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Saving the City : ambiguities in ancient Greek crisis management

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Saving the City

Ambiguities in Ancient Greek Crisis Management

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To my parents, who taught me to read and write

To my brothers, who taught me to argue

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PART 1

SETTING THE STAGE

PROLOGUE

THE RHETORIC OF CRISIS

“Where is Menoeceus?” By the time Teiresias asks this innocent question in the *Phoenissae* of Euripides, we know which die has been cast¹. The city of Thebes is on the verge of destruction, threatened by a civil war between the sons of Oedipus. A last attempt to reconcile the strife-torn brothers has failed. Then Teiresias is sent for. Is there any chance of saving the city? The seer knows there is one means of safety (*mechane soterias*)² left, but hesitates, holds back. For the solution would be all too bitter for those who must administer the safety balm (*pharmakon soterias*)³. Creon, father of Menoeceus, insists however: “Tell safety for citizens and city!”⁴. It is at that very moment that Teiresias asks: “Where is Menoeceus?”

The tension in these lines is the work of a great artist. Teiresias knows, the audience knows, only Creon does not yet know that his son Menoeceus is to die to save the city. Although it may be true that it is Euripides himself who contrived the self-sacrifice of Menoeceus⁵, this invention follows a beaten track in the imagination

¹Eur. *Ph.* 905. I have profited from the translations of Way 1912 and Mastronarde 1994. The *Phoenissae* of Euripides is not the only source mentioning the heroic death of Menoeceus, but it is the most elaborate one and probably the earliest. It is solely on the *Phoenissae* of Euripides that we shall concentrate here; other references will be given at the beginning of Chapter 3. Euripides’ *Phoenissae* has long been the subject of many textual controversies and fierce discussions on the authenticity of parts of the text. Standpoints are motivated in terms of linguistic and stylistic arguments (allegedly un-Euripidean word order, syntax, vocabulary, etc.), but also on the basis of internal coherence (or the lack of it). For relevant insights, arguments and the debates as well as the textual tradition, see Mastronarde 1994 with references. The discussion at large falls outside the scope of this introductory study, but has been taken into account when necessary. I follow the cautious reading of the Greek text in the edition of the *Phoenissae* by Mastronarde 1994 (D.J. Mastronarde, *Euripides: Phoenissae. [Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 29]* [New York and Cambridge 1994]). Finally, it must be emphasised that this is an explorative essay, an attempt to become familiar with an ancient Greek discourse on crisis and safety, rather than a definite attempt to finalise the discussion on all controversial issues pertaining to Euripides’ *Phoenissae*.

²Eur. *Ph.* 890. A line deleted by Fraenkel 1963 (followed by others).

³Eur. *Ph.* 893.

⁴Eur. *Ph.* 898: φράσον πολίταις καὶ πόλει σωτηρίαν. Or: “Tell safety to citizens and city.”

⁵Schmitt 1921, 92 tried to show that Euripides’ version is a heroic elaboration of the account of the ‘normal’ death of one of the sons of Creon on the battlefield. Many others

of his audience⁶. Menoeceus can save Thebes with his own death and he is determined to stick to his heroic fate: “I shall go and save the city, and I shall give my life to die for the sake of this land”⁷. And: “I shall drive out the illness of this land”⁸. He climbs the city ramparts where he kills himself by ‘thrusting the sword black-hafted through his throat to save the land’⁹.

Euripides’ *Phoenissae* is about crisis, about causes and about consequences. And it is about remedies, too. The search for the city’s salvation is the heartbeat of the narrative¹⁰. Motifs alternate, heroes take turns, interacting in splendid isolation. Arrivals and departures, exile and death. The history of Thebes fuels the wheel of misfortune, infinitely revolving. ‘Save us, Zeus,’ Iocaste prays at the end of the prologue, in which she briefly explains the history of the rise and impending downfall of the royal family and Thebes. ‘Save us, Zeus’; that is what it is all about. But why? What has happened? The city of Thebes is sick, it is repeated many times.

have followed her. Vian 1962, 206-215 on the other hand pointed out that the self-sacrifice of Menoeceus too closely resembles the Theban traditions of curses and human sacrifices to be considered the original invention of one poet. For the discussion on the history of the myth, see also E. Craik, *Euripides, Phoenician Women* (Warminster 1988) 35-40; Mastronarde 1994, 17-30; C. Mueller-Golding, *Untersuchungen zu den Phönissen des Euripides (Palingenesia 22)* (Stuttgart 1985) 15-36. On the Euripidean habit of devising the unexpected from the point of view of tradition, his conscious manipulation of the expectations of the audience, and his playing on the all too human gap between words and deeds, see A.P. Burnett, *Catastrophe Survived: Euripides’ Plays of Mixed Reversal* (Oxford 1971); Foley 1985, esp. 106-146 where she tried to show that the *Phoenissae* ‘in particular acquires its meaning in large part by calling attention first to its often outrageous differences from, and finally to its similarities to, these earlier poetic texts’ (115); see also Nancy 1983; S. Saïd, ‘Euripide ou l’attente déçue: l’exemple des Phéniciennes’, *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* 15 (1985) 501-527. Be this as it may, this discussion does not regard us here.

⁶I cannot elaborate here on the mutual influences of (esp. Euripidean) drama on patriotic self-sacrifice, comparable myths of crisis management such as discussed in Chapter 3, and funeral orations, for which see esp. N. Loraux, *The Invention of Athens. The Funeral Oration in the Classical City* (Cambridge and London 1986), translation of *L’invention d’Athènes: Histoire de l’oraison funèbre dans la ‘cité classique’* (Paris 1981). See also below on the citation of a model in Eur. *Ph.* 852-857.

⁷Eur. *Ph.* 997-998: εἴμι καὶ σῶσω πόλιν ψυχὴν τε δώσω τῇσδ’ ὑπερθανεῖν χθονός.

⁸Eur. *Ph.* 1014: νόσου δὲ τήνδ’ ἀπαλλάξω χθόνα. A line deleted however as non-Euripidean by many scholars, but see M. van der Valk, *Studies in Euripides: Phoenissae and Andromache* (Amsterdam 1985) 15-19 in defense of the verses. Mastronarde 1994, *ad loc.* tends towards their deletion, for being superfluous, especially after 1012: εἴρηται λόγος (following Fraenkel 1963).

⁹Eur. *Ph.* 1091-1092 (translation Way 1912).

¹⁰It is mentioned in every episode and every stasimon over and over again. Especially in the third episode, the centrepiece of the play, it is *the* subject (see e.g. Eur. *Ph.*

But what are the symptoms? And what are the cures? Anyone who tries to disentangle this web of events will end up in a vicious circle. Causes appear to be consequences; what once seemed to be a solution turns out to be a cause in itself.

The sacrifice of one youth could heal the sickness, the *nosos* of Thebes, whose main symptoms are, at the very heart of the city, the discord within the royal family, and, outside the city walls, the threat of the foreign army allied to Polyneices. The past events leading up to the present crisis are recalled by the insider Iocaste in the prologue. Everything she recounts adds up to the impending doom. In the scene from the roof top the threat is once more the central issue, but now the perspective has changed. It is not through the words of the elderly woman looking back at past events, it is now through the eyes of the young Antigone on the roof, that we fully recognise the impact of the present crisis, which is brought to life in this scene: the panoply of threats unfolds. Iocaste sums up various possible causes: “whether it is the sword or strife or your father to blame; or whether the gods have revelled destructively against the house of Oedipus”¹¹. But it is not a choice between causes, the causes operate simultaneously. Just as there is multiple causation¹², there is multiple trouble, and so there will be multiple solutions. The whole play is one cumulative expression of the rhetoric of crisis.

This rhetoric of crisis deserves further study. Without intending to attach one overall meaning to the tragedy itself, nor implying that this is its cure-all reading, I here only attempt, as a warm-up for the present study on ancient Greek crisis management, to explore the manifestations of crisis and salvation with which the *Phoenissae* appears so richly imbued¹³.

864, 890, 893, 898, 900, 910, 918, 952, 997). Both the prologue and the second episode end with invocations to gods for help in saving the city.

¹¹Eur. *Ph.* 350-353 (translation E. Craik, *Euripides, Phoenician Women* [Warminster 1988]): εἴτε σίδαρος, εἴτ' ἔρις εἴτε πατὴρ ὁ σὸς αἴτιος, εἴτε τὸ δαιμόνιον κατεχώμασε δώμασιν Οἰδιπόδα. Mastronarde 1994, *ad loc.* has interpreted the iron, here translated as sword, as ‘malevolent magic’.

¹²I owe the expression to Mastronarde 1994, but its particular use in this text is mine.

¹³Basically, I am not concerned here with questions of consistency of the plot (but see below) nor with its overall interpretation. The discussion about the interpretation of the *Phoenissae* has a long history. So C. Mueller-Goldinger, *Untersuchungen zu den Phönissen des Euripides (Palingenesia 22)* (Stuttgart 1985) 2-4 writes: “In der Nachfolge von Valckenaer, der als erster in seiner epochemachenden Ausgabe der *Phönissen* der Frage nachging, in welchem Umfang in diesem Stück mit Interpolationen zu rechnen ist, entwickelten sich prinzipiell zwei Positionen: Auf der einen Seite erfolgten Angriffe gegen die Fülle von Motiven, man tadelte das Fehlen eines wirklichen Protagonisten und die

A. MULTIPLE CAUSATION

In the most general terms it is ‘some god’ who ruins Oedipus’ house¹⁴. In more detail though, throughout the tragedy, at least three, more or less intertwined causes of the crisis situation are alternately emphasised¹⁵.

First and foremost, the fratricidal struggle is the fulfilment of the curse Oedipus has laid upon his sons. Oedipus, the former king, now leads the most marginal existence in his dark rooms in the heart of the city. Iocaste, in the prologue, describes the circumstances as follows: Oedipus, once he had discovered his patricide and the polluted character of his marriage and blinded himself, is kept behind locked doors by his sons, who hope ‘that his dark fate would become forgotten’. Their father, maddened by his fate, ‘hurled the most impious curses at his

vermeintlich lose Verknüpfung einzelner Szenen, so Hermann, Wecklein, Wilamowitz, Méridier, Verrall, auf der anderen Seite versuchten Pohlenz, Riemschneider, Podlecki, Arthur und Rawson aus den *Phönissen* Leitmotive herauszuarbeiten, um auf diese Weise die Einheit des Stückes nachzuweisen. (...) Auf der Seite der Unitarier sind vor allem Schmid, Strohm, Diller und Mastronarde zu nennen.” (For references, see Mueller-Goldingen, *ad loc.*). Among the ‘unitarians’, the theme stressed most frequently in modern scholarship pertains to family and fatherland (P. Burian and B. Swan, *Euripides. The Phoenician Women* (New York and Oxford 1981); Podlecki 1962, 177-194; E. Rawson, ‘Family and Fatherland in Euripides’ *Phoenissae*’, *GRBS* 11 (1970) 109-127; Schmitt 1921 and J. Wilkins, ‘The State and the Individual: Euripides’ Plays of Voluntary Self-Sacrifice’, in: A. Powell (ed.), *Euripides, Women, and Sexuality* (London 1990) 177-194. I profited from Arthur 1977, who considers ‘the curse of civilization’ as ‘the main principle which orders and unites all the major actions of the drama’ (174). As it is not my aim to reformulate the interpretation of the *Phoenissae*, it would be to overestimate the claims of the present ‘unitarian’ angle to discuss here the various interpretations suggested so far. For a concise overview of interpretations of the *Phoenissae*, see, among others, P. Burian and B. Swan, *Euripides. The Phoenician Women* (New York and Oxford 1981) 3-4; D.J. Conacher, *Euripidean Drama. Myth, Theme and Structure* (Toronto 1967) 230f. It was only at a later stage in my research on the *Phoenissae* that I came across Luschnig 1995. I was pleasantly struck by the many correspondences in our work.

¹⁴Eur. *Ph.* 379. See. also 70, 1614 and, correspondingly, 1199: “some god has saved her” (Thebes).

¹⁵Provided though, that one does not delete too much. In this analysis I choose not to distinguish explicitly between public and private, between the city of Thebes and the fate of the royal family. In my view, and especially from the perspective I apply to the play, the one is so much dependent on the other, and the causes, symptoms and cures are interwoven to such an extent that I gladly leave these issues to others. I do, of course, acknowledge that the relation public - private can be considered one of the major themes of this tragedy. Mastronarde 1994, 29f. has also distinguished between distant and recent causation, a distinction which I do not adopt, as I think that the introduction of the aspect of temporality may lead to over-rationalisation and subsequently, though this may sound contradictory, to simplification and the loss of an important dimension to the complex nature of the intertwining of cause and effect, problem and solution in the play as a whole. Finally, I even consider a distinction between demonic-divine and human causation artificial, too. They go hand-in-hand.

sons'¹⁶. Iocaste explains how events inevitably led up to this: Laius' lustful violation of the divine command not to engender any child; Oedipus' exposure in the mountains, his unknowing murder of his father, the attack of the Sphinx on Thebes, Oedipus' saving of the city from the Sphinx's plague, and finally as his reward, the polluting marriage with his own mother¹⁷. All this Teiresias is referring to when saying 'this land has long been sick, ever since Laius - in spite of the gods - begot Oedipus'¹⁸. At times the role of the Sphinx as the main link in this chain of curses is underlined¹⁹. Why she had to come at all is left in the dark. Mechanisms are set in motion by curses. By uttering them, Oedipus has invoked suprahuman forces, the *Erinyes*, who are in charge of the practical execution of these curses. There is no escaping them, no matter how hard one tries: Iocaste desperately urges her sons "flee, flee the *Erinyes* of your father"²⁰. In vain. Elsewhere the role of the *Erinyes* is extended, linked up with previous events in the chain of Theban disasters. In the verses 1503-1507 the chorus describes the *Erinyes* as having been already active from the time that Oedipus saved Thebes from the Sphinx onward. Or, as in 1029, as early as the time of her visitation. Twice, it is not the *Erinyes*, but the *Alastor* of Oedipus which is credited with this destructive power²¹. There is one other agent of doom left to mention, described simultaneously as an independent operator: Ares. The chorus, describing in the *parodos* how 'furious Ares comes before the walls of Thebes', calls him in turn the accomplice of the *Erinyes*, bringing their curse, or, more generally the curse of the gods²².

Ares, and this may be considered the second cause, also has dealings of his own with the descendants of Cadmus. This second cause of trouble has very deep roots in Thebes. For, when Cadmus came to found Thebes, he killed the dragon of

¹⁶Eur. *Ph.* 66-68 (the expression *par excellence* is: ἀρὰς ἀρᾶται). Other unequivocal references to the curses uttered by Oedipus in 70; 254-255; 334; 350; 474-475; 624; 765; 876; 1051-1054; 1355; 1426.

¹⁷Eur. *Ph.* 10-62. The polluting marriage is also mentioned in 1050 by the chorus (μυαίνει δὲ πτόλιν). And in 815-817 it is claimed that sons of such a marriage can never be other than a polluting source of evil themselves.

¹⁸Eur. *Ph.* 867-869.

¹⁹Eur. *Ph.* 803f; 1041f; 1504-1507.

²⁰Eur. *Ph.* 624. Other references to these *Erinyes* in 1306 and 1503.

²¹Eur. *Ph.* 1556-1559: σὸς ἀλάστωρ ξίφεσιν βρίθων καὶ πυρὶ καὶ σχετλίαςι μάχαις ἐπὶ παῖδας ἔβα σούς, ὃ πάτερ, ὅμοι ("Your *Alastor* heavy with iron and fire and insatiable enmity, came upon your sons, o father"). See also 1594.

²²Of the *Erinyes*: Eur. *Ph.* 253-255. Of the gods: Eur. *Ph.* 1426.

Ares, deadly warder of the fountain²³. Thus Ares has nursed a wrath against Cadmus ever since and seeks vengeance for this killing²⁴. At the very moment of Thebes' foundation, at the beginning of its glorious history, its downfall had been set in motion too. The opening lines of Iocaste already refer to the 'unhappy rays' the sun spread over Thebes on the day when Cadmus came to the land²⁵. Thebes' fate was sealed, as early as that.

It was, however, not only the killing of the dragon that started off all trouble. On top of this, and we may call this the third cause, the following happened: instructed by Athena, Cadmus sowed the dragon's teeth in a deep furrow and the earth gave birth to cruel men, who were fully armed. Cadmus then slaughtered these Sown Men and their blood returned to the earth. Earth also has had a grudge against the Cadmeans ever since and now requires 'fruit for fruit and human blood for blood'²⁶, that is in compensation for the bringing forth *and* the killing of her offspring, the death of one born of the lineage of these same Sown Men²⁷.

Three causes, with ramifications of their own, together shape the organic whole of Thebes' history of rise and fall, of preservation and crisis, salvation and destruction. Principles of transgression and of cursing, mechanisms of compensation and of retribution and retaliation (*talio*), superseding human action, are all active forces, reinforcing each other, causing and fulfilling. Multiplicity, yet intertwined.

²³Eur. *Ph.* 657f; 933-935. For dragon slaying as a motif in Greek (foundation) tales, see J. Fontenrose, *Python. A Study of Delphic Myth and its Origins* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1959). This theme is elaborated on in particular by Arthur 1977, e.g. 173: "The curse in the *Phoenissae* is bound up with the very conditions of civilization, with the circumstances of the city's foundation. The monster and the monster-slayer each contain their own opposite, so that they are locked together in a cycle in which the hero becomes the city's bane, and the monster its saviour."

²⁴Eur. *Ph.* 934-935: Κάδμου παλαιῶν ἄρεος ἐκ μηνιμάτων, ὃς γηγενεῖ δράκοντι τιμωρεῖ φόνον.

²⁵Eur. *Ph.* 4-5. As 1-2 are, since M.W. Haslam, 'The authenticity of Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1-2 and Sophocles, *Electra* 1', *GRBS* 16 (1975) 149-174 considered to be a later interpolation, the verses 4-5 receive more weight as the very beginning (after the invocation of the Sun) of the play, see Arthur 1977, 163. Arthur 1977, 163 has also drawn attention to the fact that one of the scholiasts of the *Phoenissae* felt uncomfortable with the adjective δυστυχῆ, emphasising Thebes' prosperity at the time (the marriage of Cadmus and Harmonia, where the gods were present; the birth of Dionysus and Heracles). According to the scholiast Thebes began to grow ill from the time when Laius fathered a child against the will of the gods.

²⁶Eur. *Ph.* 937-938 (slightly abridged): ἀντὶ καρποῦ καρπὸν ἀντὶ θ' αἵματος αἷμα βρότειον.

²⁷Eur. *Ph.* 940-941.

It is Teiresias who establishes the links and provides crucial insights concerning these causes and the cures, acting as the intermediary between the human and the divine, between problem and solution. His is the most unrewarding task of speaking the unspeakable. Seer and healer, mouthpiece of the inescapable.

B. MULTIPLE REMEDIES

After the first failed attempt by Iocaste to overcome the crisis through negotiations between the brothers, Teiresias is called for ‘to find out by what doing we could best save the city’²⁸. He must provide the city with a cure, a task most unrewarding. His words are always badly needed, but seldom gladly received, especially in Thebes²⁹. Under great pressure from Creon, Teiresias finally speaks out: “You must sacrifice your son Menoeceus for the sake of his fatherland”³⁰. The fate of Menoeceus is inextricably linked up with the fate of Thebes, though with opposing interest: “Of two prospects choose one: either save the city or your son”³¹. Creon vehemently protests: Sacrifice his son? Never. He would rather die himself: “I shall die willingly as a ransom of my fatherland”³². But it is only Menoeceus who can fulfil this duty. No substitutes allowed. He is an innocent youth, the last direct descendant of the Sown, apart from his brother Haemon, who, since he is engaged, is disqualified for sacrifice³³. And Menoeceus, in spite of all Creon’s attempts to prevent the death of

²⁸Eur. *Ph.* 864 (τί δρῶντες ἂν μάλιστα σῶσαιμεν πόλιν).

²⁹There is an interesting reference to Teiresias’ success elsewhere in 852-857. Teiresias has just returned from Athens and is wearing a golden wreath. He had successfully helped the Athenians in defeating Eumolpus. A reference to the self-sacrifice of the daughters of Erechtheus, thanks to whom the Athenians gained victory, may be hidden behind these verses. Euripides himself had written a play featuring the patriotic self-sacrifice of these girls. What an extraordinary way to alert the audience and to prepare them for the next passage! See Mastronarde 1994, *ad loc.* on this allusion and the effect of this ‘citation of a model’ if the self-sacrifice of Menoeceus indeed was an innovation.

³⁰Eur. *Ph.* 913 (σφάξαι Μενοιτιάδα τόνδε δεῖ σ’ ὑπὲρ πάτρας, σὸν παῖδ’). Expressions with ὑπὲρ are frequently used in connection with this sacrificial death, see 1056; 1090; 1313. For a discussion of the meaning of this sacrificial death in Euripidean perspective, see Foley 1985, 106-146; Nancy 1983.

³¹Eur. *Ph.* 952 (ἦ γὰρ παῖδα σῶσον ἢ πόλιν).

³²Eur. *Ph.* 969 (θνήσκειν ἕτοιμος πατρίδος ἐκλυτήριον), compare Soph. *OT* 392 where Oedipus reproachfully asks Teiresias: “why did you not say anything that could free these people?” (πῶς οὐχ ... ἡῦδας τι τοῖσδ’ ἀστοῖσιν ἐκλυτήριον;). See also schol. Eur. *Ph.* 969: πατρίδος ἐκλυτήριον· λύτρον ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος· ἀπολυόμενος τὴν πατρίδα τῶν περιεστώτων αὐτῇ κακῶν (a ransom of the fatherland; freeing the fatherland of the present ills).

³³Eur. *Ph.* 945: οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἥθεος. This is an interesting aspect to the status of the victim, to which we shall return. Another interesting, and comparable, term used for

his son and to persuade him to flee abroad, is determined to stick to his fate: “I shall go, ..., I shall set this land free. The word has been spoken”³⁴. *Eleutheroso gaian*, “I shall set this land free”. Free from the wrath of Ares and Earth and free from the threat of Polyneices and the Argive army. All causes and symptoms, one cure: the safety balm of the city (*pharmakon soterias*)³⁵.

The status of Menoeceus is slightly equivocal. Being a ‘pure’ descendant of these Sown Men, earthborn, he acquires an almost spatial, ‘rooted’, centrality in addition to his high social standing as a member of the noblest family in town³⁶. On the other hand, he is still young (not fighting in the battle-line and unbetrothed), in a way still dispensable, at least compared to Haemon, and his ancestors, important as they may be, are also described as cruel monsters: “A glory and a reproach to Thebes”³⁷. His status, though first and foremost royal, young and innocent, has thus a reverse side, too. This ambiguous status of Menoeceus is not only expressed in his social position, but also inscribed in space, as we shall see below, and versed in terms of time: he embodies, as the last descendant of the Sown Men the city itself and by his death the origin of Thebes is ‘rooted out’ in order to preserve the very city.

Although central in its position in the structure of the play, and very heroic indeed, the sacrifice does not result in the complete recovery of Thebes. Crisis is still immanent. The last scenes of the *Phoenissae* deal with the subsequent fate of Oedipus, the former king, who - in this version of his biography - has remained in Thebes after his own downfall. Menoeceus has died, the two brothers have been

Menoeceus in 947 is πῶλος, colt (or filly), the precise sense of which in this context is however debated among scholars. Mastronarde *ad loc.* has pointed out that this term is used of unmarried girls, stressing their wildness that should be tamed by marriage. For examples see Bonnechere 1994, 60. Luschig 1995, 224 therefore has interpreted its use in this context as pejorative. According to Hesych. s.v. πῶλος ([...] τοὺς νέους καὶ τὰς νέας, καὶ παρθένους), however, the use of the term is not restricted to girls. Besides, there appears another, ritual, aspect to the term, when we look at it in combination with the word following, ἀνειμένος, which may carry the sense of ‘left untilled’, or ‘allowed to roam free’, and thus ‘consecrated’ when used of land or of animals dedicated to a god (Mastronarde *ad loc.*, *LSJ* s.v. ἀνίημι II.6). The parallel use of πῶλος for Polyxena (Eur. *Hec.* 142) may be argued to confirm both readings. Only one who is still unbetrothed can be called a free-roaming colt.

³⁴Eur. *Ph.* 1010-1012.

³⁵Eur. *Ph.* 893.

³⁶For stress of Menoeceus’ nobility, see Eur. *Ph.* 1060-1061. On the importance of belonging (autochthony) and patriotism, see Kearns 1990, 332 and notes. Kearns has also underlined how ‘within-ness’ is taken to its ultimate conclusion in the concept of springing from the earth itself.

³⁷Eur. *Ph.* 821 (Θήβαις κάλλιστον ὄνειδος). See Arthur 1977, 182.

killed by each other, Iocaste has taken her own life and Creon is the new king of Thebes. One of his first royal deeds is to order the exile of Oedipus *cum suis*, according to an earlier pronouncement of Teiresias: “And you, doomed city, shall be levelled with the ground, if no one shall listen to my words. For this would be the best possible course, that no one of Oedipus’ line remain in this land, whether as a citizen or ruler, as they are driven by a possessing demon and destroying the city”³⁸. Creon has recognised that the sacrifice of his son was not sufficient: “Never shall Thebes prosper while you dwell in the land”³⁹. To expel Oedipus must be considered the ultimate means of safety, the most effective cure of the sick city, and the necessary counterpart to Menoeceus’ self-sacrifice⁴⁰.

The status of Oedipus is fascinating. On the one hand he is the former king, and his wife (and mother) is still much revered. He is the former saviour of Thebes, the famous Oedipus, who saved the city from the terrible and monstrous Sphinx⁴¹. We may even regard him as the re-founder of the city, as a double of Cadmus, who expelled chaos by destroying a monster⁴². On the other hand he is the ill-tempered, blind and brooding presence who has uttered curses against his sons, who has

³⁸Eur. *Ph.* 884-888. These lines are part of one of the most controversial sections in the interpolation debate. Apart from a few minor textual reasons inciting suspicion of this section, the major arguments pro and contra deleting are of an interpretative character. As will be clear from my own argument, I don’t have any objections to this section from the point of view of interpretation.

³⁹Eur. *Ph.* 1589. My juxtaposition of both quotations is less natural than it seems. There is much discussion if τῶν Οἰδίπου in 886 includes Oedipus or not. For arguments pro and contra, see Mastronarde 1994, *ad loc.* As Oedipus’ expulsion is, in my view, such a self-evident complement to Menoeceus’ self-sacrifice, I do not hesitate to include Oedipus nor to even make him the understood subject of the expression τῶν Οἰδίπου μηδένα. Creon now speaks out what was hinted at before by Teiresias, or rather, what has been prepared for throughout the whole play so far. See M. van der Valk, *Studies in Euripides: Phoenissae and Andromache* (Amsterdam 1985) 29-30.

⁴⁰Foley 1985, 109 n.11, following others, claimed that the literary tradition, though insisting on the death of the brothers, does not require the banishment of Oedipus. Most scholars agree that - at least - the timing of Oedipus’ exile is an innovation. The *exodus* of the play, with respect to both text and content, is highly controversial, see Foley 1985, 131 n.45, who concluded, however, with minor reservations, in favour of Euripidean authenticity. The very last part, from 1797 onwards, is almost unanimously questioned. Mastronarde 1994, too, has not dismissed the whole *exodus*-scene, but has acknowledged its many problems. For the discussion see Mastronarde 1994, *ad* 1582-1708; M. van der Valk, *Studies in Euripides: Phoenissae and Andromache* (Amsterdam 1985). It should be clear from my own arguments that I do not find the exile of Oedipus inconsistent with the overall narrative, see previous note.

⁴¹Eur. *Ph.* 1043-1050 (καλλίνικος); 1688; 1728-1731. On Oedipus *Kallinikos*, see Podlecki 1962, 367-369.

⁴²See Arthur 1977, 173 and 181-182, referring to the end of the third stasimon.

polluted himself and others. A living *miasma* in the very heart of Thebes. Oedipus dwells in the inner chambers of the palace, locked up by his sons, hiding himself in darkness⁴³. An exile dwelling centre-court. He leads a *daimon*-like existence, ‘a dim grey ghost made of air, a dead soul from the depths, or a winged dream’⁴⁴. Add the many times his cursing power is stressed and his expulsion must be regarded as the ridding of a polluting presence, the expulsion of the *miasma* in person. However, though the negative charges of his being seem to outweigh his positive qualities in the time span of this tragedy, Oedipus remains an ambivalent character. Saviour and destroyer. Or, in the words of the chorus: “In course of time came Oedipus, sent by the Pythia to our Theban land, then to our joy, but to our grief in turn”⁴⁵. And later even more so according to Oedipus himself: “One day blessed me, one day ruined me”⁴⁶.

Although (slightly) differentiated, the various causes for the illness of Thebes and, more strikingly, the two divergent cures applied must be studied in the same

⁴³Eur. *Ph.* 64-66; 327; 336; 376-378 (if genuine); 872; 875 (if genuine); 1530f.

⁴⁴Eur. *Ph.* 1543f: πολὺν αἰθέρος ἀφανὲς εἶδωλον ἢ νέκυν ἐνερθεῖν ἢ πτανὸν ὄνειρον; 1534: ἀέριον σκότον; 1541: σκοτίων ἐκ θαλάμων (θάλαμος means bedroom, but is, according to Mastronarde, *ad loc.*, frequently used metaphorically for the grave or the underworld); 336: σκότια κρύπτεται; 1088-1089. In 1484 σκοτίαν is used to modify the realms of death. On the sinister connotations of σκότος and σκότιος (esp. in connection with death and underworld), see *LSJ* svv. The many references to Oedipus’ blindness can also be read in this light (see e.g. D.T. Steiner, ‘Stoning and Sight: a Structural Equivalence in Greek Mythology’, *CLAnt* 14 (1995) 193-211, 193f. on the structural similarities between blindness, exclusion from the community, hidden spaces and pollutedness). Others have already drawn attention to the demon-like appearance of Oedipus, see for example L. Edmunds, ‘The Cults and Legend of Oedipus’, *HSCP* 85 (1981) 221-238, 230-231 who also pointed out that ἐξ- or ἀνάγειν εἰς φῶς (1540) is the *vox propria* for restoring the dead to light and life’; see also Luschnig 1995, 162 drawing a parallel between Oedipus and the dead dragon: “(...) behind the *skene* an imaginary Oedipus lurks, an unseen blind man in the dark, waiting to come out, awaited with dread at what he may have become in his interim isolation and ill-treatment. His sightless spirit, like a shade in the dark world hovering between being and non-being, is also like the dead dragon of Ares in its dark den, forgotten and unseen, dead but living on in spirit to curse the young and return them to the earth”; Mastronarde 1994, *ad loc.* “It is as if a demonic power lurking in the background throughout the play is now brought before the audience’s eyes.”

⁴⁵Eur. *Ph.* 1046: τότ’ ἀσμένους, πάλιν δ’ ἄχῃ. Note the cyclical aspect to πάλιν (*LSJ* sv.). See also 1758-1763, though highly controversial in terms of authenticity, see Mastronarde 1994, *ad loc.* If we elaborate on the cyclical aspect to πάλιν (above) there opens up a possibility to assume that Oedipus’ ambivalence was of a structural character, for which see my comments above. Foley 1985, 141 even read a promising future of a heroic tomb for Oedipus in Athens in the lines 1705-1709, assuming the lines to be genuine. The ambiguity of Oedipus in Sophocles’ Oedipus plays will receive more attention below.

light⁴⁷. It is possible to argue that Euripides himself meant to juxtapose the two explicitly. And, in fact, he actually does so through Teiresias, when the seer, after first having stated that it would have been best that all of the family of Oedipus should have left the country, proclaims: ‘One *other* way of safety yet remains’⁴⁸. From the present perspective, that is that of crisis-salvation, Menoeceus and Oedipus can be seen as both each other’s doubles and direct antipodes. Both are central to the city, whether in terms of social importance or more physically, in terms of space. But also in time, as they are both tied to the ancient past of the city. Both have the potential to free Thebes from disaster, short- or long-term, by their own removal, whether by (self-)immolation or by banishment. However, they also seem to occupy opposite ends of the scale. One is pure, young, heroic and innocent, the other old, blind, broken and blameworthy, himself the very embodiment of the curse on Thebes.

C. INS & OUTS

Thebes is in dire peril. There is a cursing father, a *stasis* at the very heart of the city centred within the royal family and a threatening army, a furious god and a dead, but demanding, dragon just before the walls. Multiple trouble with multiple causes in need of multiple cures. Causes and symptoms appear to hover between the very inside and the outside of the city. So do cures. Menoeceus’ sacrificial act occupies a significant location in space, as it is performed from the heights of the ramparts, straight into the den of the dragon, just outside the walls of Thebes⁴⁹. The den of the dragon itself even fits the scheme, too. Originally, the central spot of Thebes, the very

⁴⁶Eur. *Ph.* 1689: ἐν ἡμέρῳ μὲν ὄλβισ', ἐν δ' ἀπώλεσεν; Fraenkel 1963 rightly drew attention to Soph. *OT* 438 (ἥδ' ἡμέρῃ φύσει σε καὶ διαφθερεῖ). See also 1047-1048: τάλαις καλλίνικος.

⁴⁷There has been a tendency in the scholarly literature to distinguish between mythical and ‘real’ causes and to link up this distinction to another one, i.e. between what is described by the chorus and in the episodes. In my opinion though, both mythical and less- or non-mythical causes *and* stasima and episodes are very much integrated. Such a distinction, again, would be an over-rationalization that obscures certain dimensions of the play instead of clarifying them.

⁴⁸Eur. *Ph.* 890 (μὴ ἐστὶν ἄλλη μηχανὴ σωτηρίας). Besides, in the context of this narrative *both* cures (in Oedipus’ case, esp. the timing of the cure) may well be the invention of the poet. For discussion, see Mastronarde 1994, 24f. and the literature referred to above.

⁴⁹Versnel 1981, 140 n.2 has pointed out that ‘the way Menoeceus kills himself while standing on the walls in order that his blood would drip outside the city’, may be compared with the so-called *epipompe*, the riddance of evil towards the enemy. For a discussion of the place of Menoeceus’ sacrifice, see Luschig 1995, 224; on Euripides’ change in the location of the dragon’s cave, see Vian 1963, 84.

place of its foundation, it now lies just outside of the walls. Or Polyneices, who is both a threat from outside, and, spatially and socially, an insider, as well. Or Oedipus: dwelling in the inner chambers of the palace, he occupies, symbolically, the most central space of the city. Socially and spatially he is a central figure. Although, it must be added, he is leading a marginal existence, unseen and blind. In fact, he is the one who must be expelled, whose removal from the city is a precondition for its survival. Expelled, but where to? To Mount Cithaeron, to where he had been expelled before? Exposed as a new-born baby, only in order to return as a saviour of his fatherland? In and out, exit and arrival - no words better strike the key features of Oedipus' existence. He belongs to *both* the palace *and* Mount Cithaeron, to the inside and the outside, but is doomed to stay in neither.

The whole play is based on this polarity of ins and outs, exits (through exile or death) and arrivals, most visibly played out on stage, where personae come and go in succession⁵⁰. It is the coming and going of saviours and destroyers. The theme of exile is obviously and prominently elaborated in connection with Polyneices, whose exile - to escape the father's curse - turns out to be the event that sparks off the current crisis. Creon is just about the only character in the play who does not meet a fate of exile or death, a fate extensively lamented in the dialogue between Iocaste and her son. Exits not only mark the onset of crisis, they appear to be the way to salvation, too. At least for Thebes.

The position of the chorus fits this polarity well⁵¹. They are exiles who have just arrived and are about to leave again. Phoenician women on their way to Delphi, consecrated women featuring in a civic void. Though their coming is not of so much consequence to the unfolding of events, it is worth lingering over their presence for a moment. Who were they and why had they come to Thebes at this unfortunate time? The group of Phoenician women are on their way to Delphi, dedicated to Apollo as a

⁵⁰See Luschnig 1995. See for the importance of space in tragedy D. Wiles, *Tragedy in Athens. Performance Space and Theatrical Meaning* (Cambridge 1997). In my view the meaning of space in ancient Greek crisis management exceeds the preoccupations of genre and I therefore ignore the issue of genre here.

⁵¹On Euripides' choice of this particular group of foreign women, see Foley 1985, 119; Mastronarde 1994, 208-209. R. Rebuffat, 'Le sacrifice du fils de Créon dans les *Phéniciennes* d'Euripide', *RÉA* 74 (1972) 14-31, considered the recent friendship ties with Carthage as a possible motive and places the sacrifice of Menoeceus wholly in a Phoenician (Semitic) perspective.

thanks offering from their fatherland Tyre⁵², destined for the sacred servitude to the god⁵³, of which they seem proud. They are the choicest offering (*akrothinia*)⁵⁴, a gift of beauty⁵⁵ to Apollo selected from among the youth of Tyre. The happy victims of their country's well being.

The theme of arrival is at least as integral to the events as the exile-motif. A chain of arrivals, or rather, invasions, attacks, have contributed to the present crisis. First and foremost, Cadmus', by whose arrival in Thebes history began in the first place. And then Oedipus' arrival, the consequences of which are well-known. Polyneices' arrival, finally, as, potentially, the closing entry of Thebes' history. Trouble itself is also verbalised as arriving, moving up against the city. *Alastors* come, *Erinyes* come. The descriptions of the visitation of the monstrous Sphinx from mount Cithaeron, the arrival of Ares and the approach of the army before the walls are revealing. These figures are couched in comparable terms of attacking, of ravaging thunderstorms and beasts of prey⁵⁶. The chorus, when describing the consequences of Cadmus' founding deed, uses the following terminology: "From which there spread across the land, devouring and destroying, a supernatural fury of blood and hate"⁵⁷. And earlier already about the (winged!) Sphinx: "seizing

⁵²There appears to have been some discussion about their origins, if it is Tyre or Carthage, see e.g. Arthur 1977, 165.

⁵³See for the servitude to the god Eur. *Ph.* 221 ("to stand before him like golden statues appointed for the service of Apollo" [Φοίβῳ λάτρεϊς]); idem, 225: Φοιβείαισι λατρεΐαις; idem, 205: Φοίβῳ δούλα. See for this pride Eur. *Ph.* 214-225. Luschig 1995, 195 comments: '...a worthy life for women in ancient Greece who have so little to look forward to.'

⁵⁴Eur. *Ph.* 203, 283 (ἀκροθίνια, δορὸς ἀκροθίνιον). As Mastronarde 1994, *ad loc.* has pointed out, δορὸς ἀκροθίνιον could refer to the finest offering from the booty of war, but here the women are not captives, but Tyrians themselves, so this first-fruit offering must be in gratitude for something, a victory in war or a good harvest. On comparable groups of youngsters sent to Delphi endowed with a special status, see Chapter 6. On temple-service being the equivalent of sacrifice see Faraone 2003, 68 n. 71.

⁵⁵Eur. *Ph.* 215 (καλλιστεύματα).

⁵⁶Ares' arrival: Eur. *Ph.* 239-240; arrival of the Sphinx: 806-811, but esp. 1019-1042; approach of the army: 1095-1103; 1153f. The animal imagery has not gone unnoticed, see esp. Podlecki 1962, 362-367, who elaborated this theme in detail. Apart from the dragon and the Sphinx (the literal beasts), the two brothers esp. are several times referred to as beasts, e.g. Eur. *Ph.* 1296: δίδυμοι θῆρες or 1573-1574.

⁵⁷Eur. *Ph.* 1065-1066: ὅθεν ἐπέσυτο τάνδε γαῖαν ἀρπαγαῖσι δαιμόνων τις ἄτα. Translation Mastronarde 1994, *ad loc.* There is an ambiguity in the Greek about taking δαιμόνων with ἀρπαγαῖσι or τις ἄτα. Those who defend the latter only allow for one type of divine persecution, that of the Sphinx, others allow for multiple manifestations of divine assaults. For this discussion, see Mastronarde 1994, *ad loc.* Arthur 1977, 181 quoted an ancient commentator who glosses: καὶ γὰρ ἡ Σφίγξ ἥρπαζεν, ὁ δὲ Μενεικεὺς πέπονθέ τι

Cadmeans”⁵⁸. Or, again elsewhere: “She who approached the walls with four-footed claws ...”⁵⁹. Crisis involves being in the grip of an attacking power, crisis management means freeing one’s self from that grip. Remember the words of Menoeceus: “I shall go, ..., I shall set this land free”. Free from the wrath of Ares and Earth and free from the threat of Polyneices and his Argive army. Being in trouble equals being in the firm grip of incoming forces, with grasping claws⁶⁰.

Inside versus outside, arrival versus exit: this is the spatial translation of the crisis and salvation theme. There is one more *locus* in this topography of crisis that deserves attention: the Theban walls⁶¹. Throughout the play the walls feature as the boundary *par excellence*, marking out the difference between crisis and salvation. The seven-gated walls are the hallmark of the city’s pride, the focus of its vulnerability. Each new attack is described as approaching the walls⁶². All defence is concentrated there⁶³. The walls keep safety within⁶⁴, ward off the enemy, but - as a consequence - at the same time they enclose the sickness fostered inside⁶⁵. The walls

ὅμοιον, thus understanding ἀρπαγαῖσι as a reference to both the assault of the Sphinx and Menoeceus’ suicide.

⁵⁸Eur. *Ph.* 1021: Καδμείων ἀρπαγά.

⁵⁹Eur. *Ph.* 808, translation Podlecki 1962, 362. The chorus in this antistrophe explicitly stresses that both the Sphinx and Oedipus had come from Mount Cithaeron (801-809). On mountains as typical areas of marginality, see Buxton 1994, 81-96.

⁶⁰But it is not only trouble that arrives from abroad. Help and safety can come from afar, too. The founding father of Thebes came from a far land. Just as Oedipus had been a visitor and saved the city, other saviours are invoked to come and assist the Thebans in their distress, too.

⁶¹See also Luschnig 1995, esp. 164 and 226f, ‘the crowns of Ares’.

⁶²Eur. *Ph.* 239-240; 801-809. I count, apart from the conversation between Creon and Eteocles (690-783) at least 16 references to the Theban walls, 10 to the gates (excluding 1104-1140, a debatable passage about the fight and full of references to gates) and 12 to the towers.

⁶³Eur. *Ph.* 744; 1097. The entire conversation between Creon and Eteocles (690-783) is one about walls, towers and gates.

