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THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MUSEUM OF DELPHI

ROSINA COLONIA

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MUSEUM OF DELPHI



John S. Latsis
Public Benefit Foundation

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DELPHI, the navel of the earth – as it has been called since ancient times – was one of the most important political and religious centres of ancient Greece. The temple of Apollo, the ancient theatre, the stadium, the Charioteer and other valuable finds, and all the works of art that are exhibited, as well as their ageless symbolism, are condensed in the book published by the John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation and EFG Eurobank Ergasias S.A.

The Archaeological Museum of Delphi has been in operation since 1903, and is one of the most significant museums in the world, as testified by its large number of visitors.

The special interest and primary emphasis of this book are focused on the thoroughly detailed presentation of the enormous value of the Archaeological Museum of Delphi.

The selection by the editors of this particular Museum confirms the warm interest in promoting one of Greece's most important sites in terms of the art and knowledge of antiquity.

I should like to express my conviction that this publishing venture and the resulting book will be enthusiastically received by all of us, the scholarly community, art lovers, and more broadly, by men and women of culture in Greece and abroad.

I salute this extremely important publication and would like to extend my hearty congratulations to the author of the book, archaeologist Rosina Colonia, and to all those who collaborated in this effort.

GEORGE A. VOULGARAKIS
Minister of Culture



THE ANCIENT HELLENIC CIVILISATION, with its unique cultural works of literature and the visual arts, has been an ageless source of inspiration, as well as the foundation and primary linchpin for the cultural advancement of Europe and indeed of the entire world. Greek museums, most of which are archaeological, are contemporary repositories of the priceless artistic heritage with which a benevolent fate has so lavishly endowed modern Greece.

Any contact we may have with museums, in addition to being a decisive factor in our cultural and historical education, constitutes a gesture of respect to the sacred artefacts of the ancient Hellenic world and an expression of gratitude to all the archaeologists, art historians, ordinary people and honoured sponsors who have joined forces in the effort to find, preserve and demonstrate the continuous fabric of the ancient Hellenic civilisation.

The John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation and Eurobank EFG have been visiting Greek museums for many years now, and have dedicated to each one of them a valuable book which, through its academic soundness and visual aesthetics has, we hope, contributed to the deeper knowledge and understanding of these particular pages in the history of Greek culture. Within the context of what has now become our established, traditional cultural initiative, we are already exploring actions that will offer new access to this prized material, through the use of new technologies, by society as a whole, both Greek and international.

For 2006, we at the John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation and Eurobank EFG have chosen to visit one of the most significant sanctuaries of the ancient world, Delphi. This was where the two eagles that had been sent by Zeus to each of the farthest ends of the earth eventually met, thus determining the centre, or navel, of the earth, and making it globally renowned as the site associated, like no other in history, with oracles and with man's centuries-long need for prediction and prophecy. In compensation for receiving this divine oracular gift at Delphi, every leader and every city offered its choicest works of art as pledges of their profound faith, devotion and gratitude to the god Apollo, but also as evidence of their political and cultural supremacy.

Dedications that have been preserved through the centuries are depicted here, accompanied by a rich commentary, thus creating a special type of communication with the art-loving reader who wants to become better acquainted with the sanctuary of Delphi. Our infinite thanks and gratitude are extended to all those eponymous and anonymous men and women who have contributed to creating this book.

MARIANNA J. LATSIS

THIS BOOK is a product of the favourable concurrence of two factors: on the one hand, the cordial and generous assistance provided to our country's Museums by the John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation and Eurobank EFG, and on the other, the recent re-exhibition at the Delphi Museum that has recently celebrated its one-hundredth anniversary (1903-2003).

Since 1903, when the Delphi Museum opened its doors to the public, it has participated in the turbulent history of this country, and is recognised as one of the most important museums in Greece. The old exhibitions expressed the spirit of their times, and reflected the concept of beauty prevailing at each period. But every new presentation, albeit bearing the seal of its creator's knowledge and inspiration, constitutes primarily a context for the exhibits. Because the Delphi exhibits speak for themselves: they have the power to command respect and captivate the visitor, inviting him or her to admire them, and leaving this visitor with the memory of their charm and the enigma surrounding them. Even though the exhibits on display today constitute no more than a small but representative part of the dedications seen by Pausanias at Delphi, and an even smaller part of the many more that inundated the sanctuary during the years of its heyday, they indisputably continue to delight people with their wealth, variety and beauty.

Many top archaeologists have answered their call, contributing countless pages to the literature about Delphi. An entire School, the "Delphic School" was created to study, identify and publicise the treasures from the sanctuary. Delphi has been included in archaeology textbooks, it has adorned art books; some of the Delphi finds, such as the Treasury of the Siphnians, are landmarks in the history of ancient Hellenic art, while others, even though more than one hundred years have elapsed since they came to light, continue to be a focal point of scholarly discussions even today, owing to unanswered questions regarding their identity and interpretation. But above all, they still charm the broad public who flock, like ancient pilgrims, to admire the monuments of Delphi.

The fate of shouldering the heavy burden of the fourth consecutive exhibition of the renovated Museum fell upon me and my colleagues at the Delphi Ephorate of Antiquities. This responsibility was for us a challenge to tame and re-marshal this precious material; to correct, as far as possible, the mistakes of the past, based on the conclusions of the most recent research; to show the exhibits at their best and to make clear their organic interconnection, in accordance with the precepts of modern museology. And we felt that we were living in the atmosphere of a "Second Coming" of the ancient artefacts, similar to the feeling created by the Great Excavation when they were first unearthed from the darkness of centuries.

It was this enjoyment of the new presentation of the antiquities that I wanted to convey as much as possible in this book, in whose pages its readers will see Delphi exhibits that are both familiar and unfamiliar, in their new exhibition context. This was why I accepted with pleasure the proposal by Mr Vangelis Chronis to write the text for the book about the Delphi Museum at this particular moment in time.

Such an ambitious venture would have been impossible without the thoughtful initiative of Mrs Marianna Latsis and the valuable assistance of those who cooperated on the publication: the knowledge and guidance of Mrs Irene Louvrou, the artistic zeal of Mr Giannis Patrikianos and Mr Dimitris Kalokyris, and the discreet but substantial participation of Mr Vangelis Chronis from beginning to end. To them and all the others who contributed in any way to the completion of this book, I would like to express my sincere thanks. I would also like to thank my friend Mr Dominique Mulliez, director of the French School of Athens, for generously making available photographs and drawings from the School's archives, and the translator of the English edition, Ms Judy Giannakopoulou, who I know devoted a great deal of time and effort to the faithful rendering of the text and the archaeological terms.

ROSINA COLONIA



THE DELPHI MUSEUM

The chronicle of a century

THE HISTORY OF THE DELPHI MUSEUM spans the entire 20th century. The architectural ideas of eponymous architects were expressed in its building, and the museological and aesthetic viewpoints of four generations of French and Greek archaeologists have left their imprint on its exhibitions. In their hundred years of museum life, its antiquities have experienced the adventures of four re-exhibitions, as well as evacuation from the Museum in the 1940s. They were removed; some were once again consigned to the earth, while others were taken away from Delphi to safeguard them from the perils of German-Italian Occupation and the Civil War.

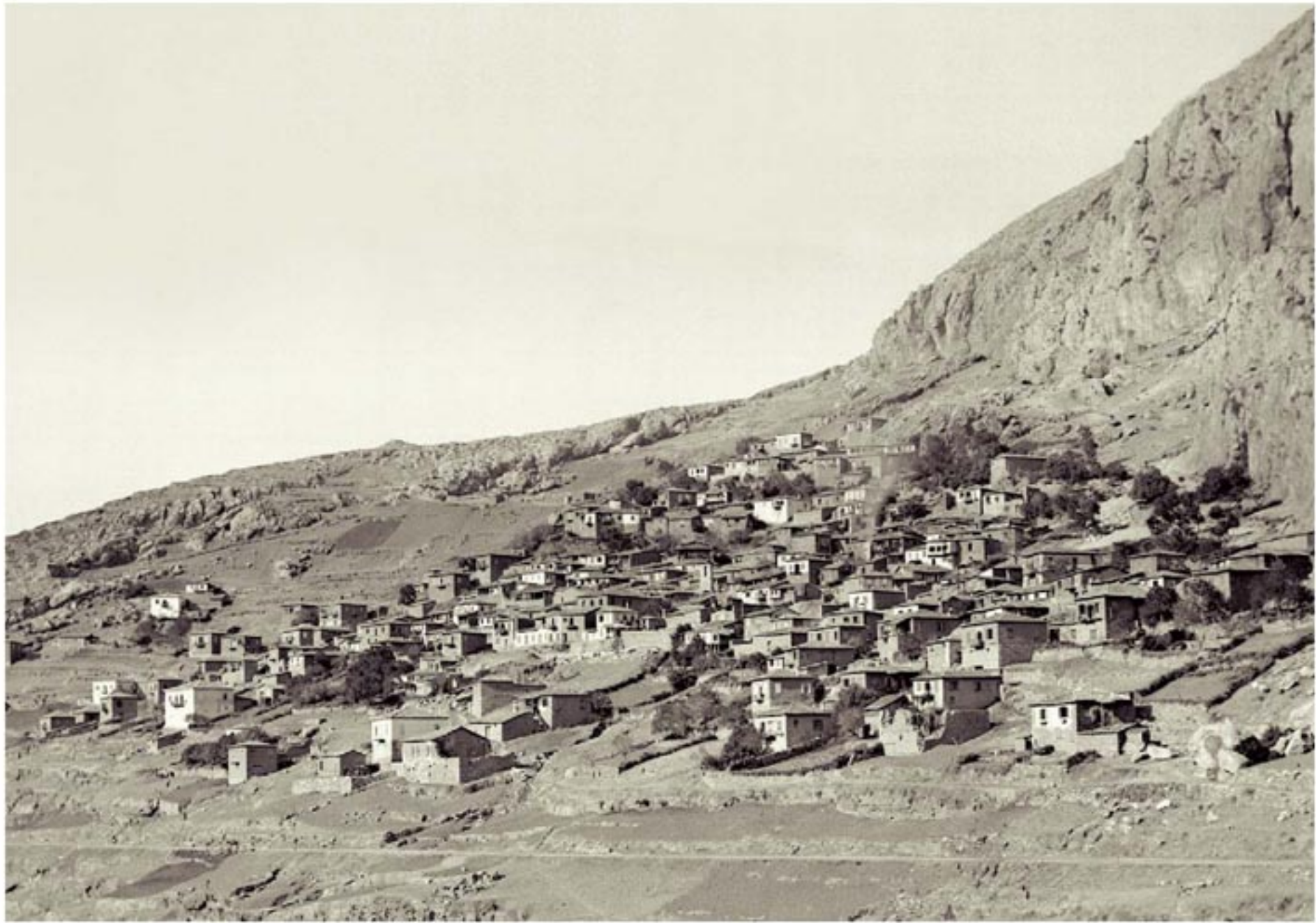
Seeing the photograph of the Delphi Museum on early 20th-century postcards, one could not imagine that this small building with pitched roofs over the side wings, reminiscent of a provincial railway station, evolved through repeated additions and reconstructions into the massive structure with the imposing stone-clad façade that we see today. The first Museum, designed by the French architect A. Tournaire and built with the financial assistance of Andreas Syngros, was officially opened in 1903, the year that marked the official completion of what is known as the great French excavation at Delphi.

In its six halls, "the sculpted treasures of Delphi, some superb architectural remains and a number of important inscriptions were arranged attractively," as described in the Museum guide by the first Ephor Antonis Keramopoulos. This description gives us the character of the first exhibition. The finds from the sanctuary of Delphi were displayed with no chronological or other thematic classification, since they had just come to light after being buried for centuries, and there had been insufficient time to study them. But with the help of the international press of the period, they made their triumphant rounds of the entire civilised world, and their radiance overshadowed the conclusions of the scholars. Keramopoulos' enumeration of the exhibits also shows the category of antiquities that dominated the first Museum, as well as subsequent exhibitions in the 20th century, where the impressive array of architectural sculptures, both reliefs (friezes, metopes) and full sculptures (caryatids, pediments, acroteria), which decorated the monuments on the site were displayed. These were precisely the antiquities that constituted the most brilliant discoveries of the large-scale French excavations of the sanctuary and that make the Delphi Museum to this day the pre-eminent Museum of monumental sculpture in Greece.

The exhibition in 1903 was the personal work of the director of the French excavations, Théophile Homolle. The main criticism of this first exhibition was that the antiquities were so crowded that the museum resembled a warehouse. Its trump card lay in the reconstructions of entire monuments through the use of plaster casts, which lent the Museum an instructional air while at the same time creating a grandiose setting. The façade of the Treasury of the Siphnians, the columns of Aemilius Paullus and the Messenians, the acanthus with the dancers and the Sphinx were among the exhibits that were "reconstructed" in an extremely informative way, the better to enhance the Delphi monuments.

In a lecture about the Museum, Homolle stated in 1903: "Wherever the restoration of the monument was not possible with authentic material, it was supplemented with casts, not only to look more attractive, but also to allow the works of art to return to the position their creators had envisaged. Such a restoration took place in the Delphi Museum with the Treasury of the Siphnians, which today is standing with all the bril-

The second of the twin kouroi from Argos (Cleobis and Biton) being surveyed by Théophile Homolle, director of the excavation. It was found on 28 May 1894, and in the excavation diary is referred to as an "archaic Apollo".



The village of Kastri that was built over the ruins of the ancient sanctuary. Many of the monuments that the French excavation was beginning to reveal were detected in the courtyards and basements of the houses in 1892, after the site was appropriated and the inhabitants moved to a site west of there.

liance of its decoration." Through these replicas of the Delphic monuments, whose popularity was indicative of the artistic and museological views of the 19th century, the architectural aspect of the exhibition was overemphasised to the detriment not only of the small-scale art, which was virtually absent, but also of the sculpture. The downplayed presence of the Charioteer in the Museum, about which the scholarly archaeologist Giannis Miliades expressed his regret in the Museum guide of 1930, was typical: "Only Roman indifference could have tolerated this masterpiece standing for dozens of years in an inappropriate place."

This exhibition lasted for 32 years during which time it remained unchanged along general lines. It survived the repercussions of World War I unscathed and then experienced the spring of the interwar period and the great moments of the Delphic Festivals, when it welcomed famous visitors from overseas.

During this period, however, many new finds were unearthed, and the exhibits needed to be displayed in more spacious areas. Succeeding generations of archaeologists disputed the entire spirit of the 1903 presentation, with its many plaster restorations that were designed more to impress than to provide archaeological accuracy, and also showed evidence of mistakes. All this, together with the increased tourism in the interwar period led in 1935 to the decision to construct a new building that would incorporate the old one.

The new building (1935-38), which was influenced by the interwar school-building programme, and the concomitant exhibition that was completed on the eve of the war in 1939, in contrast to the earlier French exhibition, which expressed the echo of the great French excavation, proceeded with scholarly interest on the Greek side. During the previous 30 years, a new generation of experts on Delphi had sprung up, French and Greek alike. In addition to Keramopoulos, Christos Karouzos and Giannis Miliades were the Greeks involved



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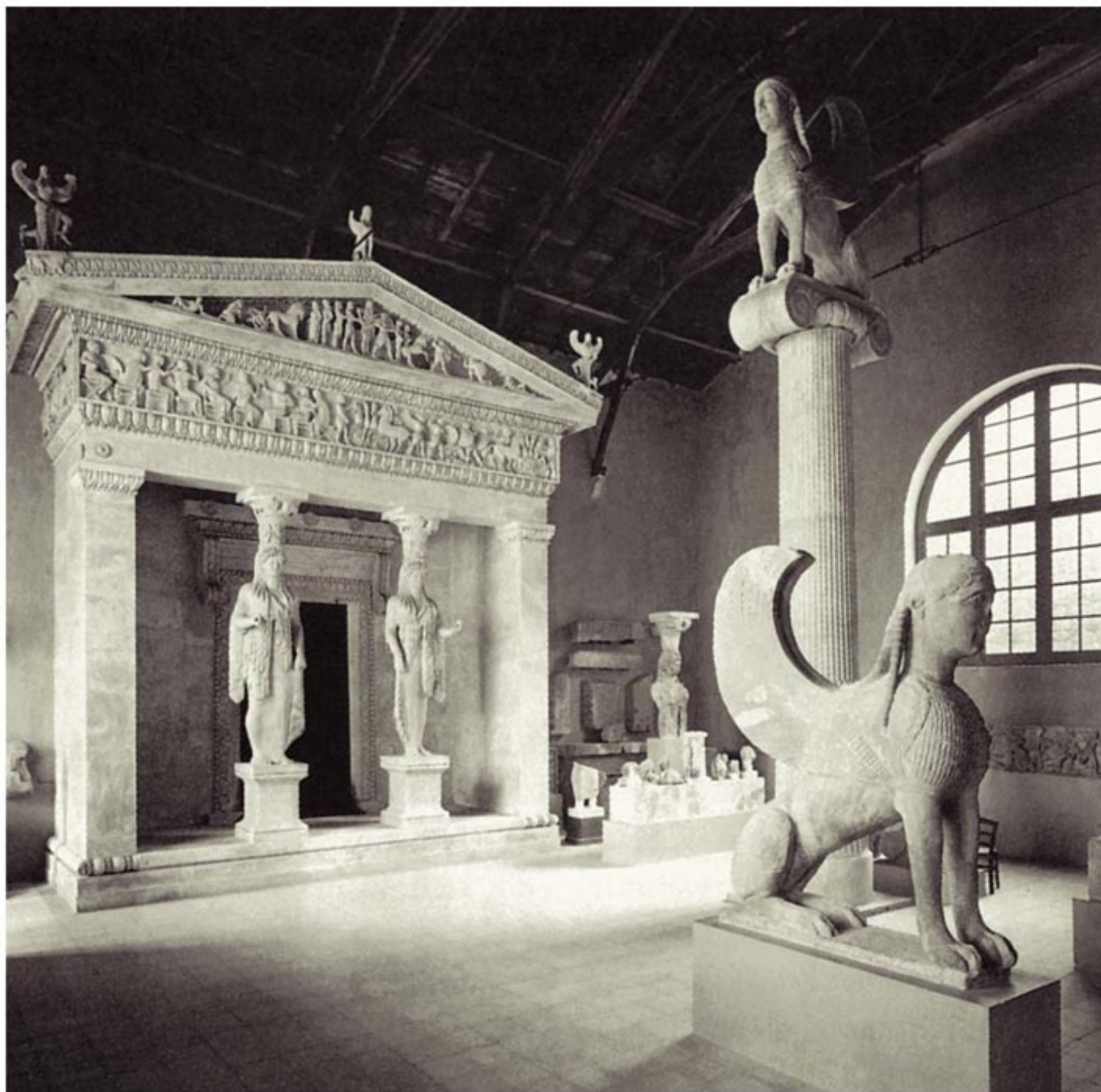
ABOVE: *The inauguration of the first Museum on 2 May 1903 in a festive atmosphere.*

LEFT: *The Charioteer in the first Museum.*

BELOW: *The antiquities emerge intact from their hiding places in 1952.*







The recreation of the west façade of the Treasury of the Siphnians in plaster. The exhibit, indicative of the neoclassical spirit of the times, remained at the Museum with all its inaccuracies and errors until 1935-36. Photo: Nelly's, 1927-1930.

Archaeologists and architects at Delphi during the first year of the excavation (1893). Seated in the middle is Théophile Homolle, the moving force of the excavation.



Scene from the production of Prometheus Bound at the Delphic Festival. Photo: Nelly's, 1930.





The renovated Museum of Delphi, 1958-2000 (architect: Patroklos Karantinos).

with Delphi, particularly Karouzos who became the Ephor of the region in 1928. And the person selected to draw up the new exhibition programme was Constantinos Romaïos, professor of archaeology in Thessaloniki.

Also present in Delphi was the patrician Pierre de la Coste-Messelière, the most famous figure in the generation of interwar French archaeologists, who studied the Delphi sculptures. His knowledge and aesthetic culture left behind the best writings on the Archaic sculpture of Delphi. His contribution to the new Museum was invaluable and has left indelible traces that can be seen to this day. He was assigned to supplement the ancient pieces and in general to work on the Archaic treasures. His name was associated with the hall containing the Ionic Archaic monuments (later called the Hall of the Siphnians), which was the highlight of the new exhibition. The removal of the plaster casts allowed the decorative wealth of the treasury of the Siphnians and the other Ionic buildings in the sanctuary to be displayed properly without the confusion of originals and copies. In the new exhibition, the antiquities were officially catalogued and placed chronologically in contrast to the rough layout of Homolle's hasty presentation.

The prewar exhibition was unlucky in that it never opened to the public. After the war broke out in Greece, the first task to be done at the Museum was to safeguard its antiquities from the repercussions of the fighting. The halls were evacuated, the marbles buried again under the Delphic earth, some in Roman tombs and others in pits that were dug in front of the Museum. Objects made of precious materials were exiled from their homeland. The chryselephantine pieces and the silver bull, which the French had found during their exploratory works on the Sacred Way three months before the outbreak of the war, were transferred to Athens to be held in the National Bank of Greece vault. This was followed by the Charioteer, who fled to the National Archaeological Museum, where he remained in exile until 1951.

The night experienced by the Delphic antiquities almost before their re-exhibition was complete was a long one, since it extended beyond the liberation of Greece, owing to the dangers of the Civil War. During this decade of war between 1940 and 1950, Delphi and its museum were not suitable for works of culture

because they were near a region under military surveillance, without the presence of a permanent archaeologist. Under these conditions, the weight fell upon the French Archaeological School, whose members, by fortunate coincidence, were stuck in Delphi during the period of the German Occupation, and thus they continued to study and engage in minor research. In 1952, after the antiquities had all been removed from their hiding places and the Charioteer returned, the exhibits were restored to their earlier position and, in this way, the public was able to see the prewar exhibition for at least six years in the same layout and with the small changes imposed by half a century of research and study of the Delphic monuments. It soon became obvious that the Museum required a new exhibition in conjunction with changes to the building that would ensure better conditions for the antiquities.

The third exhibition was marked by the renovation of the Delphi archaeological site in conformity with the more general contemporary viewpoint regarding the exploitation of monuments for tourism purposes. In 1958, the architect Patroklos Karantinos, the "most active and vigorous champion of the modern (architectural) movement in Greece" (D. Philippides, *Modern Greek Architecture*) was called upon to provide solutions that would highlight the antiquities in the existing building, in which only limited space was available. By re-designing the interior layout, he succeeded in creating two spacious new halls, while ensuring more light through the roof. In this re-exhibition, a substantial and decisive role was played by Christos Karouzos, a familiar face in Delphi, and an outcast of the previous exhibition. His employment at Delphi was now feasible, since his gigantic project at the National Archaeological Museum was nearing an end. But the museological study would not have been possible had it not been for the constant presence, firm guidance and constructive intervention by the Ephor of Delphi Ioanna Constantinou.

This third exhibition was a continuation of the more academic presentation of the ancient objects that had begun before the war and led to a layout focused on the sanctuary monuments in chronological order, but also with a further disengagement of the sculptures from their architectural setting and the eventual predominance of sculpture in the Museum.

The exhibition was an achievement by contemporary standards. Its official opening in 1961 coincided with the development of mass tourism, and throughout its long history, it received endless parades of visitors who, following the itinerary of the ancient pilgrims, disseminated knowledge of these antiquities to the ends of the earth. This was the exhibition that made the emblematic exhibits of the Delphi Museum –such as the Charioteer, the Sphinx, and the kylix depicting Apollo– known and popular figures everywhere.

On the threshold of the twenty-first century, this third exhibition, the longest in the Museum's history, seemed to have come full circle. The architect Alexandros Tombazis was assigned to redesign the façade of the building, to create a new hall for the Charioteer, to make changes in the interior layout to facilitate the flow of visitors, and to modernise the old halls. This architectural renovation constituted a challenge to the archaeologists of the Ephorate to draw up a new museological study that would highlight the thematic units in the Delphi Museum more clearly. But it also had to take into account the progress made in academic research which, in the last quarter of a century, has formulated new interpretations and restorations of the Delphic monuments and has discovered the lost identity of many antiquities that had been neglected when excavated, such as the sculptures from the pediments of the Classical temple of Apollo. Appropriate places had to be found for all of these in the renovated Museum.

The twenty-first century exhibition

Since the Delphi Museum was established and its first exhibition mounted, few new finds have come to light in the Delphic sanctuary, but many new conclusions have been drawn regarding the identities and interpretations of the Delphic monuments, and even more changes have taken place in terms of the principles and concepts of museology. The picture of today's exhibition –the fourth consecutive one in the century-old Museum of Delphi– which opened its doors just before the Olympic Games in 2004, is a long way from the crowded deployment of the ancient artefacts and the ostentatious reconstruction of the monuments in the very few

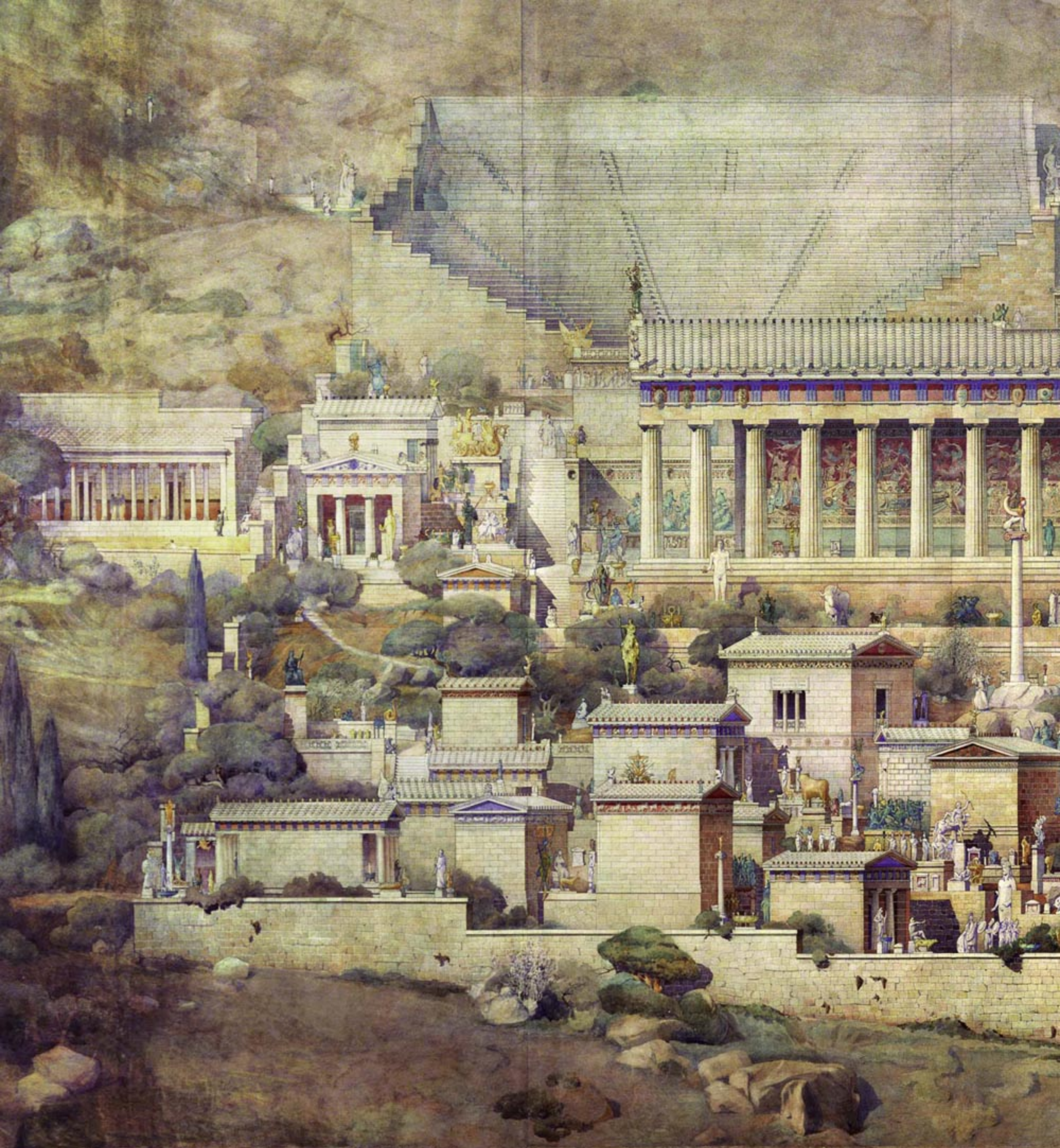


halls of the earliest building. Its exhibits are not lined up as autonomous works or scattered images in entries for some encyclopedia of ancient art, but classified into chronological units that are organically interlinked, constituting a historical novel whose pages cover twelve centuries, outlined through the history of the Exhibition. The religious, political and above all artistic activity of the most famous sanctuary in the pagan world and its oracle are narrated museologically from the period of its founding, which extends back through the mists of legend to the early Christian period.

At the same time, however, the dedications to the paramount Panhellenic sanctuary, which gathered the cream of artistic creation by known workshops and eponymous artists, constitute significant works of art. For this reason, the present Museum of Delphi, although much poorer than the outdoor Museum of votive offerings that was established in the sacred precinct of Apollo in the period of its zenith, is a model school of ancient Greek art, in which all its stages and many of its expressions are represented, and indeed frequently with examples that have been dated accurately through the knowledge offered by literary sources.

The 21st-century Museum (architect Alexandros Tombazis). Photo: N. Danielides.

Following pages: *Perspective reconstruction of the sanctuary of Delphi in accordance with the finds and written sources. Watercolour and India ink drawing by A. Tournaire (1894). École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts.*



RESTAURATION DU TEMENOS D'APOLLON

LES TEMPLES ACTUELS ET LES RECONSTRUCTIONS





FROM MYTH TO HISTORY

IFE IN DELPHI begins long before the history of the sanctuary of Apollo, which was founded on the site of a Mycenaean settlement (1500-1100 BC) clinging to the steep cliff of the Phaedriades. Its inhabitants must have had their own cults and must have performed religious rituals in their houses, the remains of which have been found in the deepest layers of the excavation, or on some altar or at the graves of their dead, in accordance with the customs of the period and of the local society. Nothing however has been found that testifies to the existence of a temple or any special site dedicated to worship, and the only finds that can be linked with these early cult activities are the many standing Mycenaean female figurines of the "phi" and "psi" type –this conventional designation is derived from their shape which resembles the letters Φ and Ψ respectively of the Greek alphabet– as well as seated ones, and a few zoomorphic figurines found in the area of the sanctuaries of Apollo and Athena Pronaia, to which the Mycenaean settlement and its cemetery extended.

Earlier archaeologists and historians of religion saw in these female figurines and in the Minoan stone rhyton –the precious ritual vessel in the shape of a lion's head (16th cent. BC) that was found under the temple of Apollo– archaeological proof of what the subsequent literary tradition has handed down to us with regard to the cults that existed prior to that of Apollo. They interpreted these artefacts as dedications to Ge or Gaea, the well-known Mother Earth of the Mycenaean pantheon, whom they regarded as the pre-eminent goddess on the sacred site of Delphi and its primitive oracle: she was the "prophet-mother Earth", the first prophetess of the oracle, as designated by Aeschylus in *The Furies*, who was succeeded by her daughter Themis and later by Phoebe. The latter gave the oracular tripod to Phoebus Apollo as a birth present.

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*First, in this prayer, of all the gods I name
The prophet-mother Earth; and Themis next,
Second who sat –for so with truth is said–
On this her mother's shrine oracular.
Then by her grace, who unconstrained allowed,
There sat thereon another child of Earth –
Titanian Phoebe. She, in aftertime,
Gave o'er the throne, as birth-gift to the god,
Phoebus, who in his own bears Phoebe's name.
He from the lake and ridge of Delos isle
Steered to the port of Pallas' Attic shores,
The home of ships; and thence he passed and came
Unto this land and to Parnassus' shrine.*

[...]

*And in his breast Zeus set a prophet's soul,
And gave to him this throne, whereon he sits,
Fourth prophet of the shrine, and, Loxias hight,
Gives voice to that which Zeus, his sire, decrees.*

(AESCHYLUS, *The Furies*, 1-10, 17-20)

(The Harvard Classics, *Nine Greek Dramas*, trans. E.D.A. Morshead, 1982)

The "master of wild beasts". God or hero taming a wild animal.



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Mycenaean terracotta figurines (1400-1200 BC)
Replica of a tripod throne with seated figure,
which has been interpreted as an early form
of the Delphic tripod.
Schematic female figurines of the "phi" (Φ) type.
Replicas of bulls.



Mycenaean terracotta figurines (1400-1200 BC). Schematic female figurines of the "psi" (ψ) type.

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The archaeological finds, however, are too poor to corroborate the myth that presents Apollo not as the founder of the sanctuary and its oracle, but as the conqueror of a site on which a prophetic female divinity was already worshipped. Figurines of the same type, the largest of which was made on a wheel, have been found on many Mycenaean sites. We know today that they were associated with early cults, but more careful study of the excavation data has shown that the majority of the figurines found in the sanctuary of Athena were not dedications to a previous female deity, but grave gifts. When the inhabitants of Delphi found them during the works to build the sanctuary in the 7th century, they did not remove them, but buried them reverently under the altar of the goddess, where they were found during the excavations. For them, these figurines were the venerated remains of a distant heroic age, which they knew from the Homeric epics, and anything from that era was an object of admiration.

Thus modern research disputes the historical accuracy of the myth that argues for the uninterrupted continuity of worship and prophecy in Delphi from the prehistoric period, regarding it as a later expedient, adapted to the theogonic pattern exhibited by the Hellenic pantheon of evolution from primitive, dark and chthonic deities to bright heavenly gods with secular traits. Delphic priests adopted the tradition of this succession, which was made known in particular by the poets of the 5th century BC as the symbolic expression of religious and political propaganda. Its aims were: to surround the sanctuary of Delphi and its oracle with the prestige of a legendary past whose beginnings went back to the most ancient times, to extol the moral role of the Apollonian religion that displaced the underworld deities of darkness and anarchy, and to impose order and civilisation.

Apollo, the brightest creation of polytheism, son of Zeus and Leto, belonged to the second generation of Olympian gods, i.e. to the last generation of the great gods. He arrived in Delphi comparatively late, coincid-

ing with the years of the cultural renaissance observed in Hellenic lands in the 8th century BC, after the dark centuries that had followed the flourishing of the Mycenaean period. The founding act that established his cult on this site is described in the "Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo", a poem which, although it came down to us accompanied by the name of Homer, was written later, in the 7th or early 6th century BC, i.e. in an age when the fame of the sanctuary had spread throughout the ancient world, and its principles and the direct descent of the new oracle had to be clearly disseminated. To glorify Apollo, the hymn recounts that the god descended from Olympus to earth in search of a suitable place to establish his first oracle for men. Having wandered through various regions of central Greece, the god arrived in the area of Crisa "beneath snowy Parnassus, a foothill turned towards the west: a cliff hangs over it from above, and a hollow, rugged glade runs under". (*Hesiod, Homeric Hymns, Epic Cycle, Homerica*, trans. Hugh C. Evelyn-White, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, p. 345 ll.282-285.) There he laid the foundations for his temple, whose glory would reach the ends of the earth. Later, he used his bow and arrows to kill the enormous she-dragon that was ravaging the area and left her to rot in the sun. "Now rot here," he told the dragon, "upon the soil that feeds man. You at least shall live no more to be a fell bane to men who eat the fruit of the all-nourishing earth and who will bring hither perfect hecatombs... but here shall the Earth and shining Hyperion make you rot." (*Hesiod, Homeric Hymns, Epic Cycle, Homerica*, trans. Hugh C. Evelyn-White, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, p.351 ll. 363-369).

From then on, Apollo acquired the epithet Pythian and the site where the dragoness lay rotting was called Pytho (*pythomai*=rot). Then the god had to find people who would look after his sanctuary and serve him. So he transformed himself into a dolphin (Apollo Delphinus) and having found a ship bearing merchants travelling from Knossos to Pylos, he pulled it to the nearby port of Kirra, and from there he led them to Pytho, as Delphi was known in the early years. These Cretan merchants became the first priests of the newly arrived god, reformers of an ancient cult.

