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SOME NOTES
ABOUT THE CONCEPT
AND THE VALUE
OF THE *θησαυροί*
IN THE GREEK
SANCTUARIES

Marco CAVALIERI*

Abstract: The paper focuses on a monumental typology that contradistinguishes Greece's extra urban panhellenic sanctuaries. This paper has been written with the intention to facilitate a better understanding regarding the purpose of these edifices in the light of literary and archaeological research. This analysis will lead to a discussion around the political and ideological role that these small monuments have had as venues for displaying famous items of great importance for the sanctuary's cult of divinization, and also a discussion around the role of some structures that were inherited as gifts for the sanctuary's divine power from various „poleis», for some important political and military actions.

Key words: *θησαυρός*, monument, Greece, terminology, literary and archeological sources, function.

During the VIIIth century B.C., the expansion of the great extra-urban sanctuaries¹ takes place in Greece and important sites as Delphi, Olympia or Delos develop themselves. These sanctuaries are not only participating to the blooming of the architecture that expresses itself through the erected majestic temples, but they are also adorned by a multitude of offerings

¹ TOMLINSON R.A., *Greek Sanctuaries*, London, 1976; ROLLEY C., *Les grands sanctuaires panhelléniques*, in HÄGG R., *The Greek Renaissance of the Eight Century B.C. Tradition and Innovation*, Stockholm, 1983, pp. 109-114; MORGAN C., *Athletes and oracles: the transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the eighth century BC*, Cambridge, 1990; MARINATOS N. et HÄGG R. (eds.), *Greek sanctuaries, New Approaches*, London et New-York, 1993.

consecrated by people from whole Greece. More than marble statues, monumental bronze tripod cauldrons and other prestigious dedications², a new type of edifice appears: the θησαυρός³. These architectural offerings flourish in the greatest Greek religious centers impressing by their size, their building materials and the quality of their carved decoration. Although they have been the object of many studies, mainly targeted on their architectural aspect, their function remains unknown and this because of the imprecision of the ancient sources. Some authors⁴ however attempted to treat this question. What emerges from these studies is a consideration of the θησαυρός as an offering shelter and as an offering itself⁵. In this paper, we will reconsider the different arguments that demonstrate these two functions and we will also tackle the θησαυρός under a new aspect, the “μνημεῖον”.

First of all, it would be proper to inspect the origin of the term as well as its use in the different literary and epigraphic sources. The question of the etymological source isn't definitively solved at all; however, the mainly accepted hypothesis is a common root with the greek verb τίθημι that means “to place”, “to put down”⁶. This origin, even if uncertain provides an interesting reading key: the function of the building is intrinsically linked to its denomination. However, the application area of the verb τίθημι is quite wide enough and doesn't allow us nor to determinate a precise function or to distinguish the aspect of an offering shelter or an offering. It's since then necessary to rely on the witnesses left by the ancient authors.

Sources

Even if absent from the Homeric texts, the term θησαυρός is present in numerous ancient authors –Herodotus, Thucydides, Strabo, Plutarch and

² ROUSE W.H.D., *Greek Votive Offerings*, Hildesheim, New York, 1976; VATIN C., *Monuments votifs à Delphes*, 1991; JACQUEMIN A., *Offrandes monumentales à Delphes*, (BEFAR, 304), Paris, 1999; DUCAT J., *La fonction des statues en Grèce archaïque. Kouros et colossos*, in BCH 100, 1976, pp. 239-251; MAGOU E., PHILIPPAKIS S. et ROLLEY C., *Trépieds géométriques de bronze*, in BCH 110, 1986, pp. 121-136.

³ DYERS L., *Olympian Treasuries and Treasuries in General*, in JHS 25, 1925, pp. 295-319; MALLWITZ A., *Olympia und seine Bauten*, Munich, 1972; ROUX G., *Temples, trésors, tholos*, in *Temples et sanctuaires*, (TMO, 7), 1987, pp. 154-171; PARTIDA E.C., *The Treasuries at Delphi: an Architectural Study*, 2000; HÖLSCHER T., *Schatzhäuser – Bankethäuser?*, in IOAKH, *Festschrift für Jörg Schäfer zum 75. Geburtstag am 25. April 2001*, Würzburg, 2001, pp. 143-152.

⁴ Amongst the most recent : ROUX G., *op. cit.*, pp. 154-171; PARTIDA E.C., *op. cit.*; HÖLSCHER T., *op. cit.*, pp. 143-152.

⁵ Even if T. Hölscher is reticent about this hypothesis.

⁶ ROUX G., *op. cit.*, p. 158.

Pausanias only to name some of them. Nevertheless, the concrete reality to which this term refers will be different according to the spatio-temporal context in which it's used. That's why, by remaining next to the general idea that the verb *τίθημι* includes the specific function of the building changes roughly.

The first considered function is the simplest form generated by *τίθημι*, namely a room where objects are left, whatever the nature of it. The term *θησαυρός* has evidences in this way in Aristotle (*Pol.* I,3,8) that describes the building as a store that contains goods that are necessary to the existence and useful for the common life of states and families⁷. Three centuries later, but still with the same perspective, Strabo (XII, 8, 11) describes three *θησαυροί* situated in Cyzicus: one for weapons, another one for machines of war and a third one for wheat. This term is also related on Greek papyri, dated between the third and the second century A.D., in which it points out a private or public barn⁸. The frequent appearance of this word in documents shows that these barns had a great importance in the administration and organization of the society. The estate's harvest and the taxes in kind were collected in it. Built with bricks or with a lath-work filled with raw clay, they had a circular plan and an ogival elevation⁹. There were two openings, one on the top to pour the grain and one on the basis to pick it up, and they were frequently matched in groups of ten or more. These first examples show the extremely functional part of the building. The *θησαυρός* in this context only has a function of warehouse, silo or a simple storage room. The next evidences are going to reveal different acceptances linked to the term *θησαυρός*.

A first nuance occurs in Herodotus and Plato. Still in a secular context, Herodotus uses by three times the term *θησαυρός*. The first time to name the edifice where the king Sardanapalus piled up the treasures of Nineveh (II, 150), the second time, by speaking about the place where Croesus kept his gold¹⁰ (VI, 125) and a last time to refer to the place where the pharaoh Rhampsinit placed his jars full of noble metal (II, 121). Plato (*Pol.*, 548a), as

⁷ It is to note that this definition also suits for containers of monetary nature as well as for commodities.

