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RESPONSE TO LÉOPOLD MIGEOTTE

The methodological issues posed by documents from (or data relating to) the *polis*-communities of classical and hellenistic Greece are well-known. As context for the evidence itself, and for any inherent problems it raises, stand broader conceptual questions: the ‘unity of Greek law’; the balance between the general and the particular. And just as it is (and was) between states, so it is (and was) within them – at any rate, those states large enough to embrace, as the vast majority did, subdivision into constituent parts.

Few poleis were larger than Athens; and after Kleisthenes the sub-state units of prime importance were its demes: 139 of them (by John Traill’s defining criteria), of all shapes and sizes.¹ How far were the demes told what to do – and how to do it – by central government, and how far did they enjoy autonomy? Sometimes the unifying, controlling hand of the centre is plain to see. Each and every deme, for instance, had to appoint a *demarchos*, to perform some functions on the city’s behalf as well as those his own deme might choose to give him.² And as regards those *polis*-wide functions, each and every deme had to maintain lists of its members, its own *demotai*; lists which, in aggregate, became rosters of the citizen-body as a whole.³ In other areas, though, what the evidence suggests (and indeed sometimes what it demonstrates) is diversity, to a degree which prohibits, or at least inhibits, across-the-board generalisation. Instead, what is called for is a methodology designed to showcase the particularity of the document in question and to enhance and enrich the exegesis of it with comparative material deployed just as much for contrast as for analogy.

IG I³ 258 (formerly II² 1172) is such an item, *par excellence*; and Professor Migeotte, with his lifetime of experience in work of this kind, handles it superbly. Of course, despite his title (‘Pratiques financières dans *un dème* attique...’ – my emphasis) more demes than little Plotheia are invoked: Aixone, Eleusis, Ikarion, Myrrhinous, Peiraeus, Prasiai, Rhamnous, Teithras. So too are Athenian institutions other than demes (tribes, phratries, orgeones); and so too is extra-Athenian material,

¹ See Traill (1975) 73-103; Whitehead (1986) 16-21. Traill (1986) 133-134 with 142-144 presents Acharnai as a bipartite deme, which if true would have the effect of raising the total to the mathematically less awkward 140 (cf. Traill, 1986, 123), but for doubts about this see Whitehead (1987) 442-443.

² Whitehead (1986) 58-59, expanded 121-139.

³ Whitehead (1986) 97-109, 258-260.

especially from colonies and cleruchies. But everything serves the end of shedding light on this Plotheia document, unique as it is in so many ways.

When I was invited, and agreed, to be the Respondent to this paper, I naturally had no idea what Professor Migeotte would say about IG I³ 258, and no expectation (accordingly) of how far, and if so how strongly, I would need to express dissent from him. Once I had received his paper and read it, the answer became clear: hardly at all.⁴ It turned out, first, that his basic avenue of approach was one that I myself had found good reason to endorse, when studying the document some years ago.⁵ It was therefore a relief, if I may so put it, not to have to revisit the broad prefatory questions: the fundamental relationship between the two parts of the document, and the sense in which its opening ‘totals’ are to be understood. But secondly and especially, Professor Migeotte’s opinions and suggestions on matters of detail and background, throughout, nearly all strike me as eminently reasonable. I have tried to find fault with them. Save for a few details, presented below, I cannot. That is bad news, perhaps, for anyone who would have relished gladiatorial combat over these issues. But the good news is more important: at least two people with some claim to expertise in the area are at one in the story that IG I³ 258 has to tell.

In the role, then, of seconding Professor Migeotte’s motions rather than opposing them, I would draw attention to his emphasis – more pronounced than in previous treatments⁶ – on the sense one gets, from this document, of the Plotheians *changing their ways, at a time of financial difficulty*. When the stone used to be dated c.400, that ‘time’ was shortly after the end of the Peloponnesian War, and in circumstances when plenty of other evidence illustrates what, nowadays, one would call a recession engulfing Athens and Attica. But latterly the David Lewis dating is followed by everyone, up to and including Professor Migeotte himself: 425-413. Of course, those termini are not purely epigraphical ones; they reflect epigraphical criteria (letter-forms, in the main) shaped by historical ones. With the pre-war years not in question, apparently, the period 431-425 is deemed to be ruled out because of the “Periklean” evacuation of Attica, operative (in theory at least) until the annual Spartan invasions stopped.⁷ Later, 413 marks the full-time enemy occupation of Dekeleia – which, we should note, was within close striking distance of Plotheia. (The site of Plotheia was near present-day Stamata, on the far side – from an Athenian starting-point – of Mount Pentelikon.)⁸ So here are the Plotheians, as a

⁴ His bibliographical coverage is as up-to-date and as comprehensive, in respect of earlier work, as one would expect; but under the latter heading add, perhaps, Millett (1991) 171-176.

