

KINGS AGAINST CELTS

Deliverance from barbarians as a theme in Hellenistic royal propaganda

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leder nadeel heb z'n eigen

voordeel – Johan Cruijff¹

Introduction

The Celts, Polybios says, know neither law nor order, nor do they have any culture.² Other Greek writers, from Aristotle to Pausanias, agreed with him: the savage Celts were closer to animals than to civilised human beings. Therefore, when the Celts invaded Greece in 280-279 BC and attacked Delphi, Greeks saw this as an attack on Hellenic civilisation. Though the crisis was soon over, the image remained of inhuman barbarians who came from the dark edge of the earth to strike without warning at the centre of civilisation. This image was then exploited in political propaganda: first by the Aitolian League in Central Greece, then by virtually all the Greek-Macedonian kingdoms of that time. The

¹ Several variants of this utterance of the 'Oracle of Amsterdam' (detriment is advantageous) are current in the Dutch language; this is the original version. Cf. H. Davidse ed., *'Je moet schieten, anders kun je niet scoren'*. *Citaten van Johan Cruijff* (The Hague 1999) 93; for some interesting linguistic remarks on Cruijff's oracular sayings see G. Middag and K. van der Zwan, "Utopieën wie nooit gebeuren". *De taal van Johan Cruijff*, *Onze Taal* 65 (1996) 275-7.

² Polyb. 18.37.9. Greek authors use *Keltoi* and *Galatai* without any marked difference to denote these peoples, who evidently shared some common culture (e.g. *infra* Pausanias, but esp. 1.4.1; the first mention of *Keltoi* in Greek literature is in Hdt. 2.33.3 and 4.49.3). I will for convenience speak of 'Celts', and of

boast of having defeated Celts in battle was used to propagate the notion of the king as saviour, benefactor and liberator of the Greek cities (and thus to legitimise the kingdoms' political and military dominance) to an extent that seems to leave any other royal propaganda to the same effect far behind. In my contribution to this volume I hope to explain how and why the Celts came to play such a crucial part in the ideology of Hellenistic monarchies.

Political propaganda may be simply defined as the communication of political ideology by multifarious means; in the present discussion the communication of the ideology of the Greek-Macedonian kingdoms in the third and second centuries BC. Several remarks concerning this propaganda should be made from the outset. First, that neither ideology nor propaganda was ever disconnected from genuine beliefs concerning the cultural and supernatural ordering of the world on the part of the recipients. On the contrary, the primary aim of Hellenistic royal propaganda was to convince people that the existence of kingdoms and the exercise of royal authority was in accordance with normality and for the recipients' general benefit. The central theme was the king's *prestige* in various fields, but mainly as saviour and benefactor. *Euergetes* was a secular title. *Soter* had divine and military connotations. All propaganda discussed below came into being as *ad hoc* responses to circumstances. Second, that there is no reason to question the sincerity of the abundant use of religion in political propaganda. It is surely wrong to ask where 'sincere' religious expressions ended and the 'cynical' use of religion for political aims began. Of course, religion *was* used for propaganda purposes; but that does not mean that it was used in some inappropriate or disingenuous manner. The minds of the common Greeks made no clear distinction between religion and other aspects of life, and we should not impose such a distinction in retrospect. More often than not it is impossible to tell which aspect, the religious or the political, prevailed. For instance the magnificent votive offerings to Athena Nikephoros made by King Attalos Soter after his first great triumph over the Galatians, discussed below, were both sincere thanksgivings to the goddess who had bestowed victory *and* a means to propagate the king's military exploits. Third, that honours awarded to a king by cities and the propaganda of the king himself—another oft-made distinction in modern literature, notably in 'Galatians' only when referring to those Celts who settled in Phrygia, in the country that was subsequently named Galatia. I will not use 'Gauls'.

the context of ruler cult—overlapped. Civic honours reflected royal propaganda and *vice versa*. Moreover, kings could actively manipulate cities in this respect, notably through the influence of Greek royal *philoï*, who acted as intermediaries between their native cities and the royal court.³ For instance when Antigonos II Gonatas had defeated the Celts in Battle in 276 he was honoured as *soter* by the city of Eretria in a decree proposed by Menedemos, a *philos* of Gonatas (below, n. 47). Fourth, that although there were many ways to make political propaganda—buildings and monuments, statues, epigraphy, literature, coins—the main instrument was the word of mouth. Images on coins served as reminders of propaganda messages already current rather than being themselves the carriers of such messages.

This article has a simple set-up. As the main theme is victory propaganda, military events are briefly sketched, with discussions of the accompanying propaganda integrated in the chronology. I will start with the first recorded attack of the Celts on the Greek world, the attack on Delphi in 279, and end with the last Graeco-Celtic wars in Asia Minor in the early second century BC.⁴

³ The workings of international *xenia* networks have been studied by G. Herman, *Ritualised Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge 1987); on ‘Royal Friends’ (courtiers) esp. pp. 153-5.

⁴ Comprehensive accounts of the Celtic Wars: E. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique I (323-30 av. J.-C.)* (2nd ed. Nancy 1982); N.G.L. Hammond and F.W. Walbank, *A History of Macedonia. III: 336-167 B.C.* (Oxford 1988). G. Nachtergaeel, *Les Galates en Grèce et les Sôtéria de Delphes* (Brussels 1977) is a thorough study of the Celtic invasion of Greece in 280-279 and its sources. H.D. Rankin, *Celts in the Classical World* (London and Sydney 1987) devotes one chapter to the invasion of 280-279, and one to the image of the Celts in Greek and Roman literature, and is mainly concerned with ‘wie es eigentlich gewesen’. The account of the war up until 276 in W.W. Tarn, *Antigonos Gonatas* (1913; 2nd ed. Oxford 1969) 139-66, is excellent though often tentative; see J.J. Gabbert, *Antigonos II Gonatas. A Political Biography* (London and New York 1997) 21-8, for modern adjustments of Tarn’s views and new evidence. J.B. Scholten, *The Politics of Plunder. Aetolians and their Koinon in the Early Hellenistic Era, 279-217 B.C.* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 2000) examines *i.a.* the involvement of the Aitolians in the war of 280-179 and the consequences of the invasion for the development of the Aitolian League. On the wars in Asia Minor: F. Staehlin, *Geschichte der kleinasiatischen Galater* (Leipzig 1907), and esp. E.V. Hansen, *The Attalids of Pergamon* (New York 1947; 2nd ed. Ithaca 1971). Pergamene inscriptions are published in OGIS or in M. Fränkel, E. Fabricius and E. Schuchhardt eds., *Die Inschriften von Pergamon. Altertümer von Pergamon 8* (Berlin 1890), abbreviated IvP.

The coming of the Celts

In 285 the Diadoch Wars seemed at last to have come to an end. King Demetrios I Poliorketes was defeated and taken prisoner by King Seleukos I Nikator. The elimination of the firebrand Demetrios ended years of turbulent warfare, which had exhausted Greece and Macedonia. In the same year another notorious troublemaker disappeared from the political scene: Pyrrhos of Epeiros was forced to come to terms with his many enemies, and returned to his mountain kingdom. For several years he kept quiet there, then embarked on his great western campaign which kept him away for another four years. King Lysimachos in the meantime became sole ruler in Macedonia and restored order there. The other great actors in the final stage of the Diadoch Wars, the aged monarchs Seleukos and Ptolemy, turned their attention mainly to domestic affairs.

There remained, however, two threats to the status quo on the Greek mainland. First, Greece was still burdened with the presence of the virtually landless King Antigonos II Gonatas, the son and successor of Poliorketes, who was as dissatisfied with the new arrangements as he was power-

Our main source for the Celtic Wars in the first half of the third century BC is Pausanias, with additional information in Diodoros and Justin's epitome of Trogus. The informants of the latter two for these events include the contemporary writers Timaios (who lived in Athens during the invasion), Phylarchos and Hieronymos of Kardia, a court historian of Antigonos Gonatas. Trogus used mainly Timaios and Phylarchos, both of whom wrote from the perspective of the independent city-state; Phylarchos also survives in Plutarch's biography of Pyrrhos. Pausanias' account has some interesting aspects: his narrative of the invasion contains an elaboration of decades of political propaganda and centuries of folklore. Pausanias also equates the Celtic and Persian invasions, but he does not simply mirror Herodotos. On the various influences at work in Pausanias' account: Scholten 2000, 33 n. 11. Consistent sources for the second half of the third century are lacking, but from 220 onward relatively reliable information is provided by Polybios, with additional evidence in Livy. For the sources for the invasion of 280-279 see Nachtergaele 1977, 15-125; for the pro-Antigonid bias of Hieronymos: J. Hornblower, *Hieronymos of Cardia* (Oxford 1981) 180-233; for the image of the Celts in Polybios: Rankin 1987, 72-5. On the historical digressions of Pausanias in general: C. Habicht, 'Pausanias on the history of Greece', in: id., *Pausanias' Guide to Ancient Greece* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1985) 95-116.

hungry. Second, there was a growing rivalry between two of the last surviving friends of Alexander the Great, the old kings Lysimachos and Seleukos Nikator (Ptolemy died of old age in 282).

Neither Greeks nor Macedonians, however, seem to have been aware of a third danger, closing in on them from the north.

For more than a century the peoples of inner Europe had been on the move. Early in the fourth century migratory movements in the north had hit upon Celtic tribes living in the border regions of the Mediterranean, who in turn migrated, in search of new homelands. Roving bands in search of plunder preceded these tribes.⁵ Celts from the Po Valley crossed the Apennines into peninsular Italy and sacked Rome in c. 385. Others slowly moved toward the Balkans, where they put pressure on the native Illyrians and Thracians. Southward migration was for a long time prevented by the Macedonian kingdom of Philip II and Alexander III, and later by the kingdoms of Kassandros and Lysimachos.⁶ In the reigns of the latter two there had been sporadic border skirmishes and small raiding parties had on several occasions entered Macedonian territory.⁷ The attackers were easily repulsed but they brought back valuable information.

Ptolemy Keraunos

In 281 the rivalry between Seleukos and Lysimachos culminated in a decisive trial of strength. Lysimachos, who was already over eighty years old, attacked with all his might the forces that Seleukos had assembled in Asia Minor – a campaign that was as much a bid for empire as a necessary pre-emptive strike. A great battle took place at Koroupedion in which Lysimachos was defeated and slain.⁸ The seventy-seven year old victor Seleukos crossed the Hellespont but he was murdered before he could fulfil his dream of winning the kingship of Macedonia, the *mutatis mutandis* first prize in

⁵ Tarn, 1969, 140-3. Cf. Liv. 38.16.1. M. Todd's new book on migrations in Antiquity was not available to me when writing.

⁶ Tarn, 1969, 139. Diplomatic contacts with Celtic leaders were established as early as Alexander's reign: Arr., *Anab.* 1.4; Strabo 7.3.8; Ptol., *FGrH* F 2. Cf. S. Alessandri, 'Alessandro Magno e i Celti', *MH* 54 (1997) 131-57.

⁷ Plin., *Nat.Hist.* 31; Senec., *Quast.Nat.* 3.11.3; Paus. 10.19.4; cf. Polyb. 2.18-13.

⁸ Just. 17.1.7-12, 17.2.1; App., *Syr.* 62, 64; Memnon, *FGrH* 434 F 5.7; Paus. 1.10.4-5.