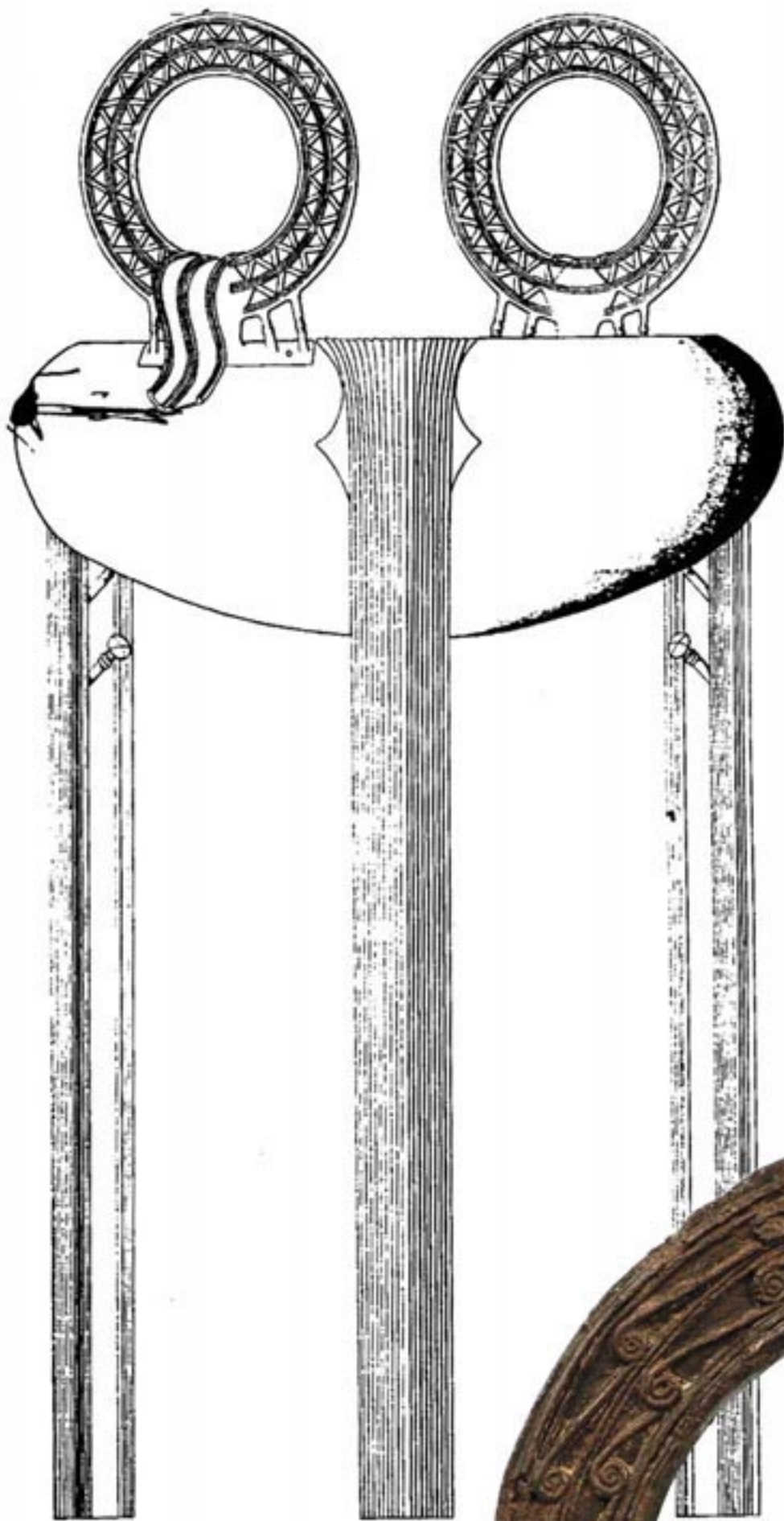
The early dedications

The early buildings associated with the worship of Apollo have been dated to the period when the Homeric hymn was written in the late 7th century BC. But the first votive offerings appeared much earlier, in about 900 BC, and then increased in number during the 8th century, revealing that the sanctuary of Delphi attracted pilgrims from all over Greece and that its patron deity and sole interpreter of prophecies was now Apollo. The rapid growth of the new sanctuary has been correlated with the Greek movement to colonise the shores of southern Italy and Sicily that began in the mid-8th century BC. In the past, the guiding role of the oracle in establishing Greek colonies in remote regions of the western Mediterranean was overemphasised. Today the authenticity of a number of early prophecies referring to the establishment of colonies is disputed and the opinion of scholars is that neither the priests of Apollo nor the Pythia, who always originated from Delphi, could have possessed sufficient geographical knowledge to indicate a favourable position for a colony and to direct new settlers there. This is why it is believed that the decision to send settlers was taken by the interested cities themselves, and that what they wanted was the approval of the god so as to ensure moral support for this dangerous mission. This fact alone, i.e. that cities would resort to requesting divine authority for their decisions, shows that the sanctuary of Pythian Apollo was already recognised as the religious centre of the Greek world.

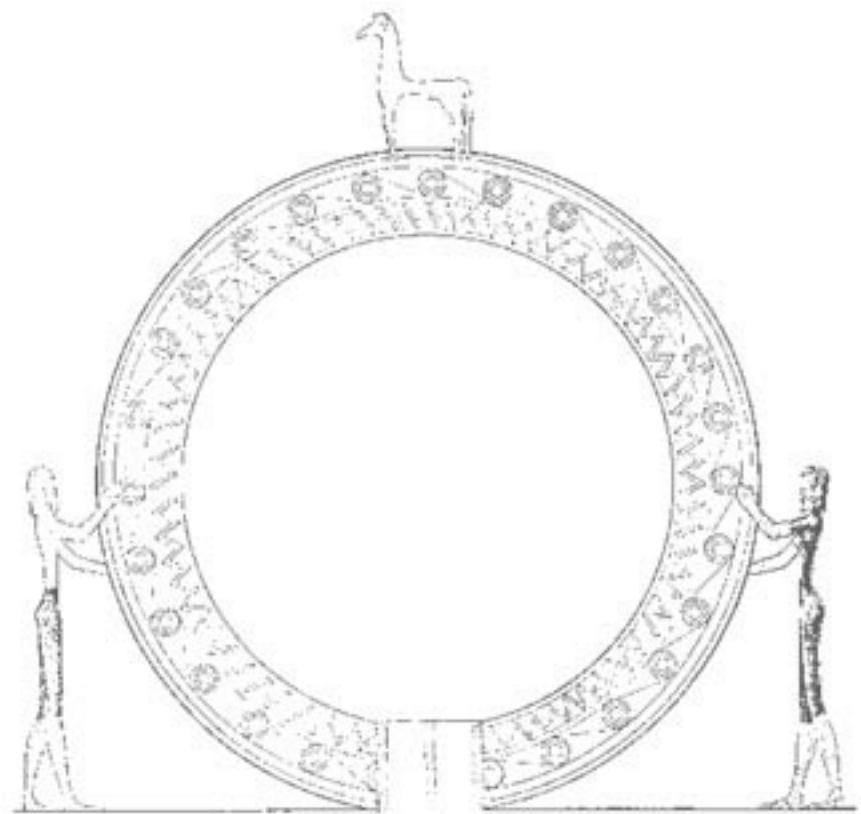
Among the early offerings of the faithful, the most official position is held by bronze tripods. Initially cooking utensils that consisted of a *lebes* (cauldron) supported on a base with three legs, they evolved, owing to the great value of their metal, into valued prizes in contests and precious votive offerings to sanctuaries. But here at Delphi, the tripod was charged with special symbolic meaning, for it was not just an ordinary religious vessel as in other Panhellenic sanctuaries, but was associated with the prophetic nature of Apollo and the process of delivering the oracle: the Pythia could comprehend and transmit the precious divine knowledge only when she was seated on the tripod that linked her with the chthonic powers, and thus it became the



Bronze figurines of horses that decorated the handles of a tripod. 8th cent. BC.



*Geometric tripod.
The legs are
an integral part
of the cauldron
(reconstruction).*



*ABOVE: Reconstruction of the handle of a Geometric tripod.
BELOW: Bronze ring-shaped handle with spirals attached
to the rim of a cauldron. It was decorated at the top with
a group comprising a horse and its groom (the horse
has been preserved). First half of the 8th cent. BC.*

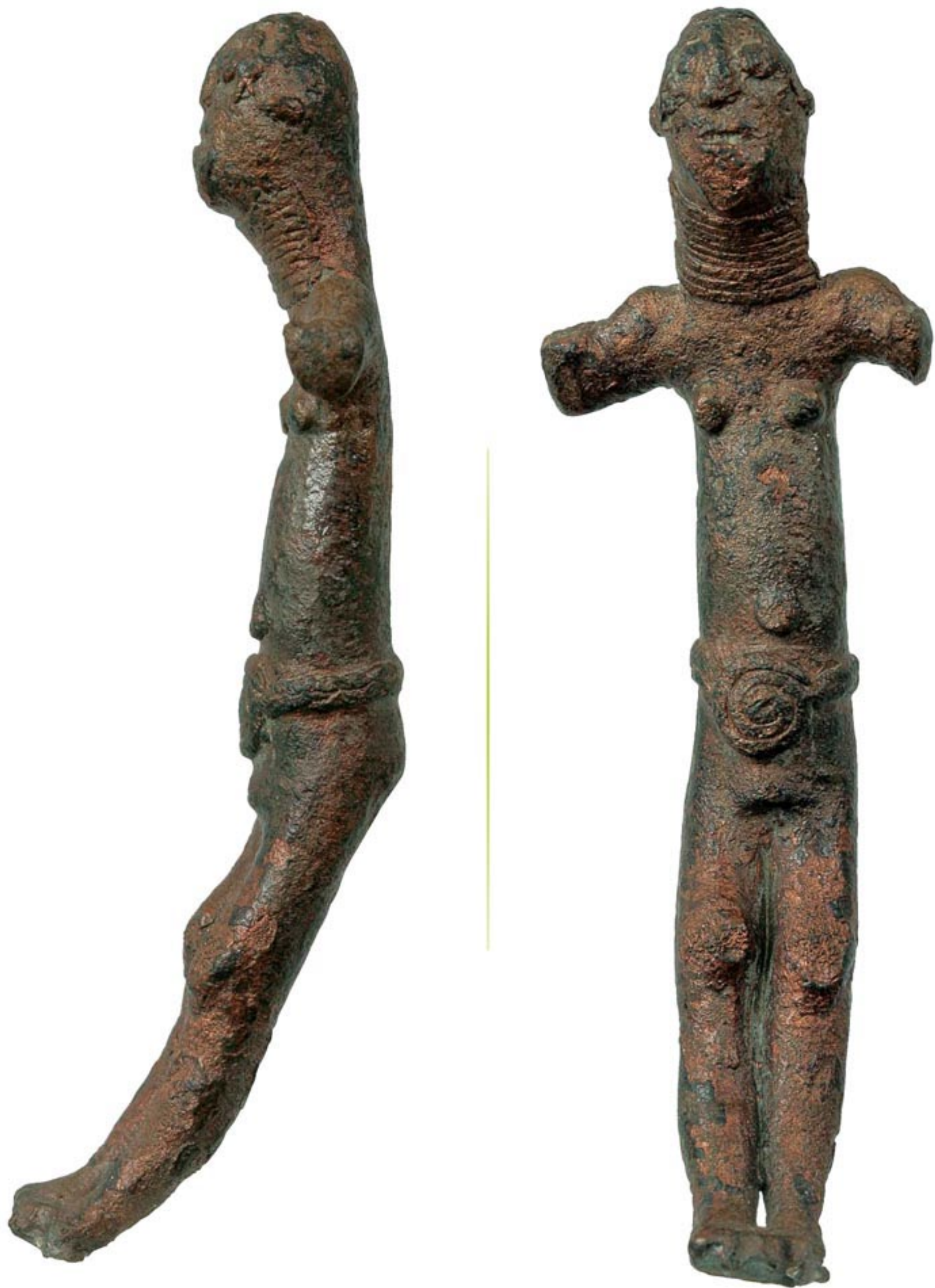




Bronze figurine of a bird that adorned the top of a tripod handle. First half of the 8th cent. BC.

Bronze ring-shaped handle on a tripod with openwork decoration and a bird on the top. Middle of the 8th century BC.





Bronze statuette of a woman wearing a girdle that forms a relief spiral in front and a necklace of nine successive circles. The curved position of the statuette was adjusted to fit the shape of the pot it decorated. Late 8th cent. BC.



Parts of legs from bronze Geometric tripods with hammered decoration. The first has an openwork plate on the joint with the cauldron. 8th cent. BC.

symbol and power guaranteeing the prophecy. This was why its possession was identified with the supremacy of the oracle.

None of these large vessels has been preserved intact, since the rough slopes of rocky Pytho, where they were erected, did not favour their preservation, even those that escaped the notice of the sanctuary's frequent looters. But the many fragments of the cauldrons and their supports have made it possible to reconstruct their shape and technique fully and to attribute them to one of the known contemporary bronze foundries in the Peloponnese and Attica. At the beginning, the Geometric type prevailed with the three legs and two upright circular handles that were attached to the rim of the hammered metal cauldron with nails. They were decorated using carved or repoussé techniques to render a variety of Geometric motifs.

Bronze Geometric statuettes appeared slightly later than the early tripods and were either dedicated as independent gifts standing on their own bases, or decorated the handles or rim of cauldrons. The statuettes were mainly of humans and horses. Male figures predominated among the anthropomorphic statuettes, thus indicating the historic shift that had taken place since the Mycenaean period, when primacy was held by female figures. The type of the helmeted warrior brandishing a spear, and the proud animal, the horse, symbolised the privileged status of their dedicators in the contemporary aristocratic society of hoplites (men-at-arms) and horsemen.

None of the statuettes have the dimension of depth; they are tall, slim geometric figures on which drawing predominates rather than moulding, despite the fact that they are works of miniature sculpture. They constitute concise images of what they are intended to represent, and succeed in doing so with a primitive realism whose main feature is the tectonic articulation of the parts of their bodies.

In the late 8th century BC, together with dedications from all parts of Greece, the first imports from the East arrived in Delphi. In the beginning they stood out like rare exotic goods brought in by Greek merchants and seamen from the hinterlands of Asia Minor. But in the next century, a multitude of luxury metal goods crafted with new techniques and strange ornamental motifs flooded the sanctuary and created an artistic renaissance. Some of them came from countries of the Near East through the ancient civilisations of the Assyrians, the Hittites, and the kingdom of Urartu (today's Armenia), while others were imitations of Oriental models. Relations with the Eastern world and its culture were a commonplace in all Greek art in the 7th cent. BC, which is why the resulting works are described as "orientalising".

First place among these oriental offerings was held by the new type of tripod that probably originated in northern Syria: the hammered cauldron is movable; it rests on a circular hoop supported by three fluted legs. Around the rim are busts of bulls, lions and more frequently fantastical creatures such as griffins and sirens.

Griffins, mythical monsters with an eagle's head and wings and the body of a lion, first appeared as decorative motifs in the sumptuous palaces of the Assyrian court. They were manufactured in bronze initially using the technique of hammering a sheet of metal, but in the 7th century the cast method prevailed, which utilised a molten alloy poured into a suitably shaped mould, a wise art from the kingdoms of the East.

"Sirens", winged creatures with the head of a woman, were thus named for their similarity to the Sirens in the *Odyssey*. They provided an instructive example of the way Greek artisans assimilated borrowings from the East and translated them into their own artistic idiom: the flaccid features of the Oriental daemonic figures with their enormous almond eyes, fleshy cheeks and coarse nose were reshaped into human figures with intensity and vigour.

The four-sided cauldron supports, with their decoration of lacy open-work relief scenes, originated in Cyprus. They are evidence of relations with this copper-rich eastern Mediterranean island, where the cultures of Greece and the East intersected.

The shields with embossed and incised representations were a rare type of votive offering in Hellenic sanctuaries and resemble the shields found in the Idaean Cave, the famous sanctuary of Zeus in Crete. This is why they are regarded as archaeological evidence of the privileged links between Delphi and the island of Crete, from which, according to the Homeric hymn, Apollo recruited Minoan merchants as the first priests of his temple.

Testimony to the Greeks' knowledge of the monumental sculpture of the East, which had been established centuries earlier, is provided by the appearance of the first large stone statues on Hellenic lands in the second half of the 7th century BC. The art of this period is called Daedalic after Daedalus, the sculptor who, according to tradition, was the first to create life-size statues and to invest them with vitality. The influence of this art is visible in the works of small-scale sculpture and pottery that were dedicated in the sanctuaries, such as the bronze Daedalic kouros of Delphi. Despite its small size, this statuette has all the typological characteristics of the large stone statues that appeared at the same time in many regions of Greece, and first in Crete. It could be the miniature of a stone kouros, i.e. the characteristic type of the standing youthful male figure that evolved into large-scale sculpture in the early period of Archaic art. The features of this small Delphic votive offering, and of the Daedalic art it represents, are the absolute frontality, the triangular shape of the face, the arrangement of the hair in horizontal sections and the nude body with the girdle around the waist. The difference between this and the two-dimensional long slender, loose-limbed figures of the 8th and early 7th century is obvious. Despite its strict articulation, the little kouros is imbued with a new disposition to create sculptural volume, while the position of the bent arms with the closed fists lends intensity to the work, and makes it a precursor of the figures of the twin kouroi, Cleobis and Biton.

Upper part of the leg from a bronze tripod showing the holes for the nails that secured it to the cauldron. It bears the embossed representation of a winged goddess known in Oriental art. Circa 700 BC.

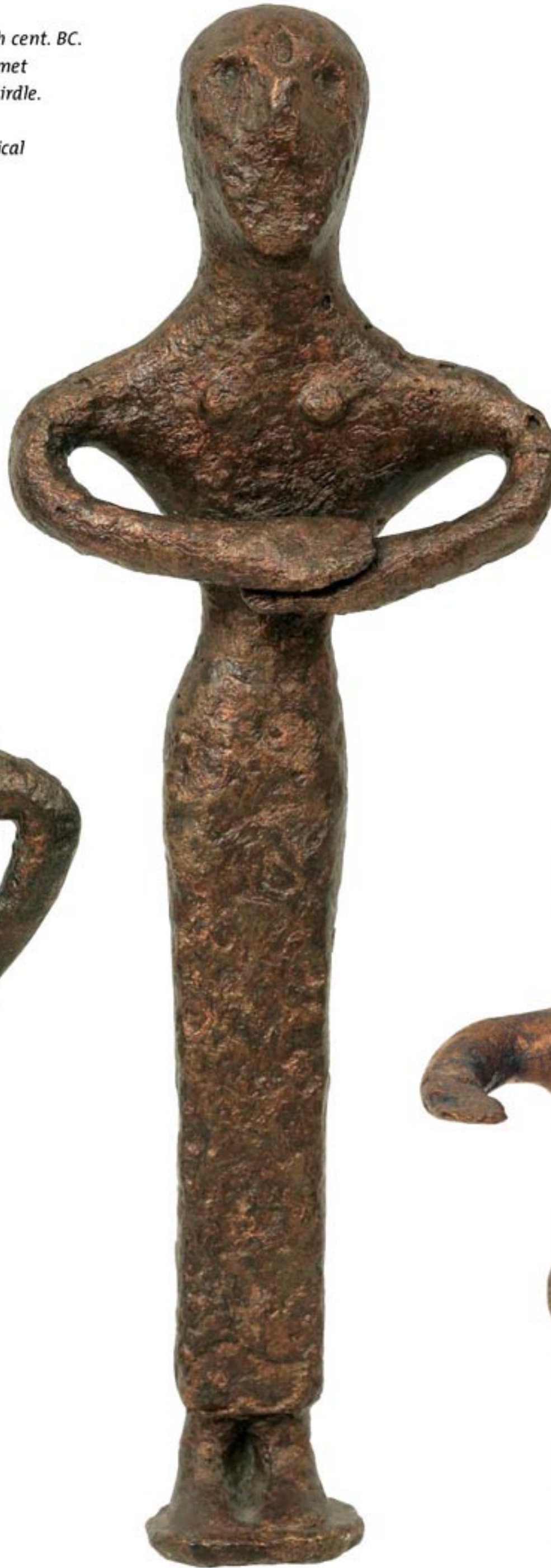






Bronze statuette of a warrior wearing a Corinthian helmet. On his left thigh has been incised the outline of a rosette to resemble a tattoo-like mark, which was protective in nature. Circa 700 BC.

*Bronze Geometric statuettes. 8th cent. BC.
Male figure wearing a conic helmet
with cheek-pieces and a broad girdle.
Female figure.
Female figure wearing a cylindrical
headdress or polos.*



Geometric bronze statuettes.
Late 8th cent. BC.
The upper part of a nude man.
Figure of indiscernible gender
with a double relief spiral
ornament on the chest.
Warrior with shield. The shape
of the face recalls Levantine,
probably Syrian, models.

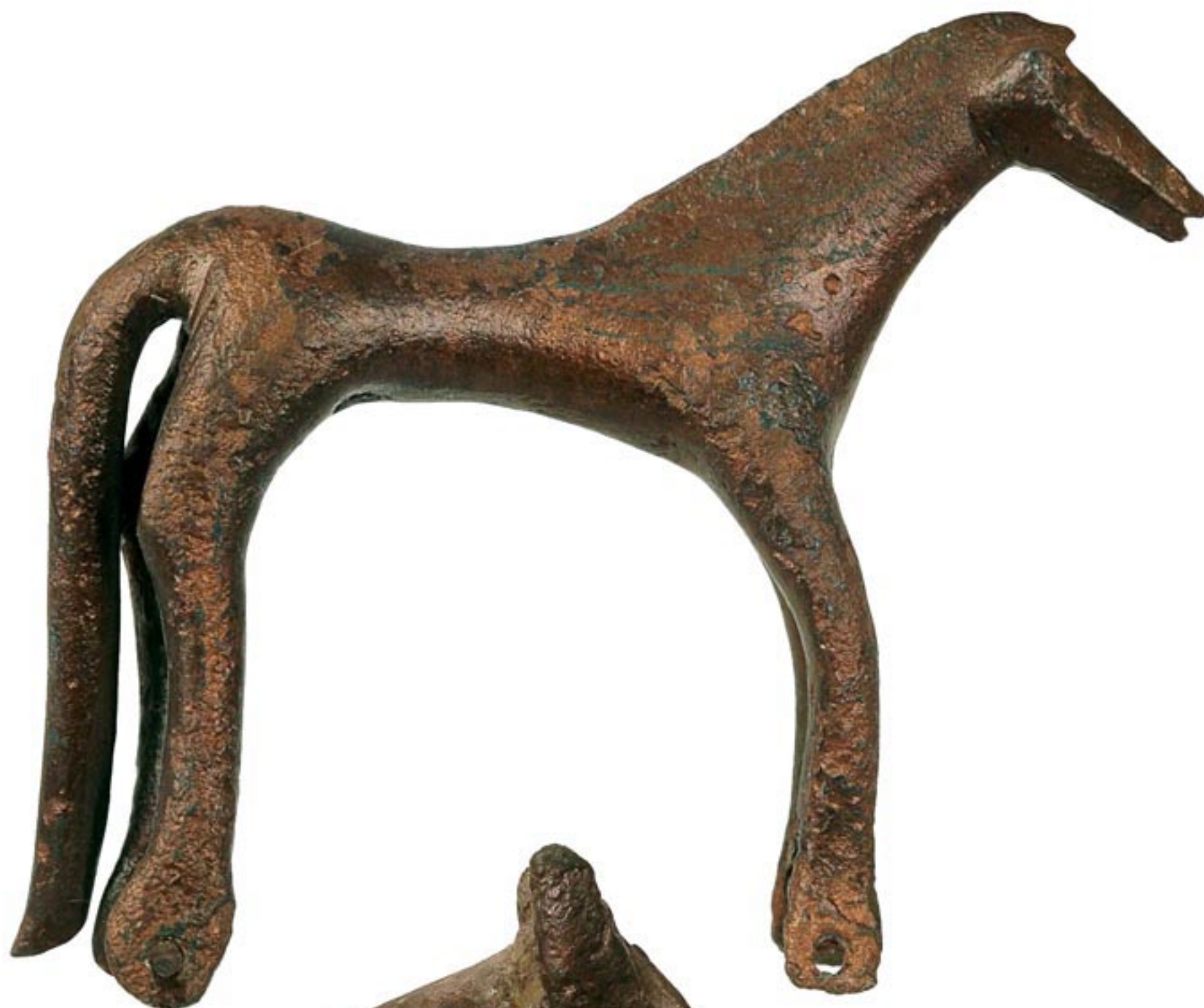




*Bronze statuette of a horse standing on an openwork base.
Mid-8th cent. BC.*



*The surface under the base of bronze statuettes, with relief designs.
Might have been used as a seal. 8th cent. BC.*



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Bronze statuette of a horse that was attached to the top of the circular handle on a tripod. Early 8th cent. BC.



Bronze statuette of a horse standing on an openwork base. 8th cent. BC.

Bust of a hammered bronze griffin. Imaginary monsters, griffins and sirens usually decorated the rim of the new cauldrons that arrived in the late 8th cent. from the East, replacing the Geometric type. This new cauldron could be moved independently of its base.

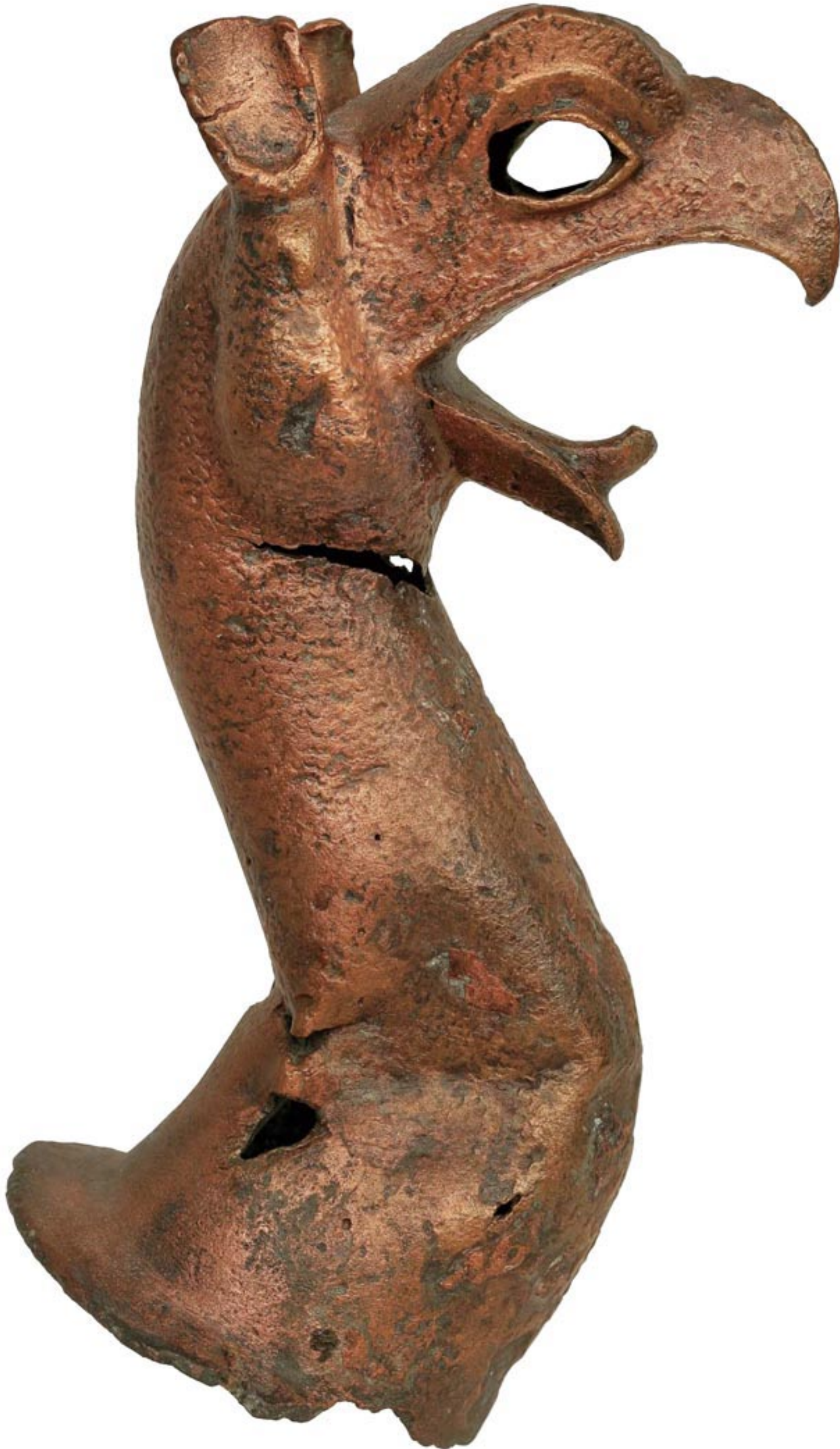


Cast bronze bust of a griffin that was attached to the cauldron rim of an Eastern type of tripod. 7th cent. BC.





Cast bronze griffins' heads that were attached to the cauldron rims of Eastern tripod types, and were of an apotropaic nature. The necks are covered with carved scales. 7th cent. BC.







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Cast bronze griffin's head. Decorated the cauldron rim of an Eastern type of tripod. It has an open beak, curved pointed tongue, upright ears and a club-type projection with a round finial. Its cheeks are decorated with spiral-type curls. There were eyes inlaid in the sockets. 7th cent. BC.



Bronze bust of a griffin from a cauldron rim. 7th cent. BC.



Bronze bust of a winged figure ("Siren"). It adorned the cauldron handle from an Eastern type of tripod. 7th cent. BC.





Bronze bust of a winged figure ("Siren"). The circular handle of the cauldron passed through a ring on its back. The curved finial on its head is reminiscent of the crest on a helmet and was inspired by depictions of warriors with Assyrian features. 7th cent. BC.





*Bronze winged figure ("Siren") with a loop as part of her head.
Attached to a cauldron from an Eastern-type tripod. 7th cent. BC.*





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Part of the bronze support for a vessel with lacey openwork decoration. A lattice is formed between the legs of the support with representations of rams. Cretan-Cypriot work. Late 8th cent. BC.



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Part of the bronze support for a vessel. Between the legs, which supported a hoop, is openwork decoration with deer. Late 8th cent. BC.



Bronze handles for a small bowl with lotus blossoms. A bird is perched on the last flower. This type of handle is common in Cypriot metalwork. Late 8th cent. BC.



Bronze bowl (phiale) that was hammered from the outside, so that the relief was created on the inside. A Cypriot work influenced by Phoenician and Egyptian art. Around the central rosette the siege of a city is depicted. Four archers are on the walls fighting against warriors who are attempting to storm them. A chariot is being drawn by a winged sphinx. 7th cent. BC. Page 63: Detail from the scene: one of the attacking bowmen.



Bronze two-faced bust of a winged figure ("Siren"). Decorated the handle of a votive cauldron imported from the Eastern Mediterranean. Circa 700 BC.





Bronze accessory from a Phrygian-type belt. 7th cent. BC.

Bronze plate from a votive shield with hammered decoration from a Cretan workshop: two friezes with sphinxes and deer. 8th cent. BC.



Bronze head from the handle of a vessel. 7th cent. BC.



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Winged figure ("Siren") carved on a seashell. The details are incised. 7th cent. BC.

*Decorative accessories from bronze vessels. 7th cent. BC.
Panther's head mounted on the handle of a vessel.
Lion rearing up on its hind legs from the sculpted
decoration of a vessel.
Bull's head of exceptional quality that decorated
a piece of furniture. Work from a Greek workshop,
influenced by Eastern models.*





ABOVE: Bronze votive shield with repoussé decoration. Rams surround the bust of a lioness. Shields of the same type, showing a strong Eastern influence, have been found in the Idaean Cave in Crete. Early 7th cent. BC.

BELOW: Rare type of bronze votive shield that came to Delphi from Cyprus or Crete. It is decorated with relief concentric circles intersected by acute angles. Circa 700 BC.





Bronze votive helmets of the Corinthian type. The helmet above bears an incised mythological scene with Europa seated on the bull. (The incising has been enhanced in the photograph.) 7th cent. BC.







*Bronze statuette of a kouros showing
the characteristic features of the Daedalic order.
Exceptional work from a Cretan workshop.
Circa 630 BC.*



THE GOLDEN AGE OF DELPHI

The first monumental votive offerings

PERIOD OF EXCEPTIONAL PROSPERITY began for Delphi in the sixth century. In 590 BC, the amount of property belonging to the sanctuary increased considerably, as the fertile land of neighbouring Crisa (today's Amphissa plain) was dedicated to Apollo. The ten-year-long Sacred War declared by Delphi and the Amphictyonic League against the sacrilegious city that coveted the riches of Delphi came to an inglorious end for Crisa and its allies. Then the League, an old political and religious federation of tribes from central Greece, which Delphi had joined in the 7th century, took over the administration of the sanctuary and reorganised the Pythian Games, the celebrations with music contests that were held every eight years in honour of Apollo. From 582 BC on, the Pythian Games were held every four years and were enriched with athletic and equestrian contests in accordance with the model of Olympia.

Thus, together with the religious prestige of the oracle, which had begun much earlier, its political power also grew. The Delphic priests intervened in the historic fate of Hellenic cities either directly, with advisory prophecies, or indirectly by safeguarding the political power of the League, which ratified public worship and legislation, became involved in political conflicts, supported political groupings, and directed both military operations and peaceful projects. Now, at the Panhellenic sanctuary of Delphi, together with offerings from devout pilgrims, costly offerings began arriving from cities, federations, tyrants and princes who, on the pretext of their piety, would seek to secure, together with the favour of the god, the protection of a powerful political agent like the oracle. Here at Delphi the strong men of the moment found the most appropriate place to show off their wealth and strength with priceless votive offerings, statues or even entire buildings. The numerous pilgrims, the *theopropoi* who flocked to Delphi to ask the god for an oracle, and the athletes and crowds who attended the games and festive celebrations could see and admire the artistic value of these new dedications which were no longer statuettes and vessels, but large works of sculpture and monumental architecture, statues and buildings by eponymous sculptors and architects. The inscriptions incised on the bases of these works speak proudly of the donors and of their military or heroic feats that provided the occasion for dedicating these public offerings.

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The twins from Argos

It was Argos, early in the 6th century BC, that sent the first monumental dedication consisting of two kouroi known by the names Cleobis and Biton. These two similar, larger-than-life statues constitute a real pair, a rare occurrence in Greek art. Since the time they were found, the two kouroi with their muscular trunks and slim waists have been identified with the two strong and pious brothers from Argos, whom their fellow citizens honoured by erecting their statues in Delphi. Other archaeologists, however, saw in these two youthful figures the twin sons of Zeus, the Dioscuri, whose cult was widespread in the Peloponnese. Gods or heroes, the statues of the "Argos twins", on the pedestal of which the name of the Argive sculptor Polymedes is preserved, have left us with a characteristic work of Argive plastic art from the years of the transition from Daedalic to mature Archaic art, in about 580 BC.

