

Myth and Symbol II

Symbolic phenomena in Ancient Greek culture.

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Front cover: 'The funeral games at the burial rites for Patrokolos'
Attic black figure vase by Sophilos, early sixth century
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Myth and Symbol II

Symbolic phenomena in Ancient Greek culture.

Papers from the second and third international symposia
on symbolism at The Norwegian institute at Athens,
September 21-24, 2000 and September 19-22, 2002

Edited by

Synnøve des Bouvrie

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Introduction

Synnøve des Bouvrie

THE PRESENT collection of articles continues the investigation of 'myth' and 'symbolic' phenomena in ancient Greek culture launched in *Myth and symbol* Vol. I. That volume, with its subtitle *Symbolic phenomena in ancient Greek culture*, was the result of a symposium held at Tromsø, which invited an open discussion on myth and symbolism in the ancient world. Proceeding from the fact that the term 'myth' is seldom defined (and in some quarters abolished altogether), the introductory article in the volume aimed at examining our often unacknowledged assumptions about what is commonly labelled as 'myth.' Drawing particularly upon concepts and theory from field anthropology, as well as from psychology, it argued that we should proceed to study concrete tales and images not only as traditional expressions, but from the point of view of 'symbolism' as well. Distinguishing 'myth' in the everyday sense of (a kind of) 'traditional tale' from 'symbolic phenomena,' it attempted to conceptualise 'symbolism' as a theoretical framework applicable within our (historical) field. The collection's main objective was to present a fair range of approaches to the problem, to encourage critical reflection, and to contribute to developing method.

Responding to the invitation to study 'mythical' or what we might identify as related expressions the contributors made detailed analyses of a number of verbal and visual narratives. Various approaches were thus offered to the problem of 'myth and symbol,' demonstrating the need for theoretical and methodological discussion in this field of research.

Dismissing the idea that there is anything intrinsically 'mythical' in the tales labelled as 'myths,' that is, the well known traditional stories, we assumed that it is the specific social context that may cause so-called 'mythical' as well as other kinds of tales to function as 'symbols,' in the sense of collective expression or mobilising force. The categories of 'myth' and 'symbol' were seen as partly overlapping entities.

The contributors to the first volume then inquired into concrete tales and imagery, whether the tale was part of a corpus of traditional tales or offered a

generic pattern (Marinatos, Nielsen). Some studied the interrelationships between tales (e.g. through genealogies, Aronen), or the wide-spread networks of traditional tales (Bremmer), as well as the reception of different versions in their changing environments (Simonsuuri). Or the ways in which divine or heroic tales or *personae* served socio-religious functions and evoked collective sentiments (e.g. Georgoudi, Ellinger, des Bouvrie). Some contributions addressed the question of how tales may be generated from shared cultural values, as well as the cultural-metaphorical relationships, ordering forces, or inversions that may structure such tales (Svenbro, Endsjø, des Bouvrie). The role of tales in processes of self-identification (Nielsen), or in strategic but subtly veiled ways of furthering specific interests, was given attention (Lincoln), as well as their transformative potential in a living religious community (Hoffmann). One of the assumptions was that categorical distinctions between different narrative genres are to be dismissed. We did for example not exclude so-called 'literature' from our inquiry (Zaidman, des Bouvrie), although it has been an established practice not to include works of art in the category of 'myth,' which is generally understood as a simple product of anonymous folk tradition. Without denying the artistic value of the expression, we find that it may exert 'symbolic' power in a specific historical and social group. It is the reception and workings of literary or visual art within a definite community that defines the 'symbolic' quality of a narrative expression.

The present volume proceeds in the same direction as the first, examining the cultural aspects and symbolic processes involved in verbal and visual narrative. Being the result of two symposia held at the Norwegian Institute in Athens, it offers a selection of the papers presented on these occasions: the second symposium on *Myth and Symbol. Cognitive and affective aspects of symbols in ancient culture* (September 21-24, 2000), the third on *Myth and symbol. Their occasion, audiences, and performance in ancient culture* (September 19-22, 2002). Although several articles in the earlier volume addressed some of the problems announced at the Athens symposia, the contributions in the present volume focus more specifically on the social settings and the workings of symbolic phenomena.

At the second symposium the participants continued discussions on questions that have important implications for methodology: in what sense do the mythical tales or the symbols we identify operate as mental devices of categorisation or affective stimuli charged with mobilising power? Since symbolic phenomena are present in a wide range of contexts and forms in ancient culture, in overt religious as well as in (to us) secular manifestations, in texts, images and ritual the question arises how to identify them. Some symbols seem to contribute to categorising and structuring the world, and offering a view of the normal and natural order. Others seem primarily to have affective qualities, in particular symbolic *inversions* and

reversals, which are obviously more than just mental instruments of classification. These phenomena should warn us against interpreting cultural expressions as documents, a positive record of the world. How may 'symbolic expressions' convey hidden meanings, hidden even to their creators? In what sense is a distinction between cognitive *vs.* affective aspects useful? And can 'myths and symbols' be said to transform their audience? How do we address the perennial question of genre within this perspective? Is there more to 'myth and symbol' than a quest for 'the Other?'

The third symposium put an emphasis on the 'context' of these phenomena as well as on their diachronic dimension. But since the term 'context' may suggest the medium of writing, it is necessary to emphasise the non-verbal, imaginative and subliminal streams of communication. 'Myths and symbols' are not just insulated expressions carrying a perennial meaning to be found within the phenomena. As Walter Burkert has pointed out, they are 'angewandte Erzählungen,' deriving their cultural meaning and power from the listening, viewing and applauding community. This aspect of context is not often emphasised, and even in specialists' discussions it may be ignored. We are aware of the 'myth-and-ritual' discussion but there may still be other urgent questions we should delve into. In ancient society tales were told or staged and songs performed, and rituals attracted their audience. Visual symbols were created and exerted their magnetic impact on the audience. How do we conceive of the occasion when a symbol has been installed, inaugurated or presented? To whom was it directed and how was its performance realised? Were the 'same' symbols continued in the next generations and how did their meaning fare in new contexts and among other audiences?

Simultaneously with the first volume another collection of papers appeared, *Myth. A new symposium*, addressing the general problem of 'myth,' the result of the efforts of a wide range of scholars, the majority of them belonging to folkloristic, anthropologic and philological and literary studies.¹ This volume plays down the distinction between myth and other narrative categories, and includes conceptualisations of 'myth' as 'a culture's core ideas or ideology,' an expression approaching the concept of 'symbol.'² Likewise it advocates the 'close analysis of myth in specific, situated socio-historical contexts,'³ a method consonant with our present studies of 'myth and symbol.' What is particularly interesting is the discussion of

1 Schrempp and Hansen 2002:249ff. They include specialists in Hispanic literature and culture (including Portuguese and Brazilian and Native Americans), Old English, English, folklore, classics, anthropology, communication and culture, Scandinavian studies, comparative literature, and Celtic studies.

2 Schrempp 2002: 2. *Cf.* the question of the 'literal' *vs.* 'symbolic' meaning or 'figurative processes' of myth, as well as the notion of 'interested' as opposed to 'disinterested' attitudes.

3 Schrempp 2002:8.

‘agency,’ in the sense of ‘individual, active myth-shapers,’ and while primarily addressing folkloric material, the volume testifies to a growing awareness of the role of individual composition in these so-called anonymous collective expressions, with its corollary attention to ‘specific matters of style and surface nuance.’⁴

The contributors to the present volume all belong to the field of classical studies, whether their approach is philology, ancient history, history of religions, archaeology and art history, folklore studies or anthropology. Several papers offer discussions of the concept of ‘symbol,’ including the notion of unconscious cognitive and affective processes operating at more than one level (e.g. Nielsen, Jensen, Auffarth, des Bouvrie). A striking example is the paradoxical relationship between ‘myth’ and social reality in rituals of reversal, offering a world which is changed into a temporary utopia (Auffarth). Another issue is the question how a story pattern may cross the boundary between ritual and narrative—whether tradition or innovation—suggesting a common structure at a deeper level (Auffarth, Jordan). The status of the narrative’s substance as historical fact or fiction may become irrelevant in the process of creating a ‘mythical’ tale, operating through inversion and stylisation. They thus answer to a community’s need for symbols with powerful mobilising force (Vidal-Naquet).

Some collective experiences and values may become condensed into an immaterial sign as in the significant name ‘*Pausanias*’ (Ellinger), or into a material signal carrying symbolic force, either of which may again expand into a ‘mythical’ story. Not only tales and narrative images then, but also material objects, may serve as ‘symbols,’ in the sense of metaphors or metonyms conveying affective connotations and cognitive meanings, answering collective or individual needs in specific situations, as exemplified in the studies of game-boards and *trópaia* (Whittaker, Stroszeck).

The tension between the culture-specific nature of a phenomenon and its cross-cultural dimension may cause us to adopt a comparative method (Whittaker, Jensen, des Bouvrie, Auffarth, Bremmer).

Since a crucial locus of meaning is found in the listeners’ or viewers’ minds, we cannot abstract from the historico-cultural context of symbolic phenomena (Nielsen). The organising community may be seen as an important force, shaping the symbolic expression according to its collective needs, not necessarily doing so in a conscious way (des Bouvrie). We should become aware of the dynamic nature of symbolic vehicles, which do not just passively absorb cultural materials but actively mould the community with their symbolic power.

4 Schrempf 2002:9f.

In oral traditions a performance may manifest a highly flexible outcome, due to the 'mental text' of the narrator, a common pool of tradition, offering him or her the opportunity to communicate effectively with the audience, in a composition in performance. We may conceive of the narrative process as a reciprocal relationship, the members of the community inspiring the artist to tell and imagine as they desire (Jensen).

Since all oral narration is motivated, the tension between an abstract story and its realisation at a specific occasion makes clear that the way it is framed by the narrator's comments in actual telling is essential for our understanding its meaning. (Hansen, 'Reading embedded narration'). In story-telling events various factors may trigger the telling, involving a wide range of affective messages; at one end of the scale the narrator selects a tale from his repertoire that will strategically deal with a social situation. At the other end the narrator adopts a traditional motif prompted by some individual urge. In neither case does the telling occur only for reasons of information or entertainment (Hansen, 'Cognition and affect'). Likewise the telling of a 'myth' in the theatre may do more than just serve as an artistic performance; with its suggestive force the dramatic myth may confirm the multiple religious sensibilities of the audience (Zaidman).

Gender may or may not be an issue. In some cases the gender of the narrator does not seem to have an impact on the telling event. In others the status and authority of the 'mythical' narrative may be determined by social factors such as gendered space (Bremmer).

Within a broader historical perspective we may observe how 'myths' are structured by the communities that employ them and restructured in strategic ways according to changing needs, polarisation being a common mythopeic modality. Being polysemic and multifunctional as well as multivocal they may carry the meanings of different social and religious realities (Inwood). 'Mythical structures' may thus correspond to the fundamental ideologies of a community, transformations of narrative sequences, or inversions signalling transposition to different social contexts, in communicative or dialogic processes operating through binary oppositions (Masciadri). Since 'myth' is embedded in culture, traditional materials may be employed in providing a novel situation with powerful symbolic images, which convey complex politico-cultural messages to the audience and are charged with subtle resonances from the past (Henderson).

It is to be hoped that the two collections of papers may inspire readers to inquire into the manifold dynamics of socio-cultural processes and the role of art within them. We may thereby bridge historical distances between the foreign and the familiar and better understand our common humanity.

Tromsø, May 2004

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Cognition and affect in oral narration

William Hansen

ON HIS WAY home from Troy after the conclusion of the Trojan War, Odysseus came to the land of the Phaiakians, whose help he sought in reaching Ithaka. In honor of his guest, King Alkinoos invited noblemen to a feast in his palace, and after dining the king proposed that the company go outdoors where he wished to host a number of sporting events. In the course of the games Odysseus declined an invitation by one of the young nobles to join in the competition, as a result of which another youth, Euryalos, declared rudely that the guest was no athlete. Angered, Odysseus grabbed a discus and outthrew the local athletes. At this tense moment the king hastily changed plans, bringing the sporting events to a close and proposing that there be a performance of dance and song for the stranger, whereupon the bard Demodokos sang of the love affair of Ares and Aphrodite, telling, while dancers danced to the bard's song, how the cuckolded husband Hephaistos learned of the affair and embarrassed the lovers publicly.¹ Odysseus and the Phaiakians were delighted by the song. Finally, the king bade the youth who had offended the stranger make amends with an apology and a gift, which he did.

An oral storytelling event such as this one presupposes several conditions, whether the narrative itself is a myth, legend, folktale, or some other sort of story. First, it presupposes a social occasion, a company of at least two persons, as here we have a gathering of Phaiakian men and their as yet anonymous guest Odysseus. Second, it presupposes conditions that are congenial to narration as an activity, as here the guests are assembled outdoors to be entertained. Third, it presupposes a narrative repertory. Someone must know a story, as does the singer Demodokos, who is able to draw upon a prior acquaintance with the myth of Ares and Aphrodite. So far so good. But what is it in the present situation that moves the Phaiakian bard to sing precisely the song of Ares and Aphrodite and no other? And what does the song, or its underlying story, mean to the participants in this event?

1 The song appears in Hom. *Od.* 8.266-366.

Broadly speaking, Homeric bards seem to know two kinds of song. One kind is ostensibly historical, set in heroic times such as that of the Trojan War. It is serious in theme, and its meter is hexameter. Nearly all the songs that the oral poets in the *Odyssey* sing are of this kind, as is the *Odyssey* itself. Another kind of song is mythical. It is lighter in theme, its meter is probably lyric, and it is coupled with performative dancing, which may mean that it is mimed.² The song of Ares and Aphrodite, accompanied by dancers, belongs to this genre. When, therefore, King Alkinoos orders a bard as well as dancers to perform, he is implicitly ordering a light song rather than a heavy one.

Consider a parallel from the Classical period. In his *Symposium* Xenophon portrays an eating and drinking party for men that concludes with a mime performed by dancers to the music of a flute. There is no longer a bard to give the story; instead, the dancing-master gives a synopsis of the events, which the dancers act out. The story in this case is the love of Dionysos and Ariadne, which is mimed by a young girl and a youth. The guests admire the performance, which brings their evening to a pleasant conclusion, creating in them feelings of love, unity, and desire.³ Structurally, Xenophon's post-prandial dance with flute in Classical Athens is a successor to the post-prandial dance with stringed instrument that Homer describes for the Heroic Age.⁴ Among the topics that are appropriate for this kind of entertainment are the loves of the gods—the love of Ares and Aphrodite in Homer, the love of Dionysos and Ariadne in Xenophon.

With regard to the bawdiness of Demodokos' song, the crucial social variable is that Alkinoos' party is exclusively male.⁵ The host and his guests are male, the

2 On the lyric meter of Demodokos' original see Thalmann 1984:118; whether the dancers mime the story or not is an old and perhaps unanswerable question. Songs accompanied by dancing included themes other than erotic myths. In an illustration on the shield of Achilles boys and girls dance together and sing the Linos Song, evidently a kind of mythical dirge, to the music of a young phorminx-player (Hom. *Il.* 18.567-72).

3 Xen. *Symp.* 9.

4 On the variety of entertainment at symposia, or post-prandial drinking-parties, at different periods see Pellizer 1990, Fehr 1990, Slater 1990, and Jones 1991. In Greek literature the best-known instance of spontaneous entertainment intended to head off strife at a gathering is probably Hephaistos' comically assuming the role of cup-bearer for the other Olympians, perhaps in parody of Ganymedes, in the first book of the *Iliad* (584-600), a strategy that has often been compared with Demodokos' singing of the Song of Ares and Aphrodite in the eighth book of the *Odyssey* (e.g. Burkert 1960), both Olympian scenes culminating in divine laughter. For other instances in ancient literature of therapeutic joking or singing in touchy sympotic situations see Slater (1990:216). Notice also Eumolpus' recounting the erotic and comic novella of the Widow of Ephesus to a company of persons aboard ship who recently were fighting (Petron. *Sat.* 109-13).

5 The maleness of the party has been noted by several scholars, e.g., Austin (1975:160) and Peradotto (1990:56f. note 14). Whether Homer's own audience for this singing of the *Odyssey* was male or mixed is a question that cannot be answered. See in general Segal (1992).

athletes are male, the dancers are male, the singer is male. Even the climactic event within the song of Ares and Aphrodite features a male audience, for the minstrel says that when Hephaistos summoned the gods to witness the trapped adulterers, male deities came to the house whereas all the goddesses stayed away. A husband's coming upon his wife *in flagrante delicto* was not a proper subject for decent females to show an interest in among either Phaiakians or Olympians. The absence of females at this point in the Phaiakian party enables a ribald tale of adultery and revenge to be told and openly enjoyed by the men. It is a male story, and an important aim of its performance on the present occasion is to reconcile the hot-headed males with one another.

The song itself tells how (1) Hephaistos was cuckolded by Ares but (2) triumphed in the end when he exposed the trapped lovers to public view, after which (3) Poseidon negotiated a formal settlement between Hephaistos and Ares. The story thus offers an erotic parallel to the sporting events in Phaiakia, in which (1) Odysseus was insulted by Euryalos for being no athlete, after which (2) Odysseus enjoyed a public triumph when he entered the contest and outthrew the other discus-throwers, whereupon (3) Alkinoos imposed a settlement, instructing Euryalos to bestow upon the stranger a gift of reconciliation.⁶ Since Demodokos' song celebrates the public triumph of a man who has been wronged, we must suppose that the Phaiakian bard selects it on the present occasion for this reason. The choice of the affair of Ares and Aphrodite as the subject of Demodokos' song also entails narrative strategies that extend beyond the immediate performance situation, for the events of the myth resonate equally with the erotic insult that in the distant past precipitated the Trojan War itself, the affair of Paris and Helen, which led the wronged husband Menelaos to take revenge upon the offender, and the song also calls to mind the contemporary erotic situation on Ithaka, where in Odysseus' absence arrogant suitors visit his house daily, pressing his wife Penelope to choose one of them, suitors who will all perish one day by the hand of Odysseus. So the reasons why Demodokos performs specifically the song of Ares and Aphrodite on this occasion have to do, on the one hand, with social motives answering to the immediate situation that we can impute to the host Alkinoos and to the internal narrator Demodokos and, on the other hand, with artistic motives attributable to Homer that include resonances between the present myth and its immediate episode and also between the present myth and the larger legend of Troy.

Before I turn to the question of what meanings the story has for participants in the event, I wish to consider another story recounted to Odysseus, that of the Sailor and the Oar.

6 The relationship of the song of Ares and Aphrodite to its immediate context is discussed by Edinger (1980) and Braswell (1982).

In the Homeric version of this international narrative, Odysseus is told to put an oar on his shoulder and walk inland in search of a community that knows nothing of the sea or seafaring. When eventually he encounters a man who mistakes the oar for a winnowing shovel (that is, who mistakes a basic marine tool for a morphologically similar agricultural tool), Odysseus will know that he has found a community whose inhabitants are completely ignorant of the sea.⁷ From Homer we learn nothing at all about the telling of the Sailor and the Oar as a story, for he frames it, not as a narrative as such, but as instructions given by the seer Teiresias to the hero Odysseus. Since Homer manifestly wishes to include a mention of this adventure in his poem but since the actual quest of Odysseus and the oar takes place after the events recounted in the *Odyssey*, the poet is obliged to foretell it, which he does here by putting it into the mouth of a seer.

We can however compensate for our lack of information concerning the oral transmission of this story in antiquity by turning to the evidence of modern tradition, for the story of the Sailor and the Oar continues to circulate among seamen in modern times.⁸ Here, for example, is a Greek text published a half-century ago in which the story is recounted as a legend about St. Elias, that is, the Old Testament prophet Elijah.

1. They say about St. Elias that he was a seaman and served all his life as a captain on ships. He experienced great storms, and in one frightful storm his ship sank and all except for him were drowned. Getting hold then of the oar of a boat, St. Elias managed to reach the mainland. Disgusted however with his sufferings at sea, he withdrew far inland. With his oar on his shoulder he began going forward, and whomever he met on the road he asked, 'What is this?' And whenever they said, 'An oar,' he understood that these people knew of the sea. And he kept moving on in order to go further inland. In this manner one day he reached a little village built on the top of a mountain. He gathered the villagers, showed them the oar, and asked them, 'What is this?' With one voice they all answered, 'A piece of wood.' These people had never seen the sea, ships, and boats. For this reason he remained with them forever. And from that time the chapels of St. Elias have always been built on mountain tops.⁹

The contemporary story of the Sailor and the Oar also circulates as a secular folktale. I collected the following text in the United States some twenty-five years ago from an informant who had heard it while serving in the United States Navy.

7 Hom. *Od.* 11.121-37, 23.265-87.

8 See Hansen (1977, 1990).

9 Ταμσσίας 1951:129, No. 3.

2. The story, as I remember it, goes roughly like this, that there was an old sailor in the United States Navy—presumably, since the story took place on the east coast of the U.S. He put in his thirty years, and took his retirement option, and set out walking down the gangplank with a gunny-sack over one shoulder and carrying an oar over the other shoulder, and headed due west inland, and walked somewhere through New Jersey or so, and happened to pass someone standing along the road who waved to him and said, ‘Where’re you going with that oar over your shoulder?’ And he just nodded, and barely looked at the person who greeted him in this fashion, and marched on heading westward, and traveled further and further inland. At some point in the middle of, say, Ohio or Indiana, he passed someone else alongside the road who waved at him, greeted him, and yelled as he passed by, ‘Hey, where’re you going with that rower over your shoulder?’ And he just sort of barely met eyes with the person who greeted him in this fashion, and kept on walking.

And sometime further along the way, perhaps around Nebraska somewhere, he passed someone along the side of the road who said to him something to the effect of, ‘Hey, mister, what on earth are you carrying that piece of lumber over your shoulder for?’ And a grin slowly broke across his face, and he stamped his foot and said, ‘This is where I’m settling down.’ And that’s the end of the story.¹⁰

In modern oral tradition the story of the Sailor and the Oar is known in two redactions, a longer one and a shorter one. The two preceding texts illustrate the story in its longer form. In its shorter form tellers present the tale somewhat comically as a future event. The following narration was recorded by folklorist George Carey from a seaman on the northeastern coast of the United States.

3. I’ve lived here all my life and I’ve worked on the water and I’m getting kind of sick of it all. When I retire I’m gonna go and go until somebody asks me what that is I’ve got in my hand. Then I’ll say, ‘You don’t know what an oar is?’ And if he says, ‘No,’ I’m gonna throw my oars away and let that row-boat go with the tide, and then I’m gonna spend the rest of my life right there.¹¹

In the short form, then, the sailor’s quest is represented as something that the narrator claims he himself will do.

10 Taped interview with Mr. Adam Horvath (July 5, 1975).

11 Carey 1971:111.

Why do narrators tell this story? What triggers its telling? What can the situational contexts of transmission reveal about the meaning of the story for its users? Let us consider several narrations in their living environments.

The following text was published in 1906 by the classical scholar W.H.D. Rouse, who reproduces a conversation that he had aboard a Greek caique one evening with its aged skipper, Hajji Giorgis, as they passed the time sailing from Kos to Astypalaia.

4. 'Ah well,' says Giorgis, 'tis a poor trade this, as the holy Elias found.' 'What was that?' I asked. 'The prophet Elias,' quoth he, 'was a fisherman; he had bad weather, terrific storms, so that he became afraid of the sea. Well, so he left his nets and his boat on the shore, and put an oar over his shoulder, and took to the hills. On the way, who should he see but a man. "A good hour to you," says he. "Welcome," says the man. "What's this, can you tell me?" says St Elias. "That?" says the man, "Why that's an oar." Eh, on he goes till he meets another man. "A good hour to you," says St Elias. "You are welcome," says the man. "What's this?" says St Elias. "Why, that's an oar, to be sure," says the man. On he goes again, until he comes to the very top of the mountain, and there he sees another man. "Can you tell me what this is?" asks St Elias. "That?" says the man, "Why, that's a stick." "Good!" says St Elias, "this is the place for me, here I abide." He plants the oar in the ground, and that is why his chapels are all built on the hill tops.' 'Well, well, I didn't know the prophet Elias followed the sea; of course the holy apostles did, we all know that.' 'Aye, and so they did. You know why they left it, sir, don't you?' 'Why?' 'Well, you see, Christ and the Apostles...'¹²

Kapetan Giorgis begins by making an evaluative comment upon seafaring as a profession and then, prompted by his interlocutor, recounts the legend of St. Elias by way of explanation or illustration of his initial remark.

Like the foregoing, the following text is a classical scholar's description of an unexpected encounter with a narration of the Sailor and the Oar, this time in its shorter form. The scholar is the late Cedric Whitman of Harvard University.

5. The old seaman of my story was a U.S. sailor who sat next to me on a train going to New York many years ago. He was reading a comic book and I was reading *Paradise Lost*. Presently he began to read over my shoulder, then nudged me and asked: 'Hey, you like dat stuff?' I said I did, and a conversation began. I asked how long he had been in the Navy, and he said something like twenty-five years. I remarked that he must have liked it to have stayed in it so long. His answer was: 'Look, when I get out of dis Navy,

¹² Rouse 1906:414.

I'm gonna put an oar on my shoulder and walk inland; and when somebody says, "Where d'ya find a shovel like dat?" dat's where I'm gonna build my house.' He made no mention of a sacrifice to Poseidon; he was shamelessly secular about it all, but clearly the inland journey spelled release from, and forgetfulness of, the hardships of the sea, peace at last. I didn't ask him if he'd read the *Odyssey*, but I doubt it; he had not read *Paradise Lost*. He seemed, in fact, pretty nearly illiterate—perhaps a bard? Anyway, that's all I remember, except that the experience gave me a pleasantly creepy feeling that I was talking to One Who Was More Than He Seemed.¹³

As in Rouse's account, the topic that triggers the storytelling is an evaluation of seafaring as a profession.

In the next text the topic of conversation similarly focuses upon what a sailor intends to do upon his discharge from the navy. The informant is a professor of anthropology at a Canadian university.

6. Although I have long been a Canadian citizen, I was born and raised in the United States, and was a U.S. Navy flier in World War II. Just about this time of year in 1945, I was standing in a queue in Providence, Rhode Island, waiting for a bus to Naval Air Station Quonset Point, where I was then stationed. Most of the people in line were non-commissioned personnel; I had the rank of Lt., USNR

The Japanese had surrendered, and the war was over. Ahead of me in the line, several enlisted men were talking about what they were going to do after their discharge from the Navy. One chap expansively declared, in Appalachian accents: 'I'm going to get me a binnacle light off some junked-up boat or ship—they're lots around—and I'm going to take and carry that son of a bitch straight in away from the god-damned ocean. I'll show it to people and when I get to where they say, "What is that funny-looking flashlight?" I'll just stop right there. I'll know I've got to where they don't know nothing about ships or the sea.' This is from memory, but I think I have it fairly as given.

When I say that I had graduated college with a degree in Classics shortly before the War, you can understand the thrill with which I heard these words.¹⁴

Last of all, I print an excerpt from a letter that appeared in England in *The Times Literary Supplement* in 1919.

13 Personal letter from the late Cedric Whitman, Professor of Classics, Harvard University (October 13, 1975).

14 Personal letter from Richard Slobodin, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, McMaster University (October 11, 1977).

7. A naval officer tells me that the boatswain of his ship, in speaking of his future retirement, said that he should walk inland with an oar on his shoulder, and when he met with people who asked him what he was carrying should settle there.

This naturally reminded me of the passage in the eleventh book of the *Odyssey* where Odysseus is told to go inland till he comes to a people which has no knowledge of ships and the sea. The sign of his reaching his destination is to be that a wayfarer meeting him will ask if he is carrying a winnowing shovel on his shoulder. I was also told that the saying was not uncommon with sailors, but I have not had further confirmation of this.¹⁵

In all these conversations we encounter a social occasion of one sort or another that is congenial to conversational narration: men passing time aboard ship, men passing time on a train, men standing in line, and so on. In each instance, the narrative repertory of one of the interlocutors includes the story of the Sailor and the Oar. One or another stimulus provokes the narrative to leap from psychic storage to active transmission.

What is it that triggers its telling? Each conversationalist recounts the Sailor and the Oar when an opportunity arises to comment upon seafaring as a profession, to evaluate it as a way of life. An ambivalent attitude toward the sea as giver of both livelihood and distress has doubtless been a feature of the mariner's experience from the time of the earliest seafaring to the present day, and the Sailor and the Oar expresses in a simple fashion the negative extreme of this attitude, by describing a disgusted sailor who acts out the mariner's fantasy of quitting the sea for good, or who declares he will do so. It recounts in narrative form the fantasy that every mariner must sometimes have, the desire simply to walk away from the sea.

The telling of an oral story is always a willful act, and the circumstances that trigger its narration necessarily reveal something of the significance that it has for its narrator as well as something of the significance that the narrator expects it to have for his or her hearers.¹⁶ Just what is communicated by these stories—the Sailor and the Oar, Ares and Aphrodite—on the occasions when we are privy to their transmission, historical or fictive? What do the narratives actually mean when they are employed in the natural environment of oral storytelling?

In each instance there is found a significant parallelism between narrative and situation, either the situation of the narrator or that of his audience. The narrator

15 J.E. King, letter in *Times Literary Supplement* (September 11, 1919) 485.

16 Concerning how narrators use traditional stories to make a point, see Hansen (1982) and Edmunds (1997).

of the Sailor and the Oar comments upon himself, while the narrator of Ares and Aphrodite comments upon members of his audience. The message is an indirect one, taking the form of an extended metaphor, so that a conscious or unconscious act of reasoning on the part of both narrator and audience is required in order to construe the analogy. Each narrator selects from his repertory a story that makes an appropriately logical and intentional fit with the moment, and in order to appreciate the communication fully an audience member must perceive the fit and draw the appropriate inference.

Nevertheless the messages themselves are not essentially intellectual in content, for the stories do not really express a general truth about life, nor do they illuminate something about the world or about society that might be deemed puzzling. On the contrary, to judge from the contextual evidence of the narrations of the Sailor and the Oar (Texts 4-7), the significance of this story for its narrators is essentially *affective*. It captures a feeling, a sentiment, packaged artfully in the form of a brief but memorable narrative. The sailor who walks inland with an oar on his shoulder is a metaphor for every sailor who has ever dreamed of quitting the sea, and beyond that, since obviously the story can be meaningful to non-mariners as well, it is a metaphor for everyone who has ever wished simply to walk away from his or her present life or from anything whatsoever. The sailor in the story acts out his feeling, and since the present narrators tell the story about themselves, they do so in part in order to communicate to other persons how they *feel* about their work. 'Ah well,' says Giorgis, 'tis a poor trade this, as the holy Elias found.'

Narrative communication is much the same among the Phaiakians. When developments in King Alkinoos' party induce him to change the entertainment for his guests from sports to song, he indicates by his choice of singer and dancers his wish for a light story to lift the heavy mood of his guests, and the bard accordingly selects from his repertory an erotic myth, a bawdy novella suited to promote male bonding. More specifically he chooses a tale of personal triumph over insult that might be understood to chide the offender in an inoffensive fashion and to give heart to the offended stranger, a story moreover of eventual reconciliation that hints at the desirability of intervention by kindly authority. Through his bard the king offers his guests a gift of art and pleasure, its ribaldry reminding the assembled company of the hearty fellowship of males and its story graciously communicating to the stranger the ultimate goodwill of his hosts. The competent interpreter must do the logical work of construing the metaphors, but as in the case of the story of the Sailor and the Oar the message itself is *affective*.

The contemporary Greek legend of St. Elias and the Oar, like the ancient legend of Odysseus and the Oar, can conclude with an aetiological coda.¹⁷ When it does

17 On the aetiological function of the legend of Odysseus and the Oar, see Hansen 1990:256f.

so (Texts 1 and 4), it provides a historical *aition* for a feature of Elias' cult, the customary location of the saint's chapels on heights. Although no published text known to me illustrates a narrator's telling the Elias legend in the course of a conversation about the saint's chapels, I myself encountered an instance. In the 1980's I lived in a suburb of Athens near a mountain upon the side of which a chapel of St. Elias was built; when one day I pointed out the chapel to two Athenian intellectuals, they responded by recounting to me the legend of Elias and the Oar. So at least two different topics are known to trigger a telling of the Elias legend, seafaring as a profession or the location of Elias' chapels. A narrator might thereupon comment metaphorically upon himself and his profession, the message being essentially affective, or he might comment upon Elias' chapels and monasteries, the message being essentially intellectual, providing as it does an allegedly historical reason for a puzzling pattern of Greek cult. In short, depending upon the situation the same story might serve either a primarily affective or a primarily intellectual purpose.

Now consider this passage in which the scholar Christodoulos Syrmakesis in his study of St. Elias in Greek tradition cites the legend of Elias and the Oar.

8. The folk, wishing to explain why on almost all mountain tops a chapel is built in the name of St. Elias, narrate different legends. Out of many we report an unpublished Paxian legend reported by Dim. Loukatos from the narration of D. Kontaris.

'Are we going fishing?'

'Hey, I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to do like St. Elias did. I'm going to put my oars on my shoulder.

'St. Elias was a seaman and got so tired of the seaman's life—that time they did not have engines and sails but only an oar—that he put his oars on his shoulder and said, "I'm not coming back to the sea." And he went to the highest mountain. For which reason, all the churches of the prophet Elias that exist are also on mountains. (I don't remember the conversation with the villagers).'¹⁸

This is a revealing passage, not because fisherman Kontaris could not recall a few details of the story he was relating to folklorist Loukatos, but because the fisherman says that he is ready, like St. Elias before him, to give up his trade for good, whereas scholar Syrmakesis cites this conversation in illustration of his assertion that the Greek folk recount various legends to explain why on nearly every Greek mountaintop there is found a chapel of St. Elias. The learned Syrmakesis fails to hear fisherman Kontaris behind the printed text, or he simply overrides the

18 Συρμακέσης 1964:60.

fisherman's implication about the weariness of his work, his express readiness to walk away from fishing forever. Syrmakesis' educated mind assigns every importance to the aetiological coda and none to the expressive element of the mariner's fantasy. Like most scholars, Syrmakesis over-emphasizes the intellectual aspect of myths and legends at the expense of the affective.

It is impossible to judge the relative importance of affect and aetiology in the Greek tradition of Elias and the Oar as a whole, let alone the ancient tradition of Odysseus and the Oar, because of the lack of contextual data. Only two published texts of the Elias legend featuring information about the situational context of narration are known to me: classicist Rouse's shipboard conversation with Kapetan Giorgis and folklorist Loukatos' conversation with fisherman Kontaris. Nevertheless, in both of these tellings the narrator's motivation for relating the legend is to make a point about the misery of his profession, not to explain the location of the saint's chapels. If these instances of transmission are characteristic of Greek tradition, the impulse that typically motivates a narrator's telling the Elias story is his wish to make an artful and symbolic communication about affect, to convey something of his feelings toward his profession, and not a wish to offer colorful information about a feature of the landscape. When it is present, the *aition* is, to be sure, part of the pleasure of the legend, lending it closure and tying it in with the external world, which in turn appears to confirm the truth of the legend. But the secondary importance of the *aition* in the Elias legend is confirmed by the fact that most branches of the tradition of the Sailor and the Oar, including all anglophone forms of the story, lack the aetiological element entirely. The story of the Sailor and the Oar can be told without an aetiological coda, but it cannot be told without a protagonist who has strong feelings toward the sea.¹⁹

19 I thank Reimund Kvideland for his helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

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The three ages of man. Myth and symbol between Chiusi and Athens

Marjatta Nielsen

THIS CONTRIBUTION takes us to the world of images. As such, the element of symbol is embedded in the very nature of images: they *are* not what they seem to be, but charged with meaning when being produced, and again—if the artist has succeeded in his efforts—in the viewer's mind. To give visual form to anything at all is a highly cognitive process, and the more so, when complicated stories have to be told by visual means. Images are also able to express and arouse emotions, and they may even work on an unconscious level (at least the advertising business is relies on that).

Here I will be dealing with problems of decoding consciously chosen metaphors in ancient art, such which go beyond the immediately evident contents of the image. When trying to 'read' messages in ancient imagery we are of course on a rather uncertain ground, since truly iconological studies presuppose access to contemporary documents about the artists' and the customers' intentions, and an intimate knowledge of the mental frames in the given period. Yet, even in the case of Etruscan art we may often be on the safe side, thanks to occasional explanatory inscriptions, and to centuries of research in the field of ancient pictorial conventions.

I discuss two exceptional funerary reliefs, one Etruscan and one Greek, where the artist has not had recourse to compositions from a conventional stock repertoire of motifs. The Etruscan relief has narrative contents, the Greek one not. The question is whether these scenes were intended to be 'read' on more than one symbolic level (if any). As a case study I have chosen representations of one or more persons appearing at three different ages—that is, a categorizing, structuring task for the artist—and ask whether they might contribute to the discussion of cognitive versus affective nature of myth and symbol, the focus of this volume.

My point of departure is an Etruscan relief from the early second century BC at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen (Nielsen 1996:no.31). The relief adorns the front of a cinerary urn of alabaster, in which a certain Aule Vetana was

buried (Fig. 1). The subject matter of the relief has been an enigma ever since it was found in 1841 in a chamber tomb at Cetona, a few kilometers from Chiusi/Clusium. The city of the legendary king Porsenna in the inner Northern Etruria was not at all as isolated as one might think—also such famous Attic vases as the François vase, and the *skyphos* with Penelope sitting by her loom, had found their way there.

Also in the case of this relief, we can without hesitation identify its subject matter as something drawn from Greek mythology, since we can easily recognize the figure of Odysseus to the right. The rest has been subject to highly divergent interpretations.¹



Fig. 1. Aule Vetana's urn from Cetona near Chiusi, early 2nd cent. BC, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek H.I.N. 59 (photo M. Nielsen)

1 For shorter versions of the new interpretation, see Nielsen 1999a and b, and for a fuller account of the previous interpretations as well as for a more detailed rationale for the present one, see Nielsen, forthcoming. Here I will just pick up the issues relevant in the present context.

In the following discussion, the single figures in the scene are referred to according to the following numbering (Fig. 2):

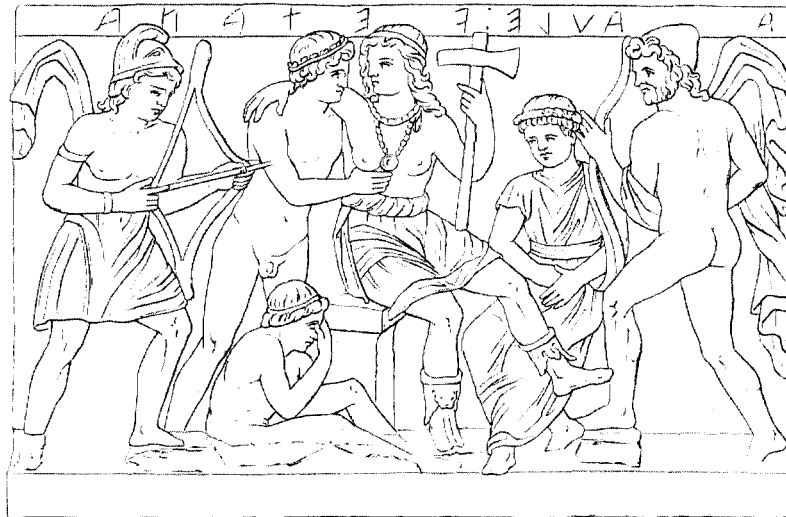


Fig. 2. Aule Vetana's urn relief (drawing from Brunn 1870:pl. 97,8), and a table with the principal identifications of the single figures. For the sources Nielsen forthcoming

Fig. nos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
A)1842			Hercules	soul of Alcestis	Proserpina	
B)1842	Telemachus	suitor	suitor	Prosepina/demon	Euryclea/Penelope	Odysseus
C)1929	Trojan		Achilles	Penthesilea		Odysseus
D)1996	Paris		Helenus			Odysseus
E)1996	Paris in Trojan war	Paris exposed	Paris recognized	Cassandra	Cassandra	Odysseus in Trojan war
F)1998	Paris in Trojan war	Paris exposed	Paris recognized	Cassandra reconciled	Hecuba dreaming	Odysseus in Trojan war
Time levels	4	2	3	3>4	1>2	4

- (1) The archer to the left,
- (2) the figure sitting on the ground covering his face,
- (3) the naked youth, who is embracing
- (4) a female figure sitting on an altar with an axe in her hand;
- (5) another sitting figure;
- (6) the archer to the right, clearly representing Odysseus.

The table also gives the main interpretations (letters A-F) and the years when they were launched in the column to the left. The first interpretation (A), 'Hercules embracing the soul of Alcestis in the presence of Proserpina,' was put forward by the excavator, captain Sozzi, but abandoned at the outset. The most long-lived interpretations have been 'Odysseus killing Penelope's suitors' (B), and 'Achilles and Penthesilea falling in love at the moment of her death' (C). Within these general frames, individual scholars have proposed many identifications to the single figures. The unanswered questions have invariably been explained as due to 'Etruscan misunderstandings,' the convenient standard solution for scholars.²

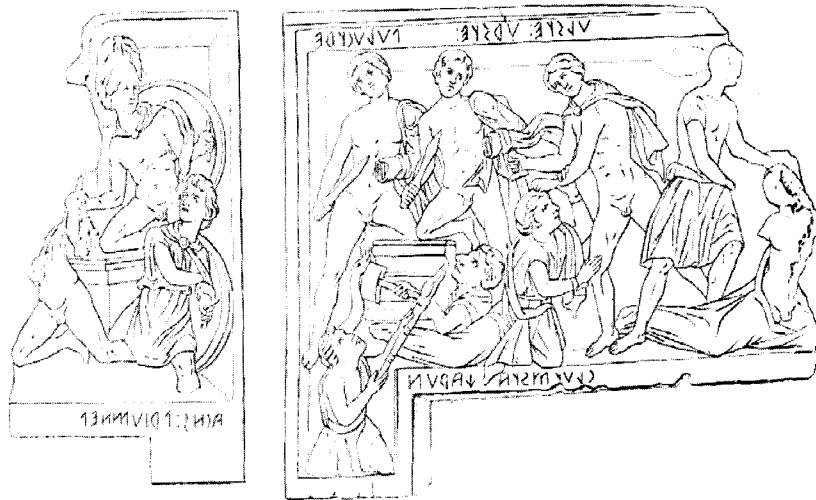


Fig. 3. Urn relief with motifs from the *Oresteia*, early second cent. BC. Orestes (Ulste) is killing Clytemnestra (Clutmsta), and probably Aegisthus as well (to the right; the inscription now vanished); Orestes (Urste) is again kneeling on the altar to the left, together with Pylades (Puluctre), while the death demons Charun with his mallet and Vanth with her torch survey the scene from below. The left, short side of the urn likewise showed a Trojan scene, as testified by the name of Priam/Priumnes. Volterra, Museo Guarnacci 345 (from Brunn 1870:pl.80:10)

2 By now much work has been done to contradict the simplistic views, by exploring the perception and refined uses of Greek myths in Etruria, latest e.g. Pairault Massa 1992, d'Agostino and Cerchiai 1999. More generally for Greek myth in the West, see also *Epos greco in Occidente* 1980, *Mythe grec dans l'Italie antique* 1999.

Unconvinced by the previous interpretations, I have tried to work on other possibilities, taking into consideration that more complex techniques of pictorial narrative might be utilized, since several Etruscan representations operate with multiple time levels in the same scene.³ For example, on a Volterrannan urn relief we see that Orestes appears at least twice, as confirmed by the inscriptions (Fig. 3).⁴

On our Chiusine relief, one of the figures whose identity is crucial for the story, is the woman sitting on the altar with an axe. She has previously been taken as the Etruscan female death demon, Vanth, or as Penthesilea falling in love with Achilles. Vanth does not normally have an axe, but a torch, snakes, or the like,⁵ but here her attribute has been thought to be due to a contamination with the male death demon's mallet—which would mean that the Etruscans made mistakes even with their own iconographies.

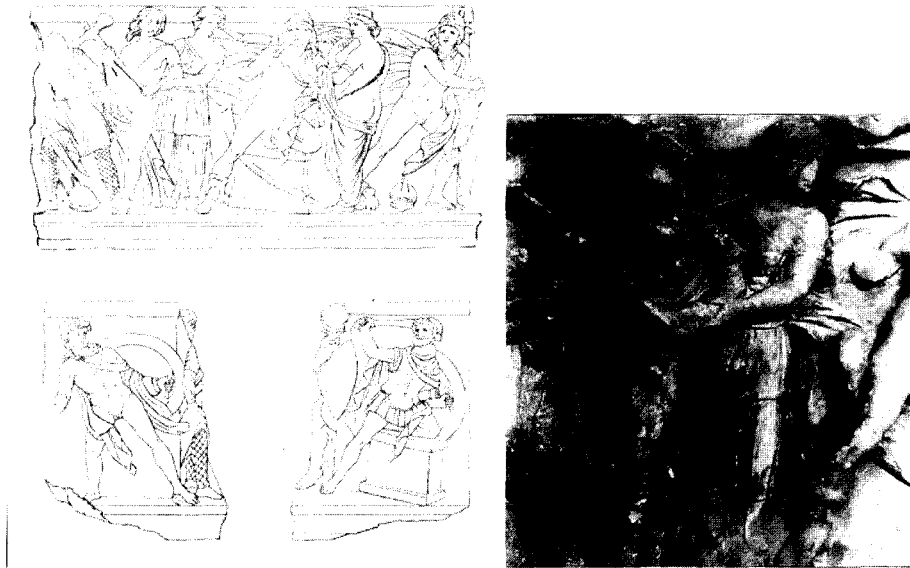


Fig. 4. *The Recognition of Paris, with a seminude Cassandra restrained by Hecuba. The scene is flanked on the short sides by warriors. Alabaster urn from the early-mid second century BC, Volterra 384 (from Brunn 1870:pl. 11,24; photo M. Nielsen)*

- 3 Etruscan examples given e.g. by Harari 1995, Nielsen 1999a-b, *ead.* forthcoming; Maggiani 2000. For complex pictorial narratives more generally, see e.g. Brilliant 1987, Small 1999, Stansbury-O'Donnell 1999.
- 4 Volterra, Museo Guarnacci inv. 345: Brunn 1870:99, pl.80:10, van der Meer 1978:32, 59, 104f., *CUV* 2,2:no. 147. For other Oresteia-urns (often with more than one moment of the story shown together), Brunn 1870:pls. 74-85, Nielsen 1996:no. 28, Maggiani 2000:9-12, with references to possible Greek models.
- 5 s.v. Vanth, *LIMC* 8 (1997):173-83, pls. 122-27 (Weber-Lehmann).

As to Achilles and Penthesilea falling in love, I think that the flabby youth with no weapons or armour whatsoever would be hardly convincing as Achilles, and so would the calmly sitting woman without any signs of being wounded be as Penthesilea.

A rapid survey of Etruscan (and other ancient) representations of women with axes revealed many others than Amazons:⁶ hunters like Atalanta, raving Maenads, Clytemnestra, priestesses, and so on.⁷ In Etruscan art, however, the most assiduous axe-swinger is the prophetess Cassandra, who appears in many scenes depicting 'the Recognition of Paris,' swinging the sacrificial axe which belonged to her outfit as the priestess of Athena (Fig. 4).⁸ This has brought me to consider the possibility of attributing even this relief to the story of Paris/Alexandros (Fig. 2, interpretations E-F).⁹

According to this hypothesis, the Chiusine sculptor has created an original composition, in which he managed to describe the whole prehistory of the Trojan war, with the Trojan prince Paris/Alexandros as the key figure. He would then appear no less than thrice, namely as the three figures to the left (Fig. 2):

—As a child (2), exposed on Mount Ida and believed to be dead; the small boy is sitting naked on the ground, hiding his face behind his hands, a very eloquent gesture of desolation, abandonment, of 'being and non-being.'¹⁰

—As a youth (3), the anonymous winner of the funeral games arranged in his honour. Here the only sign of victory is the golden wreath on his head (*cf.* Martelli 1994:171 fig. 5), perhaps because here he has no hands free to hold the customary palm leaf. This is the moment just after his recognition and the attacks on his life:

6 *s.v.* Amazones, *LIMC* 1 (1981):586-653, pls. 440-526 (Devambezz/Kauffmann-Samaras), which show that the axe was not very common as amazonic weapon elsewhere than in Etruria. For Etruria, *s.v.* Amazones Etruriae, *LIMC* 1 (1981):654-62 (Mavleev) (with Aule Vetana's urn on pl.528:no.17a).

7 Atalanta in Calydonian boar hunt, Körte 1896:141-55, pls. 57-61; *CUV* 2,2:nos. 4-9. For Clytemnestra, Viret-Bernall 1996. Priestesses with sacrificial axes are an Etruscan feature, Maggiani 2000:11. For persons threatened at an altar, also with swords and knives, Steuernagel 1998.

8 Brunn 1870:pl. 11:24 (Volterra 384), pl. 12:25 (Volterra 236), pl. 12:26 (Volterra 239), pl. 13:27 (Florence 5343), pl. 13:28 (Volterra 227), pl. 16:33 (Chiusi, Palazzo Vescovile).—For the figure of Cassandra in art and literature, *s.v.* Cassandra, *LIMC* 7 (1997):956-70, pls. 671-85 (Paoletti), and latest Mangold 2000 (with no Recognition scenes or axes), Mazzoldi 2001.

9 Only sketched in a few lines by Nielsen 1996:no. 31, and at various degrees of elaboration *ead.* 1999a-b, and forthcoming.

10 This precise iconography was probably invented by 'the Vetana Master' himself, but in Etruscan and Greek art there are some analogous figures, sitting or squatting on the ground, naked or wrapped in a mantle, with or without hands covering their faces. These figures express despair, exhaustion by sorrow, exposed situations in general, *e.g.* as refugees, and only apparent death. The Vetana master also used an almost similar posture meaning 'seeing with closed eyes,' *i.e.* learning or memorizing divination.

the young brother and the older sister have now been reconciled, embracing each other. This confidence would, however, fail, and the evasion from the doom of Troy proved to be illusory.

—Finally, we have Paris as an adult (1), after the abduction of Helen, and the beginning of the Trojan war, while the final result of Cassandra's prophecy, the destruction of Troy, is imminent. Paris, now wearing his customary Phrygian cap, represents the Trojan party in the war, while Odysseus is the sole representative of the Greek adversaries. The two were also protagonists in the war while Paris was to blame for it. Significantly, the archers are pointing their weapons towards each others, while their eyes are directed towards the crowd in the centre, *i.e.*, towards the past happenings.



Fig. 5. Urn relief with the Recognition of Paris, early second century BC, Chiusi, Palazzo Vescovile (from Brunn 1870:pl. 16,33)

Such a complex story of Paris is unique on Etruscan urns, while the Recognition scene is quite common. In those scenes, Paris is kneeling on the altar, seeking salvation, with the palm-leaf of victory—or a sword—in his hand, while a varying array of his family members—the brother Deiphobus, the sister Cassandra, his mother Hecuba, father Priam or others, are either trying to kill him or prevent it from happening (Figs. 4-7).¹¹ The reason for the aggression was initially the shame, which the supposed slave-winner of the games would have inflicted upon the royal house. Then, after being recognised by Cassandra, either she or their mother Hecuba tried to kill him with an axe in order to prevent future disasters,

while Deiphobus is seen with a sword. On these urns, there are plenty of variations as to who is doing what, but this was the case also with Greek tragedies based on the theme.¹² On our relief Cassandra has let her axe rest, but her sacerdotal gowns are out of order, as a sign of her frantic behaviour just before.

On the Copenhagen relief there still remains one enigmatic figure to be identified, the one sitting in the middle of the turmoil, as if in his or her own thoughts (Fig. 2:5). There are many possibilities—Cassandra at the moment of her first prophecy at Paris' birth, Helen abducted by Paris, or perhaps Penelope patiently waiting for the return of Odysseus.¹³ However, I prefer to consider her as Paris' mother, Hecuba, who, when pregnant with Paris, had a strange dream. The woman here does not seem to be sleeping, but rather day-dreaming, which is not necessarily against the story.¹⁴ Her old-fashioned hair-dress, typical of Etruscan brides and young women in the Classical and early Hellenistic periods (an example of 'antiquarian consciousness'), her large hands significantly resting on her womb, and her introverted expression make Hecuba my favourite candidate for the figure, the starting point of the whole sequence of tragic events. Therefore, she is placed slightly in the background, but not at the margins of the scene. Not by chance, her face and body are turned into the direction of the exposed Paris.¹⁵

11 Brunn 1870:4-22, pls. 1-15, *s.v.* Alexandros, *LIMC* 1 (1981):494-529, pls. 374-96 (Hampe and Krauskopf), *s.v.* Deiphobos, *LIMC* 3 (1986):362-67 (Kahil), *CUV* 2,2:nos. 74-98, *Steuernagel* 1998:62-73, nos. 110-80, pls. 24-31. Before urns, the motif was in its most concise form known on Etruscan relief-covered box mirrors, probably of Tarquinian production, *e.g. s.v.* Cassandra, *LIMC* 7 (1994):956-70, pls. 671-85 (Paoletti).

12 The tragedies by Sophocles, Euripides, and Ennius are lost, so Hyginus *Fab.* 91 (also quoted by Brunn 1870:5) is the ancient passage which fits best to the Etruscan urn reliefs. Brunn considered the possibility of a relationship between the Etruscan urn motifs and the development of early Roman theatre, including Ennius' *Alexandros*, but discarded the idea, believing that the urns were from the 3rd century BC, and not from the 2nd and 1st centuries. Since then a papyrus with the *hypothesis* of Euripides' *Alexandros* has been found. On the literary evidence and the relationship with Etruscan urn reliefs, Snell 1937, Jouan 1966:113-42, Coles 1974:esp. 26-32. On the relationships between the urn iconographies and the tragedies, see also Van der Meer 1978:107, *id.* 1991:132, Nielsen 1993:341-45.

13 The pros and contras of the various possibilities are examined more closely in Nielsen, forthcoming.

14 Euripides makes Hecuba sleep (Coles 1974:13), while Hyginus, *Fab.* 91 states that she saw the dream while *in quiete*, which may mean both while 'resting' and 'sleeping.' Sleepers are often represented in more or less sitting postures in ancient art, Stafford 1993.

15 The royal family of Troy (Hecuba, Priam, Hector, Paris and Helen) also appears on a 3rd-century Etruscan mirror from Vulci, but in a peaceful composition without prophetic elements: *LIMC* 7 (1994):511 *s.v.* Priamos no. 24 (Neils). In the Augustan period, Hecuba's dream and what followed seems to have been used as a thoroughly learned dynastic metaphor in the frieze on the famous Portland vase, where another dreaming woman refers to Augustus' family history; the destruction of Troy would prove a necessary positive event, since it brought Aeneas to Italy: *Vetri dei Cesari* 1988:nos. 29-30, Moreno 2002.

The pictorial narrative is here told in a ‘hierarchical’ sequence (*cf.* Small 1999:562-65), the beginning being shown in the centre and the later developments at the margins. The directions of the protagonists’ eyes and bodies help us remain on track. The sequence of the prophecies and their fulfilments are evolving in the scene in a centrifugal, spiral movement, giving further visual expression to the cyclical notion of time, which seemed to play a fundamental role in Etruscan culture.

In theatrical performances the past prophecies were mostly inserted as flash-backs and ‘flash-forwards’ in the middle of the present-time happenings. On some Etruscan urn reliefs, Cassandra—who was much older than Paris—is seen as a young girl, *i.e.* at the time of her prophecy at Paris’ birth (Fig. 6).¹⁶



Fig. 6. Urn relief with the Recognition of Paris, ca. 50 BC. Volterra, Museo Guarnacci 227 (Brunn 1870:pl. 13,28)

This interplay between prediction and their fulfilment, between past, present and future is not an exclusively Etruscan feature, since many Greek dramas were based on such plots, in spite of the requirements of unity of space and time in Greek drama. Especially Euripides’ *Alexandros* seems to fit our Paris reliefs. The play itself is lost, but its plot has partly survived in a papyrus containing the *hypotheses* of his plays (*cf.* note 12). Such anthologies were widely spread in the Hellenistic world, and may also have been illustrated with ‘diagnostic’ scenes.¹⁷ Therefore they were

16 Volterra inv. 227; Brunn 1870:pl. 13,28; CUV 1:no. 8.

not only suited for general literary education, but also for scenographers, and for artists.

The lack of surviving Etruscan literature has led to an *opinio communis* that it never existed. However, that is a consequence of the extinction of the language. Now there is more and more evidence for the fact that theatrical performances were also given in Etruria, and that both live theatre and illustrated books had a great impact on the motifs of Etruscan cinerary urns (cf. Nielsen 1993:341-45). Many, especially Volterranean urns, even show architectural decorations, which happen to correspond to fragments found in the excavations of a stage building at Arezzo (Maetzke 1999). Etruscans had for long had professional performances as part of propitiatory rites, including funerals, and Greek-style tragedies may well have constituted 'modernized' versions of old-age funerary games. The peak of theatrical motifs in funerary art was reached in the second century BC, parallel to the creation of Roman drama and probably of Etruscan drama as well.¹⁸

The subject matter of Greek tragedies contained many motifs suitable for funerary purposes, and here we come to the second level of interpretation, regarding the function of the relief in the funerary context. In the case of the story of Paris, it may well have been Paris' only apparent death, his narrow rescues and his 'returns to life' that secured the Recognition motif its success in funerary art. Furthermore, soothsaying, prophecies, and the fulfilment of predictions are important elements in these scenes. With their renowned expertise in the art of divination, the Etruscans were capable of not only comprehending but of emphasizing the complicated time patterns in the Greek tragedies against the background of their own culture. For example, a few Volterranean urns show by Cassandra's side a man wearing a hat with an *apex* (Fig. 7).¹⁹ This is an ambiguous figure: the *haruspex*' costume included age-old elements going back to shepherds' clothing.²⁰ He might just be the shepherd summoned to testify to Paris' real identity as the royal prince Alexandros. On the other hand, the *apex* of his hat and his dignified figure are so clearly indicated that we have to take him as a *haruspex*. This makes the element of divination very clear to the audience.

17 Gentili 1979:18ff. For illuminated books, refs. in Small 1999:568 n. 60, Maggiani 2000:17 n. 17 (also Hellenistic paintings in Rome).

18 Nielsen 1993:esp. 322-24, tables 1-2; the highest percentages of Greek mythological subjects on Volterranean urns were 53,8 in the mid-second century BC, but their quantities continued to be very high down to early first century BC. On the relationships between Roman tragedy literature and Volterranean urn motifs, cf. La Penna 1977. At Chiusi the most varied repertoire of tragedy motifs in funerary art appeared earlier in the 2nd cent. BC than at Volterra.

19 Volterra 236; Brunn 1870:pl. 12:25, Steuernagel 1998:pl. 25:1. Another example, Brunn 1870:pl. 14:29.

20 Maggiani 1989. The Chiusine urns with divination scenes are from the same period, early 2nd cent. BC, as some lid figures represented as *haruspices*.

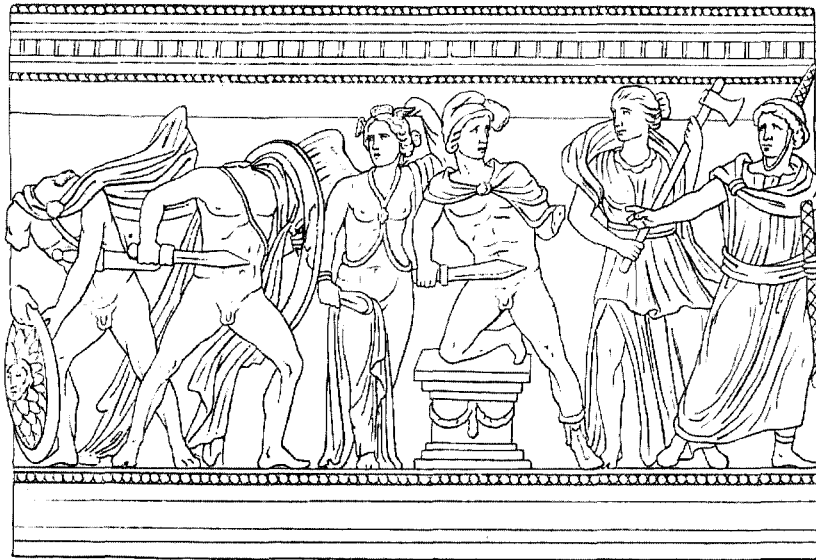


Fig. 7. Urn relief with the Recognition of Paris, late 2nd cent. BC. Volterra, Museo Guarnacci 236 (Brunn 1870:pl. 12,25)

The aspect of divination and the cyclical concept of time among the Etruscans may have been stressed in funerary art²¹ more strongly than in other artistic fields, because of the consolation and hope it gives to the bereaved: human life and death made part of a bigger whole.

One more interpretational level might have been implied by choosing the same hero to appear at three different ages: his 'hidden state' as a child, his return amongst the living as a youth, and his manhood may have referred to rites of initiation. The initiates to Dionysiac (and other) mysteries went through stages of separation, transition, and reincorporation into society, rites whose ultimate scope was to secure the final transition, from mortality to immortality (refs. in Hoffmann 1997:121-26). There is a lot of evidence from contemporary Etruria, especially from Chiusi, of the cult of Dionysos, both from the world of the living and from the funerary context.

The last, 'eternal' stage is shown on the lid of the urn, albeit combined with retrospective features from the life of the deceased (Fig. 1). Here Aule Vetana is represented as a middle-aged man with balding head and wrinkled forehead, but holding his head in an almost triumphant posture. Whether pointing to past or future triumphs, he wears a golden oak-leaf wreath on his head. The rest of the

21 The most well-known example is the François tomb, e.g. Coarelli 1996:138-78 (reprint from 1983), Brilliant 1987:30-42, pls. 2-3.

figure points to his new, immortal status as a heroic banqueter in the Afterlife—his nude upper body, the garland round his neck, and especially the gilded *kantharos*, Dionysos' attribute *par excellence*.

The idea of considering the story of Paris, his 'deaths and returns,' as a metaphor of the funerary aspects of the Dionysiac mysteries would probably not have entered my mind without Herbert Hoffmann's inspiring volume *Sotades* (1997), and his paper given at the first 'Myth and Symbol' seminar at Tromsø, containing a perceptive analysis of Sotades' white-ground *kylix* in London.²² The painter has succeeded in depicting the complicated and enigmatic story of Polyidus and Glaucus with a few, masterly chosen elements. Glaucus is wrapped in a dark cloak and sitting on the ground in a squatting posture—not quite unlike our boy. Although in different circumstances, both figures convey the idea of death which proved to be only apparent (*cf.* note 10).

The motif of the squatting boy serves as a link to the second part of this paper. Such figures do appear here and there in Etruscan art, as the small figure entirely wrapped in a black cloak, apparently sleeping, in the *Tomba degli Auguri* at Tarquinia, from about 530 BC (*Etruscan Painting* 1985:pl.19). I have no precise suggestions as to how this figure should be interpreted. At any rate, the painting had been hidden for centuries in a closed, underground tomb chamber, before our Chiusine boy was created.

Unlike most Etruscan funerary art, Greek funerary monuments were exposed in the open air. Although many of them had been pulled down and reused as building blocks for the city walls and elsewhere already in Antiquity, at least something must have been visible also in Hellenistic Athens. If, for example, a second-century Etruscan visitor happened to come to Athens or somewhere else in the Greek and Hellenistic world, he must have been impressed by the monuments he saw. Whatever the channel of transmission, many of the Greek motifs came to belong to a common figurative repertoire over vast areas. Many of the single elements borrowed from Greek art reappear in later times in varying contexts (*cf.* Maggiani 2000).

It is a paradox that in their choice of subject for funerary reliefs, the Etruscans in the Hellenistic period were more 'Greek' than the Greeks themselves, and that continued also in the Roman imperial sarcophagus reliefs. Subjects from Greek mythology constitute the largest single group of motifs on Etruscan urns, especially abundant on the expensive and finely carved alabaster urns (*cf.* note 18). By contrast, the cheaper tufa urns show endless variations of farewell scenes without

22 Hoffmann 1997:120-23 (*cf.* Hoffmann 2002), followed by Stansbury-O'Donnell 1999:84-86. For analogous concepts on Volterranean red-figure *kelebai*, used as cinerary urns, see Cristofani 1997.

mythological contents, just as grave *stelai* do in Greece. The narrow shape of the Greek *stèle* does not permit large crowds of persons to be depicted, as on the Etruscan urns, but on both, persons of different ages are normally assembled. At times they look at each others, as 'real people' would do, but often they do not. The lack of visual contact may tell us that some of them are not present in reality, but only in the minds of the bereaved. The small family groups of three different generations at the most—in short, the three principal age groups in society—convey the idea of family cohesion and continuity, in spite of the loss (Bergemann 1997). More symbolism than that is not common on the Attic grave reliefs.

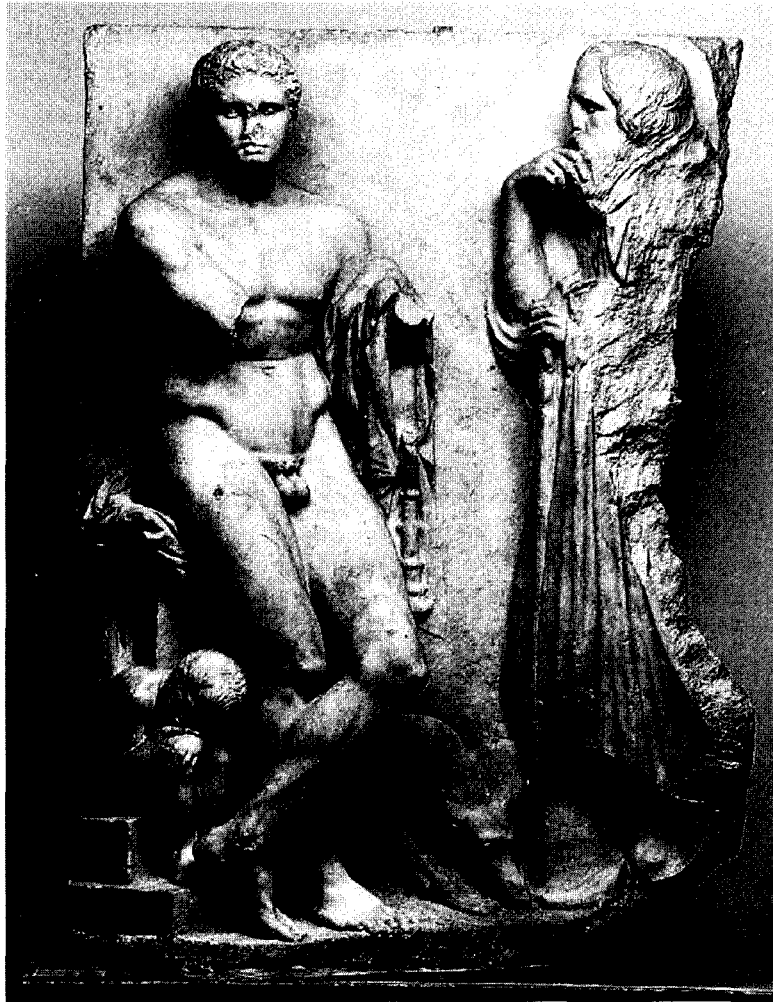


Fig. 8. Attic funerary relief found in the Ilissos river bed, ca. 340-320 BC, Athens NM 869 (photo Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Athens 4673)

However, I wonder whether there might be a few exceptions. Among the enormous quantities of Attic grave *stelai*, the well-known *naiskos* relief found in the Ilissos river bed appears somewhat different (Fig. 8).²³ This is of course partly due to its exceptionally high artistic qualities: the ‘Ilissos sculptor’ has mostly been regarded a talented follower of Skopas or Lysippos, active after the middle of the fourth century.

There is nothing peculiar as such in the relief: three male persons of different ages and a dog. The small dowel holes on both sides of the heads of the old man and the younger one for inserting wreaths indicate that the relief did commemorate both these persons, at least when both were dead (the holes may have been added after that had happened). Unfortunately, the frame and eventual inscriptions are missing, so we do not know their identity, nor the precise idea behind this monument.

The customary interpretation is the matter-of-fact, biographical one: a young hunter with his hunting club and his dog; at his feet his small *pais* who has wept himself to sleep; the old father standing in deep sorrow, leaning on his stick.

But is this the only level of interpretation? I think that the sculptor tried to make himself very clear, sprinkling clues about his intentions all over the relief, to be ‘read’ on another level than the customary one, at least by a narrow circle of connoisseurs. This suggestion may, of course, result in yet another anachronistic invention of ‘hidden agendas.’²⁴

Why is the old father not of the normal, vigorous type but one who rather resembles a philosopher?²⁵ We are here dealing with a period ranging between 340-320 BC, *i.e.*, relatively soon after Plato’s death in 348/347 BC, on which occasion Speusippos wrote the well-known epigram, speaking of the separation of his body lying in the ground, and of his godlike soul among the blessed ones (quoted by Himmelmann-Wildschütz 1956:26). Nor has the father’s gesture the customary air of nostalgic sorrow. He rather seems puzzled, as if pondering a philosophical enigma; in fact, his gesture is the conventional one for meditation (Neumann 1965:123). And, since he is gazing at the youth, he is probably pondering the whys of the youth’s premature death.²⁶

23 Athens NM 869: Clairmont 1993:no. 2.950, discussed on pp. 812-21, 821-24, with many references, of which most relevant in this connection are perhaps Himmelmann-Wildschütz 1956, Neumann 1965:124, 131 fig. 63; further, *e.g.* Panofsky 1993:23, fig. 40, Moreno 1994:70-80, Bergemann 1997:164 no. 300, pls. 94,4, 106,2, Himmelmann 1999:28-29.

24 Admittedly, the following suggestion would be less controversial in the Neo-Platonic context of Renaissance art.

25 Several centuries later, in the 2nd-3rd centuries AD, the type had an impact even on how young persons were portrayed: Ewald 1999.

26 That the old man survived the youth is the customary interpretation. However, the cloak pulled high up his neck, might mean that he is already ‘invisible,’ *i.e.* dead. But here I may be making an incorrect projection from Etruscan iconography.

The *pais* squatting by the hunter's feet, apparently on his master's tombstone, may not actually be there at all. Viewed from the left, at an angle, we see that his eyes are open, but otherwise he makes himself as small and invisible as possible, conveying the idea of 'being and not being.' The theme has been varied in another *stele*, from Kerameikos,²⁷ clearly influenced by the Ilissos *stele*. There the *pais* is even smaller; in real life an infant of that size would hardly be able to assist the athlete by holding his sporting equipment. The 'mood' on this *stele* is, however, more conventional and sentimental.

On the Ilissos relief, the youth is represented in as big a contrast to the small boy and the old father as possible. While the boy looks away, and the father looks straight at the youth, the young man himself is looking right out of the relief, towards the spectator, with a calm and 'self-possessed' expression, and in a casually relaxed posture, which emphasizes the perfection of his naked body. We do not know, what he really looked like, but perhaps his physical perfection is only a metaphor for his supposed mental capacities.

Since the organizer of the present seminar has stressed the importance of discussion, I would like to ask, whether it would be quite unthinkable that we would not only be dealing with a 'heroised, immortalised' youth with his nearest ones, but with a deeper, philosophical reflection on the human life span? The young man would represent the peak of human perfection, while the beings at his feet would depict his way to that stage: before being illuminated and shaped by philosophy, he had been like a sleeping child or a searching hound. His old father—perhaps himself a philosopher?—had passed that stage of perfection, but is shown here as the one who is asking the questions of life and death. Or, is the sculptor making an anti-philosophical statement about the limits of human cognition?²⁸

Bringing the two otherwise quite unrelated reliefs into the discussion on the nature of myth and symbol dealt with in this volume, I would like to conclude that the Etruscan representation of a Greek myth, although by 'affective' means, deals with markedly cognitive questions of categorising and structuring the world. And that the quite unmythical, Greek relief, although 'cognitive' in its basic conception, is able to pull on highly affective strings in the viewer's mind.

27 Athens NM 871: Clairmont 1993:no. 2.294, Moreno 1994:72 fig. 80, 80-81; good pictures of both reliefs, Himmelmann 1999:26-27. A third squatting boy on a Thasian relief, Clairmont 1993:no. 2.960.

28 Philosophers did not share the creed of a higher existence of the dead, but there seemed to be a change in the very period we are dealing with (cf. Johansen 1951:128).

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Let women speak in the Assembly. Symbolic reversals in Aristophanes' *Ekklesiazousai*

Christoph Auffarth

Dedicated to Toni Bierl

1. Reversals and Normalcy

THE PERFORMANCE of comedy in the Athenian theatre fits within the framework of the subject proposed for this volume because the complex relationship of the symbolic action of dramatic comedy to social realities manifests both cognitive and affective components. Comedy must be treated as more than amusing fiction.

Ancient comedy differs from tragedy in its relationship to social realities. In the case of tragedy, the general outline of the plot is known to the audience as soon as they hear the title of the play because a traditional tale or myth provides a cognitive guideline. To be sure, there was no standardised canon of Greek myths which would have provided a consistent point of reference for the audience, but some version of the myth informing the tragedy would have been heard or seen by most members of the audience at some time. Thus both the audience and the poet or playwright had a roughly common mental map through a familiar landscape. Expectations for the plot or characters of a tragic play would be established on that basis and could then be fulfilled, or, in a few but significant cases, overturned. In difference to this common cultural knowledge, which unites audience and author in the performance of comedies, the performance of tragedy remains rooted in a world of narrative. Any translation into the contemporary world of social action is indirect, and the author does not address or exhort the audience to action through any particular character in the play.

While the narrative and social worlds remain largely distinct in the case of tragedy, in comedy the common knowledge or cognitive guideline which is decisive is based on familiarity with contemporary social problems, a fact which explains the difficulty modern readers often have in comprehending the plot. There are many connections between the world of the play within the boundaries of the

theatre and the social world of the *polis*, bringing the performance of comedy and everyday social experience into closer contact. Some elements of comedy interact with social reality directly, as when characters directly address the jurors and appeal for their support in the vote for the best play in the competition. Comedy may refer not only to the social world but to other elements of the world of the theatre by cultivating a humorous element at the expense of traditional myths used in tragic theatre, a technique we might call the intertextuality of paratragedy.

The relationship between drama and social realities can also be explicated by taking a closer look at the concept of myths. I would propose that Greek myths, with very few exceptions, are very different from so-called charter myths. This term was coined by Bronislaw Malinowski to express the direct correspondence between the narrated and the social worlds. In this type of 'in the beginning' tale, a social institution is represented and reinforced as divinely or heroically mandated and thus unchanged and unchangeable. This type of myth is a narrative charter serving a similar purpose to written foundation charters in our society today. However, Malinowski's model does not fit Greek myths, as these, rather than upholding and reinforcing social institutions, stand in a paradoxical and contradictory relationship to social realities. Greek myths often describe the inversion or contradiction of social mores and institutions. Walter Burkert has explained this inversion as a result of the tension between the rules governing human beings as social beings *vs.* those which apply to humans in terms of raw biology. For example, societies discourage physical aggression between their members, but myths often present the *homo necans*, man as a killer. Myths are full of violence and forbidden acts, thus constituting symbolic narratives which invert social norms. According to Burkert, this locates myths in a position closer to human nature 'red in tooth and claw,' a reality which is more fundamental and instinctive than that based on social constructs. As expressed in his Gifford Lectures of 1989, traditional rites are bound to the 'tracks of biology.'

I have reservations about such a schematic connection between myth and reality, whether social or biological. Instead, I will deal with reversals according to the model of the reversed world and the model of symbolic action as described by Victor Turner and Barbara Babcock. Within this framework the structure of reversals is not dualistic, because even when social rules are reversed in the course of ritual process, other rules, namely the rules of the dramatic game, still obtain. Thus the inversion that takes place cannot be predicted as the world of ritual is not the exact opposite of the normal world, but rather a world of its own, for which Turner uses the term *communitas*.¹

¹ Babcock 1978. Excellent introduction by Bräunlein 1997. For application to theatre see Turner 1982, Schechner 1990, Bierl 2000:11-104 is also outstanding in connecting ritual and theatricality in Old Comedy.

This model sees the audience as players of the game who are changed in the process. The 'normal' world which they re-enter from the theatre is also changed in their perception, because the rules according to which it functions are no longer limited to a perceived 'natural' course, but have been expanded and opened to alternatives by the experience of new rules in the dramatic *communitas*.

Looking again at comedy on the basis of this model, it is striking to note that a certain mythical element has been attributed to the later comedies of Aristophanes, which have been commonly described as 'comedies of escape' or 'fairy tales'. Despite their fanciful elements, a social role has also been attributed to them, especially since the sixties, when interpretation tended to treat the comic world of Aristophanes as a utopia. This puts comedy in a third category, separate from mere fantasy or fiction on the one hand and the presentation of realisable political programmes on the other. Instead, the 'world' of Aristophanic comedy is unrestricted by reality but nevertheless real to the author and audience with their common cultural experience in ancient Athens.

One element of common experience besides everyday social life which is especially relevant in the case of comedy are traditional festivals with their complex ritual actions. When used as a basis for comedy, these festivals and the traditions behind them can be seen as mental maps which establish certain expectations or set up the basis for surprises. This may be because festivals themselves have a utopic element: they are real social experiences, but are outside the natural or normal course of everyday life. Thus when actors and audience enter into the socially constructed space and fixed period of time of a festival they are in another world which functions according to different rules which will soon give way to the rules of ordinary life. According to Angus Bowie in his valuable study on Aristophanes, each of the plays can be interpreted within the utopic framework of a given festival. The rules of the world of the festival inform the rules of the utopia in the play, and although they are unlike ordinary social norms, they are still a more or less familiar structure known to the author and the audience. It is this sort of model which I consider to be behind the content and characters of Aristophanes' *Ekklesiazousai* and which will inform our interpretation below.

2. *After the defeat. Reversals of identity*

The comedy with the provocative title 'Women in the Assembly' is the earliest extant play by Aristophanes, the hero of comic poets, written after the bitter defeat of the Athenians in the Peloponnesian War. The years following the war were:

'... one of the hardest and most humiliating periods in the history of Athens: the defeat and loss of the navy; the loss of the Empire and its tribute; the siege and capitulation to Sparta, the suppression of democracy; the

oligarchic regimes of the Thirty and the Ten, followed by counter-revolution and the restoration of democracy There was a feeling that the disastrous outcome of the Peloponnesian War had been due to failings in the democratic system of government.²

But when the oligarchy failed as well, turning out to be an enemy scheme, a way to overcome the crisis was urgently called for. One of the experiments which developed in response to this situation, the amalgamation of Argos and Corinth in 392,³ was probably initiated in the year before the performance of Aristophanes' play.⁴ Both Argos and Corinth joined the Theban League against Sparta in the so-called Corinthian War together with Athens. Years of consolidation and recovery were behind the cities, but in the year of the performance of the play which is our topic here, again dark clouds appeared on the horizon in the form of apprehension about the Persians and Spartans joining forces. The Athenians voted to finance the building of a new fleet to cope with the threat, but failed to carry through beyond the vote and actually deliver the money needed to put the plan into action. This kind of political behaviour is ridiculed in the second part of the play.

One result of Athens' losing the war, then, was that the old political structures were called into question and seen as having been responsible for the defeat. Political theory in the fourth century made proposals for change and experimented with mixed constitutions and interstate relations as well as with radical utopias.⁵ This trend is reflected in the *Ekklesiazousai* when the female hero of the play, Praxagora, proposes a grand new design for an Athenian constitution which is a radical utopia. Thus this component of the plot of the play does not present a political programme which the author or audience expects to actually be realised, not least because government by women was unthinkable. However, it does relate to key issues in contemporary political theory. The programme presented by Praxagora is remarkably similar to that of Plato in book five of the *Republic* (see Fig. 1 for a comparison) and the question of dependency has frequently been posed.⁶ So a cognitive guideline is present in the link between an action in the play and contem-

2 MacDowell 1995:301. The author of this statement is British, writing after the loss of the empire; perhaps confident in the policy of the Iron Lady, which was somewhat different to that of Praxagora.

3 Sommerstein 1998, Davies 1995:36.

4 MacDowell 1995:303, Sommerstein 1998:1,6f.: 'not earlier than 391 BC and if in 391 more likely at the *City Dionysia* than at the *Lenaia*.'

5 Davies 1995:36, Schütrumpf 1995.

6 MacDowell 1995:314; Sommerstein 1998 gives a clear cut short comparison 13-20 with the far-reaching thesis that *Eccl.* is the fountain for the whole utopian discourse in Western tradition (p.17). But see the discussion in Dettenhofer 1999:98f. (overall an excellent documentation).

porary political culture. There is also an affective aspect developed in the portrayal of Praxagora as someone who can appeal to the emotions of the majority cleverly and effectively. Rothwell, in his analysis of the political programme put forward in the play, sees this affective element as key to its interpretation, and considers the play:

‘... an expression of the restored democracy. Aristophanes is sympathetic to the principle that the stability of the government must rely on the consent and obedience of the *dēmos*, and, while no great defender of demagoguery, he understands that the persuasion which wins this consent must depend on affective means. Praxagora is therefore not a deceptive manipulator, but a quick-thinking leader.’⁷

Gynaikokratia, women’s reign over the city, is a myth of anti-identity of the male-controlled Greek city-state. Aristophanes uses the idea of women leading the state in a surprisingly positive mode: not only Eirene in *Peace*, but over all *Lysistrata* is a positive character, needed to end the endless war. Other poets of Athenian comedy staged a *gynaikokratia* several times, such as Theopompos in his *Stratitides* ‘Lady Soldiers’ produced around the year 400.⁸ There are also famous but negative mythical examples, *The women of Lemnos* and *The Amazons* among the titles of plays for which we have evidence. Although we do not have enough information to paint a complete picture, it is clear that there is variety in the plots of *gynaikokratia* plays, ranging from the Lemnians and Amazons portrayed as ridiculous and disgusting man-killers and child-haters to the clever and competent women’s think tank in *Lysistrata* which successfully breaks down male privilege. The women’s key to power in *Lysistrata* is to refuse sexual advances from their husbands, whereas in *Ekklesiazousai* the game is reversed and the women legally require every male to meet the sexual demands of every woman who gets a glimpse of him.

The conscious transvestism of the theatre is carried beyond the dramatic convention of male actors wearing women’s clothes. In the *Ekklesiazousai* men wear women’s clothes unwillingly and—in a reversal of the reversal—a male actor, acting as a woman, wears male clothes. Another divergence from other similar plays is that *gynaikokratia* as a permanent institution is not to be found anywhere else except in the *Ekklesiazousai*, a point which has also been brought out by other scholars: ‘The idea of permanent gynaecocratic Utopia may well in 391 have been a complete novelty, something, never ... done or said before (579).’⁹ And I quote Bowie:

7 Rothwell 1990:102.

8 PCG 7, F 55-59. Concerning the issue of lady soldiers see Bierl 2000:100 n. 209.

9 Sommerstein 1998:10.

'In *Lysistrata*, the difference between the violent men and the peaceful women was important: the women had, it is true, some negative traits, such as lustfulness, but in general they were represented in a better light. In *Ekklesiazousai*, by contrast, the women's take-over is rendered more natural not just because the men are feeble but also by the many similarities between the women and their husbands: the women can as easily assume male roles in public life as adopt their clothing.'¹⁰

There has been considerable scholarly debate as to how to interpret the inversion of gender roles in the *Ekklesiazousai*. Taaffe, I believe, goes too far in assuming that gender roles are as easily constructed for the purposes of a play as clothes are changed. Helen Foley, however, points to an important gulf in the plot between the plan and its realization: female conservatism is initially announced, but what actually happens is a revolution. Egalitarianism is the purported aim, but in the end the motivating forces are private interests and the satisfaction of sexual desires. And finally, rather than the scheme ending in the city's *sotería*, chaos ensues.¹¹ These diverse opinions show the difficulties of interpreting this play, and are quite possibly all superseded by MacDowell's statement that Aristophanes originally wrote a play about women's government, unfortunately ran out of good ideas, and tacked another one about communism onto the end (vv. 558ff.).¹² As will become clear in the rest of this discussion, the inversion of gender roles in this play can be interpreted coherently on the basis of a cultural model.

This comedy relates to the cultural experience of the audience in their knowledge of at least one actual society in which women had a significant influence on public life, namely Sparta.¹³ Of course, Athen's arch-enemy could not be presented as a model for Athenian political life, but the example of the Argive women, on the other hand, lay nearly a century back in Greek history.¹⁴ Herodotus, writing some forty years before Aristophanes' play, relates how after the defeat at Sepeia in 494 the women were left in charge because Spartan foul play had resulted in every male Argive citizen being killed. Aristophanes makes an allusion to these women by a clever pun on the name of the battlefield at which the Argive catastrophe took place: the false beards of the *Ekklesiazousai* are called *Sepeiai*, which literally means 'fried cuttle fish.' As we will see, this is not the only connection between this play and the Argive women.

10 Bowie 1993:260.

11 Zeitlin 1999:175.

12 MacDowell 1995:320.

13 Millender 1999. According to Dettenhofer 1999 the utopia is a Spartan program, which is ridiculed by putting it into the mouth of a woman.

14 Auffarth 1995, ch. 5.

I would therefore conclude that the *Ekklesiazousai* is neither an escapist fantasy nor a political utopia, but rather a play which relates the defeat which the Athenians had experienced to the defeat of the Argives, thus building on real experience but making use of exceptional states of affairs with their alternative rules, *i.e.* women being in charge. After the defeat at Sepeia Argos was ruled by women with a competent and successful female general, Telesilla. In the following generation, the Argive women had to cope with the lack of male citizens and make use of any man that came to hand, namely those who had been too young or too old to fight in the battle at Sepeia, as well as slaves and non-citizens, to father the next generation of citizens. Argive women thus had the reputation for arrogance and for despising their husbands who were often significantly younger and/or of lower social status. We will now examine how the *Ekklesiazousai* mirrors the *gynaikokratia* at Argos after the catastrophe of 494.

3. The Argive festival Hybristiká as the model for the *Ekklesiazousai*

3.1 *Everything is to be had in common, even women*

In the *Ekklesiazousai* Praxagora's proposal to save the *polis* is that everything that is necessary for life should be shared: *koinòn pâsin bíoton, kai toûton hómoion* (590). This point in her programme is not as far-fetched as it seems, especially to our ears: communal property was both a social reality in some Greek societies and part of reform programmes like that of Plato.¹⁵

There is, however, one proposal for communal life that does not fit in a serious constitution, that is, free sex for women and obligatory copulation for men. In the play, men are portrayed as being physically exhausted and apprehensive about becoming impotent because of the overwhelming quantity of females demanding sexual gratification. On the other hand, the women are eager for sex and actively seek male partners. Praxagora proclaims: 'Women shall be free to sleep with everybody. I'm making common property, for any man who wishes, to have sex in order to produce babies (613-15).' And later, when her husband puts the question: 'Well, from your point of view, it makes some sense, you have planned it so that none of you will have an empty hole. But what about men's point ... of view? What will happen to the uglier men? The women will run from the uglier men and go for the handsome ones! (624-26).' What actually happens is that even ugly men are faced with a higher demand than they can deal with, such that after dinners 'women will waylay the men, shouting "Come here!" but the next one: "You have to sleep first with me, then with her!" (694-701).' And later on again, an old woman formulates as a principle of democracy: 'It is not the days of Charixene

15 Dettenhofer 1999:95-103.

now! It's right and proper for these things to be done according to the law, if we live in a democracy' (*Katà tòn nómon taûta poieîn esti díkaion, ei demokratoúmetha* 943-45).

The only limitations on this copulative free-for-all were that female slaves are not allowed to pursue male citizens (721-24) and that girls under twenty—although, as we have seen in the Pandora-Exhibition, that normally girls of twelve and 14 were married¹⁶—are likewise banned from participating in the communal reproductive market. This was obviously an unpopular policy among the men. In the play, a young man, preferring a young girl, says to the aged woman: 'We're not entering those over sixty at present (*sc.* the cases at trial, but here ambiguous formulated); we've postponed them to a later date. We're finishing dealing with those under twenty, first.' But the old woman answers: 'That was under the previous regime, sweetie. Now the ruling is that you must enter us first' (982-86).¹⁷ The young man carries the name Epígonos, a name which is unusual for an Athenian citizen, so that the audience is directed to the famous Epigonoí of Argos.¹⁸

These arrangements, beyond their comic value, suggest that there is a shortage of men at a usual child-rearing age, and a surplus of women. That sexuality is a common good and every man has to do his duty, namely to make children, is not part in other utopian constitutions. Rather, it is a special case which must remind us of the situation of the Argive women after the catastrophe of Sepeia. The community had to react to political and military disaster by reversing its traditions—if the only men to have survived the war are very young and/or non-citizens, patrilinear descent will not work any more, so that the women take over the responsibility for leading the family and community and citizenship is handed down from the mothers to the sons.¹⁹

3.2 *Transvestism and men giving birth*

The *Ekklesiasouzai* also includes unusual practices such as cross-dressing and men having babies. These elements of the play can be better understood by relating them to the evidence for the Argive festival of *Hybristiká*.²⁰ Plutarch (*Mor.* 245e-f) provides an aetiological explanation of certain components of this festival such as cross-dressing by linking them to the defeat at Sepeia just discussed.²¹ On the

16 Reeder 1996:14.

17 Henderson 1987:119 against 'morbid' intentions of the older women demanding sex.

18 *Eccl.* 167; as actor's name 938-1111. Occurs seldom as a personal name in Classical Athens (see LPGN 107); but in Roman times it was extremely common, rendering Roman *Postumus*. Sommerstein *a.l.*

19 Zeitlin 1999:184.

anniversary of that battle, the Argives even up to the present day celebrate the festival of *Hybristiká*. During the festival the women wear false beards, male *chitones* and *himatia*, whereas men are clothed with female *peploi* and veils. The reason for this, according to Plutarch, was that the Argive widows had, after the battle, married non-citizens. In order to maintain the difference in status and to make clear who was in charge, the widows dressed like men and the lower-status husbands had to wear women's clothes as a symbol of their subservience. Since other Greek cities criticized Argos for having had a *gynaikokratia* and, even worse, a *doulokratia*, Argos needed a tradition which could repel this type of slander.²² Thus they created the myth of Telesilla, the idealized poetess and general who prevented the ruffians from Sparta from destroying the city even though there were no men to defend it.

In the play, on the other hand, the reversal of gender roles is portrayed as the result of the wives stealing their husbands' clothes in order to seize power in the assembly/*ekklesia* and not as a way of coping with fate. The husbands are then reduced to wearing their wives' clothes, like Blepyros in 311ff. who dons his wife's saffron dress and Persian shoes.²³ Both gender roles are reversed and, as the result of that, the hierarchy of the gender roles is reversed, as well. Women leave the house and enter the public room, men stay at home and avoid the public. The gendered symbolism of in and out, secret and public, darkness and sunlight runs from the beginning throughout the play.

But Aristophanes goes even further: even the social and biological gender-roles of giving birth are reversed in the play. When Blepyros awakes, he realizes that he is at home and that his own clothes are missing. He finds his stomach upset and leaves the house, looking for a discreet place to relieve himself. Taking advantage of the darkness of night, Blepyros squats down in a quiet place, but because of his constipation is still sitting there hours later when the sun rises and exposes him to

20 Nilsson 1906:371 and 373. 'Nach der Analogie der angeführten Gebräuche werden also auch die Riten dieses Festes auf die Ehe und Ehegebräuche zurückgehen. So wird auch die wunderliche Sitte begreiflich, daß ein Jüngling sich wie ein kreißendes Weib gebärdete. Es war ein Akt sympathetischer Magie, die wahrscheinlich auch der Sitte des Männerkindbettes zugrundeliegt. Man suchte durch die Festgebräuche nicht nur die Eheschließung, sondern auch *das Gebären zu fördern*.' Nilsson gives as a hint to further evidence in Frazer 1900, vol. 1:20, n. †.

21 Plutarch, *Mor.* 245 C-F; abridged in Polyain. *Strat.* 8. 33. Auffarth 1995, ch. 5, Auffarth 1997.

22 Vidal-Naquet 1989. *Ekklesiastousae* as the most pertinent play for his argument p. 197.

23 Bowie 1993:257f. mentions the *Hybristiká* as a rite of transvestism, because they are celebrated in mid-summer like *Skira* (which is explicitly mentioned in *Eccl.* 'But there is no sound evidence for anything of that sort at the Scira.'). but he does not discern the deep roots of the Argive festival in *Eccl.* I find no evidence which supports placing the festival in mid-summer. Nilsson 1906, equates the *Hybristika* with Attic *Gamelia* in the end of winter.

view, especially to the eyes of the audience. His attempt at discretion is thus reversed into vulgarity. MacDowell interprets this scene as follows:

‘Nowhere else is constipation displayed, and the audience is expected to laugh in surprise at seeing something normally hidden from view. The passage reinforces the theme of the play, by showing a man preoccupied with a mundane or degrading activity while his wife is concerned with higher things.’²⁴

I disagree, however, with the view that this is the sum of the purpose of this scene. Rather, Aristophanes needs it for his gender reversal as the male next-best version of giving birth: when Blepyros continues to be unable to move his bowels, he begins to pray to the goddess of birth, to Eileithyia (369-71):²⁵

‘O Lady Eileithyia, don’t stand by and
let me burst or stay blocked up like this;
I don’t want to become the comic shitpot!’

The vulgar humour arises from the fact that men can’t give birth, so that even when, for the purposes of the reversals and the analogy with Argos, the goddess of birth is invoked, the man is made ridiculous by being unable to give birth to anything but ‘shit,’ thus stressing their inability to come to grips with the crisis that their community is in.

The inversion of biological birth, which turns out to be impossible, has its counterpart in the play. When Praxagora comes home, her husband asks why she had gone out wearing his cloak. She answers: ‘A woman who’s a close friend of mine sent for me. She’d gone into labour during the night’ (526-50). He, instead of asking about the health of mother and baby or otherwise showing an interest in the new life, scolds Praxagora for leaving him behind as ‘like a corpse.’ Her main interest, on the other hand, is in rejoicing that the new baby is a boy. Again a striking parallel to Argos after the catastrophe: Blepyros is a corpse on the battlefield, whereas the interest of the women is on the next generation of soldiers who must be born and reared. Indeed, women in fact perform both ‘male’ and ‘female’ functions, taking over in the social and political sphere while still pursuing their biological role as mothers. Men, on the other hand, are completely incapable in either sphere. By using the male inability to give birth to emphasize the Athenian

24 MacDowell 1995:311. In his note 12 he cites other ‘unconvincing’ suggestions.

25 Kleinknecht 1937:71 He does not realize the explicit parallel to the real birth. ‘Das parodische Gebet entspringe einzig der Freude an der augenblicklichen komischen Situation’; cf. Horn 1970:43f.

men's incompetence at dealing with the present crisis, if in no other way than by bringing forward the next generation of citizens, Aristophanes reverses the charge against the Lemnians and Amazons. In those cases, infertility and refusal to become mothers was decried as bringing death to the city, and in other *gynaikokratiai* women also refuse to give birth. Here, however, the issue is inverted and men are blamed for failing to reproduce.²⁶

The reversal just set out belongs to a type known to cultural anthropologists as *couvade* or *Männerkindbett*.²⁷ This phenomenon involves husbands of new mothers staying in bed and wishing everyone to look after them as if they were the ones who had just given birth. The male partner attracts the attention of the friends and relatives to himself, and thus detracts it from the mother and baby, who are therefore forced to struggle alone through the physical and mental adjustment after the birth. So I agree with Helen Foley's interpretation that the men in *Ekklesiazousai* are depicted as drones. I disagree then with MacDowell in finding fault with the 'distinguished author' among modern feminists (*i.e.* Foley) for the view that 'men are reduced to leading a drone-like life of pleasure in a world run by others.'²⁸ MacDowell stresses that Aristophanes wrote his play not for modern feminist authors but for ancient men who would be only too delighted to have a 'drone-like life of pleasure.' In my view, the analogy with the historical crisis at Argos and its commemorative festival provide the explanation for this particular reversal: men are outside the sphere of responsibility because the few who remain are not of a quality to deal with the problems of a community and can only be used as reproductive tools.

3.3 *Wedding song in soldier's boots*

A fine detail of a reversal can be observed in the wedding song in soldier's boots, the song 289-99 with the antistrophe 300-10.²⁹ The women have finally gathered at the appointed place whence they, in chorus formation, set out for the assembly. At this point the women are disguised as old men with walking sticks, beards and cloaks. Their leader Praxagora gives the command to sing 'like old men' as they walk at a farmer's pace (*adoúsai mélos presbytikón* 279f). However, with the third verse they change from marching to dancing, so that the audience is confronted with the women dancing along to the assembly wearing their husbands' Spartan soldiers' boots (*lakonika*). Their song is a popular ditty in telesilleans. Parker, who has analyzed the metres of the songs in Aristophanes, comments: 'It is naturally

26 Bowie 1993:258f.

27 Männerkindbett: Zapperi 1994, Dumont du Voitel 1997.

28 Foley 1982:18.

29 Zimmermann 1985-87:3, 95f.; 1, 137f., Händel 1963:26-29. Parker 1995:526-30.

tempting to wonder whether the chosen metre has any special significance in the context. The evidence connecting telesilleans with weddings songs (see *On Peace* 1239ff.) can hardly be relevant here.³⁰ With a single exception, telesilleans appear in the songs of young women and are usually used in betrothal and wedding songs. The Argive poetess, whose name a later philologist chose to designate this metre,³¹ Telesilla, composed just such Parthenia. And Telesilla is, in the Argive myth, the general who successfully repelled Spartan aggressors with her troop of young women. So in the *Ekklesiiazousai* the song is to be interpreted accordingly: on the level of outer appearance and the words used the she-general commands a military troop—with the lapsus of 299 a/b, where the chorus first sings *philas*, in the next line correcting into *philous*. But the rhythm leads the audience to perceive the ‘soldiers’ on another level as disguised maidens dancing with their clever teacher.

4. *New-and-old order. The reversal of the reversal*

Reversals are one of the most telling features of Greek myth and ritual. Reversals in myths may easily be connected with reversals in rites and rituals. In a symbolic act like the performance of a rite, a reversal can be indicated by a change of clothes, dressing a pole with a mask, or by imagining in narrative a time long ago and beyond recall.

In other papers on Aristophanes I have argued that the common ground between the poet and the audience provide a basis for understanding the structure of the play, using the common experience of a festival as an interpretive key which would have been relatively obvious to the Athenian audience. In fact, the festival which informs the symbolic structure of the play is sometimes explicit in or at least indicated by the title, as in *Thesmophoriazousae*, or the *Dionysia* in *Peace*, the *Mysteria* in *Clouds* and in *Frogs*.³² Some plays, however, have to be subjected to meticulous effort on the part of modern scholars before they can be deciphered, whereas the Athenian audience understood the important structures by signs, masks, costumes, and other props.

30 Parker 1997:528; she deals with *On Peace* 1329–59 on p.290–95, which she calls there ‘This song and *Birds* 1731ff., both featuring telesilleans, are the sole survivors in Greek of a type of processional wedding song which must have provided the model for Catullus c. 61 and ... Ticides fr. 1 Morel.’ On the next page Parker offers examples from Telesilla’s girl’s songs (*PMG* 717) and from Hermippus’ *Stratitides/Stratitotai*, which may come from the parodos (*PCG* 57) and the chorus of that play may have consisted of effeminate young men. Cf. Kassel/Austin *PCG* 5. 585. ‘However, the idea that telesilleans have specifically feminine connotations is hardly tenable in view of *Knights* 1111ff. = 1131ff.’ In my opinion it is the use of telesillians in *Knights* that has to be explained. For further comedies with choruses of soldiers see Bierl 2000:100 n. 209.

31 Hephaestion, see Pfeiffer 1970, Paul Maas, *RE* 5 A 1(1934), 384f.

32 Bowie 1993.

5. Conclusions

We now must take a step back from the content of the play and ask ourselves what the performance of this particular play in its particular time and place meant to its author and audience. Some scholars have taken the inclusion of a mock *Panathenaia* (730–45) as an indication that Aristophanes intends the audience to support the reestablishment of the old order. For example Burkert takes the span from *Skira* to *Panathenaia* as indicative of regeneration but in a cyclical sense as in the coming of the new year, so that the old order is newly established.³³ Bowie, working within an Athenian context, sets up a dichotomy from *Skira* to *Panathenaia*, from chaos (parallel to the plotting of the women) to cosmos (the traditional structures) and sees the performance of the *Panathenaia* in the play as the reversal of the reversal and hence the restoration of the old order. As he puts it, 'It is up to the audience to relate this new world which follows Chremes' Panathenaic parade of pots to the normality felt to be restored after the city's *Panathenaia*.'³⁴ On this scheme a reversed reversal automatically restores the original state of affairs, that which was perceived as normal at the outset. But this cannot be coherently applied to the *Ekklesiazousai* in which the new order is praised and maintained up to the end. Reversals are not simple opposite positions, moves from 'upside down' to 'right side up,' but can be distortions to any degree in any direction, setting the old order topsy turvy, as Victor Turner and Barbara Babcock have shown in their interpretations of rituals and communities

I would see the meaning of this play in its particular place in time as governed by the experimental function of Greek symbolic acts like myths and festivals. Old Comedy, as part of a festival, is the game of reversing the world of the everyday order and acting in the reversed world to test its possibilities.³⁵ This is particularly complex in the case of this play, as Aristophanes is experimenting with events expressed in a festival, itself a symbolic experiment.

As pointed out in the introductory section, comedy makes itself coherent symbolically in part by connecting to aspects of everyday social experience, including symbolic social experience as just indicated, but also including political issues and controversies. Thus we can see how the audience would have understood the play in terms of Athens' contemporary foreign policy, cocking a snook at Sparta and her friends in Athens in its re-enactment of the re-enactment of the failure of Sparta to defeat a community defended 'only' by women. There is also a

33 Burkert 1972:153–77. Burkert 1977:346–54 (= Greek Religion 1985:227–34).

34 Bowie 1993:267.

35 In so far I agree with Dettenhofer's conclusion that *Ekklesiazousai* is still a typical Old comedy in its topicality. But I don't agree that Praxagora's plan is ridiculed by putting it into the mouth of a woman.

bitter tone to the character of Praxagora, the Athenian Telesilla, who is a successful and competent leader, with ideas and the ability to carry them out in action, the type of leader Athens lacked at the time and the lack of which in the past had recently caused her defeat. The lack of a leader would be most keenly felt in the affective response of the audience to Praxagora as the new Telesilla, not the new Pericles, as this would be immediately felt as a wish for something impossible.

Reversals are typical in Greek myth. Reality, normalcy, and the natural course of everyday life is contradicted by alternatives. Old Comedy was the institution in Athenian society whose function it was to imagine alternatives and to criticize existing social realities. It also functioned to experiment with the alternatives in a setting free from the constraints of economics and the political establishment. The rules of this 'game' required that the experiment come to an end with the end of the festival, when the players and audience leave the theatre after going through the symbolic experiment of the comedy.³⁶ But before leaving the theatre they had been changed, and the old order to which they returned outside the theatre could be seen from eyes freshly experienced in symbolic reversal.

36 Auffarth 1991:1-37.

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Fig. 1 Utopian constitution
in Aristophanes' Ecclesiazousae and in Platon, Politeia 5
(based on Sommerstein, Ecclesiazousae 1998, 14)

Regulations proposed in	<i>Ekklesiazousae</i>	<i>Politeia</i>
No private property	590-610	416D 'unless absolutely essential' 464D they have 'no private possessions except their bodies'
No litigation	655-61	464D
Men have no private dwelling-places	674-75	416D
They dine in communal halls	675-88	416E
Their maintenance will be provided by slaves	651-52	416E, 463B, 464C
Women do textile work as hitherto	654	No regulation
Songs will be sung in honour of brave warriors	678-80	468A,D those who have shown cowardice will be prevented from attending
Marriage is not to exist, and all women are to be 'common' to all men	614-15	457C
Rules of sex	615-34	No regulation
No parent has to know who is his child and v.a.	635-36	457D
Every older person will be treated as his parent	636-37	461 D/E
Any two Guardians will regard each other as close kin and behave accordingly	638-50	463C-E
No violence by the young against the old	641-43	465A-B
Punishment for crimes	662-72	Crime doesn't exist

*Fig. 2 Argos
in the fifth century*

	As seen in Argos	As seen by the other Greek cities
ca. 494	At Sepeia Spartans killed every Argive man, using a foul trick. But they did not enter the city	Argive men lacked intelligence
		The Womanish (foul trick) wins, but with bad consequences (for the Spartan king Kleomenes). Herodotus 6.75-84.
	The Argive women put the Spartans to flight. General is the poetess Telesilla	
	The Argive women are forced to marry men of lower social rank (<i>perioikoi</i>)	<i>Gynaikokratia</i> <i>Doulokratia</i>
	Festival of <i>Hybristiká</i> Reversal of gender roles < Women wear beards because they despise their husbands < Men lie in bed and give birth (<i>couvade</i>)	
480	The Argives refuse to partake at the Persian war, because they lack men	The Argives as traitors: <i>Medismós</i>
ca. 460	Battle of Oinoé Together with the Athenians the Argive 'new generation' defeats the Spartans.	
	The <i>epigonoí</i> (new generation) represent themselves as revengers of their fathers (seven against Thebes): Statues in Delphi [SEG 38, 314]	Painting in the <i>Stoa Poikile</i> at Athens

431 - 404	<i>Peloponnesian war</i>	
	Alliance (Corinth) Argos / Athens	
391		Aristophanes' performance of the Argive <i>gynaikokratia</i> as <i>Ekklesia-zousai</i>
ca. 303 1. c. AD	Apollo saved Argos (Inscription <i>BCH</i> 32[1908]: 236-58) Sokrates of Argos <i>FGrH</i> 310 F 6 (Plutarch, <i>Mor.</i> 245c-e) on <i>Hybristiká</i>	

La Fin des Maux. Un nom—Pausanias—et un symbole (d’Homère à Pausanias le Périégète, en passant par Platon)

Pierre Ellinger

QUEL RAPPORT, à part leur nom—Pausanias—, y a-t-il entre un disciple auquel s’adresse Empédocle, un régent de Sparte et généralissime des armées grecques, vainqueur des Mèdes à Platées en 479, et un voyageur sous l’Empire romain qui décrit les Antiquités de la Grèce? Il ne s’agira pas des raisons pour lesquelles leurs parents ont pu leur donner ce nom—événements de leur vie personnelle ou de la vie collective, ou simple tradition familiale¹—mais des connotations qu’il prend dans la situation de récit où on le trouve employé, dans le poème d’Empédocle, dans les biographies du régent ou même dans l’aventure intellectuelle de Pausanias le Périégète telle qu’on peut la discerner à travers son œuvre. Je laisserai, dans l’immédiat, le disciple du thaumaturge et la maîtrise des vents² aux spécialistes d’Empédocle et je reviendrai ailleurs sur le cas du Périégète. Pourtant ce qui m’a dirigé vers ces questions un peu insolites a bien été une réflexion de ce dernier, dans sa description de Sparte, sur le destin de son homonyme, le vainqueur de Platées. Donc une réflexion d’un homme portant ce nom, Pausanias, sur un autre homme du même nom. Elle conduisait à s’interroger sur les traditions biographiques concernant le régent de Sparte. En effet, à côté du récit d’Hérodote, à la fin de l’*Enquête*, et de celui de Thucydide—ce qu’on appelle l’excursus sur Pausanias et Thémistocle—au premier livre de l’Histoire de la guerre du Péloponnèse,³ il existe un nombre considérable de témoignages, qui n’ont quasiment jamais été étudiés. On a suffisamment reproché à Thucydide, dans son excursus, d’être trop hérodotéen,⁴ ces récits le sont encore bien plus et au-delà. En fait, à partir de sources dispersées, souvent tardives, on peut reconstituer une

1 Les traductions sont, sauf indication contraire, celles de la Collection des Universités de France, parfois légèrement modifiées. Sur le problème du nom signifiant et de la nomination, cf. Sulzberger 1926, Svenbro 1988:74-91. On devine aisément les raisons pour donner un tel nom à un fils de médecin; pour un fils d’une famille royale spartiate, la question mérite d’être posée.

2 DK 31 B 111.3; cf. Diog. Laert. 8.59-62.

3 Thuc. 1.94-96, 128-35.

biographie très riche et cohérente qui joue systématiquement sur le nom du héros. Cette tradition complète et éclaire le texte de Thucydide; elle en infléchit aussi considérablement la signification. Je ne raconterai pas l'histoire par le menu,⁵ mais j'en donnerai une idée qui suffira ici pour mon propos. Au centre, il y a précisément cet épisode auquel je faisais allusion, et dont Pausanias, l'autre, le Périégète, nous dit qu'il donne la clef du destin du régent de Sparte, la raison des maux qui se sont abattus sur lui et sur sa cité,—et il se vante alors d'être le seul de tous les historiens à avoir su révéler le sens profond de tous ces événements.⁶

Donc, Pausanias, le régent, après sa victoire, s'était établi à Byzance, avec la flotte grecque qu'il commandait, et se conduisait déjà fort mal. Une nuit, il fit venir une jeune fille, Kléoniké, pour abuser d'elle. La jeune fille, s'approchant du lit dans l'obscurité, fit malencontreusement quelque bruit, et Pausanias, réveillé en sursaut, croyant qu'on venait l'assassiner, la frappa de son poignard. Banale histoire de tyran, pourrait-on penser,⁷ si elle ne prenait pas, dans les récits, une dimension historique panhellénique: les alliés, indignés par le meurtre, renversent leurs allégeances et donnent l'hégémonie, l'*archè*, aux Athéniens; et, en même temps, en tuant cette jeune fille au nom si parlant, Kléoniké, la 'Gloire de la victoire,' qu'il aurait pu donner à une fille née de lui après son exploit, le chef des Grecs, qui se vantait si orgueilleusement, dans la première version de l'inscription du trépied de Platées à Delphes, celle que firent effacer les Spartiates, d'avoir anéanti les armées mèdes, vient en fait d'assassiner le *kleos* de sa propre victoire. Surtout, le fantôme de la jeune fille ne va plus cesser de lui apparaître toutes les nuits—nous sommes maintenant chez Plutarque—, le fustigeant de ce vers épique: 'C'est un grand mal que l'*hubris*, la démesure; marche vers la *diké*,' c'est-à-dire, de manière volontairement ambiguë, tout aussi bien la justice que le châtement⁸—dans une autre version, c'est physiquement qu'elle le fustige toutes les nuits dans ses rêves.⁹ Finalement, Pausanias réussira à faire cesser la persécution incessante du fantôme en évoquant l'âme de Kléoniké à l'oracle des morts d'Héraclée du Pont, sur la mer Noire, l'une des entrées des Enfers. La jeune fille lui apparaîtra, et lui dira son dernier mot: 'Va à Sparte, tu trouveras la fin de tes maux:'

4 Entre autres, Syme 1962:42, Canfora 1982. Pour un point de départ dans une bibliographie pléthorique (sauf pour les traditions qui nous concernent), Hornblower 1991:211-25.