Alexander's 'funeral games'. The assassin was an ambitious young prince called Ptolemaios Keraunos, King Ptolemy's prodigal son, who at that time belonged to Seleukos' entourage. Keraunos moved into Macedonia, claimed the kingship, and rallied what was left of Lysimachos' armed forces. He was instantly attacked by Antigonos Gonatas, who had nominally claimed the kingship of Macedonia some time earlier,⁹ and perhaps also by troops of Seleukos' vengeful successor Antiochos I.¹⁰ After defeating a combined Antigonid-Athenian fleet, Keraunos proceeded to gain some authority in Macedonia and Thessaly but lost Thrace to the Thracians. In southern Thessaly Gonatas retained the impregnable fortress-city Demetrias and several strategically crucial positions in Greece, including Corinth and the Piraeus.¹¹

The destruction of the Macedonian army at Koroupedion and the unstable rule of Keraunos made Macedonia vulnerable, and the opportunity was not lost to the Celts.¹² At this time an estimated total of 300,000 people—men, women, and children—were on the move in the Balkans.¹³ In 280 the dam burst. Three large Celtic armies simultaneously invaded Macedonian territory.¹⁴ Keraunos self-confidently went to meet the barbarians with only a small force. He was as ignorant of the great numbers approaching him as he was ignorant of the Celtic way of war: the dreadful 'Celtic charge' hit Keraunos' outnumbered Macedonians like a stroke of lightning. The royal army was routed, Keraunos himself was slain. The Celts stuck his head on a spear, which they carried before them while they entered Macedonia unopposed.¹⁵ Macedonia fell into anarchy, with a rapid

⁹ Hammond & Walbank 1988, 252-3.

¹⁰ Trog., *Prol.* 17; Just. 24.1.

¹¹ Tarn 1969, 130-3.

¹² Rankin 1987, 85-6; Will 1982 I, 105-7; cf. id., 'The formation of the Hellenistic Kingdoms', *CAH* 7.1 (1984) 101-17, at 114-5.

¹³ Mitchell, *op.cit* below, n. 62.

¹⁴ Paus. 10.19.4.

¹⁵ Diod. 22.3.3-4; Just. 24.5.1-7; Paus. 1.4.1, 1.16.2, 10.19.4; Memnon, *FGrH* 434 F 8.8. Cf. Hammond & Walbank 1988, 252-3; Will 1982 I, 105-7.

succession of short-lived, unsuccessful kings in the following years.¹⁶ Meanwhile groups of Celtic raiders terrorised the countryside and ransacked the palace at Aigai.¹⁷ Keraunos' failure also cleared the path for a large-scale migratory movement into Thrace, where the Celtic kingdom of Tylis was founded.¹⁸

Invasion of Greece

With Macedonia knocked out of action, the road to Greece lay open. In the year 279 a large war party moved south via Thessaly, ravaging the countryside as it went.¹⁹ In Central Greece armies from Boiotia, Lokris, Phokis and Aitolia assembled; also Athens and Megara, and the kings Antigonos II and Antiochos I, sent detachments.²⁰ After an unsuccessful attempt to stop the Celts at River Sperchios

¹⁶ Diod 22.3.4; Just. 24.4-8. The most notable was King Antipatros Etesias, whose nickname refers to his reign of 45 days, equal to the period that the Etesian Wind blows. On the period of *anarchia* in Macedonia: Hammond & Walbank 1988, 253-4; K. Buraselis, *Das hellenistische Makedonien und die Aegais. Forschungen zur Politik des Kassandros und der ersten drei Antigoniden im Ägäischen Meer und im Westkleinasiens* (Munich 1982) 112.

¹⁷ Hammond & Walbank 1988, 477; D. Müller, s.v. 'Vergina' in: S. Lauffer ed., *Griechenland. Lexikon der historischen Stätten. Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich 1989) 702-3; I. Nielsen, *Hellenistic Palaces. Tradition and Renewal* (Aarhus 1994) 81.

¹⁸ Just. 25.1; Polyb. 4.46; Liv. 38.16.9. The kingdom of Tylis extorted money from Greek cities and native tribes alike, but also provided mercenaries for Macedonian kings; it survived as an independent state until c. 212 BC, when it was destroyed by the Thracians. Cf. Rankin 1987, 189; Nachtergaele 1977, 168-9; Will 1982 I, 106; Hammond & Walbank 1988, 257.

¹⁹ Paus. 10.20.1; Just. 24.6.

²⁰ Paus. 1.4.2-3, 10.20.3. Cf. Scholten 2000, 36 n. 24. The royal troops at Thermopylai, if there were such troops at all, were token forces; the exact number of troops given by Pausanias—500 men from each king—is at any rate suspect. Pausanias' account of these events is obviously an elaboration of the tradition that equated the Celtic invasion with the expedition of Xerxes, as well as of other popular tradition and (Aitolian) propaganda. Hence the granting of a central role to Athens, and the aggrandisement of the importance of Aitolia in e.g. 10.22.2, where Pausanias states that the Celts sent a detachment into Aitolia to draw the Aitolians away from Thermopylai because 'the war against Greece would [then] be easier to

the Greeks retreated to the pass of Thermopylai.²¹ They held the Celtic main force at bay but could not prevent small groups from ransacking the surrounding areas. After one week news arrived that the town of Kallion in northern Aitolia had been taken by surprise and Celts were massacring its inhabitants. The Aitolians thereupon left Thermopylai. Soon the defence of the passes was given up and the Greek armies returned home to defend the territory of their respective *poleis*.²² The Celts scattered to the east and southeast in search of plunder.²³

One group, led by a certain 'Brennos', attacked Delphi and entered the sacred *temenos* of Apollo Pythios.²⁴ A force of Delphians, Phokians and Amphissians counter-attacked and prevented the Celts from doing any substantial damage. Aitolian warriors later joined the defenders of Delphi and after two days of fighting below the sanctuary the Celts were driven off.²⁵ Meanwhile, the Aitolian main force had crushed the attackers of Kallion and proceeded to expel the Celts from Aitolian lands. Being spearfighters and swordsmen, Celtic warriors were vulnerable to guerrilla combat, a business that the Aitolians were particularly good at.²⁶ Seemingly without too much trouble the Aitolians battered the invaders into retreating. Other Greek states involved in the war likewise succeeded in chasing the Celts from their homesteads.²⁷

The Celtic crisis was over in less than a year but it had an overwhelming impact. The news that the Delphic sanctuary had been desecrated and then saved spread like wildfire. The saving of Delphi was attributed to the intervention of Apollo Pythios and Zeus Soter. Almost instantly the belief became manage'; cf. Scholten 2000, 32 and 34-6, who accepts this explanation and also on other grounds argues for a leading part of the Aitolian *koinon* in the mobilisation of the Greeks.

²¹ Battle of Thermopylai: Rankin 1987, 92-4; Scholten 2000, 31-7.

²² Paus. 10.22.2-4.

²³ *Ibid.* 10.23.1.

²⁴ H.W. Parke and D.E.W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* (Oxford 1956) I, 254-9; Rankin 1987, 94-8. In 86 BC Sulla looted the sanctuary more thoroughly.

²⁵ Paus. 1.4.4; 10.19-23; Memnon, FGrH 434 F 8, 11; Polyb. 4.46; Diod. 22.9.1-5; Just. 24.7.1-8. Cf. Diod. 22.3-4, 22.9; Just. 25.1-2.

²⁶ Paus. 10.22.4; cf. 10.23.7.

²⁷ Scholten 2000, 33 and 35.

current that Apollo had been present during the battle, aided by the mysterious White Maidens.²⁸ It was believed that when the Pythia was asked: 'Shall we remove the treasures, and children, and women from the Oracle?', Apollo had replied:

Let the offerings and everything else stay where they are at the Oracle. I and the White Maidens will attend to this.²⁹

And Apollo kept word, of course. His presence had been made manifest in a series of terrifying supernatural occurrences:

Brennos and his men were faced by the Greeks and by the hostile portents of the god, which were swift and conspicuous to a degree that to my knowledge has no other instance. All the ground where the Celtic army stood quaked violently nearly all day, with continuous thundering and lightning. ... Flashes from heaven would not only strike one man down, but set fire to other men and their shields all round him. ... All day long the barbarians were gripped by disaster and by horror; but a much more calamitous night awaited them. A terrible frost came, and with the frost came blinding snow. Enormous rocks fell from Parnassos, and cliff-faces broke away and crashed down on them.³⁰

The Battle of Delphi acquired a mythology of its own. Within mere decades various other divine manifestations were added to Apollo's: epiphanies of Delphic deities, notably the *heros* Pyrrhos, but

²⁸ Parke & Wormell I, 258; Rankin 1987, 94-8.

²⁹ J.E. Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle. Its Responses and Operations* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1978) Q231 on p. 344.

³⁰ Paus. 10.23.3. When supernatural occurrences such as these, took place, the responsible god was believed to be actually present: H.S. Versnel, 'What did ancient man see when he saw a god? Some reflections on Greco-Roman epiphany', in: D. van der Plas, *Effigies Dei. Essays on the History of Religions* (Leiden 1987) 42-55. Also for the wars with the Celts in Asia Minor, some years later, several such supernatural occurrences were recorded, cf. Bevan *op.cit.* n. 58, I 139.

also Phylakos and Autonoos, who had earlier defended Delphi against the Persians in 480, as well as manifestations of Pan, Zeus and Artemis.³¹

Cities throughout the Greek World made thank-offerings to Apollo and Zeus and sent sacred ambassadors to Delphi. It seemed as if the saving of Delphi had delivered all the Greeks from some terrible danger. In an important contemporary source, a decree of Kos passed in 278, sacrifices were awarded to Apollo Pythios, Zeus Soter and Nike in both Delphi and Kos; the day of the sacrifice was proclaimed a sacred day to celebrate 'the safety of the Greeks and the *homonoia* of their democratic constitution'.³² Shortly after the invasion the Delphic Amphictyony inaugurated a festival of Soteria in honour of Apollo Pythios and Zeus Soter. The Soteria Festival found wide recognition among the Greeks as a cardinal panhellenic festival.³³

Celebrations up until this point can only reluctantly be called political propaganda. That changed, however, when the Aitolian League intensified its influence in the Delphic Amphictyony.

Aitolian propaganda

Before the invasion the Aitolians were considered a backward and unreliable people. The slow and troublesome emergence of their league in late classical times was looked at with Argus' eyes by the 'civilised' Greeks.³⁴ But the events of 279 suddenly left the Aitolian League the dominant political entity in Central Greece. This was not the result of their victory over the Celts—which was not such a great feat in strictly military terms—but of the power vacuum created by the powerlessness of the Macedonian kingdom since Lysimachos' death. The Aitolians stepped into this vacuum with their

³¹ Paus. 10.23.5; Diod. 22.9; Just. 29.6.8. G. Petzl, *Die Inschriften von Smyrna* (Bonn 1983-1990) no. 574; *Fouilles de Delphes* III 1.483.

³² *Syll.* 398. Cf. Nachtergaele 1977, 295-6.

³³ Nachtergaele 1977, 295; Parke & Wormell 1956 I, 259. Decrees in acceptance of the Soteria were found in Athens, Chios, Tenos and the Cyclades; a decree of Smyrna concerning the Soteria is perhaps to be associated with the later reorganisation of the festival by the Aitolian League and may be dated to c. 250: cf. SEG 34 no. 381, with literature.