One of the twin kouroi of Argos.



best of men . . . »

(HERODOTUS, *The Histories*, I,31, Trans. by Robin Waterfield, Oxford University Press, 1998)

Herodotus recounted the story of Cleobis and Biton, describing how the gods gave the two Argive youths the enviable gift of a happy death by plucking them from the ephemeral world of mortals and transporting them to the realm of heroes. Cleobis and Biton were described as happy because they

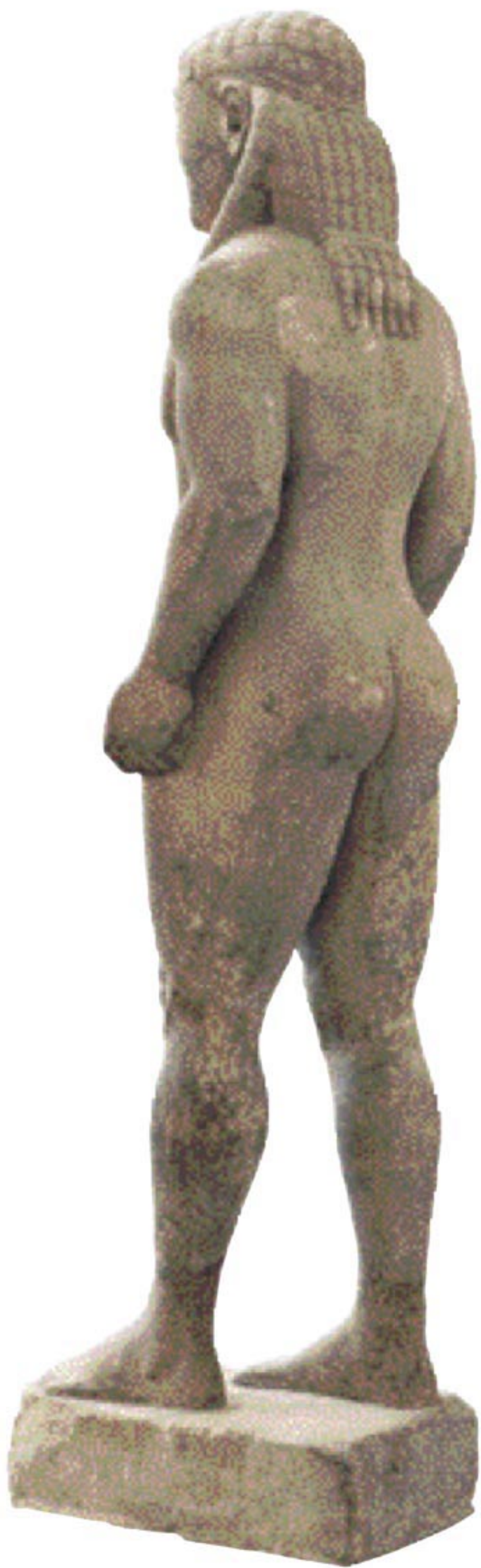
« . . . made an adequate living and were also blessed with amazing physical strength. It's not just that the pair of them were both prize-winning athletes; there's also the following story about them. During a festival of Hera at Argos, their mother urgently needed to be taken to the sanctuary on her cart, but the oxen failed to turn up from the field in time. There was no time to waste, so the young men harnessed themselves to the yoke and pulled the cart with their mother riding on it. The distance to the temple was forty-five stades, and they took her all the way there. After this achievement of theirs, which was witnessed by the people assembled for the festival, they died in the best possible way; in fact the god used them to show that it is better for a person to be dead than to be alive. What happened was that while the Argive men were standing around congratulating the young men on their strength, the women were telling their mother how lucky she was in her children. Their mother was overcome with joy at what her sons had done and the fame it would bring, and she went right up to the statue of the goddess, stood there and prayed that in return for the great honour her children Cleobis and Biton had done her, the goddess would give them whatever it is best for a human being to have. After she had finished her prayer, they participated in the rites and the feast, and then the young men lay down inside the actual temple for a rest. They never got to their feet again; they met their end there. The Argives had statues made of them and dedicated them at Delphi, on the grounds that they had been the

The discovery of the first of the twin kouroi from Argos in the great French excavation. The writer of the journal called him an archaic Apollo. "On 30 May we find an Archaic statue of Apollo (sic) of which only the lower parts of the legs are missing. The legs are broken at the knees. . . ." (from the journal of the French excavation).



*The two kouroi of Argos, known
as Cleobis and Biton. Circa 580 BC.*







The early architectural sculptures

Another Peloponnesian city, perhaps Sikyon, which was wealthy and powerful in the Archaic period, built a small square building of poros stone in about 560 BC. It was a strange type of structure that the ancients called *monopteros*, because it had no cella with constructed walls, just a Doric colonnade –*pteron*– around the four sides, so that the inside was visible through the columns. A Doric frieze consisting of metopes and triglyphs surrounded the upper part of it. We do not know precisely what purpose this colonnaded structure served, but it must have played the role of a treasury, i.e. it was itself an architectural dedication to the god, and was at the same time designed to house precious treasures from the city that dedicated it. According to the hypothesis of P. de la Coste-Messelière, the monopteral Treasury of the Sikyonians housed the chariot of the tyrant Cleisthenes of Sikyon, winner of the first chariot race that was introduced in the Pythian Games in 582 BC, and an ally of Delphi in the first Sacred War. Architectural members from this Treasury were used as construction material to build the foundations of a subsequent treasury that may have been erected by the Sikyonians when they overthrew the family of tyrants to which Cleisthenes belonged.

The metopes, i.e. the relief slabs that alternated on the frieze with the triglyphs, came from the crowning of the Doric colonnade. Five of them are in better condition and constitute the oldest architectural reliefs in Delphi with singular features. The long narrow shape typical of their early origin gives the impression of a painting dominated by precision of design both as a whole and in its details. This impression must have been even stronger in antiquity, when the bright colours could still be seen on the clothing and the painted inscriptions, which have faded today. On each metope, the artisan depicts a scene of exceptional density derived from rare mythological themes. And when the space on the metope was insufficient to complete the composition, he went beyond the narrow border and, leaping over the intervening triglyph, continued the theme on the following metope.

In the scene from the expedition of the Argonauts, the celebrated mythical ship *Argo* had just anchored off the coast of distant Colchis. On her prow two Argonaut musicians are standing, Orpheus and perhaps Linus, who are playing the lyre. The shields that protected the oarsmen from hostile arrows were hanging on the ship's bulwarks. On the far left side, a man on horseback is disembarking from the ship, while a similar figure, greatly damaged today, occupied the right side. They were the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, the heroes of Laconia, who were disembarking from the ship. The representation appears to have continued on both the next two metopes.

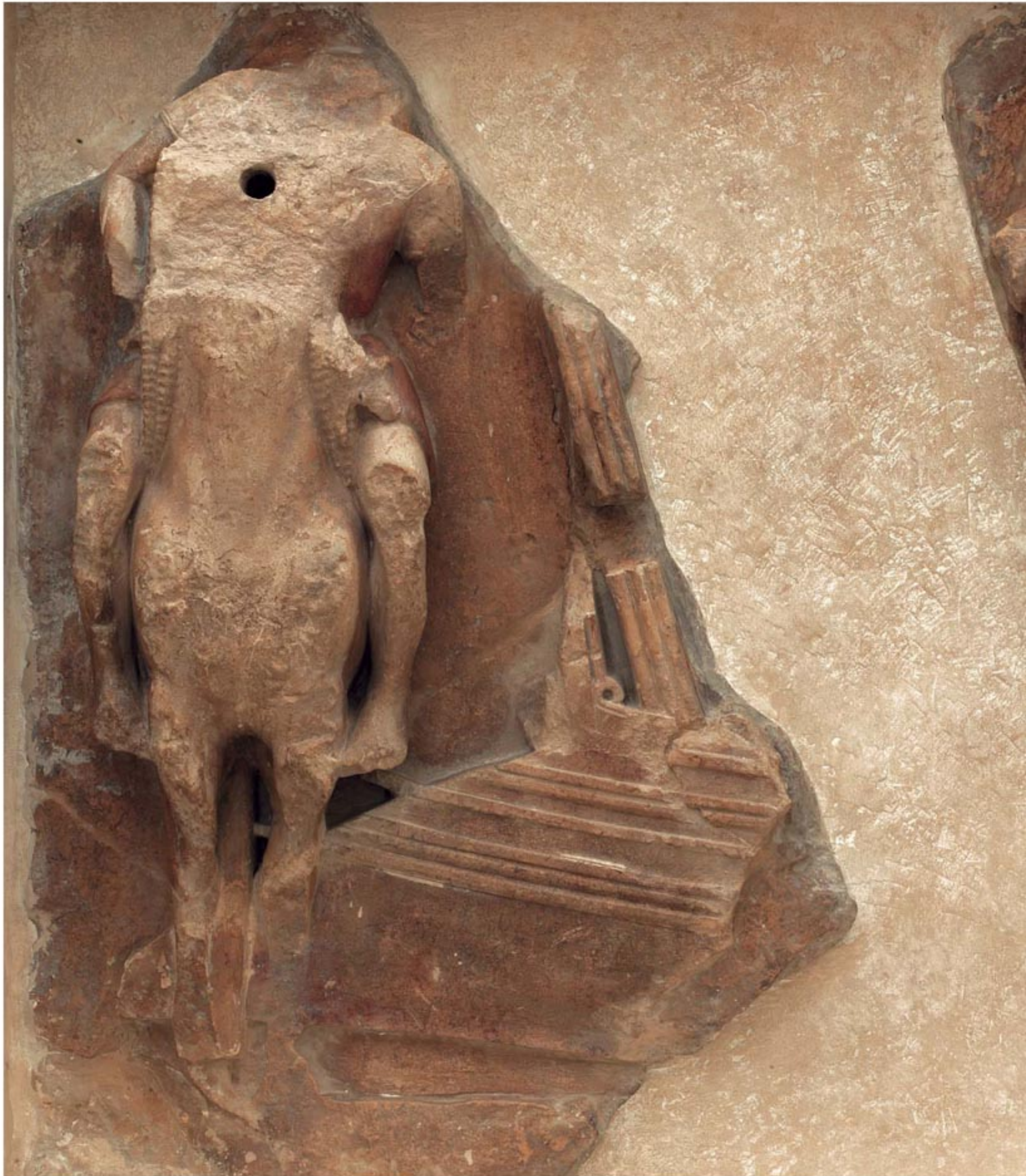


In the scene with the herd of oxen, the mythical heroes of Arcadia, the Dioscuri Castor and Pollux, can again be discerned with the Aphareids. According to legend, they once had an adventure that did not at the time seem so unsuitable: a raid on Arcadia to steal a herd of oxen. The metope depicts them at the moment they are returning from the hunt as though in procession, showing off their rich booty. The oxen are lined up between the extended javelins held by the heroes in their hands and on their shoulders. There is nothing to suggest the dramatic conclusion of their adventure, as narrated by Pindar, in which their disagreement over the division of the herd led to mortal combat between them.

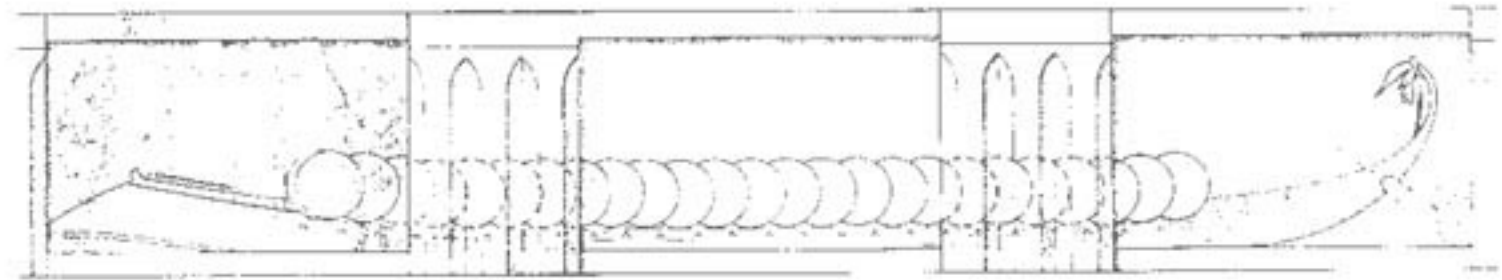
Another metope depicts a favourite theme found on pottery, which is the rape of Europa. The daughter of the king of Phoenicia is seated on the back of Zeus who has transformed himself into a bull. She is leaning forward holding onto the animal's horns as it gallops vigorously toward Crete.

In the scene from the mythic hunt of the Calydonian boar, the terrible beast that was ravaging Aetolia is portrayed preparing to attack and sow devastation. Taking part in the hunt, which lasted just a few days, were all the select heroes of the subsequent Argonaut expedition, including the maiden warrior Atalanta. The hunters of the boar were depicted on a neighbouring metope, of which nothing remains today but a small hunting dog –perhaps belonging to Meleager, leader of the expedition– that can be discerned under the belly of the boar.

The Argonaut cycle includes the representation on a metope of the fabulous ram with the golden fleece on which Phrixus was riding to Colchis.



*Metope from the monopteros of the Sikyonians. RIGHT: On the prow of the Argo, two kithara players calm the waves.
ABOVE: The two horsemen (the figure to the right has been destroyed) who have just disembarked are the Dioscuri. Circa 560 BC.*



Proposed reconstruction of the entire scene with the Argo, which is portrayed on three continuous metopes. The Argo is depicted, as in the myth, as a large warship with fifty oarsmen.

Following pages:
Metope from the monopteros of the Sikyonians depicting the theft of a herd of oxen by the Dioscuri (Castor and Pollux) and the Aphareids (Idas and Lynceus), mythic heroes of Arcadia. The names of the heroes were declared in colour on the metope. The fourth figure to the right is missing. The successive levels on which the figures are rendered with draughtsmanlike precision suggest to the viewer the impression of perspective with great depth. Circa 560 BC.











Metope from the monopteros of the Sikyonians. The rape of Europa by Zeus who has transformed himself into a bull. Circa 560 BC.



Metope from the monopteros of the Sikyonians. The terrible ram, with its back hair standing on end, stretches out his front legs preparing to attack the hunters depicted in the next metope. Circa 560 BC.

Page 84: *Three of the heroes of Arcadia parading with their weapons and the stolen oxen.*

Page 85: *The Dioscurus Pollux (the name has been preserved in faint colour on the metope).*



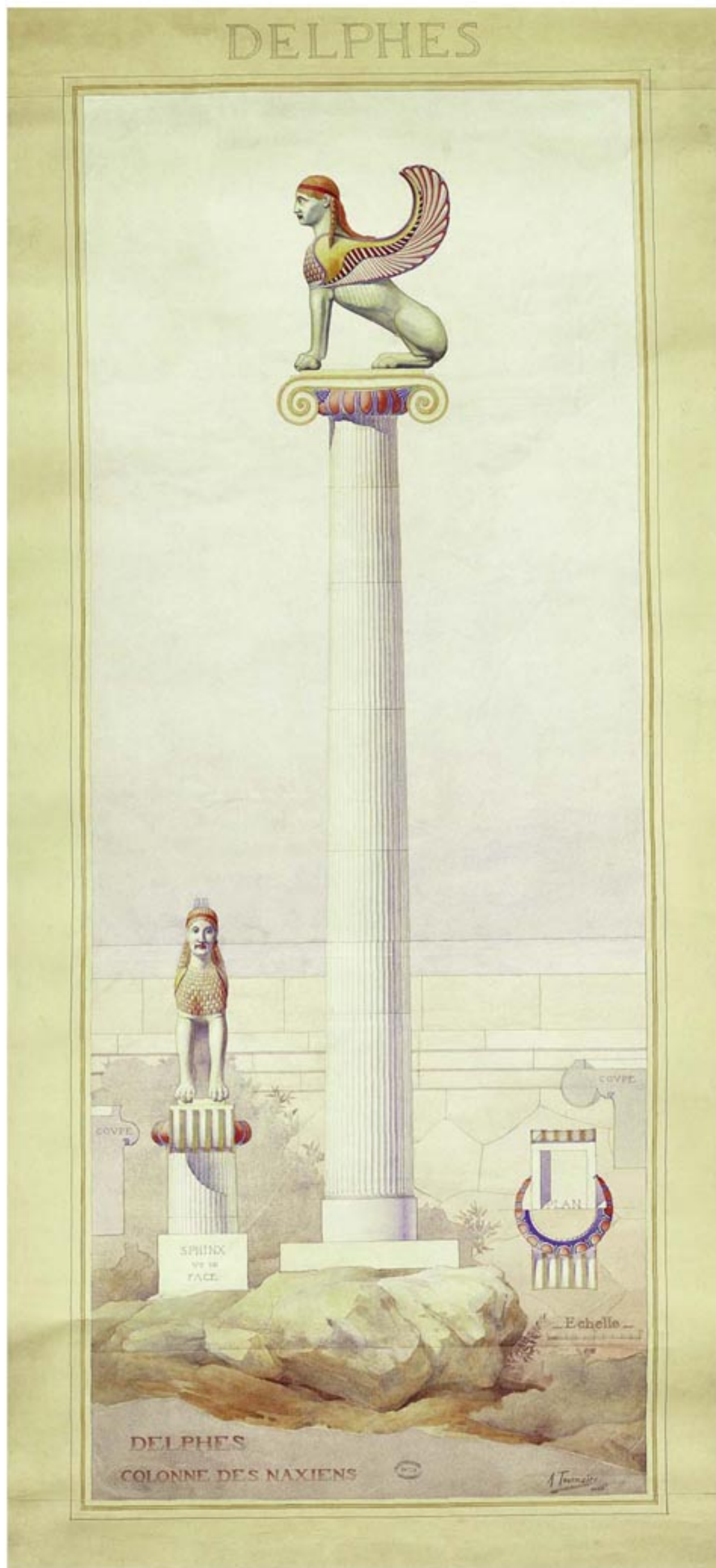
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Bronze plaques with mythological scenes that were attached to the surface of some vessel or item of furniture. Second half of 6th cent. BC. Page 88: Episode from the Labours of Heracles: The hero is carrying the Erymanthian boar on his shoulders. Eurystheus, the terrified king of Argos, is hiding in a storage jar. Page 89: An episode from the Odyssey: Odysseus or one of his companions is coming out of the cave of Polyphemus tied to the belly of a ram.



The Sphinx

In about 560 BC, just a few years after the offering of the Argive twins, the wealthy Cycladic island of Naxos sent an offering to Delphi. It was the statue of a Sphinx which, with its colossal size, form and imposing position in the sanctuary, expressed Naxian political and artistic supremacy in the Archaic period. The mysterious daemonic figure of the mythical creature with the female face and enigmatic smile, the body of a lion and the wings of a bird was mounted on a very high Ionic column that had been erected in front of the polygonal wall of the sanctuary. It is the most ancient Ionic architectural feature in the sanctuary of Delphi. The total height of this votive offering was 12.45 metres.

Carved out of an enormous piece of Naxian marble, the statue combines solidity of construction with a decorative disposition expressed in the rendering of the hair, the feathered breast and the wings. As we are informed by the inscription that was carved on its base in the 4th century, the priests of Apollo honoured the citizens of Naxos for their offering with the privilege of *promanteia*, i.e. the right of consulting the Delphic oracle first.

Reconstruction of the column of the Naxians. Watercolour and drawing in brown ink by A. Tournaire (1894).

RIGHT: The Naxian Sphinx on its Ionic column. Circa 560 BC.





*The Naxian Sphinx on the top of its Ionic column.
RIGHT: The woman's head and wings of the Naxian Sphinx.*





The Siphnian Treasury. The triumph of the Ionic order

Alongside the spare Doric structures that were built in the sanctuary by the cities of mainland Greece, the artisans of the Aegean islands and Asia Minor introduced the grace of Ionia to Delphi. The architectural traces of one of these elaborate Ionic buildings, the Treasury of the Siphnians, allow us to reconstruct it up to the last detail and to confirm the testimony of the ancient authors Herodotus and Pausanias, who described it as "very rich". It was built entirely of marble –the first structure built completely of marble in mainland Greece– to demonstrate the wealth of this small Cycladic island which was experiencing great prosperity at that period, owing to its gold and silver mines. It is in fact one of the few monuments that can be dated with precision, because its building is associated with a historic event reported by Herodotus, which had been foretold by the Pythia in her prophecy to the Siphnians. In 524, Siphnos was plundered by Samian fugitives after their unsuccessful revolt against the tyrant Polycrates. Therefore, the treasury must have been built just before the island was sacked, an event that marked the end of its prosperity (530-525 BC).

The opulence of the Treasury, which has been admired by ancients, excavators and art historians alike, is mainly expressed in the rich sculpted decoration characteristic of the building from base to ceiling. The most capable architects, stonemasons and sculptors of the late Archaic period who were approached by the Siphnians designed and carved a plethora of Ionic motifs with unrivalled skill on all the surfaces of the marble, thereby giving the building its decorative and sculptural value. The bands with astragals, palmettes and lotus leaves, rosettes, spirals, rows of marble lion's heads around the roof, architectural sculptures on the façade, frieze, pediments and acroteria, as well as their bright colours, constituted "prodigal waste" according to La Coste-Messelière. He also described these features as "the triumph of the flamboyant Ionic order", and noted their similarity to the phenomenon expressed 2000 years later by the same exuberance of moulded decoration on the late Gothic churches of France that was designated *style flamboyant*.

The dominance of sculpted forms over abstract architectural shapes reached its zenith on the façade of this temple-like Ionic treasury, on which there were two kores instead of columns between the pilasters on each side (*in antis*) supporting the epistyle or architrave. They are similar to the kores found on the Acropolis and in Ionia, whose grace conquered mainland Greece in the second half of the 6th century. Together with the elaborate border, richly decorated with reliefs around the doorframe behind them, they were the precursors of the Erechtheion porch with the Caryatids in Athens.

Only the east pediment of the Siphnian Treasury, which depicts a Delphic theme, has been preserved. In the middle is Zeus trying to restrain Apollo to the left and Heracles to the right, both of whom are claiming the prophetic tripod. Heracles is angry, because the Pythia refused to give him an oracle, since he had not been cleansed from the killing of Iphitus; he has seized the tripod, while Apollo is trying to pull it away from him. The lower part of the figures has not been sculpted in the round and is still attached to the tympanum of the pediment. This technical peculiarity may very likely indicate that the sculptors working on the treasury pediment did not have time to finish their work, but abandoned it hastily after the military adventure and sudden impoverishment of their employers.

The east and north sides of the relief frieze that ran round the building over the architrave have been best preserved. On the east side, the gods are depicted watching the battle between the Greeks and Trojans, participating with lively gestures. To the left are the gods who protect the Trojans, headed by Zeus who is seated on a lavish throne. On the right are those who side with the Greeks, headed by Athena. The episode, known from the lost epic cycle of Aithiopis, concerns a duel over the body of a dead warrior. The two adversaries are flanked by the heroes of the Trojans to the left and those of the Achaeans to the right. On the right side of the frieze, the figure of old Nestor can be discerned, whose stance encourages the Greeks in the battle that will bring them victory.

The head of a caryatid from the Treasury of the Siphnians. The holes in the wavy hair, in the diadem and in the ears indicate the position of inlaid metal decoration and added marble curls to enrich the coiffure. Around her basket-shaped head covering, or polos, there are relief representations of Sileni and Maenads (see also p. 97).



Page 96: Reconstruction of the doorframe on the Treasury of the Siphnians, made of marble from the islands and richly decorated with relief motifs (astragals, palmettes, lotus blossoms, rosettes, consoles).

In front, two young women (kores) or caryatids were standing in place of the columns that supported the architrave of the façade (see drawing p. 105).



The theme on the north frieze is the Battle of the Giants (Gigantomachy), in which the gods of Olympus fought against the Giants, children of Earth. The legend of the fight, which ended in the victory of the gods, is depicted frequently in ancient Greek art and symbolises the triumph of civilised order over savagery and anarchy. The gods fight hard to defeat the Giants who are attacking from the right with spears, swords and stones; some are heavily armed with helmets and shields, others with cuirasses and greaves. On the other side are the gods: on the far left is Hephaestus, with the short chiton of an artisan, standing near his bellows preparing masses of red-hot metal. He is followed by two goddesses, Demeter and Kore, and after them is Dionysus wearing a panther skin, and the goddess Themis, known from Delphic mythology on her chariot drawn by lions. The pair of gods who are shooting their arrows against a phalanx of four giants, must be identified as Apollo and Artemis. In front of the latter is a Giant whose name is indicated by an inscription, and the crest of his helmet bears a relief vessel of the kantharos type. Another inscription on the shield of a Giant refers to the sculptor who worked on decorating the treasury, but the name has not been preserved. At this point, which is damaged, Zeus was standing on his chariot. He was followed by Hera, Athena, Ares holding a helmet and shield, and Hermes wearing the conic cap of Arcadian shepherds. And finally, a few fragments have been preserved from the body of Poseidon who was probably accompanied by his wife Amphitrite.

There is an amazing and unlimited variety in the interwoven figures in the scene and the game of light and shadow is impressive. Here, the epic narrative mode does not end up in monotonous repetition but, on the contrary, the inexhaustible inventiveness in differentiating clothing and the elegance of the scene holds the interest of the viewer undiminished and contributes to the dramatic presentation of the myth. The bright colours used in painting the frieze also contributed to the effect, as did the many metal weapons and other inlaid details that added lustre to the entire composition. The names of many of the figures represented were painted on, which has made it possible to identify some of the figures in the multiple compositions.

The relief slabs that have been preserved from the scenes on the west frieze lead to the legitimate assumption that the theme portrayed here was the judgement of Paris when selecting the most beautiful goddess from among Athena, Aphrodite and Hera. The first of the goddesses coming to be judged is Athena who appears to be mounting her winged chariot. Her charioteer is Hermes, on the left side, who is depicted with a short tunic like a groom. The winner Aphrodite is portrayed with particular grace descending from her chariot in a coquettish movement. In the section of the frieze that has been lost, we can imagine Hera mounting her chariot to depart, after being rejected, as was Athena. The last figure would have been Paris, the goddess's judge.

Just a few fragmentary pieces have been preserved from the south frieze, which is why we can only hypothesise about its theme. It concerns a mythological abduction of women, perhaps Hippodamia by Pelops or the daughters of Leucippus by the Dioscuri. But everything that has been preserved of the scene with the procession of mounted men and four-horse chariots has given us figures of horses whose movement and moulding is unique in Archaic art.

When the first scholars to study the Treasury observed minor differences in the technique and rendering of the individual figures and compositions, they believed that the frieze was the work of two different workshops. Today it is believed that the frieze as a whole is characterised by a single concept and common features, which demonstrate that all its sides belong to the same school of art. However the artisans who worked on the frieze were flanked by two sculptors, whose names are unknown to us and who had different inclinations and influences. The artist of the north and east sides, which are more elaborate, had been influenced by progressive Chian and Attic workshops. In his signature incised on the shield of a Giant, he states with pride that he had carved two sides of the treasury, but his name has been effaced. The sculptor who was head of the group that carved the west and south frieze was more conservative. He did not have the bold inspiration and skill of the man who carved the Battle of the Giants, and his art was more painterly in nature. He had probably apprenticed in one of the art centres on the Asia Minor coast of Ionia.

Head of a kore or caryatid, from one of the sanctuary's early Ionic treasuries. The delicate decoration is remarkably rich. The sensuous face, its intense smile highlighted by slanted almond eyes, is framed by wavy hair which, as indicated by the many holes, was adorned with metal ornaments and enriched with additional marble curls. Around the basket-shaped head covering that supported the capital there is a relief scene with Apollo playing the kithara, Hermes playing the syrinx, Nymphs and Graces. Circa 530 BC.





"A thumb and forefinger are bent to lift a dress with the same grace that you saw the other day in a Greek village . . . such fragments from a life that was once whole are stirring bits, very familiar to us, at one moment our own, and then mysterious and inaccessible."
(G. SEFERIS, *Essays*, "Delphi", 1961)

Starting in the mid-6th cent. BC, the first Ionic treasuries began being built with elegant young women (caryatids) supporting their façades and bringing the grace of eastern Greece to the sanctuary. The oldest of these kores is attributed, but not with certainty, to the Treasury of Knidos, which was built before that city was conquered by the Persians in 544 BC. Her left hand is holding a thin chiton. Through the fan of fine drapery created by her grasp of the garment, her thighs and shins are outlined. Circa 550 BC.





Architectural members from the Treasury of the Siphnians. ABOVE: Part of the marble rain gutter with relief palmettes and lotus blossoms that are interrupted by the spout through which water drained from the roof.

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BELOW: Corner plaque of the cornice over the frieze with relief ornaments of palmettes, lotus blossoms and a band of astragal.





Architectural members of Archaic Ionic buildings with rich sculpted decoration (Ionic and Lesbian cymatium, astragals, palmettes, lotus blossoms). The bottom one is from a structure that might have protected a valuable offering in the Archaic temple of Apollo. Second half of the 6th cent. BC.

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Pages 104-105: Of the two pediments on the Treasury of the Siphnians, only the east one was saved, i.e. the one at the back, over the corresponding frieze. In the representation of the fight over the Delphic tripod, Heracles has already hoisted the symbolic vessel onto his shoulder, while Apollo is pulling it by the legs. In the middle, Zeus is trying to reconcile the two claimants, while Artemis is restraining the angry god.



The bell-shaped capital that rested on the caryatid's basket on the Treasury of the Siphnians. Its echinus bears a bold relief group of two lions mauling a deer.

RIGHT: Reconstruction of the Treasury of the Siphnians by the Danish scholar engaged in studying the monument, architect E. Hansen.





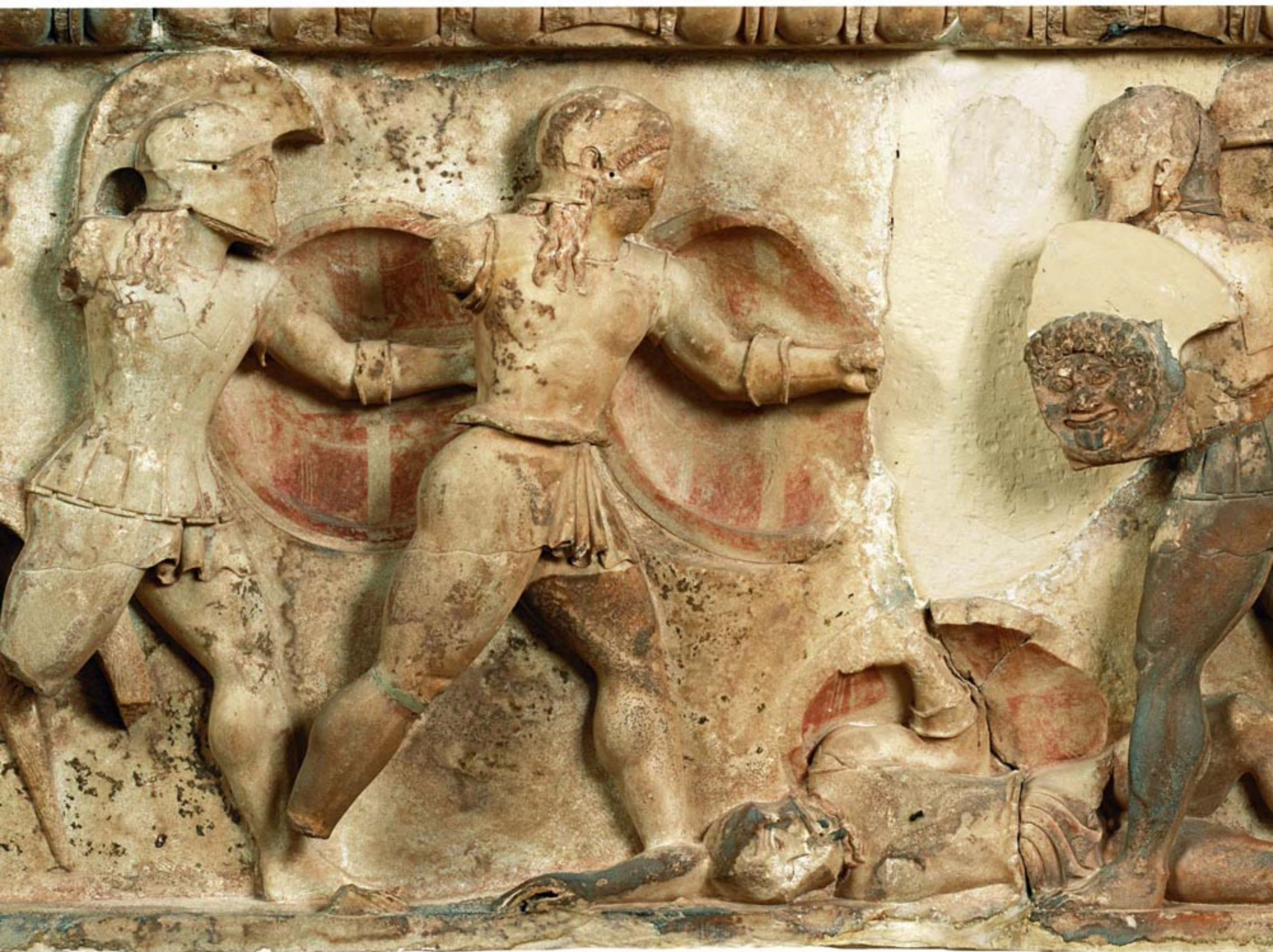
The east frieze on the Treasury of the Siphnians. Scene from the assembly of the gods who are watching with lively gestures the episode from the Trojan War that follows. The group of gods who protected the Trojans is depicted: Ares with his panoply, two goddesses (the first can perhaps be identified as Eos, the second as Artemis or Aphrodite) and Apollo.





The east frieze on the Treasury of the Siphnians. Scene from the assembly of the gods who are watching an episode from the Trojan War. The group of gods who protected the Greeks is portrayed: Athena, Hera and Thetis (?) who is holding out her arms to plead for the life of her son. Right: (From the battle scene that follows) a four-horse Trojan chariot (quadriga) with a groom who is watching over the restless horses.





The east frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Scene from an episode in the Trojan War with the heroes, whom we recognise from the barely legible names written in colour beside the figures. Two warriors from the Trojan camp, Aeneas and Memnon are fighting with two Achaeans, Achilles and a fellow warrior, over the body of the dead Antilochus. Right: Greek quadriga and the groom keeping watch over the restless horses. The figure of Nestor follows (see page 119), who with his stance, is urging the Greeks to battle.







*The east frieze
of the Treasury
of the Siphnians.
Detail from the scene
of the assembly
of the gods. The figure on
the left has been
identified variously as
Demeter or Aphrodite,
and recently
as Eos (the mother
of Memnon, a hero
of Troy), who with
a characteristic gesture
is begging for her son's
life. Another goddess
follows (Artemis,
Aphrodite or Leto)
holding her arms
out towards Apollo,
who is turning around
to look at her.*



The east frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Details from the scene of the assembly of the gods.

ABOVE: The head of Apollo turning around with his long hair gathered at the nape of his neck.

RIGHT: Zeus seated on a throne the arms of which rest on the relief figures of a Silenus and a Nymph. His feet are resting on a low footstool.





The east frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Detail of a battle episode from the Trojan War. The two warriors from the Trojan camp are rushing in full armour against their Achaean adversaries. To the left, Aeneas wearing a Corinthian helmet.

To the right, Memnon with an Attic one. On the inside of their shields, the wide band (ochanon) holding the heavy shield on the warrior's arm is depicted in relief.





The east frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Left: Detail of the figure of Achilles with the distinguishing mark on his shield: the Gorgon's head. The horrible, round daemonic face of the Gorgon Medusa, with her bulbous eyes, broad nose, open mouth with protruding tongue, sharp teeth and snakey hair was designed to frighten enemies and as a symbol to ward off danger.

Homer describes the awful Gorgon's head on warriors' shields.

*... Next he took his shield...
that a fire-eyed Gorgon's
horrifying maw enclosed, with Rout
and Terror flanking her.*

(Iliad, XI, 36, 40-23, trans. Robert Fitzgerald, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 179-180)





The north frieze on the Treasury of the Siphnians. The beginning of the scene from the battle between the gods and the Giants (Gigantomachy). Hephaestus is bending over the bellows in his blacksmith's shop, obviously preparing the terrible red-hot metal or thunderbolt, the weapon of Zeus. In front of him the two goddesses Hestia and Demeter dash forward against two Giants who are brandishing spears. Dionysus follows, fighting a Giant. Between the two adversaries Themis is driving Dionysus' chariot.





The north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Scene from the Gigantomachy. One of the two lions pulling Dionysus' chariot is devouring a Giant. In front of him Apollo and Artemis are shooting arrows at a phalanx of three Giants carrying shields. In front of Leto's twins (Apollo and Artemis), the Giant with the characteristic crest on his helmet flees in panic in order to escape the lions. Behind him, a Giant has fallen to the ground dead and a second is expiring.





The north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Scene from the Gigantomachy. Two horses from the chariot of Zeus (which has not been preserved) and two attacking Giants. In front of them, in the foreground, Aphrodite is bending down to deliver the coup de grace to a fallen Giant. She is followed by Athena who has already vanquished a kneeling Giant and is battling a standing adversary.





The north frieze on the Treasury of the Siphnians. Scene from the Gigantomachy. Ares is fighting two heavily armed Giants, the first of whom is lifting a rock to hit the god. At the feet of the adversaries a nude Giant lies dead. Hermes follows in his conic cap and attacks two Giants with his sword. On the right, part of the torso of Poseidon (?) has been preserved.



The north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. The last episode in the Gigantomachy. Ares, god of war, is in the front ranks of the struggle of the Olympian gods against the Giants, the fearsome and violent sons of Gaea (Earth). He stands out among all the other gods owing to his panoply and the power of his fury. He is trampling on a fallen Giant whom he has struck in the chest with his bronze spear. The spear has not survived but it has already pierced his adversary's shield. A particularly dramatic feeling in the scene is created by the fact that the doomed Giant is exchanging glances with the god at the moment Ares kills him. The cheek-pieces of the latter's Attic helmet are decorated with rams' heads. The last Giant in the scene, armed with a shield and a helmet bearing an enormous crest, is attacking the god with his sword.