⁶⁴See Eur. *Ph.* 117, where a worried Antigone on the roof is reassured by the old servant: “Fear not; the city wards all safe within (the walls)”.

⁶⁵These insights are partly inspired by a paper called ‘walling in - walling out’ by Jennifer Kosak presented at a colloquium on Pollution in Exeter in 1995. See now J. Kosak, ‘*Polis Nosousa*. Greek ideas about the city and disease in the fifth century BC’, in: V.M. Hope and E. Marshall (eds), *Death and Disease in the Ancient City* (London 2000) 35-54, esp. 43-44. On the theme of enclosure in the *Phoenissae*, see Luschnig 1995, 236-7. Her concluding observations deserve to be quoted in full: “Rings, circles, crowns; centers, dens, chambers, navels, hearts: the play is full of these things. Iocaste dances around her son; she dies encircling her dead; Creon embraces his lifeless son; Antigone dances, a bacchant of the dead whirling around the bodies of her mother and brothers; Oedipus stumbles around his dead. The anular construction of the play has Menoeceus in the center and Oedipus’ fate at the two ends, with the brothers’ agones (one of words, one of swords) forming a middle circle. Thebes still stands at the end with its surrounding walls: it is, finally, the crown of

are the landmark of tension, the skin of the diseased city. The infection arrived through one of her seven openings, the way to safety runs via the city's walls, too, either through one of the gates (Oedipus), or via the ramparts (Menoeceus)⁶⁶. Seven gates to destruction, seven gates to safety.

D. PURIFICATION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

In one of his many interesting articles, Burkert has unveiled intriguing correspondences between the *Seven against Thebes* legend and Babylonian material. After having discussed the possibilities of Near-Eastern influences on the legend and presenting a Babylonian tale and an Assyrian ritual of purification⁶⁷, Burkert claims in conclusion: "... the situation presented and acted out in this ritual is surprisingly close to the plot of the *Seven against Thebes*: There are the Seven threatening warriors, the infernal God - equalling Adrastus - as their leader, there are Seven defenders who are to overthrow the enemy, there are 'twins fighting each other in the gate', and there is the pyre at the end. I cannot believe this complex of similarities to be purely accidental. But then the conclusion is inescapable: *the tale of the Seven*

Ares. There are layers and layers of enclosures. Menoeceus is called to return to the hole where it all began, the serpent's lair, where Cadmus won his crown of victory, preserved for the last of the Sown Men. Oedipus, enclosed in a chamber and then summoned finally into the light, talks about himself still unborn, cursed already in the darkness of his mother's womb before his traumatic birth, the piercing of his ankles and the attempted disposal of him".

⁶⁶Note the medical vocabulary employed in situations of crisis, such as θάλλει (812), φάρμακον (893), νόσος, νοσέω (various places, e.g. 867).

⁶⁷Burkert 1981a. According to Burkert, the orally composed *Thebais*, written down in a fixed form some time between 700 and 600 BC., certainly betrays very ancient layers (Eteokles is a Mycenaean name, for example), but also marks the traits of more recent invention (e.g. formulas with linguistically late features). After analysing the relevant material, Burkert has concluded that the traditions of the seven gates and seven assailants do not necessarily seem to belong to the oldest stratum. Next Burkert has put forward a remarkable parallel; a Babylonian tale, the epic of Erra (dated some time between the 9th and 7th century BC.), featuring seven warriors setting out to destroy mankind with the help of Erra, the god of war and pestilence. Just in time, however, mankind placates Erra and the Seven have to retreat (40-41). Even more remarkable, however, is another Assyrian text, referring to the cure of sickness which may infest a house, and which belongs to a larger body of magical texts called 'the house surrounded by guardian spirits'. The text describes how a magician has set up figurines: 'Seven menacing demons with formidable wings', Nergal, the infernal god of pestilence, seven other gods, protective divinities, and figures of 'twins', both to the right and the left of the sick man's head and 'twins fighting each other', set up in the gate, and to the right and the left of the doorposts. There are prayers and in the end probably the entire lot is burnt.

against Thebes is the epic transposition of a purification ritual of ultimately Babylonian origin (my italics, LK)⁶⁸.

Remarkable as this may be, in my view, when working with the Greek material, one should be extremely cautious in attaching anything more than one's attention to such parallels. The import of substance does not imply the import of meaning. Besides, Euripides' version of the legend of the 'Seven' in his *Phoenician Women*, is, in a sense, again a firm step further removed from the 'Seven against Thebes' tale, a step that may fundamentally alter content and meaning. As stated above, at least in several respects Euripides did move away from the tradition. Two inventions in particular, Menoeceus' self-sacrifice and Oedipus' postponed exile, gave this version another, and at least for the purpose of this study, a wholly autonomous dimension.

Interestingly however, one may argue, that by reshaping the narrative into the discourse analysed above, Euripides ended up as close to a purification ritual as can be. Purification may be regarded as a means of recreating order, of overcoming crisis, that is, of dealing with pollution, chaos and disease. The emphasis on pollution, curses, crisis and the urgent need for deliverance is already evident in the Prologue: "Save us, Zeus!" - are virtually the last words of Iocaste's prologue. The whole action in the *Phoenissae*, from start to end, is one *perpetuum mobile* of crisis, causes and solutions; of illness of a city; of symptoms and cures. Of course, as I have stressed already a few times, this is not the only theme of the *Phoenissae*, but a theme so clearly present throughout the play, that it seems justified for anyone interested in the rhetoric of crisis to explore it from this perspective.

The narrative sequence of the main plot in the *Phoenissae* leads from a city threatened by destruction, diagnosed by a seer who knows the *pharmakon soterias*, to a beloved youth of noble birth who sacrifices himself and in this manner seeks to save his fatherland from its impending doom, and to an old blind former king who embodies this very illness Thebes suffers from, whose expulsion equals the removal of the city's pollution. Trouble is multiple, couched in the dynamic terms of attack

⁶⁸Both the epic and this text are relatively 'late' Mesopotamian texts, which makes the assumption of direct influence a hasty business. Burkert 1981a, 42: "Thus if any connection between the Babylonian and the Theban seven is accepted, the tale cannot have been created in Greece before 750 BC. We arrive at a rather late terminus post quem for the evolution of an oral tradition in Greek epic art." Burkert 1981a, 45 acknowledges that there

and invasion. The crisis is spatially articulated as well; symptoms, causes and cures oscillate between the very inside and the outside of the city. The seven-gated walls are the focus of crisis and safety. There is not one single cause, nor one straightforward solution. Ambiguities galore. Causes, consequences and cures are multiple and intertwined; they are all constituted by the divergent poles of centrality and marginality. Reading the *Phoenissae* from this perspective, as the rhetoric of crisis management, allows us not only to appreciate the richness and ambiguities of the play, but also, and more importantly for the present study, to get ourselves acquainted with all the ins and outs of ancient Greek thought on crisis and safety, the subject of the present study.

is Mycenaean and other old substance in the tale; it is just the general plot which was provided by the oriental source.

INTRODUCTION

In the Prologue the ancient Greek rhetoric of crisis and safety in Euripides' *Phoenissae* is explored. Although the plot and its specific phrasing are unique creations of Euripides' genius, he was a 'cultured' man, and the underlying ideas were part and parcel of the Greek mentality of his times. But also subsequent generations who inherited and cherished the play, adding or cutting a few lines, must have understood its main gist: save us Zeus!

This book is about ancient Greek crisis management. But it is not about facts and figures, not about actual plagues and famines, population growth and mortality risks. This is a study of ancient Greek mentality¹ in times of crisis covering a detailed and comparative analysis of three clusters of phenomena in the context of crisis management. These are, in the first place, the so-called *pharmakos* rituals which served ancient Greek communities to purify themselves by expelling one or two of their members. Secondly, myths of (self-)sacrifice, in which kings, noble virgins and handsome princes died for the sake of their fatherland. Thirdly, tales of forced colonisations, in which a community in dire peril consecrated (or expelled) part of its own youth in order to remedy a crisis. Each cluster will be studied in detail separately, but additional insight is to be expected from the comparison of the rituals, myths and tales. Their interrelations and divergences will prove to be mutually illuminating, and will provide the key to a deeper understanding of ancient Greek crisis management at large.

¹I am aware that nowadays, one runs an intellectual risk when speaking of 'the ancient Greek mentality', in stead of 'mentalities' (in the plural), or of 'conceptualisations', 'religions' etc. Even if I have not always added the -s, I realise that local and temporal differences are of considerable importance for the study of ancient Greek culture (one may perhaps also add other differences, e.g. in social-economical background or gender). Nevertheless, it seems that some sort of generalisation is often inevitable in modern research on ancient history, as in the context of the present enquiry, for instance, where the evidence for more specific statements is usually too flimsy to state anything at all. So one actually has to choose between ancient Greek scapegoat 'mentalities' reconstructed on the basis of single pieces of (perhaps unrepresentative) evidence, or ancient Greek scapegoat 'mentality' in general, reconstructed on the basis of all the extant evidence, but with all possible reservation with regard to variation and differentiation. Therefore, whenever I use the singular, I think – albeit wishfully- the plural.

The initial *traît d' union* between these clusters is the fact that in all three phenomena a communal crisis is dealt with at the expense of a few individuals. These individuals died, were expelled, were sacrificed, or killed themselves voluntarily, all for the sake of the endangered community.

One could argue that correspondence stops here, as has been done by the grand old lady of the study of ancient Greek religion, Jane Harrison, a century ago: “Tzetzes (a Byzantine scholar, LK), looking back at the ceremony of the expulsion of the *pharmakos*, calls it a sacrifice (θυσία), but we need not imitate him in his confusion of ideas new and old. The rite of the Thargelia (the *pharmakos* ritual, LK) was a rite of expulsion, of riddance, which incidentally, as it were, involved loss of life to a human being. The result is, indeed, in both cases the same to the human being, but the two ceremonials of sacrifice and riddance express widely different conditions and sentiments in the mind of the worshipper”².

Indeed, our sources leave no doubt that in the midst of a severe crisis two remedial strategies stood out³: the purificatory expulsion of wretched individuals from the area of human habitation carrying the ills with them on the one hand, often (but not always) regarded to be main gist of the *pharmakos* ritual, and the sacrifice or the sacrificial consecration of valued human beings on the other hand, a strategy considered to be found in the myths. The tales of forced colonisation display both remedies: the expulsion of people who are consecrated to a god on the one hand and the removal of outcasts on the other. Generally, the ancient Greek vocabulary that is employed in describing these remedial strategies, belongs to a purificatory or a sacrificial sphere.

While both remedies involve the elimination of the victims to the benefit of the community at large, there are obvious differences between the two, as Harrison observed already long ago⁴. The main differences between purificatory and sacrificial remedies can be located in the status of the victims, their ultimate fate, and the involvement of the divine. Soon however, it will become clear that it is not always possible to separate, or even distinguish, these two ‘ideal’ remedies, and that overlap,

²Harrison 1922³, 109.

³Evidently, there were other forms of crisis management, such as the setting up of statues of gods. These have not been taken into account.

⁴See above. Hence, the two should not be confused: “The *pharmakos* was not a sacrifice in the sense of an offering made to appease an angry god. (...) It was, as ancient authors repeatedly insist, a καθαμός, a purification” (Harrison 1922³, 103).

intertwining or even amalgamation of purificatory and sacrificial features and vocabulary often occur.

For this and other reasons, when referring to these remedies I sometimes prefer to use the term crisis management. One of the reasons for introducing this term is its glaring anachronism, so that a definitive choice between the concepts of sacrifice and purification with all their complex resonances can be postponed and reserved for later discussion.

The aim of this book is to explore ancient Greek crisis management from various scholarly perspectives and to investigate the similarities and differences between the *pharmakos* rituals, the myths of (self-)sacrifice and the tales of forced colonisations. A central question is why phenomena that seem quite different at first sight, turn out to share so many properties. Approaches from the points of view of functionalism and structural-semiotics will prove helpful in this respect. However, even if they may function in a similar way, the phenomena are not identical. In dealing with the remaining differences between and among these clusters of phenomena, a coherent explanation will be sought as well. This will not be done by taking short-cuts, for instance by explaining away or smoothing over part of the evidence. On the contrary: the differences and inconsistencies will be put into focus and explored in order to gain a better understanding of the nature of ancient Greek crisis management.

This book consists of five parts. Parts 2, 3 and 4, the study of the three phenomena, form its centre piece. In addition there is the present introductory part (Part 1) and a final part (Part 5). Parts 2 to 4 each have their own introductions, presenting scope and aims, and the specific methodological problems pertaining to the study of that subject. In each of Parts 2 to 4 one specific scholarly perspective is elaborated on in particular, namely what may be called the 'intellectualist', 'functionalist' and 'structural-semiotic' approach. This implies, on the one hand, that too much repetition can be avoided, on the other, that the study of the rituals and myths (Parts 2 and 3) is not entirely completed at the end of the respective parts. The last chapter of Part 4 consists of a combined analysis of the three phenomena of ancient Greek crisis management from a structural-semiotic viewpoint. It will appear that the differences between the phenomena that stood out at first sight, especially from a more intellectualist frame of mind, vanish almost completely. However, it would have been unwise to stop there, as differences do remain. These remaining

differences provide the subject of the last part, Part 5. In order to make sense of these differences, the scope of the enquiry is widened. It is no longer the effective death of human victims that is the focus of interest, but this time attention will be paid to all sorts of crisis management, in which sacrificial and purificatory features and terminology intertwine, overlap, or even merge. After a reconsideration of the notions of sacrifice and purification, the ancient Greek concepts of order and disruption will be discussed. It will turn out that the remarkable intertwining of sacrifice and purification in times of crisis depends on the ancient Greek concept of order as a well-balanced divine equilibrium, and hence, on the need to redress that order in situations of crisis by means of both the elimination of ills and the restoration of the relations with the divine. This is what may be called the double bind of crisis management.

Three observations by other scholars have been of considerable influence on the present study. First, one made by Bremmer in his classic article on ancient Greek scapegoats who noticed ‘a curious dichotomy’ between the poor and ugly characters featuring in the rituals and the attractive, aristocratic and royal protagonists of myth. Moreover, Bremmer discovered that these ‘marginal’ figures in ritual were at the same time represented as very valuable persons, whereas the mythical protagonists were ‘marginal’, too⁵. This inconsistency, although revised and rephrased, forms an important source of inspiration for this study.

A second impetus was found in an article by Versnel. In his comparative study of Apollo and Mars, Versnel made the following observation: “Indeed it could be claimed that in many respects the emigrants of the *ver sacrum* or the *dekateusis* and the *pharmakoi* in Ionia perform very similar social and emotional functions”⁶. It thus seemed interesting to add the tales of forced colonisations (among which this so-called *dekateusis*) to the myths and rituals Bremmer had studied. These tales will appear to occupy a middle ground between the *pharmakos* rituals and myths of human sacrifice. Moreover, Versnel’s observation pertaining to the social and emotional functions of these various victims invited comparative research from other perspectives, too.

Finally, the following observation made by Parker in his important study of purification *Miasma* prepared the ground for the present approach: “in theory

⁵Bremmer 1983, 305.

sacrifice and purification may seem distinct operations, the one intended to appease a deity and the other to efface an impersonal pollution. In practice, what is spoken of as a purification often takes the form of sacrifice, while the effects of divine anger, at least when it manifests itself as a disease, can sometimes be washed away”⁷.

There are well-known, general methodological problems involved in this investigation, including the paucity of sources, the fact that the sources we do have stem from various places and from different periods, and the permanent difficulty of distinguishing between modern concepts and ancient practice. In addition, there are also more specific problems, such as the role of genre in the study of myth and tale, or the impossibility of delineating cultural phenomena in an objective way.

Although I try to remain aware of these problems and pitfalls, the general method applied may be called inclusive. This inclusiveness pertains to my use of sources, my attitude to the interpretations of the material offered by other scholars from various perspectives and to my willingness to work with (remaining) inconsistencies in the source-material⁸.

As to the first of these inclusive strategies, the use of sources, a few remarks may be made. All sorts of written sources have been used, originating from the 6th century BC until Byzantine times, stemming from various places in the ancient Greek (and Byzantine) world. One of the basic principles in this study is, while keeping an open eye for the date, origin and genre of the sources, to postpone the disqualification of source-material until an analysis based on most sources induces one to reject evidence. This inclusive method thus requires patience, not in the last place from the reader. However, without this inclusiveness, no thorough study of the subject would be feasible. Evidently, there are risks involved in such method. As many scholars have pointed out, religious notions have been resistant to change, but one might expect at least some changes during this lapse of time. Demons may have grown, or decreased in number, the popularity of deities may have changed, perhaps also the way they are involved in crisis management, and issues of morality may have become

⁶Versnel 1993, 309.

⁷Parker 1983, 10 and ref.

⁸In these matters, I follow two basic principles that have been propagated by Versnel: first, the idea that if evidence appears contradictory, it is not necessarily the most rewarding strategy to get rid of the inconsistency too rashly. Secondly, the conviction that it is rewarding to use different scholarly perspectives (paradigms, if one prefers that term) to complement each other in the study of one phenomenon. For the former see the Introduction in Versnel 1990, for the latter the Introduction in Versnel 1993.

a factor of growing importance. Moreover, even at one and the same time, people at various places in the Greek world may have experienced and understood rituals, myths and tales differently. Nevertheless, the changes never seem to outweigh the correspondences in our source-material. The reader may judge for himself at the end of the study.

Secondly, with regard to the interpretations offered, I have chosen to incorporate a good deal of the historiography on the phenomena involved. Already in the nineteenth century, ancient Greek human sacrifice attracted a lot of attention, especially with respect to the question whether it had ‘really happened’. More recently, intracommunal violence has received a great deal of attention. Various scholarly perspectives, such as what may be called intellectualism and functionalism, will be applied in a complementary way. What may remain unnoticed, or unmarked from one perspective, may be crucial in another frame of reference.

Thirdly, as to my willingness to work with inconsistencies, I must add at once, that my final scholarly aim is coherence all the same. However, I also want to take information at face value, even if contradictory evidence is involved. To take, prematurely, recourse to arguments referring to local variations, mere misunderstandings, or Byzantine fantasies in order to explain inconsistencies, may in fact turn out to be a piecemeal approach. Such a method may obscure rather than illuminate. Therefore, here too, inclusion is favoured over exclusion, especially if the inconsistencies recur over and over again. There is always the possibility that variation, or inconsistency, reflects something more structural, pertinent in the sources. Hence: when in doubt, include.

It is a legitimate, but complex, question to ask whether the inconsistencies at stake are *created* by the modern scholar rather than merely disclosed. In general one may answer that that depends: to identify an inconsistency, an ambiguity, or even of an ill-fit, has much to do with one’s own definitions. A specific answer can therefore only be provided by the study itself. It is true, ambiguity, or inconsistency, was not always present in ancient Greek crisis management. Sometimes, operations may be described in a straightforward way. More often, however, as we shall see below, the intertwining of vocabulary and features from what may be regarded as basically different spheres strikes the (modern) eye. If our interpretations of these spheres, these notions and their respective semantic scopes are not too far removed from ancient Greek conceptualisations, the use of the concept inconsistency, or, in the case

of the victims, of ambiguity, seems justified. Whether it is only the modern scholar who experiences such inconsistency and ambiguity as unsettling is a different question altogether and can not always be answered⁹.

The main inconsistencies in the source-material discussed in this book will appear to be the result of the intertwining of sacrifice and purification in times of crisis. This intertwining will turn out to be a recurrent phenomenon in a wider context of crisis and transition, due to what may be called the double bind of ancient Greek crisis management. It is true, the rituals, myths and tales in which human beings are the saving victims in situations of crisis and transition may be closer to the ancient Greek imagination than to 'real life'. However, as such, they may serve as a magnifying glass. The way the intertwining of sacrifice and purification can be observed in these particular phenomena of crisis management will facilitate the understanding of numerous other ancient Greek hybrid reactions to crisis. It will no longer be necessary to reject part of the source-material, nor to stretch concepts or invent new categories in order to deal with these recurrent inconsistencies in ancient Greek crisis management. On the contrary, sometimes inconsistencies make sense.

⁹A hint of such discomfort in ancient times, however, may perhaps be found in the tirade by the author of the Hippocratic treatise on the sacred disease who objects to the mingling of the divine world and the purificatory sphere by those quacks who attribute a divine cause to diseases but then purify the patients in all sorts of ways, 'treating them as polluted beings instead of bringing them to sanctuaries, with sacrifices and prayers, in supplication to the gods' (*Morb. Sacr.* 4 [Jones II, 145f], for which see also Chapter 9 Sections b and c).

PART 2

THE *PHARMAKOS* RITUALS

INTRODUCTION

Just like most modern societies, ancient Greek communities had their scapegoats. Unlike nowadays, the ancient Greeks actually expelled these scapegoats in an official public ritual. One source, for instance, relates that “in Athens, they used to lead out two men to be *katharsia* (purifying instruments) of the city during the Thargelia”¹, an annual festival that took place at the beginning of May. Various ancient sources relate that in several places in the ancient world one or two persons were ritually removed from a community. This occurred in some places regularly, at annual festivals. Other testimonia state that the ritual took place in times of great misfortune. The victims were expelled, or killed, in what was, according to some sources, a ritual of purification of the community.

These rituals form the subject of the present part. On the basis of a set of relevant testimonia, the first chapter offers a detailed analysis of the various elements that constituted the ancient Greek scapegoat rituals. The aim is to provide more insight into the ancient Greek mentality that informed these rituals and that was informed by them. Furthermore, questions will be raised that cannot be answered by the study of the ritual only. The second chapter deals with modern, traditional, scholarship that tried to make sense of these rituals in terms of religious beliefs. The questions raised are not answered. Or rather, they appear to have been answered in contradictory ways. Both chapters prepare the ground for the later parts of this study.

The rituals will be further referred to as *pharmakos* rituals, named after their protagonist. I prefer this employment of *pharmakos* to that of scapegoat. In modern popular usage, the meaning of the latter term is being stretched continuously, and has eroded in consequence. With respect to the ancient world, the word scapegoat calls to mind all too easily the biblical scapegoat of the Old Testament². Although there is more than a superficial resemblance between the Greek and the biblical ritual, it is clearly better to treat them separately, even in terminology³.

¹Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48.

²*Lev.* 16.7-10, 20-22.

³Cf. B. McLean, ‘On the Revision of Scapegoat Terminology’, *Numen* 37.2 (1990) 168-173. McLean suggests to use of the term ‘scapeman’ for all victims of human expulsion

As not all the rituals seem to be identical, one might consider speaking of *pharmakos* rituals in the plural. However, if one accepts the existence of ‘polythetic definitions’⁴, it is possible to unite these rituals under one heading, which then may be given the (family)name *pharmakos* ritual. Consequently, I speak about the *pharmakos* with a double tongue: on the one hand it is the literally attested name of the ritual victim in certain ancient Greek rites of expulsion, on the other hand it serves as the generic name for all victims in this type of ritual.

Before the *pharmakos* ritual is studied in detail, a few preliminary remarks are in order. First of all, the much-debated concept of ritual must be defined in the context of this study. Secondly, the selection of the relevant ancient Greek testimonia needs clarification. Finally, the use of these sources involves various problems that should be made explicit at the outset.

To begin with, the term ritual requires some closer attention. What is a ritual? Ever since the term ritual was (re)discovered in Academia⁵, many different answers to this question have been proposed. Definitions have varied according to area of scholarship, subject of research and, as importantly, according to interpretative method. Generations of scholars have been wondering whether it is the purpose, the function or the meaning of ritual that forms ritual’s main defining aspect⁶. However,

rituals and to reserve the term scapegoat for the Jewish ritual. This would indeed prevent a superficial identification between the latter and all other instances of ‘scapegoating’, but in fact shifts the problem of generalisation and incorrect identification to all scapegoats but the Jewish one.

⁴R. Needham, ‘Polythetic Classification: Convergence and Consequences’, *Man* 10 (1975) 349-369.

⁵On the invention of ritual as a conceptual category, see Bremmer 1994 and 1998, esp. 14-24; C. Calame, “‘Mythe’ et ‘rite’ en Grèce: des catégories indigènes?”, *Kernos* 4 (1991) 179-204, esp. 196-203.

⁶Burkert, whose interest in ethology is well known, defines ritual as “a stereotyped action pattern redirected to serve for communication” (Burkert 1979, 35-58). Others, less interested in origins, but all the more in the aspect of communication rather put it in these or comparable terms: “Ritual is action wrapped in a web of symbolism” (D.I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics and Power* [London 1988] 9, closely inspired by Geertz’s definition of culture, see e.g. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York 1973)) or “ritual is repetitive, representational behaviour that often has to be decoded” (Bremmer 1994, 38). Others again put the emphasis on function: “Ritual confirms and strengthens social identity and people’s sense of social location: it is an important means through which people experience community” (Cohen 1985, 50) or “A ritual is a complex of actions effected by, or in the name of, an individual or a community. These actions serve to organise space and time, to define relations between men and the gods, and to set in their proper place the different categories of mankind and the links which bind them together” (Bruit Zaidman and Schmitt Pantel 1992, 27). The disadvantage of this last, inclusive definition, is, interestingly, its incompleteness, as ritual may be considered to do much more.

we need not choose. Because ritual is not a native Greek category, one is relatively free to use the term in such a way as thought appropriate, as long as it is kept in mind that this is a category of one's own, a helping hand to grasp a complex matter. For the purpose of this study it suffices to take ritual as 'standardised action pattern'. In fact any narrower definition will only obstruct the polyparadigmatic approach employed in this study. Purpose, function and meaning are not mutually exclusive. At the same time, regarding ritual as standardised action pattern does emphasise an essential quality: its fixed character. Whether a ritual is practised regularly or at irregular intervals, its basic structure is available and need not be invented.

The set of sources that forms the basis of this chapter, published separately as a catalogue in the appendix, is the second subject in need of elucidation. What are the criteria for selection of a text as source-material?

In general, one must remain aware of the impossibility of delineating cultural phenomena in an objective way. Selecting cultural manifestations inevitably involves choices, which are made on the basis of interpretation. Culture itself creates categories, but does not neatly delimit its manifestations. On the contrary, every culture consists of a limited set of symbols that can be used in an unlimited number of combinations to express all of its concerns. No collection of whatever cultural phenomenon can be complete, nor can it exist without 'borderline cases', as I call them. At one point, a line between one phenomenon and the other must be drawn. The catalogue in the appendix is therefore an open one, an 'exemplary' collection of rituals sharing, to a large extent, the same, but not all, features.

The main criterion for inclusion in this catalogue has been the occurrence of the ritual name *pharmakos*. This usually counts as a solid basis for cataloguing purposes. On further consideration, however, the occurrence of a ritual name appears a rather arbitrary criterion for selection. Ancient testimonia that happen to omit the *ph*-word, but do refer to a similar ritual while mentioning terms such as purification or Thargelia, are also included. Finally, a few testimonia are incorporated that describe related rituals. Though not mentioning the familiar terms, they do testify to a similar action pattern, namely the ritual expulsion of one or two human being(s) for the sake of the community at large. It will be obvious that, especially with respect to this last category, the catalogue is open-ended.

The third and last issue that deserves attention pertains to the use and the assessment of the individual sources in this collection. In the catalogue of testimonia,

a variety of sources is put together, containing evidence that overlaps to a certain extent only. What to do with the differences? The sources differ in date, place and genre. It is therefore tempting to attribute the variety in the sources to temporal and local differences, or to differences in genre or to dispose of part of the evidence as Byzantine fantasies. Whether this is always really helpful remains to be seen. It is worthwhile to discuss a few of the complications involved.

The relevant testimonia comprise material from various communities of the ancient Greek world, such as Athens, Abdera and Massilia. As far as possible, the listing of testimonia in the appendix is organised on a geographical basis in order to do justice to local variation. Given the cultural diversity of the societies in which the ritual is attested, it is a priori likely that variation in the ritual did exist. In the past, scholars have been keen to differentiate especially between an Ionian and an Attic ritual practice. However, it will prove impossible to explain all discrepancies among the sources in this way. In this chapter, place is of secondary importance, but will be dealt with whenever appropriate.

Another factor of some importance is time. Even though ritual, as a rule, is resistant to change, the possibility of evolution cannot be excluded. Evolution has often been proposed by scholars as an explanation of differences in the evidence on the *pharmakos* ritual. However, there are very few sources that allow for a precise dating of the information they contain. Therefore, the possibility of change usually remains a mere theoretical consideration, with little practical value.

Furthermore, the authors of these sources cover an enormous span of time, from the sixth century BC until the high Middle Ages, long after the last *pharmakos* had been expelled. The reconstruction of the *pharmakos* ritual therefore invokes all the usual problems involved in the study of cultural transmission. On the one hand, it is noteworthy that a substantial part of the extant testimonia dates from times closer to the present day than to ancient Greece. Their unreliability, one would expect, is high. On the other hand, it is also true that the Byzantine scholars who are responsible for most of these testimonia had more material at their disposal than we have now. Without Tzetzes' twelfth-century AD *History*, the fragments of the sixth-century BC Ionian poet Hipponax would not have been known. To dismiss any 'new' information provided by these Byzantine sources as unreliable would therefore be unwise.

An additional complication is presented by the advent of Christianity. Some of the Byzantine scholars appear to be well versed in Christian vocabulary. Does this however disqualify them from being authoritative at all? Can their language be considered merely to be the vehicle of expression, or is the terminology too much part of the message itself to be taken seriously in a study of ancient Greek ritual practice? If so, why did these scholars think it apt to employ specific Christian terms in this particular context? There are no straightforward answers to these questions, nor simple instructions for use, perhaps only 'handle with care'.

Finally, one observation must be mentioned with regard to the traditional difference between direct and indirect source-material. Some of the sources for the ritual belong to oratory, others to invective poetry, scholarly commentary or lexicography. Obviously, indirect references to *pharmakoi*, for example in invective poetry, must be treated with caution. But one should not forget that direct references have complications of their own. As soon as words are chosen to describe a ritual, the author chooses a particular way to see and interpret the ritual, which, in turn, triggers its own terminology. One of the main properties of ritual, however, is polysemy. It has different meanings to different people. This characteristic is likely to be ignored in a linear description of ritual practice. As all the testimonia are in the first place one-sided, or partial reflections of a ritual practice, one must be just as careful dealing with direct references as with indirect ones. Hence, the difference between direct and indirect sources is not very helpful.

Therefore, my approach of the source-material is inclusive, rather than exclusive. I try to keep an eye open for the date and origin of the sources, as well as for their genre. The other eye, however, tries to take the information at face value, because there is always the possibility that variation, or inconsistency, reflects something more structural, pertinent in the ritual itself.

In the first chapter of this part the *pharmakos* ritual is examined in great detail. To begin with, one testimonium is presented in full to prepare for the sections that follow. In the latter all the properties of the ritual are analysed and discussed one by one, starting from and in dialogue with the research done in this field. Questions of interpretation and various answers receive attention. The second chapter concerns the ritual as a whole. It discusses the interpretations put forward by those scholars who were primarily interested in religious beliefs and regarded ritual as a means of

communication with the divine. Other general interpretations, stressing either the function or meaning of the *pharmakos* ritual are dealt with in later chapters.

CHAPTER 1

(RE-)CONSTRUCTING AND READING

THE *PHARMAKOS* RITUALS

A. TZETZES AND HIPPONAX

The twelfth-century scholar Tzetzes is the author of numerous works and treatises, including a great many scholia and short commentaries on Greek literature. He wrote several testimonia that are relevant for the study of the *pharmakos* ritual. One of these is a detailed description larded with quotations from the invective iambs of Hipponax, a sixth-century BC Ionian poet. Notwithstanding Tzetzes' assertion that these verses of Hipponax illustrate his own words very well, there is divergence in several respects. This divergence may serve as a starting point for a detailed analysis of the *pharmakos* ritual¹. Tzetzes' *History* on the so-called *katharma* runs as follows²:

The *pharmakos*, the *katharma*, was as follows long ago: if misfortune had the city in its grip due to divine wrath, whether famine or pestilence or any other disaster, they would lead [the man] who was more ill-featured than all the [others] as if towards a sacrifice for the purpose of purification and cure of the city that was ill. And having placed the sacrifice at a suitable place, having given [him] in his hand cheese and barley bread and dried figs, having whipped him seven times on his penis with squills, with wild figs and with other [branches] of wild [flora] they finally burnt him completely in a fire on wild wood and they scattered the ashes to the winds into the sea for the purpose of purification of the city that was ill, as I said. As also Lycophron relates somewhere about the Locrian Maidens, saying something like this, I don't exactly know the verse: "When burning the limbs with barren branches Hephaistos throws the ash into the sea of her who perished from the tops of Traron". And Hipponax explains the whole custom very well:
'to purify a city and to be hit with fig branches'
And somewhere else he says, writing in his first *iambos*:
'hitting on the meadow and striking
with fig branches and squills like a *pharmakos*'

¹I borrowed the idea to start the discussion of the *pharmakos* ritual in this manner from Hughes' chapter on 'the *pharmakos* and related rites' (Hughes 1991, 139-165). As we have different interests, in terms of theory, method, questions and content, the similarity in starting points will not lead to identical outcomes.

²Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13. The fragments from the work of Hipponax are numbered separately in the catalogue: Hippon. fr. 26, 6, 27-30 (Degani) = T. 1-6.

And again elsewhere he says these things as follows:
 ‘and it is necessary to remove him by turning him into a *pharmakos*’
 ‘and in the hand to provide dried figs and barley bread
 and cheese, such as *pharmakoi* eat’
 ‘for they have long been waiting for them gaping
 having fig-branches like they hold for *pharmakoi*’
 And somewhere else he says in the same *iambos*:
 ‘that he becomes dry due to hunger; and may he be hit
 seven times on his penis, being led like a *pharmakos*’
 These are the things regarding the custom of the sacrifice of a *pharmakos*.

These two sources, combined in one testimonium, provide an excellent example of the wide variety in time, place and genre of the source-material discussed in this chapter. A close comparison between the information handed down by Tzetzes and the references made by Hipponax also reveals differences in content. Tzetzes furnishes more information on the ritual than can possibly be derived from the fragments of Hipponax quoted by him. He adds terminology, such as *katharma*, and provides a ritual context for the action. Tzetzes also specifies the occasion³: “misfortune, whether famine, pestilence or any other disaster”, “when the city was ill”, and the type of victim: “the most ugly man of all”. Tzetzes refers to one victim, Hipponax to two or more. Above all, however, there is no agreement about the ultimate fate of the *pharmakos*. According to Tzetzes the (sacrificial) victim was completely burnt in a fire, whereas Hipponax alludes to a kind of expulsion, something more easily understood as a ritual of purification.

Perhaps Tzetzes had a lively imagination. Or he had other sources at his disposal than these verses of Hipponax. Both possibilities are put forward by Hughes, who has also noted the discrepancies between the sources and tries, like earlier scholars, to smooth out or explain away some of Tzetzes’ assertions⁴. Hughes suggests for instance that Tzetzes derived his information from sources referring to the Athenian rather than the Ionian form of the ritual. Moreover, he claims that Tzetzes incorrectly identified different ritual terminology and thus mixed up various ritual practices, making unfounded inferences by wrong analogy. Tzetzes had, according to Hughes, a ‘versatile mind’⁵.

³Hipponax is not clear on the occasion, though in another fragment a link between the *pharmakos* and the Thargelia festival is established: Hippon. fr. 107, 47-49 (Degani) = T. 8.

⁴Hughes 1991, 141-149. See also e.g. Gebhard 1926.

⁵For this tradition of distrust, see also Deubner 1932, 184 (with examples). The versatile mind (‘vides, quam mobiles ingenii homo noster fuerit’) is a quotation from W.

And yet, to take recourse to local variations, mere misunderstandings or Byzantine fantasies in order to explain the inconsistencies in Tzetzes' *History* may in fact turn out to be a piecemeal approach. Such a method obstructs further insight in the pertinent structures of the ritual itself. Consequently, the approach in this chapter is thematic, and not based on geography or chronology, nor is it a one-by-one study of the testimonia.

In this chapter, the differences between Hipponax and Tzetzes are placed in the larger context of the *pharmakos* ritual. In order to evaluate and refine our knowledge and understanding of the ritual, it is necessary to discuss the ritual components one by one. The following themes come up for discussion: the circumstances that give rise to the ritual, the victim, various ritual procedures, the ultimate fate of the victim, ritual topography, and finally, ancient explanations of the ritual's 'rationale'. Where necessary, it is considered whether time, place, genre or even a versatile mind is responsible for inconsistencies in the source-material. As the reconstruction of a ritual cannot be separated from interpretative strategy, the presentation, analysis and discussion of possible interpretations of these ritual features are combined.

B. CIRCUMSTANCES

The first question to ask is under what circumstances a *pharmakos* ritual was performed. The question seems straightforward enough, but the sources disagree. According to some testimonia this was done annually, at the occasion of a specific festival. According to others, such as Tzetzes' description, the ritual took place in times of misfortune.

Some have tried to explain this inconsistency by assuming a difference between Attic and Ionian practices⁶. But this does not explain the disagreement between the sources in a satisfying manner. For both Athens and Ionia references to

Koster's *Tzetzes Scholia on Aristophanes' Ranae* (1962) 892, see Hughes 1991, 147-148. However, see *RE* 8.A2 (1948) 1959-2011 s.v. Tzetzes (Wendel) at 1965: "Dieser Mut zur Wahrheit, den wir an Tzetzes beobachten, gibt uns das Recht zu der tröstlichen Annahme, dass er auch in seinen Schriften die alte Überlieferung, die er weitergibt, nicht geflissentlich gefälscht habe".

⁶See for instance Gebhard 1926, 42.

an annual context exist, though some are, admittedly, problematic⁷. Others have pointed out that the references to collective misfortune are found in late antique and Byzantine sources only⁸. However, as will soon become clear, to dismiss situations of misfortune merely as a late invention would be too rash. In this section, I intend to show that it was crisis, in the wider sense of the word, which formed the ritual's occasion *par excellence*.

Before the circumstances of the ritual can be discussed in detail, one remark must be made. One basic distinction in modern studies of religions is that between myth and ritual. The distinction has, evidently, practical advantages and has become too widely used to be questioned each time. It is followed in this study as well. However, the criteria employed are sometimes quite arbitrary: reports about annual rituals in which humans were sacrificed are usually ranged among myths, more on the basis of their presumed 'unhistorical' character, than for not being rituals⁹. Hence, such categorisation, no matter how useful, obscures the fact that the distinction is less sharp in the sources than in our books. As a result of this, the 'mythical' material in chapter 3 cannot be adduced already here to show that the ancient Greeks occasionally dealt with serious misfortune by removing someone in order to save the lot. This makes one, to some extent, the victim of one's own categorisation. Fortunately, there are more arguments available to sustain the claim that crisis occasioned the expulsion of a *pharmakos*.

The misfortunes mentioned by the late antique or Byzantine sources vary between hunger (*limos*), drought (*auchmos*), pestilence (*pestilentia*, *loimikos nosos*), plague (*loimos*), or more vaguely, but not less pressing: something terrible (*deinos*), ills (*kakos*), a disaster (*blabos*) or (great) disaster (*sumphora*)¹⁰. Although in daily life it does matter whether one suffers from a pestilence or from a drought, it is not necessary to distinguish here between these different manifestations of misfortune.

⁷See for Athens D.L. 2.44 = Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 fr. 34 = T. 50 and Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48. For Ionia: Hippon. fr. 107, 47-49 = T. 8. For the Ionian colony of Abdera an annual basis can be safely assumed.

⁸See Hughes 1991, 143, who claims that the situations of misfortune are 'Tzetzes' contribution to the *pharmakos* lore'.

⁹E.g. the Rhodian ritual reported by Porph. *de Abst.* 2.54: "For also on Rhodes on the sixth day of the month Metageitnion a human being used to be sacrificed to Kronos".

¹⁰See e.g. Tz. *Chil.* 5, 729-730, part of T. 13 (misfortune, whether famine, pestilence or any other disaster); Tz. *Chil.* 8, 914, part of T. 14 (during very large misfortunes); schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 30 (drought or famine or such the like); schol. Aesch. *Th.* 680 = T. 45

They clearly function as synonyms of collective trouble. The diagnosis is the same: the city is ill¹¹.

A few sources deserve special attention for the following reasons: not only do they date from a period prior to the Byzantine testimonia, they also show that the difference between sudden misfortune and annual festival is not as large as it may seem at first sight.

First a passage ascribed to Petronius by Servius regarding a custom in Massilia. This is the earliest reference to the ritual expulsion of someone in times of misfortune. In Massilia, during a pestilence, a poor person was fed during one year and thereafter expelled, and with him the ills of the Massilian community¹². The expression ‘whenever a pestilence occurred’ reveals its irregular occurrence¹³. However, the remedy did not have to be invented: the standardised action pattern to respond to situations of misfortune had always been known and formed an intrinsic part of Massilian culture.

Secondly, there is an account by Photius¹⁴. Each year, a young man is being thrown into the sea, a so-called *katapontismos*, “for the sake of the removal of the ills that held them in their grip”. Interestingly, the idea of an annual ritual is coupled with a situation of misfortune. This suggests that a ritual experience of ills, and the need to deal with these, can have an annual basis, a suggestion that will be elaborated in the context of the annual festivals at which the *pharmakos* rituals were performed.

A similar conclusion can be drawn from Helladius’ aetiological account of the ritual. Helladius explains the custom (*to ethos*) ‘always’ to cleanse the city with *pharmakoi* as “a means of averting pestilential diseases (*apotropiasmos*), taking its

(famine or any other of the abominable things/troubling disaster). (Add perhaps Hippon. fr. 6 = T. 2 if ἐν χειμῶνι is the correct reading.)

¹¹Tz. *Chil.* 5, 739, part of T. 13; On *limos* and *loimos* and the extent to which such terms are interchangeable and conjointly employed, see Delcourt 1938; L. Robert, *Hellenica* 4 (1948) 128; Ogden 1997, 9 n.2. See also Hdt. 7.171.2; Thuc. 1.23.3 and 2.54. In Part 3 and 4 there will be many more instances of the interchangeability of these situations.

¹²Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petr. fr.1 = T. 25. Lactantius, a second source for the *pharmakos* ritual in Massilia, mentions ‘a fixed and solemn day’ (Lact. *Plac. Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 10, 793 = T. 26), which could either refer to the actual performance of the expulsion ritual or imply that the occasion was an annual one.

