In this chapter, I will explore some of the ways in which divination worked in Greece in the classical period through the activities of one man, Euxenippos, probably the son of Ethelokrates, of the deme Lamptrai.¹ He was the target of an eisangelia brought by Polyeuktos and Lykourgos some time between 330 and 324 BCE,² and what we know of him comes mostly from the speech in his defence composed by Hypereides. Although Hypereides presents Euxenippos as a private citizen unfairly caught up in a political dispute, there is good reason to see him as rather more than this. His experiences show how seriously the Athenian democracy took the need to establish the divine will accurately through divination, and how important particular individuals could be in this process.

1. Context: Athenian Consultations

Euxenippos was sent by the Athenians to the oracle of Amphiaraos at Oropos, where the method of consultation involved going to sleep in the sanctuary and receiving instructions from the god in a dream. We can be fairly certain that we know what the process involved, thanks to the evidence of Pausanias, albeit that he was writing several centuries later.³ We can supplement this information with evidence drawn from modern studies of dreaming. The application of the results of experimental psychology to the ancient world, and ancient religion, needs to be done carefully, given the great differences in social structures and world-view, but it can offer valuable

Dreaming is an area where modern experimental studies can be particularly helpful, because they tend to focus on analysing individual experience, and pay less attention to the wider social context of the dreamer. Since recalling dreams plays an important role in psychotherapy, there have been a number of studies of how dream recall can be improved, in both frequency and quality of detail. Those consulting oracles that used dream-incubation in ancient Greece, usually at healing sanctuaries, also needed to be able to recall their dreams, so this modern research can be of help in understanding what procedures might have been used then.

Hypereides’ defence of Euxenippos gives us a partial view of how one individual was involved in Athenian decisions about consulting Amphiarao c.330 BCE. He assumes that his audience understands much of what happened, or was informed about it by a previous speaker. To the modern reader, this can be confusing. I want therefore to preface the discussion of Euxenippos with a consideration of an earlier historical episode that shows the workings of divination in Greece, including at the oracle of Amphiarao. Herodotus tells a story about visits to oracles by an agent of the Persian general Mardonios in the winter of 480/479:

133. The Greeks sailed to Delos, while Mardonios overwintered in Thessaly. From his headquarters there he sent a man from Europs, called Mys, to visit oracular shrines, commanding him to consult them wherever he was able to put questions. What he was wishing to learn from the oracles when he gave these instructions I cannot say, as there are no reports about it: it seems likely to me that he was consulting about his current circumstances rather than anything else. 134. This Mys appears to have visited Lebadeia where he paid a local man to descend into the oracle of Trophonios, and also to have visited Abai in Phokis. Certainly he first visited Thebes where he consulted the oracle of Apollo Ismenios; the method of consultation there is through the examination of sacrificial entrails, as at Olympia. Then he paid a man who was not a Theban to spend the night at the sanctuary of Amphiarao. It is not permitted for any Theban to consult the oracle there for the following reason: Amphiarao ordered them, through an oracular response to choose which of these two options they wanted, to make use of his powers only as a seer, or only as an ally. They chose to have him as an ally. For this reason it is not permitted for any

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4 See, for example, Larson 2016. 5 Schredl et al. 2000. 6 μισθῳ πείσας is often translated here as ‘bribing’ (cf. LSJ sv. πείθω), but it does not have to have a pejorative sense (cf. Lys. 21.10), and there is no particular reason to assume one here.
Theban to sleep in the sanctuary there. At this time, according to the
Thebans, a miraculous event took place. They say that while Mys of
Europos was making his tour of all the oracles he came to the sanctuary
of Apollo Ptoios. This place is called the Ptoion, and it belongs to Thebes; it
lies above Lake Kopais, by a hill, very close to the city of Akraiphia. When
this man called Mys entered the temple, he was accompanied by three men
from the town who were chosen by the state to write down whatever was
prophesied. Suddenly the prophet started speaking in a non-Greek lan-
guage. And the Thebans accompanying Mys were amazed to hear words
not in Greek but in another language, and they had no idea what he was
prophesying about the current circumstances. But Mys of Europos grabbed
the writing tablet they had brought with them and wrote down the words
of the priest on it, saying that he was speaking Karian. And when he had
written everything down, he returned to Thessaly. (Hdt. 8.133–5)

