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THE RELIGIOUS DIMENSION TO THE
PELOPONNESIAN WAR, OR,
WHAT THUCYDIDES DOES NOT TELL US *

SIMON HORNBLOWER

The most surprising feature of Thucydides' account is that one thing is missing: the gods of the time. (Paul Veyne, *Writing History* [Manchester 1984] p. 232)

IN a recent paper, E. Badian speaks of Thucydides and his "contempt for established Greek religion."¹ This is strong language, but justified. I am not, however, concerned in this article with the tricky question of Thucydides' own religious beliefs, if he had any. My theme is a different one, namely: the *consequences* for our understanding or misunderstanding of the second half of the fifth century, of Thucydides' neglect of the religious factor in his narrative. The speeches will concern me less; they admittedly go some way to redress the general imbalance. For instance, Badian has recently reminded us² that it is not from the main narrative of the Theban attack on Plataia,

*This article is a revised, lengthened and annotated version of a Loeb Classical Lecture that I gave at Harvard University on 14 March 1990. I should like to take this opportunity of thanking Professor Richard Tarrant and the other members of the Departments of History and of the Classics for their invitation to give the lecture; for their splendid welcome and hospitality; and generally for making my first visit to the New World so memorably pleasant.

I am very grateful to Robert Parker and Ernst Badian for kindly reading, commenting on and improving the paper in its revised form.

In this article, references in the form (e.g.) "iii 56.2" are to Thucydides, unless otherwise stated.

¹ E. Badian, "Plataia Between Athens and Sparta" in H. Beister and J. Buckler (eds.), *Boiotika* (Munich 1989) pp. 95 ff. at p. 98.

² Badian (above n.1) 98, citing iii 56.2 and iii 65.1.

but from subsequent references in speeches, that we learn that the attack achieved military surprise by taking advantage of a religious festival. But on the particular issues I shall be discussing, no speeches have much of a bearing.

The religious silences of Thucydides are in their way quite as scandalous as the political silences of Xenophon, for which he is so often denounced.³ I shall try to show that Thucydides seriously understated the religious aspect of the war he set himself to describe. But in this area as in so many others we can often do no more than correct Thucydides out of Thucydides. That is, we choose to play up what *he* chose to play down. Our justification for doing this, a perilously arrogant justification, consists in the little that we think we know about Greek religion. Occasionally we can point to an item of non-Thucydidean evidence as a control on Thucydides. But that is a rare luxury.

I begin by giving a few individual examples of religious silence or distortion in Thucydides, some familiar some perhaps less so. I shall then try to trace a connected story, plotting the phases of the story by reference to some recurrent religious themes.

* * * *

The first minor silence can be introduced in the form of a question: what about the Olympic Games of 432? They are never mentioned by Thucydides, but they certainly happened: we know⁴ the names of three of the victors, one of them a Spartan who was victorious in the four-horse chariot event. The contrast with Thucydides' handling of the 428 Olympic festival, four years later, is very marked: that event was turned by the Spartans into a strongly anti-Athenian occasion, and Thucydides gives the Mytilenaeans a speech which suitably exploits their own status as suppliants of Zeus Olympios and Zeus Hikesios, the god of suppliants.⁵ We should like to know what was the atmosphere at the 432 Olympics: presumably Athenians were present, as competitors or pilgrims. This raises a neglected general question, to which I shall

³ See, e.g., G. L. Cawkwell, "The Foundation of the Second Athenian Confederacy," *CQ* xxiii (1973) 47 ff. at pp. 57 f.

⁴ L. Moretti, *Olympionikai: I Vincitori Negli Antichi Agoni Olimpici* (Rome 1957) pp. 105 f.

⁵ iii 9–14; Zeus: iii 14.1.

return, about access to the panhellenic festivals in the Peloponnesian War. On the question of the Olympics he is not so much silent as capricious: were it not for the meal he makes of the 428 festival our question about 432 would not be a legitimate one. Much the same applies in such areas as finance: it is only because he *occasionally* tells us detail about tribute, eisphora levels and so forth (see, e.g., iii 19; iv 57.4; vii 28.4), that we can reasonably complain that we do not get more.

My second example is from book ii. Here Thucydides is not so much capricious as partial. The Funeral Oration is introduced, at ch. 34, with an unusually rich amount of detail, including what is for Thucydides a rare aesthetic comment, namely, that it took place in the most beautiful suburb of the city. But he never mentions the *epitaphios agon* or funeral contest, which we now know, from the evidence of three inscribed bronze vessels, to have been a feature of the funeral by the mid-fifth century. From Pausanias and Aristophanes' *Frogs* we know that this was a brilliant and lively affair including as it did a torch-race.⁶ Thucydides does not merely pass it over in silence; his choice of language in the final chapter of the Oration positively shouts out his refusal to take any notice of it. I am referring to the metaphorical use of the words *στέφανον*, *ἄθλα*, *ἀγώνων* "crown," "prizes," "games."⁷

Examples could be multiplied.⁸ In book iii, for instance, brilliant

⁶ Aristophanes *Frogs* line 129; Paus. i 30.2; E. Vanderpool, *Αρχ. Δελτ.* 24A (1969) pp. 1 ff.; R. Stupperich, *Staatsbegräbnis und Privatgrabmal im klassischen Athen* (Diss. Münster 1977) II p. 41 n.5; C. Clairmont, *Patrios Nomos* (Oxford 1983) ch. 3; U. Knigge, *Kerameikos von Athens* (Athens 1988) p. 158.

On Thucydides' silence about the games see N. Loraux, *The Invention of Athens* tr. Sheridan (Cambridge, Mass. 1986) pp. 37–39.

⁷ ii 46.

⁸ My examples are mostly taken from the first three books of Thucydides, on which see my commentary (Oxford 1991); but note, e.g., the mention of the Attic deme Kolonos at viii 67.2, describing a crucial meeting of the Athenian assembly in the oligarchic year of revolution, 411. (It was at Kolonos that the oligarchy of the "Four Hundred" was set up.) In Thucydides the choice of Kolonos is not explained. But the religious significance of Kolonos was pointed out by P. Siewert, "Poseidon Hippios am Kolonos und die Athenische Hippeis," in G. Bowersock and others (ed.), *Arktouros: Hellenic Studies Presented to Bernard M. W. Knox on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (Berlin and New York 1979) pp. 280 ff.: there was a cult of Poseidon the "Horsey" at Kolonos, and this cult made it specially suitable for an anti-democratic gathering (for the cavalry as politically suspect see, e.g., Xen. Hell. iii 1.4). Siewert's view is followed by M. Ostwald, *From Popular Sovereignty to the Sovereignty of Law: Law, Society, and*

studies by Pierre Vidal-Naquet and Lowell Edmunds have illustrated the religious significance of the so-called ‘monosandalism’ of the Plataians who broke out of the siege of Plataia.⁹ That is, their reason for leaving one foot unshod was not, as Thucydides thought, in order to get a better footing in the mud, although this quaint explanation satisfied Gomme. It has to be said, without disparaging other aspects of Gomme’s achievement, that the problems of penetrating Thucydides’ indifference to religion are made worse by Gomme’s own blind spot about religion. (Too often, Gomme simply leaves religious phrases or sentences with no, or very little, commentary.¹⁰) On the mono-

Politics in Fifth-Century Athens (Berkeley 1986) p. 373 n.140. Cp. also W. R. Connor, “City Dionysia and Athenian Democracy,” in *Aspects of Athenian Democracy: Classica et Mediaevalia Dissertationes* xi (1990) pp. 7 ff. (reprinted from *Cl. et Med.* xl (1990) pp. 7 ff. at p. 18 n.36). Thucydides’ selectivity in this instance is the more intriguing because on this occasion the religious aspect actually makes the political event more intelligible. Even on his own political terms, Thucydides could have afforded to say a little more about Kolonos.

Again, v 11.1 is a remarkably understated reference to what seems to have been oikist cult at Amphipolis paid to the Athenian Hagnon *in his lifetime*: see my forthcoming commentary.

⁹ iii 22, on which see P. Vidal-Naquet, “Epaminondas the Pythagorean, or The Tactical Problem of Right and Left,” in *The Black Hunter* (Baltimore 1986) pp. 61 ff. at p. 64 and esp. pp. 69 f. (Appendix 1980) citing Pindar *Pyth.* iv, where the hero Jason has only one sandal; L. Edmunds, “Thucydides on Monosandalism” in *Studies Presented to Sterling Dow: GRBS Monograph* x (1984) at pp. 71 ff.

¹⁰ Examples, at random, are the “rites of beginning the sacrifice” which the Corinthians complain they are not granted by Corcyra, i 25.4, a passage much better elucidated in W. Burkert, *Homo Necans*, tr. P. Bing (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1983) p. 37 and n.14, than by Gomme, who sees nothing here but politics.

Again, Th.’s mention of the altars of the *σέμναι θεαί* or Eumenides at i 126.11 surely deserved more than a merely topographical ten words.

