THE DECREES OF KALLIAS

The well-known decrees of Kallias, which contain regulations not only for financial reform but also for the rehabilitation of the Acropolis, have come to be dated, by general consent, in 434/3. Dinsmoor now reopensthe question and assigns them to 438/7.¹ His arguments should be briefly examined.

(1) Dinsmoor argues that a date so late as 434/3 seems incompatible with the story of the gradual depletion of the Athenian treasury down to 431 B.C., as reported by Perikles (Thuc., II, 13, 3), and that the reserve can never have reached the Thucydidean total of 9,700 talents if the deposit of 3,000 talents mentioned in the Kallias decrees was made as late as 434.

This raises large problems of Periklean finance before the Peloponnesian War, which are difficult but are not solved by dating the Kallias decrees in 438. Dinsmoor assumes that the 3,000 talents were added to Athenian resources in one lump: this is impossible.² The payment must have been cumulative, and we are certain that, even assuming the most favorable circumstances and at whatever date we put Kallias' decrees, a total of 9,700 talents can never have been reached at any one time. Whether the alternative text of Thucydides (II, 13, 3) which is quoted by a scholiast on Aristophanes, Plutus, 1193, is to be preferred, is a question we need not determine here, but Dinsmoor's observations do not dispose of it.³ The scholion reads as follows: ὑπαρχόντων δὲ ἐν τῇ ἀκροπόλει ἀεὶ ποιεῖ ἄρρυμιν ἐπιστήμων ἐξακοσχελίων ταλάντων (τὰ γὰρ πλείστα τριακοσίων ἀποδέοντα περιεγένετο, ἀν' ὅν εἰς τὰ προπόλεα τῆς ἀκρόπολεως καὶ τάλλα οἰκονόμηματα καὶ εἰς Ποτίδαιαν ἐπανηλώθη). This gives to the grand total in the reserve an average (not a maximum) of about 6,000 talents. About 5,700 talents remained, after the expenses of the Propylaia and the other buildings and of Poteidaia had somewhat depleted it. The amount of these expenses is not defined. Presumably they were the 300 talents in addition to whatever the normal increment would have been during the period covered by the building program and the war at Poteidaia. It is therefore not a legitimate argument against it to say that it "would leave us with the preposterous result that only 300 talents were expended on the Propylaia and other buildings and (down to the time of the speech) on the siege of


² The reserve fund described by Thucydides included all moneys available to the Athenian state, so that mere transfer from one fund to another cannot either have increased or diminished the total. At no time was a sum of 3,000 talents, previously not available, suddenly made available in this reserve.

³ Dinsmoor says (loc. cit., p. 131, note 114) that the text "was garbled . . . by the mere omission of the word ὑπίρια." This is untrue: there are three other significant changes, and the resulting text gives a coherent meaning (in rather doubtful Greek) which is totally different from that of the book texts.
Potidaia all combined.” But these, at the moment, are minor matters. The main consideration is that putting the Kallias decrees in 438 does not solve the problems of Thucydides, II, 13, 3.

(2) Dinsmoor says that the Kallias decrees order the pedimental sculptures of the Parthenon to be executed according to previous vote; that it is known from the building inscriptions that expenses for carving the statues were paid out from 438/7 to 433/2; and hence it would “seem rather senseless to assume that the carving was authorized in 434 B.C. when they were already two-thirds done.”

No one except Dinsmoor claims that the Kallias decrees make this authorization. The decrees provide for the completion, not the inception, of work on the Parthenon pediments. The same is true of the Golden Nikai and of the Propylaia. These three projects were already in progress when the Kallias decrees were passed. When Kallias proposed to limit the expenditure of money on the Acropolis to ten talents a year, by way of preamble he exempted from the limitation the Parthenon, the Nikai, and the Propylaia. The clause is no part of the promulgation of a building program; it is a safeguarding clause, exempting from a program of retrenchment certain projects of long standing, and—so far as one could foresee at the time—projects that were nearing final completion. The Athenians were, in fact, instructed to carry on. One may believe, therefore, with Mrs. Thompson, that the Golden Nikai were authorized after the defeat of Samos in 439 or when artisans were free to work on them after the dedication of the Parthenon in 438; and no one will deny that the Propylaia were

