



DELHI UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

DELHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Cl No

Q851:86.2.12.00

5-19

Ac No

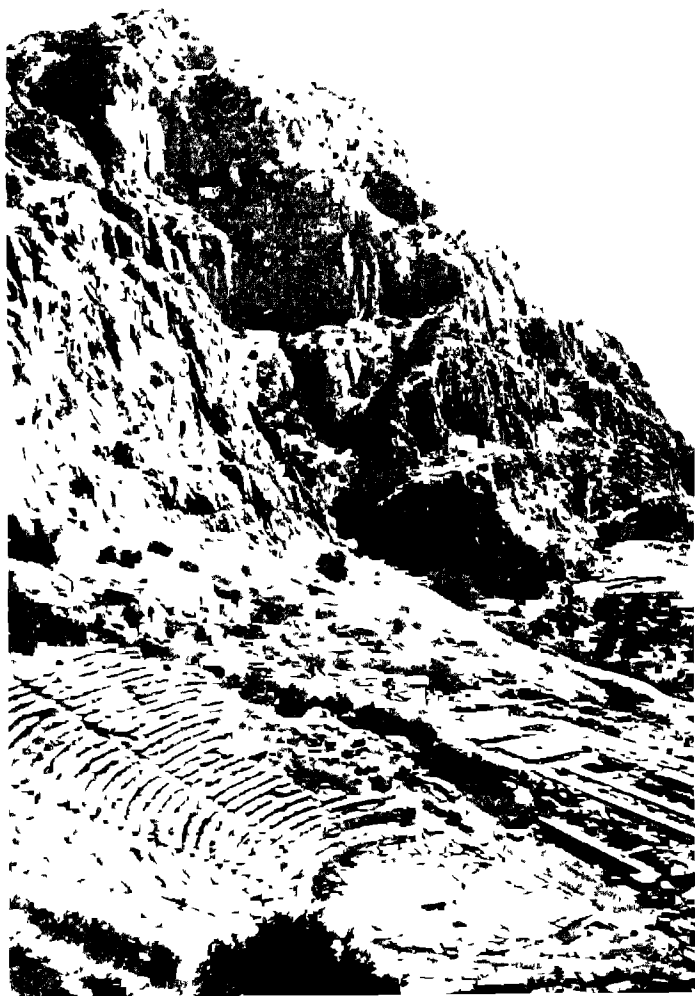
327 19

Date of release for loan

2 JAN 1951

This book should be returned on or before the date last stamped below. An overdue charge of 5 Paise will be collected for each day the book is kept overtime

A HISTORY OF THE DELPHIC ORACLE



A GENERAL VIEW OF DELPHI

Looking south east, in the foreground the Theatre. Beyond it to the right the foundations of the temple, and the path leading to Castalia. In the background the cliff called Hyamporia.

Tr. n. 10

A History of the Delphic Oracle

H W PARKE, LITT D

FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN
AND PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT HISTORY

BASIL BLACKWELL
OXFORD

1939

Printed in Great Britain for BASIL BLACKWELL & MOTT LTD
by the KEMP HALL PRESS LTD in the City of Oxford

PREFACE

IT is nearly fifty years since the French began their excavation of Delphi. In that period much has been written on the archaeology of the site and in the last few years valuable books have also been published on the political history of Delphi, but no attempt has been made to discuss in detail the history of the oracle. The present work attempts to fill this gap.

The subject is one of considerable difficulty both in its archaeological and its literary evidence. The finds on the site of the Pythian Apollo's sanctuary have cast an invaluable light on Delphi's historical relations, which are an indispensable background to any account of the oracle's activity, but on the subject of the oracle itself their value has been mainly negative. Here one cannot tell what the future may still hold in store. The unforeseen discovery of golden treasures under the pavement of the Sacred Way which was made in May of this year shows that the excavations are not yet exhausted, and much of what has been already found still awaits full publication and discussion.

It is on the literary evidence of ancient authors, however, that our knowledge of the oracle's activity mainly depends. Here the chief difficulty consists in deciding how far to trust their accounts of the Pythia's prophetic successes. In many instances it is impossible to demonstrate whether some particular prophecy was truly delivered or is a later forgery, hence one has to fall back on subjective impressions. I am very conscious that at many points in this work readers may feel constrained to differ from my judgements. All that I can hope is that I have stated the evidence honestly and maintained a consistent picture of the oracle's work. Delphi was concerned in so many directions with the life and thought of the ancient world, that at times I have been led into various fields where I cannot write with equal confidence. But it has seemed to me worth while to attempt to produce this comprehensive study, even though finality on many details is unattainable. Also I must apologize, if my renderings of the Pythia's words fail to suggest any literary excellence, for the history of

the oracle it seemed necessary to translate the ambiguous responses as literally as possible. I trust that this book will satisfy those who have occasion to study this aspect of ancient history, and also that it may interest some of those who are able in increasing numbers to visit the site of the oracle.

I must thank the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, for a grant by which I was assisted to revisit Delphi. Also I wish to acknowledge the help of those who read my manuscript and offered valuable criticisms—Professor H. T. Wade-Gery of Oxford, Professor Michael Tierney of University College, Dublin and my colleague, Mr. W. B. Stanford. Dr. M. N. Tod has kindly supplied me with references to epigraphical material, and also has earned my gratitude by generously undertaking the arduous task of reading my proofs. Also Professor Demangel, Director of the French School at Athens, gave me every assistance when I was in Greece. Finally I would like to thank my publishers for the trouble which they have taken over procuring the use of some of the illustrations.

H. W. PARKE

Trinity College, Dublin

Trinity Monday, 1939

CONTENTS

Chap		Page
	Preface	v
	BOOK I	
I	Introduction	3
II	The Origin of the Oracle	6
III	The Procedure of the Oracle	18
IV	The Sources of the Oracle's History	39
	BOOK II	
I	The Oracle and Colonization	47
II	The Oracle and Colonization	69
III	The Oracle and the Messenian Wars	88
IV	The Oracle and Sparta in Early Times	96
V	Delphi to the End of the First Sacred War	116
VI	The Oracle and the Tyrants	131
VII	The Oracle and Lydia	143
VIII	The Oracle's Activity till Xerxes' Invasion	159
IX	The Persian Invasion	179
X	The Oracle till the end of the Peloponnesian War	194
XI	The Oracle to the Battle of Leuctra	215
XII	The Third Sacred War	229
XIII	The Pythia Philippizes	244
XIV	The Oracle in the Hellenistic Period	255
XV	The Oracle and the Roman Republic	269
XVI	The Oracle under the Roman Emperors	287
	BOOK III	
I	The Oracle in Greek Myths	299
II	The Oracle in Greek Myths	313
III	The Oracle and Greek Religion	325
IV	The Oracle and Greek Religion	335
V	The Oracle and Greek Religion	347
VI	The Oracle and Greek Religion	370
VII	The Oracle and Greek Religion	378

Chap		Page
VIII	The Oracle and Moral Questions	386
IX	The Oracle and the Private Enquirer	402
X	Conclusion	428
	Select Bibliography	433
	Index Locorum	437
	Index of Proper Names	447

LIST OF PLATES

A general view of Delphi	<i>Frontispiece</i>
From <i>Retour en Grèce</i>	
Two Omphaloi	<i>facing p</i> 9
Themis as Pythia	„ „ 12
A block from the floor of the Adyton	„ „ 24
Castalia	„ „ 26
The Adyton	„ „ 30
A View of the Crisæan Plain	„ „ 116
A Metope with traces of a Celtic Shield	„ „ 266

The author gratefully acknowledges the permission to reproduce the following photographs —

The Omphaloi, by La Musee de Delphes

The Themis Vase, by the Staatliches Museum, Berlin

The frontispiece and the view of the Crisæan plain, from A Bon's *Retour en Grèce* (2nd edition) by Messrs Paul Hartmann

The Metope with the Celtic Shield, from F Courby's, *Fouilles II*, by Messrs Boccard

The remaining illustrations are from the author's own photographs

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

ZEUS according to the Greek legend once wished to determine the exact centre of the earth. So he released two eagles from opposite ends of the world. Flying towards each other they met exactly over Delphi and demonstrated that it was the midmost point. Accordingly in early Greek maps Delphi occupied the exact centre, like Jerusalem in the maps of medieval Christendom. This pretty myth can claim a certain symbolic truth. Delphi for much of Greek history was the spiritual centre of the Hellenic world. Athens in the classical age became the chief home of art and philosophy. Other states in the swaying struggle for hegemony might for a time hold political dominance. But no city for so long or so generally was recognized as a common meeting ground of all Hellenes equally—their central hearth.

Once every four years Olympia drew the Greek world to its games, but at other times it was comparatively unfrequented. Delphi too had quadrennial games only second in rank to those of Olympia, but the continuous attraction was the oracle. Places of consultation were fairly frequent in Greek sanctuaries, but few attained to more than local importance. Delphi's only rivals in reputation in classical periods were Dodona and Ammon, and it is hard to say how far their distinction was based on the very fact of their difficulty of access. Delphi on the contrary lay in Central Greece at a ready distance from most parts of Hellas.

To the modern visitor the situation of Delphi is one of its chief distinctions. Many have tried to convey in words that blend of sublimity and charm which is the special property of its landscape. The remains of the ancient temple lie on a sloping shelf of the mountain side, which ends in cliffs dropping sheer to the Pleistos gorge and is in turn dominated by further cliffs of rose-tinted limestone which project from the flank of Mount Parnassus. It looks southward, but its view of the Corinthian Gulf is blocked by the straight face of Mount

Cirphis Half a mile from the temple the cliff wall above is split by the chasm of Castalia. The whole setting must have enhanced the magnificence of the sacred buildings. But to an ancient Greek it was probably less the natural beauties than the architecture, sculpture and painting of Delphi which called for admiration, and all these gifts had been lavished on the place in honour of Apollo who had chosen it above all others for his 'most truthful oracle' ¹

For a thousand years of recorded history the Greeks and Romans, sometimes as private individuals, sometimes as official ambassadors, came to Delphi to consult the prophetess. Her words were taken to reveal the will of the gods. These prophecies were not usually intended simply to be a forecast of the future as such. The Pythia's function was to tell the divine purpose in relation to coming events. Hence the question put to her usually took one of two forms. The most frequent was to ask 'Is it better and more good that such and such a course be adopted?' The Pythia's answer would approve or disapprove, and the meaning would be conveyed or disguised in ambiguous indications on the probable consequences of the suggested course of action. Alternatively the enquirer might be resolved on his purpose, and might wish to consult the oracle only on the means to attain it. The enquiry then would take the form of asking to what gods or goddesses offerings should be made to achieve the specified object, and the Pythia's reply would prescribe the appropriate ritual.

Thus the consultations were religious in form, and not mere inquisitive speculations on the future or attempts to obtain practical short cuts to success. But as at least in earlier periods religion entered into every aspect of Greek life, there were few subjects on which the advice of Apollo was not sought. The state that wished for success in war or advice on its constitution might approach the Pythia and so also might the ordinary individual, who felt the need for guidance in such important decisions as marriage or the choice of a vocation. Hence the oracle acted in turn as international arbitrator or father confessor.

Our ancient sources have preserved for us many curious and some beautiful responses of the Pythia. They vary greatly in

¹ Cf. Aesch. *Cho.* 559. Herod. I, xlix. Pindar, *Pyth.* III, 29.

their sincerity and literary excellence. For the history of Delphi was not one unswerving record of success. It had its ups and downs in accordance with the piety or scepticism of the Greeks and it shared the rise or fall of Hellenic civilization to which it contributed no slight part.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN OF THE ORACLE

THE foundation of Delphi and its oracle took place before the times of recorded history. It would be foolish to look for a clear statement of origin from any ancient authority, but one might hope for a plain account of the primitive traditions. Actually this is not what we find. The foundation of the oracle is described by three early writers: the author of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Aeschylus in the prologue to the *Eumenides*, and Euripides in a chorus in the *Iphigeneia in Tauris*. All three versions, instead of being simple and traditional, are already selective and tendentious. They disagree with each other basically, but have been superficially combined in the conventional version of late classical times.

The *Homeric Hymn*¹ compounded by a rhapsode out of various earlier lays contained as one section, 'how, far-darting Apollo, you first went through the earth seeking an oracle-centre for men'. The vigorous god descends from Mount Olympus through Northern and Central Greece till he finds the place 'at Crisa under snowy Parnassus'. First Apollo lays out his temple and then at a fair-flowing spring beside it he slays a she-serpent. The name of the site—Pytho—is said to be derived from the rotting corpse of the monster (*ἐντραυθοῖ νῦν πύθεο*). The story is filled out with much topographical matter and local traditions from Northern Greece. The slaying of the snake is treated as nothing more than the necessary removal of a neighbouring nuisance. No clear indication of the method of the oracle itself is given, but in the following section, which tells of the settlement there of Cretan travellers to act as prophets and priests, it is implied,² that Apollo spoke from the laurel tree in his temple and that his utterances were announced by his servants. This suggests much the same procedure as that which was traditionally used in the temple of Zeus at

¹ *Hom. Hymn.* III, ll 214 ff.

² *Hom. Hymn.* III, 194 ff. ἀγγελλοῦσι θεμιστὰς Φοῖβου Ἀπολλωνίου χρυσαορὸν ὅττι κεν εἴπῃ χρεῖαι ἐκ δαφνὸς ὕδαλον ὑπὸ Παριησίου. Cf. Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, I, p. 107. Contrast Allen and Halliday's note on the passage.

Dodona where the god spoke from the oak tree and the Selli expounded his oracles. The god's communication in both places was probably recognized in the rustling of the leaves which the priests claimed to understand.

Our second account of the origin is put by Aeschylus¹ into the mouth of the Pythia herself. In the *Eumenides* she begins the action of the play by appearing as though making a pre-fatory prayer before entering the prophetic shrine, 'First in this prayer I honour before the other gods Earth, the primal prophetess. After her Themis, who was the second to sit here in her mother's oracle, as a tradition says. In the third place, willingly and not perforce after her sat another child of Earth, the Titaness Phoebe. She gave it as a birthday gift to Phoebus who takes his name from hers.' Then the Pythia's narrative describes how Apollo came from Delos in peaceful and civilizing progress to occupy his prophetic temple. Here there is no mention at all of the serpent, and the keynote of the narrative is dignity and order. In the Homeric hymn the vigour and violence of the virile god were the chief subject, but also there was no suggestion that there had been any previous occupant of a prophetic centre at Delphi. In the *Eumenides* the predecessors are mentioned, even emphasized, and the possible suspicion that the possession of the shrine could have passed by force is rebutted. This account is chosen by Aeschylus because it exactly suits the tone of his play. Where the main theme of the action is the triumph of law over violence, it would have been unseemly for the prologue to have mentioned Apollo's slaying of the serpent, still more the tradition which represented that slaying as the forcible occupation by Apollo of the shrine of the Earth Goddess.

This third and violent tradition is represented best in the chorus of Euripides² where it suits the action of the play to glorify Apollo without much heed to right or dignity. We are told in colourful phrases how after his birth on Delos his mother, Leto, carried him to Parnassus where 'a serpent, a huge monster of Earth, ministered the oracle of the earth goddess. Him, while still a babe, still leaping in your dear mother's arms, you slew, O Phoebus, and mounted on the godlike oracle, and now sit on the golden tripod, on an unde-

¹ *Eumen* 1 ff

² *I T* lines 1247 ff

ceiving throne, assigning to mortals the oracles from beneath your prophetic shrine, as neighbour to the Castalian streams and holding the hall midmost of the earth' But, as we are told, when Apollo had thus driven Themis, the daughter of Earth, from the oracle-centre, Earth avenged herself by sending in the night prophetic dreams to men. This competition against Apollo's oracle was threatening to deprive him of his glory as prophet. But he appealed to Zeus who stopped Earth's dream oracles and restored the pre-eminence to Apollo.

This version evidently reproduces in a sophisticated form the primitive tradition¹ which Aeschylus for his own purposes had been at pains to contradict: the belief that Apollo came to Delphi as an invader and appropriated for himself a previously existing oracle of Earth. The slaying of the serpent is the act of conquest, which secures his possession, not as in the *Homeric Hymn*, a merely secondary work of improvement on the site. Another difference is also noticeable. The *Homeric Hymn*, as we saw, implied that the method of prophecy used there was similar to that of Dodona: both Aeschylus and Euripides, writing in the fifth century, attribute to primeval times the same methods used at Delphi in their own day. So much is implied by their allusions to tripods and prophetic seats.

In one way archaeology helps to elucidate the problem of Delphic origins. Excavation has shown that the site was occupied freely in Late Minoan times, and an object used in Minoan ritual—a limestone vessel for pouring, shaped like a lioness's head—was actually found in the site of the classical sanctuary.² Evidently this place, otherwise unattractive for habitation, was frequented as early as 1500 B.C. and had become a centre of cult. The subject of Minoan religion cannot be fully elucidated through the surviving monuments and the traces in classical tradition, but all indications point to the conclusion that the chief deity of the Minoans and those influenced by them on the Greek mainland was at all times a goddess, strongly associated with the earth and its fruits. Hence if Delphi was a cult centre before Hellenic times, an original

¹ Cf. Pindar, frag. 261 (Bowra).

² Evans, *Palace of Minos*, II, pp. 832 ff. Perdrizet, *Fouilles*, V, p. 1 RCH LIX, 1935, pp. 328 ff.



TWO OMPHALOI

Shown as at present exhibited in the Museum at Delphi. The roughly shaped ovoid rock on top was found in the Adyton. It has scratched on one side what appear to be the letters *ΕΡ.ΙΣ*. The large marble omphalos was found on the terrace outside the main entrance of the temple. It is a late reproduction on a large scale of the genuine omphalos and was intended to be seen by the general public. Pausanias (X, xvi, 3) mistook it for the original. The carvings represent the woollen fillets attached to the true omphalos.

worship of an earth goddess there would be a natural supposition on our archaeological evidence alone. But since all our literary tradition agrees in making Apollo a settler come from elsewhere, and most of the tradition (though not in the earliest poem) makes Earth his predecessor, we can take it that the agreement of archaeology and tradition is right.

Delphi also has two other traces of primitive and pre-Apolline cult. One was the tradition that Poseidon had been worshipped there in company with the Earth goddess.¹ At first sight the god of the sea seems to be a strange object of worship on this inland mountain shelf, but analogous instances of the cult of Poseidon and some earth goddess in conjunction, even at inland places, serve to show that this tradition too records a genuinely primitive element. A legend, which may have been authorized by a Delphic response to the Spartans, alleged that Poseidon had given his rights in Pytho in exchange for Taenarum in Laconia. This belief was perpetuated in historic times by an altar in honour of Poseidon erected inside Apollo's temple.²

Another very archaic feature at Delphi also confirms the ancient associations of the place with the Earth goddess. This was the Omphalos,³ an egg-shaped stone which was situated in the innermost sanctuary of the temple in historic times, and can probably be seen in the rough ovoid rock unearthed there by the French excavators. Classical legend asserted that it marked the 'navel' (Omphalos) or centre of the Earth and explained that this spot was determined by Zeus who had released two eagles to fly from opposite sides of the earth and that they had met exactly over this place. The eagles were represented by two figures of birds, one on either side of the Omphalos itself. But they must have been very crude and primitive carvings for other authorities took them to be crows or swans, the birds traditionally sacred to Apollo.

It is evident that the legend about Zeus and the Omphalos is

¹ Strabo, VIII, C 374. Ephorus, *FGrH* 70 F 150. Paus II, xxxiii, 2, X, xxiv, 4. Callimachus ap. Schol. Aesch. *Lum.* 21. Schol. Ap. Rhod. III, 1243. Suidas s.v. αἰεῖδεν. Poseidon 'Αμυθεύς, Schol. Lycophr. 617. Hesychius s.v. Ποσειδῶς. Eustath. ad Dion. Per. 499. Contrast Plut. *Moral.* 741A.

² Paus. X, v 6, and for worship of Poseidon on the North side of the temple, cf. Ditt. *Syll.* 247, col. 3, 13.

³ Hecataeus, frag. 36a. *FGrH*. Pindar, frag. 260 (Bowra). Strabo, IX, C 419. Paus. X, xvi, 3. Varro, *de l. l.* VII, 77. Plut. *Moral.* 409 E. Hyginus, CXL. Lucian, *de Salt.* 291 and Schol. etc. Courby, *Fouilles*, II, p. 70.

only the latest of several different meanings attached to this stone. One may accept the suggestion¹ that it was the oldest object of cult preserved at Delphi. In the primitive times before religious belief had become articulate, the Omphalos will have been a sacred stone, a fetich worshipped or feared for its own inner power. Then when the religion of the Earth Goddess assumed a personal form, the Omphalos still remained a sacred object, but was associated with the goddess. The stone found by the French excavators had scratched on one side of it the Greek name for the Earth goddess, and similar baetyls are regularly found in association with the Mother goddess of Minoan art. The legend that it marked the centre of the earth may have arisen before the coming of Apollo. The association of Zeus is evidently late, and served to give a more or less reasonable explanation for the respect paid to an otherwise meaningless object. It is even possible that the two figures of birds were originally set up, in a manner familiar in Minoan and Asiatic art, to adore the sacred object from opposite sides, and that they gave rise to the myth of the eagles, when their original purpose had been forgotten.

So Delphi was originally devoted to the worship of the Earth goddess whom the Greeks called Gé Themis, who is associated with her in tradition as her daughter and partner or successor, is really another manifestation of the same deity—an identity which Aeschylus himself recognized in another context.² The worship of these two, as one or distinguished, was displaced by the introduction of Apollo. His origin has been the subject of much learned controversy—it is sufficient for our purpose to take him as the *Homeric Hymn* represents him—a northern intruder—and his arrival must have occurred in the dark interval between Mycenaean and Hellenic times. His conflict with Gé for the possession of the cult-site was represented under the legend of his slaying of the serpent. The motive of the young god who slays a dragon may be more primitive than its immediate association with Delphi. There, however, it would take on a special meaning. Snakes were regularly supposed to be born from the ground, and this female serpent evidently was originally the visible manifestation of Gé herself, a belief which can be traced in Minoan re-

¹ Cf. Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, I, pp. 5 ff.

² P. V. line 211.

ligion. That this fact is overlooked in the *Homeric Hymn* might be put down to the slipshod telling which is characteristic of our poem—the rehashed work of a late rhapsode. But it is more likely to be a primitive feature preserved. At first the worshippers of Apollo did not make peace with the worshippers of Gé or recognize their deity as more than a nameless female snake. Later there arose a compromise. Gé was admitted to have been a predecessor of Apollo and his violent appropriation of the place was taken to have been something unjustified for which the Delphians said Apollo himself had been forced to pay atonement.¹ This curious tradition is not found in Euripides' account, in which the Earth goddess, as in much of Greek mythology, appears simply as the enemy of Zeus and of the Olympians generally. But at Delphi itself the classical tradition ran that Apollo for the death of the serpent had been compelled by Zeus to suffer nine years' exile in Thessaly and this belief was perpetuated by an obscure piece of ritual performed every ninth year at Delphi, which was generally taken to be a symbolic representation of these events. Whether this interpretation correctly explained the original meaning of the ceremony matters less to us than the certain fact that in classical times at Delphi it was always taken to have had that purpose. As the idea of purification for blood guilt was very dominant in Delphic theology shortly before the seventh century B.C. it was probably about that time that the theory of Apollo's purification was developed. Also with this change may have come a renewed recognition of the cult of Gé, as official even though subsidiary to that of Apollo. Certainly in late archaic times she had her sanctuary beneath the terrace of Apollo's temple.²

It can be observed that in later times the story of the slaying of the serpent underwent various changes. In the *Homeric Hymn* Apollo does not set out from Delos, but from Olympus, and there is no suggestion that he is immature. The later

¹ Anaxandrides *Delphus* ap. Schol. Eur. *Alc.* 1 (Mueller, *FHG* 5). Plut. *Moral.* 417F, 421C, 293C, 1136A. Aristonous, *Hymn* (Diehl, *Anthol. Lyr.* XVI) lines 17 ff., where it is combined inconsistently with the persuading of Gé by Athena. Aelian, *V. H.* III, 1. Steph. Byz. *Δελφιάς*. Paus. II, vii, 7, xxx, 3, X, xvi, 5. Strabo, IX, C. 422, cf. Lucian, VI, 407. Serv. *Aen.* IV, 377.

² Cf. De la Coste-Messelière, *du Musée de Delphes*, pp. 63 ff. on the Tholus, demolished towards the end of the sixth century, and *BCH* LIV, 1930, pp. 283 ff. for bases of statues of Gé and Themis.

stories¹ usually make him come direct from Delos to Delphi and draw an exaggerated picture of the infant god slaying the snake with his arrows. This conception of the incident was the outcome of that mutual recognition between Delphi and Delos which can be observed in historic times. The Delphians on their side admitted that Delos, not Delphi, was Apollo's birth-place: the Delians, while deriving great glory from their local cult of Apollo, did not compete with Delphi as a centre of prophecy. Each priesthood could strengthen its theological traditions by incorporating features from the other's legends.

Also from a very early date the story became a happy hunting ground for the etymologists. Already in the *Homeric Hymn* the place-name Pytho is derived from the rotting of the serpent. Later ingenuity² found the origin of the ritual cry 'Ie Paean', in a shout encouraging Apollo to shoot. The serpent, too, which appears to be anonymous in the *Homeric Hymn*, later³ was known as Python and was regarded as masculine. Or it was given a name connected with the more common name of the place and was known as Delphyne, if male, or Delphyne, if female. The original association with the Earth goddess was forgotten or mostly ignored.

On the primitive mode of consulting the oracle we have little information. The classical writers who mention the oracle of Earth⁴ vaguely imply the existence of the same methods, which they knew in their own times, and one vase painter of the early fifth century has represented Themis herself,⁵ as if she were a Pythia, sitting on the tripod and prophesying. The *Homeric Hymn* on the other hand, while wilfully ignoring the previous oracle of Earth, implies that Apollo employed much simpler methods of prophecy like those which Zeus used at Dodona.

¹ Clearchus 19 Athen. XV, 701c. Contrast Ap. Rhod. II, 701 ff. Ovid *Met.* I, 438 ff. Apollod. I, 11. Hyginus, CXL. Claudian, II, 1 ff. *Anthol. Graec.* III, 6. Menander (*Rhet. Graec.* ed. Spengel) Vol. III, p. 325.

² Clearchus 19 Athen. I c. Callimachus, *Hymn.* II, 97 ff. Et. Magn. 469, 45. Macrob. *Sat.* I, xvii, 17.

³ Cf. e.g. Schol. Apoll. Rhod. II, 706, Suidas, s.v. *Δελφοί*, Hesychius, s.v. *Δελφύς*, Schol. Eur. *Phoenissae*, 232.

⁴ Earth as prophetess Aesch. *Eum.* 2. Pind. *Pyth.* IV, 74. Plut. *Moral.* 402. C. Paus. X, v, 5.

⁵ Aesch. I c. Eur. *Orest.* 16. D.S. V, lxxvii, 4. Apollodorus, III, xxi, 5. Ovid, *Met.* I, 320 ff., IV, 623, IX, 403. Strabo, IX, C. 422. Plut. *Moral.* 421 C. *Orphic Hymn.* lxxix, Hypoth. Pind. *Pyth. Hypothesis* 7. Cf. Furtwangler-Reichhold, No. 140.



THEMIS AS PYTHIA

Aegeus consulting the Pythia, who is here named Themis. She sits on the tripod holding a laurel twig in her right hand and a bowl in her left. The picture, from a red-figure Attic vase of about 440 B.C., is less an exact illustration of a classical consultation than an imaginary grouping of two main figures in a mythological event.

There is nothing improbable in the view that the procedure at Delphi had changed between the time of Apollo's earliest establishment on the site and the later seventh century when our first clearly historical consultations are recorded. Legends associate many different methods of prophecy with Delphi. For instance, Parnassus,¹ the eponymous hero of the mountain, was said to have discovered augury by means of birds, and Delphus and Amphictyon,² the eponyms of the town and the Amphictyony, invented respectively the examining of entrails and the interpretation of omens and dreams. One body of local priests were probably connected with divination by fire.³ The foretelling of the future by drawing lots is even more certainly evidenced in connection with Delphi. For early traditions⁴ connected Apollo and Parnassus with some mysterious nymphs, called Thriae, who are personifications of the lots themselves. Also it is said that in historic times a bowl full of lots was preserved in the place where the Pythia sat. Even the technical verb used to describe the Pythia's delivery of oracles means literally 'to take up' and can best be explained by supposing that it originally was applied to the act of selecting the lot under the inspiration of the god.⁵

In historic times all these methods had been displaced by the direct utterances of the Pythia. Many questions arise about her and her procedure, but the first is how it comes about that the oracles of Apollo were delivered by a woman at all. The official priests of Apollo were men, in accordance with the general practice of Greek religion, in which men held the priesthoods of gods, and women those of goddesses. The male 'prophet', as we shall see, had some presiding function in the ceremony of the oracle, but the actual vehicle of the god's utterance was a woman. This was not originally true in Didyma, Claros or any

¹ Paus. X, vi, 1, cf. Anaxandridis Delphus ap. Steph. Byz. s.n. (Mueller, *FHG* frag. 1). Pliny, *NH* VII, 203. Pliny (*NH* X, 21) also assigns a knowledge of augury to Phemonoe, the Pythia.

² Pliny, *NH* VII, 203.

³ Paus. X, v, 6. Hesych. s.v. πυρκαῖαι.

⁴ Homer, *Hymn*, IV, 552 ff. Pherecydes, *FGH* 3 F49. Callimachus, *Hymn*, II, 45, with Scholia. Philochorus ap. Zenob., *cent.* V, 75 (Mueller, *FHG* vol. 1, p. 416, No. 196). Et Magn. *Θρία* ap. Steph. Byz. *Θρία* Suidas, *Θρία*, *Πυθία*. Cf. Plut. *Moral* 492. A. Bouche-Leclercq, *Histoire de la Divination*, I, 192 ff. F. E. Robinson, *Classical Philology*, 1916, pp. 278 ff. with some evidence from representations.

⁵ For an actual instance of this method, recorded in tradition cf. Aleuas the Red, p. 119 *infra*.

other Apolline temples which issued prophecies, except at Argos where the temple of Apollo Pythaeus was supposed to be directly founded from Delphi¹ Hence though the Argive procedure was apparently not identical in every detail with the Delphic, they present a single problem to be explained The simplest explanation seems to be found in the previous worship of the goddess Gé in the same place Clearly her chief ministrant would be a woman and if, as is alleged by our authorities, Gé had issued prophecies it would have been through a woman's mouth An interesting analogy is suggested by an oracle of Gé which survived in late classical times at Aegira in Achaea just across the Corinthian Gulf² There a priestess of Gé used to descend into a cavern and return inspired with prophecy The motive underlying the method was no doubt a belief that by entering a cavern the servant of the goddess came into closer contact with the divine One may suppose that some such method was employed by a priestess of Gé at Delphi in the second millennium, B C³

If, then, as we have supposed, the intrusive cult of Apollo first ousted the worship of Gé and later came to terms with it, it might well have happened that at first Apollo prophesied directly from his sacred laurel or by other methods, and later compromised with Gé to the extent of borrowing her use of a priestess and perhaps some of the original procedure The other source from which Delphi might have derived the institution of the Pythia was the worship of Dionysus Though he was a god his particular votaries were women, and he was always supposed to show his presence by producing an orgiastic excitement in them Dionysus is not described in our early authorities as preceding Apollo at Delphi or even being strongly associated with him Aeschylus⁴ is the first to mention him there, but the priestess in the *Eumenides* seems almost to put him in as an afterthought Throughout the fifth

¹ Cf Poulsen, *Delphische Studien*, p 28, who supposes that even in Argos there was a change from men to women in Hellenistic times The earliest reference is Plut *Pyrrh* xxxi (i.e. 272 B C) Cf *infra* p 376

² Pliny, *NH* XXVIII, 147 Paus VII, xxv, 13

³ For the cavern, cf the probable derivation of Delphi from a root *delph*—a hollow Pytho is the older name in our tradition Delphi first in Hom *Hymn*, XXVII, 14, and Heraclitus

⁴ *Eum* 24 Contrast Pind *Pyth Hypothesis*, p 2, and see Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, II, 118, note 3

century B C¹ and thereafter, references to Dionysus at Delphi became more and more frequent. The problem here is whether Dionysus forced his way gradually and at a late date into the cult of Delphi or whether even at the beginning of historic times his influence was sufficient to have modified the method of delivering oracles. Most of our evidence comes from Plutarch² in the first century A D, and is not valid in itself as evidence for primitive conditions. The chief token of Dionysus' importance at Delphi was the monument in the innermost sanctuary of Apollo which was regarded as the grave of Dionysus. Literary evidence³ for this belief does not go back earlier than the third century B C, but archaeology suggests that the lines of the Delphic temple were maintained unchanged at least from the middle sixth century B C. Hence it is unlikely that Dionysus could have been intruded into the central shrine later than that date. Another token of Dionysus' importance was the fact that by Plutarch's time at least it was supposed that for three winter months Apollo was absent from Delphi and Dionysus took his place to some extent as chief deity there. The evidence⁴ for these winter absences of Apollo stretches back to the sixth century B C but it is not possible to prove that Dionysus took his place before Plutarch's time. In earlier periods Apollo may merely have been thought of as abroad among the Hyperboreans, but without leaving a *locum tenens*. The third indication and in a way the most significant of Dionysiac influence is the frequency with which this cult was recommended in early Delphic responses⁵. There seems no room for doubt, that the growth of Bacchic worship in the Greece of the sixth century was due largely to the authority of Delphi. This Delphic leaning towards Dionysus is best explained, if one supposes that already by the beginning of the sixth century this new deity had been admitted into worship there, and probably his position did not greatly alter through

¹ E.g. Soph. *Ant.* 1126. Eur. *Ion*, 550, 715. Aristoph. *Nub.* 603.

² E.g. *Moral.* 388E.

³ Philochorus, etc. ap. Malal. p. 44, 14. Euseb. *Armen.* 710, p. 292, ed. Mai. Syncellus, p. 162c. Cyrill. c. *Julian* V, 341. Tatian, *adv. Graec.* 8. Aug. *de Civ. Dei*, XVIII, 12. Plut. *Moral.* 365A. Et Magn. *Δελφοί*. Tzetzes, *Lyc.* 208. Cedren. p. 43B. Clem. Alex. *Protr.* II, 15 P.

⁴ Bacchyl. XV and frag. 37. Pindar, *Pyth.* IV, 5. Claudian, XXVIII, 25 ff. Libanius, *Epist.* 311. Plut. *Moral.* 389C. Alcaeus ap. Himerium, *Orat.* XIII. 5. Procopius, *Ep.* xx, lxxviii.

⁵ Cf. *infra* pp. 335 ff.

the centuries, except in so far as the later pagan theologians found scope for fanciful theories which would identify the two gods

If Dionysus was accepted at Delphi by the early sixth century, it is possible that his cult influenced in early stages the procedure of the Pythia. What exactly that influence might have been is less easy to assess than that of Gé, because there are no such good analogies from neighbouring cults. At one place in Phocis there was an oracle of Dionysus,¹ but there the responses were given by a man. So there is no ground from this example to suppose that the choice of sex in the Pythia can be attributed to Dionysiac influence. A much better, but more distant, analogy is provided in Thrace. Herodotus,² evidently with a view to rebutting more fantastic accounts, records that among the tribe called Satrae there was an oracle of Dionysus where men acted as prophets, and 'a woman delivered the responses just as in Delphi, and without anything more elaborate to it'. The distance from Delphi is too far to make direct influence likely, but it is true that the Dionysiac cults of Phocis and Boeotia show Thracian elements prominently. Hence it is not out of the question to argue that to some extent Delphi and the oracle of the Satrae may have been under a common influence. At the same time it is unnecessary to suppose that the idea of employing a woman to deliver the oracles came from this source. As we have seen, it would be derived more plausibly from the primitive cult of Gé. Also even the excited element in Delphic prophecy should not be assigned exclusively to Bacchic influence.³ All direct prophesying (where it was not merely a matter of systematically interpreting omens given from without) was expected by the Greeks to be accompanied with an excitement bordering on frenzy. Hence it is a mistake to regard this feature as inappropriate to an oracle of Apollo. The same or very similar excited prophecy was practised by male seers at other Apolline temples, where no direct influence from Delphi or from Dionysus need be supposed. Hence the best judgment to pass on Dionysiac influence

¹ Paus. X, xxviii, 11

² VII, cxi

³ For the view that the enthusiastic element in Delphic prophecy comes from Bacchic influence, cf e.g. Bouche-Leclercq, *Histoire de la Divination*, I, pp. 144 ff., Rohde, *Psyche* (tr. W. B. Hillis), p. 289 ff.

at Delphi seems to be that no features in the oracle need to be explained by this supposition, but, as such influence is likely to have been at work, one can recognize that it would help to establish the oracle more firmly on lines which were already otherwise determined. The primitive worship of Gé on the site had suggested the use of a woman as the mouthpiece of prophecy. The Pythia is not really a priestess to a male god, but the human vehicle of his utterance, which is then interpreted by Apollo's priest who was regularly described as 'the prophet'¹

There was one other tradition about Delphi in mythical periods which showed a woman as prophetess there apart from the Pythia. She was the Sibyl² who was said to have come and prophesied from a rock which still towers over the sacred way below the temple. The site is immediately in the neighbourhood of the traditional sanctuary of Earth. The Sibyl herself is not associated with Delphi in any very primitive authority. In fact the name and the concept appear to originate in Asia Minor, and only in Hellenistic times did the theory grow up that Apollo had inspired a series of different prophetesses, called Sibyls, in different parts of the Greek world. It was not until this late stage that the tradition of a Delphic Sibyl was evolved. She was presented as a daughter of Poseidon and so was linked with the pre-Apolline period at Delphi, and she was said to have prophesied ecstatically from beside the sanctuary of Earth. Some scraps of distorted tradition about the primitive mouthpieces of the Mother goddess may have contributed to this picture, but otherwise it has no direct connection with the Pythia of historic times.

¹ L. g. Herod. VIII, xxxvii. Plut. *Moral.* 438B.

² Cf. *P. H.* s. v. Sibylla, esp. col. 2089.

CHAPTER III

THE PROCEDURE OF THE ORACLE

THE procedure of consulting the oracle and delivering the responses at Delphi remains still a very mysterious subject. This is curious, because there is no sign that it was a mystery, in the technical sense, to the ancient Greeks. Our authors allude to the subject or discuss it fairly freely and without any indication that those who consulted the oracle or even those who ministered at it were under any ban against describing the procedure. It is evident that the consultation did not take place in public, and those who wished to be present appeared as enquirers, not as spectators. Also they could not obtain admission without undergoing various rites of purification and offering certain sacrifices. Thus to consult the oracle involved some trouble and expense. Again in all periods consultations were not allowed on all days—probably not more than nine times in the year.¹ But even allowing for all these restrictions on haphazard and merely inquisitive consultation, Delphi at the height of its fame must have been visited by hosts of enquirers and even in its periods of decline there must usually have been quite a large number of Greeks alive at any time, who had actually been present at a consultation. In spite of these opportunities for direct acquaintance with the oracle we do not possess a single straightforward account telling in prose what the procedure at Delphi was. We have to rest content with many allusions to the subject from all periods, a few verse descriptions of late times, and from the same age many quasi-philosophical discussions of Delphi as an example of prophecy. One reason why our evidence is no better appears to be that to the Greeks of classical periods Delphi and its methods were taken for granted. Everyone knew as much as he wanted to know of a recognized and accepted institution. So Herodotus could explain away the alleged peculiarities of the oracle of

¹ Plut. *Moral.* 292 D, 398 A. In the earliest periods only once a year, on Apollo's birthday. In Plutarch's time only once a month and not in the three winter months. Some scholars suppose more frequent opportunities in the classical period, but evidence is lacking.

the Satrae in Thrace, by saying that the prophetess acted just like the Pythia, and there was nothing more elaborate in it.¹ He knew that his readers would understand how the Pythia acted and did not trouble to go into details. When we attempt to reconstruct these details, the chief difficulty is that our fragmentary evidence has to be pieced together from many periods and authors. The inconsistencies that appear may be sometimes attributable to the difference in mental outlook in our informants and the varying degree of their acquaintance with the subject. Another possibility is that the procedure itself altered somewhat from period to period, but in view of the general conservatism of Delphi one is less inclined to adopt this hypothesis, unless it is forced on one.

The first and chief question is what was regarded as the operating cause in the process of prophesying? How did the Pythia receive the inspiration? It is well known how in Roman times (from which most of our evidence dates²) the means of inspiration was said to be vapour issuing from a chasm or cave. Sometimes the Pythia was represented as seated on the tripod above the mouth of a cavern, and the vapour apparently was thought of as mounting to her from the hole. At other times the Pythia is described as herself entering a cavern and going to encounter the vapour. Both these accounts seem to be variants of an idea which can be traced back to the fourth century B.C. but not earlier. There is no allusion to the cave or chasm as a source of inspiration before that date and the idea did not make much mark in literature, till the last century B.C. and later, when it was the basis of all Roman descriptions of Delphi and of many philosophical discussions. In its earliest form the theory of the chasm was evidently a rationalistic invention. Diodorus Siculus, reproducing some fourth-century B.C. authority (probably Ephorus), describes how the oracle was discovered. When Delphi was as yet uninhabited, a goatherd, named Coretas,³ observed that any of his goats

¹ Cf. *supra* p. 16.

² D.S. XVI, xxvi. Strabo, IX, C.419. Paus. X, v, 7 and 12 [Aristotle], *de Mundo*, 395 b. 26. Cic. *de Div.* I, xxxvi, 79 [Longinus], *περί Ὑψους* xiii, 2. Plin. *N.H.* II, 208. Justin, XXIV, vi, 9. D.C. LXII, frag. xiv, 2 [Lucian], *Nero*, 642. Livy, I, lvi, 10. Val. Max. I, viii, 10, III, 1, 2. Lucan, *de B.C.* V, 111. Statius, *Theb.* III, 611. Apollodorus, I, iv, 1. Servius, *Aen.* III, 92. Palaephatus, *περί ἀνόρων*, xlix. Iamblichus, *de Mysteriis*, III, xi. Clemens Alex. *Protr.* II, 10. P. Lactantius in Stat. *Theb.* VIII, 331.

³ The name is given in Plut. *Moral.* 433C, 435D, cf. Paus. I c. Schol. Eur. *Orest.* 165. Themistius *Orat.* IV, 53A.

which approached the chasm skipped in an astonishing fashion and uttered a different cry than their wont. He came near it and had the same experience as the goats, for he was seized with a prophetic frenzy and foretold the future. His utterances were observed by his neighbours, and when they were confirmed by later fulfilment the place of the chasm became frequented, and was regarded as an oracular shrine of Earth. At first the visitors to the place prophesied for each other. But as many in frenzy leapt down the chasm and disappeared, the local inhabitants chose one of their number, a woman, to act as prophetess for all. For her protection they devised the tripod as a contrivance, mounted on which she could sit above the chasm, and this method was, as one is to understand, maintained unchanged after the temple was built and throughout historic times.

This highly ingenious story can be treated as nothing but an invention, cleverly devised by some one who was well informed about Delphic procedure, and who wished to explain it all on a strictly rationalistic principle. In this tendency the story can be compared with the attempts of Euhemerus to explain away the Olympic deities by retelling their myths so as to show that they were only great men of the past. The author of this subtle fiction was able to account for a number of Delphic features.

(i) As to the existence of a chasm at Delphi we have already seen¹ that this supposition would be perfectly in accord with the tradition that there had originally been an oracle of Earth on the site. The French excavators² were unable to produce very positive results on this subject. Quite clearly there is not and never has been a huge subterranean chasm. But faint indications do point to the existence of a small underground cell, just large enough to have admitted the Pythia. We can take it that this cavern, a survival from the cult of Gé, still remained on the site, and could be entered from the innermost sanctuary.

(ii) In historical times the Pythia gave her responses while seated on a tripod. This appliance, and not the chasm, is always mentioned as typical of Delphi in the fifth century and

¹ Cf. *supra* p. 14.

² Courby, *Fouilles*, II, pp. 59 ff. For an earlier discussion cf. Oppé, *JHS* XXIV, pp. 214 ff.

early fourth century writers. We will suggest later¹ that this tripod, in contrast to the cavern, was Apollo's particular method of giving oracles at Delphi. Here the rationalist cleverly brought it into conjunction with the cavern by pretending that it was a sort of safety device.

(iii) The idea of goats as the original discoverers of the place was no doubt suggested by a piece of ritual which was still observed in Plutarch's² time. Before the Pythia sat on the tripod, the priests made trial whether the god was favourable. The method was to offer a goat, which was not, however, auspicious, unless the victim first trembled from head to foot through all its limbs, before it should be sacrificed. To induce this trembling the priests adopted the rather naive device of sprinkling the goat with drops of cold water, and repeating the process till they produced the desired omen or were satisfied that it was not to be secured. The underlying theory evidently was that the goat should tremble, as the Pythia trembled in her ecstasy, and that both these conditions were the work of the god. If the goat trembled first, then it followed that the priestess would also. But unfortunately for pious theory, the goat needed a physical stimulus before it would do its part. However, this preliminary use of a goat, though not necessarily connected with chasms or vapours, suggested to the rationalist that goats had been the original predecessors in discovering the chasm.

(iv) The theory of the vapour coming out of the chasm was no doubt suggested to the rationalist by the actual examples in Asia Minor and elsewhere which were known to the ancient world. Geologically it is quite impossible at Delphi where the limestone and schist could not have emitted a gas with any intoxicating properties.³ But the theory suited the rationalist because by it he could explain how the Pythia was thrown into a state of excitement without having recourse to supposing supernatural action. The fact that the vapour issued from the ground was to the rationalist sufficient explanation why the first discoverers attributed the marvel to the Earth Goddess's power. Apollo, the Python, and the rest of the mythical tradition could be dispensed with or explained away as a

¹ Cf. *infra* p. 24.

² *Moral.* 435 B, 437 B, and 438 A.

³ Cf. Philippson, *P. II* V, 2519. Oppé, *J. H. S.* XXIV, 230.

poetic exaggeration of actual happenings. For example, Ephorus¹ described these events as the triumph of a hero over a wicked man, called Python, who was nicknamed 'the Snake'. Thus the supernatural would be quite removed from the story of Delphic origins.

This kind of rationalized theology made little impression that we can notice in the writers of the fourth century and Hellenistic times. Such notions were in the air and were accepted readily enough without much excitement. The pious seem to have raised little objection. Among the Hellenistic Greeks generally, sceptical and rationalistic views of the gods did not provoke protest or recrimination, so long as they did not suggest the abandonment of existing ritual. Whether the Pythia was excited by vapours from a chasm or by the direct inspiration of Apollo himself mattered little, the same ritual could be applied on either supposition, and the responses might be equally valid for predicting the future. Even the rationalist did not suggest that the Pythia's utterances were just meaningless gabble.

The chasm theory of Delphi came into its own, when the Romans were dominant in the Mediterranean. They were a nation quite unfamiliar with ecstatic prophecy. Their indigenous methods were elaborate systems of augury, which hinged on the detailed and quasi-scientific knowledge acquired by the prophet, not his emotional response to the presence of the god. Such mystical notions as spiritual inspiration were alien to Roman thought and religion. The materialistic account of the Pythia intoxicated by a subterranean vapour was both intelligible and satisfying. Also it lent itself well to such dramatic treatment as that in Lucan's *Pharsalia*.² The Pythia's entry into the cavern and her voice issuing from it were favourite features in the less authentic Roman accounts. They did not apply correctly to Delphi, but may have been influenced by the cave sanctuary of Claros—a much frequented oracle in Roman times—and the grotto at Cumae, if Vergil's famous account³ of the Sibyl has a foundation in fact.

By Plutarch's time the chasm and vapour theory had even won some degree of acceptance among the Delphic intelli-

¹ Ephorus, *FGrH* 70 F 31. Strabo, IX, C 422.

² V, 111 ff.

³ *Aen.* VI, 42 ff., cf. Leopold, *Mnemosyne*, 1927, pp. 170 ff.

gentsia and was regarded as more or less official. But to Plutarch, a pious thinker well acquainted with the site, it presented real difficulties. He asserted¹ that 'the building, in which they make those consulting the god sit down, not often, nor regularly, but occasionally at intervals is filled with a sweet savour and vapour as though the innermost sanctuary were emitting as from a fountain the scents of the sweetest and most expensive perfumes'. But he sees the difficulty that if the vapour issued generally into the place occupied by priests and enquirers there was no rational ground why they also should not prophesy ecstatically. The preliminary sacrifice of the goat also involved an illogicality in the use of cold water douches, if the vapour itself could make the goat tremble. Hence Plutarch was constrained to suppose that the Pythia's own state was a determining factor. If she was attuned to the inspiration then she would be affected by the vapour, if not, it could not influence her or could only do her harm. The god knew whether the priestess was in a fit state or not and intimated her fitness by causing the goat to shiver at the cold water. This elaborate hypothesis only serves to show how ill the chasm and vapour theory fitted the facts and ritual at Delphi. What was needed was a theory of spiritual inspiration, and Plutarch's final view approximates closely to this. But direct inspiration by the god suggested to the contemporaries of Plutarch² the conception, which they dismissed as vulgar, that the god had insinuated himself into the Pythia's body and that she was no better than the ventriloquial quacks who claimed to speak with the voice of a god from their inside. Hence the vapour theory, which at least conferred a special dignity on Delphi as a site, was accepted, even if it did not fit very well.³

In the classical authors who wrote before the rationalistic theory had been enunciated, there is no reference to vapours. They speak of the god as prophesying or of the Pythia as uttering his oracles,⁴ but do not explain the mechanism which

¹ *Moral* 437 C (*de defectu orac.*) Plutarch in his later dialogues ceases to mention material vapours. Cf. R. Flacelière's introduction to the *De Pythiae Oraculis*, p. 49.

² *Plut. Moral* 414E cf. Suidas and Hesychius, *Ἐγγαστήριον*, Apostolius, VI, 46 and the *Acts of the Apostles*, XVI, 16.

³ For an attempt to reconcile the vapour theory with modern discoveries, cf. Leicester B. Holland, *A J A* 1933, pp. 201 ff. *The mantic mechanism of Delphi*.

⁴ E.g. Tyrtæus, frag. 3 *Psudar, Olymp* VII, 32 for Apollo, or Herod. *passim* for the Pythia.

produced her ecstatic utterance. The only feature to which they¹ allude regularly is the tripod. This structure, shown on many contemporary representations, consisted of three metal legs supporting between them a bowl, which could be used to contain offerings or incense. No doubt the three legs were originally intended to hold the contents of the bowl over a fire in the centre, but from its practical uses in ritual the tripod became a recognized offering to the gods even without the intention that it be put to any practical use. Apollo seems to have been a regular recipient of these symbolic offerings. Both the literary references² and the artistic representations show that the Pythia when prophesying seated herself in the bowl of the tripod. Also the same evidence³ can be produced for Apollo himself as seated on the tripod. This kind of throne for the god is strange, and may have been suggested at Delphi by some special feature in the arrangement of the inner shrine. At any rate whatever the origin of the idea, Apollo was the god on the tripod *par excellence*, and so the Pythia seated herself there as his visible counterpart and mouthpiece. Proper contact with Apollo's tripod was supposed in itself to inspire. This theory is proved to be primitive by the myth⁴ that Heracles, when angry with the Pythia's refusal to prophesy, carried off the tripod with the intention of setting up a rival oracle. This scene was represented in art by the mid-sixth century at latest, and one may suppose that in the previous century the classical method of consulting the oracle had become established. This change, if the *Homeric Hymn* can be safely interpreted, meant that Apollo ceased to speak in rustlings from a sacred laurel, but through the actual mouth of the Pythia, who became inspired by assuming the position of the god. The rustlings of the leaves or the words of the Pythia both equally had to be announced to the enquirer officially by a prophet. This element remained in common: the change corresponds

¹ Eur. *Orest.* 161 and 329; *Ion*, 91, contr. 461; Xen. *Apol.* 12, cf. Plato, *Lysis*, 719c; Aristoph. *Plut.* 9.

² Aristoph. and Eur. *loc. cit.* Schol. and Eur. *El.* 980 and cf. the indecent accounts of the Christian writers of polemics. Origen, in *Cels.* III, xxv, VII, iii, etc.

³ Sophocles, frag. 1044, ἐνάλμιος; Eur. *I. T.* 1252, *Or.* 955, etc.; Zenob. III, 63; Callimachus, *Hymn.* IV, 89; Pollux, X, 81. For representations cf. e.g. Apollo on the tripod with the omphalos beneath on the fine late fifth century Attic relief, Nat. Museum No. 2756.

⁴ Cf. *infra* p. 348.



A BLOCK FROM THE FLOOR OF THE ADYTON

Identified by Comby (*Essai*, II, p. 67) who explained the cuttings as designed for the base of Dionysus' tomb. Leicester B. Holland (*JHS* XXXVII, p. 208) more plausibly suggests that the three holes in a triangular pattern held the feet of the Pythia's tripod.

to the transition from open air worship associated with a sacred tree to worship in a temple with the god himself conceived of as anthropomorphic in shape and appurtenances

To an unsophisticated age Apollo inspired his propheticess as she sat on the tripod without the need of any further vehicle to convey the afflatus.¹ The rationalists of later times invented the mechanical explanation of vapour and the chasm. There was only one further tendency, that towards syncretism, by which in later times, when superstition was regaining the ground lost to rationalism, the different elements of ritual and belief became combined. Hence we find in Lucian and his contemporaries that they are not content with mentioning the chasm and its vapour. They heap up many various methods of inducing inspiration which deserve some separate consideration as each has some special association with Delphi.

(1) *The Use of the Laurel*

We have seen how the earliest Apolline oracles at Delphi issued from the laurel, and may have been supposed to be delivered by the tree itself.² It is possible also, that the primitive lots used for sortition were of laurel-wood. But in the classical period the laurel does not enter much into descriptions of the oracle at work. According to the legend it was the sacred tree of Apollo who had pursued Daphne till she was changed into it.³ Also laurels are often mentioned as a decoration in the shrine or shown in reliefs and pictures of Apollo on the Omphalos or on the tripod.⁴ So probably the Pythia prophesied from amid laurels, and Lucretius⁵ could write of her answers as coming 'from the tripod and laurel of Phoebus' without meaning that the laurel played any direct part in the prophetic mechanism. There is evidence, however, from the fifth century

¹ Earlier authorities mention the shaking of the laurel by Apollo. Aristoph. *Plut* 213 with Scholia. Aristonous, *Hymn* (Düchl, *Anthol.* I 17 XVI) 10.

Late authorities emphasize the shaking of the tripod by the Pythia e.g. Lucian, *Be. Aet.* 792. Menander (*Rhet. Graec.* ed. Spengel, Vol. III), p. 321.

On the whole subject of the tripod, see J. Schwendemann, *J. D. A. I.* XXXVI, pp. 95 ff. My own conclusions on the subject, which were arrived at separately, approximate closely to his. On the contest between Apollo and Heracles for the tripod and its implications cf. *infra* pp. 348 ff.

² Cf. Daphnis as the first Promantis. Paus. X, v. 5, or the first temple made of laurel id. 9, and see Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, I, pp. 111 ff.

³ First mentioned by Phylarchus in Parthen. *Erot.* 15.

⁴ I. g. Aristoph. *Plut.* 39, with Scholia. Callimachus, *Imbr.* p. 282 (Loeb) = *Ox.* p. 1011.

⁵ I, 739.

BC onwards that to chew laurel leaves was supposed to bring a person into touch with the gods and was used by prophets and poets to invoke inspiration.¹ Only in the second century AD we find this method precisely attributed to the Pythia as one of a number of procedures for calling the god to her.² The leaves of some shrubs which could be named 'laurel'³ are bitter to the taste, and actually contain a little prussic acid, but the proportion is too minute to have any toxic effect on an individual. It is not impossible that the Pythia did chew some as part of the ritual, but our evidence would not be valid for early periods, and is not very convincing even for Lucian's time.

(2) *The Sacred Spring*

In our classical authors there are occasional references to Castalia, the stream which descends the cleft at Delphi. It is implied that it was used for purifications, but nothing suggests that it helped to inspire the prophetess. Again the first positive statements come from Lucian⁴ and his successors. According to them the Pythia was inspired by drinking from the sacred fountain, which is sometimes precisely described as Castalia, sometimes left unnamed. References in earlier writers to draughts of water from Castalia always associate it with poetic, not prophetic inspiration. The eating of the laurel, also, as we have seen was similarly attributed first to poets and then to the Pythia. The belief that prophetic inspiration could come from drinking at a sacred fountain was held generally among the Greeks,⁵ and was the central feature in the oracular ritual at Claros. At Delphi the problem is complicated by the existence of more than one spring. Castalia with its spectacular gorge is among the most conspicuous and also provides the most

¹ Sophocles, frag. 897 (Pearson). Theophrastus, *Characters*, XVI. Iycophr 6 and Schol. Tib. II, v, 63. Juv. VII, 19. For a somewhat different use cf. Philochorus, *F.H.G.* Vol. I, p. 417, No. 203.

² Lucian, *Bus Acc.* 792, *Dial. in Hes.* 246. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.V.*, 224a.

³ The 'laurus' or *δαφνη* is usually supposed to be identical with *laurus nobilis* ('sweet bay') whose leaves are commonly used as seasoning. But *Prunus* or *Cerasus laurocerasus*, which has bitter leaves, could be called laurel, and the Greeks and Romans might have included it under the same name. Prof. Henry H. Dixon, F.R.S., has kindly given me this information.

⁴ Lucian, *Hermot.* 801, *Bus Acc.* 792, *Dial. in Hes.* 246. Oenomaus, loc. cit. Clemens Alex. *Protrept.* II, 10. P. Claudian, IV, ii, 7. Statius, *Silv.* V, v, 2, contrast *Thib.* VIII, 175. For merely poetic inspiration see Ovid, *Am.* I, xv, 35.

⁵ Cf. *Philologus*, suppl. XIV, 2. Nünck, *Die Bedeutung des Wassers*, pp. 47 ff. For Claros cf. Pliny, *N.H.* II, 232; Tacitus, *Annals*, II, 54.



CASI ALTA

Originally the broken edge of rock to the right was complete and formed a low wall with apertures for spouts at intervals. The water, which has since changed its course, flowed from the right background and escaped through the hole in the bottom left hand corner. In the bottom right hand corner is the edge of the pool for lustral baths.

Livingston

water, but immediately above the temple a small spring issued from the ground. It went underground again and reappeared below the temple again, pouring from a stone conduit. This was the spring Cassotis of which Pausanias¹ records 'they say that its water plunges underground and in the innermost sanctuary of the god makes the women prophetic'. This positive statement might lead one to suppose that the real water of inspiration was supplied directly within the temple by Cassotis, not brought in vessels from the more distant Castalia. But the excavation of the temple has proved Pausanias' report to be wrong. The conduit of Cassotis does not enter the sanctuary² and it would be quite impossible for the Pythia to drink from it direct. More significant and reliable than Pausanias' account is the earlier reference in Plutarch,³ who alludes to the reappearance of the stream below the temple and mentions that its water was used for libations and lustrations, supporting this view by a quotation from Simonides, but says nothing about the inspiration of the Pythia, though it would have been highly appropriate in the context. The natural interpretation of these facts seems to be that in classical times both Cassotis and Castalia were used for ritual purposes in the worship of Apollo. Cassotis would perhaps supply enough water for the immediate service of the temple for purificatory baths only. Castalia would be adequate,⁴ and Castalia because of its more conspicuous position has figured more in our literature. The idea of drinking from a sacred spring to procure inspiration cannot be shown to be originally Delphic. More probably it only appeared there in late periods and through the syncretistic process which we have already noted. It may only have been hearsay among the temple guides. Whether the Pythia actually drank a draught of sacred water as part of her preliminaries cannot be asserted positively.

(3) *The Chasm*

We have seen already that the exaggerated theories of a vast chasm beneath Apollo's temple are mistaken, but still there

¹X, xxiv, 7

²Courby, *Fouilles*, II, 181 ff

³*Moral* 402C

⁴Cf Schol. in Eur. *Phoen.* 224. Ulrich, *Reisen und Forschungen*, p. 49, refuses to accept the evidence of this scholium as garbled. Cf *BCH* XXIII, p. 567 for a cleaning and fencing of Castalia in the 3rd cent. B.C.

was some evidence for a small subterranean chamber. The remaining question is did the Pythia descend into this vault as part of her ritual? The tripod evidently stood above, and her oracles also must have been given above only the least informed Roman accounts suggest otherwise. But the priestess might well have descended into the vault and there performed some preliminary ritual before ascending again and mounting the tripod. Curiously enough evidence is lacking or is quite indecisive. In a number of passages in Plutarch the verb 'descend' (*καταβαίνειν*) is used of the priestess when going to prophesy,¹ but the force of these examples is completely destroyed when one observes that the same verb is also used by Plutarch² and others of the enquirers entering the shrine. If a literal meaning can be found in the application of the verb to both parties, it must be supposed that the floor of the inner shrine was a step or two beneath the general level of the temple. The archæological evidence does not preclude this supposition, but leaves it uncertain. While no proof can be brought to show that the priestess did descend into the vault, it is natural to infer that she did, because otherwise it is impossible to understand why the vault remained open, but unused. The fact that it did stand open was the origin of all the chasm and vapour myths, which in one of their forms actually suppose that the Pythia entered a cave. If we admit, then, that the Pythia as a preliminary to mounting the tripod may well have descended into the vault for ritual purpose, this procedure can be explained as a survival from the worship of the Earth goddess which had previously been practised on the same site.

The lack of accurate detail about the Pythia's preliminaries can partly be accounted for on the ground that the enquirers were not admitted to the shrine, till she was already seated on the tripod. From their standpoint the procedure appears to have run somewhat as follows. Shortly after dawn on the 7th of each month (except the three winter months) the Pythia prepared to give responses.³ First she had a ceremonial

¹ Of Priestess, Plut. *Moral* 397A, 405C, 408C, 438B, cf. Diog. Laert. V, vi, 91.

² Of enquirers, Pind. *Pyth.* IV, 55 (*καταβάντα*), Herod. V, xcii, c 1, (*εσκαταβαίνει*), Plutarch, *Tim.* viii, *Moral* 407D.

³ Eur. *Ion*, 93, Plut. *Moral* 292D, cf. *supra* p. 18.

bath in Castalia,¹ and purified herself with a fumigation of laurel leaves and barley meal.² Then before the day was declared truly auspicious and the Pythia admitted to the shrine, the priests entered the innermost sanctuary and presented a goat before Apollo.³ This victim was sprinkled with cold water to see if it would give the proper omen by trembling throughout its limbs. Failure to obtain this indication might lead to a cancelling of the consultation for that day. When the sign had been given, the victim was offered,⁴ perhaps on the great altar of the Chians outside the temple, as an indication to all enquirers that the day was auspicious. The Pythia was then admitted to the sanctuary,⁵ and went through such preliminaries as were expected to assist inspiration. Finally she mounted the tripod. In the meantime the male officials of Delphi had been preparing themselves to partake in the ceremony by a lustration at Castalia.⁶ The exact composition of this body may have varied at different times in Delphic history. Various authorities⁷ mention the prophet himself and the other priests of Apollo, the Hosii who were apparently the ministers of Dionysus, and some representatives of the Delphic community selected by lot. The enquirers also had to purify themselves with holy water⁸ and then were allowed to consult the oracle in turn. The order was partly determined by precedence. The Delphians claimed for themselves the right of first consultation and accorded at different times to different states the right of coming next.⁹ Besides this, they gave honorary grants of priority to many states and individuals, which meant apparently that they and their families had the right of consulting before the general mass of undistinguished enquirers. The detailed order, in early times at least, was finally determined by lot.¹⁰ Before each enquirer entered the temple, he was first required to offer on the main altar outside a sacred cake

¹ Schol. in Eur. *Phoen.* 224. cf. supra p. 27, note 4.

² Plut. *Moral.* 397A.

³ cf. supra p. 21.

⁴ Eur. *Ion*, 419.

⁵ Plut. *Moral.* 435B.

⁶ Eur. *Ion*, 93 ff.

⁷ Eur. *Ion*, 415. Plut. *Moral.* 438B. On the Hosii, cf. Dempsey's excellent appendix with some criticisms in Halliday, *Plutarch's Greek questions*, pp. 58 ff.

⁸ *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 71, and 74. Heliod. *Aeth.* II, xxvi.

⁹ For a modern discussion of this right of προσηγορία, cf. Legrand, *Rev. Et. Gr.* XIII, pp. 281 ff.

¹⁰ Aesch. *Eum.* 32. Eur. *Ion*, 908, cf. Simplicius in Aristot. *Physic.* II, p. 75 for the formula 'O Luck and Loxias, do you give an oracle to So and So?' Cf. Foulles, III, v, 68, for the silver table used in the ritual.

whose cost was fixed at a high price¹ and after he had passed the threshold into the cella of the temple, he had still to sacrifice sheep or goats on the inner hearth, where burned the eternal fire.² In this procedure he was accompanied by the priests and also by the *proxenus*—the local representative of his own city. Evidently a foreigner whose city was unrepresented at Delphi could not himself perform the ritual for it a proper interpreter to direct the ceremonial was essential. The Delphians claimed a portion of the sacrifices as their perquisite except for the charges for offerings, no payment in money is recorded.³ When the sacrifices were ended, the enquirer might be admitted to the sanctuary. This was a small structure some 8 feet by 10 feet standing on the south side of the cella and towards its further end.⁴ One door gave admittance, and within the enquirer found facing him the golden statue of Apollo,⁵ the Omphalos, the tomb of Dionysus and the priestess seated on the tripod. To her right was the entrance to the underground vault. The room was comparatively small and contained many religious objects, such as laurel trees, Apollo's lyre, sacred armour, and votive ribbons.⁶ The enquirer was seated at the nearer end of the building,⁷ and then the prophet put to the Pythia the question which had previously been addressed to him by the enquirer.⁸ The Pythia was already in an overwrought state resembling hysteria. Her answer would vary in its degree of coherence and intelligibility. When it had been given, the prophet would reduce it to some form,⁹ and dictate it to the enquirer who could, if he wished, have it

¹ Eur. *Ion*, 226 ff. Plut. *Lyc.* v cf. Gow in *J. H. S.* XXXII, 1912, p. 220 ff. For this *πέναιος* see also Homolle in *Mélanges Nicole*, pp. 6-5 ff. Schwyzler, *DGLLEP* 332—a convention between the Delphians and Phaeacians to fix the charge for the cake at 7 dr. + ob. (Delphic) 10 dr. Attic on a state enquiry and a tenth of this sum on a private enquiry. Presumably, this was a special rate below the general tariff (date, 420-00 B.C.). See Pirke, *Hermathena*, XXVIII, 59.

² Eur. *Androm.* 1107, cf. *Helen*, 146, Herod. *Aeth.* II, xxxiv. Cf. *BCH* V, P. 399.

³ Cf. Pherecydes, *FGrH* 1 F 64. Contrast the proverb ἄνευ χαλκοῦ Φοῖβος οὐ μαντεύεται. *Philologus*, NF I, p. 197, cf. *infra* pp. 126 and 408.

⁴ Courby, *Fouilles*, II, pp. 66 ff.

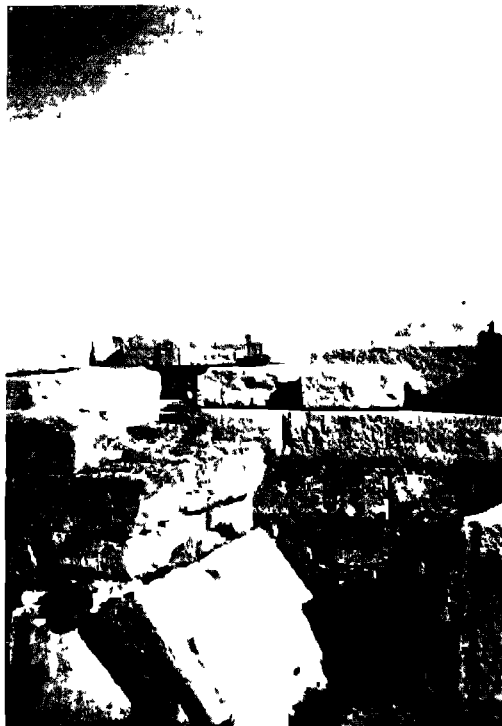
⁵ Paus. X, xxiv. 4.

⁶ For laurels cf. *supra* p. 25. For the other objects, Plut. *Sulla*, xii, Herod. VIII, xxxvii. Plut. *Tim.* viii. G. Syncellus, p. 307 (Dind).

⁷ Herod. VII, cxi.

⁸ Eur. *Androm.* cit. *supra*. In late periods the question may have been submitted in writing. Schol. Aristoph. *Plut.* 39, cf. Ditt. *Syll.* 1157.

⁹ Eur. *Ion*, 100. Pind. frag. 137 (Bowra), cf. Eumathius, II, 8.



THE ADYTON

A view taken from the middle of the west end of the Naos, looking towards the inner foundations of the south side. Courby (*Fouilles*, II, pp. 56 ff.) identifies the foundation on the left as that of an inner colonnade. He explains the gap at its west end as designed to allow room for the underground chamber of the Adyton, which was built in this corner of the Naos. The marks visible on the top stone of the Naos foundation are letters which were presumably intended to assist the fourth-century builders in assembling their materials.

recorded in writing.¹ The consultation, then, was over and the enquirer left the temple. If the actual enquirer was merely acting as the agent of some third party, he received the response in a sealed tablet with fearful threats, if he should venture to open it.² He might appropriately consult other prophetic experts, especially those of his native city, on the meaning of the response and they would sometimes be prepared to supply a commentary.³ But the Delphic authorities were not expected to provide further information or divulge the answer to a third party.⁴

Such appear to have been the general lines of the procedure. For the scene in the sanctuary itself we are forced to strain to the full our defective evidence. The exact words of the Pythia cannot be taken to be recorded in our authorities. They give at best the authentic text of the oracle as delivered in its definitive version by the prophet to the enquirer. This form might be either prose or verse. The favourite metre was the hexameter, which according to various traditions⁵ had been invented by Apollo himself at Delphi or by the first Pythia. The diction was in early times the epic dialect, but already in the latter half of the 6th century B.C. responses began to be delivered in iambic trimeters. The hexameter, however, remained the favourite form. Sometimes a verse response was accompanied by a prose comment, which gave those ritual directions for which plain statement was required, or the verses might be omitted. This poetic or prose form must have been supplied by the prophet and his priestly or civic assessors in the sanctuary,⁶ and one can well imagine that they would not expend their best literary efforts on some merely trivial enquirer. Hence the frequency and excellence of the verse responses varies approximately with the prestige of the Delphic oracle and the diligence of its priesthood. The composition of

¹ Herod. I, xlvii, VII, cxli. Plut. *Phocion*, viii. IG II², 1096. Contrast Plut. *Moral.* 397C.

² Zenob. VI. 11. Suidas, s.v. τὰ τρία. On this interpretation cf. e.g. Persson, *Die Exegeten und Delphi*, p. 70.

³ Herod. V, xlii. Paus. X, x, 6.

⁴ Contrast Lycurgus, in *Leocr.* 85. Paus. IV, xii, 8.

⁵ Pliny, *N.H.* VII, 205, cf. Isodor. *Orig.* I, xxxix, 13. Hesiod, fr. 226. Choeroboscus, *Comm.* I. Plut. *Moral.* 402 D. Schol. Eur. *Orest.* 1094. *Orphic Frag.* (Kern), 356. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* I, 366 P. alleges 11 hemis as one of various possible inventors. For oracles in trimeters see infra p. 159, and for the mixture of prose and verse, p. 343.

⁶ Strabo, IX, C. 419. Plut. *Moral.* 407 B.

verse oracles almost died out in the two centuries from 100 B C to 100 A D. In historic times, the enquirer listened in silence¹ and he does not appear to have had the opportunity to ask supplementary questions. Only in unhistoric instances² does the Pythia allow herself to be cross-examined, but it was possible in exceptional cases to approach the oracle a second time, and, as suppliant, ask Apollo to give a different answer.³ A traditional form of legend was that which represented the Pythia as addressing the enquirer immediately on his entering the sanctuary and answering his unspoken question.⁴ No certainly historic instances are known, but it would not have been very difficult for the priesthood to contrive, if they really applied themselves to the problem.

About the Pythia herself we do not hear much. She was regarded as the unconscious instrument of a divine revelation and as such she counted for little. In early times, if we accept the account of Diodorus,⁵ the Pythia was appointed as a young virgin, but in the third century B C, after one of them had been seduced by an enquirer who had fallen in love with her, the Delphic authorities decided only to employ women over fifty, who wore, when prophesying, the costume of a young maiden. This account is rather discredited by the way in which classical writers habitually describe the Pythia as old.⁶ Probably in earlier periods the age of the candidate was not officially regulated, but in practice she tended to be of mature years before she was chosen and held the appointment for life. The youthful costume was worn because of its associations with virgin purity.⁷ The Pythia must be of blameless life and while there was no objection to her having already been a wife and mother, after her appointment she was required to cease to live with her husband, and apparently to observe other restric-

¹ Julian, *Ep.* 41, 421a.

² Herod. VI, lxxxvi (Glaucus), cf. IV, c1 (Grinnus) D S VII, xii (Lycurgus), VIII, xiv (Sicyonians) Plut. *Moral.* 412 C (Delians).

³ Herod. VII, cxi (before Salamis), where I take it that the two consultations occurred in one day and the same may be true of Corax, cf. p. 407 *infra*.

⁴ Plut. *Moral.* 512 E. Herod. I, xlvii (on Croesus' Messengers), V, xcii, B2 (Eetion), I, lxxv, 2 (Lycurgus) D S XXXV, xiii (Attalus).

⁵ XVI, xxvi, cf. Paus. VIII, v, 11 ff. as a parallel.

⁶ Aesch. *Eum.* 38, Eur. *Ion* 1322. For both ages, cf. Ael. *NA* XI, x.

⁷ Plut. *Moral.* 405 C, 435 D, cf. Tertullian, *ad Uxor.* I, 6. But for married Pythiae we have the evidence of inscriptions, cf. *infra* p. 34.

tive taboos¹ This deliberate selection of women who thereafter renounced all sexual relations need not be taken as implying any view that the Pythia was the bride of Apollo Such an idea is nowhere expressed The sole motive appears to have been ritual purity

Plutarch, Maximus Tyrius and Aristides all assert that the Pythia was not selected from any special family nor was she the product of particular training in fact, pious pagans gloried in emphasizing that, except when on the tripod, a Pythia might be a very ordinary woman² possessed of no knowledge worth reckoning It was only when under Apollo's immediate influence that she saw all time and all space as one How a Pythia was selected is never mentioned, but no doubt the position was gradually acquired by service to Apollo In the heyday of the oracle there were as many as three at one time two alternately in actual service, and one held in reserve³ Later the actual Pythia was only one, but she may always have had an understudy and potential successor A possible source is suggested by the ritual connected with the eternal fire on the hearth within the temple This was kept alight with pine and laurel wood only and was in the sole charge of 'women who had ceased from marital relations'⁴ The qualification is the same as that for the Pythia, yet it would surely need the services of quite a number of women to keep the fire always burning Hence it seems impossible to believe that the Pythia, even helped by an understudy, could have done all this work If so, one must suppose there was a whole guild of consecrated women of mature years, who served in the temple, and who would provide a natural recruiting ground for the post of Pythia Individual Pythias are scarcely known We often hear in literature, e.g. of Phemonoe⁵ ('Prophetic mind'), the traditional first Pythia and a favourite figure in poetic fantasies The only two historic individuals were Aristonice, the Pythia at the time

¹ She had an official residence, cf. *Fouilles*, III, v, 50 *BCH* XX, p. 721 On the Pythia as the bride of Apollo, see A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, II, p. 207

² *Plut. Moral* 405C with Flacelière's note Aristides, (Jebb), Vol II p. 10 Maximus Tyr. VIII, 1, b, Poulsen, *Delphische Studien*, p. 25, thinks that in Plutarch's time the Pythia had to be chosen from the poor because the rich shirked

³ *Plut. Moral* 414B If the plural (*ipsae vates*) in Justin, XXIV, vii, can be taken strictly of the period of the Gallic attack on Delphi, more than one Pythia were maintained contemporaneously in the 3rd cent. B.C.

⁴ *Plut. Moral* 385C, *Numa*, ix, cf. *Hom. Hymn*, XXIV

⁵ e.g. Lucan, *B. C.* V, 126 Paus. X, v, 7

of Salamis, and Periallus, whom Cleomenes had suborned.¹ Late inscriptions show that by the third century A.D. the post had become associated with the priestly families. One monument is a memorial to the daughter of a Hosius and granddaughter of a Priest and a Pythia (Theonice).² It breathes that spirit of petty pride in local distinctions which is typical of many late imperial inscriptions from all parts of the Roman empire. At such a period it would be possible enough to believe that the Pythia was consciously in league with the other members of her family to make the oracle a success by any specious means. But such an hypothesis scarcely fits the facts for all periods.

The mystery of the oracle can only be accounted for on two extreme theories or a blend of them. (i) The priesthood and the Pythia were deliberate charlatans who worked a traditional *hocus pocus*, because it paid them well. According to this view the Pythia's frenzy was simply play-acting on her part, traditional and effective in impressing the credulous. (ii) The opposite view would be to suppose that the priesthood and the Pythia were perfectly sincere. Instead of being the deceivers they were the deceived. The phenomenon of prophetic frenzy was the product of some power which they could not explain, whether one is to describe it as the promptings of a spirit or the manifestation of a subliminal human consciousness. As the theory of intoxication through a natural source of subterranean vapour has to be abandoned, there is now no way to explain the Pythia's frenzy in terms of a strictly physical phenomenon. Of the opposite attitudes to the problem the theory of utter charlatanism is hard to maintain in view of the long and distinguished history of the oracle. The Delphic priesthood must have gone nearer than any other men to the unattainable goal of 'fooling all the people all the time.' For very few critics of the oracle actually thought that the whole business was deception. Many philosophers were prepared to ascribe the prophecies to vapours from a chasm, but scarcely any ancient author was so sceptical as to think the oracle was utter fraud. Even the Christian apologists, who would not have shrunk from representing it as an imposture, if this view could be maintained, had to admit that the phenomena were or had been real.

¹ Herod. VII, cxi, VI, lxxi, and for mythical instances, Xenocleia, p. 349 *infra* and Themistocleia, p. 412 *infra*.

² B C H XLIX, 1925, pp. 83 and 86.

enough. Their account was that the oracle was worked by evil spirits who assumed the name and dignity of Apollo for the purpose of seducing men's minds from the true God. Thus the Christians did not doubt that the Pythia was seized by a frenzy inspired by a superhuman power and even that this power could foretell the future. They did not question the facts of Delphic revelation: they put a new theological construction on them.

If one tries the opposite view to that of extreme incredulity and supposes that the Pythia and the priests acted in good faith in what they did, one is faced with a problem which bears strong resemblances to that presented by modern spiritualism. This resemblance has been noted by modern scholars,¹ since the investigation of psychic manifestations has been attempted by scientists. Unfortunately, the accounts of the Pythia's actual behaviour when engaged in the act of prophesying almost all provide untrustworthy data for investigation, as they come from poets and rhetoricians who were not eye-witnesses, nor serious reporters. The only incident which is worth considering as evidence is recorded by Plutarch. It was clearly a contemporary happening, for Plutarch's friend, Nicander, was presiding priest on the occasion and could have supplied him with the authentic facts.²

Some ambassadors had arrived from abroad to consult the oracle, but the goat which was to be used to test whether the occasion was auspicious remained motionless and unresponsive through the first libations poured on it. However, the priests wished to please their enquirers: important visitors were all too rare. They persisted till the victim, drenched with cold water, at last succumbed and gave the sign. The Pythia descended into the oracular chamber unwilling and dispirited. As soon as she gave her first replies the harshness of her voice revealed that she was 'full of a dumb and evil spirit'. At last her confusion reached its height, and with an incomprehensible and terrifying shout she threw herself towards the doorway. The ambassadors, the prophet Nicander, and the other

¹ F. Myers, *Essays, Classical*, p. 5 ff. Greek Oracles. *Greek Poetry and Life, essays presented to Gilbert Murray*, Telepathy and Clairvoyance in Classical Antiquity by E. R. Dodds, p. 365 ff. Rose, *Greek Mythology*, p. 139, and see a long but somewhat confused account in Oesterreich, *Possession* (tr. D. Ibberson), pp. 311 ff. and 303 ff.

² Plut. *Moral* 438A.

priests in attendance fled. After a few minutes they re-entered the room and found the Pythia restored to her normal consciousness. She was picked up, but only survived for a few days.

Plutarch records this tragic episode so as to illustrate how serious it might be to disregard the proper preliminaries which showed whether the Pythia was fit for her function or not. For us, however, the importance is that it gives a fairly trustworthy account of a Pythia in the act of prophesying. Unfortunately, this particular incident was exceptional, and so may not be safe to use for broad generalizations. Yet there is no doubt that in this incident the Pythia was a victim, not an impostor. Also the episode offers some interesting analogies with features of modern consultations of spiritualistic mediums.

The change of voice in a condition of trance is frequently reported in seances, and we find it in Plutarch's account and also in the more rhetorical allusions of other writers¹ where the Pythia's utterances are often described as shouts. Again the disastrous end to the consultation on this occasion is not unlike violent, but less fatal, disturbances which have been known to happen where the medium was 'under some malignant influence'.

There is no need here to pass a sweeping judgment on modern spiritualism, where our subject is the Delphic oracle. It is sufficient to suggest, that just as the existence of some charlatanism in certain spiritualists does not prove that every medium is a deliberate fraud, so also while the ancient world certainly contained false prophets, we need not suppose that every Pythia and every Delphic priest was an impostor. Probably the majority of these women, particularly when they came of ordinary peasant stock, were simple tools. The priests may have chosen them for their suitability, which may have manifested itself most easily in an hysterical devotion to Apollo and his worship. The signs of emotional instability and a tendency to abnormal behaviour might have been a recommendation, as showing that the god had already selected such a one for his mouthpiece. Then the Pythia, when seated on the tripod after elaborate emotional stimulus and super-

¹ Cf. the examples cited by Goudes, *Μαντεῖον*, p. 85, note 2. Pindar, *Pyth.* IV, 60. Eur. *Ion*, 92, *I. T.* 976, *Or.* 162, Aristoph. *Eg.* 1016 etc.

natural suggestions, fell an easy victim to a self-induced hypnosis. Her conscious ego became submerged, and a dis-associated personality spoke in answer to enquiries. Later she would recover normal consciousness in an exhausted condition, but the process could be repeated more and more easily as the hypnosis became a habit. Probably the strain was severe as long as the oracle was much frequented, and if the Pythia was often known to succumb to the toil, that may have inspired the Delphic theologians with their doctrine, that the gods could give man no better reward for his service than death.¹

The priests who operated this procedure could not have explained this process in the terminology of modern science. It must have been something supernatural which passed their understanding. To that extent they may have been perfectly sincere in regarding it as the voice of God speaking to them. But the confused and disjointed remarks of a hypnotized woman must have needed considerable exercise of imagination to reduce them to the form of a response. In this must have lain the chief temptation for the priests. Where must they draw the line and confess that they were merely reading their own thoughts into the Pythia's gabble?² No doubt in this matter individual priests on particular occasions took a very different course. In a special emergency when it seemed expedient that one particular answer must be given, the priest may have consciously or half-consciously substituted his own predetermined reply as the authentic utterance of the prophetess. One may even wonder whether some of the priests had mastered some tricks of hypnotism and could implant a suggestion in the Pythia's mind which would reappear in her ravings when under a trance.³ At any rate, the history of Delphi shows sufficient traces of a consistent policy to convince one that human intelligence at some point could play a deciding part in the process. On the other hand, a few apparently purposeless answers may really be explicable as *paraphrases* of some actual remark made by the Pythia when babbling irrationally.

¹ Cf. *infra* p. 388.

² Cf. with Dempsey (p. 67 n. 2) Jocasta's words 'I will not say the response was from Phoebus himself, but from his servants' *Soph. O. T.* 711.

³ Dare one draw any conclusions about a trance induced in the Pythia from the phrases which imply that to be put to sleep on the top of a tripod' meant to be made prophetic? Cf. *Zenob. III*, 63 (*ἐν ὄλῳ εὐνάσω*), *Plut. Prov. II*, 14 (*ἐν ὄλῳ ἐκοιμήθη*) and Eustath. *Iliad*, XI, p. 836, 45.

As she was only the mouthpiece of Apollo, the verse responses were so drafted that the god himself often spoke in the first person¹ But this mode of expression did not make for special clearness of statement On the contrary it was a notorious fact in antiquity that Apollo's oracular responses were crooked and ambiguous² In fact, the mysterious title, Loxias, given to him at Delphi was popularly and perhaps correctly derived from this circumstance Primitive writers took this difficulty for granted³ and would have explained, with Chaucer, that 'Goddess spoken in amphibologies' Late satirists, such as Lucian, found much scope for ribald scoffing in the clumsy equivocations of some traditional prophecies The pious Plutarch produced an ingenious *apologia*⁴ for these defects Apollo, he argued, was compelled to consider the perilous situation of his servants, the Delphians In primitive times when the oracle was consulted by great monarchs and tyrants on critical questions, a straightforward forecast of the future would have produced some dire vengeance from the outraged enquirer But as the Pythia's meaning was wrapped up in obscurity the Delphians remained immune Otherwise, when Apollo had to play a part in high politics he found it expedient to adopt the methods of diplomacy In Plutarch's day when, as he alleges, the only enquirers were ordinary individuals asking about simple private concerns, the Pythia could abandon her former high-flown diction After Plutarch's time the rhetorical flights of the prophetess were to enjoy one brief revival, before the oracle sank into silence

¹ E.g. the oracle to Lycurgus, p. 101 *infra*, to Croesus, p. 147, to the Cyreneans p. 82, to the Amphictyons, p. 123, on Asclepius, p. 352, to the Argives p. 172, to Parmeniscus p. 432 or Plut. *Numa*, iv, where the Pythia expresses Apollo's erotic feelings

² E.g. Aesch. *Ag.* 1255, Lucian, *Deor. Dial.* 244, Plut. *Moral.* 511B, Dio Chrys. X,

²¹ E.g. Heraclitus classic phrase 'the god at Delphi does not tell nor conceal, but gives a sign', Plut. *Moral.* 404D Stobaeus, III, 1, 199

⁴ *Moral.* 407D

CHAPTER IV

THE SOURCES OF THE ORACLE'S HISTORY

IN discussing the history of the oracle and its responses one is driven again to deplore the gaps and uncertainties of our evidence. The ancient world once contained a considerable body of technical literature on the subject, but only small fragments of it have come down to us. The chief writers lived in the Hellenistic age when specialists in this study were producing works devoted to the history of important antiquities. Of these authorities the most important who wrote on Delphi was himself a Delphian Anaxandridas,¹ who lived at the end of the third and beginning of the second century B.C. and published a book on the sanctuary. He discussed not only the extant remains, but also the offerings which had been removed by the Phocians in the fourth century B.C. This work was followed by one 'on the treasures at Delphi', written by Polemo of Ilium, the most famous of the Greek antiquarians. He found occasion to differ from Anaxandridas on various points. The works of these two are known to us by a number of quotations from each. Other writers of *Delphica*, such as Alcetas, Apellas or Melisseus, are mere names.² Besides these antiquarians there were also the collectors of oracles. It had been usual even in very early periods for persons to make collections of prophecies, which were often attributed by them to the famous, semi-mythical seers of the past, such as Bacis or the Sibyl. These collectors were known as 'Chresmologoi' (*χρησμολόγοι*) and their aim was to have ready to hand a prophecy for every remarkable contingency on which they might be consulted. Their books were therefore intended for their private purposes only, and were closely guarded treasures. But in the Hellenistic period, when the belief in oracles and soothsayers had declined before the growth of rationalism, some authors published collections of oracles simply for their literary and antiquarian interest. The most often mentioned

¹ F.H.G. Vol. III, p. 106, cf. Weniger, *De Anaxandrida, Polemone, Hegesandro*, etc. Berlin, 1865, and *P.W.* IV, col. 252j.

² F.H.G. Vol. IV, pp. 295, 307 and 445.

was Mnaseas of Patara¹ who issued a *corpus* of Delphic responses. None of these collections has come down to us in its original form, but the Fourteenth book of the *Greek Anthology*, which contains oracles and riddles, was evidently copied in part from some such handbook. In this series one can see that the greater part of the oracles are ultimately derived from Herodotus, and probably in most instances the sources of the published collections were previous literature rather than hitherto unpublished archives. One can believe that Delphi did contain what Euripides calls 'leathern scrolls written in black ink and crammed with many utterances of Loxias'.² But though Anaxandridas may have been able to consult these records for antiquarian purposes, it is improbable that their contents were ever generally made available for publication.

The oracles recorded in ancient historians have been transmitted to them by hearsay for the most part. Sometimes the source was Delphic tradition, sometimes the tradition of the city from which the enquirers came. In either instance the prophecy was seriously liable to be distorted in its application or interpretation. The Delphians naturally would wish to suggest that the Pythian Apollo was always infallible. The recipients of an oracle would frequently be inclined to represent the response as sanctioning some particular course of action. Hence it is often necessary to ask oneself whether the traditional circumstances or interpretation can be accepted as authentic. For even when the genuine words are preserved their context and meaning may have been adapted to square with later facts.

Often, however, the response itself is a fabrication, and this need not mean that it was necessarily produced with a criminal intention to deceive. In general the ancient world had a lighter attitude to questions of historic accuracy than the modern world. If a Greek author had to tell a story about an oracle, it was natural for him to reproduce as plausibly as possible the form of a Pythian response. A mere prose paraphrase of the general meaning would not have appeared adequate. Hence ancient writers frequently quote Delphic oracles of mythical

¹ *FHG* Vol. III, p. 149, and cf. *P.H.* sub nom. Cf. *BCH* VI, p. 218 for a Delphic inscription in honour of Nicander of Colophon, who was author, among other works, of a treatise in three books, 'on all oracles'.

² Frag. 629 (Nauck), cf. *Plut. Luc.* xxvi and p. 218 in *fra*.

periods in the hexameter form which was conventional in the classical age. Such apocryphal documents were not so much intended to mislead as to give a vivid picture of what was meant, and were more likely to be invented by poets unconnected with Delphi than by Apollo's own prophets.

Delphi could, however, be the source of another type of fictitious oracle, which again might be produced without criminal intent. In Roman periods and probably earlier the sanctuary had become a great show place visited by pilgrims, whose interests were most akin to those of the modern tourist. These visitors were shown round the sights of the sacred way by regular guides, who pointed out the most interesting offerings and went through a rigmarole of information about each. We have a vivid picture of the procedure in one of Plutarch's dialogues,¹ where a young man of philosophic interests is being conducted round by the official ciceroni. The party includes some other men of culture who already know the place and indulge in abstruse discussions with him of some special features. But in the meantime the professional guides cannot be induced to cut short their customary patter. Their information is regarded with contempt by the scholars who are being conducted, since they are conversant with the great written authorities on the subject, while the guides merely reproduced a succession of popular legends embellished with apocryphal oracles of little literary merit. In fact, the whole procedure was an ancient equivalent to what happens when a sexton conducts a party round the tombs and chapels of an English cathedral. Possibly the discourse of the Delphic guides may have been based to some extent on information supplied by the priests, just as the sexton's information may be derived sometimes from notes prepared by the dean. But in both cases, it is sure to be popularized and vulgarized to suit the general taste of its audience, and filled out with sensational or humorous additions.

Evidently some of our anecdotes about the Delphic oracle have been drawn from these sources. Pausanias the traveller, for instance, though he was a man with considerable pretensions to scholarship, reproduces in other parts of his work the popular stories of professional guides, and it is probable that

¹ *De Pythiae Oraculis*, ed. R. Flacelière. Cf. *Moral.* 786B τὴν κοινὴν καὶ περιηγητικὴν δόξαν

some of the items which he records about the Delphic dedications are the same. Even Polemo the antiquarian¹ recorded one story about the oracle and a Delphic statue whose indecency would suggest that it was invented to give a racy flavour to a guide's recital.

Finally, one must allow for the activities of the deliberate forger as distinct from the innocent fabricator. He was not very likely to belong to some other state than Delphi. For if any one else forged a Pythian oracle with a contemporary reference and put it into circulation, the Delphic authorities were always available to confirm or refute the document. But it was more easily possible for the Delphians themselves to issue false versions of oracles. When a great success had been achieved there would be a temptation to fake evidence that Apollo had foretold it, or when an unexpected disaster had come on a party whom the Delphians had supported they would be inclined to cover up the error by issuing a new version of the reply which the Pythia had given. Such doctored responses would readily win acceptance after the event, and occasionally it may be possible now to detect where this malpractice has occurred. But an examination of Delphic responses in their contexts will show that more often the priesthood had been able to guard themselves in advance by the use of suitable equivocations, rather than to cover up their tracks later by spurious inventions.

At one time it was normal for scholars to explain most examples of coincidence between an oracle and the historic facts by the judgment that it was a *vaticinium post eventum*—a prophecy forged in full knowledge of what it was pretended to foretell. But the present study of the extant responses will suggest that this view in the majority of instances is not correct, if taken in the strict sense that the Delphic priesthood circulated an oracle after the event which bore no relation to what had been prophesied in advance. The criteria to decide for or against authenticity are hard to state in general terms, because so many factors in the response and its attendant circumstances have to be taken into consideration. The most suspicious feature, of course, is a correspondence between prophecy and event so detailed and exact as to seem beyond the range of human prevision. On the contrary an unfulfilled pro-

¹ Ap. Athen. XIII, 606A.

phesy has high claims to be authentic. The presence of some ambiguities in a prophecy is to be expected. Except in directions about ritual, some degree of obscurity belonged to the literary convention, and on important issues the Delphic priesthood would usually cover themselves in advance against various contingencies by ambiguous utterances. But an exact amphiboly which could be taken only in either of two opposite ways is not likely to be genuine. It was too obvious an evasion before the event and afterwards it lent itself too effectively to a moralizing tale, suggesting that man blindly saw one meaning, where the god had intended the other. In general, there is something suspicious about a response which makes a very effective parable. Such examples are probably constructed to point a moral, and are only interesting as illustrations of Delphic propaganda. On the contrary a bald and unexciting response unaccompanied by any pointed implication is not likely to be forged, for the forgery would seem to be to no one's interest. These principles of criticism are best illustrated in their direct application to Delphic history.

In giving a history of the oracle's activity it is easiest to divide the subject partly by the nature of the questions asked of Apollo and partly by the chronological order. The most important aspect for the historian is the responses on political issues, and among them the subject of colonization comes first in time and also chief in magnitude. After one has considered the political relations of the oracle from the earliest historic times to its ultimate downfall, there remains the share of the Pythia in the cognate fields of mythology, religion and morality. Finally comes a discussion of the responses to private individuals, who, though they may have provided the bulk of the oracle's business, have left the smallest impression on our historical sources.

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

THE ORACLE AND COLONIZATION

(a) TYPICAL EXAMPLES

THERE was one kind of public undertaking on which the Delphic oracle was usually consulted in advance by any Greek community this was the sending out of a colony¹ The reason for this general rule was not simply because of the serious risks and responsibilities of such a venture To dispatch a body of citizens from their native land to settle as a community abroad was not solely a civil act to the Greeks it involved a number of serious religious consequences So it was not sufficient merely to ask Apollo for an assurance that colonists would be safe and prosperous His blessing was equally needed for the new steps in ritual which the founding of a colony would entail

Since Greek colonies were not politically subject to their mother-cities, the bonds between them were only sentimental and religious It was customary for the colonists to bring with them to the new settlement a fire taken from the hearth of their native city This fire would in turn light the hearth in the council hall of the colony Thus a spiritual union between the two communities was observed Also the daughter cities were expected to share in the cults of their mother city and send their representatives with offerings to the chief periodic festivals of the home land At the same time the foundation of a colony would involve the establishment of temples and cults on the new site, and thus colonization, besides propagating old religious associations, might also give rise to new ones A particular example is the status of the founder of the colony The 'oecist' (οἰκιστής) was a man with a special mission, religious as well as political Hence he was regarded as a chosen instrument of the gods and after his death he received special veneration. Usually he was buried within the colony in some important public place where his grave became the object of a heroic cult The festival of the founder was a symbol of the unity of the colony

¹ On the whole subject, see A. S. Pease, *Classical Philology*, 1912, pp. 1 ff

In view of these diverse religious associations which were bound up with the foundation of a colony, it was appropriate that the gods should be consulted at some oracular shrine. The chief questions were the location of the colony and its future prospects: the prospective founder was the usual person to consult the oracle, and its response usually designated him in particular to carry out the work. Failure to consult the oracle in advance was taken as in itself a cause capable of accounting for later disaster.¹

One favourite form of legend represented the enquirer as coming to the oracle on other business and then being arbitrarily selected by the god to found a colony. The motive has a certain dramatic effectiveness. The god chooses his instrument where least suspected, and by this method the colony is represented as originating entirely with Apollo. In actual fact no doubt founders of colonies came to Delphi with a plan already determined. What they required was not supernatural instructions where to place the settlement, still less initial commands to undertake a colonial expedition. They wanted a divine authorization for an undertaking already conceived, and they hoped to be given it in some positive form, which would serve to encourage settlers.

The Delphic authorities may have possessed a certain amount of independent knowledge on the subject of distant lands. Delphi occupied a conveniently central position in Greece and as a place of pilgrimage must have been visited even in early times by travellers from all parts of the Greek world. Their tales no doubt contributed to the store of geographical knowledge. But it would be ingenuous to suppose that, when the oracular response pointed to a particular site, the local details originated exclusively from the Pythia and the prophet. More probably the enquirers themselves had already heard of a suitable site and either deliberately or accidentally supplied the Delphic authorities in advance with the description of the prospective location.²

The Pythian Apollo in later times had a special fame for the

¹ Cf. *infra* p. 170.

² Cf. the instances in historic times of (1) Dorieus: two expeditions (on the first Delphi is not consulted, on the second only for confirmation); (2) Heraclea in Trachis selected as a site before the oracle was consulted, *infra* p. 206.

colonies which he had founded¹ Dodona and Ammon are also mentioned, but the foundations attributed to them are very few which can be taken as a correct picture of the facts.² In the earlier periods when most of the colonies were dispatched Delphi was much more easily accessible to most Greeks than its two more distant rivals. Many of the settlers came from the shores of the Peloponnese within easy reach of Delphi, and those with a westward objective were particularly likely to fall in the way of the Pythian Apollo.³

Of course, some of the stories of the foundation of important cities are lost, and our evidence merely indicates the existence of some association with Delphi, but does not describe what its origin was supposed to have been. Even more often the extant stories are to be regarded as mere legends. It was natural that any colony, looking back on its past, liked to produce an interesting account of its origin. Those that had original connections with Delphi would beautify the tale of their foundation with motives drawn from folk-tale and myth. Those that owed nothing to the sanction of the Pythian Apollo would be inclined to claim it on the analogy of other colonies, and would reinforce the legend with some fictitious oracle. Traditions of early sanction were also often associated with the existence at Delphi of treasures or dedications from colonies. No doubt the grateful colonists did frequently express their gratitude by such offerings, but the stories later associated with them were not necessarily authentic.

One kind of settlement, of which traditions existed from primitive times, was associated with Delphi in a very special way. A custom had once belonged in common to the Indo-European races of Greece and Italy, whereby in time of crisis they vowed a tithe to the gods, and sometimes this tenth part could be reckoned not in property, but in persons. A state at war might vow to give a tenth of the enemy to a god if they

¹ Callimachus, *Hymn*, II, 56 ff. Cic. *de Div.* I, 1, 3. Plut. *Moral.* 408A. Celsus ap. Orig. VII, iii. Maximus Tyrius, XXIX, 7. Libanius, *Declam.* xli, 20. Aristid. (Jebb), Vol. II, p. 10. Himerius ap. Phot. *Bibl.* p. 374 B. J. Menander (*Rhet. Græc.* ed. Spengel, Vol. II) p. 326.

² For Ammon cf. Cic. loc. cit. (a general reference). For Dodona, cf. (1) Duris, *FGrH* 76 F 84 ('the clod of Aletes'). (2) Paus. VIII, xi, 12 (*Athens and Sicily*), and see p. 50, note 1 below. All these examples are mythical.

³ *Fouilles*, III, 1, 497 for what may be a fragment of a long list of colonies founded under Apollo's patronage.

were victorious, or a people stricken by plague or famine might even vow a tenth of their own population to the god in return for relief from their general misfortune. In Italy Mars had been the traditional recipient of this kind of offering in Greece the Pythian Apollo. Few instances of the practice are recorded among the Greeks from historic periods, but it figures frequently in folk-traditions.¹

Usually it is represented that a tithe of a captured tribe were brought to Delphi and given to the god. When some time had elapsed they were allowed by him to settle elsewhere. Sometimes the proportion of the people dedicated is not specified. Thus Heracles had conquered the Dryopes, and dedicated the population at Delphi.² The oracle directed that they should settle in the Peloponnese at Asine, and this legend was one of a series of explanations put forward to account for the presence of this tribe in various scattered settlements in Greece. Again the foundation of Claros and the oracle of the Clarian Apollo was traditionally connected with a colony led by Manto, the daughter of Teiresias.³ She had been captured in the siege of Thebes by the Epigoni, who had dedicated her with other prisoners at Delphi in accordance with a vow to give the fairest of their spoils to Apollo. The god bestowed her on one Rhacius with instruction that they should lead a colony to Asia Minor.

Sometimes the alleged dedication was used as an explanation of a proverb or a custom. The Gephyraei (under circumstances unrecorded) were dedicated by the Athenians as a tithe.⁴ The Pythia sent them away with the advice

'To a Gephyraean man the best home is a friendly home.'

So they set out on their wanderings to find one, the leading man carrying a herald's staff as a sign of peace while those behind went fully armed. This was said to be the origin of a Greek proverb 'Spear and Herald's staff' used of those who encouraged and threatened at the same time. As usually with such mythological explanations of proverbs, one forms the

¹ For the practice in general, cf. Dion Hal. *Ant. Rom.* I, xvi, 2. Plut. *Moral.* 402A. Festus, p. 150, (L). For an instance at Dodona cf. Dion Hal. *Ant. Rom.* I, xxiii. Macrobius *Sat.* I, vii, 28. Zenob. V, 74. Steph. Byz. *'Αθρομίγες*.

² D. S. IV, xxxvii, 1. Paus. IV, xxxiv, 9, ff.

³ *Epigoni* ap. Schol. Ap. Rhod. I, 308. Apollodorus, III, vii, 4. Photius, s. v. *'Ομολόγως Ζεύς*. Paus. VII, iii, 1, IX, xxxiii, 2.

⁴ Zenob. III, 26, Suidas, s. v. *Δόρυ κηρύκειον*, Eustathius, *Iliad.* 408, 4.

impression that the proverb arose first and then a legend was suitably modified to fit it

Again, Aristotle wanted to account for an odd piece of ritual among the Bottiaean in Thrace by supposing that they were originally composed of a mixed population from Crete who had been dedicated as a tithe from among their own people by the Cretans in some time of distress¹ But another entirely different form of legend existed about the same settlement

In historic times the people of Magnesia on the Maeander regarded themselves as specially bound to Delphi, and recorded the legend of their foundation in a lengthy series of inscriptions² The matter which these contain is not historic in this form at least, but they provide an interesting illustration of the wealth of myths, which could grow up round a pre-historic colony's origin We are told that the Magnesians were originally dedicated as a tithe to Apollo out of their namesakes the Magnesians of North East Greece after the Trojan war. The exact reasons for the dedication are lost, but apparently (according to the local legend) the Pythia first sent them to colonize a place in Crete with instructions that when they saw a white crow they might return again The white crow was a traditional motive in Greek myths, as it was proverbially used of the improbable also as the crow was one of the sacred birds of Apollo, it may have had a special appropriateness here When after eighty years the sign appeared, the Magnesians rejoiced that their period of exile in Crete was over and sent for confirmation to Delphi But the Pythia's answer was disappointing

'You have come, Magnesians, turned away from Crete at the sight of the ominous bird with gleaming white wings instead of black (which has appeared as a wonder to mortals), and you seek whether it is better to return to your home But you must depart elsewhere far from your native land Yet my father and I and my sister will take care thus to divide up a clod of Magnesian earth not worse than the land between the Peneus and steep Pelion'

This response meant that Zeus, Apollo, and Artemis (who is specially mentioned here because of her importance in the

¹ Aristotle, frag. 443 = Plut *Theseus*, XVI, 2 Plut *Moral* 298 F Contrast Conon, F Gr H 26 F 1, xxv

² Kern *Inscriptionen v Magnesia* No 17 and 20 Conon F Gr H 26 F 1, xxix Parthen *Erat* V

cults of Magnesia) would not let the consecrated population return to Thessaly Their future home was defined in answer to a further enquiry

'You ask, peerless Magnesians, whither you are to depart Know that before the doors of the temple stands a man who is to rule you and lead you on your way to the fields of the Pamphylians above steep Mount Mycale There the wealthy hall of Mandrolytus stands in a conspicuous spot with many possessions by the much-winding river, and there to those who defend themselves and do not begin guile the lord of Olympus will vouchsafe victory and great glory'

This oracle defined the place of settlement, but still left the oecist uncertain That was more clearly defined in a further answer

'There is in the precinct a valiant man of the family of Glaucus, who will be the first to come and meet you when you have left my temple That is fated He will also show you the fields of the mainland rich in corn'

This turned out as the Pythia described The Magnesian embassy on leaving met a man called Leucippus, who had come to Delphi to seek atonement for murdering his father They explained the situation to him, and while willing to undertake the task he consulted the oracle on his own account to make sure of Apollo's instructions. The answer was

'Set out for the Pamphylian Gulf, Leucippus, leading the kindred folk of the Magnesians under arms, so that you may reach the rock of Thorex and the steep stream of Amanthus and the steep Mount Mycale opposite Endymion, and there will happily dwell in the hall of Mandrolytus the Magnesians honoured by the cities that dwell around'

The expedition set out and after diverse romantic adventures, among which the daughter of Mandrolytus, the local chieftain, fell in love with Leucippus, the colony was finally established

These oracles form a whole symposium of favourite motives from Delphic mythology We have already noted the 'white crows' other instances are found in the motive of the first person to be met on leaving the temple as peculiarly significant,¹ the arbitrary choice of an oecist by the Pythia

¹ Cf. *supra* Rhacius p. 50 and *infra* Andreus and Orthagoras, p. 134, the Dolonci and Miltades the Elder, p. 164, Ion and Xuthus, p. 306, Lophis and his father, p. 372 Telesicles and Archilochus, p. 406, Phormio, p. 422

from enquirers come for other purposes, and the theory that blood guilt could be purged by going abroad as the leader of a colony. This last idea is very frequently illustrated in Greek myths, never in historical foundations.¹ None of the oracular responses recorded in the Magnesians inscriptions can be treated as historical and even Leucippus himself is probably imaginary, except perhaps his name. At the same time it is hard to believe that there was no original connection between Delphi and Magnesia, because in the classical period, as we are told, the Magnesians 'as consecrated to the god and colonists of the Delphians used to supply any Delphian who settled among them a roof, salt, olive oil, vinegar, lamp-oil, beds, coverlets, and tables'.² The existence of this custom requires an explanation, and it is very unlikely that such generous provision for Delphians originated in a purely imaginary connection. The reasonable explanation is that the Delphians had originally received the Magnesians as a tithe from North Greece, and had sent them away as settlers abroad with this obligation of hospitality. The association had given birth to this complex of myths with appropriate oracular responses in hexameter verse. Indeed, the oracles may have been composed by some Delphic official in the third century B.C. when asked to confirm the ancient associations between Magnesia and Delphi.³

The legends of Magnesia lead one to suppose that at least there may have been a dedication of the original settlers to Apollo. The only example of the practice which is recorded within the reach of historical evidence was the foundation of Rhegium. This took place just before the First Messenian war according to the tradition which alleged that the pro-Spartan party in Messenia, when exiled from their native land, had appealed to Apollo and received instructions to join this expedition. The exact circumstances may be fictitious, but it is probable enough that some Messenians, before their con-

¹ Cf. *infra* p. 312.

- *Athen IV*, p. 173F, quoting 'Aristotle or Theophrastus'.

² There has evidently been some deliberate attempt to create spurious evidence, for Kern, No. 20 is a forged resolution of the Cretan Confederation, supposed to be contemporary with Leucippus' expedition. See also Wilamowitz-Moellendorf *Hermes*, XXX, pp. 177, "Die Herkunft der Magneten am Maeander." He doubts any original connection between Delphi and Magnesia and attributes the forged responses to a Magnesian on account of their wealth of local place names.

quest by Sparta, had taken part in the colonization of Rhegium. The bulk of the colonists were said to have come from Chalcis. They had been dedicated as a tithe to Apollo in time of famine, and had been sent by the oracle to Rhegium.¹ The only response recorded in this connection is not very plausible, for, as it stands, it appears to belong to a common class of foundation oracles, which are mostly to be treated as fictitious, but, as it does not mention the subject of dedication, the rejection of this oracle does not affect the question whether the colonists were a tithe or not. A more serious objection is that Antiochus, an early historian, omitted all reference to the dedication as a motive. It is, therefore, best to leave it an open question: certainly in later times the Rhegians did believe that their ancestors had been consecrated to Apollo, and the various mythical examples which we have cited can be taken to show that such a rite was originally possible. The idea of this form of dedication even appears as a motive in fifth century Attic tragedy, for Euripides² makes the chorus of Phoenician women in the play of that name describe how they have been sent from their native land as an offering to the Pythian Apollo.

The primitive existence of this custom of dedication in association with dispatch of the dedicated to found a colony must have established a convention, whereby all intending colonists consulted the Delphic oracle, and in consequence also there grew up a group of legends which tended to show that all the great primitive folk movements and foundations of Greece had similarly been directed by Apollo. The Dorian invasion, the Ionian migration, as well as many smaller movements of tribes were decorated with an embroidery of oracles. The stories themselves are quite unhistoric and often conform to conventional patterns. Perhaps the actual migrations may have had support from Delphi in some instances. The alleged connections of the Dorians of the Peloponnese with Doris, the neighbouring state to Delphi, make it possible that they had consulted the oracle before their migration. The movements of the Ionians and other tribes are much less likely to have any connection with the Pythia. But the traditional oracles concerning all these settlements are equally legendary.

¹ Strabo, VI, C 257 and 260 D S VIII, xxiii, 2 Dion Hal *Ant Rom* XIX, frag 1 u *Antig Hist Mic* 1

² *Phoen.* 202 ff, 280 ff

I. The Dorian invasion was represented in the imaginative reconstruction of folk-lore as the return of descendants of Heracles to their ancestral home. The chief function of the Delphic oracle in this saga was to provide ambiguous encouragement, which could later be interpreted to account for the delays and failures of the would-be settlers. Folk memory believed that their attempts were spread over three generations before they achieved success. The common story¹ was that on the death of Eurystheus, the former master of Heracles, Hyllus and the other Heraclidae settled in their ancestral home in the Peloponnese, but had only been there a year, when the country was smitten with a plague. An oracle informed them that the reason for this affliction was because they had come back too soon. So they retired from the Peloponnese again, and Hyllus enquired from Delphi how they could return. The answer was to wait for the third crop, and then they would be able to do so. Hyllus took this prophecy to mean that the attempt should be made in the third year, and set out accordingly, only to be defeated and killed. Later Aristomachus, his eldest son, visited Delphi with the same enquiry. He was told

'The gods show you victory in the road of the narrows'

So he invaded the Peloponnese by the Isthmus, but he also was killed in this attempt. Finally, Temenus, the eldest of Aristomachus' sons received the same two replies in answer, when he had repeated the enquiry. This extraordinary procedure led him to accuse Apollo of being responsible for the deaths of his father and grandfather, since they had gone to their dooms at Delphi's advice. But the god explained that they had brought about their own destruction by misinterpreting his oracles. The third crop meant the third generation, and the narrows were those of the 'broad belly'—a gratuitous ambiguity for the sea. So Temenus as the third in descent from Heracles made his attempt on the Peloponnese by the straits opposite Naupactus and was successful in the conquest.

These legendary prophecies were merely invented to

¹ Isocr. VI, 17. Plato, *Lawr.*, 686a. Apollodorus, II, viii, 2. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.* V, p. 210B. Schol. Aristid. p. 651. Tryphon (Walz, *Rhet. Graec.* VIII, p. 737). The earliest reference to Apollo as sanctioning the Return of the Heraclidae appears to be in Pindar, *Pyth.* V, 69 ff. The legend as known from later authorities seems to have been reduced to shape by Ephorus.

explain away the different traditions of unsuccessful invasions of the Peloponnese by representing them as failing through a misunderstanding of Apollo's directions. Also other oracles were accumulated round the same group of events. One was to provide an origin for the Dorian festival of the Carneia.¹ Its name was actually derived from Carnus, a divinity who was in fact a specialized aspect of Apollo. According to the legend, he was a prophet sent by the god to the Heraclidae, and slain by a member of their expedition. In consequence their fleet was pursued by disaster till they consulted Delphi, where they were told that the death of Carnus was the cause.

'By having slain my messenger you have stained yourself with guilt'

When Temenus asked for an atonement he was told

'Now to pay honour to the Carneian Apollo'

Evidently the ritual of the Carneia was such as to suggest an atonement, and mythology provided an explanation connected with the Dorian invasion, which helped to account for the recognition of the festival by all Dorians alike.²

Apollodorus connects with the reply on the death of Carnus a story that the Pythia instructed the Heraclidae to return under the guidance of a man with three eyes.³ This apparent impossibility was solved by the appearance of Oxylyus,⁴ an Aetolian riding on a one-eyed horse. He suggested the solution of crossing from Naupactus and was rewarded by becoming king of Elis. Yet another story⁵ explained by an oracle the reason why the Arcadians were not subdued by the Heraclidae. The invaders had been told not to make war on those who gave them 'guest gifts'. The Arcadians by a trick managed to make the Heraclidae accept something from them, and so escaped the dangers of war. These superficial stories with popular motives helped to explain all the chief features of the ethnography of the Peloponnese, where there were found a pre-

¹ Apollodorus I c Euseb I c Conon, *FGrH* 26 F 1, xxvi Paus III, vii, 4 Schol Theocr V, 53

- Traditions varied on the slayer of Carnus. Apollodorus gave Hippotes, whom Apollo exiled for ten years. Oenomaus gave Aristodemus, who died in consequence. Cf also Paus III, 1, 6

² Cf the authors already quoted and Schol Aristid *Panath* p 30, Dind Suidas, s v τριόφθαλμος

³ Cf Paus V, iv, 3 for a Delphic oracle on his settlement

⁴ Schol Aristid I c and Polyaeus, I, vii

dominance of Dorian states, but also the earlier population survived in Arcadia, and Elis was dominated by a Western Greek stock

II The Ionian migration was also endowed in legend with several oracles.¹ The main purpose behind their formation was to support the Attic tradition that Ionia in general and Miletus in particular were colonized from Athens by a scion of the Attic royal house Neleus, the eponymous ancestor of the Milesian family of the Neleidae, was said to have been a younger son of Codrus, king of Athens. On his father's death he challenged the right of his elder brother, Medon, to succeed, on the ground that he was lame in one foot. They agreed to refer the question to Delphi, which decided in favour of Medon.² Neleus was instructed by the Pythia to take a colony to Asia, which led to the foundation of Miletus. What the Pythia had said to Neleus was the subject of four different legends, which though they can be combined to some extent in one narrative are really independent and evidently came from separate origins.³

(a) One oracle is only known from rather summary references. As preserved, it merely told Neleus to drive out the race of unjust Carians and settle a colony of Ionians and other Greeks.

(b) The second oracle is referred to as an alternative by the same scholiast and can be supplied verbatim from elsewhere:

'Send to the golden men a people of many tribes, and carry bronze on your shoulders and iron in your hands.'

These more picturesque instructions are evidently based on a somewhat feeble notion—a comparison between the different metals named. Neleus' colonists armoured in bronze and with weapons of iron are to invade a golden people: this last specification refers presumably to the wealth of the country, in which they are to settle. The picture drawn is one of needy, but well armed adventurers invading the settlements of prosperous citizens.

¹ Paus. VII, 11, 1. Schol. Ven. *Iliad*, XX 404. Aelian, *V. H.* VIII, 5. Schol. Lycophr. 1378. Schol. Aristid. *Panath.* p. 78. Dind. Himerius, *Orat.* X, 5, XXXVIII, 1.

² Lycophr. 1c represents Neleus as enquiring at Delphi after he has lost the kingship through failing to comply properly with a previous oracle.

³ Lycophr. 1378 with Schol. and Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E.* V, 224c. Cf. Parke in *Hermathena*, XXVII, pp. 56 ff.

(c) In itself the prophecy does not define the place of the colony with any great exactitude. The scholiast says that the Pythia added that Neleus' daughter would show him the place. It is not clear whether this is genuinely part of the same oracle, or whether as is perhaps more plausible, it belongs to quite a different story. At least it is explained in the scholium by two slightly differing anecdotes in which the daughter of Neleus (unnamed) indicated the site of the colony by rudely calling for a mate from there. The indecent wording of the legend—an unusual feature in traditions about Delphi—suggests that it originated in a 'Milesian tale'. Such stories were notorious in antiquity for their impropriety.

(d) The fourth legend contained a usual folk-tale motive. Neleus received an oracle to found his city where a maiden gave him earth damped with water. The fulfilment came at Miletus where at his request a potter's daughter gave him clay to make a seal. This is a familiar scheme in prophecies about colonial foundations.¹ A local inhabitant gives the founder some common object without attaching significance to the act, but thereby they have symbolically conferred the rights of possession of the place. Here earth and water by a familiar ancient convention were taken to mean sovereignty over the land and its rivers.

These diverse legends about the foundation of Miletus and the Ionian migration² show by their independence one of another that there was no genuine tradition preserved from the date of the colonizations. These are simply the different explanations produced in later times to account for the existence of the same Ionic tribes and similar customs in Attica and Ionia.