³⁴ Scholten 2000, 1-28.

successful involvement in the Celtic War. The League now rapidly expanded its influence and incorporated new states. The re-emergence of Macedonia as a major power under Gonatas after 276 (below) induced them to extend their power and consolidate their gains. The establishment of Aitolian dominance in the Amphictyonic League was a central objective in this policy.³⁵

The Aitolians had already offered to Apollo Pythios some shields they had seized after the fighting around Kallion, but most spoils were hung up in the League's own central sanctuary at Thermon. Outside the Delphic Apollo Temple they had placed a statue of Aitolia, represented as a woman in arms sitting on a heap of Celtic armour. This monument commemorated not the saving of Delphi but the Aitolians' revenge for the massacre of the people of Kallion.³⁶ Indeed, the Aitolians' contribution to the actual saving of Apollo Pythion's sanctuary had been only a small one.³⁷ But soon the Aitolian leaders understood that by connecting the fundamental part they had played in the war as a whole to the saving of Delphi, they might profit from the panhellenic character that was now being attributed to that specific event. Gradually Delphi was loaded with Aitolian dedications, including statues of Apollo, Athena, Artemis and Aitolian generals. Celtic shields were hung up in the temple of Apollo opposite the Persian spoils dedicated by the Athenians, so that the Aitolian glory was associated with Athenian glory in the Persian Wars.³⁸ At the western entrance the Aitolians built a stoa filled exclusively with trophies taken from the Celts. The statue of Aitolia triumphant appeared on coins, sometimes with a small image of Nike in her hand, thus making the Aitolian victory known to all the Greeks for generations to come.³⁹ As a result, the League gained international prestige and

³⁵ For the expansion of the League after the Celtic War: Scholten 2000, 29-95.

³⁶ Paus. 10.18.7. Cf. Hintzen-Bohlen, *op.cit.* n. 40, pp. 66-7, and the literature on p. 210, cat. no. 14.

³⁷ Scholten 2000, 36 n. 36. In the Battle of Delphi there had been only a small force of Aitolians, arriving relatively late; the honour for saving Delphi goes mainly to the Phokians, who were rewarded for their bravery and heavy losses with an amphictyonic vote (Paus. 10.8.3, 10.23.3).

³⁸ Paus. 10.19.4.

³⁹ These were probably the first issues of the Aitolian League; individual Aitolian towns did not strike coins: B.B. Head, *Historia Numorum* (Oxford 1911) 334-5.

acceptance, and acquired legitimisation for its preponderance in the Delphic Amphictyony. And, last but not least,, the Aitolians reorganised and thereafter dominated the Soteria Festival.⁴⁰

Celts and the Kingship of Antigonos Gonatas

Three years after the invasion, Macedonia was still disordered. A general, Sosthenes, had succeeded in imposing some order and keeping the Celts at bay. But the land was without a king and Sosthenes himself declined the honour; he died in battle, probably in 276.⁴¹ Sosthenes' death created yet another power vacuum. In the early summer of 276, Antigonos Gonatas left Demetrias to try his luck in the north.⁴² By chance, the landing of his mercenary army in the Thracian Chersonese coincided with the southward march of a Celtic army. Gonatas lost no time in seizing the opportunity. Near Lysimacheia he ambushed and massacred the Celts.⁴³ The victory boosted Gonatas' prestige in a way he could not have foreseen but knew very well how to exploit. It took only months to get Gonatas, the vanquisher of the barbarians, recognised as king throughout Macedonia.⁴⁴ The next year, Gonatas defeated whatever claimants to the throne there were left, pacified Thessaly and Chalkidike, and remained in control for the following 35 years.⁴⁵

Gonatas' position was similar to that of the Aitolian League in 279: an outsider who had suddenly risen to power and needed acceptance and legitimacy urgently. Soon the word spread that during the Battle of Lysimacheia Gonatas had been aided by Pan, who had struck the barbarians with

⁴⁰ Aitolians in Delphi: R. Flacelière, *Les Aitoliens à Delphes. Contribution de la Grèce centrale au IIIe siècle av. J.-C.* (diss. Paris 1937). For a detailed account of Aitolian dedications in Delphi as known from archaeological and written sources see B. Hintzen-Bohlen, *Herrscherrepräsentation im Hellenismus. Untersuchungen zu Weihgeschenken, Stiftungen und Ehrenmonumenten in den mutterländischen Heiligtümern Delphi, Olympia, Delos und Dodona* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna 1992) 61-7.

⁴¹ Just. 24.5.

⁴² Buraselis 1982, 112-3.

⁴³ Just. 25.1.2-10; Diog.Laert. 2.141. Cf. Gabbert 1997, 26-7.

⁴⁴ Will 1982 I, 108-9; Hammond & Walbank 1988, 257-8.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 110.

panic. A cult of Pan was established in Pella and the god appeared on Gonatas' coins to promote his victory.⁴⁶ Gonatas rebuilt the palace at Aigai, which the Celts had destroyed in 280. In the cities of Greece he was honoured as the saviour of the Greeks; presumably, the king actively sought after these honours with the help of his family's *xenia* relations.⁴⁷

Pyrrhos returns

From this moment on, victory over Celts became a pivotal element in royal propaganda. Gonatas was the first in a series of rulers who were honoured as *soteres* because they had delivered the Greeks from the barbarians. By this time, too, Celts turned up as mercenaries and allies in virtually all royal armies.

In 275 Pyrrhos returned from Italy. In the spring of the following year he raided Macedonia together with a band of Celts.⁴⁸ When he accidentally came upon Gonatas and his army he made a surprise attack on Gonatas' rear, which was guarded by Celtic troops. The Celts' defence broke and Gonatas' undeployed phalanx had no choice but to surrender.⁴⁹ Though Celts constituted only a small part of Gonatas' total force, Pyrrhos was well aware that the defeat of these barbarians, as Plutarch says, 'added more to his reputation than anything else he had done'. Pyrrhos therefore propagated

⁴⁶ P. Green, *Alexander to Actium. The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1990) 134, n. 139.

⁴⁷ In Eretria the philosopher and politician Menedemos, a *philos* of Gonatas, proposed a decree honouring the king as saviour of the Greeks: Diog.Laert. 2.136. At this time too the Athenians voted a decree in honour of their fellow-townsmen Herakleitos son of Asklepiades, another *philos* of Gonatas and military governor of the Piraeus (*Syll.* 454), for his actions 'against the barbarians on behalf of Greek safety ... and his friendship and benefactions toward King Antigonos and the *boule* and *demos* of Athens' (IG II² 677, I. 6; cf. 683). The edict can be dated to c. 276; presumably it refers to the involvement of an Athenian fleet in Gonatas' landing operations in the Chersonese; for a different explanation see Gabbert 1997, 27; for the date see Green 1990, 145 n. 44.

⁴⁸ Plut., *Pyrrh.* 26.2.

⁴⁹ Just. 25.3.1-5; Paus. 1.13.2; Plut., *Pyrrh.* 26.3-4. Cf. P. Levèque, *Pyrrhos* (Paris 1957) 557.

the battle as 'the greatest victory he had ever won'.⁵⁰ The round Macedonian shields he had captured on that day were dedicated to Zeus of Dodona in Pyrrhos' homeland; the long shields taken from the Celts, however, were shown to the world more conspicuously in the sanctuary of the Thessalian deity Athena Itonis, located along the main artery connecting Greece and Macedonia, between Pherai and Larisa. The epigram inscribed above the trophies became famous among the Greeks:

These shields, now dedicated to Athena Itonis, Pyrrhos the Molossian took from the fearless Celts when he defeated the entire army of Antigonos; that was not so strange: the sons of Aiakos are, and always have been, valiant spear-fighters.⁵¹

To commemorate his victory Pyrrhos the barbarianslayer issued gold staters with the image of a winged Nike bearing Celtic shields and a helmet in one hand, and a victory laurel in the other; beneath the figure of the goddess was the six ray fulmen of Zeus of Dodona.⁵² Moreover, Pyrrhos may have been the benefactor behind the sudden revival of the cult of his mythical ancestor and namesake, the *heros* Pyrrhos (Neoptolemos) at Delphi. Pausanias says that this ancient Delphic cult

⁵⁰ Plut., *Pyrrh.* 26.5; cf. Paus. 1.13.2. Later Gonatas himself acted similarly when in 264, during the Chremonidean War, his own Celtic mercenaries revolted in Megara; the king came in person to suppress the revolt, bringing all his elephants, even though at that time he was besieging Athens: Polyæn. 4.6.3; Trogus, *Prol.* 26. Cf. Gabbert 1997, 47-8.

⁵¹ Plut., *Pyrrh.* 26.5; cf. Paus. 1.13.2. Aiakos is the ancestor of the *heros* Pyrrhos-Neoptolemos, Achilles' son, who was the founder of Pyrrhos' dynasty. After the battle King Pyrrhos became master of Macedonia and Thessaly, but only briefly as he was killed in 272. When Celtic mercenaries in his service desecrated the royal tombs at Aigai in 274, Pyrrhos' reputation was badly damaged (Plut., *Pyrrh.* 26.6-7). In the epigram inscribed above the Macedonian armour displayed at Dodona, Pyrrhos posed as liberator of the Greeks from Macedonian oppression: 'This metal destroyed Asia, rich in gold. This metal made slaves out of the Greeks. This metal is lying fatherless by the pillars of Zeus of the Water-streams, the spoil of proud-voiced Macedonia' (Paus. 1.13.2; transl. P. Levi 1971).

had been half forgotten before the attack of the Celts. Indeed, Pyrrhos-Neoptolemos had been conspicuously absent from the saving of Delphi in 480, when Xerxes' Persians attacked. But now the *heros* was the most important of the demigods who fought alongside the defenders of Delphi against the Celts. The cult was revived and an annual celebration was established or re-established at his *heroon*.⁵³

Elephants against barbarians: Seleukid propaganda

Meanwhile the focus of the war had shifted to the east. For some years the Northern League, a federation of Hellespontine cities, had prevented the Celts of Thrace from crossing into Asia Minor.⁵⁴ In c. 277, however, King Nikomedes I of Bithynia recruited some Celtic leaders as allies in his war against his brother Zipoetes, who in turn was allied with the Seleukid king Antiochos I. With the help of Nikomedes three Celtic tribes crossed the straits, totalling, we are told, 20,000 people, half of whom were non-combatants.⁵⁵ Soon northwestern Asia Minor was in turmoil. Celtic war bands spread terror in Mysia, Lydia and Bithynia and Nikomedes proved unable to control his allies.⁵⁶ King

⁵² A.N. Oikonomides, 'The portrait of Pyrrhos King of Epirus in Hellenistic and Roman art', *AW* 8.1-2 (1983) 67-72. Cf. A.J. Jansen, *Het antieke tropaion* (Brussels 1957) 126-7, who states that Pyrrhos' use of the emblem of *Nike Tropaiophoros* was a innovation.

⁵³ Paus. 1.4.4 and 10.24.5. Cf. Hintzen-Bohlen 1992, 74, who expresses amazement at the lack of dedications made by Pyrrhos to Apollo Pythios, especially so since the Aitolians were his allies. On the history and importance of the cult of Pyrrhos: J. Defradas, *Les thèmes de la propagande delphique* (diss. Paris 1954; 2nd rev. ed. 1972) 146-56 and J.E. Fontenrose, *The Cult and Myth of Pyrrhos at Delphi* (Berkeley 1960). Generally on the cults of Delphi: G. Roux, *Delphes. Son oracle et ses dieux* (Paris 1976).

