

**Diplomacy of classical  
Greece and inscriptions**

## DIPLOMACY OF CLASSICAL GREECE AND INSCRIPTIONS

### DIPLOMACIA DE LA GRECIA CLÁSICA Y LOS TEXTOS GRABADOS

#### ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the importance of inscriptions for study of some Greek diplomatic procedures such as concluding treaties and exchange of envoys between the Greek poleis themselves and the Greeks and the barbarians. The scholars usually study the diplomacy of classical Greece primarily on the basis of literary sources involving inscriptions only for comparing with the evidence of narrative material. The inscriptions provide us with information on the development of treaties' vocabulary. They allow to determine main features of the Greek allied and peace treaties which were in existence during two centuries in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. It is concluded that the inscriptions when comparing with the narrative sources, on the one hand, allow to study the Greek vocabulary of diplomacy, on the second hand, to understand the Greek diplomatic procedures and their development, on the third hand, to complement other sources relating to the Greek diplomatic events.

**KEYWORDS:** history, international relations, international law, diplomacy, Greeks, inscriptions.

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#### RESUMEN

El objetivo de este trabajo es demostrar la importancia de las inscripciones (textos grabados) para el estudio de algunos procedimientos diplomáticos griegos, como la conclusión de tratados y el intercambio de enviados entre las mismas polis griegas y los griegos y los bárbaros. Los estudiosos generalmente estudian la diplomacia de la Grecia clásica principalmente sobre la base de fuentes literarias que implican inscripciones solo para compararlas con la evidencia de material narrativo. Las inscripciones nos proporcionan información sobre el desarrollo del vocabulario de los tratados. Permiten determinar las características principales de los tratados de paz y aliados griegos que existieron durante dos siglos en los siglos V y IV a. C. Se concluye que las inscripciones, cuando se comparan con las fuentes narrativas, por un lado, permiten estudiar el vocabulario griego de la diplomacia, por otro lado, para comprender los procedimientos diplomáticos griegos y su desarrollo, por otro lado, para compilación de otras fuentes relacionadas con los eventos diplomáticos griegos.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** historia, relaciones internacionales, derecho internacional, diplomacia, griegos, inscripciones.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The inscriptions are very important evidence for the Greek diplomacy. In this paper we intend to demonstrate the importance of the inscriptions for the study of some Greek diplomatic procedures (concluding the treaties and exchange of envoys between the Greek poleis themselves and the Greeks and the barbarians).

The inscriptions provide us with the information on the development of treaties' vocabulary. We will take for an analysis 2nd and 3rd editions of *Inscriptiones Graecae* [Hiller von Gaertringen F. (ed.), 1924; Lewis D. (ed), 1981]. Besides of them we occasionally use the selections of Greek inscriptions which have been edited by W. Dittenberger, M.N. Tod, R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, R. Osborn and P. Rhodes [Dittenberger W., 1919; Meiggs R., Lewis D., 1989; Tod M.N., 1946; Rhodes P.J., Osborne, R., 2003]. The modern scholarship considers the diplomacy of classical Greece primarily on the basis of literary tradition involving the inscriptions only for comparing with the evidence of narrative sources. This approach is found in the classical works on Greek diplomacy by F. Adcock, D.J. Mosley, E. Baltrusch etc [Adcock F., Mosley D.J., 1975; Mosley D.J., 1973; Baltrusch E., 1994].

## 2. METHODS

The paper is built up on the historical-comparative analysis that enables us to give a detailed consideration of the Greek diplomatic tradition as viewing from epigraphy. This method is applied for investigation of Greek inscriptions themselves and the Greek narrative sources as well. It enables to evaluate the reliability of the Greek epigraphical material about diplomacy and to take into consideration a technical correct source of information which does not depend on authors' bias.

