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978-1-107-03822-6 - State Pilgrims and Sacred Observers in Ancient Greece: A Study of Theōriā and Theōroi

Ian Rutherford

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State Pilgrims and Sacred Observers in Ancient Greece

For at least a thousand years Greek cities took part in religious activities outside their territory by sending sacred delegates to represent them. The delegates are usually called *theōroi*, literally ‘observers’, and a delegation made up of *theōroi*, or the action of taking part in one, is called *theōriā*. This is the first comprehensive study of *theōroi* and *theōriā*. It examines a number of key functions of *theōroi* and explains who served in this role and what their activities are likely to have been, both on the journey and at the sanctuary. Other chapters discuss the diplomatic functions of *theōroi*, and what their activities tell us about the origins of the notion of Greek identity and about religious networks. Chapters are also devoted to the reception of the idea of *theōriā* in Greek philosophy and literature. The book will be essential for all scholars and advanced students of ancient religion.

IAN RUTHERFORD is Professor in the Classics Department, University of Reading. He works mostly on Greek poetry, Greek religion and relations between Greece and other cultures: chiefly the Hittites and Egypt. He has published extensively on ‘pilgrimage’ in the ancient world (e.g. *Seeing the God: Patterns of Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity*, co-edited with Jaś Elsner, 2005) with a related interest in travelling poets (*Wandering Poets in Ancient Greek Culture: Travel, Locality, and Pan-Hellenism*, co-edited with Richard Hunter, 2009). He has also published a full commentary on Pindar’s Paeans (*Pindar’s Paeans: A Reading of the Fragments with a Survey of the Genre*, 2001) and has another volume forthcoming on Hittite and Greek religion.

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*In memory of my father Charles Simmers Rutherford
1925–1999*

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Preface

In ancient Athens, the time for the dispatch of the sacred embassy to Delphi known as the *Pūthais* was determined by people who on certain days of the year watched for the sign of lightning over a place called Harma ('Chariot') on Mt Parnes. The sign appeared so seldom that ὅταν δι' Ἄρματος ἀστράφηι ('When the lightning flashes across Harma') became a proverbial expression for something happening rarely or late.¹ The same expression could perhaps be used for books that have taken a very long time to gestate.

I started thinking about this subject as long ago as the late 1980s, at a time when I was working on Pindar's *Paeans*, many of which were performed by choruses accompanying sacred delegations sent to national sanctuaries. I remember being struck then by the absence of a comprehensive study of *theōriā*, and in a youthful way that now makes me smile wondering whether this meant that there wasn't much of a subject there. Undeterred, I began the project when I was a Junior Fellow at the Center for Hellenic Studies in 1992–3, under the nurturing supervision of Debbie Boedeker and Kurt Rauflaub. The fact that it has taken so long to complete is partly to be attributed to my having not infrequently become distracted by other commitments, but mainly it is because the scope turned out to be far greater than I had originally anticipated, requiring familiarity with more periods, subdisciplines and theoretical paradigms than I had bargained on. Looking back on it now, the fact that I have learnt so much in the process of writing it is some compensation for the length of time it took.

Adequately to acknowledge, still less to pay back, all the debts I've incurred would be impossible, and to do it systematically would mean distinguishing debts of different sorts. I have to admit that in general I learn most from people who disagree with me, which means that some of the people listed below may be surprised to be included. For many years Barbara Kowalzig's intellectual interests have seemed to run parallel with, and occasionally intersect with, my own, and if writing this book has been my *agōn*, she deserves credit as the *theōros*. I owe a great debt also to Jas Elsner, with whom I shared the happy task of editing a volume of essays on

¹ See §11.1, pp.176–7 below.

ancient pilgrimage a decade ago, and who has always gone out of his way to convince me that this was a project worth completing. Above all, I'd like to express my thanks to the late Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, my colleague at Reading from 1995 till 1998, but who was a sort of intellectual *arkhitheōros* for me from when we met in 1985 till her death in 2007. Christiane enthused me with her passion for ancient Greek culture, tried to communicate to me something of her own exacting methodological rigour, and, above all, gave me the confidence to believe that maybe I too could make a contribution.