⁸ Husson G., *Oikia, le vocabulaire de la maison en Egypte d'après les papyri grecs*, Paris, 1983, pp. 91-93.

⁹ The site of Karanis has provided several examples of barns that allow an archaeological study realized by HUSSELMAN E.M., *The Granaries of Karanis*, in *TAPhA* 83, 1952, pp. 56-73.

¹⁰ The legend tells that Croesus admitted Alcmaeon, which came to ask him for help, in the room where he kept his treasure and allowed him to take away all the gold he was able to bear.

for him speaks about the *θησαυρός* as an edifice that contains some wealth and links it to the term *ταμεία* that is the treasurer's function. The use of this term by the two authors implies clearly the idea of wealth, treasury in the monetary point of view. In this context, the edifice appears more as a private treasure room in Herodotus, and a public one in Plato.

But it's in the most sacral framework of the sanctuaries that the term *θησαυρός* gets all his signification. The first authors remain vague about the function of the building. Herodotus (I, 14 and 50-51; III, 57-58) mentions briefly the *θησαυροί* erected by Corinth and Siphnos. Pindar (O., 6, 65) tells us that in Olympia, "*The god (Zeus) granted to Iamos a double prophetic θησαυρός*". Even if a certain link with the divine nature of the edifice appears, it remains difficult to deduce its function and its real connection with the prophetic or divinatory dimension. The texts of Euripides (*Andr.* 1092-94; *Hec.* 1229; *Suppl.* 1010) are more explicit about the functional nature of the *θησαυροί*. He specifies that these buildings were erected by men and that they contained gifts for the gods. The edifice is a *Διὸς θησαυρός*, a sacral depot for Zeus. Thucydides (I, 121, 3) is even more precise and tells us that each edifice was the particular property of a confederate State that was able to leave and withdraw there wealth without appealing to the Amphictyons or the Sacred Senate. A bite later, Xenophon (*an.*, V, 3, 4-5) mentions the famous *θησαυρός* of the Athenians and prides himself on having consecrated there an *ex-voto*. However, we must wait the first century B.C. and Strabo to get the first true definition of the *θησαυροί* of Delphi (Strab. IC, 3, 4): "*They are edifices built both by cities and by potentates in which they deposited dedications, money and works of art which they dedicated to the gods*". During the two first centuries A.D., several authors will evoke and describe some of the edifices when they pass through these sanctuaries. Plutarch names two times the *θησαυρός* of Brasidas and the Acanthians¹¹ as well as this of the Corinthians (*De Pyth. or.*, 12-14; *Lys.*, 1-3). In his Periegesis, Pausanias describes the *θησαυροί* of Delphi (X, 11, 1-6) and of Olympia (VI, 19, 1-15), typical buildings of these two sanctuaries as he says. The author doesn't definite explicitly the *θησαυροί* but brings however some new elements such as the reason of the consecration of some of them. He recognizes their function as offering shelter, in particular these of Olympia that contained rich statues and carved groups, while all the *θησαυροί* of Delphi had been emptied of their contents. Concerning the edifice of Gela in Olympia, it is to note that the author (Paus., VI, 19, 15) talks about it not as a *θησαυρός* but as a *ἀνάθημα* which makes this building rather a

¹¹ Achantus, city on the most eastern peninsula of Chalcidice, not so far from the Athos mount. Brasidas leaded a military campaign in the area from 424 to 422 B.C, date of his death.

"votive chapel". Furthermore, the author is surprised because of the absence of any statue. Later, the roman author Aulus Gellius (II, 10) compares the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\iota$ with ritual dumps but this parallel doesn't seem correct because the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ is an edifice erected above the ground level rather than a pit, a crypt or any other underground room where offerings could be placed. Finally, at the VIth century A.D., Hesychius (*Lexicon*, " $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ ") gives a very precious and very precise definition: "*The $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ is a consecrated edifice in a sanctuary both as an offering and as an offering shelter*".

Several evidences are also supplied by epigraphy. In this way, carved inscriptions on the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ of the Athenians mention this term several times¹². Blocs from epistyles, discovered not so far from the Athenian building, allowed reconstituting a dedication that mentions the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ of the Cnidians¹³. In the Delian inscriptions, the term $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ doesn't have the same value as in Delphi or in Olympia. In Delos, epigraphic sources name five $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\iota$: in the Hieron of Apollo, the Aphrodision, the Asclepeion, the Serapeion and the Artemision on the island¹⁴. It appears to be offering boxes that are presented as a cylindrical or rectangular marble base looking like an altar with an internal cavity closed by a decorated lid. This type of $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ can also be found in Eleusis. These offering boxes opened and emptied once a year contained private and anonymous offerings or sometimes a fee paid by those who offered a sacrifice¹⁵. These five edifices arranged in a half-circle around the three temples and whose plan was identical to the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\iota$ of Delphi and Olympia, are denoted by the general term of $\acute{o}\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$, which leaves us a doubt on their true function¹⁶.

These sources give us numerous indications to determine the function of a $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$. If in any contexts, the building can be seen as a warehouse or a treasure room, within the framework of the Greek sanctuaries, it takes on a quite other signification. There's indubitably a sacral dimension that comes on top of the purely functional aspect. It appears one time as a sacral deposit or as a repository for offerings of a city, another as an offering itself. The next step consists in the confrontation of these sources with the archeological sources to assess the pertinence of each of these two aspects. We insist however on the fact that our investigations are mainly targeting the

¹² COLIN G., *Inscriptions du trésor des Athéniens*, (FD III, 2), 1909, n° 20 l. 17, 139 l. 18, 47 l. 37, 50 l. 14, 140 col III l. 13.

¹³ *Id.*, n° 289.

¹⁴ HELLMANN M.-C., *Recherche sur le vocabulaire de l'architecture grecque*, (BEFAR, 278), Paris, 1992, p. 156.

¹⁵ About these delian offering boxes, see KAMINSKI G., *Thesaurus, Untersuchungen zum Antiken Opferstock*, in *JdAI* 106, 1991, pp. 63-181.

¹⁶ HELLMANN M.-C., *op. cit.*, pp. 298-304; Roux G., *op. cit.*, p. 158.

sanctuaries of Delphi and Olympia, on one hand because they are the best documented, on the other hand because the identification of the Delian οἶκοι are nowadays too uncertain to get them mixed up in the debate.