⁵⁴ On the Northern League: Will 1982, I 138-9; C. Préaux, *Le monde hellénistique. La Grèce et l'Orient (323-146 av. J.C.)* (Paris 1978) 138. The Hellespontine *koinon* had been founded in 281 to keep the Seleukids away after the defeat of Lysimachos; its principal members were Byzantion, Herakleia and Kalchedon.

⁵⁵ Liv. 38.16.9; cf. Paus 10.23.14.

⁵⁶ Memnon, FGrH 434 F 11.1-7; Paus. 1.4.5, 10.23.14; Liv. 38.16; Strabo 12.5.1; Just. 25.2.8-11. Cf. Will 1982 I, 142-4. On the treaty see H.H. Schmidt, *Die Staatsverträge des Altertums* III (Stuttgart 1969) no. 469. For a

Antiochos I was suppressing revolts in Syria and could not come to the rescue of the Greeks. Several cities, including Pergamon under the dynast Philetairos, a Macedonian, resisted with the help of Seleukid provincial forces for about two years.⁵⁷ Then the Seleukid king crossed the Taurus with his main force and after a brief campaign routed the Celts in the so-called Battle of the Elephants in c. 275.⁵⁸ The Celts, however, were neither subdued nor expelled. They retreated into Phrygia and settled in the country later known as Galatia.⁵⁹ They remained a threat to Seleukid Asia Minor—extorting money from cities and even the king⁶⁰—and provided a source of terrific

detailed account of these events see M. Launey, 'Un épisode oublié de l'invasion galate en Asie Mineure', *RÉA* 46 (1944) 217-234. The Celts defeated by Antigonos Gonatas near Lysimacheia may have been on their way to Asia Minor.

⁵⁷ Cf. OGIS no. 765, a lengthy inscription from Priene honouring a citizen for his part in the organisation of the city's defence.

⁵⁸ Lucian, *Zeuxis* 8-11; App., *Syr.* 65. On the Seleukid-Celtic war in general: E.R. Bevan, *The House of Seleucus I* (London 1902) 142-4; A. Kuhrt and S. Sherwin-White, *From Samarkhand to Sardis. A New Approach to the Seleucid Empire* (London 1993) 32-4. Battle of the Elephants: B. Bar-Kochva, 'On the Sources and Chronology of Antiochos I's Battle Against the Galatians,' *PCPhS* 199 (1973) 1-8; M. Wörle, 'Antiochos I., Achaïos der Ältere und die Galater,' *Chiron* 5 (1975) 59-87. According to the tradition recorded by Lucian in *Zeuxis*, Antiochos was outnumbered ten to one (Lucian gives the Celtic army an incredible strength of 20,000 cavalry and even more infantry), but the Celts panicked when they saw Antiochos' elephants. Seleukid royal armies in major campaigns numbered on average always more than 50,000 men (Diod. 20.113.4; Plut. *Demetr.* 28.3; Polyb. 5.80.3-13, 30.25; Liv. 35.43.4, 37.40.1-14); given that the king brought his war elephants with him, he presumably came with his main force and the Celts were probably outnumbered. On Seleucid military power: B. Bar-Kochva, *The Seleucid Army. Organisation and Tactics in the Great Campaigns* (Cambridge 1976).

⁵⁹ Paus. 1.4.5; Strabo 12.5.1; Memnon FHG III 535-6. Cf. Nachtergaele 1977, 166-7; Préaux 1978, 139; Rankin 1987, 188-207.

⁶⁰ Liv. 38.16.13.

mercenaries for the Seleukid kings' antagonists as well as for the kings themselves.⁶¹ Eventually, the Anatolian Celts became so hellenised that they were known as *Hellenogalatai* in the first century BC.⁶²

Like Gonatas, Antiochos I made the most out of his victory. He used it to legitimise his kingship, and took the title of Soter, apparently in a ritual on the battlefield in which he was crowned victor by his troops.⁶³ In the royal city Seleukeia, where Antiochos had buried his deified father Seleukos Nikator, he established a cult of Apollo Soter.⁶⁴ We further know that the Seleukid court poet Simonides of Magnesia celebrated the Battle of the Elephants in a famous epic.⁶⁵

The Greek image of the Celts

⁶¹ Cf. Bevan 1902 I, 140: 'It was not as a new state but as a great mass of mercenary soldiers encamped in the land that the Galatians—selling themselves now to one employer, now to another, one part of them to the Seleukid king, another to the King's enemies—kept all the conflicting powers in Asia Minor in unstable balance and prevented the establishment of a single supreme lord.'

⁶² Pos. *ap.* Diod. 5.32-3; Just. 26.2. Cf. Liv. 38.17; Strabo 13.4.2. On the settlement of the Celts in Galatia: S. Mitchell, *Anatolia. Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor. I: The Celts in Anatolia and the Impact of Roman Rule* (Oxford 1993); P. Moraux, 'l'Établissement des Galates en Asie Mineure', *Istanb.Mitt.* (1957) 56-75.

⁶³ App., *Syr.* 65; Lucian, *Zeuxis* 9.

⁶⁴ CIG 4458. More commonly, Zeus Soter was associated with victory over the Celts, but by adding the epithet to Apollo, the official ancestor of the Seleukid royal house, Antiochos stressed his own reputation as saviour; perhaps it was also meant to cause an association with the Celtic attack on Delphi. Wishing to create a dynastic ideology and stress his divine origin, Antiochos promoted the cult of Apollo throughout his empire and replaced Zeus with Apollo on the obverse of Seleukid coins: Kuhrt & Sherwin-White 1993, 28, cf. 34 and Bevan 1902, 143.

⁶⁵ Suda s.v. 'Simonides'. To be sure, several Greek poets of the period composed epic poems called *Galatika*, of which pieces remain, cf. Rankin 1987, 99. A terracotta from Bura in Achaëa, depicting a war elephant trampling a Celtic warrior underfoot may refer to Antiochos' victory: S. Reinach and E. Pottier, 'Éléphant foulant aux pieds un Galate', *BCH* 9 (1885) 485-93.

The most splendid 'Celtic propaganda' was yet to come: that of the Attalid kings in Pergamon. The propaganda encountered thus far presented mainly an image of the civilised world of the *poleis* being threatened by barbarians and then saved: first by gods with human aid, later by kings with divine aid.

Why did the Greeks look upon the Celts as the typical barbarian enemies of civilisation? This view became current especially in the early Hellenistic age. In the present context this was first and for all because the Celts *were* uncivilised according to Greek standards, and because they actually *did* attack the heart of Greek civilisation. But there was more. The Celts were barbarians from the western edge of the earth, a dark and cold land. They were opposite the Persians on the scale of barbarism. The Persians—the typical barbarians of the classical period—were judged uncivilised because they were *overcivilised*, that is, decadent, servile, voluptuous, *et cetera*. The Celts, however, were *savages*: ferocious beasts who were accused of cannibalism, necrophilia and other unnatural behaviour.⁶⁶ The Hellenistic writer Poseidonios says about the northwestern Celts that 'they consider it honourable to eat their dead fathers and to openly have intercourse, not only with unrelated women, but with their mothers and sisters as well.'⁶⁷ Pausanias describes the atrocities committed by

⁶⁶ The Greek (and Roman) view of Celts has been examined extensively in the past decades, notably, but not exclusively, in the context of the debate on 'alterity'. On ancient views of Celts as barbarians: Y.A. Dauge, *Le barbare. Recherches sur la conception romaine de la barbare et de la civilisation* (Brussels 1981); B. Kremer, *Das Bild der Kelten bis in der augusteischen Zeit. Studien zur Instrumentalisierung eines antiken Feindbildes bei griechischen und römischen Autoren* (Stuttgart 1994). The only comprehensive study of the image of barbarians in Hellenistic thought is C. Lacey, *The Greek view of Barbarians in the Hellenistic age* (diss. Boulder 1976); Lacey argues that in late classical and early Hellenistic times the Persians, the traditional barbarians *par excellence*, were no longer feared and loathed but became subject to curiosity and finally found some sort of acceptance as co-inhabitants of an expanded Greek world, a world that now covered the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East; the 'new barbarians' came from beyond the boundaries of this world. For the most recent archaeological approaches to the *historical* Celts in Europe in this period see now M. Diepeveen-Jansen, *People, Ideas and Goods. New Perspectives on Celtic 'Barbarians' in Western and Central Europe (500-250 BC)* (Amsterdam 2001).

⁶⁷ Poseidonios *ap.* Diod. 5.32-3 and Strabo 4.43. Cf. P. Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World* (Austin 2001) 46.

the Celts during the sack of Kallion as ‘the most horrifying evil I have ever heard of, not like the crimes of human beings at all.’

They butchered every human male of that entire people, the old men as well as the children who were still at the breast; and the Celts drank the blood and ate the flesh of those of the slaughtered babies that were fattest with milk. Any woman and mature virgin with a spark of pride killed themselves as soon as the city fell; those who lived were subjected with wanton violence to every form of outrage by men as remote from mercy as they were remote from love: they mated with the dying; they mated with the already dead.⁶⁸

The Celts were feared because they themselves feared nothing. But Celtic fearlessness had nothing to do with courageousness: it was based on *thymos*, the irrational absence of fear caused by lack of self-control.⁶⁹ In relation to the invasion of 279 Pausanias describes the irrational and inhuman Celtic way of fighting:

They rushed at their adversaries like wild beasts, full of rage and passion, with no kind of reasoning at all. ... The blind fury never left them while there was breath in their bodies; even with arrows and javelins sticking through them they were carried on by sheer spirit while their life lasted. Some of them even pulled the spears they were hit by out of their wounds and threw or stabbed with them.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Paus. 10.22.2; transl. P. Levi. In western Asia Minor an entire genre of folktale sprang up in which virgins preferred death to capture by Celts; all instances are conveniently summed up by Bevan 1902 I, 139.

⁶⁹ Arist., *Eth.Nic.* 3.5 b 28: ‘Anybody would be mad or completely bereft of sensibility if he feared nothing, neither earthquake nor wave of the sea, as they say of the Celts’; cf. Rankin 1987, 55-6. The classic text is Arr., *Anab.* 1.4: ‘Alexander asked the Celtic envoys what they were most afraid of in this world, hoping that his glorious name was known as far as their lands, or even further, and that they would answer: “You, my lord!” However, he was disappointed ... for the Celts replied that their worst fear was that the sky might fall on their heads.’

⁷⁰ Paus. 10.21.2. Cf. Poseidonios *ap.* Ath. 154 c; Liv. 38.17; Polyb. 2.19.4, 11.3.1.

