

# Phocis, Delphoi, and the amphictyony

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## Introduction

Delphoi began life as a small, isolated sanctuary on the southwest slopes of Mount Parnassos in Central Greece. Though tucked high enough up its valley to be out of sight of the sea, it was easily accessible from the Corinthian Gulf. Thus it is not surprising that in its early history, as Catherine Morgan has commented, the network of connections visible in dedications at the sanctuary was very different from that displayed at Kalapodi, on the other side of Parnassos and on the far side of the Kephisos valley. This is true especially from the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. onwards, with far more Peloponnesian (especially Corinthian) styles in ceramics and bronzes than at Kalapodi, and both eastern and Italian imports evident particularly in the 7<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup>.

Yet during the 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries Delphoi came to be far more integrated into its local region. By the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, if we are to believe Herodotus<sup>2</sup>, the amphictyony – dominated by states and *ethne* of Central and Northern Greece – was responsible for building the new temple of Apollo, and therefore presumably now managed the sanctuary. In the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century the war which we know as the ›Second

Sacred War‹ was fought over the issue of whether or not Delphoi should be part of the Phocian *koinon*: possibly at this time Phocian claims to ancestral ownership of the sanctuary, clearly articulated for us by Philomelos in 356 B.C., were already being aired<sup>3</sup>.

The traditional scholarly explanation for the incorporation of Delphoi into the power structures of its wider region has been the ›First Sacred War‹, a shadowy conflict fought apparently near the very start of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, in which a coalition of states, including Thessalia, Sikyon, and Athens came together to free the sanctuary from the predations of the nearby people of Kirrha or Krisa<sup>4</sup>. In an article published in 1978, however, Noel Robertson argued that the First Sacred War at Delphoi is an invention of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.<sup>5</sup> I will not rehearse Robertson's arguments in detail now, except to say that I find them entirely convincing. It is mainly an argument from silence: the lack of a suitable archaeological site to represent powerful, Archaic Krisa or Kirrha; and the failure of authors such as Herodotus and Thucydides to mention this war in contexts where it would seem to have been highly relevant. Even Aeschines, the au-

<sup>1</sup> Morgan 2003, 123 f.; full discussion, though with some reservations, at Franchi 2016, 80–97.

<sup>2</sup> Hdt. 5, 62, 2. Hdt. 2, 180 is also relevant, but see n. 42 for reservations.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion, see Londey 2010.

<sup>4</sup> For summaries of sources, see Robertson 1978; Sanchez 2001, 60–73; Londey 2015; Franchi 2016, 213–230.

<sup>5</sup> Robertson 1978.

thor of our first substantial account<sup>6</sup>, in a speech delivered in 330 but purporting to relate events at Delphoi in 340, had himself failed to mention the First Sacred War in the earlier speech ›On the false embassy‹, delivered in 343, when he told his listeners about the amphictyonic history lesson he had given Philip of Macedon in 346<sup>7</sup>. So we have a situation where earlier writers seem entirely ignorant of the war, while the story comes to light in the 340s, just around the time Philip gained membership of the Delphic Amphictyony as reward for saving the sanctuary from the impious Phocians: an obvious moment for the story to have been invented.

Surprisingly (in my view), Robertson's arguments have failed to gain traction<sup>8</sup>. In an article in 2015, I suggested that the reason scholars had been reluctant to accept Robertson's arguments was not because those arguments were flawed, but rather because the

Sacred War seemed so useful. It has become a convenient explanation for three otherwise mysterious phenomena: the existence of the sacred land; the fact that Delphoi at some point came under the control of that strange institution, the Delphic Amphictyony; and, most apposite to this conference, the apparent excision of Delphoi from the territory of Phocis. In this paper I wish to explore further than I did in 2015 other possible explanations for those phenomena. In doing so, I also hope to get away from the quite dangerous modern tendency to think that significant changes need wars to effect them. A war becomes a lazy form of explanation for an otherwise unexplained event. Yet in my own lifetime, the Cold War represents a significant conflict resolved without war, while German reunification and the end of apartheid in South Africa are both examples of significant social change effected without great violence.