The most appropriate order for the names of my other thankees would probably be a sequence of broad geographical trajectories, like the Delphic *Theōrodokoi* List (see pp.74–5), but in the end it seemed easier to use the conventional, alphabetic method. In different ways and for different reasons I am indebted to Sanna Aro, Emma Aston, Lukia Athanassaki, Sandra Blakeley, Ewen Bowie, Jan Bremmer, Felix Budelmann, Miriam Carlisle, Paola Ceccarelli, Angelos Chaniotis, Elena Chepel, Willy Cingano, Bruno Currie, Giambattista D'Alessio, John Davies, Matthew Dillon, Stephen Durnford, Elena Chepel, Arnold Enklaar, Lucy Fletcher, Fritz Graf, Julia Griffin, Theodora Hadjimichael, Albert Henrichs, Liz Irwin, Vicky Jefferson, Theodora Jim, Christopher Jones, Athena Kavoulaki, James Ker, Julia Kindt, Troels Myrup Kristensen, Leslie Kurke, Robin Lane-Fox, Jane Lightfoot, John Ma, William Mack, Paraskevi Martzavou, David Mitten, John D. Morgan (to whose careful reading of the proofs I am much indebted), Fred Naiden, Andrea Nightingale, Dirk Obbink, Jacques Oulhen, Robert Parker, Elena Partida, Natasha Peponi, Georgia Petridou, Ivana Petrovic, Verity Platt, Lucia Prauscello, Tessa Rajak, Kent Rigsby, Peter Rhodes, Scott Scullion, the late Charlie Segal, Michael Sharp, Julia Shear, Amy Smith, Philip Smither, Sari Takacs, Rosalind Thomas, Ken Walton and Peter Wilson. I'd also like to thank all my colleagues at the University of Reading for putting up with me during the final stages. Thanks also to the readers of Cambridge University Press, who improved the book and saved me from some serious mistakes.

Long ago, Harvard's Loeb Fund made it possible for me to engage in practical *theōriā* of some relevant sites, the most exotic of which was the oracle of Ammon in the Siwa Oasis (I recommend this trip to anyone who doubts whether there was such a thing as pilgrimage in the ancient world). The AHRC (or AHRB as it then was) gave me a fellowship to work on the project some more in 2000–1, and I also received two awards from the University of Reading, the more recent one in 2011, engineered by Peter

Kruschwitz, *vir versutus*, when the penultimate draft was written. Florida State University were also generous in their support when I was a visiting professor there in 2004. I owe a huge debt too to the Sackler Library at Oxford and its long-suffering staff, and ultimately to the Sackler Foundation.

Over the years, I have published a number of papers on *theōriā* and related subjects, often as the result of contributions to conferences. Some of these were points of punctuation in the otherwise even evolution of my thinking on the subject (the 'Music and the Muses' conference at Warwick in 1999, organised by Peter Wilson and Penny Murray stands out in my mind). However, comparing my articles with the book, I am surprised how few of them overlap with it significantly. In retrospect, some of these pieces turn out to have been merely thought-experiments to see how far I could push one particular approach, and now I find I've changed my mind. Not everything stands the test of time, though with any luck some of it will.

Despite all the acknowledgements, I am entirely responsible for all errors. I doubt whether I've said the last word on *theōriā* (in fact, I *hope* I haven't), but it's a wonderful subject which deserves a lot more attention than it has hitherto received. If the book stimulates the imagination of students of the subject in the future, I'll think it was well worth the effort.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations of journal titles follow *L'Année Philologique*. Readers should notice in particular the conventions in use for several recent works which contain corpora of inscriptions: Aneziri for the Dionysiac Artists, Clinton for Eleusis, Dimitrova for Samothrace, LhôteL for Dodona, PerlmanEC for the *theārodokoi* of the Peloponnese, RigsbyA for *asylia* inscriptions.

Agora 16	A. G. Woodhead ed., <i>Inscriptions. The Decrees (The Athenian Agora 16)</i> ; Princeton, 1997
Agora 19	G. Lalonde, M. K. Langdon and, M. B. Walbank eds., <i>Inscriptions. Horoi, Poletai Records, Leases of Public Lands (The Athenian Agora 19)</i> ; Princeton, 1991
Aneziri	S. Aneziri, <i>Die Vereine der dionysischen Techniten im Kontext der hellenistischen Gesellschaft</i> ; Stuttgart, 2003
App.	Appendix of Texts
BE	<i>Bulletin Épigraphique</i> , published yearly in <i>Revue des Études Grecques</i>
Carie	L. Robert and J. Robert, <i>La Carie. Histoire et géographie historique avec le recueil des inscriptions antiques. II. Le plateau de Tabai et ses environs</i> ; Paris, 1954
CEG	P. A. Hansen, <i>Carmina Epigraphica Graeca</i> (2 vols.); Berlin, 1983–9
CID	<i>Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes</i>
CID1	G. Rougemont, <i>Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes. I. Lois sacrées et règlements religieux</i> ; Paris, 1977
CID2	J. Bousquet, <i>Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes. II. Les comptes du quatrième et du troisième siècle</i> ; Paris, 1989
CID4	F. Lefèvre, <i>Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes. IV. Documents amphictioniques</i> ; Paris, 2002
CIS	<i>Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum</i> ; Paris, 1881–