⁵ Whitehead (1986) 165-169.

⁶ The remarks of Whitehead (1986) 151 n.9 were suggestive but undeveloped.

⁷ Suspicions that the evacuation was less complete and/or less long-lasting than readers of Thucydides are invited to believe have been voiced by e.g. Hornblower (2002) 153 and Rhodes (2006) 102. The issue is important but cannot appropriately be pursued here.

⁸ Traill (1975) 41.

functioning body of demesmen, making decisions about their financial problems, and committing those decisions to stone. They are doing this either during the closing years (as events were to prove) of the Archidamian War, with peace unforeseeably ahead, or else with the Peace of Nikias already signed – and with nobody wishing to heed pessimists like Thucydides who were anticipating an imminent resumption of hostilities. Either way, deme life, even in a tiny (one-councillor-sized) community like this, no larger than a village, was manifestly resilient. The Plotheians did want to sustain their cults and festivals, as Professor Migeotte comments, and the key to that was revenue, and the appropriate officials, institutions and mechanisms needed for raising, managing and spending it.

Apart from the demarch (singular) and the treasurers (plural) mentioned *obiter* in the opening list of ‘totals’, these officials are the first item of business in the decree itself (lines 11ff). I have three brief points to make about this:

(i) In a recent study of the Epakreis (and related matters) which cites this document, Nikolaos Papazarkadas presumes in passing that that the ‘*archontes*’ here are the successive holders of the office of demarch.⁹ Neither Professor Migeotte nor I would share that presumption.

(ii) Professor Migeotte understands (and translates) the accusative plural adjective *axiochreos* in lines 12-13 as ‘solvable’. I agree that it can, often, mean that, as when (e.g.) guarantors or sureties are being characterised;¹⁰ nevertheless I would want to give the word in the present context a broader connotation like ‘trustworthy’ (the sense applied to witnesses in Demosthenes 40.61 and elsewhere).¹¹ Note incidentally – either way – that *sortition* to produce officials who meet this requirement necessarily presupposes a short-list of *prokritoi* who already do.¹²

(iii) Whereas both Professor Migeotte and I follow the line of interpretation, going back to the nineteenth century, which takes ‘the archons’ in line 12 as the *object* of its verb, I am (nowadays) troubled – in a way that he, apparently, is not – by the definite article in the phrase. Were it not there, it would be crystal clear that the decree is *creating new officials* (‘instituer’, as he has it). But since the article *to(u)s* is, unavoidably, there, I think we are driven to a scenario not considered by Professor Migeotte: that this decree is following up an earlier decision in principle to create these officials, without, as is now addressed here, determining in detail how they are to proceed.

⁹ Papazarkadas (2007) 25 n.15.

¹⁰ For this see e.g. Aristoph. *Ekkles.* 1065; Plat. *Ap.* 38C, *Leg.* 871E, 914E; and frequently in juridical inscriptions from outside Athens.

¹¹ See also *IPArk* 17 B102-3. For this adjective in another Athenian deme decree (and with a somewhat different sense) see IG II² 1183.28-29 (Myrrhinous).

¹² Compare (*mutatis mutandis*) ?Aristot. *Ath.Pol.* 8.1 and 22.5 on procedures for choosing the nine city archons.

Professor Migeotte's discussion of the *ateleia* provisions in the document (building, to be sure, on foundations laid by John Davies and Sally Humphreys) is especially noteworthy. This is, surely, *ateleia* of a general kind (not restricted to the sphere of cult and religion); and the idea that the standing fund designed to pay for it was built up by subscriptions from the wealthier demotai,¹³ even if it has no precise parallel, is fully congruent with the general body of evidence of how demes managed their communal lives and tapped the resources represented by their richer members. In the second part of the paper he makes a good case for thinking that the Plotheians' decision to plunder (as one might say) the *ateleia* fund for their financial needs was both novel in itself and sustainable only in the short term. In the concluding summary this seems to have become an all-embracing assessment of what the Plotheians are doing in IG I³ 258: '[c]es décisions étaient sans doute temporaires et, dans un avenir meilleur, ils pouvaient espérer revenir aux pratiques antérieures'. When drafting this response I began with some doubts about this analytical inflation, so to speak, but on the whole I think it justifiable – even if what the Plotheians hoped for in, say, 420, may not be what the future actually brought them in the longer run.