Civilised soldiers, however, could handle such charges. This is clearly expressed by Livy, in a speech by the consul Manlius Vulso on the eve of his victory against the Galatians in 189:

Soldiers! I am not blind to the fact that of all the peoples of Asia the Celts have the highest reputation for war. ... Their tall bodies, their flowing red hair, their gigantic shields and long swords, together with their howling as they go into battle, their shouts and leapings and the fearful din of arms as they batter their shields. ... [But] if you hold your ground during the first charge, into which they hurl themselves with blazing passion and blind rage, their limbs will grow slack with sweat and weariness, and their weapons waver in their hands ... so that you will not even need to raise your weapons against them.⁷¹

The Celts' blind rage bordered on insanity. On several occasions the Celts were defeated in battle because they 'panicked' and went mad. Notably at the conclusion of the Battle for Delphi the Celts, as Pausanias writes, 'were seized by the terror of Pan':

The upheaval among the warriors broke out at nightfall; at first only a few were driven out of their minds ... [but] it was not long before madness seized the whole force. They grabbed their weapons and killed one another, without recognising their own language or familiar faces or even the shape of their shields ... and this madness from the god brought on a mutual massacre of the Celts on a vast scale.⁷²

⁷¹ Liv. 38.17. Cf. Diod. 5.28: 'the Gauls are tall in body, with rippling muscles. ... they are always washing their hair in limewater and pull it back from the forehead ... so that they look like Satyrs and Pans; the treatment of their hair makes it so heavy that it looks like the mane of a horse.' On Celtic warfare in the Hellenistic period see P. Connolly, *Greece and Rome at War* (London 1981) 113-26. On Manlius' campaign: Hansen 1971, 88-92.

⁷² Paus. 10.23.5. The other instances are the Battle of Lysimacheia and the Battle of the Elephants. In Asia Minor it was told that the river-god Marsyas had flooded against the Celts; the Celts panicked while the air was filled with a mysterious flute sound: Berve 1902 I, 139.

To sum up: Celts were formidable enemies in war but also cultural antagonists of the civilised Greeks. They were bloodthirsty savages from the barbarous world border who threatened to destroy the ordered world of the *poleis*. Because of their irrationality they feared nothing. This is why they were often compared to mythical representations of chaos and anti-culture such as Cyclops and Laestrygonians⁷³ but notably Titans and Giants.

Attalos of Pergamon saves Asia

The first known instance of Celts being associated with Titans is in a piece of Ptolemaic propaganda: Kallimachos' *Hymn to Delos*, dated to 271-265⁷⁴ and dedicated to Ptolemy II Philadelphos. In this poem the victory of Apollo at Delphi is equated with the Ptolemaic king's suppression of a mutiny of his own Celtic mercenaries in Egypt between 274 and 271. Speaking from his mother's womb the yet unborn Apollo first calls 'future Ptolemy' his equal and then prophecies that:

A time will come when both he and I shall fight the same battle, when against the Greeks a barbaric sword is raised, a Celtic Ares, the Titans of a later age, who will rush upon us from the uttermost west like snow, as numerous as the stars when at their thickest they pasture the sky.⁷⁵

In an oracle of Zeus of Dodona, transmitted by the soothsayer Phaennis, yet another king was destined to become the saviour of the Greeks from the Celtic threat:⁷⁶

⁷³ Paus. 10.22.4.

⁷⁴ W.H. Mineur, *Callimachus Hymn to Delos. Introduction and Commentary* (Leiden 1984) 10-8.

⁷⁵ Call., *Hymn to Delos*, 171-90. Cf. Paus. 1.7.2.

⁷⁶ Philadelphos himself did not bear the epithet of Soter but the *Hymn to Delos* calls him instead the son of the 'sublime lineage of the Saviour', i.e. of his father Ptolemy I Soter, for whom Philadelphos had set up a cult as Saviour God in 279. Ptolemy I had perhaps first received the title of *soter* from the Rhodians in 304 (Diod. 20.100; Paus. 1.8.6) but see the objections of R.A. Hazzard, 'Did Ptolemy I get his surname from the Rhodians?', ZPE 93 (1992) 52-6. On the deification of the early Ptolemies: G. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* (transl. T.

Behold! The murderous Celtic hordes are at the Hellespont, striding down the hollow roads, crying out for battle and the destruction of Asia. Any day now the god will bring great terror to you who live beside the beaches of the sea. But Zeus shall give you a ready ally: the beloved son of the god-nourished bull shall one day destroy the Celtic nation.⁷⁷

The 'son of the bull' is the Pergamene king Attalos I Soter (ruled as king 241-197). The poem is a reflection or product of his propaganda.

By the time Attalos I came to power as dynast of Pergamon under Seleukid suzerainty, in 241, the Celts were firmly settled in central Anatolia. Although there certainly was more to the culture of the Galatians than fighting and plundering alone, the Greeks of Asia knew and feared them because they extorted money from cities, looted decent peoples' property, and carried off hostages.⁷⁸ In 238 or 237 Attalos spread the word that he would no longer pay the barbarians their danegeld, thus provoking an attack on Pergamene territory.⁷⁹ A Celtic host moved westward but the army of Pergamon awaited them in the mountain pass between the Makestos Valley and the Kaikos Valley. At the source of the river Kaikos, near the modern town of Gelenbe, the Celts were ambushed and

Saavedra; London and New York 2001) 90-7; H. Melaerts, ed., *Le culte du souverain dans l'Égypte ptolémaïque au IIIe siècle avant notre ère* (Louvain 1998); R.A. Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy: Studies in Ptolemaic Propaganda* (Toronto, Buffalo, London 2000).

⁷⁷ Paus. 10.15.2; cf. Suda s.v. 'Attalos'. Pausanias asserts that the prophecy was made one generation before the Celts invaded Asia Minor in 277, but in 10.12.5 states that Phaennis was born around 280, making her a contemporary of King Attalos

⁷⁸ OGIS no. 765; Liv. 38.16.13. Cf. Préaux 1978, 138-9. A royal letter to Erythrai dated to the reign of Antiochos II (261-246) mentions a 'Galatian tax' (*galatikon*), perhaps imposed to meet the cost of war against the Celts, perhaps to buy them off: C.B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Age* (New Haven 1934) no. 15, lines 27-8. The Macedonian, Greek and Iranian rulers who fought each other in Asia Minor paid or otherwise induced the Celts to terrorise their neighbours, cf. Kuhrt & Sherwin-White 1993, 34.

⁷⁹ Liv. 38.16.13.

annihilated.⁸⁰ Because of this triumph, Attalos added to his name the titles of King and Saviour.⁸¹ The victory legitimised not only Attalos' taking of the diadem—probably on the battlefield—and abjuration of his overlord Seleukos II, it also gave him enough prestige to take the place of the mighty but distant Seleukids as the dominant power in western Asia Minor, with the responsibility to protect the cities there.⁸² The cities in the region soon honoured him as the common saviour and benefactor of the Greeks.⁸³ In Pergamon itself altars were erected to 'King Attalos the Saviour'.⁸⁴ Between 238 and 228 Attalos also fought successful campaigns against the Seleukid ruler in Asia Minor, Antiochos Hierax, and his allies the Galatians, and achieved at least one other major victory.⁸⁵

Though his most formidable adversaries were the Seleukids, in his propaganda Attalos brought his victories over the Celts to the fore. Attalos credited his adoptive father, the dynast Philetairos, with the honour of having driven the Galatians from western Asia to Phrygia in 275, instead of Antiochos Soter. This he made especially clear on his coins. On Pergamene tetradrachmes now appeared, instead of the Seleukid king, the head of Philetairos, who was awarded a victory wreath and, with retrospective effect, a diadem; on the reverse a seated Athena Nikephoros held a victory

⁸⁰ Polyaeus 4.20; Frontin., *Strat.* 2.13.1. For the date see Will 1982 I, 266-7. In the summer of 334 Alexander followed the same route after the Battle of the Granikos: A.B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire. The Reign of Alexander the Great* (2nd ed.; Cambridge 1993) 44 with n. 56. On Attalos' Celtic War in general: Hansen 1971, 28-33.

⁸¹ Paus. 1.8.2, cf. 1.25.2; Polyb. 18.41.7-8; Strabo 13.4.1-2. According to Suda s.v. 'Nikandros', Attalos became also known by the name of Galatonikes. Cf. R.E. Allen, *The Attalid Kingdom. A Constitutional History* (Oxford 1983) 31 and Appendix II, pp. 195-9.

⁸² Attalos profited from the so-called War of the Brothers between Seleukos I and Antiochos Hierax (239-236) which had paralysed the power of the Seleukid king in Asia Minor: less than two years before the Battle of the Kaikos, Seleukos had been expelled from Asia Minor by Hierax.

⁸³ For a discussion of the evidence for Greek honours for the Attalids: Allen 1983, 145-58.

⁸⁴ Hansen 1971, 31 with n. 27.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 38-45.

wreath above the letters of Philetairos' name.⁸⁶ The coinage with the diademed Philetairos—the founder of the dynasty was depicted on issues of all later Attalid kings, who never put their own portraits on coins—marked the *de iure* secession of Pergamon from the Seleukid Empire.

The image of the king as saviour from barbarians became a recurrent, central theme in the propaganda of the Attalid dynasty for nearly a century, as it was systematically continued and elaborated under Attalos' successors Eumenes II and Attalos II. It is striking that Attalid military successes against the Seleukids, the political and military consequences of which were more far-reaching, did not receive half as much attention in their propaganda.

Building activities of Attalos Soter

Attalos I began the building programs that would eventually turn the Pergamene acropolis into a shrine for the cult of victory and kingship, with the Great Altar as its greatest monument. The ideological foundations for this were laid shortly after the Kaikos victory. The cult of Athena Polias—the main deity in Pergamon whose sanctuary was on the acropolis—was transformed into a cult of Athena Nikephoros, and to the cult of Zeus on the agora a cult of Zeus Soter was added.⁸⁷ In traditional religion Zeus was the saviour *par excellence* and a bestower of victory if ever there was one.⁸⁸ The warrior goddess Athena, Zeus' principal daughter, was a bestower of victory too. In

⁸⁶ H. von Fritze, *Die Münzen von Pergamon* (Berlin 1910) and H.D. Schultz 'The coinage of Pergamon until the end of the Attalid Dynasty', in: R. Dreyfus and E. Schraudolf eds., *The Telephos Frieze From the Great Altar II* (San Francisco 1997); cf. O. Mørkholm, 'Some Pergamene coins in Copenhagen', in: A. Houghton *et al.* eds., *Studies in Honour of L. Mildenberg* (Wetteren 1984) 188. A festival of *Philetaireia* celebrated in Kyzikos was perhaps a reward for Philetairos' support against the Celts: CIG 3660.

⁸⁷ Allen 1983, 121-2; Hansen 1971, 440, 447-50. Zeus and Athena were the two principal deities in the city. On the cults of Pergamon: Hansen 1971, 440-3; Allen 1983, 121-9.

⁸⁸ W. Burkert, *Greek Religion*. Translated from the German by J. Raffan (Cambridge, Mass., 1985) 128. Athena and Zeus were the deities most associated with the goddess Nike; in Classical times the two were closely connected with each other, as apparent from e.g. instances of joint worship and the sharing of temples, and their having cult epithets in common; on the close relationship of Zeus and Athena in classical

Hellenistic thought Zeus furthermore had become the embodiment of cosmic order, a celestial king who was a model for royal power. Meanwhile, the man Attalos had been transformed into *king Attalos the Saviour*. From this moment on Attalid propaganda would find its inspiration from this divine triad of Athena, Zeus and the King.⁸⁹

Although his son Eumenes undertook the greatest building projects, Attalos I took the first steps. During his reign the precinct of the Athena sanctuary on the acropolis—where the spoils from the Kaikos victory had been consecrated—was gradually filled with splendid votive offerings commemorating Attalos' Celtic War. There were battle-scenes and dying Gauls to see, a gigantic Athena Promachos standing next to a statue of Attalos Soter, and several smaller portraits of the king, his family and his *philoï*. In the late nineteenth century the excavators of the Athena precinct found several large bases for memorials. A circular *bathron* was dedicated to Athena by the king; the inscription on its base thanked the goddess for victory in the Battle of the Kaikos.⁹⁰ This base is usually associated with the Capitoline Dying Gaul and the so-called Ludovisi Group in the Museo Nazionale delle Terme in Rome, two surviving marble copies of original bronzes from the Pergamene Athena sanctuary, but the exact connection of these sculptures with any of the sanctuary's bases is impossible to ascertain.⁹¹ The other large monument, the long *bathron* commemorating victory over

Athens see J. Neils, 'Athena, Alter ego of Zeus', in: S. Deacy, and A. Villing eds., *Athena in the Classical World* (Leiden 2001) 219-32, esp. 224-6.

