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ANIMAL SACRIFICE IN ELEUSINIAN INSCRIPTIONS OF THE CLASSICAL PERIOD¹

INTRODUCTION

By 'Eleusinian inscriptions', shown in the collection below together with comments on all possible aspects of a sacrifice, I understand inscriptions associated with Eleusinian sanctuaries not only in the topographic sense, but also in terms of subject and content. That is why we have inscriptions which *de facto* originate from Athens, Phalerum and Piraeus, and in particular those which address the Eleusinian cult practice in the Athenian Eleusinion as well as all the legal regulations associated with organising and the course of the Eleusinian Games, entirely separate from the Mysteries.

The issue of animal sacrifices in Eleusis, determining their character, type, significance, place and how they were performed, both during the Mysteries as well as on other days of the ritual calendar, particularly during the Eleusinian Games, is still awaiting its monograph, which will bring order to the scattered data. A cataloguing together with a cohesive interpretation of information pertaining to

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Eleusinian sacrifices, taking onto account variations and modification in the rituals as well as the course of the Eleusinian festival are some of the most eagerly awaited academic works today. Out of necessity, the following commentary focuses on identifying and commenting all references to sacrifices in the Eleusinian inscriptions and is no substitute for such a monograph. One may only hope that it constitutes a major step in the direction thereof.

The fundamental source material for the commentary comprises K. Clinton's three volume publication.² I've adopted the inscription numbering suggested by Clinton as the primary system, different than the earlier *IG*, *SIG*, *LSG* and other publications, referenced if necessary.

In terms of the order for the texts commented upon, I rely on the order determined by Clinton in his publication based on the chronology used therein. For the classical period inscriptions between 1 and 177 are applicable (acc. to Clinton's numbering). References to an animal sacrifice, subject to commentary in this paper, are found in inscriptions 13, 28a, 30, 159 and 177 (the latter is dated to the year 330/329).

The inclusion of numerous thematic excursions embedded in the commentary in a paper dealing with epigraphical material, no matter how profoundly outside of the framework delineated by the source text, still seems justified due to its normative nature.

In the opinion of Nancy Evans 'the festival began with numerous sacrifices made in the Athenian Eleusinion, and it came to an end with a great *thysia*, sharing of meat and return to *normal* (highlights by KB) life.'³ This opinion correctly suggests that sacrifice marks the start and end of the ritual; nonetheless, a detailed reconstruction thereof is difficult, if at all possible. A number of initial comments should be made with reference to the Mysteries themselves:

1. The venues for Eleusinian Mysteries were, in that order: Athens, Pireus (and/or Phalerum and back), the road to Pireus, *hiera hodos* to Eleusis, the sanctuary itself in Eleusis and in particular the Telesterion

² Clinton 2005a; Clinton 2005b; Clinton 2008a.

³ Evans 2002: 250, similar to Burkert 1983: 292.

and the court yard in front of it and finally Athens again. To a large extent these are 'Mysteries of the road', which is not surprising if we keep in mind an image of the wandering Demeter and the processional, performative character of Greek religiousness. The Telesterion and Eleusis are only part – even if most important – of the topography of the Mysteries.

2. The Eleusinian Mysteries were held over a period of 9 days (if we disregard the spring Lesser Mysteries in Agrai), or perhaps even 10 days if we take into account day '0' and the procession which carries the *hierai* from Eleusis to the Athenian Eleusinion.

Walter Burkert paid particular attention to the significance of sacrifice in the structure of the Eleusinian Mysteries, and even went as far as to suggest, that an animal sacrifice was made during a key initiation moment in the Telesterion.⁴ The latter opinion, expressed fairly conservatively, failed to find supporters.

Burkert based his suggestion on messages, which bring to mind pictures of a bright fire in the context of the initiation night and the Telesterion.⁵ Of course, a sacrifice has to be accompanied by a powerful and thus bright fire in order to effectively cremate it. However, sources talk about light and fire but not smoke. And cremating sacrifice causes thick smoke, which would have to accumulate in the Telesterion. Clinton points out, that there isn't a good place for a sacrifice in that building⁶ – the sacrifice would have to be made in the Anaktoron, but still it would not be visible to everyone as the view would be obstructed by the internal system of columns. The lack of any reports, including from Christian authors, which would surely not miss such an opportunity – of smoke and odour of the sacrifice exuding from the Telesterion constitutes an *ex absentia* type argument of a kind.

⁴ Burkert 1983: 256–264, 274–297.

⁵ Burkert 1983: 274–293, and particularly 276, footnote 7 – with sources; Burkert 1985: 288; Clinton 1974: 46 and Rubensohn 1955: 34–49 on the same subject.

⁶ Clinton 1988: 71, *n.b.* earlier Clinton was convinced that the Eleusinian sacrifice was made in the Telesterion: see Clinton 1979: 2.

One way or another, even if Burkert's suggestion is particularly misplaced, the issue of sacrifice during the Eleusinian Mysteries and their significance is paramount and remains closely related with research into the essence of the Eleusinian experience.

Sacrifice within the temple area itself at Eleusis, throughout the two days of the Mysteries which were celebrated there during the Mysteries festivities, had to be made somewhere else, outside of the Telesterion. The main sacrifice, in epigraphical sources simply referred to as *θυσία*, was a sacrifice of bovines.⁷ On inscriptions pertaining to the *epheboi* duties we find information that they had to raise killed⁸ bulls onto the altar (e.g. *IG II² 1011*, line 8: ἤρξαντο δὲ καὶ τοὺς βοῦς ἐν Ἐλευσῖνι τῆι θυσίαι), and they even sometimes acted as sacrificers or at least were participating in the act in a way (e.g. *IG II² 1008*, line 9: καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐβουθύτησαν). That sacrifice took place in the morning after the initiation night.⁹ Only the location where it might have been made remains unknown. We know that there were two main altars at Eleusis – one devoted to Demeter and one to Kore,¹⁰ where Eleusinian officials are mentioned,¹¹ who took their oaths before assuming office at a location between the two altars (ὁμόσαντες μεταξύ τοῖν βωμοῖν Ἐλευσῖνι).

13 (= *IG I², 5* = *LSG 4, 5*)

The oldest surviving legal regulation treating the sacrifices at Eleusis is quoted by an inscription which originates from Eleusis 13 (*IG I², 5* = *LSG 4, 5*). Compared with typical sacrificial calendars, it does not

⁷ Foucart 1914: 371–375.

⁸ Ioanna Patera paid my attention to the fact, that there is no evidence to decide if the sacrificial animals must have been dead.

⁹ According to different calculations this was either the 22nd day of the month of Boedromion, as Clinton 1974: 71, footnote 28, or the 20th – Foucart 1914: 371–375.

¹⁰ See below, comment to inscription 30, lines 16–17.

¹¹ *Epistatai*, see Cavanaugh 1996: 1–18.

contain too much information and is severely damaged, nevertheless it warrants attention. In academic discourse, it is the focal point of the dispute on the relationship between the Mysteries and Games (Eleusinia) at Eleusis (as discussed hereinbelow). Clinton dates the inscription back to approx. 480 BC or the seventies of the fifth century.¹² The significant damage results in the necessity to fill in the blanks (supplements) which often constitute the central point of discussions, which, however rarely venture beyond the realm of hypotheses.

- 1 [ἔδοξε]ν [τῷ βολεῖ] καὶ [τ]οῖ δέμοι ἡότε Παραιβάτες [ἐγραμμάτευε]
 [προτέ]λεια θ[ύε]ν τὸς ἱεροποιὸς Ἐλευσινίων καὶ [τ ἔ]ν
 [τει Ἐλ]ευσῖν[ι ἀν]ῶν ἡερμῆι Ἐναγονίοι Χάρισιν αἶγα [.]ον
 [Ποσειδ]ῶνι [κρ]ιὸν Ἀρτέμιδι αἶγα Τελεσιδρόμοι Τριπ[τολέμοι κρ]ιὸν
 5 [Πλούτο]νι δ[. . .]χοι Θεοῖν τρίττοαν βόαρχον ἐν τῷ ἑορ[τῷ]

- 1 The council and assembly, when Paraibates was a secretary, decided:
 Preliminary sacrifice will be made by Eleusinian officials and [...]
 In the area at Eleusis: For Hermes Enagonius and the Charites – a goat [...]
 For Poseidon a ram, for Artemis – a goat, for Telesidromus Triptolemus – a ram
 5 for Pluto a [...] Three animals led by a bull sacrificed for the Goddesses
 during the celebrations.

That inscription contains the following information: on the type of sacrifice – [προτέ]λεια, as long as we agree with the supplements proposed and staunchly justified by Clinton¹³ and the accompanying circumstances, the location where it was made (again, as long as the supplementations are correct, which in this case they probably are), the time when it was made and who was to make that sacrifice.

