

A Catalogue and Summary of Published Questions by Individuals and Responses from the Dodona Oracle

The diviner's analysis transforms uncertainty into a conditional certainty and his instructions . . . enable the consultor to move from inertia to purposeful activity.

Jackson 1978: 134¹

The organization of the catalogue is described and explained as part of the overview of its contents in Chapter 6.

INQUIRIES

Future concerns

Travel

This is the largest category among the published questions found at Dodona. It might well have been even larger, since many of the other categories contain questions that relate somehow to travel. In particular, there is a great deal of overlap between the tablets in this category and the next category, Work, but there are also tablets in the categories of Prosperity/Safety, and Health that concern travel. In sorting questions between Travel and Work, I have placed those questions that name their destination or place of departure under Travel; if the emphasis of the tablet is on a specific type of work, I have placed it under that category.

This concentration of questions around problems and concerns relating to travel supports an emerging historical picture of the peoples of the Mediterranean being consistently on the move: trading—or stealing—skills and goods, making religious pilgrimage, or migrating in order to find work.² The many questions in this category (see also those questions in the category of

Work that focus on matters directly or indirectly concerned with working on the sea), suggest that such travel, although common, was a cause of considerable anxiety. I have created three subdivisions in this category: (i) those tablets that mention their locations; (ii) those that do not; and (iii) those questions that are concerned with the desire not to travel, whose consultants want to remain at home.

Most of the inquirers seem to be consulting the god solely on their own behalf. In six of the 28 questions, the consultant mentions himself by name (9, 11, 14, 17, 19, and 27). Question 17 provides an example of a tablet with the question on one side, and the name of the consultant inscribed on the reverse. But a few more personal details appear in a couple of questions: question 5 mentions the inquirer's concerns about his possessions (*περὶ πανπασίας*) and that his family do well; question 15 gives the name of the consultant's prospective business associate (and travelling companion?) and the consultant of question 26 asks about returning to his brother.

The questions reveal a variety of different reasons for travelling. Some just raise the idea of a journey. Of these, some name their destination (for example, question 19, specifying the Adriatic as part of the destination); others do not even do that (23). It's possible to read some uncertainty about the method of travel in a few questions. Two may be asking if he should make the journey by land (4, with a note on translation of the phrase, and 25); another (24) includes the phrase 'by sea' but it may just be a detail of his larger inquiry and not the focus of his question. Safety is an explicit concern in question 12, which asks something about conveying something or someone safely (*κομίζοντι [- -ά]σφαλέως*). However, looking across the category, the journeys about which Dodona was most commonly consulted were those made by sea, and most people were concerned with how they were likely to prosper if they made the trip, that is, they wanted to know if it was worth it. Most consultants included detail that allows us to infer their reason for travel. I have mentioned the overlap between travel and work. Those tablets that make these concerns specific include: questions 1, 20, and 24, which are most likely asking about travel for the purposes of trade; *ἐμπορίας* (1) means 'commerce' usually conducted by sea, the related verb *ἐμπορεύεσθαι* (20, 24) means travel, usually for business. Tablet 20 also has *Ἐνπορα* on its reverse, a partial single word that could be either a shorthand reference to the question or part of a response from the oracle. Question 18 brings up 'selling' (*πωλοῦντες*) although the tablet is too fragmentary to tell us what is being sold. The consultant of question 15 is contemplating moving to Megara in order to work (*ἐργαζομένωι Μεγαροῖ*).

A number of the inquiries seem to be about the advantages of moving to new places to live, using a variety of verbs. For example, question 6 uses *ἀπιών*

to describe going away (although it doesn't say from where); question 14, *οἰκοντι ἐμ Φάρωι* ('for him, if he lives in Pharos'; this tablet has the question on one side, and seems to have some kind of shorthand reference to it, *Φά* short for *Φάρωι*, on the reverse); question 5 is about whether it is better or not for him and his wife and family to live in Kroton (*περὶ Φοικέσιος ἰς Κρο(ό)τονα*), and the oracle seems to have responded with a succinct 'in Kroton'. The consultant of question 4 wants to know if he should move to Orikos or is better off staying put. Question 22, although very fragmentary, might be similar: the tablet is very difficult to read but seems to concern moving residence (*ἀποουικέοντες*), but the response on side B, *μένε[τε]* ('Stay!')—if, indeed, it is the answer to this question—implies that this may have been the gist of the inquiry. Among these questions we often find the formulae *λῶϊον καὶ ἄμεινον*, that is, literally, 'better and more good', or some form of it.

Some time in the early third century BCE, Ariston asked if it would be better to join a colony (but it is not clear which colony) of Syrakuse (17). He asks about being able to join it 'later, a phrase that may indicate some anxiety about the dangers of being in a first wave of colonizers or, perhaps, that he will miss out if he is not in that initial group.³ Question 14 seems also to be connected with a problem to do with the process of emigration, this time to Pharos, the colony of Paros.⁴ Nikomachos' question (11) may also concern the details involved in moving to a colony. He asks about the advantages of changing his registration of something—from the use of the middle form of the verb, it is probably the consultant himself that was meant—from Herakleia to Taras. It could be that Nikomachos was a metic, a free person who lived temporarily or permanently in a *polis* without becoming its citizen, simply moving from one city to the other, who would need to register himself as liable for a metic tax of some sort. Alternatively, it may be that he is a citizen of the colony of Herakleia moving back to the mother city of Taras under some kind of system of shared citizenship.⁵ On this subject, note also tablet 6 in the category of Women below.

As for where they are travelling: two consultants (13 and 18) seem to offer the god a choice of destinations from which to select, but both questions are very fragmentary, so these readings cannot be certain. Most of the questions seem to have been posed by people who knew where they wanted to go, and how they intended to get there. Sometimes they talk in terms of larger regions (Elis, in question 18, may mean the region, rather than the town; Karia in question 21; Messene in question 13; Sicily in question 9); sometimes they pinpoint a particular town. Otherwise, a wide range of destinations emerges. People are travelling along the coast to Ambrakia, Apollonia, Chemara (a colony of Kerkyra), Epidamnos, and Orikos.

Others are headed towards mainland Greece, for example to Alyzea in

Acarmania, and Hermion in Argolis, one perhaps to Elis in the Peloponnese (but see previous paragraph). Some are setting sail for cities in south-east Italy: for example, Sybaris, Herakleia, Hipponion, Atria, Kroton, Ergetion, and Taras; one is heading for Syrakuse. One questioner (7) identifies his destination by its inhabitants rather than its name. There was a group of helot-like serfs in Thessaly called *penestai* and this question may refer to them, or indicate that there was a similar group in Epiros.⁶ Another (18) included some detail about his route, using the verb *περιέρχασθαι*, ‘to go around’ or ‘end up in’. As the material evidence has suggested, for a long time, Epiros was part of a trade network that spanned the Adriatic and spread south to mainland Greece. Although we know that trade was conducted into Illyria and Makedonia, these areas are not mentioned in the questions that have survived.

I have discussed above how questions were structured to express the desires of the consultant. This was not only a question of content, but also nuance, as questions 27 and 28 illustrate. In both of these questions the consultant asks whether he should stay at home: not everyone, it seems, was eager to travel. Question 26, difficult to read, appears to be asked by someone anxious to return to their brother.

Location identified

1. SEG 43.335; Dakaris, Christidis, Vokotopoulou 1993: 58; M-4; archaic Korinthian alphabet; 550–525 BCE

[- -] ἐμπορίας ἐς Ἐπίδαμνον

. . . of a journey for trade into Epidamnos

2. SEG 43.323; Karapanos 1890: 157/8; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 6; shortly before 510 BCE

Ἄ κα μέλλι ἐς [Σύ]βαριν ἰόντι λόιον

ἔμεν [κ]α πράτοντι ταῦτα

Whether it would be better for me if I go to Sybaris and if I do these things?

3. SEG 43.321; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 4; M-768; c.450 BCE; inscription on side B of left part of lead question

ἦ Ἡιππονίο[ι - - - -]

(If I go or sail) to Hipponion . . . (would it be better for me?)

(Trans. Vokotopoulou 1992)

4. Dakaris, Christidis, Vokotopoulou 1993: 60; M-526; Korinthian alphabet; first half of fifth century BCE

Θεός . Τύχα .
 Ἐν Ὀρικῶι κα
 λῶιον πράσοι-
 μι κατὰ χῶραν ἔ
 ἡὸσπερ γῶν
 Φοικέων

God. . . Luck. Would I fare better in Orikos in the countryside, or as I am living now? (This depends on translating *κατὰ χῶραν* with a meaning more usually found later than the early Classical period. The alternative would be to take it as belonging to the second clause of the question: 'If I would fare better in Orikos, or in this place, as I am living now?')

5. SEG 43.325; Vokotopoulou (1992: no. 8); *Ep. Chron.* 1935; M-47; c.400 BCE; ll. 4–6 at right of ll. 1–3; both sides in same hand

Side A:

Θεός · τύχα ἀγαθά ·
 περὶ πανπασίας καὶ περὶ Φοικέσιος
 ἰς Κρο(δ)τονα ἔ βέλτιον καὶ ἄμεινο(ν)
 αὐτοῖ καὶ γενε-
 αὶ καὶ γυναι-
 κί

God . . . Good Luck. About possessions and about a place to live: whether (it would be) better for him and his children and his wife in Kroton?

Side B (probably the response to A):

Ἐν Κρότονι

In Kroton

6. Parke 23; SEG 15.393; BE 1956: 143; PAE 1952: 300, 3; fifth to fourth century BCE

θεός · Ζεῦ, Διώνη, ἡ ἀπιῶν
 ἐς Ἀλύζεαν βέλτιον
 πρήξει;

God, O Zeus, Dione! Whether he will do better if he migrates to Alyzea?

(Evangelides notes that there are two letters on the reverse of this plate, which probably indicate the name of the questioner. Parke tells us that on the reverse of this plate is a response, listed below at 29, but SEG 15.393 gives this as being on the reverse of 24, below.)

7. Christidis; 400–380 BCE

Ἥ ἀ]γτρ{ι}οδιδιάτο[ς]
 [Πε]νέσταις ἐδὸν

Whether he/I should go to the cave-dwelling Penestai?

8. BE 1996: 226, 11; SEG 43.328; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 11; M-122; early fourth century BCE
(Side B of tablet with no. 12 on side A.)

Ἦ μετὰ τῶν Παρίων ἐς Πάρον
[πόκα ἰ]κέοντι ἐς τὸν Ἰόνιον
κόλπον λώϊον καὶ ἄμεινον

Whether, when he arrives in the Ionian Gulf, to Pharos, with those from Pharos, it will be advantageous for him?

(Vokotopoulou: Paros is Pharos, a colony of Paros (cf. Strabo 7.5.5) founded in 385/384 BCE)

9. SEG 43.329; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 12; M-1366; c.375 BCE; inscription on side B, partially readable

Θ[ε]ό[ς] · Τύ[χα] ἀγαθὰ · Ἀρχω[ν]ίδας
[ἐρωτᾷ] τὸν θεόν
πότερον πλέω εἰς Σικ[ελίαν]

God . . . Good Luck. Archonidas asks the god whether I should sail into Sicily?

10. SEG 43.338; Dakaris, Christidis, Vokotopoulou 1993: 59; M-718; c.350 BCE

Περὶ τὰς οἰκήσεις τὰς
ἐν Χεμαρίων πότερον
αὐτεῖ οἰκέωντι

About the residence in Chemara, whether it would be (good) for him to live (there)?

11. SEG 43.326; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 9; *Ep. Chron.* 1935; M-1052; 340–330 BCE

Νικόμαχος ἐρωτῆ τὸν Δία [τ]ὸν Νάϊον ἢ ἀπογραφάμ[ε]ν[ος]
κα ἐς Τάραντα ἐξ Ἡρακλείας ἄμεινον

Nikomachos asks Zeus Naios whether he will fare better by having moved his registration from Herakleia to Taras?

12. BE (1996: 226, 11); SEG 43.328; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 11; 330–320 BCE; M-122; PAE 1967: 48–9, 4; BE 1969: 348
(Side A of tablet with no. 8 on side B.)

[- - πε]ρὶ Ἡρακλέας
[- -]σα κομίζονται
[- -ἀ]σφαλῆως καὶ οἱ φύ
[λακες - -] Ἡρακλεωτᾶν

Concerns Herakleia (πε]ρὶ Ἡρακλέας) and conveying something safely κομίζονται [- -ἀ]σφαλῆως). Guards (οἱ φύλακες) are also mentioned.

13. PAE 1973: 94–6, 2a; fourth century BCE

- - -] . σατ [- -
 - - -] δων π [- - -
 - - -] ειτωι κα [- - - -
 - - -] ιευμαρ [- - - -
 - - π] ρὸς ἡμᾶ[ς - - -
 - -] σιης καὶ εἰ π[ορευόμε - - -]
 θα ἐς Μεσσήνην [7-8 - - -]
 που ἢ ἐν Ἀμπρα]κίαι - - -]
 ωμεν καὶ εἰ πρ[- - - - - -]
 νεωμεν ἄν ἦ . [- - - -
 - - -] ἦ τὰν [- - - - -
 - - - -] κα [- - - - -

Something to do with a group (l. 5 π] ρὸς ἡμᾶ[ς) travelling to Messene (ll. 6–7 εἰ π[ορευόμε - - -] θα ἐς Μεσσήνην) or Ambrakia (l. 8 ἐν Ἀμπρα]κίαι)

14. BE 1969: 348, 6; PAE 1967: 33–54, 6; fourth century BCE

Ἑξακῶν ἐρωτᾷ τὸν Δία καὶ τὰν Διώναν
 εἰ λώιον αὐτῶι οἰκοντι ἐμ Φάρωι

On the back in large letters: Φά

Hexakon asks Zeus and Dione if it will be better for him if he lives in Pharos?

