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INVENTORIES AND OFFICIAL RESPONSIBILITY: RESPONSE TO MICHELE FARAGUNA

The relation of monumental inscribed texts to the practice of law and government, addressed on the example of classical Athens and Delos in Michele Faraguna's careful analysis, is a long-standing problem both in Greek and in Roman legal history. As my own specialism lies in a much later period, I shall, in this response piece, work back from some comparable later evidence to the particular examples discussed in his paper, focussing more on these broader methodological issues than on the light thrown by his study on the Athenian institutional context.

A wide range of approaches to this issue has been tried, not all of them equally convincing. Few Roman legal historians, for instance, would fully follow Callie Williamson's provocative suggestion to wholly disregard the practical value of the publication of Roman statutes and decrees on permanent media, above all bronze, for all the problems with their readability and with interpreting their relation to the wooden tablets.¹ It is clear, nevertheless, that a range, or perhaps better to say a continuum, of possibilities exists: from ritual practices and what Angelos Chaniotis has recently termed 'creation of memory', to the more immediately practical uses, with a variety of possibilities in between, often exhibiting features of both.²

So, for instance, the famous dossier of the city privileges of Aphrodisias on the end-wall of the stage building in the city's theatre operates through preserving and advertising (a very selective version of) memory of a unique city status in the increasingly unstable political environment of the mid-third century AD. It would be rash to deny its usefulness, or its connection with the civic archive, but, as rightly pointed out by Chaniotis, the designation of it as an 'archive wall' is prone to lead

¹ Williamson 1987; Williamson 1995. Contrast Crawford 1988.

² 'Creation of memory': Chaniotis 2014, and his note to *SEG* LXI 679. For a classic case-study of the ritual use, see Beard 1985 on the *acta fratrum Arvalium* at Rome. These interpretative problems are, of course, not limited to the monumental records: a powerful, though far from indisputable, case has been made for even the Roman government, the largest producer of documentary records in the ancient Mediterranean history, using documents primarily as part of the civic ceremony and a branch of elite literary activity (Purcell 1986). Contrast, for the argument for 'the immense administrative knowledge wielded by the Roman state', Dolganov (forthcoming 2021).

into error.³ Perhaps the best known Greek inventory from the period of the Roman dominion, a list of dedications to the sanctuary of Athena Lindia on Rhodes, forms part of what is somewhat misleadingly known as the ‘Lindian temple chronicle’. It is undoubtedly a work of literature, moving considerably further from the documentary record than the texts from Aphrodisias, let alone the inventories from the classical period discussed here by Michele Faraguna.⁴ On the other hand it is, as pointed out by Alain Bresson, based on a comprehensible documentary principle, that of recording the gifts to the sanctuary which had been lost by the date of composition (which serves as a better explanation for the absence of any gifts from the Romans than an ideological exclusion).⁵ Indeed the decree of the Lindians preceding the list of dedications and the chronicle of epiphanies makes an explicit reference to letters and public records among other types of available evidence.⁶

On Delos, where the accounts of the *naopoioi* form one of Faraguna’s two case studies, the much later texts from 156/5 BC, in the period of the second Athenian domination, include with the temple inventories a set of leases of sacred land, expressed in precise juridical language (*I.Délos* 1416 and 1417).⁷ At the same time, however, the sanctuary-by-sanctuary inventories, while careful and (if a document similar to what we have on the stone could be used in checking the contents) not written in a useless way, are not entirely consistent. The regular appearance of items that have not been weighed, have their weight reported from an inscription, or are listed as a group in particularly striking. At the Isideion, for instance, we are given a long list of unweighed silver items, which includes some that have their weight

³ Chaniotis 2014, 142: ‘Die Bezeichnung dieser Sammlung als “Archivwand” ist irreführend’. See now on these documents and the context of the inscription Kokkinia 2015-16, who stresses that it is impossible ‘to classify the dossier in terms of any known type of archival storage, public or private’ (quotation from p. 10).