This account is revealing about some of the personnel who might be
involved in the consultation of oracles in Greece. Although we are given
no information about Mys, beyond his city of origin, the narrative clearly
implies that he was selected for his experience and expertise in divination: he
is presented as understanding the different rules at the different sanctuaries,
and as not being discomfited by the events at the Ptoion. But there are other
unnamed individuals in the story. The two men paid to consult the oracles of
Trophonios and Amphiaraos should not be assumed to be random individ-
uals. As we will see, some people will have made better dreamers than others,
and it seems plausible that there will have been a market for non-Thebans to
offer their services to Thebans who wanted to consult Amphiaraos by proxy.
Descriptions of the method of consultation of Trophonios make that seem
unusually arduous, so again the use of an experienced local person would be
unsurprising. The account of the consultation at the Ptoion describes a
different set of personnel: there is the priest of the sanctuary (referred to
as both promantis and prophētēs) who actually speaks the words of Apollo,
and there is the group of three amanuenses, whose role is to write down
what he says, presumably on behalf of the city of Thebes as much as for the
benefit of the consultant. We may also note something about the processes
of these oracles. Although Mys did not himself take part in the consultations
of Trophonios and Amphiaraos, the men who did were his own agents, not
personnel of the sanctuaries. And at the Ptoion, Mys himself heard the

\[\text{Ar. Nub. 507–8; Paus. 9.39.5–14, where Pausanias claims to have consulted the oracle himself.}\]
words of the priest directly. There was no interpretation by temple servants, and indeed in the story as told, Mys was the only person capable of understanding the god’s words. One more point is worth making. Herodotos tells this story, but admits that he has no idea what the consultations were about. As we will see, the exact words of oracular responses are not always considered central to accounts of consultations described in the Classical period.

The oracle of Amphiaraos will be the main point of interest in our exploration of the activities of Euxenippos, who consulted it some 150 years after Mys. By then, it appears that the oracle had moved. The sanctuary visited by Mys (and presumably by the agents of Kroisos of Lydia in the mid-sixth century) was at Thebes, but by the fourth century, that oracle appears to have ceased to function, and Amphiaraos was consulted instead at Oropos. In Herodotos’ time, the dedication made by Kroisos to Amphiaraos could be seen in the sanctuary of Apollo Ismenios in Thebes, not the Amphiareion, suggesting perhaps that the Theban Amphiareion had ceased to function by the 420s. It also appears to have developed a more specific function, since the Amphiareion at Oropos was above all a healing sanctuary.

2. Who was Euxenippos?

Let us now turn to the background to the story of Euxenippos. Either after the Battle of Khaironeia in 338 BCE, or after the sack of Thebes three years

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8 Plut. Mor. 412a reports the story of the Karian response, offering the interpretation that ‘it is never possible for non-Greeks to receive a response to their demands in the Greek language’. Cf. Paus. 9.23.6, where Pausanias says that Mys asked the question in Karian. Herodotos’ account implies that the oracle’s utterance was spontaneous. It is possible that Pausanias’ source for the story had adapted Herodotos’ story, or even that Pausanias suggested this as a logical explanation for the Karian response: cf. Bowden 2007: 77–9 on the potential influence of Herodotos and Pausanias on their informants.

9 Plutarch (Mor. 412a–b; Arist. 19.1–2) provides a more elaborate account of Mys’ consultation of Amphiaraos, in which the man he paid to consult the god dreamed that he was threatened by a temple servant, and, when he refused to leave, was struck on the head with a large stone. This dream foreshadowed the death of Mardonios, struck on the head by the Spartan Aemncestos (or Arimnestos) at the battle of Plataia. The story is not reported elsewhere, and Plutarch’s accounts are problematic. One version, in On the Obsolescence of Oracles, is corrupt and lacunose. The other states that Arimnestos was himself told by the oracle how he would kill Mardonius, but goes on to describe Mys sending a Lydian man to consult Amphiaraos, and noting that it was this Lydian who had the dream.