On the reverse: *Pha*

15. SEG 24.454b; BE 1968: 318; Parke 1967c: 133(2); fourth to third century BCE

Καὶ ε(ἰ) ἄμενόν
 μοι μετὰ Διο-
 [τί]μο ἐργαζομέ-
 νωι Μεγαροῖ Parke: Μεγάροι[σι]

And if it would be better for me to work with Diotimos, in Megara?

Parke: *Megaroisi* ‘among the Megarians’

16. SEG 43.333; Dakaris, Christidis, Vokotopoulou 1993: 55; M-234; 300–275 BCE

[- - -] Ἀπολλωνίαν πλεύσας ἦι ἀλαστῶν τη-
 [- - -] ε ὄντων πυνθάνοιτο

ll. 1–2 DCV suggest τῆ[ιδ]ε to balance ἦι in an οὐ . . . λὰ arrangement. However, Pleket comments that in this text we really need ἦι = ἦ = ‘whether’.

Something to do with: ‘having sailed to Apollonia where’ (Ἀπολλωνίαν πλεύσας ἦι) and, possibly, ‘learning some news’ (ὄντων πυνθάνοιτο). . .

17. BE 1996: 226, 13; SEG 43.330; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 13; M-46; early third century BCE

Side A:

Θεός · Ἀρίστων ἐρωτᾷ τὸν Δία
α τὸν Νάϊον καὶ τὴν Διό-
νῃν εἰ λόϊόν μοι καὶ ἄμε-
νον καὶ δυνήομαι
πλὲν εἰς Συρακόσας
πρὸς τὴν ἀποικίαν ὕστερο-
ν

God, Ariston asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether it is better and more good for me and if I will be able to sail to Syrakuse, to the colony, later?

Side B:

Ἀρίστωνος
Of Ariston

18. SGDI 1561c; Karapanos 1878: pl. 35; reverse of plate

Ἥ εἰς Ἑλίαν περιέλ(θ)[ωμες.
ἦ εἰς Ἀνακτόριον [.
ἦ πωλοῦντες τὸν [.

Whether we should go around to/end up in Elis . . . or into Anaktorion . . . or selling the . . .

19. Parke 1967a: 24; *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 252, 9

Θεός. Τύχη. εἰρω-
ταῖ τὸν Δία τὸν
Νάϊον καὶ τὴν Διώ-
νῃν Αἰσχυλίνος εἰ
μὴ αὐτῷ ἄμενον
πλὲν ἐς Ἀδρία
ἐς Τισατες

God. Luck. Aischylinos asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether it would not be better for him to sail to the Adriatic to Tisates (?)

20. SEG 15.387; PAE 1952: 301–2, 7

Side A:

Ἐμπορευόμενοι
ἐς ΕΠΙΛΟΜΙΧΟΝ

Making a voyage to Epilomichos

Side B:

Ἐμπορα . . .

A voyage/business

21. PAE 1958: 105

Αἰ Συπτ. . . αι
 ἐστὶν κάθοδ[ος
 εἰς Καρείαν
 ἐφ' οἷς αὐτὸς
 βόλεται

Whether . . . it is better to journey into Karia on the conditions he wants?

Unspecified location

22. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 259, 35; fifth century BCE

Side A:
 Περὶ τοτμιονιο
 ἡ ἀπουικέοντες
 ἄμεινον τοῖς
 εονιαυας

Starts with 'About' (*περὶ*) then goes on to ask 'whether by migrating it would be better for those' (*ἡ ἀπουικέοντες ἄμεινον τοῖς*)

Side B:
 μένε[τε
 Stay

23. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 258, 26; fifth to fourth century BCE

περὶ τὰς ὀρμᾶς
 About the enterprise

24. *SEG* 15.394; *BE* 1956: 143; *PAE* 1952: 300–1, 4; fifth to fourth century BCE
 (*Side B* of tablet with no. 28 on side A.)

(a kappa in reverse)
 ἐπερωτεῖ τυα. . .
 . . κατὰ θάλασσα[νπο]-
 [ρε]νομένωι
 . να
 . . ικ πράσσοιμι
 . . κα λαβῶν
 . σ . . . γα

He asks (*ἐπερωτεῖ*) . . . for him/me travelling or doing business by sea (*κατὰ θάλασσα-
 [νπο][ρε]νομένωι* probably *κατὰ θάλασσα[νέμπορε]νομένωι*) . . . I would fare better
 (*πράσσοιμι*) . . . if/and taking (*κα λαβῶν*)

25. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 260, 38; fourth century BCE

Θεός

τύχα· ἦ καὶ ἔβην κατὰ χώραν

God. Fortune. Whether I also travelled by land/in the same place?

(See no. 4 for questions about translation.)

26. *SEG* 24.454c; *BE* 1968: 318; Parke 1967c: 132 (3); dialect of the consultation is not Attic; fourth to third century BCE

ἦ ἀφέρπης οἰκαδε πὸτ

τον ἀδελφεόν

Whether you(?) may return home to your brother

Remaining at home

27. Parke 22; *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 255, 13; fifth to fourth century BCE

ἀγαθαὶ τύχα[ι]

ἐπικονῆται Παρμενίδ-

ας τῶι Δι τῶι Νάω καὶ τῶι

Διώναι λῶον καὶ ἄμει-

νον οἴκοι μένοντι

Good luck. Parmenides asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether he will fare better if he stays home?

28. *SEG* 15.394; *BE* 1956: 143; *PAE* 1952: 300/1, 4; fifth to fourth century BCE
(Side A of tablet with no. 24 on side B.)

αὐτεῖ οἴκει-

ν καὶ ἐξέχουσθ-

αι

For him to stay at home and put up with it

For other tablets relating to travel, see also:

Work 4: *SEG* 43.331; *PAE* 1932; Vokotopoulou 1992: 86, 14; M-545; 340–330 BCE

Work 7: *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 254, 12; fifth century BCE

Work 9: Parke 19; *SGDI* 1568a; Karapanos 1878: pl. 37

Work 10: *SEG* 43.341; *BE* 1993: 346; *PAE* 1968: 53–4; Salviat 1993: 61–4; c.350–320
BCE

Work 11: *SGDI* 1583; Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, 3

Work 13: *SEG* 23.475; *PAE* 1958: 104–2

Women 6: *SEG* 24.454a; Parke 1967a: 132(3); *BE* 1968: 318; fourth to third century BCE

Prosperity/Safety 4: *PAE* 1967: 50, 7; *BE* 1969: 348, 7; third century BCE

Health 6: *SGDI* 1587b (a response to 1587a)

Women

The questions in this category are *περὶ γυναικός* that is, about women. Five questions begin with or include this formula (1, 8, 9, 16, and 19), while question 11 varies the formula to fit the circumstance of a father asking about his daughter, beginning [*πε*]ρ[*ί*] τῆς κόρ[*ης*], ‘about the girl/my daughter’). The usual form of questions in this category appears to be ‘whether’ the consultant will ‘do better’ if he marries a particular woman. This seems to be the only area of life related to relationships that occurs, at least in such number, amongst the questions, published and unpublished, although Christidis reported one example of a question in the unpublished material that asks about a young man and calls him *ώραῖος*, which may suggest an erotic feeling on the part of the consultant.

Three questions are specifically about marriage with a named woman (questions 1–3); six about marriage with an unnamed woman (questions 4–9). We also see fathers asking whether they should marry off their daughters; siblings asking if they should marry; and inquiries that appear to be about second marriages or additional relationships of some kind. In question 6, Isodemos seems to be considering marriage as only one in a series of life changes about which he asks, including whether it would be better for him to live among the Athenians as a citizen. (Since it was not a simple matter to become a citizen of Athens, it seems likely that he was either a citizen of Athens who was thinking about moving away, or that he was not an Athenian, but was contemplating moving there as a metic—although the verb in question means political rights, not freedom.)

Seven of the consultants name themselves (2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 15, 18); the rest remain anonymous. For most of the other tablets, we can tell that the gender of the consultant is male (for example, question 5 asks something like ‘would it be better if I took a wife . . .’), but a few are less clear (for example, question 16 seems to ask ‘about a woman’ and then something to do with safety; it is possible that this question is about the safety of the women it mentions, but there is so little information in the text that this must remain in the realm of speculation). We should not automatically assume male authorship: Professor Christidis found a number of questions in the unpublished material inscribed by women asking about the marital prospects of their daughters. The questions suggest that marriage was considered to be a decision best guided by the gods. That marriages might turn on the outcome of a session of divination can also be seen from other sources.⁷

Other themes also shape these questions about marriage. Question 3, with or without the gloss offered by Christidis, is clearly concerned with gain. It appears to have been put to the oracle by the guardian of a girl who hoped to

profit from his relationship with her. Apparently, some of the unpublished questions show that the chance of a dowry was an important consideration for a man contemplating marriage. There are at least two examples of questions concerning *τίμασις γυναικός* (literally, ‘the estimation of the value of a girl’), both, apparently, posed after a divorce. Question 15 also seems to be about the reliability of some kind of gain, but it is unclear what this refers to—it could be the relationship or some material acquisition. Another significant factor for men and women to consider before marriage was whether or not a woman would produce children—as the next category of questions, Children, suggests.

Two questions seem to show the consultant concerned about changing his woman. Question 14 appears to be asking about marrying another woman. What may be a response (20) may be instructing the protagonist to ‘put up with’ his wife.⁸ The very brief inquiry of question 13 may also be about a woman (although it could be about another feminine noun, perhaps land). Unfortunately, the rest of the text is missing and we cannot know the context or motivation behind the question.

Question 10 may concern marriage between siblings. Such a relationship would have horrified most Greeks, although Athenian law did allow the marriage of half-siblings from the same father, but not the same mother, and Spartan law from the same mother but not the same father.⁹ There does not seem to have been a tradition of sister-marriage among the Molossians (at least not among their royal family, although Olympias did marry Alexander, her half-brother (king of the Molossians 272–240 BCE). I can find no particular evidence for sibling marriage among the Epirotes, although, of course, our knowledge of the culture of the area, let alone each individual tribe, although growing, is still relatively slim. But perhaps it is precisely a lack of precedent, and fear of breaking a cultural taboo, that drove the consultant who asked this question to the oracle.

Question 11 seems to be asking about the chastity of the consultant’s daughter, a unique concern among the published questions. I have included it in this section under the assumption that the question was posed because it affected her chances of marriage. However, the question could have been posed regarding some other venture, perhaps, for example, the chance of gaining a priesthood—although the requirement of chastity for such a position seems to have been extremely rare.¹⁰

Marriage inquiries about specific women

1. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 257, 18; side b, ii

περὶ γυναικός
πότερον κα τ[υγ-

χάνοιμι λαμβάνων
Κλέολαιῖν

About a woman, whether I will be fortunate taking Kleolais as a wife?

2. SEG 19.431; PAE (1955: 172, a)

Ἐρωτῆ Κλεμήδης τὸν Δία καὶ τὴν Διώναν ἢ ᾗ πτύχοι κα- - - -
θυγατέρα Ολυμπιάδα τῷ Νικάρχου ἢ δέδασται τουτ- - - -

Klemedes asks Zeus and Dione whether it will happen that . . . Olympias, daughter of Nikarchos, will be given to him . . . ?

3. Parke 10

αἰ τύχαια μοι ἄ ἐπι-
τροπεία τὴν ἔχω
γαμῶν Λυκκίδας; Christidis l. 3: τᾶμον

Whether the guardianship, which I, Lykkidas, gain by marrying, will bring me fortune?

Marriage inquiries about unidentified women

4. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 255, 14; fifth century BCE

Ὅνασίμοι ἄμει-
νον τὴν γυναῖκα
κομίδεσται

And on the other side of the tablet: μελιχ

Will it be better for Onasimos to marry the woman?

5. SEG 15.396; PAE 1952: 306, 24; fifth to fourth century BCE

Βέλτιον τιταυ. . γαν . .
. κομένωι γυναῖκα
πράσσοιμι

Would I do better . . . if I took a wife?

6. SEG 24.454a; Parke 1967a: 133(1); BE 1968: 318; fourth to third century BCE

αι εἰ λ[ώ]ϊον γυναῖκα λαμβάνοντι Parke: καὶ ἐ
[κ]αὶ ἄμενον καὶ παῖδες ἔσονται
[γῆ]ροτρόφοι Ἰσοδήμωι
[κ]αὶ Ἀθήνησι ἐπιδημοῦντι
[κ]αὶ πολιτευομένων Ἀθήνησι

And if I will do better by taking a wife, and whether there will be children for Isodemos, who will take care of him, and if he should live in Athens and become a citizen among the Athenians?

7. Kekule and Winnefeld 1909: 40

Ob die Frau zu nehmen, die er im Sinn hat, er sich wohler und besser befinden wird

Whether he will do better if he takes the woman he has in mind.

8. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 256, 18, side b, i

περὶ γυναικὸ-
ς ἦ τ' ἄμυννο τε
λῶον πρᾶμι

About a woman whether. . . and I would do better

9. Parke 1967a: 6; *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 260, 37

Θεός. Γηριότον Δία ἐπ-
ερωτῆι περὶ γυναικὸς
ἦ βέλτιον λαβόντι

God. Geriotion asks Zeus about a woman, whether (he would do) better if he married (her)

Inquiry concerning marriage between siblings

10. Christidis; 400–390 BCE

[- -] καὶ πόττερα κασι[γνήται]
ἑάσσαι συνΦοικέω
αὐτος ἄ γυνά

l. 3 Christidis believes ἄ γυνά may belong to another inscription

And whether I myself should live with her, my half-sister

Fathers concerning their daughters

11. Christidis; 325–300 BCE

[Πε]ρ[ὶ] τῆς κόρη[ς] ἄγνεῖαν πῶς κα ταύ
[τα] λ[ώ]ιον καὶ ἄμεινον πράσοι

About the chastity of the girl/my daughter how would s/he do these things better and more well

12. Kekule and Winnefeld 1909: 41

Offenbare, O Zeus, ob es mir nützt, meine Töchter dem Theodoros und dem Tessias zu Frauen zu geben

Reveal, O Zeus, whether it is more serviceable to give my daughter to Theodoros or to Tessias as a wife

Taking another woman13. *SGDI* 1570; *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 259, 28; fourth century BCE

ἦ ἄλλαν μαστέων

Whether I should seek another (woman or land)?

14. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 260, 39; fourth century BCE

ἔ ἄτέραν ἄγομαι

Whether I should marry another woman?

A secure future15. *SGDI* 1568b; Rhodes or Rhodian colony

Θεός(ς). Τύχα(ν) ἀγαθάν. [Ἐρωτ]ᾶι Πο(λ)έ[μα]ρ(χ)ο(ς) [τὸν]
 (Δ)ί[α τὸν Ν](ά)ο(ν καὶ) [τὰ]ν Δ(ιὸ)ν[αν· αἴ] τι ἀγαθὸν τᾶς γυν-
 ναικὸς ταύτας παραμό[νι]μον ἐν.έχει καὶ.

God. Good fortune. Polemarchos asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether he will have a share in a something good and trustworthy from this woman . . . ?

16. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 260, 36b

πὲρ τᾶς γυν-
 αικὸς· αἰ τιὰντα[ι] εἴει
 ἀσφαλ . ως

About the woman, whether she will . . . safely?

Unspecific inquiries about specific women17. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 256, 17; beginning of fifth century BCE

Θορακίδα θυγατέρα
 Θεαρίδαι

His daughter Thorakis to Thearidas

18. Kekule and Winnefeld 1909: 40

Eukrates fragt den Zeus und die Diona seine Frau Theuxena, die Tochter des Theuxenos

Eukrates asks Zeus and Dione (about) his wife Theuxena, the daughter of Theuxenos

Relevant fragments19. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 257, 22; Korinthian letters; fifth century BCE

περὶ τᾶς γυν-
 αικὸ[ς] νουματοι(ς)

About the woman (the rest is illegible)

20. BE 1998: 202; *Poikila Epigraphika* 1997: no. 4; M-189; Doric; mid-fourth century BCE

τὰν ἔσσαν σ
στέργω

l.1 Parker: ἔσσαν for οὔσαν

As noted above, this tablet could be translated as: ‘Bear with your defeat’ or ‘Put up with her’

For other tablets relating to women, see also:

Property 1: Parke 3; *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 253, 10; fifth century BCE.

Children

These inquiries all concern the birth of children. The word most frequently used to describe offspring in these consultations is *γενεά*. The word occurs 14 times out of 18 questions; the phrase *περὶ γενεᾶς* appears in five questions (2, 5, 7 (qualifying it as a male child), 11, 16). LSJ describes *γενεά* as rare in prose, a poetic term for descendants, often used in Homer. Perhaps it was used by the consultants to invest their inquiries with greater significance. Other terms found are: *παῖς* (question 8) and *τέκνα* (question 9). Professor Christidis told me that in the unpublished material *περὶ γενεᾶς* is most common, but other formulae are found, such as *εἰ τέκνον εὐτοκία* (*sic*) which translates as something like ‘whether she will bring forth children easily’.

Only seven of these questions are concerned with the likelihood of having children from a particular woman (although a number of the tablets are very fragmentary, so there may be more). This is often phrased in the questions as *ἐκ* or *ἀπὸ τῆς γυναικός* that is, literally, ‘out’ or ‘from the woman’, and in most cases the woman is named. Five of the questions ask about how a child might be obtained, that is, to which gods the consultant must pray for this favour to be shown (questions 1, 6, 7, 16, and Christidis argued for question 15); in question 13 the parents just ask what they should do. This is a rare example of a question in which the inquiry was made by both parents, although this does not necessarily mean that both were physically present at the oracle. Men ask most of the other questions. In seven questions the consultant names himself (or, in the case of 13, himself and his wife) (1, 2, 5, 6A and B, 7, 10, 11, 16), while on others the phrasing of the question suggests a male (for example, question 12 asks: ‘Zeus and Dione, will there be children in the future for him?’ where the pronoun surely refers to the consultant).

There is one example of a question that we know is definitely asked by a woman (question 15, from the gender of the participle of dedication) in the

published material. Others do not indicate the gender of the consultant: for example, question 8, which simply says ‘for the sake of the birth of a child’. Question 9 may be a question asked by a woman, since the participle of the verb for consulting is feminine. Christidis told me that in the unpublished material, women do appear, asking about their own prospects of having children, albeit infrequently.

Only two phrases include the idea of ‘doing better’: question 11 asks: *αι λώϊον] κα(ι) ἄ(μ)[εινο](ν) πρ(α)άσσοί*, literally ‘if he might do better and more well’, while question 7 casts it in terms of superlatives: *πράξαιμι λῶστα καὶ ἄριστα*, literally ‘if I might do best and excellently’. This latter tablet is the only one that makes a specific request for male children. Two other possibilities are question 2, which asks for *περὶ γενεᾶς πατρούχο*, that is, ‘a child to inherit’ (although the adjective in other literary examples, is used of an heiress);¹¹ and 13, which asks for *γενιὰ κ’ ἀνδρογένεια*, meaning literally children ‘of descent from their father’.¹² This could mean ‘like their father’, but it may indicate concerns about paternity, in which case it is similar to the question in which Lysanias asks whether Annyla’s child is his. This concerns a current, but concealed fact rather than a future plan, so I have placed it under the category of present concerns.¹³

Professor Christidis told me that in the unpublished material there are also questions showing concern about having few children or about the survival of offspring, and questions about the chances of begetting male children. Christidis suggested that questions 17 and 18 in this category are about abstaining from sexual intercourse and indicate problems with having children.

This category of questions, which includes the oldest of the questions among the published tablets, suggests how important children were in this society. In most cases, it is men who bring this matter to the oracle, formulating their questions one of two ways: ‘Will I have children from this woman (named or unnamed)?’ and ‘To what god should I pray in order to have children?’ This gender bias of the material evidence fits with the bias of literary accounts, in which it is, on the whole, men who visit oracles to find out about children. This bias might be explained by a tendency in Greek society to attribute the crucial ingredient for conception to men, but although we know some medical authors held this view, we also know others did not (in fact, they ridiculed it).¹⁴ Probably, we should look for an explanation in more widely held cultural beliefs, for example, as shown in the language of the Athenian betrothal ceremony in which the father of the bride gives away his daughter to her future husband with the words ‘I give you this woman for the plowing of legitimate children’. This imagery of woman as receptive earth that needs to be worked, and man as the tamer/farmer/

ploughman, etc. is repeated throughout Greek literature. In this light, the gender bias of questions about the chances of having children ‘from this woman’ make sense. It is likely that any visit to a doctor to resolve problems of conception through natural rather than supernatural methods was likely to have been accompanied with a visit to the oracle for divine guidance.¹⁵ It is surprising, considering how dangerous childbirth was for mother and child, that there are no questions concerned with the details of birth.¹⁶

An incidental detail of the texts in this category is the repeated phrase ‘the wife I have now’ (see questions 2, 5, possibly implied in question 6). The implication may be that the inquirer regarded his relationship with the woman in question as temporary, especially if children were not forthcoming.

Inquiries about children from a particular woman

1. Parke 5; *PAE* (1931: 89–91); Boustrophedon; end of sixth/beginning of fifth century BCE

Ἐρμων τίνα
κα θεὸν ποτθέμ-
ενος γενεὰ F-
οι γένοιτο ἐκ K-
ρεταίας ὀνά-
σιμος ποτ τὰ ἐ-
άσσαι. {*}

Hermon (asks) by aligning himself with which of the gods will there be from Kretaia offspring for him, in addition to those he has now?

* This last clause is difficult to read: does *ονάσιμος* agree with the children that Kretaia will have or is it Hermon himself? Or is Onesimos the name of another man? Does *τὰ ἐάσσαι* mean existing children or is it the Doric form of the feminine dative participle (‘a delight for Kretaia’)?

2. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 255, 15; fifth to fourth century BCE

Κλεάνορι περὶ γενεᾶς
πατροιόχο ἐκ τᾶς νῦν
Γόνθας γυναικός

For Kleanor, about offspring to inherit, from Gonthe, the wife he has now?

3. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 259, 34; fifth to fourth century BCE

Περ Μύδρας πιτα . .
σάνδρο γενεᾶς
ἔσσεται

About Mydra . . . will there be children?



Fig. 3. Oracle question tablet from Dodona: In this tablet, a man called Hermon asks to which of the gods he should turn to in order to get children from a woman Kretaia (end of sixth/beginning of fifth century BCE) © G. Garvey/The Ancient Art & Architecture Collection

4. Karapanos 1878: pl. 35, 1; Athenian or Ionian (Kykklades)

[τὸν] Δία καὶ τὴν Διώνην
 τὸν θεὸν ἐπερωτᾷ
 ἐκ τῆς γυναικός

1.3 Christidis in conversation suggested εἰσούσας γυναικός

Zeus and Dione . . . the god he asks . . . from the woman

5. Parke 7; *SGDI* 1561a = Pomtow 24; puts two inscriptions together (Karapanos 1878: pl. 38, 4 and pl 35, 1)

Ἡρακλ[ε]ίδας αἰτεῖ τὸν Δία καὶ τὴν Διώνην
 τύχην ἀγαθὴν καὶ τὸν θεὸν ἐπερωτᾷ
 περὶ γενειῆς · ἣ ἔστα[ι] ἐκ τῆς γυναικός
 – Α[ἰ]γλης τῆς{*} νῦν ἔχει

Herakleides asks Zeus and Dione for good fortune and asks the god about offspring. Will there be any from Aigle the (wife) he has now?

* The sense of the genitive pronoun is unclear. I have read it as an accusative pronoun that has been attracted into the genitive.

6. Parke 1967a: 8; SEG 19. 426; PAE 1955: 171, a

Side A:

Καλλικράτης ἐπερωτᾷ τὸν θε-
ὸν ἢ ἔσται μοι γενεὰ ἀπὸ τᾶς Νίκης
τῆς γυναικὸς ἣς ἔχει συμμένο-
ντι καὶ τίνι [θ]εῶν εὐχομένῳ

Kallikrates asks the god whether there will be offspring for me from Nike, the woman he has, if he shows allegiance and prays to which of the gods?

Side B:

Ἀγάθων ἐπερωτεῖ - - - - -
Νικώνδαι ΕΥΝΑΩΛ - - - - -

Agathon asks . . . to Nikondas . . .

7. Parke 9; BE 1959: 231; BCH 1957: 584

Θεὸς τύχα ἀγαθὰ · Ἀνάξιππος τὸν Δία τ-
ὸν Νάον καὶ τὴν Διώναν ἐπερωτᾷ περὶ ἐρ-
σεντέρας γενεᾶς ἀπὸ Φιλίστας τᾶς γυναι-
κός, τίνει κα θεῶν εὐχόμενος πράξαιμι
λώιστα καὶ ἄριστα

BCH: ἐρσεντέρας is the Ionic form of ἀρρεντέρας

God, good fortune. Anaxippos asks Zeus Naios and Dione about male children from Philiste his woman. By praying to which of the gods would I do best and excellently?

No specific woman mentioned

8. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 257, 19; beginning of the fifth century BCE

Γενεᾶς ἐννεκα παιδὸς

for the sake of the birth of a child

9. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 258, 27; fifth century

Πότ[ερ]ον ἐμ[οί]

χρωμένη γίνεταί

αὐτῇ τέκνα

Whether there will be children for me, if I consult the oracle?

10. Karapanos 1878: pl. 35, 3

. Διὸς τοῦ Νά-

[ου] ησασθαι εἰ μὴ

. [αὐτ]ῷ καὶ τὰ οἰκήσει

. [πό]τερα Φιλόταν καὶ

. γένειαν καὶ Θη-

. ὁ πατῆρ ἐν παν-

[τῆ] ν γενέσθαι τῶ
 μιν ὅτι σελ-

Of Zeus Naios . . . if not . . . to him and there he will live . . . whether Philotas and . . . offspring and . . . the father in every . . . to be to . . . that . . .

11. SGDI 1572b

[θεός . τύχαν ἀ](γ)α(θ)ά(ν). Ἐ(ρω)τᾶ Μέν-
 [ων Δία Νάον καὶ Διώναι](ν) περὶ (γ)[ε]ν[ε]ῖς · [αἴ κα] συν-
 [οικέων. αι λώϊον] κα(ι) ἄ(μ)[εινο](ν) πρ(α)άσσοι

God. Good luck. Menon asks Zeus Naios and Dione about offspring. If by living with . . . he would fare better?

12. SGDI 1577b

[θε]ός
 κα(ι) τὰν [Διώναν]
 [γε]ν[ε]ῖς αὐτ[οῦ]
 [εἰς τὸ]ν ἔπ[ειτα χρόνον]

Zeus and Dione, will there be children in the future for him?

