

The Mysterious 3000 Talents of the First Kallias Decree

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FOR MANY PEOPLE the orthodox dating of the two Kallias Decrees (434/3 B.C.) has become an article of faith.¹ Geoffrey Woodhead lately deprecated attempts to shift what he regards as a central element in any sound reconstruction, to dislodge “so vital a piece of evidence.” He was disturbed by my persistent efforts “to bring demolition tackle to bear” on the impressive building reared by the architects of *The Athenian Tribute Lists*. Above all he feared that such demolition, if it were allowed to succeed, could only leave us with “fallen and jumbled pieces of haphazard masonry.” This reaction is entirely understandable.² But what we badly need is solid argument. Donald Bradeen typically deployed this in a vigorous counterattack on such heretics as Fornara and myself.³ More recently Meigg’s reasoned reply has also appeared.⁴ Bradeen showed conclusively that both decrees were inscribed by the same mason—a view already cautiously advocated by Pritchett, who provided some excellent new photographs of both sides of the *stele*.⁵ Were the decrees passed on the same day, as Wade-Gery insisted? Bradeen took this for granted, like most modern scholars, but Pritchett has usefully reminded us that it

¹ For a good text, commentary and defence of the orthodox dating see R. Meiggs and D. M. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Oxford 1969) [henceforth ML] 154–61, no.58 (IG I² 91/92: ATL II D1, D2). My thanks are due to the editor and his two readers for some positive criticism, which has usefully improved the presentation of my thesis.

² See *Akten des VI Internationalen Kongresses für griech. und latein. Epigraphik*, München 1972 (Munich 1973) 348.

³ D. W. Bradeen, *GRBS* 12 (1971) 469–83 [henceforth BRADEEN]. In nn.4–5 he gave the main bibliography. Rereading his article lately I realised afresh how much we have lost through his untimely death. My attempt to meet his objections is in reality a sincere tribute to his memory. For Fornara’s case (advocating Beloch’s 418/7 B.C.) see *GRBS* 11 (1970) 185–96. In *ΦΟΡΟΣ: Tribute to Benjamin Dean Meritt* (Locust Valley, N.Y. 1974) 94–97 I adduced some more evidence (from the Golden Nikai records) supporting my 422/1 B.C. Kallias dating.

⁴ *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford 1972) 519–23 and 601.

⁵ Bradeen 469f; W. K. Pritchett, *CalStClAnt* 4 (1971) 224f (see his pls. I and IV). H. T. Wade-Gery (*JHS* 51 [1931] 58) distinguished the hands and has been followed generally since.

is very far from certain.⁶ I do not want to argue this point here. Much more important issues are raised by Bradeen and Meiggs, and I shall concentrate on answering them on these.

Kallias was wholly concerned with the state of the Athenian treasuries. Firsthand evidence on part of Athena's holdings is supplied by the inventories of the three main divisions of the Parthenon. Some scholars have always insisted that these, which begin in 434/3 B.C., were specifically authorised by Kallias' second decree. That would clinch its date, and Bradeen and Meiggs both take this line.⁷ One small consideration should inspire caution. Kallias ordered all unweighed precious metal objects among the sacred treasures to be weighed. Yet the first Pronaos inventory opens with a gold ritual vessel noted as *unweighed*, and there are two further exceptions to Kallias' ruling at the head of the first Hekatompedon list.⁸ It would seem better to follow an old suggestion of Wade-Gery. Kallias had just stipulated that the moneys of Athena and the Other Gods should be banked on the right and left side of the Opisthodomos respectively. When he proceeded to order the complete weighing or counting of the separate objects, it was surely this particular accumulation that he had in mind. The other inventories may have formed the pattern for his. But this evidence in no way imposes 434/3 B.C. dating for Kallias.⁹

Though Treasurers of the Other Gods can be traced back at least to 430/29 B.C., this again proves nothing for Kallias. Some years ago I deciphered in Mystoxides' transcript of a lost Attic financial record from *ca.* 430 B.C. the intriguing phrases -⟨ι⟩αι <h>οι ἐ⟨γ> βο<λ>ῆς and -ιον τῶν ἐγ βο<λ>ῆς. Bradeen accepted this with one proviso. He tried to keep open the possibility of reading -ται and -⟨τ>ον instead. Thus supplements such as [ἐπιμελε]ταί might be envisaged.¹⁰ But the crucial *iota* looks likelier, occurring in a line where Mystoxides made a single certain, venial mistake. And *epimeletai*—or *epistatai*?—seem

⁶ Bradeen 472f (see Wade-Gery, *op.cit.* [*supra* n.5] 59): Pritchett, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 219–25. The opening of B is very mutilated; even if it *does* preserve part of the prescript, this may not be identical with that of A.