Or there is the very interesting paragraph about the Mytilenean festival of Apollo Maloeis, iii 3.3, which gets no comment from Gomme at all. But see, for Apollo Maloeis, *FGrHist* 4 Hellanikos F33 with Jacoby’s comm.; Callimachus F 485 Pf.; and other refs. given in my commentary. On the stratagem see H. Popp, *Die Einwirkung von Vorzeichen, Opfern und Festen auf die Kriegführung der Griechen im 5 und 4 Jhd. v. Chr.* (Diss. Erlangen) p. 122; A. J. Holladay and M. Goodman, “Religious Scruples in Ancient Warfare,” *CQ* xxxvi (1986) pp. 15 ff. at p. 153.

Festivals in Th. are not so common that we can afford to disregard them: the attempted exploitation of the festival at i 126.4–6 (the Kylon affair) is oddly parallel to the Apollo Maloeis incident in book iii; the mention of festivals at ii 38.1 is virtually the only reference to religion in the whole Funeral Oration; and the paragraph about the festival of Herakles at Syracuse (vii 73.2) is of interest—but not for religious reasons but because it contains the only reference to drunkenness in all Thucydides.

sandalism, Vidal-Naquet comments¹¹ that Thucydides “had the honesty to give us the detail which allows us to contradict him.” But just *why* he gave the detail, and the unsatisfactory explanation for the detail, remain totally baffling questions. Both Vidal-Naquet and Edmunds compare what is actually a slightly different sort of passage, v. 70, where Thucydides goes out of his way to deny a religious motive for a military practice: the Spartans, says Colonel Thucydides,¹² march to the sound of flutes not for religious reasons, τοῦ θεοῦ χάριν, but simply in order to keep in step. Here, the indictment against Gomme has to be extended to Andrewes: not a relevant word in the 1970 volume of the historical commentary; nor does the passage feature in the *index locorum* to Pritchett’s religion volume in *The Greek State at War*.¹³ In the book v passage Thucydides’ denial is so curiously explicit and uncalled-for that we may reasonably suspect that he is contradicting somebody; but if so his target is not Herodotus:¹⁴ there is nothing relevant in Herodotus. The passage is incidentally of great interest as showing that Thucydides had the vocabulary for distinguishing the religious from the non-religious sphere in the way that the present article seeks to do: more than any other passage in Thucydides, v 70 provides a reply to possible objections on the lines “how would Thucydides have expressed a distinction of the kind you seek to draw, between religious and other sorts of motive?”

* * * *

Let us begin with the beginning, the foundation of what we call the Delian League. The Ionians and others approached Athens in virtue of kinship, κατὰ τὸ ξυγγενές, and asked them not to allow Pausanias the Regent to mistreat them (i 95). The reference to kinship, or relationship, is a reference to Athens’ role, an essentially religious role, as mother city of Ionia. It would be wrong to deny that Thucydides stresses this theme. One purpose of the *Archaeology* is to introduce us to a number of key themes and concepts, and that kinship is one such concept: at any rate the precise phrase κατὰ τὸ ξυγγενές strikes us as

¹¹ Vidal-Naquet (above n.9) p. 70.

¹² S. Hornblower, *Thucydides* (London 1987) 109 and n.147.

¹³ W. K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War* iii (Berkeley 1979).

¹⁴ See my paper “Thucydides’ Use of Herodotus” in J. Sanders (ed.), ΦΙΛΟΛΑΚΩΝ, *Lakonian Studies Presented to Hector Catling* (Athens 1991).

early as the sixth chapter of book i. So too the idea of Athenian autochthony, that is, the idea that the Athenians sprang from the soil and were not immigrants, is introduced in the *Archaeology* (i 2.5) and then picked up, in very similar language, early in the Funeral Speech (ii 36.1). Nevertheless, it will be my contention that Thucydides did not bring out remotely adequately the significance of such religious themes.

Modern scholarship on the Dorian versus Ionian issue nicely reflects the healthy recent move away from seeing everything in political (that is to say, ultimately in Thucydidean) terms. Thirty-five years ago, Édouard Will published a 100-page essay on Dorians and Ionians.¹⁵ Itself a reaction against some nineteenth-century (and later) excesses, Will's own work had the unfortunate effect of persuading a generation of scholars that it was legitimate to reduce the difference between Ionian and Dorian to an absolute conventional minimum. Will's thesis was not challenged head on for a quarter of a century, until J. Alty's elegant paper "Dorians and Ionians."¹⁶ Alty showed, above all on the evidence of two crucial passages of Thucydides himself,¹⁷ that the difference between Ionian and Dorian was taken more seriously than Will allowed, though we must concede to Will that for rhetorical purposes the same speaker, actually Hermokrates, might be made both to deny, and later on to assert, the relevance of the racial factor, depending on the situation at the time (in 424 Hermokrates takes a pan-Sicilian line, in 415 he urges the repelling of the Ionian invader¹⁸). Alty was, however, absolutely right to restate the religious significance of the difference. In fact, the point had already been quietly and unpolemically insisted on by L. H. Jeffery. She mentioned Will's book, but noted in the same breath the fifth-century inscription from Paros that runs "it is not lawful for a Doric stranger or a slave to be a spectator of the rites of Kore of the City" (DGE 773).¹⁹ Paros, as we know from an important fourth-century inscription found by the Americans in the Athenian agora in 1936, was firmly claimed as an Ionian *apoikia* of Athens: she was required to send religious offerings to the

¹⁵ E. Will, *Doriens et Ioniens* (Strasbourg 1956).

¹⁶ J. Alty, "Dorians and Ionians," *JHS* cii (1982) pp. 1 ff.

¹⁷ iii 86.2 (Ῥηγῖνοι δὲ κατὰ τὸ ξυγγενὲς Λεοντίων); viii 25.3 (ὡς ἐπ' Ἴωνά τε καὶ οὐ δεξιόμενους).

¹⁸ iv 61.2–3; vi 77.1.

¹⁹ L. H. Jeffery, *Archaic Greece* (London 1976) pp. 48 f. n.4.

Dionysia and Panathenaia in 372 B.C.²⁰—and in the fifth century, too, on the evidence of general texts like ML 46 lines 41 ff. and ML 69 lines 57 f.

To return to 479: Herodotus has in fact already put us on notice that Athens intended to make a stand as metropolis of Ionia: he says (ix 106.3) that Athens resented Sparta's proposals to evacuate Ionia because it amounted to a decision about her own, i.e., Athens' colonies, οὐκ ἔδοκέε . . . Πελοποννησίους περὶ τῶν σφετέρων ἀποικιέων βουλεύειν. We have, however, to be careful here: Herodotus was no more of a *contemporary* authority for the year 479 than was Thucydides. Decades of imperial propaganda, some of it religious in character, stood between Herodotus and the event he here reports.

In those imperial decades that followed there are plenty of relevant episodes. Some of Thucydides' silences in the early years are explicable by reference to the scale of his narrative. Thus his account (i 98.2) of the taking of Skyros in the 470s does not mention the Bones of Theseus, which as we know from other evidence the Athenian leader Kimon took back to Athens. There he ceremonially reburied them in a purpose-built shrine somewhere east of the agora.²¹ But the narrative pace hereabouts in Thucydides' *pentekontaetia* is perhaps too rapid for this omission to signify.

Other explanations are available for other omissions. Plutarch, for instance, who knew something about Delphi, got hold of a story that Sparta in the 470s tried to expel the medising states from the Delphic amphiktion, the "international" organization (twelve "tribes," twenty-four votes) that controlled the affairs of the sanctuary.²² But some scholars doubt the truth of the story.²³ In any case it has (it may be urged) no place in a skeleton narrative about the growth of Athenian power (even though it was Themistokles who is said to have foiled the Spartans—just as he did on another occasion that Thucydides *did*

²⁰ S. Accame, *La lega ateniese del sec. iv a.c.* (Rome 1941) p. 230, lines 2 ff.

²¹ Plutarch *Kimon* viii (with A. Blamire's commentary, London 1990) and *Theseus* xxxvi; J. M. Camp, *The Athenian Agora* (London 1986) p. 66.

²² Plutarch *Themistokles* xx. On the Delphic amphiktion the basic account remains G. Busolt and H. Swoboda, *Griechische Staatskunde*³ (Munich 1926) pp. 1292 ff.

²³ E. M. Walker, *CAH* v p. 36; but see H. Bengtson, "Themistokles und die delphische Amphiktyonie," *Eranos* xlix (1951) pp. 85 ff. and R. Flacelière, "Sur quelques points obscurs dans la vie de Thémistocles," *REA* lv (1953) p. 1 ff.

recount, and at discursive Herodotean length. I refer to the building of Athens' walls after the Persian wars: i 90–93).

Such an explanation, in terms of narrative scale, is not, however, available for another story in Thucydides book i, that of the boastful epigram put up at Delphi by the Spartan Regent Pausanias: i 132.2–3. Ps.-Demosthenes (actually Apollodoros) lix 98 says that it was the Delphic Amphiktiony that took disciplinary action against Pausanias and ordered the inscription erased. In Thucydides it is merely “the Spartans,” οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι, who do the erasing. *This* story is in an ample and “Herodotean” section of Thucydides, in which a mention of the amphiktiony would *not* have been out of place or scale. It does begin to seem that Thucydides' refusal to mention the amphiktiony was deliberate. Fornara's attempt²⁴ to dismiss Demosthenes' version of the erasure is unsatisfactory because it does not address the wider question of Thucydides' attitude to amphiktionic issues.

