

Narratives of Plunder. From Classical to Hellenistic Greece

1. 'that they had not done right in transgressing the laws of the Hellenes; for it was an established custom of them all, when invading one another's country to abstain from the sanctuaries therein.' In response, the Athenians defend themselves 'saying that they had done no injury to the temple, and would not damage it wilfully in the future' (Thuc. 4.97.2-3)
2. '[Philomelos] sent envoys to the other most distinguished cities of the Greek world, explaining that he had seized Delphi, not with any designs upon its sacred properties but to assert a claim to the guardianship of the sanctuary; for this guardianship had been ordained in early times as belonging to the Phocians. He said he would render due account of the property to all the Greeks and expressed himself as ready to report the weight and the number of the dedications to all who wished an examination.' (D.S. 16.27-3-4)
3. 'Finally more than six thousand of the Phocians and mercenaries were slain, and among them the general himself; and no less than three thousand were taken captives. Philip hanged Onomarchus; the rest he threw into the sea as temple-robbers (ἱεροσύλους).' (D.S. 16.35.6)
4. '... an investigation into the sacred property took place and the Phocians called upon those who had administered it to render an accounting. The man who had been in charge of most of it was Philon. Since he was unable to render a proper accounting, he was adjudged guilty, and after being tortured by the generals disclosed the names of his accomplices in the theft, while he himself, after being subjected to the utmost torments, obtained the kind of death that suited his impiety. Those who had diverted the properties to their own use restored whatever balance they still possessed of the stolen property and were themselves put to death as temple-robbers. Of the generals who had been in office previously, the first to hold the office, Philomelos, had kept his hands off the dedications, but the second, named Onomarchos, brother of Philomelos, squandered much of the god's money, while the third, Phayllus, the brother of Onomarchos, when he became general, struck into coin a large number of the dedications in order to pay the mercenaries. For he coined for currency one hundred twenty gold bricks which had been dedicated by Croesus king of the Lydians weighing two talents each, and three hundred sixty golden goblets weighing two minae each, and golden statues of a lion and of a woman, weighing in all thirty talents of gold, so that the sum total of gold that was coined into money, referred to the standard of silver, is found to be 4,000 talents, while of the silver offerings, those dedicated by Croesus and all the others, all three generals had spent more than 6,000 talents' worth, and if to these were added the gold dedications, the sum surpassed 10,000 talents.' (D.S. 16.56.3-6)
5. 'Arrived at the temple of Artemis, which lies between Cleitor and Cynaetha, and is regarded as inviolable by the Greeks, they threatened to plunder the cattle of the goddess and the other property round the temple. But the people of Lusi acted with great prudence: they gave the Aetolians some of the sacred furniture, and appealed to them not to commit the impiety of inflicting any outrage. The gift was accepted, and the Aetolians at once removed to Cleitor and pitched their camp under its walls.' (Plb. 4.18.10-12) and 'The Boeotians accused them of plundering the temple of Athene at Itone in time of peace' (Plb. 4.25.2)

6. 'On reaching the temple of Dodona [Dorimachus, the Aetolian *strategos*] burnt the porticoes, destroyed many of the votive offerings and demolished the sacred building, so that we may say that for the Aetolians no restrictions exist either in peace or war, but that in both circumstances they pursue their designs in defiance of the common usages and principles of mankind.' (Plb. 4.67.3-4).
7. 'Up to now all that had been done was right and fair according to the laws of war, but what shall I say of that which followed? For mindful of what the Aetolians had done at Diium and Dodona they burnt the colonnades and destroyed the rest of the rich and artistic votive offerings, some of which were most elaborate and expensive works. And not only did they damage the roofs of these buildings by the fire, but razed them to the ground.' (Plb. 5.9.1-3)
8. 'Philip left Thermum taking away everything that he could lead or carry' (Plb. 5.13.1)

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