10 Hdt. 1.46.2. 11 Hdt. 1.52.
12 Paus. 1.34; Petrakos 1968; Terranova 2008.
later, ownership of the territory of Oropos was transferred from Boiotia to Athens. The territory included the sanctuary of Amphiaraos, and some of the other land in the area belonged to the god. The Athenians took the decision to share out the territory (referred to as the mountains) of Oropos not owned by the god between the ten tribes, which were grouped into five pairs for this purpose.¹³ After this process had been carried out, it was claimed that a mountain that had been allocated to Akamantis and Hippothoontis actually belonged to the god.¹⁴ A decree was proposed in the Athenian Assembly by Polyteuktos that the land, and therefore the income from the sale of produce from it, should be returned to the god, and that the other eight tribes pay money to Akamantis and Hippothoontis to make up for their loss. This proposal was rejected, and Polyteuktos was successfully impeached under a graphê paranomôn.¹⁵ Three citizens, including Euxenippos, were then sent to the sanctuary of Amphiaraos to find out what the god wanted. Euxenippos duly dreamed a dream, in which the god gave instructions, and he reported this to the Assembly. In reaction to this, Polyteuktos introduced an eisangelia against Euxenippos, claiming that the latter had misrepresented the god.¹⁶

The speech from which this information has been gleaned is Hypereides’ defence of Euxenippos against the eisangelia.¹⁷ It provides us with another significant piece of information about the defendant. At some point before the current trial, Euxenippos had allowed Olympias, the widow of Philip II of Macedon, and mother of Alexander the Great, to dedicate a phialê to the statue of Hygieia.¹⁸ This suggests that Euxenippos had some kind of formal position relating to the cult of Hygieia. The statue mentioned was probably the bronze statue of Athena Hygieia on the acropolis dedicated, according to Plutarch, by Perikles;¹⁹ a statue base from the mid-fifth century, inscribed ‘from the Athenians to Athena Hygieia’ may belong to the same statue.²⁰ Athena Hygieia is mentioned in an inscription concerning the Little Panathenaia, dated to 335–330, about the same time as the trial of Euxenippos, which specifies details of the sacrifice to be made to the goddess.²¹ Significantly for our purposes, the sacrifice was to be funded by income from the Nea—that is, the territory of Oropos in which the Amphiareon stood.²² Another inscribed statue base, this time dedicated to Hygieia, was found at

the Amphiareion: it is dated to 330–324, and the dedication was made by Euxenippos, son of Ethelokrates.²³ The inscription about the Little Panathenaia indicates a direct link in the 330s between the cult of Athena Hygieia on the acropolis and the territory of Oropos. It would be reasonable, therefore, to identify the dedicator of the statue of Hygieia at Oropos with the men who authorized the dedication of the phialē to the statue of Hygieia on the acropolis. We can thus see an existing connection between the Euxenippos of the speech and the Amphiareion at Oropos. The precise nature of Euxenippos’ role is more difficult to determine. The inscription at the Amphiareion gives only his name and patronymic. In his speech, Hyperides emphasizes that Euxenippos is an idiotēs (a private citizen), and this would be difficult to maintain if he held a formal priesthood.²⁴ It is more likely therefore that what Euxenippos did in ‘allowing’ Olympias to dedicate her phialē was to advise the Assembly (or some other body) in the role of a religious ‘expert’.²⁵

We may turn now to the delegation of which Euxenippos was a part. According to Hypereides, ‘the Assembly instructed Euxenippos as one of three men to lie down in the sanctuary; he said that he went to sleep and had a dream, which he reported to the Assembly’.²⁶ The phrase used to describe Euxenippos’ position in the delegation, ‘tritos autos’, has been the subject of scholarly debate. The consensus is that it does not generally imply that the named person had any greater authority than the other members of a group.²⁷ It would obviously not suit Hypereides’ purpose to suggest that Euxenippos did have particular authority, but there is reason to suppose that he was not chosen at random in this instance. The Khalkis decree of the fifth century gives responsibility for consulting the collection of oracles about Euboea, and carrying out the required sacrifices, to a named individual, Hierokles, and three men chosen by lot from the Athenian Boulē.²⁸ Hierokles was a recognized religious expert particularly associated with oracle-interpretation.²⁹ Given his connection with the Amphiareion, it would be reasonable to suppose that Euxenippos, too, was chosen to go and sleep at the sanctuary because of his expertise. The alternative, that there was no distinction at all between the three men, and there were no expectations