Clinton	K. Clinton, <i>Eleusis, the Inscriptions on Stone. Documents of the Sanctuary of the Two Goddesses and Public Documents of the Deme</i> (3 vols.); Athens, 2005–8
CPG	E. von Leutsch and F. W. Schneidewin eds., <i>Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum</i> ; Hildesheim 1808–87
DELG	P. Chantraine, <i>Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque. Histoire des mots</i> (4 vols.); Paris, 1968–80
Didyma	A. Rehm and R. Harder, <i>Didyma. II. Die Inschriften</i> ; Berlin, 1958
Dimitrova	N. M. Dimitrova, <i>Theōroi and Initiates in Samothrace: The Epigraphical Evidence</i> (Hesperia Supplement 37); Princeton, 2008
DTL	Delphic <i>Theōrodokoi</i> List; citations follow the unpublished doctoral thesis of J. Oulhen (1992); see §5.2.1
EAA	<i>Enciclopedia dell'arte antica, classica e orientale</i> (7 vols.); Rome, 1958–66
EM	T. Gaisford ed., <i>Etymologicum Magnum</i> ; Oxford, 1848
FD	<i>Fouilles de Delphes</i>
FD 1	E. Bourguet, <i>Fouilles de Delphes. III. Épigraphie. 1. De l'entrée du sanctuaire au trésor des Athéniens</i> ; Paris, 1929
FD 2	G. Colin, <i>Fouilles de Delphes. III. Épigraphie. 2. Trésor des Athéniens</i> ; Paris, 1909–13
FD 3	G. Daux and A. Salac, <i>Fouilles de Delphes. III. Épigraphie. 3. Depuis le trésor des Athéniens jusqu'aux bases de Gélon</i> (2 fascs.); Paris, 1932–43
FD 4	G. Colin and others, <i>Fouilles de Delphes. III. Épigraphie. 4. La terrasse du temple et la zone nord du sanctuaire</i> (4 fascs.); Paris, 1930–76
FGrH	F. Jacoby, <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> ; Berlin, 1923–58
FHG	C. and T. Müller eds., <i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</i> (5 vols.); Paris, 1843–70

- Fontenrose (1988:R) Response of Didyma as listed in J. Fontenrose, *Didyma. Apollo's Oracle, Cult and Companions*; Berkeley, 1988: 179–231
- GD (Musée) *Guide de Delphes. Le Musée (École Française d'Athènes, sites et monuments VI)*; Paris, 1991
- GD (Site) J.-F. Bommelaer and D. Laroche, *Guide de Delphes. Le site (École Française d'Athènes, Sites et monuments VII)*; Paris, 1991
- IACP M. H. Hansen and T. Nielsen eds., *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*; Oxford, 2004
- IClaros J. Robert and L. Robert, *Claros. I. Décrets hellénistiques*; Paris, 1989
- ICret M. Guarducci, *Inscriptiones Creticae Opera et Consilio Friederici Halbherr Collectae, I–IV*; Rome, 1935–50
- ID F. Durrbach, P. Roussel, P. Launey, M. Coupry and A. Plassart eds., *Inscriptions de Délos*; Paris, 1926–
- I.Ephesos H. Wankel, C. Börker, R. Merkelbach, H. Engelmann, D. Knibbe, R. Meric, S. Sahin and J. Nollé, *Die Inschriften von Ephesos (IK 11–17)*; Bonn 1979–84
- IG *Inscriptiones Graecae*; Berlin, 1873–
- I.Gonnoi B. Helly, *Gonnoi. II. Les inscriptions*; Amsterdam, 1973
- I.Iasos W. Blümel, *Die Inschriften von Iasos (2 vols. IK 28.1–2)*; Bonn, 1985
- I.Ilion P. Frisch, *Die Inschriften von Ilion (IK 3)*; Bonn, 1975
- IK *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien*; Bonn, 1972–
- I.Kaunos C. Marek, *Die Inschriften von Kaunos*; Munich, 2006
- I.Magnesia O. Kern, *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander*; Berlin, 1900
- I.Mylasa W. Blümel, *Die Inschriften von Mylasa (2 vols., IK 34–5)*; Bonn 1987–8. (I (1987): nos. 1–761; II (1988): nos. 801–962)
- I.Olympia W. Dittenberger and K. Purgold, *Olympia: Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabung. V. Die Inschriften*; Berlin, 1896