Of the other large folk migrations to Asia Minor the colonization of Aeolis was attributed to two quite inconsistent versions of a Delphic response.³ The Dorian region in Asia also had its legendary connections with Delphi.⁴ On the Greek

¹ Cf. *infra* p. 64 the Aenianes and p. 83 the Argonauts. Also cf. the legend about Dodona and 'the Clod of Aletes' and the unspecified oracle in Conon, *F. Gr. H.* 26 F. 1, xxvi. For a discussion see Halliday, *Plutarch's Greek Questions*, p. 76.

² Cf. Vitruvius, IV, 1, 4 for a rationalized version of the Ionic migration in accordance with an oracle.

³ *Demon* (*F. H. G.*, Vol. I, p. 382, No. 20) = Schol. Vat. Eurip. *Rhes.* 250 Suidas, s.v. *Ἐοῦτος Μυαῖον* Steph. Byz. *Θυάτρεψα* Mantissa, *Prov. Cent.* II, 28 Lycophron, 1375 and Schol.

⁴ Cf. the legend of Podalirius, p. 59 *infra*.

mainland the settlement of the Boeotians in the territory which took its name from them was the subject of contradictory traditions, which were reconciled by an elaborate edifice of false history. This included the same legendary motive of the white crows which we have already discussed¹ and two other oracular responses from Delphi only one line is preserved of each. The former authorized the Boeotians to settle in Thessaly with the phrase 'Arne bereft awaits a Boeotian man.'² Later the Boeotians were supposed to have been expelled from Arne by the Thessalians, and to have reoccupied a place of the same name in Boeotia. The details of the legend connecting this migration with Delphi have been lost, but one may conjecture that this response was to be taken ambiguously as alluding to either Arne in turn. Plutarch³ has the fragment of a corresponding oracle to the Thessalians authorizing them to take heed of 'the hearing of the deaf and the sight of the blind'. Again the legend is lacking, but evidently it ran that the Thessalians, having enquired when they should expel the Boeotians, were told to wait till the deaf heard and the blind saw. This superficially discouraging advice will then have been miraculously justified by a subsequent fulfilment of the prophecy.

This pattern of legend is frequent in Delphic myths and particularly in those that deal with colonization. In the typical form a result is made contingent on an apparently impossible antecedent which then confutes the rash interpreter by its accomplishment.⁴ The motive is found not only in tales about primitive migrations of whole tribes, but also in the colonization of separate cities. For instance Podalirius was told to settle, where, even if the surrounding heaven fell, he would suffer no hurt.⁵ The solution was found in the Carian peninsula where the mountains towering up on all sides seemed to be ready to support the falling sky. Often the oracle is of a ludicrous nature and the answer to the riddle is more or less

¹ Didymus, XI, 65. D S. XIX, liii, 8. Suidas, s.v. *εὐς κόρακας*. Schol. Clem. Alex. *Protrept.* II, 9. P. Zenob. III, 87. Cf. Athen. VIII, 360E.

² Steph. Byz. *Ἀρνη*. Eustath. in *Iliad*, 270, 33.

³ *Moral.* 432B.

⁴ Cf. also Athamas who was to settle where entertained by wild beasts, Apollodorus I, ix, 2. Schol. Lycophr. 22. Schol. Plato, *Minos*, 315c. Et. Magn. s.v. *Ἀθαμάντιοι*, p. 24, 10.

⁵ Apollodorus, *Epitome*, VI, 18. Schol. Lycophron, 1047.

facetious Locrus, the eponymous founder of the Ozolian Locrians, was told by the Pythia to build a city where he was bitten by a wooden dog.¹ The solution was provided when he pricked his foot on a variety of brier known to the Greeks as 'dog-bush' (κυνόσβατον).

Often these humorous anecdotes were evidently of local origin. For instance, Creophylus,² a local historian of Ephesus, writing about the end of the fifth century B.C., gave the native legend of that city. Its original colonists after many difficulties in finding a site asked the Pythian Apollo for instructions. He told them to found their city where a fish would point out and a wild boar lead the way. Some of the future colonists after fishing were making their midday meal on the shore when a fish which was baking on the coals leaped out and fell with some cinders into a quiver which was lying beside. This set fire to a thicket in which a wild boar was hiding, and it, scared by the blaze, started up the hill with the colonists in pursuit. They killed the boar, and then saw that these incidents had indicated this place as the true site for their colony. So they removed their possessions thither. Creophylus embellished his account with features of local topography, noting where the fire and the kill occurred in relation to the great city which later arose. One cannot deny the possibility that some genuine fragments of local folk-memory may underlie the account, but the whole has been worked up into an oracular 'aition' (αἴτιον).³ In one instance, it is possible to trace through our different authorities the way in which such a tradition could be invented. Herodotus⁴ records that when the Persian satrap, Megabazus, visited Byzantium, he was informed that it had not been the earliest settlement in that neighbourhood. Calchedon on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus had been founded seventeen years earlier. The Persian was struck with the folly of the men of Calchedon, who when they had first choice had missed the more advantageous site of Byzantium.

¹ Plutarch, *Moral* 294E. Athen. II, 70C. Hesychius, s.v. κύναιπος. Eustathius, 1822, 18.

² Athen. VIII, 361D.

³ For other oracles of this type, cf. Aelian, *N.A.* XII, 5—an alternative reason for a settlement at Hamaxitus. Plut. *Moral* 247D, 296C—Lemnian settlers in Crete, with Haliday, *Plutarch's Greek Questions*, p. 111, who suggests that a local cult has influenced the tradition. Zenob. I, 54, the founders of Gela.

⁴ IV, cxliv, 2.

His comment was that the Calchedonians of those days must have been blind. This little incident is evidently historic, but later tradition forgot Megabazus, and substituted for him the Pythian Apollo. In Strabo and Tacitus¹ it is recorded that the Delphic oracle advised the Megarians to found a colony opposite the city of the blind, and they recognized that this was an allusion to the men of Calchedon because of their foolish choice of a site. It is obvious how much less plausible is this context for the original *bon mot*. At the same time if it were not for Herodotus' evidence, we could not reconstruct by conjecture the true origin of the story. In many other instances no doubt the alleged prophetic advice to some colonists originated in some entirely different context, but was similarly transferred to the Delphic oracle, as the popular source of significant ambiguities.

Actually another tradition² preserves in alternative versions a verse oracle which has much more claim to be the true reply of the Pythia about the colonization of Byzantium:

'Happy are they who will dwell in that sacred city, on the seagirt Thracian shore and by the mouth of the Pontus where the fish and the stag graze to the very pastures. Send the expedition as quickly as possible, keeping all things in mind.'

This might well have been a genuine answer of the Delphic oracle when asked whether Apollo would sanction the sending of a Megarian colony to Byzantium. Clearly the district was already known to the Megarians and the site approximately selected. The Delphic authorities would have been told the situation of the proposed colony, and the Pythia's answer embodied this information in poetic form with a divine blessing and command to set out. The allusion to the fish and the stag need not mean more than the general observation that the colonists would find good fishing on the one side in the Bosphorus and good hunting on the other in the Thracian deer forests. Possibly after the estuary on which Byzantium stood had been compared to a stag's antler, later generations may have seen in the oracle an allusion to the Golden Horn. But this was a fortuitous coincidence.

¹ VII, C 320 *Annals*, XII, lxiii. Cf. Hesychius Miletus, frag. 4, 20.

² Hesychius Miletus, *F H G*, Vol. IV, p. 147, frag. 4, § 71. Steph. Byz. *Βυζάντιον*.

An alternative version of the third line had been ¹

'Where two puppies lap the hoary sea'

This allusion was connected with two streams on the site which together flowed into the bay – a rather thin explanation. Perhaps it had been invented on the spot to give more topographical detail to the prophecy.

Finally we can probably recognize an instance of the type of oracle in the single hexameter line quoted by Plutarch.²

'The swarms of bees will soon prove to be wasps to you.'

This was used by Plutarch to mean that seeming friends would prove enemies, and was said to have been delivered by the Pythia to Timesias of Clazomenae, who about 650 B.C. led a colony from his native city to Abdera on the Thracian coast. The venture did not succeed, for the Thracian tribes rose and expelled the settlers. No doubt a prophecy of this fate was found in the line which Plutarch quotes. The native inhabitants first were to appear friendly, but later to turn to bitter enemies. It may have been a happy forecast, but it is possible to treat it as a *vaucinium post eventum* and conjecture when it might have been forged. About 545 B.C. Abdera was recolonized by the Teians, and we are told that Timesias was consecrated as a hero by these later settlers. Perhaps they sought authority for their colony from Delphi or even more certainly they must have received sanction for the canonization of Timesias. On either occasion the Delphic authorities may have produced an alleged response of Apollo to Timesias, designed to show that his ill success was forecast by the god.

This example leads to another type of foundation oracles, those dealing with a piece of ritual or an object of cult found in the colony. They evidently have some local connection with the site in so far as they correspond to a feature of the settlers' worship. But normally the response did not in actual fact precede the foundation of the colony. It was only later tradition that converted the sanctioning of a local usage into the original authorization of the settlement. The best instance of this

¹ Hesychius combines in the same oracle the two versions of the third line. Presumably this composite form has resulted from conflating alternative traditions. Cf. the hexameter oracle for the foundation of Rhegium (D. S. VIII, xxiii, 2), which might be taken as authentic if the second line is omitted as an interpolated embroidery. The Byzantine oracle was reshaped to apply to Constantinople, *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 115.

² *Moral.* 96B. Cf. Herod. I, clxviii, etc.

pattern is provided by Heraclea in Pontus¹ In the marketplace of that city was a tomb, on which grew a venerable wild olive It was the object of worship as the resting-place of a hero, Agamestor This name was said to be merely the cult title of Idmon, the prophet, who had been one of the Argonauts, and had died and been buried there. According to the general tradition the Delphic oracle had instructed the Megarians and Boeotians to found a city on the Pontus round the wild olive, which covered Idmon's tomb But the rather ambiguous citations from some of the local historians of Heraclea suggest that this is not the right sequence of events. The oracle prescribing the worship of Agamestor did not precede the foundation of the colony Actually the original colonists finding some obscure native cult at this local tomb consulted Delphi, and received the sanction of Apollo to worship the unidentified hero as Agamestor—the 'very mindful' Boeotian traditions among the colonists would soon suggest an identification with a descendant of the great Boeotian prophet Calchas and an association with the epic story of the Golden Fleece²

In this way there must have been a general tendency to connect the origin of local cults with the foundation of the colony itself So at Cyzicus what appears to have been a local baetyl was preserved in the temple of Athena and was said to have been an anchor stone left behind by the Argonauts. Traditionally, an Apolline oracle had fixed it as the site for the colony³ Here again the legend is likely to have been invented after the founding of Cyzicus Whether the response was supposed to have come from Delphi or not is not stated in our authorities, and though Cyzicus in late periods paid great respect to the Pythian Apollo, one may suppose that originally they had been directed by the oracle of Branchidae, beside their mother city, Miletus

¹ Apoll Rhod II, 845 ff with Scholia = Herodorus of Heraclea, *F Gr H* 31, F. 51 and Promathidas of Heraclea, *F H G* Vol III, p 201, No 3

² Justin (XVI, iii, 4) records that the colony was twice commanded from Boeotia, as a cure for a pestilence and a war This foundation may also be alluded to in Plut *Moral* 408A, if the name of the founder, Gnesilochus, is not corrupt, cf Schol Apoll Rhod II, 351

³ Apoll Rhod I, 958 with Scholia, Aristides (Jebb), Vol I, p 237 For later consultations cf Collitz, No 2970 and *B C H* IV, pp 471 ff LIV, p 287, note 2 Ditt *Syll* 1158, and *B C H* LIX, 93

Sometimes, the feature to be explained is a peculiar local custom. Among the Aenianes when a hecatomb was offered to Apollo it was the practice to set aside a special portion which was called the 'beggar's meat',¹ and was given to one particular family, the descendants of one Temo. The legend was that when the Aenianes had been forced to leave their earlier home at Cirrha, they received an oracle to hold whatever they accept from willing givers. When they reached the territory of the Achaeans of Thessaly where they wished to settle, one of them named Temo, disguised as a beggar, contrived to obtain from the king of the Achaeans a present of a clod of earth. Thus (according to a motive which we have already encountered)² the Aenianes obtained possession of the whole land. The success was celebrated by a hecatomb to Apollo vowed by Temo, whose descendants were supposed to have a share in every similar sacrifice. At least in its present form, tricked out with oracles and folk-tale motives, the legend is unhistoric. Just possibly Temo himself may have had a real existence and a share in the settlements of the Aenianes.

Thus sometimes the original legend has become overlaid with fictitious features obscuring the basic motive.³ But occasionally it is possible to believe that the cult had a real connection with the foundation of the colony. For instance, in Massilia (Marseilles) there was a temple of the Ephesian Artemis with a very ancient image at the entrance of the harbour. It was said that an oracle had instructed the Phocaeans when they founded Massilia to take as their guide the person given them by the Ephesian Artemis.⁴ The temple was a thank-offering to the goddess for the successful conclusion of the expedition and she also had temples in the colonies of Massilia. The oracle, if genuine, was no doubt Delphic in view of the intimate association between Massilia and Delphi. Also the suggestion that Artemis should nominate a leader might well have originated from the Pythia when she was asked for her blessing on the colony.

¹ Plut. *Moral.* 293 F

² Cf. *supra* p. 58

³ E.g. the colonization of Lesbos with a legend of a human sacrifice and a rescuing dolphin, Plut. *Moral.* 163A, 984E, Athen. XI, 466C, or the foundation of Pythopolis in Bithynia, Plut. *Theb.* xxvi

⁴ Strabo, IV, C 179

A third type of oracle directing the foundation of a colony was the etymological. In this form of legend the prophecy prescribed that the enquirer should settle where some stated condition was fulfilled, and when the founder did so, he named the place after the thing which he had been told to observe. Mostly, these stories are completely mythical. The real or fancied derivation of the colony's place-name suggested the concoction of an oracle to explain why that thing should be associated with the place.¹ For instance, Aegae, the old capital of Macedon seemed superficially to have some connection with the word for 'goat'. This fanciful notion gave rise to a legend, that the founder of Aegae had been told to settle where he first saw goats, and had named the place after the event. Two versions of the Delphic oracle are extant.² The older is recorded as given to Caranus, the son of Poeanthes, when he left Argos to found a colony.

'Take heed, godlike Caranus, and store up my word in your mind. Leave Argos and Hellas of the fair women, and go to the springs of Haliacmon. There when first you see goats grazing, it is your fate to dwell much envied, you and all your family.'

The alternative version³ relates that Perdiccas received this reply when he wished to increase his kingdom.

'There is a royal might over a wealth-producing land for the reverend sons of Temenus. For aegis-bearing Zeus gives it. But go in haste to the Bottiaean land of many flocks. There if you see gleaming-horned, snow-white goats sunk in sleep on the floor of that ground, sacrifice to the blessed gods and found the fortress of a city.'

Apart from the minor disagreement over the recipient of the prophecy, the two versions convey the same general sense, and it might appear at first sight that the oracles were practically interchangeable, and thus one could not account for the fact that more than one was produced. But one feature in the older prophecy is highly significant. It foretells that the house of Caranus will always dwell at Aegae. Actually Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great, removed the capital to Pella. Hence it is likely that the older version was produced at some

¹ But cf. *infra* p. 201 for a type of etymological oracle about Thurii which seems to be historical.

² Schol. Clem. Alex. *Protrept.* II, 11 P.

³ D. S. VII, xvi, 1.

time before Philip's reign. But when the capital was transferred it was inauspicious to maintain a foundation-oracle for Aegae which implied that it should always remain the seat of the dynasty. Hence the later version was composed to convey the same general notion, but avoid the inconvenient prophecy which it was not now desired to observe.¹

It is not likely that even the earlier prophecy is really authentic in the sense that it dates from the actual foundation of Aegae. The etymology is a figment: the settlement of the Macedonians probably took place in prehistoric times. Herodotus² records a folk tale of the founding of the dynasty which is more primitive in character than these stories of oracles and seems to be the earliest tradition on the subject. Probably the former oracle is a fifth-century invention to be connected with the time when Alexander I of Macedon had achieved great recognition in Greece and had honoured Delphi with one munificent dedication. Delphi returned the compliment by providing a document in support of his genealogy.

Another interesting example of the etymological oracle is that concerning the city of Gela in Sicily.³ This odd, non-hellenic name could be derived from the verb 'to laugh'. Hence a legend arose that Gela and Phaselis, both colonies of Rhodes, had been founded by two brothers, Antiphemus and Laciús. They went to Delphi on some enquiry, but the Pythia, instead of answering it, told Laciús that he must sail to the sunrise. At this unexpected command Antiphemus burst out laughing, whereupon the Pythia gave him also a command:

'At the sun's setting you also are to found a city, Gela.'

So the two brothers founded Phaselis and Gela, the latter taking its name from Antiphemus' laugh. The story is evidently a folk tale and reminds one of the Old Testament account of the derivation of Sarah's name. The common element is the notion that laughter at a god's command could be commemorated in a title. The other chief element in the saga is the dramatic notion of two kinsmen being sent to opposite

¹ Cf. Dio Chrys. IV, 71, Hyg. *Fab.* cccix, for a prose version, in which Archelaus drove the goats with him, or Justin, VII, 1, 7, for another slightly discrepant account.

² VIII, cxxxvii.

³ Steph. Byz. *Γελα*, Et. Magn. p. 225. The verse line is corrupt in our MSS. but this must be its general sense. In the Et. Magn. the story has lost its chief point through abridgement.

ends of the earth and this recurs also in a legend connected with Dodona.¹ Neither feature had any historic origin in the colonization of Gela: the name of the place and the fact that Rhodian colonies had gone out in opposite directions suggested this fiction.

Curiously enough, the original and historic oracle about Gela appears to be preserved. According to the more sound account Gela had two co-founders, Antiphemus and Entimus, who received this oracle.²

'Entimus and the cunning son of famous Craton, go both to Sicily and inhabit that fair land, when you have built a town of Cretans and Rhodians together beside the mouth of the holy river Gela, and of the same name as it'

Here the derivation is not from the verb 'to laugh', but from the native name for a river on the site. This is no doubt correct; and as the prophecy is so simple and without special allusions, it is natural to take it as authentic.

There is no need to multiply instances of this type of oracle. In some legends the etymology is likely enough: all that the myth-maker has done is to give its derivation a narrative setting.³ In others the etymology is fantastic, and requires a legend to justify it.⁴ The latter type could be supplemented by alleged roots in local dialect. But all this class of oracles are noteworthy in one point. Though Delphi is sometimes mentioned specifically, much more often the oracle is not attributed to any particular deity or temple. Such a lack of particular information is not always a proof that an alleged prophecy is unhistoric, but when it appears in a number of parallel instances, it can be best explained on that supposition.

Closely connected with the usual etymological oracle in type are a number dealing with very primitive settlements. Their beginning was so long before historic times that no genuine tradition had survived, but it was replaced by oracles attributing the foundation to an eponymous hero or a founder who was told to name the colony after his original home. To

¹ Vide Steph Byz Γαλεῶται

² D S VIII, κκiii ι

³ Halieis (Steph Byz s n = Ephorus, *F Gr H* 70 F 56), Elaeus (Plut *Moral* 375 F) Alopecconesus (Steph Byz s n)

⁴ Mycenae (Ps-Plut *de Fluv* XVIII, 7), Noricum (id X, 2), Argilus (Heracleides, *de reb publ* xlv)

this extent these oracles are etymological they account for the name of the colony, but not by giving it any allusive meaning. A good example of the eponymous hero is the oracle recorded for Carystus in Euboea ¹

'Dear child of famous Cheiron, Carystus, leave Pelion and go to the Cape of Euboea. There it is foretold that you are to found a sacred land Go then, delay no longer .'

For an oracle that explained a derivation by the name of the mother city we can take the foundation oracle of Samos, addressed to Ancaeus, the Cephallenian, a son of Zeus ²

'Ancaeus, I bid you found Samos instead of Same, an island in the sea It is now called Phyllas'

Here the old name of Cephallenia, Same, is taken to be the origin of the name Samos, as prescribed by the Pythia ³ In all this type of instance the founder belongs to the heroic age and the verses are not authentic The local tradition has provided itself with an oracle, just as a family might construct a pedigree

In contrast to them one can cite a single instance of what may be taken as a genuine foundation oracle which turns on the name of the place Before the foundation of Thasos by the Parians the response was given to Telesicles, the father of Archilochus ⁴

'Announce to the Parians, Telesicles, that I bid you found a conspicuous city in the island of Eeria'

Here it is merely a poetic fancy that makes the Pythia allude to the place under what was said to have been its primitive name One can take it that the initiative had not really come from Delphi, but that the Parians had sent Telesicles to ask for Apollo's sanction in the venture and this response was his warrant

¹ *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 68 Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E.* VI, 255D

- Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 11

² Cf. Teucer's foundation of Salamis in Cyprus Eur. *Helen*, 148 Horace, *Odes*, I, vii, 27 Servius, *Aen.* I, 621 Perhaps his name should be read in Plut. *Moral.* 408A

⁴ Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E.* VI, 256B Steph. Byz. *Θάσος*

CHAPTER II

THE ORACLE AND COLONIZATION

(b) SPECIAL INSTANCES

BESIDES the particular examples of foundation oracles which we have considered, there were many more cities which evidently believed that their origin was connected with the Pythian Apollo,¹ but about which no legend or prophecy has been preserved in our sources. We can only list the instances. In a very different position are a group of colonies mostly in Sicily and South Italy. Their foundations are not merely provided with brief oracles of the conventional type, but are adorned with comparatively lengthy prophecies in verse and detailed narratives. These stories are not always historic, but they are all of a considerable antiquity and point to the fact that Delphi had specially intimate relations with these cities from their very beginning. The situation of Delphi near the Corinthian gulf and close to Crisa, an important trading city in the seventh century, gave the Pythian Apollo a special connection with Western colonization. The route to South Italy and Sicily passed quite close, and several of the mother-cities such as Corinth or the Achaean towns were near neighbours of Delphi.

This particular link between Delphi and Sicily is shown in the special ritual associated with Naxos, the earliest of the Sicilian colonies. The oracle which blessed this foundation has not been preserved, but it must have come from the Pythian Apollo, for outside the city stood an altar dedicated to him as the Chief Leader (*Ἀρχηγέτης*). By the fifth century at least it was a convention that the members of religious embassies leaving Sicily for Greece should visit this sanctuary and offer sacrifice.² This procedure was evidently intended to recognize the obligations of all cities in Sicily to the Pythian Apollo, as the spiritual founder of Naxos and initiator of Western colonization.

¹ From literary sources one may note Apollodorus (*F Gr H* 244 F 178)—Samo-
thrace Paus VII, iv, 9—Chios Paus V, xxii, 3—Apollonia in the Adriatic Scymnus,
760 (Mueller)—Callatis id. 824—Chersonesus Apollodorus, III, vii, 7—Amphilochian
Argos.

² Thuc VI, iii, 1 cf. Appian, *Bell. Civ.* V, 109.

Syracuse is the only Sicilian foundation except for Gela about which an oracle with claims to authenticity has been preserved. The founder was Archias of Corinth, and Pausanias¹ quotes three lines of a prophecy which he declares was addressed to him

'A certain Ortygia lies in the misty deep, opposite Thrinacia, where the mouth of Alpheus bubbles, mingled with the springs of fair-flowing Arethusa'

Evidently this is only a small part of a much longer poem in which Archias was mentioned by name and told to found his city in the place described. The reference to the fountain of Arethusa contains the earliest appearance in literature of the notion that the Alpheus, the largest river in the Peloponnese, flowed under the sea all the way to emerge in the spring on Ortygia. The occurrence on this island of a fountain of fresh water immediately beside the edge of the sea suggested to the imagination of the Greeks that the fresh water itself had found its way untainted through the salt ocean. Into the words of the oracle it is not possible to read with any certainty the later romantic legend, according to which it was the passionate love of the river god, Alpheus, for the water-nymph, Arethusa, that made him undertake the perilous chase through the waves. The Pythia need only have meant that it was the river, Alpheus, which emerged again as part of the Syracusan spring Arethusa, and it is in this form that Ibycus and Pindar² seem to have known the legend. The oracle no doubt is still older, in fact there is no reason for denying its claim to be authentic. The site of Syracuse with a source of water supply near a good harbour must have been known to Greek navigators for a long time before the Corinthian settlers occupied the place. The name Arethusa ('the Waterer') appears to be borrowed from the famous Euboean fountain, and was probably given by some Chalcidian explorer before the foundation of Naxos. The pretty legend about the Alpheus may even have preceded the colony or been invented in conjunction with it. At any rate, the easiest supposition is that these three lines are part of the original answer of the Pythia to Archias. Delphi will have been informed in advance of the proposed site of the colony, which the Pythia described in these picturesque phrases

¹ V, vii, 3 Cf D S V iii, 5

² Frag 21 (Diehl), *Nem* I, 1

The alleged submarine course of the Alpheus became in later times the subject of much scientific disputation. The stock arguments to prove its reality appear at least as early as the works of Timaeus.¹ They were that the spring was disturbed and sullied every fourth year on the occasion of the Olympic games, when the offal of the sacrifices was thrown into the Alpheus, and that a gold cup lost in the river had been recovered in Arethusa. The Greeks, owing to the frequent occurrence of limestone faults in their native land, were quite accustomed to the notion of rivers which disappeared at one place and reappeared again in quite another locality, even possibly emerging from under the sea floor as fresh water springs. Also they knew the proper proofs to demonstrate the identity of the stream, but we can only treat these alleged instances as fabulous. In later classical literature² the chief interest is centred in the romantic version of the legend and Arethusa either appears as a huntress of the Peloponnese converted into a stream in a vain attempt to evade Alpheus' pursuit, or else she is local nymph of Sicily whom Alpheus goes through the sea to seek. But the ultimate source of the fiction is this hyperbolic reference in the foundation-oracle of Syracuse.

Besides this prophecy which may well be genuine there also exists an alternative foundation-oracle for Syracuse which is clearly fictitious.³ It is based on the belief that Croton and Syracuse were both founded in the same year. The synchronism may be historic, but it suggested to later imagination a grouping of the two founders together in one Delphic legend. According to this, Myscellus the Achaean and Archias the Corinthian both consulted the oracle at the same time on the question of founding separate colonies. Apollo's reply was in the form of a question:

'You have come with a folk who are settling in a town and a country, and you would ask Phoebus to what land you are to go. But come now, point out which of the two blessings you would choose, whether to have wealth of possessions or health which gives great enjoyment.'

¹ Polyb. XII, 4 c. 5. Strabo, VI, C 270 [Arist.], *Mir. Ausc.* 847a.3. Seneca, *Quaest. Nat.* III, xxvi, 5. Antiqu. Hist. *Mir.* 140.

² E.g. Ovid, *Am.* III, vi, 29.

³ Strabo, VI, C 269. Suidas, s. v. Ἀρχίας. Schol. Aristoph. *Eg.* 1091. For a romantic legend of late date which would make Archias an exile for bloodguilt, cf. D. S. VIII, x, Plut. *Moral.* 773B. Max. Tyr. XVIII, 1a—d. Schol. Ap. Rhod. IV, 1212.

Faced with these alternatives, Myscellus chose health, and Archias wealth. So the god assigned Syracuse to Archias, and Croton to Myscellus as the sites of their colonies. The choice is based on the later characteristic of the two places. Croton was famous for its healthy situation and the ability of its doctors. Syracuse grew to be the wealthiest city among all the Greek colonies. The legend is not impossible, but it is most natural to take it as a fiction created when chroniclers had noted the synchronism and the diverging fortunes of the two places: this stage would be reached by the beginning of the fifth century.

Another reason for rejecting this common oracle is that both Syracuse and Croton have independent traditions of their original prophecies. We have already considered that of Syracuse: the foundation oracle of Croton is extant in even ampler form. Myscellus from Rhype in Achaëa according to this tradition went to Delphi to ask the god concerning the begetting of children. The Pythia answered:

*'Myscellus, short-in-the-back,¹ Apollo the far-darter loves you and will give you offspring. But this first he bids you, that you make your home in mighty Croton among the fair acres.'*²

When Myscellus did not understand where Croton was, the Pythia gave him a second oracle:

'The far-darter himself points out to you, do you understand him! Here is Taphius, the unploughed, on your path, and there Chalcis, then the sacred land of the Curetes and then the Echinades. Great is the ocean to the left. But even so I would not expect you to miss the Lacinian cape, nor sacred Crimisa, nor the river Aesarus.'

This reply defined Myscellus' course fairly precisely. He followed it and prepared to found a colony, but he was struck with admiration for the territory of Sybaris which had been lately founded and wished to place his settlement there instead. Apollo, however, forbade him:

'Myscellus, short-in-the-back, hunting for other things apart from the god's command, you are finding lamentations. Praise the gift which the god gives.'

¹ This must be a pun on Myscellus, cf. *μούσκληι σκολisci*, Hsch. and *σκελλος* = 'crook-legged'. This characteristic is not mentioned in our legends.

² D. S. VIII, xvii. Antiochus ap. Strabo, VI, C. 262. Hippias ap. Zenob. III, 42. Cf. Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 52. The MSS. of Strabo in the third response give *κλάσματα* ('mor-els') in place of *κλάμματα* ('lamentations').

Of these three prophecies the first is very improbable. It is a good instance of the motive whereby Apollo selects as oecist a man who came to Delphi on a private enquiry. If we reject it on that ground (while admitting that it may be very old), the second oracle as it stands belongs to the same legend as the first. But it need not in its original form have been a sequel to a previous enquiry. The directions to find Croton may have originally been introduced by some formula which showed that this was an answer to an enquiry about a colony. These first lines would easily be omitted or modified to accord with the growth of the legend and the supposition that Myscellus' original enquiry had been for children. It would be possible, of course, to reject the whole of the second oracle as a fiction. But the list of place names looks an improbable invention for a forger, something more picturesque or more significant would be what one would have expected.

The third oracle is of an unusual character. It is abnormal for a founder of a colony to wish Apollo to change the situation of the settlement, and especially before the specified place had even been tried. The verses are extant with two somewhat different wordings, but the same general meaning. These versions come from two early authors, Antiochus of Syracuse and Hippias of Rhegium, and therefore are of considerable antiquity. The only reason for treating them as forgeries is that the later rivalry between Sybaris and Croton might have suggested some early association between the two. But even this supposition would not reasonably explain the tradition, especially as it implies that Myscellus wanted to add his settlers to an already existent Sybaris. So it seems best to suppose that the third prophecy also is genuine. The tradition was no doubt preserved partly for its moral and cautionary value. It taught that Apollo's instructions must not be questioned, but acted on implicitly. However, it can scarcely have been invented for that purpose, as the lack of a sensational penalty deprives the story of the point, which a forger would certainly have provided.

Croton was ultimately responsible for the destruction of Sybaris. Of Sybaris itself no foundation oracle is preserved—an omission which requires explanation on account of the great importance of the city and its evident connection with

Delphi. It had been founded by an Achaean expedition only a few years before Croton and rose to exceptional heights of wealth and luxury, so that its name became a proverb in antiquity. Its fall and annihilation were a shock to the Greek world. Hence it is significant that in the absence of a foundation-oracle tradition preserved two versions of a prophecy of Sybaris' ruin. One explanation might be offered for these circumstances that there had originally existed a foundation-oracle prophesying to Sybaris a future of prosperity and that this oracle had to be suppressed after the fall of Sybaris. Instead, a prophecy of its destruction would be the most convenient one for Delphi to put forward. Hence it is not surprising and in accordance with this supposition that only forecasts of the downfall of Sybaris have been preserved for us.

The better authenticated version comes from Timaeus.¹ The men of Sybaris once sent to Delphi to enquire how long they would enjoy prosperity. The Pythia's answer was

'Happy man of Sybaris, yea all-happy, you will ever be in delights while you honour the race of the Immortals. But whenever you respect a mortal man in preference to a god, then war and internal strife will come upon you.'

The Sybarites confidently took this to mean that their prosperity would last for ever, as they could not imagine that they would ever reverence a man more than the immortal gods. But according to the legend the prophecy was fulfilled in an unexpected way. A man of Sybaris happened to be punishing one of his slaves, and even after the slave had fled to the temple of Hera he continued to scourge him, but when he took sanctuary instead at the tomb of his master's father, the slave-owner felt too great respect for the place and stopped his scourging. Thus a dead man was more revered than one of the immortal gods.

The people of Sybaris generally failed to recognize the significance of the happening. But a certain man named Amyris, who had been a member of the original embassy to Delphi, saw that the fateful oracle had been fulfilled and proceeded to convert his property into money and remove from Sybaris to the Peloponnese. His fellow-citizens regarded his conduct as insane, and from their judgment on him was derived a Greek

¹ Athen. XII, 520 A. Steph. Byz. Σύβαρις. Suidas, s. v. Ἀμυρίς μαίμεται.

proverbial saying 'Amyris is mad' That he was actually the only wise man in Sybaris was proved soon after by the fall of the city and its annihilation by Croton

This legend is evidently worked up for cautionary and moralizing effect. Some elements in it are typical motives of folk-tale—the prophecy of perpetual success which proves to have a catch in it,¹ and the one wise man in a city of infatuated fools. The last line of the prophecy also corresponds excellently to the particular facts of Sybaris' fall. the attack from Croton originated in a political dissension in Sybaris itself. This close connection between the alleged prophecy and the actual happenings might be used to prove that the oracle was invented after the event. But one point must be set against this argument. Before one is to treat the whole legend as a late fantasy without any basis in fact, it is well to note that in one respect the story seems to be less exactly put together than one would expect from a forger. Though the fulfilment of the oracle does meet the requirements of its forecast, it is noticeably unprecise when compared with other instances. For example, the famous oracle that Croesus' realm would fall when a mule ruled over the Medes is only intelligible in relation to its fulfilment in Cyrus. The two parts of that legend are so mutually complementary as to be inseparable. But here the prophecy deals with generalities. only the alleged fulfilment is very specific in its character. The wording of the oracle is such as might be attributed on grounds of style to the mid-sixth century. Hence it is possible to maintain that the prophecy is genuine enough, a piece of moralizing, which might well have been actually delivered. Even the references to war and sedition, though they fitted the fall of Sybaris excellently, need be no more than a conventional reference, which was justified by a coincidence. If this oracle had been actually delivered to Sybaris some time before its fall, the Delphic priesthood no doubt felt bound to discover some incident to satisfy its conditions, and the story of the slave and his master was either discovered or invented to meet this need. The clue to this whole problem would be Amyris, but it is impossible to prove whether he is an historic figure or not. Such personages² whose names survived

¹ Cf. Croesus, p. 152 infra

² His historicity is made somewhat doubtful by the fact that there was a famous wise man of the same name living in Siris in the early sixth century B.C., Herod. VI, cxxvii

in proverbs are often open to serious suspicions. However, he may have existed and have been the person who suggested to Delphi the connection between the prophecy and its fulfilment.

Whether or not the Amyris oracle is rejected as completely legendary, there can be no doubt of the unhistoric nature of the other prophecy of Sybaris' fall. According to this legend, when a singer in the local festival of Hera was performing, a political riot broke out. The singer in his sacred robes took refuge at the altar of Hera, but was killed there by the rioters. This appalling impiety was followed by an equally awful omen: a spring of blood bubbled up in the temple of Hera. Delphi was consulted on this prodigy, and replied ¹

'Depart from my tripods. There is still blood on your hands which flowing copiously keeps you away from the threshold of stone. I will not give you a prophecy. You have slain the servant of the Muses at the altars of Hera, and have not shrunk from incurring the vengeance of the gods. To those that have wrought evil the accomplishment of justice is not to be postponed or stopped by prayers, not even if they were the offspring of Zeus. But on their own heads and upon their children it rolls, and woe mounts on woes in their halls.'

After this violent pronouncement, the Sybarite embassy had to go home unsatisfied and soon afterwards justice overtook their city.

The melodramatic tone of this legend and its improbable omen would at any rate bring it into suspicion. The words of the prophecy increase these doubts manifold, for several of the phrases occur in another oracle ². In fact, the verses appear to be partly modelled on the answer given to the murderer of Archilochus, which evidently provided the germ of the legend. Why this motive should have become associated with the fall of Sybaris it seems impossible to conjecture. But the idea was worked into a moralizing parable on the basis of the previously existing oracle. It is even possible that an ambiguity in the second line suggested the omen of the spring of blood. At any rate the story is quite unhistoric and seems to have no close connection in time with the actual fall of Sybaris ³.

¹ Aelian *V H* III, 43

² Cf. p. 407 *infra*

³ See Plut. *Moral* 557 C for traces of a third legend about a Delphic response on the fall of Sybaris. The wrath of Hera was to be appeased by three destructions. I can only find two destructions of Sybaris towards satisfying this prediction.

One other famous city of Magna Graecia has no foundation-oracle preserved, though it too had strong associations with Delphi. This was Metapontum, which was renowned for its dedication to Apollo of a 'golden harvest'¹—such ears of corn as are seen on its beautiful coins. Here again the reason for the gap in tradition may be conjectured. Metapontum had been a colony of Crisa² if a foundation-oracle was originally delivered, as seems only likely, its sentiments may have sounded inappropriate, after the men of Crisa had been condemned as godless and their city levelled with the ground (cf. *infra*). The verses were suppressed or conveniently forgotten. The loyal association of Metapontum with the Pythian Apollo remained.

The last of the towns of South Italy whose foundation-oracle we must consider is Tarentum. Its original colonists according to the usual legend had come from Sparta and they were the sons born to the Spartan women during the absence of their husbands at the First Messenian war. As the paternity of these children was doubtful, they were excluded from citizenship and sent abroad to fend for themselves. The story is suspicious and has analogies in other Greek folk-tales. Sparta sent out no colonies except in the dark ages before Greek history, and its claim to this one is probably a late legend.³

On Tarentum's foundation two quite independent and mutually exclusive legendary oracles are extant. One is obviously spurious, and is based on the motive which we have already discussed—the prophecy of an improbable happening, followed by its fulfilment in some very figurative way. Phalanthus, the individual who was regarded in later traditions as the leader of the colony, was told to settle where he felt rain under a clear sky. Through failing to seek advice on the meaning of this riddle he met with continual disappointments, until at last in his wanderings Aethra, his wife, tried to console him, and (as the rather startling story relates)⁴ took his head on her knee and began to pick out the lice from his hair. The pathetic condition of her husband made Aethra burst into tears, which

¹ Strabo, VI, C 264. For similar dedications cf. Plut. *Moral* 402 A, and Courby, *Fouilles*, II, 268.

² Strabo, VI, C 265.

³ In Dion Hal. *Ant. Rom.* XIX, frag. 111, a folk-tale based on a traditional stratagem is turned into an oracle about the occupation of Callipolis, a depot of Tarentum, by Leucippus, a Spartan. It is not explicitly attributed to Delphi.

⁴ Paus. X, x, 6.

fell on his head. The dampness roused in him a consciousness that the prophecy was solved. For his wife's name could mean literally 'Clear Sky'. So he settled and founded Tarentum.

This conventional pattern of legend is evidently unhistoric, when judged simply on its narrative. A deeper reason is the fact that Phalanthus himself and his wife, Aethra, appear to be faded gods, not historical characters. The first appears in the story of Tarentum as one who, when shipwrecked in the Corinthian Gulf, rode to Tarentum on a dolphin. It is only in the later versions that he has become reduced to the plain role of a mortal founder.¹ Originally he was a counterpart of Poseidon, just as his wife has the same name as the wife of Aegeus, another counterpart of the sea god. The whole story is probably derived by Pausanias from some of the Delphic guides who told it à propos of one of the Tarentine dedications.²

The second version of the foundation-oracle of Tarentum is more plausible on two accounts.³ At least it offers a prophecy in verse, and the name of Phalanthus is not necessarily inherent in this account. According to it, the Partheniae originally wished to settle in the territory between Corinth and Sicyon. They asked Delphi for sanction to settle there. The answer was

'Fair indeed is the space between Corinth and Sicyon; you will not live there, not even if you were all of bronze. Mark Satyrion and the gleaming water of Taras and the harbour on the left and where the goat loves the briny surge, dipping the tip of his hoary beard. There make Tarentum mounted on Satyrion.'

When the Partheniae heard this answer and failed to understand it, the Pythia gave a more open prophecy:

'I have given you Satyrion and Tarentum a rich country to dwell in and to be a plague to the Iapygians.'

This account squares better with the earliest legends of Tarentum, in that it connects the origin of the colony with the Corinthian Gulf. Also though it is addressed to a founder in the singular, he need not be the mythical Phalanthus, but the

¹ Cf. Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte*, Vol. I, page 406, Note 1.

² Vide Justin, III, iv, 12 ff. for a story involving Phalanthus and a fictitious Delphic oracle.

³ D. S. VIII, xxi. 3. Antiochus ap. Strabo, VI, C. 279. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* XIX, frag. 1. Cf. Athen. V, 219 A. Zenob. III, 57. Liban. *Épist.* 371. Suidas, s. v. εἰ τὸ μέσον κτήσας. The first line was popularly converted into a proverb in various forms.

actual founder whoever he was. The original situation of Tarentum is described exactly on the peninsula with a harbour on either side.¹ The 'goat, dipping his hoary beard,' was explained as a reference to a wild olive tree which stood by one harbour with its offshoots touching the water. The Greek name for these was Epitragos which suggested the word 'he-goat' (Tragos) as a pun. This is rather feeble, but need not be rejected as unhistoric on that account. Generally it is not unlike the reference in the oracle about Byzantium which we have already accepted as genuine. If, however, it is taken to be spurious, at least it need not be dated late. There are no traces of the accretion of legends in it. The only superfluity in the story is the occurrence of two oracular responses. For the second, apart from its allusion to the Iapygian native inhabitants adds nothing to the first: it is only more intelligible to the extent that it omits the riddling allusion to the he-goat. Perhaps the original oracle contained parts of both: it would be easy to put them together so as to omit the punning reference, which could then be treated as an early accretion. But such speculations are not finally convincing and cannot be confirmed by independent evidence.

Finally, there remains one colony which lay in a different direction from Magna Graecia, but was intimately connected with Delphi from its very foundation, as tradition told. This was Cyrene, the most important city which the Greeks founded in Africa. Its origin dated back to the last quarter of the seventh century, when its settlers came from the island of Thera, and occupied the site of Cyrene after a couple of previous spots had proved unsuitable.

The story has come down in two different versions, both recorded by Herodotus,² one derived from Cyrene, and the other from its mother city, Thera. The basic difference between them is that the Theraeans represented the colony as enjoined by the Pythia generally on their island: the Cyrenaeans laid the emphasis on the personal responsibility of Battus,

¹ For Satyrion as a local name, cf. Smith, *Dictionary of Class. Geogr.* II, p. 1101.

² IV, cl ff. Pind. *Pyth.* IV, 4 ff. V, 55 ff. Cf. Callimach. *Hymn.* II, 65. Plut. *Moral.* 405 B. Aristotle, frag. 485 and Anaxandrides (*F. G. H.* Vol. III, p. 106, frag. 4) = Schol. Aristoph. *Plut.* 925. Heraclides, *de reb. publ.* IV, 1. Suidas s.v. *Βάττου σίλφωον*. Justin, XIII, vii, 1 ff. Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* IV, 1. On the oracles about Cyrene, see particularly Malten, *Kyrene*, pp. 196 ff., where among other points the occurrence of Dorian dialect in the responses as preserved is discussed.

the founder of their local dynasty. The Theraean account said that Grinnus, the king of the island, was visiting Delphi with a hecatomb for Apollo. When he made a general enquiry from the oracle, the answer was that he should found a city in Libya. Grinnus protested that he was too old to undertake the task and suggested for it one Battus, the son of Polymnestus, who belonged to the Minyan inhabitants of Thera and happened to be on the embassy. Nothing more was done about it at the time, and, according to the story, there followed seven years of drought on Thera. When the inhabitants sought the help of Delphi, the Pythia once more enjoined on them the sending of a colony to Libya, and after various enquiries the Theraeans sent a quota allotted from each of their communities under the leadership of Battus.

The Cyrenaeen account omitted Grinnus' part in the action. Instead, Battus, whom they described as feeble-voiced and stammering from birth, went to Delphi as soon as he grew to manhood, and asked for a remedy for his voice. The Pythia replied ¹

'Battus, you have come for a voice. But King Phoebus Apollo sends you as a founder of a colony to Libya, the nurse of flocks.'

Battus objected to this oracle and protested his incapacity for the task, but Apollo could not be induced to give a different answer. As in the story of the prophecy to Grinnus an interval occurred, in which the displeasure of the gods was shown by famine in Thera. According to the Cyrenaeen account the Pythia explicitly prescribed a colony to Libya led by Battus as the remedy. He was sent out, and when he lost heart and attempted to return the Theraeans expelled him by force.

Herodotus already had applied an analytic criticism to this legend, and had found the correct solution which disclosed its origin. He tells us that the Libyan name for 'king' was 'battos'. Hence he conjectured that Battus' original name had been something different, and that he acquired this cognomen simply from the oracle and his kingship in Africa. When the Pythia used the name, she was prophetically foreseeing the title and position which he was fated later to hold. Evidently Herodotus was not aware of any other name for Battus, but his elder contemporary Pindar supplies the omission accord-

¹ Herod. 1 c. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 83. Schol. Callim. *Hymn* II, 76.

ing to him and the later local historians of Cyrene, Battus' original name was Aristoteles, and there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of this tradition. It confirms exactly Herodotus' hypothesis, that the name Battus was only derived from the founder of Cyrene's native title. The only omission on Herodotus' part was that he failed to press his analysis to the obvious conclusion. If the name Battus was simply acquired in Africa, it could have had no relation to a defect in Aristoteles' speech. In fact, any suggestion that he was a stammerer was evidently derived from his use of this name, whose sound suggested Greek words for stammering. The whole story of Battus' visit to Delphi to seek a cure for his voice is a figment based on the apparent derivation of the title. No doubt, judging from his later relations with Cyrene, the Pythian Apollo had given the original expedition his blessing, but the exact circumstances have been so overlaid with legend that we cannot now recover them.

An interesting variation on this foundation-oracle is preserved by Diodorus Siculus.¹ It runs

'Battus, you have come for a voice. But King Phoebus Apollo sends you to Libya of the fair crown to rule broad Cyrene and to have a kingly power. There savages wearing sheepskin cloaks will attack you, whenever you land on Libya. But by praying to Zeus and to Pallas, the grey-eyed goddess, who fights with the spear, and to the son of Zeus, Phoebus of the unshorn hair, you will have the upper hand in victory and will rule as king over blessed Libya of the fair crown, you yourself and your family. Phoebus Apollo guides you.'

This version is obviously much more elaborate and sophisticated than the Herodotean oracle to Battus. It retains the first line of the earlier oracle, to indicate the same purpose in Aristoteles' consultation, but the rest of the prophecy is designed to lay great emphasis on the kingship of Battus and his dynasty. The Herodotean oracle (apart from the meaning which Herodotus tried mistakenly to read into the use of the name Battus), contained no implication that the leader of the colony would become a king and found a dynasty. It was quite abnormal for Greek colonies to be ruled in that way, and evidently the kingship arose in Cyrene principally through inter-marriage with

the Libyan inhabitants and adoption of their method of government along with its title. Such a procedure had never been prophesied by the Pythia, but at some much later date the traditional foundation-oracle was modified to incorporate a prediction of the dynasty. The successors of the original Battus had become powerful monarchs of great wealth, but their positions as rulers of the turbulent Cyrenaeans was often precarious. Hence it seems likely that the Delphic authorities were led to make a pronouncement in the dynasty's favour from respect for their wealth and sympathy with their political difficulties. The occurrence in this oracle of fairly precise directions for worship suggests that it must have been produced by some priestly forger. For its date, we may conjecture it fell in the years between 510 and 480 B.C.¹ when Battus the Fourth had re-established the sovereignty for the last time. Their pro-Persian sympathies at this period would have drawn him and Delphi closer together.

Returning to the traditional history of Cyrene, it was said that the settlers under Battus occupied an island called Platea off the Libyan coast. But after two years' residence, they were so unfortunate that, leaving one of their number behind, all the rest sailed away to Delphi and protested that they were inhabiting Libya, but their settlement showed no sign of prospering. The Pythia answered ironically:²

'If you know Libya, the nurse of flocks, better than I do, when you have not gone there, and I have, I admire exceedingly your wisdom.'

This was a shrewd blow. The island of Platea, as it was not part of the Libyan mainland, was not taken to count for the purpose of the original prophecy. The settlers were not released from their obligation, but were sent back to try again at a new site on the mainland itself. There after yet another attempt they founded the city known as Cyrene which prospered greatly.

¹ Studniczka (*Kyrene*, p. 98) also dates the oracle about 500 B.C. because of the title 'of the fair crown'—only appropriate after the Cyrenaeans had acquired fame for agonistic success. But he takes this to be the original version and that in Herodotus a mere abridgement. Pindar (*Pyth.* IV, 62) takes it that the oracle conferred kingship on Battus.

² Herod. elvii Plut. *Moral.* 408A. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 84. If the allusion in the oracle is explicitly to Apollo's journey to Libya with the nymph Cyrene, the response is not authentic as the myth would date after the founding of Cyrene. For its connection with Delphi, see Malten, *Kyrene*, passim.

This tradition has no reasons against its historicity. The story of the three places which the settlers tried is not likely to have been invented, and the oracle with no reference to Battus under that name might well have been delivered to Aristoteles himself. If so, one must admire the succinct and pointed style of the 7th-century oracle-writer. The prophecy is one of the most effective pieces of literature which Delphi had left us. In contrast Menecles of Barca,¹ a Hellenistic writer on local Libyan history, preserved what appears to have been framed as an alternative version of this oracle, but it is obscure and lacking in the pointed brevity of Herodotus' response. As it is addressed to Battus under that name it cannot well be authentic.

The usual legend described Battus as acquiring natural freedom of speech after he had founded his colony. This was the logical sequel to the oracle concerning his voice. One special version of it is worth separate notice. Pausanias in describing a Cyrenaean dedication at Delphi, consisting of Battus in a chariot, mentions the recovery of his voice.² 'When he was going over the territory of Cyrene in the most distant parts of it which were still desert, he saw a lion, and the fear occasioned by the sight compelled him to a clear and loud shout.' The story is old, for Pindar alludes to it in his fifth *Pythian Ode*, where with typical care for dignity he lays all the emphasis on the fact that Battus' shout frightened the lion, not that Battus was himself afraid. But the notion that an impediment in the speech could be cured by a sudden shock is exactly paralleled by the Delphic story about the dumb son of King Croesus. Probably, if the Lydian instance is historic, the motive had been transferred from there to the Cyrenaean legend, and became one of the stock tales told by the guides at Delphi about Battus' dedication.

Pindar also reminds us in his fourth *Pythian Ode* that Cyrene had another tradition of a prophecy concerning its origin. This represented the foundation of Cyrene as foretold in heroic times. When the Argonauts in their voyage were driven to the shore of Libya they encountered a son of Poseidon, Eurypylus, dwelling there, who offered them a guest-gift. This took

¹ Schol. Vet. Pind. *Pyth.* IV, 10. Menecles in a rationalistic account of Battus' career assigned the response incorrectly to the time before his first settlement in Platea. Cf. Parke in *Hermathena*, XXVII, pp. 72 ff.

² Paus. X, xv, 7. Pind. *Pyth.* V, 60. Schol. Callim. *Hymn.* II, 65.

the unexpected form of a clod of earth, but, though unattractive, it was accepted by Euphemus, the Minyan. Of course, in accordance with the traditional motive, which we have already met, the clod symbolized the rights of sovereignty over the land from which it was taken. Euphemus either put it into the sea near Thera or let it be washed overboard there. Hence the sovereignty of Libya was inherited by Battus, a distant descendant of Euphemus and a native of Thera.

This legend appears in Pindar and Apollonius Rhodius.¹ It is not inconsistent with the rest of the Battus legends, but acts as an epic counterpart to them. It may have originated quite early in the history of Cyrene. At any rate a kind of variant on it survives which appears to have been fabricated to assist Dorieus' attempt to colonize Cinyps.²

The relations of Delphi with Cyrene continued to be strong throughout the sixth century. In the reign of Battus II, the Fortunate, the Cyrenaeans decided to divide up some of their territory into lots, and invite all the Greeks to come and settle on them. This scheme to increase the population of Cyrenaica received the blessing of Apollo. In reply to some enquiry whether the allotment would thrive, the Pythia gave the enterprise a first-class advertisement.³

*'Whoever comes to lovely Libya too late for the allotment of land,
I say that he will indeed regret it'*

These verses must have served as a useful slogan for we are told that a great host of applicants assembled at Cyrene.

But all was not well with the constitution of Cyrene. The unhellenic monarchy which possessed the monopoly of the silphium trade, the chief asset of the country, was ill suited to the growing spirit of democracy and the expansion of commerce. Two of the kings of Cyrene were assassinated in succession, and when Battus III, the Lame, acceded, the people sent to consult Delphi under what kind of constitution they could best dwell.⁴ The Pythia bade them send to Mantinea and fetch an arbitrator from there. There is some evidence of other Mantinean arbitrations, so perhaps the city had a special reputation

¹ Pindar, *Pyth* IV, 9 ff with Scholia. Apoll Rhod IV, 1547 ff, 1731 ff.

² Cf. *infra* p. 170 and see Malten, *Kyrene*, pp. 132 ff.

³ Herod IV, clxx, 2. *Anthol Graec* XIV, 85.

⁴ Herod IV, clxx, ff. *Ox Pap* 1367, col. 1, 20.

for this kind of work.¹ In any case Demonax was sent to Cyrene and reorganized the people on a new tribal basis, while reducing the function of the king to certain ritual forms. This democratic change continued in force till the next reign, when Arcesilaus III attempted a reaction, but was driven into exile. He took refuge in Samos and with Persian help gathered a large army to force his restoration. He consulted the Pythia and was told

'As far as four Battuses and four Arcesilauses, eight generations of men, Loxias grants you to be kings in Cyrene Farther than that he does not advise you even to attempt to reign Do, however, return to your native land and remain quiet. But if you shall find the kiln full of jars, do not roast up the jars, but send them down the wind Yet if you shall roast up the kiln, do not enter the place with water on both sides Or else you will die and the bull in his pride.'

This elaborate oracle is recorded by Herodotus in a prose paraphrase, but the original verses can be traced vaguely under its poetic wording. The prophecy must be *post eventum*. Its precise statement of the length of the dynasty corresponded exactly to the historic facts. Arcesilaus III had two successors, bringing the total of the kings to eight, alternately named Battus and Arcesilaus. Also the warning to Arcesilaus himself was easily interpreted in conjunction with his later history. He did not 'remain quiet' after his restoration, but persecuted his former opponents until finally a number of them took refuge in a tower, where Arcesilaus caused them to be roasted alive. The Herodotean account alleges that he then saw that he had fulfilled the first part of the oracle, and retired from Cyrene, because it could be regarded as lying between two streams. He took refuge in Barca, which somehow also complied with the oracle.² There he was assassinated in company with the local king, Alazeir, who must be identified as the 'bull in his pride' of the prophecy.

Clearly the oracle was built up on a basis of the facts after the event. The burning of the political opponents and the assassination in Barca are historic. The forger invented the queer ambiguity of the place between two streams, and attri-

¹ See Busolt, *Gr. Ges.* I, p. 490, note 1.

² How is not quite clear. 'Auffippuros' would naturally suggest an island. Studniczka (*Kyrene*, 99) takes it of the agora where Arcesilaus was murdered—I.e. with the people howling round it. But this is curiously far-fetched for a *post eventum* prophecy.

buted a misinterpretation of it to Arcesilaus as the motive for his fatal retirement to Barca. The whole was put together after the fall of the dynasty of Battus, and the motive was evidently to justify the Delphic oracle. Arcesilaus III must originally have received a favourable response from the Pythia, and the oracle prophesying kingship for Battus and his family was evidently part of the propaganda on his behalf at this time. But when the dynasty fell, Delphi preferred to represent it, that the Pythia had foreseen what occurred and given Arcesilaus III a warning which he first forgot and then misunderstood. We shall see how, similarly, Delphi was constrained to recast the story of Croesus to explain away the support which Apollo had given him before his fall. As for the dynasty of Battus, later generations preferred a more moralizing version of the Pythia's warning. Diodorus Siculus¹ recorded it in the form that the oracle told Arcesilaus, when he complained of his misfortunes, that it was the wrath of the gods, because the later kings had not ruled in the same way as Battus I.

We have followed down the history of Cyrene to the fall of its monarchy in the 5th century B.C., because it is a specially good example of the continuous relations maintained by Delphi with a colony, which in this instance was particularly isolated from the rest of the Greek world.² If we turn back to summarize Delphic influence in founding colonies, the first point to note is that only in a minority of instances we have been led to accept the foundation-oracle as genuine.³ Our arguments have been drawn from the internal character of the responses and their accompanying legends. But if we apply them to what is known of Greek colonization, the results are consistent enough to justify us in believing that the internal evidence is approximately correct. We have not found any strong grounds for crediting Delphi with inspiring any settlements before the latter half of the eighth century. This is reasonable enough as before that date any evidence on Greek history is very precarious, and at such a primitive period Delphi was not likely

¹ VIII, xxx

² For what was apparently a later instance of Delphic control of Cyrene, cf. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Sitzb. Preuss. Akad.* 1927, pp. 170 ff. fragments of a sacred law authorized by the Pythian Apollo.

³ For instances of oracles on the foundation of colonies discussed later, see p. 160, Phocaea and Corsica, p. 170, Dorieus and Heraclea, p. 164, Miltiades and the Chersonese, p. 201, Athens and Thurii, p. 202, Athens and Amphipolis, p. 206, Sparta and Heraclea in Trachis.

to have acquired the general recognition which later was accorded to it. In the eighth century the only colonies which we have ascribed to the Pythia are situated in Sicily and South Italy and were dispatched from states in the near neighbourhood of Delphi, such as Achaea, Corinth or Euboea. With the beginning of the seventh century some enquirers come from further afield in the Aegean and beyond—Paros, Thera and Rhodes. Also the colonies are sent not only to the West, but to North Africa and to the Hellespontine region. It is not until the latter part of the seventh century that prospective colonists came to enquire at Delphi from Asia Minor,¹ and even then they seem to have been few. This gradual spread of Delphic authority in the two centuries of colonization is quite in accordance with historic probability. Also the gaps and silences in our evidence are apparently not entirely accidental. For instance, the many important colonies of Miletus in the Hellespontine region and the Black Sea are never associated with Delphi, except one founded by exiles. They have frequent connections with Apollo, but there is no safe ground for identifying this as the Pythian Apollo. Miletus had in the nearby temple at Branchidae an Apolline oracle, which may well have been the authority for sending out the various expeditions.² This silence in our tradition can, then, be taken to mean that the Pythia was not consulted by Miletus on the subject of colonies, because her sphere of operations lay quite apart from the direction of Delphi, and the Delphic oracle itself was not much consulted by Ionian enquirers in such early periods. In the West most of the colonies of the Achaeans, Corinthians, and Chalcidians have some connection with Delphi: the exceptions such as Metapontum and Sybaris can probably be explained otherwise, as we have seen. There remain a few important colonies in the West, such as Locri, Selinus, and Acragas, which are never proved to have been authorized by Pythian oracles: but as Locri at least had later associations with Delphi, it is probable that these gaps in our evidence are simply accidental and Delphi had also given her approval to some of these foundations.

¹ The earliest reference is to Cretines receiving an oracle when he was refounding Sinope in 670 B.C. He and his partner Coss were exiles from Miletus. Plut. *Moral* 408A. Mueller, *Geogr. Graec. Min.* I, 236. But the reading in Plutarch is doubtful.

² Cf. e.g. Rehm, *Das Delphinion in Milet*, No. 155.

CHAPTER III

THE ORACLE AND THE MESSENIAN WARS

THE relations of the Delphic oracle to the general history of Greece is a subject which varies greatly from one period to another in the amount of evidence available and in the comprehensiveness of the account which can be based on it. This changing quality in the subject is partly the result of our changes of sources, but also corresponds to some extent to the alterations in the oracle's activity at different times. In the earlier periods before 550 B.C. it is not possible to give a chronological narrative of the policy of the Delphic authorities. Our information is grouped round a few particular subjects or events. The chief of these subjects has already been discussed, the function of the oracle in colonization. Its other activities are best treated in separate compartments: the relations of the oracle to the Messenian War, to the Lacedaemonian state, to the Amphictyony, and to the tyrants. In each of these fields there is a great deal that is mythical or uncertain, especially in the dealings of the Messenians with Delphi.

The only genuine authority for the Messenian wars was the poet Tyrtaeus, who was contemporary with the second (the Messenian revolt) and made occasional allusions to the earlier war in his elegies. So far as is known, he never mentioned Delphi in connection with either struggle, and it is evident on examination that all the alleged Delphic oracles connected with these events are later inventions.

The bare facts seem to have been that the Spartans in the last quarter of the eighth century B.C. succeeded after a long struggle in conquering the non-Dorian people, who dwelt in the rich plain of Messenia. About a century later the Messenians who had been reduced to serfdom revolted and for many years maintained themselves in some mountain strongholds such as Ithome and Eira. At last they were reduced once more to the same serfdom, in which they remained (except for a revolt in the fifth century) till in 370 B.C. Epaminondas after defeating the Spartans at Leuctra reconstituted the state of Messenia, as

a thorn in the side of his enemies. The genuine traditions of Messenia and its wars had practically vanished in their three hundred and fifty years of slavery. But the restoration of Messenia produced a fresh outcrop of legends to take their place. Some were invented by well wishers of Sparta and were intended to support the Spartan claim to recover what they had lost. Others were from the Messenian side, to fill adequately the painful gap in their country's history and attach a sentimental interest to the failures of the past. The Delphic oracle could conveniently be made to play a part in either process. The romantic aspect particularly appealed to various Hellenistic authors who, without any special loyalties to the Messenians, treated the subject from their side. Our later compilers have mostly drawn on these sources.

We have seen already how the story of the return of the Heraclids had early been accepted in Greece because it accounted satisfactorily for the dominance of the Dorians in the Peloponnese. As part of this saga, Sparta had given currency to the tradition that Cresphontes was one of three Heraclid brothers who had divided their ancestral heritage between them, and that he had founded the kingdom of Messenia. Actually the dynasty of Messenia had never been Dorian, but the supposition that the Spartans had taken over the share of Cresphontes, when his line had died out, helped to justify their occupation of Messenia.

Shortly after Leuctra, in 366 B.C., we find Isocrates¹ producing an improved version of this legend with the Delphic oracle figuring prominently. According to the speech which he wrote as a pamphlet for King Archidamus, Cresphontes had been killed by his treacherous subjects, in spite of an oath of loyalty. His sons had fled to Sparta seeking help and offering Messenia in return, and when consulted by Sparta the Delphic oracle had instructed them to accept the offer and avenge the wronged. Further, when the war had broken out and was being prolonged, both sides consulted Delphi on the method of achieving victory. The Pythia would not answer the Messenians because their cause was not just, but informed the Spartans of the correct sacrifices to offer and allies to ask for aid.

This story is nothing but a feeble and malicious invention

to back up the Spartan claim to recover Messenia. There already existed some legends about the murder of Cresphontes by his own kinsmen.¹ Isocrates has recast them to produce a special argument. The weakness of the story is shown by the failure to quote an actual oracle, and by the hopeless chronology, which would date the conquest of Messenia not quite a generation after the return of the Heraclids. Perhaps Isocrates treated the pamphlet as a rhetorical exercise in presenting a case, and so did not care that his statements were historically unsound. His famous pupil, Ephorus, the historian, appears to have taken over the motive of Cresphontes' murder, but he evaded the chronological difficulty by supposing a long period of unrest in Messenia before the Spartan invasion. There is no evidence that he introduced the Delphic oracle into his narrative.

The course of the Messenian wars, as usually pictured after the restoration of Messenia, is best known from Pausanias. Also the same matter, so far as concerns the First War, occurs in citations from Diodorus Siculus and in their common origin both apparently go back to one Myron of Priene, a rhetorical romancer of Hellenistic times. Many of his incidents are simply fiction, not meant to have any deep significance, but merely to add interest to the narrative. For instance, when they were driven into Ithome, the Messenians send one Tisis, a prophet, to consult Delphi.² On his way back he is ambushed and wounded by the Spartans, but a supernatural voice interposes to rescue him. At a mysterious shout—'Let the oracle-bearer go'—the Spartans release him and he delivers his message to the king, and shortly after dies of his wounds. The oracle, in tragic trimeters, reads

*'Offer in sacrifice by night to the deities of the nether world a maiden unspotted chosen by lot from the blood of the sons of Aepytus. But if you have failed in this, then sacrifice from some one else who offers her willingly for slaughter, and you will have victory in war and strength.'*³

The oracle was acted on, and the lot fell on a daughter of one Lyciscus who belonged to the royal house of the Aepytidae. But a seer, named Epebolus, forbade her to be sacrificed,

¹ Cf. Eur. frag. 452-62 (Nauck).

² Paus. IV, ix, 3 ff.

³ The last clause can be added from the paraphrase in D. S. VIII, viii.

as he declared she was supposititious. So the Messenians had to take the alternative prescribed by the Pythia, and look for a maiden to be offered willingly. Aristodemus, also an Aepytid, made the offer of his daughter, but at once her fiancé disputed the father's right to give her in sacrifice, asserting that his claim on her was the stronger. When this appeal failed, he alleged that the girl was with child by him. The father in a fury slew his daughter and demonstrated that she was not pregnant. Whereupon the seer alleged that another maiden must be produced, and in the prescribed manner sacrificed to the gods, but the Messenians were so shocked at what had happened, that they decided to rest satisfied with the sacrifice that had been made. Thus they left the oracle unfulfilled and prepared the way for disaster.

This melodramatic story is merely imported into the Messenian war to thrill the pulse of the reader. It is an amplified version of the old legendary motive—the oracle which requires a maiden victim, and the father who must offer her. An almost exact parallel occurred in another author, Asclepiades of Myrlea,¹ who told the same story in a Cretan setting, and there is also extant an alternative version of this oracle, which shows an earlier stage in the evolution of the story. Oenomaus, the bitter critic of the oracles, quoted this couple of hexameter lines as the prophecy given to the Messenians:

*'The lot calls for a virgin of the sons of Aepytus, whom you might give to the deities of the nether world, and you would save Ithome'*²

(Through its reference to Ithome it is clear that this version also was supposed to have been delivered to the Messenians at the same point in the war as the previous oracle—when they were confined to the mountain itself.) The noticeable difference here is that there is no suggestion of alternative victims, either chosen by lot or offered voluntarily. Oenomaus sometimes quotes his oracles incompletely, but these two lines seem to need no further addition, and preclude the necessity of a virgin put forward by her father. The story as told in this version is not extant. But presumably it lacked all the amplifications introduced by Aristodemus' offer of his daughter. Some virgin was merely selected by lot, but whether actually sacrificed

¹ Mueller, *F H G III*, p. 300 = Parthen *Erat* 35

² Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P E V*, 221D

or not, the ritual was null and void in some way which was doubtless explained, so as to account for the subsequent fall of Ithome

Early commentators, such as Wolff and Lobeck, correctly supposed that this was the earlier version of the oracle. It would be rash, however, to assign priority to it on the ground that it is in hexameters while the oracle found in Pausanias is in trimeters. Both oracles were invented long after the events, probably not before the fourth century, and at such a period the metre is no criterion of earlier or later date. Also Wolff is ingenuous in arguing that the hexameter version must be genuine, because Oenomaus would not have made his case ridiculous by deriding a spurious oracle as if it were authentic. But here Oenomaus was no wiser than the men of his own generation. If this prophecy was generally counted as historical in the second century A.D., he did not attempt to apply principles of higher criticism, but was content to hold it up to ridicule on its popular valuation. The true criterion of earlier date is the simpler character of the Oenomaus version: the added alternative in the Pausanias version is an accretion which the story had acquired when retold.

The fall of Ithome in the twentieth year of the war is decorated with a further cluster of Delphic oracles. One of them¹ is merely a late concoction of some Hellenistic rhetorician designed to introduce another exciting episode into the narrative: we need not consider it in detail here. The other two have a different interest. They are a pair of companion oracles addressed to the Spartans and Messenians and were evidently composed after the restoration of Messenia, so as to suggest that the country's history had followed a symmetrical scheme. The Spartans had propagated a legend that the Heraclid ancestor of the Messenian dynasty, Cresphontes, had obtained this share in the Peloponnese by a trick which he played on his kinsmen when they were dividing up their conquests. These companion oracles informed both sides that, as Messenia had been won by deceit, so it would fall to Sparta by deceit. The oracle to the Messenians told them further

'To those who first set up around the altar tripods ten times ten

¹ PAUS. IV, xii. D. S. VIII, xiii, 2. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. P. E. V, 221 C. Cf. Parke in *Hermathena*, XXVII, pp. 66 ff.

in number dedicated to Zeus of Ithome, the god gives with glory of war the land of Messenia For Zeus has willed it Do as fate directs, but destruction comes on some men before others'

The Messenians thereupon proceed to make a hundred tripods of wood, as they had not enough bronze—the usual material. But while they were confident that the secret talisman for victory was in their power, a Delphian had divulged the contents of the oracle to the Spartans. A crafty Spartan, named Oebalus, made a hundred tripods of clay, and disguising himself as a hunter succeeded in smuggling them into the temple of Zeus on Mount Ithome, where he dedicated them. Thus the oracle was fulfilled and the Messenians were struck with despair on finding the clay tripods in the temple. Within a year they fled from Ithome leaving Messenia to the Spartans.

The motive in this story is a traditional one. The god prescribes a hard condition which can be easily fulfilled in some unexpected manner, and the party which seems most handicapped finds the required solution. Here in association with the famous temple of Zeus of Ithome it is possible that the legend is old. It might even have arisen from the presence of many diminutive tripods offered to the god in primitive times. For if such a collection did exist on Mount Ithome, the story of the oracle may have been invented to provide the explanation.

In the cryptic final line Pausanias¹ saw a prophecy of Leuctra. Destruction would come soon on Messenia, but also on Sparta, though late. This interpretation fits well, and while one could just reject the words as oracular moralizing, the more precise explanation seems preferable. Pausanias was probably right in the sense (which he did not intend) that the present form of the oracle was composed after Leuctra with a passing allusion to it. If so, the pair of companion oracles are probably somewhat earlier in date than the other oracles in Pausanias, which are mere rhetorical inventions designed to embellish particular incidents.

In the revolt of the Messenians a century later the Delphic oracle was famous for having contributed one great asset to the Spartan side. According to the late tradition,² the Spartans

¹ IV, xxvi, 4.

² Plato, *Lysis*, 629 with Scholia. Strabo, VIII, C 362. Paus IV, xv, 6. Justin, III, v. 4. Suidas, s.v. *Tupraios*. For a recent discussion cf. E. Schwartz *Philologus*, XCII, 19 ff.

when they consulted Delphi on the outcome of the war were told to ask the Athenians for a general, and in response to this request were given Tyrtaeus. This legend does not appear before the mid fourth century, when after the restoration of Messenia the poems of Tyrtaeus appear for the first time to have been circulated generally in Greece. At this period Athens was in alliance with Sparta and the belief may have been deliberately fostered that the poet who inspired the Spartans to victory in the Second Messenian War had really been an Athenian. Later the story was distorted in various ways. It was said that Tyrtaeus had been lame or a schoolmaster, and that the Athenians had offered him as general in derision at the Spartan request, but that though unable to fight he had brought victory by the martial power of his verses alone. This version could be used to enhance the credit of Apollo by suggesting that the most unlikely people could become instruments of fate by his direction.

Actually, the facts must have been quite different. The poems of Tyrtaeus, as fragmentarily extant, show well enough that he was a native Spartiate, not an Athenian. The story told about him began as political propaganda, influenced perhaps by the fact that the Athenians had assisted the Spartans in the Messenian revolt of 464 B.C. It remained a popular tale, and was never enhanced by the fabrication of the exact words of the Pythia.

On the Messenian side Aristomenes was the great hero of the saga which was built up in Hellenistic times round the seventh-century revolt. His prowess, as Pausanias says, was made as brilliant as that of Achilles in the *Iliad*. Evidently most of the stories told of him were romances. But there was a reason why he should bulk so large in the accounts produced from the middle of the fourth century B.C. onwards. He had a strange connection with the battle of Leuctra (371 B.C.), which led to the restoration of Messenia. Just before the battle the Thebans received an oracle from Trophonius, that they should take into battle the shield of Aristomenes which was preserved as a dedication in his shrine.¹ This was done, and after a crushing victory the Thebans replaced the shield in the sanctuary. These facts are put beyond question by a contemporary inscription

¹ Paus. IV, xxxii, 5. I G VII, 2462

recording the event. Whether the shield which in the fourth century B.C. was regarded as a dedication of Aristomenes had really been presented by him is a more doubtful matter. It is evident from ancient descriptions of Greek temples that they often contained archaic dedications, which the authorities sanguinely attributed to the famous names of heroic times. The ascription to Aristomenes might even have been invented just before Leuctra for the special occasion, and might have been the outcome of that Theban interest in the Messenians which led to their immediate restoration. But it is more likely that behind all the accretions of legend Aristomenes was a historic character and he may actually have visited Lebadea on some occasion, consulted Trophonius, and left a shield as a dedication. At any rate the kind of ornament which Pausanias describes as having seen himself on the shield would have been typical of the period in which Aristomenes lived.¹

Pausanias could tell the story of the circumstances in which the shield had been dedicated. They were obviously somewhat fabulous and include a response of the Delphic oracle, which acts as a convenient *deus ex machina* to solve the problem of connecting Aristomenes and Trophonius. Aristomenes, as we are told, on one occasion went too far ahead on the field of battle. A soothsayer had warned him not to pass a certain wild pear-tree, in whose branches he saw that Castor and Polydeuces the heroes of Sparta, were seated invisible to the ordinary human eye. In consequence of his over-confidence Aristomenes lost his shield in the battle, and later went to Delphi to enquire how he could recover it. For the loss was counted a great disgrace in Greek warfare. The Pythia instructed him to go to the shrine of Trophonius, where he found it and returned with it to fight in Messenia. When the revolt was ultimately crushed Aristomenes revisited Lebadea and left his shield as a dedication to Trophonius.

The one point left obscure in the story is how the shield lost in battle in Laconia found its way to Boeotia. We are left to suppose that either a Spartan had found it and dedicated it to Trophonius, or else it had come by supernatural means. But evidently the whole story of the loss of the shield, the consul-

¹ Paus. IV, xvi, 7. Cf. the bronze votive shield from the Idaean cave in Crete, now in the Candia Museum.

tation of Delphi, and the recovery of the shield was a detailed fiction invented to explain its subsequent presence at Lebadea and to connect it with the Messenian revolt. If Aristomenes dedicated the shield there at all, it was probably before the war or subsequently to it as an exile.

Only one Delphic oracle is quoted *in extenso* on the Messenian revolt. It is probably a forgery, but as the forger can be identified with some probability, it has a certain interest. According to Pausanias¹ after their defeat at the battle of the Great Trench, Aristomenes and the prophet, Theoclus, consulted Apollo and were told

'Whenever a he-goat shall drink the eddying water of Neda, no longer do I guard Messenia, for destruction is nigh.'

The river Neda is the northern boundary of Messenia. But of course the oracle did not mean anything so obvious as that an ordinary he-goat would drink from it. As in the foundation-oracle of Tarentum² there is a pun in the word which could mean either a he-goat or a wild fig-tree. Such a tree was growing on the banks of the Neda with its stem curved, so that tips of its leaves just touched the water. The prophet found it and saw that the prophecy was fulfilled. He told Aristomenes, but while they both admitted that the doom of Messenia was now fixed, they decided to keep it secret from the other Messenians.

The sequel is a curious one. The Messenians, we are told, possessed a secret thing, the 'luck' of Messenia on whose preservation the fate of the people depended. If it were destroyed, the people were lost beyond recovery; if it were saved, they would ultimately be restored. This fate was foretold in the oracles of Lycus, the son of Pandion. So Aristomenes, convinced by the prophecy about the he-goat that the Spartans would soon capture Messenia, buried the 'luck' of the Messenians by night on a deserted mountain.

The significant feature in this story is the reference to the oracles of Lycus, the son of Pandion.³ We may well ask what the prophet son of an Attic king is doing in Messenian legend. The answer is clear. Some time after the restoration of Messenia one Methapus, an Athenian, settled in Messenia at Andania. Here he established mysteries in honour of Demeter and Per-

¹ IV, xx, 1 Suidas s. *τράγος*

Cf Paus IV, 1, 5 ff, xxv, 6 ff Cf Frazer, *Pausanias*, Vol III, p 407

- Cf supra p 78

sephone, evidently borrowed from the Eleusinian model. To make them more acceptable, he managed to link them up with primitive Messenian history and put about the story that they had originally been founded by Caucon, a mythical king of Messenia, improved by Lycus the son of Pandion, who had visited Messenia in the fabulous past, and finally restored and amplified by Methapus himself. The whole tradition is sanctimonious humbug, invented by Methapus to give his cult a dignified air of antiquity. In the disturbed state of Messenia after three hundred and fifty years of subjection to Sparta its primitive past was so obscure that it was at the mercy of charlatans. Methapus must have found it easy enough to pass off his innovations as improved revivals of ancient customs. He recorded his achievement proudly in a verse epitaph:

'I sanctified houses of Hermes and paths of holy Demeter and the first born Maiden, where they say that Messenia set up a festival to the Great Goddesses taught by Caucon, seed of the famous son of Phlyus. I wondered to find that Lycus the son of Pandion had established the whole rites of Attica in full completeness by trusty Andania'

Methapus in the mysteries of his Great Goddesses claimed no doubt to exhibit to the fully initiate the 'luck' of Messenia which prophecies of Lycus had mentioned. For this purpose he had to explain its preservation till his own day and he used the legend, no doubt invented by himself, that Aristomenes also had known these oracles and had hidden the sacred thing. To complete the story by giving a particular occasion for the hiding he forged the Delphic oracle on the he-goat, this time taking as his model the response about Tarentum, just as he had also forged all the oracles of Lycus. Pausanias, who prided himself on his acquaintance with the books of soothsayers, had never read the works of Lycus, as he regretfully admits. The reason obviously was that Lycus was a myth and his alleged works were a monopoly of Methapus, which were never released for circulation.

We can confidently name Methapus, the Athenian, as the forger of the last oracle connected with the Messenian revolt. Pausanias rightly calls him in a suggestive phrase 'one who put together all manner of things'. He may also have put together some of the other fictitious oracles which we have already

considered, but one cannot see that they would be useful to support his line of business

Aristomenes is mentioned in connection with Delphi on one occasion after the failure of the revolt.¹ He came, an exile, to consult the oracle, whose reply is not recorded. But at the same time Damagetus, king of Ialysus in Rhodes, was at Delphi enquiring whom he should marry, and when the Pythia told him to take the daughter of the bravest of the Greeks, he decided that the third and youngest daughter of Aristomenes, who was still unmarried, must be the person intended by Apollo. Aristomenes consented and accompanied them on their return to Rhodes. From there he had intended to go up to Phraortes the Median to seek assistance for Messenia. (This last touch is a curious fiction which helps to date this version of the legend. For in it the fourth-century embassies to the Persian king concerning the restoration of Messenia are translated into their seventh-century counterparts.) But Aristomenes died in Rhodes and received heroic honours at his tomb. The story is somewhat suspicious. In addition to its fourth-century colouring it appears as if it was intended to provide an 'aition' for a cult of a hero, Aristomenes in Rhodes, who was identified at that date with the Messenian. The chief objection to the story is the curious silence of early authorities. For the famous family of the Diagoridae were traced back to this marriage, as Pausanias, our authority, tells us, yet Pindar in his great odes glorifying the family never made mention of this notable ancestor. Also an alternative tradition existed wherein Aristomenes was killed in battle at the close of the revolt, and buried in Messenia. Pausanias² had seen the tomb at Ithome, and on enquiry had been told that the body had been translated from Rhodes in response to the usual order from a Delphic oracle. But this story sounds like a late attempt to combine inconsistent traditions and does not prove that either was true, still less both.

¹ Paus IV, xxiv, 1 ff

² IV, xxxi, 3. Cf Pliny, *N H* XI, 185. Val Max I, viii, 15. Steph Byz 'Ανδανία. Pfister, *Reliquienkultur*, p. 207.

CHAPTER IV

THE ORACLE AND SPARTA IN EARLY TIMES

WHEN we turn to the relations of Delphi with Messenia's great opponent, Sparta, the position is to some extent better in that a certain amount of early and genuine evidence is available, but this advantage is somewhat offset by the obscurity of the whole subject, which results partly from the mystification about their past practised by the Spartans, partly from the misguided efforts of other Greeks to illuminate the subject by conjectures and inventions.

When we first can get a firm grip on Spartan history in the middle of the sixth century, they are evidently on excellent terms of intimacy with Delphi and use the oracle's utterances to support and further their external policy. Their internal constitution is already fixed on the traditional Lycurgan lines, and is closely connected with Delphi. The special position which that oracle held is shown by the fact that the kings had associated with each of them two Spartans elected as Pythii.¹ These were sacred ambassadors who were appointed to go to Delphi, as required, and when in Sparta, they had their meals with the kings and shared with them the duty of preserving the oracles which had been delivered. How important the function of the oracle might be is shown by a curious custom which survived in Sparta till the third century B.C. at least.² Once every nine years the ephors used to choose a clear and moonless night and sit in silence looking fixedly at the heavens. If a shooting star crossed from a certain quarter to another, they would put the kings on trial, charged with having offended the gods, and suspend them from office till an oracular answer had arrived from Delphi or Olympia to relieve the kings. Evidently the meteor was taken as a sign that the gods might be angry with the kings and the Pythian Apollo had the power to confirm or refute the suspicion. If we survey the legends about Spartan history, we note that the dual

¹ Herod VI, lvii, 2. Xen. *Resp. Lac.* xv, 5. Cic. *de Div.* I, xlii, 95, cf. Plut. *Moral.* 1116 F.

² Plut. *Agis*, xi.

kingship was closely bound up in its traditional origin with Delphi. When Aristodemus died and left twin sons, who were born posthumously, their mother, according to the story,¹ wished to make them both kings so she refused to disclose which was the first-born. The Pythia was consulted and advised that both be made kings, but the elder should receive more honour. The Spartans were thus forced to try to find out once more which was the first born. They watched the mother secretly and observed that she regularly washed and fed the same one first. So they selected him rightly as the elder. This legend is simply aetiological to explain why the Spartans had this curious type of monarchy, consisting of two kings of different families, whose powers were equal, but of whom the Agiads were supposed in Herodotus' time to be the more honourable.

So also the marriage of the twins was the subject of an oracle.² They consulted Delphi on the question themselves, and were bidden to return by the same road and seek wedlock where they met the wildest beast carrying the gentlest—perhaps a graceful allusion to the respective characters of husbands and wives. At any rate, in the land of Cleonae they met a wolf carrying a lamb, so they sought (successfully) the hands of the two daughters of Thersandrus, a Cleonaeon.

These oracles are merely pretty tales without even the formal wording of the prophecy preserved, but they serve to show that Delphi was traditionally the source of guidance for Sparta from the earliest times.

Other families in Sparta too were traditionally associated with Delphi, particularly the Aegeidae, a clan who claimed to be originally Thebans. How they had come to settle in Sparta was the subject of a legend which took slightly different forms according as their settlement was placed in the days of the original return of the Heracidae or when the Spartans had succeeded in conquering Amyclae.³ The oracle in either case told the ancestors of the Spartans, that they could not succeed without the alliance of the Aegeidae. This was first taken by the enquirers to mean the sons of Aegeus, the king of Athens,

¹ Herod VI, 11, 4. Paus III, 1, 5.

² Aelian, *Nat. An.* XII, 31.

³ Pindar, *Pyth.* V, 101, and *Isthm.* VII, 15 with Scholia = Ephorus, *F. Gr. H.* 70.

but later by chance they heard someone praying the gods to give blessings to the Aegeidae. On enquiry this proved to refer to a Theban family. So the ambassadors decided that the god meant this clan, not the Athenians, and proceeded to secure their alliance with a successful result to the war. The legend is probably not historic, but just aetiological, to explain the existence in Sparta of a family called the Aegeidae who claimed to be derived from Thebes and were vaguely connected with the tradition of early wars.

The most famous association between Sparta and Delphi concerned the Lycurgan constitution itself. A tradition had gained some acceptance in Greece by the fifth century B.C. to the effect that the Pythia had actually dictated to Lycurgus the constitution as instituted. But Herodotus¹ records that the Spartans themselves said that Lycurgus had borrowed his institutions from Crete. The problem is how far does this statement conflict with the existence of Delphic oracles addressed to Lycurgus, preserved in various forms, or with the other evidence which suggests that there was a connection between their constitution and Delphi.

Herodotus himself records that 'when Lycurgus, a man of repute among the Spartans, came to Delphi to visit the oracle, as soon as he entered the hall, straightway the Pythia said

*"You have come to my rich temple, O Lycurgus, dear to Zeus and to all who dwell in the halls of Olympus. I am in doubt whether I will declare that you are a god or a man, but I rather expect to declare you a god, O Lycurgus."*²

As it stands, this oracle seems quite complete, and involves no reference to a Lycurgan constitution. Herodotus mentions Lycurgus' repute, but does not state that he came to consult the oracle about his plans, and seems thus to imply that it was Lycurgus' fame in general and not some special occasion of constitution making which impelled the Pythia to pay him this great tribute which amounted to ascribing, somewhat hesitantly, divine honours. Later authorities altered the whole tenor of the address by adding two further lines

'And you have come asking for a good constitution. Indeed I my-

¹ I, lxxv 2 ff.

² Herod. I c. cf. Xen. *Apol. Socr.* 15. Val. Max. V, v 2. Plut. *Moral.* 1103 A. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 69. Schol. Aristid. *Panath.* p. 326. Dind. *Thermistius, Orat.* XIX. 225 D. Cf. Cyriacus of Ancona in *BCH* V, p. 434.

*self will give you one which no other city on earth will possess.*¹

Evidently these verses were meant to be followed by an account, of how the Pythia prescribed the lines of the Lycurgan reform. But the connection between this passage and the previous one is very weakly made, and it appears as if Herodotus did not know these supplementary verses, but had merely come across their substance as a vague tradition.

There was one obvious source whence writers after Herodotus might have drawn information alleged to connect Lycurgus and his laws with the Pythia. Pausanias, the Spartan king, who was exiled in 395 B.C., published in retirement a pamphlet on the Spartan constitution.² His object apparently was to justify himself against the political opponents who had brought about his downfall. He followed a tradition at variance with that of Herodotus, for according to him Lycurgus had belonged not to the Agiad house to which Pausanias himself belonged, but to the Eurypontids, and it was in enmity to the Eurypontids that Pausanias in his pamphlet published the oracles given to Lycurgus concerning his laws. Our fragmentary allusions to this lost work of King Pausanias suggest that he drew a contrast between the original intentions of the Delphic oracle and their incorrect execution by Lycurgus. Probably this was the first occasion when a Spartan claimed to give the prophetic source of Lycurgus' inspiration, and it seems likely that the extra lines implying the Pythia's help in the constitution are derived from King Pausanias' work.

Later authorities record three other oracles which appear to concern Lycurgus and his reforms. The first is preserved in an excerpt from Diodorus Siculus,³ and contains the interview between Lycurgus and the Pythia from the point where she had volunteered to provide a constitution. Lycurgus asked by establishing what constitutional rules he would give the greatest benefit to the Spartans, and she answered, if he made a law that some should lead rightly and others be obedient. So Lycurgus asked again by what conduct they would lead rightly and be obedient and the Pythia replied with an oracle

'There are two roads, most distant from each other the one

¹ D S VII, xi Oenomaus ap Euseb P E V 222B Cf Plut Lyc v

² Strabo, VIII, C 366 cf E Schwartz, *Quaestiones ex hist graec saec quart desumptae*, 1893 Ehrenberg, *Neugründer des Staates*, 1925

³ D S I c Oenomaus, ib 223D

leading to the honourable house of freedom, the other to the house of slavery, which mortals must shun. It is possible to traverse the one through manliness and lovely concord, so lead your people on this path. The other they reach through hateful strife and cowardly destruction, so shun it most of all.

This dialogue with its accompanying verses is an elegant piece of moralizing, and has nothing in it to suggest either an ancient tradition or political propaganda. But it might have been produced in the lifetime of King Pausanias. The parable of the two roads has obvious resemblances to the teaching of the early Sophists, such as Prodicus. Also its rather too conscious parallelism in style, where noun balances noun, epithet epithet, and clause clause, suggests the end of the fifth century with its experiments in verbal symmetry. Both these features would fit a date shortly before King Pausanias published his pamphlet—a work which was probably not the personal product of the king himself, but a piece of special pleading drawn up by a professional writer.¹ Yet this particular response is so lacking in precise controversial point that one cannot demonstrate with certainty how it would have been used to support the exile's case.

Another oracle found in Oenomaus² looks more specifically like an extract, though even it as preserved fails to press home its point. It occurs without context, except that Oenomaus implies that it was given by the Pythia to Lycurgus as instructions for a constitution.

'So long as you give your promises and oaths to the oracles, and justice to each other and to strangers, holily and purely honouring the elder-born, and respecting the sons of Tyndareus—Menelaus and the other immortal heroes, who in sacred Sparta . . . , so long will Zeus, god of the broad heaven, spare and save you.'

This prophecy seems to contain at least one *lacuna* and may have been quoted incomplete. For though it might have ended as it does in Oenomaus, it would have been quite plausible for it to have balanced its promise of conditional pardon with a threat of conditional punishment—'But if you . . . , Zeus will . . .'. As it stands, the oracle is a vague injunction to observe the

¹ Cf. Lysander's unpublished speech, *infra* p. 216.

² Ap. Euseb. 223A. Plutarch (*Moral* 789E) quotes the word *προσβυεῖας* from a Pythian response. It may be from this one, but the word also occurs in Tyrtæus, frag. 3, line 5 (Diehl), discussed below.

constitution, to honour the 'elder-born', the Gerusia or Senate, of Sparta, and to respect the deified ancestral kings. The appropriateness of these instructions in King Pausanias' work can only be vaguely guessed. They have a proper tone of conservatism. But if the oracle went on to threaten penalties for particular offences against the Gerusia and the kingship, it might have been possible to give it a special point in relation to contemporary politics. The style of the oracle, while not as mannered as the previous one, might belong to a not-too-successful fourth-century forgery.¹

Another oracle is also recorded in the same excerpt from Diodorus, as brought by Lycurgus from Delphi to Sparta, the famous line

*'Love of money and nothing else will ruin Sparta.'*²

Though brief, this prophecy is easier than any of the others to connect either with the Lycurgan reforms or with early fourth-century politics. The restriction on the use of gold and silver currency and the retention in Sparta of the use of long iron spits was one of the most famous features of the Lycurgan constitution. Also in B.C. 404, when Lysander returned home after destroying the Athenian empire and creating one for Sparta, he brought back quantities of gold and silver, which were the ground for much political agitation. The conservative thinkers argued that the principles of the constitution must not be violated and their view temporarily won the day. But it is clear that from that period began the breakdown in Sparta's economic system. King Pausanias had been an opponent of Lysander in 404 B.C., and had been exiled in 395 B.C. on the ground that his failure to give Lysander proper military support had led to his death. Hence it would not be strange if King Pausanias in his political pamphlet had quoted this oracle to discredit Lysander's policy. It does not occur in our historians' accounts of the controversy in 404 B.C. but is first known to have appeared in Aristotle's *Spartan Constitution* toward the end of the fourth century.³

¹ Isyllus seems to have imitated the last line of our extract (B17, Diehl) and knew of this version of Lycurgus' activity (E14, Diehl). Cf. E. Meyer, *Forschungen*, II, p. 226.

² Cf. Aristotle ap. Zenob. II, 24. Cic. *de Off.* II, xxii, 77. Plut. *Agis*, ix, *Moral.* 239F. Athen. VI, 233F. Paus. IX, xxxu, 10, etc. Schol. Aristoph. *Pax*, 622, Eur. *Androm.* 443. Suidas, s.v. *Λυκούργος*.

³ Aristotle does not quote Pausanias in his extant works, but in the *Politics* (1333a 18) he quotes Thibron, another Spartan pamphleteer of the same period, and an alternative source for oracles.

In Aristotle's *Spartan Constitution* there also occurred another Delphic oracle, not in the form of verses, but as a series of instructions in prose.¹ If authentic, they would represent the comment which might accompany a verse prophecy, and gave more detailed information to the enquirers. In substance it commands (a) the establishment of a temple of Zeus and Athena, (b) the reorganization of people on a new basis of tribes and 'obae', (c) the appointment of a 'Gerusia' of thirty members including the kings, (d) periodic meetings of the people at a specified place, at which proposals are to be brought forward and divisions taken: the vote of the people is to be final, but there is added what Aristotle took as a 'rider', allowing the kings and elders the right to dismiss the assembly 'if the people make a crooked decision'. Unlike the moral advice or general precepts of the verse oracles which we have previously considered, this document, which bears no relation to them, is the abbreviated outline of a real constitution. Its traces of archaic Spartan diction prove that it is a genuinely ancient traditional document.

The problem of this prose constitution is complicated by the existence of two versions of a passage in Tyrtaeus, which has a bearing on it.² It seems impossible to settle on grounds of style and diction which of the two is authentic, but in view of the difference in meaning one appears greatly to be preferred. The version in Plutarch does not dispose of the question completely, but it speaks in a vague plural of those who fetch the Pythia's answer, which seems to exclude Lycurgus, or at least to imply that it was not he who was the enquirer. Now we have seen that King Pausanias and later writers represented Lycurgus as the recipient of his constitution from the Pythia. So it was in certain people's interest to produce a version of Tyrtaeus which corresponded to the Lycurgus myth. On the other hand there is no evidence that any one attempted to produce proofs destructive of Lycurgus' part in the constitution. Hence it is probable that the version in Plutarch is the original. The fact that Tyrtaeus is never quoted as referring to Lycurgus makes it likely that his name did not occur in Tyrtaeus' works, and the variants introduced into this poem were merely designed

¹ Plut. *Lyc.* vi

² D S VII, xii, 5. Plut. *Lyc.* vi = Diehl, *Anthol. Lyr.* Tyrtaeus, frag. 3. On the whole subject, cf. Andrewes, *Class. Quart.* XXXII, pp. 95 ff.

to remove positive conflict between Tyrtaeus' evidence and the later conventional legend

In the genuine version of these lines Tyrtaeus, who apparently wrote before the great reformation of the Spartan constitution, ascribed the origin of the kingship and Gerusia to a response of the Pythia. Who the enquirers were is not stated in our extract, but evidently they were more than one individual, and most probably they were supposed to be the original invading Heraclids or the two first kings. In view of the intimate relations between Sparta and Delphi in later times, it is not surprising if even in the mid-seventh century B.C. the Spartans attributed their primitive institutions to the Pythian Apollo. Tyrtaeus' lines were evidently rewritten at a later period so as to allow for the identification of Lycurgus with the enquirer, and its final verses show that it was meant to suggest the main lines of the prose document quoted by Aristotle. These are just the characteristics to be looked for in a forgery produced in the fourth century B.C. or later.

Aristotle, who quoted the prose version of this oracle in his *Spartan Constitution*, is known to have believed in the historic existence of Lycurgus and to have attributed the constitutional changes to him. The fact that the instructions, as quoted by him, are grammatically framed to apply to one individual can be taken to show that Aristotle believed they were addressed to Lycurgus by the Pythia. But this would not prove that Aristotle was right. His *Athenian Constitution* proves that he could fall into serious error in his use of documents, and we have no guarantee here that he had not modified the form to suit his narrative or taken it over already thus modified. Hence one seems justified in supposing that, while the document quoted by Aristotle is derived from a genuine Delphic oracle, it is not necessarily itself to be connected with Lycurgus as a historic or legendary figure.

The efforts of modern scholars seem to have shown that the change in the Spartan constitution, afterwards associated with Lycurgus, actually was introduced shortly after the Messenian revolt in the last years of the seventh century. The document in Aristotle reproduces so closely some of the changes which may probably have taken place then, that it should be regarded as a more or less close paraphrase of an oracle actually delivered

The authorities in Sparta responsible for the changes will have sent draft proposals to Delphi with a request for Apollo's approval. The oracle gave its assent in this form, perhaps after adding the ritual prescription concerning the founding of a temple. The procedure can be compared with that which has been supposed to be behind the sacred Law of Cyrene.¹ In each instance a lengthy document written in a local dialect is ascribed to the Pythian Apollo. Evidently each had been submitted to Delphi in that form with a request for Apollo's *imprimatur*. Once this was given the whole became officially a Delphic oracle.

Lycurgus himself was not associated with the constitution till the fifth century. The Spartans knew of him as a hero, worshipped at a temple in Sparta. The four-line oracle in Herodotus is probably to be connected in some way with this cult. In spite of its form as an address to Lycurgus, it may be simply a rather metaphorical reply by the Pythia to an enquiry from Sparta whether they were right in worshipping Lycurgus as a god. The second line appears to be designed deliberately to contrast this Lycurgus, friend of Zeus and the immortal gods, with the Lycurgus of *Iliad*, VI, 140, a different figure of mythology who is there described as 'hated by all the immortal gods'. Also the use of *μαντεύσομαι* in the third line—'I will declare in a prophecy'—seems to imply that the Pythia's utterance is more than an impromptu address. Instead, the identification of Lycurgus (somewhat doubtfully) as a god is an oracular answer to an enquiry. The cult of Lycurgus after lapsing into obscurity, may have been revived at some date in the early sixth century. Therefore this oracle should then be taken as the re-foundation charter of the restored cult of some half-forgotten god or hero, a typical activity for the Delphic oracle (cf. *infra*, Book III, chap. 6).

By the fifth century the Spartans had begun popularly to associate Lycurgus with the constitution, but, unaware of the original constitutional oracle from Delphi or ignoring it, supposed that the model for the changes was found in Crete. Meanwhile the rest of Greece had already associated Lycurgus and Delphi, basing the connection on the Lycurgus oracle quoted by Herodotus. In the early fourth century King

¹ Cf. *supra* p. 86, Note 2.

Pausanias gave this view official support for his own ends and amplified it by publishing a number of oracles, which we cannot now identify for certain, but it is probable that some of our extant documents go back to his pamphlet. Also he may have retouched or forged some prophecies to suit his purpose. At least, the history of his opponent, Lysander, shows that this practice was freely adopted at the time.¹ From King Pausanias' time the Lycurgus legend was practically dominant in varying forms. Either, as in Xenophon,² Lycurgus merely obtains Apollo's sanction to strengthen the authority of a constitution which he submitted in draft to the oracle. Or he pretends to have been inspired originally by the Pythia in framing his proposals.³ Late authorities even make this version so crude as to suggest that the Pythia was secretly bribed in advance to prophesy as he intended. A further amplification was added that after Lycurgus had carried his constitutional reform he bound the people by an oath not to modify it until his return, and departed another time to Delphi. There he enquired whether he should make any additions or modification in the constitution. On receiving an answer that his laws were rightly framed for the well-being and goodness of the city, he sent this message in writing to Sparta and starved himself to death abroad, so that his fellow-citizens should be bound never to change the constitution to their hurt.

This is only a picturesque fiction, which has borrowed a suggestion from the legends of the foreign travels of Lycurgus' great fellow-lawgiver, Solon. The story appears as early as the middle of the fourth century in Ephorus, but authorities could not agree on the place of Lycurgus' death, suggesting such different choices as Cirrha, Elis or Crete.

Plutarch in his life of Lycurgus⁴ gives a grand conspectus of all the learned story telling about his subject, and also shows a touch of scepticism about Lycurgus' historical existence which is unusual for such a pious moralist. He knew of a number of other *Rhetrae*, as he calls them, besides the *Great Rhetra*—Aristotle's constitutional oracle. They appear to have

¹ Cf. *infra* pp. 216 ff.

² Dion Hal. *Ant. Rom.* II, lxi, 2. Justin, III, iii, 10. Paus. III, ii, 4. Polyæn. I, xvi, 1, etc.

³ *Lyc.* xiii, 4ges. xxvi. *Moral.* 403E, 997C, cf. Polyæn. I, xvi, 2. For a discussion of their value, see Ehrenberg, *op. cit.* 55 ff.

⁴ *Resp. Lac.* viii, 5.

been, like it, preserved in prose, and contained prohibitions against using written laws, against extravagance, and against fighting continually against the same enemies. The second of these sounds as if it is related to the verse about 'love of property'. the other two seem too general to belong to constitutional reform. Probably spurious matter had accumulated in prose as well as in verse,¹ but without actual specimens we cannot judge much about it.

Before we leave the subject of Sparta, it is well to consider several Delphic oracles which are concerned with the expansion of Sparta. Much the earliest, if its association were genuine, would be the response consisting of two hexameters, which is quoted by Oenomaus of Gadara.² He implies that it was addressed to Charilas and Archelaus, the Spartan kings of the second generation before the First Messenian war, and it ran:

'If they divide a half share of the additional portion for Apollo, it will be much better for them.'

The 'additional portion' would mean some conquered territory annexed to Sparta, and we know from other sources that these kings were credited with having annexed the district of Aegys on the Arcadian border. The words of the oracle are the proper formula for authorizing the dedication of half of the conquered territory to Apollo. Actually a solitary reference in Pausanias³ shows that there was a temple of Apollo Cereatas in Aegys, but it does not show how much of the district belonged to the god.

In one way the oracle has strong claims to be deemed genuine. It is so simple and bald in its lines that it presents little scope to the forger of later date, who usually errs in over-emphasizing and exaggerating his work. On the other hand there is nothing in the brief sentence to show that it was really addressed to Charilas and Archelaus. There is something inherently improbable in the survival of a response from the ninth century B.C. The claim to such high antiquity must be left as not proven in default of better authority than Oenomaus.

¹ For other general oracles to the Spartans, cf. (1) Heraclides, *de reb. publ.* 11, 6 D S VIII, xxviii Plut. *Moral.* 558 A Suidas, Photius, s.v. *μετὰ Λιγυρίων ὄδον* Zenob. V, 9 Schol. Aristid. p. 593 (2) Praunus ap. Plut. *Moral.* 1146C, *Lyc.* iv, and Philodem. *de Musica*, 42.

² Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.* V, 226 D.

³ VIII, xxiv, 5. Mr. Wade-Gery has suggested to me that the response was a forged 'decretal,' produced to favour a claim of the priests of the local Apollo.

for such an early date. The lines themselves on their general straightforwardness can best be classed as a genuine utterance of the Pythia, but perhaps delivered a century or two after the original annexation of Aegys.

Another pair of prophecies come from Herodotus' account of the sequel to Lycurgus' activities.¹ Sparta's new access of strength made her plan to conquer all Arcadia, and Apollo was consulted on the prospects of success. The Pythia's reply was

'Do you ask me for Arcadia? You are asking for a great thing. I will not give it you. There are many men eating acorns in Arcadia, who will hinder you from your purpose. But I am not at all grudging to you. I will give you Tegea, which is beaten by the foot,² to dance in, and a fair plain to mete out with the reed.'

This offer of Tegea, instead of all Arcadia, as a place for festivals and a territory for allotment, appealed to the Spartans sufficiently, and Herodotus records that they actually set out on their campaign carrying chains to bind the Tegeans when captured. But they were defeated, and with ironic justice the Spartan prisoners were forced by the Tegeans to wear their own captured chains and work on the lands of their captors. This sequel, as Herodotus suggests, fulfilled the prophecy. The Spartans captives toiling in chains were 'dancing in Tegea' and 'meting out the plain'. The credit of the Pythian Apollo for infallible prophecies was thus maintained. In Herodotus' day the chains themselves were still shown to sightseers at Tegea.

This oracle, unlike those we have previously considered, is evidently authentic and was delivered under approximately the circumstance which Herodotus records. The Pythia's words were a reasonable comment on Spartan aspirations. They might be expected to conquer, not the whole of Arcadia, but their northernmost neighbour, Tegea, and the flat plain in which it stood. Happily for the Pythia her metaphorical language could lend itself to other interpretations, and when the current opinion was that the gods expressed their meaning darkly, a devious construction could plausibly be put on the prophecy after the event.

¹ Herod. I, lxxvi. D.S. IX, xxxvi, 2. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 76. Schol. Aristid., p. 561, Dind. Paus. III, vii, 3, VIII, 1, 6. Schol. Lycoph. 482, and with slightly different context Polyæn. I, viii.

² This phrase is evidently meant to be a paraphrase of the Homeric epithet *καλλίχορος*.

The failure taught Sparta to extend her power in a new way, not by conquest, but by incorporation in a league of allied states, and Delphi could be induced to further this policy even better than the former. The Spartans sent to ask Apollo a more modest question this time: which of the gods must they placate so that they might get the better of the men of Tegea in war? The answer was that they should bring to Sparta the bones of Orestes, the son of Agamemnon. The Spartans were unable to find where the tomb of Orestes was, so they had to consult the Pythia again, asking where Orestes lay.¹ The answer was

'There is a certain place called Tegea in a smooth plain in Arcadia, where two winds puff by the force of fate, and blow is laid, returning blow, and trouble upon trouble. There the life-giving earth keeps under the son of Agamemnon. Fetch him, and you will be the protector of Tegea.'

Herodotus follows up this oracle with the pretty story of the young Spartan on state-business in Arcadia, who stops at the forge to watch the smith at work, and dropping into conversation with him hears of the coffin containing a huge skeleton, which the smith has lately found. The oracle is then discovered to mean that Orestes' bones will be unearthed where the blows of the hammer fall on the anvil and iron, a woe to men, is laid on iron. So the Spartans purchase the smithy and remove the bones to Sparta. After this preliminary they have no difficulty in acquiring control of Tegea.

This story is evidently worked up to make it effective as a popular tale, but at the same time it has a solid foundation of truth. It is the first of a series of translations of heroic relics ordered by the Delphic oracle for political purposes. Usually the relics had not received special honours or even perhaps any honours at all at their original resting place, but by their removal they are brought into high repute. Also the transference brings with it the 'luck', the spiritual force, of the people from whom they are taken, and thus is followed more or less by a transfer of sovereignty.

Some features of the story in this instance are suspicious. The prophecy as preserved does not seem to presuppose that

¹ Herod. I, lxxvii, ff. D S IX, xxxvi, 3. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 78. Steph. Byz. *Τεγέα*. Pliny, *N H* VII, 74. Paus. III, iii, 6. Suidas, s. v. ἀντίτρομος.

the Pythia had already prescribed the translation of the relics. It could have been, as it stands, the answer to the original question as it both commands the removal of the bones and describes their resting place. But the setting in Herodotus is possible.

More suspicious is the interpretation of the second and third lines as referring to a smithy: this is very far-fetched, but it is not much easier to find what the oracle really meant. Possibly it should be left unsolved as one of those pieces of prudent ambiguity which the Delphic priests were well advised to leave in their official utterances, confident that a meaning to suit could later be found for them. But without rejecting this view, I am inclined myself to suppose that the underlying meaning was that Tegea and its plain were always a place of strife between opposing forces, climatic and racial.

It can be seen from their later history that the Spartans gradually made up their minds at this time to adopt a new policy towards their northern neighbours. Part of this was to cease to stress their own Dorianism in opposition to the non-Dorian majority, but to represent themselves instead as the heirs to the traditions of heroic sovereignty in the Peloponnese. For this purpose they had to distort the Homeric account and represent not Argos, but Sparta as the seat of the monarchs of the house of Agamemnon. The transference of the bones of Orestes to Sparta is the first trace of this policy. Perhaps the hint came originally from Delphi: perhaps Sparta had already conceived the notion and prompted Delphi to give official sanction. Orestes was a most suitable person to start on, because as an exile under curse of bloodguiltiness he had in legend been driven from Argos, and had no traditional burial place. Probably some bones of a prehistoric monster were found in the plain of Tegea in the neighbourhood of a smithy, and thus provided the colossal relics required, and suggested the involved interpretation of the oracle. The news of the finding and the loss of this precious talisman will have had a weakening effect on Tegean morale. Also the new cult of Orestes at Sparta must have been accompanied with some assurance to Tegea that if she capitulated and joined the league her independence would be respected. A compromise on these lines was finally achieved, and, as has been well suggested by

Bowra,¹ it was to celebrate this peace that Stesichorus during his stay in the Peloponnese produced his *Orestes* with its novel transference of the death of Agamemnon from Argos to Sparta

The same method was used in a less important expansion of influence at a later date Pausanias records² that in his day there was still a tomb of Tisamenus, the son of Orestes, in Sparta and that the bones had been translated from Helice in Achaëa in obedience to a Delphic oracle He tells a legend to explain why Tisamenus should have been buried originally in Achaëa, but does not date the removal of his relics Clearly they will have been taken when towards the latter part of the sixth century Spartan influence had penetrated as far as the northern Peloponnese Though Pausanias is not explicit, it appears as if the Achaeans had not had any cult of Tisamenus, and actually a quite different account of his death, according to which he was killed not by Ionians in Achaëa, but by the Heraclids when invading the Peloponnese, was current even in later times Once more the Spartans appear to have fabricated with Delphic assistance a lucky talisman which they could remove to their own city, taking with it the sovereignty of the district whence it came

When the Spartans had originally asked Apollo for all Arcadia he had refused such a sweeping request, giving the reasonable ground that there were too many Arcadians to be conquered Another motive, which the Pythia did not state, may have been that Delphi already had good relations with the rest of Arcadia except Tegea, and had no wish at that time to encourage an expansion of Spartan influence there It is interesting that the earliest Delphic oracle which is precisely dated by an ancient authority concerns the rescue of a small Arcadian town from Spartan occupation In 659 B.C., according to Pausanias,³ Phigalia was captured by the Spartans The local population escaped and appealed to Delphi on the question of their return to their native city The Pythia said she did not see any return for them if they tried by themselves, but if they added to their side a hundred picked men from Oresthasium,

¹ *Greek Lyric Poetry*, p. 126

² VII, 1, 8 Alternative legend in Apollodorus, II, viii, 3 For yet another Spartan translation of relics cf. *infra* p. 357

³ VIII, xxxix, 4

the latter would die in the battle, but through them the Phigalians would secure their return. The advice proved successful, and the prophecy was fatally fulfilled for the Orestasians who had volunteered their assistance readily.

Though the actual words of the oracle are not given but merely a reported version of their substance, there is no reason to doubt that the account is generally correct. The precision of the dating for a very minor event can be taken as a sign that the story had ultimately come from some local chronicle. By Pausanias' scheme of chronology the attack would fall shortly after the end of the Messenian revolt, a likely period for an attack on the nearest Arcadian neighbour to Messenia. Here Delphi seems to have sponsored a small local alliance to preserve Arcadian independence against Spartan aggression.

A much more important example of Delphic encouragement to the union of all the scattered peoples of Arcadia can be seen in an oracle which also provides the closest parallel to the prophecy concerning Orestes' bones. Unfortunately Pausanias¹ who quotes it in its proper verse form, does not attempt to give a date, and internal evidence on the subject is hard to find or assess. The response concerns the bones of Arcas, which in Pausanias' time were said to lie within a tomb which stood by the altar of the temple of Hera at Mantinea and had been brought from Maenalus in response to a Delphic oracle.

'There is also wintry Maenalus, and there lies Arcas from whom indeed all take their name, where is a three-lane-end and a four-lane-end and five paths. There I bid you go and with joyful heart taking up Arcas bring him back to your lovely city, and there make for Arcas a precinct and offerings.'

In explanation of the somewhat cryptic description of Arcas' earlier resting place, Pausanias records that the relics were found at a place called Trihod¹—'Three Roads', in the territory of Maenalus. The verses are evidently not quite complete. Something must have been lost at the beginning to which the connecting word (δέ) referred. Besides, the reference to all who take their name from Arcas presupposes an earlier allusion to the Arcadians in general. If the document were complete it might be possible to get over the other great difficulty—the lack of a statement on the date. The purpose of the oracle was

evidently to advise the Mantineans to translate the bones of Arcas, the eponymous ancestor of the Arcadians, from a desolate site to a place of worship in their city. The underlying meaning can only be that the Mantineans had secured Delphic encouragement in a bid to make Mantinea the centre of a Pan-Arcadian league. For this purpose the eponymous ancestor's cult was a convenient symbol. It is not surprising if previously Arcas' bones had received no worship, for one version of his legend, persisting long after, described how he was lifted bodily to the stars. But here another version was either invented or given recognition. The date when such a Pan-Arcadian movement might have taken place is hard to fix, in view of our small evidence on Arcadian history. Undoubtedly in the fourth century, after Leuctra, the figure of Arcas was used as a symbol of the new Arcadian union, but that does not prove that it had not been used in this way earlier. The fact that Mantinea, and not such a place as Megalopolis, is here indicated as the centre, certainly suggests that the oracle is earlier in date, and a probable time may have been in the late fifth century shortly before the Battle of Mantinea. At this period the Mantineans might have contemplated the leadership of an Arcadian league, independent of Spartan control, and for this purpose obtained authority from Delphi to institute a cult symbolic of Arcadian unity. If so, this oracle is an interesting contrast to the oracle concerning Orestes' bones which had been delivered a century and a half earlier.

CHAPTER V

DELPHI TO THE END OF THE FIRST SACRED WAR

So far we have considered the interaction of the Delphic oracle on some of the earlier periods of Greek history, but we have had no occasion to see Delphi itself as the scene of historic happenings. Those who were consulting the oracle hitherto have come from outside, and brought questions in which the Delphians themselves were not immediately concerned. It is otherwise with the history of the First Sacred War. The outcome of this event entirely altered the international status and internal conditions of Delphi. So much is clear beyond doubt, but when it comes to an attempt at description either of the war itself or of the changes which it produced, the poverty and unreliability of our authorities baffles precision. The history of the war itself seems to have missed the attention of the earlier Greek historians, and actually comes to us first in the tendentious narrative of the orator Aeschines. This and later accounts are inclined to be distorted either by an effort to force the First Sacred War into parallelism with later wars of the same name, or to glorify particular states or individuals by exaggerating their share in championing Apollo. Also the conditions and status of Delphi after the First Sacred War were so well established and familiar to the Greeks of later date, that they forgot the antecedent stages of Delphi's development and modern scholars are forced to reconstruct by conjecture the situation before the First Sacred War.

It appears that Delphi in these early periods was very much under the domination of her near neighbour Crisa¹ a town situated on a lower stage of the same side of Mount Parnassus, where a foothill projects out into the plain. Its position astride this outlying ridge gave Crisa the advantages of security from

¹ *Iliad*, II, 520 with Scholia and Eustathius. Strabo, IX, C 416. Steph Byz *Κρίσα* Etym Magn p 515, 18. Schol Lycophr 1070. Recent excavations have failed so far to find the archaic city. But I prefer for the present not to follow J. Jannoray, *BCH* 1937, pp 32 ff, in supposing therefore that it lay on the coast.



A VIEW OF THE CRISAEAN PLAIN

Taken from the ridge behind ancient Delphi and looking away from it to the south west To the left the modern town and beyond it the valley of the Pleistos and Mount Cirphis In the middle distance to the right the jutting headland on which Crisa probably stood Around and beyond it the Crisaeian plain terminating in the bay of Itea and the Locrian mountains The plain is thickly covered with olive-trees

direct attack combined with ready access to a fruitful plain and to the sea. The Crisaeans had made full use of these natural riches, and had cultivated the lands lying beneath their town, and spread their shipping over the nearby waters. In fact, the Corinthian Gulf was earlier named the Crisaeian Gulf from what was then the most important trading city near its shores, and Metapontum in Southern Italy reckoned itself a colony of Crisa.¹ Besides the other benefits to be derived from Crisa's position, it commanded most of the routes to Delphi. It was impossible for travellers to approach the sanctuary northward from the sea or down the direct route from the North over the pass from Doris without going through Crisa. The only road which was free from her control was the Cloven Way, leading from Boeotia.

It would probably be a mistake, however, to suppose that Delphi was originally a subordinate sanctuary in the territory of Crisa. Delphi in later periods always is organized as an independent city-state, and it is more probable that this condition was not merely a result of the First Sacred War. In spite of the small and unproductive site of Delphi it is not worse or smaller than other parts of Phocis which without the special asset of a Panhellenic sanctuary managed to survive and be reckoned as cities in later centuries. Crisa also was evidently a Phocian city. Its peculiarly advantageous position gave it a special prosperity and importance which must have distinguished it greatly from the majority of the Phocian cities which were little else than mountain villages. In later centuries when Crisa had disappeared it was forgotten whether it had belonged to the Phocians or the Ozolian Locrians. But from the mythological genealogies,² in which Crisus, the town's eponymous ancestor, was the son of Phocus, it is clear that Crisa was Phocian.

Delphi, apart from its somewhat inferior position in relation to Crisa and its general connection with the Phocian tribe, had already a further association with Northern Greece as a whole. It had become the seat of a religious league or Amphictyony.

¹ Strabo, VI, C 265. Thucydides regularly writes of the Crisaeian Gulf, e.g. I, cvii, 3.

² Cf. references in note 1, p. 116, and Apollod. I, ix, 4. Schol. Eur. *Troad* 9. In Homer, *Hymn*, III, 282 Apollo coming to the site of Delphi is said to come to Crisa, but I take it that the rhapsode is allowing for the existence of Crisa before the foundation of Delphi, not that he reckoned Crisa as the owner of Delphic territory in historic times.

It would be unsafe to assert the exact composition of the membership in early times, but it evidently included generally the Phocians, Locrians, Dorians of North Greece, Euboeans, Thessalians, and some other tribes of the intervening country and its hinterland. Such religious leagues seem to have been prominent in early Greek history—for instance, the Amphictyonies of Calauria, Onchestus, Itonia and Delos. Of these, only Delphi and Delos retained their importance down to late periods. It is interesting to note, however, that the Delphic Amphictyony was evidently not originally centred in Delphi at all. In fact, the incorporation of Delphi must have taken place after the Amphictyony had already evolved its main structure. Its true home was the temple of Demeter at Anthela, near Thermopylae—a place of little renown in all the historic period.¹ Yet the original connection of the Amphictyony with this insignificant site is beyond question, as a few instances will show. The meetings of the league's representatives, twice a year, in spring and autumn, appear to have met first at Anthela and then adjourned from there to Delphi. Also, the league's terminology still retained words derived from its earlier association with Thermopylae, even when Delphi was its only important centre. Its meetings in either place were known as Pylaea, and one class of delegates were called Pylagorae—'those who speak at Thermopylae'. Also while an Amphictyony ought properly to mean a league of states surrounding a religious centre, it is significant that the geographical centre of the Delphic Amphictyony even in the fourth century was still Anthela rather than Delphi. The states included all lie rather northward from Delphi, whereas such a near neighbour as Achaea, just across the Corinthian Gulf, not to speak of the more distant Peloponnesian states, had no independent place in the league. This fact suggests that the membership cannot have altered greatly since the days before the Amphictyony moved to Delphi.