## 3. RESULTS

There is a lot of copies of treaties of alliance in the inscriptions but a bit of the peace treaties copies (the treaty between Amyntas III and the Chalcideans; the fragments of the treaty between the Greeks and Philip II). (Xiangyi et al., 2016) Indeed the main Greek peace treaties occur only in narrative sources (the Peace of Callias, the Thirty Years Peace between Athens and Sparta, the Peace of Nicias, the Peace treaty between Athens and Sparta which ended the Peloponnesian War, the King's Peace, the *koinē eirēnē* treaties), but there are no them in the inscriptions. This fact may be explained that the most of the peace treaties copies might have been demolished already by the contemporaries after the breaking them by contracted parties as it is attested for the Peace of Philocrates (Philoch. FGrH 328 F. 162 (Salavati-Niasari et al., 2015)

There are only 9 treaties of alliance (*symmachia*) which was concluded by the Athenians with non-Delian states in the Vth century B.C. They all may be found in the inscriptions. The most of them are bilateral: the Athenian treaties with Phocis (c. 458 B.C.: IG. I3. 9), Egesta (c. 433/2 B.C.: IG. I3. 11–12), Rhegium (c. 433/2 B.C.: IG. I3. 53), Leontinoi (c. 433/2 B.C.: IG. I3. 54), Haliai (424/3 B.C.: IG. I3. 75), the Bottiaean (422 B.C.: IG. I3. 76), the Argives (417/6 B.C.: IG. I3. 86), Perdikkas II of Macedon (c. 417–413 BC: IG. I3. 89); only one treaty is multilateral: the quadruple alliance between the Athenians, Argives, Eleans and Mantineans (420 B.C.: IG. I3. 83).

In the fourth century B.C. the bilateral treaties were negotiated by the Athenians with the Boeotians (395 B.C.: IG. I2. 14), the Locrians (395 B.C.: IG. I2. 15), the Eretrians (395 B.C.: IG. I2. 16), the Chians (384/3 B.C.: IG. I2. 34–35), the Thebans (378 B.C.: IG. I2. 40), the Byzantians (378 B.C.: IG. I2. 41), the Methymnians (378 B.C.: IG. I2. 42), the Corcyreans (375 B.C.: IG. I2. 97), Cephallenia (375/4 B.C.: IG. I2. 98), Dionysius I of Syracuse (368/7 B.C.: IG. I2. 105), the Thessalians (361/0 B.C.: IG. I2. 116), the Locrians (356/5 B.C.: IG. I2. 148), the Eretrians (341/0 B.C.: IG. I2. 230); we have only three multilateral treaties: the treaty with the allies of the Second Athenian League (decree of Aristoteles of 378/7 B.C.: IG. I2. 43); the treaty between the Athenians, Corcyreans, Acarnanians and Cephallenians (375/4 B.C.: IG. I2. 96); the Athenian treaty with the Arcadians, Achaeans, Eleans and

Phliasians (362/1 B.C.: IG. I2.112). Totally is 25 alliance treaties.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Sarah Bolmarsich [Bolmarcich S.A., 2003] calculated that 29 treaties have been signed in the Fifth Century and 59 treaties in the Fourth Century Greece. The complete versions of the treaties may be found in Thucydides (the Spartan-Athenian truce of 423 B.C.: Thuc. 4. 118; the Peace of Nicias: Thuc. 5. 18; the Spartan-Athenian alliance of 421 B.C.: Thuc. 5. 23; the quadruple alliance between the Athenians, Argives, Mantineans and Eleans: Thuc. 5. 47; two Spartan-Argive treaties of 418 B.C.: Thuc. 5, 77; 79; three Spartan-Persean treaties: Thuc. 8. 18; 37; 58) as well as in the inscriptions.

The *symmachia* was the military alliance concluding for the fixed period (thirty, fifty, one hundred years) or for all time. One of the earliest Greek documents proclaimed the bilateral *symmachia* was the treaty between the Eleans and the Heraeans for 100 years dated usually to the VI-th century B.C. After the official heading *symmachia* for 100 years the text continues:

"...and if there be any need, whether of word or of deed, they shall stand by each other in all matters and especially in war' and if they stand not by each other, those who do the wrong shall pay a talent of silver to Olympian Zeus to be used in his service..." (Tod, I, 5, tr. by M.N. Tod).