## The sacred land

The only one of the three phenomena listed which Aeschines, who provides our earliest extended account, attributes to the Sacred War is the setting aside of the sacred land. Aeschines tells us that it was in response to an oracle that, after defeating the Kirrhaians and the Kragalidai, the Amphictyons dedicated their territory to Apollo Pythios, Artemis, Leto and Athena Pronaia<sup>9</sup>. Clearly by the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. the presence of the sacred land was a striking fact which could generate aetiological stories, but Aeschines is speaking about a supposed event 250 years before his own time: we are not obliged to believe him. If we reject the historicity of the war, how else might we explain the existence of the sacred land?

Timothy Howe has argued persuasively that the reason the sacred land was necessary was to provide an area to rear and graze the thousands of animals sacrificed at Delphoi<sup>10</sup>. This is plausible enough, and would certainly explain why, at least by the 4<sup>th</sup> centu-

ry, the amphictyony itself regulated the use of the land, as seen in the Amphictyonic Law of 380<sup>11</sup>. But Howe's further claim that the existence of the land provides evidence for the Sacred War has no foundation. Unlike Aeschines, Howe believes that the land had been dedicated before the war, by 600 at the latest, and that the amphictyony fought the war later, in the early 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., to defend the sacred territory against Kriasaian and Kragalidai, who presumably had lost the use of it<sup>12</sup>. This cavalier approach to the ancient evidence somewhat undermines his earlier statement that ›the creation of this sacred and uncultivable land is surprisingly well represented in the ancient sources‹<sup>13</sup>. In fact the ancient sources provide no worthwhile evidence for the creation of the sacred land. The statement in the Amphictyonic Law that the Amphictyons themselves had dedicated the land shows – contra Howe – no more than that in 380 that was a view which could reasonably be put about<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Aeschin. 3, 107–112. A slightly earlier account, around 342, is in Speusippus' Letter to Philip; but it gives little detail apart from the fact that the Kriasaian had after defeat lost their amphictyonic votes, just like the Phlegyans and Dryopes before them, and now the Phocians: Speus., Letter to Philip 8.

<sup>7</sup> Aeschin. 2, 114–116.

<sup>8</sup> Discussion at Londey 2015, 226–229.

<sup>9</sup> Aeschin. 3, 113–121. On the sacred land and the First Sacred War, see Rousset 2003, 283–286.

<sup>10</sup> Howe 2003, 139–142; further valuable discussion at McNerney 2010, 150–153.

<sup>11</sup> Rougemont 1977, 90, inscription 10, lines 15–18, commentary p. 108 f.

<sup>12</sup> Howe 2003, 139, 143.

<sup>13</sup> Howe 2003, 129.

<sup>14</sup> Rougemont 1977, 90, inscription 10, line 16; Howe 2003, 139.

On the basis of four examples, none of them from ancient Greece, Howe adduces a general principle: »specialized, large scale raising of animals occurred only when an elite possessed the resources, authority and incentive to run sizable numbers of animals between pastures in their possession or under their control«<sup>15</sup>. In other words an elite, in Howe's view the amphictyony, must have seized control of territory from a presumably unwilling set of local inhabitants. To support this he cites Morgan's view that Delphoi's ever-growing needs constituted a burden on the local population, and that the Phocians (whom she assumes occupied the plain before it was dedicated to the god) were a group »upon whom considerable economic demands continued to be made despite the loss of a large and important area of territory«<sup>16</sup>. Morgan's view seems implausible. On the contrary, Delphoi provided a market for animals which, in pastoral economies like Phocis and Locris<sup>17</sup>, will have seemed more opportunity than burden. The Old Oligarch demonstrates perfectly well that Greeks understood the value of a market for their goods and services<sup>18</sup>.