These anecdotes, then, raise the question of Thucydides' utter failure to mention the amphiktiony at all, especially in the period of the two Peloponnesian Wars, when (as I shall argue) it may be relevant even to a minimalist and political reconstruction of a Thucydidean type. The nearest he comes to the word is the epic and untechnical περικτιόνων, used in a sacred context (iii 104.3) about the island “neighbors” of Delos. Contrast, with Thucydides' silence, some statistics about Herodotus: Herodotus mentions the Amphiktionies five times, moreover he mentions the Amphiktionic delegates called the Pylagoroi twice and the Pylaia once. In these passages the states and officials are found in a variety of roles. One of the passages has the amphiktiony performing a clearly political action, the punishment of Epialtes the medising traitor.²⁵

We must, admittedly, be careful to avoid anachronism. In modern histories of Greece the Delphic amphiktiony does not hit the headlines until the modern author gets to the fourth century; in particular, amphiktionic evidence plays a necessary part in any reconstruction of the Third Sacred War of the 350s and 340s.²⁶ One revisionist historian,

²⁴ C. Fornara, “Two Notes on Thucydides,” *Philologus* xci (1967) 291 ff. But see J. C. Trevett, “History in Demosthenes 59,” *CQ* xl (1990) pp. 407 ff. Already R. J. Bonner and G. Smith, “The Administration of Justice in the Delphic Amphictyony,” *CP* xxxviii (1943) 1 ff., at 2 with n.10, had accepted that Th.'s story might be incomplete.

²⁵ Amphiktionies: Hdt. ii 180.1; v 62.2; vii 200.2; 213.2; 228.4. Pylagoroi: vii 213.2; 214.2. Pylaia: vii 213.2. Epialtes: vii 213.2.

²⁶ See Diod. xvi 23 ff.: the Third Sacred War began after the Amphiktiony imposed a

Noel Robertson, has even argued that the so-called First Sacred War of the sixth century was a fiction, a back-projection of Philip's war. He has been refuted in his extreme position by G. Lehmann who showed that awareness of the First Sacred War is shown at dates earlier than Philip.²⁷

But my concern is the period of the Second Sacred War, that is, the mid-fifth century: this war is fleetingly mentioned by Thucydides, who speaks (i 112.5) merely and vaguely of the Spartans "handing over the *hieron*" to the Delphians (presumably after an unattested loss of Delphian control) and Athens "handing it over [i.e., back?]" to the Phocians — which must itself have been followed by an unattested Delphian recovery.²⁸ No word anywhere about the amphiktion, whose job it surely was to stop this kind of thing, and no modern scholar reproaches Thucydides for this (the narrative is admittedly running at breakneck speed at this point). Should we be equally careful to avoid anachronism in this period too? That is, was Thucydides right to keep the amphiktion out of sight in his narrative of the two Peloponnesian Wars? (The speeches are less of a difficulty. True, the idea of drawing on Delphic treasures is raised in speeches in book i—see 121.3; 143.1—and in real life the amphiktion would certainly have had something to say about this. But Thucydides' speeches generally avoid the technical language needed to express this sort of thing.) Anachronism is a danger, it is true. But there is another danger equally pernicious, what we might call the evidence trap. Ancient historians are occupationally prone to confuse the two statements "x is the first example of phenomenon p" with the quite different proposition "x is the first *attested instance* of phenomenon p." Thus changes in Athenian politics in the 420s have been detected, and there is good ancient support for this—but part of the trouble is that we do not have old comedy or Thucydides to tell us about politicians earlier than Kleon. Again, Finley has insisted, with some justice, that talk of harsher Athenian imperialism in the Kleon period implies a false contrast with an earlier period for which we have little imperial evidence

large fine on the Phokians; it continued with attempts (e.g., 24.2; 5) to get the Amphiktionic decrees rescinded. It was the Amphiktion that eventually declared war, 28.4.

²⁷ N. Robertson, "The Myth of the First Sacred War," *CQ* xxviii (1978) 38 ff.; G. A. Lehmann, "Der 'Erste Heilige Krieg' — Eine Fiktion?," *Historia* xxix (1980) 242 ff., citing Isok. xiv 31.

²⁸ J. Buckler, *Philip II and the Sacred War* (Leiden 1989) p. 11.

of any kind, so we cannot say whether policy then was harsh or soft.²⁹

I am suggesting a historical and literary conclusion. The historical is that our impression that the fifth-century amphiktionion, which does not happen to be well attested epigraphically, was a negligible entity, is due to Thucydides' systematic policy of silence. This policy was perpetuated by the Oxyrhynchus Historian and Xenophon, in each of whose histories there are cues, albeit slight ones, for a mention of the Delphic amphiktionion.³⁰ The epigraphic silence before 346 is anyway not complete: we have after all an important Amphiktionion Law of 380 B.C. (Syll³ 145), a warning against any temptation to think the amphiktionion was dormant in the pre-Philip period. The *literary* conclusion is that Thucydides' silence about the amphiktionion is an aspect of his indifference to religion. It might be objected that in his account of the Second Sacred War Thucydides does after all zero in on the sanctuary of Delphi, he merely ignores the organizational aspects. But this is to admit that he treats religion as a thing apart, not paying attention to the ways in which religion and politics interact.

With this in mind let us turn again to the amphiktionion, remembering that, though we may have no amphiktionion lists before 343 we do have those eight Herodotus passages. We can go further, thanks to an interesting inscription.³¹ It is annoyingly fragmentary and cannot in honesty be dated earlier than the middle of the fifth century. It seems (though everything about it is very uncertain) to be an Athenian alliance with the Delphic amphiktionion: relevant surely to that Second Sacred War. Finally it is tempting, even in the shadow of Fontenrose's skepticism, to adduce another Delphic item, the mid-fifth century oracle that allegedly hailed Athens as an "eagle in the clouds for all time."³² Again, Plutarch (*Kimon* viii) reports an amphiktionion aspect to Kimon's activity on Skyros.

²⁹ W. R. Connor, *The New Politicians of Fifth-Century Athens* (Washington 1971); M. I. Finley, "The Fifth-Century Athenian Empire: A Balance-Sheet," in P. Garnsey and C. Whittaker (eds.), *Imperialism in the Ancient World* (Cambridge 1978) 103 ff.

³⁰ The occasions on which a mention of the amphiktionion might have been conceivable are first, the 390s, when there was trouble about sacred land, see Hell. Ox. xviii and Xen. iii 5.5; and second, the plan of Jason of Pherai in the late 370s to preside at the Pythian festival games, and perhaps to touch the sacred money as well, Xen. Hell. vi 4.30.

³¹ IG i³ 9; not in ML. See also G. Roux, *L'amphictionie, Delphes et le temple d'Apollon au iv^e siècle* (Lyon 1979) 239 ff.

³² H. W. Parke and D. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* ii "The Oracular Responses," (Oxford 1956) no. 121; J. Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle* (Berkeley 1978) p. 327.

Here we ought to broaden the discussion, and ask whether it is plausible to suppose that the great sanctuaries are likely to have been the objects of political attention and even manipulation in the fifth century as well as the fourth (and sixth, see Hdt. v 62 for the Alkmaionids); and if so, why. There is no reason why they should *not* have been. One can point to some tangible moral advantages implicit in the things sanctuary authorities did: imposing sacred fines (n. 26 and Syll³ 145), putting a price on the head of a man like Epialtes, excluding enemies from the games altogether as the Eleans did to Sparta at Olympia after 420 (v 49.1), having a say in prestigious decisions involving rich sanctuary treasures and in any temple rebuilding projects which might be on hand (again, see Hdt. v 62 for the Alkmaionids and the amphiktion); and so on. But perhaps Catherine Morgan is right, in her recent book on the early history of Olympia and Delphi,³³ to put it more vaguely: “the lack of constraints imposed by *single-state* control made *inter-state* sanctuaries ideal contexts for political activity of many kinds.”

This general truth explains the importance, in another theatre of the First Peloponnesian War (461–446), of control of the *Nemean Games*; this has been noticed and argued for independently by D. M. Lewis and K. Adshead.³⁴ Again, Thucydides is absolutely no help here: the story has to be pieced together from scraps like Pindaric scholia. It is no good saying that the political importance of the sanctuaries must have been eclipsed in the time of the classical superpowers: that is, anachronism, as if one were to apply, to the fifth century B.C., Stalin’s famous question, “how many divisions has the Pope?” Certainly, control of the panhellenic sanctuaries and their festivals was to matter again in the hellenistic period: in 315 B.C. Cassander presided at the Nemean Games (Diod. xix 64), and in 290 B.C. Demetrius Poliorketes actually held the Pythian Games at Athens at a time when Delphi was in the hostile hands of the Aitolians (Plutarch *Demetrius* xl). Is it credible that such things should matter in the archaic age³⁵ and again in the

³³ C. Morgan, *Athletes and Oracles: The Transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the Eighth Century BC* (Cambridge 1990) p. 137.