5 Analyse détaillée dans mon livre, *La Fin des Maux. D'un Pausanias à l'autre. Essai de mythologie et d'histoire* (à paraître).

6 Paus. 3.17.7-9. L'épisode est aussi connu, avec des compléments variés, par Plut. *Cim.* 6.2-7, *De sera* 10.555c; Aristodèmos *FGrH* 104 F 1.8. Voir également maintenant Ogden 2001:29-32, 104s., Ogden 2002.

7 Signification tyrannique bien vue par Jameson 1965:170.

8 Plut. *Cim.* 6.5 et *De sera* 10.555c.

9 Aristodèmos, *FGrH* 104 F 1.8.1.

παύσεσθαι τῶν κακῶν.¹⁰ La fin des maux, c'est-à-dire, bien sûr ici, la mort, mais aussi la signification même du nom du héros, Pausanias, composé du verbe *pauô*, cesser, mettre fin à, et de *aniai*, qui est un équivalent poétique, noble, de *kaka*, les maux, les souffrances. En un jeu de mots tragique donc: 'Va à Sparte, tu y trouveras l'apaisement, tu y trouveras la mort, tu t'y trouveras toi-même.' Après bien des péripéties, Pausanias agonise, emmuré vivant par les éphores, dans le sanctuaire de la divinité poliade, Athéna *Chalkioikos*, sur l'acropole de Sparte. Elien,¹¹ dans son *Histoire variée*, y fera allusion sous le titre: 'Que, de certaines fois, les maux ne cessent pas, même avec la mort, et à propos de Pausanias,' "Οτι ἐνίοτε μήτε ἐν θανάτῳ ἐστὶν ἀναπαύσασθαι, καὶ περὶ Παυσανίου, sur le thème: les méchants ne trouvent pas de sépulture. En fait, ce n'est pas seulement pour Pausanias que les maux ne vont pas cesser, mais maintenant pour la cité. Pour son sacrilège, le *loimos* s'abat sur elle, ou plus exactement le fantôme de Pausanias apparaît à son tour, autour de l'autel de la divinité poliade, l'autel principal de la cité, et interdit tout sacrifice, interrompant la communication avec les dieux.¹² Il faudra, pour mettre fin à la situation et revenir à la normale, réintégrer, sur l'ordre de Delphes, le mort dans la cité en lui donnant une sépulture adéquate, sur le seuil même du sanctuaire, encadrer l'autel poliade de deux statues de bronze de Pausanias, sous l'œil desquelles, désormais et pour l'éternité, les autorités de l'Etat sacrifieront aux dieux.¹³ Et en même temps que cette sorte de culte héroïque, on fondera, pour Zeus, un culte du *daimôn* Epidôtès, 'Bienveillant,' qui seul a su détourner la colère (μήνιμα ἀποτρέπειν) qu'éprouvait contre les Spartiates le dieu des Suppliants, Zeus *Hikésios*, à cause de Pausanias.¹⁴ Dans l'intervalle, le récit n'aura cessé de jouer sur le thème de l'absence de limites, de la répétition incessante, et sur le verbe *pauô*, qui constitue en quelque sorte le fil rouge auquel on reconnaît les fragments

10 Plut. *Cim.* 6.6-7: 'Elle lui apparut et lui dit que *ses maux cesseraient* bientôt, dès qu'il serait à Sparte, faisant ainsi une allusion voilée à sa *fin* prochaine (αἰνιττομένη ... τὴν μέλλουσαν αὐτῷ τελευτήν),' et *De sera* 10.555c: 'elle lui apparut enfin, pour lui dire qu'il serait *délivré de ses maux* (παύσεται τῶν κακῶν) dès qu'il parviendrait à Lacédémone: à peine arrivé, il *mourut* (ἐτελεύτησεν).'

11 Ou peut-être son éditeur antique, avec un texte souvent réduit à un résumé. Le titre (Ael. *VH.* 4.7) n'a pas été repris dans les éditions postérieures à celle de C.G. Kühn (1780), mais les raisons pour l'éliminer, alors que d'autres titres exactement du même type ont été conservés, ne paraissent pas décisives. En tout état de cause, le même jeu de mots est impliqué dans le récit qu'il introduit. Sur ces problèmes, cf. l'introduction de la récente édition de Wilson 1997.

12 Plut. *De sera* 10.560e, *Etudes homériques*, fr. 126 Sandbach (schol. Eur. *Alc.* 1128); Aristodème, *FGrH* 104 F 1.8.5: 'Pour cela un fléau s'abattit sur eux. Et le dieu, consulté, leur répondant que s'ils conjuraient les *daimones* de *Pausanias*, le fléau *cesserait*, ils dressèrent une statue de lui, et le fléau *cessa* (ἐπὶν ἐξιλιάσωνται τοὺς δαίμονας τοῦ Παυσανίου, παύσασθαι τὸν λοιμόν, ἀνδριάντα αὐτῷ ἀνέστησαν, καὶ ἐπάυσατο ὁ λοιμός).'

13 Thuc. 1.134.4.

14 Paus. 3.17.7 et 9.

épars de cette tradition. Qu'est-ce qui n'a pas cessé? La trahison (*prodosia*),¹⁵ les fantômes (*phasmata*),¹⁶ le *loimos*,¹⁷ tout ce qui constituait le trouble (*tarachè*, *tarassein*) apporté aux affaires de la Grèce et de la cité.¹⁸

Devant un tel récit biographique, construit sur un jeu systématique sur le nom du héros, on pouvait se demander ce qui l'avait rendu possible, sur quel arrière-plan il se fondait; d'où, dans l'espoir également d'en dater la fabrication, l'idée d'une enquête à la fois sur le verbe *pauô* au plus large, avec ses valeurs propres, et plus particulièrement sur ce concept de 'fin des maux.' Dans la mesure où l'on se trouvait face à des sources souvent tardives, il fallait ouvrir l'enquête très largement, au point de vue chronologique. Le danger ici n'est pas le manque d'occurrences, mais d'en être plutôt submergé. Ce sont les résultats, encore provisoires, de ce travail que je voudrais présenter. Une enquête, donc, au travers de ce que certains ont pu appeler le 'mythisme,' ou plus largement, de ce dispositif de métaphores conventionnelles et de messages implicites, propre à une langue et à une culture.¹⁹ La *fin des maux* pourrait alors être définie comme un symbole, un concept chargé d'affects, conformément à la problématique de cette rencontre, ou peut-être, si l'on préfère, comme une expression quasi formulaire, traversant l'étendue de la culture grecque.²⁰

Disons d'emblée que ce qui frappe, c'est que parmi les verbes grecs employés pour exprimer l'idée de finir, de terminer, *pauô* (et ses dérivés) n'implique pas une idée d'achèvement, de perfection, de mener à terme dans un sens positif, à l'inverse de ce qu'expriment *telos* et les termes de la même famille, mais qu'au contraire il porte massivement et de manière prédominante sur des objets chargés de valeurs négatives: il s'agit dans la plupart des cas de mettre fin, de mettre un terme, à quelque chose de désagréable, déplaisant, pénible, injuste, impie, ou hostile, dont la continuation, la répétition, l'absence de fin seraient insupportables et dont il faut absolument se débarrasser. Passer en revue ces emplois, c'est faire le tour de tout ce que les Grecs ont pu juger insupportable dans leur monde. Bien sûr, je ne veux pas dire qu'il n'y a pas aussi des emplois neutres du verbe, non chargés d'affect, pour exprimer l'idée d'une limite spatiale ou temporelle: ainsi quand Strabon dit que telle montagne se termine à tel endroit, ou pour parler de la fin du

15 Aristodèmos, *FGrH* 104 F 1.8.2: τῆς δὲ προδοσίας οὐκ ἐπαύετο.

16 Plut. *De sera*, 555c: οὐ παυομένου τοῦ φάσματος; cf. *Cim.* 6.6: τῷ φάσματι ταραττόμενος.

17 Cf. supra, note 12.

18 Plut. *Cim.* 6.3: ταραττομένης τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀνακαλεῖν τὸν Πανσάνιαν; cf. Paus. 3.17.8.

19 Muellner 1996:1.

20 Quel nom donner à ce type d'expressions qui traversent les époques, à ce point chargées de sens et d'attentes diverses renouvelées?

mois, de la fin d'un discours,²¹ mais ce ne sont pas ces emplois, et de loin, qui, sur des centaines d'exemples, paraissent prédominants, et souvent eux aussi en viennent à se charger de ces mêmes connotations négatives.²²

Par où commencer un tel panorama de ces maux, sinon, au plus général, par la définition hésiodique de la condition humaine elle-même: 'C'est maintenant la race du fer. *Ils ne cesseront* ni le jour de souffrir fatigues et misères, ni la nuit d'être consumés par les dures angoisses que leur enverront les dieux,'

οὐδέ ποτ' ἡμαρ
παύσονται καμάτου καὶ οἰζύος οὐδέ τι νύκτωρ
φθειρόμενοι· χαλεπὰς δὲ θεοὶ δώσουσι μερίμνας.²³

Des soucis auxquels il ne semble y avoir d'apaisement que dans le chant de l'aède lui-même, l'œuvre de Mémoire, l'oubli des malheurs, la trêve aux soucis, λησμοσύνην τε κακῶν ἄμπαυμά τε μερμηράων.²⁴

Les maux, ce seront d'abord, avec la femme, qui peut se révéler ἀλίσστων ἀνίην θυμῷ καὶ κραδίη, καὶ ἀνήκεστον κακόν, 'un chagrin qui ne quitte plus son âme ni son cœur, un mal sans remède,²⁵ les maladies, *nosos*, les souffrances diverses, *achos*, les durs efforts, *ponos*, tous termes dont on trouvera de multiples emplois avec *pauô*, et, au bout, la mort, dont le *Prométhée* d'Eschyle se vantera d'avoir délivré les hommes de son obsession (Θνητούς γ' ἔπαυσα μὴ προσδέρκεσθαι μόνον), en installant en eux comme 'remède du mal,' φάρμακον νόσου, les aveugles espoirs.²⁶ Et une fois qu'elle est arrivée, il y a le temps du deuil, de la lamentation (*penthos*, *goos*), du thrène, qui doivent aussi bien prendre fin.²⁷

Les maux que les hommes s'infligent à eux-mêmes, c'est encore la guerre et ses épreuves: pas seulement les combats ponctuels qui parfois semblent ne devoir jamais se terminer ou se terminer mal, comme ceux pour les corps de Patrocle et d'Achille, si la nuit ou la tempête, envoyées, dans le premier cas, par Héra, dans le second par Zeus, n'y mettaient fin;²⁸ mais aussi la guerre dans son interminable

21 Strabon 9.2.15 (montagne); Plut. *Sol.* 25.4 (mois); Hdt. 7.8; Xen. *An.* 1.3.12, 3.1.45 (discours).

22 Voir par exemple, Hdt. 7.47.1.

23 Hes. *Op.* 176ss.

24 Hes. *Theog.* 55.

25 Hes. *Theog.* 611s.

26 Aesch. *PV* 248ss.

27 Soph. *OC* 1751. En fait, dans l'épopée, *pauô* ne s'emploie jamais dans le cadre de lamentations rituelles, mais toujours de lamentations hors normes qui menacent de ne jamais trouver de fin, comme celles de Pénélope (Hom. *Od.* 4.801, 812; 17.7; 19.268). En revanche, on commence rituellement la lamentation (ἦρχε, ἐξῆρχε γόοιο: *Il.* 23.17; 24.723, 747, 761).

durée, la guerre de Troie en premier, que les hommes espèrent en vain voir cesser, comme au chant III de l'*Iliade*, avec le combat singulier de Pâris et de Ménélas,²⁹ tout comme, chez Thucydide, Nicias espérera mettre un terme aux épreuves de la guerre du Péloponnèse,³⁰ dont le roi de Sparte, Archidamos, à son début, avait averti qu'on n'en verrait pas de sitôt la fin,³¹ ou, dans la comédie d'Aristophane, comme le souhaitent Lysistrata et ses compagnes.³² Au IV^e siècle, c'est la folie des guerres et rivalités entre Grecs que l'on dénoncera en bloc, comme une véritable guerre civile, pour en exiger la fin.³³

Les maux à faire cesser, c'est, parallèlement à la guerre, dans l'autre grand type d'épopée, les *Nostoi*, leur thème central, l'errance interminable, et les souffrances qu'elle provoque chez ceux qui ne peuvent trouver le chemin du retour, Ménélas, Ulysse, comme chez ceux qui les attendent.³⁴ Philoctète, pour prendre un exemple moins connu, chez Apollodore, ayant trouvé à Crimissa d'Italie la fin de son errance, *παυθεὶς τῆς ἄλης*, y fonda un sanctuaire d'Apollon Errant, *Alaios*.³⁵

Se pose évidemment la question de la responsabilité humaine dans ces maux, de l'injustice, éventuellement de l'impiété, plus globalement de l'*hubris* de ceux qui transgressent les limites, les règles de l'ordre cosmique ou social: 'Ne cesserez-vous pas le meurtre à cruelle clameur? Ne voyez-vous pas que vous vous dévorez les uns les autres dans l'étourderie de votre esprit?' οὐ παύσεσθε φόνουιο δυσηγέος, s'exclame Empédocle, dénonçant le rituel du sacrifice sanglant.³⁶ Et

28 Hom. *Il.* 18.239-42 (combat pour le corps de Patrocle); *Od.* 24.41s. (pour le corps d'Achille): 'et la bataille n'eût pas cessé si Zeus n'y eût mis fin en déchaînant une tempête,' οὐδέ κε πάμπαν *παυσάμεθα* πτολέμου, εἰ μὴ Ζεὺς λάϊλαπι *παύσειν* (noter la répétition de *paúō*). Voir aussi le combat et la guerre entre Lydiens et Mèdes, arrêtés seulement par une éclipse de soleil, Hdt. 1.74.

29 Hom. *Il.* 3.112; cf. Bacchyl. *Dith.* 1.42 éd. J. Irigoin, CUF (1993) = 15.46 Snell-Maehler; Soph. *Aj.* 1184-91.

30 Thuc. 5.16.1: 'Dans l'immédiat, il (Nicias) désirait *mettre un terme pour lui comme pour ses concitoyens aux épreuves endurées* (*πόνων πεπαύσθαι* καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ τοὺς πολίτας *παύσαι*), et pour l'avenir, il espérait laisser à la postérité le souvenir d'un homme qui, au cours de toute sa carrière au service de l'Etat, n'avait jamais été responsable du moindre revers (trad. P. Roussel),' avec le commentaire de Boegehold 1992, qui essaie de montrer qu'on a dans cette formule le slogan des partisans de la paix athéniens.

31 Thuc. 1.81.6.

32 Ar. *Lys.* 554-56 (avec le jeu de mots sur Lysistrata-Lysimachè), 565s., 569, 571s.; voir aussi *Pax* 991-995, *Eq.* 579.

33 Cf. Isoc. *Paneg.* 19,134; *Philippus* 4,88,111; *Panath.* 14; *Ep.* 9,14.

34 Hom. *Od.* 4.33ss. (Ménélas); 15.341-45, où Ulysse dit à Eumée: 'toi qui mets fin à mes errances, à mon malheur! (ὄττι μ' ἔπαυσας ἄλης καὶ οἰζύος αἰνῆς) Rien n'est pire pour les mortels que ce vagabondage' (trad. Ph. Jaccottet); cf. 6.169-75. Souffrances de Pénélope: *Od.* 4, 801, 812, etc.

35 Apollod. *Epit.* 6.15b. Cf. aussi Plut. *De mul. virt.* 247d (oracle prédisant la fin de l'errance, *παύσασθαι πλάνης*, aux Lemniens, s'ils fondent Chersonèse de Crète).

36 Empédocle 31 B 136.1 DK (n° 414 Kirk-Raven-Schofield, *Presocratic Philosophers*).

Xénophon, dans l'*Anabase*, remettant au pas sa troupe de mercenaires, qui s'est laissée aller à diverses atrocités: 'Jugez que ce sont là des actes de bêtes fauves et non d'hommes, *cherchez le moyen d'y mettre un terme*, σκοπεῖτε παῦλάν τινα αὐτῶν; sinon, par Zeus, comment sacrifierons-nous de bon cœur aux dieux, si nous com-mettons des actes impies, et comment lutterons-nous contre nos ennemis, si nous nous égorgeons les uns les autres?'³⁷ Mais déjà le Scamandre, dans l'*Iliade*, se promet-tait d'arrêter Achille: 'Nous arrêterons ce guerrier sauvage (παύσομεν ἄγριον ἄνδρα) qui, pour l'instant, triomphe et montre la fureur d'un dieu.'³⁸ Dans le dis-cours patriotique des cités grecques, la formule, pour ne pas dire le cliché, 'mettre un terme à l'insolence de,' παύειν τινὰ τῆς ὕβρεως, et ses variantes, sera appliquée à toute superpuissance expansionniste, soupçonnée de vouloir tout engloutir, tour à tour les Perses, les Lacédémoniens, les Thébains, les Macédoniens, les Ro-mains, et déjà, dans le mythe, à Eurysthée pourchassant les Héraclides, et par im-itation, par Platon, à l'Atlantide.³⁹

Dans le langage politique, *pauô* fait une entrée en force au temps des guerres civiles archaïques. Il semble être un des maîtres-mots de Solon. Comme son cœur le lui ordonne d'enseigner aux Athéniens, les mauvaises lois (*dusnomiè*) apportent à la cité bien des maux, *kaka pleista*. *Eunomia*, au contraire, 'met des entraves à l'injustice ..., *fait cesser* la convoitise, disparaître la démesure, dessèche les fleurs de l'égarément, redresse les arrêts tortueux, adoucit les actes de l'orgueil, *fait cesser* ceux de la dissension, *fait cesser* l'amertume de la pénible discorde,' παύει κόρον, ὕβριν ἀμαυροῖ ..., παύει δ' ἔργα διχοστασίης, παύει δ' ἀργαλέης ἔριδος χόλον.⁴⁰ Le point de vue de Théognis⁴¹ est évidemment différent: lui ne voit de trêve à ses soucis, κακῶν ἄμπαυμα μεριμνέων,⁴² que dans la vengeance, en rendant à ses ennemis souffrance pour souffrance, *ania* pour *ania*, ἀντ' ἀνιῶν ἀνίας. On se félicitera par la suite d'avoir mis fin à la tyrannie, aux excès démagogiques, ou oligarchiques.⁴³ Mettre fin aux fonctions d'un magistrat, d'un commandant, n'est guère d'un emploi plus neutre, dans la vie politique des cités,

37 Xen. *An.* 5.7.32 (trad. P. Chambry).

38 Hom. *Il.* 21.314s.

39 Isoc. *Panath.* 61, 196; *Lettre à Archidamos*, 19 (Perses; cf. Hdt. 7.54); Thuc. 4.87.5, 5.26.1 (Empire athénien); Dem. *Leptin.* 70 (Empire lacédémonien); Dem. 6.30; 19.220 (Thébains); Dem. 9.1 (Philippe); Isoc. *Paneg.* 58; *Philippus* 34 (Eurysthée); Pl. *Ti.* 24E (Atlantide). Pour les Romains, Polyb. 32.2.7; Phlegon. *Mir.* 3.3 (FGrH 257 F 36) dans un contexte de prophétie (cf. déjà Plut. *Alex.* 17.4 pour une prédiction de la fin de l'Empire perse).

40 Solon, *Eunomia*, fr. 4.32-39 West (= Dem. 19.255, trad. G. Mathieu légèrement modifiée).

41 Thgn. 341-44: 'Du moins exauce, ô Zeus, roi de l'Olympe, une prière qui ne vient qu'à son heure, et accorde-moi, après tant de maux quelque bien. Plutôt mourir que de n'entrevoir nulle trêve à mes peines, et de ne faire payer mes chagrins d'aucun chagrin.'

42 Le vers renvoie à Hes. *Theog.* 55 (*supra*, n. 23).

le contexte montrant en général qu'il s'agit d'une destitution pour ce qu'on estime être une faute grave.⁴⁴

Reste la réaction aux transgressions. L'*hubris* ou la souillure, qui aboutissent à une interruption de l'ordre du monde, ont des conséquences qui semblent elles-mêmes ne devoir pas avoir de limites, sinon l'anéantissement du coupable. Se déclenche donc la colère des dieux, *mènis* — avec les autres termes plus ou moins atténués qui servent à l'exprimer, *cholos*, *orgè ek theôn*, *mènima*, *agos*⁴⁵—dans ses diverses manifestations, foudre, tempête, sécheresse, et tout ce que recouvre ce qu'on appelle *loimos*: stérilité de la terre, des troupeaux, des femmes, maladie, folie.⁴⁶ C'est à ces dérèglements qu'il faut mettre fin à leur tour, par divers rituels d'expiation.⁴⁷ *Pauò*, *paula* finissent par apparaître comme des termes quasiment techniques de la consultation et des réponses oraculaires.⁴⁸ Qu'on ne l'ait pas vraiment remarqué provient probablement de l'étiquette moderne, qui a fonctionné comme un masque, sous laquelle les historiens des religions ont rangé ce type de questions, en choisissant un presque synonyme, qui avait sans doute à leurs yeux l'avantage de mieux évoquer des procédures de purification, *lusi kakôn*.⁴⁹

Pour en revenir à *mènis*, je rappellerai simplement que la formule solennelle par laquelle Achille y renonce est: $\nu\upsilon\nu \delta' \eta\tau\omicron\iota \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu \epsilon\gamma\omega \pi\acute{\alpha}\upsilon\omega \chi\acute{o}\lambda\omicron\nu$, 'A mon courroux je mets fin aujourd'hui'.⁵⁰ Je passe sur les exemples ultérieurs d'outrages

43 Cf. Hdt. 3.81, 6.123; Lys. 33.2; Diod. Sic. 16.82.4 (tyrannie); Hdt. 3. 82; Thuc. 1.107.4 (*kata-pauein*), 8.68.4; Ar. *Pax*, 923; Plut. *Alc.* 25.4 (pouvoir du peuple ou excès démagogiques); Thuc. 8.97.1; Aeschin. *In Ctes.* 190 (*katapauein*); Arist. *Pol.* 1273b35; [*Ath. Pol.*] 36.1 (excès oligarchiques et servitude du peuple). Déjà dans l'*Odyssée* à propos des prétendants: 2.168s., 241, 244; 24.457; voir aussi 20.274 (Télémaque accusé de démagogie).

44 Cf. Thuc. 6.103.4; 8.39.2, 8.76.2; Lys. 21.7 (Alcibiade); Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.1 (stratèges des Arginuses), 6.2.13. Déjà Thgn. 675s.: 'ils ont relevé le pilote—un bon ($\kappa\upsilon\beta\epsilon\rho\nu\eta\tau\eta\nu \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu \epsilon\pi\alpha\upsilon\sigma\alpha\nu \epsilon\sigma\theta\lambda\acute{o}\nu$), et qui faisait merveille à la barre.'

45 Parker 1983:235-80. Arrêt/non-arrêt des colères divines: Hom. *Il.* 15.72; Hes. *Theog.* 533 (Zeus); Hom. *Hymn Cer.* 349ss.1; cf. 82s., 339 (Déméter); Bacchyl. 5.98, 123 (Artémis); Hdt. 7.137 (Talthybios).

46 Phénomènes de ce type ne cessant pas ou à faire cesser (avec *pauò*): Hdt. 1.94; Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.1, 2.5.11 (disette); Diog. Laert. 1.110 (*loimos*, avec un large choix d'expressions synonymes, *apallagè*, *lèxai*, *luthènai*); Pol. 36.17.3 (pour toute la série des phénomènes dans son ensemble).

47 Cf. Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 4.712-15 (Erinyes, purification de Jason et Médée); Diog. Laert. 1.110 (purification d'Athènes par Epiménide).

48 Pour s'en tenir aux seuls oracles delphiques, cf. les n° 13, 75 (Just. *Epit.* 20.2.3: *finem mali*), 106, 108, 114, 125, 152, 179, 196, 224, 235, 305, 328, 353 (Ov. *Met.* 15.63: *mala finiat*), 354, 409, 417, 468, 487, 499, 500, 530, 554, 556 de la collection de Parke et Wormell 1956. On aura noté la traduction en latin de l'expression grecque.

49 Cf. Dyer 1969:42s.; Parker 1985:304s.

50 Hom. *Il.* 19.67s. (cf. 16.60-63), avec les analyses de Watkins 1977:197ss.

privés et de colère qu'ils déclenchent, et mentionne pour mémoire tout le problème philosophique et moral du contrôle des désirs et des passions.

Un chantier particulièrement intéressant à ouvrir serait celui de la fin du discours.⁵¹ En ce domaine la réflexion sur le commencement et la fin est présente dès l'épopée, et le nombre de cas où le verbe *pauô* est présent dans les derniers vers d'un chant ou d'un épisode, en marquant ainsi métonymiquement la fin, est trop important pour ne pas être significatif. Deux exemples seulement: la fin du chant V de l'*Iliade*, la Théomachie, où Héra et Athéna rentrent dans l'Olympe, *παύσασαι βροτολοιγὸν Ἴσχυον ἀνδροκτασιάων*, 'ayant mis fin aux tueries d'Arès, fléau des mortels' (c'est le dernier vers du chant),⁵² et la fin de l'*Odyssee* elle-même, avec le cri d'Athéna, *Ἴσχυο, παῦε δὲ νεῖκος ὁμοίου πολέμοιο*, 'Arrête! mets un terme à la lutte indécise,' ordonné sans appel par la foudre de Zeus tombant devant elle.⁵³ Les orateurs attiques n'ont pas manqué à leur tour de jouer de cette possibilité. Ainsi Lysias, dans le *Contre Eratosthène*, avec son début paradoxal: 'Aborder l'accusation n'est pas ce qui me paraît embarrassant, juges: c'est plutôt de m'arrêter dans mon discours' (*οὐκ ἄρξασθαι ... ἀλλὰ παύσασθαι*), tant l'adversaire s'est rendu coupable de maux, démenti par la concision de sa célèbre fin: 'Je termine ici mon accusation, *παύσομαι κατηγορῶν*. Vous avez entendu, vu, souffert. Vous tenez le coupable: prononcez.'⁵⁴ On trouvera de même le jeu rhétorique sur la fin du discours et la fin des maux. Démosthène conclut la 4^e *Philippique* et le discours sur la Chersonnèse en brochant sur le thème: moi, j'ai fini de parler, mais, vous, si vous ne mettez pas fin à votre mauvaise politique, il n'y a aucune chance que vous trouviez le salut, la fin de vos maux.⁵⁵

On comprendra donc qu'associé à ce point à des connotations négatives, *pauô*, appliqué au contraire à un but positif—ce qui est en définitive fort rare—prenne une valeur extrêmement forte, solennelle, pratiquement d'une formule de serment: 'Oui, le but pour lequel j'ai réuni le peuple, *me suis-je arrêté avant de l'avoir atteint?*' s'écrie Solon, et son but était la *seisachtheia*, le rejet du fardeau, ou la délivrance des peines, *achthos*.⁵⁶ Et Socrate lui répond, devant ses juges: 'J'obéirai au dieu plutôt qu'à vous: jusqu'à mon dernier souffle et tant que j'en serai capable, ne vous attendez pas que je cesse de philosopher, de vous adresser des recomman-

51 Cf. Fowler 1989, Roberts, Dunn and Fowler 1997.

52 Hom. *Il.* 5.909.

53 Hom. *Od.* 24.543; voir aussi *Il.* 11.848 (sang qui cesse de couler); *Od.* 5.492s. (endormissement mettant fin aux fatigues) et Ar. *Ran.* 1531ss. où fin des maux espérée de la guerre et fin de la pièce coïncident en une citation de la manière tragique et, par delà, épique, *ἐκ μεγάλων ἀχέων πανσσίμειθ' ἄν*. Également Aesch. *Cho.* 1075s.

54 Lys. 12.1 et 100.

55 Cf. Dem. 8.76s.; 10.75s.

dations, d'être ce taon⁵⁷ qui vous réveille, 'n'arrêtant pas un instant de le faire, m'installant partout et le jour entier.'⁵⁸

Mais un verbe comme *pauô* ne se rencontre pas seulement dans ce contexte sérieux, épique et même tragique, c'est aussi un formidable instrument du comique de répétition, à commencer par la manière, redoublée, de dire 'arrête, stop': *παῦε, παῦε*.⁵⁹ On se contentera de renvoyer à deux scènes parmi les plus drôles, celle de l'enfant, dans la *Paix*, qui ne sait chanter que des chants de guerre, et la grande scène du Brè-ke-kex-koax, dans les *Grenouilles*.⁶⁰ Mais l'utilisation peut-être la plus amusante en est la parodie, ou vaut-il mieux dire l'hommage à Aristophane, qu'en a donnée Platon, dans le *Banquet*, avec la scène du hoquet.⁶¹ On se souvient que chacun des participants veut avoir le mot de la fin, et que Pausanias ayant raté sa conclusion, le médecin Eryximaque espère pouvoir le placer, quand le hoquet inopiné d'Aristophane l'oblige malencontreusement à parler avant son tour. Donc tout le discours, qui promettait d'être terminal, du médecin est ponctué par le hoquet qui ne cesse pas. Platon a annoncé la couleur, en introduisant tout le passage par un jeu de mots sur le nom de Pausanias, Πausανίου δὲ παυσαμένου, 'Pausanias ayant fini de parler,' qui se moque en même temps des sophistes et des rhéteurs,⁶² et il réussit, dans le dialogue, à donner l'équivalent du jeu de scène que l'on imagine au théâtre, en répétant neuf fois le verbe *pauô*, qui est, de plus, le tout dernier mot, rageur, du discours d'Eryximaque.⁶³ La seule autre et dernière occurrence, sans doute pas par hasard, étant, dans le grand mythe d'Eros, que va raconter immédiatement Aristophane,

56 Arist. [Ath. Pol.] 12.4 = Solon, fr. 36.2 West: ἐγὼ δὲ τῶν οὐνεκα ξυνήγαγον δῆμον, τί τούτων πρὶν τυχεῖν ἐπαυσάμην; et, inversement, à la fin du poème: 'Un autre n'aurait pas retenu le peuple et ne se serait pas arrêté avant d'avoir troublé le lait et enlevé la crème,' οὐκ ἂν κατέσχε δῆμον οὐδ' ἐπαύσατο, πρὶν ἀναταράξας πῖαρ ἐξεῖλεν γάλα (fr. 37.6s. West). Voir aussi Hdt. 7.8 (engagement solennel de Xerxès de détruire Athènes).

57 Pour le taon comme image d'un harcèlement qui ne veut pas cesser, cf. Aesch. *PV* 675-82, *Supp.* 571-78, 586s., à propos de celui persécutant Io.

58 Pl. *Ap.* 29D: οὐ μὴ παύσωμαι φιλοσοφῶν καὶ ὑμῖν παρακελεύομενος, et 31A (trad. L. Robin). En dehors de cela, d'un point de vue positif, il n'y a guère que de l'éloge qu'on ne cesse pas (cf. Hdt. 7.107; Ar. *Pax*, 1037s.; Pl. *Euthphr.* 9B; *Meno*, 91E), encore que là aussi l'excès soit nuisible (Eur. *Or.* 1161s.).

59 Ar. *Eq.* 919; *Ran.* 580; *Vesp.* 37, 1194; *Av.* 889, en fin d'une interminable énumération (864-88).

60 Ar. *Pax*, 1270-95 (cf. 1270, 1275, 1286); également l'irrépressible danse de joie (318-36) au début de la même pièce et dans *Vesp.* 1476-86 (avec un jeu sur le début des maux); *Ran.* 209-70 (avec 221, 241, 268s.).

61 Pl. *Symp.* 185C-189A. Cf. Queval 1986.

62 *Symp.* 185C5.

63 *Symp.* 188E: 'Ou bien, si tu as dans la tête de faire de ce dieu un autre type d'éloge, fais-le, puisque aussi bien ton hoquet a cessé, *pepausai*? Le discours, qui commence par *arxomai*, a joué auparavant de l'opposition de *pauô* et de *telos* (185E-186B).

la décision, après longue et difficile réflexion, de Zeus, de couper en deux l'androgyné, pour mettre fin à son insolence, παύσαιντο τῆς ἀκολασίας, donnant ainsi naissance à la race humaine.⁶⁴

Arrêtons ce survol, évidemment lacunaire—de multiples autres exemples seront certainement venus à l'esprit du lecteur—pour nous concentrer sur l'expression même 'la fin des maux,' avec soit la forme verbale *pauomai tōn kakōn*, soit le substantif *paula tōn kakōn* ou *paula kakōn*. Les occurrences sont heureusement moins nombreuses. L'expression en tant que telle n'apparaît pour nous, à ma connaissance, qu'à l'époque classique, même si on peut en discerner rétrospectivement les éléments dans l'*Odyssée*, quand Ulysse évoque devant Nausicaa les nombreux maux qui l'ont affligé et qui ne paraissent pas devoir cesser: 'Lorsque les dieux enfin m'ont jeté sur vos bords, n'est-ce pour y trouver que nouvelles souffrances? Je n'en vois plus la fin: combien de maux encore me réserve le ciel!'⁶⁵

... νῦν δ' ἐνθάδε κάμβαλε δαίμων,
ὄφρα τί που καὶ τῆδε πάθω κακόν, οὐ γὰρ οἶω
παύσεσθ'· ἀλλ' ἔτι πολλὰ θεοὶ τελέουσι πάροιθεν.

A la jonction des formulations plus spécifiques de la poésie archaïque, Pindare dit, dans la 8^e *Isthmique*, au sortir de la deuxième guerre médique, le soulagement d'avoir vu écarter la pierre de Tantale suspendue au-dessus de la tête des Grecs.⁶⁶ Le contexte est bien celui que nous avons repéré: ἐκ μεγάλων δὲ πενθέων λυθέντες, 'nous avons été délivrés de grandes souffrances,'⁶⁷ et le verbe *pauō* revient par deux fois: une première fois avec presque ce qui sera notre expression, παύσαμενοι δ' ἀπρακτῶν κακῶν, mais où *kakōn* est encore doté d'un qualificatif, *apraktōn*, 'nous en avons fini de ces maux contre lesquels nul ne peut rien,'⁶⁸ et une deuxième fois: ἀλλ' ἔμοι δεῖμα μὲν παροιχόμενον καρτερὰν ἔπαυσε μέριμναν, 'la peur, en s'évanouissant, nous a ôté un cruel souci.'⁶⁹ L'expression *paula kakōn*

64 *Symp.* 190C. Dix occurrences au total. La septième avec le dernier mot d'Eryximaque; la neuvième avec la dernière mention du hoquet, par Aristophane (189A), la dixième pour la naissance de la race humaine. Manière très athénienne, démocratique (ironiquement, bien sûr), de raconter l'histoire? La décision du Zeus d'Aristophane renvoie à la création de Pandora chez Hésiode, début du mal; mais voir également, dans les *Lois*, 3.701C, en écho à l'anthropogonie orphique, l'absence de fin des maux (μὴ λῆξαι ποτε κακῶν) pour la race humaine, due à son antique nature titannique.

65 Hom. *Od.* 6.172ss., et la suite: ... 'Ah! reine, prends pitié! c'est toi que la première, après tant de malheurs (κακὰ πολλὰ μογήσας, 175), ici j'ai rencontrée' (trad. V. Bérard).

66 Pind. *Isthm.* 8.6-13 Snell-Maehler.

67 *Isthm.* 8.6.

68 *Ibid.* 8.7.

69 *Ibid.* 12.

apparaît, quant à elle, à la fin des *Trachiniennes* de Sophocle, avec directement le jeu de mots qui est celui du fantôme de la jeune fille de Byzance disant son destin à Pausanias. Ce sont quasiment les dernières paroles d'Héraclès que l'on emmène vers le bûcher de l'Oeta: *παῦλά τοι κακῶν αὐτή, τελευτή τοῦδε τάνδρὸς ὑστάτη*, 'La voilà bien pour moi la vraie fin de mes maux: ma dernière heure de vie.' Sa toute dernière parole étant très précisément, à la réplique suivante, l'injonction à son fils: *ἀνάπαυε βοήν*, 'arrête tes cris.'⁷⁰ En fait, c'est essentiellement dans un contexte de réponse oraculaire que vont apparaître ces expressions. Implicitement chez Hérodote, mais la formule est cette fois bien présente, quand les gens d'Epidamne, frappés par un fléau pour avoir aveuglé le berger et futur devin Evénios, coupable d'avoir laissé les loups dévorer les troupeaux sacrés, demandent la cause de leurs maux présents, et qu'aussi bien Apollon à Delphes que Zeus à Dodone répondent qu'ils ne cesseront que lorsqu'ils lui auront donné une juste compensation.⁷¹ Explicitement dans la parodie d'oracle d'Aristophane dans *Lysistrata*, promettant la victoire aux Athéniennes dans leur grève du sexe pour la paix, si elles ne succombent pas à la tentation de la division, de la *stasis*, on ne peut plus d'actualité à ce moment:

Mais quand au même moment hirondelles blotties,
Devant huppés fuyant, du phallos s'abstiendront,
*Lors leurs maux cesseront; παῦλα κακῶν ἔσται.*⁷²

Déjà, à la veille de la Paix de Nicias, Aristophane promettait à Hermès *Alexikakos*, que si elle était signée et les cités *πεπαυμένα κακῶν*, les Athéniens refonderaient en son honneur toutes leurs fêtes, des Panathénées aux Adonies, et que les autres cités en feraient de même.⁷³ Pour revenir des maux collectifs aux maux individuels, Œdipe, dans *Œdipe à Colone*, quand il a appris que le lieu où il se trouve est le bois des Euménides, rappelle la prédiction de Phoibos: 'Car c'est Phoibos qui, le jour même où il me prédisait cette *foule de maux que personne n'ignore*, τὰ πόλλ' ἐκεῖν' ὅτ' ἐξέχρη κακά, m'a dit également quelle *fin à ces maux* (παῦλαν)

70 Soph. *Trach.* 1255s. (cf. 1170s.: μόχθων ... λύσιν, avec prédiction oraculaire) et 1262. Voir aussi Eur. *Cresphontes*, fr. 449 Nauck² (*Cresphonte*, fr. 6 éd. F. Jouan-H. Van Looy [2000:282s.]).

71 Hdt. 9.93.4: 'Et tant à Dodone qu'à Delphes, des prédictions leur furent faites, comme ils demandaient aux prophètes *quelle était la cause de ce malheur* (τὸ αἴτιον τοῦ παρεόντος κακοῦ); ceux-ci leur déclarèrent que c'avait été une injustice de priver de la vue le gardien des troupeaux sacrés Evénios: car c'étaient eux-mêmes qui avaient envoyé les loups et *ils ne cesseraient de le venger* tant qu'on ne lui aurait pas accordé une réparation (οὐ πρότερόν τε παύσεσθαι τιμωρόντες ἐκεῖνον πρὶν ἢ δίκας δῶσι) du mal qu'on lui avait fait, telle qu'il la choisirait lui-même et la jugerait équitable.'

72 Ar. *Lys.* 770ss.

73 Ar. *Pax* 416-22.

j'obtiendrais au bout de longs jours, quand, parvenu dans un dernier pays, j'y rencontrerais un abri et un séjour hospitalier chez les Déesses Redoutables.⁷⁴

Là non plus, on ne multipliera pas les exemples, mais un détour par Pausanias, le Périégète, permettra de faire un pas de plus. Parmi ses nombreux récits de colère divine,⁷⁵ Pausanias raconte qu'Epaminondas, voulant refonder Messène, vit en rêve lui apparaître, en habit de hiérophante, le héros fondateur des Mystères de Déméter à Andanie, qui l'autorisait à le faire: le temps du malheur pour les Messéniens avait pris fin, car la colère des Dioscures (*mènima*) contre eux était maintenant terminée (*πέπαιται*). Or au paragraphe suivant, Pausanias va expliquer comment le *mènima* des Dioscures avait pris naissance, ἤρξατο.⁷⁶ La fin des maux renvoie à leur début, *paula kakôn* à *archè kakôn*. Peu auparavant, Pausanias avait raconté comment leur malheur final, leur défaite définitive, conduisant à l'asservissement pour de longs siècles de leur pays, était venu aux Messéniens: 'Après cela, comme auparavant pour les Troyens, le début des maux des Messéniens leur vint de l'adultère.'⁷⁷ Mieux que pour la fin des maux, en effet, nous pouvons suivre le thème du début des maux à partir de l'épopée, avec les fameux navires 'début des maux,' νῆας ... ἀρχεκάκους, de Pâris ramenant Hélène à Troie.⁷⁸ L'*archè kakou* pour Patrocle fut le moment où il sortit de sa baraque, à l'appel d'Achille qui avait enfin compris l'étendue du désastre, et l'envoyait aux nouvelles.⁷⁹ Le même thème que l'on retrouve dans le chant de Démodocos dans l'*Odyssée*, avec la querelle d'Ulysse et d'Achille,⁸⁰ semble avoir aussi figuré dans l'épopée thébaine. Le nourrisson Opheltès que sa nourrice dépose dans l'herbe pour aller renseigner les sept chefs en route pour Thèbes—il va être piqué par le serpent et en son honneur seront fondés les Jeux Néméens— sera surnommé Archémoros, le Début du Destin, sur l'avis d'Amphiaraios, car sa mort, il l'avait compris, annonçait le début de leurs malheurs.⁸¹ Mais au delà de la tragédie—en particulier avec Eschyle, pour les Perses à Salamine⁸²—, la reprise la plus significa-

74 Soph. *OC* 86-90.

75 Cf. Habicht 1998:153s.

76 Paus. 4.26.6 et 27.1.

77 Paus. 4.20.5: Μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο τοῖς Μεσσηνίοις ἤρξατο, καθὸ καὶ Τρωσὶν ἔτι πρότερον, γίνεσθαι κακὰ ἀπὸ μοιχείας.

78 *Il.* 5.62s.; cf. *Il.*, 22.114ss.: 'Hélène, et les trésors qui l'ont suivie, tout ce qu'Alexandre a jadis amené sur ses *nefs creuses* à Troie—et qui a été l'origine même de notre querelle (νεῖκεος ἀρχή).'
Thème repris et prolongé par Eur. *Hel.* 425s.; *Tro.* 919-22 (Hélène renvoyant la balle à Hécube).

79 *Il.* 11. 602ss.: 'Patrocle sort de la baraque, semblable à Arès— et c'est pour lui le début du malheur (κακοῦ δ' ἄρα οἱ πέλεν ἀρχή).'

80 *Od.* 8.81.

81 Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.6.4; cf. Bacchyl. 8.10ss.; Schol. Pind. *Hyp. Nem.* c. p. 3. ed. Drachmann; Lactantius Placidus, *Comment. in Stat. Theb.* 4.717, 5.738.

tive de ce thème sera celle des historiens. Le navire de Pâris et d'Hélène laisse la place, chez Hérodote, à ces vingt navires athéniens qui partirent pour l'Ionie, en 498, et qui furent 'le début des maux pour les Grecs et les Barbares,' Αὐται δὲ αἰ νέες ἀρχὴ κακῶν ἐγένοντο Ἑλλησὶ τε καὶ βαρβάροις,⁸³ ces maux dont le tremblement de terre de Délos,—'le premier et le dernier, selon les Déliens, que l'île ait connu,'—confirmera l'annonce, en 490, au passage de la flotte perse faisant voile vers Marathon: 'Peut-être était-ce un présage par lequel le dieu avertissait les hommes des malheurs à venir; car sous Darius, fils d'Hystape, son fils Xerxès, et le fils de Xerxès, Artaxerxès, pendant ces trois générations consécutives, la Grèce connut plus de maux qu'au cours des vingt générations qui ont précédé Darius; elle dut les uns aux Perses, les autres aux luttes pour l'*archè*, l'Empire, entre ses propres leaders,'⁸⁴ les Athéniens et les Spartiates. Précisément, Thucydide placera son œuvre à l'enseigne de la même prédiction, la mettant dans la bouche du dernier envoyé spartiate aux Athéniens, au moment où le roi Archidamos s'apprêtait à envahir l'Attique. Les Athéniens, dédaignant cette ultime tentative de négociation, firent reconduire l'envoyé à la frontière, lui interdisant toute communication avec qui que ce soit. Le héraut spartiate, se séparant de son escorte athénienne, se contenta de cette phrase: 'Ce jour marquera pour les Grecs le début de grands malheurs,' Ἦδε ἡ ἡμέρα τοῖς Ἑλλησι μεγάλων κακῶν ἄρξει.⁸⁵ Le début des maux, on le voit, après avoir été la raison d'être du métier d'aède, l'est devenu de celui de l'historien.

Les illusions perdues du IV^e siècle popularisèrent, avec Isocrate, le jeu de mots sur le double sens d'*archè*, le commencement et l'Empire, et Aristote dans la *Rhétorique* témoigne du succès de la formule: 'L'Empire avait été le début des maux,' *archè archè kakôn*—en particulier l'Empire de la mer, faut-il y voir un autre écho des navires de Pâris et d'Hélène?⁸⁶ L'épigramme gravée sur le monument aux héros de Phylé qui avaient abattu en 403 la tyrannie des Trente et rétabli la démocratie jouait quant à elle, au même moment, à la fois sur le double sens du verbe *archô* et sur son opposé *katapauô*: 'Pour leur vertu l'antique peuple d'Athènes a gratifié de couronnes ces hommes qui naguère ..., *entreprirent les premiers de mettre fin à un gouvernement fondé sur d'injustes ordonnances*, οἱ ποτε τοὺς ἀδικοῖς / θεσμοῖς ἄρξαντας πόλιος πρῶτοι καταπαύειν ἤρξαν.⁸⁷

82 Aesch. *Pers.* 354s.: Ἦρξεν μὲν, ὧ δέσποινα, τοῦ παντὸς κακοῦ φανείς ἀλάστωρ ἢ κακὸς δαίμων ποθὲν, 'Ce qui commença, maîtresse, toute notre infortune, ce fut un génie vengeur, un dieu méchant, surgi je ne sais d'où.' Cf., antérieurement, Thgn. 1133s.: Ἐκρυσ, ἐτοῦφονς dans le germe les maux (κακοῦ καταπαύσομεν ἀρχήν) des amis auprès desquels nous sommes; cherchons, dès qu'il se forme, un remède à l'ulcère.'

83 Hdt. 5.97.

84 Hdt. 6.98 (trad. A. Barguet, légèrement modifiée). Cf. Nagy 1990:306s.

85 Thuc. 2.12.3. Echos dans Ar. *Ach.* 821; *Pax*, 605-614 et, par antiphrase, 436.

Jetons un bref regard sur le devenir de la formule *archè kakôn* chez les historiens ultérieurs: dans les résumés de l'histoire grecque de Pausanias le Périégète, l'*archè kakôn* pour les Grecs sera la défaite de Chéronée, puis celle de Persée à Pydna et la fin de l'*archè* des Macédoniens, qui conduira ultimement à la désastreuse insurrection achéenne de 146 et à la fin définitive de l'indépendance de la Grèce.⁸⁸ La dimension tragique de la formule est donnée par la seule autre occurrence chez Pausanias. Le début des maux pour Œdipe fut le croisement de la route de Daulis où il rencontra Laios.⁸⁹ Deux siècles après le Périégète, l'historien chrétien Rufin d'Aquilée qualifiera d'*initium mali Romano imperio* la déroute d'Andrinople en 378, 'Iliade de désastre' pour le rhéteur contemporain Thémistius, qui vit anéantir par la cavalerie des Goths l'armée romaine et l'empereur disparaître dans les flammes.⁹⁰

La transposition du thème à l'histoire juive par Flavius Josèphe, qui a bien appris sa leçon des rhéteurs et des historiens grecs, confirme les analyses précédentes. L'*archè kakou* de Patrocle est devenue celle de Samson rencontrant Dalilah,⁹¹ l'*archè kakôn* des Hébreux correspond immanquablement à leur abandon de la Loi, la première fois quand Jéroboam, responsable de la division du Royaume de Salomon, qui mènera, avec le temps, à la défaite et à la Captivité de Babylone, ose élever, pour faire pièce au Temple de Jérusalem, deux sanctuaires, à Bethel et à Dan.⁹² Et l'on retrouvera la fin des maux lorsque le gouverneur Festus arrête les agissements d'un faux Messie qui appelait les Juifs à le rejoindre au Désert, 'leur annonçant le salut et la fin des maux,' σωτηρίαν αὐτοῖς ἐπαγγελλομένου καὶ παῦλαν κακῶν.⁹³ On comprendra donc, pour revenir chronologiquement en ar-

86 Isoc. *Paneg.* 119: ἅμα γὰρ ἡμεῖς τε τῆς ἀρχῆς ἀπεστερούμεθα καὶ τοῖς Ἕλλησιν ἀρχὴ τῶν κακῶν ἐγίγνετο; G. Mathieu et E. Brémond dans leur édition de la Collection des Universités de France (1938) traduisent: 'C'est au moment même où l'empire nous fut enlevé, que la situation de la Grèce commença à empirer!'; également Isoc. *Philippus* 61; *Pax* 64, 74, 101, 105s.; Arist. *Rh.* 1412b: 'Il en est de même des bons mots, comme celui qui consiste à dire que pour les Athéniens l'empire de la mer n'était pas le commencement de leurs maux (τὴν τῆς θαλάττης ἀρχὴν μὴ ἀρχὴν εἶναι τῶν κακῶν), car il leur fut utile; ou, comme Isocrate, que l'empire fut pour la cité le commencement des malheurs (ἢ ὥσπερ Ἰσοκράτης τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆ πόλει ἀρχὴν εἶναι τῶν κακῶν).

87 Aeschin. *In Ctes.* 190.

88 Paus. 1.25.3 (Chéronée, avec une reprise ici aussi du jeu de mots sur la fin de l'*archè* maritime); 7.5 (Pydna); 7.10.1 et 12.8 (Achéens).

89 Paus. 10.5.4: Οἰδίποδι μὲν ὁδὸς ἡ Σχιστὴ καὶ τόλμημα τὸ ἐπ' αὐτῇ κακῶν ἦρχε.

90 Ruf. *Hist. eccl.* 2.13 ed. Mommsen, in Schwartz-Mommsen 1908:1019s.; Them. *Or.*, 16, 206d-207a. Cf. Lenski 1997:143, 159; Ellinger 1999:35s.

91 Joseph. *AJ* 5.306.

92 Joseph. *AJ* 8. 229; cf. 12.384; 15.281; 18.340.

93 Joseph. *AJ* 20.188.

rière, toute la force symbolique, dans son expression même, de la fameuse prédiction de la *République* de Platon, reprise dans la *Lettre VII*:

‘A moins ... que les philosophes ne deviennent rois dans les cités, ou que ceux qu’on appelle à présent rois et souverains ne deviennent de vrais et sérieux philosophes, et qu’on ne voie réunis sur la même tête la puissance politique et la philosophie, ... il n’y aura pas ... de fin aux maux qui désolent les cités, ni même, je crois, à ceux du genre humain, οὐκ ἔστι κακῶν παῦλα ταῖς πόλεσι, δοκῶ δ’ οὐδὲ τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ γένει.⁹⁴

La déclaration de Platon se situe à la rencontre d’une triple lignée. Tout d’abord, celle de la tradition oraculaire dont *paula kakôn*, on l’a vu, est une des formules caractéristiques. Deuxièmement, il reprend, bien sûr, en le détournant, le jeu de mots familier à ses contemporains sur l’*archè* et l’*archè kakôn*, tout en évitant, sans doute délibérément, le clinquant rhétorique, en opérant en quelque sorte la diffraction entre les différentes variantes de sa formulation.⁹⁵ Et, troisièmement, bien au delà de ses interlocuteurs contemporains, en substituant la *kakôn paula* à l’*archè kakôn*, il s’inscrit, pour s’y opposer et l’affronter directement, dans cette lignée qui conduisait d’Homère à Hérodote et Thucydide. La *kakôn paula* du dieu de Delphes mise au service des philosophes-gouvernants est aussi, pour Platon, face aux poètes et aux historiens, revendication de l’*archè* dans le champ intellectuel pour la philosophie.⁹⁶

Polybe fera explicitement référence à Platon lorsqu’il proclamera, à son tour, que les choses n’iront bien (ἔξει ... καλῶς) pour la science historique que lorsque les historiens seront des politiques ou formés à la politique, ou bien lorsque les

94 Pl. *Resp.* 5.473C-D (trad. E. Chambry modifiée); cf. 6.487E; 499B; 501E; *Ep.* 7.326A-B. Voir également *Ep.* 7.336D-337A et 8. 356C au sujet de la *stasis*.

95 Cf. *Resp.* 5.473C-D: κακῶν παῦλα et δύναμις πολιτική; 474B; 487E: οὐ πρότερον κακῶν παύσονται αἱ πόλεις, πρὶν ἂν ἐν αὐταῖς οἱ φιλόσοφοι ἄρξωσιν; *Ep.* 7.326A-B: κακῶν οὐ λήξουσιν ... ἀρχὰς τὰς πολιτικάς.

96 C’est assurément ce que semble avoir compris la tradition de l’oracle de Delphes sur la duplication de l’autel d’Apollon Délien. Les habitants de Délos, devant la gravité du *loimos* qui frappait la Grèce entière du IV^e siècle, non pas une simple épidémie comme celle d’Athènes sous Périclès, mais bien la Peste des guerres pour l’hégémonie entre cités, couplée à celle des guerres civiles à l’intérieur de chacune d’elles, demandèrent au dieu né dans leur île comment les Grecs pourraient trouver la fin des maux présents, *paula tòn parontôn kakôn*. Le Pythien leur répondit de doubler l’autel de Délos. Les Déliens ayant évidemment échoué à résoudre le problème de la duplication du cube sur lequel s’acharnaient en vain les mathématiciens de l’époque (ils avaient doublé chaque dimension et obtenu un autel huit fois plus grand!), s’adressèrent à Platon. Celui-ci leur expliqua que le dieu n’avait pas voulu qu’ils doublent concrètement l’autel, mais proposait aux Grecs, pour sortir de leurs maux politiques, de s’attacher à la géométrie, comme préparation évidemment à la philosophie; cf. Plut. *De E* 386e; *De Gen.* 579a; *Vita Platonis Anonyma* (Parke-Wormell 1956:76 n° 179).

politiques s'occuperont d'histoire, non plus comme un passe-temps, mais en y appliquant toute leur attention; 'en attendant, il n'y aura pas de fin aux erreurs, dues à leur ignorance, des historiens,' πρότερον δ' οὐκ ἔσται παῦλα τῶν ἱστοριογράφων ἀγνοίας. Mais ce faisant, Polybe n'essaie pas véritablement de reprendre la main pour les historiens; il consacre plutôt la suprématie de la discipline philosophique.⁹⁷

Que ni les philosophes, ni les historiens, n'aient apporté la fin des maux est, si l'on peut dire, une autre histoire. Simplement nous aurons mieux appris à connaître les dangers que recèlent les divers programmes de la fin des maux. Comme le disait le proverbe grec, *pausis tou kakou meizon kakon*.⁹⁸ La fin des maux, le pire des maux.

97 Polyb. 12.28.1-5: 'Platon dit que les sociétés humaines n'iront bien (καλῶς ἔξειν) que lorsque les philosophes seront rois ou les rois, philosophes.' Polybe emploie une expression synonyme, tout en ignorant le jeu de mots sur *archè*, mais il conserve *paula* pour les maux de la science historique; cf. Walbank 1967:410 *ad loc.*

98 *Souda*, s.v. Φυγαδεΐα: ... οὕτως ἀληθές ἐστι τὸ περιφερόμενον, ὅτι παύσις τοῦ κακοῦ μείζον κακόν, et s.v. Παῦλα: ἀνάπαυσις: κατὰ τὸ δὴ λεγόμενον, παύσις κακοῦ μείζον κακόν: διόπερ ἐν κακῶν αἰρέσει τοῦλάχιστον δεῖ ἐλέσθαι.

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Myth embedded in culture.
The murals of Thorvaldsen's Museum, Copenhagen

John Henderson

I. The Museum

THE DANISH architect Gottlieb Bindesbøll visited Athens in 1835/6, and fed what he saw, and saw missing, at the Parthenon into the designs he was preparing for a museum to house the sculpture in Thorvaldsen's collection, together with the great neo-classical sculptor's working library, and his collections of painting, sculpture, and other antiquities. This essay is a response to the bijou museum Bindesbøll dreamed up in Copenhagen, and specifically to the myth with which the outside of the *Museum* is clad.

The building is modest in size, on a spectacular site beside the royal canal around the Christiansborg Palace island, but snug with the Palace Church behind, to the East, and dwarfed by the massive 1920s version of the Palace across the narrow courtyard adjacent to the south side. The *Museum* fronts onto its triangle of open ground, with the canal vista beyond. The façade displays five white-framed 'pylons,' as I shall call them, each enclosing a window-light above large double-doors, loudly set off against the surrounding stucco of orange cement.¹ Above, brazen Victory rides a bronze four-horsed chariot in triumph, and two relief details, originally painted, present similarly triumphal motifs on the 'capitals' on the flanking quasi-columns, like a pair of quotation marks. Behind the 'pylons,' an entrance hall frontally parades the grandest sculptures in the repertoire. These chefs d'œuvre make for a powerful entrée, and the impact will redouble when they recur within the museum in all their (repeated) glories, as clay models, preliminary sketches and early attempts, as plaster casts and marble versions. If the central doors at the back of the hall are opened, a startling inner courtyard is suddenly re-

1 This is the paper delivered at the International Symposium on Myth & Symbol in Athens (2000). An extended, and fully documented, version awaits publication. Many many thanks to Synnøve des Bouvrie for the invitation, and for marvellous hospitality—with the Parthenon at the window. See essays in Melander and Walther 1998 on every aspect of the *Museum* and its contents.

vealed, with bold palm trees and exotic vegetation symmetrically ordered. At centre, a simple white marble rectangle encloses lilies, marking Thorvaldsen's burial chamber below. For all the hinted 'Parthenon' associations, this museum is also a mausoleum, a final resting-place.

Inside, the ground floor surrounds the courtyard with corridors lined with models and versions of Thorvaldsen's sculpture. Both long sides are edged with a suite of diminutive adjoining rooms, each sporting a tableau disposed around a single feature piece. Brash mosaic floors beckon visitors into the row of receding doorways. We are softened up for the grand finale of the comparatively large central room that suddenly opens out to centre at the far end of the museum. Here two rows of ferocious giant *Apostles* flank the centrepiece of Thorvaldsen's world-famous and endlessly replicated figure of *Christ*, looking down on us with arms spread low in welcome. On the first floor, more corridors parade the sculptor's works, increasingly familiar now and showing new angles and subtleties with every fresh incarnation, while rooms off hold the collected paintings on one side, and the antiquities on the other. Display cabinets and lay-out for both was Bindesbøll's doing, and (we are assured) virtually nothing has been altered since his original installation between 1838 and 1848.

But we shall stay outside. The triumph theme continues along the length of the three other exterior walls of the building. The other blunt end has three narrow 'pylons,' whose frames divide up a frieze into seven instalments alternating wide/narrow. The two long sides have their friezes, too, but with broad pylons alternating with little more than 'slits' of linkage. On the north side facing the canal, all eleven pylons plus slits connect together into a single scene, and this culminates in, or is headed by, an extended final episode that coats the side wall of the (built-on) entrance hall. No more windows above, only relief details on the cornerpiece pilasters, this time showing a sun and a moon chariot apiece, more hints of the Parthenon tradition.

Facing the courtyard, the side-entrance occupies the pylon next to its grand extended entrance wall. *Pope Pius VII* sits enthroned in the central pylon, an irresistible force of blessing, and an immovable object of massive frontality. By contrast, we will find the other long side a fluid and sinuous chain of images; and the east end, at the back, is just big enough for a ship to moor alongside, and for unloading to commence.

The friezes occupy the same strip around the building, with the same strongly anti-naturalistic black background, and using the same four chief colours of cement mortar. Burnt sienna, violet, ochre, and brown (*umbra* and *siena*), with white for statues, and thrown-in touches of green. In formal terms, this exterior frieze is neither sculpture in relief nor a tease of intercolumnar masking, so resemblance to the Parthenon before it was stripped can only be broadly generic. There

is something, however, of 'the Greek vase' in the overall effect, reminiscent of a wrap-round panel in the red-figure style.

With the classic repertoire of triumphal sculpture from ancient *Rome* in mind, unmissable allusions and revisions multiply. They are meant to, for that is the axiom of neo-classicism, even in its obsolescence. For comparison in general terms, the *Arch of Titus* provides four-horsed chariot and winged Victory, obviously; but add the waving forest of shafts that crowd the upper plane alongside the statue-like pose of the blessed emperor with his frozen wave of beatification; and the by-play between the foreground figure as he points out to his neighbour what scene they behold, and that they are themselves caught within a scene. On the facing wall of the archway, feel the contrasting seethe and bustle of the procession bearing the spoils of war off to dedication and safekeeping; this crowd of Romans wave their placards, and carry on high their strange haul of captured valuables—holy trumpets and sacrificial table, and the supreme artwork, the candlestick from the Temple at Jerusalem. Keen eyes can pick out that the troop heads under an arch surmounted by a triumphal chariot, reminding us that these panels are themselves mounted on a triumphal arch, and one which in fact served as its hero's mausoleum. For this arch commemorates Titus' triumph *and* his apotheosis—in the *Arch's* vault, we can spot him jetting up to heaven on Jupiter's eagle.²

For matters of detail, *Trajan's Arch at Benevento* provides the best comparison, in scenes such as the welcoming line-up to greet the '*adventus*' (*entrée-cum-epiphany*) of victorious Trajan home from adventures in the east. The gods of Rome line up to congratulate him on success, and to congratulate themselves on having someone worth admiration These awe-struck scenes of human warmth invested in the Returning Superhuman call for especially subtle realisation in intimately appropriate but appropriately intimate body language. The great man needs to be shown fond affection, but way short of familiarity, even by the gods. Ceremonial queueing, formal protocols of posture and gesture, and the pinning of prestige onto the charismatic focus of the communal gaze are the name of this game. See how Athena pats young Hadrian on the shoulder as he stands deferentially close to his now-divine father, the fitting recipient of Jupiter's thunderbolt.

Thorvaldsen himself had witnessed for real, with his own youthful eyes, just such a stupefying procession of imperial spoliation and staggering art treasures as loot, and even an uncannily surreal replay of it, in a re-wind reversal. When he collected his travel scholarship from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts to study in Rome, he was 25 and it was 1795. Sailing via Malta and Naples, he arrived in spring 1797, just when Napoleon's army was collecting the huge list of world-famous

2 The *Arch*: Henderson 2003. The imagery of ascension from Rome: Beard and Henderson 1998.

works required by the *Treaty of Tolentino*, packing them into 500 wagonloads ready for a spectacular extravaganza on arrival in Paris en route to their destined home in the newly swollen museum, the Louvre. Teams of oxen would pull heavy metal and stone teams of triumphal horses to and fro across the map of Europe for a generation.

So Thorvaldsen landed in the midst of riots, invasion and counter-invasion, sham revolution and sheer panic. The art market collapsed along with the rest of Roman culture, as the geriatric Pope was shocked into his grave, and aristos in panic off-loaded their baubles and collections for a song. In the legend, the connoisseur, artist and traveller through Greece and the Greek east, Thomas Hope forks out an advance—25 years' advance, as it turned out—on a marble realisation of Thorvaldsen's statue of a young man bringing home the bacon: his *Jason with the Golden Fleece*. Hope arrives in the proverbial nick of time to stop the budding genius 'boarding the plane' back to failure and oblivion.

By the time of the Emperor Napoleon's anticipated visit to Rome in 1812, Thorvaldsen had become Canova's rival and obvious successor. His original backer, Crown Prince Frederik, had been de facto head of state from the 1780s and, as Frederik VI, succeeded his schizophrenic father Christian VII in 1808. He was challenged strongly for the sculptor's output by Ludwig the Crown Prince of Bavaria, at the head of a long line of miscellaneous patrons and fans clean across Europe. The 35-metre long *Alexander Frieze* commissioned by the French commandant was swiftly installed around the four walls of a dedicated chamber of the Quirinal Palace, ready for the big day of the Emperor's Triumphal Entry to Rome, but it never came. Instead, in 1815 Canova was off to Paris to mastermind the job of reclaiming the gallery of masterworks from the Louvre. The restitution deserved celebrations fit to match those of Napoleon's hybris. This was a boom time for everybody with a stake in the crating and haulage business.

By now, Thorvaldsen was running a network of ateliers with 30-40 masons and craftsmen. Fêted as a 'Phidias-spirit,' he was treated as a superstar on returning to Denmark in 1819. There to take a share in C.F. Hansen's re-building of central Copenhagen after fires, and bombardment by the British longships under Nelson. There would be busts of the royal family, a copy of the *Alexander Frieze*, and rows of statuary for Christiansborg Slot; the miraculous free-standing *Christ* centre-piece, ordered for the Palace Church but re-negotiated for the *Church of Our Lady* just building across the canal, along with the bodyguard of outsize *Apostles*, a *Baptismal Angel* to kneel in front of Christ and the main altar, and a pediment full of symbolic uplift thrown in; 26 pieces in all. A triumph for probably the best sculptor in the world.

Cultured Europeans of the day knew perfectly well that the history of art began, if it did not quite end, with the original model for the mass seizure of classic art, the triumphal conquest of the Ancient Greek world by Rome.³ As the perils and blockades of the Napoleonic Wars had helped to push travellers and collectors eastwards into Greece, on the trail of pioneers like Thomas Hope, one spin-off was the re-discovery of authentic works of Hellenic art—the Parthenon and Aegina losing their sculpture in more crates packed off in more gun-boats to fetch up in London and Bavaria,⁴ in more cargoes of triumphalist loot. Artists, connoisseurs and critics bought and talked their way round to idealization of the newly impacting Hellenic sculpture, imagining the emergence of artistic perfection and consummate artists back in Classical Athens. How best should a Thorvaldsen set about re-animating Phidias and his fellow-paragons? Was it enough to turn out stunning stone, staking everything on actually pulling off the restoration and emulation of battered ancient relics and icons of Antiquity? Or was image, with spin, needed for the *artist*? To invent neo-classicism, did it prove necessary to play up artistic Genius, living out the Romantic role *avant la lettre*? How far would Renaissance myths of Michelangelo and Bernini need to be modified, displaced, jettisoned?

In Thorvaldsen's success story, the myth of the artist hybridized a whole stock of lines: the child from the gutter, risen to conquer the world; the hick from little nowhere, whose natural abilities trounced the doyens of cosmopolis in their own backyard; the blocked melancholy of restless creativity, above mere mundane time and tide. Thus, they say, he hardly ever spoke much, and when he did it was in broken bits of a half dozen languages By 1829, re-doubled negotiations with the Palace were proceeding apace to capture 'Thorvaldsen' for the nation, and it was crucial to settle what this blessing would amount to, what it would tell Denmark. The terms good as determined themselves, with strong precedents set, as ever, by Canova, who had created a fantastic tomb and '*Gesamtkunstwerk*' at his birthplace, 'the first permanent shrine to celebrate the life and work of a single artist,' though the museum for casts of his works would not be unveiled until 1836.⁵

A permanent home for Thorvaldsen's collections would trade for a pension for daughter Elisa. But the key question proved to be what was to become of his own hoard of sketches, clay prototypes, plaster models, marble versions and out-takes, and even a precious cache of fully-realised marbles which he had not relinquished. This was Thorvaldsen's sticking-point, the concrete tokens and currency of his fame as the most wanted sculptor in the art capital of the western world. On a visit

3 Beard and Henderson 2001:89-105.

4 Thorvaldsen's restored Aegina marbles (1816) were the pride of the display he designed for the new Munich *Glyptothek* (1830).

5 Quote from Hall 1999:50f.

to Munich, to help lay out and open the *Glyptotek* in 1830, Ludwig I went for broke on the whole package; and others—the city of Stuttgart, for instance—were in with a shout, as well. Or, at any rate, this was good leverage in the Copenhagen bargaining. Through the 1830s, a deal was struck. Thorvaldsen would leave his works and collections to the City of Copenhagen, to be housed in *Thorvaldsens Museum*. Was ever a triumphal return so excogitated?

By 17 September 1838 the arrangements for the ‘*aduentus*’ of the World’s Greatest Living Artist had been finalized, and the ceremonies for welcoming the Local Boy made Good, and Coming Home for Good, fully choreographed. Rowed ashore from the frigate *Rota*, Thorvaldsen was received canal-side by a flotilla of rowing-boats full of luminaries, well-wishers, friends, colleagues, and pupils, while a committee awaited him ashore, led by the team who had made it all possible, and heading the people of Copenhagen in full force. Jubilant thousands treated the sculptor, as he said himself, like some visiting Pope.

The triumphant entry extended into a round of festivities and honours. After undignified twists and wrangles behind the scenes, the king came up with an ideal site in January 1839, just months before his death. This grand offer was snapped up instantly, in the shape of the old coach-house on the canal bank beside Christiansborg.

Bindesbøll, who had been toying with grandiosities in the manner of Schinkel in Berlin and von Klenze in Munich, landed the commission, and the tottery old Genius was taken off and taken over into safekeeping by his new adoring admirer and minder, Baroness Christine Stampe. She doted on him and gathered round the rest of Denmark’s stars, including Hans Christian Andersen.

Stampe even shepherded Thorvaldsen safely through Europe, in a continuous triumphal procession with festivities and ovations in nearly every city on the way, back to Italy. There to get on with sorting out the atelier factory-complex, wind up the business, and pack up his winnings. He would be ready for the call in 1842 that said his museum roof was now on. Working on into spring 1844 the maestro collapsed and died in his seat at the Royal Theatre. The funeral in the *Church of Our Lady* was not quite the last time that the people turned out en masse to acclaim Thorvaldsen through the streets of his and their capital city, in triumph.

At this point the *Thorvaldsen Museum* was not yet what we see today. There was no tomb or grave-marker in the courtyard inside, though Thorvaldsen had blessed the plan; no frieze on the walls outside; and no Victory chariot on top. All this belonged to a posthumous supplement to the earlier conception, instigated under Bindesbøll’s direction by one of the artists on the large and extraordinarily young home team which had dreamed up the décor in the rooms within, Jørgen Sonne.⁶ Their design for the courtyard side mural, showing the convoy of Thorvaldsen’s

greatest sculptural hits, took a year to get onto its wall, from 1846-7. The canal side's line-up of cheering Danes laying on their hero's welcome was designed by Sonne and laid by the team from 1847, to reach completion, just, for September 1848.

By then, we should remind ourselves, history was erupting, as the 1848 wave of popular unrest, rioting, assassination, and revolution swept through all Europe. Chartists in England; revolt against Austria by Czechs and Hungarians. The demise of the Orleans monarchy in France, overthrown by the Second Republic; matched by Risorgimento in Italy, with Mazzini's *Roman Republic* declared, and then gallantly defended from Président Louis Napoleon's armies by the Garibaldi. In Munich, Ludwig I forced to abdicate; barricades and concessions in Berlin. For a few heady weeks of political spring fever, a glimpsed world without absolutism, even a liberalized society completely shorn of autocracy. In Denmark, the main repercussions were twofold.

On one side, King Christian VIII expired, just in time to present the *Museum* roof with the *Victory* bronze, by Thorvaldsen's chief pupil H.W. Bissen. He also expired just in time to leave the renunciation of rule by divine right to Frederik VII, in the year of unrest. This after alarming mobbing of the Palace, and, in the rapprochement, formal inauguration of the new Assembly in Christiansborg Slot, October 23 1848.

On the other side, revolt in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein led to ghastly civil war, touched off by dispute over the succession, and fomented by scheming major powers. The new Prussian-led German Confederation worked towards eventual occupation, and the other superpowers wriggled and squirmed their way to one more wishy-washy compromise.

Thorvaldsen's devotees managed to get the coffin re-located into their burial chamber just one week before the *Museum* was officially delivered to the City of Copenhagen, on the 10th anniversary of the Genius' epoch-making return from Italy.

Parliamentary government was taking over the reins of power, and marking the enervation of the power of the crown in the new dispensation by taking over occupation of Christiansborg Palace for its assembly hall and offices. And Sonne was off to the front, there to sketch and paint many a scene of waste and carnage, a theme running through his work for many a year to come. By the time he returned to the *Museum*, to round off the frieze by working with his team on the ship berthed at the east end in 1850, this was a state of Denmark undreamt of by any of Thorvaldsen's generation.

6 See Damsgaard, Helsted, Henschen, and Jørnæs 1988:*passim*, and esp. the timeline, 10.

On the day after the presentation of the *Museum* to the City, it was officially declared open to the public, and populist ambitions on the part of Bindesbøll, Sonne, and friends could begin their mission to improve the cultural horizons of the nation through astounding sculpture.

Bissen had conjured up the *Victory* chariot on the basis of some Thorvaldsen types. He and other epigoni would devote much of the rest of their output to delivering 'Thorvaldsen' bronze casts and fully realised marbles to eager customers, while they took upon themselves the challenge and responsibility of producing full versions of many an original plaster model in the *Museum* collection.

Their legacy is to be found all over Copenhagen, and they played a far from insignificant role in turning the modern city into a mecca for sculpture lovers. Milking their status as satellites touched with the master's genius for all it was worth, they made sure his legacy primed and propagated a cityscape civilised by spectacular art.

While Hansen's Palace Church and *Church of Our Lady* survive, Christiansborg Slot burned down once more, and was replaced in the early C20th, though Bissen's colossal equestrian statues of Frederik VII still patrol the Palace front and back. The *Museum*, too, for all Bindesbøll's commitment to exact preservation of the original conception and his dedicated implementation of it, became the plaything of his acolytes and successors, in a world that was maybe not his style at all.

For, like any mausoleum or whatever funerary monument, the finished article belonged to the representational and ideological régimes of a new cultural moment: thus the *Arch of Titus* is of course a projection from, and of, *Domitian*, and dates from getting on for a decade after Titus' triumph; it is a bold conversion of the arch commemorating imperial victory into an innovative transumption of triumph into a metaphoric of imperial apotheosis.

The governing body of *Thorvaldsens Museum* went on rounding out their treasures, inevitably further adulterating the collection, and progressively diluting the aim of a museum sealed at inauguration. So the *Museum* has evolved in just the way an artist's œuvre does, acquiring a history of its own, and modelling a history of art, a history of culture. This attention-grabbing orange 'fire-station' has itself become, more than a clamorous instance of high culture, a *myth* of high culture. Here is a publicity-seeking semiotic operator of a liberal bourgeois *habitus* which trades icons of enlightenment for imperialist fantasies; an ideological proposition for Danish identities to negotiate, and re-negotiate; and a playground for academic tourists.

How far Sonne's murals court or risk iconoclasm in splashing bright Hellenizing-cum-Pompeian colours along their walls is, I think, the right question to push, and it is surely impossible to rule out parody: surely the brashly coloured concrete

used for the living figures pictured on the frieze is being positively valorized *above* the pale art works which the toiling workers must manhandle off into the decent obscurity of their museum. Impossible to banish the thought that just such scenes must have repeated themselves on every occasion in history when hauls of artworks have ever been amassed, and shipped off. Impossible to banish the thought, exactly, that here at last ‘the true story’ of art is out in the open—a story of bodily expropriation and re-naturalization. Not something that will easily strike home in the civilized context of a museum display interior.

Greek workers must have beamed out vivid vigour as they invented politics without kings, but within a pioneering culture of proto-capitalism. For Danes, to picture art within the cultural context of Phidias’ Athens must be to play down the tyrannous expansionism, and warm instead to the hustle and bustle of another sea-faring mercantile city-state. Once the *people* of democratic Athens come into view in their own right, however, the chunks of blank stone fetishized from Renaissance to Neoclassicism must risk standing out as dead and dull as any ancien régime dodo. A gap for dialectic opens up between all that unreserved enthusiasm for the Genius of Sculpture shown stepping from the skiff, and the less-than-reverence that his masterpieces are receiving from their hauliers, on the opposite long sides of Sonne’s frieze.

Here, that is to say, there is splashed across these walls a myth, a myth about art, the artist, art history, art theory, art in society, and the culture of art, a cultural myth about myth and myths; together with the postulate that these are irredeemably fused, and the speculation that this is always the case with myth, unless and until we repress its embedding within culture.⁷

With the remaining piece of background information supplied, viz. that *nothing*, not a patch, of any of the three murals you can see pre-dates the 1950s, when a team led by Axel Salto produced this totally faithful re-creation, we are now ready to inspect the *Thorvaldsen Museum* frieze, for its take on myth and symbolism embedded in culture.

II. The murals

Take first the water-borne aduentus on the north side of the Museum (Fig. 1, panels 21 -->1). Here is a strong concatenation of panels that coheres into a rhythmically amplifying crescendo, as we pass along from left to right. How should we try to read it?

7 The burden will be that ‘myth’ names a fantasy passepartout which promises to take us beyond the complexities of the instance, and yet ‘myth’ also denies the necessary unboundedness of any *collection*, as it is constituted by the very work of definition which opens it to on-going discourse: see Stewart 1993:esp. 132-50, 151-66.

We build to the climactic final panel (1) where the object of all the salutations from the swelling throng of well-wishers and fans is ultimately disclosed, beyond the military-style brass from the boys in the band (panels 8-7) amid all the waves of cheering. Literally distinguished (from the rest), the Grand Old Man is safely cordoned off by his 'guard of honour,' the oarsmen with blades aloft and bodies sat at the feet of the charismatic star of the communal stare. At the head of the procession, with all the energy of its bulk fully behind him, the '*triumphator*' confronts the representatives of 'his' city.

Watch the sea-captain gently deliver the Man of the Moment from ship to shore, with all the tact that his supportive arm can bring to bear. See Thorvaldsen steadied and embraced in 'filial' submission by his right-hand man, the aptly-named H.E. Freund. This focal scene concentrates into the micro-level detail of bodily proxemics the sum of the affect which has been loudly externalized, energized, and epicized at the social macro-level by the whole mural.

So here is Denmark in dinghies: all top hats, and buns, and national flags. How Copenhagen would like to see itself and be seen seeing itself, Sonne guessed, come whatever revolution, across whatever ripples might in some future perturb Danish-sized politics.

The men are to the fore (panel 1), but conjugality comes close behind (panel 2). Further back (panel 10) comes a boatful of writers and poets, topped by the unmistakably odd beanpole Hans Christian Andersen clinging to the mast. In the central pylon (panel 12), another group of heavyweight Men of Learning load their vessel low in the water with the gravity of their over-developed brains, striking a pose for Danish seafaring at bow. To their stern, the flotilla shrinks in significance, winding down to more sedate groups from panels (14 to 17), before panel 18 lowers the tone altogether. A complement of sea-dogs wave cap and bottle of grog in place of top hat—jacket half on, half off, and propped up against one another because the worse for a drop or two. This *is* a triumph, after all, and Bacchic festivities are an essential ingredient, no question about it.

Did we notice the brilliant detail back in (1) where the frieze's frame was uniquely broken at the bottom by the business end of the boatswain's boathook, in order to concentrate attention on the all-important moment of crisis? When the personal safety and the collective dignity of Thorvaldsen and the City were in the balance, as the rite de passage sticks, forever half in/half out, caught taking that liminal step back from abroad and onto home territory. A critical moment, but no need for alarm: *this* Conquering Hero takes possession of his land to universal acclaim, and on 'his' people's terms. Copenhagen confers on Thorvaldsen the coach-house adjacent to the scene. This '*triumphator*' returns to his Rome headed for the knacker's yard. This canal-side is the spot he has come home to die in.

Dickensian' touches of social hierarchy enliven the whole frieze. As when panel 2 perches a barefooted urchin on a nautical pole higher than anyone in town or in port; or when the distinctly rough-looking brass section (panels 7-8) seems to collect the plaudits of the great and good for itself. The final suite of panels (20-22) has more to it than the politics of local(ized) wit. The isolated dinghy offers us a saga to weigh up against the glorious finale at the other end: panel 21 shows an oar being put to improvised use in rescuing an underling who has sunk way down beneath the 'picture-frame,' in the canal. Boy overboard!⁸

Copenhagen society is comfortably included between the poignant extremes of the celebrity and the non-entity; the child and the dotard genius. That boy could be the start of the next tale of the next Thorvaldsen who quits the quays of Copenhagen to seek his fortune. All Denmark knows it—the country depends on luring the successful ex-pats back home, bringing with them their riches from rags *Bildungsroman*.

Recall that Sonne masterminded the east end frieze on his return from trauma at the front, two years after the long sides were achieved, and the museum opened (Fig. 2, panels 29-->22). The structural pattern pivots symmetrically around a large central pylon flanked by a pair of smaller pylons; the proportions are inverted, so that the 'slits' provide by far the wider area. On site, it is immediately obvious that clear continuity of image around the corners has not been sought and found. The large ship occupies the half to canal-side, its prow and figurehead sharing the central image (panel 26) with the stern of the first of the two boats that occupy the half to courtyard-side. This is low-impact imagery, though full of tension and strain.

This fine ship has respect. A solemn grandeur, proudly displaying the elaborate systems of sheets, cables, and chains that hold fast a sailing-ship, dropped anchor and all. The workmen unloading and fetching ashore the heavyweight containers of cargo use boathook (panel 25), oars (27), a lever (28), rollers on a ramp, and finally one-horse-power traction (29). More ropes crane down the monster cases, and haul them up the slope for delivery (25, 29). What do we see here?

Easiest thing in the world to suppose right away that this fine study simply displays that frigate named for the Valkyrie *Rota*, from which Thorvaldsen disembarked on his triumphant return in 1838 (confirmed by the figurehead in panel 26). Indeed, this just must be a good half of the effect intended. The mural does affirm that the stuff belongs to Thorvaldsen, for 'AT | N50' on one package (panel 25) emblazons his initials, and, in 27, one player holds up the Greek vase in his

8 Anthony Snodgrass points out that such reminders of fallibility reaffirm the tradition derived from the Parthenon Frieze, not least where the north side cavalcade threatens to run marshals down, and horses buck and rear.

grasp for inspection by his neighbour, whose gesture of pointing indicates to us that he is giving it a good look, so we should, too: for such props are authentic Greek 'spoils,' from Rome (freshly excavated in Etruria). They both join Thorvaldsen's own works of art, and signal that his work is authentically 'classical.'

But remember, again, the sandwiching of the twin occasions celebrated by the *Arch of Titus*: if the shipment conveys (conveys to us) the Thorvaldsen treasures now safe forever on the other side of these walls, then recall that, while shipments of artworks had started back in 1835, and more did arrive along with their creator in 1838, the sculptor only vouchsafed a large quotient of those prize possessions from the ateliers of Rome, once he was good and sure the roof was on, in 1842.

A second version of the haulage theme occupies the remaining, landlubbers,' flank of the *Museum*. This long side starts from a pile of more cased goods, and runs right to left through an elaborate train of 'Thorvaldsens.' These are transported on land, by one shift or another, until (at panel 50) the first in line is seen to left, another 'reclining' rectangular shape in the process of being pulled up by a gang, and their draught horse. The image on that Greek vase (a late C6th BCE Attic hydria) even points to a thematic pun, as a pair of horses drive their chariot away, to right.⁹ Shades of triumph about it, as we saw, and these are brought out by the structural parallel with all the cues of (Roman) victory in the course of the procession before us along the courtyard wall. We saw in the parade on the *Arch of Titus* how teams of Roman hauliers carried spoils aloft (usually shoulder-high), on more or less makeshift wooden pallets fitted with poles fore and aft. Sonne's frieze expertly exploits the same sort of opportunity for telling effect.

But I must now clinch the argument about the occasion represented on the frieze. If the east end *does* 'excerpt' the preliminaries to the shifting of the art treasures all the way from quayside and into the *Museum*, then this 'is' 1842, or '1835-42,' as well as 1838, and this is not simply 'the frigate *Rota*,' but, instead, a synthetic composite of the *Rota* with merchantmen, both earlier and later. And we are being given a foretaste of the mimetic entertainment ahead once we turn that corner, and get moving past the piled up baggage—gaffers wielding notebooks, workers putting their backs into it.

But this is still to miss the trick of such commemorations. The symbolic point is to grip together the two moments of the long murals, like the two sides of the passage-way of the *Arch of Titus*: when the Sculptor himself quit the ship; and when his collection(s) did. Bag and tag them as one and the same instant: that is

9 The tiny painting of the fine painting on the prize pot speaks up for miniature detail, against the megalographic design of the wrap-around mural, which must stand in for the *lost* tradition of monumental Classical painting.

the narrative function of the 'supplementary' third wall, which cements the visual mytho-logic of the representation. And this *is* myth, for several of the portraits belong to persons absent abroad in 1838, and, for example, Thorvaldsen had not yet *met* the family Stampe at the time, so their cameo (panel 4) is really a gift planted by hindsight.

In terms of visual modality, the east end stands out from the major statements to right and to left. Here virtually nothing is (yet) revealed for sure—and while the foremen keep notes, their squads have too fraught a task, too much on their hands that can snap or crash any second, to take the slightest bit of interest (panels 29, 27). For sure, the point of the museum-cum-mausoleum is to bring the *œuvre* home in one piece. 'Danishness' on the east end is virtually limited to *implicit* ideological self-approbation: the featured dream boat, shipshape and Baltic fashion, plus the disarming vaunt of teamwork from the expert dockers, who never seem to have to try too hard.

The south, courtyard or Palace, side of the Museum was the first instalment of the frieze, always the most inspected and inspectable section (Fig. 3, panels 50-->30). It was designed to engage us in a lingering, wondering, drooling, gaze. The snail's pace of this laboriously ponderous procession certifies the pricelessness of these removals, and representative bystanders on, and in, the scene model for us the response required from us. They underline the fundamental structural design of this mural as a whole, centred around the overbearing frontality of the massive Pope who dominates the central pylon. The onward crawl of the procession of images leftwards, away from the wharf, leads on towards the main museum entrance around the south-west corner, and their destination inside. But difficulties obstruct the operations planned and overseen by Bindesbøll, the elevated and courted authority-figure and Man in a Hurry who stands second left on panel 50. He exudes commanding authority, plus a certain irritation at the precious time it is taking for the middle-management bosses and their gangs to struggle with so simple a task as bringing it all back home.

But the frieze is more than a match for its architect's will. In exchange for the march-past triumphal parade of spectacular 'spoils' of culture captured for the City, he gets, and gives us, this tableau on permanent hold. The 'step inside, this way' arrow-function of the frieze is a primary objective, however split the message is between the 'symbolic/ceremonial/grand' entrance around the corner, past the horses and lion, and up those steps already in view, by artistic license, on panel 50 beneath Bindesbøll, and the 'actual/working/tradesmen and tourists' entrance that occupies the first 'pylon' in the line (at panel '49A'). As I shall propose, the discrimination between exhibit 1, his Majesty King Lion Recumbent, and the rest of his train, does, besides, just happen to ground the fundamental proposition of the whole frieze as the authorized Founding Myth of *Thorvaldsens Museum*. But I am

sure that the piquant semiotics of the museum whose contents are most effectively displayed to the public *on its exterior* have played the key role in establishing this quirky orange coachhouse high in Copenhagen's charts of tourist sights and sites.

Viewers are manipulated to stand and stare as if at a temple with all the sculpture thoughtfully brought down close at ground-level. On panel (40), meet *Pope Pius VII*, the only thing in St Peter's carved by a non-Catholic, now holy and menacing symbolic Keeper of the *Museum*.¹⁰ Not for nothing is the brag attributed to Thorvaldsen about the *papal* dimensions of his reception in 1838; and his legendary quip that the *Pius* was a failure because he looks much too *Danish* is only a pointer to his obvious resemblance to Thorvaldsen himself

See how two lads hug each other and whisper, stood in our place in front of that stern benediction, as over-awed as we are. Surely they feel, rather than comprehend, the power to penetrate the soul which is packed into this looming mass of plaster and paint. To the right (panel 39), see the dog bark: is it frisson at the Pope's mana, or at the heaving ropes, rumbling rollers, and screeching levers that drag him sidelong (into panel 41)? The second pair of boys here have a parenting supervisor at hand, to make sure they read it right, and to make sure that, *through* their reading, *we* read right, from where we stand. If we could see through a child's eyes, we would see the jaundice that loss of innocence has inflicted on our response to the image.

Continuing to right, (panel 37) mum and friend point baby toward the symbolic Christian Mother coming their way on her sedan chair, figuring matronal Chastity, and challenging the eye to react (im)properly to the innocence of *her* overgrown baby, the only genital nudity on display to us in the whole of Bindesbøll and Sonne's frieze. And (panel 35) Mrs and Mr Mid Nineteenth-Century stop a strapping worker who manhandles a relief, for a peek and a peer at *Hector with Paris and Helen*. The very best marriage guidance that neo-classicism could plunder from its supplier of schemata and legitimating ancestor in Classical art, text, and myth: sublime Homer.

To left of *Pius VII*, two further 'slits' hive off a pair of spectators apiece. In panel 49, Mr Well-To-Do insists on pointing out, and explaining interminably, for the benefit of Mrs Well-To-Do on his arm, just what the *Angel Kneeling with a Baptismal Font* before them means for her. *Angel* has just stopped for a slight, but eternalized, pause to adjust her balance on her trolley, and we are meant to look at her counterpart, and speculate whether, for example, they are contemplating a christening in the *Church of Our Lady* font across the canal?

10 Thorvaldsen generally kept people guessing about his religious attitudes, and was blessed with commissions ranging from the papal to the frankly pagan: neo-classicism had the advantage of interposing a screen between artist and creation.

Finally, and in complete contrast, one pair of jolly jack tar porters take a moment off to step into our leisured classes' role of spectator (panel 43). It seems that they have come along to enjoy watching others sweat, lounging back against the painted frame of the pylon, and pointing out for their (o-so-significantly) hooded girl the finer points of the intellectual break-through which founds modernity in its grasp of the natural world and in its self-identification with the worship of Science. For the haulage gang (on 43) is sweating buckets, stumped with their problem of how to get *Copernicus* moving, now he and his cartwheels have ground to a halt.

I don't think that *they* actually get his contraption's demonstration that the sun and stars don't move round the earth, and as they call time out, and squat for a breather, it doesn't seem that art helps show anyone how we really are hurtling round the solar system at fantastic velocity. This doesn't stop the master mariner from launching into his theoretical explanation of Copernicus' orrery—it's only a glorified ship's compass, I bet—and what he comes up with is good enough for his younger mate, too, with his hands-in-pockets 'shucks-sure-beats-me' attitude

A whole education in Art History, advertising the *Museum* as a shrine to cultural power. This train of imagery adds up to a view and a theory, a recommendation and a protreptic, for how Art *should* convey and communicate the essential myths valorized by society. Join in the effort, to create, collect, ship, house, parade, and access the icons enshrined in the city's portfolio of approved cultural capital: see the 'Thorvaldsens' open eyes, ears, and minds. Isn't it 'nice' being so European, where wars, revolutions, and massacres are so lovingly mediated to us through art about art about art about the ugliness of history! What a perfect way (stop, look, think!) to ponder in decency 1848, Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein, Prussia and Poland, Italy ... and Greece, from Homer to Missolonghi and modern Athens

This Christiansborg courtyard is a good place to reflect on culture *as* reflection on itself. The parade of spoils insists on both the status of the collection *as* 'combinatoire' and the status of each piece as a unit of the collection.¹¹ Each piece brings its own separate history to the conglomerate, and receives new significance from the association; they stay partially detached one from another, for the collocations are a temporary happenstance that is already disassembled inside the museum, for all that the frieze ties them into its symbolic 'narrative.' The procession of 'spoils' provokes a reading of each artwork, and reads them together into a paradigmatic myth of culture, mediated through sculpture, mediated through culture

I leave the lion for last (Section *IV* below).

11 Cf. Henderson 1996 for this approach to the megalographic frieze.

The *Baptismal Angel* (panel 48) in the *Museum* was presented by the artist to the *Church of Our Lady* soon after his return. A baptism makes an ideal story-opener; an angel makes an ideal figurehead for a triumphal parade. A post-Classical 'Victoria,' a Roman statuette type with a nymph's nudity, she looks where she is headed. Her bearers paw a wing-tip and use a lever to steady her as she goes, in delicate parody of the heavyweight oarage and leverage to be found all around the *Museum's* other murals.

Next we find one worker backpacking another relief, in such a way that *we* must miss its image (panel 47). For us, this is just a slab of rock. Head down, *he* too must miss everything: reduced to blockhead. His companion embraces a bust, identified as *Rosa Taddei* an Italian *improvisatrice* artiste, and artist, big in Rome in the 1820s, and so here she must symbolize art's preservation of beauty against time, the precious memory as portable memento; and she betokens Thorvaldsen's real-life zest for animated sensuality, in taverna and theatre alike, the non-academic streak in his 'modernity.'

Rosa is not a staggeringly over-weight armful, but her bust does need *careful* handling, by an 1848 lad as easy on the eye as she ever was. In tune with one another, these figures both double as extra spectators and turn a twin gaze back toward the statue which looks down upon them from the next trolley.

This seated matron (panel 46) is a Russian Countess of yore, Yelizaveta Alexeyevna Osterman-Tolstoy, from 1815. Her gang have got her transportation completely under control, hoist on sling-poles fore and aft, though something isn't to the liking of the principal bearer, and she needs a steadying hand to rear, looks as pensive as ever. This paragon is surely represented as untouchable. She is the right type to represent Classical womanhood, the 'Penelope' figure sitting harmlessly/aimlessly waiting for *her* man to return; just a step away from that baby-processing machine in front. The schema has traded everywhere sculpture has reached: this is the *Seated Agrippina*, one of the most reproduced of Classical matrones.

Here comes trouble (panel 44). *Lord Byron*, no less, in the common Roman imperial pose of, e.g., the 'Augustus from Cumae' in the Hermitage. Commissioned from Thorvaldsen to commemorate the dead poet, this is the lame English Lord playing his abstractedly Romantic genius persona of *Childe Harold* (the book that he clutches). Lost in thought, he is oblivious to the mundane fact that the wheels have just come off his wagon. Somehow a sheet or a shirt has tangled itself up in the spokes, so the thing won't budge. It's a pity that the bearer who points this out to all of us mates blanks out the broken column prop where the Poet rests his good foot. The two other symbolic supports project mythical death, heroic activism. The skull and the owl of Athena factor in melancholy Hellenizing *memento mori* poetics; but they link the Byronic *Bildungsroman* with a freedom-fighter's

martyrdom for Greek autonomy: amazing what the grammar grind of a classical education implanted into *this* unlikely-looking Anglo-Saxon adventurer. *He* won't notice if there is ever any more progress, he's getting somewhere as it is, wrapped up in thought.

Danish Christian Angel; Russian Roman Matron; Hellenist English Poet. Next, essentially a blown-up pair with *Byron*, only closer to, e.g., the Vatican Hellenistic *Urania*, comes the Polish Man of Science, *Copernicus* (panel 42). The playful point is a mind-over-matter conundrum. The Genius fails to defy plain terrestrial gravity, and becomes instead a heart-breaking backache for his unmoving movers. In Copenhagen, however, *Copernicus* following *Byron* also speaks to nationalist fundamentalism, this time unsignalled and implicit—but Denmark even consisted of resistance to German subsumption, and Polish autonomy has rarely been a dead issue there.

So to panel 40 and the *Pope*, 1831. Massive and moving imperceptibly if at all, the Catholic Church claims imperial conquest of another world. Not verse or space but the psyche, the soul. This commemorative statue, however, emphatically belonged, like *Byron*, to the turbulence of Thorvaldsen's life and times. For Pius VII was the Pope who had had to parley with and crown Napoleon, then play a waiting game until ejected into exile, before returning to Rome in a triumph of his own. In Copenhagen, this *Pope* signifies the capture of 'Rome' for Denmark, courtesy of Art; and patriarchal authority serves to image the local *papa* acclaimed beside the Slotsholm canal. A Nordic 'Pope's' commemoration, at his tomb.

Our last Hero supplies the steel, the militarism, in this courtyard (panel 38). This is more Napoleonic history, Poland again; suicidal self-devotion is the game. *Prince Józef Poniatowski* led the Polish contingents fighting for Napoleon, against Austria and Russia, until in 1813 he was caught the wrong side of a river when the bridge was blown in the retreat. Rather than be captured, this hunk of nobility charged into the torrent, and ... drowned. In the realm of Classical sculpture, the Man Mounted on Horse means only one thing: the gilded bronze *Marcus Aurelius* in Rome, apparently crushing all resistance by stretching out a right hand: the *Count*, however, is the only sword-pointing rider in the range of ancient equestrian statues. In mythological terms, this is another Marcus Curtius, that hero who saved Rome by charging straight into the yawning chasm that would swallow the city unless a sacrificial life was forthcoming. These young officers exchanged the chance to win triumphs for undying fame. They were famous for neither killing, nor being killed by, anyone. 'On into the breach ...!'

In context, the *joke* played by the statue could be that, given half a chance, he will charge straight into the river next door. Or, better, let the frieze make agreeable sport with the commanding gesture of this cavalry officer's sword-point. He has a

horse, so out of the way, everyone in the procession, and he'll trot triumphantly into these glorified (orange) royal stables under his own steam! After the haulage struggles we have witnessed ahead, this is nice work if you can get it, as the Prince rides off on his sledge, to glory in a watery grave. Just try stopping him!

We now wind down (in terms of size) with a set of non-threatening women (panels 36, 34, 32), before the finale of a stripped toy-boy (panel 30). First comes the baby's diversion, the *Seated Mother, and Child*, to be joined by her book-end match, *Kneeling Mother, and Child*. These two make up a sort of 'mini-pediment' between them, to underline that they are pendants on the gable of the Church of Our Lady.

The first group, we saw, is carted along by a team in good shape. The two main bearers are properly harnessed, and a vigilant aide is on hand to give *Mother* a steadying hand on her available forearm, while one arm goes round the *Child* to keep him on board, and one finger tickles him calm. Swell. But too good to last: her companion *Mum* is forced to face the wrong way, *her Child* stood behind her, without proper control and only her neck for purchase. Precariously balanced on her right knee, she has come to grief, and come to earth with a bump.

This, then, is a fallen woman, not because anyone has laid a finger on her, but because of bad luck. The rope of her rear porter has snapped. There is nothing heavy about this set-back, and Our Lady still watches over her kind, so neo-classical eyes must see, just the way that Venuses once cuddled nude Cupids in their laps (36), and *Crouching Venuses* often felt Cupids' clammy hands on their backs (34). Only, these modern matrons ooze, not pure sexiness on stands of salacious sensuality and seduction, but domesticated bliss—straight from the Attic gravestones of the Classical tradition. Neo-classical Love.

Third and last in the row of virtuous women comes another practical and logistical problem, this time arising from a standing pose (panel 32). Historicists introduce another *Princess: Fjódorovna Baryatinskaya*, a German immortalized in her mid-twenties, and married to a Russian Prince. Frontally statuesque and above life-size, she has stopped her gang in their tracks. She is, again, not a weight problem, but the danger of instability.

She needs only a mini-cart, but how can she be secured? One of the hands carefully steps up alongside her, fixing some protective sheeting (wrapping or unwrapping?). Another proffers some rope. Their mates gesture in perplexity. The schema shows this beauty off top to toe, and the attentions of her boys are nothing less than suggestive. In keeping her safe, they already get over-familiar, one hand resting on a shoulder-strap, the other virtually interfering with the folds of her dress; and what are they to do with that rope, without overstepping the mark? Anyone who thinks she's enjoying the tease, and wonders how her Russian Prince would take it, needs to take on board that she is completely cleared of all suspicion

by her classical typology. This is *Pudicity*, personification of wifeliness, so that finger on chin pledges. So what historicism gives with one hand, neoclassicism guarantees with the other, for portrait and type fuse together in perfect recycling of Graeco-Roman glyptics.

Alternating with these 'pylon' panels are three 'slits' in a row (panels 35, 33, 31), all showing workmen carrying a piece, precisely, apiece. We looked at the first case already, where the bearer was held up, in front of the *Kneeling Mother, and Child* breakdown, so that a couple can pore over his relief with *Helen, Paris, and Hector*. The remaining two 'slits' both have a pair of carriers busy manhandling their burden without interference. One shoulders a relief panel, the other an armful of art; and we are shown two 'Thorvaldsens' per 'slit.'

In panel 33, we can see neither the relief nor its head-down Sisyphus: Classical art is dead weight loaded on a beast of burden. Will his mate stop him going into the back of the crash ahead? Two extra pairs of eyes reinforce this mate's own steady stare: they come from a bust and a head, the quintessential forms of *Roman* portraiture. A he and a she who ought to belong together; and we ought to recognize them from those dinghies canal-side. *Baroness Stampe* is having her bust grabbed tight, mauled, cuddled, and held safe, and she is paired off with her protégé, the eccentric poet *Adam Oehlenschläger*. A classic Classical parody, of the famous *Barberini togatus*, where a man carries an ancestor's bust in either hand, the perfect Republican Roman.

In panel 31, to the contrary, we can see both images: one held flat to the wall surface, the other just one side of a three-dimensional *objet*. Another relief panel and, this time, a pot are grasped two-handed, and in parallel. The close rhyme in body posture between the porters tells us to link the works close as we dare.

This is important since we can see that it minimizes a distinction between authentic ancient art—the Greek Vase is the quintessential token of *Hellenism*, and this is a prize exhibit from Thorvaldsen's own collection of antiquities—and neo-classical emulation of Hellenizing art—the relief panel shows his *Cupid received by Anacreon*, specially carved in Parian stone, not the usual Carrara, so 'Greek,' not 'Roman.'

The workers are blind to it all, but the images show us, first, Greeks locked in a duel on some epic battlefield, on an Attic black-figure amphora from the end of the 6th BCE, and second, a specially gruesome stabbing (with an arrowhead) by the naughty sex-godlet, in a scene staging a poem included in the ancient Greek collection of erotic whimsy called the *Anacreontea*. In Andersen's fetid mind, this turned into a dodgy, even fetid, 'short story' warning to children, to keep childhood a sex-free area: 'The naughty boy.'

Panel 30 is an end and a beginning. The first work we see taken out of the packing cases (panel '30A') is the kneeling and perching *Ganymede with Jupiter's Eagle*. Relatively diminutive and light-weight, it needs some tricky manoeuvring from the team, all the same. They lower the delicate group gingerly onto its cart, while the foreman frets, and gets his legs mixed up with the poles.

The frieze puns some more between the image and *its* images, so that the rest of the gang frame Ganymede and the frontal bearer in the background as if they are on a par, and, thanks to the image's kneeling posture, the design is, uniquely, isocephalic, with all the torsoes matched, too.¹² They all seem to be helping to give the bird its special drink, after the ordeal of being cooped up in the crate in the ship's hold all that time. But *we* know that this is more of a predator than meets the eye, and this sexy painted boy is going to get more than a peck when the 'modest,' quasi-bas-relief, pose for the cameras is dropped, and they resume their sculptural dimensions in the round. Then, in the myth, the Phrygian frivolity will find this represents, or represents the representative of, another 'Emperor caught in New Clothes,' namely Jupiter the King of the Gods. *Ganymede* will fly off aboard *his* eagle to join the Olympian party that never ends. So that foreman had best get a move on, or there will be nothing to carry—the image will have flown itself off, sabotaging the procession with surrealism, and robbing the *Museum!*

Ganymede and the Eagle hug the wall surface tighter than the rest of the parade, mimicking relief sculpture, but the fun with iconography here also serves to usher in the continuing ironic commentary on modes and grades of being, and of miming, reality which is embedded in the very form of the mural, where all the paint mimics sculpture in three dimensions.

That final 'slit' of all (not shown) is piled with mute unlabelled case upon case. I shall content myself with exclaiming that it figures the entire frieze, the whole museum, Copenhagen, Denmark, Europe, classicism and neo-classicism, art, myth, culture, symbolism and rhetoric, metonymy and metaphor, meaning and significance!

For the container that envelops its contents always works just this exponential way in visual representation, because its signal of occlusion is an uncashable seal of concealed signification (panels 25, 27, 28, 29, 30A, 38: which statue is in which carton?). This is how the particular bind of two-dimensional painting as index of three-dimensional architecture works. In speaking 'for' the museum inside, the mural outdoes itself. What we must do is 'enter' the orange crate, and unwrap the

12 This is a 'Thorvaldsen' *jeu*, since this *Ganymede* takes the standing *Ganymede Offering the Cup* of 1804, with cup and pitcher in hand, but ourselves for the only eagle on the scene, and re-positions him on his knee(s).

stuff for ourselves. Just the way I am trying to imagine the meaning contained in Thorvaldsen's art.

III. Genre and Ideology

Precisely the kinds of visual thinking I have attributed to Sonne's frieze were already firmly and frankly embedded in the imperial culture of early nineteenth-century Europe. The 'triumphal parade of artworks as spoils' was a graphic genre, with distinctive conventions and an affiliation to the famous archetypes of Classical Antiquity.¹³

This performance genre forever shifts and shunts to-and-fro between reality, mime, and image.¹⁴ Participants in the parade fashion a visual collage and cultural event from posture and gesture, from stereotype and myth. What marks out Sonne's frieze is that 'Dickensian' touch, of sardonic class differentiation and affectionate corporate solidarity—the drowning waifs or barking dogs of the democratised Danish *Museum*. But social hierarchy, class relations, and work *are* on parade in Sonne's world-picture.

That ramp we analysed at the head of the queue of 'spoils' (panel 50) is a stark ladder of social rank, for a start. Bosses on high are on a par with the procession of aristocrats, angels, pontiff and eagle ahead. Foremen come half-way up, half-way down. And low-down labourers heave, stoop and sweat like so many beasts of burden.

If there is dignity, as well as indignity, in the not-so-dirty low-energy work of the boatmen on canal-side, nevertheless strong social stereotyping regulates and organizes Copenhagen society afloat. Not just in terms of dress and headgear, but also in facial physiognomy and, of course, body posture. Most striking of all on quayside, on the east end. Here, the 'lower away, and steady as she goes' scene (panel 25) shows us precision, know-how, teamwork, but we can't help but know we are gawping at highly dangerous, heavy-duty, effort. On both 27 and 28-29, the juxtaposition of intent 'bookmen' in top hats against haggard, staggering 'brutes' in skullcaps gets us ready for the game of leisurely well-to-do spectators and exhausted threadbare manpower in the transportation scenes on the courtyard frieze. This newly bourgeois Copenhagen manages to sketch at least a modicum of more or less double-edged interchange and interdependence between the classes. Not where crew and passengers man the boats. And scarcely where the dockers unload the cargo.¹⁵ Rather, as we saw, in that series of under-accentuated 'slits'

13 Cf., esp., the 1810 sketch for a Sèvres porcelain urn by A.J.E. Valois, *Triumphal Entry of Roman Works of Art into the Musée Napoléon*, reproduced in Bott and Spielmann (1991):364, Catalogue 1.10.

14 This is the subject of work in progress on the Roman Triumph by Mary Beard.

along the courtyard. These chinks provide a splendid marginal site for complex commentary on the business of viewing and the viewing of busyness: panels 31, 33, 41, 45, and 47 house workers, including the vanguard of teams in pylons 40 and 44. Panels 37, 39, 43, 49 are occupied by a social mix of spectators, women and baby, bloke with lads (and dog), workers with hooded lady, and well-heeled Mr and Mrs. Panel 35 is where the worker is intercepted by that enthusiastic couple of art-lovers, who are after a close-up peek at that Thorvaldsen relief of *Paris and Helen*. Mixed in with the rest of the frieze's strategies for inter-relating watchers, workers, and wonders, these intricate angles texture the whole experience of engaging with Sonne's parade of painted signs.

The job in hand must be to explore what we would today call the culture of *access* to works of art. But the specific concern of political ideology here is, palpably, to calibrate works of art against arts of work. In the broadest terms, as I already claimed, the *Museum* plays off the traditions of maritime expertise of a seafaring nation against the entrepreneurship of a capable proto-capitalist trading station. The 'aduentus' of Thorvaldsen is in this sense an ideal occasion, an idealized occasion, for the celebration of nothing less than a nineteenth-century European 'cargo cult.' Pouring out of the ship's hold comes a bonanza of symbolic capital that carries international credit wherever boats dock, shipments are loaded, and merchandise is ferried. Sure, these Zealanders have their stake in high culture and a direct line to Rome, even Athens. But take one more turn around the block and see what you can see. Ship's carpentry and carriage joinery. Tillers and teamwork. All those ropes and cables! When it comes to shifting product, trust the Danes and their post-imperialist arts of peace—navigation and carriage. Prompt delivery and guarantee against breakage on all goods. That is the triumph, Copenhagen-style.

In terms of artistic 'form,' the *Thorvaldsen* frieze resembles nothing so much as a hyper-real wrap-round vase panel in the neo-classical style. The *Museum* portrays itself as at once a product of, and operator on, a discourse of plastic and visual art that bridges between Antiquity, Renaissance, and Modernity. Wherever Rome led in triumph or Rome was led in triumph, the tribute of Classicizing culture was, on each occasion in each era, bestowed on a 'Grecian urn.'

15 The crane lowers the crate in panel 25 onto a team with understated status markers. On 27, a beau lounges hand-on-hip on a crate at bow, jacket-less and hat casually to one side: he masquerades as a worker? The man with the vase nearby wears jacket but no neck-tie, he has 'distinguished'—'refined'—features—and trousers rolled up above bare shins and feet: obviously, an intellectual? On 29, we are prepared for the question of spectatorship within sculpture culture by the combination of idler and urchins who watch, more or less unthinkingly (?), the tonnage hauled up the plank ...