²³ SEG 15.291. ²⁴ Hyp. 4.13.
²⁵ On religious experts, and the difficulties in using the term, see Flower 2015.
²⁶ Hyp. 4.14: ὁ δήμος προσέταξεν Ἑλεινήσιν τρίτῳ αὐτῷ ἑγκατακλιθήναι εἰς τὸ ἱερόν, οὗτος δὲ κοιμηθεὶς ἐν τοῖς φησιν ἱδεῖν, δὲ τῷ δήμῳ ἀπαγγέλλαι.
about who would actually have a dream, would have potentially problematic consequences: if two men had contradictory dreams, how would this help the Assembly determine the will of the god? It seems simpler to accept that the Assembly were expecting what actually transpired: Euxenippos was sent to have the dream, and the other two members of the delegation had a role similar to that of the Thebans who accompanied Mys to the Ptoion—that is, to record the message of the god. As we will see, the practice of describing a dream at the moment of waking was an important aid to recalling and interpreting it.

3. Dream Incubation

We have very little evidence about dream incubation at oracles other than those involved in healing, and consequently modern scholarship has focused overwhelmingly on this aspect.⁴⁰ Although Herodotos describes consultations of Amphiaraos that are not on matters of health, it is clear that in the fourth century and later, the Amphiareion at Oropos was essentially a healing sanctuary. The fact that on this occasion the Athenians chose to consult the god about a matter of land-ownership can be explained by the fact that the matter involved the land of Amphiaraos himself, so he was the most appropriate god to consult. We have an account of the process of consultation from Pausanias, writing in the second century CE:

It is the custom that those who come to consult Amphiaraos first purify themselves. The method of purification is to sacrifice to the god, and they sacrifice both to him and to all the other divinities whose names are inscribed on the altar. Once these preliminaries have been completed they sacrifice a ram, and spreading out the skin they go to sleep on top of it, and await the revelation of a dream.³¹

The procedure at Oropos appears to have been very similar to that at other healing sanctuaries, of which the one for which we have the most information is the sanctuary of Asklepios at Epidauros.³² From the Classical period we have evidence of consultation in the form of the iamata, accounts describing miraculous cures that supposedly occurred at Epidauros, inscribed on

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⁴¹ Paus. 1.34.5. The procedure may have varied a bit in previous centuries: Lupu 2003.
³² Edelstein and Edelstein 1945; LiDonnici 1995. Flower, in this volume, also discusses the iamata, focusing on the epiphanies described in them.
a series of stélai that were set up at the entrance to the sanctuary c.320 BCE.³³ The stories have a strong moralizing tone, and the cures they describe are truly miraculous, so they must be treated with considerable caution. However, they can tell us something about the procedures of dream incubation. What is particularly noticeable is the almost complete absence of any reference to priests or other temple attendants in the accounts. Those that are mentioned are engaged in very menial tasks.³⁴ It is never suggested that the patients discussed their dreams with anyone at the sanctuary. As we have seen, Herodotus describes Mys employing his own agent, rather than a temple servant, when he consulted Amphiaraos, and Hypereides’ narrative of Euxenippos’ visit makes no mention of any involvement of anyone other than the Athenian delegation. The consistent picture we are given is of direct communication between god (Asklepios or Amphiaraos) and the consultant. When a consultant was enquiring on their own behalf, this would have presented no problems. However, when they were enquiring on behalf of others, and in particular on behalf of a city, the process required considerable trust to be placed in the person dreaming, as there was no external means of checking the dream itself. This brings us back to Euxenippos. Clearly not all Athenians were prepared to trust him fully, as Polyeuktos’ accusations against him attest,³⁵ but presumably the Assembly had good reasons to choose him to dream on their behalf, and we can consider what these will have been. What particular skills might he have had?