13. Christidis; 450–425 BCE

Θεὸς τύχα ἀγαθὰ ἰ Βοκόλῳ κῆ Πολυμνάστη
 τί κα δράοντων ἡγυῖα κῆ γενιὰ κ' ἀνδρογένεια
 γυνύο[ι]το κῆ παραμόνιμος ἰοιδ[ς] κῆ χρῆμάτων
 ἐπιγγ[ύ]ασις κῆ τῶν ἰόντων ὄνασις

God, good luck. Bokolo and Polymnaste (ask) what they should do for there to be health and offspring like their father and a male child that will survive and security of things and enjoyment from things to come.

14. Christidis; 400–390 BCE

Ὅλίγα γενεὰ
 A few children

15. Christidis; 400–350 BCE

Ἀλλεῖ E[- -]
 θεμένα
 [ἔσσ]εταί μοι
 [γ]ερεῖα

If I . . . dedicate to another (?) will there be children for me?

16. SEG 43.332; Dakaris, Christidis, Vokotopoulou 1993: 55; M-38, (not PAE 1958: 104, no. 3 as recorded in SEG); c.350–320 BCE

Ἐπηστορεῖται Δεινοκλῆς Ἀπολλωνίατας τὸν Δία καὶ
τὸν Διώναν περὶ γενεᾶς τ[ί][ι] κα θεῶν θύων καὶ εὐχόμενος
ΦΥΗΤΕΒΟΙ καὶ γένοιτο κ' ἄρα γ[ενεά - -]

John Chadwick: ΦΥΗΤΕΒΟΙ = φυτεύουσι

Deinokles of Apollonia asks Zeus and Dione about offspring, whether by sacrificing and praying to which of the gods . . . would there be children

Concern about intercourse

Christidis suggested that these two texts are about abstaining from sexual intercourse (taking *θίγῶ* as part (possibly a corrupt aorist form?) of *θιγγάνω*) and indicate problems with having children.

17. Christidis; 500–480 BCE

Ἐ μὲ θίγῶ [- -]

Should I not have intercourse? . . .

18. Christidis; 450 BCE

θίγῶ
Ἄγῃσαρέτα

(If) I have intercourse with Agesareta.

For other tablets relating to children, see also:

Women 6: SEG 24.454a; Parke 1967c: 132–3, 133(1); BE 1968: 318; fourth to third century BCE

Property 1: Parke 3; Ep. Chron. 1935: 253, 10; fifth century BCE

Work

As we have seen, many of the questions about travel are closely related to concerns about work. As I have said, where the specific type of activity is included in the tablet (including mention of a *τέχνη*, ‘craft’) I have placed it in this category, but both categories are also cross-referenced.

In the majority of questions in this section, the inquirers name themselves (questions 1, 4, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17) and all are male. Most of these questions are concerned with very specific courses of action: herding, farmwork, bronze work, fishing, running a ship, and, possibly, working as a doctor. The consultants either name the activity involved, or they clearly have one in mind (for example, when they mention *τὰν τέχνην*). Only one of these

questions (14) possibly makes an open-ended inquiry to the oracle about what the consultant should do for work—and, as I've described above, this may, in fact, be less open than it appears. Question 10, one of three questions that involve taking a share in a boat, gives us some idea of how closely the oracle might be involved in day-to-day decisions. The consultant, Timodamos appears to be using divine guidance with some care as he plots his career path: the tablet mentions a previous instruction, suggesting that the consultant had already described his situation in some detail to the oracle in a previous visit. This question shows him returning to ensure that his subsequent activities were still going to do him good. Nevertheless, for all his concern to get oracular instruction, it is apparent that he retains his autonomy: despite the oracle's previous instruction to stay home and give up his share in a boat, he returns to ask about doing business by land and by sea. Question 13 may provide us with a model of the earlier question and answer between Timodamos and the god: Lysias asks the oracle, if he should put up with the sea and take a share in a boat. On the back of the tablet is what looks like the oracle's response, but it is difficult to be sure of the translation. It seems to say 'it is necessary to do nothing by land'.

Most of these questions concern doing well (*λάϊον καὶ ἄμεινον* 'better and more good'). A few mention profit explicitly (1, 14, 15). The consultant of question 15 shows some ambition, wanting to do well 'for all time', [*ἐς τὸν*] *ἄπ[α](ν)[τα] (χρ)[όνον]*.

In the unpublished material, according to Professor Christidis, there are general questions about employment. Other *technai* are named or implied, with phrases including *σκυτικά* (skill in shoe-making), *χαλκεύς* (smith's work or smithy/forge), *πέλεκαν* (an axe, so something to do with timber?), *μάγειρος* (butcher or cook), *πατρῶα τέχνη* (my father's craft), and *ὀρυχθεῖν* (*sic*, possibly from *ὀρύσσω* and relating to mining). These terms appear in such questions as 'Should I choose another craft or should I stick to my father's craft?'¹⁷

There are also specific questions about how a task is to be conducted, for example, about the allocation of timber: for example, 'Will I get the timber?' which Christidis suggests was asked by contractors in competition with each other. He also indicated the presence of other topics related to work, especially farming, including the state of the weather; the likelihood of a good harvest; and irrigation (*φρέαρ*), for example, 'Should I dig a well?'

Finally, I have included here question 17, by one Porinos, who identifies himself fully with patronymic and provenance. The phrasing of this question, written neatly in accurate Greek, gives a strong impression of its creator. It seems to be concerned with a career move, that is, whether Porinos

should serve a satrap and hyparch (the two titles seem to describe the same individual here, even if not the same office). But the verb *θεραπεύω* ‘to serve’ or ‘attend to’ could also mean ‘to treat medically’, raising the possibility that this neat request is written by a doctor, one of the itinerant professionals of this period, summoned by the satrap from Kymai, unsure of what to do, and seeking a prescription from the oracle to help with his uncertainty.

Herding

1. Parke 17; *SGDI* 1559; Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, 1; Thessalian dialect; Karapanos suggests that the inscription on side B is probably a summary of the contents of the inscription on side A.

Side A:

Ἐρουτᾶι Κλεούτ(ς) τὸν Δία καὶ τὰν
Διώναν, αἶ ἔστι αὐτοῖ προβατεύοντι
(ᾔ)ναιον καὶ ὠφέλιμον

Kleouts asks Zeus and Dione if it will be better and more profitable for him if he keeps cattle

Side B:

πὲρ προβα
τείας

About cattle herding

Farmwork

2. *Ep. Chron.* (1935: 258, 24); fifth century BCE

Ζεὺ Νάιε καὶ Διώνη καὶ σύννα[οι αἰ-
τῶ ὑ]μᾶς ἀγαθεὶ τύχει δοῦναι ἐ[μοὶ τὰν
γᾶν ἐργαζομένωι καὶ ἐν
. . . . ε ι λ .

O Zeus Naios and Dione and those dwelling alongside, whether you will give me good fortune as I work the land and in . . .

3. Christidis; 375–350 BCE

[- -]λλωνίδαί
[- -]οι μέλλει βέντι
[ον] καὶ ὄναιον ἦμεν
γασργέοντι τὸν χῶρον
τοῦτόν μοι τὸν κλᾶρο
ν ἐξενθῆν

The first line may contain the remains of the name of the consultant (*λλωνίδαι*), then the question seems to be ‘Whether it will be better and more useful for me if I farm this place’, and then there is reference to the *kleros* (*κλᾶρο*) or lot, which might, it was suggested by Christidis, refer to a lot oracle. However, it is also possible that it indicates the system of allotment that provided the consultant with his land. The verb *ἔξενθεν* could be related to *τίθημι* and be about putting or placing, providing something like ‘the land which was allocated to me . . .’.

4. SEG 43.331; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 14; PAE 1932; M-545; 340–330 BCE

Ἀγελόχῳ ἔξ
 Ἡεργετίῳ ἡο
 ρμημένῳ
 ἄμεινόν ἐστι
 γαοργῆ[ν]

Will it better for Agelochos (from Ergetion) if he sets out to be a farmer?

Bronze work

5. SEG 15.403; BE 1956: 143; PAE 1952: 304, 18; fourth century BCE

Side A:

Πότερα μ- - - - κα τὰν τέχναν ἐργαζομένῳ
 ὄναιον εἰ- - - -αν χαλκῆαν - - - - -

Whether it will be useful for me, if I work as a bronze smith (literally, ‘working the bronze craft’)

Side B:

- - - - -as τέχνα - - - - -

. . . craft . . .

Fishing (his father’s skill)

6. Parke 18; fourth century BCE

Θεός. Τύχαι ἀγαθαί. Φαινύλωι θεμιστεύει ὁ
 Θεός τὰμ πατρῶϊαν τέχναν ἐργάζεσθαι, ἀλιεύεσθαι
 καὶ λῳιον καὶ ἄμεινον πράξεω;

God. Good Luck. Does the god rule that Phainylos he should pursue his father’s craft, should fish and do better?

Unspecified skills

7. Ep. Chron. 1935: 254, 12; fifth century BCE

ἐ ἀποδαμον τύ-
 χομί κα
 ἐπὶ τὰν τέχναν

Whether if I went abroad I would do better at my trade?

8. PAE 1973: 94–9, 3; fourth century BCE

Θεός τύχα ἀγαθά, Ζεὺ Νάϊε κ[αὶ Διώνη]
ἐπερωτῆ τὸν Θεὸν ἢ τὰν τέχνην [λώϊον]
καὶ ἄμεινον πρᾶσση(ι) καὶ ἦ [- - -

God. Good fortune. O Zeus Naios and Dione. He asks the god whether he will do better at this craft, and whether . . . ?

9. Parke 19; SGDI 1568a; Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, 4

Τύχα ἀγαθά. Ἢ τυγχάνοιμι καὶ ἐμπορευόμενος
ὅπως καὶ δοκῆι σύμφορον ἔμειν, καὶ ἄγων, τῆι καὶ δοκῆι,
ἅμα τᾷ τεχνᾷ χρεούμενος

Good fortune. Whether I would do better travelling to where it seems good to me, and doing business there, if it seems good, and at the same time practising this craft.

Ship-related work

10. SEG 43.341; BE 1993: 346; PAE 1968: 53–4; Salviat 1993: 61–4; c.350–320 BCE

Side A:

Θεοί· Τύχαν ἀγαθάν·
ὁ Ζεὺ, ἀναίρει Τ[ι]μοδά-
μοι ἐμπ[ο]ρεύεσθαι
καὶ κατὰ γ[ᾶ]ν καὶ κατὰ θάλασσαν
τὰπὸ τὸ [ᾶ]ργυρίο, ὅσσον
καὺτὸς [h]έληται χρόνον
ταῦτα κράτιστα;

l. 4 added later in smaller script; side B, ll. 5–8 are a reaction to this insertion; l. 5 τὰπὸ τὸ [ᾶ]ργυρίο a reference to a silver mine owned by Timodamos, ed. pr. who connects this with B, l. 4—as the toponym indicating the location of the mine. Salviat prefers to interpret [ᾶ]ργυρίο: ‘engager de l’argent dans le négoce’. In B, l. 4 he restores γαύ[λοι], a *gaulos* being a merchant ship.

Gods. Good luck. O Zeus, will you tell Timodamos that these things are best: to do business by land and by sea, using money/his silver mine, for however much time he chooses?

Side B:

Θεοί· τύχαν ἀγαθάν· Ἐν τῷ
ἄστει οἰ[κ]ῆν καὶ καπηλεύ-
ην καὶ ἐμπ[ο]ρεύεσθαι, τὰ δ' ἐ-
ν τῷ γαυ. . ἐγδιδόμεν·
ἐμπορε[ύ]εσθαι δὲ χρήματα
ἄγοντα [καὶ] κατὰ γᾶν καὶ κα-
τὰ θάλασ[σα]ν, πωλόντα καὶ
ὠνόμ[ε]νο[ν]

ll. 3–4: ‘et céder ta part du gaulos,’ i.e., ‘louer, donner à bail ta part,’ according to Salviat who points out that a ship was commonly owned by several partners, and quotes various literary parallels. He suggests translating *χρήματα ἄγοντα* (ll. 5–6) as ‘en faisant circuler des marchandises’.

Salviat believes this question contains a question and a response, followed by a question and a response: Timodamos asks Zeus first of all if it would be good for him to do business with regards to his silver. The god’s first response advises him to live in the town and set up his workshop there, do business there, and give up his share in the boat. The consultant returns to find out if he should conduct his business by land or by sea and the oracle instructs him to do business on both land and sea, in selling and in buying.

Gods. Good fortune. Dwell in the city and work as a trader and do business, and give up the share in the boat. Trade on land and sea, selling and buying

11. *SGDI* 1583; Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, 3

Θεός. Τύχαι ἀγαθὰ[ι. Ἐπι]κοινῆτα[ι] Ἰππόστρατος τῶι Διὶ τῶι Νάωι καὶ τῶι Διώναι· ἦ μὴ ν[α](υ)κλαρη(ν) λώϊογ καὶ ἄμμεινομ πράσσοιμ

God. To good fortune. Hippostratos asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether he would not do better if he became a shipowner?

Profit: no specific task

12. *SEG* 15.398; *BE* 1956: 143; *PAE* 1952: 301, 5; fourth century BCE

*Θεός · τύχα ἀγαθὰ· ἐπερωτᾷ Λοχίσκος
τὰν Διώναν περὶ ἐργασίας εἰ κατὰ
θαλα . . . ζόμενος εὐτυχοῖ
καὶ βέλτιον πράσσοι*

BE: E. thought it could be *θάλα[τταν πλα]ζόμενος* but there is only space for 2 or 3 letters, for the sense it needs: *ἐργαζόμενος*

God. Good fortune. Lochiskos asks Dione about work, if by sea. . . by [doing something] he would have good fortune and fare better?