What Morgan, Howe, and others assume is that the creation of the sacred land, with its restriction to grazing, was imposed at the expense of a large pre-existing population, presumably of farmers – generally identified as the population of Kirrha/Krisa. As long as this population remains archaeologically invisible, this view can only be speculation, and it is equally possible that at the time the sanctuary was coming to prominence in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. the plain behind

Itea was mainly used for grazing anyway. It is striking that a major urban centre such as Zagora on Andros was perched close to but also 150 m above its two harbours. This strongly implies a considerable fear of raids from the sea in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C., a fear which had evidently diminished when the Zagorites left around 700, most likely to settle at the more convenient and genuinely coastal site of classical Andros<sup>19</sup>.

Equally striking is the fact that the two major classical towns to which the bay of Itea gave access, Amphissa and Delphoi, were both situated so as to be out of sight of the sea. The exposed plain near the coast may well have been used primarily for winter grazing by the ancestors of those who would later identify as Phocians and Locrians, while settlements and more intensive cultivation were tucked away in areas which remained hidden from any unfriendly travellers sailing the Corinthian Gulf. The use of this land to support sacrificial animals for the expanding needs of Delphoi may, then, have been an organic development, responding to a market as much as anything. When this arrangement was formalised as »sacred land« with regulation by either Delphoi or the amphictyony we simply cannot know, nor the occasion for it: perhaps to regulate activities as the enormous appetite of the sanctuary for sacrificial victims put pressure on resources, or perhaps to provide an extra source of income for the sanctuary, maybe to help finance infrastructure (see further discussion below). We cannot do much more than speculate, but there is certainly no need here for a sacred war.

## The coming of the amphictyony to Delphoi

The Delphic Amphictyony controlled two sanctuaries, that at Delphoi and the sanctuary of Demeter at Anthela, near Thermopylai. It is generally assumed that the amphictyony originated as a body controlling Anthela, and at some later point extended its reach to

include Delphoi<sup>20</sup>. The logic is mainly geographical: the 12 *ethne* which constituted the amphictyony and are listed in 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. inscriptions include several minor groups from the Spercheios valley, Thessalia and its *perioikoi*, and other *ethne* which at least

<sup>15</sup> The Dogana of Southern Italy; the Mesta of Spain; the Sarakatsani of the Balkans; and Roman Italy as discussed by Varro: Howe 2003, 132.

<sup>16</sup> Morgan 2003, 126.

<sup>17</sup> McInerney 1999, 92–103.

<sup>18</sup> [X.] Ath. 1, 17.

<sup>19</sup> Cambitoglou et al. 1971, 7. 10–12. 62, citing Karphi in Crete and Emporio on Chios as similarly defensible sites from the period. From discussions with the current excavators, this position does not seem much changed, though elements of the former settlement continued in use after its abandonment, possibly at times

of festival and harvest. The pattern, of older towns remote from the sea and newer ones closer to it, is of course observed by Thucydides (1, 7), though he had no more evidence to bring to bear on the subject than we do.

<sup>20</sup> Lefèvre 1998, 13 f. 16, pointing out also that the name for an amphictyonic session, a *pylaia*, and that of one group of representatives, the *pylagorai*, suggest a derivation from *Thermopylai*. For a nuanced discussion of the varying ancient views on this question, see Sánchez 2001, 32–41. For a convenient summary of the very limited evidence for origins of the amphictyony, see Funke 2013, 453–458.

included an element close to Anthela (Euboean Ionians, metropolitan Dorians, eastern Locrians). Only the Phocians and Boeotians were more or less equally close to Anthela and Delphoi.

The question inevitably arises, then, how a body centred at Anthela came to control the much more important sanctuary at Delphoi. The ancient sources, from Speusippus and Aeschines on, are actually fairly consistent in viewing the First Sacred War as a contest between the amphictyony and the impious Krisaians/Kirrhaians and Kragalidai<sup>21</sup>. Kallisthenes seems to have started off with a version which had the Kirrhaians fighting against Phocians, but in the Register of Pythian Victors, written jointly with Aristotle, came round to the version which had the Amphictyons fighting the Kirrhaians<sup>22</sup>. Clearly these authors imagined the amphictyony as having already taken control of Delphoi before the war, and did not in any way attribute amphictyonic control to the war. Despite this, a number of modern authors have assumed that the war was in fact the occasion when the amphictyony took over control of Delphoi<sup>23</sup>.