⁷ Bradeen 474f: Meiggs, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 522 and 601.

⁸ IG I² 232.6f and 256.4f (out of only four dedications). They remain unweighed throughout the records (see 232–48: 256–75).

⁹ *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 76f.

¹⁰ See H. B. Mattingly, BSA 65 (1970) 147–49 (on IG I² 310); Bradeen 479–81.

rather out of place in a document of this nature.¹¹ Bradeen was therefore even prepared to accept my [ταμ]⟨ι⟩αι and [ταμ]ιδν. But who were these treasurers from the Council, who served (if only once) as paymasters for the war alongside Athena's treasurers?¹² On Bradeen's view they would be those elective officials from the Council known for the funds of the Mother and of Apollo from IG I² 79 lines 9–12. Now the date of that decree is quite uncertain, though it probably lies within the Peloponnesian War. But the funds of these deities will hardly have been very considerable. They would be doubtless adequate for the domestic needs of the Council and its cults. But how far could they help finance the war? If we once accept ταμίαι οἱ ἐκ βουλῆς, I do not think that there is any escape this way.¹³ After all, we know that in 423/2 B.C. a board of Treasurers of the Other Gods was financing war operations together with Athena's board, that such a board functioned in 430/29 and 429/8 B.C. also, and that the Other Gods had lent over 750 talents to the Athenian state by 426/5 B.C.¹⁴ Combining all the evidence we seem to find a pre-Kallias board of treasurers such as Beloch envisaged—different in origin, in mode of selection and in number. The variation in nomenclature may be a little baffling. At one moment they would be termed 'tamiai from Council', at another 'tamiai of the Other Gods'. But there is similar variation in the title of Athena's treasurers before the war—and that no longer misleads any reputable scholar.¹⁵

¹¹ It is surely part of the state accounts from early in the Archidamian War (note the dating by prytany). See the good discussion by B. D. Meritt in *Athenian Financial Documents* (Ann Arbor 1932) 65–68 [AFD].

¹² Bradeen 480f. He followed Meritt (AFD 57f) in regarding IG I² 300, like 296 etc., as "records of money borrowed by the Athenian state from the treasurers of Athena." He therefore felt it "surprising to find other treasurers mentioned." But he very fairly stressed how hazardous such argument was with IG I² 300 so fragmentary and the line-length so uncertain: "there are just too many unknowns" (480 n.55).

¹³ See Bradeen 481f. For IG I² 79 see SEG XXII 41 (ca. 425 B.C.) and, in particular, Meritt, "Greek Historical Studies," in *Lectures in Memory of Louise Taft Semple, First Series* (Princeton 1967) 123f. Its date was immaterial for Bradeen (p.482)—"since it presupposes Treasurers of the Mother it can explain any reference to οἱ ταμίαι οἱ ἐγ βολῆς." Not if we supply dual or singular in lines 11f—[ἥταν τὸ ὅταν τὸν τῶν τῆς Μῆς]|τὸς χρημάτων αἰρῆται; he suggested this possibility himself (p.481 n.59). For ταμίαι οἱ ἐγ βουλῆς compare ἱεροποῖοι οἱ ἐγ βουλῆς from IG II² 1672 of 329/8 B.C. (lines 280, 284, 295, 299): ἱεροποῖοι κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν form their counterpart (lines 221, 251, 295 etc.), just as the treasurers of Athena would balance the Council's treasurers in Mystoxides' document.

¹⁴ See IG I² 310.1–8 (line 8 mentions the previous board) and IG I² 324.54–97 and 102–05, 119f with ML 212–17 (no.72).

¹⁵ See K. J. Beloch, *RhM* 43 (1888) 188ff, and *Griechische Geschichte*² II.2 (Strassburg 1916)

The real stumbling-block against dating Kallias 422/1 B.C. remains, the 3000 talents which were taken up to Athena shortly before he proposed his decrees. Most people cannot believe that Athens could have found so much money for the goddess at that low financial point after an exhausting war. Wade-Gery's theory of a 'Sinking Fund' was an interesting expedient, but even its author had soon to abandon it as too modern and unrealistic.¹⁶

The first point to note is that 'transfer' is a better translation of Kallias' verb ἀναφέρειν than either 'give' or 'repay'. Bradeen seized this excellently.¹⁷ So also long ago did Gomme, who argued that in 434/3 B.C. 3000 talents was 'transferred' from the state treasury in the lower town to Athena on the Acropolis.¹⁸ The ATL editors, who disagreed profoundly with Gomme, made their own valuable contribution to the debate by suggesting the idea of a steady annual accumulation of the 3000 talents rather than a single massive transaction. In their view 200 talents was regularly 'set aside' for Athena