Since the north side of the Treasury looked out over the Sacred Way, pilgrims ascending toward the temple could admire the representation of the Gigantomachy with the narrative style given to it by the artist. Even though the figures of the adversary camps are all mingled together, and the action develops on many levels, the whole scene is cohesive and recognisable with the chariots and figures of the gods moving to the right and those of the Giants in the opposite direction. Beside each figure, inscriptions with the names of the adversaries supplement the narration of this multi-figured mythical battle that will not be found again in a similarly monumental form until the altar of Pergamon. The names of the Giants, written in the local Phocian dialect, also contribute to the dramaturgy of the scene, expressing the barbarous, military and rude personality of their owners: Biatas (Violent), Eriktypos (Thunderous), Hyperphas (Reviler), Tharos (Insolent), Ephialtas, Astartas and Megiator (Giant?).









The north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. The scene of the Gigantomachy with the chariot of Dionysus driven by Themis, a familiar goddess in Delphic legend. Dionysus has descended from his chariot without cuirass or shield, and is confronting a Giant brandishing his bronze spear. The two lions pulling his chariot are mauling another Giant.



Following pages: Details of the scene from the Gigantomachy. Dionysus appears with his characteristic features: the nebris, the skin of a panther with paws tied on his chest, and the wreath with bronze leaves affixed to the holes. One section of the bronze spear has been preserved in front of his beard. The lions from the chariot of Dionysus are mauling a Giant.









The north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Apollo and Artemis are drawing their bows. The Giant Tharos is running with his shield and sword, looking back in terror at the spectacle of his companion (behind the two gods) being devoured by lions. Page 137: Detail with the heads of Apollo and Artemis.





*Detail from the scene
of the Gigantomachy on the north
frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians.
The face of Artemis and the helmet
of the Giant Tharos with its
characteristic crest that forms
a cup in the shape of a kantharos.*

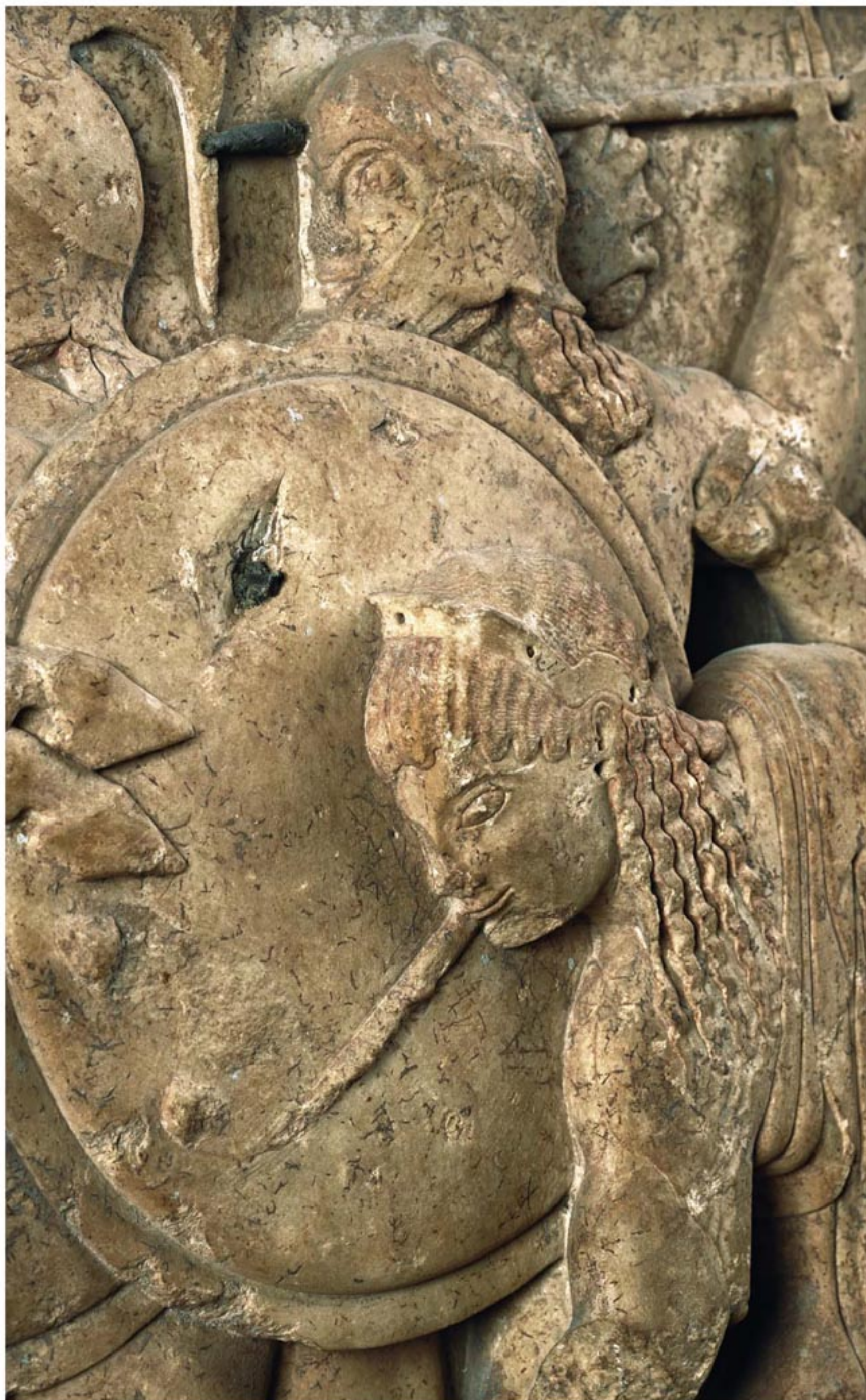
The north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Scene from the Gigantomachy with the phalanx of three armed Giants fighting against Apollo and Artemis (to their left). The names that are painted beside the figures indicate their barbaric and abusive nature. The first is Hyperphas (Reviler), the second is Alektos. On the shield of the third Giant, whose name has not been preserved, the artist has incised a circular inscription which, with his signature (that has unfortunately been lost, together with the missing part of the shield) declares with pride that it was he who created the reliefs on this side and on the back (... τάδε καὶ τὸπισθεν ἐποίησιν). The information contained in this inscription is believed to confirm the view of scholars who have analysed the frieze artistically and find common stylistic features on the north (Gigantomachy) and east sides (assembly of the gods), the latter of which happens to be at the back of the building. This is why they believe that these two sides were created by the same artist's workshop, at the head of which was the sculptor who wanted to immortalise his name through the inscription on the Giant's shield.

The hand-to-hand battle scenes between the gods and the dense phalanxes of the Giants fighting as hoplites in full armour with one large shield touching the other, the successive helmets with their crests, and the spears and swords are like illustrations of the verses of Tyrtaeus in his military elegies.

Following pages: Detail from the Gigantomachy on the north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. The face of Hera or Aphrodite can be seen over the shield of a Giant, as she kneels to pierce the chest of a fallen adversary with her spear. The holes in her hair and ear supported the metal diadem ornaments and an earring.







The north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Scene from the Gigantomachy. The goddess Athena, who was the right hand of Zeus in the battle of the Olympian gods against the Giants, dashes forward with her shield and spear against her adversaries. She is holding her shield firmly with her arm through the ochanion, the bar or strap across the hollow of the shield, and brandishing her metal spear. Her characteristic symbol is the aegis, the short cloak of goatskins bordered with coiling snakes like tassels that protects her chest. Such a figure of Athena was described by the women in the retinue of Creusa in Euripides' Ion, as they were ascending toward the temple and looking with dazzled eyes at the scenes on the monuments they encountered to their right and left. In fact, some scholars believe that the scenes from the Gigantomachy that the women of the chorus were describing were in fact those on the frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians with their rich colours and not the temple of the Alcmeonids.

*So not only in sacred Athens, then, are temple-courts with fine columns to be found,
and pillars in honour of the god who protects streets. Here, too, at the shrine of Loxias,
child of Leto, are a temple's twin façades, shining in fair-eyed beauty.*

[i.e. the figures from the monuments decorating the two sides of the street right and left]

[...]

My eyes go everywhere, believe me! Look, there on the marble walls - the rout of the Giants!

We see it here, friends.

Then do you see her, shaking her shield with its Gorgon-face over Enceladus?

(EURIPIDES, "Ion", Heracles and other Plays, trans. John Davie, Penguin Books, 2002, 184-211.)







The north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Page 146: A god (uncertain identity) armed as a hoplite rushes into battle with his shield and spear, stepping over the body of a dead Giant. Page 147: Detail with the head of the Giant who has been killed by an arrow, as indicated by the piece of bronze under his ear.





Detail from the scene of the Gigantomachy on the north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians: Hermes in his conic cap is attacking two Giants. In his left hand he is holding the scabbard of his sword. The first of the two Giants is Megiotor.

The beginning of the west frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians, representing the judgement of Paris, i.e. the contest, judged by Paris, to determine which of the goddesses Athena, Aphrodite and Hera was the fairest. Hermes in front of the winged horses on Athena's chariot.







Details from the scene on the west frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians (the judgement of Paris). LEFT: Hermes, messenger of the gods with his caduceus and winged sandals, is trying to calm a restless horse by patting its muzzle.

RIGHT: Winged Athena is mounting her chariot, obviously to depart defeated after the unequal competition with Aphrodite. She is wearing her characteristic aegis with the tassels in the form of coiled snakes around the edge.





Detail from the scene of the Judgement of Paris on the west frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians.

Female figure descending from a chariot with studied grace. This is the central figure of the frieze on the façade of the building with the two caryatids; it has been interpreted as Aphrodite descending from her chariot holding the reins or arranging her necklace in a coquettish gesture. She is wearing a diadem in her hair and her ear is covered by an octagonal ornament.

This story started at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus, when Eris (Discord), in revenge for not being invited, tossed a golden apple among the wedding guests on which was written: For the fairest. Immediately a quarrel broke out between Aphrodite, Athena and Hera all of whom claimed the apple and Zeus assigned Paris, the prince of Troy, to be the judge. He selected Aphrodite as being the fairest, and she rewarded him with the love of Helen, the most desirable woman of the era, whose abduction from Troy was the cause of the ten-year Trojan War. Thus the theme on the west side constituted an introduction to the theme on the east side that is related to the Trojan War.

In any event, it was the movement of this female figure from the west frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians that poet George Seferis had in mind when writing his impressions of the Museum of Delphi.

"... a vibrant thigh, as the knee bends for a woman to descend from a chariot... Such fragments from a life that was once whole are stirring bits very familiar to us, at one moment our own, and then mysterious and inaccessible."

(G. SEFERIS, *Essays*, "Delphi", 1961)

*The south frieze of the
Treasury of the Siphnians.
Scene with
a four-horse chariot. The horses
have come to a halt in front
of an altar. On the left,
the hand of the charioteer
can be discerned and the ends
of the reins he was holding.*







The south frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. Equestrian procession: four horses are yoked to a chariot and two pairs of horses with riders are galloping sedately.



The fragmentary state of the south frieze slabs prevents its restoration and the certain identification of its theme. A procession with four-horse chariots, riders and horses unfolds from left to right. Perhaps the theme of the frieze concerned mythical abductions of women by heroes and demigods, such as the rape of Hippodamia by Pelops and that of Phoebe and Ilaera, daughters of Leucippus, by the Dioscuri. The chariots are carrying young women and are accompanied by riders.

Two horses follow the chariot, galloping sedately. They are led by a nude man, perhaps one of the two Dioscuri, who is riding one horse and holding the second one by the reins. The horses are rendered naturalistically in terms of the folds

of the skin on the neck and knees. The human figures are flat, i.e. more drawn than sculpted, a feature that lends the whole scene a painterly character. This is visible on the west frieze as well, in contrast with the sculpturality and narrative spirit that distinguishes the other two sides with the Gigantomachy and the assembly of the gods. For this reason, two artists' workshops are believed to have worked on the frieze with the supervision of two sculptors who, in addition to the new material, the island marble, brought to Delphi the art of Ionia, but with different traditions and influences.



The south frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians. The end of the equestrian procession that accompanied the chariot. Two horses, led by the horseman, have stopped galloping.





The west frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians with the scene of the judgement of Paris. Hera, like Athena at the beginning of the frieze, is ascending her chariot to depart from the beauty contest.

The buried treasures

The reputation of the irrefutable prophecies of Pythian Apollo spread beyond the frontiers of the Hellenic world through the colonies and trade. For this reason, as early as the 8th century, kings of wealthy states in Asia Minor would consult the oracle on issues related to the governance of their countries or their relations with neighbouring peoples, and would send lavish gifts to Delphi. Herodotus describes these gifts admiringly in the 5th century, when they were still kept in the Treasury of the Corinthians. Priests had transferred them there after a fire in the temple in which they were initially kept. Of the multitude of gold and silver offerings, some stood out owing not only to their precious material but also to their art, such as the throne of King Midas of Phrygia, the first of the foreigners to send dedications to Delphi. He was followed by the renowned King Gyges of Lydia who sent six gold kraters. But the most generous donor to the sanctuary was Croesus, also king of Lydia (560-546), famed for his wealth and for the ambiguous prophecies that were given to him by the Pythia. The most brilliant of his many gifts to Apollo were silver kraters, lustral basins and, above all, a golden lion that weighed about 250 kg, mounted on a tall pedestal one hundred and seven bricks high.

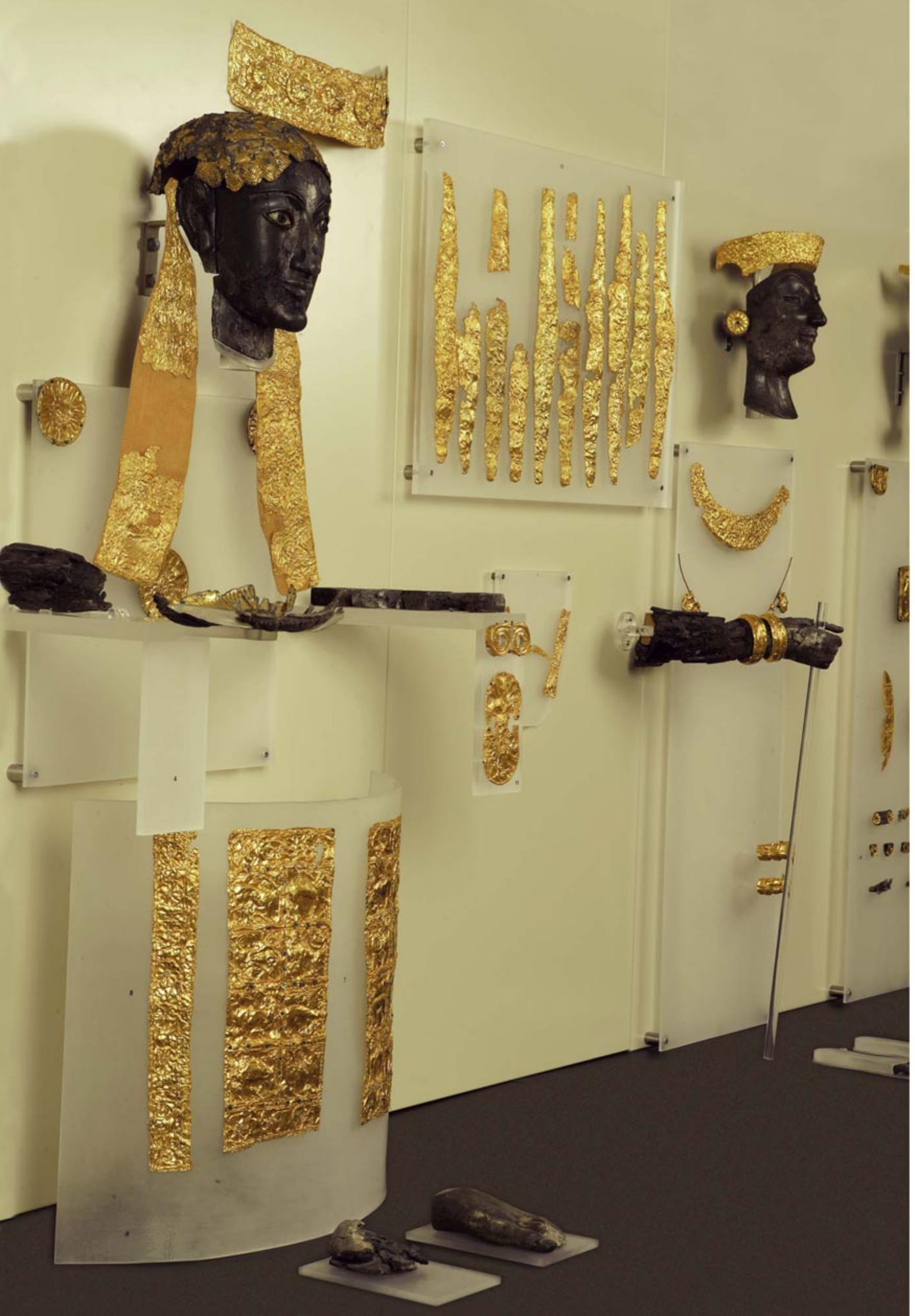
The testimony by Herodotus and other authors about the exotic gifts that were donated to Delphi by princes of Asia Minor was unexpectedly corroborated by an excavation find. Many years had passed since the completion of the great systematic excavation of the site, when in 1939, on the eve of World War II, French archaeologists conducting investigations began to take up the slabs that had been laid on the road between the monuments in the early Byzantine years. Between the Treasury of the Corinthians and the Portico of the Athenians, they were astonished to discover two large pits full of objects made of precious materials (gold, silver, ivory and bronze) that dated between the 8th and 5th centuries BC. Fragments of at least three chryselephantine (gold and ivory) statues, hundreds of pieces of sheet metal from a life-size hammered silver bull, and countless reliefs were found, as well as offerings of weapons and vessels, all of which were intermingled with soil, charcoal and ashes. It seems most likely that they had all come from dedications that had been severely damaged when the building they were kept in was destroyed, which was why they were reverently buried in the two "depositories", as we call the pits that were dug for them. This was the practice of the ancients with damaged offerings that could not be removed from the sacred site of the god to which they belonged.

When World War II was over and after years of conservation, the thousands of fragments from the two depositories under the Sacred Way, as this road came to be called, were re-assembled in the form of the offerings visible today. As a whole, they give us a picture of the wealth of the votive offerings in the sanctuary from the Archaic and early Classical periods and some idea, albeit faint, of the impression made by these gifts with their precious materials that were sent to Delphi by wealthy and powerful magnates from the East. They also provide us with information about the rare techniques used in creating works of art at that period, which otherwise we know solely from ancient literary sources.

The head of the chryselephantine (gold and ivory) statue that probably represented Apollo. 6th cent. BC









THE CHRYSELEPHANTINE STATUES

The remains of chryselephantine statues that were found in the depository, even though they did not retain their initial appearance, constitute unique examples of a rare sculptural technique that combined sculpted ivory and hammered gold, affixed to a wooden core. As we know from ancient literary sources, sculptors used this technique in the 6th and 5th century for cult statues, as Phidias did when he created the statue of Athena for the Parthenon and that of Zeus for Olympia. Gold leaf or gilt sheets with hammered decoration that rendered the hair, dress, jewellery and other details were fitted onto the wooden core of the statue, while the bare parts of the body, such as the face, hands and feet, were of ivory. The eyes and the eyelashes were inlaid. According to one possible explanation, the three gold and ivory statues constituted a group representing the Apollonian triad, Apollo with his sister Artemis and their mother Leto. The representation of Apollo seated on a throne holding a gilt silver broad-rimmed bowl (*phiale*) in his left hand has not been confirmed.

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Two hammered gold bands bearing relief scenes adorn the clothing of the seated figure. They were attached to the core of the statue with silver nails, the head of which was in the shape of a gilt rosette filled with enamel. It is a masterwork of the Greek goldsmith's art. The goldsmith, having first created a mould of the decorative motifs, would hit the metal sheet lightly on the back with the appropriate tools so that it would take the shape of this marvellous relief decoration (the repoussé technique). The same motif is rendered differently on two plaques, which are believed to have been created by two Greek artisans in some city on the coast of Asia Minor, or on some island in the Eastern Aegean, such as Samos or Chios, in about the middle of the 6th century BC.

ABOVE: Gold band diadem with embossed rosettes that are attached in the centre by silver nails.



Gold disk embellished with a multi-petalled relief rosette. It was fastened with nails to a bronze band as a pectoral ornament on the chryselephantine statue.





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The head of the chryselephantine statue that probably represented Apollo. The missing parts of the ivory face have been filled in with wax. Sheets of hammered decoration were used to depict the hair. On the scalp, the sheet metal is gilt silver. Two gold bands with wavy decoration render the long chest-length tresses.

Pages 170-171: Detail of the ivory face of Apollo. The arched eyebrows and almond eyes were highlighted with material inlaid into deep cuts.







The chryselephantine statue of Apollo with the hair and three gold pectoral ornaments (the side ones may have represented brooches or necklace clasps).

Page 173: Gold bands with hammered decoration from the lower part (knees to feet) of the garment worn by the chryselephantine statue, superb examples of the Archaic goldsmith's art.





Hammered decoration on the band from the garment of the chryselephantine statue. Within a border of rosettes, two vertical columns are formed that are divided into eight separate squares each of which is filled with a real or imaginary animal.

Wild goat and winged horse.

Lion mauling its prey and griffin.

Bull and lion with two deer on its back.

Deer and sphinx.

Page 175: Detail. The square with the griffin. Here one can discern the silver nails with the gilt head in the shape of a rosette, whose leaves are filled with enamel.





The representations in the second hammered band are similar to those in the previous one (pages 173-175). These two bands, placed one beside the other, constituted the bottom part of the clothing on the hammered metal statue.

Winged horse and wild goat.

Griffin and panther.

Lion with two deer on its back and bull.

Sphinx and deer

The representation of the animals may lead to the conclusion that the hammered bands, placed one beside the other, come from the clothing on the seated statue representing Artemis (P. Amandry).





Detail of the decoration on the hammered band: the square with the winged horse.

Page 179: *Detail of the decoration on the hammered band: the square with the griffin.*

Page 180: *Detail of the decoration on the hammered band: the square with the lion mauling its prey.*







Gold plates from the throne of the seated chryselephantine statue in the shape of a double volute (above) and a double palmette (below).







Gold sheets with stamped wavy decoration representing hair on chryselephantine statues. At the ends, the locks of hair are tied with a band.



Ivory toes.



The ivory right hand of the seated chryselephantine statue that was holding a sceptre. The hand consists of two connecting parts and is adorned with two bracelets of hammered sheet gold. In the middle of the main surface a band is formed with incised decoration.

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Page 185. Woman's head from the chryselephantine statue that may represent Artemis. The face, even though most of it has been filled in with wax, retains its characteristic features: almond eyes and arched eyebrows rendered with deep cuts and inlaid material, strong cheekbones and fleshy lips. The work of an Ionian, probably Samian workshop in the 6th cent. BC. The gold diadem is decorated with embossed continuous spirals. Two rosettes were affixed by means of a central nail and adorned the earlobes as earrings.



Gold crescent-shaped ornament enriched with continuous embossed spirals.





Necklace of gold pieces in the shape of lion's heads, attached with nails to a bronze plate. 6th cent. BC.

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Band of ivory with applied gold rosettes.



Two gold bracelets or anklets. 6th cent. BC.





Pages 188-189: Two gold plaques, each with an embossed Gorgon fastened to bronze plates. They adorned the clothing of the chryselephantine statue, probably as brooches. 6th cent. BC.



Page 190: Square gold plaque with the embossed representation of a griffin, fastened with nails to a bronze plate. Possibly the pectoral decoration of a chryselephantine statue.



Gold band from the clothing of the chryselephantine statue. Embellished with embossed motifs (rosettes with schematic leaves, spirals) that fill the space.



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Pages 192-193 (ABOVE): *Gold plaques in the shape of fruit, rosettes and leaves from the ornamentation of clothing.*
 (BELOW): *Gold and gilt bronze leaves and wreaths.*





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Decorative flowers of sheet gold, superb examples of the goldsmith's art.

Some two thousand fragments of ivory were collected from the two depositories, and after many years of painstaking work they were reassembled and restored to their individual figures or compositions. The processing of the verso showed that they had constituted decorative facing on wood and bronze chests or furniture, perhaps a throne. They were offerings whose fragile material made it necessary to keep them in one of the treasuries in the sanctuary.

The most ancient of these is a statuette of a god or hero, perhaps Apollo, who has tamed a wild animal. It is an excellent specimen of the art of Asia Minor with strongly Oriental influences, but was made by a Greek technician as indicated by the meander (Greek key) motif on the base of the figure. Proposals for its dating range between the 8th and 6th century.

Masterpieces of miniature art were created with carved figures standing on a thin band, that were cut around the outline (ajouré technique). In some of these we recognise rare mythological scenes, such as the episode from the Argonaut expedition with the sons of Boreas and the Harpies that was made up of about forty fragments. On their journey to distant Colchis, Jason and his companions landed on the coast of Thrace, because they had encountered unfavourable winds or, according to another tradition, because they wanted information about the route they should take to reach their destination. This place was ruled by old king Phineus, whom the gods had blinded to punish him for a profane act, condemning him to the endless torment of never enjoying his food because two terrible winged women called Harpies would snatch or soil the blind king's food. Among the heroes on the expedition were the two sons of Boreas, who were also winged. They chased off the Harpies thereby delivering Phineus from his torment; he rewarded them for this benevolent act by ensuring them fair winds for their voyage and advising the Argonauts how to get through the Symplegades. The plaque depicts the Harpies being chased away by the sons of Boreas.

The scene of the departing warrior was also a favourite motif in Archaic art, especially in pottery painting. Sometimes the warrior is accompanied by his name, but more frequently he is anonymous. Here the warrior, perhaps Amphiaraus, the mythic king of Argos who took part in the Argonaut expedition, is mounting his chariot on which the charioteer is already standing, while his comrades are ready to follow him.





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Relief scene carved on ivory that decorated a wooden chest, throne or other furniture. Calais and Zetes, the sons of Boreas, are depicted chasing the Harpies, two monstrous winged women named Aello and Okypede, one of whom is holding the food she has just snatched from Phineus. One of the hunters has grabbed her by the hair (detail right), while the other is drawing his sword to behead her. To the left a woman is gesturing and turning her head around to announce the joyous news to the blind Phineus. On the little table, the hand of Phineus has been preserved searching for his food. Traces of gold plating remain. Circa 570 BC.





Relief scenes with mythological themes, carved in ivory. They come from the decoration on a wooden chest, throne, or other piece of furniture. Left: The scene of a departing warrior, perhaps Amphiaraus, mounting his chariot. His companions are preparing to follow him.

Detail of the scene with the two warriors in front. One of them is putting on his helmet while the other is pushing aside his long hair so that he can don the helmet in his right hand. Traces of gold plating remain. Circa 570 BC.





*Fragments of a relief scene carved in ivory.
From the decoration on a wooden chest or piece of furniture
depicting a scene from a mythological battle. 6th cent. BC.*





Fragments of a relief scene carved in ivory. From the decoration on a wooden chest or other furniture depicting a scene from a mythological battle. To the left, a warrior carrying the dead or wounded body of another warrior. To the right, a war chariot. 6th cent. BC.



Pages 206-207: *Fragments of a relief scene carved in ivory. From the decoration on a wooden chest or other item of furniture, depicting a scene from a mythological battle. The warriors are wearing Corinthian helmets and holding shields adorned with carved eagles. 6th cent. BC.*







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Ivory hand and foot. 6th cent. BC.





*Plaques of glass paste in the shape of hands.
Obviously influenced by Egyptian art.
6th cent. BC.*







Wrist and hand from an ivory statue. 6th cent. BC.



Ivory plaques that decorated chests with meander, rosette, and leaf motifs.





Ivory leaves and rosette. Affixed with nails to a wooden chest or other item of furniture.

Pair of feet wearing elaborate sandals. 6th cent. BC.





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Heads of ivory statuettes. 6th cent. BC.





Head of an ivory statue of a woman. 6th cent. BC.

THE SILVER BULL FROM THE DEPOSITORY

The technique of hammering metal was widespread in the Archaic period, and is visible in the Museum's early cauldrons. Some statues and figurines made of sheets of hammered bronze have been preserved. But the sixty silver leaves that were found crumpled and damaged at the bottom of one depository have, after exacting and detailed work by highly competent conservators, produced the first example of a large-dimension statue of hammered silver. It is a bull made of three sheets of silver. The mass of the statue was created by a wooden core which did not, however, occupy all the interior space. The gaps were filled with some malleable material such as clay, wax, or plaster on which the leaves, which had been hammered from the back, rested. The metal plates were joined with bands of silver-plated bronze and affixed with silver and bronze nails. The horns, ears, forehead curls, hoofs and other parts of the body were gilded.

Conservation made it possible to restore many fragments, but the initial sculpted shape and volume of the statue could not be duplicated, because its interior core was lost, and no more than traces of charred wood were preserved at some points. In addition, the dimensions of the statue have been altered in relation to its initial total length, which was about 2.30 metres.

Despite the deficiencies, the poor condition of the metal owing to the combustion of the wood in the pit and the changes to its initial form, the work still retains much of its initial magnificence from the time it gleamed with its precious materials, silver and gold in the natural environment of the sanctuary and the Delphic land. Testimonies from inscriptions and literary sources do not tell us who dedicated the silver bull or the conditions under which it was commissioned. But its art, particularly the head and strongly moulded legs, speak eloquently of the abilities of the Ionian metalworker of the 6th century BC and demonstrate the power, wealth and cultural level of a prosperous city and the enormously wealthy official who dedicated such a gift to Apollo! The association with the rich offerings of Croesus, King of Lydia is inevitable.

Bronze or stone statues of bulls, an animal which, like the lion, symbolised power and suprema-



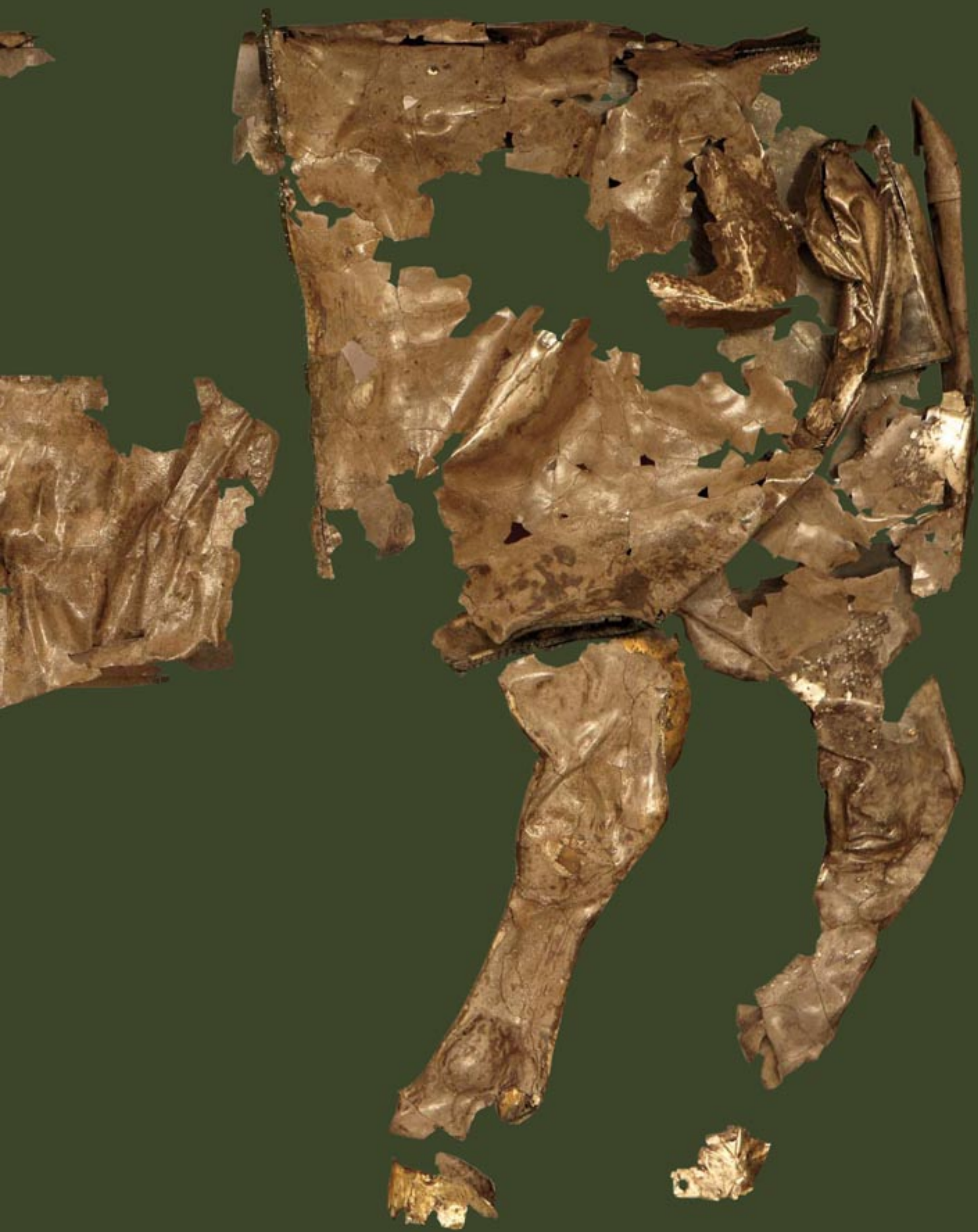
Leg of the silver bull with gilded hoof.

cy, were customary votive offerings to Greek sanctuaries. The first monument encountered by the visitor to the sanctuary of Delphi, on the right of the Sacred Way, was a bronze bull whose base has been preserved. It had been dedicated by the Corcyraeans in about 480 BC with their share of the profits from a rich catch of tonnes of fish, according to Pausanias' account.



Page 217: Head of the silver bull with gold-plated horns and shaggy hair.
Following pages: The silver bull. 6th cent. BC.







THE GLORIOUS TEMPLE

"In this place I am minded to build a glorious temple to be an oracle for men..."

("Hymn to Pythian Apollo", *Hesiod, Homeric Hymns, Epic Cycle, Homerica*,
Trans. Hugh G. Evelyn White, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press,
ll. 287-288)

The Alcmeonid temple and its sculpted decoration

THE PRIMARY SITE IN THE SANCTUARY is occupied by the temple, the dwelling place of the god and seat of his oracle. And when, in the 6th century BC, the reputation of the sanctuary had spread throughout the known world, the temple must have had a form worthy of its universal prestige. This was why, after the fire in 548 BC that destroyed the first stone temple in the sanctuary (the one that the Homeric hymn says was founded by Apollo himself), those responsible for the sanctuary began building a much larger and more lavish one. To this end they extended the terrace on which the foundation of the new building would be laid and, to hold the soil, they built an enormous retaining wall of polygonal masonry. The very large sum of money required for the construction was collected through generous offerings from Greek cities and colonies as well as from foreign princes, and the works went on for many years.

The new temple was associated with the name of the Alcmeonids, the aristocratic Athenian family that was exiled by Peisistratus, tyrant of Athens. The Amphictyonic League, which regulated sanctuary matters, commissioned them to complete and decorate the building in about 510 BC. The Alcmeonids, in order to win the favour of the god, but also to rally other Greek cities in the struggle against their political adversaries, constructed the temple façade of marble, as Herodotus relates, instead of poros stone as had been provided in their contract, and assigned the sculpted decoration to a significant sculptor from Athens, possibly Antenor. After the fall of the Peisistratid tyranny and the return of the Alcmeonids, the Athenians entrusted the creation of the bronze group of the Tyrannicides, the two citizens who killed the tyrant Hipparchus, to the same artist.

The results were indeed impressive, as confirmed by the statues on the two pediments, poros stone on the west and marble on the east, which were found in the excavation. Despite their piecemeal state, they allow us to identify the scenes that were depicted in the large tympana. The stern magnificence of the themes and figures is in harmony with the strict Doric order of the temple. Great glory was in store for the Alcmeonids and the Athenians, whose mythical ancestors were depicted on the east pediment, as the temple was praised in song by the great classical poets and admired by pilgrims to the Panhellenic sanctuary for more than a century.

*... for among all cities travels the report about
Erechtheus' citizens who made
your temple in divine Pytho splendid to behold*

(PINDAR, "Pythian Ode for Megakles", *Pindar Olympian Odes, Pythian Odes*, ed. and trans.
William H. Race, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1997, p. 323 ll. 9-13)

The ruins of the last temple of Apollo in front of the Phaedriades rocks. The columns of Corinthian poros stone were restored between 1938 and 1941.