IV. *Myth of the Artist*

I shall end, as I started, at the front of the parade of spoils through Christiansborg Castle courtyard, with the *Lucerne Lion* (panel 50). More properly, this is *Dying Lion Protecting the Royal Arms of France*. We have seen so many affirmations that Sonne's frieze is a triumphal monument to Sculptor and Sculpture. Here are *the horses-and-chariot with regal triumphator* installed.

This is one huge lion, we hope chained up as stoutly as the undercarriage of his wagon is, we hope not going to be roused by the stevedores rattling his cage—those two crouched muscle men 'work horses' pushing him from behind, and the pair of 'gee-up's' and 'whoa's' right in his right ear. But this is no big cat, history says, but Thorvaldsen's *Lucerne Lion*. And he *is* dying, and they must hurry to get him home to his cave, not a second to lose. He incarnates heroic *fides ac uirtus*, naturally (he is a lion, and Denmark has as many lionhearts as anywhere). But the tale, as they say, is passing strange.

Back in 1792 Paris during the Terror, the royal Swiss Guard billeted on the Tuileries went down fighting the French Revolutionaries to the last man. In 1819 Thorvaldsen was approached for a monument, and a colossal version of his idea was duly hacked out of the side of a cliff at Lucerne (1821, by L. Ahorn): hewn from the proverbial 'living rock.'¹⁶

In 1848, Bingesbøll, Sonne, and associates went ahead anyhow, and put in pride of place this icon of post-royalist propaganda, for Danes to shake their heads over. Viewers could find themselves vowing never to indulge in regicidal theatrics, for example, but rather to clip the monarch's claws. Chain him up in constitutionalist red-tape, and give his cortège a good send-off if he was half as brave and bold a lion as Frederik VI had, for a change, managed to be. Messy myth, all loose ends and no teeth, try as we may (The Swiss Guard? The freedom of Copenhagen? What did these old myths mean? What could they tell us today? ...).

However this may lie in political mythology, this is also the lion that lords it over the frieze. And lions are where sculptors cut *their* teeth in the arena. From Classical lions surviving from Antiquity, such as the *Medici Lions*, to neo-classical lions acclaimed, like Canova's, as at least their match, this icon of power bred into the nature of Kings always ruled the monument jungle. From D.C. Blunck's *Thorvaldsen in his Atelier in Rome with his Statue of a Recumbent Lion*, we can see at once that Thorvaldsen and his portraitist knew perfectly well in Rome 1837 that the sculptor is the lion he must be, and must be the lion he is. There is no other way to be first and foremost; a 'King' he must be.¹⁷

¹⁶ Hall 1999:178.

¹⁷ Lions and Kings: Henderson 2000:esp. 180-86, 191.

Of course Thorvaldsen was always mythologized through his works. 'Thorvaldsen' meant nothing but his œuvre, and, from 1842, that means the Christiansborg coach-house. He had been preparing his own legend by running it through his whole career. In 1814, C.W. Eckersberg's *Portræt af Bertel Thorvaldsen i S. Luca-Akademiets ordensdragt* proposed right away by posing Thorvaldsen before his *Alexander Frieze* that this artist's work was always invested in the *self*-heroization of an *artistic* genius.

It would be the *neo-classical* heroism of *self*-fashioning, as in the *Jason*, whose creation took from the baptism of the artist in 1802-3 through 1828, then more work in the 1830s and, under the supervision of Bissen, a posthumous attempt in 1846-62, before the first marble was bought back in 1917: a synthesis of all the most 'classical' ideal males in all Greek art, the *Apollo Belvedere* and Polyclitus' *Doryphorus*, plus hints of the *Ares Borghese*, the '*Pompey Spada*,' etc.

In mere life, Thorvaldsen waited on royalty. In lasting myth, the great sculptor would be lionized as a hero of Art, defying incorporation in any mundane ruler's orbit.

Baroness Stampe hoped he would hammer home, and chisel in, his mission of self-glorification forever, with the self-portrait of the artist as his own living statue: *Bertel Thorvaldsen Leaning on the Statue of Hope*: it worked, too, as the installation of the *Thorvaldsen Museum* made sure it would.

The frieze around *Thorvaldsens Museum* contrives to parallel the '*aduentus*' of the returning *triumphator* with its other face, that *Dying Lion* heading the parade of *triumphal spoils*. Just as the *Arch of Titus* twins its emperor with his most spectacular spoils, capturing in its images of precious art the figural representation which his artistic incarnation in the idiom of Roman beatitude trounces. Trounces, but replicates.

Just so, *Thorvaldsen the Dying Lion* takes pride of place as the *Museum's* ultimate artwork. His public celebrates his apotheosis, pay their last respects. Fêted and fated, the artist heads his own train of spoils, first of the trophies. Captor and captive, captivating and captivated, he symbolizes a liberalist myth of representation embedded in Euro-culture.

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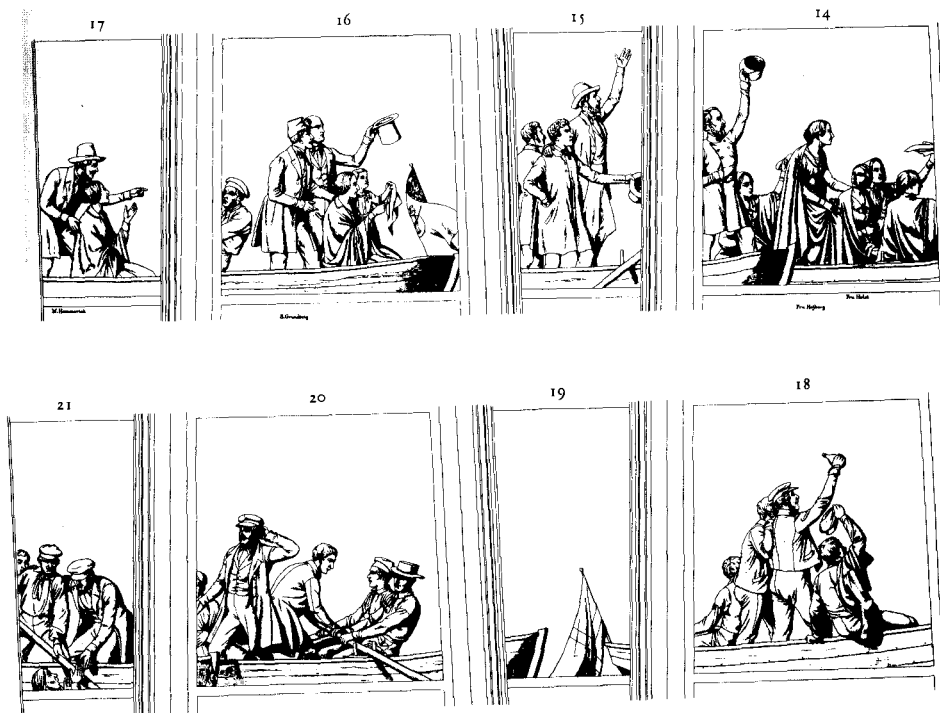


Fig. 1.

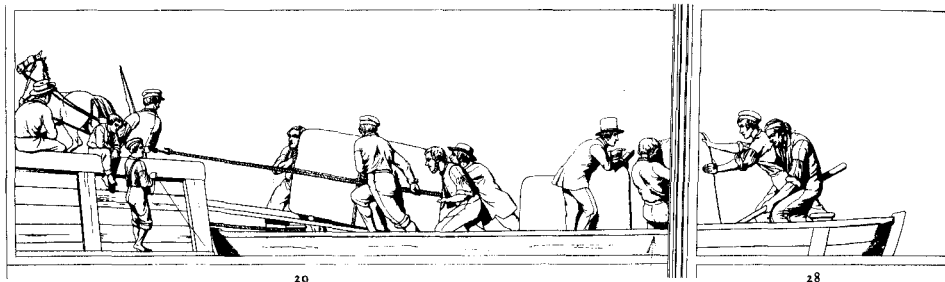
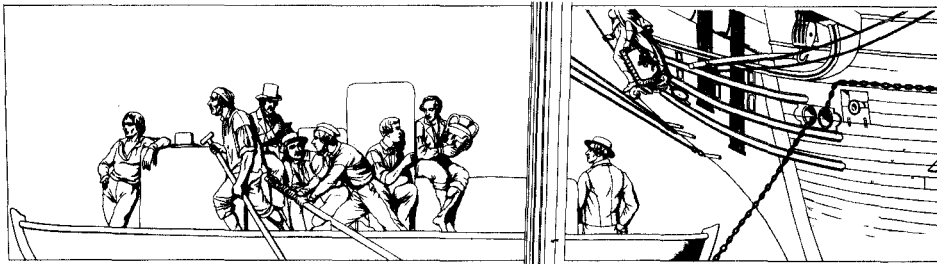
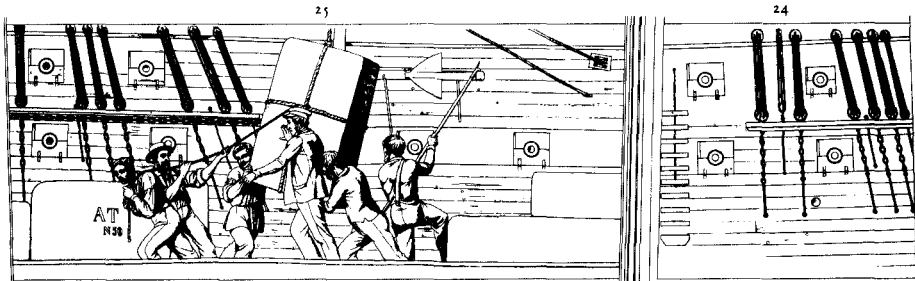
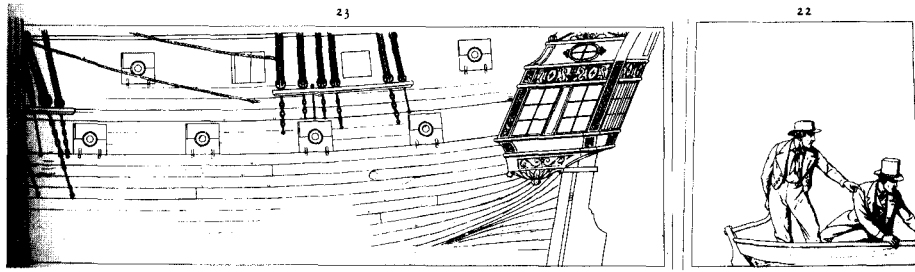
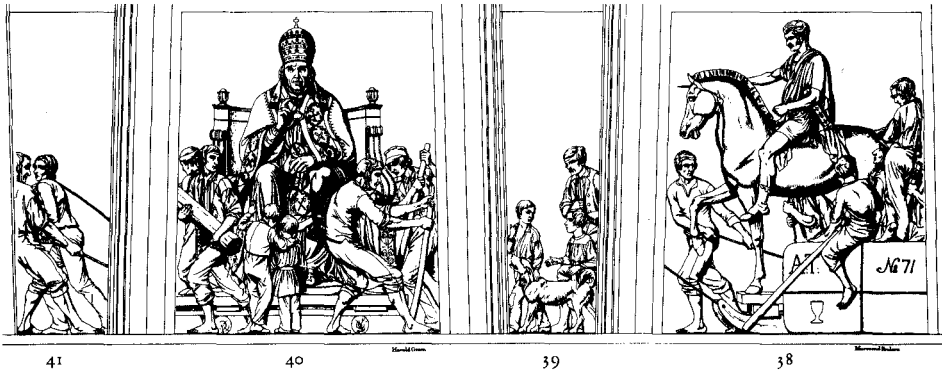
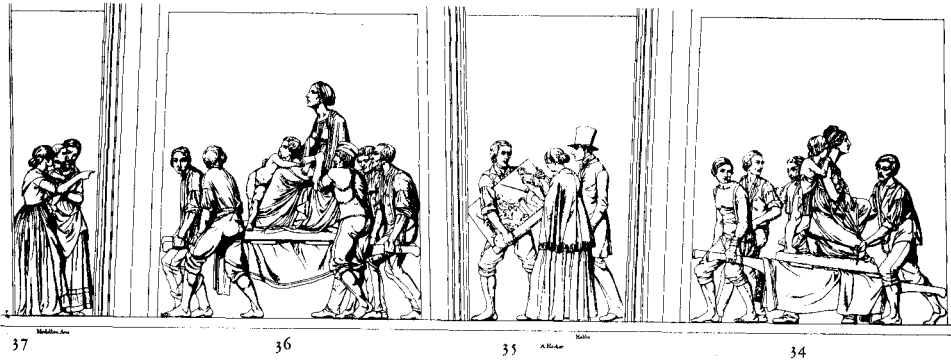
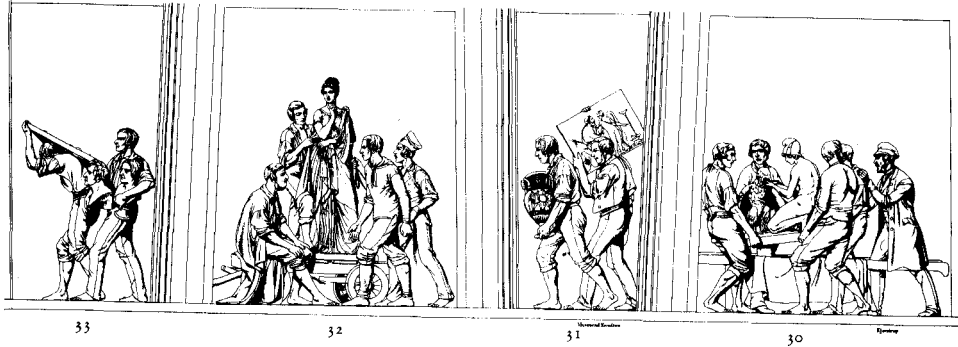


Fig. 2.



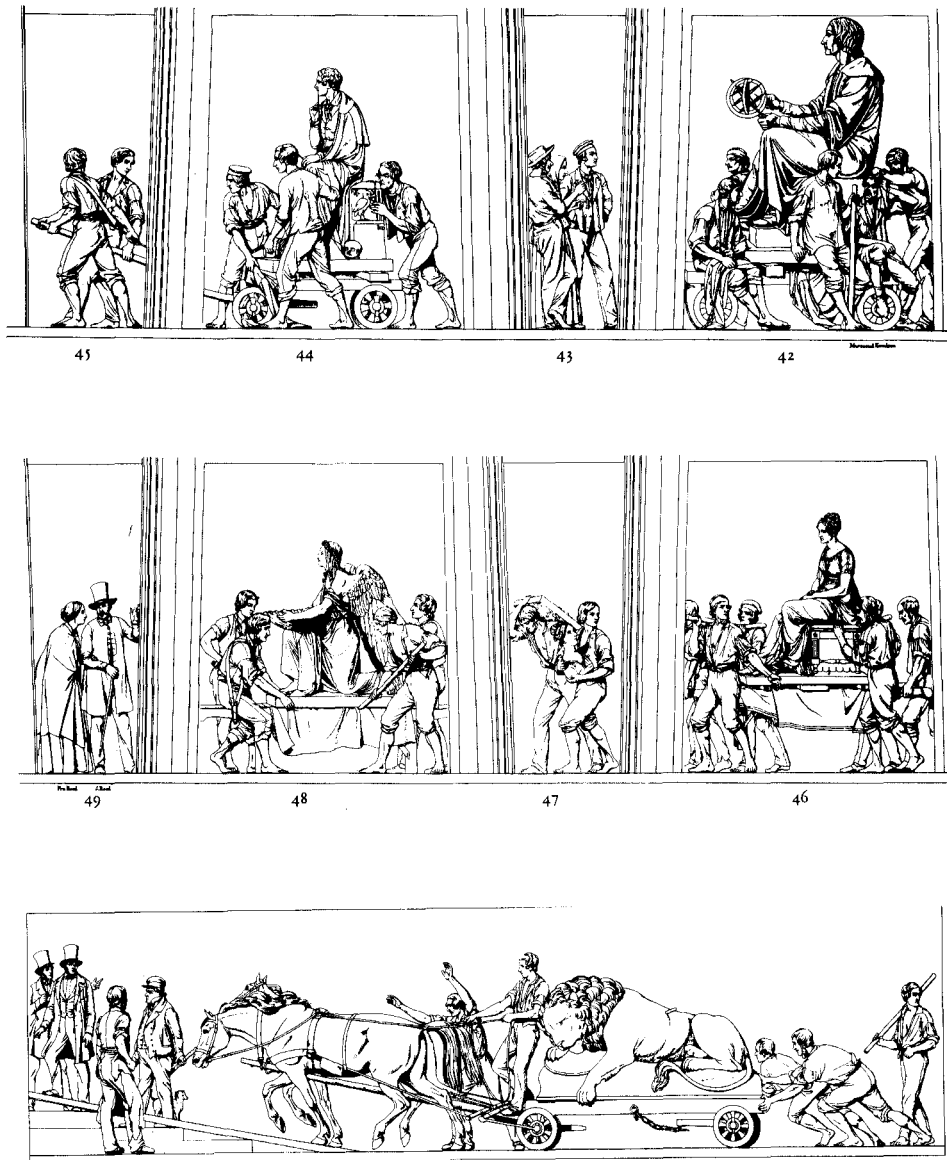


Fig. 3.

CREDIT FOR FIGS.

Sonne's friezes at Thorvaldsens Museum, Copenhagen: line-drawings after Damsgaard, Helsted, Henschen, and Jørnæs 1988:142-7, canal side; 148-9, rear end; 142-7, courtyard side

Reading embedded narration

William Hansen

MANY TRADITIONAL oral narratives from Classical antiquity have come down to us in collections, from which we learn a great deal about the structure and content of the stories but very little about how they were actually employed in live social interaction. I have in mind such works as the compilations of myths and legends attributed to the mythographers Pherekydes, Konon, Apollodoros, and Hyginus; the anecdotes compiled by Plutarch and Aelian; the jokebook *Philogelos* that is attributed to a certain Hierokles and Philagrios; and the anonymous collections of Aesopic fables in prose as well as the fables versified by Phaedrus, Babrios, and Avianus. Whether a particular compiler presents his stories as elements of a continuous narrative (as in the mythological handbook of Apollodoros, for example) or as a series of discrete items (as in the mythological handbook of Hyginus), what these collections have in common is that the stories are imparted with minimal framing. Myths and legends are grouped together, and fables are grouped generically with other fables, of course, according to one principle or another for the ordering of the items within the collection, but this arrangement tells us little more than that they are myths or legends or fables, and as a consequence we glimpse little of their human uses. What triggers the telling of a particular tale? How is it told? What kind of person recounts it? How do the listeners respond? What does the narrative mean to the participants? After all, the primary locus for the transmission of traditional narratives is not books but human social interaction. To survive in oral tradition a story must be told, and to be told it must be useful.

Fortunately, in addition to stories in compilations many ancient narratives have come down to us in more informative contexts, since ancient authors frequently recount or allude to traditional stories in the course of speeches, essays, letters, poems, and other works, so that the narratives are framed by the narrator's comments, as when in a letter the younger Pliny digresses to relate an anecdote about an outspoken contemporary, and as when in his *Metamorphoses* Ovid represents a fictional narrator as reverently relating in a nocturnal storytelling session a miraculous tradition concerning the pious couple, Philemon and Baucis.¹

Naturally, the practice of employing in written discourse stories taken from oral tradition must spring from the habit of using such stories in oral discourse. While it would be rash to treat written works or parts of such works as though they were actual transcripts of live conversations, it seems safe to assume that the secondary use of traditional stories in written works must frequently mimic and therefore approximate in many ways their primary use in human social interaction.² How should one read such texts?

Consider Plutarch's use of the Aesopic fable of the fox and the crane in his essay on table-talk in order to illustrate how conversationalists should *not* behave in a symposium. Addressing the question of whether philosophical queries are appropriate topics at drinking-parties, Plutarch argues that the questions posed by the symposiasts for conversation should be simple and uncomplicated, and the topics familiar, so as not to exclude the less intellectual guests. Like the wine the conversation should be one in which everyone shares. Persons who propose complex topics for discussion are no more fit for such social intercourse than are Aesop's fox and crane. Entertaining the crane at dinner (Plutarch continues) the fox served her a broth poured out upon a flat stone. The crane went without a dinner and looked ridiculous as she attempted to eat the broth with her bill. The crane in turn invited the fox to dinner, serving the meal in a jar having a long and narrow neck. Whereas she herself easily inserted her bill and enjoyed the food, the fox was unable to put his mouth inside and so got for himself the portion he deserved. In the same way (Plutarch concludes), whenever philosophers plunge into subtle topics at a symposium, they are irksome to most of the guests, who cannot follow, and in consequence the other diners throw themselves into singing songs, telling silly stories, and talking business, whereupon the fellowship of the party is gone and Dionysos is insulted.³

There is no obvious reason to suppose that Plutarch's use of this animal tale in his essay would not be close to the use to which he might put it in a live discussion on the same topic. He does not tell the tale for its own sake, which would be irrelevant, not to say childish, like the inappropriate behavior of old Philokleon in Aristophanes's *Wasps*, who intends to regale adult listeners with animal tales and

1 I use 'frame' to refer to narrator's contextualization of a tale, usually by means of remarks immediately before and/or after the tale itself that serve to guide the reader's or listener's interpretation of it. It is the bed of an embedded tale. This is common usage (for example, Leonardi 1989, Nagy 1992). 'Interpretive frame,' or simply 'frame,' is used more narrowly in performance studies to mean clues that guide a listener to discriminate between different orders of message, for example between a literal communication and a performance of some kind, and, among performances, between such modes as insinuation and joking (for example, Bauman 1984:7-14).

2 Richard Martin (1989:43-145) makes the same point with regard to genres of speech in the *Iliad*.

3 Plut. *Quaest. Conv.* 1.5 (Mor. 614d-615a). Another version of the fable can be found in Phaedrus (1.26).

the like, to the exasperation of his son (1174-1187). Rather, Plutarch relates the tale in passing and with little elaboration in order to illustrate by means of a vivid and amusing analogy the central point he is making, namely, how inappropriate social behavior on the part of one participant begets inappropriate social behavior on the part of another participant, to the detriment of an entire social event. He exploits the distancing that an animal fable with its non-human characters affords, using the imaginary social life of animals as a metaphor for human social life in order to facilitate his reader's assessing undefensively the author's proposition about appropriate conversation.

Orders of narration

Instead of recounting a tale straightforwardly in his or her own person, however, an author may describe the circumstances of its narration in a real or invented social situation, ascribing the telling to another person who relates it to someone else. In this case the author creates, or recreates, a narrative event, with the result that we have a text of the story as well as information about its use on a particular occasion, whether the description reproduces in some measure an historical happening or imaginatively represents the sort of event that, in the mind of the author, might plausibly call forth this particular story. The result is an embedded, or emboxed, story, a second-order narration.⁴ Do first-order narration and second-order narration differ with regard to the richness of contextual detail?

Consider a Mesopotamian instance. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh* the poet tells how the protagonist Gilgamesh, driven by his desire to avoid death, makes his way to the dwelling-place of the flood-hero Utnapishtim, to whom the gods have granted eternal life. Utnapishtim gives Gilgamesh an account of the great deluge, the extraordinary event that led to his being granted immortality.⁵ At its conclusion Utnapishtim asks: 'So now, who can gather the gods on your behalf, (Gilgamesh),—That you too may find eternal life which you seek?' Utnapishtim's point is that the factors that led to his own grant of immortality were unique and unrepeatable.

A first-order narration such as Plutarch's employment of the fable of the fox and crane features, in addition to the tale, the narrator and the immediate framing of the tale, which is likely to consist of the topic that prompts the telling of the tale and the narrator's explanation of the relevance of the tale for his or her discourse. For Plutarch the topic that prompts his narration of the fable is a point that he wishes to make about proper conversation at dinner parties, and the relevance of

4 Cf. Genette 1980:227ff.

5 For the text see Dalley 1989:109-20 (*Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet xi). The quoted verses are found in Dalley 1989:116.

the fable, as he sees it, is that it makes a similar point, namely, that misbehavior at a dinner party begets more misbehavior. A second-order narration, in which an internal character is represented as narrating to another internal character, invites more situational detail, such as where the event took place, what the occasion was, who the listeners were, how the narrator and listener behaved. The Mesopotamian epic furnishes most of this detail, even if the situation itself is fantastic.

Instances of third-order narration, in which an author presents a story embedded within a story embedded within some other discourse, are also plentiful in ancient literature. If second-order narration carries potentially more situational information than does first-order narration, does third-order narration bear even more?

In his essay *Progress in Virtue* Plutarch reports a jest about weather so cold that sounds immediately freeze as soon as they are uttered and are not actually heard until they thaw out: 'Quite relevant here is Antiphanes' story, which somebody has applied to Plato's close acquaintances. Antiphanes used to say humorously that in a certain city sounds froze because of the cold the moment they were spoken, and later, as the sounds were thawing out, people heard in the summer what they had said to one another in the winter. The same thing was true, he asserted, of what was said by Plato to men still in their youth, for not until a long time afterwards, when they had become old men, did most of them come to perceive Plato's meaning. And this is the general experience with philosophy as a whole until one's judgment acquires a healthy stability ...'⁶

Antiphanes recounts a humorous tale about a city so cold in the winter that words freeze as soon as they are uttered, and only later, in the summer, when the words thaw out do the citizens hear what they said back in the winter. Antiphanes' narration is cited by an unnamed person—let us call him the Philosopher—who compares the inhabitants of Antiphanes' cold city to the companions of Plato: they hear Plato's words in their youth, but until they become old men most of them do not understand their meaning. And Plutarch in his turn cites the Philosopher, his own point being that, just as the Philosopher distinguishes two life-stages in the understanding of Plato's philosophy, the youthful stage in which one hears the words of the master and the senescent stage in which one finally grasps their meaning, so also are there two stages in all philosophical learning, the immature stage in which beginners in philosophy are self-conscious and disputatious, and the mature stage in which philosophers make real progress.

Does third-order narration, such as that of Plutarch's use of the Philosopher's use of Antiphanes, carry richer information than second-order narration? Not necessarily. Plutarch provides little information about the two embedded

6 Plut. *Mor.* 79a.

narrations, mentioning the point that the second-level narrator makes with the tale, but otherwise saying nothing of him or his audience nor under what circumstances he employs the tale, and with regard to the deepest level, that of Antiphanes, Plutarch does little more than identify the narrator by name. Probably no rule can be formed, because the primary narrator can handle the presentation in any number of ways. For example, Plato's *Symposium* shows at least four levels of narration.⁷ The whole piece is narrated by a certain Apollodoros (N1), who quotes his informant Aristodemos (N2), who recounts the conversation of different men at a dinner-party, among them Socrates (N3), who recalls what Diotima (N4) once told him. So at one point in the narrative Apollodoros quotes Aristodemos, who quotes Socrates, who quotes Diotima—four narrators, one inside the other, not counting the author of the piece, Plato. The author provides situational information about all four levels, most richly about level three, the symposium itself.

Logically, it is possible to imagine an infinite number of frames, one inside the other, like the reflections of a mirror in a mirror, but in practice frames beyond third-order narration are probably not very common in either oral or written discourse. The greater the number of levels there are, the less likely they are to be relevant to the aims of the primary narrator, and deep embedding is difficult for a narrator to handle clearly and for an audience to follow comfortably.⁸ So there is an informational advantage in embedded narration if we are given details about narrator and listener and occasion, but deeper embedding does not guarantee the reader greater profit, since the primary narrator may be either generous or stingy in the amount of information provided at the different levels.

Resonance

I turn to three factors that may need to be taken into account in reading framed narration. Consider the tale of Cupid and Psyche embedded in the novel by Apuleius.⁹ On the level of second-order narration, the tale is related by an old woman to a frightened girl in her charge, a kidnapped bride, with the kindly aim of heartening and consoling her, since the old woman's tale recounts the tribulations of another bride, Psyche, and of her eventual reunion with her husband, Cupid. But the story reaches beyond the immediate situation to resonate in many ways with the principal plot as well, both with the protagonist's own protracted trials and eventual liberation and also with other important themes of Apuleius'

7 Sandy 1970:463 note 1.

8 Part of the reason is the limited capacity of human short-term memory. The number of items of the same sort that one can store without error is around seven (Miller 1956).

9 Apul. *Met.* 4.28-6.24.

novel, such as undue curiosity. So the old woman's tale has points of contact with the immediate storytelling situation as well as with the distant situation of the novel's protagonist, Lucius. Narrative-level two alludes to narrative-level one. Accordingly, an embedded tale may owe multiple allegiances, reflecting not only the immediate narrative strategy of the embedded narrator but also the larger narrative interests of the primary narrator.

In practice, however, it is difficult to evaluate whether the author's wish for resonance distorts in any way the embedded storytelling situation. Let us imagine that, in planning his novel, Apuleius began with the story of Lucius and his transformation into an ass, which we know he borrowed from a Greek antecedent. He decided to embed in his narrative another narration, the tale of Cupid and Psyche, partly because of the themes of curiosity and suffering that it shared with his principal story. So the novelist created an internal narrator, an internal audience, and a setting for the telling of the embedded tale. Although the tale of Cupid and Psyche owes allegiance both to its immediate situation and to the larger tale of Lucius, the immediate storytelling situation is credible enough. Since we know from other evidence that consolation is one of the uses to which oral tales are often put, it is hard to evaluate to extent to which the internal narration may have been distorted for the sake of the larger text.

Emergence

Each time an oral story is told, its shape and content reflect a particular narrator's response to the particular occasion that has called forth the tale, since an oral story itself possesses no fixed or proper or necessary form. When for example Homeric characters employ a story, they generally relate it in an elliptical form, slanting their narration toward the point they wish to make. Accordingly, after the disguised Odysseus asks to be allowed to compete in the bow contest, the suitor Antinoos rebukes him for his presumption, suggesting that the wine has gone to the beggar's head. So too (Antinoos continues) did wine infatuate the head of the centaur Eurytion in the house of Peirithoos, when the centaur came to visit the Lapiths. Since Eurytion did criminal deeds, the heroes dragged him outside and cut off his ears and nostrils, so that Eurytion paid the penalty for his drunkenness (*Od.* 21.287-304). Antinoos views the beggar's request to compete in the bow contest as prompted by his having drunk too much wine. So he cites as a precedent the legend of the centaur Eurytion who similarly drank too much wine, misbehaved, and was punished. In the same way the beggar will be punished if he tries to string the bow. Antinoos recounts the legend elliptically, not even mentioning precisely what Eurytion's misbehavior was.¹⁰

10 Edmunds 1997:418-20.

An anecdote recounted by the younger Pliny in one of the letters (4.22) furnishes a subtler instance. Citing a public statement made by a certain Junius Mauricus that required courage to utter, Pliny declares that such behavior was nothing new to Mauricus, who gave strong proof of his courage before the Emperor Nerva himself. The emperor (Pliny recounts) was entertaining a few select friends for dinner, Mauricus among them. The topic of conversation turned to the notorious informer Catullus Messalinus, whom Pliny characterizes as a man who lacked humanity, fear, shame, or compassion, a man whom the emperor Domitian had employed like a weapon against his enemies. As the diners traded stories about the horrible man, the emperor asked: 'And what would have been his fate had he lived till now?' Mauricus answered: 'He would be dining with us.'

Pliny's narration of Nerva's dinner party ends with the courageous quip of Mauricus. He does not describe the emperor's response to it, or anyone else's response, because responses to Mauricus's comment would be irrelevant to Pliny's point in the present context, which is to illustrate Mauricus's bravery, not to develop the interaction of the participants at the dinner party as a drama for its own interest. Pliny's anecdote omits the climactic element that we might have expected, the emperor's response to the brave comment of his guest. Like Antinoos, Pliny tells his story elliptically, dwelling only upon that which is necessary to make his point.

At the other end of the continuum, Hesiod's two tellings of the myth of the first woman illustrate how freely a story can be adapted to different purposes. The versions differ considerably in content and emphasis, reflecting the nature of the context in which each is employed. In the *Theogony* (570-616) the first woman is unnamed; she is made and dressed by Hephaistos and Athena; and she herself, as the prototype of all women, is Zeus' gift of evil to mankind. In the *Works and Days* (47-105) she is called Pandora, and the name is explained; she is made and attired by Hephaistos, Athena, the Horai, the Charites, Aphrodite, and Hermes; she has a husband, Epimetheus; and her jar is the source of all evils. In one poem Hesiod is interested primarily in the natural and supernatural beings that populate the world, so that his emphasis is on Pandora as the prototype of all women; in the other poem the poet is interested more in the quality and conditions of human life, so that in this instance he emphasizes the irreversible entry into human life of evils such as hard work. The teller slants each narration to its situational context. There is no neutral, or default, form, since every oral narration is motivated.

Hesiod's selectivity and emphases on these occasions are features of what performance-oriented scholars of oral narration call the emergent structure of the text, that is, the interplay among all the factors that contribute to the narrative event as it affects the text of the narration—the performer, the performer's competence, the genre, the situation, the audience, the goals of the participants,

and so on.¹¹ Hesiod emphasizes those features associated with the first woman that are relevant to each narrative occasion, and downplays or omits others. It is inappropriate, therefore, to treat his two texts as complementary and interlocking, as though each were somehow a defective version of the myth. Minna Skafte Jensen aptly compares such a view to that of the early folklorists who combined different texts of a ballad in order to create a single, 'proper' text.¹² A myth or ballad text synthesized by a scholar does not result in a form that is truer to tradition, but in a new creation.

Tension

A third complication is tension, by which I mean that a story may have a different meaning when it is viewed by itself and when it is viewed in a particular context, resulting in a tension between the story considered ideally and the story considered situationally.

Take two tellings of essentially the same story by different narrators on different occasions. One is a fable that Phaedrus (3.3) tells about Aesop. There was (Phaedrus says) a certain man whose flocks of sheep were giving birth to lambs with human heads. Alarmed at the prodigy he consulted various soothsayers. One soothsayer explained the omen as referring to the man himself, who needed to perform a sacrifice in order to avert the danger. Another soothsayer interpreted it as a reference to the man's wife, and likewise recommended that the man perform a sacrifice. But Aesop, who happened to be standing nearby, remarked to the farmer: 'If you want to remedy this portent, give wives to your shepherds.' In his promythium Phaedrus explains the fable as illustrating the common saying that a man with experience in the world has more truth in him than a soothsayer does.

Plutarch tells a different version of the tale in his *Dinner of the Seven Sages*. Here the perceptive protagonist is not Aesop but another sage, Thales.¹³ In this case the prodigy was a new-born creature that is part human and part horse. The tale ends with Thales telling Periander either not to employ young men to tend his horses or to provide the young men with wives. When Periander heard Thales' recommendation with its implied diagnosis, he burst out laughing.

Periander's laughter in Plutarch's narrative is the equivalent of the promythium in Phaedrus's poem. It comments on the tale, guiding our understanding of it, for the tale does not have a fixed meaning that inheres in its text, but rather its meaning is dependent upon narrator and occasion. For Phaedrus the tale is primarily a didactic narrative that illustrates how practical experience of the world

11 Bauman 1984:37-45.

12 Jensen 2000:314 and note.

13 Plut. *Mor.* 149c-e.

is superior to the pure intellectualism of soothsayers, whereas for Plutarch it is essentially a humorous tale about the covert bestiality of young, unwed men. One narrator emphasizes the triumph of worldly wisdom; the other, the sexual humor of the tale. Neither narrator wishes or tries to convey all the possible meanings that the tale might be made to bear; instead, each frames the tale in such a way as to call attention to certain meanings, and these constitute its meanings on the particular occasion.

A passage in the twenty-fourth book of Homer's *Iliad* illustrates how a particular situation may call forth a truly surprising application of a story. When Priam, the aged king of Troy, came in fear and mourning to the Achaian camp to ransom the body of his son Hektor, his host Achilles wished to induce his grieving guest to take food with him. Achilles referred as a precedent to the case of Niobe, whose loss was similar in kind to Priam's but greater in its extent. 'Even Niobe (Achilles said) remembered to eat after she had lost her twelve children. In anger Leto's children had destroyed Niobe's children, Apollo slaying her six sons, Artemis her six daughters, because Niobe had compared herself favorably with Leto, saying that the goddess had borne only two children whereas she herself had borne many. When Niobe wearied of weeping, she remembered to eat. So also they (Priam and Achilles) should pause to take food, and later Priam might resume his mourning of his son.'¹⁴

It strikes a modern observer as obvious enough that the Niobe legend, considered apart from any particular context, is essentially a cautionary story illustrating how a kind of hybriatic behavior—in this case boastfulness springing from excessive pride—can have disastrous consequences for the character who exhibits it. One can easily imagine a Greek narrator citing the story to exemplify the proposition that boastfulness or insolence or impiety may entail reprisal, especially when the offended party is more powerful than the offender. Therefore it is unexpected when Achilles gives it here not a cautionary but a prandial application. What modern scholar, considering the bare text of the story, would ever have predicted that the blasphemous Niobe would be cited as a positive precedent, as a model of behavior?

In Achilles' use of the legend on the occasion of Priam's visit there is a considerable gap between the apparent, or structural, meaning of the story and its situational, or applied, meaning. Taken by itself and with no particular context, the Niobe legend is a story of misbehavior followed by punishment; it is a cautionary story. But for Achilles on one evening at Troy its meaning is that it is permissible for a grieving person to take food. Understood ideally, it is apotretic, but

14 Hom. *Il.* 24.601-20. On Achilles as narrator in the present passage see Hansen 1982; for the way in which he unfolds the details of his story, see Slater 1983.

understood situationally, on the occasion of its employment by Achilles, it is protreptic.

Conclusion

The secondary use of traditional stories in written works doubtless mimics in many respects their primary use in live discourse, so that we can examine framed stories in the expectation of gaining insight into the ancient use of oral stories. But multiple embeddings do not guarantee a greater richness of situational detail, since the primary narrator is free to economize at any level.

A complication in reading represented storytelling as reflective of human social interaction is the author's possibly distorting the embedded material in order that there be points of contact between the secondary text and the primary text, that is, resonance, a common feature in the literary manipulation of embedded narration. It is often difficult to evaluate the effect of this factor on emboxed texts.

Two normal features of oral narration are found also in literary representations of narration: emergence and tension. Because traditional texts are emergent, their form and content are conditioned by their particular narrator, audience, and occasion of transmission. It is a mistake to regard such texts merely as incomplete parts of a whole that should be combined with other incomplete wholes in order to make a proper text, for to remove a text from its context is to deny the factors that determined it.

Meaning too is emergent, since it depends on the same factors of narrator, audience, and situation. When a tension exists between the ideal meaning of a story and its situational meaning, it cannot be resolved because the ideal mode is the imagining of a story as having no situational context, as existing conceptually, whereas the situational mode is a realization of a story in particular situations.

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Performing myths. Women's homes and men's *leschai*

Jan N. Bremmer

IN THE LAST thirty years, Greek mythology has had one of the best periods in the history of its analysis. It is sufficient to mention here the work of Walter Burkert, whose many studies pioneered a whole new approach to myth and ritual. Yet all this time the study of the performance of myth hardly received the attention it deserves. The only major treatment in this respect has been a characteristically informative and subtle chapter in Richard Buxton's *Imaginary Greece*, where he surveys the various occasions, ranging from the cradle to the grave, when the Greeks told myths, be it for fun or for education.¹ An especially valuable aspect of his discussion is the attention to gender, and in my contribution I would like to follow up his discussion and concentrate on two places where, according to him, myths were told in a gendered manner: women's homes (§ 1) and men's *leschai* (§ 2). Naturally, my analysis is much indebted to his insights, but it seems to me that in both respects we can make some progress, if not in the interpretation, at least in the offering of a few more passages to be taken into consideration.

1. *Women's homes*

Buxton rightly draws attention to the fact that children began to hear myths in the home. But they were not the only persons to do so. When in Euripides' *Ion* the chorus of Creusa's maid-servants enters the temple of Apollo in Delphi, they immediately recognise the scenes on the temple's twin façades: the battle of the gods against the Giants; Bellerophon; and the labours of Hercules. Regarding the latter, one of the girls remarks: 'I see him. And near him another raises the blazing torch! Is it he whose story I heard as I plied my loom, shield-bearing Iolaos, who took up shared labours with the son of Zeus and helped to endure them?' (194-200, tr. D. Kovacs, Loeb). The chorus even returns to this setting when it comments later in the play on a mother's exposure of her child by Apollo: 'Neither in story at my loom nor in song have I heard it told that children from the gods ever meant for mortals a share of blessing' (507ff., tr. Kovacs). Apparently, maid-servants told one another stories during weaving to counteract the monotony of

1 Buxton 1994:18-44.

their task.² The custom is also alluded to in his *Atalantai* (fr. 14 with KA *ad loc.*) by Epicharmus, who made fun of those working at the loom with linen by saying that they sang songs for Linos.³

The motif of weaving as a moment for story-telling is taken up by Ovid—perhaps from a Hellenistic source?—in his version of the myth of the Minyads. These maidens stayed at home when the other Theban women had left their houses in order to perform the sacred rites for Dionysus. One of the girls, ‘drawing the thread with deft thumb’ (*levi deducens pollice filum*) proposes to alleviate *opus manuum vario sermone* but, Ovid being the poet he was, she does not tell a *vulgaris fabula*, but the unusual myth of Dercetis (*Met.* 4.32-54). This talking ‘at the loom’ also recurs in Euripides’ *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, where women are represented as talking to each other about their fate while weaving (789f.). Less informative, unfortunately, are the references in the *Odyssey* to both Calypso (5.61f.) and Circe (10.221ff., alluded to in Verg. *Aen.* 7.11-4) singing ‘with sweet voice’ when tending their looms. Such songs must have been normal, since in Euripides’ *Hypsipyle* the eponymous heroine also sings: ‘the Muse does not want me here to play Lemnian songs of comfort on the woof, not here on the shuttle stretched on the loom’ (26-8 Diggle). Vergil also speaks of the farmer’s wife having *longum cantu solata laborem / arguto coniunx percurrit pectine telas* (*G.* 1.293-4), and the motif of song, story and gossip at the loom date from as far back as women have performed their repetitive tasks.⁴

We would of course like to know where exactly in the house women worked at the loom, but this is not totally clear. Probably, for much of the year this will have happened in the courtyard, but in winter the women probably moved to one of the rooms off the court in the area of the women’s quarters.⁵ In these quarters other females also told myths. When discussing education in his *Laws*, Plato writes about ‘the stories heard so often in earliest infancy, while still at the breast, from their mothers and nurses—stories, you may say, crooned over them, in sport and in earnest, like spells—and heard again in prayers offered over sacrifices’ (887D, tr. A.E. Taylor). In his last work he is more tolerant than in the earlier *Republic* where he, admittedly, allowed ‘nurses and mothers’ (377C) to continue telling at least some of the stories of their normal repertory, but stipulated that most of those had to go.⁶ In his younger years Plato used the term ‘old wives tales’ only in a belittling

2 I had already written my contribution before the appearance of S. West 2003, which partially covers the same ground. For wool working women see most recently Killet 1994:115-24, Larsson Lovén 1998, Vickers 1999, Kosmopoulou 2001:300-02, Stears 2001.

3 For Linos see most recently Schmidt 1995, Bremmer 1999.

4 Note also Theoc. 27.74; Verg. *G.* 4.435; Wille 1967:107f.

5 Jameson 1990:188.

manner as in the *Lysis* (205D), *Gorgias* (527A), *Theaetetus* (176B), and *Hippias Major* (286A) where the Spartans listening to Hippias are compared to children listening to old women—hardly a favourable comparison. It must be his abiding interest in education that makes Plato our main source for such tales in ancient Greece. Yet the expression itself would have a long life and *aniles fabellae* would be the regular object of scorn in Roman society.⁷

Interestingly, around AD 300 we find one more example of both the maidens at the loom and the old women. After a scathing discussion of the myth of Attis, the Christian Arnobius rhetorically asks: 'When you read through such stories, I ask, do you not have the impression that you are listening to girls at the loom beguiling the boredom of a tedious task, or old women trying hard to distract credulous children, and giving out all sorts of fiction under the guise of truth?' (5.14, tr. G.E. McCracken). It is not clear where the well-read Arnobius got his idea of the maidens from, but he will hardly have been referring to his own time.

We have even less material on mothers telling stories. Yet there is an interesting passage in Euripides' *Wise Melanippe*, which is usually overlooked. In a speech to defend her babies, Melanippe says: 'Heaven and Earth were once a single form; but when they were separated from each other into two, they bore and delivered into the light all things: trees, winged creatures, beasts reared by the briny sea—and the human race.' The audience must have been pretty surprised to hear these Orphic doctrines,⁸ after she had assured them: 'This account is not my own; I had it from my mother' (fr. 484 Nauck², tr. C. Collard *et al.*). What we notice here is that mothers apparently could be trusted to be more serious in their myth-telling than nurses. The latter would try to frighten children with bogey figures who had little life independent of the world of children, such as Akko,⁹ Alphito (Plut. *Mor.* 1040b), Gello,¹⁰ Lamia,¹¹ and Mormo.¹²

Although early youth may seem to us the most normal age for mothers to tell stories to their children, the Greeks sometimes seems to have thought differently. In his *Life of Theseus*, Plutarch tells us that during the Athenian festival of the Oschophoria the *deipnophoroi*, women who imitated the mothers of the adoles-

6 For nurses in ancient Greece see Bradley 1991:13-36, Capomacchia 1994, 1999, Kosmopoulou 2001:285-92.

7 Massaro 1977, note also Moser-Rath 1977, Ziolkowski 2002.

8 For the Orphic content see Bernabé 2002:216f., Bremmer 2004.

9 Robert 1967:119-23, Strubbe 1978:378f., Winkler 1982, Kassel and Austin on Hermippus fr. 6.

10 Oeconomides 1965, Herter 1975:50f., D.R. West 1991, Johnston 1999:165f.

11 Douris *FGrH* 76 F 17; Phot. λ 61Theod. (with all references in the scholia); Halm-Tisserant 1989:67-82, Johnston 1999:173f., Tortorelli Ghidini 2000.

12 Robert 1966:119f., Herter 1975:50, M.L. West 1977:107, Johnston 1999:179f.

cents that had been selected by lot to accompany Theseus to Crete, once again told myths to the adolescent participants in the festival to encourage them. There is something peculiar about the notice, since one would not have expected mothers telling stories to their adolescent children, but lack of further information prevents us from any insight in this matter.¹³

Adults naturally could no longer believe such stories and referred contemptuously to the old ladies they had once listened to in awe. It cannot have helped either that old women were not highly esteemed as a class in ancient Greece.¹⁴ It was different with the mother who was perhaps the most valued female for the Greek male. It would have been impossible to speak disparagingly about her.¹⁵ That is why we find this difference in the appreciation of women and nurses regarding their telling of myths.

2. *Men's leschai*

Let us now move to the world of the males and concentrate on the *leschê*. In the last decade, virtually at the same time and independent from one another, both Walter Burkert and Richard Buxton have again drawn attention to this elusive term.¹⁶ Burkert concentrated on possible Near Eastern connections, whereas Buxton focussed on the performance of myths and stories in the *leschê*. He concluded that 'it is safest to regard the *leschê* as something about which we know tantalisingly little—but that little suggests there are interesting things which escape us. What we do know is that the *leschê* was a context within which itinerant singers, like Homer in the *Life*, could find an audience.'¹⁷ As neither of them has analysed all the material available, I would like to investigate the *leschê* once again. I will argue against Burkert that the institution had fewer religious roots than he suggests, and against Buxton that we know more about the *leschê* than he supposes, but less about its connection with singers than he thinks.

There are of course several ways of approaching the problem. As the institution is of considerable antiquity and probably reaches back into Mycenaean times (below), it may be rewarding to take our point of departure in that period. A fresh investigation of the Archaic Greek calendar has demonstrated that Greek society

13 Plut. *Thes.* 23.4 = Demon *FGrH* 327 F 6. For the Oschophoria and the *deipnophoroi* see Calame²1996:143-48, Parker 1996:309f., 315f., Waldner 2000:102-75.

14 Bremmer 1987a, Pfisterer-Haas 1988, Zanker 1989.

15 Golden 1990:101-04, several studies in *Kentron* 8-9 (1992-94) and in *Ithaca* 16-17 (2000-01):23-145; note also the highly sentimental view of Wilamowitz, himself a 'Mutterkind,' as quoted by Braun 2000:621f. note 20.

16 Burkert 1993, reprinted in Burkert 2003:135-53, Buxton 1994:40-44. From the older studies the best is Bourguet 1877-1919.

17 Buxton 1994:43f.

of the late Mycenaean era was divided into three areas, each with a different calendar and its own dialect: the West Greeks (the later Thessalians, Phocians, Boeotians, Dorians and Lesbians, amongst others), the later Ionians and the later Arcado-Cypriots.¹⁸ As the first group provides the best information, we will start with them, beginning with the Thessalians, the most Northern group of the 'West Greeks' to provide some information about the *lesché*.

Admittedly, we do not find any mention of the *lesché* itself among the Thessalians, but we can deduce its (former?) existence from the fact that they had a month Leschanorios.¹⁹ The same month can be found on Crete in an unknown fourth-century city (*IC* II.XXX.1, 4) and in second-century Gortyn (*IC* IV.181, 17 and 26),²⁰ and its corresponding festival will therefore almost certainly have been a Mycenaean inheritance.²¹ Originally, *Leschanôr, 'having men in the *lesché*, *leschai*,' seems to have been the name of a divine patron of the *lesché*. The existence of such a patron can probably also be deduced from the Arcadian month name Leschanasios of Tegea (*IG* V 2.3, 29), which looks like the Arcadian variant of the Thessalian month name and presumes a festival *Leschanasia. Trümpy explains the name as a festival celebrated in honour of *Leschanax, 'Ruler of the *lesché*,' but normal Greek word formation would have given Leschanaxios or Leschanaktios and the name must be considered to be still unexplained.²² This month, too, almost certainly reaches back to the Mycenaean era, just like another Arcadian month name, Lapatos, is already attested in Linear B. We might even guess its place in the Mycenaean calendars. Chaniotis has observed that in Gortyn the month must have marked an important moment in the year and he suspects it to have been the first month of the second half of the year. And indeed, this is exactly the same position of the spring month Leschanorios in the Thessalian calendar.²³ As the related name Leschanoridas is attested only in fourth-century Tenedos (*VDI* 1974.1, 94) and fourth/third-century Chersonnesus (*SEG* 36.697), areas with a 'West Greek' population, it seems reasonable to assign Apollo Leschanorios, who is mentioned in some literary sources, to a 'West Greek' area too.²⁴

18 Trümpy 1997:286-89.

19 *IG* IX 2. 207c, 340a-1, 349c, 546, 960-1 *etc.*

20 Burkert 2003:143, also assigns the month to Achaia Phthiotis, but our only testimony, a *Freilasungsurkunde* from Thebes, uses Thessalian month names and does not correspond with what we know of the Theban calendar, *cf.* Trümpy 1997:239.

21 Thus, persuasively, Trümpy 1997:256. Sporn 2002:152 suggests a Spartan origin, but the month is not attested in Sparta.

22 *Contra* Trümpy 1997:254.

23 Chaniotis 1997:24 (I thank the author for kindly sending me a copy of his article), Trümpy 1997:216 (Thessalian calendar). Trümpy 1997:189 is unnecessarily sceptical about its spring position in Crete.

We have perhaps an indication of what happened in Thessalian *leschai* through a fifth-century dedication to Apollo Leschaios by a certain Aristion and his fellow *daphnêphoroi* in the context of the Delphic enneaeteric festival Septerion. The group made its dedication in the Deipnias area on the border of Larissa's territory during their procession from Tempe to Delphi in commemoration of Apollo's legendary procession after he had killed the dragon Python.²⁵ This was the occasion that the *daphnêphoroi* broke their fast for the first time—hence the name Deipnias—and Bruno Helly has attractively connected the epithet of the god with meals in a *leschê* by comparing the information that common meals were actually called *leschai* in Boiotia.²⁶ However this may be, in Thessaly we do find a fifth-century Leschos (*IG* II/III² 1956) and a third-century Leschinas (*IG* IX 2.517, 57), names which surely confirm the one-time existence of Thessalian *leschai*.

In fact, meals were important in other *leschai* too. An interesting example is the treasury of the Knidians in Delphi, which was famous for its paintings by Polygnotus.²⁷ It is regularly overlooked in discussions of this *leschê* that it was not the Knidians but the Delphians who called this sumptuous building a *leschê*. This is made clear by Pausanias, who provides a valuable testimony to the existence of the *leschê* in Phocis by relating: 'It is called by the Delphians *leschê*, because in former times they used to meet there to discuss matters which were more serious and those which were *mythôdê*' (Paus. 10.25.1). The architecture of the Knidian building strongly suggests that it was used as a dining hall.²⁸ On the other hand, its importance for discussion is confirmed by the fact that it was in this building that Plutarch (*Mor.* 412c) situated his dialogue on the decline of oracles. Several later sources indeed mention the *leschê* as a place for philosophical disputations,²⁹ and that is undoubtedly the reason why Heraclides Ponticus Junior called his book on philosophical problems *Leschai*.³⁰ This meaning continued that of 'serious discus-

24 Cleanthes *SVF* I.123, 33; Cornutus 32 (with an improbable explanation); Plut. *Mor.* 385c.

25 Pind. fr. 249a Maehler, *Pae.* X(a), cf. Rutherford 2001:200-05; Hdt. 6.34.2; Ephoros *FGrH* 70 F 31b; Theopomp. *FGrH* 117 F 80; Callim. fr. 86-89, 194.34-36 Pfeiffer; *IG* IX 2.1234; Plut. *Mor.* 293c, 417e-418d, 1136a; Ael. *VH.* 3.1; Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.11-14 Drachmann; more recently, Brelich 1969:387-438, Burkert 1983:127-30.

26 *IG* IX 2.1027, cf. Helly 1987:141f., who compares *Etym. Magnum* 561 = *Etymologicum Gudianum* λ 366: Λέσχαι παρὰ Βοιωτοῖς τὰ κοινὰ δειπνητήρια (with many thanks to Aphrodite Avaganiou for showing me her edition of the inscription in her forthcoming study of the Thessalian cults). For Boiotian common meals note also Plato, *Leg.* 636B; Polyaeus, *Strategemata* 2.3.11.

27 See most recently Kebrić 1983, Stansbury-O'Donnell 1989:203-15, Cousin 2000, Oakley 2001.

28 Pouilloux 1960:120-39, Tomlinson 1980:224-28, Maass 1993, 178ff.

29 Plut. *Mor.* 385c; Hierocles, fr. 2 Arnim; Ath. 5.192a; Phot. λ 210 Theod. (with the lexicographical references); Apost. 10.59.

30 Heraclides *SH* 475-80 Lloyd-Jones/Parsons.

sion, council,' which we already find in Herodotus (2.32, 9.71) and which must also be its meaning in Callimachus' moving epigram for his friend Heraclitus where he remembers how often 'the two of us made the sun go down in *lesché*.³¹ In fact, discussion must have been the most striking element of the earlier *lesché*, although the Greeks in general clearly were not greatly impressed by the quality of the arguments offered. It is hard to think of any other place where people spoke in public that has generated so many words connected with 'quibbling,' 'vaunting' or 'talking rubbish,' right down to the insulting *κυσολέσχης* (*PCG Adesp.* 186 KA).³²

Plutarch also mentions another aspect of the *lesché*. When they entered the building, they saw their friends already sitting and waiting for them. It is rather striking that the friends sat at a table and were not reclining, as was usual at a symposium. And indeed, whenever any detail is given it is invariably said that people are *sitting* in *leschai*.³³ Now seated dining was still the rule in Homer,³⁴ and Aeschylus 'Homerizes' the cannibalism of Thyestes by letting him eat his children sitting.³⁵ Sitting was also customary among the Macedonians (*Curtius* 8.6.5), Thracians (*Xen. An.* 7.3.21; *Ath.* 4.151a), Illyrians (*Theopompos FGrH* 115 F 39), Celts (*Posidonius* fr. 87.15), ancient Romans,³⁶ and early Egyptians (*Ath.* 5.191f). As among these more 'Barbarian' peoples, the custom had also been preserved in conservative Crete and backwards Arcadia.³⁷ In Athens, sitting had maintained itself not only at the festival of the *Anthesteria*,³⁸ but also in the Tholos in the Agora where the *prytaneis* took their meal sitting. In fact, archaeology has uncovered a number of round buildings in sanctuaries where dining clearly took place sitting and not reclining.³⁹ Evidently, the *lesché*, too, had preserved the earlier 'Homeric' position.

31 Callim. *Epigr.* 2; add to Pfeiffer's testimonia *Apost.* 17.97; Merli 1997.

32 I collect here the relevant verbs (without their corresponding nouns and adjectives), nouns and adjectives: (κατ)ἄδολεσχέω, ἀερολέσχης, ἔλλεσχος, ἐννομολέσχης, ἐρίλεσχης (*Parthenius* fr. 22 with *Lightfoot ad loc.*), ἰσχνολέσχης (not in *LSJ*; *Suda* ε 2613), λεσχάζω, λεσχαίνω, λεσχῆν, λεσχῆνευμον (not in *LSJ*; *IC* II.v.4), (προ)λεσχηνεύω, ληρολεσχέω (not in *LSJ*; *Tzetzes* on *Ar. Nub.* 291a, 331, 358), λογολεσχέω, μεταρσιολεσχέω, μετεωρολεσχέω, ὄνειρολεσχία, οὐρανολέσχει (not in *LSJ*; *Eustathius* on *Od.* 1.419), περιλεσχῆνευτος, πλατυλέσχης, πρόλεσχος, στενολεσχέω, χρησμολέσχης.

33 *Hes. Op.* 501; *PCG Adesp.* *823 KA (with all paroemiographical references); *Vita Homeri* 12, 15; *Plut. Lyc.* 16.1, *Mor.* 412d; *Ael. VH* 2.34; *Procop. Goth.* 7.32.9.4; *Etymologicum Gudianum* a 23, l 308.

34 *Hom. Il.* 9.199 ff., 24.126, 457 ff.; *Od.* 1.130 ff., 3.32 and 472, 4.238, 7.203, 17.478, 20.136.

35 *Aesch. Ag.* 1594., with a characteristically learned note by *Eduard Fraenkel*.

36 *Varro apud Servius, Aen.* 7.176; *Isid. Etym.* 20.11.9; *Rathje* 1983:23f.

37 *Crete*: *Pyrgion FGrH* 467 F 1; *Heraclides Lembus* fr. 15 *Dilts*; *Cic. Mur.*, 35. *Arcadia*: *Ath.* 4.148f-149d.

38 For the *Anthesteria* see most recently *Burkert* 1983:213-47, *Bowie* 1993:35-39, 146-50, *Bremmer* 2003:46-50.

Food must also have been an important item of the *leschai* in Sparta, since according to Cratinus (fr. 175 KA) the Spartan *lesché* was a kind of *Schlaraffenland* where sausages were nailed to the walls. Admittedly, the Spartan standard diet was extremely frugal and even sacrifices, the usual providers of meat in antiquity, small and cheap.⁴⁰ Yet the produce of the hunt could be brought as a desert to the mess where, in order to strengthen the competitive spirit, the names of the contributors were announced publicly.⁴¹ Cratinus, then, will certainly have overdone his picture, but he can hardly have been totally off the mark.

Pausanias mentions two specific *leschai* in Sparta. The *lesché* of the (otherwise unknown) Crotani near the tombs of the royal dynasty of the Agiadae (3.14.2) and the *Poikilê* near the heroa of the family of the Aegeids (3.15.8). It is difficult to deduce the function of these *leschai* from Pausanias' sparse notices, but they seem to have belonged to aristocratic families. Burkert suggests that they might have been connected with the aristocratic 'Toten- bzw. Heroenkult,'⁴² but similar 'club houses' are attested elsewhere. Already in the early 1930s Louis Gernet had compared these Spartan *leschai* to other houses of groups of men, such as the shrine of mystery rites (*telestêrion*) that Themistocles had rebuilt for his clan, the Lykomids, in Phlya after the Persian invasion. Pausanias calls the building a *klision* and reports that the Lykomids chanted songs of Orpheus and a hymn to Demeter at their ceremonies.⁴³ Similar buildings are the *megara* of the Kouretes in Messene (Paus. 4.31.9), of the Meliastai in Mantinea (Paus. 8.6.5) and of the mystery cult of Despoina in Lycosoura (Paus. 8.37.8). Gernet persuasively pointed to the initiatory function of the Kouretes,⁴⁴ which also fits the 'wolfish' name of the Lykomids,⁴⁵ and compared the *lesché* to a so-called 'men's house,' a comparison we will come back to in a moment.⁴⁶

In any case, neither of these aristocratic *leschai* seems to have been the *lesché* where the members of a phyle had to bring a new born child in order to have it

39 Cooper and Morris 1990, 66-85, Hoensch 2003:186ff.

40 Frugal diet: Hdt. 9.82; Ar. Av. 1281-82, *Lys.* 279; Antiphanes fr. 46 KA; Diphilus fr. 96 KA; Xen. *Lac.* 2.5-6, 5.3. Sacrifice: Plato *Alc.* 2.149A; Plut. *Lyc.* 19.8.

41 Xen. *Lac.* 4.7; Masson 1986:137 (on the name Therikyôn).

42 Burkert 2003:140.

43 Lykomids: Simonides fr. 627 Page; Plut. *Them.* 1; Paus. 1.22.7, 4.1.5-9, 9.27.2 and 30.12; Hesychius λ 1391; *IG II²* 2670, 3559; note also Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.20.4-6 on the celebration of mysteries at Phlya.

44 For their background in initiation see most recently Legras 1993, Graf 1999.

45 For wolves and initiation see Bremmer 1987b:43.

46 Gernet and Boulanger 1970:72; as regards the Kouretes the same suggestion had already been made by Harrison 1911:27 note 3. For some of these, often underground, houses, see also Robert 1969:1005-07.

accepted into the community. Plutarch (*Lyc.* 16.1) relates that the investigation of the child was conducted by the 'eldest of the members of the *phylê*,' and his notice implies that in earlier times a *leschê* must have occupied an important position in a phyle in conservative Sparta.

The presence of old men in Spartan *leschai* is already mentioned by Cratinus (fr. 175 KA), and the antiquity of this element of the *leschê* is confirmed by Sophocles, who in his *Antigone* (160) speaks of a 'specially convoked *leschê* of elders.' In these passages the old still clearly seem to have a certain political clout. This is certainly no longer the case in the *Life of Homer* (12) where the poet sits down 'in the *leschai* of the old men' or in an anecdote about Epicharmus who 'in extreme old age' sits in a *leschê* 'with some of his contemporaries' droning on about their limited life expectancy (Ael. *VH.* 2.34 = Epicharmus T 16 KA).⁴⁷

We have a few other other testimonies about *leschai* in Dorian areas. If the anecdote about Epicharmus has any connection with historical reality, it might point to a *leschê* in his town, Syracuse, but its existence in Megara seems to be more certain. The city knew common meals and Theognis uses the *hapax leschazô*, the seemingly earliest example of a verb connected with *leschê* with the meaning 'talking rubbish'.⁴⁸ We move onto firmer ground in Kos where *ca.* 300 BC a certain Diomedon forbids 'to use the *leschê* in the sanctuary as a store room'; this *leschê* may have been a dining room gone out of use.⁴⁹ However, the oldest mention in Dorian areas occurs in Rhodian Kamiros where an Archaic inscription says: 'I am the *lescha* of Euthytidas, son of Praxiodos, son of Euphagos, son of Euphylidas.' As in the Spartan cases, Burkert suggests that we may have here a dining hall in a funerary context,⁵⁰ but the meaning 'grave' is attested in a late Pisidian inscription from Termessos (*TAM* III.187) and seems therefore more attractive. We also note a *Leschaios* on fourth-century Rhodes (*SEG* 12.360.II), which seems to point to worship of Apollo *Leschaios* on the island. The latest Dorian example is the first-century (BC) 'Leschis, son of Ammon' from Cyrenaica with the typically local ending *-is* (*SEG* 26.1839, 17), but we do not know if there once had been a real *leschê* in the Pentapolis as background to this name.

Our final testimonies for *leschai* among the 'West Greeks' derive from the Aeolians. The pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer* (12, 13) represents Homer performing in the *leschai* in Cyme, and from the third century BC onwards several sources mention a certain *Lesches* of Lesbos (T 1-6 Bern. = T 3-7 Davies) as the

47 Note also *IC* II.v.51, 2, a fragmentary Cretan grave epigram of the early Empire: ἐρίσῃμα [γ]ερόντων λῆσχῆνευμ' ἄλιας παιδὶ.

48 Theognis 309 (meals), 613 (verb).

49 Segre 1993:I.ED 149.84f. (replacing earlier editions).

50 *SEG* 26.867 (with bibliography); Burkert 2003:II.140.

author of the *Ilias Parva* who, according to Phanias of Lesbos (fr. 33 Wehrli²), lived before Terpander. Unfortunately, the basis for his chronology is hard to see and one cannot but suspect educated guesswork.

As the Tegean month name Leschanasios (above) is the only testimony for possible *leschai* among Arcado-Cypriots, we proceed to the Attic-Ionian area. In Athens there must have been several *leschai*. A fifth-century *horos*-stone marks off 'public *leschai*' (IG I³ 1102), and such boundary stones may well have been a subject in Antiphon's 'On Boundaries' against Nikokles, which mentioned *leschai* (Harp. s.v. *leschai*). Two other fourth-century *horos*-stones were found between the Areopagus and the Pnyx in the deme of Melite (II² 2620a, b). Finally, a fourth-century inscription from Aixone stipulates that details of a leasing contract should be inscribed on two stelai and set up both in the temple of Hebe and in the *leschê*, presumably of the deme (II² 2492, 23). The last clause is particularly interesting, as it shows that this *leschê* still performed an official function in the deme. The *leschai* perhaps continued to have 'political' force as a parallel institution to the deme-assembly for discussion of common affairs, like social events in the community hall and church alongside formal town meetings. Perhaps it was the combination of such *leschai* with the tradition of 360 γένη in Athens that led to the idea of 360 *leschai* in Athens that we can read in the scholia on Hesiod's *Works* (491).⁵¹

As the tragedians use the term to denote skilful talking, conversation, social company or council,⁵² we may safely deduce these activities as those practised in the *leschê*. Moreover, there also seems to have been a kind of social code, as was the case at the symposium, since according to the fourth-century comedy playwright Epicrates it was not done to make insulting gestures in the *leschê*.⁵³ In any case, the *leschê* was already early on notorious in Athens for its discussions without end, since it was proverbial to say 'I break up the *leschai*' when it was time for work.⁵⁴

Moving from Athens to Euboea we notice the Ἰακμάων λέσχη, the 'Young Men's *Leschê*' near Chalcis. The notice in Plutarch's *Greek Questions* (298d) relates that the place received its name from the protection given by young men in the prime of their youth to a suppliant. Unfortunately, the time when this happened is not specified, but the tradition seems to imply that among the Chalcidians the *leschê* once was a reputable institution. This suggestion is perhaps supported by the occurrence of a Lescheus in fourth-century Eretria (IG XII 9.191B, 29 and 245B, 381).

51 Oikonomides 1987 goes too far in identifying all kinds of places as *leschai*.

52 Aesch. *Cho.* 665, *Eum.* 365; Soph. *Ant.* 160, *OC* 167; Eur. *Hipp.* 384, *IA* 1001, fr. 473 Nauck².

53 Epicrates fr. 10, 29-31 KA, but the text is somewhat corrupt.

54 Eupolis fr. 192, 156 KA; Plato fr. 244 KA.

Our oldest testimony in Ionia undoubtedly derives from the *Odyssey*, where Melanthe reviles Odysseus: 'And you are unwilling to go to a smithy to sleep or to a *lesché*, but you talk too much here [*sc.* in the palace of Odysseus]' (18.328-9, tr. Buxton). The passage is elaborated upon by Hesiod (*Op.* 493-501),⁵⁵ who adds that the *lesché* is warm in winter, which perhaps is additional information regarding the *leschai* in Boiotia, where in fifth-century Thespieae we also find a Lesschon (*IG VII.1888-9*, 5). Melanthe's words already suggest that idle talk was a favourite pastime in the *lesché*, and this surely is confirmed by Heraclitus' use of the verb *λεσχηνεύομαι* (B 5 DK). Finally, in addition to Cyme, the *Life of Homer* (15) also represents the poet as performing in the *lesché* of Phocaea. That is all that we seem to be able to say about the *leschai* of the Ionians.⁵⁶

Let us now try to draw some conclusions about the nature and history of the *lesché*. It seems almost certain that the *lesché* was an institution already existing in Mycenaean times; in fact, both the position of Leschanorios/Leschanasios in the calendar and the existence of the divine patron seem to point to an important position of the *lesché* in that era. Among the 'West Greeks' the patronage was taken over by Apollo Leschanorios/Leschaos, who has not been found among the Ionians. This absence fits Apollo's absence from the Ionian *Urkalender* and is one more argument for this god being a 'West Greek' creation.⁵⁷ Apollo's connection with the coming of a new season or year, with initiation and with the assembly of the people (the Dorian *Apellai* that perhaps has given him his name) makes it probable that the *leschai*, in their days of political importance, were (one of?) the places where the old men admitted the young men to the ranks of the adults, once a year.⁵⁸

The early function of the Greek *lesché* can only be approximately reconstructed. Yet its still visible connection with both a Spartan *phylê* and an Athenian deme as well as the prominence of the elder males suggests that in the last centuries of the second millennium and in the first centuries of the first millennium BC the *lesché* functioned as a kind of meeting house of the youths (Chalcis) or the most important males of the community; evidently, these also took their communal meals there, just as they would do, for example, in the Athenian *prytanikon*. The fact that people did not recline but remained sitting in the *lesché* is an important indication for its origin in a more distant era.

55 Note that this passage probably inspired Ausonius, *Epistulae* 6.23, where in a macaronic masterpiece *lesché* probably means 'existence,' cf. Green 1991:615f.

56 For *lesché* as a building note also Pollux 9.49 and, perhaps, *P Oxy.* 3239.I.10.

57 Trümper 1997:32f., referring to Burkert 1975, but see now Beekes 2003.

58 For these aspects of Apollo see Versnel 1993:289-334.

At the same time, the building could apparently also function as a guesthouse for passing strangers. Burkert has well compared the information by the Cretan *Lokalthistoriker* Dosiadas (*FGrH* 458 F 2) that in every Cretan polis there were two buildings. The first was the men's house (*andreion*) where the communal meals were taken but also tables for guests were present, whereas the second was a *koimêtêrion*, a guesthouse.⁵⁹ In other words, Crete had divided into two buildings what in earlier times or in other places had been only one.⁶⁰

Exactly a century ago (from the time of my writing) an *Assistent* in the Bremen Museum für Völker- und Handelskunde, Heinrich Schurtz (1863-1903), had already noted the importance of the *lesché* for the community and interpreted it as the men's house of 'primitive' peoples.⁶¹ In the spirit of his time, Schurtz put the men's house in an evolutionistic context and applied the notion to a whole range of buildings, ranging from the house of the unmarried youths of a community to the place where the elders came together to discuss matters of communal interest and with many forms in between; it was also in this house that strangers normally stayed the night.⁶² As we just saw, Gernet had reached the same conclusion and as a convinced Durkheimian he had undoubtedly already read Schurtz; elsewhere in his oeuvre he points out that in his interpretation of the Spartan *syssitia* as 'men's houses' Schurtz had been pre-empted by Bachofen in his *Mutterrecht*.⁶³ Although we may have some qualms about the theoretical framework of Schurtz and although the scarcity of early sources hardly allows us any certainty,⁶⁴ his suggestion is very attractive given the ubiquitous worldwide presence of the men's house on earth, which has left traces even in Europe.⁶⁵

It is clear that already at an early stage the *lesché* had lost most of its political importance. It still remained, though, the place *par excellence* for old men to muse about things past and present. At one time, discussions must have been almost without end and this evidently became less and less acceptable after the birth of the symposium and the development of different political institutions, such as the assembly. This process of decline probably took place at different speeds in differ-

59 Burkert 2003:142f. For the *andreion* see Laurencic 1988.

60 Note that *klision*, Pausanias' term for the 'men's house' of the Lykomids, can also mean 'inn' (Hesychius κ 3017).

61 Schurtz 1902:313, 331. Schurtz was accepted by Brelich 1969:424 note 69, who in turn is accepted by Buxton 1994:42, but he seems to have been overlooked by Burkert 1993.

62 Schurtz 1902:209.

63 Gernet 1983:120, Usener 1907:122 mentions Schurtz in his discussion of the ephebes, but saw the book too late to incorporate it properly.

64 See the critique by Schlesier 1953:177-95; for a debatable explanation of the interest in men's societies at Schurtz's time see See 1994:319-42; more persuasively, Brunotte 2004a,b.

65 Schurtz 1902:312-17, Wolfram 1956.

ent communities, but must already have been fairly advanced in the fifth century BC. That is why *leschê* also acquired the meanings 'conversation,' 'small talk,' *causerie*, telling of big stories (below) *etc.*⁶⁶ It is therefore understandable that the *leschê* virtually stopped being productive in an onomastical respect in the third century BC; the only exceptions are the early second-century Pergamene poet Leschides, whose origin is unfortunately unknown,⁶⁷ and the example from the outlying corner of the Libyan Pentapolis (above). It returned to onomastic favour only in the first century AD, but now as a women's name ('Miss Gossip?').⁶⁸ Can there be a clearer sign that this once important male institution had lost all of its former significance?

There is one final testimony on the *leschê* which we have left until this moment, since its value is hard to evaluate. At the end of the nineteenth century, William Robertson Smith noted the resemblance between *leschê* and Hebrew *liškah*, of which the oldest mention occurs in *1 Samuel* (9.19-22).⁶⁹ When Saul has met Samuel, the latter invites him to a 'high place.' There he brought Saul and his servant 'into the *liškah*, and made them sit in the chiefest place among those that had been invited, which were about thirty men.' Burkert reasonably suggests that the *liškah* is here a building where people dine from sacrifice,⁷⁰ even though our text is silent about any religious ritual. After the religious centralisation in Jerusalem by Solomon the *liškah* is found mainly connected with the Temple, although, strangely enough, it does not occur in the chapters on the building of Salomo's temple (*1 Kings* 6-7). In the later books of the *Old Testament*, it is a Temple hall where people drink (*Jeremiah* 35.4) or priests eat (*Ezekiel* 42.13), but which can also serve as a Temple store room for valuables (*Ezra* 8.29) or as the office of a scribe in the royal palace (*Jeremiah* 36.12, 20). Apparently, the main resemblance between *leschê* and *liškah* is that both were buildings where one could dine, and Palestinian archeological evidence seems to suggest that this dining in Israel too happened on benches.⁷¹ The Hebrew material, then, is a welcome confirmation of our observation that the *leschê* was also a dining hall. And it is the more welcome, since the term *liškah* must have existed already in the first centuries of the first mil-

66 Note its occurrence as *causerie* in Cicero, *Att.* 6.5.1, 12.1. For Cicero's use of Greek in his letters to Atticus see Swain 2002:146-62.

67 For Leschides see Suda λ 311 = *FGrH* 172 T 1 = SH 503 Lloyd-Jones/Parsons, *cf.* Cameron 1995:282f. Lloyd-Jones/Parsons have overlooked his mention in Suda κ 2395.

68 Solin 1982:1168, 1313.

69 Smith ²1894:254 note 6.

70 Burkert 2003:137f.; add to Burkert's literature Kellermann 1984, but note also *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament* I 665; IV 703; VI 568-69, 1064; 1197; VIII 652; Brown 1995-2001:1.18, 43, 141-2, II.96, 300, 311, III.340.

71 The best discussion is Kellermann 1984:607 (benches).

lennium BC, given its occurrence in 1 *Samuel* and in an, admittedly damaged, Punic inscription.⁷²

Smith's idea of a connection between *lesché* and *liškah* was virtually immediately accepted by the ancient historian Eduard Meyer (1855-1930) and the Indo-Europeanist Otto Schrader (1855-1919), who both suggested that an Anatolian language stood at the cradle of the Greek and Hebrew terms.⁷³ Although this view has not been totally abandoned by post-war linguists,⁷⁴ it has been rejected by the majority of them, who now opt for a Greek etymology of *lesché* and connect the term with the root *λεχ.⁷⁵ Burkert goes along with this majority and looks for connections with the Mycenaean festival Lechestroterion and the Roman *lectisternium*,⁷⁶ but nothing in our later sources points into that particular ritual direction. As 'lying' was hardly the most prominent feature of the *lesché* (above), and *liškah* stands isolated in North West Semitic,⁷⁷ its Anatolian origin still seems attractive. Given the differences between the Greek and Israelite functions, on the one hand, and its Anatolian/Rhodian connections with a grave, on the other (above), the original meaning of the Anatolian verbal ancestor may well have been a specific shape of building.

Having now acquired a relatively clear picture of what the *lesché* was in the course of time, we can finally attack the problem posed by the few passages that connect the *lesché* with the telling of myth: Pausanias on the Delphian *lesché* and the mention in the *Life of Homer*. From these, the latter is assigned by Wilamowitz to the period 130-80 BC, but other students of the *Life* are inclined to date it to the first centuries AD.⁷⁸ In any case, the *Life* hardly contains old traditions, and it seems better to see the reference to Homer's performance in the *lesché* of Cyme as a narratological device to stress the poet's poor position before people try to have him accepted by the town's *boulê*, 'senate,' which dismally fails this unique opportunity for eternal fame. In other communities, too, Homer has to put up with positions hardly befitting his poetical pre-eminence, such as being kept by a schoolmaster in Phocaea (15), being hosted by a goat herd in Pitys (21), being a

72 Hoftijzer and Jongeling 1995:1.576.

73 Meyer ²1909:627, Schrader 1911:469.

74 Their suggestion is still accepted by Furnée 1972:257, who in note 36 also points to a non-Indo-European suffix -αρο-/α and compares λεσχάρα? (*Etymologicum Genuinum* s.v. Λεσχάρα Alpers).

75 See the etymological dictionaries of Frisk and Chantraine.

76 *Lechestroterion*: PY Fr 343+1217. *Lectisternium*: see the bibliography in Beard 1998:1.63 note 195.

77 Kellermann 1984, M.L. West 1997:38 (who also rejects a Greek etymology, but favours an origin from the Near East).

78 Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1916:414ff., Schmid and Stählin 1929:84 note 7. For English translations see Lefkowitz 1981:139-55, M.L. West 2003:354-403 (with the best modern edition).

tutor to a Chian (24), being schoolmaster in Chios (25) *etc.* In other words, the passage can hardly be adduced in support of a one-time place where itinerant poets performed their myths.

Pausanias' reference is more persuasive. He clearly opposes 'matters which were more serious' to 'those which were *mythôdês*,' which has here the meaning 'fictitious,' 'fabulous,' 'over the top,' but not the meaning 'serious myth.' The same meaning we find, for example in Plutarch and Lucian;⁷⁹ the meaning is also reflected in Apuleius' reference to the *fabulam Graecanicam* in the Prologue of his *Metamorphoses*. In these authors, *mythos* 'in the conventional rhetorical division of narrative, denotes the category of untrue-and-unlike-the-truth,' a meaning that can be found widely after Aristotle.⁸⁰ Pausanias, then, is a rather important testimony that some kind of untrue narrative with entertainment value was told in the *leschê*; surely the Greeks must have also told myths among their entertaining tales to pass the time. We find a similar connection between *leschê* and *mythos* in two entries in Hesychius λ 703-4 where we read: λεσχηνεῖ and [...] μυθολογεῖ and λεσχηνευθέντα: μυθολογηθέντα. Evidently, these references imply the same association between the *leschê* and the telling of 'tall' stories.

Finally, the latest connection between myth and the *leschê* is found in Eustathius, who in his commentary on *Iliad* 9.502-7 refers to the traditional stories about the gods as μυθολέσχα. In his edition, my compatriot Van der Valk tersely notes '*contemptum denotat*' and '*ex Eust. solo, ut videtur, est nota*.'⁸¹ With these examples we have exhausted our material. Much about the *leschê* still remains obscure, but one thing seems now pretty clear: the *leschê* was hardly the place for itinerant singers, but after its political heyday many a Greek may have listened there to myths, even though more in the spirit of entertainment than in that of a serious tale.⁸²

79 Plut. *Rom.* 25.4 μυθῶδές ἐστι, μᾶλλον δ' ὅλως ἄπιστον, *Sol.* 32.4 ἀπίθανος παντάπασι καὶ μυθῶδης; Lucian *VH.* 1.2 τεράστια καὶ μυθῶδη, *Philops.* 5.2 ἄπιστα καὶ μυθῶδη; Philostr. *VA.* 5.1, *Her.* 7.9.

80 Thus, on *mythos* in Ach. Tat. 1.2.3, Morgan 2001:155, who overlooked the best discussion of this meaning of *mythos*: Meijering 1987:72-90.

81 Van der Valk 1976:775.

82 For information and comments I would like to thank Rob Beekes, Bob Fowler and Ed Noort. Richard Buxton kindly corrected my English.

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Reading a myth, reconstructing its constructions¹

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MYTHS ARE STORIES by which communities live and think; they are structured by, and express, a society's realities and values, its perceptions of the world, and its place in it, and articulate its ideologies, setting out paradigms of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour; they also explore problems and possibilities. Hence they are inevitably polysemic and multifunctional, and often also multivocal. The Greek world had a long extremely complex history of complex and changing realities (and so also ideologies) with radical changes, for centuries before and after the emergence and crystallization of the polis. This is one of the factors underlying the complexities of the Greek mythological discourses; another is the intensity and breadth of the cultural interactions in the world that generated them, long and shifting interactions between Greek communities, and also, most importantly, with a variety of non Greek others, especially in the East, over many centuries. These are circumstances that facilitate complexities of representations, partly through the generation of dissonances and consequent self reflection and potential multivocality.

These complexities make Greek myths especially vulnerable to reductionist, culturally determined, readings, in which the myth is structured in accordance with the hierarchies of modern perceptual casts and filters, so that, for example, one aspect of a complex myth is privileged, and its other important meanings and functions are marginalized. In this paper I will illustrate this process, by considering a myth which has been interpreted in such a reductionist way, as a political myth with a simple message, but which, I will argue, in ancient Greek eyes had expressed a variety of meanings, and explored problems that pertained to different aspects of Athenian life and ideology. In the process I will be considering the methodologies of reading Greek myths and suggesting that it is possible to reconstruct at least the basic parameters that shaped the processes through which the

¹ I am very grateful to Professor Robert Parker for discussing aspects of this paper with me.

ancient Athenians made sense of the myth, minimizing the intrusion of culturally determined assumptions and filters.

The myth I will be discussing is that of the rape of the Athenian women by the Pelasgians.² According to this myth Pelasgians had come to Athens, stayed for some time, and during their stay built the Pelargikon wall. Then the Athenians expelled them, for reasons that differ in the different variants. In Hekataios' version it was because the Athenians had coveted the previously worthless land which they had given to the Pelasgians as a reward for building the wall, and which the Pelasgians had improved by superior cultivation. In what Herodotos calls 'the Athenian version' it was because the Pelasgians had maltreated the Athenians' sons and daughters who went to fetch water—for in those days they had no servants—and then plotted to attack Athens. The expelled Pelasgians went to Lemnos (or Lemnos and Imbros); in revenge for their expulsion, they abducted many of the Athenian women who were celebrating a festival of Artemis at Brauron and made them their concubines (*pallakas*). These women had many children, and they brought up their sons in the Athenian speech and manners. Eventually, the solidarity and superiority of the sons of the Athenian women made their Pelasgian fathers perceive them as a threat to their legitimate sons, so the Pelasgians killed both their sons and their Athenian mothers. After that, their land, animals and women became barren.³ The Pelasgians consulted the Delphic oracle and the Pythia told them to pay the Athenians whatever penalty the Athenians wanted. So they went to Athens and offered to pay the penalty, but the Athenians wanted their land, and ordered the Pelasgians to deliver it in the same condition as a couch and a table they had finely adorned at the prytaneion. The Pelasgians replied with an *adynaton*: they would deliver their land to the Athenians when a ship with a north wind accomplished the journey from the Athenians' country to Lemnos in one day—which seemed impossible; but when the Chersonese on the Hellespont was made subject to Athens, Miltiades did it.⁴

In an alternative variant the girls abducted by the Pelasgians were saved by Hymenaios, and as a result, the wedding song Hymenaios is sung in his honour by those who are married according to the law.⁵ Finally, another version, implied,

2 On this myth see Hdt. 6.137.1-138.4; see also 4.145; Hekataios *FGrH* 1 F 127; Ephoros *FGrH* 70 F 119; Philoch. *FGrH* 328 FF 99-101; Schol. BT Hom. *Il.* 1.594; Plut. *Mor.* 247d-e, 296b; Scholia in Aelium Aristidem 13.111.1-2; see also Charax *FGrH* 103 F 18; Kleidemos *FGrH* 323 F 16; Strabo 5.2.4; 9.1.18; 9.2.3; Paus. 1.28.3; Chorikios Gazaetus 17.85-6. See also Jacoby *FGrH* IIIb.1, 405-21, Osborne 1985:161f., 168, De Simone 1996:52, 66-71. On the Pelargikon wall and its relationship with the Pelasgians see also De Simone 1996:68-70, 80f., Briquel 1984:284-89. On Eur. *Hyps.* and Ar. *Lemniai* see below.

3 Hdt. 6.138.1-139.2.

4 Hdt. 6.139.2-140.1.

rather than articulated, in Plutarch,⁶ involves two significant differences. First, the sons of the Athenian girls had survived, and their descendants had a further history, in which they went to Laconia. In the Herodotean version⁷ of the story involving Lemnians going to Laconia these Lemnians had been the descendants of the Argonauts, driven out of Lemnos by the Pelasgians; the Spartans received them and gave them land, and also gave them their daughters in marriage.⁸ In Plutarch's version those incomers were the children of the Tyrrhenians / Pelasgians of Lemnos and Imbros and the Athenian women whom they had abducted from Brauron, expelled from the two islands by the Athenians. Eventually, these Tyrrhenians / Pelasgians founded Lyktos in Crete and conquered other cities. The account concludes with the statement that these people consider themselves to be kinsmen of the Athenians on their mothers' side and colonists of the Spartans. The second significant difference is that in Plutarch's version the Pelasgians / Tyrrhenians had also stolen the *xoanon* of Artemis from Brauron; for this is what is implied by the story that the descendants of the Pelasgian / Tyrrhenian Lemnian men, who were *mixobarbaroi*, had been carrying around with them a *xoanon* of Artemis which had been taken to Lemnos from Brauron.⁹

There are, then, three versions of the rape of Athenian girls by the Pelasgians. First, the version that Herodotos calls Athenian, also found in the Attidographers;¹⁰ second, the failed attempted rape involving Hymenaios; and finally, the version in Plutarch, involving a different outcome, the survival of the sons of the Pelasgians and the Athenian women. Herodotos' 'Athenian version' and the Hymenaios myth involving the rescue are, we shall see, complementary. They both pertain to marriage. Plutarch's version is an alternative to a part of Herodotos'

5 See Schol. Hom. *Il.* 18.493 (Hymenaios saved some Athenian girls who had been abducted by Pelasgians). Phot. *Bibl.* 321a speaks simply of pirates and Athenian girls, with no further details. In Serv. *Aen.* 4.99 the pirates are not identified as Tyrrhenians / Pelasgians and the cult in which the girls had been taking part was that of Demeter at Eleusis. On the myth of Hymenaios saving the Athenian girls see Jolles 1914:128 with a full list of sources. See also Sissa 1990:106-9. The fact that much later sources, such as Servius, transfer the rape to the sanctuary and cult of Demeter at Eleusis, is correlative with the fact that to non Athenians with limited access to the conceptual universe of Archaic and Classical Athens, Eleusis, the world renowned cult, was a more obvious, and to their eyes even more appropriate, locus for such a significant event. The other versions of the myth of Hymenaios do not concern me here. On Hymenaios in general see Jolles 1914:126-30; see also Bellefonds 1990:583-85, Bellefonds 1991:197-212.

6 Plut. *De mul. vir.* 247a-e; cf. *Quaest. Graec.* 296b-c.

7 Hdt. 4. 145.

8 The story continues, but the rest does not concern us here.

9 Plut. *De mul. vir.* 247d-e.

10 Another variant of this version, attested in a late source, will be discussed below, for reasons that will become apparent.

Athenian version, and it involves the generation of *mixobabarbaroi*, the rejection of these *mixobabarbaroi* by the Athenians, a more open attitude by the Spartans, and the eventual Hellenization of the *mixobabarbaroi*. Two arguments suggest that the variant in which the Lemnians who went to Sparta were the children of the Pelasgians and the Athenian girls is a later transformation of the Herodotean version in which they were the children of the Argonauts. First, the myth is structured through an Athenian *versus* Spartan opposition, in which, to begin with, the allegedly more open and hospitable Athenians rejected people who had some kinship claim on them, while the Spartans accepted them, and it ends with a claimed affiliation to both: Athenian maternal descent and the identity of a Spartan colony. This suggests that this form of the myth had been articulated after this opposition had become significant, after, I would suggest, the Peloponnesian war. Second, this version places the Athenian conquest of Lemnos not very long after the abduction;¹¹ from the perspective of fifth century Athenians this would have put the abduction in the immediate past, which for them would have been absurd, since in their perceptions the Pelasgians had left a very long time ago. I therefore suggest that this version is late, and is unlikely to have been an Athenian myth, especially since it claims that Artemis' *xoanon* had been stolen from Brauron. Its emphasis is on events after the Pelasgians' departure from Lemnos, and it explores the category *mixobabarbaroi*.

Herodotos speaks of the abductees as many among the Athenians' women.¹² But Philochoros, who was an Athenian, a participant in the culture who had himself held religious office, specified first, that the abduction took place at the Brauronia, and second, that these 'women' were unmarried girls, *parthenoi*. The extant reports of his text give different accounts of the girls' identity: in one scholion¹³ Philochoros is cited as saying that they abducted the girls who were bears (*parthenous arkteuomenas toi theoi*), in another¹⁴ as saying that they abducted girls who were basket-bearers, *kanephorous parthenous*. He may well have said that they abducted both, at the very least he appears to have mentioned both. As we shall see, this is important, for both the *arkteia* and the office of *kanephoros* were associated with marriageability. This version in Philochoros was almost certainly the Athenian version, which was reflected in Herodotos in a less than precise form as regards the victims, perhaps because the rape of the women is

11 This would be the case even if we assume that both *paides* and *mixobarbaroi* are used metaphorically here, to mean 'descendants' and mixed 'Greek and barbarians'—rather than 'sons' and 'half Greek half barbarian.'

12 See also Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 296b, who speaks of the daughters and *gynaikas* of the Athenians; cf. Plut. *De mul. vir.* 247a (*gynaikas*).

13 Philoch. *FGrH* 328 F 100.

14 Philoch. *FGrH* 328 F 101.

arguably of almost incidental importance in his narrative, and certainly because Herodotos' viewpoint was that of an outsider, while for the Athenians the juxtaposition 'females,' 'Brauron' and 'religious context' had very distinct meanings that evoked, and helped articulate the aspect of the myth that pertained to, girls' transitions.

Harpokration and Photios¹⁵ cite Euripides' *Hypsipyle*¹⁶ and Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* and *Lemniai*¹⁷ for the fact that the *arkteuomenai parthenoi* were called *arktoi*. A reference to the *arkteia* in Euripides' *Hypsipyle*, which was concerned with a Lemnian woman who had saved her father when the other Lemnian women had murdered all their men,¹⁸ suggests that this tragedy had referred to the rape of the Athenian girls by the Pelasgians of Lemnos, for it is in this myth that Lemnos, Brauron, *arkteia* and women converge. This rape had not yet happened at the time of the Euripidean tragedy's action, for in the mythological chronology, set out by Herodotos, the Pelasgians had expelled the descendants of the Argonauts from Lemnos.¹⁹ Thus, this could not be a reference to a past event,²⁰ it is a reference to the future, a prophecy, perhaps some kind of foundation legend. It is possible that the *arkteia* had been mentioned in this tragedy as an institution founded to ensure that such things would never happen in Athens. Athens is where proper marriages are acted out, thanks to the acculturation of women with the help of the *arkteia*, Lemnos is the place where women are wild. Aristophanes' *Lemniai* also seems to have implicated the Thoas-Hypsipyle story, and it is perhaps likely to have referred, in some way, to one of the tragedies concerned with the Lemnian women.

The myth of the rape of the Athenian girls by the Pelasgians has been seen by modern scholars as, above all, a political myth, the creation of Athenian propaganda seeking to legitimate the Athenian conquest of Lemnos. Jacoby characteristically stated 'nobody has ever doubted' that the Brauron rape myth (which he thinks was invented in the last decade of the sixth century) 'is meant to justify the Athenian conquest of Lemnos and the expulsion of its inhabitants.'²¹ He also argued that it had been Herodotos who had created (what Herodotos presents as) the 'Athenian version' of the myth, by putting together two previously separate

15 Harp. s.v. *arkteusai*; Phot. s.v. *arkteusai* (*Photii Patriarchae Lexicon* vol. 1, Berlin 1982 [ed. by C. Theodoridis] 2825).

16 Fr. 767 N2. Bond 1969:139.

17 Ar. *Lys.* 645; *Lemniai* fr. 370K.

18 See below for a brief discussion of this myth.

19 Hdt. 4.145; cf. also Paus. 7.2.2; see De Simone 1996:41-2, 52-53, cf. also Calame 1996:129f.

20 Bond (1969:139) thinks it was one of the tales of Lemnos told by Hypsipyle but the chronology makes this impossible.

21 Jacoby *FGrH* IIIb. 1, 409.

Athenian stories, the story that the Pelasgians had built the Pelargikon, and 'the Athenian justification for the conquest of Lemnos;' and that it had been Herodotos who first identified the Pelasgian builders of the wall with the predatory inhabitants of Lemnos, thus assigning to the Pelasgians a character foreign to them (in Herodotos and elsewhere).²² The political reading of the myth was also accepted by its most recent commentator known to me, Rausch, who speaks of an invention of a new myth to legitimate the conquest of Lemnos.²³ In a comment indicative of the depth of his politicization of the myth's reading Jacoby stated that the localization at Brauron belongs to the invention, that any place of the Attic east coast would have done as well, but the Brauronia as a great women's festival offered itself conveniently, and the choice may also have been determined by the fact that the family of Miltiades, who achieved the vengeance, had its home at Brauron.²⁴ Osborne recognizes that the myth's localization at Brauron was significant, and suggests that the myth had meanings connected to the meanings of the foundation myths of the *arkteia*, pertaining to the wildness of the *parthenos* that will be tamed by marriage.²⁵ But he appears to accept, and certainly does not reject, the view that this myth had been created to justify the Athenian conquest of Lemnos, and he cites Jacoby's statement about nobody doubting that this was so.

This established view of the myth's construction sounds reasonable to modern ears; however, as I will try to show, when read (as much as possible) through Athenian eyes the myth has several other meanings, an important nexus of which is intimately connected with the Brauron cult, with which the myth is associated; and this, I will argue, suggests that the universal agreement of modern scholars is the result of a culturally determined perceptual cast which privileges the political dimension and marginalizes everything else. In my view, this myth was not constructed to justify the conquest of Lemnos; it was an earlier myth, which was eventually reshaped and redeployed in a new version that encompassed the conquest.

But how, if at all, can we decide who is right? The exploration of this question raises important methodological issues, of which the most obvious is how to avoid the danger of culturally determined judgements, and ensure that we do not produce a culturally determined construct which reflects modern concerns, in the

22 Jacoby *FGrH* IIIb.1, 410 (see also 411, 417-8); *cf.* also Jacoby *FGrH* IIIb.2. Notes 311 n. 24.

23 Rausch 1999:12-3, Rausch (1999:7-17) places the conquest of Lemnos by the Athenians with the help of Miltiades, then tyrant of the Chersonese, during the Ionian Revolt in 498 BC. Brulé (1987:291, 318 *cf.* 192) noted that Pelasgians were appropriate rapists, and also (1987:192, 291) that the fact that the rape took place at Brauron was significant, but he did not develop this further.

24 Jacoby *FGrH* IIIb.2:311 n. 22.

25 Osborne 1985:161f., 168.

same way that the privileging of the political had reflected the concerns of an earlier age. One clear strategy is that we must not begin by trying to answer the question; for such an operation will structure the discourse through culturally determined 'organizing centres,'²⁶ thus inevitably distorting the attempt to reconstruct the ancient realities. Instead, we need to try to read the myth as much as possible through ancient Athenian eyes, reconstruct as much as possible the ways in which they had made sense of it. Obviously, in order to do this we need to reconstruct the assumptions that had shaped their perceptual filters. Where, then, do we begin?

I suggest that we should begin by setting the basic parameters for the reconstructions of the ancient meanings by reconstructing an important category of assumptions through which Greek myths articulated meanings, the myth's schemata. Through sets of comparisons between myths, and between myths and social and religious realities and ideologies, it has become clear that myths are structured by schemata, such as 'erotic abduction,' which are themselves structured by, and express, the realities, beliefs and ideologies of the society which produced them.²⁷ For example, myths about the abduction of girls, which in the Greek collective representations functioned also as metaphors for marriage, are structured by the schema 'erotic abduction,' which reflects, is structured by, and thus also expresses as messages, among other things, certain perceptions pertaining to marriage, the wildness of the unmarried girl who needs to be tamed, and relations between the sexes in general. Myths are polysemic and operate at different levels. They are shaped by different aspects of the realities, ideologies and beliefs of the society that generated them—as well as by their context and the conventions of the genre in which each particular formulation is articulated. Thus, meanings are created in each myth, in interaction with the myth-reader's assumptions, through the interaction of the different schemata that structure it, for it is this interaction that helps shape the specific forms the schemata take in particular myths, and particular versions—and thus also the specific forms that those myths and versions take. Consequently, the identification of the mythological schemata that structure the myth, through comparisons with different myths, sets in place the main parameters for the reconstruction of a myth's meanings, and prevents significant mythological elements from being underprivileged through culturally determined filterings.

26 On this notion of organizing centres, and the ways in which, through them, culturally determined questions structure the discourse in culturally determined ways and corrupt the attempt to reconstruct (as much as possible) the ancient realities see Sourvinou-Inwood 1995:414.

27 I discussed such schemata (with special reference to myths of parent-children hostility) in Sourvinou-Inwood 1979:8-18, Sourvinou-Inwood 1989:136f., Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:252-55.

I will now set out the schemata which, in interaction with each other, structure the myth of the rape of the Athenian women by the Pelasgians. Both Herodotos' 'Athenian version' and the variant in Hekataios, which does not mention the rape, articulate a violent de-Pelasgianization of Attica. In this myth the Pelasgians are unambiguously non Athenian, indeed barbarian.²⁸ In most versions, but not in the Herodotean one, the Pelasgians were identified with the Tyrrhenians.²⁹ Thus, the first schema structuring this myth is the schema 'expulsion of the Pelasgians.' That the 'expulsion of the Pelasgians' is a mythological schema is shown by the fact that it also appears in several other myths, and the variant 'expulsion—revenge—tragic outcome' also structures the myth of the expulsion of the Pelasgians from Thessaly in the myth of Kyzikos³⁰—though the specifics of the revenge are different. Kyzikos, in that myth, had been the king of the Pelasgians who had lived in Thessaly before they were expelled by the Aeolians. After the expulsion, Kyzikos founded Kyzikos, which prospered. When the Argonauts arrived at Kyzikos the Pelasgians, angry because of their expulsion, attacked them; Kyzikos was killed.

Both these myths articulate a localized expulsion of Pelasgians, who go and live in another place, and then take some sort of revenge for their expulsion. Both articulate the de-Pelasgianization of Greek areas that were somehow associated with the Pelasgians. The Pelasgians, who in these myths are non Greeks, go and live elsewhere, and then take revenge for their expulsion. The Athenian variant is different from other myths of Pelasgian expulsions in that here the Pelasgians who were expelled were newcomers, correlatively with the Athenians' claim to autochthony.³¹ For the fact that in their representations the Athenians were autochthonous, entails that a Pelasgian presence in Attica could be explained in one of two ways—given the explanatory modalities and schemata available in Greek mythology: they had come to Athens from the outside, were received by the Athenians, and had stayed on—or alternatively left again; or, alternatively, the Athenians had themselves been Pelasgians. Both explanations had been articulated, the first in our myth the second in Herodotos.³²

28 I discuss Greek perceptions of the Pelasgians' ethnicity Sourvinou-Inwood 2003.

29 Philochoros (*FGrH* 328 F 100), for example, refers to the abductors as Tyrrhenians, as well as Pelasgians, while Herodotos only calls them Pelasgians. Philochoros also identified the Pelasgians with the Sinties (*FGrH* 328 F 101); on the Sinties see De Simone 1996:43f., 73f., and see also below.

30 See Konon *FGrH* 26 F 1 (41); Ephoros *FGrH* 70 F 61. In other versions the inhabitants of Kyzikos are not Pelasgians: according to the version in Apollonios Rhodios (*Argon.* 1.947-1077. Cf. also Apollod. 1.9.18) Kyzikos was the king of the Thracian Doliones.

31 On Athenian autochthony see Loraux 1981, Parker 1996:138f., Thomas 2000:117-22. The fact that in Hom. *Il.* 2.547f. Erechtheus is born of the Earth suggests that the autochthony myth was early, and that what happened in the Classical period is particular ideological constructs out, and deployments, of this autochthony (see Parker 1987:193ff.).

The fact that the schema ‘expulsion of the Pelasgians’ structures also other myths, and the variant ‘expulsion of the Pelasgians—vengeance of the Pelasgians—tragic outcome’ also structures the Kyzikos myth, suggests that Herodotos’ Athenian version was structured by a schema that expressed perceptions pertaining to the Pelasgians that were significant in the Greek collective representations; and this sits uncomfortably with Jacoby’s theory that the ‘Athenian version’ had been created by Herodotos, who in the process gave the Pelasgians a character foreign to them in Herodotos and elsewhere.³³ The notion that the character of vengeful rapists is alien to the Pelasgians is evidently based on the fact that the Pelasgians have ‘culture-hero-like people’ traits, in the Herodotean rape myth superior building skills, and in Hekataios also superior agricultural skills. The culture-hero people aspect characterizes the Pelasgians also in other myths,³⁴ and it is correlative with Pelasgos’ persona as a culture hero.³⁵ But in the mythological mentality this does not entail that bad behaviour is alien to such people. On the contrary, the ambivalent traits of the Pelasgians in Herodotos’ Athenian version of the rape myth also characterized the Pelasgians in other myths.³⁶ The Pelasgians are represented as ambivalent also in the Kyzikos myth, for on the one hand they had prospered, and they also had a good king, and on the other they were negatively coloured because they attacked the Argonauts.³⁷ A myth in Plutarch³⁸ (another segment of which was referred to above) associates the Pelasgians’ arrival with both war and positive innovations: when the descendants of the Tyrrhenians who had raped the Athenian girls went to Laconia they married Laconian women, but then had to leave and they went to Crete; there they fought the locals, and their

32 On Herodotos’ treatment of the Athenian claim to autochthony see now Thomas (2000:117-22), who comments, on the notion of the Athenians being Pelasgians, that (*op. cit.* 120) Herodotos seems to be taking the autochthony myth literally and rationalizing it into current ethnic definitions; if they had always lived in Attica they were Pelasgians earlier (120f.). See also above n. 28.

33 Jacoby *FGrH* IIIb.1, 410 (see also 411); *cf.* also Jacoby *FGrH* IIIb.2. Notes 311 n. 24.

34 For example, according to Hdt. 2.49-50 they had taught the Greeks religious knowledge. In one myth (see Ephoros *FGrH* 70 F 119, F 142; Hes. fr. 319M-W; *cf.* Strabo, 9.2.4) the Dodona oracle was a Pelasgian foundation. See also the *Pelasgika grammata* in Dionysios Skytobrachion *FGrH* 32 F 8 (Diod.Sic. 3.67.1).

35 *Cf. e.g.* Paus. 8.1.4-6; Schol. Eur. *Or.* 932, 1646.

36 Only very few myths allow us to assess the nature of the Pelasgians, since, mostly, we do not have detailed versions of myths involving Pelasgians, especially of myths, such as those of their expulsions, in which the Pelasgians are non Greek others who left.

37 See Konon *FGrH* 26 F 1 (41).

38 Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 296b; see also *De mul. vir.* 247a-e, where the Pelasgians who went to Crete had three leaders, said to be Lacedaemonians.

leader Pollis³⁹ set in place certain institutions concerning religious personnel and those who buried the dead.

The Pelasgians were characterized by ambivalent traits because they were conceptually associated with primeval times, and the Greeks associated primeval times with ambivalence, often characterized the pre- (main) heroic-age past as (to a greater or lesser extent) ambivalent.⁴⁰ The ambivalence of primeval people is another schema that structures this myth. The Pelasgians are also associated with serious sexual misbehaviour (in combination with revenge) in the myth of the eponymous heroine of Phryconian Larisa. Strabo says that the inhabitants of that city honoured Piasos who, according to the ancient accounts, had been a king of the Pelasgians; he had raped his daughter Larisa, and she killed him.⁴¹

Herodotos' Athenian version, then, which represents the Pelasgians as ambivalent, is in harmony with, and so reflects, the Greek collective representations of the Pelasgians. Hekataios' version,⁴² which represents the Pelasgians as unambivalently positive, was a rationalizing version by a rationalizing author, in which their 'culture-hero-like people' aspect was further developed, and correlatively, following a rationalizing logic that has difficulties with the ambiguities and ambivalences of mythopoea, their negative behaviour was eliminated. This interpretation gains support from the fact that both the 'bad,' and the 'culture-hero-like people' aspect of the Pelasgians were further developed in other versions of the myth of the rape, for this shows that this ambivalence was indeed a significant aspect of the representations of the Pelasgians: Philochoros says that the Pelasgians were called Sinties because they raped the Athenian girls, for *sinesthai* means to harm;⁴³ according to Eratosthenes, the Sinties / Pelasgians were *goetes* who invented *deleteria pharmaka*;⁴⁴ Hellanikos says that the Lemnians were called Sinties because they first invented weapons for war,⁴⁵ and Porphyrios that they were called Sinties because they first invented weapons for war, which harm people.⁴⁶

In these circumstances, it is clear that the myth under discussion does not consist of two parts put together by Herodotos, one involving good Pelasgian wall builders and another a myth of justification of the conquest of Lemnos. The

39 This is a Spartan name; the other leader was called Delphos.

40 On the ambivalence of the remote past associated with the age of Kronos see Sourvinou-Inwood 1997a:lf. with bibl.

41 Strabo 13.3.4; see Larson 1995:137.

42 For Jacoby (*FGrH* IIIb.1, 408) Hekataios *FGrH* 1 F 127 told an Athenian story.

43 Philoch. *FGrH* 328 F 101.

44 Eratosthenes *FGrH* 241 F 41.

45 See Hellanikos *FGrH* 4 F 71.

46 Schol. BT Hom. II 1.594.

ambivalent representations of the Pelasgians articulated in the Herodotean myth as a whole reflects the ambivalent representations of the Pelasgians elsewhere in Greek mythology as does the ‘Pelasgians’ expulsion’ schema; therefore, the Herodotean myth of the expulsion and rape is a complex Athenian myth in harmony with other local myths about Pelasgians. Furthermore, as we shall see when we have considered the other schemata, this myth expresses important perceptions concerning, among other things, marriage and male—female relations, which are intimately connected with the Brauronian cult of Artemis, whose sanctuary was the locus of the rape; thus, far from being a simple piece of political propaganda focussed on justifying the conquest of Lemnos, this was a rich, complex and polysemic myth intimately connected with the cult with which it was associated.

The myth of the Pelasgian rape involves a hostile rape by enemies of the abducted girls’ community. This rape was an act of aggression and revenge, which followed the Pelasgians’ earlier plot to attack Athens; the two are correlative, both were attacks on the Athenian polis, which suffered harm as a result. Though only a section of the female population suffered directly in the rape, the whole community was humiliated and harmed. This myth, then, is also structured through the schema ‘the enemy hurts the community by attacking its weakest members, women, at a moment when they are exposed as a group, in certain types of religious festivals,’ which expresses meanings significant to Greek communities, since versions of it also structured several other myths. An Athenian myth that presents itself as history, the story that Solon had lured the Megarians to a trap, by dressing up youths in the clothes of the women who had been celebrating the preliminary part of the Thesmophoria on the shore at Koliai, depends on the assumption that the Megarians could not have resisted the opportunity to capture the Athenian women at a festival.⁴⁷ Several versions of this schema structure some of the myths that tell stories about the enmity and war between Spartans and Messenians, which present themselves as history. A mild version of the schema structures the story according to which, during the Messenian war, Aristomenes had captured the noblest and wealthiest among the Spartan *parthenoi* who were performing dances in honour of Artemis at Karyai; having prevented some of his men from violating them (which they were trying to do, contrary to Greek custom), he released them for a large ransom, still *parthenoi*.⁴⁸ In another story, Aristomenes and the other Messenians unsuccessfully tried to capture the Spartan women who were celebrating a festival of Demeter at Aigila in Laconia.⁴⁹ The story about an

47 Plut. *Sol.* 8.4; Brumfield 1981:82.

48 Paus. 4.16.9-10; Calame (1977:267-74), who also discusses a different variant.

49 Paus. 4.17.1.

incident that had taken place before the beginning of the war is structured by a more negative version of the schema.⁵⁰ According to the Spartan story, Messenian men had violated the Spartan virgins who had gone to the festival of Artemis Limnatis, and killed the Spartan king who had tried to prevent it; the violated virgins had committed suicide. This was not quite an enemy coming from the outside, for Messenians as well as Spartans had shared in the sanctuary where the outrage had taken place, and therefore the violators were both insiders and outsiders. Here the killing of the king is correlative with the rape of the virgins; both acts harm and humiliate the community. In the Messenian version of this story there was, as in the Athenian Solon story, an element of transvestism, of young men dressed up as girls, as part of a ruse. This, and other elements, relate these myths to the ritual sphere of adolescent initiations.⁵¹ For in these myths the schema 'the enemy hurts the community by attacking its weakest members, women, at a moment when they are exposed as a group, in certain types of religious festivals' takes a form that involves festivals implicating initiatory rituals, interacts with schemata pertaining to girls' transitions, as, we shall see, is also the case in the Athenian myth.