347f (on D1 13–22): Meritt, *AFD* 30–32 (Athena's *tamiai*). For judicious discussion of Beloch's view in the light of our fuller evidence see Bradeen 476–78. Fornara (*op.cit.* [*supra* n.3] 191–94) tried to maintain Beloch's Kallias dating (418/7 B.C.) despite the fact that *IG I²* 370.7–17 shows a ten-man Kallias type of board in 421/0 B.C. Wesley Thompson argued the orthodox case well in *ClMed* 28 (1967) 219–21, arguing that the board of 429/8 B.C. was probably depleted because of the plague and that the 'present treasurers' of D1 18–24 were in fact the treasurers of Athena. His attempted *reductio ad absurdum* of the concept of a pre- and post-Kallias board for the Other Gods, however, will not work. "This hypothetical alteration in the numbers of the treasurers," he writes, "was accomplished by a masterpiece of misdirection: the clause which supposedly ordains this change does not mention numbers at all." On the contrary, by stipulating choice by lot on the pattern of Athena's treasurers, Kallias was defining their number as ten and their distribution as one to each tribe. Thus we find them in *IG I²* 370.7ff (421/0 B.C.). The 'treasurers from Council' would be elected (like those others in *IG I²* 79.9–12), five in number—as in 429/8 B.C. (on this I find Thompson [p.220 with n.16] convincing)—and *not* tribal representatives. This pre-Kallias board (on my view) also controlled actual cash in Athens and not just the central records of treasure still dispersed. Meiggs rather misunderstood my position in *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 521–23. See my latest and clearer treatment in *op.cit.* (*supra* n.3) 96f. The treasure of the Other Gods was first assembled in summer 431 B.C. (some months after Perikles' famous financial statement), at the time of the evacuation of Athens. In 422/1 B.C. this central treasury was swollen by most of the funds and precious objects that had been left under local control in 431 B.C. The board of management was reorganised and the Opisthodomos became the central bank both for Athena and the Other Gods.

¹⁶ See Wade-Gery, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 70f, and *JHS* 53 (1933) 135; *ATL* III 326–48; A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* III (Oxford 1956) 687–89; *ML* 214–17, no.72; Meiggs, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 523.

¹⁷ Bradeen 478f (citing other scholars).

¹⁸ *Historia* 2 (1953/54) 12–21; *op.cit.* (*supra* n.16) II 31f.

from 449 to 434 B.C.¹⁹ These two points can now be applied to the 420s rather than the 430s.

The main foreign revenue of Athens in the Archidamian War was still—and indeed increasingly—the allied tribute. Much of it was regularly remitted to Athena's treasurers for banking.²⁰ But there were other revenues. The Samian war indemnity was still being paid off in 426/5 B.C. In that year Kleonymos specifically applied his strict financial regulations to that money, the indemnity now being paid by Thera and similar additional obligations of other allies.²¹ Samos paid no tribute, but Thera is thought to have been saddled with both indemnity and tribute. This would neatly illustrate Diodotos' point in the Mytilenean debate that, if the Athenians were sensible, they could recover allies after revolt in a fit state to pay back the costs of their suppression *and* meet demands for tribute.²² Gomme thought that the Samian indemnity might all have been paid back before war broke out. There is something in this idea, but unfortunately it will not square with Kleonymos' decree. If Samos were required to repay 80 talents a year, however—a not unreasonable figure—the indemnity could have been cleared within fifteen years. It amounted to some 1200 talents. Certainly by far the greater part, on any reckoning, should have been settled by 422/1 B.C.²³ Byzantion had had to find a much smaller sum than Samos as its indemnity (*ca* 130 talents?) and had probably paid up well before Thera started. Thera was still neutral in spring 431 B.C. but must have been forced into the Athenian

¹⁹ ATL III 281 and 327f. The editors followed G. E. Stevenson (*JHS* 44 [1924] 1–9) in arguing that there were no sums worth mention in the public treasury after 449 B.C. Bannier had earlier argued that Kallias' perfect tense (*ἀνετέλεγκται*) implied a process completed over a period of time (*RhM* 75 [1926] 186 n.1).

²⁰ See ATL III 327–32 and Gomme, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.16) II 17–22 and III 687–89.