³⁴ D. M. Lewis, “The Origins of the First Peloponnesian War,” in G. S. Shrimpton and D. J. McCargar (eds.), *Classical Contributions: Studies in Honour of M. F. McGregor* (Locust Valley, NY 1981) pp. 71 ff. at 74 f.; K. Adshead, *Politics of the Archaic Peloponnese: The Transition from Archaic to Classical Politics* (Aldershot 1986) pp. 72 ff.

³⁵ See above on Hdt. v 62 (the Alkmaionids); and cp., e.g., M. F. McGregor, “Cleisthenes of Sicyon and the Panhellenic Festivals,” *TAPA* lxxii (1941) pp. 266 ff.

hellenistic, but that the period covered by Thucydides should happen to be the only period when such control did *not* matter? Or is it not more plausible that, as I would prefer to suggest, the anomaly is merely apparent, and due to the nature and prejudices of our main source? That is, the reason why we hear so little in the Thucydidean period about struggles for control of the great sanctuaries *lies in Thucydides' narrow view about the kind of thing that mattered.*

Something similar is surely true of historical coverage of the main relevant organizational body, the Delphic amphiktion. The amphiktion matters in Herodotus; it is absent from Thucydides and his continuators Xenophon and the Oxyrhynchus Historian; it matters again in Diodorus book xvi, which covers Philip II and the Third Sacred War.³⁶ The amphiktion is absent from the extant narrative of Polybius (though it is mentioned at xxxix.1, a famous quotation from the elder Cato³⁷). But we cannot be sure if this absence is significant: certainly, modern accounts of the third century B.C. (the period of Aitolian control of Delphi) make extensive use of the amphiktionic lists for the reconstruction of political developments.³⁸ Later still, Strabo was certainly interested in the topic; and Pausanias reports how the emperor Augustus thought it worthwhile reorganizing the amphiktion.³⁹ And we have noticed Plutarch's interest already — though with his Delphic connections such an interest was to an extent natural and personal. My suggestion is that the prejudices of Thucydides are responsible for the anomalous fifth- and early fourth-century period during which Greek historiography neglected the amphiktion.

I return to Apollo Pythios and his sanctuary at Delphi in the fifth century B.C. They were, we have seen, being paid attention by Athens at the time of the First Peloponnesian War. But what of Sparta? The

³⁶ This war surely helped to kindle the historical interests that led Kallisthenes and his kinsman Aristotle to compile a list of Pythian, i.e., Delphic victors: Tod 187. Kallisthenes did after all write a monograph on the Sacred War, though we do not know if this work, or his Hellenika, talked about the amphiktion.

³⁷ I am indebted to Ernst Badian for reminding me of this passage, which I had overlooked.

³⁸ R. Flacelière, *Les Aitoliens à Delphes* (Paris 1937); G. Nachtergaele, *Les Galates en Grèce et les Sôtéria de Delphes. Recherches d'histoire et d'épigraphie hellénistiques*: Acad. royale de Belgique. Mémoires de la Classe des Lettres² lxiii.1 (Brussels 1977).

³⁹ Strabo 420; Paus. x 8.2–5 with G. Bowersock, *Augustus and the Greek World* (Oxford 1965) pp. 97 f. and G. Daux, "Les Empereurs romains et l'amphictionie Pyléodélphique," *CRAI* 1975 pp. 348 ff.

evidence here is actually even better: it comes *in a way* from Thucydides himself. The Tanagra campaign of 458 B.C. began with an operation by Sparta on behalf of her metropolis, the tiny central Greek state of Doris. That much Thucydides *does* tell us (i 107.2). If Athens could take her religious role as metropolis seriously, so it seems could Dorian Sparta take hers as an *apoikia*. But there is more to the episode than that, as we see if we consider Sparta's own standing in the amphiktion. That standing was in fact as precarious as it could be, despite Sparta's special relationship with Delphi.⁴⁰ In 1957, Georges Daux showed⁴¹ that Spartan representation in the 24-vote amphiktion was not, as one might reasonably but wrongly assume, exercised through the Dorians of the Peloponnese, where after all Sparta was actually situated. It was, anomalously, exercised through *and only through* the Dorians of the Metropolis, that is, the little state which Sparta was so piously protecting in 458. As Daux saw and Gomme in his note on the passage did not,⁴² the significance of the Spartan campaign of 458 takes on an extra dimension in the light of this simple fact about the composition of the amphiktion.

We may digress here, and notice a line of Spartan policy on which Andrewes insisted in several places, namely, Sparta's perennial ambitions in central and northern Greece, particularly in Thessaly. Perhaps because Andrewes chose to set out the evidence in articles about Lysander in the 390s,⁴³ his thesis has not had its proper impact on fifth-century studies. But the evidence is overwhelming, though it is true that it is most nakedly seen at the time of the Corinthian War of the 390s, when Sparta actually garrisoned towns in Thessaly. But already

⁴⁰ See, e.g., Hdt. vi 57.2 (the Pythioi at Sparta), with R. Parker, "Spartan Religion," in A. Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta: Techniques Behind her Success* (London 1989) pp. 154 f.

⁴¹ G. Daux, "Remarques sur la composition du conseil amphictionique," *BCH* lxxxi (1957) 95 ff. at 106 ff.

It is much to be regretted that the late Professor Daux's Sather lectures on the Delphic amphiktion were never published; I know of them only through Sterling Dow, *Fifty Years of Sathers* (Berkeley 1965) p. 66 and Daux's own remarks at *CRAI* 1975 pp. 348 f. On Athenian relations with Delphi in the fifth century see Daux's brief but valuable paper "Athènes et Delphes," in *Athenian Studies Presented to W. S. Ferguson, HSCP* Supp. i (1940) pp. 37 ff.

⁴² Gomme in fact has no note on the passage whatever, not even on the word *metropolis*.

⁴³ A. Andrewes, "Two Notes on Lysander," *Phoenix* xxv (1971) pp. 206 ff., and "Spartan Imperialism?" in *Imperialism in the Ancient World* (above n.29) pp. 91 ff.

Kleomenes I in about 500 had ambitions in Thessaly and so did Leotychides in the 470s.⁴⁴ What has this to do with the Delphic amphiktion? Quite a lot, if we recall that Thessaly had a built-in majority in the amphiktion. If there is anything in this (and we should always beware the dangers of treating the *pentekontaetia* as if it were straightforwardly comparable to the Greece of Philip II) we might note the attempt by Athens in ch. 111 of Thucydides' *pentekontaetia* account to put a king of Thessaly on the throne. When we come to look at the Spartan foundation of Herakleia Trachinia in 426, we ought to recall Andrewes' point about the perennial Spartan tendency to move north when she has the chance. What I shall be trying to add is a religious dimension to Herakleia.

To sum up so far, both the occasions when Sparta does directly intervene in the First Peloponnesian War have a religious aspect: the move in defence of Doris, and the Second Sacred War. We can reasonably complain that Thucydides' treatment of the religious aspects of these episodes is less than satisfying.

I now need to say something more about *Athens* in the *pentekontaetia*. Apollo Pythios was not the only Apollo: there was Apollo Delios, the god of Ionian Delos, an island that for Thucydides (i 96.2) is merely the ταμειῶν or treasury of the league; but surely there was more to it than that: Delos was a great Ionian religious center⁴⁵ — although it is possible that Athens was having it both ways because (as was noted a century ago⁴⁶) Delos had a religious appeal not just for the Ionian but for some of the Dorian islanders in Athens' empire. But at any rate the Spartans, at least until their period of control after 404, had no place on Delos.

Generally, in the period of the *pentekontaetia*, religion was, contrary to the impression of Thucydides' narrative, extensively used by the Athenians as a propaganda device inside their empire and even as an instrument of oppression and expropriation. For instance there is the

⁴⁴ See S. Hornblower, *The Greek World 479–323 BC* (London 1983) pp. 24 (citing Hdt. vi 72: Leotychidas) and 81 (citing Pindar *Pyth.* x 1 ff.: Kleomenes).

⁴⁵ See further below. Full documentation is given by B. Smarczyk, *Untersuchungen zur Religionspolitik und politischen Propaganda Athens im Delisch-attischen Seebund* (Munich 1990) at pp. 464 ff. and 504 ff. See also J. Heinrichs, *Ionien nach Salamis: Die kleinasiatischen Griechen in der Politik und politischen Reflexion des Mutterlands* (Bonn 1989) = *Antiquitas*, vol. 39, at 160.

⁴⁶ W. R. Paton and E. L. Hicks, *The Inscriptions of Cos* (Oxford 1891) p. xxiv.

Great Dionysia. The propaganda aspect of this festival has recently been examined:⁴⁷ there was an imperial aspect to the festival that actually included some kind of physical display or depiction of the allied tribute in the presence of the allies: Isok. viii 82. Then there is religious expropriation. It may, for instance, be relevant to the revolt of Samos in 440 that there were, as we know from inscriptions, boundary stones or *horoi* on the island delimiting sacred, i.e., expropriated property.⁴⁸ This property might be leased out to individual Athenians, as we know was done on Euboia and probably also at Mytilene. Incidentally Thucydides is our authority (at iii 50) for the ear-marking of the 300 Mytilenean *kleroi* for the gods, as part of the punitive settlement after their revolt (427). Not for the first time we see with irritation what Thucydides could have told us more often, had he felt like it.