4. Dreams, Interpretation, and Recall

Dreaming, and interpretation of dreams, has become the subject of growing research in recent years.³⁶ The academic journal Dreaming was started in 1991, and the introduction to the first issue noted:

We are all fascinated by our dreams and yet dreaming has only intermittently been an object of serious study. Early in this century, the works of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung led to a heightened interest in the subject of dreams. Then, in the 1950s and 60s, there was a proliferation of laboratory studies of dreaming. More recently still, we have experienced another

³³ IG IV² 1 121.43 Cf. RO 102. Edelstein and Edelstein 1945; LiDonnici 1995.
³⁴ E.g. IG IV² 1 121.43 (a pais who carried fire for the god), 114–15 (therapontēs who carry a crippled patient).
³⁵ Hyp. 4.15.
³⁶ E.g. most recently Bulkeley 2016.
revival of interest in dreaming—this time from a variety of directions, both academic and popular.³⁷

A significant driver in this renewed interest has been the perception of the therapeutic benefits of dreaming outside Freudian analysis: ‘although dreams have long fascinated people, only recently have researchers begun to empirically investigate dream interpretation. Studies have suggested that dream interpretation sessions are viewed as valuable and as leading to self-understanding and insight.’³⁸ These comments bring out an important contrast between the role of dream interpretation in modern psychiatry and in the ancient world: in antiquity, as the example of Euxenippos makes clear, the aim of dream interpretation was to increase understanding of the world, and in particular the will of the gods, rather than understanding of the dreamers themselves. This reflects an important difference in world-view between the modern subjects of dream experiments and therapy involving dreaming on the one hand, and the inhabitants of ancient Greece on the other. I am taking for granted that those involved in divination accepted the reality of the divine as a feature of the world.³⁹ Nonetheless, there are still important insights into dreaming in the ancient world that can be gained from modern experimental studies.

The idea that there might be individuals who could be described as ‘expert dreamers’ in ancient Greece is supported by modern studies. Dreaming is a universal phenomenon,⁴⁰ but the ability to recall dreams varies between individuals. There have been numerous studies investigating the role of personality types and attitudes to dreaming in determining levels of dream recall.⁴¹ Although experiments have not identified dramatic differences, they do support the common-sense assumption that individuals who have a positive attitude to the value of dreaming are more likely to recall dreams, and that certain cognitive traits also have an effect: having a good visual memory and memory for personal experiences makes dream recall more likely, for example.⁴² Circumstances also come into play: frequent nocturnal awakenings have been demonstrated to increase the frequency of dream recall.⁴³ Archaeological evidence from surviving healing sanctuary sites about the conditions for those incubating dreams there, coupled with

³⁹ Bowden 2005: 26–33.
⁴⁰ Schredl et al. 2003: 145: ‘modern sleep research has found that every person dreams every night.’
⁴¹ E.g. Bernstein and Roberts 1995; Schredl et al. 2003, with references to earlier studies.
⁴² Schredl 1999: 75.
descriptions of the procedure as found in Pausanias and Aristophanes,\textsuperscript{44} suggests that visitors to these sanctuaries would be unlikely to experience an uninterrupted night’s sleep. Thus the likelihood that any visitor to a healing sanctuary would recall their dreams was probably higher than if they had spent the night in their own homes.

Other studies have shown that there are simple techniques available to improve dream recall. Common practices used in experimental and therapeutic work include the keeping of dream diaries, and the use of questionnaires. These have an impact on the frequency of dream recall, although this varies.\textsuperscript{45} For those individuals who are motivated to recall dreams, encouragement in doing this has a positive effect.\textsuperscript{46} The motivation for this kind of experimental work is usually related to supporting the therapeutic power of dreaming, and as a result, the circumstances of the dreamers involved are likely to be rather different from the circumstances of someone in Euxenippos’ position. Nonetheless, modern practices suggest that techniques that were in principle available to individuals in fourth-century Athens, involving no more than access to a writing tablet, or to a slave who could attend their waking moments, could have an effect on the frequency and accuracy of dream recall. Aelius Aristides, writing in the second century CE, attests that he recorded his own dreams, at enormous length.\textsuperscript{47} Therefore, skill in dream recall was similar to other mantic skills, in that it could be trained, but at the same time it was something that some individuals were naturally more gifted in than others.\textsuperscript{48}

Dream recall is potentially a separate process from dream interpretation. Here too, modern studies suggest that in principle it might be possible to say something about the dreams of ancient Greeks on the basis of modern research. A recent monograph seeks to find meaning in dreams through quantitative study:

First, it will demonstrate an internal coherence or regularity in the dreams of specific groups, such as men, children, or members of hunting and gathering societies. Second, it will show there is consistency in what individuals dream about from year to year and even over decades. Third, it will reveal correspondences between dream content and waking life;