²¹ See ATL III D 8.20–24 (*IG* I² 65+) as republished in ML 185 (no.68), with a new fragment promptly made known by Meritt (*AJP* 88 [1967] 29–32). I accept Meritt's [*πλ*]έν τῆς αἰρέσεως | [*τ*]ὸν ἀνδρῶν in lines 22f: Samos, Thera and others indebted to Athens would not have to elect collectors for these moneys, since they were not assimilated to tribute.

²² See ATL II List 26, col. iii 22 (?) with A 9 col. i 68 and ATL III 334f (Thera) and Thuc. 3.46.2. Thera was certainly assessed in 425/4 B.C., for 5 talents: the indemnity was, however, perhaps cleared by then.

²³ See Gomme, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.16) II 17f and 33; Diod. 12.27.2 (Perikles' 80 talents from Samos in 441/0 B.C.) with E. Cavaignac, *Études sur l'histoire financière d'Athènes* (Paris 1908) 95; ATL III 327 n.7 and 334f (50 talents a year over 26 years). Later payments involving Samos (*IG* I² 324 [ML no.72] 42 and 302, 18f with 297.16) should probably be divorced from the Samian indemnity: I agree with Gomme here. This is clearly true of those 'Samian' payments recorded in *IG* I² 304 A (ML no.84) 18f and 34. See now on these the good treatment by Wesley Thompson in *op.cit.* (*supra* n.15) 229f.

alliance early in the war. Comparison with Byzantion suggests a very modest indemnity. The island was in 425/4 B.C. assessed for only five talents tribute.²⁴ These indemnities do not seem to have gone into the same fund as the tribute itself. No 'banking charge' was levied on them for Athena, and Kleonymos' decree surely confirms that they were kept separate.²⁵

Nor were they the only extra Athenian revenue from the area of the Empire.²⁶ Amphipolis probably sent valuable revenue to Athens, as well as ships-timber, in the period from 437/6 to 424 B.C. Even if we assume that bullion and money were physically retained at Amphipolis or Eion, they were presumably 'booked' in Athens and removed thither after Brasidas took Amphipolis and dangerously isolated its port. Just so, precious Athenian manpower was evacuated from Amphipolis under agreement with the enemy.²⁷

Gomme was perhaps wrong only in arguing that the 'transfer' of the 3000 talents was made in 434/3 B.C. On his view the public treasury of Athens was then left virtually empty.²⁸ At least he recognised the continued existence of this treasury alongside Athena's central bank well after 449 B.C. The *ATL* editors came to deny it, but the mention of τὸ δημόσιον in relation to debts and fines in the first Methone Decree and Thoudippos' Reassessment arrangements is awkward for their view. They rather begged the question in glossing this as "the profane funds stored on the Acropolis."²⁹ War indemnities and Amphipolis revenues, I submit, were paid in to the public treasury in the 420s and banked somewhere in the lower town.³⁰

²⁴ See Meritt, *AFD* 46 and *ML* 150f (no.55) for Byzantion; Thuc. 2.9.4 and *ATL* II A 9 col. i 68 for Thera.

²⁵ Samos' name never appears in any Quota List, not even in a special category, nor in an Assessment. For Samos in *D* 8 see my n.21.

²⁶ See Gomme's very good discussion of Thucydides' '600 talents of *phoros*' (2.13.3) in *op.cit.* (*supra* n.16) II 17–19.

²⁷ See Thuc. 4.105–08; Gomme, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.16) III 578–88; *ATL* III 332–37.

²⁸ *op.cit.* (*supra* n.16) II 31–33.

²⁹ See *ATL* III 337f and II *D* 3.9ff (*IG* I² 57); *ATL* II A 9.28–31.

³⁰ The Samian War was surely financed from a recognised confederate reserve fund held by Athena on the Acropolis, not from Athena's own money (as *ATL* III 327 and 334f). See on this point Gomme, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.16) II 21 and 31–33. The main evidence is *IG* I² 293 (*ML* 149ff, no.55), on which see Meritt, *AFD* 42–48. Athens surely felt committed to restoring the reserve, through the indemnity; but it was not a debt to Athens and so free of interest (unlike the loans from 433/2 B.C. on, as Gomme noted on p.26). The installments could either have been handed over to Athena piecemeal or banked until the total had been reached. I submit that the Athenians chose the second course and—unlike Gomme—believe that the total was not reached until some years after 431 B.C. (see *supra* n.23).