Θησαυρός as an offering shelter

The first considered aspect, even the most present in the sources, is the use of the edifice as an offering shelter. Strabo (IX, 3,4) gives about that a really explicit definition: the θησαυρός is an edifice "*where they deposited dedications, money and works of art which they dedicated to the gods*". Besides this definition and the meaning stemmed from the etymology, several literary and archeological evidences confirm this function.

In the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi, Pausanias (X, 13,5), Herodotus (I, 14 and 50-51) and Plutarch (*De Pyth. or.*, 12-13) tell us that, during the reconstruction of the temple, after the fire of 548 B.C., the Lydian kings' offerings of which six golden craters of Gyges, the golden lion and the silver jars of Croesus, were transferred in the θησαυρός of Kypselos and of the Corinthians. Herodotus (I, 51) adds that a golden krater was housed in the θησαυρός of Clazomenae. Following Plutarch, (*Lys.*, 1, 1-3), the θησαυρός of Brasidas and the Acanthians enclosed a trireme made with gold and ivory, given by Cyrus the young to Lysander¹⁷, a large sum of money and a statue of Lysander himself. Xenophon (*Anab.*, V, 3, 4-5) as far as he's concerned, claims to have consecrated a votive object in the edifice of the Athenians, but we ignore the exact nature of this offering. Besides these literary evidences, archeology provides a different trace that confirms the presence of votive objects in the θησαυροί. In this way, several embedding cavities were identified in the walls of the Athenian edifice; they were intended to support or to hang up offerings¹⁸. On the edifice of the Cnidians, the next dedication can be read: "*The Cnidian people consecrated this θησαυρός and the statues as a tithe to Apollo Pythius*"¹⁹. Even if these statues are sometimes considered as caryatides that could have replaced the columns as it was the case for the θησαυρός of Siphnos²⁰, they

¹⁷ Despite the private character of the θησαυροί, one could notice that some persons receive or place offerings in a foreign θησαυρός. This particular aspect will be developed *infra*.

¹⁸ Two on the external face of the southern wall, one on the northern wall of the πρόδομος, one that still contained traces of lead on the supporting wall, two on the northern wall of the cella and two on the western wall. AUDIAT J., *Le trésor des Athéniens*, (FD II, 3), 1933, p. 31-32.

¹⁹ Roux G. et Pouilloux J., *Enigmes à Delphes*, Paris, 1963, p. 67-68.

²⁰ BOMMELAER J.-F., *Guide de Delphes, le site*, Paris, 1991, p. 142.

were maybe offerings to Apollo placed inside the cella²¹. In Marmaria, following the interpretation of the text of Pausanias by Ch. Le Roy²², the ionic θησαυρός (of *Massalia*?) contained roman statues. Delphi unfortunately doesn't deliver us more examples, but it must be stressed that during the passing through of the authors, on one hand, numerous edifices were already ruined, on the other hand, those that survived didn't escape plundering.. That explains the poverty of the archeological evidences concerning the offerings located in the θησαυροί.

On the other hand, the Olympian θησαυροί contained all, excepted two of them²³, votive objects. The θησαυρός of Sicyon contained, two θάλαμοι, three discs used during the πένταθλον, a bronze shield, a helmet and shields dedicated by the Mynians, the sword of Pelops equipped with a golden guard, an Amalthea's horn made of ivory (Paus. VI, 19,2-6). The edifice of Syracuse contained three linen breastplates (Paus. VI, 19, 7) and that of Sybaris contained golden and silver vessel²⁴ (Atheneus, XI, 480 a). Besides this rich material, the recurrent characteristic of the Olympian buildings is the consecration of a statue or a carved group inside the cella. One can list a wooden statue of Apollo (Sicyon), of Zeus (Syracuse), the group of Heracles and the Hesperides (Epidamnos), a statue of Triton (Sybaris), roman statues (Cyrene), a statue of Dionysus (Selinus), of Endymion (Metapontum), the group of Heracles against Acheloo (Megara) and unknown statues (Gela)²⁵. The archeological study of the remains confirms the presence of these offerings. The ground of the edifice of Cyrene shows pits, probably intended to fasten the offerings into the ground²⁶, maybe the roman statues mentioned by Pausanias (VI, 19, 10)²⁷. In the construction of the Selinuntins, the

²¹ HÖLSCHER T., *op. cit.*, p. 149.

²² The description of Marmaria is difficult to interpret because Pausanias only mentions four edifices while the sanctuary contains five (two temples, two treasuries and one *tholos*) and he all indicates them as ναός. The different hypotheses for the identification of the edifices are resumed in LE ROY CH., *Pausanias à Marmaria*, in *BCH Suppl.* IV, 1977, p. 247-65.

²³ The byzantine edifice and the foundation n°3 which identity is discussed. Concerning this problem, see DYERS L., *op. cit.*, pp. 295-319; DÖRPFELD W. (e.a.), *Olympia I. Topographie und Geschichte*, Amsterdam, 1966, pp. 75-76; MALLWITZ A., *op. cit.*, pp. 169-170.

²⁴ That this vessel only constitutes an offering or that it was used for ceremonies or sacred banquets can weigh up on the determination of the function of the θησαυροί in general, and on this of the building of Sybaris in particular. Unfortunately, nothing allows the balance to tip for one solution or another.

²⁵ Paus. VI,19 6-15.

²⁶ DÖRPFELD W. (e.a.), *Olympia II. Die Baudenkmäler von Olympia*, Amsterdam, 1966, p. 48.

²⁷ Even these traces are dated of the roman period; it's unlikely that the romans have

paving shows the presence in the center of the cella of a basis that probably supported the statue of Dionysos²⁸. Finally, the edifice of Gela also consists of an important basis, in the center of the cella, on which were exposed the consecrated objects²⁹. The presence of these statues could suggest the function of a temple³⁰. Indeed, a temple is seen as a divinity's house, materialized by a worship statue or an object of great antiquity, as the xoanon in the Erectheion. Could a θεῶν σαυός be seen under this point of view? Certainly, this edifice has a direct link with the divine dimension, it already appears by Pindar (*Ol.*, 6, 65) and Euripides (*Andr.*, 1092-94; *Hec.*, 1229; *Suppl.*, 1010), however these authors remain quite vague about the true function of the building. The religious role of the edifice doesn't appear in the sources: but it's precisely this aspect that makes an edifice a temple. The statues in the edifice of Olympia are offerings and aren't object of a particular cult. Besides, nothing in the θεῶν σαυός suggests a religious activity or other, except maybe the golden and silver vessel of the θεῶν σαυός of Sybaris (Athenaeus, XI, 480 a) but as we said previously nothing allows us to claim that it is really ritual vessel. Moreover, all these edifices are consecrated by a city, or even by a person³¹, whose name is written in the dedication, unknown practice in temples. Finally, these edifices are too numerous inside a same sanctuary to claim to the function of a temple. However, the presence of divine statues inside the θεῶν σαυός, even if they are offerings and not religious statues, make these little buildings closer to temples, moreover because of their very similar plan, which could explain the confusion with the terminology used by the authors³².