\textsuperscript{44} Ar. Plut. 653–747. \textsuperscript{45} Schredl 2002. 
\textsuperscript{46} Halliday 1992; Rochlen et al. 1999. 
\textsuperscript{47} Ael. Arist. Or. 48.2–3 (referring to a dream-register with 300,000 words), 50.25. 
\textsuperscript{48} Flower 2008: 70–1.
more specifically, it will show a direct continuity between dream concerns and waking concerns.⁴⁹

We should expect dreams to be more straightforward than not, and for ‘bizarre’ aspects of them to be relatively rare; this is something borne out by other studies,⁵⁰ and can be expected to apply in ancient Greece as much as anywhere else. On this basis, we should expect that Euxenippos’ dream would have been easy to describe, and although Hypereides’ account gives few details of the dream itself, it does suggest that it was not hard to make sense of. According to Hypereides, Euxenippos ‘reported what he had seen in the dream to the Assembly’ and ‘announced to the Athenians what the god had commanded him’.⁵¹ It would appear then, that the dream had been unambiguous and clear, and thus in minimal need of interpretation: his opponent Polyeuktos responded not by offering an alternative interpretation of the dream, but by suggesting that Euxenippos had wrongly reported what he had dreamed.⁵² This suggests that Polyeuktos shared the assumption that a dream from Amphiaraos could be expected to be comprehensible and unambiguous.

There is one more important contribution that modern experimental work can bring to our investigation of Euxenippos’ dream. The term ‘dream incubation’ has been adopted in a fairly recent self-help dream manual and used as a term for ‘targeting dreams for specific problem solving’.⁵³ This technique requires ‘participants to think of a focal question or concern related to a personal problem, to repeat that problem question over and over while maintaining attention to the question, and then to fall asleep’.⁵⁴ The results of an experimental study suggested that ‘Relative to other experimental conditions and to controls, participants in the night incubation condition reported that their focal problem had become more solvable, that it had improved, and that they were less distressed by it’.⁵⁵ There are important differences between divination in ancient Greece and personal problem solving in the modern world, which might make the relevance of this kind of experiment unclear. The experimenters in the study that we are considering ‘used a procedure by which participants nominated a specific current problem that they believed was potentially solvable by their own efforts within the time frame of the study’.⁵⁶

⁵² But see Whitehead 2000: 201–3 for other interpretations of the events.
We may contrast this with the view expressed by Xenophon’s Sokrates, that ‘in those matters where the gods have granted us the power to deal with them through application of learning, we should use that learning; in those matters where the answer cannot be seen, we should try to learn from the gods through divination’.\(^57\) In practice, however, the differences are not so significant. The ‘incubation’ technique is basically what we would expect to find in any form of Greek divination: a question is put by the enquirer, and then the divinatory ritual takes place. The story of Mys illustrates the more common forms of ritual: either an inspired priest or priestess speaks the god’s answer, or the entrails of animals are examined, or the consultant goes to sleep. The reports about dream incubation in the *iamata* do not mention what the patients did immediately before they went to sleep, but they generally do not mention any preliminary ritual either. It is quite likely, however, that Euxenippos, accompanied as he was by two other Athenians, might have put his question to the god aloud in their presence, to make clear that the consultation was under way. We have no evidence that those incubating dreams repeated the question to themselves multiple times, but it is quite possible that this might have occurred, especially if it was found to have a positive effect. The subjects of modern incubation experiments would generally recognize whether or not the process had produced the ‘right’ answer, because the focus was on a personal problem, and a solution would leave them ‘less distressed’.\(^58\) Euxenippos’ question was not obviously personal, and there would be no way of determining whether what he dreamed was the ‘right’ answer. However, all that was required of the incubation process was that it led to a coherent answer to the question, which should be understood as representing the command of the god. Here, Euxenippos’ position as an expert would have had a particular influence. Since, as we have seen, he had some definite association with the cult at the Amphiarion, he would have had more knowledge about Amphiaros, and perhaps about practical aspects of his sanctuary, than most Athenians. Any solution that would have come together in his unconscious mind as he slept would potentially incorporate such knowledge, and thus emerge as a richer dream than others might have had. There is no need to suppose that Euxenippos was able to dredge up from the depth of his memory information that was genuinely relevant to the question he asked: all that is necessary is that he had a dream that gave an answer to his question. There is an important

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\(^{57}\) Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.9.  
\(^{58}\) White and Taytroe 2003: 204.
contrast here between dream incubation and oracles like Delphi, where the god’s answers were spoken by a priestess or priest. At Delphi it was not important whether the Pythia knew anything about the topics on which she was asked questions, and indeed the Athenians in the fourth century used a method of consultation where the Pythia would not even know what the real question was that the god was being asked. In contrast, the more the dreamer knew about the subject, the more likely he would be to have a coherent and detailed dream, even while we may still assume that he was not consciously using that knowledge to generate a particular answer to the question.