13. *SEG* 23.475; *PAE* 1958: 104–2

Side A:

*Θεός, τύχα · ἐρωτῆ Ἰυσίας τ-
ὸν θεὸν ἦ τυγχάνοι κα τᾶς θαλ-
λάσσης ἀντεχόμενος καὶ πε-
δέχων ναός*

God. Fortune. Lysias asks the god whether he will do better by sticking with the sea and taking a share of a ship

Side B:

γῆ οὐθὲν δεῖ τελεῖν

You should do nothing by land

14. Parke 25; SEG 15.405a; BE 1956: 143; PAE 1952: 305, 21; fourth century BCE

Θεοί · τύχη ἀγαθή ·

Ἀρίζηλος ἐπαερωτᾷ τὸν θεὸν

ὄ τι δρῶν ἢ ποιῶν λῶον καὶ ἄμεινον

ἔσται αὐτῷ καὶ χρημάτων κτήσις ἀγαθὴ ἔσται

Gods. Good fortune. Arizelos asks the god by doing or making what thing, if he will fare better and more well, and acquire good (acquisition of) property

15. SGDI 1560a; Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, 9

Ἐπερωτᾷ Κράτ[υλος Δία]

Νάον καὶ Διών[αν · αἴ ἔσ-]

τ(ι) α(ὐ)τοῖ οι ΜΡΗΑΦΙ [. . ὄναιον]

καὶ ὠφέ(λιμον) [καὶ τοῦ ἐ-]

(πι)όν[τος] κ(α)ὶ [ἐς τὸν]

ἄπ[α](ν)[τα] (χρ)[όνον]

Kratylos asks Zeus Naios and Dione if there is for him. . . useful and profitable, both in the near future and for all time?

16. Parke (1967a: 16); SGDI 1575; Karapanos 1878: pl. 35, 2a

[Θεός. Τύχαν ἀγαθάν. Τῷ Δὲ τῷ Ναῖ]ω καὶ τῷ Διώναι Σωκράτης ἐπικοι-[νήται,

ἦ] ἐργαζόμενος λῶιον καὶ ἄμεινον

[πράσσοι καὶ νῦν καὶ τοῦ εἰσιόντ]ος καὶ αὐτῷ καὶ γενεαῖ

God. Good Fortune. Sokrates asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether . . . by working, he will fare better both now and in the future, both for himself and his descendants

Service

17. Christidis; 340–320 BCE

Θεός τύχαι ἀγαθαὶ καὶ Διὶ Προνάωι καὶ Διώναι· Πορίνος

Κυμαῖος Εὐανδρου εἰρωτᾷ τὸν θεὸν εἰ τὸν ξατράπην

καὶ ὑπαρχον θεραπεύοντ[ι] λῶιον καὶ ἄμεινον ἔσται

God. To good fortune and Zeus Pronaios and Dione. Porinos of Kymae, son of Euandros, asks the god if he would do well if he served the Satrap and Hyparch

For other tablets relating to work, see also:

Travel 1: SEG 43.335; Dakaris, Christidis, Vokotopoulou 1993: 58; M-4; archaic
Korinthian alphabet; 550–525 BCE

Travel 12: *BE* 1996: 226, 11; *SEG* 43.328; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 11; 330–320 BCE; M-122; *PAE* 1967: 48–9, 4; *BE* 1969: 348

Travel 15: *SEG* 24.454b; *BE* 1968: 318; Parke (1967c: 133(2)); fourth to third century BCE

Travel 18: *SGDI* 1561c; Karapanos 1878: pl. 35; reverse of plate

Travel 20: *SEG* 15.387; *PAE* 1952: 301/2, 7

Travel 24: *SEG* 15.394; *BE* 1956: 143; *PAE* 1952: 300–1, 4; fifth to fourth century BCE

Slavery

Most of these questions are from the unpublished material, and were kindly supplied to me by Professor Christidis. They include questions by both slaves and masters and, for the most part, concern a slave's freedom, particularly the question of obligations following manumission. There are also less coherent questions that concern a court case (11); 'about the price of a slave' (10) and 'some kind of servant' (9).¹⁸ What kinds of slaves are present at Dodona is not clear from the questions: for example, were they public slaves, perhaps locally employed, or domestic slaves who had arrived with their owners at the sanctuary? Tablet 12, which may be a response from the oracle, suggests that they might be *χωρὶς οἰκοῦντες* (the editors suggest that *Δίχα οἰκέσιος* is a west Greek equivalent for this phrase). These were privately owned 'slaves who lived apart', living and working outside the home of their owner, often in a workshop set up with their owner's capital, and paying their owners all or some of what they earned. Some of these slaves enjoyed a high level of freedom, even of income, and it does not seem inconceivable that they might make their way to Dodona, even if it meant travelling quite a distance.¹⁹

In question 5 an unnamed slave asks about freedom from his master, specifically about continuing in service after manumission (*παραμονή*); question 1 also includes the phrase, *περὶ ἐλευθερίας* and so its protagonist may have had the same intent, and it may be the inquiry of a slave (the name *Ἀνθρόπος* certainly suggests that this is so). Kittos in question 6 asks if he will obtain the freedom that his master Dionysios has promised him. The questions of these slaves, in contrast with those asked by their fellow free inquirers, tend to be formulated in terms of 'Whether *x* will happen' ('... or not', understood); Will it be something good? (7); 'Will Kittos get the freedom from Dionysios that Dionysios promised him?' (6). The exception to this is Leuka's question (3), which uses the comparative, 'Whether Leuka would do better if she stays put?' This seems to suggest that, unless they were consulting about breaking the law, these slaves came to the oracle not

to find out how best to craft a route between several possible options, but merely to find out from the god what fate (and their masters) held in store for them.

Those consultants who intend to run away are, on the whole, quite straightforward about their plans, making no attempt to conceal them. It is not difficult to imagine the motivations behind these questions, but to find them asked at an established oracle implies that the gods could be asked to sanction acts which pitted slave against citizen. This raises questions about the kinds of situations in which it could have been considered culturally legitimate for a slave to seek to escape from his or her owner,²⁰ perhaps when the slave had been ill-treated, for example, but there is no evidence for this from the questions themselves. And it was not just the slaves who were contemplating illegal action. The person who asked question 8 wanted to re-enslave an individual who had been freed. It may provide another example of the god being asked to sanction what was probably an illegal action—although, again, there may have been mitigating circumstances.

We may have some idea of how the oracle reacted to such questions: the phrases either side of question 4 could be construed as a question by a slave about his possible fortune if he ran away ('what will happen if I leave?') and a response. The grammar of the question implies that it was asked by a man, although it is always possible that this is an inaccuracy of the inscription. The oracle's answer, if that is what it is, is succinct. It seems to say 'the woman stays', but *μένε* may be an imperative, in which case it says something like, 'the woman, stay!' If the consultant was a man, this might refer to a partner; if a woman, perhaps this should be read as an order not to leave. As noted above, tablet 12 may provide another example of a response.

In the unpublished material, Professor Christidis told me there are many questions that come under this category, posed by both slaves and masters. The theme of *παραμονή* is common. There is also a question about runaway slaves (*φεύγοντες*) and a couple of questions where the master is interested in the price he will get in the context of manumission. In addition, there are a number of questions about ransoms, which are likely to be connected to relatives who have been captured in war and enslaved.

Questions by slaves

1. Christidis; 450 BCE

Ἄνθρωπος[ος]

[π]ερὶ ἐλευ[θερίας]

Anthropos, about freedom

2. Christidis; 420–400 BCE

Θεὸς τύχα ἀγαθὰ
 Ραζία ἐπέθετο
 αἰ διαλλαγὰ μέλλει
 γενέσθαι ἀπο Τεῖ
 τύκῳ ζόοντος
 καὶ ἀποχώρησ(ις).

God, good fortune. Razia asks whether she will attain an agreement from Teitukos while he lives and a place of safety?

3. Christidis; 420–400 BCE

Λε
 ὑκα πότερα με[ί]
 [ν]ασα ἢ βέντιον εἴη

Whether Leuka would do better if she stays put?

4. SEG 15.389; PAE (1952: 303, 10); Korinthian letters; fifth century BCE; A and B could be construed as a question and a response.

Side A:

ἢ ἰφὼν τυνχάνω

What will happen to me if I leave?/Shall I make it happen?

Side B:

ἀ γυνὰ
 μένε

The woman remains/O woman stay!

5. Christidis; 375–350 BCE

[- - -]ν ἐπερωτῆ τὸν θεὸν τί κα ποι
 [έων] περὶ ἐλευθερίας ἔστι αὐτῶι
 [παραμο]νὰ παρ τὸν δεσπότα

... asks the god what he should do about his freedom and whether he will gain *paramone* from his master?

6. Christidis; 350 BCE

Κίττωι εἰ ἐστὶ ἢ ἐλευ
 [θ]ερία ἢ παρὰ Διονυσίου
 ἦν οὖν ἔθετ' αὐτῶι
 Διονύσιος

Will Kittos get the freedom from Dionysios that Dionysios promised him?

7. PAE 1931: 89–91, 3; fourth to third century BCE

Ἡ ἀπιούσα ἄλλ[ο] τι μοι αγαθὸν
ἐσσειται
Διοι . . . τ . τ κ .

Whether, by leaving, there will be something else that is good for me, Zeus. . . ?

Questions by masters

8. Christidis; 475–450 BCE

Ἔ ἀμδῶλό
μα μὲ ἄγσῶ
ΠΑ [- - -]

Whether I should re-enslave PA

(Taking Christidis' suggestion that ἀμδῶλόμα is a mistake for ἀναδουλούμαι, I re-enslave)

9. Christidis; 420–380 BCE

[- - -] Α Υ . . . [- - -]
καλαπαίδω[ν]
. . . of a servant

10. Christidis; 400–375 BCE

Θεὸς τύχαν ἀ[γαθάν· περι] ἀνθρ]
ὥπου τιμᾶς

God. Good fortune. About the price of a slave

11. Christidis; 350–330 BCE

Τοῦ ἀνδραπόδου {ου} τὰν δίκαν δικα
ξοῦμαι Σκιδάρκας ὦκα τού[τ]αν

Shall I, Skidarkas, proceed quickly with this private legal case of the enslaved captive?

(This seems to be about a man who had been illegally enslaved. This was a serious crime in Athens, at least, and a range of procedures were available against it: see Din. 1.23; Lys. 23.9–10; cf. Todd 1993: 187)

Possible response

12. BE 1998: 202; *Poikila Epigraphika* no. 3; M-163; beginning of fourth century BCE

Δίχα οἰκέσιος

Slaves living apart

For other tablets relating to slavery, see also Parke 26; *SEG* 15.385; *BE* 1956: 143; *PAE* 1952: 298–300; fifth century BCE (listed in this catalogue under Crime: Kidnapping 1).

Health/Disease

The majority of these questions concern which god(s) the consultant should pray to (e.g., question 1: *τίνι θεῶν θύουσα*) in order either to be released from sickness (*νόσου* or *νοσήματος*, for example 1, 2, and 3) or to retain his/her health (*ὑγεία* for example, 4, 5); or both (3). A number of these inquiries are made on behalf of others: question 6 is a request for health on behalf of the consultant, his father and brothers; the consultant of question 7 makes a longer-term inquiry both for himself and for his descendants; and question 9 appears to be about the (male) consultant's son.

Questions 1 and 2 are both inquiries by women: questions 5 and 8 give no indications of the gender of the consultant; the rest of the questions are by men. Among the more general references to disease or health, the eyes occur explicitly in two of these questions (8 and 10), and the foot (a supplement in the text) of a child is mentioned in question 9. Professor Christidis told me that in the unpublished material there are further questions specifically related to the eyes, and also to hearing, skin disease, tumour, jaundice, and paralysis. There is also apparently a question about what we might call a mental or emotional state—*περὶ ἀθυμίας*—but at the time of writing no more is known.

One final point: question 6 appears to have been answered—and the response is intriguing. The question asks to which god the consultant should sacrifice in order to gain health for himself and various members of his family. But the god's answer appears to be a directive to travel. It is possible, of course, that this is actually a fragment from, or an answer to, another question. It may also be that the text, if complete, included information about a particular god or sanctuary that the consultant should visit. Even so, it suggests that sometimes the answers from the oracle did not simply comprise 'yes' or 'no' or the name of a god, nor, perhaps, were they predictable.

Disease

1. Karapanos 1878: pl. 35; side B

[*Ἐπερωτᾶ . . .*] *α τίνι θεῶν θύουσα*
 [*καὶ εὐχομένα ἄμεινον*] *πράσσοι καὶ τᾶς νόσου*
 [*ἀπαλλαχθεῖν*]

She asks by sacrificing and praying to which of the gods would she do better and be released from this disease?

2. Parke 15; SGDI 1561b (put together from two separate tablets, cf. Children); Karapanos 1878: pl. 38

Ἱστορεῖ Νικοκράτ[ει]α τίνι θεῶν θύουσα
 λώιον καὶ ἄμεινον πρᾶσσοι καὶ τᾶς νόσου
 παύσα(ι)το

Nikokrateia asks by sacrificing to which of the gods would she do better and be relieved of her disease?

Health

3. Parke 13; fourth to third century BCE

Θεός . τύχα . Ἱστορεῖ Λεόντιος περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ
 Λεόντος ἢ ἔσσεται ὑγεία τοῦ νοσήμα-
 τος τοῦ ἐπιμ . . . του ὃ λάζεταί νιν

God. Luck. Leontios asks about his son Leon, whether he will be healthy and (cured) of the disease which has gripped him?