At Delos, the foundation n°19³³ is the only one to show concrete traces of artifacts: supports of an offering table, a cavity in the ground that probably

altered the original function of the Greek edifice.

²⁸ DÖRPFELD W. (e.a.), *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

²⁹ *Id.*, p. 54 ; SCHLEIF H. et SÜSSEROTT H.K., *Großgriechische Dachterrakotten, das Schatzhaus von Gela*, (OF. 1), 1944, pp. 83-86.

³⁰ We are talking here about a temple-sanctuary, it is said a temple as a place of worship, that G. Roux distinguishes from the temple-treasury that in spite of his sacral character, because of his construction for a divinity, only has for function to collect and contain offerings made to the god. Roux G., *op. cit.*, pp. 159-166

³¹ Kypselos for the θεῶν σαυός of Corinthus in Delphi, Myron for this of Sicyon in Olympia.

³² θεῶν σαυός pointed out as a ναός by Pausanias (X, 8, 6), Diodorus (XVII, 10, 5) and Polemon (Athénée, XI, 479 F - 480 A, XIII, 606 A-B).

³³ Numbering used by in BRUNEAU P. et DUCAT J., *Guide de Délos, site et monuments*, Paris, 1983.

got a statue and the prints of four pedestals³⁴. These indications could lead to the identification of the edifice as the οἶκος πρὸς οἱ ὁ Διαδούμενος that contained weapons, paintings, four statues, a marble table and casements³⁵. However, as already specified, the existence of the θησαυροί in Delos is a tricky problem and the veritable function of the οἶκοι mentioned in the sources remains indistinct.

As the numerous literary and archeological indications attest, the function of offering shelter is indisputable, but is it the essence self of the edifice? Although the Delphic edifices of Clazomenae and of Corinth served as a shelter for works of art that the temple of Apollo contained during its reconstruction, it is inappropriate to relegate them into the simple rank of a warehouse³⁶. Several aspects give to this type of edifice a more prestigious character. The first characteristic is an accomplished architecture and a rich and mannered decoration. It is to note that if the most edifices considered as θησαυροί are in tufa, one of them is made of limestone (edifice of the Thebans) and seven of them in marble (edifice of Cnidia, Siphnos, Athens, Cyrene, the doric edifice of Marmaria and two anonymous eolic edifices, one in Marmaria and the other in the Apollonion). The restitution of the elevation of several edifices allows revealing that a particular attention has been paid on the esthetic elements of the edifices, whether they are of ionic or Doric order. The most beautiful example is the θησαυρός of Siphnos in Delphi that gets architectural particularities of a great interest³⁷. Its elevation is made of three different marbles: Siphnian for the walls, Parian for the carved decorations and Naxian for the decorative plaques. The columns of the façade are replaced by magnificent caryatids. The figured frieze and the carved groups of the frontons give the evidence for a style of a great quality. Let us also mention the edifices from Olympia of which several elements of the *simá* and the richly decorated terracota frieze have been found³⁸.

³⁴ VALLOIS R., *Architecture hellénique et hellénistique de Délos. I. Les Monuments*, (BEFAR 157, 2), Paris, 1944, p. 58.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Moreover, the θησαυρός of Corinth is earlier to the destruction of the temple of Apollo, which proves it wasn't specifically built in order to house the offerings of the great temple.

³⁷ PICARD CH. Et DE LA COSTE-MESSELIÈRE P., *Art archaïque : les trésors ioniens*, (FD IV, 2), 1928, pp. 57-71 ; DAUX G. et HANSEN E., *Le trésor de Siphnos*, (FD II, 9), 1987, pp. 155-190.

³⁸ TREU G., *Olympia III. Die Bildwerke von Olympia in Stein und Ton*, Bearbeitung, Amsterdam, 1966; MERTENS-HORN M. et VIOLA L., *Archaische Tondächer westgriechische Typologie*, in *Hesperia* 59, 1990, pp. 236-248; MOUSTAKA A., *Großplastik aus Olympia*, (OF, 22), 1993; HEIDEN J., *Die Tondächer von Olympia*, (OF, 24), 1995.

Another element to be considered is the position of these buildings within the sanctuary. The *Θησαυροί* are placed in an ideal position, sometimes even to the detriment of the quality of the ground³⁹. The edifices of Delphi are distributed along the Sacred Way oriented toward it in order to present their impressive façade to the visitors. Those of Olympia were lined up on an imposing terrace that opened itself to the South toward the inside of the *Altis*⁴⁰. In Delos, the five edifices interpreted as *Θησαυροί*, organised themselves in a quarter of circle around the three temples of Apollo. So, far from harmless, the place where such an edifice was erected was consciously chosen even if the orientation doesn't depend on the sacred character, the *Θησαυροί* are all gathered in the sacred area of the sanctuary, most of the time next to the great temple.

The last considered aspect is the existing relation between the edifice and the offering that it contains. If one pay attention to the available space in the cella, it seems that, proportionally, the *Θησαυροί* only contained few offerings. Moreover, there's a will of layout, an inner organisation of the offerings, as one would arrange an exhibition room⁴¹. These offerings were probably intended to be seen⁴² and the edifice that contained them took part to their display. It is a fact that the external look of the building gave even more value to the exposed objects, but was this its unique function? Concerning this link between the edifice and the offerings, Hölscher⁴³, in a recent study, suggests an interesting hypothesis. Rather than considering the *Θησαυρός* as an offering-edifice that, afterward, houses other votive objects, he sees this edifice as a repository of a more important object, consecrated in the sanctuary. His conclusions are based on the contemporaneity of the edifice and the votive objects that it contains. So, the *Θησαυρός* of Sicyon in Olympia, erected by Myron for a sporting victory, contained two bronze *Θάλαμοι* (Paus., VI, 19, 2). On the smallest one, an inscription mentions clearly that it was given by Myron and the Sicyonian people. So at least,

³⁹ The Thebans, whose *Θησαυρός* is dated of 371 B.C is one of the latest one consecrated in Delphi, preferred a well-visible place in the sanctuary on a ground sensible to the bad weather, rather than a more resistant ground situated in a quieter area.