Concerning the foundation of the Amphictyony Greek tradition knew nothing historical: the origin was usually attributed to a mere eponymous hero, Amphictyon, who was conveniently supposed to be the son of Deucalion, the Greek

¹ For references to Amphictyonic activity at Thermopylae in later times cf. *infra* p. 193.

Noah, and the founder was thus dated in a venerable, but vague antiquity¹ Another version attributed the work to Acrisius, a mythical king of Argos, who also had strong associations in legend with Thessaly A third account gave the founder as Pylades, the Phocian These two latter attributions seem designed to enhance the claims of Phocis or of Thessaly to have been the originators of the Amphictyony

All record of the later incorporation of Delphi in the league had vanished So presumably this stage had been reached well before the beginning of the sixth century B.C., at which point Greek tradition on this subject begins to present us with some approximation towards fact² Also the incorporation of Delphi must have occurred before the fall of Crisa, if we are to account for the attribution of the founding of the Amphictyony to Pylades He was the grandson of Crisus, the eponymous founder of Crisa, and his name appears to be derived from association with Pylae (Thermopylae) Pylades, unlike his father Strophius, does not appear in Homer, but is first known from the Epic Cycle Hence the association of Strophius with the Amphictyony can have arisen at a time when Crisa was still inhabited, but Delphi was already incorporated in the Amphictyony The rivalry between Crisa and Thessaly which is indicated in these two rival traditions ultimately issued in the First Sacred War

Several early traditions illustrate the relations between Delphi and Thessaly in primitive times One of these legends concerns that mysterious figure of early Thessalian history—Aleuas the Red We are told that as a youth he was haughty and violent So his father snubbed him, but his uncle took up his cause When the Thessalians wished to elect a king they sent to Delphi an embassy with a number of lots containing the names of candidates Aleuas' father would not let him submit his name, but his uncle put it in secretly on his behalf The Pythia was to draw the lot of the future king She picked on Aleuas, and when the device had been upset by his father's

¹ Agathon ap. Schol. Soph. *Trach.* 639 Theopompus, frag. 77a (Oxf.) *FGrH Marmor Parium*, 239 F. A5 Callimachus in *Anthol. Graec.* XIII, 25 Cf Strabo, IX, C.420 Libanius, *Declam.* XVII, 70 etc

² On this subject see Busolt-Swoboda, *Staatskunde*, II pp. 1292 ff Others date the incorporation of Delphi as a consequence of the First Sacred War e.g. *CAH* III, 604

denial that the name had been submitted, the Pythia repeated her choice in the hexameter verse ¹

'I mean the Red, indeed, whom Archedice bore as her son'

Thus Aleuas became federal king of Thessaly, and established the organization which was later associated with him

This story cannot be confirmed or disproved by other evidence. If Aleuas himself is a historic person and not a myth, there is no reason why it should not be true. Also it preserves the memory of what was evidently a genuinely primitive method of choosing a federal king, and shows Delphi as already in early times recognised by Thessaly as the arbiter in questions affecting the whole tribe. Also other royal houses of Thessaly besides the Aleuadae had early associations with Delphi. Echekratides of Larissa had dedicated a small Apollo which in Marcus Aurelius' reign was regarded as the earliest of all the Delphic dedications ². If so, presumably it must have dated from the seventh century and belonged to the time before the First Sacred War.

We can trace the probable course of events thus

The original religious league of Demeter at Anthela had grown to large importance in North Greece through the influence of Thessaly, which had achieved a position of dominance in this Amphictyony. The power of the Thessalians, based ultimately on a strong cavalry, spread widely over the surrounding states. It must have been a signal triumph in this expansion when Delphi was brought within the control of a religious league in which Thessaly held the primacy. The date of this important step cannot be fixed exactly, but was probably in the middle of the seventh century.

Even in this early period Delphi with its oracle must have been a much more important place than Anthela, and one can suppose that soon the Amphictyony tended to concentrate its activities mostly on this more distinguished sanctuary. At first, there may have been an attempt on the part of the Phocians to resist this primacy of Thessaly within the Amphictyony, and the legendary claim that Pylades had founded the league may have been part of an attempt to back up these pretensions. But the general hostility of the Phocians must have been less intense than the resentment of Crisa in particular. It was the town most con-

¹ Plut. *Moral* 492 A

² Paus. X, xvi, 8

cerned in the changed status of Delphi and friction between Crisa and the Thessalian members of the league must have increased. At last in the First Sacred War the League was induced by Thessaly to crush the only Phocian town which could seriously interfere with the international status of Delphi.

Tradition appears to have forgotten the actual *casus belli*. at least our authorities from the fourth century B C onwards give many different grounds for the crusade against Crisa.¹ Also these alleged reasons are so suspiciously similar to the actual causes which in the fourth century gave rise to the Third and Fourth Sacred wars that one must suppose they are modelled on these later instances. We are told either that the Crisaeans had committed 'impiety against the sacred offerings', as the Phocians did in 356 B C, or that they had tilled sacred land and imposed duties on those going to Delphi, as the Amphissians were accused of doing in 340 B C. Callisthenes had produced a much more precise cause for the First Sacred War—he is quoted as alleging that the Crisaeans had carried off Megisto, the daughter of Pelagon, the Phocian, and the daughters of the Argives when they were returning from the temple of Apollo. This would be a dramatic motive for the outbreak of war and would explain why Crisa was not supported by the rest of Phocis. But unfortunately Callisthenes in this instance appears to have been simply creating a *casus belli* modelled on that of the Trojan War. Of the other reasons given the imposition of duties on pilgrims going to Delphi is the most plausible. We have seen how Crisa's site enabled it to command most of the approaches to the temple, and it would be natural enough that the people of Crisa in vexation at the new power in Delphi determined to make some profit out of the temple in spite of the Amphictyony.

At any rate, the Amphictyony found an adequate cause for declaring a holy war on Crisa—the first of its kind known to have been fought on behalf of the Pythian Apollo. The Delphians, who may have been concerned in the original extension of the Amphictyony, supported the crusade wholeheartedly, and the Pythia gave a favourable response. It was

¹ Callisthenes ap. Athen. XIII, 560 C, = F Gr. H. 124 F 1, (with Jacoby's note) Aeschin. III, 107 ff. Strabo, IX, C 418. Paus. X, xxxvii, 4 ff. [Hippocrates], Vol. IX, pp. 406 ff. (Littre).

enjoined that the Amphictyony should make war on the Crisaeans 'all days and all nights and lay waste their land and their city, and enslave the inhabitants, and dedicate the territory to the Pythian Apollo and to Artemis and Leto and Athena Pronaea to be perpetually uncultivated' ¹ The declaration of this grim fate for the conquered would tend to stiffen their resistance, and traditionally the siege of Crisa was long and stubborn, lasting for the conventional period of ten years. This figure for its duration is perhaps too neatly rounded on the analogy of the Trojan war, but that the struggle was prolonged can be accepted. The generals in command on the side of the league, and the city-states involved in the war are re-counted in our sources with differences corresponding to their different outlook. The earliest account is in Aeschines, who was addressing an Athenian jury and wished to emphasize to them, how deplorable it was that Athens had not co-operated on the Amphictyonic side in the Fourth Sacred War. Hence he exaggerates the importance of the Athenian part on the First Sacred War. According to him, Solon himself had proposed before the Amphictyonic Assembly the motion that they should act on the advice of the oracle in declaring war. Later tradition even tried to convert Solon into the general commanding, but Plutarch² points out that the Athenian commander according to the Delphic records was Alcmaeon, the head at that time of the famous family of the Alcmaeonidae, whom we shall meet later as great friends of Delphi.

Another tradition represented Cleisthenes, the renowned tyrant of Sicyon, as the protagonist on the side of Apollo. This version also seems to be influenced by local patriotism. It occurs first in a Sicyonian historian, Menaechmus,³ who may, like the Attic writers, have exaggerated his countryman's share in the war.

A third and more plausible tradition says that the leader of the Amphictyonic army was Eurylochus the Thessalian. This version,⁴ while not represented by any very early source, appears to have no motives in local bias, and it is most likely that Thessaly was the dominant power in the whole movement.

¹ Aeschin. I. c.

² Solon, xi.

³ In the Scholia on Pindar, *Nem.* IX, 2, cf. Polyæn. III, v.

⁴ Schol. Vet. Pindar, *Hypothesis of the Pythians*. Ps.-Hippocrates, I. c.

The southward advance of Thessaly is shown in the extension of the Amphictyony from Anthela to Delphi, and the continued primacy of Thessaly in the league would of itself incline one to suppose that a Thessalian would be chosen as commander-in-chief. There is no need to doubt that Athens and Sicyon co-operated actively in the conduct of the war. Cleisthenes' assistance in blockading the sea-communications of Crisa must have been indispensable, and he may have been glad enough to join with others in wiping out the oldest claimant to control of the Corinthian Gulf. The motive for Athenian co-operation is not so obvious or self-regarding. It is hard to see how either city could have had a status in the conflict, if it was not already a member of the Amphictyony. Also owing to their great distance from Anthela they could scarcely have been included in the Amphictyony before the league transferred its headquarters to Delphi.

The course of the war is only illustrated by a couple of little incidents which had clung to folk memory.¹ One was the stratagem, attributed either to Solon or Eurylochus, whereby the Crisacans were said to have been subdued, that hellebore was introduced into the aqueduct which brought its drinking water to Crisa and the inhabitants made helpless by its poison. The method appeared rather shocking to the ancient world. It was actually banned by the rules of the Amphictyonic league, but the prohibition only applied to war between members. Crisa had been guilty of sacrilege and was outside the pale.

Sacred tradition treasured another story as the true explanation of the fall of Crisa. According to this legend the siege had been prolonged and the league's contingents were beginning to dwindle away when the Pythia was consulted. She answered²

'You will never take the tower of the city and make it fall, until the wave of blue-eyed Amphitrite, thundering on the holy capes, surges against my precinct.'

This reply seems to prophesy that Crisa would not fall before the sea reached the edge of the Delphic sanctuary—

¹ Paus. I c. Polyæn VI, xiii. Frontin. *Strat.* III, vii, 6.

² D S. IX, xvi, Paus. X, xxxvii, 4, Suidas, s. v. *Ἐόλωρ*, and mistakenly inserted as a document in Aeschin. III, 112. Cf. Isocrates, XIV, 31.

an impossible happening, if it were to mean that the sea must rise to Delphi. But the solution was that Mahomet must go to the mountain and the Delphic sacred land be extended down to reach the sea. This interpretation was detected by the Amphictyonic league, they dedicated the Crisaean territory to Apollo, and the city fell in fulfilment of the oracle. This is the sacred legend to account for the fact that in historic times Crisa had vanished, and its territory—the Crisaean plain—as far as the sea was the sacred land of the Pythian Apollo. There is no doubt that this dedication was a result of the First Sacred War: the only question is at what time before the fall of Crisa the oracle asked for the land to be vowed in advance to Apollo. We have seen above that the confiscation of the Crisaean territory and its consecration to Apollo and other deities was already prescribed by the prose oracle, which Aeschines quotes and dates at the beginning of the war. This verse oracle would date the request for the territory at a time when the siege had gone on for some time. Thus it seems merely to be an alternative and more picturesque 'action' for the same dedication. With its intriguing ambiguity and its pious suggestion of victory as a reward for generosity to Apollo the verse oracle is no doubt the later and more popular version. We find it has been intruded incorrectly into our manuscript of Aeschines as the text of the prophecy from which he makes extracts. When this verse oracle was invented cannot be determined exactly, probably at some date in the later sixth or early fifth century and perhaps as a popular tradition at Delphi.¹

The significant point in view of later conditions is that Apollo through the Pythia had enjoined the ritual consecration of the conquered territory. One might have expected that the Delphians would have wished simply for the abolition of their troublesome and overbearing neighbour and for the partition of its territory among them. If the Delphians had each received a lot in the plain, they would have been provided with a comfortable source of permanent support, which would have gone near to make them independent of other means of livelihood. For the population of Delphi at the beginning of

¹ Cf. Ps.-Hippocrates, cit. *supr.* for further romantic amplifications of the siege, including further fictitious oracles. See Pomtow, *Klio*, XV, pp. 317 ff. for a rather too appreciative judgment on this source.

the sixth century must have been very small, and the Crisaean plain was quite extensive and fruitful. This scheme, however, would not seem in the best interests of the Amphictyony. If the Delphians were made independent and the service of Apollo became, not their chief source of income, but an unessential adjunct, the temple and its management might have declined. Also, if the annihilation of Crisa was to mean that Delphi took its place as the dominant city of that region, those Amphictyonic states which might hope to gain something from the destruction of Crisa would have been sadly disillusioned. Thessaly and Sicyon, at least, one can suppose, wanted Delphi to be free from the dominance of Crisa, but unable to set itself up as an independent power. The surprising feature is that the Delphians through the Pythia gave their own approbation to a scheme which might not appear at first sight the most attractive for them. They relinquished the opportunity of obtaining those fruitful acres, which were the chief asset and ambition of Greek states in the early sixth century, and chose to devote themselves to the special vocation of serving Apollo. Thus the First Sacred War converted the Delphians into the only official body of professional priests in Greece.

They may have been well advised to make this choice. Their own numbers must have been few, probably not a thousand male citizens all told. Also they cannot have been farmers by upbringing. Hence the Crisaean plain might have been more than they could cultivate alone and quite beyond their powers to defend. The sanctuary of Apollo, while its fame continued and increased, was enough to ensure them a steady income without much labour, and it was easy to call on the league to guarantee the security of their temple and its treasures, while it would have been hard to expect similar protection for their own fields, if they had chosen to possess them. Thus the choice, though unusual, could be justified on grounds of expediency. By it the Delphians became a people set apart.

A strange monument to these changes can be found in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo. This cento was produced by the rhapsode Cynaethus towards the end of the sixth century.¹

¹ Cf. Wade-Gery in *Greek Poetry and Life, Essays presented to Gilbert Murray*, pp. 56 ff., Kynaihos. F. Jacoby *Sitzb. Preuss. Akad.* 1932. For a contrasting view, see Drerup, *Mnemosyne*, 1937, pp. 81 ff. and Allen and Halliday's introduction to the Hymn.

The final section, which we have already mentioned, records how Apollo directed a shipload of Cretans to Delphi, in order to become his first priests. In its original form this poem dated from before the First Sacred War and presupposed the existence of Crisa in its former prosperity. Cynaethus let this pass without alteration. But at the end of the poem occurs a long passage added by the rhapsode. The leader of the Cretans, shocked at the barrenness of the Delphic site, asks Apollo how they will make a living. The god replies scornfully:

'Childish men, and poor drudges, who wish for grievous cares and toils and troubles at heart! I will tell you an easy saying and place it in your mind. Let each one of you, holding a sacrificial knife in his right hand, be ever slaying sheep, for all will be present without stint, as many as the famous tribes of mankind shall bring to me.¹ But watch over the temple and welcome the tribes of mankind. But if you transgress my commands, whether it be in deed or in word, and are insolent, as is the way of mortal men, then others hereafter will be your rulers and under their necessity you will be bound for ever. I have said my say, do you keep it in your hearts.'

The account of the barrenness of Delphi and the need of Apollo's priests to support themselves by the proceeds of their sacrifices might both date from before the First Sacred War, but the ominous warning of the last lines could only have been imagined after the fall of Crisa had shown, that impiety against Apollo could be punished with an awful vengeance.

In another way the First Sacred War added to the importance of Delphi: it provided the first occasion for the celebration of the Pythian games, which as a quadrennial festival attracted great throngs. The contests were all held originally in the Crisaean plain where a stadium was marked out, while the rest of the confiscated land was given over to the pasturage of the sacred flocks and herds. The first Pythian games were held to celebrate the victory over Crisa.² There had existed at Delphi since prehistoric times a contest in singing to the

¹ For jests on the Delphians as preoccupied with sacrifices cf. Aristophanes and others in Athenaeus, IV, 173C, Appendix Proverbiorum, I, 94. For their greed in taking a share of the sacrifice ib. 95, Plut. *Moral* 709A, and for their poverty in natural resources, Libanius, *Epist* 208, Lucian, *Phal* II, 204, Diogenianus, IV, 26, Suidas, s.v. Δελφός ἀντίρρ.

² Schol. Vet. in Pind. *Pyth. Hypothesis*; Strabo, IX, C 421. *Marmor Parium*, F Gr H 239 F A 17 and 39. Paus. X, vii, 2 ff.

accompaniment of the lyre, said to have been instituted by Apollo in honour of his destruction of Python. To this competition were then added events for singing to the flute and flute playing alone, as well as all the athletic events which were already established at Olympia, except chariot racing. At this first celebration, which was a triumph for success in war, prizes were given in money from the spoils of Crisa. The games were celebrated again six or eight years later when they took on the general form which they retain thereafter. The chariot race was added to the events and the flute playing omitted, also for this occasion and thenceforth the prizes for victory had no material value. They were only crowns of sacred laurel. The contest was celebrated every four years from this date, and thus fell conveniently midway between each Olympic festival. Extra events were gradually added, and it remained an honourable second in general estimation to the Olympic games, on which it was clearly modelled. In later times the connexion with the First Sacred War tended to fade out of memory. Legends grew up which made Apollo's original festival a prototype of the later games with heroes as competitors, and the Pythian festival itself was normally regarded in all its events as a celebration of Apollo's triumph and the death of Python. This transformation must have been assisted by the fact that no oracle enjoining the celebration after the First Sacred War was preserved by tradition. Instead, the myth-making ingenuity of late times even forged an account whereby the Olympic games themselves were founded in response to a Delphic oracle enjoining them as cure for a general plague in Greece¹. The long-winded utterances, which some forger attributed to the Pythia are preserved in the fragments of Phlegon of Tralles, a freedman of Hadrian, but they need not detain us here.

Thus Delphi had become a city of Apollo's servants, free from the predominance of neighbours, but dependent to the extent that in matters religious and financial its ceremonies were under the control of a council of representatives of an inter-state league. Its importance also had been greatly enhanced by the foundation of a great quadrennial festival which marked it out as one of the chief centres for athletic and musical

¹ Paus. V, iv, 6. Phlegon, *F Gr H* 257 F 1. Schol. Plat. *Rep.* 465.

contests in Greece. The fame of the oracle as a place of Panhellenic significance must have been augmented by these changes. There is no indication that the delivering or framing of the Pythia's prophecies came in any way under the control of the Amphictyony. The Delphian priesthood maintained their hold on this and other executive matters to do with the ordinary routine of the temple. The Amphictyonic delegates, usually under the presidency of the chief Thessalian representative, conducted the games and at their meetings twice a year considered general questions concerning the mutual relations of their own and other Greek states, particularly in the religious sphere. But their deliberations, which included also the upkeep of the temple and its finances, did not influence the utterances of the oracle, except in so far as the Delphians chose to adopt the general Amphictyonic policy.

Of those who had been responsible for the prosecution of the First Sacred War, Thessaly does not seem to have received any great benefits in return from the oracle. In the feud between Thessaly and Phocis which continued throughout the century Delphi would seem ultimately to have taken Phocis' side.¹ Cleisthenes of Sicyon on one occasion received a nasty rebuff from the Pythia, if one can believe a somewhat doubtful tradition.² Solon was the only protagonist in the war who traditionally was supported with oracles in his own affairs.³ One story recorded that Apollo had given him the magic clue for conquering the island of Salamis from the Megarians. As often in this kind of legend, the method was to win the favour of the supernatural powers who had Salamis in their keeping.

'Placate with sacrifices the chieftains of the land, the indwelling heroes whom the daughter of Asopus covers within her bosom, who, though dead, gaze at the setting sun.'

The daughter of Asopus was the nymph, Salamis, from whom the island took its name, and Athenian tradition claimed that their dead and the Salaminian dead were buried facing westward, while the Megarians buried their dead facing east.⁴ The Athenians later used this argument to prove that Salamis properly belonged to them, but Hereas, a fourth-century Megarian writer, countered this by stating that the Megarians

¹ Cf. *infrap* 171.

² Cf. *infrap* p. 139.

³ Plut. *Solon*, ix ff.

⁴ On the actual facts, see Miss Lorimer, *JHS* LIII, p. 172, note 70.

also buried their dead facing west. It was said that Solon in accordance with the oracle had crossed by night to Salamis and secretly sacrificed to the local heroes, Periphemus and Cychreus. Thus success came to his military expedition which followed shortly after. When later the question of the ownership of Salamis was referred to Spartan arbitration, it was said that Solon adduced in support of the Athenian claim both this alleged evidence from burial methods and the fact that in various Delphic oracles Salamis was described as 'Ionian'—which would connect it with Athens, in contrast to Dorian Megara.

That Solon was specially interested in the Pythian Apollo is shown by the fact that Delphi held a particular place in his laws. Under the Solonian constitution the Archons, the chief magistrates of Athens, were required on entering on office to take a public oath in the Agora, that if they transgressed the laws they would dedicate a life-size golden statue at Delphi.¹ This hyperbolic sanction was meant as a warning rather than an actual penalty. We never hear of it being exacted. But the choice of Delphi as the place designated for the dedication shows a special veneration for that sanctuary. It is even suggested by a couple of fragments of oracles addressed by the Pythia to Solon that he may have consulted the Pythian Apollo before introducing his great scheme of legislation at Athens. The verses which come from isolated contexts in Plutarch² are

*'Sit in the middle of the ship, guiding straight the helmsman's task
Many of the Athenians will be your helpers,'*
and

'Blessed the city which listens to one herald'

We cannot be sure that these came from one single prophecy, but they would be quite appropriate in the same poem. The first passage recommends to Solon that policy of compromise, dependent on the support of all moderate men, which was the guiding principle of his legislation, as he tells us himself in his poems. The other single line could be interpreted in various ways as advocating unity in a city. One might think that all Athens was being advised to listen to Solon as their single

¹ Plato, *Phaedrus*, 235 D with Schol. Plut. *Solon*, xxv. Delphi is not mentioned in *Ag. πολ.* vii, 1 and iv, 5.

² *Solon*, xiv, 6, *Moral.* 152C.

legislator. But in the context in Plutarch where it occurs Solon himself is represented as interpreting it more figuratively to mean that all the city should obey the law, and this view may have been supported by the rest of the poem which Plutarch has omitted to quote.

It is curious that ancient tradition has not recorded any precise circumstances for this oracle (supposing our fragments belong together). But the only reasonable circumstances would appear to be just *immediately before or after Solon's nomination* as lawgiver for Athens, and before he promulgated his constitution. The simple and appropriate words sound authentic enough, and show no signs of being a later invention. If they were, one might have expected some more specifically political colouring, but only a moralist could draw any lessons from the lines as quoted. In view of Solon's particular mention of Delphi in the sanction of his legislation, it is likely that Apollo had given him some express encouragement, and that these lines come from the original oracle which has not been preserved complete. If so, within less than half a century Delphi had been associated with the establishment of the constitutions of both Sparta and Athens.¹

¹ For other similar activities of the oracle of the Cyrenaean constitution, p. 86 *supra*, and a somewhat improbable story, which attributes the laws of Zaleucus to the initiative of an oracle unspecified (Aristotle, *ap. Schol. Pind. O. XI*, 17).

CHAPTER VI

THE ORACLE AND THE TYRANTS

THE FIRST Sacred War had taken place in the middle of a period of Greek history notable for a new feature in constitutional development, the emergence of the tyrant. The new-found forces of commerce and democracy were shaking the position of the old landed aristocracies in the more advanced city-states, and the movement spread till few places remained untouched. The more backward states of Northern Greece which formed the core of the Delphic Amphictyony continued long immune. In the Peloponnese the chief exception was Sparta, where the timely enforcement of the Lycurgan constitution checked all tendencies toward producing a tyranny. The Spartans had to pay for this immunity by resigning all claims to lead the Greek world in art or commerce. To them the tyrants were a menacing novelty and an obstacle to their military supremacy in the Peloponnese. Aided by internal factors of reaction and development they succeeded ultimately in eradicating tyrannies from all the more important cities of the Greek mainland.

While the tyrants rose to power and fell again, their careers were bound to bring them into contact with Delphi. As a generally conservative force, Delphi must have found them disturbing. The old Dorian minorities which dominated the bulk of the Peloponnese had been intimately associated in tradition with the oracle. Under Apollo's guidance their ancestors, the Heraclidae, had traditionally returned and established their power. The hereditary houses of their kings were under Apollo's protection. We have seen examples of this in the Spartan dynasties, similar traditions were told about the Heraclid dynasty in Argos.¹ That family had once died out; the Argives consulted Delphi, and were told that an eagle would show them the proper successor. A few days later an eagle appeared and settled on the house of one Aegon, who was therefore elected as king. Such was the legend about the Argive kingship. The actual words of the traditional oracle are now

¹ *Plut. Moral.* 396C, 340C

lost. we only know that they were in verse and were so silly and trivial that in Plutarch's day they were regarded by scholars with contempt. So we may suppose that the verses were not authentically ancient, but supplied by some later inventor. But the whole legend represents well enough the position of Delphi as the guardian of the Dorian monarchies. Actually in the cities where tyrants arose the hereditary dynasties had already become extinct or had been absorbed into a Dorian oligarchy. But there is no evidence to suggest that Delphi had expressed disapproval of these changes or regarded the tyranny as a justifiable punishment for the extinction of the monarchy.

So the traditional standing of the Pythian Apollo should have tended to incline him against the new tyrants. On the other hand the tyrants were very wealthy and displayed their piety liberally in founding religious festivals in their own cities and adorning the great sanctuaries of Greece with valuable offerings. One might have expected that they would thus have purchased their peace with the god, and perhaps they did succeed in doing so in their own lifetimes. But after the fall of the majority of the tyrannies a general tradition grew up at Delphi to suggest that the oracle had been very quick to foresee the coming tyrant, but was ready normally to treat them with somewhat scant courtesy when they had attained to power. This picture of Delphi's attitude helped to reinforce its credit for prophetic prevision, without compromising it in the eyes of later generations by suggesting that Apollo had supported the tyrannies which he foretold. In classical times the public opinion of Greece was so unfavourable to tyrants in general that the only Delphic oracles of the age of the tyrannies which remained in circulation generally correspond fairly closely to a few predetermined patterns.

The first type is a prophecy of the coming tyrant delivered before his birth: this may be addressed either to the prospective father, or to the people over whom the tyranny will later be established. It was the purpose of this kind of tradition to show how well the Pythia could foresee such important events. A typical story which illustrates both varieties of oracles together is the Herodotean tale of the origin of Cypselus, the famous tyrant of Corinth.

Eetion, a Corinthian of non-Dorian stock, was permitted to marry Labda, a daughter of the Bacchiad aristocracy, who, because she was lame, was thought incapable of a better match¹ When they failed to have children, Eetion went to consult Delphi, and as soon as he entered the hall, the Pythia addressed him.

'Eetion, no one honours you, though you are full of honour. Labda conceives, and will bear a rolling stone It will fall on the absolute rulers, and will exact justice from Corinth'

This prophecy corresponded with one, previously uninterpreted, which had come at an early time to the Bacchiads²

'An eagle on the rocks conceives, and will give birth to a lion, strong and flesh-eating He will bring many low Mark these things well, Corinthians, who dwell round fair Peirene and high-browed Corinth'

When the oracle delivered to Eetion was announced to the Bacchiads, they could recognize the meaning of their own prophecy The 'Eagle on the rocks' (Aetus on Petrae) was a covert allusion to Eetion of Petra So both oracles prophesied the same event Herodotus goes on to tell the picturesque and beautiful story, how the Bacchiads sent a deputation to take and destroy Labda's child, but were overcome by the baby's smile at their first visit, and when they returned later with hardened hearts the mother had taken warning and concealed the child successfully in a chest Thus he was called Cypselus from what was alleged to be a Corinthian word for a chest (cypsele)

It is generally recognized that the story of Cypselus' concealment as an infant was merely a popular tale, which had arisen partly from the imaginary etymology. actually 'cypsele' meant not a chest, but some utensil such as a pot The idea of a chest seems to come from the fact that Cypselus among other magnificent offerings dedicated at Olympia a famous carved chest in later days the guides certainly alleged that it was the identical hiding-place of the infant Cypselus But more probably it had contributed to form the legend Similarly, it was told of the treasury which Cypselus constructed at Delphi that it was a thank-offering to Apollo, because the god had divinely

¹ Herod V, xcii, β 2 *Anthol Graec* XIV, 86 Oenomaus ap Euseb *P E* V, 224C Nicolaus of Damascus, (*F Gr H* 90 F 57)

² Herod I c *Anthol Graec* XIV, 87

stopped his childish wailing, so that he escaped the notice of the searchers¹ This alleged connection was also probably a mere invention of the guides

As the kernel of Herodotus' story—the concealment of the infant—can be taken as unhistoric, its unreliability brings the two oracles also into question One curious point, however, is that only one of the oracles is needed for the effect of the story it would be sufficient for the birth of Cypselus to be prophesied clearly enough for the Bacchiads to take warning, and for this purpose the oracle to Eetion is enough without the previous oracle addressed to the Bacchiads Hence one is led to suppose that both the oracles, or at least the one concerning the eagle on the rocks, were produced earlier than the story of the infant Cypselus, and became incorporated in it when it reached Delphi It is unlikely that either of them was authentic The allusions to Cypselus' parents are too exact for the oracle to have been produced accidentally before his birth and then adapted to the occasion when he became tyrant Cypselus himself must have been known and respected in Delphi for his generous foundation of a treasury, and another oracle which we shall consider soon shows him addressed by the Pythia with signal honour Hence the two prophecies of his birth were probably forged during his lifetime out of compliment to him²

Another example of the prophecy concerning a tyrant's birth is found in the legend of the origin of the Sicyonian tyranny³ An embassy from Sicyon was at Delphi and received the oracle that their fellow-citizens would be ruled with scourges for a hundred years When they asked further who would do this, they were told it would be the son of the one of them who first heard the news of his birth after returning to Sicyon The members of the embassy were misled by the circumstance that the prospective father was not one of the ambassadors, but merely a butcher, named Andreas, who had accompanied them to assist in the official sacrifices His son, Orthagoras, became tyrant

¹ Plut. *Moral* 164 A

² Cf. Paus. II, iv, 4, V, xviii, 8, for a fictitious story that Aletes when founding Corinth had disobeyed a Delphic oracle which forbade him to admit Cypselus' ancestor to the settlement

³ *Ox. Pap.* XI, 1365 D S VIII, xxiv Plut. *Moral* 553A By a butcher' (μάγειρος) was probably meant originally an official concerned with the meat-offering of the embassy

The story later received further amplifications. So as to provide a better motive for the metaphorical prophecy that the Sicyonians would be 'ruled with scourges', the additional notion was invented that Andreus had acted not only as butcher to the state but as official scourger. Further it was said that the reason why the Sicyonians had been threatened with this fate was because they had forcibly deprived the Cleonaeans of the credit for a victory won by a boy athlete at the Pythian games. This elaboration appears to be chronologically absurd, as the Pythian games in the seventh century before the rise of Orthagoras did not include any event for boys. The duration of a century for the Sicyonian tyranny appears to be approximately correct and the original legend no doubt arose after the last of the tyrants had fallen. It reflects the ordinary outlook of later Greek times, which was bitterly opposed to the idea of the tyrant, in a way that the oracles about Cypselus do not.¹

A typical example of a late and evidently unhistoric legend is the oracle described as delivered to Deinomenes, the father of the famous tyrants Gelon, Hieron and Thrasybulus of Syracuse. Plutarch² tells that he consulted the Pythia concerning the futures of his three sons. The answer was that they would all be tyrants. In shocked amazement Deinomenes exclaimed 'It will be to their sorrow, then, lord Apollo,' and the Pythia rejoined, that too was to be taken as an addition to the prophecy. The story is an effective combination of two motives, that the tyrant is to be pitied, not congratulated, and that the gods are ready to take one promptly at one's word.³ In their own day Gelon and Hieron at least had been intimately associated with Delphi by their bountiful dedications and famous victories in the Pythian games, but long after their deaths they could be taken as suitable examples for the lesson that the god foresaw, but disapproved of tyranny. How easily this type of oracle given to a tyrant's father could arise is shown by an instance where it was localized not at Delphi, but Olympia. It was said that the father of the Athenian tyrant Peisistratus while sacrificing there received an omen which foretold what his son would become.⁴ It is interesting here to

¹ For the favourite mouve of the 'first met' cf. *supra* p. 52.

² *Moral* 407B.

³ Cf. *supra* p. 66.

⁴ Herod. I, lix, and for the same pattern of legend, cf. Agathocles *infra* p. 253. For hostility between Delphi and Peisistratus family, cf. *infra* p. 167.

note that Delphi, which was ultimately responsible for the fall of the Athenian tyranny, has no traditions of oracles, favourable or unfavourable, delivered to Peisistratus or his sons. As all the more important tyrannies are connected traditionally with Delphi, this omission is significant: it points to the fact that the Pythian Apollo dissociated himself completely from the Peisistratidae.

Occasionally we encounter another type of oracle, when the Pythia prophesies to the aspirant to the tyranny just before his attempt. We are told that Cypselus, when he had grown to manhood, visited Delphi and received this reply:¹

'Happy the man who enters my house, Cypselus, son of Eetion, king of famous Corinth, he himself and his sons, but his sons' sons no longer.'

Thus encouraged, he seized the government of Corinth. So Herodotus tells the story, but it is hard to accept it on its face value. The oracle itself is made peculiar by two features: (i) Cypselus is addressed as 'king', not 'tyrant'. This is a complimentary title, which could not ordinarily be applied to the holder of a tyranny, but might be used in addressing him directly with a deliberate intention of glossing over the unconstitutional character of his power. (ii) The prophecy indicates, that Cypselus and his son would be kings, but not his grandchildren. This forecast was fulfilled only approximately: Cypselus was succeeded by his son, Periander, and Periander by his nephew, Psammetichus, a grandson of Cypselus through his son, Gorgus. But actually Psammetichus was only able to maintain himself as tyrant for three years in contrast to the thirty years of Cypselus and the forty years of Periander. When he fell, the dynasty ceased. Hence modern commentators disregard the slight inaccuracy of ignoring Psammetichus' reign and take the whole response to be a *vaticinium post eventum*.²

But this view leaves unexplained the unusually compli-

¹ Herod. V, xcii, E 1 ff. Dio Chrys. XXXVII, 5. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 83. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.* V, 233A, who also gives a separate line, presumably from another oracle—'Cypselus, who will accomplish many woes to Corinth'.

² Cf. How and Wells, ad loc. In *Hermathena*, XXVII, pp. 62 ff., I argued that the response was all genuine, but I am now inclined to suppose the last line doctored. Mr Wade-Gery has suggested to me a comparison with the prophecy of the Mermaid dynasty, cf. p. 145 *infra*. This is a doctored account of an original response to Gyges. For the form of the oracle to Attalus I, p. 258 *infra*.

mentary address to Cypselus. It would be generally unlikely to take this form if forged by the Delphic authorities after the end of the dynasty, but this difficulty is specially marked in view of Plutarch's evidence. He records that after the fall of the Cypselids the Corinthians asked permission to substitute their city's name for that of Cypselus on the treasury which he had dedicated at Delphi: their request was granted by the Delphic authorities, whereas the Eleans refused a similar application to alter the inscription on Cypselus' dedication at Olympia.¹ This story shows that the Delphic authorities, as one might expect, shared in the general revulsion against tyrants, which began in Greece from the mid sixth century.

If this response, then, was not likely to have been forged in this form after the fall of Psammetichus, it remains to suppose that it is a doctored version of one originally produced in Cypselus' lifetime. Here one may note that the verses as they stand are not strictly expressed as a prophecy: in form they are simply an address to Cypselus, as king of Corinth, when he entered the temple of Apollo. Of course, Apollo might be supposed to see the later Cypselus the tyrant already immanent in Cypselus the private citizen. But actually it would be possible to take the lines apart from their context as a complimentary greeting to Cypselus when he happened to visit Delphi after his accession to the tyranny. An obvious occasion would have been the dedication of his treasury. The Pythia had good reason to be respectful to such a visitor and equate his position with the older Dorian monarchies, but presumably the late line concluded in the original version with some vaguer phrase which offered him a succession not for one generation only, but for many.² If we suppose that the original response was generally forgotten after the occasion of its utterance, some time subsequent to the fall of Psammetichus it was revived in this doctored form by the Delphic authorities. Under the changed feelings towards tyrants they preferred to insert it into an account of Cypselus' visit before his rise to the tyranny. It thus appeared to be a piece of clever divination: the brief reign of Psammetichus was soon forgotten in comparison with

¹ Plut. *Moral* 400E. Cf. Foulles, III, iii, 153.

² For another contact between Cypselus and Delphi, see Polyaeus (V, xxxi) — he sent political enemies to enquire at Delphi and then refused them the right to return to Corinth.

the long reigns of Cypselus and Periander, and the credit of the Pythia was effectively reinforced

One other oracle addressed to a candidate for a tyranny is recorded by Thucydides¹ in a brief notice Cylon, the Athenian, in the late sixth century, actually consulted Apollo in advance on the prospects of his *coup d'état*. He was advised by the Pythia 'to seize the Acropolis on the greatest feast of Zeus'. He interpreted this instruction as meaning the time of the Olympic games because of its great reputation and also because, as an old Olympic victor, he felt it had an appropriate connection with himself. His attempt failed, however, because after he had seized the Acropolis successfully the Athenian populace rallied against him and besieged him there. Thucydides reproduces what was evidently the established explanation of the oracle—it had meant the feast of the Olympian Zeus at Athens, because on that occasion the people left the city to sacrifice outside. Their absence would have provided a strategic opportunity which Cylon missed by his misinterpretation. This was evidently the official *apologia* on behalf of the Delphic oracle and may even have originated in Delphi itself. The fact that the answer needed such a defence suggests that it was authentically given before the *coup d'état*. The exact words are not preserved in Thucydides' paraphrase, but he must convey the general sense. It indicates well the difference between the seventh-century attitude towards tyranny and that of later periods, that about 630 B.C. a Greek citizen would consult the Pythia on the subject without receiving a rebuff. He would receive instead a useful tip, if he knew how to act on it.

On the subject of Delphi's relations with tyrants actually in power the regular type of story preserved shows the Pythia as truculently abusive. This attitude no doubt appealed to the anti-tyrannical feelings of the Greek of classical periods. For instance, Cleisthenes of Sicyon set out to discredit the Argive and Dorian elements in his city and for this purpose wished to remove the body of the Argive hero, Adrastus,² who had traditionally been a former king of Sicyon and at whose tomb worship was paid. He consulted Delphi as the recognized source of sanction when the remains of heroes had to be exhumed. The Pythia's answer was a downright refusal ac-

¹ I, cxxxi.

² Herod. V, lxxvii. Dio Chrys., III, 41.

according to the later story she told Cleisthenes that he was a mere 'skirmisher',¹ while Adrastus was king of Sicyon. We are told that Cleisthenes did not proceed with his plan of exhumation: instead he chose on his own authority to neutralize the spiritual powers of Adrastus by abolishing his cult and borrowing the body of his sometime mortal enemy, Melanippus, to be buried beside him.

This story, so far as it concerns the Pythia's reply, is surprising in view of the fact that Cleisthenes took Apollo's side in the First Sacred War. For that service one would have expected him to have received favourable treatment from the oracle. Of course, in the uncertainty of sixth-century chronology it is impossible to determine whether Cleisthenes' consultation of the Pythia concerning Adrastus did not take place before the Sacred War and at the beginning of his reign. But an allusion in the *Schol.* to Pindar's Nemean odes shows that Cleisthenes out of his third share from the spoils of Crisa founded Pythian games to be celebrated regularly at Sicyon: these were substituted for a festival traditionally founded by Adrastus and therefore seem to be part of the same policy of replacing Argive by native institutions. So the indications rather date the attempt to suppress Adrastus to the period after the First Sacred War, when one would expect Cleisthenes to be a *persona grata* with Delphi. But the foundation of Pythian games at Sicyon need not be taken to be a compliment to the Pythian Apollo and nothing more. It was rather a deliberate act of competition against the Pythian games at Delphi.² There are no signs that the Delphians encouraged the setting up of local temples to the Pythian Apollo and festivals in his honour. In fact, some instances of this kind of institution seem rather to imply hostility to Delphi and a deliberate wish to dispense with pilgrimages there by providing a local substitute. We may cite the erection by Peisistratus of a temple to the Pythian Apollo at Athens for, as we have noted, his dynasty was noticeably alienated from Delphi. So in this

¹ Lit. one who stones. Therefore it has been interpreted as (1) a mere stone thrower <> a proper warrior, (2) one who deserves to be stoned. So Suidas, but the passive meaning is inconsistent with the form. (1) An oppressor, but this metaphorical meaning is unlikely.

² Schol. Pind. *Nem.* IX, 20. On this view of the significance of these Pythian games, cf. Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, II, pp. 64 ff.

Sicyonian example it is probable that, after the First Sacred War when Thessaly secured the primacy in the Amphictyony, tension with Sicyon developed. Cleisthenes may have hoped for greater influence as a result of his championship of Delphi, but was first rebuffed in his anti-Argive aspirations, and then set up a rival festival to the Pythian games at Delphi over which the Thessalians presided¹

Another instance where Delphi appears to have discountenanced the setting up of a local festival is supplied by the history of Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos² He had refounded the festival to Apollo on Delos, and sent to Delphi to enquire whether he should call it by its old name 'Delia' or by a new title 'Pythia' One might have thought that this delicate compliment would have won Delphi to his favour, but the enigmatic answer came that the festival was for him 'both Pythia and Delia' The story goes on that Polycrates died shortly afterwards and that this was what the oracle had meant. the cryptic saying implied apparently that it was all the same to Polycrates whatever his festival was called This anecdote indeed has no great claims to authenticity It first appears as a proverbial saying in the late fourth century—'It's both Pythia and Delia to you'—meaning 'It is your last occasion to do this' As with other similar proverbs alleged to be derived from oracles, it is somewhat difficult to determine whether the proverb is the source of the legend or the legend of the proverb. But it may represent correctly enough the Pythia's attitude to such a proposal, especially when made by a tyrant who was a particular enemy of Sparta

Plutarch³ records a prophecy of another tyrant's death in which Apollo is even more grimly uncompromising Procles of Epidaurus, the father-in-law of the more famous Periander of Corinth, had murdered a certain Athenian, named Timarchus, and given his body to an Aeginetan to sink in the sea. Later, 'his affairs fell into confusion' and he sent his brother, Cleotimus, to consult Delphi on the chances of his being able

¹ Cf *CAH* III, 556 See Anaxandrides ap Zenob I, 57 (*FHG* Vol III, p. 106, No. 2) Apostol I, 97 Suidas, s.v. Ἀκρον λάβε, for an oracle given to the men of Pellene after a war with Cleisthenes Some sources give Aegina instead of Pellene, but see Courby, *Fouilles*, II, p. 286

² Suidas, s.v. Πύθια, citing Epicurus, and s.v. ταῦτά σοι, Zenob VI, 15, citing Menander = frag. 147 (Kock)

³ *Moral* 405C

to flee from Epidaurus and settle elsewhere. The Pythia answered that Apollo would let Procles flee and settle where he had bidden the Aeginetan stranger let down the basket or where the stag casts his horns. The tyrant understood from this that the god meant that he should either throw himself in the sea or be buried on land for folklore asserted that stags buried their dropped antlers. Shortly afterwards the prophecy was fulfilled when friends of Timarchus killed Procles and threw his body in the sea.

This story has evidently been dressed up for pious effect. We have no independent evidence to confirm or disprove it, but it may be taken that there is a substratum of truth to it. It conforms well to the anti-tyrannical pattern which would explain its survival and amplification. A rare example of an answer to a tyrant which appears to have survived without pietizing modifications is preserved from a local chronicler.¹ A tyrant named Pythagoras overthrew the Ephesian oligarchy, and in the process slew some of his opponents in the sanctuary of a temple where also the daughter of one of them, when besieged by the tyrant's forces, proceeded to hang herself. This impious pollution was followed by a general epidemic and famine. Pythagoras in anxiety sent to Delphi and asked for a solution of these troubles. The Pythia prescribed that he should build a temple in place of that which was polluted, and pay funeral rites to the dead. We are not informed whether this advice remedied the disasters, but the account ends with the information merely that these events took place before the time of Cyrus the Persian—that is before the middle of the sixth century. The incident is so simple, that it can be taken as authentic and unvarnished. The Pythia's advice does not seem here to have been influenced by any special anti-tyrannical bias. The ritual observances were the same as would naturally have been prescribed to any government after a civil disturbance which had involved blood guilt.

An opposite example can be found in the unhistoric group of oracles which were later assembled round the figure of Phalaris.² He particularly appealed to the Greek imagination

¹ Suidas, s.v. Πυθαγόρας Ἐφέσιος

² Heraclides Ponticus ap. Athen. XIII, 602B. Aelian, *V. H.* II, 4. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E.* V, 233B. Iamblichus, *Vit. Pyth.* 221.

as the typical instance of the grisly tyrant, and to him were assigned legends borrowed from the histories of the other tyrants. The story of Dionysius and the two Pythagoreans, Damon and Pytheas, is reproduced with Phalaris as the tyrant and Chariton and Melanippus as the romantic pair of conspirators. When the tyrant was converted to admiration for the loving heroism of the two and gave them pardon, Apollo was said to have announced that he had granted Phalaris a postponement of death for his clemency, and gave this as an answer to those who consulted the Pythia on the question of attacking him. Also in honour of the pair an oracle was issued

'Blessed are Chariton and Melanippus, born as guides of divine friendship to mortal men'

Other oracles not now extant foretold the tyrant's ultimate fall when his subjects were more powerful and more united with one another—a fairly safe prediction, which was said to have been fulfilled when Pythagoras, the philosopher—another favourite figure in later legends—visited Acragas and converted the citizens by his teaching. But these fictions have no relation to history, and only illustrate the way in which Delphi could be made to play a conventional part in Greek romances.

The actual relations of the Delphic oracle with Greek tyrants are hard to reconstruct, but as we have seen, the truth probably was that in their own day Delphi treated them much as any other enquirer. A Cylon would receive advice or a Pythagoras have a remedy prescribed for him such as other statesmen would have got in like case. The power and wealth of Cypselus might exact a special tribute of admiration. It was not till the tyrants fell that Delphi encouraged the growth of the conventional legend in which the oracle either foretells the coming tyranny or treats the reigning tyrant with scorn. The friendly relations of Delphi with the Spartan king, Cleomenes, would tend to enhance this hostile attitude toward tyranny. For Cleomenes and his immediate predecessors had been the great opponents of tyrants on the Greek mainland.

CHAPTER VII

THE ORACLE AND LYDIA

THERE was one dynasty of autocrats, who stood for long in a special relation to Delphi—the Mermnad monarchs of Lydia. Their rule had been begun by a *coup d'état* and the founder, Gyges, is the first man of whom we hear the title 'tyrant' employed. In fact, it is probable that this non-Hellenic word was borrowed from some Asian language, and applied first to Gyges and those Greek autocrats whose usurpation of power resembled his. But whereas the Greek tyrants were represented in general tradition as no friends of Delphi, the Lydian kings were renowned in later ages for their bountiful generosity to Apollo and the oft quoted prophecies which the Pythia had given them. This bounty reached its climax in the many valuable dedications which were sent to Delphi by Croesus. These gifts were famous in later times not merely through their extreme magnificence, but also for the pathetic fate of the donor which added a sentimental interest to his dedications. The story of Croesus has been told with all his usual skill by Herodotus, and from his narration it has become part of the literary heritage of Europe. But here we must consider the familiar tale from a different angle, not so much for the picturesque interest of the events, but so as to arrive at a view of the activity of the Delphic oracle. It is the earliest instance where Delphi had contact over a succession of reigns with a family of foreign kings. They were wealthy beyond the scale of Greek states, and were ambitious to extend their rule over the Greek cities of the Asia Minor coast. For this purpose the support of Delphi might be precious: if generous dedications to Apollo could induce the oracle to issue pronouncements in favour of the Lydian kings, their power might be strengthened by alliances from mainland Greece and their empire in Asia Minor might be extended. Greek tyrants, also, had been generous to Delphi, but it is doubtful whether they succeeded in buying much countenance from Apollo in their own lifetimes, and certainly after their deaths the sacred legends

were inclined to discredit them. But with Lydia it was otherwise. We have little reliable evidence for the actual oracles delivered to Croesus or his predecessors, but from the long succession of costly offerings sent from Lydia it is clear that the Pythia's replies must have given satisfaction, and after the fall of Croesus Delphi continued to hold him in grateful and pious remembrance. The tragic history of his house was embellished with such legendary prophecies as would suggest that Apollo could not have done more than mitigate the fall of Croesus, which he had darkly foretold. To Croesus himself pious tradition assigned no more discreditable quality than that over-weening self-confidence which to the Greeks was the besetting fault of the over-successful man. Hence where the Greek tyrants have been painted black, the Lydian kings shine out nobly in Delphic tradition.¹

Gyges, the founder of their dynasty, was not the first barbarian to send a dedication to Delphi. For in the treasury of the Corinthians there Herodotus² was shown an offering from Midas the son of Gordius, king of Phrygia—'the royal chair in which he used to sit when giving judgment'. But concerning this interesting object Herodotus tells us nothing more than that it was worth seeing. He omits any description of its material or workmanship, and if the Delphian guide told him any tale to account for the dedication, Herodotus has failed to record it. Later authorities gave no information at all. So while it is unnecessary to cast doubts on the alleged donor of the chair, he remains unexplained in his contact with Delphi.³ With Gyges it is otherwise. In the same treasury Herodotus saw six mixing bowls of gold, each five talents in weight,⁴ which Gyges had dedicated, and he also records that Gyges gave the greatest amount of silver dedications sent to Delphi.

The reason for this generosity, as given by Herodotus,⁵ was that Delphi had decided the question of the kingship of Lydia in Gyges' favour. After describing how Gyges was driven to slay his master, Candaules, and seize the throne in his stead,

¹ Cf. especially Pindar, *Pyth.* I, 94 ff.—the φιλόφρων ἀμετά of Croesus contrasted with the wickedness of Phalaris.

² I, xiii.

³ For other views, cf. e.g. Hiller von Gaertringen *P.W.* IV, 2549.

⁴ It is uncertain whether Herodotus here and elsewhere is calculating in Attic talents (each about 58 lb.) or Aeginetan talents (each about 82 lb.).

⁵ Herod. I c. paraphrased by Nicolaus of Damascus *F.G.* H 90 F 47, 10.

Herodotus tells that Gyges' followers and the rest of the Lydians who rose in indignation at Candaules' death agreed together to suspend hostilities and refer the question to Delphi. If the oracle decided in favour of Gyges, he should reign, if not, he should give back the kingship to the dynasty of the Heraclidae whom he had displaced. The Pythia gave Apollo's decision for Gyges, but added that vengeance for the Heraclidae would fall on his fifth descendant. 'Yet this saying' (Herodotus adds) 'the Lydians and their kings set at naught, till indeed it was accomplished.'

This favourable decision might well have been a sufficient motive for Gyges' generosity. But the whole account is too improbable for belief. One cannot conceive that in Lydia by the early seventh century the Delphic oracle was already held in such respect that a question of kingship could be referred to it by general agreement. Also the supplementary prophecy of the fall of Croesus is too numerically precise to have been given before the event. This kind of prediction is a stock feature of Delphic traditions with regard to dynasties.¹ Clearly the dedications of Gyges had in time become the centre of an accretion of legend similar, though on a smaller scale, to that which was built up round Croesus' offerings. That Gyges did actually send those dedications to Delphi, it would be perverse to deny, but his exact motive must have been different. He was the first king of Lydia to set out on a career of conquest among the Greek cities of Ionia. It is not surprising if he thought at the same time to please his newly conquered Greek subjects by showing a generous respect to their gods. It is even possible that he succeeded in eliciting from the Delphic oracle a prophecy favourable to his rule in some way. From this beginning the Lydian kings continued to find in Delphi a convenient point of contact with the heart of the Greek world.

The next Lydian king to be a donor to Delphi was Alyattes. According to the story which Herodotus² had heard from the Delphians themselves, Alyattes had attacked the territory of Miletus, and his troops in burning the standing corn also set fire to a temple of Athena Assesia, which stood outside the walls of the city. The temple was destroyed, and when his campaign ended Alyattes fell ill. As the disease persisted he

¹ Cf. *supra* pp. 85, 134-6 and *infra* p. 258.

² I, xix, ff.

sent ambassadors to Delphi (Herodotus hesitates between supposing that he did this on his own initiative, or at someone else's advice) The Pythia refused to give a reply till the temple of Athena was restored As we learn from a later passage, Alyattes rebuilt two temples for one and then recovered In acknowledgment of his return to health he sent to Delphi a huge silver mixing-bowl and a welded iron base Herodotus admired the latter object above all the dedications at Delphi and said the maker was Glaucus of Chios, the inventor of the process of welding As it was not of precious metal, this piece of ironwork survived when all the other Lydian dedications were melted down Pausanias in the second century A D was able to see and describe it, and late writers mention it when the other famous dedications at Delphi had ceased to be remembered ¹

Herodotus' account of Alyattes involves no improbabilities so far as the Delphian part of his narrative is concerned He inserts from a Milesian source a folk-tale telling how Periander of Corinth warned Thrasybulus, the tyrant of Miletus, that Alyattes had been advised to make peace with him, and enabled him to exact stiff terms The details of this anecdote are improbable, and it is unnecessary to add it to the Delphian account. It would be reasonable for Delphi, if Alyattes fell ill and sought its advice, to require him first to atone to Miletus for the involuntary impiety of his troops against a Greek temple Probably the Delphians had already heard of its burning and they, not Periander, may even have warned Thrasybulus of the new factor, which they had introduced into the relations of Miletus and Lydia For though Delphi and Miletus were not necessarily on very good terms, they might feel a common Hellenism in opposition to the aggression of Lydia. Alyattes' later munificence to Delphi on his recovery may, as we have already suggested with Gyges' dedications, have also been inspired by a desire to foster good relations with the Greeks. His peace with Miletus would require a general policy of that kind as its logical sequel

These earlier contacts between Delphi and Lydia were of small consequence compared with their dealings with Croesus,

¹ For other references, cf Hegesander Delphus ap Athen V, 210B Plut *Moral* 436A Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, VI, xi Paus X, xvi, 1-2 Hogarth (*C A H.* III, 513) suggests that Alyattes approached Delphi with a view to making peace with Miletus For another possible reference to Alyattes and Delphi, cf *infra* p 161

the son of Alyattes Herodotus' account¹ is primarily derived from Delphian sources and he tells the story as it was recast after the event. All the incidents are made to connect with the fall of Croesus, and that supreme disaster has coloured all the narrative, which is arranged with a naive skill to heighten the tragedy and at the same time to save the credit of Delphi as far as may be.

After he had formed the resolution to counter the expansion of Cyrus' power by an attack on Persia, Croesus set out systematically to test in advance the different oracles which might forecast the issue of his new scheme.² Simultaneously he sent embassies to the Greek oracular centres—Delphi, Abae, Dodona, Amphiaraus at Oropus, Trophonius at Lebadea, and Branchidae near Miletus. Herodotus adds that he sent agents to one oracle of Libya—that of Zeus Ammon. The ambassadors were instructed to consult the oracle in each place on the hundredth day counting from the date of departure,³ and the question in each instance was to be the same: what did Croesus happen to be doing at that moment? The answers were to be brought back in writing for Croesus to compare their approximation to the truth.

The reply of the Pythia was

*'I know the number (of the grains) of sand and the measures of the sea, and the deaf I understand and the speechless I hear. The smell has come to my mind of a hard-skinned tortoise, as it is boiled in bronze along with lamb's flesh. Bronze is the bed beneath it, and bronze is above.'*⁴

On hearing this oracle Croesus immediately uttered a prayer and accepted it. For on the appointed day he had chopped up a tortoise with some lamb and boiled them together in a bronze cauldron with a bronze lid. The other oracular replies, as Herodotus tells us, did not appeal to Croesus. But in a later passage he corrects this generalization by

¹ I, xlv, 2 ff.

² Cf. *Marmor Parium* (F Gr H 239 FA 41) where the sending of the embassy appears to be dated differently to the first year of Croesus' reign.

³ This statement seems to conflict with the rule that the Pythia could only be consulted on the 7th of each month. Either Croesus' ambassadors were allowed special access, or, as is more likely, the whole story is a fiction. Cf. F. Benedict, *de oraculis ab Herodoto commemoratis*, p. 26.

⁴ Cf. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P E* V, 230B and Lucian, *Jup. Trag.* 676 for sarcastic allusions, and Pindar, *Pyth.* IX, 44-9 for a possible echo, cf. *Pyth.* III, 29.

asserting that, though the reply of Amphiaraus was unrecorded, still Croesus regarded it also as an infallible oracle

Herodotus¹ records that it was in consequence of the successful answer of the Pythia, that Croesus sent his famous dedications to Delphi (1) They were in part the results of a colossal burnt offering made in Lydia to the honour of Apollo, in which Croesus sacrificed three thousand victims, and burned beds encrusted with gold and silver, gold cups, and purple garments It is implied that the Lydians were also required each to contribute their individual offerings The molten residue was cast into one hundred and seventeen half bricks four of pure gold, each weighing $1\frac{1}{2}$ talents, the remainder of 'white gold'—i.e. a mixture of gold and silver—each weighing two talents The half bricks measured six palms by three palms by one palm At Delphi they were erected into a pile surmounted by a lion of pure gold weighing ten talents

There were also various other dedications sent by Croesus (2) two huge mixing-bowls, one of gold and one of silver to stand on either side of the entrance to the temple Herodotus records that the golden one weighed $9\frac{1}{2}$ talents, 12 minas, and that the silver one could hold six hundred amphorae It was said by the Delphians to be the work of Theodorus of Samos, and Herodotus agrees with the attribution on account of the superior quality of the workmanship In addition Herodotus records without giving details of size or weight, (3) four silver jars, (4) two sprinklers for holy water, one of gold, one of silver, (5) a golden figure of a woman, three cubits high, called by the Delphians 'Croesus' baker', (6) and many other minor offerings, including a great golden shield in the temple of Athena Pronaea Besides these, Croesus' wife dedicated her necklace and girdles

The extraordinary wealth of these offerings makes one pause But the truth and accuracy of the description of them given by Herodotus is beyond serious doubt He records them separately, not merely mentioning the original sites on which they were first placed, but also recording their positions in his own day, if they had since been moved Clearly his statements are the result of observations on the spot at Delphi,

¹ I, i ff xcii, 1 Cf D S XVI, lvi, 6 Plut *Moral* 401 E Lucian, *Charon*, 503 Paus X, xiii, 5

and his details of weights and measures sound as if they came ultimately from the official inventory of the temple treasures, where such particulars would be noted in the case of intrinsically precious offerings, as a safeguard against pilfering or substitution.¹ Also Herodotus' account is confirmed independently in Diodorus Siculus, who records the weights of the Lydian dedications more summarily, when assessing the treasures melted down during the Third Sacred War.

Modern scholars have been tempted at times to be sceptical. But the existence of these treasures at Delphi cannot seriously be questioned. Also theories put forward to suggest either that they were not dedicated by Croesus, or that they were dedications of his transferred from elsewhere, e.g. Branchidae, are too hypothetical and foolish to need detailed consideration.² The overwhelming bounty of Croesus to Delphi must be accepted as a fact and taken as something to be explained. Herodotus' own explanation, derived from the Delphian authorities, is that the dedications were an acknowledgment of the proved infallibility of the oracle and a payment in advance for an answer to Croesus' great question 'whether he should make an expedition against the Persians and whether he should make any further host of men his friends?' But so far as concerns the test of the oracles, Herodotus' account is open to serious question. (1) Herodotus himself notices that the answer of Delphi was preserved, but the answers of all the other oracles were unrecorded. One might suppose that the unsuccessful replies had been hushed up, and the incident forgotten as quickly as possible by the other oracle centres. But Herodotus himself³ found that the oracle of Amphiaraus had been honoured, like that of Delphi, with golden offerings, but on a much smaller scale, a solid gold shield and a spear with blade and shaft of solid gold. In Herodotus' day, when Thebes had suppressed the oracle of Amphiaraus, these dedications were shown in the temple of the Ismenian Apollo. Herodotus himself was aware of the inconsistency, and appends the oracle centre of Amphiaraus to that of Delphi in a couple of places in his narrative. But it is evident that it does not fit.

¹ Cf. the inscriptional records of the treasures of Athena on the Acropolis.

² C. Niebuhr, *Mitt. der Vorder-asiat. Gesell.* 1899, pp. 27-8.

³ I, xlix, and lii.

The original answer of Amphiaraus to the test is not known to Herodotus, nor can he record any answer given there to the question about war with Persia. Moreover, in the actual passage where he describes Croesus' offerings to Amphiaraus, he records a different motive—not respect for Amphiaraus' oracular answer, but that Croesus had heard of the hero's bravery and tragic death.

(ii) Also the list of oracles consulted is obviously chosen to suit with the circumstances of Herodotus' own day. It is a complete list of the fifth-century rivals of the Pythia, not such a list as one would expect in Croesus' reign. The addition of Dodona and still more of Ammon are highly suspicious, as both these distant and isolated shrines were not normally consulted by Ionian Greeks in the mid-sixth century. On the other hand, the oracles of the Asia Minor coast are absent except for Branchidae.¹ They had all lapsed into insignificance in the fifth century, but would have been of considerable importance in the sixth. The mention of Branchidae alone is otherwise explicable, owing to its past rivalry with Delphi, it would not be forgotten in such a list prepared by the Delphians.

These difficulties could be explained away by supposing that the circumstances of the test had been merely confused and garbled in the telling. But it seems easier and more reasonable to suppose that the test itself was a Delphian fiction. In arguing thus, I have avoided raising the further question of the possibility of the prophecy. Myers² accepts the general accuracy of the Herodotean account, supposes that the test was proof against counterfeiting, and attributes the correctness of the Pythia's answer not to sheer coincidence, but to the power of second sight—a spiritual television which could detect Croesus at the moment of his action. If one could accept this view, it would be the greatest tribute to the powers of the Delphic oracle, one would have to admit that, while perhaps unable to foresee the future, the Pythia had at times a supernatural vision of present events. But this belief, though attractive, is too uncertainly grounded in a story whose other details are so open to question. The Pythia's prefatory words in later times were taken as the stock manifesto of Apollo's prophetic powers, and as such were revered or mocked by

¹ E.g. Claros, Telmessus, Grynium

— *Essays, Classical*, p. 41

later writers. Clearly also, this had been the purpose of the fiction, to associate Croesus' dedications with a story which would advertise the infallibility of Delphi and the futility of all other oracular shrines, not even excluding that of Amphiaraus.

In rejecting the story of the test, one must also reject the primary motive given by Herodotus for Croesus' dedications. But before we substitute another it is necessary to consider the rest of Herodotus' account of Croesus. According to him¹ Croesus instructed the ambassadors who conveyed the dedications to ask whether he should attack Persia and whether he should join any allied force to himself. Herodotus, curiously, does not give the Pythia's answer in its conventional hexameter form, but merely offers a prose paraphrase in indirect speech—that, if he attacked the Persians, he would destroy a great empire, and that he must find out the most powerful of the Greeks and make them his friends. In all the other instances of oracles delivered to Croesus, Herodotus quotes them in their correct verse form, and the first part of this answer was familiar to later authors in a single hexameter line:

'Croesus, having crossed the Halys, will destroy a great empire.'

The verbal resemblance to Herodotus' paraphrase is so close that one cannot seriously doubt that this was the exact version, which he knew. If so, his use of paraphrase here needs explanation and the solution that suggests itself is that Herodotus was not pleased by the childish ambiguity attributed to Apollo. He has to accept it as part of the only story which he knows about Croesus and Delphi, but, rather than to give it emphasis, he prefers to pass it over in a hasty paraphrase. Later writers were not so charitable to Delphi. Aristotle quotes the line baldly as a stock instance of fallacious ambiguity. Cicero notes it unfavourably in his work *on Divination*. Lucian recurs to it more than once with cutting sarcasm. Even Dio Chrysostom, wishing to point a pious moral, can at best see in it an instance of the perils which await mere mortals when they 'make use of a god'.

In Herodotus' account, Croesus blindly accepts this oracle as meaning that he will destroy the Persian empire. His

¹ Herod. I, lxxi, 1 ff., lxxix, 2, xc1, 4. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1427, a 38. Cic. *de Div.* II, lvi, 115. D S IX, xxxi, 1. Lucian, *Jupp. Conf.* 636, *Jupp. Trag.* 665, 691. Maximus Tyrius, V, 2A. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.* V, 211D.

delight at the prophecy causes him to ascertain the number of the Delphians and send them a reward of two gold staters each¹ In return the Delphians voted to Croesus and the Lydians all their best honours and privileges—right of previous access to the oracle, freedom from paying dues, the right of front seats in public meetings—and decreed that any Lydian might settle in Delphi with the full rights of a Delphian for all time Herodotus' wording reads as if it were borrowed from the inscribed decree Along with his gift of money Croesus had sent a third question whether his monarchy would last long² The Pythia's answer was³

'But when a mule shall have become king of the Medes, then, soft footed Lydian, flee by the pebbly Hermus, do not linger, nor feel shame at being a coward'

These words also delighted Croesus, for he took it that as a mule could never be a king, his kingdom would never be taken from him or his descendants He followed up the advice to seek an ally by making enquiries and deciding that the Spartans were the most powerful of the Greeks So he sought an alliance with them and his ambassadors quoted the Delphic oracle in support of their request, which was granted

Herodotus then tells in detail the story of Croesus' campaign across the Halys, his defeat, the taking of Sardis, Croesus' own capture, and his placing on the pyre He is rescued by Cyrus' change of purpose at the last moment and through a providential storm of rain Croesus thereupon asks permission of Cyrus to send his chains to Delphi and to challenge the oracle to justify its conduct Herodotus reproduces the official Delphic *apologia*, put into the mouth of the Pythia replying to Croesus' agents

It was inescapable fate for Croesus to fall in recompense for the sin of Gyges, exacted from the fifth generation, as already prophesied to him Apollo had wished to postpone the disaster until the reign of Croesus' children, but could not divert the Fates They only conceded a delay of three years⁴ Also Apollo

¹ Pomtow (*Rh Mus* LI, p. 324) ingeniously suggests that this money was really meant to defray the charge on individual Delphians towards the restoration of the temple, cf. *infra* p. 162

² Herod. I, iv D S IX, xxxi, 2 *Anthol Graec* XIV, 112 Oenomaus ap Euseb *P E* V, 218B

³ Cf. How and Wells, commentary ad loc., on calculations which may account for the origin of this figure

had given him a second blessing in that he had contrived his rescue from the pyre. The ambiguities of the oracles were explained that the great 'empire' was Croesus' own, that the 'mule' was Cyrus, the son of an inferior father and a superior mother. Delphi itself was justified as the honoured instrument of destiny and justice.

The beauties of the ancient romantic legend make one regret the need of a critical reconsideration of its truth. Clearly the two oracles which form the kernel of the story must be abandoned. The absurd simplicity of the former one makes it impossible. The latter with its interpretation hingeing on later unhistoric legends about Cyrus' birth is obviously a subsequent invention. If Delphi did send Croesus oracles about the success of his military ambitions and the permanence of his dynasty, these were not the words. Yet it is impossible to believe that Delphi did nothing. The vast munificence of Croesus' dedications cannot be explained entirely as a disinterested tribute to the Pythian Apollo. Croesus may, even must, have believed in the truth and importance of Delphi. But Delphi must have given him some special cause for choosing it as an object of his generosity. It is reasonable to suppose that the groundwork of fact behind the later Delphian narrative was the question of military allies. In deciding to make war on Persia Croesus would have wished not only for the backing of the Greeks of Asia Minor, whom he had made his subjects, but also for the active support of allies from mainland Greece, if he could secure them. Never previously had a Greek state given military assistance to Lydia, but Croesus by his territorial expansion was in closer touch with Greece than any previous Lydian monarch. In persuading the co-operation of Greek allies, Delphi might prove of peculiar value. A favourable prophecy from the Pythia, some encouragement to the Greeks to assist, and the task of inducing Sparta to support him would be possible. Sparta, particularly, had been much more closely connected with Asia Minor in trade and culture during the earlier half of the sixth century than it was before or after this period and Sparta was particularly bound to Delphi.

The more rationalistic Greek historians of later times took a somewhat similar view of Croesus' relations with Greece. Ephorus told the story of the scoundrel, Eurybatus, who was

sent by Croesus to Greece with gold to hire Greek mercenaries, but absconded with the money.¹ This version has been coloured by the conditions of the fourth century B.C. in which Ephorus wrote. Eurybatus has been modelled on the pattern of one of those agents of Persian satraps who were sent at that very period on the same mission to Greece. But there may be again the same substratum of truth, that Croesus' financial relations with Greece were actuated by a desire to win military allies.

One may suppose, then, that Croesus may have sent some of his dedications to Delphi before he conceived of attacking Persia. On his accession or in the early years of his reign he may have thought it wise to follow up the policy of previous members of his house, and honour the Pythian Apollo. When his plans of aggression took shape, it would be reasonable for him to seek encouragement and allies from Delphi, and join with his questions bountiful offerings which might induce the Pythia to prove of great use in her prophecies. One cannot doubt that the oracle's reply was strongly favourable without the suspicious ambiguities which the later versions contained. On the Delphians the seemingly boundless wealth of the Lydian monarchy must have made an overpowering impression. Gold at this period was very scarce in Greece, and a ruler who could dispense hoards in bounties must have seemed the master of invincible resources. Persia or even Media can have been scarcely more than a name. Hence an unqualified backing of Croesus must have seemed the only sensible policy. The strong tone of the oracles may have led Sparta to take the remarkable course of accepting such a distant request for alliance. But she used her native caution and did not send any actual assistance, till the quick decision of the issue made the sending of help meaningless. Then she contented herself with diplomatic protests, not backed by action.

The story of Croesus on the pyre existed in other versions even before Herodotus' time. One, known from an ode of Bacchylides,² and apparently represented on a well-known Attic red-figure vase,³ told that Croesus himself deliberately prepared the pyre and mounted it as a form of suicide. Bacchy-

¹ D S IX, XXXII = F Gr H 70 F 58d

² Louvre, G 197 (Pottier, *Vases Antiques du Louvre*, III, p. 1021)

³ III, 23 ff

lides accepts the consequence that Croesus died there, but relieves its pathos by conferring a kind of apotheosis on Croesus in which the 'Delian-born Apollo' bears him away to the land of the Hyperboreans. Before his immolation Croesus is made to reproach Apollo with the memory 'of the countless gifts at Pytho'. But there is no reference to oracles. Jebb saw in this version a Delian *apologia* for Apollo's apparent treachery, differing from the Delphian story with the same purpose. The theory is possible. But the one reference to Apollo as 'Delian-born' scarcely decides the question of origin. The ode was composed for Hieron's victory with a four-horse chariot at Olympia in 468 B.C. In honour of this success Hieron made important dedications at Delphi which are actually alluded to in the earlier lines of the poem. Hence it cannot be said that the ode is unconnected with Delphi in subject, and it is as likely that we have here an earlier or alternative version of the Delphic *apologia*, which was superseded when the new versions of the oracles obtained general currency.

Another version of the legend is that of Nicolaus of Damascus, no doubt going back to a somewhat earlier source, but ultimately based on the Herodotean account with picturesque amplifications. It agrees partly with Herodotus in representing Cyrus as at least consenting to Croesus' immolation, but introduces a new incident: the appearance of Herophila, the sibyl, with a prophecy in hexameter verse against the burning of Croesus.¹ An allusion to Zeus, Apollo and *Amphiaraios* as champions of Croesus evidently is derived from Herodotus. But the incident has no real effect on the story which ends with Croesus' rescue while alive.²

It is impossible to decide the truth about Croesus' fate. He may have placed himself on a pyre: but the story sounds suspiciously like that of Sardanapallus and may be based on a folk-tale of the Near East. Cyrus, if a good Zoroastrian, should not have attempted to defile fire with any human body, but we cannot be certain that he accepted any such taboo. It is probable, however, that, whether through Cyrus' orders or his own suicide, Croesus did not survive defeat. The earliest (Bacchy-

¹ Herod. I, xc, 4 ff. Nicolaus of Damascus (*F Gr H* 90 F 68).

² A late version in Malalas (*Chronicon*, VI, p. 157, 8 = Castor *F Gr H* 250 F 11) makes Cyrus merely exhibit Croesus in triumph as a prisoner bound on a wooden tripod, and then deport him to Persia.

hidean) story points this way Herodotus makes him live on till the reign of Cambyses and tells many anecdotes about him at the Persian court, but it cannot be said that multiplied incidents of this sort prove a fact, while sound confirmatory evidence from other sources is lacking Certainly Greek thought could not approve of the notion that the 'kindly-hearted virtue' of Croesus should go for nothing The final Delphian version ensured that Croesus survived to hear through his messengers the Pythian Apollo's justification and admit its truth This solution would best satisfy the conscience of Delphi and the opinion of their fellow-countrymen

One other oracle delivered to Croesus by the Pythia is recorded by Herodotus¹ Croesus had a son of excellent physique, but dumb He sent to Delphi to enquire about his son's cure The Pythia's answer was

'Lydian-born, king of many, mighty foolish Croesus, do not wish to hear within your halls the voice, besought with many prayers, of your son speaking It is much better for that to be far from you For he will speak first on a day of ill luck'

The prophecy was fulfilled at the taking of Sardis A Persian soldier was about to kill Croesus, unaware of his identity Croesus himself in despair did not trouble to disclose himself, but his son standing by suddenly found voice and shouted 'Fellow, would you slay Croesus?'

The story is dramatic, and also is true to nature, in that some forms of dumbness can be overcome by a sudden nervous shock We have seen a similar legend as one variant of the tale of Battus² The oracle itself is noticeably simple and unambiguous It may have been invented to point the moral, so often inculcated by Delphi, that men's foolish desires bring trouble in their fulfilment, and that it is better not to ask to have the thorn in one's flesh removed But it is not strictly forced on us to suppose that the oracle is an invention Even before the event the Delphian priests may have thought it both morally and prophetically safe to answer that it was well for the dumb not to be cured The address to Croesus is lacking in courtly deference, but that was the privilege of the mouth-piece of the gods So this may have been a genuine prophecy made at random, which either was actually fulfilled, or for

¹ I, 100-101 D S IX, xxxiii, 2 *Anthol Graec* XIV, 79

² Cf *supra* p 83

which the fulfilment could be invented after the fall of Sardis.

That Croesus, particularly of the Lydian kings, had intimate relations with Delphi and a great respect for Apollo his vast dedications showed. But another trace of hereditary devotion may be conjecturally recognised. When Xerxes made his great expedition against Greece he met in Lydia one Pythius, the son of Atys, who was far the wealthiest man in Asia after the great king.¹ The story of his presumption and his tragic punishment does not concern us. But the name is interesting. For it implies in his father a devotion to the Apollo of Delphi. Herodotus elsewhere gave the name of Croesus' eldest son as Atys. The story which he told of Atys' early death is only a beautiful folk-tale. But it is possible that a grandson was born to Croesus before 546 B.C. in the days of his veneration of Delphi, and received this significant name. He may have retained or recovered some of the vast possessions of the Mermnad house and survived to meet in old age the young Xerxes (481 B.C.). If so, his name is one more indication of the personal connection between Croesus and the Pythian Apollo, and suggests again that, while the main dedications at Delphi may have been connected immediately with the campaign against Persia, it is probable enough that some gifts, even many, had been sent to Delphi by Croesus before that time. After Croesus' fall the Delphian guides would tend to link up every offering with that tragic event.

The magnificence and the downfall of the Lydian house were obvious materials for the moralist. Even Herodotus in a quiet way uses his narrative to point a moral, but never to the detriment of the superb excellence of the story itself. It is probable that Delphi adapted the Croesus story in some degree to the same purpose. But later writers made this aspect more obvious in crudely impossible versions. Valerius Maximus² represents Gyges as visiting Delphi in person to enquire whether any mortal is happier than himself, and receiving a humbling answer which prefers to him the poorest of the Arcadians. Xenophon³ makes Croesus tell Cyrus the story of his presumption, that he asked children from the god and that they were born, one to die young, the other to remain dumb.

¹ Herod. VII, xxvii, and xxxviii

² *Cyrop.* VII, ii, 15 ff

³ VII, 1, 2

Then he had sent to enquire by what deeds he could continue happy. The answer was 'By knowing yourself, Croesus, you will pass through life happy.' But he had scorned this reply for its simplicity, without grasping its inner meaning. These moral lessons are on the lines of other Delphic cautionary tales, they do not add to our knowledge of Delphic history in the sixth century B.C.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ORACLE'S ACTIVITY TILL XERXES' INVASION

THE fall of Croesus must have been a severe blow to the prestige and self-esteem of the Delphians. They found with a sudden shock that, like Disraeli, they had 'backed the wrong horse' for Eastern supremacy. Later generations prepared the careful *apologia* which we find in Herodotus, and turned the disastrous speculation to their ultimate credit. In the meantime Delphi could do little. No encouragement came from Apollo to the Greek cities of Asia Minor and no attempt was made to combine them to resist Cyrus. Herodotus¹ heard in Cnidus a local tradition of a Delphic oracle which actually enjoined inaction. The Cnicians had decided to defend themselves, and for this purpose set about cutting a canal through the isthmus which linked them to the mainland of Asia Minor. But the workers suffered a phenomenal number of casualties from the splintering of the rock. So they consulted Delphi and received the answer

'As for the isthmus, neither fortify it nor dig it. For Zeus would have made it an island, if he had wished it so.'

The story in itself is credible enough, and the fact that Herodotus had heard it in Cnidus and not in Delphi is not surprising. The oracle contained nothing for Delphi to record with pride, while the local traditions of Cnidus might well preserve it as significant. Cnidus was already closely associated with Delphi by the construction of a magnificent treasury there. The only doubtful point is the metre of the oracle—iambic trimeters in place of the usual hexameters.² But though many late forgeries of oracles occur in this metre there is no necessity to classify this oracle with them. The only motive for forgery would be to justify the failure to complete the fortifica-

¹ I, clxiv, 4. Paus. II, 1, 5. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E. V.* 220C. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 81.

² H. Pomtow, *Quaestionum de Oraculis caput selectum*, Berlin, Diss. 1881, rejects all oracles in trimeters. In this instance he argues that the Cnicians would not have had time to consult Delphi.

tion of the isthmus. Some Cnidian might have forged it *post eventum* for this purpose, but this is the less probable supposition.

So one may take it that Delphi when consulted counselled that no resistance to Cyrus should be made. Also it seems to have given no direct encouragement to the movement of colonization which started Greeks of Ionia who could not face the prospect of subjugation to Persia prepared as individuals or as whole communities to leave Asia Minor for ever. The most famous example of this endeavour was the colonization of Alalia. This settlement in Corsica had originally been founded by Phocaea some twenty years before the fall of Sardis.¹ Apparently it had received the usual oracular authorization from Delphi in the form that they should 'found Cynus' the contemporary name for Corsica. When Croesus was defeated, the Phocaeans decided to abandon their native place, and, after solemnly cursing any one who should attempt to return, departed by sea to settle as a community in Corsica. No further authorization for this mass migration seems to have been obtained. It proved largely a failure, for after some years of settlement the experiment was ruined by Carthage. The Carthaginians could not tolerate this further challenge to their dominance in the Western Mediterranean. They attacked Alalia and after a serious naval battle were so far successful that the Phocaeans decided to evacuate Corsica.

Of the prisoners taken in the battle some were allotted to the Etruscans of Caere who were in alliance with the Carthaginians. The Caeretans later stoned these Phocaeans to death near their city. The rest of the Phocaeans had proceeded southward along the west coast of Italy, and ultimately settled at Velia. The failure of the colonization of Corsica was justified by the usual reinterpretation of the original oracle whereby it was found that 'Cynus' did not mean Corsica, but a local hero of that name associated with Velia. Herodotus records that a man of the neighbouring town, Posidonia (Paestum), was responsible for this identification: he evidently proposed the location which ultimately proved final.

Delphi was involved in the fate of the Phocaeans by an accidental connection. The people of Caere did not escape retribution for their treatment of the Phocaean prisoners.

¹ Herod. I, clxv, 1, clxvii, 4.

Herodotus¹ relates that 'all creatures that passed by the place, where lay the Phocaeans who had been stoned, became twisted and maimed and distraught, equally whether cattle, draught animals, or men. The people of Caere sent to Delphi, seeking a remedy for their offence, and the Pythia bade them do what the men of Caere perform to this day. They sacrifice to the Phocaeans as heroes in a magnificent style and arrange a gymnastic festival and a horse race.' The story is a typical account of the origin of a hero cult, such as Delphi often sanctioned. There is no reason to doubt its general truth. One may explain the miraculous plague as some contagious epidemic, possibly caused by the presence of unburied bodies. The men of Caere were closely connected with the Pythian Apollo, since Strabo states that they built a treasury at Delphi, but one cannot deduce from his statement whether it was dedicated before or after these events.²

While Delphi's spiritual prestige had suffered a set-back in Asia, an even more serious material disaster had befallen her at home. The temple of Apollo was burnt down. Pausanias³ dates the event by Attic archon-year and Olympiad to 548-7 B.C. which would be two years before the traditional date for the fall of Sardis. But the latter event cannot be fixed with any great precision. All we can be sure of is that the more important of Croesus' dedications were already in position at Delphi before the fire. Herodotus records that the golden lion, which must have stood originally in the neighbourhood of the temple, fell from its stand of half-bricks and four and a half of the original twelve talents of gold which it had contained were melted away. Also the two great *amphorae*, of gold and of silver, were removed from the front of the temple, apparently undamaged, after the fire. This disaster, involving the overthrow of Croesus' lion, apparently took place a few years before the fall of Sardis, yet curiously no ominous significance is attached to the happening in our ancient authorities. Herodotus, the earliest of these, vouches for the fact that the fire was accidental.⁴ No account

¹ I, clxvii, cf. Strabo, V, C 220.

² See de la Coste-Messelière, *Au Musée de Delphes*, p. 476, for a suggested identification of the treasury which would date it just after these events.

³ X, v, 13.

⁴ Philochorus, (*F H G* Vol. I, p. 395, No. 70 = Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* VII, 9) preserves an old fiction that it had been burnt by the Peisistradae.

shows the extent of the general damage, but the temple itself must have been destroyed beyond repair, for the Amphictyons proceeded to build a new one.

Funds for the reconstruction were raised much in the same way in which they were found two centuries later when a similar disaster once more overtook Delphi. The estimated cost of the rebuilding was put at three hundred talents.¹ Of this large sum the Delphians themselves undertook responsibility for the fourth part. The other Amphictyonic states were no doubt assessed to contribute the remainder. The Delphians raised a fund towards their quota by sending collectors to solicit subscriptions throughout the Greek world. Particulars about only one group of contributors have been preserved in our tradition. Amasis, the Pharaoh, paid in kind, giving as his share a thousand talents' weight of alum—an Egyptian product much valued in Greece—presumably it was sold for the good of the cause. At the same time the combined subscriptions of the Greeks resident in Egypt came to twenty minas—a third of a talent. Herodotus regarded these gifts as very generous, but at this rate of contribution progress must have been slow and it is not entirely surprising to find that the temple was not finished till some forty or more years after the fire.

By what stages the restoration progressed is very obscure. Presumably the contract for the work was let out when enough subscriptions had at last come in. But for some reason unrecorded the work was still uncompleted about 514 B.C. and the contract, assuming it had already been let out, was void through the death or default of the original contractors. The work of completion was undertaken by the Athenian family of the Alcmaeonidae.² This prominent clan had been alternately the opponents and the allies of Peisistratus, but at last

¹ Herod. II, cxxx.

² Pindar, *Pyth.* VII, 9 with the Scholia, including a citation from Philochorus. Herod. V, lxi, 2 ff. Isocrates, XV, 232. Dem. XXI, 144. *Ἀθ. πολ.* XIX, 2 ff. This account based on the literary sources would have to be modified, if, as is possible, new epigraphic evidence shows that the Alcmaeonidae were exiled under Peisistratus, and took the contract then, returned under Hippias, and again went into exile. The evidence consists of a fragmentary list of names which are taken to represent the Archons before 522-1 B.C. If so, Cleisthenes actually succeeded Hippias as Archon in 525-4. It would be simpler, though against our literary evidence, to suppose that the Alcmaeonidae had held the contract from its first inception, and the suggestion that they were not exiled from Athens throughout all the work would suit with its very Attic style in sculpture. See *Hesperia*, VIII (1939), pp. 59 ff.

during his third and final tyranny at Athens they were expelled from the city and remained in exile for a generation. They must have managed to retain control of their capital and take some of it abroad with them. For they did not merely submit as penniless wanderers. Instead, Herodotus¹ believed that Alcmaeon, the head of the family, was active in assisting Croesus' ambassadors at Delphi and earned the generous gratitude of Croesus. So, long before the contract was given to his family, Alcmaeon may have possessed some influence at Delphi. This connection could have begun when Alcmaeon led the Athenian contingent in the First Sacred War.

It is remarkable that the Pythian Apollo is never represented as giving support to Peisistratus or foretelling his tyranny. As we have seen, tradition tended to associate the rise of all the famous tyrants with Delphic prophecies. The relations of Apollo to these unconstitutional rulers were often represented as unfriendly, but on no other dynasty as important as the Peisistratidae. Is Delphi allowed to keep silence? The proper conclusion seems to be that the Delphic priesthood were not on good terms with the family of Peisistratus. One may note as a possible reason that Peisistratus and Hippias were renowned for their patronage of private soothsayers and for the possession of collections of secret oracles. In such a vague subject it is difficult to decide which is cause and which effect, but the absence of Delphic oracles concerning Peisistratus seems to have its correlative fact in Peisistratid encouragement of their own court prophets.

One can fit into the same picture the two facts that the Alcmaeonidae, the chief opponents of Peisistratus, are influential at Delphi and the oracle is also shown helping the head of another Attic clan to leave Athens and establish a powerful position abroad.² The Dolonci, living in the Thracian Chersonese, were hard pressed by their neighbours and sent their chieftains to ask Delphi to advise them about the war.

¹ VI, cxcv. there are obvious chronological difficulties, if this tradition is compared with the fact that Alcmaeon was the father of Megacles, who married the daughter of Cleisthenes of Sicyon, and the marriage is supposed by Herodotus to be a consequence of the wealth which the family has *already* acquired. A way of escape for the modern commentator is to suppose that Alcmaeon's riches were derived from Alyattes, not Croesus.

² Herod. VI, xxxiv. Nepos *Miltiad* I, 1, 2. Schol. Aristid. p. 551, Dind. (substituting Apsinthians for Dolonci).

The Pythia's reply was that they should persuade to found a colony among them the man who was the first to invite them to hospitality after they left the temple. According to the legend the chieftains went through Phocis and Boeotia without receiving a welcome till at Athens they passed the door of the house of Miltiades the elder. He was sitting in his porch and shouted to them to come in. They explained their mission, and since Miltiades had been a man of influence and was vexed at the new tyranny of Peisistratus, he accepted the proposals, and after enquiring from Delphi to confirm that he should comply with the oracle he led a colony of Athenians to the Chersonese. It is evident that this picturesque story has been slightly touched up in accordance with the conventional Delphic motive of 'the first whom you meet'. No doubt Delphi had some reason to know that Miltiades was open to such a proposition, and the journey of the Dolonci had not been so entirely guided by a happy chance. There is no need to rationalize the legend as completely as we find it transformed in Cornelius Nepos. All one need suppose is that for publication and to impress volunteers for the colony the oracle took the form which Herodotus gives. The family of Miltiades the elder may have maintained good relations with Delphi. At least we notice that the annexation of Lemnos, accomplished by the more famous holder of the name, was also connected with the Pythia by a legend which would base the title to possession on a prehistoric response of the Pythia at last fulfilled by the younger Miltiades.¹

Thus Delphi, even before the fall of Croesus, had assisted one rival of Peisistratus to achieve an honourable settlement abroad. By giving his chief opponents the contract for rebuilding the temple of the Pythian Apollo an even more important step had been taken. For ancient authorities agreed that it was through obtaining this contract that the Alcmaeonidae were able to engineer their return to Athens and the restoration of the democracy there, but there was some disagreement among historians over the question how the obtaining of the contract furthered that end. Herodotus² reports an Attic tradition, that

¹ Herod. VI, cxxxix. Schol. Aristid. *Panath.* p. 79.

² V, lxi, xc, VI, cxxiii, 2 and other authorities cited above. For modern discussions see Homolle, *B. C. H.* XX, pp. 642, ff., XXVI, pp. 600 ff.

the Alcmaeonidae were able to use the occasion to bribe the Pythia to assist their cause by oracles. The ordinary version among fourth-century Athenian authorities was that the Alcmaeonidae, having secured the money for the construction in advance, used it first for the overthrow of the Peisistratidae and then completed their contract. These two versions can be treated as complementary rather than contradictory. In fact, Herodotus need not be taken as excluding the later account, but merely treating it as of subsidiary consequence. He records that the Alcmaeonidae carried out the construction in finer style than the specification, especially making the front of Parian marble, when limestone (*poros*) had been stated in the contract for the whole temple. He leaves it undefined whether this improved restoration was completed before or after the return of the Alcmaeonidae to Athens. So one cannot decide whether Herodotus supposed the money was used first for political purposes or not. His account could even be taken to imply that the superior work put into the construction of the temple was a motive to influence the Pythia to favour the Alcmaeonid cause. The sound point in Herodotus' narrative is that it is self-consistent and suits the circumstances of the sixth century. The fourth-century authorities are apparently restating the proceedings in terms of their own day. In that period the revolutionary could always achieve his object by the use of money, particularly by hiring sufficient mercenary troops. But there is no place in the Herodotean account for the extensive use of hired soldiers, or money at all, except for bribing the Pythia. It is a similar position to that which we have already noticed, where Herodotus ignored Eurybatus, and Ephorus gave him an important part in Croesus' activities.

Hence we can best suppose that what happened was as follows. The Alcmaeonidae secured the contract because they had influence at Delphi: they hoped to use this occasion to increase their power. After their failure at Leipsydrium any further attempt at direct military action was given up as hopeless. But Delphi was a great centre of contact with the Greek world and sooner or later it might be possible from it to secure effective allies against the Peisistratidae. According to Herodotus, bribery of the Pythia actually took place and by this means pressure was brought to bear on Sparta. Whenever a private

Spartiate or a public embassy from Sparta came to Delphi, the answer given was that they must first free Athens. At last the Spartans yielded and decided to undertake the venture. First they sent Anchimolius' naval expedition against Attica, which was unsuccessful. Afterwards King Cleomenes came by land with a Spartan army and expelled Hippias.

Such is Herodotus' account. It is rather naive in that it supposes that the Spartans could be induced by persistent pressure from Delphi to adopt a course of action without other motive. In fact, it is more probable that the Pythia's responses were only the façade to cover a more elaborate political negotiation. The Alcmaeonidae may have managed to convince Cleomenes that it was to his own best interests to overthrow the tyranny of the Peisistratidae. Cleomenes, as his later history showed, was well aware what use could be made of oracles. It would no doubt suit both the Alcmaeonidae and Cleomenes to have Delphic authority for their policy, particularly for the purpose of inducing the cautious Spartans to adopt an aggressive policy against a dynasty which had a tradition of friendship with Sparta. Bribery of the Pythia and the Delphic priesthood may literally have taken place, but on such a matter an Attic tradition could easily have been fabricated and need not be believed without further evidence. The Alcmaeonidae as holders of the contract to restore the temple would have ample opportunity to influence the Pythia to endorse a policy agreed upon between them and Cleomenes.

The overthrow of the Peisistratid tyranny and the return of the Alcmaeonidae had different consequences from what could have been foreseen. Cleisthenes, the head of the family, found that to maintain his position in Athenian political life he had to secure the support of the people. Thus after a disturbed interval in which King Cleomenes returned to Attica and was besieged in the Acropolis, the Athenian democracy was established on its own strength and the link forged between Athens and Delphi was maintained. The archaeological evidence confirms the belief that the completion of the temple should most likely be dated after the freeing of Athens.¹ Also the Delphic oracle was asked to co-operate in constructing the Athenian

¹ Homolle, *BCH* XXVI, pp. 621 ff. de la Coste Messelière, *Au Musée de Delphes*, p. 62. Contrast Humphry Payne, *Archaic Marble Sculpture from The Acropolis*, p. 96.

democracy When he created a new organization of the Athenians with ten tribes, Cleisthenes submitted a list of a hundred names of Attic heroes and the Pythia selected ten names which were adopted as the eponyms of the new tribes ¹

Pausanias in the second century A.D. saw at Delphi seven statues of the Attic tribal heroes, which he attributed to Pheidias. It appears as if the democracy had expressed its gratitude by dedicating ten statues, one for each eponym, but the set had later been broken by a plunderer or some accident, so that only seven remained. If Pheidias were really the sculptor, the figures would presumably date from at least thirty years after the creation of the tribes. But such attributions in Pausanias are not always reliable.

Delphi was also noticeably cold towards Cleisthenes' enemies. One of the opponents of Athens, Thebes, after a sharp defeat at the hands of the new democracy, consulted Delphi on the question of vengeance ². The Pythia's reply (only extant in paraphrase) was that they would have no vengeance themselves, but they should bring the matter before 'the many-voiced' and then ask help from 'their nearest'. The Thebans interpreted the first part of these instructions as meaning that they should refer the question to a gathering of the whole people. When the oracle was put before them they decided that 'the nearest' was not to be taken as recommending alliance with their neighbouring cities of Thespieae, Coronea, and Tanagra, but should be interpreted in a mythological sense. As Thebe, the eponym of their city, was the daughter of Asopus, and sister of Aegina, the Aeginetans were their nearest race. So a request was sent to Aegina for assistance against Athens. But the people of Aegina seem to have been unwilling at this time to undertake any military operations against Athens. They replied to an appeal based on such specious grounds by giving equally specious support. They sent their native heroes, the Aeacidæ, to be a spiritual reinforcement, but the relics were returned to them with a polite request for something more practical. It is probable that thereafter the Aeginetans contented themselves with what they had done.

¹ *Ἀθ. πολ.* xxi, 6. Paus. X, x, 1. For other references to the hundred heroes, see Busolt, II, 205, note 3.
- Herod. V, lxxix.

We can see in the oracle, as given in Herodotus' prose narrative, a genuine product of the period. Clearly Delphi did not want to estrange Thebes, at the same time she was not prepared to give her any great encouragement against Athens. Thus the prophetic answer contains no promise of victory over Athens, and the advice to seek allies (a mere commonplace in view of the recent defeat of Thebes) is so couched as to give no positive indication which allies were intended. Thebes could interpret as she liked, but could not claim Delphic authority with any great certainty in involving any ally against Athens.

Delphi had assisted in the internal reorganization of Athens and maintained a guarded attitude in regard to her foreign opponents. The Alcmaeonidae on their side had shown their personal gratitude to Delphi by the enhanced magnificence of the temple which they had constructed. In 486 B.C. in one of his earliest odes, Pindar¹ celebrated a victory of Megacles, then the head of the Alcmaeonidae, at the Pythian games. The poet proudly describes how 'to every city the rumour is brought near of the citizens of Erechtheus, who wrought thy temple, Apollo, in holy Pytho, for all to admire.' But here the words have a touch of pathos, for in the early years of the fifth century there had been a change of political leadership in Athens, and Megacles at the time when Pindar wrote was banished from Athens by ostracism.

It is well to interrupt our story here with the misfortunes of another body of benefactors of Delphi. The little Greek island of Siphnos had a remarkably rich source of income in gold and silver mines. From the proceeds of these mines the Siphnians became after the mid sixth century the richest of the islanders, dedicating a tithe of their profits to Apollo and distributing the rest to all the citizens. They constructed with the consecrated money a treasury at Delphi which Herodotus truly describes as a match for the wealthiest.² The remains of its sculptures are among the richest and most satisfying remains of archaic art. When they made this treasury in the third quarter of the sixth century, they asked the oracle if their present blessings would last long. The Pythia's reply was

'But whenever in Siphnos the town hall has become white, and

¹ *Pyth* VII

² III, lvi, 2 ff. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 82

the market-place has a white front, then indeed there is need of a watchful man to be on the watch against a wooden ambush and a crimson herald'

At that time the Siphnians had faced their market-place and town hall with Parian marble. But though they had fulfilled the condition implied, they could not understand what the oracle indicated for the future.

Not long afterwards, a band of Samian exiles out for plunder touched at Siphnos. They had been originally shipped from Samos by Polycrates the tyrant, had been attempting to force their restoration with the help of the Spartans, and when that attempt had failed were now cruising the Aegean for what they could pick up. First they asked the Siphnians for a loan of 10 talents. When this was refused they ambushed some Siphnians and held them to ransom for 100 talents. With this booty they sailed to Crete.

Herodotus saw the fulfilment of the oracle in this serious loss. The ships with their primitive style of red-painted prows were 'the wooden ambush and the crimson herald'. The interpretation fits these ambiguous words quite well, and reminds one of the later and more famous oracle, which alluded to a ship as a 'wooden wall'. The serious objection is that, though a fine of 100 talents must have crippled Siphnos for a few years, it was not in itself an end to her blessings. This fact makes it natural to suppose that the oracle is not a *post eventum* invention, but merely a plausible conjecture. The Delphic authorities might well suppose that the riches of Siphnos would tempt some naval power to try to annex it. It is this fate which they prophesied. But as it never happened, the event nearest the description was naturally selected generally as the fulfilment of the prophecy.

Later history was to provide a more picturesque conclusion to the wealth of Siphnos. The sea invaded the workings and made the mines inaccessible. This disaster, of course, had to be attributed to divine retribution. It was said that Apollo had bidden the Siphnians pay him a tithe of their proceeds from the gold mines, but that, after they had built the treasury, they left off the payments through greed. Thereupon, the sea poured into the mines. The fact that the mines were flooded has been proved by modern exploration. The reason given is evidently

a cautionary tale whose moral is that vows made to Apollo must be paid in full Pausanias tells it in association with his account of the treasury at Delphi, and doubtless picked up the story there ¹

Some twenty-five years after the battle of Alalia, Delphi was connected slightly with another colonizing expedition to the West, which was to end disastrously through the opposition of Carthage When Cleomenes came to the throne in Sparta, his accession was intolerable to Dorieus, his half-brother, who had a better sentimental claim to succeed Dorieus determined not to remain under Cleomenes' rule, and proceeded to lead a colony of Spartans to North Africa, where they settled at Cinyps between Carthage and Cyrene But two years later the Libyans with Carthaginian support drove them out and Dorieus returned to the Peloponnese This first failure was attributed to his omission of the usual consultation of the Delphic oracle on the proper site for his colony ² But Dorieus determined to renew his attempt in a different place Antichares, a Boeotian soothsayer, assured him on the evidence of the prophecies of King Laus, that the land of Eryx in Sicily all belonged to the Heraclidae, as Heracles had founded Eryx therefore he ought to establish a colony named Heraclea there ³ The notion appealed to Dorieus, but this time he avoided all appearance of irregularity by appealing to Delphi to confirm this choice The Pythia answered that he would take the land towards which he was setting out The expedition did ultimately reach its goal, but the Carthaginians were as unwilling to tolerate an encroachment in Sicily as previously in North Africa Dorieus fell in battle against them his colonists were driven out, but the name was transferred by survivors to Heraclea Minoa A justification of the oracle was provided by the men of Sybaris, who alleged that on his way to Sicily Dorieus had assisted the men of Croton in the taking of Sybaris, and so had fulfilled the Pythia's prophecy too prematurely The men of Croton denied this theory, as their

¹ X, xi, 2. Suidas, s.v. *Σιφνίοι* cf. JHS VI, p. 197, for confirmation of the mines flooded by the sea See Beloch, *GG* II, 1, 117, note 6, that this happened before the middle of the fifth century B.C.

² But he probably had some oracular authority, perhaps supplied by a private soothsayer. Traces of this propaganda are left in Herod. IV, clxxviii, and clxxxix, Lycophron, *Alex* 891 and Plut. *Lyf* XXV.

³ Herod. V, xli 4.

traditions would not admit that Dorieus had helped them against Sybaris. But the alliance is probable enough, even if it cannot have been foreseen by Delphi. The original form of the Delphic response remains doubtful. That preserved by tradition is so baldly ambiguous that, like the Halys oracle, it was probably reshaped after the event.

The end of the sixth and the beginning of the fifth century saw several important changes in the balance of power in Greece. We have already noticed the fall of the Peisistratidae and the rise of Athenian democracy. But there were other significant events with each of which Delphi had some concern.

(1) Thessaly, once dominant in North Greece and the Delphic Amphictyony, was losing her position of primacy.¹ The chief cause, no doubt, was internal dissension and the break up of the old hereditary chieftainships. But it found open demonstration in a military disaster sometime at the end of the sixth century. The Thessalians had engaged in a border war with Phocis, and after an initial success suffered two crushing defeats. The Phocians captured four thousand of the Thessalians' shields and dedicated this great booty, half at their national temple of Apollo at Abae, half at Delphi. Also with a tithe from the rest of their spoils they set up great bronze statues in front of the temple at Delphi, and a similar group at Abae.² Pausanias saw the figures at Delphi more than six hundred years later, and records an oracle, which the Pythia was said to have given to the Phocians at the beginning of the war when they asked to escape the approaching danger.

'I will match a mortal and an immortal to fight, and I will give victory to both, but rather indeed to the mortal.'

This enigmatic utterance Pausanias explains by the circumstance that in the final battle the Thessalians took as their watchword the name of Athena, the Phocians the name of their eponymous hero, Phocus. The Phocians, after suffering a previous reverse, were ultimately victorious. Thus the fortunes of the respective sides corresponded to the fates predicted by the Pythia for the mortal and the immortal. This was evidently the official explanation later offered to visitors.

¹ Cf. *supra* p. 120, and cf. *infra* pp. 230 ff. for an oracle about Ceressus supposed to have been delivered at this time.

² Paus. X, 1, 4 ff., cf. Herod. VIII, xxvii.

by the temple guides. The response itself might have been forged after the event. But the ambiguity is so complete that one cannot be sure that that oracle was not delivered previously, and the explanation subsequently invented. It is interesting to notice, also, that the Phocians chose as the subject of their group of statuary at Delphi, a myth to which the response would fit. The memorial represented the contest of Heracles and Apollo for the tripod, one of the most notable instances in Greek mythology when a mortal was matched with an immortal.

(11) Another of the great powers of early Greek history which suffered a severe defeat at this time was Argos. It has been a subject of much dispute at what date Cleomenes invaded Argos and destroyed her army in the battle of Sepeia. The alternative possibilities are between 520 and 510 B.C. or between 499 and 494 B.C. The Argive disaster was associated in later times with a remarkable oracle, from which modern scholars have tried to draw conclusions as to the date of the battle of Sepeia. Herodotus describes the oracle as being given to the Argives, when they consulted Delphi concerning the safety of their city, and points out that part of the oracle applied to the Argives but a digression inserted in it applied to the men of Miletus, though they were not present at Delphi.¹ It ran as follows:

‘But when the female having conquered the male shall have driven him out and have won glory among the Argives, then many of the Argive women will be made to tear their cheeks in mourning. Thus on a time one will say even of the men who will come after, “a dread snake of triple coil has perished subdued by the spear.” And then indeed, Miletus, deviser of wicked deeds, you will become a feast and bright gifts to many, and your wives will wash the feet of many long-haired men, and others at Didyma will care for our temple.’

Unfortunately Herodotus nowhere states when this oracle was delivered, whether immediately before Cleomenes' invasion or at some earlier time. The only part of the prophecy which has a certain connection with history is the reference to Miletus. This can only be taken as foretelling the fall of Mile-

¹ Herod. VI, XIX, LXXII, 2. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 89 and 90. Paus. II, xx, 8 ff. I do not accept J. B. Bury's ingenious theory that this oracle was delivered to Aristagoras of Miletus and the Argives when he was seeking help in the Ionian revolt. See *Klio* II, 14 ff.

tus at the close of the Ionian revolt. The periphrasis used to describe it is so unambiguous that one cannot believe that the Delphic priesthood would have inserted it gratuitously in an answer actually addressed to Argos, if they had been in any doubt about Miletus' fate. Also it is not likely to be a *post eventum* insertion. The combination of two prophecies in one reply is unique and not what a forger would be likely to invent. Hence it is most probable that this common oracle was delivered to Argos, after the Persian victory at Lade had sealed the fate of Miletus and before it had actually fallen.

As for the Argive portion of the prophesy, Herodotus believed that it applied to the battle of Sepeia, but does not indicate any special appropriateness. Of course, the general reference to Argive women mourning could well be taken of an Argive defeat, but the rest of the more specific allusions go for nothing. Later Argive tradition appears to have found a more precise fulfilment. They told that Cleomenes had been repulsed from the city by a hastily levied band of women under the leadership of Telesilla. This incident was evidently taken as meant by 'the female having conquered the male'. Telesilla's victory was later commemorated by a relief set up at Argos in which she was shown with books strewn at her feet and a helmet in her hand, as though about to put it on. Also it was supposed to be perpetuated in an annual festival in which women appeared in men's clothes. This latter association is very suspicious, as similar eccentricities of ritual are known from other places in Greece, and the derivation of the practice from Telesilla's exploit is obviously erroneous. Also the fact that Herodotus, while using Argive traditions, makes no mention of this remarkable incident, suggests that the victory of women over men was simply a fiction invented at some later period to fit the allusion in the oracle. Perhaps some passage in Telesilla's verse encouraging to bravery against Sparta may have given a reason for introducing her name. The date of the relief is unknown so it is only evidence for the tradition, not for its truth.

As we have seen, the oracle about Argos, apart from this suspected reference to a victory of female over male, contains nothing specific, and might well have been pronounced before Cleomenes' campaign. It was not the only prophecy on the

subject of this war Herodotus¹ records that Cleomenes received an oracle that he would take Argos. After his victory at Sepeia, he ruthlessly pursued the Argive fugitives to a grove of trees, which he burned over their heads. After this act he was informed on enquiry that the grove belonged to the hero Argos. At once he recognized the sinister omen and cried, 'O prophetic Apollo, verily you have deceived me mightily in saying I would take Argos. I conjecture that the prophecy has been accomplished for me.' Consequently he led his army away without taking the city.

The story turns on one of those homonymic equivocations which are so commonly attributed to oracles. It would easily be possible to regard it all as fiction. But one fact makes it more plausible to suppose that there is a foundation of truth. After his return to Sparta, Cleomenes was put on his trial by the Ephors for having failed to capture Argos. In Herodotus' story of the grove of Argos one can see part of Cleomenes' plea in justification, converted into a narrative.

One may then suppose that before Cleomenes' campaign against Argos, when it was clearly impending, both Sparta and Argos sent embassies to consult the Delphic oracle about the prospects of success. The oracle given to the Spartans has not been preserved. But it must have appeared highly favourable. This is not surprising, as we have seen already that Cleomenes may have had influence at Delphi, and he certainly was able to exert his power there soon after this date. No doubt the prophecy contained the usual ambiguities, but Cleomenes before the battle could interpret it as prophesying the capture of Argos. After the victory, for reasons of strategy or policy, he found it inadvisable to press home his success by trying to capture the city. Hence he was forced by the Ephors to produce a justification for his failure to fulfil Apollo's promise. The grove of Argos provided a conventional type of excuse.

The Argives also had consulted the Delphic oracle. The authorities were not so inclined to encourage them, but to run no risks they gave a highly ambiguous and colourful answer, which could later with some use of imagination be stretched to suit any result of the war. As Luria² has pointed out, 'the female conquering the male' is a stock motive for the topsy-

¹ VI, *xxvi* and *lxxx ff*

² *Klio*, XXVI, 214 ff

turvy, and oracles delight in specifying that some one event will be a consequence of some other paradoxical one. The allusion to Argive women mourning was cover against an Argive defeat, but the further reference to a snake could be used equally if Sparta was vanquished. The growth of the Telesilla legend was a consequence of the Argive desire to see meaning in the prophecy. Modern scholars who try to read special allusions into these tortuous phrases are only falling into the trap set by the Delphians, who composed an oracle open to any degree of subtle interpretation.

As if deliberately to balance the large amount of fiction present in this prophecy, the Delphic priests threw in gratuitously a piece of certain prevision. We have seen that Delphi seems to have been so impressed by the failure of Croesus against Persia, that it abstained from countenancing any further resistance. The oracle is not mentioned in connection with the Ionian revolt, and one can take it that Delphi disapproved. Hence when the end was in sight they felt no regrets in announcing the result. In fact, the reference to the change of ownership which Didyma is about to undergo is so explicit, that it seems as if the Delphic priests were not sorry to know that the rival oracular centre was going to suffer eclipse.

The next few years saw a question of peculiar importance referred to Delphi. Cleomenes' relations with his fellow king, Demaratus, had become more and more strained. The quarrel had started when he had refused to support Cleomenes in pressing his last invasion of Attica. It reached its climax in 491, when Demaratus thwarted Cleomenes' attempt to take hostages from Aegina. Cleomenes decided to raise an old scandal against his rival. It had often been rumoured that Demaratus was a bastard. Now Cleomenes, working in concert with Leotychidas, a distant connection of Demaratus, who would have the right of succession, contrived to have the question referred to the Pythian Apollo.¹ was Demaratus a son of King Ariston? In advance, secret information of this question was sent by Cleomenes to Delphi, where Cobon, the son of Aristophantus, a man of great influence, was his agent. The Pythia, Periallus, was approached and persuaded to give the answer desired. Demaratus was declared illegitimate, and

¹ Herod VI, lxxi. Paus III, iv, 3.

deposed from his kingship. He lingered for a while in Sparta subject to the insults of his triumphant enemies. At last he left the city on the excuse of going to consult the Delphic oracle, and made his escape to Persia. His fall did not long remain unavenged. The truth about Cleomenes' Delphic conspiracy leaked out. Cobon was exiled from Delphi, Periallus deprived of her position as Pythia, and Cleomenes found it prudent to go abroad while the scandal blew over. But he was too dangerous a person for the Spartans to have at large in Greece. So he was later recalled and was said to have committed suicide in a ghastly manner, while kept under restraint. The circumstances of his death are suspicious, as we can scarcely credit that he could have coerced his guard by words alone into giving him the knife with which he was said to have disembowelled himself. Modern scholars would be inclined to suppose that it was a political murder, prudently hushed up. To the ancient world it was certainly an instance of divine vengeance. Different Greek cities which had suffered at Cleomenes' hands held different views on the crime for which his death was the penalty, but the general opinion saw in it Apollo's retribution for the corrupting of his prophetess. To Pausanias, writing near the end of Delphic history, Cleomenes was the only man known to have dared such a sacrilegious attempt.

While these serious events were occupying Delphi and Sparta, a much more important happening from the point of view of world history had occurred in Attica. The battle of Marathon had been fought and won. Whether owing to the current scandal or to her pro-Persian attitude, Delphi seems to have had no connection with the Athenian side before the battle. The Alcmaeonidae, those great friends of Delphi at Athens, had earlier encouraged the Athenians to take up a pro-Persian policy, and from the stories about them which circulated after Marathon it is clear that they were believed (probably untrue) to be in league with the enemy. Only after the battle the oracle was consulted on a question of cult. It had been alleged that during the fighting there had appeared a man of rustic dress and appearance who slew many of the Persians with a plough-share.¹ But when the battle was over, he had disappeared. Delphi was consulted, and instructed the Athe-

¹ Paus. I, xxxii, 5. *ἰσχυρῶς ὁ θεὸς εἶπεν*

nians simply to honour the hero Echetlaeus. No doubt this was some local agricultural deity of the plough-share, whom the Athenians had believed they recognized in the battle and to whom they now accorded a national cult with the usual previous authorization from Delphi.¹ Echetlaeus was also commemorated on the famous fresco of the Stoa Poikile.

Delphi profited by the Athenian victory, for Athens completed her fine treasury there and erected a number of other memorials later. It was probably shortly after Marathon that the Athenians and the Aeginetans came into conflict. According to Herodotus² (whose chronology is particularly vague at this point), when the Athenians were setting out to go to war with Aegina an oracle from Delphi came to them, advising them to abstain from harming the Aeginetans for thirty years and in the thirty-first to set aside a consecrated precinct to Aeacus and begin the war: then all would go as they wished. But if they were to attack immediately they would suffer and accomplish much in the meantime, but would subdue Aegina at last. The Athenians, the account continues, owing to the shocking way the Aeginetans had treated them, were not content to wait, but dedicated the precinct at once to Aeacus, the great local hero of Aegina. The site chosen was in the marketplace, where Herodotus knew it in his own day.

Actually Athens did not subdue Aegina till 458 B.C. or a little later. Hence the thirty years counted back from the subjugation would bring us to 488 B.C., a very probable date for the commencement of this war. Some scholars have used this oracle as a proof that that was the actual date of its beginning on the supposition that this is a *vaticinium post eventum*. But even more ingenious is Walker's theory.³ As Herodotus does not quote the exact words of the oracle, Walker suggests the Pythia did not use a precise number, but merely indicated the interval of a generation, which is often taken conventionally as thirty years. This supposition would suit the practice of oracular prophecy better, as it never tended to deal in exact figures. It would be quite natural that, if Aegina was subdued thirty years after the Pythia's answer, Athenian tradition would

¹ Cf. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults*, p. 88.

² V, lxxxix, 2.

³ *C.A.H.* IV, 258. For criticism of this view, cf. L. E. Law, *Classical Philology*, XXX, 1934 ff.

accept that figure as a paraphrase for the more vague phrases of the prophecy.

The original significance of the oracle is plain. It was a warning to abstain from trying conclusions at once with Aegina, which before the creation of Themistocles' fleet was a much stronger naval power than Athens. Instead, she was advised to use that form of spiritual aid which Delphi had prescribed in other instances—to try to tempt away the local hero of Aegina by offering him a new home in Athens. This method was at once applied. It may be evidence of a fear of some such procedure that Pausanias tells us that in Aegina Aeacus had an altar, which was actually his tomb, but this information was a secret of the Aeginetans.¹ They probably kept dark the resting place of their hero for fear enemies should secretly remove the power-giving relics. But the ritual magic in Athens brought no immediate help. She first had to do and suffer in accordance with the prophecy.

¹ Cf. Paus. II, xxix, 8, for Aeacus' tomb on Aegina, which was a state secret. Pfister, *Religionskult*, p. 462, suggests the secrecy was due to fear of Athenian designs on the body.

CHAPTER IX

THE PERSIAN INVASION

IN prophesying trouble to come the Pythia may have answered more truly than she guessed Greece was soon threatened by Xerxes' great land and sea expedition not, like Marathon, a mere punitive raid against a couple of states that had offended the great King, but a systematic campaign of conquest and annexation Delphi, as we have seen, had always, since Croesus' fall, avoided giving advice to resist Persia This policy was still maintained even in face of a direct attack, which, if successful, would have meant the permanent incorporation of Delphi in the Persian empire In continuing to follow this weak line Delphi was acting in accord with most of the states of North Greece, which formed together the majority in the Amphictyony These northern Greeks knew that it would be impossible to induce the armies of the Peloponnese to march in full force for the defence of their land To protect them nothing less would be of any use So Thessaly and her hinterland medized immediately on the approach of Xerxes Also even in Sparta the death of Cleomenes had removed the last person who could induce Delphi to support the Hellenic cause Hence Delphi consistently discouraged effective resistance to Persia

Before the invasion of Greece actually began, two requests for guidance came to the Pythia, from Argos and Crete, each asking whether or not they should join the anti-Persian side. Argos, as Herodotus reminds us, had lately suffered the loss of six thousand men in battle against Sparta The Pythia's answer to the Argives was ¹

'Foe to those that dwell around you, friend to the immortal gods, stay on guard, keeping your spear point within, and guard your head Your head will save your body'

In spite of this positive advice to adopt a neutral and defensive policy, Argos did not at once refuse to join the

¹ Herod. VII, cxlviii *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 94 The allusion to *περὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν* may refer to the fact that Mycenae and Tiryns were independent of Argos in consequence of the battle of Sepeia

Hellenic side. Negotiations with Sparta were begun, but broke down over the question of leadership, where Argos, perhaps purposely, refused to compromise with Sparta's claim to primacy.

The Cretans waited until they received an invitation to join the Greek cause, and then sent to Delphi to ask 'whether it would be better for them if they defended' Hellas¹ The Pythia's answer is preserved in a prose paraphrase which shows traces of the original verses 'O foolish men, do you find fault with all the weepings for his wrath which Minos sent you from your defence of Menelaus, because they (i.e. the Greeks) did not assist in exacting vengeance for his death at Camicus, while you *did* assist them in recovering the woman who had been stolen from Sparta by a barbarian man?' This oracle alludes obscurely to the belief that Crete had suffered under the curse of the dead Minos. According to Cretan legend he had been treacherously killed by a local king when he had gone in pursuit of Daedalus to Sicily. The Cretans had incurred his ghost's enmity because they had failed to avenge him, but had chosen instead to join Menelaus' expedition to Troy for the recovery of Helen. The Pythia's ironic question is meant to suggest that the Cretans ought to have been taught by experience not to interfere in other people's quarrels, when they had enough troubles of their own. The Cretans took the prophetess's advice and abandoned any intention of joining the Greek forces.