⁸⁹ Most clearly expressed in an inscription of Pergamene settlers in Panion, Thrace, dedicated to Zeus Soter, Athena Nikephoros, Apollo Pythios, and 'King Eumenes Soter and Euergetes': OGIS no. 301. The name Nikephoros was used mainly in the propaganda of Attalos' successor Eumenes.

⁹⁰ OGIS no. 269 = IvP 20.

⁹¹ The two figures of the Ludovisi Group have been soundly identified as a Galatian noble and his wife; the man has stabbed the woman to death and proceeds taking his own life. The generally accepted notion that the male figure does so in order to ward off the humiliation of falling into enemy hands alive, however, is not so obvious and requires justification, for this interpretation presupposes a sense of honour that Celts are not normally credited with in the written sources of that time. On absence of honour as a Celtic characteristic see e.g. Polyb. 2.7.5, 2.32.8, 9.34.11. Although tentative as well, I might suggest that we should allow for the possibility that the Celtic man is acting in a fit of madness, which would at least be

the Galatians and Antiochos Hierax, was dedicated by the king's army commanders; its base inscription honoured Athena, Zeus and Attalos.⁹² Other inscriptions found in this area honoured Athena and Zeus.⁹³

Outside the city walls Attalos built a second sanctuary for Athena the Bestower of Victory, called the Nikephorion.⁹⁴ Attalos furthermore rebuilt and enlarged the temple of Zeus on the Upper Agora.⁹⁵ Above the entrance a statue of Nike was placed. The altar in front of the temple was

more in accordance with the Greek image, such as I have noted above. The old popular understanding of the Ludovisi Group as a idealised 'compassionate' image of the enemy, for which even underlying stoic thoughts have been proposed, can now be dismissed, cf. Schalles 1983, *op.cit.* below, n. 93. The Dying Gaul poses no difficulties in interpretation: a realistic image of a defeated enemy lying in the dust: not a compassionate but a triumphal image.

⁹² OGIS no. 273-9 = IvP 21-8.

⁹³ The Celtic marbles and their sculptors are mentioned by Plin, *Nat.* 43.84. For the inscriptions in the Athena sanctuary: H. Fraenkel, *Altertümer von Pergamon* 8.1 (Berlin 1890). Cf. W. Radt, *Pergamon. Geschichte und Bauten einer antiken Metropole* (Darmstadt 1999) 159-68, who gives an overview of recent interpretations of the inscriptions. The sculptures found in and associated with the Athena sanctuary are listed in F. Winter ed., *Altertümer von Pergamon* 7 (Berlin 1908), cf. J. Schäfer, *Pergamenische Forschungen* I (1972). R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture* (London 1991) gives a good general treatment of these sculptures and their influence on pages 99-126, and on page 113 places next to each other the competing reconstructions of the Celtic groups by H. Schober and E. K. Künzl. The thorough study of the dedications in R. Wenning, *Die Galateranatheme Attalos I. Eine Untersuchung zum Bestand und zur Nachwirkung pergamenischer Skulptur* (Berlin 1978) is somewhat outdated, but J. Schalles, *Untersuchungen zur Kulturpolitik der pergamenischen Herrscher im dritten Jahrhundert vor Christus* (Tübingen 1985), chapter 'Die inhaltlichen Deutung der Galaterskulpturen' pp. 80-149 is excellent.

⁹⁴ Radt 1999, 242-3; Schalles 1983, 145-6. The location of the Nikephorion has not been established; the most likely location is near the Gate of Eumenes in the south, where the road to the acropolis began. The Nikephorion was built after c. 220, raised to the ground by troops of Philip V in 201, and rebuilt by Eumenes II: Polyb. 16.1; App., *Mac* 4. Cf. Hansen 1971, 55-7.

⁹⁵ In a decree of Pergamon, OGIS no. 332, 5-17, divine honours were awarded to Attalos III, the son of the posthumously deified Eumenes II; it was *i.a.* decreed that a gold statue of King Attalos as a mounted victor

dedicated to Zeus Soter. After the Battle of the Kaikos Attalos also made dedications abroad, notably in Athens and Delos, but in Delphi too.⁹⁶ In Athens he commissioned a stoa and on the southern slope of the Acropolis erected four large groups consisting of twenty-five bronze statues each, representing battles between (1) Olympian Gods and Giants, (2) Athenians and Amazons, (3) Athenians and Persians, (4) Pergamenians and Galatians.⁹⁷ Attalos made his message very, very clear.

The later Attalids

Pièce de résistance of Attalid victory propaganda was the so-called Great Altar of Pergamon. Its building began under King Eumenes II Philadelphos Soter (197-159), who more than his father was responsible for the transformation of the Pergamene acropolis into a splendourous *basileia* that could compete with Alexandria and Antioch.⁹⁸ Profiting from Seleukid and Antigonid decline in the Aegean region, Eumenes posed as the standard-bearer of Hellenism and protector of the ancestral freedom and autonomy of the Greeks.⁹⁹ He embellished his capital with splendourous buildings, founded a *mouseion*, attracted Greek poets, philosophers and artists to his court, and so on. Eumenes also was a magnificent benefactor of cities throughout the Aegean, notably Athens and Delphi.¹⁰⁰ It was primarily his father's and his own triumphs over Celtic armies that Eumenes used to seek acknowledgement as the saviour and benefactor of Greek civilisation.¹⁰¹

During Eumenes' reign the Attalid kingdom arrived at its greatest territorial extent due to the defeat of the Seleukid king Antiochos the Great by Roman and Attalid forces in the Battle of Magnesia

were to be placed beside the altar of Zeus Soter on the Upper Agora, and frankincense offered to the king daily.

⁹⁶ Wenning 1978, 49; cf. Hansen 1971, 26-7 and 290-2; Schalles 1983, 104-43.

⁹⁷ Paus. 1.25.2.

⁹⁸ Strabo 13.4.2.

⁹⁹ R.B. McShane, *The Foreign Policy of the Attalids of Pergamon* (Urbana 1964) 58-91.

¹⁰⁰ Hansen 1971, 67-8, 105-6, 234-98.

¹⁰¹ Allen 1983, 147.

(189). By the Treaty of Apameia one year later Attalos acquired almost all parts of Asia Minor that had formerly been under Seleukid control. Eumenes furthermore fought two major wars against the Celts. First he defeated the Galatian king Ortiagion between 185 and 183 as part of a war against Prousius I of Bithynia, with whom the Galatians were allied.¹⁰² This victory resulted in the nominal subjugation of Galatia to Attalid dominance, and it justified Eumenes' taking of the epithet of Saviour.¹⁰³ It also led to the foundation in Pergamon of a festival of Nikephoria in honour of Athena Nikephoros. The Nikephoria found wide recognition as a paramount panhellenic festival and was equated with the Soteria of Delphi.¹⁰⁴ The Attalids' position in the Aegean was not unlike that of the Aitolians in Central Greece. The Attalids, too, had suddenly risen to power by stepping into a power vacuum—here the result of Antigonid and Seleukid failure—and like the 'Aitolian' Soteria the Nikephoria propagated Attalid political and military preponderance. Eumenes' second clash with the Celts was a Galatian uprising against Pergamon. This war ended in 166 with Attalid victory in the Battle of Mount Tmolos near Sardis. In this battle Eumenes was aided by Dionysos. Eumenes later built a sanctuary for the liberator Dionysos Lyseios on Mount Tmolos and established a Lyseios cult in the god's birthplace Thebes.¹⁰⁵ This victory, too, stirred up the gratitude of the Greeks. Both Eumenes and Attalos, who had been posthumously deified at least since 188, received divine honours. At Sardis and Tralles a

¹⁰² Polyb. 14.15, 25.2; Liv. 17.60. Cf. F. Chamoux, 'Pergame et les Galates', REG 101 (1988) 492-500; C. Habicht, 'Über die Kriege zwischen Pergamon und Bithynien', *Hermes* 84 (1956) 90-110.

¹⁰³ Allen 1983, 79 and 150-1 with n 26.

¹⁰⁴ Hansen 1971, 449-50; Allen 1983, 123-9. Coins were struck in the name of Athena Nikephoros, probably on the occasion of the installation, and again at the reorganisation, of the Nikephoria. The image of Athena on these issues—heavily armed and with a small Nike in her hand—probably depicts the cult statue at the rebuilt Nikephorion outside the city. On the exclusive connection of the Nikephoria and its propaganda with the Celtic Wars of Eumenes II: A.S. Fanta, 'The Medusa-Athena Nikephoros Coin from Pergamon', in: S. Deacy, and A. Villing eds., *Athena in the Classical World* (Leiden 2001) 163-180, with literature. On the decree in acceptance of the festival, and the date: M. Segre, 'L'institution des Nikephoria de Pergame', in: L. Robert ed., *Hellenica V* (Paris 1948) 104-5; C.P. Jones, 'Diodorus Paspasos and the Nikephoria of Pergamon', *Chiron* 4 (1974) 183-205.

¹⁰⁵ Diod. 31.14; cf. Polyb. 29.31, 31.6.6; Liv. 45. On the Galatian uprising and its aftermath: Hansen 1971, 120-9. Dionysos was a 'personal' god of the royal family: Hansen 1971, 451-2; cf. Paus. 10.15.2-3.

festival of *Athanaia* and *Eumeneia* was established. The people of Pergamon voted a gold victory crown for a new cult statue of Athena in her precinct. The people of the Ionian League voted a golden crown and a statue of Eumenes, and inaugurated festivals in honour of Athena and Eumenes too. The Ionians praised Eumenes as the common benefactor of the Greeks and thanked him for having restored peace and prosperity. In Kos, Kyzikos and Teos divine honours were given to Eumenes and his family.¹⁰⁶

The Attalid Gigantomachy

Eumenes' architectural projects in Pergamon (continued by his brother and successor Attalos II, r. 159-138) were built alongside the city's main road and procession street. The road started at the Gate of Eumenes and terminated on top of the acropolis.¹⁰⁷ Its ultimate starting point probably was the Nikephorion outside the city. Winding up the slopes of the acropolis the road passed by several public monuments: first mainly buildings connected with Pergamon's identity as a *polis*—gymnasium, market square, agora—then more and more monuments connected with kingship, until it finally

¹⁰⁶ Delphi: *F. Delphes* III 3.241 = OGIS no. 305, 7-9. Tralles: L. Robert, 'Décret de Tralles', *RPh* 40 (1934) 279-91. Pergamon: OGIS no. 299; cf. Paus 1.4.6. Ionians: C.B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Age* (New Haven 1934) no. 52. Kos: *Syll* no. 1028. Kyzikos and Teos: OGIS no. 305, lines 11, 7-12. For divine honours for the Attalids see generally Hansen 1971, 435-70, and (much more cautious as regards the actual deification of living Attalids) C. Habicht, *Gottmenschentum und griechische Städte* (Munich 1956) 124-6; the evidence is discussed in Allen 1983, 145-58, who is mainly concerned with chronological and technical problems. In Athens Attalos I and Eumenes II were heroised as eponymous *phyle* heroes (replacing the Antigonids kings Antigonos I and Demetrios I whom the Athenians had deified and honoured as *soteres* ever since they liberated the city in 307) but it is uncertain if this was exclusively connected with their Celtic Wars.