In the Spartan myths the rapes are either averted (or partly averted, as when Aristomenes protected the girls from his own men), or they end in disaster, as in the Artemis Limnatis story. The version of the rape at Brauron in which the rape was not averted also ends in disaster. These hostile abductions and rapes are thus wholly negatively coloured. The schema that structures them articulates the notion of the vulnerability of women in public spaces in the course of religious festivals, especially, as in our myth, in the *eschatiai* areas that are appropriate for rites of transition,⁵² but which are also more vulnerable to enemy attacks. Through this representation, a more general notion is inevitably also articulated (for it is contained in that representation), that communities (and social units, like the *oikos*) are vulnerable through their women; and that, therefore, there is a tension between on the one hand the fact that it is necessary for the community and the *oikos* that women should not be confined, indeed should be exposed in public spaces for religious purposes, and on the other the fact that this exposes them to potential danger. The myth of the Pelasgian rape articulates the fear that they may be harmed: the women in this myth are subjected to rape and hostile abduction. At some level of perception this rape would also have functioned as a metaphor for

50 Antiochos *FGrH* 555 F 9; Strabo 6.1.6; 8.4.9; Paus. 4.4.1; see Calame 1977:254-62.

51 See Calame 1977:261, who argues that the Spartan and the Messenian versions of the cause of the Messenian war represent the historicization of the foundation myths of the cult of Artemis Limnatis; see also Calame 1977:260ff. On rituals and the Messenian wars see also Robertson 1992:219-31.

52 See e.g. Brulé 1987:192f.

all potential harm that could come to women exposed in public spaces, which involved, in male Athenian perceptions, a spectrum of dangers, at one end of which was the hostile rape by enemies acted out in the myth, and at the other seduction, a danger that figured most prominently in male Athenian representations; thus, in this myth, the former would also have functioned as a metaphor for the latter; this metaphorical relationship would not have been necessarily explicitly perceived, but it would have helped reinforce the representation of potential danger, and, conversely, would have helped express the relevant male anxieties in a context that legitimated them. One particular version of the tension between the desirability of exposing women in public spaces and the anxiety that this makes them, and the community, vulnerable, is articulated in the version in Philochoros, according to which the Pelasgians had abducted *arktoi*, which was almost certainly the common Athenian version: the tension between on the one hand the desirability of acculturating the young *parthenoi* by sending them to live in the *eschatiai* at Brauron for a certain period of time, as an important part of their preparation for marriage, and on the other the manifold (perceived) dangers involved in the fact that the heads of the girls' *oikoi* in effect temporarily relinquished authority over them, and sent them to be bears at Brauron, where, in theory, anything could happen.

The Pelasgian rape myth, which, we saw, was (like the Spartan stories) wholly negatively coloured, was structured through negative versions of two established mythological schemata pertaining to the erotic sphere; first a negative transformation of the schema 'erotic encounter at the fountain',⁵³ and then a vengeful abduction, structured through a negative, perverted, version of the schema 'girl abducted from a sanctuary of, or a chorus of girls dedicated to, Artemis'.⁵⁴ Some erotic abductions in Greek mythology are metaphors for marriage.⁵⁵ But this mass abduction, motivated by hatred and the desire to punish the girls' community, involving the hostile Pelasgians, who had been rejected as *synoikoi*, and leading not to marriage but to a wretched concubinage, is a negative reversal of such myths and metaphors. This negative transformation of schemata structuring myths pertaining to marriage is, in this myth, located at the sanctuary of the most important of the Athenian cults concerned with girls' transitions to marriageability and marriage, the cult of Artemis at Brauron.⁵⁶ It is thus comparable to the Spartan myths that are connected with cults involving initiations, that had been histori-

53 On which see Buxton 1994:112.

54 See Calame 1977:176f., 189f., Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:75 (where I include the rape at Brauron and note that the myth's meanings were closely connected with the cult's concerns), 102-06.

55 See Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:65-87.

56 See Sourvinou-Inwood 1988:*passim*, esp. 67, 111-17, Sourvinou-Inwood 1990:45-60.

cized and transformed into negative versions involving hostile actions. Myths structured by a version of the schema 'abduction as a metaphor for marriage' located in *eschatiai* areas (which are associated with initiatory rituals and the myths that refract them) lent themselves (because those areas were also often frontier areas that were especially vulnerable to outside enemies) to the transformation, with the help of the real life model 'rape of women by enemies,' into the schema 'the enemy hurts the community by attacking its weakest members, women, at a moment when they are exposed as a group, in certain types of religious festivals;' and myths structured by this mythological schema were *par excellence* prone to being historicized; for the slot 'enemy' attracted various historical enemies in different places and times in the context of the modality of Greek history-telling that involved the structuring of historical material, reflecting historical events, through mythological schemata.⁵⁷

In the Athenian version of the Pelasgian rape myth, as it is reflected in Philochoros, the abducted girls were directly connected with rites of marriageability. As we saw, Philochoros is cited in one scholion as saying that the Pelasgians had abducted *arktoi*, and in another as saying that they abducted *kanephoroi*;⁵⁸ he may have said that they abducted both, and at the very least he had mentioned both. I suggested elsewhere that the few older girls shown in one of the images refracting the *arkteia*, on the red figured krateriskos I, together with several *arktoi*, and apparently involved in a supervisory capacity in the rite, were represented through the iconographical type that corresponds to the *kanephoros* age.⁵⁹ This would coincide with the combination of *kanephoroi* and *arktoi* in this reconstruction of Philochoros' account. Both the *arkteia* and the ritual office of the *kanephoros* were closely related to marriage: the *arkteia*, a rite of transition out of childhood, prepared for marriageability,⁶⁰ while the office of *kanephoros* was closely associated with marriageability,⁶¹ which is why sometimes the girl who is abducted in abductions that lead to marriage was a *kanephoros*.⁶² The Pelasgian abduction, we saw, is a negative reversal of abductions that were metaphors for marriage; if it had included the abduction of *arktoi*, who were not yet marriageable, as well as (or instead of) *kanephoroi* and girls of an appropriate age to be *kanephoroi*, this would

57 See Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:265ff. See also 244-65.

58 Philoch. *FGrH* 328 F 100; F 101.

59 Sourvinou-Inwood 1988:65, 103-04 n. 307 (and cf. pl. i). On the identification of the iconographical type that corresponds to the *kanephoros*' age see *op. cit.* 54ff.

60 See Sourvinou-Inwood 1988:*passim*, esp. 67, 111-17, Sourvinou-Inwood 1990:45-60.

61 See Sourvinou-Inwood 1988:54-57, 94-97 nn. 253-66, Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:111, 130 nn. 59f., 134 n.105 with bibl.

62 See e.g. Akousilaos *FGrH* 2 F 30.

have been another negative alteration of the paradigmatic model of abduction as a metaphor for marriage.

I hope to have shown elsewhere that images of erotic abductions and pursuits that lead to marriage, and which are metaphors for marriage, included a few, lightly sketched, elements indicating the girl's 'consent' that deconstructed the dominant discourse which presented the act as being imposed by force by the male; and also that this subordinate 'consent' facet is correlative with, and is determined by, the nuptial dimension of the myths, the fact that they were metaphors for marriage; and that it expressed perceptions pertaining to the Athenian representations of marriage, which involved both men gaining control of women and women giving themselves to men—with apparent reluctance, since they were ideally chaste (virginal) brides who would become chaste (virtuous) wives.⁶³ This notion of female consent was also a metonymic sign for a wider set of correlative and associated perceptions pertaining to the facet of marriage ideology that involved reciprocity, rather than coercive imposition, such as the expectation, in Athenian ideality, that marriage involved love between husband and wife.⁶⁴ The myth of the Pelasgian rape did not lead to marriage, and it involved the enemies of the girls' community raping them as an act of revenge; therefore it would have been perceived to have excluded any element of female consent. For the parameters that shaped its perception by those who shared in the assumptions that had shaped it would have excluded the representation 'violence deconstructed by consent as a correlative to certain perceptions of marriage' and perceived the myth as expressing the opposite, brutal coercion—not deconstructed by any hint of consent.

That the myth of the rape by the Pelasgians at Brauron is a negative reversal of myths in which erotic abductions lead to marriage, which are metaphors for marriage, is confirmed through an independent argument. Like the different Spartan stories, the Herodotean version of the myth of the rape at Brauron and the version involving a rescue by Hymenaios offer alternative outcomes: in the first disaster, in the version involving Hymenaios the girls are rescued and all is well. Inevitably, as was the case with the Spartan stories, each of the two versions helped shape the meanings of the other. Both express meanings that are directly related to

63 Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:67, 68ff., *cf.* 85. See also Redfield 1982:191. *Cf.* also, on consent, Lefkowitz 1993:17-37.

64 For example, the epitaphs, which reflect ideality, sometimes speak of a reciprocal emotional attachment between man and wife (see *e.g.* *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca* 2.530), as do other texts (see for example, Xen. *Symp.* 8.3. See also Xen. *Symp.* 9.2-7, where, when the men became sexually aroused, it was to their wives that they went for sex, and those who did not have wives decided to get married. Here sex equals marital sex as a matter of course. And this was at a symposium which included an erotic performance; in fact, the erotic relationship portrayed in this sexually arousing performance was between the god Dionysos and his wife Ariadne).

the Brauronian cult. The fact that it is Hymenaios that saved the girls, and that, as a result of the rescue, the wedding song Hymenaios is sung in his honour, articulates the notion that the cancellation of the Pelasgian rape was perceived as symbolically equivalent to 'wedding.' The Hymenaios variant spells out that a successful abduction by the Pelasgians is the negative opposite of wedding and marriage.⁶⁵

This myth helped define a *parthenos*' proper transition to womanhood by articulating a transgressive transition, for the norm is also defined through its transgression. The transition in this myth is negative and transgressive in several ways: (leaving aside the fact that it ultimately ended in murder, which colours negatively the whole process) it led to the status of *pallake* (which made the Athenian women inferior in status to that of the men's non Greek legitimate wives) and mother of illegitimate sons; it took place by vengeful force in the hands of hostile outsiders; and it excluded any element of female consent. Female consent was symbolically important in marriage, and this notion was articulated, to a greater or lesser extent, even at the most 'coercive' end of the spectrum of nuptial representations, where marriage was represented through the metaphor of erotic pursuit and abduction. I argued that the myth of the Pelasgian rape excludes the possibility of female consent, and articulates the opposite, brutal coercion, not deconstructed by any hint of consent. If this is right, this negative paradigm would have helped reinforce the definition of proper marriage as including an element of female consent, perceived also as a metonymic sign for a wider set of correlative and associated perceptions pertaining to marriage.

The concubinage to which these perverted transitions had led was negatively coloured; it was represented as a perverted variant of Athenian marriage, since it was the result of transgressive rape and led to multiple murders and the tearing apart of the family-type units of pseudo-wife / mother—pseudo-husband / father—sons.

The Athenian girls' concubinage at Lemnos is a negatively polarized version of concubinage; first, because it was motivated by hostility; second, because they lived in a foreign, non Greek, country; and finally, because though Athenian women could be concubines, the paradigm of concubinage involved non Athenian women as concubines of Athenian men.⁶⁶ In this myth there is a transgressive reversal of this paradigm: Athenian women become the concubines of non

65 The specification in Schol. Hom. *Il.* 18.493 that because Hymenaios had saved the Athenian girls from the Pelasgians those girls who were being married according to the law sang a hymn called *hymenaios* in his honour, as though invoking him, shows that in the ancient perceptions Hymenaios' rescue of the girls was perceived to be correlative with legitimate marriage—which is therefore opposed to the concubinage that was the fate of the girls who had not been rescued by Hymenaios.

Athenian, barbarian, and negatively coloured, men, who, motivated by malice, as a punishment for all Athenians, had taken them by force, and removed them to an uncivilized non Greek place. Polarization is a common mythopoeic modality; through this negatively polarized version of concubinage this myth articulates a negative representation of the institution of concubinage in general: it explores, and sets out the potentially destabilizing effect of concubinage, here represented as a perverted variant of marriage, on the central institution of marriage.⁶⁷

One of the representations articulated in this myth is that concubines may be more fertile than wives, and, above all, that the sons of concubines may be better than, and represent a danger to, their legitimate brothers, and that they in turn are vulnerable. Thus, in this polarized version located elsewhere, but made symbolically more openly permeable through the girls' Athenian identity, the potential of concubinage to destabilize legitimate marriage is articulated at a distance, as is the possibility that the sons of concubines may be superior to the legitimate sons, which in Greek eyes was a potentially dangerous representation. This is the viewpoint of the polis; but the fact that the concubines are here Athenian and the men barbarians had the inevitable result that the myth's Athenian readers were zoomed more closely towards, implicitly adopted also the focalization, the viewpoint, of, the concubines. Myths are multivocal as well as polysemic, and I suggest that this exploration of concubinage had also constructed, next to the dominant discourse, that was polis—and male—oriented also aspects of the female perspective.

The reason why illegitimate sons were vulnerable is because of a representation, implicitly articulated in this myth, which is at odds with the dominant ideol-

66 And, of course, after Perikles' citizenship law of 451, Athenian men could not marry foreign women, they could only have them as concubines.

67 According to Osborne (1985:168) in this myth, the Lemnian men come from outside, find women in a public space, outside the domestic context, and take them away to become concubines, to remain outside the domestic context, untamed by marriage, wives and not wives and thus particularly dangerous. 'Their existence outside accepted categories puts the Lemnians—husbands and not husbands—and the children—Lemnians and not-Lemnians—in an equally problematic position. The killing ... is a result and a reflection of the breakdown of the distinctions which constitute civilized life? In my view, it is not quite right that concubines were perceived as being outside the domestic context, nor is it quite right that their concubinage involved the breakdown of the distinctions which constitute civilized life. For concubinage was an Athenian institution, and thus category, and this is a polarized version of that category, which is at the same time an exploration of that institution, and its effect on marriage. What is the case is that in this myth concubinage is represented as a perverted variant of marriage; that (through the myth of Hymenaios—but also through the rape myth's connection with the Brauronian cult, which was inextricably connected with girls' marriageability) it is juxtaposed to lawful marriage, which is what normative Athenian ideology perceives as the normal fate of Athenian girls, and it is represented (this concubinage, and, by extension, concubinage in general) as a perverted variant of marriage, involving a breakdown of the norms; instead of being proper wives, as Athenian girls are normatively destined to be, they are wives and not wives.

ogy of our times, and so is in danger of being marginalized in modern readings. Our ideologies privilege blood over legitimacy, and biological over legal relationships, but in this myth it is an implicit assumption, which the myth implicitly rearticulates, that what mattered to the dominant males was their legitimate sons; they were the ones that had to be protected. This would not have registered as alien with the Athenians, it would not have been perceived as part of the Pelasgians' otherness and negativity, for it is correlative with the fact that in Athens illegitimate sons did not have rights of inheritance, and could not continue a man's *oikos*—with the significant consequences that this entailed in Athens. I suggest that this was a point at which the Athenian males would have felt the Pelasgians as not unlike themselves; the myth would have zoomed the Pelasgians towards the Athenians' own reality—while at the same time the Pelasgians' viewpoint would have been distanced by the fact that the illegitimate sons' mothers were Athenian. It was not the way the Pelasgians saw the problem, but the solution they adopted to resolve it that was wrong.

The sets of meanings reconstructed here, which pertain to girls' transitions, marriage, and the rearing of children, which, we saw, account for, and are thus confirmed by, the Hymenaios variant, are significant in the religious context in which the myth belongs, which helps confirm that these readings are not culturally determined constructs, and shows that this myth was an integral part of the mythology of the Brauronian cult, which was centrally concerned with transitions, marriage and women.

This myth illustrates the fact that the myths that help make up the complex (and, within certain parameters, multivocal) web of the Athenian polis discourse were not necessarily the voices of men's desires, even in sexual matters. What actual Athenian women had felt and wanted is inaccessible to us; since affect is culturally determined,⁶⁸ it is not methodologically legitimate to assume that certain feelings and desires are 'natural,' and therefore universal, and impose them on ancient societies. But the commonsense perception that Athenian wives did not enthusiastically embrace their husbands' choice to have concubines is confirmed by tragic representations such as that of the sympathetically constructed Deianeira's sorrow in Sophocles' *Trachiniae*.⁶⁹ If this is right, the women's viewpoint coincided with the interests of the polis, for, the myth of the Pelasgian rape suggests, concubinage threatened the stability of the *oikos*, which the polis privileged very highly. Concubinage, to the polis, was a marginal institution.⁷⁰ This myth articulates (among

68 Though the parameters of variability and the details of the modalities in which this cultural determination operates are a matter of controversy—which does not concern me here. For an example of a minimalist position (*i.e.* one accepting minimal cultural determination) see Golden (1988: 152-63) who, however, does not deny the culturally determined nature of emotional feelings (*op. cit.* 159).

many other representations) the notion that the individual males' desire for maximum sexual gratification should ideally be restrained, for it privileges the competing representation that such practices threaten the stability of the *oikos*, but also bring disaster to the individual men involved.

The well known passage from the pseudo-Demosthenic speech⁷¹ that claims that men had wives for the purpose of producing legitimate children and to have them as faithful guardians of their households, *hetairai* for pleasure, and concubines for the daily care of their bodies is, of course, an ideological construct shaped by a forensic context conducive to the stressing of distinctions and of the procreative role of wives.⁷² But how would this construct have been coloured in the eyes of the Athenian audience? Pelling suggests⁷³ 'Apollodoros can present this categorisation which his audience may aspire to rather than ridicule, and that well behaved males might be expected not to avoid *hetairai* and concubines, but to keep them distinct from their wives.' I would put it somewhat differently: that this is one possible discourse of Athenian male desires, one possible presentation of what well behaved males might be expected to want. The men in Xenophon's *Symposion*⁷⁴ (who were not hampered by financial considerations if they had been inclined to promiscuity) are presented as equating sex with marital sex, for when they became sexually aroused they went to their wives to have sex, and those who were unmarried decided to get married. Most importantly, our myth suggests that men would be foolish to do what Apollodoros claims as the norm, and that one reason for this is that the procreation of illegitimate children through concubines (which here would have encompassed the category of *hetairai*, any woman with whom men have sex, and who therefore could produce their illegitimate children) may desta-

69 I cannot discuss here the complexities of reconstructing attitudes on the basis of tragic constructs. I have set out illustrations of the very complex relationships between tragic female characters and real life elsewhere (Sourvinou-Inwood 1989:134-48, Sourvinou-Inwood 1997b:253-96), but here I am claiming a minimum correlation between the two, that a sympathetically constructed Deianeira was representable.

70 An illustration of the marginality of concubinage for the polis is the fact that the Archaic homicide law (Dem. 23.53) which specifies the women in respect of whom a man may kill an adulterer mentions not a free born *pallake*, but a *pallake* from whom the man intends to have freeborn children; the *pallake*'s freeborn status was a necessary, but not sufficient condition for having freeborn children; it is the children that mattered to the polis, and normally, and certainly in the normative ideology, men had freeborn children from their wives. Cf. [Dem.] 59.122 and the most recent discussion in Pelling (2000:189-94). It is, in my view, highly dubious that those freeborn children from *pallakai* could be citizens (on this debate see a brief discussion with bibliography in Pelling 2000:191, 295 n.9).

71 [Dem.] 59 (*Against Neaira*) 122.

72 See on this most recently Pelling 2000:191-94.

73 Pelling 2000:194.

74 Xen. *Symp.* 9.2-7.

bilize and threaten their *oikos* and lead to disaster. It is not impossible that the (at least partial) convergence between the (basic lines of what may be roughly reconstructed as the) female viewpoint, and the representations articulated in the myth, which was part of the web of the polis discourse, may be correlative with the context of the myth's construction; that the particular slanting in the representation of concubinage, though obviously consistent with the polis' major concern with the stability of the *oikoi*, may have been correlative with the fact that this myth was the product of Brauronian mythopoea, which constructed mythology that was part of the polis discourse, expressing the ideologies of the polis, but which was focussed on women, in ways that may not have entirely excluded a partial focalization through women, and may even have had an input from some of the influential women, above all the priestess, in the Brauronian sanctuary.

This, then, was a myth about the expulsion of the Pelasgians and at the same time an exploration of marriage and of its alternatives. The negatively polarized version of concubinage articulated in this myth, and the transgressive abduction, are symbolically connected with an earlier stage in society, through the involvement as transgressive agents of the Pelasgians, who were conceptually primeval, and, correlatively, also ambivalent. These characteristics made them especially suitable counters for deployment in the exploration of 'other' possibilities, of alternatives and negative paradigms, that helped define and characterize the present norms. For the fact that the Pelasgians were conceptually associated with the primeval past made them appropriate agents for articulating alternatives; and the fact that they were ambivalent made them especially appropriate for constructing negative paradigms: while their negative side (or at least negative potential) made them appropriate for exploring and articulating negative paradigms, their positive side allowed the negative exploration to be less distanced from the Athenians' own realities. The same effect of placing this exploration both symbolically near and at a distance is produced by the fact that the Pelasgians were both *synoikoi* of the Athenians and very different from them. Clearly, in the Athenian representations, the Pelasgians functioned as an ambivalent other, that had once been near and are now afar. It is an inventive, but uncivilized other, especially in terms of social intercourse and relations between the sexes. These representations of the Pelasgians, I suggest, articulated the perception of an uncivilized past at a symbolic distance. It was the past here, but it is now located elsewhere, and even when it was located here it was other. In this way the institution of concubinage is explored at a distance, in a polarized form, in which the negative aspects refract fears and realities or potential realities of Athenian life in the present. Clearly, raping the Athenian women in revenge for their expulsion, suited the character of the Pelasgians in the Greek representations, as it suited the cult of Artemis at Brauron that such a rape myth should be connected with its sanctuary.

It was, in my view, inevitable that the Pelasgians as *synoikoi* would also have been seen as mythological representations of metics, distorted and negative representations, in which alienness and distance are emphasized.

In most versions of our myth, though not in Herodotos,' the Pelasgians were identified with the Tyrrhenians.⁷⁵ Such versions are structured also by a version of the schema 'transgressive behaviour by Tyrrhenians towards deities and/or their cult.' In the other myths structured by this schema the outcome is different, the Tyrrhenians' transgressive behaviour had been aimed directly at the deity or cult and failed. The Tyrrhenian pirates who abducted Dionysos in the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysos*⁷⁶ failed and were punished. More directly comparable is the myth associated with the festival Tonaia in Samos, in which the Tyrrhenians, acting as agents of the Argives, had unsuccessfully tried to steal the statue of Hera.⁷⁷ The comparability between this myth and that of the rape is closer in the version in which the Pelasgians / Tyrrhenians had stolen the *xoanon* of Artemis from Brauron.⁷⁸ To put it differently, the fact that a variant of the Pelasgian rape myth had been generated, in which the Pelasgians / Tyrrhenians had stolen the *xoanon* of Artemis, suggests that this myth was perceived to have been somehow related to myths of the Tonaia type in which Tyrrhenians steal, or try to steal, a Greek deity's statue.⁷⁹ This schema would have increased further the Pelasgians' negative colouring.

Herodotos ends his account of the murder by the Pelasgians of their sons and their Athenian mothers with the comment that because of this crime, and of the

75 See, for example, Philoch. *FGrH* 328 FF 99-101. The identification of the Pelasgians with the Tyrrhenians is a complex question. According to Briquel (Briquel 1984: esp. 18, 20, 22 n. 100, 52f., 58, 110f., 132-40, 141, 221) the identification is at least as early as the late sixth century, the notion of the Pelasgian origin of the Etruscans was already in Hekataios and Herodotos had chosen to reject it (on Herodotos' rejection of the Pelasgian origin of the Etruscans see Briquel 1984:128, 132f., 134, 136.). On the identification of the Pelasgians with the Tyrrhenians see also De Simone 1996:51-65, 77f., cf. 79-83; 88f. (and *passim*).

76 Which dates either from the sixth or the seventh century (see Henrichs 1987:109, cf. 122 n. 92; Janko 1982:184).

77 See on this myth Menodotos *FGrH* 541 F 1.

78 There are traces, in later mythography, of another involvement of a Pelasgian / Tyrrhenian with an Athenian ritual, in the variant of the myth concerning the Aiora in which Aletis was the daughter of Maleos or Maleotes the Tyrrhenian (See Briquel 1984:264-75, 293ff. for the testimonia and a discussion of this and the other myths involving Maleos). According to Strabo (5.2.8), Maleos was a king of the Pelasgians in Regisvilla, who went to Athens. In other myths also there may be traces of an association between Maleos and other Greek cults; Maleos dedicated a stone, called Maleos' stone, to Poseidon, at the entrance of the Phaistos harbour to protect Phaistos from the sea; a Maleos or Melas invented the trumpet. In addition, Maleatas was an epithet of Apollo.

79 We do not know the date of the myth of the Tonaia, but its connection with the festival suggests that it is early—though not necessarily in that form.

earlier deed done by the women who had killed their husbands, a 'Lemnian crime' was a Greek proverb for any deed of cruelty.⁸⁰ The story in the dominant versions of the myth of the Lemnian women,⁸¹ which was well known in Athens, can be briefly summarized as follows. The Lemnian women had offended Aphrodite, who made them smell bad;⁸² their husbands rejected them and slept with Thracian concubines; the Lemnian women then murdered their husbands and all other men, except for Hypsipyle, who saved her father Thoas and then reigned in an island without men, until the Argonauts came, and had sex with the Lemnian women; Hypsipyle had male offspring from Jason.

This is a very complex myth, structured by many schemata. As Burkert has shown,⁸³ it articulates an aetiological refraction of a new fire festival, and there are also comparabilities with the Thesmophoria and other festivals in which normality is temporarily disrupted. This is a Greek myth about Lemnos. Whether the non Greek pre-Athenian Lemnians had had a new fire festival, of which a myth of this kind was an aetiological refraction, the forms of the myth as we have them are Greek myths, and any ritual elements refracted in them are refracted through perceptual filters shaped by Greek mythicoritual assumptions. In the Greek *imaginaire* Lemnos was the island of Hephaistos,⁸⁴ and was associated with fire.⁸⁵ It was thus an appropriate locus in which to place a new fire festival and its mythological refractions in the *imaginaire*. Whether or not any non Greek Lemnian ritual reality had gone into the relevant constructions is not important for our purposes. What is important is that at some point mythological material refracting a new fire festival, and material involving the Argonauts visiting Lemnos and having sex with, and descendants from, non Greek Lemnian women, had gone into the making of the myth of the Lemnian women as we know it.

Here we are concerned with the 'crime by bad women' aspect of the myth. The Lemnian women are among the dreadful women mentioned in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi*,⁸⁶ where Klytemestra's crime is compared to those of other women

80 Hdt. 6.138.4.

81 See Aesch. *Cho.* 631-38; Herodoros *FGrH* 31 F 6; Myrsilos *FGrH* 477 F 1; Theolytos *FGrH* 478 F 3; Kaukalos *FGrH* 38 F2; Aesch. *Hypsipyle*, *TGrF* 3, 352; and *Lemniai* *TGrF* 3, 233f.; Soph. *Lemniai* *TGrF* 4 pp. 336ff.; Pind. *Pyth.* 4.251-54; *Ol.* 4.19-27; Eur. *Hyps.*; Apollod. 1.9.17; Ap. Rh. *Argon.* 1.609-26; cf. Ar. *Lys.* 299f.; see Burkert 1970:1-16, Detienne 1972:172-84, Gantz 1993:345f., Bowie 1993:186-95. Aristophanes, we saw, had written a comedy entitled *Lemniai* and so had others (see refs. in Burkert 1970:155 n. 5).

82 There are different variants as to the reason for the Lemnian women's bad smell, see Myrsilos *FGrH* 477 F 1; Kaukalos *FGrH* 38 F 2.

83 Burkert 1970:1-16.

84 See e.g. Hom. *Il.* 1.593; cf. further references in Burkert 1970:3 n. 4.

85 See e.g. Hellanikos *FGrH* 4 F 71; see also on Lemnian fire Burkert 1970:5f.

who had destroyed men: Althaea, Skylla, the Lemnian women. Their actions are presented as the result of the women's reckless minds and ruthless passions which subjugate them, and which perverts and ruins the marriages of men and beasts.⁸⁷ Whether or not these emphases are an Aeschylean, or generally Athenian, construct, it is clear that one of the schemata structuring the Lemnian women myth in the form in which it is known to us is the schema 'wives out of control.' This schema, and the concerns it helped articulate, are relevant to the concerns of the Brauronian cult, which had helped acculturate the Athenian girls so that they became good wives, and, ideally at least, did not get out of control—though the perceived danger that they still might do so is explored through a variety of myths, at a greater or lesser symbolic distance. I argued elsewhere that the barbarian woman is deployed in the exploration of the Greek male's closest other, Greek women, in highly complex and sophisticated ways, through modalities that involve both distancings and zoomings between 'barbarian woman' and 'Greek woman.'⁸⁸ The myth of the Lemnian women distanced to the barbarian other the mass murder of men by their wives and other women over whom they had authority, and who owed them loyalty, which in Greek eyes was especially atrocious, focussing the partial zooming on the woman who was innocent of murder. The Danaids, all but one of whom had also murdered their husbands, had a claim to some Greek ancestry, but were not, when they came, Greek. It was, of course, the danger that Greek women may get out of control that was explored through these myths. The Lemnian women, who did not behave like proper wives, but like wild animals, are a negative paradigm, the opposite of what the Athenian girls were supposed to become with the help of the *arkteia*. It is to avoid this outcome that the Brauron cult acculturates the girls, ensuring that such things could not happen in Athens, that women were 'tamed,' a process in which the *arkteia* was a crucial stage, and which culminated in marriage⁸⁹—while at the same time admitting that the process can be reversed by the very metaphor of the bear, who can be tamed, but can also revert to wildness, as some of the myths associated with the *arkteia* make clear.⁹⁰ The strong connection between the *arkteia* and the Lemnian women myth is reflected in the fact that, as the references to the *arkteia* in Euripides'

86 Aesch. *Cho.* 585-651. On this ode see Garvie 1986:201-22, Gould 1980:55, Zeitlin 1978:155, 164f., Stinton 1979:252-62.

87 See Aesch. *Cho.* 596-601.

88 Sourvinou-Inwood 1997b:253-96.

89 See Sourvinou-Inwood 1988:28ff., 111-15, 147f., Sourvinou-Inwood 1990:54-58.

90 See the myth in Suda s.v. *arktos e Brauroniois*, which involves a little girl being harmed by a tame bear with whom she had been playing, and whom she had overexcited.

Hypsipyle and Aristophanes' *Lemniai* suggest, in the Athenian perceptions the Lemnian women myth was associated with Brauron and the *arkteia*.

The schema 'taking concubines leads to disaster' helps structure both the Lemnian women myth and the myth of the Pelasgian rape. The forms this schema takes in the two myths are different. In the Lemnian women myth the Lemnian wives are the central actors, in the myth of the Brauron rape the Lemnian wives play no role. In the myth of the Lemnian women the concubines are Thracian, and of no importance—in the myth of the rape the concubines are Athenian, and an important focus in the story. The Lemnian women version, in which the concubines are of lower status than the wives, corresponds to the normal life situation.

In the (dominant variant of the) Lemnian women myth the wives had offended a deity, a schema which triggers off disaster in Greek mythology, and eventually committed a dreadful crime. In the rape myth the Athenian girls were the victims of an offence which also had a religious dimension (they had been abducted from a sanctuary, while celebrating a religious festival) and ended up murdered, together with their children. Both sets of evil-doers, then, had also offended a deity. In the Lemnian women myth these evil-doers are non Greek women, and their victims are non Greek men. In the Pelasgian rape myth the evil-doers are non Greek men, and their victims are Athenian women. In the first the focus is gender; disaster happens because the wives are bad; their non Greek ethnicity is a distancing device and a symbol. In the second ethnicity is the deciding factor in, and a symbol of, the inappropriateness of the concubinage, and the descent to disaster; their Athenian ethnicity made the concubines and their sons better than the Pelasgians' wives and theirs. At the same time this inappropriate concubinage articulates a strong version of what can happen with any concubines and their children. Because concubinage is articulated through these negative versions, it is itself coloured negatively. In other words, though it is inappropriate concubinage and bad wives that are at the forefront in these two myths, the dangers inherent in all concubinage, and the possibility of any woman going bad, are also explored. In Athenian ideality Athens is where proper marriages are acted out, involving women who had been acculturated with the help of the *arkteia*; Lemnos is the place where women are wild. But Greek myths deconstruct the oppositions they set up, to bring out the complexities and ambivalences in their conceptual universe. Thus, this myth articulates also another ambivalence, besides the potential reversibility of the 'taming' hinted at through the figure of the bear: though the Athenian girls were in the process of being acculturated, they became victims of barbarian males, and ended up in the place where transgressive marriages are acted out: they became *pallakai* in Lemnos, played a role that corresponded to that of the Thracian concubines in the myth of the Lemnian women. Because the Lemnian women myth deploys wives as instruments, the women's viewpoint is

also articulated, albeit in connection with negative figures, which deconstructs its validity, but does not wholly eliminate it; and because in the Pelasgian rape myth the concubines were Athenian women, which focalized the myth at least to a significant extent through the concubines, the concubines' viewpoint was also articulated—in a subdued voice.

The close comparabilities between the myth of the Lemnian women and that of the Pelasgian rape show that the two are related, and I suggest that one is a transformation of the other. If this is right it would help make sense of the fact that the Lemnian women myth came into the orbit of Brauron; for the semantic connection was not necessarily sufficient to explain the association; after all, the myth of the Danaids was not, to my knowledge, connected to Brauron as a negative paradigm—it was connected to another women's cult, the Thesmophoria. The notion that the myth of the Pelasgian rape and that of the Lemnian women are related brings up the question of the latter myth's date. Burkert suggested that, as the story that Hypsipyle had a son from Jason is known to the *Iliad* (7.468-9), both myth and ritual must antedate 700, and concern the pre-Greek inhabitants of Lemnos.⁹¹ He is probably right—though the possibility cannot be totally excluded that the killing of the men may not necessarily have been part of the nexus 'Argonauts have sex with, and sons from, Lemnian women' attested in Homer. If it is right that the Lemnian women myth was early, Lemnos, perceived as being inhabited by non Greeks, would have been established early as a place in which transgressive marriages were acted out; this would have offered a paradigmatic 'transgressive marriage' locus when the myth of the Pelasgian rape was constructed, or expanded—and the interaction between these myths would have created a context conducive to bringing the myth of the Lemnian women into the semantic orbit of the Brauron cult. This would explain why, when the myth of the Pelasgian rape was constructed the Athenian women's concubinage was located on Lemnos. In the interpretation that assumes that this myth had been created as a justification for the conquest of Lemnos, the reason for the selection of Lemnos as the homebase of the rapists is obvious: Lemnos is what all this is about. But since I am suggesting that the myth was not constructed as part of that justification, I am exploring the factors that are correlative with, and thus may account for, the choice of Lemnos. One such factor, then, is that, through the Lemnian women myth, Lemnos may have been already established as a place where transgressive marriages were acted out.

It is not impossible that another, alternative or complementary, factor in determining the choice of Lemnos may have been a preexisting association between Lemnos and the Pelasgians. Lemnos is in the general area where Greek representa-

91 Burkert 1970:14.

tions located the Pelasgians of the present. We do not know when the Lemnians became identified with the Pelasgians in the Greek representations. In Homer Lemnos was inhabited by Sinties,⁹² who were eventually identified with the Pelasgians and the Tyrrhenians.⁹³ There was an actual historical connection between the Etruscans / Tyrrhenians and the pre-Greek population of Lemnos,⁹⁴ and it is likely that a refraction of this historical reality had been deployed (to serve mythological purposes) in the myth associating Lemnos with the Pelasgians who were identified with the Tyrrhenians. I shall return to this question, after discussing a version of the rape myth attested in a late source, which can only be properly assessed after the completion of the discussion of the Herodotean version.

This reconstruction of the construction of the myth, in which the selection of Lemnos was correlative with the island's association with transgressive marriages, is, I submit, the most likely, in that it accounts for all our scarce data in ways that are in harmony with the modalities of Greek mythopoea. But the scarcity and nature of the data entail that other possibilities cannot be excluded. Thus, if the Lemnian women myth had not been early, in the unlikely possibility that it had been constructed at the same time as the myth of the Pelasgian rape the selection of Lemnos could be accounted for in terms of, first, its earlier connection with the Argonauts, which involved a sexual relationship between Jason and Hypsipyle and resulting offspring (thus involving a matrix in which the issues of ethnicity, gender and mixed offspring were implicated), and second, the fact that, of all the non Greek places in the general area where Greek representations placed Pelasgians in the present, Lemnos was especially significant, because of this connection with the Argonauts and its association with Hephaistos.

Such hypotheses about the circumstances of the construction of the myth of the Pelasgian rape and the factors shaping the choice of Lemnos as the locus of the concubinage are destined to remain speculative—unless new evidence changes the situation. But certain things pertaining to the general context in which this part of the myth was constructed are, I would argue, clear. The concubinage at Lemnos segment of the myth is symbolically equivalent, and antithetical, to the lawful marriage that is the outcome of the variant of the Pelasgian rape myth that involves Hymenaios. We do not know whether the Hymenaios variant and the Lemnos variant had been constructed at the same time, or when this construction or

92 Hom. *Il.* 1.594; *Od.* 8.294. See also Hellanikos *FGrH* 4 F 71. On the Sintians in Lemnos see De Simone 1996:43f., 73f.

93 See Philoch. *FGrH* 328 F 101. See also Jacoby *FGrH* IIIb (Supplement) 1, 420-1 ad F 101.

94 Two late Archaic inscriptions from Lemnos in a native language which has affinities with Etruscan show that there had been some connection between the non Greek peoples of Lemnos and the Etruscans (For the first see Hornblower 1996:348, with bibl., *cf.* 36. For both see De Simone 1996:7-38, 85ff.).

constructions had taken place. But it is clear that the part of the myth after the Pelasgians' expulsion and before the barrenness on Lemnos expressed meanings pertaining to marriage, male-female relations and offspring. The concerns of the Lemnian segment are correlative with those of the rape segment and also of the cult with which the rape is associated. In these circumstances, I submit that the myth had been constructed in connection with these concerns, in the context of the Brauron cult; and that the concubinage at Lemnos had been created, either at the same time as the Hymenaios myth, or later, as an extension of that myth with an alternative outcome, but in the same context. This is a complex myth about women, relations between the sexes and offspring and about Pelasgians as ambivalent others that were once near, though separate, and are now afar.

Of course, the very last segment of the myth does articulate a justification for the conquest of Lemnos—though even this segment was not, in Greek eyes, simply political propaganda legitimating the conquest, it had also (inevitably) performed, when taken with the rest of the myth, the significant function of integrating a newly acquired non Greek Lemnos in the Athenian conceptual map in a way that related more closely the past to the present. The segment that can unequivocally be seen to be the product of post-conquest mythopoea legitimating the conquest of Lemnos is that which reflects the historical events: the *adynaton* postulated by the Pelasgians as a condition for giving up their land to the Athenians, accomplished in the new historical reality of the Athenian possession of the Chersonese. But where does this post-conquest construct begin? Does it include only the barrenness / oracle / *adynaton* part or the whole Lemnos segment? I argued that both its meanings and its relationship to the Hymenaios myth suggest that the concubinage at Lemnos was constructed in connection with the Brauron cult. The consideration of the myth's last segment will produce another, independent, argument to support the view that the concubinage was not part of the post-conquest mythopoea, and that the latter's product begins with the Pythia's response. For this last segment, I will now try to show, contains elements that are odd, in the sense of being unparalleled (in this form) in the Greek myths known to me; while they do not go against Greek mythological 'logic,' they stretch the established modalities in ways that seem to me to fit less the mythological, and more the rationalist, mentality—which is not the case in the rest of the myth. I use the term 'rationalist mentality' to refer to something (the operations of which [and so also some of its defining parameters] I will try to illustrate) which is other than the 'mythological' mentality that shapes traditional Greek myths (the 'syntax' structuring the multi-dimensional web of Greek mythology, shaping the deployment of schemata that articulate collective representations according to established mythological modalities), and which operates through reason-based logic.⁹⁵

The syntax structuring the mythemes that make up the last segment of the myth is significantly different from that which structures comparable myths. For here the punishment for the Pelasgians' crime is deferred, and they are uniquely let off without paying the price the oracle had recommended. In so far as they eventually paid the penalty of losing their land, the mythological mentality is not violated. But since life had continued in Lemnos, the Greeks would have understood the barrenness to have ceased when the Pelasgians responded to the Athenians' request with an *adynaton*.⁹⁶ This means that it had stopped though the Pelasgians had not then paid the penalty that the Athenians had asked for, and therefore had not done what the oracle had told them to do.⁹⁷ This, I believe, is unique, as is, to my knowledge, the fact that the penalty is paid in the recent past (of Herodotos' readers, the present of the post conquest mythopoea) for a wrong committed in the heroic age.⁹⁸

There are, of course, many instances in which certain things happen in the heroic age which directly affect, or are fulfilled in, the present. That things happened in the heroic age which affect the present is inherent in the perception of the Greek heroic age as the time in which rites, cults and institutions of the present were founded. The modality that involves something starting in the heroic age and being fulfilled in the present structured, for example, foundation myths in which a heroic age figure predicts, and, in one way or another, legitimates, the foundation of a colony, which will take place in the historical age: the myth that legitimated the historical foundation of Cyrene through the gift of a clod of earth given to the Argonaut Euphemos by a *daimon*⁹⁹ belongs to this group, as does the foundation myth of Kroton, according to which Herakles had accidentally killed Kroton and foretold to the natives that in later times a famous city will be built

95 As opposed to 'mythological logic'—in which the word 'logic' is used metaphorically. The use of this opposition 'rationalist vs. mythological mentality' has no implications concerning the relationship between 'myth' and 'reason' (on which see now Buxton 1999). It is a different distinction from that drawn by Griffiths (1999:169 and n. 2) between the mode of *mythos* and the mode of *logos* that coexist in Herodotos.

96 The *adynaton*, is, of course, a traditional element. In my view, this type of *adynaton* expresses also the notion that people, mere mortals, cannot fathom how things will turn out.

97 On this oracular response (Parke and Wormell 1956:37 no. 83) see also Fontenrose (1978: 311f.), who remarked (312) that 'the story is peculiar in that the Pelasgians did not carry out the oracle's direction to pay the Athenians whatever penalty they asked; they put a condition on fulfilment In spite of the Lemnians' not really doing what the oracle demanded, the famine apparently came to an end.' See also Crahay 1956:82, 268ff.

98 Fontenrose (1978:312) attempts to calculate the perceived interval in terms of years; but in Greek eyes the past was structured through conceptual schemata that made the heroic age a very different period from the present.

99 Pind. *Pyth.* 4.9-56. See Malkin 1994:174-81.

bearing the name of Kroton.¹⁰⁰ This modality appears superficially comparable to that structuring the story of the Pelasgians, but in fact the comparability is very limited; for in those foundation myths nothing is left unfinished in the heroic age.

The same is true of comparable myths in which the ultimate end of a chain of events that had begun in the heroic age takes place in historical times, but does so as a further development, not, as in the Pelasgian story, as the completion of a nexus of elements that belong together, structured by a schema expressing fundamental Greek perceptions, such as 'crime-punishment-redemption through obedience to the oracle.' For example, in the case of the hero of Temesa,¹⁰¹ this nexus 'crime-punishment-redemption through obedience to the oracle' takes the form 'one of Odysseus' sailors was stoned to death; his ghost inflicted harm on the people of Temesa; the Pythia commanded them to propitiate him, and they did, with a sanctuary, a temple, and a yearly sacrifice of a girl.' The people of Temesa had done wrong, were punished and then paid the price the oracle had instructed them to pay, and so normality returned—all in the heroic age. The further events in the narrative, which involved Euthymos (in the fifth century) freeing the town of the annual sacrifice of a girl by defeating the hero, belong to another stage in the story, which is connected with the first, to form a larger nexus, structured by the schema 'human sacrifice—cessation of human sacrifice.' But the first part, which took place in the heroic age, formed a self contained nexus. This is different from the Pelasgian story, where normality would have implicitly been understood to have resumed in the heroic age, while the penalty was paid in the recent past. In the last segment of the myth of the Pelasgian rape, then, a nexus which is elsewhere inextricably bound is split into two, one part of which takes place in the heroic age and the other in the present and the syntax of its elements (that reflects and expresses important representations) has been reversed, thus altering the traditional relationship between atonement and redemption.

There is a certain comparability between this segment of the Pelasgian rape myth and another story, which is part of the mythicoritual nexus of the Locrian Maidens.¹⁰² The dominant variant of this myth is that in Timaios,¹⁰³ according to which three years after the Trojan War the Locrians, having been hit by a plague, consulted the Delphic oracle and were told to send maidens to Troy regularly in order to propitiate Athena for the rape of Cassandra by the Locrian Ajax; so they

100 Diod. Sic. 4.24.7. On the foundation myths of Kroton see Leschhorn 1984:28ff., Malkin 1994:134ff.

101 Paus. 6.6.7-11. The hero of Temesa was mentioned as a possible parallel in the discussion after my paper at the Symposium.

102 For the texts in which the myth is attested see Parke and Wormell 1956:134f. nos. 331-3. For the myth and its context and meanings see Graf 1978:61-79.

103 Timaios *FGrH* 566 F 146; see also Apollod. *Epit.* 6.20-22 and Aelian fr. 47.

did.¹⁰⁴ This myth is structured by the traditional mythological schema ‘a leader offends a deity, a plague attacks the community, the oracle is consulted, the penalty it orders is paid, normality resumes.’ In one version the tribute of maidens had to be sent for a thousand years, in another until the goddess was appeased; when the Locrians considered the thousand years to have passed, in the third century BC, they stopped sending the tribute; they were then hit by a plague and the oracle told them that they had disobeyed its injunction and ordered them to resume the rite.¹⁰⁵ This further narrative is structured by the mythological mentality that governed the main part of the myth. But there is another variant of the story, in which there was a long gap between offence and atonement, and which is therefore not structured by the established mythological schema of ‘offence—punishment—oracular consultation—atonement—end of punishment.’ Strabo, after mentioning the myth that the Locrians began to send maidens to Troy soon after the Trojan war, argues that this whole story of Ajax and Cassandra is un-Homeric, and states that the Locrian girls were first sent after the Persian conquest of the Troad, that is, after 547/6¹⁰⁶—a view believed to be reflecting Demetrios of Skepsis.¹⁰⁷ Strabo does not tell a story, he simply makes this statement in the context of his discussion of the claim by the inhabitants of Ilion that Troy had not been deserted after the Trojan War, claim in which the institution of the Locrian Maidens was used as part of the argument.¹⁰⁸ Thus, the notion that the girls were first sent to Troy after the Persian conquest is part of an attempt to determine which of the conflicting versions of Troy’s fate after the Sack is historically correct. The myth of the Pelasgian rape is a myth that presents itself as history. The story in which the atonement involving the Locrian Maidens began in the heroic age is a myth, structured by a traditional mythological schema, which explains a rite by attaching it to a Trojan War myth, and it also presents itself as history. The Strabo variant transforms the traditional mythological schema as part of an attempt to reconstruct accurately past historical events, which was perceived to necessitate reconciling the Locrian Maidens myth with the perceived historical reality of an interruption in the occupation of Troy. In my view, whether or not this variant actually reflects any historical reality, the fact that it is part of an attempt to reconstruct that reality entails that it is the product of a rationalizing mentality, which restructures mythological material to try to make some kind (different kinds) of

104 The particulars, some of which vary in the different versions, are complex and do not concern us. Graf 1978:61-79 has shown that this myth refracts an initiatory rite.

105 See Parke and Wormell 1956:134.

106 Strabo 13.1.40.

107 See Graf 1978:74 n. 89 with bibl.

108 Strabo 13.1.40-42.

logical sense, in this case reconstruct historical reality—even if this stretches traditional mythological mentality to the limit. It was not generated through a process governed by the traditional mythological mentality, for this mentality operates by structuring historical material through schemata that articulate mythologically significant representations. Graf's view of the nature of the two variants of the Locrian Maidens myth (part of a discussion which aims at reconstructing historical reality, while I am only concerned with the myth, not its complex relationships to reality) is broadly comparable to the one set out here—which shows that I am not structuring the evidence to fit my interpretation. He considers the information that the Maidens were first sent to Troy after the Persian conquest to be precise and credible, and the notion that the institution had begun three years after the Trojan War to have originated in the mythological tradition and be worthless as historical fact.¹⁰⁹

This variant of the myth of the Locrian Maidens, then, is comparable to the last segment of the Pelasgian story, in that here also the rationalizing attempt at reconstructing history¹¹⁰ did not violate mythological mentality, in that the penalty had been paid, albeit in the historical past, rather than in the heroic age; but it stretched the mythological schemata in ways that may make sense to a logical perception of the situation, but do not quite fit the modalities of Greek mythopoea. The stretching of the traditional schemata in the Locrian Maidens' story may have been perceived as less extreme than that in the Pelasgian rape myth. First, because the past in which the atonement had begun in the Strabo variant of the Locrian Maidens' story was very much further removed from the present, even the present of Demetrios of Skepsis, let alone Strabo, and so was symbolically much more distanced, than in the myth of the Pelasgian murders, where the penalty was paid in the immediate past of the narrative's construction. Then, it is not clear when in the variant reflected in Strabo the Locrians had been instructed by the oracle to pay the penalty—if there ever had been a story telling this variant, if it had not simply consisted of a rebuttal of the traditional time of the institution's beginnings. It is therefore not clear that any disobedience of the oracle had been involved, let alone that there had been, as is implied in the Pelasgian story, a resumption of normality despite the disobedience. Thus, the last segment of the story of the Pelasgian murders would appear to be stretching the limits of Greek mythological mentality significantly further than the rationalizing variant of the Locrian Maidens story. In any case, the fact that the one other instance of this type of 'heroic age—present' gap-and-disjunction occurs in a rationalizing attempt to reconstruct historical reality adds further support to my argument that the last segment of the

109 Graf 1978:74f. and n. 89.

110 Whether or not a construct of Demetrios of Skepsis.

Herodotean myth of the rape had not been constructed in the same mythopoeic process that had shaped the rest of the myth as we know it, but was, unlike most of the myth, the later product of a rationalist mentality.

Even the Pythia's response takes a rare form in this segment of the myth, for it involves an open-ended injunction, in which the injured party has control, is supposed to decide in a totally open-ended way what the penalty should be.¹¹¹ The nearest parallel¹¹² is the story of Euenios in Herodotos,¹¹³ according to which Euenios of Apollonia had fallen asleep while guarding a flock sacred to the Sun, and wolves came and killed about sixty sheep. When the people of Apollonia found out what had happened they condemned him to be blinded. But after they blinded him, their flocks bore no offspring, and their land did not produce fruit as before. The oracles of Dodona and Delphi told them that they had blinded Euenios unjustly, and that for their affliction to stop they had to 'make him such restitution ... as he himself chooses and consents.' The Apolloniats then tricked Euenios, who was unaware of the oracle, into saying that he would accept as compensation certain lands and a house, which they then offered him as restitution (and the gods gave him the gift of divination). Though Euenios was angry over the trickery when he found out about the oracle, the Apolloniats had done what the oracle had told them to; and this is a fundamental difference between the Euenios myth and the last segment of our myth. The Apolloniats may have tricked Euenios to limit the scope of the open-ended injunction of the oracles, but they did obey that injunction; and the restitution took place in the story's present, there was no jump from the heroic age to the present. The same is true of the version of the Minotaur story in Apollodoros,¹¹⁴ which also involves an open-ended injunction: the oracle told the Athenians who had been hit by famine and pestilence that they must compensate Minos for Androgeos' death by giving him whatever satisfaction he asked for;

111 Crahay (1956, 82 [cf. 270]) says that the expiation recommended belongs to a type which, in his view, is also found elsewhere, a type in which the guilty party must submit to the conditions dictated to him by the victim or his representative, but he only mentions as a specific parallel the story of Euenios on which see below. Elsewhere (Crahay 1956, 312) he puts together, into one category, the response to the Pelasgians, the one concerning Euenios and that concerning Aesop (see below).

112 Which was suggested to me by Professor Robert Parker.

113 Hdt. 9.93f. See also Crahay 1956:82ff., Fontenrose 1978:321f., and esp. Griffiths 1999:169-82. In the version of the myth in Konon *FGrH* 26 F 1 (30) the hero is called Peithenios. According to Griffiths (1999:172) the Herodotean narrative about Euenios is *mythos*—as opposed to *logos*—'it hums and buzzes with the tones and harmonics of Greek traditional belief,' and its components 'identify it as a narrative which blends folktale and cultic aetiology.' It is, he suggests (Griffiths 1999:178), 'a gobblet of what we may unhesitatingly categorize as *mythos*' in the middle of a long stretch of *logos*.

114 Apollod. 3.15.8.

he asked them to send seven youths and seven maidens to be fed to the Minotaur; and they did. This type of open-ended injunction itself involves, I suggest, an extension of an open-ended injunction of the type found in the oracle's injunctions to propitiate specific dead people, which was only on the surface open-ended, in that there existed established modalities for propitiating the dead.¹¹⁵ When this type of injunction is extended to a living person it becomes genuinely open-ended. The oracular response in our myth, then, is an extension of an extension,¹¹⁶ and it is another, albeit minor and less striking, manifestation of the fact that this segment of the myth stretches the Greek mythological mentality to its limits, without violating it; it extends the modalities of Greek mythopoea to create unprecedented forms.

The fact that the schema 'wrong doing—punishment—oracular consultation—penalty paid' that structures the last segment of the myth takes a strange form fits the notion that this segment had been constructed, for the purpose of saying something specific, that the Athenians are entitled to Lemnos, by a member of the culture, who operated through a rationalist (rather than mythological) mentality, which manipulated and structured material on the basis of some kind of logical sense, rather than through schemata articulated by, and articulating, Greek collective representations—in some ways comparable to Hekataios' manipulation of the nature of the Pelasgians.

In these circumstances, I suggest that different arguments, though not conclusive in themselves, point strongly to the conclusion that it was the segment beginning with, or following, the barrenness that was added, or radically reshaped, in post-conquest mythopoea, to provide a justification for the conquest of Lemnos. Either the oracle had given a different answer in the pre-conquest myth, or that myth had ended with the murder of the Athenian concubines and their sons, and what happened to the Pelasgians afterwards had been of no interest to the Athenian myth—until Lemnos became of interest to them, and the story was extended, through the development of the potential included, in Greek eyes, in the murder of the Athenian girls. This choice may have been facilitated by the fact that such post-conquest mythopoea was obviously associated with Miltiades and the Philaids, to whom Brauronian mythology was especially familiar.

115 See, for example, Parke and Wormell 1956:34 no. 75, Fontenrose 1978:304 Q126. See also some versions of the oracle instructing the Delphians to propitiate Aesop whom they had killed (Parke and Wormell 1956:26f. no. 58, Fontenrose 1978:304 Q 107, *cf.* also Hdt. 2.134.4, Crahay 1956:84f.).

116 Somewhat different, but also stretching traditional patterns to their limits, is the injunction to the Spartans to seek recompense from Xerxes for the death of Leonidas, which is combined with the injunction to accept whatever he gave (Hdt. 8.114.1), in what is self-evidently not a traditional myth, but a story about Xerxes' arrogant reply that came true in ways he did not expect. See also Crahay 1956:312-15, Fontenrose 1978:319 Q 153.

The possibility cannot be excluded that traces of the earlier version of the myth of the rape by the Pelasgians may have survived in a late source: the version summarized by a scholiast to Aelius Aristides¹¹⁷ may conceivably be reflecting, in however altered a form, (the basic lines of) the myth before it had been reshaped by post-conquest mythopoea. According to this version, the Pelasgians who lived in Tyrrhenia had been expelled from Thessaly and gone to Athens, where they abducted some Athenian women by force, and then went to Lemnos; the Lemnians became afflicted by sickness and consulted the oracle who told them that the sickness will continue until they surrender the Pelasgians to the Athenians; so they did. Here, then, first, the Pelasgians and the Lemnians are different people, and second, the schema 'bad behaviour—divine punishment—oracular consultation—obedience to the oracle's injunction—restoration of normality' appears in its traditional form: the Lemnians obeyed the oracle's injunction immediately, and so the Pelasgians, whose actions had brought about divine anger, were punished,—and, it is to be understood, normality returned to Lemnos. On my reconstruction, the concubinage at Lemnos had been part of the pre-conquest myth, but the scholiast's extremely brief narrative does not explicitly mention it. However, the fact that in terms of Greek mythological mentality the murders are a much more appropriate correlative to, and thus trigger for, the pestilence than an abduction, however hostile, suggests, I submit, that the myth the scholiast was summarizing had included the concubinage and murders.

The fact that in this version the Lemnians are not the same as the Pelasgians, who were incomers, whom the Lemnians surrendered to the Athenians, entails that this myth did not represent the Lemnians in a negative light, nor did it make them appear to owe a debt to the Athenians. It is conceivable that the absence of these two representations, which constructed a justification of the Athenian conquest in the post-conquest myth, suggests that this is not a version of the post-conquest myth, that it may be partially reflecting the myth of the Pelasgian rape before it was reshaped by post-conquest mythopoea. If this is right, the identification of the Lemnians with the Pelasgians would have taken place in this post-conquest mythopoea.¹¹⁸

I hope to have shown several things about this myth. First, that Herodotos had not created it, by stitching together a story about good wall building Pelasgians and the justification for the conquest of Lemnos, and ascribing to the Pelasgians a character foreign to them. On the contrary, the wall building and the rape belong together; when taken together these two mythemes represent the Pelasgians as ambivalent, which is how the Pelasgians are represented in the Greek collective representations in general. Second, that the myth is rich, polysemic and multivocal, and

117 Scholia in Aelium Aristidem 13.111.1-2.

expresses complex meanings pertaining on the one hand to the Athenian past and the de-Pelasgization of Attica, and on the other to girls' transitions, marriage, male—female relations and offspring, a nexus of concerns intimately connected with the Brauronian cult, which is the locus of the rape. The meanings articulated in this myth are in harmony with meanings in other myths, and also with the society's ideologies, in so far as they can be independently reconstructed. Finally, I have shown that the last segment of the myth, which begins with the oracle and provides the justification for the conquest, is different in nature from the rest of the myth, that it contains a cluster of peculiarities that suggest that it had been constructed through a manipulation of traditional material governed by a 'rationalist' rather than mythological mentality.

Because of the nature of the evidence and the limitations of access, it cannot be proved beyond reasonable doubt, and certainly not to someone determined to make sense of myths in ways that seem reasonable to us, that this myth with all its complexities was not created *ex novo* as a justification for the conquest of Lemnos. But I hope to have shown that this is extremely unlikely, and that it entails unlikely implications; for this hypothesis to be sustainable it would have to be postulated that in that context a lot of complex mythopoea had been invented and developed, which had nothing to do with the conquest, and which pertained to, and focussed on, girls' transitions, marriage, concubinage, relations between the sexes in general, and sons. Obviously, we do not have the access to the culture that would allow us definitely to exclude this possibility. But I submit that this is not how Greek mythopoea works when its workings become in any way visible to us. It is true that its *bricolage* modality would have allowed earlier material pertaining to these concerns to be deployed in any such mythopoea, but here it is not simply the material, but the myth's *structuring* schemata, representations and perceptions that are focussed on these Brauronian concerns¹¹⁹—intertwined with representations of the Pelasgian others; except, that is, in the last segment, which is indeed structured by the representation 'justification for the conquest of Lemnos.' This

118 If the reconstruction suggested here is right in its basic lines, the representations that would have gone into the making of the selection to identify the Lemnians with the Pelasgians in this mythopoea would have been, first, (the representation articulated in the earlier myth as reconstructed here) 'Pelasgians went to Lemnos as incomers and then left;' second, the perception, based on historical reality, that the pre-Greek inhabitants of Lemnos were related to the Tyrrhenians / Etruscans; and finally, perhaps also the representation 'the Pelasgians are the same as the Tyrrhenians,' if it had been earlier than this post-conquest mythopoea (on the date of this identification see above n. 75). These representations, in interaction with each other, and also with the perception that Lemnos was in the general area where Greek representations located the Pelasgians in the present, would have generated the identification of the Pelasgians with the pre-Greek inhabitants of Lemnos, in the context of the construction of the post-conquest form of the myth with its justification of the conquest.

suggests that only this last segment was constructed, and added to the myth, as a post-conquest legitimation. This is also suggested independently by the fact that this segment is different from the rest of the myth, contains odd elements, and seems governed by a 'rationalist' rather than mythological mentality. Thus, the two arguments converge, and there is a correspondence between the meaning 'legitimation of the conquest' articulated in the last segment and the presence of elements governed by a 'rationalist' mentality—a correspondence which the hypothesis that the whole myth was constructed as a post-conquest justification would need improbably to postulate is a total coincidence.

In these circumstances, I suggest that it is perverse to resist the conclusion that this myth had been constructed in connection with the cult of Artemis at Brauron, and in interaction with the myth of Hymenaios, as well as the myth of the Lemnian women's crime, to express certain perceptions pertaining to a variety of concerns: perceptions of the Pelasgians, and the Athenian past, and through the representation of the Pelasgians in Attica as latecomers who stayed for a certain time and then were expelled, also of Athenian autochthony; perceptions pertaining to a community's vulnerability through its women, and the vulnerability of women who were exposed in public spaces on religious occasions, and the tension between these fears and the desirability of so exposing them—one particular version of which was the tension between the desirability of acculturating the wild *parthenoi* on the one hand, and the dangers of their *kyrios* relinquishing authority over them and sending them to be bears at Brauron on the other; perceptions pertaining to marriage, the desirability of proper marriage, perceived as including a consensual element, and the undesirability, and destabilizing effect, of concubinage; and the importance of legitimate sons—as opposed to biological offspring in general. This

119 I suggested elsewhere that the *arkteia* had been reorganized in the context of the 're-foundation' of the city through the Kleisthenic reforms in the very late sixth century (Sourvinou-Inwood 1988:113f.). If the conquest of Lemnos had taken place at that time, it would not, in theory, be impossible for that conquest to have brought the island into prominence in the collective representations of the time, and for this to have helped determine the choice of Lemnos as the raping Pelasgians' home-base. If so, what of the comparabilities between the Lemnian women myth and the Pelasgian rape myth? We would have to believe that either the Lemnian women myth had also been invented by Athenian mythopoea at that time, or that the myth had preexisted, but only came into play when, and because of the fact that, Lemnos was on the news, despite the fact that this myth had established Lemnos as the place where transgressive marriages were acted out. Both possibilities appear unlikely, but this may be a culturally determined judgement, and a convergence of 'Lemnos on the news' and 'this brings attention to the Lemnian women myth which suits Brauron, and thus provides a model helping to shape the new myth' is perhaps not totally unlikely. However, I must make clear that none of this matters very much for our purposes; for even if the conquest of Lemnos had brought the island in the forefront of perceptions and motivated its choice as the locus for the Athenian girls' concubinage, this would not alter the fact that this would be Brauronian mythopoea about girls' transitions, not political mythopoea aiming at justifying the conquest.

myth of the Pelasgian rape was eventually reshaped in a mythopoeic process that followed the Athenian conquest of Lemnos to construct a justification for that conquest and at the same time integrate a newly acquired non Greek Lemnos in the Athenian conceptual map in a way that related more closely the past to the present.

This myth illustrates the fact that the myths that help make up the complex web of the Athenian polis discourse were not necessarily the voices of men's desires. In this myth there is a certain (at least partial) convergence between the (basic lines of what may be roughly reconstructed as) the female viewpoint, and the representations articulated in the myth, which were part of the web of the polis discourse. This may be correlative with the context of the myth's construction; the choices that shaped it, obviously consistent with the polis' major concern with the stability of the *oikoi*, may have been correlative with the fact that this was the product of Brauronian mythopoea, which was focussed on, and so may have been implicitly partially focalized through, women, and may even have had an input from some of the influential women, above all the priestess, in the Brauronian sanctuary.

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De l'Atlantide a Masada. Réflexions sur querelle, mythe, histoire et politique¹

Pierre Vidal-Naquet

POURQUOI AVOIR choisi de réunir sous un même toit, si j'ose dire, deux récits aussi différents tant dans leur origine, Platon dans le premier, Flavius Josèphe dans le second, que l'Atlantide et Masada? D'un côté Platon, et personne n'a dit rien de tel avant lui, expose que 9 000 ans avant Solon, donc vers 9600 av. J.-C., existait, au-delà des Colonnes d'Héraclès, c'est-à-dire du détroit de Gibraltar, une île 'plus grande que la Libye et l'Asie réunies,' séparée d'un continent colossal qui se trouvait dans la mer véritable, traduisons: dans la mer idéale. L'île en question—l'Atlantide, puisqu'il faut l'appeler par son nom—était à la tête d'un empire gigantesque s'étendant, d'ouest en est, du continent à l'Egypte et de l'Espagne au monde étrusque (*Timée* 25AB). Cet empire affronta en un combat singulier, dans tout les sens du terme, une Athènes ancienne régie à peu près selon les principes de Platon dans *La république*. Athènes remporta la victoire, mais l'île Atlantide et son armée s'effondrèrent, emportant dans la catastrophe l'armée athénienne et la chair de l'Athènes archaïque. Cette histoire, nous dit Platon (*Timée* 20D), est un λόγος μάλα άτοπος παντάπασί γε μὴν ἀληθής, un récit tout à fait étrange, mais parfaitement vrai, et Dieu sait quelles sont les conséquences qu'on a tirées de cette affirmation

De l'autre côté, Flavius Josèphe, historien juif du I^{er} siècle de notre ère, nous raconte, presque à la fin de *La Guerre des Juifs*, que Masada, un rocher dominant la mer Morte, fortifié et orné par Hérode le Grand, fut occupée par un groupe de terroristes juifs, sous la conduite d'Eléazar Ben Yaïr, et fut l'ultime point de résistance, en 73 de notre ère,² des Juifs insurgés contre l'Empire romain. Ses défenseurs, face à la pression des assiégeants romains, ne voulant pas capituler et ne pouvant

1 *A l'origine de cet exposé il y a une conférence prononcée à Aix-en-Provence le 23 janvier 2002. J'ai remanié, depuis, mon texte, que j'ai dédié à Gilles Dorival qui fut le maître d'œuvre de cette conférence. Je dédie cette nouvelle impression à Synnøve des Bouvrie. J'ai cependant gardé un peu du style oral de l'exposé.

2 Selon d'autres, en 74.

plus combattre avec une chance de s'en sortir, décidèrent d'égorger leurs femmes et leurs enfants, puis s'égorgerent réciproquement jusqu'au suicide du dernier. Scribe de la mort, Flavius Josèphe précise (*Guerre des Juifs*, VII.400) que 960 êtres humains périrent dans cette affreuse aventure.

Pour dire les choses sommairement: d'un côté nous avons un mythe qui, du fait de la perversité de Platon, a été pris pour un récit historique; de l'autre, nous avons un récit historique qui, à bien des égards, est devenu un mythe, puisqu'on parlait couramment, il y a encore quelques années, du 'mythe' et même du 'complexe' de Masada. A ce mythe, un ouvrage récent d'un savant israélien, Nachman Ben Yehuda, a été consacré.³

Commençons par l'Atlantide. L'exposé initial du *Timée*, repris et développé dans le *Critias*, dialogue interrompu brusquement au moment où Zeus allait prendre la parole, est placé dans la bouche de Solon qui, lui-même, fait parler des prêtres égyptiens qui lui auraient conté l'épopée gigantesque qui vit s'affronter, 9 000 ans avant son propre temps, Athènes et l'Atlantide.

Prenons-y garde: Solon est un personnage historique, archonte en 594/3 av. J.-C.; il fut choisi comme arbitre entre les puissants et les pauvres qui s'affrontaient à Athènes. D'autre part, le récit platonicien est un pastiche de celui qui fut l'historien par excellence des guerres médiques: Hérodote. L'affrontement entre Athènes et l'Atlantide reproduit sur le mode historico-épique l'affrontement entre Grecs et Perses dans lequel Athènes joua un rôle essentiel.⁴ Mais est-ce le Solon historique qui prend la parole, est-ce même le Solon poète dont nous connaissons quelques dizaines de vers grâce à Aristote et à Plutarque? C'est Platon lui-même qui nous dit le contraire. Le Solon qui parle est un Solon qui aurait pu être. C'est Critias l'ancien qui nous le dit par la bouche de son lointain descendant et homonyme: 'Si Solon n'avait pas fait de la poésie un passe-temps (πάρεργον), s'il avait donné forme à ce récit qu'il avait rapporté d'Égypte en Grèce, et si les séditions (στάσεις) et les autres maux qu'il trouva ici à son retour ne l'avaient pas forcé à négliger la poésie, ni Hésiode, ni Homère, ni aucun autre poète n'eût, à mon avis, jamais été plus célèbre que lui.'⁵

Il est, me semble-t-il, possible de tirer de ce petit texte deux conclusions. Le Solon 'historique' est celui qui, par sa législation, a mis un terme à la στάσις, à la guerre civile qui menaçait Athènes. De tous les maux qui peuvent frapper une cité, la *stasis* est le pire. Thucydide l'a dit dans les pages inoubliables du livre III de son Histoire, en commentant les troubles de Corcyre; Platon ne pense pas autrement. Eschyle a affirmé la même chose à la fin des *Euménides*: 'Je n'appelle pas combats

3 Ben Yehuda 1995.

4 Pour une démonstration détaillée, voir Luc Brisson 1995.

5 *Timée* 20C, trad. L. Brisson.

ceux qui opposent entre eux des oiseaux de la même volière' (ἐνοικίου δ' ὄρνιθος οὐ λέγω μάχην, 866). La guerre étrangère est toujours préférable à la guerre civile. Le Solon historique a vécu la *stasis*; le Solon fictif raconte une μάχη, un combat gigantesque qui opposa Athènes et l'Atlantide. Mais, du coup, le pseudo-récit historique de Platon est frappé au cœur. C'est à Homère ou à Hésiode qu'il est comparé, non à Hérodote ou Thucydide.

Aussi, à la question que nous sommes bien obligés de poser: y a-t-il quelque chose à tirer, sur le plan de l'histoire au sens factuel du terme, du récit de Platon sur l'Atlantide, il faut répondre par un non brutal. Ce n'est pas que les hypothèses aient manqué pour localiser l'île mystérieuse en dépit de ce mot d'Aristote cité par Strabon: 'Il en est de l'Atlantide comme du rempart bâti [selon Homère] par les Achéens; celui qui l'a créée est aussi celui qui l'a détruite.'⁶ Des coups que l'on aurait pu croire mortels ont été portés à l'idée d'une Atlantide 'réelle.' En 1841 un philosophe français, disciple de Victor Cousin, Thomas-Henri Martin, professeur à l'Université de Rennes, publia à Paris ses célèbres *Etudes sur le Timée de Platon*. Elles comportaient⁷ une longue et remarquable 'Dissertation sur l'Atlantide' dans laquelle cet érudit recensait patiemment toutes—enfin, presque toutes—les identifications qui avaient été proposées pour l'île décrite par Platon. Martin concluait ainsi: 'On a cru la reconnaître dans le Nouveau Monde [l'Amérique], non, elle appartient à un *autre monde* qui n'est pas dans le domaine de l'espace, mais dans *celui de la pensée*.'⁸ Quelques mots de plus et Martin faisait la théorie de ce que nous appelons l'historiographie de l'imaginaire et qu'un homme comme Jacques Le Goff, par exemple, illustre quand il s'agit du Moyen Age occidental.

Le coup porté par T.-H. Martin avait beau être mortel, l'Atlantide s'en releva fort bien. On la rechercha et, naturellement, on la trouva partout, du lac Titicaca au Kamtchatka, de la Crète au Sahara, de l'Italie à l'Espagne méridionale, avec une insistance particulière sur l'île de Santorin où l'un des principaux hôtels s'appelle Atlantis. Le site d'Akrotiri, fouillé par S. Marinatos, a été et est encore considéré comme la capitale de l'Atlantide. A défaut d'un continent disparu nous devons à ces fouilles des fresques magnifiques datant du deuxième millénaire et qui sont une des gloires du Musée national d'Athènes.

Cela n'a pas empêché les coups—toujours mortels—de pleuvoir. Récemment, dans le volume de la Nouvelle Cléo traitant des Civilisations égéennes,⁹ René Treuil

6 L'attribution à Aristote s'obtient en confrontant Strabon 2.102 et 13.598. Aristote s'oppose à Poseidonios qui croyait, lui, à la réalité du mythe. Germaine Aujac, dans le Strabon de la CUF (Aujac 1969:II p. 149, n. 1), attribue à Aristote (*Cael.* 2.14) une référence à la grande île qui est indirecte.

7 Martin 1841:I.257-332.

8 Les expressions soulignées le sont par moi.

9 Par R. Treuil, P. Darcque, J.-C. Poursat, G. Touchais 1989; voir part. R. Treuil 375ss.

a consacré quelques pages à la théorie qui fait de l'éruption de Santorin, à la fin du Minoen Récent I (MRI), aux environs de 1500 av. J.-C., l'effondrement dont Platon s'est fait l'écho dans le *Timée* et le *Critias*. 'Ces théories imposent toutes, il faut le souligner, de corriger lourdement le texte de Platon, voire de le déformer ou de le compléter à volonté. Mais surtout, elles négligent totalement—et c'est beaucoup plus grave—le fait que ce récit ne figure dans l'œuvre d'aucun historien¹⁰ et appartient exclusivement à celle du philosophe.' Et René Treuil s'appuie sur l'analyse que j'avais donnée, dans la *Revue des études grecques* de 1964, du mythe platonicien,¹¹ en partie pour répondre à Fernand Robert qui, dans une conférence à Orléans, où j'enseignais en 1955-56, avait esquissé une interprétation 'minoenne' de la civilisation crétoise.

Reste que, comme le monstre du Loch Ness, familièrement connu sous le nom de Nessie, l'Atlantide réapparaît à tout moment. Sa dernière résurgence est aixoise et due à un géologue, ce qui devrait être une garantie de sérieux. Selon M. Jacques Collina-Girard,¹² qui a au moins la modestie de gratifier son exposé d'un point d'interrogation, il est possible de réconcilier mythe et géologie. Noble ambition assurément, et qui témoigne d'une volonté estimable de cohérence scientifique.

Mais le résultat est-il à la hauteur de l'espérance? J. Collina-Girard prend au sérieux une des indications données par Platon: l'île atlantique se trouvait 'devant cette bouche' (πρὸ τοῦ στόματος) que les Grecs appellent les Colonnes d'Héraclès (*Timée* 24E); il identifie cette île à ce qui est aujourd'hui un haut-fond, le banc de Spartel, allongé NE-SO et culminant à 56m de profondeur. Or, au maximum glaciaire, il y a 12 000 ans environ, cette terre était émergée. Ainsi, à une dizaine de kilomètres des continents africain et européen se trouvait une île de 14 km de long sur 5 km de large, dont J. Collina-Girard nous dit, sans apporter de preuves, qu'elle était occupée par une population paléolithique. Je ne discuterai pas, faute de la moindre compétence, l'aspect géologique de l'argumentation. Les difficultés commencent avec l'identification de cette île de Spartel, environnée du reste d'autres îles, avec l'Atlantide.

J. Collina-Girard a perçu l'une des difficultés en question. Cette île atlantique, nous dit Platon, était plus grande que la Libye et l'Asie réunies. Autrement dit, elle était plus grande que deux des trois continents connus d'Hérodote. La façon dont J. Collina-Girard se tire de cette difficulté est exemplaire. 'Cette dimension ne correspond pas,' dit-il, 'aux dimensions de l'île du Cap-Spartel et des autres îles de

10 Il faudrait cependant s'entendre sur ce qu'on appelle dans l'Antiquité un historien. Quand Diodore, 5.19, fait d'une île sise en plein océan Atlantique une description au moins partiellement issue de Platon, écrit-il en historien?

11 Reprise dans *Le chasseur noir* (Vidal-Naquet 1991).

12 Collina-Girard 2001:233-39.

l'archipel, ce qui n'est pas étonnant, les navigateurs et historiens antiques ne disposant d'aucun moyen sûr de mesures et de relevés de positions et surestimant toujours distances et surfaces' Certes, mais ils étaient tout de même capables de distinguer un éléphant d'une puce, et il y a des éléphants dans l'Atlantide (*Critias* 114E)!

On touche là une des grosses difficultés de tous les Atlantomanes. Ils suivent Platon quand cela les arrange et rompent avec lui dès que son récit fait problème. En particulier, J. Collina-Girard prend au sérieux l'origine égyptienne du récit. On le sait, Platon le met dans la bouche d'un prêtre de Saïs qui, comme il se doit, parle un grec magnifique: 'Solon, Solon, vous autres Grecs êtes toujours des enfants' Or il n'existe aucune trace égyptienne de ce récit du prêtre de Saïs, absolument aucune. Et ce qu'on supprime est pour le moins aussi important que ce qu'on conserve. On peut le résumer par ce mot d'un certain G. Poisson que cite avec approbation J. Collina-Girard:¹³ 'Il y a lieu de tenir compte du *Timée* tandis que le *Critias* doit être absolument rejeté.' Au lieu de la magnifique civilisation de l'Atlantide avec son temple de Poséidon, ses canaux, son port évidemment inspiré du Pirée, on nous offre des populations du paléolithique supérieur qui, 'refluant vers la péninsule Ibérique et peut-être vers les côtes marocaines [...], pourraient être les ancêtres des Ibéromaurusiens.' Mais, du continent que Platon a placé au-delà de l'île atlantique, et que, après 1492, les interprètes se feront une joie d'identifier avec l'Amérique, J. Collina-Girard ne dit rien. Cela se trouve pourtant dans le *Timée* et non dans le *Critias*.

J'estime donc qu'en dépit des efforts généreux de J. Collina-Girard et de beaucoup d'autres, il faut entièrement abandonner toute interprétation 'réaliste' de l'Atlantide, qu'elle soit 'géologique' ou 'Atlanto-nationaliste,' puisque l'Atlantide a servi, de la Suède à l'Espagne, de lieu 'd'identification' aux divers 'peuples élus' qui voulaient rivaliser avec la Bible. Ce fut le cas pour les nazis et, en général, celui de certains nationalistes germaniques, avant Hitler, pendant Hitler, après Hitler. Il y eut de cela aussi chez certains Grecs d'aujourd'hui, tel l'archéologue de Santorin, Spiridon Marinatos.¹⁴

Il s'est cependant trouvé des chercheurs pour emprunter une autre voie. Je suis l'un de ces chercheurs et nous avons un ancêtre commun. C'était un abbé piémontais au service du roi de Sardaigne. Il écrivait en français et travaillait pour le compte du roi Gustave III de Suède qui était lui-même un bel exemple de des-

13 Poisson 1953.

14 Voir en particulier mon article 'L'Atlantide et les nations,' dans mon recueil *La démocratie grecque vue d'ailleurs* (Vidal-Naquet 1996), et, plus généralement, 'Hérodote et l'Atlantide. Entre les Grecs et les Juifs' (Vidal-Naquet 2000).

pote éclairé. Ce chercheur, parfois fantasque, s'appelait Giuseppe Bartoli, et son livre, publié en 1779 à Stockholm et à Paris, s'intitulait: *Discours par lequel Sa Majesté le roi de Suède a fait l'ouverture de la Diète, en suédois, traduit en français et en vers italiens, avec un essai sur l'explication historique que Platon a donnée de son Atlantide et qu'on n'a pas considérée jusqu'à présent* Etrangement, il existe une liaison étroite entre l'historiographie du mythe de l'Atlantide et le royaume nordique. Cela commence avec cet extraordinaire personnage de la fin du XVII^e siècle et du début du XVIII^e siècle qui s'appelle Olaf Rudbeck, savant considérable, précurseur de Harvey dans la découverte de la circulation du sang, anatomiste, créateur d'un amphithéâtre d'anatomie imité de celui de Padoue et toujours en place, recteur de l'Université d'Uppsala, auteur d'un ouvrage gigantesque, *Atlant eller Manheim* (1679-1702), L'Atlantide ou l'humanité, 4 volumes qui mobilisent toute l'érudition imaginable pour démontrer que l'Atlantide n'était autre que la Suède, et que sa capitale était, comme de bien entendu, Uppsala. Je n'ai jamais ouvert ce livre sans me rappeler que nous sommes poussière et que nos plus brillantes théories, nos hypothèses les plus entraînantes, seront peut-être jugées absurdes lorsque, comme nous le disait Louis Robert, nous mangerons les pissenlits par la racine.

Cela dit, nous avons été tout de même quelques-uns à essayer de redresser la barre dans le sillage de l'abbé Bartoli et de Thomas-Henri Martin. J'en nommerai quelques-uns: le Britannique Christopher Gill, qui a édité et commenté les textes platoniciens; le Québécois Luc Brisson, qui a entre autres traduit le *Timée* et le *Critias* dans la collection Garnier-Flammarion; le Niçois de Marseille Jean-François Mattéi.¹⁵ Certains de ces auteurs sont partis de mes propres travaux, d'autres, comme W. Welliver, auteur d'une bonne étude, *Character, plot and thought in Plato's Timaeus-Critias*,¹⁶ ont cru qu'ils étaient les premiers à dire que l'Atlantide n'était autre qu'Athènes, ce que Bartoli avait fort bien compris en 1779. Que peut-on tirer de tout cela? J'essaierai en peu de mots de dire l'essentiel en formulant quelques règles, inspirées à leur manière des *Regulae* de Descartes.

La première de ces règles consiste à séparer radicalement l'étude des textes platoniciens de celle de l'historiographie du mythe. Ce n'est pas que celle-ci manque d'intérêt. J'y ai consacré plusieurs travaux, dont le dernier, publié en 1998,¹⁷ tend à démontrer que le romancier français Georges Perec, lorsqu'il écrivit son roman semi-autobiographique *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*¹⁸ avait en tête

15 Voir son livre *Platon et le miroir du mythe. De l'âge d'or à l'Atlantide* 1996; pour les autres références, voir Vidal-Naquet 2000:29, n. 2. Ajoutons à ces noms celui du Charentais aujourd'hui Nanterrois J.-F. Pradeau, qui a traduit et commenté le *Critias* dans la collection de poche des Belles Lettres.

16 Welliver 1977.

17 Vidal-Naquet 1998:17-28.

l'Atlantide de Platon. W est un continent imaginaire, une sorte d'Olympie où s'entraînent des athlètes incapables et inutiles. Le lecteur découvre peu à peu que cette Olympie de l'extrême Occident est aussi Auschwitz ou plutôt qu'elle le devient sous le regard du lecteur. Qu'elle soit aussi l'Atlantide est prouvé par l'existence d'un concours mensuel qui s'appelle tout simplement les Atlantiades. La règle est donc simple. On peut expliquer Perec par Platon, on ne peut pas expliquer Platon par Perec.

La seconde règle est de ne pas séparer ce que Platon a uni: autrement dit, de ne pas séparer l'Athènes idéale, l'Ur-Athènes des savants allemands, la cité que décrit le *Critias* et, dans le *Critias*, le soi-disant prêtre égyptien qui s'adresse à Solon, cette cité qui s'inspire de *La république*, de ne pas la séparer de l'Atlantide à laquelle elle s'oppose. Quand je dis que l'Athènes primitive s'inspire des institutions de *La république*, sans plus, j'emploie délibérément une formule vague. Dans cette Athènes, ce ne sont pas les philosophes qui sont au pouvoir. Rien n'existe au-dessus des guerriers, sauf la double divinité: Héphaïstos et Athéna, ce qui permet de faire tenir ensemble, quoique séparément, les guerriers et les artisans. Les mariages sont arrangés par l'autorité supérieure. Hommes et femmes sont égaux dans l'éducation guerrière, mais l'institution clef de *La république*, la communauté des femmes et des enfants, dont le caractère révolutionnaire est rappelé au début du *Timée*, n'existe pas dans l'Athènes primitive.

En face, l'Atlantide, royaume issu des dix enfants que Poséidon, divinité marine s'il en fut, a eu de la nymphe Clito, représente en quelque sorte la pluralité et le devenir, là où Athènes incarne l'unité et l'immobilité. Le royaume des Atlantes, issu de dix rois, est divisé en dix sections comme Athènes, depuis Clisthène, est divisée en dix tribus. La référence à Athènes est d'autant plus évidente que lorsque Platon écrit *Les Lois* il fait très attention de diviser sa cité en douze tribus, autant qu'il y a de dieux olympiens, et non en dix.

L'Athènes primitive est une cité terrienne; elle n'a ni port ni marine. On connaît la haine qu'éprouvait Platon pour tout ce qui touchait à la mer, c'est-à-dire à la démocratie et à l'impérialisme. J.-F. Mattéi écrit à juste raison: 'La fascination exercée à travers le temps par le mythe de l'Atlantide tient peut-être à sa structure spéculaire générale qui révèle, à travers la profusion de ses images, la limite infranchissable du mythe et le silence final de la parole. En ce sens, le miroir de l'Atlantide se donne d'emblée comme un miroir de mort dans lequel tous les fantasmes des utopies ultérieures viendront se refléter.'¹⁹

La première impression à qui lit simplement le *Critias* est celle de la profusion, de la richesse engendrée par une nature infiniment généreuse. Ainsi, parmi les

18 Perec 1975.

19 Mattéi 1996:252s.

métaux, l'orichalque, 'le métal le plus précieux après l'or.' Et de même les forêts, les animaux domestiques ou sauvages, l'éléphant 'qui est le plus gros et le plus vorace' (*Critias* 115A). Ainsi les fruits, y compris, peut-être, le citron: '... l'île les produisait vigoureux, superbes, magnifiques et en quantités inépuisables' (*Critias* 115B).

Après la nature, l'art: l'Atlantide *devient* une puissance maritime, avec des canaux, des ponts et des ports, des anneaux de terre et des anneaux de mer. Nous sommes dans ce qu'Aristote appelait, à propos de l'enseignement oral de Platon, 'la dyade indéfinie du grand et du petit.'²⁰ Citons encore J.-F. Mattéi: La 'raison utopique va se perdre dans l'infinie duplication d'un récit dont la structure en miroir affecte aussi bien les cités en présence que les protagonistes du drame, et finalement les dialogues platoniciens eux-mêmes;²¹ et il ajoute à juste titre qu'Athènes et l'Atlantide 'sont l'image inversée l'une de l'autre.' Tous les détails vont dans ce sens: Athènes possède une source et une seule, l'Atlantide en a deux. On pourrait multiplier les exemples.

Dans le drame cosmique évoqué dans le *Timée*, Athènes perd une part de son espace et de sa terre, mais, contrairement à l'Atlantide, elle ne disparaît pas, tout en courant le risque de devenir une puissance maritime, c'est-à-dire de devenir l'Atlantide. Le désastre que connaît l'empire atlante est pire encore que celui que connaît Athènes à la fin de la guerre du Péloponnèse, quand le narrateur de l'Atlantide, Critias, devient un des trente tyrans et même le plus célèbre et le plus redoutable d'entre eux. Platon a vu Athènes reconstruire un empire et le perdre à nouveau aux environs de 355 av. J.-C. Ce désastre trouve son écho dans le *Timée* et le *Critias*.

La troisième règle consiste à se demander à qui Platon s'en prend, je veux dire: dans quel contexte idéologique écrit-il le prologue du *Timée* et le *Critias* qui se termine au milieu d'une phrase, alors que Zeus se prépare à annoncer la fin de l'Atlantide? Disons-le en passant, je suis de ceux qui pensent que Platon n'a pas voulu aller plus loin. En un sens, j'ai déjà répondu à cette question. L'ennemi par excellence de Platon, c'est la démocratie athénienne et, plus spécifiquement, la démocratie du V^e siècle. C'est le pays qui a construit la flotte, qui a mieux que contribué à la victoire de Salamine, qui a établi la thalassocratie qu'il a présentée tout au long de son œuvre comme l'anti-modèle. Voilà qui est bien connu de tous et qui a été vigoureusement rappelé par Cornelius Castoriadis dans le livre, publié posthument,²² qu'il a consacré au grand dialogue qu'est *Le Politique*.

20 Qu'il me suffise de renvoyer à la synthèse commode et précise de Marie-Dominique Richard 1986, notamment p. 225-33.

21 Mattéi 1996:253-54.

22 Castoriadis, sur le *Politique* de Platon, 1999.

Si l'on veut comprendre la guerre entre Athènes et les Atlantes, il faut avoir devant les yeux deux exemples historiques qui étaient familiers à tous au temps de Platon. Le premier a été compris de tout le monde: c'est celui des guerres médiques. L'Atlantide est un empire richissime comme l'était l'Empire perse. Les traits 'orientaux' ne manquent pas dans la description de la capitale avec ses multiples enceintes qui évoquent Babylone ou Ecbatane. Le fait a été bien souligné par Joseph Bidez dans son livre de 1945, *Eos ou Platon et l'Orient*. La seule différence majeure, si j'ose dire, c'est que l'Atlantide est à l'ouest et l'Empire perse à l'est; mais c'est si peu de chose que la géographie, surtout quand on sait, comme le sait tout lecteur du *Phédon*, que la vraie mer n'est pas la Méditerranée, simple mare à grenouilles, ce que répète à sa façon le *Timée*....

Cela dit, si nous parlons des guerres médiques, il faut se souvenir que pour Platon, le Platon du livre III des *Lois*, Platées est une victoire honorable au contraire de Salamine. Derrière ce décalque des guerres médiques, il y a un pastiche de celui qui les a racontées: Hérodote. Rien de plus évident. On lit dans le *Timée* (20E): 'Dans le passé notre cité a accompli de grands et admirables exploits (μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστά) dont le souvenir s'est effacé sous l'effet du temps et en raison des catastrophes qui ont frappé l'humanité.' Ces formules rappellent inévitablement le début de l'*Enquête* d'Hérodote: 'Hérodote de Thourioi expose ici ses recherches pour empêcher que ce qu'ont fait les hommes avec le temps ne s'efface de la mémoire et que de grands et admirables exploits (ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θαυμαστά)—accomplis tant par les Barbares que par les Grecs ne cessent d'être renommés.'

Les ressemblances sont évidentes, les différences aussi. Hérodote prend une mémoire vivante qu'il veut empêcher de disparaître. Platon prend une mémoire d'autant plus morte que les faits dont il est censé parler n'ont jamais existé. Les 'grands et admirables exploits' dont parle Platon n'ont été accomplis que par les seuls Athéniens. Pour rester dans le registre des guerres médiques, Marathon succède à Platées, puisque Athènes seule, en dernière analyse, après avoir été membre d'une coalition, met au tapis l'empire atlante. Par-delà le détail des épisodes et des pastiches, il n'y a aucun doute sur le fait que Platon veut remplacer l'histoire véritable par une histoire fictive. L'historien est pour lui un ennemi: Hérodote, bien sûr, mais aussi Thucydide. Platon, il est vrai, ne cite ni l'un ni l'autre. Qu'il ait lu Hérodote est prouvé par le prologue du *Timée* et par le *Critias*. Qu'il ait lu Thucydide fait d'autant moins de doute que le *Ménéxène* n'est pas autre chose qu'un pastiche soigneux et pervers de l'oraison funèbre de Périclès au livre II de Thucydide.²³ Quant à l'Atlantide, son nom même vient de l'Atlas que

23 Il suffit de renvoyer ici aux pages concernant le *Ménéxène* dans la thèse de Nicole Loraux, 1981.

Hérodote a décrit à l'extrême ouest du monde présenté dans l'*Enquête* (4.184-185).

Une fois qu'on a compris que la guerre entre les Athéniens et les Atlantes n'est pas autre chose qu'une guerre d'Athènes contre Athènes, c'est-à-dire une *stasis*, ce mot magnifique qui a fait l'objet du livre de Nicole Loraux, *La Cité divisée*;²⁴ *stasis*, ce mot qui désigne en grec moderne l'arrêt du bus ou la station de métro, on comprend que derrière le désastre maritime de l'armée atlante engloutie sous la mer il faut lire le désastre de Sicile en 413 et la guerre civile de 403 racontée par Xénophon.

L'Athènes primitive de Platon est une Athènes qui n'a jamais existé, sinon dans le rêve de la *πάτριος πολιτεία*, de la Constitution des ancêtres que Platon partageait avec quelques-uns de ses concitoyens. Encore s'agit-il d'une Constitution des ancêtres qui ressemble beaucoup à *La république*, même si le début du *Timée* n'est pas tout à fait un résumé de *La république*. Platon a mis de l'eau dans son vin, il en mettra encore plus dans *Les Lois*. Il faut donc lire à travers le prologue du *Timée* et le *Critias* l'évocation de la guerre civile entre ce que fut Athènes et ce qu'elle aurait dû être.

Ni Thucydide ni Hérodote n'ont ignoré l'issue désastreuse de la thalassocratie athénienne. C'est évident pour Thucydide dont toute l'œuvre peut être analysée comme la tragédie d'Athènes: montée au sommet suivie de cet effondrement que l'historien a connu mais n'a pas eu le temps de raconter. Il y a près de deux ans, j'étais au jury d'une thèse d'un chercheur polonais, Marek Weçowski, élève de François Hartog et de Benedetto Bravo. Weçowski s'est efforcé de démontrer qu'Hérodote savait qu'Athènes, l'Athènes impériale dont il était le contemporain et l'ami, courait tout droit à la catastrophe, selon la courbe en cloche familière à la pensée grecque. Mon sentiment intime se révoltait contre cette idée et, pour tout dire, j'étais plus que réticent. Je le suis beaucoup moins aujourd'hui; mais ce qui, en tout état de cause, reste indiscutable, c'est qu'aux yeux de Platon toute la pensée du V^e siècle, tout ce qui a fait la gloire d'Athènes, était fondé sur le mensonge qu'était à ses yeux la démocratie. Le bazar, ce *παντοπωλίον* qu'était à ses yeux le régime (*République* VIII.557D), ce mot qui est inscrit ainsi sur les magasins grecs d'aujourd'hui, même s'il se prononce *μακάλι*, un mot turc. L'Atlantide fut un gigantesque bazar, et Athènes ne sortira de la crise que si les dieux ou les philosophes la prennent en charge.

C'est d'une autre catastrophe que je voudrais maintenant dire quelques mots, en praticien de l'histoire comparée; il s'agit cette fois de Masada. La fin de l'Atlantide est une catastrophe imaginaire, et il est d'autant plus étrange que l'Atlantide, ce

24 Loraux 1997.

'miroir de mort,' cette île vouée au malheur, ait donné naissance à tant d'utopies positives, que tant d'idéologues nationalistes aient voulu que leurs peuples, à défaut d'être des Juifs, soient aux mains des descendants des Atlantes, comme le soutenait par exemple le Suédois Rudbeck.

De même que le destin de l'Atlantide nous est connu par une source unique et par ses innombrables dérivés, la fin de Masada nous est racontée par les chapitres 8 et 9 du livre VII de *La Guerre des Juifs*²⁵ de Flavius Josèphe.

Ce n'est pas que le site soit inconnu de la tradition gréco-romaine. Strabon dans sa *Géographie*,²⁶ Pline dans son *Histoire naturelle* (5.17), mentionnent le lieu. Le premier est antérieur à la Révolte, le second l'a vécue, mais, en l'espèce, il n'y fait pas allusion.

Flavius Josèphe lui-même n'est ni un témoin direct (il était alors à Rome) ni un narrateur indifférent. Il a été en 66 un des généraux de la Révolte juive; contraint et forcé, nous dit-il dans son *Autobiographie*.²⁷ Il estime plus tard que cette insurrection était contraire à la volonté de Dieu et, plus encore, à celle des notables. Quand on lit dans l'ordre chronologique *La Guerre des Juifs* et *l'Autobiographie*, on a l'impression d'être en face d'une des deux versions successives de *Fils du peuple* de Maurice Thorez ou de *l'Histoire du PC (b) de l'URSS*.

Josèphe nous raconte donc, à propos de Masada, non les combats, dont il ne dit strictement rien, mais le siège avec sa fin tragique. Sur la réalité de ce site, redécouvert en 1838 par deux explorateurs américains, et sur celle du siège, il n'y a naturellement aucun doute. Des fouilles ont été entreprises à la fin du XIX^e siècle par un archéologue allemand, Von Domazewski, qui s'intéressait surtout à l'armée romaine, et le lieu était d'autant mieux choisi que Flavius Josèphe est, après Polybe, un témoin absolument capital pour l'histoire de cette armée, puisque, comme son prédécesseur, il nous informe de l'extérieur.

La fouille à peine esquissée par le savant allemand a été reprise avec d'énormes moyens, l'appui des pouvoirs publics et la participation de nombreux volontaires, par l'archéologue et homme politique israélien Y. Yadin, fils de l'illustre savant E. Sukenik, un des 'inventeurs' des Manuscrits de la mer Morte à la diffusion desquels Yadin a d'ailleurs contribué en publiant *le Rouleau du Temple*.

Répetons-le: sur l'identification du site et l'importance du siège dirigé par Flavius Silva, il n'y a pas l'ombre d'un doute. A vrai dire, un seul personnage a écrit au tome IV de ses *Ecrits révisionnistes*²⁸ qu'il existait à ce sujet une légende juive, que des fouilles avaient été effectuées et qu'elles avaient démontré qu'il n'y avait eu

25 Editions de Minuit, 1977, trad. Pierre Savinel.

26 Strabon, *Geogr.* 16.764. Mâasada (*sic*) est placée dans un environnement volcanique.

27 Belles Lettres, 1959, trad. André Pelletier.

28 Faurisson IV, 1875; cf. mon article du *Monde des livres*, 24/3/2000.

ni siège ni résistance héroïque. Faut-il nommer ce personnage? Il s'appelle Robert Faurisson, et ce n'est ni la première fois ni la dernière fois qu'il est pris la main dans le sac.

Masada pose à l'historien trois sortes de problèmes qui ne sont pas sans rappeler ceux que posait l'Atlantide, et c'est pourquoi je les ai réunies dans cet exposé. Le premier problème consiste à analyser le texte de Josèphe. Le deuxième consiste à réfléchir sur les rapports qui peuvent s'établir entre nos deux catégories de sources, le récit de Josèphe d'une part et les fouilles menées par Yadin qui ont fait l'objet d'une publication scientifique partielle. Le troisième consiste à réfléchir sur ce qu'on appellera, faute de mieux, la réception idéologique de cet épisode historique. Comment le siège de Masada est-il devenu ce que beaucoup de chercheurs israéliens appellent le mythe de Masada? J'ai contribué à ces recherches par deux études maintenant republiées dans mon livre *Les Juifs, la mémoire et le présent*.²⁹ Mais depuis lors toute une littérature a été publiée en dehors de celle que je cite. Outre le livre, déjà évoqué, de Nachman Ben Yehuda³⁰ j'en mentionnerai deux autres: le premier, dû à une Américaine, étudie la quête des racines telle qu'elle se pratique dans la culture israélienne.³¹ Le second est une traduction (inégale) des recherches juives du grand historien Arnaldo Momigliano.³²

Procédons par ordre. Si l'on prend le récit de Flavius Josèphe, qu'apprenons-nous en lisant les textes qui précèdent les chapitres 8 et 9 du livre VII de *La Guerre des Juifs*? Masada est une forteresse datant du temps des Asmonéens (*Guerre*, I. 237s.), et qui fait partie d'un trio de places fortes construites ou reconstruites par Hérode le Grand non pour défendre le peuple juif mais au contraire pour le combattre en cas de révolte.³³ Outre Masada, tel fut le destin de l'Hérodion, près de Bethléem, et de Machéronte, aujourd'hui en Jordanie, et d'où l'on a une excellente vue, au-delà du Jourdain, sur Masada.

Cette dernière forteresse, ornée d'un somptueux palais, occupe un site évidemment stratégique au-dessus de la mer Morte, ce qui explique qu'elle ait été assiégée par Antigone, le dernier des Asmonéens, que les Parthes avaient tenté en 40/37 av. J.-C. de remettre sur le trône en qualité de roi-vassal. Les Romains qui l'occupaient en 66 en furent chassés dès le début de la Révolte par des

29 Vidal-Naquet 1995:46-71 et 197-227.

30 Ben Yehuda 1995.

31 Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots. Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* 1995.

32 *Contributions à l'histoire du Judaïsme*, Momigliano 2002. On trouvera dans ce livre une traduction de la préface (critique) que Momigliano avait donnée à l'édition italienne de mon étude 'Flavius Josèphe ou du bon usage de la trahison' en ouverture de *La Guerre des Juifs* (cf. *supra*, n. 25).

33 *Guerre*, I.164, 264-86.

révolutionnaires venus de Jérusalem (II.408), mais ces révolutionnaires furent remplacés par plus révolutionnaires qu'eux (II.433-448), à la tête desquels se trouvait Eléazar fils de Yaïr. C'était le descendant d'un homme connu sous le nom de Judas le Galiléen, chef de brigands selon Josèphe, qui avait pris la tête de ce que l'historien appelle la 4^e philosophie. En dehors des sectes (des hérésies, dans le grec de Josèphe) traditionnelles, les Pharisiens, les Saducéens et les Esséniens, la 4^e philosophie, celle des Sicaires, était une variante terroriste de la secte pharisienne. De même que les socialistes révolutionnaires étaient, selon les marxistes russes, des libéraux la bombe à la main, les Sicaires étaient des Pharisiens le poignard, la 'sica,' à la main. Ils refusaient non seulement le recensement mais les images de l'empereur, y compris quand elles figuraient sur les monnaies.

Que dit Josèphe quand il décrit les Sicaires avant de raconter le siège et la prise de Masada? 'A cette époque, en effet, les Sicaires avaient formé une conjuration contre ceux qui consentaient à se soumettre aux Romains, et les traitaient comme des ennemis de toutes les façons, pillant leurs biens, emmenant leurs troupeaux, mettant le feu à leurs habitations. Ils disaient en effet que "ces gens ne différaient en rien des étrangers, vu qu'ils sacrifiaient aussi lâchement la liberté des Juifs si chèrement acquise et qu'ils lui préféraient, de leur propre aveu, la servitude sous le joug romain"' (*Guerre*, VII.254-255). Aurant dire que Josèphe n'a pas la moindre sympathie pour les Sicaires qui 'furent les premiers à entrer dans la voie du crime et de la cruauté à l'égard de leurs proches, ne négligeant aucune parole non prononcée pour exercer leur violence, aucune action non accomplie pour mettre à mort les victimes de leurs complots' (*Guerre*, VII.262).

Cela dit, ajoute-t-il, il y eut pire: Jean de Gischala (Gush Halav), Simon Bar Gioras, les Iduméens et les Zélotes au sens propre du mot, c'est-à-dire les disciples, pour l'essentiel des prêtres, d'Eléazar fils de Simon. Tout cela est mis en ordre croissant, mais les Sicaires sont les seuls à avoir survécu à la prise de Jérusalem en 70, ce qui explique que *La Guerre des Juifs* se termine par leur affrontement avec Rome, non seulement à Masada, mais en Afrique autour de Cyrène. Josèphe en personne est alors dénoncé comme complice des Sicaires, ce qui n'a pas dû le mettre de la meilleure humeur à leur égard. C'est alors et alors seulement que se termine *La Guerre des Juifs*, tandis que la traduction latine, celle du Pseudo-Hégésippe, se clôt par l'épisode de Masada.

Mais revenons à cette célèbre forteresse. Josèphe décrit très soigneusement, comme il le fait d'habitude, le site, la forteresse et le palais d'Hérode ainsi que les fortifications des Sicaires. Il n'évoque aucun combat. Simplement, quand le chef de la garnison, Eléazar Ben Yaïr, constate que toute défense est inutile, il réunit ses hommes et leur tient deux discours pour les convaincre de se suicider collectivement, d'égorger leurs femmes et leurs enfants après avoir mis le feu à tout ce qui pouvait brûler à l'intérieur de la forteresse. Deux discours: c'est là le fait le plus

étonnant. Le premier discours est une prédication de mort. Eléazar annonce la fin du peuple juif, comme Zeus, à la fin du *Critias*, se prépare à annoncer la fin du peuple athénien. Dieu a créé le peuple juif, Dieu le dissout. Ce discours ne convainc pas. Le second discours est un plaidoyer pour l'immortalité personnelle. A coup d'arguments empruntés froidement à la philosophie grecque, Eléazar persuade ses auditeurs que chacun connaîtra un monde meilleur. C'est ce second discours qui emporte l'adhésion des hommes de la garnison. Après quoi chacun égorge sa femme et ses enfants, et l'on tire au sort les dix qui achèveront la sinistre besogne. C'est dans un monde mort que, peu après, pénètrent les Romains.

Comment Josèphe sait-il tout cela? Deux femmes et cinq enfants ont survécu. L'une de ces femmes est cultivée, l'autre non. Josèphe use alors de ce que Roland Barthes appelle 'l'effet de réel,' ce qu'il juge parfaitement inutile quand il nous inflige, dans un langage solennel, le discours que tient Abraham à son fils Isaac pour le convaincre d'accepter d'être sacrifié par son père (*Antiquités juives*, I.222-236).

Que peut, en face de ce texte, dire et faire l'historien? Toutes les attitudes sont possibles, et on peut tirer de ce type de document toute une gamme d'interprétations. L'attitude la plus commune—hélas!—consiste à accepter le récit tel quel. C'est ce que j'appelle le style 'Eléazar sortit à cinq heures.' Un immense érudit comme L.H. Feldman, auteur d'une colossale bibliographie de Josèphe, est allé jusqu'à écrire que les canalisations dans lesquelles s'étaient cachées les deux femmes offraient une 'acoustique excellente.'³⁴ D'autres expliquent que Josèphe est un menteur, que les hommes sont morts en combattant et que les Romains ont massacré tout ce qu'ils ont pu. Entre ces deux extrêmes, toutes les variations sont possibles, et sous chacune d'elles on pourrait mettre un nom. Une radio culturelle m'a récemment appelé pour me signaler un détail archéologique. Dans une des grottes où l'on a retrouvé des restes auxquels l'Etat d'Israël a fait des obsèques nationales, on aurait mis au jour des restes de porcs. Comment interpréter ce fait, s'il est bien réel? Il est évident que les archéologues sont libres de répondre soit que les défunts n'étaient pas des Juifs, soit que les Romains ont voulu insulter ces cadavres en les faisant voisiner avec des restes de porcs.

Quelle est ma solution personnelle de l'énigme de Masada? Elle se fait en deux temps. Il s'agit d'abord d'expliquer Josèphe par Josèphe. Or au livre III, chapitre 8, Josèphe raconte comment à Yotapata, en Galilée, il se trouva pris dans une situation comparable à celle d'Eléazar. Caché dans une grotte, il se vit sommer de se suicider plutôt que de se rendre. Il plaida en vain que le suicide était contraire à la religion juive. Après quoi il fit en sorte d'être le dernier à devoir mourir; mais

34 Feldman 1975:218-48; je cite les p. 244s.

il ne se tua pas et se rendit à Vespasien à qui il annonça de surcroît qu'il allait devenir empereur. Sur ce point, j'ai été généralement suivi.

Il n'en a pas été de même quand j'ai proposé de voir dans le double discours d'Eléazar Ben Yaïr une apocalypse de mort. Qu'ai-je voulu dire? Comme l'observe Momigliano³⁵ le mot *apokalupsis* est inconnu en grec classique et apparaît en grec hellénistique à partir du II^e siècle av. J.-C., soit avec une signification profane: l'acte de se déshabiller, soit 'avec une référence vaguement religieuse: découverte d'une erreur.' Dans le sens religieux, il est employé par Paul (par exemple, *Épître aux Galates* 1.12), mais c'est évidemment le livre de Jean qui a fait sa gloire. Les Anglo-Saxons appellent du reste ce livre *Revelation*, ce qui est la source de beaucoup d'erreurs dans les traductions.

Mais, du coup, on a donné ce nom à un nombre considérable de textes grecs, araméens, syriaques, hébreux, qui vont de quelques lignes à un livre important. De ces chapitres ou de ces livres, un seul, le livre de *Daniel*, a pénétré dans l'Ancien Testament. Il en existe par ailleurs nombre de variétés qui ne sont ni juives ni chrétiennes (en Egypte par exemple). Ces livres expriment la vision des vaincus ou, si l'on préfère, l'espoir des désespérés. Ils ont leur équivalent aujourd'hui dans les religions du Tiers Monde. Comme récits, les apocalypses sont construites selon un schéma extrêmement simple. Aux turbulences succède la mort apparente, suivie elle-même de la résurrection et de la victoire. Josèphe était l'ennemi farouche de ceux que Norman Cohn a appelé *Les Fanatiques de l'apocalypse*.³⁶ Au pire moment du siège de Jérusalem, le portique du Temple s'effondre sur ceux qui s'y étaient réfugiés, et Josèphe explique (*Guerre*, VI.285): 'Le responsable de leur mort fut un faux prophète qui, ce jour-là, avait fait proclamer par héraut aux habitants de la cité que Dieu leur ordonnait de monter au Temple pour recevoir les signes de leur délivrance.' Voilà l'exemple même de ce que déteste Josèphe: le faux prophète est un praticien de l'apocalypse.

Pour moi, le double discours d'Eléazar est une apocalypse de mort. Il nous montre où conduisent la révolte et le messianisme: à la prédication de la mort du peuple juif, ce dont Josèphe ne veut à aucun prix puisque, pour lui, l'histoire continue. La tradition juive, contrairement à ce qu'on lit ici ou là, n'a pas retenu Masada. Elle n'a d'ailleurs pas retenu Josèphe, qui a été préservé par les chrétiens. Quel magnifique *Testimonium Flavianum* que cette fin apocalyptique de l'Etat juif! Je l'ai déjà signalé, l'adaptateur latin de Josèphe fait en sorte que son récit se termine par l'épisode de Masada.

35 Momigliano 2002:129-42 ('Indications préliminaires sur Apocalypse et Exode dans la tradition juive').

36 Cohn 1982.

Du côté juif, c'est plutôt le silence. Au X^e siècle, dans le Sud byzantin de l'Italie, le *Yosippon* est une sorte de récit apologétique de l'histoire juive d'Adam à la Guerre des Juifs, inspirée de Josèphe avec des déformations cléricales. Masada devient Mezira. Les Juifs égorgent leurs femmes et leurs enfants, et meurent en combattant l'ennemi romain. Ce texte fut traduit dans nombre de langues et connut un immense succès, mais il n'en existe pas d'adaptation française. Flavius Josèphe en tant que personne en est évidemment absent, mais c'est de son nom que s'inspire le titre même du *Yosippon*.³⁷ Il faudra longtemps pour que Masada reprenne sa place dans l'histoire juive. Cette histoire a été racontée dans les deux livres que j'ai mentionnés de Yael Zerubavel et de Nachman Ben Yehuda.³⁸ Le premier d'entre eux a l'avantage de replacer Masada dans l'ensemble des mythes nationalistes qui sont nés et se sont développés en Palestine juive, puis en Israël.