Recent archaeological work at Delphoi has revealed substantial changes which archaeologists have associated with the Sacred War and with the arrival of the amphictyony. A large house, the ›Maison Rouge‹, built around 625, suffered a series of destructions, the first of them violent<sup>24</sup>. Luce is inclined to see the first destruction as an action of the Sacred War<sup>25</sup>. After the house's final destruction (or perhaps demolition), which the archaeologists date between 585 and 575, the first *peribolos* of the Apollo sanctuary was built across its ruins. Luce notes the thickness of this first *peribolos*, and suggests that it may have had a defensive function, at least as a refuge, given that Delphoi did not otherwise have a city wall<sup>26</sup>. Luce and others have argued that the construction of the *peribolos*, clearly demarcating the sanctuary from the secular space of the town, and in the process enlarging the sanctuary at the expense of areas (such as part of the site occupied by the ›Maison Rouge‹) which had been part of the Delphian polis, should be seen as

the work of the amphictyony, asserting its dominance over the site and the primacy of the sanctuary over the town. In the same period, similar works were carried out in the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia, and there were further works in the sanctuary of Apollo<sup>27</sup>.

It is a seductive argument, but at the same time a rather flimsy one. It is, of course, always tempting to relate visible changes in the archaeological record to known historical events. But if the archaeological record is also used as evidence for those events, then the argument quickly becomes circular. It also makes an assumption that amphictyonic control over the sanctuary came in the form of a hostile takeover, with the Amphictyons pushing aside the local inhabitants and asserting their more sophisticated will. Michael Scott provides the most explicit rendition of this idea:

»The Amphictyony seems to have taken charge of the rebuilding program (we can only imagine the chagrin this must have caused the inhabitants of the city of Delphi as their sanctuary was now rebuilt by international committee). The upside, however, was a rebuilding program beyond their wildest dreams«<sup>28</sup>.

This is essentially a colonialist fantasy, in which the backwoods Delphians play the part of the ›natives‹, awed by the sophistication of the international organisation: which is a strange idea given the Delphians' intensive contact with the outside world, compared with the relative isolation of some members of the amphictyony.

Too much here is uncertain. It is not necessarily the case that the *peribolos* wall represented the first demarcation of the sanctuary. Some Archaic and Classical sanctuaries were marked by boundary stones; periboloi were built in different sanctuaries at very different times<sup>29</sup>. In any case, with the sanctuary prospering, yet potentially vulnerable, the Delphians themselves may easily have decided both to enlarge the temenos and to surround it with a defensive wall. If anything, this might suggest that they did not at this stage have the protection of a relatively powerful body such as the amphictyony.

21 Speus., Letter to Philip 8; Aeschin. 3, 107.

22 See discussion at Robertson 1978, 54–60; Londey 2015, 222 f.

23 See references at Sánchez 2001, 58 n. 4; Sánchez himself op. cit. 79 f. taking a cautious approach to which may be added: Lefèvre 1998, 14–16 (cautiously); McInerney 1999, 166. 171 (confidently); Scott 2014, 72. 75 (confidently).

24 Luce 2008, 67–72.

25 Luce 2008, 108.

26 Luce 2008, 96.

27 Luce 2008, 98–111; Bommelaer 2011; Scott 2014, 74 f.

28 Scott 2014, 94.

29 Sourvinou-Inwood 1993, 7. 12 n. 55. 56.

## Delphic ambition and the Homeric Hymn to Apollo

There is one key piece of literary evidence which may bear on both the issues addressed above. The Homeric Hymn to Apollo is probably to be dated to sometime in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Efforts to date it more closely have generally been based on a supposed reference to the First Sacred War, a reference which disappears if we accept the war as fictional<sup>30</sup>. Yet the Hymn contains no hint of the existence of the amphictyony. It is true that some have interpreted the god's final warning to his Kretan priests that if they do not behave they will be subjected to new masters as a reference to the amphictyony<sup>31</sup>. But really the argument again quickly becomes circular (especially as this supposed reference is used to date the hymn on the assumption that in some way it is a reference to the First Sacred War<sup>32</sup>). The reference is too vague and, if it were to the amphictyony, too hostile<sup>33</sup>. In passing it should be noted that there is also no reference to the Pythia: presumably she too as an institution post-dated the hymn.