⁴ *I.Lindos* 2 (revised edition in Higbie 2003), sections B and C. See on it now the contributions to Ampolo, Erdas and Magnetto 2014.

⁵ Bresson 2006, 543–4; deliberate exclusion of Roman gifts: the view of Higbie 2003, 168. For a methodologically perceptive exploration of both ritual and practical aspects of temple inventory stelae (focussing on Lindos, but with comments on the practice elsewhere), see also Shaya 2015, who argues for ‘a deliberate selection of objects as an integral grouping in order to convey a story’ (quotation from p. 30).

⁶ *I.Lindos* 2, A, lines 6–7: ἔκ τε τῶν | [ἐπ]ιστολῶν καὶ τῶν χρηματ[ισμῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων μαρτυρί]ων. The best text of this part of the inscription in Bresson 2006, 535–6.

⁷ See now Pernin 2014, 255–9 nos. 123–126 for the leases only, and for a legal commentary on select passages of *I.Délos* 1416, Vélissaropoulos-Karakostas 2011, II, 19, 42, 358, and 474–5. On the exact status of one of this properties, ‘the plot of the Pyrrhakidai’ (*I.Délos* 1416, B1, ll. 57–63 = Pernin 2014, 255 no. 123), see Papazarkadas 2011, 186–7 and 294–5. It seems possible to me that by that date it is rather a traditional name of that plot of land from the name of former owners; compare e.g. the involved description of an estate in *IG IX.1* 61, A, ll. 20–21 (with a full discussion of the legal aspects in Girdvainyte 2019). This seems to be also the solution implicit in Pernin’s translation of the document.

reported from an inscription (in one case, 1 drachm and 3 obols, hardly a difficult one to ascertain), ten silver models on a board, listed as group, and a golden, rather than silver, wreath, the weight of which is again reported from an inscription, as 1 drachm 1 obol.⁸ These inconsistencies do not, of course, in any way demonstrate the lack of practical purpose or that these inventories could not be used for bringing officials to account: no one who had to deal with the modern university or college accounts in any detail could possibly think that. They do, however, raise important questions, particularly when we consider that the readability of *I.Delos* 1417 leaves much to be desired.⁹ Demands on readability need not be put unrealistically high: when talking about *euthynai* or similar procedures we are of course dealing with a highly literate segment of the population. Nevertheless, an undifferentiated list, not making a serious effort to visually emphasize its rubrics (occasional vacats are used entirely inconsistently), would not have been a convenient tool to use for anyone.

These later records bring me back to the methodological point brought up at the beginning of Faraguna's paper, when discussing the relationship of extant documents to legal procedures, and in particular, in this case, to the procedures for accountability. Insofar as we follow him in adopting the case-by-case approach advocated by Peter Rhodes and Robin Osborne – which seems to be the only way to account properly for the variability of the available evidence both in content and in presentation – we need to be thinking very hard about the limitations of what particular case studies may be telling us. The two cases of the Delian *naopoioi* and of the *epimeletai* of the Athenian dockyards, which he revealingly discusses, are not only distinct from later documents, but also, as he points out, exhibit certain important differences between themselves. Notably, the naval records do not appear to be an inventory of the equipment that was actually present at the dockyards, and, in his words, 'do not seem to make sense if the purpose of the records was to provide a complete inventory of the material effectively available to be used for military purposes'. Such delays in the accounting record would not, of course, in and of themselves rule out their use as an instrument of accountability. To provide just