A third power, besides Crete and Argos, abstained from giving military support to Greece. This was Syracuse, where Gelon had at least the good justification that his hands were kept full by the synchronous attack directed against him by Carthage². It is interesting, however, to notice the method which he used to cover himself against the contingency that the Persian king might conquer Greece. He sent a confidential agent, Cadmus of Cos, with an expedition of three fifty-oared vessels, 'carrying much money and friendly speeches' to Delphi. This town was used as a convenient base where to wait the issue of the struggle. Cadmus' instructions were that in the event of Persian victory he was to give the money to Xerxes,

¹ Herod VII, clix. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 95

² Herod VII, clixiii, 2. *Ox. Pap.* VI, 857

and offer him earth and water in token of the submission of Gelon's dominions. But if the Greeks won, he was to return with his expedition as it was. Evidently this is what Cadmus ultimately did. The choice of Delphi is interesting. It is not said that Gelon consulted the oracle, but clearly he knew that Delphi's intention was to remain neutral and capitulate to Persia, if at all necessary.

Oracles are also recorded as given by Delphi to the cities committed to the struggle against Persia. It was said that at its very beginning Sparta had consulted the Pythia about the war.¹ The reply was

'But for you, O dwellers in Sparta of the broad lands, either your city, famous and mighty, is sacked by Persian warriors, or, not that, but the guard of Lacedaemon will mourn the death of a king of the kin of Heracles. No strength of bulls or of lions will stop the foe in the onset. For the will of Zeus is with him. I say he will not stay until he has taken and utterly rent up one of these two (i.e. the city or the king).'

Herodotus accepted this oracle with complete confidence and even selected this out of other reasons as that which determined Leonidas to remain behind at Thermopylae. He knew that a Spartan king must die to save his country, and chose this occasion for a hero's act of sacrifice. This interpretation of events became established and reappears without question in later Greek historians' narratives. But it cannot now be accepted.

It is too improbable that Leonidas wished to offer himself like Decius Mus in Roman tradition. If he had meant to do so, there would have been no need for him to spend at least a week in stubborn defence of the pass before his self-sacrifice. Also he need not have involved in destruction three hundred valuable Spartan soldiers, not to speak of a force of Thebans and Thespians. Sparta could never afford lightly the loss of a body of Spartiates in war. It is not easy to decide what exact blend of strategic necessity and Spartan tradition determined Leonidas to lead his last stand, but it was certainly not to fulfil this prophecy. More likely the prophecy itself was invented to provide just that justification for Leonidas' death which Hero-

¹ Herod VII, ccxx, 3. Oenomaus ap Euseb P E V, 219B. Anthol Graec XIV, 96. Justin, II, xi, 8 ff. Plut Pelop. xxi.

dotus found in it. The loss of one of the Spartan kings in battle was a serious military disaster, for which the heroism of his end could not quite compensate. There even hung about his fate the ugly suggestion that Leonidas might have been betrayed or let go to his death without proper support. This oracle was probably invented to set all suspicions and regrets at rest, especially among the Spartans themselves, to whom the prophecy would make it clear that only through the death of Leonidas could Sparta be saved. That the oracle originated in Sparta may be conjectured from the way in which Herodotus¹ supports it by further details from Spartan tradition. He records a story that the Spartans had a specially early intimation of the impending attack from Persia. Demaratus had sent a cryptic message, which only Gorgo, Cleomenes' daughter, had managed to reveal. The implication of this story was that Sparta, through this early warning, was in a special position to consult the Delphic oracle in advance. No doubt Delphi was not unwilling to have this prophecy fathered on it, after the Persian invasion had failed. It will also have helped to form the tradition in accordance with which Leonidas was honoured at Sparta with a hero's shrine and cult, a tribute not ordinarily accorded to Spartan kings who died in battle.

A second oracle, reported to have been sent by the Delphians to the Greeks in general, is less open to scepticism.² We are told that while Xerxes' expedition was still in Macedonia the Delphians themselves consulted Apollo on their own behalf and on behalf of the Greeks and the answer given was that they should pray to the winds for they would be great allies to Greece. Herodotus relates that the Delphians sent information to those who were championing the cause of Hellenic freedom, and earned undying gratitude by giving this advice. The reference to the gratitude is a palpable exaggeration. In view of the dubious position taken up by Delphi it was incumbent on them after the war to make the most of their few contributions to the Greek cause. There is no reason to suppose that this particular prophecy was invented later. It required no superhuman prevision to see that one of the greatest hopes for

¹ VII, cccxxxix

² Herod VII, cxxxviii, cf. cxxxix. Clemens Alex. *Strom.* VI, 753P, who quotes the original verse

the Greeks was that the Persian navy would be crippled by storm. The destruction of Mardonius' fleet at Athos a few years earlier had shown what might happen in the treacherous conditions of the Greek Archipelago. The loss of the squadron which was circumnavigating Euboea, was a less serious disaster, but sufficient to justify the prophecy. Herodotus records that the Delphians 'set up an altar in Thyie, where there is a precinct dedicated to Thyie, the daughter of Cephissus, and offer sacrifices on it.' The practice of making a placatory offering to the Winds there continued down to the historian's own time. The Athenians also during the Persian war invoked Boreas, as a married kinsman of theirs through his wife, Oreithyia, whom he had carried off from Attica. This invocation was said to have been made in accordance with a prophecy unspecified. So it may be connected with this oracle, the only positive contribution of Delphi to the Greek side as a whole.

The last oracles recorded before the battle of Salamis are the two which Herodotus reproduces *in extenso* as given to the Athenians.¹ Unfortunately he does not date the occasion precisely, but it must have been just before the battle of Thermopylae.² His account tells that the Athenians sent an embassy to Delphi, 'and after performing the customary rites about the temple, when they had entered the hall and sat down, the Pythia, whose name was Aristonice, uttered the following oracle.

"Miserable men, why are you sitting idle? Leave in flight the furthest dwellings of your land and the high peaks of the wheel-shaped town! For neither head nor body remains firm, nor tipmost toes, nor hands, nor is anything of the middle left, but it is reduced to oblivion. It falls in ruins before fire and sharp Ares, driving a Syrian-born chariot. Many other fortresses he will destroy, not yours alone, and many temples of the immortals he will give to devouring fire, who now stand flowing with sweat, shaking with fear. Down on their topmost roofs black blood has been poured, foreseeing the compulsions of distress. But leave the shrine, ye two, and spread out your heart to troubles."

"The two Athenian ambassadors, when they heard this

¹ VII, cxxxix, 6 ff. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 92 and 93, and many references e.g. *Oenomaus ap. Euseb. P.E.* V, 216 B and 218 C.

² Cf. Munro in *C.A.H.* IV, 282 ff.

oracle, regarded the situation as very serious ' They well might Delphi had never given such a crushing pronouncement of disaster It allowed no resistance, only flight, and promised no relief The Athenians were debating together their next step, when Timon, the son of Androbulus, advised them to adopt the position of suppliants, and to approach the oracle a second time under that form They did so and prayed to Apollo. 'O King, give us a better oracle about our land, and respect these emblems of suppliants which we have come bringing into your presence, or else we will not leave the shrine, but will remain here thus even unto death ' The priestess replied to 'this desperate appeal with a second oracle

'Pallas is unable to appease Olympian Zeus, though she prays him with many words and deep wisdom But to you again I will say this word, which I have made unshakable as adamant When all the rest has been captured which the guardian of Cecrops and the heart of sacred Cithaeron hold between them, yet Zeus of the broad heaven gives to the Tritoborn a wooden wall, alone to remain undestroyed and it will bless you and your children Do not wait quietly for the cavalry and the mighty host of infantry coming from the mainland, but turn your back and retire At some other time you will yet also stand face to face with them O divine Salamis, you will destroy the sons of women either when Demeter is being scattered or when she is coming together'

The Athenian embassy accepted this oracle as milder than its predecessor, and brought it recorded in writing to Athens There rival interpretations were put upon the oracle, but Themistocles won general approval for his view that the 'wooden wall' meant the fleet, and that the reference to Salamis could be taken as promising a victory there, because, as he suggested, it could not be called 'divine'—a complimentary epithet—if the 'sons of women' who would perish there were to be the Greeks and not the Persians A minority stuck to the view that the wooden wall could only be taken literally, and decided to put up a wooden barricade on the Acropolis and shelter behind it But the bulk of the Athenians followed out Themistocles' instructions and evacuated Attica, as soon as the Persians were known to have forced the pass of Thermopylae.

These two oracles are among the most interesting recorded For there there can be no doubt that we have the original

utterances of Delphi before the event. No forger would have perpetrated such a mistake as to show Apollo induced to change his mind about one of the most decisive events of Greek history. Clearly on the arrival of the Athenian embassy the Delphians were already so convinced of the impending failure of the Greek cause, that they could threaten Athens with destruction and recommend the Athenians to remove their whole people to some colony abroad, as the Phocaeans had done in the previous century. But the Athenian ambassadors were not prepared to bring back this answer to their people, and they remained awaiting a second audience. The most natural supposition is that they put before the Delphic authorities privately the general plan which Themistocles had already drawn up, and asked them on second thoughts to produce some prophecy which would further its execution.

From the actual course of events it is clear that even in face of the oracle some Athenians preferred to remain in Attica. It was natural that some should feel that even to await the coming of the Persians was better than to leave their homes unoccupied a prey to the conqueror, and others should choose a forlorn hope of defending some small portion of Attica rather than complete evacuation. Themistocles must have known in advance what opposition his plan would encounter and will have therefore instructed the ambassadors to Delphi to get what support they could from religious sources.¹ The first oracle was delivered before the ambassadors could influence the Pythia: the latter oracle represents a compromise in which Delphi gave qualified support to Themistocles' plan, but guarded itself by the insertion of ambiguities. The 'wooden wall' pointed fairly clearly to the navy, but even it could be interpreted otherwise. The reference to Salamis is almost absurdly equivocal. Themistocles could wring a favourable implication from it, but one can imagine that, if the battle of Salamis had proved a Greek defeat, the oracle would have been taken to have foretold that result. Oenomaus in Roman times made fun of the dating of the sea-battle to harvest or seedtime, pointing out that a naval battle was not to be expected in the

¹ A similar instance which shows Themistocles using religious means to induce the Athenians to evacuate Attica is provided by the story, Herod. VIII, xli, 2, that just before the evacuation the sacred snake of the Acropolis failed to devour its monthly offerings i.e. it also had left Attica, the faithful were to assume.

depth of winter. In general, the vagueness of the wording makes it easier to suppose that these two final lines are genuinely part of the original prophecy. A forger after the event would have made his meaning unmistakable. The ambiguities well accord with the supposition that Delphi did know from an official source that Salamis would be the naval base for the Athenian fleet but doubted the possibility of a Greek victory.

When he comes to describing the actual position of Delphi during the Persian occupation of Northern Greece, the ancient historian finds himself in a difficulty. Our only competent narrative is evidently derived from Delphian sources and has been composed as an *apologia* after the event. It is impossible to accept it as a whole, and hard to decide what, if anything, can be retained. The only certain fact is that Delphi survived the Persian invasion intact. Its vast treasures were never looted, nor did Greek tradition in later times admit that the Persians had ever controlled the sanctuary. This immunity was remarkable. From the late summer of 480 till the late summer of 479 the Persians had occupied Thebes as their base. From there Delphi lay behind their right flank. It was cut off completely from Greek support by land, and was at the mercy of the Persians. Yet it is not stated to have been occupied. On the contrary, the Delphians of Herodotus' time told a picturesque tale,¹ how the temple had been rescued from Persian attack by supernatural aid. Their narrative pictures Xerxes as knowing all about the Delphic treasures (as well he might from Ionian and Thessalian sources). So after Thermopylae he detached a portion of his army and sent it down the 'Cloven Way' from Boeotia to Delphi with instructions to pillage the sanctuary and bring its contents to him. When the Delphians heard of this move, they consulted the oracle in terror concerning the sacred treasures, asking whether they should bury them or remove them. But Apollo forbade any interference, saying that he could protect his own property. So the Delphians contented themselves with removing their own families to safety, and only sixty men and Aceratus, the prophet, remained. He began to discover supernatural manifestations. When the Persian column was in sight consecrated

¹ Herod. VIII, xxxv ff. D S. XI, xiv, 2. For a variant see Ctesias, frag. 29, paragraph 25 (Mueller), Paus. X, viii, 7.

weapons preserved within the sanctuary were found lying outside, ready for service. The blow fell on the Persians as they were passing the temple of Athena Pronaea, within a mile of the sanctuary itself. They were struck with thunderbolts and 'two pinnacles broke off from Parnassus, hurtled down on them with a great clatter, and crushed many of them, while from the temple of Athena Pronaea came shouts and war cries.' Panic seized the Persians, who fled pursued by the Delphians. Their flight was made more awesome by the apparition of two warriors, of greater than human size, who chased and slew them. These the Delphians identified with two local heroes, Phylacus and Autonous, whose shrines were near the route of the raiders. One material relic of the defeat was shown in Herodotus' time: the rocks from Parnassus lying in the precinct of Athena Pronaea, where they had fallen.

Such was Herodotus' account from Delphian sources. Apart from the supernatural elements it is very unconvincing through the unsatisfactory conclusion. One is left to suppose that Xerxes was so impressed with the divine disaster wrought on his expedition that he abandoned all intention of plundering the sanctuary and left it unoccupied during the remainder of the Persian invasion. Actually, it is very unlikely that the Persians would have submitted so tamely to defeat, especially in an important direction strategically, from which their lines of communications might easily have been threatened. But still more unlikely is the suggestion that Xerxes ever intended to plunder Delphi at all. The oracle had conspicuously failed to give full support to the Greek side. It had done nothing to incur Xerxes' particular displeasure, and, if he intended to annex Northern Greece to his empire, the active goodwill of Delphi would have been a most important factor in conciliating the conquered peoples to Persian rule. It is certain that the Thes-salians on Xerxes' side, with memories of their former control of the Amphictyony, will have wished Delphi to be preserved.

Is one then to suppose that there was no attack on Delphi and no repulse, supernatural or otherwise? It is possible to argue in favour of this completely sceptical view. But to accept it requires one to attribute an excess of sheer invention to the Delphians. Humble though the compromise may seem, it is perhaps best to suppose that there was some skirmish at

the temple of Athena Pronaea. A marauding band of stragglers from the main army may have attempted in defiance of orders to loot the temple, whose riches must have been known already throughout the Near East. The god had truly said that he could protect his own. No doubt Delphi was already guaranteed against an authorized attack by a secret compact with Persia. But if some unauthorized raiders did appear, an ambush near the sanctuary, assisted by the contrivance of a fall of rock from the neighbouring mountain-side was sufficient to rout a small force. A year later when the Greek side had triumphed, the Delphians were forced to explain the suspicious immunity of their temple. The reasonable course was to hush up any relations with Xerxes, and make the most of the repulse of a minor raid. It could easily be described as the rout of a deliberate attack by a large body of troops and could be tricked out with the thunderbolts, shoutings and divine apparitions, which are part of the stock accompaniments to a miraculous victory. The rocks which Herodotus saw may actually have played a part in the incident. Their witness, conveniently dumb, was replaced by a trophy with an official inscription in later times, as quoted by Diodorus Siculus:

'As a monument of a foe-resisting war and a witness of victory the Delphians set me up, giving thanks to Zeus and Phoebus, when they themselves had repulsed the city-destroying band of the Medes, and had rescued their bronze-crowned sanctuary.'¹

A faint echo of Delphic propaganda in defence of their temple may have come down in another incident related by Herodotus.² Mardonius, whom Xerxes had left behind in command of his army, before the battle of Plataea asks the Greek commanders on his staff whether they know of any oracles that the Persians will be destroyed in Greece. They do not reply, some through real, others through feigned ignorance. But Mardonius himself declares that there was an oracle that the Persians were fated to come to Greece and to plunder the temple at Delphi and after that to perish utterly. The oracle is not otherwise known and Herodotus himself, who was

¹ Cf. Demangel, *Fouilles*, II, fasc. 3, page 110 and fig. 117, for other rocks fallen from the cliff in ancient times, id., p. 88 for the suggested identification of the base of the trophy, Demangel id. fasc. I, p. 25 for repairs after the Persian raid.

² IX, xlii. For another example see Chæroboscus, I, 146 (Gaisford), Athen. XIII, 568D, Pollux, VII, 112 and a forthcoming note in the *American Journal of Philology*.

evidently dissatisfied with it, comments that he knows it as referring not to the Persians, but to the Illyrians and the host of the Encheleis¹ The fabrication of such an incident after Plataea seems pointless Hence it is likely that Mardonius may have heard an oracle actually put about by the Delphians to frighten off Persian attacks Such an oracle hastily invented may well have been based on an older prophecy in which some other peoples figured as the attackers

Of oracles to the Greek side during the period of the Persian occupation, Herodotus² only gives one very suspicious example After Salamis the Spartans received an oracle from Delphi that they should demand compensation for the death of Leonidas and accept what Xerxes offered At their interview with Xerxes the Spartans were ironically told that Mardonius would pay all the debts which Persia owed them This ominous saying could be taken to prophesy the death of Mardonius in atonement for Leonidas and might be regarded as fulfilled at Plataea But the fact that the oracle is not preserved in its original wording and that it conforms to a familiar type of legend in which the giver gives more than he knows, both suggest that it is simply a later embellishment of the story of Plataea Whether it was actually invented in Delphi or not it is hard to say

Certainly historical is a prophecy recorded in Plutarch³ It is given in prose and evidently is taken direct from a verbatim version of the Delphic response, which in this instance may not have contained any verses It instructed the Athenians that they would defeat the Persians, if they prayed to Zeus and Hera of Cithaeron and Pan and the Sphagitides nymphs, and sacrificed to the heroes Androcrates, Leucon, Peisander, Damocrates, Hypsion, Actaeon, and Polyidus, and made the attempt in their own land in the plain of Demeter of Eleusis and the Maiden These ritual prescriptions may have been appended to some more generally worded encouragement to battle In his account Plutarch treats the oracle as an enigma, the nymphs belonged to north-west Cithaeron, the heroes named were the patrons of Plataea, but the plain of Demeter of Eleusis where the Athenians were to fight in their own land

¹ Cf also Eur *Bacchae*, 1336, and Apollodorus, III, v 4

² *Aristid* XI, 3 ff

³ VIII, cxi

could only naturally be taken as the Thriasian plain in Attica. Aristides, the Athenian commander-in-chief, was baffled by the instructions, till Arimnestus, a fellow-general, saw a dream in which Zeus Soter appeared and, on learning that the Athenian army was going to march to Eleusis, announced that it should march to Plataea instead, for that would fit Apollo's words. The literal meaning of the oracle according to Plutarch's account did not remain unfulfilled. Near Plataea the Athenians find a temple of the Eleusinian Demeter, and the Plataeans by tearing up the boundary stones make the land part of Attica. Thus the conditions were complied with and the victory won.

Clearly we have here an original oracle somewhat misrepresented by a later narrative designed to show that it was a perfect prophecy of Plataea. The circumstances of the Athenians at this time are clear from Herodotus. The Athenians, particularly the farmers, while temporarily relieved at the result of Salamis, were gradually becoming more and more disgusted at the failure to recover Attica. The Spartans were mainly interested in fortifying the Isthmus, and did not greatly care if Athens remained in Persian hands for the present. But the second invasion of Attica by the Persians in the early summer of 479 roused the Athenians to action. They demanded Spartan co-operation in a campaign on land for the recovery of Athenian territory. In so far as it reverses the policy of the previous year, the change is also shown in the emergence of Aristides in place of Themistocles as chief commander.

The alteration in strategy could best be helped by a Delphic oracle which would countermand the 'wooden wall' of the previous year and encourage both Athenians and Spartans to seek a victory in Western Attica and Cithaeron. Aristides evidently succeeded in extracting from Delphi just such a prophecy. The original disposition of the Athenian forces will have corresponded closely with the places suggested by the oracle. From the route of Mardonius' retreat from Attica it is clear that Aristides held the Thriasian plain and all the western passes of Cithaeron.¹ No doubt he expected that Mardonius would have stood his ground, and so had conveyed to Delphi a suggestion that the plain of Eleusis should be the

¹ Cf. *CAH* IV, p. 325

site designated for the decisive action. When Mardonius retreated and circled round behind Cithaeron, Aristides had to invent excuses which would make the oracle square with the new situation. Arimnestus' vision was a first expedient, later the finding of a temple of Demeter near the new scene of operations suggested further improvements. The Plataeans will have been glad enough for the sake of Athenian protection to assist in fulfilling the oracle literally.

The victory of Plataea both counteracted the supremacy of Persia over Greece and gave Delphi an opportunity to resume its normal position as the arbiter in religious matters among the Greeks. The victors consulted the Pythia on the right form of sacrifice in celebration of their triumph.¹ The prophetess took full advantage of the opportunity which this request presented of associating Delphi immediately with the victory. The instructions were to erect an altar to Zeus the Liberator, but not to sacrifice on it until they had first quenched the fire throughout the land, as it had been polluted by the barbarians, and fetch a fresh fire from Delphi from the common hearth. The Greek commanders accordingly went round Plataea bidding all who were using fires to put them out and Euchidas of Plataea volunteered to fetch the fire as speedily as possible. He went to Delphi and after a purificatory ceremony there, including a lustration, he set off wearing a crown of laurel and carrying the sacred fire. Later tradition said that he had reached Plataea again before sunset the same day and immediately after greeting his fellow-citizens and handing over the fire dropped down and died. He was given the unusual honour of burial within the temple precinct of Artemis of Good Repute, where his grave was shown in later times with the verse inscribed

'Euchidas ran to Pytho and came here in one day.'

If one is really to take it that the double journey is meant, estimated approximately by Plutarch at 1000 stades (c. 125 miles), it seems impossible for a human being to accomplish in the time. The credibility of the story could only be saved if we suppose that half that distance, the return journey, was what Euchidas did in one day, but the Greek will not bear this meaning. Whether the detail about his sudden death is a mere embellishment is impossible to determine.

¹ Plut. *Aristid.* XX, 4. *Moral.* 873B. Simonides in *Anthol. Graec.* VI, 50.

Thus Delphi had been recognized once more as the centre of Greece. The slur of Medism was forgotten and the Pythian Apollo received a noble share of the many dedications made in thanksgiving for the victories of the Greek cause. For Salamis a bronze statue thrice life size with the figurehead of a ship in its hand was dedicated. The Greeks asked Apollo if he was satisfied with the common offering. He agreed he was content with the Greek gift as a whole, but asked the Aeginetans for their special prize of valour from Salamis. So the Aeginetans dedicated a bronze mast with three golden stars on its points. For the battle of Plataea, apart from the offerings of particular states, there was the common offering of a golden tripod on a bronze column formed out of three snakes entwined. On its coils were inscribed the names of cities which had fought in the war. Also somewhere on the monument Pausanias, the Spartan regent and commander-in-chief at Plataea, caused to be inscribed a distich lauding himself as leader of the Greeks and dedicator of the monument. This piece of arrogance was to react on him later.

Concerning another commander on the Greek side and his offering at Delphi a curious tale is recorded. Themistocles brought his personal offering to the Pythian Apollo, and asked whether he should place it within the temple. But the Pythia bade him remove it entirely from the sacred precinct. Pausanias the traveller,¹ who is the only writer to tell this story, records the oracle in tetrameters.

'Pray do not place the beautiful decoration of spoils from the Persian within the temple, but send it back home as quickly as possible'

Are we to suppose that Apollo disapproved only of the Persian spoils offered by Themistocles? Pausanias expressed surprise at this interpretation, with which we can well agree. For we know of no reason for special prejudice against him. Some supposed that the Pythia would have expressed the same opinion on all the spoils, if the dedicators had made the same enquiry as Themistocles. But this view conflicted with the fact that Apollo had actually asked for the Aeginetan offering. Others alleged that Apollo foresaw that Themistocles would later become a suppliant of Persia and wished by this answer to prevent him

¹ X, xiv, 5

from incurring an unending hatred from the Great King. The explanations are not very satisfying. The rejection of Persian spoils certainly did not apply to dedications from the victories in general. In fact, as we have seen, Apollo actually asked for one from Aegina. The theory that Themistocles' interests were being considered is very improbable, and even seems to be quite inadequate as a motive for forging the prophecy after Themistocles' escape to Persia. The oracle remains a riddle.

The recognition given at this time to Delphi as a centre of Hellenic worship is accompanied by the emergence of the Amphictyonic council as the representative body of the Greek states as a whole. The Spartans actually proposed to make the Amphictyony a counterpart of the anti-Persian league by excluding from it all the cities which had not fought against Persia.¹ But Themistocles opposed the suggestion, pointing out that only thirty-one cities could claim to have shared in the war, the majority of them being quite small. Hence he argued that it was absurd to exclude the rest of Hellas and put the council at the disposal of the two or three chief cities. The proposal was dropped.

Without having purged their membership of those who had not taken part, the Amphictyonic council proceeded to commemorate the victories of the war. They set up monuments engraved with epitaphs at Thermopylae, and statues of Scyllias and his daughter, who had helped the Greek cause at Artemisium, were dedicated by the same body at Delphi.² Along with their rewards came punishments also: at least the Amphictyonic council put a price on the head of Ephialtes of Trachis, the traitor who led the Persian outflanking column round Thermopylae.

¹ Plut. *Them.* xx, 3

² Herod. VII, cxxiii. Cf. ib. ccxxviii, 4. Paus. X, xix, 1.

CHAPTER X

THE ORACLE TILL THE END OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR

Thus the history of Delphi in the Persian Wars ends, and at this point Herodotus' narrative ceased. With him we lose a writer who was really interested in the Delphic oracle and well acquainted with the traditions preserved at Delphi. In the fifty years till the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, our authorities are often very scrappy, and even when in Thucydides we find again a great contemporary historian, his obvious difference in outlook prevents him from giving the amount of information about Delphi which we might otherwise have expected. He is a realist, for whom prophecy is only significant when it shows the superstitious outlook of the time or had produced a positive effect on men's minds. In an age of growing scepticism this attitude found little to concern itself with in the activities of the Delphic oracle.

At the same time one can regard the fifty years of the *Pentecontaetia* as in some ways a Golden Age for Delphi. The distinction of the Pythian games was probably at its highest, and Pindar's book of Epinician Odes gives a splendid impression of the brilliance of the festival. Also in this period there were erected many of that great series of statuary groups, which adorned the Sacred Way from the entrance of the precinct up its winding ascent to the terrace of the temple. The fifty years ending in the Persian Wars had been the chief period for the erection of treasures: the following half-century beautified the sanctuary with many bronze figures. In most instances there is no evidence that these offerings were directly the consequence of a successful consultation of the oracle, and we should be rash to suppose this assumption necessary.¹

¹ For the treasures, see Dinsmoor, *BCH* XXXVI, 1912, pp. 439 ff. For statuary e.g. (1) the Corcyraean bull, (2) the Marathon Monument to Miltiades, (3) the Argive groups of the Seven and the Epigoni, (4) the two Tarentine monuments, (5) the two Liparaean monuments. Only two of these, the bull and the Liparaean Apollos, were traditionally connected with oracles in Pausanias' time, cf. *infra* pp. 369 and 394.

One may also mention the Lesche of the Cnidians with its famous paintings by Polygnotus. The series of statue groups is continued through the Peloponnesian War

They were more general tributes to the prestige of the Pythian Apollo, but his reputation was ultimately founded on his oracular successes. Even if the practical influence of the Pythia in Greek politics had begun to wane, the accumulated fame of Delphi had a momentum which carried it triumphantly through the fifth century.

Yet in the early fifth century B.C. the minds of many Greeks could still be influenced by oracles in times of crisis. A good example is provided by the debate at Sparta in 477 B.C., when the assembly were discussing whether or not to challenge in war the new naval empire of the Athenians. Diodorus¹ (not Thucydides) records that at first the younger men and the majority of the rest were in favour of the attempt to recover Sparta's leadership at sea. Among other arguments they recalled an ancient oracle, which was evidently preserved in the archives of the Pythia. It warned the Spartans to guard against a 'lame sovereignty,' and it was suggested that this prophecy would be fulfilled if Sparta lost the maritime part of its leadership. However, on this occasion a member of the Gerusia, named Hetoemaridas, succeeded in swaying popular opinion to favour peace on grounds of general expediency. The oracle on the lame sovereignty was to reappear again in Spartan history.

We do not hear of Delphi in connection with the growth of the new Athenian empire, except at one point where it was appropriately consulted on a question of cult.² In 476-5 B.C. the men of Scyros, who had already a bad reputation for piracy, had incurred special infamy by an attack on some Thessalian merchants who had anchored at the island. The victims escaped and induced the Delphic Amphictyony to impose a fine on Scyros. The penalty remained unpaid, while unrest broke out in Scyros between those responsible for the piracy and their fellow-citizens. These circumstances provided

by the Argive 'Wooden Horse', and reaches its climax in the 'Navarchs' cf. *infra* p. 215. On the whole subject consult, e.g. G. Daux, *Pausanias à Delphes*, under the separate titles.

¹ XI, 1. It has been maintained by Busolt (*G.G.* III, 71, note 2) that Diodorus' account was untrue, on the supposition that it had been concocted by some fourth-century author, after this response had been used in the case of Leotychidas, cf. *infra* p. 219. But the circumstantial character of Diodorus' account seems to justify its veracity.

² Plut. *Theseus*, xxxvi, 1, *Cimon*, viii, 3. Aristides, (Jebb), Vol. II, p. 241 and Schol. p. 688D. Schol. Aristoph. *Plut.* 627. Paus. III, iii, 7.

an excellent opportunity for Athens to intervene and establish order by subduing Scyros. An Athenian expedition was then engaged in the reduction of Eion on the Thracian coast and was thus the only Greek force which could conveniently be diverted on its return to punish the pirates. The authority of Delphi was obtained in a round-about way. The oracle instructed an Athenian embassy, which had raised the question, that the Athenians should recover the bones of Theseus and after reinterment guard them with honour. According to one legend,¹ Theseus had died in exile on Scyros by the hand of the king, Lycomedes. Hence Cimon, the Athenian commander, had a good excuse for intervention. The Scyrians objected to the removal, and could not or would not give information of the whereabouts of the body. But Cimon annexed the island to Athens and found the remains under circumstances which later times embroidered with miraculous features. The tomb was said to have been indicated by an eagle which tore at the soil on top with its beak and claws. At any rate the Athenians were readily enough satisfied at the identification and covered the remains with a sumptuous temple. It continued to be one of the most celebrated successes associated with the name of Cimon.

The story of the translation of Theseus' bones only appears in comparatively late authorities. But this is no reason for doubting its general truth. The removal of a hero's bones, besides providing an excuse for intervention, was regularly regarded as a means of transferring luck or sovereignty from one state to another, as we have already seen. In this instance, the story is told by one authority with an undue emphasis on this aspect. In Pausanias, Theseus' bones have become a sort of Palladium and Scyros cannot be captured till they are found. But this is to reverse the true sequence. Also some late sources give a plague in Athens as the motive for consulting Delphi and the translation of the bones as the prophesied cure. But this is a mere fiction invented on the analogy of many other legends.

Some years later Delphi intervened to command another translation of bones. Pausanias, the Spartan regent, had earlier

¹ The date when this legend arose is not determined. It may have even been invented at this time, but at least it is not likely to be earlier than the mid-sixth century. Cf. Robert, *Heldensage*, p. 735.

incurred much dislike for his arrogance and a suspicion of Medism. The Plataeans had brought a suit in the name of the allies before the Amphictyonic council, and compelled the Spartans to remove Pausanias' presumptuous inscription on the Tripod monument. At last the Ephors claimed to have obtained conclusive evidence that he was even then guilty of treasonable correspondence with Xerxes. They attempted to arrest him, but Pausanias fled for sanctuary to the temple of Athena of the Brazen House and, as he refused to come out, the Ephors starved him where he was, till he was at the point of death. Then an attempt was made to carry him out and save the temple from pollution. But he died in the forecourt. There was some dispute on the question of disposing of the body. His enemies wished to throw it into Caeadas, the common grave of malefactors. But it was buried at the time somewhere in the neighbourhood. The matter, however, did not end there. Sparta was plagued with some manifestations of divine displeasure.¹ Hence when some Spartiates were enquiring at Delphi concerning some other matter unspecified, Apollo gave them an oracle, bidding the Spartan state transfer Pausanias' grave to the site where he had actually died, and atone for the bloodguiltiness to the goddess by paying two bodies for one to Athena. The oracle was accepted by the state, and later Pausanias' tomb stood in the forecourt of the temple and was indicated by monuments. The problem of giving two bodies for one was solved by dedicating two bronze statues. Late authorities add various further methods of placating the gods. Pausanias, that rites were paid to a daemon, named Epidotes, Plutarch, that magicians who specialized in conjuring spirits were sent for from Italy, and laid the ghost which had haunted the temple.

It appears as if this oracle was forced on the Spartans without their wish, a fact which may suggest that Pausanias had good friends among the Delphians, who regretted his tragic death and determined to see that his memory was properly respected. Another instance occurs not long afterwards, when Delphi again provided a ground for interfering with Sparta's internal affairs. The Messenians, who had revolted from

¹ Thuc. I, cxxiv, 4. D. S. XI, xiv, 9. Nepos, *Paus.* IV, v, 5. Paus. III, xvii, 9. Plut. *Moral.* 560F.

servitude to Sparta and resisted a ten years' siege in Ithome, were at last compelled to capitulate (456 B.C.) The Spartans treated them with comparative leniency, giving them their lives and liberties, but expelling them from the Peloponnese on pain of enslavement. The reason for this remarkable decision was stated to be that an oracle already existed bidding the Spartans release the suppliant of Zeus of Ithome.¹ If we can trust Pausanias, it was Tisamenus, the Iamid, who was responsible for bringing this oracle into notice. He was a famous prophet, of whose history we learn from Herodotus.² When in early life he had consulted Delphi on the question of his having children, the Pythia gave him a rather irrelevant answer, that he was to carry off five contests (Herodotus does not make it quite plain whether this response was meant to convey the necessary condition for his begetting children or was merely thrown in as a gratuitous prediction. But the first alternative seems the more plausible.) Tisamenus took this to mean that he should devote himself to the pentathlon. Here he showed some proficiency, but failed to do more than draw with his opponent at Olympia. The Spartans thereupon discovered that the oracle had been misinterpreted. The contests meant were not athletic but military. In view of the coming Persian invasion they tried to bribe Tisamenus to attach himself to their side and act as prophet when they went into battle. But he knew his price and insisted on being made a Spartan citizen. This was a unique privilege to confer on a foreigner, but Tisamenus persisted in his demand and even increased it to include his brother. At last the Spartans yielded and the result was highly successful, as Tisamenus officiated at Plataea, Dipaea, Tegea, and Tanagra. It appears that there was some difficulty in finding the fifth victory: for formal purposes it was found in a small skirmish in the Messenian revolt. Tisamenus founded a dynasty of prophets in Sparta, for at the end of the century we hear of Agias, the son of Agelochus and grandson of Tisamenus, acting as prophet at Aegospotami.³ So the promised progeny had been given him and proved a success.

¹ Thuc. I, ciii, 2. Paus. IV, xxiv, 7. Cf. III, xi, 8.

² IX, xxxiii.

³ Paus. III, xi, 5 ff. Cf. xii, 8, and cf. Xenophon, *Hell.* III, iii, 8, for a Tisamenus, a prophet, arrested and executed for complicity in the conspiracy of Cinadon.

Out of this tangle of legend about Tisamenus it is difficult to determine how much Herodotus has given us of mere fact. But it seems fair at least to infer that Tisamenus had become of great influence at Sparta and that he could base his claim to special powers on credentials derived from an interpretation of a Delphic oracle. Such a person may well have been in the position to produce a Delphic oracle alleged to have been delivered formerly, and by the use of it to sway Spartan policy towards the Messenians. The genuineness of the oracle itself is not open to proof or disproof. But it is hard to imagine plausible circumstances since the previous Messenian war for its production. It is suspicious that it is merely referred to a former period unspecified and appears associated with a particular individual. It is possible that Tisamenus found it in some forgotten archive, but more likely that as a professional oraclemonger (*χρησμολόγος*) he produced it by some process of doctoring or forgery. As one not truly Spartan by birth, he may have had a sympathetic feeling for the Messenians.

The whole position of Delphi was imperilled in this period. By the battle of Oenophyta (457 B.C.) Athens had gained political dominance among her neighbours to the north-east. Boeotia, Phocis, and Eastern Locris were under her control. Evidently she would have been glad to extend this influence so as to embrace Delphi. So she supported the claim of the Phocians to include Delphi as one member in the confederacy of their towns. Ever since the First Sacred War the position of Delphi divorced from Crisa had been anomalous. It was an independent *polis* not incorporated in either Phocis or Western Locris, the two large but somewhat vague leagues of small city-states which together surrounded it, except for its access to the sea. No doubt it suited the priesthood and chief citizens of Delphi that their privileged position and perquisites were not subject to encroachment by any fellow members of a common league. Hence in the name of Delphic autonomy they would have opposed incorporation, but their protest appears to have been ineffective to stop the Phocians. Delphi became part of Phocis for a time and one may suppose that the Phocians appropriated some of the fruits to be gained from their intrusion. But about 449 B.C., when the Spartans had their hands free by a truce with Athens and a peace with Argos, they took

the occasion to champion the cause of the Delphians¹ They sent an expedition to Delphi which made the Phocians withdraw, and handed over the sanctuary to the Delphians Anemoreia became the boundary westward between Delphi and Phocis In honour of this success the Spartans accepted a grant of '*promanteia*' and caused the decree to be inscribed on the brow of the bronze wolf which already stood in the precinct

But Pericles would not tolerate this interference with his plans He did not wish to challenge Sparta to a direct clash of arms, but some time after the Spartan expedition had withdrawn Pericles led an expedition to undo their work The sanctuary was placed under Phocian control again, and Athens retorted to the Spartan gesture by accepting also a grant of '*promanteia*' and inscribing it on the flank of the same wolf For the time being the position was re-established as before the outbreak of this curious piece of military activity It was later reckoned as a Sacred War, the second in the series But it must have had a sequel shortly afterwards For certainly by the time of the Peloponnesian War the Delphians had already resumed their normal control of the sanctuary and its oracle. Clearly as a result of the battle of Coronea and the Athenian loss of control in Northern Greece, the only check on a restoration of the Delphians was removed The exact circumstances of the expulsion of the Phocians are not recorded. Probably it occurred quietly without external intervention, and will have been completed by the conclusion of the peace of 445 B C In fact the position of the Delphians was so firmly re-established that they were able to lay a claim before the Amphictyonic council for compensation for the impiety of the Phocians A fine was awarded which the Phocians paid, and from the proceeds a bronze statue of Apollo of colossal size was erected at Delphi to celebrate the triumph of the god's servants over the sacrilegious²

The remaining interval until the Peloponnesian War contains no important references to the activities of the Delphic oracle But it can be observed as engaged in the routine task of sanctioning the foundation of colonies. Firstly, of Thurii

¹ Thuc I, cxii, 5 Strabo, IX, C423 Plut *Pericles*, xxi Schol Aristoph *Aves*, 556 = Philochorus, *F.H.G.* Vol I, p 399, No 88 On the question of chronology cf. Laistner, *The Greek World from 479 to 323 B C*, p 42

² D S XVI, xxxiii, 1 on this cf Parke in *Hermathena*, XXVIII, 65

the Athenian embassy received a reply that they should settle where they would be able to drink water by measure and eat their loaf without measure.¹ The mildly paradoxical suggestion of scarcity of water and abundance of corn suits with the style of many foundation-oracles, and could apply literally to some places in South Italy which were fertile, but scanty in drinking water. A more exact fulfilment was discovered on the spot chosen, near the former site of Sybaris. There a spring issued from a bronze pipe which the local inhabitants called 'Gallon' (*μέδιμνος*). So the settlers could be said to drink water by measure. As Lampon, the famous Athenian prophet, was concerned in the founding of Thurii, we may see his hand in this neat piece of interpretation.² It is impossible to say whether it was an impromptu on the spot or whether the idea was concocted in advance with the Delphic authorities.

The settlement was remarkable through its Panhellenic character, being made up of colonists from almost all parts of the Greek world, who were organized at Thurii in ten tribes according to the districts of their origin. As was only to be expected, discord broke out among these diverse settlers. One subject of dispute was, whom should the Thurians name as their founder.³ This was not merely a question of history or political bias, for the rights of a founder to be worshipped as a hero in the colony which he had founded, raised the question into the sphere of religion. Ultimately, the matter was referred to Delphi, which may have been anti-Athenian at this time, for the controversy may have lasted until the Peloponnesian War. At any rate the Pythia instructed the Thurians that they must regard Apollo himself as their founder. This compromise closed the question.

The other important Athenian foundation of this period was Amphipolis, the culmination of a series of attempts on that important site. Delphi is not explicitly mentioned in connection with it, but an unspecified oracle with a piece of familiar ritual suggests that it may have played its usual part. Polyaeus

¹ D S XII, x, 5. Suidas, s v *Μέτρω ὕδωρ*. Zenob V, 19.

² Lampon's colleague Hierocles was also an *ἐξηγητής*. Cf. Aristoph. *Pax*, 1046. For another oracle probably connected with the Athenian activity in S. Italy, see Herod VIII, lxxi. Beloch, I, 2, p. 238 ff.

³ D S XII, xxxv, 3. Cf. the similar enquiry on the founder of Drepanon, Callimachus, *Aetna* (*Ox. Pap.* 208c, 76).

preserves¹ a prophecy in hexameter verse and of a style quite appropriate to Delphi. It enjoined on Hagnon, the Athenian founder, that he must first fetch from Troy the bones of Rhesus, the Thracian chieftain who had been buried there, and must bury them in the site of Amphipolis. Other literary references to a tomb of Rhesus in Amphipolis seem to be lacking. But the procedure is remarkably in keeping with the practice of earlier periods (especially in association with Delphi), and it is probably true that some attempt was made to counter the unlucky associations of the site by a new and strong piece of magic. The body of the Thracian chieftain, consecrated with a hero-cult, could protect Amphipolis against Thracian attacks, in just the same way as king Oedipus' body was thought to protect Attica against his kinsmen from Thebes. With the decrease of the danger from Thrace, the importance of Rhesus may have been gradually forgotten. But Polyaeus seems to preserve a genuine piece of tradition from the fifth century.

It was a question of relations between colonists and their mother-city which provided the first occasion for the Peloponnesian War, and the question had been originally connected to a minor extent with Delphi. The inhabitants of Epidamnus had been troubled by party strife and the exiled oligarchs with help from the Illyrian tribes were attempting to seize the city forcibly. The democrats in possession of the town appealed unsuccessfully for help to their immediate mother-city, Corcyra, and then in despair sought permission from Delphi to hand the city over instead to Corinth, the mother-city of Corcyra itself, and ask for protection from there.² The oracle agreed and told the Epidamnians to hand the city over to the Corinthians and make them their leaders. Armed with this authority the Epidamnian ambassadors went to Corinth, which acceded to their application. The consequence was a feud between Corcyra and Corinth over this interference by a mother-city in one of her daughter-city's colonies.

Corcyra was ready enough to attack Epidamnus when a Corinthian garrison had been introduced into it, but when Corinth prepared for a direct attack on Corcyra itself, the Corcyraeans proposed to settle the matter by arbitration. They offered to refer the question of the authority in Epidamnus

¹ *Strat.* VI, liii, cf. *Eur. Rhesus*, 970 ff.

² *Thuc.* I, xxiv, 1.

either to any Peloponnesian cities which both parties would accept or else alternatively to the Delphic oracle.¹ The latter proposal sounds remarkably generous, as Delphi had already shown itself inclined to support the Corinthian side. But neither proposal was accepted by Corinth and the matter was left to a decision by arms.

So far as is known, Delphi remained outside the other incidents which led up to the Peloponnesian War. When in the autumn of 432 B.C. the Spartans had decided that the Athenians had broken the treaty of 445 B.C. and were resolved to go to war, they sent an embassy to Delphi to ask the usual, formal question 'Would it be better for them if they went to war?'² The enquiry is interesting because it was almost the last time when the Pythian Apollo was consulted on a major question of policy, which had no connection with cult or ritual. Thucydides, guardedly, reports the reply of the oracle as hearsay 'If you go to war with all your might you will have victory and I, Apollo, will help you both when you call for my aid and when you do not.' Evidently Thucydides with his usual caution was not satisfied that this was the authentic reply received by the Spartans, but also it is clear that immediately afterwards this was the version in circulation. There is no reason to doubt that Delphi came down wholeheartedly on the side of Sparta. Before Coronea the Delphians had been subject to Phocian control because of Athens' support of Phocis. They must have feared that, if Athens won the war, Pericles would re-establish the Phocian dominance. Hence Delphi wanted the Spartan side to win, and at the beginning of the war Greek opinion in general reckoned on a Spartan victory. The power of Athens to remain on the defensive and to resist by the use of her sea-power only was not widely recognized.

The most serious blow at Athens' power of resistance was inflicted by the plague in 430 and 429 B.C. In this visitation contemporaries saw the working of Apollo. The oracle had been fulfilled. Uncalled for, the god had given his aid to the Spartans in a way which they had not foreseen. Ever since the *Iliad*, the Greeks had associated Apollo particularly with

¹ Thuc. I, xxviii, 2.

² I, cxviii, 3. Plut. *Moral* 403 B. Suidas s.v. ἀκλήτων.

epidemics, of which he could be sender and averter. At this time the specially severe incidence of the plague in Athens, due primarily to overcrowding, was obviously regarded as a special dispensation of Apollo.

The overcrowding of Athens by war refugees from the country caused the infringement of another Delphic oracle. On the Acropolis was an open space, called the *Pelargicon*, which was for some ritual reason dedicated to remain free from habitation. This prohibition was reinforced by a prophecy of the Pythian Apollo which contained the fragmentary warning ¹

'The Pelargicon is better unused (argon)'

The saying's ominous character was enhanced by the punning emphasis on the name. No account survives of the circumstances in which the original oracle was delivered. But that is no reason for doubting its authenticity. One of the reconstructions of the sacred buildings on the Acropolis probably caused enquiries to be made at Delphi for permission to alter the plan of the sanctuary, and this warning will have been part of the reply.

The great shortage of sites for dwellings caused the *Pelargicon* to be occupied in spite of prohibitions. It was only to be expected that the pious would attribute any such disasters as the plague which followed to the sacrilegious disregard of the warning. Thucydides accepts the belief that there was some connection between the occupation of the *Pelargicon* and disaster in Athens. But with rationalistic irony, he inverts the chain of causality, and maintains that the oracle foresaw that, if the *Pelargicon* had to be occupied, it would be only under bad circumstances. To him the occupation is not a cause, but a symptom of disaster.

Apollo appeared also at this time as the averter of the plague. At Delphi Pausanias² saw a statue of a goat in bronze with a Doric inscription recording that it had been dedicated to Apollo by the men of Cleonae. The official account of the guides was that, when Cleonae was being vexed with the plague at the same time as Athens, a Delphic oracle had commanded them to offer a goat to the sun when it was just rising, and they had sent this dedication because the sacrifice had been effective.

¹ Thuc. II, xvii, 1

- X, xi, 5

The account is probable enough. Much more unlikely is Pausanias' statement¹ elsewhere that a statue of Apollo, the Averter of Evil, in the market-place at Athens had been erected with this title in accordance with an oracle from Delphi, because he had stopped the plague during the Peloponnesian War. It would be unlikely in any case that Delphi succeeded so completely in backing both sides in the war that the Spartans could see the plague as Apollo's assistance, while the Athenians averted it with Apollo's help. But apart from any general improbability, Pausanias vitiates his statement by attributing the statue to the sculptor Calamis, whose works, so far as known, are all to be dated in the first half of the fifth century. If the attribution was correct, the statue had no connection with the Peloponnesian War, and it is most probable that it was erected on the occasion of some earlier plague. To later times *the* plague of Athens *par excellence* was that of 430, and every tradition rightly or wrongly tended to be associated with it.

During the first part of the Peloponnesian War (431-421 B.C.) Delphi was a place of strategic importance. The Spartans needed a centre for operations in Greece outside the Peloponnese and in convenient touch with the Corinthian Gulf and the main land routes. Delphi generally met these requirements, and it must have been in the hands of the Peloponnesian league almost continuously. Thucydides even makes the Corinthian embassy to Sparta suggest that Delphi could be used to support the Peloponnesian side where it was weakest and the Athenian was strongest—in financial resources.² A loan could be taken from the treasuries at Delphi and Olympia, and used to pay higher wages to the sailors on the Peloponnesian ships and thus to lure away the rowers from the Athenians. It is remarkable that the other features in this speech, which is represented as delivered before the commencement of the war, are all intelligent anticipations of events which did ultimately take place. The Corinthians suggest the occupation of a base in Attica, and in 413 B.C. Decelea is occupied. The suggestion of bringing about revolts of Athenian allies is more general, but can best be seen in operation after 413 B.C. Even the proposal to lure away Athenian sailors with higher pay was actually

¹ I, iii, 4. For an earlier plague, as suggested by Mr Wade-Gery, cf. *I G* I² 1009.

² I, cxxi, 3; cxliii, 1.

carried out in 407 B.C. But the source of the extra money required was not Delphi and Olympia, but Persia. Hence it seems too unsafe to argue that the Peloponnesians actually made use of the sacred treasures. No evidence exists to show that they did, but one must admit that they were in a military position to have done so, if they had chosen. But as they cannot have commanded a majority in the Amphictyonic assembly, they could not legally obtain control of the money.

In 426 the Spartans with Delphic encouragement created another northern base.¹ They founded it as a colony at Heraclea in Trachis, which commanded the main road to the north through the Pass of Thermopylae and also the more difficult route through Amphissa from the Corinthian Gulf. Moreover it was not far from the north-western point of Euboea. The plan was to ensure permanent occupation, even after the war, by sending settlers of the Spartans themselves and their perioecae as well as other members of the Peloponnesian league. The conventional request for authority from Delphi here took on a special purpose. With the authority of Apollo the colony was closed to 'Ionians, Achaeans, and certain other tribes'. Thus while the colony was nominally an institution of peace and open to other than Laconians only, it was effectively closed to Sparta's enemies. Athens and her empire could be treated from the Amphictyonic standpoint as Ionians. Achaeans was probably meant to exclude the neighbouring district of Achaia Phthiotis, which might have taken away the Spartan character of the colony by flooding it with settlers. Similarly the reference to the other tribes unspecified may have covered the other neighbours of Heraclea.

In the autumn of the same year in which Heraclea was founded a great expedition of 3000 Peloponnesian allies was assembled for an attack on the Athenian post of Naupactus.² The meeting-place of the army was Delphi itself and the commander was Eurylochus, who may have been the first Spartan governor of Heraclea. But this ambitious attempt ended in failure, and the Spartans appear to have given up their plans for operations in this region, till Brasidas two years later led a northward expedition with a different objective. One link between him and Delphi survived in the treasury of the

¹ Thuc. III, xcii, 5

² Thuc. III, ci, 1

Acanthians there, which bore the remarkably aggressive inscription

'Brasidas and the Acanthians from the Athenians'¹

It can only have been at a period of strong hostility to Athens that the Delphians, who usually fostered the tradition that they were the common hearth of Greece, allowed one Hellenic state to dedicate a treasury so explicitly in triumph over another

The feelings of the Athenians towards Delphi in this period can perhaps be judged to some extent from the expressions which found utterance on the Attic stage. Of the two tragedians of the time Sophocles gives little room for conjecturing contemporary sentiments. Jocasta's scepticism about the divine source of Delphic prophecies is dramatically appropriate and need not express a personal attitude of the poet.² It is what one might expect of Sophocles' balanced orthodoxy, that he does not give way to any incidental bias against the Pythian Apollo. With Euripides the opposite seems to be true. His earliest plays contain no special criticism of Apollo or his oracles, but somewhere in the middle of the period between the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war and the Sicilian expedition he produced the *Andromache* and the *Ion*, both notable for their pointed attacks on the Delphians and their oracle.³ In the former play the murder of Neoptolemus at Delphi is described with every attempt to emphasize its cowardliness and treachery. In the *Ion* the Pythian Apollo remains the villain of the piece in spite of a perfunctory attempt to excuse him in the epilogue. The later plays of Euripides show the same tendency, but less marked. The *Electra*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and *Orestes* all contain in places some bitter jibes at Apollo, but the emphasis is less exclusively on this aspect.⁴

Somewhat the same case can be made out for Aristophanes, though, as he is a comic writer, it is even harder than with Euripides to decide how far the satire is intentional and how

¹ Plut. *Lys* 1

² Cf. *supra* p. 37 note 2

³ The dates of these two plays are somewhat uncertain. On the evidence of the metre Gilbert Murray puts the *Andromache* between 430 and 424 B.C. and the *Ion* after the *Heracles* and before the *Troades* (415 B.C.). For anti-Delphic passages see in the *Andromache* 1085 ff., esp. 1161 ff. and *Ion* 369 ff., 436 ff., 859 ff.

⁴ *El* 971, 1245, *IT* 711, *Or* 28, 161, 285, 416 contrast 1666

far the natural outcome of stock themes and characters. In the *Knights* (424 B.C.) much of the plot of the play turns on the production of oracles: first of all, those which expose the weakness of Cleon, and later a contest in oracle-mongering between him and the Sausage-seller. Though these prophecies are not directly ascribed to the Pythia, references to Delphi are frequent throughout, and one line at least may be lifted bodily from a Delphic oracle.¹ In his later plays Aristophanes' satire is less specifically directed towards the Pythian Apollo. Hierocles in the *Peace* and the Oracle-Monger in the *Birds* are not in any way identified with Delphi, and the references to Delphi elsewhere in the *Birds* and in the *Plutus* are quite as respectful as one could expect from comedy.²

From these examples one could suppose that Athenian feeling became embittered against Delphi during the first part of the Peloponnesian war. Somewhat after the Peace of Nicias, as we shall see, there was a certain degree of reconciliation, but relations were never cordial till after the fall of Athens.

Meanwhile Athens, isolated spiritually from Delphi, found herself at variance with Delos also and showed her antipathy to the priesthood there under the guise of intervening on religious grounds. In 426 the Athenians carried out a purification of the island which involved the exhumation of all bodies buried on it.³ They had a distant precedent, in that Peisistratus more than a century earlier had applied the same procedure to as much of the island as was visible from the temple. Now his work was completed by including all the island in the purification. Of course, the Athenians had, as Thucydides tells us, the authority of 'a certain oracle' but he and later authors give no details, and we cannot tell whether the work was justified by a reinterpretation of Peisistratus' authority. The wording rather suggests, what one might expect, that this time there had been no immediate approach to Delphi on the subject. The Athenians also instituted under their own control a four-yearly

¹ *Eq.* 197 ff. and 999 ff. References to Delphi, 220, 1047, 1072, 1229, 1273. The line 1016—*ταχὲν ἐξ αὐτοῖσι διὰ τριπόδων ἐπιγύμων* may be Delphic, cf. Wade-Gery, in *Greek Poetry and Life*, p. 75, note 3. For references in Thucydides to oracles and oracle-mongers apart from those already discussed, see II, xxi, 3, liv, i, V, xxvi, 3, VIII, i, i.

² *Pax*, 1046 ff., *Aves*, 959. No Delphic references, except that line 968 may be modelled on a Delphic oracle, cf. p. 75. Normal allusions to Delphi e.g. *Aves* 188, 618, 716.

³ *Thuc.* III, civ. Cf. I, viii, 1. D S XII, lviii, 7.

festival on the island, a revival of one suspended since the days of Peisistratus. These operations taken alone might be merely explained as instances of the increase in superstitious observance, which normally accompanies a prolonged war. But more must have lain behind. In 421 B.C. the process of purification was completed by expelling the Delians from their native island. Thucydides¹ merely gives as the motive that the Athenians 'thought, in accordance with a charge of long standing, that the Delians had been consecrated when not ritually pure'. But though this may have been the avowed reason, Diodorus Siculus² is more plausible when he alleges that they accused the Delians of secretly contriving an alliance with Sparta. The accusation was possibly true for it is easy to believe that some Delians would resent the dominance of Athens, her interference in their local worship, and the failure to give the island its former importance as a Hellenic centre.

The Delian exiles were scattered. One party consulted Delphi about their future. The answer was to find the place where Apollo was born and accomplish certain sacrifices there.³ These instructions merely perplexed the Delians as they had always claimed Delos as the true birthplace of Apollo. The Pythia offered as a supplementary oracle, that a crow would reveal the place to them. They left Delphi still puzzled, but at Chaeronea, so the story runs, they heard an innkeeper's wife talking to some strangers, who were going to Tegyra, about an oracle of Apollo there. As they said good-bye, the strangers addressed the woman by the name of 'crow,' and the Delians found the clue needed. They went to Tegyra, which also claimed to be a birthplace of Apollo, offered the prescribed sacrifices and not long afterwards secured their return to Delos. Actually the exiles came back in 420 B.C., when Thucydides⁴ records that the Athenians had taken to heart their recent disasters in battle and the Delphic oracle had sent a prophecy enjoining the restoration. Clearly the story of the visit to Tegyra has been improved on for the edification of later times. Perhaps Plutarch derived it from a Boeotian source which particularly enjoyed the moral that even Delians must admit that the Boeotian city of Tegyra was the true site of

¹ V, 1² Plut. *Moral* 412C.³ XII, 1003, 1⁴ V, 203, 1

Apollo's birth The story of the crow, a sacred bird of Apollo, is modelled on the stock lines of traditional ambiguity But there may well be a substratum of truth Certainly the Delians did enlist Delphian sympathy, and some of them may well have taken refuge at Tegyra with encouragement from Delphi, till the Athenians had been persuaded to let them return to Delos. The Delians who returned in 420 B C were probably only the more pro-Athenian part of the population For later some at least were still resident at Adramyttium in the southern Troad where we hear that the undersatrap, Arsaces, had settled them in 421 B C¹ Shortly before 411 B C they had fallen out with their protector, who proceeded treacherously to slay a number of them, whom he had lured into his power The remainder presumably still lived at Adramyttium till 404 B C, when one may suppose they were restored to Delos by Lysander along with the other remnants of exiled peoples who were replaced in the territories from which the Athenians had formerly expelled them The supposition that the Delians returned in two sections would explain what appears like a minor discrepancy in our authorities Plutarch described the Delians as returning 'not long after,' when referring to those who went to Tegyra Pausanias² selects the Delians at Adramyttium as an example of a people long in exile Both writers are correct in respect of the particular section to which they refer

Meanwhile both parties in the Peloponnesian War were inclining towards making peace This objective had been materially advanced by the return of King Pleistoanax from exile to Sparta³ He had been driven out in 445 B C for having, as it was alleged, corruptly made a truce with Pericles In exile he had resided at Lycaenum in Arcadia and was said to have persuaded the Pythia through her brother,⁴ Aristocles, to take up his cause The Spartan embassies to Delphi for some time regularly received the answer that they must 'bring back the seed of the half-divine son of Zeus from abroad to his own land, or else they would plough the furrow with a silver ploughshare' The allusion to Pleistoanax as a son of Heracles is obvious, but the threat of consequences, if he was not allowed

¹ Thuc VIII, cviii, 4

² IV, xxvii, 9

³ Thuc V, xvi, 2 Cf Plut *Moral* 403B

⁴ This is the MSS reading and usually adopted But probably it should be emended to τὸν Δελφεύ. For the corruption, cf e.g. Schol in Aristid *Panath* p. 118 (Dind).

to return, is less easy of interpretation. The metaphor seems to be suggested by the description of Pleistoanax as seed. If the true seed is not brought back, their ploughing will be as costly and abortive, as if they used a ploughshare of silver.

The prophecy did not immediately produce its effect. But in 426 B.C. Archidamus, the powerful head of the rival royal house, died, and the way was cleared for Pleistoanax' return. He came back with dances and sacrifices, and began to work for peace. Yet whenever a set-back occurred to the Spartans, it did not help his purpose. For his opponents murmured and attributed their misfortunes to what they described as his unconstitutional recall. However, at last, in 423 B.C. (April) a truce was concluded between Sparta and Athens.

It is possible that Delphi was eager for peace to be concluded. As Sparta had failed to win at once, the continuance of the war was very damaging to Delphi. The Athenian side must have been precluded entirely or almost entirely from sending their usual offerings, public and private. Even visitors from the Peloponnese must have been seriously reduced owing to the disturbed conditions, especially in the Corinthian Gulf. So Delphi, apart from nobler motives, had abundance of material considerations to press her to favour peace. The encouragement of Pleistoanax' recall may have been deliberately intended as a step to reconciliation. At any rate, the first proviso of the truce was a guarantee of freedom of access to the temple and oracle of the Pythian Apollo for any one who wished.¹ Actually the truce, after running for a year, lapsed for a few months till in the spring of 421 it was recast and re-established, with a view to permanence, as the Peace of Nicias. In it, the first paragraph, as was conventional, dealt with religious issues before secular, and stated² 'Concerning the common temples, any one who wishes may sacrifice and travel³ and consult oracles and act as ambassador in accordance with the ancestral customs by land and by sea with immunity. The sanctuary and temple of Apollo at Delphi and the Delphians are to be autonomous and independent in taxation and jurisdiction over them and their lands in accordance with the ancestral customs.' The freedom of access guaranteed by the truce is here reiterated and

¹ Thuc. IV, cxviii, 1

² The verb *τέναται* is probably corrupt. Some editors omit it.

³ Thuc. V, xviii, 2

amplified, while it is applied not merely to Delphi, but also to the other Panhellenic shrines. But in return for this security the Athenians were required to recognize the independence of Delphi. There must be no return to the Periclean plans of dominance there by giving the oracle over to the Phocians. There was evidently a rapprochement between Athens and Delphi which shows itself in the important responses on questions of cult, the oracle concerning the Eleusinian first-fruits and that in which Apollo defines certain features of his own worship and offers himself as his own interpreter.¹ In practice while the independence of Delphi remained, the freedom of access for the Athenians was somewhat limited. Sparta failed to induce her ally, Boeotia, to accept the treaty, and Athens persisted with her northern neighbour on the precarious terms of a truce renewed every ten days. Hence even as late as 414 B.C. Aristophanes wrote 'If we wish to go to Pytho, we have to ask the Boeotians for a passage through their territory'.²

Apart from the unsatisfactory position of the Boeotians the other Greeks were in a state of disquiet and soon drifted into war, first sporadically, then as a whole. Delphi seems to have stood apart from these movements. It avoided attaching itself exclusively to one side or the other, and consequently the reputation of the oracle was not greatly concerned in the successes or failures of the war, a position of detachment and neutrality which could seem to be the height of prudence, but actually was the first step towards detaching Delphi from its former position as the arbiter in Greek politics. A good example of its ambiguous neutrality is seen in the minor battle between Mantinea and Tegea (422 B.C.), when each side routed one wing of the other, and both sent the spoils of their enemy to Delphi, to be dedicated to Apollo.³ But at the same time Delphi was prepared to encourage the union of Arcadia under Mantinea, if we are right in dating to this period the oracle on the bones of Arcas.⁴

Of all the events in the latter half of the Peloponnesian War the Sicilian disaster was easily the most sensational. Its tragic conclusion naturally suggested divine vengeance on Athens for

¹ *Ditt. Syll.*³ 83 (Iod. No. 74) dated by Meritt to 415 B.C. spring (*Athenian Financial Documents*, p. 172, note 3). Cf. *infra*, p. 371 and *I.G.* I², 78, for the dating of this latter, cf. R. Binneloesel, *Studien zur den Attischen Urkundenreliefs des 5 und 4. Jahrhunderts*, 1932.

² *Aves*, 188.

³ *Thuc.* IV, cxxxiv, 1.

⁴ Cf. *supra* p. 114.

her imperial presumption Yet strangely even this opportunity for making claims to supernatural prevision seems scarcely to have been used by the Delphian priests Only one minor oracle and one ominous happening are mentioned in connection with the Sicilian expedition It was said that when the Athenians consulted the Pythia concerning the expedition they received a response to 'bring the priestess of Athena from Erythrae'¹ They carried out this injunction literally by fetching the woman who was named Hesychia (Quiet) But the oracle was also susceptible of a second interpretation, for to 'bring Hesychia' might also mean to 'keep quiet' Hence Plutarch, who tells the story, suggests that the Delphic oracle really was advising the Athenians to abstain from the expedition. It is a pleasant anecdote, but one cannot really decide whether it is authentic or invented later Only a little more plausible is the omen which Plutarch records with it An Athenian dedication at Delphi consisting of a golden image of Pallas Athena placed on a bronze palm tree was attacked by crows which pecked at the golden dates and broke them off This description may go back to a contemporary source, as Plutarch also records the conjecture of the Athenians that this story was an invention of the Delphians at the instigation of the Syracusans There is no other evidence to show that Delphi attempted in any way to protect Syracuse from the Athenian attack

The only oracle of probable authenticity, preserved from the last years of the Peloponnesian War, shows Delphi once more as pro-Spartan It is merely quoted fragmentarily by Oenomaus² with his usual sarcastic comments, which do not illuminate the subject of the oracle or its original context It ran thus

'You have taken, O Locrian, Trachis, the town of the divine Heracles To you, then, Zeus has given destructions and will still give them'

From Oenomaus' comments the only fact that emerges is that the people enquiring from the oracle (evidently Locrians) were suffering from a famine Clearly they had consulted the Delphic oracle for a remedy, and received the reply, in which Apollo attributed their woes to the vengeance of Zeus because

¹ Plut *Moral* 433B, *Nic* xii, 5 Cf *Moral* 397F In the *Nicias* Plutarch substitutes Clazomenae for Erythrae, probably by a mere slip

- Ap Euseb *P E* VI, 260A and 260B

they had destroyed Heraclea in Trachis. The allusion must be to the Spartan colony which had been founded there early in the Peloponnesian War. Xenophon records that in 409 the neighbouring tribes, who had always resented the presence of the Spartan intruders, won a crushing victory over the colonists and slew their Spartan commander, Labotas. It was at this date, we may suppose, that the Locrians destroyed Heraclea.¹ The Spartans at the time were too preoccupied with the war against Athens to avenge the disaster. But in the next few years a famine afflicted the Locrians, and Delphi took upon itself to interpret the will of Zeus in this sense. The destructions which Zeus would 'still give' in the future were probably a prophecy of ultimate retribution from Sparta. Another single line of an oracle, which Oenomaus also quoted in an adjoining passage, might possibly belong to the same context.

'Oetaeans, do not haste in distracted folly of mind'

The men of Oeta were also the neighbours of Heraclea who had betrayed the Spartans and may have received a warning not to destroy the town. But the position of the oracles in Oenomaus is no necessary proof of a connection between them. The Pythia may have discouraged the precipitate folly of the Oetaeans on some other occasion, which cannot now be defined.

¹ Xenophon in his brief notice (*Hell.* I, ii, 18) only mentions (1) Achaeans against whom the Spartans were fighting, (2) Oetaeans who betrayed the Spartans. But I cannot find another context for the event.

CHAPTER XI

THE ORACLE TO THE BATTLE OF LEUCTRA

THE end of the Peloponnesian War made Sparta dominant in the Greek world¹ Delphi profited well from the victory For the Spartans were specially generous in the dedications which they erected in honour of their triumph At this particular time Olympia, the other great Panhellenic sanctuary, was not favoured by Sparta, as the Eleans, who controlled it, had failed to co-operate in the Peloponnesian league during the closing years of the war and were shortly to be chastised for their insubordination So Delphi gained by receiving the chief monuments of both the Spartan commanders

King Agis had spent the last ten years of the war in the useful, but rather inglorious occupation of Decelea, the Spartans' permanent base in Attica A tithe of the proceeds of the plundering raids, which had been sent out from there, had been collected for consecration to Apollo From it Agis erected a monument on which he described himself in a poetic phrase as 'king of sea and land'² But this dedication with its claim to command in both branches of warfare must have been put sadly in the shade by the monument of Lysander, the Spartan admiral He erected a portico containing a large group of bronze statues representing his colleagues in the naval victory of Aegospotami with himself and Poseidon in the centre³ The whole remained one of the most famous and imposing trophies ever set up at Delphi, and corresponded to the position of supreme importance which Lysander had won in Greece It was no wonder that Agis attempted to assert in opposition

¹ A fictitious story later alleged that Athens had been saved from destruction because the Pythian Apollo warned Sparta not to ruin 'the hearth of Hellas' Cf Aelian, *VH* IV, 6 Schol Aristid *Panath* p 341

² Plut *Moral* 467F In the article in *JHS* LII, 42, where I discussed the tithe collected by the Spartans from the spoils brought in to Decelea, I failed to notice this indication of the ultimate destination of the 'tithe of Apollo' Schober, *PW* suppl Vol V, 139, connects this monument with Agis' tithe from the Elean War Cf *infra* p 221 But there were no naval operations in it

³ On this dedication see Plut *Lys* xviii, and cf ib i *Moral* 395A Fouilles, III, 50 (Tod, No 95)

the superior claims of royalty, but failed to win general recognition

The rivalry between Agis and Lysander entered the field of practical politics, when Lysander, by establishing decarchies throughout the new Spartan empire, attempted in each city to entrust the supreme power to a group of his private friends. In the autumn of 403 B.C. the two Spartan kings at last combined to suppress him, and Lysander, who then held no official position, had to submit to seeing his imperial system abolished.¹ The rigid Spartan constitution gave no scope to the dominant individual. Hence Lysander, who was still young and ambitious, was driven to attempt some revolutionary change, which would allow him to exercise the power for which he yearned. The Spartans were as yet too united in obedience to the Lycurgan laws for Lysander to raise a party for constitutional reform. The only hope was the use of religious propaganda. The Spartans were still a pious people untouched for the most part by the doubts and unbeliefs which had lately swept through the rest of Greece. Delphi was traditionally associated with the establishment of Spartan sovereignty and the promulgation of the Lycurgan constitution. A word from the Pythia would produce more effect than years of political agitation.

For the exact details of Lysander's endeavours we are reduced to some rather untrustworthy hearsay. That he had attempted some such general policy seems too probable to deny, but as his scheme never reached fruition it is natural that later historians knew nothing except suspicious gossip about Lysander's hidden plots and doubtful allegations of discoveries made among his papers after his death. Some ancient historians appear to have ignored these stories as slanderous. Ephorus, the most famous writer of the fourth century, was their chief upholder, and it is best to reconstruct his account without necessarily supposing all the details were certain.² According to him, Lysander's main object was to abolish the hereditary kingship of the Heraclidae and substitute for this an elective kingship open to all true Spartans. Evidently he did not intend to do away with the peculiarly

¹ Cf. Parke in *J. H. S. L.*, pp. 53 ff.

² *D. S.* XIV, xiii, 2 ff. Nepos, *Lys.* VI, iii, 1. Plut. *Lys.* αλ and παλ, *F. Gr. H.* 70 f. 206

Spartan feature of dual sovereignty, but he trusted that his own prestige would secure his election to one of the two thrones, which his abilities could then make dominant. The scheme must have occurred to him in the autumn of 403 B.C. when thwarted by the two hereditary kings. He foresaw that only by the employment of an oracle could he force this drastic change through, so he is said to have begun by offering vast sums to the officials at Delphi with a view to bribing the Pythia. His advances were rejected, and a similar attempt at Dodona, in which he used one Pherecrates of Apollonia as his agent, was also unsuccessful. So he set out on a pilgrimage to the distant shrine of Zeus Ammon in Libya. This oracle had specially close relations with Sparta through its Dorian neighbour, Cyrene, and Lysander's family had a traditional friendship with the native king, which they had shown in the naming of Lysander's brother, Libys. That Lysander went on this journey was generally admitted, even by the ancient authorities who did not suppose that he had an ulterior purpose, but accepted his own excuse that in the winter of 404 B.C. when besieging Aphytis in Chalcidice he had seen a vision of Zeus Ammon, the patron god of the city, and in consequence had raised the siege and made a vow to visit Zeus at Ammon and propitiate him. The pilgrimage is dated by Diodorus, probably correctly, to the Attic year 403-2 B.C. Again Lysander's attempt at bribery failed and this time the priests were so indignant that they sent an embassy back to Sparta to accuse Lysander of treason. Lysander defended himself and was acquitted to the disgust of the Libyans, whose comment was 'We will give a better judgment, when you come to us in order to settle in Libya,' alluding to the old prophecy that the Spartans would some day make a colony there.¹

Of Lysander's final attempt a more complex and detailed account exists. It concerned Delphi again, and perhaps our ancient authorities were wrong in treating it as a climax to Lysander's previous attempts. It may have been originally an alternative version of his previously recorded attempt on Delphi. According to this account a Greek woman living near the Black Sea claimed to have conceived from Apollo, and bore a son who was named Silenus. Lysander decided to take advan-

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 170

tage of this circumstance Agents employed by him put about the story of Silenus' supernatural birth and also a rumour, supposed to reach Sparta from Delphi, that some extremely ancient oracles were preserved in writing by the priests, and were not allowed to be given to anyone till after a long passage of time some one born of Apollo should come, and, after he had shown those who guarded the tablets a token to recognize him by, he would receive the oracles from them Lysander's plan was that, after sufficient preliminary propaganda, Silenus should appear and claim the oracles, as a son of Apollo, whereupon some confederates among the priests would contrive their part to suit They would enquire of Silenus' birth and after professing themselves satisfied on the subject they would show him the writings Silenus would then read to a large audience a number of oracles including one on the subject of Spartan kingship, that it would be better for them when they chose their kings from the best of the citizens We are told that this elaborate plan was all ready for execution, Silenus had grown to boyhood and had come to Greece for the attempt, when Lysander abandoned the theatrical affair because of loss of nerve on the part of one of the actors who shirked his part The plot ended in nothing and was not discovered till after his death Then King Agesilaus had occasion to go through Lysander's papers in connection with an appeal from one of Sparta's allies Here there was found a reasoned disquisition on the change in the kingship prepared by a rhetorician for delivery by Lysander, and apparently other evidence showing the extent of his intrigues Agesilaus intended to publish the essay as a demonstration of Lysander's treasonable intention, but was dissuaded from doing so for fear it should have an injurious effect on Spartan loyalty

The whole story of this last attempt of Lysander is rather sensational in its matter and picturesque in its colouring Ephorus can have had little certain evidence for it, as posthumous discoveries of documents by Agesilaus are open to some suspicions Agesilaus had broken with Lysander shortly before his death and might have found it convenient to blacken his memory At the same time there is nothing incredible in the story and it is best to accept it in default of other evidence. Delphic oracles and similar prophecies had in the past made

and unmade kings of Sparta as we shall see, Lysander made great play with an oracle on Agesilaus' own accession. When he was in Asia Minor in 407 Lysander may well have heard of the young Silenus, or at latest in the Hellespontine region in 403 B.C. autumn, at the very time when his quarrel with the kings was coming to a head. The attempt to work the oracle may have been ready for production in the last year of the century. Even if it broke down through the weakness of some member of the conspiracy, Lysander soon was to have a further reason for abandoning this plot in preference for another one.

In 399 B.C. King Agis died suddenly. He had been Lysander's most powerful opponent, as Pausanias, the other king, was still young and comparatively inexperienced. Lysander determined to try to thrust Leotychidas, Agis' only son, out of the kingship, and place in power a nominee of his own on whom he could reckon as a tool in his further attempts. It was safer not to try to overthrow the Heraclid kingship, but use it for his own ends by securing his own nominee for the vacant throne. Leotychidas was specially open to attack as a scandal surrounded his birth, which had taken place in the years in which Alcibiades was resident in Sparta. Rumour alleged that Alcibiades, not Agis, was his true father, and the personal enmity which Agis had for Alcibiades seemed to prove that he believed the truth of this story, which was amplified with many scandalous details. So Leotychidas' right to succeed was questioned at once. Lysander supported as the next heir a half-brother of Agis, named Agesilaus, a man already past his first youth and not yet distinguished in any special degree. He had one physical handicap in his lameness, which his opponents tried to turn to their own advantage. Diopithes, a famous oracle-monger, who supported Leotychidas, produced on his side an oracle of Apollo:

*'Beware, Sparta, haughty though you are, lest a lame kingship spring from you, when you are firm of foot. Then long will unexpected toils oppress you and a confused wave of man-destroying war will fall upon you.'*¹

¹ Xen. *Hell.* III, iii, 3. Plut. *Ages.* iii, xxx, *Lys.* xxii. *Moral.* 399B. Paus. III, viii, 9. Justin, VI, ii, 4. For earlier references to Diopithes, cf. Aristoph. *Eq.* 1085, *Vesp.* 380, *Aves.* 988 and Plut. *Per.* xxxii.

This prophecy is evidently the same in general meaning as that which had been cited eighty years before at the time of the foundation of the Athenian empire¹ On this occasion Diopeithes offered an entirely different interpretation (Whether he had modified the text or not, we cannot tell) He suggested that the response forbade the appointment of a lame man as king But Lysander retorted that the oracle must not be taken literally It meant that the Spartans must be on their guard, lest the kingship itself should be lamed by the intrusion of one not of the Herachid blood How absurd it was that Lysander should argue thus in support of hereditary sovereignty would not be apparent to contemporaries At any rate Lysander won his case, and Agesilaus was made king It was an ironic stroke of fate that, instead of proving himself a convenient puppet, he soon became a forceful and independent autocrat, who did more than most of his predecessors to determine the course of Spartan policy, and quickly took occasion to put Lysander in his place by an effective snub

All these uneasy intrigues were stopped by the death of Lysander in a minor skirmish outside Haliartus in 395 B C It was not surprising that this event was connected in later times with an ambiguous oracle² It was said that Lysander had been given a prophecy

'I bid you guard against a roaring hoplite and a snake, cunning son of the earth, which attacks behind the back'

The 'hoplite' was identified with a river said to be named Hoplites which flowed beside Haliartus The snake was recognized in the emblem on the shield of the soldier (a Haliartan named Neochorus) who killed Lysander The interpretation is evidently rather forced and made doubly suspicious by the fact that Plutarch knew of another identification of the hoplite with a river once called Hoplia near Coronea It appears as if strong efforts were made to connect the oracle with the circumstances of Lysander's death, though its ambiguities were not particularly susceptible of such interpretation Whether the words are to be taken as a genuine product or a later fiction it is difficult to decide, but the

¹ Cf supra p 195 All our authorities except Xenophon, a contemporary, imply that the Delphic oracle had been consulted *ad hoc* on this issue by Diopeithes

² Plut. Lys xxx, Moral 408 A, where it is implied that the prophecy was Delphic

obscurity of the wording seems too great for the forger. So perhaps it may be a genuine piece of prophecy, an attempt to invent a suitable ambiguity, which could afterwards be revealed as a secret piece of foresight.

After the death of Lysander the Delphian oracle appears but rarely in the political events of the next thirty years. King Pausanias, exiled after Haliartus, tried, as we have seen, to invoke the memory of Delphic influence on the Lycurgan constitution. But his propaganda derived from the past had no useful effect. The oracle seems to have made equally little effect by contemporary responses. This drop from its influential position of earlier years is probably not merely apparent. Though our authorities for this period are not very detailed, one would expect that the godfearing Xenophon would not overlook any signal illustration of Apollo's power. The most probable explanation is that the scepticism induced by the Sophistic movement of the last half century, coupled with the uncompromising realism in politics which is typical of the fourth century, had together left little room for such antiquated conventions as consulting an oracle on a line of political action.

Delphi, however, still had significance even to the man with no thought for idealism in the conduct of the state. It was one of the most frequented places in Greece. Hence it provided an appropriate site for erecting dedications or making demonstrations of power. But the prestige of its abundant offerings brought a danger with it. The unscrupulous adventurer, who seized these treasures, might use them with devastating effect in Hellenic policy, especially now that mercenary soldiers were plentifully available for hire and were becoming an important element in warfare.

In the early fourth century it is the Spartans who are chiefly recorded as dedicating tithes from spoils of war. Agis in 399 B.C. offered the share from his booty taken at Epitalium in Elis, which had been a base for raiding attacks exactly on the same lines as Decelea in Attica.¹ More considerable were the proceeds from Agesilaus' two campaigns in Asia Minor. He had taken more than a hundred talents' worth of booty, and after Coronea he dedicated a tithe at Delphi during the

¹ Xen. *Hell.* III, iii, 1, IV, iii, 21. Ages. 1, 34. Plut. *Ages.* xix. Cf. D. S. XIV, lxxiv, 2.

Pythian games of 394 B.C. It may have been about the same date that Xenophon,¹ who had also just returned from Spartan service in Asia, deposited in the treasury of the Athenians at Delphi a half-tithe of the spoils of his Ten Thousand, or at any rate the portion of it which had been entrusted to him.

The only occasion on which a Spartan king consulted Delphi in this period was on a question of technical ritual and even then the method used was noted to be curious. The Argives in 387 had been at war with Sparta, but had managed to stave off invasion by always proclaiming the festival of the Carneia whenever the Spartans were about to cross the frontier. As good Dorians, the Spartans could not lightly violate the sacred truce of the Carneia, even when it was being celebrated in defiance of ordinary practice by a process of juggling with the calendar. Ultimately the Spartans decided on sending an expedition under Agesipolis, who, after he had offered the preliminary sacrifices and found them auspicious, then went to collect oracular authority for his unorthodox breach of truce before crossing the frontier.² He began at Olympia, where he enquired of Zeus, whether he would be justified before the gods in not accepting the truce, if the Argives offered it at any other than the correct time. The god gave his approval, and thus fortified Agesipolis went to Delphi, where he contented himself with asking Apollo whether he agreed with his father on the question and the oracle gave the same answer. Agesipolis' conduct is strange in view of the traditional theory that Apollo at Delphi was not expressing his own purpose, but simply revealing the will of Zeus. It looks certainly as if the earlier visit to Olympia was meant to prejudice the issue, so that Delphi could not consistently disapprove of Agesipolis' proposal whether it wished to or not. At this particular moment Sparta's hold on central and northern Greece was especially weak, while Elis had only lately been reduced by Agis. So the answer of Olympia may have been certain in advance to be favourable, that of Delphi possibly anti-Spartan. But if so, it shows how weak a formality the consultation of the oracle was, if Agesipolis felt no compunction in forcing a favourable reply by such a transparent sophistry.

¹ *Anab.* V, iii, 5. *Diog. Laert.* II, vi, 51.

² *Xen. Hell.* IV, vii, 2. *Aristotle, Rhet.* II, 1398b 32. *Plut. Moral.* 191B, 209B (somewhat garbled).

Of adventurers who had their eye on the Delphic treasures we hear particularly of two—Dionysius I of Syracuse and Jason of Pherae. About 385 B.C. Dionysius in an interval between his many wars made an alliance with the Illyrians through Alcetas, the exiled King of the Molossi, who had taken refuge in Syracuse.¹ His immediate object was to secure the forcible restoration of Alcetas to his kingdom, and for this purpose he sent to the Illyrians soldiers and hoplite armour. But after they had won some success, Sparta intervened by contracting an alliance with the Molossi, which prevented Dionysius from carrying out his plan. It was said that he had intended from this base in north-west Greece to make an attack on Delphi itself for the sake of its treasures, and in view of his notoriously sacrilegious attacks on other temples in Italy, it is not at all impossible.² Some dozen years later we find Dionysius instead in the position to pose as a benefactor of Delphi unjustly deprived of his glory. In 373-2 B.C., when Iphicrates, the Athenian general, was in command of a fleet off Corcyra, he captured a convoy of ships from Dionysius bringing statues of gold and ivory to Olympia and Delphi.³ Iphicrates felt some scruples about confiscating them and consulted the Athenian people who answered his dispatch harshly by telling him not to concern himself with questions of theology, but see how he could feed his soldiers. So Iphicrates appropriated the dedications, and the Athenians received a bitter letter of reproach and scorn from Dionysius. They had some excuse to the extent that Dionysius was at the time supporting Sparta in her war with Athens.

A more serious threat to Delphi came from Jason of Pherae. In 371 B.C. he was at the height of his power having made himself master of all northern Greece and had just supported the Thebans in their crushing victory over the Spartans at Leuctra. He intended as the next step to celebrate the Pythian games of 370 B.C. on a colossal scale with a thousand oxen and more than ten thousand other victims, and a golden crown as a prize for the town that provided the finest bull.⁴ Also he sent out orders for the Thessalian army to assemble at the same-

¹ D.S. XV, xiii, 1

² For references see Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers*, p. 72

³ D.S. XVI, lvi, 2

⁴ Xen. *Hell.* VI, iv, 30 Aelian, fr. 52

time These preparations naturally caused alarm Contemporaries believed that his object was to seize the temple, and it was said that the Delphians consulted the god on the action which they should take, if Jason tampered with the sacred treasures The answer was that the god would take care of them—the same reply as in 480 B C The crisis never arose, for Jason was assassinated in the earlier part of 370 B C The motives behind the deed are obscure, but there is no reason to suppose that Delphi was concerned in the plot or knew of it in advance¹ The death of Jason removed any danger to the treasures and any possibility that Thessaly might resume that dominant control in the Amphictyony which it had possessed in early times when also Thessaly had been united under a single ruler In the end this relief produced a new and more serious danger, the attempt of Thebes to take the place of Thessaly in this policy But before we follow that we must note a few other examples of Delphic activity before Leuctra

One story concerns the Achaeans of the Northern Peloponnese At some uncertain date between 404 and 367 they had been besieging a fortified town in Aetolia, called Phana Meeting with difficulties they consulted Delphi and were told²

'Dwellers in the land of Pelops and Achaea, who have come to Pytho to enquire how you may take a city Come now, reckon how great a share each day rescues the town, when the folk drink it, and the town is refreshed Thus you might take the tower-girt village of Phana'

We are told that the Achaeans failed to understand the oracle till a chance happening called their attention to the fact that the townsfolk were depending on a spring of water just outside their walls from which they secretly draw a daily ration This source of supply was stopped and Phana fell In return for the prophecy the Achaeans made a dedication at Delphi which Pausanias records, citing this response

The story need not be rejected as legendary Some Delphian may have possessed enough local knowledge of Phana to suggest the fairly simple advice of cutting off the local water supply The site of this otherwise unrecorded town has been

¹ Delphic complicity was maintained by Tropaea, *Giaroni il Tago della Tessaglia* (Messina, 1898) pp 66–7, cited by Westlake *Thessaly*, p 98

² Paus X, xviii, 1 ff

identified with great plausibility. traces of the spring and the towers fitted excellently with the ancient account ¹

All other three instances are in different ways connected with Asia Minor. We hear that about 385 B.C. Tiribazus, a Persian general commanding against Evagoras, King of Cyprus, was accused to Artaxerxes by his colleague, Orontes, of making a private alliance with the Spartans, and sending to Delphi to enquire on the subject of a rebellion against the Great King ² If the charge was authentic, it is evident that Tiribazus, like Croesus in the sixth century, had hoped that the Pythian Apollo would give him useful authority for the employment of Greek allies. The answer of the Pythia is unrecorded and we do not know whether the charge against Tiribazus was proved.

In the seventies of the fourth century Delphi received a case for arbitration ³ Two Ionian cities, Cyme and Clazomenae, both laid claim to a seaport, named Leuce, which had been founded some years before by Tachos, an Egyptian admiral, who had rebelled against Artaxerxes. Through Tachos' death it had been left without a ruler. The two claimants to the sovereignty first attempted to settle the matter by conflict, but later decided to refer the question to Apollo. The Pythia gave as her judgment that Leuce should belong to the city which first offered sacrifice in the temple of Apollo there. They were to send their representatives each from their own city at dawn on a day which was to be fixed by mutual agreement. On the appointed day the Cymeans assumed that they had an advantage as their city lay nearer Leuce, but the men of Clazomenae used a trick to obtain the victory. They selected some of their citizens by lot and made them form a colony near Leuce. From this advance base they started at dawn and were the first to offer sacrifice. Thus they obtained final possession of Leuce, for Delphi did not interfere as umpire to disqualify Clazomenae for infringing the rules. The success was celebrated by an annual festival called *Prophthascia* (Anticipation) in honour of the event.

¹ Cf. Woodhouse, *Aetolia*, p. 141 ff. He prefers to date the siege in the other period open—i.e. after 189 B.C. But it is so comparatively unlikely that the Pythia would have given a verse oracle of this kind at that period that I prefer the earlier dating. Rebuildings in the second century would account for the present state of the remains.

² D.S. XV, viii, 4.

³ D.S. XV, xviii. For Leuce, cf. also Pliny, *N.H.* VII, 119, that it was once an island, but became a promontory.

Another enquiry from Ionia had a tragic sequel ¹ The nine cities, which were all that remained of the original sacred league of twelve Ionian colonies, still celebrated regularly their common festival, the Panionia, on the traditional site at Mycale. But the disturbances in Asia Minor, due to the great Satraps' revolt, caused the Ionians to decide that it would be better in future to transfer the religious centre to a safer place, near Ephesus ² This serious step required oracular support So they applied to Delphi which agreed with the change and directed that they should take copies of images for the new altar from the ancient and ancestral altars at Helice in Achaëa. (The patron deity of the Panionia was Poseidon Heliconius, and tradition said that the Ionians had brought this cult with them to Asia from Helice in the north of the Peloponnese) These instructions were in accordance with the normal outlook of the Greeks, who preserved close contact in ritual usages between mother cities and colonies The Ionians sent ambassadors to the confederacy of the Achaeans which agreed to their request for the images, but a new and serious difficulty now presented itself The men of Helice alleged that they had an ancient prophecy by which they were warned of great peril when the Ionians should sacrifice on the altar of Poseidon So they refused to allow this dangerous condition to be fulfilled and would not let the Ionian ambassadors take the copies, maintaining that the sanctuary of Poseidon belonged to them privately, and not to the federation of the Achaeans The Ionians, relying on the general resolution of the federation, insisted and attempted to gain their object by force The men of Helice attacked them, and brought upon themselves the guilt of gross impiety Though the Ionians were compelled to retire unsuccessful, they had contrived to sacrifice on the altar of Poseidon, and had thus fulfilled the condition prescribed for the destruction of Helice.

Poseidon did not long remain unavenged, he soon reminded the men of Helice that he was both lord of the sea and shaker of the earth His visitation was attended by fearful portents In the winter following the impiety (373 B.C.) and in Poseidon's

¹ D S XV, xlix

² Vide Thuc III, civ, 3 for a reference to the Ephesia, but presumably this experiment had been abandoned later and was re-established at this date in the fourth century.

own sacred month a brilliant comet appeared (the same which Halley was to identify more than two thousand years later)¹ Also five days before the blow fell, all the mice, weasels, snakes, spiders and other small inhabitants of the district were seen to be taking the road for Ceryneia and leaving their homes. Then by night a fearful earthquake occurred Helice sank submerged beneath a tidal wave, the neighbouring town of Bura was swallowed up in an earthquake, and ten Spartan warships which were at anchor off the coast were destroyed.

Later ages saw in these events the most sensational disaster of its kind known to the Greeks and a perfect example of divine retribution. In our authorities this aspect is brought forward to the prejudice of the true facts. The innocent Laconian victims of the tidal wave are forgotten, except in one author,² and a later tradition associated the men of Bura with the men of Helice in their impious assault, though one may well doubt whether they had any hand in what was evidently a quarrel local to Helice. Those who viewed the disaster as divine justice at work were logically compelled to believe in the guilt of all the victims and to ignore the death of those who could not be connected with the impiety, with the result that Diodorus can record a claim that none but those who had committed sacrilege met their fate.

It may have been through this attitude to the disaster, that it was almost forgotten that Delphi suffered severely about the time of this earthquake and probably through its action. The temple of Apollo was devastated by what was most likely a deluge.³ Its position on a terrace, built out on a steep mountain slope, had always made the problem of drainage and support peculiarly difficult. The earthquake of 373 (winter) may have ruptured the retaining wall above the temple and released on it a mass of earth and flood water. In any case the

¹ Cf. also Strabo, I, C54 and 59, VIII, C385. Aristotle, *Meteor.* I, 343b2, *de Mundo*, 396a20. Paus. VII, xxiv, 6 ff. Aelian, *NA* XI, 19. Ovid, *Met.* XV, 293 ff. Callisthenes ap. Seneca, *NQ* VI, xxiii, 4. Ephorus ap. Seneca, *NQ* VII, xvi, 2 = *F Gr H* 70 F 212.

² Aelian, I c. Diogenes Laertius (III, 20) mentions the death of the Spartan admiral, Pollis, because he saw in it a retribution for his bad treatment of Plato.

³ Courby (*Fouilles*, II, p. 110) rejects earthquake and fire on account of the condition of the remains. The *Marmor Parium* (*F Gr H* 239 F A71) and Epaphus ap. Macrob. *Sat.* III, 1, 6, mention fire, the former dating it to 373-2 B.C., the latter referring vaguely to the earthquake at Helice. Courby proposed a landslide and deluge as the only cause.

temple was somehow laid in complete ruin about this time, yet only two obscure and neglected authorities recorded the disaster, till the discovery of the fourth century B.C. building accounts called the attention of modern scholars to the true facts.

The question of restoring the temple appears to have been discussed at the Panhellenic conference in the summer of 371 before the battle of Leuctra. Apparently an international body of 'naopoioi' to arrange for the reconstruction of the temple were chosen and some scheme for raising the necessary funds was agreed to,¹ by which each state was assessed at a certain proportion of the expense. But before the restoration was completed many changes were to take place in the sovereignty over Delphi and of all northern Greece. The first stage in these developments was marked at once by the battle of Leuctra.

¹ This contribution was the first obol, cf. *BCH* xxvii, p. 9 ff. and the accounts (*Fouilles*, III, v, 3 = *Ditt. Syll.*³ 239). Cf. also the reference to the temple in *Ditt. Syll.*³ 159.

CHAPTER XII

THE THIRD SACRED WAR

WE have seen how in the first quarter of the fourth century Sparta had precariously maintained her dominance in Greece, and had been the most notable state in her contacts with Delphi. The battle of Leuctra entirely changed this position. Sparta was driven from Northern Greece and soon could only defend with difficulty her own territory in the Southern Peloponnese, while Thebes, the victor of Leuctra, established a short-lived hegemony. It was only to be expected that the sensational result of the battle, the first complete defeat of a Spartan army, should be associated with supernatural foreknowledge and purpose. The Spartan expedition to Leuctra would never have taken place, if a proposal made by a certain Spartan, named Prothous, had been adopted. When the army of Cleombrotus was in Phocis, the question of its advance into Boeotia was discussed at Sparta. The majority wanted to enforce by arms the terms of the recent Panhellenic understanding by which Thebes was to be compelled in the name of Greek autonomy to dissolve her Boeotian league. But a minority, led by Prothous, proposed to disband Cleombrotus' army and send ambassadors round the cities of Greece, asking each city to send voluntary contributions for the restoration of the temple at Delphi. After this fund had been raised, the Spartans could invite all the states which supported autonomy to contribute forces to overcome those who threatened it. This course, it was suggested, would best win the blessing of the gods and incur least disapproval from other cities.¹ The principle behind the two parts of the proposal seems to have been that Sparta should at the same time disown the system of compulsory state contributions to the restoration of Delphi and the enforcement of local autonomy on the Boeotian league. But this policy of waiting for voluntary action in international questions did not appeal to the majority of the Spartans, who decided on the war which culminated in Leuctra.

¹ Xen. *Hell.* VI, 1, 7, 2

So Cleombrotus started on his fatal expedition. Xenophon in describing the decision expresses his opinion that it was the work of a supernatural power leading Sparta to destruction, and this view was generally held later. The campaign of Leuctra in our authorities is plentifully provided with omens disastrous to Sparta and favourable to Thebes, especially from the Boeotian oracle of Trophonius. One prophecy only is attributed to Delphi and it is at least doctored, if not quite spurious¹. Some two hundred years before the battle of Leuctra, according to this account, when the Thessalians were invading Boeotia, the Boeotians occupied Ceressus, a strong point near Thespieae. The Thessalians, after an unsuccessful attempt on the place, enquired of Delphi concerning their chances of capturing it. The reply was

'I have a care to shady Leuctra and the Alesian ground and I have a care to the two mournful daughters of Scedasus. There a battle of many tears comes on, nor will any of mankind point it out, till the Dorians lose the glorious youth of their sons, whenever the fatal day arrives. At that time Ceressus can be captured, but at no other time.'

We are given to understand that the Thessalians failed to take the fortress, but two hundred years later the Spartan defeat at Leuctra satisfied the necessary condition, and the prophecy was fulfilled by the fact that after the battle the Thespians took refuge on Ceressus, which was then captured by the Thebans.

It is impossible to accept this oracle as genuine. Apart from the extreme improbability that Leuctra and its consequences could be indicated so long before they actually took place, the style and wording of the poem suggest the fourth century, not the sixth. The daughters of Scedasus were two legendary beings who were said to have been violated by Spartan ambassadors passing through Leuctra at some unspecified time in the far past². They had imprecated destruction on the Spartans before committing suicide. This tradition was expounded by local soothsayers to Epaminondas just before the battle. Most probably the details of the legend here were simply invented at the time to encourage the Boeotian soldiers who were rather

¹ Paus IX, xiv, 2 Cf. Plut. *Camillus*, xix

- Xen. *Hell.* VI, iv, 7 D. S. XV, liv, 2 ff. Plut. *Pelop.* xx, Moral. 773 C, 856 F

in need of moral support. It was an unnerving experience to have to face unsupported the redoubtable army of Sparta; still worse at this moment when by a clever strategic move the enemy had managed to enter Boeotia and advance from an unexpected direction. Hence any tradition capable of suggesting that Leuctra was the fated spot for the Spartans to meet a crushing defeat was of particular use to Epaminondas. Other parts of Greece also contained mysterious maidens' graves, the objects of a half-forgotten cult. On this occasion the local tomb near Leuctra was credited with a special tradition suitably embroidered. Hence one can suppose that the alleged Delphic oracle prophesying the capture of Ceresus was invented after Leuctra to encourage the Boeotian army to complete its work by the capture of that difficult stronghold.

The fiction had to this extent a foundation in fact that there had been in the seventh century a serious defeat inflicted on the Thessalians by the Boeotians at Ceresus. Possibly even an oracle with regard to this battle had existed, and the version given in Pausanias was substituted to suit the new occasion. But there is no reason to connect the invention with Delphi. It is perhaps a significant fact that no oracles are known certainly to have emanated from Delphi between 372 and about 362 B.C. The destruction of the temple must have upset the arrangements for the Pythia's prophesyings and it would not be surprising to find that the work of the oracle was suspended for some years. Presumably it had in part at least been resumed by 368 B.C. when a peace conference was summoned at Delphi. The prime mover on this occasion was Philiscus of Abydos, an undersatrap of Ariobarzanes and his agent in this attempt to reconcile the difference between the Greek states. He brought together representatives of the Thebans and their allies and their opponents, the Spartans. But the uncompromising attitude of both parties rendered agreement impossible, and Philiscus was probably not much distressed by the failure of these negotiations as his main purpose had not been to make peace for its own sake, but as a prelude to raising a large mercenary army for his Persian master. He achieved this object without having needed to settle the Greeks' differences. What offended the orthodox Xenophon, who records the conference, was that, while the delegates were engaged in debating peace at Delphi, they

never communicated their difficulty to Apollo.¹ The comment would be less justified if the oracle had been completely closed at the time. It is a revelation how greatly the status of the Pythia in political questions had changed. But the delegates had not entirely forgotten their pious duties, for it was probably at this time that a second instalment for the restoration of the temple was assessed on all the states.

One oracle with regard to Epaminondas, which could chronologically have been delivered at this time, is attributed to Delphi but it is evidently quite unhistoric.² It is not extant in any verbatim form, but merely as a story that Epaminondas received an oracle from Delphi that he could beware of the ocean (*πέλαγος*). Hence he never went on board a warship or cargo boat for fear of the prophecy. But he was killed in the battle of Mantinea beside a wood called Pelagus (*Πέλαγος*), thus fulfilling the oracle verbally. Apart from the lack of an authentic form of response, it is proved fictitious both by the fact that it conforms to a familiar pattern of folk-tale and also because it is historically wrong. Only two years before his death Epaminondas had shown that he suffered from no superstitious fears of the sea by organizing for the first time in history an important naval expedition from Boeotia which he commanded in person. The silly pun on the name, Pelagus, suggested to some later writer a theme for a prophecy: its attribution to Delphi is only a tribute to that oracle's outstanding repute.

A few years after Epaminondas' death Delphi did deliver a reply to another statesman, which later was taken as a forecast of his execution.³ Callistratus had been the leading politician in Athens for many years, but he fell out of favour in the sixties of the century, was accused of betraying the border fort of Oropus in 366, and some years later condemned to death for treason. He had evaded the execution of the sentence by taking refuge in exile, in which he distinguished himself by his brilliant activities. After some time he consulted Delphi on the

¹ Xen. *Hell.* VII, 1, 27. Cf. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers*, p. 89.

² Paus. VIII, xi, 10. Suidas, s.v. 'Επαμεινώνδας.

³ Lycurgus, in *Leocr.* 93. The date of the event is obscure. It must be later than 361-60 when Callistratus was still in Thrace (Dem. L, 21) and might well be as late as the period of political despondency in Athens consequent on the Social War. If so, this enquiry would have been made during the period of the Phocian occupation of Delphi.

prospect of returning to Athens and was advised that, if he did, he would 'obtain the laws' (τεύξεται τῶν νόμων). This ambiguous phrase seems to have given him encouragement. He appeared as a suppliant at the Altar of the Twelve Gods, the important sanctuary in the Athenian market place. But his appeal was unsuccessful. The sentence of death, previously in suspense, was now executed. It was said that the only law which a condemned man could obtain was his legal penalty.

In this instance, as in the previous one, no proper text of the oracle is extant, but that alone is no serious objection when it is merely known from an allusion in a contemporary orator. There is nothing historically objectionable in the account, and the oracle, as it is represented, is so bald and comparatively pointless that it cannot be a forgery. It may have lost something in paraphrase, but it is best regarded as the residuum of a genuine, and not very inspired, piece of equivocation.

As we have said already, the Third Sacred War which was to alter the control of Delphi and change the whole history of Greece, arose originally as a consequence of the battle of Leuctra. In the years preceding that battle the Phocians had been able to maintain themselves in independence and hostility to Thebes through the support given them by Sparta. When the Spartans were defeated at Leuctra and driven back into the Peloponnese, Phocis was bereft of her ally and had perforce to support the Theban cause. At the time of the battle of Mantinea, however, they had challenged Theban vengeance by standing neutral.¹ The Thebans were content first to use a religious weapon against their lesser enemy. Some charges of sacrilege, whose exact nature is uncertain, were brought against the Phocians at the Amphictyonic assembly, but the issue remained in suspense till the spring of 356 B.C.² By her dominant position in Northern Greece Thebes had virtual control of the league at this time, and secured the condemnation of the Phocians to pay a heavy fine. Unless it was paid, they were in danger of being attacked by the Amphictyonic league on the ground that they were sacrilegious recusants, who must be made to atone to the god by confiscation of their territory. At this point Philomelus, a prominent Phocian, induced his fellow-

¹ Xen. *Hell.* VI, v, 23. Cf. Hiller von Gaertringen, *P. W.* IV, 256j.

² D. S. XVI, xxiii, 2 ff. Paus. X, ii, 1 ff.

countrymen to adopt the bold plan of vindicating by force their ancient claim to the control of Delphi.

It was said afterwards that Philomelus had personal grounds for wishing to take such drastic action. But, apart from that, the moment was peculiarly appropriate, for Delphi had evidently long been suffering from internal dissension and unrest, which had split the small city into two hotly opposed parties. One piece of evidence on this subject is provided by a Delphic inscription—the law of Cadys¹—which contains stringent provisions fixing a low rate of interest for all current and future loans. This was inscribed shortly after 390 B.C. and shows that the Delphians must have been in such a depressed state of economy that drastic measures could be enforced to remedy it. There had also been private feuds among the upper classes which led to public dissension.² Crates, a Delphian noble, was giving his daughter in marriage to Orsilaus, the son of Phalis, of another Delphian house, when at the wedding the mixing-bowl burst of its own accord during the pouring of libations. The bridegroom took this as an ill omen and departed, renouncing the match. Crates, bent on revenge, later contrived to 'plant' a piece of the consecrated gold among their sacrificial utensils, while Orsilaus and his kinsmen were sacrificing. The apparent theft led to the immediate and summary execution of Orsilaus and his brother by the traditional punishment for the sacrilegious—to be cast over the cliff. Crates followed this up by compassing the death of some friends and kinsmen of Orsilaus who had taken refuge as suppliants in the temple of Athena Pronaea. But this act involved him in his turn in a charge of sacrilege, and he and some of his adherents were executed as under the curse of blood-guilt. This feud had probably begun during the uneasy years after the restoration of Delphic independence.³ The family of Orsilaus may have had affinities with Thebes, that of Crates with Phocis. At any rate this cleavage persisted into the fourth century. The majority of the Delphians, led by one Astyocrates (probably a kinsman

¹ *Fouilles*, III, 1, 294–5. *BCH* L 1926, pp. 14 ff.

² Aristotle, *Pol.* V, 1303, b 37. *Plut. Moral.* 825 B. Heraclides, *de reb. publ.* xxii, 2. Aelian, *V.H.* XI, 5. Cf. *Dovatour*, *Rev. Et. Gr.* xlv, p. 215.

³ For modern discussion of the date of this crisis in connection with the remains at Marmaria cf. Karo, *BCH* XXXIV, 217 ff. Dinsmoor, XXXVI, 486. Homolle, *L.*, 1, ff. G. Daux, *Fouilles*, II, 1, pp. 45 ff. I follow Homolle.

of Crates), wished to support Phocis against Thebes. Their dissension must have come to a head afresh shortly before the time when the Thebans were inflicting the fine on Phocis. For in the spring of 363 Astyocrates and at least ten other Delphians were condemned by a decree of the Amphictyons to perpetual exile, they and their descendants, while their property was confiscated. They took refuge at once in Athens, which at the time was bitterly hostile to Thebes, and were granted special privileges by the Athenian state.¹ Astyocrates was even made an Athenian citizen and honoured with the freedom of the city. Meanwhile Delphi became completely pro-Theban and conferred on that city the privilege of first consultation at the oracle (363 B.C.)² Hence when Philomelus claimed to restore the Phocian control of Delphi, he was supported by this party of exiles at Athens, eager to return under him, and had the tacit approval of the Athenian people.

Another ally for Philomelus was to be found in the bitterest enemy of Thebes, Sparta under her king Archidamus.³ The Spartans, like the Phocians, were threatened by the Thebans with Amphictyonic fines, and it was said that Archidamus was privy to Philomelus' plans before he put them into action, and had even advanced him fifteen talents towards the expenses of raising the mercenary army. This sum Philomelus was able to double out of his private resources, for he intended to face the forces of the Amphictyonic league by raising a huge army of hired soldiers. At this period Greece offered many desperate adventurers eager enough to enlist under any employer, and in Delphi and its treasures Philomelus would have a vast source of pay for his troops, if he were prepared to use it unscrupulously.

Delphi was seized by the Phocians in the early summer of 356 B.C. Their first act was to deal with the leaders of the pro-Theban party. Astyocrates and his colleagues returned with Philomelus from exile, and the Thracidae were driven in turn into perpetual banishment and their property was confiscated. The Phocians had to face an immediate war with Thebes and the Western Locrians, but this they managed successfully for that year.

¹ Ditt. *Syll.*³ 175

² D. S. XVI, xxiv

³ B. C. H. XXIII, p. 517. Ditt. *Syll.*³ 176

Philomelus attempted to justify the occupation of Delphi before the rest of Greece by reviving the Phocian claim to sovereignty over it, a tradition which he supported by the evidence of Homer. He also announced that he would respect the treasures and dedications in the temple and be accountable for them to any Greeks. This *apologia* temporarily persuaded all but Thebes and Locris to stand neutral.

In addition, Philomelus was able to reinforce his case by an utterance of the Pythia which he chose to treat as oracular.¹ After his first successes over the Boeotians and Locrians he required the prophetess to give him an answer from the tripod on the prospects of the war. Probably he had not felt it safe to raise the question till he had some successes to his credit, as one can suppose that the Pythia was the same who had been installed in office before the Phocian occupation and so would be biased against Philomelus. At any rate she still raised some objections to giving a prophecy, and when Philomelus was preparing to use force to compel her to occupy the tripod, she exclaimed in exasperation, 'You can do as you please.' This random remark—the only natural saying ever recorded of a Pythia—was fastened on by Philomelus as an inspired utterance. He published it in writing as a divine authorization for his somewhat arbitrary procedure. Such is the story as told by Diodorus, which we need not reject as a fiction.²

At last in the autumn of 355 B.C. a Sacred War was declared against Phocis by the Amphictyonic league. Thebes and most of the northern Greek states prepared to expel Philomelus by force. Sparta was friendly to Phocis and would help as much as her reduced resources and dangerous situation would let her. Athens also was pro-Phocian, at least to the extent that she was anti-Theban, but at the moment she was too much weakened by her desperate war against her own allies to consider active intervention. The aged Xenophon³ in a pamphlet, published shortly after the war began, threw out a casual suggestion that if the Athenians were to send embassies round Greece they would find general support for an alliance to restore autonomy to Delphi, while resisting the encroachment of Thebes. But

¹ D. S. XVI, xxvii, 1.

- It became the model for a later fictitious anecdote concerning Alexander the Great. Cf. *infra* p. 252.

² *de Vect.* V, 9.

no one seems to have taken up this compromise, and the rest of the Greek states remained inactively neutral¹

The details of the military action, which was conducted mostly in Phocis and Boeotia, do not concern us, and we have only slight information on the internal conditions at Delphi. As the Phocians were ultimately unsuccessful, and the campaign against them came to be represented as a crusade in defence of religion, all our traditions have become distorted, so as to show the working of avenging gods behind every turn of the action. The somewhat sensational course of the war lent itself well to this process of reconstruction and became transformed into a succession of cautionary tales, warning the credulous against the consequences of sacrilege. Once Philomelus had seized Delphi and based his military plans on the use of mercenaries, it was inevitable that he should have to use the resources of the Delphic sanctuary for the purposes of paying his troops. The initial capital with which he started did not exceed thirty talents, and the Phocian state could not provide much ready money from its limited finances. The confiscation of the property of the Thracidae and allied families would have brought in a little, if sold at once, but it is not certain that these first confiscations of Philomelus were very extensive. There remained the contents of the sanctuary. Here there must have been a good deal of ready money, including funds for reconstructing the temple, as well as the many offerings of precious metal. As for the money, Philomelus could show a good case for making use of it. If, as he claimed, the control of the sanctuary legally rested with the Phocians, he had the general custom of Greece on his side, when he diverted the contents of the Delphic treasury temporarily to military purposes. Any Greek state engaged in a serious war would feel itself justified in appropriating the contents of its temple treasuries, provided that a strict account was kept and the total sum appropriated was paid back to the gods with interest later, when the emergency had passed. However, the dedications in the temple at Delphi must be regarded as in a somewhat different position.

¹ I have accepted here the revised chronology proposed by N. G. L. Hammond, *JHS* LVII, pp. 44 ff. This involves changes in my own account of the Third Sacred War in *Greek Mercenary Soldiers*, pp. 133 ff. Also in view of these changes I must abandon the belief that Philomelus had abstained from appropriating any of the dedications. The statement to that effect, which emanates from Ephorus, must have originated in a pro-Athenian bias for Philomelus.

Whereas Athens at the final crisis of the Peloponnesian war might melt down the dedications on the Acropolis, and be justified by the fact that they were all dedications of the Athenian state or Athenian citizens, far the greater part of the precious objects at Delphi had been dedicated not by the Delphians or the Phocians, and the right to control the temple might not be held to confer the right to melt down the dedications of other states and individuals, even in time of war.

It is fairly clear from our authorities that Philomelus drew this distinction and intended to avoid the necessity of coining the dedications. No doubt he appropriated at once the treasures in money stored at Delphi. Only after the Sacred War was declared against him, he was compelled to raise the pay of his mercenaries to half as much again as the usual rate, and this reckless expenditure must have compelled him to begin the coining of sacred offerings. This drastic policy had not lasted long when in the late summer of 354 B.C. Philomelus fell with many of his soldiers in the battle of Neon. It must have seemed for the moment that the Phocian cause would collapse after this disaster. But Onomarchus, Philomelus' brother, succeeded to his post and managed to rally support, while he continued and extended the desperate recourse of melting down Apollo's treasures. This policy was developed for some eight years under him and his successors, Phayllus and Phalaecus. In the end no considerable object was left unrealized, and Delphi, once one of the marvels of Greece for its wealth and beauty, had been stripped bare. Diodorus Siculus¹ records an approximate estimate of the Delphic offerings which had been melted and coined for the mercenaries' pay. He gives a total of 10,000 talents of silver, of which 4,000 talents worth had been dedications of gold. These are evidently round figures, but if taken thus, they need not be regarded as an exaggeration. Boeckh has shown by comparisons that the sum suggested for gold is not excessive, and a general calculation of the probable expenditure on mercenaries' wages shows that the total pay of the Phocian armies must have worked out near the amount of this figure.

Onomarchus tried to counterbalance the impious use of the

¹ XVI, lvi, 6, cf. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers*, p. 139, and Boeckh, *Public Economy of Athens*, 2nd ed., London, 1842, p. 10.

dedications by a semblance of piety in other directions. The inter-state commission for rebuilding the temple, which had been meeting every spring and autumn at the time of each Pylaea, did not meet after the autumn of 356 B.C.¹ In the spring of 353, when Onomarchus' cause seemed to be thriving, the commission reassembled with a membership drawn from those states which either supported Phocis or had been coerced into recognizing it. This suggestion of activity must have served to put a better face on the Phocian treatment of Delphi. But not long afterwards, whether through growing political opposition or financial stringency, Onomarchus had to expel more than seven further families of Delphians and confiscate their property. The commission continued to meet twice yearly with dwindling membership, till its last session in the spring of 351 B.C.

The business of the oracle was evidently not completely suspended. But it must have been seriously hindered by the half-finished state of the temple and by the political and religious prejudice against the Phocians. (As late as 342 (autumn) a contractor was being paid to provide 'a shelter beside the retaining wall for those consulting the oracle', while at the same time constructional work was going on in the neighbourhood of the omphalos².) Probably, as with the rebuilding commission, those states and individuals well disposed to the Phocians were prepared still to consult the oracle, as long as the control of the sanctuary was effectually maintained. The only recorded example of a consultation is when the Athenians in 352 B.C. authorized an embassy to inquire on the question whether to leave untilled the sacred land at Eleusis.³ The method to be employed on this occasion was highly abnormal. Instead of giving a discursive reply the Pythia was merely to state a choice between alternative schemes by a kind of secret ballot, which is elaborately defined in the Attic inscription. The whole procedure was apparently designed to provide against any form of human collusion, but it also had the effect of simplifying the consultation for the Pythia.

By 351 B.C. Onomarchus and Phayllus were dead, and though

¹ Cloche, *BCH* XL, pp. 94 ff. Ditt. *Syll.* ³ 177 and 241 A = *Fouilles*, III, v, 19.

² Ditt. *Syll.* ³ 247, col. 1, l. 13, col. 2, l. 68 = *Fouilles*, III, v, 25.

³ Ditt. *Syll.* ³, 204. Cf. Didymus, XIV, 46, that the Pythia's decision was against cultivation.

the Phocians managed to maintain an uncertain resistance till 346 B.C., it must have been clear already to the remaining Greek states that Phocis was in too feeble and disunited a condition to hold out indefinitely. Even the great resources of the Delphic treasures were ultimately insufficient to support the forces required for the defence of Phocis. When the war had gone on for some seven years, Phalaecus, who was then commander, was prepared to adopt still more desperate expedients to get hold of money.¹ A Phocian, named Philo, quoted the famous lines of the *Iliad* 'Not all that the stony floor of the archer Phoebus Apollo holds within at rocky Pytho', and suggested that Homer meant there were treasures of gold and silver concealed beneath the pavement of the temple. So the soldiers set to work to dig up the neighbourhood of the sacred hearth and the tripod within the temple itself. Their impiety brought no profit and the occurrence of an earthquake scared them from the work. Philo, the author of the godless suggestion, suffered his merited penalty, we are told, but what it was in this instance our authorities do not state.

This omission is rather unusual, since our authorities, as has been noted, specialize on detailing the horrific fates of sacrilegious Phocians. The facts seem to have been as follows. Philomelus was trapped on the cliffs of Parnassus at the battle of Neon and threw himself over the precipice. Onomarchus fell in battle against Philip of Macedon, Phayllus died naturally from illness, Phalaecus, after being driven from Greece, was killed at the siege of Cydonia in Crete. But tradition amplified the horrors of these ends. It was said that Onomarchus and Phalaecus were not killed by the enemy, but by their own troops in revenge for defeat. Alternatively Onomarchus was drowned trying to escape, Phalaecus was killed by a thunderbolt—the proper end for the impious—and as Phayllus' wasting disease was not sufficiently dramatic, he was burnt in the conflagration of Apollo's temple at Abae. So at last we find that Philo Judaeus² at the beginning of the Christian era can sum up the matter by saying that there were three possible fates appointed by law for the sacrilegious, either to be thrown from a cliff, or drowned, or burnt alive, and Philomelus, Ono-

¹ D. S. XVI, lvi, 7. Strabo, IX, C 421. Aelian, *V H* VI, 9. For the 'stony floor,' cf. *infra* p. 318.

² Ap. Euseb. *P F* VIII, 392C.

marchus and Phayllus respectively distributed these penalties among themselves.

Similarly those who had shared in the plunder of Delphi were all under a curse. Archidamus, the Spartan king, who had aided Philomelus, and was said to have been well paid for his assistance, was killed on an unsuccessful campaign in Southern Italy. Wherever disasters occurred to mercenary troops in the next few years, it is recorded that they were some of the sacrilegious hirelings of Phocis, whether they fell in Lucania, Sicily, Crete, or Elis. But they had not been the only recipients of the Delphic treasures: scandal delighted in alleging that the Phocian tyrants had scattered the sacred dedications in heedless generosity to their wives and other less creditable female acquaintances. The curse went with the gift. A dancer, named Pharsalia, had received from Philomelus a crown dedicated by the Lampsacenes.¹ When she wore it during a performance in front of the temple of Apollo at Metapontum, a supernatural voice from the shrine inspired her audience with a mad frenzy, in which they snatched the crown and tore the woman in pieces. More often tradition enjoyed exploiting one particular motive—that a gift from Delphi, which had once belonged to some heroine of Greek legend, transmitted to its new owner the same fate which had befallen her more famous predecessor.² Hence those women who received the gold necklaces of Helen and of Eriphyle were supposed to have re-enacted their tragedies. The details differ strikingly in the different accounts, but the motive is the same. The recipient of Helen's necklace runs away with a foreigner, or merely sinks to become a prostitute. Eriphyle's ornament makes its owner plot death against her husband, or die by the hands of a maniac son.