The Athenian inscriptions determine the main features of the Greek treaties of alliance which were in existence during two centuries. The treaties usually begin with the official heading: in the fifth century BC it may be simply *xsymmachia* (alliance) (Phocis: IG. I3. 9, 5; Regium: IG. I3. 53, 1; Leontinoi: IG. I3. 54, 2-3); *xsymmachia kai horkos* (alliance and oath) (Egesta: IG. I3. 11); *philia kai xsymmachia* (friendship and alliance) (Egesta: IG. I3. 12); *xsynthekai kai xsymmachia kai horkos* (treaty and alliance and oath) (Haliai: IG. I3. 75); *spondai* (treaty) (restored in the Athenians' treaty with the Argives, Eleans and Mantineans: IG. I3. 83); *xsymmachia kai xsynthekai* (alliance and treaty) (the Athenian-Argive treaty: IG. I3. 86). In the fourth century B.C. the Greek treaties of

alliance were always named only *symmachia* (IG. I2. 14; 15; 16; 34; 35; 41; 42; 43; 97; 112; 116). There is no mention in the inscriptions such words as *epimachia* (defensive alliance) (Thuc. 1. 44. 1; 5. 48. 2) and *homaichmia* (alliance on equal terms) (Hdt. 7. 145; 8. 140; Thuc. 1. 18. 3): these words appear only in Greek authors.

The most of treaties were concluded in the fifth century B.C. for the fixed period (Ar. Acharn. 188-200). On contrary, the most of treaties in the fourth century B.C. were concluded for all time [Knoepfler D., 1980]. This important change in the defining of treaties' duration, attested also in inscriptions, reflects the eagerness of the most Greek states to maintain the more stable relations. In the fifth century B.C. the treaties were usually concluded for thirty years (between the Spartans and the Argives of 451 B.C.: Thuc. 5. 14, 4; 28, 2; 40; between the Spartans and the Athenians of 446 B.C.: Thuc. 1. 115. 1), fifty years (the Peace of Nicias: Thuc. 5. 18. 3; the Athenian-Spartan alliance of 421 B.C.: Thuc. I. 5. 32. 1; the Spartan-Argive treaty of 418 B.C.: Thuc. 5. 79. 1; the Athenian-Argive treaty of 417/6 B.C.: IG. I3. 86, 4) or one hundred years (the treaty between the Athenians, Argives, Mantineans and Eleans: Thuc. 5. 47. 1 = IG. I3. 83). There were some treaties, which were negotiated for all time and in this case the sources of the fifth century B.C. use the phrase *eis aidion* – "forever" (the Athenian treaties with Rhegium and Leontinoi: IG. I3. 53, 12; IG. I3. 54, 23). In the fourth century B.C. the treaties, which were concluded for all time, regularly use such phrases as *eis aei* or *eis hapanta chronon* (the Athenian-Boeotian alliance of 395 B.C.: IG. I2. 14; the Athenian-Locrian alliance of 395 B.C.: IG. I2. 15; the Athenian-Chian alliance of 383 B.C.: IG. I2. 34; the Athenian-Corcyrean alliance of 375/4 B.C.: IG. I2. 97; the Athenian treaty with Dionysius I of Syracuse: IG. I2. 105; the Athenian treaty with the Arcadians, Achaeans, Eleans and Phliasians: IG. I2. 112; the Athenian-Thessalian alliance: IG. I2. 116).