The more important east pediment portrays the coming of Apollo to Delphi. In the middle was the chariot of the god with four horses in a frontal stance. It transported the god, accompanied by his mother Leto and his sister Artemis. To the right and left, three *kouroi* (young men) and three *kores* (young women) flank the chariot. In the two corners, the popular theme of the lion mauling a domestic animal underscores the formal nature of the scene. The interpretation of the theme is based on lines from Aeschylus' *The Furies*, in which the Pythia recounts the arrival of Apollo from Athens to Delphi in front of the temple. The Athenians, children of Hephaestus, gave the god a send-off and the citizens of Delphi and their king Delphos welcomed him with honours.

*...and thence he passed and came
Unto this land and to Parnassus' shrine.
And at his side, with awe revering him,
There went the children of Hephaestus' seed,
The hewers of the sacred way, who tame
The stubborn tract that erst was wilderness.
And all this folk, and Delphos, chieftain-king
Of this their land, with honour gave him home.*

(AESCHYLUS, "The Furies", 12-16, *Nine Greek Dramas*, Trans. by E.D.A. Morshead, The Harvard Classics, Grolier Enterprises Corp, 1982)

The poros stone west pediment depicts the Gigantomachy, the battle between the Olympian gods and the Giants, children of Gaea (Earth). The following figures have been preserved from the left side of the composition: a Giant fallen to his knees, perhaps Enceladus, Athena moving vigorously and wearing her shield, the lower part of a man, perhaps Dionysus, and parts of two horses from the chariot of Zeus who was at the centre of the pediment. On the marble mortar covering the poros stone figures, traces of rich painted decoration can still be seen. This was the pediment that the women in the chorus of Euripides' *Ion* admired

*...at the shrine of Loxias, child of Leto [...]
Look, there on the marble walls – the rout of the Giants! [...]
Then do you see her, shaking her shield with its Gorgon-face over Enceladus?*

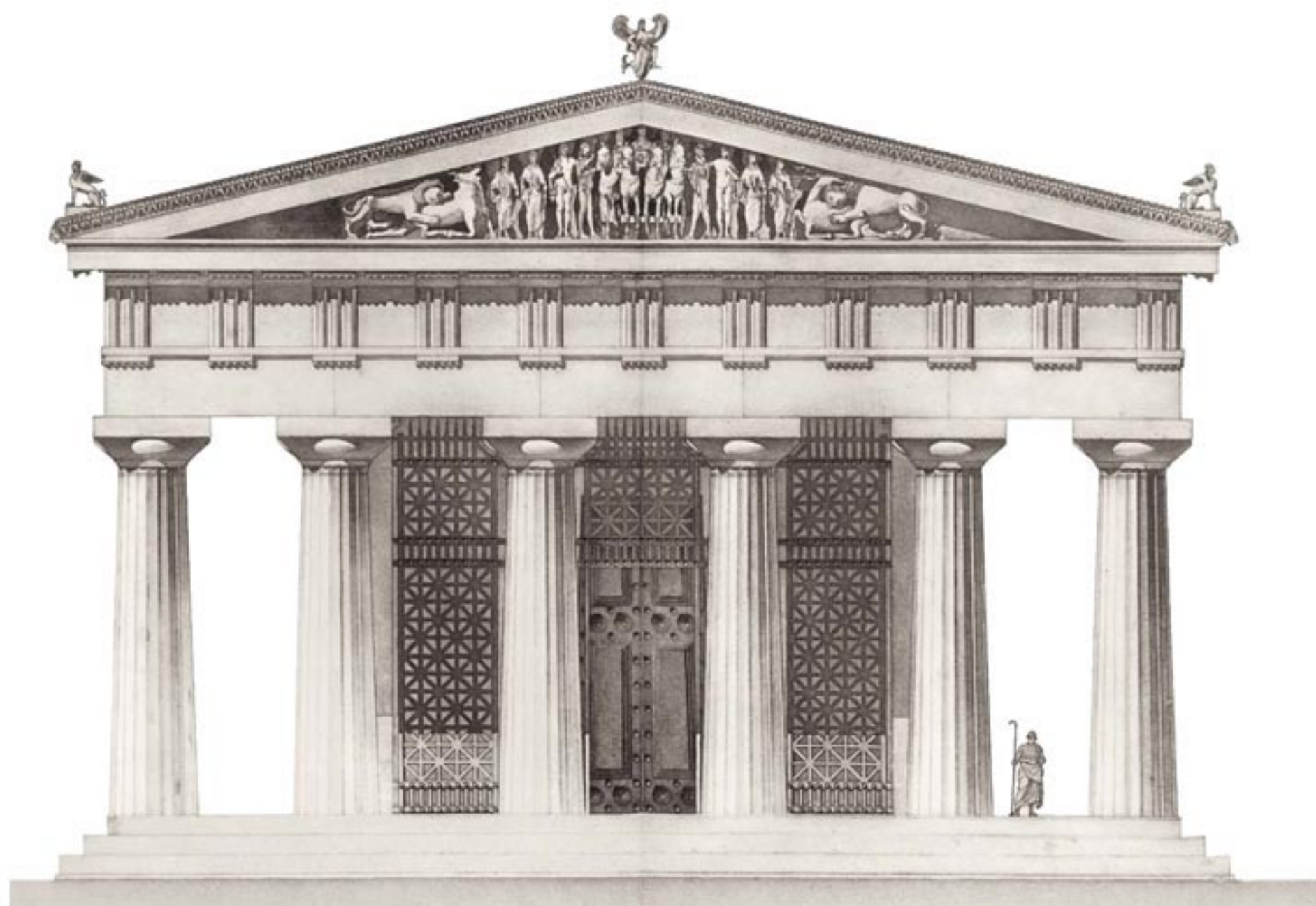
(EURIPIDES, "Ion", *Heracles and other Plays*, trans. John Davie, Penguin Books, 2002, 188 ff. p. 106)

The composition on the west pediment featured very lively movement in contrast with the east one, where the seriousness of the divine presence imposed a "priestly immobility" on the figures.



Reconstruction of the east pediment of the Archaic temple of Apollo in the Museum. The Alcmeonids selected the seminal theme of Apollo's arrival at Delphi with a retinue of Athenians in order to confirm the tradition that their city had played a major role in the founding of the Pythian sanctuary. Soon after 510 BC.

BELOW: Reconstruction of the façade of the Archaic temple of Apollo. The establishment of the god at Delphi, with his following of Athenians, was re-enacted every eight years by the festive procession of the Pythais, which started from the Agora in Athens and ended at Delphi.



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Group of animals that border the east pediment of the Archaic temple: lion mauling a bull (left) and deer (right). This outdated apotropaic theme was of special significance here at that time. It suggests the wild forces of nature that were tamed by the Athenians accompanying Apollo to Delphi. This is very likely the scene that Aeschylus had in mind when he wrote the lines at the beginning of *The Furies*: "There went the children of Hephaestus' seed / The hewers of the sacred way, who tame / The stubborn tract that erst was wilderness." (*The Furies*, *Nine Greek Dramas by Aeschylus, Euripides and Aristophanes*, Translated by E.D.A. Morshead, Grolier Enterprises Corp, Danbury Connecticut, 1982, p. 122.)



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Two kores from the east pediment of the Archaic temple, representing the Athenian women accompanying the god on his journey from Athens to Delphi. Their similarity, in terms of technique and style, to the Acropolis kore that bears the signature of Antenor led to the conclusion that the Alcmeonids commissioned this famous Athenian sculptor or his workshop to create the pediments.



The bottom part of the body of Athena from the poros west pediment of the Archaic temple. The goddess is striding swiftly to the left, where a fallen giant lies. We can imagine her whole figure and stance from Euripides' description in Ion "Then, do you see the goddess Athena, shaking her shield with its Gorgon-face over Enceladus?" (Heracles and Other Plays, trans. John Davie, Penguin Books, l. 210, p. 106).

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Statue of winged Nike running. This is one of the acroteria that once decorated the east side of the roof of the Archaic temple. Soon after 510 BC.





The main figure on the west pediment of the Classical temple of Apollo. It portrays Dionysus in the rare type of the kithara-player, as indicated by the hollow on the right arm, to which the kithara was attached. 340-330 BC.

The 4th century BC temple and its sculpted decoration

The temple of the Alcmeonids was reduced to rubble by the rock fall that accompanied a major earthquake in 373 BC, the same one that buried the statue of the Charioteer under a landslide. To rebuild it, the Amphictyons, the representatives of the cities of mainland Greece who administered the sanctuary, once again resorted to a Panhellenic fund-raising campaign. A large part of the colossal amount of money required was raised from the fine paid by the Phocians for their plundering at the expense of the sanctuary during the ten-year third Sacred War. One solitary piece of documentation about the financial management, drawings and technical methods used on the enormous construction site, which was organised under the direction of special archons (the "temple-builders"), has been provided to us by inscriptions on stone stelae found in the excavations.

The new peripteral Doric temple, whose ruins we can see today, was inaugurated in 330 BC; on its pediments sculpted representations were erected of Apollo among the Muses on the east side and Dionysus among the Baccantes or Maenads on the west, while Persian shields that had been part of the Athenians' booty from the battle of Marathon were attached to its metopes.

The excavations could not enhance the sparse information that has come down to us from the ancients about the interior of the temple, since it was almost totally destroyed. In its cella (*sekos*, or inner part of the temple), the gold-plated cult statue of Apollo stood in a prominent position and on the wall of the vestibule (*pronaos*) famous sayings by the Seven Sages were inscribed, together with the enigmatic letter E. Nothing was preserved of the oracular holy of holies (*adyton*) in which the prophecies were given. The last Pythia appears to have taken the secret of the prophetic art with her, and left us nothing of the symbols of the prophet god which must have been under the floor of the cella, i.e. the oracular tripod, on which the priestess of Apollo would sit to make contact with the Earth and its subterranean forces, and the *omphalos*, which was regarded as the tomb of the Python or of Dionysus.

In recent years, the systematic re-examination of a number of sculptures that had been overlooked in the Museum storage area reinstated their identity which had been lost so many centuries ago, and led to their unexpected identification as statues from the two pediments which, since the period of the French excavation, were believed to have been looted by Roman emperors. This important discovery was confirmed by Pausanias' description of the pediments on which he had seen the sculptures in place in the 2nd cent. AD, has

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also given us a fairly accurate picture of the two compositions, which are presented for the first time, albeit in fragmentary form, in the present exhibition, a century after the Museum was founded.



On the east pediment of the temple, Apollo is presented with his mother Leto and his sister Artemis among the Muses. In the centre is Apollo, wearing a mantle that leaves his chest bare, and sitting on a tripod holding a laurel branch and a wide-rimmed bowl (*phiale*). He is depicted not as Musagetes, but as the lord of his oracle. The Muses, some standing and others seated in a rocky landscape, link the god with the world of the arts and culture.

On the west pediment of the temple, Dionysus is portrayed among Bacchantes (women in Dionysus' retinue who, according to the poetic tradition, would dance across Parnassus). Dionysus is standing in the centre in the rare type of *kithara*-player. He is wearing a tunic belted under the chest, a mantle thrown over his shoulders and the characteristic headband (*mitra*) of the initiated on his forehead. The kithara he is holding in his left hand ranks him with the god of music, Apollo, and reconciles the different worlds of the two gods that are depicted on the same temple.

Works by two Athenian sculptors, Praxias and Androstenes, who do not belong to the cluster of famous artists of their age, these two pediments from the 4th century BC do not have the magnificence and power of the Archaic pediments of the previous temple, but they do present interesting iconographic innovations. The depiction of the two gods on the same monument and the unique representation of Dionysus in the type of the kithara-player take on symbolic significance. Apollo, the ruling god of the sanctuary, cedes the west pediment of his temple and lends his favourite musical instrument, the kithara, to Dionysus, just as he granted his sanctuary to him during the three winter months when Apollo would leave Delphi and go to the Hyperboreans; then Dionysus-Bacchus became the lord of the sanctuary in which the Apollonian paeans would cease to be heard and Dionysian dithyrambs would echo. This iconographic novelty appears to have been related to the more general development of the Dionysian cult and its official recognition at Delphi, which was achieved with the support of the priests during the period in which the pediments were being constructed (340-330 BC).

Praxias, the main artisan to whom the difficult work of rendering an innovative iconographic programme was assigned, and his pupil Androstenes did not leave us a significant work of art, but they did succeed in carrying out the commission to produce innovative syncretism of the two divine figures.

GOLDEN-HAIRED APOLLO WITH HIS LYRE

Sing of golden-haired Pythios who shoots far and is skilled on the lyre

2nd Delphic Hymn to Apollo

The figure of Pythian Apollo was preserved intact in a painted representation on a wide-rimmed kylix. This small drinking cup is the sole exhibit in the Museum that did not come from the sanctuary. It was found in 1959 in a tomb under the site of today's Museum. Consequently, it was not an offering to Apollo, but a funeral gift that accompanied some famous man of Delphi, probably a priest of Apollo, to his last resting place.

The exterior of the vessel is undecorated, covered with black slip, burnished as in the Archaic period, and has today taken on a brown hue. The inside curved surface is covered by off-white slip on which the main emblem of the kylix has been painted, the representation of Apollo pouring a libation. The god is depicted as a very young man, crowned with laurel or myrtle leaves, and with long hair that has been tied up in the back leaving the line of his neck defined. He is seated on a folding stool with crossed legs that terminate in the legs and paws of a lion. Over his sleeveless tunic, a simple undecorated purple mantle hangs from his left shoulder, covering the lower part of his body. The fingers of his left hand are resting on the chords of the lyre, perhaps to strike up a hymn or paeon. The depiction of the tortoise-shell sound-box of the lyre calls to mind the story recounted that the newborn Hermes made the first lyre out of the shell of a tortoise and oxhide. With his outstretched right hand, the young Apollo is holding a ritual vessel from which he is pouring





Attic kylix with a white ground. Representation of Apollo pouring a libation. 480-470 BC.

a libation, perhaps of red wine, on the Earth, the first prophetess of the sanctuary. The white colour applied to the vessel indicates that it was made of precious silver.

The scene takes place in front of a black bird, perhaps one of the doves that nested in the temple of Apollo. Some scholars identify the bird with the crow that announced to Apollo the wedding of the nymph Coronis, the beautiful daughter of king Phlegyas. According to the myth, the god was angry at losing his beloved and cursed the crow to be as black as his heart. Others argue that it is a bird with prophetic traits related to divination.

The painter of the kylix is unknown to us, but his superb skill in adapting the design to the small cyclical shape and in harmonising its soft colours make him one of the most noteworthy artisans of his age. This was the decade after the turbulent years of the Persian Wars (480-470 BC), when the carefree joy of the Archaic years that was imprinted on the figures by the conventional Archaic smile gave way to austerity. The spiritual and religious atmosphere of this age is expressed by the image on this kylix with the eternally youthful and beautiful figure of the god with his fair hair, as rendered by the soft, almost golden, colour used by the pottery painter.





THE TREASURY OF THE ATHENIANS

A song of praise to the Athenian state

ON THE EVE OF THE PERSIAN WARS, the Delphic oracle did not take the stand warranted by the historic circumstances and issued prophecies that hindered the Greek cities from fighting the invaders. Despite this, its moral prestige was not shaken in the minds of the Greeks who, after their victories against the barbarians, showered the sanctuary with rich gifts to express their gratitude to Apollo and to immortalise their heroic deeds.

Soon after the battle of Marathon, in which they had been in the front lines, the Athenians hastened to dedicate to the god an offering of the booty taken from the defeated Persians, as we are informed by the inscription carved in front of the terrace on which they built their treasury of pure white Parian marble, a structure in the type of a Doric temple with two columns between pilasters (*in antis*) on the façade and with sculpted decoration on the metopes and pediments. According to the evidence of Pausanias, this monument to the Battle of Marathon was dedicated in 490 BC.

Despite the fact that most of the metopes were found to be broken, we have been able to identify the subject of each one, as well as its position on the monument. On the south side of the treasury facing the Sacred Way, the metopes depict the exploits of Theseus, in whose person the Athenians perceived the guarantor of their ancestral values, but also the national hero who, with his revolutionary changes, laid the foundations for their republican state. On the east side of the façade, another theme beloved of the Athenians is depicted, the battle with the Amazons. The scenes reminded pilgrims approaching the temple of the legendary battles against the Amazons and how Darius set out from the East to conquer the glorious city, but was stopped by the Athenians and their mythical king Theseus. The tradition that Theseus fought on the side of the Athenians at Marathon was narrated centuries later by Plutarch. "And years later, the Athenians began to honour Theseus as a hero and for other reasons too because they believed that, when they were fighting the Medes at Marathon, many had seen his ghost clearly in arms leading them against the barbarians" (*Theseus*, 35.5). On the two visible sides of their treasury, the Athenians, using the most eloquent symbolism, proclaimed their pride in their young republic whose military strength had saved Greece. The metopes on the north and west side, which were not directly visible to pilgrims, narrated the labours of Heracles, a Panhellenic hero whose super-human strength defeated all daemonic forces.

The reliefs on the metopes are an expression of Attic sculpture in the last phase of the Archaic world, when the trend to refinement and elegance was enriched by the invention of new and daring solutions in depicting the movement of figures. The older sculptors who worked on the frieze must have retained the customary techniques of their youth, and the metopes they created have more Archaic features, such as the conventional smile and prominent eyes of the figures. Younger sculptors, without abandoning the Archaic tradition, presaged the features of Classical art with their austere figures and balanced poses. But the concept and style are common over the frieze as a whole. Every metope presents two figures with the repeated appearance of the protagonist. The figures are carved in a strong, high relief and their limbs often project beyond the borders of the metope.

The Treasury of the Athenians. Owing to the excellent state of preservation of its marble, it was possible in 1903-1906 to restore the monument that expressed the hegemonic policy of ancient Athens. The project was undertaken at the expense of the Municipality of Athens following an enthusiastic proposal by then mayor Spyros Mercouris. This is the only complete restoration and rebuilding of a temple-like structure from Hellenic antiquity.

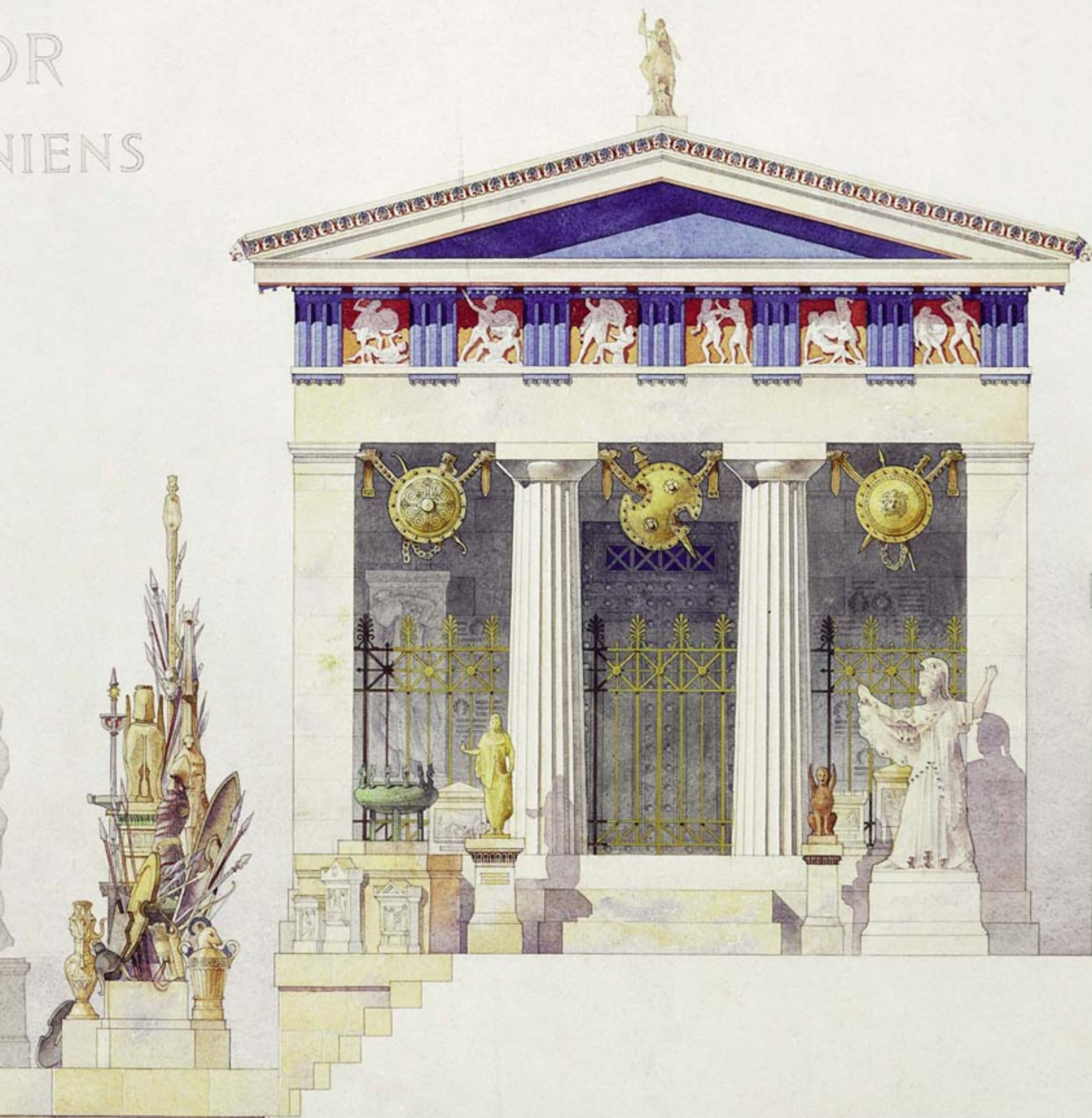
The faithful walking up towards the temple could see, in the middle of the south side, the scene of the sacred conversation of Theseus with Athena. Before setting out on his exploits, Theseus comes to the goddess to seek her protection and salutes her reverently, raising his right hand. Athena welcomes him, dressed in the typical Ionian dress of the Archaic kore. Her breast is covered by the aegis, which, as can be seen from the holes, was once adorned with metal decoration. Her left hand was holding a spear and, in her right, she may have been holding a small additional shield. This metope is regarded as the most inspired one on the entire frieze, and appears to have been a work by one of the younger sculptors who introduces us to the austere order of the early Classical period. The symbolic meaning of the scene, which expresses the seriousness of the new aesthetic concept in the most characteristic way, is a dual one: Athena, in blessing Theseus, the founder of the Athenian state, is also blessing the city that she herself had chosen to be its protecting goddess.

On another metope on the south side, Theseus gives the coup de grace to his adversary, perhaps Antiope, queen of the Amazons. Both figures are wearing a raised helmet. The body of the mythical hero is depicted nude against the background of his cloak which has spread out behind him. On his lips lingers a hint of the Archaic smile, which testifies to the Archaic origins of the artist responsible for this metope. The Amazon, dressed in a leather cuirass, has fallen onto her shield. Her head, leaning toward Theseus, lends an emotional tone foreign to the bellicose atmosphere of the other metopes, and reminds us of Antiope's love for the mythical king of Athens.

The best preserved of the metopes on the north side is the one with Heracles fighting the Ceryneian hind. After hunting her for a year, the hero wearing his lion skin, grabbed the sacred hind from Ceryneia in the Peloponnese by her golden horns and handed her over alive to Eurystheus. At the same time, he is holding her down firmly with his knee on her back, while raising high his right hand that would have held the club, extended beyond the border of the metope. Here the artist appears to have remained loyal to the Archaic stylistic tradition, as shown by the almost calligraphic rendering of Heracles' anatomy and face.

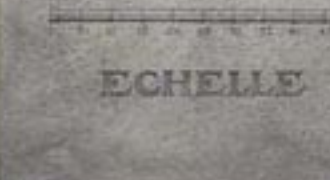
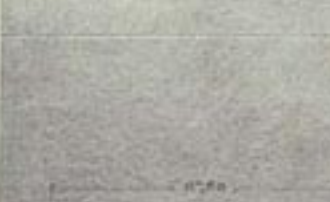


OR
NIENS



The façade of the Treasury of the Athenians. Watercolour on a drawing in India ink by the French architect A. Tournaire (1894). The votive offerings around the monument are hypothetical inventions and bear witness to Tournaire's fondness for detailed additions. Traces of bright colour were preserved on many sculptures and other architectural members after they were unearthed, but rapidly faded.

DELPHE



TRESOR DES[®] ATHENIENS

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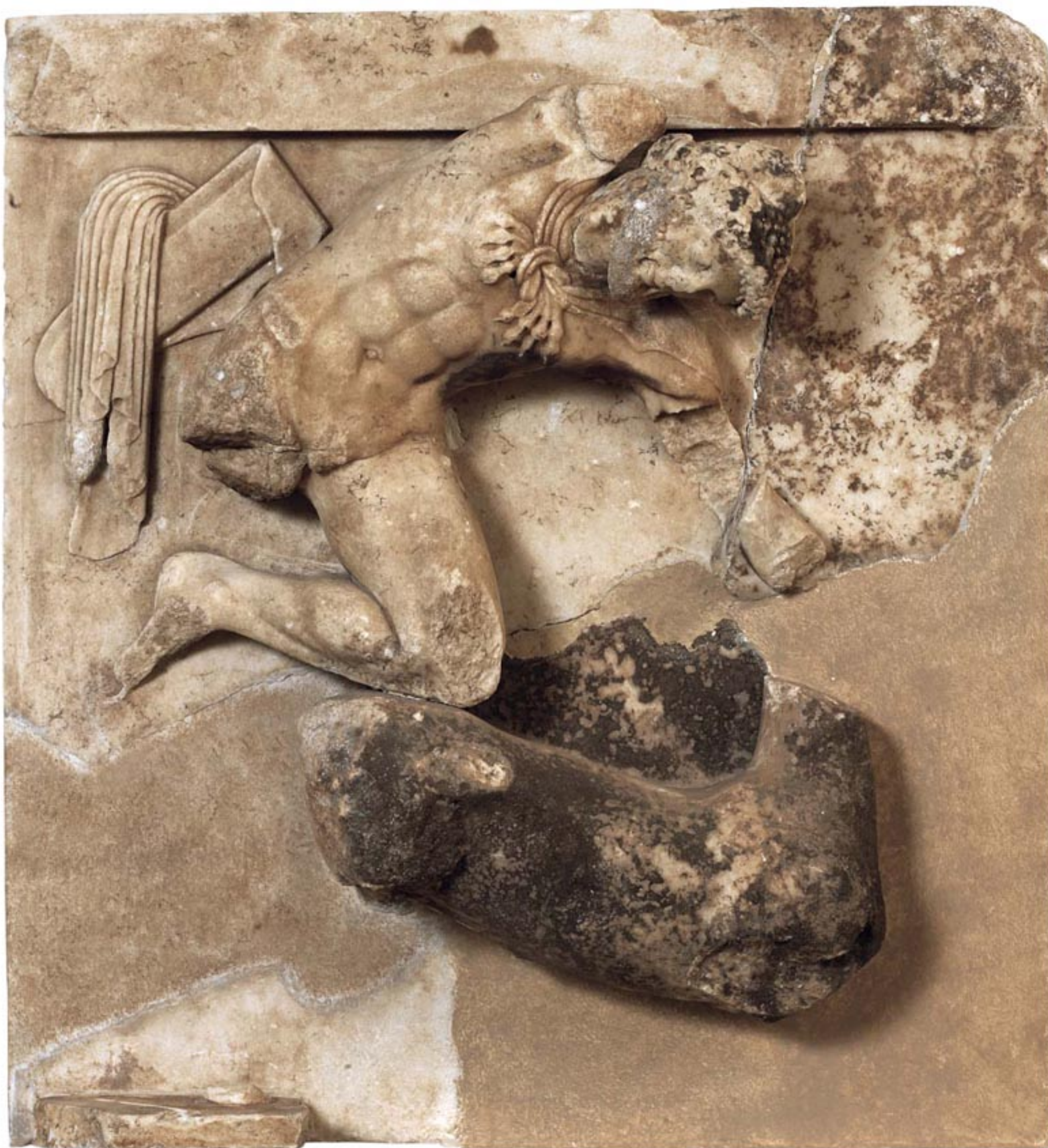
Metope from the south side of the Treasury of the Athenians. Athena is welcoming Theseus. The seriousness of the theme and its rendering express the transition from Archaic to Classical art. Soon after 490 BC.

Page 240: The Treasury of the Athenians, in the Doric order. Watercolour on a drawing in India ink by A. Tournaire (1894). The metope with Athena and Theseus is represented.



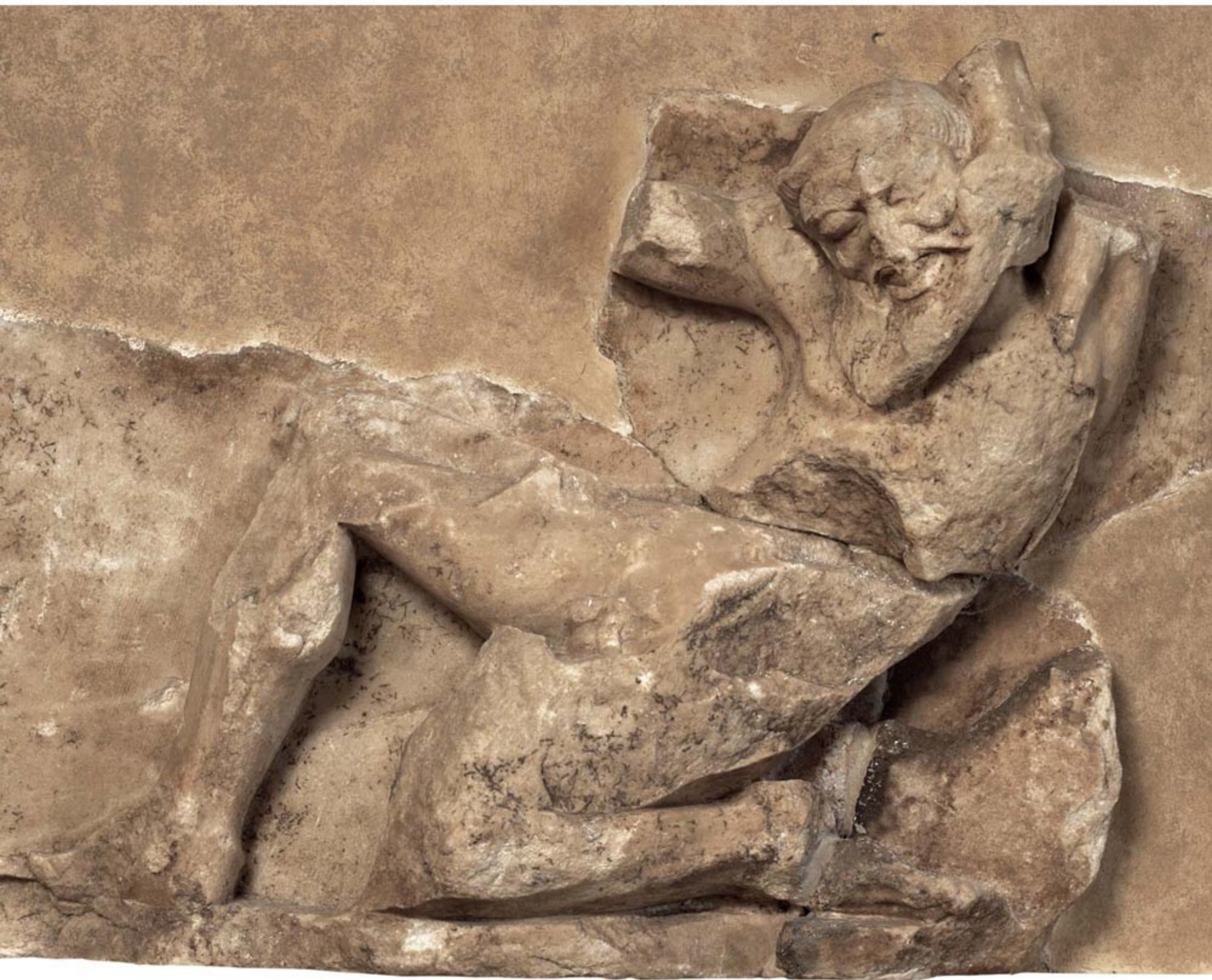
Metope from the south side of the Treasury of the Athenians. The group with Theseus and the Amazon. Right, detail of the head of Theseus. Soon after 490 BC.





Metope from the north side of the Treasury of the Athenians. Heracles captures the Ceryneian hind. The art of the metope represents the Archaic tradition. Right: detail with Heracles. Soon after 490 BC.





Metope from the south side of the Treasury of the Athenians, showing the robber Skiron, whom Theseus has cast on a rock. Soon after 490 BC.



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Metope from the south side of the Treasury of the Athenians. Theseus captures a wild bull near Marathon. The beast has fallen with its head touching the ground. Soon after 490 BC.



*Corner acroterion on the Treasury of the Athenians. Mounted Amazons armed with breastplate and quiver.
Soon after 490 BC.*



ΚΑΙΝΟΝ
ΕΝ ΤΗ
ΠΑΛΑΤΕΙ
ΕΝ ΤΗ
ΕΠΙΓΡΑΦΗ

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ΕΛΡΟΧΑΡΗΣΟΤΗ...
ΟΕΧΛΕΤΟΜΕΝΟ...
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ΤΕΘΕΛΑΤΟ...
ΚΑΙΣΤΕ...
ΒΙΟΙΣ...
ΜΕΝΟ...
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ΝΗΡΑ...

ΕΠΕΥΟΧΛΟΜΟΥΑΡΧΙ...
ΙΡΟΜΝΗΜΩΝ...
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ΜΑΡΑΘΑΝΙΟΣ...

ΑΟΛΛΟΦΑΝΗΣ...
ΕΡΕΥΑΠΟΛΛΑΡΝΟΧ...
ΜΑΡΑΘΑΝΙΟΣ...

Two ancient pieces of written music

The walls of the Treasury of the Athenians were covered with inscriptions that had begun to be carved in the 3rd century BC and lent the monument even greater historical value, transforming it into a kind of archive of the city of Athens. Most of the inscriptions are honorific decrees concerning Athenian citizens. Among them, however, carved on the marble slabs of the south wall, i.e. the wall looking toward the Sacred Way, there are two hymns to Apollo, famous for their musical notation. They are the most interesting and extensive ancient pieces of notated music from among the fifty or so that have come down to us today. Most of these pieces have been preserved on papyri from Hellenistic and Roman Egypt, fewer on inscriptions and in a few manuscripts. The musical texts however that were carved on the Treasury of the Athenians are unique because they are related to other Delphic inscriptions that inform us about the composers of the two paeans and about the specific events with which they are associated. Thus we know that they were written by two professional Athenian poets and musicians, the bard Athenaios, son of Athenaios, and the kithara-player Limenios, son of Thoinos, on the occasion of the Pythais of 128 BC. The Pythais was an official Attic delegation sent by Athens to Delphi at certain periods and took the form of a major religious procession in honour of Pythian Apollo. This feast was held in commemoration of the mythic arrival of Apollo in Delphi, where he was accompanied by Athenians, children of Hephaestus, who opened the way and tamed the wild land, as Aeschylus said in *The Furies*. These Pythian feasts and processions were accompanied by music contests during which we know that one paean to Apollo received a prize, which was why it was carved on the wall of the treasury of the composer's city. We also know that one hymn was officially performed by a chorus of 86 singers accompanied by flute and kithara players.