[προτέ]λεια: *Proteleia*, according to its etymology and morphology, constitutes a sacrifice made before (*pro*) some important event, before some important act is fulfilled or done (*telos*). According to

¹² Clinton 2008: 32; Clinton rejects the earlier dating by Luria 1927: 271 on account of the format of the letters.

¹³ Clinton 2008: 33, see also Parker 2005: 328.

Hesychius (*s.v.*: προτέλεια· ἢ πρὸ τῶν γάμων θυσία, καὶ ἑορτή. τέλος γὰρ ὁ γάμος, ἀπὸ τοῦ εἰς τελειότητα ἄγειν), Suda (*s.v.*: Προτέλεια: ἡμέραν οὕτως ὀνομάζουσιν, ἐν ἧ εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν τὴν γαμουμένην παρθένον ἄγουσιν οἱ γονεῖς εἰς τὴν θεὸν καὶ θυσίας ἐπιτελοῦσι)¹⁴ Pollux (3,38: ἢ δὲ πρὸ γάμου θυσία προτέλεια) and Photius (*Bibl.* 367a29) the primary technical sense of the word was ‘a preparatory, precursory sacrifice, made in conjunction with a marriage ritual’.¹⁵ Both Euripides (*IA*.718: προτέλεια δ’ ἤδη παιδὸς ἔσφαξας θεᾶ;) and Plato (*Leg.* 774e9: προτέλεια γάμων) use it in such context. However, Harpocration, citing the *About a priestess* oration by Lycurgus of Athens, which only partially survives¹⁶ expands that meaning to every sacrificial ritual which prepares for some important event or another ritual (*s.v.*): Προτέλεια: Λυκούργος ἐν τῷ περὶ τῆς ἱερείας. τὰ πρὸ τοῦ τελεσθῆναί τι τῶν εἰς τὸ θεῖον ἀναφερομένων γινόμενα ἢ διδόμενα καλεῖται προτέλεια (*‘Proteleia: As stated by Lycurgus in his About a priestess work: a sacrifice made or offered before something comes to pass, which refers to that which sacred, is called proteleia’*).¹⁷ In Eleusis, that type of sacrifice preserves its core meaning, but it also assumes another – it is a sacrifice which in particular precedes a τέλος or τὰ τέλη, in other words an initiation, τελετή.¹⁸ The inscription shows that the sacrifice preceding an initiation – within the scope known from its preserved section – comprised of: sacrifice for Hermes Enagonius and the Charites (a goat), for Poseidon (as long as the supplementation is correct) (a ram), for Artemis

¹⁴ Suda *s.v.* provides two definitions, one of which coincides with Hesychius, and the other – identical to that by Harpocration, citing the same quote by Lycurgus of Athens, as discussed below (Προτέλεια. Πρωτόλεια δέ. Λυκούργος ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῆς ἱερείας. τὰ πρὸ τοῦ τελεσθῆναί τι τῶν εἰς τὸ θεῖον ἀναφερομένων γινόμενα ἢ διδόμενα).

¹⁵ Cf. Conomis 1961: 117.

¹⁶ Conomis 1961: 107–108 and 117.

¹⁷ The same was already said by Aeschylus (*Ag.* 277), and later by Athenaeus (10,58,7) for example.

¹⁸ Cf. Athenaios 9.18.11, and also Tresp 1914: 170, see Clinton 2008: 37.

(a goat), for Triptolemus Telesidromus¹⁹, for Plutus (?) and finally for both goddesses, Demeter and Persephone.²⁰ Clinton²¹ points out the lesser rank of that preparatory sacrifice, as it is not presided over by *hierophantes* and Demeter's head priestess nor by a special Eleusinian official of the Kerykes family, assigned to 'look after the altar' *ἱερεὺς ἐπὶ βωμῶν*.²²

τὸς ἱεροποιὸς Ἐλευσινίων (that is τὸς ἱεροποιουὺς τῶν Ἐλευσίνων). What does information that the initial sacrifice is to be made by Eleusinian officials mean and who exactly does it refer to – Eleusinian Mysteries' priests or those of the Eleusinian Games? The commentaries we have sidestep this problem. In his work, Clinton devotes little attention to this expression, only noting that a phrase made up of a title of an official/priest and a genitive of celebrations does not appear anywhere else, which constitutes an interesting grammatical observation (even more so that here there is no doubt as to the correct reading of the inscription), but does not contribute anything to the interpretation of the problem itself. However, it does seem that the inscription cannot refer to Eleusinian Games, but rather to the Mysteries,²³ as it is pointless to write down that the sacrifice at the Eleusinian Games is made by Eleusinian priests.²⁴ To the contrary – this fact is sufficiently intriguing and extraordinary for it to be reflected in regulations and radically in-obvious.

This fact would indicate a need to highlight the association between the Games with the Mysteries on a symbolic level, pointing to the

¹⁹ A ram – as per the supplementation, however a billy goat in other supplementation, see Clinton 2005a: 17.

²⁰ Sacrifice of three animals, with an ox in the first place: τρίττοαν βόαρχον, see Scheller 1956 and the commentary below.

²¹ Clinton 1979: 8.

²² Clinton 1974: 82–86.

²³ Cf. *contra*: Parker 2005: 328, n. 6.

²⁴ See discussion below on the associations and misunderstandings between the Games and the Mysteries.

essence of the celebrations centred around the Eleusinian myth. If the *proteleia*, the initial sacrifice is made by Athenian rather than Eleusinian officials, then this might also emphasise the association between Athens and Eleusis on a formal level, which is a constantly reoccurring matter during the course of reading the Eleusinian inscriptions.²⁵

In the inscription, an official making a sacrifice (θύεν) is referred to as a *hieropoios*.²⁶ *Hieropoios* were a group of officials associated with the cult with a broad range of duties.²⁷ Apart from making sacrifices, as in this inscription, they could also collect fees for participating in the Mysteries (*SEG X*, 6, 89–92) or put profits made from the sale of sacrificial animals into the treasury (*IG II² 1496*, col. IV) or even – as officials from one *boule* (*IG II² 1749*, 80–84), oversee *myesis*.

Ἐλευσῖνι ἀλᾶι (*scil.* Ἐλευσῖνι ἀλᾶῃ). The location for making this sacrifice is fraught with difficulties which consistently and constantly re-appear in interpreting subsequent inscriptions and other sacrifices. The Ἐλευσῖνι ἀλᾶι is indicated here as the location for making the sacrifice. It cannot be the Telesterion, as interpreted by Rubensohn,²⁸ as – which is referred to in the introduction – in the end it was agreed that sacrifices were not made in the Telesterion.²⁹ Neither can it be the city Eleusinion, as the inscription is Eleusinian and pertains to sacrifices in Eleusis. Furthermore, there is no ambiguity in the toponym: Ἐλευσῖνι – ‘in Eleusis’. On most documents – as argued by Clinton³⁰ – the courtyard in Eleusis as well as the Eleusinion simply mean the ‘Eleusinian sanctuary’.

²⁵ See Parker 2005: 175, 198.

²⁶ See Clinton 1974: 82–86.

²⁷ See Rhodes 1981: 605, comment to 54, 6.

²⁸ Rubensohn 1892: 32–35 with footnotes 196–197 and Rubensohn 1955: 9, footnote 42, and initially even Clinton 1979: 2.

²⁹ Clinton 1988: 71.

³⁰ Clinton 2008: 1–3 and 34.

ἐν τῷ ἐορ[τῷ] (scil. ἐν τῇ ἐορτῇ). The time the sacrifice was made is defined as ἐν τῷ ἐορ[τῷ] – during the celebrations, which, according to Clinton is the final argument determining that the inscription pertains to the Mysteries and not the Eleusinian Games.³¹ Another location, where the same term appears is inscription 52A.III.36 (acc. to Clinton), where there were never any doubts as to this expression, and where it can refer to nothing else but the Great Mysteries.

In Clinton's opinion, the only justified moment when such a sacrifice preceding τὰ τέλη – initiation rites in the Telesterion – could have taken place was the day *mystai* arrived at Eleusis in the great procession.