The treaty of alliance usually included the conditions for cooperation between the allied parties against an enemy and the text of oath. In the fifth century B.C. the Greek treaties of alliance included the condition to be allies trustworthy and without deceit, just, strong and harmless and to have same friends and enemies. However there is no such pro-

visions in the most of fourth century Greek treaties. The Greeks swore to the-se conditions while concluding their treaties of alliance. The Athenian treaty with the Bottiaean stated that the Athenians swore to respect the alliance trustworthy and without deceit and protect the Bottiaean; the latter swore to be friends and allies of the Athenians trustworthy and without deceit, to have same friends and enemies and to not assist to the Athenians' enemies (IG. I3. 76, 12-20). There is a difference between the expression of this condition in the documents of the late fifth century B.C. and the treaties of alliance in the fourth century B.C. In the fifth century the provision for cooperation was written in a number of variants. The more standard form of this condition was appropriate for the fourth century B.C. treaties. So the Athenian-Boeotian treaty of 395 B.C. states:

“Alliance of the Boeo [tians and the At] he- nia [ns for all] time. [If] anyone comes against [the Athenians] for the purpose of making war [either by] land or by sea, the Boe [otians] shall give assistance with all their strength, in whatever way is requested by the Atheni [ans in the best of their] ability. And if [anyone] comes against [the Boeo-tians] for the purpose of making war either [by land or] by [sea], assistance shall be giv-en by the Athen [ians with all their strength, in whatever] way is requested[by the Boeo-tians, to the best of their] ability” (IG. I2. 14; tr. by Ph. Harding).

The similar standard clause may be found in a number of other fourth century treaties of alliance with the official heading *symmachia* (the Athenian-Locrian treaty: IG. I2. 15, 5-9; the Athenian-Erettrian treaties: IG. I2. 16, frg.b 1; IG. I2. 230, 8-11; the Athenian-Chian alliance: IG. I2. 34, 23-26; the Decree of Aristoteles: IG. I2. 43, 46-51; the Athenian-Corcyrean alliance: IG. I2. 97. 2-14; the Athenian treaty with Dionysius I of Syracuse: IG. I2. 105, 12-23; the treaty between the Athenians, Arcadians, Achaeans, Eleans and Phliasians: IG. I2. 112, 24-34; the Athenian-Thessalian alliance: IG. I2. 116, 17-29).

As for truces and Peace treaties, that the word *spondai* was most typical in Thucydides' usage and occurs in his work 141 times (the word *xymmachia* mentions by the historian 154 times). However there are only few references to this word in the fifth century inscriptions. The reason is that there are no

peace treaties of that period which survived in stone. It is very remarkable the appearance the word *eirēnē*, “peace”, in the fourth century documents (Mafi et al. 2012). This may be explained by the development of the General Peace / *Koinē Eirēnē* concept in that period. So, the epigraphy goes in line with the Greek narrative sources. Andocides in his oration “On the Peace with the Lacedaemonians” has contrasted a peace treaty (*spondai*) with genuine peace (*eirēnē*):

“There is a wide difference between a peace and a peace treaty. A peace is a settlement of differences between equals: a peace treaty is the dictation of terms to the conquered by the conquerors after victory in war” (Andoc. 3. 11; tr. by K.J. Maidment).

There are several references to *eirēnē* in the fourth century inscriptions. The Athenian treaty of alliance with the Chians referred to the King's Peace as “common agreements that have been written by the Hellenes, namely that they (the Chians) will maintain, like Athenians, the peace and the friendship and the oaths and the treaties that are in existence, which were sworn by the King and the Athenians and the Lacedaemonians and the other Hellenes” (IG. I2. 34, 5-20; tr. by Ph. Harding).