As noted above, the 6<sup>th</sup> century was the period of radical transformation in the sanctuary. The building of the *peribolos* was only the start. After the very shadowy previous temple burnt down, accidentally according to Herodotus, in the mid-6<sup>th</sup> century<sup>34</sup>, whoever was managing the sanctuary undertook a massive, and no doubt expensive, remodelling of the site, including the vast terrace fronted by the polygonal wall. This was a truly ambitious program, and the long period before completion very late in the 6<sup>th</sup> century may well imply that it outstripped the resources of its architects. But who were these ambitious men?

Contrary to the *communis opinio*, this does not have to be a case of the amphictyony entering the fray with grandiose plans to upgrade their new sanctuary. As noted above, scholars such as Jacquemin, Luce and Scott have attempted to read the archaeological evidence at Delphoi in the light of a pre-existing assump-

tion that the early 6<sup>th</sup> century should yield evidence of the amphictyonic take-over. But the evidence can equally easily be read as evidence for the Delphians themselves becoming ambitious for the sanctuary as they sensed its increasing success in attracting wealthy visitors and dedicators. The construction of the Corinthian treasury, possibly under the patronage of the Corinthian tyrant Kypselos<sup>35</sup>, may in particular have suggested the direction in which things might go.

One motivating factor for this ambitious undertaking may well have been elite competition within the Delphian polis, with some families pushing the idea of radical expansion while their opponents may have been obstructive to such grandstanding or simply financially cautious about the immense costs involved<sup>36</sup>. All this would be speculation if it were not that the Homeric Hymn to Apollo reflects versions of mythology which directly buy into some of the potential arguments.

On the question of Delphoi's relationship with its own region, the Hymn is decisive. Though there is a large local population to help build the temple (h. Ap., lines 298–299), Apollo recruits his priests from far afield by hijacking a ship sailing from Knossos and setting up its Kretan sailors as priests and speakers of oracles (lines 388–524). When the Kretans arrive at Delphoi, the first question they ask is how they will support themselves economically in this place (lines 525–530)<sup>37</sup>. Apollo's answer is exactly what proponents of expansion of the sanctuary will have said to the financial doubters: each of them, knife in hand, will be kept busy slaughtering all the sacrificial animals which the tribes of men will bring them (lines 531–537)<sup>38</sup>. Earlier in the Hymn, Apollo has issued what amounts to a prospectus for his *perikallēs* temple, promising crowds of visitors from far afield – the Peloponnese, the mainland (*Europe*), and the sea-girt islands (presumably thinking of the Aegean)

<sup>30</sup> Chappell 2006, 332–335 (accepting the difficulty of dating the Hymn, but also allowing the possibility of a late-7<sup>th</sup> cent. date); Londey 2015, 235.

<sup>31</sup> h. Ap., lines 540–544. See discussion at Lefèvre 1998, 13 n. 20; 349 f.; Sánchez 2001, 63–66; Chappell 2006, 331–335.

<sup>32</sup> Chappell 2006, 332–335.

<sup>33</sup> Londey 2015, 234 f.

<sup>34</sup> Hdt. 2, 180; 548 B.C. according to Paus. 10, 5, 13. The date cannot be considered reliable, and probably depends on a synchronism with the fall of Kroisos of Lydia, but it is apparently not inconsistent with the archaeological evidence.

<sup>35</sup> Scott 2010, 41–45.

<sup>36</sup> Herodotus has probably drawn the figure of 300 talents (Hdt. 2, 180) more or less out of thin air, but the cost of remodelling the site and building a substantial new temple will surely have stretched the resources of a small polis and certainly represented a gamble on the future.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. McInerney 2010, 130.