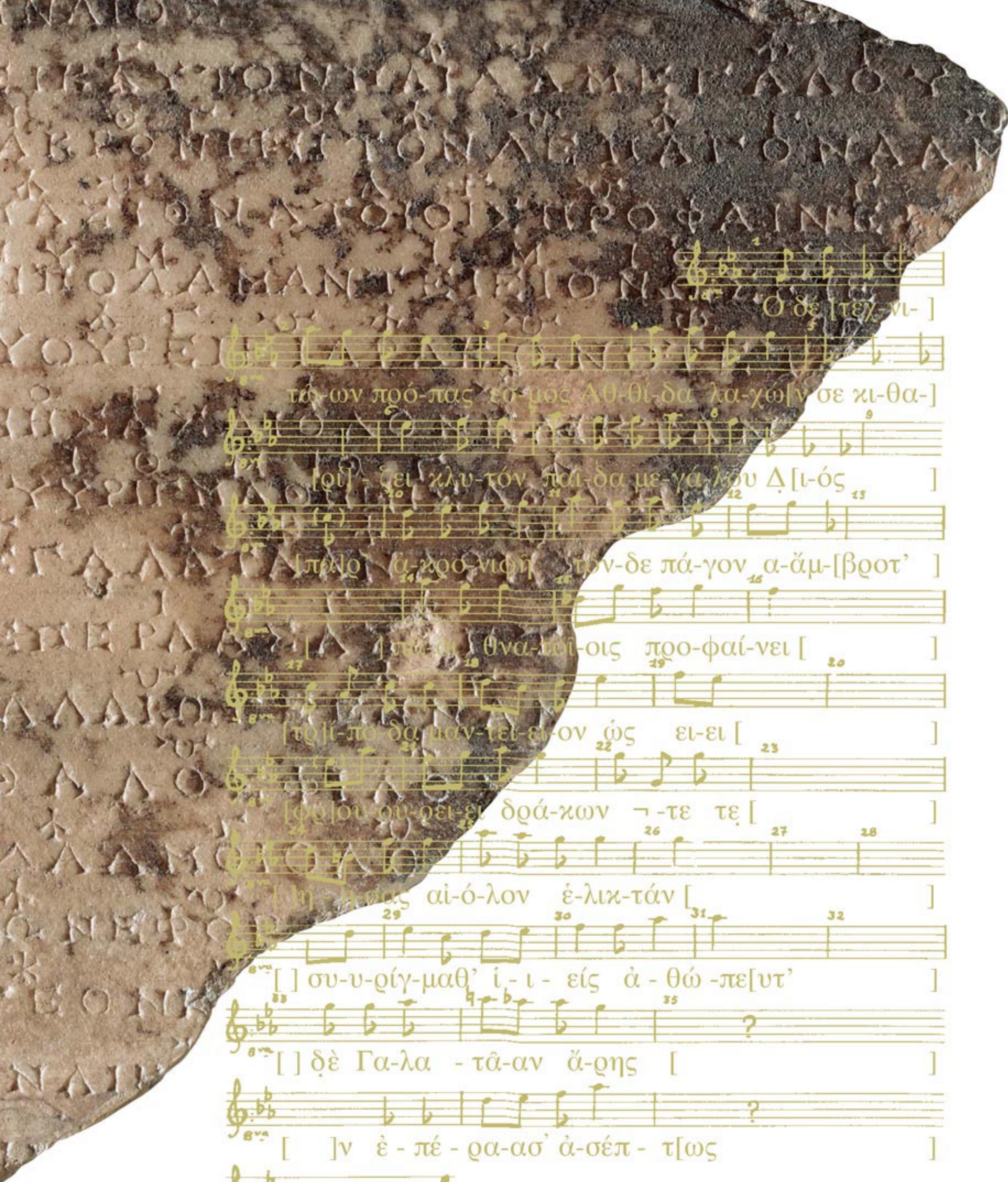
Expert musicologists were able to decipher the musical symbols (notes) that are carved among the lyrics. This was due to a fateful coincidence. During the middle of the 3rd century AD, an unknown writer of music, Alypius, composed a brief treatise, in which he set out the basic systems of intonation used in any written music preserved from the 4th century BC and provided tables with symbols. In the Delphic hymns, two different systems were used, vocal and instrumental. The former used the 24 letters of the Greek alphabet as its symbols, whereas the latter used the letters either inverted or standing on their side. The symbol is carved right over the syllable that it determines vocally or instrumentally and, when the sound remains constant on more than one syllable, the symbol is not repeated. The intonation is not rhythmic and the value of the sound is equivalent to short or long syllables.

The first paean has four verses, three of which have been preserved virtually intact. The second numbered nine verses and ended with a triumphant finale in two tempos. Apollo is glorified –his birth on the island of Delos, his coming to Delphi, and his victorious struggle against the Galatians. The talent of the "Dionysian artisans" of Athens, i.e. the artists who serve the arts of Dionysus, is also emphasised. At the beginning of the two paeans, the poet calls upon the Muses to descend from Helicon and join in the song in honour of Phoebus on Parnassus:

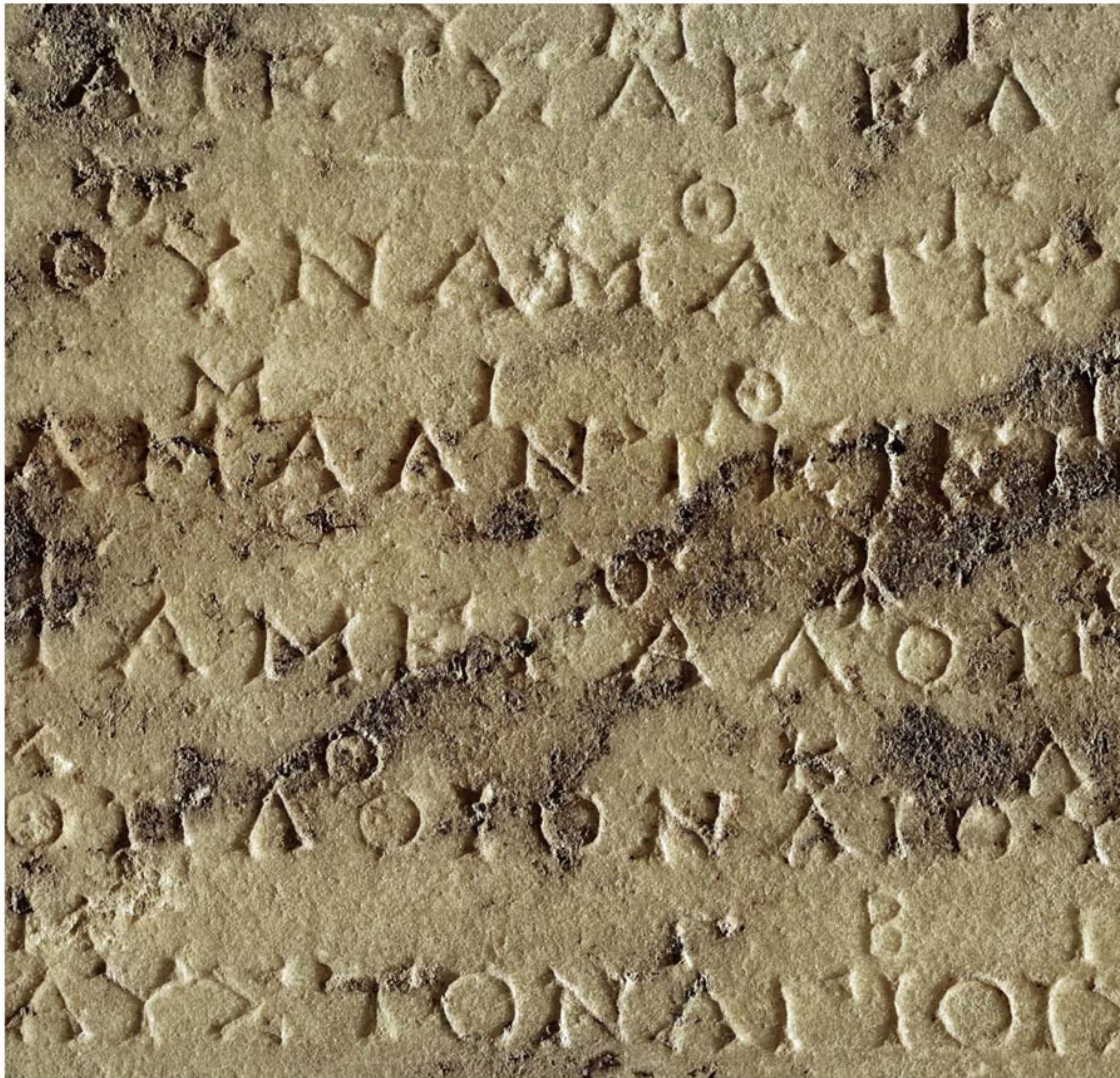
"Hark ye who protect the dense forests of Helicon, daughters of thunderous Zeus with the lovely arms, hasten to delight with your hymns golden-haired Phoebus who, on the twin-peaked Parnassus, together with the glorious of Delphi, walks among the tributaries of the Castalian spring with the sparkling waters, on the heights of Delphi, on the prophetic peak. . ."

(1st verse, hymn 1)

From the period when these two hymns were discovered in 1893 to the present time, many efforts have been made by musical groups, using replicas of the ancient instruments, the flute and the lyre, to render the texts musically using their symbols. In 1894, the international athletic congress organised in Paris by Pierre de Coubertin to establish the international Olympic Games, began with a musical performance of the hymns to Apollo.



Ο δέ [τεχ-νι-]
τώ-ων πρό-πας εσ-μός Αθ-θί-δα λα-χώ[ν σε κι-θα-]
[οί] - ζει κλυ-τόν παί-δα με-γά-λου Δ[ι-ός
[παλο] ἄ-κρο-νιφῇ τὸν-δε πά-γον α-ἄμ-[βροτ']
[πῶ-σι θνα-τοῖ-οις προ-φαί-νει [
[τρ]ί-πο-δα μαν-τεί-ει-ον ὥς εἰ-ει [
[φρ]ου-ού-ρει-ει δρά-κων - τε τε [
[η] - η-σας αἰ-ό-λον ἐ-λικ-τάν [
[] συ-υ-ρίγ-μαθ' ἰ-ι- εἰς ἄ - θώ - πε[υτ']
[] δέ Γα-λα - τᾶ-αν ἄ-ρης [
[] ν ἐ - πέ - ρα-ασ' ἄ-σέπ - τ[ως
[]



Pages 250-253: Verses from a paeon to Apollo carved on the south wall of the Treasury of the Athenians (after 128 BC). Above the verses are inscribed the musical notations that accompany them. LEFT: "All persons of Attica who engage in music sing with their kithara of the celebrated son of great Zeus who, beside this mountain wreathed in snow, shows the immortal (prophesies) to mortals (...). They tell how he captured the prophetic tripod (...) that the snake was guarding after (piercing it with his arrows), how the monster slipped away and (how) it expired uttering frightful whistles (...) they tell how the Galatian horde crossed (the threshold of his sanctuary) impiously." Musical rendering of the third, longest strophe of the first hymn by Annie Bélis.



DEDICATIONS OF THE 5th CENTURY BC

The bronze-crowned sacred precincts

... and they protected the bronze-crowned sacred precincts

(DIODORUS SICULUS. *Library of History*, Book 15, 14, 25)

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MONUMENTAL bronze sculpture can be traced to the end of the Archaic period, particularly to the Peloponnese, for it was there that the new lost wax technique in bronze casting was perfected. This truly revolutionary method supplanted the then prevailing technique of casting metal in moulds to produce small solid statuettes and other artefacts. In the early 5th century BC, sculptors in bronze such as Myron, having mastered the technique of casting large bronze works, went on to apply their innovative ideas directly to large sculptural works.

However, although sources unanimously confirm that the great sculptors of Classical Greece worked principally in bronze, very few of their bronze works have survived. Their fate, it seems, was at the mercy of the valuable material from which they were made that could easily be melted down and reused in the manufacturing of functional objects or weapons. At Delphi, some of the bronze statues that had filled the sanctuary in the 5th century were lost very early on. In the 4th century BC, the Phocians who revolted against the Amphictyonic League made a fortune by looting costly dedications. Later, ancient writers accused the art-loving Roman emperors Sulla, Nero and Constantine for plundering many hundreds of bronze sculptures. Most of the artworks made of metal were lost at a time when they were valued solely for the utility of their material.

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For the loss of all the monumental bronze offerings that once adorned the sacred precinct (*temenos*) of Apollo in Classical times, we are recompensed by the solitary find of the Charioteer, the various literary sources, and the excavated archaeological remains. Pausanias' visit to Delphi, Plutarch's dialogues that describe many monuments that had survived into the 2nd century AD, other literary testimonies, inscriptions, and the statue pedestals preserved *in situ* all provide us with some of the most comprehensive documentation of the ancient world. These sources allow us to envision a virtual forest of predominantly bronze statuary: statues of gods, generals, philosophers, athletes, groups with scenes of mythological heroes, with chariots and riders, and aristocratic families, on pedestals, pillars or columns, their gilded bronze gleaming up and down the Sacred Way or glimmering amidst the columns of the treasuries and colonnades in which they stood.

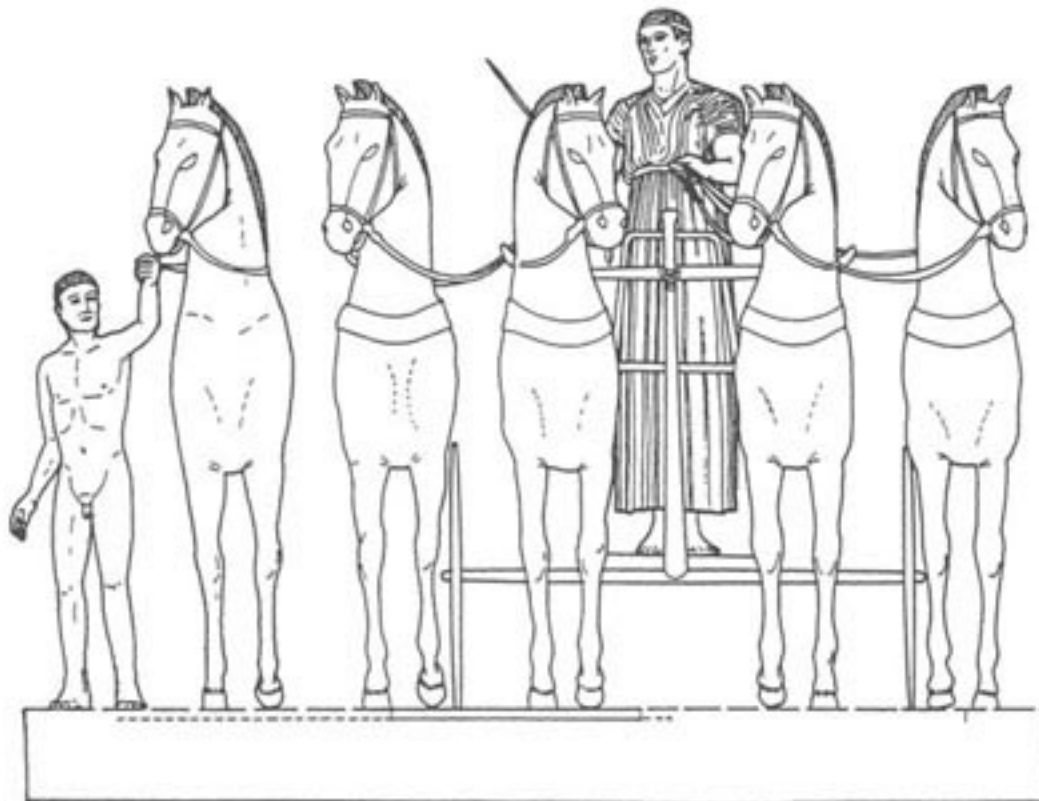
Plutarch served as a priest of Apollo for many years. In one of his dialogues set in Delphi, he admires the coloured patina on the thirty-seven statues of the gods and mortals in a marvellous group dedicated by the Spartans following their victory in the naval battle near Aegospotami in 405 BC. The colour resembled the deep blue of the sea, and seemed to render the admirals represented by the statues in such way that they appeared to be in the throes of the actual naval battle.

Monumental bronze dedications were very popular, particularly groups with multiple figures whose conception and execution demanded artisans who were both competent and daring. Many cities commissioned such projects from the foremost artists of the day. The Athenians assigned Phidias to create a monument with thirteen statues from their share of the spoils from the battle of Marathon in 460 BC. Dedications by other cities included statues by the famous bronze sculptor Ageladas from Argos and by Onatas of Aegina. The names of other sculptors mentioned by Pausanias or in inscriptions on bases remain unknown to us, and for several works we can only hypothesise their creators' artistic environment from these descriptions.

The Charioteer

The rocks and earth that fell from the Phaedriades onto the temple terrace during the great earthquake of 373 BC not only caused the destruction of the Archaic temple, but also swept away all the artworks that had been dedicated there, among which was the statue of the Charioteer. Hidden beneath the embankment that had covered it for centuries, the Charioteer escaped pillaging by Roman emperors and the destruction that was the fate reserved for nearly every bronze sculpture in the sanctuary in the years that followed. So when it came to light again, virtually intact, with its green patina that protected it from corrosion, during the great French excavations of 1896, the excitement accompanying its discovery was justifiable. It was then the sole surviving large-scale bronze statue of the Classical era. Since then, it has been joined by a few large bronze statues from antiquity, such as the Zeus of Artemisium and the Riace warriors, which have been recovered from shipwrecks. Even though literary sources unanimously confirm that the great sculptors of Classical Greece worked principally in bronze, we know their works only through Roman marble copies.

The Charioteer was part of a group representing a four-horse chariot. Near it excavators also found two horse's hind legs and a tail, parts of the chariot harness and a child's hand and arm with remnants of reins. There is still no unanimous opinion among scholars concerning the actual composition as a whole, but we can imagine it with some degree of likelihood: four horses are drawing the chariot upon which stood its driver,



Proposed reconstruction of the group with the chariot and Charioteer.

er, the Charioteer. Two grooms, left and right, are holding the reins of the outside horses because the race is over and this chariot has won. The Charioteer who drove the chariot to victory wears the victor's ribbon on his head and is parading before a cheering public.

A youth from a noble family of his day, when aristocratic chariot racers selected their drivers for the Panhellenic contests from nobility, the Charioteer of Delphi wears the customary long tunic or chiton, called a *xystis*, which reaches to his slender ankles. A wide belt cinches the chiton high above the waist while two other bands pass like suspenders around the shoulders, under the arms and crisscross in the back. This is the *analavos*, worn to keep the garment from billowing in the wind during the race.

His steadfast posture is accentuated by the deep vertical pleats in the lower part of the chiton, which evoke the fluting on an Ionic column. On the upper part of the body, however, the pleats are wavy, diagonal or

curved. This contrast in the disposition of the garment is also echoed in the contrapuntal stance of the body, whereby the sculptor avoids all rigidity. It is the "motionless movement that takes your breath away", as felt by George Seferis when he saw the Charioteer during his visit to the Delphi Museum (G. Seferis, *Essays*, Vol II, Delphi, 143, Ikaros ³1974). The entire statue seems animated by a gradual rotation to the right, which begins at the firmly planted feet and proceeds through the body in sequential stages, passing through the hips, the chest and the head, to finally end in the gaze. His extended hands held the reins, in addition to which his long slender fingers also grasped a cylindrical object that was the riding crop.

Regarding the unclad parts of the figure, one may aptly quote the poetic description written by the distinguished archaeologist Giannis Miliades in 1930, when the Charioteer was still on display in the original Museum.

"From beneath the long robe emerge two bare feet, close to each other like twin brothers, that are unrivalled in all of art history for their realism and vitality. Spread slightly like a little fan, each toe is rendered separately and delicately. Under the skin, veins are visible through which we sense the flow of life's warm



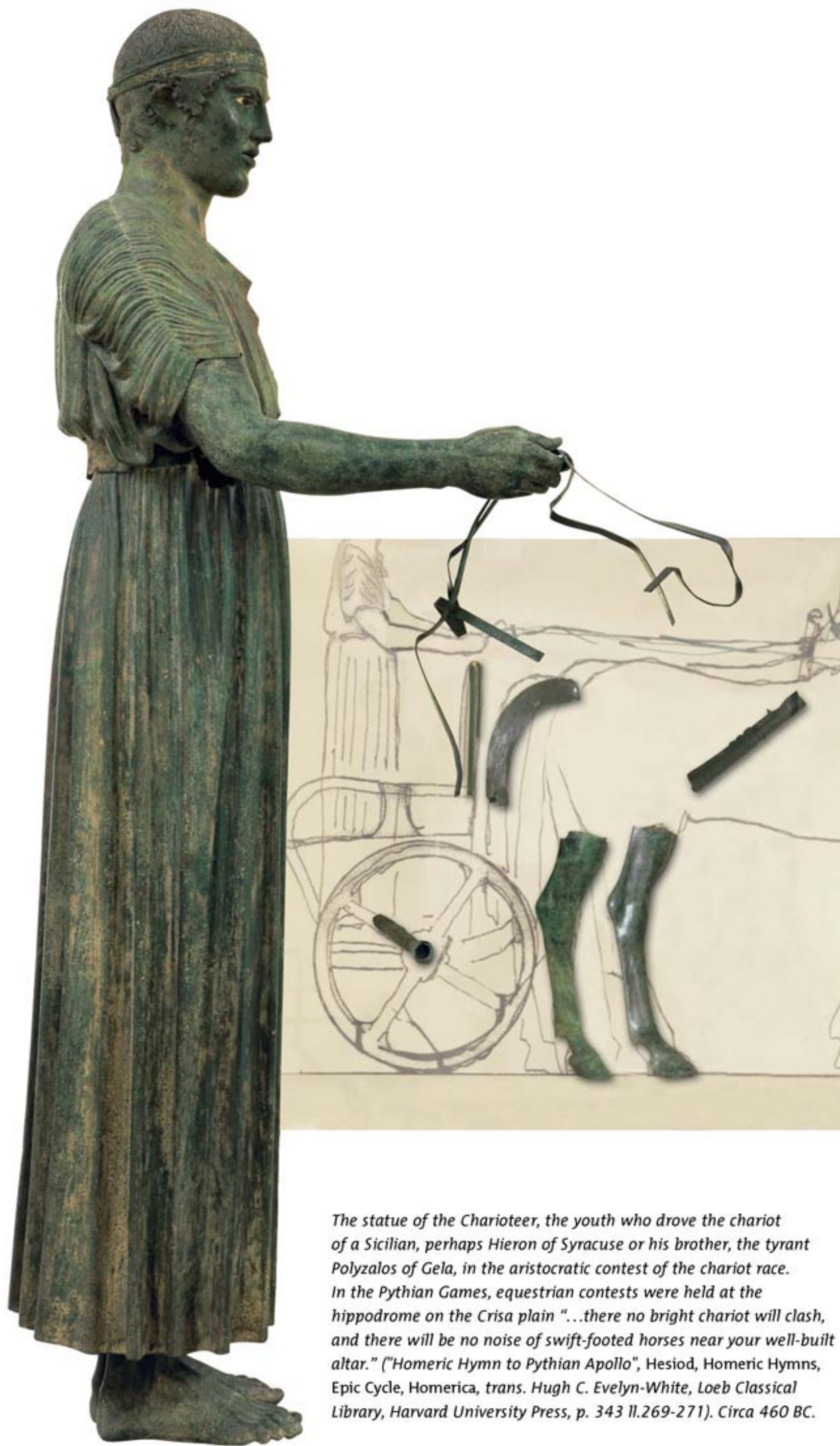
blood, the arch of the sole and the prominent ankles, a marvel of subtlety. . . Then the elegant curve of the upper arm as it falls from the spreading pleats of the sleeve. A vein bulges in the crook of the arm holding the relaxed reins. Everything speaks of a love for the nude. . . . The nostrils seem to flare with quickened breath. The mouth is drawn with a sharp contour, but the sensuous lips are slightly parted like a flower in the sun, allowing a glimpse of the teeth, which are designated with a small sliver band.

"The skull is the dome that crowns the face. The hair is carved in an unbroken tidy roundness that continues unbroken until caught at the forehead by the ribbon of victory. This, his sole, deserving ornament was once trimmed in silver. At the back, however, below the ribbon and on the sides around the ears, tendrils of long delicate curls slide with unparalleled grace towards the neck and towards the cheeks to join the down on his face, the sign of his manhood first emerging.

"Similarly, the open but decisively arched eyebrows span his forehead, curving from the bridge of the nose. Almond shaped eyes are framed by strong eyelids; contemplative eyes shine with an inner light, with an intense yet wistful gaze from beneath the eyelashes, which are individually inlaid strips. The enamel orb has two circles of different coloured onyx for the irises; the play of light between them animates the eyes to such an extent that when you stare at them intently you think you see them flicker.

"His expression is in perfect harmony with his modest demeanour. Here we no longer have the Archaic smile –that elegant, graceful yet always external display of Ionic style. Here the fresh breath of the austere style diffuses the face with a thoughtfulness that reveals to us the inner being of this youthful figure. . ."

Together with the bronze parts of the offering that included the Charioteer, parts of its stone pedestal were also found, bearing a couplet fragment from its dedicatory verse inscription. The first line was re-engraved a few years after the offering was inaugurated that correct the original script, making the inscription even more illegible and difficult to



The statue of the Charioteer, the youth who drove the chariot of a Sicilian, perhaps Hieron of Syracuse or his brother, the tyrant Polyzealos of Gela, in the aristocratic contest of the chariot race. In the Pythian Games, equestrian contests were held at the hippodrome on the Crisa plain "...there no bright chariot will clash, and there will be no noise of swift-footed horses near your well-built altar." ("Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo", Hesiod, Homeric Hymns, Epic Cycle, Homeric Hymns, trans. Hugh C. Evelyn-White, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, p. 343 ll.269-271). Circa 460 BC.

interpret. The name Polyzalos survives, whom we know was one of the four sons of Deinomenes, tyrant of Syracuse. The Deinomenids were renowned in antiquity for the famous gold tripods that they dedicated at Delphi to immortalise their victory over the Carthaginians at Himera in 479 BC. The poets Bacchylides and Pindar, both contemporaries of the Charioteer, wrote odes to celebrate the victories of Polyzalos' brothers, Gelon and Hieron, in the Olympic and Pythian equestrian and chariot races. Therefore, the chariot with the Charioteer was dedicated by Polyzalos, either to honour his own victory in the Pythian Games or that of his brother Hieron.

There is some dispute over the identity of the artist who executed the work, as well the school to which he belonged. The most plausible theory is that it was created by one of the major Greek sculptors working in Greater Greece – possibly Pythagoras of Samos, the great bronze sculptor who migrated to Rhegium in Calabria during the Deinomenid era. Sources relate that Pythagoras' figures were distinguished for their rhythm and symmetry, and note that he paid special attention to the rendering of details.

Even though a large number of research papers have been written on the identity and interpretation of this offering, on the accurate reconstruction of the entire group, and on the style of the work, we do not seem to have heard the last word on all these issues yet. What is unquestioned, however, is that the Charioteer is one of the greatest works of the "austere style," the artistic movement that developed between the Archaic and the Classical ages (480-460 BC). The Charioteer has shed the affected grace and decorative quality of late Archaic art. Spare and severe, the statue is not a rendering of external form, but a remarkable expression of the athlete's ethos.







The head of the Charioteer. The face is enlivened by the well-preserved inlaid eyes, tufts of hair and traces of adolescent fuzz on his chin, as well as by his half-open mouth in which four silver-plated teeth are barely visible.



The head of the Charioteer wearing the diadem of victory, decorated with damascened silver. The ends of the diadem, tied in a simple knot, fall down the back of his neck.







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The main view of the Charioteer and the bronze group as a whole with the chariot could only be seen from the terrace of the temple, i.e. from a level much lower than the site on which it stood on its base, near the theatre of Delphi. The artist had taken into account the angle from which the work would be seen.





Details from the statue of the Charioteer. LEFT: His finely worked bare feet and ankles are firmly planted on the chariot. Veins stand out under the skin. RIGHT: his raised right hand was holding reins and a riding crop in an easy gesture.

Small-scale bronze sculpture

Alongside the official dedications by cities celebrating important historical events and by aristocrats who distinguished themselves in Panhellenic competitions and in public office, one might have expected the bronze statuettes dedicated by the anonymous faithful to look like poor relations. However, in terms of artistic quality, some of these are such as to compete with the large-scale bronze works.

The artisans of the three statuettes dating from the first half of the 5th century BC and found in the sacred pit (*apothetis*), or depository, under the Sacred Way, were apprentices in local bronze workshops. Nonetheless, they appear to have aspired to create artwork equal to that of the famous bronze sculptors of their time. Once displayed in some treasury or other building and admired for many years by visitors to the sanctuary, these small statues eventually fell victim to natural disaster and to the redesigning of the space in which they were kept. In order to keep them within the precinct of the god to which they were dedicated, they were reverently buried by the faithful in a pit, along with other precious dedications. Thus they escaped pillage and their discovery has provided us with a veritable treasure trove of art in the severe style that ushered in the Classical period.

Under the bronze censer, a young woman in a long mantle, or *peplos*, and a mesh hairnet, with arms upraised, holds a hemispherical cauldron in her hands raised up over her head. The bowl, in which incense was placed, has a rim fitted with a perforated lid that allowed the fumes to escape. The figure wears the unadorned Doric peplos, the prevalent garment for the greater part of the 5th century BC.

The balanced proportions are the main achievement by the exceptional artist who created this censer. Although the volume and height of this ritual vessel are larger than those of the figure supporting it, the viewer has the sense that the woman's slender arms bear the great weight with ease. Its ascription by scholars to a Parian workshop is not conclusive, given that other local bronze workshops in the Peloponnese, and even in Delphi, could claim its production.

The flute-player is the name given to the bronze statuette of a youth playing a double-reed pipe, or *diaulos*, one side of which is broken. Dressed in the long chiton of the musician, the flute-player blows through the double pipes with the help of a *phorbeia*, the leather strap tied around the head and mouth to support the musician's cheeks. Hanging from his left shoulder is the instrument's carrying case.

This statuette may have been dedicated by a flute-player victorious in a musical competition. We know that flute contests were instituted at the Pythian Games in Delphi in 582 BC, and thus flute-players are often depicted accompanying youths exercising in the gymnasia. This offering is the product of a Corinthian workshop.

The pair of athletes is an offering that represents a pair of youths with similar faces and bodies. The athlete on the left, probably a winner of the long jump in the Pythian Games, holds a jumping weight (*halter*), which helped him win, while displaying his wreath of victory in his upraised right hand. The youth on the right salutes his fellow athlete with an open-armed gesture.

Believed to have been produced in an Attic workshop, this offering is one of the rare original works of the 5th century depicting a group. As opposed to simply being lined up beside each another, these figures interact with one another through their poses and gestures, thus giving us some small picture of the large multi-figure groupings described by Pausanias as lining the Sacred Way.

Starting in the mid-5th century, small sculpture ceased to be an area of artistic experimentation and gradually declined. The distinction given to the great names in sculpture whose works were exhibited in the Panhellenic sanctuaries had a direct impact on local workshops. As a result, in the majority of figurines the imitation of monumental models prevailed over the continuation of local traditions. In the statuette of an athlete offering a libation (430-420 BC) the artisan was influenced by the contemporaneous works of Polyclitus as evidenced in the figure's supple stance and balanced movement.







Bronze statuette of a flute-player who may perhaps have taken part in the music contests of the Pythian Games or some other festive occasion at the sanctuary. It was found in 1939 in the treasure buried in the pit under the Sacred Way. Early 5th cent.

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Bronze group of two athletes, perhaps winners in the gymnastic events at the Pythian Games. Found in 1939 in the buried treasure of the Sacred Way. 470-460 BC.



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Bronze statuette of an athlete pouring a libation, influenced by the art of Polyclitus. 430-420 BC.



The remains of the large bronze statue: the crest of a helmet decorated with a meander formed by a damascened band. 5th cent. BC.

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Handle of a shield from a large bronze statue.



The theatre of Delphi that was built by the kings of the Hellenistic kingdom of Pergamon in the 2nd cent. BC as a venue for music and drama contests. Celebrations had been held on the same site in the past. The permanent backdrop was the valley of the Pleistus and the mountains of Kirphi.

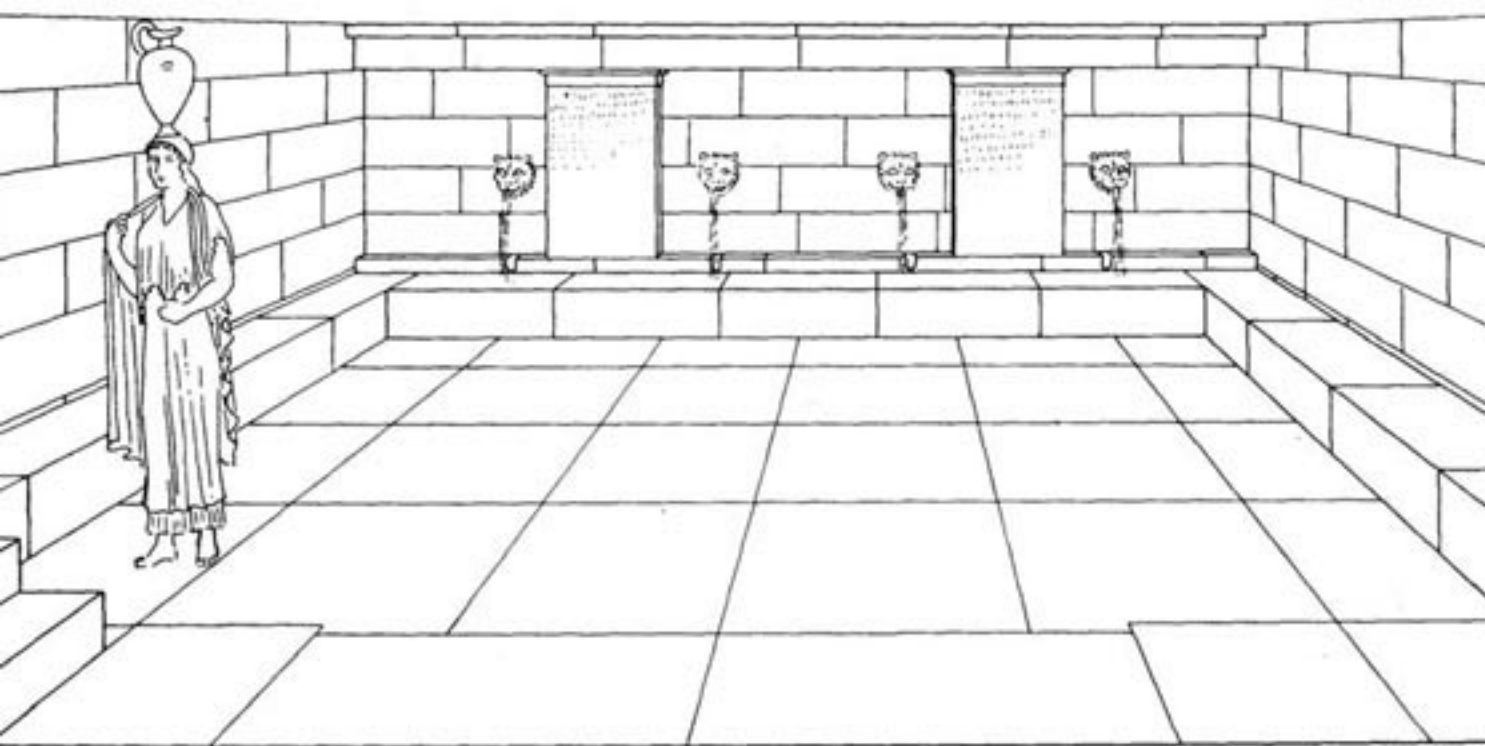




CASTALIA

From the innermost recesses of the Phaedriades, the two cliffs of Mount Parnassus that are separated by the precipitous Arkoudorema Gorge, gush forth the waters of the Castalian Spring, famous since the time of the Homeric Hymns, which were joined by other abundant sources to supply the settlement and sanctuary of Delphi with its crystalline waters.

Filled with awe and gratitude for this beneficence of nature, those who used the spring regarded the place as sacred and named it after the homonymous nymph. In the 6th century BC they adorned the spring with a monumental fountain that was constructed at the entrance to the inaccessible gorge, near the road leading to the town of Delphi and its sanctuary. The fountain took the form of an open rectangular chamber with a tiled courtyard and sturdy walls around which was a stone bench on three sides. The water flowed from bronze spouts shaped like lions' heads that were affixed to the north wall, which explains why Pindar described the waters of this Archaic fountain as flowing from bronze gates (*chalkopylon hydor*).



Reconstruction of the Archaic Castalian spring. RIGHT: Bronze spout from which flowed the "bronze-gated" water.

In Late Hellenistic or Roman times, a new fountain was hewn into the rock at the base of Hyampeia (today Phlemboukos), which Pausanias saw on his ascent from the Gymnasium to the sanctuary. Its waters, as Pausanias tells us, were "sweet to drink and good for bathing." The façade of the hewn basin-reservoir still bears traces of the decorative marble pilasters that gave the fountain a graceful vertical articulation and framed the bronze lion-head spouts. Higher up on the cliff face are carved niches in which pilgrims placed votive offerings of terracotta figurines, relief carvings, sweets, etc.