<i>IPArk</i>	G. Thür and H. Taeuber, <i>Prozessrechtliche Inschriften der griechischen Poleis: Arkadien (IPArk)</i> SBAkad. Wien. 607; Vienna, 1994
<i>I.Pergamum</i>	M. Fraenkel, <i>Altertümer von Pergamon. VIII 1–2. Die Inschriften von Pergamon</i> ; Berlin, 1890–5
<i>I.Priene</i>	F. Hiller von Gaertringen, <i>Die Inschriften von Priene</i> ; Berlin, 1906
<i>I.Strat.</i>	N. Çetin Şahin, <i>Die Inschriften von Stratonikeia</i> (3 vols., <i>IK</i> 21–2, 68); Bonn, 1981–2010
<i>I.Tralles</i>	F. B. Poljakov, <i>Die Inschriften von Tralles und Nysa (IK 36)</i> ; Bonn, 1989
<i>LGPN</i>	<i>Lexicon of Greek Personal Names</i> ; Oxford, 1987–
<i>LGPN I</i>	P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews eds., <i>The Aegean Islands, Cyprus Cyrenaica</i> ; Oxford, 1987
<i>LGPN II</i>	M. J. Osborne and S. G. Byrne eds., <i>Attica</i> ; Oxford, 1994
<i>LGPN III.A</i>	P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews eds., <i>The Peloponnese, Western Greece, Sicily, Magna Graecia</i> ; Oxford, 1997
<i>LGPN III.B</i>	P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews eds., <i>Central Greece: From the Megarid to Thessaly</i> ; Oxford, 2000
<i>LGPN IV</i>	P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews eds., R. W. V. Catling asst ed., <i>Macedonia Thrace, Northern Regions of the Black Sea</i> ; Oxford, 2005
<i>LGPN V.A</i>	T. Corsten ed., <i>Coastal Asia Minor. Pontos to Ionia</i> ; Oxford, 2010
<i>LGS</i>	H. T. A. von Prott and L. Ziehen, <i>Leges Graecorum Sacrae e Titulis Collectae</i> (2 vols.); Leipzig, 1896–1906
LhôteL	The Dodona tablets as presented in E. Lhôte, <i>Les lamelles oraculaires de Dodone</i> ; Geneva, 2006
<i>LIMC</i>	L. Kahil ed., <i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> ; Munich, 1981–2009
<i>LSAG</i>	L. H. Jeffrey, <i>The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece. A Study of the Origin of the Greek Alphabet and its Development from the Eighth to the Fifth Centuries B.C.</i> with a supplement by A. W. Johnston; Oxford, 1990
<i>LSAM</i>	F. Sokolowski, <i>Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure</i> ; Paris, 1955

LSCG	F. Sokolowski, <i>Lois sacrées des cités grecques</i> ; Paris, 1969
LSJ	H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, <i>A Greek–English Lexicon, a New (9th) Edition by Sir H. Stuart Jones</i> ; Oxford, 1940; Supplement by E. A. Barber; Oxford, 1968
LSS	F. Sokolowski, <i>Lois sacrées des cités grecques</i> , Supplément; Paris, 1962
<i>Milet</i> I, 3	A. Rehm ed., ‘Die Inschriften’ in G. Kawerau and A. Rehm eds., <i>Das Delphinion in Milet</i> ; Berlin, 1914, 162–442 (nn. 31–186)
<i>Milet</i> VI, 1	P. Hermann, <i>Nachträge und Übersetzungen zu den Inschriften n. 1–406 in Milet VI. Inschriften von Milet. Teil 1</i> ; Berlin, 1997
Minon	S. Minon, <i>Les inscriptions éléennes dialectales (VIe–IIe siècle avant J.-C.)</i> (2 vols.); Geneva, 2007
ML	R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century BC</i> ; Oxford, 1969
Nachtergaeel.A	Actes as collected in G. Nachtergaeel, <i>Les Galates en Grèce et les Soteria de Delphes: recherches d’histoire et d’épigraphie hellénistiques</i> ; Brussels, 1977
<i>Nomima</i>	H. van Effenterre and F. Ruzé, <i>Nomima: recueil d’inscriptions politiques et juridiques de l’archaïsme grec</i> (2 vols.); Rome, 1994–5
NP	H. Cancik and H. Schneider eds., <i>Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike</i> (19 vols.); Stuttgart 1996–2003; translated as <i>Brill’s New Pauly</i> (2002–), from which the citations come
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OMS	L. Robert, <i>Opera Minora Selecta: épigraphie et antiquités grecques</i> (7 vols.); Amsterdam, 1969–90
<i>P.Oxy.</i>	<i>Oxyrhynchus Papyrus</i>
<i>Paeans</i>	I. C. Rutherford, <i>Pindar’s Paeans. A Reading of the Fragments with Survey of Genre</i> ; Oxford, 2001
PCG	R. Kassel and C. Austin, <i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> (8 vols.); Berlin, 1983–2001
PEP	Princeton Epigraphical Project