4 The verb ἐκποιέω is restored in lines 2 and 4, but there is general agreement about the desirability of this supplement. A locus classicus for the meaning of ἐκποιέω is Herodotos, II, 125, where the building of the great pyramid of Cheops is described: ἐκποιήθη δ' ὑπὸ τὰ ἀνώτατα αὐτῆς πρῶτα, μετὰ δὲ τὰ ἐχόμενα τούτων ἐκποίησε, τελευταία δὲ αὐτῆς τὰ ἐπέγαμα καὶ τὰ κατοίκησιν ἐκποίησαν. As applied to the buildings on the Acropolis this meaning suits neither Dinsmoor’s date nor his interpretation of the Kallias decrees, and the reference shows clearly that the verb means to finish, not to start, a building. The same meaning is obvious elsewhere, and particularly in the building inscriptions of the Erechtheion (cf. I.G., I², p. 351, s. v. ἐκποιέω). It is true that in lines 3-4 Dinsmoor suggests Προ[πίλαις] ἡνὸς ἀν ὀικοδομ. ἐθεῖ ταντελός (loc. cit., p. 134), and so perhaps proposes to exclude ἐκποιέω altogether (is this the one detail to which he refers in his note 88?), but this is not a seriously feasible supplement. Other supplements are no doubt possible, but in our belief ταντελός is not a word which is likely to be used until a work is getting toward completion.

5 Dinsmoor again argues (loc. cit., p. 133) that the Kallias decrees should be dated in 438 because, “just as in the case of the pedimental statues of the Parthenon, it would seem superfluous to have authorized the execution of the Propylaia as late as 434 B.C., when the work was three-fifths done.” Kallias does not authorize its “execution”: he tolerates its completion as an exception to his general economies. There is not the slightest reason for those who favor 434 to postulate “an interruption, temporary abandonment, and resumption of the work under a new contract in 434 B.C.” (loc. cit., p. 133, note 129).

6 Dinsmoor assumes that the previous votes with more details may have been in special decrees, of which the Kallias decrees formed the activation (loc. cit., p. 138, note 154). It is a new concept that decrees earlier passed should have to be “activated”—and in so casual a fashion—by other subsequent decrees.

7 D. B. Thompson, Hesperia, XIII, 1944, p. 176; Dinsmoor, loc. cit., p. 133.
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commenced in 437; but the only bearing of these circumstances on the date of the decrees of Kallias is that all three projects were in sight of completion in 434. Kallias did not order their inception in 438, nor, on other grounds, can one admit that the pediment sculptures for the Parthenon were authorized first at that date. The building inscriptions show that work was being done on them in 438, but the inscriptions also show payments in 439/8 for the quarrying and hauling of stone which must have been intended for the pediments. Dinsmoor has himself so interpreted these items. Hence the authorization for the pediment sculpture antedates 438 and goes back earlier than Dinsmoor’s date for the Kallias decrees. This is an additional objection to their being the original authorization, as he proposes, and indeed there is no reason to deny that the sculptures were planned at the time of the first vote on the Parthenon as a whole about 448. It would be extraordinary to think that Iktinos and Pheidias embellished the temple with frieze and metopes, finished all architectural construction, provided the magnificent cult statue of ivory and gold, and dedicated their work to Athena at the Panathenaia of 438 while still uninstructed whether they should plan for sculptured decoration in the pediments.

(3) Dinsmoor argues that the general reorganization of the Acropolis authorized in the Kallias decrees finds epigraphical confirmation in the Propylaia accounts of 437/6 and 434/3; and that hence the Kallias decrees are at least as early as 437.