Bringing all these points together allows us to offer a somewhat clearer image of Euxenippos than the few scraps of ancient evidence might have suggested. He was relatively old at the time of the consultation, and quite rich. He was someone who had a particular association with the cult of Athena Hygieia on the Athenian acropolis and at Oropos. In this role he may have been an experienced dream-incubator, and he was presumably known well enough to the Athenian Assembly for him to have been considered appropriate to consult the god on their behalf. Arguably he was an expert in one area of religious life—the world of health and healing represented by the sanctuary of Amphiarao at Oropos—who was deployed to help the Athenians in a rather different area, that of dispute resolution about public land. Although Euxenippos was not an important figure in Athenian politics (especially when contrasted with one of his opponents, Lykourgos), this examination of his role in one event in Athenian history allows us to make some more general points about divination in Athens.

5. Divination in Athens

There are three broad points I want to bring out. First, the fact that the Athenians decided to send a delegation to the Amphiaraoion at Oropos to ask about a matter that had nothing to do with health and healing reveals something about their understanding of how healing sanctuaries functioned. In order to explain how healing might have happened at sanctuaries in ancient Greece, modern scholars must seek explanations that do not involve

59 IG II³ 292; Bowden 2005: 88–95. For a more complex picture of the role of the Pythia, see Maurizio, this volume.
60 Hyp. 4.13, 32.
61 Hyp. 4.12.
the actual intervention of gods. Recent examples of explanations for what actually happened at Epidauros have included the therapeutic power of the landscape,⁶² genuine surgery carried out with sleep induction,⁶³ the power of dramatic performances,⁶⁴ the emotive power of healing narratives displayed in sanctuaries,⁶⁵ or activating the placebo effect through the therapeutic use of the self.⁶⁶ In some of these studies, scholars have made claims that the Greek experience might be relevant for modern medicine.⁶⁷ These interpretations, which simply ignore the presence of the god in ancient accounts, also tend to be rather free in their interpretation of ancient evidence.⁶⁸

The power of the god himself is however an important part of the narratives of cures in healing sanctuaries, and this cannot be ignored in explanations, as some scholars have recognized: ‘to think of Asklepios’ cult exclusively in terms of medical techniques, treatments, and procedures which more or less find parallels with contemporary medicinal thought and practice would be to miss the point entirely.’⁶⁹ It is important that our explanations include the fact that the Greeks themselves recognized the power of the god.⁷⁰ The case of Euxenippos’ delegation supports this approach, since here it is Amphiaraos himself alone who is the subject of the consultation. Rather than seeing healing sanctuaries as being sui generis, places concerned solely with therapeutic care of sick individuals, the ancient Greeks understood them as sanctuaries of the gods that included oracular functions, where the gods had a particular association with healing.⁷¹ Incubating a dream in order to find cures for illness is a special case of asking the god for instructions through dreaming, and that, in turn, is one of the many divinatory options open to the Greeks.⁷²