τρίττοαν βόαρχον. A three animal sacrifice for each goddess, where the first, i.e. first in line and the most important is an ox.³² One cannot be certain as to the other two animals, as there is no key of a normative nature to be found in the sources. On the illustration shown above in the van Straten collection, a sheep and a pig are seen next to an ox, which lead this academic to consider this representation to be normative – he fails to take into consideration other possibilities;³³ neither did he notice that all epigraphical depictions of this type of sacrifice are directly or indirectly associated with Eleusis, in light of which, his search for the prototype of a sacrifice for the analysed Attican iconography outside of the Eleusinian context should be considered to be devoid of any significant basis³⁴. A categoric acceptance of his belief that the *trittoa* consists of an ox, sheep and a pig, led van Straten to find just such a sequence of animals on one Attic inscription

³¹ See Clinton 2008: 33 and Clinton 1979, *passim*

³² See Ziehen 1906: 10–11, Dittenberger 1915: 106, Straten van 1995: 16–17, 71, illustration 6 and Sokolowski 1969: 8.

³³ Van Straten 1995: 16.

³⁴ Van Straten also notes (1995: 71), based on an analysis of a reconstructed votive relief from the Athenian Asclepeion dated to approx. 400 BC, that *trittoa boarchos* was Asclepeion's foundation sacrifice without citing any arguments to support his thesis.

(Straten van 1995: 17), which contains the Marathon and Trikorynthos sacrificial calendar (Sokolowski 1969: 46–50, inscription 20, column B line 21) and an immediate adoption of this – essentially random alignment of a line of sacrificial animals, in a series of a dozen or so other sequences – as proof of extra-Athenian forms of this type of sacrifice.

Trittoia boarchos appears in another inscription, referred to by Sokolowski (1969: 32–33, inscription number 16). Clinton does not take it into account, despite the fact that it has a connection with Eleusis. Whereas van Straten (1995: 17) considers it to be strong evidence for this sacrifice to have been practiced in other demes outside of Athens. It contains the sacrificial calendar for Oinoe, located approx. 50 kilometres to the North-West of Athens. It is dated to the 4th century BC. Apart from three references to a *trittoia* type sacrifice, it also mentions two *kerykes* (line 3) and Eleusis, possibly the Games (line 4). The two significant data, legible and incontestable, are entirely overlooked in the critical comments. The inscription dictates that three *trittoia boarchos* sacrifices are made: to Oenonean Artemis (line 5), to Apollo (line 8–10) and for Oenonean Athena (line 11–13). These three sacrifices for these given deities could in actual fact have been considered to be a local ritual, had the inscription not included a clear reference to Eleusis. It is difficult to say what kind of a connection with sanctuaries (located half-way between Oenone, which it applies to, and Athens, where it was found) this may point to, however it is impossible not to notice it.

Van Straten's conviction pertaining to the animals which make-up a sacrifice of this type based on an analysis of a single and fragmentary iconographic depiction requires a revision in the context of other epigraphical data. The Eleusinian inscriptions commented upon herein-below (28 and 37 acc. to Clinton's numbering, see comment there) talk about animals which have gilded horns – thus apart from ox, mutton and billy goat are also possible (see Dittenberger's comments 1915: 83). The technical name for the sacrifice – τρίττοα βόαρχος – only appears in inscriptions and always directly or indirectly linked with Eleusis (Lupu 2005: 144; Sokolowski 1969 finds it in three places: 4.5, 5.37, 16.6–12, mentioned three times in the latter, *LSJ s.v.* refers to only one location, in the inscription subject to discussion).

A reference should also be made to one further – albeit supplemented and thus dubious – appearance of a *trittoa* type sacrifice on an inscription with ritual instructions for the Erchia deme, published by Lupu (2005: 115–149, document number 1, line 41): ἐς Πυθίο Ἀπόλλωνος τρίτ[τοαν ...] – acc. to supplementation by Daux (1980) and Labarbe (1977). This would mean that in Lupu’s opinion (2005: 144) – residents of Thorikos were obligated to send sacrifice of this type to one of Pythian Apollo’s sanctuaries in Attica (Parker 1987: 146 suggests that there could have been such a sanctuary in Thorikos itself). On the other hand, Lupu argues that here, an unusual preposition ἐς may signify that the sacrifice was sent outside of the deme boundaries. He takes into account Apollo’s sanctuary in Daphne, with its powerful links to the Thorikos deme, which on the other hand constitutes a somewhat weak sign of a connection between the *trittoa* sacrifice and the Eleusinian context, as the sanctuary on Daphne was located by the sacred road from Athens to Eleusis and was a place for Mysteries rituals during the Eleusinian procession (Mylonas 1961: 255).

Interpretation of that particular and rarely mentioned sacrifice was the focal point of a particularly intense discussion on the association between the inscription in question and the Eleusinian Festival. Many problems with interpretation and *expressis verbis* disputes between academics on assigning certain rites to the Mysteries or to the Games, stem directly from phraseological confusion and the fact that in many, particularly later, sources, Ἐλευσίνια was used not only with reference to the Games, but – mistakenly – also to the Mysteries (Brumfield 1981: 182). In 1903, Van der Loeff did contend that the confusion does not apply to Attic inscriptions (van der Loeff 103: 3–13), however it does seem that his optimism was premature, clearly demonstrated by the example in question, as opinions on the matter are divided.

Simms (1975: 275) is adamant that this rarely mentioned type of sacrifice – τρίττοα βόαρχος – may be exclusive to the Games. He notices that it should also be associated with the great *aparchai* (with reference to inscription IG I² 845), but in his opinion the great Panhellenic *aparchai*, which can be taken into account here, only took place during the celebrations associated with the opening of the Games.

The Eleusinian celebrations together with the Games reflected the Demeter and Triptolemus myth (see Soph., *Triptolemos*, fr. II, 239–253, No. 596–617; Kalimach, *Cer.* 19–21, *Ov. Met.* 5, 645). A seed from the Rharian Plain was the prize for winning the Games (*Schol. Pind. Ol.* 9,150 and *IG II/III²* 1672, 252–261), where according to myth, Triptolemus sowed the first crops (Paus. 1, 38, 6).

The Games were held in Eleusis itself every two years and were a sports event (however, a completely different point of view is presented by Simms 1975: 269 in footnote 2, where he argues that the Games took place every year as a harvest festival, however the time they were held varied year to year in elaboration. Aristotle makes references to these Games in *Athenaion Politeia* 54,7, classifying them as celebrations which are held every four years (see Rhodes 1981: 608, comment to 54,7 citing references to other Games' dates and a justification of a possible calendar evolution taking into account the frequency of Games). In the Eleusinian oration, Aelius Aristides (oration 22, see translation and comments in: Behr 1981: 23–25 and 363–365) considers the Eleusinian Games to be the oldest Greek Games (ἀγῶνά τε γυμνικὸν γενέσθαι πρῶτον Ἐλευσίῃ τῆς Ἀττικῆς) and also mentions that cereal was the prize (τὸ ἄθλον εἶναι τοῦ καρποῦ τοῦ φανθέντος – see commentary on: Humbel 1994: 91). Whereas Aelius Aristides in *Noctes Atticae* (15,20), in the chapter devoted to Euripides, states that the poet was to have been victorious in Eleusinian Games and in Theseian Games (*post Eleusino et Theseo certamine pugnavit et coronatus est*). Healey (1990: 12–13) – as cited by Kern (*RE* 16, 1215) – he also considers the Homeric Hymn to Demeter 266–267 as a source for the Games (cf. Richardson 1974: 246).

The disciplines which competitors took part in during the Eleusinian Games are listed in account inscription from the year 329/328 (*IG II/III²* 1672, 258–260); these included wrestling, horse racing, music contests and some πάτριος ἀγών – we don't know what it was (εἰς τὸν γυμνικὸν ἀγῶνα καὶ τῆς ἵπποδρομίας καὶ τοῦ πατρίου ἀγῶνος καὶ μουσικῆς). As J. Kirchner concisely puts it in his commentary to inscription in his version *IG II/III²*, (Berlin 1927, p. 313): 'Unum initio certamen errat ludis Eleusiniis, πάτριος ἀγών, cui postea addita sunt

certamina gymnicum, musicum, equestre. Quaeenam illius ἀγῶνος πατρῴου natura fuit, nescimus’.

We do not know the venue of the Games. It certainly could not have been the Eleusinian sanctuary, as we have no data which might even suggest that any other festivities apart from the Mysteries were held there or that the un-initiated could enter (Mylonas 1961: 224–229 and Clinton 1979: 2). The location of the stadium in Eleusis outside of the sanctuaries as well as its structure and appearance is described by Travlos (1949: 146 together with footnote 21 and a reference to Pausanias 2.27.5 and inscription *IG II² 1682*, 5–8).

Simms’ conclusion seems accurate, which considers the Games, or the Eleusinian Games an ordinary harvest festival on the one hand, and on the other a thanksgiving celebration for the ‘invention’ of agriculture (Simms 1975: 275). The second element is a clearer link between the Games and the Demeter and Triptolemus myth with Eleusis itself. In this structural duality, Simms wants to recognise overlapping historical layers – at some point an interpretation associated with the Eleusinian myth was added to the first, the ancient, which was merely a harvest celebration, and in the end – a great *aparche* at the start, which was to transform the Eleusinian Games into a Panhellenic harvest festival. It is difficult to understand that last judgement, as *aparche* – a sacrifice constituting the first fruits of a harvest – constituted the essence of that celebration right from the outset (Cornford 1912: 153–166).