La date essentielle est probablement la publication en 1927 d'un poème en six chants, en hébreu, dû à Ytzhak Lamdan, Juif ukrainien dont le frère avait été victime d'un pogrom. *Masada* tourne autour de l'histoire de trois Juifs russes. L'un choisit la révolution et s'y perd, le deuxième meurt anonymement, le troisième vient en Eretz Israël et rejoint un groupe de jeunes gens à Masada, Masada qui ne tombera plus. Ce récit est devenu un mythe national. L'autorité sioniste tenta en vain d'acheter le site en 1937. Elle n'en sera maîtresse qu'après la guerre d'indépendance. Masada est devenue un symbole non de défaite mais d'héroïsme, ce qui suppose une interprétation assez libre du texte de Flavius Josèphe. Les ouvrages que j'ai cités dépeignent très bien ce que fut la montée à Masada comme rite d'initiation juvénile avant l'indépendance, suivie d'un tourisme politico-culturel et même, de nos jours, d'un tourisme de masse, puisqu'il y a désormais, non plus le seul sentier du Serpent, mais un bon et brave funiculaire qui banalise l'ascension.

A ce tourisme de masse, les fouilles de Yadin ont apporté un adjuvant décisif. Que l'archéologue israélien ait pratiqué une archéologie massivement nationaliste ne fait évidemment aucun doute. Dans son édition en hébreu, le livre *Masada* par lequel Yadin a popularisé sa fouille porte en sous-titre: *Ba-Yamim ha-hem bazeman ha-zé*, c'est-à-dire *En ces jours en ces temps*, ce qui est extrait de la prière de Hanouka. En anglais, ce sous-titre est devenu *The Zealots last stand*, ce qui est parfaitement faux à moins d'intégrer sous le nom de Zélotes tous les insurgés d'Israël, dont la division, la *stasis*, était le trait le plus manifeste. Masada est aujourd'hui un lieu de pèlerinage civil et militaire, et Yadin a tout fait pour cela. Il a cherché à suivre le récit de Josèphe, négligeant un peu les temps hérodiens au profit des temps de siège. Il a poussé les choses très loin lorsqu'il a estimé avoir

37 Lucien Poznanski en annonce une traduction française à paraître aux Editions du Cerf.

38 Voir aussi, plus brièvement, Hadas-Lebel 1995.

découvert les jetons qui ont servi au tirage au sort des hommes qui ont été chargés de l'égorgement final. Ô miracle, l'un d'entre eux portait le nom de Ben Yaïr.

Est-ce vraisemblable? Je ne l'ai pas cru et je ne suis pas le seul. Sur ce point, j'ai généralement été suivi, et il est plaisant que ma démonstration ait été citée approbativement par un excellent spécialiste américain de Josèphe, Shaye D. Cohen, dans un article publié dans un volume de *Mélanges* en l'honneur de ... Y. Yadin.³⁹ Le fait que de telles critiques soient maintenant couramment accueillies en Israël est le signe d'une évolution: le mythe a perdu de sa prégnance. Le temps n'est plus où Golda Meïr pouvait dire: 'Oui nous avons le complexe de Masada.' Les Israéliens en ont assurément d'autres. Toutefois, ils ne se sont pas encore découverts les héritiers des Atlantes, en dépit du fait qu'entre le XVI^e et le XVIII^e siècle nombreux ont été les savants (chrétiens) qui ont identifié l'Atlantide à la Palestine, ce qui suppose un renversement du récit platonicien qui n'a pas fini de me stupéfier.

Lors d'un voyage en Israël il y a près de trente ans, j'ai suggéré à des amis israéliens d'entreprendre une opération *Acharniens*, d'imiter le Diccéopolis d'Aristophane en concluant directement la paix avec les Palestiniens. Aujourd'hui, je leur proposerais de mettre au programme le titre d'une autre pièce d'Aristophane, aussi éloignée que possible de Masada et de l'Atlantide, mythes guerriers s'il en fut. Elle s'appelle Εἰρήνη: la Paix, Shalom, Salam.

39 Cohen 1982.

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Myth and poetry in Archaic Greece A comparative approach

Minna Skafte Jensen

To the memory of Lauri Honko

Introduction

IT IS A BEWILDERING fact in Homeric studies today that opinions of what is probable, what not, differ so radically. What seems convincing to some is ridiculous to others, making for a situation in this field of scholarship in which serious discussion is difficult. The problem is to some degree, but by no means exclusively, linked to the question of how individual scholars take their stand in relation to the oral-formulaic theory. What is obvious is that the frames of reference in which scholars of various disciplines or with various preferences read the two great epics determine their understanding of the poems to a degree almost beyond communication.

As an illustration, I shall mention a few important modern hypotheses about the writing of the Homeric poems that seem to me sturdily unconvincing: the idea that as soon as the Greeks learned to write they recorded the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in writing;¹ the idea that the great poet and the great inventor of the Greek alphabet met and immediately realised how they could make their geniuses cooperate;² the idea that the hexameter was invented by an individual about 700 BC, and that this same person created the Homeric diction;³ or, to revert to a somewhat older suggestion, the idea that Homer had at his disposal a wall of unlimited length, and that he inscribed on it his poems, deleting this and adding that during the process.⁴ I can only note that such ideas appeal to quite a few other people, whereas other hypotheses that I find convincing are rejected. To begin

1 Janko 1998.

2 Powell 1991.—Powell's hypothesis has been competently rejected by Woodard 1997:160f. and 253ff.

3 Berg and Haug 2000.

4 Goold 1977.

with, I shall therefore state that the ideas of the present paper all stem from the basic hypothesis that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were orally composed.

The tradition of comparing Homer with epic from other cultures is of long standing. Already Robert Wood and Friedrich August Wolf were deeply inspired by folk traditions of their day, and ever since comparison has been an important element in Homeric studies. There are two main approaches: either scholars study stories and motifs across time and space, or they concentrate on poetic technique. It is the latter form of comparison that has been dominant since Parry and Lord's establishment of the oral-formulaic theory, and it is to this approach that my paper belongs. These scholars studied the actual process of composing orally, composition in performance, and saw the formulas and themes as necessary tools in this form of art.

Their theory has been criticised for being too rigid, for creating an unconvincing great divide between oral and written, and for many other weaknesses. But it has certainly been a stimulus for research, both in Homeric scholarship, where it began, and in modern folkloristics and anthropology. The way fieldwork is conducted has changed radically as a result of their theory, the methods both of recording and publishing have been totally altered, and the volume of epic traditions alive in the 20th century documented in such a way as to make them accessible to scholars from other disciplines is by now considerable. Every new documentation of an epic tradition, even though its main importance is of course for the study of the tradition in question, serves to verify or falsify parts of the oral-formulaic theory.⁵ The wealth of such modern fieldwork has not been as intensely used in Homeric scholarship as it could and should have been although John Miles Foley and his periodical *Oral Tradition* constitute the exception that confirms the rule and have done much to open new perspectives in Homeric studies.

Besides the fact that the theory has been so obviously productive, it has another very attractive feature, namely that it offers an alternative to the evolutionary model. Why is it relevant at all to study one phenomenon—say, ancient Greece—by comparing it with another, such as, for instance, Montenegro in the 1930s? Because there is an evolution that all human societies go through, but at a different pace? That was the generally accepted worldview when comparative studies were first introduced. But it has grown increasingly problematic, especially because it involves ideas of lower and higher steps on a ladder of progress, with our own society occupying the top rung. What a coincidence! Parry and Lord's focus on the technical, material and social circumstances of composition provides an ideologically more neutral basis for comparison.

5 For a survey with bibliography see Jensen 1994-95. A detailed discussion of 11 select examples of edited oral epics are to be found in Honko 1998a:169-217.

Interests guiding the present study

Comparison on the basis of the oral-formulaic theory can be carried out in different ways with a whole range of different purposes. It leads to questions such as: How does it influence our reading of the Homeric poems if we consider them orally composed? What does it mean for our understanding of Archaic and early Classical literature, and of the intertextuality among surviving works? How do we imagine the functions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in society? And, especially, how were the two epics ever written? Scholars who consider them orally composed have to have a hypothesis about the origin of the written poems that have been transmitted to us.

For the sociologically oriented questions, comparison with oral poetry in our own times is important as a help towards establishing a convincing setting for the poems. We have the texts, but few or no reliable external sources to inform us about how they were composed and received in their own time. For this use, documented oral epic serves as a kind of laboratory, and much of Parry and Lord's influence has had to do with this aspect. By studying how living oral traditions actually work, we can hopefully build up a frame of reference describing what is probable, what not. For this kind of study, it is the normal, average performance that is most relevant, not the single, extraordinary event. To stick to Parry and Lord's Serbo-Croatian example, Avdo Mededovic's tour-de-force in singing his extremely long epic of *The Wedding of Smailagic Meho*, published in vols 3-4 of their collection, is of less interest than the singers in vols 1-2 and the study of their various performances.⁶

What I shall be doing here is to concentrate on what can be learned about Archaic Greek poetry from a specific living tradition, of Karnataka in India. The reason is simply that it has been documented in an unusually careful way. Actually, such a one-to-one comparison is problematic in being arbitrary: there is no special similarity between this tradition and Homer, neither in the content and form of the tradition in question, nor in the society to which it belongs. Accordingly, I am not advocating this kind of comparison as superior to the way Parry and Lord-inspired Homeric scholars usually proceed, that is by comparing the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to a general model of oral epic. It is still the theory as such that is behind my present procedure, which I consider complementary rather than alternative to it. The advantages in making a one-to-one comparison between two specific traditions are, firstly, that it is clearer what you are handling and more easily controllable for others, and, secondly, that you can take into consideration not

6 Parry and Lord 1953-54; Parry, Lord and Bynum 1974.

only the edited poem, the singer and the audience, but also the editor and the scholarly interests that lie behind a given fieldwork study.

The Siri project

I am referring to a monumental investigation carried out in cooperation between Finnish and Indian scholars and directed by Lauri Honko.⁷ The title of the edition is significant: *The Siri Epic as performed by Gopala Naika*. The book publishes a specific performance executed by a specific singer, not a tradition. It is printed in its original language and in English translation, and is accompanied by a monograph of almost 700 pages.

Fig. 1 reproduces pp. 792-3 of the edition as an example of the poem and the way it is presented. It shows that the translation aims at reproducing the original faithfully, the same phrase being rendered in the same way every time it occurs. Thus source language is given priority over target language, as is normally the case in scholarly translations.⁸ The meter of the original seems to be free, and while the style is more redundant than that of the Homeric poems, reiterations undergo small variations all the time (*cf.* 14777, 14882 and 14906-8) and are thus not immediately comparable to the Homeric formula. Again, unlike in Homer, there is a kind of refrain with the filler word *Naraayina* being inserted as in v. 14873 or making up whole verses as vv. 14879-80 (In everyday prose *Naraayina* is an exclamation meaning 'Oh God!'⁹). As in Homer, verses tend to be meaningful units chained to each other in what Parry termed adding style. In the Siri epic, a characteristic way of building up a description is seen in vv. 14901-4, in which each verse consists of a repetition and an addition of information. *Inquits* are explicit as in Homer, and typically formed with the verb of saying ending a verse, followed by the grammatical subject filling one or a couple of verses (*cf.* 14876-7, 14884-6, 14893-5 and 14906-8).

The tradition that is represented in this way is located in South Kanara, a region in the Indian state of Karnataka. The language is called Tulu, and is spoken by *ca.* 2 million people, thus being a microscopic language in an Indian context. It has no official orthography; in school Tulu children are taught Kannada, the official language of the region, and this is the language that Tulu speakers use for written messages in general. A few works of literature have actually been recorded in writing, but Tulu literature as such is exclusively oral.¹⁰

7 Honko 1998a & b.—Detailed reviews: Foley 1999 and Jensen 2002.

8 The translation policy is discussed Honko 1998a:586-93.

9 Honko 1998a:281.

10 Honko 1998a:226-27, 234-56.

55. (14873–15063)

- naraayina magaa sagee naaraayina nakkere nakkere
 namma napperuṅṅ namma nammeruṅṅ
 14 875 namma najjeruṅṅ panti paṭṭaa parakke uṅṅduu
 nandolige naaluṣaanoguu namo oo pooyo pooyondu paṅṅere
 abbayoo daaraya panuppi jookuluu paṅṅonuu
 poopoo daanee nandolige naaluṣaanogu
 naraayinaa naaraayina de oo
 14 880 naraayina oo naaraayina baalelu oo
 poodu pooduṅṅ mukkaḍappuu muuji kariyaa panppii sudekkuṅṅ
 pooyone baaleluu abbaaya daarayanuppi jookuluu
 yeeriyaa vooḍodaa kuṅṅnaa yeeriyaa vooḍoda kuṅṅnaa
 vooḍo koṅḍoo bala paṅṅere
 14 885 abbaaya oo daaraya oo
 naraayinaa naaraayina oo baaleluu
 yeeriyee ponuṅṅjoove yeeriyee ponuṅṅjoove
 voṅṅji vooḍo yittunaa muuḍaayi narikku pootuṅṅde
 voṅṅji vooḍo yittunaa paḍḍaayi uppugu pootuṅṅde
 14 890 voṅṅje vooḍoo moonṅṅu jalloo yaanu dekkudu kaṭṭude
 baaroṅṅji kaṭaaksoda kaḍappuu muuji kariya panuppi sudendu
 kalla kuṅṅḍoḍuu kaṭṭudu naaṅṅde oo poṅṅjove
 yinitta dinamanoḍuu vooḍo buḍiyere naapuji paṅṅere
 mukkaḍappudaa kaḍappuda oo
 14 895 vooḍoodaa kuṅṅnee panuṅṅbee
 aatu paateroo keeṅḍoonnee ponnuu oo
 naraayina oo baṅga baareda koḍire koṅḍo oo baruvone ponnuu
 niiruḍuṅṅdu diiḍiyone ponnuu
 pattu bireḷundane malppone ponnuu
 14 900 naraayina oo naaraayina oo
 yeṅṅkuḷeḍaa nana oo sammaale ulleeru
 vojramaalookanda kooṭi kumarendu paṅḍudu pudaritti nana oo
 sammaale oo
 kooṭi deevateleguṅṅ samanaayi sammaale yeṅṅkuḷenaa
 kooṭi kooṭii jookulegu migilaayi sammaale yeṅṅkuḷena ulleruṅṅ
 14 905 aarena yinii kale sagtiḍu
 yiyereḍdu naayerere yeṅṅkulu karee vonduvo paṅḍere ponnuu
 abbaaya oo daaraya oo
 naraayinaa naaraayina oo ponnuu
 paṅḍi naalaayii donḍeḍaavodaṅḍaa
 14 910 koḍireṭṭuu kullii baaleluu
 navaa dumbuu miindonuu teelononduu poopuṅṅde

55. Four-Shrine Nandolige

- “Naraayina, dear younger sister, Naaraayina, elder sister, elder sister,
 the sudden vow said by our mother, our father,
 our Ajjeru is there!
 Shall we go to Four-shrine Nandolige? Shall we go?” Thus they said,
 the children called Abbaya, Daaraya, so saying
 they go to Four-shrine Nandolige, see,
 Naraayina Naaraayina de oo
 14 880 Naraayina oo Naaraayina, the children.
 Going, going to a river called Mukkaḍappu triple ferry
 they went, the children called Abbaya, Daaraya, the children.
 “Hey, boatman Kuṅṅna, hey, boatman Kuṅṅna,
 come, bring a boat!” said
 Abbaya, Daaraya,
 Naraayina Naaraayina oo, the children.
 “Hey, women, hey, women!
 One boat which was here went east for rice!
 One boat which was here went west for salt!
 14 890 A boat with holes, a broken oar, I have washed, moored!
 A very elusive crossing is this river called Triple ferry.
 To a stone-peg I have moored mine, women!
 On the day of today the boat cannot leave!” he said,
 the boatman Kuṅṅna
 of the Mukkaḍappu crossing says.
 The girls heard those words.
 Naraayina oo, the girls bring a top leaf of a baṅga-banana.
 The girls put it on the water.
 The girls make the ten-finger salutation.
 14 900 “Naraayina oo Naaraayina oo.
 Our uncle is now there!
 Our uncle by the name of Kooṭi Kumara of Vojramaalooka,
 now,
 our uncle who is equal to a crore of divine beings,
 our uncle who is superior to a crore, a crore of children is there!
 Today, by his power, by his force
 from this side to that side we shall get ashore!” said the girls
 Abbaya, Daaraya,
 Naraayina Naaraayina oo, the girls.
 The spoken tongue just set in the throat,
 14 910 the children sitting on the top leaf,
 look, forward swimming, floating they go!

The main editor, Lauri Honko, first came into contact with Indian epic scholars in 1984, and in October 1985 a seminar was arranged in Udupi on Finnish and Tulu epic. Among other things a Tulu translation of a passage of *Kalevala* was presented and used as the script for a dramatic performance.¹¹ Honko's Indian colleagues introduced him to the singer Gopala Naika, and during the following years Honko paid many visits to Naika, attended his performances and discussed his art with him: on various occasions he also recorded performances, the acquaintance culminating in a mammoth recording in December 1990, the one published in print.¹²

Naika is an illiterate farmer living in the village of Machar in South Kanara, and his chief occupation is cultivating rice. In addition, he is the priest of a cultic community, and his talents as an epic singer come into play in both connections.¹³ He knows six epic poems in all, but considers the Siri epic most important among them. Honko and his team recorded the five other epics as well.¹⁴ Some years earlier, in the winter of 1985-86, Naika had dictated the Siri epic in a version consisting of 8,538 verses to an Indian folklorist and his assistant. This recording took place at Naika's own initiative. He wished to make the Siri epic accessible as a book so that children could read it in school.¹⁵

The poem is normally performed in one of two contexts, as a work song recited to an audience of women workers in the paddy fields, and as part of the cult, especially at the yearly celebration of the harvest. In the paddy fields Naika and the women sing by turns: he recites a verse and they repeat. While the singing is going on, the women's hands work diligently, sorting out and planting the small rice plants. Some of the women are professional singers, too, and may take over the lead singer's role.¹⁶

During ritual performance both parties identify with the protagonists of the epic, the women with the heroine Siri or one of the other heroines, and Naika as priest with her son Kumara.¹⁷ There are also more restricted cultic events in private houses, in which the priest performs the epic for his group of Siri women. But the great annual harvest festivals are open to everybody. Here the women are still the primary and interacting audience, but the whole event takes place in the presence of a huge mass of onlookers of both sexes and from different social classes. The

11 Honko 1998a:219-27.

12 Honko 1998a:228-33, 261-69.

13 Honko 1998a:228, 597.

14 Honko 1998a:563-69, Honko 1998b:xvii.

15 Honko 1998a:257-60, Honko 1998b:xvii-xviii.

16 Honko 1998a:484, 548-57.

17 Honko 1998a:430-31, 449-50.

performance begins by Naika singing a solo narrative that lasts a couple of hours and then gradually develops into dialogue. In his functions as singer and priest he has male helpers, and they all impersonate Kumara; they ask the women one after another who they are, and the women answer in the person of one of the heroines, relating her story. Some passages may also be acted out dramatically. The performance culminates in some of the women falling into trances.¹⁸

But the Siri story is present at the festival in other ways, too, and performed by other artists; for instance, a famous game between two sisters that ends with their death is performed as a drama.¹⁹ Honko and his team witnessed a number of the Siri festivals and on one occasion were even allowed to videotape a whole event.²⁰

The published poem

When Honko arranged with the singer to record the epic from beginning to end, Naika stated that except for the version previously dictated this was not how he usually performed.²¹ In normal performance his narratives were briefer so as to be finished in one session; he might concentrate on a single episode or give a brief version of a full story.²² From December 20th to 28th 1990, Naika sang his poem to the scholars and their technical equipment, a video camera and two tape recorders. He does not accompany himself on an instrument, so he just sat there on a bench under a tree, singing and singing. Towards the end of the project, he now and then asked Lauri Honko if it would perhaps be a good idea to abbreviate a bit—a request that to the present reader seems quite touching, but which was firmly rejected by Honko, fortunately enough for scholarship.²³ Anyway, we are of course unable to check if he did in fact abbreviate as compared to how he could have presented his story. The 1990 version consists of an introductory invocation of divine powers in 563 verses, and the epic proper, which runs to 15,683 verses. The dictated and the sung version tell the same story in the sense that they follow the same course of events, but with all kinds of variation. The longer version gives more details and engages in more embellishment than the shorter one, but there are also cases of episodes being related in the shorter, dictated version and left out of the longer, sung performance.²⁴

18 Honko 1998a:337-88.

19 Honko 1998a:232f., 409, 412-17.

20 Honko 1998a:389-421.

21 Honko 1998a:276.

22 Honko 1998a:30.

23 Honko 1998a:310.

24 Honko 1998a:258-60.

Honko is duly impressed by Naika and his achievement, and he is at pains to emphasise that this recorded version of the Siri epic is of almost the same length as the *Iliad*.²⁵ But this assertion is not quite acceptable. For one thing, the average verse of the Indian poem is shorter than the hexameter, and then the many *Naraayina* occurrences make for verses and half-verses empty of content.

That oral poets are capable of performing works of immense length ought not really to provoke astonishment since over the years quite a few scholars have reported on the existence of such mammoth poems.²⁶ In a way, what is really new in this case is that a large-scale poem has been published, and in view of the enormous investment of time and money that the Siri project must have required, it is not difficult to understand why such publications are rare.

In the sung version the narrative follows the heroine Siri and her offspring, three generations in all. The protagonists are human, but are one after another taken into *maaya*, which seems to mean that they die and achieve divine status. At the end of the narrative their cult is instituted, and the epic is thus closely linked with the cult in which it is performed, commemorating the deeds of the heroes and heroines, describing the institution of their cult, and giving meaning and legitimacy to the festival. Thus there is a strong aetiological element in the poem.

It is very much a woman's epic. Not only are the protagonists female, but the themes that are handled are basic women's problems, concerned with puberty, pregnancy and childbirth, the intricacies of married life, jealousy and friendship inside the family, and even women's status in society if they are without male supervision. The story takes place in the highest circles, among kings and queens, but the themes are recognizable to women of all social categories. Honko has many dialogues with Naika about the epic and what it means to him, but says rather less about the audience and its reactions. However, there seems good reason to think, as Bengt Holbek does when interpreting fairy tales, that for the storytelling community they provide a means of verbalising problems and even conflicts that are too sensitive to be discussed directly.²⁷

Siri is married twice. Her first marriage ends in divorce because her husband visits a prostitute, which makes Siri so angry that she leaves him and returns to her foster-father's palace where she gives birth to her son Kumara. The foster-father dies, however, and a distant male relative claims his realm and fortune. A court is convened and Siri called before it. In this passage the narrative clearly sides with

25 Honko 1998a:11.

26 Bowra 1952:354-56 (Jugoslav, Uzbek and Kara-Kirghiz examples), Lord 1960:105-09, Parry, Lord and Bynum 1974 (Avdo Mededovic), Biebuyck 1976:20f. (Bambara singers), Roghair 1982 (Indians from Andhra Pradesh), Saada 1985:24 (a Tunisian singer), Reynolds 1995:265 (Arabs of Northern Egypt), Gyaltsho 2001:281 (a Tibetan singer), Ying 2001 (a Kirghiz singer).

27 Holbek 1987: 409, 601-03.

Siri; it tells in some detail how, for instance, the claimant bribes the members of the court, and it is emphasised how she is all alone as a woman in an assembly consisting entirely of men, among whom is also her divorced husband (4100-4111, 4211-4299). Siri leaves the palace with her infant son and a single maid, and after a period of wandering both son and maid are taken to *maaya*. Before leaving, little Kumara predicts that Siri will marry again. It turns out that her new husband already has a wife, and this passage deals with problems between the two wives, they are jealous of each other and behave mischievously, but the husband settles the conflict. In this part, interestingly enough, Siri is not right all along, but has to be reprimanded by her husband (7568-7571). She bears her second child, a daughter, and goes to *maaya*. The narrative now follows the daughter Sonne, who is brought up by a foster-father together with another girl, Gindye, and this passage of the poem circles around the relationship between sisters, which is again not without problems. Also in this sequence the heroine is blamed and taken to task. Sonne has another problem, too, since she is late in reaching maturity. She is extremely beautiful and has married a prince, but is scorned by working people in the palace—cooks, women grating coconuts, and sweeping women—because she has not yet begun to menstruate (10649-10687). However, she finally bears twin daughters and goes to *maaya*. In the story of her daughters the relationship between sisters is again verbalised. They grow up to be expert players of a game called *cenne*, but at a certain point get so heated over a game that one kills the other by hitting her with the game board and afterwards drowns herself in remorse (13841-14052). They both go to *maaya*, where their uncle Kumara receives them; at their death they had been just about to marry, and the tragedy is resolved by the sisters reappearing supernaturally at the wedding, where they find two girls to substitute as brides. The poem ends with detailed descriptions of how they set up a temple together with Kumara, with instructions about the rites of worship, and Kumara promises that he will protect the people.

The epic is full of fairy tale motifs, too. For instance, gods take human shape to control and test the mortals. Siri is born miraculously from an *areca* flower as an answer from the gods to the prayers of a pious old man who has no offspring. Vows and other promises are recurrent; sometimes they are kept, as in the case of Siri's foster-father, more often they are broken. The last third of the poem is tied up in a great bow of suspense by a vow given by Sonne in order to become pregnant at all (11310-11410). She has the twin daughters, but afterwards does not keep her vow, and their tragic death is a punishment for this. Certain narrative patterns are recurrent: in the just mentioned example we may note the pattern of childlessness—vow—childbirth. Siri's birth and childhood are echoed by Sonne's birth and childhood. Even though Sonne is born naturally to Siri, the baby appears to her foster-father lying in an *areca* flower (9058-9105). Like her mother she grows up

in the palace of an old man; but a variation is introduced by means of the foster-sister. And of course, it is a thoroughly religious poem, concerned with the relations between gods and humans, and having as its overall theme the institution of the cult of Siri and Kumara.

I have drawn special attention to the dominant female themes, because it seems obvious that they are linked to the fact that the poem regularly addresses a female audience. This aspect seems not to have appealed to Honko, who only touches upon it in passing. But the kinds of problem handled in the poem must seem highly familiar to the women attending its performance, and it must be easy for them to identify with the heroines, not only at the harvest festival. Thus the Siri epic may serve as confirmation of another of the elements of the oral-formulaic theory, that of the decisive role of an audience for the content and moral of a text. Honko, who besides being a folklorist was also a historian of religions, is much more intent on the religious function of the epic, and his monograph contains much important reflection upon such matters.

The Siri project and the oral-formulaic theory

Every publication of field studies in oral traditions serves to verify or falsify Parry and Lord's original theory. Honko is more aware of this fact than most fieldworkers, and his monograph is from beginning to end a detailed explicit and implicit discussion of the way in which his experience comments upon the oral-formulaic theory. My remarks in the following, besides being of course much briefer, differ in some respects from his.

The formulas of the Siri epic do not fit into Parry's definition, since they vary all the time. This occasions Honko to criticise Parry's basic notion of a formula.²⁸ But Parry built his definition on two traditions only, the Homeric and the Serbo-Croatian, and until now, as far as I know no other oral poetic traditions have been found containing formulas of exactly the same character. This does not single out Homeric formulas from all the rest, but different traditions from each other, and presumably has to do with the different formal demands that characterise different kinds of poetry. It might be maintained that it is therefore not tenable to speak of formulas at all. But without the word formula we would lack a term for the striking general characteristic of oral traditions that they reiterate not only words—as does all language—but phrases. Instead, analysts must formulate special definitions for each separate tradition, just as is done in describing rhythm, verse structure and the like, whereas a definition of the formula covering the phenomenon in general would have to be broader. Honko does not comment in detail upon the length and thrift that Parry pointed out in the system of Homeric formulas,²⁹ and it would of

28 Honko 1998a:100-104.

course be a huge extra job to compile statistics for the formulas in the Siri epic; but allowing for the inherent variations they do seem to recur with striking regularity.

Parry's notion of the adding style is easily applicable to the Siri epic. The way verse structure and sentence structure interact is as described by Parry: normally each verse brings an understandable unit of content, and only with the addition of the next verse does it become apparent whether or not the sentence was actually finished.³⁰ This is regularly confirmed as a characteristic of oral narrative poetry without giving rise to problems of definition, and it is natural to relate it to the conditions of performance as meeting a need in both singer and audience to have the action presented in clear units, each of which adds an understandable item of information.

It is also easy to recognise the composition by theme, both in the sense of recurring type scenes and of narrative patterns.³¹ I have tried to bring this out in my summary of the poem's content.

The flexibility of oral narrative has been confirmed in study after study, and Honko's is no exception. It is remarkable and well documented how singers of oral epic are able to restructure their stories according to the circumstances of a given performance, and this is at the roots of the whole theory.³² Every performance is to some degree a recomposition, and in oral epic traditions singer and poet are synonymous. Not only do the two full recordings of the whole Siri story differ from each other as described above. On various occasions Naika sang individual episodes for the scholars, but his versions of the same episode were never identical. They were not arbitrarily different either.³³ A remarkable example is his various performances of another epic, the *Kooti Cennaya*. In January 1992 the Honko team recorded him performing this epic over three days, almost 15 hours of net singing. Three years later Naika told them that he had performed the same epic on All India Radio in 20 minutes. The scholars were astounded and asked him to do the same for them, and he did so on the spot, performing a version that lasted 27 minutes. Honko describes this brief version as a kind of torso, not as easily understood as the long version Naika had given previously, but he had been right in asserting his ability to abbreviate.³⁴ When comparing versions of Naika's Siri epic, Honko maintains that the singer has in his mind a storyline that remains stable through the various performances, however different they may be from one another. In

29 Parry 1971:276.

30 Parry 1971:251-65.

31 Lord 1960:68-98.

32 Lord 1960 *passim*, especially 13-17.

33 Honko 1998b:xlix.

34 Honko 1998a:30.

Honko's understanding, when a singer has learned a new text he works on it, repeating it to himself and in performance until it achieves a form with which he is satisfied and which then stays in his mind, ready for use on various occasions, to be embellished with further detail or kept at a minimum. Honko uses the term mental text for the phenomenon, and underlines its crucial importance for the technique of composition in performance.³⁵

This fits in well enough with Parry and Lord's material, even though Lord preferred to stress the constant variation; he actually had striking examples of singers who kept their storyline remarkably well over the span of almost 20 years that passed between Parry and Lord's original fieldwork and Lord's follow-up in the 1950s. One of them even paused to smoke a cigarette at the same point in the story as he had on the first occasion.³⁶

Referring to Ruth Finnegan and Paul Zumthor, Honko speaks of the common fund of stories shared by oral performers as the pool of tradition, '*i.e.*, a pool in which the elements reside to be used in different combinations by different performers.'³⁷ Among Tulu speakers the heroine Siri occurs not only in epic and drama, but in other literary forms as well, such as ritual, lyric poetry or storytelling, and she may be referred to in all kinds of way. One might say that her epic is the basis of it all, but not in any single version such as, for example, that recorded by Honko and his team. It is a more general knowledge of the heroine's story that the pool of tradition contains. What we are told in the monograph about other singers and genres is, however, relatively meagre.³⁸ Honko clearly designed his fieldwork to concentrate on one individual singer. There seems to be nothing in Tulu tradition to compare to the South Slavic Cor Huso,³⁹ or to Homer, for that matter, no great first inventor to whom traditions are ascribed. On the contrary, Naika expresses his understanding of the tradition beautifully at the end of a brief poem dedicated to his Siri epic:

The epic flows like a river.
Where has water been born? ⁴⁰

The Siri project is especially illuminating in respect of the recording process. I shall discuss this in some detail in the final part of my paper and here only draw atten-

35 Honko 1998a:92-99, 519-47.

36 Parry and Lord 1954:408, Lord 1960:102-123.

37 Honko 1998a:66-74, the quotation on p. 70.

38 Honko 1998a:245-53, 519-24.

39 Parry 1971:437, 473, 477.

40 Honko 1998b. The poem is printed at the beginning of vol. II, the pages being unnumbered.

tion to a few immediately striking points. First, the fact that the recorded narrative is almost double the length of the dictated version confirms the experience Parry and Lord had in Yugoslavia. Dictation and writing form a tedious process, which tends to make the singer lose inspiration and opt for brief solutions.⁴¹ Next, it is interesting that Naika himself took the initiative of having a written version produced since this is a departure from the oral-formulaic theory. According to Parry and Lord, the idea of having oral epics recorded comes not from the singers themselves, but from somebody alien to the tradition. This is understandable, since both the singers of tales and their audiences feel certain that oral transmission is reliable. Of course, there may be bad singers who make a mess of stories or even tell lies on purpose, but good singers relate what happened, and the singing community is in no need of writing or other artificial media to guarantee that songs are preserved. It is actually worth noting why Naika wished to have his song made into a book. It was not in order to have it preserved, but to obtain access to an otherwise unreachable audience, children at school, and national pride on behalf of the Tulu language and the local heroine was a main reason. In India the classical epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* form part of the school curriculum in book form, and presumably Naika felt that for Tulu children the Siri epic would be more appropriate. His wish can hardly be said to have been fulfilled, or rather, it has been fulfilled in a way he could not have imagined. The version that he dictated ended up on a scholar's shelf,⁴² and the huge sung version that now exists as an impressive two-volume book is scarcely suitable for use in the classroom. But at its release in Udupi in Karnataka, March 1999, it was handed over to Gopala Naika under great festivities with many dignitaries present, the event was celebrated with a scholarly seminar, and newspapers both in South India and New Delhi brought articles on the subject.⁴³ So his efforts did achieve an increase of interest in Tulu culture.

Whether the published volumes will in their turn influence oral tradition remains to be seen. My guess is that they will not, since their readers will be folklorists and other scholars rather than the local Siri worshippers.

The Siri project and Archaic Greek poetry

Behind Honko's Indian project lies an interest in *Kalevala*. Research on the great Finnish epic has always been conducted in close connection with Homeric studies, and Honko's approach is, for this reason as well, eminently useful for classical

41 Parry 1971:450-51, Lord 1960:124-8.

42 Honko 1998a:257.

43 'Releasing the Siri epic in two cultures,' FF Network for the Folklore Fellows 18, 1999, 25-6.

studies. He puts the kind of questions to his fieldwork that Homeric scholars also want to have answered.

Honko takes pains to inform his readers about Naika's audiences, both those that are made up of the typical addressees of his normal performances and that which was present at the recorded performance. The latter regularly consisted of three people: Honko himself, leading the process and looking after the video recorder, Anneli Honko, who handled the tape-recorders, and Chinnapa Gowda, the scholar who had had Naika's epic written down from dictation, and who on this occasion was taking notes and acting as interpreter. Honko had asked for a version that was as full as possible. He made it clear to Naika that he as the singer was free to decide how he would organise his narrative, and that he could take as much time as he needed. Naika chose to proceed chronographically through three generations of heroines, beginning with the birth of Siri, taking us through her story and those of her daughter and granddaughters, and ending with the death of the twins. If we imagine that the poets of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were similarly asked to perform their stories in the longest version possible, it seems that they preferred to maintain an episodic narrative but to expand it in all kinds of way.

On some occasions guests were present at the recording. A professor from Mangalore University, Viveka Rai, attended on December 23rd. At the end of the morning's performance he pointed out that a detail had been left out, and Naika agreed to sing the forgotten piece of narrative and let the scholars insert the passage into the printed text in due course.⁴⁴ However, in another connection Honko had protested against what seemed to him an inconsistency: Siri was furious with her husband because he had visited a harlot, but it had not been told how she came to know. Here Naika defended his narrative, claiming that Siri had supernatural faculties and knew what had taken place without being informed.⁴⁵ It is a tempting suspicion that Naika's reactions reflect his assessment of the expertise of the two listeners. At any rate, while Naika often corrected himself on minor points, the name of a locality for instance, the correction of the error noted by Rai was the only case in which Naika made use of the possibility offered him by the recording process of revising his performance. If the rhapsodes who dictated the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* felt for their performances in the same way, it is easier to understand why the poems contain the inconsistencies so energetically pointed out by analytic scholars.

Naika's normal audience consists of rather poor working women, while the epic heroines move in the highest circles. That should warn us against making hasty conclusions from the world of the epic to that of its audience.

44 Honko 1998a:296ff.

45 Honko 1998a:291.

One day a woman singer was invited, a certain Ramakka, one of Naika's Siri women who had learned her art from him and had been a member of his group for more than 30 years.⁴⁶ Naika first proposed that she should continue the performance from the point he had reached, but Honko wanted that the whole recorded version should be one singer's work. Therefore it was decided that she should give a passage that Naika had already sung, without her being present. So Naika told her what part of the story she was supposed to perform, sang a few verses and asked her to take over, which she did. Honko and Naika's respective attitudes to the matter reveal their different opinions on stability and change of a song. Ramakka's version of the passage was actually rather different from Naika's and considerably shorter.⁴⁷ The procedure is remarkably similar to the situation in book 8 of the *Odyssey* in which Odysseus asks the Phaeacian singer to tell the story of the wooden horse and makes explicit from which point to begin. It also reminds us of the so-called Panathenaic rule: Solon or Hipparchus demanded of the rhapsodes at the Panathenaea to recite Homer in such a way that where one ended, the next one should begin.⁴⁸ If 'Homer' means, not the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but the story of Troy, the organiser of the recital wanted the singers to perform an episode each, but between them to tell the full story of the war.

Classicists know well enough that the texts transmitted to us are just a small bit of what once existed, but they tend to forget this wisdom in their actual scholarly procedure. Careful studies are made of how Pindar or Sophocles refer to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but were these poems accessible to them at all? Without booksellers and libraries? It could be argued that they heard them recited, but if any element of the oral theory has been unanimously confirmed by fieldwork during the last half century, it is the flexibility of the long narrative traditions. Honko's observations offer us tools for a more precise description of how oral literatures work. The individual singer has his/her mental text, however much it may differ from performance to performance, and if it is at all possible to meet the demands of a given audience, it is because the mental text is there, ready to be abbreviated, expanded or in other ways made to fit the circumstances. But such texts are not transmitted from one singer to the next. Ramakka maintained that she had had no other teacher than Naika, and nevertheless her mental text seemed to be different from his. What is common is the pool of tradition, a mass of stories and storylines that singers share in a more general sense, and which may be implemented in different literary forms and by different individuals.

46 Honko 1998a:300.

47 Honko 1998a:298ff.

48 Hom. *Od.* 8.492-8; Pl. [*Hipparch.*] 228B; Diog.Laert. i.57. Discussions of the Panathenaic rule are recurrent in Homeric scholarship; for two recent examples see Collins 2001 and Nagy 2002.

This makes for a more dynamic understanding of early Greek literature. Considering the existence of Troy stories told in different genres—epic, lyric and drama—I find it probable that the intertextuality at work is linked with such a common pool of tradition rather than with any single poem. No doubt the Trojan cycle was also productive in less prestigious forms, such as the songs and tales performed in the *lesche* or at the loom, as described by Jan Bremmer in his contribution to this volume. And of course there was a wealth of other mythical cycles, too, local as well as pan-Hellenic. Thus Pindar's *epinicia* offer a glimpse into pools of tradition special to local communities or great families, and an important part of the praise-poet's art must have been to be knowledgeable in such matters and skilled at incorporating the elements most suited for the occasion. The wealth of mythic themes painted on vases offers a better impression of the tradition than the picture we have through literature. As presented by the *LIMC* it is obvious how painters had their pools of tradition, too: stories are not told at random, but certain episodes are selected and there are rules for how they are to be told. Still there is variation enough to suggest that painters had their individual mental texts, too.

The Siri project and the recording of the Iliad and the Odyssey

There is much to be learned from Honko's work regarding the process by which the Homeric poems, as well as other early literary works in Greece, were recorded in writing. Basically, if you consider the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* orally composed, the simplest hypothesis concerning how they were written is that they were dictated by a singer—or possibly two—to a scribe. After all, dictation to scribes was the normal way of writing in historical times, even for literate authors in Greece and Rome.

The process that Naika and Honko went through was in many ways different from what a process of dictation must have been like in ancient times. Dictating is different from performing, the technical equipment of Honko's team made it radically different from any kind of recording in antiquity, and the balance of status and power between singer and scribe also made for different situations. But the fact that a singer was being asked to change his performance from the demanding, but also inspiring task of entertaining a live audience to the tiresome process of recording for scribes or scholars is actually similar. While taking pains to meet Honko's requirements, Naika obviously chose to treat his unusual audience, the scholars of whom two did not even understand his language, as if they were one of his typical audiences consisting of women. And what is perhaps most remarkable, he performed the introductory invocations of the gods as if he were launching into a ritual performance, even though from his point of view the occasion must have been a fake ritual. Of course, it may be that I misunderstand his invocation, and

that the powers that he calls into presence are those necessary for a performance. If they are a counterpart to the Greek Muses, the need for them is easily understood, for the singer is embarking on an unusually demanding task. But if they are the divine powers called for in the cult—and that is what the text suggests—Naika demonstrates a remarkable degree of abstraction in inviting their participation in an occasion of this kind.

I have argued elsewhere that the recording of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* took place in Athens during the Pisistratid tyranny, and following one of the great Panathenaic festivals. I imagine that in a similar fashion to Naika the Homeric rhapsode(s) kept in mind the great, festive audience that had been present during the live performance, and that this is how the passages specially meant to please a big, mixed audience consisting of men and women, young and old, free and slaves, were maintained in the dictated texts. If the rhapsode(s) had only had scribes to inspire him/them, the text would hardly have had the freshness we enjoy today.

A special interest of mine is how an epic is structured by the singer. The handbooks inform us that the 24 books of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* respectively were introduced by Alexandrian scholars, but like so much else in Homeric scholarship this is based on shaky source-material. Parry's very last published work was the abstract of a paper he intended to read to the American Philological Association on the subject of 'The Singer's Rests in Greek and Southslavic Heroic Songs.' Regrettably the abstract gives only the barest outline of his thoughts⁴⁹. Decades ago Notopoulos argued—influenced by his studies of modern epic singers in Crete—that each Homeric book was a performance.⁵⁰ This is, however, problematic, since no scribe is able to keep up with the speed of a sung performance. Some years ago I argued that the division reflects the process of dictation, each book being the portion singer and scribe managed per day.⁵¹ Working on that hypothesis, I searched through all the publications of living epic I could get hold of in order to find information of the recording process and the way singers take their breaks, but, frustratingly, this is not part of what scholars normally include when publishing their fieldwork.

Honko, by way of contrast, has a whole chapter in which he gives detailed information about what happened when, who was present, how long the sessions were, what breaks the singer took, *etc.*⁵² On several occasions Honko discussed the

49 Parry 1971:420.

50 Notopoulos 1964.

51 Jensen 1999. (Honko 1998a & b were only released in 1999 and not accessible to me when I wrote the paper.)—My opinions were discussed in the same volume of *SO* and by Janko 2000. The paper is mentioned by Cerri 2002:13 as a merely risible example of unserious scholarship.

52 Honko 1998a:276-321.

structure of the narrative with Naika, and the latter's comments were invariably concerned with content. For instance, there are passages that must be performed without breaks such as the description of Siri's pregnancy: if this was not the case, the divine heroine would feel offended and avenge herself on the singer.⁵³ This sheds an interesting light on Naika's relationship with his poem, showing how he feels that the narrative brings the protagonists and their time as human beings back to life. The performance is a re-enactment and, as such, dangerous, calling forth divine powers that are beyond the singer's control. Naika does not mention concerns for his human audience.

As structured by Naika's breaks, the poem falls into 36 'segments' of unequal lengths, varying from 88 to 795 verses. Honko analyses the way the singer ends a segment and begins the next, finding two main types: either he repeats the last few lines of the preceding segment on beginning a new one, or he simply continues. In both cases he ends and begins with *Naraayina*. A special problem is to remember after a break exactly at what point of the story the narrative had been interrupted. Naika sometimes asked Chinnapa Gowda for help, but as a rule he was in full command of the storyline. When in some cases Naika ended a segment with an almost graphic representation of a scene, Honko understands this as a mnemotechnic aid, remaining in the singer's mind with almost visual clarity. Since Naika was not used to performing in this way, he must have developed these techniques on the spot, and Honko even notices a development during the days of performance.⁵⁴

Honko states that he decided upon writing this chapter at a late phase of the editorial work, when the poem had already been analysed and organised as it is in the edition, divided into 5 'sub-epics,' which are again subdivided into 56 'cantos' in all. Comparing the two systems he notes that even though they differ in matters of detail, they are not absolutely at variance with each other. Furthermore, studying the segments brought about by the singer's breaks he finds a cohesion of content in them.⁵⁵ That Naika was actually trying to organise his narrative in coherent parts is clear from some of the remarks he makes, for instance when he states of a passage he is just going to perform: 'It is like becoming one chapter.'⁵⁶

However, Naika's pauses differ in length from 3 minutes to a whole night and can hardly all have been felt to be equally significant. A couple of details confirm this assumption: First, even though Naika had said that Siri would not accept any interruption in the representation of her pregnancy (2448-3110), he made a pause

53 Honko 1998a:289.

54 Honko 1998a:278, 316ff.

55 Honko 1998a:318f.

56 Honko 1998a:284.

of 14 minutes after v. 3015, and Honko finds an irony in this breaking of a taboo.⁵⁷ Similarly, Honko wonders at a strange intersection between segment 24 and 25, which falls in the middle of a speech. At this point the singer is exhausted, drinks water, coughs, and only continues singing after a break of 25 minutes.⁵⁸ These awkward breaks might instead be interpreted as a signal that a relatively short pause was not felt by the singer to interrupt the narrative. The most important factor for the overall structure of the performance must have been the pauses at noon and in the evening. The length of the sessions was dependent on temperature for singer and audience and daylight for the video recorder, and morning sessions were always longer than those in the afternoon. To a singer accustomed to regulating his performances according to circumstances, this must have offered a rhythm that was reasonably simple to operate with.

Naika distributed his narrative over the 11 sessions as follows:

				hours	vv.	vv. per min.
1	Dec. 21.	morning	1-1350	2.16	1350	9.9
2		afternoon	1351-2447	1.53	1097	9.7
3	Dec. 22.	morning	2448-4783	3.41	2336	10.6
4	Dec. 23.	morning	4784-6657	2.59	1874	10.5
5		afternoon	6658-7511	1.17	854	11.1
6	Dec. 24.	morning	7512-9356	2.59	1845	10.3
7		afternoon	9357-10623	1.52	1267	11.3
8	Dec. 27.	morning	10624-11994	3.07	1371	7.3
9		afternoon	11995-12979	1.40	985	9.9
10	Dec. 28.	morning	12980-14674	2.46	1695	10.2
11		afternoon	14675-15683	1.39	1009	10.2

Net singing time: 26.09 hours.

It is impressive how long passages Naika was able to perform in a single session, and at a certain point it became necessary to make a break of some days because his voice had become strained. His singing tempo varied; it seems that he speeded up the further he got into his performance; the two 'beginnings,' on December 21 and 27 are below average.

If we look at how Naika arranged his long narrative, we find that it actually falls into harmoniously rounded narrative elements to which titles may be easily attached. Only in one case, no. 6, did I feel uncertain how to characterise the subject:

- 1 The prehistory
- 2 Siri's birth, youth, and wedding

⁵⁷ Honko 1998a:290.

⁵⁸ Honko 1998a:305f.

- 3 Siri's wedded life and divorce; the birth of her son Kumara
- 4 Siri's period of wandering
- 5 Siri's second wedding
- 6 Siri's last years; the birth of her daughter Sonne
- 7 Sonne's childhood and wedding
- 8 Sonne's wedded life
- 9 Sonne's two daughters, Abbaya and Daaraya
- 10 Abbaya and Daaraya's weddings
- 11 Institution of the cult

Of course this does not prove anything about the structure of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but it does show that from a comparative point of view the idea of the books reflecting the writing process is neither absurd nor improbable.

What happened to the Homeric text after the original recording? We can only speculate, but it is worth noting that in the case of the Siri epic eight years passed from recording to publication. Again, Honko is remarkably careful to state what the scholars did to the text during those years. It is not my topic here to discuss the process of redaction that the original recording of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* must have undergone, but at least it is clear from the comparison that we ought to pay homage not only to the great poet(s), but to the scribes as well.⁵⁹

59 I am grateful to John D. Kendal for revising my English.

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Hypsipyle et ses sœurs. Notes d'analyse structurale et historique¹

Virgilio Masciadri

LA LÉGENDE d'Hypsipyle et des femmes de Lemnos connues pour avoir tué les hommes de leur île a été célèbre pendant toute l'antiquité classique. On trouve des allusions à ce mythe dans l'Iliade et chez Pindare, on sait qu'il a été traité par les tragiques, et il figure dans l'épopée d'Apollonios de Rhodes ainsi que chez les Romains Stace et Valérius Flaccus.² La légende n'en a pas moins suscité l'intérêt des chercheurs modernes. Dans la littérature spécialisée, on trouve des analyses d'auteurs tels que Welcker, Bachofen et Dumézil, ainsi que Burkert et Detienne.³ Cette suite n'est pas fortuite: elle se constitue de recherches dont l'approche ne se limite pas à une interprétation littérale ou littéraire, mais qui s'ouvre sur un horizon anthropologique. On peut même dire que l'histoire du crime des Lemniennes est devenue un exemple de cas prototypique d'une lecture anthropologique des mythes.

- 1 Pour le contexte de la recherche dans laquelle s'insèrent les réflexions suivantes, voir Masciadri 2001. Je remercie Hervé Mesot (Lausanne) de son aide dans la préparation du texte français.
- 2 Voir Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 1.601-909; Stat. *Theb.* 5.49-498; Val. Fl. 2.77-430. Nous ne savons presque rien sur les *Lemniai* (*TrGF* 3: frs. 123a/b) et l'*Hypsipyle* (*TrGF* 3: frs. 247s.) d'Eschyle et sur les *Lemniai* (*TrGF* 4: frs. 384-389) de Sophocle (mais voir Schol. Ap. Rhod. 1.769-73 = *TrGF* 3:352 = *TrGF* 4:336s.); néanmoins, les fragments des *Kabeiroi* d'Eschyle semblent indiquer que cette pièce a peut-être aussi contenu des éléments de la mythologie lemnienne (*TrGF* 3: frs. 95-97a). Dans les fragments riches de l'*Hypsipyle* d'Euripide nous ne trouvons que quelques allusions à ce mythe (voir Aéliou 1986:128-35), et nous ne savons rien du tout sur la tragédie *Hypsipyle* de Kleainetos, qui a été jouée aux Lénéennes de 363 av. J.-C. (voir *TrGF* 1: no. 84 T 4). Le titre *Lemniai* se trouve plusieurs fois chez les poètes comiques aussi: les pièces d'Aristophane (*PCG* 3.2: frs. 372-91, voir aussi n. 35) et de Nicochares (*PCG* 7: frs. 14-17) ont très probablement traité le mythe d'Hypsipyle, mais pour les comédies d'Alexis, Antiphane, Diphilos et du romain Turpilius qui portent le même titre, il est très peu vraisemblable que le sujet ait été tiré de la mythologie; pour l'usage d'un tel titre il faut alors comparer les pièces de Ménandre tels que *La Samienne*, *Les Imbriens* etc. Pour les autres sources voir n. 15.
- 3 Welcker 1824:155-304, 311-19, 585-95, Bachofen 1861:85-92 = 1948:264-79, Dumézil 1924 = 1998, Burkert 1970 = 2000 (voir aussi Burkert 1972:212-18), Detienne 1972:172-84. Une analyse détaillée de quelques-uns de ces travaux se trouve chez Leclercq-Neveu 1998:5-34.

Au 19^{ème} siècle, la tendance majeure était de voir dans le crime des Lemniennes le reflet de faits historiques réels. Bachofen lui-même, dans un passage célèbre du ‘Droit maternel,’ a prononcé des paroles dures à l’encontre de ceux qui veulent rejeter cette histoire dans le domaine de la légende.⁴ Pour lui, elle raconte le crépuscule du matriarcat: l’île de Lemnos qui, en l’absence des hommes, est ‘gouvernée par les femmes,’ *gynaikokratoumene* selon la parole d’Apollodore,⁵ représenterait le stade primitif de la société humaine. Hypsipyle qui se réclame d’être la fille du roi Thoas, et qui sauva son père du massacre, serait l’annonciatrice d’une époque nouvelle: le patriarcat, qui aurait trouvé sa pleine vigueur après l’arrivée des Argonautes, lorsque les Lemniennes appelèrent leurs enfants du nom de leur père.⁶

On a coutume aujourd’hui de prendre distance de ce genre de constructions.⁷ Pourtant, il suffit de jeter un coup d’œil dans un manuel de référence comme le 12^{ème} volume des *Inscriptiones Graecae* pour constater ce que la science académique plus traditionnelle a fait de la mythologie lemnienne: toute une série de peuples, Grecs, Sintiens, Tyrrhéniens et de nouveau Grecs se seraient succédés sur l’île en chassant et massacrant leurs prédécesseurs.⁸ La supériorité de la lecture sociologique du mythe proposée par Bachofen à l’encontre de cet historicisme primitif me paraît incontestable. De plus, c’est dans le ‘Droit maternel’ que surgit probablement pour la première fois l’idée que pour bien comprendre les mythes il est essentiel de tenir compte des faits mis à jour en l’anthropologie de la parenté.

Dans les recherches lemniennes, c’est le travail de Dumézil qui a marqué un tournant décisif, après lequel toute interprétation historique de la légende semble être devenue impossible. Dans un passage bien connu de Philostrate, le crime des Lemniennes est cité comme étant à l’origine d’une fête annuelle à Lemnos.⁹ Dumézil a proposé d’établir entre le mythe et cette fête une relation d’après les principes de Frazer. Selon lui, le mythe raconte, d’une façon vague et confuse, le

4 Voir Bachofen 1861:86 = 1948:267.

5 Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.17; voir sur ce point Bachofen 1861:85 = 1948:264s.; l’idée d’une gynécocratie ancienne à Lemnos a déjà été proposée par Welcker 1824:585-95.

6 Selon Hyg. *Fab.* 15.6; voir Bachofen 1861:87 = 1948:269.

7 Voir p. ex. Vidal-Naquet 1981:272s. avec la référence à Lemnos et à Bachofen. Pour l’histoire du débat scientifique sur la théorie du matriarcat en général, voir la liste bibliographique chez *DNP* 15.1 (2001) 321-29 s.v. *Matriarchat* (Beate Wagner-Hasel), et pour son influence sur les études classiques voir Georgoudi 1991.

8 Voir Fredrich 1909:2-6, ‘de Lemno et Imbro.’

9 Philostr. *Her.* 53.5-7; le passage comporte un problème textuel: d’autres interprètes y ont vu une fête célébrée tous les neuf ans (voir Leclercq-Neveu 1998:125 avec les notes 1s.); mais l’interprétation traditionnelle (maintenue aussi par Burkert 1970:2s. = 2000:229s.) semble être bien fondée sur les manuscrits, voir De Lannoy 1973.

rite: il en reproduit la structure et le sens, ce qui veut dire que le mythe n'a pas de signifié propre, voire que le sens est à inscrire dans le rituel seul. Le sens attribué au rite serait celui de redonner de la force vitale à la terre épuisée par le moyen d'un feu nouveau. Il s'agirait donc de cette magie de la fertilité qui pullule dans les œuvres anthropologiques du style Frazerien.¹⁰

Dans le sillage de Dumézil, on peut citer le travail de Walter Burkert. Il a apporté deux innovations importantes aux modalités d'interprétation du grand anthropologue français: d'un côté, il a essayé de compléter notre connaissance des rites lemniens en les comparant à d'autres fêtes grecques de structure analogue, ainsi qu'à d'autres mythes de l'île.¹¹ Il en résulte l'image d'une fête sauvage et un peu barbare, image sans doute captivante, mais qui montre peu de concordance avec celle que l'on peut se former en se penchant sur les inscriptions trouvées dans les sanctuaires de Lemnos. D'un autre côté, Burkert a éliminé les éléments d'origine Frazerienne, constitutifs de la lecture de Dumézil: selon lui, le rite ne sert plus la magie de la fertilité, et n'est porteur d'aucun sens qui dépasse le geste rituel lui-même. Car, on le sait bien, l'essentiel du rituel Burkertien n'est pas dans les signifiés, mais il est un vécu réel, doté d'une efficacité psychologique immédiate et fondée sur des constantes anthropologiques qui se situent au-delà de l'histoire et de la culture.

Il a fallu attendre les 'Jardins d'Adonis' pour que la narration mythique soit revalorisée pour elle-même. Marcel Detienne a placé l'histoire d'Hypsipyle dans le contexte de la mythologie des aromates. Selon certaines variantes du mythe, la punition qu'Aphrodite a envoyée aux Lemniennes était une mauvaise odeur, la célèbre *dysosmia*,¹² en exacte opposition à la bonne odeur de la myrrhe et de la menthe, si riches en connotations érotiques.¹³

De ce bref repérage des recherches spécialisées, il ressort qu'il n'y a jamais de lecture du mythe comme tel. On essaie toujours de le mettre en perspective, de le

10 Bachofen 1861:91 = 1948:277s. avait aussi donné une interprétation de la fête lemnienne: pour lui, elle représente la victoire du principe masculin du feu d'Héphaïstos qui purifiait les femmes de leur crime, sur une féminité tellurique, qui ne connaissait ni pardon ni pitié. Mythe et rite, chez Bachofen, ne se reproduisent donc pas simplement l'un l'autre, mais par un procédé plus complexe, la fête exprimait d'une façon originale le même sens profond que le mythe. C'est une position qui va être partagée par Dumézil dans le développement ultérieur de sa pensée, voir Leclercq-Neveu 1998:22-29. La question des relations entre mythe et rite à Lemnos a aussi été traitée par Welcker 1824:247-76.

11 La reconstruction des rites à partir des mythes est toujours très incertaine, voir p.ex. les réserves de Graf 2001:45. Néanmoins, Robertson 1985:276-80, essaie de corriger certaines conclusions de Burkert sans abandonner cette 'méthode' problématique; voir aussi nn. 21, 49.

12 Leclercq-Neveu 1998:31s. attribue à Dumézil le mérite d'avoir attiré l'attention sur ce détail; cependant, le motif joue déjà un rôle important dans les analyses de Welcker 1824:248-50 et de Bachofen 1861:85 = 1948:265s.

comparer à un paradigme extérieur pour lui faire produire du sens: c'est l'étude de la parenté chez Bachofen, ce sont les rites chez Dumézil et Burkert, c'est la mythologie des aromates chez Detienne. Bien plus, ce paradigme comparatif est toujours d'une nature hétérogène aux histoires lemniennes, et à l'exception des travaux de Detienne, il ne provient même pas du champ de la narration mythique. En quelque sens, les interprétations s'installent dans le creux des mythes: ceux-ci semblent receler une espèce de vide magnétique qui attire du sens de l'extérieur. Je ne prendrai personnellement pas l'initiative d'abandonner l'approche comparative dans ces pages, mais je vais la restreindre à un cercle plus étroit et proposer une lecture de quelques mythes qui ressemblent à celui d'Hypsipyle. Ils sont d'ailleurs bien connus: exception faite pour la légende de Zalpa, tous ont déjà été cités par Dumézil. Mais j'essaierai de montrer qu'on peut aller encore plus loin en les soumettant à une analyse détaillée.

J'aimerais partir de l'histoire d'Hypsipyle telle qu'elle est racontée par Apollonios de Rhodes.¹⁴ On a souvent sous-estimé l'importance de cet auteur pour notre connaissance des mythes lemniens. En effet, nous ne disposons que de très peu de témoignages qui sont plus anciens que les 'Argonautiques'¹⁵, et l'image qui nous est transmise par ces passages est fragmentaire, voire contradictoire. On reste avec l'impression que la gamme des variantes anciennes devait être bien plus large que celle que l'on peut déceler aujourd'hui, et ainsi, il est difficile de déterminer ce qu'Apollonios a changé.¹⁶ Par contre, les auteurs qui sont venus après les 'Argonautiques' racontent l'histoire dans un style plutôt uniforme. Ils semblent donc dépendre de cette œuvre clé de la littérature hellénistique, sauf pour quelques

13 Pour compléter le système mythologique de ces plantes, Detienne 1972:177s. a cité des traditions selon lesquelles, dans le rituel lemniens, les femmes utilisaient de la rue (*ruta graveolens* L.) pour se rendre malodorantes, voir la glose marginale citée par Jacoby dans l'*apparatus criticus* à Myrsilus, *FGrH* 477 F 1b = Antig. Car. *Mir.* 118. Mais ces traditions (invoquées déjà par Burkert 1970:10, note 7 = 2000:240, note 52) ne sont qu'un fantôme: il s'agit d'une erreur de Jacoby qui a mal copié l'*apparatus criticus* de Keller 1877—en vérité, aucun témoignage ancien ne met en contact les Lemniennes avec cette plante.

14 Voir Vian/Délage 1976:78-93 ainsi que leur introduction 19-28.

15 Pour l'essentiel, ce sont les vers de l'*Iliade* (Hom. *Il.* 7.467-71) et de Pindare (Pind. *Ol.* 4.19-27 et *Pyth.* 4.251-54) déjà cités, deux allusions, l'une chez Eschyle (Aesch. *Cho.* 631-34), l'autre chez Hérodote (Hdt. 6.138.4), quelques remarques dans un papyrus d'Euripide (voir avant tout Eur. *Hyps.* 254-96 Diggle) et une notice chez l'historien Myrsilus (*FGrH* 477 F 1a-c); pour les fragments des pièces de théâtre du 5^{ème} siècle, voir n. 2.

16 On sait qu'il a adapté son épisode lemniens au modèle de certaines scènes homériques; en particulier le rapport avec l'épisode de Circé dans Hom. *Od.* paraît être important; voir sur ce sujet Claus 1993:106s., et Knight 1995:162-69; pour le récit d'Apollonios en général la meilleure analyse est celle de Claus 1993:106-47; voir aussi Levin 1971:59-86, George 1972, Clare 2002: 62-66, 179-87, 208-11, 268-73.

éléments de l'action qui proviennent de toute évidence de la tragédie d'Euripide, surtout chez Stace.

On y trouve l'histoire suivante: Les Lemniennes n'avaient pas honoré d'offrandes la déesse Aphrodite; celle-ci, prise de colère, inspira aux maris des Lemniennes un violent amour pour des femmes captives qu'ils avaient ramené de la Thrace. Les Lemniennes, répudiées par leurs maris, se vengèrent en les tuant dans leur lit. Seule Hypsipyle sauva son père, le roi Thoas, en le laissant partir à la dérive sur la mer dans un coffre, que des pêcheurs ramèneront sur l'île de Sikinos, aussi appelée Oinoié. Les Lemniennes organisèrent ensuite une véritable cité des femmes, en se partageant les travaux que faisaient les hommes. Plus tard, Jason et les Argonautes accostèrent à Lemnos avec leur navire, l'Argo. D'abord, les Lemniennes hésitèrent à les accueillir chez eux, mais la vieille Polyxo les convainquit qu'il était nécessaire d'avoir des enfants pour que l'île ne se dépeuplât pas. Hypsipyle se joignit à Jason, et le reste des Lemniennes aux autres Argonautes, par un mariage improvisé, avec le résultat qu'Aphrodite elle-même se réconcilia avec les Lemniennes.

En examinant ce récit, on remarque qu'aucune mention n'est faite chez Apollonios de la mauvaise odeur si importante dans les interprétations modernes.¹⁷ Je n'approfondirai pas cet argument ici, mais j'aimerais toutefois relever qu'à mon avis, ce motif a une vie plus ou moins indépendante de l'histoire d'Hypsipyle et que les narrateurs anciens semblaient libres de l'introduire à leur guise.

Mais il y a d'autres différences dans notre tradition qui concernent le roi Thoas sauvé: Hérodote nous dit qu'il a été tué avec les autres hommes,¹⁸ tandis que dans d'autres textes, nous pouvons lire qu'Hypsipyle l'aurait caché chez elle dans un coffre pour le sauver. Les autres femmes l'auraient ensuite découvert et jeté le coffre dans lequel il se trouvait à la mer pour le tuer. Selon certains, le roi est mort à cette occasion,¹⁹ mais selon la variante suivie par Euripide, il fut sauvé par Dionysos. Cette idée a été développée dans des grandes scènes narratives par les Romains Stace et Valérius, mais elle est déjà présente de manière plus discrète chez Apollonios, où le roi est sauvé sur l'île *Oinoié*, ce qui veut dire *l'île du vin*. Ce jeu de mots a été ensuite retravaillé par Stace, pour lequel le roi sauvé parvient à une autre île, Chios, où règne son frère *Oinopion*, dont le nom est aussi dérivé du *vin*.

17 De même, on ne trouve pas ce motif chez Stat. *Theb.*; Val. Fl.; Schol. Hom. *Il.* 7.467; Hyg. *Fab.* 15.

18 Le motif du roi sauvé est absent des textes de Orph. *Argon.* 471-84; Schol. Hom. *Il.* 7.467; Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.88b; Schol. Ap. Rhod. 1.609-19a. Dans certaines variantes, mention est faite d'un *agon* sportif, célébré lors de l'arrivée des Argonautes, mais qui est représenté comme les jeux funéraires de Thoas, voir n. 41. Je trouve exagéré le scepticisme de Leclercq-Neveu 1998:48 avec notes 2s. et page 49 avec note 2 à l'égard de la tradition sur ces jeux funéraires.

19 Voir Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.6.4 et Hyp. Pind. *Nem.* b 2.8-14.

A noter finalement une troisième variante où le roi n'arrive pas sur l'île de Dionysos, mais en Tauride, où il devient le protecteur du temple de 'Diane de Tauride.' Ce détail ne se trouve que chez Valérius,²⁰ mais nous verrons bientôt qu'il pourrait être beaucoup plus ancien.²¹

Il faut regarder l'ensemble de ces variantes pour les comprendre: le roi est sauvé ou mort, il est caché dans la maison ou bien chassé au dehors de l'île—en tout cas (et c'est la seule chose qui est claire), la nuit du crime des Lemniennes, le roi a disparu, et il ne joue plus aucun rôle dans la *polis*. Il est évident, que ce fait simple a été exprimé ou expliqué par des narrations différentes.

Après le crime, c'est la fille de Thoas qui lui succède sur le trône—ce qui indique en passant, que la cheftaine de la cité des femmes était choisie selon le principe de la filiation patrilinéaire. N'oublions pas ensuite, que Thoas est aussi le fils de Dionysos, un dieu qu'on a souvent considéré comme le seigneur de la communauté par excellence. La cité des femmes n'est donc point conçue comme une alternative à la *polis* des hommes. Bien au contraire, elle se réfère toujours à celle-ci: elle constitue un espace intermédiaire, en se plaçant entre la disparition du roi Thoas et la naissance des fils d'Hypsipyle, dont l'un portera le même nom que son grand-père.²² Thoas, le roi, personnifiant l'ordre de la *polis*, est renfermé ou exilé, sa figure est oblitérée—mais elle ne peut s'effacer, sans laisser une trace, qui annonce son retour.

Mais l'épisode du roi Thoas sauvé offre encore un autre point d'intérêt: c'est le coffre, le *larnax*, dans lequel le roi est abandonné à la mer. Dans la mythologie grecque, on connaît plusieurs histoires semblables qui suivent le même schéma.²³ Chaque fois, un père enferme dans le *larnax* sa fille avec un enfant d'origine non

20 Val. Fl. 2.300-05; le motif a été repris par Hyg. *Fab.* 15.1.

21 Néanmoins, la plupart du récit de Val. Fl. 2.242-305, qui concerne le roi sauvé et qui est plutôt différente de tout le reste de notre tradition, paraît être inventée par le poète Romain selon le modèle de quelques scènes de l'Énéide voir p.ex. Verg. *Aen.* 7.385-405 et les commentaires de Poortvliet 1991:159. Il s'agit d'un tour de force typique pour un poète de la cour Flavienne, et qui constitue une allusion à un épisode semblable de la vie de Domitien, voir Tac. *Hist.* 3.74.1; Suet. *Dom.* 1.4 (la parallèle a été notée par Burkert 1970:7s., note 4 = 2000:237, note 32); voir aussi l'analyse (quoique insuffisante dans beaucoup de respects) de ce passage chez Frings 1998. Certes, on ne peut exclure que Valérius pour quelques détails de son récit s'est inspiré de sources anciennes que nous ignorons aujourd'hui. Néanmoins, je trouve très problématiques les essais de Dumézil 1924:42-44 = 1998:77-79 et de Burkert 1970:7s. = 2000:236s. de fonder sur ce passage la reconstruction d'un rituel archaïque.

22 C'est le nom qu'il porte chez Eur. *Hyps.*, ainsi que dans la tradition correspondante (voir p.ex. Hyp. Pind. *Nem.* b 2.16; Stat. *Theb.* 6.340-43 etc.; voir aussi *Anth. Pal.* 3.10 avec la variante *Eunoos*); chez Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.17 ce deuxième fils de Jason s'appelle *Nebrophonos*, chez Hyg. *Fab.* 15.3 et 273.6 *Deipylus*.

23 Voir avant tout Usener 1899:80-114; collection de matériel très riche chez Binder 1964:125-250; voir aussi *EdM* 1 (1977) 1048-65 s.v. *Aussetzung* (Gerhard Binder) et Bremmer 1987:27-30.

légitime. C'est ce que fait Acrisios avec Danaé et Persée, Aleos avec Augé et Télèphe, Staphylos avec Rhoeo et Anios, et finalement Cadmos avec Sémélé et Dionysos selon une tradition de Brasiai.²⁴

Mais ce motif ne se limite pas aux légendes grecques: il n'est pas moins connu dans l'Ancien Orient.²⁵ Ainsi, dans un texte babylonien, le roi Sargon raconte que sa mère l'avait mis au monde en secret et abandonné dans un panier, qu'elle confia à un fleuve,²⁶ et dans la Bible, la même histoire est racontée sur Moïse.²⁷ Mais il y a une différence bien marquée entre les variantes grecques et celles de l'Ancien Orient: les légendes grecques mettent en jeu trois générations (père, fille, petit-fils), celles de l'Orient seulement deux (mère et fils). De ce point de vue, la variante lemnienne est alors plus proche des histoires de l'Orient. Elle semble entretenir avec eux une relation de transformation qui se définit par un double renversement: celui du transfert des rôles entre les générations (rôle de la mère prise par la fille, rôle du fils par le père) et celui de la fonction séquentielle (on ne raconte pas la naissance d'un prince, mais sa fin). Ce rapport devient d'autant plus clair si l'on considère que le petit Moïse avait été déposé sur le fleuve parce que le Pharaon avait donné l'ordre de tuer tous les garçons hébreux et de ne laisser en vie que les filles, et que l'enfant Moïse avait été finalement sauvé par la fille du roi. Le parallèle avec le crime des Lemniennes semble ici évident. Si l'on admet donc l'hypothèse que la légende lemnienne—par des intermédiaires que nous ignorons—remonte à une tradition du Proche-Orient, on peut dire que la variante pour ainsi dire 'grecque' de ce type de légende a été produite en réunissant les acteurs de la variante orientale (mère et fils) et lemnienne (père et fille) dans un même ensemble narratif.²⁸

Les mythes lemniens ont d'ailleurs donné lieu à une expression proverbiale, les *Lemnia kaka*, les 'crimes lemniens'.²⁹ A en croire Hérodote, ce proverbe ne se référait pas uniquement à Hypsipyle et à ses compagnes mais aussi à un épisode de

24 Pour Danaé voir p.ex. Pherec. *FGrH* 3 F 10 = Schol. Ap. Rhod. 4.1091; Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.4.1; Hyg. *Fab.* 63.2s. et pour les images *LIMC* 3 (1986) s.v. *Danae* nos. 41-70; pour Augé Strab. 13.1.69; Paus. 8.4.9, et pour les images *LIMC* 3 (1986) s.v. *Auge* nos. 25f; pour Rhoeo Diod. Sic. 5.62.1s.; Schol. Lycoph. *Alex.* 570; pour Sémélé voir Paus. 3.24.3s.

25 La légende d'Osiris, souvent citée dans ce contexte, me paraît trop problématique pour être utilisée ici: dans sa forme célèbre, elle n'est pas attestée avant Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 13.356b-d. Elle apparaît donc dans un texte grec qui a été écrit après plusieurs siècles d'échanges culturels entre la Grèce et l'Égypte; je doute, qu'on puisse en tirer quelque chose sur les traditions anciennes. Je ne dis rien ici sur toutes les légendes de l'Inde, de la Perse etc. (collectionnées par Binder 1964:175ss.), qui contiennent des motifs semblables: aucune d'elles n'est fixée par écrit avant l'âge hellénistique et par conséquent on ne peut exclure qu'elles ont été influencées par les modèles grecs ou sémitiques.

26 Voir *ANET*:119.

27 Voir *Ex.* 2.1-10.

l'histoire plus récente.³⁰ Après que les Pélasges aient été chassés de l'Attique, ils occupèrent Lemnos, et voulant se venger ensuite, ils décidèrent d'enlever un certain nombre de filles Athéniennes qui se trouvaient à Brauron pour en faire leurs concubines. Celles-ci élevèrent leurs enfants dans la langue et les coutumes attiques, si bien que les Pélasges se méfièrent de ces enfants qui faisaient bande à part et étaient plus forts que les enfants des épouses légitimes. Ils finirent enfin par massacrer les Athéniennes et leurs enfants, après quoi l'île fut frappée d'une grande stérilité.

On a depuis longtemps vu que ce récit, au moins dans la forme que nous connaissons, était une création Athénienne qui servait à justifier la conquête de Lemnos par Miltiade,³¹ et qu'il était d'autre part forgé sur le modèle du mythe d'Hypsipyle. Une comparaison étroite des deux récits révèle en effet des relations intéressantes:

<i>Hypsipyle</i>	<i>Pélasges</i>
	<i>d'</i> . Les hommes de Lemnos s'unissent avec des femmes grecques, qu'ils vont chercher à l'extérieur contre leur volonté.
	<i>e'</i> . Ils ont des enfants.
<i>a.</i> Conflit entre les Lemniens et les Lemniennes.	<i>a'</i> . Conflit entre les enfants lemniens et les enfants grecs.
<i>b.</i> Les Lemniennes tuent leurs maris et leurs fils.	<i>b'</i> . Les Pélasges tuent leurs femmes et leurs fils.
<i>c.</i> Stérilité.	<i>c'</i> . Stérilité.

28 On trouve à Ténédos une autre variante particulière de ce conte qui met en jeu trois personnes (comme les variantes 'grecques'), mais seulement deux générations (Cycnos, le père, et ses deux enfants Hémithéa et Ténès), voir Paus. 10.14.1-3; Conon *Narr.* 28; Schol. Hom. *Il.* 1.38b. La petite île de Ténédos est placée sur les marges du monde archaïque grec et voisine à Lemnos, il n'est donc pas étonnant qu'elle présente une variante 'contaminée.'

29 Première attestation chez Aesch. *Cho.* 631. L'expression est devenue une formule rhétorique chez Lib. *Ep.* 24.2, *Or.* 61.19; voir aussi Zen. 4.91; Diogenian. 6.2; Apostol. 10.65; Hsch. *s.v.* *Lemnion kakon.*

30 Hdt. 6.138s. et spécialement 6.138.4; voir aussi 4.145.2.

31 Voir Dumézil 1924:10f = 1998:44. Naturellement, il n'est pas exclu qu'une partie de ces motifs ait déjà été utilisée avant dans la mythologie liée au sanctuaire de Brauron.

- d. Les Lemniennes s'unissent avec
des hommes grecs qui viennent de
l'extérieur de leur propre gré.
- e. Ils ont des enfants.

On voit que les deux chaînes narratives sont composées d'anneaux qui se ressemblent beaucoup mais dont la disposition a été changée: La séquence d'Hypsipyle débute avec une dispute et finit avec l'union, tandis que la séquence des Pélasges suit l'ordre inverse. Dans les deux cas, le conflit est motivé par une différence fondamentale: celle entre hommes et femmes dans la séquence d'Hypsipyle, celle entre Pélasges et Athéniens dans l'autre. On passe donc de la différence des sexes à la différence des ethnies. Cette transformation est facile dans la pensée grecque où l'on a parfois tendance à concevoir les groupes des deux sexes comme des peuples différents, ou bien à ne pas distinguer de façon toujours précise les deux notions, comme le montre par exemple l'usage ambigu du mot *phylon*.³² Mais concernant l'ordre des éléments narratifs, la morale de la deuxième histoire est également renversée par rapport à la première: chez Hypsipyle le conflit entre les époux endogames, c'est à dire lemniens, conduit à une catastrophe qui entraîne la stérilité, ce problème étant ensuite résolu par des mariages exogames avec les Argonautes. L'histoire des Pélasges, par contre, se présente comme l'expression d'une idéologie nationaliste rigide qui tend à prouver que l'exogamie conduit à la catastrophe.³³

Mais l'analogie entre l'histoire d'Hypsipyle et celle des Pélasges ne s'arrête pas ici. Je reviens sur le détail de l'enlèvement des filles Athéniennes à Brauron. On connaît bien ce sanctuaire d'Artémis dans lequel une partie des filles Athéniennes se préparaient au mariage en exécutant une danse rituelle où elles jouaient à l'ours—les Pélasges avaient donc bien choisi le lieu pour chercher leurs concubines. De plus, selon certains, Brauron était l'endroit où Iphigénie, au retour de Tauride, débarqua avec le *xoanon* d'Artémis.³⁴ On pense ici aux traditions où le roi Thoas est recueilli par 'Diane de Tauride,' ainsi qu'à quelques détails plus obscurs de la tradition: dans la comédie d'Aristophane intitulée *Les Lemniennes*, il

32 Comparer Hom. *Il.* 2.840 avec 9.130/272; Hes. *Theog.* 1021 etc.; pour ce qui concerne les animaux, on peut trouver p.ex. chez Ael. *NA* 10.9 une tradition qui fait du mâle et de la femelle de la vipère deux espèces différentes. Pour la relation des idées de sexe, race et tribu en Grèce voir aussi Loraux 1981:90-94.

33 Voir Vidal-Naquet 1981:283s., qui soupçonne que ce trait est une invention spécifiquement attique et compare le récit avec une autre légende proche des traditions lemniennes, *Hdt.* 4.145.

34 Paus. 1.33.1, voir aussi 3.16.7s., 8.46.3; sur Brauron en général voir Gentili et Perusino 2002.

est mentionné le nom que les filles de Brauron portaient dans le culte, *arktoi*, les 'ourses,' également cité dans l'*Hypsipyle* d'Euripide.³⁵ De plus, selon une scolie à Apollonios de Rhodes, Thoas avait une sœur qui s'appelait *Tauropolis*,³⁶ ce qui fait penser à l'épithète d'Artémis Tauropolos. On sait enfin que le culte d'Artémis avait déjà été important à Lemnos avant la conquête Athénienne.³⁷ Néanmoins, dans l'histoire des Pélasges (ainsi que chez Euripide et Aristophane), par la référence qui est faite à Brauron, la présence de la déesse prend une forme très attique.

En regardant de plus près, on voit qu'entre le Thoas sauvé et les Pélasges, il y a des parallèles et des contrastes très nets:

<i>Hypsipyle:</i>	<i>Pélasges:</i>
une fille	plusieurs maris
(= femme	(= hommes
consanguine	non consanguins
d'une génération différente)	de la même génération)
transporte un	transportent beaucoup
homme par la mer	de femmes par la mer
vers Artémis	loin d'Artémis
dans un <i>larnax</i> (= non-bateau)	dans des bateaux
pour le sauver	pour se venger

On constate donc que dans la légende d'Hypsipyle un rapport de solidarité est établi entre deux générations, tandis que dans l'histoire des Pélasges, ce thème a disparu: on ne parle alors plus de la descendance, mais seulement de l'alliance. Placé au début de l'épisode, ce renversement de l'axe narratif annonce déjà que l'histoire va aboutir à la stérilité et à la catastrophe totale de la société Pélasge.

Je ne veux pas poursuivre, sans tirer un bilan provisoire: J'ai essayé de préciser les relations entre le mythe d'Hypsipyle et deux autres complexes narratifs, les légendes d'abandon et l'histoire des Pélasges. J'ai déjà remarqué que l'histoire des

35 Aristoph. fr. 386 et Eur. fr. 767; malheureusement nous ne savons rien sur le contexte dans lequel cette expression était citée chez les deux auteurs.

36 Schol. Ap. Rhod. 3.997-1004a.

37 Voir Beschi 1998:69f. Un des témoignages les plus intéressants est l'inscription 'tyrrhénienne' publiée par Della Seta 1937:143ss. (no. 4).

Pélasges paraît être inventée d'après le mythe d'Hypsipyle à Athènes, au temps de la conquête de l'île ou peu après, au début du 5^{ème} siècle. Plus difficile est la question des mythes d'abandon: le matériau présenté nous suggère que l'épisode de Thoas repose sur des contacts avec les légendes du Proche-Orient, les versions grecques ne pouvant suffire pour en déduire ses traits distinctifs. On aimerait penser que cette adaptation ait eu lieu à l'époque orientalisante, une période dont on sait aujourd'hui combien elle a été importante pour la formation de l'imaginaire grec.³⁸

Mais il y a d'autres mythes encore qui ressemblent à l'histoire d'Hypsipyle. Les Grecs eux-mêmes la comparaient à légende des Danaïdes.³⁹ Danaos et Égyptos se disputaient la royauté de l'Égypte. Danaos construisit un navire et se réfugia en Argos avec ses filles. Les fils d'Égyptos poursuivirent leurs cousines jusqu'à Argos pour les épouser contre leur gré. Danaos fut obligé de céder mais ordonna à ses filles de poignarder leurs cousins pendant la nuit des noces. Toutes obéirent à leur père sauf Hypermestre, qui épargna son mari Lyncée. Danaos la fit emprisonner puis juger, mais elle fut acquittée grâce à l'intervention d'Aphrodite. Plus tard, afin de choisir d'autres maris pour ses filles, Danaos organisa un *agon* sportif, c'est à dire une course dont ses filles étaient le prix.⁴⁰

Il y a toute une série d'analogies entre ce mythe et celui d'Hypsipyle: il y a un groupe de femmes qui se querellent avec leurs maris et les tuent. L'une d'entre elles sauve un des hommes, et il s'ensuit une période intermédiaire à la fin de laquelle les femmes sont réunies avec de nouveaux maris. Chez les Lemniennes, comme chez les Danaïdes, nous avons des traditions qui parlent d'un *agon* sportif qui a eu lieu lors de l'arrivée des Argonautes, et dont la course était une partie importante.⁴¹ Et finalement, chez les Danaïdes, ainsi qu'à Lemnos, il y a le motif du groupe d'hommes qui arrive en bateau pour épouser les femmes, quand bien même ce motif s'applique aux premiers maris chez les Danaïdes, aux deuxièmes chez les Lemniennes.

38 Voir l'analyse classique de Burkert 1984 ainsi que les matériaux collectionnés par West 1997.

39 Voir Eur. *Hec.* 886s.; pour les analogies entre les Lemniennes et les Danaïdes, voir aussi Dumézil 1924:48-51 = 1998:84-87 et Burkert 1970:12 = 2000:242s.; pour des histoires analogues voir *EdM* 2 (1979) 887-902 s.v. *Brüder suchen Schwestern* (Uku Masing).

40 Pour l'ensemble de la légende voir Pind. *Pyth.* 9.112-16; Aesch. *PV* 853-69; Schol. Hom. *Il.* 4.171c; Hor. *Carm.* 3.11.25-52; Ov. *Her.* 14; Apollod. *Bibl.* 2. 1. 4; Hyg. *Fab.* 168 *etc.*, et pour les images *LIMC* 3 (1986) s.v. *Danaïdes*, nos. 5s. Les sources concernant les Danaïdes ont été collectionnées et commentées en détail par Garvie 1969:163-174. Pour l'interprétation voir aussi *DNP* 3 (1997) 307s. s.v. *Danaos, Danaiden* (Christoph Auffarth).

41 Sur l'*agon* à Lemnos, voir Simon. *PMG* fr. 547; Philostr. *Gym.* 3; Scholl. Pind. *Ol.* 4.31-37, *Pyth.* 4.450s.; Apostol. 7.95. Cet *agon* est peut-être représenté déjà sur une *olpe* étrusque du milieu du 7^{ème} siècle av. J.-C., voir Rizzo et Martinelli 1989; plus spécialement sur Erginos, vainqueur à la course, Pind. *Ol.* 4.19-27; Callim. fr. 668; voir aussi n. 18.

On peut poursuivre dans cette voie en analysant des analogies plus spécifiques: par exemple, ni les Danaïdes ni les Lemniennes choisissent de leur propre volonté de tuer leurs maris; chez les Danaïdes, l'instigateur est le père, chez les Lemniennes, c'est Aphrodite. Mais la figure d'Aphrodite est aussi présente chez les Danaïdes: c'est elle qui protège la seule femme non-meurtrière. Et de même, la figure du père est présente à Lemnos: c'est lui qui est protégé par la seule femme non-meurtrière. On retrouve donc un de ces doubles renversements qui caractérisent souvent la transformation d'un mythe:

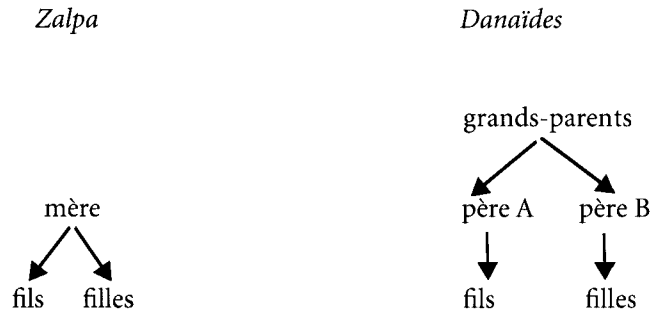
	<i>Lemnos</i>	<i>Argos</i>
<i>instigation des meurtrières</i>	Aphrodite	père
<i>protection de la non-meurtrière</i>	père (objet)	Aphrodite (sujet)

On pourrait bien approfondir l'étude du rapport entre ces deux mythes. Toutefois, je préfère encore introduire une dernière légende. Cette fois, il ne s'agit pas d'un mythe grec, mais d'un texte provenant des archives de l'empire Hittite, et qui date du milieu du 2^{ème} millénaire av. J.-C. Celui-ci nous raconte l'histoire suivante:⁴² La reine de la ville de Kanesh en Anatolie avait donné naissance à trente fils dans une même année. Comme elle détestait cette foule de garçons, elle les abandonna dans des paniers sur un fleuve, qui les emporta vers la ville de Zalpa près de la Mer Noire. Après quelques années, la reine de Kanesh accoucha d'une trentaine de filles qu'elle garda avec elle pour les éduquer. Un beau jour, les trente garçons de Zalpa arrivèrent à Kanesh et apprirent que la reine de cette ville avait trente filles. En entendant cela, ils comprirent qu'elle était leur mère. Celle-ci ne les reconnut pas mais proposa de marier ses filles avec les trente garçons. Ceux-ci étaient d'accord, sauf le plus jeune d'entre eux, qui dit: 'Est-ce que nous voulons vraiment nous marier avec nos sœurs? Ce n'est certainement pas juste de coucher avec elles.' C'est ici que la tablette d'argile a été rompue, en conséquence de quoi, nous ignorons la fin de l'histoire.

On constate que cette légende réunit des traits qui ressemblent à celle d'Hypsipyle tout comme aux Danaïdes: on y retrouve par exemple l'enfant abandonné dans une version analogue à celle qui a peut-être inspiré l'épisode du roi sauvé à

42 L'analogie avec les Danaïdes a d'abord été notée par Burkert 1982:719; il est revenu sur le sujet dans Burkert 1991:534; voir aussi West 1997:439, 446s. Une traduction anglaise de ce texte hittite se trouve chez Beckman et Hoffner 1990:62s. (no.19); pour le contexte historique voir Bryce 1998:22-42.

Lemnos. Si l'on examine maintenant de plus près les ressemblances entre la légende de Zalpa et les Danaïdes, on remarque que l'analogie concerne d'abord le motif du mariage endogame: à Zalpa, les noces devaient avoir lieu entre frères et sœurs de la même mère, chez les Danaïdes entre cousins et cousines, dont les pères sont des frères, c'est à dire des cousins parallèles patrilinéaires:



Chez les Hittites, on a donc deux générations, chez les Grecs trois—je vous rappelle, que c'est une différence identique à celle entre les légendes d'abandon grecques et celles du Proche-Orient.

Ensuite, il y a deux séquences de voyage: les fils et les filles sont séparés, puis réunis. À Zalpa, ce sont les garçons qui font le premier voyage; chez les Danaïdes, ce sont les filles.

En résumé, on pourrait dire que la structure narrative du mythe est constituée, jusqu'à ce point, de deux séquences (parenté et voyage), dont chacune est composée de deux éléments: parents et enfants dans la première, séparation et réunion dans la deuxième. Le rapport entre les mythes de Zalpa et des Danaïdes est alors défini par un renversement des sexes dans le premier élément de chacune des deux séquences:

	<i>Zalpa</i>		<i>Danaïdes</i>	
	<i>parents:</i> <i>enfants</i>	<i>séparation:</i> <i>réunion</i>	<i>parents:</i> <i>enfants</i>	<i>séparation:</i> <i>réunion</i>
1. <i>élément renversé</i>	mère	voyage des garçons	pères	voyage des filles
2. <i>élément identique</i>	garçons et filles	voyage des garçons	garçons et filles	voyage des garçons

C'est ce même renversement des sexes qui est constitutif du rapport entre les deux légendes dans la suite de l'histoire: à Zalpa, c'est la mère qui veut que ses filles épousent les garçons, et c'est un des garçons qui refuse cette liaison problématique; chez les Danaïdes, c'est le père qui veut empêcher le mariage, et c'est une des filles qui ne participe pas au crime qui s'en suit.

Cette opposition très simple entre les deux récits est probablement liée à la différence entre les systèmes de parenté en Grèce et en terre hittite. Nous savons en effet que la liaison entre frères et sœurs, telle que la reine de Zalpa veut l'organiser, était défendue chez les Hittites. Une telle liaison était même punie de la peine de mort. C'est ce qui ressort des paroles du plus jeune des garçons, ainsi que d'autres sources. Les Hittites savaient cependant que le mariage entre frères et sœurs était usuel chez quelques-uns de leurs peuples vassaux, et certains témoignages indiquent que ce type de mariage était considéré comme le signe d'une vie barbare.⁴³ Par contre, en pays grec, on observe une forte tendance à des mariages endogames, exception faite peut-être dans l'aristocratie de l'époque archaïque. On connaît la situation à Athènes: le célèbre mariage de l'*epikleros* n'est alors pas du tout un phénomène isolé. Des témoignages chez les orateurs attiques nous indiquent également que le mariage préférentiel était celui avec le frère du père, ou bien avec le cousin parallèle patrilinéaire. Nous savons même qu'il était considéré comme de très mauvais goût d'empêcher une telle liaison.⁴⁴ Tandis que la reine de Kanesh essaie de forcer des noces barbares, Danaos empêche ce qui est vu comme un mariage normal en Grèce. Le projet de chacun des deux est pervers et en opposition totale avec les règles de la culture humaine. Le héros positif est le seul enfant qui refuse de participer au crime. Les légendes de Zalpa et des Danaïdes expriment donc une pensée analogue en l'adaptant à un contexte social différent.

Il est temps de revenir sur le crime des Lemniennes qui coïncide avec ces deux légendes dans un bon nombre de traits distinctifs. D'abord, il y a les deux couples d'éléments qui constituent la colonne vertébrale des trois récits: le premier est composé de la séparation suivi du voyage forcé par la mer (A1), et de l'arrivée du groupe d'hommes chez les femmes (A2). La deuxième paire est constituée par un crime qui a rapport au mariage (B1) et par son abstention par l'une des personnes (B2). Chez les Danaïdes, ainsi que dans la légende de Zalpa, la séquence de ces

43 Voir sur ce point Beckman et Hoffner 1996:22ss. (no.3 §25).

44 Pour le mariage préférentiel voir p.ex. Lys. 32.4; Dem. 43.22/24, 43.74, 44.9s.; pour le refus d'un tel mariage Isae. 7.11s.; voir aussi Leduc 1991:304s. sur le mariage préférentiel à Athènes. Mais la tendance n'est pas seulement athénienne; pour un parallèle au mariage de l'*epikleros* et l'endogamie dans les lois de Gortyne voir Leduc 1991:288-91. Pour les raisons politiques de la pratique aristocrate voir aussi DNP 3 (1997) s.v. *Ehe. II. Griechenland*, 894s. (Beate Wagner-Hasel).

quatre éléments est identique (A1/2 - B1/2), tandis que l'ordre est renversé dans la fable lemnienne (B1/2 - A1/2):

		<i>Danaïdes</i>	<i>Lemnos</i>	<i>Zalpa</i>
<i>Voyage forcé par la mer</i>	A1	1. Fuite des Danaïdes	3. Thoas sauvé	1. Les garçons abandonnés
<i>Arrivée du groupe d'hommes chez les femmes</i>	A2	2. Les fils d'Égyptos	4. Les Argonautes	2. Les garçons viennent chez les sœurs
<i>Crime qui a rapport au mariage</i>	B1	3. Meurtre	1. Meurtre	3. Mariage barbare
<i>Abstention par l'une des personnes</i>	B2	4. Hypermestre	2. Hypsipyle	4. Le plus jeune des garçons s'abstient

Ici, de même qu'avant, on peut approfondir l'analyse par quelques points de détail: dans ces légendes, le crime consiste à nouer une liaison illégitime (à Zalpa) ou bien à détruire une liaison légitime (chez les Danaïdes). Il est évident, qu'à cet égard, la légende d'Hypsipyle s'accorde avec les Danaïdes. Ensuite, l'instigateur du crime chez les Danaïdes est un homme, le père, tandis qu'à Zalpa, c'est une femme, la reine. À Lemnos, c'est une divinité féminine, Aphrodite—voici donc les Lemniennes du côté de Zalpa. Et finalement, il y a le motif du double voyage, qui est aussi présent chez les Lemniennes: le motif de la séparation, quand Thoas est abandonné dans un coffre sur la mer, et puis la réunion avec les Argonautes qui arrivent par la mer. J'ai donc essayé de montrer que l'épisode du sauvetage de Thoas dépend des contes du Proche-Orient sur les enfants abandonnés, et que l'on retrouve dans la légende de Zalpa. Par contre, dans l'épisode de l'arrivée des Argonautes, tout comme c'est le cas dans la légende des Danaïdes, nous retrouvons le motif du navire, qui selon certains auteurs aurait été le premier bateau du monde.⁴⁵

Voilà maintenant le moment de rassembler le fil de nos pensées et de formuler une hypothèse capable d'articuler ensemble ces analyses. À cette fin, je prendrai comme point de départ deux observations différentes mais concordantes: d'abord, on a vu qu'il est possible de définir le rapport entre les histoires de Zalpa et des

Danaïdes par des transformations simples et directes. On a ainsi l'impression que les deux textes se répondent l'un à l'autre sans intermédiaire. D'un autre côté, la légende des Lemniennes semble contraster tant avec la structure de l'histoire de Zalpa qu'avec celle des Danaïdes, le signe le plus clair étant le renversement de la séquence A/B - B/A. Je propose d'en conclure que les mythes de Zalpa et des Danaïdes sont plus anciens que la légende lemnienne et que pour trouver l'origine de l'histoire des Danaïdes, il faut remonter à une époque où l'on peut supposer un contact direct entre le monde grec et la culture de l'Anatolie. On se souvient peut-être de certaines notices qu'on trouve dans les documents hittites à partir du 15^{ème} siècle av. J.-C. et qui parlent de conflits avec un peuple qui habite à la frontière occidentale de l'empire et qui porte le nom d'*Ahhiyawa*. On soupçonne depuis longtemps qu'il pourrait s'agir ici des Grecs mycéniens.⁴⁶ Je rappelle à ce propos qu'un des centres importants de la culture mycénienne a précisément été Argos, c'est à dire l'endroit où le crime des Danaïdes a eu lieu. On sait d'ailleurs, que depuis l'*Iliade*, le nom des *Danaoi* est utilisé pour désigner les Grecs,⁴⁷ et l'on peut trouver dans des inscriptions égyptiennes du 14^{ème} siècle av. J.-C. le nom *Ta-na-ja* (ou *Ta-na-ju*) qui sert à désigner une région de la Grèce.⁴⁸ Toute somme faite, il n'est pas absurde d'en conclure que le mythe des Danaïdes a été formulé à l'âge de bronze au moins dans ses traits principaux.⁴⁹

Si l'on suppose maintenant que le mythe d'Hypsipyle est né du dialogue avec ces deux complexes mythologiques, il nous faut conclure que cela s'est passé à une

45 L'Argo est considérée comme le premier bateau par Catull. 64.11; Ov. *Am.* 2.11.1s.; Stat. *Achil.* 1.64s; Schol. Aratus, *Phaen.* 342; Apostol. 3.60c, voir aussi Diod. Sic. 4.41.1; le bateau de Danaos aurait été le premier bateau, ou bien le premier bateau à 50 rames selon Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.1.4; Schol. Hom. *Il.* 1.42c; Schol. Aesch. *PV* 853; les deux traditions ont été mises en relation déjà durant l'Antiquité, voir Phaedr. 4.7.6-20; Plin. *HN* 7. 206s.; Schol. Eur. *Med.* 1; Schol. Ap. Rhod. 1.1-4e; Schol. Strozz. German. *Arat.* 347-55 (page 172s. Breysig).

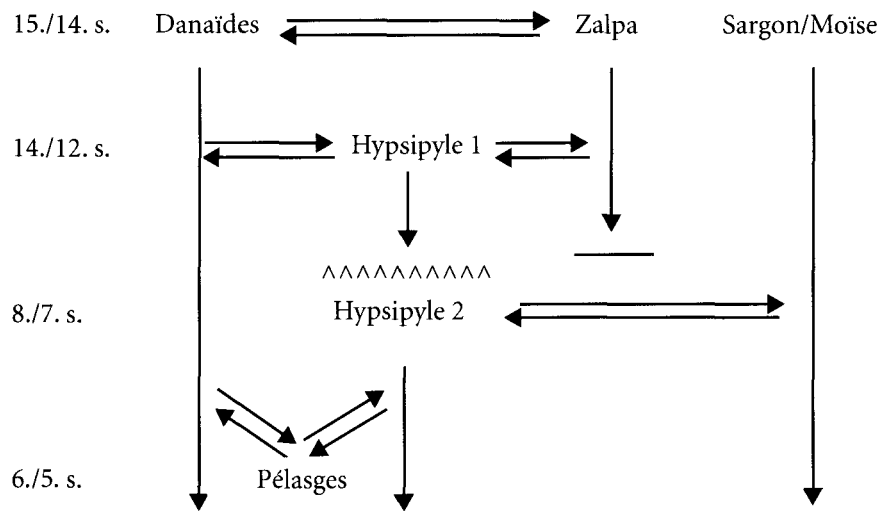
46 Voir Bryce 1998:59-63.

47 Hom. *Il.* 1.42, *Od.* 1.350 *etc.*; à noter que le terme est absent des œuvres authentiques d'Hésiode, qui ont probablement été fixés par écrit avant l'*Iliade*. En mycénien, on trouve l'anthroponyme masculin *da-na-jo* (KN Db 1324.B), dont la relation avec *Danaos* est peu claire, voir *DMic s.v. da-na-jo*.

48 Voir Burkert 1991:534, qui propose lui aussi une origine mycénienne à la légende des Danaïdes. Le nom *Ta-na-ja* est attesté trois fois dans des inscriptions d'Aménophis III, voir Helck 1979:29-32, et pour l'état actuel de la question Cline 1998; l'argument sceptique de *LFE s.v. Danaoi* col. 217 (Gerd Steiner), selon qui *Ta-na-ja* ne peut signifier 'pays des Danaoi' parce que la tradition grecque ne connaît pas de toponyme dérivé de *Danaos*, est évidemment erroné—il est bien clair que cela ne joue aucun rôle dans un texte en langue égyptienne! Cependant, je ne partage pas l'évhémérisme naïf de Faure 1969 qui suppose que la légende des Danaïdes reflète des événements historiques de l'âge de bronze.

49 Néanmoins, j'émet des doutes sur les analyses de Dowden 1989:146-165, qui essaie de déduire du mythe l'existence de certains rites à l'âge de bronze; sur cette méthode problématique voir n. 11.

époque où les cultures porteuses de ces deux mythes étaient encore d'une certaine importance dans la région. L'invention de ce mythe doit donc remonter avant la destruction de l'empire hittite autour de 1200 av. J.-C. Ce n'est pas le moment ici d'entrer dans la question difficile de l'histoire de l'île de Lemnos à l'âge géométrique, mais j'aimerais faire remarquer que les fouilles archéologiques ont en général confirmé l'hypothèse d'une présence grecque sur l'île à l'âge de bronze, ainsi que celle d'une certaine continuité culturelle entre la période submycénienne et les siècles obscurs.⁵⁰ Si l'ancienneté de ce mythe paraît donc probable, il ne faut pas oublier cependant qu'il est fort possible qu'il ait subi encore des changements plus tard. Ainsi, par exemple, les échos aux épisodes des enfants abandonnés ont peut-être été introduits ou bien renforcés à l'époque orientalisante, quand les Lemniens devaient affronter des cultures nouvelles, apparues dans l'espace qui était auparavant occupé par les Hittites.⁵¹ Finalement, j'aimerais proposer un schéma, qui résume la genèse de cet ensemble de mythes:



Mais je ne peux conclure ces analyses sans dire un mot sur les réflexions de principe qui les ont accompagnées. Rappelons la démarche que j'ai poursuivie dans ce travail: j'ai d'abord confronté des mythes qui se ressemblent et j'ai fait

50 A noter quand même que cette image (déjà traditionnelle et influencée surtout par l'article classique de Della Seta 1937) a été corrigée sur beaucoup de points par les nouvelles fouilles de l'École Italienne, voir p. ex. les analyses de Beschi 1998.

51 Dans l'état actuel de la question, il me paraît prématuré de formuler une hypothèse sur l'âge des rites lemniens qui, dans nos textes grecs, sont liés au crime des Lemniennes. Dans l'architecture des sanctuaires lemniens ainsi que dans la forme des idoles qu'on y a trouvés, on a souvent vu des traces mycénienes, voir p.ex. *LIMC* 8.1 (Suppl. 1997) 771-73 s.v. *Lemnos* (Christos Boulotis), mais voir aussi les analyses très critiques de Beschi 1998, surtout 55s. et 62-66.

l'examen des différences qui les séparent. Puis, j'ai mis en relief que ces différences ne sont pas fortuites, mais qu'elles font système, et qu'il est possible de les réduire à des oppositions simples ou bien, pour prononcer la parole magique, des oppositions binaires. Ainsi, les Danaïdes sont opposées à la légende de Zalpa, tandis que le mythe des Lemniennes se révèle être un terme médiateur de cette paire. Rien de nouveau, jusqu'à ce point: il s'agit d'une analyse structurale classique, telle qu'elle a été développée par Lévi-Strauss, et introduite dans le champ de la mythologie grecque par les 'Jardins d'Adonis.' J'ai poursuivi cette approche en essayant de décrire comment ces transformations correspondent à l'idéologie des sociétés porteuses de ces mythes. Mais je ne me suis pas arrêté là: on sait qu'en principe, l'analyse structurale s'inspire de la linguistique synchronique et s'oppose à l'histoire. De ce point de vue, les relations de système sont logiques et nécessaires: elles correspondent aux lois de l'esprit humain, tandis que l'histoire reste du domaine des contingences. Dans mes analyses, j'ai par contre proposé une lecture historique de la structure même du système différentiel à l'intérieur duquel les légendes individuelles sont produites. Ainsi les différences entre les mythes ont été soumises à une temporisation: au lieu d'être des structures fixes, qui définissent un contexte immobile, elles apparaissent comme les traces d'une dynamique évolutive. On notera que même ici il s'agit d'un mode de lecture linguistique, qui rappelle le concept des lois linguistiques diachroniques.

Néanmoins, j'espère qu'on aura remarqué que mes analyses diffèrent des reconstructions historiques plus anciennes en plusieurs aspects. Je n'ai par exemple nullement l'intention de faire revivre des fantaisies vagabondes dans le style de Pettazoni et Untersteiner qui pensaient pouvoir déduire des mythes grecs des conclusions sur l'histoire religieuse du 3ème millénaire av. J.-C. Mes hypothèses n'ont point remonté au delà des siècles qui nous ont laissé des fragments écrits, que ce soit un conte sur une tablette hittite, ou quelques signes de linéaire B. Mais la différence la plus importante, c'est certainement que j'ai essayé de renoncer aux concepts habituels de l'approche diffusionniste. Je n'ai pas seulement fondé mes analyses sur les analogies, mais également et surtout sur les différences et les innovations. De plus, je me suis abstenu de l'usage du mot 'influence,' puisqu'il s'agit là d'un concept ethnocentrique qui suppose une hiérarchie entre les cultures, et j'ai préféré utiliser le terme plus neutre du dialogue entre les mythes.

En développant ultérieurement cette idée, on arrive à réfléchir d'une manière nouvelle sur l'origine des oppositions binaires qui dominant la structure des mythes. Selon la doctrine classique du structuralisme, le recours au modèle binaire dans les transformations des mythes trouve son origine dans les fondements phonologiques de la langue, c'est-à-dire dans la projection de la structure binaire des phonèmes au niveau des structures de pensée mythique. Mais cette extension de la notion de structure phonématique a été justement critiquée de n'être qu'une

métaphore *ex post*, car il n'y a aucune nécessité à ce que les structures complexes répètent les structures basales d'une façon si stricte. Pourrait-on alors expliquer le binarisme manifeste dans les mythes d'une autre manière, p.ex. en réfléchissant à l'importance de la communication orale dans la production et la transmission des mythes, même s'ils sont structurés par le discours poétique?

Dans de telles circonstances, le conteur ne raconte jamais un mythe absolument nouveau, mais il oppose sa narration à une autre qui lui préexiste. Il ne s'agit donc jamais d'une narration isolée et monologique, mais le conte se narre toujours déjà en référence à un autre. Maintenant, dans une situation dialogique, il est bien naturel qu'une même action racontée par deux participants conduise à des échanges de position, notamment entre les pronoms 'je' et 'tu.' Pour prendre un exemple très banal: A dit: 'je te donne la pomme,' et B réplique: 'tu me la donnes.' L'appropriation de l'énoncé de A par B s'effectue par une inversion binaire entre le sujet et l'objet qui ressemble tout à fait à ces opérations transformatrices qui marquent les contrastes entre les variantes des mythes que j'ai analysées. On peut aussi en déduire que les agents des mythes, par exemple les Lemniennes ou les Danaïdes, ne sont pas des troisièmes personnes, mais représentent des 'je,' des 'nous,' des 'tu' et des 'vous.' Par conséquent, la structure narrative en elle-même contient déjà le point de vue du narrateur, aussi peut-on d'un côté essayer de retrouver ce point de vue et de lui assigner sa place historique. D'un autre côté, il s'ensuit que le mythe est étroitement lié à la définition de l'identité sociale du narrateur, ce qui a tendance à renforcer les différences entre les légendes, tendance que l'on retrouve déjà esquissée dans la structure dialogique du mythe comme telle.

Voici donc les principes que j'ai suivis dans mes recherches sur les mythes lemniens. Je suis bien conscient des limites des reconstructions historiques en général; aussi je tiens plutôt à insister sur le caractère exploratif des analyses proposées à titre d'exemple que sur les résultats obtenus en tant que tels. J'espère néanmoins que mes réflexions nous aident à voir que ces inventions antiques s'inscrivent dans un dialogue entre les cultures qui dépasse les frontières des langues et des nations, souvent trop respectées par la science moderne, d'un dialogue par ailleurs, auquel nous participons encore de nos jours.

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Two descriptions of *myêsis*¹

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In memory of
Lynette Thompson
(†21.12.2003)

Introduction

Excavations of a columbarium on the Roman Esquiline in 1875 brought to light a figured marble ash urn of Augustan date, which Ersilia Caetani Lovatelli published in 1879. It shows three scenes (Fig. 1), to be read from right to left:²

(A) An adult male, barefoot, wearing a mantle and a lion's skin, stands holding, with his right hand, a pig over an altar. His left has a vessel of some kind. A hierophant, heavily cloaked and barefoot, stands at the other side of the altar, pouring liquid onto it from a vessel held in his right hand; his left has a dish with three poppy pods.

(B) An adult male, barefoot, his head covered with his mantle, sits on a carved stool over which a lion's skin is draped; at his right foot is a ram's horn. Behind him stands a woman, like the hierophant heavily cloaked and barefoot, holding a winnowing fan over his head.

(C) A goddess, lighted torch in left hand and wheat (?) fronds in right, with a headdress of wheat (?) fronds, sits beside a broad cylindrical object, around the back of which a snake is twined. Its head has extended to the goddess' left thigh. At her left stands a young male in a fringed chiton, his

- 1 Translations from Homer are by Richmond Lattimore (1965), those from Apuleius by J. Arthur Hanson (1989), occasionally somewhat modified, those from the Brothers Grimm by M. Hunt, revised by Joseph Stern (*Tales*). I had written the second part of this paper before I read Stephanie West's appealing suggestion (2003) that ancient novels were intended for listeners, not only for readers. That I have not changed 'readers' to 'readers or listeners' in the text below is not meant to imply disagreement.
- 2 Now in the Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome (H. 0.294 m, diam. of rim 0.320). Some of the individual scenes on the urn appear in other works of art found in Italy and elsewhere. Preserving all three, for example, but in a somewhat different form, is the so-called Torre Nova Sarcophagus, the *editio princeps* of which, Rizzo 1910, remains a basic and standard treatment of the several representations of the episodes. Essential also is Roussel 1930.

left hand resting on a club, his right fondling the snake's head. At her right stands a young woman, a breeze fanning her mantle and partly exposing her head; on her left shoulder she carries a lighted torch. The three wear sandals.