¹³Deubner 1932, 186-7 mistrusts this information, arguing that a year would be too long to wait for a remedy against a pestilence. He suggests that this is Petronius’ own phantasmizing. I do not see major problems here. It is not the only example of a votum-like postponement of action. See for a similar context and a much longer waiting period the Roman *ver sacrum*.

¹⁴Phot. s.v. περίψημα = T. 54.

origin from Androgeus the Cretan, as a result of whose unlawful death in Athens the Athenians suffered from a pestilential disease”¹⁵. Both the original occasion and all the follow-ups of the ritual cleansing of Athens were to remedy pestilential diseases. Were there truly that many plagues ravishing Athens that Helladius can rightly claim that “the custom persisted *always* to cleanse the city with *pharmakoi*”? Probably, we should rather understand the *apotropiasmos* in an anticipatory sense. Just as the annual *katapontismos* of a young man reported by Photius, the Athenians may have dealt on a regular basis with the ever lurking possibility of plague.

These three examples must suffice to show that the Byzantine emphasis on situations of misfortune is not a Byzantine invention. Moreover, they shed new light on the difference between situations of misfortune and annual rituals. Whereas it cannot be denied on the basis of the sources that disaster may have provoked *pharmakos* rituals, it appears that misfortune could also be annually, or regularly, ritualised and remedied. To some extent therefore, the dichotomy between the testimonia with regard to the circumstances of the ritual can be bridged.

A rapprochement between the sources can also be established starting from the other side, the annual festivals. There are two festivals repeatedly mentioned in the context of *pharmakos* rituals that deserve attention: the Abderean Calends of Ianuarius and the festival of the Thargelia.

First, briefly, the case of Abdera. There is a large degree of agreement among the sources about the circumstances of the ritual in Abdera¹⁶. All scholia on Ovid’s *Ibis* report that the Abderean ritual had an annual character: ‘every single year’, ‘on [fixed] (solemn) days’, ‘at the Calends of Ianuarius’ or ‘during the festival of Ianus’. Ovid himself also refers to ‘[fixed] days’¹⁷. Without going into detail about the character of the Calends of Ianuarius, it suffices to keep in mind that this was a New Year festival, a festival of caesura and renewal, which was marked by liminal behaviour (masquerades, jesting), rituals of gift-giving, sacrifice and purification¹⁸. This is of importance for what follows.

¹⁵Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49.

¹⁶See T. 16 to T. 24.

¹⁷Ov. *Ib.* 467-468 = T. 16.

¹⁸See D. Baudy, ‘Strenarum commercium. Über Geschenke und Glückwünsche zum römischen Neujahrsfest’, *RhM* 130 (1987) 1-28; M.W. Gleason, ‘Festive Satire. Julian’s *Mysopogon* and the New Year at Antioch’, *JRS* 76 (1986) 106-119; F. Graf, ‘Kalendae Ianuariae’, in: F. Graf (ed.), *Ansichten griechischer Rituale. Geburtstags-Symposium für Walter Burkert. Castelen bei Basel 15. bis 18. März 1996* (Stuttgart and Leipzig 1998) 199-

More attention must be paid to the Thargelia. Most handbooks on ancient Greek religion deal with the *pharmakos* ritual in the context of the Thargelia festival. Although this context is usually taken for granted, the evidence is rather scarce and not unproblematic¹⁹. It is more correct, therefore, to discuss the Thargelia as one of several occasions at which the *pharmakos* ritual has reportedly been practised. Its principal position should be abandoned.

Thargelia festivals were celebrated both in Athens and in various Ionian *poleis*²⁰, at least until the end of the second century BC²¹. The festivals may have differed to a certain extent²². It is unlikely that the *pharmakos* ritual was always and at all places an integral part of the festival. It has been claimed that the *pharmakos* ritual was still practised at the festival in the third century BC, as Ister is quoted using a present tense-clause in his description of the ritual²³. This is, however, a rather weak and indirect basis for quite a strong claim.

The Thargelia was a festival of Apollo²⁴, celebrated on the (6th and) 7th of the month Thargelion, which is, roughly speaking, sometime early May, just before the

216; M. Meslin, *La fête des kalendes de janvier dans l'empire romain. Étude d'un rituel de nouvel an* (Coll. Latomus 115) (Brussels 1970); M.P. Nilsson, 'Studien zur Vorgeschichte des Weihnachtsfestes', *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 19 (1916-1919) 50-150.

¹⁹D.L. 2.44 = Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 fr. 34 = T. 50 (without mentioning the *pharmakos*); Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48 (supposed by some [e.g. Hughes 1991, 153] to combine Athenian and Ionian evidence, but the most important evidence for the Thargelia as the occasion for the *pharmakos* ritual) and, indirectly, Hippon. fr. 107, 47-49 (Degani) = T. 8. However, if in Hippon. fr. 6 (Degani) = T. 2 ἐν χειμῶνι is the correct reading, there is an even better claim for the connection between *pharmakos* ritual and situations of dire peril in the Ionian context. The link between the Thargelia and the *pharmakos* ritual was, as far as I know, only once disputed in the distant past (Stengel 1887, 89f; contra: J. Töpfer, 'Thargeliengebräuche', *RhM* 43 (1888) 142-145).

²⁰Probably in Clazomenae, Colophon (but see Hughes 1991, 242 n.11) and Miletus, and perhaps in the Ionian colony of Abdera. From a fragment that may be ascribed to Archilochus (Paros) it may be inferred that the poet was at least familiar with the Thargelia (fr. 255 West).

²¹Parker 1996, 270 referring to *LSCG Suppl.* 14 (a celebration of Athenian Thargelia 129/8 BC).

²²See e.g. Parker 1996, 76 and 95-96, who claims that the Athenian Thargelia had undergone a major reshaping and expansion at the end of the 6th century BC. Whether these changes pertain to the *pharmakos* ritual itself is hard to judge. H.W. Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians* (London 1977) 147, for instance, does not believe that the *pharmakos* ritual was still practised in 5th-century Athens.

²³Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48.

²⁴Though it is debated if this had been so originally and if this was Delian Apollo or Pythian Apollo. The Thargelia was firmly placed in an Apollonian context by Ister who discusses the festival in his *Epiphanies of Apollo* (Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48). See also Hesych. s.v. Θαργήλια: Ἀπόλλωνος ἑορτή; Plu. *Symp.* 8.1.2 (*Mor.* 717D). Note that Hesychius describes the Thargelia, but does not mention the expulsion of a

crops have fully ripened²⁵. For this reason scholars call the Thargelia a pre-harvest festival. The name Thargelia derives from the offerings, *thargeloi*²⁶, that were carried in a procession to the temple of Apollo on the 7th of Thargelion. Typical ancient Greek festival events, such as musical contests²⁷, took also place on this day.

Whether the *pharmakos* ritual officially belonged to the Thargelia, on the sixth of Thargelion, or took place as a sort of preliminary ritual right before the Thargelia proper, cannot be established with certainty²⁸. Due to these uncertainties, the *pharmakos* ritual is often discussed in the context of the Thargelia, but in relative isolation of the second day. However, the alliance of the ritual with the Thargelia is hardly remarkable in light of the festival's character at large and deserves some further exploration.

Most ancient festivals have long been interpreted from an agricultural perspective. This is not surprising and certainly not inappropriate, as agriculture was of the highest priority to any pre-industrial human being. The difficulty with theories informed by this perspective is that every single element of each ritual was interpreted with respect to agriculture and fertility. It was fertility at all costs. More recent interpretations have turned away from agriculture. In his analysis of the Thargelia, Parker for instance shifts the emphasis as follows: "The scapegoats were not, to our knowledge, led among the crops, and they were said to purify the city and not the fields. ... [A]nd Apollo, honorand of the rites at Athens, was a god more

pharmakos. On the whole, the Apolline context of the second day is much more certain than that of the first day. Nevertheless the involvement of Apollo at the first day is generally assumed. See Hesych. s.v. Θαργήλια for the whole month being sacred to Apollo.

²⁵See Hes. *Op.* 383-384 on the precise time to begin the harvest: when the Pleiades start to rise, which must be around the 19th of May, see also Nilsson 1906, 113.

²⁶A term of uncertain origin which might have referred to either a *Panspermia* (a pot full of kinds of corn and vegetables boiled together), fruits in general or bread baked with first-fruits. See Crates ad Athen. 3.114A; *EM* 443.20; Hesych. s.v. θάργηλος. See for the procession also Dem. 21.10. According to some sources (for instance schol. Ar. *Eq.* 729) the *eiresione*, a branch with wool, dried fruits, cakes and oil-flasks was carried around in the neighbourhoods and hung up at the doors, while a song was sung. See Mannhardt 1884, 214-218 and Nilsson 1906, 36-39. Contra: Deubner 1932, 188-192.

²⁷There were musical contests and competitions in hymn-singing between choruses of young boys and men. It has also been suggested that during the Thargelia new fire was brought home from Delphi (Parker 1983, 26). According to Parthenius, the Milesian Thargelia included a drinking bout of undiluted wine and the expenditure of the costliest things (Parthen. 9.5).

²⁸There is only one source that firmly places the *pharmakos* ritual within the Thargelia festival: Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48. Diogenes Laertius' remark on the Athenians purifying their city on the 6th of *Thargelion* can be explained in either way (D.L. 2.44 = Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 fr. 34 = T. 50).

concerned with purification than farming. Concentration with the harvest obscures the more general sense in which the Thargelia was for Athens a festival of purification and renewal”²⁹.

However, this should not imply that the agricultural perspective on the Thargelia must be abandoned entirely. Its agricultural context is evident, both in its timing and symbolism, especially that of the second day. The question is, rather, how far one should go in trying to explain the whole festival, or all ritual features from this point of view. As Parker already noted, the involvement of Apollo³⁰ and the focus on the city, at least in Athens, seem to enlarge the frame of reference beyond agriculture and fertility. To complicate even further, it may well be possible to attribute both an agricultural and a non-agricultural meaning to one and the same element.

The timing of the Thargelia is revealing: the Thargelia was a pre-harvest festival, a festival marking an important turning point in the agricultural year, taking place on the verge of affluence or disaster³¹. One may range the Thargelia among those festivals of transition, during which the anxiety about the prospective harvest is acted out, and thus turned away and overcome³².

If one accepts this agricultural-functional perspective on the Thargelia, the festival may be compared in character and atmosphere with the festival discussed before, the Abderian Calends of Ianuarius. Whereas the Abderian festival can be seen as a festival of transition, of suspense, of *caesura* and renewal of the *cultural* year, the Thargelia is one of transition in the *agricultural* year. Both festivals deal with a *krisis*, a turning point, either in the cultural or in the agricultural year. Prosperity is just around the corner, but so is chaos. By ritually creating a way to deal with this *krisis*, its inherent danger and threat can be turned away³³. Evidently, on the phenomenological level there may be many differences, even among the various

²⁹Parker 1983, 25-26. See also Hughes 1991, 140-141.

³⁰On the involvement of Apollo in this context, see also Versnel 1993, 289-334, esp. 309-313. Bremmer 1983, 319 stresses the role of Apollo, esp. Apollo Delius, in seasonal renewal and the initiation of boys. Hughes 1991, 140 rather points to the Apollo's connections with purification and with disease and its prevention and cure. See also Burkert 1985, 145-147; Nilsson 1955, vol. 1, 538-544; Parker 1983 25, 275-6, and 332-51.

³¹See for a similar view Bremmer 1983.

³²See for this type of festival Versnel 1993, 119f with references. See also Versnel 1993, 300 n.37 for the Thargelia.

³³Compare Bremmer 1983, who reasons in a similar vein.

Thargelia festivals. However, in character and atmosphere, they can all be regarded as rituals of transition.

To round off this section, several conclusions can be drawn. In the first place the difference between the testimonia regarding the circumstances that gave rise to the *pharmakos* ritual cannot be explained by dismissing part of the evidence as fantasy, nor by pointing to local variations. The sources simply do not allow such conclusions. Secondly, as for the evidence itself, it has been shown that several sources span a bridge between these two positions. Some for instance refer to an *annual* occasion on which the ancients dealt with misfortunes, such as pestilence. Thirdly, a closer study of the annual festivals points to a similar conclusion. A turning-point in the (agri-)cultural year involves a disruption of the normal order, a *krisis*: affluence and prosperity are at hand, but chaos and disaster lurk around the corner, too. On these fixed occasions, a place and time is ritually created to deal with this anxiety, and to re-establish order. The various circumstances that are claimed to have given rise to the *pharmakos* ritual thus reveal consistency to a considerable extent. Whether ills have arrived in the form of hunger, plague and pestilence or can be expected to arrive any moment, a standardised action pattern (and even a victim at some places) to respond to such a crisis was available. These necessary measures to be taken in both types of situations can be, albeit anachronistically, referred to as crisis management.

C. THE VICTIM

In this paragraph the backgrounds of those performing the ritual role of *pharmakos* will be discussed, as well as their number and gender. This concerns what might be called the original status of the *pharmakos*, in distinction to his ritual status. This distinction is important, though it should not be forgotten that in the description the latter might influence the former, as the special status of the ritual victims may be symbolically reflected in the description of the candidate-*pharmakoi*. All the same, we still should take the evidence at face value first.

Regarding the number of the ritual victims, information is not unequivocal. Some testimonia refer to one *pharmakos* some refer to two victims, while others

simply speak of *pharmakoi* in the plural³⁴. The cases where one *pharmakos* is mentioned may refer to the actual number of ritual victims during one performance of the ritual. However, they may also refer generically to the *pharmakos* as such, without making any claim about the actual number. The same type of problem can occur in testimonia that mention *pharmakoi* in the plural. Do they refer to the total of victims of successive years or to two or more victims performing the ritual role of *pharmakos* at the same time? Besides, quite some testimonia derive from a rhetorical context, which has, evidently, its own claims on reality³⁵. With regard to Leucas, Abdera and Massilia there is little doubt: only one ritual victim at the time is attested. On the basis of a few testimonia it may be assumed that in Athens two *pharmakoi* functioned simultaneously at the Thargelia³⁶. Scholia commenting on Athenian practice, however, mention only one victim³⁷. Gebhard nevertheless concludes that the doubling of victims was a typical Athenian innovation³⁸. The basis for this conclusion however is rather small. Besides, it requires ingenious argumentation³⁹ and a rejection of some scholia and late comments. The maximum we can conclude is that the *pharmakos* ritual had, at most, two protagonists, while in some places the actual number is known to have been one. Beyond that anything remains hypothetical.

Most likely, the victims have always been men. There is only one testimonium, a gloss by Hesychius, that refers to a woman: “*pharmakoi*: purificatory ones, who purify the cities all around, a man and a woman”⁴⁰. This is usually taken to be an error, but it cannot be dismissed out of hand. Helladius claims for Athens that of the two male *pharmakoi*, led for the sake of purification, one was on behalf of the

³⁴Interestingly, Hipponax refers to both one *pharmakos* and *pharmakoi* in the plural. See for one: Hippon. frs. 6 (Degani) = T. 2, 27 (Degani) = T. 3 and 30 (Degani) = T. 6, for more than one: Hippon. frs. 28 (Degani) = T. 4 and 29 (Degani) = T. 5.

³⁵E.g. Ar. *Eq.* 1404-1405 = T. 42; Dem. 25.80 = T. 47; Lys. 6.53 = T. 46.

³⁶Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48 (if this source indeed refers to Athens) and Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49. See also e.g. schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136c (*SA* I, II) = T. 41.

³⁷E.g. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34.

³⁸Gebhard 1926, 32, see also U. Pestalozza, ‘Le Thargelie Ateniesi’, *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 6 (1930) 232-272 and 7 (1931) 59-93, at (1930) 259; Weber 1925, 233.

³⁹One has to get rid of for instance Hippon. fr. 28 (Degani) = T. 4 and fr. 29 (Degani) = T. 5.

⁴⁰Hesych. s.v. φαρμακοί = T. 11.

men, one on behalf of the women⁴¹. Hughes therefore assumes that Hesychius is referring to Athenian practice⁴². However, Hesychius refers to cities (plural), and in his other remarks mainly relies on Ionian evidence⁴³. On the other hand, we do not have any Ionian hint of female protagonists in the ritual⁴⁴. Whether Helladius and Hesychius refer to the same practice must remain inconclusive. The gender issue can therefore not be settled with certainty. But the evidence of female involvement is slight enough to assume that the victim was usually male.

Many sources are silent about the original status of these male victims. They neutrally describe them as “man”, or “someone (of the citizens)”⁴⁵. However, if they provide any further information about the original status of the victims at all, this is, according to ancient standards, invariably negative, such as “a man who was more ill-featured than all the others”, “the meanest and physically disabled”, “the most hateful and wretched one of the city”, “the ugliest of all or someone who had no relative”, “some people of very low birth and poor and useless ones”⁴⁶. All these details are provided by late scholiasts⁴⁷. Must they therefore be regarded as late contributions to the *pharmakos* lore? Possibly, though earlier, albeit indirect, references indicate that they seem to be not wide of the mark⁴⁸.

With regard to the selection of the victim, there is little specification. The sources referring to the poor and ugly just state that the victim was fetched, set apart,

⁴¹Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49.

⁴²Hughes 1991, 246 n.51.

⁴³See for Ionian information in Hesychius Hesych. s.v. κροαδισίτης = T. 9 and Hesych. s.v. κροαδίας νόμος = T. 10 (for instance the beating with fig branches and the fig melody).

⁴⁴On the contrary, if it was so that the victim was beaten on his penis, as may be deduced from a verse by Hipponax (Hippon. fr. 30 (Degani) = T. 6), the *pharmakos* must have had one.

⁴⁵See e.g. Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467a = T. 17 and schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467b = T.18; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467c = T. 19 and schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467f = T. 22.

⁴⁶See e.g. Tz. *Chil.* 5, 731, part of T. 13; schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 30; Tz. schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 31; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454e = T. 35; Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136c = T. 41.

⁴⁷See Hughes 1991, 242 n.13.

⁴⁸See e.g. Ar. *Ran.* 730-733 = T. 29: “... both strangers and red-haired and worthless men, sons of worthless people, we use for everything. Those who came last, whom the city in the past would not have employed easily even as *pharmakoi*”. The reference is indirect and only illustrates the negative image of the *pharmakos*, already at the time of Aristophanes. The ‘in the past’ is ambiguous: did the city use this riff-raff in the past or was the entire *pharmakos* ritual something from the past? The strangers may live in Athens, but are, like ‘those who came last’, not real Athenians, who emphasise their autochthony.

taken or seized. However, four testimonia, two on the Massilian custom, two on Abdera, claim that a poor man “offered himself”, “was enticed by rewards to sell himself for this”, or, twice, merely that the victim was “bought”⁴⁹. The first two presuppose a free status, the last may refer to a slave, but not necessarily. The first two, or all four, testimonia refer to a voluntary victim. Finally, there is one source, describing a *katapontismos*, a throwing into the sea of a victim, at Leucas, which claims that “someone lying under a charge” was kept for the occasion⁵⁰.

If this evidence is taken at face value, what can be said about the suitability of these people to become the protagonists in the *pharmakos* ritual? First, it should be noted that all these persons belonged to the community. Uglier, poorer, meaner than their fellow-citizens indeed, but taken from their midst, or even voluntarily offering themselves. The victims apparently must have had a place within the community in order to be cast out as *pharmakoi*. Secondly, they share another feature: though on the one hand belonging to the community, they are at the same time explicitly disqualified from normality, too. This disqualification is either expressed in terms of physical features (being ugly or red-haired), or in economic terms (extreme poverty), or in social terms (someone without relatives, or no real citizen). Apparently, the victims were both insiders *and* outsiders⁵¹.

Older interpretations of the *pharmakos* ritual, preoccupied with magic and evolution, have not paid much attention to the original status of the victim. Gebhard however found a way to fit the ugliness within his larger two-staged interpretation of the ritual. According to him, the ancient Greeks at first considered the ugliness an apotropaic element, but later they regarded it as a natural asset that facilitated the transference of evil onto the victim⁵².

From a functionalist perspective, it can be argued that the low status and appalling physique of the victims reveal the underlying group-mechanisms at work. Just as ethological experiments have shown that the bird who is painted black among his white fellow-birds will be cast out⁵³, the most ugly member of a group of human

⁴⁹Massilia: Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petr. fr.1 = T. 25 and Lact. Plac. *Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 10, 793 = T. 26. Abdera: *Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24 and schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467e = T. 21.

⁵⁰Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27.

⁵¹For a similar view see Kearns 1990, esp. 335-336.

⁵²Gebhard 1926, 80-81 and 106.

⁵³See for these experiments and the theory applied in cultural studies Baudy 1980, Burkert 1979 and Fehling 1974.

beings is bound to be the one expelled, if conditions require such action. “Hacking at the outsider is a well-known group-reflex”, according to these ethologists⁵⁴.

In the same vein, but more focused on ethics than on actual primate behaviour, a second consideration can be made. It can also be argued that these negative features served, in retrospect, to legitimise the selection and removal of members of one’s own community: to expel the lowest-born, the poorest or the ugliest might be less questionable.

Finally, more in a symbolic line of thought, disqualifications from normality such as these, might be read as mirroring, or foreshadowing the *ritual* status of the victims. Hence, the ambiguous status of these victims, both belonging and not belonging to the community, therefore both insiders and outsiders, may also mirror something about the *ritual* status of the *pharmakoi*.

The following conclusions can be drawn with regard to the victim in the *pharmakos* ritual. In the first place, the testimonia do not agree about the number of victims. There were either one or two victims involved in a *pharmakos* ritual. For some places, such as Abdera, Leucas and Massilia, the evidence unequivocally refers to one victim. In Athens there may have been two *pharmakoi*. Secondly, the victims were predominantly, or exclusively, male. Thirdly, in the descriptions of the original status and selection of the victims two features stand out. On the one hand, the victims-to-be were part of the community, on the other hand they are described as riffraff, as ugly, poor and worthless beings on the fringe of society. The latter may be explained from an ethological perspective or in terms of social legitimation. At a more general level, the slightly ambiguous status of the victim may be explained in the light of a new status the victims were to receive in the course of the ritual.

D. FOOD

About the actual ritual procedures there is much to say, and little to establish. A variety of elements are mentioned by two or three sources and a few details are given by one single testimonium only. One of the relatively well attested procedures is the ritual feeding of the *pharmakos*.

⁵⁴Burkert 1979, 70. In the accompanying note Burkert refers to I. Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *Liebe und Hass: Zur Naturgeschichte elementarer Verhaltensweisen* (Munich 1970) and K. Lorenz, *Das sogenannte Böse: Zur Naturgeschichte der Aggression* (Vienna 1963) 155-158.

Both Athenian and Ionian sources as well as testimonia from elsewhere refer to some kind of ritual meal or even a temporary maintenance of the victim. This is unlikely to be a late invention, as Hipponax already mentions the specific food the *pharmakoi* were fed on. Inevitably, details vary.

The aim of this section is not so much to try to determine the local roots of the variants, but to explore ways to understand this ritual element in its context. First the sources that refer to meals, food or feeding are discussed in some detail. Secondly, attention is paid to interpretations that have been put forward by modern scholars. Finally, one interpretative perspective that proves particularly useful is further explored: a semiotic reading of the specific foodstuffs of the victim's ritual meal. Cheese, dried figs and barley bread turn out to be substantial food for thought.

Tzetzēs and Hipponax report that the victims were treated to cheese, dried figs and barley bread⁵⁵. They ate on the spot, in the course of the ritual proceedings, as in Abdera, where the *pharmakos* had been 'enjoying an abundant meal' before he was cast out. The Massilians had a more elaborate practice. They fed their victim during an entire year on especially pure food⁵⁶. A scholion on Aristophanes mentions a comparable practice at Athens, and reports that "the Athenians fed some poor, useless people of low birth until a situation of crisis necessitated their sacrifice"⁵⁷. Another hint to the keeping or the ritual feeding of the *pharmakoi* is provided by Aristides who first quotes Aristophanes on employing people as *pharmakoi*, and then proceeds by suggesting that his enemies should be dealt with in the same way, "to expel them after having nourished them"⁵⁸.

Two passages from Aristophanes' *Knights* require closer attention. At one point in the play *Demos*, the personification of the people, says: "and in return I ask you to the Prytaneum and to the seat, where that *pharmakos* was"⁵⁹. The 'you' in these verses refers to Paphlagon, who stands for Cleon, and *pharmakos* might be no

⁵⁵Hippon. fr. 28 (Degani) = T. 4; Tz. *Chil.* 5.734, part of T. 13; Ar. *Eq.* 1404-1405 = T. 42. See however the qualification 'dry to hunger' (Hippon. fr. 30 (Degani) = T. 6) which is difficult to place into this context. It might not relate to the *pharmakos* at all.

⁵⁶Abdera: *Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24. See also schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467f = T. 22. Massilia: Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petron. fr. 1 = T. 25; Lact. Plac. *Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 10, 793 = T. 26.

⁵⁷See schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136c = T. 41. See also schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136a = T. 40.

⁵⁸Aristid. *Or.* 3.684 = T. 51. Evidently, it is hard to tell whether Aristides here hints at the Athenian habit, most suitable in the context of Aristophanes, or uses his own Ionian (local) knowledge.

⁵⁹Ar. *Eq.* 1404-1405 = T. 42.

more than a term of abuse here. The Prytaneum, the symbolic centre of the community, housed the public hearth and the communal dining-room for official hospitality. The association between the *pharmakos* and the Prytaneum may be wholly dependent on Cleon's honorary position⁶⁰. There is another possibility though, as the Prytaneum was the usual place where people who were either entertained or kept by the state were fed⁶¹. Interestingly, although the evidence to sustain this link between *pharmakos* and Prytaneum is far from solid, it has been taken for granted lately, that the Athenian *pharmakos* was fed at the Prytaneum⁶². In this view, the strength of the comparison lies precisely in Aristophanes' playing upon the double function of the Prytaneum, housing both *pharmakoi* and honorary guests. A subtle way of abusing indeed, for the comparison with this ritual victim whose fate was expulsion, suggests a similar end to Cleon's career.

A second passage from the same play by Aristophanes deserves attention because of one controversial term. Scholiasts trying to explain the Chorus' words "you feed them as *demosioi*", disagree whether these *demosioi* refer to *pharmakoi* or to public animal victims⁶³. These animal victims, *demosia*, were fed on state land in anticipation of their sacrifice and lived in a sort of 'in-between' in time and space; they were already consecrated and could move around freely and graze undisturbed

⁶⁰Cleon had been awarded with the *sitesis*, the honor of life-long maintenance in the Prytaneum that could be granted to very successful generals, see M.J. Osborne, 'Entertainment in the Prytaneion at Athens', *ZPE* 41 (1981) 153-170. In the *Knights*, first staged in 424 BC, Aristophanes has several references to this honour: see Ar. *Eq.* 167f, 281f (with schol.), 575f, 709, 766 (with schol.).

⁶¹To dine at the Prytaneum was, as is well known, a distinctive honour in Athens, in classical times especially reserved for foreign guests, citizen honorands and the Eleusinian priest or the descendants of the tyrannicides. See S.G. Miller, *The Prytaneion: its Function and Architectural Form* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1978). There are a few hints in Phot./*Sud.* s.v. *προδικασία* that persons charged of homicide lived at the Prytaneum for three months until their trial was over, but the dating and the historicity of this information is difficult to establish, see D.M. MacDowell, *Athenian Homicide Law in the Age of the Orators* (Manchester 1963) 36-37.

⁶²Bremmer 1983, 313.

⁶³Ar. *Eq.* 1131-1140 = T. 39 and scholia (T. 40 and T. 41). See Deubner 1932, 185; Harrison 1922³, 102; esp. Hughes 1991, 150 and Nilsson 1906, 106. Hughes points out that if the *demosioi* had been animals, they would have been denoted as *demosia* (neuter). The correct explanation according to Hughes is that the *demosioi* were persons supported by the state, such as public slaves and servants of various sorts (comp. Ar. *Lys.* 436; *Lys.* 30.2; *Lys.* 30.5; *LSJ* s.v. *δημόσιος*). These may have included *pharmakoi* as well, although the last verse (esp. the dining) makes one hesitant to take the reference too literally, as Nilsson 1906, 106 had already claimed: "... die gehässige Pointe ist der Vergleich der Demagogen mit Todeswürdigen, das übrige freiere Ausmalung".

on a special plot of land⁶⁴. They were set apart, let loose, *aphetoi*⁶⁵. Whether the scholia are right or not in their explanation of the term in this particular context, the discussion shows that both the *pharmakoi* and sacrificial animals were kept, at public expense. As we shall see, these animals awaiting sacrifice, may provide an interesting parallel for the *pharmakoi* at the level of interpretation.

Attempts to interpret this ritual feeding have produced various theories of the phenomenon. Early interpretations vary between ‘Abschiedsmahlzeit’ (farewell dinner), ‘Henkersmahlzeit’ (last meal) and the offering of food to the deity of the harvest to obtain prosperity⁶⁶. From a more practical point of view, some scholars claim that for the very poor the prospect of good food must have been an ample compensation for their victimisation. Or, in a similar vein, that it must have fostered their willingness. Others assert that the food was provided to be consumed by the expelled ones ‘on the road’⁶⁷. More recently, in an attempt to grasp the rationality of the ritual action, Schlesier has suggested that victims in expulsion rituals in general were presented with good food and festive decorations, in order to preclude their return and revenge⁶⁸. As is usual with this type of interpretation, it is difficult to verify or falsify.

Burkert, in line with his overall approach of ritual, emphasises another aspect: “It is clearly essential that the creature to be driven out be first brought into intimate contact with the community, the city: this is the sense of the gifts of food which are constantly mentioned”⁶⁹. A first objection against this interpretation regards the use of the word ‘constantly’ here, for this is too much of a generalisation. More

⁶⁴Compare the sacrificial victims, oxen, in Magnesia at the Meander (*LSAM* 32: ‘for the well-being of the city’ an annual ritual was performed. The best possible bull was dedicated to Zeus and maintained to be sacrificed six months later) and on Cos (*LSCG* 151A in which the sacrificial oxen is carefully chosen from among the finest bulls around and kept overnight in order to be sacrificed to Zeus on the next day).

⁶⁵*LSJ* s.v. ἄφετος. See Pl. *Criti.* 119d: “It was customary to rear certain animals and let them roam free in temple-precincts until the time of sacrifice”. See also Aesch. *Eum.* 304, which seems to allude to this habit as well: “fattened up and consecrated for me” (as a sacrificial victim) (ἐμοὶ τραφεῖς τε καὶ καθιερωμένος). See further Burkert 1983, 16 and references.

⁶⁶Gebhard 1926, 61 (*captatio benevolentiae*), 82, 88. That at least was the original idea behind the offering according to Gebhard. In later times, Gebhard claims, the offering of food was not understood anymore, and in fact seemed out of place (Gebhard 1926, 107).

⁶⁷W. den Boer, *Private Morality in Greece and Rome. Some Historical Aspects (Mnemosyne Suppl. 57)* (Leiden 1979) 129. As a picnic: Deubner 1932, 196.

⁶⁸Schlesier 1990, 38-41, without directly referring to the *pharmakos* ritual, but to no other ritual example either.

⁶⁹Burkert 1985, 83.

important, however, is that Burkert ignores that the *pharmakos* might well have eaten in isolation. There is at least no source hinting at any actual interaction between the *pharmakos* and the community. Ancient Greek culture was so permeated with community-binding eating and drinking, that ritual eating in isolation must have been meaningful. The more so if it occurred in the Prytaneum, the communal dining hall. Eating alone must have been one of the ultimate signs of exclusion, the typical fate of the outsider⁷⁰. However, without an explicit reference that the victim ate alone, it remains unwise to put too much emphasis on its symbolic value in the context of the *pharmakos* ritual. However this may be, the evidence does not comply with Burkert's reading of the ritual feeding as a moment of intimate communal contact.

More recently, scholars have stressed the positive, valued side of the *pharmakos*-figures on the basis of these ritual meals. Bremmer for instance notes:

For this reason the scapegoat was always treated as a very important person. In Massilia he was kept by the state – a treatment usually reserved for very important people – for one year and then chased from the city, dressed in holy clothes. In Abdera he was treated to an excellent dinner before chased away. In Athens, too, he was kept by the state, and in the end led out of the city in fine clothes⁷¹.

Unfortunately, most other scholars have hardly paid any attention to the ritual feeding of the *pharmakos*⁷². There are, however, a few more observations to be made, especially if one is willing to take parallel cases of ritual feeding into account. The scholarly discussion of the term *demosioi* evoked a comparison with animal victims for sacrifice. In their case, should their feeding be regarded as a means to buy off feelings of guilt on the part of the sacrificial community? Or, rather, as an attempt to avoid the revenge of the returning dead animal? Or as a last public effort to make the animal the fattest sacrificial victim ever, to the greater glory of the receiving god and the tastier enjoyment of the sacrificial community? The question can never be answered with certainty. From a semiotic perspective, however, this public feeding may be considered to be a sign of the ritual status of these victims: singled out for a public purpose, consecrated, not yet sacrificed, but already transferred to the domain of the god, where they roam freely until their ill-fated hour has come.

⁷⁰See e.g. Orestes in Eur. *IT* 947-960; Phanod. *FGrHist* 325 fr. 11. See also Bremmer 1994, 46-48 on the reversal of normal practices as a negative ritual marker.

⁷¹Bremmer 1983, 305; see also Kearns 1990, 335.

⁷²See e.g. Hughes 1991 and Parker 1983.

Pharmakoi were, evidently, not eaten by the community, and, according to part of the source-material, they were expelled, not sacrificed. Nevertheless, there remains sufficient ground for comparison. With regard to the suggestion that the public feeding of the sacrificial animal signalled the special status of the victim, there is evidence in support of a comparable argument about the *pharmakos*. The various scholia on Ovid's *Ibis* and the *Diegesis* on Callimachus' account of Abdera use many equivalent terms to express the same. Ovid uses the term *devotus* for the ritual victim, thus describing his ritual status. Three of the six scholiasts commenting on the verse repeat the term, one of them referring to Callimachus as the source for his knowledge⁷³. This scholiast also elucidates the term *devotum* by adding 'someone they were keeping on that day'. The *diegesis* on Callimachus does not mention a Greek equivalence of *devotus*, if this exists at all, but does refer to this 'keeping', namely the victim 'enjoying an abundant meal'⁷⁴. This suggests that the public feeding may be interpreted as a prerogative and a marker of the victim's status, which in Latin apparently would be termed *devotus*.

Ritual meals may therefore be regarded as markers of a special status. The ingredients of the ritual meals may be approached in a similar way. The victim was fed not on whatever leftovers were available, but on 'especially pure food', or, according to Hipponax and Tzetzes, on cheese, dried figs and barley bread. Why this particular food? Does it convey anything beyond calories?

It has been acknowledged for a while now, that food is at once nutrition, the stuff human beings live on, and a cultural object, with various non-food uses and associations, stuff we think with⁷⁵. The ancient Greeks themselves already used to distinguish and identify men in terms of food and eating customs⁷⁶. Although the individual connotations of cheese, dried figs and barley bread may vary slightly, they

⁷³*Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24; Ov. *Ib.* 467-468 = T. 16; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467b = T. 18, schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467e = T. 21 and schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467f = T. 22.

⁷⁴*Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24.

⁷⁵It is far from new to try to gain insight into a people's culture and mentalities on the basis of their diet, either through their recipes (Levi-Strauss in various publications, Vernant and Vidal Naquet 1981), their food taboos (e.g. Douglas 1966), the ingredients (e.g. R. Barthes, 'Pour une psycho-sociologie de l'alimentation contemporaine', *Annales ESC* 16 (1961) 977-986) or the way they eat (e.g. P. Schmitt-Pantel, *La cité au Banquet* [Rome 1992]). See P. Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge 1999) for a highly accessible introduction and further literature.

⁷⁶See e.g. the analyses of Herodotus by M. Rosellini and S. Saïd, 'Usages de femmes et autres nomoi chez les sauvages d'Hérodote. Essai de lecture structurale', *Annali della Scuola Normale superiore di Pisa* 8 (1978) 949-1005.

do show overlap in one important respect. Though certainly ranging among the most common ingredients of the daily ancient Greek diet, they all feature frequently in a comparable way in descriptions of other people, other times and other places. By exploring the specific connotations of cheese, dried figs and barley bread, something more might be found out about the symbolic status of the victim.

Cheese, *turos*, though a common ingredient of the ancient Greek diet, was not a specific marker of the Greek identity. This is different with societies or groups that are described in opposition to normal Greek culture. The most famous (and most malicious) cheese-eater was, undoubtedly, Polyphemos⁷⁷. Others, apart from the Cyclopes, who were *characterised* as cheese-eaters, were the Scythians and Pythagoreans⁷⁸. Whether in a mythical, historical or social context, these three groups were all viewed by the ancient Greeks as outsiders, “others”, leading a pastoral life, closer to nature than to Greek culture⁷⁹.

Cheese apparently had connotations that fitted such contexts of otherness. Otherness, to be sure, that did not necessarily involve a complete deviance from everything Greek⁸⁰. Nor was it entirely positive or negative⁸¹. Cheese carried a connotation of the pastoral, the simple, the pre-cultural in the eyes of the Greeks⁸². Yet to produce it required labour. It therefore belonged to civilised life as well, as civilised man works for his food. Cheese therefore carried connotations of both

⁷⁷Hom. *Od.* 9.219; Eur. *Cycl.* 136.

⁷⁸Alexis in Athen. 4.161d = fr. 201 Kassel-Austin (and dried figs); Hdt. 4; Nic.Dam. *FGrHist* 90 fr. 104 = Stob. *Flor.* 3.1, 200 (Hense and Wachsmuth 1894).

⁷⁹See G. Losfeld, ‘Tyrophagie religieuse et mystique’, *B.Ass.Budé* 36 (1977) 257-277. Compare the initiatory context of cheese-stealing at Sparta (Xen. *Rep. Lac.* 2.9). See also Calame 1990, 326: “Quant au fromage, associée à l’activité pastorale, non seulement il constitue un autre aliment de base dans la réalité du régime quotidien des Grecs, mais comme le lait, il est surtout caractéristique, dans la représentation hellène de la culture, de cet état intermédiaire entre état sauvage, Age d’or et civilisation qui est par exemple celui connu par les Cyclopes de L’Odyssée. Le fromage est donc le signe d’une première activité de la production alimentaire civilisée, encore susceptible de basculer du côté de la ‘nature’”.

⁸⁰For otherness as more than a static and bipolar concept, see e.g. the forthcoming dissertation by my Leiden colleague C.M. de Greef; N. Loraux, *Les expériences de Tirésias: le féminin et l’homme grec* (Paris 1989); Rossellini and Saïd 1978.

⁸¹As has been shown by various scholars, the peaceful purity of past ages and other people can in the Greek imagination easily veer or slip into the anti-cultural (and vice-versa). It is not necessary to decide whether Polyphemos was the only malicious Cyclops among a friendly breed or whether the status of the Scythians was entirely negative. For literature on the ambiguous Cyclopes, see Versnel 1993, 109 n.66. On utopian and dystopian sides of otherness in ancient Greek imagination, see Versnel 1993, 108-109 and below.

⁸²According to Posidonius the cheese-eating Mysians were a pious (*theosebeis*) and peaceful people (Posidon. ad Str. 7.3.3 (= C 296) = fr. 277a (Kidd)).

nature and the beginning of culture, could symbolically represent both, but did not belong exclusively to either of them.

What was true for cheese, was no less true for (dried) figs⁸³. Figs were indeed good ‘to think with’ in Antiquity⁸⁴. Just as cheese, the fig was not uncommon at all. However, in many descriptions of golden age-like affluence, the *ischades*, dried figs, play a dominant role⁸⁵. Mentoux attributes to the dried fig connotations of fertility, affluence and abundance⁸⁶. Burkert assigns to the fig a “breath of golden age from which reality must be rudely distinguished”⁸⁷.

The presence of the fig in the victim’s diet thus corroborates the observation that has been made about the ritual meal as a marker of contrast. As with cheese, this distinctness did not entirely deviate from the ancient Greek norm. For, even more

⁸³ Anyone starting to read either Athenaeus’ discussion of figs or Olck’s article in the *RE* will soon find his brain reeling from all the kinds and varieties of ancient Greek and Roman figs (see Athen. 3.74c-80e; Olck 1909). Not only do all regions have specific types of figs, but there are also other important distinctive aspects, such as male and female, wild and tame, black and white and non-edible and edible. The edible figs can be eaten either fresh (*sukon*) or dried (*ischas*). However, distinctions are blurred. Authors such as Athenaeus can refer to the *ischas* as a *sukon* (Athen. 3.75b). It is therefore impossible to distinguish sharply between the dried fig and the fresh fig and so they must be discussed together.

⁸⁴ This is nicely illustrated by the following fragment from Aristophanes’ *Farmers*: “Figs I plant - all kinds but the Laconian. For this one is a foe and given to autocratic ways. It would not be so little, did it not hate the common people violently” (Athen. 3.75.a = Ar. fr. 110 Kassel-Austin).

⁸⁵ According to Cratin. in Poll. 6.81 (fr. 390 Kassel-Austin) dried figs, *ischades*, were the main ingredients of their diet before the Athenians started to eat meat (see also *EM* 479.14 [ἰσχάς· ἀπὸ τῆς ἰσχύος· ἐπειδὴ πρὶν τὴν κρεωδοσίαν δοθῆναι τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις, ἐχρῶντο τῇ ἰσχάδι] and Plin. *NH* 23.121-122). For the connotation of affluence, see for example in the song accompanying the carrying around of the *eiresione*: “The *eiresione* brings figs and rich bread, honey in jars and oil to rub down, and a pitcher with strong wine to make you go to bed drunk”, according to Paus. in Eust. ad *Il.* 22, 496, p. 1283 [= *Sud.* s.v.]; Crates Hist. *FGrHist* 362 fr. 1. It cannot be accidental that Aristophanes’ *Plutus* is so lavishly provided with dried figs. The associations seem consistent, for in a third-century A.D. encomium on the (dried) fig, it is called ‘favourite food and delicacy of Hermes, ornament of the festival, sister to honey, delicacy of fortunate men, first fruit at sacrifices to the gods’ (*P.Oxy.* 17. 2084, not the only one in its kind). Compare also Lucian *Vit. Auct.* 19. This, however, does not mean that the negative side of these precultural connotation is wholly forgotten. A gloss in Hesychius for instance shows that dried figs were used to stigmatise the less civilised: “Fig-eater (ἰσχαδοφάγος)” was a pejorative reserved for the rural bumpkin (Hesych. s.v. κρεαδοφάγος: συκοφάγος, ἰσχαδοφάγος. σημαίνει δὲ καὶ τὸν ἀγροῦχον). Note again the ways in which the various categories of figs are referred to synonymically.