However, if an ordinary harvest celebration of a local character was older than festivities emphasising an association with the Eleusinian myth, as Simms desires, then one has to ask the question of why that local celebration was centred in Eleusis? As ordinary harvests can be celebrated everywhere, wherever crops are grown. I think Simms is wrong both in terms of the historical development of the Eleusinian Games, as well as when it comes to their rapid transformation into a Panhellenic festival, which they perhaps became during the Hellenistic period (see Clinton 1979: 3, footnote 10). The Eleusinian Games were and remained an Athenian harvest festival and the fact that it was organised by Athenian officials and was included in the Athenian religious calendar only means that Athenian harvest festival was

celebrated in Eleusis and not that all Greeks equally en-masse took part in two Panhellenic religious celebrations (even later, during the Hellenistic era the role of these festivities significantly gained prominence, as *theoroi* was sent outside of Athens, to be heralded together with the Mysteries and the Panathenaic Games,³⁵ see inscription number 109 in Helly 1973: 120–121 together with comments).

Finally, one has to accept that the Simms' controversial ideas, linking inscriptions solely to the Eleusinian Games are not argued thoroughly enough to be feasible, whilst at the same time contributing many valuable inspirations and findings to the discussion. In this paper, in agreements with Clinton's conclusions we accept that the instructions contained therein pertain to the Mysteries.

The inscription in question talks in some detail about issues associated with the preparatory sacrifice made before the Eleusinian initiation rites. Most of the deities and characters mentioned therein had their temples within the Eleusis sanctuary or in the immediate vicinity. Temples devoted to Poseidon, Artemis and Triptolemus as well as Demeter and Persephone and most probably Pluto as well were located within the sanctuary itself. The links between Triptolemus and the Mysteries questioned by Simms (1975: 274) remain unquestionable, as argued by Xenophon's passage (*Hell.* 6.3.6; see Clinton 1979: 4–5, footnote 13). Most probably Telesidromus – as his name suggests – accompanied the *mystai* en route, helped them with the toils of the journey, which terminated and was crowned off in a meeting with Iakchos (if one was to adopt the tempting supplement already put forward by Lenormant (1862: 75–85) 5: δ[. . .]χοι = δ[ε Ἰάκ]χοι, of for 'Iacchus', Charites and Hermes, also mentioned in the inscription. And that seems to put a definite end to the discussion on whether the instructions from the inscriptions pertain to the Mysteries or the Eleusinian Games. Both these deities as well as the type of sacrifices point to the Mysteries (see Clinton 2008: 37). Despite the sacrifice to Iakchos

³⁵ Particularly if one adopts Clinton's view that the Eleusinian Games always took place in the third year of the Olympiad – same as the Panathenaic Games (see Clinton 1979: 12)

not being confirmed anywhere else, it also seems that it would not be made anywhere else.

28a (= IG I³ 78a = LSG 5, 37)

A Decree by the Athenian council, dated to 440–435 BC (for a discussion on other options see Clinton 2008: 52, Sokolowski 1969: 8 dates it to 423/422), surviving in two copies found in Eleusis and Athens, covers regulations pertaining to the organisation, course and cost of *aparchai* – a sacrifice made of the first fruits (intriguingly, according to the inscription, the *aparchai* in question are on the one hand to proceed in accordance with an ancient tradition: κατὰ πάτρια, line 4, and on the other – after advice is sought from the Oracle of Delphi: κατὰ τὲν μαντείαν τὲν ἐγ Δελφον, line 4–5), the accompanying blood sacrifices and applicable written dedications. From the point of view of issues associated with animal sacrifice, only lines 36–40 are of interest, which contain rules pertaining to sacrifices to Eleusinian goddesses and gods (Demeter and Persephone, customarily referred to as ‘each goddesses’, line 37, Triptolemus line 38, a god and a goddess whose names are not mentioned, line 38–39, Eubuleus, line 39 and Athena, line 40).

Lines 36–40:

- 36 Θύεν δὲ ἀπὸ μὲν το πελανο καθότι ἂν Εὐμολπίδαι ἐχσ[η]-
γονται, τρίττοιαν βόαρχον χρυσόκερον τοῖν Θεοῖν ἑκατ[έρ]-
[αι ἀ]πὸ τον κριθον καὶ τον πυρον καὶ τοι Τριπτολέμοι καὶ τοι Θε-
οι καὶ τει Θεαι καὶ τοι Εὐβόλοι ἱερεῖον ἑκάστοι τέλεον καὶ
40 τει Ἀθυναίαι βον χρυσόκερον.
- 36 Eumolpides will perform a sacrifice from a little *pelanos*,
a three animal sacrifice with a leading ox having gilded horns to each
of the two goddesses,
from cereal and fire, and to Triptolemus and to god
and goddess, and to Eubuleus – a full grown animal to each and
40 an ox with gilded horns to Athena.

τρίττοαν δὲ βόαρχον χρυσόκερον (37) – a three animal sacrifice with a leading ox with gilded horns due to each of the two goddesses. Each of the goddesses has its own altar in Eleusis (see comment to inscription 30, 16–17 below). For more on this type of sacrifice see comments to inscription 13. However, the requirement to gild horns of sacrificial animals does not appear there. It seems that in his publication, Dittenberger correctly suggested that χρυσόκερον should refer to all three animals in each group – which means that apart from the ox – it would also apply to the mutton and billy goat, thus in this case the *trittoa* could not include a sacrificial pig (see Clinton 2008: 48).

ἠιερεῖον (...) τέλειον (39) – sacrifice comprising a full grown sheep or a goat.

30 (= IG I³ 32)

An inscription from Eleusis, dated to the 440s BC. (432/431? – a discussion on the topic is far from reaching any conclusions, see Cavanaugh 1996: 18–27 and Clinton 2008: 56–58). It contains an instruction establishing a committee, the so called *epistatai* – officials supervising the treasury of both goddesses in Athens (Cavanaugh 1996: 1: ‘a board of officials created sometime after mid-fifth century to oversee the treasury of the Two Goddesses [Demeter and Kore]’). Before, this scope of duties remained the responsibility of officials called *hieropoioi* (see Clinton’s comments [2008: 19] on lines 36–38 in inscription 19 acc. to Clinton’s numbering; cf. also Clinton 1974: 11). The inscription does not contain any important and direct references to a blood sacrifice, but two fragments are noteworthy and significant in the context of further appearances.

line 16–17:

ἄρχεν δὲ ἐπ’ ἐνιαυτὸ[ν] ὁμόσαντας με-
ταχρὸ τοῖν βομοῖν Ἐλευσῖνι [...]

Let them exercise the authority of this office for a year following the oath
Taken between the two altars at Eleusis.

με-/ταχσὺ τοῖν βομοῖν Ἐλευσῖνι – ‘between the two altars at Eleusis.’ The structures surviving in front of the entrance to the Teles-
terion do not indicate any connections with the altars, and as it is
difficult to suppose, for these to be obliterated completely right down
to the foundations, so as to leave no trace, academics are searching
for a different location. Based on a reconstruction of the scenography
to Euripides’ *The Suppliants*, (with reference to line 33: μένω πρὸς
ἀγναῖς ἐσχάραις δυοῖν θεαῖν), the plot of which takes place in Eleus-
is, K. Clinton concluded, that the only possible location for these al-
tars is in front of the sanctuary, outside of the main gate, between
that – which in Hadrian’s reconstruction – survives to this day as
the Greater and Lesser propylaea (Clinton 1988: 72). Clinton seems
not to take into account research by Demosthenes Ziro, who identi-
fies both altars in an extensive monograph devoted to the main en-
trance to Eleusis (Ziro 1991: 124–127 with plans number 51 and 52,
as well as 280 with plan number 137), already seen on plans drawn
up by Mylonas (Mylonas 1961: map 4), subsequently re-printed by
Clinton (Clinton 2005: XX). They were located approximately in the
same space, where Clinton wants to see them, not however, symmet-
ric with respect to one another. Ziro identifies three altars there: two
bomoi and one typical *eschara*. One *bomos* was positioned centrally,
directly in front of the entrance to the temple of Artemis Propylaia
located in this area, with the second, slightly smaller and receded
relative to the first in the direction of the temple, and finally the *eschara*
effectively located behind the temple. In Euripides’ text, which uses
the word *eschara* to refer to both altars, the Kallichoron Well is a point
of reference for locating them. This argument seems to be indicative
that the two altars, referred to as *escharai* by Euripides, in light of
today’s archaeological data, have to be the two *bomoi* in front of Ar-
temis’ temple. Only they were in line, slightly skewed to the East from
the North – South axis, with the Kallichoron Well. From the Well, the
eschara was to remain unseen.