These *horoi* delimiting *temene* are the subject of an interesting study by Barron,⁴⁹ prompted by his valuable examination of the *horoi* of Dorian Aigina, which can be seen in the courtyard of the Aigina Museum. Barron's main thesis does not, however, seem to me quite right. He argues, on the evidence of the Aiginetan *horoi*, that in the course of the 450s and 440s, Athens made a definite propaganda move away from an emphasis on the Ionian gods Apollo and Poseidon, to a much less acceptable emphasis — acceptable from the allied point of view that is — on Athena. The reason I find this unconvincing lies not in what he says about Athena, but in his idea that Athens ever, either in the two decades before the main Peloponnesian War, or in the War itself, lost sight of Apollo Delios for a moment.⁵⁰ In fact we have no right to suppose that Delos disappeared from view. This time I do not even need to invoke the evidence trap: there is after all the plain evidence of ML 62, a valuable inscription attesting Athenian control of Delos in the 430s, and exploitation of its resources. And in 1960 Lewis

⁴⁷ S. Goldhill, "The Great Dionysia and Civic Ideology," *JHS* cvii (1987) pp. 58 ff., reprinted with slight changes in J. Winkler and F. Zeitlin (eds.), *Nothing To Do With Dionysos: Athenian Drama and Its Social Context* (Princeton 1990); see also W. R. Connor, "City Dionysia and Athenian Democracy" (above n.8).

⁴⁸ See S. Hornblower and M. Greenstock (eds.), *The Athenian Empire*: LACTOR i³ (London 1984) pp. 145 ff.

⁴⁹ J. Barron, "The Fifth-Century *Horoi* of Aegina," *JHS* ciii (1983) pp. 1 ff.

⁵⁰ It is true that the treasury was moved from Delos to Athens at some point, but it has been pointed out that there is no good evidence for the hallowed date 454 which we find in our books; the move could have been earlier. See W. K. Pritchett, "The Transfer of the Delian Treasury," *Historia* xviii (1969) pp. 17 ff.

suggested⁵¹ on the basis of a clutch of inscriptions, one of them new at the time, that in 432 the Athenians appeased Apollo Delios by building him a new shrine at Phaleron, the occasion for the appeasement being the Delian earthquake recorded by Thucydides at ii 8. But above all there is the evidence of a famous and splendid passage of Thucydides. What I have been saying about the cult of Apollo Delios is intended as a prelude to what I shall be saying about the rich chapter, iii 104, which describes Athens' purification of Delos in 426. That chapter gives precious information about Athens' religious policy in the Archidamian War, but it is information for which Thucydides has not prepared us by anything in book i. Or rather, by anything in the *main* narrative of book i, because he has, once again, used the *Archaeology* to introduce an important theme, this time the Delian theme: as early as i 8 he carefully inserts an advance mention of the 426 purification, when talking about Karians and Phoenicians of the age of Minos.

* * * *

So much for introduction about the religious issues in the First Peloponnesian War and the Athenian Empire. I now move on to the position on the eve of, and during, the main Peloponnesian War. Let us accept that religious issues would be counting for something in the great war, and stand back and look at the religious cards Athens had to play. They were not very good ones. She had no panhellenic sanctuary in or near her territory, unlike Corinth or Argos. It is true that the Great Panathenaia had some explicitly Olympian features, and that some of its competitive events, though not those which were competed for by the ten Kleisthenic Athenian tribes, were open to foreigners like the Argive winner in Pindar's Tenth *Nemean*. But none of this was the same as games based on a truly panhellenic sanctuary.

Nor was Athens' mythology very promising, although much could be and was done with the various Athenian manifestations of Athena, such as Athena Nike, in effect a remodelled cult after the mid fifth century, with a priestess appointed by lot from all Athenians; or Athena Athenon Medeousa.⁵² But even Athena had non-Athenian commit-

⁵¹ D. M. Lewis, "Apollo Delios," *BSA* lxxv (1960) pp. 190 ff., discussing the inscription which is now IG i³ 130.

⁵² For Athena Nike see ML 44 with SEG xii 80; for Athena Athenon Medeousa see J. Barron, "Religious Propaganda of the Delian League," *JHS* lxxxiv (1964) pp. 35 ff.

ments: "it can come as a surprise to realize that Athena, the familiar "city-holding" goddess of the Athenians, performed the same office from the acropolis of Sparta."⁵³ (And we can add that Athena Polias was worshipped as city-protectress at many other places as well.) Thucydides' neglect of the building programme on the acropolis, a programme of which the Nike temple was a part, is a famous silence, and here I shall do no more than mention it.

But in general the mythological and religious pool available to Athens was not promising. It has been said⁵⁴ that "in glamour and ancient renown, Athenian mythology can scarcely compete with several other regional mythologies of Greece"; that is, with the Theban and Peloponnesian legends. Athens, then, would have to make do with what she could. God, in the form of Delphic Apollo, had declared that he would help the Spartans whether they asked him to or not: i 118. So much for Delphi. The other great sanctuary was Olympia: I postpone yet again the question how welcome Athens was at Olympia, but it was a very Dorian shrine.

Athens' assets were: first Theseus, though we should not forget his roles outside Attica, for instance as founder — albeit as a patriotic Athenian — of the Isthmian Games. We have seen that Theseus played his part in the 470s at Skyros. But that was not quite all. There were many aspects of the Delos purification of 426. One of them, an aspect Thucydides does not mention, is the well-attested myth that the festival of the Delia was founded by Theseus himself: Plutarch *Theseus* xxi. So Theseus was not quite forgotten in the 420s. The Athenian hero was not purely local but had a pan-Ionian role that could be turned to imperial advantage.

Second, there was Eleusis and the myth of the Athenian benefaction of corn to Greece. This theme is found in the mouth of an Athenian orator in Xenophon's *Hellenica*. The orator is a hereditary priest of the Eleusinian Mysteries, who tells a Spartan audience that Triptolemos first gave the gift of corn to Herakles, the founder of the Spartan state, and to the Dioscuri who were Spartan citizens (vi 3.6). Eleusis as an international cult center is absent in Thucydides, indeed Eleusis scarcely features at all except in indirect mentions like the scandal of the Mysteries in book vi (28.1; 61.1) or the antiquarian digression

⁵³ R. Parker, *Spartan Religion* (above n.40) at p. 142.

⁵⁴ R. Parker, "Myths of Early Athens," in J. Bremmer (ed.), *Interpretations of Greek Mythology* (London 1987) pp. 187 ff. at p. 187.

about Eumolpus at ii 15. But from an inscription of (probably) the 420s⁵⁵ we see that Athens issued a bold invitation to all Greece to bring offerings to Eleusis *κατὰ τὰ πάτρια*, “according to tradition,” whether or not that tradition was “invented”;⁵⁶ and in accordance with the Delphic oracle. This last detail cannot, however, be used to show that Delphi was after all supporting an Athenian imperialist move in the Archidamian War, because of the uncertainty not only about the date of the inscription but about the date of the oracle. And the text as a whole may⁵⁷ simply be an expansion and rationalization of existing arrangements. So it would be too much to claim that it was only in the post-Periclean period that Athens deliberately exploited and magnified the panhellenic aspects of Eleusis. Those aspects were in any case not entirely a fifth-century invention: the Mysteries had been open to all from an unknown date.⁵⁸ All we can say for sure is that Eleusis is never likely to have been out of Athenian thoughts: for one thing it was not just a very special sanctuary but a major garrison deme and a first line of defence against a Peloponnesian invasion.⁵⁹ Further than that we cannot safely go without a firm date for the crucial inscription.

Third and most important there was Delos and the Athenian claim to be mother city of Ionia. This, unlike Theseus and Eleusis, is a theme that Thucydides does report richly if not quite fully. But before asking why Athens made the sudden decision in 426 to boost what Thucydides says was the dilapidated festival of the Delia, I want to turn back to Sparta and *her* use of the religious weapon in the years 431–421.

Just 12 chapters earlier in book iii than the digression about the Athenian purification of Delos, Thucydides gives us an even longer digression about a major Spartan initiative in central Greece, the Spartan foundation of Herakleia in Trachis or Herakleia Trachinia in 426

⁵⁵ ML 74.

⁵⁶ E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge 1983).

⁵⁷ As Ernst Badian points out to me.

⁵⁸ Note also the evidence for the early spread of the extra-Attic cult of Demeter Eleusinia: see R. Parker, “Dionysus and the Spartan Pantheon,” in R. Hägg, N. Marinatos and G. C. Nordquist, *Early Greek Cult Practice: Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens: Skrifter Utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athens* 4⁰, xxxviii (Stockholm 1988) pp. 99 ff.