<sup>38</sup> McInerney 2010, 142 has also suggested that the Hymn displays a competitive desire to out-compete other sanctuaries of Apollo.

– all bringing hecatombs for sacrifice as they consult the oracle (lines 287–292)<sup>39</sup>. Delphoi stood to gain economically from visitors in other ways, of course, but the emphasis in both passages on sacrificial animals might also provide a hint of the thinking which may have led to marking off the sacred land for grazing, to supply the insatiable needs of the sanctuary and, perhaps, to provide an income stream from agistment fees.

On this reading, the Homeric Hymn reflects a moment in Delphic history when local ambition led to the grandiose enlargement of the sanctuary, well before the amphictyony was on the scene. After that we must speculate. By the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the amphictyony was apparently in charge at Delphoi. That

could be linked with aggressive southwards Thes-salian expansionism<sup>40</sup> but I would still return to my earlier suggestion<sup>41</sup> that the Delphians found they had overreached themselves, both financially and perhaps organisationally<sup>42</sup>, and were happy to be rescued from their problems by the amphictyony. Alternatively, internal conflicts between elite families at Delphoi may once again have played a role. The archaeological evidence cannot be decisive. Yet around 525 a second *peribolos* was built, less defensively minded than the earlier one, but enclosing an even larger area<sup>43</sup>. This could plausibly represent an injection of amphictyonic funds and a renewed confidence that the ambitious works, and the temple at their heart, would now be completed.

## Delphoi and Phocis

The supposed excision of Delphoi from Phocis, certainly a cause of anger for Philomelos in 356<sup>44</sup>, is a mirage, a piece of political propaganda which has sucked modern scholars in. Certainly, in the ›Catalogue of Ships‹ Homer includes Delphoi (›Pytho‹) among the Phocians<sup>45</sup>, but I doubt if this should be pressed too far. Since the Catalogue does not travel any further west, this was the only region where Delphoi could have been placed, while the two Phocian heroes named seem rather generic: one never appears elsewhere in Homer, while the other dies twice, with different patronymics<sup>46</sup>. The Homeric ›Hymn to Apollo‹ may be relevant here as well. Kyriakidis has argued that the Hymn's view of the legendary past is designed to emphasise the separateness of Delphoi specifically from Phocis, since (as discussed above) the Kretan sailors whom Apollo recruits to be his priests may be conceived of as ancestors of all the Delphians, who are thus marked out as being separate

from the surrounding tribes of men, presumably the Phocians (but equally, in fact, the local Locrians)<sup>47</sup>.

The story of the Kretan sailors does, no doubt, suggest a special status for the Delphians, or at least for the priests at the sanctuary, but whether this should be seen specifically as being at the expense of the Phocians depends on when we imagine the emergence of Phocian identity. McNerney has sought to place the development of Phocian identity in the late 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., partly as a response to pressure from the Thessalians, but possibly also as a means of entry as an ethnos into the amphictyony when the latter expanded its operations into Central Greece<sup>48</sup>. In that case, Delphoi will already have become a major international sanctuary before the question of Phocian ethnicity could become an issue. Eventually the unified Phocians could see a point in laying claim to Delphoi; but there is no evidence for that before the Second Sacred War of the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>39</sup> The passage is a further indication of the absence of the amphictyony from the Hymn: the Aegean islands (apart from Euboea) were never members of the amphictyony, while the Peloponnesian cities remained peripheral (providing one *hieromon* out of 24 in the 4<sup>th</sup> cent.).

<sup>40</sup> On which see now Franchi 2016, 239–327.

<sup>41</sup> Londey 2015, 233.