On the other hand, Clinton is certainly correct in his assertion (Clinton 1988: 72) that such – i.e. outside of the cramped space in front of the Telesterion itself – positioning of these altars had to establish better access for more people to participate in the sacrifice. The sacrifice made in this location, apart from the initiation itself, was the focal point of the Eleusinian celebrations. The fact that the oath was taken by Eleusinian officials here, between the altars, also stands testament to the rank of this location. Two altars for both goddesses are also mentioned on line 202 of inscription 177.

line 31–33:

γράφσαι δὲ τὸ φσέφισ-
μα ἐν στέλει Ἐλευσῖνι καὶ ἐν ἄστει καὶ Φ-
αλεριοὶ ἐν τοῖς Ἐλευσινίοις [...].

This regulation should be displayed on a stele.
In Eleusis, in the city and the Eleusinion in Phalerum.

That inscription, defining the duties of Eleusinian officials was made in three copies (Clinton 2008: 56), out of which one was to have been placed (γράφσαι δὲ τὸ φσέφισμα) in Eleusis (ἐν στέλει Ἐλευσῖνι), the second in Athens (ἐν ἄστει), and the third in the Eleusinion in Phalerum (Φαλεροὶ ἐν τοῖς Ἐλευσινίοις).

That section includes important information regarding the strict interconnection between these three locations of the Eleusinian cult: Eleusis itself, Athens and Phalerum, with Eleusinian temples – ‘Eleusinia’ – in the latter two. The second information about and even more significant is the suggestion that the ‘seawards’ location for practising the cult, perhaps connected to the *halade mystai* day, was Phalerum (acc. to Rubensohn 1933: 432), and not Pireus, as is reported in some works (e.g.: Mylonas 1961: 249). That information is significant from the point of view of any possible reconstructions of the course of the Eleusinian celebrations, with sacrifices at the forefront, their topographies. That is why, even though it does not refer directly to the sacrifices, it should be taken into account here.

159 (= IG II² 1673)

The inscription is dated to 333/332 and constitutes, similar to the subsequent one, an annual financial report by Eleusinian *epistates* and – probably – (Clinton 2008: 152) – treasurers of both goddesses, not split per *prytaneía* (contrary to the subsequent inscription). Most expenses constitute the costs of building materials, from columns (lines 1–6) to metal rings (line 16).

line 62:

Προθύματα δο[θέντα, εἰς μύ]ησιν οἷς : Δ Η Η : εἰς ἱερά : Η Η Η : Δήμητροι
οἷς Δ Η Η : Κόρηι κριὸς : Δ Γ Η Η.

[For] the pre-sacrificial offering made for the *myesis* – a sheep for 12 drachmas, three drachmas for *hiera*; a sheep for 12 drachmas to Demeter, to Kore a ram for 17 drachmas.

Three phrases require clarification:

Προθύματα – ‘pre-sacrificial offerings’. *Prothyma* means – in most cases – an ‘offering made *before*’, pursuant to the basic time function of the preposition prefix *πρό*, and precedes either some other event (such as a religious celebration, games, contest, feast – see Mikalson 1972: 579 and 583), or another sacrifice, most often made to another deity. Thus, I propose ‘pre-sacrificial offering’ as the translation rather than ‘initial’ or ‘preparatory’, as very often the emphasis lies only on the time precedence without any additional value determinants. In a different, later Eleusinian inscription, dated to 215/214 BC (IG II² 847, 15–16) *prothyma* precedes organizing a procession and preparing a cart for transporting the *hiera* (Ζεῦγος – see Foucart 1914: 302–303, Mylonas 1961: 252–253, Mikalson 1972: 578): ἔθυσαν δὲ καὶ τὰ προθύματα ἀε[ί] / καὶ τὸ ζεῦγος παρεσκεύασαν ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων εἰ[ς] / τὴν κομιδὴν τῶν ἱερῶν ([*epimeletai*, line 11] made pre-sacrificial offerings and prepared the cart for transporting the holy items using their own funds). In the context of the inscription in question,

this certainly simply means ‘a sacrifice which precedes (has to precede) *myesis*.’ However, it is not entirely obvious, whether *prothyma* precedes *myesis*, or if it is the same as *myesis*, an immanent component of the *myesis* ritual, which naturally is or may be (see discussion below) a ritual which precedes another, more important – *prothyma* as it precedes initiation in the sanctuary.

εἰς μύησιον – ‘for *myesis*’ (also see lines 24–25 of that inscription). As to the actual technical meaning of the noun μύησις, which describes certain actions during the Mysteries, there is no consensus amongst scholars, and there won’t be for a long time to come, as sources prevent an unambiguous interpretation (cf. Dowden 1980: 414–414; Clinton 2003: 52). Perhaps the original and broadest meaning of *myesis* should be sought in no less expected, but most obvious place – the name of the celebration itself: the Mysteries originated in Eleusis – μυστήρια. This noun remains in etymological and functional relation with the verb μύειν and noun μύησις. Undoubtedly, μύσται take part in the Eleusinian celebrations. According to the oldest traditions, the Mysteries were a celebration of the *mystai* (Clinton 2003: 50–51 and Clinton 2008b: 25). Thus, it is difficult to consider that the phrase *myesis* could have originally meant something else, and for its meaning to be narrower, then, by coincidence and carelessness of language users, to broaden (cf. Parker 2005: 354 with n. 78 and a reference do the scholarly discussion, especially to Roussel 1930). Rather, the original meaning, pertaining to all of the Eleusinian Mysteries, assumed additional technical meanings as the structure thereof grew and in light of the need to describe the components thereof with greater accuracy. One way or another, *mystai* are those who are to take part in the rituals during the initiation night at the Telesterion in Eleusis.

This subject requires even more attention and development, particularly in light of data from inscriptions 19 and 177, but that task lies beyond the scope of this paper.

εἰς ἰερόα – this phrase means the fee for ‘additional costs’ incurred in making a sacrifice, for example for wood for the sacrificial altar. The

inscription from Agora of Athens dated to 363/362 seems to confirm this, which includes instructions within the scope of a religious cult for residents of Salamis (LSS 19, lines 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92). The phrase ἐφ' ἑροῖς appears there frequently, usually together with τὰ ἄλλα or ξύλα, and even with ξύλα ἐπὶ τὸν βωμόν. Usually these additional costs 'for other expenses associated with making the sacrifice' do not exceed three drachmas.

In a comment to this inscription, Clinton expresses his opinion that the remaining sacrifices referred to therein – a sheep and mutton – are not part of the *myesis* in question, but of some other ritual (Clinton 2008: 158). However, no justification for this opinion is offered, and the 'other ritual' is not specified, he only states that these sacrifices – which he labels as 'additional' – were not required for *myesis*. However, perhaps one should accept that this line of the inscription describes a cohesive and complete ritual, which includes both the pre-sacrificial offering (πρόθυμα) in the form of sheep worth 10 drachmas, additional sacrificial costs of three drachmas and the sacrifice proper for both goddesses? A sheep sacrifice would then constitute a pre-sacrificial offering in the strict sense, and the other two the sacrifice proper. The only remaining uncertainty would be whether all three offerings make up the price for *myesis*, or perhaps only the first one. In the latter case, the two remaining sacrifices would remain independent of the pre-initiation, which means that they would not be a required element, but only optional – as an execution of the acquired right resulting from crossing the boundary delineated by *myesis*.

On the other hand, inscription 177 commented upon below in line 269 talks about the price of 30 drachmas (ΔΔΔ) for *myesis* (μύησις) of two slaves:

Μύησις δυοῖν πῶν δημοσίων : ΔΔΔ

Myesis for two [goddesses] from public funds thirty drachmas.

Clinton simply explains the evident differences in price for initiation between the two inscriptions by a price increase in that given year (Clinton 1974: 69–70). And perhaps the inscription from 333 talks about

the unit cost of a sacrifice – in that case 12 drachmas, and the one from 329 unambiguously states that *myesis* is for two people without providing any additional information regarding the sacrificial animal, thus this cost should be divided by two? Then the resulting *myesis* unit cost of 15 drachmas is not significantly different from the earlier 12 drachmas.

INSCRIPTION 177 (= IG II² 1672)

An extensive inscription dated to 329/328, originating from Eleusis. It constitutes a full financial report of *epistatai* and treasurers of the two goddesses. It includes an opening balance, a list of incomes and expenditures, incomes from the sale of gifts coming from the *aparchai*, donations and a closing balance.