And on the back: Λεοντινου Π Ε

Of Leontinos

4. SGDI 1566a; Doric dialect

[Ἐπικουῆται . . .] ασσχ .
 [Δι καὶ Διώναι, τί]νι κα θεῶ-
 [ν ἢ δαιμόνων ἢ ἡρ]ῶων εὐχ[ό -]
 [μενος καὶ θύων] ὑγιῆς εἶη

1. 1 Hoffman: [Ἄν]άσσχ[ετος]

He asks . . . by praying and sacrificing to Zeus and Dione and to which of the gods or *daimons* or heroes might he be healthy?

5. SGDI 1577a

[τύχ]αν [ἀ]γαθάν. [E](ρ)[ω]τη
 ὑγιε[ίας]

Good fortune. He/she asks . . about health

6. SGDI 1587a and b

Side A:

Θεός[ς· Τύ]χα ἀγα-
 θά· Ἐρ[ωτ]εῖ Ἄντιό -
 χος[ς τὸ]ν Δί(α) καὶ τὰν
 Διών[α]ν ὑπὲρ ὑγι -
 είας [α]ὑτοῦ καὶ πα-

τρὸς καὶ ἀδελφ -
 âς· τ[ί]να θεῶν
 ἢ ἡρ[ώω]ν τιμᾶν-
 τι λ[ώ]ϊον καὶ ἄ -
 μεινον εἴη

God. Good Fortune. Antiochos asks Zeus and Dione about his health and that of his father and brother. By honouring which of the gods or heroes will he be better?

Side B:

Εἰς Ἑρμι

όνα

όρμά

σα

⟨α⟩ντι·

To/for him setting off to Hermione (probably a response)

Kekule and Winnefeld (1909: 41) note that Demeter Thermasia had a sanctuary at Hermione

7. Parke 12; *SGDI* 1564; Karapanos 1878: pl. 36, 5

[ἐπικουῆται Σωκράτ -]
 (η)ς Ἀμβρακιάτ[ας]
 Διὸς Νάωι καὶ Διῆ [ώναι]
 Περὶ ὑγιείας αὐτοῦ [καὶ]
 τῶν ὑπαρχόντων
 καὶ εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα [χρ -]
 όνον, τίνος θεῶν [ί -]
 λασκόμενος λώϊον
 καὶ ἄμεινον πρά[σσοι].

Sokrates, from Ambrakia, asks Zeus Naios and Dione about his health, both current matters and into the future. By appeasing which of the gods will he fare better?

Specific parts of the body

8. *PAE* 1973: 96, 4; fourth to third century BCE

περὶ τῶν ὀφθαλ -
 μῶν

About the eyes

9. *SGDI* 1588; Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, 8

Ἐπερωτεῖ Ἀμύντας

Δ[ία Νά]ϊον καὶ Διῶναν·

ἦ λώϊον καὶ ἄμει-
 [νον το]ῦ παιδὸς
 [πόδα] παγάσασθαι

I. 5 Karapanos: ἀγάσασθαι (?)

Amyntas asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether it would be advantageous to [verb uncertain] his child's foot?

10. Parke 14

Θ]ρασύβουλος τίνι κα θεῶν θύσ[as]
 καὶ ἠιλαξάμενος τὸς ὀπτίλ[os]
 ὑγιέστερος γένοιτο;

Thrasymboulos (asks) by having sacrificed to and appeased which of the gods, would I become healthier with regard to his eye?

For other tablets relating to health/disease, see also Work 17: Christidis; 340–320 BCE (if *θεραπεύοντ[ι]* indicates 'cure' rather than 'serve' or 'attendance on').

Property

In this category I have included three questions which contain, as an introductory phrase *περὶ πανπασίας* (questions 1, 2, and 3), which I take to mean property of all types (a phrase that is also found in question 5 of the Travel category, in which the consultant is asking whether or not he should move to Kroton). Question 1 mentions property as part of a general request to prosper in all areas of life. The second two questions are too fragmentary to supply much beyond this, although question 2 seems to have received an answer, which gives us some idea of the question's formulation, at least. The response comprises directions for making libations, including a list of gods and heroes, which makes it likely that the consultant asked the oracle to whom he should make sacrifice in order to achieve his desires.

The rest of the questions in this category focus on specific aspects of property. Question 4 appears to be a consultation about the advisability of living in a newly built, or another, house. The following four questions are all concerned with the wisdom of specific real estate ventures: question 6 about purchasing a house and land in the city; question 7 seems to be about whether it is a good idea to sell a property to one Aristophantos; and question 8 is about buying a particular pond. These all seem to be questions by the consultant in his own interest, but Alkinoos asks on behalf of someone else (5): 'Would it be better and more good for Nikeas to build a workshop?'

The majority of the questions are demonstrably written by men. Four include their names in their question (2, 3, 5, 7); the others mention a wife (1) or use masculine forms of participles to describe their actions (4, 6, 8).

Requests concerning *panpasia*

1. Parke 3; *Ep. Chron.* (1935: 253, 10); never folded; irregular grammar; fifth century BCE

περὶ πανπασίῳ αὐτοῦ
καὶ γενεᾶς καὶ γυναικῶ-
ς τῶν θεῶν εὐχόμενος
πράσσοιμι ἀγαθὰν

About all my property, my children and my wife's, by praying to which god would he fare well?

2. SEG 15.391c; BE 1956: 143, 22; PAE 1952: 305, 22; fifth century BCE

Side A:

Δάμυς περὶ πανπ[ασίας --]

ε . . . ν -----

περὶ γαεν-----

l. 1 Damys, about all my property

Side B:

Θεὸς . Διὶ πατροίωι περὶ . . . ιο

Τύχαι λοιβὰν

Ἡρακλεὶ Ἐρεχθεῖ(ῖ)

Ἀθάναι Πατροία[ι]

On the back of the tablet on the left; possibly a response and something to do with libations:

God . . . to Zeus the father, concerning . . . to Fortune a libation, to Herakles Erechtheis, to Athena Patroa (of our homeland)

3. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 254, 11; fourth century BCE

Θεός· τύχα ἀγαθὰ· ἐπ-

ιστορεῖ Γλαυκίας τὸν Διώναν πε-

ρὶ πανπασίας ἢ ἔστι . . .

τε καὶ περὶ ανοσκαία . . .

God. Good fortune. Glaukias asks Dione about possessions, whether it is . . .

And about [. . .]

Housing

4. SGDI 1569a

[Θεός· τύχαν ἀγ]αθάν. Πότερα τυγχ[άνοιμι τὰν]
[νεωστὶ οἰκοδο](μ)ητὰν ἢ ἄλλαν οἴκησ[ιν ἔχων]

God. Good luck. Whether I will meet with advantage by having the structure recently built, or by another dwelling

Business ventures

5. Parke 21; fourth century BCE

Θεός. Τύχη. ἐπικουῆται Ἀλκίνοος τῶι
Διὶ τῶι Ναίωι καὶ τῶι Διώναι εἰ λ[ύσιον]
καὶ ἄμεινον Νικέαι κατασκευάζ[ειν]
τὸ ἐργαστήριον

God. Fortune. Alkinoos asks Zeus Naios and Dione if it will be to the advantage of Nikeas to build the workshop?

6. Parke 20; SGDI 1573; Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, 1

Ἦ αὐτὸς πεπαμένος τὰν ἐ(μ) πόλι οἰκίαν καὶ τὸ χωρί-
ον βέλτιοι μοι κ' εἶη καὶ πολυωφελέ(σ)τε(ρ)ον.

Whether, by having acquired the house in the city and the piece of land, it would be better for me and more profitable?

7. SGDI 1581; Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, 7

[Θεός· Ἐπι]κουῆ[ται Θέμις τῶι]
[Διὶ τῶ]ι Ναίωι κ[αὶ τῶι Διώναι· ἦ]
κα (λ)ώ(ι)ο(ν) Θέμι ἔ(σ)[ται καὶ ἄμεινον]
τὸ ἀνώγειον, τ[ὸ ἔδωκε Ἀριστοφ -]
άντῳ, ἀπ(ο)δ[όμεν . . .]
. . . (ῥ)στερον δ[ε μὴ]

God. Themis asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether it will be better for him to return the rope, which he gave to Aristophantos . . . later or not at all?

8. SEG 19.432; PAE 1955: 172, b

ἦ τὸ λίμνιον τὸ πὰρ τὸ Δαμάτριον πριάμενος πράξω τι
ἀγαθὸν κατ' τοῦτον Φ P E Λ . Σ < I I

Whether by buying the marsh by the Damatrion [temple of Demeter?] I will do a good thing and this . . .

See also Travel 5: SEG 43.325; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 8; *Ep. Chron.* 1935; M-47; c. 400 BCE.

Prosperity/Safety

The first and last questions in this category concern how to ‘do better and more well’ as an end in itself. The first consultant (the participles suggest he is male) limits his inquiry to this, without relating it to any specific area of life. Question 6 posed by one Euandros on behalf of himself and his anonymous wife makes the same inquiry, but in much more detail. As with many of the oracle questions, he sets up his question using the formula that is often found opening city decrees *Θε(ο)ί. Τύχαν ἀγαθάν* (‘Gods; Good Luck’), and suggests a range of supernatural personnel to whom he is willing to make sacrifice. He seeks prosperity not just now, but *καὶ νῦν καὶ ἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον* that is, ‘both now and for all time’. The unpublished material apparently contains a range of similar questions about how to ensure prosperity, often phrased as ‘Which god should I pray to in order that . . .?’

Questions 3 and 4 explicitly concern *σωτηρία* or *ἀσφάλεια* (‘safety’ or ‘security’). Question 3 offers little beyond this. In contrast, question 4, which appears to have been written by a trader anxious for his ship, is much more detailed. The consultant, Archephon, had apparently been to consult the god on a previous occasion: the ship he owns was made in accordance with Apollo’s previous instruction. Tablet 5 appears to be a response of some kind, denying the possibility of safety, although there will be good business.

Professor Christidis told me that in the unpublished material *ἀσφάλεια* or *σωτηρία* are popular subjects for questions. Often they provide little indication of the particular danger involved, but a number were clearly written by people concerned about the state of family members who had been taken prisoner.

1. SEG 15.395; BE 1956: 143; PAE 1952: 303, 13; fifth to fourth century BCE

[τ]ίνι κα θεῶι εὐ-
χόμενος καὶ θύ-
ων βέλτιον πράσ-
σοι;

To which god should he pray and sacrifice so that his fortunes might improve?

2. SEG 15.402; PAE 1952: 303, 14; ὕστερον (third line) is in Korinthian letters; fourth century BCE

[Θε]ὸς . τύχα . [ἦ] ἐπιμ . . νάσας
λῶν καὶ ἄμινον πράσοιμ-
ι ἀτύκα καὶ ἰς τὸν ὕστερον χρόνον;

God . . . Luck . . . whether . . . would I do better and more well, now and into the future?

3. PAE 1967: 49, 5; BE 1969: 348, 5; fourth century BCE

[Ζεὺ Νάϊε καὶ Διώνη να]ῖα Θέμι καὶ Ἀπολλ[ον - - -]
[- - - σωτ]ηρίας καὶ τύχης ἀ - - -

Zeus Naios and Dione Naia and Themis and Apollo . . . of safety and of fortune . . .

4. PAE 1967: 50, 7; BE 1969: 348, 7; third century BCE

Ω Ζεὺ καὶ Θέμι καὶ Διώνη Νάϊοι | Ἀρχεφῶν
τὰν νᾶ | ἄν ἐναυπαγησατο(ν), κελο-
μένο το Ἀπόλλωνος, ἔχω κατὰ χῶ-
ραν · καὶ σωτηρία μοι ἔσσειται καὶ ἐμὴν
καὶ τᾷ ναῖ, αἶκα καὶ τὰ χρέα ἀποδ(ώ)σω
να = Dorian form of ναῦν

Zeus and Themis and Zeus Naios, I, Archephon have the ship in place, built according to the order of Apollo. Will there be safety for me and the ship, and will I pay back what is needed?

5. BE 1984: 231–3; PAE 1982: 29; bronze tile; response of the oracle; fourth century BCE

οὐκ ἐστι ἀσφάλεια ἀλλ' ἀπωλέωντι πάντα

It is not safe but for the man destroying everything

6. Parke 1; SGDI 1582a; Karapanos 1878: pl. 34, 3

Θε(ο)ί. Τύχαν ἀγαθάν. Ἐπικουῆται Εὐβαν-
δρος καὶ ἡ γυνὴ τῶι Διὲ τῶι Νάωι καὶ τᾷ Δι-
ώνηι, τίνι κα θεῶν ἢ ἡρώων ἢ δαιμόνων
εὐχόμενοι καὶ φύοντες λώϊον καὶ ἄμεινο-
ν πράσσοιεν καὶ αὐτοὶ καὶ ἡ οἴκησις καὶ νῦν
καὶ ἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον

Gods. Good luck. Eu[b?]-andros and his wife ask Zeus Naios and Dione by praying to which of the gods or heroes or daimons and sacrificing will they and their household do better both now and for all time.

For other tablets relating to prosperity/safety, see also:

Travel 12: BE 1996: 226, 11; SEG 43.328; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 11; 330–320 BCE;
M-122; PAE 1967: 48–9, 4; BE 1969: 348

Women 15: SGDI 1568b

Women 16: *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 260, 36b

Ritual activity

The text of question 1 is fragmentary to the point of non-existence, but the accompanying drawing on the tablet may have a magical implication, which could imply that the consultant was asking ‘to which of the gods’ he should pray in order to have a child. Question 2 asks about hiring one Dorios, a *ψυχαγωγός* or spirit-raiser, one of the men or women, already discussed, who travelled from place to place offering supernatural services. It looks as if this could be about a situation facing a group of people, perhaps a community, and this brings to mind stories of other communities that are reported to have hired such characters. *Psychagōgoi* start appearing in literature in the fifth century, although they are described as being active in late seventh/early sixth-century events.²¹ Their primary activity seems to have been to lay angry ghosts who were causing trouble for communities or individuals, but some may also have been involved in ritual activity designed to harm.²² Again, on the back of this tablet, there is what seems to be an abbreviated reference to the question.