⁴⁰ Let us remind that they were themselves situated in the *Altis*, so in the sacred area.

⁴¹ As attested by the fixing cavities in the walls of the *Θησαυρός* of the Athenians and the bases of the statues of the *Θησαυροί* of Olympia.

⁴² Without giving a free access to the visitor into the edifice, as attested by the presence of the gates that closed the *πρόδρομος*, no other opening that the door of the cella gave an access to the *Θησαυρός*, in certain cases voluntarily made difficult: it is the case for the two triangular terraces that made the access difficult to the edifice of the Athenians. See Roux G., *op. cit.*, p. 156.

⁴³ Hölscher T., *op. cit.*, p. 143-152.

one of the two θάλαμοι is contemporary with the edifice. In the θησαυρός of Epidamnos, dated to 540-530 B.C.⁴⁴, is consecrated the carved group of Heracles realised by Theokles and his son Hegylus (Paus., VI, 19, 8). On basis of other works of Theokles and of the archaic aspects of the sculptures, Hölscher considers the work as contemporary of the building and probably consecrated at the same time. Laying down the same kind of reasoning with regard to the presented sculptures inside the Megarian edifice, he draws the same conclusion. In the edifice built by the Selinuntins, he considers that the central basis that supported the statue of Dionysos, generally considered as a later development⁴⁵, could be dated on the construction of the edifice. Concerning the building of Gela, Pausanias (VI, 19, 15) refers us to an inscription that mentions that "*the θησαυρός and the ἀγάλματα were consecrated by the people of Gela*". According to Hölscher⁴⁶, the edifice and the statues are to be considered as a whole and were consecrated together. He draws the same conclusion about the dedication of the building of Cnidia in Delphi⁴⁷. "*The people of the Cnidians have consecrated the θησαυρός and the statues as a tithe to Apollo*"⁴⁸. These different observations make the author conclude that the edifice that is named θησαυρός is only a repository for an offering to the divinity. As for the different construction motivations mentioned by Pausanias, they apply to the offering and not to the building.

This hypothesis deserves to be considered, however, it gives rise to some objections. Even if the contemporaneousness of a θησαυρός with the first consecrated object inside can be proved, it doesn't allow us neither to determine which of them constitutes the main offering nor to define the function of the edifice. Besides, Hölscher's conclusions generate several remarks. If the object housed in the edifice is the main offering, why does the building, and not the work that it contains, seem to appear on the foreground in the sources? Indeed, only the dedications of the edifice of Gela in Olympia, and of Cnidia in Delphi, mention consecrated statues in the same way of the θησαυρός. If it's about offering a work of art in the sanctuary, why, in certain precise cases were they enclosed in edifices, while so many other offerings were consecrated for a long time in open air? Delphi and Olympia don't have a lack of examples of statues, tripods, columns and other outside consecrated during the VIth and Vth century B.C.,

⁴⁴ Dated according to decorated elements (frieze and *simá*). HEIDEN J., *op. cit.*, pp. 114-119.

⁴⁵ MALLWITZ A. *op. cit.*, p. 174.

⁴⁶ HÖLSCHER T., *op. cit.*, p. 143-152

⁴⁷ COLIN G., *op. cit.*, n° 289.

⁴⁸ Restitution of the inscription by Roux G. et Pouilloux J., *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68.

proliferation period of the θησαυροί. However, several cities consecrate a θησαυρός and outdoor offerings in the sanctuary, and this in a restricted chronological bracket⁴⁹. Cyrene erected several monuments during the VIth century B.C of which the chariot of Ammon (Paus, X, 13, 5) and the θησαυρός dated to 334-320 B.C.; Syracuse includes, besides his θησαυρός, a whole series of offerings dated to the Vth century B.C.; *Massalia*, during the VIth century B.C., offers in addition to the θησαυρός located in the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia in Marmaria, a statue of Apollo (Paus. X, 18, 7) and one of Athena (Paus., X, 8, 6). It is to observe that even Athens celebrates its victory of Marathon by several constructions in the sanctuary of Delphi, namely a θησαυρός and two basis supporting statues, one adjacent to the building and the other in the lower part of the sanctuary⁵⁰. It is difficult to understand why certain offerings would deserve to be displayed in a monumental case and other not.

All those aforesaid characteristics don't suit very well to an edifice which only function would be to serve as a room where offerings and/or religious material are stored. The involvement put in would be exaggerated for such a singular building. Their architectural qualities, their position in the sanctuary, are indications that suggest a high consideration of the edifice. Even the hypothesis of a repository for a particular offering isn't entirely convincing. These different remarks lead us to consider the θησαυρός as a full offering.

θησαυρός as an offering

Again, the point of departure is a definition given by an ancient author: "*Ἡ θησαυρός is a consecrated edifice in a sanctuary both as an offering and as an offering's shelter*" (Hesychios, Lexicon, "θησαυρός"). The author gives clearly to the edifice a function of offering. Other indications, given by the ancient literary, come to support this hypothesis. Pausanias (VI, 19, 1), in the beginning of his description of the "terrace of the θησαυροί of Olympia explains: "On this terrace are the θησαυροί, just as at Delphi certain of the Greeks have made θησαυροί for Apollo." This passage indicates that the edifices of Delphi and Olympia are dedicated and offered to a divinity. However, we will remember the use of the expression "as a tithe to (δεκάρη in Greek!)" in the dedication of the θησαυρός of Cnidia, and the texts of Herodotus (II, 57-58) and Pausanias (X, 11, 2) that are both speaking about

⁴⁹ The next few examples and their dates are taken from the corpus of JACQUEMIN A., *op. cit.*, pp. 307-372.

⁵⁰ JACQUEMIN A., *op. cit.*, pp. 126, 186-7.

the tithe concerning the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ of Siphnos. The term $\delta\epsilon\kappa\acute{\alpha}\tau\eta$ ⁵¹ is often present in the in the dedication of an offering, but the examples mentioned above show this word as directly linked with the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ rather than with an offering that could have been put in it. One should accept that it is the edifice itself that constitutes the offering.