The celebrated Castalian Spring was so closely associated with the history of Delphi that its name became synonymous with the sanctuary of Apollo and his oracle. It was the "*kallirrous krini*", the "sweet-flowing spring", extolled by the poet of the Homeric hymn to Apollo. Pindar, too, to denote the Delphic sanctuary, uses phrases such as "beside the waters of Castalia" and "I sought an oracle at Castalia." Its waters played a special role in the cult of Apollo and in the ritual of divination. All pilgrims, priests and servants of temple had to first cleanse themselves with it, as we are told by the women in the chorus of Euripides' *Ion*.

*Haste, ye Delphic train,
Haste to Castalia's silver-streaming fount;
Bathed in its chaste dew to the temple go;*

*Elsewhere the maidservant of Apollo sprinkles the temple floor
with water from the Castalian Spring.*

*. . . and sprinkling from the golden vase
The chaste drops which Castalia's fountain rolls,
Bedew the pavement. Never may I quit
This office to the god;*

(EURIPIDES, *Ion*, translated by Robert Potter)

In early Christian texts, the demise of the ancient cult and the end of the oracle are equated with the loss of the prophetic powers of the Castalian waters: "Castalia is silent . . . and her waters no longer prophesy." When Delphi fell into ruin it was buried beneath the village of Kastri and, during the period of Ottoman rule, vanished entirely from human memory. But the remains of the fountain carved into the rock still stood as the solitary marker of the sacred site for travellers and visitors, together with the chapel of St. John the Baptist (Ai-Yanni), seen in early drawings and photographs, which was built in front of the great niche in the cliff.



*The Castalian spring today.
2nd or 1st cent. BC.*



TERRACOTTA TILES

The zenith of architectural decoration

IN ADDITION TO STONES CARVED with sculptural decoration, the excavations at Delphi brought to light many terracotta tiles, antefixes and rain gutters that originated from the roofs of buildings in the sanctuaries of Apollo and Athena Pronaia. Many of them have been identified as belonging to specific monuments, especially treasuries and porticoes that we know from the sources or from excavations, while others adorned unidentified buildings.

A rich selection of Archaic tiles –which, through typological classification can be attributed to more than thirty mostly Corinthian roofs– confirms the intense construction activity in the sanctuary of Apollo in the 6th century BC. The oldest of these terracotta architectural members constitute the sole evidence of the small buildings that were destroyed in the great fire of 548/47 BC, and whose foundations were covered over during the creation of the large artificial terrace on which the Archaic temple of the Alcmeonids was built.

The terracotta architectural features from the poros temple of Athena Pronaia, as well as other buildings of uncertain identity dating from the late 6th century BC, provide evidence of rich sculptural and painted decoration. The two acroteria that decorated the roof corners on the temple of Athena and represented winged Nikes are superb examples of large-scale ceramic sculpture. The wealth of colours and the variety of decorative motifs, whether in geometric shapes or inspired by the plant world (flowers, leaves, stalks, petals and buds, etc.), are characteristic of the luxurious roof coverings on 5th-century BC buildings, such as the Lesche of the Knidians, which French excavators searched for anxiously in the hope that they would discover in its ruins painted works by Polygnotus that were famous in antiquity. Unfortunately, fragments of terracotta tiles from the famous Lesche were the sole examples of painted decoration.

The well-preserved colours of the tiles constitute the sole authentic feature that we have today to evoke the polychromy of the ancient architecture in our imagination, since very few examples of the once strong colours that brightened the marble and complemented the sculptural decoration on the building have been preserved, but even these have faded with time. For this reason, drawing multicoloured reconstructions of roofs became a popular theme for architects in the 19th century, as it provided an occasion for long discussions about the use of colour in ancient architecture and sculpture. Tournaire was delighted by the terracotta tiles in Delphi with their rich colours, and in 1893-1896, he created an admirably accurate series of 20 small watercolours with views of ceramic anthemia and rain gutters. These watercolours, together with the coloured reconstructions of the monuments, lent a romantic grace and brilliance to the sanctuary ruins that had just been unearthed.





Corinthian-type terracotta antefixes that were placed at the end of roofs on eaves, rain gutters and acroteria. With their painted decoration and lively colours, they enhanced the buildings in the sanctuary.

Piece of a rain gutter with guilloche, dentil and rosette ornamentation. Circa 560 BC.

Section of a rain gutter with palmettes interlaced with lotus blossoms and tongue-shaped leaves curved outwards. 540-530 BC.





Antefix with relief and painted decoration; a palmette between two shoots that end in spirals. 6th cent. BC.

Section of a rain gutter from the roof of an Archaic building. Painted decoration with guilloche.





Section of a rain gutter with relief decoration consisting of rosettes, continuous spirals and leaves curved outward. It has been attributed to the Treasury of the Corcyraeans, one of the oldest buildings in the sanctuary. Circa 580 BC.



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Detail from the relief decoration on part of the rain gutter from an unidentified small building in the sanctuary: facing lions. Second half of 6th cent. BC.





Detail from the rain gutter on the previous page: horse galloping with a rider.

Antefix with relief decoration: palmette between two shoots ending in spirals.
RIGHT: A sphinx. First half of 6th cent. BC.







Fragments that are probably from the same winged Nike that adorned the roof of the poros temple of Athena Pronaia (acroterion): head with diadem, wing with arm and dress under which a bent leg is outlined. Superb example of the art of large-scale ceramic sculpture. Late 6th cent. BC.



Fragment of a woman's head. From a terracotta sculpture on the roof of an unidentified building. Late 6th cent. BC.

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Head of Athena from the pediment of the Doric temple dedicated to the goddess. The poros stone was covered with plaster and painted in bright colours.



Woman's foot wearing a sandal, gracefully raised. Late 6th cent. BC.



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Sections of rain gutters belonging to unidentified 5th-cent. buildings in the sanctuary. They are decorated with astragals and palmettes alternating with lotus blossoms, meanders and chequer patterns.





Two antefixes. The upper one with the artistic painted decoration is from the famous Lesche of the Knidians (470 BC). The lower one is from the poros temple of Athena Pronaia (late 6th cent. BC.) The decoration consists of an inverted lotus blossom on the base, whose sprouts end in spirals. A palmette is growing out of the calyx of the lotus blossom. Late 5th cent. BC.





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Corner rain gutter with a spout in the shape of a lion's head, decorated with a meander, chequers and schematic leaves. From the roof of a Stoic building located at the beginning of the Sacred Way. Late 5th cent. BC.





*Part of a corner rain gutter with a lion's head spout. Same origin as the one on the previous page.
On the upper part there is a socket to hold an acroterion.*





THE SANCTUARY OF ATHENA PRONAIA

OUTHEAST OF THE SANCTUARY of Apollo in Delphi lies a smaller sanctuary that we now reach by going down the
S public road, past the Castalian Spring. It was dedicated to Athena, who here has the epithet Pronaia, meaning "before the temple" [of Apollo], because visitors arriving by the inland route encountered her shrine before arriving at the sacred precinct of Apollo.

Two architectural jewels

Among the buildings in the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia, two treasuries are distinguished for the beautiful, finely crafted Parian marble of which they were built, and their wealth of carved decoration. They stand one beside the other as though their different architectural orders were in competition, gleaming like two precious gems, as Christos Karouzos describes them. The earlier one, built in the late 6th century BC, is believed to have been a dedication by the inhabitants of Massalia (today's Marseille), a colony of the Aeolian city of Phocaea, and for this reason is called the Aeolic Treasury of the Massaliots. A number of figures from the sculptures on the frieze above its epistyle have survived, but their fragmentary condition prevents us from re-creating the theme they depicted –which was probably the Amazonomachy and Gigantomachy. Nonetheless, they do exhibit an exceptionally high level of workmanship and late Archaic features, including the protruding eyes, restrained smile, and a studied treatment of detail. For instance, the sculptor renders the decorative details of the greaves on the figures' legs with minute precision.

All that survives of the Treasury's façade is a rare type of capital. Formed from outward curling leaves, it is considered a characteristic architectural type from Aeolis, the city on the north shore of Asia Minor that sent colonists to settle Massalia, and is thus called an Aeolic capital. It is a forerunner to the palmette capital adopted in the Hellenistic period by the architects of Pergamon.

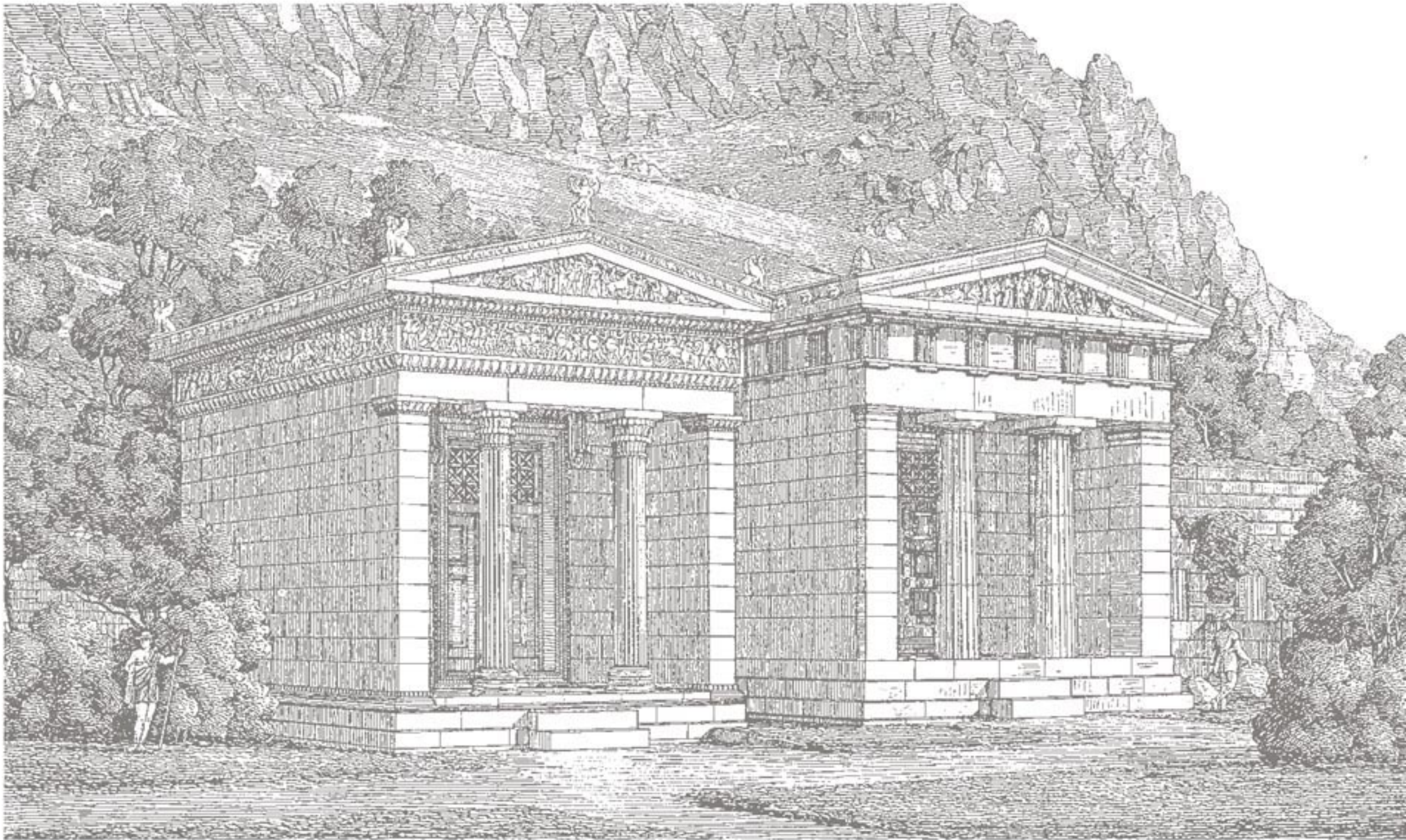
We do not know what city dedicated the second treasury to Athena, the so-called Doric Treasury, in ca. 470 BC following the Persian wars. In contrast to the Ionic frieze of the earlier building beside it, this Treasury has metopes in the Doric order. Of their carved decoration only fragments of figures survive, whose strong movement suggests scenes from some battle. The finds are meagre but sufficient to reveal their "austere" style, characteristic of the times, which abandoned the features of late Archaic art and presaged the Classical era. The bodies of the nude youths are rendered with the expressive features of the athlete's body with its powerful musculature.

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Head from the terracotta statue of winged Nike that adorned the roof of the temple of Athena Pronaia. Late 6th cent. BC.



The ruins of two treasuries in the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia: the Doric Treasury (circa 470 BC) and the Aeolic Treasury of the Massaliots (late 6th cent. BC).



Reconstruction of the Aeolic (left) and Doric Treasuries in the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia by German archaeologist H. Pomtow.





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Fragments of relief figures from the frieze on the Treasury of the Massaliots. Heads of helmeted warriors. There is a characteristic attention to detail with painterly precision. Late 6th cent. BC.



The Tholos of Delphi

... *de tholo, qui est Delphis*
(VITRUVIUS, *De Architectura*, VII, 12)

The architectural jewel of the Sanctuary of Athena Pronaia is undoubtedly the building with the unusual circular plan that Vitruvius, in his book on architecture, called the Tholos. Elements of every architectural order are combined here in a playful fashion that nonetheless sacrifices nothing in its overall design concept, or in its precision of execution and perfection of detail. The outer colonnade with its twenty tall, slender columns (three have been restored) supported a frieze with triglyphs and metopes. The circular wall of the cella, the building's central chamber, was also crowned by a similar frieze with triglyphs and metopes but on a smaller scale. Its interior face was lined with a stone bench on which stood ten Corinthian semi-columns that were attached to the concave surface of the wall. This interchange of different architectural elements was enhanced by the natural polychrome furnished by the various materials used –poros stone for the three-stepped foundation (*crepidoma*), and Pentelic marble and Eleusinian titanite for the superstructure. The building's eight-sectioned conical roof was also marble and ornamented with eight acroteria in the form of female statues in animated poses.

Regarded even in antiquity as one of the most beautiful works of architecture, the Tholos can be dated by its stylistic features, primarily the sculptural decoration, to ca. 380-370 BC. Yet in terms of its use, it remains Delphi's most enigmatic monument. This conundrum originated with Pausanias, who inexplicably omits the Tholos from his description of the monuments in the sacred precinct of Athena Pronaia; it continues to this day in the extensive literature regarding the building's purpose that have yet to produce a convincing answer.

Equally as admirable and daring as the monument's architect –whose name has come down to us as Theodoros from Phocaea in Asia Minor– are the anonymous artisans who created its sculptural decoration. The figures on the metopes were carved in high relief and thus were easily removed from their background slabs, which were then ground flat for reuse as construction material and tomb lids in Early Christian times. After many years of painstaking work to match and rejoin the fragments found scattered around the monument, we finally have some knowledge, albeit incomplete, of the themes and stylistic features of the relief scenes. The large outer metopes depicted scenes from the Amazonomachy and Centauromachy (battles of the gods with Amazons and centaurs respectively), known from mythology and among the favourite subjects in Greek art. The inside frieze, of which only fragmented figures survive that are smaller in scale than those on the outer frieze, may possibly have represented the labours of Heracles and Theseus, but opinions differ on this.

The architectural reliefs from the Tholos are closely related to those from the Temple of Asclepius in Epidauros. Despite their fragmentary state, they testify to their carvers' skills in handling the marble, rendering details, and ensuring the anatomical accuracy of the figures. The scenes are animated by the high relief that breaks free from the surface of the metope, and the naturalistic movement, dramatic tension and passion demonstrated in the clashing rival forces. These features also introduced an innovative artistic current to the 4th century BC iconographic tradition and to the art of relief sculpture, which could now compete with sculpture in the round.

The airy grace of the acroteria recalls the counterpart figures of Nike (Victory) from the Asclepieion in Epidauros. The drapery of the garments is carved in luxurious folds that follow the contour of the robust bodies beneath. The skilled sculptor manages to render the dynamic fluttering of the long mantle (*himation*) in the hard marble that, unlike bronze, does not lend itself to such experimentation in the static object. Such technical accomplishment testifies to the fact that this sculptor was familiar with contemporaneous achievements in bronze sculpture.

View of the Tholos, which was partially restored in 1988. The columns consist of five drums that are more slender in shape than all the other known examples of the Doric order in Greece in the 5th and early 4th centuries BC.



Two metopes from the exterior frieze on the Tholos with the scenes of the battle with the Amazons (Amazonomachy). In the first, a nude man is trying to calm a startled horse. In the second, an Amazon is preparing to administer the coup de grace to her adversary, already wounded and fallen onto one knee. The bold movement and torsion of the fully sculptured figures, liberated from the slab of the metope, lend the scenes dramatic intensity. 480-470 BC.

RIGHT: Detail of the metope with the scene of the battle between the Amazon and the Greek.



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Section of the marble rain gutter that surrounded the Tholos roof. The relief decoration consists of acanthus, spiral shoots and inverted palmettes between lion's head spouts. 480-470 BC.





The torsos of fighting figures detached from the metopes of the exterior frieze on the Tholos. Torso of a nude man with an athletic body and an Amazon wearing a pleated himation fastened at the waist and breast by narrow ribbon. 480-470 BC.



Bodies of fighting Amazons detached from the metopes of the exterior frieze of the Tholos. On the first figure (above) the light garment clings to her body, outlining the harmonious female anatomy. In the second (below), the fierceness of the battle has moved the chiton to reveal the right shoulder and breast. 480-470 BC.



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Male head from one of the smaller metopes on the interior frieze of the Tholos.

Page 314: *Fragments of figures from metopes on the Tholos. The upper section of a female torso, an athletic male torso and a woman's foot that is raised gracefully. 480-470 BC.*

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In contrast with the vigorously moving figures on the exterior metopes, those on the smaller interior ones are static figures that hark back to the sculptural types of the 5th cent. BC. Page 316: Woman wearing a peplos. Page 317: Man dressed in a himation. The view has been expressed that these figures came from the depiction of an assembly of the gods. 480-470 BC.



The "messenger of the gods". Torsos from marble statues of running women, from the acroteria of buildings in the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia. The one on the left is wearing a peplos and himation thrown over her shoulders (circa 470 BC). The one on the right is wearing a chiton held by a thin ribbon under the breast. As she runs, the tunic clings to her leg, outlining its harmonious shape. Mid-4th cent. BC.



Marble statuette of a running woman. She is wearing a peplos that leaves her left breast bare. Under her clothing, the shapely female anatomy is outlined. The work comes from the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia and is contemporary with the sculptures on the Tholos (480-470 BC).





DEDICATIONS OF THE 4TH CENTURY BC

From promoting the city to advancing the individual

NOTHING HAS SURVIVED of the bronze statues that continued to be dedicated to the Delphic sanctuary during the 4th century. Some were destroyed in the powerful earthquake of 373 BC that crushed the temple of Apollo and the Charioteer's chariot. Others were lost during the turbulent years of the Third Sacred War, when the sacrilegious Phocians held control over the sanctuary for the decade 356-346 BC and utilised the precious offerings to cover their military expenses. Those that were not transported to Rome by art-loving emperors were melted down in later years by the inhabitants of the region and their material used to manufacture functional utensils.

However, after the mid-4th century, if we are to judge from the finds, it appears that marble was being used again to create free-standing sculpture at Delphi. Surviving from this period is a multiple-statue offering that is not mentioned in the written sources. It has, nevertheless, been almost completely restored and even informs us as to the circumstances of its dedication. This group inaugurated a new type of offering – the family votive – that did not express the glory of a city or a people, as in earlier times, but instead demonstrated the pride of the private individuals who dedicated it.

The family offering of Daochos II or of the House of the Thessalians was initially erected on the prominent terrace northeast of the temple. It comprises a group of marble statues dedicated to Apollo by Daochos II, a Thessalian dignitary from Pharsalus, who represented his people in the Amphictyonic League of Delphi (336-332 BC) where he served the interests of the Macedonians. Nine statues stood on the long, narrow base: Apollo (lost) and eight representatives of the dedicator's powerful family (Daochos' ancestors, himself and his son) who were famous for their political, military and athletic exploits. We know the names and glorious deeds of the men represented from the inscriptions carved on the front of the base. Although the figures are deployed in a line and differ from one another in pose and dress, they nevertheless interact through the symmetrical or contrasting movement of their bodies, gestures and turns of head.

These statues represented, in genealogical order, six generations of a family of Thessalian landowners, whose achievements starting in the early 5th century paved the way for the magnificent donor, Daochos II. This family sculpture gallery begins on the right with the political founder of the family tree, Aknonios, and continues with the figures of his descendants:

Aknonios son of Aparos. Lived during the time of the Persian Wars and served as *tetrarch* of Thessaly. He wears the Thessalian *chlamys* or short mantle, and appears to be using his left hand to present his descendants to Apollo.

Agias son of Aknonios. Great-grandfather of Daochos II, champion in the pankration (contest combining wrestling and boxing) and victor of many Panhellenic games in the 5th century BC. The idealised portrait of the athlete bears a recognisable stylistic kinship to the *Apoxyomenos*, the most famous work of Lysippus

Telemachos son of Aknonios, brother of Agias and Olympic victor in wrestling in 440 BC. The powerful muscular anatomy is characteristic of a trained wrestler's body.

Agelaos son of Aknonios. Younger brother of Agias and a champion runner. His well-trained adolescent body and long sinewy legs are characteristic of a runner.

Part of the family "sculpture gallery" that Daochos II dedicated at Delphi. Distinguished members of the donor's family from Pharsalus in Thessaly are depicted. From right to left: the athlete Agelaos, the politician Daochos I, the military man Sisyphos I, the foot of the donor, and his son Sisyphos II. 336-332 BC.





The nude torso ascribed to a statue from the Daochos monument representing Daochos son of Agias (Daochos I). Grandfather of the monument's donor who, according to the epigram on the base, was tetrarch of Thessaly and "governed his land without violence yet according to law" for twenty-seven years. He wears the Thessalian chlamys.

Sisyphos son of Daochos (Sisyphos I). Father of the donor, known for his military career. He wears a short chiton belted at the waist and a chlamys tossed over his left arm. His right arm is raised in a military salute, presaging the theatrical pose later adopted for statues of Roman emperors.

Daochos son of Sisyphos (Daochos II). Only the left foot and plinth survive from the statue of the donor Daochos II, who also served as tetrarch of Thessaly, *hieromnemon* (deputy) to the Amphictyonic League and president of its assembly.

Sisyphos son of Daochos (Sisyphos II). Son of the donor and youngest member of the Thessalian family. He is leaning his left elbow on a *herm* (stele).

The status of each figure is differentiated by pose, anatomy and dress. The political officials (Aknonios and Daochos I) are wearing the national dress of the Macedonians and Thessalians; the dress and gesture of Sisyphos I convey the traits of a military officer who gives orders; while the nudity of the three athletes, Agias, Telemachos and Agelaos, underscores their physical prowess. Rather than individualising the persons depicted, these features portray them as idealised representations of social types, each with its characteristic attribute.

The best preserved and most significant from an art history point of view is the statue of Agias, not only for its artistic quality but also because of its connection to the art of Lysippos. This great Sikyonian sculptor had created a statue in bronze of the pankration athlete Agias, grandfather of Daochos, and its inscription found in Pharsalus is similar to that on the marble statue of Agias in Delphi. This correlation has provoked much debate over the identity of the creator of the Delphic statue of Agias, which was thought to be either a work by or copy of a work by Lysippos, as well as over the style of the other statues in the group. Scholars currently believe that even though the Agias of Delphi does not faithfully copy Lysippos' original statue, it nevertheless comes from his workshop and, being a 4th century work, sheds light on the artistic trends of the time.

The offering of the Thessalians is significant for another reason as well. It was both an expression of the new order in the sanctuary as well as a prelude to the climate of the new historical period in which the governing role at Delphi and throughout the Greek world was no longer played by the city-states of Southern Greece, but by the lords of Thessaly and the rising power of the Macedonians.

As testified by the inscriptions on the pedestals of stat-

ues, the institution of the family votive, offered to the sanctuary on a variety of occasions promoting the individual, continued into Hellenistic times. Of the representational statues of this period, the best preserved is the statue of an elderly man, known in earlier literature as the "The Philosopher" or the "Old Man of Delphi." It is one of the best-preserved statues to be unearthed in the sanctuary excavations. Dressed in a loose himation that leaves his right shoulder and chest bare, the figure stands firmly on both feet, his legs in a relaxed position. His feet are shod in sandals with narrow straps. His gaze follows the forward motion of his right hand and extended foot as though he were addressing an interlocutor or audience.

This statue of a mature man is a characteristic example of representational art in early Hellenistic times, circa 270 BC. The human figure, now distanced from the idealistic portraiture of the Classical age, moves towards realism. Unlike the idealised and impersonal features of the Thessalian athletes and military officers of the Daochos monument, his features are individualised. His massive, exaggeratedly round head with its high, protruding brow, sparse hair, sunken eyes beneath arched eyebrows, and the mouth partially hidden by a moustache that merges with the unruly curls of his beard all create a physiognomy with unique personal

characteristics – a portrait, in other words. The artist, no longer interested in providing an image of the eternal and immutable man, is now interested in rendering the particular person without idealising his features or modifying the signs of age. The sparse hair and lined, withered cheeks, as well as the stooped shoulders, flabby chest, and other anatomical details clearly compromised by age, all testify without flattery to the subject's advanced years.

Yet despite these realistic features, the artist still adheres to the restrained realism that we recognise in the well-known representational statues of the orators and philosophers of his era. The description of the man's physiology reveals rather than conceals the essence of his being. The old man of Delphi's decisive gesture and contemplative gaze disclose his character and personality. It is obvious that this is not some random figure, but a noble, complex mature man, which explains why he was arbitrarily described a philosopher in the absence of any indication to that effect. In all probability, he was some venerable priest.

Likewise, we lack evidence about the identities of the other statues found in the same area. However, the circumstances of their recovery and their stylistic affinity have led scholars to the valid assumption that they were part of a family offering, similar to that of the Thessalian landowners, which was erected northeast of the temple in circa 270 BC. Moreover, the male statue that is larger than life-size and wearing garments not found on the representational statues has recently been interpreted as Dionysus. It could be, therefore, that this multiple-figure group of a priest and his family members (his wife and a young girl) was dedicated on the occasion of the services they provided as servants of Dionysus in some celebration at the sanctuary.

Also included in the category of family or personal dedications are the two statues of children that impart



The statue of Aknonios, tetrarch of Thessaly, the first in the family sculpture gallery.



The statue of the pankration athlete Agias. Believed to be a copy of an original bronze work by Lysippus. 336-332 BC.

a different spirit to the sanctuary. Statues of children are known from certain sanctuaries where they were dedicated to commemorate the services they rendered to the temples and their participation in the rites. But in the absence of such evidence at Delphi, these two figures should be attributed to likenesses of ordinary children and were either single votive offerings or belonged to multiple-figure offerings. Among the concerns of Hellenistic art was the depiction of childhood with the particular proportions and tender, rounded forms of the childish physique.

The little girl of Delphi appears to have come from the same Attic workshop as the statues of little girls that Athenian maidens dedicated to Artemis Brauronia, whose worship they served bearing the name "little bears." The statue is wearing a long chiton belted at the waist and a himation that she has wrapped below her waist, gathered on her left side, and is holding in a gesture of studied grace.

The little boy holding a goose in both hands is portrayed nude, with his crumpled chlamys tossed over his left arm and trailing on the ground, and is thus used by the sculptor to support the statue. The theme of the child playing or struggling with a bird or small animal made its appearance in the early 3rd century BC. Inspired by daily life, this was a favourite subject, as demonstrated by the large number of variations on it. Pliny cites the famous work by the artist Boethus representing a child strangling a goose that survives in numerous Roman copies. The Delphi statue is akin to a number of small statues found in Thespiae that were obviously dedications to Asclepius, votive offerings from parents whose children had been healed. It also resembles those of little boys presenting a bird or fruit to Artemis Brauronia.

The image of Eros as a sleeping child has an idyllic quality. The primeval god Eros, the underlying generative cause of every form of creation, is not depicted as he was in Classical times, as a beautiful boy or youth, but as a playful child, constantly pestering everyone and prompting the most improbable love affairs. This new image of the god created by poets and artists coincides with the particular interest of the period in the study of childhood and its psyche as well as in idyllic and mundane themes.

Here, the little winged god exhausted from dashing about and mischief-making has spread his mantle on a rock on which he now sprawls in blissful slumber. His legs and right arm dangle in repose, and abandon characterises his chubby face. The sculptor has convincingly rendered the child's tender flesh and lavish curls in the hard marble.

Head and chest of the statue of Agias. The deep-set eyes give the face a dreamy expression.

Following pages: *Four statues belonging to a family group. Left: A statue of Dionysus whom the family of the donors is addressing. Circa 270 BC. Behind the statues is a photograph of the first, outdoor Museum in Delphi, where these statues were erected near the site from which they were unearthed in the excavation. Among them we can recognise statues in the Museum today.*









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Statues of two children. 3rd cent. BC. The boy to the left is holding a goose, while the little girl on the right in a tunic and mantle is in the type of the "little bears" of Brauron.

Statue of Eros in the form of a sleeping child. May perhaps have decorated a fountain near the theatre. Early 2nd cent. BC.







The column with the "Dancers"

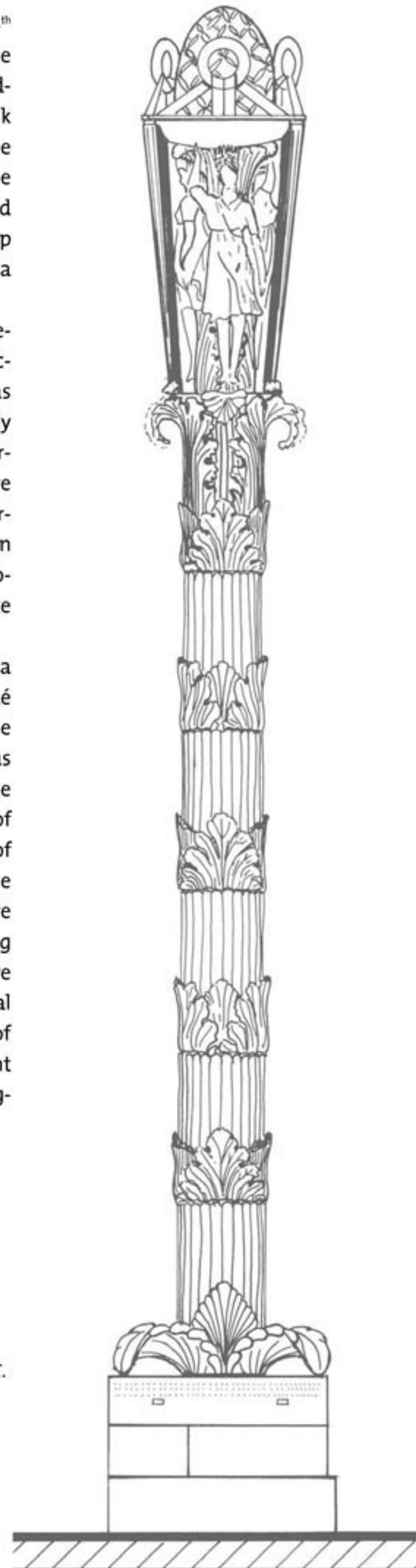
Among the numerous votive offerings erected in the second half of the 4th century BC in the area east of the temple, the thematic column with the "dancers" is outstanding for its great height of thirteen metres. The dedication comprises a column of drums, which resembles a plant stalk wound at regular intervals with lacy acanthus leaves. At its top, three young women carved around another phytomorphic stalk appear to be suspended in the air. The figures wear short transparent chitons and head coverings shaped like small baskets. With their left hands they grasp the hems of their ethereal garments while raising their right arms in a breezy gesture.

The three girls were initially called "Dancers" because of the dance-like quality of their pose – an impression that was reinforced by the inaccurate restoration of the upraised arms in the plaster cast, which was exhibited in 1903 in the first Museum. The broken arms were originally restored to open out in a dancer's gesture, leading to an incorrect interpretation of the work. For many years the figures in the group were believed to be young girls from Delphic mythology who danced with fervour like the Thyiads, the local name for the Maenads in the Dionysian procession. Claude Debussy also perceived them as dancers in a photograph of the work on display in the Louvre, and was thus inspired to write his first prelude titled "Danseuses de Delphes."

Today, however, after extensive debate, scholars have arrived at a different interpretation of the figures on the column. When J. Marcadé reassembled the upraised arm of one of the figures to turn inward, the curve of the palm suggested that the girls were supporting an enormous cauldron. This, it turns out, was the cauldron of a bronze tripod whose legs framed the female figures, who are no longer the dancers of Parnassus but three noble maidens gracefully holding the sacred vessel of Apollo. In addition, a careful reading of the inscription on the base of the votive proved its Athenian provenance. The maidens of the column are most probably the three daughters of the mythical Athenian king Cecrops, who are offering the god his favourite symbol. This impressive gift may have been dedicated at the celebration held to mark the arrival in Delphi of the procession of Athenian pilgrims during the Pythais of 330-325 BC. Furthermore, the most recent restoration of the monument places the stone omphalos on top as a lid for the sacred tripod, augmenting the symbolic significance of the Athenian dedication.

The head of one of the three maidens (kores) on the acanthus column. 330-325 BC.

Reconstruction (by J. L. Martinez) of the acanthus column with the three maidens holding the symbols of Apollo over their heads.



Carved stone oval shape representing the navel of the earth which, according to the most recent research, was placed over the tripod cauldron held by the maidens on the acanthus column, as a symbol of Apollo. The relief bands on its surface represent the woollen net (agrenos) that covered the famous symbol of Delphi in the adyton of the temple of Apollo near his statue. The myth tells us that when Zeus wanted to find the centre of the Earth, he released two eagles from each of the most distant points in the universe; they met in Delphi, the centre of the world, navel of the earth.

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The top of the acanthus column with the three maidens.



ROMAN TIMES

The decline of the sanctuary

DELPHI OCCUPIED A SPECIAL place in the vast Roman world due to its long-standing tradition. Roman generals and Senate officials initially, and Roman emperors later, respected this religious and cultural centre of Hellenism. They took care to reinforce its traditional institutions: the Amphictyonic League and the Pythian Games. The restructuring of the League –the federation of city-states from central Greece in charge of administering the Delphic sanctuary– helped the Romans to support their policies while permitting the ever-opportunistic inhabitants of Delphi to enjoy political privileges over other Greek cities.

However, by the early years of Roman rule the sanctuary of Delphi had already begun to lose the prestige of the past, since it was now unable to intervene in political matters. Decisions were henceforth made in the Roman Senate during the period of the republic and in Roman palaces during the period of the empire. The only remaining attractions for pilgrims and source of financial revenues were the religious life and athletic games. But as the cities, tribes and Hellenistic kingdoms began losing their independence one after the other, so their generous contributions and major dedications became increasingly scarce.

The sanctuary began faltering financially and, in the maelstrom of military conflicts during those turbulent times, was stripped of its treasures, many of which were transported to Rome. In 168 BC the victory of the Roman high commander Aemilius Paullus over the Macedonians at Pydna was commemorated by the last war monument in the sanctuary: a towering column bearing the equestrian statue of the Roman victor, erected in front of the Temple of Apollo. In 86 BC the Roman general Sulla, in order to meet the expenses of his siege on Athens and subsequent civil war in Italy, removed precious offerings from the sanctuary in the form of loans. Among these was a large silver *pithos* jar dedicated by King Croesus. Three years later raiding Thracian tribes plundered Delphi, exacerbating its abandoned image. On the occasion of his visit to Delphi late in the 1st century BC, the historian Strabo noted the decline of the sanctuary, venturing a startling comparison with its past, "... the sanctuary is as greatly neglected now as it was highly venerated in the past."

Roman emperors tried in vain to reverse Delphi's downward spiral, but confined their beneficence to overseeing the repair of the monuments, giving a superficial nod to religious life, and reviving the Pythian Games. In pursuit of Roman endowments, the Amphictyonic League erected statues in their honour, of which only their inscribed bases survive. Statues of emperors, portrait busts of senators, generals, local officials, as well as athletes victorious in the Pythian Games were erected alongside any earlier offerings that had escaped plunder, recalling the sanctuary's brilliance and the glory of its past.

Many of the emperors combined their visits to the sanctuary with endowments and bestowals of privileges on Delphi. Indeed, Nero took part in the Pythian Games as a charioteer and was declared victor, whereupon the sanctuary officials paid tribute to him with a commemorative statue. They did not even hesitate to re-enact the labours of Heracles on the proscenium of the theatre in an attempt to flatter their vain, idiosyncratic visitor into identifying himself with the great Greek hero. But Nero expressed his admiration of Greek art by transporting some 500 of the sanctuary's statues to Rome to decorate his palaces. Domitian repaired the temple and immortalised his act with a pompous Latin inscription. Nevertheless, following the *damnatio memoriae* (the official damning of his memory by the Roman state) statues of him were removed from the sanctuary and their inscribed bases chiselled smooth and reused elsewhere.