Question 3 is extremely brief: the editors suggest that this is a new ritual term, related to *τριθῦται* found on another tablet (unpublished, M-1098 in the Ioannina museum). They associate this with a triple sacrifice known in Attika as *τρίττοια* or *τρίττοα βόαρχος*.²³

See also the mention of a curse in Judicial Activity 2; and there are a number of questions that may be about supernatural ways of doing harm (depending on the translation of *pharmakon* as something involving supernatural activity or simply as poison) in Past/Present: Crime: Murder.

1. Christidis, Dakaris, Vokotopoulou (C–D–V) 1999: no. 2; M-269; second quarter fifth century BCE; Under line 2 there is a drawing that resembles the so-called ‘clé sur la matrice’ (the womb together with a key), which is found on later Graeco-Egyptian intaglios. C–D–V suggest that it may be related to a *φυσικλείδον* (‘key to the vagina’), a much later spell intended to unlock the womb. Here it may be intended as a ‘magical reinforcement’ of the question being asked.

 [- - - - -] *ας πέρ* [- - - - -]
 [θεῶν τίν] *ι εὐχό[μενος - -]*

1. 3 Praying to which of the gods?

2. Christidis, Dakaris, Vokotopoulou 1999: no. 5; *BE* 1938: 153; *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 257, 23; fourth century BCE C–D–V: c.420–410 BCE

[- - - Δι] *τῶι Νάωι καὶ τῶι Διῶναι· ἧ μὴ χρῆνται Δωρίωι τῶ[ι] ψυχαγωγῶι;*

To Zeus Naios and Dione, whether or not they should hire Dorios the spirit-raiser?

On the outer side of the question the name Dorios apparently recurs in an abbreviated form: Δώρι(-).

3. *BE* 1998: 202; *Poikila Epigraphika*: no. 1; *SEG* 1997, 819; M-89b; beginning of fourth century BCE

Ἡ τριθυτικόν

Whether (to make) the triple sacrifice?

For other tablets relating to ritual activity, see also:

Future Concerns: Judicial Activity 2: C–D–V 1999: no.3; M-186; mid-fourth century BCE

Past/Present Concerns: Crime 7: C–D–V 1999: no. 1; M-257; very early fourth century BCE

Crime 8: C–D–V 1999: no. 4; M-433; c.340–320 BCE

Military campaigns

There are two questions in this category. The second asks whether ‘it would be better and more good’ for the consultant to set off on an expedition against Antiochos, possibly, but by no means certainly, King Antiochos I, who ruled the Seleucid empire c.281–261 BCE.

The first question asks whether the inquirer should campaign by land: the consultant could be asking about whether the expedition should happen at all or whether he should join an existing land expedition. Since the other side of the tablet contains a response from the oracle to ‘stay on land’, it is most likely that he was asking about the route for the campaign. Professor Christidis noted that there are a number of questions regarding mercenary service in the unpublished material.

1. *BE* 1998: 202; *Poikila Epigraphika*: no. 2; *SEG* 47.820; M-96; first quarter of fourth century

Side A:

Στρατεύομαι
κατὰ γᾶι

Shall I go by land?

Side B:

Ἐπὶ γᾶι σκέθῃ | τέλεος

Stay on land: completely (on the back, possibly a response)

2. SEG 15.407; BE 1956: 143; PAE 1952: 304, 15; fourth to third century BCE

Ἀγαθὴ Τύχη· ἐπερωτᾷ Ἀργεῖ . λ [Δί]α Νᾶον καὶ Διώναν
εἰ λῶον καὶ ἄμεινον εἰτῶνι ἀνελλθόντα στρατεύ-
εσθαι ἐπ' Ἀντίοχον

SEG: l. 2. ἔσται

Good Fortune. He [Argei . . . ?] asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether it is advantageous to set off on campaign against Antiochos?

Judicial activity

There are two inquiries in this category. The first question seems to concern a court case against a neighbour and/or over a dwelling place. The inquiry specifically mentions victory. Although this is an example of a question genre given by Plutarch in *Moralia* 386c, this explicit request to win is rare among the published questions. The second, difficult to read, seems to concern the advisability of going to court (l. 3 *δικαζόμενος*) and, if one accepts the translation of *ἐπάρασιος* as something to do with a curse, is about how a curse would affect the outcome of a court case (and so I have also listed it under the category Ritual Activity).²⁴ Professor Christidis reported that in the unpublished material there are also questions about who will win a court case; whether or not to go to court; and arbitration, including conciliation (*δίαιτα* and *ὀμόνοια*).

1. SEG 15.391a; BE 1956: 143, 22; PAE 1952: 305, 22; fifth century BCE

BE: It is difficult to decipher, but without doubt has something to do with a judicial situation.

Θεός · τύχα · Διαι ται ικ
εύμενος νικε ὑπέρ τοῦ χο
εου τοῦ Ἀριστογειτοσα
πεδοιοχι τὸς ἀντιδίκος
καὶ τὰς Φοικίας

God. Fortune. If he beseeches Zeus for victory on behalf of . . . the judicial opponents and the households

2. Christidis, Dakaris, Vokotopoulou 1999: no. 3; M-186; mid-fourth century BCE

Ἐπικουνῆται Σώσανδρος [πέρ]
τὰς ἐπαράσιος τὰς Ἄλε [max. 4]
ἦ τυγχάνοι “μὶ”* κα δικάζομ[ενος;]

* The *μ* appears to have been added by the writer after that line of text was completed. The editors observe that the *τ* of *τυγχάνοι* has two verticals.

Sosandros asks about the curse of Ale . . . whether I would do well if I went to court?

For other tablets relating to judicial activity, see also Slavery: Questions by Masters, 11.

City affairs and politics

The first question in this section asks about the advantages of citizenship both now ‘and into the future’. I have also included references to four questions in other categories, which appear to show their protagonists paying attention to details of their citizen status (see Women 6 and Travel 11, 14, and 17, respectively); see discussions under the relevant categories. Professor Christidis told me that in the unpublished material there are a number of questions about taking up citizenship in another city.²⁵ There are also questions asking whether the protagonist is going to be selected as *θεωρός*. This word can indicate the title of a magistrate, and sometimes the envoy sent to consult an oracle; the precise meaning in these texts is not clear.²⁶

Although the second tablet is fragmentary beyond reading, I have included it here because of its mention of Arybbas (side B, l. 2), which appears to have been a name in the Molossian royal family.²⁷ The subject matter of the consultation seems to have been stated at the beginning of the question, in the usual *περί* clause, but unfortunately is broken off mid-way, leaving us to speculate about what the second word might have been.

1. *SGDI* 1589; Karapanos 1878: pl. 35, 3

*Ἡ αἰτέωμαι ΤΑΝΙ
πολιτείαν ἐπὶ ταύτῃ
ἢ τοῦ εἰσιόντος*

Shall I request citizenship this year or next?

2. *SEG* 23.476; *PAE* (1958: 104, no. 3)

Side A:

περὶ ὑποσυγι- - - - πηωνεωμλ (?)

About . . . (unclear)

Side B (possibly a response?):

*οδοτος δὲ εἰμὴ πέμπω
ποτ' Ἀρύββαν, ἀλλ' αὐτεῖ μένη - - -*

But if I do not send to Arybbas, but it stays here . . .

For other tablets relating to city affairs, see also:

Travel 17: *BE* 1996: 226, 13; *SEG* 43.330; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 13; M-46; early third century BCE

Travel 11: *SEG* 43.326; Vokotopoulou 1992; no. 9; *Ep. Chron.* 1935; M-1052; 340–330 BCE

Travel 14: *BE* 1969: 348, 6; *PAE* 1967: 33–54, 6; fourth century BCE

Women 6: *SEG* 24.454a; Parke 1967c: 133(1); *BE* (1968: 318); fourth to third century BCE

See also Work 17: Christidis; 340–320 BCE (if *θεραπεύοντ[ι]* indicates ‘attendance on’ rather than ‘serve’ or ‘cure’)

Past/Present concerns

Crime

Most of the questions dealing with events from the past are concerned with crimes—and most of these are direct questions about stolen property, asking for confirmation of a suspect’s guilt. There are some exceptions: question 1 offers a number of suspects, and it is possible that this is a description of a gang; while in another (4), the question is aimed at establishing the fact of foul play, but no suspect is named. Objects mentioned as stolen include: silver, wool, blankets and pillows, clothing, and possibly, Parke suggests of question 5, a horse.²⁸ Professor Christidis told me that in the unpublished material, sacred property is also mentioned.

Under the subheading Murder, questions 7 and 8 inquire about responsibility for the past application of what may be natural or unnatural ways of doing harm.²⁸ Question 10 is fragmentary and hard to make sense of, but seems to be about somebody that has died (*τέθνακε*). Professor Christidis told me that in the unpublished material there are a number of questions about murders. As with stolen property, these are usually concerned with identifying the perpetrator (*ὁ αἴτιος*).

Kidnapping

1. Parke 26; *SEG* 15.385; *BE* 1956: 143; *PAE* 1952: 298–300; fifth century BCE

[Θ]εός · τύχα ἀγαθά · -οὐκ ἀνδρ(α)ποδίξατο Ἀρχωνίδας
τὸν Ἀριστοκλέος ἄοζον οὐδὲ Ἀρχέβιος ὁ Ἀρχωνίδα υ-
ιὸς οὐδὲ Σώσανδρος ὁ Ἀρχωνίδα δούλος τόκα ἐὼν
ἢ τὰς γυναικός;

God. Good fortune. Did not Archonidas enslave the son of Aristokles, and Archebios the son of Archonidas and Sosandros who was then the slave of Archonidas or of his wife?

Stolen/lost property

2. SEG 15.400; BE 1956: 143; PAE 1952: 303, 11; fourth century BCE

Βοστρύχα ἃ Δόρκωνος ἠδυκε κι [. . . ἄ] -
ργύριον τὸ Δίων ἀπώλεσε ξ
τοῖς νῦν Ἀκτίοις, ὦ Ζεῦ Νᾶε κ[αὶ Δίωνα - -]

Seems to be asking about Bostrycha, the (wife) of Dorkos (l. 1 Βοστρύχα ἃ Δόρκωνος) and something to do with the silver which Dion lost (ll. 1–2 ἄ]-ργύριον τὸ Δίων ἀπώλεσε) . . . Something is said about Aktion, and the question ends with an invocation of Zeus Naios and Dione (l. 3 τοῖς νῦν Ἀκτίοις, ὦ Ζεῦ Νᾶε κ[αὶ Δίωνα - -])

3. Ep. Chron. 1935: 259, 32; fourth to third century BCE

ἔκλεψε Θωπίων τὸ ἀργύριον;
Did Thopion steal the silver?

4. Parke 27; SGDI 1586; Karapanos 1878: pl. 36, 1

Ἐρωτεῖ Ἄγισ Δία Νάον [καὶ Διώναν]
ὑπὲρ τῶν στρωμάτων κ[αὶ τῶν προσ -]
κεφαλαίων, τὰ ἀπώλολ[ε]
ἢ τῶν ἔξωθέν τις ἀνέκ[λεψεν]

Agis asks Zeus Naios and Dione about the coverings and pillows which he lost, whether someone from outside stole them?

5. Parke 28; SEG 19.428; PAE 1955: 171, c

Ἀγαθαὶ τύχαι · ἐπικουῆται Σάτυρος τῶι Διὶ τῶι Ναίωι
καὶ τῶι Διώναι οὐκ ἀνεθέθη ὁ Σατύρου Σκύθος. ἐν Ἐλέαι
ἂν τὸν κέλητα τὸν Δωριλάου ὁ καὶ Ἀκτίου ἀπέτιλε

Good fortune. Satyros asks Zeus Naios and Dione whether, if Satyros' Skythian (horse) was not packed up, in Elea he would have 'plucked the hair off' the horse of Dorilaos, alias Aktios?³⁰

6. Parke 29; SEG 19.429; PAE 1955: 171, d

ἔκλεψε Δορκίλος τὸ λᾶκος·
Did Dorkilos steal the cloth?

7. BE 1962: 173–4; BCH 1960: 751; fourth century BCE

Side A:

. . . ηπιστος (
ἂν ἔκλεψε τὰ ἔρια
ἄπο τοῦ κλισμοῦ τὰ αἶα



FIG. 4. Oracle question tablet from Dodona: Someone called Pistos is named in the first line—he may be asking the question or be the subject of the question, which is ‘if he stole the dry fleeces from the couch’ (fourth century BCE) © G. G. Garvey/The Ancient Art & Architecture Collection

(l. 1) Perhaps name ‘Pistos’; (l. 2) If he stole the dry fleeces from the couch?

Side B:

... περὶ τῶν λύκων τῶν θηρίων

... about the wild wolves

Murder

8. Christidis, Dakaris, Vokotopoulou 1999: no. 1; M-257; very early fourth century

Ἐπήγεικε φάρμακον
ἐπὶ τὰ γ γενεὰν τὰν ἐ(μ -)
ἀν ἢ ἐπὶ τὰ γ γυναῖκα [ἢ ἐ -]
π' ἐμέ παρὰ Λύσωνος;

Did he (or she) introduce a poison (or potion) to my children, or to my wife or to me from Lyson?