So: is anything known of (or from) fourth-century Plotheia? In 1986 I raised the possibility that we do have just one other document from that deme in that period;¹⁴ and since it is just about the only relevant datum that Professor Migeotte does not deploy, it deserves a mention here. Here is the text:

ΟΙ ΔΗΜΟΤΑΙ *vacat* ΕΠΙΑΚΡΕΕΣ
ΕΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΑ
ΑΡΞΑΝΤΑ

The original editor, the archaeologist and Byzantine expert Mrs Eleni Tsophopoulou-Gkini,¹⁵ characterised this as part of a 'decree' of a deme, and this terminology was taken over without comment in SEG 32.144. It would be more accurate, though, to call it a summary (or outcome) of such a decree, one honouring or commemorating an individual who had 'held office'. Compare the even more telegraphic IG II² 3214 (from the third century, and from an unidentifiable deme): ΜΝΗΣΙΘΕΟΝ ΟΙ ΔΗΜΟΤΑΙ (*in corona*), i.e. 'the demesmen (*sc.* crowned) Mnesitheos'. There we have the name of the honorand but not the reason for the crowning. Here, in Tsophopoulou-Gkini's document, we have no name – most oddly – but we do have the background. The individual concerned has held office in respect of the Apollonia (the prepositional phrase seems bound to belong with the participle); and both 'the demesmen' – his fellow-demesmen, presumably – and the

¹³ Davies (1971) 470-471 (Prokles) and 490 (Speusandros) registers two Plotheians affluent enough to be trierarchs in the third quarter of the fourth century.

¹⁴ Whitehead (1986) 386-387, no.97; noted in SEG 36.189.

¹⁵ Tsophopoulou-Gkini (1980) 94-95, with photograph.

Epakreis have seen fit to mark that fact. And one can go further, I think. While (the) Epakreis are named, the demesmen concerned are simply ‘the *demotai*’, just as in IG II² 3214. This suggests that the document was theirs, with (the) Epakreis in a merely associative role.

So what deme was it? The *editio princeps* assigned the document to the deme Hekale. At that time, thirty years ago, Hekale was identified (by Traill, amongst others) with the present-day town Mygdaleza (where this stone was found built in to the wall of the excavated Byzantine church).¹⁶ Traill subsequently changed his mind and held that Mygdaleza was the site of the deme Anakaia (with Hekale moving to present-day Koukounar(t)i).¹⁷ However, as Papazarkadas points out, the risk of circular argument is clearly high here.¹⁸ Rather than contributing to the already complicated discussion of the topography of this mini-region, I prefer simply to take this opportunity to repeat my suggestion that Tsophopoulou-Gkini’s stone migrated the short distance – some 2-3 km. – from Plotheia/Stamata.¹⁹

More than the mention of (the) Epakreis, which raises its own problems (explored by Papazarkadas), what principally supports the idea of a link is the phrase ΕΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΑ – precisely the one that 258 uses,²⁰ and unparalleled elsewhere in Attica. Let it at least be conceded that connection between these two documents is a very strong probability. Unfortunately, the date assigned to the later one (second half of the fourth century), as well as the possibility that it is incompletely preserved,²¹ seriously impede the chances of relating it in substantive and historical terms to 258. Robert Parker’s summary discussion in his *Athenian Religion* claims that, from SEG 32.144, ‘we now know that the Epakrians appointed an *archon* to organise specific festivals, an apparently archaic practice also found in the League of Athena Pallenis’.²² I wonder. I have argued already that that ‘the demesman’ are in charge of this *document*, as such; it may therefore be that the deme, rather than the Epakreis, had appointed this *official*. True, even if that is correct, he is not self-evidently the same kind of archon as the financial ones created by 258; but in all honesty, who can say?

¹⁶ Traill (1975) 46.

¹⁷ Traill (1986) 131, 137.

¹⁸ Papazarkadas (2007) 30 n.49.

¹⁹ In SEG 32.144 the location is given as ‘Mygdaleza, near Stamata’.

²⁰ Notwithstanding the fact that J. and L. Robert read *eis* (rather than *es*) from the photograph: *BE* 1983, 105 no.187.

²¹ In SEG 32.144 it is noted, presumably by Pleket and Stroud, that Tsophopoulou-Gkini ‘does not print a text but gives *this much* in majuscules’ (my emphasis). From the photograph (pl.23β) in the ed.pr. one could not reasonably conclude that she omitted anything, given the large spaces both above and below the six words published; however, that still leaves the possibility that the complete, original stone said more.

²² Parker (1996) 330 (including a text of SEG 32.144 with tacit adoption of the Roberts’ *eis*: n.20 above), with 330-331 on Athena Pallenis. See also Parker (2005) 461.

From our perspective, then, the Plotheians relapsed into the frustrating obscurity out of which 258 had temporarily emancipated them, and which it was the fate of so many other demes never – even this once – to escape.

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