⁵⁹ For the military importance of Eleusis see S. Hornblower, *The Greek World 479–323 B.C.* (London 1983) p. 110, and for Eleusis as a place of muster see H. Wankel, *Demosthenes Rede für Ktesiphon über den Kranz* (Heidelberg 1976) vol. ii p. 875, n. on Dem. xviii 177.

(iii 92–93). Thucydides gives strategic motives for the foundation, which was a large affair, 10,000 settlers if we can believe Diodorus (xii 59), though this claim may have been contaminated by hellenistic theories about the *muriandros polis* as the ideal city or community. The strategic motives given, in terms of the route to the north and access to Euboeia, are all right as far as they go. They go some way to answer Wade Gery's famous complaint that Thucydides gives us nothing between the methods of tragedy and of the laboratory notebook, e.g., an intelligible account of strategy.⁶⁰ But even on their own terms they do not go far enough if we subscribe, as I have made clear I do, to the view that Herakleia is just one link in a long chain of northern involvements starting with Kleomenes in the sixth century and ending only in the fourth.⁶¹

Thucydides does, however, repeat from book i, virtually verbatim, the statement that the Spartans were responding to an appeal by Doris the metropolis of Sparta, as well as from the Trachinians. That is a valuable detail, borne out by Diodorus who says that the Trachinians, who were having difficulties with their neighbors the Oitaians, invoked the Spartans' ancestor Herakles who had made his home in Trachis: this reminds us of Sophocles' *Trachiniae* in which Herakles actually dies there.⁶² The Spartans were surely delighted to respond to the double appeal, not least because (as Thucydides rather than Diodorus tells us) the Trachinians had originally considered bringing in the Athenians but decided against it. True or false? Recent work on Thucydides' narrative technique has taught us to be wary of his statements about intentions, especially unfulfilled ones.⁶³ At the very least we must allow for the possibility that it would be rhetorically effective for the Trachinians at Sparta to pretend that they had considered the Athenians but rejected them in advance. But from Sparta's point of view, it would be a splendid propaganda coup to send out a big colony, which other Greeks would be invited to join: we know that she enjoyed

⁶⁰ *OCD*² s.v. "Thucydides" p. 1068.

⁶¹ See S. Hornblower, *Greek World* (n.59) p. 186.

⁶² P. Easterling, *Sophocles Trachiniai* commentary (Cambridge 1982) pp. 9 f.

⁶³ V. Hunter, *Thucydides, the Artful Reporter* (Toronto 1973); Chr. Schneider, *Information und Absicht bei Thukydides* (Göttingen 1974); H. D. Westlake, "Personal Motives, Aims and Feelings in Thucydides," *Studies in Thucydides and Greek History* (Bristol 1989) ch. 14 at pp. 201 ff. See my commentary on Thucydides vol. i, books i–iii (Oxford 1991) n. on ἡγομένων at i 5.1.

the goodwill of the Greek world at the beginning of the war.⁶⁴ Here was a chance to exploit that goodwill. (Incidentally she also enjoyed the good-will of Pythian Apollo,⁶⁵ so it is not surprising to learn from Thucydides that Apollo too sanctioned the Herakleia venture.)

But what of Herakles? He was not, of course, exclusively Spartan property: Boardman has argued⁶⁶ that Herakles was annexed by the Athenian Pisistratids. But there is no doubt that though Herakles is curiously invisible in Sparta at the level of cult,⁶⁷ he had a very special connection with Sparta, as Kallias the Torchbearer reminded his Spartan audience in 371 (see the Xenophon passage cited above). As we have seen, Herakles is specifically mentioned not by Thucydides but by Diodorus. Can we trust this detail? It might be objected that Diodorus' source Ephorus was merely working in an allusion to Herakles, in whom he had an undeniable interest of his own, as several fragments show.⁶⁸ But I think this would be needlessly skeptical: the new colony was after all called Herakleia, like those two other colonies with a Spartan connection: that planned by Dorieus in Sicily in the late sixth century (Hdt. vi 43), and the Lukanian Herakleia founded in c. 433, in which Sparta's nearby colony Taras predominated.⁶⁹ Anyway, the Dorian or at least anti-Ionian character of Herakleia in Trachis is made clear by Thucydides' report (above) of the colony's prospectus.

That is not all. I wish now to draw attention to a feature of the colony's organization that Thucydides does report, but without bringing out its significance. One of the oikists or founders was the Spartan Alkidas, who features prominently if not very honorably in the first third of book iii. His appointment has puzzled modern scholars, after what Thucydides, at least, seems to have thought a dim performance at Mytilene and in the East Aegean—although there has been a recent scholarly reaction in favor of Alkidas.⁷⁰ Gomme said sneeringly of

⁶⁴ ii 8.4. The Greek here actually says ἡ δὲ εὐνοία..... τῶν ἀνθρώπων, which is broader even than the "Greek world" of my rendering. But para. 1 of the chapter (ἢ τε ἄλλῃ Ἑλλάδι) shows what Thucydides has in mind.

⁶⁵ i 118.3 (on which see my commentary) and ii 54.4.

⁶⁶ J. Boardman, *CAH* iv² (1988) pp. 421 ff., and references there given to a series of articles.

⁶⁷ Parker, "Spartan Religion" (above n.40) p. 146.

⁶⁸ *FGrHist* 70 FF 13–18, 34, 115–118, 130.

⁶⁹ For Lukanian Herakleia see Strabo 264 = *FGrHist* 555 Antiochos F 11, with B. Neusch, *Siris ed Herakleia* (Urbino 1968) p. 6.

⁷⁰ J. Roisman, "Alcidas in Thucydides," *Historia* xxxvi (1987) pp. 385 ff.; Badian, "The Peace of Callias" *JHS* cvii (1987) pp. 1 ff. at p. 23.

Alkidas that he was rewarded for his earlier failures in the easy aristocratic manner by the Herakleia job.⁷¹ I suggest that there is more to Alkidas' appointment than that; in fact his name made him a singularly suitable oikist for Herakleia, because as early as Pindar and as late as Virgil, Alkidas or Latin Alcides is one of the names for Herakles (P. *Ol.* vi 68). It needs little proof that Greeks took lucky names seriously;⁷² and oikists, in particular, might be chosen because their names seemed appropriate: thus an inscription (Tod 200) shows that the Athenians in the 320s sent a colony to the Adriatic under an oikist with the name Miltiades, a name famously associated with an archaic Athenian outpost on the Chersonese. In Alkidas, I submit, we have an item comparable to the monosandalism of earlier in book iii: that is, an item of which we gratefully owe our knowledge to Thucydides, but the religious significance of which he either overlooked or chose not to bring out. If the second of these explanations is right (i.e., he chose not to bring it out), we have to ask why. My answer would be that Thucydides was reacting against Herodotus who like many Greeks back to Homer and down to Sophocles saw significance in proper names for themselves. For instance Herodotus (ix 91) has a speaker exploit the literal meaning of Hegesistratos, "leader of the army." This kind of thing is totally absent from Thucydides, unless you agree with Enoch Powell⁷³ who thought he found three puns in Thucydides.

Before I leave Herakleia generally, I want to comment on one aspect of the mention of the Dorians of the Metropolis. As we saw earlier, these central Greek Dorians had a special value to Sparta because they were a toe-hold in the Delphic amphiktion. But I would like to offer the suggestion that one aim of the Spartans at Herakleia was to put that matter on a rather better footing: this time there was no Themistokles to foil them. In the fourth century, when epigraphic evidence begins, Herakleia exercises a vote of its own in the amphiktion, one of two Malian votes. How old was that arrangement? In the standard works

⁷¹ A. W. Gomme, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides* vol. ii (Oxford 1956) p. 395.

⁷² For names as omens see generally E. Fraenkel, *Commentary on Aeschylus Agamemnon* (Oxford 1950) on line 687. David Lewis has pointed out to me that Melanthios (Hdt. v 97) was a very apt name for an Athenian envoy to Ionia at the time of the Ionian revolt: Melanthos (Hdt. i 147) was father of the Kodros whose sons colonized Ionia, setting out from Athens.

⁷³ E. Powell, "Puns in Herodotus," *CR* li (1937) pp. 103 ff.; but see S. Hornblower, *Thucydides* (n.12) p. 94.

on the subject, a book by Roux and an excellent dissertation by Zeilhofer, the question is not considered, but Flacelière in 1937 asserted as incontrovertible fact that it was Sparta who got one of the old Malian votes transferred to Herakleia “so as to augment her influence in the amphiktion.”⁷⁴ What Flacelière does not consider is the date at which this “augmentation” happened, nor does anybody else that I can find; certainly not Gomme, since he does not consider this aspect of Herakleia at all. Clearly, 404 is a theoretical possibility, or indeed any date before Leuktra in 371. But 426 is surely a very strong candidate, given the original support of the Delphic oracle for the colony—not that the amphiktion and the oracle are at all the same thing. But Sparta was deeply interested in Delphi in 426, and it is not frivolous to recall by ways of analogy and as a final reason for that interest, the military aspect of Eleusis. Delphi was four things: a polis of sorts,⁷⁵ the seat of an oracle, a sanctuary run by an amphiktion— and a place of muster for operations in central Greece. Thucydides iii 101 is the prime text for this period: a Spartan army assembles at Delphi.