<sup>42</sup> The former is suggested by the story at Hdt. 2, 180 that the Delphians went as far afield as Egypt to collect contributions for the temple building. The story, an exoticising tale about Amasis the wise ruler, is not exactly reliable: if we take it seriously, however, then Amasis' death in 526 places this contribution a full two decades before the completion of the temple. Pace Morgan 2003, 130, I would suggest that Herodotus' reference to the amphictyony

in this story is quite possibly an anachronistic error, a retrojection of arrangements which would seem natural in the 5<sup>th</sup> cent. (or even by the very end of the 6<sup>th</sup>). Organisational problems are a large subject, to which I hope to return elsewhere. For an abridged version of some preliminary comments, see Londey 2023.

<sup>43</sup> Luce 2008, 95–98; Bommelaer 2011.

<sup>44</sup> Londey 2010.

<sup>45</sup> Hom. Il. 5, 519; discussion at Kyriakidis 2011, 78.

<sup>46</sup> See comments at McNerney 1999, 123.

<sup>47</sup> Kyriakidis 2011, 81–85.

<sup>48</sup> McNerney 1999, 156 f. 165. Genealogical explorations, such as those in Franchi 2017, seem to me fascinating but ultimately inconclusive on the question of when Phocian identity first emerged.

<sup>49</sup> Thuc. 1, 112, 5; cf. comments at Londey 2010, 37 f.

After 346, the Delphians were considered one of the twelve member *ethne* of the amphictyony, apparently at the expense of the Perrhaebians and Dolopians, each of whom was reduced to a single seat on the amphictyonic *synedrion*<sup>50</sup>. This may have been a new arrangement, made in the aftermath of the Third Sacred War and the expulsion of the Phocians, but in reality it may equally have been part of the deal when the amphictyony first took control of Delphoi in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. There is simply no evidence. If the latter, then it represented a clear assumption that Del-

phoi was separate from Phocis; but a change in 346 may be more likely, in effect in order to shore up Delphic independence against Phocian claims. And it may be added that Delphoi itself was rather remote from major Phocian centres, and was closest to Amphissa. Delphoi was, in truth, in an ambiguous position, situated on the slopes of a Phocian mountain, Parnassos, yet perched above a plain which might equally be claimed as Locrian: in 340, those accused of tilling sacred land were, after all, not Phocians but Locrians<sup>51</sup>.

## Conclusion

In the foregoing I have tried to suggest more fully than before ways in which we can make do without the First Sacred War as an explanatory tool. The key is the early development of Delphoi as a major, independent sanctuary, not part of the territory of any polis, but rather with a rich web of international connections. Given early Greek reluctance to live in urban centres too close to coasts, it should not surprise to find the plain below Delphoi used to raise and graze animals, many (but not necessarily all) for sacrifice, an arrangement eventually formalised by bringing the area under the sanctuary's management as sacred land. Equally, given the early development of Delphoi and the late development of Phocian ethnicity, it is likely that the question of whether Delphoi was originally Phocian never arose until, perhaps, the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

On the other hand, there was at some point a genuine transition from Delphic independence to amphictyonic control. But to assume that a war is necessary to bring about such change is a failure of imagination. I have suggested an equally plausible scenario, in which late in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. the Delphians welcomed the involvement of the amphictyony so that they could complete their ambitious remodelling of the sanctuary and rebuilding of the temple. Given that the First Sacred War almost certainly never happened, these alternative accounts are what we should be looking for.

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<sup>50</sup> The two earliest extant lists, from 343/342, are at CID 2, 36 I.1–11. 21–36.

<sup>51</sup> For a full discussion, see Londey 1990.

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# Zusammenfassung – Abstract – Περίληψη