- PEP (Priene) D. F. McCabe, B. D. Ehrman and R. Neil Elliott, *Priene Inscriptions. Texts and List* (printout from computerised list, given limited circulation, 1986)
- PEP (Teos) D. F. McCabe and M. A. Plunkett, *Teos Inscriptions. Texts and List* (printout from computerised list, given limited circulation, 1985)
- PerlmanEC Epigraphic Catalogue in P. Perlman, *City and Sanctuary in Ancient Greece: the Theorodokia in the Peloponnese* (Hypomnemata 121); Göttingen, 2000: 171–245
- PerlmanPC Prosopographical Catalogue in id.:247–85
- PMG D. L. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci*; Oxford, 1962
- Pūth1 *Pūthais* 1, i.e. the first revived Athenian *Pūthais* to Delphi sent in 138/7 BC
- Pūth2 *Pūthais* 2, i.e. the second revived Athenian *Pūthais* to Delphi sent in 128/7 BC
- Pūth3 *Pūthais* 3, i.e. the third revived Athenian *Pūthais* to Delphi sent in 106/5 BC
- Pūth4 *Pūthais* 4, i.e. the fourth revived Athenian *Pūthais* to Delphi sent in 98/7 BC
- PW H. Parke and D. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* (2 vols.); Oxford, 1956
- RAC *Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum*; Stuttgart, 1950–
- RE *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*
- RigsbyA *Asylia* decrees according to the enumeration of K. J. Rigsby, *Asylia: Territorial Inviolability in the Hellenistic World*; Berkeley, 1996
- RO P. J. Rhodes and R. Osborne, *Greek Historical Inscriptions 404–323 BC*; Oxford, 2003
- SECir. G. Pugliese Carratelli and D. Morelli, ‘Supplemento epigrafico cirenaico’, *Annuario* 39–40 (= N.S. 23–4), 1961–62:217–375
- SEG *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*; Leiden, 1923–
- SERod. G. Pugliese Carratelli, ‘Supplemento epigrafico rodio’, *ASAtene* 30–2 (= N.S. 14–16), 1952–4:247–316.
- SGDI F. Bechtel et al. eds., *Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften* (4 vols.); Göttingen, 1884–1915

SGO	R. Merkelbach and J. Stauber, <i>Steinepigramme aus dem griechischen Osten</i> (5 vols.); Munich, 1998–2004
SH	H. Lloyd-Jones and P. Parsons, <i>Supplementum Hellenisticum</i> ; Berlin, 1983
SIG ³	W. Dittenberger and F. Hiller von Gaertringen eds., <i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> ³ ; Leipzig, 1915–24
STG	J. Elsner and I. Rutherford eds., <i>Seeing the Gods. Patterns of Pilgrimage in Greco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity</i> ; Oxford, 2005
ThesCRA	<i>Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum</i> ; Basel, 2004– ThesCRA I (2004): <i>Processions. Sacrifices. Libation, Fumigations, Dedications</i> ThesCRA III (2005): <i>Divination. Prayer. Gestures and Acts of Veneration. Hikesia. Asyilia, Oath, Malediction, Profanation, Magic Ritual</i> ThesCRA IV (2005): <i>Cult Places Representations of Cult Places</i> ThesCRA VI (forthcoming) <i>Stages and Circumstances of Life. Work, Hunting, Travel</i> ThesCRA VII (2011) <i>Festivals and Contests</i>
TitCal	M. Segre, ‘Tituli Calymnii’, <i>ASAtene</i> 22–3 (= N.S. 6–7), 1944–5
TitCam	M. Segre and G. Pugliese Carratelli, ‘Tituli Camirenses’, <i>ASAtene</i> 27–9, N.S. 11–13 (1949–51), 141–318.
TGF	B. Snell, R. Kannicht and S. L. Radt eds., <i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> (5 vols.); Göttingen, 1971–2004
VS	H. Diels, <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , edited with additions by W. Kranz, 5th–6th–7th eds.; Berlin, 1934–54