The consecration of an edifice as an offering drives us to take an interest to the reason that justified its construction. Thanks to the ancient literature and to the epigraphic texts, several reasons are known. First of all, there's a pure act of piety. This type of offering is quite rare but we know however two cases attested in Delphi: the statue of Hermes Kathegemon⁵² consecrated during the third quarter of the second century A.D. and, as for us, the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ of Potidaea (Paus., X, 11, 5). We also have to mention the statue of Gorgias in Olympia (Paus., VI, 17, 7), according to the inscription carved on the basis⁵³. Even if there are few examples, we may add to this category offerings made for the great feasts of the sanctuary⁵⁴. However, it's an evidence that, whatever the offering, it is marked with piety because it implies a close link with the divinity.

An offering can be granted as thanks for a sudden material prosperity. The will of a dedicant is not only to express his gratitude to the divinity but also to honor him by fear to arouse his discontent that could put an end to a providential situation. It's in this context that was erected the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ of Siphnos. Pausanias (X, 11, 2) explains that "Their Island contained gold mines, and the god (Apollo) ordered them to pay a tithe of the revenues to Delphi. So they built the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$, and continued to pay the tithe...". Other offerings in Delphi belong to this category: the golden harvests of the Metapontins (Strabo, VI, 264), of the Myrineseans and of the Apolloniats (Plut., De Pyth. or., 16, 401F); the spits (or oboles) of Rhodopsis (Her., II, 134-135); or the bovines of Karystos (Paus., X, 16, 6).

Another event leading to the consecration of an offering is an agonistic success. If relatively few examples are attested in Delphi, the boxer Theagenese, the Phocidian wrestler or the equestrian statue of Attalus the first for example⁵⁵, the Altis of Olympia looks as a true display of trophies of

⁵¹ JACQUEMIN A., *op. cit.*, p. 90.

⁵² FLACÉLIÈRE R., *Inscription de la terrasse du temple et de la région nord du sanctuaire*, (FD III, 4), 1954, p. 266; JACQUEMIN A., *op. cit.*, p. 87.

⁵³ CURTIS E. et ADLER F., *Olympia IV. Die Inschriften*, Amsterdam, 1966, n°293.

⁵⁴ JACQUEMIN A., *op. cit.*, p. 87.

⁵⁵ For the statues of the victorious athletes situated in the sanctuary of Delphi, see JACQUEMIN A., *op. cit.*, p. 86-87.

the athletic games⁵⁶. Indeed, it was usual for the victorious athletes during the Olympic events to erect a statue depicting them-selves or Zeus, with on its base an inscription mentioning the name of the athlete and the gained event. We will also remember the erection of the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\gamma\acute{o}\varsigma$ of Sicyon following the victory of the tyrant Myron on the chariot race of the 33th Olympiad (Paus., VI, 19, 2).

But the majority of the offerings –and this is particularly true at Delphi⁵⁷– are consecrated following a military victory⁵⁸. This particular case constitutes a double act of piety: by thanking to have enjoyed of the divine favor and for the material prosperity that follows, in terms of spoil of war. The offering itself recovers this double aspect because it is, on one hand, to honor a divinity, and on the other hand, to pay the tithe taken from the spoil in the form of works of art. There's no lack of occasions for this type of offering, because Greek people were always busy with wars, as well for military campaigns against barbarians than amongst Greeks. During the Vth century B.C., Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse, as thanks for his victorious campaign against the Carthaginians, consecrated a tripod and a $\nu\acute{\iota}\kappa\eta$ in Delphi (Plut. *De Pyth. or.*, 8) and a $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\gamma\acute{o}\varsigma$ in Olympia (Paus., VI, 19, 7), the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\gamma\acute{o}\varsigma$ of Syracuse. The Greco-Persian wars were the occasion for numerous offerings. The battle of Marathon was honored, in Delphi, by a $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\gamma\acute{o}\varsigma$ and two basis consecrated by the Athenians (Paus., X, 10, 1-2, X, 11, 5), whereas the victory of Plateaus was marked by the consecration of a column with on its top a tripod in Delphi (Paus., X, 13, 9; Her., IX, 81) and a statue of Zeus in Olympia (Paus., V, 23, 1). We also can find in Delphi, the palm tree of Eurymedon (Paus., X, 15, 4-5) or even the golden statue of Alexander the first (Her., VIII, 121). Amongst the conflicts between Greek people, the Peloponnesian war deserved the consecration, at Delphi, of the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\gamma\acute{o}\varsigma$ of Syracuse (Paus., X, 11, 5), a horse of Troy (Paus., X, 9, 12) erected by the Argians following their victory on the Lacedemonians in Thyrea, the Navarchs' monument (Plut., *De Pyth. or.*, 2; Paus., X, 9, 7-11), and lot of other ones. The $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\gamma\acute{o}\varsigma$ of Brasidas and of the Acanthians could date from this period⁵⁹. In Olympia, the winged victory of Paeonia commemorates the victory of the Messenians on Sparta (Paus., V, 26, 1). The

⁵⁶ Pausanias draws an imposing list of them in the book VI, 1-18 of his description of Greece.

⁵⁷ What for Plutarcus took offence at (*De Pyth. or.*, 15, 401 C-E).

⁵⁸ JACQUEMIN A., *op. cit.*, pp. 84-87 ; JACQUEMIN A., *Guerres et offrandes dans les sanctuaires*, in *Pallas* 51, 1999, pp. 141-157.

⁵⁹ The name of the spartiate Brasidas is linked to the edifice of the Acanthians because he offered his help to free Acanthos from the Athenian hold. (Plut., *De Pyth. or.*, 8, 14, 15, 397F, 400F, 401C)

beginning of the VIth century B.C., the period of the Theban hegemony was marked by the great victory of Leuctra, for which was erected, in Delphi, the *θησαυρός* of Thebes (Paus., X, 11, 5).

Only the motivations of a few *θησαυροί* has been transmitted by the ancient sources, but these monumental offerings, as particular as they could appear, seem to fit perfectly into the numerous other *ex-voto* consecrated as an act of gratitude to a divinity. Like the other offerings, these edifices were erected following a - military, political or social- event that marked the history of the city.