All these picturesque stories are of very doubtful historicity. But they clearly go back to early sources, even to fourth-century authors, in their main lines. For the belief that Apollo had avenged himself was sedulously fostered, at first, as we may suppose, by the Delphic authorities themselves, when restored to power, and later by its intense appeal to the roman-

¹ Theopompus, frag. 240 (Oxf.), Plut. *Moral.* 397F with small disagreements on details.

² Ephorus, *F Gr H* 70 F 96. Phylarchus, *F Gr H* 81 F 70 = Parthen. *Narr. Amat.* 25. D S XVI, luv. Plut. *Moral.* 55J E.

tically superstitious side of the Greek mind. Even the rationalism, which had taken control of the practical affairs of life, had not broken this hold of the supernatural on the ordinary Greek. We can see the superstitious attitude towards the actual material of the dedications shown in the fact that after the Sacred War had ended the Opuntian Locrians collected all the coins made from the silver dedications on which they could lay hands, and melted them down to make a vase to be consecrated again to the god. The feeling that individuals might be involved in a curse from Apollo through sharing in sacrilegious gains must have been deeply ingrained also in the average Athenian mind. For a score of years after the Third Sacred War Aeschines spared no pains in trying to frighten an Athenian jury by suggesting in another connection that Demosthenes had become tainted with this same curse and was a danger to his community.¹

The converse of this proposition was also no doubt true. He who helped Apollo's cause was worthy of blessing and glory. In the Third Sacred War this person pre-eminently was Philip of Macedon. Macedon had not previously been one of the Amphictyonic states, and Philip only became engaged incidentally in the war after it had been in progress for some years. But he had defeated and killed Onomarchus, he would have ended the war in 352 B.C. but for Athenian intervention, and he actually brought it to a bloodless conclusion in 346 B.C., after Athens had been cleverly detached from the Phocian cause by the Peace of Philocrates. It was a supreme irony of history and a masterstroke of policy that Philip was acclaimed as the champion of Apollo, and not the Thebans who had borne the brunt of the war for ten years. He was able to achieve this triumph in 346 without striking a blow, because the resources of Phalaecus were exhausted and his position in Phocis was so precarious that he was willing to come to terms at once, provided he and his mercenaries were allowed to depart unhurt. They were compelled to surrender their horses and arms and the Amphictyonic league expended some of its righteous zeal in stoning and burning the armour and selling the animals.

¹ III, 114, etc. Pious feelings had no doubt been intensified in the interval by the outcome of the Fourth Sacred War.

The full weight of the Amphictyonic judgment fell on the inhabitants of Phocis. They were expelled from the temple of Delphi and the Amphictyony.¹ Those who had fled abroad were put under a curse, and the remainder were forced to break up their cities into villages of not more than fifty houses each and distant at least a furlong apart. Their land was not taken from them as forfeit to the god, but they were required to pay an annual tribute assessed at sixty talents, till they had repaid all the money taken in sacrilege. For this purpose an estimate was prepared, and it is probably from that source that Diodorus Siculus ultimately derived his figures (cf. *supra*).

The control of Delphi was given back to the Delphians. Those whom the Phocians had driven into exile were recalled, and Astyocrates and his party were once more expelled and deprived of their property. Actually this sentence of banishment did not remain perpetually in force. The sometime supporters of Phocis seem mostly to have been allowed to return gradually at various times before Alexander's great recall of all political exiles in 324 B.C. Astyocrates even acquired such influence that he was able to cause his name to be deleted subsequently from the inscribed records of the property of the banished. This reconciliation seems to have meant that the Phocian claim to Delphi had been buried at last.

Philip received much of the honours which the Phocians lost. The two seats of the *hieromnemones* at the Amphictyony which belonged to the tribe of the Phocians and had now been withdrawn from them were transferred to Philip. Philip himself took advantage of this admission to the Amphictyony to preside at the Pythian games in the late summer of 346 B.C., which thus provided a fitting celebration of his entry into Greece south of Thermopylae. To many it must have recalled Jason of Pherae and his unfulfilled ambitions of twenty-four years before. The great difference was that Macedon had never before had any rights in the Amphictyony such as Thessaly might claim to possess.²

¹ D.S. XVI, lix, 4 ff. Paus. X, iii, i ff., xxxiii, 9.

- Dem. V, *Hypothesis*, XI, 4.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PYTHIA PHILIPPIZES

SINCE the early fifth century the royal house of Macedon had certainly been reckoned Hellenes, and Philip's ancestor, Alexander I, had dedicated a golden statue of Apollo as a tithe of the booty which he captured from the Persians¹. But apart from occasional relations of this sort Macedon had possessed no influence at Delphi. After 346 B.C., however, the Amphictyony and with it Delphi itself practically lay in Philip's power. He controlled not merely the two votes of his own, but through his hold over Thessaly and Northern Greece he could also count on the double votes of the Thessalians, Delphians, Perrhaebian-Dolopes, Magnesians, Aenianes and Malians, and the single vote of Doris, while Eastern and Western Locris must have been open to pressure from him. Hence Philip could be sure of a clear majority on any issue which came before the council. This special position of Macedon is shown by the fact that the names of the Macedonian delegates in the official lists come second only to those of Thessaly, who had a traditional claim to precedence. Also the peculiar personal character of the link is shown by the fact that the *hieromnemes* are always described by the name of the king 'those from Philip', or 'those from Alexander'—in striking contrast to all the other *hieromnemes*, who are recorded under their tribes. The Hellenistic monarchy was forcing itself into one of the most ancient strongholds of Greek tradition.

This successful intrusion of Philip was resented by those who had favoured the cause of Phocis, even the Thebans can scarcely have been pleased at the turn which events had taken. In Athens there was bitter disillusionment. Whether under the influence of Philip's bribes or not, the majority of the Athenian ambassadors, who had just concluded the Peace of Philocrates, had conveyed to the Athenian people the impression that Philip's arrival south of Thermopylae would result in a settle-

¹ [Dem.] XII, 21, Cf. *supra* the oracles on Aegae, p. 65

ment of the Sacred War which would humble Thebes without seriously damaging Phocis. In their immediate revulsion the Athenians were ready for any rash step. But Demosthenes, who had been chief in putting the action of his fellow-ambassadors in an unfavourable light, had no wish to hustle Athens into an ill-considered war. He was willing for the Athenians to condemn his political opponents and express their disgust at Philip's acts by boycotting the Pythian games of 346 B.C., but he persuaded them not to go to war against the majority of the Amphictyonic league 'for the sake of the shadow of Delphi'.¹ Athens was forced to acquiesce under protest in Philip's supremacy. Demosthenes can only complain that Athens has been deprived of her *promanteia*, which Philip had received instead, that the new government in Delphi is so tyrannical that, if any one dares to mention the sacred treasures, he is hurled from the cliff, and that Philip himself, if he cannot be present at the Pythian games (i.e. in 342 B.C.), sends his slaves to conduct the celebration for him.² There does not seem to have been much behind these assertions. So far as one can judge the Phocians had come off very luckily in view of the temper of their antagonists. For the penalties which Philip had inflicted, though strict, would be reckoned very fair by the standards of his day. The majority of the Delphians were naturally delighted at their restoration, and the work of reconstructing the temple was resumed with vigour and pressed forward in the next few years.

Of Philip's relations with the oracle itself we hear little. To him the Pythia must generally have offered much less scope for political intrigue than the Amphictyony. But that he could occasionally make use of the oracle for political purposes is shown by an earlier instance. An inscription from Olynthus shows that when in 356 Philip had concluded an alliance with the Chalcidians, which he was later shamelessly to break, he had invoked the blessing of Delphi on this fallacious covenant.³ The oracle had answered that it would be 'better and fairer for the Chalcidians and Philip to become friends and allies in accordance with the agreement,' which had been submitted

¹ Dem. V, 25.

² Dem. XIX, 327, IX, 32.

³ David M. Robinson, *A Short History of Greece*, p. 163, M. Segre, *Riv. Fil.* lxiii, 497 ff.

to it, and prescribed a series of sacrifices to various deities to be performed for good luck at the conclusion of the alliance, and finally directed that thank-offerings should be sent to Apollo at Delphi. This oracular reply is only extant in a prose form. One fragment of a verse oracle to Philip is preserved in the late collections of proverbs.¹ No particular occasion is described, but it is merely stated that the Pythia gave an oracle to Philip:

'Fight with silver spears and you will conquer all things'

This was interpreted to mean that a sedulous use of bribery would make Philip master of Greece, and it was apparently current in later times as a proverb on the power of money. The story without a special context is somewhat suspicious. It neatly describes Philip's favourite method of approach, but it is on that account quite likely to be invented. At best it must take its place with Philip's aphorism that no fortress was impregnable to whose gate an ass laden with gold would be brought. Both stories are appropriate, but probably apocryphal.

Just as the Third Sacred War gave Philip his excuse to march south of Thermopylae, so the Fourth Sacred War gave him the pretext for coercing Thebes and Athens. In each case Philip took advantage of hostilities which had first begun on a religious question in dispute. In 340 B.C. the building of the temple at Delphi had progressed so far that it was possible for the Athenians to replace on the side above the columns the trophy of shields taken at Plataea, which had decorated the previous temple.² It was probably necessary to repair or reconstruct the shields considerably, but whoever was responsible did not take the favourable opportunity to modify the offensive inscription, which mentioned the Persians and Thebans together as the enemies from whom these spoils had been taken. Probably some anti-Theban group at Athens had chosen this method of making a demonstration of protest against any *rapprochement* between their own city and Thebes. The action did not pass unchallenged and a motion of censure on Athens was proposed by the representative of the Ozolian Locrians at the autumn session of the Amphictyony (340 B.C.).

¹ Suidas, s.v. *Ἀργυρεῖα*

² Aeschin. III, 115 ff.

In some way not fully explained the erection of the shields had been undertaken prematurely, and the Athenians were liable to a charge of impiety because they had failed to await the performance of some expiatory ceremony. The point seems to us a slight one, but in view of the extent to which religious disputes can become exacerbated, it is possible that Athens was really in danger of incurring a heavy fine with expulsion from the Amphictyony till it was paid. It is most unlikely that the Ozolian Locrians undertook this case on their own initiative. Either the anti-Athenian party in Thebes had induced them to take up the challenge or less probably Philip was employing the Locrians as his agents in promoting a quarrel between Athens and Thebes which would suit his plans.

At any rate, the Locrian attack was immediately countered by Aeschines, who happened to be the chief Athenian delegate available. With an apparent adroitness on which Aeschines later prided himself he met one charge of impiety by another. In a dramatic address to the Amphictyonic Assembly he pointed out that they could see from their place of meeting that the Locrians were cultivating the Crisaean plain and so bringing on themselves and those who abetted them the curse pronounced at the end of the First Sacred War. After this bomb-shell Aeschines withdrew, intimating that Athens could take no part in proceedings till this flagrant offence was purged. The assembly decided to make an immediate attack next morning on the impious occupiers of the sacred land, and when they carried out this plan with the meagre forces available in Delphi, the Locrians resisted and compelled the Amphictyonic company to flee ignominiously. The only result could be a Sacred War between the Amphictyonic league and Ozolian Locris. The assembly of the league arranged for a special meeting to be held before the usual spring session, in order to discuss the provision of military forces.

The situation had become complex and serious. Aeschines, by his unfortunate piece of cleverness, had put Athens in a dilemma. If she supported the Amphictyonic league against the Locrians, it would appear as an unfriendly act against Thebes to victimize the state that had taken up the Theban cause in the assembly. If she failed to support the Amphictyony,

there was no doubt that Philip was ready to appear as its champion, and since war had lately broken out between Athens and Macedon, he could use all the charges of impiety to strengthen his cause against the Athenians. So Demosthenes persuaded the Athenians not to send representatives to the special meeting of the League, and the Thebans also, who evidently wished to let the matter drop, did not take part in the proceedings.

Consequently the League could only muster a small force led by the Thessalians and supported by a few of the minor states. The other towns of Ozolian Locris do not appear to have backed up Amphissa, the town whose citizens had occupied the Crisaean plain. Hence the campaign was a small affair. Cossyphus, the chief Thessalian delegate and commander of the expedition, succeeded in expelling those Amphissians who were adjudged responsible, and imposed a fine on this community, but he professed himself unable to prevent the guilty Amphissians from returning or to compel payment of the fine imposed. Hence at his proposal, Philip was asked to come and support the cause of the league. Clearly this invitation was what Philip had wanted, and the proceedings of Cossyphus had been in accordance with Philip's instructions.

In the autumn of 339 Philip marched into Phocis, but instead of proceeding to Amphissa, he prepared a base at Elatea with a view to invading Attica. The only course left open to Athens was to make an alliance with Thebes against Philip on any terms and co-operate with them in repelling the Macedonian army from Boeotia and Amphissa. The religious ideals of the Fourth Sacred War tended to be forgotten in the realities of this death struggle. But the Delphic oracle consistently supported Philip against Athens, as the champion of Apollo's cause. In late September (339 B.C.), when Philip was about to intervene, the celebration of the Mysteries at Athens had been marred by an ill-omened event.¹ When engaged in the ritual of purification, which consisted in entering the sea and there cutting the throat of a young pig, one of the participants was bitten in two by a shark. A prophet, named Ameiniades, proposed that Delphi be consulted on the proper method of

¹Aeschin. III, 130, with Schol. Plut. *Dem.* xx, *Phocion*, xxviii. Cic. *de Div.* II, lvii, 118. Cf. Beloch, III², II, p. 297.

expiation, but Demosthenes resisted the proposal and, in describing the anti-Athenian attitude of Delphi, coined the phrase that 'the Pythia is philippizing'. The pious were shocked at this irreligious view of the oracle, and sceptics in later ages quoted the phrase with damaging effect, but Demosthenes won his point. What oracles already issued had justified this extreme censure we do not know.

In the course of the campaign of the winter 339-8, Athens and Thebes together occupied southern Phocis and Delphi. They produced one permanent result in that they allowed the Phocians there to reunite their villages into towns.¹ Philip on his side gave the same concession to the Phocians in the territory which he occupied, and went even further in reducing the Phocian tribute to the temple from 60 talents to 10 talents a year, made in one payment. Various changes were also made in the financial organization of the Amphictyony (spring 338).

In the summer of 338 Philip succeeded by a ruse in entering Locris. He inflicted a formal punishment on Amphissa, which was deprived of its fortifications and compelled to exile certain of its inhabitants. Then Philip turned to his more important task of defeating the citizen armies of Thebes and Athens. Chaeronea meant for Delphi as for the rest of Greece the end of the era of city states. The battle had been heralded, as Aeschines tells us, by 'dreadful oracles' from the Pythia,² but later generations quoted instead some obscure lines from the Sibylline prophecies, which foretell that the conqueror is destroyed. No doubt Delphi had supported Philip's cause with suitable ambiguities.

A further occasion for a Delphic prophecy came soon, when in July, 336, Philip was celebrating the marriage of his daughter Cleopatra and Alexander of Epirus. It was known that Philip would shortly lead a Panhellenic expedition against Persia, and an advance guard had already been sent to Asia Minor. Hence an oracle issued by Delphi on the occasion contained the appropriate line.³

'The bull has been garlanded, the end is come, the sacrificer is at hand'

¹Paus. X, iii, 3. See *C. A. H.* VI, p. 260, for a different interpretation.

²Aeschin. III, 130. *Plut. Dem.* xix.

³*D. S.* XVI, xci, 2. Paus. VIII, vii, 6.

This could conveniently be connected either with the ritual celebration of this summer or symbolically with the sacrificing of Persia by the hand of Philip. But a new meaning was given to it by the assassination of Philip. This occurred, appropriately for the prophecy, during the marriage festivities themselves, so that it was easy to identify Philip as the garlanded bull.

The prophecy appears to have produced some curious reactions. Philip was actually killed by a Macedonian, named Pausanias, who had a bitter personal grudge against the king and Attalus, the father of Philip's new wife. But many believed that the murder was prompted by Olympias, Philip's former wife, whom he had lately divorced. The question is one on which no conclusive evidence is or ever was available. All that can be said is that Olympias certainly had the motive and the character to plot such a crime, but also had many enemies who would have been ready to attribute it to her, even if she were innocent. Justin¹ in a passage expressly framed to implicate Olympias alleges that after the assassination she dedicated to Apollo the sword with which Philip had been stabbed, using, as a pseudonym, Myrtale, the name which she had borne as a little girl. This statement, coming from a later authority and without an explicit mention of Delphi, is not in itself very valuable. But elsewhere we find in some Latin authors a separate story which also connects Delphi and the sword which slew Philip. According to Valerius Maximus, Philip was warned by the Delphic oracle to protect his life from the violence of a chariot. Hence he commanded all the chariots in his realm to be unyoked, and always avoided a place in Boeotia called Harma ('chariot'). But he could not escape death from the direction foretold. For the hilt of Pausanias' sword bore a chariot engraved on it, and so he did die by the violence of a chariot.

The legend itself is a silly one. Philip who put the quadriga on his coins never had any superstitious fear of chariots. The story of the prophesied fate which is not escaped by any precautions is a favourite motive in folk-tales, but here it is possible to suggest a reason for this particular form of legend. If there was at Delphi a sword dedicated with a quadriga chased

¹ IX, vii, 17, cf. Cic. *de Fato*, iii, 5. Val. Max. I, viii, 9. Aelian, *V. H.* III, 45 (who attributes the oracle to Trophonius).

on the handle, and this sword had traditionally slain Philip, it would be typical of the temple guides to invent a story about an oracle fulfilled, whose moral could easily be pointed to the sightseer by showing the handle of the sword with its emblem. The fact that no verse version of the oracle exists suits with the supposition that the whole story had a popular origin.

I believe that a sword, with a tablet attached, recording that it was dedicated to Apollo by Myrtale, was shown to sightseers at Delphi and described as that which slew Philip. Whether it was really dedicated by Olympias cannot be determined. If Olympias did send it, I would suppose that, as she appears from other traditions to have been of a superstitious nature, she was impressed by the apparent prophecy of Philip's death in the oracle about the garlanded bull, and wished to express her gratitude to Apollo by an appropriate offering. The Delphic priests would not be likely to disavow the Pythia's foreknowledge, but might later divulge the secret of Olympias' pseudonym. The ignorant guides at some later time furbished up the story with a fictitious oracle which fitted the sword itself more conveniently.

One happy event for Delphi marked Alexander's reign. In 330 B.C. the temple was at last sufficiently completed to allow of its consecration.¹ The Third and Fourth Sacred Wars had sadly delayed its completion. An allusion in a Delphic hymn seems to imply that Apollo had grown impatient, and through the mouth of the Pythia had told the Amphictyonic council to hasten the completion of the work.² There is no sign that the dedication of the temple led to any increase in consultations of the oracle.

No Delphic oracles addressed to Alexander the Great can be classed as genuine. The vulgate tradition provides a number which illustrate well the type of apocryphal tales which soon grew up round the great conqueror. One story supports the legend that Alexander was really the son of Zeus Ammon and Olympias.³ According to it Philip saw Olympias in her bedroom with a snake stretched beside her body, and sent Chaeron

¹Cf. *Fouilles*, III, 1, 511 = *Ditt. Syll.* 296

²Philodamus of Scarpheia, (Diehl), *Anth. Lyr.* Vol II, p. 255 ll. 105 ff. For discussions of the meaning of this fragmentary stanza, cf. Vollgraff, *BCH* XLIX, p. 114. Vallois, *LV*, p. 241. The latter appears to me to be too ingenious.

³*Plut. Alex.* 111

of Megalopolis to Delphi to enquire what the sight portended. The answer was said to have been that Philip should worship and sacrifice to Zeus Ammon particularly, and that he was fated to lose the sight of the eye which he had applied to the crack of the door when he saw the god lying with his wife in the form of a snake. As a matter of historic fact Philip lost one eye in the siege of Methone a few years after Alexander's birth. But the rest of the story derives partly from the legendary connexion with Zeus Ammon, to which Alexander himself gave some support in his later years, and there has been combined with this theme the old motive that those who spy on the gods lose their power of sight.

A second story attributed to Alexander the same oracle as to Philomelus under somewhat improved circumstances.¹ Alexander, when wishing to consult the Pythia on his expedition against Persia, arrived at Delphi on one of the days inauspicious for enquiring. When the Pythia refused on the ground of traditional custom, Alexander began to drag her by force to the temple. Whereupon the Pythia overcome by his vehemence exclaimed, 'Boy, you are invincible,' and Alexander, accepting this utterance as the prophecy, said he had no need of any other. The story is obviously a fictitious doublet of the earlier incident, and reappears also in a more romantic version where it is even more absurdly attributed to the oracle of Zeus Ammon.

The only Delphic prophecy concerning a particular event in Alexander's campaign is also found in several of the vulgar versions, but not in the sound historical narrative of Arrian.² According to this story when after the battle of Arbela Alexander was attempting to force the pass of the Susan Gates into Persia, he could not surmount the opposition till a man describing himself as a Lycian volunteered to guide Alexander round by another road. The success of this detour was said to have fulfilled a Pythian prophecy that a wolf would be Alexander's guide on his road to Persia. The feeble pun between *λύκιος* and *λύκος* is eked out in one version by the further detail that the guide was dressed in a wolf-

¹Plut. *Alex.* xiv. Cf. *Anthol. Graec.* VII, 239. Ausonius, Bk. IX, dedicatio Jacoby, *F. Gr. H.* II, p. 821, a fabulous version which transfers the oracle to Zeus Ammon.

²D. S. XVII, lxxviii, 5 (without reference to the oracle). Plut. *Alex.* xxxvii. Curtius Rufus, V, iv, 10. Polyæn. *Strat.* IV, iii, 27.

skin Curtius Rufus appears to have missed the point of the pun and makes the oracle prophecy a Lycian¹

One brief allusion in Justin² implies that Alexander received an oracle which warned him against plots in Macedon. It sounds like the old folk tale motive recast Alexander leaves Macedon never to return, but meets his death abroad under some circumstances which justify the prophetic warning. But the oracle and its fulfilment have both been forgotten in our tradition. The fact that none of these oracles are even extant in what purports to be an official form is a symptom of the poverty of our tradition on the subject.

One verse oracle of the period does survive—a pathetic fragment of equivocation. Three months before the revolt of the Thebans against Alexander, which led to the destruction of their city, a spider's web as big as a coat and exhibiting in a circle an image like a rainbow was found in the temple of Demeter at Thebes.³ Delphi when consulted on the portent could do no better than announce

'This the gods reveal as a token to all mortals, but especially to the Boeotians and those who dwell around'

At this time there was no whisper of danger and the Pythia seems to have lacked inspiration. The local shrine of Ismenian Apollo did not do much better: its contribution was

'A web woven, a curse for one, a blessing for another'

When the revolt had broken out and Alexander's arrival before Thebes was imminent, the Delphians showed that they knew which side to take. For a report went out that the treasury which the Thebans had erected from Phocian spoils⁴ was seen to have blood stains on its roof. Such an ominous portent could only be taken to mean disaster for Thebes.⁵

Though no accurate record of the relations between Delphi and Alexander remains, we can be sure that he would have paid it formal respect and received from it deferential courtesy. It is stated that in his last years he followed the usual Greek

¹Cf. Radet, *Rev. Et. Anc.* XXVIII, pp. 120 ff. for the vulgar tradition that Alexander claimed to enter Tyre for the purpose of sacrificing to Heracles in accordance with a Delphic oracle. Curtius Rufus, IV, II, 3; Justin, XI, x, 10.

²XII, II, 3.

³D. S. XVII, x, 3. Paus. IX, vi, 5. Aelian, *V. H.* XII, 57.

⁴For this treasury, cf. *Fouilles*, III, III, 77.

⁵See Pseudo-Callisthenes, xxvi, for two hexameter verses said to have been delivered to the survivors promising a subsequent restoration of Thebes.

custom of dealing with sacred embassies before secular, and that his order of precedence was first those from Olympia, then Ammon, Delphi, Corinth, Epidaurus, and the rest. Similarly, Delphi was one of the six sites where, according to the memoranda published after his death, he had intended to erect a temple at the cost of 1500 talents.¹ On the side of the oracle there is preserved one verse response which may represent the Pythian Apollo's tribute to Alexander. Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian,² quotes it among three examples of pagan prophecies prescribing deification, and implies that it was given in answer to an enquiry from the Amphictyony

'Honour Zeus, most high of gods, and Athena, Trito-born, and the lord hidden in a mortal body, whom Zeus begat by blessed generation, as a helper of good rule for men—Alexander the king.'

From such a late source these verses at first sight have only weak authority. But as one of Socrates' other examples is undoubtedly authentic, it is probable that this instance too is quite genuine. In the later years of his reign, when through encouragement from Alexander his deification was approved in various city states, the Amphictyonic league may well have asked the Delphic oracle to authorize the innovation, and have received this answer.

Of the other adventurous conquerors of this period we hear even less in connection with Delphi. A typical homonymic oracle in two versions is extant concerning the death of Alexander of Epirus,³ but all the earlier authorities describe him with better probability as consulting his native shrine at Dodona, only one late author classes the oracle as Pythian. Timoleon, the conqueror of the Carthaginians in Sicily, did visit Delphi and consult the oracle before his venturesome attempt. The answer is not recorded, only an omen: when he was descending into the oracular shrine, a ribbon from one of the dedications hung above fell down encircling his head.⁴ To set out thus crowned by the god was of course auspicious, and the rest of Timoleon's career shows that he was the man to heed and make full use of omens.

¹D. S. XVII, cxxx, 4, XVIII, iv, 5.

²*Eccles. Hist.* III, 23. The third line is slightly corrupt.

³Strabo, VI, C 256. Livy, VIII, xxv, 1. Justin, XII, ii, 3. Steph. Byz. *Πανδοσία*. Suidas, s. v. *τύπος*.

⁴Plut. *Tim.* viii. In Themistius, *Orat.* XIX, 226C, we have apparently the converse of this incident—Nero stripped of his *taenia* by Apollo.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ORACLE IN THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD

WITH the death of Alexander it becomes practically impossible to write a consecutive history of the Delphic oracle. The new world of the Hellenistic monarchies held no scope for important activities of the Pythia. The chief political value of the oracle had been in the clashing interests of the little city-states where its guidance might be sought and its decisions respected. But to the rulers of vast kingdoms distributed round the coasts of the Eastern Mediterranean the word of a prophetess in a tiny *polis* of the Greek mainland was not of great moment, even when backed by the traditional sanctity of centuries. In practical matters the Hellenistic king trusted to secular advisers, and in matters of cult his state was apt to be autonomous and even nationalist, frequently finding divine guidance in the ruler himself.

The fall in the importance of the oracle is shown by the fact that in the fifty years after Alexander's death we do not hear once of the oracle being consulted on any matter of other than local importance. On the problems of the city-state, especially those of a more or less religious nature, it was still usually consulted. A couple of examples from the years just before Alexander's death show the kind of activity which might still go on unimpaired. In 332 B.C. Callippus, an Athenian, who was competing in the pentathlon at Olympia, bribed his fellow competitors to let him win.¹ The corruption was discovered, and the Eleian authorities inflicted a fine on Callippus and his colleagues. The Athenians were not satisfied at the decision, and sent Hyperides to appeal to the Eleians to remit the penalty. But the Eleians refused and the situation reached a deadlock, the Athenians obstinately determined not to pay, and were forced in consequence to submit to a ban excluding them from Olympia. Delphi intervened, apparently on its own initiative, to maintain the Eleians' authority in a matter which touched the sanctity of a religious ceremony. The Pythia

¹Paus. V, xxii, 5 ff.

refused to reply to the Athenians till they had paid up the fine to the Eleans. Athens submitted to this form of pressure, and six statues of Zeus were made out of the proceeds of the penalty, and set up in a row, appropriately just outside the entrance to the stadium at Olympia.

Similarly, Delphi was available as a court of appeal on doubtful questions touching the gods. Since 338 B.C. the Athenians had had to administer the territory of Oropus, ceded to them by Thebes, and shortly after 330 B.C. a commission of three citizens were sent to the local shrine of Amphiaras there to enquire whether or not a mountain in the newly recovered territory belonged to the god.¹ The method was to sleep the night in the temple and decide on the evidence of what the sleepers had dreamed. Later Euxenippus, one of the commission, was accused of reporting a false dream through interested motives. His advocates, one of whom was Hyperides, suggested that the right procedure for Euxenippus' opponents was to have sent to Delphi to enquire the truth of the matter from Apollo. But evidently in this instance more political methods were preferred.²

It could even happen that the Delphic oracle might be superseded by the new cult of the deified autocrat. In 307 B.C., when Demetrius Poliorcetes landed at Athens and freed the city from the dictatorship of Demetrius of Phalerum, the popular enthusiasm found expression in all sorts of honours, in which the liberator was equated with the gods. Among other proposals it was decreed on the motion of Stratocles that those sent to Demetrius or his father, Antigonus, should be called not ambassadors but *θεωποι*, the proper term for embassies sent to Delphi or other sacred sites.³ But the climax of flattery was reached in a proposal which Plutarch quotes in its original form. The Athenians had been in doubt on the question of dedicating certain shields at Delphi—perhaps the very same which had been the first occasion for the Fourth Sacred War—and Dromocleides proposed:

'With good luck, let the people have decided, that the people elect one man from the Athenians, who shall arrive at the

¹Hyperides, III, 15.

²Cf. Plut. *Phoc.* viii, for an alleged Delphic oracle of this period which sounds like a fiction.

³Plut. *Demetr.* xi and xii. Cf. *Moral.* 338A.

Saviour and after having offered an auspicious sacrifice shall ask the Saviour how in the most godly and best and speediest way the people may make a restoration of the dedications, and whatever he shall give as an oracle, that the people are to do.'

This document is just a blasphemous parody of the proper formula for consulting the Delphic oracle on a matter of ritual, and is made all the more insulting because the question at issue concerned Delphi. Demetrius Poliorcetes was also prepared to be equally unconventional in his own attitude to Delphi. In 290 B.C., during his second visit to Athens, he had intended to attend at Delphi for the Pythian games, but the Aetolians, who were hostile to him, held the passes and prevented him. Nothing daunted, Demetrius held 'Pythian' games in Athens, at which he presided in person and defended this innovation on the ground that Apollo was the ancestral god of the Athenians.¹ The gesture served no doubt to make a protest against Aetolia's invasion of the Amphictyony.

The Pythian Apollo suffered an even worse insult from a general in the service of the Ptolemies. Echecrates of Pharsalus on a visit to Delphi fell in love with the Pythia, carried her off, and seduced her.² It shows how low the reputation of the sanctuary had fallen that we hear nothing about any punishment inflicted on this sacrilegious villain. The only consequence recorded is that the Delphic authorities decided in future to appoint no woman to the post under fifty years of age, but as a relic of the earlier practice the prophetic still wore the ritual costume of a young maiden.

In general, the Hellenistic monarchs were not openly indifferent to the honour of Apollo. On the contrary some of them were conspicuously generous in bestowing gifts on the god or causing their statues to be dedicated in his precinct. But much of this activity was only inspired by a desire to use the publicity of Delphi for their own purposes. The oracle was never actually consulted on matters of general policy. Occasionally its advice might be sought on religious subjects or what passed as such.³ But when Apollo was asked to approve

¹Plut. *Demetr.* xl. ²D.S. XVI, xxvi, 6. For the identification, cf. P. W. V, 1909.

³Perhaps on one occasion Delphi was consulted about a city foundation, if the oracle recorded in Steph. Byz. s. v. *Λαοδίκεια* originated from the Pythian Apollo, and see B. C. H. LIX, 489 ff. for a verse response (very fragmentary) to Pares when consulting Delphi whether to continue to maintain their colony at Pharos (date c. 175).

the grant of rights of sanctuary to a town on account of its dedication to some deity the motive was not really religious, but political.¹ If at the request of one monarch Apollo had declared such a district inviolate, other monarchs might hesitate before infringing a right which had received a kind of international sanction.

The usual stories told in ancient literature about the relations of the Delphic oracle to Hellenistic monarchs are simply legends modelled on the classical oracles traditionally given by the Pythia to the heroes and kings of the distant past. For instance, Diodorus² records a romantic tale about the origin of Agathocles, which is compounded from a sordid version of the Oedipus legend and the stock Delphic motive of the prophecy of the coming tyrant, delivered before his birth. Carcinus of Rhegium, an exile from his native land, was living in Thermini under Carthaginian rule, when he became the lover of a local woman and got her with child. Visions by night made him uneasy on the future of the baby that was to be born. So he instructed some Carthaginian envoys setting out for Delphi to enquire of the god on the subject. The answer was that the son who was to be born would be the cause of great misfortune to the Carthaginians and all Sicily. Carcinus was so impressed that he caused the baby boy to be exposed. The usual romantic consequences follow: the child was not really left to die, and Carcinus at a latter date recognised and adopted his son in defiance of the oracle. He grew up to be Agathocles of Syracuse. The instinct which caused the storyteller to model his tale of Agathocles on those of the early tyrants was a true one, because he alone of the Hellenistic monarchs presents close analogies to the earlier type of autocrat.

Another dynasty was evidently treated with greater respect, but this time, while a verse oracle is actually extant, the story of its circumstances has been lost. Two late excerptors preserve the lines said to have been delivered by the Pythia to Attalus I.³

'Take courage, Bull's horn, you will possess the honour of kingship, you and your son's sons, but their sons no longer.'

¹Cf. *infra* p. 378.

²XIX, ii, 2 ff.

³D S XXXV, xii. Suidas, s. v. Ἀτταλος. For the address 'Bull's Horn' cf. Paus. X, xv, 3, ταύροιο διωτρεφέως φίλον υἱόν = Attalus. - a Sibylline (Erythraean) prophecy.

Evidently this was supposed to have been uttered to Attalus, when in some difficulty, and while he had little prospect of sovereignty. It foretold the descent of the kingship to the grandsons of Attalus I, but no further. This prophecy is true to the facts, but that probably means that it is simply a *vaucinium post eventum* forged to commemorate the intimate association between Delphi and the house of the Attalids. We have seen already this favourite pattern of oracle which forecasts the limits of a dynasty. In this instance the second line is lifted with only slight modification from the alleged prophecy to Cypselus. Again the legend about a Hellenistic monarch has been modelled on the traditional dealings of Delphi with the early tyrants. Attalus, like Cypselus, had been a generous benefactor to Apollo.¹

To the Pythia also was attributed a counterpart of the notorious oracle to Croesus on crossing the Halys, but on this occasion the author of the invention can be named. In his *Annales* Ennius gave fame to the story that Pyrrhus before his invasion of Italy had been greeted at Delphi with the sentence.²

'Aio te, Aeacide, Romanos vincere posse,'

which could equally be taken to mean that Pyrrhus could conquer the Romans or that the Romans could conquer him. The story found its way into popular history, but Cicero believed, probably truly, that the whole idea was an invention of Ennius, and alleged in proof that the oracle only existed in this Latin version, which could not have emanated from Delphi, and was quite unknown to Greek authors (His further assertion that in Pyrrhus' day Delphi had ceased to deliver oracles in verse is not true nor a sound reason for rejecting this one as unauthentic.) One later author attributes the prophecy to Dodona instead of Delphi, which would be historically more probable as an oracular centre for the king of Epirus to consult.³ In fact, if the oracle has any source before Ennius, it may have been Dodona, and Ennius for Roman readers may have transferred the legend to Delphi, as the most famous oracular centre of his day. It is useless, however, to discuss the

¹Cf e.g. *Fouilles*, III, 1, 432.

²Cic. *de Div.* II, lvi, 116, cf. *de Orat.* I, xlv, 199, Orosius, IV, 1, 7, Ausonius, X, 5. For Dodona, cf. Dio Cassius, frag. xl, 4.

³Cf. Ditt. *Syll.* 392 and *Chronic. Lind.* XL, for Pyrrhus' relations with Dodona.

matter further, for evidently the oracle was not delivered to Pyrrhus at Delphi, but is an invention, composed after the disastrous end of his attempt

Politically, the position of Delphi had undergone a great change in the beginning of the 3rd century.¹ The Aetolian league, hitherto an unimportant federation of backward states, had risen greatly in power, and in the years before 290 B.C. had seized Delphi. This outrage, which in earlier times would have provoked a Sacred War, passed as a mere incident in the dynastic struggles of the period. The Aetolians did not actually incorporate Delphi in their league; its internal organization remained as before. But it ceased to be completely independent in its dealings with other states, and even had an Aetolian governor with a garrison installed in it in the last years of the century. Aetolia also secured control of the Amphictyonic assembly by incorporating some of the smaller tribes into her league. Thus while Aetolia as such was never a member of the Amphictyony, her policy was dominant there for a century through such representatives as the Ozolian Locrians, Perrhaebians, Dolopes and Aenianes. Meantime, her opponents seceded from the league.

Twice our authorities record that wars against Aetolia were justified by the claim that they would rescue Delphi from her domination. In 280 B.C. Areus, the ambitious king of Sparta, rallied round him a group of city-states, which were independent of the Hellenistic monarchs, and led an invasion.² His nominal ground for action was that the Aetolians had taken forcible possession of part of the Crisaean plain, the same excuse as in the Fourth Sacred War. But after he had shipped his troops over the Corinthian Gulf, he was sharply defeated in Delphic territory. Thereafter the sacred land ceased to be a *casus belli*. It remained for many years a subject for more private boundary disputes. At last by the time of Marcus Aurelius the superstitious respect for this plain was so diminished that Pausanias³ could feel doubt on the question whether it remained unplanted because of a curse or merely because it was not suitable for growing olive trees.

¹The relations of Delphi and Aetolia and many other problems connected with this period are dealt with comprehensively by R. Flacelière, *Les Aetoliens à Delphes*, 1937.

²Justin, XXIV, 1, 1 ff. B.C.H. XXXV, p. 488.

³X, xxxvii, 5. Contrast the magnificent olive trees there at present.

In the Social War of 220 B.C. the Allies were more general in their avowed aims they included among them the intention of recovering the control of the Delphic sanctuary.¹ But actually the war ended without any material change in Aetolian dominance.

It was strange for Delphi to be subject to Aetolia, but that fate was a pleasant one compared with the awful disaster which threatened the sanctuary in 279 B.C. and was with the greatest difficulty averted. Since the days of Alexander a horde of Celtic peoples had been on migration north of the Balkans. In 280 B.C. they entered Macedon and killed the reigning king in battle. Next year they threatened to march into Greece. Most of the states north of the Peloponnese rallied to hold Thermopylae, which they did for some time with success. But Brennus, the Celts' leader, managed, like Xerxes in 480 B.C., to find a path to circumvent the pass. As one of the chief objects of the Celtic raid was plunder, he led the vanguard of his horde directly to attack Delphi.

It was a critical moment for the sanctuary, as the main body of the Greek army had scattered as soon as Brennus turned the pass, and the Aetolians, who were the only large force still in being, had to deal with the remainder of the Celtic force first, before they could relieve Delphi. Our accounts of what followed suffer from a desire to emphasize the parallelism between the attack of Xerxes and that of Brennus.² This specious similarity has led to the introduction of the same vast numbers for the Celts as are found in the conventional Greek accounts of the Persian wars, also the supernatural phenomena which enlivened the one account of the defence of Delphi reappear similarly in the other.

As before, when the sanctuary had been threatened by attack it was said that the Delphians had consulted the god on the question of flight, but had again received the assurance that he would protect his own, and that they must leave the sacred treasures as they lay.³ This time a further detail of the prophecy is preserved in the line

'The care for these things falls on me and the white maidens.'

¹Polyb. IV, xxv. 8.

²Paus. X, xxii, 12—xxiv. Justin, XXIV, vii, 1 ff. Callimachus, *Hymn.* IV, 171.

³Cic. *de Div.* I, xxvii, 81. D.S. XXII, frag. ix, 5. Val. Max. I, 1, 9. Aristides, (Jebb), Vol. I, p. 339. Suidas, s.v. *ἐμοὶ μολήσεται*.

If we can trust Justin, the oracle had gone even further than on previous occasions, and had forbidden the country folk to carry off their corn or wine.

When the Celts approached, the only forces that could be mustered to the defence of Delphi were the men of Phocis and Amphissa, a garrison of Aetolians, and such stray members of other nationalities as happened to be at the shrine. They must have numbered only a few thousands in all. The Celts were no doubt superior in numbers, but they were undisciplined and too inclined to scatter, plundering the farms of the countryside instead of concentrating on their main objective. Here Justin implies that Apollo's warning not to remove the food and drink contributed towards saving the sanctuary at the expense of this easier booty. The account of the attack itself is embellished with all the manifestations, which occurred in earlier narratives—earthquake, thunderbolts, pieces of the mountain breaking off and pulverising the enemy. The heroes were seen to take part in the action. Phylacus, the local daemon, who had fought against the Persians, was now reinforced by Neoptolemus (Pyrrhus), a person of more Hellenic repute, as well as by the lesser known Hyperochus and Laodicus.¹ Justin goes further and tells how at the crisis of the battle the priests and the prophetesses themselves in their sacred vestments approached the fighting line and shouted that the god himself had come. They had seen him, while they prayed for help, appear as a youth of more than human size and beauty leaping down into the temple through the openings of the roof and with him two armed maidens, the goddesses Athena and Artemis, from their neighbouring sanctuaries. They had heard the clang of his bow and the rattle of his armour.

The attack was beaten off, and during the night while the Celts encamped below the shrine there was a fall of snow. The Phocians took advantage of this blizzard to make an early attack on the enemy from more than one direction. The Celts could not long resist the guerilla attacks of the Greeks, who were helped by their knowledge of the country. When Brennus was wounded, his men carried him from the battle and prepared to retreat northwards, to form a junction with their main body.

¹Probably these were Hyperborean heroes, cf Gruppe, *Mythologie*, p. 107.

The retreat developed into a rout, and the Aetolians and the Greek forces rallying from different directions drove the invaders back into Macedonia. Greece had been saved from the Celtic scourge.

Such is the account of the Celtic attack on Delphi which can be compiled from our two extant narratives in Pausanias and Justin. Actually they are not easy to combine, because they agree better on the unessentials, such as the supernatural manifestations, than they do on the more important matters of fact. Moreover, it is very doubtful whether one can reach the whole truth in them simply by removing the more improbable elements. Justin and Pausanias agree in suggesting by their silence that the temple was never entered by the Celts, nor its offerings plundered. But the opposite is implied by other and earlier authorities. Diodorus Siculus,¹ whose work on this period is only available in extracts, recorded that Brennus entered the temple of Apollo, and expressed scorn that the images within were only of stone or wood. (This incident, even if it did not take place, is probably accurate in its account of the interior of the temple: the ravages of the Phocians had not been made good completely, and their indemnity had been spent mostly on the building itself, not on replacing its lost contents.) Again in Posidonius, Strabo, Livy and Dio Cassius we encounter a tradition that the Celts, who were of the same stock as the Gauls of Western Europe, had carried off spoils from the temple at Delphi. This tradition was employed in ancient times to explain why there had been a great accumulation of treasure at Toulouse (Tolosa), or why one tribe, the Scordisci, had a taboo on gold—because the stolen treasures of Delphi had brought a curse with them. The misfortunes that followed those who touched the gold are presented as similar to the mythical fates of those who partook in the booty of the Third Sacred War. It is noteworthy that Strabo, who criticizes the view that the gold at Toulouse had come from Delphi, raises a number of objections, but does not argue that the Gauls had failed to plunder the temple.

It has been shown by M. Segre² that these accounts of the

¹XXII, ix, 4. Strabo, IV, C 188. Livy, XXXVIII, xlviii. Posidonius ap. Athen. VI, 234 A. D. C. frag. lxxxviii, cf. D. S. V, xxxii, 5. Val. Max. I, 1, 9.

²*Historia*, VIII, 1929. Flacelière, op. cit. pp. 98 ff.

sack of Delphi cannot be traced back further than the 2nd century B.C., whereas an inscription¹ dating from the year after the attack refers emphatically to the saving of Delphi. The difficult problem is whether to reject the accounts of the sack as entirely fictitious, or to suppose that they had some basis in fact. It has been argued that the Delphic priests would have been inclined to make the most of their losses, if there had been any, so as to stimulate the charity of the pious. But we must allow for the fact that the Pythia had already given assurance that the god would protect his own. It seems even more likely that the priests, constrained by this prophecy, were bound to conceal the fact of any plundering, if it were small enough to conceal. It is beyond doubt that the temple was not freely pillaged, but our archaeological evidence would not prove that some of the Gallic raiders failed to force an entry into some part of the precinct and steal some sacred offerings. The general escape of the temple would have been sufficient justification for the immediate proclamation of its 'Saving'.

I take it as most probable that Brennus and his followers forced an entry into the sacred precinct on the first day, but retired to their camp outside for the night, and were driven off next day by the surprise attack of the Phocians, who had succeeded in raising reinforcements. The snowstorm is to be taken as historic and seems to provide the proper accomplishment for the prophecy of the 'White Maidens'.² But curiously some time afterwards another interpretation was officially accepted: this saw the fulfilment of the response in the maiden goddesses, Athena and Artemis, who were said to have appeared with Apollo at the height of the battle.³ The belief that Apollo had manifested himself is known to have been current within six months of the invasion. But some thirty years later this legend had been extended to include the epiphanies of the other two deities. This amplification was due, as R. Flacelière suggests, to the influence of the Aetolians who tended to appropriate for themselves the reflected glory of saving Delphi.

¹Ditt. *Syll.* 3 398. A vote of thanks from Cos replying to the official intimation of the delivery of Delphi, Spring 278.

²Earliest reference 'Limenius', *Hymn*, col II, ll 5 ff. (Diehl, *Anthol. Lyr.* D, XVIII = *Fouilles*, III, 11, 138).

³*Fouilles*, III, 1, 483. D S XXII, frag. ix, 5. Suidas s.v. *ἐμοὶ μελήσει* κατὰ Contrast Val. Max. I, 1, 9. Cic. *de Div.* I, xxxvii, 81, combines both interpretations. For this theory, see Flacelière, *op. cit.* 110 ff. and 154.

and attributed a share in the work to Artemis and Athena, their special divinities

The fact that ancient authorities provided two different interpretations of the prophecy inclines one to suppose that the response with its reference to the white maidens was genuinely issued before the attack. As the season was late autumn, it was meant to forecast that a snowfall would thwart the Celtic invasion, and the actual snow shower of the night between the two attacks seemed at first to supply enough fulfilment. Only later, when the independent legend of an epiphany of Apollo had been amplified to include Artemis and Athena, was an official attempt made to substitute them in the interpretation. This version disregarded the epithet 'white,' which had no proper significance when applied to Artemis and Athena.

Delphic inscriptions from the years that immediately followed the repulse of the Celts showed one consequence of their attack. We possess at least seven decrees from the years 275 to 271 B.C., in which rewards and honours are voted to numbers of persons who have given information leading to the recovery of sacred moneys of Apollo.¹ How these funds had gone astray is not explained in the decrees, but as much as nine talents is stated to have found its way into the hands of a single Athenian. One may put it down generally to the disturbed conditions of the time, but a more exact hypothesis would be to suppose that these moneys were the spoils of the Celtic raid. If the Celts had managed to carry off some treasures during their attack, it might have happened that in their flight the booty fell into the hands of various unscrupulous Greeks, who preferred to retain it for their own use rather than to restore it to its rightful owner, Apollo. Within the following seven years a certain number of these receivers of stolen goods may have been discovered and brought to the notice of the Amphictyony, which rewarded the informers in these decrees. This would explain the sudden appearance at this time, of a number of these cases which cannot be paralleled in the rest of our inscriptional evidence.

Whether or not the defence of Delphi had been as successful as the pious legends suggested, there can be no denying

¹Foussier, III, 1, 83, 87 (=Ditt. Syll.³ 405), 88 (=Ditt. Syll.⁴ 406), 11, 205 (=Ditt. Syll.³ 416), Ditt. Syll.³ 417, 418, Collitz, 2523

that the Aetolians made the most of the victory gained. They used the military opportunity to extend the power of their league, and through the Amphictyony the other states of Greece were informed of the triumph of Apollo. Ultimately a festival called the *Soteria*¹ was established at Delphi in honour of the saving of Greece, and other states of the Greek world were induced to found similar festivals, which celebrated the glory of the Pythian Apollo and provided a pleasing recognition of Aetolia's position as head of the Amphictyony. In fact, as R. Flacelière well points out, the Aetolians almost made a reality of that dream of Jason of Pherae, the Thebans and Philip of Macedon—to acquire a primacy of influence in Greece based on the religious prestige of the Panhellenic sanctuary of the Pythian Apollo.² The Phocians had contributed largely to the repulse of the Celts and their piety was recognised by the Aetolians who returned to them the votes in the Amphictyony which they had lost. Also at this time, if not earlier, the annual payments of the indemnity were finally remitted to the Phocians. To indicate the parallel with the Persian invasion the captured shields of the Celts were hung up on the one side of the temple of Apollo,³ balancing the Persian shields on the opposite row of metopes, and literature and art continued the tradition of comparing the victory with the rout of Xerxes or even the fall of the Titans. The event was fixed in men's minds. Polybius⁴ writing more than a hundred years later uses it as a point from which to date lesser events, and the youthful Cicero,⁵ when wishing to rouse the malice of a Roman jury against his client's prosecutors, reminds his hearers that these are Gauls of the 'tribes who once set out so far from their homes against Delphi, to plague and plunder the Pythian Apollo and the oracle of the whole world.'

From the following eighty years of Aetolian dominance Delphic responses are scarcely preserved in their authentic form at all. Most are only known from brief allusions in inscriptions dealing with religious questions. Our Roman authorities for the first time give some valuable information, but only one

¹The subject is highly controversial for a recent discussion, see Flacelière, *op. cit.* pp. 125 ff. The oracle had originally enjoined sacrifices for the delivery, *Fouilles*, III, 1, 432.

²*Op. cit.* p. 258.

³*Ibid.* *Syll.* 398. Callimachus, *Hymn.* IV, 182. Paus. X, xix, 4.

⁴I, vi, 5. II, xx, 6.

⁵*Pro Font.* xiv, 30.



A METOPE WITH TRACES OF A CELTIC SHIELD

A metope from the south side of the temple showing by the difference in its weathering the shape of a Celtic shield hung on it after 279 B.C.

Facing p. 206

response is recorded in its verse form, and it is so obscure that it may have been corrupted in transmission. The occasion was the death of Aratus of Sicyon, the famous general of the Achaean league, to whom in large measure was due the importance of that federation in the third century B.C. His career had been full of ups and downs, and many Greeks could not forgive him for allying with Macedon against Sparta in his latter years. But no failure could rob him of his unique position of leadership among his contemporaries. He died in Aegium, the federal capital (213 B.C.), and Sicyon, his native city, claimed the honour of his burial. But a difficulty arose since the Sicyonians wished to bury him as a hero in a precinct inside their city, while they had a traditional custom that no one could be buried within the walls. Delphi was asked to absolve them from this prohibition and canonize Aratus as a hero, and the Pythia complied in this oracle.¹

'Are you deliberating on a reward in perpetuity to Aratus for his saving of life, O Sicyon, by means of a funeral rite and festivities for the chieftain who has departed? Since the thing which is grievous is an impiety, whether it be in land or sky or sea.'

Sicyon owed gratitude to Aratus for rescuing it from a tyrant, in return it was now to consecrate his memory with heroic honours. The obscure second sentence does not go well with what precedes. Some lines may have dropped out. But the general meaning is that, as Aratus is now more than mortal, it would be impious for any place to be unpleasant to him: in other words, he must be buried where he pleases, and not in some place towards which he would exhibit his disapproval by supernatural manifestations. Even allowing for the obscurity of Delphic oracles, it seems likely that the original answer was fuller and more intelligible. At any rate it was taken to convey the necessary sanction. So Aratus, though often an opponent of Aetolia, was not denied the honours of a hero by Delphi.

In spite of such struggles as the Social War the Aetolians retained their control of Delphi till 190 B.C., when they lost it through the intervention, not of other Greek states, but of the Romans. To Rome it was only incidental to her overthrow of Aetolia, that the Amphictyony should return to its former

¹Plut. *Arat* lxx

independence. The oracle showed no revival but a further decline. In fact no genuine prophecy is extant from the succeeding century. But Delphi retained some importance as a great centre, at which powers from outside Greece could make contact with the city-states. Flaminius made dedications there to celebrate his freeing of Hellas,¹ Antiochus the Great when marching against the Romans, visited Delphi and offered sacrifice.² It was while King Eumenes was going up to worship at Delphi that his enemies tried to assassinate him.³ In the reign of Perseus he and his opponents in turn made use of Delphi as a centre of propaganda.⁴ Perseus chose it as one of the sites at which he put up his notices recalling the exiles, and there, after the war between Rome and Macedon had broken out, there was set up in marble a statement of the offences by which Perseus had broken the peace.⁵ Among other things he is accused of having attached to his side the same barbarians, who had formerly marched to invade Greece and to sack the temple of Apollo.⁶ Also Delphi was the place where Aemilius Paulus, the conqueror of Perseus, set up a great marble monument to commemorate his victory, tradition said that Perseus had intended the blocks to hold his own statue in gold. But even more ironic was the circumstance that Mummius, after capturing Corinth and stamping out the last vestiges of Greek freedom, also erected a monument at Delphi.⁷ For the end of Greek independence was virtually the end of the Pythian Apollo's influence in public life. The spread of Roman rule eclipsed those city states which might still consult the Pythia, and the Romans themselves, though they had enquired at Delphi in the past, had little use for it in their later history.

¹Plut. *Flamin* xii²Livy, XXXVI, xi, 5³Polyb. XXII, xviii, 4, etc⁴Polyb. XXV, iii, 2. Plut. *Aem. Paul* xxviii, xxxvi. Appian, *Mac* 19⁵See Georges Daux, *Delphes au II^e et au I^{er} siècle*, 1936, pp. 319 ff., on this subject and all others within this period, on which it provides an excellent series of discussions.⁶*Fouilles*, III, iv, 75 = *Ditt. Syll.*³ 643⁷Polyb. XXXIX, vi, 1

CHAPTER XV

THE ORACLE AND THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

ACCORDING to tradition the relations of Rome with the Delphic oracle reached from a distant past long before the Roman conquest of Greece. Some of these Roman legends are merely fabulous, but at least some foundation in fact lies behind the tales of Roman embassies to Delphi from the fourth century B.C. onwards. It is noteworthy that Delphi does not appear in the accounts of either the wanderings of Aeneas or the foundation of Rome. Ancient authors frequently refer to prophecies of Aeneas' coming to Italy, and the dignity of his landing there is enhanced by various omens which occur in fulfilment of earlier oracles. But none of these prognostications is specifically assigned to Delphi: the prophecies emanate from Dodona and Delos, as places which Aeneas touched in his travels, or else they are assigned generally to Apollo under some of his various cult titles. But no specific reply from the Pythia is mentioned in Roman tradition until the closing years of the Regal period.

From early times the Romans had one great local source of prophecy which enabled them to dispense with direct consultation of Greek oracles. Apart from their native augurs, whose function was not to foretell the future so much as to determine whether the gods were well disposed or not, the Sibylline books provided a means of prediction and a source of direction on the future. Traditionally, the manuscripts containing these Apolline oracles had been brought by the Sibyl of Cumae to Tarquinius Priscus, and since his reign they were entrusted to the safe-keeping of a special commission of priests. From behind the mythological details which surround this incident there emerges the fact that Rome in the sixth century obtained from Greek sources a set of written prophecies. The state had official control of this collection and could consult it, whether to find remedial rites, to counter some ill omen, or to forecast the outcome of some policy. The particular instances of their consultation are well evidenced in late republican times. But they usually show signs that the Sibylline books were being

employed to favour a particular policy. When a political group had decided to adopt some special measure, the oracles were made to provide a forecast that this was the only way out of the national emergency. The consultation of a local collection of prophecies must have given more opportunity for 'working the oracle' than any embassy to foreign sanctuaries would allow. Also, if the Romans wished a foreign method of prophecy, they always had available the Etruscan *haruspices* with their elaborate science combining astrology with consultation of sacrificial entrails. Hence it is not surprising that in earlier centuries with a local source of prediction and a rival foreign method at hand the Romans had little occasion to go as far afield as Delphi to seek for prophecies. When at last Delphi was incorporated in the Roman Empire, its credit had sunk with the growth of scepticism, and prophecy of any kind was only occasionally valued.

The first instance of Delphic prophecy in Roman tradition is in the reign of Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of Rome.¹

According to the conventional account he had been distressed by a ill-omened portent of a snake in his palace. Hence he sent his sons, Titus and Arruns, to Delphi to consult the oracle on the subject. They were accompanied by their cousin, Lucius Junius Brutus, who had deliberately acquired a reputation for stupidity by pretending to be half-witted: his motive was that he feared the tyrannical character of Tarquinius who had made it his policy to remove any prominent citizen who might endanger his throne. At Delphi Brutus, as a symbol of his concealed talents, presented Apollo with a wooden staff which contained a golden staff concealed within it. After Titus and Arruns had completed the task entrusted to them, they went further on their own initiative and asked the oracle which of them would become king of Rome. The answer given to the embassy was

'Young men, he among you who first shall kiss his mother will hold the highest power in Rome.'

The Tarquins took this answer literally, but Brutus guessed that Apollo alluded to the earth as the mother of all. So, as

¹ Cic. *de Rep.* II, xxiv, 44. Brutus, xiv 53. Livy, I, lvi. Zonaras VII, xi, 10 = Dio Cassius, frag. X, 9 ff. Val. Max. VII, iii, 2. Ovid, *Fasts.* II, 711 ff. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* IV, lxxix. The legend about Romulus and the Pythia (Malalas, p. 172) is not a Roman tradition.

soon as he could, he fell flat on the ground, as if by accident. His interpretation was correct, and when later he had joined in expelling the Tarquins, he was elected one of the two first consuls.

This well-known tale, like most of the others concerning the fall of the Tarquins, is unhistoric. The central motives—the stratagem of the concealed gold¹ and the ambiguous allusion to Mother Earth—are both derived from popular folk tale. The pretended stupidity of Brutus is also folk-tale, influenced in this instance by its appropriateness as providing an explanation of the *cognomen* (Brutus = 'Stupid'). Actually, Brutus himself is very much open to suspicion as unhistoric. His family does not otherwise appear in early Roman history, so that modern authorities generally agree that Brutus and all the stories in which he plays a leading part were not created till a couple of hundred years after the fall of the Tarquins.²

It would not in itself have been impossible for an embassy from Rome to have gone to Delphi in the latter half of the sixth century B.C. We have seen already that Caere, one of the Etruscan cities nearest to Rome, actually possessed a treasury there and was consulting the oracle about that date. But the story of the Tarquins' visit, when the folk tale elements are removed, contains nothing substantial. The immediate occasion of the embassy is differently given in different authorities and there is no record of the actual answer of the Pythia to the main enquiry for which the Tarquins were sent. Their mission has become simply a vehicle for conveying the various folk-tales, and is open to the obvious criticism that it need never have actually taken place. If the early Roman kings ever sent offerings or enquiries to Delphi, they have left no positive evidence in later authorities.

Roman tradition is silent on the subject of relations with Delphi till, more than a hundred and twenty years later in the beginning of the fourth century, the siege of Veii provided an occasion. The conquest of this city, the great opponent of Roman expansion to the north, was a turning point in the history of the republic, and appropriately it was adorned with

¹For the hollow staff, cf. Stobaeus, III, xxviii, 21, reproduced by Cervantes in *Don Quixote*.

²Zonaras (VII, xi, 10) gives an additional response that Arruns would fall from his kingdom 'when a dog should use a human voice'. But the method of fulfilment is not recorded.

a wealth of picturesque legends. The fall of Veii, in the conventional account, was doubly foretold.¹ When the siege had lasted for many years, the Romans were astonished by a portent—the waters of the Alban lake suddenly swelled in the midst of summer for no assignable cause. An embassy was sent to consult Delphi, and this marvel was also mentioned by a Roman centurion to a Veientine friend of his during a period of fraternization. The Veientine was a soothsayer and indicated by his comments that the secret oracles of his native city prophesied this event and that it would turn out to the safety of Veii. Whereupon the Roman took the first opportunity to kidnap the Veientine and bring him before the Roman authorities. He was ultimately induced to disclose the prediction that, while the Alban lake was full, Veii could not fall, but when its waters were drained off, so that they should not reach the sea, Veii would be taken. The authorities were suspicious of this alleged prophecy, but immediately afterwards the ambassadors returned from Delphi with an oracle which exactly confirmed the Veientine's words.²

'Roman, beware from letting the Alban waters be restrained in its lake, or flow out to the sea by its own stream. You will direct it released through the fields and quench it scattered in channels. Then with courage mount on the enemies' walls, and remember that it is by these fates which now are revealed that the victory is given to you over that city which you have been besieging for so many years. When the war is over, carry as victor a bountiful gift to my temple, and renew in their customary manner those ancestral rites whose care has been omitted.'

The Romans were duly impressed by the coincidence between the two prophecies, and proceeded to carry out the instructions. The Alban lake was drained into the plain by a subterranean tunnel and shortly afterwards the siege ended in a victory for Rome. Camillus, the Roman commander-in-chief, before the final assault had vowed a tithe of the spoils to the Pythian Apollo.³ Difficulties were raised later on the point that

¹ Cic. *de Div.* I, xlii, 100. Dion Hal. *Ant. Rom.* XII, x ff. Livy, V, xv, j ff. Plut. *Cam.* iii ff. Zonaras, VII, xx, 8. Val. Max. I, vi, j.

² The form of this response in Livy suggests that it is a prose paraphrase from a version originally composed in Latin hexameters. For a possible reconstruction, see H. W. Garrod, *The Oxford Book of Latin Verse*, No. 13.

³ D. S. XIV, xciii, 2 ff. Livy, V, xxi, 2, xxi, 10, xxviii, 2. Val. Max. I, 1, 4. Florus, I, iv, 10.

the people had not been consulted in advance of the vow. But it was held that the Roman people were bound by this religious obligation, and his quota in money was collected from each recipient of spoil. This total sum was converted into a gold mixing-bowl, which was entrusted to three ambassadors to transport with them to Delphi. But this mission was not accomplished without adventures. In the straits of Messina they were waylaid by pirates from the Lipari Islands and carried off to that haunt, where the inhabitants regularly shared out all the plunder of their privateers. But Timasitheus, the governor of Lipari, was impressed by the religious character of the ambassadors and their treasure, and persuaded his people not merely to release them, but actually to escort them safely to Delphi. After the mixing-bowl had been safely dedicated to Apollo, the ambassadors on their return to Rome reported Timasitheus' generous treatment of them, and the senate decreed him a reward and rights of hospitality.

This was the usually accepted story of the oracle concerning the Alban lake and the Roman dedication at Delphi. The mixing-bowl itself had soon disappeared, for it was melted down by Onomarchus with the other gold dedications, but the bronze base, on which it had stood, remained for centuries later in the treasury of the Massiliotes, which had no doubt been the original site of the whole dedication.¹ Probably it had an inscription to identify it: in any case it is clear that this story of Rome and Delphi is proved to have had some foundation in fact. Another piece of confirmatory evidence is the fact that the special privileges of Timasitheus were recognized a hundred and thirty-seven years after they had been conferred, when the Romans annexed the Lipari islands and continued the special position of his descendants by allowing them exemption from taxation in perpetuity.

These facts can be taken to prove that there was actually a dedication made at Delphi of a tithe from the spoils of Veii. But this much being admitted, it does not follow that the existent story of the oracle is true. Firstly, the tunnel which drained the Alban lake was not of fourth-century date: it is a piece of prehistoric engineering intended originally to increase

¹ Appian, *Italia*, 8. *Fouilles*, II, 1, p. 48 for an identification of the Massiliote treasury with the small Ionic building at Marmaria.

the area of arable land on the fertile slopes of the Alban mount, and had nothing to do with the siege of Veii, which it had antedated by several centuries. Hence the Delphic oracle and its ordained solution are both fictions connecting together as contemporaneous two events with no original connection. Secondly, the double prophecies by the Pythia and the Veientine soothsayer are suspicious duplicates of the same idea. It appears as if alternative legends, telling how the Romans were enjoined to drain the Alban lake, have become combined in one account and been made to confirm one another. This view is supported by the fact that Cicero tells the story with the Veientine's prophecy only and no mention of Delphi.¹ The two legends arose from different motives. The Veientine soothsayer is one of the features in which the tale of Veii had been modelled on that of Troy. Just as each siege lasts ten years, so also the fall of each is predicted by a citizen captured by the enemy, to whom he discloses the secret way to break his city's luck. The Veientine soothsayer is a double of Helenus.

The Delphic oracle came from another motive. The writer who invented it knew by tradition of the dedication at Delphi. Hence it was natural to suppose that the mixing-bowl was a thank-offering to the god who had revealed the fateful secret. The formation of both legends presupposes a traditional connection between the draining of the Alban lake and the fall of Veii. How this notion erroneously arose is not to be explained precisely, perhaps from association with the belief that Veii was captured through a subterranean mine.

Even the source of the gold used in making the mixing-bowl was diversely explained. The conventional version attributed it to the actual spoils. But another tradition explained certain ritual privileges conferred on the Roman matrons by supposing that, when the state needed gold to pay its vow to Apollo, they had surrendered their personal ornaments to the treasury and received these honours in recompense.² Yet another legend said that the matrons' sacrifice was made not for the tithe to Apollo, but to buy off the Gauls after their capture of Rome. These

¹I was glad to find that this analysis of the prophecies about Veii agrees closely with that of W. Hoffmann (*Philologus*, suppl. XXVII, pp. 129 ff.), but I cannot follow him in his sceptical conclusions.

²Festus, p. 138 (L). Val. Max. V, vi, 8. Plut. *Cam.* viii, *Moral.* 829 C. Zonaras, VII, xxi, 3.

divergencies only show how uncertain were the facts about this early period. The popular legends interpreted them in different ways and filled them out with fabulous circumstances and fictitious associations. The one certain event is that the Romans commemorated the siege of Veii by an important dedication of a gold mixing-bowl. They are not likely to have given this to Apollo without some previous benefit received (or taken as received) from him. So the Pythia may have forecast the fall of Veii, but if so, not in the words attributed to her by later Roman tradition. Or perhaps the instructions to dedicate a tithe to Apollo came originally from an interpretation of the Sibylline books. In any case the true explanation was forgotten at Rome and a fictitious one was later supplied at Delphi; no local tradition is known to have existed on the subject. This omission is not surprising, because up till the time when the Roman dedication was melted down Rome must have seemed a distant and not very important place. After the destruction of the bowl the stand would escape notice till the later advent of Roman visitors with their native legends about it supplied all the information which was required.

The fact that the Roman dedication was placed in the treasury of the Massiliotes correctly represents the relations between these two cities. Massilia, hard-pressed by its Carthaginian trade-rivals, depended for its existence on keeping open the coastal route down Western Italy to the straits of Messina. Hence friendly association with Rome was indispensable. At the same time Massilia as a colony was under respectful obligation to Delphi, where it maintained a treasury. Shortly after the first Roman dedication at Delphi ambassadors of Massilia, returning from a mission of conveying offerings to Apollo, called at Rome and found the city captured and burned by the Gauls.¹ They made a contribution towards the ransom required by the invaders and for this benefaction received from the Romans special grants and a treaty between the two cities negotiated on equal terms.

Rome is only recorded to have consulted Delphi once again in this century. During the Samnite War (which one is not stated by Pliny),² Apollo, evidently as a means to secure victory, prescribed that two statues should be erected in an important

¹Justin, XLIII, v, 8

²N H XXXIV, 26

place, one to the bravest and the other to the wisest of the Greeks. This advice was carried out by putting up representations of Alcibiades and Pythagoras in the Roman Forum at the angles of the space where the people assembled. The choice is presumably that made by the Romans of the day, and seems as odd to a modern scholar as it did to Pliny the Elder. The only explanation is that Pythagoras and Alcibiades were both Greeks who had left great traditions of their activities in South Italy. Hence to a fourth-century Roman they were, we may suppose, more familiar than many of the other wise and brave men of Greek history.

Again there is a lapse in our tradition until after the first Punic War, when the Romans were engaged in vigorous warfare with the Gauls of North Italy. It is said that after the victory of Claudius Marcellus they sent a golden mixing bowl from the spoils as a thank-offering to Delphi.¹ No oracle is recorded, and the gift sounds somewhat suspiciously like the dedication after Veii, but need not be rejected as a doublet.

The Second Punic War provided occasion for several famous consultations of Delphi. It was the most serious struggle in which the Romans had been engaged in all their history, and opened with a succession of disasters to Roman armies, which were a severe shock to the citizen's morale. The Senate apparently decided that a mere consultation of the Sibylline books was not enough, so Quintus Fabius Pictor was sent to consult Delphi on the proper ritual to secure victory (216 B.C.). The account of his mission is ultimately derived from Fabius himself, the earliest of the Roman historians.² The Pythia instructed him on leaving the sanctuary to offer incense and wine immediately to some deities who were specially named in the reply. Then still wearing the same garland of laurel, which he had worn when consulting the oracle and making his offerings, he was to go on board ship and not lay the garland aside till he reached Rome, where he ultimately deposited it on the altar of Apollo. He also brought back with him two written replies—a list of gods and goddesses to whom a solemn festival of supplication was to be directed in a manner prescribed, and a verse oracle, which is preserved in a Latin prose translation.

¹Plut. *Marcell.* viii

²Livy, XXIII, xi, 1 ff. Plut. *Fab. Max.* xviii. Appian, *Han.* 27. Zonaras, IX, iii. Silius Italicus, XII, 320 ff. (imaginary account)

'If you will do these things, Romans, your affairs will be better and easier. Your commonwealth will advance more in accordance with your purpose and the victory in war will rest with the Roman people To the Pythian Apollo, when your commonwealth has prospered and been preserved, send a gift from the gains which you have earned, and from the booty and its proceeds pay honour to him But keep away wanton indulgence from you.'

Fabius translated these oracles and read them in public to the Romans By a decree of the Senate the ritual instructions were put into effect

Clearly the account is authentic in every detail Delphi at this crisis in Roman affairs had no leanings towards Carthage, which is natural, as the Carthaginians never recognized the Pythian Apollo Hence the oracle was prepared to prophesy a Roman victory, but without any attempt at foretelling the particular circumstances The warning against wanton indulgence could even have been interpreted as a qualification on the prophecy The ritual prescriptions were just what the Senate wanted so as to institute festivals with a flourish, and raise the people's spirits by convincing them that the gods were once more on their side The prominence of the request for dedications after the victory is in marked contrast to the style of earlier Delphic oracles¹ Apollo's prophetess seems to have become less concerned with detailed prediction and more interested in stimulating the gratitude of the faithful

Actually the Roman victory over Carthage was long delayed. In 207 B.C. after the victory of the Metaurus ambassadors were sent to Delphi with a gold crown and some silver figures as a gift from the spoils of Hasdrubal² The embassy was successful, for it reported that its sacrifices had proved propitious and an oracle had been given them that the Romans would soon have a much greater victory than that of which they were bringing the spoils Shortly after the return of the ambassadors the Sibylline books were consulted and were found to prescribe that the Mother of the Gods (Magna Mater) should be brought to Rome

Another embassy was, therefore, sent to fetch the goddess from Asia Minor, but they were instructed first to call at

¹Cf. *infra* p. 344

²Livy, XXVIII, xlv, 12, XXIX, x, 6

Delphi for Apollo's sanction.¹ When asked what hope he portended to the ambassadors and the Roman people of accomplishing the task for which they were sent, the god replied that through king Attalus they would obtain what they sought. The oracle added the instruction that, when they brought the goddess to Rome, they must see to it that the best man in Rome welcomed her. One of the ambassadors returned with this information, while the others through king Attalus' good services received the goddess from her home in Pessinus under the visible form of a black stone. This sacred object was duly transported to Rome and welcomed with all the pomp and dignity which the state could muster. Publius Scipio Nasica, a young man of senatorial family who had not yet held a public magistracy, was awarded the signal honour of being chosen as the best citizen to welcome the goddess. The Mighty Mother, as she was called, was installed in a temple on the Palatine and received official worship. The Senate found, however, that the orgiastic practices of the new cult were so foreign to Roman notions, that they decided to select the eunuch priests of the goddess from foreigners only.

This account is the straightforward and historical narrative of Livy. It is interesting to note how in Ovid the same story is touched up for dramatic effect. According to him, the entry in the Sibylline books was so cryptic that only Delphi, when consulted, could solve the riddle. Again Attalus is made to refuse consent for the removal of the goddess till she herself in her shrine audibly announces that she wishes to go. These extravagances show how sound is Livy's narrative, yet even he may not be reproducing a quite candid account of the negotiations. The sequence of events certainly suggests that the first embassy to Delphi may have received there the hint to import this foreign cult, which was first made public at Rome after an alleged discovery in the Sibylline books. Delphi, meantime, had communicated with Attalus and received his assent in advance, which was then officially announced by Apollo to the second Roman embassy. The purpose of the arrangement from the Senate's point of view was that it provided a useful tonic to the spirits of the citizens generally, who were very

¹Livy, XXIX, xi, 5, xiv, 5 ff. Ovid, *Fasts*, IV, 255 ff. Strabo, XII, C 567. Appian, *Han* 56. Dio Cassius, frag. lvi, 64. Julian *Or* V, 159B.

depressed by the prolongation of the war. The later regulations suggest that the Senate found it had got rather more than it bargained for in the way of religious stimulus. From Delphi's point of view the affair was an effective demonstration to the world in general of the oracle's extensive respect and influence.

It is possible that Delphi had been responsible before for the importation of a foreign cult into Rome. In 293 B.C. Aesculapius had been fetched from Epidaurus under the form of a serpent and was installed in a temple on the Tiber island. The occasion was a serious outbreak of plague in Rome. According to Ovid¹ the Romans consulted Delphi first and were there instructed to fetch Aesculapius. But Valerius Maximus, our only other authority, attributes the importation simply to the directions of the Sibylline books. The instance of the Magna Mater shows that both methods might be combined at the same time, and perhaps our separate authorities may each have recorded a different one of the two sources of direction. But Ovid's rhetorical account is so full of picturesque fictions that his version is open to grave doubts. The consultation of the Pythia provided better opportunities for the story-teller than an inspection of the Sibylline books, and Ovid might have substituted the one method for the other simply to suit his purpose.²

So far the Delphic oracle had always treated the Romans with favour and encouraged them on their career of conquest. As long as Rome was only a growing power in the Western Mediterranean, struggling against Etruscans, Gauls or Carthaginians and generously acknowledging the prophecies delivered to it, Delphi could well look on her expansion with approval. But when the Second Punic War ended at last in a complete victory for Rome, the whole aspect of her foreign policy underwent a change. She began to face eastward and challenge the position of the Hellenistic monarchies, nominally on behalf of the freedom of Greece, but actually to secure her own supremacy. Some parties in the Greek city-states thought they saw in Roman intervention a means for their own advancement and at times (such as on the occasion of Flaminius' proclamation of Greek liberty) a sudden wave of pro-Roman

¹Met XV, 630 ff. Val Max I, viii, 2.

²Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults*, p. 265, accepts the Delphic version.

enthusiasm might sweep over Greece. But in general there was a strong under-current of dislike and distrust of Rome, which showed itself more frequently as the second century advanced, till Greek independence was finally crushed in 146 B.C. This new attitude to Rome is mirrored in the changed tone of the oracles attributed to Delphi.

The first is recorded by Plutarch,¹ who makes a character in one of his dialogues cite it as one of the examples of a perfect prediction.

'But whenever the race of the Trojans shall have got the upper-hand in contest with the Phoenicians, then unbelievable events will happen. The sea will shine with unquenchable fire, and after thunderclaps waterspouts upwards will rush through the wave, mingled with rocks, and it will be made firm—an island never before spoken of by men. Also weaker men by force of hand will conquer the stronger man.'

As the speaker in Plutarch's dialogue triumphantly points out, this sequence of events occurred in accordance with the prophecy. A few years after the Roman victory over Carthage (202 B.C.) a new island emerged from the sea between Thera and Therasia accompanied by a submarine earthquake, and this was followed in the same year by the defeat of Philip V of Macedon by the combined forces of Rome and Aetolia in the battle of Cynoscephalae (197 B.C.). These events are undoubtedly historic, and the first lines of the prophecy clearly refer to the end of the Second Punic War and a remarkable disturbance in the Aegean, which is known from other authorities. But only a strong power of imagination can see a clear statement concerning the defeat of Philip in the last lines of the oracle. They contain a typical Greek ambiguity in that the term 'weaker' and 'stronger' can equally well mean 'worse' and 'better'. Taken by themselves the lines are of the usual oracular pattern. When A and B occur, then will happen a reversal of the law of nature, the weak will conquer the strong. The only specific feature is the allusion to the 'weaker' in the plural and the 'stronger' in the singular. This would suit with Philip as the conquered, the Aetolians and Romans as the conquerors. But obviously it might, if need be, receive another interpretation.

Plutarch's speaker would imply that the oracle was delivered

¹ *Moral* 399C. Cf. Strabo, I, C 57. Justin, XXX, iv, I. Pliny, *N. H.* II, 202, IV, 70.

before either of the two later events foretold had occurred, but he fails entirely to describe the circumstance of its delivery, or to whom it was addressed. Without other evidence a critical examination of the oracle itself would suggest that it was composed immediately after the submarine earthquake, which it describes in detail, and before the issue between Rome and Macedon had been finally settled by the victory to which it alludes much more vaguely. The ambiguity is in the traditional manner, and suits the situation early in 197 B.C., when the war was evidently going against Philip, but it might have been unsafe before Cynoscephalae to prophesy his defeat. At the same time the use of the singular for the defeated party, would suggest him rather than his allied opponents. No doubt if the result had proved different, some reason could have been found for the opposite interpretation. Without knowing the circumstances of its publication one can well suppose that an attempt was made to suggest that the prophecy originated before the earthquake, and this view is reproduced in Plutarch. But the most significant feature is the new tone of the references to Rome. If the use of the plural means anything, Delphi reckoned on the Romans as the prospective victors, but by the choice of language did not greet the result with any approval. The Romans and Aetolians are grouped together as the victorious, but inferior side.

Much more explicitly anti-Roman are a series of oracles preserved by Phlegon, an encyclopaedic writer of Hadrian's time.¹ In a framework of historical events from the campaign against Antiochus the Great are inserted a set of hexameter prophecies, which threaten Rome with all manner of woes, if she does not retire from Greece. In some, mention is made of an avenging war from the East. The prophecies are introduced in a ridiculously incredible manner, being put into the mouths of such unlikely prophets as decapitated heads and revived corpses. One brief response is attributed to the Pythia, when she is asked to give a remedy for one of these portents of evil. In these circumstances there can be no question of treating this prophecy as an actual utterance of the Delphic oracle. But at the same time these hexameter verses must be regarded as genuine contemporary products. There is nothing in the allusions which

¹F Gr H 257 F 36

they contain, which would apply particularly to the wars of Mithridites or the Parthians—the other threatening powers of the East who later menaced Rome. Hence the right interpretation seems to be that these anti-Roman documents were actually composed by some well-wisher of Antiochus, and possibly were circulated along with their fabulous circumstances to serve on his behalf as propaganda among the superstitious. It is hard to believe that after the defeat of Antiochus at the battle of Magnesia anyone would have thought it worth his while to forge these documents. It is interesting, however, to notice that the author, whoever he was, found no incredibility in attributing to Delphi an anti-Roman prophecy. Whether he had any authority for ascribing this attitude to the Delphic authorities, we do not know, but it would not be entirely surprising if it were true of this period of Roman expansion. Until the winter of 190 B.C. Delphi was still in the Aetolian league, and evidently contained a pro-Aetolian party which must then have been anti-Roman. After the expulsion of the Aetolians from Delphi in 190 B.C. the city underwent a revulsion of feeling in favour of Rome, and instantly attempted to exploit its new independence.¹ The ups and downs of its politics in the next half-century are too involved for description and have no direct bearing on the history of the oracle. Phlegon's prophecies were probably produced by some Aetolian or pro-Aetolian Delphian in the interval between 190 (Spring) and the battle of Magnesia (189).

The extension of Roman power meant the obsolescence of the Delphic oracle on all political and public questions.² After the Second Punic War the Roman state never consulted Delphi officially again: private Romans may have occasionally enquired on their own affairs, but they are not likely to have been many. Also the other states and cities, forced into the background by Rome, had no adequate occasion for consulting the Pythia. Even the private enquiries must have declined in numbers with the dwindling population of the Greek mainland, Hellas, and Delphi with it, had begun to be a mere backwater in the Mediterranean world.

¹For a discussion and literature cf. Jacoby, *FGrH* commentary and A. J. Reinach, *BCH* XXXIV, pp. 275 ff.

²For the history of Delphi in the period, 191 to 31 B.C., see Georges Daux, *Delphes au II^e et au I^{er} siècle*, Paris, 1936.

This decline showed itself in the mismanagement of the sacred funds of Apollo.¹ About 125 B.C. thirteen Delphians laid information before the Amphictyonic council concerning some peculations, and in face of the danger which they ran from their fellow-citizens, they prudently fled to Rome and appealed to the Senate. The whole issue was taken up by the Senate, the Proconsul of Macedonia, and the Amphictyonic council. Serious defalcations were proved, but it seems that, in view of the importance of the Delphians involved, the matter was settled quietly. Those found responsible made good the losses to the treasury, but escaped any further punishment.

There were also dangers from without. Macedon had been crushed by Rome, and with its fall the northern bulwark of Greece was removed. Hence for half a century hordes of northern barbarians made occasional incursions into Greece.² These reached their climax when in 85-84 B.C. some tribes of Illyrians and Thracians, the Scordisci, Maedi, and Dardani, defeated a Roman army and overran Macedonia and North Greece. Delphi was among the cities which were sacked. Within the temple the eternal fire was put out and the hearth destroyed, while the building itself caught fire. The French excavators³ claim to detect as the chief signs of this raid places where dedications had been forcibly extracted from their positions on the temple walls. But the barbarian intrusion was evidently only brief and not completely destructive. However, the funds of the Amphictyony were so weak, that the restoration of the temple was not carried out completely till more than a century and a half later.

The old myth-making faculty reappears in the ingenious fates which are said to have befallen the impious barbarians, when they returned to their native land. The god, besides the usual rain, storms and thunderbolts, sent a plague of frogs on the Illyrians, which was followed by a pestilence, while the Celts were driven from home by persistent earthquakes. Finally, the Roman governor, Lucius Scipio, who, when

¹The evidence all comes from inscriptions. See Daux, *op. cit.* pp. 372 ff.

²For unsettled conditions, cf. *Fouilles*, III, 1, 457, kidnappers near Delphi about 100 B.C. For the Maedian raid, cf. Appian, *Illyr.* 4 ff. Plut. *Num.* ix. Euseb. *P. E.* IV, 134D, *Chronicon*, II, p. 133, ed. Schoene. Also see Daux, *op. cit.* 392 ff. The date has been much disputed.

³Courby, *Fouilles*, II, p. 116.

fighting against the Illyrians, was said to have taken a share of their consecrated booty, was supposed thus to have brought upon Rome the curse of civil war as the vengeance of Apollo

Just before the Maedian raid the treasures of Delphi were at the mercy of even more open pillage by a Roman commander ¹ Sulla, when his army in Greece was fighting the forces of Mithridates, found himself in revolt against the government in Rome and short of military funds. He proceeded to appropriate the sacred treasures of Olympia and Epidaurus and wrote to the Amphictyons, telling them that it was better to hand over the money of the god to him. For he could keep it more safely, or, after using it, repay no less than he received. Sulla's agent was a Phocian, named Caphis, who had instructions to accept the treasures by weight. But he regretted his task, and when told that the lyre of Apollo had been heard to sound in his sanctuary, he delayed taking action, till he had informed Sulla in writing of this ominous sign. Sulla's reply was cynical: he expressed surprise that Caphis was unaware that the music of the lyre was a sign of rejoicing, and not of anger. So he should go on blithely with his task, as the god was happy to be giving. Consequently, the treasures were emptied, and we are told that a huge silver mixing bowl, which Plutarch mistakenly believed to have been the only one of Croesus' dedications which had survived the Phocian sack, was now destroyed ². As it stood it was too big for the baggage animals, and it had to be broken up preparatory to its removal.

Sulla was in no position to repay his debts in coin, but as the Thebans had been engaged on the side of his opponents, he confiscated half their territory and assigned its revenues to be paid towards the sums owing to Epidaurus, Olympia and Delphi. Like most such punitive measures, it was rescinded at some later date, and we do not hear whether Delphi had received full compensation or was reimbursed from some other source. It is more likely that it remained a bad debt. Sulla was ready to make a jest of his obligations and assert that he had such a military superiority over all his foes, because the gods them-

¹Plut. *Sulla*, xii, xix. Appian, *Mith* 54, and 112. Paus IX, vii, 5. D S XXXVIII, vii.

²Cf. *BCH* XXI, p. 489, that this crater appears from the Naopoiot accounts (*Fouilles*, III, v, 63) to have been the only one of Croesus' dedications to be replaced after 346 B.C., because it was actually needed for the ritual of the Theoxenia.

selves were helping his side by generous contributions of money. At the same time he was an odd mixture of rationalism and superstition. When he needed money, no supernatural terror could keep him from seizing it. But at other times he was ready enough to find spiritual comfort in the magical powers of the gods. He used to carry into battle a little gold statue of Apollo taken from Delphi, and in a crisis he would produce it and kiss it.¹ This action need not be taken as simply meant to impress his soldiers.

It appears, too, that Apollo was not unwilling to give Sulla favourable prophecies.² Appian records an oracle in connection with a dedication which he sent to Aphrodisias in Caria. He had seen a dream in which Aphrodite armed with an axe led his hosts to victory, and had consulted an oracle to ascertain how he might reap the benefit of this auspicious vision. It was in accordance with the response that he dedicated a gold crown and an axe at this shrine of Aphrodite in Asia Minor. The prophecy had told Sulla

'Obey me, Roman. Cypris has given you great power in her care for the race of Aeneas. But do you place yearly offerings to all the immortals, and not forget the following. Send gifts to Delphi, and there is to those who ascend under snowy Taurus a place, where is a very large city of the Carians who dwell in a town named from Aphrodite: dedicate an axe to her, and you will receive copious might.'

There seems no doubt that this oracle is genuine. The dedications evidently were shown in later times, and these verses appear to be the answer to an inquiry from Sulla, in which he had described his dream and asked for the correct procedure in view of its significant nature. What oracular shrine he consulted is not stated by Appian, but the reference to Delphi contained in the answer certainly implies that it was delivered by the Pythia. Though Delphi had suffered severely at the hands of Sulla, it would not be prudent to bear him ill will. In his later years, as absolute master of Rome, he could easily have made Delphi feel his approval or displeasure. It was probably at that period that the answer was given. Appian

¹Plut. *Sulla*, xxix. Val. Max. I, ii, 3. Statius, *Silvae*, V, iii, 293. Sic non sine Apolline Sulla.

²Bell. Civ. I, 97.

records it in connection with Sulla's assumption of his title Felix (the Fortunate) after his appointment as dictator. The Greek form of this name which he chose was Ep-Aphroditus, which seemed elegantly to suggest his obligations to the goddess Aphrodite.

For Sulla's victims also Delphi had words of consolation, but rather old-fashioned and ineffectual ones. During Sulla's ruthless siege of Athens, some of the citizens fled to Delphi and asked whether at last its fate had come upon their city, and it was doomed to be desolate.¹ For answer the Pythia repeated the comforting lines which traditionally a predecessor of hers had addressed to Theseus:

'For many cities, indeed, my father has placed the bounds and the skeins of fate within your town. But make your plans, and be not too distressed at heart within, for a leather bottle will ride the waves even in a storm.'

Thus Apollo assured the Athenians again that his father Zeus had bound up the fates of other cities with their own, and that Athens would be storm-tossed, but survive. The words proved true. It is interesting to notice that Delphi, which no doubt was rarely called on for verse responses at this period, when in need might take refuge in a repetition of an earlier prophecy. Inspiration to original composition was lacking; traditional formulae were repeated.

¹Paus. I, xx, 7. Cf. Parke in *Hermathena*, XXVII, pp. 59 ff., and *infra* p. 314.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ORACLE UNDER THE ROMAN EMPERORS

AFTER Sulla's dictatorship a period of silence falls on Delphi in all public relations. The Roman conquerors who passed through Greece ignored the oracle. Caesar merely records Delphi in a list of Greek towns occupied by one of his lieutenants before Pharsalia.¹ Antony had promised to restore the temple, but failed to carry out his promise.² Augustus is not known ever to have visited the place. His only contact with it seems to have been when, after founding Nicopolis in honour of his victory of Actium, he reorganized the Delphic Amphictyony to allow his new city a place in its deliberations. He and Livia, however, honoured it with dedications.³ His immediate successors appear to have been equally unregarding.⁴ The *Pax Romana* of the Augustan age brought no revival of fame or prosperity to Delphi, as the words of Strabo,⁵ a contemporary, show

'Even the shrine,' he says, 'is quite belittled, but formerly it was honoured exceedingly. This is shown by the treasures which peoples and rulers constructed, in which they deposited consecrated money and works of the best craftsmen, also the Pythian games and the host of oracles recorded show the same fact of the past. But now the temple at Delphi is very poor in money, and of its dedications some have been removed, but the majority remain.'

Nero was the first emperor to show some interest in Delphi again. It was one of the places which he visited in his famous tour of Greece, but his purpose was not so much to honour Apollo as to receive glory at the Pythian games. He appeared in the musical contests and was declared victor. Also he was said to have consulted the oracle and received a warning to

¹*Bell. Civ.* III, lvi, 4. *BCH* XXII, p. 150, *Ditt. Syll.*³ 761.

²*Plut. Anton.* xxiii, cf. Daux, *Delphes au II^e et au I^{er} siècle*, pp. 409 ff.

³*Plut. Moral.* 385F. Syncellus, p. 307 (Dindorf).

⁴Except *Ditt. Syll.*³ 801 D, fragment of a letter from Claudius to the governor, Gallio, concerning Delphi.

⁵*IX*, C 420. Cf. Cicero, *de Div.* I, xix, 37, II, lvii, 117.

'beware of the seventy-third year.'¹ This he took to signify that he would die aged seventy-two. But after he had committed suicide, the pious saw that Apollo had indicated the danger coming from Galba, who was in his seventy-third year when he rebelled and overthrew Nero. This story, of course, is not known from evidence before the date of its alleged fulfilment. So it might be a later invention. But the prophecy is so simple that there is no need to be sceptical. The choice of the number seventy-three may have been a mere chance shot, which was sure to find some coincidence to confirm it.

Whatever the nature of the Pythia's answer, it appears to have given Nero some pleasure, for he is said to have rewarded it with a gift of 100,000 sesterces, which Galba later recovered for the Roman treasury.² But, as was typical of his volatile nature, Nero simultaneously inflicted serious injury on Delphi by removing from it some five hundred bronze statues of gods and men. They were intended to decorate his new palace, the Golden House, in Rome, and were never restored. He is also said to have confiscated the Crisaeian plain to provide allotments for his soldiers.

Later legends amplified this aspect of Nero's visit with fabulous details.³ The Pythia was supposed either to have enraged the emperor by preferring some poor man's offering to the Emperor's lavish gifts, or else to have insulted him directly by alluding to the death of Agrippina in the response

*'Nero, Orestes, Alcmaeon, all murderers of their mothers.'*⁴

In revenge Nero was said to have attempted to abolish the oracle by stopping up the cave mouth, whence the oracular vapours issued, with the bodies of slaughtered men. This grisly picture is only one of those apocryphal stories which soon grew up round Nero's memory. The alleged response of the Pythia can first be traced as a popular lampoon at Rome immediately after the death of Agrippina. Clearly it had some such vulgar

¹Suet. *Nero*, 40. For various honours paid to Nero at Delphi from the first year of his reign, cf. *BCH* XX, pp. 170 ff.

²Dio Cassius, LXII, xiv, 2. Paus. X, vii, 1. Dio Chrysostom, XXXI, 148.

³Dio Cassius, I c. [Lucian], *Nero*, 642. Sopater, *Prolegomena to Aristides*, p. 740, Dind. Themistius, *Orat* XIX, 226 C.

⁴Philostratus, *Vit Soph* I, p. 481. Sopater I c. Contrast Suet. *Nero*, 39. See Cedrenus, p. 360 B, for an unspecified oracle—As last of the sons of Aeneas a matricide will rule.¹

origin, and was only later attributed to Delphi, when it was believed that the oracle had incurred Nero's displeasure. The alleged stopping up of the cave is a fiction, founded on the prevalent superstition of the period that vapours from a chasm were the operative cause of the Pythia's prophesying.

Nero's visit to Delphi, though it robbed the sanctuary of many works of art, had one good result. It inaugurated a period of imperial patronage.¹ Titus was the first emperor to allow himself to be nominated as chief magistrate for one year. Domitian even assisted the restoration of the temple.² But it was not until Hadrian's reign that the oracle itself showed any signs of revival. Though its name appears in contemporary writers among lists of prophetic sources, these references are part of the conventional stock-in-trade of literature. Juvenal goes to the other extreme, when he groups together Delphi and Ammon as equally put to silence, but Plutarch in his essays and dialogues on Delphi shows that this view is too sweeping. The Pythia had not ceased to issue prophecies, but the practice of giving them in verse had almost lapsed, and in general a decline of all Greek oracles, even including Delphi, was admitted. Philosophers speculated on the question whether this deterioration was due to natural causes or spiritual.

However, the belief that there would be no revival of Delphi was happily refuted. In the second century A.D. the reign of Hadrian saw a return to verse oracles. The emperor himself, a great philhellene and litterateur, provided an occasion for the Pythia to answer in hexameters again. He put to the oracle the stock conundrum of literary history: where was Homer born and who were his parents? The Pythia's answer was precise.⁴

'Do you ask me of the unknown family and native land of that ambrosial Siren? By dwelling he belongs to Ithaca, and Telemachus was his father, and Epicaste, the daughter of Nestor, his mother, who bore him very omniscient among men.'

This response is doubly remarkable. The style has a euphuistic preciousness, which must be explained as the result of

¹For Titus, cf. *BCH* XVIII, p. 97, *Ditt. Syll.*³ 817. For Domitian, *BCH* VI, p. 451. For Trajan, *Ditt. Syll.*³ 825. For Hadrian, *CIL* III, 550, *Ditt. Syll.*³ 829.

²For various restorations, all of which are to be dated about this period, see *Ditt. Syll.*³ 813, 821, 823.

³*VI*, 555. Contrast e.g. Martial, IX, xli, Statius, *Thebaid*, III, 474.

⁴*Certamen Hom. et Hes.*, p. 314. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 102.

novel and strained efforts to produce verses worthy of the great occasion. Also it was most unconventional to assign to Homer a birthplace in Ithaca, and the notion that he was a grandson of Odysseus has no other place in tradition. The late scholar who incorporated this anecdote in the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod* thought that the authority both of the enquirer and his informant was sufficient to give one confidence in this solution of the ancient Homeric problem, and that it also explained satisfactorily why Homer had given such praise to Odysseus in the Epics. But generally the answer of Delphi seems to have produced no great influence on scholarship, which still preferred Chios, Ios, or Smyrna as the possible birthplaces of Homer.¹

In this period of revived activity the Pythia did not usually have political questions submitted to her. But answers to enquiries of a personal or a religious nature are recorded in such numbers as to suggest that the oracle was once more busily occupied.² This interpretation is confirmed by the Delphic inscriptions, which point to a renewed prosperity at the same time, when Herodes Atticus was restoring the Stadium and spending his money lavishly on other buildings at Delphi, as well as in other parts of Greece. But the reputation of the oracle and its god was also subjected about the same time to more criticism in contemporary literature than it had ever experienced before. Oenomaus of Gadara,³ who had suffered a great disillusionment in his enquiries at the oracle of the Clarian Apollo, visited his spleen on prophecies in general by composing a vindictive pamphlet. In this work he set out to demolish the claims to prevision made by the Apolline prophets, and showed in addition how illogical and even immoral was their picture of the workings of a divine providence. Claros had been his particular source of resentment, but most of Oenomaus' attack fell on Delphi, because its replies were much more extensively recorded in literature than those of any other shrine. Oenomaus' work has not been preserved in its original form, but Eusebius and the Christian apologists later found in him a whole armoury of quotations to use against the pagans. From

¹Cf. *infra* p. 403.

²Cf. *Fouiller*, III, 1, 215, a record of a Spartan *θεόπνομος* in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, apparently sent to consult the oracle, but on what subject is not known.

³On him, cf. Donald R. Dudley, *A History of Cynicism*, pp. 162 ff.

their extracts large parts of the pamphlet can be recovered. But it impresses more by its virulent crudity than by any great critical acumen in Oenomaus. A subtler satirist was Lucian¹ He was the sworn enemy of all humbug and sham, and while he devotes his chief attention to false philosophers and unofficial charlatans, he spares an occasional shaft for Apollo His particular objection is against the obscurity and ambiguity of Delphic prophecies

But these critics, though more vocal than ever before, were only a minority The bulk of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire believed in the power of prophets to foretell the future. The tide of rationalism which at times had risen in the Greco-Roman world was now on the ebb Superstition showed itself in many new and strange forms Delphi profited to some extent from this movement, adopting in its replies the terms of astrology and countenancing some of the oriental cults which were finding new favour in the West² But this policy savoured of mere time-serving, and could not breathe a new vitality into the archaic formularies of Greek religion

Only once more, in the turbulent period after the death of Commodus, some answers of the Pythia on political issues are recorded³ When three claimants to the post of emperor emerged, Niger, Albinus, and Septimius Severus, and the oracle was asked to decide which would prove most suitable as emperor, the answer was

'The dark one is best, the African good, the white one worst'

The two colours are puns on the names of Niger and Albinus, Severus was the African The oracle had not of course been issued in answer to any official inquiry of the Roman state at most it was given to some local governor But it is probably a genuine product of the time of uncertainty, because it was very quickly proved that Severus, and not Niger, was actually to establish his position as emperor The Pythia had been misled into supporting Niger, since as Governor of Syria he was at first the most influential claimant in the Eastern Empire. A second oracle which gave unequivocal approval to Severus was

¹E.g. *Jupp Conf* 636, *Jupp Trag* 648, 674, *Philopatris*, 591

²Cf. *infra* p. 383

³*Historia Augusta, Pescennius Niger*, viii, *Clodius Albinus*, i, where it is pointed out that Albinus tried to evade this interpretation on the ground that he also was by birth an African Cf. *Ditt Syll*² 877A, a restoration of the temple in the reign of Severus

evidently issued later to correct the impression conveyed by the first. It ran

'The blood of the white one and brave black one will be poured forth, and he who set out from a Carthaginian city will rule the empire of the world'

A more ambiguous response was taken to answer the question how long Severus would rule

'With twice ten warships he crosses the Italic sea, if one ship only can pass the main'

This was taken to portend a reign of twenty years, and this interpretation satisfied the easy chronology of ancient writers. Actually Severus only reigned eighteen years, and the allusion to the ships was evidently an impromptu piece of ambiguity which happened to find a fortuitous interpretation later.

Another line, in its Latin version at least, could be taken as a prophecy of the name adopted by Severus' successor. He was to be 'the man to whom the gods have given to have the name of Dutiful' (Pius). This title, held earlier as a family name by the Antonines, was assumed again by Caracallus, who pretended to continue their line. The Greek original of this prophecy may well have been less precise, and merely meant that the successor would be a man deserving to be called god-fearing. Some such sentiment could easily be taken in a more specific sense after Caracallus' assumption of the name Pius. Otherwise one would be forced to suppose the oracle entirely a *vaticinium post eventum*.

Delphi never gave any further oracles on political questions, so far as we know. The revival of Hadrian's reign was short-lived. Within a century of that time it appears that the oracle had again relapsed into silence, but not before the same fate had overcome its sister oracles in other Apolline sanctuaries. One hexameter response preserved by Eusebius¹ appears to have been issued at a time when only Delphi, Claros, and Branchidae were still working. It is in answer to some one who has inquired on the decline of oracular centres, and it offers no

¹ P. E. V., 204. D. Wolff, *Porphyry de Philosophia*, p. 172, ingeniously argues that it is not from an Apolline shrine such as Delphi because it is not in the first person. He attributes it to Alexander of Abonuteichus, cf. Lucian, *Pseudomantis*, 237 and 249. But the occurrence of a *ἡμετέριον* in the oracle is sufficient evidence for Apolline origin. Late responses often lack the direct style of earlier periods, e.g. that cited in *Ath. Myth.* 1893, 192.

explanation except natural causes such as earthquakes and the passage of time

In the same context Eusebius also records a response of Apollo to the men of Nicaea, which evidently emanated from Delphi, where the oracle had already ceased to function normally. The Nicaeans must have sent to inquire whether in view of the lapse of the oracle they need continue to send some traditional sacrifices to the Pythian Apollo. The answer was

'It is not possible to renew the spoken oracle at Pytho. For already made dim by length of time, it has put on itself the keys of unprophetic silence. But offer to Phoebus, as is the custom, the sacrifices prescribed by the oracle.'

This is no doubt a genuine document, which belongs to the closing years of paganism, when the practice of giving oracles at Delphi had been abandoned, but the priests were unwilling on that account to give up the worship of Apollo or forgo the perquisites which they could claim from his sacrifices. It is from this period that there arises a tradition that the spring, Castalia, echoed when Apollo spoke,¹ and late writers often refer to it in close conjunction with the oracle. As the original procedure lapsed these new legends took its place.

Thus before Christianity had been accepted by Constantine as the official religion of the empire, the oracles of paganism, including that of the Pythian Apollo, had already sunk into silence. As early as the beginning of the third century A.D. their downfall is celebrated by Clement of Alexandria,² but the tradition of their prophetic powers continued to remain as an influence in the minds of men. The Christian apologists think it worth their trouble to devote much space in their writings to refuting the idea that the oracular powers of Delphi were in any way a confirmation of pagan belief. Usually they do not suggest that the oracles were merely the products of human trickery, nor that the priest of Apollo had been self-deceived by phenomena which were not superhuman in origin. The tradition that Delphi had foretold the future was too well established for any one to explain away its successes. Particular

¹Aeneas Sophista, *ep.* xvii (Hercher, *Epistolographi*) Clemens Alex. *Protrept.* 1, 10 P. = Euseb. *P. E.* II, 61 C. Nonnus, IV, 309. Cedrenus, ed. Bekker, Vol I, p. 532.

²*Protrept.* 1 c. But Origen (*c. Celsum*, III, xxv, VII, iii) still write of the Pythia's activities in the present tense. Contrast the paraphrase in John Chrysostom (*Migne*, Lxi, p. 242), xxix, ad Cor. I, xii, 1.

prophecies were open to ridicule, and here the Christian apologists found the pagan critics of Delphi already at hand to supply them with the materials. But the general fact of Delphi remained, even if many of its particular manifestations could be discounted. So the apologists proposed the theory which in a slightly different form had already been advanced by the later pagan philosophers. The pagans had wished to account for the decline of the oracles, while assuming that Apollo himself still survived immortal, and had invented the assumption that the oracular responses did not emanate directly from the god, but were the products of some lesser deities—the *Daemones* who held an intermediate position between the gods and the human race. They were subject at long intervals to death or change. So Apollo's oracles might decline, because the local spirits who operated them had died or departed.

The Christian apologists' theory was very similar. Only for them the operating causes had been not *Daemones*, but Demons. Satan and the powers of darkness, to lead men from the belief in one true God, had adopted the guise of the different pagan deities, and had exercised their superhuman powers of prevision in foretelling the future to pagan prophets. Apollo was a devil in disguise. Hence he had at times misled his worshippers with riddling prophecies, at other times had actually given them an inkling of the future, but only for satanic ends. Also when Jesus had been born as God Incarnate, his presence on earth had banished the powers of evil from their sanctuaries. The silence of the oracles was a direct consequence of the coming of the Christ.¹

'The oracles are dumb,

No voice or hideous hum

Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.

Apollo from his shrine

Can no more divine

With hollow shriek the steep of Delphi leaving

No nightly trance or breathed spell

Inspire the pale-ey'd Priest from the prophetic cell'

This beautiful legend was invented by those who ignored or were unaware of the revival of pagan prophecy under Hadrian. But after Christianity had become officially recognized, such

¹Cf Prudentius, *Apotheosis*, 438 ff

ideas gained ground until at last it was believed that Apollo himself through the mouth of his own prophetess had admitted their truth. For instance, the story ran that Augustus shortly after the birth of Christ had consulted Delphi on the question of his successor.¹ The Pythia remained dumb, and when asked to explain her silence, answered

'A Hebrew boy bids (he who rules as god among the blessed) that I leave this house and go to Hades. Depart therefore from our halls and tell it not in the future.'

So Augustus returned to Rome, and placed on the Capitol an altar inscribed 'To the first-born God'. Thus some Christian writers were prepared to believe that the oracles were constrained to prophesy the coming of their conqueror. But the more orthodox view would not allow that any good came out of the service of demons.

Hence it was reckoned as one of the offences of Julian the Apostate that he tried to revive the oracle at Delphi. He sent there a famous doctor, named Oribasius, who was acting as imperial quaestor.² But the attempt failed, for Oribasius only brought back the answer

'Tell the king, the fairwrought hall has fallen to the ground. No longer has Phoebus a hut, nor a prophetic laurel, nor a spring that speaks. The water of speech even is quenched.'

The tone is the same as that of the oracle to the Nicaeans, only more despairing. As both replies assert that the traditional prophetic methods have fallen out of use and cannot be revived, one must suppose that these verses were elicited in some other manner. Probably they came direct from the priests themselves, if the priesthood in any form had survived till the reign of Julian.

This pathetic valediction to the apostate emperor was the last utterance of Delphi. Some writers of the fourth century still wrote with hankering admiration for the traditional oracles of the past. Julian himself frequently quotes the Pythia. So also does Libanius. Even Claudian, writing nominally as a Christian and under the emperor Honorius, refers several times to Delphi with enthusiasm. He pictures Apollo as rejoicing in a victory

¹Malalas, 31, 15. Cedrenus (ed Bekker), Vol I, p. 320. Suidas, s. v. Ἀῖγιον. The verses are somewhat corrupt. On these *Oracles Theologues*, cf. Nock, *Rev. Et. Anc.* XXX, p. 280 ff. Wolff *Porphyry de Philosophia*, pp. 183 ff. 235 ff.

²Cedrenus (ed Bekker), Vol I, p. 532. Cf. Julian, *Contra Galilaeos*, 198C.

over the Goths which will assure, that 'no barbarian drinks with defiled mouth the Castalian waters, and the streams which have foreknowledge of fate.'¹ But these sentimental tributes in literature to the memory of the Delphic oracle soon dwindled away, and followed the Pythia herself into silence.

¹Claudian, IV, 11, 5 ff, VIII, *de quarto consulatu Honorii Augusti* (A D 398), 144

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

THE ORACLE IN GREEK MYTHS

(a) *Typical Examples*

IN treating of the relations of the Delphic oracle to Greek mythology it is impossible and also irrelevant to attempt a detailed analysis of each myth or a conjectural assessment of the proportions of fact, fancy, ritual and symbol, which may be incorporated in them. Our object is to isolate as far as possible the function which the Delphic oracle is represented as performing, and to try and explain that function by grouping similar examples together. In so far as we succeed, it should be possible to show how far the Delphic oracle is used by the myth-maker simply as a specific instance of a possible source of prophecy, where for the purposes of the story any source would serve. But also in some myths the part played by Delphi will be formative, and the legend will have taken on a special character because of its association with that oracle in particular.

The Delphic oracle appears fairly frequently in the stories of Greek mythology, but if one examines the instances, in a good many of them the function of the oracle is not primarily dramatic, but aetiological. Apollo's prediction does not help the telling of a story for its own sake, but it provides a mythical reason for some historic fact which required explanation. A colony's foundation or a cult's institution has been attributed to heroic times, and has been associated with the characters of one of the great legends of Hellenic pre-history. In such a story the Delphic oracle was useful, in that it could be made to give the command which authorized the founding of the colony or the institution of the custom. We are considering these special types of aetiological legends separately, and they can here be excluded from the general treatment of Delphi in Greek mythology.

Of the remaining myths, in which the purpose of the narrative is primarily dramatic, most of those mentioning oracles can be grouped into two fairly restricted classes.¹

¹I have omitted from the following discussion some occurrences of the Delphic oracle in late romantic legends (Callimachus, *Aetia* = *Ox. Pap.* 1011, 20, Ovid, *Heroides*, XXI, 231, Hyginus, *fab. ex c.*, Dictys Cretensis, VI, 11) and in Greek comedies (Aristoph. *Vesp.* 155, *Plut.* 41, cf. Plato *Comicus ap. Athen.* X, 456A).

The first deal with the motive of human sacrifice. We cannot call these aetiological myths; for at the time when they were written down the sacrifices which they described were no longer practised. It is possible that the existence of this stock type of legend sprang originally from the actual usage of human victims. Such an institution, though quite unhellenic in feeling, was darkly remembered in historic times, and it even partly survived in a few secret or modified rites. Many Greek myths represented particular instances of human sacrifices as enjoined by the gods and put into effect or at least attempted. Either of two compelling motives is shown as driving the citizens to approve this desperate remedy for the common good. It may have been to cure a violent famine or plague which was depopulating the land, or else it was to avert a foreign invasion. This picture of primitive conditions is true enough, in so far as war, famine, and pestilence must have been the chief dangers to a community which drove them to seek a special remedy from the Pythian Apollo. For the dramatic purposes of folk memory the command to offer a human sacrifice was the most thrilling answer which the oracle could give. The victim was usually of the royal house,¹ either the king himself or more usually the king's son or daughter. A typical example of this form of offering in time of famine is provided by the story of Phrixus and Helle, which we know as reconstructed by Euripides.² Ino, their stepmother and the wife of king Athamas, produced a famine by inducing the women to roast the seed corn before planting it. Athamas sent an embassy to Delphi to ask for a remedy and Ino persuaded the ambassadors to say that the famine would cease if Phrixus (later versions add 'and Helle') were sacrificed to Zeus. In this instance the oracle is represented as not genuine, and the gods intervene to prevent the impious instructions from being put into effect. But almost certainly in an earlier form of the story the famine was heaven-sent, not artificial, and the oracle represented as a genuine response of Apollo.³

¹For a king sacrificed, cf. Oenocles in Plut. *Moral.* 294A, and in general Ephorus *F. Gr.* II 70 F. 69. For royal children, cf. in general Libanius, *Declam.* XLII, 26, with the Scholia and Aristodemus' daughter, *supra* p. 90.

²Apollodorus, I, ix, 1. Ovid, *Fast.*, III, 855 ff. Hyginus, 11. Zenob IV, 38. Schol. II VII, 86. Schol. Lycophr. 22.

³Cf. Apollodorus, III, ix, 1 for a version of the legend of Auge treated similarly.

More commonly the peril which has to be averted is foreign invasion and then the victim is usually the king's daughter:¹ also often, though not always, the sacrifice is represented as voluntary. In Attic legend we find the three instances of the daughters of Cecrops,² of Erechtheus³ and of Leos:⁴ in Thebes we have Menoeceus,⁵ a young man of royal blood

The most elaborate story on this subject is that of Codrus. The most generally recognized version of this legend told how the Dorians were about to invade Attica and consulted Delphi on their chances of taking Athens. They were told that they would succeed if they did not kill the king of Athens. Cheered at this simple precaution they invaded the country, but Cleomantis, one of the Delphians, had secretly disclosed the oracle to the Athenians. So Codrus, their king, nobly determined to assure the safety of Athens by his own death. He disguised himself as a countryman and went out as though to gather sticks. Thus unrecognized, he contrived to fall foul of some of the enemy and was killed by them. Thereupon the Athenians formally sent to ask for the body of their king to be restored for burial and the Dorians, shocked at the fulfilment of the prophecy, retired from Attica. We are told that Cleomantis, the Delphian, and his descendants were honoured with the right to dine nightly in the town hall of Athens.⁶

This legend appears to have grown up comparatively late even in the mid-fifth century Codrus was still represented by Attic vase painters as a warrior in ordinary hoplite armour. It is an ingenious combination of two motives—the voluntary victim and the king killed in disguise—and has been worked up to produce the maximum of dramatic effect. The part played

¹ Eg. Helen in Aristodemus, *FGrH* 22 F 1 on the occasion of a plague, or Macaria in Eur. *Heracleidae*, 403 ff. Paus. I, xxxii, 6. Zenob. II, 61, but this oracle is not specified as Delphic.

² Philochorus, *FHG* Vol I, p. 386, No. 14.

³ Lycurg. in *Leocr.* 98. Demaratus, *FGrH* 42 F 4. Schol. Aristid. *Panath.* p. 110. Contrast Phanodemus, *FHG* Vol I, p. 366, No. 3. Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* I, xlviii, 116, with no reference to oracle.

⁴ Paus. I, v, 2. D.S. XVII, xv, 2. Cic. *de Nat. Deor.* III, xix, 50. Aelian, *VH* XII, 28, etc.

⁵ Paus. IX, xxv, 1, a Delphic oracle. Contr. Eur. *Phoen.* 911, Apollod. III, vi, 7, Stat. *Theb.* X, 610 ff.

⁶ Pherecydes, *FGrH* 3 F 154. Hellanicus, *FGrH* 4 F 125. Plato *Symp.* 208D. Lycurg. in *Leocr.* 84 ff. Vell. Pat. I, ii, 1. Val. Max. V, vi, 1, etc., etc. Cf. P. W. s. n. A. Persson, *Die Exegeten und Delphi*, p. 41, suggests that Cleomantis provided a precedent for the banqueting of the Exegetai in the Prytaneum.

by Cleomantis and his subsequent reward are cleverly invented to make the story more convincing. In none of this type of legend is there any verse prophecy cited or any attempt to reproduce the original words of the Pythia. Provided the instructions were conveyed, the exact form did not matter. An exception is partially to be found in the story of the victims sent to Minos. Androgeos, Minos' son, had been murdered in Attica and the pollution of this crime brought a plague on the land.¹ The Pythian Apollo, when consulted for a remedy, replied

'The end of plague and famine will be, whenever you assign by lot from yourselves male and female bodies for Minos, sending them to this bright sea, as a requital for your wicked deeds. Thus the god will be appeased.'

This oracle was carried out by sending a band of youths and maidens annually to Crete for Minos to offer as victims to the Minotaur. Other versions of the legend dispensed with the oracle altogether and made the victims an annual tribute exacted by Minos. The account which employs the agency of the Pythian Apollo is somewhat more respectful to Athens, in so far as there is no implication that the victims were extorted by human force. Instead, they are a voluntary concession to the will of the gods. It may have been to further this more patriotic version that some Athenian composed the oracle which has survived. In style and vocabulary it is not likely to be older than the end of the fifth century B.C. It is interesting to notice that no figure for the number of victims sent is specified. This was a much disputed question among ancient authorities. In any case the story is more aetiological in character than most of those which we have been considering, for the sending of the victims was supposed to be commemorated annually in the dispatch of a sacred vessel from Athens to Delos and back.²

The other chief subject for mythological oracles was marriage and children. Here no doubt legend mirrored everyday fact. The ordinary enquirer at Delphi in historic times frequently wished to know what were his prospects of having children, what their fate would be, and what marriage would be

¹Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.* V. 208 C. Cf. *Marmor Parium*, *F.G.H.* 239 F. A. 19.

²For an unusual motive in sacrifice, cf. the offering to Phobos of Antiope, his wife, by Theseus in accordance with an Apolline oracle. *Plut. Thes.* xxvii. *Hygin. Fab.* cxxli.

best for his daughters. If the myths convey anything like a true impression of the Pythian Apollo's usual answer, the would-be father must frequently have met with bitter discouragement. For the stock motive in such legends is that the gods will grant a son or grandson, but he will cause the death of the enquirer. This theme was dramatically most effective. The idea appealed to the Greek moralist, that when the gods granted an urgent prayer, the answer might not prove to be the blessing which was expected. Also the efforts of the enquirer to evade the fate foretold gave a fine opening for ironical treatment. The more he tries to escape his doom, the more he unconsciously aids its fulfilment.

The classic example of this motive is in the story of Laius. In its simplest extant form, Laius consulted Delphi concerning his chances of having a son and was warned that if he did the son would kill him.¹ Later Oedipus was born, and in spite of being exposed as an infant survived to fulfil the prophecy. The oracle to Laius is extant in several different versions none very primitive. The most often quoted² runs.

'Laius, son of Labdacus, you ask for a happy race of sons. I will give you a dear son. Yet it is fated that by the hands of your son you leave the light. For thus Zeus, the son of Cronos, has willed, persuaded by the hateful curses of Pelops, whose dear son you stole. He prayed all these things upon you.'

This oracle connects the fate of Laius with an earlier offence on his part. He had once carried off Chrysippus, the son of Pelops, and incurred his father's curse with this effect. This explanation was designed to cover what is the chief objection to the story of Laius. Taken by itself, it seems very unfair to Laius that he should have been selected by fate to beget a son who would murder him. Hence the hypothesis that this destiny was a penalty for a previous crime makes a reasonable justification for the legend, and would fit well with a handling of the story on a large scale. The style of this version is good and in

¹Pind. *Ol.* II, 38. Aesch. *Sept.* 800. Soph. *O.T.* esp. 711 ff. Apollod. III, v. 7. Nicolaus of Damascus, *FGrH* 90 F 8. Hygin. lxxvi, lxxvii. Paus. IX, v. 10. D.S. IV, lxxv, 1, etc.