⁸ *I.Delos* 1417 = Prêtre 2002, 199–238, face B, col. I, ll. 74–82: ἐν τῷ Ἰσιδαίῳ· ἀργυρᾶ ἄστατα· φιάλην λείαν [ὁμ]φαλὸν ἔχουσιν ἐμ πλινθείῳ, ἀνάθημα Ὀλύμπου Καρυστίου, ὀλκή [ὡς ἡ] ἐπιγραφή ΔΔ ἄστατον, ἐφ' ἱερέως Φιλοκράτου· [ἄλλην] ἐμ πλινθείῳ, πρῶσωπαῖ ἔχουσιν τρία, ἀνάθημα Δαφνίδος, ἐπὶ σανιδίου· δακτύλιος χρυσοῦς [ἐπὶ] | σανιδίου λίθον ἔχων, ὀλκή ὡς ἡ ἐπιγραφή ΗΗΙ· φιάλιον ἀργυροῦν [ὡς δακτύλ]ων [ἔξ], ἐπιγραφή· Εὐτυχ[ὸς Δά]ζου Τερ...τινος ἄστατον· λαμπάδα, | ἀνάθημα vac. Βερενίκης, ἄστατον· τύπια ἐπὶ σανιδίου ἀργυρᾶ δέκα· στέφ[ανον χρυ]σοῦν, ἀνάθημα Νικομένου· Ἐλεάτου ἄστατον, ὀλκή κατὰ τὴν ἐπιγραφὴν | ΗΙ, ἐφ' ἱερέως Σαραπίωνος· καὶ ἐπὶ σανιδίου ὀφθαλμοὶ δύο. For modern attempts at the valuation of the Delian treasures based on epigraphic evidence, Migeotte 2014, 615–6, with further references.

⁹ See Prêtre 2002, Plate XIII, for a good image of the side A. Cf. also Shaya 2015, 26, for a lively discussion of the practical difficulties presented by the Delian inventory inscriptions.

one comparison from another historical period, the classic exposition of the workings of the twelfth-century English Exchequer by Reginald Lane Poole abounds in irregularities and procedural delays of this kind, but it would be hard to doubt that the Exchequer was used by the Angevine Kings to bring sheriffs to account.¹⁰ Faraguna's exploration of the role of naval records in the *diadikasia* of IG II² 1613, ll. 166–239, shows one possible mechanism that could work in the Athenian navy case.

They do, however, raise questions about our ability to generalise from individual cases either about the processes of accountability or about the role of the inscribed record in it. It is, for instance, not altogether implausible that, in the case of the sanctuaries of Delos, which, for obvious reasons, was both a more 'static' one than that of the dockyards of Piraeus, and had significant sacral meaning for the officials and the *demos* of Athens, permanent record played a considerably more central role in accountability, even if not necessarily a very successful one in practical terms.¹¹ This would, indeed, seem to be the implication of Richard Hamilton's attempt to 'map' the temple inventories on Delos and the Acropolis, and particularly of his persuasive conclusion that the inscribed inventory was primary to the board (*peteura*) of the Delian accounts, based on the evidence for payments to scribes who were copying from the stele onto a board. He provides an important parallel from Athens itself, where in the detailed description of how the checking of the accounts of the Treasurers of the Goddess in 362/1 BC will be conducted, the inscribed stelai before the Chalkoteke precede the making of the copies by the secretary of the Council.¹² Against this, though, as Hamilton emphasizes, 'the inventories were not systematic' and 'the decree's requirement that gold and silver be separated was unheeded', which does not prevent him from accepting a basic fiscal function for at least the Acropolis, if not the Delian, inventories.¹³ If that is so, the differences with the dockyard records are perhaps less pronounced than I have suggested above, even if the irregularities compared to the actual state of affairs are inevitably less obvious to us.

To return now from treasury inventories to revenues and expenditure, and to the case of the accounts of the amphictyons and *naopoioi* discussed by Faraguna: making an exact assessment of the role of the inscribed record in their case becomes even more problematic if we follow Faraguna in accepting and extending Véronique Chankowski's convincing argument that the *hieropoioi* stelae are compilations from

¹⁰ Poole 1912; see now for the sheriffs' accountability at the Exchequer, Sabapathy 2014, 83–134, particularly the observations on 'the culture of accountability' at pp. 93–4.