⁸⁶ Mactoux 1990/1991, 57: “Elles connotent dans l’imaginaire grec la fécondité, l’abondance, la richesse, tant au niveau des représentations mythiques qu’à celui des pratiques religieuses et profanes.”

⁸⁷ Burkert 1985, 83.

obviously than cheese, the fig was a powerful symbol of the transition of nature to culture, of the very first stage of ancient Greek civilisation. The fig was even said to be the first of cultivated fruits⁸⁸. For this reason, as one of Athenaeus' table companions remarks, "that is why they call the place where it was discovered the 'sacred fig tree' (*hiera suke*), while they call its fruit 'the Leader' (*hegeteria*), because it was the first cultivated fruit that was discovered"⁸⁹. The 'protocultural' fig thus both carried the connotations of the pure and simple life of past ages and was posited at the very beginning of ancient Greek culture and civilisation⁹⁰.

With regard to barley, comparable conclusions can again be drawn. Whereas barley was a common staple food in ancient Greece⁹¹, the *maza*, or barley cakes⁹², appear to have shared at least some of the pre- and protocultural connotations of cheese and figs: they feature in descriptions of an ideal rustic past, of peaceful plentiness and health⁹³. A telling golden age-image is that of huge barley cakes that

⁸⁸Athen. 3.74d (ἡγεμὼν τοῦ καθαρείου βίου τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐγένετο).

⁸⁹Athen. 3.74d; Paus. 1.37.2 does not speak of discovery, but of a gift. At the *Plynteria*, it was the custom to carry around dried fig paste, in memory of the discovery of the fig. The name of this paste ἡγητηρία (translated above as 'the leader') is telling. See the various explanations of the term in Phot. s.v. ἡγητηρία (ὅτι ἡμερου τροφῆς πρώτης ταύτης ἐγεύσαντο); Hesych. s.v. ἡγητηρία ("διὰ τὸ τοὺς αὐτόχθονας ἡμερον καρπὸν φαγεῖν πρῶτον τῶν σύκων"); Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* I.125, p. 1399, 30 (Stallbaum); *E.M.* 418,49 in which they invariably refer to the fig being the first of cultivated fruits. Athen. 3.74d (because it was the first cultivated fruit to be discovered).

⁹⁰See Calame 1990, 296-297; 301-308: "Légende et culte situent donc la figue au fondement même de la civilisation attique, en l'associant aussi bien à la saison de la récolte qu'aux premiers comportements civilisés. ... Figues fraîches et sèches, vin doux et olives, c'est la triade se trouvant fonder dans l'alimentation végétarienne la vie simple que dispense Déméter; vie d'autrefois à laquelle aspire Aristophane dans sa nostalgie utopique d'un paradis campagnard perdu". See e.g. Ar. *Pax* 571f. See also Mactoux 1990/1991, 69: "Ce fruit offert à Demeter, participe à la sphère céréalière, se situant à la limite du naturel et du civilisé."

⁹¹P. Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge 1999) 119 points out that in classical Athens the status of barley was still quite good, whereas in the course of the following centuries, it became an inferior cereal. This raises the question whether the symbolic potential of barley was also subject to change. However, one may also point out that, from the 4th century onwards, the idyllic and peaceful became more and more represented by the simple and rustic. Thus we may not only be confronted with cultural changes in the signifier and the signified, but also in the symbolic system itself. Obviously, this is an important caveat for those who apply the structural-semiotic method too rigorously.

⁹²T. Braun, 'Barley Cakes and Emmer Bread', in: J. Wilkins, D. Harvey and M. Dobson (eds.), *Food in Antiquity* (Exeter 1995) 25-37. According to Braun (p. 28) 'the ancient *maza* or barley cake was usually just meal made from roasted barley, kneaded with water, milk or oil and then eaten straight away without baking'.

⁹³"Let us turn to the house of a man of great power and outstanding, lasting fortune! (...) Plenty of Wealth will come in, and with Wealth, flourishing Joy and noble Peace. Let

have kneaded themselves⁹⁴. At the same time, barley was held to be the oldest cereal and thus occupied an important place at the beginnings of ancient Greek civilisation⁹⁵. Just as cheese and figs, barley can be called a ‘thresholdfood’, both partaking in the connotations of precultural life with its self-producing plentiness, and placed at the foundation of ancient Greek culture and civilisation.

Cheese, figs and barley bread thus appear to be not only common foodstuffs of rather low status, but also apt carriers of golden age-like connotations. They represent a pastoral diet, characteristic of good times past, and, concurrently, of people whom the ancient Greeks considered different from themselves. A difference that had both a utopian and a dystopian potential. Interesting and exemplary in this context is a passage from Plato’s *Republic* in which Socrates describes to Glaucon the nourishment for the inhabitants of his ideal city, including, among other ingredients, cheese, figs and ‘noble barley cakes’. Glaucon, however, regards the ingredients as far from ideal and protests against this frugal diet as ‘fodder for a city of pigs’⁹⁶. Here we see more explicit than before how the peaceful, healthy and rustic ideal which indeed includes the cheese, the figs and the barley cakes studied above, has a reverse side of low status, too.

Cheese, figs and barley cakes thus seem to confirm the earlier observation about the symbolic function of the ritual meal. From a structural-semiotic point of view, they mark the *pharmakos* as a different, an ‘other’ being. Whether this contrast signalled by the meal is positive or negative is impossible to say at this stage of the enquiry. Looking closer at the ingredients of the meal, a second observation can now be made. Not only do they evoke precultural connotations, they also appear to be powerful symbols of the transitional stage between nature and culture. They may therefore be named ‘thresholdfood’.

all bins be full, and the *maza* overflow the kneading-through” (according to [Ps] Hdt. *Vit. Hom.* 33 (Wilamowitz-Moellendorff) this song is called the *eiresione*). For these and other golden age-descriptions in which barley-cakes invariably feature, see the quotations from comic poets (e.g. Crates, Cratinus, Pherecrates, Telecleides, adding ‘there was peace overall’ and ‘men were fat in those days and every bit mighty giants’, and Metagenes) in Athen. 6.267e - 270.

⁹⁴Metagenes in Athen. 6.269f. = fr. 6 Kassel-Austin.

⁹⁵See e.g. D.H. 2.25.2: “and as we Greeks regard barley as the most ancient grain, and for that reason begin our sacrifices with barley-corns ...” and Artemid. 1.69: “On the other hand barley bread means good luck to everyone. There is a legend that barley bread was the first food that men received from the gods”. See also Plin. *NH* 18.72 and Porph. *de Abst.* 2.6.

⁹⁶Pl. *Rep.* 372bc.

Regarding the question of the purity of the food, referred to in the Massilian context, a few remarks must suffice. Figs could, apparently, be called ‘the guide to pure life’⁹⁷. However, it is most uncertain what is meant by this. The Loeb translator solves the problem by translating ‘the guide to *civilised* life’, striving after coherence with what follows (“and the first of cultivated fruits”). Pure and civilised life need not be identical, however. It may also be said of initiands for example, that they lead a pure life⁹⁸. Therefore, one may as well argue that pure food belongs to a simple life, a life closer to nature than to culture. Cheese, figs and barley bread meet these qualifications. Purity, however, is a concept that is too complex and too bound up with context to be reduced to one specific description⁹⁹. The identity of pure food must remain inconclusive here, although it need not conflict with the foodstuff discussed.

To round off this section, several conclusions can be drawn. Various sources relate that the *pharmakoi* were fed once or for a longer period, even for a whole year, on public costs. Some scholars suggest the feeding of the victim was a propitiation, others claim that it must have functioned as a welcome compensation for the poor who volunteered as victims. One testimonium gave rise to a comparison with animal victims for sacrifice. From that perspective, the feeding of animals may be considered a last attempt to fatten the victim as much as possible, more valuable for the gods, most edible for the sacrificial community. However, as the *pharmakos* did not end up at the spit, this theory is of little use in the context of the *pharmakoi*. From a structural-semiotic perspective, however, the feeding of sacrificial animals can also be read as a prerogative, a sign of status: though they are already consecrated, they are still alive. They have left their former dwellings and are transferred to the domain of the god. Their necessary maintenance corresponds to their new status. This may hold true both for the sacrificial animals and the *pharmakoi*. The term *devotus*, used in a few Latin testimonia, supports this view.

From a similar perspective, the ingredients of the ritual meal confirmed this hypothesis: cheese, figs and barley bread can be read as ritual markers of otherness, as contrast signals, as they recur in descriptions of other times, other people and other places. An otherness that is as yet unspecified, with a referential potential of both

⁹⁷Athen. 3.74d (ἡγεμὼν τοῦ καθαρείου βίου).

⁹⁸See Eur. *Cret.* fr. 472 (Kannicht).

⁹⁹See Parker 1983.

positive and negative connotations. If bread (*sitos*), mixed wine and cooked meat - besides being normal (albeit not all of them daily) food - as *markers* characterise Greek culture as Greek culture, so these three kinds of food - though belonging to the normal diet of the common Greek - as *markers* characterise the ‘otherness’ of pre- or protoculture. This ‘thresholdfood’ thus characterises the atmosphere of the ritual time and place, but perhaps most importantly, the ritual status of the victim, ‘who is what he eats’.

E. CLOTHES, BOUGHS AND NECKLACES

With the conclusions from the last section in mind, a discussion of the ritual outfit of the *pharmakos* is in order, as clothes might make a man, too. Evidence is scarce, again. Most sources are silent on the subject and the few that mention anything at all vary in every detail. For lack of evidence no general conclusions can be drawn. The details that are mentioned may nonetheless provide some insights.

From one of the fragments from Hipponax it has been inferred that the *pharmakos* must have been without clothes, naked to the bone; how else could he be beaten seven times on his penis¹⁰⁰? However, this is not a very compelling inference; one can think of a more concealed way to hit a penis. Moreover, with Hipponax one never knows whether he refers to actual practice or if his ‘malicious imagination’ is at work¹⁰¹. Although it may well be that the term *pharmakos* is employed merely as a term of abuse, the idea must have made sense to Hipponax’ audience. In recent scholarship, the verse from Hipponax is rarely paid attention to. Earlier scholars, however, especially those explaining all ritual elements from the perspective of fertility, put great emphasis on this beating: nothing more effective than a stimulating thrashing of the (naked) male organ¹⁰². Be that as it may, this does not necessarily involve a naked victim, nor is there any other evidence for the possible nudity of the ritual victim. On the contrary.

Three other testimonia require closer attention, as they contain information with regard to special clothes or attributes.

¹⁰⁰See Hippon. fr. 30 = T. 6 (ἐν δὲ τῷι θυμῷ). Tz. *Chil.* 5, 735, part of T. 13 and Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38.

¹⁰¹Bremmer 1983, 301.

In the first place, there is a gloss from the *Suda* elucidating a verse in Aristophanes in which the term *katharma* is used: “For the sake of purification of the city they remove someone *who was dressed up* (*estolismenon*), whom they called *katharma*”¹⁰³. *Stolizein* is a common ancient Greek term used in various contexts, with the primary sense of ‘to wear, to dress’. It does not really mean wearing just anything, but it has something official or special, ‘for the occasion’ to it, which is here rendered by ‘dressed up’. Military men were dressed in this sense, statues of gods could be dressed up, and so could priests and prophets¹⁰⁴. As the comment from the *Suda* pertains to the Athenian comedy writer Aristophanes, one might suppose that the information regards the Athenian victim in particular, or even exclusively. This may be too rash an inference, however. By the time of the *Suda*, Aristophanes’ verses had become common Greek heritage, and comments may have been drawn on a broad range of general knowledge.

More specific is the information on Massilia as provided by Petronius. He describes how the ritual victim was ‘decorated with boughs (*verbenis*) and sacred vestments (*vestibus sacris*)’¹⁰⁵. Although it is hard to tell what these sacred vestments looked like, it cannot be ruled out that they are comparable to the outfit referred to in the *Suda*. Noteworthy is the classification of the vestments as *sacred*. The *verbenae* also belong in this sphere. They are leafy branches from any kind of aromatic tree used in religious ceremonies or for medical purposes. If worn, they are put on as garlands or wreaths¹⁰⁶. These are, though used in a great variety of contexts in both ancient Greek and Roman culture, first and foremost a mark of exceptional status,

¹⁰²See for instance Gebhard 1926, 61; Mannhardt 1884, 123-124 and 132. See Cl. Bérard, ‘Pénalité et religion à Athènes. Un témoignage de l’imagérie’, *RA* 32 (1982) 137-150 for more speculations about the nudity of the victim.

¹⁰³*Sud.* s.v. κάθαρμα = Ar. fr. 686 (Kassel-Austin) = T. 44.

¹⁰⁴*LSJ* s.v. See also *RE* 11 (1921) 2106-2192 s.v. Kultus (Pfister), 2133 on *stolizein* (“Kultische Verkleidung Propheten und Zauberer”).

¹⁰⁵Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petr. fr. 1 = T. 25.

¹⁰⁶The *Fetiales* for example wore *verbenae*. A *verbenatus* is, according to the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (1981), someone “carrying ceremonial branches (crowned)” which denoted, according to the dictionary, a sacred function. In Suet. *Cal.* 27.2, someone who has offered himself on behalf of the emperor, a *devotus*, ordered his slaves “to drive him through the streets decked with sacred boughs and fillets, calling for the fulfilment of his vow, and finally hurl him from the embankment” (*verbenatum infulatumque votum reposcentes per vicos agerent, quoad praecipitaretur ex aggere*). Note that the same term *devotus* is used for the status of the annual victim in the Latin scholia on the passage on Abdera in Ovid. Apparently, the *verbenae* are fit for such people, too.

sometimes an emblem of purity, sometimes of great honour, often of consecration¹⁰⁷. A symposiast person was wreathed, a suppliant, a herald, a magistrate in (special) function, a ritual participant, and also the sacrificial victim¹⁰⁸.

Once again, elements in the *pharmakos* ritual remind one of the ritual preparation of animals for sacrifice¹⁰⁹. The person or animal thus decorated was temporarily, or definitely, withdrawn from the normal course of time and activity, and belonged to another sphere. Adding these *verbenae* to the sacred vestments, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the Massilian victim was consecrated, ritually made sacred¹¹⁰.

In the context of external appearances there is one last interesting detail from an account of the Athenian ritual by Helladius, transmitted by Photius¹¹¹. According to Helladius one of the two Athenian *pharmakoi* wore a string of black, the other of white dried figs (*ischades*) around the neck. Helladius himself explains this by pointing out that the former *pharmakos* was led on behalf of the men, the latter of the women. The ancient Greeks, however, fond of oppositions, may have read other dualities than the male-female opposition into the black and the white necklaces¹¹², as

¹⁰⁷See e.g. Parker 1983, 153.

¹⁰⁸See for all these instances and more esp. M. Blech, *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen (Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten 38)* (Berlin 1982); van Straten 1995, 161-162; Wachsmuth 1967, 90-91, on the 'Weihekraft des antiken Kranzes' and idem, 312ff. There are quite a few other studies on wreaths, to name some: L. Deubner, 'Die Bedeutung des Kranzes im klassischen Altertum', *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 30 (1933) 70-104; S. Eitrem, *Der Kranz - seine religiös-magische Bedeutung bei den Griechen und Römern, Serta Hoffilleriana* (1940); J. Köchling, *De coronarum apud antiquos vi atque usu (Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten 14.2)* (Giessen 1914). Someone wreathed should not be beaten, see Ar. *Plu.* 21 - something which cannot be guaranteed in case of the *pharmakos*. For other human victims thus wreathed see Eur. *IA* 1567 (Iphigeneia); Ar. *Nub.* 256f and Hdt. 7.197 on Athamas (see Chapters 3 and 4).

¹⁰⁹The similarity of the ritual adornment of the Massilian *pharmakos* and the usual treatment of animal victims for sacrifice has been noted before. Deubner 1932, 186 whose general interpretation of the *pharmakos* ritual has nothing to do with sacrifice (see Chapter 2 below) also notes the similarity of the ritual adornment of the victim in Massilia to sacrificial victims: "*Fast* (my italics, LK) sieht es so aus, als spielte hier der Opfergedanke herein im Sinne einer Darbringung an eine Gottheit, der ein solches Opfer genehm ist". For the adornment of sacrificial animals see Burkert 1985, 56; Van Straten 1995, 161-162, and also 43: "The fillets set the animal apart from the rest of the herd or the flock, marking it as *hieron*, (...)".

¹¹⁰Note that the 'especially pure food' discussed in the last section was also derived from the Massilian context and may be regarded as another element that underlines this consecrated status of the victim.

¹¹¹Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49.

¹¹²L. Weber, for example, suggests that in the eyes of the Greeks the white and black stood for the double nature of Apollo and the double character of the Thargelia, dark and light (Weber 1925, 245-247; contra: Deubner 1932, 197).

black and white were apt carriers of various opposite meanings¹¹³. Being antipodes, they could also function together as a sign of wholeness or totality in various contexts, whether social, religious or other¹¹⁴. It is too early to dwell on any alternative meaning of black and white in this context, but apparently, colours too, were good to think with.

In the past these fig-necklaces were readily interpreted as either cathartic or apotropaic amulets, pertaining to, for instance, fertility-magic¹¹⁵. From an agricultural perspective the necklaces were interpreted in connection with a fertility ritual of figs. In this view the male-female opposition was particularly stressed¹¹⁶. As usual, this type of interpretation can neither easily be refuted nor affirmed. What is clear, however, is that one must be cautious not to reserve agricultural symbols merely for agricultural practices, especially if the larger context is the Athenian *polis*.

Another way to deal with these necklaces also deserves attention. Above, the pre- and protocultural connotations of dried figs have already been discussed. They appeared to have an equivocal referential potential both to nature and to the beginnings of ancient Greek culture. It could be argued that the necklaces fulfil the same role as the ingredients of the ritual meal: they place the victims outside the normal order and symbolise their special status¹¹⁷.

¹¹³See for literature on black and white: *RE Suppl.* 5 (1931) 236-282 s.v. Hostia (Krause), 244ff; K. Meyer, *Die Bedeutung der weissen Farbe im Kultus der Griechen und Römer* (Freiburg 1927); G. Radke, *Die Bedeutung der weissen und der schwarzen Farbe in Kult und Brauch der Griechen und Römer* (Jena 1936); Stengel 1910, 151-152 and 187-190 (esp. on the [conflation of the] opposition black animals for Chthonic deities and white ones for Olympians). For the Pythagorean association of black with evil and white with good see D.L. 8.34. However, it seems more complicated than that: Compare Ar. *Ran.* 847f (a sacrifice of a black lamb in expectation of a tempest) with Hom. *Hymn.* 33, 8-11 (a sacrifice of white lambs in a storm to summon the Dioskouroi).

¹¹⁴Moulinier 1952, 97.

¹¹⁵Gebhard 1926, 100, though later 'no longer understood' (idem, 107). See also Schwenn 1915, 38: '... so sollen sie entweder selbst gegen dämonische Einflüsse geschützt werden, oder es soll verhindert werden, daß sich eine Unreinheit von ihnen aus weiter verbreitet', and Deubner 1932, 196-197 for the apotropaic use, without, however, the fertility context. For amuletic necklaces of magical herbs, see Pind. *Pyth.* 3. 51-53.

¹¹⁶See e.g. W.R. Paton, 'The *pharmakoi* and the Story of the Fall', *RA* 9 (1907) 51-57, at 51: "I regard it as an agricultural rite - the object of which was to promote the success of the practice known as caprification, i.e. fertilization of the fruit of the cultivated fig-tree by hanging on it, before the maturity of this fruit, that of the wild fig tree". See also L. Foxhall, 'Women's Ritual and Men's Work', in: R. Hawley and B. Levick (eds.), *Women in Antiquity. New assessments* (London and New York 1995) 97-110, at 109 n.32.

¹¹⁷Compare the necklaces of dried figs worn by the *Kanephoroi*, carrying the holy basket in the sacrificial processions, for which see e.g. Ar. *Lys.* 646. See also Bremmer 1983, 312 who follows a similar approach, but whose conclusions differ. Mactoux

Again, the structural-semiotic approach does not yield unequivocal results. This might be the consequence of the method itself: when elements are polyvalent and have different connotations in differing contexts, they appear less unequivocal in a general survey than they might be in each specific case. Closing the context usually helps to narrow down the possibilities. As a matter of fact, in the cases studied so far, it not only appeared that the connotations of the foodstuffs confirmed the otherness of the occasion and the person involved, but also that it could not be established whether this otherness was entirely negative or positive. On the contrary, the symbolism appeared to be ambivalent itself, whether natural and cultural at the same time, or simultaneously positive and negative, or, elaborated as it is here, both black and white.

This section on the ritual outfit has nonetheless produced some useful insights, although the source-material is indeed scarce. Whereas Hipponax has been taken to allude to the nudity of the victim, a few other sources rather mention a special outfit and some other attributes. What the *Suda* merely calls ‘dressing up’, is specified by Petronius as sacred clothes and boughs. It is difficult to tell precisely what this may have involved. However, the parallel with animal victims for sacrifice is again striking. On the basis of his outfit, the Massilian victim may be regarded as a consecrated human being. Without losing sight of the fact that this evidence pertains to the Massilian victim only, this inference concurs with earlier, comparable conclusions stressing the consecrated status of the victim. Finally, of the Athenian *pharmakoi* it is said that they wore black and white necklaces of dried figs. Though it is indeed so that necklaces had apotropaic functions in antiquity and strings of figs might have had (originally) agrarian connections, these fig necklaces may have become carriers of other than magical or agrarian symbolism, too. The protoculturality of these fig necklaces set the victim apart from his community in a sphere of otherness, comparable to the equivocal otherness evoked by the ingredients of the meal the *pharmakos* ate. Finally, the symbolic potential of black and white as a multipurpose frame for dualities has been emphasised.

1990/1991 points out that these protocultural connotations of dried figs, when activated in rituals of transition, may be credited with both/either an integrating and/or a separating value.

F. BEATING AND ITS TOOLS

According to Hipponax, Tzetzes and Hesychius the *pharmakos* was beaten, perhaps on his penis, with fig branches, squills and, according to Tzetzes, ‘other [branches] of wild [flora]’¹¹⁸. It may well be that this element in the ritual only belonged to the ritual practice of one or more Ionian communities, for no other testimonium claims that the victim was beaten. The aim of this section is to explore the role of beating in the context of the *pharmakos* ritual. The materials employed in the beating are also discussed, as they may be of significance. To be beaten is one thing, to be hit with branches of wild flora may be another.

Though not a central feature in the sources, the beating once took a prominent place in interpretations of the *pharmakos* ritual. In the late nineteenth century, when scholars were interested in folklore and popular customs, Mannhardt collected throughout Germany indigenous material on ‘der Schlag mit der Lebensrute’ (the thrashing with the rod of life), hoping this would help him understand ancient rituals. The beating of the victim in the *pharmakos* ritual thus received ample attention as ‘ein Analogon dieser den Mißwachs austreibenden Schläge’ (an analogous case of thrashing in order to expel crop failure)¹¹⁹. Mannhardt’s rod of life, but also his interpretation of the *pharmakos* ritual at large, has been extremely influential. The allusion that the victim was beaten on his penis easily fits in with the interpretation of fertility¹²⁰. The question whether the objective of the thrashing was positive, stimulating, or negative, expulsive, remained controversial¹²¹.

¹¹⁸Hippon. fr. 26 = T. 1; Hippon. fr. 6 = T. 2; Hippon. fr. 29 = T. 5; Hippon. fr. 30 = T. 6 and Hippon. fr. 95, 3-4 = T. 7 (if relevant at all); Tz. *Chil.* 5. 735-736, part of T. 13; Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38; Hesych. s.v. *κλαδισίτης* = T. 9 and Hesych. s.v. *κλαδίης νόμος* = T. 10. Julian alludes to a beating with wands (*θύσθλοις*) in his seventh speech, but it is unclear if this part of his comparison is a direct reference to the *pharmakos* ritual (Jul. *Imp. Or.* 7.209d = T. 52). For the possibility that the victim was hit on his penis, see again Hippon. fr. 30 = T. 6 (*ἐν δὲ τῷ θυμῷ*). Tzetzes unambiguously incorporated the element in his description of the ritual: Tz. *Chil.* 5, 735, part of T. 13 (*εἰς τὸ πέος*) and Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38 (*ἐς τὸ αἰδοῖον*). Tzetzes’ creativity in finding synonyms is noteworthy.

¹¹⁹Mannhardt 1884, 124f: “... die Umherführung des Wachstumsgeistes, der durch den Schlag mit der Lebensrute und andere Mittel von schädigenden Mächten befreit und zur Prokreation im nächsten Jahr befähigt werden sollte”. See also Gebhard 1926, 61.

¹²⁰Tz. *Chil.* 5, 735, part of T. 13 interprets the ambiguous verse by Hipponax (Hippon. fr 30 = T. 6 in an unequivocal way. He also claims that the victim was beaten seven times on his member (a statement based on the same fragment from Hipponax’ work). On the number seven, there is much to say. This detail is not very illuminating since it was a ritual number throughout the ancient world. In Greece it was especially connected with Apollo. Compare the fact that the Thargelia took place on the seventh day of the month *Thargelion*. As mentioned before, the reference is of uncertain bearing on the ritual.

Various parallel cases of ritual thrashing have further complicated the discussion¹²². It is, for instance, said of Pan that he was beaten with squills by youths at an Arcadian festival¹²³. This beating, too, has long been interpreted as a fertility-ritual¹²⁴. In this context one Roman ritual must be mentioned too, as it has often been drawn into the discussion, especially by the proponents of the fertility-school. During the Roman *Lupercalia*, [men and] women were whipped with leather strips. Plutarch explains this ritual as follows:

The Luperci are men who race through the city on the Lupercalia, lightly clad in loin-cloths, striking those whom they meet with a strip of leather. ... In fact they call

Besides, Apollo himself is a multi-faceted, all-round god, at home in many contexts, and I do not expect much help from him here in understanding the ritual beating on the basis of this reference. Therefore, I do not pay further attention to the detail.

¹²¹Much depended also on whether one interpreted the *pharmakos* as a fertility god or as the demon of infertility. For positive, stimulating effects, see Frazer 1913³; Gebhard 1926 and Mannhardt 1884, whose views are discussed in the next chapter. Harrison 1922³, 100 saw the promotion of the good only as a secondary consequence of the beating: "It must have been a matter of very early observation that beating is expulsive. You beat a bush, a bird escapes; you beat a garment, the dust comes out; you beat a man, the evil, whatever it may be, will surely come emerge. We associate beating with moral stimulus, but the first notion is clearly expulsive". Deubner 1932, 194, regarding the *pharmakos* merely as a vehicle of evil, focused on the particular part of the body the *pharmakos* was hit: "Das Zeugungsglied des *Pharmakos* soll unschädlich gemacht werden, damit sich das Übel, von dem er ganz durchsetzt, mit dem er gewissermassen identisch ist, das auf seine Kinder übergehen würde, nicht weiter verbreiten kann". Nilsson 1955², 108 in turn objected against Deubner's one-sidedness: "Hinwiederum sieht Deubner in dem *Pharmakos* nichts als das Reinigungsmittel, den Sündenbock, und versucht *das feierliche Schlagen* (my italics, LK) mit Zweigen, besonders auf das Zeugungsglied, ..., wegzuerklären". Nilsson's own suggestion, and the wider context in which this discussion should be placed, is dealt with in the next chapter.

¹²²For quite a list of parallels, see Graf 1985, 140 n.21.

¹²³Theocr. 7.106-108 with schol. The latter explains that the beating took place when there was not enough sacrificial meat at the festival. "A strident note of rustic simplicity", according to K.J. Dover, *Theocritus. Select Poems* (London 1971) *ad loc.* See also Gow 1950, vol. 2, 158; R. Hunter, *Theocritus. A Selection. Idylls 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11 and 13* (Cambridge 1999) *ad loc.* For Gebhard this is a crucial parallel in his interpretation of the *pharmakos* as a temporary deity: "So zeigt der Pan, dass der *Pharmakos* eine göttliche Rolle spielt" (Gebhard 1926, 74).

¹²⁴See e.g. Nilsson 1906, 443-444. Evidently, other interpretations have been put forward, too. Harrison *ad loc.* emphasised the expulsive role of the beating. P. Borgeaud, *Recherches sur le dieu Pan (Bibliotheca Helvetica Romana 17)* (Rome 1979) 111 has pointed to a correspondence between the *pharmakos* ritual and this Pan ritual at another level of interpretation: "Le rituel des scilles, tout comme celui du *pharmakos*, est accompli pour écarter une menace qui pèse sur l'ensemble de la communauté; L'élément fondamental demeure le choix d'un individu auquel on attribue (ou sur lequel on fait passer) l'ensemble des impuretés qui souillent la communauté".

this month February, and indeed this very day, *februata*; and to strike with a kind of leather thong they call *februare*, the word meaning ‘to purify’¹²⁵.

Another parallel is provided by reports on a ritual in which Spartan *epheboi* were being whipped while they had to try to steal cheeses from an altar of Artemis. According to Pausanias this custom had allegedly originated in times of crisis (he mentions *stasis*, *nosos* and a polluted altar). This had to be remedied, according to an oracle, by regularly shedding of (human) blood on the altar in order to placate Artemis: “The person upon whomever fell the lot used to be sacrificed, but Lycurgus changed the custom to a scourging of the lads, ...”¹²⁶. The view that beating formed a mitigation of human sacrifice has had adherents ever since¹²⁷.

Finally, an instance of, largely expulsive, ritual beating that shows close correspondences with the *pharmakos* ritual is provided by Plutarch¹²⁸:

There is a traditional ritual, which the archon performs at the public hearth and everyone else at home; it is called ‘the driving out of hunger’. Beating one of the household slaves with wands of the *agnus castus*, they drive him out of the doors, while saying: “Hunger out, Wealth and Health in”. When I was archon quite a few people took part in the ritual.

Although these comparanda are interesting, they are not of much genuine help. They have been adduced in support of differing views, of interpretations that emphasise either the fertility-stimulating use of beating, or its pseudo-sacrificial character or its expulsive employment. The difficulty with these comparanda therefore is that they do not clarify as such, but first need to be interpreted themselves. Moreover, it may also be true that beating had different uses in different contexts.

¹²⁵Plu. *Quaest. Rom.* 68 (*Mor.* 280b); see also Ov. *Fast.* 2.19ff: “*februa* are any purification instruments”. On the Lupercalia: C. Ulf, *Das römische Lupercalienfest: ein Modellfall für Methodenprobleme in der Altertumswissenschaft (Impulse der Forschung 38)* (Darmstadt 1982); T.P. Wiseman, ‘The God of the Lupercal’, *JRS* 85 (1995) 1-22; A. Ziolkowski, ‘Ritual Cleaning-up of the City: from the Lupercalia to the Argei’, *Ancient Society* 29 (1998-1999) 191-218. I cannot dwell upon the Lupercalia and its history of interpretation here.

¹²⁶Paus. 3.16.9-11.

¹²⁷Hamburg 1919, 2518: “Substitutionsopfer als καθαρμοί einer ganzen Befleckten Gemeinde sind auch die ursprüngliche Menschenopfer (...). Gemildert lebt dies später fort in den rituellen Peitschungen der Spartanischen Epheben (...)”; see Graf 1985, 86, 87 for an interpretation in the context of initiation. Cf. however the cautious remarks by Geourgoudi 1999, 74.

¹²⁸Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 6.7 (*Mor.* 693f.). Note that the ancient Greek term *thysia* is here translated with ‘ritual’.

According to at least one ancient commentator, one of these uses was purificatory. Hesychius simply equates beating with purification without further comment: “to be purified: to be beaten”¹²⁹. Burkert has also noted that a ‘real beating’ may be termed a *katharmos*, a purification¹³⁰. This, evidently, at least fits the purificatory context of the *pharmakos* ritual. One has to add, however, that according to Hipponax it is the *victim* who is beaten, but the *city* that is purified¹³¹. Apparently, the victim could be either the object or the means of purification¹³².

With this observation in mind, it is time to leave the search for objectives and turn to another aspect of the ritual beating of the *pharmakos*. Beating may also be regarded as an effective way to release communal tension. In times of crisis, anxiety physically produces life-saving adrenaline¹³³. This aggression is unfocused as long as there is no apparent enemy. Beating the person who is singled out and set apart, serves as an outlet for this aggression and intracommunal tension. Thus, whereas the victim is the one who is beaten, it is the community that is affected by it. By releasing its aggression on the victim, it is safeguarded from itself, for instance from civil strife. The solidarity of the group is reaffirmed in opposition to the outsider.

Taking one more step, beating may also be regarded as an act of division. The one who is beaten by the group is set apart. Instead of Mannhardt’s rod of life, we may rather speak of a rod of separation. And of a rod of definition: the one who is beaten is thereby marked as the outsider, those who are beating mark themselves as belonging to the group.

The materials used for the beating of the victim can be approached in a similar vein. From a semiotic perspective, Bremmer has argued that all flora that was employed in the ritual fits into one category: that of the fruitless, unproductive trees. Hence, according to Bremmer, the marginal connotations of these branches underline

¹²⁹Hesych. s.v. καθαρθῆναι· μαστιγωθῆναι. Compare Plu. *Quaest. Rom.* 68 (*Mor.* 280b).

¹³⁰Burkert 1996, 127, referring to Ar. fr. dub. 940 (Kassel-Austin); Men. *Dysc.* 114; Theocrit. 5.119.

¹³¹See Hippon. fr. 26 (Degani) = T. 1.

¹³²This observation will become more substantial when the terms *katharmos* and *katharma* are discussed.

¹³³See e.g. Baudy 1980.

the marginal status of the one who is struck with them¹³⁴. Although Bremmer's conclusions are valuable, a few complications deserve attention.

The first complication concerns the terminology. According to Hipponax *skillai* and *kradai* were used. Hesychius employs the term *kradai*, too, but adds *thria*, fig leaves. Julian refers to *thusthla*. Tzetzes mentions *skillai*, *sukai agriai* and 'other branches of wild flora'¹³⁵. The Ionian word *krade* seems to denote branches of the fig tree, or the fig tree itself, the normal one, not the wild fig tree, or not specifically¹³⁶. Likewise, the *thrion* seems to refer to a fig leaf in general¹³⁷. It is therefore only Tzetzes who claims explicitly that branches of the *wild* fig tree are used in the ritual. This might make a difference, as regular figs are not wild and do not necessarily share all the connotations of unproductive trees.

With respect to the connotations of fig trees, much has already been said about its fruit. Just as (dried) figs in a meal, fig trees must have been a common element in the ancient Greek landscape. However, just as its fruit, the fig tree appears to have had a symbolic potential that, if activated, carried protocultural connotations. The fig tree was called 'sacred', *hiera suke*¹³⁸, and said to be the gift of Demeter or Dionysos¹³⁹. Several ancient sources mention the 'fact' that the fig tree is never struck by lightning, another sign of its special status¹⁴⁰.

¹³⁴Bremmer 1983, 308-313. Bremmer points to the similar use of the *agnus castus* in the ritual in Chaeronea (above). See Graf 1985, 140 n.21 on the ritual beating of Pan (Theocr. 7.106-108 and schol): "... dass das marginale Ritual zum marginale Gott gut passt".

¹³⁵*Kradai* (branches of the fig tree): Hippon. fr. 26 (Degani) = T. 1; Hippon. fr. 6 (Degani) = T. 2; Hippon. fr. 29 (Degani) = T. 5; Hippon. fr. 95, 3-4 (Degani) = T. 7; Hesych. s.v. κροδισίτης = T. 9; Hesych. s.v. κροδίας νόμος = T. 10 (also mentioning *thria*). *Thusthla*: Jul. Imp. Or. 7.209d = T. 52. Branches of the *wild* fig tree: Tz. *Chil.* 5, 736, part of T. 13; Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38. *Skillai* (squills, or sea-onions): Hippon. fr. 6 (Degani) = T. 2; Tz. *Chil.* 5, 736, part of T. 13; Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38. Other wild flora: Tz. *Chil.* 5, 736, part of T. 13.

¹³⁶See Hesych. s.v. κρόδη· σνκῆ· κλάδος. Compare also Hesych. s.v. κροδίας τυρός (fig cheese, which must be edible) and Hesych. s.v. κροδοφάγος. See Olck 1909, 2106.

¹³⁷See Hesych. s.v. θῤῥιον.

¹³⁸Athen. 3.74d. Compare also the importance of the fig tree in the oath of the *epheboi*, G. Daux, 'Le serment des éphèbes Athéniens', *RÉG* 84 (1971) 370-383.

¹³⁹Note that the statue of this Dionysos, who was called *Meilichios*, was made of fig-wood, see Athen. 3.78c (adding also that figs are called *meilichia*, too); Paus. 1.37.2: "There is a legend that in this place Phytalus welcomed Demeter in his home, for which act the goddess gave him the fig tree".

¹⁴⁰Rohde 1898, vol. 2, 407. See e.g. Plu. *Symp.* 5.9 (*Mor.* 684bd); Geopon. 2.2.7; Plin. *NH* 15.77.

A detail which may have bearing on the present context is provided by Pausanias, who relates that the sacred fig tree stood close to the altar of Zeus Meilichios, the place where Theseus was purified¹⁴¹. It is not the only passage in which a link is established between the fig tree and purification. Eustathius relates that among the ancients there was a Zeus of the Fig, *Sukasios*, who was also called *Katharsios*, the Purifier, which he explains as follows: “For they say they used to apply a fig tree in their purification rites”¹⁴². The purificatory use, though dependent on the symbolism of the fig, may restrict the range of pre- and protocultural connotations.

As to the wild fig tree, whose branches were employed in the ritual according to Tzetzes, connotations may indeed have been quite negative. The connotations of the wild may have overruled the normal symbolic potential of a tree, or rather, may have stressed the negative side of this potential. Wild was rarely a positive epithet for the ancient Greeks. It was, for instance, precisely at a place called *Erineos*, the Wild Fig, that Hades, carrying off Kore, descended into the Earth¹⁴³. Following Bremmer’s argument, wild trees or plants, being non-edible and fruitless, must be regarded as negative markers in the ritual¹⁴⁴.

Regarding squills, Bremmer rightly emphasises the low status and negative qualities of the inedible, unproductive and even ‘death bringing’ squill¹⁴⁵. Not only Hades was said to be full of squills, wolves were reported to go numb when even approaching the leaves of a squill¹⁴⁶. Squills, or sea-onions, bulbous plants, were hung above the door as an *alexipharmakon*, an antidote, or even planted around the walls of a besieged city¹⁴⁷. They were regular utensils in the context of purification¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴¹Paus. 1.37.2-4.

¹⁴²Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 6.116, p. 1572, 58-59 (Stallbaum); see also Orph. *Argon.* 904-905 (θύσθλα καθαριῶν) and Athen. 3.78d for the fig tree as a highly useful tree and an ‘uncommonly good remedy’. See Cook 1914-1940, vol. 2.2 (1925), 1103-1104; Olck 1909, 2108 and 2148; Rohde 1898, vol 2, 406f.

¹⁴³Paus. 1.38.5; Pl. *Theaet.* 143b.

¹⁴⁴This is my terminology for what Bremmer calls ‘marginal’. My use of the term marginal is different from Bremmer’s and my understanding of the concept applied to ancient Greek culture is more ambiguous, with negative *and* positive connotations. I therefore try to refrain from using the term in this particular context.

¹⁴⁵Bremmer 1983, 309-310. Death bringing: Suid. s.v. σκίλλα.

¹⁴⁶For Hades see Hom. *Il.* 11. 539 and 573; 24. 13 and Artemid. 3.50.

¹⁴⁷For the use of squills to ward off evil spirits, see Plin. *NH* 20.101 (referring to Pythagoras).

¹⁴⁸Burkert 1985, 76 and n.9; *RE* 3 (1927) 522-526 s.v. Σκίλλα (Steier). See for instance Artemid. 3.50; Athen. 9. 371d; Crat. fr. 250 (Kassel-Austin); Dio Chrys. 48.17;

Parker draws the following conclusion on the use of squills in the *pharmakos* ritual: “It is tempting, therefore, to see it as the vegetable equivalent of the impure puppy, a dishonourable plant appropriately used in a ritual applied to polluted persons”¹⁴⁹.

The use of squills affirms the earlier conclusion about the negative connotation of the wild fig. The materials used for the beating of the victim therefore range with the *agnus castus* as negative ritual markers. The fig tree in general was credited with more ambivalent connotations, but one may safely assume that, sided with the squill, especially its negative connotations were activated. Bremmer’s conclusions may therefore be adhered to, although, strictly speaking, it is preferable not to employ terms as wild and fruitless when the branches of the fig tree are involved as well.

There is one more complication that needs to be discussed. As Parker observes in the same passage on the use of the squill as quoted above, one must be cautious with this type of approach: “The difficulty, however, in interpreting the symbolism of natural species lies in the complexity of their possible uses. Though the squill might be aesthetically and gastronomically despised, the druggist and the horticulturist esteemed it”¹⁵⁰. Scarborough adds an important insight by claiming that “the squill is a particularly apt example of the mixture in the Greek mind of practical botany, magicoreligious rituals of great antiquity, and precise knowledge of pharmacological and medical utility”¹⁵¹. This implies that it is impossible to fully separate the uses and, consequently, the positive and negative connotations, or, perhaps, status. From this point of view then, Bremmer’s reading of the use of squills in the *pharmakos* ritual may be too one-sided, as Scarborough has already pointed

Diph. fr. 125 (Kassel-Austin); Diosc. 2.171.3-4; D.L. 8.47; Lucian. *Nec.* 7; Lucian. *Alex.* 47 and Theocr. 5.121; Theophr. *Char.* 16.13; Theophr. *HP* 7.13.4.

¹⁴⁹Parker 1983, 232. See Theophr. *Char.* 16.13 for purification with either a young puppy or sea-onions.

¹⁵⁰Parker 1983, 231-232 with ref.