I conclude that despite Thucydides’ silence there was an amphiktionic aspect to the foundation of Herakleia, just as there was to Sparta’s earlier help to the metropolitan Dorians. Sparta is now trying to get another, new, amphiktionic vote, just as earlier she was protecting the nearest thing she had to an existing vote.

So much for Herakleia. How was it all viewed at Athens? Thucydides, writing with evident hindsight, knew that Herakleia turned out a flop for all sorts of reasons, not least the fact that the harsh and positively unjust behavior of the Spartan governors drove people away: iii 93.2; v 52.1. But what was the mood in 426 itself?

To answer that we need to look at the position of Athens inside the Greek religious world at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. Did

⁷⁴ Roux (above n.31); G. Zeilhofer, *Sparta, Delphoi und die Amphiktyonen im 5 Jhrdt. vor Christus* (Diss. Erlangen 1959); Flacelière (above n.38) p. 40 n.2.

⁷⁵ In the ordinances of the Labyadai (a phratry of Delphi), inscribed about 400 B.C., “il est remarquable que la cité delphique n’était pas intervenue dans le règlement de ces questions”: R. Dareste, B. Houssoullier, Th. Reinach, *Recueil des Inscriptions Juridiques Grecques* deuxième série (Paris 1898) p. 196, commenting on their n. XXVIII = DGE 323 = Syll² 434 (not in Syll³). Partial text only in F. Sokolowski, *Lois Sacrées des cités grecques* (Paris 1969) pp. 152 ff. no. 77. Most recent text in G. Rougemont, *Corpus des Inscriptions de Delphes* i, *Lois sacrées et règlements religieux* (Paris 1977) pp. 26 ff. no. 9.

religious life just go on normally as the war raged? And were the Athenians and their allies welcome at—were they even admitted to—the great panhellenic festivals? (Of which the Nemean is the only one not mentioned by Thucydides⁷⁶). It is strangely difficult to find any decent modern discussion of these issues. One passage at the very beginning of book v may imply, what was surely true, that the Athenians were included in the Pythian truce of 422, but the passage is unfortunately corrupt (v 1).

Let us begin with the Olympic festival of 428, which we have already noticed. Were there Athenians at those games? This is a question that has forced itself on the attention of commentators, because those games included a very famous victor, the Rhodian Dorieus, a member of the family celebrated in Pindar's Seventh *Olympian*. The chief evidence for Dorieus' victory is, unexpectedly, Thucydides himself (iii 8): "unexpectedly," because of Thucydides' usual, though not quite uniform, indifference to athletics⁷⁷ and to that athletic success that an inscription of the Periclean period shows the Athenian state took very seriously indeed.⁷⁸ Dorieus is one of a very small handful of Olympic victors whom Thucydides notices, the others being Kylon, Alcibiades and the Spartan Lichas. The games themselves are mentioned in passing in the *Archaeology* in a digression on athletic dress.⁷⁹ The problems about Dorieus' Olympic victories are numerous, and I cannot go into them all here. The only one that directly concerns us is this: Dorieus was a Rhodian, and the Rhodians, though Dorians, were Athenian allies, and (it is said⁸⁰) Athenian allies were excluded from Olympia *de facto* if not *de jure*. Therefore Thucydides is wrong to call

⁷⁶ For the Pythian festival see v 1; for the Isthmia see viii 10 and discussion below; for the Olympic games see n.79 below. Nemea features, as a place name only, at v 58–60, cp. iii 96.1.

⁷⁷ See Hornblower, *Thucydides* (above n.12) p. 139 and n.10, citing the remarkable iv 121.1: the people of Skione garland Brasidas and go out to greet him *like an athlete*.

⁷⁸ IG i³ 131.

⁷⁹ i 6.5; i 126; vi 16.2; v 50.

⁸⁰ K. J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte* iii² 1 p. 43 n.2; H. van Gelder, *Geschichte der alten Rhodier* (The Hague 1900) p. 80 n.2; A. Hönl, *Olympia in der Politik der griechischen Staatenwelt* (Diss. Tübingen 1968) p. 210.

In reading about the problems of Dorieus at the games, and later on of Lichas who had to pretend to be in some sense a Boiotian in order to compete at Olympia (v 50.4), one cannot help thinking of modern athletes like Zola Budd, who took U.K. citizenship to overcome the political difficulties of being South African.

Dorieus a Rhodian; he must already have been a Thurian as he later became. But what of the premise about exclusion of Athens and her allies in the Archidamian War period? This is an idea that can be traced as far back as Grote,⁸¹ who had no better evidence than the first clause of the Peace of Nikias. This clause stipulated (v 18) that the common sanctuaries should be open to all, to sacrifice and consult the oracles and attend the festivals without fear according to ancestral custom. Grote assumed that this clause implied earlier exclusion. It implies, of course, nothing of the sort. It does, however, suggest that there had been difficulties, and that Athenian pilgrims were not altogether welcome at the games. Thus in the *Birds* of Aristophanes (line 188) it is clearly implied that Athenians needed Boiotian permission to visit Delphi. But (to revert to Dorieus) competitors themselves were always privileged and even sacred persons. Before we finish with Dorieus (who appears in Thucydides only as part of a dating formula) let us make one final suggestion that would affect, though not entirely remove, the problem: when we find, in Xenophon's *Hellenika*, a date given in the form of an athletic victory, we are told by modern commentators as a matter of course to ignore it as an intrusion by a later hand. There is no reason why the text of Thucydides should be thought immune from this sort of intrusion: Jacoby⁸² thought that there are more such scholiasts' glosses in Thucydides than modern scholars realize.

To return to Athenian access to the sanctuaries of Greece. The unargued assumption is often made that the Athenians and their allies⁸³ were kept out of Delphi and Olympia in the war. For instance an Athenian dedication from Dodona (Syll³ 73) is regularly⁸⁴ explained in terms of the unavailability of Delphi in the 420s, although it is quite undated and there is thus an element of circularity in the whole argument. Actually things are not so simple. The Messenians from Nau-paktos, Athenian allies, made a remarkable war-dedication at Olympia

⁸¹ G. Grote, *History of Greece* (10-volume ed., London 1888) vol. v, p. 454.

⁸² F. Jacoby, *FGrHist* 323a *Hellanikos* F24 comm. n.18.

⁸³ An inscription attests dealings between Athens' ally (Th. iv 42.1) Andros and Delphi, at some time in this period: F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* (Paris 1962) no. 38 = Rougemont (above n.75) pp. 19 ff. no. 7. But the date, and therefore the historical significance, of the text is uncertain; see Smarczyk (above n.45) p. 513 n.49.

⁸⁴ H. W. Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus* (Oxford 1967) pp. 136, 149; but see R. Parker, "Greek States and Greek Oracles" in P. Cartledge and F. D. Harvey (eds.), *CRUX: Essays in Greek History Presented to G. de Ste Croix* (Bristol 1985) p. 326 and n.99.

and a simultaneous one at Delphi some time in the period I am concerned with. The Olympia dedication is known to ancient historians as ML 74, but to art historians as the marvellous Nike of Paionios. There is an intriguing difference over this inscription between Tod 65 and ML. Tod, without explanation, put it 425 B.C., ML, also without explanation, put it “c. 421 B.C.” Why? The only explanation can be the very assumption I have been examining, about exclusion of Athenian allies. In fact, there is no real difficulty in supposing that the dedication of “Brasidas and the Akanthians from the Athenians” (Syll³ 79: mid 420s?) should have gone up alongside and stood next to the Messenian dedication. In any case the general position was complicated after 420 when Sparta fell out with Elis, the state that controlled the sanctuary. Thereafter we really *can* speak of exclusion, but it is exclusion not of Athens but of Sparta (v 49.1; cp. above). As for Athens in the 420s I conjecture that Athenian individuals were not formally excluded from the 428 Olympics, and that theoroi or sacred ambassadors went on attending on Athens’ behalf then and at other times in the Peloponnesian War. The only evidence is from much later: in book viii 10, a shamefully neglected passage, we are told that in 411, i.e., in war-time the Athenians were sending theoroi to the Isthmia for it had been announced to them, ἐπηγγέθησαν γάρ, and so they got a clearer idea of what was going on in Chios. This passage proves official Athenian attendance at a sanctuary in hostile territory; but we may feel a tiny doubt: why tell us that the festival had been announced to them unless it was abnormal for it to have been announced to them? To return to the Olympia of 428: the sanctuary was not actually closed to Athens, but nor was it a very friendly place judging by Thucydides’ report of the festival.