Fig. 1. Figures on the Lovatelli Urn, watercolor from Roussel 1930:pl. 2 = Mylonas 1961:pl. 83

According to the generally accepted interpretation, the three scenes, each apparently a copy or reworking of a Greek original of the 4th century BC or earlier, represent episodes from the purificatory rites preliminary to the mysteries of Demeter. The standing male who wears the lion's skin has been interpreted as Heracles, whose need for purification before he could be initiated at Eleusis led Theseus, according to legend, to institute the Lesser Mysteries at Athens; the first scene on the urn shows the purificatory libation and sacrifice. In *B*, the same initiand, again with his lion's skin, sits on a carved stool; this is the rite known as the θρονισμός or θρόνωσις.³ The ram's horn at his right foot symbolizes the δῖον κώδιον, the ram's purificatory pelt.⁴ Over his covered head the priestess is holding a winnowing-fan, from which she evidently sprinkles him.⁵ In *C*, which features

3 For this 'enthronement' we have two ancient sources. Pl. *Euthd.* 277D ὦ Κλεινία, μὴ θαύμαζε εἰ σοι φαίνονται ἀήθεις οἱ λόγοι. ἴσως γὰρ οὐκ αἰσθάνη οἷον ποιεῖτον τὸ ξένω περὶ σε ποιεῖτον δὲ ταύτων ὅπερ οἱ ἐν τῇ τελετῇ τῶν Κορυβάντων, ὅταν τὴν θρόνωσιν ποιῶσιν περὶ τοῦτον ὃν ἂν μέλλωσιν τελεῖν. καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖ χορεία τις ἐστὶ καὶ παιδιὰ, εἰ ἄρα καὶ τετέλεσαι· καὶ νῦν τούτω οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ χορεύετον περὶ σε καὶ οἷον ὀρχεῖσθον παίζοντε ὡς μετὰ τοῦτο τελοῦντε. νῦν οὖν νόμισον τὰ πρῶτα τῶν ἱερῶν ἀκούειν τῶν σοφιστικῶν, etc. Dio Chr. 12.33 Εἰώθασιν ἐν τῷ καλουμένῳ θρονισμῷ καθίσαντες τοὺς μυουμένους οἱ τελοῦντες κύκλω περιχορεύειν. It is not clear whether Plato's Κορυβάντων refers to priests of a particular worship or to revellers in general. Dio does not specify the type of mysteries that included his 'so-called enthronement.' On such 'enthronements' see in general Clinton 2003:62-65 with its bibliography.

4 Polemon fr. 87 (*FHG* III 143f.). For bibliography see Roussel 1930:62 n.2.

the Eleusinian triad, the material of the cylindrical object beside which goddess sits is unclear on the urn, but a sarcophagus from Torre Nova (*supra* n. 2) shows it to be wicker-work, the mystical κίστη.⁶

As P. Roussel (1930:52) and others have stressed, preliminary to the Eleusinian Mysteries was a purificatory μύησις. From the facts that scenes from the *myësis* are depicted in works of art and that those who underwent the *myësis* were not yet full *epoptai* and would not become such until a later rite it follows that what was experienced in the *myësis* did not include any of the well-guarded secrets of the culmination of the Eleusinian mysteries, the *epopteia*, which it was criminal to reveal to the profane.⁷

After Lovatelli's publication, Albrecht Dieterich pointed out, in 1893, that in the *Clouds* Aristophanes presented Socrates' induction of Strepsiades into the Phrontisterion as a parody of what scene B of the urn shows. 'Do you wish,' the teacher asked the new pupil (*Nub.* 250), 'to see clearly the divine things (τὰ θεῖα πράγματα)?' He had Strepsiades sit, crowned, on a sacred *skimpous*, and when Strepsiades, knowing that in such a situation the Athamas of myth was sacrificed (256; Dover 1968:132f.), feared lest he should have the same fate himself, Socrates reassured him that 'all this is what we do to our initiates (261 τοὺς τελουμένους).' He sprinkled Strepsiades with a kind of powder, then solemnly called on *Aêr*, *Aithêr*, and the Clouds; Strepsiades covered his head with his mantle, as the powers invoked performed a mystic dance. Later, we learn that he has been sitting on a ram's pelt,⁸ again the *dion kôidion*. The Roman urn shows, Dieterich insisted, that the reference to the *myësis* would have been clear to any Athenian viewer of the play. This is worth noting not only about the staging of Strepsiades' induction but about the language throughout the play, which is that of 'mysteries:' 'It is not meet (οὐ θέμις),' the doorkeeper of the Phrontisterion told Strepsiades (140f.), for me

- 5 W. Burkert (1985:76) sees the sprinkling from the *liknon* as symbolic of purification: 'The winnowing fan purifies the corn as the swinging movement of the basket allows the chaff to be blown away by the wind.' He compares it with the rite of *katachysmata*, the pouring of sweetmeats over the head of the new bride or the newly bought slave: they are each, through purification, integrated into their new households. Such seems to have been Heracles' purpose: having been abroad in the world, he wanted to come back into society after his labors, but he needed to be purified before he could be reintegrated.
- 6 Scene B, with the veiled and seated Heracles, is in many respects like that with the veiled and seated Demeter described at *Hom. Hymn. Dem.* 188-211: for discussion and bibliography see N. Richardson 1974:207-17, esp. 211-13, who emphasizes that the *mystês* is seated; he refers to a miniature bronze folding stool among the votives at the Sanctuary of Demeter and Core on Acrocorinth (Stroud 1963:19, pl. 9c); cf. *infra* n. 17.
- 7 The question of the stages leading up to the full Eleusinian experience is too complicated to be discussed here and in any case is not central to this paper. Fuller treatment: Dowden 1980, Clinton 2003.
- 8 *Nub.* 730-1 τίς ἄν δῆτ' ἐπιβάλοι ἐξ ἀρνακίδων γνῶμην ἀποστερητρίδα;

‘to speak to anyone but the pupils: you must respect these μυστήρια;’ the Clouds, when they appeared (303-05), talked of a μυστοδόκος δόμος with its ἄγλαι τελεταί and its σέβας ἀρρήτων ἱερῶν.

In the generations since Dieterich, there has been much scholarly discussion of the depiction of Socrates in the *Clouds* as parodist of the mysteries (e.g. Byl 1990, Auffarth 1999). It is not my purpose here to prolong this discussion but rather to point out two other literary parodies of the *myêsis*, both apparently unnoticed as such. The first (I) is in the dialogue *Protagoras*, in which Plato shows sophists, assembled in the house of the Athenian Callias, enacting some of the scenes from the rite. A good deal of its imagery is in fact that of Aristophanes’ *Clouds*, as if the dialogue were written in reply to the play. The second (II), a scene from the traveller’s tale near the opening of Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* (1.2-20), is a chief concern of this paper, for it goes some way, I shall try to show, towards giving a better overall understanding of that difficult novel.

Elements of Apuleius’ presentation of the sequel of the travesty, the attempted escape from Hypata, find striking parallels in a story in the collection of the Brothers Grimm. Why this should be has long puzzled me. In an appendix I set out the riddle in the hope that it will find its Oedipus.

I. Early morning at Athens

Some of Plato’s dialogues are ‘acted,’ their texts, like those of plays, consisting only of characters’ speeches. Other dialogues are narrated, one speaker reporting a conversation. Still others are mixed, beginning as ‘acted’ and continuing with a narration by one of the characters. A basic difference between the ‘acted’ and the narrated or mixed types is that in these latter the narrator can not only report the conversations heard but can also describe the actions of the speakers and the setting of these actions.⁹ An obvious distinction between the purely narrated and the mixed types is that much like the overture of an opera, the ‘acted’ part of the mixed dialogue can, and often does, serve to hint at some of the themes that will be developed in the narrated part.

Such a mixed dialogue is the *Protagoras*. The ‘actors’ at the opening are Socrates and an unnamed friend, and the eventual narrator is Socrates himself. The friend playfully chid Socrates as being ever in pursuit of Alcibiades, even though the latter had by then begun to show a beard. Socrates (*Prt.* 309A-B): ‘Well, what of it? Are you not an enthusiast of Homer, who said that the most graceful young age (χαριεστάτην ἦβην) is that which Alcibiades now has, that of the young man first-

9 For example, in the ‘acted’ part of the *Phaedo*, Echecrates asks Phaedo, himself about to become the narrator, to tell of τὰ λεχθέντα καὶ τὰ πραχθέντα (*Phd.* 58C, ‘the words *and* the deeds,’ my emphasis).

bearded (τοῦ πρώτου ὑψηλήτου)?' Now these were Odysseus' words when he described his encounter with the young-looking Hermes:

But as I went up through the lonely glens, and was coming
near to the great house of Circe, skilled in medicines,
there as I came up to the house, Hermes, of the golden
staff, met me on my way, in the likeness of a young man
with beard new grown, which is the most graceful time of young manhood.
(*Od.* 10.275-79) ¹⁰

After this reference to Hermes' looks, Odysseus tells of useful advice that Hermes gave him: when Circe asks you to go to bed with her and you want to leave, stay, said Hermes (297), and: use the magical *mōly* with her and you'll win and not be transformed into a pig (281ff.). After his own reference to Alcibiades' Hermes-like looks,¹¹ Socrates said that on that very day Alcibiades had been of use to him by speaking at length on his behalf. Odysseus went on to tell of his conquest of Circe and of his descent into the Underworld. The narrated part of the dialogue will be Socrates' account of his visit to the house of Callias and of the sophists that he has met there; its imagery, as we shall see, is that of Odysseus' description of his visit to the Underworld. And in his narrative Socrates revealed how Alcibiades, as he had told his friend, was of use: Protagoras had asked Socrates to stay and to let him engage him in a debate, using sophistic set speeches, but Socrates wanted to leave. Stay, said Alcibiades (*Prt.* 336B), who then arranged for Socrates to be allowed to use his own invincible *pharmakon*, his 'Socratic' questioning dialectic (347B), and thereby to win, retaining his own identity.¹²

The narrated part of the dialogue has a second, as it were outer and overall, structure, however. There Socrates told how a younger friend, the enthusiastic Hippocrates, having learned the night before that the famous Protagoras was in town, rushed to his (Socrates') house before dawn, banged on the door, and asked loudly (310B): 'Are you awake or are you asleep?' This is sheer comedy, a

10 279 πρώτου ὑψηλήτη, τοῦ περ χαριεστάτη ἦβη.

11 According to Lucian (*Sacr.* 11) the first-bearded Hermes was a subject of statuary by such artists as Praxiteles, Polykleitos, and Pheidias. Clement of Alexandria tell us (*Protr.* 47) that at Athens sculptors of Hereses used Alcibiades as their model. For the use of models in early Classical 'realistic' portraiture see Barron 1999.

12 In the 'acted' part of the dialogue there may be a third pointer to the Underworld imagery of the narrated part. Socrates had mentioned that he had just seen Protagoras. 'Oh, is he in town?' asked his interlocutor. Socrates: 'it's already the third day' (309D). It was usually on the second day after death (*i.e.* the 'third day' of being dead, as the Greeks, in their inclusive reckoning, would put it) that a body was brought out and interred (Burkert 1985:192, with bibliography). Can it be a mere coincidence that it was on Protagoras' third day in Athens that Socrates described him, as we shall see, as being among the dead?

buffoonery surely as old as any invented by the risible biped. Hippocrates, it turns out, wanted to learn Protagoras' arts, especially that of brilliant speaking. As the narration continues, we see how very close it is to one comedy in particular. Both narration and Aristophanes' *Clouds* begin with pre-dawn scenes of waking, and the idea in both scenes is that the older man (Strepsiades; Socrates) shall introduce the younger (Pheidippides; Hippocrates) to a sophist (to Socrates in the Phrontisterion; to Protagoras in Callias' house). The younger men's names are strikingly alike. Aristophanes emphasized the components of the name Pheidippides: Strepsiades told us that he himself had wanted to call his son Pheidonides, after his own father, Pheidon, but his aristocratic, spendthrift wife insisted on a *hippos* name; the compromise was Φειδιππίδης (← φείδεσθαι 'use sparingly' + ἵππος 'horse'). In the dialogue, Socrates (311B) subtly emphasized his visitor's name (Ἴπποκράτης ← ἵππος + κρατεῖν 'keep control of') by referring to its homonymity with that of the Coan physician.¹³

In both play and dialogue, those entering the house that had the sophists were met with abuse from someone at the door who did not want to let them in. Once they did enter, each of the two older men succeeded in confuting the sophistry that he found inside: Strepsiades ultimately burned the Phrontisterion down, and Socrates, more resourcefully, applied, as noted, his own special technique of questioning.¹⁴ In other words, Socrates in the *Protagoras* assumed the rôle of Strepsiades in the *Clouds*, that of the genial comic hero whose naïve and engaging quality it is to overcome what is sophisticated and unnatural—what in Classical Athens the sophists represented. In the dialogue, Plato has given Protagoras the rôle of chief priest, which Aristophanes gave Socrates in the play.

When Strepsiades looked into the Phrontisterion, his immediate reaction was to exclaim Ἡράκλεις and to remark that the occupants looked starved, as if half-dead souls, and he was told that they were in fact grubbing about for the onions of Tartarus (*Nub.* 184-92). Plato maintains this Underworld imagery in his description of three of the sophists in Callias' house. When Socrates entered, he saw Protagoras, walking back and forth in the courtyard, followed by his listeners; he likened their movements to a circular dance of those charmed by the voice of Orpheus (*Prt.* 314C-5B). Then, almost echoing Strepsiades, Socrates looked up as if surprised, and, although he did not actually say Ἡράκλεις, remarked (315B), τὸν δὲ μετ' εἰσενόησα, ἔφη Ὅμηρος, Ἰπίαν τὸν Ἥλειον. The first four words are from Odysseus' account of the Underworld, and the reader, especially after

13 That Socrates' reference to his visitor's name is *prima facie* irrelevant is enough to invite us to notice it.

14 G. Klosko (1979) draws attention to the deliberately fallacious arguments in the *Protagoras* and to the perplexities of modern scholars who have sought to regard all of Socrates' arguments against Protagoras as rigorously logical and fair.

Socrates' broad hint (ἔφη "Ὀμηρος), expects the rest of the verse, βίην Ηρακληείην; even though Socrates substituted Ἰππίαν τὸν Ἡλείον, Heracles is whom the reader actually sees. Compare Odysseus' description of Heracles,

After him I was aware (τὸν δὲ μετ' εἰσενόησα) of powerful Heracles
 All around him was a clamor of the dead as of birds scattering
 scared in every direction; but he came on, like dark night,
 holding his bow bare with an arrow laid on the bowstring,
 and forever looking, as one who shot, with terrible glances.
 There was a terrible belt crossed over his chest, and a golden
 baldric, with marvellous works of art that figured upon it,
 bears, and lions with glaring eyes, and boars of the forests,
 the battles and the quarrels, the murders and the manslaughters.
 May he who artfully designed them, and artfully put them
 upon that baldric, never again do any designing.

(*Od.* 11.601, 605-14)

and Socrates' of Hippias,

After him I was aware, said Homer, of Hippias of Elis, seated in the opposite part of the courtyard, on a throne. About him on benches sat Eryximachus, son of Acumenus, and Phaedrus of Myrrhine and Andron, son of Androtion, and men from elsewhere, and certain others. They seemed to be asking Hippias astronomical questions about nature and the meteors, and he, sitting enthroned, drew distinctions for each of them and went through the things they asked.

(*Prt.* 315B-C)¹⁵

The reader who today may know nothing of the sophist Hippias can appreciate the humor of Socrates' juxtaposing timid questioners and twittering birds, the latter afraid that they will be shot down by the fierce man. Readers who knew the sophist himself or his reputation would see more. In the *Hippias Minor* (368B-C) Socrates reminded Hippias that he (Hippias) once appeared at Olympia in a chiton that he had made himself, and that he had made everything else he had with him: ring, sealstone, strigil, oil-jar. The sash that he had woven for the chiton had a virtually Asiatic splendor.

It is also with Odysseus' words in the Underworld that Socrates turned to a third sophist, Prodicus: 'and I saw Tantalus also.'¹⁶ Tantalus (*Od.* 11.583-87),

15 'Verba obscura,' write Van Leeuwen and Mendes da Costa (1897) of *Od.* 11.613f., μὴ τεχνησάμενος μὴδ' ἄλλο τι τεχνήσαιτο, / ὅς κείνον τελαμῶνα ἐῆ ἐγκάτθετο τέχνη. My own assumption is that the ἐῆ here emphasizes the remarkable and that it was Heracles himself who fashioned his baldric; this is not, to be sure, provable from the Greek. Plato's substitution of the sash-making Hippias for Heracles suggests that this is now he understood the verses.

16 *Od.* 11.583 καὶ μὴν Τάνταλον εἰσείδον; *Prt.* 315C καὶ μὲν δὴ καὶ Τάνταλον γε εἰσείδον.

parched with thirst, was standing in a pool of water that covered him up to his chin but never reached his mouth. Prodicus was still in bed, under several covers (*Prt.* 315D), talking in a voice so heavy that his words were indistinct.

The Callias in whose house this all took place was one of the aristocratic Eleusian officials, a hereditary Kêryx, and he himself also served as δαδοῦχος or torch-bearer at the mysteries. Everything that we know of him suggests that he gloried in the rôle.¹⁷ If we consider these three descriptions of Socrates' more carefully, we see that they refer, subtly but, I believe, unmistakably, to the rite of *myêsis*.

Hippias, when in the *Protagoras* he was likened to Heracles, was sitting on a throne. When Heracles himself is represented, in art and literature, as seated, his usual—indeed almost exclusive—perch is a rock (as Homer shows him in the Underworld). Among the few exceptions are representations of what we have called Scene *B* of the Lovatelli Urn, with Heracles seated on an elaborately man-made stool as arch-*mystês* of Demeter and Core.¹⁸ This central part of the Lesser Mysteries, at least in what we know of them, was in fact called the 'enthronement' (*supra* n. 3) of the *mystês*, before whom there was a dance. Such a scene of 'enthronement' is what we see in Callias' house: Hippias as the initiand Heracles, enthroned before such a dance, which was led by Protagoras as hierophant.

A closer look at the description of Prodicus is also rewarding. There too we find the iconography of the mysteries. Not only is he covered, like the Lovatelli Heracles, but his covering includes certain sheepskins.¹⁹ Surely, immediately after the description of the 'enthronement' of Heracles/Hippias, the reader cannot fail to see in these sheepskins the purificatory pelts of the *myêsis*. Prodicus' voice was heavy, and there was a buzz or murmur (316A βόμβος) in the room that made his words obscure. The word is almost a *terminus technicus* of the *myêsis*: the flutter or roar that sounds in the ear of the mystic at his initiation.²⁰ The skeptic will urge that it is unthinkable that Socrates should be suggesting that the *bombos* of the mystic

17 For Callias and his affairs see Davies 1971:261ff., no. 7826 viii-xii. If one set out to write a comedy about the teachings of sophists and their pretensions in late 5th-century Athens, Callias and his circle would be a good place to start. He had had the most expensive sophistic education that money could buy and had in fact been the object of Eupolis' comedy Κόρακες, *The Flatterers* (PCG 156-90). Fragments of this last show sophists at Callias' house; the title suggests that the sophists were somehow milking him of money.

18 The few other exceptions are an apparently enthroned Heracles at Alba Fucens (Visscher 1962:41, 45) and a congener at Cleonae (Damaskos 1999:19-22). In the Lovatelli scene and its congeners (Rizzo 1910:103-5) Heracles as initiand sits on a stool, which is without a back but is formally carved—as if an abbreviated representation of a throne?

19 *Prt.* 315D ἐγκεκαλυμμένος ἐν κφδίσις τισίν.

20 Cf. *Pl. Cri.* 54D ἐγὼ δοκῶ ἀκούειν, ὥσπερ οἱ κορυβαντιῶντες τῶν αὐλῶν δοκοῦσιν ἀκούειν, καὶ ἐν ἐμοὶ αὕτη ἡ ἰχὴ τοῦτων τῶν λόγων βομβεῖ 'I seem to hear, as the corybants seem to hear the flutes, and within me the sound of these words flutters'

could be heard by such an unparticipating visitor as himself, but would it be unworthy of a story-teller who had begun his narrative with such a ribaldry as 'Are you awake or are you asleep?' and had continued it after the model of a known comedy (which itself had shown a parodying of *myéisis*) to imply that the *bombos* at these particular *Winkelmysterien* was so loud as to make it hard to hear anything else?

II. *Midnight at Hypata*

Σ. Ἄλλον ὁρῶμεν λόγον τούτου ἀδελφὸν γνήσιον, τῷ τρόπῳ τε γίγνεται, καὶ ὅσῳ ἀμείνων καὶ δυνατώτερος τούτου φύεται;

Φ. Τίνα τρόπον καὶ πῶς λέγεις γιγνόμενον;

Σ. Ὅς μετ' ἐπιστήμης γράφεται ἐν τῇ τοῦ μανθάνοντος ψυχῇ, δυνατὸς μὲν ἀμῦναι ἑαυτῷ, ἐπιστήμων δὲ λέγειν τε καὶ σιγᾶν πρὸς οὓς δεῖ.

Phdr. 276A

In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (or *Golden Ass*), the young man Lucius went to Hypata in Thessaly, a land famous for its magic and its witches. There, erotic encounters with a witch's assistant enabled him to experiment with magic, and the inevitable happened: in his case he was transformed into an ass. The remedy, according to the handbook that they were using, was to eat a rose, but that proved impossible, for it was nighttime, and until a rose might be found the next morning, he as ass had to be put into the stable; robbers came, though, loaded onto Lucius' back what they had taken from the house, and went off with him into the night. After many adventures he was able to escape from the last of his owners and to go

to a hidden stretch of shore. There, next to the spray from the breakers, I stretched out in a soft hollow of sand to refresh my weary body As I surrendered myself to the evening's quiet, sweet sleep overwhelmed me. About the first watch of the night I awoke in sudden fright and saw, just emerging from the waves of the sea, the full circle of the moon glistening with extraordinary brilliance. Surrounded by the silent secrets of dark night, I realised that the supreme goddess now exercised the fullness of her power

(*Met.* 10.35-11.1)

He prayed to this goddess:

‘Grant me rest and peace from the cruel mischances I have endured. Let this be enough toil, enough danger. Rid me of this four-footed form, restore me to the sight of my own people, restore me to the Lucius I was. But if some divine power that I have offended is harassing me with inexorable savagery, at least let me die, if I may not live.’

(*Met.* 11.2)

The goddess, Isis, told him that a procession for her was to take place the next day, in which a priest would be carrying a garland of roses. Lucius was to eat it and to be turned back into to a man, and in his adoration of her he would become one of her initiates and priests.

In considering the *Metamorphoses*, we must remember that Apuleius knew, and embellished on, another account in the *Eselsmensch* tradition, the Λούκιος ἢ Ὀνοϛ of one ‘Lucius of Patrae,’ preserved among the works of Lucian.²¹ The *Onos* is itself an abbreviation of a longer story about a young Lucius who went to Thessaly, experimented with magic, and found himself changed into an ass, the remedy there too being to eat a rose. Many of the adventures of the Apuleian and these other Luciuses are the same, but among the specifically Apuleian additions in the *Metamorphoses*, it is generally agreed, are the traveller’s tale near the beginning of the novel, the tale of Cupid and Psyche near its middle (4.28-6.24), and the initiation into the worship of Isis as its culmination (Book 11). The second and third of these have been much studied, and it has been recognized that the second is a prefiguration of the third.²² The traveller’s tale, on the other hand, has received almost no attention in this regard. I shall argue that one of its episodes is a particularly black parody of the Eleusinian *myēsis*. If I am right, the Apuleian *Eselsroman*, unlike its predecessors, has, as a framework, a perversion of mysteries at the beginning, in the traveller’s tale, before Lucius has lost his human form, and their true celebration at the end, after he has regained it.

Apuleius’ novel, it is notorious, is shot through with Platonic themes and devices. The episode of Lucius and the fellow travellers on the road is in fact like a miniature of a ‘mixed’ Platonic dialogue in that the part (1.2-4) that precedes the narration (1.5-19) points, as we shall see, to motifs developed more fully in the narration itself. And emphasizing, as it does, such themes, the episode on the road

21 Treatments of these forebears include Molt 1938:1-6, Scobie 1975:26-46, Hägg 1983:176-81, and above all Van Thiel 1971-72.

22 For example, Hägg 1983:182, ‘[The] transformation of Apuleius’ novel, in its eleventh and last book, into a serious edifying work is however not as unexpected as has sometimes been suggested. There are several premonitions, though mostly hidden to the uninitiated reader ... A premonition of the end ... comes right in the middle of the novel: ... the deeply serious tale of Cupid and Psyche.’

serves as a kind of overture to the novel proper, which is the account of what happened after Lucius arrived at Hypata.

Before his own adventures began, Lucius, there on the road, dismounted so as to let his horse rest. In doing so, he met two travellers who were arguing about whether magic existed; one had been telling a first-person tale that the other regarded as incredible. Lucius, who was curious about magic, begged the story-teller to continue.

Lucius, we learn later in the book, had an attractive look of young modesty and inexperience (*infra* note 50), and his horse was a white thoroughbred. When the first traveller complained of the unbelievableness of the second's tale about the supernatural, Lucius pointed out that whereas he himself had recently almost choked on too large a piece of cheese, he had seen, nonetheless, a juggler at Athens who swallowed a spear and then brought up, at its point, a dancing boy so lithe as to seem boneless. Lucius was so eager to hear the tale that he offered to pay for the story-teller's supper at the next inn they might stop at. The story-teller agreed, swearing the truth of what he was about to relate:

And you will have no further doubts when you arrive at the next town in Thessaly, for the story is circulating there on everyone's lips about what occurred in plain daylight.

(*Met.* 1.5)

Readers of traditional stories know the device: the story-teller's claim that he is speaking the truth is the surest sign that he is not.²³ In this case, he reveals, in his story, that he intentionally kept secret from the people of Hypata his experience in the inn and the death beside the stream. The story is therefore to be a lie, later to be shown as such. Furthermore, the traveller says that the story is about himself, and there he gives himself the name Aristomenes; it in fact includes motifs and episodes, to be sure disguised to some extent, from legends that the story-teller knew about a real Aristomenes but that his character Aristomenes did not. In other words, it is a first-person story in which the 'I'-character comes to grief because he—impossible to believe—is ignorant of the very source from which the 'I'-narrator draws these motifs and episodes. And the story has every appearance of being invented on the spot, for Lucius' ears in particular, for in it the narrator weaves together the motifs that Lucius himself has just mentioned: cheese, magic, a shaft thrust into a throat, boneless flesh brought out, a free supper in an inn—and he even works in the white thoroughbred, for underlying the story, as we shall

23 An example from the folktale 'The Tinker' (Wace 1964:116, Pindus, early 20th century): "And I was there too," Lushu [the story-teller] concluded, "and the tinker gave me this tin tobacco box. You see it has the letter T for tinker on it and so I have not deceived you."

see, is Plato's *Phaedrus*: one of the story-teller's characters was in fact named Socrates, lying beneath a plane-tree beside a stream. To this lie, *lector, intende: laetaberis* (*Met.* 1.1).

The story, briefly: I, a travelling merchant, when I arrived at Hypata, hoped to buy there fresh cheese to resell but soon found that a wholesaler named Lupus had bought it all the day before. As evening came on, I went, tired, to the baths.

Suddenly I caught sight of Socrates, an old friend of mine. He was sitting on the ground, half-covered by a tattered old cloak, almost unrecognizable in his sallowness, pitiably deformed and shrunken, like those cast-offs of Fortune who are forever begging alms at street corners 'Oh Socrates, my friend,' I said, 'what has happened to you? How terrible you look! What a disgrace! At your home you have already been lamented and ritually addressed as dead, guardians have been appointed for your children by decree of the provincial judge, and your wife, after performing all the funeral services ... is being pressured into ... a new marriage. And you show up here, the image of a ghost, to our shame!' 'Aristomenes,' he answered, 'you do not know the slippery windings and shifting attacks and alternating reversals of Fortune.' And with that he covered his face, which had long since begun to redden from shame, with his patched cloak, baring the rest of his body from his navel down.

(*Met.* 1.6)

I (you now know that my name is Aristomenes²⁴) gave him some clothes, installed him in a room with me in an inn, restored him with food and drink, and listened to him tell of his misfortunes. On the road to Larissa he had been set on by thieves, robbed, and abandoned. He found his way to the inn of a woman named Meroë, *anum sed admodum scitulam* (1.7), who he later learned was a locally notorious witch.²⁵ She gave him a free meal (*cenae gratae atque gratuitae*) and then took him to her bed. Thenceforth he was her slave, forsaking his livelihood and all attachments, working as a bag-carrier (*saccariam faciens*) and giving her all his wages. I expostulated with him and said that we must escape from Hypata the next morning. We then retired, I to a cot, which I pushed up against the door, and Socrates to the main bed. Around midnight, the door, though locked, burst open:

24 The text at the beginning of the traveller's tale is obviously corrupt: 1.5 *sed ut prius noritis cuiatis sim qui sim Aegiensis*. Castiglione (1930:99f.) emended *qui sim* to <*Aristomenes sum*>, 'but this is neither necessary nor consonant with Apuleius' usual practice of postponing the introduction of his characters' names' (Hanson 1989 *ad loc.*; cf. Brotherton 1934:43); to me the proposal to delete *qui sim* seems reasonable. For the ethnic *Aegiensis* and its redolence of αἴξ 'goat' and cheese ('fabrication') see Keulen 2000. Whether or not the story-teller's 'real' name was that of his main character, Aristomenes, I try to avoid confusion in what follows by referring to the narrator as the traveller, the first-person character within the story as Aristomenes.

My cot (*grabatulus*), being low, lame in one foot, and rotten, collapsed from the force of such an assault, and I likewise was rolled out and hurled to the ground. The cot landed upside down on top of me, covering and hiding me.
(*Met.* 1.11)

I peeped out from under the covers and saw two old women, the jealous witch Meroë and her sister, 'one carrying a lighted lamp and the other a sponge and a naked sword' (1.12). Meroë: 'This, sister Panthia,' referring to the sleeping Socrates, 'is my darling Endymion' They had seen me too. The sister proposed that they should tear me to pieces or at least castrate me, but Meroë allowed me to remain alive so that I could bury my friend. She then thrust the sword up to the hilt into Socrates' neck, collected the blood into a pouch, reached into the wound, and drew out Socrates' heart. The sister sealed the wound with a sponge, and said:

'Listen, o sponge, born in the sea, take care to travel back through a river.'
(*Met.* 1.13)²⁶

Thereupon the two women urinated on me and they left—the hinges, bolts, and pins of the doors falling back into their former places.

But I stayed where I was, sprawled on the ground, lifeless, naked, and cold, and covered with urine, as if I had just come out of my mother's womb. No, it was more like being half-dead but still my own survivor, ... posthumous
....
(*Met.* 1.14)²⁷

25 A. Scobie (1983:94): the name, 'like those of the bawds Dipsas and Oenothoe, clearly alludes to a liking for drink' and (*ib.* 260) 'is probably a pun on *merum*;' cf. S. Panayotakis (1998:126): 'obvious pun with undiluted wine,' referring however to Zach 1992 (*non vidi*). Outside Apuleius' novel, there is only one instance of Meroë as a personal name: that of Cambyses' mother (Diod. Sic. 1.33), sister, or wife (Strabo 17.1.5), in memory of whom he named the Nubian capital (*FHN*: Eide *et al.* 1994-2000:II 563f.). The city along with her island, E.A.W. Budge has stressed (1929:19), was known in Egyptian antiquity for her magic. Juvenal (*AD 67), only a few generations before Apuleius, could complain (6.526) of the lost *pudicitia* of the Roman women of his day who went as far as Meroë to take part in Isiac rites, which he implies were somewhat lubricious. Archaeological explorations of Meroë show, in any case, that Isis was worshipped there: see Török 1997; for Isis in textual sources about Nubia, see the index in *FHN*: Eide *et al.* 1994-2000:IV 1264. Magic, *impudicitia*, secret rites: surely Apuleius trusted the reader, on learning the witch's name, immediately to think of the Nubian city and not to extract some far-fetched Latin pun.

26 *Heus tu ... spongia, cave in mari nata per fluvium transeas.*

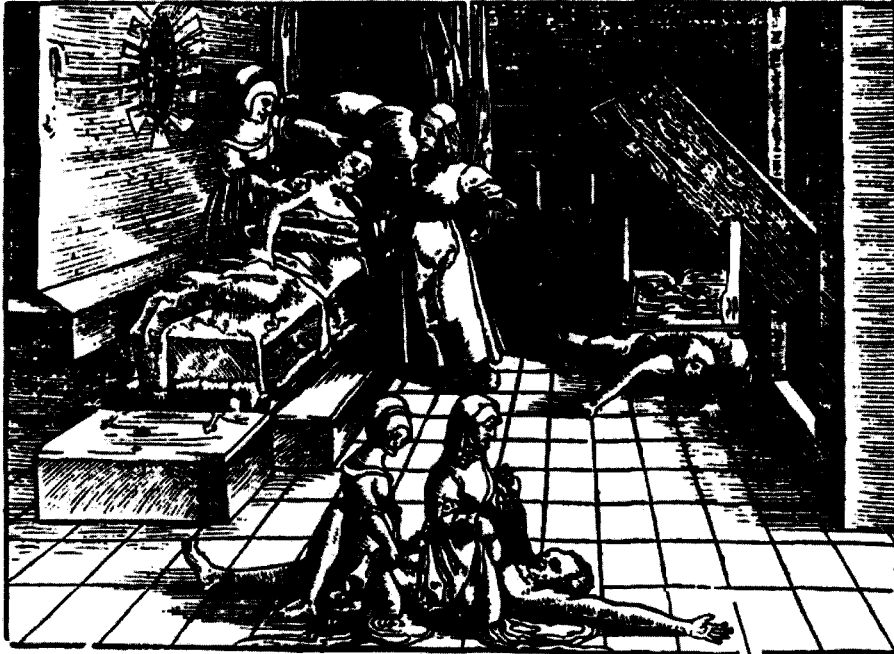


Fig. 2 Woodcut from (Johan Sieder), Lucii Apuleii von ainem gulden Esel (Augustae Vindelicorum 1538), to be read anticlockwise from upper right

The next morning, Socrates woke up, apparently unharmed. In his sleep he had seen the two women come and extract his heart, but, despite the foul stench, we both dismissed as dreams what we had seen. The next morning we two set out from Hypata and soon sat down beneath a plane-tree and had some breakfast.

Socrates ..., when he had polished off enough food, began to feel unbearably thirsty, since he had greedily bolted down a good share of a fine cheese. Not

27 *At ego, ut eram, etiam nunc humi proiectus, inanimis, nudus et frigidus et lotio perlitus, quasi recens utero matris editus, immo veruo semimortuus, verum etiam ipse mihi supervivens et postumus.* As the manuscripts all have it, the story, in what immediately follows, seems somewhat confused. Aristomenes, worried lest he be blamed the next morning for the murder of Socrates, decided to escape in the night on his horse, but the inn-keeper would not open the door. He returned to the room and decided to hang himself from a rafter by jumping from his cot (1.16 *grabatule*), to which he delivered a speech. The rope broke and he fell on Socrates, waking him up. At this point the inn-keeper burst into the room. B.E. Perry (1929) has argued—convincingly, in my view—that the episode with the inn-keeper is a later intrusion, and that it was Socrates who originally spoke some of the speeches that the novel, as we have it today, assigns to the inn-keeper. A problem not mentioned by Perry but possibly related to the interpolation, if this is what it is, is this: Socrates was sleeping on a *lectulus* (1.7 *lectulo refoveo* [*sc. Socratem*]), certainly not on the cot with Aristomenes that was overturned. But when Aristomenes later, in the part that Perry considers intrusive, jumped from a cot and his rope broke, he fell on Socrates. Perry's view has not found universal favour, I should warn: see Mayrhofer 1975.

far from the plane-tree's roots a gentle stream lazily flowed along in the likeness of a quiet pool, rivalling the colour of silver or glass. 'Here,' I said to him, 'quench your thirst with the milky waters of this spring.' He got up, and after a short search for a level enough spot along the edge of the bank, he crouched down on his knees and bent greedily forward to drink. He had not quite touched the water's surface with the edge of his lips, when the wound in his throat gaped open with a deep hole and the sponge suddenly rolled out of it, accompanied by a trickle of blood. Then his lifeless body nearly pitched forward into the river, except that I was just able to catch hold of one of his feet and with great effort to drag him higher up onto the bank. There I mourned my poor friend as much as circumstances would allow and covered him over with sandy soil to remain forever beside the river. As for me, trembling and terrified for my life, I fled through remote and trackless wildernesses, and like a man with murder on his conscience, I abandoned my country and my home and embraced voluntary exile. I now live in Aetolia and have remarried.'

(*Met.* 1.19)

The first traveller said that this was all the most arrant nonsense. Lucius, though:

'Not only do I believe him, by Hercules, but I am also extremely grateful to him for diverting us with a charming and delightful story. I have come out of this rough long stretch of road without either toil or boredom. I think my conveyer is happier over that favour too: without tiring him I have ridden all the way to this city gate here, not on his back, but on my own ears.'

(*Met.* 1.20)

It is a cautionary tale about two men, each with the name of a person from the past and each acting in a way that is strikingly at odds with the nature of his famous older namesake.²⁸ Socrates', of course, can be no other than the Athenian philosopher. As for the main character, his too is the most famous of all men to be so named, the culture-hero of ancient Messenia.²⁹

28 That a character in a plot should suffer because he was ignorant of what his famous homonym should know would be no innovation of Apuleius': we find it, for example, in Euripides' *Helen*, in which a man arrives from the sea, is in rags, dupes his wife's suitor, and wins her for himself. Everyone who sees or reads the play recognizes here the plot of the return of Odysseus to Ithaca—but not Helen's suitor himself, whose name is Theoclymenus, that of the seer in the *Odyssey* who conspicuously knew that Odysseus had returned, who announced it to Penelope, and who foretold the defeat of the suitors.

29 I am not aware that anyone who has written of Apuleius has considered this as even a possibility. W.H. Keulen (2000) discusses the etymology of the name, connecting it with Meroë's remark to her sister at *Met.* 1.12, *hic (sc. est) bonus ... consiliator Aristomenes*.

Pausanias (*AD 111-15) tells us (4.24,1) that when the Spartans had seized Messene, Aristomenes before emigrating went to Delphi with his daughter to consult the oracle; also at the shrine was a Rhodian ruler, who had gone there to ask how he might get a wife and was told to marry the daughter of the noblest Greek. He chose Aristomenes' daughter, considering her father by far the noblest of his day, and took them both with him to Ialysus. Our own knowledge of the stories that attached themselves to Aristomenes is limited mainly to what Pausanias relates. The two sources that he names (4.6.1) are the epic poem *Messeniacae* by Rhianus of Bene (3rd cent. BC), evidently immensely popular well after the poet's death, and the historian Myron of Priene (dates unknown).³⁰ Apuleius (*AD 125), a contemporary of Pausanias, could have expected his own readers to know Rhianus' epic, in which, Pausanias tells us, 'Aristomenes shines no less brightly than Achilles in Homer's *Iliad*' (4.6.3), and necessarily they would have known more than what we ourselves find in Pausanias' *précis*. We are fortunate, though, in that this last preserves two episodes, both from just before the fall of Messenia, that illuminate Apuleius' traveller's tale of Aristomenes.

After the Spartan victory at the battle of the Great Trench (4.17.2-9), Aristomenes and the seer Theoclus consulted the oracle at Delphi and received as answer:

'When a τράγος drinks the swirling water of Neda
I protect Messene no longer, for destruction is nigh.'

(Paus. 4.20.2)

There was fear therefore lest any he-goat (*tragos*) should drink from this river, which runs between Messenia and Elis, until Theoclus saw a wild fig-tree growing beside the river, not upright but bent and brushing the water with its leaves. 'The wild fig-tree is called by some Greeks *olynthê*, but the Messenians call it *tragos*' (4.20.2). Here was the 'goat' drinking from the Neda: Theoclus brought Aristomenes to the tree and explained that the end had come.

Aristomenes is persuaded that this is so and that they can no longer delay, but he made provision in even the present circumstances. For indeed the Messenians had something that they held secret, and if it were to disappear it would keep Messenia hidden forever, subdued, but if it were guarded, the oracles of Lycus the son of Pandion said that it would save the area again for the Messenians. When night fell, Aristomenes, who knew the oracles, brought this, and when he reached the most deserted part of Mount

³⁰ Rhianus: *Coll.alex.* 9, *FGrH* 265. His popularity: he was, for example, Tiberius' favorite poet (*Suet. Tib.* 70.2). Myron: *FGrH* 106.

Ithome, he dug there, imploring Zeus who held Ithome and the gods who were the salvation of the Messenians up to then to stay as guards over what he was depositing and not to put into the hands of the Lacedaemonians the Messenians' only hope of return.

(*Met.* 4.20.3-4)

Later in Book 4, Pausanias tells us what that secret was. Generations afterwards, when Sparta herself had been defeated at the Battle of Leuctra in 371 Epaminondas of Thebes and Epiteles of Argos, intending to refound Messenia and wondering where to establish her capital, both had dreams.

They say that to Epaminondas, in his perplexity, an old man, very much like a hierophant,³¹ said, as he stood over him at night: 'To you gifts there are from me, to prevail over whomever you with your arms approach. And if you vanish from among men, I, O Theban, shall see to it that you are never without name or glory. Give land and country and cities back to the Messenians ...' That he said to Epaminondas, and to Epiteles (whom the Argives had elected to be general, to refound Messene) he said this: wherever on Ithome he should find a yew and a myrtle,³² to rescue, by digging between them, the old woman (τὴν γράυν), who was suffering through being confined in the bronze chamber and was already fainting. Epiteles, when day began to dawn, went to the place described, dug, and happened on a bronze hydria. Taking it at once to Epaminondas, he explained about the dream and told him to take off the lid himself and to see what was inside. After sacrificing and praying to the dream that appeared, he began to open the hydria, and when he got it open he found tin beaten out very thin. It was rolled up like τὰ βιβλία.³³ There the rite of the Great Goddesses had been written, and this was what Aristomenes had deposited.³⁴ And they say that

31 For the traditional attire of the hierophant see Scene A of the Lovatelli Urn (*supra* Fig. 1) and Rizzo 1910:156-67.

32 Demeter's chaplet was made of yew and myrtle, Ister (*FGrH* 334 F 29) tells us.

33 The great *lex sacra* concerning the mysteries at Andania mentions βιβλία handed down to newly elected priests and priestesses (*LSCG* 65.11f.). The date of the inscription, 97 BC, is late, but the content of the βιβλία would necessarily be the special things that the new officials alone—and not the readers of the *lex sacra* itself—would need to know, such as the *legomena* and the handling of the *drōmena* of the mysteries. I have not seen any other reference to mystery rites as an 'old woman.'

34 To translate Μεγάλων Θεῶν would be tendentious, for we do not know whether Pausanias (or his source) intended the Great Goddesses (Demeter and Core) or the Great Gods (Dioscuri/Cabiri), the gender of the genitive plural being ambiguous. That Pausanias elsewhere in Book 4 (*infra*) emphasizes the installation of Eleusinian rites in Messenia suggests, however, that he had the goddesses in mind.

this man that appeared to Epiteles and Epaminondas in their sleep was Caucon, who came from Athens to Andania, to Messene, daughter of Trio-pas.

(*Met.* 4.26.6-8)³⁵

At the beginning of his Messenian history Pausanias has told us something of those rites:

The first to reign in this country are Polycaon, son of Lelex, and Messene, Polycaon's wife. Caucon, son of Celaenus, son of Phlyus, came from Eleusis bringing the *orgia* of the Great Goddesses to this Messene. The Athenians say that Phlyus himself was a child of Earth. Musaeus' hymn to Demeter written for the Lycomids agrees with them. The rites of the Great Goddesses Lycus, son of Pandion, many years later than Caucon, promoted to greater honor. And the place where he purified the initiates they still call the Grove of Lycus. ... And that this Lycus was the son of Pandion, verses on a statue set up by Methapus show. For Methapus too made changes in the rites. Methapus, an Athenian by birth, was an initiate and deviser of *orgia* of all kinds. He also dedicated at the cult house of the Lycomids a statue with an inscription telling other things that confirm our account:

'And I purified houses of Hermes and roadways of chaste
Demeter and of Core *prôtogonos*, where they say
Messene established for the Great Goddesses a rite
learned from Caucon, illustrious offspring of Phlyus.
And I marvelled how Lycus, son of Pandion, established all
the sacred rites of Atthis in dear Andania.'

(*Met.* 4.1.5-9)

The Athenians Lycus and Methapus purified rites that the Athenian Caucon had brought from Eleusis. These secrets, then, inscribed on the tin tablet, were the

35 Pausanias is our single witness to an Argive general named Epiteles, son of Aeschines. In his Berlin dissertation Kohlmann (1866, *non vidi*, from Aly 1914:785) denied that Pausanias' source here could have been a composition in dactylic hexameters: Rhianus might have managed 'Επιτέλης, (- ~ ~ ~ ~) by turning it into κάπιτέλης (~ ~ ~ ~ ~), but Αισχίνης (~ ~ ~ ~) is impossible in a hexameter. Nonetheless, even though Pausanias may have learned the patronymic from elsewhere, it is difficult to think that Rhianus would not have included in his *Messenica* such a dramatic and significant story. Its inventor—some propagandist for the Argive-Theban plan to reestablish Messenia?—was artfully drawing on motifs from legends of the last days of Messenia: two men (Theoclus, Epiteles) receive supernatural revelations (from the Pythia, from Caucon in a dream) about trees (the *tragos*, the yew and myrtle), whose discovery and identification lead to diggings on Ithome (Aristomenes buries a hydria, Epiteles unearths it). I have no doubt that the detail of dawn as the time of Epiteles' discovery, as Messenia was about to rise again, reflects the legend that it was a nightfall that Aristomenes buried the secrets, when Messenia had gone into decline.

Eleusinian rites that the Messenian Aristomenes knew, a pious man attentive to the oracles, in which he put his hope.

Of all this and indeed of the legends of his namesake in general, the Aristomenes of the traveller's tale was ignorant or unheeding. If he had known them and paid them due attention, he might not have come to such grief. His is a story of a man who, in not knowing his name, did not know himself.

Let us look at some of the motifs from the legends about the Messenian Aristomenes that Apuleius' traveller has incorporated into his story. They are all disguised but recognizable if we know the legends: (A) mysteries of Demeter and Core, at least those of them that one could refer to in a novel, (B) two men's dreams of a hierophant/hierophantis³⁶ and their reactions to his/her instructions, (C) removal of the heart from a living man (not in Pausanias, but see *infra*), (D) the inauspiciousness of drinking from a flowing stream, and (E) the oracle-founder Lycus.

(A) When the two men retired for the night in Aristomenes' room, Aristomenes lay on a *grabatulus*, a portable trundle-bed like the *skimpous* on which Strepsiades sat.³⁷ When the witches had overturned his bed, his head was hidden under the bed-clothes: like the Lovatelli initiate, Strepsiades and Prodicus, he was *enkekalymmenos*. He saw a scene of sacrifice evidently traditional in everything but the choice of victim: Meroë plunged a sword into Socrates' neck, and 'so as not to deviate, I suppose, from the ritual of sacrificing a victim' (Met. 1.13),³⁸ reached into the wound, and pulled out the heart. Then, instead of sprinkling the *enkekalymmenos* with holy grain from the *liknon*, they stood over him and urinated. Aristomenes' reaction in claiming that he was then 'lifeless, naked and cold ... just come out of my mother's womb ... half-dead but still my own survivor' was surely, whether or not he knew it, that of the newly created *mystês*: compare the opening verse, evidently addressed to the new initiate, on gold tablets from a woman's grave of the 4th century BC at Pelinna in Thessaly:

Now did you die and now were you born, blessed one, on this day.³⁹

Aristomenes, lying drenched in witches' urine, has unknowingly witnessed an ugly perversion of a ritual purification.

From under his covers Aristomenes saw the sisters holding three objects: torch, sponge, sword. Meroë spoke of her dear Endymion: in doing so she revealed her-

36 In what follows, I treat the Apuleian Meroë/Panthia as a unitary symbol.

37 Cf. *Suda*, Hsch. σκίμπους; κράββατος (= Lat. *grabatus*), in general Rodenwaldt 1927.

38 Met. 1.13 *Ne quid demutaret, credo, a victimae religione.*

self as the moon, his lover; that the objects that the sisters carry are three in number calls to mind the triple attributes of the lunar goddess Hecate.

(B) As Aristomenes beheld Meroë and her sister extracting the heart of the sleeping Socrates, Socrates saw the same thing in a dream, which he attributed to indigestion. The next morning, Aristomenes also dismissed as an idle dream what he himself had seen. Again, we have two men dreaming about a hierophant(is), who utters instructions about what to look for (Caucon: a yew and a myrtle) or avoid (Meroë and Panthia: a flowing stream, lest the sponge return to the sea). What happened thereafter in the traveller's tale is curiously symmetrical to but the very reverse of the Messenian legend: Epiteles acted on his dream, went out and obeyed the instructions by finding the trees, and as a result dug someone up (the *graus*), while Aristomenes scoffed at the dream, went out and (accidentally) found a tree but disobeyed the instructions by not avoiding the running water, and as a result buried someone.

(C) Aristomenes assumed that what he saw from under the bed-clothes was a ritual sacrifice and that the extraction of the heart was necessary as part of the ritual. Independently of Aristomenes' remark, A. Henrichs (1972:72) has brought together evidence that such extraction and then sacrifice of victims' hearts was indeed a regular Greek religious practice.⁴⁰ What Aristomenes in fact saw and failed to recognize, though, was a reenactment of one of the legends about his own namesake, who had twice been captured by the Spartans and twice escaped from them; the third time, though, they opened his living body and cut out the heart, which they found to be hairy, a sign of great courage.⁴¹ It may not be going too far to say that the character Aristomenes therefore uncomprehendingly saw a ritual

39 Parássoglou and Tsantsanoglou 1987 (*SEG* 37.497, *OFBern* 485f. $\nu\upsilon\nu$ ἔθανες καὶ $\nu\upsilon\nu$ ἐγένου, †τρισόλβιε, † ἄματι τῶιδε. The adjective must be corrupt, for it makes the line too long for a hexameter; the first editors have suggested μάκαρ; if this last is correct, the meaning could equally well be 'now you became blessed.' The tablets from Pelinna are of the shape of 'cordate leaves,' according to the editors. They may be compared to those inscribed with the *legomena* of the Lernaean mysteries of Demeter; Pausanias (2.37.2f.) speaks of them as inscribed on 'hearts' (evidently heart-shaped tablets) of orichalc, which is an alloy of copper much like gold in appearance. He tells us that the texts were analyzed by one Arriphon, whom he describes as τὸ μὲν ἀνέκαθεν Τρικωνιεύς τῶν ἐν Αἰτωλίᾳ, τὰ δὲ ἐφ' ἡμῶν Λυκίων τοῖς μάλιστα ὁμοίως δόκιμος. Unless Pausanias was tacitly drawing on an earlier source, such tablets must have had some circulation in his own and therefore in Apuleius' day, even if up to now, however, most of those that the archaeologist's spade has brought to light have been of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC (the one late exception is *OFBern* 491, Rome, of the 3rd century of our era). A prevalent view (e.g. Riedweg 1998) is that the words quoted above come from the *legomena* of an initiation and were spoken and even written down at the initiate's funeral (*op.cit.* 367 n. 32). This last, however, would have taken place on the second day after death (*supra* n.12), not on the ἄματι τῶιδε of the death itself. The ἔθανες of the tablets must be symbolic, the words spoken and inscribed rather at the initiation (so Graf 1991:98, despite his later retraction, 1993); see Jordan forthcoming for further argumentation.

surrogate sacrifice of himself as initiand: W. Burkert (1983:46 n.45) has noted similarities between the induction of a new initiand and the ritual sacrifice of a victim.⁴²

(D) The reader, once aware of this mock-*myësis*, sees more. When the two men had left town, Socrates ate some cheese and grew unbearably thirsty. Aristomenes, noticing a plane-tree beside a crystal-clear stream, told his companion to drink of its milky waters.⁴³ When Socrates died as a result, he almost fell into the stream.⁴⁴ After just seeing this travesty of the mysteries, can we fail to think of the phrase 'a kid, I/you fell into milk' of the gold 'Orphic' tablets?⁴⁵ Of the rites from which the phrase comes we know too little to be able to understand the full significance of an animal falling or rushing into milk, but it is clear that in the ritual the animal sym-

- 40 He adduces Galen's description (*De plac. Hipp. et Plat.* 2.4.45) of a case like Socrates': ritual removal of the heart of a chicken, which remained alive and ambulatory, to die only later, from loss of blood (cf. Elias, *Comm. in Arist. Categ.* 231.10). We may add Lucian's description (*Sacr.* 13) of the sacrificing priest, as bloody as any Cyclops, removing his victims' hearts (cf. *Suda* καρδιουκία: τὰς καρδίας ἔλκειν τῶν θυμάτων). Clement of Alexandria (*Protr.* 13) claims that the removal of the heart figured in the mysteries of Demeter (Δηώ) and Core (G. Mylonas arguing [1961:289-91], though, that the rite was Phrygian rather than Eleusinian); in any case, at Ephesus in the 3rd century of our era Demeter, on 190 days of the year, received the sacrifice of an animal who was to suffer extraction of the heart and evisceration (*LSSuppl.* 121.7f., with the editor's notes). (To extract and then indeed to eat a *human* heart was part of the initiation into gangs of thieves in two ancient Greek novels, those of Lollianus and Achilles Tatius: see Henrichs *loc.cit.*.)
- 41 For this we have three sources: Plin. *HN* 11.185 *Hirto corde gigni quosdam homines proditur, neque alios fortioris esse industriae, sicut Aristomenen Messenium qui trecentos occidit Lacedaemonios Tertium capto Lacedaemonii precus dissecuere voventi, hirsutum cor repertum est.* Val. Max. 1.8 ext. 5 *Oculis eius admirabilius Aristomenis Messenii cor, quod Lacedaemonii (codd.: Athenienses) ob eximiam calliditatem exsectum pilis repertum invenerunt, cum eum aliquotiens captum et astutia elapsam cepissent.* Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἀνδανία: Ἐκ ταύτης Ἀριστομένης ἐγένετο, ἐπιφανέστατος στρατηγός. τοῦτον οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι πολλάκις αὐτοῦς νικήσαντα θανάμασαντες, ὡς μόλις ἐκράτησεν ἐν τοῖς Μεσσηνιακοῖς, ἀνατεμόντες ἐσκόπουν εἰ παρὰ τοῦς λοιπούς ἐστὶ τι, καὶ εὖρον σπλάγγχον ἐξηλλαγμένον καὶ τὴν καρδίαν δασεῖαν, ὡς Ἡρόδοτος καὶ Πλούταρχος (= fr. 33.3 Dübner) καὶ Ῥιανός. When Stephanus cites Herodotus and Plutarch, he evidently means *De Herod. malign.* 11 (856f.) Ἀριστομένης φησὶν αὐτὸς (sc. Ἡρόδοτος) ὑπὸ Λακεδαιμονίων ζῶντα συναρπασθῆναι, where the reference to Herodotus must be mistaken. Can Stephanus be correct about the poet? If Rhianus was Pausanias' source for his account of Aristomenes' burial of the Messenian secrets, then the poet, if he indeed included the story of the extraction of Aristomenes' heart, would have mentioned it presumably only as an example of persistent old wives' tales invented to illustrate the hero's valor.
- 42 He adduces 'Livy 10.38.9 *admovebatur altaribus magis ut victima quam ut sacri particeps* at the initiation into the *legio linteata* of the Samnites.' The question of surrogate sacrifice of the 'reborn' initiate is beyond the scope of the present discussion: see Jordan forthcoming.
- 43 *Met.* 1.19 *en ... explere latice fontis lacteo.* The water, of course, was not milky: contrast Aristomenes' description of the stream a few lines before: *fluvius in speciem placidae paludis ignavus ibat, argento vel vitro aemulus in colorem.* This is Apuleius' signal that we should pay particular attention.
- 44 *Loc.cit.: denique corpus exanimatum in flumen paene cernuat.*

bolizes the initiate, the rushing or falling the initiate's willingness to accept the allegorical death that the mysteries offer. But in the traveller's dark tale the death is no longer joyous and symbolic but gruesome and real.

Those who know the gold tablets will be reminded of other imagery in them: like Socrates, the deceased initiate in the Underworld is parched with unbearable thirst.⁴⁶ (S)he will see a spring ahead but should be careful in choosing it: beneath a white cypress at the right (*OFBern* 474.2; at the left: 476.1) is the spring to be avoided, with the souls of the dead;⁴⁷ the character Aristomenes, be it noted, was totally incautious: he simply chose the first body of water that he and Socrates saw. His invitation to Socrates to come and drink of it as if of milk is as full of foreboding as the oracle about Messenia's fall when the *tragos* should drink of the Neda. Like the fig-tree 'caprid' and the caprid of the mysteries, Socrates as a kid 'falling into milk' leaned over to drink from the running water and thus he, like the Messenian *tragos*, spelled disaster to the character Aristomenes, who, like his namesake, now went into exile.⁴⁸

(E) The Messenian Aristomenes buried the 'secret thing' because he remembered an oracle of the Athenian Lycus (Paus. 4.20.4). This Lycus (λύκος 'wolf') appears, in disguise, at the very beginning of the traveller's tale, as the wholesaler Lupus ('wolf'), who to be sure spoke no word, oracular or not, but the fact that he had bought all the cheese in the market the day before and frustrated the character Aristomenes' hopes of profit was a warning, as if oracular, to Aristomenes, who took it as such: the day would not go well (*Met.* 1.5).⁴⁹

45 *OFBern* 488.10. ἔριφος ἐς γάλ' ἔπετον. 487.4 ἔριφος ἐς γάλα ἔπετες (both Thuri, IV^a). The tablets from Pelinna (*supra* n. 39) show a variant: after the initiate is told that she has just died and been born (or become blessed) and that she must tell Persephone that the Bacchic god himself has released her, we read: ταῦρος εἰς γάλα ἔθορες· αἶξ (ΑΙΨΑ tab.) εἰς γάλα ἔθορες· κριὸς εἰς γάλα ἔπεσε.

46 *OFBern* 474-6 διψαὶ δ' εἰμ' αὔος καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ δότε ὄκα ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ; cf. 478-84.

47 The concern that the traveller in the Underworld should avoid what is to be avoided is a theme that recurs, for example, in the tower's advice to Psyche (*Met.* 6.18f.): avoid a lame ass with a lame driver, a dead man floating in the Styx, women weaving, a meal shared with Persephone, etc.

48 That Apuleius' traveller's character Aristomenes should go into exile after the perversion of the 'purification' rites that he had gone through comes as no surprise, if indeed (*supra* n. 5) the original purpose of such *myēsis* was integration into a group.

49 *Met.* 1.5 *Sed, ut fieri assolet, sinistro pede profectum me spes compendii frustrata est.* The equation of Lupus and the oracle-founder Lycus will seem less far-fetched to the reader who recalls Lucius' own visit (1.24f.) to the market at Hypata before he too went to the baths. Like that of Aristomenes, his visit was made profitless (he was *et nummis simul privatus et cena*) by one Pytheas, whose name (as Hanson [1989] notes *ad loc.*) is also redolent of oracles. Like Lycus, Pytheas, as Lucius points out, came from Athens.

Every one of these points to scenes that the Messenian Aristomenes would have recognized as inauspicious and from which he would have taken warning, which the character Aristomenes fails to heed, through either a lack of acquaintance with the legend (as in *A-D*) or a habitual disregard of such things (as in *E: ut fieri assolet*). It is a cautionary tale about a man who does not know his own name, who does not know himself.

Now in the *Eselmensch* story in Apuleius' sources, the main character already had the name Lucius. Apuleius could not, then, have given his hero a name of his own choosing, as he done for Aristomenes. But he did the next best. When Lucius reached Hypata, he went to the house of his host there, Milo, who, after reading his letter of introduction, remarked:

‘In itself your attractive personal appearance and your quite virginal modesty would lead me to conjecture, and quite rightly, that you come of a noble family I hope you will be pleased to stay with us. Not only will you make our house greater by the honour of your presence, but you will lay claim to a token of great repute if you are content with a tiny hearth, in emulation of the virtues of your father’s namesake Theseus, who did not disdain the meager hospitality of old Hecale.’

(*Met.* 1.23) ⁵⁰

It is as if Lucius' looks themselves reminded Milo of Lucius' father's name and of the mythical Theseus' famously virginal and modest son, Hippolytus. In fact it was as an encrypted Hippolytus (ἵππος + λυτός 'horse to be loosed') that Lucius first presented himself to us and to the two travellers on the road. He had dismounted and unbridled his horse (1.2 *frenos detraho*), which followed him, still unbridled, into Hypata (1.20).⁵¹ Hippolytus, we cannot but remember, came to grief because his stepmother, Phaedra, fell in love with him and then, when he showed horror at the thought, accused him of rape. That myth hung over the story of Lucius in Hypata: the good Byrrhaena warned him of the storied predilection of his hostess, Pamphile, for young men (2.5), and at dinner he took a place where Pamphile's eye would not fall on him (2.11). The motifs are of course those of the story of 'Potiphar's Wife' (Thompson 1955-58: K2111, T418), a type evidently popular always;

50 *Ego te ... etiam de ista corporis speciosa habitudine deque hac virginali prorsus verecundia generosa stirpe proditum et recte conicerem Fac libenter deverseris in nostro. Nam et maiorem domum dignatione tua feceris, et tibi specimen gloriosum arrogaris, si contentus lare parvulo Thesei illius cognominis patris tui virtutes aemulaveris, qui non est aspernatus Hecales anus hospitium tenue.* The first traveller had already remarked (1.20), on the road to Hypata, that Lucius' clothes and manners showed what kind of *vir* he was.

51 G. Drake (1968) has noted that it is not necessary for a horse to be unbridled, as Lucius' horse was, in order to eat grass. The unbridling is 'superfluous,' therefore significant.

from Greek antiquity we have not only the stories of Phaedra and Hippolytus themselves (Eur. *Hipp.*) but of Anteia and Bellerophon (*Il.* 6.156-65), of Cleoboea and Antheus (Parthen. 14⁵²), of Phylonome and Tenes (Paus. 10.14.1-2), of Astydamia/Cretheis and Peleus (Apollod. 3.13.3), of Biadice and Phrixus (Hygin. *Poët. astr.* 2.20), and rewritings by Heliodorus (Cnemon and Demaeneta: 1.9-11) and by Apuleius himself (murderous stepmother: *Met.* 10.2-12). In several of these accounts the reluctant young man is noticeably learned or pious or stands in a special relation to the divine: in the Biblical story (Gen. 39ff., 48) he could interpret dreams; Parthenius (quoting Alexander of Aetolia) describes him as 'dear to quick Hermes,' Apuleius as 'a young son with a good liberal education, consequently unusually pious and modest;' Hippolytus, to whom Apuleius invites us to compare Lucius, was steeped in the incense of Orpheus and his writings.⁵³ The Hippolytus of the myth would no doubt have recognized the religious symbolism of the two episodes of the traveller's tale; in Euripides' play he emphatically distinguished between the two goddesses at work there—Artemis, with whom he also had a special relation—and Aphrodite, that of his stepmother and her lust. Any reader of Apuleius who knew the myth would surely have seen something in the traveller's tale that the hearer Lucius himself did not.

We may now turn to Plato's *Phaedrus*. Whatever background might have come to the minds of those readers when at the end of his tale the traveller described Aristomenes and Socrates beside the stream beneath the plane tree, among them the most conspicuous was surely the *Phaedrus*, with its scene of Socrates and his companion, outside Athens on a summer day, lying on the grass beneath a plane tree beside the Ilissus, not far from where the Lesser Mysteries were celebrated at Agrae (*Phdr.* 229C), discussing Eros in his worse or his better form. Those who could read perceptively, those (I assume) for whom Apuleius wrote the novel, would, I believe, have seen more still.

In the dialogue, when the two had lain down beneath the plane tree, Phaedrus read Socrates a speech, in which the orator Lysias argued that the beloved should gratify the non-lover rather than the lover (*Phdr.* 230E-4D). Challenged by Phaedrus, Socrates gave a speech on the same theme (237A-8C, 238D-41D) but then pronounced it unsatisfactory as treating only of the lower type of Eros, not Eros the son of Aphrodite and therefore a god. During this speech, he kept his head

52 Where it is ascribed, rightly or wrongly, to Aristotle and writers of τὰ Μιλησιακά. Parthenius also reproduces an account of the story in elegiac couplets by Alexander of Aetolia. Discussion: Lightfoot 1999:454-70.

53 Theseus at Eur. *Hipp.* 953f. Ὀρφέα τ' ἄνακτ' ἔχων βάκχευε πολλῶν γραμμάτων τιμῶν καπνοῦς. Bellerophon (*Il.* 6.162) was of a 'virtuous will' (ἀγαθὰ φρονέοντα). In Heliodorus, the young man had just completed his epebic training and has returned home from the Panathenaea wearing festal attire when the stepmother attempted to seduce him.

ered—out of shame, he said. When in the traveller's tale Aristomenes first encountered Socrates, this Socrates also, his face red from shame, covered his head (*Met.* 1.6): as he would relate, he had been enslaved by that lower type of love (1.8 *voluptatem Veneriam*, in Aristomenes' words). We have, then, at both the beginning and the end of our encounter with the Apuleian Socrates, references to the Socrates of the *Phaedrus*.

Earlier in the dialogue, as the two men were about to reach the plane tree, Phaedrus mentioned the legend that somewhere along the Ilissus Boreas swept Oreithyia away. One could think of some rational explanation, Socrates offered, that Boreas might, for example, have blown her off a rock and thus 'carried her off' to her death. One might thus explain other such stories, if one had the time.

'But I have no leisure for them at all; and the reason, my friend, is this: I am not yet able, as the Delphic inscription has it, to know myself; as it seems to me ridiculous, when I do not yet know that, to investigate irrelevant things. And so I dismiss these matters and, accepting the customary belief about them, as I was saying just now, I investigate not these things, but myself, to know whether I am a monster more complicated and more furious than Typhon or a gentler and simpler creature, to whom a divine and quiet lot is given by nature.'

(*Phdr.* 229E-30A)

With the exception of Lysias' speech as read by Phaedrus and of Socrates' rival speech and another that followed, the *Phaedrus* is an entirely 'acted' dialogue. But the apparently casual reference to the maxim at Delphi and to the Typhonic vs the gentler beast does serve as the overture of a mixed dialogue in that it prefigures themes in the rest of that work. After delivering his unsatisfactory speech with his head covered, Socrates then uncovered his head and gave a 'purificatory' speech about Eros as a god (244A-57B), in which, as if in obedience to Delphi, he would examine man's very soul, explaining it as a charioteer driving two horses, on the right a white thoroughbred,⁵⁴ a lover of honor in keeping with modesty and decorum, led by command and *logos*, on the left a dark mongrel, with the opposite qualities, resisting whip and spur.

A significant difference in the traveller's tale is that the Socrates there never offered the equivalent of the Platonic 'purificatory' speech, with its examination of the self. There is no suggestion that the traveller's Socrates ever thought of his soul, much less that one of its parts might overcome that baser part that had led him into the clutches of his witch. This story of the very less-than-Platonic Socrates and his poor end, with all its pointers to the *Phaedrus*, is what Lucius himself heard and

54 White: *Phdr.* 253D λευκός ἰδεῖν. Thoroughbred: 246B καλός τε καὶ ἀγαθός καὶ ἐκ τοιούτων.

did not comprehend, enjoying it as a mere *lepida fabula* (*Met.* 1.21) to pass the time. And, he joked, my horse enjoyed it too!—his white thoroughbred, which, like the white thoroughbred of the *Phaedrus*, could hear and understand speech/reason (*Phdr.* 254D κελεύματι μόνον καὶ λόγῳ ἠνιοχεῖται).

Once Lucius installed himself at his host's house at Hypata, he went to the market and met a man who despoiled him of money (*Met.* 1.24f.; *supra* n. 49); then he went to the baths. His own story, then, has already begun, unbeknownst to him, to take the lines of the traveller's tale. It becomes the story of the unfortunate man whom Aristomenes met at the baths. Like that Socrates, he is lodged with a witch. Sexual relations with her ensue (in Lucius' case, with her assistant). Like Socrates, who held up his cloak and exposed his genitals ('*sine, sine*') before telling of his Meroë, Lucius makes a point of exposing his genitals before going to bed with his Fotis ('*miserere*').⁵⁵ Socrates became a bag-carrier, as if a beast of burden; Lucius becomes a pack-ass. If this last analogy is intentional,⁵⁶ then when Socrates, after his degradation, continued to go to bed with his witch, it was as a beast with a human; this is what the course of Lucius' metamorphosis is to entail as well, his sexual intercourse as ass with the Corinthian matron (10.19-22).

Fortunately for Lucius, this is where his adventures as an ass end. After the frog, who, as the Brothers Grimm record in the first of their *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, had been metamorphosed into that shape from a prince, had sat at a human's table, had eaten from a human's plate, and had gone to a woman's bed, he was able to return to human form.⁵⁷ Having met these requirements, the unlucky Socrates, however, was never able to experience this second metamorphosis. Lucius too met them: he ate and drank at the table of his last owner and he went, much to his delight, to a woman's bed, describing it all almost pornographically. Having passed

55 Socrates: *Met.* 1.6 *sutili centunculo faciem suam ... obtexit ita ut ab umbilico pube tenus cetera corporis renudaret.* Lucius: 2.16 *inguinum fine lacinia remota impatientiam Veneris Photidi meae monstrans*

56 Scobie 1983:260f.: 'It is ... worth noting that Meroë's victim, Socrates, is not, like many of the witches' victims, transformed into an animal shape (1.9). In other words, he performs the function of a pack-animal, even though he does not have the shape of one. It therefore seems possible that Apuleius deliberately altered a traditional feature of the tale <of the female inn-keeper and her victim who is metamorphosed into a quadruped> ..., and for a good reason: to have Socrates transformed by a witch into an ass at this stage of the narrative would have detracted from the climax of the first three books of his romance: the transformation of Lucius into an ass at 3.24.'

57 Some version of this man-into-frog-into-man story must have been known in antiquity: Petron. *Sat.* 77.6 *amicus vester, qui fuit rana, nunc est rex.* L. Friedländer 1906:354 refers to Crusius 1890:46 (*non vidit*). Referring to the sequence drink-food-bed in later antiquity, though not necessarily with connotations of metamorphosis, L. Robert (1967:80) mentions an epitaph from Aezani (Le Bas and Waddington 1870: no. 977) with λουσαι (*i.e.* 'go to the baths') πῖε, φάγε, βείνησον and also Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 8.12.78 ἐσθίων, πίνων, καὶ γαμῶν.

through all the stages of the frog story, he began to have human shame. There was to be a spectacle with a masque of the Judgment of Paris, after which, as part of the entertainment, he was supposed to have public sexual intercourse with a woman, a murderess: the idea now appalled him. In describing the masque, he burst into an encomium of the Platonic Socrates, telling how he had been pronounced by the Delphic god to be the wisest of all and had kept a rein on (*frenis coercebat*) the young: ‘even to this day the best philosophers choose his holy school and in their zealous pursuit of happiness swear by his very name’ (10.33). This from Lucius, who before and after his metamorphosis into an ass, was, in his unwisdom, himself indeed, *περὶ τὰ ὄτα λάσιος, κωφός* like the dark horse of the *Phaedrus* (246B), an unreined youth to whom the name of Socrates on the road to Hypata had no such resonance, and his metamorphosis to an animal even more shaggy-eared, head-strong, contemptible was merely the outward manifestation of his allowing the dark horse in his own soul to take the lead. When, that first night, he was put into the stable until a rose could be found, the faithful white thoroughbred, seeing the other, the ugly, quadruped, this foul ass, tried to strike him down. Lucius had become, in other words, that ‘monster more complicated and furious than Typhon’ that Socrates referred to at the beginning of the *Phaedrus* (230A): he had become an ass, the very animal of Typhon (Griffiths 1975:25f., 162).

In his account of the festival, just after his encomium of Socrates, Venus appeared in the masque, rejoiced in her triumph, and filled the theatre with sweet fragrances. At this point the herald announced, as if a demonstration of her victory, the lewd act that the crowd had come to see. The woman was sent for, a bed brought out and prepared; the reluctant Lucius stood by. But no one noticed such a (now) tame ass: his second metamorphosis was progressing.⁵⁸ He ran away.

His legs took him to the sea, from which, at nightfall and as the full moon, Isis arose, ancient enemy of the ass-god Typhon. The rest we know. Lucius’ novel has as a frame-work the mysteries, beginning with their foul travesty by a lustful witch with a Nubian name and ending with the holy rites of the celestial Egyptian goddess. Like the traveller’s tale, the novel is also framed by references to the *Phaedrus*, which took place near the fields of the purificatory Lesser Mysteries. It is back to the *Phaedrus* that Lucius’ conversion took him: to be initiated at Rome, to pray daily ‘to the supreme deity of Queen Isis, who was worshipped with the greatest reverence under the name derived from the site of her temple, *Campensis*’ (*Met.* 11.26)⁵⁹—or, if I may literally translate its Roman term into that of Apuleius’ Attic model, the goddess ἐν Ἀγρᾶς. There at Athens Socrates had covered his head from

58 Hence, we may think, the plural in the title of Apuleius’ book.

59 *Met.* 11.26 *Cotidie supplicare summo numini reginae Isidis, quae de templi situ sumpto nomine Campensis summa cum venerationis propitiatur.*

shame, but then uncovered it as he pronounced a 'purificatory palinode.' Apuleius' novel had begun with the covering of the character Socrates' head; its very last words show that Lucius' own palinode is now complete: 'then, joyfully carrying out the duties of that ancient priesthood founded in the days of Sulla, I once more shaved my head completely, neither covering up nor hiding my baldness, but displaying it wherever I went' (11.30).⁶⁰

The palinode of the Socrates of the *Phaedrus* included his insight about the two horses in our souls. After his metamorphosis back into human shape and his conversion to the worship of Isis, Lucius, who had lost his own white horse, recovered him. As in the Messenian legend and in the traveller's tale, he too had a dream about a hierophant with a message; there he heard that his servant Candidus ('white') would arrive. The next morning servants from Hypata brought Lucius back his horse, the white thoroughbred that had listened to the traveller's tale.⁶¹

Appendix. Socrates and the Goose Girl

As I have noted above, the episodes of the mock-*myēsis* in the bedroom and of Socrates' death at the stream have features reminiscent of two episodes in the legend about Aristomenes of Messenia. Oddly enough, the two episodes, as Apuleius' presents them, together find a striking parallel in part of one of the *Märchen* of the Brothers Grimm, at the beginning of their no. 89, *The Goose Girl (Die Gänsemagd)*. I do not know why this parallelism, which seems to have gone unnoticed,⁶² should exist, but it has aroused my curiosity. In the thought that it may be beneficial for the understanding of the artistry of the *Metamorphoses* and possibly also for the

60 *Met.* 11.30 *Rursus denique quaquā raso capillo collegii vetustissimi et sub illis Sullae temporibus conditi munia, non obumbrato vel obtecto calvitio, sed quoquo versus obvio, gaudens obibam.*

61 Did the *Protagoras*, discussed above, have any direct influence on Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*? I am inclined to believe so. The sequence of Socrates' description of Hippias as the *mystēs* Heracles enthroned before a holy dance and his reference to Prodicus as the thirsty Tantalus, eternally bending down to drink before a pool, seems to be the parent of the same sequence in the traveller's tale: an account of the *myēsis* followed by that of a thirsty man leaning down to drink from a stream. And is not the young Lucius, so eager to learn things secret, who enters the novel so conspicuously as the 'horse-loosing' Hippolytus, the descendent of the earlier young man, so eager to learn, the 'horse-holding' Hippocrates? The dialogue indeed begins with an allusion to metamorphosis: the just-bearded Hermes tells Odysseus how to avoid it. We find this too in the story of Cupid and Psyche: to her sisters the bride, not knowing that she is speaking the truth, describes her husband as *iuvenem quendam et speciosum, commodum lanoso barbitio genas innumbrantem* (5.8). Shortly afterwards he, like the young Hermes, tells her how to avoid degradation (through the transformation of her identity), even if she does not follow it: do not look at his face (5.11).

62 There is no mention of it in the commentaries on the *The Goose Girl* in Bolte and Polívka 1963 or H.-J. Uther 1996.

study, in general, of the transmission of folktales, to direct others' attention to the similarities, I give a translation of *The Goose Girl* here, with a tabulation of its motifs that occur also in the traveller's tale. The two stories, it will be agreed, cannot belong to the same 'tale-type,' but the reader will see not only the conspicuously large number of motifs that they share but that these motifs occur in the same order in each of the two stories.

The Goose Girl (Tales 404-06)

There was once upon a time an old Queen whose husband had been dead for many years, and she had a beautiful daughter. When the princess grew up she was betrothed to a prince who lived at a great distance. When the time came for her to be married, and she had to journey forth into the distant kingdom, the aged Queen packed up for her many costly vessels of silver and gold, and trinkets also of gold and silver; and cups and jewels, in short, everything which appertained to a royal dowry, for she loved her child with all her heart. She likewise sent her maid-in-waiting, who was to ride with her, and hand her over to the bridegroom, and each had a horse for the journey, but the horse of the King's daughter was called Falada, and could speak. So when the hour of parting had come, the aged mother went into her bedroom, took a small knife and cut her finger with it until it bled. Then she held a white handkerchief to it into which she let three drops of blood fall, gave it to her daughter and said, 'Dear child, preserve this carefully, it will be of service to you on your way.'

So they took sorrowful leave of each other; the princess put the piece of cloth in her bosom, mounted her horse, and then went away to her bridegroom. After she had ridden for a while she felt a burning thirst, and said to her waiting-maid: 'Dismount, and take my cup which you have brought with you for me, and get me some water from the stream, for I should like to drink.'

'If you are thirsty,' said the waiting-maid, 'get off your horse yourself, and lie down and drink out of the water, I don't choose to be your servant.' So in her great thirst the princess alighted, bent down over the water in the stream and drank, and was not allowed to drink out of the golden cup. Then she said: 'Ah, Heaven!' and the three drops of blood answered: 'If this your mother knew, her heart would break in two.' But the King's daughter was humble, said nothing, and mounted her horse again. She rode some miles further, but the day was warm, the sun scorched her, and she was thirsty once more, and when they came to a stream of water, she again cried to her waiting-maid: 'Dismount, and give me some water in my golden cup,' for she had long ago forgotten the girl's ill words. But the waiting-maid said still more haughtily: 'If you wish to drink, get it yourself, I don't choose to be your maid.' Then in her great thirst the King's daughter alighted, bent over

the flowing stream, wept and said: 'Ah Heaven!' and the drops of blood again replied: 'If this your mother knew, her heart would break in two.' And as she was thus drinking and leaning right over the stream, the handkerchief with the three drops of blood fell out of her bosom, and floated away with the water without her observing it, so great was her trouble. The waiting-maid, however, had seen it, and she rejoiced to think that she had now power over the bride, for since the princess had lost the drops of blood, she had become weak and powerless.

So now when she wanted to mount her horse again, the one that was called Falada, the waiting-maid said: 'Falada is more suitable for me, and my nag will do for you,' and the princess had to be content with that. Then the waiting-maid, with many hard words, bade the princess exchange her royal apparel for her own shabby clothes; and at length, she was compelled to swear by the clear sky above her, that she would not say one word of this to anyone at the royal court, and if she had not taken this oath, she would have been killed on the spot. But Falada saw all this, and observed it well.

In what follows in the story, princess and maid arrived at the royal court, the maid mounted on Falada, passing herself off as the bride and contriving that Falada should be beheaded. The true Princess, to whom the King gave the job of assistant gooseherd, had Falada's head nailed up in a gateway through which she passed every day with her flock, and Falada addressed her as 'Queen.' She revealed to the gooseherd that she had golden hair, and when he tried to steal some of it, she induced the wind to blow his hat away. The gooseherd complained to the King, who came to see all this himself and at length learned who she was. The maid was put to death, and Prince and Princess married.

It is in the account of the journey to the royal court that *The Goose Girl* and the Apuleian story overlap in their motifs.⁶³

- (A) Both journeys are away from a land dominated by a woman (Meroë in Apuleius; Queen in *The Goose Girl*).
- (B) She has magical powers. (Meroë is actually called a witch; Queen knows magic, as the operation of the pricking of her thumb shows, and she owns a horse that can speak.)
- (C) In a bedroom
- (D) she draws blood (Meroë by plunging sword into Socrates; Queen by pricking thumb),
- (E) some of which she collects with an absorbent material (Panthia with sponge; Queen with cloth).⁶⁴

⁶³ In what follows, I treat the Apuleian Meroë/Panthia as a unit.

- (F) She issues a command concerning the material (Panthia to sponge: 'return to sea through a flowing stream;' Queen to Princess: 'preserve this carefully'),
- (G) which she gives to the person about to travel,
- (H) who carries it in the upper part of the body (Socrates in wound in neck; Princess in bosom).
- (I) Of the two travellers (Socrates and Aristomenes; Princess and maid)
- (J) one (Socrates; Princess) grows thirsty.
- (K) At the other's suggestion, the thirsty one goes to the stream, kneels down, and drinks.
- (L) The drinker's sponge/cloth falls out into the stream, and with it the drops of blood (*Met.* 1.19 *parvus admodum comitatur cruor*).
- (M) In both cases the command in F is disregarded.
- (N) The strength of its bearer wanes. (Socrates actually dies; the princess feels weak, and indeed the loss of her identity follows.)
- (O) The companion worries lest s/he be held guilty of this. (Aristomenes goes into exile; maid makes Princess swear that nothing has happened, and later she has the only other witness, the talking horse, killed.)⁶⁵

It seems inevitable that either one story is the source of the other or the two have a common ancestry. I have put the problem to folklorist friends; some of these who have assumed the first have also assumed that because the Apuleian story is so much earlier than any evidence for *The Goose Girl* it must be the source of this latter. I myself find this unlikely and doubt that anyone would or could take a tale from a book, radically alter its plot and mood—from a witch's Black Mass with human sacrifice to young girl's leaving her mother in order to get married—and that it could then find such currency in oral form as to be accepted by the Brothers Grimm as an oral folktale. On the other hand, *The Goose Girl*, as we now have it, has one key element that is unlikely to be ancient, the bride's virtually unaccompanied journey, with her dowry, to the house of the bridegroom. If the second alternative is the case, though, it is not obvious what form that 'parent' story took. It is probably significant, in any event, that the motifs that *The Goose Girl* and the Apuleian story have in common do not appear in the legends (at least as we have them from Pausanias) about the Messenian Aristomenes; is it possible that

64 Apuleius in fact writes that Meroë and Panthia collected *all* of Socrates' blood into a pouch, but there was some left on the sponge when Socrates fell into the stream: see *L infra*.

65 There may be another common motif, that of a listening horse. Falada has been paying attention, and at the end of the traveller's tale, Lucius remarks that his horse enjoyed it: *Met.* 1.20 *etiam illum vectorem meum credo laetari*.

Apuleius, knowing this 'parent' story, simply imposed them on the Messenian stories?

The Goose Girl has a feature not in the traveller's tale: a talking horse. His name is Falada. We can probably take it for granted that in a story about humans a talking horse, like a talking frog, is a human who has been magically metamorphosed.⁶⁶ Here we have a metamorphosis into a quadruped beast of burden, the subject, in fact, of Apuleius' novel and of course of a number of other stories, ancient and modern, about men who were turned into asses (Scobie 1975:26-46). One of the many is a Catalan example, its age unknown, collected by J. Amades (1950:532, no. 231; cf. Scobie 1975:44f.), in which a mother and a daughter, both witches and both with a reputation for turning into birds and flying out of the chimney at night, have a servant who is curious to learn how they do it. When he tries it himself, he is transformed into an ass, but eventually, at a festival of the Virgin, he is able to eat a rose and to regain his human shape. His name is Felet, obviously a congener of Falada.⁶⁷ I close with what I insist is only a speculation. In *The Goose Girl*, mother (who pricks her thumb and produces protective blood-drops) and daughter (who commands the winds) have magical powers: they are witches, even if benevolent. They own a talking horse, transformed into that shape no doubt by (his misuse of?) their own magic. May *The Goose Girl*, as we have it, have originated, then, as a 'man-into-beast' tale somewhat like the Catalan, with mother and daughter the witches and their talking quadruped the metamorphosed Falada/Felet who here however never regained his human form but remained their servant? If so, the story would be, then, a later chapter in the tale of this metamorphosis, a maturation-story about the daughter-witch for whom it has come time to get married. If it is ancient, it would no doubt be one of the many 'man-into-beast' stories collected and read by Apuleius as he was preparing his own *Metamorphoses* and could well have been the source of those motifs discussed

66 Dare we think this too of Achilles' talking horse Xanthus (*Il.* 19.404-14) and Balaam's ass (Numbers 22.21-31)?

67 It is equally obvious that the name Falada is not German. In Portuguese it means 'rumor' or 'talk' and would not be inappropriate for a speaking horse. Bolte and Polívka 1963: II 274, unconvincingly to my ear, compare the name of the hero's horse, Veillantif (which has variants that include Valantis), in the *Song of Roland*. They also cite a variant on *The Goose Girl* in which the horse is called Folle, a name that they gloss as *Fohlen* 'colt.' It is difficult to see how Folle, though, so close to a normal German word, could have become Falada: it must have had a background that was not German. Scobie (1983:186-9) presents enough early Spanish material to support the view that Iberia got her *Eselmensch* tradition from early Roman colonists there. If *The Goose Girl* reached Germany from Iberia, conceivably its Falada is a translation, from a name in the version as brought to Iberia by the Roman colonists, into one of the Romance languages of the Iberian peninsula.

here that he—for reasons unknown to us—inserted into his own treatment of Aristomenes.⁶⁸

68 I am very grateful, in the first instance, to Synnøve des Bouvrie, the organizer of this conference (2002), for the impetus to set out my thoughts on some passages that have long interested me; I hope that what I have written will not displease those with an ear and an eye for myth and symbol. For references in n. 18 *supra* to representations of Heracles seated not on a rock, I am indebted to Olga Palagia (Athens). I am grateful also to Margarethe Billerbeck (Fribourg) for the Plutarchean reference in n. 41 *supra*, and to Jaime Curbera (Berlin) and Robert Lamberton (St Louis) for their kindness in sending me photocopies of material from Amades and from Bolte and Polívka respectively, both otherwise inaccessible to me. Zanzibar Swahili stories have a closing formula that I would urge here: 'If the story was good, the goodness belongs to all of us; if it was bad, the badness belongs to me alone, the teller.'

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Board games and funerary symbolism in Greek and Roman contexts¹

Helène Whittaker

IN GREECE in the Archaic period miniature clay models of game-boards found in Attic tombs indicate that board games were symbolically associated in some way with death.² The earliest example, dating to the middle of the seventh century (protoattique moyen), comes from the offering trench of a cremation burial at Vari, while one, dating to the early sixth century, was found in Opferplatz Ψ/Anlage LXXV of the Kerameikos. The Kerameikos table was decorated with lions on the sides, while the Vari table was decorated with floral and abstract patterns. Dice were found associated with the game-boards both at Vari and in the Kerameikos and the identification of the objects as miniature game-boards, rather than, for instance, as offering tables, can accordingly be considered certain. The symbolic character of these objects is reinforced by the figures of mourning women positioned at each corner (Fig. 1). A terracotta game-board, dated to the early sixth century, in the National Museum in Copenhagen, is possibly to be classified with the miniatures from the Kerameikos and Vari, even if it is of a different type. It is rectangular and the playing surface is marked out by nine incised lines parallel with the short sides. The supporting sides of the table are decorated in black figure style; birds can be made out on the long sides. Two terracotta dice are still attached to the surface at each end of the board while there are traces of a third in the middle. Similarly, oval knobs at each end of the incised lines may represent the gaming-pieces.

- 1 I would like to thank Siv Kristoffersen, Stavanger Museum, for bibliographical help on the Scandinavian and English material, and Richard Holton Pierce, University of Bergen, for taking the time to answer questions about Egyptian board games. I am also grateful to Sarah Morris and John Papadopoulos, University of California, Los Angeles, for sending me a copy of their article 'Of Granaries and Games: Egyptian Stowaways in an Athenian Chest' in advance of its publication. I also wish to thank Marjatta Nielsen, University of Copenhagen, for information on gaming pieces in Etruscan burials and Mette Catharina Hermansen at the National Museum in Copenhagen for answering my questions about the terracotta game-board in Copenhagen.
- 2 Kübler 1970:512, Kat. 129, pl. 102, Daux 1963:715. The evidence is discussed by Kurtz and Boardman 1971:77f., Vermeule 1979:77-82, Garland 1985:70, Dillon 2002:281-82.



Fig. 1 Miniature game-board from the Kerameikos. Kerameikos Inv. 45. Courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute, Athens

The fact that dice and gaming pieces were attached to the board indicates that it was not used for actual playing. Although the board may have had some other kind of votive function, the most likely assumption is perhaps that it also came from a grave, even if there are no mourning women or any other indication that it had a funerary function. The board was acquired in Athens, but nothing else is known about its provenance.³

The possible significance of the occurrence of miniature game-board models in Attic funerary contexts has been discussed most extensively by Vermeule, who suggested that they indicate that the Greeks may have seen the playing of board games as a metaphor for life and death.⁴ In accordance with this idea, Vermeule also suggested that funerary symbolism is present in portrayals of the doomed heroes Achilles and Ajax playing a board game, a theme which was very popular in Attic vase-painting of the late Archaic period.⁵ In addition to vase-painting, it also occurs on shield bands found at Olympia and Aegina.⁶ Otherwise, the significance of the miniature game-boards do not seem to have aroused very much interest. Recently, however, Morris and Papadopoulos have argued in support of Vermeule's ideas.⁷ It can also be mentioned that in opposition to Vermeule, whose idea he found too tendentious, Garland maintained that they should be seen as intended for entertainment in the Afterlife with no deeper symbolic meaning. That the board game in the vase scene with Achilles and Ajax refers to the fate of the two heroes has been discussed also by Hurwit as well as by Morris.⁸ Of considerable interest is Morris' idea that the scene may be a conscious reworking by Exekias of a Geometric funerary theme which shows two figures, commonly interpreted as musicians, seated on either side of a checkerboard pattern.⁹

3 (Inv. no. 1950), Breitenstein 1941:19, no. 171, pl. 19, Lund and Bundgaard Rasmussen 1994:67.

4 As pointed out by Vermeule, parallels can be found in literature. See also Kokolakes 1965:59-92.

5 This motif first occurs in vase-painting about 530 BC and remained popular into the early fifth century; more than 150 examples exist. For the different versions of this scene see *LIMC s.v. 'Achilles'* (Kossatz-Deissman 1981:96-103). See also Brommer 1974, Boardman 1978:18, Mackay 1978, Moore 1980:418-21, Buchholz 1987, Woodford 1982, Woodford 2003:116-17, Hurwit 1985:259-61, Morris 1997:69, Hedreen 2001:91-119, Morris and Papadopoulos 2004:235. The motif is usually discussed in relation to the most famous version by Exekias on an amphora now in the Vatican Museum.

6 Kunze 1950:142ff.

7 Morris and Papadopoulos 2004:232-38.

8 Hurwit 1985:259-61, Morris 1997:69.

9 See also Morris and Papadopoulos 2004:235.

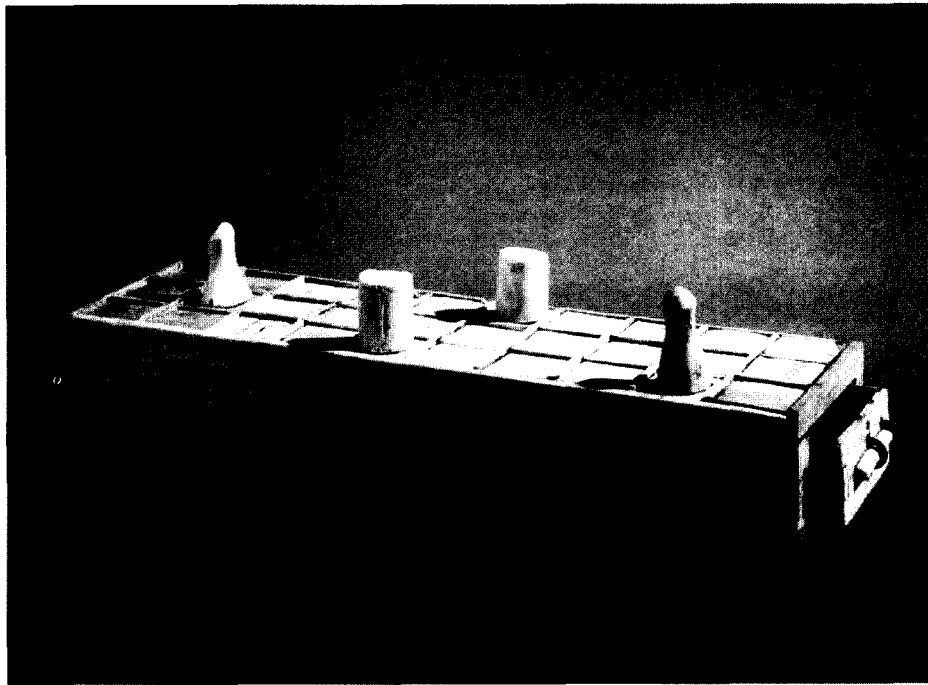


Fig. 2 Senet game, New Kingdom. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum

An association between board games and funerary beliefs and practice is particularly well-attested from Egypt with regard to the game *Senet* (Fig. 2). Examples of *Senet* boards have been found as grave goods from the Pre-dynastic period onwards, and the game is also frequently represented in wall paintings within tombs.¹⁰ Apart from being considered a suitable occupation for the dead, *Senet* was, at least from the time of the New Kingdom, associated with death and resurrection. Texts dating to the New Kingdom as well as to the Ptolemaic period indicate that the board used for playing the game could be seen as a representation of the Underworld. *Senet* was played on a rectangular board divided into thirty squares arranged in three rows of ten. Preserved examples of *Senet* boards show that the squares were at times elaborately inscribed, designating the path of the dead through the Underworld. In some representations of the game in tomb paintings, the deceased is shown playing against an invisible opponent.

In view of the Egyptian evidence, Vermeule suggests that the occurrence of miniature game-boards in funerary contexts in Attica indicates Egyptian influence on Greek funerary thought and imagery.¹¹ In support she points to renewed

¹⁰ Needler 1953, Vandier 1964:500, Pusch 1979, Piccione 1980, Idem 1984, Decker 1992:129.

¹¹ See also Morris and Papadopoulos 2004.

contact with Egypt in the seventh and sixth centuries. In fact, archaeological evidence indicates that there may have been particularly close contacts between Athens and Egypt in this period. Egypt, and more specifically Naukratis, is the earliest overseas market for Attic pottery from the end of the seventh century. With the beginning of the sixth century, the export of Attic vases to Egypt increases markedly, and the largest concentration of Attic pottery found in Egypt dates to between 570 and 540.¹²

Moreover, the traditional Greek view of death, which has a certain generic resemblance to Egyptian concepts, would fit well with Vermeule's hypothesis. In Greek thought death is commonly viewed as a process and the transfer from life to death is not instantaneous.¹³ After departing from the body, the soul undertakes a journey across land and water before passing through the gates of the Underworld, guarded by Cerberos. Close contact between Athens and Egypt can also be seen to coincide with a developing interest in the Afterlife in the Archaic period, demonstrated, for instance, by the rise of religious-philosophical movements such as Orphism and Pythagoreanism in which individual salvation played an important role.¹⁴ Egyptian influence on Orphism has been recognised.¹⁵ Perhaps more significantly, within the context of official state religion, interest in the fate of the individual after death is demonstrated by the growing popularity of the Eleusinian Mysteries.¹⁶ Consequently, the Archaic period can be seen to have provided a fertile climate for Egyptian influence on the materialisation of eschatological beliefs in funerary ritual.

On the other hand, as artefacts, the miniature game-boards do not show any Egyptian influence but fit rather into a tradition of funerary imagery which can be traced back to the Geometric period, and even further if one wishes.¹⁷ In the Archaic period, mourning women occur in funeral scenes on vases, on black-figure plaques used to decorate tombs and as figurines, either single or incorporated into larger objects including various types of vases, *thymateria* and terracotta models.¹⁸ The square shape of the miniature game-boards show that they were clearly not intended to specifically represent *Senet*, but some other game, or possibly the general idea of board games. The incised parallel lines on the rectangular terracotta table in Copenhagen are also difficult to relate to *Senet*.¹⁹ It can

12 On Attic pottery at Naukratis see Venit 1984.

13 Burkert 1985:196f., Garland 1985:13-20, Bremmer 2002:4.

14 Bremmer 2002:11-26.

15 Bremmer 2002:20f.

16 Clinton 1993.

17 Higgins 1967:22, Vermeule 1979:63, Eadem 1983, Kurtz 1984:315.

18 Boardman 1955, Higgins 1967:43, Hampe 1960:74, Garland 1985, Dillon 2002:274-81.



Fig. 3 Albertus Pictor, *Death at the chessboard*, Täby Church, Sweden. Photograph by H. Cornell & S. Wallin, Courtesy of Antikvariska-topografiska arkivet, Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm

also be remarked that the dating of the Vari board to around the middle of the seventh century might be considered an argument against Egyptian influence.

More generally, it can be stated that various types of evidence suggest that the playing of board games is not uncommonly invested with symbolic meaning, often linked to cosmological beliefs.²⁰ An allegorical association between life and death or the transition from life to death and board games would seem to be so common that it can be considered in the nature of a cross-cultural phenomenon as can be illustrated by a few examples. The idea that human life can be seen in terms of movements across a chess-board where death always says checkmate in the end was common in Medieval Europe.²¹ It is, for instance, graphically illustrated by a

19 It has been suggested that they indicate a board used for playing the game of πέντε γραμμοί, known from Greek literature (Pritchett 1968:197).

20 See for instance the discussion on Shiva's game playing in Handelman and Shulman 1997. I owe this reference to Professor Synnøve des Bouvrie, University of Tromsø.

late Medieval wall painting from Täby Church in Central Sweden which depicts a prosperous man playing chess with Death conventionally depicted as a skeleton (Fig. 3).²² The original Indian version of the game Snakes and Ladders was a representation of the journey through life where the player advances from the lower levels associated with earthly desires to the higher associated with spiritual values, eventually reaching Vishnu or Nirvana; the ladders represent virtues which help the player on his way, while the snakes represent vices which impede progress.²³

More concretely, the playing of board games can also constitute a part in funerary ritual. The term *Mancala* is used for a family of board games which are very widely distributed in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.

An association with death or funerals occurs many places where this game is played.²⁴ In Surinam, it was associated with houses of mourning in which the dead were placed in the interval before burial.²⁵ The game was played by mourners and the purpose seems to have been to amuse the spirit of the dead in order to keep him from coming back among the living. In Sulawesi in Indonesia, the game was called Galatjang and was customarily played during the time of mourning.²⁶ Clearly, if the miniature game-boards do refer to the passage from life to death, their significance is not necessarily to be attributed to Egyptian influence, although the possibility, or even probability, remains.

Furthermore, other interpretations are possible. Cross-cultural evidence also indicates that board games in funerary contexts can function as status markers. Gaming-pieces for some kind of board-game are quite common in Scandinavian tombs of the Iron Age and later periods.²⁷ The symbolic value of game-boards and gaming-pieces in Scandinavian burial contexts has been little discussed. However, in those cases where they represent rare imported items and have been found in graves which are otherwise rich in grave goods, their occurrence has been associated with elite expression.²⁸ The fact that gaming-pieces are objects of value and display further suggests that playing board-games may have been seen as an

21 Murray 1913:536.

22 Cornell 1981:62, pl. 44. This symbolism was also utilised by Ingmar Bergman in his well-known film *The Seventh Seal* (cf. Holland 1959-60 on the imagery of this film).

23 Shimkhada 1983, Topsfield 1985, Handelman and Shulman 1997:33, Parlett 1999:93f. Early versions of Snakes and Ladders in England were also heavily imbued with moral symbolism. An effective use of the game as an allegory for progress through life can be seen in David Lodge's novel *How far can you go?*, published in 1980.

24 Parlett 1999:207-223, Townshend 1979.

25 Murray 1952:202, 235, Parlett 1999:218.

26 Murray 1952:175.

27 Petersen 1914.

activity particularly associated with high status. A parallel can be found in the social significance of chess, which was in India from the time of its invention associated with leisure and a cultivated lifestyle.²⁹ Also in Medieval Europe, chess had connotations relating to social status, and chess pieces and game-boards were often objects of value.³⁰ Since the playing of board games can be regarded as a non-productive activity, yet one which requires time and often skill, it can be suggested that the association between board games and status can, to a certain extent at least, be explained in terms conspicuous leisure.³¹

Today, skill at chess is often considered a clear sign of high intelligence, and the idea that board games requiring skill reveal superior mental qualities is widespread.³² Board games can accordingly also be associated with the expression of status in a more specific way, symbolising mental qualities associated with the elite. The association of board games requiring skill with intelligence as a prerogative of high status can in many cases be explained by a perceived connection between skill at board games and military ability. Chess, for instance, was originally a symbolic representation of warfare, and this was not without relevance to its popularity among the elite both in Asia and Medieval Europe.³³ In Japan playing the complicated game Go was regarded as useful to the study of tactics and strategy by the warrior class which ruled Japan from the twelfth to the nineteenth century.³⁴ In many African societies, expertise in the board game *Mancala* was considered indicative of intelligence and the capacity for strategic planning, and consequently as these are qualities suitable for chiefs, the game was associated with the prominent position of many elders.³⁵ The significance of this association is demonstrated

28 For example, one of the richest Norwegian graves from the Roman Iron Age at Avaldsnes in western Norway contained thirty-one large gaming-pieces made of glass. An exceptionally rich grave from the eight century, also at Avaldsnes, contained two sets of imported gaming-pieces, one made of glass and the other of amber. As gaming-pieces made of glass or amber are very rare in Norway in this period, they can in both cases be interpreted as a reflection of the desire of the Iron Age elite to advertise its connections with the Continent (Opedal 1998:53f.).

29 Eales 1985:30.

30 Eales 1985:50f., 53, 57f., Parlett 1999:301.

31 For the concept of conspicuous leisure, which refers to the means by which an elite seeks to distinguish itself from the lower classes by devoting its time to non-productive activities, see Veblen 1970 (1899):41-60.

32 The association of difficult board games with intelligence is for example vividly illustrated by Silvia Nasar's description of their popularity among mathematicians at Princeton in her biography of John Forbes Nash Jr. (*A Beautiful Mind* 1998).

33 Eales 1985:31-36, Parlett 1999:6.

34 Parlett 1999:169f.

35 Townshend 1977:65ff., Idem 1979.



Fig. 4 Wooden statue of King Shyaam aMbul aNgoong of Congo seated in front of a Mancala board. Museum of Mankind. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum

by the fact that a game of *Mancala* formed part of the ritual surrounding the installation of a new Ganda king. The symbolic association of chiefly qualities and *Mancala* is also clearly illustrated by the late eighteenth century wooden statue of King Shyaam aMbul aNgoong, the founder of the Bushoong ruling Dynasty of Congo. The king is seated in front of a game-board which functioned as an emblem of his kingship (Fig. 4).³⁶

This association between mental qualities, status, and board games has been utilised in a recent analysis of the burials in the Anglo-Saxon cemetery site at Spong Hill in Norfolk (*ca.* AD 540-600). In his discussion of the meaning of the grave goods Ravn points out that the male burials which could be identified as the most prestigious seem to exhibit a significant relationship between adult men, horses, and gaming-pieces. He therefore suggests that the presence of gaming-pieces among the grave goods could have symbolised intelligence and qualities of

³⁶ Information derived from the British Museum internet site, *Compass*; see also Parrinder 1982.

leadership, in particular, the ability to lead a battle.³⁷ Ravn supports his interpretation by reference to northern European mythology where horses and board games are associated with the war god Odin. It would seem not improbable that the occurrence of game-boards in chieftain graves of the Viking period can be interpreted in a similar light as symbols of chiefly intelligence and authority.³⁸ Similar thoughts may also lie behind the presence of four elaborately decorated game-boards which were found in the royal tombs at Ur (*ca.* 2600-2350 BC), since it can be argued that most of the artefacts found in the tombs could be classified as symbols of position and power.³⁹

An interpretation of the meaning of the miniature game-boards which emphasises conspicuous leisure and military ideals as elements of status expression fits well with a consideration of Archaic Greek society. Conspicuous leisure undoubtedly formed part of the self-expression of the Athenian upper class.⁴⁰ In the *Republic*, Plato remarks that competence at board games requires intense practice of a kind which would only be possible for those with plenty of leisure time (374C).⁴¹

The idea that playing board games was seen as a typical aristocratic pastime and could therefore function as a recognised symbol of status seems quite possible. As the heroic connotations of warfare played a central part in Athenian aristocratic culture, the symbolic aspects of board games could have been reinforced by the fact that popular ancient board games may have replicated military battles. It has recently increasingly been stressed that the lifestyle of the Athenian upper class was heavily determined by imitation of the Near East.⁴² It could therefore reasonably be argued that a possible association of board games with status is most likely to have been derived from eastern contacts. However, Archaic society was also

37 Ravn 2000:289f.

38 Petersen 1914:84-85. The most well-known is the wooden game-board found in the Gokstad ship dated to the end of the ninth century which is on display in the Viking Ship Museum in Oslo. According to Petersen (1914:78, 90), gaming-pieces occur in both male and female graves in the Iron Age, while in the Viking period, gaming pieces and game-boards seem to be exclusively associated with male burials. If this observation still holds true, then it seems that there was a shift in meaning and that contrary to earlier periods, in the Viking age board games came to represent specifically male qualities. See also Owen and Dalland (1999:127-132) on gaming-pieces and game-boards found in chieftain graves of the Viking period.

39 Woolley 1946:35, pl. 11, see Pollock 1991:180 on the interpretation of the grave goods.

40 Cf. Thuc. 1.6,3-5.

41 πεπτευτικός δὲ ἢ κυβευτικός ἰκανῶς οὐδ' ἂν εἰς γένοιτο, μὴ αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐκ παιδὸς ἐπιτηδεύων, ἀλλὰ παρέργῳ χρωμένος. See also *Plt.* 292E; *Resp.* 333aA-B, 487B. The association between board game and aristocratic leisure would also seem evident from Gorgias' *Palamedes* where the playing of board games is called σχολῆς ἄλυστον διατριβήν. On board games in Plato see also Hansen 2002:9-15.

42 Kurke 1992, Neer 2002:19-22.

permeated by Homeric values and ideals.⁴³ The Homeric poems and the epic tradition suggest that board games were associated with both conspicuous leisure and warfare. In the *Odyssey* the suitors of Penelope spend their time playing board games in the intervals between their feasting, in what is clearly meant to be an ostentatious display of idleness (Hom. *Od.* 1.106ff.). Although the association of board games with the suitors might be thought to have markedly negative overtones, it can be argued that the activity in itself, like feasting, was considered a part of typical aristocratic behaviour. The reprehensibility of the suitors lies in the fact that they achieve their lifestyle at the expense of another man's estate rather than in their activities as such.⁴⁴ Board games are connected with warfare and specifically with the Trojan War tradition in Greek literature. According to Sophokles Palamedes invented dice and board games in order to combat the boredom of the long stay at Aulis, and Euripides describes the two Ajaxes, Protesilaos, and Palamedes playing games at Aulis.⁴⁵ The Homeric heroes were also believed to have spent their time playing in the intervals between fighting at Troy. The Hellenistic geographer Polemon mentions that it is possible to see a stone used by the Greeks as a game-board on the Trojan plain.⁴⁶ Evidence for a recognised association between board games and strategic abilities can be seen in the fact that Palamedes was also associated with innovations in military strategy.⁴⁷

Heroisation of the dead in the sense that the deceased was implicitly compared to the Homeric heroes can be said to have been a determining feature of high-status burials from the Geometric period onwards.⁴⁸ It can be suggested that the primary meaning of the miniature game-boards in funerary contexts derives from the epic tradition and that they refer to the social status of the deceased. Accordingly, they were intended to recall the lifestyle of the deceased as a member of the elite, and functioned as symbols of the conspicuous leisure and military ideology associated with the Athenian nobility. The mourning women at the corners of the boards reinforce the message by referring to the heroisation of the dead in aristocratic funerary ritual. The lions on the side of the Kerameikos table can also be said to emphasize the heroic connotations associated with the miniature game-boards.

43 Murray 1983.

44 For a different interpretation of the game-playing of the suitors see Kurke 1992:253ff., Eadem 1999:254-60. See also Morris and Papadopoulos 2004:235.

45 Soph. fr. 479; Eur. *IA* 192-199.

46 Preller 1834:64, fr. 32.

47 Gorg. fr. B 11a 30; Aesch. *Palamedes* 304. The literary evidence, furthermore, indicates that a metaphoric connection between warfare and board games would seem to have been a commonplace. A symbolic association between warfare, strategic thinking, and board games can, for instance, be found in Plato (*Resp.* 422E), cf. Ridgeway 1886.