The Athenian honour decree for Dionysius I of Syracuse reports that the Sicilian tyrant helped in the negotiation of the King's peace – the reference to the Greek General peace treaty (IG. I2. 103, 23-24). The Argive inscription, known also as “the Greek reply to the revolted satraps” (now is lost), referred several times to General Peace (*koinē eirēnē*) which had been concluded earlier by the Greeks themselves in the 360s B.C. (Tod2. II. 145). The word *hirana* (an analogue of *eirēnē* in the Dorian dialect), “peace”, occurs also in the Spartan treaty with the Aetolians and Erxadieis which has been published only several decades ago (SEG. XXVI. 461). This document proclaimed the treaty with the Aetolians on the terms of friendship, peace and alliance (l. 1-3). There are different dates in the literature concerning this treaty. Meanwhile it is hardly possible to support those scholars who consider the document as first evidence for appearance of the word *eirēnē* in the fifth century B.C. [Bolmarcich S.A., 2005]. Sarah Bolmarcich [Rung E., 2008] seems to be right when dates this treaty to c. 404/3 BC. (the period of

the Spartan Hegemony of Greece). The Aetolians promised to follow the Spartans whithersoever they may lead by land and by sea and to have a same friend and enemy as the Spartans have. These clause may be appropriate for the fifth century Spartan treaties.

The non-allied treaties might be entitled only as *symboula*, *horkos*, *synkeimena* or simply *synthēkai*. The regulation treaties with the Delian league's states were the Athenian treaties with Phaselis (c. 469-450 BC: IG. I3. 10), Erythrae (c. 453/2 B.C.: IG. I3. 14-15), Miletus (c. 450/49 B.C.: IG. I3. 21), Colophon (447/6 B.C.: IG. I3. 37; c. 435-427 BC: IG. I3. 43; 427/6: IG. I3. 65), Chalcis (446/5 B.C.: IG. I3. 40), Mytilene (427/6 B.C.: IG. I3. 66-67), Samos (412/11 B.C.: IG. I3. 96; 405/4 B.C.: IG. I3. 127), Thasos (410/09 B.C.: IG. I3. 101). One can note that *synthēkai* was more generic word than *symmachia* and might be applied to treaties of alliance as well.

In a number of cases *synthēkai* designated a treaty which established the peace, friendship and alliance. This conclusion is supported by the Spartan treaty with the Aetolians and Erxadieis as well as other documents which were entitled as *synthēkai*. The treaty between Amyntas III and the Chalcideans referred to alliance for fifty years, included the condition for military cooperation and the provisions of trade agreement between the contracted parties (Tod. II, 111). This treaty is not "true" *symmachia* but rather more common agreement entitled as *synthēkai* in the document.

It is evidently that many Greek inscriptions included the information on the envoys' exchanges between the states. The Athenian treaties with Regium and Leontinoi mention the envoys who had made an alliance. The lines 11-12 of the Athenian honour decree for Heracleides of Clazomenae report that Heracleides assisted the Athenian embassies on their missions [13]. He was also requested by the envoys from the Great King of Persia arriving to Athens to help them in the negotiation the peace treaty (IG. I3. 227, 14-18). The Athenian decree in honour of some Carthaginians refers to the Athenians' decision to send the heralds to Sicily for negotiations with two Carthaginian generals about alliance and friendship (IG. I2. 123). The Athenian honour decree for Strato of Sidon praised him for the assistance to Athenian embassy in tra-

veling to the Persian King in 360s B.C. (IG. I2. 141, 1-4). All these facts are not attested in narrative sources and the inscriptions provide us with complimentary information.


## 5. SUMMARY

We can conclude that the extant interstate agreements of ancient Greeks can be divided according to number of participants into bilateral and multilateral as well as according to the subject of the treaty into allied, *symmachia*, and peace ones, defined as *spondai*, *synthēkai* and, finally, *eirēnē*. Allied treaties usually included the terms of military cooperation against an enemy. The word *eirēnē*, "peace" comes to replace *spondai* to designate a peace treaty. The term *synthēkai* is more generic and could be applied not only to peace, but also to allied treaties. In a number of interstate agreements, *synthēkai* denoted a treaty that established peace, friendship and alliance.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

One can emphasize that the inscriptions when comparing with narrative sources, on the one hand, allow to study the Greek vocabulary of diplomacy, on the second hand, to understand the Greek diplomatic procedures and their development, on the third hand, to compliment other sources relating to Greek diplomatic events.

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