¹⁵¹Scarborough 1991, 146, and again on p. 150 against Edelstein who has proposed a tripartite division according to the following criteria: medicinal plants, the divinity of plants and magical beliefs (Edelstein 1976, 230f), a way of categorizing which is impossible to maintain according to Scarborough, who rather speaks of “the constant shifting and mingling with one another of these three broad approaches”.

out¹⁵². Scarborough himself understands the squill in the sense of the concept of *pharmakon*, which could, already in Homer, refer both to poison or beneficial drug¹⁵³.

In conclusion of this section on beating, the following can be said. According to a few sources, preponderantly pertaining to the Ionian situation, the victim in the *pharmakos* ritual was beaten, perhaps seven times on his penis. Apart from its precise objective, interpreted as fertility-stimulating, substitute-sacrificial or evil-expelling, this beating may also be regarded as a tension-taming, separating *and* uniting performative action. Such an action defines who belongs to the group and who does not. The flora used for the beating confirm and further define the otherness of the victim. Whereas the wild plants that were employed according to Tzetzes carry mainly negative connotations, the symbolism of the branches of fig trees, with their protocultural connotations, is more ambivalent. However, combined with the squill, one may assume that it was especially their negative symbolic potential that was activated here. The fig appeared to be strongly linked up with a purificatory context, a context also closely connected with the squill. Finally, it has been pointed out that this purificatory use involves an ambiguity at yet another level, one to which we shall amply return: even if something is employed on account of its most negative capacity, for instance as an instrument of purification, its *use* may be for the good. Hence, one should not be surprised if its status, ultimately, is at once negative, for instance poisonous, *and* positive, beneficial, too.

G. ULTIMATE FATE

A majority of the testimonia on the *pharmakos* ritual suggest that the victim is led out of, or around, town before meeting his final destiny. Words such as *agein*, *pro-* or *exagein* are used, or *circumducere*¹⁵⁴. Bremmer assumes that *pharmakoi* were led out

¹⁵²Scarborough 1991, n.100: “Bremmer’s arguments, however, that all such plants are symbolic ignores the plentiful evidence of squills and their use in medicine and herbal remedies”.

¹⁵³Scarborough 1991, 149. Actually, a squill could be called a *pharmakon*, see Diosc. 2.171.4 (ἀλεξιφάρμακον).

¹⁵⁴See for instance *Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24 (προάγεται); Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48 (ἄγειν); Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49 (ἄγειν); Hippon. fr. 30 (Degani) = T. 6 (ἄγειν); Lact. Plac. *Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 10, 793 = T. 26 (*ductus*); Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petr. fr. 1 = T. 25 (*circumducere*); Tz. *Chil.* .5, 731, part of T. 13 (ἄγειν).

in a procession that started at the Prytaneum¹⁵⁵. Although there is little evidence to sustain this hypothesis, the suggestion is not unlikely, if the *pharmakos* had his meal there first. Be that as it may, the *pompe* must be regarded as an official ritual activity, involving typical ritual elements¹⁵⁶ and a larger group of people. The *pompe* culminated in the victim's ultimate fate, the central subject of this section. *Pompe*-terminology can be used in a context of expulsion, of riddance but also in the context of sacrifice, as Tzetzes shows¹⁵⁷.

The ultimate fate of the victim has long been one of the most contested issues in the study of the *pharmakos* ritual. The discussion has, perhaps inevitably, been strongly influenced by preconceived notions and wishful thinking about ancient Greek *civilisation*. To many an admirer of the ancient Greeks it has been inconceivable that they *really* sacrificed their fellow human beings. The evidence in the context of the *pharmakos* ritual is contradictory. Various sources on the ritual claim that the victim was sacrificed, whereas other testimonia relate that he was

¹⁵⁵Bremmer 1983, 313 referring to A. Keramopoulos, *Ἀποτυμπανισμός* (Athens 1923) 116-119, a study I have not seen.

¹⁵⁶According to Hesychius, in Ionia a special tune was played during the leading out of the *pharmakos*: the fig-melody (Hesych. s.v. *κράδιος νόμος* = T. 10). Figs again. This time the ancient Greek word is *kradias*. Plutarch refers to this tune, too: "And there is another ancient melody called *Kradias*, which Hipponax says Mimnermos played on the *auloi*" (Plu. *Mor.* 1133f.-1134a (*de Mus.* 8). Little is known about this tune. Various scholars have suggested that this was a wild fig melody, a bad and nasty tune, fit to escort out someone the community wanted to get rid of. See e.g. Bremmer 1983, 313-314, who points to the musical parallels in removals of the charivari-type. However, as discussed above, it is far from evident that the *kradai* were wild figs, and, in line with earlier observations, the fig-melody may have been a 'protocultural' tune as well, some sort of 'Other Age music'. For music in a cathartic or healing context, see Aristoxenus fr. 117; (Plu.) *Mus.* 42.1146b; Theophr. fr. 88 (Wimmer). See also Gebhard 1926, 77-79; Lloyd 1979, 42 n.173; Schwenn 1915, 38 (Mittel zur Verseuchung böser Geister). For various uses of music in ancient Greek ritual, see H. Jeanmaire, *Dionysos. Histoire du culte de Bacchus l'orgiasme dans l'antiquité et les temps modernes, origine du théâtre en Grèce, orphisme et mystique dionysiaque, évolution du dionysisme après Alexandre* (Paris 1951) 316-321; G. Nordquist, 'Some Notes on Musicians in Greek Cult', in: R. Hägg, *Ancient Greek Cult Practice from the Epigraphical Evidence* (Stockholm 1994) 81-93; M.L. West, *Ancient Greek Music* (Oxford 1992).

¹⁵⁷Tz. *Chil.* 5, 731, part of T. 13. See for processions of human sacrificial victims P. Bonnechere, 'La ΠΙΟΜΠΗ sacrificielle des victimes humaines en Grèce ancienne', *RÉA* 99 (1997) 63-89, who however excludes any possible reference to the *pharmakoi*, as he considers those to constitute a completely different phenomenon. See F. Graf, 'Pompai in Greece. Some Considerations about Space and Ritual in the Greek Polis', in: R. Hägg (ed.), *The Role of Religion in the Early Greek Polis* (Stockholm 1996) 55-65, who distinguishes between centripetal and centrifugal processions and connects both types with different religious aims and religious experiences.

merely expelled. This also appeared to be the most striking difference between Tzetzes' account and the information from the verses of Hipponax.

The different fates put forward by the testimonia will be discussed one by one. First, expulsion is studied in some detail, secondly we turn to sacrifice, and thirdly special attention is given to the so-called *katapontismos*, the victim's plunge into the sea. The inconsistency among the sources will be explored from the perspective of local varieties, but also in terms of differences between late scholia and other, earlier sources. It will, however, be argued that the difference between sacrifice and expulsion is not as absolute as has been usually claimed. In this connection, and perhaps more importantly, it will also be argued that the central question in the debate must be rephrased, as both sacrifice and expulsion turn out to be conceivable ultimate fates of the *pharmakos*. Finally, the throwing of stones to the victim, fatal or not, is discussed and interpreted from various perspectives.

Modern scholarship accepts expulsion as the most probable ultimate fate of the *pharmakos*. Attic as well as Ionian and other testimonia use expulsion-terminology. Such terminology varies from *exagein* (to lead out) and *exelaunein* (to drive out) to *apopempein* (to send away) and *ekpempein* (to send out)¹⁵⁸. Sometimes, 'beyond the borders' is explicitly added, but one may safely assume that this is implied in the other cases as well.

From other evidence, it appears that throwing out, expelling, carrying or sending away are activities that belong in the context of purification. *Katharmata*, purificatory instruments, or the refuse from purifications, were disposed of in areas beyond the borders, outside communal habitation, or they were burnt¹⁵⁹. An often quoted example of such destinations is from the Hippocratic author, who refers to objects of purification, "either thrown into the sea, hidden in the earth or taken away

¹⁵⁸Amp. 8.4 = T. 28 (*excipitur lintribus*); *Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24 (ἐξελασθη τῶν ὀρίων); Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48 (ἐξήγον); Hesych. s.v. κραδῆς νόμος = T. 10 (τοῖς ἐκπέμπομένοις φαρμακοῖς); Lys. 6.53 = T. 46 (ἀποπέμπειν); Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petr. fr.1 = T. 25 (*proiciebatur*). More ambivalent terms such as *anairein* and *riptein* are also used, see *Sud.* s.v. κάθαρμα = Ar. fr. 686 (Kassel-Austin) = T. 44; *Sud.* s.v. φαρμακός = T. 53. On *riptein*, see (Ps.) Ammon. 494 = T. 59; Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27.

¹⁵⁹*Sud.* s.v. φάνιον· τόπος, εἰς ὃν τὰ καθάρματα ἐξέβαλλον. See also Aesch. *Cho.* 98: καθάρμαθ' ὥς τις ἐκπέμψας; A.R. 4.710; Eur. *Hec.* 1259f; Eur. *Andr.* 848f; Hom. *Il.* 1.314; Lucian. *Alex.* 47; Paus. 2.31.8; 5.5.10; 8.41.2; Soph. *OT* 190ff; *LSCG* 108; *IG* I.3, 257. See also Harp. s.v. Ὀξυθύμια = Hyper. 14 fr. 79 (Jensen).

to the mountains, where no one will touch or find them”¹⁶⁰. The apparent equivalence of the three destinations is noteworthy. They all are representations of the area outside the human habitat, and may be referred to as ‘Otherland’. ‘To the *korakes*’, ‘to the crows’, is another comparable destination¹⁶¹. When Oedipus has discovered his extreme state of impurity, he exclaims: “For the sake of the gods, quickly, hide me somewhere, kill me, hurl me into the sea, where you can never look at me again”¹⁶². And a few lines later: “Drive me out of the land at once, far from sight, where I can never hear a human voice”¹⁶³. There is an ancient Greek term for this type of final expulsions, *apopompe*, which has become an established concept among scholars¹⁶⁴.

Two conclusions may be drawn: in the first place, the expulsion of the victim involves a final removal from human habitat. Secondly, the victim, by being expelled to this ‘Otherland’, is comparable to purificatory instruments, *katharmata*, and polluted objects or persons.

This parallel between the victim’s fate and the ancient Greek *apopompe* has induced scholars to interpret the entire ritual from this perspective. Late scholia

¹⁶⁰Hp. *Morb. Sacr.* 4.40 (Jones II, 149): καὶ τὰ μὲν τῶν καθαυμῶν γῇ κρύπτουσι, τὰ δὲ ἐς θάλασσαν ἐμβάλλουσι, τὰ δὲ ἐς τὰ ὄρεα ἀποφέρουσιν, ὅπη μηδεὶς ἄψεται μηδὲ ἐμβήσεται.

¹⁶¹Especially favoured by Aristophanes: see e.g. Ar. *Nub.* 123, 789, 132; *Eq.* 1314; *Pax* 500, 1221; but also Pherecr. fr. 76, 5 (Kassel-Ausin) and Alex. fr. 99 (Kassel-Austin). See Ar. *Ran.* 186 for the *Korakes* as the last stop before Hades. See also Arist. fr. 496 (Rose) (to send a plague off to the crows). Compare also Zen. vulg. 3, 87: ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ τόπος ἐστὶ Κόρακες, ὅπου τοὺς κακούργους ἐνέβαλλον. Wild goats were suitable, too, see Callim. fr. 75, 12-13 (Pfeiffer) and Hesych. s.v. κατ’ αἰγας ἀγρίας· παροιμία λεγομένη εἰς ἀγρίας αἰγας τρέπειν (τὴν νόσον), μάλιστα δὲ τὴν ἱερὰν, ‘onto the wild goats’, there is a proverb saying ‘to turn [away] onto the wild goats’, especially the sacred (disease). See also commentary ad Zen. Prov. 67 βάλλ’ ἐς μακαρίαν. See also the Biblical scapegoat (*Lev.* 16.7-10, 20-22).

¹⁶²Soph. *OT* 1410-1412 (ὅπως τάχιστα πρὸς θεῶν ἔξω μέ που καλύψατ’, ἢ φρονεύσατ’, ἢ θαλάσσιον ἐκρίψατ’, ἔνθα μήποτ’ εἰσόψεσθ’ ἔτι); see also 1340f (ἀπάγετ’ ἐκτόπιον).

¹⁶³Soph. *OT* 1436-1437 (ῥιψὸν με γῆς ἐκ τῆσδ ...).

¹⁶⁴See for instance Schlesier 1990, 38: “Als Spezifikation der Pompè (Aussendung, Festzug, Eskorte) betont der Ausdruck Apopompè die Absicht, das Ausgesandte (Menschen, Tiere, Dinge, übernatürliche Erscheinungen, Gottheiten) als etwas Gefährliches los zu werden und es möglichst an seiner Wiederkehr zu hindern, wobei die Fortsetzung durch Handlungen oder allein durch Worte (Wegwünschung) geschehen kann”. See also Ogden 1997, 18 and 128; *RAC* 7 (1969) 1160-1288 s.v. ‘Fluch’ (Speyer) 1187-8 and 1198; Versnel 1977, 41-42; esp. O. Weinreich, ‘Primitiver Gebetsegoismus’, in: idem, *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien* (Stuttgart 1968) 7-44, who carefully distinguishes between *apopompe* and *epipompe*. The essence of the former is the riddance itself, in the latter the

usually refer to the victims as *katharmata*, or equate *pharmakoi* and *katharmata*¹⁶⁵. This equation is taken up by modern scholars with little hesitation, even though these scholiasts usually employ the term in a sacrificial context. As will become clear below, this sacrificial context is less eagerly adopted in modern literature on the ritual. Parker, for instance, interprets the *pharmakos* ritual as follows: “These wretched individuals were the animate form of the ‘offscourings’ (*katharmata*) which, in many Greek purifications, were expelled from the area of human habitation, carrying impurity with them”¹⁶⁶. That these victims are characterised by some sources as ignoble creatures is usually adduced to sustain the argument.

At this point of our inquiry, it is important to note how closely the negative image of the *pharmakos*, his expulsion and the purificatory perspective are linked up. That expulsion is a well attested and a very plausible ultimate fate of the *pharmakos* cannot be denied. However, the extent to which expulsion and purification must be fully equated, and as such qualify for the overall interpretation of the ritual, remains to be seen.

There is one further issue that deserves attention in this context. The difference between expulsion and death seems great and unbridgeable. However, from a more symbolic perspective, a definitive expulsion from one’s community, an irreversible sending away to this ‘Otherland’, is not so different from a lethal fate at all. Without denying that it must have made a difference in practical terms, especially for the victim himself, in social terms one may argue that in ancient society banishment equalled death¹⁶⁷. Oedipus’ exclamation in the *Phoenissae* illustrates this very well: “Why, Creon, kill me utterly? For you will be killing me, if you cast me

destination is specified and therefore of relevance as well. See also Plut. *Lyc.* 16. 1-2 on the *Apothetae*-cleft in Sparta to which disabled children were sent (*apopempein*).

¹⁶⁵See for instance Eust. *ad Hom. Od.* I. 260, p. 1415, 63-64 = Ar. fr. 656 (Kassel-Austin) = T. 43; Eust. *ad Hom. Od.* 22, 481, p. 1935.15f = T. 56; Phot. s.v. φαμακός = T. 55; schol. Aesch. *Th.* 680 = T. 45; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136c = T. 41; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454a = T. 33; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34; schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 30; Tz. schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 31; schol. Tz. *Ep.* 104 = T. 15; *Sud.* s.v. κάθαρμα = Ar. fr. 686 (Kassel-Austin) = T. 44; Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728, part of T. 13; Tz. *Chil.* 8, 916, part of T. 14.

¹⁶⁶Parker 1983, 24.

¹⁶⁷See already Nilsson 1955, vol. 1, 109-110 and also Bremmer 1983, 315-316. On expulsion as social death see Hasenfratz 1982. See further Baudy 1980, 216: “Trennung ist Tod, Tod ist Trennung”. Compare Soph. *Atham.* fr. 4 (Radt) on Athamas’ status as an outlaw: ὥς ὂν ἄπαις τε καὶ γύναις καὶ ἐστίος (without kids, without a wife, without a hearth), the inverse of which defines the social being. Note that in Eust. *ad Hom. Od.* I. 260, p. 1415, 63-64 = Ar. fr. 656 (Kassel-Austin) = T. 43, to perish comes down to the same as going away as far as possible.

from the land”¹⁶⁸. A quite ambivalent term, *anairein*, employed by the *Suda* to describe the fate of our victim, must be understood in this light¹⁶⁹. The term *exponitur*, abandoned, employed by one of the scholiasts on Ovid¹⁷⁰, implies the same, as the additional ‘to death’ confirms. The difference between expulsion and death in the ancient world is therefore smaller than is usually admitted. But let us first turn to death itself.

The ritual death of the victim is once referred to as a dying in general, but in most cases expressed in sacrificial vocabulary¹⁷¹. It must be noted at once that all testimonia claiming that the *pharmakos* ultimately died in the ritual are late and preponderantly the work of scholiasts¹⁷². Modern scholars, convinced that the *pharmakos* was exiled, not sacrificed, tend to dismiss the evidence as late fantasy or exaggeration¹⁷³. It is true that it is difficult to find a solid explanation for the inconsistency in the source-material. For instance, efforts to explain the different fates, expulsion and sacrifice, with a reference to local variety are to no avail, as it is impossible to relate these scholia to specific local practice. However, the possibilities to deal with the inconsistency have not been exhausted yet, as will become clear below.

A closer look at the sources shows some sacrificial variety. According to Tzetzes, who speaks of a *thysia*, the victim is burnt completely (*holokautein*) on wild wood and his ashes are scattered to the winds into the sea¹⁷⁴. Other sources employ

¹⁶⁸Eur. *Ph.* 1620-1.

¹⁶⁹*Sud.* s.v. φαρμακός = T. 53 (ἀναιρούμενος); *Sud.* s.v. κάθασμα = Ar. fr. 686 (Kassel-Austin) = T. 44 (φθειρή ἐκποδὼν ἡμῖν ἀπὲι ἀνήρουν). See also Dem. 25.80 = T. 47 (*exairein*).

¹⁷⁰Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467c = T. 19.

¹⁷¹For non-specific dying, see Hdn. 1.150, 3-4 = Arc. 51.10 = T. 57 (*teleutein*).

¹⁷²See schol. Aesch. *Th.* 680 = T. 45; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136a = T. 40; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136c = T. 41; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454a = T. 33; schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 30; Tz. schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 31; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467a = T. 17; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467d = T. 20; schol. Tz. *Ep.* 104 = T. 15; Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13.

¹⁷³See esp. Hughes 1991, 139-165.

¹⁷⁴Tz. *Chil.* 5, 737-738, part of T. 13; Tz. *Chil.* 8, 913 = T. 14; Tz. schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 31; Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38. The suggestion that the victim was burnt alive is virtually without ancient Greek precedent. See further Plu. *de Superst.* 13 (*Mor.* 171d) on the barbarian Xerxes’ wife who caused twelve human beings to be buried alive as an offering on her behalf to propitiate Hades, and see the early Christian martyrs, e.g. in Eus. *Hist. Eccl.* 4.15. For burning on wild wood, see e.g. Dio. *Chrys.* 33.63; Lucian. *Alex.* 47; Theocr. 24, 94-96 (ashes should be borne over the river to the rugged rocks and all cast utterly away beyond the boundaries). See Bremmer 1983, 308-313; Hughes 1991, 243 n.18; Ogden 1997, 20; Parker 1983, 221 n.75.

the verb *thyein* or *immolari*¹⁷⁵. A scholion on Aristophanes' *Knights* uses *thyein* and the more neutral *phonos*, death, interchangeably¹⁷⁶.

With regard to the type of sacrifice a complication arises. No *thysia*-sacrifice without a deity, one may suppose. Although the larger context of the ritual may have been Apolline, there is no direct reference to the deity in the descriptions of the ritual¹⁷⁷. Nor are there any references to other deities by name. Only once, the sacrifice of the victim is explicitly said to be to 'the gods'¹⁷⁸. Whenever *thyein* is used, it therefore appears to refer to a special kind of *thysia*, one that would normally be referred to as a *sphagion*, a special kind of sacrifice that is wholly destroyed and has no named receptor (or one of dubious character) and as such shows similarities with the riddances discussed earlier¹⁷⁹. However, this disregard of usual practice in vocabulary cannot be used as an argument against the reliability of the sources. On the contrary, as a matter of fact. Precisely the same happens in mythical descriptions of human sacrifice, where the usual distinction between *thysia* and *sphagion* is also ignored, or broken¹⁸⁰. Perhaps it is rather the *nature* of the event itself that breaks the rules.

In the nineteenth century, scholars understood the *pharmakos* ritual in terms of sacrifice, although they struggled with ritual elements that did not seem to fit this interpretation¹⁸¹. Moreover, there was a growing feeling of unease about such an inhumane ritual practised by the ancient Greeks¹⁸², and attempts were made to

¹⁷⁵See for *thyein* e.g. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34; schol. Aesch. *Th.* 680 = T. 45. See for *immolari*, two scholia on Ovid's *Ibis*, Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467a = T. 17 and schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467d = T. 20.

¹⁷⁶Schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136c = T. 41.

¹⁷⁷See above for the link between the ritual and the Thargelia (and Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48). See Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27 and Amp. 8.4 = T. 28 for another Apolline context.

¹⁷⁸Schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 37 (θυόμενοι τοῖς θεοῖς). Others talk about sacrifice, but only indirectly about the divine, for instance as remedy to non-specified divine wrath: (Tz. *Chil.* 5., 729, part of T. 13; Tz. schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 31; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34).

¹⁷⁹On sacrifice, *thyein*, *sphazein* and all the relevant issues pertaining to this phenomenon in ancient Greece, see Chapter 9 Section b.

¹⁸⁰See Chapter 3.

¹⁸¹See Chapter 2.

¹⁸²See for instance Weber 1925, 235-236: "Und wie das Menschenopfer eine eigentlich allen Völkern und Rassen ursprünglich vertraute Form ihres Götterkultus ist, so erklärt sich eben auch, warum es wie von anderen Völkern so auch von den Griechen bis tief in die geschichtliche Zeit hinab geübt worden ist. Man empfindet den Brauch zwar selbst als grausig und menschenunwürdig: aber es gibt im Leben des griechischen Volkes Augenblicke, in denen der aus längst vergangener Zeit übriggebliebene Bodenschatz primitiver und roher Vorstellungen elementar wieder hervorbricht".

absolve them from any incriminating evidence. Some even suggested that the term *thysia* must be translated with ‘ritual’, as *thysia* as a noun came to be used to refer to ritual in general¹⁸³. However, as Deubner already pointed out, where the verb *thyein* is employed, a sacrificial meaning seems inescapable¹⁸⁴.

Modern scholars no longer seek to negotiate with the sources in such ways, but outright dismiss the evidence for sacrifice. Hughes, who may be taken here as the modern spokesman of those who disbelieve the occurrence of human sacrifice in ancient Greek history, has spent a great deal of intellectual activity to show that the authors of these sources either misunderstood, exaggerated, or fantasised too freely on the ritual practice¹⁸⁵. According to Hughes, it was really Tzetzes who introduced the concept of sacrifice in the descriptions of the *pharmakos* ritual¹⁸⁶. Although it is difficult to establish the precise date of the relevant sources, it can not be denied that sacrificial terminology has a late appearance in the sources. Hughes certainly has made an important point here, although it may be too rash a conclusion to infer that the sacrificial fate of the victim therefore is a late invention that must be dismissed. The remaining question, rather, is how Hughes’ insight should be assessed.

It is time to shift the focus of discussion a little and to leave the present terms of the debate. In the introduction to this chapter, I have drawn attention to the fact that as soon as ritual is put into words, it is (partly) interpreted. Allusions may be turned into facts, and polyvalence is reduced. This holds true for contemporaries, scholiasts and modern scholars, though to varying extents. Apparently, the scholiasts had a penchant to employ interpretative concepts in their work on ritual. Not only did they use sacrificial vocabulary, but they also introduced the term *katharmata* in their descriptions of the ritual. Interestingly, however, the latter ‘invention’ has not met with the same resistance as the introduction of sacrificial vocabulary among modern

¹⁸³See for instance Gebhard 1926, 47f. See *LSJ* s.v. An example of this use is Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 6.7 (*Mor.* 693f).

¹⁸⁴Deubner 1932, 185.

¹⁸⁵For misunderstanding (a false identification between *pharmakos* and *katharma* on Tzetzes’ part) see Hughes 1991, 143, for exaggeration (a ‘fatal’ difference between earlier and later Massilian and Abderean sources) see Hughes 1991, 156-159, and for fantasy (the ashes spread around) see Hughes 1991, 147-148.

¹⁸⁶See Hughes 1991, 142 and 243 n. 15 on Deubner’s and Gebhard’s claims that Tzetzes derived his use of *thysia* from scholia, which he refutes asserting that the scholia employing forms of *thyein* are all post-Tzetzean. The scholiast on Aristophanes’ *Knights*, however, who refers to a cleansing with the death of the victims (schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136a = T. 40), may precede Tzetzes by some centuries.

scholars, who in fact simply adopt the concept of purification and give it a prominent place in their interpretations of the ritual¹⁸⁷.

Instead of concentrating on the *time* of its introduction, one may inquire *why* sacrificial terminology has been brought in by these scholiasts. Several reasons can be put forward. In the first place, it should not be forgotten that the distinction between ritual and myth is a modern one. In situations of dire peril the idea of human sacrifice was widespread in ancient Greek myth, as chapter two of this study will show. To ancient Greek man, human sacrifice therefore was a conceivable way to deal with crisis. Secondly, it has been argued in the earlier sections of this chapter that various ritual elements evoke associations with sacrificial practice. Comments of the scholiasts regarding the term *demosioi* produced the parallel between *pharmakoi* and animal victims awaiting sacrifice. Both appeared to be set apart and fed at public costs. Moreover, the way the victims were dressed up and garlanded reminded of the decoration of animal sacrificial victims. Hence, the employment of sacrificial vocabulary by late scholiasts in their descriptions of the *pharmakos* ritual is definitely not an unfounded invention, if an invention at all.

The third attested fate of the victim, his plunge into the sea, confirms this conclusion. The plunge, or leap, into the sea is mentioned by a few testimonia only¹⁸⁸. Strabo relates about the curious Apolline ritual at Leucas, where someone lying under a charge was thrown off (*ripteisthai*) the Leucadian rock ‘for the sake of averting evil’. Feathers and birds were attached to the victim, who was caught by men in a boat and taken beyond the borders¹⁸⁹. Another, less ingenious, ritual plunge is reported by Photius, according to whom at an unspecified place, annually, a young man was thrown into the sea for the sake of the removal of ills of the community. “Be our offscourings”, they said to the young man, and they cast him into the sea, as if they were paying a due sacrifice to Poseidon¹⁹⁰. Indeed, the plunge into the sea, the *katapontismos*, may be compared to the *sphagia* sacrifices that were either deposited, buried or burned wholly¹⁹¹. Yet the plunge may be also interpreted in the light of the

¹⁸⁷See Parker 1983, 24.

¹⁸⁸Phot. s.v. περίψημα = T. 54; Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27; Amp. 8.4 = T. 28.

¹⁸⁹Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27. See also Amp. 8.4 = T. 28.

¹⁹⁰Phot. s.v. περίψημα = T. 54.

¹⁹¹See e.g. Harp. s.v. κάθετος: ὁ καθιέμενος εἰς τὸ πέλαγος ἄμνός, LSS 94, 13 (horses for Poseidon). For immersion sacrifices in general, see e.g. Stengel 1920³, 135, 155-156 (sacrifices to Poseidon) and Wachsmuth 1967, 119. Note that these sacrificial victims were thrown into the sea alive. We shall return to these sacrifices in Chapter 9.

other *apopompè*-destinations discussed above, as the sea, the Great Infertile, was a suitable destination for riddances of all kinds¹⁹². The term *riptein*, used by Strabo¹⁹³, shows a similar ambiguity. It is one of the basic Greek verbs to designate acts of riddance and abandonment on the one hand¹⁹⁴, on the other, it is also used in connection with (immersion) sacrifices¹⁹⁵. The plunges at stake here thus qualify for both a purificatory and a sacrificial understanding.

In the past the *katapontismos* has been interpreted as a ritual of consecration (sacrifice), of purification, of initiation or as an execution¹⁹⁶. It seems impossible, however, to find one single key-interpretation. Concurrently, it is definitely too facile to conclude that all jumpers are scapegoats¹⁹⁷. Not only young men, temple-robbers and other transgressors are said to have jumped down cliffs and precipices, but also ‘holy men’, lovers and elderly Hyperboreans when they are ready to die¹⁹⁸. From a

¹⁹²For all kinds of *katharmata* thrown into the sea, see above. Compare also the evil ghost of Temesa who was chased into the sea (Paus. 6.6.9f) as was Hunger in Termessus (*Tituli Asiae Minores* 3.1, 103). According to Paus. 6.11.6 a statue accused of murder was also thrown into the sea. For more *apopompai* of evil into the sea, see Ogden 1997, 17-18, Parker 1983, 45; Versnel 1977, Wachsmuth 1967, 310-311.

¹⁹³Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27. See also Aristid. *Or.* 3.684 = T. 51; (Ps.) Ammon. 494 = T. 59, though not further specified.

¹⁹⁴For the emphasis on expulsion, see e.g. the passage from Soph. *OT* 1436-1437 (ῥιπτόν με γῆς ἐκ τῆσδ’) quoted above.

¹⁹⁵See e.g. Paus. 8.7.2 (horses as offerings to Poseidon). In mythical crisis management, on which Chapter 3, the term *riptein* also occurs, for instance when Maiandrus leaps into a river, in order to fulfill an oracle that demanded sacrifice ([Plu.] *de fluv.* 9.1 = Timolaus *FGrHist* 798 fr. 1).

¹⁹⁶On *katapontismos* in general: A. Closs, ‘Das Versenkungsopfer’, *Wiener Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte und Linguistik* 9 (1952) 66-107; Delcourt 1944, 52 (entrer dans une vie nouvelle - offrir une victime aux dieux - se soumettre à leur jugement); C. Gallini, ‘*Katapontismos*’, *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 34 (1963) 61-90; Daremberg and Saglio 1877-1919, s.v. *katapontismos* (Glotz) (ordalie: “On offre une victime aux dieux: à eux de la prendre ou de l’épargner”); J. Houbaux, ‘Le plongeon rituel’, *MusB* 27 (1923) 1-81; E. Janssens, ‘Leucade et les pays des morts’, *AntCl* 30 (1961) 381-394 (385: “Donc, que l’on considère le *katapontismos* comme une ordalie, comme un sacrifice apotropaïque au profit d’une communauté, ou comme la libération positive ou négative d’une passion, il s’agit toujours, et j’y insiste, d’un rite de purification”); Ogden 1997, 17-18 and notes; *RE* 10 (1919) 2480-2482 s.v. *Καταποντισμός* (Schulthess) (entweder gerichtliches Urteil oder Gottesurteil); Versnel 1981, 254; Wachsmuth 1967, 119f, 205, 226, 310-311, 397-398 and notes. See also the ritual on Rhodos (Porph. *de Abst.* 2.54.). The *katapontismos* may also be compared with jumping into clefts (see the traditions about Curtius and Anchurus, Chapter 3 Section c, or about Amphiaraus (Paus. 1.34.1-2).

¹⁹⁷Contra Ogden 1997, who calls everyone a scapegoat.

¹⁹⁸See for transgressors e.g. Hdt. 2.134 and Plu. *de ser. nom. vind.* 12 (Aesop); Paus. 10.2.4 (fixed punishment for spoiler of sanctuary); Str. 14.6.3 (C 683) (those who touch the altar of Apollo); for human sacrifices e.g. Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.279 (old man must jump in order to propitiate gods); for purification e.g. Plu. *Quaest. Rom.* 32 and 86 (*Mor.* 272bc and 285ab) on the Roman *Argei*, images thrown from the bridge into the river as their most

structural-symbolic perspective, however, it is possible to point to a common *signifié*, as Nagy has shown in his discussion of the rock of rocks, the white rock of Leukas¹⁹⁹. The one who jumps crosses a boundary, either between the Here and the Otherland, between life and death, between one status and another. Evidently, the symbolic potential can be productive in numerous contexts. What seems to be stressed, symbolically, in all these contexts, is the change of status of those who jump or who are being thrown off the rock. A separation between the one who jumps and those who stay behind, between the old and new is realised, a boundary is crossed. Whether the jumper remains alive or not, he will land in complete otherness.

The notion of separation finds expression in one more feature of the *pharmakos* ritual that needs discussion in the context of the victim's ultimate fate: several sources mention that the victim was either expelled or killed by being pelted at²⁰⁰. Let us therefore turn to the evidence and possible interpretation of the stoning of the *pharmakos*.

Apart from Massilian and Abderean evidence for stoning, there is one source on Athens mentioning that 'the things performed at the Thargelia are imitations of the stoning to death of a guy called Pharmakos'²⁰¹. This remark is made by Ister, a third-century BC pupil of Callimachus, who might have had, according to some, an Ionian frame of reference for the ritual²⁰². This remains speculative, however, and it

important ritual of purification [μέγιστος τῶν καθαρῶν]); for sacred men e.g. Paus. 10.32.6 (men, sacred to Apollo, leap down from sheer precipices and high rocks at Magnesia); Phot. s.v. Λευκάτης telling us that holy men threw themselves from the rock at Leukas; for lovers e.g. Str. 10.2.9 (C 452); for Hyperboreans e.g. Plin. *NH* 4.89.

¹⁹⁹G. Nagy, 'Phaeton, Sappho's Phaon and the White Rock of Leukas', *HSCP* 77 (1973) 137-177.

²⁰⁰*Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24; Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48; Jul. Imp. *Or.* 7.209d = T. 52; Lact. Plac. *Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 10, 793 = T. 26; Ov. *Ib.* 467-468 = T. 16; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467b = T. 18; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467e = T. 21; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467f = T. 22. See M. Gras, 'Cité grecque et lapidation', in: *Du châtimement dans la cité. Supplices corporels et peine de mort dans le monde antique. Table ronde organisée par l'École française de Rome avec le concours du Centre national de la recherche scientifique (Rome 9-11 nov. 1982) (Collection de l'École française de Rome 97) (Rome 1984) 75-89* for stoning as the equivalent of a *katapontismos*: "La précipitation à partir d'un rocher et l'écrasement ont beaucoup de points communs avec les lapidations. Enfin, la pétrification, ..., témoigne comme la précipitation ou l'écrasement sous la monticule, de cette volonté de chasser, d'expulser, d'anéantir. Et ceci sans qu'il y ait de contact avec la victime" (77). Gras refers to Eur. *Ion* 112-113 as an example. The combination pelting and driving over a precipice, which would be a tautology from Gras' perspective, occurs in the traditions about Aesop, see Ogden 1997, 39.

²⁰¹Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48.

²⁰²See Hughes 1991, 153.

is therefore impossible to claim with certainty that stoning pertained to the Ionian practice only.

Whether stoning was fatal or not must also remain inconclusive, although Hughes has rightly pointed out that whereas the earlier sources on Massilia and Abdera refer to an expulsion with stones, the later scholia tend to make this act fatal²⁰³. When Ister speaks of imitation of a stoning to death, it is likely that he refers to an actual non-fatal stoning, albeit one with lethal symbolism. Or one may consider, with Julian²⁰⁴, stoning to be just a more severe punishment than beating. A closer look at ancient Greek stoning or stone-throwing is in order²⁰⁵.

There are numerous examples, historical, mythical-legendary and ritual, of the stoning of outcasts and serious offenders, such as temple-robbers, murderers and traitors. People who were exiled may have been pelted with stones, as were those who were cursed²⁰⁶. It is in this company that Ovid places the *devotus*, wishing that stones, more numerous than hailstorms, may seek him²⁰⁷.

Many attempts have been made to understand the ideas and aims of stoning in the ancient world. Interpretations such as ‘a magical act that aimed to transfer evil’, or ‘eine Art Gegenzauber’ (a form of anti-magic) or a combination of magic, apotropaeic and sacrificial acts, have become obsolete²⁰⁸. In an article that long

²⁰³Hughes 1991, 158-159.

²⁰⁴Jul. *Imp. Or.* 7.209d = T. 52.

²⁰⁵Stoning and stone-throwing are usually treated as different actions, the former fatal, the latter not. In the following discussion it will become clear why I do not distinguish between the two as systematically as one would tend to do from the perspective of fatality.

²⁰⁶See e.g. Alc. *SLG* 262 (a means of averting divine wrath); Ael. *NA* 12.34 (stoning the sacrificial killer and chasing him into the sea); Ar. *Ach.* 280-346 (throwing stones at a traitor, who is referred to as τὸν μαρόνον); Ar. *Av.* 524 and Ar. *Vesp.* 1491 (the stoning of madmen); Artemid. 3.48 (stones and exile); Diod. 1.98.4 (cursing and stoning); Eur. *Andr.* 1128; Hdt. 5.38 (of a tyrant); Hdt. 9.5.2 (of a traitor); Plu. *Sol.* 12.1 (stoning of conspirators); Polyb. 25.6-9 (stoning and oaths); Soph. *OC* 434-436; Xen. *Anab.* 6.6.7 (traitor); Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.22 (temple-robbers and traitors). See also the stoning of the Ephesian beggar (Philostr. *VA* 4.10) and the fate of Polycrite in Chapter 3 Section c.

²⁰⁷Ov. *Ib.* 467-468 = T. 16.

²⁰⁸Frazer 1913³, 23 (transference of evil); Gebhard 1926, 101-104 (on the original meaning of stoning as symbolic killing) and idem, 16-7 (on the later meaning of magic projectiles to transfer evil from those who throw on the victim); W.H. Roscher, ‘Das von der Kynanthropie handelnde Fragment des Marzellus von Side’, *Abh. d. K.Sachsichen. Gesellsch. d. Wissensch. Phil. Hist.Kl.* 17 (1897) 38-39 (‘Gegenzauber’); Eitrem 1915, 280-294 (e.g. p. 282: “Das Steinwerfen ist sowohl eine apotropäische Maßregel als auch Seelenopfer und eine magische Zauberhandlung, ...” and p. 291: “Kathartische Wirkung hat der Seiwurf in anderen Fällen”). There is much literature on stoning, e.g. E. Cantarella, ‘La Lapidazione tra rito, vendetta e diritto’ in: M.M. Mactoux and E. Geny (eds.), *Mélanges Pierre Levêque* (Paris 1988) vol. 1, 83-95; Fehling 1974, 59-82; L. Gernet, ‘Sur l’exécution

dominated the discussion Hirzel argued that stoning in ancient Greece was in the first place an organised form of communal judgement. According to Hirzel the original and principal aim of stoning was the expulsion, not the death, of the one who was stoned. In this way a community warded off evil and propitiated the gods²⁰⁹.

That stoning should not be approached merely as a negative action per se has been emphasised by Kudlien, who points to various complementary functions of stoning, one of which he calls ‘therapeutisches Steinwerfen’ (therapeutic stoning), the throwing of stones in order to redress an equilibrium. He considers the pelting of *pharmakoi* to belong in this category. Kudlien rightly emphasises that a variety of co-existing and alternating beliefs may be linked up with this therapeutic throwing of stones²¹⁰.

From his ethological perspective, Fehling has claimed that any magical notion or belief was a secondary rationalisation. First and foremost the throwing of stones is an important outlet for communal aggression, according to Fehling, who compares stoning with basic behaviour of animals towards outsiders, or towards those who do not live up to the group’s standards and norms. The group co-operates in the stoning and thus closes the ranks against the anomalous member or the threat from outside²¹¹.

That a symbolic meaning of stoning may have outweighed its, possible fatal, function is well illustrated by the following passage from Plato, especially because the victim is dead already:

... and if any man be convicted of such a murder, and of having slain any of the persons named, the officers of the judges and magistrates shall kill him and cast him

capitale’, *RÉG* 37 (1924) 261- 293; Daremberg and Saglio 1877-1919, s.v. *Lapidatio* (Glotz); M. Gras, ‘Cité grecque et lapidation’, in: *Du châtement dans la cité. Supplices corporels et peine de mort dans le monde antique. Table ronde organisée par l’École française de Rome avec le concours du Centre national de la recherche scientifique (Rome 9-11 nov. 1982) (Collection de l’École française de Rome 97) (Rome 1984) 75-89*; R. Hirzel, ‘Die Strafe der Steinigung’, *Abh. d. K. S. Gesellsch. d. Wissensch., Phil.Hist.Kl.* 27, 7 (1909) 223-266; F. Kudlien, ‘Therapeutisches Steinwerfen. Methodische Überlegungen zu einer urtümlichen Heilhandlung’, *Hermes* 110 (1982) 423-434; A.S. Pease, ‘Notes on Stoning among the Greeks and Romans’, *TAPA* 38 (1907) 5-18; V.J. Rosivach, ‘Execution by Stoning in Athens’, *ClAnt* 6 (1987) 232-248.

²⁰⁹R. Hirzel, ‘Die Strafe der Steinigung’, *Abh. d. K.S. Gesellsch. d. Wissensch., Phil.Hist.Kl.* 27, 7 (1909) 223-266. See idem, 254: “Weil man durch solche Abwehr sich die Götter versöhnen will, wird die Steinigung zur Sühne”.

²¹⁰F. Kudlien, ‘Therapeutisches Steinwerfen. Methodische Überlegungen zu einer urtümlichen Heilhandlung’, *Hermes* 110 (1982) 423-434. Perhaps here should be added the observation of Burkert 1983, 5 (and n.16) that in sacrificial ritual sometimes stones were thrown.

²¹¹Fehling 1974, 59-79, esp. 73.

out naked at an appointed cross-roads outside the city; and all the magistrates, acting on behalf of the whole state, shall take each a stone and cast it on the head of the corpse, and thus purify the whole state; and after this they shall carry the corpse to the borders of the land and cast it out unburied, according to the law²¹².

The patricide, already killed, is first taken outside the city to a meaningful spot, an outcast in all respects. Then he is stoned, not in order to be killed a second time, but to be separated from the community in the most definite manner²¹³. The one who is stoned is placed among the *atimoi*, the patricides and matricides, the traitors and worse. Among the *devoti*, too, according to Ovid. In this perspective, stoning, or stone-throwing, is in the first place a performative action by the whole community (or its representatives) that separates between the other and the self. It may canalise aggression, but it especially separates and stigmatises and thus recreates order.