The inscription mentions animal sacrifices made by the Eleusinian *epistatai* a number of times, and each time the estimated cost of these sacrifices was 20 drachmas: 1. During the Mysteries (lines 41–42), 2. for the council (*boule*) (line 167), 3. during Dionysian rites in Pireus (line 168), 4. during the Lenaia (line 244). Most probably, in each case, young pig was the sacrificial animal (lines 41–42, 182, 190–191).

Purifications using young pigs are done at Eleusis on the Rharian Plain (line 182), as well as purification of the sanctuary and the home of the priestess (line 188–190) as well as – once – the entire sanctuary (line 361).

The inscription also mentions an *aresterion* type sacrifice (lines 352 and 431). The cost of the second was 70 drachmas and included the cost of two sacrificial animals (sheep or goats) and ‘additional costs’ (see Clinton 2008: 178), or probably sacrificial wood.

Ordinary sacrifice is also mentioned in line 354 and during the sacrifice made of the first fruits – *aparche* – in lines 418–426.

lines 41–42:

ΔΔΤΤΤΤ ἐπιστάταις εἰς θυσί-
αν μυστηρίοις

24 [drachmas] the *epistatai* for the sacrifice of the Mysteries

In this line the report includes an expense of 24 drachmas, incurred by the *epistatai* 'for the *thysia* of the Mysteries', or during the Mysteries, which began on the 13th day of Boedromion. Clinton (2008: 201) suggests that this had to be a young pig sacrifice made on the 15th day of the month of Boedromion, dedicated to sacrifices, however without a justification for his opinion. Equally well, this could have been the cost of a young pig sacrificed on day one or two of the initial rites – after the purification in the sea. The amount of 24 drachmas may reflect the price for a young pig during the Mysteries – the ordinary, everyday price for a young pig of approx. 3 drachmas increased during festivals. In lines 182 and 190 of the same inscription the price for a young pig is 21 drachmas.

lines 167–168:

βουλῆι εἰς θυσία[ν]
[.¹⁰ εἰς Διονύσια τ]ὰ ἐν Πειραιεῖ ἐπιτάταις εἰς θυσίαν : ΔΔ

to the council for sacrifice

[.¹⁰ for the Dionysia] in Pireus the *epistatai* for sacrifice:
20 [drachmas].

The report specifies two expenses incurred by the *epistatai* for sacrifices (εἰς θυσίαν) – one for the council (the amount has not been survived, the inscription is damaged), one for the Dionysia in Pireus, as long as the supplements adopted by Clinton pursuant to earlier publications is correct (which Clinton himself doubts – Clinton 2008: 207). Both expenses are somewhat unclear. It is difficult to find a justification in other legal regulations for contributing to the sacrifice for the benefit of the council (*Boule*) by Eleusinian sanctuaries. On the other hand, the mutual relations between the council and the officials managing the Mysteries were tight enough and formalised, that the commentators' surprise (see Clinton 2008: 207) can be really surprising. Deubner and Foucart point out the connections between Eleusis and Dionysian rites in Pireus (Deubner 1962: 137), consolidating the adopted supplements, however at the same time it does nothing to explain the cost

listed in the report. In my opinion, the connections between Eleusis and Phalerum, contrary to Clinton's optimism (Clinton 2008: 207), not only fail to explain anything here, but lead to even more confusion, as the Eleusinion was erected in Phalerum and not Pireus and everything points to strong links with the former and not the latter.

The cost of 20 drachmas reflects the price for a young pig (see comment above to line 42).

lines 188–190:

χοῖροι δύο καθῆ-
 [ραι τὸ ἱερό]δ[ν τὸ Ἐλ]ευσῖν[ι . . .]ο[. . . κα]ὶ τὴν οἰκίαν τὴν ἱεράν, οὗ ἡ
 ἱέρεια οἰκεῖ, παρὰ Παταΐκου Ἐλευσινίο-
 [ν τιμῆ ΔΔ]††

two young pigs for purification
 of the sanctuary in Eleusis and the sacred house, where the priestess lives, from Pataikos of Eleusis [as an expression of] reverence
 – 22 drachmas.

These lines including the cost of a donation to the sanctuary of both goddesses in the form of two young pigs, designated for purification of the sanctuary (τὸ ἱερό]δ[ν τὸ Ἐλ]ευσῖν[ι) and the house of the priestess (τὴν οἰκίαν τὴν ἱεράν, οὗ ἡ ἱέρεια οἰκεῖ), worth 21 drachmas each (again: as long as the supplements are correct), handed over by Pataikos of Eleusis. Pataikos was the eponym performing liturgy for upkeep of the fleet during 356–334 and Asclepius' priest around the year 345–344 (see Clinton 2008: 211 with bibliography on Pataikos).

These lines, despite significant damages and controversial supplements, undoubtedly speak of purification (καθῆραι) using two young pigs (χοῖροι δύο) of the Sacred house of the priestess (καὶ τὴν οἰκίαν τὴν ἱεράν, οὗ ἡ ἱέρεια οἰκεῖ) and of something else – unfortunately the line is too damaged to be able to state unambiguously. Supplement [τὸ ἱερό]δ[ν τὸ Ἐλ]ευσῖν[ι suggested by Tsountas in *editio princeps* (*Archaiologike Ephemeris* 1883, col. 109–134, 194, 253–264) and adopted by

Clinton in his publication, suggests, that the sanctuary itself or one of the sacred buildings (τὸ ἱερόν τὸ Ἐλευσῖνι) within the sanctuary was subject to the purification.

We are dealing with a confirmation of a donation for an Eleusinian sanctuary in the form of sacrificial animals together with a detailed indication of a type of sacrifice these were designated for – this was a purifying sacrificial offering: χοῖροι δὺο καθή[ραι] (see below for more on this subject). *Infinitivus* καθή[ραι] is an infinitive of purpose with a regular accusative object (‘piglets for purifying something’).

Sprinkling a person or place with young pig’s blood was a popular form of purification (see Burkert 1985: 80–81 and Parker 1983: 370–374 – Appendix 6). Eitrem (1915: 177), Burkert (1985: 82) and Parker (1983: 21) indicate the possible origin of this rite in private catharsis rituals practised in households.

In the description by Apollonius of Rhodes, Circe subjected Jason and Medea to such purification (4, 700–717) – this part is the most detailed description of this ritual in Greek literature (see Green 1977: 322 with comments and an extensive discussion of the context by Parker 1983: 370). Circe took a ‘young sow’ (i.e. *that* young and not *those* young: σὺς τέκος), cut its throat (ἐπιτιμήγουσα δέξην), held above the heads of the purified (τειναμένη καθύπερθε) and smeared or sprinkled their hands with blood (αἵματι χεῖρας τέγγεν)³⁶. Depictions on ancient Greek pottery show that the sacrificial blood has to flow directly onto the head and hands of the purified person (see Dryer 1969: 38–45, tabl. 2.1 [Krater, Louvre K 710] and Séchan 1967: 93–101 and Trendal, Webster 1971: 41–49), and then has to be washed off. Purification of infamy for murder of a human was not known in the Homeric world (see Harrison 1903: 152–153; Orth 1921: 812). Whereas Orestes in *The Eumenides* (line 283 – see comments in: Podlecki 1989: 30, 154) is purified καθαρμοῖς χοιροκτόνοις³⁷, which Amandry (1938: 19–27) considered to

³⁶ For philological comments to this fragment see *Apolonii Rhodii, Argonautikon liber quartus*, publ. E. Livrea, Firenze 1973: 215–216.

³⁷ See also *Fr.* 327 Aeschylus (Nauck³ = 648 Mette) about purification using this method by Zeus: πρὶν ἂν σταλαγμοῖς αἵματος χοιροκτόνου / αὐτός σε

be Aeschylus' mistake or conscious confusion of the Delphi ritual with the Eleusinian rite which he had first-hand experience of. Aeschylus was from Eleusis, and there is no more evidence for purification sacrifice of this type in Delphi, purification in Delphi is based on water and laurel leaves. Aeschylus' interpolation is possible to imagine.

A description of that ritual can also be found on inscription from Kos, dated to the first half of the third century (*LSCG* 156, A. 13–20):

αἰ δέ τί κα τούτων μυσαρῶν τῶι ἰαρήι συμβᾶι φαγεν, περιταμέσθω
χοίρωι ἔρσενι καὶ καθαρᾶσθω ἀπὸ χρυσίου καὶ προσπερμείας. αἰ
δέ τί κα τῶν ἄλλων παρακρο[ύσει, ἀπορρανᾶσθω θαλάσσαι καὶ]
καθαρὸς ἔστω.

if a priest eats something impure, let it be cut around by a male young pig (*literally*) and purified by [water from] a golden vessel and cereal grains. If he makes a different mistake, let him sprinkle seawater onto himself and [in that way] he will be purified.