He restores (loc. cit., p. 134) two items of expense in the building records of the Propylaia as follows: (a) ἀνέφη τὸν [ἐργον ἐς τὸ Προπύλαιον], and (b) [ἐς τήν ἀκρό]:πολιν ἀνέφη τὸν ὅν (ἐργον) ἐς τὰ Π]ροπύλαια. These items should, in our judgment, be restored so as to include the word μωσθομάτων from the previous line. We shall then read in 437/6 μωσθομᾶ[τον ἐς τῆν ἀκρότολιν] ἀνέφη τὸν [ἐς τὰ Προπύλαια] and in 434/3 [μωσθομάτων]α]ν [ἐς τήν ἀκρό]:πολιν ἀνέφη τὸν ὅν ἐς τὰ Π]ροπύλαια. The word ἐργον is out of place in the first reference, and there is no need to assume that it was accidentally omitted from the second. The word ἐς which occurs twice in each item will have the same sense throughout: this final item in both years’ accounts gives “the wages” paid by the overseers of the Propylaia “for work on the Acropolis apart from those for work on the Propylaia.”

Dinsmoor has made it quite clear, from architectural and topographical considerations, that there was work done on the “landscaping” of the Acropolis in connection with both the Parthenon and the Propylaia, and that much of this work was done before 434. So reference to it in the building inscriptions is not surprising. One can

8 Except by Dinsmoor, this has been generally acknowledged.
9 I.G., Π, 347, 348.
10 Loc. cit., p. 132; also A.J.A., XXV, 1921, p. 243 (under date of 439/8): “The marble now brought to the Ergasteria is probably to be in readiness for the pediment sculptures.”
11 Plutarch, Pericles, XII, 5-6, speaks of fairly detailed advance specifications.
12 These references are to I.G., Π, 363, line 50, of 437/6, and to I.G., Π, 366, line 45, of 434/3 (plus I.G., Π, 365, line 22 = I.G., Π, 384).
restore still an additional item, we believe, in the Propylaia inscription for 436/5 (I.G., I², 364, lines 30-31): [μ]σθομάτ[ν]ν εσ τέν ἀκρόπολιν | ἀνευ τόν ἐσ τὰ Προ-
pύλαια].  

There may have been a separate rubric for this work in each annual record of the Propylaia; on the other hand, for such work done under the overseers of the Parthenon there was no separate rubric. Each board kept its accounts in its own way.

There is, however, no reason here for dating the decrees of Kallias before the Propylaia accounts. We do not deny that the work mentioned in the items discussed was work concerned with the Acropolis layout and not different in kind from what Kallias orders; and Dinsmoor’s confrontation of Kallias’ use of the word ἀκρόπολις with its use in these items is relevant and important. It is even possible that Kallias’ orders did not lead to any change in the method of accountancy, sc. that the overseers of the Propylaia continued to pay and enter the wages for work near the Propylaia. But this seems to us unlikely: Kallias associates the tamiai with the work which he orders, and earmarks a special ten talents a year for its cost; we should not therefore expect this work to appear in the accounts of the overseers of the Propylaia.

The main point is that “landscaping” on the Acropolis did not begin with Kallias; in this, as in all else, Kallias desires to wind up, to get clear of commitments as soon as he decently can. He therefore seeks to “systematize” the work. There is no reason for surprise (or for antedating his decrees) when we find that similar work was already being done.