θησαυρός as « *μνημεῖον* »

Before anything else, it seems good to insist on the true signification of the “*μνημεῖον*”, in Latin *monimentum* or *monumentum*⁶⁰. Indeed, the actual use of this term is at least ambiguous. We name “monument” as well an edifice with a commemorative, historical (by the simple observation of its antiquity) or esthetical value. However, the Greek and Latin roots - *μνημεῖον*, *monere*, *monumentum*- are very precise and attest to a close link with the idea of memory, of remembrance. A monument is a work intended to perpetuate the memory of a past event, particularly important for ancient civilizations. Numerous offerings in the Greek sanctuaries have a value of monument, and it's precisely following this perspective that we will reconsider the *θησαυροί*.

The offerings made in a sanctuary are systematically linked to a precise event, whatever it is, in the history of the dedicator city. Indeed, the historical event brings the opportunity and the material means to consecrate an offering in a sanctuary, mainly when it concerns a military victory that is accompanied by a war spoil. But what's the impact of this event in the signification of the offering? Are all these works of art only witnesses of the gratitude to a favorable divinity or is there a more symbolic objective behind this act of piety? If we analyze the different offerings on the level of the representation of the chosen subjects, the decorations or the dedication, they generally present a double thematic. On one hand, there's a reference to the divinity: a statue depicting him, the presence of a significant attribute or the representation of a theme directly linked with the god or one of his functions. On the other hand, an evocation of the historical event mentioned in the dedication, when it exists, or suggested by a mythological representation which iconological signification is tied up with the event in question. So, Olympia is packed with statues at the effigy of Zeus, but whose dedication mentions an athletic or

⁶⁰ About this, see ALCOCK S.E. and VAN DYKE R. (éds.), *Archaeologies of Memory*, Oxford, 2003.

military victory⁶¹. It's the same for the representations of Apollo in Delphi⁶². Some offerings ask for a more subtle lecture via representations with a high iconological value: the horse of Troy, previously mentioned, which is a symbol of victory by himself; the basis of the Tarentians that supported four groups of horses and captive women; the monument said "of the kings of Argos" which theme takes up the Argian and royal ancestry of Heracles⁶³. Let's also mention the serpentine column of Plateaus. If the offering relates to a military victory, the column gets no military iconographical elements. The snakes and the tripod located on the top are two peculiar attributes to Apollo. In the sanctuaries, the link between history and the pious aspect of the offering is marked by different ways. Either the celebrated historical fact is made, directly or indirectly, visible or the offering is in touch with the divinity and his powers whereas the event only is mentioned in the dedication. Maybe the carved decorations of the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\upsilon\omicron\iota$ should be read from this point of view. Unfortunately, we only have the carved decorations of two $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\upsilon\omicron\iota$, this of Athens⁶⁴ and this of Siphnos⁶⁵. The metope of the $\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\upsilon\omicron\varsigma$ of the Athenians takes back the labors of Heracles and of Theseus, Athenian hero *par excellence*. The themes of the frieze of the Siphnian edifice are the judgment of Paris, a kidnapping during a sacrifice, the fight between Achilles and Memnon and a gigantomachy. One of the frontons is properly Delphic because of its representation of the rapt of the tripod of Apollo by Heracles. However, one must recognize that even if the themes are inspired by the mythology of the city or by those of Apollo, the occasion for which these edifices were built isn't explicitly depicted. In reality, the too restricted number of examples doesn't allow any conclusion about this.

The construction of edifices, the "monuments", in memory of a historical high deed is current by the Greeks, but such witnesses are generally erected at the place self where the event took place: on a battlefield, for example, as attested by the trophies of Plateaus, Marathon, and Salamis. To put up a monument in a sacred place in memory of a historical fact, far away

⁶¹ For these offerings linked with athletics, see Pausanias, VI, 1-18. For military events: the Zeus of Plateaus (Paus. V, 23, 1), those of the Thessalians (Paus. V, 24, 2) amongst others.

⁶² Apollo of the Megarians (Paus. X, 15, 1 ; Plut., *De Pyth. or.*, 16 (402A)) ; Apollo of Salamis (Her. VIII, 151 ; Paus., X, 14, 5.).

⁶³ After having helped the Theban Epaminondas to restore the independence of the Messenians, the Argians chose to represent Heracles, hero of Thebes, and to present the mythical foundation of the dynasty of Argos at the same time. (BOMMELAER J.-F., *op. cit.*, pp. 114-115).

⁶⁴ AUDIAT J., *op. cit.*, pp. 36-42.

⁶⁵ DAUX G. et HANSEN E., *op. cit.*, pp. 155-190.

from where it happened, could appear strange, however, everything can be explained if we give the object a certain propagandist value. Indeed, the message of propaganda is all the better conveyed if it shows through a historical material witness. Such a "monument" allows showing to other cities and to each visitor, via the reminiscence of a glorious fact, the importance, the wealth or the power of the city in question. An interesting example is this of the *θησαυρός* of Sicyon in Delphi. The reason of this construction isn't mentioned by the ancient sources; on the other hand, we know that the basis of the *θησαυρός* was carried out from ruins of a *tholos* and a *monopteron*. The origin of these two edifices is certainly Sicyonian, in particular because of the used building material, an oolithic tufa extracted from the same quarry, between Corinth and Sicyon⁶⁶. The *tholos* and the *monopteron*, dated by their decoration respectively from the first quarter of the VIth century B.C. and of 560-550⁶⁷, are attributed to the Orthagorides, or even to Clisthenes himself. It is conceivable that the people of Sicyon could have accepted, or even decided to destroy the buildings symbol of the ancient tyranny in order to build a new edifice, symbol of a new phase of their history. In this point of view, the *θησαυρός* of Sicyon could be an edifice with a political value that commemorates the end of the tyranny. So, we are literally in the presence of a monument. Further, the edifice has a strong propagandist component, because it insists on the greatness of the city of Sicyon that has been able to get rid of its tyrant and to establish a democratic regime.

In this analyze of the propagandist message, François de Polignac⁶⁸, in a study that deals with the control and legitimacy of the sovereign on the archaic sanctuaries in relation with the consecration of the bronze tripod caldron, concludes: "L'apport de cet objet monumental, le plus monumental de l'époque, qu'il ait été reçu en don, gagné à des jeux funéraires, ou confectionné à dessein, laissait une trace durable et visible de la venue du donateur, et continuait en son absence à manifester son appartenance à l'élite qui visitait le sanctuaire. (...) C'est par une offrande monumentale faisant office de support de mémoire que le souvenir de ce privilège [la participation du basileus au culte] pouvait être conservée et diffusée parmi les chefs des autres régions"⁶⁹. It is clearly to note that behind

⁶⁶ LAROCHE D. et NENNA M.-D, *Le trésor de Sicyone et ses fondations*, in BCH 114, 1990, p. 270.