At the end of this section, with all due caution, a few conclusions can be drawn. It may be claimed that the victim's ultimate fate was in most cases an expulsion beyond the borders of the community into a no man's land. Although, physically speaking, this expulsion is not the same as an instant ritual killing, from a symbolic perspective expulsion indeed might have equalled death in the eyes of ancient man.

Later sources introduce more explicit terminology. They not only call the victim *katharma*, but also refer to his fate in terms of a sacrifice. Such terminology, though unprecedented, does not seem entirely unfounded. Elements in the ritual indeed evoke associations with sacrificial practices. The *katapontismos* exemplifies the complexity of the understanding of ritual fates: it qualifies for both a purificatory and a sacrificial interpretation. It may even be argued that a disproportionate preoccupation with the question whether the victim was sacrificed *or* expelled in fact hinders a deeper understanding of the *pharmakos* ritual.

From a symbolic perspective, the meaning of the *katapontismos* is clear: the one who jumps, or is thrown from a rock is entirely separated from his former community, or status.

Stoning confirms the importance of separation in an almost tangible way. The throwing of stones works on various levels, but it first and foremost creates a

²¹²Pl. *Leg.* 873b (Loeb), note the representative role of the magistrates, comparable the Basileus in Abdera, and note further the crossroads outside the city as place of action and beyond the borders of the land as place of disposal. See e.g. Bremmer 1987, 45 on crossroads as ominous spots. See Chapter 9 Section a for Hecate and crossroads.

²¹³For a similar emphasis on separation see Baudy 1980, 146.

dividing-line between those who throw and the one being thrown at. The former are relieved by the throwing and reunited as a community, the latter is stigmatised as outsider, no longer member of the group. The victim is ousted, symbolically transferred to another world. The community thus redefines its borders, its identity, and regains its purity.

H. RITUAL SPACE

Ritual is not only performed, it also takes place. Literally. As scholars have repeatedly argued and illustrated in the last few decades ritual is articulated in the communal space in a non-accidental way. Their approach largely depends on structural-semiotic ways of scholarship and is no longer innovative as such, but rather presents a useful method to explore a dimension of ritual practice that may seem meaningless from other perspectives. Before such attempts to read the ritual space may be made, the relevant evidence should first be discussed.

As has been pointed out above, most sources use vocabulary suggesting that the victim was led out of town in a kind of centrifugal *pompe*. Some sources further specify the *loci* of ritual action. According to Tzetzes the *thysia* was placed ‘at a suitable place’²¹⁴. When one compares Tzetzes’ description of the ritual with the verses of Hipponax, this remark textually corresponds with Hipponax’ suggestion that the victim was beaten at a meadow²¹⁵. Elsewhere, Tzetzes states that everything happened ‘in the middle of the agora’²¹⁶. Above, the Prytaneum has already been discussed as the possible point of departure of the ritual *pompe*, after the victim had been treated there. This location, housing both the communal dining hall and the public Hearth, corresponds with the point of departure in the Chaeronean ritual described by Plutarch. Here, the ritual chasing away of a slave who represented Hunger started at the public Hearth²¹⁷. A more specific ritual topography is given in one of the descriptions of the Abderean ritual²¹⁸. At Abdera there is no mention of the Prytaneum, or the Hearth. In stead, a ‘grey block’ is referred to, on which the victim stood while eating an abundant meal. Afterwards, the *pharmakos* is led forth to the

²¹⁴Tz. *Chil.* 5, 733, part of T. 13.

²¹⁵Hippon. fr. 6 (Degani) = T. 2 (if Schneidewin was right, see appendix *ad loc.*).

²¹⁶Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38 (see also schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454f = T. 36).

²¹⁷And, at the same time, at the private hearths, see Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 6.7 (*Mor.* 693f.).

gates which were called the Prourides. There is no more information on these specific gates, but we know from Plutarch that many Greek towns had special gates for the passage of criminals and ‘other refuse’²¹⁹. Next, when the victim is outside the walls, another significant place, he goes around in a circle, purifying the city all around²²⁰. Finally, the victim is driven beyond the borders. This expression is found in Strabo’s account on the Leucadian *katapontismos* as well, where the victim is rescued in a boat and taken beyond the borders²²¹. Something hard to imagine at sea.

In line with recent scholarship, it may be argued that the Prytaneum and the public Hearth occupy the central space in a community, and hence represent everything that constitutes order and community²²². ‘The middle of the *agora*’ is another such symbolic spot. Perhaps the grey block in Abdera, unparalleled in the *pharmakos* ritual, may be compared to the ancient stone on the *agora* known from other sources²²³. This stone in the middle of the *agora* played an important role in the

²¹⁸Dieg. 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24.

²¹⁹Plu. *de cur.* 6 (*Mor.* 518b) (translation Loeb): μᾶλλον δ’, ὥσπερ αἱ πόλεις ἔχουσιν τινὰς πύλας ἀποφράδας καὶ σκυθρωπάς, δι’ ὧν ἐξάγουσι τοὺς θανατουμένους καὶ τὰ λύματα καὶ τοὺς καθαροὺς ἐκβάλλουσιν, εὐαγὲς δ’ οὐδὲν οὐδ’ ἱερὸν εἴσεισι οὐδ’ ἔξεισι δι’ αὐτῶν (‘Or rather, as cities have certain unlucky and dismal gates through which they lead out condemned criminals and cast out the refuse and the *katharmoi*, while nothing undefiled or sacred either goes in or out through them, [...]’).

²²⁰Parker 1983, 226 -227 notes on *perikathairein* and *circumferre* that they were used, ‘even when there was no actual encirclement’ and refers to *RE* Suppl. 6 (1935) 149-151 s.v. *Katharsis* (Pfister) for a list of the lustral *peri*-compounds.

²²¹Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27.

²²²The *Hestia Koine* (Public Hearth) with the eternal flame, the cultic centre of the city and its symbol of continuity, was located in the Prytaneum, which was, at least in Athens, a prominent building on the *agora* - the socio-political centre of the *polis*. The public hearth is the place where Plutus takes his seat (Hom. *Hymn. Dem.* 488-489), but also where purifications start from (see Aesch. *Cho.* 98/*Cho.* 966-968; Plat. *Crat.* 396E and also Hdt. 7.197 (chapter 4 below). The Hearth was the sacred centre of the community, see e.g. Pl. *Leg.* 12.955e. See further M. Detienne, ‘La cité en son autonomie. Autour d’Hestia’, *Quaderni di Storia* 11.22 (1985) 59-78; L. Gernet, ‘Sur le symbolisme politique: le foyer commun’, in: Gernet 1968; 382-402; R. Merkelbach, ‘Der Kult der Hestia im Prytaneion der griechischen Städte’, *ZPE* 37 (1980) 77-92; J.P. Vernant, ‘Hestia-Hermès. Sur l’expression religieuse de l’espace et du mouvement chez les Grecs’, in: idem, *Mythes et Pensée chez les Grecs. Etudes de psychologie historique* (Paris 1985²) vol. 1, 124-170. The ἐκποιήσασθαι in Hippon. fr. 27 (Degani) = T. 3 would fit in here very well. The Hearth is the common place for incorporation rituals, of new-born babies, brides and slaves (see resp. e.g. schol. Plat. *Th* 160c [Amphidromia]; Harp., Hesych., Phot. s.v. καταχύσματα and e.g. Pollux 3.77 and schol. Ar. *Pl.* 768 [slaves]), but also of ambassadors (e.g. Photius s.v. καταχύσματα). It would not be surprising if a ritual of excorporation, of alienating and expelling, also started at the (public) Hearth.

²²³Ogden 1997, 21 for instance points out that at Aetolian Cyme an adulterous woman was displayed in the market place on a stone, before being paraded round the city on a mule. Afterwards she must return to the stone again and she remained *atimos* for the rest

civic life of the ancient communities. Gernet calls it a ‘*pierre d’investiture*’, a ‘*représentation spatiale du groupe*’, Mezzadri compares it with the ultimate centre, the *omphalos*²²⁴. Apparently, the victim is first drawn into the symbolic heart of the community. A significant place that greatly contrasts with his subsequent fate.

In a similar vein, the area beyond the borders of the *polis* may be, symbolically, considered to represent ‘*uncivilisation*’²²⁵. Beyond these borders, a thousand threats lurk, though it may also be the place where gods dwell and saviours come from²²⁶. Interestingly, the ancient Greek imagination attributed this symbolic value of the ‘beyond’, or of this ‘Otherland’ as I prefer to call it, to quite familiar places, too: springs, rivers, caves, mountains, meadows, or even the sea, could be read in this way²²⁷. In the imaginary landscape these places even appear

of her life. The stone was considered impure and had to be purified afterwards (see Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 2 (*Mor.* 291f). For more parallels, see Ogden *ad loc.* The common treatment of adulterer and *pharmakos* shows that they shared a common ground. Note that the *pharmakos* remained upright, standing, whereas the woman was sitting, the position of a suppliant, or a slave, as P. Schmitt-Pantel, ‘L’âne, l’adultère et la cité’, in: J. Le Goff and J.-C. Schmitt, *Le Charivari. Actes de la table ronde organisée à Paris (25-27 avril 1977) par l’École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales et le Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (Paris 1981) 117-122, at 118 points out. See also J.N. Bremmer, ‘Walking, Standing, and Sitting in Ancient Greek Culture’, in: J.N. Bremmer and H. Roodenburg (eds.), *A Cultural History of Gesture. From Antiquity to the Present Day* (Cambridge 1991) 15-35. Both were disqualified from being normal members of the community, the woman by breaking the family law, the *pharmakos* by being ritually transformed from member to non-member of the community. For other examples of adulterous *atimoi*, perhaps even wreathed (Ael. *VH* 12.12), and led around the community, see K. Latte, ‘Beiträge zum griechischen Strafrecht II’, *Hermes* 66 (1931) 129-158 at 156-157; Ogden 1997, 21 and the article by P. Schmitt-Pantel just mentioned.

²²⁴L. Gernet, ‘Sur le symbolisme politique: le foyer commun’, in: Gernet 1968, esp. 382-383; B. Mezzadri, ‘La pierre et le foyer. Notes sur les vers 453 à 506 de la Théogonie hésiodique’, *Métis* 2 (1987) 215-220 (219 n.11: “... nous pourrions dire que la pierre est plutôt ὀμφαλός et Hestia plutôt μέσον”). Though the stone is definitely more ancient, the distinction to be made is functional rather than historical. See further Gernet 1968, 400-401. See also Paus. 3.22.1 (purification of Orestes).

²²⁵This Otherland, as I call it, is comparable with the ‘other time’ of the distant past, see Buxton 1994, esp. 104: “‘Not yet’ is an equivalent for ‘outside’”. See also Versnel 1993, 89-135.

²²⁶Binder 1964, esp. 125-152; Graf 1985, 302-303. This Otherland is, evidently, related to the antithetical descriptions of the ancient Greek Self that have received so much attention in the past years. However, the Otherland referred to here, is cruder and vaguer than the more elaborated system of ‘alterité’ discussed by e.g. P. Cartledge, *The Greeks. A Portrait of Self and Others* (Oxford and New York 1993); E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian. Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford 1989); F. Hartog, *Le miroir d’Hérodote : essai sur la représentation de l’autre* (Paris 1980); M. Rosellini and S. Saïd, ‘Usages de femmes et autres nomoi chez les sauvages d’Hérodote. Essai de lecture structurale’, *Annali della Scuola Normale superiore di Pisa* 8 (1978) 949-1005 (fundamental).

²²⁷See, most importantly, Buxton 1994, esp. ch. 6, where Buxton argues that “the landscape of mythological narrative is formed from elements which, while they grow out of

interchangeable²²⁸. Viewed in this light Hipponax' meadow is not so much different anymore from the area beyond the borders, or from the sea in which the Leucadian victim is thrown. The city walls form the locus of division between the centre and these uninhabited, wild margins. Its gates may be seen as the symbolic passages to this Otherland. Just as a rock, the Leucadian one in particular. The Prourides seem to have functioned in this manner, as the shortest way to Otherland.

The Abderean victim is said to have gone around the *polis* to purify it all around. Hesychius uses *perikathairein*, Petronius *circumducere*²²⁹. This *circumambulatio*, as it is called in Latin, is by no means a rare feature in the context of ancient Greek and Roman purification rituals²³⁰. Usually the 'within' is the positive, pure side, and the 'without' the negative area²³¹. In the past, scholars have interpreted this *circumambulatio* as a magic or protective circle, drawn to keep evil

the practices and perceptions of ordinary life, acquire strongly differentiated and conceptually potent symbolic traits". It should be noted that Buxton's analysis is more complex and refined than mine. For my purposes only the main argument suffices. See for caves, the sea-shore and springs Buxton 1994, 97-97f; on mountains: R.G.A. Buxton, 'Imaginary Greek mountains', *JHS* 112 (1992) 1-15; on meadows: C. Calame, 'Prairies intouchées et jardins d'Aphrodite: espaces "initiatiques" en Grèce', in: A.M. Moreau (ed.), *L'initiation. Actes du Colloque international de Montpellier 11-14 avril 1991* (Montpellier 1992) vol. 2, 103-118; A.. Motte, *Prairies et jardins de la Grèce antique: de la religion à la philosophie* (Brussels 1971). The sea can also be understood in these terms, although its role is definitely more complicated, the semiotic difficulties more enlarged, than that of such symbolic *topoi* in general. On the sea and its ambiguity Buxton 1994, 97f.; Parker 1983, 226-227 and Wachsmuth 1967, 212ff.

²²⁸Oedipus for example is not only said to have been exposed in the mountains (Soph. *OT* 717-19 and 1171-1176), but also in a *larnax* on the river (Hyg. *Fab.* 66) and on a (mountain)meadow (schol. Eur. *Ph.* 26). For the purification of Ajax on a meadow see Soph. *Aj.* 654.

²²⁹*Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24 on Abdera. For *circumducere* see Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petr. fr.1 = T. 25, for *perikatheirein* Hesych. s.v. φαρμακοί = T. 11. Bremmer 1983, 314 compares Dio. Chr. 8.14 who quotes Diogenes on athletes: "One should lead around those potbellies and purify (the place) all around, and then chase them over the border".

²³⁰See e.g. A. R. 4.1639-1693 (Talos, the bronze man from Crete (protector) walks thrice daily around the island, pelts with rocks anyone who approaches the island); Cic. *de Div.* 1.53; Hdt. 2.347; Paus. 9.22.1 (Hermes in Tanagra); Polyb. 21.9f.; Plu. *Quaest. Rom.* 27 (*Mor.* 271ab) (on the marking out of building land and the consecration of the city walls); Plu. *Praec. Ger. Re.* 17 (*Mor.* 814b). For the Roman *Ambarvalia*, see Serv. ad *Aen.* 4.62; Aurelian. 20.3; Serv. ad Verg. *Ecl.* 3.77 and Festus s.v. *Amburbiales hostiae*. See for the Mediterranean world at large e.g. Hdt. 1.85 (lions carried around Sardis to ensure safety). On the circumambulation as universal phenomenon, see Baudy 1998, 4 n.14.

²³¹See e.g. Ar. *Ach.* 44 on the assembly: ἐντὸς τοῦ καθάρματος.

out²³². From a more functionalistic point of view, others have stressed the community-binding aspect of such ritual encirclement: marking out what belongs and what does not belong to the community redefines and reinforces its self-image²³³.

The ritual is thus performed on the inside-outside axis of the (imagined) community. On the one hand, the locus of community, the centre is involved, on the other hand, the area beyond the borders, the uninhabited Otherland. The two places are connected and contrasted through ritual action expressed in *pompe*-vocabulary, or as discussed above, in words such as jumping and throwing. Apart from this linear movement, there is also a circular one: some sources describe how the victim is led around the town first before he is expelled. This *circumabulatio* may be considered to (re)define the social space of the community. It separates the positive from the negative, and marks out what belongs and does not belong. The linear articulation of space may be read in a similar vein: what once was part of the community has acquired another status and is sent away to where it belongs. The ritual space thus represents and redefines the community and the victim.

However, if one disregards the temporal dimension, and approaches the entire ritual in a synchronic way, the two poles that constitute the ritual space may also be considered to constitute the identity of the *pharmakos*, who both belongs and does not belong, who is both central and marginal. An equivocal being, if indeed *nomen omen est*.

I. WHAT'S IN A NAME

So far any straightforward conclusion on the ritual status and role of the *pharmakos* has been obstructed by problems of inconsistency in the source-material. Unfortunately, there is little direct evidence on the ritual status and role of the victim. However, a closer look at the names and terms employed to describe the victim may prove its while. *Pharmakos* was not the only term in use, *peripsema*, *su(m)bakchos*, *katharma*, *katharsion*, *devotus* were employed as well. Though most of these terms are quite opaque, each of them may add some insight. Nevertheless, it will appear

²³²For literature and interpretations, see Eitrem 1915, 6-29; Gebhard 1926, 75 (magic circle) and 106 (to simplify the transference of evil); Nilsson 1955², vol.1, 105, 113-114; Pax, *RAC* 3 (1957) 143-152.

²³³See e.g. Baudy 1980, 71; Parker 1983, 21-22 (symbolic acts that create division) and Versnel 1993, 319f.

that such a terminological study does not solve the problems of inconsistency. On the contrary, the *pharmakos* turns out to be the very embodiment of the ambiguity observed in earlier sections.

Two preliminary remarks are in order. First, it must be noted that some of the ritual names employed for the victim carry an abusive connotation²³⁴. However, the rhetorical use of a term does not necessarily cover the whole spectrum of its ritual meaning. It is therefore important to study the meaning of the terms as such. Secondly, it must be clear that the enormous timespan covered by the source-material highly complicates a semantic study like this. The usage of terms evolved, as did the concepts they related to, especially due to fundamental cultural and religious changes. Be that as it may, for want of better ways to analyse the role and status of the victim, it seems worth the effort to explore the terminology involved.

The term *peripsema* occurs only twice in the testimonia on the *pharmakos* ritual²³⁵. Its literal meaning is ‘anything wiped off’²³⁶, ‘offscouring’, which belongs in the field of purification²³⁷. In the *katapontismos* described by Photius, the victim is thus addressed: “be(come) our *peripsema*”²³⁸. Photius explains the term as follows: “anything wiped off or that which is under the shoes or ransoming (*apolutrosis*)” and a few lines later, “deliverance (*soteria*)”, which seems quite a semantic range to cover. In the other testimonium, a scholion on Aristophanes, the ritual victim is reported to be addressed as follows: “be our removal of evil”, on which the scholiast comments that because of those words the victim is also called ‘*peripsema*’²³⁹. The scholiast further elucidates the term by telling that the victim was wiped off all around by all. The victim thus is both the one who is being wiped off and that which has been wiped off at the same time, if the scholiast is understood correctly. In

²³⁴For such a use of *katharma*, see for instance Ar. *Pl.* 454-455 = T. 32; Dem. 21.185 and 199; Dem. 18.128; Eupolis fr. 384, 7-8 (Kassel-Austin) and Aeschin. 3, 211. See also Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 22, 481, p. 1935.15f = T. 56 and schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454a = T. 33. The abusive use of (*peri*)*katharma* can be found in the New Testament, too, and even in the same passage (1 *Cor.* 4.13) as the term *peripsema*. For *pharmakos*, see Dem. 25.80 = T. 47.

²³⁵Phot. s.v. περίψημα = T. 54; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34.

²³⁶See *LSJ* s.v.

²³⁷For wiping off as a means of purification, see Parker 1983, index s.v.; D. Goltz, *Studien zur altorientalischen und Griechischen Heilkunde: Therapie, Arzneibereitung, Rezeptstruktur* (Sudhoffs Archiv Beiheft 16) (Wiesbaden 1974), 219f. on wiping off in medical sense as purification. See e.g. Ar. *Ach.* 843; Eur. *Ba.* 344.

²³⁸Phot. s.v. περίψημα = T. 54: περίψημα ἡμῶν γενοῦ.

²³⁹Schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34: γενοῦ ἡμῖν ἀπαλλαγὴ κακῶν. ἐκ τούτου ἐλέγεται καὶ "περίψημα".

general, Hesychius explains the term as follows: ‘*peripsema*: something wiped off all around, ransom in return, that which is given for life’, which places the word into a sphere of purification, but also of effective death and compensation²⁴⁰.

Here the question arises whether the Byzantine scholars, inheritors of both the ancient Greco-Roman and the Judeo-Christian traditions, are to be taken seriously in a literal way. Is this Christian terminology applied to ancient Greek ritual or have ancient Greek concepts been employed in (Judeo-)Christian thought and writings²⁴¹? Perhaps even both these questions must be answered in an affirmative way²⁴².

Peripsema so far appears not very helpful in understanding the victim in the *pharmakos* ritual. Although the term belongs in a general context of purification, its scope is so wide that it does not allow a further specification of the role and status of

²⁴⁰Hesych. s.v. περίψημα: περίψημα· περικάταγμα. αντίλυτρα, αντίψυχα. Compare also *Sud.* s.v. περίψημα: αντίψυχον, αντίλυτρον, ἀπολύτρωσις, σωτηρία. For ἀντίλυτρον see Orph. *L.* 593 (ἀντίδοτον); for ἀντίψυχον see *Luc. Lex.* 10 and D.C. 59.8. For references to περικάταγμα εν περίψημα in ancient Greek literature see K.S.M. Starowieyski, ‘ΠΕΡΙΚΑΘΑΡΜΑ et ΠΕΡΙΨΗΜΑ. Przyczynek do historii egzegezy patrystycznej’, *Eos* 78 (1990) 281-295 who establishes a semantic evolution of the term περίψημα, from pollution to sacrifice. Unfortunately, I have only been able to read the summary of this article in French, not the Polish text. Only the grammarians and Photius mention the term in a sacrificial sense according to Starowieyski.

²⁴¹The use of the term *peripsema* is late, and a Christian influence on its employment in our context cannot be ruled out. The term occurs at least once in the New Testament, notably in a letter of Paul, where it is also used with regard to human beings, but in a pejorative way (1 *Cor.* 4.13). See for a crosscultural and crossreligious analysis of the use of the terms *perikatharma* and *peripsēma* Starowieyski 1990. Starowieyski concludes, if I understand him correctly, that the sacrificial connotation, or use, of the terms is not particularly connected with the New Testament or patristic literature. According to G.W.H. Lampe (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford 1961) the terms ἀντίλυτρον and ἀντίψυχος do occur in Patristic texts, even for Christ himself: ἑαυτὸν παρεδίδου ὁ κύριος ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ἵνα γένηται ἀντίψυχον καὶ ἀντίλυτρον ἡμῶν (*Eus. Is.* 53.6 f, and other references, see Lampe *ad loc.*). The term ἀπολύτρωσις is also frequently employed in patristic literature, e.g. *Gr. Nar. Or.* 30.20· ἀπολύτρωσις ... ὡς ἐλευθερῶν ἡμᾶς ... καὶ λύτρον ἑαυτὸν ἀντιδιδούς ἡμῶν τῆς οἰκουμένης καθάρσιον. See Lampe *ad loc.* The question of the relationship of pagan and early Christian contributions to the notion of *lutron* and related terms has received renewed attention more recently, after NT scholars have discovered the Phrygo-Lyidian so-called confession texts (see Versnel 2005, n. 237ff {forthcoming}).

²⁴²Lack of space and, more importantly, knowledge forbids me to embark on a serious study of these fascinating questions. The question of possible influences of the Graeco-Roman notions of effective death on the ‘construction’ of Jesus’ death, but also of the latter in turn on later sources commenting on the ancient Greek material is a complex issue. See for the former phenomenon, and all relevant literature, Versnel 2005 and ref.. The parallel was drawn already in Antiquity, see e.g. the following comparison made by Origenes *c. Cels.* 1.31: “They [apostles] not only dared to show to the Jews from the words of the prophets that he was the prophesied one, but also to the other peoples that he, who

the victim within that context. Its meaning varies between, most negatively, dirt that should be wiped away and, positively, a ransom, a means of safety.

The second term, *su(m)bakchos*, is hardly less problematic. Though more clearly ancient Greek in use, its overall meaning is all the more puzzling. The term is only used once in our sources, by Helladius²⁴³ and has never been satisfactorily explained. For both extant readings, *subakchos* and *sumbakchos*, interpretations have been put forward. Although the first reading has long gained most support, the second has been rehabilitated as a sound possibility by Masson²⁴⁴. *Subakchoi* has been understood as a contraction of *suko-bakchoi* or *sus-bakchoi*, either fig- or pig-Bacchants²⁴⁵. The fig-variant is supported by the necklaces of dried figs worn by the two *pharmakoi*, according to the same report from Helladius. The pig-variant would yield no clue, or it must be the far-fetched reference to pigs as common victims in purification rituals. As mentioned, the alternative *sumbakchoi* has found fewer adherents, though the composite noun or verb is better attested in ancient Greek. Masson discusses its general sense of being possessed, either by a deity²⁴⁶ (Dionysus or Apollo), or not²⁴⁷. ‘Fellow possessed’, might then be the translation: “En tant que ‘boucs émissaires’, les pharmakoi devaient être regardés comme remplis d’une force sacrée”²⁴⁸.

I have little to add in terms of etymology and morphology. There is, however, one interpretative dimension that is noteworthy. From a structural-symbolic point of view, in all readings, but especially in the last, the *pharmakos* can be considered as being in a different state. As Masson points out this should not necessarily be in a Dionysiac context. It may be added, that it neither should be an ecstatic state. There

had been recently crucified, voluntarily died for mankind, like those who died for their fatherland, to avert plague epidemics, famine, and shipwreck”.

²⁴³Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49. For the different manuscript traditions, see *ad loc.*

²⁴⁴Masson 1950.

²⁴⁵The pig-Bacchants were defended by, among others, Harrison 1922³, 100, the fig-Bacchants by Gebhard 1926, 93-95 (Feigenbakchen) and 1932.

²⁴⁶‘Ecstatic, possessed with a sacred force’, an interpretation that was popular among the adepts of orondism, see e.g. Pfister in Masson 1950, 453: “βάκχοι sind von der Kraft des Gottes erfüllt, μανέντες, ἔνθεοι. Als Spitzname möchte ich diese Bezeichnung der pharmakoi nicht auffassen, sondern sie werden hierdurch ausdrücklich als orondistische Personen gekennzeichnet”. See for this discussion also Ogden 1997, 21 and notes.

²⁴⁷Masson 1950, 454-455. See Athen. 10.445ab = Philomn. *FGrHist* 527 fr. 2 ; Eur. *Ba.* 726; Pl. *Phaedr.* 234d; Philostr. *Imag.* 1.14 and 2.17. Compare further Eur. *Tr.* 170, 367, 408 and 500 for related expressions.

²⁴⁸Masson 1950, 454.

is a famous fragment from Euripides' *Cretans*, in which the chorus of initiates explain how they have led a pure life from the time they were consecrated and called Bacchants²⁴⁹. Fig-/pig-Bacchants or fellow-Bacchants, none can be definitely excluded. But whatever its derivation, it is tempting to read this ritual term as an indicator of a new status of the victims who are, like initiates or consecrated beings, people in a state of (temporary or enduring) otherness.

A discussion of the third term used for the victim, *katharma*, cannot be separated from another, related, term, *katharsion*. The two clearly belong to ancient Greek purificatory vocabulary, but denote different aspects of purification. The ancient Greek concept of purification is too complex to be discussed already here, but it will receive further treatment in Chapters 8 and 9²⁵⁰. For the time being only these terms and their respective meaning and uses will be explored.

As Hughes has pointed out, the identification of *katharma* with *pharmakos* is relatively late²⁵¹. Whereas its employment as a term of abuse for human beings is already attested in the fifth century BC²⁵², the employment of *katharma* for the *pharmakos* only became current among the Byzantine scholiasts, though their uses of the term do not always converge. In general, the term *katharma* means 'that which is used for purification' or 'that which is thrown away in cleansing'²⁵³. Sometimes the purification itself is referred to²⁵⁴, or even that which has been purified²⁵⁵.

²⁴⁹Eur. *Cret.* fr. 472 (Kannicht).

²⁵⁰In due course, we will distinguish a narrow interpretation, the (symbolic) elimination of dirt and a wider interpretation, in which sacrifice is considered in the first place an attempt to impose system again.

²⁵¹See Chapter 1 Section g.

²⁵²For *katharma(ta)* as a recurrent term of abuse in comedy and oratory, see e.g. Ar. *Pl.* 454-455 = T. 32 above, but also Eupolis fr. 384, 7-8: νυνὶ δ' ὅπῃ τύχοιμεν στρατεύομεσθ' αἰρούμενοι καθάρματα στρατηγούς (and now anywhere at all we choose *katharmata* as our generals when we wage war [instead of the good old days, of course, when the generals were the best men and paid respect to like gods]). Compare also Dem. 21.185 and 199 where Demosthenes uses the word *katharma* in a personified and very pejorative sense: ἄλλος οὐτοσί τις ἀναιδής καὶ πολλοὺς ὑβρίζων, καὶ τοὺς μὲν πτωχοὺς, τοὺς δὲ καθάρματα, τοὺς δ' οὐδὲν ὑπολαμβάνων εἶναι (he there is another one, who is shameless and insulting many, and treating some as beggars, others as *katharmata*). Comp. also Dem. 18.128: ὃ κάθαρμα; Din. I.16 (τὸ κάθαρμα); Aeschin. 3.211; and relevant scholia; see also Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 22, 481, p. 1935.15f = T. 56.

²⁵³LSJ s.v. See (Ps.)Ammon. p. 79: καθάρματα, τὰ μετὰ τὸ καθαρθῆναι ἀπορρίπτομενα; Eust. 1935, 10: καθαρωῶν ἐκβολαί = κάθαρμα; Pollux 5. 46: τῶν ἐν ταῖς τρίοδοις καθαρωμάτων ἐκβλητότερος. On the various possible destinies of these *katharmata*, see above.

²⁵⁴Eur. *IT* 1316; Eur. *Her.* 225. See also Hamburg 1919, 2514: "Bei den späteren wird dann *katharma* häufig abstrakt als 'Reinigung' synonym mit *katharsis* gebraucht", for

Interestingly, in one of our testimonia yet another explanation is offered: ‘*katharma* is that which is offered (*didomenon*) for the sake of purification’²⁵⁶. This in fact fits in well with the sacrificial sphere in which these later sources place the *pharmakos* ritual. The range of uses appears quite wide. It is therefore impossible to exactly describe the ritual role or status of the victim on the basis of the term *katharma*²⁵⁷.

Once, Tzetzes uses *katharmos* for the victim²⁵⁸. *Katharmos* is generally taken as ‘purification’, but was also used to refer to the means for purification, the remedy itself or the *katharma*. As Hamburg concludes *sub voce* in his contribution to the *Realencyclopädie*: “Das Wort bedeutet Sühnbräuche und umfaßt die ganze kathartische Aktion” (The word denotes the practice of atonement and encompasses the entire purificatory action)²⁵⁹.

In a few other, much earlier, testimonia, the *pharmakos* is not called *katharma*, but *katharsion*²⁶⁰. As a matter of fact, *katharsion* is the earliest substantivised description of the purificatory role of the *pharmakos*. According to (Ps.)Ammonius the difference between *katharsia* and *katharmata* is as follows: “*katharsia* are called the sacred things and the other things by means of which they are purified, and *katharmata* that which after being purified is thrown away”²⁶¹.

which he refers for instance to Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 22.481, p. 1935.3; Plut. *Caes.* 43; *Sud.* s.v. I doubt however that time is the only explanation for the divergence in meaning, or an explanation at all in view of the fact that two of the examples come from Euripides.

²⁵⁵See Ar. *Ach.* 44: ‘within the purified ground’ (ἐντὸς τοῦ καθάρματος). A remark in one of our testimonia, schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34 must be understood in this light, too: ‘*Katharma* and *katharsion* differ: *katharma* is that which is being purified and *katharsion* that which purifies’. Chantraine e.a. 1968-1980, *ad loc.* notes: ‘*katharma*: purification, mais aussi ce qui vient de la purification, du nettoyage’.

²⁵⁶Schol. Aesch. *Th.* 680 = T. 45. Compare also for instance schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 37: ‘*katharmata* were called those sacrificed to the gods to effect purification’.

²⁵⁷In dealing with the term, one should not forget that the noun is neuter and its use for human beings is not self-evident. *Katharma*, as mentioned earlier, appears to have been an abusive term for persons already in classical Athens. What we do not know, unfortunately, is whether it was already at that time used for the human victims of the *pharmakos* ritual. Or, in other terms, whether the pejorative use of *katharmata* in oratory and comedy arose from its association with *pharmakoi*, or the other way round, and perhaps only many centuries later. (It is Tzetzes himself who suggests something in this direction, when he says: ‘This *katharma* they formerly called *pharmakos*’, Tz. *Chil.* 8, 916, part of T. 14).

²⁵⁸Tz. *Chil.* 5, 763, part of T. 13. Compare Athamas in Hdt. 7.197, Chapter 4.

²⁵⁹Hamburg 1919, 2513 and ref. Hamburg *ad loc.* Distinguishes three main categories of *katharmoi*: “a) rein kathartische, b) hilastische, c) separierende.”

²⁶⁰Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48; *Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24.

²⁶¹Ammon. *de Ad. Voc. Dif.* (Nickau) p. 68 = T. 58: καθάρσια καὶ καθάρματα διαφέρει· καθάρσια μὲν γὰρ λέγεται τὰ ἱερὰ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα οἷς καθαιρούνται,

Eustathius rates the two terms as follows: “And from this *kathairein* are the derivations *katharsion* and *katharma*, the first not pejorative, the second very much so, whence we call the base and filthy folks *katharmata*”²⁶².

Kathairein, ‘to purify, to cleanse’, from which these nouns derive, occurs already in the oldest testimonia and is one of the most constant terms throughout the source-material on the *pharmakos* ritual²⁶³. Consequently, the problem is not so much the purificatory sphere the ritual clearly belongs to, but rather the precise role of the victim within this context: is he considered the subject, the object or the means of purification?

To sum up, the term *katharma*, attested in the *pharmakos* context only in later testimonia where it is mostly combined with sacrificial notions, is less unequivocal in its uses than the abusive contexts in which it also occurs, might suggest. The terms *katharma* and *katharsion* may be considered quite neutral descriptions of the victim’s function as ‘purifying instrument’. The latter occurs in earlier sources and readjusts any preconceived idea about the purely negative status of the victim in purificatory ritual²⁶⁴. The fact that differing terms, each with considerable semantic scopes, are employed to describe the victim may be regarded to confirm the impossibility of the present terminological venture²⁶⁵. However, it may also be taken to reflect the polysemy of ritual, and hence of the role and status of the ritual’s protagonist.

Next, one Latin term deserves some attention, as it is used for the same Abderian victim who is referred to as *katharsion* in the *diegesis* on Callimachus. Both Ovid and a number of the scholiasts who comment upon his verses employ the

καθάρματα δὲ τὰ μετὰ τὸ καθαρθῆναι ἀπορριπτούμενα. Note the use of *riptein*. For *katharsia* being sacred, see *LSJ* s.v. *katharsion*. See also schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34 (“... *katharsion* is hat which purifies”) and schol. Aesch. *Th.* 680 = T. 45 (“*katharma*, *katharsion* and *katharsis* are different; a *katharsion* is that which purifies ...”).

²⁶²Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 22, 481, p. 1935.15f = T. 56.

²⁶³Compare also Hesych. s.v. φαρμακοί = T. 11: καθαρτήριοι.

²⁶⁴See the remarks and objections already made in Chapter 1 Section g in reaction to Hughes’ conclusions about the misleading identification of *katharmata* and *pharmakoi*, and to Parker 1983, 24 where he assumes a purely negative role of the victims in the purificatory *pharmakos* ritual.

²⁶⁵In dealing with the terms *katharsis*, *kathairein* and derivatives Lloyd 2003, 9 (and ref.) has stressed what he calls the ‘semantic stretch’ of language, refusing to choose between primary or transferred, literal or metaphorical usage: “... in each case there is the notion of return to a clean or pure state, how that is construed varies from instance to instance, and so accordingly does ‘purification’ in question”. I came across Lloyd 2003 too late to incorporate his arguments in my main thesis. The notion of semantic stretch is comparable with what I shall call semantic slippage in Chapter 9 Section c.

term *devotus* for the victim²⁶⁶. According to one of the scholiasts, the ‘devoted’ was nourished, as the *diegesis* on Callimachus mentions as well²⁶⁷. To be ‘devoted’ is by no means an entirely happy fate: most scholia follow Ovid with regard to the stoning of the ‘devoted’, and some even report that this stoning was fatal. Two other scholiasts on Ovid, who do not employ the term *devotus*, describe the victim as follows: “he was excommunicated seven days earlier, so that in this way he would have the [blemishes] of all” or: “someone is exposed to death”²⁶⁸. Probably, these descriptions are all variations on the same ritual theme.

The term *devotus*, when used in a ritual context, means ‘devoted’ in the sense of ‘vowed (to a deity)’ or ‘cursed’, ‘execrated’ or ‘handed over to the infernal gods’²⁶⁹. Through this term a link is established between the *pharmakos* ritual and the Roman *devotio*. The *devotio* is a ritual “to ‘devote’ either oneself, the enemy or both to the infernal gods in order to ensure victory, to save someone else or a whole group from death and destruction”²⁷⁰. A ritual that shows more than superficial correspondences with the ritual that is subject of our interest.

The potential ambiguity inherent in the status and fate of the *devotus* is even more clearly present in the term *sacer*²⁷¹. It is precisely this term that Servius tries to elucidate when he describes the Massilian *pharmakos* ritual as described by Petronius: “some consider *sacra* ‘devoted’, hence *ver sacrum*. Others take *sacrum* as impious or sacrilegious”²⁷².

Although of great interest, the terms *devovere*, *devotus* and *sacer* are Latin terms, and we should be cautious to generalise their use too easily in our study of the *pharmakos* ritual. The idea that the victim was ritually set apart and thus acquired a new, perhaps quite ambivalent, status, seems nonetheless to cover the Greek evidence as well.

²⁶⁶Ov. *Ib.* 467-468 = T. 16; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467b = T. 18, schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467e = T. 21 and schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467f = T. 22, the last of these explicitly referring to Callimachus as the source of his knowledge.

²⁶⁷Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467f = T. 22 and *Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24.

²⁶⁸Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467a = T. 17 and schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467c = T. 19.

²⁶⁹See Lewis and Short s.v. The English ‘devoted’ does not carry the negative connotations and is thus misleading.

²⁷⁰So Versnel in *OCD*³ ad loc. See esp. H.S. Versnel, ‘Two types of Roman *devotio*’, *Mnemosyne* 29 (1976) 365-410.

²⁷¹See esp. Fugier 1963.

²⁷²Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petr. fr. 1 = T. 25 (*Auri sacra fames*). On the Roman *ver sacrum*, see Chapter 6 Section e below.

Last but not least we turn to the name by which the ritual victim has become best known: *pharmakos*. The term is undoubtedly related to the word for drug ‘*pharmakon*’²⁷³. One (perhaps later) meaning attributed to the term *pharmakos* is ‘magician’²⁷⁴. The suggestion by Herodian²⁷⁵ (as far as I know the first attempt in antiquity) to differentiate between the ritual and non-ritual *pharmakoi* in terms of their accent (the *phármakos*-magician with the accent on the antepenult and the ritual *pharmakós*, the victim in our ritual, accentuated on the ultima) has been adopted in modern scholarship²⁷⁶. One has to keep in mind however, that this distinction is a relatively late invention and may not hold true for all ancient sources.

The precise meaning of the term *pharmakos* in the ritual context is difficult to establish. Those who try to solve this problem through (supposed) etymologies have come up with suggestions such as ‘der als Zauber dienende, ein in Menschengestalt

²⁷³On the etymology of *pharmakon* and *pharmakos*: Fick, *Bezenberger Beiträge zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sprachen* 23 (1898) 185ff; *RE* 5.2 (1934) 1287-1304 s.v. Thargelia (Fiehn) and references; Gebhard 1926, 24; Gebhard 1934, 1290; W. Havers, ‘Zur etymologie von griechischem pharmakon’, *Indogermanische Forschungen* 25 (1909) 375f; A. Klotz, ‘φαρμακός?’, *Glotta* 3 (1912) 236-241; O. Masson, ‘Sur un papyrus contenant des fragments d’Hipponax (*P.Oxy.* xviii. 2176)’, *RÉG* 62 (1949) 300-319, esp. 311-319; Nilsson 1955², vol. 1, 538-544; H. Osthoff, ‘Allerhand Zauber etymologisch beleuchtet 3: Gr. φάρμακον, lit. buriù’, *Bezenberger Beiträge zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sprachen* 24 (1899) 144-158, who claims ‘Zaubermittel’ as the main sense of the homeric *pharmakon*; Schwenn 1915, 38-39 realises that etymology and interpretation cannot be separated: “*pharmakos* = Zauberer, sowie *pharmakon* = Zaubermittel, das Glück und Unglück bringen kann, demnach sowohl das Heilmittel wie das Gift. Man hat angenommen, daß in unserem Brauche nichts anderes stecke als eine Vertreibung von Zaubern, die dem Volke Schaden zugefügt hatten oder zufügen konnten. Das will durchaus nicht mit der sonstigen Überlieferung stimmen, nach der es sich um eine Entsühnung handelte. So muß das Wort *pharmakos* anders zu verstehen sein, am besten wohl als ‘lebendes Zauber- (d.h. Reinigungs)mittel’”. See also Chantraine 1974, *ad loc.*: “victime expiatoire” (...) “Ce φαρμακός est le même mot que φάρμακον, mais avec genre et accent distinctifs: l’homme qui sert de victime expiatoire est ‘le remède’ personnifié, d’où le passage de φάρμακον au masculin”. On the second alpha in *pharmakos* being long in Ionic Greek, short in Attic, see Didymus *ap.* Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48; Hippon. fr. 6 (Degani) = T. 2, Hippon. fr. 27 = T. 3, Hippon. fr. 28 (Degani) = T. 4, Hippon. fr. 29 (Degani) = T. 5; Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 23 and Phot. s.v. φαρμακός = T. 55.

²⁷⁴*LSJ* s.v., which is, ultimately, also a matter of contextual interpretation.

²⁷⁵Hdn. 1.150, 3-4 = Arc. 51.10 = T. 57.