¹⁰⁷ On the building programs of the Attalid kings: Hansen 1971, 234-98; A. Schober, *Die Kunst von Pergamon* (1951); E. Rohde, *Pergamon. Burgberg und Altar* (Berlin 1964). For an overview of the latest excavations: W. Radt, 'Recent research in and about Pergamon: A survey (ca. 1987-1997)', in: H. Koester ed., *Pergamon, Citadel of the Gods. Archaeological Record, Literary Description, and Religious Development* (Harrisburg 1998) 1-40.

reached the royal palaces on the acropolis' summit. The focal point of this architectural celebration of Attalid might was situated half-way, as a kind of intermediary space between the civic *polis* below, and the royal space high above the city. This central area consisted of three terraces that together formed one integrated whole: (1) the existing *temenos* of Athena, which was enlarged to include new buildings: a *propylon* entrance adorned with images of Athena's owl and Zeus' eagle, *stoai* decorated with sculptured trophies (arms in both Celtic and Macedonian style), and a *tropaion*;¹⁰⁸ (2) a newly created precinct whereon the Great Altar was built; (3) a terrace supporting royal tombs, perhaps the focal point of ruler cult. These all visitors passed by before entering the *basileia* area proper, where the audience rooms, royal palaces and arsenals were located.

The Great Altar of Pergamon, now in Berlin, is included in a second century AD list of the Seven Wonders of the World. This is the only ancient text of which we know for certain that it deals with the Great Altar:

In Pergamon stands a great marble altar, forty feet high, with huge sculptures; these represent a Gigantomachy.¹⁰⁹

The Great Altar's was dedicated to Zeus, Athena, or Zeus *and* Athena. The incredibly baroque reliefs on its outer walls depicted the Olympian Gods—representatives of *kosmos*—fighting a mixture of

¹⁰⁸ The original temple of Athena Polias was left intact; this building had been constructed in the late fourth century, perhaps commissioned by Alexander's wife and son Barsine and Herakles: Schalles 1983, 4-22.

¹⁰⁹ Lucius Ampelius, *Liber Memorialis* 8.14; the only other source mentioning the Altar is Paus. 5.13.8, but cf. Rohde 1964, 41; the Great Altar may be the 'Throne of Satan' in *Revelations* 2.12-3. The Altar disappeared because of earthquakes in the third century AD, and because its stones were used for the construction of the so-called Byzantine Wall in the fourth century and a castle in the early eighth century. It was rediscovered by the legendary Carl Humann, who initiated systematic excavations of the site in the 1880's. On the discovery of the Altar see e.g.: A. Conze ed., *Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen zu Pergamon* (reprinted Berlin 1980); C. Humann, *Der Pergamon Altar. Entdeckt, beschrieben und gezeichnet* (E. Schulte ed.; Berlin 1959); cf. E. Schulte, *Chronik der Ausgrabung von Pergamon, 1871-1886* (Dortmund 1959).

Titans and Giants—representatives of *chaos*—as an allegory of the Greek struggle against the Celts.¹¹⁰ At least since the Persian Wars, if not earlier, the theme of Gigantomachy represented the universal battle of civilisation against barbarity, order against chaos. In the myth twenty-four Giants, creatures from Hell, assaulted Heaven and were defeated by the Olympian Gods, their immortal allies and one mortal: Herakles.¹¹¹ The Pergamene Gigantomachy presumably did not refer to a specific battle. It rather presented a summing-up of Attalid achievements against the Celts. Its iconography was deliberately reminiscent of Athenian victory celebrations after the Second Persian War so that a direct link was established with the saving of Greece in 480-479 (cf. the earlier mentioned statue groups erected by Attalos Soter on the slopes of the Athenian Acropolis, depicting battles against Amazons, Giants, Persians, and Celts).¹¹²

¹¹⁰ The connection of the Gigantomachy with the Attalids' Celtic victories is undisputed but controversy remains as to what specific event led to the construction of the altar: *communis opinio* prefers the defeat of the Galatian king Ortiagion in c. 184, but later and earlier dates have also been suggested, most recently by B. Andreae, 'Dating and significance of the Telephos Frieze in relation to the other dedications of the Attalids of Pergamon', in: Dreyfus & Schraudolph 1996, 121-6, who argues in favour of the Battle of Mount Tmolos in 166, a date already proposed by Schalles. Pace Radt 1999, 196, who argues that Eumenes built the altar to thank Zeus Soter for saving him from an assassination attempt in Athens. There is abundant literature on the Great Altar. See in general Hansen 1971, 319-40, Radt 1999, 168-80, and E. Schmidt, *Der Grosse Altar zu Pergamon* (Leipzig 1961). Rohde 1969, 37-79, offers a useful and well-illustrated guide to the Gigantomachy Frieze. For a more recent discussion: V. Kästner, 'The architecture of the Great Altar of Pergamon', in: H. Koester ed., *Pergamon, Citadel of the Gods. Archaeological Record, Literary Description, and Religious Development* (Harrisburg 1998) 137-62.

¹¹¹ The main surviving written account of the Gigantomachy is Apollod., *Bibl.* 1.6.1-3; also Ovid., *Met.* 1.151-62; Strabo 10.5.16; Paus. 8.29.1-2; Diod. 4.21. The fight between Gods and Titans is best known from Hes., *Theog.* 485ff; cf. Apollod., *Bibl.* 1.1.5-7, 1.2.1; Hyg., *Fab.* 118; Diod. 5.70; Paus. 8.8.2.

¹¹² T.H. Carpenter, *Art and Myth in Ancient Greece* (1991; 2nd ed. London 1996) 74-5; cf. see E. Hall, 'Asia unmanned. Images of victory in classical Athens', in: J. Rich en G. Shipley eds., *War and Society in the Greek World* (London 1993) 108-33. Gigantomachy was an important aspect of the cult of Athena on the Athenian Acropolis. The shield of Pheidias' statue of Athena Parthenos was adorned with images of a Gigantomachy and an Amazonomachy, a Gigantomachy was woven into the peplos worn by the cult statue of the goddess during the Panathenaic Festival, it was the subject of the east metopes of the Parthenon and of the paintings of several

It will not be necessary to discuss all Gods and Giants on the altar's many slabs; only the central group (on the left side of the eastern frieze) needs more extensive treatment. On the right side of this group Athena can be seen fighting with several foes. The goddess is crowned by a winged Victory, approaching her from behind. Opposite Athena Zeus is busy battling three Giants to their knees. Behind Zeus is Herakles. Athena and Zeus are facing each other. The space between them is filled with Giants falling down under the blows of the gods. The Herakles-Zeus-Athena group has a perfectly balanced symmetry, and is flanked on either side by a chariot, driven by Hera and Ares.¹¹³ This group was immediately opposite the entrance of the precinct. It was the panorama that visitors saw upon entering and there could be no doubt that what they saw was the epicentre of the battle.

The inside of the altar was decorated with a smaller relief relating the history of Telephos, the son of Herakles and Auge. Telephos was *heros ktistes* of Pergamon and the Attalids claimed lineal descent from him. Herakles' part in the Telephos myth was much stressed on the Telephos Frieze. The literal centrality of the Telephos Frieze inside the altar mirrored the symbolic centrality of Herakles on the exterior friezes, and stressed the Attalids' ancestry from Herakles, and thus ultimately from Zeus.¹¹⁴

vases dedicated to the goddess already in the sixth century. Moreover, it was on the Parthenon that the Giants first acquired their barbarian guise. Other well-known images of Gigantomachy were in Delphi, namely on the exteriors of the treasuries of the Siphnians (c. 525) and Megarians (c. 500), and moreover on the archaic temple of Apollo himself (c. 525-500). Gigantomachy in art: F. Vian, *Répertoire des gigantomachies figurées dans l'art grec et romain* (Paris 1951); M. Mayer, *Die Giganten und Titanen in der antiken Sage und Kunst* (Berlin 1887). For Gigantomachy in Hellenistic Greek and Latin literature see esp. P. Hardie, *Virgil's Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford 1986) 85-156. The Attalids' Celtic victories were also celebrated in painting: Paus. 1.4.6.

¹¹³ W. Schindler, *Mythos und Wirklichkeit in der Antike* (Leipzig 1987) 148-9; Rohde 1969, 37-79. On Athenian images of Gigantomachy, notably on the Parthenon, Athenian art, Herakles, Zeus and Athena are together presented as a 'winning team; on the close relationship of the three: Neils 2001, 229-32, with literature.

¹¹⁴ Paus. 1.4.6, 5.13.2, 8.4.6. The *heros* Telephos already had a sanctuary and cult in Pergamon; Telephos and his mother Auge figure on Attalid coins. On the Telephos Frieze see now R. Dreyfus and E. Schraudolph eds., *Pergamon. The Telephos Frieze from the Great Altar* (2 vols.; San Francisco and New York 1996). There is a

Since the reign of Alexander the Great kings regularly associated themselves with Herakles for reason of his divine parentage, his bodily strength, invincibility, his quality as *soter* from monsters, *et cetera*.¹¹⁵ The Attalids focussed on their ancestor's part in the Gigantomachy. This is why they chose Gigantomachy to represent their trial of strength with the Celts instead of the better known struggle between the Gods and the Titans, like Kallimachos did in the *Hymn to Delos*.¹¹⁶ On the Gigantomachy Frieze Herakles refers to, if not represents, the Attalid monarchy. Herakles was the Attalids' ancestor and he was closely linked to Zeus and Athena, the deities with whom the Attalids associated their kingship. Therefore Herakles fights beside Zeus and Athena. The connection between Herakles and his father Zeus is obvious. But Herakles also maintained a special relationship with Athena. Throughout his mortal life, his many deeds and adventures, Athena had been Herakles' guide and helper. It was in a sanctuary sacred to Athena that Herakles fathered Telephos.¹¹⁷ Moreover, it was said that Telephos' mother had founded the first altar of Athena in Pergamon.¹¹⁸

detailed description of the friezes in Hansen 1971, 338-47; cf. W.D. Heilmeyer ed., *Der Pergamonaltar. Die neue Präsentation nach Restaurierung des Telephosfrieses* (Tübingen 1997).

¹¹⁵ See now the exhaustive study by U. Huttner, *Die politische Rolle der Heraklesgestalt im griechischen Herrschertum* (Stuttgart 1997).

¹¹⁶ In Hellenistic times the two myths were not always strictly separated, cf. E. Simon, *Pergamon und Hesiod* (Berlin 1975). The gods had received an oracle that the Giants could only be killed by the hands of a mortal and for that reason enlisted Herakles.

¹¹⁷ Apollod., *Bibl.* 2.7.4; Diod. 4.33; Paus. 8.48.5; 8.47.3. It has been argued that the emphasis on the meeting of Auge and Herakles in Arkadia on the Telephos Frieze reflected the pleasant diplomatic contacts between the Attalid monarchy and the Achaean League; during the reign of Eumenes II, however, relations between the two states were not good, cf. Schindler 1987, 154-5 (not to mention that the meeting had been rather unpleasant for Auge). On Telephos in Greek art in general: C. Bauchhens-Thuriedl, *Der Mythos van Telephos in der antiken Bildkunst* (Würzburg 1971).