⁶⁷ ØSTBY E., *Delphi and Archaic Doric Architecture in the Peloponese*, in JACQUEMIN A. (éd.), *Delphes. Cent ans après la Grande Fouille. Essai de bilan*, in BCH suppl. 36, 2000, pp. 239-261, particularly pp. 248-252; BOMMELAER J.-F., op. cit., pp. 119-123.

⁶⁸ DE POLIGNAC F., *Offrandes, mémoire et compétition ritualisée dans les sanctuaires grecs à l'époque géométrique*, in HELLSTRÖM P., *Religion and Power in the Ancient Greek World*, Stockholm, 1996, pp. 59-66.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

the offering itself is hidden a message of authority. The same principle is applicable to the VIth and the Vth century B.C., even if it's no more the question here for a city to take control of the sanctuary, it is able to show its power, its wealth or to assert its identity thanks to the consecration of a "monumental" offering. This will of the dedicators is well understandable by having a look on the context in which these monuments were consecrated. With the opening of the great sanctuaries to the whole Greek world, some insular cities or some colonies wanted to asset their existence by this type of offering⁷⁰. In compensation, the already existing cities that are involved in the management of the sanctuary (as the Amphictyonic states) wanted to recall their role also by erecting imposing offerings⁷¹. Moreover, in the context of the development of the *poleis*⁷², there was a constant competition amongst the cities and although they all belong to the Greek community, each one desires to distinguish itself and forge its own identity. It's marked by the appropriation or by the creation of their own mythological origin, laws and moneys. It's noteworthy that this rivalry amongst the cities existed by the consecrated offerings in the sanctuaries. That explains the number and the wealth of the offerings, the search of an ideal location and the outcome of the artistic techniques (sculpture, melting, architecture, etc.). In the expanding Greek world since the colonizing wave, when a multitude of cities come into being, it's important to impose its existence against all the others. That's why certain offerings are to be considered, beyond their value of *ex-voto*, as monuments reflecting the existence of a city, through a historical event that could maybe only be a pretext to show its identity. Within this rivalry of appearances, the *θησαυρός* could be seen as an offering *par excellence*, the wealthiest, the most accomplished, element of piety and of propaganda. Moreover, following the example of the temple which is a divinity's residence, the *θησαυρός*, whose form is often this of a temple but with smaller dimensions, could symbolize the establishment of the city, inside the sanctuary. As if the city created its own residence in a village gathering the whole Helen community, what would tally perfectly with the most Panhellenic sanctuary that could be: Delphi. The hypothesis to make this sanctuary a replica of the Greek world has been mentioned by A. Jacquemin, but as she notices: "*L'emplacement du trésor des Corinthiens, de celui des Potidéates, s'il s'élevait sur la fondation XIII, et de celui des Clazoménien, s'il était sur la fondation XVI, inciterait à faire de l'Apollonion un microcosme grec. Cependant, l'emplacement des trésors des Athéniens, des Cnidiens*

⁷⁰ The *θησαυροί* of Olympia were almost all erected by colonies.

⁷¹ JACQUEMIN A., *Offrandes monumentales à Delphes*, (BEFAR, 304), Paris, 1999, pp. 245-247.

⁷² DE POLIGNAC F., *La naissance de la cité grecque*, Paris, 1983.

et des Thébains ruine cette théorie"⁷³. However the *θησαυρός* appears as an exclusive property of a city, of which the management is independent of the sanctuary, as claimed by Thucydide⁷⁴. This is also attested by the mention in several inscriptions, of a *neocore*, woman hired by the city, bound to the *θησαυρός* and in charge of its maintenance⁷⁵. The national identity of these edifices is claimed via a well-visible dedication, on the epistyle or on an anta, mentioning the name of the city⁷⁶. It also shown through the building material used. It's not rare, especially in Olympia, that the stone and the artisans come directly from the mother-city. This process being in contrast with every logic of saving time and money, it is to believe that the city makes it a point of honor to show its origin. This privileged status of the *θησαυρός* and the symbolism that it carries can explain why some communities made the choice to use foreign *θησαυροί*, for lack of their own, to display their own offerings: Locridian dedications in the *θησαυρός* of the Sicyonians in Olympia⁷⁷, the offering of Lysander in the *θησαυρός* of Brasidas and the Acanthians⁷⁸ in Delphi and the Roman statues put in the Delphian *θησαυρός* of *Massalia*⁷⁹ and in this of Cyrene in Olympia⁸⁰.

Conclusion

This new type of building appears during the VIIth century B.C. and flourishes in the most important extra-urban sanctuaries of Greece for the next three centuries, reflecting a new conception of the offering. By its size, its architecture, its decoration, its sacral, historical and honorific value, the *θησαυρός* imposes itself as the apogee of the monumental offerings. The here presented analysis suggests a new manner to broach the *θησαυρός*, by putting an accent on its role as a "monument" consecrated by a city and its role in a competitive politic amongst the different *poleis* where propaganda remains the best way to distinguish oneself. At the same time offering and

⁷³ JACQUEMIN A., *op. cit.*, p. 260, n. 84.

⁷⁴ Thuc., I, 121, 3.

⁷⁵ Roux G., *op. cit.*, p. 156-157.

⁷⁶ These dedications are known, by the archaeology or by literary sources, for the edifices of Cnidia and Cyrene at Delphi, Sicyona, Megara and Gelas for Olympia.

⁷⁷ Paus., VI, 19, 5-6.

⁷⁸ Plut., *Lys.*, 1, 1-3, 8 ; 2. Sparta, owning no *θησαυρός* in Delphi, Lysandre consecrated his offerings in the edifice on which the dedication mentioned the name of his ancestor, Brasidas.

⁷⁹ Paus., X, 8, 6.

⁸⁰ Paus., VI, 19, 10.

μνημεῖον, image of piety and of propaganda, the concrete establishment of this private edifice in a communitarian sanctuary symbolizes the emergence and the independence of the different *poleis* of Greece and Magna Graecia for which it is essential to show themselves before everybody's eyes and for which there's a will to arouse a feeling of recognition and respect towards the other cities. In the search of the real meaning of the *θησαυρός*, the propagandistic character is certainly an element for which one must take into account because the Greeks of the VIth and Vth century B.C. were particularly concerned about showing their greatness, especially under the tyrannical reigns, and even more when cities become autonomous.

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