²⁷⁶See *LSJ* s.v. φαρμακός and s.v. φάρμακος. Masson 1962, 113 claims that the magician is the successor of an earlier, but in due course extinct ritual being. But this cannot be maintained without reservations; the earliest testimonia in which φάρμακοι (according to our interpretation) play a role are long before the last φαρμακός makes his (dis)appearance. It seems more likely that they existed side by side. In that case the question remains if Herodianus simply reflects common usage or invented this formal distinction for the sake of clarity.

verkörperter Zauberer' (he who serves as magic, the embodiment of magic)²⁷⁷, 'der körperlich und geistig geschlagener Mann' (he who is beaten physically and mentally)²⁷⁸ or 'magic man'²⁷⁹. Interpretation of the ritual victim's role and suggested etymologies are, evidently, closely intertwined. One other translation which has been employed, and in fact is still current, is '(human/living) medicine'²⁸⁰, thus stressing its etymological connection with the Greek word for drug, medicine, *pharmakon*. It is this translation, personalised medicine (or drug), that I am inclined to work with, as this connection seems the least controversial.

A striking aspect of the term *pharmakon* must be discussed here, for it is not unlikely that this has bearings on the term *pharmakos*, too. Artelt has amply shown that the term *pharmakon* as such was a *vox media*²⁸¹: "Unsere Begriffe 'Heilmittel' und 'Gift' sind vereinigt in dem (homerischen) Wort *pharmakon*. Es wird durch Zusätze wie *epion*, *esthlon*, *lugron*, *kakon* (...) näher als nutzbringend oder schädigend charakterisiert" (our notions remedy and poison are united in the (homerical) term *pharmakon*, which is further specified as beneficent or harmful by terms such as *epion*, *esthlon*, *lugron*, *kakon*.)²⁸². Whether this duality is caused by its basic sense of magic, multipurposed in itself, by cognitive structures in ancient Greek thought or by other reasons, remains to be seen. For the time being it suffices to point out that without an explicating adjective or a closing context the term remained neutral or, for that matter, ambiguous. In addition, it is important to note that the term *pharmakon* retained this potential for ambiguity also when used metaphorically²⁸³.

²⁷⁷H. Osthoff, 'Allerhand Zauber etymologisch beleuchtet 3: Gr. φαρμακον, lit. buriu', *Beiträge zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sprachen* 24 (1899) 144-158, at 151.

²⁷⁸W. Havers, 'Zur etymologie von griechischem pharmakon', *Indogermanische Forschungen* 25 (1909) 388.

²⁷⁹Harrison 1922³, 108.

²⁸⁰See e.g. Schwenn 1915, 39; compare also Hughes 1991, 140.

²⁸¹Artelt 1937, followed by many others since. See further e.g. G Jüttner, 'Heilmittel', *RAC* 14 (1988) 249-274; Daremberg and Saglio 1877-1919, s.v. 'Veneficium' (Lécrivain); Lloyd 1979, 43-44 n. 184. See e.g. Hom. *Od.* 4. 220-230 and 10. 304 and 391-394; Hes. fr. 239 (Merkelbach-West); Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 7.1 (*Mor.* 655e); Theocr. 11, 1-4; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 7.11.61.5 (iii. 44, 30 Stählin).

²⁸²Artelt 1937, 39 (ἥπιον, ἐσθλόν, λυγρόν, κακόν [...]). See also, among others, H. Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg 1970) *ad loc.*

²⁸³Artelt 1937, 46f. If it is wise at all to distinguish between primary and derived, or metaphorical, uses at all. Moreover, Chantraine e.a. 1968-1980, s.v. has pointed out that the function of the term is also double: *pharmakon nosou*: remède contre une maladie - *pharmakon athanasias*: drogue donnant l'immortalité. Compare Menoeceus as a *pharmakon soterias* above. See Chapter 9 Section c for more examples of semantic stretch and slippage in crisis management terminology.

Though it cannot be concluded that precisely the same holds for the *pharmakos*, too, it may be kept in mind that the term *pharmakon* as such carried an ambiguity as to its function (taking away the negative or harbinger of the good) and ends (maleficient or beneficent).

Although most of these terms studied so far do not allow unequivocal conclusions about the status or role of the victims, they do confirm and even deepen our insights gained so far, albeit in various respects. To begin with, earlier observations about the emphasis on separation (stoning, beating) and redefining (food, clothes) have been reinforced by the use of ritual terms that also express some kind of otherness, perhaps *sumbakchos*, and *devotus* in particular. Furthermore, the purificatory context of the *pharmakos* ritual has once more been firmly established. However, on the basis of the terminology employed for the victim, his role within that context has become less clear. It appears that more inferences have become conceivable than the simple assumption that the victim was regarded as the animate form of purificatory waste that should be dispatched as far as possible, such as the terms *peripsema* and *katharma* perhaps at first sight suggest. Other terms, basically more neutral, or more ambivalent, such as *katharsion* and *pharmakos*, *devotus* and *sacer*, point also to other directions to perceive the ritual role and status of the victim. These directions however are far from unequivocal.

Earlier observations about the status of the victim concur with this conclusion. Whereas one might have wondered if these earlier equivocal findings about the victim were the sum of incompatible source-material rather than a reflection of his ritual status, it has now turned out that even the name of the victim has this potential of ambiguity. Instead of having become more transparent, the *pharmakos* ritual has acquired a kind of structural complexity. Before we can embark on a study of the interpretative history of the ritual in the next section, this structural complexity needs some further attention.

J. CIRCUMSTANCES, REMEDIES, CAUSES AND EFFECTS

“But did it really work?”, someone in my audience once asked after having heard a paper on the *pharmakos* ritual. To him, this was a self-evident question, and he clearly expected to hear, ‘no, of course not’. And he was right, but only in terms of visible causality. However, that this is not the sole framework for questions and

answers in religious studies must be evident by now. Rituals do work, and on various levels. Let us first explore the ritual causality as perceived by the ancient authors themselves.

Two questions stand out. The first pertains to the presumed rationale behind the ritual: what effects did the authors attribute to the ritual procedures? What relations between causes, means and consequences did they discern? And secondly: which of these relations recur systematically in the ritual descriptions?

Furthermore, one other issue must also be dealt with at the same time. A sceptic may regard the inconsistencies established so far, especially with regard to the victim's fate, merely as a matter of disagreement *between* the sources rather than intrinsic to the ritual. In other words, the question must be dealt with to what extent our methodology has *created* the established inconsistencies. To put it bluntly, it may be that half of the testimonia speak of the purificatory riddance of an ugly nonentity to expel evil, while the other half claims that a member of the community was entertained, wreathed and sacrificed in order to propitiate the gods. By taking these various sources as belonging to one coherent body of texts, an inconsistent ritual conglomerate may be created artificially.

Discussing culture is, however, not the same as discussing mathematics. In the introduction a few remarks have been made, that need to be recalled at the onset of this final section. There are not two identical descriptions of a ritual. Place, time and the onlooker's subjective perception are all formative factors of importance, the author on whose written text we depend provides a further filter. Ritual descriptions are potentially reductive and may therefore reveal partial ritual truths only. As a result any attempt to reconstruct (and read) a ritual depends on resembling, not identical, descriptive material. Ritual causality, as perceived by the ancient authors themselves, presents an excellent test case for this larger issue of inconsistency as well.

Most testimonia call the ritual a purification of the city, but, as was observed in the last section, it is not that simple to find out what is exactly meant by that. Cleansing by means of two wretched individuals who were the animate form of the 'offscourings' (*katharmata*) and who were expelled from the area of human habitation, carrying impurity with them²⁸⁴, does not always cover the content of the

²⁸⁴Parker 1983, 24.

source. Older testimonia are rarely specific, due to their indirect character, and they employ polyvalent terms, such as *katharsion* and *pharmakos*. Only the later testimonia, written by erudite commentators and scholars, attribute more precise purposes and effects to the described ritual procedures, although the evidence still remains quite meagre.

The purification, whether by means of a sacrifice or an expulsion of a victim, is described to affect the city as a whole²⁸⁵, or its inhabitants²⁸⁶. Further specifications of this purification, if any, come down to ‘the removal of disaster (ills, drought and so on)’²⁸⁷ or to ‘the aversion of (all sorts of) evil’²⁸⁸. Once, the ritual is said to be performed ‘for the transgressions of the citizens’²⁸⁹, once to provide ‘a ransom for all’ ‘to atone for the city’s offence towards the gods’²⁹⁰ and once as ‘a removal of the ills that held them in their grip’ by means of the victim who was referred to as ‘[their] deliverance and ransoming’²⁹¹. A few times the gods, albeit nameless, are drawn into the accounts. In the testimonium that speaks of atonement and ransom, and in four more (late) sources, the cause of the crisis is attributed to divine wrath or the city is described as ‘being in the grip of the god’²⁹². In these cases either a sacrifice or ‘burning’ of the victim appears the proper remedy, the victim being a paltry fellow all the same. One source refers to ‘a sacrifice to the god to effect purification’²⁹³.

From this list it becomes evident that there is no chance to gain more systematic insights into the ritual by studying the ancient accounts of its ‘rationale’. The same effects are attributed to sacrificial killing and purificatory expulsion alike.

²⁸⁵See e.g. (Ps.) Ammon. 494 = T. 59; *Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24; D.L. 2.44 = Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 fr. 34 = T. 50; Harp. s.v. Φαρμαχός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48; Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49; Hdn. 1.150, 3-4 = Arc. 51.10 = T. 57; Hesych. s.v. φαρμαχοί = T. 11; Hippon. fr. 26 (Degani) = T. 1; Lact. Plac. *Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 10, 793 = T. 26; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136a = T. 40; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136c = T. 41; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467f = T. 22; *Sud.* s.v. φαρμαχός = T. 53; *Sud.* s.v. κάθαρχμα = Ar. fr. 686 (Kassel-Austin) = T. 44; Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13.

²⁸⁶Schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136c = T. 41; schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467b = T. 18.

²⁸⁷Schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 30; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34; schol. Aesch. *Th.* 680 = T. 45.

²⁸⁸Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454e = T. 35; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 37; Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27; Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38.

²⁸⁹Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467a = T. 17.

²⁹⁰Schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34.

²⁹¹Phot. s.v. περιψήμα = T. 54.

²⁹²Schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34 and Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13; Tz. schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 31.

²⁹³Schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454f = T. 36.

Purification appears a broad notion, put to various uses, with various ends by various means.

The same holds true for the victim, who does not reveal more about the presumed rationale behind the ritual: a *katharma* can be expelled *and* sacrificed²⁹⁴, so can a *pharmakos*²⁹⁵. At times, proceedings do appear logical: when Demosthenes refers to the *pharmakos*, the *loimos*, he speaks of expulsion, whereas the scholiast who calls the victim a ransom mentions sacrifice²⁹⁶. However, one cannot claim that the victim is marked out as negative only in case of expulsion, and as positive only in case of sacrifice. On the contrary, the later scholiasts, so fond of sacrifice, are also the main source for discrediting the victim in all possible ways. The employment of the term *katharma* for the victim only occurs in their writings. Moreover, the Massilian victim who was treated on especially pure food, wearing sacred boughs, was expelled while being cursed²⁹⁷. Conclusions pertaining to the ambiguous status of the *pharmakos*, expressed in ritual symbolism and in ritual terminology only confirm this lack of ritual transparency.

In sum, it cannot be claimed that in ritual crisis management purificatory riddance and sacrificial killing can be satisfactorily distinguished in terms of type of victim and attributed effects, at least not on the basis of this evidence. Nor can it be claimed that crisis management involves either the expulsion of victims of low status for the purpose of riddance of ills and evils or the sacrifice of a victim of positive value in order to propitiate the gods. To complicate even further, purificatory terminology is used in most contexts, whether sacrificial or expulsive.

The quality of our texts for purposes such as the analysis above, is problematic. There is too little reflective source-material from the time the ritual was actually practised to find out more about the antique rationale behind the ritual. Whatever direct evidence there is, comes from late antique scholars. Whereas earlier

²⁹⁴For sacrifice: see schol. Aesch. *Th.* 680 = T. 45; schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34; Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13 and Tz. *Chil.* 8, 911-919 = T. 14; Tz. schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 31; schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a = T. 30. For expulsion: see *Sud.* s.v. *κάθαγμα* = Ar. fr. 686 (Kassel-Austin) = T. 44.

²⁹⁵See the difference between Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13 and Hippon. fr. 30 = T. 6, or Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49 and Lys. 6.53 = T. 46.

²⁹⁶For *loimos*: see Dem. 25.80 = T. 47. For ransom: see schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d = T. 34 and Phot. s.v. *περίψημα* = T. 54.

²⁹⁷Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petr. fr. 1 = T. 25. See also *Sud.* s.v. *κάθαγμα* = Ar. fr. 686 (Kassel-Austin) = T. 44 on the victim who was dressed up, though not sacrificed but expelled.

sources refer to ‘purifications of the city’ without much further elucidation, later sources, especially the scholia, are much more explicit. They introduce terms like *katharma* and *thyein* in their descriptions of the ritual. Although one may argue that they have mixed things up terribly, it can also be argued that they made explicit what had been already there all the way. But how then should one interpret the ritual as a whole?

In most of the sections, much attention was spent on inconsistencies in the source-material. Some of the differences appeared synonyms in disguise: the circumstances for example, whether they were annual occasions or instants of sudden disaster, could all be referred to crisis situations. Other differences remained or turned out to be a structural feature of the ritual. One difference in particular could not be reconciled, at least not by arguments pertaining to local variation or evolution. It could not be decided with certainty whether the victim was expelled or sacrificed, although the former method seems more likely. Though the difference between death and expulsion as such appeared less large than one might expect, no satisfactory way has been found to deal with this inconsistency among the sources. Moreover, it appeared impossible to discriminate between sacrifice and expulsion on the basis of either the circumstances of the ritual, the type of victim or the effects attributed to the ritual in the sources.

The nature of the victim appears to further complicate matters. Not only is he described in ways that are not easy to reconcile, as an ugly, lame nobody on the one hand, and wreathed, dressed up and well-cared for on the other, but he is also characterised straightforwardly as an ambiguous being, as a member and a non-member of the community at the same time, both by ritual symbolism and by terminology, such as *devotus* and, most importantly, *pharmakos*. Ambiguity that cannot be explained away by subdividing the source-material in any systematic way.

Although the body of evidence consists of sources that vary to some degree, there appeared to be no systematic way to distinguish among them on the basis of circumstances, victim, method or effects. On the contrary, there are too many crossovers linking each source with various others. Neither temporal or local variety nor Byzantine fantasies have provided sufficient arguments to solve all the established inconsistencies in the source-material. Our present methodology of inclusiveness can not be blamed for the remaining inconsistencies either. It is time to investigate whether modern scholarship has met with similar difficulties.

CHAPTER 2

SACRIFICE OR PURIFICATION: THE INTELLECTUALIST VIEW

In spite of their marginal character, the *pharmakoi* have never left the centre of interest ever since the study of the ancient Greek history and religion won ground in Academia. As little explanation of the ritual as was provided by the sources, as much is offered by modern scholarship.

This section concerns the interpretations of the *pharmakos* ritual as a whole, put forward by those scholars who were primarily interested in religious beliefs and regarded ritual in the first place as a means of communication with the divine. This approach may be labelled the substantivist, or intellectualist, approach¹. The most important catchwords within this theoretical framework are origins, evolution, magic and fertility/vegetation.

What did the ancient Greeks think they were doing, what were they aiming at, when they performed the *pharmakos* ritual? Why did they do what they did in that particular way? What did they seek to achieve? It is around such questions that the inquiry in the present section is structured. The answers turn out to vary between the interpretative models of sacrifice, of riddance (purification) and of fertility magic.

Seen in the light of the present state of scholarship, much of what has been written by these scholars counts as outdated. Their theoretical model and the questions they sought to answer have long been abandoned. To try to retrieve an individual state of mind behind a customary action is nowadays regarded as an impossible mission. To think in terms of collective states of mind is considered naive, at best. It would be unwise though, to fully ignore the questions and answers these older interpretations have brought to the fore. They might still prove relevant. Consequently, as we are not really concerned here with the right or wrong of these various scholarly insights, nor with their particular places in the intellectual debates

¹See Versnel 1993, esp. 6-14, a helpful introduction to this subject. The term intellectualist is used here. For this 'intellectualism' see e.g. Morris 1987, 182.

of their times², the variety of interpretations under discussion is reduced to a few main characteristics and classified accordingly. This survey is by no means exhaustive.

For both practical and theoretical reasons, the inquiry into these modern interpretations of the ritual starts with K.O. Müller, the German scholar who brought about important changes in the field of classical studies in the first half of the nineteenth century. This beginning may be quite arbitrary, but it is not the aim of this section to present a study of interpretations of the *pharmakos* ritual at the level of the individual scholar, but rather to discuss the main lines along which the arguments have been formulated. The core of this survey will end in the Interbellum, when scholars of religion had started to ask different questions. These questions and answers pertaining to the *pharmakos* ritual, will be discussed in the last chapters of the Parts 3 and 4³.

A. SACRIFICE

In his *Die Dorier*, which appeared in 1824, K.O. Müller offered an interpretation of the *pharmakos* ritual that exercised its influence on several generations of nineteenth-century scholars⁴, though it must be added that this was partly due to the elasticity of his concepts. Müller claimed that, periodically, in every person and every society an inner need for purification and atonement arises due to the disturbing intrusion of an external power. This requires a large sacrifice, one larger than *oblaciones* or animal sacrifice, so as to free oneself from this firm grip and restore normality. It is for this reason then, according to Müller, that in Athens, during the Thargelia, two men were decorated with flowers and fruits, rubbed with fragrant herbs, festively led in front of a gate, and after being cursed and hurled from a rock, probably caught up down below and taken across the border. Müller added that the city kept criminals especially for this purpose⁵.

²For this type of research a good point of departure is the volume W.W. Briggs and W.M. Calder III (eds.), *Classical Scholarship. A Biographical Encyclopedia* (New York 1990).

³See the general Introduction of this study above.

⁴See for instance Stengel 1887, 86, referring to the interpretation of the *pharmakoi* as ‘Sühnopfer’ as the standard theory.

⁵Müller 1824, 326. Note that in this reconstruction of the victim Müller pled his beloved Greeks as free as possible from the guilt of human bloodshed. However, there is

Certain tensions emerge in this interpretation of the ritual, with which scholars who endorsed the sacrifice-thesis would struggle in the following decades. On the one hand Müller asserted the need for a highly valuable sacrifice, on the other he claimed that criminals were being used for this very purpose. Another tension lies in the notion of sacrifice and the cursing, a third in the notion of sacrifice and the actual rescue operation which results in expulsion. Similar incongruities will crop up over and over again.

There are, of course, several strategies to deal with incongruities, such as disclaiming part of the evidence presented (there was no criminal, no cursing and/or no rescue operation), developing a complementary theory in order to restore internal coherence⁶ or the ‘winking-method’: acknowledging both sides, but not at the same time (or page)⁷.

With regard to the first inconsistency, a valuable sacrifice of criminals, August Mommsen did away with the idea that the *pharmakoi* were criminals. He pointed out that criminals had to be killed anyway, and the Athenians definitely knew that such killing would not appease Apollo. However, one must add that Mommsen did not need the criminals as badly as Müller did, for Mommsen claimed that during the Thargelia an *imitation* of a human sacrifice was performed, ‘veraciously and accurately, just like the slaughtering of an animal’. The people were to believe it was all serious, but the god usually showed mercy in time. Only in terrible situations of crisis, the sacrifice might have been carried through⁸.

In his *Feste*, Mommsen slightly moved away from his former interpretation by introducing the idea that the *pharmakoi* were both sacrificial victims and carriers of sin⁹. Though Mommsen emphasized the purificatory dimension of the ritual in his

hardly any evidence that the ritual victims were criminals kept for this purpose, see only Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27.

⁶See e.g. L. Preller, *Griechische Mythologie* (ed. C. Robert) (Berlin 1894) 261-262, who agrees that the ritual was meant to be an atonement, but an atonement for the sins and offences of the community, and it was for that reason that guilty people were used as sacrificial victims (and killed as such).

⁷As discussed by Versnel 1990, 1-34, esp. 3 with Douglas 1966.

⁸Mommsen 1864, 414-425, esp. 419-420.

⁹Mommsen 1898, 468-486, esp. 476: “Die beiden Opfermenschen, welche die Sündenlast der Gesellschaft auf ihr Haupt nahmen, und sich durch ihr Äußeres als Gefässe des göttlichen Zornes kundgaben, ...wurden feierlichst unter Flötenschall zu Tempeln geführt, ...; an der heiligen Stätte angekommen, peitschte man sie mit Feigenruten und bot die Abschachtung an, begann dieselbe auch mit Verwundung, dass Blut floss, mit welchem gesprengt war, wie sonst mit Ferkelblut. Damit war der Gott dann schon zufrieden und liess Gnaden walten; die Pharmakoi flohen schließlich ins Elend, und nun war die Gesellschaft

revised view, he did not find any inconsistency. He simply stretched the concept of sacrifice in order to cover his revised ideas of the ritual.

Most of these nineteenth-century approaches do not distinguish too strictly between myth and ritual and consider both to be expressions of religious beliefs, the gist of scholarly interest at the time. According to Von Lasaulx for instance, in an all-embracing attempt to reconcile pagan religions with Christianity, the Greek and Roman cases of vicarious sacrificial deaths (mythical examples, pseudo-historical examples and the ritual *pharmakoi*) arose from the same needs and served the same purposes as the death of Jesus Christ: the restoration of man's disturbed relationship with God¹⁰. The religious difference merely lay in the fact that the poor miserable ancient Greek creatures were sacrificed in vain, whereas the sacrifice of Jesus was successful, for he was truly without sin. Ritual did work, for once.

It is interesting to observe with Stengel¹¹ how the need to save the ancient Greeks from accusations of savage practices was a complicating factor within the sacrificial atonement-model. If one wished to argue that there was no killing at all (as Müller suggested with his rescue-operation), there was actually no atonement-sacrifice either. If one wished to argue that the victims of the sacrifice were criminals (to make it less cruel), the ritual was in fact an execution rather than a valuable sacrifice. Various arguments had to provide a way out. The ritual was either an imitation sacrifice and was only really executed in times of severe crisis; the victims were volunteering to be sacrificed because of the attractive perspectives of a whole year of superb food instead of the extreme poverty they were used to¹²; the victim

rein". Mommsen added that the victims might have been killed in pre-historic times, but that this killing would have been incompatible with the splendour of the Periclean era (473-474).

¹⁰Von Lasaulx 1854, 277: "Es ist der allgemeine Glaube der alten Welt, das freiwillig dargebrachte Leben des Unschuldigen vermöge das notwendig verlorene Leben des schuldigen zu retten. Und soweit ist der Inhalt des religiösen Bewußtseins, welches die heidnische Sühnopfer erzeugt hat, vollkommen wahr".

¹¹Stengel 1887, 88: "Das die Athener alljährlich an einem in sonst heiterer Feier verlaufenden Fest zwei Menschen geschlachtet haben, hat begreiflicherweise Anstoss erregt, und man hat diese Grausamkeit durch eine oder die andere Erklärung aus der Welt zu schaffen gesucht".

¹²Höfer, 'Pharmakos', *RML* 3 (1909) 2276-2284: 'Unter *pharmakoi*, auch *katharmata* genannt, sind jene Opferrmenschen zu verstehen, die zur Reinigung und Entsühnung eines Volkes oder einer Gemeinde unter bestimmten Zeremonien getötet wurden' (2277). ... 'Wir werden also unter *pharmakoi* diejenigen Menschenopfer zu verstehen haben, die sich freiwillig, wenn anders das Sühnopfer wirksam sein sollte, bereit finden ließen, in den Tod zu gehen, nachdem sie eine Zeit lang trefflich beköstigt worden waren. Das waren natürlich Leute, die nichts mehr zu verlieren hatten, zu nichts mehr zu gebrauchen waren oder denen

was really killed only in the remotest period of ancient Greek history and the ritual was soon mitigated, the *pharmakoi* were merely expelled. This reluctance to face the possibility that the civilised ancient Greeks killed their fellow human beings was (and still is) widespread among scholars¹³.

Within the sacrificial interpretation model inconsistencies appear concomitant. Elements in the ceremony seem to induce both positive and negative readings of the ritual role and status of the *pharmakos* which does not easily fit in with a sacrificial interpretation. Moreover, ambivalence seems to be created by the definition of concepts, such as atonement and sacrifice, as well¹⁴. Scholars struggled with these incongruities and felt the need to do away with them¹⁵.

Before a discussion of other attempts to overcome the impasse in which the sacrificial interpretation model had arrived is due, a radically different way of dealing with the *pharmakos* ritual deserves attention.

infolge ihrer Mißgestalt mit den Mitteln zum Erwerb auch die Lust am Leben geschwunden war' (2278).

¹³Hermann 1846, 121 tried to absolve the Greeks in yet another way: "Manche dieser Graüsel scheinen ohnehin ursprünglich fremdländischen Einflüssen ihre Entstehung verdankt zu haben, und fanden insofern schon durch die Erstarkung des hellenischen Nationalgefühls ihr Ende". See already J.H. Voss, *Antisymbolik* (Stuttgart 1824-1826) 67 on human sacrifice imported to Greece by 'nachhesiodeischen Handelsgeist'. See further Murray 1934⁴, 15, who concludes his discussion of the *pharmakos* ritual with the following claim: "Human sacrifice, then, is one of the barbarities which Hellenism successfully overcame. It was either abolished entirely or else, as in the case of the *pharmakoi* at Athens, reduced to some harmless ceremonial which satisfied religious conservatism without inflicting much harm on human beings".

¹⁴See Stengel 1920³, 128: "Religiöse Empfindungen lassen sich nicht zerlegen, die Motive fließen zusammen: man mag auch geglaubt haben, den Mächten der Unterwelt durch das Blut des Opfertiers oder des hingeschlachteten Menschen wohl zu tun, im Wesentlichen sind diese Opfer doch ebensowenig eine zum Genuß für die Gottheit bestimmte Gabe, wie jener Ring, den Polykrates nicht in ein Heiligtum stiftete, sondern ins Meer warf. Sie sind ein Präventivmittel, und die Bezeichnung Buß- oder Ablösungsoffer wäre vielleicht richtiger als Sühnopfer".

¹⁵Though not everyone: see G.F. Schoeman, *Griechische Alterthümer* (Berlin 1859) vol. 2, 260. Schoemann advocated the duality of the *pharmakos*. Reluctant to differentiate between sacrificial atonement and purification, he claimed that the *pharmakoi* were 'Sühnopfer' and 'Sündenböcke' at the same time. He illustrates their double character by means of their name: *Pharmakoi* - "gleichsam Heil- und Reinigungsmittel" (healing and purifying at the same time). Unfortunately, he does not pay any more attention to the ritual, neither to the question how this duality may have come into being, nor to how it was understood by the ancient Greeks themselves.

B. FROM DIVINE SPIRIT TO SCAPEGOAT

This different approach was initiated by Mannhardt, the German scholar who combed out the whole of north-western Europe in search of popular customs. He was convinced that these would shed light (by analogy) on cults and myths in the ancient world, as religious ideas concerning vegetation were at the root of all these cults¹⁶. Not only was vegetation about to become the keyword in scholarship in the next decades, attention was also shifting from myth to cult, and theories about magic as an early, pre-religious stage in evolution were to carry the day.

Mannhardt focused on a specific element in the *pharmakos* ritual, the beating of the victim. He interpreted this, as has already been discussed, as analogous to the thrashing of a victim in order to expel crop failure of which he had collected so many other examples, both in the ancient world and in his contemporary Europe¹⁷. Mannhardt emphasised the double character of ‘der Schlag mit dem Lebensrute’ (the thrashing with the rod of life), also in the context of the *pharmakos* ritual, as being both expulsive and beneficial at the same time. The chasing away of the *pharmakos*, the demon of infertility, results in growth, health and a rich harvest for the community¹⁸.

Next, however, Mannhardt pointed out that there are elements in these customs that indicate that they once had a different (original) meaning. Crucial in his view is the fact that the *pharmakos* was beaten on his genitals, which is, according to Mannhardt, basically a fertility-improving activity. Why would a demon of infertility be beaten on his genitals while being chased away? Mannhardt solved this inconsistency by claiming that the expulsion of the *pharmakos* (as a demon of infertility, periodically and in crisis) in fact was the ritually elaborated reinterpretation (‘Umdeutung’) of an older custom, involving the leading around of the Vegetation Spirit *in effigie*, who had to arrange for the restoration of health and for fertility in the next year¹⁹.

¹⁶Mannhardt 1884.

¹⁷See Chapter 1 Section f above (Mannhardt 1884, 124f).

¹⁸Mannhardt 1884, 129: “In beiden Fällen (crisis and periodically, LK) bedeutet die Hinausführung des Pharmakos aus dem Ortschaft einerseits die Austreibung des Dämons der Unfruchtbarkeit, der entweder durch den Hinausgeführten dargestellt oder demselben gleichsam aufgepackt gedacht ist, und damit anderseits zugleich die positive Erzeugung von Wachstumsfülle, Gedeihen, Gesundheit”.

¹⁹Mannhardt 1884, 123-124, 132 and 133: “... so wird die Frage berechtigt erscheinen, ob wir nicht in der Austreibung des Pharmakos die Umdeutung einer

Sir James Frazer advanced a comparable, but much more ingenious view. In his all-embracing attempt to explain ‘the meaning and origin of the ancient Italian priesthood of Nemi’, which entailed the coverage of countless customs from all over the world from ancient to modern times, Frazer also devoted ample attention to scapegoat rituals²⁰. Frazer’s interpretation was embedded in grand ideas on the evolution of human thought - from the stage of magic through religion to science -, shaped by his views on magic (based on two complementary principles of thought, sympathetic and homeopathic or imitative magic) and disclosed by his main interpretative key - the theory and practice of the ‘Dying God’²¹.

In order to understand the (universal) scapegoat ritual, Frazer first discussed the idea of transferring evil, which he considered ‘the typical misunderstanding of the savage’, a confusion between the material and the immaterial. The expulsion of such ‘vehicles of evil’ is to effect a total clearance of all the ills that have been infesting a community. After describing numerous examples and analogies of *his* concept of a scapegoat, and scapegoat rituals, Frazer made a general conjecture from two or three particular examples of rituals in which the expelled victim was a divine man (Tibet) or animal. From this evidence he then concluded that it is the dying god who is

Herumführung des in der Ernte zum Vorschein kommenden Wachstumgeistes, des Segenspenders, vor uns haben, welche *eo ipso* die Mächte der Unfruchtbarkeit und Krankheit verscheucht, wobei aber noch besonders symbolisch die Fortschreckung derselben durch den Schlag mit den zaubererjagenden Pflanzen zur Darstellung gebracht wurde”.

²⁰Though his ideas can already be found *in nuce* or sometimes in full in the two-volume *Golden Bough* of 1890, I quote from and refer to the third and most elaborate edition of the *Golden Bough* of 1911-1915, consisting of twelve volumes, one of which (VI, 1913) is entirely devoted to The Scapegoat. Whereas the subtitle of the first edition reads: *A Study in Comparative Religion*, the one of the second and third edition was: *A Study in Magic and Religion*. The emphasis shifted accordingly from the Arician priesthood towards a general work on primitive superstition and religion, see R. Ackermann, *J.G. Frazer. His Life and Work* (Cambridge 1987). For the scapegoat, this shift is of little importance and will be passed over here. The main difference between the three editions concerning the scapegoat consists in the amount of comparative material and the attention paid to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (a theme still more or less avoided in the first edition, openly and rather provokingly treated in the second and withdrawn to the appendix of the third edition). For some recent evaluations of Frazer and his work, see R. Ackermann, ‘J.G. Frazer’, in: W.W. Briggs and W.M. Calder III (eds.), *Classical Scholarship. A Biographical Encyclopedia* (New York 1990) 77-82 and the monograph already mentioned; M. Douglas, ‘Judgments on James Frazer’, *Daedalus* 107/4 (1978) 151-164; E. Evans-Pritchard, *A History of Anthropological Thought* (ed. A. Singer) (London 1981) 132-150; S. MacCormack, ‘Magic and the Human Mind: a Reconsideration of Frazer’s *Golden Bough*’, *Arethusa* 17 (1984) 151-176; Morris 1987, 103-106; Smith 1978, 208-239.

²¹On the strong influences of Tylor and others on Frazer, see Morris 1987, 104.

chosen to serve as scapegoat²². According to Frazer, the ambiguous character of the scapegoat ceremony, joyful on the one hand, but manifesting fear and abhorrence on the other hand, arises from the doubleness of the expelled being, who is at the same time a dying god and a vehicle of evil: a Scapegod, as it were.

With respect to ancient Greece, Frazer clearly approved of Mannhardt's interpretation of the *pharmakos* ritual, although he shifted the emphasis from the stimulation of the reproductive powers of the *pharmakos* (the Vegetation Spirit) to the transmission of these onto his immediate successor: "If these considerations are just, we must apparently conclude that while human victims at the Thargelia certainly appear in later classical times to have figured chiefly as public scapegoats, who carried away with them the sins, misfortunes, and sorrows of the whole people, at an earlier time they may have been looked on as embodiments of vegetation, perhaps of the corn but particularly of the fig trees²³; and that the beating which they received and the death which they died were intended primarily to brace and refresh the powers of vegetation beginning to droop and languish under the torrid heat of the Greek summer"²⁴.

Again, it all is a matter of paradoxes. Paradoxes in the atmosphere and character of the ritual and in the nature of the *pharmakos*, the divine scapegoat. Paradoxes, however, which, in case of ancient Greece, can be explained and overcome in the light of evolution, as Mannhardt had advocated as well²⁵.

²²Frazer thus claimed all scapegoat rituals to be a combination of two customs, which were at one time distinct and independent. On the one hand the habit of killing the human or animal god in order to save his divine life from being weakened by the inroads of age, on the other the custom to arrange a general expulsion of evils and sins once a year. Now, if it occurred to people to combine (note Frazer's view of culture as a product of the human mind!) these two customs, the result would be the employment of the dying god as a scapegoat (Frazer 1913³, 227).

²³Frazer here follows W.R. Paton, 'The *pharmakoi* and the Story of the Fall', *RA* 9 (1907) 51-57, who regards the *pharmakos* ritual as an agricultural ritual, an imitation of the ancient Greek caprification process - the artificial fertilization of the cultivated (female) fig tree, by hanging on it, before the maturity of the fruits, strings with figs of the wild (male) fig tree. In this view, the *pharmakoi* were the personifications of the male and female fig tree, to be joined in either a kind of mock-marriage or at least some sort of sexual union, in order to promote the fertility of the fig trees by means of magic.

²⁴Frazer 1913³, 273.

²⁵And to complicate things even further, Frazer introduces his book on Scapegoat rituals with an allusion to the next stage (religion) in human history (1913, v): "When we survey the history of this pathetic fallacy from its crude inception in savagery to its full development in the speculative theology of civilized nations, we cannot but wonder at the singular power which the human mind possesses of transmuting the leaden dross of superstition into a glittering semblance of gold. Certainly in nothing is this alchemy of

As an appendix to the views of these two scholars, Farnell's view must be mentioned briefly, as he disagreed with Mannhardt and Frazer in one important respect, that of evolution. Farnell first rejected the atonement-interpretation, because of the fact that the whole concept belonged to 'high religion' and was, in his eyes, utterly out of place applied to ancient Greek religion²⁶. Farnell himself explained the idea behind the rite as more primitive: the *pharmakos* is 'an abject sin-carrier, whose death need not be called expiation, but rather a purgation by magical transference' ... 'in his character as sinbearer he is ugly, vile and rejected, burnt, and his ashes cast into the sea'. Note how expiation and purgation have explicitly become rival concepts now. Next, however, Farnell argued that there is simultaneously another idea present in the ritual: the *pharmakos* as the incarnation of the harvest-god: "... he is decked with the fruits of the soil, fed and cherished, whipped with fructifying boughs, especially on the reproductive organs, to stimulate his vitalising powers, and if he was ever burnt, as he might well have been, his ashes would not have been wastefully thrown into the sea, but probably strewn over the land to impregnate the soil with his vital spirit. ... The *pharmakos* is in fact playing two roles at the same time"²⁷. Unfortunately, Farnell did not indicate how or why these roles were combined within the one ritual character of the *pharmakos*²⁸.

thought more conspicuous than in the process which has refined the base and foolish custom of the scapegoat into the sublime conception of a God who dies to take away the sins of the world." Is this the dialectics of expulsion in the history of humanity - from god to scapegoat to God?

²⁶L.R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (Oxford 1907) vol. 4, 280: "... and if this creature by magical or higher ritual could be charged with all the sins of the community and could be safely put away, here was a literal and almost mechanical expulsion of sin, and there is hardly any need for a high god in the matter." He also pays ample attention to the question of death: "...are we to suppose then, that the Athenians were in the habit at some past period in their history of immolating the human scapegoat in this cruel fashion? ... that this cold-blooded ritual murder should have been consummated every year in the most brilliant of the Greek states seems so grave a slur on Attic civilization that, ..., we are inclined to dismiss the statement, or only to admit it as true of far-off prehistoric days"(p. 272). And some pages, and numerous exonerations later, he concludes "that the human sacrifice in the Attic *Thargelia* in the latter historical period was only a shadow and a simulation of what had once been a real oblation"(p. 279).

²⁷L.R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (Oxford 1907) vol. 4, 280-281.

²⁸See however W.J. Woodhouse, 'Scapegoat', in: J. Hastings (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (Edinburgh 1908-1926) vol. 9, 221, defending a similar thesis (but for the suggestion that the *pharmakos* might have incarnated the primitive earth-goddess), who offered some sort of explanation for this striking double role: "Combined with this, however, in the inconsistent and illogical manner characteristic of religious thought and procedure, ...".

The third important representative of the scholars working from the interpretative framework of vegetation is Gebhard, who was the first to publish an entire monograph, his dissertation, on the *pharmakoi*. He is clearly indebted to Mannhardt whose views, as he claimed “alle Zeitgenossen weit voraussehend” had never been refuted²⁹. Just as Mannhardt and Frazer, Gebhard acknowledged two sides in the *pharmakoi* and as he elaborated to a great extent on the interpretation and explanation of this duality by Mannhardt, we shall not dwell upon his work at great length.

His general criticism of the different theories on the origin and meaning of the rite is that no view so far had accounted for all the evidence, nor for any suggested shift of meaning. Gebhard’s own thesis amounts to the following: originally, the leading around of the *pharmakoi*, ‘die als Zauber dienenden’, was beneficial, by means of ‘Analogiezauber’. They were temporal representations of fertility gods, who were freed from any possible spells of their productive powers by being beaten with cathartic branches³⁰. In due course, however, this ritual lost its original meaning, continued to exist, but was no longer properly understood. In historical times, people developed new religious views (such as the belief in the physical presence of *miasmata* and the transferability of evil) according to which they gave new meaning to old customs³¹. The *pharmakos* came to be seen as the magic vehicle of all *miasmata*, who was supposed to be the cause of disaster or through whom one hoped to remove all evil³². Quite a difference, as Gebhard noticed, observing ‘a sharp contrast between the original meaning of the ritual and the actual sources’³³.

²⁹Gebhard 1926, 50.

³⁰Gebhard 1926, 61. One detects influences from both Mannhardt and Frazer. The notion of ‘temporal god’ had been introduced by H. Usener, *Götternamen: Versuch einer Lehre von der religiösen Begriffsbildung* (Bonn 1896): ‘Augenblicksgötter’.

³¹Gebhard 1926, 105-106. Interestingly, as became already evident Chapter 1, Gebhard also discussed the shifts of meaning in every single constituent of the rite (e.g. stones, which he claimed to have originally pointed to the symbolic death of the Vegetation deity, but came to be understood as magic projectiles which transferred evil from those who threw them onto the *pharmakos* (Gebhard 1926, 101-104 and 16-17). Only some elements were not understood any more in historical times, such as the offering of the gifts to the *pharmakoi*, the string of figs and the beating on the genitals (p. 61-111).

³²E. Bickermann critically reviews Gebhard’s dissertation in *Philologische Wochenschrift* 47 (1927) 912-915 and concludes that Gebhard’s thesis might be valid as to Ionia, but does not stand up to scrutiny when regarding the Athenian evidence; the Ionian *pharmakos* could have been a temporary fertility spirit, for he remains alive and is not expelled (as a scapegoat would have been). This does not rule out, however, the possibility that a shift of meaning occurred later on. The Athenian *pharmakos* on the other hand was clearly expelled (something not wise to do with a fertility god who, according to

The implicit ambivalences in the first interpretation model under discussion, that of sacrifice, have thus yielded to explicitly elaborated paradoxes in this second model. Elements, function, atmosphere and victim - paradoxes galore. ‘Grelle Widersprüche’ which, fortunately, could be explained (away) in terms of evolution. Fortunately, as inconsistencies were regarded as a problem that needed to be solved. Gebhard puts the general feeling well into words when he writes: “... kann man unmöglich glauben, dass zu ein und derselben Zeit der *Pharmakos* zwei so verschiedene Funktionen hatte” (it is impossible to believe that the *pharmakoi* had such different functions at one and the same time)³⁴.

C. FROM SACRIFICE TO RIDDANCE

Bearing in mind this alternative line of thought in which the *pharmakos* is the equivocal exponent of two different, historically separated and ritually translated world views, we return to the former interpretation model, in which the *pharmakos* was seen in the light of sacrificial atonement and expiation. In this perspective, no clear cut lines separated atonement by means of a valuable sacrifice to a god and atonement by sacrificing (expelling) carriers of sin. Moreover, myth and ritual were rarely sharply distinguished. Consequently, at the margins of the interpretative model, most scholars struggled with the sacrificial status of the victims, their expulsion and the general issue of ancient Greek human sacrifice. They usually ended up with compromising views, implicitly accepting various paradoxical options at the same time.

Bickermann, can only be beaten or be killed on the spot), and thus must have been a scapegoat since times immemorial. A second reviewer who deserves some attention is F. Pfister, *Gnomon* 5 (1929) 94-98. Pfister partly acclaims Gebhard's conclusions, but disagrees with the Mannhardtian turn Gebhard's view takes, and objects against the prudence Gebhard calls for when dealing with the differences between Athenian and Ionian evidence. Pfister regards the rites as being of one origin and urges to handle the material accordingly. Pfister himself explains the incongruities in the figure of the victim as a result of a shift of meaning in the appreciation of magic. In a later contribution to the discussion, in *RE* 19.2 (1937) 1841-1842 s.v. *Pharmakos* (Gebhard), written after the discovery of the new Callimachus papyrus on Abdera, Gebhard almost one-sidedly stresses the vehicle-of-evil-role of the *pharmakos*.