## Phokis, Delphoi und die Amphiktyonie

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**Zusammenfassung** Bereits früher habe ich argumentiert, dass wir Noel Robertsons Ansicht akzeptieren sollten, dass der Erste Heilige Krieg ein fiktives Ereignis ist, welches im 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. vornehmlich aus politischen Gründen erfunden wurde. Dennoch sind Historiker gegenüber Robertsons Argumenten skeptisch geblieben und versuchen weiterhin, ihre Darstellung des 6. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. in Delphoi um einen nicht stattgefundenen Krieg herum zu gestalten. Es gibt bessere Erklärungen für die Schlüsselphänomene in Delphoi. Die Existenz des heiligen Landes kann als eine organische Entwicklung in einem Gebiet angesehen werden, das von Weidewirtschaft dominiert wurde, zu einer Zeit, als die Griechen eher ungern in der Nähe des Meeres lebten. Die Einrichtung der Amphiktyonie in Delphoi, für die die archäologischen Beweise weniger entscheidend sind als bislang behauptet, ist wahrscheinlich eher eine Partnerschaft zur Lösung finanzieller Probleme als eine kriegerische Übernahme. Schließlich entwickelte sich Delphoi zu einem wichtigen Heiligtum vor der vollständigen Konzeptualisierung des phokischen Ethnos und spätere phokische Ansprüche auf Delphoi müssen als politische Propaganda und nicht als Geschichte verstanden werden.

**Schlagwörter** Delphoi, Phokis, Amphiktyonie, heiliges Land, Tempelbau

## Phocis, Delphoi, and the Amphictyony

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**Abstract** I have argued before that we should accept Noel Robertson's view that the First Sacred War is a fictional event, invented largely for political reasons in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Yet, historians have remained sceptical of Robertson's arguments, and continue to try to shape their account of the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. at Delphoi around a non-existent war. There are better explanations for the key phenomena at Delphoi. The existence of the sacred land can be seen as an organic development in an area dominated by pastoral farming in a period when Greeks were reluctant to live close to the sea. The establishment of the amphictyony at Delphoi, for which the archaeological evidence is less decisive than has been claimed, is more likely a partnership for the solution of financial problems than a hostile takeover in the context of a war. Finally, Delphoi developed as a major sanctuary before the full conceptualisation of the Phocian ethnos, and later Phocian claims to Delphoi should be read as political propaganda, not as history.

**Keywords** Delphoi, Phocis, amphictyony, sacred land, temple building

## Η Φωκίδα, οι Δελφοί, και η Αμφικτυονία

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**Περίληψη** Έχω υποστηρίξει και παλαιότερα ότι θα πρέπει να δεχτούμε την άποψη του Noel Robertson πως ο Πρώτος Ιερός Πόλεμος αποτελεί φανταστικό γεγονός, που εφευρέθηκε κυρίως για πολιτικούς λόγους στον 4ο αιώνα π.Χ. Παρόλα αυτά, οι ιστορικοί έχουν παραμείνει σκεπτικοί απέναντι στα επιχειρήματα του Robertson και συνεχίζουν να προσπαθούν να διαμορφώσουν τη δική τους παρουσίαση του 6ου αιώνα π.Χ. για τους Δελφούς γύρω από έναν ανύπαρκτο πόλεμο. Υπάρχουν καλύτερες εξηγήσεις για τα σημαντικά φαινόμενα στους Δελφούς. Η ύπαρξη της ιερής γης μπορεί να θεωρηθεί ως αντικείμενο οργανικής εξέλιξης σε μία περιοχή όπου κυριαρχούσε η κτηνοτροφία, κατά την περίοδο που οι Έλληνες ήταν επιφυλακτικοί να ζήσουν δίπλα στη θάλασσα. Η άφιξη της Αμφικτυονίας στους Δελφούς, για την οποία τα αρχαιολογικά ευρήματα είναι λιγότερο καθοριστικά απ' ό,τι έχει υποστηριχθεί, είναι πιθανότερα μία σύμπραξη για τη λύση οικονομικών προβλημάτων, παρά εχθρική κατάκτηση στο πλαίσιο ενός πολέμου. Τέλος, οι Δελφοί αναπτύχθηκαν ως σημαντικό ιερό πριν από την ολοκλήρωση της διαμόρφωσης της έννοιας του Φωκικού έθνους, και οι μεταγενέστερες φωκικές διεκδικήσεις στους Δελφούς, θα έπρεπε να θεωρηθούν ως πολιτική προπαγάνδα, κι όχι ως ιστορία.

**Λέξεις-κλειδιά** Δελφοί, Φωκίδα, αμφικτυονία, ιερή γη, οικοδόμηση ναού