48 Houby-Nielsen 1995:165f., Eadem 1996:41-54.

A similar interpretation derived from the connection between military preeminence and skill at board games can be suggested for the vases depicting Ajax and Achilles playing a board game (Fig. 5). The theme of two warriors seated at the game table exists in more than one hundred and fifty examples. Strictly speaking, only on those vases on which they are provided with names can the two warriors with certainty be identified as Achilles and Ajax. However, as they are never identified as any other heroes, it can reasonably if not with complete certainty be assumed that they were intended to represent Achilles and Ajax, also in those cases when they were not provided with painted inscriptions.⁴⁹ In any case, the number of inscribed vases indicates a particular connection between these two heroes and the playing of board games. The various versions of the scene differ considerably. The fact that Athena is present in some versions of the scene has been taken to indicate that the scene is narrative, representing a specific episode of the Trojan Cycle as originally suggested by Robert, and more recently by Boardman and Hedreen.⁵⁰ In some examples, she seems to be agitatedly summoning the heroes back to the battlefield. Two black figure vases and two red figure cups seem to show the warriors playing in the midst of battle can be seen to support this hypothesis.⁵¹ However, the fact that Athena does not appear on the earliest vases, suggests that she did not play a fundamental role to the understanding of the scene. It would therefore seem more likely that the presence of Athena is emblematic as patron of Achilles rather than narrative.⁵² Boardman has also suggested that the popularity of the scene in the late Archaic period could be associated with the story told by Herodotus (1.62-64) that the Athenians were dining, napping, and playing dice when Peisistratos gained control of Athens in 546. The point of the motif would be to console the Athenians by showing that even the greatest heroes could be so caught up in a game that they were oblivious to danger. Boardman's suggestion is consonant with the idea that board games were a recognised symbol of leisure. It is dependent on the understanding of the scene as a representation of a well known episode from the epic tradition as well as on the assumption that its relevance to contemporary Athenian politics would have been understood and appreciated by those who used the vases. This does not seem an entirely impossible hypothesis.⁵³ On the other hand, as Herodotus wrote almost a hundred years after the events he describes, his account of Athenian passivity with

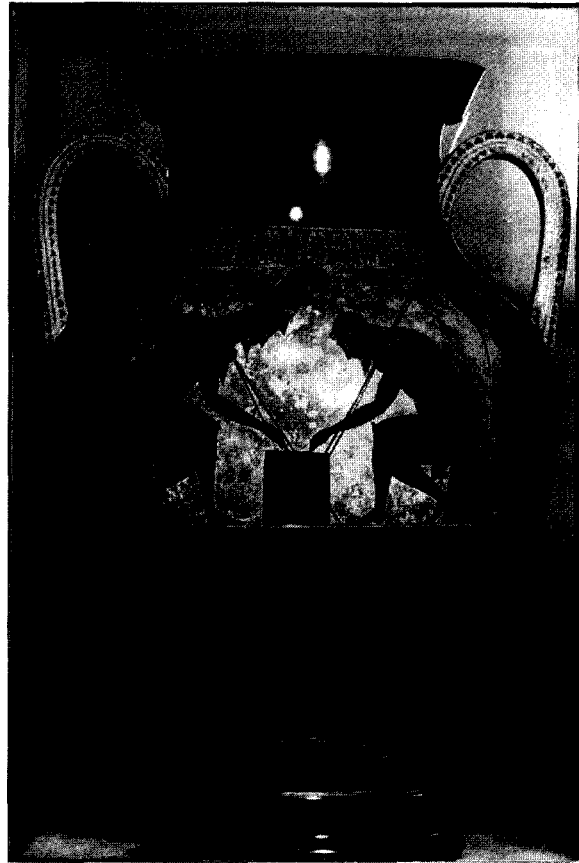
49 Boardman 1978:19, n. 42, Woodford 1982:177, Hedreen 2001:92, *LIMC s.v. Achilles* (Kossatz-Deissman 1981: 103).

50 Robert 1892:57, n. 36, Boardman 1974:231, cf. Hedreen 2001:92.

51 Boardman 1974:231, 1978:19, Woodford 1982:175, Hedreen 2001:96-104.

52 Cf. Boardman 1974:218-19; see also the commentary in *LIMC s.v. Achilles* (Kossatz-Deissman 1981: 103).

Fig 5 Amphora by Exekias,
 Courtesy of Hirmer
 Fotoarchiv



regard to Peisistratos could be based on stories invented long afterwards. It is also an open question to what extent mythological subjects in vase-painting should be related to contemporary historical events.⁵⁴ However, given the artistic freedom most of us assume Athenian vase painters had, there is no compelling reason why they should not have chosen to comment on specific political events.⁵⁵ As mentioned above, Morris has associated the scene with an earlier Geometric theme. Woodford and Thompson have also argued that the variations in the elements of the scene suggests that its origin lies in art rather than literature and therefore does not reflect epic narrative.⁵⁶

53 Boardman 1978:24. Kurke's objection (1999:271f., n.46) that Herodotus wrote κύβοι rather than πέσσοι does not seem valid to me; the fact that in English one is unlikely to refer to a board game, even when it requires dice, as a game of dice does not mean that the ancient Greeks might not have done so.

54 Cf. Woodford 2003:141f., Bazant 1982, Cook 1987.

55 Boardman 1984:240f.

Characteristic of all versions is that the status of the heroes as warriors would seem to be deliberately emphasised. They hold their spears while playing and usually wear full body armour. Helmets and shields are either worn or shown lying on the ground directly behind them. Rather than interpreting this in narrative terms, as does Hedreen, it would seem possible to argue that the heroes are shown fully armed in order to convey a conceptual link between military activity and the playing of board games.⁵⁷ In the *Iliad* Achilles and Ajax are the foremost warriors among the Greeks, and it can therefore be proposed that the scene was intended to reflect a specific connection between the military prominence of Ajax and Achilles and their skill at or fondness for board games.⁵⁸ According to this interpretation, one could see the presence of the war goddess Athena as referring to the intelligence and strategic abilities of the heroes. The scene clearly shows that the winner is Achilles and it can be argued that his superior skill at board games reflects his status as top warrior, superior also to Ajax.

Death and heroic values are closely allied, and an emphasis on the aristocratic and Homeric connotations associated with the playing of board games does not, however, exclude symbolic connotations associated with the transition from life to death. A number of arguments can be made in support of Vermeule's reading of the scene, which sees the two heroes as symbolic figures representing the shortness of life and the suddenness and inevitability of death. In some versions of the scene there are birds, flying between the two heroes. As birds were a common and easily understood symbol of death, they may have been included by some vase painters in order to emphasise the funerary connotations of the scene.⁵⁹ More clearly significant is the fact that the scene occurs on White-Ground lekythoi, the decoration of which was often bound up with death in some way.⁶⁰ The association between board games and death would seem explicit, as pointed out by Vermeule, in a black-figure cup which shows two seated male winged figures playing a board game (Fig. 6).⁶¹ The identity of the winged figures is uncertain. Vermeule sees them as death demons or possibly as Thanatos and Eros and suggests that they may be gambling for a man's soul.⁶² Woodford refers to them as winged youths.⁶³ However,

56 Thompson 1976:31, Woodford 1982:178-80.

57 Hedreen (2001:98-99) argues that the fact that the heroes are shown fully armed indicates that the game is taking place at Troy rather than in Aulis and that they are playing near the enemy lines, away from the safety of the tents.

58 Hom. *Il.* 2.268f.; 17.278ff.; *Od.* 11.550f.

59 On the other hand, the function of the birds might be to indicate an outdoor setting. Cf. Hedreen 2001:101.

60 Knigge 1976:pl. 20, no. 10, 11, 12, pl. 21, no. 7.

61 Vermeule 1979:81, fig. 36.

62 Vermeule 1979:82, 159f.

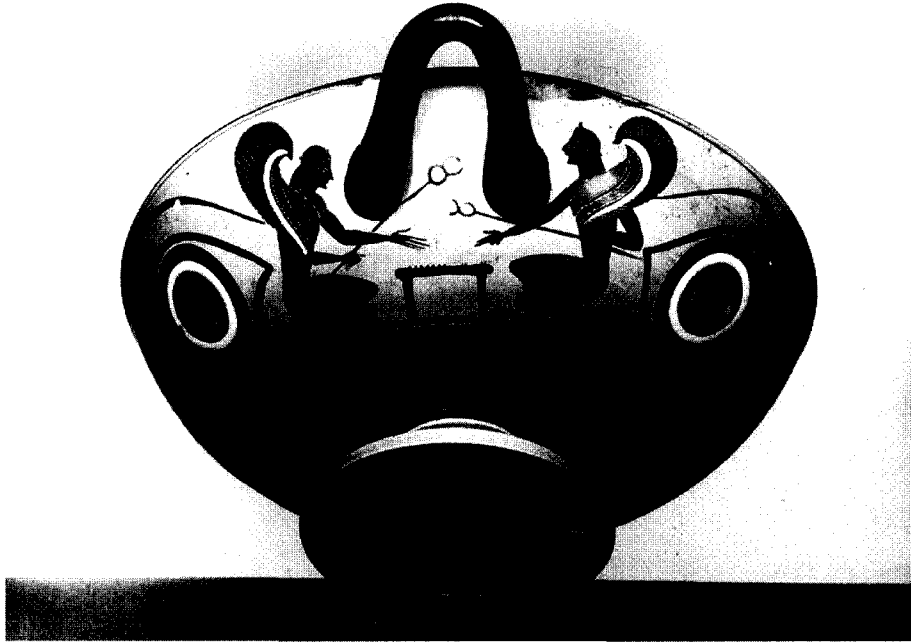


Fig. 6 Two winged figures playing a board game. National Museum, Copenhagen Inv. 13521. Courtesy of Nationalmuseets Antiksamling

the scene can be seen as a deliberate variant on the theme of Ajax and Achilles playing a board game and this suggests a somewhat different interpretation. It can be proposed that the vase painter has picked up on the death connotations of the scene and taken it a step further.

In Greek vase-painting, the *eidola* of the dead are usually shown winged and a possible interpretation of these winged figures is that they represent the two heroes after their death.⁶⁴ Instead of spears they hold *kerykeia*, which since they allude to the god Hermes as *psychopompos*, are possibly to be understood as a symbol of the transition to the world of the dead. A further connection between the playing of board-games and the Underworld is provided by Pausanias' description of Polygnotos' painting of Odysseus in the Underworld in the Knidian Lesche at Delphi (X.31). The painting showed Palamedes and Thersites playing a game while both Ajaxes watch, presumably standing on either side of the players.⁶⁵ Pausanias comments that Polygnotos' choice of heroes in the scene is to be explained by the fact

63 Woodford 1982:177.

64 I owe this idea to Dr. Sven von Hofsten. For an example of the depiction of an *eidolon* which is comparable to the winged figures on the vase see the Amphora of the Leagros-group which shows Achilles on his way to Leuke (CVA British Museum 4, pl. 58).

that they were all enemies of Odysseus. However, they are also all heroes who did not die a normal warrior's death in battle and it would seem possible that this is the context in which the scene should be understood. Palamedes, the inventor of board games, died as a result of trickery and betrayal, Ajax son of Oileus drowned on his way home from Troy, and Thersites was killed by Achilles. Arguing back from Polygnotus' depiction of the Underworld, it can be suggested that the scene with the two winged figures on the late Archaic cup should be seen as an early *nekyia* and a forerunner to the larger and more elaborate representations of the Underworld in the Classical period.

Exekias is generally considered either the inventor of the scene depicting Achilles and Ajax playing a board game, or the first to introduce it to vase-painting, and an argument can also be made by relating the scene to Exekias' other vases which depict Ajax and Achilles. In the epic tradition Achilles and Ajax are linked in death. Ajax saved the dead body of Achilles and carried it away from the battlefield, while Ajax' suicide was related to the competition for the arms of Achilles.⁶⁵ Both of these episodes were painted by Exekias, and it could be argued that the scene of Achilles and Ajax at the game-board is to be understood as a more subtle variation on the same underlying theme. Exekias seems to have had a particular fondness for Ajax and Boardman has hinted that Exekias might have had some connection with Salamis.⁶⁶ Moore has suggested that the reason may have been that Exekias himself was from Salamis and therefore wished to promote the hero of his homeland.⁶⁷ Shapiro, on the other hand, while not completely denying Exekias' personal interest in Ajax, suggests that the occurrence of the hero in Athenian vase-painting reflects the political and historical circumstances related to Athenian control of Salamis.⁶⁸ However, it may rather be that Exekias' main interest in Ajax was that he found him, as he also did Achilles, ideal for expressing the close connection between heroic valour and death. This is a theme which can be seen to be closely related to the function of the vases as drinking vessels.⁶⁹

65 According to Woodford (1982:180), Pausanias' text suggests that Salaminian Ajax was also participating in the game. She then argues that Polygnotos had renewed the game-playing motif by adding a third person and that this may be the reason for its loss of popularity among vase painters in the early Classical period. It seems to me that the Greek can be understood in this way, but that it is not the most probable reading. See Stansbury-O'Donnell 1990 for a reconstruction of Polygnotos' *Nekyia*.

66 Cf. Boardman 1978:18, Woodford 1982:178, Moore 1980:424-31, Hurwit 1985:260f., Morris and Papadopoulos 2004:235.

67 Boardman 1978:24.

68 Moore 1980:433f.

69 Shapiro 1981.

70 Boardman (1978:18) has remarked that on Exekias' vases, Ajax and Achilles appear in scenes which seem deliberately chosen to express most fully the heroic values of the Greeks.

Most of the vases on which the scene with Ajax and Achilles playing a board game occurs were made primarily for use in the symposium.⁷¹ The importance of the symposium as a ritual activity affirming the collective identity of the Athenian elite has recently been much emphasised.⁷² The symposium can be viewed as an extreme manifestation of conspicuous leisure, but it also functioned to reinforce the warrior ideology of the Athenian aristocracy.⁷³ The scenes of warfare depicted on sympotic pottery can therefore be said to have reflected the ideological concerns of the symposium. From this perspective, the function of imagery related to the epic tradition can then be seen as the heroisation of the symposiasts, allowing them, within the closed context of the aristocratic drinking-party, to represent themselves as Homeric warriors. The symposium was moreover the occasion for the performance of poetry. The ultimately Homeric thought that life is short and death can come suddenly is a theme common in lyric poetry, and it can be argued that the image of Achilles and Ajax playing a board game on vessels used for drinking was also intended, to evoke similar thoughts.⁷⁴ It can therefore be suggested that the popularity of the scene is derived from its particular appropriateness to the mood of the symposium.⁷⁵

71 Murray 1983:195, Neer 2002:9-26.

72 Murray 1983.

73 Cf. Murray (1991) who points to interconnections between warrior ideology and ritualised drinking.

74 Cf. Aeschylus (*Sept.* 414) for metaphoric connections of dice with both warfare and the suddenness of death. See Murray 1983, Neer 2002 for the relations between poetry and the pottery used at the symposium.

75 The majority of these vases, including the most well known example by Exekias, were found in Etruscan tombs. The popularity of the scene in Etruria is also indicated by the fact that it is found on Etruscan mirrors of the third century, a time when it no longer occurs in Attic vase-painting (Fittà 1998:fig. 259). It seems quite improbable, however, that the vases were made specifically for the Etruscan market. Nor is it possible to conclude that the theme was more popular in Etruria than in Athens. The shield bands from Aegina and Olympia as well as the fact that the motif was copied in Corinthian pottery indicate that it was well-known and 'circulated' within Greece before the end of the sixth century. According to Spivey (1991:145-50) Etruscan readings of scenes of Greek myth were conditioned by the frequent funerary use of imported Greek vases. On the other hand, it has recently been stressed that Attic imports were mainly intended for banquets (Rathje 1990, Barker and Rasmussen 2000:134, Reusser 2002). Accordingly, the occurrence of Attic vases in a funerary context can be seen to refer back to the symposium. However, as scenes of banquets and symposia are popular in Etruscan funerary imagery, it might perhaps be maintained that the funerary connotations of the scene were recognised by the Etruscans and that for this reason they may have found the theme particularly appealing on vessels used in banquets and later deposited in tombs. A wall-painting from the Tomba dell'Orco II in Tarquinia dating to the second half of the fourth century shows Theseus and presumably Perithous seated playing a board game while being menaced by a female demon.

This double message of heroisation and the inevitability of death can also explain the use of the scene for the decoration of shield bands. Turning back to the earlier material and the miniature game-board models, it can be asked whether ideas concerning the passage from life to death were associated also with them. The epic tradition suggests that this may have been the case. In the *Odyssey*, when Athena, disguised as Mentès, arrives at Odysseus' palace, the first thing she sees is the suitors playing a board game in front of the doorway, sitting on the skins of Odysseus' cattle which they themselves have slaughtered. It is tempting to see the game-playing of the suitors not only as an expression of their aristocratic idleness, but also as a reference to their future fate when they will be slaughtered like animals. Furthermore, in addition to Ajax and Achilles, as noted above, board games seem to be particularly associated with heroes whose deaths were in some way exceptional.⁷⁶ Accordingly, it can be suggested that an association between the playing of board games and the fate of certain heroes was part of the epic tradition and that this is not irrelevant to the interpretation of the miniature game-boards. In summary, it seems likely that the presence of the miniature game-boards in burial contexts functioned primarily as status markers, but it can be argued that their meaning also encompassed the idea that death can come suddenly and unexpectedly and losing the game of life is a fate which the deceased shares with the heroes of epic poetry. Arguably they may also have been intended to affirm that the aristocratic lifestyle of the deceased will continue after the passage from life to death.⁷⁷

The question of whether the funerary connotations of board games represent Egyptian influence remains open. Egyptian beliefs were connected with the particularities of *Senet* and not with board games in general. The squares of the *Senet* board represented specific stages in the passage of the dead through the Underworld before arriving at the judgement of his soul and attainment of eternal life. The Greek beliefs about life and death which were arguably associated with board games seem to have been of a much more general nature. If they have their origin in contact with Egypt, it would seem that they were quickly absorbed and associated with the Greek heroic world. That Egyptian beliefs were transformed and inserted into the Greek heroic tradition is argued by Morris and Papadopoulos who suggest that the funerary associations of board games may have reached the Aegean, possibly transmitted by the Phoenicians, already in the Late Bronze Age

76 See also Morris and Papadopoulos 2004:235.

77 It could be suggested that the evidence suggests that the playing of board games was particularly associated with male values in Archaic Athens. This does not seem to have been the case in Etruria, on the other hand, where gaming pieces and dice are often found in high status female burials. It is possible that although the symbolic connotations of board games in both Attica and Etruria may have had a common origin, the Etruscans may have been more interested in the manifestation of conspicuous leisure than in military values.

or soon afterwards.⁷⁸ There is, moreover, literary evidence which provides some support for Egyptian influence. In the *Phaedrus* (274D1) Plato attributes the invention of board games to the Egyptian god Thot. Plato connects the invention of board games with the discovery of writing, numeracy, and astronomy, an association which may seem logical but which does not find support in the Egyptian sources.⁷⁹ Vasunia has therefore argued that the attribution of the invention of board games to Thot as god of writing reflects a Greek and not an Egyptian way of thinking.⁸⁰ However, although Thot does not seem to be known as the inventor of board games in the Egyptian tradition, as escort and protector of the dead through the Underworld he was clearly associated with the symbolic meaning of *Senet*. The first square on the *Senet* board was called the 'House of Thot.'⁸¹ Plato is accordingly correct in associating Thot with board games, but he may have misunderstood or not have had precise information about the nature of the association. It is also possible that the surviving Egyptian material is defective with regard to Thot's role as inventor god. Thot was identified with Hermes and one of the main functions that the two gods had in common was that of *psychopompos*. It is interesting to note that according to Suetonius, who wrote a now, more or less, lost book about Greek games, Hermes was regarded by the Greeks as the patron of games played with dice. In the Budé edition of the preserved fragments, Taillardat connects this information with the role of Hermes as protector of the gymnasium and the palaestra.⁸² However, it might be possible to connect Suetonius' statement with the passage in the *Phaedrus*, and argue that Hermes as patron of board games is the result of his assimilation to Thot. Despite the fact that Plato does not mention the funerary aspects of Thot's association with board games, it could be argued that this is the context in which the role of Hermes as patron of board games should be seen.

Both gaming-pieces and dice occur occasionally in Roman tombs. Their significance is difficult to interpret.⁸³ They may reflect the idea that life can be compared to a game of chance where losing represents death, but they may also be personal

78 Morris and Papadopoulos 2004:237f.

79 Plato elsewhere connects the playing of board games with mathematics and geometry (*Grg.* 450D).

80 Vasunia 2001:148-55.

81 Piccione 1980:56.

82 Taillardat 1967:151. Suetonius mentions both Hermes and Pan as patrons of board games. Taillardat finds no explanation for Pan's connection with board games and dice. A possible explanation, and one related to the symbolic connotations of board games, could be that the brief moment of uncertainty experienced after the dice have been thrown and before the outcome is clear was naturally associated with the terror induced by the god.

83 Egidi 1983, *cf.* Toynbee 1971:52.

possessions, or provisions for entertainment in the Afterlife. However, a funerary relief from Palmyra, which shows three men at a game-board would seem to indicate that board games had a deeper symbolic significance in the Roman empire, as pointed out by Vermeule.⁸⁴ A similar relief from Trier which shows two men playing while a third watches indicates that the motif was widespread in funerary imagery.⁸⁵ Literary evidence can be adduced for the suggestion that the significance of game-boards in funerary contexts in the Roman Empire was related to the transfer from life to death. In the episode of Petronius' *Satyrica* known as the 'Cena Trimalchionis,' Trimalchio is described as being in the middle of a solitary board game as he is carried into the dining-room where his guests are already assembled. The novel's narrator, Encolpius, also makes a point of the fact that instead of regular gaming pieces, Trimalchio makes use of gold and silver coins. It has often been remarked that Trimalchio's dinner-party is modelled on a descent into the Underworld and consequently is permeated with funerary themes and imagery.⁸⁶ It is therefore not unreasonable to see deliberate funerary symbolism also in Trimalchio's game. The motif of solitary game-playing has a certain similarity to Egyptian representations in which the dead is shown playing against an invisible opponent. It does not seem impossible that the funerary connotations of the Egyptian game *Senet* were known to the Romans and utilised here by Petronius. It could be suggested that Trimalchio's opponent in the game is meant to be understood as Death. Coins are found in both Greek and Roman burials.⁸⁷ The presence of an obol between the teeth of the dead occurs sporadically in Greece from the fifth century and more frequently, although far from universally, from the Hellenistic period onwards. This custom has most often been interpreted as the fee for Charon known from literature.⁸⁸ It has, however, been pointed out that large amounts of coins which are quite common in Roman burials are likely to be unconnected with the myth of Charon. The chthonic aspects of coins are also illustrated by the fact that according to Roman custom, at the beginning of the year coins were thrown into the Lacus Curtius, which was regarded as an opening into the Underworld.⁸⁹ Considering this practice and the literary and archaeological evidence for the belief in payment to Charon, it can be suggested that Trimalchio's

84 Vermeule 1979:79, fig. 34.

85 May 1992:30.

86 Saylor 1987, Bodel 1999:46.

87 Purcell (1995:22), however, associates the coins with the link between gambling and game-playing. Saylor (1987:597) and Pack (1974:214-215) suggest that Trimalchio is showing off and sees his solitary game-playing as a demonstration of his competitiveness.

88 Garland 1985:23, Vermeule 1979:212, Stevens 1991, Grindler-Hansen 1991.

89 Stevens 1991:228.

use of coins as gaming-pieces is connected in some way with symbolism regarding entrance into the Underworld.

Board games can be seen to have played a role in funerary symbolism in both Archaic Greece and Imperial Rome and evidence may exist from other times and places in the Graeco-Roman world. This should probably be taken as an illustration of the universality of ideas concerning the funerary connotations of board games rather than as evidence for any real continuity, even if the image of Trimalchio as a Homeric hero has an obvious comic resonance.

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Greek trophy monuments

Jutta Stroszeck

Introduction

THIS ARTICLE treats Greek *τρόπαια*: simultaneously historical and sacred, these monuments were visible symbols of victories, erected after many historical battles of the Greeks and therefore precisely datable to the year of, or very soon after, the respective victory.

A distinction between perishable primary and more permanent trophies has to be introduced from the start, since this difference is significant for further study: *Primary (Perishable anthropomorphic) trophies* are erected immediately after the battle on the battle ground by hanging or nailing weapons to a tree trunk or to a wooden stake.¹ Naturally, few, if any, *trophaia* of this type have survived,² but there is frequent reference to them in ancient sources. Towards the end of the fifth century we see a rising tendency to make these trophies more durable by putting up reliefs with sculpted depiction of primary trophies in sanctuaries.³ From the fourth century onwards they also occur in other contexts, mainly on coins struck in order to commemorate the glory of victory.⁴

*Permanent 'secondary'*⁵ trophies were made some time after the victory in bronze and stone. While some simply imitate the actual perishable monument of anthropomorphic form like a marble trophy at Orchomenos in Boeotia⁶ (Fig. 1),

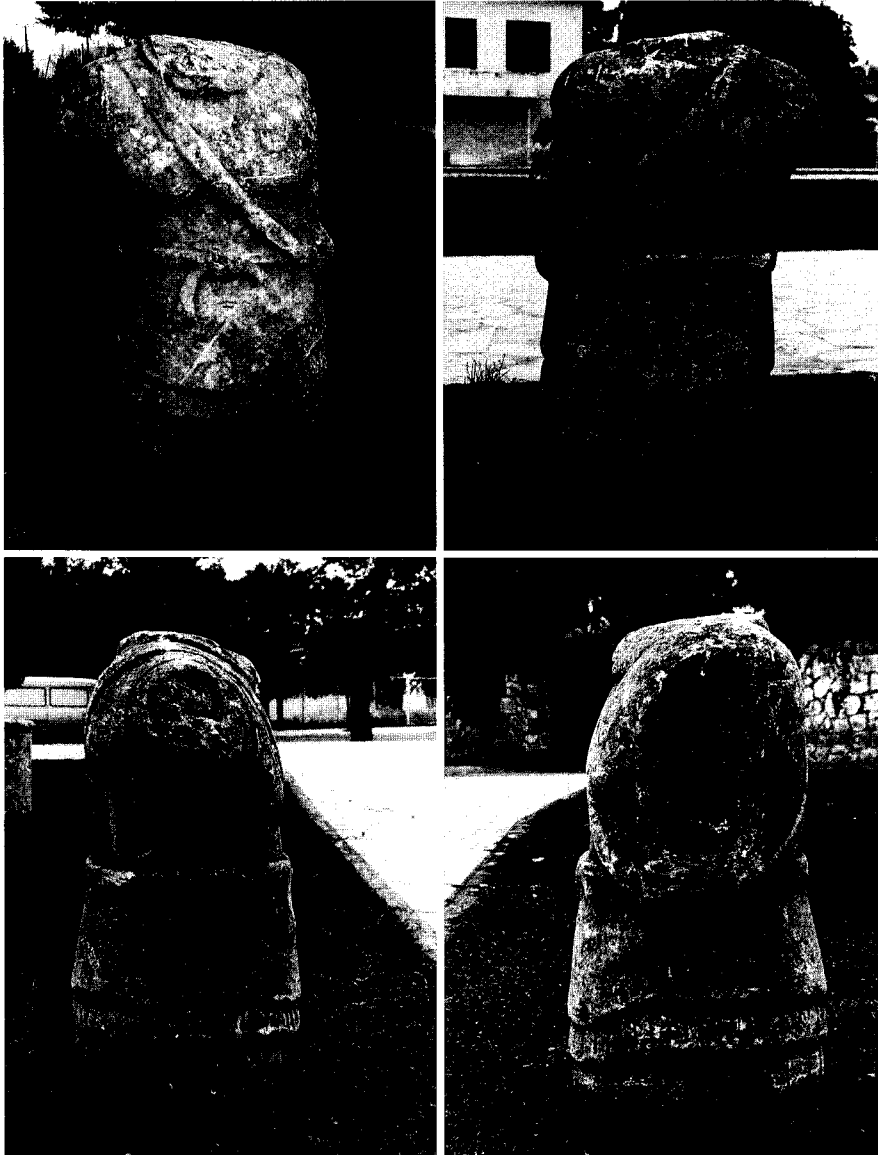
1 Cf. the representation on an Attic *pelike* in Boston, Ducrey 1985:273 fig. 181.

2 Kaeser 1987:233f. figs. 9,10 published a trophy kept at the Munich Antikensammlungen (inv. 15032). The pole with a roughly carved face at the upper end has the height of 2,40 m. The weapons are a muscle cuirass and a helmet of Pilos type. The piece is said to have come from southern Italy, but it remains unclear whether the wooden stake really dates back to the fourth century BC and whether it formed a unit with the weapons in antiquity.

3 E.g. the bases inv. 3173 and 4070 in the Acropolis museum: Kosmopoulou 2002:69f., 175ff. number 13, 15.

4 E.g. a stater from Lampsakos (fourth century BC), showing Nike fixing weapons to a *trophaion*: Imhof-Blumer 1871:28ff. no. 61, Lonis 1979:252 fig. 20.

5 Gansiniec 1955:143 and Picard 1957:22 call them 'secondary' trophies.



1 a—d. Orchomenos, stone trophy (photo by the author).

others include such an imitation in a larger architectural frame, enriched by sculpture. The earliest example for this are the trophies at Marathon and Salamis, as we

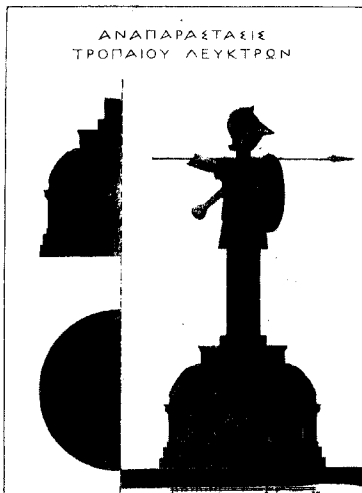
6 Camp *et al.* 1992:448f. fig. 6. Another from the necropolis of Rhodes: Maiuri 1932:57-60 fig. 28-30, Gergel 1991:243f. fig. 12.

will see below, and the best preserved monument known hitherto has been reconstructed at Leuctra⁷ (Figs. 2-4), but the same features have been used in other trophies up to the colossal monuments of the Roman period.

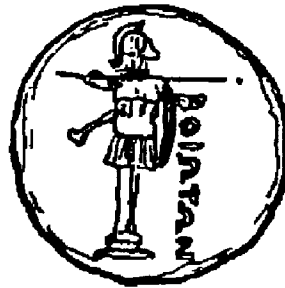
Trophies are special monuments different from victory anathems that were dedicated after battles in sanctuaries.



2. Leuctra, reconstructed monument in the plain below the modern village (photo by the author).



3. Leuctra, reconstruction drawing by Orlandos 1958a:pl. 37.

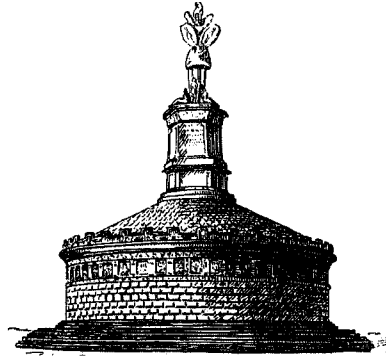


4. Coin of the Boiotian koinon picturing the Leuctra trophy. After Janssen 1957:61 fig. 8.

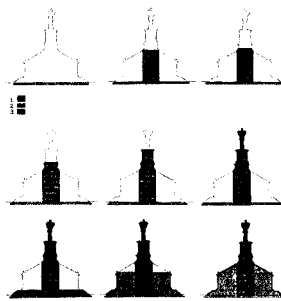
7 Leuctra (Boeotia) see below note 74.

Most of the scholars treating ancient trophies have used the written source material to study their rôle in ancient warfare, their nature as symbols of victory, or their character as monuments, where ritual offerings were made.

The first articles by A. Reinach, K. Woelke and the three monographs that were dedicated to trophies in the 1950s by Z. Gansiniec, A.J. Janssen, and Ch. Picard, mainly concentrated on the Roman trophies. Two relatively well preserved and monumental Roman trophies have been identified by their inscriptions and were studied to some detail: the Tropaeum Alpium at La Turbie, erected by Augustus for his victories over the Alpien tribes in 7/6 BC⁸ and Trajan's trophy erected at Adamklissi in Romania for his victory over the Dacians (Figs. 5-7).⁹



5. Adamklissi, reconstruction drawing of the trophy. After Reinach 1913:fig. 7123.



6. Adamklissi, elevation cut after Benndorf-Tocilescu pl. IV.

8 The Tropaeum Alpium was erected on a summit close to the via Iulia leading from the Italian to Gallic provinces. The monument stands on the very borderline. The overall height of the monument was 50 m. Lamboglia 1964:fig. 27, 28, Mouchat 1995:30-33.

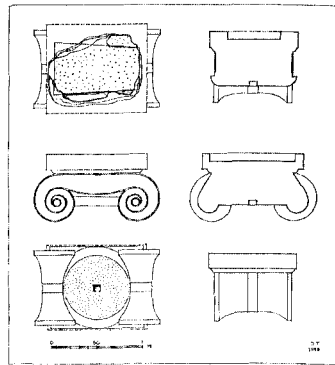
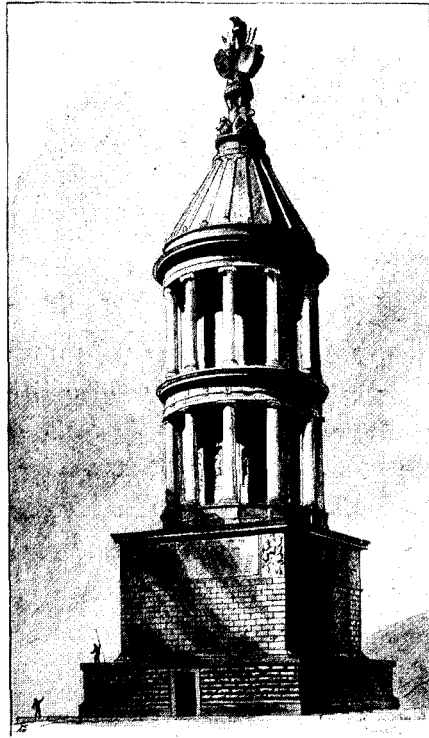
9 Adamklissi (107/8 AD): Florescu 1965, Amiotti 1990:207-13. Augustus' victory monument at Nikopolis, although not fully excavated yet, seems to have had a completely different layout. The reasons for this will have to be discussed once the monument is published. For the time being see Zachos 2001.

7. La Turbie, *Tropaeum Alpium*, reconstruction drawing after Reinach 1913:512 fig. 7122.

On Greek trophies, first A. Orlandos has to be mentioned, who worked for many years on his reconstruction of the trophy for the victory at Leuctra, before the final erection of the restored monument in the plain below the modern village was achieved (Fig. 2).¹⁰

In 1966 E. Vanderpool identified the remnants of a monumental ionic column found near Marathon as part of the trophy erected by the Athenians after their victory in 490 BC. L. Beschi in a recent article published evidence confirming this conjecture (Fig. 9).¹¹ Beschi also closely revised the remains of the trophies erected over the Persians in Attica.

Other trophy monuments have been identified recently through their inscriptions, e.g. the trophy from Kara Tobe (dating to 113/112 BC) found near the lake Kerkinitis on the Crimean peninsula (Vinogradov and Heinen 1997:493 fig. on p. 498 and pl. 34, 1) and the trophy erected by Sulla at Chaironeia in 86 BC (Fig. 10).¹²

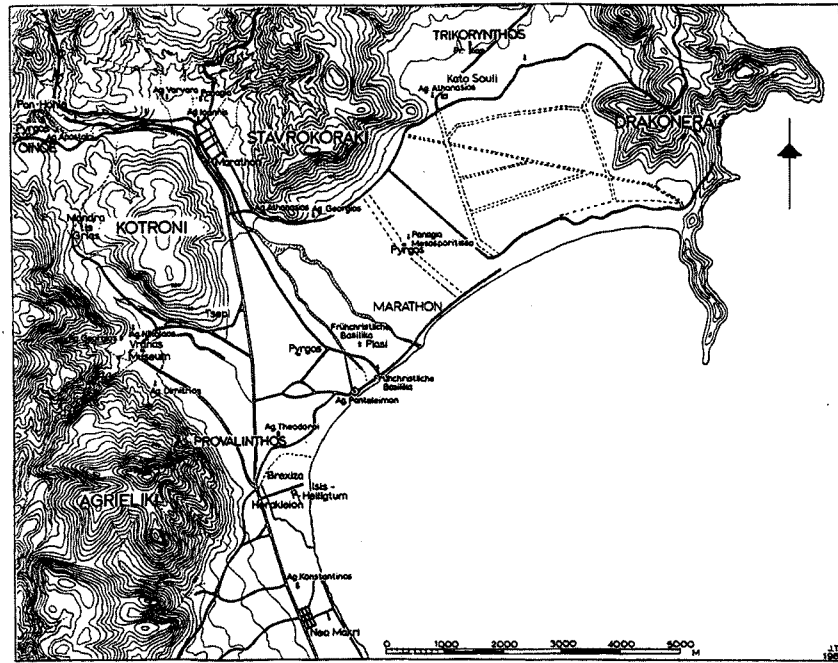


8 a-b. Marathon, column of the trophy, reconstruction by Petrakos 1995:29 fig. 8.

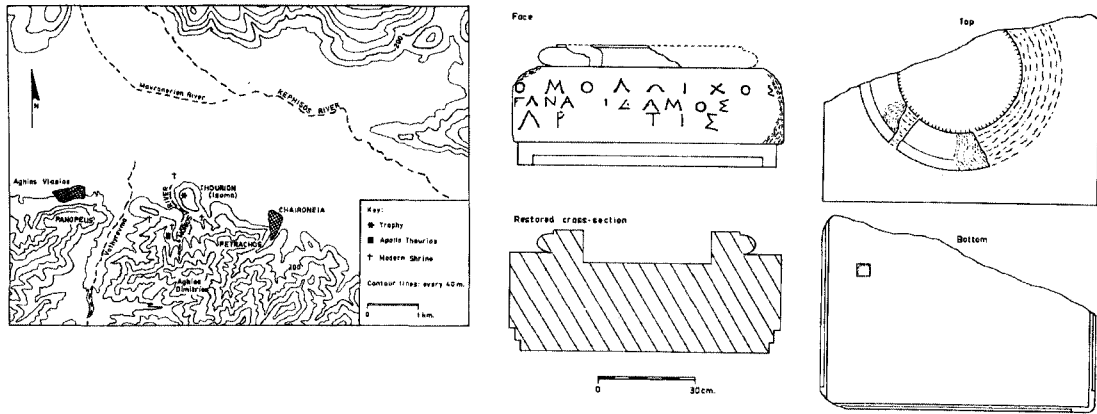
10 See below note 74.

11 Raubitschek 1940:53-59, Vanderpool 1966:93-106, Travlos 1988:254 fig. 315, 316, Petrakos 1995:27ff. fig. 8, Beschi 2002:52ff.

12 Camp *et al.* 1992:443ff.



9. Marathon, plan of the plain, after Travlos 1988:fig. 271.



10 a-b. Chaironeia, plan and fragment of the trophy by Sulla (86 BC) after Camp et al. 1992:fig. 2.

The monuments

The first trophies we know of are the ones erected for the Persian victories at Marathon (Fig. 8),¹³ Salamis¹⁴ and Psyttaleia¹⁵ which were regarded by the Athenians as theirs (e.g. Plut. *Vit. Arist.* 16, 4). At Plataiai, both Athenians and Spartans erected a trophy, maybe a sign of emerging rivalries.¹⁶ Another trophy was erected in 480 BC at Delphi,¹⁷ after the Persian attack there had come to a standstill because of a landslide.

The term τροπή for the moment in battle, when one side gains the advantage and the fighting order of the opposing side dissolves, occurs for the first time in the early fifth century.¹⁸ In Aesch. *Sept.* 276f., Eteokles vows to the gods to sacrifice animals, to dedicate spoils in the temples and to erect trophies for the gods, if victory be granted him. The erection of trophies is mentioned here as a separate act, different from the dedication of the spoils in the temple.

Contemporary with the first introduction of trophies, the dedication of masses of weapons from spoils in sanctuaries, that had been common practice through the Archaic period, almost came to an end, as can be seen by the much reduced number of weapons dedicated in the sanctuaries of Olympia, Isthmia, Delphi or Dodona during the fifth century.¹⁹

No doubt the victories in the Persian wars played an important rôle in the development of the custom. The help of the gods was considered necessary in every victory. Therefore, an immediate thank offering had to be made. The trophy as representation of the helping god was the place where offerings could be made immediately on the battle field, as was the case at Marathon.

There are trophies mentioned in the pre-Persian period, even mythological trophies said to have been erected by Heracles or Pollux,²⁰ but all of them are later applications. No trophies are known before the Persian wars.

Thus, the first version of the story of the Spartan Othryades fighting the Argives in the Thyreatis ca. 550 BC, given by Herodotos (1.82), does mention that the severely wounded man collected weapons from the enemy and thus claimed the

13 Cf. note 11.

14 Beschi 2002:68ff.

15 Plut. *Vit. Arist.* 9.2.

16 Plut. *Vit. Arist.* 20.3—Pausanias saw a trophy 15 stadia (πέντε στάδια καὶ δέκα) above the city (9.2.6).

17 Diod. Sic. 11.14.3-4; Seiler 1986:70, Bommelaer and Laroche 1991:64 no. 34 fig. 4, 5, 13.

18 Franz 2002:237ff.

19 Jackson 1991:228-49.

20 E.g. Heracles's trophies: Soph. *Trach.* 751 (for the victory over the father of Iole); Isoc. 5.112 (for his victory at Troy); Paus. 3.10.6 (over Hippokoon); Pollux' trophy over Lynkeus: Paus. 3.14.7.

victory for his party, but no mention is made of Othryades erecting a trophy. In later versions of the story, composed when trophies were common practice, this myth is altered: now Othryades erects a tropaion with the dedicatory inscription to Zeus Tropaios written in his own blood;²¹ others sources add the standard formula: Ἰακεδαίμονιοι κατ' Ἀργείων.²²

The process of erecting primary trophies

When a battle is decided, the defeated party pulls back or flees, while the victor plunders the weapons of the enemy dead and puts up a trophy with them. It can be observed in most cases that the victorious soldiers are doing this together (τρόπαιον ἔστησαν), but there are cases where the expression is used in singular form (τρόπαιον ἔστησεν) in connection with the name of the commander in charge. It is worth noting that in greek the same word, στήσαι, is normally used both for primary and secondary trophies.²³

The erection of a tropaion by one party means that it is in full command of the battle site. This is proven by the mere fact that it collects undisturbed its dead for burial (cf. Plut. *Vit. Nic.* 6.5). The defeated have to accept that their casualties are being despoiled of their weapons. They send heralds to the winning party asking for the right to collect their casualties under truce.²⁴ This is usually granted, if they accept their defeat.²⁵

The victorious soldiers take a set of these weapons, *i.e.* helmet, shield, spear, and greaves (in some cases also a hoplite's chiton and mantle), in order to erect the tropaion, the symbol confirming their victory. The weapons, if possible splendid ones taken from outstanding men,²⁶ are hung or nailed onto a wooden pole erected for this purpose or to a tree trunk. Plut. *Vit. Ages.* 19.2 testifies that an *aulos* is played during the erection of a trophy.

21 Plut. *Mor.* 306b; Lukian, *Charon* 24; cf. Phaklaris 1987:101-19.

22 Stob. *Flor.* 3.7.68; *FGrH* iv a (1999) 241f. 1078 F 2. On the inscriptions on trophies see below.

23 Picard 1957:20 tried to establish a difference between the terms (ἀνα)στήσαι and ἐγείρειν, claiming the one was used for the primary and the other for the monument type. But the only evidence he mentions is Herodianus from the third century AD. This can hardly be taken as a confirmation for the Greek Classical period.

24 According to Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.14. the Spartans after their defeat at Leuctra, at first considered to force the recovery of their dead, in order to block the erection of a trophy, but after counting their casualties, decided to send heralds.

25 Thuc. 4.97: after the battle at Delion, the Thebans erected a trophy over the Athenians. The Athenians sent a herald but at first they were denied the right to collect their casualties, because the Boeotians wanted them to leave the Delion sanctuary.

26 *E.g.* Thuc. 4.12 and 14 relates that the shield the Spartan leader Brasidas had lost in battle at Sphacteria was used to erect the tropaion.



11. Athens, Kerameikos, inv. P 1534.
Three-sided marble base for a trophy
(photo by the author).

Another tropaion type is mentioned by Xen. *An.* 4.7.25f. and represented several times in monuments, so that its existence cannot be doubted:²⁷ the weapons, mostly shields, are heaped up in a pile (on the top of which, additionally, the tropaion pole stands). A triangular marble basis from the Kerameikos with round shields on three sides and holes on the top that may have been used for the setting up of a tropaion monument in bronze may be quoting this type (Fig. 11).²⁸ Also, the decoration of the frieze above the marble monument at Leuctra with nine round hoplite shields refers to such a monument (Figs. 2 and 3), and a sculpted tropaion in the Kos museum consists of the weapon heap proper.²⁹

27 Picard 1957:20, Lonis 1979:129.

28 Stikas 1961:177f. figs. 31, 31a.

29 Kos, museum, inv. 112.

Greek art developed several types of representations showing the construction of a tropaion. Both on vase-paintings and in reliefs of the late fifth and fourth centuries, Nike plays a central part: the personification of victory either brings weapons to the pole or nails the weapons onto it using a hammer or a stone.³⁰

When are tropaia erected?

In many cases the erection of trophies some time after the battle is recorded, e.g. on the day after battle, if fighting continued until sunset. The tropaion is erected then the next morning.³¹ The reason seems to be that the visibility of the trophy was of immediate importance for the recognition of the victory.

In other cases trophies were erected even days later. Plut. *Vit. Tim.* 29.4 reports that a trophy was erected only on the third day after battle because of the abundance of spoils taken from the opponent.

Restrictions for durable trophies

A difference between victories by Greeks over Barbarians and victories by Greeks over Greeks has been formulated, stating that while the tropaia over the Persians were intended to be visible symbols of the Greek victories, and quoted for many generations,³² trophies over Greeks should be primary ones only.

The Syracusan Nikolaos is quoted by Diod. Sic. 13.24.5 as speaking up after the defeat of the Athenians in 415 BC, stating that no permanent trophies should be erected in order not to create constant reminders of conflicts. Another source for this is Cicero (*Inv. rhet.* 2.23.69f.):

The Thebans, having defeated the Lacedaemonians in battle, set up a trophy in bronze. They were accused before the Amphiktyons, that is, before the common council of Greece. The charge is: "It was not right." The reply is: "It was right." The question is: "Was it right?" The defendant's reason is: "By our valour we won such glory in war that we wished to leave a perpetual memorial of it to our descendants." The counter-argument is: "Still it is not right for Greeks to set up a permanent memorial of their quarrels with Greeks." (transl. H.M. Hubbell)

This sounds like a moral guideline and indicates that there may have been a moral obligation, but no written law.

30 E.g. Kosmopoulou 2002:69f. 177-81 number 13, 15, 19, Imhof-Blumer 1871.

31 Diod. Sic. 13.47.1.

32 E.g. Ar. *Eq.* 1334; Pl. *Menex.* 240D, et al.

Lonis already argued convincingly that this 'rule' is an invention of the fourth century BC, when the unity of the Greeks became a major theme.³³ He quoted a number of permanent trophies that had been erected at the end of the fifth and during the fourth century. The argument that there should be no permanent memorial of the inner-Greek quarrels, is obsolete, given the anathems dedicated for these victories in sanctuaries, like the Nike of Paionios, the painted versions of various battles or even the historical reports written by Thucydides and Xenophon describing every victory and every battle in detail. Consequently, if the victory achieved was an important one, permanent trophies may have been erected by Greeks over Greeks.

Number of trophaia

Normally, one primary trophaion was set up for each victory. The counting of victories of famous generals by numbering the trophies they erected was common practice. Thus, we know that Pericles could claim nine trophies, and Demosthenes (20.78) has the detailed information on Chabrias' victories read in front of the court:

He alone of all our generals never lost a city, a fort, a ship, or a man, as long as he led you; and none of your enemies can boast a single trophy won from you and him (οὐδ' ἔστιν οὐδενὶ τῶν ὑμετέρων ἐχθρῶν τρόπαιον οὐδὲν ἀφ' ὑμῶν τε κάκεινου), while you possess many won from many enemies while he was your general. ... the clerk shall read to you an inventory of all the ships he took and where he took each, the number of cities and the amount of treasure captured, and the place where he set up each trophy (καὶ τῶν τροπαιῶν οὐ ἕκαστον). Read. (translation by J.H. Vince)

The keeping of records on who erected trophies, and when, was necessary because the commanders with such achievements had the right to meals in the prytaneion, while the state cared for their children and grandchildren according to an inscription found on the Acropolis.³⁴

There are separate monuments for fights on land and on sea. For the victory at Salamis, for instance, the Athenians erected one trophy for the sea battle on the Kynosoura-peninsula on Salamis and another one for Aristeides' victory, which seized the island of Psyttaleia from the hands of the Persians.³⁵ Two trophies also were erected by Numenios, satrap and strategos under Antiochos IV Epiphanes,

³³ Lonis 1979:135.

³⁴ IG II² 832 line 11-22 (229/8 BC).

³⁵ Plut. *Vit. Arist.* 9.2.

for his victories in land and sea battles over the Persians at Carmania in southern Babylonia in the late second century BC, one for Zeus and the other for Poseidon.³⁶

In rare cases, more than one trophy is erected, because both parties claim the victory. This happened e.g. in 433 in the battle of Sybota, where both Corinthians and Kerkyraeans (who had been fighting together with the Athenians) erected a tro-paion, because both had recovered their dead and some spoils (Thuc. 1.54).³⁷ It is therefore clear that the free recovery of casualties and the plundering of the enemy dead were seen as reasons to claim victory and proceed with the erection of a trophy.

Decision over the spot

Landscape is taken into consideration as well as the circumstances of the battle before a trophy is erected.

The τροπή was the decisive moment in battle, when the fighting order of one party dissolved and the men took to flight for some reason.³⁸ Some tro-paia were erected on the spot where the enemy turned around and took to flight,³⁹ others at the place of the first collision.⁴⁰

But this obviously was not the only consideration. Especially if there were plans to erect a permanent trophy after the battle, the spot selected had to be seen from afar or by as many as possible. This also must have been the purpose of fixing an inscription on trophies. Therefore, depending on where a battle took place, and what its significance was, we have evidence that the trophy was set up on a hill above the battle field,⁴¹ in or just outside a sanctuary,⁴² in front of city gates,⁴³ and along the main arterial roads (that is, in the neighborhood of the tombs lining these roads), or even within the city.⁴⁴ Another possibility was that the trophy was erected on the borders of a territory.

36 Plin. *HN* 6.152.

37 See also: Thuc. 1.105.6, 2.92 (battle of Naupaktos) and Thuc. 7.34.

38 Franz 2002:309ff.

39 Serv. *Ad. Aen.* 10.775; Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 19.5f.

40 Xen. *An.* 6.5.32.

41 Paus. 9.2.6.

42 Plut. *Vit. Ages.* 19.2 (just outside the temple of Athena Itonia in Koroneia); Olympia: Paus. 5.27.11 and 6.2.8; Argos, sanctuary of Apollon Lykeios: Paus. 2.20.1.

43 E.g. Haliartos: Trophy of the Thebans and people from Haliartos against Spartans. The Spartan general Lysandros fell in this battle: Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.19; Korinth: Xen. *Hell.* 4.4.8; Paus. 3.24.6 (Las) and others.

44 According to Xenophon, *Hell.* 7.4.14 there was a trophy on the Agora of Elis set up for the Elean cavalry victory over the Arcadians. At Sparta, the sanctuary of Zeus Tro-paios was next to the tombs of the Iamids as well as the Hieron for the two bravest Spartan fighters at Thermopylae, Maron and Alpheios: Paus. 3.12.9.

It is not quite clear in which cases the Greeks decided for the erection of a secondary trophy not on the battlefield but on a prominent spot nearby in order to achieve greater visibility. But there are cases where the actual site of the battle was far away from the spot where the trophy was erected. For example, the trophy the Athenians cavalry erected over the Macedonian Pleistarchos in 319 BC: it is mentioned by Pausanias 1.15.1 as standing on an arch in the Agora near the stoa Poikile, while the encounter had taken place near the city walls (Fig. 12).⁴⁵ The reason for the selection of this spot lay most likely in the fact that the Athenian cavalry was using the area called the 'herms' on the north-western edge of the Agora as a starting point for their training program and their processions (Xen. *Hippiarchikos* 3.2; Mnesimachus *apud* Athenaios ix 402f.). The trophy was thus best visible for them and may have served as an incitement for the younger. For the trophies of sea battles, a prominent spot close to the site was selected, if possible, on a promontory. This was the case at Salamis (Figs. 13. 14.),⁴⁶ Abydos,⁴⁷ the island of Syme⁴⁸ and other places.

'Clusters'

In some cases, if there were already trophies of former victories nearby a battlefield, the same spot was picked again for installing a new one. Thus, e.g. in the narrows between Sestos and Abydos in the Propontis, there was a site on the Abydos side where several trophies for marine victories stood.⁴⁹ Also, toponyms like 'Tropaia' in Psophis mentioned by Pausanias 8.25.1 might refer to such places.

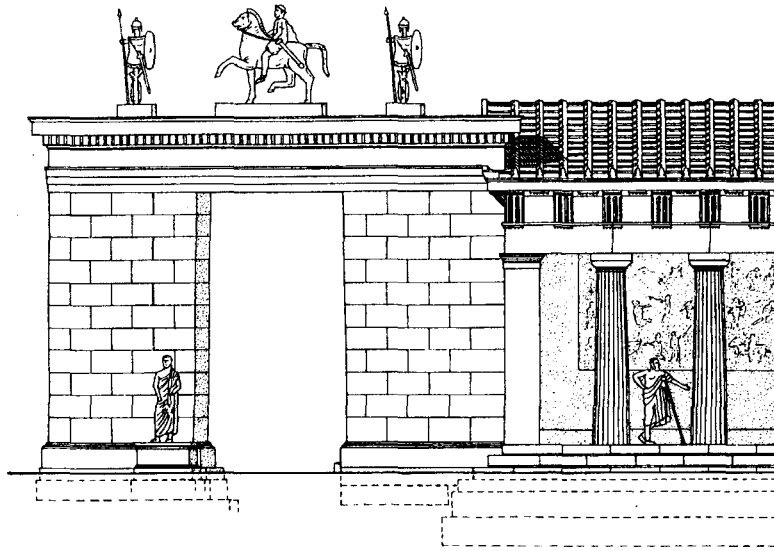
45 The gate on which the trophy was set up has been reconstructed using two massive foundations to the west of the Stoa Poikile by Shear 1984:1ff. esp. 23 fig. 12, Camp 1990:105ff. fig. 60, 61. Commenting on this part of my lecture, Dr. J. Binder has doubted the correct interpretation of the stoa as the Poikile, as well as the reconstruction and date of the gate on the two pillars. She argues that the Poikile must have been farther to the east, whereas the stoa to the north of the Greek agora could be identified as the Herm Stoa. For our context, this would mean that the spot where the trophy was erected was still farther from the battlefield. The reconstruction drawing provided by Shear (here, Fig. 12) is hypothetical in doubling the trophy for symmetry and posing the statue of a rider separately in the center of the arch. Also critical of this reconstruction: Maul-Mandelarz 1990:199 n. 856. While Travlos 1988:25 fig. 36 has argued similarly to J. Binder, identifying the excavated part of the Stoa Poikile with the Stoa of the Herms, Rückert 1998:90 doubts that there existed a special Stoa of the Herms and argues that any of the Stoai of Zeus Eleutherios, Basileios and Poikile may have been called 'Herms' Stoa, because there were so many herms standing in front of them.

46 Beschi 2002:68ff. fig. 10.

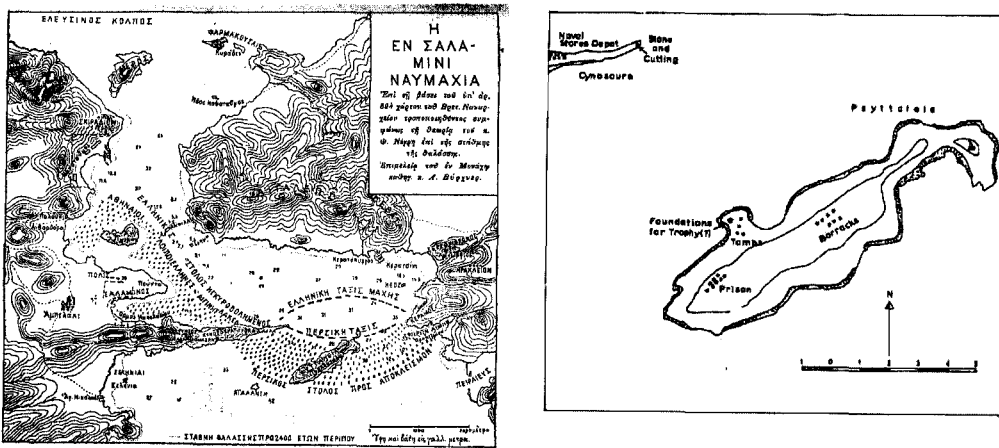
47 Diod. Sic. 13.40.6 and 13.47.1; Krentz 1989:10-14.

48 Falkner 1995:121.

49 See note 48.



12. Athens, Agora, reconstruction of the trophy erected over Pleistarchos in 319 BC. After Shear 1984:23 fig. 12.



13. Salamis, plan of the battle field after RE I A 2 (1920) 1826-31 s.v. Salamis



14. Salamis, Cape Kynosoura, the remains on the site (photo by the author)

Trophies close to the burials of the casualties

The Persian trophies at Marathon and Salamis were also in the vicinity of the tombs of the casualties. The tumuli of the casualties and the burial of Miltiades are mentioned as being close to the Marathon trophy. At Salamis there is a large tumulus on the north side of the Kynosura peninsula, at the cape on which the trophy stood (Fig. 13).⁵⁰ It should be the same tumulus mentioned in *SEG* 26:121, line 33 next to the trophy of Themistokles. The *epeboi* presented yearly offerings at both the tomb and the trophy.⁵¹ At Adamklissi the burial mound of the fallen has likewise been found near the trophy.⁵²

50 Marathon: Paus. 1.32.4f. For a critical review of the identification of the tombs: Mersch 1995:55-64, Mersch 1996:178f. The tumulus at Salamis: *SEG* 26:121 line 33, Culley 1975:213, Goette 1993:259f.

51 *IG* I³ 1 no. 255.

52 Amiotti 1990:207-13.

The trophy inscriptions

Inscriptions form an integral part of trophies of either kind. Their function was first, to give information about the battle, *i.e.* information about the monument, by whom and why it was erected. Secondly, to praise the achievements of the fighters, whose glory reflects back on the city or tribe they fought for.

There are two kinds of sources for the study of tropaion inscriptions: there are seldom original inscriptions preserved on stones;⁵³ more often there are trophy inscriptions quoted by ancient authors or copied by early travellers.⁵⁴ From these, we can deduce the components of which a standard trophy inscription consisted:

1. Name of the battle and topographical information where it took place (in the plain, on a hill, on the bank of a river, *etc.*)⁵⁵
2. Names of both parties⁵⁶ and sometimes the name of the leading general.⁵⁷
3. Dedication to a god,⁵⁸ in many cases Zeus Tropaios (Δὲ Τροπαίω).⁵⁹

The standard information can then be enriched by specific details about the battles and the circumstances that led to victory, and even names of outstanding fighters (*e.g.* Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 19.5f., naming Homoloichos and Anaxidamos as the best fighters).

A trophy in the sanctuary of Athena Pronoia at Delphi had an inscribed epigram that is quoted by Diod. Sic. 11.14.4. Inscriptions have given the clue to the latest identifications of tropaion monuments in Chaironeia (Fig. 10 a, b)⁶⁰ and Kara Tobe.⁶¹ Sometimes inscriptions were renewed later, like the one copied from one of the blocks of the Marathon trophy by Fauvel.⁶²

53 *IG VII* 2462 (Leuctra); *Campet et al.* 1992:445 fig. 2 (Chaironeia); *CIL V* 7817 (La Turbie); *CIL III* 12 467 (Adamklissi).

54 *E.g.* Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 19.6 (Chaironeia); Plin. *HN* 3.136ff. (Tropaion Alpium).

55 Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 19.6f.: one trophy Sulla erected at Chaironeia was in the plain on the battlefield near the brook Molos, the second one on the hill Thurion, where the Roman camp had been.

56 Plut. *Mor.* 306c: Ρωμαῖοι κατὰ Σαμνιτῶν; Paus. 5.27.11.

57 Plut. *Mor.* 318d quotes Sulla's full name as given on the trophies of Chaironeia: Lucius Cornelius Sulla Epaphroditus.

58 Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 19.5f. with a dedication to Ares, Nike and Aphrodite.

59 Plut. *Mor.* 306b gives a variation: Δὲ Τροπαιούχω. The Roman counterpart of Zeus Tropaiouchos was Jupiter Feretrius.

60 *Camp et al.* 1992:443ff.

61 Vinogradov and Heinen 1997:493ff. esp. fig. on p. 498 pl. 34, 1, 2.

62 Beschi 2002:61.

*The sacredness of a tropaion*⁶³

Trophies seem to have had a form of transitional sacredness that faded together with the wooden pole. It was forbidden to destroy any trophies unless they had been erected without justification.⁶⁴ Primary trophies, therefore, may have been left to decay, but they were never removed because they were sacred to the helping god, in many cases Zeus Tropaïos.⁶⁵

The sacredness also applied to the permanent monuments, as can be deduced from Vitruvius 2.8.15, who reports a trophy at Rhodes:

Then Artemisia took Rhodes, killed the leading citizens, and set up a trophy of her victory in the city of Rhodes, having two bronze statues made, one of the city of Rhodes, the other in her own likeness. She had the latter figured as setting a brand upon the city of Rhodes. But afterwards the Rhodians, being restrained by a religious scruple because it is forbidden for trophies once dedicated to be removed, erected a building round the spot and protected it with a Greek outpost to prevent anyone seeing, and ordered this to be called 'unapproachable' (*abaton*). (transl. F. Granger)

In 353 BC, queen Artemisia of Halikarnassos, after conquering the city of Rhodes, had a *tropaion* put up in the city ('*tropaeum in urbe Rhodo suae victoriae constituit*'). It obviously was a complex structure, because part of it was a statue group made in bronze, representing Artemisia herself, brandishing a personification of the city of Rhodes. After getting rid of Artemisia, the Rhodians could not remove or destroy the *tropaion* nor the statues (they were obviously a part of it), because it was a sacrilege to destroy consecrated trophies ('*nefas est tropaea dedicata removeri*'). So the Rhodians built walls around the area and put up a Greek guard station, so that nobody could see it, and they called the area '*abaton*.'

Lonis has argued that trophies were always representations of Zeus Tropaïos.⁶⁶ While I can see that the trophies obviously became identified with the gods and, in some cases, received regular offerings, it does not seem convincing that it was always Zeus Tropaïos, since there are many other deities with the same epithet.⁶⁷

Yearly sacrifices have been performed at the Persian trophies: according to the Hellenistic inscription *IG II² 1028.27*, the Athenian *epheboi* set out every year on

63 Lonis 1979:268.

64 An unjustified trophy erected by the Athenians over the Spartans at Panormos near Miletus was torn down by the Milesians: Thuc. 8.24.1f. The reason given is that the Athenians did not really attain command of the area by this victory.

65 Picard 1957:17f. 26ff. Eur. *El.* 671f.; Paus. 3.12.9. For Zeus Tropaïos cf. Pritchett 1974:246-75. Plut. *Mor. Quaest. Rom.* 273cd.

66 Lonis 1979:136ff.

67 Picard 1957:24.

the anniversary of the battle, the 16th of Munichyon (Plut. *Vit. Lys.* 15.1) for a collective trip to Salamis in order to sacrifice at the trophy there to Zeus Tropaïos.⁶⁸ Yearly ceremonies were also performed at the Marathon trophy: in an inscription of the fifth cent. BC from Chalkis, sacrifices for Zeus Tropaïos are mentioned (*IG* I³ 1 no. 255 line 11).⁶⁹

Permanent trophy monuments

Durable monuments in stone or bronze were erected for historical victories whose long-term results were anticipated by the end of the battle. Both at Marathon and at Salamis marble columns formed an important part of the trophy monument. It is not clear, so far, what the architectural framework was—if there was one at all. For instance it is unclear whether there was an enclosure wall encircling a wider area around the monument or not. In the case of Marathon, alterations of later generations (fourth century down to Roman times) obviously included enclosure walls around the trophy, built from orthostates according to a drawing by Fauvel and quoted by Beschi. One of the blocks bears the inscription ΤΡΟΠΑΙΟΝ, confirming their connection with the monument.⁷⁰

It remains unclear what kind of monuments the columns really supported. One is inclined to think of an anthropomorphic trophy, but Beschi illustrated a fragment of a marble statue representing a seated person and reiterated the idea of G. Despinis that it once stood on top of the column.⁷¹ On the other hand it also seems possible that this statue formed part of the monument, but was placed somewhere else and not on the column.

It therefore seems likely that, since the time of the Persian trophies, there were also sculptures enriching the ensemble of a trophaion, a fact proven for the fourth century for the trophaion of Artemisia at Rhodes (see above) and common still for the Roman monumental trophies. There are other durable monuments mentioned in the fifth century:

In 420, the Eleans put up a bronze trophy over the Spartans in the center of the Altis at Olympia, where the battle had taken place. Pausanias mentions the inscription and says that the sculpture was made by Daidalos from Sikyon.⁷²

68 Cf. *IG* II² 1006 line 71 (= *SEG* 19 (1963) 40 no. 108).

69 Beschi 2002:68 n. 41 (on the identification of the Kynosoura peninsula at Marathon). For regular cult at the Plataiai trophies: Ducrey 1979:275ff.

70 Beschi 2002:60 fig. 5.

71 Beschi 2002:53 fig. 3.

72 Paus. 3.8.4 (battle); 5.27.11 (trophy in the Altis); 6.2.8 (work of Daidalos from Sikyon).

In 405, the Ephesians erected a bronze trophy over the Athenians. It became a constant reminder of disgrace for the Athenians, who were commanded in the battle by Thrasyllus (Plut. *Vit. Alc.* 29.1 and Xen. *Hell.* 1.2.10).

Leuctra

A new type of trophy has been introduced into research through the reconstruction of the monument at Leuctra by Orlandos.⁷³ First fragments and thoughts published in the 1920s led to the reconstruction shown in Fig. 3. Orlandos finally completed his work by reconstructing the monument somewhat different in the 1960s, with further original stones found and included in 2002 (Fig. 2).

The monument at Leuctra is a circular tower (3,38 m in diameter) erected on three steps. The height of the tower could not be established, because there were not enough original stones. It was therefore restored in proportion. It is crowned by a Doric frieze, followed by a frieze of nine large round shields⁷⁴ and a circular balustrade.

Excavations carried out in the area brought to light some scattered conglomerate blocks, but no foundations *in situ*. So we have no information on whether or not it stood within a defining space.

The interior of the monument is hollow, ἀναμφιβόλως πρὸς ὑποδοχὴν τοῦ πυρήνος τοῦ χαλκίνου τροπαίου—without any doubt for the reception of the [foundation for the] bronze trophy,' as Orlandos remarked.⁷⁵

The bronze tropaion mentioned in the texts and shown on coins of the Boeotian Koinon (Fig. 4) must therefore have once stood on a pillar-like base in the center of the monument, rising high above the balustrade.⁷⁶

The form of this monument is distinctive, the ground plan can be reconstructed as a round tower with a massive central base carrying the tropaion.

Few analogies are known in architecture, and yet it does not seem likely that the monument at Leuctra was an invention for that occasion. It rather must have

73 IG VII 2462; Diod. Sic. 15.53-56; Paus. 4.32.4ff. Fragments of the monument have been found in 1923 ca. 20 minutes to the north of the actual position on a small hill, next to the ruins of a church. Orlandos 1922:38ff. *id.* 1958a:43f. pl. 34. 36; *id.* 1958b:48-52 fig. 49-54; *id.* 1961a:225 pl. 179; *id.* 1961a:229ff. fig. 245. At Leuctra, a trick was used in order to break the fighting spirit of the Spartans: as recommended by the oracle of Trophonius, Epaminondas ordered Xenokrates to erect a trophy *before* the battle, using the shield of the Messenian Aristomenes, taken from the Trophonion at Lebadeia in a place where the Spartans could see it. The Thebans thus announced they would win from the very start of the battle. The Spartans, recognizing the shield, interpreted it as Aristomenes himself, fighting in the front row. They were much disturbed by the bad omen and this led consequently to their defeat. Beister 1973:65ff.

74 Diameter of the shields: 0,97 m.

75 Orlandos 1958a:43.

76 Reinach 1913:503 fig. 7107, Janssen 1957:61 fig. 8.

stood in line with an older tradition, the type and layout being developed much earlier.⁷⁷

That ancient art was rather conservative with regard to the use of specific architectural types, especially in combination with cult buildings, can be deduced by comparing the main features of the two colossal Roman trophies that are preserved today: both the trophies from La Turbie and Adamklissi have a cylindrical central tower set on top of a quadrangular substructure. Each is crowned by a central pillar carrying the anthropomorphic stone trophy (Figs. 5-7).⁷⁸

The question that arises is therefore: were there any typological forerunners to the Leuctra monument?

Kerameikos

Situated next to the third Horos stone on the left side of the Kerameikos street about 156 m outside the Dipylon gate, there is the so-called 'State burial on the Third Horos' (Figs. 15-17). Though singular in its form and unparalleled as a tomb plot, it always has been interpreted as a burial monument.⁷⁹

The monument has been published in detail by Mallwitz, who also provided the two reconstruction proposals given in Fig. 15.⁸⁰

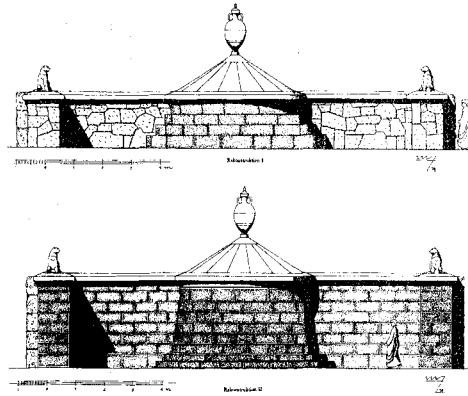
Though part of the monument lies still unexcavated under the Piraeus-street, the excavations since A. Brueckner, who found the monument in 1914, have revealed enough to justify the assumption that the structure was axially symmetric. The restored dimensions are 15, 35 by 5, 5 m. A circular tower, about 6 m in diameter in the upper part, is enclosed by rectangular walls on three sides. The enclosure walls consist of ashlar blocks of conglomerate stone. The façade towards the Kerameikos street was once built in fine limestone, but only the foundations remain. Also, the rear half of the tower is constructed in conglomerate, while the front half was

77 W. Koenigs (1980:52) considered an influence of the circular walls of a tumulus and the weapons heap: 'Bei Denkmälern wie dem Tropaion von Leuctra wird tatsächlich die Grabform und der Waffenhäufen die Gestalt bestimmt haben.'

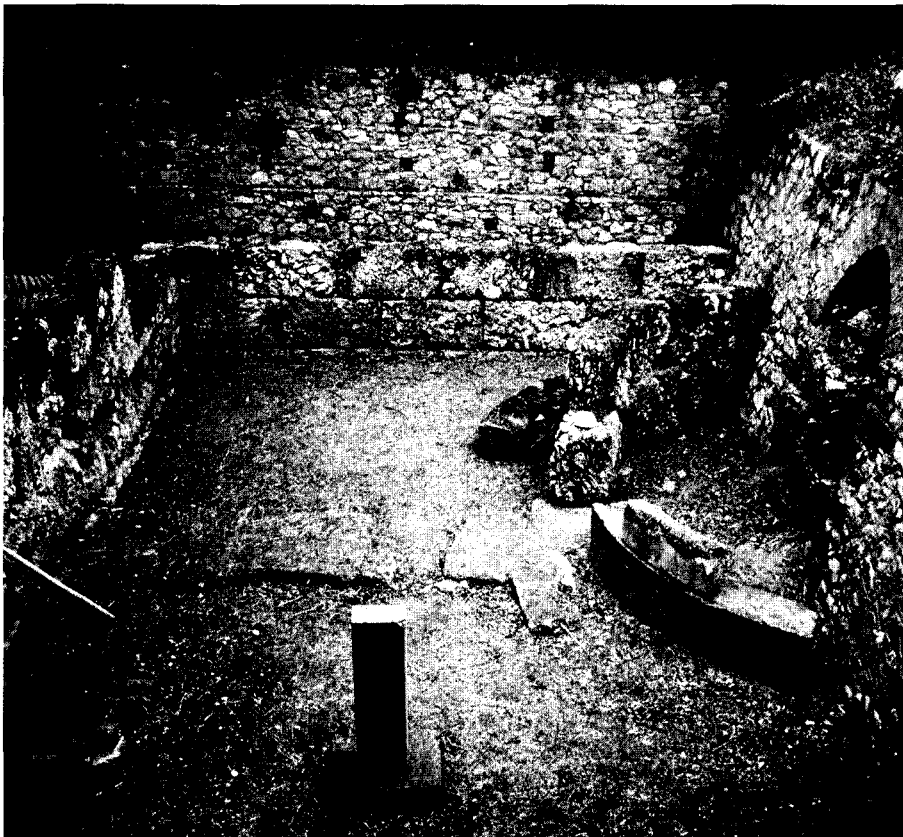
78 See above, notes 8 and 9. There is a controversial discussion on other monuments of this type, like the 8 m high monument on the Panayir Dagħ near Ephesus: Benndorf 1906:143-66 fig. 98-106, pl. 5.

79 Brueckner 1914:94f., *id.* 1915:119 (Chabrias), Gebauer 1940:344. 355ff., Gebauer and Johannes 1942:204. Willemsen 1977:139f. interpreted the monument as the burial of the Olympionikes Lakrates, who is mentioned together with the Spartan casualties in 403 by Xen. *Hell.* 2.4.33; Knigge 1988:163 thought the built 'Tymbos' without a burial could be at the same time cenotaph and Heroon for a man who was buried somewhere else: 'ein Kenotaph und Heroon gleichzeitig für einen ... verschollenen oder andernorts bestatteten Toten.'

80 Mallwitz 1980:99-125 pl. 30-34 Beilage 23-31.



15. Kerameikos, monument on the Third Horos, reconstruction drawings by A Mallwitz 1980:Beilage 29. 30.



16. Kerameikos, monument on the Third Horos (photo by the author).

worked in limestone. A L-shaped wall once ran from the tower towards the enclosure wall, turning there at a 90° angle towards the street. Again, only foundations remain. It formed part of the façade, but there is uncertainty with regard to its height. It closed the area between the street, the enclosure wall and the tower, without concealing the character of the complete monument, dominated by the central tower.

The tower encircles a massive, rectangular base made of conglomerate blocks, five layers of which are preserved. The roof of the tower consisted of trapezoid stone slabs that lean against the central basement with their short side, leaving space in the middle for the central pillar, on which a base for the monument crowning the tower has to be assumed.

The building was erected over three potter's kilns of the late fifth century.⁸¹ The marble sculptures used for the reconstruction of the monument are fragments of a reclining Molossan dog and of a marble vessel. In the reconstruction drawing the vessel has been positioned on the center of the central pillar, where it has been placed after excavation (Fig. 16), while the Molossan fragment is kept in the magazines of the excavation. A close examination of Brueckner's excavation diaries and photographs, where they are first mentioned, shows, however, that these fragments were found in Roman layers. If we add to this Brueckner's remark that during excavation he found a pit filled with marble fragments that he believed belonged to a lime kiln, their connection with the monument becomes quite arbitrary.⁸² The presence of marble sculpture in pieces could be easily explained by the existence of the lime-kiln. The marbles had some impact on the interpretation of the monument, though: understood as funeral sculptures belonging to the monument, they seemed to confirm the identification of the structure as a tomb.

Two tile-covered burials of the Hellenistic period and one sarcophagus-tomb were found inside the enclosure, the latter being placed within the space between the enclosure and the façade walls at a depth of *ca.* 0,50 to 0,60 m from the upper edge of the foundations.⁸³ That is unusually shallow if the burial was contemporaneous with the monument. As P. Valavanis has reasonably argued, the burial can be dated to the second half of the fourth century.⁸⁴

81 Gebauer 1940:357f. fig. 30, Monaco 2000:72ff. 96 pl. 27-29. Stichel 1998:138 remarks that some time has passed between the destruction of the kilns and the erection of the monument. It is not clear, though, how much. Gebauer and Johannes 1942:204.

82 Brueckner, diary V (1914:31f. 36, 37). Excavations conducted by E. Vaziotopoulou-Valavani from the Third Ephorate of Antiquities in Piraeus street in an area just on the other side of the surrounding wall, confirms the existence of lime basins close by. Doubt may also be raised as to whether there was enough space on the wall to place the Molossan dog on it.

83 Gebauer 1940:358-62 fig. 30, 31, 33f. The shallow depth can be used to argue for a separation of monument and tomb, because Gebauer 1940:361 mentions that the enclosure had not been filled up completely with earth.

But the question is whether the sarcophagus belongs to the original structure or not? This is important because the dating of the monument—always seen in connection with the burial—has caused some controversy. One group of scholars dated the tomb to 403, connecting the occupant with the *olympionikes* Lakrates (Willemsen 1977:140) or the oligarch Kritias (Stichel 1998:147-52). Another group of researchers has argued for a date in the second half of the fourth century: Brueckner (1914:94) suggested in his first article, that the monument was the tomb of the general Chabrias, Valavanis (1999:204) the tomb of the general Molossos. Mallwitz, who also dated the monument to the fourth century, posed the question, whether the burial belongs to the monument at all, but decided to argue in favour, although he remarked, that the position is eccentric.⁸⁵ An additional argument for a late date for the monument has always been its 'baroque' appearance, which is thought out of place in the fifth century BC.⁸⁶

Both D. Ohly (1965:325f.: mid fourth century) and F. Willemsen (1977:128) have consulted the street levels for their conflicting date of the monument. Since the decisive layers are no longer preserved or still unexcavated under the Piraeus street, both finally used the sarcophagus burial in order to date the monument. A further argument has been raised by Ohly and Valavanis, claiming that the monument must be later than Horos 3 in front of it, because the Horos has not been built into its wall like in the case of the tomb of the Lacedaemonians, but at a small distance from it.⁸⁷ But the Horos is so nicely set within the front line of the monument (Valavanis 1999:187 fig. 1), that one has to turn the argument around: the monument was obviously there before the border stone was placed. More convincing arguments have been proposed by Stichel using the debries from the kilns under the monument to establish a date of 403 BC.⁸⁸ U. Knigge is the only author who separates the monument from the burial.⁸⁹

84 Valavanis 1999:185-205 pl. 27; he gives the recent bibliography on the date of the monument in 192 n. 32.

85 Mallwitz 1980:124. He also quotes Ohly, who raised the argument, that the foundations of the façade of the monument were found to cut the pit that was made for the sarcophagus (Ohly 1965:324), and that the monument was therefore made after the sarcophagus was positioned. For this information Ohly quotes Gebauer 1940:358 but there is no such remark. On the contrary, a look at Gebauer's drawing published in *AA* 1942:203ff. figs. 1 and 2 shows that the sarcophagus is drawn there within the monument, its ditch being untouched by the monument walls, and indeed, the sarcophagus ditch is positioned, as it seems there, with respect to the pre-existing walls.

86 Ohly 1965:325, Mallwitz 1980:123.

87 Ohly 1961-62:18f., Valavanis 1999:192 n. 31.

88 Stichel 1998:137f. pl. 22,6.

89 Knigge 1988:163.

Reviewing the arguments, one can summarize:

1. that the monument can be dated to the end of the fifth century by evidence of the kilns and the pottery underlying it,
2. that the sarcophagus burial can be dated, as suggested by Valavanis, to the middle or the second half of the fourth century BC,
3. that the monument has been erected independently from and earlier than the peripheral and shallow burial in the sarcophagus,
4. that the central round tower and the massive pillar within it are unfamiliar for tomb monuments, but can be compared to the plan of the trophy at Leuctra.

Megara

A monument outside Megara on the western border of the Megarid towards the Korinthia is the closest parallel for the structure in the Kerameikos (Figs. 16-19).⁹⁰ Spectacularly situated high above the sea on the hills of the Geraneia mountains, it lies next to an ancient road leading to the Peloponnese and within a necropolis along this street. It shares many features with the Kerameikos monument: it has high rectangular retaining walls (not completely symmetrical, though), a circular central tower, and within it a massive rectangular pillar. The monument has been excavated completely, and no burial has been found within it. In search of a hidden burial, even the foundation stones for the central pillar were removed, but this yielded no evidence. There are fragments of a round Doric frieze preserved that belong to the monument and allow for a date in the fifth century BC. The Megara monument is larger than the one in the Kerameikos (*ca.* 25 x 12, 5 m), the round tower measures 10 m in diameter. It is built of the local limestone that contains many enclosures of petrified sea shells

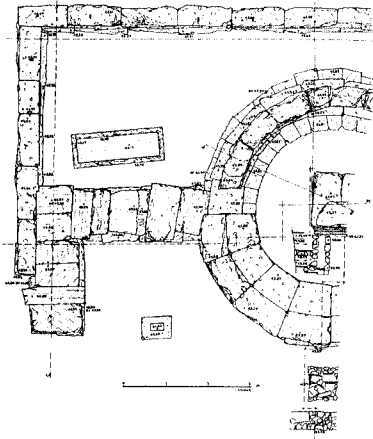
The monument has been interpreted as the tomb-Heroon of Car⁹¹ (but this does not explain the peculiar architecture), and as a watch-tower⁹² (but there are no doors and the decoration with a Doric frieze would be singular).

The monument features a remarkable resemblance with the Kerameikos monument. The typological features it has in common with the Leuctra trophy (tower with Doric frieze and central pillar), the absence of a burial, and the position high above the cliffs on the very borderline to the Korinthia are all features that can argue for an interpretation as a trophy.

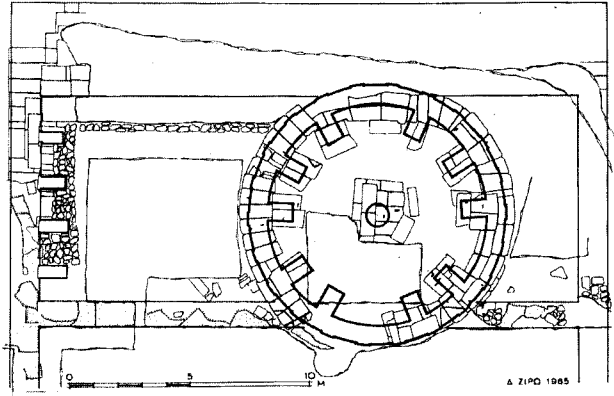
90 Travlos 1988:259, 278f. figs. 348-51, Valavanis 1999:198 fig. 4.

91 According to Paus. 1.44.6 'Among the graves on the road from Megara to Corinth is ... also a tomb of Car the son of Phoroneus: it was originally a mound of earth, but afterwards in obedience to an oracle it was adorned with mussel-stone' (transl. J.G. Frazer). The use of shell-limestone as described by Pausanias is abundant near Megara and typical for the area. Valavanis 1999:198 n. 64.

92 Goette 1993:239f.



17. Kerameikos, monument on the Third Horos, Plan after Stichel 1998:134 fig. 1.



18. Megara, monument on the Geraneia pass, plan after F. Giraud (Travlos 1988:fig. 348).



19. Megara, monument on the Geraneia pass (photo by the author).

It could have been erected by the legendary Attic general Myronides, who gained a decisive victory over the Corinthians in 458 BC.⁹³ The Corinthians had tried to seize Megara in this fight, but the Megarians had asked help from the Athenians. It was the Athenians, then who won the battle. This victory was also important for Myronides, because he fought it with young men against an overwhelming Corinthian force which tried to take advantage of the fact that the regular Athenian troops were all abroad. The Megara monument might well be their trophy: seen from afar, it warned against trying to violate the borders again.

A final suggestion

But was there a trophy in the Kerameikos?

Lysias in his burial speech for the casualties of 394 BC says (2.63) about the brave men fighting the oligarchs under Thrasybulos in 403 BC:⁹⁴

having felt no fear of the multitude of their opponents, and having exposed their own persons to the peril, they set up a trophy over their enemies, and now find witnesses to their valour, close to this monument, in the tombs of the Lacedaemonians (τρόπαιον μὲν τῶν πολεμίων ἔστησαν, μάρτυρας δὲ τῆς αὐτῶν ἀρετῆς ἐγγύς ὄντας τοῦδε τοῦ μνήματος τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίων τάφους παρέχονται). (trans. W.R.M. Lamb)

Lysias, therefore, mentions a trophy of Thrasybulos in connection with the tomb of the Lacedaimonians who had been fighting on the side of the Tyrants and were defeated in 403 BC (Xen. *Hell.* 2.4.28-33). This tomb of the Lacedaimonians was identified with a *polyandrion* excavated by Brueckner along the western side of the Kerameikos street when a fragment of the inscription was recovered in 1930.⁹⁵

The date as well as the type of the monument would allow the identification of the monument on the Third Horos with the trophy of Thrasybulos. As we can see from the parallels quoted above, neither the position away from the battlefield nor the point along the Kerameikos street next to *polyandria* of the same battle would be unusual for a trophy.

Last but not least, there are parallels for trophy monuments erected under similar circumstances: at Argos, according to Pausanias (2.21.8), a stone trophy had been erected over the tyrant Laphaëis, after he had been overthrown by the Argives in battle.

93 Thuc. 1.105.6; Diod. Sic. 11.79; Lys. 2.49ff. 52f.

94 Strauss 1985:69ff.

95 Brueckner 1930:90ff. fig. 5, Van Hook 1932:290-92, Tod 1932/33:108-11, Willemsen 1977:117-57, Closterman 1999:310f. Nr. D 1, Hodkinson 2000:252f. fig. 12.

Is it coincidence, that before the battle of Leuctra, the Thebans were reminded of Thrasyboulos in a speech given by Pelopidas?⁹⁶ The Theban Pelopidas had been outlawed by the Spartans during the occupation of Thebes. He held a speech to the Thebans, asking them to rise against the occupants who held their city in slavery and encouraged them to overthrow them, 'παράδειγμα θεμένουσ τήν Θρασυβούλου τόλμαν καὶ ἀρετήν.'

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96 Plut. *Vit. Pel.*7.2.

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Mythe et symbole religieux dans l'*Hippolyte* d'Euripide. Hippolyte entre Artémis et Aphrodite

Louise Bruit Zaidman

EN 428 AV. J.-C., les Athéniens attribuèrent à l'*Hippolyte* d'Euripide le premier prix de tragédie. Un des quatre premiers prix de toute l'œuvre d'Euripide, qui, selon la *Vie d'Euripide* avait composé soixante dix tragédies.¹ Quelques années plus tôt, un premier *Hippolyte* du même auteur avait pourtant essuyé de vives critiques, dont Aristophane semble se faire l'écho dans les *Grenouilles*.² Il fait dire à Eschyle: 'Mais, par Zeus, je n'ai point représenté de Phèdres prostituées (*pornas*) ni de Sthénébéés,' vers qui appelle ce commentaire du scholiaste: 'à cause de la tragédie d'*Hippolyte* d'Euripide.' Qu'il s'agisse du premier *Hippolyte*, la *Vie d'Euripide* semble le confirmer: 'Dans le premier *Hippolyte*, Euripide stigmatise l'impudicité des femmes (*tên anaischuntian tôn gunaikôn*), inspiré par l'inconduite (*akolasian*) de sa propre femme.' Ainsi, lorsque l'*hypothesis* de la tragédie conservée, appelée par la tradition l'*Hippolyte couronné*, affirme 'ce qui choquait et prêtait à médisance (*to aprepes kai kakégorias axion*) a été corrigé dans ce drame,' elle renvoie sans doute à la transformation du personnage de Phèdre, devenu soucieux de pudeur (*aidôs*), tandis que l'impudicité des femmes est devenue l'objet du discours du jeune prince réfractaire aux travaux de Cypris. Or, il est remarquable que les récits les plus circonstanciés dont nous disposons sur le mythe de référence ne mentionnent pas le mépris d'Hippolyte pour Aphrodite et son refus de l'amour sexuel.³ D'où la tentation d'attribuer à l'Euripide de la deuxième tragédie la dévotion exclusive d'Hippolyte pour Artémis et son profond dédain pour Aphrodite, ainsi que le rôle de cette déesse tel qu'il apparaît dans le Prologue. Si le mythe a été emprunté par

1 75 œuvres, selon Varron et la *Souda*: cf. *Euripide* t. I, Méridier 1927, édition de référence dans cette étude, avec celle de Delcourt-Curvers 1962 et celle de Barrett 1964.

2 Sur le premier *Hippolyte*, perdu pour nous, voir en dernier lieu le commentaire et les fragments édités par Jouan et Van Looy 2000, *Euripide* t. VIII 2^e partie, sous le titre: *Hippolyte se voilant* (221-48). L'éditeur fait le point sur la tradition concernant cette tragédie perdue et les nombreuses reconstitutions auxquelles elle a donné lieu.

3 Asclépiade de Tragile (*FGrH* 12 F 28 Jacoby = schol. Hom. *Od.* 11.321) et Apollodore (3.10.3).

Euripide à la légende trézénienne, c'est grâce à la tragédie attique et dans la forme qu'elle lui avait donné qu'il s'est répandu à partir du V^e siècle, au point que Plutarque peut écrire: 'quant aux malheurs que Thésée éprouva du fait de son fils et de Phèdre, comme les historiens ne contredisent en rien les poètes tragiques, il faut admettre que les choses se sont passées comme ces derniers les racontent tous.'⁴

On analysera les valeurs symboliques assumées par le mythe dans la forme que nous fait découvrir la tragédie d'Euripide à travers le comportement d'Hippolyte et la configuration religieuse dominée par les deux figures d'Artémis et d'Aphrodite.

Fiction et sentiment religieux

Si les dieux qui se manifestent sur le théâtre ne se confondent pas avec ceux que les Athéniens honorent dans les cultes divers, cultes de la cité célébrés à l'occasion des grandes fêtes collectives ou cultes des multiples sanctuaires locaux qui accueillent telle ou telle divinité ou telle ou telle figure des divinités panhelléniques, ils ne se réduisent pas pour autant à des figures 'littéraires' comme le suggère D. Mikalson à propos de l'affrontement mis en scène par Euripide entre Aphrodite et Artémis.⁵ Leur présence sur scène en fait des personnages de théâtre appréciés comme tels, avec la même distance par rapport à la divinité honorée sous le même nom dans tel ou tel sanctuaire, qu'ils reconnaissaient, sans avoir besoin de l'exprimer, entre le Thésée irréfléchi qui précipite le dénouement tragique, et le héros honoré sur l'Agora, ou entre le Dionysos incarné par un acteur et maudissant Penthée sur le théâtre dans les *Bacchantes*, et le dieu qui recevait à l'occasion des mêmes Dionysies, l'hommage d'un sacrifice sur son autel du sanctuaire au pied de l'Acropole.

Même distance et, je dirais, même proximité. L'Apollon et l'Athéna dialoguant devant les spectateurs de 461 avec les Erinyes au sujet de la culpabilité d'Oreste dans la trilogie d'Eschyle, sont et ne sont pas les dieux du culte. S'ils n'habitent pas les acteurs qui portent le masque et si les paroles qu'ils prononcent sont celles qu'Eschyle a voulu mettre dans leur bouche, ces paroles n'ont de sens et de portée, elles ne sont crédibles, dans les limites conventionnelles du spectacle, que parce qu'elles font écho à des traits qui les rendent vraisemblables, mieux, qui renvoient à une réalité profonde qu'elles rendent manifeste.

Or, si une ample littérature s'est développée autour des *Bacchantes*, à propos de la religion d'Euripide, la tragédie d'*Hippolyte* ne provoque pas le même type de

4 Plutarque, *Thes.* 28, trad. Ozanam 2001. En plus des deux drames d'Euripide, les Anciens connaissaient une tragédie de Sophocle, également perdue, et, bien sûr, la *Phèdre* de Sénèque.

5 Mikalson 1991:144-47.

questionnement. L'accent est mis plutôt, dans les études critiques qui y sont consacrées, sur la dimension humaine de l'intrigue; ou, quand on s'interroge sur la place et le rôle des dieux, on voit volontiers dans le comportement d'Aphrodite, le mépris pour la souffrance humaine et une preuve de l'attitude critique d'Euripide vis-à-vis de la théologie olympienne de la tradition.⁶

Pourtant, la tragédie s'ouvre et se ferme sur l'intervention d'une divinité. Le Prologue donne la parole à Aphrodite pour annoncer le rôle décisif qu'elle va jouer et les moyens qu'elle a choisis pour punir Hippolyte de son mépris à son égard. S'il est vrai qu'elle n'apparaît plus dans la tragédie, chaque péripétie confirme son pouvoir, que le chœur se charge de rappeler et de célébrer: au moment de l'aveu de Phèdre à sa nourrice (Eur. *Hipp.* 370ss.),⁷ dans la strophe qui précède la mort de la reine (Eur. *Hipp.* 765s.),⁸ enfin au moment même où Artémis apparaît au-dessus du palais pour l'explication finale (Eur. *Hipp.* 1268-80). Cette dernière strophe s'achève sur le rappel que 'sur tous les êtres à la fois, seule, Cypris tu étends ton souverain empire' (*mona kratuneis*). Présences conventionnelles et seulement utiles à la dramaturgie? Je voudrais montrer à l'inverse que cette double manifestation du divin, redoublée par la présence sur scène, pendant toute la durée de la tragédie, des statues d'Aphrodite et d'Artémis, donne à la tragédie tout son sens. D'autre part, l'annonce de la création d'un culte d'Hippolyte renvoie à une réalité culturelle et topographique qui inscrit l'aventure jouée sur le théâtre dans un contexte familier aux spectateurs athéniens. C'est la façon dont mythe, tragédie et réalité culturelle s'interpénètrent et s'infléchissent l'un l'autre, donnant un sens nouveau à une histoire ancienne que je voudrais analyser.

Hippolyte entre Artémis et Aphrodite

La tragédie installe explicitement l'aventure malheureuse d'Hippolyte entre les deux divinités dont les statues et les autels encadrent la scène à l'ouverture de la tragédie et dont les discours se répondent, du prologue où Aphrodite pose les éléments de l'intrigue et en annonce le dénouement, à la scène finale où Artémis éclaire pour Thésée et Hippolyte mourant les causes du malheur qui les frappe, en même temps qu'elle annonce la création du culte destiné à célébrer à Trézène le jeune héros. La présence des statues permet de mettre en scène concrètement le choix d'Hippolyte qui, dès son entrée, couronne l'une, la statue d'Artémis, et ignore, voire défie l'autre. Au-delà de l'opposition de deux 'personnes' divines avec

6 Bibliographie de S. Saïd dans *Metis* III (1988), en particulier 489-90 et 503-04. Y ajouter, pour les années suivantes, les études de Charles Segal (1993), Froma Zeitlin (1996) et leurs indications bibliographiques.

7 'Il n'est plus obscur, le terme du destin voulu par Cypris, ô malheureuse fille de Crète.'

8 'Le criminel amour dont Aphrodite lui a brisé l'âme.'

leurs sentiments et leurs réactions trop ‘humaines’ à nos yeux de modernes—habillage anthropomorphique dont les Grecs étaient familiers ne serait-ce que par les aventures et les affrontements de leurs dieux dans l’épopée—au-delà donc de cette opposition personnelle, l’opposition entre Aphrodite et Artémis apparaît comme une dramatisation de deux étapes de la vie sur lesquelles règne chacune des deux déesses.

Une lecture traditionnelle, à la fois moralisante et chrétienne, oppose de façon simpliste Aphrodite et Artémis en faisant de l’une, une déesse cruelle et sans pitié qui fait fi des souffrances humaines et de l’autre, une divinité qui noue avec le pieux Hippolyte une relation personnelle.⁹ Ce partage coïncide avec l’opposition entre une sexualité sans mesure, voire incestueuse (du côté d’Aphrodite et de Phèdre) et la chasteté ou pureté d’Hippolyte et d’Artémis. Reste une contradiction: celle de la cruauté partagée des deux déesses, Artémis annonçant à son tour une vengeance contre Aphrodite, exercée injustement contre un mortel seulement coupable d’être son protégé. On la résout alors en mettant la cruauté au compte des dieux païens et en distinguant soigneusement, voire en détachant de tout contexte, la dévotion personnelle et mystique d’Hippolyte. Or, toute la tragédie d’Hippolyte repose sur le refus du fils de Thésée de passer d’un domaine à l’autre, de celui d’Artémis à celui de Cypris.¹⁰ La chasteté d’Artémis n’est pas la défense d’un mode de vie ‘pur.’ Elle est un privilège et un choix partagé avec Athéna et Hestia, qui place ces trois déesses, dans des fonctions diverses, en marge de la loi générale qu’impose Aphrodite.¹¹ La chasteté d’Artémis coïncide notamment avec le statut de la vie adolescente, celle qui ne connaît pas encore le mariage, et tout est, pour les jeunes qu’elle protège, dans ce ‘pas encore.’ L’erreur d’Hippolyte est de choisir ce ‘pas encore’ comme un projet de vie et de confondre le destin humain avec le choix divin de la déesse. Lorsqu’Aphrodite affirme (Eur. *Hipp.* 20) qu’elle n’est pas jalouse d’Artémis et que c’est des torts qu’Hippolyte a envers elle qu’elle va le châtier, c’est bien de son refus de l’amour et du mariage qu’il est question explicitement: ‘Il refuse les plaisirs de l’amour,’ reproche Aphrodite (*anainetai lektra*, où *lektra* désigne le lit et par métaphore, le lit nuptial) ‘et le mariage’ (*kai ou psauēi gamōn* Eur. *Hipp.* 14). Par son mépris d’Aphrodite et son refus de la sexualité, ce ne sont pas seulement les honneurs d’une déesse qui sont oubliés, c’est, à travers elle, l’ordre du monde humain tout entier qui est menacé, désigné

9 Sur cette interprétation voir notamment Festugière 1954 et les remarques à ce sujet de Vernant 1985:271ss.

10 Cf. le rôle attribué par plus d’un commentateur, dans ce refus, au modèle paternel offert par Thésée ‘le volage’ et le séducteur. Notamment Segal (1987:208s.): ‘Cela fait partie de cette tragédie que le père soit l’antithèse exacte du fils quant à son comportement sexuel. Il incarne pleinement la “double norme” conventionnelle de la sexualité masculine.’

11 Cf. *Hymne Homérique à Aphrodite* 6-35.

par 'ceux qui entre le Pont et les bornes d'Atlas ont leur séjour et voient la clarté du soleil' (Eur. *Hipp.* 3-4).

L'*Hippolyte* d'Euripide est une tragédie sur le pouvoir de Cypris et, plus largement, sur la faiblesse des humains en face du pouvoir des dieux, soit qu'ils refusent de le reconnaître, comme Hippolyte, soit qu'ils tentent de leur résister comme Phèdre. Mais si les hommes sont vaincus par le pouvoir des dieux cela n'annule pas leur responsabilité. C'est ce qu'Artémis expliquera à Thésée à la fin de la tragédie: Thésée a agi de façon criminelle envers son fils, même si c'est Aphrodite qui a perdu les trois personnages de la tragédie. Lorsque Thésée tente de s'excuser devant son fils en affirmant 'les dieux avaient égaré ma raison' (Eur. *Hipp.* 1414), il ne fait que reprendre la parole d'Artémis: 'Il a été trompé par un dessein divin' (Eur. *Hipp.* 1406). C'est cependant la déesse qui vient de l'accabler longuement en soulignant sa responsabilité (Eur. *Hipp.* 1315-1325): 'Tu sais que de ton père tu tenais trois vœux infaillibles. L'un d'eux tu l'as détourné (*pareiles*), misérable (*Ô kakiste su*), contre ton propre enfant, quand tu pouvais en frapper un ennemi. Ton père, le dieu des mers, eut raison de t'accorder ce que lui imposait sa promesse; c'est toi qui, à ses yeux comme aux miens, fais figure de criminel (*kakos*): sans attendre ni preuve ni parole des devins, sans enquête, sans permettre au temps de faire la lumière, en ta hâte coupable, tu as lancé l'imprécation (*aras*) contre ton fils et tu l'as tué (*katektanes*).' Cette apparente contradiction entre la responsabilité de l'individu et la volonté des dieux renvoie à un débat qui est au cœur de la pensée grecque, qu'on trouve déjà présent chez l'Agamemnon d'Eschyle, pris entre l'exigence d'Artémis et son désir de gloire, et que les sophistes reprendront sous une autre forme, par exemple dans le débat autour de la responsabilité d'Hélène.

Des hommes et des dieux dans la tragédie.

Livrés aux caprices des dieux, les hommes peuvent-ils se fier à leur piété pour s'assurer une vie heureuse? C'est la question que pose le chœur au troisième *stasimon* (Eur. *Hipp.* 1102-1112), au moment où Hippolyte, chassé par son père et, sans le savoir encore, condamné par sa malédiction, quitte la scène. Il vient d'affirmer: 'Jamais vous ne verrez homme plus vertueux (que moi): *sôphronesteron*,' et c'est l'homme le plus vertueux que le sort frappe à l'improviste à travers la condamnation de son père, qui en fait un criminel contre les lois humaines et divines. C'est ce paradoxe que le chœur commente dans une strophe difficile, diversement traduite et interprétée: 'Le souci que les dieux ont des hommes (*ta theôn meledêmata*), quand il me vient à l'esprit, allège grandement mes peines; au fond de moi je garde l'espoir de comprendre (*xunesin de tin'elpidi keuthôn*), mais j'y renonce quand je vois les hasards et les actions des mortels (*leipomai en te tuchais thnatôn kai en ergmasi leussôn*).'² Je ne crois pas qu'on puisse garder la traduction proposée par Louis Méridier, qui traduit *ta theôn meledêmata* par: 'la Providence

divine,' notion tout à fait étrangère à la pensée grecque, ni 'l'espoir en une Intelligence suprême' pour traduire *hê sunesis* mot qui renvoie plutôt à une connaissance intime et subjective qu'à la notion d'une rationalité divine.¹² Autre difficulté du texte: les masculins singuliers *keuthôn* et *leussôn* 'renfermer, cacher' et 'voir.' Wilamowitz propose de supposer un chœur d'hommes présent sur la scène pour la première strophe. Le scholiaste attribue ces vers à Euripide, ce qui leur donnerait évidemment un statut tout à fait particulier. Barrett préfère transformer la première personne *leipomai* en *leipetai* et faire des deux vers une réflexion générale. Aucune des solutions n'est vraiment satisfaisante. Mais, que le chœur prenne à son compte ce vacillement devant le sort des humains, avant de revenir dans la deuxième strophe au sort particulier d'Hippolyte, qu'il s'agisse d'une intrusion d'auteur à un moment clé avant la catastrophe finale (c'est en effet aussitôt après cette intervention chorale qu'un messager va apporter l'annonce du prodige dont Hippolyte a été victime), ou qu'il s'agisse d'une réflexion générale à la troisième personne, le moment où elle se place et la généralité du propos lui donnent de toute façon un relief particulier. La suite de la strophe fait du hasard (*tuchê*) le maître du destin humain, voué à l'incertitude: 'ce ne sont que vicissitudes,' traduit M. Delcourt 'chaque chose se change sans cesse en une autre (*alla gar allothen amebetai*),' 'toute vie semble le jouet d'un éternel caprice.' 'C'est sous la forme du hasard, *tukhê*, que les mortels expérimentent leur propre vie, où seule la récurrence des vicissitudes relève d'un toujours,' écrit N. Loraux dans *La voix endeuillée* (1999:51), en renvoyant non pas à *Hippolyte*, mais aux *Héraclides* dans un passage où c'est encore le chœur qui commente les malheurs des héros (Eur. *Heracl.* 608-615). Devant un tel constat, il ne reste aux humains que la prière: 'puisse, en réponse à mes prières, le destin (*moira*) venu des dieux me donner un sort (*tuchan*) prospère et un cœur préservé de souffrances (Eur. *Hipp.* 1111-1113).' Prier pour un sort heureux, s'en remettre aux dieux et s'accommoder de sa vie, c'est en ceci que consiste la piété du chœur, au-delà de ses doutes.

Est-ce, cependant, le dernier mot d'Euripide sur le rapport des hommes aux dieux? On peut en douter. D'une certaine façon, *Hippolyte*, à travers le personnage du fils de Thésée et son destin, est une réflexion sur la piété, comprise comme la pratique des relations avec les dieux, réflexion qui se poursuit à travers tout le théâtre d'Euripide. On pourrait suivre ce thème d'une tragédie à l'autre, à travers les personnages, les situations et les dieux auxquels ils sont confrontés. En quoi consiste la piété? Qu'est-ce que les hommes peuvent ou doivent attendre des dieux?

La piété d'Hippolyte, sans cesse affirmée par lui-même et par les personnages qui l'entourent, fait de lui un symbole de la piété méconnue voire bafouée. 'J'en

12 Sur les diverses interprétations possibles de ce chœur cf. Barrett (1964), Segal (1993:137ss.), Zeitlin (1996:249s.).

veux aux dieux' clame le chœur dans l'épode du même chant (*maniô theoisin*, Eur. *Hipp.* 1146), devant le sort qui poursuit celui qui n'a pas mérité ce châtement. Du geste rituel d'offrande qui dépose d'une main 'pieuse' une couronne sur l'autel d'Artémis (83) au respect du serment qui interdit à Hippolyte de trahir le secret de Phèdre (656), à l'ensemble des comportements qui caractérisent l'homme de bien (1368): 'En vain j'ai pris la peine d'observer, face aux hommes, tous les devoirs de la piété,' à quoi fait écho, au vers 1454 l'éloge d'Hippolyte mourant par Thésée: 'Quelle piété, quelle noblesse je pleure en toi' qui joint les mots *eusebes* et *agathês*. Hippolyte incarne les diverses formes de l'*eusebeia*, cette vertu qui consiste non seulement à révéler les dieux (*theous sebein* 995) mais à remplir aussi tous les devoirs qu'ils imposent aux hommes. Comment comprendre alors la tragédie? En déconsidérant la cruauté des déesses païennes, et leurs sentiments trop humains, de jalousie et de vengeance? En valorisant parallèlement la piété supérieure et exclusive d'Hippolyte, voire son mysticisme, en face de la piété populaire représentée par le vieillard et ses mises en garde contre la jalousie des dieux?

Pourtant, le premier responsable de la tragédie n'est pas la cruauté d'Aphrodite, mais l'aveuglement d'Hippolyte, fasciné par Artémis, qui en a fasciné d'autres, avant de les entraîner dans la mort. La piété d'Hippolyte est certes montrée à plusieurs reprises au long de la tragédie, mais ses principales manifestations s'adressent à la seule Artémis (hymne et offrande de la première scène). Cette piété est louée tout particulièrement par Artémis, dans la scène des adieux, à quoi font écho les éloges tardifs de Thésée, et surtout, par Hippolyte lui-même. Ainsi lorsque, ramené mourant devant son père, il se plaint de l'injustice de son sort: 'oui, c'est bien moi, l'austère adorateur des dieux (*ho semnos ego kai theosep-tôr*), celui qui, par sa vertu (*sôphrosunêi*) dépassait tous les autres' (1364-1365).

La pureté d'Hippolyte, est proclamée par lui-même dès vers 102, dans son dialogue avec le vieux serviteur qui lui demande pourquoi il n'invoque pas (*prosennepein*) Aphrodite:¹³ 'Je la salue de loin, car je suis pur (*hagnos*, Eur. *Hipp.* 102).' Segal, citant Barrett considère qu'il 's'agit là d'une prétention [à une pureté morale] tout à fait étonnante' selon les normes grecques ordinaires. Analysant les différents sens de *hagnos* dans la tragédie, il distingue la pureté rituelle du jeûne, proclamée par Phèdre aux vers 135-138 et 'la pureté morale et sexuelle qui a tant d'importance pour l'action de la pièce dans son ensemble' (Segal 1987:185s.). Plus loin il oppose 'pureté extérieure et pureté morale' données comme équivalent de 'pureté rituelle et pureté morale,' et enfin, 'vie intérieure' et 'vie extérieure' (212s.). Si je m'arrête à ces formules, c'est qu'elles me paraissent caractéristiques de

13 *Prosennepein*: 'adresser la parole à qq.'; le mot appartient au vocabulaire tragique, on le trouve par exemple dans l'*Ajax* de Sophocle, à propos du salut solennel qu'il adresse au Soleil avant de mourir.

plusieurs glissements de sens qui portent sur des aspects essentiels du comportement religieux d'Hippolyte et, à partir de là, des significations possibles de la tragédie. D'abord, le vers 102, replacé dans son contexte, ne renvoie pas à une 'piété morale hors norme,' mais à un refus commenté deux vers plus loin par Hippolyte lui-même: 'Je n'aime aucun des dieux qu'on vénère la nuit.' Il faut ici mettre en relation la nuit, moment privilégié de l'exercice de la sexualité, et les relations d'Aphrodite avec certains des enfants de la Nuit évoqués par Hésiode.¹⁴ Il faut en rapprocher aussi les vers 13-15 du Prologue où Aphrodite met en relation la détestation dans laquelle la tient Hippolyte ('Il m'appelle la plus détestable [*kakiste*] des divinités') et son refus de la vie sexuelle. Or, ce refus n'a rien d'unique, comme nous le verrons plus loin à travers l'histoire de plusieurs personnages mythiques, et il n'exprime pas en soi l'aspiration à un idéal supérieur. Quant à la prairie non moissonnée, évoquée un peu plus tôt par Hippolyte dans les vers où il dédie à Artémis une couronne de fleurs cueillies dans la prairie préservée (*akêratos*) et entretenue par la seule Pudeur (*aidos*) à l'abri des méchants (*kakoi*), elle est, certes, une métaphore de la chasteté dans laquelle veut vivre Hippolyte,¹⁵ et Aphrodite ne s'y trompe pas. Mais la chasteté n'est pas une vertu pour les Grecs comme elle le deviendra pour les Chrétiens. Elle n'a pas de valeur en soi. L'abstinence peut avoir une valeur rituelle, liée à certains moments ou à certains lieux. Elle n'est pas un choix de vie. Les jeunes *parthenoi* consacrées à Artémis préparent dans ses sanctuaires le moment où elles quitteront leur statut de vierges pour celui d'épouses. En choisissant de rester le 'servant' (*huperetês*) d'Artémis, le chasseur Hippolyte s'apparente aux autres héros mythiques victimes de leur refus d'Aphrodite, tel le Melanion évoqué par Aristophane (*Lysistrata* 781-796) et doté, comme 'chasseur noir' d'une seconde vie par Pierre Vidal-Naquet, ou son parallèle féminin, Atalante, dont Euripide justement, dans une tragédie perdue (fr. 530 Nauck 2), évoquait la haine de Cypris. Il n'est pas indifférent à notre histoire que Melanion et Atalante, au terme de rebondissements divers, apparaissent comme victimes du comportement inverse, puisqu'ils auraient finalement été punis pour s'être accouplés hors des normes reconnues, dans un sanctuaire.¹⁶ les mêmes héros incarnant successivement les deux extrêmes, distribuées entre Hippolyte et Phèdre dans la tragédie d'Euripide.