¹¹ It is arguably important that, as noted by Migeotte 2014, 678, the city finances, compared with the sanctuary finances, 'ont laissé peu de traces' on Delos.

¹² Delos: *I.Délös* 287, A, l. 197; 399, A, l. 97; Athens: *IG* II² 120, ll. 8–33, with Hamilton 2000, 347–8.

¹³ Hamilton 2000, 347.

a number of preceding accounts.¹⁴ The demonstration that the inscribed accounts of the *naopoioi* incorporated trial records, in particular the compelling detective story of *SEG LI 1001* (= Chankowski 2008, no. 55), undoubtedly shows, as Faraguna argues, the close relationship of the inscribed record to documents on perishable materials. It also, however, raises questions about the mix of different documentary genres in the emerging monumental record, the timing of the inscription relative to the trial, and the practicability of referring to the record of a trial once the accounts were rendered and the scrutiny hearings complete.¹⁵

Faraguna's study makes a convincing argument both for a role of accounts in the process of *euthynai*, and for a close relationship of his two types of monumental records to it. What, to my mind, remains as a further problem, is where exactly within the continuum between the symbolic and practical we need to place the surviving inscribed stelae. Elements of both practical and ceremonial aspects can be discerned, and some of the practical aspects may have been more relevant to the perishable version.¹⁶ Rhetoric of civic accountability is expressed by reproducing actual documents, and that makes the stelae a valuable source of evidence for the *euthynai* process, a conclusion of undoubted comparative significance in showing the possibility (and power) of such reproduction. Athenian and Delian accounts seem to stand in a much closer relation to the archival practices than the Aphrodisian privileges dossier or the 'Lindian Chronicle' from which we started our discussion. The practical use of monumental inscriptions remains a more intractable question,

¹⁴ Chankowski 2013, 942: 'La stèle de compte faisait ainsi la synthèse de la situation de plusieurs comptes: le compte courant de caisse sacrée mais aussi, communiquant avec celui-ci, l'état des avoirs de la caisse sacrée'. Compare the discussion about the publication of the *senatus consultum de Pisone patre* of AD 20, described in the publication clause both as *haec senatus consulta* in the plural and as *hoc senatus consultum* in the singular (SCPP, ll. 168–73, emphasis mine: *placere uti oratio quam recitasset princeps noster, | itemq(ue) haec senatus consulta, in aere incisa, quo loco Ti. Caes. Aug. vide|retur, ponere<n>tur, utiq(ue) hoc s(enatus) c(onsultum) in cuiusque provinciae celeberrima{e} | urbe eiusque{i} urbis celeberrimo loco in aere incisum figere|tur, itemq(ue) hoc s(enatus) c(onsultum) in hibernis cuiusq(ue) legionis at signa figeretur. censu|erunt*). While there is no doubt that the surviving inscription is related to the actual decree(s) of the Senate, the exact nature of this relationship remains elusive and controversial; for the two main views, Eck, Caballos and Fernández 1996, 257–62, and Mackay 2003.

¹⁵ Chankowski 2013, 930: 'la synthèse de ces différents registres'. See also Chankowski 2013, 923, for the display and recycling of the stelae. The monumental effect of the multiple account stelae would have been considerable, but we may perhaps compare the visual effect of the countless bronze tablets with grants of citizenship to auxiliary soldiers on the Capitol from the principate of Claudius on (Williamson 1987, 166): those undoubtedly had a practical function too, as the surviving provincial *diplomata* amply confirm. (For an attempt at quantification, see further Eck 2008.)

¹⁶ The persuasive argument of Chankowski 2013, 933 (with further references), for different hierarchical levels of accounts is significant here, but in a way bypasses the problem: was her 'grand livre de compte' still a practical document in this form?

and could (as later evidence from Delos may suggest, and as Faraguna himself acknowledges at the end of his paper) differ somewhat even between these two types of records.

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