¹¹⁸ Telephos and Auge in Pergamon: Paus. 1.4.6; 5.13.2; 8.4.6. Founding of the Athena cult: IvP 156, 23-4, cf. Hansen 1971, 447.

The figure of Herakles held great attraction to the Attalids (and other dynasties as well) because he was both *heros* and *theos*, both a (deified) man *and* a god.¹¹⁹ This made him an excellent model for ruler cult. Moreover, Herakles not only acquired immortality but was even admitted to Olympus and 'reborn' as a thirteenth Olympian next to the Twelve Gods.¹²⁰ The same honour befell the deified king Eumenes II after his death. In an inscription from the reign of Attalos III the Pergamenian people decreed that a statue of Eumenes were to be regularly crowned with a victory wreath by 'the *stephanephoros* of the Twelve Gods and the God King Eumenes'.¹²¹ Giving his even greater prestige as a saviour, similar deification may be postulated for the deified Attalos Soter. As Herakles' apotheosis as an Olympian deity was a reward for his part-taking in the Gigantomachy,¹²² this adds an explanation to the centrality of Zeus and Athena in Attalid propaganda: only Athena had the power to bring mortals before the throne of Zeus, and only Zeus could make a mortal immortal. Zeus had brought Herakles from his funeral pyre to Olympos in a golden chariot; Athena had taken him by the hand, introduced him to the Olympians, and finally led him before Zeus.¹²³

Conclusion

The Greeks equated the Celtic invasion of Greece with the Second Persian War. Pausanias based his account of the war on this equation. However, Pausanias also shows how different things were in 279, as several aspects of his account reveal that the Celts were not half as dangerous as the Great King's well-organised *Grande Armée* in the year 480. First, the Greek army at Thermopylai was able to block

¹¹⁹ Pind., *Nem.* 3.22; Hdt. 2.44.5.

¹²⁰ Diod. 4.39; Pind., *Isthm.* 4.59; *Nem.* 10.18; Apollod., *Bibl.* 2.7.7; Hdt. 2.44.5. In 336 Philip II included in a procession an image of himself in between statues of the Olympian gods, presenting himself as *synthronos* of the Twelve: Diod. 16.92.5, cf. 16.95.1; Ael., *Var.* 5.12; Ath. 6.251 B; Neoptol. *Ap. Stob.* 4.34.70. Cf. J. Tondriau and L. Cerfaux, *Le culte des souverains dans la civilisation gréco-romaine* (Paris 1956) 123-5; Habicht 1956, 12-4.

¹²¹ OGIS no. 332, lines 17-20.

¹²² Pindar, *Nem.* 1.60-7.

¹²³ Apollod., *Bibl.* 2.7.7; Hyg., *Fab.* 102; cf. Ov., *Met.* 9.241-73. Cf. Neils 2001, 226.

the approach of the Celts. Indeed, any troop of massed in-line infantry with any training and experience ought to be perfectly able to hold its ground against the helter-skelter charge of these barbarians. The Greeks only retreated from Thermopylai when the enemy had already dispersed in eastward and southeastward directions: not because the Celts had pushed home their attack through or around the passes and into Attika. As far as the Athenians were concerned, the second battle of Thermopylai was a great success. Second, only the countryside suffered; with the exception of Kallion, cities were not threatened, for the invaders brought neither the knowledge nor the material to construct siege weapons. Third, whenever a Greek army managed to catch up with the Celts, the Greeks won. Apparently, the problem with the Celts was that they were not so easy to catch up with. They were dangerous only as long as they roved around in dispersed bands, avoiding battle, and beyond the reach of the slow moving heavy infantry that was typical of the Greek and Macedonian armies. Such war bands could terrorise and blackmail isolated cities by pillaging their farmlands, but not federations of cities such as the Northern League. With the exception of the unprepared army of Ptolemy Keraunos, the Celts were, as a rule, defeated whenever they were forced to engage in a pitched battle. Hence the kings' preference for ambushes when dealing with these enemies.¹²⁴

Pausanias informs us also that the attack on mainland Greece was not to all the Greeks a matter for concern. The short-lived military alliance of 279 consisted of states from the area where the attack took place—Lokris, Phokis, Boiotia and Aitolia—with help only from Athens and Megara. Both the composition of the 'Greek' army and the course of events suggest that Greek war aims were limited to prevent the ransacking of each states' own territory, not to drive the Celts away altogether (even though the Aitolian League later claimed it had done exactly that). To all likelihood the Celts, plain-dwelling people, came to mountainous southern Greece only to plunder. There are no Celtic sources to inform us how laden with booty and covered in glory these warriors returned to their

¹²⁴ In 276 Antigonos Gonatas defeated the Celts after he had first outmanoeuvred and ambushed them; Pyrrhos' victory in 274 was the result of a rear-attack on an unprepared army column; the victory of Attalos in the mountainous region around the source of the river Kaikos was to all likelihood the result of a well-prepared trap; Ptolemy Philadelphos prevailed over his rebellious mercenaries only after he had managed to entrap and isolate them on an island in the Nile.

clans.¹²⁵ There remains only a Greek version. Why, then, did this single crisis seem, as one modern commentator said, 'as if the Greeks' very survival was in the balance'?¹²⁶ And why did this and later wars against Celts generate such an outburst of propaganda, first of the Aitolian League, later especially of kings?

The saving of Delphi gave panhellenic dimensions to the events of 279. The initial thanksgivings to Apollo Pythios and Zeus Soter, and the establishment of the Soteria festival served no distinct political aims. But politics and religion became interrelated when the Aitolians appointed themselves protectors of the sanctuary and appropriated control of the festival. In 279 the Aitolian *koinon* had suffered more than any other Greek state that had been involved in the war. By linking their own victory to the Soteria festival, the Aitolians broadened the scope of both the Delphic festival and the Aitolian victory. The Soteria now came to commemorate not merely the saving of Delphi but of Greece itself. By equating the glory of Aitolia with that of Apollo the Aitolians posed as protectors of the Greeks and thereby legitimised their *koinon's* political and military supremacy in Central Greece.

Kings were to copy and surpass the Aitolian way of making propaganda. In the early Hellenistic age panhellenism and the idea of a homogeneous Greek culture were developing concepts within the imperial ideologies of the Macedonian kingdoms. Kings posed as the guardians of the Greek commonwealth and of Hellenic culture, and as the leaders of Greek unity.¹²⁷ Because of this all kings, but notably the Ptolemies in Alexandria, acted as patrons of Greek poets whose work was notorious for its deliberate 'Greekness'.¹²⁸ The first king to claim panhellenic significance for a victory over Celts

¹²⁵ Later Greek stories relating how plunder from Delphi turned up in remote places suggest that the raid on Greece was not altogether a failure, see e.g. N.G.L. Hammond, 'Travels in Epirus and South Albania Before World War II', *AW* 8.1-2 (1983) 13-46.

¹²⁶ Rankin 1987, 91.

¹²⁷ On the latter aspect as a policy of Philip and Alexander: M. Flower, 'Alexander the Great and Panhellenism', in: A.B. Bosworth and E. J. Baynham eds., *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction* (Oxford and New York 2000) 96-135.

¹²⁸ See my 'Mecenaat aan de hellenistische hoven', *Lampas* 34.3 (2001) 187-203, with English summary. Alexandrian poetry was, as one of the editors of this volume it once aptly put it, 'hard-core Greek': I.L. Pfeijffer, *De Antiëken. Een korte literatuurgeschiedenis* (Amsterdam and Antwerpen 2000) 100.

was Antigonos Gonatas after the Battle of Lysimacheia. Pyrrhos, Antiochos Soter, Ptolemy Philadelphos and Attalos Soter followed suit until, finally, Eumenes Philadelphos Soter awarded the Celts a central place in his dynasty's propaganda and established the panhellenic festival of Nikephoria in competition with the Delphic Soteria.

The attack on Delphi was conceived as an attack on civilisation itself. This was, in the first place, because Delphi was the principal panhellenic shrine of mainland Greece. Second because Delphi was home to the *omphalos*, the more than symbolic navel of the earth which demarcated the four quarters of the compass and was a central element in late Classical cosmology.¹²⁹ The desecration of the Delphic sanctuary could therefore be understood as an assault against the earthly nucleus of the cosmic order. Moreover, the attackers were typical barbarians who came from a place at the opposite end of that centre, namely the westernmost edge of the world where Chaos lurked. The Celts' homeland was, as Pausanias puts it, 'the remotest region of Europe, on the coast of an enormous tidal sea which no ship can ever cross; it has sea monsters in it nothing like the other monsters of the sea.'¹³⁰ The identification of the savage Celts with Giants was obvious. The Giants' came out of Tartaros to attack Heaven. They were defeated by the gods and one mortal, Herakles, who was then rewarded with immortality and a place amongst the gods on Mount Olympus. The Celts came from the world border to attack Greece. In 279 Apollo saved Delphi, aided by at least two other Olympians and several demigods. Thereafter not gods but kings delivered the Greeks from the barbaric onslaught, and received appropriate divine honours in return.

Of course the Celtic Wars did not bring about the self-presentation of kings as *soteres*. This notion goes back to Classical times.¹³¹ It had taken root as a central aspect of royal ideology decades before the Celts arrived. But the emotional impact of the Celtic invasion provided monarchs with a rare opportunity to boost their reputation as saviours. In this context *soter* had divine connotations;

¹²⁹ Defradas 1972, 108-10; cf. Strabo 9.3.6; Paus. 10.16.3. On this concept in general: H.V. Herrmann, *Omphalos* (Munich 1959).

¹³⁰ Paus. 1.4.1; cf. Call., *Hymn to Delos* 171-2: 'When Brennos from the Western Sea led hosts for the overthrow of the Greeks'. On the Greek views of the world boundary: J.S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought. Geography, Exploration, and Fiction* (Princeton 1992).

¹³¹ H.S. Versnel, 'Heersercultus in Griekenland', *Lampas* 7 (1974) 129-63.

deliverance from whatever threatened them was what *poleis* normally expected from the gods. But *soter* also had distinct military connotations.

In the well-known but still puzzling ithyphallic hymn to Demetrios Poliorketes¹³² (who was the first Hellenistic ruler to be styled *soter* by a city¹³³) the Athenians praised that king as a more powerful god than any other god, ‘because the other gods are either far away, or they do not have ears, or they do not exist, or they do not take any notice of us – but you are present here, and visible to us.’ The hymn was composed to celebrate the entry of Demetrios into Athens in 290, after successful military exploits of the king in Central Greece. The wars with the Celts, too, proved that kings could surpass the gods in coming up to the expectations of the *poleis*, in this case protection against, and deliverance from, barbaric enemies in wartime.

¹³² Douris FGrH 76 F 13 *ap.* Ath. 6.253 b-f. Cf. F. Taeger, *Charisma. Studien zur Geschichte des antiken Herrscherkultes* (Stuttgart 1957) I 271-3.

¹³³ In 307, together with his father Antigonos Monophthalmos: Plut., *Demetr.* 10.4. Demetrios had ‘liberated’ the city from Kassandros; the spot where he had stepped down from his chariot and first touched Athenian soil became a sacred place, with an altar dedicated to ‘Demetrios the Descending God’.