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⁶⁸ Askitopoulou et al. (2002) take the presence of sculpted poppy flowers in the vault of the tholos at Epidauros as evidence for the use of opium there as a soporific; Hartigan (2009: 32), discussing the depiction of the visit to the sanctuary of Asklepios in Aristophanes’ Plutus, asserts, with no obvious justification, that ‘Aristophanes clearly indicates that Karion was watching rituals performed by the temple priests and attendants for the patients sleeping in the abaton’.
⁶⁹ Petridou 2014: 305.
⁷⁰ Panagiotidou 2016.
⁷¹ Hartigan (2009: vii) asks, ‘why did the Greeks construct theatres as part of a healing sanctuary’ without considering how many sanctuaries that were not concerned with healing had theatres in them.
⁷² Hypereides (4.15) suggested to Polyeuktos that if he was unhappy with the outcome of Euxenippos’ consultation, he should have consulted the Delphic oracle to find the truth.
Second, Euxenippos challenges categories commonly used in the study of Greek divination. Distinctions might be made between ‘institutional oracles’ on the one hand, and ‘independent diviners’ on the other,\(^7\) or between technical and natural divination.\(^{74}\) The assumption is that oracles might be visited by anyone with a question, and it would be the mechanism of the oracular shrine that would generate the god’s answer. Herodotos’ account of Mys’ tour of oracles gives an indication of the variety of the mechanisms, but Mys was clearly looking for answers in identifiable places. In contrast, ‘independent diviners’ would rely on their own skills, often backed up by their personal collections of written texts, and were not associated with any particular place, or indeed any particular divinity. ‘Technical divination’ involved practising skills that could be learned, such as how to interpret entrails, or the flight of birds, while natural divination can be understood to involve ‘possession’ by the god.\(^{75}\) These have been seen as useful distinctions, but not absolute ones: ‘there never was, and probably never will be, an easy way to dichotomize where this topic is concerned’.\(^{76}\) Euxenippos’ consultation of Amphiaraos cuts clearly across both these distinctions. Euxenippos was a religious expert who appears to have held no formal position, but was nonetheless associated with the sanctuary at Oropos; he was chosen by the Athenians because he could be relied upon to dream the god’s command himself—but a dream, sent directly by a god, is much closer to the idea of possession, and therefore to ‘natural divination’, than it is to ‘technical divination’ such as the interpretation of entrails. The Amphiar-eion (wherever it was located) was clearly recognized as an oracular sanctuary, to be listed alongside Delphi and Didyma,\(^{77}\) but it was a place to which it was considered advisable to send an expert.\(^{78}\) As we have already noted, there was a very specific reason why the Athenians chose to consult the oracle of Amphiaraos on this occasion: the issue concerned the god directly. It was therefore not a typical consultation of the oracle. It does, however, show the flexibility in the way the Athenians approached divination—it was not a matter of having a single fixed procedure for consulting the gods, or

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\(^7\) Johnston 2008: 28.

\(^73\) Johnston 2008: 28.

\(^74\) Flower 2008: 22–4.

\(^75\) Flower 2008: 24. See Maurizio, this volume, for discussion of the use of technical divination at Delphi.

\(^76\) Johnston 2015: 480.

\(^77\) Hdt. 1.46.2.

\(^78\) Contrast the specific choice of Euxenippos argued for here with the delegation of three men sent to the Delphic oracle to ask about the sacred orgas: one man selected from the Boule and two from all the Athenians (IG II³ 292.42–4).
resolving disputes. Amphiaraos was recognized as a real party in the dispute, and the Athenians took seriously the process of identifying his wishes.\textsuperscript{79}

Finally, we must return to the situation that led to Hypereides’ speech in defence of Euxenippos being written. Euxenippos was impeached through an \textit{eisangelia} brought by a group that included the most important politician in Athens in this period, Lykourgos. Hypereides’ argument that Euxenippos was merely an \textit{idiotēs} should not disguise the fact that he had advised the Athenian people in the Assembly, and was therefore a \textit{rhetor}, and open to political charges.\textsuperscript{80} The involvement of Lykourgos, and indeed of Hypereides, indicates that the dispute was not considered to be trivial. The charge against Euxenippos was that ‘he spoke against the best interests of the Athenian people, and took money and gifts from those who were acting against the interests of the Athenian people’;\textsuperscript{81} he did this by misrepresenting the god’s instructions.\textsuperscript{82} Euxenippos had alone been made responsible for transmitting to the Athenian people the view of a god, and there was no way for anyone else to check what the god had said. The fact that what he reported led to impeachment suggests that this was considered a great responsibility: to be solely responsible for representing the views of a god was potentially a very powerful position in a society where establishing and following the will of the gods was considered vital. Religious experts like Euxenippos could end up, wittingly or otherwise, as major figures in the Athenian democracy.

\section*{References}


\textsuperscript{79} Cf. Eidinow 2013: 36: ‘consultation of a god was not consultation of a disinterested bystander.’


\textsuperscript{81} Hyp. 4.39.

\textsuperscript{82} Hyp. 4.15.