The text of the Kallias decrees has been utilized here with the opening lines restored, in part, to read [ἥπος δ’ ἀν ἐκποιεῖ θεῖ παντελῶς [ἐπισκέφθ' σει χρέσθαι ἀπ’ [ἀντας τός ἐπιστάταις] κατὰ τὰ ἐφοβεῖ [σμένα··] καὶ τὲν ἀκρόπολιν [νέμεν πλὲν εἰ μὲ τὰ ἔχοντ' ῥυμένα καὶ ἐπι[σκενά]ζεν δέκα τάλαντα ἀ[ναλίσκοντας τό ἔναντ'] ὑκεαστὸ κτλ. But the purpose clause has alternatively been restored as temporal, in which case the implications are somewhat different. If [ἐπειδὴν δ’ ἐκποιεῖ θεῖ] is read instead of [ἥπος δ’ ἀν ἐκποιεῖ θεῖ] the decree will mean that after the marble pediments, the Golden Nikai, and the Propylaia have been completely finished all the boards of overseers shall take thought together (perhaps [συνσκέφθ'] σει χρέσθαι) and fix bounds on the Acropolis and make repairs, spending ten talents a year until the bounds have been fixed and the repairs made as well as possible. With these boards the treasurers of Athena were associated as joint epistatai. If this version is correct the three verbs χρέσθαι, νέμεν, and ἐπισκενάζειν, closely connected by καὶ, are all modified by the tem-

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13 We have restored the form Προπύλαια throughout; Dinsmoor restored Προπύλαιον in 437/6 because this form appears in the heading of that same year (I.G., I², 363, line 2: π[πο]πύλαιο). If there is any significance in this change and the plural was only used (as Dinsmoor suggests) after 437, it is perhaps worth noting that Kallias both times uses the plural.

14 One should restore, preferably, in D2, lines 8-9: [συν]ε[πιστάταν]ν[ο]ν δ[ε] τοι[η]ξ[ε]ν [ο]μ[ε] [συν]ε[πιστάταν]. See below, p. 283. The earlier reading [ο]τ[ε] τοι[ε]κτόν) is not probable, in view of the fact that the architect is later directed to collaborate “with the epistatai” — a specification which seems odd if he was in fact one of them.

15 No more than the “conditioning” (ἐπισκενή) of old structures, which he orders at the same time, began with him.
poral clause, and this is perhaps easier than the assumption, necessary with ἥπος ἄν, that the purpose clause modified only χρέσθαι. The difficulty of interpretation will now lie chiefly in the fact that, if ἐπειδάν is correct, the effective implementation of the general program on the Acropolis must have been postponed for approximately two years. The building inscriptions record expenses for work on the pediment sculptures and on the Propylaia in 433/2, and it would be surprising to find the decrees of Kallias providing for the initiation of a program, and asking that the architect submit a plan, when everyone must have known that nothing was likely to be done about it until 432.

Yet there is another way to interpret these opening lines of Kallias’ decree, so reading the text that the main emphasis is put on restrictions about spending the moneys of Athena. The general reorganization of the Acropolis was to cost ten talents a year, but presumably no long period of expense was envisaged.\(^\text{10}\) Other charges against Athena’s money were not to exceed 10,000 drachmai a year unless authorized by special vote. But the principal drain on Athena’s money would continue to be the work on the pediments of the Parthenon, the Nikai, and the Propylaia. These major undertakings were to be completed, and the money for them—too great a sum to come from the new fund of ten talents a year—must have been disbursed as usual according to previous authorizations: κατὰ τὰ ἐφθεῖσθαι σει [ἐπιμένα]. Hence one may combine a verbal noun with χρέσθαι so that the concept will mean “spend” rather than “plan” (e.g., ἀπαναλόγωσι προχρέσθαι rather than [ἐπισκέψει]σει χρέσθαι), and then read Athena’s treasure as once more the source of the funds in ἀπὸ τὸν χρεμάτον Ἀθηναίας. The modifying clause, now probably with ἥπος ἄν, instead of ἥπος ἄν or ἐπειδάν, permits the necessary spending until the tasks are finished. Construed in this way the text of D2, lines 1-15, reads as follows:

\[\begin{align*}
&\text{ἐδοχοςεν τει βολει και τει δεμοι. Κεκοποις ἐπρυτανευε, Μνειθε]  \\
&\text{ος ἐγραμμάτεως,} Ε[ντε]θες [ἐπεστάτε, Κ]αλλιας ἐπ[ετε κποιεν ταγά]  \\
&\text{λματα τα λιθμα και τας Νίκας τας χρ]ρυσάς και τα Πη[πυλαια - ἥ]έως  \\
&\text{δέ άν εκποιει παντελος [ἀπαναλό]σει χρέσθαι ἀπο τον χρεμάτο]  \\
&\text{ν Ἀθηναίας] κατὰ τα ἐφθεῖσθαι σεινα], και τει ἀκρόπολιν [νεμεν πλευν ε]  \\
&\text{ι με τα ἐχετε ργμεια και επι [ςκενα]ζευ δεκα τάλαντα δια ναλνκοντα]  \\
&\text{σ το ἐναυτο δεικνατο λεος [ἀν νεμει]θει και ἐπισκενα]σθει λος καλ]  \\
\end{align*}\]

Lines 2-3: ἐκποιείν τάγαλματα]. Or perhaps ἐκποιείν τά ἐνατεία, rather than ἐκποιείν τά ἐνατεία. The crasis is suggested on the analogy of I.G., 1\(^{2}\), 372, line 75, and apparently ποιεῖν, rather than ποεῖν, was the spelling employed in lines 4 and 9.


\(^{10}\) Cf. ἥπος [ἀν νεμει]θει και ἐπισκενα]σθει λος κάλλιστα].
[στατα νεμεθ] ἑστεα qualifications νὸπολις καὶ ἐπισκευασθε[στατ] τὰ δεό
[μενά· τοῖς δ] ἀλλοις χρέμα[σγ το]ὶς τέσ Ἀθεναίας το[ἰς τε νὺν ὅσι]
[ναλίσκεν ἄ] π' αὐτῶν ἐ[σ] ἀλλο μ[ἐδὲν ἐ] ἔστα ταῦτα ἡπερο μν[ρ] [α]ς δραχμά]
15 [ἐ ἐς ἐπισκ] εὐνεν ἐδάν τι δέει[ὶ· ———— κτλ. ————]

With this text the cost of the old obligations is balanced against the cost of the new; the operative verb ἐκποιεῖν is supplemented by an authorization to spend in ἀπαναλοσεῖ χρῆσθαι, just as the sanction implied in νέμενω and ἐπισκευάζεν is supplemented by ἀναλίσκοντας; and in both cases the spending was permitted for the duration of the work, with ἡεσ καὶ in lines 3-4 and 7. No other subject being expressed, the Athenian people must be understood as the subject of all the infinitives down to line 8. But this is a normal and satisfactory construction. Kallias was interested in the allocation of Athena’s money and in its frugal spending. His strictures on its use were continued into the future with his prohibition in lines 12-19: [τοῖς δ] ἀλλοις χρέμα[σγ ——] μὲ χρῆσθαι[θ] a[ἰ ——— κτλ.] His name has no special importance for the history of ancient art,17 except perhaps as measures of economy tended to discourage new undertakings, but his financial reorganization of 434 must have been of outstanding significance in the history of the Athenian treasury.

(4) Dinsmoor recognizes that with the Kallias decrees dated in 438 there is a hiatus between the decrees and the extant inventories which they sanctioned. He explains this by assuming (loc. cit., p. 138, and note 155) that inventories were drawn up for 438-434 on paper, but probably not cut on stone.

Here the evidence unequivocally points to 434 and not 438: Dinsmoor’s plea is simply that it is not conclusive. The decrees of Kallias were quite specific that the inventories of the Other Gods, at least, should be cut on stone (D1, lines 22 and 25). Moreover, the Treasurers of the Other Gods were to render their accounts in the future from Panathenaia to Panathenaia καθάπερ οἱ τὰ τέσ ἐθεναιας τ[α] μενοντες, and they were to set up these stelai, on which they inscribed the moneys, on the Acropolis (D1, lines 27-30). It would be strange to interpret these lines to mean that the Treasurers of the Other Gods had to use stone, while the Treasurers of Athena could be content with paper. Surely both boards inscribed stelai of stone, and the only question is whether they have all been preserved.