Si l'attitude aristocratique d'Hippolyte ne fait pas de doute, cela n'autorise pas à déceler dans son comportement religieux une piété supérieure qui s'opposerait

14 Hes. *Theog.* 211-32 et Pirenne-Delforge 1994:471.

15 Sur la symbolique de la prairie en relation avec les *parthenoi*, cf. Calame 1992 et Motte 1973. Cf. aussi, dans un esprit différent, Pigeaud 1976, à propos de la nature à laquelle renvoie cette prairie 'sans tache': 'La vérité de la pureté c'est la stérilité'

16 Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.9.2

à celle du vieux serviteur, dont la piété formelle serait représentative des 'normes grecques ordinaires.' Le rapprochement des deux notions de 'pureté' et de 'chasteté,' fait partie, comme le reconnaît Charles Segal du 'genre d'idées' auquel 'le christianisme nous a accoutumés.' Dire que 'pour un public athénien du V^e siècle la pureté est encore (je souligne) en premier lieu affaire de culte et de rituel,' n'est-ce pas donner à la piété d'Hippolyte un statut qui le coupe de son contexte mythique et religieux au nom d'une conception d'une nature toute différente?

La lecture de la tragédie qui valorise la chasteté revendiquée d'Hippolyte a aussi favorisé une interprétation tendancieuse de la relation privilégiée entre Hippolyte et Artémis, relation qui apparaît surtout comme un leurre, car toute relation privée entre un mortel et une déesse s'achève toujours par la déception du mortel, la différence essentielle de nature entre eux la condamnant par définition. C'est ce que rappelle Artémis à la fin de la tragédie (Eur. *Hipp.* 1396 et 1437s.). Ce n'est qu'à travers l'épreuve de la mort et des souffrances qui l'accompagnent que les mortels peuvent atteindre un nouveau statut, c'est le sens des honneurs culturels annoncés par la déesse. 'Ephèbe qui a échoué,'¹⁷ Hippolyte doit quitter ses compagnons d'âge (*homêlikes*), ceux qui en même temps que lui sont devenus des *neoi* au moment même où il devrait intégrer la vie de citoyen. Il doit faire ses adieux à ses compagnons, en même temps qu'à Athènes comme *polis* (cité) et comme terre (*gê*), cité et terre que les éphèbes athéniens s'engageaient à défendre: 'Adieu ville et terre d'Erechtee *chairete*, Ô *polis kai gai* Erechteôs (Eur. *Hipp.* 1090-1101).' La malédiction de son père condamne Hippolyte à s'éloigner à jamais de la cité au moment où il devrait y entrer. Mais cette malédiction est causée non par la faute contre le père, que Thésée lui impute à tort, mais par la faute qu'il a commise en refusant la sexualité et le mariage et dont Aphrodite le punit avec une cruelle ironie en faisant peser sur lui une imputation d'adultère.

Pas de religion épurée donc ni de lien mystique entre Hippolyte et Artémis; mais une tentation, partagée par de nombreux mortels, d'oublier leur nature qui leur est toujours cruellement rappelée. Le profil orphique dessiné par Thésée pour déconsidérer son fils et utilisé parfois comme argument pour cette lecture, doit se comprendre dans ce contexte. Rien dans le mode de vie d'Hippolyte ni dans ses propos ne donne le moindre appui au portrait charge fabriqué par Thésée, où on reconnaît par contre le regard hostile d'un Aristophane ou plus tard d'un Platon envers des pratiques mal connues du grand nombre et perçues comme exotiques. Hippolyte en orphique dans la bouche de Thésée est aussi convaincant que Socrate en sophiste dans le portrait qu'Aristophane fait de lui.¹⁸

17 Cf. Winkler 1985:20-62, pour qui la tragédie est d'abord 'le chant de l'éphèbe.' Cf. aussi Vidal-Naquet 1992:247-49.

On ne trouvera donc pas dans la tragédie d'un côté une religion 'populaire,' celle que défendrait le vieillard du début de la tragédie en mettant en garde Hippolyte contre son orgueil (*semnon*, repris par Thésée au vers 1064), et de l'autre une religion supérieure épurée et mystique que la figure d'Artémis serait étrangement choisie pour représenter. Il y a un jeune homme égaré que sa souffrance à la fin de la tragédie rend digne de pitié.

Le pouvoir d'Aphrodite

Le vrai sujet de la tragédie, annoncé aux vers 9-14 par la déesse elle-même, c'est le pouvoir d'Aphrodite que nul ne saurait mépriser ou ignorer. Les deux personnages qui se partagent presque également l'espace et le temps, Phèdre et Hippolyte, sont des témoignages symétriques et inversés de son pouvoir et à des titres divers, ses victimes, l'un, Hippolyte, par châtement, l'autre, Phèdre, comme instrument nécessaire, à son corps défendant. D'où l'étrange ballet qu'ils jouent, vivants et morts, sur scène, se croisant sans se parler. D'où aussi le rapprochement des deux victimes dans les honneurs posthumes promis à Hippolyte après la victoire mortelle d'Aphrodite, puisque les *parthenoi* venues lui rendre un culte chanteront, au long des siècles, l'amour que Phèdre eut pour lui: 'Pour toi, infortuné, pour loyer de tes épreuves, je t'accorderai les plus grands honneurs dans cette ville de Trézène. Les jeunes filles à la veille des noces couperont pour toi leurs cheveux, et pendant de longs siècles tu recevras un tribut de regrets et de larmes. Les pensées des jeunes filles, vers toi toujours tournées, leur inspireront des chansons. Jamais ne se perdra dans le silence et dans l'oubli l'amour que Phèdre conçut pour toi (Eur. *Hipp.* 1423-1431).' Au second siècle après J.-C. Pausanias mentionne encore le tombeau de Phèdre près du *mnêma* d'Hippolyte (Paus. 2.32.3).

Les deux personnages ne se parlent jamais, mais ils tiennent des propos symétriques et alternés; à la longue réflexion de Phèdre sur l'*aidôs*¹⁹ et sur le destin des femmes répond indirectement la tirade cinglante et rageuse d'Hippolyte contre la race des femmes où se déchaîne sa haine exaltée (Eur. *Hipp.* 616-669) et à laquelle assiste, muette, et hors du regard d'Hippolyte, la malheureuse Phèdre. Elle est présente encore, quand Thésée maudit son fils, muette à nouveau, mais

18 Cf. l'interprétation de Barrett 1964:342ss.: 'Hipp. is of course no Orphic at all ...' et les vers 109-10 d'Euripide, où Hippolyte attend de ses compagnons qu'ils préparent le banquet: 'Une table bien garnie (*trapeza plêrês*) est agréable après la chasse.' Voir aussi sur ce thème Schnapp 1997:108ss.

19 Cf. les nombreuses réflexions sur cette notion et en particulier sur ses valeurs dans *Hippolyte*, notamment, parmi beaucoup d'autres, Dodds 1925:102-204, qui fait reposer sur elle la signification entière de la pièce, comme 'drame humain' et Pigeaud 1976 'Euripide et la connaissance de soi,' qui interroge les valeurs des deux 'Pudeurs' évoquées par Phèdre et leur ambiguïté à l'intérieur du texte.

terriblement présente par la lettre dénonciatrice et par son cadavre exposé. Eux que tout sépare, d'abord leur statut (l'épouse légitime mère de deux enfants dont elle doit défendre les droits en face du bâtard arrogant et barbare), ensuite l'opposition entre la farouche chasteté d'Hippolyte et la lutte désespérée de Phèdre pour sauver sa réputation. Eux que tout devrait séparer se trouvent unis par la redoutable vengeance d'Aphrodite d'abord, par les honneurs réparateurs annoncés par Artémis ensuite.

Des dieux bienveillants et terribles

C'est ce dispositif qui fait de la tragédie d'Hippolyte un symbole de la double figure des dieux, bienveillants ou terribles, selon qu'ils s'estiment honorés ou dédaignés. La figure bienveillante est ici incarnée par l'Artémis amicale et la relation privilégiée qu'elle offre à Hippolyte, sans effacer pour autant la distance essentielle entre humain et divin. L'Aphrodite irritée qui s'exprime dans le Prologue: 'Ceux qui révèrent ma puissance, je les mets en honneur; mais je les abats quand ils nous traitent avec superbe; car c'est un sentiment que connaît la race des dieux, ils prennent plaisir aux hommages des hommes,' ressemble beaucoup aux paroles du Dionysos des *Bacchantes* proclamant: 'Il faut que cette ville apprenne ce qu'il en coûte de prétendre ignorer mes mystères.' Mais les rôles peuvent aussi s'échanger. En Tauride ou à Aulis, Artémis réclame aux hommes du sang humain pour l'apaiser, et il faudra l'intervention d'Athéna, à la fin d'*Iphigénie en Tauride* pour que la déesse taurique laisse sa prêtresse, Iphigénie, et Oreste, rentrer sains et saufs en Grèce, en échange de l'établissement par Oreste, d'un rite sanglant: 'Quand on célébrera sa fête, pour tenir lieu de toi, victime qui fus épargnée, le fer, touchant le cou d'un homme, en tirera un peu de sang, par pure piété, afin que la déesse reçoive son dû' (Eur. *IT* 1458-1461).

A l'ambivalence des dieux répond celle des humains et c'est leur faillibilité qui met en évidence l'intervention des dieux. De même que se succèdent sur scène deux Phèdre, se succèdent aussi deux Hippolyte. La première Phèdre est celle qui se soucie de sa gloire de femme et de sa responsabilité de mère, celle qui lutte contre la passion inspirée par Aphrodite et qui mérite la pitié et l'éloge d'Artémis évoquant 'la fureur qui blessa Phèdre en la livrant, il faut le dire, à un noble combat' ('*gennaiotès*,' Eur. *Hipp.* 1300), après qu'Aphrodite l'a proclamée '*eukleès*.' La deuxième est celle qui cède à la pression de la nourrice, puis, ayant tout perdu, a recours à la tablette dénonciatrice, décidée à entraîner dans sa chute celui qu'elle n'a pu convaincre et dont elle pense avoir tout à craindre. Aux deux Phèdre répondent deux Hippolyte, le premier, arrogant et haineux, celui qui défie Aphrodite et qui crache son venin sur les femmes. Avec ces attitudes se confond sa vénération exclusive et privilégiée pour Artémis qui est comme la justification de son refus de la sexualité, refus habillé de chasteté vertueuse. Mais son erreur et sa

faute sont de confondre son destin d'homme avec la virginité comme attribut divin d'une déesse; au *'parthenon psuchên echôn'* ('Mon âme est vierge' Eur. *Hipp.* 1006) d'Hippolyte répond le cruel mais juste: *'seautou sebein'* ('tu t'es exercé au culte de toi-même' Eur. *Hipp.* 1080) de Thésée à son fils pris en flagrant délit d'*hubris*. Cependant, dans la dernière partie de la tragédie, son malheur et sa souffrance, malgré sa naïve arrogance le rendent pitoyable à son tour.

Artémis n'est pas une moins grande déesse qu'Aphrodite, mais elle ne peut rien pour qui a offensé un dieu et méconnu les règles de l'ordre du monde. Elle ne pourra que venger à son tour son protégé sur un favori d'Aphrodite (car il n'est pas rare que les dieux aient avec des humains des relations privilégiées ...). Les humains sont les jouets des dieux qui exercent à leurs dépens leur puissance. A quoi sert alors la piété? A faire reconnaître leur gloire par des honneurs posthumes, à faire triompher *in fine* la justice. On pourrait multiplier les citations empruntées à la plupart des tragédies d'Euripide où le poète interroge le rôle des dieux sur le destin humain, depuis le 'j'en veux aux dieux' du vers 1145 jusqu'au 'les dieux devraient laisser la rancune aux humains' d'Agavé, à la fin des *Bacchantes*, devant un autre corps déchiré, celui de son fils. De tels propos ont largement alimenté la question de savoir si Euripide était ou non en rupture avec la religion de la cité. De la critique rationaliste à l'aspiration à une religion 'épurée,' toutes les positions lui ont été attribuées. Selon que l'on met l'accent sur telle ou telle tragédie ou que l'on souligne une réplique ou l'autre, on peut trouver en effet chez lui tout le spectre des positions possibles, de l'incroyance affirmée à la conversion mystique. Cependant, il est périlleux d'identifier la position d'Euripide avec celle du chœur ou de lui attribuer les paroles d'un héros déchiré qui exprime par une formule la limite de souffrance qu'il a atteinte. Ces formules extrêmes ne sont-elles pas justement le symbole même de l'expérience humaine donnée à voir sur le théâtre, n'ont-elles pas pour but de représenter la forme extrême de cette expérience par une formule elle-même extrême?

Pour reprendre le rapprochement que je suggérais entre deux tragédies qui se situent aux deux extrémités de la carrière tragique d'Euripide²⁰ (et avec toutes les précautions qu'imposent deux structures dramatiques très différentes), les deux formules citées se trouvent commenter le sort de deux héros 'déchirés' au sens propre, l'un broyé contre les rochers, l'autre démembré, par la volonté d'un dieu qui intervient chaque fois par l'intermédiaire d'un prodige: dans l'*Hippolyte*, le taureau furieux suscité par Poseidon (et sur la valeur symbolique duquel Charles Segal et d'autres se sont suffisamment exprimés),²¹ provoque la mise à mort

20 Rapprochement dont je ne suis pas la première à interroger les valeurs, dans des perspectives différentes les unes des autres. Cf. la lecture psychanalytique de Segal 1987 à propos d'Hippolyte et de Penthée:152-82. Ou le rapprochement d'Aphrodite et de Dionysos par Winnington-Ingram 1958:170-91 (188-89) ou chez Knox 1952:1-31.

d'Hippolyte par ses propres chevaux; dans les *Bacchantes*, la *mania* des femmes habitées par le dieu, pousse la propre mère de Penthée à déchirer de ses mains le corps de son fils. Dans cette situation d'horreur indépassable, l'interpellation des dieux est un cri de douleur. Tentation vaine de la malédiction chez Hippolyte, bien à l'image de son *hubris*: 'que ne peut la race des hommes maudire les dieux' (Eur. *Hipp.* 1415 *eith'ên araiôn daimosin brotôn genos*). Reproche d'une mère anéantie dans l'autre cas: 'Les dieux dans leurs rancunes, doivent-ils imiter les hommes?' (Eur. *Bacch.* 1348).

D'une tragédie à l'autre, le drame individuel qui ne touchait à travers Thésée que sa maison privée, est devenu dans *Les Bacchantes* drame cosmique, engageant la cité de Thèbes toute entière et mettant en branle tous les règnes de la nature. C'est encore le refus de reconnaître un dieu qui provoque la catastrophe, le refus de se soumettre à l'ordre des choses que les hommes pieux savent célébrer par la pratique du culte des dieux.²² Mais l'*hubris* du jeune Hippolyte qui revendiquait une carrière privée et refusait les tentations périlleuses du pouvoir royal²³ est devenue dans les *Bacchantes* celle d'un tyran, chef d'une armée puissante et arbitre du destin d'une cité. Chaque tragédie incarne dans une histoire et des personnages particuliers un aspect de l'expérience humaine vécue comme douloureuse et incertaine. A l'ambivalence des sentiments et des actions humaines se superpose l'ambivalence des interventions divines, tantôt cruelles tantôt bienveillantes, quand elles ne provoquent pas le malheur des hommes en se voulant bénéfiques. Ainsi les dons malheureux d'Apollon à Admète dans la tragédie d'*Alceste*, ou celui de Poseidon à Thésée. Dans les *Bacchantes*, le bouvier juxtapose le tableau de la puissance de vie de Dionysos animant le thiasé d'Agavé et de ses sœurs, et celui de sa puissance de destruction lorsque les mêmes Bacchantes s'attaquent aux bouviers impies.²⁴ Dans *Hippolyte*, une fin apaisée suit l'intervention d'Artémis et l'annonce de la fondation du culte d'Hippolyte, grâce au pardon du jeune héros et aux regrets de Thésée 'absout par son fils du sang versé.' Le dernier vers prononcé par Thésée s'adresse directement à Aphrodite ainsi solennellement reconnue: 'Comme je me souviendrai, Cypris, des maux que tu m'as infligés' et répond à l'ouverture solennelle, voire emphatique de la tragédie par la déesse elle-même: 'Je suis Cypris, la déesse au nom illustre parmi les mortels et non sans gloire dans les cieux.' Reconnaissance douloureuse et ambiguë: c'est par les maux qu'elle lui a causés que Thésée se souviendra de la déesse. Cypris a frappé les trois héros

21 Par exemple chez Segal 1986:200 et 277 où le taureau est le symbole de la sexualité refusée par Hippolyte.

22 Cf. Les personnages de Tirésias et de Cadmos dans *Les Bacchantes*.

23 Eur. *Hipp.* 1016-1020.

24 Eur. *Bacch.* 677-767.

humains de la tragédie, mais la responsabilité d'Hippolyte et de Thésée est explicitement engagée dans leur malheur. Seule, Phèdre, dans la version que nous avons sous les yeux, est une pure victime, à laquelle Cypris elle-même rend hommage.

Mythes et cultes

La richesse symbolique de la tragédie est inséparable de la force des figures qu'elle met en scène et des tensions qu'elle crée. Les figures de l'éphèbe 'manqué' qu'est Hippolyte et de Phèdre, la femme soumise à la puissance d'Eros, exposée aux maux spécifiques de son corps et aux exigences de la société, sont victimes de leurs propres contradictions en même temps que jouets des dieux. Mais la puissance et la force de suggestion de la tragédie tiennent aussi à l'enracinement dans le culte et dans des lieux connus de chacun.

Les Athéniens qui assistaient en 428 à la représentation de la tragédie d'Euripide connaissaient l'existence, sur la pente sud de l'Acropole, d'un *mnêma Hippolutou*, dont le culte aurait été importé de Trézène après l'accueil des réfugiés athéniens par la cité d'Argolide à la veille de la bataille de Salamine.²⁵ L'existence d'un sanctuaire d'Aphrodite *epi Hippolutou*, près du sanctuaire d'Hippolyte, est d'autre part attestée par deux indications épigraphiques du V^e siècle (la première est datée de 429/428).²⁶ Que les vers 29-33 où Aphrodite évoque le temple fondé par Phèdre sur l'Acropole soient ou non interpolés (ce que soutient entre autres L. Méridier), les Athéniens connaissaient donc l'existence de ce sanctuaire d'Aphrodite en relation avec Hippolyte.²⁷ Quant au culte dont Artémis annonce la création à Trézène, il appartenait à un complexe extra-urbain que Pausanias a visité (2.32.3).²⁸ Il comprenait entre autres un temple dédié à Hippolyte où des résidus de sacrifices datés de l'époque géométrique jusqu'à l'époque hellénistique ont été identifiés.²⁹ Au-dessus du stade, Pausanias a vu un temple d'Aphrodite *Kataskopia*: 'celle qui observe.' Il a vu aussi, près de la tombe de Phèdre et du *mnêma* d'Hippolyte, un myrte, plante symbole de la séduction, que l'on trouve à ce titre dans les couronnes des nouveaux mariés. Son nom grec, Myrrha, renvoie aussi au mythe jadis analysé par Marcel Detienne et qui s'inscrit également dans la problématique du mariage et du refus d'Aphrodite: 'Tantôt vierge dégoûtée des

25 Plutarque *Thém.* 10.5. Calame 1990:423, Pirenne-Delforge 1994:44s.

26 Pirenne-Delforge *loc. cit.* 40.

27 'Il existait, au moins à partir de 428 av. J.-C. un *hieron* ou même un *naos* consacré à Aphrodite sur le flanc de l'Acropole qui fait face à Trézène, c'est à dire sur le flanc sud,' Pirenne-Delforge, *loc. cit.* 41.

28 Cf. Calame 2000:207-41 (215-28 en particulier).

29 Pirenne-Delforge, *loc. cit.* 178 et note 52.

prétendants qui la recherchent en mariage, tantôt femme saisie par le désir effréné de l'union sexuelle avec son propre père.³⁰ En pleurant Hippolyte et en lui rendant hommage, les *parthenoi* prennent indirectement congé d'Artémis et se ménagent sa bienveillance. Mais en disant adieu à leur vie de jeunes vierges par l'offrande de leur chevelure, elles s'engagent aussi à entrer dans une juste relation à Aphrodite, à égale distance du refus dont Hippolyte était l'incarnation malheureuse et de l'excès qui avait perdu Phèdre.

Ainsi, pour les Athéniens du V^e siècle spectateurs d'Euripide, le mythe était inscrit dans la réalité topographique et culturelle. D'un côté le sanctuaire de l'Acropole, de l'autre, le culte et le sanctuaire de Trézène.³¹ Il est frappant que dans l'un et l'autre cas, Hippolyte est associé à Aphrodite et à Phèdre. Artémis disparaît de l'espace du théâtre et du champ visuel du père et du fils aussitôt après sa révélation et la réconciliation qu'elle a favorisée, les laissant à leur tête-à-tête ultime; elle disparaît aussi du champ culturel, abandonnant Hippolyte à Aphrodite et à Phèdre. C'est d'Aphrodite que se souviendra Thésée: *Memnésomai* est le dernier mot de la tragédie (si on en excepte les derniers vers du chœur fortement contestés par Barrett). C'est son intervention que rappelle le *mnéma* d'Hippolyte, la tombe du héros, flanquée du sanctuaire d'Aphrodite. La fonction dramatique d'Artémis, en '*deus ex machina*' masque son inconsistance dans la tragédie en face d'Aphrodite. La divinité dont la statue a été dédaignée par Hippolyte au début de la tragédie a gagné tout le champ, sans avoir besoin d'apparaître à nouveau. Le chœur se charge de chanter sa puissance, au moment même où Artémis apparaît en haut du palais (Eur. *Hipp.* 1268-1281). C'est elle seule que salue Thésée, c'est elle qui impose sa présence aux côtés d'Hippolyte à Athènes et à Trézène, tandis que la vague menace d'Artémis reste sans objet réel, même si on peut lui trouver des supports.³² Hippolyte et Phèdre, rapprochés à jamais au-delà de leur mort, n'est-ce pas un ultime hommage à Aphrodite, dans la bouche d'Artémis elle-même? Le deuxième *Hippolyte* est bien une tragédie sur le triomphe d'Aphrodite, triomphe sans concession sur les trois personnages humains principaux. Artémis, ici, se dérobe, comme si sa sympathie pour Hippolyte ne pouvait compenser la faute du jeune homme envers une divinité dont Artémis est tenue de respecter le champ d'intervention. C'est sur cet équilibre des puissances que repose l'ordre olympien, c'est de l'avoir ignoré ou refusé que meurt Hippolyte après avoir entraîné dans son désastre une Phèdre, de provocatrice dans la première version,

30 Detienne 1972:121-24.

31 Calame souligne 'l'homologie entre l'organisation culturelle des deux espaces, à Trézène et à Athènes, indiquée dans le texte même d'Euripide' (2000:223).

32 Tel Adonis, amant d'Aphrodite, tué par un sanglier suscité par Artémis maîtresse de la chasse, selon une version rapportée par Apollodore, *Bibl.* 3.14.4

devenue digne des éloges conjugués des deux déesses concernées. Enfin c'est à cet ordre que participe Artémis en respectant le champ d'intervention d'Aphrodite.

La tragédie tout entière affirme et célèbre sa puissance. Artémis semble ici n'en être qu'un faire-valoir, se réservant de jouer ailleurs un rôle décisif, toujours aux dépens des humains.³³ Euripide, dans cette tragédie, s'applique à montrer des humains aux prises avec les erreurs et les passions humaines, mais, dans le registre supérieur (comme sur les vases 'tragiques' où sont traités des thèmes empruntés au théâtre) les dieux agissent. En révélant, à la fin de la tragédie, aux protagonistes survivants, le rôle d'Aphrodite, dont les spectateurs sont, eux, avertis par Cypris elle-même depuis le Prologue, Artémis se fait la dénonciatrice des limites et des faiblesses des dieux, de leur violence aussi et de leurs passions. Mais elle en est en même temps la réparatrice et elle manifeste sa puissance dans l'ordre qui est le sien, l'ordre du divin, par la fondation d'un culte qui établit des relations ordonnées entre les hommes et les dieux. La tragédie s'ouvrait sur une faute envers Aphrodite manifestée par un refus de lui rendre un culte. Elle s'achève par la création d'un culte à Hippolyte qui, à la fois, célèbre à jamais sa faute et l'associe au domaine d'Aphrodite. Dérision ou réconciliation? S'il n'y a pas de limite au déchaînement de la colère des divinités oubliées ou dédaignées,³⁴ il est toujours semble-t-il, une réparation possible: elle passe par le culte, seul mode de communication durable possible entre les hommes et les dieux.

Cela n'interdit pas de mettre Euripide en relation avec les Sophistes et les débats philosophiques, religieux et politiques de son époque, mais sa réflexion sur les dieux n'en reste pas moins en résonance avec les croyances et les pratiques cultuelles de ses contemporains.³⁵ La forme qu'Euripide donne au mythe dans son second *Hippolyte* change profondément les significations dont il était chargé dans les cultes d'Athènes et de Trézène. Le succès de la tragédie athénienne transforme les représentations que l'on pouvait se faire jusque-là du jeune héros honoré comme un dieu dans son sanctuaire de Trézène (cf. la réflexion de Plutarque). Euripide se fait l'interprète des cultes en même temps qu'il les charge, aux yeux de ses spectateurs, de valeurs nouvelles. La force des symboles que porte la tragédie s'en trouve renforcée; qu'il s'agisse de ceux qui révèlent les conflits entre le père et le fils, ou le statut du désir féminin dans la société grecque de l'époque.³⁶ Faire cependant une lecture tout humaine de la tragédie, ce serait l'amputer d'une dimension qui

33 Comme il apparaît dans les deux *Iphigénie* d'Euripide.

34 Ainsi le chœur des femmes de Trézène, pour expliquer l'état de Phèdre au début de la tragédie commence-t-il par envisager les atteintes des dieux ou l'oubli d'un sacrifice à Dictynna. Ce n'est qu'en second lieu qu'il s'interrogera sur le comportement possible de Thésée ou les incidences d'une maladie féminine (Eur. *Hipp.* 141-69).

35 Cf. Goossens 1962, Lefkowitz, 1987.

marque tout le théâtre d'Euripide et éclate dans sa dernière tragédie: *Les Bacchantes*.

36 Cf. Bonnard 2002. S. des Bouvrie observe justement: 'We may describe the action of the drama as existential conflicts, but they are definitely existential within fifth-century Athenian society.' Elle observe aussi que c'est par l'émotion suscitée par l'action tragique que ces conflits nous deviennent sensibles (des Bouvrie 1992:242).

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Olympia and the epinikion. A creation of symbols

Synnøve des Bouvrie

1. Introduction

THE PINDARIC victory ode has for centuries been surrounded with scholarly attention and critical debate. Its historical, aesthetic, religious, social and moral dimensions have been subject to close scrutiny and it seems that everything that can be said about the genre has been said. However, although the social and cultic context of these poems has been studied in detail, the specific celebratory nature of this context has not received proper attention. Even when scholars inquire seriously into the conditions of the performance, they may still lack a sufficient apprehension of its nature. Generally speaking, the epinikion genre is studied from an individualistic perspective and its symbolic quality in an anthropological sense has not been acknowledged.

A basic assumption within the study of 'symbolism' is that symbols are generated by 'tacit' creative processes, and operate at a subliminal level of consciousness creating shared orientations and collective meanings.¹ We should keep in mind that human beings do more than act as individuals, and the meaning of their endeavours may be more than what they profess to do. Being an essential aspect of culture, and a truly human universal, symbolism helps us create culture, responding to our urge to relate to a group.²

In this article I will take some of the prevailing assumptions about the epinikion and relate them to the nature of the celebration in which the victory ode was

- 1 I will shortly return to these general notions. With the term 'symbolic' I refer to the anthropological terminology developed during the last thirty or so years, with the work of Victor and Edith Turner, Barbara Babcock, Sally Moore and Barbara Myerhoff, Bruce Lincoln (his concept 'discourse' referring to a somewhat wider range of phenomena), Don Handelman (analysing what he labels 'social events') and others. In particular, I will focus on the work of Sherry Ortner.
- 2 As to the concept of culture, I support the assumption that even if cultural groups may be difficult to define, they can be identified by a core of shared symbols, even in various, partly overlapping, partly concentric constituencies. See Shweder in the discussion directed by Borofski *et al.* 2001.

embedded. I will develop my argument by drawing on the wider historical and archaeological context, applying anthropological theory of 'symbolism.' The paper will concentrate on the Olympic *panegyris* and, reasonably, on the late Archaic and early Classical period.

The way Elroy Bundy has emphasised the epinikion's encomiastic function and the notion of the victory ode as rooted in tradition are important contributions to our understanding of the genre.³ Still, his work lacks a wider perspective of this tradition and the conditions of the performances.

Leslie Kurke, proposing a 'sociological poetics of Pindar,' envisages the epinikion as enacting 'the reintegration of the victor into his heterogeneous community.'⁴ However, apart from the fact that Kurke does not make clear how this reintegration came about, in particular since not every athlete was honoured with an epinikion,⁵ she avoids to address the question why these societies organised the Olympic celebrations altogether and why prospective victors departed from their home community to join in the festivity. A general problem with studies like this is that they conceive of the epinikia more or less as a 'record' of contemporary social processes.⁶ More convincing is Patricia Bulman's study of the dynamics of *phthonos* operating in the world of the epinikian celebration, in its positive version a symptom of success, and in the negative an inevitable attack on the successful athlete which the poet has to counter.⁷

3 Bundy 1962. The way he expressed himself, declaring many of the epinikian motifs as 'conventions,' has however provoked reactions in defence of the poet's genius. (e.g. Rose 1974:150). Unnecessarily, I think, if we realise that the epinikia, however original, were embedded in a cultural performance. For the traditional character of the epinikion, see also Hamilton 1974.

4 Kurke 1991:7f., 259. The task of the victory poem was 'to reintegrate the victor, who had isolated himself by his achievement, back into his community' (*op. cit.* 6f.). In this Kurke relies on Kevin Crotty's model of the epinikion. However, his examples of the difficult returns of athletic victors (Crotty 1982:122ff.) exhibit strong folk tale motifs, cf. Hönle 1963:29-44, Molineux 1971, Bohringer 1979. While society surrounding the victor (and poet) may have been heterogeneous, it is by no means evident that the victor was rejected. The general admiration for the victors and the acceptance of athletic ideals is well attested, and the way the odes celebrate not only the victor but 'crown' his polis as well (as it is expressed in formulaic victory epigrams), is well attested. See Ebert 1972, numbers 12, 15, 22, 26, 27, cf. Saïd and Trédé-Boulmer 1984.

5 I share the scepticism of Christopher Carey 1994, 2001:23, Mary R. Lefkowitz 1995:143f., and Christian Mann 2001:49.

6 The method Kurke presents is to 'consider first how the oikos of the victor itself *figures* in the epinikia ... then trace the *depiction* of the relation of the house to the outside world ...' (Kurke 1991:9, emphasis added). It is doubtful whether depictions of a situation would have an reintegrating impact on the agents. I suggest that the epinikion, being an element in a ritualised celebration, is not just a reflection of a situation but a strategic manipulation of that situation (cf. Bell 1992:100).

7 Bulman 1992:20ff.

The celebrative nature of the genre is better understood by e.g. Jaume Portulas in his view of the religious status of the epinikion.⁸ Following Jacqueline Duchemin he emphasises the relationship between the victory celebration and hero cult, concluding: 'L'épinice offre à un homme l'expérience singulière d'entendre de son vivant comment sa renommée agira après sa mort.'⁹ He thus both abandons the view of Pindaric poetry as reflecting a profane social reality and suggests that the poetic exaltation affected the experience of the victor.¹⁰ However, his statements focus on the victor as an individual and on his personal experience, and do not address the collective celebration, the workings of the performative programme, seen from the perspective of the communities creating them.

A detailed analysis of the social world of the epinikion is offered by Christian Mann. Emphasising the celebratory aim of the epinikion (Mann 2001:35), he analyses the interaction between the victor, whom he considers basically responsible for the ode, and his environment.¹¹ This focus on the ideologically charged message transmitted by a sender to an addressee is of course a relevant inquiry. However, I would include a wider range of questions as to the nature of the entire collective performance, because I think we have to understand the epinikion within the overall cultural process, and study the phenomenon as a symbolic expression. Of course, there may be a factual communicative situation between author, victor, and audience, but instead of the perspective of individual partners in conversation and conscious exchange of 'messages,' we have to adopt the anthropological notion of symbolic performances which engage a group of participants and operate through imaginative and affective modes in a collective practice.¹²

There is a general tendency in philological studies of 'performance' to adopt empirical methods which focus on concrete spatial and temporal dimensions and distributions of roles,¹³ without accounting for the way the performance may have affected and transformed the community of protagonists and spectators in a collective experience. Such a study is, of course, less empirically verifiable, and

8 Eveline Krummen while likewise focusing on the religious context offers a more philological study of how the victory ode incorporates religious traditions (Krummen 1990).

9 Portulas 1985:213, cf. 215.

10 Portulas 1985:211, cf. Duchemin 1955:297. Still Portulas' approach seems somehow intellectual, conceiving of a poet sending messages to reflect upon, insights, analogies, and warnings (e.g. *op. cit.* 217). Likewise Krummen thinks of the epinikion as 'Aussage ... gedeutete Wirklichkeit ... eine Form der Gesprächssituation' (Krummen 1990:3ff.).

11 'Der Auftraggeber muß die Kontrolle über den Textinhalt besitzen' (Mann 2001:44), 'die Selbstdarstellung siegreichen Athleten gegenüber der Bürgerschaft ihrer Polis ... das Verhältnis Athlet und Heimatpolis' (*op. cit.* 38f.).

12 I adopt this specific term in the sense applied by Catherine Bell, who, following Bourdieu, draws attention to the aspect of 'misrecognition,' the fact that those involved do not see what they are doing (cf. Bell 1992:81f.).

must be supported by comparative material. However, it may be necessary to include such an anthropological inquiry in the face of the complex social phenomena under consideration.¹⁴ One of the very few who have addressed the collective workings of the performance is William Mullen. He suggests that by orchestrating the processional dance, the 'poet' affected the community as a group,¹⁵ creating literally an embodiment of cultural ideals.¹⁶ Mullen has radically abandoned the method of treating the epinikion as a kind of record, and focused on creative interaction.¹⁷ While the dancers (and the 'poet') as performers are acting, the audience (and the victor) is 'active' as well, all sharing responsibility for the performance. In an anthropological perspective we may conceive of the whole group present as 'participants' in the performance.¹⁸

In another approach, emphasising the collective nature of the epinikian context, John and Frances Newman suggest the notion of the carnivalesque as the basic meaning of 'komos' and hence the essence of the Pindaric epinikion.¹⁹ However, they do not explain what kind of social conditions created this carnival or shaped its workings.²⁰

13 For an overview of the debate on the poetic 'I' in the epinikion, see Lefkowitz 1991 and 1995, Bremer 1990. Antonio Aloni, although attempting to surmount the purely empirical method, focuses on a historical inquiry (Aloni 1998). This is of course legitimate; I suggest, however, that an anthropological approach may offer a more complex perspective.

14 On the methodological differences between historical and anthropological inquiries, see Saliba 1976. Anthropology embraces not only 'explanation in terms of antecedent events or efficient causes, and explanation in terms of mediating factors (the meaning of customs and values in terms of their interconnectedness),' but also 'explanation in terms of ends and purposes and explanation in terms of general laws or principles' (101). For the workings of symbolic processes in general, see Victor Turner, *e.g.* 1974:55f. For its physiological aspects, see d'Aquili and Laughlin 1979. Catherine Bell assembles and develops theories about the role of the body in ritualisation (Bell 1992:98ff.).

15 'There will be some sense in which the dancers transform the narrative from mere fictional representation into a *mode of sacred presence*' (Mullen 1982:88, emphasis added. *Cf.* 133).

16 Mullen 1982:24. For a discussion of these ideals, see *e.g.* Mullen 1982:60ff. Being a honoured guest, the 'leader' of the performance focused for that reason on his personal 'I,' while at the same time including all the participants in his expression (*op. cit.* 68). While dismissing the idea of an external reference, Kathryn Morgan conceives of the poetic 'I' in a purely rhetorical sense (Morgan 1993). Within this framework we should definitely abandon the scepticism about the poet working for payment. See the discussion of this issue by *e.g.* Bremer 1991. If material rewards brought dishonour, the poet would not have announced this fact so openly in his poetry. *Cf.* Portulas 1985:231f.

17 As scholars we are always in danger of confusing the record of the past with the social reality then and there, that is, we confuse what *for us* is just a document offering us information about the past with the living relationship its audience had to their social or religious expression.

18 *E.g.* Kapferer 1984.

In the situation where a comprehensive view of the victory performance is either incomplete or lacking, it is my aim to contribute to the understanding of the Pindaric epinikion by restoring the genre to its widest cultural context within a historical as well as anthropological framework. Given the religious celebration encompassing the song-dance and the metaphysical world evoked in the text, the genre invites to be analysed as an instance of ritualisation.²¹ Such a classification, however, requires a few preliminary assumptions. The fact that Pindar's poems were embedded in a cultural performance or a ritual does not deny his poetic genius.²² And the fact that the poetic form lived only for a brief period does not preclude the possibility that it conveys meanings of the ritual process and social values at the core of the entire *panegyris*.

2. Key symbols

For our present purpose, it will be useful to start with a general distinction. According to Sherry Ortner, the cultural process is basically due to the workings of 'key' symbols; these symbols may be divided into what she has labelled 'summarizing' and 'elaborating' symbols. 'Summarizing' symbols embrace a variety of values and notions, sometimes incongruous and even conflicting ones, drawing attention towards a complex centre and engaging affectively laden responses of the social group.²³ Typical examples of 'summarizing' symbols are central religious or

19 Newman and Newman 1984. They invoke a range of theoretical studies on carnival to claim that the genre betrays the 'spirit and manners of a now vanished popular culture' (*op. cit.* 236). Mullen interprets the word '*komos*' as the (most common) expression for the processional dance performed by the celebrating dancers (Mullen 1982:24). Thomas Cole assumes that the *komos* revel ended in violence and that it was the task of the epinikion to check and contain a potentially explosive situation (Cole 1992:25ff.).

20 While the term 'uncrowning' (Newman and Newman 1984:41) normally refers to the inversion of some power and status hierarchy, neither victor nor hero (or god) is degraded, rousing laughter. Nor do we get a deeper understanding of what kind of laughter was involved, unless festive joy (*op. cit.* 40ff.). Carnavalesque laughter deriving from inversion is lacking. I therefore find their main thesis unconvincing, although a number of observations deserve closer attention. The fact that the poems manifest repetitions of words, punning, corresponding expressions and parallelisms suggests in principle a poetic rather than a carnivalesque mode, and the metamorphoses identified by Newman and Newman are not evident nor the 'grotesque bodies' (Newman and Newman 1984:160). Jesús A. Salvador underscores the poetic nature of word-play in Pindar (Salvador 1997:39).

21 Bell 1992:91.

22 We should just realise that 'ritual' does not imply repetitiveness, lack of originality, uninspired expression or other signs of inferiority. It is our problem as westerners to have created the artificial dichotomy between sublime art and folk art, genius and 'monotonous tribalism' (Mullen 1982:8). The ritual under analysis was not a performance of fixed texts, but 'required the freshness of perpetually renewed creation by a living poet' (*op. cit.* 49).

23 Ortner 1973, 1979.

ideological symbols such as e.g. 'the American flag,'²⁴ which evokes 'the American way,' a cluster of values and diffuse visions of life, mobilising and charging them with intense power: 'it stands for them all at once. It does not encourage reflection on the logical relation among these ideas, nor on the logical consequence of them as they are played out in social actuality, over time and history. On the contrary, it encourages a sort of all-or-nothing allegiance to the whole package ...' 'Elaborating' symbols, on the other hand, are symbols which create distinctions, sorting out and orienting experience along cognitive ways. Furthermore, Ortner divides elaborating symbols into 'root metaphors which provide categories for the ordering of conceptual experience and key scenarios which provide strategies for organizing action experience.'²⁵

'Elaborating' symbols, then, classify the world and offer roads of action, they encourage rational thought and are not necessarily charged with feeling. 'Summarising' symbol, on the other hand, collapse complex experience attracting the audience toward their core 'in an emotionally powerful way,' discouraging rather than promoting rational thought.²⁶ Working within living cultures Sherry Ortner has drawn a list of indicators which may identify key or central symbols of the community.²⁷

At this moment we have to remind ourselves of the distinction between two aspects: first, symbols as workings of cultural formation, the concepts, patterns,

24 Other examples of 'key cultural symbols are: the cross of Christianity ... the motorcycle for the Hell's Angels, and "work" in the Protestant ethic.' (Ortner 1973:1339, 1979:94).

25 Ortner 1973:1340, 42 or broe certain culturally effective courses of acting upon it. Success is defined in certain terms, root metaphors, while key scenarios suggest the road to attaining such success.

26 Ortner 1973:1939f., 1979:94f. This division, however, should be understood as an analytical tool, for in a living reality the two kinds of symbols may be interwoven, classifications are not only sober cognitive means, they serve to charge action with value as well.

27 Criteria may be:

1 The natives tell us that x is culturally important.

2 The natives seem positively or negatively aroused about x, rather than indifferent.

3 x comes up in many different contexts. These contexts may be behavioral or systemic: x comes up in many different kinds of action or conversation, or x comes up in many different symbolic domains (myth, ritual, art, formal rhetoric, etc.).

4 There is greater cultural elaboration surrounding x, e.g. elaboration of vocabulary, or x's nature, compared with similar phenomena in the culture.

5 There are greater cultural restrictions surrounding x, either in sheer number of rules, or severity of sanctions regarding its misuse (*loc. cit.*).

There is no mystery about these symbols, because 'all of them will be expressed somewhere in the public system, because the public symbol system is ultimately the only source from which the natives themselves discover, rediscover, and transform their own culture' (Ortner 1973:1339, 1979:94).

rules, values, action programmes and feelings which are operative in the formation of a given social community, that is 'key' symbols; secondly, their vehicles²⁸ or creative instruments, the 'symbolic domains, myth, ritual, art, formal rhetoric, *etc.*' We should thus distinguish the 'key' symbol of 'the American way, ... a conglomerate of ideas and feelings including (theoretically) democracy, free enterprise, hard work, competition, progress, national superiority, freedom,²⁹ from 'the American flag', as a vehicle of that 'key' symbol, the expressive instrument evoking these motivations and values.

'Key' social symbols are created and maintained in everyday discourse and on special occasions. The most obviously 'elaborating' symbols, sorting out experience and distinguishing categories, are created and refined in all kinds of socialising situations. The primarily 'summarising' symbols, however, demanding the commitment of the community, tend to be negotiated and recreated when the instrumental function of human action recedes in favour of a celebration: revitalising or transforming these socially important symbols and charging them with new power.³⁰

3. *Olympia*

Olympia as a pilgrimage centre attracted a host of Hellenic citizens assembling at a site that embraced manifold meanings.³¹ The fact that such sites attract fervent adherence combined with the fact that they manifest complex meanings suggests that they are spaces where 'key' symbols emerge.³² We should therefore examine the various physical arrangements and verbal expressions, myths, ritual and iconographic programmes and other peculiarities connected with the pilgrimage centre.

Preliminarily we may observe that Olympia harboured the sanctuary of Zeus and Pelops and was primarily the realm of men. Pelops' bride Hippodameia, anchored in the Hippodameion and evoked in myths and imagery, brought the world of women discretely into the conceptual complex of the sanctuary,³³

28 Turner 1973:197.

29 Ortner 1973:1339f., 1979:94.

30 For a brief introduction to the phenomenon of celebration, see Turner and Turner 1982.

31 For a discussion on this issue, see my article 'The pilgrimage to Olympia. Settings and sentiments' (Bouvier forthcoming).

32 Studying the phenomenon of pilgrimage, James Preston draws attention to the relationship between pilgrimage sites and 'key' symbols (Preston 1992:44). He follows Turner and Turner 1994 [1978]:10, who apply the term 'root paradigms' (defined at 248) for what Sherry Ortner labels 'key' symbols.

33 Paus. 6.20.6; *cf.* Paus. 5.20.1. The transfer of Hippodameia's bones to the Hippodameion may, however, have been primarily a political act, *cf.* McCauley 1998. For the myth, see Hansen 2000.

providing points of contact with female shrines and celebrations, first of all the sanctuary and cult of Hera. The *Heraia* celebrated Hippodameia and centred on the blessings of marriage (Paus. 5.16.3).³⁴

Women celebrated the cult of Sosipolis within the shrine of Eileithuia in the Altis,³⁵ the infant that averted the enemy's attack and rescued the community (Paus. 6.20.4-5; Robert 1893). At the eve of the *Olympia* they mourned Akhilleus' death in the gymnasium at Elis (Paus. 6.23.3, 24.1), thus enacting women's crucial contributions to society: to give birth to warriors and to lament the fallen, Akhilleus being the paradigmatic warrior.³⁶ Women's athletic contest at the *Heraia* emphasised women's minor status as symbolically expressed in the shorter distance of their race track (Paus. 5.16.3).³⁷

Warfare

A central emphasis in Olympia was in fact, as is often observed, on warfare, notwithstanding the general condition of the Olympian 'ekekheiria.' This is not in the least expressed in the number of war votives.³⁸ When we consider what was the specific sphere of influence of Olympia as opposed to that of other major cult centres (with influential oracular or healing powers), it is clear that Olympia

34 According to Nancy Tersini, the iconographic programme of the temple of Zeus underscored the value of monogamous marriage (Tersini 1987). The age of Hera's cult is in fact uncertain. Alik Moustaka suggests that Hera's temple originally was dedicated to Zeus, arguing mainly from the lack of female votive offerings (Moustaka 2002). Hera's cult may, however, originally have entered the sanctuary as a complex political power. De Polignac identifies the basic nature of Hera in the Archaic age as the power establishing order, marking the sill between the outer world and the familiar or the *meson* between different communities, symbolised by the fundamentally mediating institution, marriage (Polignac 1997:118f.). Neta Aloni-Ronen argues for an aristocratic Hera cult in the Argolid in the Archaic age, assembling elites from various communities (Aloni-Ronen 1997:19). Jesper Svenbro suggests that the myth of the 16 matrons of Elis who resolved a period of crisis among the Eleans and Pisatans by weaving a peplos for Hera (Paus. 5.16.2 and 6), may be seen as a cultural metaphor for creating the cohesive fabric of society (Svenbro 1994:18ff, 1996:10f.). In case the *Heraia* were held in the Elean month of Parthenios, as Ludwig Weniger argues (Weniger 1905:25), this may suggest that the celebration was an old one; it may, however, have originated in an Elean cult.

35 Kastenholtz 1996. The date of ritual sacrifice is not given, but the priestess for the cult of Eileithuia was appointed annually (Paus. 6.20.2).

36 For the heroic status of Akhilleus, see Chirassi-Colombo 1977, for the location of alternative graves of Akhilleus, see Hommel 1980. Simonides introduces Akhilleus in his *Plataiai elegy* (fr. 11.19ff. in Boedeker and Sider 2001) as the panhellenic heroic paradigm of the warrior, cf. Aloni (2001:98), and Boedeker (2001:181).

37 The different measures of the stadion tracks for the *Olympia* and the *Heraia* creating the ritual order in the celebrations emphasise the complementary roles of men and women in Greek society. David G. Romano has studied the dimensions and other aspects of the stadion, Romano 1981:255, cf. Romano 1993:24 and 23, ill. 13. For a more detailed analysis of women's roles in the Olympic ritual complex, see Bouvrie 1995.

claimed a renowned oracular authority specialised in warfare. Its power elite, the Iamid and Klytiad clans, provided prominent seers who escorted armies in battle.³⁹ In the regular programme of sacrifice at Olympia, deities connected with warfare are prominent: after Hestia and Olympian Zeus (a lacuna follows) Athena Leitis, the power of booty, is mentioned (*cf.* Hom. *Il.* 10.460), paired with Artemis,⁴⁰ Hephaistos was honoured,⁴¹ as well as Herakles Parastates, in particular a protector of men, further Areios Zeus, the object of cult at the battlefield trophy,⁴² as well as Zeus Katharsios and Nike, the power of military victory (Paus. 5.14.4-10).⁴³ At the table where the victory crowns were displayed the image of Ares was represented (Paus. 5.20.3). The *hoplitodromos*, established in 520 explicitly interwove athletics and warfare.⁴⁴ The competition of trumpeters, established in 396, were, according to Pollux, held because of their relationship with warfare.⁴⁵ Nigel Crowther has analysed the similarities in mentality between warfare and athletics,⁴⁶ and Michael Poliakoff has drawn attention to the brutality of a number of athletic exercises blurring the boundaries between the two realms.⁴⁷ The

38 Mallwitz characterises Olympian Zeus as 'Schlachtenlenker' (Mallwitz 1972:20). 'Der Anteil der Waffen und Rüstungen am Fundgut in Olympia ist immens,' (Sinn 1996a:22). Ulrich Sinn expresses his amazement how this fact is to be reconciled with the sanctuary's 'Friedensidee.' *Cf.* Sinn 1996b:136f., Kunze 1972:20. Jackson 1991:228 suggests that until the fifth century dedications of arms fostered pride at war expeditions. This custom faded, however. Peter Siewert observes on the basis of epigraphic evidence that dedications of arms disappear about the same time (440 BC) when metal bars with votive inscriptions make their appearance, concluding that arms were melted down (Siewert 1996).

39 *E.g.* Teisamenos partaking in the battle of Plataiai (Hdt. 9:33-35); Pindar *Ol.* 6.5, 70f., *Ol.* 8.2. *Cf.* Pritchett 1979:47-90, Mora 1984, Bearzot 1993, Bremmer 1996.

40 In one of her functions Artemis was the recipient of the *sphagia* at the moment of the hoplite collision. Pritchett 1971 [1974]:109-15, Vernant 1988, Jameson 1991, Ellinger 2002:321.

41 Clearly he was conceived of as the power of metal working.

42 Pritchett 1974:246-75, Lonis 1979:136ff.

43 Since he is paired with Nike Zeus Katharsios was perhaps honoured as the power who purified warriors after battle. Aristotle lists Zeus Katharsios after mentioning his functions as the protector of armies and of the *tropaion* (Arist. [*Mund.*] 401a20, Paus. 5.30.3).

44 Reed 1998:9-21.

45 Pollux: 'ἐκ τῆς ἐμπολεμίου μελέτης,' Poll. *Onom.* 4:87. Crowther 1994:146. Philostratos likewise comments on the connection between war and athletic events. He suggests that the race in armour has connections with warfare, referring to the herold's announcements 'that the dispensation of prizes is terminated and the sound of the trumpet signals Eualios' business calling the young men to arms' (Philostr. *Gym.* 7 Jüthner). (εἰ δὲ μὴ ῥαθύμως ἀκούεις τοῦ κήρυκος, ὄρα ὡς ἐπὶ πάντων κηρύττει λήγειν μὲν τὸν τῶν ἄθλων ταμίαν ἀγῶνα, τὴν σάλπιγγα δὲ τὰ τοῦ Ἐνυαλίου σημαίνειν προκαλουμένην τοὺς νέους εἰς ὄπλα, *cf.* 43).

46 Crowther observes that athletic contests resembled war in that the athlete like the warrior demonstrated 'evil thoughts, intimidation, and gloating at the opponent and contempt at the defeated' (Crowther 1999, *cf.* Lonis 1979:35f.).

terminology for military and athletic achievement and rewards were overlapping.⁴⁸ Homer presents a close relationship between athletics and warfare, at least in their ideals,⁴⁹ and Pindar's poetry sometimes expresses the equivalence between the two.⁵⁰ Aristophanes *Clouds* 985-1052 relates old-fashioned education with the feats of *Marathonomachai*. Plato suggests in the *Laws* that festival combats should be organised, modelled on real combat,⁵¹ a proposal that, however, never was realised. Still, there constantly arose controversies concerning the usefulness of athletics to warfare and athletic ideals were frequently the butt of harsh criticism.⁵²

Studying the history of militarism cross-culturally in an anthropological approach, Doyne Dawson suggests that the overall ancient Greek attitude to war was one of 'civic militarism,' that is, 'assuming warfare as a normal and natural feature of the world, to be accepted fatalistically like any other great force of nature,' as distinguished from 'bellicism' (the promotion of aggression).⁵³ According to Victor Hanson, hoplite warfare was not primarily focused upon defending

47 Poliakoff 1987:94ff. He states that 'sport played a role in military preparation' although indirectly (*loc. cit.*). Mann, however, strictly focusing on the immediate preparatory merits of athletic exercise, denies the connection between athletics and warfare (Mann 2001:135). Yet, within a wider perspective, the realms are overlapping (Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 2.5.1= *Mor.* 639a, *Cf.* Lee 2001:66). Mark Golden argues likewise for the relationship between athletics and warfare (Golden 1998:23-28). See Hdt. 9.33 on the story about the Iamid seer Teisamenos who misinterpreted the oracle promising him 'victories in five agones,' confusing 'γυμνικούς ἀγῶνας [and]... ἀρηίου ἀγῶνας.' (*cf.* Rose 1974:154).

48 Müller 1996:42f., Dickie 1983:237.

49 See Visa-Ondarçuhu 1999:40-50.

50 *E.g.* Pind. *Isthm.* 1.50ff. As the argument goes: all men love to get a reward. Those performing agricultural tasks strive to ward off hunger. But he who competing for prizes (*aethlois*) or partaking in war achieves fine glory (*kudos*), receives the highest reward.

ὄς δ' ἀμφ' ἀέθλοισ ἢ πολυμίζων ἄρηται κῦδος ἀβρόν,
εὐαγορηθεὶς κέρδος ὕψιστον δέκεται, πολιτατῶν καὶ ξένων γλώσσης ἄωτον.

Pindar frequently mentions war and warriors in a laudatory manner, and associates war with athletics, *e.g.* *Ol.* 7.15, *Ol.* 13.20-23, *Pyth.* 8.26f., *Nem.* 1.16, *Nem.* 5.19, *Isthm.* 4.15, *Isthm.* 7.20-30, while the *hoplites dromos* is explicitly related to Ares, *Pyth.* 10.13f. *cf. Istm.* 1.23 (*cf.* Perysinakis 1990, Müller 1996:54ff.).

51 *Leg.* 8:829C. He offers a view of the honour in which successful warriors were to be held: they should be crowned, and they should dedicate their στέφανον νικητήριον in a temple of the war-gods as a witness of τὰ ἀριστεῖα, the prize of valour (Pl. *Leg.* 12.943C; on the *aristeia*, see Pritchett 1974:278).

52 Lavrencic 1991, Kyle 1987:124-54, and Müller 1995:69-114. Mann thinks there were no connections between war and athletics (Mann 1998:11).

53 Dawson 1996:3f. Pacifism was never developed in ancient Greece (Dawson 1996:3, *cf.* Vernant 1968:10, Effe 1989:10, Hanson 2000:111). Nor was there any strong moral condemnation of destroying captives: 'No public man throughout Greek history is, I think, recorded, to have shown pity [on captives of war]; it was unmanly and best left to poets and philosophers' (Pritchett 1991:208).

the community's crops,⁵⁴ but safeguarding the family's honour,⁵⁵ a central drive being the demonstration of courage.⁵⁶

The hoplite ideology was based upon a 'powerful emotive, symbolic, ideological reason,'⁵⁷ war becoming an important source of male identity and being praised in a rich literary tradition. A militaristic war culture tends to promote solidarity and cooperation but causes as well '... intense status competition among males over honor.'⁵⁸ War was surrounded with extensive metaphysical elaboration. A whole host of female and male war-divinities protected the business of warfare, from nurturing Artemis, Athena or other female *kourotrophi*, to exemplary and protective Herakles and other heroes.⁵⁹

We have still to take account of the nuances and differences; as Christian Mann has pointed out, there are significant distinctions between war and athletics.⁶⁰ In athletics there were oppositions between speed and strength, on the one hand, and the 'heavy' and brutal exercises (boxing and pankration) on the other. Both warfare and athletics, with the exception of the stadion race, were exclusively male activities. Warfare is cross-culturally an essentially male monopoly, as it was in Greek

54 Hanson 1989:33, *cf.* Hanson 1991:6, and Hanson 1999:267. Vernant has emphasised that being a warrior was considered a part of men's nature (Vernant 1968:25). Warfare developed the idea of the 'citizen, farmer, soldier' triad (Foxhall 1993:141ff.). Raaflaub likewise assumes a triple role of landowner, soldier and assemblyman (Raaflaub 1997:57).

55 Hanson 1991:4, 34. Hanson 1989:25. The distinctively Greek form of hoplite battle developed out of primitive warfare (Dawson 1996:49, *cf.* Brelich 1961, Connor 1988), and retained for a long period its ritualised character. This does not necessarily mean that early warfare was less destructive or brutal. Modern field anthropological studies of warfare in tribal societies demonstrate that 'ritualised' pitched battle is often just one of several methods, a 'means of testing the strength of an adversary, while ambushes and raids on settlements are the means of killing large numbers of the enemy' (Otterbein 1999:800).

56 'A man could focus all his courage upon one pure burst of frenzied activity; for an hour or two he overcame the limits of physical and psychological endurance' (Hanson 1989:25). According to Runciman, the hoplite warrior culture was fostered by a complex of instructions, promising pre-eminent prestige to the courageous and successful citizen-warrior (Runciman 1998:738ff., 741).

57 Dawson 1996:50, 52, Meier 1990:85f., 1991:44f, *cf.* Garland 1993:77. Warfare was based upon strong bonds of solidarity with fellow hoplites, brothers, fathers, sons and friends, Hanson 1989:36, *cf.* 119ff.

58 Dawson 1996:16f.

59 Pritchett 1979:11-46, Lonis 1979:199-311, Jost 1995, Deacey 2000, Parker 2000. The literary record offers a number of heroic military epiphanies. In the world of Olympia Herakles was powerfully present, although he did not have a prominent shrine or altars. In his investigation of Pindar Jacques Jouanna has shown that the poet offers a complex and nuanced view of Herakles as the founding hero of the Olympian contest and essential Olympian cults (Jouanna 2002). On the metopes of Zeus' temple the hero is uniquely prominent as the paradigmatic saviour strongman.

60 Mann 1998:11.

culture.⁶¹ The status of the warrior, moreover, was elaborated into extraordinary dimensions.

We may thus provisionally identify symbolic processes going on in Olympia: in the first place the emergence of ‘elaborating’ symbols in Sherry Ortner’s terms, emphasising gender distinctions creating models of excellence (‘root metaphors’) for females and males, as wives and warriors respectively, as well as paths of action (‘key scenarios’), through motherhood and warfare-athletics. Women’s cultic roles, as manifested in a number of ways, categorised female nature as distinct from male nature. Men aspired to excellence in masculine sports and the heroism of martial victory.

Within the male realm, however, the contests encompassed a whole range of distinct and opposed fascinations and meanings in a complex arrangement, rewarding beauty as well as brutal force,⁶² wealth and achievement, strength and courage. Stephen Miller emphasises the opposition between hippic *vs.* gymnastic exercises.⁶³ As a magnetic centre, the Olympic celebration engaged both single athletes and polis communities, offering individual as well as collective glory. The very fact that the merits of athletics to war or society in general were always and at times vehemently contested, may be an indication of the symbolic values involved.

Perfection

As the entire Olympic phenomenon is extremely multifaceted, we have to draw together some prominent features, in order to investigate the symbolic processes involved. We may consider the important aspect of the ordering of calendrical time. The *Olympia* were probably convened at the first full moon after the summer solstice, the training period for athletes starting one month in advance. Stephen Miller suggests that this date probably was a practical arrangement for orienting the participants coming from afar.⁶⁴ There are, however, no indications that the other panhellenic celebrations also were held on a full moon, their date being rather inspired by a deity’s sacred day, such as Apollo’s seventh and Poseidon’s eighth of the month.⁶⁵ The *Nemea* were probably held at new moon.⁶⁶ Miller reminds us of the fact that the *Olympia* were not tied to the local Elean calendar,

61 Dawson 1996:29, Vernant 1968:15, Graf 1984:245.

62 For the focusing on visible male beauty and warfare virtues in early Greek poetry (epigrammatic included), see Robertson 2003.

63 Miller 2002:286ff.

64 Miller 1975:219f. The *Isthmia* were probably held in April, the *Nemea* in July and the *Olympia* and *Pythia* in August (Unger 1877:42, cf. Golden 1998:10f.).

65 Unger 1877:40ff., Fontenrose 1988:127.

66 Perlman 1989:65.

in fact to no local calendar at all.⁶⁷ Since, however, the Greeks from the Archaic period on knew the date of the solstices, the Olympic games could equally well have been held on a specific day counting from that moment. Or if one assumes the practice of including the full moon as a universal point of orientation, they could have ordered people to arrive on that day and start on the *n*th day after. In Pindar's poetry it seems, however, that the full moon was part of the celebration's climax (Pind. *Ol.* 3.19f., *cf.* *Ol.* 10.74f.). What I will suggest is that practical reasons do not exclude symbolic motives for accommodating the full moon in the ritual arrangement. According to Claire Préaux, the Greeks associated the waxing moon with processes favourable to growth.⁶⁸ We should therefore not dismiss the possibility that the calendrical arrangement were connected with the overall superiority and 'perfection' of the *Olympia*.⁶⁹

Taboos

There seems to have been an additional atmosphere of sanctity associated with the pilgrimage centre of Olympia, which was surrounded by an exceptional protective zone through the traditional neutrality of the entire polis of Elis. According to Strabo, an oath was pledged by all stating that those who bore weapons into the sanctuary, as well as those who refused to defend Olympia, were under a curse or polluted (ἐνᾶγῆ).⁷⁰ This war taboo seems to have been exclusive for Olympia.⁷¹

Not only were women excluded according to elaborate regulations (Paus. 5.6.7; 6.20.9; Ael. *NA* 5.17), but other exceptions and taboos surrounded the sanctuary as well. So the sanctuary was subject to 'miracles' (θαυμάσαι, θαῦμα): Pausanias mentions that Olympia is the only place in the Hellenic world where flax grows (Paus. 5.5.2). Another 'miracle' elevating Olympia to a realm of exceptionality is the 'fact' that only the water of the Alpheios created the 'clay' constituting the monumental ash altar (Paus. 5.13.11). Kites did not prey on the sacrificial meat and flies kept away from the sacrifices during the Olympic festival (Paus. 5.14.1;

67 Miller 1975:220.

68 Préaux 1973:99. We may surmise that the full moon represents the *akmè* of this favourable process.

69 *Cf.* Hugh Lee citing Sch. vet. Pind. *Ol.* 3.33, where Herakles is staged establishing the altars and sacrifices, introducing him in the following manner, 'the moon being full, gleaming and shining into the evening and the night on the faultless (ὄλοκλήρω) man' (Lee 2001:11).

70 Strabo 8.3.33; *cf.* Phlegon 257 *FGrH* F 1.8 Jacoby. Lämmer 1982-83:49.

71 Although wars were fought over the control of Olympia, nobody seriously contested the special role of Elis in relationship to Olympia (For the conflict between Elis and Sparta, see recently Roy 1998 and Hornblower 2000). The situation of Elis is characterised by Drees as a 'Phäakendasein' (Drees 1967:41, 'Phaecian existence,' 1968:37). Sordi 1984 and Corbetta 1981 discuss the political aspects of the games and the sanctuary. In Olympia there did not arise a league of states that distributed control over the sanctuary as was the case with Delphi.

Ael. *NA* 5.17; 11.8, Plin. *HN* 10.12). Flies were considered a source of pollution,⁷² and their ‘absence’ avoided this ‘danger’ guaranteeing the purity of the celebration. The ‘taboo’ then seems to protect against pollution and against blurring strictly separate categories of dead bodies. Probably the kite falls into the same category of defiling animal. The singularity of flax is less easy to explain. Another example of the urge to establish categorial perfection, testified by Classical as well as post-Classical sources, is the tradition that horses and asses did not—could not or should not—breed in Elis.⁷³ The ancient sources attribute the strange fact that mules ‘were not born’ in Elis due to a curse, ‘inflicted upon the region by Oinomaos,’ which indicates that there was a taboo on mating horses and asses. According to Aristotle, this contamination of species was ‘against nature,’ producing infertile offspring,⁷⁴ thus apparently creating a kind of ‘danger’ of ‘pollution.’ We may easily relegate this particular ‘fact’ to a widespread tendency among various peoples to create rules of avoiding ‘polluting’ phenomena, especially the confounding of categories, a phenomenon focused upon by Mary Douglas in her study of *Purity and danger*.⁷⁵ The miracles and taboos then seem to contribute to the exceptionality and categorial purity of the Olympic celebration.

Nudity

Another aspect we have to examine is the custom of athletic nudity. Myles McDonnell assumes that this was generally practised by the mid-sixth century at Athens and probably earlier at Sparta and the Olympic games, in spite of the fact that both Thoukydides and Plato represent the practice as a recent development.⁷⁶

72 Cole 1995:193, according to Cole, because flies feed on offal and corpses.

73 Hdt. 4.30; Plut. *Mor.* 303b = *Aetia graeca* 52; Paus. 5.5.2; Ael. *NA* 5.8. Calame 1977:419 following Devereux thinks this folklore is related to the myth of Oinomaos obstructing his daughter’s marriage, a suggestion I do not find convincing. I think the function of tales of this kind is not just that of mirroring and ‘documenting.’ The race with mule carts was introduced into the *Olympia* in 500 and abolished again in 444 (Paus. 5.9.1, cf. Lee 1992:105).

74 Arist. *Gen. an.* II:8,748b15-19, cf. Georgoudi 1990:200.

75 Douglas 1985, see especially ch. 3, 41-57. Douglas underscores that the seemingly curious beliefs in pollution and its concomitant ‘danger’ are not primitive forms of irrationality, but the expression of cultural creativity: ‘... rituals of purity and impurity create unity in experience. So far from being aberrations from the central project of religion, they are positive contributions to atonement. By their means, symbolic patterns are worked out and publicly displayed. Within these patterns disparate elements are related and disparate experience is given meaning’ (*op. cit.* 2f.).

76 McDonnell 1991:193. He argues that Thoukydides’ (Thuc. 1.6.5) and Plato’s claims (Pl. *Resp.* 5.452C), assuming a recent introduction of the practice, have to be understood as rationalising attempts at composing a schematic picture of social progress. For a historical explanation for the ‘invention by Orsippos’ in early Classical Megara, see Bohringer 1979:13.

As to the question why athletes performed naked we are generally met with anecdotal explanations in the ancient sources and simple qualifications such as 'athletic nudity,' 'nudité rituelle,' 'ideal nudity' etc. in modern scholarship.⁷⁷ In the case of Greek athletics, nudity seems to have been the rule not only at contest festivals but in daily exercise as well. It is therefore in principle not likely that the custom was a framing of ritual context.⁷⁸ A different explanation has been offered by Stephen G. Miller, who draws attention to the relationship between egalitarian politics and the levelling effect of nudity, assuming a proto-democratic mentality developing during the early sixth century, the age when the panhellenic festivals were established, reorganised or expanded.⁷⁹ Whatever the essential motive for the custom, the fact that males exercised naked had an obvious additional function: by displaying the naked body they emphasised the sex of the performer, thus stressing gender categorisation. The tale of the unlucky mother of an athlete who intruded into the games disguised as a male and was unmasked (Paus. 5.6.7-8; 6.7.2) suggests this concern. However, the overwhelming mass of male nudes in Greek sculpture, beginning with the *kouros* type (contrary to its Egyptian predecessor) and their frequency in other art forms suggests a cultural preoccupation with male physical vitality.⁸⁰ François Bohringer suggests that 'cette nudité oppose le Grec au Barbare.'⁸¹ Beth Cohen thinks the nudity of the West pediment of Zeus' temple presents the ideal nudity of the Greek male in contrast to the barbarian Centaurs in a 'monumental embodiment of ethnic conflict.'⁸² The pervasive custom of exercising naked in the *gymnasion* and in fact the etymology of this term support the argument that 'athletic nudity' was a materialisation of the 'the Hellenic way,' revealing their cultural preoccupations, in contrast to surrounding cultures, the earlier Romans included.⁸³ The fact that subsequent Christian culture has emphasised so strongly the opposite value may be an indication of the centrality of 'male

77 E.g. Brelich 1969:31, Thuillier 1988:32, 43. James Arieti suggests that the custom served to demonstrate Greek superiority by sexual restraint (Arieti 1975-76). Mouratidis argues for a 'warrior-athlete' connection (Mouratidis 1985:230). David Sansone (discussing still more theories) considers athletics as a form of sacrificial ritual, explaining nakedness as an aspect of initiation, while both sport and initiation are 'descendants of hunting ritual' (Sansone 1988:89, 112). Mark Golden discusses the issue without favouring any explanation (Golden 1998:65ff.).

78 In anthropological terms it is a common feature among humans to create ritual frames by overloading or stripping away the ordinary, and so they may enforce nudity as an extreme case of the latter tendency (Babcock 1978:297). Victor Turner 1972:576 qualifies ritual nudity as a symbol for the loss of status in initiation.

79 Miller 2002. According to Robertson, the nude body may have been a sign of citizen status (Robertson 2000:167ff.).

80 For an assessment of the varying manifestations of the male nude in art, see Osborne 1997.

81 Bohringer 1979:13, cf. Thuc. 1.6.5.

82 Cohen 2001:237f.

nudity' culture, a preoccupation with extroversion, physical (male) beauty vs. spiritual introversion ('Leibfeindlichkeit'),⁸⁴ and the present, immanent world vs. transcendent other-worldliness ('Jenzeitbezogenheit').⁸⁵ Contrast the futile existence of the souls in Hades vs. Christian paradise.

Women and girls

We may relate the custom of naked exercise to the practice of excluding (certain kinds of) women from the male celebrations.⁸⁶ According to Pausanias, παρθένοι were not debarred, but γυναῖκες were excluded from the Olympic contests, with the exception of the priestess of Demeter Khamyne (Paus. 6.20.9; 6.21.1). Those who trespassed were to be thrown from Mt. Tupaion (Paus. 5.6.7). No female at all was allowed to proceed beyond the stone *prothysis* of Zeus' ash altar, only men could climb to its top (Paus. 5.13.10).

These taboos have prompted various speculations. Susan Guettel Cole suggests that the fear of pollution stemming from processes like birth and miscarriage were the reason for debarring mature women from the Olympic athletic festival. This may be the case, but it does not explain why females altogether, not only matrons, were refused access to the top of the ash altar. Furthermore, Cole suggests that at the root of the taboo was the regulation of sexual activity for the sake of accumulating athletic energies, a quasi-practical ordination.⁸⁷ However, since no equivalent rules prevailing in other athletic contests are recorded, the exclusion of women was rooted in other motives. It may be suggested that within the general atmosphere of exceptional 'purity' and sanctity a particular urge for distinct and pure categorisation by polarisation (and hierarchisation) has been an underlying drive.⁸⁸ According to Matthew Dillon, the *Olympia* seems to have been the only celebration where *gynaikes* were excluded,⁸⁹ which supports my argument that Olympia answered the urge for pure categorisation.

83 Glass 1988:158 'abhorred by the barbarians' Thuc.1.6.5; Plut. *Mor.* 274d = *Quaest. Rom.* 40; cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 4.70

84 Müller 1995:337f.

85 Weiler 1985-86:258, 262, Tert. *De spect.* 18.2, *Scorp.* 6.2, cf. Koch 1965, Weismann 1972, Ebert 1975, Poliakoff 1984.

86 Paus. 5.6.7; 6.7.2; Ael. *NA* 5.17; Philostr. *Gym.* 17. Whether males were excluded from the female celebrations is not recorded.

87 Cole 1995:182f.

88 Cf. Burkert's comment: 'das Fest trennt die Familienbeziehungen, um sie eben dadurch deutlich zu machen' (Burkert 1972:118, 1983:102). The drive does not need to have been conscious. If the taboo prevailed in Olympia only, we may compare the fact that university colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, in contrast to other academic institutions, so long resisted to admitting females into their male colleges, defending a notion of male superiority (Burke 1990).

89 Dillon 2000:479.

However, when gender segregation and categorisation were the rule we have to explain the exceptions: why young women as well as the priestess of Demeter were given access to the male games. This requires that we take into account factors that neutralise gender polarisation.⁹⁰ Some individuals may be classified as genderless, as e.g. children, elderly women and individuals with exceptional and marginal status such as priestesses.⁹¹ The fact that girls were admitted to the *Olympia* may mean that they represented the indifferent category of children, who were considered as gender neutral. Their presence therefore did not affect the demand for strict categorisation.

The priestess of Demeter Khamyne may have been a similar case of individuals classified as marginal and for that reason lifted outside the normal gender distinction.⁹² This provides, however, only a negative explanation, offering a reason why the Demeter priestess was not excluded. I have elsewhere argued for a positive reason for this choice, the fact that Demeter seems to have been connected with athletic races and initiation practices, apparently favouring the symbolic 'growth' of new generations of men.⁹³

Pageantry

Until now we have gathered an understanding of the Olympian celebration as a sacred space-time where-when the exceptional and perfect were enacted, categories were kept pure and pollution banned. These circumstances, however, cannot explain the extraordinary manner in which the *olympionikai* were honoured or provide a sufficient explanation for the epinikian ode. We have to investigate the arrangements and celebrations more in depth, in particular the specific magnetic pull the pilgrimage centre exercised and the affective climaxes at work during the festivities, including wider circles of the celebration at the *hieronikes*' homecoming.

90 Discussing the phenomena of gender ambiguity and ambivalence, Miranda Green reminds of the fact that in traditional societies, gender is subject to both polarisation and hybridisation. Gender is not always conceived of as the sum of absolute innate characteristics, but a category which can be construed socially. 'The attribution of gender to an individual may, in certain contexts, vary according to other criteria, such as age, status or primary role within a community, with the corollary that gender attribution may be fluid and mutable' (Green 1997:899).

91 Those 'who do not conform to the gender "norm" in society might symbolically change gender-attribution, with the female ruler allocated a male gender-attribution' (Green 1997:899).

92 The Delphic Pythia represents a parallel arrangement, an exception to the general prohibition for women to enter Apollo's sanctuary. The Vestal Virgins are another example (Green 1997:900). Among West African Poro secret societies, which, as the rule, are single sex male organisations, a woman must officiate (Lafontaine 1985-86:38).

93 Bouvrie 2004.

The *Olympia* promised a colossal renown to the victorious athletes. During the victory celebrations the *olympionikai* were crowned and showered with leaves, in the *phyllobolia*. At their homecoming they could be received with extraordinary honours,⁹⁴ and a pageantry exhibiting features common to marriage processions, receptions of victorious commanders or monarchs and similar phenomena, including *euangelia*, *makarismos*, and *phyllobolia*.⁹⁵ Exainetos from Akragas was escorted by 300 teams of white horses (*Ol.* 92, Moretti 1957 nr. 346). The fact that victorious athletes were honoured with permanent *sitesis* in the prytaneion, 'the symbol of the life of the city'⁹⁶ underscores the social significance of their victory.

During the *eiselasis*, the community could pull down the city wall, in order to receive the exceptionally powerful citizen, a symbolic act demonstrating the belief in his beneficent power. Henk Versnel comparing the *eiselasis* and the Roman *triumphus* offers particularly valuable insights into the mentality underlying these customs.⁹⁷ Like a Roman *triumphator*, however, the *hieronikes* seems to have been subject to a ritual 'memento mori!' as well.⁹⁸

This brings us back to the issue of war. A *hieronikes* might be revered as someone invested with extraordinary victorious power, which could be transformed into martial fortune, as was the case with Sparta.⁹⁹ Sometimes their merits in both fields, war and athletics, were recorded in funeral inscriptions, e.g. Phaÿllos from Kroton, who won stadion and pentathlon victories at the *Pythia* and fought in the battle of Salamis as well (*Hdt.* 8.47, Moretti 1953 nr. 11, 1957 nr. 185).¹⁰⁰

Heroisation

Victorious athletes in the sacred contests were, then, per definition extraordinary males.¹⁰¹ This is evident from the fact that they in specific circumstances could, when deceased, be turned into a strong mobilising force as heroes. This seems to have been the case in situations of crisis, when (segments of) the community

94 A catalogue of rewards is provided by Horst Buhmann 1972.

95 For these traditional features in pageantry, including *euangelia* and *makarismos*, see Kleinknecht 1937, Slater 1984, cf. Buhmann 1972:111f. For the *angelia*, see further Nash (1990), for the *phyllobolia*, see Giglioli 1950, Kefalidou 1999.

96 Miller 1978:129. For the honours rewarded at Athens (*JG I² 77*), see Morissey 1978, Kyle 1984.

97 Versnel 1970:159, while now distancing himself from the concept of 'mana.' *Plut. Mor.* 639e = *Quaest. conv.* 2.5.2; *Plin. Ep.* 10.118; *Suet. Ner.* 25; *Dio Cass.* 63.20; See Robert and Robert 1961, Buhmann 1972:104, Herrmann 1975.

98 Versnel 1970:380 'hominem te esse memento,' cf. Slater 1984:244.

99 *Plut. Lyc.* 22, Kurke 1993:136, cf. Versnel 1970:155ff. Conversely, Themistokles was received with tremendous acclaim when arriving at the *Olympia* of 476 (*Plut. Them.* 17).

100 Cf. Sani 1982. Other examples are Stomios from Elis, 376 (*Paus.* 6.3.2), Promakhos from Pellene (*Paus.* 7.27.5), and Kheilon from Patrai (*Paus.* 7.6.5, Buhmann 1972:73).

adopted a particularly powerful heroic figure, in order to overcome the crisis and establish a new order.¹⁰² In that capacity they belonged to a wider field of male exceptionality,¹⁰³ elevated to a status of heroisation that could befall the war dead as well. These men were at least lifted out of the routine of human existence, the *Marathonomakhai* being an example.¹⁰⁴ In iconography the fallen warrior might be presented as (a warrior accompanied by) a snake, granting him exceptional status too.¹⁰⁵ The myth of the infant hero Sosipolis evoked in Olympia, who was transformed into a snake and so defended the community may be an instance of this belief (Paus. 6.20.4-5).¹⁰⁶ What we are witnessing is the creation of a complex of values accruing to the 'exceptional male': athletic vitality and power,¹⁰⁷ as well as martial strength and courage.

Masculinity complex

We may compare these forms of ritual and symbolic expression with Dorothea French's example from the mediaeval pilgrimage to the cave of Saint Patrick's Purgatory in Lough Derg in North Western Ireland. Here, she argues, the European ideal of a noble male elite was cultivated.¹⁰⁸ Referring to parallel phenomena, French suggests that the ritual components of the pilgrimage may emphasise social distinctions among pilgrims, concluding that Saint Patrick's Purgatory pilgrimage

101 For the tale type of the heroic athlete, see Fontenrose 1968. Apart from the *oikistes* of an *apoikia* there are the cases of military leaders. Exceptional athletic success constitutes but one element in the range of factors that make males eligible for heroisation, in addition to the exceptional beauty of Philippos from Kroton (Moretti 1957 nr. 135), the powerful brutality of Kleomedes from Astypalaia (Paus. 6.9.6, Moretti 1957 nr. 174), or other characteristics. Cf. Hoffmann 2000:368, Voutiras 2000:377).

102 Bohringer 1979. E.g. the heroisation of Brasidas in 422 by the Amphipolitans in opposition to the Athenians (Thuc. 5.11.1., cf. Kearns 1990:328f., Hoffmann 2000), and the heroisation of Kimon in Kition in 450 BC during a plague (Plut. *Cim.* 19.4), Miltiades son of Kypselos (and an *olympionikes*) was honoured as a hero by the Dolonkians during a conflict with the Apsinthians (Hdt. 6.38). Kenneth Scott describes the case of Demetrios Poliorketes (Scott 1928). Emmanuel Voutiras discusses a detailed description of a heroisation manqué, underscoring the exceptionality of the historical factors and immediate circumstances of heroisation (Voutiras 2000). For the concrete expression of the deceased athlete being transformed into a *heros*, see Pind. fr. 133 (Snell).

103 See Roller 1981, who has collected a number of heroised historical persons. Hammond 1999 analyses Macedonian traditions.

104 Whitley 1994:227f. Hugh Bowden argues that the Homeric triad: gods, war kings (*basileis*), and commoners reflect the hierarchy of polis religion: gods, heroes and ordinary mortals, emphasising the association between heroes and warfare (Bowden 1993:55f.).

105 For examples, see the terracotta plaques found on the Peloponnese from the late Classical and early Hellenistic period (Salapata 1997:248ff).

106 Cf. Kearns 1990:323ff.

107 This was not necessarily beneficent; See especially Bohringer 1979. Cf. Visser 1982.

'rather than providing a site where day-to-day identities of pilgrims were suppressed actually reinforced the medieval European idea of a noble male elite.'¹⁰⁹ The *Olympia* assembled the host of freeborn, male, Hellenic celebrants, competing for the status of ideal performer in their supreme contests of excellence.

These phenomena may be related to the world wide tendency to create manhood ideals, a social need for defining the standard of masculinity, and forcing it upon its members.¹¹⁰ While the content of this ideology may vary, the modes of disciplining the young and challenging the adult into compliance are near universals. The masculinity ideology is either transmitted in a brief and intensive formal transition rite or it is 'hung on high' resulting in a life long competition for excellence with the continuous hope for victory and fear of defeat.¹¹¹

Seen from the perspective of the individual athletes it seems obvious that the pilgrimage centre Olympia harboured the 'key symbol' of 'Hellenic manhood,' manifesting supreme physical vitality and spiritual excellence (*i.e.* courage).¹¹² In this sense the contest festival offered an 'elaborating' symbol, elaborating upon the distinction between females and males.

With its strong affective charge, however, the celebration drew together a number of intensively admired and fiercely contested excellences, exerting a powerful magnetic force upon the entire Hellenic world, centred in 'the Hellenic way-of-life,' the basic value of being a Hellene. In addition to honouring physical excellence the *Olympia* rewarded worldly success, *i.e.* wealth expressed in the horse

108 French 1994:111, *cf.* 103. The pilgrimage ritual, which was transformed by the Cistercian order towards the end of the twelfth century, offered an ordeal at the faraway cave of Saint Patrick's for the extremely tough and ambitious, excluding females altogether and attracting primarily men from the knightly class. Those who passed the tormenting ritual stages bringing them to the entrance of the 'Otherworld' and almost driving them to their death, 'finally gained entrance to the cave [and an] experience [which] not only gave them knowledge of their own personal salvation but also heroic status within society' (French 1994:110).

109 French 1994:111, *cf.* 103.

110 Gilmore 1990.

111 Gilmore 1990:224ff. Societies may enforce the manhood ideology upon their members, either in the form of 'rigid chronological watersheds' through initiation ceremonies or informally by way of permanent competitions for excellence (see his case studies on societies ranging from inner Malaysian highlands to American middle class society, *op. cit.* 124 and *passim*). Gilmore is convinced that the manhood complex is not just a biological urge, but an adaptation to social and environmental challenges and needs, a social barrier that society must erect against entropy, the renunciation of male adulthood. We may trace the way formal puberty initiations in Greek history have varied with other challenges of manhood ideology, and consider the athletic contests with adolescent as well as adult participation within the range of these social forms. Hans van Wees notices the physical and conceptual separation of boys from men in the *gymnasion* and in panhellenic events as a 'significant archaic development' (Wees 1996:1.9f.).

112 Müller 1996:44 'den in Sport wie im Krieg entscheiden körperliche Leistungsfähigkeit, "Technik" und psychisches Durchhaltevermögen über Sieg und Niederlage.'

aces, thus offering arenas for social competition attracting the wealthy as well as the less fortunate in a common celebration. This complex *panegyris* undoubtedly qualified for a 'summarising' symbol, and I would preliminarily suggest to adopt the panhellenic '*agon*' as a perceptual vehicle of this 'summarising' symbol, a materialisation of the deep-seated values that were admired in the entire Hellenic cultural region and period.¹¹³

Social and historical factors surrounding the epinikion

Within this framework, which offers a view of the *Olympia*, we may study the role of the epinikian genre. As I have suggested earlier, I think the epinikion may reveal both elements of short term historical effervescence as well as glimpses of a lasting mentality running through the (actually) '*longue durée*' of the *panegyris*.

We may then conceive of the nature of the Olympic *panegyris* as a celebration during which a male elite competed for excellence in a generally recognised complex of masculinity ideals. In doing so they created first of all a distinction between males and females. In addition, in a period when the sense of ethnicity was developing perhaps more rapidly and forcefully,¹¹⁴ they expressed their ethnic superiority as well, marking themselves as Hellenes, with nudity as a costume, and demarcating themselves from the barbarians by the extraordinary distinction lavished upon the *hieronikes*.¹¹⁵

As to the question of the short term meaning of the victory celebration we have to address the problem of the social origin of the participants at the athletic festivals in the late archaic and early Classical period, a discussion that concerns the distinction between amateurism *vs.* professionalism.¹¹⁶ To what extent the *Olympia* were the arena of the aristocracy or embraced a wider range of Hellenic citizens is not easy to determine, but I would suggest that the sources point to a combination of aristocrats and wider elites in the period under consideration.¹¹⁷ The commonly held view is that the athletic contests, dominated by their fierce competition and emphasis on individual achievement, prove their purely aristocratic nature.¹¹⁸

113 Stefan Müller assumes 'auch wenn derartige Agon-Denken nicht spezifisch griechisch ist, so ist doch die extreme Ausprägung dieses Motivs im Leben der Griechen einzigartig' (Müller 1995:40). The *agon* is highlighted in Herodotos by way of the ideological discourse between the Hellenic deserters and Xerxes (Hdt. 8.26).

114 *cf.* Malkin 2001 and Ulf 1996.

115 The athletic victory celebration has been recognised as a distinctively Greek cultural feature by Poliakoff (Poliakoff 1987:104, *cf.* Poliakoff 2001:51).

116 For the principal contributions to this discussions, see Young 1984, Pleket 1974, 1975, 1992, Kyle 1985, 1997, Poliakoff 1989. More recently Müller 1995:20-37, Golden 1998:141-45, Mann 2001:36ff.

117 I am not convinced by Young that the reward system alone was sufficient to promote poor athletes systematically in their career (Young 1984:158ff.).

Especially Young and recently Stephen G. Miller have argued from a different assumption, stating that the participants at the panhellenic festivals belonged to a wider social range than aristocrats only.¹¹⁹ In contrast to the unfree, freedmen and *metoikoi*, the citizen body constituted anyhow an elite in the wider sense, and the distance between the upper and the middle region may not have been insurmountable.¹²⁰

Stephen G. Miller questions the one-to-one correspondence between aristocracy and individualism or between team athletics (and hoplite warfare) and communal mentality. As Dawson has pointed out, the civic militarism, which prevailed in the entire Hellenic cultural area, fosters intense competition, an equally widespread custom of collective (hoplite) tactics notwithstanding. Instead of equating individualistic contests exclusively with aristocratic values Poliakoff has suggested that the common, 'hoplite,' citizen participated in the *Olympia*, finding an outlet for otherwise prohibited behaviour of competing for excellence, diverting the unacceptable impulses and redirecting them into harmless efforts.¹²¹ Harry Pleket wondering 'why on earth the ancients themselves rejected the idea of athletics as a *techne*, an *epitedeuma*,' argues that the reason was their origin in the aristocratic value system.¹²² I would, however, suggest that this activity was lifted

118 Recently this view has been promoted in particular by Christian Mann: 2001:35 and Stefan Müller, who discusses 'Die archaische griechische Adelsetik mit ihrem Drang, Rangfolgen zu erstellen und individuelle ἀρετή vor anderen zu demonstrieren,' while in war hoplites competed for the *aristeia*, 'das Moment sich vor anderen auszuzeichnen' (Müller 1996:50ff.).

119 Miller 2002:278. Miller assumes that team athletics require hierarchy and discipline (Miller 2002:278). On team sports, see Mann 1999:128. Poliakoff emphasises that individual exercises were a typical feature of Greek athletics (Poliakoff 1987:107). I would suggest that while the system did not reward anyone beyond the winners, and did not register absolute results there did not arise any disruptive competition between hoplites. The contests as such, instead of creating status hierarchies, contributed to raise the general level of achievement.

120 On prosopography, see Müller 1996:46 n.23, cf. Poliakoff 1987:129ff. According to Christian Mann, the aristocratic elite was not constituted by birth (Mann 2001:33). Elke Stein-Hölkeskamp assumes that there may have been a gradual transition, during which the ancient noble families might descend in wealth and prestige while rich families might ascend (Stein-Hölkeskamp 1989:81ff.). The genealogical 'depth' of elite families was not very impressive (Stahl 1987:81ff., cf. Vallet 1985, Bernardini 1992). William Slater dismisses the notion of a bounded aristocracy altogether. He suggests that the epinikion served as 'image-making' for people who felt like aristocrats (Slater 2001:46ff.). Thomas Hubbard thinks, contrary to Kurke, that Pindar had an open interest in trade and moneymaking (Hubbard 2001:388ff.). He thinks Pindar's poetry is interspersed with 'propagandistic claims,' for the 'problematized elites:' New Wealth, Sicilians suspected for not offering help in the Persian wars and Aiginetans suspected for piracy (*op. cit.* 396f.).

121 Referring to the important study by Clifford Geertz on the cultural processes on Bali, Poliakoff concludes that 'the games represent displacement of certain military impulses' (Poliakoff 1987:114f. and n. 80). Müller maintains that the *apobates* exercise functioned as a 'Ventilsitte' for the aristocracy as a compensation for their reduced power position in society (Müller 1996:50).

out of the pool of ordinary professions, and, whatever its brutality or lucrative aspects, categorised as an extraordinary occupation, passing into the domain of symbolic meaning.

4. 'Summarising' symbols and the epinikion

The very complexity of the recruitment to the Olympic games and the variety of motives for participating suggest that these celebrations were of an exceptional nature. 'Summarising' symbols have a tendency to unite people with various and even opposing urges and interests in a shared glowing fascination, and it would not be surprising if the pilgrimage magnet of the panhellenic *agon* attracted the splendid 'aristocrats' and the banausic 'hoplites' alike to its common centre.

While the 'aristocrats'¹²³ may have distinguished themselves by *hippotrophia* and other aristocratic pursuits,¹²⁴ and the 'democrats' had to earn their glory in gymnastic exercises, still both could meet in a common celebration sharing the brilliance of the Olympic *angelia*, *phyllobolia* and *enkomion*.¹²⁵

The *agon* with the preparatory arrangements, the separation for the training period, the formidable test and the subsequent victory celebration have been said to remind of initiatory rites.¹²⁶ However, apart from the fact that the *Olympia* did not involve adolescents only, or result in a transition into adulthood, only a few athletes reached the final crowning. We may then wonder what was the nature of these ritual forms. The entire arrangement, including the celebration at the festival site and the pageantry organised upon homecoming, seems to have followed a ritual pattern. In addition, during the period under consideration the victorious

122 Pleket 1992:148f.

123 I am in doubt whether the term is favourable to our understanding of the ancient Greek conditions, or carries a too heavy weight of modern age noblesse, with its feudal associations.

124 Especially a life style focusing on elegance, paederasty and symposia, cf. Stein Hölkeskamp 1984:104f. and Donlan 1999:62. For the creation of difference through equestrian competition Golden 1997:33-45. In a comparative study, Christoph Ulf demonstrates that there is a general tendency to define specific athletic exercises as markers of social distinctions (Ulf 1981:44f.).

125 Poliakoff discussing the question of social origin of the participants underscores that in this athletic culture 'egalitarianism enjoyed a virtually symbiotic relation with the aristocratic world' (Poliakoff 1989:170). Müller thinks that the competitive values of the aristocracy were to a large extent shared by the demos (Müller 1996:49). Walter Donlan assumes that 'the points of identification between the "aristocratic ideal" and the wider cultural ideal were not the results of the filtering down and acceptance by the many of the values of the few, but the reflection of a culture-wide homogeneity of values and attitudes which all Greeks shared' (Donlan 1999:178). Whitehead demonstrates that *philotimia* played a pervasive role from the Homeric to the Roman age, while social conditions altered the aims from individualistic to the community as the proper object (Whitehead 1983).

126 Sources in Burkert 1972:117, 1983:102.

athletes were frequently honoured with the performance of an epinikion given during a symposion or a thanksgiving at a shrine.

The celebration of the victorious athletes was naturally centred around the announcement, the *angelia*, and the crowning. Not all of them were rewarded with an epinikion.¹²⁷ The victory odes were a genre performed in complex ritual celebrations, not all aspects of which were symbolic (neither in the *Olympia* nor in the other panhellenic festivals). Most of the activities were probably just serving the wish for excitement, for winning honour, or the desire for crude profit. We may compare the way the Balinese cockfight analysed by Clifford Geertz manifests a wide range of fascinations, from simple lucrative motives to the deepest expression of the community's cultural ideals.¹²⁸ While the athletic festival generated all kinds of emotions, there were some moments when the celebration rose to the most elevated sentiments. William Mullen has expressed this thus: 'The poet would see in that brief gleam of victory reflections of the great light that once played upon heroes in the foundational ages, and in making the reflections visible to all, he would *bring about* the desired triumph of the victor's fame over time.'¹²⁹

It is within this perspective we may once more consider the *komos*, the festive procession orchestrated into a ritual complex, comprising song, dance, glorification, and blessing as well as warning. There was no question of any carnival festivity in the sense of a *mundus inversus* inverting status and power hierarchies and thus releasing carnivalesque laughter.¹³⁰ Nor any prosaic transaction between victor and community for reintegration into the polis. No exchange of information in a *Gesprächssituation*. The genre transmitted central Hellenic values, although not in a discursive manner.¹³¹

I suggest that a form of liminality was created during the cultural performance of the *Olympia*, which lifted the *olympionikai* to an elevated status, although it

127 Nash 1990, cf. Bernardini 1985. Miller demonstrates with statistical method that the Pindaric epinikion was commissioned by the wealthy only (Miller 2002:281f.).

128 Geertz 1973. Contemporary Olympic games comprise concentric circles of sensationalism, sportive excitement, patriotism as well as the sublime sentiments of shared humanity (MacAloon 1984).

129 Mullen 1982:32, emphasis added.

130 The *komos* is supervised by the *Kharites* e.g. in Pind. *Ol.* 13.16 which suggests its positive and serious sentiment, contrary to Newman and Newman's concept of carnival.

131 I am therefore sceptical to the formulations of Peter W. Rose, who underscores the element of *paideia* in the Pindaric epinikion, 'mythic *paradeigmata* believed to exhibit ideals of permanent value to Greek society and in particular to the Greek aristocracy ... have a general enduring appeal to more of Greek society than the victor and a small circle' (Rose 1974:149), cf. 'The use of myths to reinforce social and political structures and norms of behaviour ... replacement of myth by philosophy as the primary vehicle for serious explicit teaching ... didactic reasons' (151).

involved no ordinary initiation. The *Olympia* were a recurrent event and the celebration is more to be viewed from the collective point of view.¹³² Although victors were given tremendous attention it was not their status that was at stake, but the state of the celebrating community, periodically renewing itself in their collective pilgrimage to Olympia. This process of renewal is suggested by the central role of the full moon, a common symbol in rites of passage.¹³³ In the spectacular Incwala celebration among the Swazi in South-East Africa lunar symbolism accompanies the 'periodic strengthening' of the king as well as the nation.¹³⁴ Hilda Kuper, who has studied the rite, claims that, although the focus was on the king, 'on [a particular day during the Incwala] the identification of the people with the king is very marked.'¹³⁵ During the celebration the king is ritually humiliated and chastised. Customs of 'chastening,' the humiliating, and reviling of the central person often accompany liminal moments of elevation during installation rites (Turner 1969:105f., 167ff., Lincoln 1989:69).

I will argue that the victors were transformed and transferred in a similar liminal event. What was happening to the *olympionikai* was a transformation of the victorious athletes into a separate category of exceptional human beings.¹³⁶ At the athletic *panegyris* they were charged with the symbolic power of the festival site, and while being crowned and escorted in the *pompè*, they were transformed into living vehicles of the complex 'summarising' symbol stored at the pilgrimage centre. And when dedicating their crowns to the divine patrons upon homecoming, they carried their share of the 'key' symbolic power to their home polis, sowing that power all over their Mediterranean and Euxine settlements.¹³⁷

The victory celebration transformed the victorious athlete into an *olympionikes* as it transformed the community in its attitude towards him. Mentally, in his own

132 Turner 1967:94f.

133 Turner 1967:99.

134 Turner 1967:108f., Lincoln 1989:54.

135 Kuper 1947:219f. cited in Turner 1967:109.

136 Turner 1967:95. See Pierre Bourdieu for the notion of 'magical' transformation through ritual (Bourdieu 1992).

137 Cf. Gelzer 1985. Ian Rutherford draws attention to the system of state pilgrimages, which entailed local congregations preparing for panhellenic *theoriai* in a way which guaranteed a continuous circulation of religious-cultural pulse through the extensive network, a *two-stage pilgrimage* (Rutherford 2000:608): At Keos a local pilgrimage with choral performance was held at Karthaia assembling the *poleis* of the island, before the *theoroi* went on to Delos (609). From the SE Aegean members of the Nesiote league sent regular state-pilgrimages (*theoriai*) to Delos, Kos being the most regular contributor state. The departure of the state-pilgrimage from Kos to Delos was the occasion for a sacrifice attended by delegates from neighbouring states, such as Knidos, probably Kalymna. Similarly the *Thearoi* on Aigina visited Delphi, as delegates from a *pentapolis*.

as well as the community's perception, he was transferred into another realm of existence, expressed in imagery of boundaries and margins, the *eskhatia*, in Victor Turner's terms, 'betwixt and between' human and supra-human existence.¹³⁸ This was not just in order to pass and proceed his life in a new status. Athletes returned and could be crowned again. This potentially recurrent event indicates that the victor's identity was exchangeable, while it was his status as an exceptional human being that counted. The *Olympia* moved the community from a hypothetical state of lack or emptiness to a state of fullness, expressed in the full moon, while the *olympionikes* materialised the strength of the assembled and temporally cohesive community. We may suggest that the acts of abstaining from food and sexual union did not mark the separation of an initiand, but the state of lack of the entire community,¹³⁹ which was transformed and reborn in a celebration of growth in the *phyllobolia*, and a celebration of plenty in the sacrificial banquet. I suggest that the victor was transformed into a vehicle for the 'summarising' symbol of 'the Hellenic way,' charged with its complex and competing ingredients: male beauty and vitality, brutal strength and courage, (inherited) wealth and personal achievement. The celebration focused on confirming the 'axiomatic values of society.'¹⁴⁰ This may explain why there was no room for Dionysos in Olympia.¹⁴¹

Of course we can view the athletic contest as a kind of ordeal, potentially resulting in the status elevation of the athlete. Like the Swazi king the *olympionikes* was transposed into an almost unbearable condition of supra-humanity, and, as we will see, he was ritually 'chastised' in the 'memento mori' admonitions. It is, however, more fruitful to conceive of the Olympia as a *panegyris*, a *collective* liminal celebration.

It is within this perspective of liminality and rites of transformation we may consider the Pindaric epinikion. 'Liminality is the realm of primitive hypothesis, where there is a certain freedom to juggle with the factors of existence ... there is promiscuous intermingling and juxtaposing of the categories of event, experience, and knowledge ...'¹⁴² We may consider the way the poet conceives of his effort in a way that reminds of the essence of liminality moving between separate realms of existence, breaking up normal categories and crossing genre boundaries. The narrator frequently refers to this quality of the poems, he seems to travel like the bee from flower to flower (Pind. *Pyth.* 10.53), and we may interpret expressions as

138 Turner 1967:97.

139 On sexual continence as part of liminal rituals, see Turner 1967:104ff., 1967:109 (= Kuper 1947 129f.).

140 Turner 1967:100.

141 For these aspect of the celebration, see Bouvrie 2004.

142 Turner 1967:106.

poikilia (*Ol.* 6.87, *Nem.* 5.42, *Ol.* 3.8),¹⁴³ the notion of mixture (*Ol.* 3.9, e.g. the metaphor for song, the beverage mixed of milk and honey, *Pind. Nem.* 3.77f.) as indications for this liminal bricolage.

Whereas the epic genre refers to the mythical past, Pindar consistently switches to and fro between the heroic past and to the concrete present, traversing time from mythical heroes to the present. While the epic may only in rare and vague expressions elevate mythical heroes rhetorically through a contrast with 'men as they are nowadays,' Pindaric passages explicitly compare and associate living persons with heroes of the past, creating a kind of 'Homeric similes.'¹⁴⁴ In *Nem.* 9.39 Khromios is praised for his military skill and courage, behaving 'like Hektor beside the Skamandros.' Timodemos the pankratiast is likened to Aias (*Nem.* 2.13ff.), Herodotos with his chariot is 'inserted' into a song about Kastor and Iolaos (*Isthm.* 1.16), Melissos resembles Herakles, short but strong (*Isthm.* 4.49-55), Nikokles the boxer is associated with Akhilleus (*Isthm.* 8. 61ff.), Hagesidamos is compared to Patroklos (*Ol.* 10. 16ff.), while at the end of the ode the boy is likened to Ganymedes (99-105).

Pindar's poetry traverses cosmologic space, vertically from Olympos (e.g. *Ol.* 14.10ff., *Nem.* 10.17f.) via Earth to Hades (e.g. *Pind. Nem.* 85f., *Ol.* 8.81ff. and, of course, *Ol.* 2.57-60) or the island of the blessed (*Ol.* 2.70ff.), horizontally from the Olympic centre, Pelops' shrine, to the limits of the world, the farthest miraculous borderlands.¹⁴⁵ Melissos and his clan have reached the Columns of Herakles (*Isthm.* 4.11f., cf. *Ol.* 3.44), Aigina's noble elite has performed deeds which are heard beyond the Spring of the Nile and through the Hyperboreans' land (*Isthm.* 6.23, cf. *Ol.* 3.16), the boy Hippokles is told that by sublime feats a mortal can reach as far as the Hyperboreans (*Pyth.* 10.29f.), Aristokleides with his prowess may reach the extreme end, Herakles' Columns (*Nem.* 3.21, cf. *Nem.* 4.69). Xenokrates is said to have 'sailed with his hospitality and achievements as far as the Phasis [extreme east] and the Nile [extreme south]' (*Isthm.* 2.41f.).

These geographical expressions are metaphors for excellence and create a symbolic landscape into which the victor is moving towards the extreme borderland, the realm of the Randvölker, the Hyperboreans, the 'Hesperids' (Gadeira,

143 Newman and Newman have focused on this particular feature, although interpreting it as 'the harlequin's motley dress' of carnival (cf. Newman and Newman 1984:39, 49).

144 We may therefore doubt whether it is justified to subsume Homer and Pindar under a common category of praise poetry (Nagy 1990:146ff.). The *Iliad* and the *Odyssee* I would prefer to classify as cultural symbolic narrative. Although praise as well as blame are abundantly expressed, the subliminal meaning was to evoke and charge the fundamental symbolic values of society, as has been so well argued by Pierre Vidal-Naquet for the *Odyssee*. I have suggested a similar view of the *Iliad* in an earlier paper (Bouvier 2002:45).

145 Cf. Newman and Newman 1984:237.

Herakles' Columns) or the 'Aithiopians' (Nile). Frequently expressions of the 'extreme,' ἔσχατία, resonate in this cosmology in which the *hieronikes* fares, presented as a sea voyage in which he casts his anchor at the farthest shore, ἔσχατον πλόον (*Pyth.* 10.28f.), ἔσχατιαῖς ἤδη πρὸς ὄλβου βάλλεται ἄγκυραν (*Isthm.* 6.12f.), the end of sea voyage ([κίονες] ναυτιλίας ἐσχάτας *Nem.* 3.22), with the fame of their ἐσχάταισιν ἀνορέαις reaching to the Columns of Herakles (*Isthm.* 4.11f.).

They reach the highest peak, crest, or lookout-place (ἄκρον, κορυφά, σκοπία with the opposite χαμαί *Nem.* 9.9, *cf.* 7, and 47, *Nem.* 1.11, *cf.* 34, *Nem.* 6.24, *Nem.* 10.32, *Isthm.* 1.51, *Ol.* 13.15). The odes are, of course, replete with other superlatives and hyperbolic expressions (e.g. the priamel in the first lines of the first Olympian epinikion).

While the *hieronikes* is praised as being *daimonios* and godlike (*Ol.* 6.8, *Nem.* 1.8, *Nem.* 6.4f.), and is transferred to the borderlands of the cosmos, he is 'chastised,' warned of his mortality, bound to revert to the earth (*Nem.* 11.15f., *cf.* *Isthm.* 7.40ff.). This 'memento mori' manifests itself in admonitions against striving or sailing too far (*Isthm.* 4.13), or wishing to become like the gods ('do not seek to become a god' *Ol.* 5.24, 'strive not to become Zeus! ... mortal aims suit mortals' *Isthm.* 5.14, 'the brazen heaven is not ascendable to [the victor]' *Pyth.* 10.27).¹⁴⁶

Not seldom Pindar selects myths concerning heroes who are 'betwixt and between' mortality and immortality, who reach heaven, or strive for immortality and are driven back: Kastor and Polydeukes, brilliant athletes (*Nem.* 10.51), alternate (μεταμειβόμενοι) between human and divine status (*Nem.* 10.55, *Pyth.* 11.63f.),¹⁴⁷ Perseus reaches to the Hyperboreans (*Pyth.* 10.31, *cf.* *Nem.* 10.4), while Bellerophon was warded off from Olympos (*Ol.* 13.91, *Isthm.* 7.44) and of course Pelops, another athlete, was removed from Olympos (*Ol.* 1.65f.) while earning the favour of a god. A number of heroes recorded in praise of a clan or polis, or as *paradeigma*, are told to have won access to the status of the gods. Athena made Diomedes ἄμβροτον (*Nem.* 10.7), Herakles entered the Olympos (*Isthm.* 4.55ff., *cf.* *Nem.* 10.17f. *cf.* Semele and Ino, who achieved divine status, *Ol.* 2.25-30, *Pyth.* 11.1f.).

The crown, covering the head, that is the person of the *hieronikes*, is handed over to the polis community and its divine protectors. The imperatives and subjunctives inviting to deliver or to accept the crown suggest this ritual act: 'receive the crown and/or the victory song' (*Ol.* 3.29, *Pyth.* 12.5, *Isthm.* 4.43, *Pyth.*

146 Race 1990:191-95.

147 *Cf.* Ringleben 2002 (although elaborating the Pindaric passages within a Christian interpretation).

8., *Nem.* 10.21). The poet is charged by the gods to perform his transformative task (*Isthm.* 4.1, *Nem.* 1.13, he is a magician *Nem.* 4.2).

5. Conclusions

Serving the need for categorising between female and male 'nature,' the *Olympia* anchored 'elaborating,' symbols. The overall fervent adherence to athletics and the extraordinary attention bestowed on the crowning ceremonies, the exceptional status and rewards of the *hieronikes*, and the magical power adhering in his person are all indications of a culturally important phenomenon. At the end of a steep scale of excellences, from local competitions, through regional festivals and the lesser panhellenic celebrations, the *Olympia* constituted the summit of excellence. The severity of the rules and the extreme demands on physical and psychic performance, the calendrical arrangement, the elements of purity, perfection and miracle, the protecting curses and surrounding taboos suggest that Olympia harboured a Hellenic 'summarising' symbol. The complex motivations for participating, the contested value of athletics, even the often indignant criticisms, point to the same direction.¹⁴⁸ Uniting often opposite ideals (and social groups), and creating boundaries between Greeks and barbarians, the Olympia constituted the climax of 'the Hellenic way,' materialised in masculine grace and strength, nudity and glory. As a magnetic centre for martial and athletic pride and admiration Olympia attracted Hellenes from the entire Mediterranean.

The epinikion verbalises what may have been the spirit of the celebrations: transforming the community and transferring the magnetic charge from the symbolic centre to its outposts. It exalted the exceptionally wealthy, but at the same time it offered a general conceptualisation of panhellenic victory. Although the winners were in fact socially transferred into a privileged position, that is, the moment they were crowned for the *first* time, the celebration did not entail an initiation. The *olympionikai* served another and more exalted mission.

The fact that not only adolescent but also adult males performed in the contests forcefully suggests that this arrangement was a form of idealisation of the 'eternally youthful male' appearing in a monumentalised running contest, in a similar way as vases were monumentalised into funerary markers, garments into *peplos* offerings, and dwellings into temples.

Under the circular moon, they reached for perfection, nature 'cooperating' in the desirable categorisation between species: refusing horses and asses to mate. The cultic and other festival arrangements produced distinctions between Hellenes and non-Hellenes, but also between men and women. Disregarding girls as uncategorised 'facts of nature' they created a pure segregation between the worlds

¹⁴⁸ See the criteria listed in chapter 2 of this paper.

and goals of 'real,' adult, females and 'real,' warrior males, thus developing and confirming 'elaborating' symbols. Being attracted towards the magnetic centre, the source of *kudos*, men aspired towards heroic status, in 'Hellenic' nakedness, through perennial vitality and strength inserting themselves 'betwixt and between' mortals and immortals.

Meeting in a setting which was elevated to a cosmic level, in a 'Phaeacian' absence of war, Olympia answered the need for charging a 'summarising' symbol, a complex of competing and changing, but intensely 'Hellenic-ways-of-life'. Here the authority of war mantics was anchored, war trophies abounded and martial athletics were celebrated. In the austere and awe-inspiring atmosphere embracing opposing values, wealth and strength, noble clans as well as outstanding *politai* met at the complex magnet of 'key' symbolic power.

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