Trajan visited Delphi during his reign as emperor, and on that occasion bestowed autonomy on the city and decreed freedom for its citizens. It was then that Plutarch of Chaeronea became high priest of Apollo, an office he held from 95 AD to his death in 125 AD. His three philosophical treatises provide considerable information about the condition of the sanctuary and the votive offerings it contained, describing them through

discussions with acquaintances along the Sacred Way. In addition, we have gleaned much information from his essays describing the rituals and prophetic procedures; but his writings above all "bring vividly to light the mood of the people and the attitude of the spirit towards the time-honoured religion at the time. . . of its evensong, just 200 years before it was abandoned by the official state" (Christos Karouzos).

The emperor Hadrian, nostalgic for Classical Greece, showed a keen interest in Delphi. The many pedestals inscribed with his name testify to the honour reciprocated by the priests to the romantic emperor for his beneficence towards the sanctuary. The portraits of Hadrian may be lost to us, but we do have the statue of his favourite, Antinous, who accompanied the emperor on his visit to Delphi in 129 AD, a year before his death.

The last great works in the sanctuary were funded by the extremely wealthy Roman Herodes Atticus, who in ca. 170 AD donated an enormous sum for the construction of stone benches in the Stadium. It was during this period that Pausanias travelled to Delphi and, by describing the offerings in the order in which he saw them, presented us with the first archaeological guide to the site. His tour guides us carefully through venerable monuments of the past including the offerings of the Marathon warriors and the Treasuries of the Siphnians and the Athenians, but pays no attention to the countless honorific decrees to Roman officers inscribed on the walls or to Roman statues of senators and emperors. For visitors, Delphi had become an open-air museum of the splendours of Hellenism, but a place with no contemporary life, where nothing of significance was happening. This view taken by Pausanias of the glorious monuments of the past played a decisive role in the orientation of modern archaeology and historical research, as well as in the reconstruction of the monuments and their museological presentation to Delphi visitors. For a great many years, the Roman works found in the excavations were relegated to the periphery of research. Scholars focused on the golden centuries of the Panhellenic sanctuary and on the Archaic and Classical eras, just as Pausanias had paid more attention to the monuments of the past and their history than to his own present reality. The fact, however, is that many of the Roman period works are unique historic monuments, such as the pillar of Aemilius Paullus, with the earliest-known historical relief carving of the battle of Pydna. Some works, like the so-called portrait of the statesman Flamininus or the statue of Antinous are true masterpieces that received short shrift in the past in comparison with Classical sculpture.

The depiction of a historic battle

The clash between Roman legionaries and the Macedonian phalanx, as well as the imposition of Roman rule on Greek territory after the Battle of Pydna in 168 BC, is imprinted as a historic as well as a symbolic event on the monument of Aemilius Paullus. This towering pillar, some ten metres tall, was erected in front of the temple of Apollo to commemorate Roman defeat of the Macedonians in the battle that took place on the Macedonian plain near the city of Pydna. The fragments of the monument and its sculptural decoration that were recovered during excavations made possible its complete reconstruction. It rises from a pedestal and, like Ionic buildings, was crowned with a frieze of sculpted decoration. The frieze depicts the crucial battle during which the Roman general Aemilius Paullus, a veteran of the Spanish and Ligurian wars, defeated Perseus, the last representative of the Macedonian dynasty, and brought him back to Rome as a captive. This Macedonian king and son of Philip V had come to Delphi a few years before his confrontation with the Romans to make sacrifices to Apollo. Expecting to win the war against the Romans, Perseus commissioned the pillar on top of which he intended to place a gilded equestrian statue of himself. But Perseus lost, and the Roman victor in the battle and arbiter of the new order in Greece used that same pedestal on which to place his own bronze equestrian statue.

This new offering was taller than its two neighbouring pillars bearing equestrian statues of the Hellenistic sovereigns Eumenes of Pergamon and Prusias of Bithynia. It thus proclaimed in a most eloquent fashion, standing on the sanctuary's "most illustrious site" in front of the temple, the passage of supremacy over the sanctuary in Delphi, as well as over all of Hellenism, from the sovereigns of the Hellenistic states to Rome, that now ruled the world. The base of the pillar bears the following inscription in Latin, which arrogantly confirms Roman dominion:

*Lucius Aemilius, filius Lucii, imperator, de rege Perse
Macedonibusque cepet*

*Lucius Aemilius Paullus, son of Lucius, emperor,
captured [the pillar] from king Perseus and the Macedonians*







The frieze on the monument of Aemilius Paullus with the representation of the battle of Pydna (168 BC). Detail that depicts the beginning of the battle with the startled horse escaping from the Roman camp and causing the adversaries to clash.



The frieze on the monument of Aemilius Paullus with the representation of the battle of Pydna (168 BC). Detail that depicts a scene of fierce fighting between Romans and Macedonians, each armed with their characteristic shields, amid soldiers fallen to the ground.



Unlike most Greek temples, the frieze that runs around the four sides of the pillar does not depict an epic legendary battle. Instead, the theme is the actual battle of Pydna between the Romans and Macedonians. Irrespective of its artistic merit, the relief scene is important since it is the earliest carving to recount a real event in Greco-Roman history, as we know it from the contemporaneous historians, Polybius, Livy and Plutarch. In fact, some interpreters of the frieze, in which the opponents are distinguished by their different weaponry, have matched its scenes and figures to specific episodes and individuals in the battle. The Roman legionaries have their characteristic long, narrow shields and swords, whereas the soldiers of the Macedonian phalanx carry ornate round shields (*argyraspides*) and long javelins. The riderless horse galloping in the centre of one long side is acknowledged as the unbridled horse that, as period historians recount, got away from the Roman forces and provoked the first skirmishes that provided the grounds for the eventual clash between the adversaries who had been vacillating owing to an inauspicious oracle.

"When it grew towards evening, some tell us, Aemilius himself used a stratagem to induce the enemy to begin the fight; that he turned loose a horse without a bridle, and sent some of the Romans to catch him, upon whose following the beast, the battle began . . . and that, relief coming still from both armies, the main bodies at last engaged."

(PLUTARCH, *Life of Aemilius Paullus*, XVII,
http://ancienthistory.about.com/library/bl/bl_text_plutarch_aemiliuspaulus.htm)

The scene with the unbridled horse begins the narrative that unfolds from left to right, with all four sides of the monument depicting in sequence the successive stages of the battle. The fourth side, with its pile of corpses on the ground, appears to represent the end of the military conflict and the victory of the Romans which, judging from the dramatic scenes on the previous sides and by the accounts of historians, succeeded due to the bravery of the Roman soldiers and their allies.

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"As these [i.e. the Macedonians] were taking their places they were followed from the camp by the troops in phalanx called the Brazen Shields, so that the whole plain seemed alive with the flashing of steel and the glistening of brass; and the hills also with their shouts, as they cheered each other on . . .

"The battle being joined, Aemilius came in and found that the foremost of the Macedonians had already fixed the ends of their spears into the shields of his Romans, so that it was impossible to come near them with their swords . . .

"When he saw this, and observed that the rest of the Macedonians took the targets that hung on their left shoulders, and brought them round before them, and all at once stooped their pikes against their enemies' shields, and considered the great strength of this wall of shields, and the formidable appearance of a front thus bristling with arms, he was seized with amazement and alarm; nothing he had ever seen before had been equal to it . . .

"For these [i.e. the Italians] endeavoured to cut the spears asunder with their swords, or to beat them back with their shields, or put them by with their hands; and, on the other side, the Macedonians held their long sarissas in both hands, and pierced those that came in their way quite through their armour, no shield or corselet being able to resist the force of that weapon. The Pelignians and Marrucinians were thrown headlong to the ground, having without consideration, with mere animal fury, rushed upon a certain death . . .

"In the end, three thousand of the chosen men, who kept their ground and fought valiantly to the last, were all cut in pieces, while the slaughter of such as fled was also very great. The plain and the lower part of the hills were filled with dead bodies . . ."

(PLUTARCH, *Life of Aemilius Paullus*, XIX, XX
http://ancienthistory.about.com/library/bl/bl_text_plutarch_aemiliuspaulus.htm)

We do not know the identity of the inspired artist who designed the frieze. However, the moulded vitality of the figures, the complexity of the composition, the elegant contours, and the Hellenistic sense of space evident, especially in the fallen bodies, reveal the hand of one or more sculptors from an Attic workshop, heirs to the legacy of Greek relief sculpture.

The "Melancholy Roman"

The portrait head of a man with an expression of restrained melancholy has been identified by many as the Roman high commander Titus Quinctius Flamininus, who following his defeat of Philip V of Macedon in 197 BC proclaimed the "freedom" of Greece at Corinth. At Delphi he was not honoured only as the guarantor of Greek independence from Macedonian domination, but also because he donated lavish offerings to the sanctuary. In fact, a base has been found that once supported a bronze statue of him.

In his account of the life of Flamininus, Plutarch gives us a portrayal of the physiognomy and ethos of the general that corresponds to the Delphi portrait.

"For they who had been told by the Macedonians of an invader, at the head of a barbarian army, carrying everywhere slavery and destruction on his sword's point; when in lieu of such an one, they met a man, in the flower of his age, of a gentle and humane aspect, a Greek in his voice and language, and a lover of honour, were wonderfully pleased and attracted; and when they left him, they filled the cities, wherever they went, with favourable feelings for him, and with the belief that in him they might find the protector and asserter of their liberties. . . ."

"Other parts of Greece also heaped honours upon him suitable to his merits, and what made all those honours true and real, was the surprising good-will and affection which his moderation and equity of character had won for him. For if he were at any time at variance with anybody in matters of business, or out of emulation and rivalry, as with Philopoemen, and again with Diophanes, when in office as General of the Achaeans, his resentment never went far, nor did it ever break out into acts; but when it had vented itself in some citizen-like freedom of speech, there was an end of it. In fine, nobody charged malice or bitterness upon his nature, though many imputed hastiness and levity to it; in general, he was the most attractive and agreeable of companions, and could speak too, both with grace, and forcibly."

(PLUTARCH, *Life of Flamininus*, V, XVII

http://ancienthistory.about.com/library/bl/bl_text_plutarch_flamininus.htm)



The ascription of the portrait to Flamininus is substantiated mainly by comparisons with coins depicting the Roman general. But some scholars contest this, proposing numerous other identities and dates. Whichever interpretation we accept and whomever the artist intended to depict –Greek or Roman, philosopher or general– one thing is certain: with the rounded face with its prominent cheekbones, the hair covering the nape of the neck and falling on a noble brow furrowed with two lines, the eyebrows shadowing the eyes, the sardonic lips, and the well trimmed moustache and beard, in the face with a melancholic expression, the artist has given us an outstanding work in the history of Greek portrait sculpture.

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Marble pictorial head which, in its technique, imitates some bronze model. The restrained sadness that is expressed by the slack mouth and wistful air has given it the name "melancholy Roman". It may be the Roman general Flamininus who defeated Philip V, king of Macedonia, at Cynoscephalae in 197 BC and was honoured as the liberator of Greek cities from Macedonian rule.



Antinous: The deification of beauty

In 130 AD, Antinous, a youth from Bithynia famed for his beauty and beloved companion of the emperor Hadrian, drowned in the Nile when barely out of adolescence. Antinous believed in the ancient myth that sacrificing himself in this fashion would prolong the life of his protector. The distraught emperor, nostalgic for Classical Greece and a benefactor of the Delphic sanctuary, then decreed that statues of the beautiful youth whom he had loved so passionately be erected in sanctuaries and cities throughout his vast empire, where cults and games were established in honour of this new god. This deification appears to have been based on the Egyptian religion, because Herodotus informs us that the Egyptians deemed an immortal hero any person who drowned in the Nile.

One of the most beautiful cult statues of Antinous was erected at Delphi, within the sanctuary, where it was discovered upright on its pedestal, but broken at the knees, alongside the wall of a brick chamber behind the temple. On Roman coins minted in Antinous' honour, the representation of the statue is accompanied by the epithet "Propylaeus," meaning that it stood in front of the gate. It is therefore likely that the statue originally stood at the entrance to the sanctuary but later, after having lost its legs, was moved to a sort of chapel near the temple of Apollo where it was found, in excellent condition and still gleaming as if made of alabaster or porcelain thanks to the custom of the day of polishing marble cult statues with a special oil.

The youth's head is tilted sideways in reflection; the thick hair falling on his forehead and cheeks gives the figure a mournful quality. Holes are visible in the hair where a bronze laurel wreath was attached. His eyes "express a profound melancholy, as if still reflecting in their moistness the river in which the mystical youth found death" (Giannis Miliades). The body with its heroic, godlike nudity aspired to approximate Classical athlete sculptures, but it lacks the inspiration of the models that Hadrianic classicism nostalgically pursued in its art. With his wistful gaze, Antinous seems to be regarding not only his own sad end but also a waning world for which there would be no return.

In her historical novel, *Memoirs of Hadrian*, Marguerite Yourcenar offers an evocative yet characteristic description of Antinous' personality and appearance as well as the spirit of the times.

The statue of Antinous. It is one of the best-preserved pictorial statues that were erected throughout the Roman empire after his death in 130 AD. The head tilted sideways pensively, the idealised facial features and the polished skin are typical of the age of Hadrian, who returned nostalgically to classical models. 130-138 AD.





"Antinous was Greek: I traced the story of this ancient but little known family back to the time of the first Arcadian settlers along the shores of the Propontis. But Asia had produced its effect upon that rude blood, like the drop of honey that clouds and perfumes a pure wine. I could detect in him the mystic superstitions of a disciple of Apollonius, and the religious adoration, as well, of an Oriental subject for his monarch. . . This graceful hound, avid both for caresses and commands, took his post at my feet.

"I admired his almost haughty indifference for all that was not his delight or his cult; it served him in place of disinterestedness and scruple, and of all virtues painfully acquired. I marvelled at his gentleness, which had aspects of toughness, too, and the sombre devotion to which he gave his whole being. And yet this submission was not blind; those lids so often lowered in acquiescence or in dream were not always so; the most attentive eyes in the world would sometimes look me straight in the face. . .

"I see a head bending under its dark mass of hair, eyes which seemed slanting, so long were the lids, a young face broadly formed, as if for repose. This tender body varied all the time, like a plant, and some of its alterations were those of growth. . . ; a single afternoon at the hunt made the young athlete firm again, and fleet; an hour's sun turned him from jasmine to the colour of honey. The boyish limbs stretched out; the face lost its delicate childish roundness and hollowed slightly under the high cheekbones; the full chest of the young runner took on the smooth, gleaming curves of a Bacchante's breast: the brooding lips bespoke a bitter, sad satiety. . .

"I have seen the boy anxious at the thought of soon becoming nineteen. Dangerous whims and sudden anger shaking the Medusa-like curls above the stubborn brow alternated with a melancholy that was close to stupor, and with a gentleness more and more broken. . ."

(*Memoirs of Hadrian* by Marguerite YOURCENAR,
translated from the French by Grace Frick in collaboration with the author.
Readers Union, London, 1955. Secker and Warburg. Pp. 138, 139, 158)

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Page 351: The discovery of Antinous: "The life-sized marble statue of a young man was found standing on its base ... in a brick built chamber behind the temple of Apollo ... It made us all think we had acquired an Antinous..." (From the diary of the great French excavation. 13 July 1894.

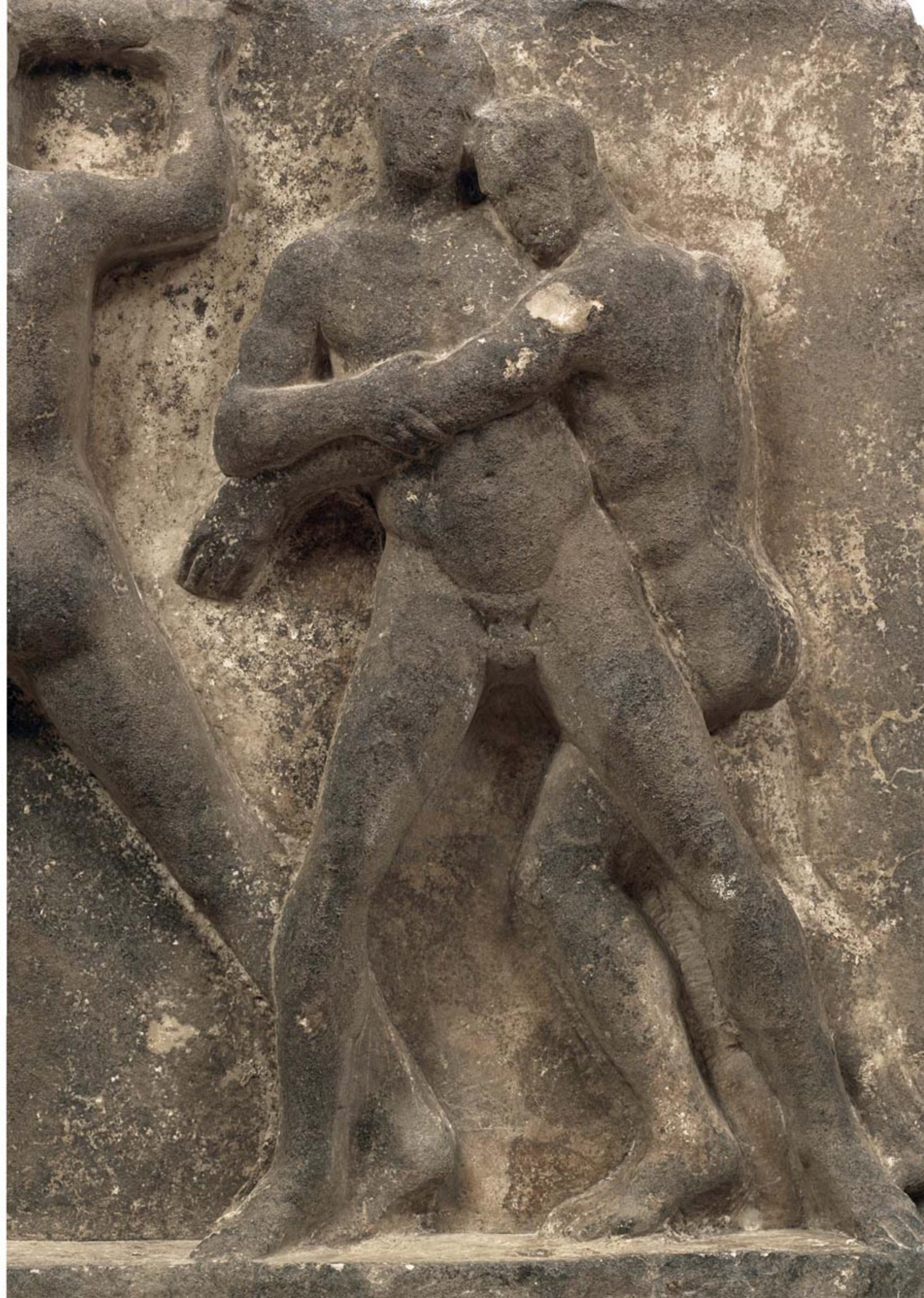
Pages 350-3. The head of the statue of Antinous: "What the invention of oil-painting was to the Venetians, the face of Antinous was to late Greek sculpture, and the face of Dorian Grey will someday be to me." (Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, 1891, p. 16).





Slabs from the relief frieze that adorned the proscenium of the theatre at Delphi. It is very possible that they were created for Nero's visit to Delphi in 67 AD. In order to flatter the emperor's desire to identify himself with Heracles, the persons responsible for the sanctuary presented the feats of the Panhellenic hero on the proscenium of the theatre, where many of the events were held in the Pythian Games in which Nero participated and was greeted with the honours of a demigod-hero. The provincial artist who created the frieze tried awkwardly to adapt the tradition of great classical reliefs to the art of his time.

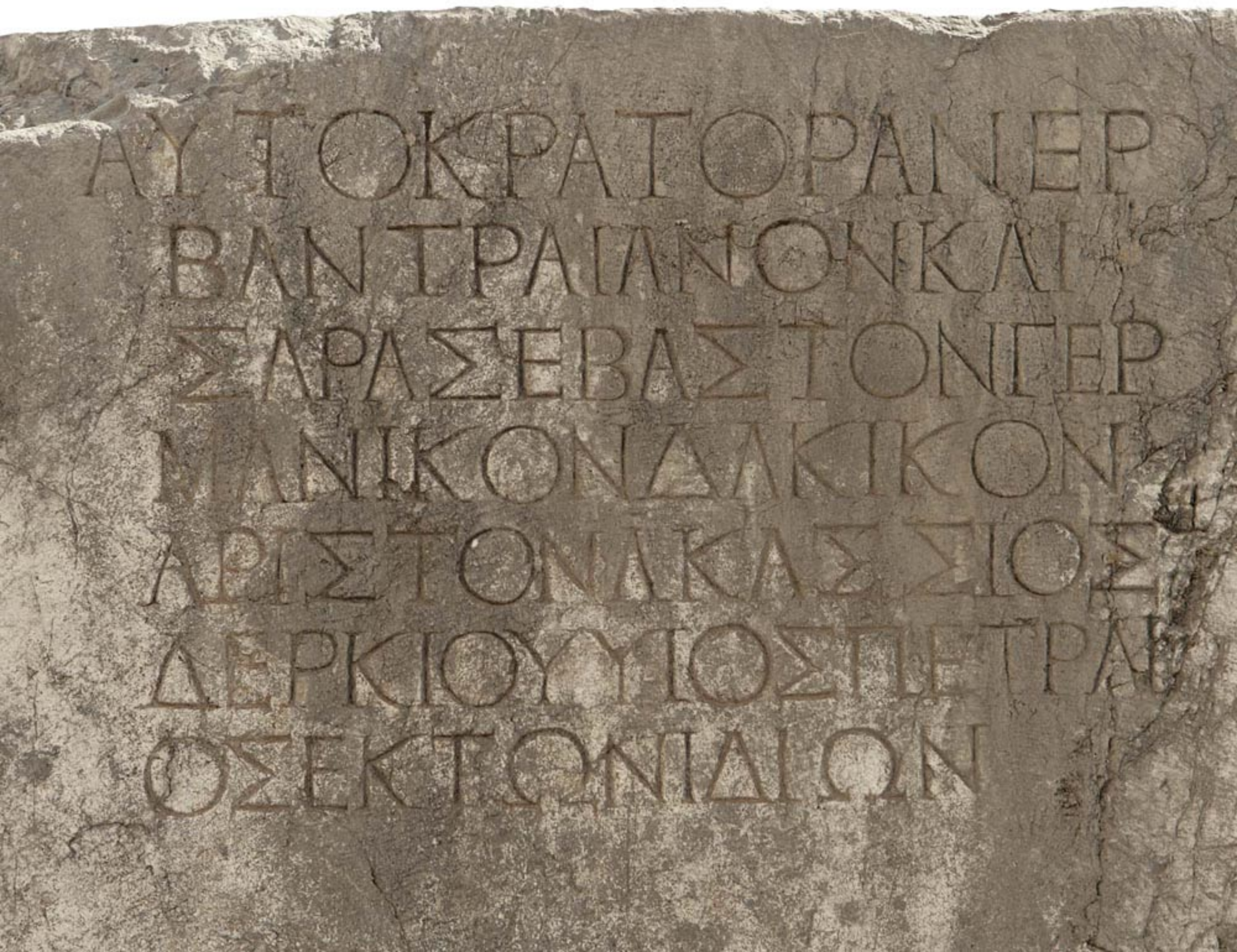
Page 355: Detail from the frieze showing Heracles wrestling with Antaeus. This scene is not one of the twelve labours of Heracles that he undertook by order of king Eurystheus, but one of the various other adventures (parerga) that occurred in his travels. When Heracles went to Libya, he wrestled with the giant Antaeus, son of Poseidon and Gaea, and after an exhausting fight, succeeded in killing him.



ΔΕΛΦΟΙ ΧΑΙΡΩΝ ΘΥΣΙΝ ΟΥΟΥ
 ΠΛΟΥΤΑΡΧΟΝ ΕΘΗΚΑΝ
 ΤΟΙΣ ΑΥΦΙΚΤΥΟΝΩΝ
 ΔΕΛΦΟΙΣ ΤΙΤΕΙΘΟΥΕΝΟΙ

Page 356. The inhabitants of Delphi carved the following inscription on the herm bearing the bust of Plutarch: "Delphi together with the citizens of Chaeronea dedicated the bust of Plutarch in accordance with the doctrines of the Amphictyonic League." Plutarch was at Delphi in 67 AD when Nero visited. He travelled to Rome where he met Trajan and Hadrian. In his dialogues dedicated to Delphic themes, he expressed his admiration for the interest shown in the sanctuary by the emperors Domitian and Hadrian.

Inscription from the imperial era. The relations between Delphi and Rome are clearly described in the rich series of inscriptions found in the excavations. The citizens of Delphi legitimately appealed for protection to the Roman emperors who, in turn, through the moral prestige of the sanctuary, sought support for their policies.







The Stadium at Delphi, where from the 3rd cent. BC on, athletic and music contests were held. It took on its final monumental form in about the mid-2nd cent. AD, when it was inaugurated with generous funding from the wealthy antiquity lover Herodes Atticus. It was then that the stone benches were built that provided seating for about 6,500 spectators, as well as the monumental arched entrance gate, and niches for honorific statues.

The sarcophagus of Meleager. It was one of the earliest finds at Delphi and among the first museum exhibits. It was discovered

by the Bavarian architect Laurent, on instructions from Kapodistrias, between 1831-1833, many years before the French excavations. In 1901 it was transferred and placed in the old village school next to the museum site, where the finds were collected prior to construction of the Museum with financing from Syngros. The sarcophagus came from a monumental grave enclosure in the east necropolis which contained tombs that were seen and described by travellers arriving in Delphi via

the road from Arachova. It belongs to the category of Attic sarcophagi of the 2nd cent. AD bearing relief mythological scenes. Its lid is in the form of a mattress on which the figure of the dead woman is reclining. The sarcophagus was named after



The back of the sarcophagus of Meleager. The two facing griffins portray a frequent theme with funereal symbolism. On each side, the herms with the head of Heracles function as Atlases supporting the lid of the sarcophagus.



The sarcophagus of Meleager. On one narrow side is depicted the episode that followed the quarrel between the heroes of Aetolia over the hide of the Calydonian Boar. Meleager's mother Althaea, upon learning that her son had killed her brother during a quarrel, threw the brand into the fire, the burning of which, according to a terrible curse, would cause the death of her son. In the scene on the right, a mythical hero, either Meleager or one of the Dioscuri, is depicted nude in front of his horse. Behind the horse is the Calydonian Boar. In the scene on the left, Althaea is depicted in a long, flowing robe, holding a torch, ready to throw it into the fire.

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FROM THE APOLLONIAN RELIGION TO CHRISTIANITY

*Tell the king: the elaborate hall has fallen down.
No longer has Phoebus either a hut, a prophetic laurel,
or the spring that speaks. The water of speech is silenced.*

HIS LAST PSEUDO-ORACLE that Christian authors reported to us is as ambiguous as its predecessors. We do not know whether it was invented to express the polemics of the new religion's advocates against idolatry's most important sanctuary, or sadness at its decline and nostalgia for its former greatness. It has also been interpreted as a dramatic appeal by the last priests of Apollo, the final representatives of the pagan world, to the emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363 AD) that, together with the ancient religion, he should restore the dilapidated dwelling of the god and seat of his oracle.

But irrespective of its symbolic or actual significance, the "last oracle" renders poetically the image of abandonment presented by the sanctuary of Delphi in the 4th century AD, and has the sonorous tone of a funeral lament. Most of the buildings must have been in ruins by then, owing not so much to deliberate actions by Christians, as to natural disasters, to the barbarian raids of the 3rd century AD, and to the lack of funds, since there were no longer believers to maintain them.

The same fate must have been shared by the statues in the sanctuary, the bronze and stone dedications. Since the time Pausanias had seen them during his visit to Delphi, some must have been destroyed in natural and other disasters, while many were transported by the emperor Constantine to the new capital of the Roman Empire, embellishing it with treasures stripped from other cities. Among them was one of the most revered monuments of Greek history, the base of the tripod dedicated at Delphi from part of the booty from the battle of Plataea. On the bodies of the bronze snakes that were coiled around the legs of the tripods, and are still standing in the Hippodrome in Istanbul, were carved the names of the cities that took part in the battle against the Persians. Any votive offerings that remained in the sanctuary after the triumph of Christianity represented nothing more than the last idols of paganism, which the inhabitants of Delphi reduced to metal or lime for their daily needs.

During the intellectually turbulent age in which the shift towards Christianity was taking place, some statues, busts and herms were erected at Delphi with portraits of the last representatives of the pagan world, i.e. philosophers or other theoreticians of ancient thought. Of the very few of these works to have survived, the bust of the bearded man stands out for its virtually intact state of preservation and its quality. The intellect it exudes has ensured it the designation of philosopher. Its creator, with remarkable technical skill, succeeded in the game of rendering the contrast between the smooth surface of the facial flesh, which was polished with great care, and the roughness of the dense, unruly tufts of beard and hair. The pensive eyes and heavy eyelashes lend the face the attribute of an intellectual, perhaps some neo-Platonic philosopher from among those who frequented Delphi in the 3rd century BC and who, together with the priests of Apollo, engaged in philosophical discussions. This pictorial bust was recently interpreted as the portrait of an *agono-*

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Corinthian-type capital, among the earliest evidence of Christianity at Delphi. From an early Byzantine basilica. Late 5th cent. AD.

thetes, i.e. an official responsible for organising and overseeing the Pythian Games which were still being held at Delphi in a reorganised form, while retaining their international character. In either case, it is the image of one of the last servants of the institutions of the Greco-Roman world.

The decree issued by Theodosius in 392 that prohibited the ancient religion from being practised in ancient temples did not come to Delphi as a bolt out of the blue, but rather as official certification of the death of the age-old Panhellenic sanctuary. The city of Delphi, on the other hand, appears to have followed a path contrary to the fate of the sanctuary. When the oracle was silenced and the sacred and half-ruined sanctuary, stripped of its dedications, had lost its sacredness, the inhabitants of Delphi became masters of their own land, and moved into the precinct of their old god, which their Mycenaean ancestors had inhabited before the coming of Apollo to Delphi. With stones from the monuments and inscribed slabs, they paved the path that had once led between the treasuries and the other dedications in order to build the road that to this day is conventionally called the Sacred Way. This was the main road to the commercial district that developed in the sanctuary, without touching the temple. The Christian builders of this road had no reason to respect the old buildings; but they involuntarily respected the dedications hidden by their distant ancestors under the terrace in front of the Stoa of the Athenians. If they had laid the stones 20 cm deeper on the road, they would have found the treasure with the gold and ivory objects that were discovered in 1939 by French archaeologists when they removed those same re-used stones for further study.

At the same time, the portico with the shops around the square, the so-called Roman market, was built at the entrance to the sanctuary. The town of Delphi that lived for so many years under the shadow of the sanctuary of Apollo with coverage from the Amphictyonic League, after the dissolution of the latter, experienced a period of prosperity which resulted in its expansion over a large area around the sanctuary with secular and religious buildings alike. The Christians did not convert the temple into a Christian church, as they did in other cities, and the sole traces of their zeal can be found in carvings of crosses on certain pagan buildings as a kind of exorcism. Also, the interior of the temple was completely destroyed by early excavators who believed, perhaps not unjustly, that the Christians wanted to remove all traces of the *adyton*, the innermost chamber of the Pythia.

The remains of the Christian city – i.e. the mosaic floors of a 6th-century AD basilica that were excavated at the entrance to the present-day village and scattered architectural sculptures from two other basilicas – are no different from contemporary ruins found in other provincial towns in southern Greece. But they have special significance since they constitute museological expression of how a great historic adventure that unfolded over a period of some two thousand years came to an end on a site that was marked by the successive passage of gods and men through a shady corner of Parnassus.



Detail from the mosaic floor of the early Byzantine basilica that was found west of the sanctuary, at the entrance of the present village. Twisted rope border creates lozenges filled with birds. Early 6th cent. AD.





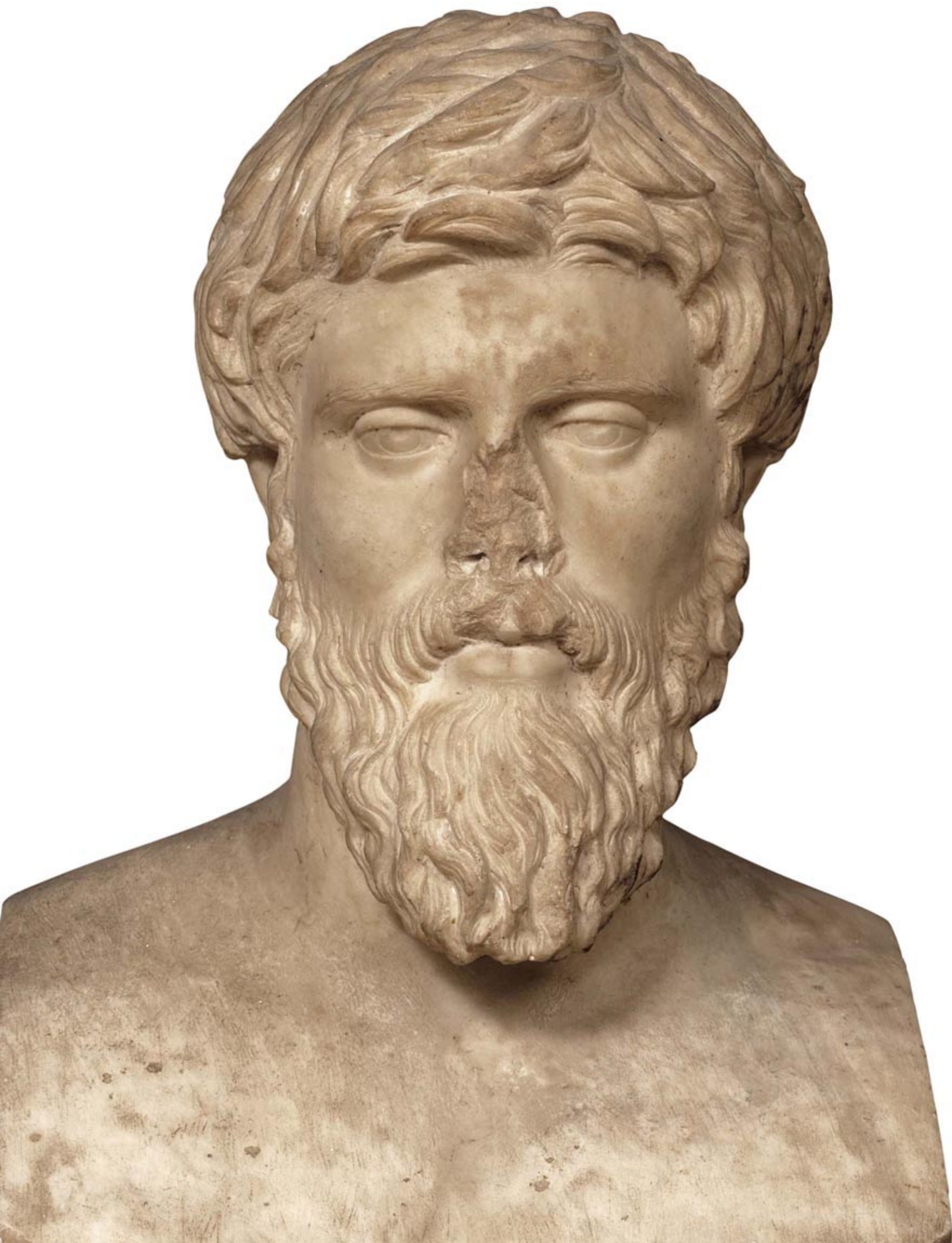
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Personification of summer: a pictorial decorative motif from the mosaic floor of the early Byzantine basilica in Delphi. 6th cent. AD.



The portrait of a "philosopher". 3rd cent. AD.

This pictorial head dating to the late Roman Empire finds its most appropriate museological expression in the last section of the Delphi Museum exhibition, the theme of which is the closing of the sanctuary. The man portrayed with the pensive eyes and serious air of an intellectual is one of the last representatives of the pagan world: a theoretician of contemporary neo-Platonic philosophy, a man of letters, or perhaps an official who rendered services (priest or organiser of games) to the sanctuary in its last moments of brilliance.







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