What though of the Delphic oracle? Official Athenian consultations in the Peloponnesian War are hard to find, though we know from Thucydides and Aristophanes⁸⁵ that chresmologoi and manteis were doing brisk business. One Delphic consultation might be claimed: the oracular sanction for the Delian purification of 426. I find this idea incredible in view of Thucydides’ ironic language. His words are κατὰ χρησμόν δὴ τινα, “according to some oracle.” This surely means something other than Apollo at Delphi, though it is true that after the plague Apollo the god of purification would be a natural recourse. The

⁸⁵ Thuc. ii 8.2 etc.; Aristophanes *Birds*, *passim*.

reference must be, however, to something less than fully respectable. It can either be to the original oracles, which, as Herodotus tells us, moved the Pisistratids to purify the island. Or there is another possibility I should like to offer. We are told by a hellenistic author, Semos of Delos, that “Delian prophets” predicted Athenian rule of the sea (*FGrHist* 396 F12). Jacoby in his commentary connected this item with Pisistratos’ activity on Delos. Anyway we can safely rule out Pythian Apollo.

To sum up, I would describe Athens’ standing at the two greatest sanctuaries in the early 420s as follows: unloved, but not actually locked out. Just the moment, we might think, for a propaganda counter-attack, especially in the aftermath of the Herakleia initiative. That brings me to iii 104 and the purification of Delos, described as the work of “the Athenians.” This is itself a silence: what individuals if any were involved? In some books it is stated as fact that Nikias was responsible. This is simply wrong. More recently the politician Kleonymos has been suggested, because he is now known to have proposed a decree about Delos in precisely 426.⁸⁶ However, Lewis tells me he is unconvinced. My own candidate is the historian Thucydides himself.

Just why Thucydides chose to insert this long and brilliant excursus, with its Homeric quotations, just here, is an old problem. The first answer is surely literary: we are in the middle of a long boring slab of north-western campaigning and this colorful chapter certainly livens things up. (Incidentally, that is surely one reason for the bit about the poet Hesiod’s death at iii 96, a piece of τὸ μῦθῳδες if ever there was one.) A second answer was suggested thirty years ago by Sir Ronald Syme,⁸⁷ tongue just perceptibly in cheek: had Thucydides been formulating views on the “Homeric Question”? We can add a third: Herodotus (iv 35) had quoted a hymn about Delos by one Olen of Lycia: is Thucydides hinting that Olen is low-grade authority next to Homer?

⁸⁶ Nikias: see my forthcoming commentary on Thucydides i–iii (Oxford 1991) introductory n. on iii 104; J. K. Davies, *Athenian Propertied Families* (Oxford 1971) s.v. “Nikias” has the correct chronology for Nikias’ Delian architheoria, which must have fallen at some date *after* the re-establishment of the Delia. Kleonymos: see H. Mattingly, “Methodology in Greek History,” *Échos du monde classique/Classical Views* xxxii, n.s. vii (1988) pp. 321 ff. at p. 321, discussing A. Plassart, *Inscriptions de Délos* (Paris 1950) no. 80 + J. Coupry, *BCH* lxxviii (1954) p. 293, as reinterpreted by D. M. Lewis, *ZPE* lx (1985) p. 108, who shows that the decree is *Athenian*.

⁸⁷ R. Syme, “Thucydides,” *PBA* xlviii (1962) pp. 39 ff. at p.42.

But if we accept that the episode did indeed happen when it did, we can ask why it happened; that is, we can move on from literary to historical considerations. One answer I have already hinted at: purification after the plague. Diodorus, i.e., Ephorus, characteristically has this motive, though this has been unnecessarily questioned in modern times;⁸⁸ Thucydides equally characteristically does not. If it is urged that the plague back in book ii is a long time ago in narrative terms, my reply is that the second outbreak has just been described by Thucydides at iii 87, and it is here that he sums up the plague's effect on manpower.

The second motive has already, I hope, emerged by implication: Delos was to some extent a reply to Dorian Herakleia. Thucydides tells us about Herakleia, and he tells us about Delos soon after, but he does not connect the two.

Third, there is the Pisistratid connection. Pisistratus was in some ways the founder of Athenian maritime greatness, at very least a more considerable military figure than Herodotus gave him credit for being. But he was a tyrant, whom it is a little odd to find Athens recalling so specifically. Was this perhaps defiance: if we are to be labelled "the tyrant city" let us make the most of it and take a leaf out of the book of the tyrants whom those Spartans deposed? This Pisistratid aspect *is* in Thucydides, but it is not explained.

Fourth there is Theseus, the legendary founder of the Delia that the Athenians were now reconstituting.⁸⁹ We have already seen that the Skyros episode showed he, too, had an imperial aspect. This aspect is not in Thucydides iii 104.

But fifth, finally and most important, Delos was the center of Ionianism, and Athens was making a strong bid to bring Ionian cult within her control. Hitherto, the center of Ionian cult had been the Panionia in Asia Minor. In my view the purification of Delos, and the reestablishment of the Delia, did not actually bring cult activity at the Anatolian Panionia to an end; it was merely a more attractive and more politically accessible alternative to it from the point of view of Ionians in the empire. Thucydides says that Ionians flocked to the new Delia "as they

⁸⁸ J. Mikalson, "Religion and the Plague," in *Studies Presented to Sterling Dow* (above n.9) pp. 217 ff. at p. 221. But see my comm. in ii 47.4.

⁸⁹ K. Tausend, "Theseus und der delisch-attische Seebund," *Rh. Mus.* cxxxii (1989) 225 ff.

now do to the Ephesia," i.e., the Panionia, as I argued in 1982,⁹⁰ against those scholars who equated the Ephesia with a festival of Ephesian Artemis. If I was right, the passage is proof positive that the Panionian festival went on in Thucydides' time. This puts the new Delia in its context: a revamped Ionian festival, not replacing but complementing and overshadowing the Panionia. A magnificent imperial gesture indeed. It may have been followed, as we have seen, by an almost equally assertive action at Eleusis, about which Thucydides is completely silent.

Pythian Apollo was not, however, pleased with what was going on at the home of Delian Apollo, and his reaction is the other official Pythian response. In 422 the Athenians went further than they had done in 426 and actually evacuated the Delians from Delos (v 1). Shortly afterwards (v 32) they put them back again, on the orders of the god at Delphi, whom they had consulted because of misfortunes in battle. This is after the end of the Archidamian War, in fact in the Peace of Nikias period; but we can surely connect it with the Pythian Apollo's encouragement to Sparta in 432 (i 118). This is not the last time Delphi looked after Delos: there are fourth-century examples.⁹¹

The Dorian/Ionian divide is something I have treated, for my own purposes, as if it was purely religious. It was not, it was racial as well; it was also linguistic. From the point of view of the comparative philologist, it ought to be very interesting that a military trick in book iii (112.4) involves the use by Demosthenes of some Dorian-speaking Messenian troops, Δωρίδα τε γλῶσσαν ἰένταξ. But the passage was not picked up by a philologist until Anna Davies studied it,⁹² and remarked on its interesting assumption that for Thucydides' readers Dorian dialects were a distinct and recognizable group.

It is sometimes said that the Peloponnesian War itself polarized the Dorian/Ionian distinction. There is a danger here of the evidence trap: we just happen to have Thucydides for those three decades. Actually, the truth is more troubling. For Thucydides, one feature of the war was that it *muddled* colonial religious ties; thus his list of the allies before Syracuse in book vii (57–58) notes as a singularity that Dorians fought

⁹⁰ S. Hornblower, "Thucydides, The Panionian Festival and the Ephesia," *Historia* xxxi (1982) pp. 241 ff.

⁹¹ See Wankel (above n.59) pp. 731 ff.

⁹² A. Morpurgo-Davies, "The Greek Notion of Dialect," *Verbum* x (1987) pp. 8 ff. at pp. 17 f.

Dorians and so on. Athens could in effect trump the old allegiances: thus an inscription from North Aegean Neapolis, recording Athenian honors to the city, has an erasure where there had once been carved the words “because they are colonists of the Thasians”: ML 89. Having started as the leader of the Ionians, Athens was redefining and extending the role of religious metropolis. To put it bluntly, what she now wanted was control of the Aegean, Dorian and Ionian alike: hence her attempts to coerce Dorian Melos because (Thucydides says) they were islanders and because they had not yet submitted: iii 91.2 and v 84.2. But this was not exactly new. It would after all have taken some ingenuity to justify, in terms of τὸ ξυγγενές, the incorporation in 458 of Aigina, the “star ruling in the Dorian sea” as Pindar had once called it (*Paian* vi 123 ff.). And new epigraphic evidence from the ten-year period of Athenian control of Boiotia (457–446) now suggests the very startling possibility that two Boiotian cities, Orchomenos and Akraiphia, were actually tributary members of the Delian League.⁹³ No crude Ionian/Dorian formula will account for these remarkable facts.

In this paper I have tried to show that alongside the military and political struggle of the Peloponnesian War there was a religious war for the hearts and minds, and that if Thucydides had had a different outlook we would know a good deal more about that war. But equally, without Thucydides we would lack many of the texts with which to correct Thucydides; indeed without him we would hardly have a Peloponnesian War at all.⁹⁴

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⁹³ Lewis (above n.34) p. 77 n.43 for Orchomenos; and for Akraiphia see Lewis in *CAH* v², forthcoming.

⁹⁴ See N. Loraux, “Thucydide a écrit la guerre du Péloponnèse” *MHTIE Revue d'anthropologie du monde grec ancien* i (1986) pp. 139 ff. at p. 146.