When peace with the Peloponnesians was being concluded in 422/1 B.C., almost all these accumulated funds will have been moved up to the Acropolis in a heroic effort to recreate the great central reserve protected by Athena. They can hardly have amounted to 3000 talents on the most optimistic estimate. Yet they would not have fallen short of 2000 talents.³¹ It is not difficult to envisage how the balance may have been found. Kallias defines the 3000 talents as being *all* Athenian currency. Now as late as 429/8 B.C. the consolidated treasury of the Other Gods contained precious metal and much foreign coinage. Athena's treasury was presumably still similarly mixed. We need then assume only that in 422/1 B.C. the people decided to replace at least the foreign silver currency with good Athenian coin. This replacement could alone have entailed 'taking up' to the Acropolis a few hundred talents.³² Finally we should not rule out a further distinct possibility. The Athenians might have been able to spare as much as 1000 talents from their greatly increased tribute as a first installment towards repaying their debts to Athena. The *ATL* editors themselves suggested that this *could* have been done by the Panathenaia of 421 B.C., and I have elsewhere argued that their estimates of the funds available tended to be too low.³³

³¹ The Samian indemnity amounted to more than 1276 T, the Byzantine to over 128 T. See Meritt's interpretation of *IG I²* 293.6–17 and 1–5 (*AFD* 42–48) and the good discussion in *ML* 151. They account alone for *ca* 1500 T. We must add the Amphipolis 'balance', miscellaneous allied indebtedness (*ATL* II D 3.9–16), rents from sacred *temene* and Athenian public land in the empire, etc.

³² On this and the mixed character of the Athenian funds *ca* 430 B.C. see my earlier treatment in *BCH* 92 (1968) 462f and Wesley Thompson's acute study of *IG I²* 310 and 302 in *op.cit.* (*supra* n.15) 224–26. I accept his view (p.226) that "the accounting method employed in *IG I²*, 310 does not show whether or not the foreign silver was still acceptable as currency in 429/8." I was too dogmatic in *ProcAfrCA* 7 (1964) 48. The vital point is that the treasuries still had considerable foreign coinage in the early 420s, whatever its legal status.

³³ See *ATL* III 354f and my argument in *BCH* 92 (1968) 463f and 470 (Kallias Decree voted close to the Dionysia of 421 B.C.?). If the Dionysia were imminent when the 3000 talents were 'carried up', the bulk of current tribute could have been earmarked to this end. Meiggs (*op.cit.* [*supra* n.4] 523) reasonably objected to my calculations in *BCH* that "There remains a considerable gap." If my thesis on Samos (no more than an adaptation of Gomme's, really) may be accepted, the gap is filled. I am glad that Bradeen (p.473 n.21) finally disposed of the chance "of the Athenians having either 1200 or 200 talents to pay to the Other Gods," which Fornara canvassed in *op.cit.* (*supra* n.3) 193. I had tried the supplement [μεχ|ρὶ τὸν χιλ|ε]ο]ν διακοσίον τα[λάντο]ν in D 2.21f (*ProcAfrCA* 7 [1964] 41), though I abandoned it in *BCH* 92 (1968) 464. Bradeen rightly insisted that in the fifth century such composite numbers would be linked with καί, the *smaller* coming first. The total of 3200 talents is manageable in 422/1 B.C. and the 200 talents—as opposed to some 800 talents actual indebtedness—can be explained, as I have tried in *BCH* and elsewhere.

The stumbling block appears to have been removed. No other orthodox argument is as strong as this one. Indeed one argument on the other side looks to me stronger than ever. Since the second Kallias Decree demanded a vote of *adeia* before any considerable expenditure from Athena's funds, I had argued that we should expect to find it—on the orthodox dating—in the state accounts of 433/2 and 432/1 B.C. In fact it is *not* found in 433/2 B.C., and its apparent presence in IG I² 296.5 is solely due to restoration, which may here be mistaken.³⁴ Now Wesley Thompson has claimed that the *adeia* formula was “the rule and not the exception” from 433/2 B.C. onwards, since it is definitely missing in only one of the early accounts. This has a certain persuasiveness, but I think that it is altogether safer to base oneself firmly on the known facts.³⁵ The *adeia* formula first appears for certain in the accounts of 418/7 B.C. It may be surprising that it does not appear with the first payment that year and *can* be omitted hereafter. We must not hope to understand everything, however, and dating Kallias 422/1 B.C. creates no real problem.³⁶

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³⁴ See my case in *ProcAfrCA* 7 (1964) 40 and *BCH* 92 (1968) 450f. Meritt also restored the *adeia* formula in his revised text of IG I² 296 (AFD 80).

³⁵ See Thompson, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.15) 221–23.

³⁶ For the odd incidence of *adeia* annotation in the accounts of 418/7 to 415/4 B.C. see ML 160 and 234; Thompson, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.15) 221–23; Meiggs, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 519.