The expression 'cut by a young pig' (περιταμέσθω χοίρωι) has to mean that the animal is cut, which is then carried around (περί) the person that needs purification. The verb περιτέμνω used in the inscription, means 'to cut around', or simply to cut off – it is a verb also used by Herodotus to mean 'to circumcise' (e.g. 2, 104) and in *Septuagint* (e.g. Gen. 17, 10). A few lines further on (line 19) we find a recommendation for a purification by a young pig – καθαίρεται χοίρωι – in the sea: ἐπὶ θαλάσσαι. Perhaps – as Clinton suggests (2005: 169) – this is a ritual where the purified person was first sprinkled with the young pig's blood, and then that blood had to be washed off using seawater. This of course brings to mind the rituals of Eleusinian *mystai* on the third day during the *halade mystai* ritual, but incorrectly in this case, as there is nothing here to suggest that we are dealing with a purification sacrifice using animal blood (*contra*: Parke 1977: 63).

χράνηι Ζεὺς καταστάξας χεροῖν. And similar in Aristophanes: *Ran.* 338, *Ach.* 764, *Pax* 374–375. In Euripides' *IT* 1223–1225 and 1230–1233, a sheep was used as a sacrificial animal for a similar purification.

Anyway, during the animal blood purification ritual, a young pig's throat was cut and the person or place that needed purification were sprinkled with the gushing blood. None of the cited sources refer to the fate of the animal once it bled to death, or indeed whenever the 'sprinkling' ritual lasted until the animal bled to death or whether it was interrupted, was the animal left to die or was it finished off. Intriguingly, the practical aspect of the ritual escapes the attention of academics and commentators. Even Parker (1983: 21) talks about a young pig which was killed, whose carcass was carried around the purified area. Descriptions – both literary and epigraphical – talk about making an incision, cutting the animal's throat, and not of killing it. In the description by Apollonius of Rhodes cited above, Circe seems to be holding a young pig above the heads of Jason and Medea with a cut throat in a way which suggests holding still a dying, but jerking animal (τείνω) – it is 'stretched' and not limp. It is true that blood continues to flow from a dead animal for some time, however the question is, when an animal whose throat has been cut should be considered to have been killed. It seems justified to consider that purification using a young pig's blood was performed by carrying a dying animal whose throat has been cut.

What happened to the carcass of the animal killed in such manner is another question. Parker is convinced that it was abandoned at crossroads, just as sacrifices to Hecate (Parker 1983: 21, footnote 12). As evidence, he cites a section of Demosthenes' oratory against Conon (54, 39)³⁸, where the orator reminds the accused, that in his youth, together with friends of dubious reputation, he would eat meat from sacrifices to Hecate left by the side of the road (τά θ' Ἑκαταῖα) and that he ate the testicles of young pigs (καὶ τοὺς ὄρχεις τοὺς ἐκ τῶν χοίρων), which were used to purify assemblies (οἷς καθαίρουσιν). Strictly speaking, Hecataia primarily means Hecate statues or circles devoted to it, most often located at crossroads (in fact: three-roads) or

³⁸ Whereas on p. 30 (footnote 65) of the same book Parker admits, that there is a clear distinction between sacrificial offerings for Hecate and young pigs' remains in Demosthenes' text, but he still maintains that they would be *de facto* the same thing.

within the boundaries of households. However, one may not eat statues, and in all certainty the oratory refers to sacrifices to Hecate made by Hecate shrines (For the apotropaic function of Hecate and the customs of making food sacrificial offerings by its statues at crossroads, see Johnston: 1991: 219, footnote 12). Demosthenes reproaches the accused for two transgressions of a religious nature – they are related by the fact that a taboo was broken, entailing touching and consuming that which is forbidden. Both sacrificial foods for Hecate as well as the meat from sacrificial young pigs used for purification were un-touchable. Aristophanes in *Plutus* also mentions the fact that the poor would steal foods sacrificed to Hecate (594 et seq., see also Lukian, *Dial. mort.*, 1, 1). In Aristophanes' ironic vision, gifts for Hecate are eaten by the hungry poor, in Demosthenes' oratory Conon is driven by disregard for religion and custom. One way or another, eating foods prepared for Hecate was sacrilegious. Eating meat from young pigs killed during purification rituals was similarly sacrilegious. The opinion adopted by Parker as obvious, that the carcasses of young pigs were left in the same locations as sacrificial foods for Hecate, is difficult to accept. Neither Demosthenes' oratory nor other sources indicate that the remains of sacrificial young pigs were abandoned in the same way and in the same locations as sacrificial offerings for Hecate (τούτους τά θ' Ἐκαταῖα [κατεσθίειν,] καὶ τοὺς ὄρχεις τοὺς ἐκ τῶν χοίρων, οἷς καθαίρουσιν ὅταν εἰσιέναι μέλλωσιν; that is 'they ate both the sacrificial offerings left for Hecate by the roadsides as well as the testicles of young pigs which were used to perform purifications, whenever an assembly is to take place'). Furthermore, sacrificial foods for Hecate were usually meagre, cheap and lousy (cf. Ar. *fr.* 209, Plut. *Mor.*, 290d, Antiphanes *fr.* 69, 14–15; Charicleides *fr.* 1; cf. Sommerstein 2001: 178).

According to scholium to Aeschines (1, 23) dead young pigs, following a purification ritual, here referred to as *katharsia*, were cast into the sea.

τὸ καθάρσιον] ἐπεὶ ἔθος ἦν τοιοῦτο. εἰσῆρχετο τις ὁ λεγόμενος περιστίαρχος, ὁ περικαθαίρων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν διὰ χοίρου

ἐπεσφαγμένου καὶ ἄλλων τινῶν, καὶ τὰ καθάρσια λαβῶν ἔρριπτεν
εἰς τὴν θάλατταν. ὁ καὶ ὁ ποιητὴς εἶπεν (Hom. *Il.* I, 314).

Katharsion: it was the custom. Someone called peristiarchos came and performed a purification of the assembly using a slaughtered young pig and other such [animals], and the killed animal was cast into the sea, which was also said by a poet (*Il.* I, 314).

According to tradition, sea had a purification power and other 'items' used to purify were also thrown therein (see C. Carey, R.A. Reid 1985: 101): in an example from *The Iliad* I, 314, cited in the scholium, Kalchas commands dirty water, which has been used for purification to be cast into the sea, which then purified that water (Parker 1983: 210). Here Euripides' sentence from the *Iphigenia in Tauris* (1193) should be quoted: θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τὰνθρώπων κακά – 'the sea washes off all evil'. On the other hand, in *Iliad* Book 19 (266–268), a boar's body is flung into the sea, which was used as a sacrificial offering accompanying an oath (see comments in Kirk 1985: 85). In light of such interpretation it is not difficult to understand where Conon accused by Demosthenes could get testicles of sacrificed young pigs. He would have to steal them from officials before the carcass was flung into the sea.

Another possibility – not directly stemming from any sources – is that the carcasses of young pigs killed in purification rituals discussed here, were of the ὄξυθύμια category – remains of domestic sacrificial rituals (Johnston 1991: 220–221). S.I. Johnston's thorough analysis showed that in late antiquity, sacrificial offerings for Hecate were confused with *oxythymia* (Johnston 1991: 221) – both were left outside of cities at characteristic places, by crossroads. Parker's interpretation seems to share in that confusion (Parker 1983: 30, footnote 65). However, nothing points to Hecate sacrificial offerings being mistaken for *katharmata* (*oxythymia*) or especially *katharsia*. Parker's opinion that 'not all *katharmata* became *Hecataia*' (Parker 1983: 30) should be replaced with 'no *katharmata* became *Hecataia*'.

It is not clear whether young pigs' corpses after purification were considered to be defiled, which the scholium to Aeschines referred to hereinabove seems to suggest, where a dead young pig is compared to

foul water, or if they still had purification powers and were untouchable not because they were defiled but because they were sacred.

Another problem, which seems to ultimately separate remains of purification sacrifices, including the corpses of young pigs, from sacrificial offerings to Hecate, is the fact that the latter were most probably cooked (Plut. *Queest. Conv.* 708f: Here Plutarch only talks about preparing *deipnon*, a feast for Hecate, which nonetheless does entail preparing and processing food) and were indeed more like meals, even if scant and prepared using paltry products. Feasts for Hecate were to comprise biscuits, puppies and perhaps some cheapest fish. The remains of young pigs were not cooked, and they were not similar to even the most symbolic meal either.