²Argumentum, Soph. *O.T.* Argumentum, Eur. *Phoen.* *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 67. On the whole subject see Carl Robert, *Oedipus*. In this oracle he suggests that the first three lines only are the original version, and the other lines conveying the dramatic motive were added later. Cf. Aesch. *Sept.* 745 ff. and the fact that this shorter version only occurs in the *Anthology*.

the epic manner, but other evidence shows that this dramatic motive was invented by Euripides towards the end of the fifth century. Another hexameter version is only represented by a simple line

*'Laius, son of Labdacus, famous among all men.'*¹

So it is impossible to guess how the motive was handled in it. The oracle was also most often quoted in two trimeters which were simply borrowed from the prologue to Euripides' *Phoenissae* —

*'Do not sow the furrow of children in despite of the gods. For if you beget a child, he that is born will slay you, and all your household will make its way through blood.'*²

Here the justification for Laius' fate is introduced in quite a different way. Apollo is represented, not as giving Laius offspring, but as warning him in advance against procreation. His death at the hands of Oedipus becomes a penalty for his own disregard of the divine warning. This account was the most usual one in ancient literature and lent itself specially well to tragic treatment. A variation on this theme is preserved by Dio Chrysostom.³ According to him Laius had been deceived by an ambiguity in the oracle. The Pythian Apollo told him not to beget a son or having begot one to expose him. Laius took this to mean that, once a son was born to him, he must expose him, but the god had meant the opposite, that, if born, the son must not be exposed. Thus Laius' fate is made a consequence of the kind of ambiguity which popular tradition attributed to Delphi.

In the legend of Laius the motive of the father killed by his son later acquired special intensity from the fact that Oedipus is represented as trying on his part to avoid the parricide. For when he reached manhood and found out that his supposed parents in Corinth were not his true progenitors, he went to Delphi to enquire after them, and was warned that he would slay his father, whose identity was not further disclosed to him. There is no attempt to reproduce the exact words of this res-

¹Mnaseas, *On oracles* (FHG, Vol III, p. 157, No. 47) in the Scholia to Pind. *O.* II, 70.

²Eur. *Phoenissae*, 17-20. Lucian *Jupp. Confut.* 636. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E.* VI, 258 A. Alexander Aphrodisiensis, *de fato* (*Suppl. Aristot.* II, 2, p. 202), xxxi. Zenob. II, 68, has a conflated version of this and the preceding response.

³X, 24.

ponse, and accounts differ whether the Pythian Apollo had prophesied incest as well as parricide or not. This aspect was stressed by Sophocles in his *Oedipus Tyrannus* where it actually is mentioned first.

The legend of Oedipus which originated in a folk-tale without much local reference was ultimately modified, so that all the features were adjusted to the part played by Delphi. Hence the divergent accounts which placed the scene of Laius' murder at random were superseded by the version which made Laius perish on the Cloven Way between Delphi and Thebes. Oedipus was supposed to be departing after consulting Apollo, and Laius by a piece of dramatic irony to be approaching in order to enquire whether his son was alive or dead.

In another legend a father brought about his own death through his son's agency, because he begat him elsewhere than the Pythia prescribed. Aegeus, king of Athens, after having remained childless for long consulted the oracle and was advised ¹

'Best of the folk, do not loose the projecting end of the leathern bottle, until you reach the citadel of Athens'

Superficially, this advice meant that Aegeus must not refresh himself with wine till he returned home. But Aegeus failed to understand the indelicate ambiguity, by which he was warned to remain continent till he reached Athens again. According to the legend he was puzzled by the irrelevance of the advice and visited Pittheus, king of Troezen, on his return journey, and his host, understanding the oracle, thwarted the divine warning by making his guest drunk and bedding him with his daughter, Aethra. Theseus was born of this union and Aegeus' death was ultimately caused by Theseus' remissness. For when his ship returned from Crete still carrying its black sails, Aegeus committed suicide believing his son to be dead.

This fantastic legend of Theseus' begetting was evidently produced to explain why the Athenians regarded Theseus as a hero of their royal house, while admitting that he was not born in Attica, but in Troezen. The oracle provided an ingenious reason for Aegeus' absence from Attica in quest of children. In one way it did not make a plausible story or allow of being

¹Eur. *Medea*, 679 ff. with Schol. *Suppl.* 6. Apollodorus, III, xv. 6. Plut. *Theseus*, III, 5. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 150. Schol. Lycophr. 494.

adjusted to Delphi as the source of prophecy in the manner of Larus' legend Troezen lay far from the ordinary route between Delphi and Athens. This difficulty was evidently felt by ancient authors, who usually explained that Aegeus had deliberately sought out Pittheus because he was reputed to be expert at the interpreting of dark prophecies.¹

The indelicacy of the oracle suggests that it is derived from some popular source. This element gave a stimulus to its preservation in folk-memory. Another thread in the story is the notion that the god's answer to one's question comes in some practical form immediately after the enquiry. This motive is a favourite in many Delphic legends. With this particular type of myth we find it in the story of Xuthus and Ion as given in Euripides' play *There*. Xuthus enquires for a son at Delphi and is told that the first person whom he meets on leaving the shrine is his.² This proves to be Ion, but in this instance the prophecy is in the nature of a deception. For Ion is the son of Xuthus' wife, Creusa, by Apollo.³

The only myth of an entirely happy prophecy about begetting children concerned Trophonius and Agamedes, the legendary builders of Apollo's temple at Delphi. According to this story their father, Erginus, king of Orchomenus, was so distracted with foreign wars that he postponed marrying until he was in old age. Then he consulted the Pythia on the prospects of his having children. The answer was:⁴

'Erginus, son of Clymenus, the son of Presbo, you have come late seeking offspring, but still even yet put a new tip on your old oxgoad.'

Erginus correctly took this as a rather indelicate suggestion that, if he selected a young wife, he would still have children, and Trophonius and Agamedes were duly born of the union. Some ancient authorities, however, believed that Trophonius had been the son of Apollo himself.

A variant of the theme of the father who enquires about his

¹Neophon in the Schol. to Eur. *Med* 666 had made Aegeus come first to Corinth to consult Medea.

²Cf. *Ion*, 661, 802 and 811, for implied derivations of his name from *ion* ('going').

³Cf. Aristotle ap. Et. Magn. s.v. *Ἀρκείσιος*, Heraclides, *de reb. publ.* xxxviii, 1 for a legend about Cephalus enquiring for children, and Hyginus, *fab.* lxxviii, 8, lxxxvii, Seneca, *Agam.* 294, Servius, *Aen.* XI, 262, Schol. Stat. *Theb.* I, 694, IV, 306 for a legend about Thyestes.

⁴Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.* V, 225C. Paus. IX, xxxvii. *Ox. Pap.* 841. Plut. *Moral.* 784B.

children is found in the father who already has an only daughter and enquires about further children. Here again the conventional motive is that the enquirer is told that the child born to his daughter will cause his death. For instance, Acrisius is told that a male child will be born to his daughter, Danae, who will slay him, and his efforts to prevent the fulfilment of the prophecy by shutting her in a brazen tower or setting her afloat with her child in a wooden ark all prove unavailing.¹ Again, Sophocles wrote a lost tragedy, in which the motive was treated rather in the manner of the Oedipus legend.² Aleos, king of Tegea, is told by the Pythia that his daughter, Auge, will bear a son who will kill his uncles, Aleos' sons. Aleos first tries to prevent this result by consecrating his daughter as a priestess to Athena, and after she bears a child, Telephus, he causes the infant to be exposed and the mother to be sent to her death. But both these plans miscarry and ultimately Telephus, grown to manhood, slays his uncles in a quarrel. Telephus, like Oedipus, had consulted Delphi on his parentage and like Orestes and Alcmaeon he was also instructed by³ the oracle to go abroad to be purified of his blood guilt.

Very similar in motive is the story that Oenomaus had received a prophecy that he would die as soon as his daughter, Hippodameia, was married, and on this account he instituted the contest with the suitors who came for her hand.⁴ The oracular warning that some happening would be accompanied with a fatal result could be made a convenient reason in a legend for the institution of some ordeal to prevent the happening. Here it is Oenomaus' chariot race established to prevent Hippodameia's marriage but we also find it in Atalanta's foot race,⁵ or the contest of Jason and the brazen bulls.⁶ Most of these examples are sophisticated inventions of classical periods when oracles were more intelligible as motives than the unexplained happenings of primitive sagas. One can also trace this type of oracle in a similar form in the primitive story of

¹Pherecydes, *F Gr H* 3 F 10. Eur frag 1117 (Nauck) with an oracle in iambs. Apollodorus, II, iv, 1. Zenob I, 41.

²Alcidamas, *Ulysses*, 4.

³Schol. Dem. XVIII, 248. Cf. infra p. 321. He was required to remain silent till he was purified cf. Robert *Heldensage*, p. 1146.

⁴D. S. IV, lxxviii, 2. Accius, frag. 6 v. 502 R.

⁵Ovid, *Met.* X, 564; Schol. Ap. Rhod. III, 594 and 605.

⁶Herodorus, *F Gr H* 31 i 9.

Jason's original mission. Pelias had received an oracle at Delphi, as recorded by Pindar, that he should be particularly on his guard against a man with a single sandal.¹ This supplemented a prophecy that he should die by one of his kinsmen (the family of Aeolus). When Jason arrived in Iolcus, after losing one sandal in the river Anaurus, Pelias contrived to postpone the peril by sending him on the dangerous quest of the Golden Fleece. In this kind of legend the prophesied doom can always be postponed, but is never ultimately evaded, and on Jason's return, Pelias by Medea's machinations dies at his own daughters' hands.

Finally, a conventional motive in legends was that the man who was guilty of killing a kinsman should seek purification at Delphi. This does not appear to have been a very primitive idea, for in Homer there is no trace of the theory that the shedding of human blood in itself brings a stain of guiltiness which can only be removed by the correct purificatory rites. The classic example was Orestes. In the *Odyssey*, where he is mentioned several times, it is assumed that he was bound in duty to demand blood for blood even from his mother, Clytemnestra, and no oracle is given to encourage him. This was doubtless the primitive version dating from the times when a blood-feud was recognized as an institution. In classical times the killing of Clytemnestra was seen as a moral and religious problem. The action of Orestes could only be accounted for on the supposition that he had received divine instructions to slay his mother. Hence the usual version of the legend, that Orestes consulted the Delphic oracle before the deed, and was advised to kill Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, her lover.² Aeschylus went even further, and represented the Pythian Apollo as enjoining matricide with threats of punishment to Orestes, if he failed to carry out his instructions. Curiously, no ancient author gives anything which purports to be the original words of the oracular response. Aeschylus and Euripides in their handling of the subject exploit to the full its possibilities for long tension and ultimate reconciliation. Orestes is made to suffer from the pursuit of visible Furies, or from his own attacks of insanity,

¹Pind. *Pyth.* IV, 1, etc. Pherecydes, *FGH* 3 F 105. Apollodorus, I, ix, 16.

²Aesch. *Choe.* passim. Soph. *El.* 32, etc. Eur. *El.* 399 etc., *I.T.* 711, *Orestes*, 162, etc. Apollodorus, *Ept.* VI, 24.

and many appeals and reproaches are addressed to Apollo for the sufferings which his servant endures after obeying his commands. Then the conclusion of the play shows a formal reconciliation when the Furies are appeased or the insanity is cured. Euripides in his treatments of the theme suggests that he is not satisfied with the conventional view that Apollo was right in his command to slay Clytemnestra; later moralists, such as Dio Chrysostom,¹ reject utterly the idea that the god could ever have given such orders.

In the Aeschylean version of the story Apollo not only commanded Orestes to do the deed, but also purified him afterwards by a ceremony which included sprinkling with the blood of a sacrificial pig. This ritual probably explains Delphi's intrusion into the legend. More than one place in Greece, possessed of a method of purifying from blood-guilt, claimed to have been the scene of Orestes' atonement. For through the influence of the epic his was regarded as the typical case of murder of kindred pardoned by the gods. Hence it was cited as the precedent for local ceremonies of purification. The Delphic account secured greater currency than the others, and it was a natural step to suppose that, if Apollo had purified the matricide, he had also approved of the deed in advance, or even commanded it. The intrusion of Delphi into the myth brings with it other local elements. Orestes is brought up in exile at the court of king Strophius in Phocis, and is accompanied on his task and assisted by the king's son, Pylades. Evidently these elements found their way into the legend before the fall of Crisa and at a time when Phocis was still dominant at Delphi.

The legend of Orestes received also various accretions in the form of additional wanderings supposed to have taken place either after his purification or before he had been freed from his madness. In the late versions in which we possess these stories some response of the Delphic oracle provides the motive. Either Apollo puts on Orestes an additional task, or the rite of purification at Delphi is even ignored, and a deed of valour to be done abroad is substituted as a penance. For instance, it was said that Orestes removed from his home, Mycenae, and settled in Arcadia on Apollo's advice.² This particular story may have been invented to harmonize with the Delphic belief

¹X, 27²Paus. VIII, v, 4

that he was buried there, which found expression in the prophecy to the Spartans that they must find the bones of Orestes, before they could conquer Tegea.

But these sequels to Orestes' deed were mostly worked up by the tragic poets for dramatic effect. The most famous told how Orestes went to the Tauric Chersonese, and, finding his sister, Iphigeneia, there, conspired with her and stole the image of Artemis from the temple.¹ This task was said to have been imposed on him by Apollo as a cure for his frenzy. The myth may have originated as an explanation of some primitive image of Artemis preserved in a Greek temple. Its peculiarities were explained by supposing that it had been brought from Tauris. For dramatic purposes the Delphic oracle was introduced to give the motive for this mission, which was specially appropriate because a frequent theme occurring in conjunction with Delphic legends of purification is that the guilty man must go abroad. We have met it already applied to Apollo himself when he was stained by slaying the she-dragon.² It occurs in these wanderings of Orestes, and one of its best illustrations is found in the myth about Alcmaeon. In some ways he is a doublet of Orestes. Both are the sons of fathers who were killed by their wives, and in each case the son has to avenge his father's death even though he incurs blood-guilt in doing so. The chief difference was that Amphiaraus did not die directly by his wife's hand and as a prophet he foresaw his end and could instruct his son in advance to avenge him. But according to the usual legend these injunctions were confirmed by Apollo, for when Alcmaeon grew up, he consulted the Delphic oracle whether he ought to punish his mother and whether he should immediately join the expedition of the *Epigoni* against Thebes.³ Apollo approved of both purposes and informed Alcmaeon that his mother had repeated her former offence. For she had been bribed by Theisander, the son of Polynices, with a precious robe to compass her son's death, just as Polynices had bribed her with Harmonia's necklace to bring about Amphiaraus' death.

¹Eur. *I T* 77ff, etc. Apollodorus, *Epitome*, VI, 26. Hyginus, cclxi and cxx. For a lost tragedy as a further sequel to the *I in T* with scene at Delphi, cf. Hyginus, cxxii, Accius, *Errig* frag. 6, 54 f. R. See Malalas, p. 135, 18, for a curious variant.

²Cf. *supra* p. 11.

³D. S. IV, lxvi, 1 ff.

After the taking of Thebes Alcmaeon returned and slew his mother, and thereafter his story develops in a parallel way to that of Orestes. He is driven mad by avenging Furies and has to invoke the aid of the Pythian Apollo to rescue him on the ground that he had been carrying out the oracle's instructions. Like Orestes he must wander to seek purification.

The oldest version of his wanderings told how Apollo prophesied that he would have no rest from his troubles, until he found and settled in a land which had not been seen by the sun, even existing as earth, at the time when his mother was slain, as all the rest had been defiled by his guilt.¹ This oracle seemed to be impossible of fulfilment, but Alcmaeon solved it by going to the mouth of the Achelous, where the river had sent down a new island of *detritus* for him to inhabit, and he married the river's daughter, Callirrhoe. It may be a fragment of this traditional oracle which is preserved by Oenomaus:²

'Son of Amphiaraus, you seek to reach your native land . . .'

Later, legends elaborated the story of Alcmaeon's end, so as to incorporate a local tradition which made Alcmaeon settle in Arcadia and ultimately die there. Another element which mingled in the story was, that by the mid-fourth century Delphi claimed that it possessed the famous necklace of Harmonia as a dedication. One legend, which was probably of local Delphian origin, described how Alcmaeon was required by the Pythia to dedicate it as a remedy for his madness:³

'You ask me for the precious gift of rest from your frenzy. Then it is your part to bring me the precious treasure by which once your mother buried Amphiaraus, him and his horses, beneath the earth.'

From the style of these verses one would assume that they were not composed before the fifth century B.C. By the time of the Third Sacred War this tradition had become established, and the necklace which was identified with that of Harmonia was said to have been stolen by the Phocian dynasts, and apparently was never recovered. We shall see how a similar legend has grown up at the same period round an alleged dedication of Menelaus at Delphi.⁴ Clearly this story of Alcmaeon's dedication of the necklace as a cure was an alternative to the tradition that his madness was healed by his settlement at the

¹Thuc. II, cii, 5. Apollodorus, III, vii, 5.

²Ephorus F.G.H. 70 F. 96 = Athen. VI, 232 D.

³Euseb. P.E. VI, 257 A.

⁴Cf. *infra*, p. 320.

Achelous. The colonization oracle is older in its underlying notion, and was based partly on a primitive genealogy which derived the Acarnanians from Acarnan, their eponymous ancestor, borne to Alcmaeon by Callirrhoe. Some later mythologer combined this story with the legend of Alcmaeon's Arcadian settlement and the dedication of the necklace at Delphi in one romance.¹ According to this picturesque story Alcmaeon when he went to the Achelous left behind a wife in Arcadia who already possessed the necklace of Harmonia as her bridal gift. His new wife in Acarnania coveted the treasure, and he went to Arcadia to recover it for her, claiming that he must dedicate it at Delphi as a cure for madness. But he was murdered by his Arcadian brothers-in-law, who carried out his alleged intention of giving the necklace to Apollo, or alternatively they were killed in vengeance by the sons of Alcmaeon's second wife, who dedicated the necklace instead. The ramifications of this legend are only interesting in the illustration which they give of a complicated story evolved to reconcile what were originally two quite inconsistent motives.

The same pattern of the blood-guilty man who must settle and found a colony abroad to win purification recurs in other less popular stories. According to one story Telephus, as we have seen, had to settle in Mysia on this account, or again Tlepolemus was driven to consult Apollo, when he had gone mad after killing Lycymnius.² His remedy was to settle in Rhodes, which the Pythia described allusively as the place where it had rained gold, which alluded to a local legend that Zeus had once sent a shower of gold on the island. In post-homeric legends even Heracles' wanderings to serve Eurystheus and Omphale were put down to his blood-guilt.³ In all these instances Delphi is specially appropriate as the source of the prophecy, because of the part which exile and servitude played in the Delphic rites of purification.

¹Apollodorus, l.c. Paus. VIII, xxiv, 7 ff.

²Pindar, *OI* VII, 30 D. S. V, lix, 5. Cf. also Athamas p. 59 and Archias p. 71.

³Cf. *infra* p. 349 and for the same motive cf. *supra* Leucippus p. 52.

CHAPTER II

THE ORACLE IN GREEK MYTHS

(b) *The Major Epics*

WE have seen how a few motives recur again and again in the wealth of Greek legends. It remains to notice the part which Delphi is made to play generally in the major epic stories. In some it is quite small and consists in initiating the action only. In the story of Io, her wanderings start when Apollo through the Delphic oracle commands her father, Inachus, to drive her from home.¹ As we have seen, Acrisius was told of Perseus' birth in advance by the Pythia,² and the action of the story originates from this motive, but Delphi plays no further part in the action. Similarly, Apollo's warning initiated Jason's wanderings but Delphi is not otherwise concerned in the *Argonautica*.³ Our post-classical epic authors, Apollonius and Valerius Flaccus, work in a number of references to the Pythian Apollo throughout their poems, and imply that Jason consulted the Pythia before his expedition.⁴ Apollonius is more frequent in this kind of allusion and describes how Jason received two lucky tripods at Delphi, which he left behind as tokens of gratitude among people who had helped him on his journey. But no prophecies of the Pythia have any determining influence on the course of the Argo. She is directed several times by another method which sounds as if it was derived from the tradition of Delphi's great oracular rival, Dodona.⁵ According to this account, Jason at Athena's direction placed in the stem of the Argo a bough from the sacred oak of Zeus at Dodona, and when emergencies arose this prophetic timber spoke and advised the Argonauts. This motive appears in both poets, but is more frequent in Flaccus.⁶

¹Aesch. *P/V* 657 ff.

²Cf. *supra* p. 307.

³Except that Pelias alleges a Delphic oracle as a motive for sending Jason to Colchis, *find Pyth IV*, 290.

⁴Ap. *Rh I*, 209, 301, 360, 412, *IV*, 529. Val. *Flacc III*, 617. Orpheus, *Argonautica*, 55 ff.

⁵Ap. *Rh I*, 527, *IV*, 580, etc. Val. *Flacc I*, 302, *V*, 65, etc.

⁶Cf. Macarius, *cent VII*, 11. Apostollu, *XIV*, 16a, for a single verse described as an oracle given to Jason, but it is probably only a proverb. Cf. Schol. *Aristoph Av* 1432 and *Epicharmus ap Athen III*, 91 C.

With Theseus also the Delphic oracle is chiefly concerned before his birth. His heroic exploits are quite unconnected with prophecies, except that Isocrates in one obscure allusion implies that the kidnapping of Helen was associated with a Delphian prophecy.¹ But the text of this oracle has been completely lost. The only oracles addressed to Theseus which are extant were not intended to add dramatic force to the telling of legend. They applied to Theseus as the founder of the Athenian state and the prototype of its fortune. One was delivered to him when he consulted the Pythia about his new city.²

'Theseus, son of Aegeus, offspring of the daughter of Pittheus, my father indeed has put the bounds and the skeins of fate for many towns in your city. But be not too distressed within your heart and lay your plans. For a leathern bottle will travel the sea in a swelling wave'

This oracle is a prophecy of the emergence of imperial Athens from many difficulties. Judging from its style and diction it was probably composed in the fifth century and is patriotic in sentiment, the tribute of some Athenian poet to the bravery of his city in peril.

Very different in tone is an oracle addressed to Theseus, which is preserved in the Anthology and comes, as its title records, from some biography of the hero.³

'Happy this man, who now by the stone threshold enters within the oracular shrine of Phoebus Apollo. He has come seeking a good constitution. Indeed, I will give you one which no other city of mortal men will have'

This prophecy was evidently composed on the supposition that Theseus had actually asked the Pythia to supply him with a code of laws in detail, instead of the request for a general forecast of the future of his city which is implied in the earlier oracle. The inventor of this prophecy simply concocted a *pastiche* out of the replies addressed to Cypselus and Lycurgus with conventional phrases such as 'stone threshold'. It has none of the natural expressiveness of the previous oracle. The Lycurgus oracle, which is one of the ingredients, may not have been published before the early years of the fourth century. Already by the last quarter of the century when Aristotle's

¹X, 19

²Anthol. Graec. XIV, 77

³Plut. *Thes.* xxiv

Constitution of Athens was written, theorists supposed that Theseus had provided his city with a written constitution. This oracle must have been forged at that period or somewhat later, to give Theseus Delphic authority of the kind which was by that time conventionally attributed already to Lycurgus as the constitution-maker of Sparta.

The one great epic in which the Delphic oracle played a prominent part from the earliest times was the story of Thebes. We have already seen this in the legends of Larus and Oedipus, but before and after the imaginary date of those incidents, the Pythia was supposed to have exercised great influence in Theban history. The foundation of Thebes itself was directed by Apollo. Cadmus was the founder, and he was sent out originally by his father to search for his sister, Europa, when she had been carried off by Zeus. In his wanderings he came to Delphi and, when he enquired of the oracle, he was told not to bother about Europa, but to follow a heifer, which he would find on leaving the temple, and to found a city where it lay down for weariness.¹ He discovered the heifer among the herds of Pelagon, the Phocian. It was distinguished by the presence of a white mark like a full moon on its sides, and led him to the site of Thebes, where, after it lay down, he offered it as a sacrifice and founded the city.

The legend can be traced as early as the time of Pindar and no doubt went back to a high antiquity. The motive of founding a colony where some guiding animal rests is common in folklore. Curiously this is its only occurrence in connection with Delphi. In legend Apollo otherwise always employs birds as guides.² The rest of Cadmus' story, however, contains features which are specially characteristic of the Delphic legend: the combat with the serpent at Ares' fountain and the penance for slaying it are modelled on Apollo's combat with Python and his subsequent penance.³ Later tradition amplified Cadmus' story by connecting the heifer's wanderings with various places in Boeotia whose names suggested some derivative

¹Pindar, frag. 13 (Bowra). Hellanicus, *FGrH* 4 F 51. D S IV, 11, 1. Ovid, *Met.* III, 8 ff. Apollodorus, III, 14, 1. Paus. IX, 11, 1 ff.

²Campanian settlements led by doves, Statius, *Silv.* III, 7, 74; IV, viii, 45. *Larus Pisonis*, 91 ff. Cyrenean settlement led by crow, Callimachus, *Hymn*, II, 65. Delian settlers guided by metaphorical crow, p. 209 supra. Cf. also Theseus' tomb, p. 196 supra and Hesiod's tomb, p. 405 infra and Aegon's kingship, p. 131 supra.

³Cf. Robert, *Heldensage*, pp. 1144 ff.

connection with the animal. Some of the etymologies were even sought from Semitic roots on the ground that Cadmus was a Phoenician.¹ The oracle itself is extant in two hexameter versions, both very long-winded. One probably comes from Mnaseas, the other is found in Nonnus.² Neither can be at all primitive in origin: they are merely hypothetical illustrations of what the Pythia might be supposed to have said, composed long after the legend had become accepted in literature.

We have already discussed the legend of Laius and Oedipus. The rest of Oedipus' history as told in the dramatists bristles with references to oracles, but they are often not specified as Pythian, and their exact words are rarely quoted. For instance, an oracle told that the Thebans would not be rid of the Sphinx till someone solved her riddle.³ In the *Oedipus Tyrannus*⁴ Delphi, when consulted, prescribed the exile of the murderer of Laius as a cure for a plague. An oracle told Oedipus that his sons would quarrel with each other,⁵ another, that there would only be peace between them when they stood on his tomb.⁶ His place of burial, whether at Colonus in Attica⁷ or at Eteonus in Boeotia, was associated with oracular responses.

These prophecies illustrate how the exciting story of Oedipus invited the frequent introduction of this motive for dramatic purposes. The two oracles with regard to his burial may have had a local origin to justify the claim to possess Oedipus' tomb, and account for its supposed supernatural properties. The others were no doubt simply invented for their place in the legend. The kernel of the Oedipus story, the Laius oracle, is the most primitive element and the one most closely associated with Delphi.

The next stage in the legend of the house of Laius was the war of the Seven against Thebes and the Epigoni: this is adorned with several Pythian oracles. The struggle arose when Polynices was excluded from the kingship of Thebes by his brother, Eteocles. According to the legend he wandered to Argos, where, in front of the palace of Adrastus, he met another wanderer, Tydeus. The two exiled princes quarrelled and fell.

¹Plut. *Sulla*, xvii. Cf. Paus. IX, xix, 4.

²Schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 638, cf. Mueller, *FHG* III, p. 157, Tzetz. *Chil.* V, 819, cf. L. Preller, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, pp. 328 ff. Nonnus, IV, 289 ff.

³Schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 45.

⁴Schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 13.

⁵O. C. 86 ff. Schol. O. C. 91.

⁶95 ff.

⁷Soph. O. C. 413 and 454.

to blows, but Adrastus intervened, and after reconciling them gave to each one of his daughters in marriage.¹ He had received an oracle from Delphi

*'Yoke the marriages of your daughters to a boar and lion, whom you will see coming together from a temple to the portals of your sacred house, and be not deceived in heart'*²

Adrastus had seen in Polynices and Tydeus the people intended by the oracle, but, curiously, though tradition preserved this fact, it seems to have forgotten in what exactly the resemblance consisted. For some ancient scholars thought that each hero had one of the animals as a blazon on his shield;³ others that they wore the skins of the animals which they had either taken up for warmth from a temple of Apollo where they found them dedicated, or that they had picked them up in Adrastus' porch, where they lay for the comfort of visitors. Yet others connected the lionskin with Polynices through the Theban associations of Heracles, and the boarskin with Tydeus because of the Calydonian boar.⁴ Clearly the original saga, if preserved, was not precise on the point, and later authors merely used their ingenuity to invent explanations. The story is first found in Euripides: the words of the oracle come from Mnaseas, and were evidently composed to suit the theory that the likeness was produced by dedications taken from a temple: but this idea is not likely to be primitive.

Except for the legend of Menoeceus' voluntary self-sacrifice, Delphi does not appear further in the history of the Seven against Thebes. Of the Epigoni we have already seen how Alcmaeon is personally connected with the Delphic oracle. The second attack on Thebes by the younger generation was supposed to have been directly sponsored by the Pythian Apollo, who foretold their victory if they were led by Alcmaeon, and confirmed this prophecy in a response to Alcmaeon himself when he sought advice on the question of joining the expedition.⁵ Traditionally the Epigoni had acknowledged Apollo's guidance by dedicating part of their spoils.⁶

¹Eur. *Suppl.* 138 ff. *Phoen.* 409 ff., *Hypsipyle*, *Ox. Pap.* V, No. 852, p. 47. Apollodorus, III, vi, 1. Stat. *Theb.* I, 395, 483 ff.

²Schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 410 = Mnaseas, *FHG* Vol. III, p. 157, No. 48. Robert (*Oedipus* p. 204) again suggests that the first line only is the original response.

³Zenob. I, 30.

⁴D. S. IV, lxxvi, 1. Apollodorus, III, vii, 2.

⁵Hyginus, *fab. lxxix*.

⁶Cf. *supra* p. 50.

The only saga which remains to be examined is the Trojan war. This is the one myth on which we possess a pair of original epic poems dating from a period before the later processes of elaboration, rationalizing or romanticizing had begun their work. The references to Delphi in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are few and difficult to interpret. Both epics only mention the place under its older and ritual name of Pytho. In the *Iliad* it only appears twice, and on neither occasion is it at all directly connected with the main action of the poem. In the Catalogue of the Ships¹ (evidently an independent document incorporated in the general structure of the *Iliad*) 'rocky Pytho' is listed among a number of Phocian towns, next in order to 'holy Crisa.' This reference clearly long antedated the First Sacred War. The only other allusion in the *Iliad* comes in a rhetorical context, where Achilles is replying to the embassy. He says that 'not even all the treasure which the stone threshold of Phoebus Apollo, the archer, keeps within at rocky Pytho'² is sufficient to outweigh the value of his life. The 'stone threshold' appears to be part of the structure of the temple, but its exact meaning is somewhat obscure and the title translated 'archer' (ἀφῆτωρ), here applied to Apollo, is a unique epithet whose real meaning is quite uncertain. The whole passage looks as if it was made up of some conventional epic phrases inserted to supply picturesque colouring to Achilles' speech. Thus on the subject of Achilles' or Homer's relations with Delphi it contributes no more information than the reference to Egyptian Thebes shortly before in the same passage proves their direct acquaintance with Egypt. The oracle is not mentioned here as such nor elsewhere in the *Iliad*.

In the *Odyssey* also Pytho only appears twice. One reference is quite unimportant: it is merely named as the place near which Tityus attempted to rape Leto.³ But the other allusion is very interesting. At the court of Phaeacia the bard, Demodocus, is represented as singing an extract from the tale of Troy,⁴ 'the strife of Odysseus and Achilles, son of Peleus, how once they strove at the thriving feast of the gods with violent

¹II, 517 ff

²IX, 404. Cf Callimach II 34, III, 250. Soph. *O. T.* 152. Strabo, IX, C 421. On the δαίμων οὐδός, see von Blumenthal, *Philologus*, 1927-28, pp 220 ff.

³*Od.* XI, 581.

⁴*Od.* VIII, 76 ff.

words, and Agamemnon, king of men, rejoiced in thought, in that the best of the Achaeans were at strife. For thus Phoebus Apollo in an oracle had spoken to him at sacred Pytho, when he crossed the stone threshold to ask an oracle. For then indeed a beginning of woe was rolling to the Trojans and Greeks through the counsels of Zeus.

This incident which Demodocus related (unlike the other lays attributed to him) is not recorded elsewhere in Greek tradition. Evidently one is to suppose that at the beginning of the Trojan war Agamemnon had consulted Apollo and had received an oracle which foretold as a sign of success a quarrel between the best of the Greeks.¹ Agamemnon saw the fulfilment of this prophecy in a dispute which later broke out. The *Iliad* shows no knowledge of this story, its famous dispute is between Achilles and Agamemnon himself, but that does not prove this legend was invented independently. At least one can say, however, that to Homer Delphi was not bound up in any essential way with the story of the Trojan war. It might appear in a subsidiary incident, but it was in no way the main-spring of the narrative.

Here one can note a great difference in the post-Homeric legends about Troy. In them Delphi appears frequently, and an attempt seems to be made to introduce the oracle into the main course of the story. For instance, the origin of the Trojan war was made to turn on a series of Pythian prophecies. We are told that a plague broke out in Sparta, and Apollo, when consulted, prescribed as a remedy that the tombs of the heroes, Lycus and Chimaereus, should be honoured.² These were situated at Troy, and Menelaus set out thither to offer sacrifice. He was entertained by Paris and thus began the fatal association between the two. When Menelaus returned to Greece, Paris accompanied him and both went to Delphi, where Menelaus enquired for children, Paris for a wife. The Pythia replied to them in one oracle.³

'Wherefore have you two kings, one of the Trojans, the other of the Greeks, entered my hall, no longer of like purpose. The one,

¹Perhaps this was the visit of Agamemnon which was said to be commemorated by a venerable plane-tree which stood at Delphi in historic times and was supposed to have been planted by the king himself. Theophrast *Hist. Plant.* IV, xiii, 2. Pliny, *N. H.* XVI, 238.

²Lycophron, *Alex.* 132, with Scholia. ³Schol. *Iliad*, V, 64. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 100.

indeed is seeking to find an offspring of his mare, the other to catch the mare herself What are you planning, O mighty Zeus?

This prophecy was not understood by Menelaus or Paris, though the allusion to a woman as a mare is a commonplace of Greek poetry. The legend appeared neither in Homer nor in the *Epic Cycle*. The motive for inventing it appears to be merely dramatic. It explained how the husband and the lover first met, and brought them effectively together before the Pythian Apollo, who is shown to have forecast by a horrified question the fateful war which was to follow. The style of the oracle seems too developed for epic, but the diction is good enough to have been produced in the fifth century or even earlier. The alleged heroes' graves at Troy might be derived from some local tradition, but are not necessarily linked in origin with the story of Menelaus' and Paris' common visit to Delphi.

Delphi had also a local tradition of a later visit of Menelaus. This was connected with a necklace, preserved in the temple of Athena Pronaea there, which was alleged to have belonged to Helen and to have been dedicated by Menelaus.¹ He had come to inquire how he could avenge himself on Paris. The answer was

'Take and bring the ornament all of gold from the neck of your wife, which once Aphrodite gave to Helen as a great joy. Thus Paris will repay you a most hateful penalty.'

The dedication was represented as a charm for success in the Trojan war. The necklace itself, as well as the alleged necklace of Harmonia, which we have already described,² was said to have disappeared as a consequence of the Third Sacred War. Evidently the legendary oracles about both dedications were invented simply to explain and authenticate their presence at Delphi, and are not of very primitive date.

The Delphic oracle also figures in a couple of late references dealing with the time when the expedition to Troy had already been assembled. The Scholia to Lycophron allege that Delphi prophesied that the war would last ten years, though in the *Iliad* this was foretold by Calchas.³ Also in the story of Tele-

¹Ephorus, *F Gr H* 70 F 96. Demetrius of Phaleron, *ib.* 228 F 32.

²Cf. *supra* p. 311.

³Schol. Lycophr. *Alex.* 200. Dares Phrygius, 15.

phus, which appeared first in the *Epic Cycle*, we are told by Libanius¹ that it was from the Pythia that he received the famous advice.

'He that has wounded will heal the wound'

This meant that Achilles, who had wounded Telephus when the Greeks landed in Teuthrania, was the only person who could heal the wound by the rust from the spear which had given the blow. This legend is a primitive one, but early authorities leave unspecified the source of this prophetic advice. It may have been Telephus' association with Delphi in other legends, which suggested the Pythian Apollo as his guide on this occasion. Delphi does not appear in the remainder of the story of the Trojan war and only in two of the sequels to it—the tale of Orestes which we have already considered and the legend of Neoptolemus' death.

The legend of Neoptolemus' death at Delphi appears in so many ancient authors and under so many various and detailed forms that it is best considered among other Greek myths, but actually it is in origin an aetiological legend invented to explain why a hero's tomb at Delphi was described as that of Neoptolemus. This tomb was situated in the precinct of Apollo just above the forecourt of the temple itself, and stood in a sanctuary of its own. Here the Delphians offered an annual sacrifice to the hero, and every fourth year at the Pythian festival the Aenianes sent a sacred embassy to honour their former king.²

There are three versions of Neoptolemus' death as well as minor variants and combinations. The most primitive is that Neoptolemus after the fall of Troy came to Delphi bringing a dedication of spoils for Apollo.³ When these gifts were being offered at the temple, the Delphians exercised a ritual privilege which they claimed at sacrifices—they snatched a share of the meat offered. Neoptolemus intervened to stop what he took for an unwarrantable license. In the ensuing struggle he was slain by one of the Delphians who is called Machaereus, the son of Daetas—an obviously fictitious name, for it is derived from the

¹*Declam.* V, 9. Contrast Eur. *Telephus*, frag. 705, where it is the Lycian Apollo, and *Lind Chron.* VIII.

²Paus. X, xxiv, 4 and 6. Cf. Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, II, xxxiv ff. *Anthol. Graec.* IX, 485.

³Pindar, *Paean*, VI, 112 ff., *Nem.* VII, 33 ff. Apollodorus, *Epit.* VI, 14. Pherecydes, *F Gr H* 3 F 64. Asclepiades of Tragilus, *F Gr H* 12 F 15, and cf. Aesop, p. 408 *infra*.

'sacrificial knife' (Machaera) and the 'feast' (Dais). Alternatively, the accounts mention that Neoptolemus was stabbed by a sacrificial knife or even stabbed himself with one, apparently in desperation at his impiety. The Delphians regretted his death and buried him under the threshold of the temple, but subsequently Menelaus removed the body to its later position in the precinct outside.

This story is evidently very primitive in origin. It accounted for the presence of the hero's tomb near the temple and attributed it to Neoptolemus. But, except for the minor detail that he was offering spoils from Troy, the same legend might equally appropriately be told of any other hero. Apart from the tomb itself, this legend had a useful effect as a cautionary tale. Its moral was that the right of the Delphians to their perquisites must not be infringed. The practice of snatching a part of the victims reminds one of the methods of the sons of Eli which caused much resentment in Israel. Our authorities do not otherwise refer to this procedure, so perhaps it did not persist at Delphi throughout classical antiquity. Its undignified character would not commend it to the more refined periods, and even the legend of Neoptolemus does little to justify or excuse the method. Also this version of the legend is rather unsatisfactory, because it leaves much of the blame for Neoptolemus' death on his Delphian hosts, and even his breach of custom seems not quite adequate as a defence. It is not surprising that in classical times other versions of his death were more popular. Even Pindar, who alludes in one of the Nemean odes to the ancient form of the legend, has to do his best to cover its crudities by much emphasis on fate. 'It was bound to be that someone, within the most ancient grove, of the kings born of Aeacus must remain for ever, beside the well-walled house of the god and dwell with heroic festivals of many sacrifices as a watcher over the rites.'

The fifth century saw the introduction of two other forms of the legend. One was dramatic and evolved by the Attic tragedians. In this Neoptolemus, after having married Hermione, went to Delphi to enquire about his prospects of having children.¹ But Orestes, to whom Hermione's hand had once been

¹Pherecydes, l. c. for motive of enquiry Vergil, *Aen.* III, 330 with Servius ad loc. Vell. Pat. I, 1, 3 Hyginus, cxxxiii

promised, was bitterly jealous, and lay in wait for Neoptolemus, and slew him by the altar. Essentially this is not a cautionary tale, but an endeavour to convert the death of Neoptolemus into a human drama. Naturally, it was used by Euripides, who combines it with the older version in his *Andromache* to the extent that Orestes conspires with a body of Delphians who assist in the murder.¹ This feature is often omitted, and Orestes acts alone.

Another version of the oracle could either be incorporated with the dramatic story or told separately. It was pietistic in outlook, and represented Neoptolemus' death as a punishment for a direct impiety to Apollo himself. He came to Delphi not to offer gifts to the god, nor to make reasonable enquiry, but to demand recompense for the death of his father, Achilles, slain by Apollo at Troy.² In fact, Neoptolemus was even prepared to sack the shrine and burn it. So Machaereus slew him in defence of Delphi. Neoptolemus had deserved this death at the hearth of Apollo's temple, because he himself had slain Priam at the consecrated hearth of his own palace.³ This legend was designed to account for Neoptolemus' death satisfactorily without leaving a stain on Delphian honour and to teach instead the importance of respect for the Pythian Apollo. Pindar combined it with the first version in one of his Paean, while Euripides incorporated it to some extent with the dramatic story. In his *Andromache*⁴ Neoptolemus has already paid one visit to Delphi, and returned unscathed after having asked for recompense for Achilles' death. He visits it again to ask forgiveness for this presumptuousness, and is killed there by Orestes in concert with the Delphians through jealousy for his marriage with Hermione. These two versions in various combined forms remained the classical account of Neoptolemus' death in later times, and the old story of the Delphians scrambling for their portion was ignored. The unknown daemon of the site had received a rich treasure of myth to enshrine him.⁵

¹1085 ff

²Eur. *Orest* 1656. Apollodorus, 1 c [Libanius], *Progymn. Narrat.* 14. Eustathius, 1479, 13. Dictys Cretensis (VI, 12) oddly reverses this motive and makes Neoptolemus come to thank Apollo for Paris' death.

³Pindar, *Paean*, 1 c. Paus. IV, xvii, 4.

⁴50 ff

⁵For another legend, that Neoptolemus' bones were scattered over Ambracia, cf. Ovid, *Ibis*, 303, Hyginus, cxxiii.

The part of the Delphic oracle in Greek mythology can thus be summed up (1) In stock motives (*a*) when answering the state which seeks a cure for plague or famine or a protection against invasion, (*b*) when an individual asks for a response concerning the birth of a son or the marriage and children of a daughter in many of these examples the attribution of the response to the Pythian Apollo is a product of later literary invention. The storyteller was naturally led to particularize the source of the prophecy, and the fame of Delphi suggested its name. Only in the instance of Oedipus has the position of Delphi been dominant in the whole saga, starting with the conventional response as the mainspring of the action. Here the nearness of Thebes to Delphi accounts somewhat for the importance of the Pythian Apollo and for the fact that he plays a part in the *Thebais*, which he only holds with difficulty in the Thessalian *Argonautica* and does not maintain at all in the Aeolian and Ionian epics of Troy.

(2) A couple of oracles connected with Menelaus and Alcmaeon seem to have been invented at Delphi itself, simply to account for the presence among the dedications of treasures attributed to these donors. Such anecdotes never acquired a prominent place in the legends surrounding these two heroes.

(3) The place of Delphi in the usual tradition about Alcmaeon, Orestes, and other slayers of their own kin is due to the claim of the Pythian Apollo in the archaic period to provide a purification for blood-guilt. In this sense the motive is in origin aetiological, but the dramatic possibilities of Apollo's agency in the action suggested many variations on the original theme to later writers.

(4) Similarly, the myth about Neoptolemus' death at Delphi was originally invented to account for a tomb and cult there, but later was modified from motives of piety and dramatic effect, so that it took on quite a different character.

Our next subject is to investigate the influence of Delphi on worship and cult, beginning with the type of tradition, where the Delphic oracle was the central point in a story explaining the origin of some particular piece of ritual.

CHAPTER III

THE ORACLE AND GREEK RELIGION

(a) *The Major Deities*

THE responses of the Delphic oracle on questions of religion and cult were among the most important of its activities. It was natural that the gods themselves should be asked for an immediate revelation on matters that concerned their own worship. But here Apollo held a very special position. Most Greek deities were only very slightly connected with prophecy: all the chief oracular centres on the Greek mainland were Apolline, excepting Dodona, where Zeus gave his prophecies direct, and a couple of heroes' shrines. Consequently it was out of the question to try and approach each specific god or goddess, and ascertain his or her wishes on a particular question. The usual procedure was simply to apply to one of the established prophetic centres, Delphi for preference, and ask Apollo to reveal the divine will on the subject. For instance, if the Athenians wish to know whether Demeter approves of the application of the rent from her sacred lands to building a portico and decorating her temple, they enquire from the Pythian Apollo for an answer 'yes' or 'no'.¹ Presumably it was taken for granted that the polytheistic society of Olympus knew each other's wishes and used Apollo as their general spokesman, in view of his special functions as the mouthpiece of Zeus.² At any rate, the questions of religious observance referred to Delphi were not confined to the cult of Apollo, but ranged over the whole field of ancient worship.

Religion played a large part in the life of the ancient city-state and few public activities were so secular that they had no religious side to them. Hence questions of ritual might come up in connection with enquiries which were not primarily concerned with worship. If Delphi was asked to sanction any course of action, it was usual to add a request that Apollo should

¹Ditt. *Syll.* 3 204.

²For Apollo as the mouthpiece of Zeus, Hom. *Hymn.* III, 132. IV, 471. Aesch. *Eum.* 19, 616 ff., 713, frag. 86. Soph. *O.T.* 151, etc., and see the many references to Zeus in the index.

indicate what gods and goddesses should receive prayer and sacrifice for the success of the undertaking. For instance, the aged Xenophon,¹ when concluding the account of some reforms in the Athenian state which he wished to introduce, suggests that Dodona and Delphi be asked 'whether it is more right and better for the city for the present and the future, if it is thus organized and if they agree with these proposals, then again, I say, we ought to enquire further by associating what gods with us can we best and most fairly accomplish these things, and whomsoever gods they answer, when we have offered auspicious sacrifice to them, it is right to begin the task.' This particular enquiry was never put to Delphi, but it illustrates the conventional method.

Also it did not follow that the Pythia could simply direct that prayers and sacrifices should be made to Apollo or some other particularly Delphic deity. Just as Apollo might be consulted on the business of other gods and goddesses, so when asked in general for advice in worship it did not follow that he would crudely put forward his own claims to the exclusion of others. Such a procedure would no doubt have proved fatal to Delphi's claim for universal recognition. The individual city-states were very particular about their local cults and deities. A general mutual recognition existed between the different communities but only on the basis of a respect for the variety of individual practice and belief. It would have been impossible for the Pythian Apollo to inculcate Delphic practice exclusively on the city-states that consulted him, nor could the Pythia easily produce a generalized Hellenic worship, which could be commended with equal success to all enquirers. We are told that the Pythia's principle in answering questions on sacrifices and ancestor-worship was to reply that ritual piety was to act in accordance with the custom of the city.² This rule might mean many different things to different communities, but the Delphians had no need to concern themselves over producing a uniform system. In fact, our tradition suggests the opposite effect, in historic times the most extreme of local peculiarities

¹*De Vect.* vi, 2. For examples of religions associated with secular activities, cf. *supra*, pp. 47 ff. the ritual prescriptions connected with colonies, and p. 105 ritual and constitutional reform.

²*Xen. Mem.* I, iii, 1, IV, iii, 16. *Cic. de Legibus*, II, xvi, 40. Cf. *Dem.* XXI, 51, XLIII, 66, for oracles containing the phrase *κατὰ πόλιν*.

in worship were justified by the claim that they had been enjoined by the oracle. Sometimes this may have been true, more often perhaps it was a spurious claim to authority for a primitive institution, which could not justify its existence any more when its original purpose was forgotten or unappreciated.

It is often difficult and even impossible to discover whether a particular ritual was genuinely prescribed by Delphi or not, for such matters did not often concern our chief historians. The main evidence comes from Pausanias' guidebook or from stray allusions in Plutarch or the poets of the latter Callimachus in his *Aetia*, a poem on the origins of local ritual, is the source of much of our information. The only way to treat this material is in bulk, when it does give some indication of particular tendencies in the activity of Delphi. Though not to be trusted in every instance, such generalizations probably come near to the true facts.

First, one can note that the basic worship of the chief Olympian deities stands quite independent of the Delphic oracle. This is natural, because ancient legends agreed that Apollo had founded his oracle at Delphi well within the period of human tradition. (Of the responses of his predecessors only the most doubtful memories were alleged¹) Hence the worship of such deities as Zeus, Athena, Hermes, or Demeter is generally presupposed. The Pythia could only prescribe particular features in their cult, or their worship under special titles, but not the original deification of these beings.

The particular instructions of the oracle might sometimes be represented as the original ground for the foundation of a certain temple on its historic site—for instance, that of the Pythian Apollo himself on Mount Aegaleus in Attica or the temple of the Eleusinian Demeter at Pheneus in Arcadia.² In each example the Pythia was supposed to have directed the original founder of the cult. Such oracles approximate in form to the foundation-oracles of colonies. The Attic temple-legend was of a familiar type. Chalcinus and Daetus, men of distant Athenian ancestry whose family had settled abroad, consult Apollo on the prospects of returning to Attica. They are told to

¹Cf. *supra* p. 12.

²Paus. I, xxxvii, 6, ff., VIII, xv, 1. For Olympian cults established in historic times cf. p. 191 (Zeus), p. 378 (Artemis), and *Ditt. Syll.*³ 977 (Aphrodite), if this oracle is Pythian.

offer sacrifice to Apollo first on the spot in Attica where they see a trireme running on the ground. This seeming impossibility is taken as fulfilled rather absurdly by a snake which they see darting into its hole at the place where the temple was later founded.¹ Some scores of temples and festivals dedicated to Apollo in different Greek cities show by their title of Pythian that they had some association with Delphi, but this seems the only instance where there is any tradition that the institution was prescribed by the Delphic oracle.

At other times the oracle is the reason for a particular annual festival for one of the Olympian deities: it was legendarily prescribed on a particular occasion to some hero. For example, Theseus before sailing for Crete was told to 'make Aphrodite his guide and summon her to voyage with him'.² Hence an annual sacrifice to Aphrodite in Attica was said to have been established on the date on which he sailed. Or the oracle might ratify the use of a peculiar cult-title for a goddess which would be explained by an aetiological legend concluding with the oracle.³ Similarly extraordinary features in local ritual were accounted for by an oracular prescription. The usual pattern of story explains how some special disaster occasioned an appeal to Delphi and the establishment of the cult which Apollo commanded. For instance, a plague of mice had led to the worship of Apollo as god of mice in Sminthus, even to the extent that the creatures were encouraged to live in holes under his altar.⁴ Again, at Tegea a famine had been followed by the worship of Apollo Agyieus in association with a hero, called Scephrus.⁵ Most of these instances are historically very doubtful, but we have one good example where the revival of a highly primitive local peculiarity in worship was evidently prescribed by Delphi.

At Phigalia in Arcadia in early times it had been traditional to worship Demeter the Black.⁶ The goddess lived in a cave-

¹ The point of resemblance is not explained. Were the zigzag markings of an adder to be taken to suggest the pattern of a trireme's oars?

² Plut. *Thes.* xviii, 1. The response appears to contain traces of an iambic trimeter.

³ E.g. Aphrodite Ctesylla in Ceos. Cf. Antoninus Liberalis, I.

⁴ Aelian, *NA* XII, 5.

⁵ Paus. VIII, lvi, 1 ff. cf. Varro ap. Porphyry in Horat. *Carm.* IV, 6, 28, p. 131 (Meyer) that the Athenian cult of Apollo Agyieus was founded in accordance with an Apolline oracle. See Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, II, p. 122.

⁶ Paus. VIII, xli, 5 ff.

sanctuary, where she was represented originally by an uncouth image robed in black and terminating in a head covered with a horse's mane. This was said to have been destroyed in a fire, apparently about the beginning of the fifth century B.C., and the Phigalians omitted to restore it. Presumably, the primitive cult had gone out of fashion, and more typically Hellenic deities were receiving the town's worship. A curse of barrenness fell on the land till they consulted Delphi. The Pythia's reply ran

'Azamian Arcadians, feeders on acorns, who dwell in Phigalia, that hidden cave of Deo who bare a horse, you have come to ask a release from your grievous famine, you who alone are twice made wanderers, alone again made feeders on wild fruits. Deo once stopped you from your pasturage, and Deo again has made you herdsmen instead of binders of sheaves and cake-eaters, because she has been deprived of the privileges of former generations and her ancient honours. Soon she will even make you eaters of each other and feasters on children, if you do not appease her anger with libations from the whole people and adorn the heart of the grotto with the honours due to a goddess.'

This grim and threatening response makes somewhat ghastly play with the jest that the Arcadians claimed to be the most ancient people of Greece and so had once lived on acorns before Demeter had taught mankind the use of grain. Now the wrath of Demeter (or Deo by her old name) had brought them back by barrenness to the same primitive diet, and would even drive them to cannibalism, if they persisted in slighting her. The Phigalians made a full atonement and even employed Onatas of Aegina, one of the chief master-sculptors of the time, to reproduce the original image in bronze. The mention of this well-known artist serves to place the period of these events as before the middle of the fifth century. The oracle is evidently a genuine one, preserved by local folk-memory. Delphi must have heard of the obsolete cult of the Earth goddess, and decided that the revival of her worship provided the best remedy for a famine. The half-threatening, half-bantering tone of the oracle is unusual, but the Phigalians were a little people and could be treated more cavalierly than the great cities. The story is only known from Pausanias, the guide-book writer. He had heard it on the spot, and prosecuted his enquiries

so far as even to interview the oldest inhabitant. From him he learned that the image made by Onatas had been obliterated some considerable time before by a fall of the cave-roof. This time Demeter seems to have remained unavenged.

It was natural that the Delphic oracle should be cited as the authority where some local worship claimed to have validity in all Greece. For instance, in historic periods a temple of Zeus on the mountain in Aegina laid special claim to the title Panhellenic. This was justified by the legend that a drought had oppressed all Greece until the inhabitants sent to Delphi to ask the reason and the cure for the distress.¹ The Pythia told them to appease Zeus, and that Aeacus the king of Aegina must be their intercessor, if he would consent. So at their request Aeacus ascended the mountain, and after sacrifice and prayer to Zeus, god of all Hellenes, he brought the needed rain. This much of the story was universally accepted in Greece. authorities differed on the cause of Zeus' anger. Some cited a wicked murder committed by Pelops, others the death of Androgeos, this latter being evidently an Attic account. The legend remained simply an explanation of the title of the Aeginetan shrine. There is no evidence that the rest of Greece was expected to ask for a regular renewal of this supplication.

Somewhat different in purpose, but similar in its general lines, was the legend attached to the Eleusinian Demeter. According to this story, another famine had afflicted the whole world, both Greek and barbarian.² Apollo decreed that the people of Athens were to make prayers to Demeter for all mankind, and in return for this service they were to receive the first-fruits from all nations to offer to the goddess. Our descriptions of this incident are less circumstantial than those about Aeacus, but it is more historic to the extent that it was the basis of a general practice of receiving tithes of corn at Eleusis, not only from Attica, but also from abroad. Our authorities differ on the date of the original famine, but generally support a period in the middle of the sixth century when Eleusis was receiving special enhancement through the patronage of

¹D S. IV, lx1, 1. Apollodorus, III, xii, 6. Paus. II, xxix, 7. Clement Alex. *Strom.* VI, p. 753. P. = Euseb. *P. E.* X, 463. B. Cf. Isocrates IX, 14, without a reference to an oracle.

²Isocrates, IV, 31. Hippostratus, *F. H. G.* Vol. IV, p. 432, frag. 3. Aristides (Jebb), Vol. I, pp. 105 and 257 with Scholia. Suidas s. v. *ἡπειρώτης*. Cf. Robert, *Heldensage*, I II, p. 773, note 3 for many references.

Peisistratus. So some event at that time may have given occasion for the prophecy: that the claim did not date from prehistoric times is shown by the fact that the offerings at Eleusis are to be made by the Athenian state, that is, after the incorporation of Eleusis in Attica. Our best evidence on the subject comes from a somewhat later period when, after the peace of Nicias, Athens obtained Delphic approval for a revival of the custom and organized the collection of the tithes from the cities of the Athenian empire.¹ No doubt, this particular system lapsed during the later years of the Peloponnesian War, but Isocrates in the next century writes as if the practice of sending the first-fruits still continued and the Pythia rebuked those cities that failed to comply. This support from Delphi must have helped to give Eleusis its specially prominent position among the Greek temples of Demeter.²

In contrast with this harmless tribute of first-fruits to Eleusis, one may place the extraordinary human tribute sent to Troy by the Locrians.³ According to the conventional legend, the Locrians of Opus after the Trojan War had become accursed because their king, the lesser Ajax, had raped Cassandra while she hid as suppliant in the temple of Athena at Troy. In the third year after the war the Locrians consulted Delphi on a plague that ravaged them, and were told that they must appease Athena of Troy, who still remained unsatisfied after the death of Ajax himself. The atonement was to consist in sending two maidens in place of one to serve the goddess. In the early fourth century B.C. maidens were still being sent at intervals to keep up the service in the temple. Their whole career, when chosen to go to Troy, was grim and painful. After landing on the coast, they had to make their way to the temple of Athena unobserved by the inhabitants. For they were accursed, and if caught were liable to be put to death immediately. Still further, their dead bodies were under the same ban, and would be burned on a fire of brushwood and thrown into the sea. But actually, the maidens seem to have succeeded

¹Ditt. *Syll.* 3 J (Tod No. 74)

²Cf. *Demon ap. Athen.* III, 96 D, for an oracle associated with a minor piece of ritual at Eleusis, and see *I. G.* II, 1363, for a sacrifice of a goat to Apollo Pythius on the 7th of each month at Eleusis.

³*Aeneas Tacticus*, xxxi, 24. *Lycophron, Alex.* 1141 ff with the Scholia. *Polyb.* XII, v, 7. *Strabo*, XIII, C 600. *Plut. Moral.* 557D. *Apollodorus, Epit.* VI, 20. *Aelian*, frag. 47. *Schol. Ilad.*, XIII, 66. *Servius, Aen.* I, 41. *Iamblicus, Pyth. Vita*, VIII, 42.

usually in reaching sanctuary in the temple, perhaps by way of an underground passage which modern excavators have found on the site. Once within the temple they might not leave it again and must spend their days in hard servitude. With shorn heads, shoeless and with only one garment, they rose at dawn and swept and washed the pavements of the building. They had no access to the goddess in their duties.¹

This hideous penance, which strikes one as very much out of keeping with the usual observances of Greek religion, is undoubtedly a historic fact. The only serious question is under what circumstances the custom came to be instituted. The bulk of tradition, especially that at Troy itself, dated the practice from just after the Trojan War. For this purpose they had to suppose (which was historically untrue) that Troy had remained in continuous occupation for the whole period. It was natural that a penance for a crime should be supposed to follow quickly on the offence itself. The only sceptic who maintained that the custom was later in origin was Demetrius of Scepsis. He alleged that the institution only dated from the period of Persian rule. But this view evidently was adopted by him because it harmonized with his theory that the classical Ilium was not on the site of the epic Troy. His proof for this dating of the institution is not forthcoming, and one piece of evidence certainly suggests that it is too late. The Locrians of South Italy, sent there as colonists about 700 B.C., possessed as an aristocracy some of the same 'hundred families,' who in Opuntian Locris were designated for the painful privilege of providing the maidens sent to Troy. Perhaps Demetrius could find some sign that the custom had been revived in the sixth century. For if it was earlier in origin, it may have lapsed during the troublous period of the mid-seventh century, when Asia Minor was devastated by the invasions of the Treres and Cimmerii. If so, some local misfortune in the later sixth century may have caused the Locrians to consult Delphi for a remedy and resulted in a re-imposition of this human tribute.

¹Our ancient authorities differ on several points. (1) Were the maidens required to serve till death or for a fixed period only, perhaps a year? On the latter supposition they may have been required to remain virgin after returning home for the rest of their lives.

(2) Were the maidens ever sent out as infants, and was the number ever reduced from two to one? These mitigations are suggested in some of our sources, but may have been introduced through some misunderstanding.

In any case the Locrians groaned under their burden in the classical period, and at last in the latter half of the fourth century B.C. after the Third Sacred War they abandoned the practice altogether. Their avowed reason was that the penance had been imposed for 1,000 years and this period had then expired. Contemporary opinion might have concurred in this dating of the Trojan War, but our authorities are inclined to deny that this version of the oracle was correct—a conclusion suggested by the later course of events. The real reason why the custom had lapsed at this time may be sought in the devastation of Locris during the Sacred War. However, this intermission was only temporary. Further disasters in Locris led to a fresh consultation of the Pythia, when they were told that the penance must be resumed and continued till the goddess was appeased. This renewal for an indefinite period was probably begun in the first half of the third century, B.C., and evidently led to disputes among the towns of Locris on the question which of them was liable to provide the maidens. At one time King Antigonus¹ was called in to arbitrate and ruled that the decision was to be made by lot. At another time the duty was undertaken by the town of Naryca and the clan who claimed descent from Ajax.² The custom persisted at least into the second century B.C., but must have lapsed soon after that, for it is never mentioned as in operation under Roman rule. No doubt it was at last assumed safely that the goddess was appeased.

The institution of this custom by Delphi is in many ways hard to explain. No similar treatment of any other city by the Delphic oracle is recorded.³ At the same time it is hard to see how the practice could have become established if it had not been imposed by a third party on Troy and Locris. For these two places lay far apart, and had little or no ground for direct intercourse in historic times. Some shadowy evidence has been used to suggest that in the Aeolic colonization of Asia Minor the original settlers at Troy came from Locris. Hence some

¹It is uncertain whether this was Antigonus Gonatas or Antigonus Doson.

²Cf. A. Wilhelm, *Die Lokrer Mädcheninschrift*, Jahreshefte des Oesterreich. Arch. Institutes, XIV, pp. 163 ff.

³The nearest analogy seems to be the penalty imposed by an unspecified oracle on the descendants of Athamas, who similarly had to seek refuge in a temple under pain of death if caught outside, Herod. VII, xcvi; Apollodorus, I, ix, 2. Schol. Lycophron, 22. Plat. *Minor*, 315C with Scholia, and cf. the *Asanteioi* of the Locrian inscription.

ritual connection between the two places may have been established in early times, and Delphi must at some period have sanctioned it in the strange and elaborate form known in classical times. Evidently the renewal under Delphic sanction in the third century is fully historic and an earlier renewal in the later sixth century can be conjectured plausibly. By this period, at least, the epic tradition of the lesser Ajax and Cassandra had long been diffused in Greece. Also the proportion of two maidens in place of one is a kind of atonement elsewhere prescribed by Delphi,¹ but possibly the Delphic oracle had been concerned in the matter as early as before 700 B.C., by which date, as we have seen, the custom in some form was already established. It would be interesting to know when exactly Delphi first took a hand in the business, but at any rate it says much for the power of conservatism when backed by the influence of the oracle that this distressing penance could be renewed and maintained down to the end of the Hellenistic age.²

¹Cf. with Wilhelm, the penance for the death of the regent Pausanias, p. 197 *supra*, or for the burning of the temple of Athena of Assesos, p. 146 *supra*.

For modern discussions of this subject cf. Wilhelm, *op. cit.* Leaf, *Troy*, pp. 126 ff. Nilsson, *Homer and Mycenae*, pp. 46 ff. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults*, pp. 294 ff.

CHAPTER IV

THE ORACLE AND GREEK RELIGION

(b) *Dionysus*

So far all the ritual which we have examined has been in honour of the chief Olympian deities. These, as we have seen, were really independent of Delphi in their general worship, and only received special variations in their cult at the instructions of the oracle. But one major deity stood in quite a special relation to Delphi: this was Dionysus. Our authorities preserve more instances of Delphic responses concerning Bacchic worship than concerning all the other Olympian deities put together. Also they are often not merely concerned with modifications of an already existing worship, but represent the Pythia as advising the first introduction of the cult of Dionysus in places where it was previously not observed.

One reason for this difference is obviously that Dionysus alone among the major deities who were accepted as truly Hellenic was represented as a comparative newcomer. Tradition told of his conquering march from the East to Greece, or described many local instances where his coming to a particular city had been violently resisted by the king, only to end in the triumphant overthrow of opposition. These legends seem on one side to be based on fact, in that Dionysus was the latest of the Olympians to win general recognition. Even in Homer's time he had failed to obtain any prominent position in the Epic legends. So while anything like a precise chronology is impossible, it is safe to assert that the Dionysiac cult did not receive its full extension and importance till after 700 B.C., and so its growth fell within the period when the influence of the Delphic oracle was considerable. By contrast the Pythia can never have been in a position to spread the cult of Zeus because its diffusion antedated her period of power. But Dionysus did not fully emerge till the time when he could be assisted by the Pythia's answers.

There was another reason why Dionysus should be mentioned often in Delphic responses. At some period before the

sixth century which cannot be more precisely determined, he had obtained a firm foothold at Delphi, and even secured a position in the innermost sanctuary of the Pythian temple.¹ The cult of Dionysus was recognized by the Delphians as official in company with that of Apollo. Delphic women were organized into bands of *Thyiades* in his honour, a great Bacchic festival was celebrated every second year, and it was even reckoned later that the three months of winter were a time when Apollo was absent from Delphi and Dionysus remained supreme in his place. Within the innermost sanctuary beside the golden image of Apollo was kept a base which was claimed to be the tomb of Dionysus. For from primitive periods this god was worshipped both as dead and as living, even before Orphic theology erected an elaborate system on this ancient tenet. In view of all these facts it is not surprising that Plutarch with pardonable exaggeration declared that Dionysus had no less a share in Delphi than Apollo.

Of the Delphic responses on Dionysus, which are either quoted or alluded to, many resemble those which we have already seen. They were the ground for worshipping him under a special title or with peculiar local ceremonies. For instance, in the annual procession of images into the temple of Dionysus at Sicyon the second was that of 'Dionysus, called *Lysios*, which a Theban, Phanes, on the instructions of the Pythia brought from Thebes,'² at the time of the second, unsuccessful, return of the *Heraclids*. This tradition may be partly mythical, but the connection with Thebes is probably genuine enough. It was the nearest other centre of Dionysiac worship to Delphi, and it shared with Delphi that peculiar view of Dionysus as a dead god.

The ritual of Dionysus *Aigobolos* (the Goat-Slayer) near Thebes was based on a Delphic oracle.³ It was said that once the worshippers driven to frenzy by the god had slain his priest. The involuntary impiety was punished by a plague till Delphi prescribed that they should sacrifice a handsome boy each year to the god. But not long afterward Apollo allowed them to substitute a goat for the boy, and this continued to be the ritual and became the origin of the god's local title. Here one would like to believe that the later Delphic oracle was

¹Cf. *supra*, p. 15.²Paus. II, vii, 6.³Paus. IX, viii, 2.

genuine, the human sacrifice which preceded it was merely a savage survival, which subsequent legend tried to explain as ordained also by Delphi.

In Athens similarly the title of Dionysus Melanaigis (of the Black Aegis) was explained by a legendary oracle from Delphi. The Athenian general, Melanthus, engaged in single combat with the Boeotian king, Xanthus, for Melaenae, or some other border town (for ancient authorities differed). The Pythia had prophesied ¹

'The Black Man (Melas) having wrought death for the Fair man (Xanthus) was holding Melaenae'

The puns on their names suggested that the Athenian would be victorious. As the fight commenced, Melanthus saw a figure with a black aegis appear behind Xanthus. He called out that it was unfair to come two against one, and when Xanthus looked behind to see his unknown supporter, Melanthus stabbed him to death. The victory was attributed to an apparition of Dionysus of the Black Aegis and supposed to be celebrated by the festival called the Apaturia, because by false etymology this could mean 'the feast of deception'. This story, which is obviously not historical, combines a traditional popular stratagem with the old folk-tale motive, found also in the mummies' play of the Saracen and St George. It had no necessary connection with Dionysus, but the convenient cult-title suggested the association. Another legend of much more typically Bacchic pattern explained the same epithet of Melanaigis by a different oracular response given to Eleuther, the mythical eponym of Eleutherae, when his daughters had been driven mad for insulting Dionysus ².

Particular local customs, as well as epithets, were attributed to Delphic influence—for instance the practice whereby at Alea in Arcadia women underwent flagellation in Dionysus' temple,³ or the ritual race held by the Dionysiad girls in his honour in Sparta,⁴ or the worship paid to certain wooden images of Dionysus in the market-place of Corinth.⁵

¹Hellanicus, *FGrH* 4 F 125 Ephorus, *FGrH* 70 F 22 Conon, *FGrH* 26 F 1, xxxix Polyæn I, xix Schol. Aristid p 112

²Suidas, s v *Mélan*

³Paus VIII, xxii, 1

⁴Paus III, xii, 7 Cf Athen XIII, 574 D Hesychius, s v *Διονυσιάδες*

⁵Paus II, ii, 7

A good historic example where Delphi chose to put forward the honour of Dionysus in preference to others is presented by the cult of Dionysus Phallenos on Lesbos. Some fishermen at Methymna brought up in their nets a face made out of olive wood.¹ Its appearance suggested something divine, but bore no relation to any of the recognized gods of Greece. The men of Methymna consulted the Pythia to what god or hero the likeness belonged. The answer was an instruction to worship it as Dionysus Phallenos.

'But it would be much better for the dwellers in Methymna, if they honour the head of Dionysus Phallenos.'

This they did, keeping the wooden original themselves and setting up a bronze copy at Delphi as a memorial.

Here we evidently have a historic occurrence. The olive-wood face was probably nothing but a natural curiosity, as the ancient sceptic, Oenomaus, supposed. But of course, even if the Delphic priests had recognized it as such, it would have suited ill with their reputation not to find a divinity in it. The wine-god was appropriate to the vine-growing district of Methymna, no doubt he had already been worshipped there under other titles. But one may take it also that the choice of Dionysus for the identification was influenced by a real leaning towards his worship on the part of the Delphians.

There are numerous other fragments of Delphic oracles or allusions to Dionysiac worship which suggest further interest of the Pythia in Bacchic matters. For instance, we find her giving advice on wine drinking.²

'Drink wine on the lees, since you do not dwell in Anthedon, nor in holy Hypera where you used to drink your wine without the lees.'

These words seem to have become proverbial in antiquity when the true context was already forgotten. Again we have cited as oracles such queer fragments as

*'Dip Dionysus the fisherman in the place of the fishermen,'*³
or the reference to

¹Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E. V.*, 233 D. Paus. *X.*, xix, 3.

²Plut. *Moral.* 295 D. Athen. *I.*, 31 B. Pollux, *VI.*, xvi. Suidas, s.v. Ἀλθηφίας. Cf. Halliday, *Plutarch's Greek Questions*, p. 111.

³Schol. V. L. *Iliad*, *VI.*, 136. Plut. *Moral.* 914 D. probably it is corrupt. See Tümpel, *Philologus*, *N. F.* *XI.*, p. 685.

'Dionysus of the much joy, a pillar to the Thebans' ¹

But these are only straws to show the way the wind blew.² More significant are the instances where Delphi is associated with the vindication and introduction of the cult. For instance, a Syracusan legend told of a grisly punishment on Cyanippus, who refused to sacrifice to Dionysus.³ In the legend his infatuation was associated with a plague and a response of the Pythia. Even more detailed is an Achaean legend in which, as in that of Dionysus Aigobolos, Delphi figures twice. Comaetho, the priestess of Artemis Triclaria, had broken her vow of chastity in love for Melanippus.⁴ A famine caused the inhabitants to consult Delphi, which disclosed the impiety and prescribed that the guilty pair must be sacrificed to Artemis and the rite repeated every year with the fairest youth and maiden. But Delphi also warned them that a strange king would come to their land bringing a foreign deity and would stop the sacrifice to Artemis Triclaria. Years later Eurypylus was returning from the Trojan War with an image of Dionysus in a chest. He was driven infatuated by the god at intervals and in this circumstance he made his way to Delphi to consult Apollo on a remedy, and was instructed to set up the chest where he found men offering a strange sacrifice, and make his home there. He was driven to Achaea by storm, found the sacrifice to Artemis in progress, and stopped the ceremony which was not repeated in that form. Instead, Eurypylus introduced the worship of Dionysus Aisymnetes, the god in the chest.

The story is mythical, but may be roughly true in its lines. Again, as in the case of Dionysus Aigobolos, but more certainly here, one can suspect that the alleged oracle prescribing a human sacrifice was not authentic. Obviously, at least the prophetic warning of the coming of the strange king was invented simply to pave the way for the account of Eurypylus' arrival. Eurypylus in his present form as a Thessalian king fighting at Troy is not an historic character. But there is probably some foundation in fact to the picture of Dionysus

¹ Clemens Alex. *Strom.* I, 418P, not actually stated to be Delphic.

² Cf. also *Eph. Arch.* 1884, p. 47. *Ditt. Syll.* 1014, 145. Paus. II, xxxi, 5. *IG* II², 1326, XII, 3, 329.

³ *Plut. Moral.* 310B.

⁴ Paus. VII, xix.

Aisymnetes as an intrusive cult from abroad, which was sponsored by Delphi and led to the abolition of the cruder practices of human sacrifice

An inscription from Magnesia on the Maeander gives a more rational account of another introduction of Dionysiac worship on instructions from Delphi.¹ It records that in a certain magistracy the people of Magnesia enquired of Apollo 'concerning a sign that was given, in that when a plane-tree in the town was broken by the wind, there was found in it an image of Dionysus what does this signify and by what procedure can the people continue unafraid?' The answer was

'Magenians who have acquired a sacred city on the waters of the Maeander and defend our possessions, you have come to enquire from my mouth what the word will be to you, since Bacchus has appeared lying in a bush. He was revealed still like a boy, because when you set up your city, you did not found well-carved temples for Dionysus. But even so, O powerful people, establish temples of the god who delights in the thyrsos, and appoint a priest holy and fit for the task. Go then to the holy plain of Thebe, that there you may take Maenads, who are of the family of Cadmean Ino. They will give you the orgiastic rites and good customs and will establish guilds of Bacchus in your city.'

The instructions were evidently carried out to the letter, for the inscription goes on to record the names of the three Maenads, the guilds which they founded and the separate place of their burial. The whole was recorded in the first century A.D. by a veteran devotee of Dionysus, who describes the oracular response as 'ancient'. Unfortunately we cannot determine the original date of the enquiry, but it is described with full particulars of a state document and need not be treated in any way as a pious forgery. The absence of any conspicuously mythological element makes such an hypothesis very unlikely. The wording of the oracle would suggest a date not earlier than the end of the fifth century B.C.,

¹Kern, *Inchriften von Magnesia*, No. 215. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Hermes*, XXX, p. 180, supposes that the first line alludes to help given by the Magnesians in the Third Sacred War, and so would date the response soon after that event. Kern (*Die Religion der Griechen*, Vol. III, p. 162) more probably dates the help to the Gallic invasion. Grainger, *Delphes et son Oracle*, pp. 25 ff., suggests that this oracle was the occasion for the dedication of the famous Column of the Dancers at Delphi. If this theory were accepted, the response would belong before 373 B.C.

and the reference to Dionysus as youthful would be suited best by the art type of the later fourth century. So probably it was somewhere about this time that the incident took place. What the explanation of the sign was, we cannot now determine. It might have had a natural origin as with Dionysus Phallos, or, perhaps even, it was a figure of the god, 'planted' there by a devotee of Dionysus, who wished to obtain public recognition for his cult. At any rate, we find Delphi not only enjoining on the Magnesians a cult of Dionysus, but instructing them to fetch initiates from Thebes, who may organize the rites correctly. Once more, as at Sicyon, Thebes is the immediate source of the cult propagated by Delphi.

As a final example of the importation of Bacchic worship under the influence of Delphi we may take Athens. The Athenians had several different accounts of the introduction of this cult, which were not necessarily inconsistent with each other, but corresponded to the different directions from which the Dionysiac worship reached Athens itself. The oldest legend told how Dionysus himself stayed with Icarius, the eponymous hero of the deme Icaria, and sent his host to spread the news of the wine-god in Attica.¹ But when those to whom Icarius first gave wine collapsed, overcome by the new drink, their relations took Icarius for a poisoner, and slew him. His dog guided Icarius' daughter, Erigone, to the tree beneath which her father lay, and she hung herself in grief. Attica was consequently struck with a plague till the Delphic oracle was consulted. The Pythia warned them of their impiety against Dionysus and instructed them to worship him along with Icarius, Erigone, and the dog. As a special charm against the blood of Erigone, they were to hang up figures and masks to swing in trees.

This story is simply a local legend of the deme Icaria, which brings the new god into association with the local hero. There is the usual motive of irreverent resistance to the first coming of the god, and the fate of Erigone was invented to explain the ritual practice of attaching charms to trees to drive off evil powers.² The dog was traditionally changed into the Dog-Star, and the heat of the climate at its rising was associated

¹E.g. *Aelian*, *NA* VII, 23, and *frag.* 88.

²Cf. the Charila ritual at Delphi for another example of the hanging puppet associated with Dionysus and authorised by an oracle, *Plut. Moral.* 293 E.

with the wrath of Dionysus. This idea explains another oracle said to have been given to the Athenians when plagued with a heat wave¹

'For the twenty days before the Dog and the twenty thereafter in a shady house use Dionysus as a healer'

This appears to be a practical piece of advice not to drink wine in the sun or in excessive quantities at the hottest time of the year. Whether it can have had any occult meaning to the initiate, our authorities do not enlighten us.

There was a second account of the introduction of wine to Athens, in which it was associated particularly with the festival of the Choes ('Pots')². The missionaries this time were Aetolians, who were similarly killed for the apparent harm which the wine had wrought. The death of the Aetolians was avenged by a famine, and the Pythia prescribed the festival of the Choes, at which libations (Choae) were offered to the dead. This aetiological legend had its origin in the fact, noted also by modern scholars, that the festival of the Choes, though superficially concerned with Dionysus, had originally been something more in the nature of an All Souls' festival. This underlying element in the ritual was explained away by the story of the Aetolians.

The third Attic tradition concerned the Dionysus of Eleutherae, a deme on the borders of Attica and Boeotia³. We are told that this form of the god was introduced by Pegasus of Eleutherae, and that he was supported by a Delphic oracle, which reminded the Athenians of the former visit of Dionysus to the house of Icarius. It is unfortunate that the actual words of this response are not preserved. For the instances of Icarius and the vague anonymous Aetolians are obviously legendary, but the coming of Pegasus may have been a genuinely historical event. Some ancient authorities have tricked it out with the usual features of resistance to the god, plague, and subsequent oracle. Yet apart from these fictitious details some successful mission must once have come from Eleutherae to Athens, or else one cannot explain how it happens that the Dionysus of

¹Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *PE* V, 225. C. Athen. I, 22. E. Hesychius, s.v. Πινυῖος Διδύμοις, cf. Hesiod, frag. 231. Lobeck (*Aglaophamus* p. 1086) suggests that there may be a metaphorical allusion to the ritual use of umbrellas at the Bacchic festivals in the summer.

²Aelian, frag. 73.

³Paus. I, 11, 5. Philochorus ap. Athen. II, 38. C. Schol. Aristoph. *Acharn.* 241.

Eleutherac was the chief form of the deity worshipped in Athens itself. But the event is incorrectly dated by our tradition. in the only places where a time is fixed for Pegasus he is placed in the reign of the mythical king Amphictyon, while other authorities date the visit of Dionysus himself to Icaria in the following reign. Clearly there was no evidence behind this dating. Whether Pegasus' name is really that of the original prophet of the cult remains unproved. The name recurs as that of a Hyperborean at Delphi so it may be derived from Delphic legend. In any case his was the only mission in which we need suppose that the oracle was immediately concerned from the beginning. Its legendary associations with Icaria and the Choes can only be taken to show that Delphi was well disposed to the Dionysiac cult and may have been willing later to claim a share in its propagation.

One document from much later times illustrates further the importance which the Pythia continued to attach to Dionysus. Demosthenes in the mid-fourth century, when wishing to emphasize the solemnity of the Dionysiac festival, quotes two oracles about it, one from Delphi, the other from Dodona. Unfortunately, he does not state when they were given nor what enquiry had been made by Athens to Apollo. From the oracles themselves it looks as if the question has been a general one touching the health and fortune of the city, not some specific enquiry whether to admit a particular Bacchic rite or to avert an immediate disaster. Of course the two oracles need not have been delivered on the same occasion. Probably Demosthenes had merely looked up the two most recent oracles mentioning Dionysus, which he could find.

The Delphic response reads ¹

'I say to the sons of Erechtheus, all who dwell in the city of Pandion and direct their festivals by ancestral laws, be mindful of Bacchus, and through your broadwayed streets set up, all of you together, a bounty of the season's fruits to Bromius, and after covering your heads with garlands offer meat-sacrifice on the altars.'

These verse instructions for a Dionysiac feast were followed by some prose directions for other worship. 'For health, sacrifice and pray to Zeus the Highest, Heracles, and Apollo the defender. For good fortune, to Apollo of the roads, Leto

¹Dem. XXI, 51 ff.

and Artemis, set up mixing-bowls and dances and wear garlands in the ancestral manner in honour of all the Olympian gods and goddesses, lifting up your right and left hands individually, and give public thankofferings'¹

The uninspired diction of the verses suggests a date somewhere near Demosthenes' own day. The instructions are mostly conventional, but if this is a fair sample, once more we find Delphi holding forward Dionysus as a deity of chief importance. It is interesting in passing to note one strong difference between this Delphic oracle and the Dodonaean one which follows it. Zeus of Dodona reminds the Athenians of their neglect of his festival and shamelessly prescribes a series of sacrifices and a dedication for himself. The Pythian Apollo with dignified reticence orders sacrifices and rites in honour of all deities, and while mentioning particularly those connected with Delphi leaves the Athenians to make their offerings to the temples in Attica.

Thus Dionysus in his aspect of the wine-god had evidently been fostered in Attica by the Delphic oracle. Another close link between Delphi and Athens in Dionysiac worship came at each two-yearly festival on Parnassus.² Then the Athenians sent their guild of Thyiads in pilgrimage from Athens to join in the ritual dances and orgies of the Delphic Thyiads. The route which they followed was a sacred road which Athenian tradition claimed had been made by their citizens for Apollo himself when he first went from Delos, his birthplace, to Delphi. The Homeric Hymn to Apollo brings him direct from Olympus through Thessaly and Boeotia to Pytho, but the Athenians supposed that he had come from Delos to their territory, and commemorated the belief by sending at intervals a sacred mission to Delphi, called the Pythais. This marched along the sacred road preceded by a vanguard of men with axes, who were supposed to recall the original pacification of the way.³ The ritual included the fetch-

¹In [Dem.] XLIII, 66, there is quoted a very similar response in prose only, given to the Athenians on the occasion of some 'sign in the heavens', about which Apollo had been consulted.

²Paus. X, iv, 3.

³For the Pythais, cf. Isaeus, VII, 27. Strabo, IX, C 404. Aristides, (Jebb) Vol. I, p. 189. Schol. Aesch. *Eum.* 11. Philochorus, *FHG* Vol. I, p. 411, No. 158 = Schol. Soph. *O. C.* 1102, and *Fouilles*, III, 11, *passim*. For the most recent discussion see Daux, *Delphes au II^e et au I^{er} siècle*, Part 3, chap. 6, esp. p. 579.

ing of sacred fire from the temple of Apollo to Athens, and in the records of its later revivals between 138 and 97 B.C. we find reference to the many prophecies which had prescribed the Pythais, and 'an oracle of the god for the health of all the citizens and their women and children and friends and allies', which had authorized its celebration as an eight-yearly festival. This attempt to make the Pythais periodic was a substitute for the older system, whereby it had been sent at rare intervals in accordance with omens drawn from lightning flashes. In its final revival the Pythais of the Athenian state appears also to have incorporated a local festival of the Marathonian Tetrapolis, which had previously sent its processions to Delos or Delphi in accordance with its own special prognostics.

These examples all demonstrate the extraordinarily close connection which subsisted between Attica and Delphi in matters of religion. Athens, like Sparta, possessed a special board of officials charged with the duty of preserving and interpreting Delphic oracles—the three Exegetai Pythochrestoi.¹ These priests were nominated by the Pythia, presumably from a short list submitted by the Athenians. On constitutional questions Sparta had in later times an even stronger tradition of dependence on the Pythia's responses. But no city was more bound in religious matters to the Pythian Apollo than Athens. This attachment to Delphi was constantly shown among Athenians by the custom of addressing Apollo as 'Patroos'—the 'ancestral god'.² This title was nominally derived from the Pythian Apollo's relation to Ion, but was not recognized in the other cities which claimed Ionian descent. Also Theseus, the traditional founder of Athens, was supposed to have made a pilgrimage to Delphi and dedicated his shorn hair to Apollo, and this legend was the prototype for an Athenian practice in classical times.³

It is only natural that Delphi recognized this association with Athens and frequently addressed the city in terms of high praise. Demosthenes⁴ cites the Pythia as calling Athens

¹ See the detailed discussion in Axel Persson's *Die Exegeten und Delphi* (Lund, 1918), and cf. *J.G.* 1² 77, with Wade-Gery's corrections *B.S.A.* XXXIII, pp. 123 ff.

² E.g. Plato, *Euthyd.* 302D; Dem. XVIII, 141, etc. etc.

³ Plut. *Thes.* v 1; Theophr. *Charact.* xxi; Schol. *Iliad.* II, 11. Cf. Theopompus, frag. 240 (Oxford) for the same rite practised by Sicyonians at Delphi, and cf. p. 421 infra.

⁴ *Ep.* IV, 3; *Athen.* V, 187D; cf. VI, 254B.

the most fortunate and most beloved by the gods of all cities: other authors add that it was addressed as 'the hearth and central hall of the Greeks'. The most magnificent and lengthy eulogy of Athens occurs in a second century B.C. Delphic inscription, where she is praised for her civilizing influence in introducing agriculture, the Eleusinian mysteries, and musical and dramatic contests.¹ This Amphictyonic decree was concerned with the rights of the Dionysiac guild of actors and illustrates again both the close relations of Athens and Delphi and the interest of Delphi in the cult of Dionysus. For in the Hellenistic period, when there was little more scope for extending the worship of the god, Delphi became the chief patron of the different guilds of Dionysiac actors that had grown up, and amphictyonic decrees illustrate its good relations with these bodies at Athens, at the Isthmus and in Ionia.²

¹*Fouilles*, III, 11, No. 69. Cf. 70 with reference to the 'oracles of the god' governing the practices of the Dionysiac festivals.

²Cf. Daux, *Delphes*, pp. 356 ff., 564 ff. *IG* XI, 4, 1061 and *BCH* LIX, pp. 210 ff. —a decree referring to other oracles on *ασουλία* for the Dionysiac guild at various festivals. Cf. Michel, 1014, as restored by L. Robert, *Études Anatoliennes*, p. 449.

CHAPTER V

THE ORACLE AND GREEK RELIGION

(c) *The Heroes*

So far we have considered the responses of the Pythian Apollo where they concern the cult of the chief Olympian gods, but there are equally important relations with the minor Olympians and the heroes. Chief among these minor Olympians is Heracles, only to be reckoned below the other gods on account of his period of life as a mortal. Here again we find that Delphi was much concerned with the newcomer to Olympus with this difference while there is no general statement that the Pythia spread the worship of Dionysus, it is abundantly demonstrated by particular instances, but though the Pythia was claimed as the general authority for the cult of Heracles, local instances are almost entirely lacking. Arrian reproduces a statement that 'no divine honours were paid to Heracles in his life, nor after his death till the god at Delphi had issued an oracle to honour him as divine'.¹ No doubt this was the conventional view of the Greeks, because it would have made the deification of Heracles parallel to the process applied to other human beings worshipped after death, as we shall see later. The temple of Heracles at Cynosarges near Athens seems to be the only one known to possess a foundation-oracle: it is a silly yarn about a white dog, which snatched a sacrifice—merely a piece of false etymology.² Plutarch contains one obscure reference which seems to mean that the Pythia once advised the Spartans for their good to employ oaths by Heracles taken in the open air.³ But otherwise there are no particular instances where Delphi appears as propagating his cult.

The bulk of the legends about Heracles and Delphi concern his life as a mortal, and come from rather late authorities when the primitive myths had been shaped systematically into something like a biography or a life of a saint. In this story the

¹ Arrian, *Anab.* IV, xi, 7. Cf. Aristides (Jebb), Vol. I, p. 33, for an assertion that the oracle was first given to Athens.

² Paus. I, xix, 3. Suidas, s.v. εἰς Κυνόσαργες, Photius, Hesychius, Steph. Byz., etc.

³ Plut. *Moral.* 271C.

Delphic oracle conveniently supplies the motives for acts which might otherwise remain unexplained. For instance, the labours of Heracles systematized to the number of twelve were enjoined by the Pythia as a necessary preliminary before his acquiring of immortality. Heracles, after he had murdered his children in a fit of madness, consulted Delphi on his future home, and was told to remove to Tiryns where he must serve Eurystheus in the tasks which he put upon him, and after that he would be immortal¹. Also it was said that then for the first time the Pythia greeted him with his true name, for up to that time he had been known as Alcides².

'And "Heracles" Phoebus calls you by name, for by doing service (Era) to men you will win and possess imperishable fame (Cleos).''

This derivation is, of course, philologically hopeless. Evidently it was the product of the elementary attempts at etymology, such as we find in the Sophistic movement.

Later in his life Heracles again consulted Delphi after the murder of Iphitus on the method of being purged of his guilt³. But the Pythia refused to give him a response and Heracles in rage picked up the tripod, and was carrying it away when Apollo stopped him. A battle between the two would have followed, but Zeus (according to our literary authorities) or Athena (judging from the representations in archaic art) intervened, and the god and the hero were reconciled. Heracles restored the tripod, and Apollo gave a response, that he must be sold as a slave and serve Omphale, queen of Lydia, for three years.

This consultation of the oracle is primitive in contrast with the other, which is a comparatively later invention. Homer knew of quite another motive for the service to Eurystheus, it was not a penance for Heracles' involuntary slaying of his children, but was a consequence of a heedless oath made by Zeus before his birth. But the carrying off of the tripod was

¹ Apollodorus, II, iv, 12. Nicolaus of Damascus, *F Gr H* 90 F 13, where the response is given to Amphitryon. Contrast *D S* IV, x, 7, xxvi, 4, where it is not connected with this murder.

² Aelian, *V H* II, 32. Et Magn. s v 'Ἡρακλῆς'. Schol. T. *Iliad*, XIV, 34.

³ Apollodorus, II, vi, 2. *D S* IV, xxix, 1, xxxi, 5. Hyginus *Fab* xxxii (where this incident comes after the murder of his children). *Plut Moral* 387 D, 411 A. Paus III, xxi, 8. *Cic de Nat Deor* III, xvi, 42. Zenob V, 48. Schol. *Pind Ol* IX, 43. Also cf. *Plut Moral* 557 C, Paus VIII, xv, 5, for the variant that Heracles removed the tripod to Pheneus in Arcadia.

known at latest before the middle of the sixth century, as we can judge from its frequent occurrence in archaic art. Also the motive with its naively savage conception of warring gods is not the product of a sophisticated age. It can well be far older than the story of Heracles' service in Lydia, which merely comes in as a convenient occasion for the attempted consultation. Later pedants amplified the story with a further detail, the Pythia Xenocleia shocked at Heracles' violence cried.¹

'The Heracles of Tiryns is indeed another, and not the Heracles of Canopus.'

This invention is a product of the time when a misplaced erudition was trying to explain the peculiarities and inconsistencies of Greek mythology by supposing the existence of several different gods of the same name. The verbal origin of the oracle appears to have been a popular Greek phrase, 'Another Heracles,' which simply meant an exclamation applied to any person of extraordinary strength.² Besides this response, there are a number of minor oracles connected with Heracles in different authors—a foundation-oracle for him to send a colony to Sardis, another foundation-oracle for him to visit Ace,³ based on a specious etymology, and a story that he was prevented from sacking Pisa in his conquest of Elis, owing to a Delphic oracle.⁴

'My father cares for Pisa and has given me charge of Pytho'

This was apparently taken to mean that Pisa was under the care of Zeus himself and must be left unravaged. Finally, according to Diodorus,⁵ after Heracles had been burned by the shirt of Nessus, he sent Licymnius and Iolaus to consult the Delphic oracle how to end his pains, and the Pythia instructed them to take Heracles to Octa, build a huge pyre and leave the rest to Zeus. Thus even the apotheosis of Heracles was connected with the Pythian Apollo.

The real facts behind Heracles' relations with Delphi appear to be that he was originally a deity worshipped by the inhabitants of Boeotia and various other northern tribes. As a

¹Paus. X, xiii, 7.

²Aristotle, *Magn. Mor.* 1213 a 12. Aelian, *V. H.* XII, 22, etc.

³D. S. IV, xxxix, 1. Steph. Byz. Ἀκτῆ.

⁴Paus. V, iii, 1, and vide [Aristotle], *Mir. Ausc.* 834 b 24.

⁵D. S. IV, xxxviii, 1.

neighbouring god to Delphi, he must once have come into conflict with the worship of Apollo. The story of the plundering of the tripod points to this conclusion, and can be further interpreted as a sign that Heracles once set out to rival Apollo as a giver of oracles. Apollodorus in recording the incident actually says, 'and Heracles wished to set up his own oracle-centre'. Other authorities record occasional prophecies of Heracles given during his mortal life,¹ and one² tradition of the death of the Heraclid, Aristodemus, was that he had been killed by Apollo because, instead of consulting Delphi about his return to the Peloponnese, he had inquired from Heracles on the subject. Similarly³ a local legend of Ambracia explained why the inhabitants, while sacrificing to Apollo the Saviour, reckoned that their city really belonged to Heracles. According to this story Apollo, Artemis, and Heracles referred to Cragaleus, the son of Dryops, the question which of them was to possess Ambracia. On hearing their different claims he decided for Heracles and was punished by the enraged Apollo by being turned into stone. Here again we find Heracles in rivalry with two of the great Delphic deities. Also Cragaleus is an interesting figure, for besides being a hero worshipped by the Ambraciots in conjunction with Heracles, he was the eponym of that mysterious family, the Cragalidae, whom Aeschines groups with the Crisaeans as enemies of Delphi.⁴ The history of this family, if it ever was historical, had faded from Greek memory before the Hellenistic scholars recorded it, because the late commentators on Aeschines can offer no explanation of the name. Clearly, however, these scattered allusions are relics of a period of rivalry between the two deities, Apollo and Heracles. The struggle of tribal cults, as in the myth, ended in a reconciliation. Heracles was recognized as divine at Delphi and one of the months was named after him, but his prophetic activities were reduced to insignificance by the growth of Apollo's oracle. The struggle for the tripod as a graphic subject appealed to late archaic art and, apart from that circumstance, this legend might have vanished. The myth

¹ D S IV, xxv, 7. Conon, *FGrH* 26 F 1. iii. Herodorus *FGrH* 31 F 13. For oracles of Heracles in historic times, e.g. Paus. VII, xxv, 10, *IG* VII, 1829.

² Paus. III, 1. 6. Contrast Apollodorus, II, viii, 2, etc.

³ Antoninus Liberalis, 4.

⁴ III, 107, cf. Schol. ad loc. and Harpocration, s.n. On the subject, see pp. 116 ff. Preller, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, Delphica, p. 233.

tended instead to represent Heracles as the trusty servant of Apollo, who conquers the Dryopes¹ (in spite of Cragaleus' connection with them) and slays Cycnus, the enemy of Delphi.² The practice of purification at Delphi made it convenient to suppose that Heracles came there after some of his deeds of violence, and his labours and wanderings, already invented by local traditions, made a convenient penance for the Pythia to impose. Finally, when it was accepted that he had become changed on death from a mortal into a god, it was natural to associate the change with the Delphic oracle, which was the usual authority on the canonization of heroes.

After Heracles one can briefly note Orpheus, another hero who was alternatively a servant or a rival of Apollo. The usual tradition showed Orpheus as the son of Apollo and a muse, inheriting from both parents the gift of song. There is even an obituary oracle on him, which may have been supposed to emanate from Delphi.³

'Woeful Pierians, you will pay a hideous suffering as penalty for having slain Orpheus, Apollo's dear son'

But Philostratus⁴ has preserved a story which shows a different attitude on the part of Apollo. He tells that Orpheus' head when carried to the shores of Lesbos after his death began to prophesy there, and was so popular a source of oracles that Apollo's shrines at Delphi, Gryneum, and Claros began to be deserted. At that Apollo came upon Orpheus while he was prophesying, and said, 'Cease from my business, I have indeed borne your singing long enough.' Apparently the head stopped speaking. This story might have been put on one side as late romanticizing, if it had not been that Robert discovered a representation of the subject on a late fifth-century B.C. Attic vase.⁵ Clearly it must be a reflection of some conflict between Orpheus and Apollo. But probably it never concerned Delphi, whose popularity was undoubtedly never affected by a Lesbian rival. The legend is local to Lesbos, where there was an Apolline oracle and where the conflict of cults took place at some early period.

Orpheus never received worship generally in Greece. Apart from Heracles, the only other mortal who was raised fully to

¹ Cf. *supra* p. 50.

² Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* IV, 313 A.

³ E.g. *JHS* XLI, 1921, p. 230.

⁴ Hesiod, *Scut.* 58 and 479 ff., etc.

⁵ *Vita Apollonis*, IV, xiv, *Heroicus*, VI, 3.

divine honours was Asclepius and he also had strong associations with Delphi. The original seat of his cult seems to have been Tricca in Thessaly, where he was in territory closely connected with the Pythian Apollo. Also the early versions of his legend mention Delphi. Apollo, his father, is there, according to Hesiod,¹ when he hears from the raven the tidings that Coronis, Asclepius' mother, has proved unfaithful. Also when Asclepius was fully grown, it was at Delphi according to Pherecydes² that he rashly ventured to use his art of medicine in raising the dead to life. Zeus punished his presumption by slaying him with a thunderbolt. Other versions of the death of Asclepius existed but one can take it that this was the Delphian one. He had a shrine there,³ and the Pythia was associated with propagation of his cult in Halicis, Athens and Rome.

The greatest temple of Asclepius in Greece was at Epidaurus. The close connection between Delphi and this place are shown by the Paean of Isyllus in honour of Asclepius composed towards the end of the fourth century. Also it is interesting to notice that Delphi was once put to the question on the subject of Asclepius. An Arcadian named Apollophanes actually enquired whether Asclepius' mother was Arsinoe and he was thus a citizen of Messenia.⁴ The reason of this question was that Messenia had a local sanctuary of Asclepius and a local legend which made him the son of a Messenian, not a Thessalian mother. But the Pythia stoutly rejected this nationalistic view.

'O Asclepius, springing as a mighty joy to all mortals, whom the Phlegyan, the lovely Coronis, when she had been joined with me in love, bore in rocky Epidaurus.'

This response both turned down the Messenian tradition and provided a piece of propaganda for Epidaurus, which puts it in place of Tricca, and also excludes the crude Thessalian legend of Coronis' infidelity to her divine lover. In these features it seems that the Delphic view had undergone revision.

¹Frag. 123. Cf. and contrast Pindar, *Pyth.* III, 24 ff.

²*FGH* 3 F 35. Cf. Pindar, *Pyth.* III, 54 ff., where the scene is not specified.

³Asclepius' cult at Delphi, *Fouilles*, III, 1, 394, iii, 66 ff. At Athens, *IG* II², 3, 4969 = *Ditt. Syll.* 3 1005, *Halicis, Syll.* 1169, xxxiii, and see *IG* XII, v, 155, for a Parian dedication to Asclepius of the imperial age. At Rome cf. *supra* p. 279.

⁴*Paus.* II, xxvi, 7. Cf. Apollodorus, III, x, 3, etc.

since the time when Pindar, a great exponent of Delphic tradition, wrote the Third Pythian Ode. No date is given for Apollopheanes' enquiry, but it would have little motive until after the restoration of Messenia in 370. The two cult centres of Epidaurus and Delphi worked as complements to each other. Asclepius healed the sick in conjunction with Apollo,¹ but did not answer general enquiries there, as he did in some other places. Apollo, though a god of healing, contented himself at Delphi with giving general responses, and was rarely concerned with the question of curing sickness.

An early tradition about the people of Epidaurus illustrates well the dealings of the Delphic oracle with another type of deity. Besides the Olympians and those immediately associated with them, the different parts of Greece possessed multitudes of local cults devoted to lesser supernatural powers, ranging from the native counterpart of some Olympian deity to the merest hero or *genius loci*. Sometimes these powers were functional in origin, sometimes the relics of some superseded pantheon. In either case they frequently were associated with oracles, particularly that of Delphi. For as we have seen that local cult-titles and peculiarities of the Olympian religion lent themselves to explanation by some prophetic command, so also the individual deity unrelated to the Olympian system required a revelation as the authority for his worship. As an Epidaurian instance shows, these cults could actually be propagated by Delphi itself. The land of Epidaurus had suffered from a famine, and the Pythia prescribed the setting up of images of 'Damia and Auxesia'.² To a further question it was answered that the material used was not to be bronze or stone, but wood of a cultivated olive-tree. The Epidaurians obtained this valuable material from Athens, the traditional source of sacred olives, in return for offerings paid to the Attic deities. In this instance it appears as if the Delphic oracle had invented two special functional powers to aid production and imagined an interesting appropriate material for their cult-statues. The name of Damia is obscure, but Auxesia clearly signifies the goddess of 'Growth'. One may wonder whether, if the Delphic priesthood had held as complete control over Greek religion

¹Cf. *I G* IV, I³, 121, heading.

²Herod. V, 100; Paus. II, 100, 4. Schol. Aristid. *Panath.* pp. 216 and 598.

as the Roman pontifices held in Rome, they would in the same way have produced an almost infinite system of special spirits presiding over every action of human life. But the opportunity was not given them this instance appears to come from the latter half of the seventh century B C In later times there is less evidence for this kind of response

Of the local heroes and heroines many were connected with the Delphic oracle, a curious instance is the legend of Coroebus¹ He was apparently a local hero of Megara, credited with the founding of the town of Tripodisci, but his legend had somehow become entangled with another from Argos, explaining the origin of some Apolline rites there. The result as given by our rather late authorities is rather confusing, but may be summarized thus Apollo's young son, Linus, was killed by a sheepdog in Argos So Apollo sent an evil spirit, called Vengeance, to ravage the country by snatching children from their mothers' arms Coroebus killed the monster, but the land was thereupon ravaged by a pestilence, till Coroebus went to Delphi to accept Apollo's punishment for the killing of Vengeance He was told by the Pythia, that he must not return to Argos, but must take up a tripod out of the temple and go carrying it till it fell from his shoulders, there he was to build a temple of Apollo and dwell himself He journeyed till, as he was climbing Mount Gerania in the Megarid, the tripod fell, and he made a village there called Tripodisci (Little Tripods) His grave was shown in historic times in the market-place of Megara with an inscription and ancient stone figures representing Coroebus slaying Vengeance The words of the epigram as quoted in a late version imply that Delphi had actually authorized the erection of the monument, perhaps at some time when Coroebus' bones were translated from Tripodisci to Megara²

The legend contains a perfect galaxy of Delphic motives—the hurt to Apollo revenged by pestilence, the visit to Delphi for purification from blood-guilt, the foundation-oracle of a town based on an omen and completed by an etymology On the

¹Paus I, xliii, 7 ff *Anthol Graec* VII, 154 Conon, *FGrH* 26 F 1, xix *Stat Theb* I, 570 ff Cf also Athen III, 99 E Aelian, *N A* XII, 34

²For instances elsewhere mentioned where Delphi was concerned with the translation of a hero's remains, see p 98 (Aristomenes), p 111 (Orestes), p 117 (Isamenus), p 114 (Arcas), p 138 (Adrastus), p 196 (Theseus), p 197 (Pausanias), p 202 (Rhesus), p 267 (Aratus), p 405 (Hesiod), and for a kind of spiritual translation p 128 (Salamonian heroes), p 177 (Aeacus)

Argive side the story accounted both for a rite of mourning for Linus and for a ceremonial sacrificing of dogs on a festival of Apollo. These various elements may have been brought together partly by folk-imagination, but no doubt it was assisted by some myth-making on the part of the Delphic priesthood on the occasion of some enquiry from Megara. As we shall see, Megara was particularly rich in hero-cults sanctioned by the Pythia.

Frequently, as perhaps in this instance of Coroebus, the Delphic oracle was concerned with the site of the tomb. A number of the graves of Greek heroes and heroines were pointed out in most unlikely places far from their traditional homes, or again there might even be rival claimants to the relics of a hero. In either instance an oracle would conveniently justify the anomaly. Thus the Megarians claimed to have the grave of Alcmena, the mother of Heracles.¹ This was strange at first sight since her traditional homes were either at Thebes or at Argos. But the Megarians explained that she died at Megara on the way between the two places, and the sons of Heracles, on consulting Delphi, were told it would be better to bury her where she was. This legend was no doubt invented by the Megarians to support their weak claim to this holy site. It needed authority, because Haliartus in Boeotia also claimed to possess the grave of Alcmena and quoted some unspecified oracle in support, while the Thebans alleged that her body had been brought to Thebes where it had vanished, its place being taken by a stone.² Evidently they could not claim to show any relics.

The worship accorded to the tombs of the departed was not always meant as a simple honour and recognition of merit. Sometimes it was in the nature of an atonement. The best example is the worship of the children of Medea at Corinth.³ The local legend differed from that used by Euripides in that Medea did not slay her own children: they were killed instead by the Corinthians themselves in vengeance for the murder of their king and his daughter. But the death of the children was

¹Paus. I, xli, 1

²Paus. IX, xvi, 7, and vide Plut. *Moral.* 378B, that there also oracular authority was claimed.

³Apollodorus, I, ix, 28. Paus. II, iii, 6. Aelian, *VH* v, 21. Schol. Pind. *O!* XIII 74. Schol. Eur. *Med.* 9 and 264. D. S. IV, lv, 1.

punished by a plague striking the babies of Corinth, till at the command of Apollo they instituted annual sacrifices to the sons of Medea and set up a statue of Terror. The rites included a mourning by the Corinthian boys, with their hair shorn and wearing black clothes

This alleged oracular response is simply a Corinthian invention to account for a primitive local custom which had occasional analogies elsewhere in Greece for instance, at Caphyae in Arcadia, where the legend helped also to explain a curious title of the local Artemis and included an alleged response from the Pythia.¹ The command to offer an atoning ritual need not, however, always have been a fiction. One example well within the historic period is found at Naples, where the people of Cumae in accordance with an oracle instituted a sacrifice and a torch race in honour of Parthenope.² As Diotimus, an Athenian admiral, was present at the institution, some date in the latter half of the fifth century B.C. seems to be indicated.

The chief importance of a hero's tomb to the community in which it was situated was found neither in its value as a memorial, nor in the need for appeasing its occupant, but in its potency for supernatural aid. The mere presence of heroic relics was a source of blessing in peace and good fortune in war. It was particularly as a talisman against foreign invasion that these departed spirits were worshipped, for most of them had been of legendary prowess in battle. But also their beneficent influence could operate in peace to keep off famine and disease. It did not necessarily follow that the best spiritual help was to be acquired from one's own ancestral dead particularly in war, the enemy might be routed most effectively if their own heroes were enshrined in the territory which they tried to conquer. Thus Oedipus resists the Theban invader at Colonus,³ and Eurystheus in Euripides' *Heracleidae* promises that he will fulfil a Delphic oracle by protecting Attica against enemies coming from the Peloponnese.⁴

'I will give you the benefit of an ancient oracle of Apollo. Bury me when I die where it is fated, beside the virgin goddess of

¹Paus. VIII, xxiii, 7. Cf. Callimachus ap. Clem. Alex. *Protrep.* II, 32 P.

²Lycophr. *Alex.* 732 with Schol. Serv. *Georg.* IV, 563.

³Soph. *O.C.* passim with Scholia on l. 57, where an oracle is quoted which Robert, (*Oedipus*, pp. 36 ff.) suggests was produced in 506 B.C. Schol. Aristid. p. 560.

⁴Eur. *Heracleidae*, 1026.

Pallene, and I, a resident alien, will lie in your land kindly disposed to you and a protector to your city, but to the descendants of these Herachidae most hostile whenever they come hither with a mighty force'

These lines written during the first years of the Peloponnesian War are full of the superstitious intensity which made the Athenians comfort themselves with any supernatural power which they could muster. The Pythian Apollo, once more, is the authority for the site of the hero's grave in foreign soil.

As we have already seen in our historical discussion, the Spartans on more than one occasion actually used the Delphic oracle as authority for the removal of the relics of a foreign hero to Sparta, and followed up this translation by claiming the sovereignty of the country and the hero's support in conquering it.¹ Another example of a Spartan talisman occurs in Plutarch's *Greek Problems*, where he asks why in Sparta a shrine of Odysseus was placed by the temple of the Leucippidae. The explanation which he gives tells how the Spartan kings received the Palladium and set it up near this temple. This lucky image had originally been stolen from Troy by Diomedes, and had decided the fortune of that city. Later it had been filched from Argos and brought to Sparta. The Spartan kings were eager not to lose it and consulted Delphi on the best protection.² The answer, based on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, was to make one of those who had originally stolen it the guardian. Diomedes as an Argive was out of the question, so the Spartans set up a shrine of Odysseus to protect the Palladium. Evidently this fancied relic, whenever acquired, was supposed to put in Spartan hands the fate of Argos, her primitive rival in the Peloponnese.

Sometimes Delphi was said to have authorized a translation of heroic relics not for political motives, but for general luck. The chief instance is that of Hector's bones, said to have been brought from Troy to Thebes in response to this oracle:³

'Thebans, dwelling in the city of Cadmus, if you would inhabit your native land with peerless wealth, fetch the bones of Hector,

¹Cf. *supra* pp. 111 ff.

²Paus. IX, xviii, 5. Aristodemus Thebanus, *F H G* Vol. III, p. 310, No. 6. *Lycophr. Alex.* 1205 ff.

³Plut. *Moral.* 302 C.

*son of Priam, to your homes from Asia, and by the commands of Zeus reverence him as a hero*¹

Certainly in historic times there was at Thebes a grave which received these tributes. But as the inhabitants of the Troad claimed that Hector's body still lay with them the story is open to serious doubts. Our other authorities try to strengthen the oracle by alleging a plague in Thebes as the occasion for the enquiry, but the oracle's words do not suit this interpretation. Hence it is more likely that the alleged translation of the bones is a figment and that the cult at Thebes, which may well have persisted from prehistoric times, was associated with the name of Hector by some later accretion of legend. It was natural that the Thebans should wish it to be believed that the dead whom they revered had been one of the great figures of Epic tradition. What made them select Hector in particular is unexplained. On this hypothesis the oracle was a forgery concocted to justify the local legend that the bones had been brought from Troy by providing a motive and a particular occasion.¹

Sometimes the Delphic oracle was required by those who consulted it to invent a suitable hero and so explain a mysterious object.² The most striking instance concerns the shoulder of Pelops. At some date unspecified, probably in the later sixth century, an Eretrian fisherman, named Demarmenus, drew up a shoulder-blade of superhuman size in his net. He kept it for some time, and at last consulted the Pythia on the identity of the bone and what he should do with it. At the time of his consultation an embassy from Elis also happened to be present asking for a remedy for a pestilence. The Delphic authorities ingeniously satisfied both enquiries by identifying the bone with the famous ivory shoulder of Pelops, and instructing the Eleans that they must recover this relic of a hero closely associated with their territory. The bone was removed to Olympia, where it was long preserved in the shrine of Pelops, while Demarmenus and his descendants enjoyed the privilege of acting as its guardians. To explain the difficulty in their account how the shoulder of Pelops had been lost in the sea off Euboea,

¹Cf Pfister, *Religionskultur*, pp 194 ff, and on Hector = 'Εχέλαος, Grace Macurdy, *Cl. Qu.* XX, p 180

²Paus. V, xiii, 4 ff and Parke in *Hermathena*, XXIII, pp 153 ff Cf the instance of Dionysus Phallosos p 338 supra

the Delphians offered the ingenious solution that it had been taken to Troy at the time of the Trojan war, as a talisman to help in taking that city, and was lost on the way back to Greece in a shipwreck. This fantastic legend, which seems only to have been invented to suit the circumstances of Demarmenus' find, occasionally reappears in post-Homeric accounts of the Trojan war. In it we can detect with fair certainty the Delphic authorities engaged in the process of myth-making to support the credit of their identification of a heroic relic.

More often the enquirer did not bring to Delphi an actual bone of the hero, but put before Apollo an account of an ominous appearance which required to be explained. The superhuman helper who was said to have been seen in the battle of Marathon slaying Persians with a ploughshare was identified by the Pythia afterwards with an agricultural hero—Echelaus—the man of the plough-share.¹ Or at Salamis a snake was said to have been seen among the ships engaged in the battle.² Delphi explained that this was a manifestation of Cychreus, a hero of Salamis who was legendarily associated with a snake. Occasionally the apparition might be hostile, and the consultation of the oracle was meant to discover a means not of honouring a good spirit, but of laying a bad one. For instance, we hear that a rock in the territory of Orchomenus was haunted by a ghost. Delphi identified this vision as the spirit of Actaeon, and prescribed that it could be laid by a combination of two methods. Any remains of Actaeon that could be found were to be buried, and a bronze figure of him was to be erected and secured with an iron chain to the rock. This would apparently act as sympathetic magic on the restless spirit, which was further appeased by an annual sacrifice offered to it as a hero. These instances were easy for Delphi to handle as the previous existence of cults or legends suggested an identity which merely needed to be confirmed by the Pythian Apollo as the conventional authority on such subjects.³

One isolated instance survives where it looks as if the Pythia had not intended any reference to heroic cults, but the enquirers for their own purpose insisted on taking the oracle in

¹Cf. *supra* p. 177.

²Paus. I, xxxvi, 1, ο θεός ἐχρησσε. For other obscure heroes associated with Delphi, cf. p. 319 (Lycus and Chimaereus), p. 328 (Scephrus).

³Paus. IX, xxxviii, 5.

that sense. In Megara the hall of the city-council was built so as to contain within it the tomb of some unspecified heroes.¹ This extraordinary circumstance was explained by the story that on the death of the last king the Megarians had consulted Delphi on the method of government which would give them happiness. They received the advice that they would prosper, if they took counsel with the majority. The Megarians alleged that this could be taken to refer to the dead under this term. Therefore they erected their council-chamber round a tomb of some heroes.

This story as told in Pausanias is adorned with proper names which cannot be fully historic. The last king is asserted to have been Hyperion, the son of Agamemnon, and the enquirer at Delphi, Aesymnus, who is evidently a mythical eponym of the council (the Aesymnetes). But it does not follow that the story is entirely mythical because of these suspicious details. The oracle, as paraphrased, may have been genuinely given to Megara. The chief argument in favour of the genuineness of the response is its strange ambiguity. If the Megarians had simply invented an oracle to justify the curious conjunction of council-chamber and tomb, it is very unlikely to have taken this odd form. On the other hand, if we take it that the Pythia's answer was genuinely in this form, one may well wonder whether the Megarians took it in the sense intended. Obviously the natural (and literal) sense of the words would be to advise a recourse to democratic government, and, in spite of the Pythian Apollo's reputation for ambiguity by which his oracles usually meant something else than their obvious meaning, it is probable the Delphic authorities did wish to recommend a less exclusive oligarchy. All they could do, however, was to issue a response: the interpretation of it and its application lay with the enquirer, and here it seems that the Megarian oligarchs saw their way to read a meaning into the oracle, which would not require them to lessen their privileged position. For once, therefore, the Pythia may not have intended to encourage hero-worship, but actually produced that effect.

So far the only hero-cults which we have considered have concerned beings whose historical existence was very doubtful and certainly not correctly transmitted by an authentic tradi-

¹Paus. I, xliii, 3

tion But the Delphic oracle was not concerned only with the mythologically great The form of canonization which an oracular response conferred might be bestowed on notable men of the historic past, even on those who were only lately dead. A border-line instance, where we have to deal with a historic character who had become involved in legendary trappings, is the poet, Aristeas, the son of Caystrobius, of Proconnesus As the author of a hexameter poem on the *Arimaspi*, he was an actual person living in his native city and in Cyzicus ¹ but his date is very uncertain and the accounts of his life represented him as a miracle-worker, who was a trusty servant of Apollo and ultimately did not die, but vanished from among men Two hundred and forty years after his disappearance (as Herodotus calculated) he reappeared again at the opposite end of the Greek world at Metapontum in South Italy The circumstances of the vision are not recorded, but the restored Aristeas gave his name and said that the Metapontines were to set up an altar to Apollo and erect a statue to Aristeas himself beside it He explained that it was to Metapontum alone of all the cities of Italy that Apollo had come and that he himself had accompanied him under the form of a crow, one of the birds traditionally associated with the god After these instructions Aristeas vanished again and the Metapontines consulted Delphi what this human apparition meant. The Pythia entirely endorsed the instructions of Aristeas, which were duly carried out

Herodotus had collected this story in Metapontum itself and compared it with the tales of Aristeas, which he had heard in Cyzicus Unfortunately, as he does not give his estimate for Aristeas' *floruit*, it is impossible to make out what exactly was the date assigned to his reappearance in Metapontum. Still the figure which Herodotus gives suggests that it must have occurred within a century or less of Herodotus' own day, and there is no reason to doubt that some alleged apparition had given occasion for this consultation of Aristeas and the Delphic oracle's order of canonization

Aristeas was in many ways a specially suitable subject for such honours through his devotion to Apollo, his translation from the earth, and his general reputation for miracles The

¹ Herod. IV, xiii, ff Strabo XIII, C 589, XIV, C 639, etc

remarkable fact is that in general the rank of hero was conferred by Delphi on quite a different class of persons and one which seems to the modern mind much less suitable for religious ennoblement. The favourite heroes created in historic times were athletes, and Delphi was responsible for a number of these in the period at the beginning of the fifth century. It was the golden age of Greek athletics, when the city-states were thriving and the aristocracies who prided themselves on success at the national games had not been superseded. At this time Delphi both assigned heroic honours to athletes of the more distant past and also canonized contemporaries shortly after their death. Of the early athletes one was Orrhippus of Megara, who was traditionally supposed to have been the first runner in the stadium at Olympia to strip himself nude (720 B.C.)¹ Somewhere in the beginning of the fifth century a tomb was erected to him in his native place with a verse inscription recording that this had been done in accordance with the instructions of Delphi. An even earlier victor to be honoured thus was Oebotas of Dyme in Achaea, who won the stadium in 756 B.C.,² and because he received no honours on this account from the Achaeans was said to have cursed them. In consequence they had failed to win at Olympia till at last they consulted Delphi, and erected in the Altis a statue to Oebotas, at which Achaean competitors offered sacrifice before their events and presented crowns if successful. For their luck returned after Oebotas had received heroic honours. This story has probably been rather improved in the telling, for the Olympic records show occasional victories for the Achaeans in the three centuries after Oebotas' success. But one need not doubt that for some reason, perhaps as a cure for supposed ill-success at Olympia, the Achaeans had been instructed to erect the statue to Oebotas in 460 B.C. and give him heroic honours.