9. Christidis, Dakaris, Vokotopoulou 1999: no. 4; M-433; Evangelidis 1929: 126, no. 5, fig. 15; c.340–320 BCE

Κατεφάρμαξε
Τιμῷ Ἀριστο-
βούλαν;

Evangelidis: l. 2 Τιμῶν ?

Did Timo bewitch/poison Aristoboula?

10. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 259, 29

ἦ τέθνακε

Whether he died

11. SEG 15.406; PAE 1952: 305–6, 23; fourth century BCE

Θεός · τύχα ·

Λυκόφρων . ἄτεκανο
 αμυλαντοτανασριγγα κι
 ε παι τιωντι καὶ πλαγᾶς
 τᾶς Λυκόφρονος τέθνακε

Christidis: l. 4 ἐπαιτιων from ἐπαιτιος

Something to do with Lykophron (l. 2) and mortal blows that he delivered (πλαγᾶς τᾶς Λυκόφρονος τέθνακε).

Requests for truth

There are two questions in which the consultants seem to be asking to be told the truth, along with a related fragmentary and puzzling question that seems to concern wrongdoing in an oracle consultation. On the basis of Hoffman's translation, it appears to be an inquiry about a previous oracle consultation made by one Aristolaos apparently on someone else's behalf, which the consultant had expected Aristolaos to bring back sealed. The current consultant, a man called Sokrates, suspects that the previous consultation has been somehow perverted on the orders of a certain Sosias.

1. SGDI 1575b; Karapanos 1878: pl. 35, 2

. . . ιοι καὶ ἄμα τι λέγομεν
 [ἄ]μες γινώμεν τὸ ἀλαθές

(l. 1) . . . at the same time what we say; (l. 2) . . . we know the truth

2. Karapanos 1878: pl. 35, 6

[τῶ πι]στεύοντι τί ἀ[λ]αθές
 . . . he is believing something true

Wrongdoing in an oracle consultation

1. SGDI 1578; Karapanos 1878: 38, 2

[Θεός . Τύχα ἀγαθὰ · Ἐπικουνῆται Σωκράτης]
 [τῶι Διὶ Νάωι καὶ τῶι Διῶναι περὶ τᾶς τοῦ]
 [θεοῦ ὑποκρι]σιος καὶ τῶν σαμηῶν, τὰν Ἀρ(ι)σ -
 [τόλαος οὐκ ἐ]σαμάνατο οὐδ' ἐπανεθέτο · αἰ Σ -
 [ωσίας ἐλθῶν ἐ]ς Δωδώναν περὶ τοῦ πινακίου
 [τὸν Ἀριστό]λαον ἐκελήσατο οὐδε τεχνᾶ -
 [σθαι σαμηᾶ οὐδ] ἐ γραφθῆμεν καὶ σαμανθῆμεν.

God . . . Good fortune. Sokrates asks Zeus Naios and Dione about the response of the god and the omens, which Aristolaos did not seal and did not set down. If Sosias

having come to Dodona about the tablet, ordered Aristolaos not to produce it, and that the omens were not to be written down and not to be sealed.³¹

Treasure

SEG 15.408a; BE 1956: 143; PAE 1952: 304, 16; fourth to third century BCE

Ἄγ[α]σίων ὑπέ(ρ) τοῦ θησαυροῦ
ἦ λανομαι φανον

Agasion about the treasure . . .

The meaning of λανομαι is unclear, but enough of the question remains to suggest that this was an enquiry about the whereabouts of hidden treasure.

Children

Parke 11; SGDI 1565a; Karapanos 1878: pl. 36, 2; Doric dialect; second century BCE

Ἐρωτῆ Ἄυσα-
νίας Δία Νάον
καὶ Δηώνα(ν) · ἦ οὐ-
κ ἐστὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ
ΘΙ τὸ παιδάριον
ὃ Ἄννύλα κνεῖ

Karapanos: At the beginning of the fifth line, is a sign that could be taken for an ithyphallic symbol, or it might be nothing more than the two letters *oi* written by mistake and then rubbed out.

Lysanias asked Zeus Naos and Dione whether the child with which Annyla is pregnant is not from him?

There is a further question concerning the paternity of children born outside wedlock in the unpublished material.³²

For other tablets relating to children, see also Future concerns: Children above.

Health/Disease

Christidis; 340–330 BCE

Αἰ(κ)α Φιλίσστας ἀξίωτο νοσέματος
If Philistas deserved his disease

The consultant seems to have been asking if an individual was deserving of his or her affliction, although the full meaning of the question is difficult to decipher.

For other tablets relating to health/disease, see also Future concerns: Health/Disease, above.

Death

SGDI 1569b; Karapanos 1878: pl. 36, 4

*Λυσίας Δαμολ(ά)[ω περι του . . .
Πασία σάματος
αὶ πόμπα τιὰ[.*

Possibly asked by Lysias (l.1), the question is something to do with a body (l. 2 *σάματος*) and burial (l. 3 *πόμπα*)

FORMULAE OF INQUIRY

What I have in mind

1. SGDI 1580; Karapanos 1878: pl. 36, 6

*Ἢ συμπεῖθον[τι]
αὐτῶι ὑπέρ [το -]
ὑ πράγματος, εἰ[v -]
τινά κα τρόπο[v
[φα]ίν[η]ται (δ)[ό -]
κιμον, βέλτιο[v]
καὶ ἄμεινον
Πυστακίωνι (ἐ) -
σσεῖται*

Whether it will be advantageous for Pystakion, if he acts as a joint advocate of this matter, in whatever way seems reliable?

2. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 258, 25; fifth century BCE

*ἦ καιαγκα αὐτὸ -
ς ἐπὶ γνώμαι ἔχ -
ηι καὶ χρήηι*

Whether . . . what he has on his mind (l. 2–3 *αὐτὸς ἐπὶ γνώμαι ἔχηι*) you also foretell as an oracle (l. 3 *καὶ χρήηι*)

3. Parke 4; *SEG* 15.386; *BE* 1956: 143; *PAE* 1952: 301, 6; beginning of the fifth century BCE

*τίνι κα θεὸν εὐξάμενος πράξαι
ἡὰ ἐπὶ νόοι ἔχε;*

To which of the gods must he have prayed so as to achieve what he has in mind?

Demands for oracles

1. *SGDI* 1558; Thessalian dialect; Karapanos 1878: pl. 35, 5; Ionian lettering

[τό](δ)ε τὸ μαντήϊον ἐγὼ χρήω
κὲ ἀλάες

I want an oracle on the following subject: Whether I am on the wrong track?²³³

2. Christidis; 450–425 BCE

Ἐῖ ἀλλῆ μαντεῦ[εσθαί]

Whether to seek an oracle consultation elsewhere

Prayers

1. *SGDI* 1597; Karapanos 1878: pl. 38, 7; Attic dialect

Ζεῦ Νάϊε [καὶ Διώνη αἰτεῖ ὑμᾶς καὶ
ἰκετεύει Ἐ[τεοκλ](ῆ)ς αὐτῶι κ[αὶ τῆι γενε-]
αἰ, δοῦναι ε[ὕχας] αὐτῶι Ἐ[τεοκλ]εὶ καὶ τῶι
ἐ[α](υτ)οῦ (υ)ίει κ[αὶ] τοῖς αὐτοῦ (ἐ)[κγ -]
ό[νοισ ᾗ]πασι[ν]

Karapanos:

Ζεῦ Νάϊε [καὶ Διώνη αἰτεῖ ὑμᾶς καὶ
ἰκετεύει Γ. [κ] -
αἰ, δοῦναι ε[μαντῶ [καὶ]
θ[υγατρὶ καὶ] πᾶσι

(At the end of the fourth line of the tablet, the inscription is hidden by a fragment of another lead tablet, as if a larger tablet had been wrapped around the smaller one. On the smaller fragment can be read twice the word αὐτῶι, 'to him', and also τοῖς αὐτοῦ γ[ονεῦσι, 'to his children'. It looks as if the larger tablet held the question while the smaller tablet held the answers. This is one of three such examples mentioned by Karapanos.)

O Zeus Naios and Dione, Eteokles asks you and beseeches both for himself and his children, to grant his prayers, and those of his son and of all his grandchildren . . .

2. Parke 2; *SGDI* 1596; Karapanos 1878: pl. 38, 3; Attic dialect

[Θεός . Τύχη] ἀγαθή
Δέσποτα, ἄναξ, Ζεῦ Νάϊε καὶ Διώνη
καὶ Δωδωναῖοι, αἰτεῖ ὑμᾶς
καὶ ἰκετεύει Διόγνητος Ἀριστομή -
δου Ἀθηναῖος δοῦναι αὐτῶι

καὶ τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ ἐ(κ)[γό]νοις ἄπασιν
καὶ τεὶ μητρὶ Κλεαρέτει και

God. Good fortune. O lord and master, Zeus Naios, and Dione, and Dodonaean, Diognetos, the son of Aristomedes, of Athens, asks and beseeches you to give to him and to all his grandchildren and to his mother Klearete and . . .³⁴

RESPONSES FROM THE ORACLE

Most of the possible responses have been discussed within the relevant category. A few remain: the first, a response to one Leton, is concerned with a disintegrating relationship (μὴ διαπιστεύοντι, ‘not putting full confidence in . . .’) with someone from Thourioi, the Greek colony in southern Italy, founded in 444/3 (τῷ Θουρίῳ, ‘the Thourion’) or a dative of location, in or to Thourioi.³⁵ Vokotopoulou suggested that this is a response, in which case, the phrase λώϊον καὶ ἄ[μεινον] may indicate the structure of the original question. However, it also could indicate that this is a question, especially considering that the majority of the other responses are so brief in comparison. The second entry is a possible visual response, as suggested by Karapanos.

1. *BE* 1996: 226, 7; *SEG* 43.324; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 7; *PAE* 1932; M-413; 330–320 BCE

Αἴτωνι λώϊον καὶ ἄ[μεινον - -]
μὴ διαπιστεύοντι ἄ[- -]
τῷ Θουρίῳ πόκα ἐθη [- -]

For Leton, it was advantageous . . . not having confidence . . . in the man from Thourioi when he placed . . .

2. Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, 6. Includes some letters scrubbed out and the head of a serpent.

See also (discussed in the relevant section):

Travel 5: *SEG* 43.325; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 8; *Ep. Chron.* 1935; M-47; c.400 BCE

Travel 22: *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 259, 35; fifth century BCE

Woman 20: *BE* 1998: 202; *Poikila Epigraphika*: no. 4; M-189; Doric; mid-fourth century BCE

Work 13: *SEG* 23. 475; *PAE* 1958: 104, 2

Slavery 4: *SEG* 15. 389; *PAE* 1952: 303, 10; Korinthian letters; side B; fifth century BCE

Slavery 12: *BE* 1998: 202; *Poikila Epigraphika*: no. 3; M-163; beginning of fourth century BCE

Health/Disease 6: *SGDI* 1587b

- Property 2: *SEG* 15.391c; *BE* 1956: 143, 22; *PAE* 1952: 305, 22; fifth century BCE
 Prosperity/Safety 4: *PAE* 1967: 50, 7; *BE* 1969: 348, 7; third century BCE
 Prosperity/Safety 5: *BE* 1984: 231–3; *PAE* 1982: 29; bronze tile; response of the oracle; fourth century BCE
 Military Campaigns 1: *BE* 1998: 202; *Poikila Epigraphika*: no. 2; *SEG* 47.820; M-96; first quarter of fourth century
 City affairs and politics 2: *SEG* 23.476; *PAE* 1958: 104, 3
 Fragmentary 9: Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, Ib

FRAGMENTS

1. *SGDI* 1564b; Doric dialect
2. *SGDI* 1572a
3. *SGDI* 1574a
4. *SGDI* 1574b, c
5. *SGDI* 1579
6. *SGDI* 1582b; Doric
7. *SGDI* 1584; Karapanos 1878: pl. 36, 3; Doric
8. *SGDI* 1585a
9. Karapanos 1878: pl. 37, Ib
10. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 256, 18a
11. *Ep. Chron.* 1935: 259, 33; fifth century BCE
12. *SEG* 15.388; *BE* 1956: 143; *PAE* 1952: 302, 8; fifth century BCE
13. *SEG* 15.390; *PAE* 1952: 305, 20; fifth century BCE
14. *SEG* 15.392; *PAE* 1952: 306, 26; fifth century BCE
15. *SEG* 15.404; *PAE* 1952: 304, 19; fourth century BCE
16. *SEG* 15.408b; *BE* 1956: 143; *PAE* 1952: 304, 16; fourth to third century BCE
17. *SEG* 15.409; *PAE* 1952: 306, 25
18. *SEG* 19.430; *PAE* 1955: 172 e
19. *SEG* 43.322; c.350 BCE; inscription on side A
20. *SEG* 43.324; *BE* 1996: 226, 7; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 7; *PAE* 1932; M-413; 330–320 BCE
21. *PAE* 1932; Vokotopoulou 1992: no. 5; M-818; first quarter of the fourth century BCE
22. *PAE* 1952: 302/3, 9b; *BE* 1956: 43, 9; fourth century BCE
23. *PAE* 1952: 303, 12
24. *PAE* 1952: 306, 25
25. *PAE* 1967: 48–9, 3
26. *PAE* 1973: 94–96, 3; fourth century BCE
27. Christidis, Dakaris, Vokotopoulou 1999: no. 2; M-269; second quarter fifth century BCE
28. Christidis; 410–400 BCE : Πέρ σ / ὀμά / τὸν Π / ενεσ / τ[ὸν