Oxythymia were left at crossroads, so as to distance oneself as much as possible from stigma and defilement. Crossroads were a symbolic 'nowhere' and could have represented a safe boundary for that which aroused fear of defilement.

A 5th century BC inscription from Paros imposes a fine on those who dispose of ἐκαθάσματα – purification ritual remains, or *oxythymia* ἄνωθεν τῆς ὁδοῦ – somewhere on a road (LSCG 108, 1–4). This indicates that the locations for depositing remains were strictly defined. I do not share the groundless opinions of Parker and Clinton, that these had to be disposed near Hecateia. A situation certainly could have occurred, where a crossroads, and particularly a place where three roads meet, reflected in epithets for Hecate, was both a location for a shrine to Hecate protecting the town, village or homestead against the ingression of evil and also the place for depositing remains of sacrificial offerings. However, an a-priori unification thereof, and in particular the belief that there is a ritual connection between these two is certainly going too far.

The purification ritual using young pig's blood, referred to as *peristia* (περίστια) or *katharsia* (καθάρσια), was performed by an official known as *peristiarchos* (περιστιάρχος) at the start of any people's, theatrical and town-wide assembly as well as for hearths. This is confirmed by descriptions in Suda's and Harpocration's lexica (for a description of appropriate sections see: Clinton 2005[3]: 169) (*ss.vv.*):

Περιστίαρχος: ὁ περικαθαίρων τὴν ἐστίαν καὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ τὴν πόλιν. ἀπὸ τῆς ἐστίας ἢ τοῦ περιστείχειν. (...)

Περιστίαρχος: ὁ τῶν καθαρσίων προηγούμενος ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις· περίστια γὰρ τὰ καθάρσια.

(*Peristiarchos*: a person who performs a purification of a hearth, a people's assembly or town. The name derives from the hearth – *hestia*, or walking around – *peristeichein*. (...))

Peristiarchos: a person performing purification rituals during people's assemblies; because the purification itself is referred to as *peristia*.)

Καθάρσιον: Αἰσχίνης κατὰ Τιμάρχου. ἔθος ἦν Ἀθήνησι καθαίρειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ τὰ θέατρα καὶ ὅλως τὰς τοῦ δήμου συνόδους μικροῖς πάνυ χοιριδίοις, ἅπερ ὠνόμαζον καθάρσια. τοῦτο δ' ἐποίουν οἱ λεγόμενοι περιστίαρχοι, οἵπερ ὠνομάσθησαν οὕτως ἦτοι ἀπὸ τοῦ περιστείχειν ἢ ἀπὸ τῆς ἐστίας.

(*Katharsia*: Aeschines in the oration against Timarchos. There was a custom in Athens to purify assembly and theatres, and people's assemblies in general using very young pigs, which were called *katharsia*. This was performed by the so called *peristiarchos*, whose name either derives from walking around – *peristeichein*, or from the hearth – *hestia*.)

The aforementioned inscription dating back to the year 329 (*IG II² 1672*) refers to the purification ritual using young pigs a number of times. However it only specifies the location and cost, but it is a strict blood and purification sacrifice. Purification of the Rharian Plain is mentioned in line 182 (τὴν Ῥαρίαν, in Pausanias 1, 38: τὸ πεδίον τὸ Ῥάριον), defiled by bodies, referred to in the previous line. The Rharian Plain was the first place where Triptolemus sowed cereal. Pausanias said that οὐλαί (barely thrown onto the head of a sacrificed animal) and πέμματα (sacrificial biscuits) were made from the crops grown on that plain.

A young pig as a purification sacrifice, also worth 21 drachmas is mentioned in lines 181–182, where the Rharian Plain, defiled with human corpses, is purified:

Νέκυν ἀνελόντι ἐκ τῆς Ῥαρίας μισθὸς Νίκωνι Ἐλευσῖνι οἴκου
[. τῶι κα]θήραντι τὴν Ῥαρίαν, χοίρου τιμὴ [ΔΔΤ].

payment for Nikon from a house in Eleusis, who removed the corpses
from the Rharian Plain
Who purified the Rharian Plain, value of young pig 21 drachmas.

Pursuant to the decree, the otherwise unknown Nikon of Eleusis collected human corpses from the Rharian Plain (the text fails to elaborate on how these got there, but they did defile a divine Eleusinian plain) and immediately purified the defiled area customarily using young pig's blood, in return for which he received remuneration from the Eleusinian treasury in the form of a young pig, and the value of the animal was deducted from accounts – 20 drachmas. χοίρου τιμὴ ΔΔ Δ | - here 'value of young pig' assessed at 21 drachmas.

Remuneration for purification – this time of an entire temple – is mentioned in line 361: τῶι καθήραντι τὸ ἱερόν τὸ Ἐλευ[σῖνι]. Due to inscription being damaged, we do not know the details of the ritual nor the name of the one who performed it, the remuneration amount and the sacrificial animal do not appear either. One may assume however, that the situation is similar to those above.

line 244:

ἐπιστάταις Ἐπιλήναια εἰς Διονύσια θῦσαι ΔΔ

to *epistatai* for Lenaia and Dionysia sacrifice – 20 drachmas.

This line mentions Eleusinian *epistatai* expense incurred for sacrifice during Lenaia. Similar to above (see particularly comments to lines 41 and 167 of that inscription), this refers to a sacrificial offering of a young pig, valued at 20 drachmas. Here we have an indication – similar to the Dionysia in Pireus – of some religious association between the Eleusinian Mysteries and the Dionysian celebrations (see Clinton 2008: 217; Deubner 1962: 137).

A sacrificial offering referred to as *aresteria* (ἀρεστηρία), due to both goddesses (τοῖν θεοῖν) is mentioned in the inscription twice:

line 352:

ἀρ[ε]στηρίαν θῦσαι ἑκατέρᾳ[ι τοῖν θεοῖν

An *aresteria* should be sacrificed to each of the two goddesses.

line 432:

ἀρεστηρίαν θῦσαι ἰερεῖον ἑκατέρᾳ τοῖν θεοῖν κατὰ ψήφισμα
βουλῆς, ὁ Λυκοῦργος εἶπεν, ΓΔΔ.

An animal should be sacrificed as *aresteria* to each of the two goddesses,
according to the decree
Of the council, as commanded by Lycurgus, 70 drachmas

It is difficult to say, exactly what an *aresteria* type sacrifice is. In Clinton's opinion it was a 'particular type of a sacrifice' (Clinton 2008: 143 – 'was not a regular sacrifice but one offered on the occasion of a particular enterprise, especially an innovative one'). According to Adrados' dictionary (*Diccionario griego-español*, Madrid 1991, vol. 3, s.v.) it is a propitiation sacrifice (*sacrificio propiciatorio*), which seems to stem from the formal association with the name of sacrificial biscuits used for propitiation type sacrifices. However, the etymology of the word, associated with the verb ἀρέσκω (cf. Chantraine, Bekees 2010, s.v. ἀρέσκω) allows one to accept this strictly technical word, which appears only on inscriptions, as a description of a sacrifice particularly pleasing to the gods.

In the second case, the cost of 70 drachmas seems excessive. If it includes – as suggested by Clinton (2008: 237–238) – the cost of two goats or two sheep, 35 drachmas each, then it seems to indicate that in the year which the report pertains to, animal prices were very high, which might be a result of some economic crisis.

line 354:

[ἐς θ]υσ[ίαν ἑκ]ατέρᾳιν τοῖν θεοῖν

For sacrifice to each of the two goddesses.

The line mentions sacrifice without specifying its character. A major part of the line is damaged, which perhaps contained some other information.

line 418–419:

ἱεροποιοῖς ἐγ βουλῆς ὅσον ὁ δῆμος ἔταξεν τοῦ προβάτου καὶ τῆς
αἰγὸς ἑκάστου ΔΔΔ

ἱερέων τετραράκοντα τριῶν, κεφάλαιον ΧΗΗΓΔΔΔΔ, τῶν βοῶν
ἑκάστου ΗΗΗΗ, τριῶν βοῶν ΧΗΗ

for *hieropoioi* from the council, as decided by the people, the total amount of 1290 drachmas for sacrifice made up of 43 sheep and goats at 30 drachmas each, 1200 drachmas for three oxen at 400 drachmas each.

This fragment of the inscription provides information on expenses incurred in conjunction with preparing and performing *aparchai* – first fruits of a harvest and gifts sacrifices. Once gifts for *aparchai* have been collected, officials known as *hieropoioi* performed a blood sacrifice which, according to the report, comprised 43 sheep and goats (30 drachmas each) and three oxen, each at 400 drachmas. The total cost of the sacrifice calculated in the report was 2490 (1290 + 1200) drachmas.

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