Of contemporary athletes to receive similar distinction the earliest appears to be Cleomedes of Astypalaea.³ About him a fantastic story is also told, but again we can believe that it is founded on fact. He competed in boxing at the Olympic games of 492 B.C. and defeated all his opponents, but as he killed one

¹Hicks and Hill, No. 1. Cf. Schol. Thuc. I, vi, 3 contrast Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* VII, lxvii, 3.

²Paus. VI, iii, 8.

³Plut. *Rom.* xxviii, 5. Paus. VI, ix, 6 ff. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E.* V, 230 C.

of them in the contest the judges disqualified him. This humiliation, when he had just achieved the highest success, was too much for Cleomedes' brain. He returned to Astypalaea, but went insane there and in his ravings entered a school and pulled the building down on the heads of the pupils. He was pursued by an enraged crowd, and took refuge in a chest, holding down the lid from inside. As he could not be got at in any other way, the chest was split open, when to the amazement of the Astypalaeans it proved to be empty. They sent to Delphi to ask an explanation, and the Pythia answered

'Cleomedes of Astypalaea is the last of the heroes, whom you must honour with sacrifices, as he is no longer a mortal.'

The Astypalaeans obeyed these instructions and worshipped Cleomedes as a hero.

This story, as told by our ancient authorities, is deliberately meant to suggest the miraculous. But falling as it does within the historic period, it must have a substratum of fact to it. How Cleomedes vanished from the chest, if indeed he had ever been inside, we cannot surmise. But evidently the general populace of Astypalaea believed that he actually had vanished, and this was taken by the Pythia to be a proof of translation to the divine, as had happened before to Aristeas. Otherwise, Cleomedes' career was not worthy of canonization. The assertion that he was the last of the heroes was not true, if it is taken in the sense that no more were to be canonized. For two other contemporary athletes received this honour after him.

One was Euthymus of Locri, a famous boxer, who was victor in the Olympic games of 484 B.C. According to the popular legend, he showed his heroic powers in a service to the inhabitants of the neighbouring town of Temesa in South Italy.¹ They had for long been plagued by a local demon, who was said to be the ghost of Polites, one of Odysseus' companions. In his wanderings Odysseus had touched at Temesa, where Polites had assaulted a maiden and had been stoned in revenge by the citizens. Odysseus had acquiesced in this punishment, but Polites, after death, continued to annoy the inhabitants by rising from his grave and assaulting them. His violent attacks became such an annoyance, that the people of Temesa seriously

¹ Callimachus ap. Schol. II. xxii, 56. Strabo, VI, C. 255. Paus. VI, vi, 7 ff. Aelian, V. H. VIII, 18. Suidas, s. v. Εὐθύμος. Eustath. in Od. 1379, 22.

considered abandoning their homes and migrating elsewhere. They consulted the Pythia, as the authority on settlements, but she would not allow them to remove at all. They were told that instead they must cut off a portion of their land to be assigned to Polites, who after death was euphemistically described only by the title of 'the Hero'. Also a temple must be built for him and each year he must be given the fairest virgin of Temesa. (Our authorities do not make clear whether she was killed as a sacrifice or presented alive for the enjoyment of the hero.)

This grim practice had continued for many years, when Euthymus of Locri visited the town and fell in love with the maiden chosen for that year. He determined to challenge the Hero to combat, and after a fierce struggle was successful in driving him out of the land and ridding the town of its *poltergeist*. The romantic story ends with Euthymus' marriage to the maiden. In its general lines it follows the pattern of a favourite folk-tale—the monster attacking the city that can only be appeased by the sacrifice of a maiden, the stranger who comes and falls in love with the victim, his successful combat with the monster, and his subsequent marriage to the maiden.

This picturesque legend is apparently superimposed on much simpler facts. Actually, in the lifetime of Euthymus Temesa was conquered by his native city, Locri, and no doubt as a consequence of this change of lordship the tribute to the local demon was stopped, and Polites was ceremonially banished. Euthymus' part was turned into a picturesque tale, because he was a particularly favourite subject for myth-making. His father was said to have been the river Caecinus, which flowed by his native city, and it was believed that at the last he descended into the river and vanished. For like other heroes he did not die, but was translated bodily. In contrast to these incredible stories, Pliny the Elder¹ records a reason for Euthymus' special honours which is extraordinary, but not beyond the possibilities of coincidence. According to him two statues of Euthymus, at Olympia and at Locri, were both struck with lightning on the same day. The Delphic oracle when consulted gave its instructions that Euthymus, who was still alive, should be honoured with sacrifices then and after his death. Here at least the happening, though remarkable, can be

¹N. H. VII, 152.

taken as true, and while one can only regard the reason for giving superhuman honours as very inadequate, yet it is quite in accordance with ancient belief, which saw in the action of the thunderbolt the direct expression of the will of Zeus. For an object to be so marked out by the sign of his notice could only indicate signal displeasure or signal approval. Delphi charitably chose to regard it as favourable.

The final instance in this period when Delphi was responsible for the conferment of heroic honours on an athlete is perhaps the best authenticated and most plausible in its details. By far the most distinguished boxer of the fifth century was Theagenes, the son of Timosthenes, of Thasos, who is recorded as winning 1,300 crowns and remaining undefeated for a space of twenty-two years. His Olympic victories were in 480 and 476 B.C. which serves to place his *floruit*. After his death it is told¹ how a personal enemy of his native city, like some Don Juan, insulted and even scourged the bronze statue of Theagenes which stood in a public place. The statue itself avenged the insult directly by falling on the scourger, and caused his death. The Thasians accordingly condemned the statue to be sunk in the sea. For this was the proper Greek procedure, where an inanimate object had shed the life-blood of a human being. After this sentence had been executed, Thasos suffered from famine, and Delphi was consulted for a remedy. The answer was

'By bringing back your exiles you will reap the fruits of Demeter.'

The Thasians did not connect this oracle or their famine with the treatment of Theagenes' statue. They recalled their political exiles, but as the famine did not abate they consulted Delphi again, pointing out that they had fulfilled the Pythia's instructions, but that the hostility of the gods was still manifesting itself. This time the answer was explicit

'You have left out of mind your great one, Theagenes.'

It was implied that the original oracle should have been taken to mean, among other things, that they must recover from its resting-place in the sea the banished statue. The Thasians this time fished till they retrieved it, and set it up in

¹Dio Chrys. XXXI, 95 ff. Paus. VI, xi. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. P. E. V, 231 B. Suidas s. v. Νίκων.

its original place. Also Theagenes received sacrifices as a divinity and even in the second century A.D. had a more than local reputation for working miraculous cures.¹

This story can be taken as true in its general lines. The telling is devised to increase the glory of Theagenes and of the Delphic oracle and in the process no doubt some details have been improved. One might wonder, for instance, whether the man on whom the statue fell really had insulted it, or was this touch added to give the story more coherence? Again, if one takes the account of the two responses of the Pythia as correct, one may justifiably question the implication that the first oracle had been framed with any thought of Theagenes' statue. To tell a Greek state to recall its exiles was fairly safe advice at any time, in that few fifth-century communities were ever without a party of political fugitives. Their return could be looked on as likely to lead to better unity in the state and a step which might appease indignant local deities. When this fairly conventional piece of advice failed to be followed by prosperity, the Delphic authorities in response to a second enquiry had to try and suggest by their supplementary answer that their first reply had already given all necessary instructions, if properly understood. The fate of Theagenes' statue must have been known generally outside Thasos, and so provided a convenient pretext for suggesting that the Thasians had not carried out all that the Pythia had told them to do.² Also the conferring of heroic honours on a great athlete was in complete accord with Delphic policy and practice at this period. Curiously enough, this kind of honour seems never to have been conferred on athletics thereafter: at least no instance is recorded. The great age of Greek athletics was passing as the higher born amateur gave way to the lower class professional. Also the prestige of Delphi itself was on the wane. Before we consider some of the ritual and cult prescribed in the period of decline we have still a few special features of the classical period to notice.³

¹Dio Chrysostom, l.c., agrees with Pausanias and Oenomaus in the general lines for the story, but quotes an entirely different version of the second response. As it is of the same meaning as the oracle in Pausanias and Oenomaus, but is in elegiac verse, it is best to reject it as a later paraphrase.

²Another briefer incident of the Delphic oracle being indignant about the maltreatment of an athlete's statue is also recorded by Oenomaus (Euseb. *P.E.* V, 2,32 B). He was the winner of the pentathlon, Euthycles of Locri, not otherwise known.

³For a reference to a Delphic oracle conferring heroic honours on Artemidorus of

First, Delphi could be a source of condemnation as well as glory. Happily in the few examples of historic times the Pythia seems to have shown a commendable spirit of leniency in sharp contrast with that illustrated in the only legendary example where a death penalty was adjudged for both the guilty parties.¹ Such enquiries were naturally bound to be few, because normally each city-state regarded its priests and priestesses as officials of the state, which could honour or punish them on its own responsibility without needing the sanction of an external authority. But in a few instances the permission of the Pythia was sought or her opinion was forced on the city when she was consulted in another connection.

One example comes from the last part of the sixth century. In Apollonia on the Adriatic the inhabitants kept a flock of sheep dedicated to the Sun god, the unusual custom was, of course, said to be prescribed by an oracular response, which is not recorded.² When they were in the keeping of one Evenius, sixty of the sheep were killed by wolves. Evenius was held responsible and was blinded by the citizens in punishment. Thereafter a curse of barrenness smote their flocks and the land in general. Delphi and Dodona were consulted, and both agreed that it had been wrong to blind Evenius. The gods themselves, they were told, had inspired the wolves' attack, and divine vengeance for the wrong would harry Apollonia till they made an atonement to Evenius of whatever kind he selected. The men of Apollonia accepted this judgment, and managed to buy off Evenius comparatively cheaply by the mean trick of asking what compensation he wanted, without first informing him that the oracles had insisted on his receiving it. However, the gods themselves gave him an additional bounty, as their oracles had promised—the gift of prophecy.

This story has been somewhat worked up in our tradition to glorify Evenius and his reputed descendants, for a later prophet claimed to be a son of his. The association of blindness and the gift of prophecy was conventional in Greek mythology, as we are reminded by

Perga, a propagator of cults, c. 250 B.C. cf. *I G XII*, iii, 863, and see p. 254 (divine honours to Alexander), p. 267 (Aratus), p. 417 (divine honours to Plato), p. 421 (Plotinus).

¹Cf. *supra* p. 339.

²Herod. IX, xciii, 4 ff. Conon. *F Gr H* 26 F 1, xxx.

'Teiresias and Phineus, prophets old.'

But the kernel of the story—the ravaging of the flock, the blinding, a subsequent bad season, and an oracle disapproving of the punishment—can be taken as historical. One curious feature is the conjunction of Delphi and Dodona. Though often named together as alternative sources of prophecy in classical times, we never find them working in complete collaboration. The transmission of the story has probably combined into one the different responses of the two centres, and they cannot now be disentangled.

A more straightforward instance is found after Miltiades' unsuccessful siege of Paros (489 B.C.)¹ An under-priestess of Demeter, named Timo, had been in treasonable negotiations with the Athenian besiegers. After the siege had been raised, the Parians sent to Delphi asking for authority to punish her with death. They evidently felt that the political charge in itself was inadequate, for they alleged against Timo not only that she had directed the enemy towards a means of capturing the city, but also that she had impiously exhibited to Miltiades some cult-objects which were taboo to men. The Pythia, however, would not allow the death penalty. She replied that Timo was not to blame for these events. It was fated that Miltiades must come to a bad end, and Timo had merely acted as the instrument of the gods. Whether Timo in consequence of this response escaped scot-free is not recorded. The interest of the story lies in its resemblance to that of Evenus: in both the Delphic oracle condemns extreme severity in punishing sacred officials for breach of their trust and the same excuse is offered in each case—that they were the involuntary agents of some special act of divine intervention.

A similarly charitable view was held by the oracle on a case, which came before it five hundred years later, in Plutarch's time, who tells the story.² There was in Phocis a temple of Heracles the Misogynist, whose priest, elected for one year, was required to have no intercourse with women during his period of office. Old men were usually appointed, but once an ambitious young man took the post. At first he observed the condition strictly, though he was already in love. But caught off his

¹Herod. VI, cxcv.

²Moral 403 F.

guard after drinking and dancing he broke the sacred obligation. In fear and confusion he sought refuge with the oracle and asked the god whether there was any way of making atonement by prayer or purification. The response was comforting

'All that cannot be avoided the god allows'

The verse line—perhaps a quotation from some tragedy—implied that the priest could be forgiven as the victim of an involuntary impulse.¹

Another instance of guilt referred to Delphi is somewhat reminiscent of Theagenes' statue. The Corcyraeans had erected both at Delphi and at Olympia a life-size bronze figure of a bull.² The one at Olympia was the scene of a pathetic accident. A small boy playing beneath the figure had bent forward and in raising his head suddenly he struck it so severely against the under side of the bull that he died a few days later from concussion. The Elean authorities regarded the bull as stained with bloodguiltiness and wished to remove it from the Altis. But when they consulted the Pythia they were told to let it remain after they had applied to it the purificatory ritual which was usual in the case of involuntary homicide. Delphi again appears as the moderating influence which prevents the application of extreme measures in the heat of the moment and suggests a formula or a rite which can lessen the guilt of the accused.

¹Cf *I G II*, 2, 1096 for a letter from an Attic *genos* to the Delphians enquiring about a priest and the covering letter of the Delphians, which accompanied the reply of the oracle. It appears as if some question of the priest's fitness had been raised. Date c. 30 B.C.

²PAUS. V, xxvii, 10, cf. X, ix, 3, where the dedication of the bull is connected with an oracular response.

CHAPTER VI

THE ORACLE AND GREEK RELIGION

(d) *Particular questions of cult*

THE importance of Delphi as a source of purificatory ritual has been seen already in the legends of Orestes, Alcmaeon and others, who were said to have sought and found atonement under the guidance of the Pythian Apollo. There can be no doubt that Delphi was a factor in the changed attitude on this question which is seen on comparing the Homeric and the classical standpoint. To Homer bloodguilt is a private question between the slayer and the kinsmen of the slain. The issue can only be settled by the death of the slayer or by his paying instead a blood-price, which the kinsmen of the slain accept as adequate. The community is scarcely concerned directly, but might intervene to adjust the terms of the settlement. No moral or religious issues of any great complexity arise, unless the murder is within a single family. By early classical times the whole procedure and the accompanying attitude had changed. The state had intervened to substitute legal prosecution by the relatives of the slain as the only procedure against the slayer. But whether the slayer was morally guilty or not, he was taken to be impure through having shed human blood, until he had undergone a ceremonial purification. The analogy for this process was sought in the Delphic ritual applied to Orestes, and evidently the theory owed a large part of its extension to Delphic influence.

Delphi also prescribed purifications for cities as well as for individuals. For instance, as a remedy for a plague, when evidently it was supposed that the city must be guilty to be visited by such a judgment of the gods. The most noted example was at a date variously given as the beginning of the sixth or the beginning of the fifth century. The Athenians fetched the famous prophet, Epimenides, from Crete to purify the city.¹ This remedy for a plague had been prescribed by the Pythia.

¹Plato, *Lysis*, 642D. Diog. Laert. I, x, 110. For other examples cf. *supra*, p. 141, Pythagoras of Ephesus, and p. 161 the men of Agylla, and *infra* p. 394 the men of Croton and Metapontum.

Other less definite instances are recorded from Sparta and South Italy,¹ and a four-line oracle is extant which appears to instruct the inhabitants of Phaestus, Tarrha, and Dios in Crete to offer a purificatory sacrifice to the Pythian Apollo, but the verses have become corrupted in transmission.²

Sometimes the purification might be of a more trivial order. Greeks who, while away from home, were falsely said to have died and ultimately returned safe and sound were regarded as under a kind of taboo. The mere rumour of death had conveyed as it were a kind of infection. One Aristinus, an involuntary victim of this inconvenient custom, sent to Delphi to appeal for a release from this penalty.³ (No doubt he dared not appear in person as still ritually impure.) The Pythia's reply provided sanction for a method

'When you have accomplished a second time all that a woman in travail accomplishes in childbirth, then sacrifice to the blessed gods'

We are told that Aristinus accordingly allowed himself to be washed, swaddled, and fed at the breast in dumb show, and then was regarded as purified and free to offer sacrifice.⁴ But Plutarch, who records this instance, notes that some authorities alleged that the custom was old and antedated Aristinus. This is probably true, for the whole ritual with its purification from death by a simulation of re-birth is a highly primitive conception. Most likely both views are correct: the custom itself was old, but lacked precise sanction until in historic times Aristinus consulted Delphi and received official authority in his instance, which was then cited generally. The Pythian Apollo may in this way have acted as a central authority on questions of purification. His influence could be made effective locally because the experts on such questions in Athens, and probably elsewhere in Greece, the Exegetai, were nominated by the Pythia, and would be likely to be conversant with the Delphic tradition to which they could have recourse for confirmation in difficult cases.

¹Theopompus, frag. 78a (Oxf.) Apollonius, *Hist. Mirab.* XL

²Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E.* V, 226B

³Plut. *Moral.* 264F

⁴Prof. Michael Tierney suggests that the actual words of the response would better describe a *courade*.

In the normal ritual of sacrifice the part played by the Delphic oracle is less easy to define. For the legendary period it is cited again and again as the authority for some instance of human sacrifice. Usually, the victim is a king or a king's son or daughter and the occasion is treated as isolated and extraordinary, not the foundation of a succession of regular human sacrifices.¹ In no instance can we be sure that there is any historical justification for the legend. But at the same time it is unlikely that Delphi in fact had never prescribed human sacrifice. At one time such ritual was evidently known and used more generally in Greece than the scattered and furtive examples of historic times would suggest. But it is very improbable that Delphi had played any special part in propagating this custom. The special importance of bloodguilt in Delphic tradition suggests rather that the Pythian Apollo was one of the first deities strongly to discountenance the shedding of human blood. The mythological responses attributed to Delphi do not indicate its actual teaching; they are a tribute to the fame of the oracle in the period when Greek legends were receiving their literary form. If ever an oracular response was needed to fill a part in the story, the Pythia was at once specified as the source of the instruction in preference to any other oracle. A typical example, which includes another conventional motive, is the story of the river Lophis, near Haliartus.² When the country suffered from a drought the king was said to have gone to Delphi and asked where he could find water in his land. The Pythia told him to slay whatever he first met in returning to Haliartus. Like Jephtha, the first creature he met was his own child—a son named Lophis. Without hesitation the father smote him with his sword, and where the dying Lophis ran in a circle rose the springs of the river named after him. The common motive in Delphic legends of the 'first thing met' on one's return from the shrine shows that here we have to do with an imaginary instance, invented to dignify the source of a local river. Such material as this cannot really provide evidence for a Delphic inclination towards human sacrifice.

Traditions preserved by Porphyry, the religious philosopher of the third century A.D.,³ would try and credit Delphi with

¹Cf. *supra* p. 300.

²*De Abstinencia*, II, 9, 17, and 29, cf. *Plut. Moral.* 729 I. See von Prott, *Rheinisches Museum*, LII, pp. 190 ff., for the contamination of legends in Porphyry.

³Paus. IX, xxxiii, 4.

being the first authority to sanction the sacrifice of an ox or a pig or a sheep. The first legend purported to explain the remarkable ritual of sacrifices such as the Buphonia, in which the slaughter of the ox was followed by a form of assize and the blame for this murder was ultimately fixed on the axe as the guilty party. A resident alien named Diomus or Sopatrus traditionally had been the first to slay an ox because it has happened to eat some of the offerings prepared for the gods. He had fled abroad to Crete as accursed with bloodguilt, and a subsequent drought had been followed by the issuing of a response from Delphi which led to the recall of the slayer and the institution of the ceremonies whereby he was acquitted of blame. The legend concerning the pig is less detailed, but attributed the death of the first one slain to an accidental blow by a woman, Clymene, whose husband shunned her till Delphi assured him that the deed was allowed. On the first sacrifice of a sheep Delphi was consulted in advance by Episcopus, a member of the Euboean clan of the Theopropi, and gave sanction subject to one condition.

'Descendant of the Theopropi, it is not allowed by the gods for you to slay the race of sheep, when it stands firm. But that which willingly nods its head, I say you can rightly sacrifice it after a libation.'

This oracle was evidently based on the same conception as a piece of ritual actually practised at Delphi which we have seen already.¹ The goat which was to be offered before the Pythia mounted the tripod was induced to shake by a douche of cold water. Similarly here the sheep must not be sacrificed until it signifies consent by nodding. It is not explained whether this omen was meant to be induced, if necessary, but such an idea is not unfamiliar in ancient ritual.

These oracular responses sanctioning the initiation of animal sacrifices cannot evidently be treated as historically genuine. Such rites began long before the Delphic oracle was known. The conception of primitive life as a golden age in which no animals were slain for food or offerings is a pretty myth. But those who framed these particular stories had justification in attaching two of them to Delphi. The question

¹Cf. *supra* p. 21

concerning bloodguilt in the ox-slaying is answered in a way that we have seen is typical enough of Delphi, and the ritual restriction prescribed for sheep-slaying is exactly paralleled in Delphic ritual. Hence both legends may have been produced by the authorities there, particularly the latter with its verse form.

Delphi could also be quoted as an authority for humbler offerings than animal victims. This is represented by moralistic and cautionary tales in which Apollo is shown as expressing, when asked, a preference for a gift of cakes or corn rather than for hecatombs of oxen with gilded horns. But there is no proof that this instruction was ever issued in fact, and it represents the moral teaching of Delphi rather than its precise directions for cult purposes to any particular enquirer.¹

One special branch of cult naturally concerned Delphi to a particular extent—the foundation of other oracles. It is not, of course, to be expected that at any time the Delphians wished to create rival sources of prophecy to their own. The oracles of Greece were in some sense all competitors in one business: the more custom one gained the more another would lose. Hence it is not likely that Delphi, particularly in the early years of its growth, would have authorized the setting up of other oracle-centres. On the other hand, in the time of its chief supremacy Delphi did attain to a dominance, which raised it in some degree above competition, and made its reputation higher, not only in degree, but almost in kind, than that of other contemporary oracles. It was probably at this time that there was developed the belief that Delphi had been responsible for the institution of a number of other oracle-centres. These legends will not bear close historical criticism, but they illustrate both the claim of Delphi to be sovereign in matters of prophecy and also the willingness of other places to be associated with the Pythian Apollo, even in a somewhat subordinate relation. For it is impossible to believe that these traditions would have received currency, unless they were accepted by the different local priesthoods as well as by the Delphian authorities. For instance, Pindar in a beautiful ode² records the parentage of Iamus, the founder of the oracle at Olympia, and the ancestor of a family of famous prophets. His mother was Evadne, who was discovered by her father, Aepytus, to be with child. In

¹Cf. *infra* p. 392.

²O. VI, 29 ff.

horror he went to consult Delphi, but was reassured by being told by the oracle that Apollo himself was the father, and the son which would be born would excel in prophecy and found a family which would never fail. Aepyus returned home, but no one could tell him where Evadne's child was, till he found it where the mother had exposed it. There the infant boy lay on a bed of violets, while two snakes fed him with honey. The origin of this legend is partly to be found in the wish to supply a derivation for the name Iamus from either violets or snake's venom. The part played by the Delphic oracle in clearing up the mystery of his parentage and vouching for his future success as a prophet was evidently invented for the greater glory of the Pythian Apollo. In classical periods Olympia and Delphi seem always on excellent terms, and the oracle at Olympia, which was only a minor activity there, never asserted itself as a serious competitor of the Pythia.

Another oracle-centre which almost acted as a branch establishment for Delphi was the shrine of Trophonius, near Lebadea. It lay on the main road to Delphi from Boeotia, and so must often have been visited by those who wished to consult Apollo. In Euripides' *Ion*¹ Xuthus calls there on his way and is told that Trophonius does not wish to anticipate Apollo's answer, but can promise success for his mission. Trophonius can never have been a serious competitor, because for most Greeks he was reckoned not as a god, but merely as a hero, who had once built Apollo's temple at Delphi in partnership with his brother Agamedes.² His place of consultation was not a proper temple, but a precinct containing a subterranean passage, and the method of consultation, by which the enquirer must himself receive the communication of the god and for this purpose worm his way through a tunnel, might well deter many from consulting Trophonius.³ Actually literature contains quite a number of instances when Trophonius gave responses, but there is no sign of any but friendly relations with Delphi. Hence it is not surprising that we find in Pausanias an account of the foundation of Trophonius' oracle in which the chief credit is given to Apollo.⁴ The Boeotians in whose territory

¹405 ff²Cf the account of Pausanias, IX, xxxix, 5 ff³Paus IX, xl, 1. Schol. Aristoph. *Nubes*, 508⁴Paus. X, v, 13, etc

Lebadea was situated had suffered from two years' drought and consulted Delphi. The Pythia told them to go to Trophonius at Lebadea and they would obtain the remedy from him. They could find no trace of an oracle there, till Saon, the senior ambassador, was guided to the future site by a swarm of bees, and received the priesthood of the new divinity. This story is evidently a pious invention to connect the greater and the lesser oracle-centre as parent and child. No doubt it is not historical, but it gives a true enough picture of the relations between the two in historic times.

For other oracular sites there is less evidence of dependence on Delphi. At Argos the temple of Apollo Pythaeus (which is a title philologically connected with Pytho, the old name of Delphi) was said to have been founded by one Pythaeus, who came from there.¹ It possessed an oracle which seems to have tried to work up a local connection in the Peloponnese in the third century B.C. by imitating Delphic methods when Delphi was dominated by Aetolia.² The legend of Pythaeus may be an echo of a genuine fact that the foundation in Argos owes something to the Pythian Apollo, but there is no evidence for a response of the Delphic oracle to authorize the establishment of the temple or the oracle. The only other centre of prophecy which seems to have been favourably noticed by the Pythia was the small shrine of Apollo at Tegyra in northern Boeotia. Delphi sometimes recognized it, rather than Delos, as the birth-place of Apollo.³ Of the oracular centres overseas Claros and Branchidae both had mythical connections with Delphi, for as we have already seen Claros was traditionally founded by the prophetess Manto, when she was sent thither from Delphi,⁴ while in later times it was alleged that Branchus, the eponymous founder of the oracle at Miletus, was the son of Machaereus, the Delphian, who had slain Neoptolemus.⁵

There are a few notable exceptions where no evidence of association with Delphi exists. One was the oracle of Apollo at Abae, the other important centre of prophecy in Phocis. Actually this

¹Paus. II, xxiv, 1

²BCH XXXIII, pp. 171 ff. Schwyzer, *DGEEP* No. 89

³Callisthenes, *FGrH* 124 F 11 and cf. supra p. 209

⁴Cf. supra p. 50

⁵Strabo, IX, C 421. Conon, *FGrH* 26 F 1, xxxiii. Cf. Gruppe, *Mythologie*, p. 276, Bilabel, *Philologus*, Suppl. XIV, 1, p. 86, *Die Ionische Kolonisation*

lost most of its importance as an oracular site after the Persian wars¹ so it was not a serious competitor of Delphi in classical times, and there is no clear evidence to show what their relations were previously. However, one might suspect the existence of some rivalry in early times between the two Apolline oracles in the same tribe. More significant is the entire absence of any relations between Delphi and Dodona. In classical periods the latter was the only rival of the Pythia and the only oracle which is frequently mentioned as an alternative authority of similar prestige. The lack of association between Delphi and Dodona is made all the more conspicuous by the fact that there are signs of good feeling between the oracle of Zeus Ammon and that at Dodona. It looks, in fact, as if the two priesthoods of Zeus were more or less combined in rivalry with the oracle of Apollo. It is quite in accordance with this emulation that, from the fifth century at latest, the Delphians claimed that the Pythian Apollo was the mouth-piece of Zeus and thus could rebut the idea that Apollo's prophecies were less authoritative than those that claimed to emanate from Zeus himself.¹ On the whole Delphi succeeded in maintaining its supremacy during the classical period, and in Hellenistic times, though its prestige was not as high as formerly, all the other oracular centres, of the Greek mainland at least, had suffered far more severely from the decline in conventional religion.

¹Cf. *supra* p. 325 note 2.

CHAPTER VII

THE ORACLE AND GREEK RELIGION

(e) *In late periods*

UNDER the Hellenistic monarchs Delphi was still occasionally consulted on ritual questions. Thus Seleucus II seems to have asked for and received the sanction of Apollo before founding a temple of Aphrodite Stratoniceis in Smyrna in honour of his wife of that name.¹ In this instance the consecration was combined with another piece of ritual: the city of Smyrna was declared holy and inviolate. For this act also the sanction of Apollo was sought. In theory this was a question of religious status and was accorded to a city that was regarded as particularly under the protection of some deity. But in practice in the Hellenistic epoch it became a useful political and military move as it led to the creation of a piece of neutral territory. Seleucus' intention on this occasion was to guarantee Smyrna against aggression, which might be feared from the Ptolemies. Sometimes as here the declaration of inviolability was made at the instance of a Hellenistic monarch for some city in his dominions: at other times it was proposed by some city independently, for example, Magnesia on the Maeander took the occasion provided by an apparition of Artemis Leucophrylene, the patron goddess of the city.² The vision was also celebrated by the erection of a temple and the establishment of a quadrennial festival of athletics and music. In these instances it is likely that the initiative did not come in any way from Delphi: it merely provided the authorization which converted a local festival or a local claim to inviolability into something of international standing. The practice seems to have lapsed with the end of the third century B.C.

¹ *BCH* XVIII, p. 230, *OGIS* 228 and *Tac. Ann.* III, 63. Cf. *BCH* XVIII, p. 235, *OGIS* 234, inviolability for Antiocheia on the Maeander in the reign of Antiochus the Great.

² Kern, *Inschriften von Magnesia*, 16, 18, 19, 22-83. Cf. also Le Bas-Waddington, No. 60 ff., esp. 78, for a grant of inviolability to Teos in honour of Dionysus, dated to 201 B.C., and *IG* XII, v. 802, 868, a grant to Tenos shortly after 250 B.C. *Ditt. Syll.*³ 550, to the temple of Apollo Pythaeus in Calchedon, ib. 1158, to Cyzicus in honour of Soteira. Cf. *BCH* LIX, pp. 92 ff. In other instances of this kind of grant the oracle is not mentioned: e.g. *Ditt. Syll.*³ 630.

Legends in later times would have us believe that Delphi had a more important part in establishing the chief cults of the new Hellenistic capitals. For instance, Libanius tells that the gods of Cyprus wished to be worshipped in Antioch, so they produced a famine there, till Delphi was consulted and prescribed the removal of the Cyprian gods to Antioch.¹ The king (which Seleucid is not stated) sent workmen who asked permission to reproduce the images in the temples of Cyprus, and when they had completed the work no one could tell copy from original. So, though the Cyprians did not know it, the agents from Antioch actually removed the original gods of Cyprus to the new capital. This legend is just the working up of an old folk-tale motive in which sacred images are copied past all possibility of discriminating. Tacitus² has a much longer and more elaborate pious tale to account for the establishment of the important cult of Serapis at Alexandria. The god first appeared in a dream to Ptolemy Soter commanding that his statue be fetched to Egypt from the Black Sea. When the Egyptian priests had failed to interpret the vision, Timotheus, an Athenian, expounded it correctly, and Ptolemy after some delay was frightened into action by a repetition of the dream. This time he sent at once to ask the Pythian Apollo whether he should fetch the statue from Sinope, where he heard it was. The Pythia gave the god's blessing, and the statue was safely removed to Alexandria. This version of Serapis' coming to Alexandria was only the most popular out of several contradictory accounts. Hence it is doubtful whether it contains even a substratum of truth: at any rate the many picturesque details are only the contributions of pious imagination. Plutarch adds more of these features rather at variance with Tacitus' account. Thus Ptolemy's ambassadors were not sent by him to Delphi, but were carried there by contrary winds and a guiding dolphin. Here the pious imagination undoubtedly belonged to a Delphian, who wished to enhance the distinction of Apollo's part in the affair. It may be doubted whether the Delphic oracle was ever consulted about the establishment of a deity who was at least in part a modification of some Egyptian prototype.

¹*Orat* XI, 111²*Hist* IV, 60-61 Plut *Moral* 984A Clem Alex *Protrep* 42 P

So the part played by Delphic responses in Greek religion during the Hellenistic period was quite slight, even though later attempts were made to magnify it by legends. In the early years of the Roman Empire it seems to have been reduced almost to nothing. But the revival of the oracle's importance in the time of Hadrian was followed by the issuing of many rather wordy answers to questions on cult and ritual. One example can be identified in an inscription from Magnesia on the Maeander (a town particularly closely connected with Delphi) which records the instructions for a cult of Hera.¹ The name of the oracle is not recorded, but Magnesia would be most unlikely to consult any but the Pythian Apollo. The first question is lost, but the answer was to placate Hera, and when a further enquiry was made on the manner, the god replied

'Where venerable antiquity for long time has accustomed the exhausted bodies of old-age to use the baths, where the maidens uninitiated in wedlock set up the dance harmoniously to the sweet euphonious song of the flute, approach Hera at the halls of an effeminate man'

These rather clumsy and enigmatic periphrases seem to instruct the enquirer to worship Hera in a eunuch's house situated between a long established bath for men and a girls' school of dancing. Presumably all these buildings actually stood together in Magnesia, and the oracle was contrived to authorize the setting up of a shrine on this particular site. The lettering of the inscription in which the answer is recorded is of the second century A.D., and the euphuistic style of the verses suggests a period of decadent, but aspiring composition, such as one might expect of the Hadrianic revival. The purpose of the response is quite in keeping with earlier periods, when also it would have been usual for Delphi to prescribe a site for an Olympian cult.

Unfortunately, our evidence on this period presents some difficulty as most of the hexameter verses which clearly emanated from some oracular centre are preserved only in quotation from Porphyry's *On the Philosophy to be derived from Oracles*.

¹Kern, *Inscriptionen von Magnesia*, No. 228. For other examples, see (1) *BCH* V, p. 340, Ziebarth, *Eine Inschriftenhandschrift* (Wilhelm gymnasium zu Hamburg), 1903, O. Kern, *Genethlacom für Karl Robert*, Berlin, 1910, 98 ff. (2) *IG* II², 5006, *Ath. Mitt.* 1893, pp. 192 ff., 1930, pp. 207 ff.

This author did not state from which temple of Apollo any particular response was issued. Evidently he was satisfied if the thought could be attributed to Apollo, and did not care to distinguish precisely between the sources in different prophets. It is likely that most of the verse came from Delphi, which was still the chief centre for consultation, but those which Porphyry merely assigns to Apollo may have been uttered in Claros or at Branchidae, for those two temples also continued to answer enquiries down to the end of paganism.

One oracle preserved by Porphyry seems to show Delphi (or some other Apolline centre), attempting to strengthen the practice of the Olympian cults by formulating the rules for sacrificing to the Hellenic gods. This is a lengthy effusion running into 28 lines of hexameter verse and classifying the deities technically into those of earth, heaven, sea or beneath the earth.¹ Some of the expressions used suggest an outlook different from that of Classical times, but in general the composer of this code tried to be conservative and give no open admission to new and foreign cults.

The later Imperial period, however, was a time when the worship of the Olympians was doomed to decline in spite of such a brilliant renaissance as that provided by the reign of Hadrian. To some extent Delphi and the other oracular centres of Apollo were bound to compromise with the tendencies of the new age. There is no sign of the Pythia authorizing the actual establishment of non-Hellenic deities and cults. This was a practice which the Delphic authorities had never adopted. The nearest approach to such an act is when the Magna Mater was introduced to Rome with the approval of the Delphic oracle. For Cybele, though officially received in the fairly lax society of the classical deities, was a foreign importation from Asia Minor. A quite improbable legend preserved by some late authors even represents Delphi as prescribing her worship at Athens.² According to this story, her cult first reached Attica when a wandering beggar-priest of the goddess appeared there and began to initiate the Athenian women. The citizens resented this innovation and slew him, hurling him into the Barathron. A plague followed this impiety and

¹ Porphyry ap. Euseb. *PE* IV, 145B.

² Julian, *Orat.* V, 159B. Apostolius, *Cent.* XI, 34. Suidas, s.v. *βάραθρον*.

the Delphic oracle told the Athenians to appease the Mother of the Gods. So they erected a temple to her and a statue to the beggar-priest.

The Byzantine authorities, who give this sacred story, are not sufficient evidence for something which, if true, must have happened at Athens at latest in the fifth century B.C. It is probably nothing but a late cult-legend invented when these Asian worships were winning the predominance.

But even if the Delphic priesthood did not actually establish foreign cults, some responses show them succumbing to the infection of novel theories. One interesting example (almost certainly Delphic, though our authority, Porphyry, does not give the source or circumstances) was clearly issued in answer to an enquiry from Athens, why a temple of Apollo there had been struck by lightning?¹ This sort of incident even as early as the fifth century B.C. had naturally given some heart-searchings to the orthodox. No instance is recorded from classical times to show how the Pythia would then have answered such a question. But in this response from the imperial epoch the prophetess frankly takes refuge in a scientific explanation. The answer runs

'O born of the holy offspring of Erichthonius, you have endured to come and enquire my omen, asking how it comes that the seats of the beautiful precinct were ravaged. Harken to the godlike omen from the laurel-roofed shrine. Whenever the roaring winds of the upper air blowing upward are in contact fighting against each other with rumbles—the frost also around the boundless universe will be windless—and the upper air when hard pressed had no vent to escape, a sooty torch has fallen out on the earth, wherever it may happen. For fear of it the beasts on the mountain flee to the depth of their lairs and do not wait to look with their eyes on the descending spear of Zeus. The temples of the blessed gods and tall trees and the peaks of sheer mountains and ships on the ocean are subdued by fiery flights when it approaches. Even the mate of Poseidon, Amphitrite herself, often retires with a noise when smitten.

'You then also have an unendurable grief at heart, but bear

¹ Porphyry ap. Euseb. P.E. VI. 238D. Cf. Wolff, *Porphyry de Philosophia ex Oraculis haurienda*, 170, for reading ὀρνίθων in line 3. I have reconstructed the circumstance of the enquiry from hypothesis.

with the unvertable tricks of the Fates For to them the head of Zeus, the grandson of Uranos, has nodded that whatever they spin with their distaff abide unshaken For it was the lot of the Fates in the long expanse of time that the beauteous precinct be subdued by flying torches fallen from Zeus'

In this extraordinary production, which is as verbose as most of the late oracles, the Delphians tried to cover the difficulties of the orthodox view, that Zeus hurled thunderbolts deliberately, by invoking instead the ideas of contemporary science and philosophy. The fatalism of the Stoics asserts that the event was unescapable, and scientific speculation accounts for the whole happening by material causes. The two views are here combined rather uncomfortably in a general setting of orthodox piety.

While Stoicism and Science could at least be regarded as Hellenic intrusions into Delphic thought, there were other elements imported from the East, which found a place in the Apolline oracles of the period. One response recognizes the week of seven days, in which one deity is assigned to each day and is particularly to be worshipped at that time.¹ The invention is attributed to 'the best of the Magi', and clearly derived from the association of deities with the sun, moon and planets and these again with the days of a seven-day week. Astrology, coming from oriental sources and becoming fused with Hellenistic Science, developed in the early part of the Imperial period into the most universally accepted and authoritative method of forecasting the future. As such it was in a sense the rival of the older methods of mantic prophecy. But at the time when the new pseudo-science was winning predominance, Delphi was too weak to put up serious competition to the Chaldaeans. The revival under Hadrian could be regarded as a reaction in favour of the true Hellenic forms of prophecy, but in practice the oracular centres seem to have borrowed much from astrology, which returned the compliment to some extent. We have preserved among the works of Lucian² a little treatise on the subject, which tries to explain such features as the Pythia, the tripod, or the legend of Python as having an occult reference to the constellations. On the other

¹Porphyry ap. Euseb. *P. E.* V, 202B.

²*De Astrologia*, 170.

side several oracles are quoted from Porphyry in which some Apolline oracle centre paid fulsome flattery to the Chaldaeans and other eastern peoples for having discovered how to tell the future by the stars. These tributes were not mere verbiage. Porphyry¹ also quotes a series of Apolline oracles, in which the theories and terminology of the astrologers are actually borrowed for the purposes of mantic prophecy and robed in hexameter verse. In response to the question whether a child about to be born will be male or female, the reply is that a conjunction of the moon and Venus will make it a girl. A serious illness is attributed to the influence of Saturn, and a martial disposition to that of Mars. All these questions seem to be put to the oracle by private individuals and the answers quoted in Porphyry can be taken as genuine samples. Unfortunately, as already noted, he never marks which Apolline oracle was the source, but as all indications suggest that the same process of change and deterioration was pervading paganism in all directions, we can take these instances as at least typical of what must have been said by the Pythia in these centuries, and possibly including some of her actual responses.

The last feverish wanderings of pagan thought responded ineffectually to the urge for monotheism which was sweeping the world. This manifested itself in a movement towards a pantheism which would see one deity behind all the chief gods of the ancient world. This single being was thought of as one under many names and immanent in the material universe. Delphi seems to have sponsored this view in response to the questions of enquirers who in the third century A.D. tended to set the oracle problems in divinity. For instance, a subtle and theologically comprehensive statement occurs in a response quoted as Apolline by Porphyry.² When asked about himself, who he was, the god replies

'Sun, Horus, Osiris, King, Zeus' son, Apollo, steward of times and seasons, of wind and rain, guiding the reins of dawn and night with its many constellations, ruler of flaming star, and fire undying'

With this fine piece of florid poetry we can leave the religious influence of Delphi. It scarcely rises to spiritual heights here or elsewhere. The function of the oracle was rarely original,

¹Ap. Euseb. P.E. VI, 237A.

²Euseb. P.E. III, 125C.

not to initiate a cult or a conception, but to authorize something which was already claiming recognition in thought or practice. Xenophon's comment on 'the custom of the state' as Delphi's criterion is true in this sense, that the Pythia did not attempt to enforce the unprecedented on the states which enquired on religious questions. Instructions, if unusual or unpalatable, were represented as restorations of what had been forgotten or lapsed in worship. Even a new step such as the inauguration of a new hero was more often than not a sanctioning of the judgment already suggested by popular opinion.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ORACLE AND MORAL QUESTIONS

IN matters of religion and cult we have seen that the Delphic oracle was mostly content to observe the conventional practices of each city, and adjust its answers fairly exactly to what was expected of it. But in the ancient world religion was mainly a system of forms and ceremonies, in which correctness of ritual rather than spiritual content was the object set before the worshipper. There were a great many questions of conduct and moral judgment on which the state religions did not offer official teaching. But whereas the worship of a patron god or goddess conveyed no moral code, the oracle might be consulted on particular problems of conduct. The Pythia might be expected to answer 'yes' or 'no' to the question whether Apollo approved of a stated course of action, and thus the Delphic authorities might become moral teachers in a way in which the ordinary Greek priesthood were not. Their instructions were, of course, rather limited by the scope of the enquiries addressed to them. For Apollo through the Pythia's mouth delivered answers, not discursive sermons. However, apart from the specific responses, Delphi became a source of moral teaching in some degree also through the legends that were told about the temple and its dedications. These were evidently invented or shaped in many instances to impart a particular moral, and the tendency in these examples taken as a whole is consistent enough to suggest that some general principles of policy and teaching inspired them.

This ethical function of the Pythian Apollo was recognized in classical times. The historian Ephorus, writing in the fourth century B.C., while he held in some ways a rationalistic view of the oracle's history, asserted that it had been founded by Apollo and Themis,¹ the goddess of law, with the purpose of benefiting the human race. This benefit, as he explained, consisted in 'summoning humanity to civilization and rebuking

¹ *FGH* 70 F 31, = Strabo, IX, C 422. For Apollo's joy at the pious see the lengthy oracle in Julian, 299C, of which the last line is quoted by Hierocles (*in Aureum Carmen*, p. 421, Mullach) as Pythian.

it, partly by giving oracular responses, partly by issuing commands and prohibitions, and again by refusing altogether to admit to the temple particular individuals.' Thus the Delphic oracle was credited with a moral and civilizing purpose, and the Delphian authorities appear to have explicitly accepted this view. For their praise of Athens in oracles and decrees for its contribution to civilization is expressed, as if Delphi had a particular right to judge of this subject.¹ Again, if one can take a passage quoted from Oenomaus in its literal sense, the Pythian Apollo had embodied in an oracular response the idea that his own function was to help humanity. At least Oenomaus² puts into his mouth, as if it was Apolline, the statement that he must 'as a god take heed for the sufferings of men.'

The earliest examples of Delphic teaching on moral questions are found in Herodotus,³ who gives us two famous instances, one a local legend, the other a primitive oracle. The first is put into the mouth of Solon, when answering Croesus' question 'who was the most blessed of men?' Solon tells the story of Cleobis and Biton who, when their mother, the priestess, was unable to set out from Argos to the temple of Hera because the beasts to draw her wagon had not come, yoked themselves to the vehicle and dragged her there a distance of five and a half miles. Their mother was so delighted with this service that she prayed that they might receive the greatest blessing which the gods could give men. The answer to this prayer was revealed when the young men lay down to rest, and next morning were found dead. The moral to be drawn was that human life itself was no blessing, and it was better for a man or woman to leave it as soon as might be.

Though this story is superficially an Argive one it is evident that Herodotus derived it from Delphi. The whole episode of Croesus is full of Delphic references and the story of Cleobis and Biton itself ends with the statement that the Argives made statues of the two and dedicated them at Delphi, regard-

¹Cf. *supra* p. 346.

²Ap. Euseb. V, 227 D. I agree with Vollgraff, *Rev. Et. anc.* IX, p. 284, that one must restore the general meaning of the passage by omitting the preceding *οὐ*, thus bringing the text into line with Giffard's translation.

³I, xxxi (Plato), *Axiochus*, 367C. Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* I, xlvii, 113. Plut. *Solon*, xxvii, Moral 108 F. *Anthol. Graec.* III, 18. Servius, *Georg.* III, 532. Hyginus, ccliv.

ing them as the best of men. Clearly, it was about these statues that the guides at Delphi told the legend which Herodotus gives and which he put into the mouth of Solon. The original figures were found by the French excavators—one being nearly intact. The inscription, which is contemporary and dates from the late seventh century B.C., refers to the young men's service in dragging their mother's cart, but makes no allusion to the fatal prayer or its fulfilment.¹

It is this latter feature with its moralistic trend which is most suspicious in general, and the doubt is intensified by the close parallel which it presents to another legend native to Delphi. It was said that when Trophonius and Agamedes, the legendary builders of the first temple at Delphi, had asked the god for their wages, he told them to wait for seven days and then he would pay them. On the eighth morning they were found dead. The features of the legends correspond closely and the moral is identical. The parallel was generally noticed in the ancient accounts, but no conclusion was drawn. We can infer, however, that the motive was a favourite one at Delphi. It probably originated in the Trophonius and Agamedes legend, but the common feature of two brothers doing special service to a deity caused it to be applied also to Cleobis and Biton after their statues had been dedicated. The Argives had merely intended to commemorate a timely effort and the muscular prowess of those who accomplished it. The Delphic authorities later added to this purpose the moral that gods know that to escape from human life is a good riddance. This doctrine may even have had a particular appeal to the priesthood, if (as one may well suppose) the work of the Pythia put a severe strain on her health, and led often to a comparatively early death. The consoling thought may have often been needed, that Apollo knew best and human life was better not prolonged.

Somewhat in contrast with this unhelpful pessimism is the early oracle which Herodotus records.² It delivers with incisive clarity a sharp moral judgment. The story is put into the mouth of King Leotyichidas who tells it after 490 B.C. as a

¹Tod, No. 3 with references to other interpretations

²VI, lxxxvi. Cf. Juv. XIII, 199 ff. Paus. II, xviii, 2, VIII, vii, 8. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 91. Stobaeus, III, xxvii, 14, xxviii, 15.

warning to the Athenians on the dangers of an immoral policy. The incident, as he relates, happened in Sparta three generations before, when, in a manner familiar to the ancient world, one Glaucus, the son of Epicydes, had been entrusted with a large sum of money to keep during his friend's absence abroad. On the friend's return he denied that he had ever received the trust, and when challenged to maintain this on oath went and consulted Delphi, whether he might forswear himself for the gain that would result. The Pythia's answer was utterly uncompromising.

'Glaucus, son of Epicydes, for the moment the gain is more thus to conquer with an oath and plunder the money. Swear then, for death awaits even the man whose oaths are true. But the child of an oath has no name and it has no hands or feet. Yet it is swift to pursue until it seize a whole family together and all the house. But the family of the man whose oaths are true is better hereafter.'

Glaucus was shocked and begged for forgiveness for his words. But the Pythia gave him no reassurance, for she said that to tempt the god and to commit the deed were equally heinous. Leotychidas concluded with the information that the prophecy had been literally fulfilled: in his own day no member of Glaucus' family survived.

There is no reason to doubt the substantial truth of this story¹ whether it was actually told by Leotychidas or was put into his mouth by Herodotus for dramatic purposes is not of great importance for our subject. That a Spartan, Glaucus, did make such an enquiry and receive this verse response can be taken as certain. The only material point on which doubts might be cast is whether Glaucus could have asked his supplementary question. Other instances of this kind of secondary enquiry are mythical. Here also the point of the second response is rather paradoxical and extraordinary. Not merely is Glaucus told that intention is as criminal as overt action, but that the mere thought of perjury, expressed as an hypothetic enquiry, is equally culpable. This conception of moral guilt is much more developed than one would expect as a general rule for the mid-sixth century. Hendess suggested what may be the

¹Hendess, *Oracula Graeca*, preface, denies the authenticity of the response on account of the fact that it was fulfilled literally. I disagree with this view, but accept his theory that the second response is an accretion.

true explanation, that this further enquiry and answer are not historic, but were appended to the story subsequently. Glaucus had been warned that if he committed the act, his family would die out. he did not actually commit it, but his family did die out. So the Pythia's response had to be glossed by the Delphic authorities with a supplementary answer which made it fit the subsequent facts.

But even if we do not take the whole story as completely historic, part is genuine and all of it can be attributed to Delphic teaching. In maintaining that no consequent advantage could justify an unjust act the Delphic priests were taking a strong stand on the principles of morality. In attaching such weight to guilty thoughts and intentions, they were maintaining a much higher and more abstract view of justice than that which would have been exhibited by contemporary legal codes. To look on the moral state of the enquirer as the important thing was to go far beyond the conventional view of the city-state. The emphasis is not put on outward form, but on spiritual character.

The same moral is illustrated in the particularly Delphic subject of bloodguiltiness by a parable, which was probably invented for purposes of instruction. Unlike the story of Glaucus it contains no proper names and other convincing details. But whether or not it actually took place, it no doubt represents the view which the Delphic authorities held. Three young men coming from one city to consult the Pythian Apollo fell in with brigands.¹ One escaped by running, the second became involved in combat with the brigands, and when they were being routed, in stabbing one missed him and thrust his sword through his friend. The Pythia gave very different responses to the two surviving enquirers. To him who ran away she answered

'When a friend was dying, though near at hand, you did not help. I will not give you a response. Depart from the fair shrine.'

To the other

'You slew your comrade when defending him. The blood has not stained you, you are now purer in hands than you were before.'

¹Aelian *VH* III, 44. Schol. Plato, *Laws*, 865. Cf. Epictetus, *Encheiridion*, xxxiii 3, with Simplicius' commentary.

Here again the emphasis is laid on the will, not on the outward act, and it is stressed even to the limit of paradox, that a good intention can excuse the most shocking deed. It is the converse of the response to Glaucus. Evil intent is equivalent to an evil deed, good intent to a good deed, and the actual consequences in either case do not alter the verdict.

As applied to bloodguiltiness this view is particularly surprising, because the ordinary Greek regarded any one who had caused the death of a human being as accursed till he had undergone a process of purification, and the guilt, which applied to voluntary or involuntary killing alike, was even taken to extend to inanimate objects which had shed life-blood. The Delphic view would substitute for this irrational attitude the reasonable belief that only the deliberate crime could stain the doer. The point is made more emphatic by the balanced pattern of the story. The coward who did not help his friend, but actually shed no blood, is expelled from the temple as accursed; the brave man who shed his friend's blood involuntarily is welcomed as doubly pure.

Unfortunately, the exact date of this parable cannot be fixed. It is first referred to by Epictetus as already familiar, so it must have originated by Imperial times at latest. Most probably it was composed much earlier at a period when questions of purification and bloodguilt were still of the first importance.

This spiritual outlook on the question of purity was also applied by the Delphian authorities to the ordinary procedure of their ritual. There are preserved in the Greek Anthology¹ two Delphic oracles on purification which express the same idea. To whom they were addressed and under what circumstances is not recorded, and from the abstract character of their contents one would be led to suppose that they may never have been given as responses to particular individuals, but composed to express Delphic belief on this general question. The first runs.

*'Holy in spirit, stranger, come to the sanctuary of a pure divinity,
when you have touched the spring of the nymphs. A tiny drop then
will suffice the good man. But the bad all Ocean could not wash
with his springs.'*

The second similarly repeats.

¹XIV, 71 and 74

'The temple of the gods is opened wide to the good men and they have no need of purifications For no stain of guilt can touch Virtue But whoso is baneful in heart, stand aside For washing of the body will never thoroughly clean your soul'

It is wonderful to find such a spiritual view of purity attributed to any ancient priesthood, who usually preferred the letter to the spirit in this matter Undoubtedly, these verses are not archaic, as their elegiac metre and their rather mannered diction show But they go along with the other two examples which we have already discussed, and show that Delphi from the sixth century B.C. till late in its history enforced the lesson that it was the spirit rather than the outward act which mattered

The Delphic authorities also applied this spiritual view to the question of sacrifice as well as of purification The moral was enforced by a story which reappears in various forms For instance Theopompus¹ told how a Magnesian of great wealth came to Delphi bringing to Apollo a hecatomb of victims He had been accustomed to offer great sacrifices, and asked the Pythia to answer who was the best and most enthusiastic of men in honouring the god and who made the most pleasing offerings To his surprise the Pythia did not name the enquirer himself, but Clearchus of Methydrium in Arcadia The Magnesians proceeded to hunt for this man and found him on a tiny farm When questioned Clearchus explained that though he was very poor he paid all his oblations to the gods with scrupulous exactitude The moral was that the gods preferred the simplest offering given regularly and piously to the most costly and elaborate expenditure of wealth

A variant on this motive is reminiscent of the parable of the widow's mite, but has a more rhetorical twist The Pythia answers the wealthy and arrogant enquirer that Apollo preferred the poor man of Hermione, who had just offered him a handful of ground barley from his wallet² The poor man was so impressed by this response, that he emptied the remaining

¹Frag. 314 (Oxf.) = Porphyrius, *de Abst.* II, 16

²Porphyrius, *de Abst.* II, 15 Cf. Theophrastus ap. Phot. *Bibl.* 148b 20 For variations on this, cf. also Hierocles, in *Aureum Carmen* (Mullach, *Fragm. Phil. Graec.* I, p. 421), Sopater, *Proleg. to Aristides*, p. 740, Dind., and Schol. Lucian, *Phalaris*, (Rabe), III, 3 Herzog, cf. page 393 note 3, proposes to read ἀνακλήτου as a proper name In Porphyry the poor man is called Docimus and is a Delphian

contents of his wallet on the altar. But the god replied, that by this act he had become twice as hateful as he was loved before.

A similar legend transferred the same principle from the question of piety to that of happiness.¹ Gyges, the ruler of Lydia, proud of his affluence and power, asks the Pythian Apollo who is the happiest man, expecting of course that he himself would be named in reply. The Pythia instead selects Aglaüs of Psophis, an obscure Arcadian, who lives on a tiny plot of soil which he has never left in his life. Gyges visits him, and is amazed at the god's judgment. A third instance presents the same paradox on the subject of wisdom. Chilon the Spartan, or Anacharsis the Scythian, each famous for his wisdom, in pride at his reputation, asks the Pythia who is wiser.² The answer was

'I say that a certain Myson of Oeta has been born in Chen, who is provided with sounder brains than you.'

Again as in the previous parables the point of the story is that 'pride goeth before a fall.' For Myson was a mere godfearing peasant living simply in an extremely backward part of Greece.

Herzog³ was the first to point out that these three paradoxical answers to the question who is the most pious, the most happy, and the most wise are evidently designed on one pattern. Also they all show signs of being very primitive: the response about Myson is alluded to by Hipponax, the choice of Gyges of Lydia as the popular example of the happiest man recalls the famous lines of Archilochus, and the story about the pious Magnesians goes back beyond the fourth century B.C.⁴ Probably all three legends were produced at Delphi in the period when the oracle was at its height in the mid-sixth century and are related to the similar moralizings which Herodotus puts into the mouth of Solon. The actual response about the wisdom of Socrates in the latter half of the fifth century shows that at that period the Delphic authorities were still prepared to attribute great wisdom to those who made no open claim to possess it.

¹Val. Max. VII, 1, 2. Pliny, *NH* VII, 151. Musonius ap. Stob. XV 18. Pausanias (VIII, xxiv, 13) substitutes Croesus for Gyges: a change typical of later times.

²Diog. Laert. I, 130 and ix, 106 ff. Hipponax, frag. 61 (Diehl). Stob. loc. cit.

³In Horneffer's *Der Junge Platon*, pp. 149 ff.

⁴Herzog also argues that Magnesia on the Maeander could not have been famous for wealth after the Persian conquest.

Other stories of a moralizing character told concerning sacrifices were not so paradoxical in their motives and are more likely to have been based on fact. Justin¹ records two incidents from the history of South Italy. One is designed to illustrate that '*bis dat qui cito dat*' applied to offerings made to the gods. The men of Croton and Metapontum had incurred the vengeance of Athena by killing fifty young men in her temple when they captured the town of Siris. A plague smote both peoples, and Delphi gave both the advice to appease the ghosts of the young men and the goddess. The men of Croton erected life-size bronze statues of the young men and a colossal image of the goddess. But the men of Metapontum thought they should make their peace with the goddess and the dead as quickly as possible. So they merely made moderately large stone figures for the young men and an offering of bread to the goddess. The lesser sacrifice which was more quickly completed was no less successful in securing a respite from the plague.

The second story² concerns the war between Croton and Locri which ended in the battle of Sagra—the subject of some notorious fictions. The men of Croton, hearing that their opponents were securing special spiritual assistance, consulted Delphi and were told that the enemy must first be beaten with vows before he was defeated in battle. So they vowed to Apollo a tithe of the spoils—the conventional proportion. But the men of Locri not to be outdone exceeded this vow by promising to dedicate a ninth of their spoils to the same god. Their additional piety was rewarded by a sweeping victory, and the motto of the story (which was probably associated with some dedication at Delphi) was that success could be won by generous vows.

Another dedication at Delphi had linked with it the parable that the god could save by few as well as by many in battle.³ This offering was the group of twenty statues of Apollo presented by the men of the Lipari Islands. It was said that in their naval battles with the Etruscans the Pythia had told them to fight using as few ships as possible. This paradoxical advice proved successful, for when the Liparaeans set out with only five ships, the Etruscans, despising their opponents, attacked them with an equal number and were captured. This happened

¹XX, II, 3 ff²Paus. X, xvi, 7 D S V ix, 5³Justin, XX, III, 1 ff

four times in succession till the Liparaeans had secured twenty Etruscan ships, and commemorated the success in the number of Apollos which they dedicated. This picturesque story comes from Pausanias, the traveller, and no doubt was what the guides told tourists in the second century A.D. But as the event must have taken place some six hundred years before it is doubtful whether the legend has not become modified to make a more effective parable.¹

The most famous expression of Delphic wisdom was not in the form of an oracle at all, but in the sentences which appeared upon the entrance of the Alcmaeonid temple.² These inscriptions consisted of the three maxims 'Know thyself,' 'Nothing too much,' and 'Go bail and destruction is nigh,' and according to the earliest traditions they had been dedicated by the Seven Wise Men—a legendary group of contemporary sages, who flourished in the early sixth century. If any of them had actually dedicated an aphorism at Delphi, it must have been in the pre-Alcmaeonid temple, but any such direct connection is most improbable. The only undoubted fact is that these three inscribed sentences were prominently visible on the building in the fifth century, and were probably part of the structure as rebuilt by the Alcmaeonids. Of the three 'Know thyself' acquired the greatest reputation and is constantly cited by later authors as the quintessence of Delphic wisdom. 'Nothing too much' is also often quoted, but the third maxim was too specific in its application and too archaic in its outlook to be classed normally with the other two. It is quoted comparatively rarely. Later moralists assigned to each of the Seven Sages a separate saying of his own by adding four more to the original three. But there was no agreement in assigning each to its author just as the list of the Seven Sages themselves was subject to much variation.

The chief person who raised objection to the ascription of these three maxims to the Seven Sages as a body was Clear-

¹Vide Courby, *Fouilles*, II, p. 142 ff.

²Plato, *Philebus*, 48C, *Alcibi* 124A, 129A, 132C, *Anat.* 138A, *Charm.* 164D, *Phaedrus*, 229E, *Protag.* 343. Xen. *Mem.* IV, II, 24. Isocr. XII, 230. Bekker, *Anec.* 253. Stob. (Hense) III, xxi, 26. Paus. X, xxiv. 1. Pliny, *N.H.* VII, 119. Contr. Varro, *Menippeae* frag. 152 (Bucheler). Suidas, s.v. τῶν κατὰ πάντων ἑτα, etc. Plut. *Moral.* 511B, etc. On these *Δελφικά γραμματα*, see Roscher, *Philologus*, 1900, pp. 21 ff. and 1901, pp. 93 ff., where he attempts to interpret them in relation to the functioning of the oracle.

thus,¹ a pupil of Aristotle. He said that 'Know thyself' was the utterance of the Pythian Apollo, given as an oracular response to Chilon the Spartan, one of the Seven who was usually credited with this apophthegm, whenever it was ascribed to one individual. But this theory seems to have been inspired by nothing but a deep reverence for the maxim which made the philosopher refuse to attribute it to any except superhuman wisdom.

Though this attribution is echoed in a rhetorical way in a few later writers,² the general opinion remained faithful to the picture of the Seven Sages. They were closely connected with Apollo by a legend which was popular in several different versions.³ The usual form tells how some Coan fishermen were hauling in a cast net when a stranger from Miletus bought the catch from them in advance. It proved to include a golden tripod. This amazing find led to a dispute, the Coans maintaining that the tripod could not be counted as an ordinary catch, the Milesians that he bought the net's contents whatever they were. Their respective cities took up the dispute and went to war, but the Pythia was meanwhile consulted and decided the issue.

'Never will war between the Coans and Ionians cease, till the tripod of gold which Hephaestus toiled to make you send from between you, and it reaches the home of a man who has foreseen in wisdom the present and future both.'

Another version made the fishermen Milesians and without suggesting any danger of war represented the Pythia as consulted at once and answering

'Child of Miletus, do you ask Phoebus concerning the tripod? Whoever is first of all in wisdom, his I declare the tripod to be.'

(Yet another version would dispense with the oracle entirely by supposing that the tripod itself was inscribed 'For him who is wise'.)

All versions of the legend more or less agreed that the tripod was first given to Thales of Miletus, the famous philosopher,

¹Apostolius, VI, 42a. Diogenes Laertius (I, 1, 40) attributes a similar theory to Antisthenes of Rhodes. See also Aristotle, frag. 5 (Rose).

²Cf. Cic. *de Legibus*, I, xxii, 58. *Tusc. Disp.* I, xxii, 52, V, xxv, 70. Dio Chrys. IV, 57.

³D S IX, iii. Val. Max. IV, 1, 7. Plut. *Sol.* iv. Diog. Laert. I, 1, 27, ff. Porphyry, *F. Gr. H.* 260F 5. Schol. Aristoph. *Plut.* 9. *Ox. Pap.* 1011 = Callimachus, *Iambi*, pp. 274 ff. and 290 (Loeb).

but that he in modesty sent it on to Bias of Priene as his superior in wisdom. By this same process of transfer, it passed through all the Seven Wise Men in turn, till at length it came back to Thales again, who decided that it should be dedicated to Apollo because his wisdom was superior to all others. Which temple of Apollo received the dedication was in no way agreed—earlier versions say Apollo of Branchidae or the Ismenian Apollo of Thebes, later versions the Apollo of Delphi. One primitive version even substitutes for the tripod a bowl bequeathed to the wisest by Bathycles of Magnesia.¹

The underlying idea in these legends, which has been tricked out with various folk-tale motives, consists in the belief that the Seven Sages were contemporary and linked together by mutual recognition. Also they were to some extent the servants of Apollo, who was often thought of as the giver of wisdom to men. The choice of a tripod as the prize particularly suggests Apollo, and the ultimate return of the prize to the god, though this motive does not appear in the earliest versions, served to round off the story with the same implication. The legend in almost all its versions has an association with Asia Minor in the scene of the fishermen's catch—also of the different names accepted for inclusion in the list of the Seven Sages: the four which were generally agreed on—Thales, Bias, Pittacus and Cleobulus—are those of wise men in Ionia and the nearby islands. Of the other names, Solon, Chilon, Periander and Myson, all have strong associations with Delphi. In fact Myson would not be known, if it were not for the traditional Delphic oracle which we have already discussed.² But even the authority of the Pythia did not suffice to keep Myson's name in the list. He was usually displaced in later accounts by one of the better known sages.

The Apolline character of the legends of the Seven Sages and the mixed elements from Asia Minor and Delphi can be taken to prove that these stories, which may have originated in folk tales, were shaped for a moralizing and pietistic purpose by the priesthoods of Branchidae and Delphi. The legendary

¹Cf. P. W. Sieben Weise, K. Schwendemann, *JDAI* 1921, p. 159, and W. Wiersma, *Mnemosyne*, 1913, pp. 150 ff., who dissects the stories rather too simply into a Milesian and a Prienian prototype, but does not allow for Delphian influence. He supposes the two were combined in Athens.

²Cf. *supra* p. 393.

picture was fully developed by the latter part of the fifth century B.C. and even though Herodotus does not mention it explicitly, he seems already to know the Seven Sages and their typical sayings. The actual authorship of the three maxims set up on the Delphian temple may be left uncertain. Most likely they were popular proverbs, which tended later to be attributed to particular sages. The idea of setting up moral sayings as instructions in a temple of Apollo is not confined to Delphi. By the fourth century at latest Delos too contained a famous quatrain on the best aims for mortals.¹ The 'Know thyself' and 'Nothing too much' remained among the guiding thoughts of Hellenic prudence.

Delphi also contained a more enigmatic dedication by the Seven Sages—a wooden E. This letter was presumed to contain great symbolic wisdom and as such was imitated in a bronze E dedicated at a later date by the Athenians and a golden E presented by the Empress Livia.² But what the symbol meant was never certainly elucidated. Plutarch's treatise on the subject enumerates many unconvincing explanations and modern scholarship has added some equally unlikely reasons. The conundrum remains unsolved.

Though the three great maxims over the entrance of Apollo's temple were not usually reckoned the god's own utterance, we can assign the spirit and meaning of them to the Delphic authorities, because they chose to give such a prominent place to these particular sentiments. Their prominence also served to give Delphi a reputation for moral apophthegms. One consequence is that popular verses which expressed an appropriate moral sentiment tended to be attributed to the Pythia, even if they actually had been composed by some classical poet. For instance the line³

'Should he suffer what he has done, then judgment would be straight'

is quoted by Julian as a Delphic response, and indexed in Suidas' lexicon accordingly. But it is otherwise known as a

¹Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* I 1059 a 26. *Eudem. Ethic.* I, 1214 a 1, and for Triptolemus' sayings at Eleusis, cf. Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, I, p. 96.

²Plut. *de E apud Delphos*, esp. 385F. Cf. supra, p. 9, for the sign on the supposed omphalos.

³Julian, *Convivium*, 314A. Suidas, s.v. αἱ κε πάροι, κτλ. Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* V, 1132 a 26, attributes it to Rhadamanthys.

fragment from Hesiod¹ and, in default of a specified enquirer and enquiry, that is the most likely source

Apart from parables of general application, a number of Delphic legends are of a sort peculiarly appropriate to an oracular centre. They are cautionary tales invented or worked up as a warning to the sceptical enquirer who might try to hoodwink the oracle or disregard its warnings. No doubt such stories were told to visitors both to illustrate Apollo's prescience and to give a salutary hint on the futility of trying to deceive Apollo. For instance, we are told that a certain man who wished to trick the oracle appeared with a live sparrow concealed in his hand and asked whether what he held was dead or alive.² His plan was meant to catch the Pythia whichever answer she gave. If she said 'dead,' he could show the sparrow alive, if she said 'alive,' he need only squeeze the sparrow, and produce it dead. But the oracle was not mocked and answered,

'Fellow, you can show it either dead or alive, for each is in your power.'

This story is simple compared with the subtle warning which another famous legend conveyed.³ One Daphnitas, a sceptic, whose sharp tongue had made him many enemies, decided to make fun of Apollo by enquiring whether he would find his horse. Actually Daphnitas had never owned one: the question was meant to sound to the Pythia like one of the ordinary enquiries about lost property which must have bulked large among the minor business of the oracle. The response to Daphnitas was that he would find the horse, but only to fall thrown from it. These words delighted the sceptic who revelled in telling how the oracle had been taken in. But not long afterwards Daphnitas fell into the power of King Attalus whom he had enraged by some insulting words. At the king's order he was executed by being thrown from a cliff, and Apollo's prescience was shown. For the cliff's name was 'Horse'!!

This cautionary tale is evidently founded partly on fact. Daphnitas of Telmessus is a historical person: a fragment of

¹Frag 174

²Babrius, 229. See Robert, *Oedipus*, I, 259, for a theory that this motive goes back to a satyr play of Aeschylus.

³Cic' *de fato*, iii. Val Max I, xiii, 5. Hesychius Milesius (*FHG* IV, p. 160, 14). Suidas, s.v. Δαφνίτας. Cicero also alludes to the fate of one Icadius, a pirate, but does not elucidate the story.

whose insulting poem on Attalus is preserved. There is no reason to doubt that he was killed by that king's orders. The fictitious element in the story is the enquiry concerning the horse and its unexpected fulfilment. Whether this can contain any substratum of truth is very doubtful and cannot ultimately be established. Strabo¹ knew of some quite different story of the oracle in which Daphnitas was told to beware of a 'breast-plate,' but unfortunately he leaves the allusion quite unexplained. Probably the sarcastic Daphnitas had made some sceptical remarks about the Pythian Apollo, which inspired the Delphic authorities to avenge themselves on his memory by building up a proper cautionary legend. To be thrown from a cliff was the correct punishment for the sacrilegious at Delphi, and that this should be the exact form of execution inflicted on Daphnitas is piously appropriate, but highly improbable. Strabo's alternative version of his fate, whatever it was, may have been nearer the true facts, but it could never have suited Delphic practice so well. So it was superseded in the official tradition.

Finally numbers of Delphic legends from all periods emphasize the precept that Apollo's warnings could not be lightly disregarded: however unimportant or obscure they might appear to be, they would be vindicated by later events. This moral is the most obvious one to draw from stories of prophecy, and it will be sufficient to illustrate it with a slight instance which we have not included elsewhere. It was said that the men of Camarina in Sicily wished to drain a lake of the same name which lay near their city and was the source of malaria.² They consulted Delphi in advance and must have been disgusted when the Pythia forbade the undertaking.

'Do not disturb Camarina: it is better undisturbed.'

The response may have merely been an expression of Delphic conservatism. At any rate the men of Camarina chose to flout the advice and drain the lake. Later their city was

¹XIV, C 647

²Servius, *Aen.* III, 701. Zenob. V, 18. Suidas, s.v. *μη κίει, κτλ.* In *Anthol. Graec.* IX, 685, a further line is added: 'lest having disturbed it, you make the lesser greater.' Modern scholars (Schubring, *Philologus*, 1872, p. 517, Ziegler, *P.W.* s.v. *Kamarina*) object to this as a spurious addition. I would prefer the theory which Schubring rejects, that it is authentic, and meant 'lest you make the smaller lake bigger.' This allusion was suppressed when the oracle was taken to refer to a different disaster.

stormed by besiegers and the Delphic authorities pointed out that the enemy had been able to attack successfully over the bed of the dried lake 'Do not disturb Camarina' became a proverb used against those who brought trouble on themselves wilfully.

CHAPTER IX

THE ORACLE AND THE PRIVATE ENQUIRER

IN almost all the oracles which we have considered so far the enquirers have not been mere private individuals. They were states and kings asking about questions of war and peace, of ritual or colonization—matters of high moment touching the lives of many. But it must not be supposed that these great enquiries made up the total or even the bulk of the questions submitted to the Pythian Apollo. The official and public embassies may have been frequent in the most important period of the Pythia's activity, but even then they cannot have displaced the private enquirer, and in the later periods of decline it was the ordinary Greek with his private cares and troubles who maintained in operation the business of the oracle. Plutarch with a somewhat supercilious air contrasts the consultations of his own day with the mighty past. Then it was 'cities great in power and kings and tyrants of overweening notions,' now it is 'So and So to ask about the purchase of a slave and Thingumbob about his occupation'.¹ The stock questions of private individuals are 'whether to get married, whether to venture on a voyage, whether to risk a loan.' People come to enquire for a runaway slave.² Sometimes, sated with kings and cities, the historian of Delphi may well wish that more of these humble enquirers and their responses had been recorded. But our literary sources are almost unfailingly snobbish, and give no personal examples, except where they convey a special moral or concern some private individual of such distinction that his question takes on the importance of a public consultation. Unfortunately our epigraphic evidence from Delphi does little to counterbalance this bias. It is not as at Dodona, where the enquirer's question might be inscribed

¹*Moral* 407D, 408C. For stock questions cf. also Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.* V, 224C, 417B. For private enquiries already discussed: (1) For a wife, Rhacius, p. 50, Damagetus, p. 98, Eurysthenes and Procles, p. 100, (2) For lost property, Aristomenes, p. 95, (3) For children, Myscellus, p. 72, Tisamenus, p. 198, Xuthus, p. 306, (4) For healing, Battus, p. 80, Croesus, p. 156. Also there are examples discussed under Myths.

²Cf. e.g. Dio Chrys. X—an imaginary instance.

on a lead tablet and dedicated in the temple.¹ Such a system has allowed numerous quite ordinary consultations of Zeus to be recorded for our own time. But it was not followed at Delphi, and the Delphic inscriptions very rarely include the text of oracular responses and in only three fragmentary instances is a private response so preserved.

So when we fall back on our literary sources for evidence of private and personal enquiries, we find that the majority of those recorded concern the famous men of the classical periods, and are often merely legends invented on the slenderest foundations to associate the great poets and philosophers with the Delphic oracle. Most of the stories of early times concern the classic poets. First of all Homer: here the great problem was to identify his birthplace, which was claimed by many cities. Otherwise, the most popular story about him was that he had met his death through vexation at being unable to solve a riddle put to him by some young fishermen. In the usual Delphic legend this folk-tale was combined with the idea that Homer had himself enquired what was his birthplace.² The Pythia both answered his question and warned him of his fated end. The version of the response which was actually inscribed on the base of a statue of Homer in the vestibule of the temple at Delphi ran

'Happy and ill-starred—for you are born for both fates—you seek your fatherland. But you have a motherland and not a fatherland. The island of Ios is the fatherland of your mother, and it will receive you when dead. But be on your guard against the riddle of the young boys.'

According to this story Homer's father was a local demigod and his mother a woman of Ios. The legend could be arbitrarily combined with one of the other traditional birthplaces by making his mother travel thither while still pregnant. But other authorities supported the claims of quite different native lands to Homer. For instance, a Cypriote prophet made a pronouncement in favour of his town of Salamis. Still more remarkably

¹Ditt. *Syll.*³ 1160-66.

²Paus. VIII, xxiv, 14, X, xxiv, 2. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 65 and 66. *Certamen*, pp. 315 and 326 [Plut.], *Vit. Hom.* 4. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P. E.* V, 227D and 229C. Steph. Byz. *Ios*. Cf. Julian, *Orat.* VII, 210 A. On the monument at Delphi, cf. *Rev. Phil.* XII, pp. 15 ff., and on the possibility that Pausanias had not actually read the inscription cf. Parke, *Hermathena*, XXIV, p. 102.

Delphi, as we have already seen,¹ in Hadrian's reign, when asked directly by the Emperor where Homer was born, gave an answer utterly inconsistent with the Ios legend. The motive for this confusion cannot be detected now.

Another version of the response to Homer himself after paraphrasing the description of his motherland and adding the warning concerning the riddle, ends with a different point.

'You have been allotted two fates of life. The one is a darkening of your two eyes, the other is equal in fortune to the immortals for you both alive and dead. For dead you are still quite unageing.'

This prophecy of Homer's traditional blindness and his immortal fame answers excellently to the double address at the beginning of the other response, 'Happy and illstarred'. In fact, it seems to be the necessary sequel to explain it. But it is missing in all except three of our authorities. It appears that even the version of the oracle inscribed at Delphi, if Pausanias has recorded it correctly, did not include these lines. Hence one will be led to suppose that the texts of this traditional response may once have been quite distinct. One version gave Homer's birthplace and the warning about the riddle, but no more. Another mentioned his double fate of blindness and immortality in addition. The longer and the shorter version tended to become combined with the omission of parts of the longer version. Neither can seriously claim to be genuine, but they go back to the tradition of classical times, since Aristotle appears to have known them both.

Beside Homer, Hesiod was of much less importance, but he also was the subject of two traditional oracles—one said to have been delivered to him in his lifetime, the other a response concerning the translation of his remains.² The oracle which Hesiod himself received was

'Blessed is this man who frequents my house, Hesiod, honoured by the immortal Muses. Verily his fame will be great as far as the dawn's light is scattered. But be on your guard against the fair grove of Nemean Zeus. For there the end of death is fated for you.'

The honorific address is a typical one; also the warning prophecy turned out in the conventional manner to be a

¹Cf. *supra* p. 289.

²*Certamen*, p. 323, Tzetzes *Vita*. Cf. Thuc. III, xcvi, 1. Plut. *Moral.* 969E. Paus. IX, xxxi, 6, xxxviii, 3. Proclus ad Hesiod. *Op. et D.* 631.

homonymic trick Hesiod avoided the famous temple of Zeus at Nemea, only to be killed in Aetolia at another shrine of the Nemean Zeus. His death was embellished with various legendary features which need not concern us. Subsequently the men of Orchomenus in Boeotia claimed that a tomb in their city contained Hesiod's bones and that these had been removed thither from their earlier resting-place near the Corinthian Gulf in response to an oracle. Orchomenus had been smitten with a plague, and the Pythia had prescribed the fetching of Hesiod's bones as a cure. The ambassadors had been told that a crow would show them the tomb and they had found the remains in a cranny of a rock on which a crow was sitting. All this story is of the usual pattern of an aetiological legend for a hero's tomb.¹ An alternative version much more simply said that the bones of Hesiod had been brought to Orchomenus from the nearby village of Ascra, his birthplace, and according to this account his original burial place also. This is much more likely to be true. Clearly the legend about the grove of Nemean Zeus was invented to justify the local claim to possess a tomb of Hesiod in the neighbourhood. His presence so far from his native town required to be explained on some ground. The Orchomenians may truly have translated his bones from Ascra, but later, when the Nemean legend of his death became accepted, they had to assert the genuineness of their relics by alleging that they had been brought from Aetolia. Though Hesiod as a historic person is less difficult to grasp than Homer, he is no more reliably connected with Delphi as an enquirer. As a poet Hesiod has close affinities to the Pythian Apollo. His background of mythology can be identified at many points with the cult and beliefs of Delphi. This was to be expected as Hesiod's home in Boeotia was not very distant. But also his moralizing outlook and his style which tended to fall into short gnomic phrases were very like the responses of the Pythia.² In fact, as we have seen, late authors could confuse the utterances of one with those of the other.³

Archilochus has been regarded as the first European to write his most personal feelings in poetry, and he is the first

¹Cf Cimon and the bones of Theseus, *supra* p. 196.

²Cf Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, I, pp. 260 ff.

³Cf *supra* p. 398.

private individual whose contact with the Delphic oracle is beyond doubt, even though the details are uncertain. Tradition even alleged that the iambic poet's future greatness had been prophesied by the Pythia to his father, Telesicles. Presumably he had been making the usual enquiry about the prospects of his children, the response was

*'Telesicles, your son will be immortal and renowned in song among mortals, he who is the first to address you when you have disembarked from your boat on your native land.'*¹

The motive of the 'first to be met' is conventional in Delphic legends, and the whole oracle may be a forgery made after Archilochus' fame had reached such a height as to suggest the invention. But it is notable that the lines contain nothing which need presuppose actual knowledge of Archilochus' later reputation. The phrase 'renowned in song'² would apply just as well to a man of action as to a future poet. In fact, it is possible the oracle is quite genuine and was composed as a compliment to Telesicles and his prospective family. For Telesicles himself had an important association with Delphi, since under the Pythia's instructions he had led the first Parian expedition to colonize Thasos. It may have been on the same visit to Delphi that the oracle about his son was given to Telesicles in response to a private enquiry. At least the words of the prophecy imply that he was still resident on Paros.

Later Archilochus himself when grown to manhood lost all his property in political troubles on Paros and consulted the Pythia about his future.³ He was advised to settle in Thasos.

'Archilochus, go to Thasos and dwell in the famous island'

He followed the advice but his restless, passionate nature was not likely to find peace anywhere. He describes jocularly in his poems how he fought unsuccessfully on the Thracian mainland. Finally he was killed in battle by Calondas, a Naxian, nicknamed the Raven, probably another wandering adventurer like himself.⁴ Later Calondas came to Delphi and wished to con-

¹Oenomaus, ap Euseb. *P. E. V.*, 227C. *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 113.

²δοῖδμος ἔσσεταί ἐν ἀνθρώποις.

³Oenomaus, ap Euseb. *P. E. V.*, 226A. There is no evidence for the assumption that this was the occasion for a further Parian settlement in Thasos.

⁴Plut. *Moral.* 560D. Heracles, *de reb. publ.* viii, 2. Oenomaus, ap Euseb. *P. E. V.*, 228C. Galen. *Protrept.* ix. Dio Chrys. XXXIII, 12. Aelian, *frag.* 80. Liban. *Orat.* I, 74.

sult the oracle, but the Pythia repulsed him with the words:

*'You have slain the Muses' servant, the man of utterance:
depart from the temple'*

Calondas, taken aback, replied soundly enough, that he had killed Archilochus in fair fight where he might himself have been killed instead. But the Pythia would not admit that he was free from bloodguilt. However, in response to Calondas' appeals, she relented to the extent of bidding him go to Taenarum, famous as a reputed entrance to the Lower World, and placate the soul of Archilochus there. This remarkable story, though not recorded in any early authority, need not be doubted in its general lines. Later ages were somewhat puzzled at the high appreciation shown by Apollo for one of such doubtful moral character as Archilochus. But that objection need not weigh with us. We have seen that Archilochus' father and Archilochus himself had both consulted the oracle which, if we accept the tradition, had given a confident prophecy of greatness to one of Telesicles' sons. This was sufficient to make his death a matter of importance, and at that period in the seventh century, as can be judged from the development of Greek mythology, the Delphic authorities were deeply concerned with questions of bloodguilt and atonement. Hence there seems no need to doubt the general truth of this story, and one can even accept the words of the oracles as genuine.¹

In the following century the death of a very different author was the subject of another Delphic oracle. The story of Aesop's end is wrapped in obscurity, but there is no reason to question the basic fact.² According to one tradition of late times he was sent to Delphi by Croesus as his agent with a large sum of money, and managed somehow to incur the bitter hatred of the Delphians. Plutarch describes how he quarrelled with them and sent back to Croesus the money which he had been entrusted to distribute among them, his reason being that they were unworthy to receive it. Other accounts attribute the ill feeling

¹One might take exception to the apparent suggestion that Calondas held an argument with the Pythia, but I take it that, like the Athenian embassy in 480, he returned as a suppliant later in the day.

²Herod. II, cxxxiv, 4. Aristoph. *Vesp.* 1446 with Schol. Heraclides, *de reb. publ.* xxi, 2. *Ox. Pap.* 1011 = Callimachus, *Iambi*, p. 280 (Loeb), *Ox. Pap.* 1800, col. ii, frag. 2. *Plut. Moral.* 556F, cf. 150A, 401A. Zenob. I, 47. Aelian, frag. 203. *Chronicon Romanum*, *FGrH* 252 B 5. See Avianus, *Fab. Epistula ad Theodosium*, that Aesop had been advised by the Delphic oracle to express morals in droll stories.

simply to Aesop's bitter tongue, when he insultingly pointed out to the Delphians that they had no land whose produce could support them, but lived off what they snatched from the offerings made to Apollo. Whatever the cause of offence the Delphians revenged themselves by 'planting' a gold cup from the sacred treasures in Aesop's baggage. He was stopped and searched, and after being convicted openly as a temple-robber was executed by the penalty for sacrilege, he was thrown from the cliff, Hyampeia.

His innocent death did not escape divine retribution. Delphi itself was smitten with famine and plagues. The Pythia directed that atonement must be made for Aesop's death, but apparently this could not be properly done until some representative of his was found. A difficult problem as a childless slave had no obvious heirs or kin. The Delphians used to advertise their search at every Greek festival, till at last Iadmon, the grandson of a former owner of Aesop, came forward and accepted the compensation in the name of the deceased.

The last part of this strange story is the best attested. Herodotus records with full names the settlement of the issue. Its origin he omits to describe, and the vague and divergent nature of the other and later sources shows that the tradition about Aesop's mission and death was not precise. Clearly he must have been killed unjustly by the Delphians and a trumped up charge of sacrilege was the most likely count. The exact detail of the gold cup sounds too suspiciously like an incident of the great Delphian feud, and may have been borrowed from it.¹ A curious point is that while our late authorities represent Aesop as Croesus' official representative, there is no hint of the effect which his execution might be expected to have had on the relations between Delphi and Lydia. Possibly his connection with Croesus is fictitious: if so, the *Chronicon Romanum* may be right when it dates his death to the year 563-2—well before Croesus' more intimate negotiations with Delphi. Or else if he really was an agent of the Lydian king, one might conjecture that his death was occasioned by the fall of Sardis. The Delphian authorities in disgust at the failure of their pro-Lydian policy had revenged themselves on Croesus' representative. Such an unworthy motive might well have been

¹Cf. *supra* p. 234.

forgotten later. If so, the wish to recompense his death may have come from those leaders of Delphic policy who substituted for the aggressive tactics of their predecessors the cautious refusal to resist Persia's advance.¹

In the following century the association between Pindar and Delphi is of a far different and happier nature. It is proved not merely by ancient tradition, supported by the evidence of later rites, but also Pindar's odes themselves show constant traces of a special interest in Delphi and a peculiar knowledge of the traditions associated with it. As a Theban, Pindar's home was not far from the place and was bound to the Pythian Apollo by the ties of ancient legends. But still more one can believe that Pindar himself with his strongly pious impulses and conservative outlook found in the bitter and changing world of the Periclean epoch that Delphi was the true spiritual home of his old age.

In Pausanias' time there was still shown in the temple of Apollo the iron chair in which the guides said Pindar used to sit and sing his hymn when he visited Delphi.² Also the association with the poet was maintained by a strange piece of ritual. At the *Theoxenia* when Apollo was supposed to be entertaining to a banquet the spirits of the heroes, a choice portion of the sacrifice was set aside for the poet and could be claimed by his descendants.³

In his Pythian Odes Pindar alludes once to his visiting Delphi, apparently to consult the oracle.⁴ But the only story of an oracular response to him, which is preserved, concerns another occasion.⁵ In old age he instructed some Boeotians on a sacred embassy to Apollo to ask what was best for men. The Pythia answered that Pindar was already aware, if he had indeed written a poem on the fate of Trophonius and Agamedes. 'But,' she added, 'if he wished to put it to the test, it would be revealed to him shortly.' Pindar correctly took this answer to be a warning of his coming death, and after making his pre-

¹ Pherecydes of Syrus was also said to have suffered voluntarily a similar fate to that of Aesop—Diog. Laert. I, xi, 118.

²X, xxiv, 5.

³Plut. *Moral* 557F. Paus. IX, xxiii, 3, where it is expressed as if the portion was given at every sacrifice. Liban. *Orat* XX, 1. *Vitae Pindari* (Westermann), I, 47, II, 28, III, 17.

⁴Pyth. VIII, 58.

⁵Plut. *Moral* 109A.

parations accordingly, passed away soon afterwards. Earlier instances have shown how inclined tradition was to make the Pythia prophesy a poet's death, but in this instance there is no need to treat the story sceptically

Only one other poet is subsequently connected with Delphi by tradition ¹ Euripides' birth was said to have been prophesied by the Pythia, but the response is very open to suspicion. It alluded directly to his winning the garland of the poet, while the prophecy of Archilochus' greatness was more indefinite

'You will have a son, Mnesarchides, whom all men will honour and he will rise to good fame and will encircle himself with the sweet grace of holy wreaths' ²

Also as Euripides' father, unlike the father of Archilochus, was reputed to have been a man of no birth or distinction, it was less likely that the Pythia would have been led to give him a congratulatory address on his prospective son. The verses are probably a forgery made after Euripides had become the most popular dramatist of the Greek world

Compared with poets other kinds of artists appear scarcely at all in the traditions of Delphi. The inscriptions preserved show that from the fourth century B.C. onward the authorities there honoured painters, sculptors, actors and others with the same grants of privileges which were accorded to poets, but they have left no legends. The solitary exception concerns Dipoenus and Scyllis, who were said to have been the first sculptors of marble, working at the beginning of the sixth century ³. They were engaged on a contract at Sicyon, but complained of ill treatment and retired to Aetolia leaving their work unfinished. A famine fell on Sicyon, and Delphi prescribed that the sculptors must be induced to complete their work—which was only achieved by generous apologies and offers of an increased commission. Here it was less the sculptors personally than their work which mattered to Delphi. A question of cult was involved, especially as the projected statues were of the chief Delphic deities of the time—Apollo, Artemis, Athena and Heracles.

The other favourite type of private individual associated

¹See Aeschylus *Life* for an alleged oracle on his death, not specified as Delphic.

²Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.* V, 227C.

³Pliny, *N.H.* XXXVI, 10.

with the Delphic oracle were philosophers. This was natural, for Apollo was regarded as the god of wisdom as well as of poetry, and philosophers were his servants almost as much as poets.

The early Ionian philosophers do not have relations with Delphi, except Thales, who was regularly reckoned as one of the Seven Sages. The first philosopher who is the subject of an independent tradition is Pythagoras, but his life presents a notoriously difficult problem to the historian. Evidence on Pythagoras is all found in late authorities, who wrote many centuries after his death and were entirely influenced by the fabulous inventions concocted by the Neo-Pythagoreans. Thus Iamblichus¹ tells us that his father, Mnesarchus, visited Delphi when on a trading venture, accompanied by his wife. He asked about the prospects of a voyage to Syria, and the Pythia told him that the attempt would prove satisfactory and profitable, and added that his wife was already pregnant and would bear a son pre-eminent among men of all time in beauty and wisdom and fated to be the greatest benefit for the human race in all its life. Mnesarchus was duly impressed by this prophecy, especially as he had not been enquiring about a prospective child. He changed his wife's name from Parthenis to Pythais in honour of Apollo, and when she gave birth to a son at Sidon he named him Pythagoras. '—spoken of by the Pythia.' The Syrian voyage also was so successful that Mnesarchus was able to build a temple to the Pythian Apollo at Samos from his profits.

This story seems to be mostly fabulous, though in some form it goes back to the fourth century B.C. when Eudoxus and Xenocrates accepted a version of it, according to which Pythagoras was actually the son of Apollo himself who had consequently inspired the Pythia to prophesy his future greatness.

The hyperbolical language of the oracle and its extraordinary circumstances of impromptu prophecy are alike very improbable. Also the derivation of Pythagoras is quite unsound and unnecessary in what was a fairly usual Greek name.² If the legend has any basis in fact, it may be that Pythagoras had through his family strong ties of traditional devotion to Apollo.

¹*Vit. Pyth.* 5 ff.

²Cf. Pape-Benseler, s.n. that its meaning is active 'speaking with the help of Apollo'.

Samos, his native island, was legendarily said to have been colonized at the instructions of the Pythia by Ancaeus, a direct ancestor of Pythagoras,¹ and the philosopher himself appears to have held Apollo in particular respect. Also a fourth century B.C. tradition maintained that he received the bulk of his moral precepts from Themistoclea, the Pythia in his time.² As it stands this must be a hopeless exaggeration, but it is not impossible that Pythagoras did consult the oracle and even perhaps claimed to have learnt something from its gnomic wisdom. We have already had cause to notice how much South Italy, the home of early Pythagoreanism, was given to consulting Delphi on other subjects.

The most famous oracular response of Delphi about a philosopher was delivered to Chaerephon concerning Socrates. Plato in the *Apology*³ puts the story into Socrates' mouth. The excitable and enthusiastic disciple on a visit to Delphi actually asked the Pythia whether any man was wiser than Socrates, and received the answer that no one was wiser. To this response Chaerephon's brother gave witness at Socrates' trial, and it is impossible to doubt the facts, difficult though they are to explain. In the *Apology* Socrates makes his whole manner of life hinge on this oracle. Puzzled by the god's assertion, for which he felt no warrant within himself, he proceeded, as he tells, to investigate his fellow citizens to discover if they were not really wiser than himself, and ultimately finding that all their alleged wisdom was self-deception, he decided that Apollo was right, because whereas all men thought they knew something and did not, Socrates knew that he knew nothing. Unless one is to regard this account in the *Apology* as either a piece of fiction written by Plato, or a piece of humbug perpetrated by Socrates himself, the oracle must have been given as described and must have had a determining effect on Socrates' life. Unfortunately no direct indication is given to show when it was delivered. It must in any case have been some years before the trial, as Chaerephon was dead by that time: the implication of the speech is that it was given many years previously, as Socrates

¹Cf. supra p. 65.

²Aristoxenus ap. Diog. Laert. VIII, 1, 8, which appears in a garbled version in Apositolus, *Cent. XV*, 88 and Suidas s.v. τὰς ἐκ τοῦ τριπόδος. For another echo of the tradition cf. Porphyry, *Vita* 41.

³20E

dates after it the adoption of his whole typical manner of life. Also, during many of Socrates' later years it must have been impossible for an Athenian to reach Delphi and consult the oracle. It looks as if one can exclude for this purpose the periods 431 to 422 and 413 to 404 B.C., leaving open only the interval between the Archidamian and the Decelean wars or the period before the war broke out. On the whole it is much more likely that the oracle was given before 431, and so influenced Socrates from about the age of thirty-five. If so, it makes it all the more difficult to explain what had led the Pythia to make such a statement. What the young Socrates was like, it is hard to guess. He may have been very different from the caricature produced some ten years later by Aristophanes and subsequently modified in the second edition of the *Clouds*. Also Plato's writings, though perhaps valid with some qualifications in describing the man whom he knew, cannot be depended on to picture correctly Socrates, as he was before Plato was born, especially if, as is implied in the *Apology*, Socrates' life underwent a kind of conversion in consequence of the oracle. Hence one cannot really tell whether the Socrates of the period before 431 had already managed to acquire such a reputation for wisdom, that the Pythia could reasonably be made to reckon him wise. Alternatively, of course, one may suppose that the Pythia's answer was determined by the earnestness of the enquirer. Chaerephon sought for a negative answer and received it. Those responsible for the reply may have given it with a touch of that lofty contempt for human wisdom, as ordinarily reckoned, which Socrates claimed to attribute to Apollo himself.¹ If neither of these explanations is satisfactory, and they both are rather inadequate, one can only leave the prophecy as one of those unexplained mysteries which still remain with the Delphic oracle. Certainly if it served to alter Socrates' course of life, as Plato makes him say, it was probably more important as a contribution to human thought than any other words that emanated from the Pythia.

Later writers frequently quote this oracle, but usually it has

¹ Herzog in Horneffer, *Der Junge Platon*, pp. 166 ff., well compares the moral tale about Myson, cf. *supra* p. 393. Horneffer, p. 101, dates the response about the time of the first production of the *Clouds*, as he supposed that play would otherwise show traces of Socrates' new mission. But Socrates in the *Apology* actually uses the story of the response to explain why he was the subject of such attacks by comic poets. However, the chronology of Socrates' career is very controversial.

been distorted by paraphrases. The first offender in this way is Xenophon,¹ who reports the Pythia as saying that no man was more liberal minded or just or upright than Socrates. This preserves the negative form of the answer, but one cannot accept the adjectives which he substitutes for 'wiser.' They would make nonsense out of Socrates' quest, as described in Plato's *Apology*, and all later authors recognized that wisdom, not moral character, was the question at issue. Burnet² may be right in suggesting that Xenophon wished, in drafting a defence for Socrates, to omit the dangerous claim to 'wisdom' in any form at all, because to the conventionally minded contemporary Athenian all such claims suggested sophistic trickery.

The more usual perversion in antiquity was to express the statement positively instead of negatively, thus removing the fine point which the Platonic Socrates sees in it.³ The stock form is to reduce it to the single verse

'Of all men Socrates is wisest'

But even worse still is the form in which it becomes a rhetorical epigram.

'Wise is Sophocles, wiser Euripides, but of all men wisest is Socrates'

Such a conjunction of names would have been impossible at the date which we have suggested for the prophecy: a time when Euripides had perhaps not produced a single play. It would certainly have seemed a most extraordinarily expressed judgment to anyone of classical times. These verses are only attempts of later writers to reconstruct an effective form of utterance for the Pythia, when her original words had been lost, except for Plato's paraphrase. One can believe that the original response was in prose, virtually as Plato gives it, and it may have exercised a determining influence on Socrates' life at a turning point in his career. Probably for delivery to an Athenian jury, he somewhat simplified the story of his

¹ *Apol.* 14.

² Plato's *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, etc., Oxford 1924, p. 91.

³ Lucian, *Erotes*, 452. Diog. Laert. II, v. 37. Galen, *Protrept.* ix. Hercher, *Epistologr.* p. 621, 44. Schol. Aristoph. *Nub.* 144. Schol. Plat. *Apol.* 21. Justin Martyr, *Cohort. ad Gent.* xxxvi. Origen, c. *Celsum*, VII, vi. Pomtow, *Quaestiones de oraculis caput selectum*, Berlin Diss. 1881, p. 16, argues that the first line was only added in front of the second in the fourth century A.D.

conversion leaving out the complications of his mental struggles and merely mentioning the external impulse.

In a famous passage in the *Phaedo*¹ Plato again represents Socrates just before his death likening himself to the swans, as a servant of Apollo. This carries on the idea of Socrates as specially devoted to the god of Delphi. A simpler view of Socrates is shown by Xenophon in the *Anabasis*². Here he is writing immediately of his own experiences so his account is not open to the same objections as in his *Apology*. As a young Athenian, already politically compromised to some extent, Xenophon had received from Proxenus of Thebes an invitation to serve under Cyrus in Asia Minor. He communicated the news to the aged Socrates and asked his advice on the hazardous speculation of accepting. Such a course would tend to prejudice even further any chance Xenophon might have had to take a good position in Athenian service. Socrates advised Xenophon to go to Delphi and put the question before Apollo. He went on the pilgrimage as suggested, but evidently in his own mind he was set on joining Cyrus. So, instead of asking Apollo whether he should go or stay, he merely enquired, by what sacrifices and prayers to particular deities his intended journey would be most successful and he himself would come through it safe. The Pythia, of course, simply answered with certain specific instructions touching ritual, and Xenophon went back to Athens, hoping no doubt that Apollo had thus been committed to the prophecy that service under Cyrus would be safe and successful. But Socrates, when he heard in what form Xenophon had put the question to Apollo, blamed him for not asking simply whether it were best to go or stay. However, in the circumstances he saw nothing else for Xenophon to do but to go, after carrying out the god's instructions.

Here we find Socrates behaving exactly as one would expect of a pious, but shrewd, Athenian of his day. He sincerely believed that Apollo could reveal truths about the future hidden from human knowledge, but at the same time he saw that the consulting of an oracle was a game with certain rules,

¹ 85B

² III, 1 5, cf. id. 12, and VI, 1, 22. Also Cic. *de Div.* I, liv, 122, Diog. Laert. II, vi, 50.

which the enquirer must observe. It was not fair play to beg the question, which one should really have asked, by putting one's enquiry in a form which did not admit of alternative answers. Xenophon, unlike Socrates, here appears to have been pious by routine, without seeing that dealings with the gods called for the exercise of intelligence and sincerity.

Socrates' greatest pupil, Plato, was a much less conventionally minded person than Xenophon, and he seems, like his master, to have held Delphi in intelligent respect. In the *Republic* and the *Laws* he allows the Pythian Apollo a function in the establishment of the ideal commonwealth.¹ He is to be the external authority from which detailed regulations can be sought on the founding of temples and sacrifices and other worship of gods, demigods and heroes. The mode of burial and the cult of the dead will also be subject to his direction. In one passage in the *Laws* Dodona and Ammon are grouped with Delphi as other sources of guidance. But Delphi evidently had first preference and a scheme is sketched out for appointing an annual magistracy, which will be responsible for fetching and expounding the oracles of Apollo. The institution is evidently modelled on the Pythia of Sparta and the Exegetai of Athens, as adapted for an ideal commonwealth.²

Plato is not known ever to have consulted the Pythia, but he was credited with the successful interpretation of a Delphic oracle.³ The men of Delos had been told that they and the rest of the Greeks would have a rest from their present troubles, if they doubled the altar at Delos. Without considering the principles of solid geometry they tried to achieve the result by doubling the dimensions of each face of the cubic structure. But this made it eight times larger. So they consulted Plato who explained the method, but also pointed out that the true meaning of the oracle was conveyed by a parable. Apollo meant to show that if the Greeks would apply themselves to geometry and true philosophy, their political difficulties would easily be solved. Again like his master Socrates, he attributed to Delphi a superhuman wisdom darkly conveying its advice

¹Rep. 427B, 470A, *Laws*, 738B, 759C, 865B, 988A.

²Plato, *Laws*, I c and 828A, 845E, 865D, 916C, 958D. Pythia, supra p. 99. Exegetai, supra p. 345 and cf. A. Persson, *Exegeten und Delphi*.

³Eratosthenes ap. Plut. *Moral* 386E, 579B. Vitruvius, IX, praef. 13. *Anonymous Life of Plato*.

by enigmatic suggestions Delphi recognized Plato's greatness by authorizing his posthumous deification. At some date unspecified a woman enquired whether she should place his portrait among the images of the gods, and was told in reply.

*'You would do well to honour Plato, the expounder of godlike glory. You will be recompensed with good gratitude from the blessed gods among whom that man is to be reckoned'*¹

With the noticeable decline of Delphi from the middle of the fourth century its relations to the philosophers are less important. A late life of Aristotle² alleged that he went to study in Athens because the Pythia told him to be a philosopher, but as this account actually makes him a pupil of Socrates for three years it cannot be taken to have any historical value. Aristotle had several points of contact with the Delphic authorities.³ He set up at Delphi a monument to his early patron, Hermias of Atarneus, he edited the records of the Pythian games, and received grants of honour from Delphi for this service. His only daughter was named Pythias. But there is no evidence that he ever consulted the oracle or received any notice from it.

A curious story was current in late periods which connected Diogenes, the founder of the Cynic philosophy, with Delphi.⁴ Diogenes was said to have been bidden by the Pythia to alter the currency, and had consequently issued false coins in his native city of Sinope, but on being detected and driven into exile he understood that the response had been an enigma. By playing on the Greek word, which could mean either 'currency' or 'custom,' it had really meant that he should diverge from the conventional customs of Greece. This advice was then put into practice by his remarkable manner of life in which he flouted all conventional restraints.

This was the usual version: some ancient authorities mentioned the forging without the oracle, others made Diogenes' father, Hicesias, a banker, and attributed the chief or the sole guilt for the forging to him. Recently Professor Seltman⁵ has

¹ *Anonymous Life of Plato*, sub fin. In the same context we are told of another oracle (probably Delphic) which compared Plato and Asclepius as both sons of Apollo and respectively healers of the body and the soul.

² *Ammونیus, Vita*, sub init.

³ *Didymus*, VI, 37.

⁴ *Diog. Laert.* VI, ii, 20. *Julian, Orat.* VI, 188A.

⁵ Cf. Donald R. Dudley, *A History of Cynicism*, pp. 20 ff and 54 ff.

shown that this legend has a basis of fact. Hicesias actually was responsible for the mint in Sinope, and had been forced to deal with large numbers of counterfeit coins put out by a neighbouring Persian satrap. These he had defaced to put them out of currency, as surviving specimens show. But presumably his action had been challenged and he had fallen a victim to some charge of dishonesty. In his writings this family scandal had been used by Diogenes for symbolic purpose. He too, like his father, would deface the spurious currency of Greek culture. Some later cynics then worked up these facts into a legend with the Delphic oracle in a typical role as the guide to the budding philosopher whom its response has started on his pilgrimage. The oracle also is shown as performing a similar service to the founder of Stoicism, Zeno of Citium.¹ When asked what would be the best life for him, the Pythia had answered, if he could become of the same complexion as the dead. Zeno took this advice to mean that he should read the works of the past, apparently applying it to the mental resemblance (It might also have been understood of the deathly pallor of the book-worm.) The story, like that of Diogenes, has probably arisen from some slight foundation, and then has acquired the legendary form of a Delphic response on the model of Socrates' mission. The Stoics particularly among ancient philosophers accepted the truth of oracles and would tend to associate their founder with Delphi, the great oracular centre.

One other story about a philosopher of the fourth century B.C. and Delphi is certainly fabulous.² It concerns Heraclides of Heraclea, and is derived from Hermippus, a Hellenistic biographer of little historical honesty. He tells that Heraclea was smitten with famine and sent to ask Delphi for a remedy. But Heraclides had bribed the ambassadors and the Pythia to announce that they would be freed from their troubles, if they crowned Heraclides in his lifetime with a golden crown and honoured him as a hero after death. This response was duly delivered in Heraclea, but when they proceeded to crown Heraclides in the theatre, he immediately went insane. So the

¹Diog. Laert. VII, 1, 2. Schol. Aristoph. *Nub.* 144. Suidas, s.v. *Αἰγυπτιᾶ ἀθημαίης, Ζήνων and συγχρωτίζεσθαι*. The Scholast quotes the response as from a comic poet in a trimeter: hence the ultimate source may be a joke in the New Comedy. Cf. Pomtow, *Quaestionum de oraculis caput selectum*, Berlin, Diss. 1881.

²Diog. Laert. V, vi, 91.

Heracleots stoned the embassy as perjured, and at the same hour the guilty Pythia after descending into the innermost shrine was bitten by a snake and expired. This melodramatic yarn cannot be taken seriously, especially as other authorities gave quite different accounts of Heracles' death.

In the last years of the fourth century B.C. we find again a couple of poets consulting the oracle, but the enquiries are not like the previous ones.¹ They are not for information about the future, but merely for Apollo's sanction to inscribe hymns, which they had written in honour of the gods. Thus authorized Isyllus set up at Epidaurus his paean to Apollo and Asclepius, and Philodamus and his brothers their paean to Dionysus at Delphi. There follows a long gap in our information on private enquirers. An isolated instance in this interval is provided by an inscription of the early second century B.C. which shows a Rhodian garrison in Tenos making a dedication to a number of deities in accordance with a Delphic oracle.²

No more private enquirers are known from literature till the last century B.C. Plutarch³ records that Cicero as a young man filled with eager hopes for a political career consulted the oracle how he might win most fame. But the Pythia somewhat chastened him by bidding him make his own character his guide in life, not the repute of the mob. It is curious that Cicero himself in his writings among so many autobiographical allusions does not mention this occasion.⁴ This silence, however, need not be taken to disprove the truth of Plutarch's story. The Pythia's advice is simple enough and natural enough to have been genuinely uttered. The implied criticism of Cicero's weakness for glory is fully justified, but need not on that account have been invented after the event.

More famous and quoted as one of the proofs of the Pythia's power of forecasting the future was the reply given to Appius Claudius.⁵ He was the Roman governor of Greece at the time when the civil war between Caesar and Pompey broke out, and, uncertain which side to follow, he proceeded to question the Delphic oracle. The consultation of Apollo had fallen into

¹ *JG* IV² 1-8, 32. Ditt. *Syll*¹ 270.

² *JG* XII, v 913.

³ *Cic* v.

⁴ Might it have occurred in the lost *de Gloria*?

⁵ *Val. Max.* I, viii, 10. *Lucan*, V, 111 ff. *Orosius*, VI, xv, 11.

disuse, and it was only by the exercise of his magisterial influence that he could induce the priestess to face the ordeal of inspiration. When she did, her response was 'This war, Roman, does not concern you for you will occupy the Hollows of Euboea.' Appius took this prophecy to be a piece of advice that he should keep neutral. So he retired to the place which she mentioned, but he fell ill there and died before the battle of Pharsalia. Naturally, after his death a deeper meaning was read into the Pythia's words. The civil war would not concern the dead Appius, and he would indeed occupy the Hollow of Euboea in the sense commonly applied in Greek to those who were buried in a locality. The story is probably true in its general lines. The words of the Pythia may have been a bow drawn at a venture: the death of Appius conveniently gave them an intensity of meaning which otherwise they need never have possessed. Evidently the story made effective propaganda for Delphi and is worked up into a fine display of rhetoric and melodrama by Lucan.

The revival of the oracle in the second century produced a few responses which are recorded. Before this process had gone far, Dio Chrysostom, the moralist and orator, visited Delphi in the time of his exile.¹ Describing his conduct afterwards he seems to feel called on to justify himself for taking the unlikely step of consulting the oracle. He defends it on analogy with the custom of the past when men had consulted Apollo about childlessness or famine. At the time Dio was living like a vagabond beggar and he was rather amazed when the Pythia advised him to keep doing as he was with all vigour, until finally he reached the world's end. The approval given to his hard condition of life seemed to him difficult to understand, but as out of his sufferings Dio was converted into a moralist, instead of being an ordinary sophist of the period, it is possible that the Pythia's advice was sound. About the same date, if we can trust a late allusion, the Pythia did an even more valuable service to humanity by persuading Galen to give up some other subject and take to medicine.²

No doubt some of the Apolline oracles of late date which appeared in Porphyry's works without further particulars were issued from Delphi in response to private enquiries. Only in

¹XIII, 9

²Sopater, *Proleg. to Aristides*, p. 740, Dind.

one instance it is clearly implied that the response came from the Pythia. This was when after Plotinus' death a friend, named Amelius, enquired from the oracle where his soul had gone.¹ With a verbosity typical of this late period the Pythia replied in more than fifty lines of fulsome praise. This emotional outpouring is in severe contrast to the calm manner in which the responses of the classical period were expressed. Plotinus is the last philosopher on whom Delphi set the seal of its approval.

So far the private enquiries which we have considered all concerned personages of importance and otherwise known to us by tradition. But in a few instances a private enquiry was preserved because of the story attached to it and not for the importance of the actors themselves. One such example is preserved in fragmentary form in a verse inscription from Delphi. The legend (for it is evidently worked up for pious effect) dates from the end of the fourth century B.C. and concerning two successful appeals to Apollo for children.² The half-miraculous tone of the incident greatly suggests the similar wondrous healings inscribed at the same period in Epidaurus. In response to the first enquiry, 'Phoebus gave offspring by his prophecy hearkening to the vow and bade bring the child's hair as an offering. On the eleventh month thereafter a baby daughter was born intact with hair on her head reaching to her eyes and in the first year it grew in length to her chest. Her mother, when pregnant, did not suffer such ills as before, nor did she endure bad pains in childbirth by the skill of Lochia, nurturer of the young, and the accomplishing Fates, and through the purpose of Apollo. Also the parents named the child Delphis on account of the oracle and as a memorial to Delphi.' From further fragments we gather that three years later the family had a second child whom they named after Pytho. Evidently the lost beginning of the inscription recounted the sufferings of the mother previous to her consultation of Apollo.³

¹ Porphyry, *Vita Plotini*, 22. Translated in full in Myers, *Essays, Classical and Modern*, pp. 98 ff. See also the brief address to a philosopher named Themistocles (Synællus, *Chronogr.* p. 680, Dindorf, under 228 A.D.).

² Fouilles, III, 1, 560. Two other fragmentary inscriptions from Delphi appear to have recorded private enquiries. *BCH* 1882, p. 88 = Collitz, No. 2971—1st cent. A.D., an enquirer told to attend the Pythian games. Pomtow, *Klio*, XV, p. 48—late fourth century B.C. (?) meaning uncertain.

³ For an alleged response to the Troezenians on childbirth, cf. Aristotle, *Pol.* 1335 a 19, with marginal Scholia.

Apollo could also be consulted as a god of healing. A beautiful legend on this subject comes from South Italy—the home of so many fanciful stories about Delphi.¹ In a war between Croton and Locri, the Locrians sent for spiritual help from their kinsmen on the Greek mainland and were promised the support of the lesser Ajax himself. So they left a gap in their front line for his spirit to occupy, and went into battle. Leonymus, the general of the opposing side, charged into the gap, and fell wounded in the chest. The wound would not heal. So he went to consult Delphi, and was told that he must go to the White Island in the Euxine where the lesser Ajax would appear and heal him. This prophecy was exactly fulfilled. Leonymus not merely was healed, he also met many of the spirits of the heroes of the Trojan war. Among others Helen, who was now married to Achilles, gave him a message to deliver to Stesichorus that his loss of sight was her penalty for the poem which he had written about her. This last point shows that these events were supposed to have taken place about the middle of the sixth century B.C. It is only a pretty myth. The White Island is a fabulous place, the motive that 'he who has wounded will heal' is borrowed from the story of Telephus. The belief in a hero's apparition in battle is fully in accord with Delphic mythology.

A somewhat similar story with a more uncanny ending was told by Theopompus.² A Crotoniate named Phormio was wounded in the battle of Sagra. He also could not be healed till he consulted the oracle. He was bidden go to Sparta and be cured by the man who first asked him to dine there. Just as he dismounted from his chariot at Sparta, a young man invited him in and after dinner enquired his business. When he heard of the oracle he applied some rubbings from his spear to the wound. Phormio took his leave and made to mount his chariot, but the next thing he knew was that he had hold of the knob of his own front door in Croton.

The implication evidently is that Phormio had been wounded by Castor or Polydeuces for they had been invoked to fight against Croton in the battle of Sagra, as we know from other sources. Their spiritual home was Sparta, and the remedy

¹Paus. III, xix, 12. Conon, *FGrH* 26 F 1, xviii, where the name is Autoleon.

²*Frag.* 152 (Oxf.)

which the oracle had prescribed was the same as for Telephus or Leognymus—rust of the divine weapon that had given the wound. The young man who was none other than one of the Dioscuri had wafted his guest back home again, when the cure was completed.¹

The Pythian Apollo might be asked to heal much more extraordinary ills than the wounds of battle. In one story he was required to prescribe for love-sickness. One Diogenes had a son who fell in love, and he treated him harshly till the passion turned into a sickness. The father sought the help of Delphi, and was told to show more leniency.

'Your son will cease from love, when in his light youth the charming sting of Aphrodite has burned out his heart. Therefore soften your unsmiling anger and do not strive to prevent him. You act the opposite to your calculations. But if you have recourse to gentleness, soon he will have an oblivion of the love-charms and, returned to sober sense, he will cease from the base impulse.'

The advice was good sense in itself, and would be approved by modern psychology. Even more remarkable than a request for a cure for love is a request to Apollo to restore the power to laugh.² It was said that those who descended into the oracular cave of Trophonius were so overcome as to lose this power, and this fate befell one Parmeniscus, an important citizen of Metapontum. On consultation at Delphi he was told

'You ask me about soothing laughter, O unsoothable one? Mother at home will give it you: pay her special honour.'

Parmeniscus returned to Metapontum hoping to recover his laughter there. But he found no benefit and thought that the Pythia had deceived him. Later he chanced to visit Delos, and entered the temple of Leto there, expecting to see some dignified statue of Apollo's mother. Instead, he only found a shapeless wooden idol. The sight made him burst into laughter. Then Parmeniscus understood the oracle correctly. Apollo had meant that his own mother, Leto, at Delos would restore the enquirer to his normal self. So he paid great honours to the goddess. This story comes from an official Delian source, and probably was a tale told by the sexton of Leto's temple to excuse the archaic image and glorify the goddess herself. One cannot

¹Aelian, frag. 103

²Semus Delius ap. Athen. XIV, 614 A

judge whether it has any foundation in fact. It interestingly shows Delphi and Delos, as usual, in friendly and intimate relations, and the oracle of Trophonius treated as something on a lower level and not seriously in competition with Delphi.

Legend also represented the Pythia as providing a cure for the opposite ailment—inability to abstain from laughing.¹ The men of Tiryns were said to have been such victims of this complaint that they were no use for serious business. They appealed to Delphi for a way out, and the Pythia directed them to sacrifice an ox to Poseidon and cast it into the sea; if they could do this without laughing, their tendency to laughter would leave them. The Tirynthians made their preparations for the ordeal and planned to keep the boys away from the sacrifice, as a likely source of fatal merriment. One of the boys heard of this purpose and tried to mingle with the crowd. They shouted to drive him away, and he cried, 'What is it? Are you afraid that I will upset your sacrifice?' At this they all burst into laughter, and learnt to their grief that Apollo meant to teach them that a long-standing characteristic cannot be cured. Such, at least, is the moralistic twist which our only authority to quote the story, Theophrastus, gives to it. It is one of a number of curiously trivial and quaint enquiries which small communities sometimes made at Delphi.