The Treasurers of the Other Gods are represented only by I.G., 12, 310,18 and earlier as well as later stelai are lost. But the Treasurers of Athena have three almost entire series, for the Pronaos, the Parthenon, and the Hekatompedon, each beginning, so far as the records are extant, in 434/3. These records are grouped by Panathenaic quadrennia. For the pronaoa the so-called “first stone” carries the accounts of 434-430, the “second stone” those of 430-426, and the “third stone” those of 426-422.

17 As Dinsmoor thought (loc. cit., p. 138).
When the decision was reached to use the reverse surfaces of these stones, the (lost) reverse of the “first stone” was presumably cut with the accounts of 422-418, and then (still largely preserved) the accounts of 418-414 and 414-410 were inscribed on the reverse surfaces of the “second” and “third stones” respectively. The implication of this arrangement is clear: the so-called “first stone” was the first stone in fact and there was no earlier stone with a record from 438 to 434 the reverse of which could be used when the fashion turned in this direction. If one assumes that the reverse of this hypothetical earlier stone was not available or was left blank the hypothesis seems unnecessarily complex. It is rendered still more improbable by what is extant of the Hekatompedon and Parthenon accounts. There is no stone for the Hekatompedon to cover 438-434, and the disposition of the Parthenon accounts suggests also that no such stone ever existed for their similar record. At any rate none has been found.

These arguments favor dating the Kallias decrees in 434 rather than in 438, and they have been traditionally so interpreted.

(5) Dinsmoor holds that two small archaic temples, called οἰκήματα in the Hekatompedon inscription of 485/4 (I.G., 1², 4, line 17: οἰκήματα), were left standing until 438; they were then demolished as a result of the terms of the decrees of Kallias, and their materials were used in the foundations of the Propylaia. Dinsmoor illustrates a lintel block from “temple B” which in its re-use has been so bonded into the construction on either side of it that it must have been laid in place as early as 437 B.C. This, says Dinsmoor, is “a final argument for the date 438/7 B.C. for the Kallias decrees.”

This argument would have weight if the Kallias decrees mentioned the οἰκήματα (they do not) or could be shown in any way to require their demolition or to imply that their demolition was recent (they do neither of these things). Apparently Dinsmoor thinks that Kallias ordered Athena’s treasure to be placed in the Opisthodomos, but Paton was undoubtedly right when he observed that the use of the Opisthodomos was already well established for the Treasurers of Athena before the decrees of Kallias were passed.¹⁹ Kallias creates the Treasurers of the Other Gods, and he models their duties on the known routine of the Treasurers of Athena. They will not come into existence before the New Year: till then Athena’s treasurers are to act as their receivers, taking charge of such items of their treasure as shall arrive during the current year. When they (the Treasurers of the Other Gods) move into the Opisthodomos at the New Year, they are to have the left-hand side while the Treasurers of Athena keep the right; and they will also thenceforth share with Athena’s treasurers in the responsibilities of opening and closing and sealing the doors of the Opisthodomos. Every word implies that an old tenant is sharing with, and making way for, a newcomer.

We do not have to broach the question whether the Opisthodomos was the amputated west end of the Peisistratid temple or the west vestibule of the Parthenon. If it was the latter, Athena’s treasure could no doubt have moved in in 438; if (as Dinsmoor holds) it was the former, the treasure could have been there far longer. The problem of where this treasure was housed in the middle years of the fifth century is not one that has to be solved here, but Kallias’ decrees give no grounds for thinking that, up to their time, it was in the οἰκήματα. So far as Kallias tells us, the οἰκήματα may never have been repaired since the Persian occupation. The last and only time they are mentioned is in 485; so the block which was used in the foundations of the Propylaia may (for all Kallias tells us) have remained stacked as building material on the Acropolis since 479.

Dinsmoor has proposed the foregoing arguments, with variations and subdivisions, urging that they favor, or permit, or prove the dating of the Kallias decrees in 438 B.C. The evidence does not support this view, but leaves little room to doubt the now generally accepted assignment to 434 B.C.

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