Another came from the little island of Astypalaea.² In the reign of Antigonus Gonatas of Macedon (277–239 B.C.) they were overrun with hares, which, like the rabbits of Australia, had multiplied from a single pair brought to the island. The Pythia, when asked for a remedy, with simple common sense told them to keep hounds and go hunting. This resulted in the astounding kill of more than 6,000 in a single year.

The most famous of such enquiries from lesser states was that of the men of Aegium in Achaea.³ They had captured a penteconter in a sea-battle with the Aetolians and dedicated a tithe to Apollo. Evidently this occurred at some very primitive time when the penteconter was still the greatest man of war in Greek navies. Elated at their success, they had the effrontery

¹Athen VI, 261D.

²Hegesander Delphus ap. Athen IX, 400D.

³Ion Chius, *FHG* Vol II, 51, No. 17 (where are additional references). *Anthol. Graec.* XIV, 73. Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *P.E.* V, 224D. Theocr. XIV, 49, with Schol. Callimachus = *Anthol. Graec.* V, 6. Strabo, X, C 449. Athen VII, 278E. Steph. Byz. *Αἰγίων*. Zenob. I, 48. Eustath. ad Dion. Per. 473. Julian *Orat.* VIII, 249D.

to ask Apollo who of the Greeks were better than they The Pythia gave the famous answer

'Of all the soils Pelasgic Argos is best, and horses of Thrace, and women of Sparta, and men who drink the water of fair Arethusa But still better than this are those who dwell between Tiryns and Arcadia rich in flocks, the Argives of the linen corslet, pricks of war But you, Aegians, are neither third, nor fourth, nor twelfth, nor in account nor reckoning'

This summary of the best things in Greece is often quoted in full or in excerpts No ancient authority attempts to date the response, but it is evidently among the most primitive which we possess The form of the references to Argos and Chalcis ('those who drink the water of Arethusa') is only possible in the sixth century at latest, before Athens had overthrown Chalcis or Argos wiped out Tiryns Also the prominence given to Argos for manpower, while to Sparta only for womanhood, is most appropriate before the fall of Pheidon and the rise of Lacedaemon The later seventh century therefore would not be unreasonably early

One interesting point to note is the way in which popular tradition played havoc with the text of this oracle The list of best things naturally gave a tempting field for variations. Our authors waver between 'Thessalian' and 'Thracian' horses, and Plato seems even to have favoured a version which read 'Female horses'¹ More interesting still is the disagreement over the name of the enquirers Aegium was such an insignificant town that the rhetorical dressing-down which they received was a little out of proportion to their importance Popular fancy evidently liked to substitute for them some city more worth putting in its place No doubt it was Attic influence which led to the selection of the Megarians At any rate many later authorities assign the impudent enquiry and the crushing retort to them

There can be no reasonable doubt that this is wrong Our earliest authority, Ion of Chius, the fifth century litterateur, gave Aegium Also if the oracle had actually been delivered to the Megarians, it is hard to imagine who would have found it worth while to father it on to tiny Aegium The transfer from

¹ *Ἱππίας Major*, 288B *θήλειαι*

Aegium to Megara would have been satisfying to Athenian dislike of their neighbour. It is at the beginning of the Hellenistic period that this perverted version shows itself frequently.

The same kind of corruption crept into another Delphic oracle of a similar sort.¹ It was said that someone from Asia asked Apollo whether it would be better for him to remove to Corinth. The answer was

'Corinth is blessed by fortune, but I for my part would belong to Tenea'

The place preferred was a small township in Corinthian territory, better known to the modern world than to many ancients, because it was the provenance of the famous archaic Apollo of Tenea. But Strabo points out that some people corrupt the name in the oracle into Tegea, the much more famous city in Arcadia.

These errors in transmission must have been unavoidable because phrases from many Delphic oracles became part of the usual idiom of Greek stock quotations which appear again and again, and sometimes in garbled forms. It is possible that occasionally the converse happened. Some proverbial phrase, perhaps with a touch of verse rhythm in it, as in many catch phrases, would be attributed to the Delphic oracle, and popularly regarded as a fragment of some response. Further an aetiological myth might grow up to furnish the imaginary context when these words could have been uttered appropriately. Hendess,² who was taken with this theory, was prepared to carry it to great lengths and by applying it to many of the traditional legends he wished to prove most of them completely unhistorical. It is needless and foolish to follow him so far. But there are a few instances where the phrase is general enough to have arisen in ordinary speech, and the myth to explain it is so feeble and vague as to be better disregarded. One may instance the unnecessary stories to explain the origin of the proverb 'the possessions of friends are in common,' or such an idiomatic phrase as 'the dearest of the dear'.³

Perhaps one may rescue from this sceptical judgment the

¹Strabo, VIII, C 380

²Preface to *Oracula Graeca*

³Clearchus ap Schol Plato, *Phaedrus*, 279, contrast Timaeus ap Zenob I, 79 Suidas, τῶν φίλων τα φίλατα = Aristotle, frag 512 (Rose)

story which gives the origin of a metaphor which has had a great revival in modern times. It is cheering to think that the Pythia may have coined the phrase, to 'leave no stone unturned'.¹ At any rate, Suidas records that after the battle of Plataea there was a persistent rumour that Mardonius, the defeated Persian general, had buried a treasure within the circuit of his tent and that after his death in battle it had remained untouched. Polycrates of Thebes bought the site of the tent and searched for long. When he had no success, he sent to Delphi enquiring how he would find the treasure, and Apollo was said to have answered (rather ironically) 'Move every stone.' With that last example of a private enquiry we may leave the subject.

¹Zenob. V, 63. Photius, s.v. πάντα κινήσαι πέτρων. Cf. Plato, *Phileb.* 15E for an echo of the story in the fourth century B.C.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

To sum up the history of the Delphic oracle is not easy, because it diffused itself into every branch of Greek life and thought, and everywhere presented itself under the curious and ambiguous forms which are to be expected of such an obscure activity as prophecy. But even if one could form a judgment on the perplexing problem of each particular response and be prepared to assert which are genuine and which not, the influence of the oracle itself is not defined by those limits. There remains the deeper and not completely soluble question how far in issuing responses the Pythia was directing the enquirer on any matter and how far she was merely registering a decision on which the enquirer's mind was already made up.

On the other hand the influence of the Delphic oracle was something more than the sum of its responses. The mere fact that Delphi provided a centre for enquiry on many subjects was of incalculable significance in the Greek world. The chief tendency of each city-state was towards forming itself into a separate unit, and these monads were not easily led to have any common contact. Here Delphi played a remarkable part in Greek civilization, as for much of their history all the city-states and their private citizens might meet at Delphi on similar terms and transact the same kind of business in their dealings with Apollo. This common activity showed itself in much more than merely the consultation of the oracle. For instance the Pythia, so far as we know, was comparatively rarely approached on questions of arbitration, but inscriptions reveal that Delphi was often the scene of settlements by arbitration between states without any consulting of Apollo. It is evident, however, that the choice of Delphi for this purpose was largely the outcome of its central position as an oracle.

Yet there is a temptation to exaggerate the centralizing power of Delphi by attributing too much positive influence to it. For example, it has often been compared to the Papacy, and

some of its activities exhibit a curious similarity of function. The control of colonization has been likened to Pope Alexander VI's partition of the New World between Spain and Portugal. The Pythia, too, could occasionally issue a kind of excommunication against particular individuals or cities, and her judgments on questions of cult, particularly on the recognition of heroes, closely resemble the decisions of canonization. Even the Delphic claim that their oracle was 'without deceit' answered to the dogma of Infallibility. But these interesting analogies conceal the fact that the power of Delphi rested on a very different basis from that of the Papacy. If, to press the analogy further, Oenomaus of Gadara was a would-be Protestant reformer, there was still no Catholic Church behind the Pythia, and Delphi was not the centre of an organized religious system.

The Delphic priesthood no doubt had intimate contacts with other cities through the local priests, Exegetai and Pythiades resident in them. But at best these were voluntary agents, and Delphi could only exercise through them a precarious influence limited by the recognition which each state or individual chose freely to accord to the Pythia. The belief that her words were the voice of Apollo announcing the purpose of Zeus was only maintained by constantly justifying itself in practice. The Greeks, who did not possess any sacred literature, were to that extent more dependent on specific revelations of divine purpose. But Delphi had no monopoly in this field. There were other centres of mantic prophecy, and, in addition, the god's will could be determined by all kinds of omens and prognostications. The supremacy which Delphi long maintained over its rivals and all other methods of divination was largely the outcome of an accumulated prestige, and was little supported by dogma or ecclesiastical organization.

How exactly Delphi was able to acquire this accumulated prestige it is impossible now to say. It was partly the consequence of its favourable position and of its fortunate relation to a powerful religious league. Its great athletic games attracted many visitors. Its prophetic methods with their well-chosen blend of dignity and excitement appealed to all kinds of emotion. But though this procedure was imitated by its rivals in later periods, nowhere did they carry it to the same degree of

success Yet even at the height of their power the Delphic priesthood must have felt the need for caution in answering the more controversial questions put to the oracle Its decision had to commend itself to Greek opinion, even if it also could mould opinion to some extent.

In politics, as a French scholar has remarked, the Delphians were always opportunists This verdict does not mean that they could never maintain a line of policy, but that their political attitude rather adapted itself to circumstances than attempted to force a way through them When the tyrants were predominant, Delphi was courteous to tyrants, only with the rise of the Spartan reaction against tyranny Delphi changed its tone and tried to suggest that Apollo had never regarded tyrants favourably So also the Lydian kings gradually won a dominant prestige at Delphi, but the fall of Croesus was followed by a long period of pro-Persian prophesying However, one notes that just before Salamis, when the Pythia had committed herself to an unequivocal utterance against Athens, it was found wiser, on second thoughts and after some Athenian pressure, to substitute for this a less decisive response Often, as before the battle of Sepeia, recourse was had to ambiguities, which could be justified in either event

This equivocal and time-serving attitude in political questions was almost forced on the Delphians by their military weakness The law of Cadys shows that in the early fourth century B.C. the town cannot have contained a thousand male citizens of full age actually the number was probably much lower Hence the Delphians could never rely on their own strength Mostly they had the Amphictyony to protect them, but its help was a very uncertain factor, frequently subject to the changes of empires and alliances in Greece So the Delphians were well advised to steer a middle course in politics and not commit themselves too much to the side of any one power. It was not till the Pythia 'Philippized' in the later fourth century that this see-saw was finally abandoned, but by then the political force of the oracle was negligible

In the more general issues of politics the Pythian Apollo showed a fine impartiality He authorized in early periods the dispatch of colonies from all parts of Greece and towards every direction of the known world Here the responses issued must

have provided useful advertisement for each venture, and occasionally the Pythia became a valuable referee on the question of a founder's or a mother-city's rights. While it could scarcely be said that the oracle mapped out the lines of Greek colonization, the fact that it acted as a centre, to which prospective colonists came in advance, must have helped to regularize this activity.

On constitutional questions Apollo was even more conspicuously impartial. The oracle's early association with Dorian monarchies did not prevent it from accepting the first tyrants, and the Spartans could secure Delphic support for tightening the restrictions of their constitution, just as Cleisthenes could receive the Pythia's help in extending the democratic franchise. One would expect a somewhat conservative outlook from an old established religious institution, but actually there is no sign that the Delphic priesthood ever attempted to block the course of political change. The view that the Pythia always supported the aristocracy is not true. When the Megarians were told to take counsel 'with the majority' or the Thebans to refer a question to the 'many-voiced,' Apollo is actually advocating a broader basis for political judgments.

The particular field for the oracle was appropriately in questions of religion, and here, as we have seen, its advice would often be described as conservative, in that it at times refused to sanction changes or frequently suggested the revival of declining customs. These sacred traditions were not normally those of Delphi itself, but belonged to the city of the enquirer. Sometimes the suggestion for a revival may have come from the latter, and Delphi may merely have signified its approval. But in some instances, such as the Demeter of Phigalia, the initiative appears to have lain with the oracle. The chief innovations in cult for which Delphi was responsible seem to be the spread of the worship of Dionysus and Asclepius and the recognition of various heroes. In both directions the oracle was acting in accordance with the trend of popular feeling, the particular function of the Pythia was to focus this feeling and give it precise and official expression. The oracle could not infuse freshness into a decaying paganism, but, while Greek religion was vigorous, it could help to determine its form. Possibly some of the customs which Apollo had

sanctioned in early periods, such as the sending of the Locrian maidens to Troy, were not of a sort which one could commend, but mostly in the historical period its prescriptions were of a moderate and justifiable kind

The Delphic oracle's steady influence in religion can be seen best on the subject of purification from blood-guilt. Here the Pythia recognized a moral offence, and provided a ritual of atonement. But also the teaching of the oracle went far beyond mere instruction in external ceremonial. It attempted to show which offences were blameworthy because of the intent which prompted them, and which were mere misfortunes

One can easily criticize the moral teaching of Delphi on the ground of the negative character of the Delphic maxims. 'Nothing too much' can be stigmatized as a niggardly playing for safety or 'Know thyself' as a suggestion of self-distrust. It is true that these cautious aphorisms would be of little use without a positive counterpart as a stimulus to action. But it lay in the nature of the oracle's function that it could not well initiate action. It had to be approached, and then it gave its judgment. So its part was more often to suggest risks and offer warnings than to urge on with encouragements. The Delphians, a small people, were naturally more suited to this attitude, and their own feelings may be expressed in some of the Delphic parables which humble the proud and justify the lowly. For though their handling of political problems was sometimes shifting, the priesthood maintained a firm, even though somewhat negative, position on moral issues. It is this fact which gives an inner rightness to many of their responses, in spite of their mistakes, and this moral aspect finds its perfect expression in that high priest of Apollo, Plutarch of Chaeronea. Like him, the Delphic oracle was not the greatest expression of the Greek genius, but even more than he, it was a formative element in the complex pattern of Hellenic civilization

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

[For bibliographies of earlier works, see GRUPPE, *Mythologie*, Vol I, pp 100-101, BOUCHÉ-LECLERQ, *Histoire de la Divination*, Vol III, pp 39 ff]

ON THE EXCAVATIONS

Fouilles de Delphes

Tome II, *Topographie et Architecture*,

La Terrasse du Temple by F COURBY (1915-27)

Le Trésor des Athéniens by J AUDIAT (1933)

Le Sanctuaire d'Athéna Pronasa,

fasc 1 *Les Temples de Tuf* by R DEMANGEL (1923)

fasc 2 *La Tholos* by J CHARBONNEAUX (1925)

fasc 3 *Topographie du Sanctuaire* by R DEMANGEL (1925)

Tome III, *Epigraphie*

fasc 1 *Inscriptions de l'Entrée du Sanctuaire au Trésor des Athéniens*
by E BOURGUET (1910-29)

fasc 2 *Inscriptions du Trésor des Athéniens* by G COLIN (1909-13)

fasc 3 *Inscriptions depuis le Trésor des Athéniens jusqu'aux Bases de Gélou* by G DAUX (1932)

fasc 4 *Inscriptions des Monuments des Messéniens, de Paul-Emile et de Prusias* by G COLIN (1922-30)

fasc 5 *Les Comptes du IV^e siècle* by E BOURGUET (1932)

Tome IV, *Monuments Figurés sculpture*

fasc 1-3

Tome V, *Monuments Figurés Petits Bronzes, Terre-cuites, Antiquités Diverses*

fasc 1 by P PERDRIZET (1906-8)

Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique, Vol V (1881) to VII (1883)

inclusive and Vol XVIII (1894) following contain numerous articles in which finds are described, inscriptions published, and questions concerning Delphi discussed *Klio*, Vol XIV (1914) to XVIII (1923) and Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 3rd edition (1915) also contain otherwise unpublished inscriptions and discussions of the excavations by H POMTOW

OTHER WORKS ON THE FINDS AND TOPOGRAPHY

BOURGUET, E, *Les Ruines de Delphes* (1914).

DAUX, G, *Pausanias à Delphes* (n d)

DE LA COSTE-MESSELIÈRE, P, *Au Musée de Delphes* (1937)

GRAINDOR, P, *Delphes et son Oracle*, Cairo (1930)

434 A HISTORY OF THE DELPHIC ORACLE

- POMTOW, H, *Die Topographie von Delphoi* (1st part), s v Delphoi, Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Supplement-Band IV, 1189-1432 (1924)
 POULSEN, F, *Delphi*, translated by G C RICHARDS (1920)
 SCHOBER, F, *Die Topographie von Delphoi* (2nd part) s v Delphoi, Pauly-Wissowa, Supplement-Band V, 61-152 (1931)

ON THE HISTORY OF DELPHI

- DAUX, G, *Delphes au II^e et au I^{er} siècle* (1936)
 FLACELIÈRE, R, *Les Aitolien à Delphes* (1937)

ON THE ORACLE

- BOUCHÉ-LECLERQ, A, *Histoire de la Divination dans l'Antiquité*, Vol III, 39 ff (1880)
 CARY, M, *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol III, pp 623 ff (1925)
 DEMPSEY, T, *The Delphic Oracle* (1918)
 DE QUINCEY, T, *The Pagan Oracles*, Vol III of Collected Writings, pp 44ff
 FARNELL, L R, *Cults of the Greek States*, Vol IV, ch iv (1907)
 GOODES, D N, *Tò Μαντεῖον τῶν Δελφῶν*, Vol I, Athens (1937)
 GRUPPE, O, *Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte* Vol I, pp 101 ff (1897)
 HILLER VON GAERTRINGEN, F, *Pauly-Wissowa*, Vol IV, s v Delphoi, 2520 ff (1901)
 KERN, O, *Die Religion der Griechen* (1928-38)
 MYERS, F W H, *Greek Oracles*, in *Hellenica*, edited by E ABBOTT, pp 388 ff (1880), republished in MYERS, F W H, *Essays, Classical*, pp 1 ff (1883)
 ROHDE, E, *Psyche*, translated by W B HILLIS, pp 130 ff (1921)
 ROSE, H J and others, *Oracle* in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th edition, Vol XVI, pp 830 ff

COLLECTIONS OF DELPHIC RESPONSES

- Anthologia Palatina*, Vol III, ed E COUGNY, pp 464 ff (1890)
Oracula Graeca, ed R HENDESS, Halle (1877)

MISCELLANEOUS

- BENEDICT, F, *De Oraculis ab Herodoto commemoratis*, Diss Bonn (1871).
 BOETHIUS, A, *Die Pythais*, Upsala (1918)
 BONNER, H, *Beiträge zu einer Geschichte der Politik des delphischen Apollo*, Klio, XVIII, pp 27 ff (1923)
 HARRISON, JANE, *Delphika*, Journal of Hellenic Studies, XIX, pp 205 ff. (1899)

- HERZOG, R, *Das Delphische Orakel als ethischer Preisrichter*, in E Horneffer, *Der Junge Platon*, pp 149 ff (1922)
- HOLLAND, LEICESTER B, *The Mantic Mechanism of Delphi*, American Journal of Archaeology, XXXVII, pp 201 ff (1933)
- LEGRAND, P E, *Questions Oraculaires*, (1) *La Promanteia*, Revue des Études Grecques, XIII, pp 281 ff (1900)
- (2) *Xuthos à Delphes*, *ibid* XIV, pp 46 ff (1901)
- OPPÉ, A P, *The Chasm at Delphi*, Journal of Hellenic Studies, XXIV, pp 214 ff (1904)
- PEARSE, A S, *The Delphic Oracle and Greek Colonization*, Classical Philology, VII, pp 1 ff (1912)
- PERSOON, A, *Die Exegeten und Delphi*, Lund (1918)
- POMTOW, J R, *Quaestionum de oraculis caput selectum*, Diss Berlin (1881)
- POULSEN, F, *Delphische Studien*, Copenhagen (1924)
- ROBINSON, F E, *The Lot Oracle at Delphi*, Classical Philology, XI, p 278 ff (1916)
- SCHREIBER, T, *Apollo Pythoktonos* (1879)
- SEGRE, M, *Il Sacco di Delfi e la Leggenda dell' Aurum Tolosanum*, Historia, VIII (1929)
- SMERTENKO, CLARA M, AND GEORGE N BELLKNAP, *Studies in Greek Religion, The Political Relations of the Delphic Oracle* (1935).
- WOLFF, G, *De Novissima Oraculorum Aetate*, (1854)
- Porphyru de Philosophia ex Oraculis Haurienda* (1856)

Addendum

- FLACELIÈRE, R., *Le Fonctionnement de l'Oracle de Delphes au temps de Plutarque*, in *Études d'Archéologie Grecque*, Ghent, 1938

[The present writer came across this interesting study too late to make use of it in Book I, Chapter II]

INDEX LOCORUM

- AELIAN**, *Natura Animalium*, vii 28, 341, xi 10, 32, 19, 227, xii 5, 60, 328, 31, 100, 34, 354
Varia Historia, ii 4, 141, 32, 348, iii 1, 11, 43, 76, 44, 390, 45, 250, iv 6, 215, v 21, 355, vi 9, 240, viii 5, 57, 18, 363, xi 5, 234, xii 22, 349, 28, 301, 57, 253
 fragment, 47, 331, 52, 223, 73, 342, 80, 405, 88, 341, 103, 423, 203, 407
AENEAS SOPHISTA, *epistulae*, xviii, 293
AENEUS TACTICUS, xxxi, 24, 331
AESCHINES, iii, 107 ff, 121, 122, 350, 112, 123, 114, 242, 115 ff, 246, 130, 248, 249
ASCHYLUS, *Agamemnon*, 1255, 38
Choephoroi, 559, 4
Eumenides, i ff, 7, 12, 19, 325, 24, 14, 32, 29, 33, 32, 616 ff, 325, 713, 325
Prometheus Vincitur, 211, 10, 657 ff, 313
 Septem, 745 ff, 303, 800, 303
 fragment, 86 (OCT), 325
Vita, 410
ALCIDAMAS, *Ulysses*, 4, 307
ALEXANDER APHRODISIENSIS, *de fato* (Suppl Aristot II, 2, p 202), xxxi, 304
AMMONIUS, *Vita Aristotelis*, 417
Anthologia Graeca, III 6, 12, 18, 387, V 6, 424, VI 50, 191, VIII 154, 354, 239, 252, IX 485, 321, 685, 400, XIII 25, 119, XIV 65, 403, 66, 403, 67, 303, 68, 68, 69, 101, 71, 29, 391, 73, 424, 74, 29, 391, 76, 110, 77, 314, 78, 111, 79, 156, XIV 81, 159, 82, 168, 83, 80, 84, 82, 85, 84, 86, 133, 87, 133, 88, 136, 89, 172, 90, 172, 91, 388, 92, 183, 93, 183, 94, 179, 95, 180, 96, 181, 100, 319, 102, 289, 112, 152, 113, 405, 115, 62, 150, 305
Anthologia Lyrica Graeca, ed E Diehl
 Aristonous, 10, 25, 17 ff, 11
 Hipponax, 61, 393
Anthologia Lyrica Graeca (cont)
 Ibycus, 21, 70
 Isyllus, B 17, 104, E 14, 104
 Limenius, Col II ll 5 ff, 264
 Philodamus of Scarphea, ll 105 ff, 251
 Tyrtaeus, 3, 23, 103, 105
ANTIGONUS CARYSTIUS, *Hist Mir*, 1, 54, 140, 71
ANTONINUS LIBERALIS, 1, 328, 4, 350
APOLLODORUS, I, iv 1, 12, 19, ix 1, 59, 300, 2, 333, 4, 117, 16, 308, 28, 355, II, iv 1, 307, iv 12, 348, vi 2, 348, viii 2, 55, 56, 350, 3, 113, III, iv 1, 315, v 4, 189, 7, 303, vi 1, 317, 7, 301, vii 2, 317, 4, 50, 5, 311, 312, viii 7, 69, ix 1, 300, x 3, 352, xii 6, 330, xiii 5, 12, xiv 6, 305
Epitome (Loeb), VI 14, 321, 323, 18, 59, 20, 331, 24, 308, 26, 310
APOLLONIUS, *Hist Mirab*, XL, 371
APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, I 209, 313, 301, 313, 360, 313, 412, 313, 527, 313, 958, 63, II 701 ff, 12, 846 ff, 63, IV 529, 313, 580, 313, 1547 ff, 84, 1731 ff, 84
APOSTOLIUS, I, 97, 140, VI 422, 396, 46, 23, XI 34, 381, XIV 164, 313, XV 88, 412
Appendix Proverbiorum, I 94, 126, 95, 126
APPIAN, *Italia*, 8, 273
Hannibalica, 27, 276, 56, 278
Macedonica, 19, 268
Illyrica, 4, 283
Mithradatica, 54, 284, 112, 284
Civile Bellum, III, 97, 285, V 109, 69
ARISTIDES, Vol I, 33 (Jebb), 347, 105, 330, 189, 344, 237, 33, 257, 330, 339, 261, II 10, 33, 49, 241, 195
ARISTOPHANES, *Equites*, 197 ff, 208, 999 ff, 208, 1016, 36, 208, 1085, 219
Nubes, 603, 15
Vesper, 158, 299, 380, 219, 1446, 407

ARISTOPHANES (cont.)

Pax, 1046, 201, 208

Aves, 183, 208, 212, 959, 208, 988, 219

Plutus, 9, 24, 39, 25, 41, 299, 213, 25
fragment, 684 (OCT), 126

ARISTOTLE, *Meteorica*, I, 343b2, 227

De Mundo, 395 b 26, 19, 396 a 20, 227

Mir. Ausc. 834 b 24, 349, 847 a 3, 71
Nic. Eth. I, 1099 a 26, 398, V, 1132 a 26, 398

Magn. Mor., 1213 a 12, 349

Eudem. Eth., I, 1214 a 1, 398

Pol. 1303 b 37, 234, 1333 a 18, 104, 1335 a 19, 421

Rhet. II, 1398 b 32, 222, 1407 a 38, 151

Ἄθ. πολ. γμ., I 129; XIX 2 ff, 162, XXI 6, 167, LV 5, 129

fragment 5 (Rose), 396, 443, 51, 485, 79, 512, 426

ARRIAN, *Anabasis*, IV, xi 7, 347ATHENAEUS, *Deipnosophistae*, I, 22 E,

342, 31 B, 338, II 38 C, 342,

70 C, 60, III 91 C, 313, III 96 D,

331, 99 E, 354, IV 173 C, 126,

173 F, 53, V 187 D, 345, 210 B,

146, 219 A, 78, VI 232 D, 311,

233 F, 104, 234 A, 263, 254 B,

345, 261 D, 423, VII 278 E, 424,

VIII 360 E, 59, 361 D, 60,

IX 400 D, 423, X 456 A, 299,

XI 466 C, 64, XII 520 A, 74,

YIII 560 C, 121, 568 D, 188,

574 C, 337, 602 B, 141, 606 A,

42, XIV 614 A, 423, XV 701 C, 12

AUGUSTINE, *De Civitate Dei*, XVIII 12,

15

AUSONIUS, *Book IX, dedicatio*, 252,

X 5, 259.

AVIANUS, *Fabulae*, *Epistula ad Theodosium*,

407

BABRIUS, *Fabulae*, 229, 399

BACCHYLIDES, III 23, 154, XV 1 ff, 15,

fragment 37, 15

BEKKER, *Anecdota*, 253, 395CAESAR, *Bellum Civile*, III, LV 4, 287CALLIMACHUS, *Hymni*, II 34, 318, 45,

13, 56, 49, 65, 79, 315, 97,

12, III 250, 318, IV 89, 24,

171, 261, 182, 266, V 6, 424

ap *Anthol. Graec.* XIII 25, 119

fragments, *Aetia*, p 206 (Loeb), 363,

p 220, 356

Iambi, p 274, 396, p 280, 407,

p 282, 25, p 290, 396

No 74 (Loeb), 9

No 149 (Loeb), 363

CEDRENUS, *Vol. I*, p 43 (Bekker), 15,

320, 295, 360, 288, 532, 293, 295

CELSUS ap Origen, VII, iii, 49

CHOEROBOSCUS, *Comm.*, I, 31*Schol.*, I 146 (Gaisford), 188*Chronicle*, the *Indican*, VIII, 321, XL,

259

CICERO, *Pro Fonteio*, XIV 30, 266*De Oratore*, I xlv, 199, 259*Brutus*, XIV 53, 270*De Divinatione*, I, i 3, 49, XIX 37,

287, xxxvi 79, 19, xxxviii 81,

261, 264, xlv 95, 99, xlv 100,

272, lvi 122, 415, II, lvi 115, 151,

116, 259, lvi 117, 287, 118, 248

De Fato, iii, 399, iii 5, 250*De Legibus*, I, xxii 58, 396, II, xvi 40,

326

De Republica, II, xxiv 44, 270*De Natura Deorum*, III, xvi 42, 348,

xix 50, 301

De Officiis, II, xxii, 77, 104*Tusc. Disp.* I, xxii 51, 396, xlviii 113,

387, xlviii 116, 301, V, xxv 70,

396

CLAUDIAN, II, i ff, 12, IV, ii 7, 26, 296,

VIII 144, 296, XXVIII, 25 ff, 15

CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS, *Protrepticus*, p

10 (Potter) 19, 26, 293, 15, 15,

32, 356, 42, 379

Stromateis, I p 366 (Potter), 31, 418,

319, VI 753, 182, 330

CTESIAS, *Periplus*, fragment 29 § 25

(Mueller), 186

CURTIUS RUFUS, IV, ii 3, 253, V, iv

10, 252

CYRILLUS, c *Julian*, V 341, 15

DARES PHRYGIUS, 15, 320

DEMOSTHENES, V 25, 245, IX 32, 245,

XI 4, 242, XII 21, 244, XV III 66

345, XIX 327, 245, XXI 51,

326, 343, 144, 162, YLIII 66,

326, 344, L 21, 232

Epistulae, IV 3, 345

DICTYS CRETENSIS, VI 11, 299, 12, 323

DIDYMUS, VI 37, 417, XI 65, 59,

XIV 46, 239

Dio Cassius, fragment, x 9 ff (Melber),

270, xl 4, 259, lvi 64, 278,

Lxxxviii, 263, LXII, xi 2, 19,

288

DIO CHRYSOSTOM, III 41, 138, IV 57,

396, 71, 66, X passim, 402, 23,

38, 24, 304, 27, 309, XIII 9,

420, XXXI 95, 365, 366, 148,

288, XXXIII 12, 405, XXXVII

5, 136

DIODORUS SICULUS, IV, ii 1, 315; x 7,

348, xxv 7, 350, xxvi 4, 348;

xxix 1, 348, 349, xxxi 5, 348;

DIODORUS SICULUS (cont)

xxxvii 1, 50, xxxviii 3, 349, lv 1, 355, lx 5, 312, IV, lxi 1, 330, lxv 1, 303, lxvi 1 ff, 310, 317, lxxii 2, 307, V, iii 5, 70, ix 5, 394, xxxv 5, 263, lx 5, 312, lxvi 4, 12, VII, xii, 32, 102, xii 5, 105, xlv 1, 65, VIII, xiii, 90, x, 71, xii 2, 92, xlvii, 72, xxi 3, 78, xxiii 1, 67, 2, 54, 62, xxv, 32, 134, xxxviii, 109, xxi, 81, xxx, 86, IX, iii, 396, xvi, 123, xxxi 1, 151, 2, 152, xxxii, 154, xxxiii 2, 156, xxxiv 2, 110, 3, 111, XI, xiv 2, 186, xlv 8, 197, l, 195, XII, x 5, 201, xxxv 3, 201, lviii 7, 208, lxxiii 1, 209, XIV, xii 2 ff, 216, lxxxv 2, 221, xxi 2 ff, 272, XV, viii 4, 225, xii 1, 223, xvi, 225, xlx, 226, lv 2 ff, 230, XVI, xiii 2 ff, 233, xxi, 235, xxvi, 19, 32, xxxv 6, 257, xxxvi 1, 236, xxxvii 1, 200, lv 6, 148, 238, 7, 240, lvii 2, 223, lx 4 ff, 243, lxvi, 241, xci 2, 249, XVII, x 3, 253, xii 2, 301, lxxviii, 252, cxiii 4, 254, XVIII, lv 5, 254, XIX, ii 2 ff, 258, lvi 8, 59, XXII, ix 4, 263, 5, 261, 264, XXXV, xiii, 32, 258, XXXVIII, vii, 284

DIOGENES LAERTIUS, I, i 27, 396, 30, 393, 40, 396, ix 106, 393, x 110, 370, xi 118, 409, II, v 37, 414, vi 50, 415, 51, 222, III 20, 227, V, vi 91, 28, 418, VI, ii 20, 417, VII, i 2, 418, VIII, i 6, 412

DIOGENIANUS, IV 26, 126

DIONYSIUS HALICARNASSENSIS, *Antiquitates Romanae*, I, xxi 2, 50, xxii, 50, II, lxi 2, 108, IV, lxxi, 270, VII, lxxii 3, 362, XII, x ff, 272, XIX, fragment 1, 78, ii, 54, iii, 77

EPICETUS, *Encheiridion*, xxxi 3, 390
Epigon, ap Schol Ap Rhod, I, 308, 50

Etymologicum Magnum, 24, 10, 59, 144, 23, 306, 225, 1, 66, 12, 15, 435, 17, 348, 455, 34, 13, 469, 45, 12, 515, 18, 116

EUMATHIUS, II, 8, 30

EURIPIDES, *Medea*, 679 ff, 305
Heracleidae, 403 ff, 301, 1026 ff, 356
Andromache, 50 ff, 323, 1085 ff, 207, 323, 1102, 30, 1161, 207
Supplices, 6, 305, 138 ff, 317

EURIPIDES (cont)

Ion, 91, 24, 92, 36, 93, 28, 29, 100, 30, 226, 30, 369 ff, 207, 405, 375, 415, 29, 419, 29, 436 ff, 207, 461, 24, 550, 15, 661, 306, 715, 15, 802, 306, 831, 306, 859 ff, 207, 908, 29, 1322, 32
Electra, 399, 308, 971, 207, 980, 24, 1245, 207
Iphigenia Taurica, 77 ff, 310, 711, 207, 308, 976, 36, 1247 ff, 7, 1252, 24
Helena, 146, 30, 148, 68
Phoenissae, 17-20, 304, 203 ff, 54, 280 ff, 54, 409, 317, 911, 301
Orestes, 28, 207, 162, 12, 24, 36, 207, 308, 285, 207, 329, 24, 416, 207, 955, 24, 1656, 323, 1666, 207
Bacchae, 1336, 189
Rhesus, 970, 202
Hippolyte, 317
fragments, 452-62 (Nauck), 90, 629, 40, 705, 321, 1171, 307
EUSEBIUS, *Chronicon*, II, p 133, 283
Armen, 710, p 292 (Mai), 15
Praeparatio Evangelica, II, 61 C, 293, III 125 C, 384, IV 134 D, 283, 145 B, 381, V 202 B, 383, 204 D ff, 292, 208 C, 302, 210 B ff, 55, 56, 211 D, 151, 216 B, 183, 218 B, 152, 218 C, 183, 219 B, 181, 220 C, 159, 221 C, 92, 222 D, 91, 222 B, 102, 223 A, 103, 223 D, 102, 224 A, 26, 224 C, 57, 133, 402, 224 D, 224, 225 C, 306, 342, 226 A, 405, 226 B, 371, 226 D, 109, 227 C, 405, 410, 227 D, 387, 403, 228 C, 405, 229 C, 240, 403, 230 B, 147, 230 C, 362, 231 B, 365, 232 B, 366, 233 A, 136, 233 B, 141, 233 D, 338, VI 237 A, 384, 238 D, 382, 255 D, 68, 256 B, 68, 257 A, 311, 258 A, 304, 260 A and B, 213, VII 392 C, 240, X 463 B, 330
EUSTATHIUS, in *Iliad* (pag ed Rom), 270, 33, 59, 274, 11, 116, 408, 4, 50, 836, 45, 37
in *Od* (id) 1379, 22, 363, 1479, 13, 323, 1822, 18, 60
ad *Dion Per*, 473, 424, 499, 9
FESTUS, p 138 (Lindsay), 274, p 150, 50
FLORUS, I, vi 10, 272
Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum, Car et Theod Müller
Phanodemus, Vol I, p 366, no 3, 301

Fragmenta Historicorum (cont.)

- Demon, p 382, no 20, 58
 Philochorus, p 386, no 14, 301, p 388, no 23, 15, p 395, no 70, 161, 162, p 399, no 88, 200, p 411, no 158, 344, p 416, no 196, 13, p 417, no 203, 26
 Ion Chius, *Vol II*, p 51, no 17, 424
 Heracles, *de reb publ Vol II*, pp 208 ff, II 6, 109, IV 1, 79, VIII 2, 405, XII 2, 234, 407, XXXVIII 1, 306, xli, 67
 Anaxandrides Delphus, *Vol III*, pp 106 and 107, no 1, 13, 2, 140, 4, 79, 5, 11
 Mnaseas, *Vol III*, pp 157 and 158, no 47, 304, 48, 317
 Promathidas, *Vol III*, p 201, no 3, 63
 Asclepiades, p 300, no 1, 91
 Aristodemus, p 370, no 6, 357
 Hesiychius Milesius, *Vol IV*, p 147, no 4, § 3, 60, p 150, no 4 § 20, 60, p 160, no 14, 399
 Hippostratus, *Vol IV*, p 432, no 3, 330
Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker, die Felix Jacoby
 1 Hecataeus, 36 a, 9
 3 Pherecydes, 10, 307, 35, 352, 49, 13, 64, 30, 321, 322, 105, 308, 154, 301
 4 Hellanicus, 51, 315, 125, 301, 337
 12 Asclepiades, 15, 321
 22 Aristodemus, 1, 301
 26 Canon, I iii, 350, xviii, 422, xix, 354, xxvi, 56, 58, xxix, 51, xxx, 367, xxxiii, 376, xxxix, 337
 31 Herodorus, 9, 307, 13, 350; 51, 63
 42 Demaratus, 4, 301
 70 Ephorus, 16, 100, 22, 337, 31, 22, 386, 56, 67, 58, 154, 69, 300, 96, 241, 311, 320, 150, 9; 206, 216, 212, 227
 76 Duris, 84, 49
 81 Phylarchus, 70, 241
 90 Nicolaus of Damascus, 8, 303, 13, 348, 47, 10, 144, 57, 133; 68, 155
 124 Callisthenes, 1, 121, 11, 376
 228 Demetrius of Phalerum, 32, 320
 229 *Marmor Parium*, A 5, 119, 19, 302, 37 and 39, 126, 41, 147, 71, 227
 244 Apollodorus, 178, 69
 250 Castor, 11, 155
 252 *Chronicon Romanum*, B 5, 407
 257 Phlegon, I, 127, 36, 281
 260 Porphyry, 5, 396
 FRONTINUS, *Strategemata*, III, vii 6, 123

- GALEN, *Protrepticus*, ix, 406, 414
Geographici Graeci Minores, I 236, 87
 HARPOCRATION, s v Κρατυλλίδαι, 350
 HELIODORUS, *Aethiopica*, II, xxv 29; xxxv ff, 321
 HERODOTUS, I xii, 144; xix ff, 145; xxxi, 387, xlv 2 ff, 147, xlvii, 31, 32, xlix, 4, 149, 1 ff, 148; li, 149, lii ff, 151, lv, 152, lvi, 2 ff, 32, 101, lvii, 110, lviii ff, 111, lxix 2, 151, lxxv, 156, xc 4, 155, xci 4, 151, xcii 1, 148, cxv 1, 160, cxviii, 160, 161, cxviii, 62, cxliii 4, 159, li, cxxxi 4, 407, clxxx, 162, lii, lvi 2 ff, 168, lv, xii ff, 361, cxliii 2, 60, cl ff, 32, 79, 80, clvii, 82, clix 2, 84, clxi ff, 84, clxxviii, 170; clxxx, 170, V, xli ff, 170, lxii 2 ff, 162, lxiii, 164, lxvii, 138, lxix, 167, lxxii, 353, lxxxix, 2, 177, xc, 164, xcii, β 2, 32, 133, xcii, ε 1, 28, 136, VI xix, 172, xxxix, 163, li 4, 100, lvii 2, 99, lxvi, 34, 175, lxxvii, 174, lxxviii 2, 172, lxxx ff, 174, lxxxix γ, 32, 388, cxiii 2, 164, cxvii, 163, cxxvii, 75, cxxxv, 368, cxxxix, 164, VII xxvii, 157, cxxxviii, 157, cxi, 16, cxli, 30, 32, 34, 183, cxli, 31, cxlviii, 179, cxliii 2, 180, clxix, 180, clxviii, 182, clxxxix, 182, cxvii 333, cxiii, 193, cxxx 3, 181, cxxxviii, 4, 193, cxxxix, 182, VIII xxvii, 171, xxxv ff, 186, cxxxvii, 17, 30, vii 2, 185, lxii, 201, cxiv, 189, cxxxvii, 66, IX xxxiii, 198, xli, 188, xcii 4, 367
 HESIOD, *Scutum*, 58 ff, 351, 479 ff, 351
Certamen, p 314, 289, 315, 403, 323, 404, 326, 403
 fragment, 123 (Rzach), 352, 174, 399, 226, 31, 231, 342
Vita, 404
 HESYCHIUS, s v, Δελφός, 12
Διονυσιαδες, 337
ἐγγαστρέμυθος, 23
εἰς Κυνόσαργες, 347
κυναρπος, 60
Παιώνιος Διονυσος, 342
Πρόνως, 9
Πυρκόσι, 13
 HIEROCLES, in *Aureum Carmen* (ed Mullach), p 421, 386, 392
 HIMERTUS, *Orationes*, X 5, 57, XIII 5, 15, XXVIII 1, 57
 ap Phot *Bibl* p 374 b 3, 49

- [HIPPOCRATES], *Vol IX*, pp 406 ff
(Littre), 121, 122, 124
Historia Augusta, Pescennius Niger, viii, 291
Clodius Albinus, i, 291
HOMER, *Iliad*, II 520, 116, 318, XI 404, 318
Odyssey, VIII 76 ff, 318, XI 581, 318
Hymns, III 132, 325, 214 ff, 6, 282, 117, 394 ff, 6, IV 471, 325, 552, 13, XXIV, 33, XXVII 14, 14
HORACE, *Odes*, I vii 27, 68
HIGINUS, *Fabulae*, ii, 300, xxxii, 348, lxxv, 303, lxxvii, 303, lxxix, 317, lxxviii 8, 306, lxxviii, 306, cxx, 310, cxxii, 310, cxxiii, 322, 323, cxi, 9, 12, cxc, 299, cccix, 66, cxxh, 302, 310, cclv, 387, cclxi, 310
HYPERIDES, III 15, 256
IAMBLICHUS, *De Mysteriis*, III xi, 19
Vita Pythagorae, 5 ff, 411, II, 68, 42, 331, 52, 72, 221, 141
ISAEUS, VII 27, 344
ISIDORUS, *Origines*, I, xxxix, 13 31
ISOCRATES, IV 31, 330, VI 17, 55, 22 ff, 89, IX 14, 330, X 19, 314, XII 230, 395, XIV 31, 123, XV 232, 162
JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, ST (Migne, LXI, p 242), 293
JULIAN, *Orationes*, V 159 B 278, 381, VI 188 A, 417, VII 210 A, 403, VIII 249 B, 424, 299 C, 386
Conversum, 314 A, 398
Contra Galilaeos, 198 C, 295
Epistulae, 41, 421 A, 32
JUSTIN, II, xi 8, 181, III, iii 10, 108, iv 12 ff, 78, v 4, 93, VI, ii 4, 219, VII, i 7, 66, IX, vii 113, 250, XI, x 10, 253, XII, ii 3, 253, 254, XIII, vii i ff, 79, XVI, iii 4, 63, XX, ii 3 ff, 394, iii i ff, 394, XXIV, i i ff, 260, vi 9, 19, vii, 33, 261, XXX, iv 1, 280, XLIII, v 4, 275
JUSTIN MARTYR, *Cohortatio ad Gentiles*, xxxv, 414
JUVENAL, VI 555, 289, VII 19, 26, XIII 199 ff, 388
Laus Pisonis, 91 ff, 315
LIBANIUS, *Orationes*, I 74, 405, XI 111, 379, XX 1, 409
Declamationes, V 9, 321, XVII 70, 119, XLI 20, 49, XLII 26, 300
Pragm. Narrat., 14, 323
Epistulae, 208, 126, 311, 15, 371, 78
LIVY, I, lvi 10, 19, 270, V, xvi 3 ff, 272, xxi 2, 272, xxv 10, 272, LIVY (cont)
xxvii 2, 272, VIII, xxxv 1, 254, XXIII, xi i ff, 276, XXVIII, xlv, 12, 277, XXIX, x 6, 277, xi 5, 278, xvi 5 ff, 278, XXXVI, xi 5, 268, XXXVIII, xlviii, 263
LONGINUS, *περί ὁμοίων*, xii 2, 19
LUCAN, *Phalaris*, II 204, 126
Pseudomantis, 237, 292, 249, 292
Deorum Dialogi, 244, 38
Dialogus in Hesiodum, 246, 26
De Saltatione, 291, 9
De Astrologia, 370, 383
Erotes, 452, 414
Charon, 503, 148
Philopatri, 591, 291
Juppiter Confutatus, 636, 151, 291, 304
Nero, 642, 19, 288
Juppiter Tragoedus, 648, 291, 665, 151, 674, 291, 676, 147, 691, 151
Bi Accusatus, 792, 25, 26
Hermotimus, 801, 26
LUCRETII, I 739, 25
LYCOPHRON, 6, 26, 132, 319, 732, 356, 891, 170, 1141, 331, 1205, 357, 1375, 58, 1378, 57
LYCURGUS, in *Leocralem*, 84 ff, 301, 85, 31, 93, 232, 98, 301
MACARIUS, VII, ii 313
MACROBIUS, *Saturnalia*, I, vii 28, 50, xvii 17, 12, III, i 6, 227
MALALAS, p 31, 15, 295, 44, 14, 15, 135, 18, 310, 157, 8, 155, 172, 270
MANTISSA, II 28, 58
MARTIAL, IX, xli 289
MAXIMUS TYRIS, V 22, 151, VIII 16, 33, XVIII 1a d, 71, XXIX 7, 49
MENANDER COMICUS, fragment 147 (Kock), 140
MENANDER RHETOR, (*Rhet Graec* ed Spengel), Vol III, p 321, 25, 325, 12, 326, 49
NEPOS, *Miltiades*, I 1, 2, 163
Pausanias, IV, v 5, 197
Lysander, VI, iii 1, 216
New Testament, the, Act of the Apostles, XVI 16, 23
NONNUS, IV 289 ff, 316, 309, 293
ORIGEN, *contra Celsum*, III xxv, 24, VII iii, 24, 49, VII vi, 414
OROSIUS, IV, i 7, 259, VI, vii 11, 419
ORTHOFUS, *Argonautica*, 55 ff, 313
ORPHIC FRAGMENTS, 356 (Kern), 31
Orphic Hymns, lxxix, 12

OVID, *Amores*, I, xv 35, 26, III, vi 29, 71

Fasts, II 711, 270; III 855 ff, 300, IV 255 ff, 278

Heroides, XXI 231, 299

Ibis, 303, 323

Metamorphoses, I 320 ff, 12, 438 ff, 12; III 8 ff, 315, IV 643, 12, IX 403, 12, X 564, 307, XV 293, 227, 630 ff, 279

Oxyrrhynchus Papyri, no 841, 306, 852, p 47, 317, 857, 180, 1011, 25, 299, 396, 407, 1365, 134, 1367, col 1, 20 84, 1800, col II, frag 2, 407, 2080, 76, 201

PALAEPHATUS, περί ἀπείρων, xlix, 19

PARTHENIUS, 5, 51, 15, 25, 25, 241, 35, 91

PAUSANIAS, I, ii 5, 342, iii 4, 205, v 2, 301, xix 3, 347, xx 7, 286, xxxii 5, 176, 6, 301, xxxvii 1, 359, xxxviii 6 ff, 327, xli 1, 355; xliii 3, 360, 7 ff, 354, II, i 5, 159, ii 7, 337, iii 6, 355, iv 4, 134, vii 6, 336, 7, 11, xviii 2, 388, xx 8 ff, 172, xxiv 1, 376, xxvii 7, 352, xxix 7, 330, 8, 178, xxx 3, 11, 4, 353, xxxi 5, 339, xxxiii 2, 9, III, i 5, 100, 6, 56, 350, ii 4, 108, iii 6, 111, 7, 195, iv 3, 175, vii 3, 110, viii 9, 219, xi 5, 198, 8, 198, xii 8, 198, xiii 4, 56, 7, 337, xvii 9, 197, xix 12, 422, xxi 8, 348, IV, i 5 ff, 96, ix 3 ff, 90, xii 1, 92, 8, 31, xv 6, 93, xvi 7, 95, xviii 4, 323, xx 1, 96, xxiv 1 ff, 98, 7, 198, xxxvi 4, 93, 6 ff, 96, xxxvii 9, 210, xxxii 3, 98, 5, 94, xxxviii 9 ff, 50, V, iii 1, 349, iv 3, 56, 6, 127, vii 3, 70, xiii 4 ff, 358, xlviii 8, 134, xlii 5 ff, 255, xliii 3, 69, xxxvii 10, 369, VI, iii 8, 362, vii 7 ff, 363, ix 6, 362, xi, 365, VII, i 8, 113, ii 1, 57, iii 1, 50, iv 9, 69, lix, 339, xxxvi 6 ff, 227, xxv 10, 350, 13, 14, VIII, i 6, 110, v 4, 309, vi, 32, vii 6, 249, 8, 388, ix 3, 114, xi 10, 232, 12, 49, xv 1, 327, 5, 348, xxii 1, 337, 7, 356, xxxvii 7 ff, 312, 13, 393, 14, 403, xxxviii 5, 109, xxxix 4, 113, xlii 5, 328, lii 1, 328, IX, v 10, 303, vi 5, 253, vii 5, 284, viii 2, 336, xii 1 ff, 315, xiv 2, 230, xvii 7, 355, xxviii 5, 357, xix 4, 316, xxxi 3, 409, xxxv 1, 301, xxxvi 6, 404; xxxvii 10, 104, xxxviii 2, 50,

PAUSANIAS (cont)

xxxviii, 306, xxxviii 3, 404; 5, 359, xxxix 5 ff, 375, xli 1, 375, xli 4 ff, 171, ii 1, 233, iii 1 ff, 243, 3, 249, iv 3, 343, v 5, 12, 25, 6, 9, 13, 7, 19, 33, 9, 25, 12, 19, 13, 161, 375, vi 1, 13, vii 2 ff, 126, viii 7, 186, ix 3, 369, x 1, 167, 6 ff, 31, 77, xi 2, 170, 5, 204, xii 5, 148, 7, 349, xiv 5, 192, xv 3, 258, 7, 83, xvi 1-2, 146, 3, 9, 5, 11, 7, 394, 8, 120, xviii 1 ff, 224, xix 1, 193, 3, 338, 4, 266, xxii 12—xxxiv, 261, xxxv 1, 395, 2, 403, 4, 9, 30, 321, 5, 409, 6, 321, 7, 27, xxxiii 9, 243, ii, 16, xxxvii 4 ff, 121, 123, 260

PHILODFMUS, *De Musica*, 42, 109

PHILOSTRATUS, *Vita Apollonii*, IV xiv, 351, VI xi, 146

Vitae Sophistarum, I p 481, 288

Heracles, VI 3, 351

PHOTIUS, s v, εἰς Κωνσταντίνους, 347

Zeús 'Ομολώσις, 50

μετὰ Λέσβιων ὥδοι, 109

πάντα κινήσας πέτρων, 427

Bibliotheca, 148 b 20, 392, 374 b 3, 49

PINDAR, *Olympian Odes*, II 38, 303, VI 29 ff, 376, VII 30, 312, 32, 23

Pythian Odes, I 94, 144, III 243, 352,

29, 4, 147, 54, 352, IV 4 ff, 79,

9 ff, 84, 55, 28, 60, 36, 62, 82, 71,

308, 74, 12, 290, 313, V, 55

ff, 79, 60, 83, 69 ff, 55, 101,

100, VII 9, 162, 168, VIII 53,

409, IX 44, 147

Nemean Odes, I 1, 70, VII 33 ff, 321

Isthmian Odes, VII 15, 100

Paean, VI 112 ff, 321, 322

fragments (Bowra), 13, 315, 137, 30,

260, 9, 261, 8

Vitae, I 47, 409, II 28, 409, III 17,

409

PLATO, *Apology*, 20 E, 412

Phaedo, 85 B, 415

Philebus, 15 E, 427, 48 C, 395

Symposium, 208 D, 301

Phaedrus, 229 E, 395, 235 D, 129

Alcibiades, 124 A, 395, 129 A, 395,

132 C, 395

Amatores, 138 A, 395

Charmides, 164 D, 395

Euthydemus, 302 D, 345

Protagoras, 343, 395

Hippias Major, 288 B, 425

Res Publica, 427 E, 416, 470 A, 416

Minos, 315 C, 333

Law, 629, 93, 642 D, 370, 686 A,

PLATO, *Lawes* (cont.)

55, 719 C, 24, 738 B, 416, 759 C,
416, 828 C, 416, 845 E, 416,
865 B, 416, 865 D, 416, 916 C,
416, 958 D, 416, 988 A, 416

Asiochus, 367 C, 387

Anonymous Life, 416, 417

PLINY, *Natural History*, II 202, 280, 208,

19, 232, 26, IV 70, 280, VII 74,

111, 119, 225, 395, 151, 393,

152, 364, 203, 13, 205, 31,

X 21, 13, XI 185, 98, XVI 238,

319, XXVIII 147, 14, XXXIV

26, 275, XXXVI 10, 410

PLUTARCH, *Moralia*, 96 B, 61, 108 F,

387, 109 A, 409, 150 A, 407,

152 C, 129, 163 A, 64, 164 A,

134, 191 B, 222, 209 B, 222,

239 F, 104, 247 D, 60, 264 F,

371, 271 C, 347, 292 D, 18, 28,

293 C, 11, 293 F, 64, 294 A,

300, 294 E, 60, 295 D, 338,

296 C, 60, 298 F, 51, 302 C,

357, 310 B, 339, 315 F, 67,

338 A, 256, 340 C, 131, 365 A,

15, 378 B, 355, 385 C, 33,

385 F, 287, 398, 386 B, 41,

386 E, 416, 387 D, 348, 388 E,

15, 389 C, 15, 395 A, 215,

396 C, 131, 397 A, 28, 29, 397 C,

31, 397 F, 213, 241, 398 A, 18,

399 B, 219, 399 C, 280, 400 E,

137, 401 A, 407, 401 E, 148,

402 A, 50, 177, 402 C, 12, 27,

402 D, 31, 403 B, 135, 203, 210,

403 C, 140, 403 E, 108, 403 F,

368, 404 D, 38, 405 B, 79,

405 C, 28, 32, 33, 407 B, 31,

407 D, 28, 38, 402, 408 A, 49,

63, 68, 82, 87, 220, 408 C, 402,

409 E, 9, 412 C, 32, 209, 413 A,

348, 413 B, 402, 414 B, 33,

414 E, 23, 417 F, 11, 421 C, 11,

12, 432 B, 59, 433 B, 213,

433 C, 19, 435 B, 21, 435 D, 19,

29, 32, 436 A, 146, 437 B, 21,

437 C, 23, 438 A, 21, 34, 438 B,

17, 28, 29, 467 F, 215, 492 A,

13, 120, 511 B, 38, 395, 512 E,

32, 553 A, 134, 553 E, 24,

556 F, 407, 557 C, 76, 348,

557 D, 331, 557 F, 409, 558 A,

109, 560 D, 405, 560 F, 197,

579 B, 416, 709 A, 126, 729 F,

372, 741 A, 9, 773 B, 71, 773 C,

230, 784 B, 306, 789 E, 103,

825 B, 234, 829 C, 274, 856 F,

230, 873 B, 191, 914 D, 338,

969 E, 404, 984A, 379, 984E, 64,

997 C, 108, 1103 A, 101, 1116 F,

PLUTARCH (cont.)

99, 1136 A, 11, 1146 C, 109

De Fluvio, X 2, 67, XVIII, 67

Proverbia, II 14, 37

Vita Homeri, 4, 403

Vitae Parallelae, *Aemilius Paulus*,

xxviii, 268, xxxvi, 268

Agelaius, iii, 219, xix, 221, xxvi,

108, xxx, 219

Agis, ix, 104, xi, 99

Alexander, iii, 251, xiv, 251,

xxxviii, 252

Antonius, xxiii, 287

Aratus, liii, 267

Aristides, xi 3 ff, 189, xx 4, 191

Camillus, iii ff, 272, viii, 274,

xix, 230

Cicero, v, 419

Cimon, viii 3, 195

Demetrius, xi, 256, xiii, 256,

xl, 257

Demosthenes, xix, 249, xx, 248

Fabius Maximus, xviii, 276

Flaminius, xii, 268

Lycurgus, iv, 109, v, 30, 102, vi,

105, xiii, 108

Lyander, i, 207, 215, xviii, 215,

xx, 216, xxii, 219, xxv ff, 170,

216, xxvi, 40, xxix, 220

Marcellus, viii, 276

Nicias, xiii 5, 213

Numa, vi, 38, ix, 33, 283

Pelopidas, xx, 230, xxi, 181

Pericles, xx, 200, xxxii, 219

Phocion, viii, 31, 256, xxviii, 248

Pyrrhus, xxxi, 14

Romulus, xxxviii 5, 362

Solon, iv, 396, ix ff, 128, xi, 122,

xiv 6, 129, xxv, 129, xxviii, 387

Sulla, xii, 30, 284, xviii, 316, xix,

284, xxix, 285

Themistocles, xx 3, 193

Theseus, iii 5, 305, v 1, 345,

xvi 2, 51, xviii 1, 328, xxvi,

314, xxxi, 64, xxxviii, 302,

xxxvii 1, 195

Timoleon, viii, 28, 30, 254

POLIUX, VI 16, 338, VII 112, 188,

X 81, 24

POLYAENUS, I vii, 56, viii, 110,

xxv 1 and 2, 108, xix, 337, III v,

122, IV, iii 27, 252, V xxxi,

137, VI xiii, 123, liii, 202

POLYBIUS, I, vi 5, 266, II, xx 6, 266,

IV, xxv 8, 261, XII, iv c 5, 71,

v 7, 331, XXII, xviii 4, 268,

XXV, iii 2, 268, XXXIX, vi 1,

268

PORPHYRIUS in Horat. *Carm.*, IV, vi 28,

p 131 (Meyer), 328

- PORPHYRY, *De Abstinencia*, II 9, 372, 15, 392, 16, 392; 17, 372; 29, 372
Vita Pythagorae, 41, 412
Vita Plotini, 22, 421
PROCOPIUS, *Epistulae*, XX lxxviii, 15
PRUDENTIUS, *Apotheosis*, 438 ff, 294
PSEUDO-CALLISTHENES, xxvi, 253
SCHOLIA, Aeschines, III 107, 350, 130, 248
Aeschylus, *Eum.*, 11, 344, 21, 9
Apollonius Rhodius, I 308, 50, 958, 63, II 351, 63, 706, 12, 848, 63; III 594, 307, 605, 307, 1212, 71; 1243, 9
Aristides, p 78 (Dindorf), 57, 79, 164, 80, 56, 110, 301; 112, 337, 118, 210, 216, 353, 326, 101, 341, 215, 551, 163, 560, 356, 561, 110, 593, 109, 598, 353, 651, 55, 688, 195
Aristophanes, *Acharn.*, 241, 342
Eg. 1091, 71
Nub., 144, 414, 418, 508, 375
Vesp. 1446, 407
Pax, 622, 104
Aves, 556, 200, 1432, 313
Plut., 9, 24, 396, 39, 25, 30, 213, 25, 627, 195, 925, 79
Aristotle, *Politics*, VII, xiv 4, 421
Callimachus, *Hymns*, II 45, 13, 65, 83, 76, 80
Clemens Alex. *Protrept.*, II 9 (Potter), 59, 11, 65
Demosthenes, V, *Hypothesis*, 243, XVIII 248, 307
Euripides, *Alceste*, I, 11
Medea, 9, 355, 264, 355, 666, 306, 679, 305
Androm., 443, 104
Troas, 9, 117
Orest., 165, 19, 1094, 31
Phoen., Argumentum, 303, 13, 316, 45, 316, 224, 27, 29, 232, 12, 410, 317, 638, 316
Rhesus, 250, 58
Hesiod, *Erga*, 631, 404
Homer, *Iliad*, II 11, 345, 520, 116, V 64, 319, VI 136, VL 338, VII 86, 300, XIII 66, 331, XIV 34, T. 348, XX 404, V, 57, XXII 56, 363
Libanius, *Declam.*, XLII, 300
Lucian, *Phalaris*, III 3, 392
De Saltatione, 291, 9
Lycophron, 6, 26, 22, 59, 300, 333; 132, 319, 200, 320, 208, 15, 482, 110, 494, 305, 617, 9, 734, 356, 1047, 59, 1070, 116, 1141, 331, 1375, 58, 1378, 57
SCHOLIA (cont.)
Pindar, *Ol.*, II 70, 304, IX 43, 348; XI 17, 130, XIII 74, 355
Pyth., *Hypothesis*, 12, 14, 122, 126; IV 1, 79, 10, 82, 15 ff, 84, 313 A, 351, V, 101 100, VII 9, 161, 162
Nem., IX 2, 122, 20, 139
Isthm., VII 18, 100
Plato, *Apol.*, 21, 414
Phaedrus, 235 D, 129, 279, 426
Rep., 465, 127
Lawr., 629, 93, 865, 390
Mimoi, 315 C, 59, 333
Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, 639, 119
O T Argumentum, 303
O C, 57, 356, 91, 316, 1102, 344
Statius, *Theb.*, I 694, 306, IV 306, 306, VIII 331, 19
Theocritus, V 83, 56, XIV 49, 424
Thucydides, I, vi 3, 362
SCYMNUS (Mueller), 760, 69, 824, 69
SENFCA, *Agamemnon*, 294, 306
Quaest. Nat., III, xxvii 5, 71, VI, xxiii 4, 227, VII, xvi 2, 227
SERVIUS, *Georgics*, III 532, 387, IV 563, 356
Aeneid, I 41, 331, 621, 68; III 92, 19, 330, 322, 701, 400, IV 377, 11, XI 262, 306
SILIUS ITALICUS, XII 320, 276
SIMPLICIUS, Aristotle, *Physics*, II p, 75, 29
Epictetus, *Encheir.*, xxxii 3, 390
SOCRATES, *Eccles. Hist.*, III 23, 254
SOPATER, *Proleg. to Aristides*, p 740 (Dindorf), 288, 392, 420
SOPHOCLES, *Antigone*, 1126 ff, 15
Electra, 32, 308
Oedipus Tyrannus, 95 ff, 316, 151, 325, 152, 318, 711 ff, 37, 303
Oedipus Coloneus, passim, 356, 86 ff, 316, 413, 316, 454, 316
fragment 897 (Pearson), 26, 1044, 24
STATIUS, *Thebais*, I 395, 317, 483, 317, 570 ff, 354, III 474, 289, 611, 19, VIII 175, 26, X 610 ff, 301
Silvae, III, v 74, 315, IV, viii 45, 315, V, iii 293, 285, v 2, 26
STEPHANUS BYZANTINUS, *Ἀβασπύριες*, 50
Αἰγίος, 424
Ἀκη, 349
Ἀλκίς, 67
Ἀλωπεκοννησος, 67
Ἀδελφία, 98
Ἀρη, 59
Βυζαντιον, 60

STEPHANUS BYZANTINUS (cont)

Γαλιῶται, 67

Γῆλα, 66

Δειπνιάς, 11

Θάσος, 68

Θρία, 13

Θυάτειρα, 58

Ίος, 403

Κρίσα, 116

Κυνόσαργες, 347

Λαοδίκεια, 257

Πανδοσία, 254

Παρνασσός, 13

Σύβαρις, 74

Τεγέα, 111

STOBÆUS, III, i 199, 38, xxi 26, 395, xxvii 14, 388, xxviii 15, 388, xxviii 21, 271, XV 18, 393

STRABO, I, C 54, 227, 57, 280, 59, 227, IV, C 179, 64, 188, 263, V, C 220, 161, VI, C 255, 363, 256, 254, 257, 54, 260, 54, 262, 72, 264, 77 - 265, 77, 117, 269, 71, 270, 71, 279, 78, VII, C 320, 61, VIII, C 362, 93, 366, 102, 374, 9, 380, 426, 385, 227, IX, C 404, 344, 416, 116, 418, 121, 419, 9, 19, 31, 420, 119, 287, 421, 126, 240, 318, 376, 422, 11, 12, 22, 386, 423, 200, 449, 424, XII, C 567, 278, 589, 361, 600, 331, 639, 361, 647, 400

SUTONIUS, *Nero* 39, 288, 40, 288

SUIDAS, s v, ἄκλῆτον, 203

ἄκρον λαβέ, 140

Ἀλθηφίας, 338

Ἀμυρίσ μαινεταί, 74

ἀνείλεν, 9

ἀντιτιπῆσαι, 111

ἀργυρέα, 246

Ἀρχίας, 71

Ἀττάλες, 258

Αὔγουστος, 295

βαρᾶθρον, 381

Βάττου σιλφιον, 79

Δαφίδας, 399

Δελφός ἀνῆρ, 126

Δελφοί, 12

Δόρυ κηρύκειον, 50

Εἰγυπτία κληματαί, 418

αἱ κε παῖσαι κτλ 398

ἐγγαστρίμυθος, 23

ἐμοί μελήσει, κτλ, 201, 264

Ἐπαμυνώδας, 232

ἐς κόρακας, 59

ἐσχάτος Μυσῶν, 58

Εὐθυμίας, 363

Ζήνων, 418

εἰρεσιώγη, 330

SUIDAS (cont)

εἰς Κυνόσαργες, 347

εἰ τὸ μέσον κτήσαιο, κτλ, 78

Θρία, 13

Λυκοῦργος, 104

μέλας, 337

μετὰ Λέσθιον ψόδον, 109

μέτρῳ ὕδωρ, 201

μὴ κίνει κτλ, 400

Νίκων, 365

Πύθαγόρας Εφέσιος, 141

Πύθια, 140

Πυθώ, 13

Σίφνιοι, 170

Σόλων, 123

συγχρωτίζεσθαι, 418

τάδ' ἐκ τοῦ τρίποδος, 412

τὰ τρία, 31

ταῦτά σοι, 140

τὴν κατὰ στυγὴν ἔλα, 395

τόνος, 254

τῶν φιλάτων τὰ φιλάτα, 426

τραγός, 96

τρίοφθαλμος, 56

Τυρταῖος, 93

SYNCELLUS, G p 162 C, 15, p 307, 30, 287, p 680, 421

TACITUS, *Annals*, II, 54, 26, III 63,

378, XII 63, 60

Histories, IV 83, 379TATIAN, *adv Graec*, 8, 15TERTULLIAN, *ad Uxor*, I 6, 32THEMISTIOUS, *Orationes*, IV 53 A, 19,

XIX 225 D, 101, 226 C, 254, 288

THEOCRITUS, XIV 49, 424

THEOPHRASTUS, *Characteri*, xxi, 26; xxi, 345

Historia Plantarum, IV xii, 2, 319

THEOPOMPUS, fragment, 77 a (OCT), 119, 78 a, 371, 240, 241, 345,

314, 392, 352, 422

THUCYDIDES, I, viii 1, 208, xxv 1,

202, xxviii 2, 203, cii 2, 198,

ciii 3, 117, cxi 5, 200, cxviii 3,

203, cxxi 3, 205, cxxvii, 138,

cxxxix 4, 197, cxlii 1, 205,

II, xxi 1, 204, ci 5, 311, III,

xvi 5, 206, xxi 1, 404, ci 1,

206, cxi, 208, 226, IV, cxviii 1,

211, cxxxix 1, 212, V 1, 209,

xvi 2, 210, xxi 2, 211, xxv 1,

209, VI, iii 1, 69, VIII, cxi 4,

210

TIBULLUS, II, v 63, 26

TRYPHON (Walz, *Rhet Graec*, VIII, p 737), 55

TZETZES, *Chilades*, V, 819, 316

VALERIUS FLACCUS, I 302, 313; III

617, 313, V, 65, 313

- VALERIUS MAXIMUS**, I, i 4, 272, 9, 261, 263, 264, ii 3, 285, vii 3, 272, viii 2, 279, 9, 250, 10, 19, 419, 15, 98, xiii 5, 399, III, i 2, 19, IV, i 7, 396, V, vi 2, 101, vii 1, 301, 8, 274, VII, i 2, 157, 393, iii 2, 270
VARRO, *De Lingua Latina*, VII 77, 9
Menippeae, frag 152 (Buecheler), 395
VELLEIUS PATERCULUS, I, i 3, 322, ii 1, 301
VERGIL, *Aeneid*, III 330, 322, VI 42 ff, 22
VITRUVIUS, IV, i 4, 58, IX, *praefatio* 13, 416
XENOPHON, *Hellenica*, I, ii 18, 214, III, iii 1, 221, 3, 219, iii 8, 198, IV, iii 21, 221, vii 2, 222, VI, vi 2, 229, 7, 230, 30, 223, vi 23, 233, VII, i 27, 232
Memorabilia, I, iii 1, 326, IV, ii 24, 395, iii 16, 326
Apologia Socratis, 12, 24, 14, 414, 15, 101
Anabasis, III, i 5, 415, 12, 415, V, iii 5, 222, VI, i 22, 415
Cyropaedia, VII, ii 15, 157
Agésilai, i 34, 221
Respublica Lacedaemoniorum, viii 5, 108, xvi 5, 99
De Vectigalibus, v 9, 236, vi 2, 326
ZENOBIOUS, I 30, 317, 41, 307, 47, 407, 48, 424, 54, 60, 57, 140, II 24, 104, 61, 301, 68, 304, III 26, 50, 42, 72, 57, 78, 63, 24, 37, 87, 59, IV 38, 300, 79, 426, V 9, 109, 18, 400, 19, 201, 46, 348, 63, 427, 74, 50, 75, 13, VI, ii 31, 15, 140
ZONARAS, VII, xi 10, 270, 271, xc 8, 272, xxi 3, 274, IX iii, 276
INSCRIPTIONS
CIL, III 550, 289
 Collitz, *Sammlung*, no 2523, 265, 2970, 63, 2971, 421
 Dittenberger, *Sylloge*, 83, 212, 331, 159, 228, 175, 235, 176, 235, 177, 239, 204, 239, 325, 239, 228, 241 A, 239, 247, col 1, l 13, 239, col 2, l 68, 239, col 3, l 13, 9, 270, 419, 290, 250, 392, 259, 398, 264, 266, 405, 265, 416, 265, 417, 265, 418, 265, 550, 378, 630, 378, 643, 268, 761, 287, 801 D, 287, 813, 289, 817, 289, 821, 289, 823, 289, 825, 289, 829, 289, 877 A, 291, 977, 327, 1005, 352, 1014, 145, 339, 1157, 30, 1158, 63, 378, 1160-66, 403, 1169, xxxiii, 352
OGIS, 228, 378, 234, 378
 Fouilles, III, i 50, 215, 83, 265, 87, 265, 215, 290, 294-5, 234, 394, 352, 432, 259, 457, 283, 463, 264, 266, 497, 49, 511, 251, 560, 421, ii *passim*, 344, 69, 346, 70, 346, 138, 264, 205, 265, iii 66 ff, 352, 77, 253, 153, 137, iv 75, 268, v 3, 228, 19, 239, 25, 239, 50, 33, 63, 284, 68, 29
 Hicks and Hill, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*, no 1, 362
Inscriptiones Graecae, I² 77, 345, 78, 212, 1009, 205, II-1096, 31, 369, 1326, 339, 1363, 331, 4969, 352, 5006, 380, IV, i-121, 353, 1, 950 l 32, 419, VII 1829, 350, 2462, 94, XI 1061, 346, XII 3, 320, 339, 863, 367, 5, 155, 352, 802, 378, 863, 378, 913, 419
 Kern, *Inscriptionen v Magnesia*, no 16, 378, 17, 51, 18, 378, 19, 378, 20, 51, 53, 22-83, 378, 215, 340, 228, 380
 Michel, *Recueil*, no 1014, 350
 Schwyzer, *Dialectorum Graecarum Exempla*, etc, no 89, 376, 332, 30
 Lebas-Waddington, *Voyage Archéologique*, no 60 ff, 378
 Tod, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*, no 3, 388, 74, 212, 331, 95, 215

INDEX OF PROPER NAMES

- ABAB, 147, 170, 240, 376
 ANDERA, 62
 ACANTHUS, 207
 ACARNAN, 312
 ACARNANIANS, the, 312
 ACE, 349
 ACERATUS, 186
 ACHAEA in the Peloponnese, 14, 87,
 113, 118, 224, 339, 362, 424
 ACHAEANS of the Peloponnese, the, 113,
 224, 226, 267, 362
 ACHAEANS of Thessaly, the, 64, 206, 214
 ACHELOUS, the, 311
 ACHILLES, 318, 319, 321, 323, 422
 ACRAGAS, 87, 142
 ACRISIUS, 119, 307, 313
 ACTAFON, 189, 359
 ACTIUM, 287
 ADRAMITTUM, 210
 ADRASTUS, 138, 139, 316, 317
 AEACIDAE, the, 167
 AEACUS, 177, 178, 322, 330
 AEGAE, 65, 66
 AEGALFUS, Mount, 327
 AEGEIDAE, the, 100, 101
 AEGEUS, 100, 305, 306, 314
 AEGINA, 140, 167, 177, 178, 192, 330
 AEGIRA, 14
 AEGISTHUS, 308
 AEGIUM, 267, 424 ff
 AEGON, 131
 AEGOSPOTAMI, 198, 215
 AEGYS, 109
 AEMILIUS PAULUS, 268
 AENEAS, 269, 288
 AFNIANS, the, 64, 244, 260, 321
 AEOLIS, 58
 AEOLUS, 308
 AEPYTIDAE, the, 90, 91
 AEPYTUS, 90, 91, 374
 AESARUS, the, 69
 AESCHYLUS, 410
 AESCULAPIUS, see also ASCLEPIUS, 279
 AESOP, 407 ff
 AESYMNUS, 360
 AETHRA, wife of Phalanthus, 77, 78
 AETHRA, daughter of Pittheus, 78, 305
 AETOLIA, 260 ff, 280 ff, 376, 405, 410
 AETOLIANS, the, 224, 257, 260 ff, 264,
 266 ff, 280 ff, 342, 424
 AGAMEDES, 306, 375, 388, 409
 AGAMEMNON, 319, 360
 AGAMESTOR, 63
 AGATHOCLES, 258
 AGELOCHUS, 198
 AGESILAUS, 218 ff, 221
 AGESIPOLIS, 222
 AGIADS, the, 100, 102
 AGIAS, 198
 AGIS, 215, 216, 219, 221
 AGLAUS, 393
 AGRIPPINA, 288
 AGYIUS, APOLLO, 328, 343
 AIGOBOLUS, DIONYSUS, 336
 AISYMNES, DIONYSUS, 339, 340
 AJAX the less, 331, 333, 334, 421
 ALALIA, 160, 170
 ALAZEIR, 85
 ALBAN lake, the, 272 ff
 ALBINUS, 291
 ALCETAS, the historian, 39
 ALCETAS, king of the Molossi, 223
 ALCIBIADES, 219, 276
 ALCIDES, see also Heracles, 348
 ALCMAFON of Athens, 121, 163
 ALCMAEON, son of Amphiarus, 288,
 307, 310 ff, 317, 324, 370
 ALCMAEONIDAE, the, 121, 162, 163, 165
 ff, 176, 395
 ALCMENE, 355
 ALEA, 337
 ALEOS, 307
 ALETES, 49, 58, 134
 ALEUAS, 119, 120
 ALEXANDER of Abonutichus, 292
 ALEXANDER of Epirus, 249, 254
 ALEXANDER I of Macedon, 66, 244
 ALEXANDER the Great, 65, 243, 251 ff
 ALEXANDRIA, 379
 ALOPECONNESUS, 67
 ALPHEUS, the, 70, 71
 ALYATTES, 145, 146, 163
 AMANTHIUS, 52
 AMASIS, 162
 AMBRACIA, 323, 350
 AMEINIADES, 248
 AMELIUS, 421
 AMMON, 3, 49, 147, 150, 217, 251, 252,
 254, 289, 377, 416
 AMPHIARAUS, 147 ff, 155, 256, 310, 311

- AMPHICTYON, son of Deucalion, 13, 118
 AMPHICTYON, king of Athens, 343
 AMPHICTYONY, the Delphic, 13, 117 ff,
 162, 171, 179, 187, 193, 195, 197,
 200, 206, 233, 235 ff, 242 ff, 249,
 251, 254, 260, 266, 283, 284, 287,
 346, 430
 AMPHIPOLIS, 201, 202
 AMPHISSA, 121, 206, 248 ff, 262
 AMPHITRITE, 123, 382
 AMPHITRYON, 348
 AMYCLAE, 100
 AMYRIS, 74, 75
 ANACHARSIS, 393
 ANAUKUS, the, 308
 ANAXANDRIDAS DELPHUS, 39
 ANCAEUS, 68, 412
 ANCHIMOLIUS, 166
 ANDANIA, 96
 ANDREAS, 134, 135
 ANDROBULUS, 184
 ANDROCRATES, 189
 ANDROGEOS, 302, 330
 ANEMOREIA, 200
 ANTHEDON, 338
 ANTHERA, 118, 120, 123
 ANTICHARES, 170
 ANTICONUS DOSON, 313
 ANTIGONUS GONATAS, 333, 424
 ANTIGONUS MONOPHTHALMUS, 256
 ANTIOCH, 379
 ANTIOCHIA on the Maeander, 378
 ANTIOCHUS the Great, 268, 281, 282, 378
 ANTIOPE, 302
 ANTIPHFMUS, 66, 67
 ANTONY, MARK, 287
 APATURIA, the, 337
 APELLAS, 39
 APHRODITE, 285, 286, 320, 328, 378, 423
 APHRODISIAS, 285
 APHYTIS, 217
 APOLLONIA in the Adriatic, 69, 367
 APOLLOPHANES, 352, 353
 APPIUS CLAUDIUS, 419, 420
 APSINTHIANS, the, 163
 ARATUS of Sicyon, 267
 ARBELA, 252
 ARCADIA, 57, 110, 210, 212, 309, 311,
 327, 328, 337, 348, 356, 392, 425, 426
 ARCADIANs, the, 56, 110, 329
 ARCAS, 114, 115, 212
 ARCESILAUS III, 85, 86
 ARCHEDICE, 120
 ARCHELAUS, king of Macedon, 66
 ARCHELAUS, king of Sparta, 109
 ARCHIAS, 70, 71, 72
 ARCHIDAMUS II, 211
 ARCHIDAMUS III, 89, 235, 241
 ARCHILOCHUS, 405 ff, 410
 ARES, 183, 315
 ARETHUSA, near Chalcis, 70, 425
 ARETHUSA, at Syracuse, 70, 71
 AREUS, 260
 ARGILUS, 67
 ARGONAUTS, the, 63, 83, 313
 ARGOS, 14, 65, 119, 121, 131, 172 ff, 179,
 180, 199, 222, 316, 354, 355, 357,
 376, 387, 425
 ARGOS, Amphilocheian, 69
 ARGOS, Pelasgic, 425
 ARIMASPI, the, 361
 ARIMNESTUS, 190, 191
 ARIOBARZANES, 231
 ARISTEAS, 361, 363
 ARISTIDES, 190
 ARISTINUS, 371
 ARISTOCLES, 210
 ARISTODEMUS, the Heraclid, 56, 100, 350
 ARISTODEMUS, the Messenian, 91
 ARISTOMACHUS, 55
 ARISTOMENES, 94 ff
 ARISTON, 175
 ARISTONICE, 33
 ARISTOPHANTUS, 175
 ARISTOTELES (Baltus I), 81
 ARISTOTLE, 417
 ARNE, 59
 ARRUNS TARQUINIUS, 270, 271
 ARSACES, 210
 ARSINOE, 352
 ARTAXFRXES, 225
 ARTEMIDORUS, 366
 ARTEMIS, 51, 64, 121, 191, 262, 264,
 265, 310, 339, 344, 350, 356, 378, 410
 ARTEMISIUM, 193
 ASCLEPIUS, see also Aesculapius, 352 ff,
 417, 419, 431
 ASCRA, 405
 ASIA MINOR, 17, 21, 50, 57 ff, 87, 143 ff,
 160, 219, 221, 225, 226, 249, 277,
 285, 381, 397, 415
 ASINE, 50
 ASOPUS, 128, 167
 ASTYCRATES, 235, 243
 ASTYPALAEA, 362, 363, 424
 ATALANTA, 307
 ATHAMAS, 59, 300, 333
 ATHENA, 11, 63, 81, 105, 121, 145, 148,
 171, 184, 187, 197, 213, 234, 254,
 262, 264, 265, 307, 313, 320, 327,
 331 ff, 348, 356, 394, 410
 ATHENIANs, the, 50, 94, 101, 128, 136,
 138, 167, 176 ff, 183 ff, 189 ff, 195 ff,
 201, 203 ff, 223, 239, 245 ff, 255 ff,
 301, 325, 341 ff, 357, 369, 370, 382,
 389, 398
 ATHENS, 57, 129, 163 ff, 176 ff, 199, 204,
 212, 215, 232, 235, 236, 238, 242,
 244, 256 ff, 286, 301, 302, 305, 314,
 330, 341 ff, 347, 352, 381 ff, 415, 430

- ATHOS, 183
 ATTALUS of Macedon, 250
 ATTALUS I, king of Pergamum, 258, 259, 278, 399, 400
 ATTICA, 184, 185, 190, 215, 302, 316, 326, 328, 341
 ATYS, 157
 AUGE, 300, 307
 AUGUSTUS, 287, 295
 AUTOLEON, 422
 AUTONOUS, 187
 AUXESIA, 352
 AZANIANS, the, 329

 BACCHIANS, the, 133, 134
 BACCHUS, see Dionysus
 BACIS, 39
 BARATHRON, the, 381
 BARCA, 85, 86
 BATHYCIUS, 397
 BATTUS I, 79 ff, 156
 BATTUS II, 84
 BATTUS IV, 82
 BIAS, 397
 BITON, 387, 388
 BITHYNIA, 64
 BOEOTIA, 16, 117, 163, 186, 199, 209, 212, 229, 237, 315, 316, 344, 349, 375, 376
 BOEOTIANS, the, 59, 63, 230, 231, 253
 BOREAS, 183
 BOTTIAIANS, the, 51, 65
 BRANCHIDAE, see also Didyma, 63, 87, 147, 149, 150, 282, 376, 381, 397
 BRANCHUS, 376
 BRASIDAS, 206, 207
 BRENNUS, 261 ff
 BROMIUS, 343
 BRUIUS, Lucius Junius, 270, 271
 BUPHONIA, the, 373
 BURA, 227
 BYZANTIUM, 60, 61, 79

 CADMUS, 115, 316, 357
 CADMUS OF COS, 180, 181
 CADYS, 234, 430
 CAEADAS, 197
 CAECINUS, the, 364
 CAERE, 160, 161, 271
 CAESAR, Caius Julius, 287, 419
 CALAMIS, 205
 CALAURIA, 118
 CALCHAS, 63, 320
 CALCHEDON, 60, 61, 378
 CALLATIS, 69
 CALLIPOLIS, 77
 CALLIPPUS, 255
 CALLIRRHOE, 311, 312
 CALLISTRATUS, 232
 CALONIDAS, 406, 407

 CALYDONIAN boar, the, 317
 CAMARINA, 400, 401
 CAMBYSES, 156
 CAMICUS, 180
 CAMILLUS, 272
 CAMPANIA, 315
 CANDAULES, 144, 145
 CANOPUS, 349
 CAPHIS, 284
 CAPHYAE, 356
 CAPITOL, the, 295
 CARACALLUS, 292
 CARANUS, 65
 CARCINUS, 258
 CARIA, 59
 CARIANS, the, 57, 285
 CARNEIA, the, 56, 222
 CARNUS, 56
 CARTHAGINIANS, the, 170, 180, 254, 258, 275, 277, 279 ff
 CARYSTUS, the hero, 68
 CARYSTUS in Euboea, 68
 CASSANDRA, 331, 334
 CASSOTIS, 27
 CASTALIA, 4, 8, 26, 27, 29, 293, 296
 CASTOR, 95, 422
 CAUCON, 97
 CAYSTROBIUS, 361
 CECROPS, 184, 301
 CELTS, the, 261 ff, 283
 CIOS, 328
 CEPHALLENIA, 68
 CEPHALUS, 306
 CEPHISUS, 183
 (L)AIATAS, APOLLO, 109
 CRESSUS, 250, 251
 CRYNIA, 227
 CHAEFRPHON, 412, 413
 CHAERON, 251
 CHAERONIA, 209, 249, 432
 CHALCIDIANS, the, 245
 CHALCINUS, 327
 CHALCIS in Aetolia, 72
 CHALCIS in Euboea, 54, 70, 425
 CHALDAEANS, the, 383, 384
 CHARILAS, 109
 CHARITON, 142
 CHIIRON, 68
 CHEN, 393
 CHERSONESE, the Tauric, 310
 CHERSONISEL, the Thracian, 163, 164
 CHERSONESUS, 69
 CHIANS, the, 29
 CHILON, 393, 396, 397
 CHIMAEREUS, 319
 CHIOS, 69, 290
 CHIOS the, 342
 CHRISTIAN APOLOGISTS, the, 34, 35, 293 ff
 CHRYSIPPUS, 303

- CICERO, 419
 CIMMERII, the, 332
 CIMON, 196
 CINADON, 198
 CINYPS, 84, 170
 CIRPHIS, 4
 CIRRHIA, 64, 108
 CITHAERON, 184, 189 ff
 CLAROS, 13, 22, 26, 50, 150, 290, 292, 351, 376, 381
 CLAUDIUS MARCELLUS, 276
 CLAUDIUS, the Emperor, 287
 CLAZOMFNAE, 62, 213, 225
 CLEARCHUS of Methydris, 192
 CLEISTHENES of Athens, 162, 166 ff, 431
 CLISTHENES of Sicyon, 122, 123, 128, 138, 139, 140, 163
 CLEOBIS, 387, 388
 CLEOBULUS, 397
 CLEOMANTIS, 301, 302
 CLEOMBROTUS, 229, 230
 CLEOMEDES, 362, 363
 CLEOMENES I, 34, 142, 166, 170, 172 ff, 179, 181
 CLEONAE, 100, 135, 204
 CLEOPATRA, daughter of Philip II, 249
 CLEOTIMUS, 140
 CLYMENE, 373
 CLYMENUS, 306
 CLYTÆMNESTRA, 308, 309
 CNIDUS, 159
 COBON, 57, 175, 176
 CODRUS, 301
 COLCHIS, 313
 COLOVUS, 316, 356
 COMAETHO, 339
 COMMONUS, 291
 CONSTANTINE the Great, 293
 CONSTANTINOPLĒ, 62
 CORAX, see also Calondas, 32
 CORCYRA, 202, 223, 369
 CORFTAS, 19
 CORINTH, 70, 78, 87, 132, 133, 136, 137, 146, 202, 244, 268, 304, 306, 337, 355, 426
 CORINTHIANS, the, 137, 202, 205, 355, 356
 COROIBUS, 354, 355
 CORONFA, 167, 200, 203, 220, 221
 CORONIS, 352
 CORSICA, 160
 COS, 264, 396
 COSSYPHUS, 248
 COUS, 87
 CRACAEUS, 350
 CRAGALIDAE, 350
 CRATES, 234
 CRATON, 67
 CRESPHONTES, 89, 90, 92
 CRETANS, the, 6, 51, 53, 67, 126, 180
 CRETE, 51, 60, 95, 101, 107, 108, 169, 180, 240, 241, 328, 370, 371, 373
 CRETINES, 87
 CREUSA, 306
 CRIMISA, 72
 CRISA, 6, 69, 77, 116, 117, 119, 120 ff, 199, 247 ff, 260, 288, 309, 318, 350
 CRISUS, 117, 119
 CROESUS, 75, 83, 143 ff, 160, 163, 175, 179, 225, 259, 284, 387, 393, 407, 408, 430
 CROTON, 71 ff, 170, 394, 422
 CTESYLLĒ, Aphrodite, 328
 CUMAE, 22, 269, 356
 CURTES, the, 72
 CYANIPPUS, 339
 CYBELE, see also Magna Mater, 381, 382
 CYCHREUS, 129, 359
 CYCNUΣ, 351
 CYDONIA, 240
 CYLON, 138, 142
 CYME, 225
 CYNATHUS, 125, 126
 CYNOSARGES, 347
 CYNOSCEPHALAE, 280
 CYPRUS, 68, 225, 379
 CYPSELUS, 132 ff, 156 ff, 142, 259, 314
 CYRENE, the nymph, 82
 CYRENE, 79 ff, 107, 170, 217, 315
 CYRNUΣ, 160
 CYRUS the Great, 75, 141, 147, 152, 155, 160
 CYRUS the Younger, 415
 CYZICUS, 63, 361, 378
 DAE DALUS, 180
 DAFTAS, 321
 DAETUS, 327
 DAMAGETUS, 98
 DAMIA, 353
 DAMOCRATES, 189
 DAMON, 142
 DANAE, 307
 DAPHNE, 25
 DAPHNIS, 25
 DAPHNITAS, 399, 400
 DARDANI, the, 283
 DECELEA, 205, 215, 221
 DELICUS MUS, 181
 DEINOMENUS, 135
 DEFIANS, the, 12, 209 ff, 416
 DELOS, 7, 11, 12, 118, 140, 08 ff, 269, 302, 344, 345, 376, 398, 416, 423, 424
 DELPHIS, 421
 DELPHUS, 13
 DEIPHYNT, 12
 DEIPHYNIS, 12
 DEMARATUS, 175 ff, 182
 DEMARMENUS, 358

- DEMETER, 96, 97, 118, 120, 184, 189,
191, 253, 325, 327, 328 ff, 368, 431
DEMETRIUS of Phalerum, 256
DEMETRIUS POLIORCETES, 256, 257
DEMETRIUS of Scepsis, 332
DEMODOCUS, 318
DEMONAX, 85
DEMOSTHENES, 242, 245
DEO, 329
DEUCALION, 118
DIAGORIDAE, the, 98
DIO CHRYSOSTOM, 420
DIOGENES the Cynic, 417, 418
DIOGENES, 423
DIOMEDES, 357
DIOMUS, 373
DIONYSIUS I, 142, 223
DIONYSIUS, 14 ff, 29, 30, 335 ff, 378, 419,
431
DIOPEITHES, 219, 220
DIOSCURI, the, 423
DIOTIMUS, 356
DIPAEA, 198
DIPOENUS, 410
DILS, 371
DOCIMUS, 392
DODONA, 3, 7, 8, 12, 49, 50, 58, 67, 147,
150, 217, 254, 259, 269, 313, 325,
326, 343, 344, 367, 368, 377, 402,
416
DOLONCI, the, 163, 164
DOLOPES, the, 244, 260
DOMITIAN, 289
DORIANS, the, 54, 56, 58, 230, 301
DORIEUS, 48, 84, 170, 171
DORIS, 54, 118, 244
DREPANON, 201
DROMOCLEIDES, 256
DRYOPES, the, 50, 350
DRYOPS, 350
DYMEL, 362
EARTH goddess, the, see also Ge, 7, 8, 9,
10, 12, 21, 329
ECHECRATES of Pharsalus, 257
ECHECRATIDES, 120
ECHELAUS, 358
ECHETLAUS, 177, 359
ECHINADES, the, 72
EETION, 133, 134, 136
EGYPT, 162, 318, 379
EION, 196
EIRA, 88
ELAEUS, 67
ELATEA, 248
ELEUSIS, 97, 189, 212, 239, 327, 330, 331,
346, 398
ELIS, 56, 57, 108, 137, 215, 221, 222,
241, 255, 349, 358, 369
ELEUTHER, 337
ELEUTHERAE, 337, 342, 343
ENCHELEIS, the, 189
ENDYMION, 52
ENTIMUS, 67
EPAMINONDAS, 88, 230 ff
EPEBOLUS, 90
EPHESUS, 60, 64, 141, 226
EPHIALTES of Trachis, 193
EPICASTE, 289
EPICYDES, 389
EPIDAMNUS, 202
EPIDAUROS, 140, 141, 254, 279, 284,
352, 353, 419, 421
EPIDOTES, 197
EPIGONI, the, 50, 310, 316, 317
EPIMENIDES, 370
EPISCOPUS, 373
EPITALIUM, 221
ERECHTHEUS, 168, 301, 343
ERETRIA, 358
ERGINUS, 306
ERICHTHONIUS, 382
ERIGONE, 341
ERIPHYLE, 241
ERYTHRAE, 213
ERYX, 170
ETFOCLES, 316
ETEONCUS, 316
ETRUSCANS, the, 160, 270, 271, 279, 394,
395
EUBOLA, 68, 87, 118, 183, 206, 358, 373,
420
EUCHIDAS, 191
EUEMERUS, 20
EUMENES, 268
EUPHEMUS, 83
EURIPIDES, 410, 414
EUROPA, 315
EURYBATUS, 153, 154, 165
EURYIOCHUS, the Thessalian, 122, 123
EURYLOCHUS, the Spartan, 206
EURYPONTIDS, the, 102
EURYPYLUS, son of Poseidon, 83
EURYPYLUS, the Thessalian, 339
EURYSTHEUS, 55, 312, 348, 356
EUTHYCLES, 366
EUTHYMUS, 363, 364
EUXENIPPUS, 256
EVADNE, 374, 375
EVAGORAS, 225
EVENIUS, 367, 368
EXEGETAI PYTHOCHRESTOI, the, 301,
345, 371, 416, 429
FABIUS PICTOR, Quintus, 276, 277
FLAMININUS, 268, 279
GALBA, 288
GALEN, 420
GALLIO, 287

- GAULS, the, see also Celts, the, 263, 266, 274, 275, 276, 279
 Gé, see also Earth goddess, the, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 20
 GELA, 60, 66, 70
 GELON, 135, 180
 GEPHYRAEANS, the, 50
 GERANIA, Mount, 354
 GLAUCUS of Lycia, 52
 GLAUCUS of Chios, 146
 GLAUCUS, the son of Epicydes, 389, 390
 GNEILOCHUS, 63
 GORDIUS, 144
 GORGO, 182
 GORGUS, 136
 GOTHS, the, 296
 GRINNUS, 80
 GRYNIIUM, 150, 151
 GYGES, 136, 143, 144, 145, 152, 158, 393
- HADRIAN, 289, 381, 404
 HAGNON, 202
 HALIACMON, the, 65
 HALIARTUS, 220, 221, 355, 372
 HALIEIS, 67, 352
 HALYS, the, 151, 259
 HAMAXITUS, 60
 HARMA, 250
 HARMONIA, 310 ff, 320
 HASDRUBAL, 277
 HECTOR, 357, 358
 HELEN, 241, 314, 320, 422
 HELENUS, 274
 HELICE, 113, 226 ff
 HELLE, 300
 HELPHAESTUS, 396
 HERA, 74, 76, 114, 189, 380, 387
 HERACLEA MINOA, 170
 HERACLEA in Pontus, 63, 418, 419
 HERACLEA in Trachis, 48, 206, 214
 HERACLES, 25, 50, 55, 170, 172, 210, 213, 253, 312, 317, 343, 347 ff, 368, 410
 HERACLIDAE of Lydia, the, 145
 HERACLIDES PONTICUS, 418, 419
 HERACLIDS, the, 55 ff, 89, 100, 106, 131, 170, 216, 219, 336, 350, 357
 HERMES, 327
 HERMIAS of Atarneus, 417
 HERMIONE, the heroine, 322, 323
 HERMIONE, 392
 HERMUS, the, 152
 HERODES ATTICUS, 290
 HEROPHILA, 155
 HESIOD, 404, 405
 HESYCHIA, 213
 HETOEMARIDAS, 195
 HICEMIAS, 417, 418
 HIEROCLES, 201, 208
 HIERON, 135, 155
 HIPPIAS, 162, 163, 166
- HIPPODAMEIA, 307
 HIPPOTES, 56
 HOMER, 289, 290, 403, 404
 HONORIUS, 296
 HOPLIA, the, 220
 HOPLITES, the, 220
 HORUS, 384
 HOSII, the, 29, 34
 HYAMFEIA, 408
 HYLLUS, 55
 HYPERA, 338
 HYPERBOREANS, the, 15, 155, 343
 HYPERIDES, 255
 HYPERION, 360
 HYPEROCHUS, 262
 HYPSION, 189
- IADMUS, 408
 IALYSUS, 98
 IAMIDS, the, 198, 174
 IAMUS, 374, 375
 ICADIUS, 399
 ICARIA, 341
 ICARIUS, 341
 IDAEAN cave, the, 95
 IDMON, 63
 ILYRIANS, the, 189, 202, 223, 283, 284
 INACHUS, 313
 INO, 300, 340
 IO, 313
 IOLAUS, 349
 IOLCUS, 308
 ION, 306
 IONIANS, the, 54, 57, 206, 226 ff, 396
 IOS, 290, 403
 IPHICRATES, 223
 IPHIGENEIA, 310
 IPHITUS, 348
 ISMENIAN APOLLO, the, 149, 253, 397
 ISYLLUS, 419
 ITALY, South, 69, 197, 201, 223, 241, 276, 361, 363, 422
 ITHACA, 289, 290
 ITHOME, 88, 90 ff, 98, 198
 ITONIA, 118
- JASON of Pherae, 223, 224, 243, 266
 JASON the Argonaut, 307, 308, 313
 JOCASTA, 37, 207
 JULIAN, 295
- LABDA, 133
 LABDACUS, 303, 304
 LABOTAS, 214
 LACINIAN cape, the, 72
 LACIUS, 66
 LADE, 173
 LAIUS, 170, 303 ff, 315, 316
 LAMPON, 201
 LAMPSACENES, the, 241

- LAODICUS, 262
 LAODICEA, 257
 LEBADEA, 95, 147, 175, 376
 LEIPSYDRUM, 165
 LEMNIANS, the, 60
 LEMNOS, 164
 LEONIDAS, 181 ff, 189
 LEONYMUS, 422, 423
 LEOS, 301
 LEOTYCHIDAS, II, 388
 LEOTYCHIDAS, the son of Agis, 219
 LESBOS, 64, 338, 351
 LETO, 7, 121, 318, 343, 423
 LEUCE, 225
 LEUCIPPIDAE, the, 357
 LEUCIPPUS, the Lycian, 52
 LEUCIPPUS, the Spartan, 77
 LEUCON, 189
 LEUCOPHRYENE, Artemis, 378
 LEUCTRA, 88, 93 ff, 115, 223, 228 ff, 233
 LIBYA, 80 ff, 147, 217
 LIBYS, 217
 LICYMNUS, 312, 349
 LINUS, 354, 355
 LIPARI ISLANDS, the, 273, 394, 395
 LIVIA, 287, 398
 LOCHIA, 421
 LOCRI, Epizephyrian, 87, 332, 363, 364, 394, 422
 LOCRIANS, the Eastern, 199, 213, 214, 242, 244, 331 ff, 432
 LOCRIANS, the Ozolian, 60, 117, 118, 199, 235, 244, 246 ff, 260
 LOCURUS, 60
 LOPHIS, 372
 LOXIAS, 29, 38, 40, 85
 LUCANIA, 241
 LYCAEUM, 210
 LYCIAN, a, 252
 LYCISCUS, 90
 LYCOMEDES, 196
 LYCURGUS, 101 ff, 110, 314
 LYCUS, the son of Pandion, 96, 97
 LYCUS, a hero, 319
 LYDIA, 143 ff, 348, 349, 393, 408
 LYSANDER, 104, 108, 210, 215 ff
 LYSIOS, Dionysus, 336

 MACEDON, 65, 66, 242 ff, 261, 267, 268, 283
 MACHAEREUS, 321, 323, 376
 MAEDI, the, 283
 MAENALUS, 114
 MAGI, the, 383
 MAGNA MATER, see also Cybele, 277, 279, 381
 MAGNESIA, the battle of, 282
 MAGNESIA on the Maeander, 51 ff, 340, 341, 378, 380, 392, 393
 MAGNESIANS of North Greece, the, 51, 244

 MALEANS, the, 244
 MANDROLYTUS, 52
 MANTINEA, 84, 114, 212, 232, 233
 MANTO, 50, 376
 MARATHON, 176, 359
 MARCELLUS, Claudius, 276
 MARDONIUS, 188 ff, 427
 MARS, 50
 MASSILIA, 64, 273, 275
 MEDEA, 306, 308, 355, 356
 MEDES, the, 98, 152, 188
 MEDON, 57
 MEGABYZUS, 60
 MEGACLES, the father of Cleisthenes, 163
 MEGACLES, the younger, 168
 MEGALOPOLIS, 115
 MEGARA, 129, 354, 355, 360, 362, 426
 MEGARIANS, the, 61, 63, 128, 355, 360, 425, 431
 MEGISTO, 121
 MELAEAE, 317
 MELANAIGIS, Dionysus, 337
 MELANIPPUS of Achaia, 339
 MELANIPPUS of Acragas, 142
 MELANIPPUS of Thebes, 139
 MELANTHUS, 337
 MELISSEUS, 39
 MENELAUS, 103, 180, 311, 319, 320, 322, 324
 MENOECUS, 301, 317
 MERMNADS, the, 143
 MESSENIA, 53, 88 ff, 114, 352, 353
 MESSENIANS, the, 53, 88 ff, 197
 METAPONTUM, 77, 87, 117, 241, 361, 394, 423
 METAURUS, the, 277
 METHAPUS, 96
 METHONE, 252
 METHYDRIA, 392
 METHYMNA, 338
 MIDAS, 144
 MILETUS, 57, 58, 63, 87, 146, 147, 172 ff, 376, 396
 MILTIADES the elder, 164
 MILTIADES the younger, 164, 368
 MINOANS, the, 8, 10
 MINOS, 180, 302
 MINOTAUR, the, 302
 MISOGYNIST, Heracles, the, 368
 MITHRADATES EUPATOR, 282, 284
 MNASEAS of Patara, 40
 MNESARCHIDES, 410
 MNESARCHUS, 411
 MOLOSSI, the, 223
 MUMMIUS, 268
 MYCALE, Mount, 52, 226
 MYCENAE, 67, 179, 309
 MYRON of Priene, 90
 MYRTALE, 250
 MYSIA, 312

- MYSCCELLUS, 71 ff
 MYSON, 191, 197

 NAPLES, 156
 NARYCA, 133
 NAUPACTUS, 55, 56, 206
 NAXOS in Sicily, 69, 70
 NEDA, the, 96
 NELEIDAE, the, 57
 NELEUS, 57
 NEMEA, 405
 NEOCHORUS, 220
 NEON, the battle of, 238, 240
 NEOPTOLEMUS, 207, 262, 322 ff, 324, 376
 NERO, 254, 287 ff
 NESSUS, 349
 NESTOR, 189
 NICAEE in Locris, 293
 NICANDER of Colophon, 40
 NICANDER of Delphi, 35
 NICOPOLIS, 287
 NIGER, 291
 NORICUM, 67

 ODYSSEUS, 290, 318, 357, 363
 OEBALUS, 93
 OEBOTAS, 362
 OEDIPUS, 202, 258, 303 ff, 307, 315, 316,
 324, 356
 OENOCCLUS, 300
 OENOMAUS, the hero, 307
 OENOMAUS of Gadara, 290, 291, 429
 OENOPHYTA, 199
 OETA, 214, 349, 393
 OETAENS, the, 214
 OLYMPIA, 1, 99, 127, 133, 135, 137, 155,
 198, 205, 215, 222, 223, 254, 255,
 284, 358, 362, 364, 369, 374
 OLYMPIAS, 250, 251
 OLYMPIC games, the, 71, 127, 138, 362,
 363, 365
 OLYMPUS, Mount, 6, 11, 344
 OLYNTHUS, 245
 OMPHALE, 112, 348
 OMPHALOS, the, 9, 24, 25, 30, 239, 398
 ONATAS, 129, 130
 ONCHESTAS, 118
 ONOMARCHUS, 238 ff, 242, 273
 ORCHOMENUS, 306, 359, 405
 OREITHYIA, 183
 ORESTES, 111 ff, 115, 238, 307 ff, 321 ff,
 324, 370
 ORESTASIUM, 113
 ORIBASIS, 295
 ORONTES, 225
 OROPUS, 232, 256
 ORPHEUS, 351
 ORRHIPPUS, 362
 ORSILAUS, 234
 ORTHAGORAS, 134, 135

 ORTYGIA, 70
 OSIRIS, 384
 OXYLUS, 56
 OZOLIAN LOCRIANS, the, see Locrians, the
 Ozolian

 PAESTUM, 160
 PALLADIUM, the, 357
 PALLENE, in Attica, 357
 PAMPHYLIANS, the, 52
 PAN, 189
 PANDION, 96, 97, 343
 PANIONIA, the, 226
 PARIANS, the, 68, 368
 PARIS, 319, 320
 PARMENISCUS, 423
 PARNASSUS, 1, 6, 7, 13, 116, 187, 240,
 344
 PAROS, 87, 257, 352, 368, 406
 PARTHENIAE, the, 78
 PARTHENIS, 411
 PARTHENOPE, 356
 PARTHIANS, the, 282
 PATROOS, Apollo, 345
 PAUSANIAS, King, 102 ff, 108, 219, 221
 PAUSANIAS of Macedon, 250
 PAUSANIAS the Regent, 192, 196 ff
 PEGASUS of Eleutheræ, 342, 343
 PEIRENE, 133
 PEISANDER, 189
 PEISTRATIDAE, the, 136, 161, 165 ff
 PEISTRATUS, 135, 136, 139, 162 ff, 208,
 209, 331
 PELAGON, 121, 115
 PELAGUS, 232
 PELARGICON, the, 204
 PELEUS, 318
 PEIAS, 308
 PELION, 51, 68
 PFILA, 65
 PELLENE, 140
 PELOPONNESE, the, 54 ff
 PELOPS, 224, 303, 330, 358
 PENEUS, the, 51
 PERDICCAS, 65
 PERGA, 367
 PERIALLUS, 34, 175, 176
 PERIANDER, 136, 138, 140, 146, 397
 PERICLUS, 200, 203, 210
 PERIPHEMUS, 129
 PERRHÆBIANS, the, 244, 260
 PERSEPHONE, 96
 PERSEUS, the hero, 313
 PERSEUS, King, 268
 PERSIA, 149, 151, 153 ff, 173, 176, 179 ff,
 206, 249, 252
 PESSINUS, 278
 PETRA, 133
 PHAEACIA, 318
 PHAESTUS, 371

- PHALAEUS, 238 ff
 PHALANTHUS, 77, 78
 PHALARIS, 141, 142, 144
 PHALIS, 234
 PHALLENOS, DIONYSUS, 338
 PHANA, 224
 PHANES, 336
 PHAROS, 257
 PHARSALIA, the battle of, 287, 420
 PHARSALIA, a dancer, 241
 PHASELIS, 66
 PHASELITES, the, 30
 PHAYLLUS, 238 ff
 PHEIDIAS, 167
 PHEIDON, 425
 PHEMONOE, 13, 33
 PHENEUS, 327, 348
 PHERECRATES, 217
 PHERECYDES of Syrus, 409
 PHIGALIA, 113 ff, 328 ff, 431
 PHILIP II of Macedon, 65, 240, 242 ff, 266
 PHILIP V of Macedon, 280, 281
 PHILISCUS, 231
 PHILO, 240
 PHILODAMUS, 419
 PHILOMELUS, 233 ff, 252
 PHLYUS, 97
 PHOBOS, 302
 PHOCAEA, 160
 PHOCAEANS, the, 160 ff, 185
 PHOCIANS, the, 117, 120, 171, 199 ff, 212, 233 ff, 249, 263, 264, 266, 311, 315
 PHOCIS, 16, 117 ff, 128, 164, 199, 203, 229, 233 ff, 245, 249, 262, 309, 368, 376
 PHOCUS, 117, 171
 PHOEBE, 7
 PHOENICIANS, the, 280, 316
 PHORMIO, 422
 PHRAORTES, 98
 PHRIXUS, 300
 PHRYGIA, 144
 PHYLLACUS, 187, 262
 PHYLLAS, 68
 PIERIANS, the, 351
 PINDAR, 409, 410
 PISA, 349
 PITTACUS, 397
 PITTHEUS, 305, 306, 314
 PLATAEA, 188 ff, 197, 198, 246, 427
 PLATEA, 82, 83
 PLATO, 227, 416, 417
 PLEISTONAX, 210, 211
 PLEISTOS, the, 3
 PLOTINUS, 421
 PODALIRIUS, 59
 POFANTHES, 65
 POLEMO of Ilion, 39
 POLITES, 363, 364
 POLLIS, 227
 POLYCRATES of Samos, 140, 169
 POLYCRATES of Thebes, 427
 POLYDEUCES, 95, 422
 POLYIDUS, 189
 POLYNICES, 310, 316, 317
 POMPEY, 419
 PORPHYRY, 380 ff
 POSEIDON, 9, 17, 78, 84, 226, 384, 424
 POSIDONIA, 160
 PRESBO, 306
 PRIAM, 323
 PRIENE, 397
 PROCLES, 140, 141
 PROCONNESUS, 361
 PRODICUS, 103
 PRONAEA, Athena, 122, 148, 187, 234, 320
 PROTHOUS, 229
 PROXENUS, 415
 PSAMMETICHUS, 136, 137
 PSOPHIS, 393
 PTOLEMIES, the, 257
 PTOLEMY SOTER, 379
 PYLADES, 119, 120, 309
 PYLAEA, the, 118, 239
 PYLAGORAE, the, 118
 PYRRHUS, 259, 260
 PYTHAEUS, 376
 PYTHAEUS, Apollo, 14, 376, 378
 PYTHAGORAS of Ephesus, 141
 PYTHAGORAS the philosopher, 142, 276, 411, 412
 PYTHAIS, the, 344, 345
 PYTHAIS, the mother of Pythagoras, 411
 PYTHEAS, 142
 PYTHIAN games, the, 126, 127, 135, 168, 194, 222, 223, 287, 321
 PYTHIAS, 417
 PYTHIL, the, 99, 195, 416, 429
 PYTHIUS, 157
 PYTHO, 6, 9, 12, 14, 155, 168, 191, 212, 224, 240, 293, 318, 319, 344, 349, 376, 421
 PYTHON, 12, 21, 22, 127, 315, 383
 PYTHOPOLIS, 64
 RHACIUS, 50
 RHADAMANTHYS, 398
 RHEGIUM, 53, 54, 62
 RHESUS, 202
 RHODES, 66, 87, 98, 312
 RHODIANS, the, 67, 419
 RHYPE, 72
 ROMANS, the, 22, 267 ff
 ROME, 269, 274 ff, 352
 ROMULUS, 270
 SAGES, the Seven, 395 ff
 SAGRA, the battle of, 394, 422

- SALAMIS, 128, 184 ff, 189, 192, 359, 430
 SALAMIS in Cyprus, 68, 403
 SAME, 68
 SAMNITES, the, 275
 SAMOS, 68, 85, 169, 411, 412
 SAMOTHRACE, 69
 SAON, 376
 SARDANAPALLUS, 155
 SARDIS, 156, 160, 161, 349, 408
 SATRAE, the, 16, 19
 SATYRION, 78
 SCEDASUS, 230
 SCFPHRUS, 328
 SCIPIO, Lucius, 283
 SCIPIO Nasica, Publius, 278
 SCORDISCI, the, 263, 283
 SCYLLIAS, 193, 410
 SCYROS, 195, 196
 SELEUCIDS, the, 379
 SELEUCUS II, 378
 SELINUS, 87
 SELLI, the, 7
 SEPEIA, the battle of, 172 ff, 430
 SERAPIS, 379
 SEVERUS, SEPTIMIUS, 291, 292
 SIBYL, the, 17, 22, 39, 249, 258, 269, 275 ff
 SICILY, 66, 69 ff, 87, 170, 212, 241, 254, 400
 SICYON, 78, 122, 125, 134, 135, 139, 140, 267, 336, 341, 410
 SIDON, 411
 SILENUS, 217, 218
 SINOPE, 87, 379, 417, 418
 SIPHNOS, 168, 169
 SIRIS, 75
 SMINTHUS, 328
 SMYRNA, 290, 378
 SOCRATES, 412 ff
 SOLON, 108, 122, 123, 128, 129, 130, 387, 397
 SOPATRUS, 373
 SOPHOCLES, 414
 SOTEIRA, Demeter, 378
 SOTERIA, the, 266
 SPHAGITIDES, the, 205
 SPARTA, 54, 77, 99 ff, 130, 140, 153, 154, 165, 170, 181 ff, 195, 199, 200, 215 ff, 223, 229 ff, 235, 236, 260, 267, 319, 337, 345, 357, 371, 389, 422, 425
 SPARTANS, the, 9, 83 ff, 99 ff, 131, 166, 169, 174 ff, 189, 190, 197 ff, 203 ff, 210 ff, 215 ff, 225, 227, 229 ff, 310, 357, 431
 SPHINX, the, 316
 STESICHORUS, 113
 STOA POIKILE, the, 177
 STOICS, the, 418
 STRATOCLES, 256
 STRATONICIS, Aphrodite, 378
 STROPHIUS, 119, 309
 SULLA, 284 ff
 SUSAN Gates, the, 252
 SYBARIS, 73 ff, 87, 170, 201
 SYRACUSE, 69, 71, 72, 135, 180, 213, 223, 258, 339
 SYRIA, 411
 TACHOS, 225
 TAENARUM, 9, 407
 TANAGRA, 167, 198
 TAPHIUS, 72
 TARENTUM, 77 ff, 96, 97
 TARQUINIUS PRISCUS, 269
 TARQUINIUS Superbus, 270
 TARRHA, 371
 TAURIS, 310
 TAURUS, the, 285
 TECEA, 110 ff, 198, 212, 307, 310, 328, 426
 TEGYRA, 209, 210, 376
 TEIRFSIAS, 50
 TELEMACHUS, 289
 TELEPHUS, 307, 312, 320, 321, 422, 423
 TELESICLES, 68, 406, 407
 TELESILLA, 173
 TELMISSUS, 150, 399
 TEMENUS, 55, 56, 65
 TEMESA, 363, 364
 TEMO, 64
 TENEA, 426
 TENOS, 378, 419
 TEOS, 62, 378
 TETRAPOLIS, the Marathonian, 345
 TEUCER, 68
 TEUTHRANIA, 321
 THALES, 396, 397, 411
 THASOS, 68, 365, 366, 406
 THEAGENES of Thasos, 365, 366, 369
 THEBANS, the, 94, 100, 181, 223, 242, 253, 266, 284, 314 ff, 339, 355, 357, 358, 431
 THEBE, 167, 340
 THEBES, 149, 167, 168, 186, 202, 224, 229 ff, 245 ff, 253, 256, 301, 310, 315 ff, 324, 336, 341, 355, 357, 358, 397
 THEBES, Egyptian, 318
 THEMIS, 7, 8, 11, 12
 THEMISTOCLEIA, 412
 THEMISTOCLES, 178, 184, 185, 190, 192, 193
 THEMISTOCLES, a philosopher, 421
 THEOCLUS, 96
 THEODORUS, 148
 THEONICE, 34
 THEOPROPY, the, 373
 THEOXENIA, the, 284, 409
 THERA, 79 ff, 87, 280
 THERASIA, 280
 THERMI, 258

- THERMOPYLAE**, 118, 181, 183, 193, 206,
 244, 246, 258, 261
THESSANDER, son of Polynices, 310
THESSANDRUS of Cleonae, 100
THESEUS, 196, 286, 302, 305, 314, 315,
 328, 345
THESPIAE, 167, 181, 230
THESSALIANS, the, 59, 118, 140, 171, 187,
 223, 230, 231, 244
THESSALY, 11, 52, 59, 64, 119, 120, 123,
 125, 128, 140, 171, 179, 224, 243,
 344, 352
THOREX, 52
THRACE, 16, 51, 202, 283, 425
THRACIDAE, the, 235, 237
THRASYBULUS of Miletus, 146
THRASYBIALUS of Syracuse, 135
THRIAE, the, 12
THRIASIAN plain, the, 190
THURII, 200 ff
THYESTES, 306
THYIADES, the, 336, 344
THYIE, 183
TIMARCHUS, 140, 141
TIMASITHFUS, 272
TIMESIAS, 62
TIMO, 368
TIMON, 184
TIMOLEON, 254
TIMOSTHENES, 365
TIMOTHEUS, 379
TIRIBAZUS, 225
TIRYNS, 179, 348, 349, 424, 425
TISAMENUS, son of Orestes, 113
TISAMENUS, the Iamid, 198, 199
TISAMENUS, 199
TISIS, 90
TITUS, son of Tarquinius Superbus, 270
TITUS, the Emperor, 289
TITYUS, 318
TLEPOLEMUS, 312
TOLOSA, 263
TRACHIS, 213
TRAJAN, 289
TRETES, the, 332
TRICCA, 352
TRICLARIA, Artemis, 339
TRIHODI, 114
TRIPODISCI, 354
TRIPTOLEMUS, 398
TROEZEN, 305, 306, 421
TROJANS, the, 280, 319
TROPHONIUS, 94, 95, 147, 230, 306, 375,
 376, 388, 409, 423, 424
TROY, 202, 319 ff, 330 ff, 339, 357, 359,
 423
TYDEUS, 316, 317
TYNDAREUS, 103
TYRE, 253
TYRTAEUS, 88, 94

VEII, 271 ff
VELIA, 160

XANTHUS, 337
XENOCLEIA, 349
XENOPHON, 222, 415, 416
XERXES, 157, 179, 182, 186 ff, 197, 261
XUTHUS, 306, 375

ZALEUCUS, 130
ZENO of Citium, 418
ZEUS, 3, 6, 8, 9 ff, 51, 65, 68, 76, 81, 93,
 101, 103, 105, 138, 155, 159, 184,
 188, 189, 190, 191, 198, 210, 214,
 222, 251, 252, 254, 286, 300, 303,
 312, 313, 315, 325, 327, 330, 335,
 343, 344, 348, 358, 363, 377, 383,
 384, 403, 429