³³Gebhard 1926, 105: “In grellem Widerspruch zu dem in den bisherigen Ausführungen erschlossenen Sinn des Brauches stehen die Zeugnisse aus historischer Zeit. In ihr ist die Hauptsache das Hinausstossen der Unglücklichen. Sie sind vogelfrei und ehrlos”.

³⁴Gebhard 1926, 53-54 in a critical review of Farnell's interpretation of the ritual.

At the end of the paragraph on sacrifice, this model began to show some serious cracks³⁵. Harrison tried to postpone the breaking by some last (evolutionary) bending, but she actually inaugurated a new model with a thin old façade. First, she stressed the factual inappropriateness of the term ‘sacrifice’ for the *pharmakos* ritual and claimed that the ceremony was not more, nor less, than an ordinary, albeit magical, riddance³⁶. Next, however, she noticed how the sacrificial *misunderstanding* came into being. According to Harrison, the Thargelia is an outstanding example of a surviving primitive religious ceremony ‘adopted’ by an Olympic god³⁷. The festival *became* sacred to Apollo, but clearly reveals primitive and magical origins. The *pharmakos* originally was by no means a ‘human sacrifice’ to a god (‘not in the sense of an offering made to appease an angry god’), but a direct means of physical and moral purgation to the effect of the promotion and conservation of fertility. It was only in the course of time that this ceremony would become interpreted in terms of sacrifice³⁸. Originally there was no one to be atoned, there was only (magical) riddance. The ritual thus was a *katharmos*, a purification. The fact that the victim was struck clearly proves this, according to Harrison, as beating is first and foremost a

³⁵Although others would defend the idea that the *pharmakoi* were ‘Sühnopfer’ for many years to come, see e.g. Weber 1925, 234.

³⁶Harrison 1922³, 96: “The ceremony of the *pharmakos* has often been discussed, but I think frequently and fundamentally misapprehended. It appears at first sight to involve what we in our modern terminology call ‘Human Sacrifice’.”

³⁷Harrison has contributed many insights to the study of Greek religion and her intellectual heritage still receives attention in modern scholarship. There is interesting literature on this inspiring, and inspired, scholar, e.g. M. Beard, *The Invention of Jane Harrison* (Cambridge and London 2000); R. Schlesier, ‘Jane Ellen Harrison’, in: W.W. Briggs and W.M. Calder III (eds.), *Classical Scholarship. A Biographical Encyclopedia* (New York 1990) 127-141; J. Stewart, *Jane Ellen Harrison. A Portrait from letters*. (London 1959); S.J. Peacock, *Jane Ellen Harrison. The Mask and the Self* (New Haven and London 1988). On her views concerning the relations between myth and ritual see Versnel 1993, 15-88. One of her theories on the evolution of Greek religion encompassed the idea of the existence of a substratum of religious conception, ‘at once more primitive and permanent (vii-ix), and an Olympic superstratum. It was her intention in the *Prolegomena* to investigate this lower stratum, the rites of which, as she stated, ‘would be seen to be characterized by a deep and constant sense of evil to be removed’ (p.ix). Those older traditions always remained potent. In a way, therefore, Harrison’s views are comparable to those of the scholars discussed in the last paragraph; two separate, almost paradoxical world views, joined together and kept apart by human evolution. One major difference, however, is that according to Harrison, it is exactly the other way round: the original and true meaning of the rite is the riddance and it was only later that this purificatory ceremony was misunderstood in terms of sacrifice. Because of this misunderstanding - a passive affair and not an active shaping and giving of meaning - I choose to discuss Harrison here under the heading ‘riddance’ and not in the next paragraph, which would have been conceivable as well.

³⁸Harrison 1922³, ix.

way to expel evil, and, only in a secondary way, the promotion of good³⁹. Etymologically, the term *pharmakos* is related to *pharmakon*, medicine, and means something as ‘magic man’⁴⁰. Thus, according to Harrison, the gist of the festival was the purification, necessary as a preliminary to the gathering of the harvest. The purification was a magical riddance, based on the notion of the physicality, the actuality of evil and on the possibility of contagion and transfer⁴¹. Sacrifice came only later, as a misunderstanding.

On the one hand Harrison thus remained close to Frazer in terms of the magical transference, but on the other she acknowledged, instead of Frazer’s dying Vegetation God, the sacrificial tinge others had put into the focus of attention before⁴². The paradoxical evidence is thus analysed as consisting of an original, true kernel and a later misunderstanding.

In Germany, Leo Weber came to quite the opposite conclusion. According to Weber the original ritual was a propitiatory sacrifice of valuable human beings and it was only in due course that the ritual had changed into a ritual of riddance⁴³. This view, in turn, is not much different from the ones presented by Müller and Mommsen above, except for its evolutionary dimension.

³⁹Harrison 1922³, 103.

⁴⁰Harrison 1922³, 108.

⁴¹Harrison 1922³, 105.

⁴²Some years later, Harrison (J.E. Harrison, ‘*Pharmakos*’, *Folklore* 37-3 [1916] 298-299) revised her view on the *pharmakos* ceremony, partially as a result of her newly gained insight that not magic is the essential stage of the ceremony, but the social expulsion is central to the ritual; the social outlaw becomes only in the last stage of the ritual process a magic vehicle. By that time Harrison was greatly influenced by Durkheimian thought and, in this particular question, by G. Glotz, *La solidarité de la famille dans la Grèce primitive* (Paris 1904). Unfortunately, Harrison did not rewrite her views on the *pharmakos* ceremony in full at that time.

⁴³Weber 1925, 234-235: “Menschen, die dazu bestimmt sind als ‘Sühnopfer’ durch die Hingabe des eigenen Lebens die Gemeinschaft einer Stadt oder eines Landes von einem auf ihnen lastenden Fluche, einer sie verheerenden oder ihnen etwa drohenden Seuche zu befreien. Das auf der Gesamtheit lastende oder ihr drohende ἄγος, die Unreinheit und Befleckung gehen durch die sühnende Zeremonie in dem Einen über, der dafür aus der staatlichen Gemeinschaft und über die Grenze des Landes ausgestoßen wird, wo die Befleckung oder die Rachegeister des Ermordeten keinen Schaden mehr stiften können, oder so völlig vernichtet wird, daß keine Gefahr mehr von ihm zu befürchten ist”. But then, only one page later, sacrifice comes in all the same: “Aber sein hohes Alter darf uns nicht darüber hinwegtäuschen, daß die Opferung der *Pharmakoi* nicht die ursprüngliche Form dieses Kultes gewesen sein kann. Jene arme Schelme, die man um ihres geringen Wertes willen zu dem traurigen Amte bestimmte oder die sich gegen die Gewährung einer vorausgehender Gnadenfrist und guten, nach sakralen Vorschriften geregelten Behandlung freiwillig anboten, müssen an die Stelle vollwertiger Menschen getreten sein, die man ursprünglich zur Entsühnung des Volkes als Opfer benutzte”.

Schwenn, another German scholar struggling at this cross-roads of sacrificial atonement and expulsion, extensively discussed the various tensions, or incongruities, in the ritual. He noticed, for instance, that only the sacrifice of a stainless and precious victim could have effectively provided for atonement, whereas the *pharmakoi* clearly fell short of these requirements⁴⁴. Hence, Schwenn refuted the sacrificial interpretation model and claimed there was, contrary to what many scholars had thought, no question of an atonement sacrifice. Atonement was realised by the expulsion of these human beings to whom all sins of the community were magically transferred⁴⁵. To complicate things again, Schwenn did not refrain from using the term ‘Menschenopfer’ for these victims, whom he also called human scapegoats, or even ‘Sündenbockopfer’ (scapegoat sacrifice), thus stretching the concept again⁴⁶.

It is interesting, that these views speak of riddance but still keep the door slightly open to sacrificial notions, either as an ancient or a modern misunderstanding. In the following decades, interpretations, which viewed the *pharmakos* as a ‘vehicle for all evil’ became increasingly popular⁴⁷. The discovery of the ‘savage notion’ of the transference of evil played a crucial role. Thanks to this concept, there was no need any more for a sacrificial factor in the interpretation in order to make the ritual effective. However, scholars still felt the need to incorporate a positive, valuable component into their interpretation, either in terms of a divine origin of the *pharmakos*, or in a vaguer, magical sense, in order to accommodate certain ‘positive’ elements they detected in the ritual and the handling of the victim.

The most straightforward example of a ‘no-nonsense’ interpretation is by Deubner. In his *Attische Feste* Deubner wiped the floor with all solutions offered by previous scholars, who had been seeing whatever inconsistencies in the ritual, had

⁴⁴Schwenn 1915, 41: “(D)ie Verwendung minderwertigen Menschenmaterials.”

⁴⁵Schwenn 1915, 40.

⁴⁶Again, to be accounted for in terms of evolution: ‘Sühne ist nach der Auffassung der reifer Entwickelten Religionen notwendig, um einen Verstoß gegen das göttliche Gesetz wieder auszugleichen, damit der göttliche Zorn mit seinen Zeit- und Ewigkeitsstrafen von dem Haupt des Sünders abgewendet wird. Diese Absicht wird erreicht durch das Sühnopfer. Niedrigen und älteren Religionsformen fehlen die Begriffe ‘Sünde’ und ‘Sühnopfer’; sie kennen dafür Tabu und Reinigungsritus, aus denen jene ersteren im Laufe der Zeit allmählich hervorgewachsen sind’ (Schwenn 1915, 26).

⁴⁷See e.g. Bickermann in his review of Gebhard 1926 *Philologische Wochenschrift* 47 (1927) 912-915, at 914: ‘... der augetriebene athenische Pharmakos kann folglich nicht als Vegetationsdämon gelten, er ist vielmehr, wie die herrschende Interpretation ihn deutet (my italics, LK), ein ‘Sündenbock’ der das Miasma der Stadt wegbringen soll’.

offered. Deubner fiercely rejects any interpretation that is based on ‘Lebensruten’, sacrifice and fertility-magic, let alone on ‘Umdeutung’, ‘Verquickung mit anderen Gedanken’ and ‘Doppelseitigkeit der religiösen Vorstellung’. After meticulously describing and discussing the sources (and rejecting quite a few of them⁴⁸), Deubner claimed that both Attic and Ionian *Pharmakos* rituals are clear expressions of the same purificatory idea, which was primitive and simple: during his round through the town, the *pharmakos* had to absorb all evil and then get away, evil and all⁴⁹. According to Deubner, the ritual fits in well with the general idea of the festival: in the anxious time just before the harvest is due, everything that may be harmful is removed on the first day, while on the second growth is secured⁵⁰.

D. DUALITY

So far the interpretations under scrutiny were (almost) all made in an attempt to find a final, unequivocal answer to the question of what ancient Greek man believed what was happening during the *pharmakos* ritual. Potential incongruities were ignored, or argued away as the result of evolution or misunderstanding. In this last paragraph we will not introduce yet another model of interpretation, but take up suggestions by Schoemann, Farnell and a few others, who hinted at the duality of either the victim, or the ritual or both. Initially, Frazer, too, moved towards a general interpretation of scapegoats as having two contrasting, but equally valid, co-existing qualities: god and scapegoat. Only when he turned to ancient Greece in particular, he closely followed Mannhardt’s ‘Umdeutung’ theory and explained any paradox away.

Although he regarded riddance as the gist of the ritual, Nilsson also observed inconsistencies in the ritual, which he tries to account for⁵¹. According to Nilsson the

⁴⁸See e.g. Deubner 1932, 185 on the Aristophanesscholia.

⁴⁹Deubner 1932, 193: “Der Gedanke ist ganz primitiv und einfach. Der *Pharmakos* soll bei dem Hindurchführen durch die Stadt alles Übel an sich saugen und damit beladen sich entfernen: so wird man das Übel los”. Note however that even Deubner 1932, 186 has one remark that *almost* opens the way to inconsistency, too: “Fast sieht es so aus, als spielte hier der Opfergedanke herein im Sinne einer Darbringung an eine Gottheit, der ein solches Opfer genehm ist”.

⁵⁰Deubner 1932, 198: “Der Gedanke des Festes ist einfach und schlicht: in der Entscheidungsreichen Zeit vor der Ernte wird am ersten Tages alles was ihr schaden kann fortgeschafft, am zweiten ihr Gedeihen gesichert”.

⁵¹Nilsson discussed the Thargelia and the role of the *pharmakoi* several times: Nilsson 1906, 105-115; M.P. Nilsson, ‘Die Griechen’ in: A. Bertholet (ed.), *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte* (Tübingen 1925⁴) vol. 2, 227-229; M.P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion* (Oxford 1925) 86-87; Nilsson 1955², vol. 1, 107-110. For a discussion of Nilsson’s

overall character of the *pharmakos* ritual is one of cleansing and getting rid of the communal dirt, as one cleanses a table with a sponge and throws the dirty sponge away⁵². This is not to be confused with sacrificial rites: “They are not sacrifices in the ordinary sense in which the victim is handed over to the gods or serves as a medium of communication with them. These so-called sacrifices are nothing but a means of purification, designed to take away the impurity attaching to town and country. ... That is why this ‘sacrifice’, so-called, need not, like others, be without blemish or defect”⁵³.

Nilsson acknowledged, however, that there are elements that indicate that there must have been a positive side to the role of the *pharmakos* as well, such as the fact that the victim was beaten with green branches and cathartic sea-onions, and the decoration with sacred herbs in Massilia⁵⁴. As to the interpretation of this positive side, Nilsson remained vague. He mentioned the ‘Lebensrute’, and referred to a context of fertility stimulating rites, of ‘good medicine’⁵⁵. He refused to follow the one or other theory about shifts of meaning in order to overcome any inconsistencies and claimed that the riddance of evil is as old as the procuration of the good⁵⁶. This duality is not surprising anymore, if one considers the fact that *pharmakos* is the masculine of *pharmakon* which is the primitive notion of medicine, that is both good

oeuvre see J. Mejer, ‘Martin P. Nilsson’, in: W.W. Briggs and W.M. Calder III (eds.), *Classical Scholarship. A Biographical Encyclopedia* (New York 1990) 335-340. Nilsson differentiates between the two rituals the Thargelia consist of. On the 6th of the month *Thargelion* there is the leading around and expulsion of the *pharmakos*, and on the 7th the procession in which the first-fruits and *eiresione* are carried and offered to the god. The central issue in his discussion of the festival is how the apparent discrepancy between the ‘grausige Sühnruten’ (Nilsson 1906, 105) on the first day and the peaceful offering of the first-fruits on the second day is to be interpreted, if, as Nilsson argues, one does not consider both days as ‘ein zufälliges Nebeneinander’.

⁵²Nilsson 1906, 112: “...damit die Unreinheit radikal vernichtet werde”... “Das ist ganz primitiv und verständlich”. Note that the expression is almost exactly the same as Deubner would use some years later.

⁵³M.P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion* (Oxford 1925) 87.

⁵⁴Nilsson 1955², 108-109 contra Deubner: “Hinwiederum sieht Deubner in dem *Pharmakos* nichts als das Reinigungsmittel, den Sündenbock, und versucht das feierliche Schlagen mit Zweigen, besonderes auf das Zeugungsglied, wobei eine Flötenmelodie gespielt wurde, wegzuerklären.”

⁵⁵Nilsson 1955², 112-113.

⁵⁶Nilsson 1906, 112: “Die Wegschaffung des Übels ist ebenso alt wie die Bewirkung des Guten”. Elsewhere, Nilsson 1955², 109 plays down the profundity of this fusion of rites: “Es scheint, daß eine Kreuzung, eine Vereinigung verschiedener Elemente vorliegt, wie sie nicht selten entsteht, wenn Riten nur traditionell bewahrt werden, ohne daß ihr Sinn noch ganz verstanden wird.”

and bad⁵⁷. Hence, any ‘Umdeutung’ theory is superfluous: in the context of a pre-harvest ritual, fertility and atonement are naturally and closely connected⁵⁸. Nilsson therefore did not further distinguish between the two equivalent constituents. Moreover, he emphasised that the duality in the ritual is embodied by its protagonist, the *pharmakos*, as his name already suggests⁵⁹.

The Belgian scholar Delcourt shed yet another light on the dual nature of the *pharmakos*, at a more basic level than previous scholars⁶⁰. She also points to the dual character of the victim⁶¹. As to her ideas about the victim’s role, Delcourt belonged in the tradition of Mannhardt and Frazer, but, just like Farnell, she claimed the co-existence of the two sides. Unlike Farnell, she tried to account for such co-existence. Taking up earlier theories by Bouché-Leclercq, Hubert and Mauss, and Glotz⁶², she first explained how fertility stimulating acts and expiatory rites could be one and the same ceremony. Next, she focused on the ritual status of the victim, who is, like various other exposed beings, handed over to the gods (the trial by ordeal)⁶³. This

⁵⁷Nilsson 1955², 108-109: “Daraus folgt, daß dem *Pharmakos* auch eine positive Wirkung zugetraut wurde. Er war nicht einfach ein Sündenbock, der Unreinheit und Unglück wegtrug”.

⁵⁸Nilsson 1906, 113: “Es ist nur eine Vermischung zwischen den an demselben Feste innig verbundenen Vegetations- und Sühneriten eingetreten”. And one page later: “Daher sind (...) die Thargelien teils apotropäische Reinigungs- und Sühnfeste, durch die aller Unglücksstoff weggeschafft werden soll, und die bei eintretendem Mißwachs und Not wiederholt werden, teils Feste, die der Fruchtbarkeit gelten”.

⁵⁹Nilsson 1955², 110: “Aus den mitgeteilten Tatsachen geht jedenfalls soviel hervor, dass das Opfer wie der *Pharmakos* zur Sühne diente und über die Grenze geschafft wurde, sowie die Homerische *lumata* ins Meer geworfen wurde”.

⁶⁰Delcourt 1944, 28-36. This is a strikingly different approach. Delcourt takes much of the rite for granted and founds her analysis on the basic insight that the *pharmakos* is an ‘émissaire’, an expelled being. Her judgment of the issue concerning the final destiny of the *pharmakos* is accordingly: there is no absolute proof of any human sacrifice. It probably came down to a ritual expelling, a trial by ordeal (p.32-3).

⁶¹Delcourt 1944, 29: ‘le caractère double dont l’émissaire était revêtu aux yeux des Grecs’. Delcourt notes: “Il a fallu longtemps avant qu’ l’on reconnaisse dans la personne expulsé à la fois un ‘mangeur de péchés’ lourd de mille responsabilités accumulées, et un être apparenté aux ‘esprits de la végétation’ qu’ on fustige afin que la récolte soit belle”. The one side might be older than the other though, however: “La valeur double du *pharmakos* est cependant certaine et le caractère expiatoire est probablement le plus moderne de deux. (...) c’est peu à peu, semble-t-il, que les fêtes agraires se sont transformées en ‘pardons’.”

⁶²Notably Daremberg and Saglio 1877-1919, s.v. ‘*Devotio*’ 113-119 (A. Bouché-Leclercq); Hubert and Mauss 1909, 15f; G. Glotz, *l’Ordalie dans la Grèce primitive* (Paris 1904).

⁶³See G. Glotz, *l’Ordalie dans la Grèce primitive* (Paris 1904). Compare already Töpfer, who claims that ‘nach Antiker Anschauung scheint jener Apollonische Sühnungsmodus zugleich als Gottesurteil gefaßt worden zu sein, indem derjenige, welchen den Gott verschonte, nunmehr für heilig und geläutert angesehen wurde’ (J. Töpfer, ‘Thargeliengedächtnisse’, *RhM* 43 (1888) 142-145). This idea of an ordeal and a

consecrated status involves, according to Delcourt, a basic ambivalence, with a potential for both maleficence and beneficence⁶⁴. Those who were consecrated (devoted) thus acquired an ambivalent character, and those saved by the gods turned beneficent⁶⁵. In order to underpin her thesis, Delcourt extensively quoted Hubert and Mauss on the fundamental ambiguity of the notion of the Sacred⁶⁶. Delcourt's contribution to the discussion was one of the first attempts to account for the established ambivalence of the *pharmakos* at a more basic level. The double nature of the ritual and the ambiguity of the victim was no longer contested as such, nor explained away. Instead, an attempt was made to understand the ritual dualities.

possible consecration of the *pharmakoi* will reappear from time to time, never to carry the day as the interpretation par excellence, but never categorically dismissed either.

⁶⁴Delcourt 1944, 31 on the 'identité du mal et du remède': it is the intensity of the maleficence which can be turned into beneficence.

⁶⁵Delcourt 1944, 35: "celui qui a été consacré et que les dieux ont choisi de sauver devient bénéfique. Les forces dont il était chargé sont restées aussi lourdes, mais elles ont changé de signe".

⁶⁶Hubert and Mauss 1909, 15f.

CONCLUSION

The *pharmakos* ritual is a polythetically defined ritual by means of which ancient Greek cities purified themselves, either regularly or in times of dire peril. In fact, both types of circumstances can be united under one heading: '*krisis*'-, crisis management. Annual festivals, such as the Thargelia or the Calends of Ianuarius, at which the ritual was performed, deal with transition and renewal. The ritual may therefore be considered a way of acting out the anxiety inherent in this transition (whether cultural or agricultural).

The purification consisted of an expulsion beyond the borders of the community, or of a sacrifice, of one or two victim(s). The status of these victims is difficult to pin down precisely. Their original status is characterised in a negative way, socially, aesthetically, sometimes morally, but they are members of the community all the same. Their ritual status is no less ambiguous. On the one hand we find negative terminology and features. On the other hand there are much more positive signs of ritual prominence, such as the abundant meals to which the victims are treated, perhaps in the very centre of the polis, and the fact that the victim is sometimes dressed up. In fact, the parallel with animal victims for sacrifice suggests itself.

Some ritual elements, such as the foodstuffs and the flora employed in the ritual, appear to enhance the established ambiguities: they have a potential for both positive and negative connotations. At the same time, however, they seem to point to a kind of 'Otherness' the victim is endowed with.

The study of the terminology involved to describe the victim also demonstrated a structural complexity of the ritual and the victim's role and nature. On the one hand it confirmed the importance of the purificatory context of the ritual, on the other, however, the victim's role within that context became even more opaque. Ritual names for the victim, such as *pharmakos*, *katharsion* and *devotus* are not unequivocal either. The term *devotus* further suggested that the victim is ritually transferred to another status.

The crux in the interpretation seems to lie in the ultimate fate of the victim. Late (Byzantine) sources have not only introduced the concept of *katharma* to

describe the victim, but they have also employed sacrificial terminology in their descriptions of the ritual and the role of the victim. Both ‘inventions’ do not seem to be entirely unfounded. Parallels can be found both in sacrificial ritual and in rituals of expulsion. Although the ritual context seems purificatory indeed, to describe the ritual fate of the victim as a mere riddance of animate *katharmata* seems not to cover everything, as various ritual elements cannot be explained in this eliminatory perspective. Moreover, these features, such as the dressing up of the victim, and his feeding on public costs, do remind one of sacrificial ritual. To complicate even further: a clear-cut distinction between on the one hand the purificatory expulsion of a negative victim and the sacrifice of the valued victim cannot be established on the basis of the source-material. Nor can such a distinction be made on the basis of the effects of the ritual: the aversion of ills or riddance of evil occurs in both contexts of expulsion and sacrifice, as does deliverance or cure of the city. Moreover, even in a straightforward sacrificial context, purificatory terminology may still be employed. It must be clear that the concept of purification deserves closer attention.

A few sources make mention of a *katapontismos*. This ritual fate of the victim exemplifies the complexity of the nature of the ritual: the *katapontimos* seems to qualify for both a purificatory and a sacrificial interpretation. Hence, it may even be argued that a disproportionate occupation with the question whether the victim was sacrificed *or* expelled in fact hinders a deeper understanding of the *pharmakos* ritual.

From a more structural-semiotic perspective, the *katapontismos* can be seen to stress separation in the first place, just as the beating and the throwing of stones, other ritual ingredients sometimes mentioned. From such a perspective the beating and stoning may be regarded as separating strategies by which a community redefines its borders and its identity - us against him.

The ritual is also expressed in spatial terms. The ritual is performed along the inside outside axis of the community. The Centre and what we have called Otherland function as antipodes, the constitutive centre versus the antithetic outside. The victim links both poles and may be seen to embody them: central and marginal, member and non-member or saviour and outcast at the same time.

The inconsistencies established in the *pharmakos* ritual could not be solved in a satisfying way by arguments of temporal or local variety, nor could we blame the Byzantines in a decisive way. Moreover, there appear too many cross-overs linking each source with various others to disqualify the present methodology of

inclusiveness. Perhaps the inconsistencies reveal something more pertinent about the ritual itself.

In the second chapter of this part the observations from the first chapter have been reinforced by a survey of intellectualist interpretations of the *pharmakos* ritual: notwithstanding the variety in emphasis, whether magic or fertility, all these discussions of the ritual shared one common feature: they had to deal with incompatible evidence.

Some scholars negotiated with their theoretical concepts in order to accommodate obstinate elements, others explained away the inconsistencies with a reference to the evolution of ideas and hence, of the ritual practice. However, the results of their intellectual activities still remain revealing: the victim has been declared either sacrificial victim or vehicle of evil, either vegetation deity or demon of infertility. A few scholars hinted at the possibility that the victim and the ritual as such were ambiguous.

The questions asked by the scholars discussed in the second chapter gave way long ago to different interpretative approaches of the ritual, which will be discussed in Parts 3 and 4. Observations from the first chapter with regard to group behaviour and the ritual emphasis on separating and redefining, are incorporated in these alternative ways to interpret and read the ritual. Even so, the idea of the *pharmakos* as the animate form of offscourings that must be removed, has lived on in more recent scholarship¹. It must be clear by now that this interpretation of the ritual role of the victim is one-sided at best. The inconsistencies in the ritual and the ambiguity of the victim have been established and cannot be further ignored.

If it is right to understand the context of the ritual, both the annual and the sudden occasion, in terms of crisis management, it is necessary to widen our scope. In order to find out more about ancient Greek strategies to deal with disaster, a closer look at a second type of crisis management is due.

¹Parker 1983, 24. See also Ogden 1997, 20: "The scapegoat and the *teras* alike take the pollution that causes *loimos* away with them when they are expelled, and carry it wherever they go".

PART 3

MYTHICAL CRISIS MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Many ancient Greek young men and women, and a handful of kings, were sacrificed in times of dire peril in order to save their community. That is, if we believe the numerous mythical narratives that relate such deeds.

These mythical narratives form the subject of Part 3 of this study. In order to gain a substantial and differentiated insight in Greek imaginative crisis management, a number of such narratives will be studied in greater detail. Proceedings will slightly differ from the last or the next part, which underlines once more that we are not dealing with three fully equivalent phenomena. In this introduction the methodology applied will be presented. Crucial in the approach is the study of equivalence and variety among sets of myths and among their individual versions. Before we start, a few caveats with regard to this approach are in order. Moreover, some problems in the classifications of myth and ritual will be discussed in order to clear the ground for comparison between these myths and the *pharmakos* ritual, or for a joined venture.

Let us first turn to the concept of myth and try to define it in the context of this study. There are many ways to study myths, many entrances to each specific myth and many dimensions to myth to be reckoned with¹. As with ritual, the pluriformity, multivalence, and pluralism of myth have been stressed time and again during the last decades. Numerous are the definitions of myth that have been advanced in the last two centuries². One of the more extreme positions is taken by

¹It may be noted already here that my mythical research is restricted to the textual (in the narrow sense here) reflections of myth; artistic representations of myth, e.g. in sculpture and on vases, are left aside.

²The quantity of theories on myth is close to outnumbering the total of myths altogether. See, for instance, Bremmer (ed.) 1987; Buxton 1994, esp. 183 on the 'peach theory', 'the apple theory' and the 'onion theory'; Burkert 1979; Dowden 1992; Edmunds in Edmunds 1990, esp. 1-17; J.P. Gould, 'On Making Sense of Greek religion', in: P.E. Easterling and J.V. Muir (eds.) *Greek Religion and Society* (Cambridge 1985) 1-33; F. Graf, *Greek Mythology. An Introduction* (Baltimore 1993), translation of *Griechische Mythologie* (Munich and Zurich 1987); G.S. Kirk, *Myth, its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures* (Berkeley and Cambridge 1970) and G.S. Kirk, *The Nature of Greek Myths* (London 1974); Versnel 1993, 16-88, to name only a few works of influence on and insight into the historiography of the debate on, especially, ancient Greek myth.

Detienne who has even claimed that ‘myth does not exist’³. Although it is true that our modern concept of myth, like that of ritual⁴, has no direct ancient Greek equivalent, there is, as in the study of ritual, no objection to using the term in a modern analysis of the ancient world, as long as we tell what we mean by it and remain aware of the consequences.

One of the more neutral and, in the study of Greek myth, acclaimed definitions, has been formulated by Burkert. He defines myth as ‘a traditional tale, with a secondary, partial reference to something of collective importance’⁵. This definition is highly useful, if only for the fact that it is - relatively - uncontroversial. It will be used here, albeit in a non-rigid way. It is for the purpose of this study not necessary to distinguish among narratives on the basis of more or lesser historicity, seriousness or sacredness. Therefore, some legends will be included in this mythical category⁶. Moreover, with regard to the adjective ‘traditional’, a rather flexible interpretation will be proposed below, thus even allowing for the inclusion of tragedy as a specific, explicit, kind of mythical creativity, a unique stretching of the limits of imagination⁷.

³M. Detienne, *L'invention de la mythologie* (Paris 1981). See also Bremmer 1994 and 1998; C. Calame, “‘Mythe’ et ‘rite’ en Grèce: des catégories indigènes?”, *Kernos* 4 (1991) 179-204.

⁴Though it is not as bad as with ritual, cf. Burkert s.v. ‘Mythologie’, *HWdPh*, Vol. VI (1984) 282 on the term *mythodes* (μυθώδης) that, from the 6th century onwards, virtually covers the modern sense of ‘myth’.

⁵Burkert 1979, 1-34, see also Chapter 3 Section c below. See for some general remarks on the constitutive parts of this definition Bremmer (ed.) 1987, 1-9. One may also follow Buxton who uses ‘narrative’ in stead of tale. His definition as such is, however, less useful for my purposes, as gods and heroes are too specifically included: “A Greek myth is a narrative about the deeds of gods and heroes and their interrelations with ordinary mortals, handed on as a tradition within the ancient Greek world, and of collective significance to a particular social group or groups” (Buxton 1994, 15).

⁶For the problem of distinguishing between legend and myth in the ancient Greek context, see e.g. Burkert 1979, 22-23: “As has often been stated, the difference cannot be found at the level of form and structure. ... the specific character of myth seems to lie neither in the structure nor in the content of a tale, but in the use to which it is put”. For the relation myth - folktale, see also Edmunds in Edmunds 1990, 240; G.S. Kirk, *Myth, its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures* (Berkeley and Cambridge 1970), 31-41 (see n.1 above).

⁷See already the Prologue, ‘Setting the Stage’. Especially Euripidean tragedy occupies a space of its own with very particular themes and stresses of its own. Nevertheless I incorporate his various tragedies in which human sacrifices (nearly) occur, as they still follow, even in their aberrations, the general patterns of what we call ‘mythical crisis management’. More in general, it would have been useful and doubtless highly instructive to study the concurring influences of the various literary genres on the transmission of myth, as certain generic demands must have been of influence on the mythical content. Nevertheless, what is of central importance for the understanding of Greek ‘mentality’ transcends the

The second issue in need of some clarification is the methodology applied in this chapter. The present focus is on the various shapes of one ‘structuring pattern’, both in various (versions of) myths or in one set of related myths, not on the meaning of individual myths. By a structuring pattern a fixed couple of features are meant, which impel, or govern, the narrative. Such a pattern may be found in unrelated myths, such as the myths about Iphigeneia and Codrus, or in a cluster of myths, which are very similar and clearly related, such as the Athamas-Phrixus complex. In this way, one may gain insights in compatible variants: what may seem different, even contrasting, might turn out equivalent⁸.

The pattern central in this study consists of a sequence of two events. A crisis in a community is followed by the removal of one or two people, often but not always members of the group, as the collective means of safety.

That sounds sufficiently straightforward to start work at once. However, before we proceed there are some caveats to be made. The first explores the tension in myth between its capacity to persist on tradition on the one hand and on adaptation on the other. The second caveat pertains to questions of meaning.

To begin with, the tension between tradition and transformation in myth. Although it has often been claimed that the ‘traditionality’ of myth is one of its main defining features, one may also argue the opposite and pose that one of the main characteristics of a mythical narrative is its immanent potential for change⁹. In this view, the transmission of myth implies the transformation of myth. So, on the one

generic properties of the narratives. See Buxton 1994, 16-17 for cautious remarks on the problematic relationship between socially embedded myths and idiosyncratic narratives. See also Edmunds in Edmunds 1990, 15 and below.

⁸This must not be taken as contra Sourvinou-Inwood 1991, 17: “We must read each individual articulation of the myth as it stands; we must not import narrative elements and meanings from one mythological articulation to another, and assume that one part of a myth in a text necessarily evoked for the ancient reader ... all the other variants”. Starting from the idea that myth is both adaptive and traditional at the same time, I only try to make the comparison of various mythical narratives fruitful for the study of ancient Greek mentality at large.

⁹Due to both its property ‘to grow’, to attract and incorporate other mythical elements and motifs, due to generic demands and due to that which Burkert 1979, 27 calls ‘the historical dimension of myth’, which he, for that matter, considers a by-product of myth’s traditionality, rather than in contrast to it. See also Bremmer 1994, 63 and 67 n.43 for the migration of myths from one cult to another and Bremmer (ed.) 1987, 3-4: “...it is precisely this improvisatory character of myth that guarantees its centrality to Greek religion.” Compare also Edmunds in Edmunds 1990, 17: “The condition for diachrone change and, at the same time, for the relative stability of the synchronic system, is the foundation of Greek myth in Greek society.

hand, choosing to deal with one set of myths as one corpus, lumping together centuries of ancient Greek imagination, and exploring this one body from the point of view of one structuring pattern is acceptable just because myth's defining property is traditionality. On the other hand, it is at the same time quite a hazardous project, as one runs the risk of forcing the specific physique of a particular version of the myth into an unfitting uniform. The use of tragedy on the one hand and of the Library of Apollodorus on the other, or of scholia, only reinforces this risk. However, this should not be exaggerated, as one may also argue that invention, and thus transformation, adheres to mythical and ritual rules: "invention keeps to the traditional patterns of myth and ritual"¹⁰.

The same tension is, for that matter, to be found in the use of the word myth: is this 'a set of multiforms or variants of the same story'¹¹ or rather does every variant itself autonomously represent the myth, as otherwise indeed 'myth (as such) does not exist'? To solve some of these difficulties involved in grasping the identity of any myth, one may establish a fourfold description of the identity of a myth, comparable to Burkert's approach of the world of the gods¹²: the distinctive character of an individual myth can be identified on the basis of, at least, four factors, the narrative pattern, the names of its protagonists, its relation to external *realia*, and its artistic representations. For the purpose of this particular study, the first two of these factors clearly outweigh the latter two. In general, the terms mythical tale or narrative are here used for the actual individual textual reflections of a 'myth'. For a myth which has a long and varied history of such reflections, I use the term mythical cluster. It is impossible, and unnecessary, to abstain from using the word myth at all.

From all this, it must be evident that in this study the single paradigmatic myth is not searched after. First of all because such a search must be considered a practical impossibility and such a myth an intellectual improbability. '(Myth) is not

¹⁰Burkert 1979, 74-75

¹¹See Edmunds in Edmunds 1990, 15. Note his remarks on the relation between 'myth' and variant: "Each retelling or application produces a new variant, which stands in some degree of antagonistic relation to other variants or other myths and thus takes its place in a system constituted by the proliferation of such relations. [This definition] can incorporate the now current definition of myth as 'traditional tale', provided that the difficult word 'traditional' means 'without an identifiable author'. A variant can thus be more precisely defined as the encounter of traditional tale and unique, individual, motivated retelling or artistic reuse of that tale". It must be clear by now that in the present study, these 'variants' are, albeit critically, treated on equal terms with the traditional tale.

bound to forms hardened and stiffened by canonical authority, but mobile, fluent and free to respond to a changing experience of the world', Gould wrote in 1985¹³, to which must be added that mythical variations and alternatives should not be considered mere products of change in time and experience, hence of evolutionary origin, but may also be read as the (by-)products of deeper cultural polyvalences. Moreover, to discredit beforehand the individual reuse of myth, e.g. in tragedy, may be too great a loss. The individual artist must first be given the benefit of the doubt, as he is, ultimately, an, albeit creative, exponent of his own culture.

In sum, just because mythical thought is both traditional and fluid and flexible, one should indeed take the opportunity and look for patterns, among different myths, among variants, and also in larger clusters of myths, however much dynamic. It will prove to be a most revealing and fruitful method. One should only realise its *potentially* reductive character.

The second, related caveat pertains to the question of meaning. Retracing a pattern does not automatically imply assigning meaning. Therefore the term 'structuring' is carefully chosen. Although the pattern impels the narrative, meaning is constituted by the interaction between the mythical narrative with the context in which it functions and in contradistinction to other mythical narratives¹⁴.

However, it must be pointed out at the same time that in choosing a pattern, no matter how significant or insignificant to the meaning of the myth, one nevertheless makes a judgement on what is important. The pattern is in the eye of the beholder. Every perspective illuminates and obscures, and each has to prove its own *raison d'être*. It is therefore important to stress that in retracing this pattern and unveiling its shapes, no exclusive claims are made. The corollary of this pattern-thinking, of what pertains to 'the core pattern' and what is secondary, can be well illustrated by the following example: the element of guilt in the myths and tales of crisis management. In the testimonia on the *pharmakos* ritual discussed in the first chapter, two *aitia* were given, accounting for the original situation of crisis which had led to the instalment of that very ritual at that specific place. Both *aitia* dealt with

¹²See Burkert 1985, 19. Burkert himself finds the identity in a '*structure of sense* within the tale itself', see Burkert 1979, 5.

¹³J.P. Gould, 'On Making Sense of Greek Religion', in: P.E. Easterling and J.V. Muir (eds.) *Greek Religion and Society* (Cambridge 1985) 1-33.

¹⁴And yet, even then one must be cautious, with Burkert 1979, 5: "myth cannot be pinned down as referring specifically and immediately to any kind of reality".

transgression and guilt: The first is only vaguely related to the subsequent ritual procedures. According to Ister, a man called *Pharmakos* stole the sacred bowls of Apollo and was therefore stoned to death. The things happening at the Thargelia are said to be imitations thereof¹⁵. Here there is no mention of the need to sacrifice or expel someone in order to save the community, it is a rather direct causal link between transgression and ultimate fate. The other example is the reference by Helladius to the original situation which necessitated the cleansing of Athens: “This purification was a means of averting pestilential diseases, taking its origin from Androgeus the Cretan, because of whose unlawful death in Athens the Athenians suffered from a pestilential disease, and the custom persisted always to cleanse the city with *pharmakoi*”¹⁶. Here the transgression resulting in a pestilence was a collective one, but it may also be an individual guilt which is collectively suffered for¹⁷. The nature of *aitia* is exactly to explain the unexplained, to clarify what is not obvious. Evidently, the motif of guilt has been introduced to explain the otherwise puzzling personal fate of the ritual victim. In other words, the problem of guilt in this study is more complicated than this apparently uncomplicated tale suggests and it is important to keep in mind that the accusation of any crime may also serve as a justification of what follows¹⁸.

With these two caveats in mind the detailed analysis of mythical narratives in the first two chapters of this part may be sufficiently accounted for. In the last chapter attention will focus on the possible ways these myths and the *pharmakos* ritual may relate to one another, and thus, inevitably, to the problem of distinguishing between the two phenomena. Distinctions between myth and ritual are usually created on the basis of dichotomies and formulated in terms such as ‘the incidental versus the

¹⁵Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48; for the motive of stealing sacred cups, see also for instance the tales about Aesop. For temple-robbery as an incriminating *topos* see Parker 1983, 170-175.

¹⁶Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 49.

¹⁷See for instance, the most famous transgressor of all, Oedipus, or Agamemnon in some of the Iphigeneia-versions.

¹⁸Stretched to the extreme, this might even lead us to consider Oedipus’ guilt as a rationalisation and legitimization of his fate. Are not parricide and incest the ancient paradigms of crime par excellence? On the other hand it would be wrong to consider the guilt as merely a legitimising strategy. For it is (part of) the cause of the plague in Thebes, too.

repetitive’¹⁹, ‘words versus action’- the *legomena* and *dromena* from Plutarch and Pausanias all the way to Harrison²⁰ - and the ‘unhistorical versus historical’.

As Part 2 and 3 are based on distinction between ritual and mythical evidence, it is an obvious conclusion to draw that at least one of these three distinctions lies at its root. However, within the context of this study, not one of them can be wholeheartedly defended, nor can they all be entirely dismissed.

In the first place the distinction incidental versus repetitive is obscured by the fact that there is hardly any accumulative ritual material on the *pharmakoi*, but rather a Wittgensteinian family of (closely) related rituals. Moreover, this distinction is even made redundant from the present focus on structuring patterns of myth: myth, the incidental, is in fact at least as consistently repetitive as the ritual material.

The second distinction of ‘words (beliefs) versus action’ seems to be most solid, but again loses part of its importance within the specific context of this study²¹: not only do both ritual and mythical evidence depend on the same sort of source material, i.e. written sources, the words of which by nature reduce the dimension of action in ritual evidence, but I have also attempted, at least partly, to ‘read ritual’, which is first and foremost a method based on the idea that ritual action may be read as a text²².

The third implicit distinction, of unhistorical versus historical, irrefutable at first sight, appears not always of value either: for what precisely do we mean by unhistorical? Is not the familiar distinction between history and myth an anachronism that obscures rather than elucidates²³? And, speaking of meaning: is it not precisely

¹⁹See for the use of this argument Henrichs 1981, 217.

²⁰Plu. *De Is.* 68 (*Mor.* 378a); Paus. 2.37.2: τὰ μὲν οὖν λεγόμενα ἐπὶ τοῖς δρωμένοις (δῆλὰ ἐστὶν οὐκ ὄντα ἀρχαῖα). Introduced in the modern debate by Harrison 1922³, 567-570, see also Burkert 1979, 159 n.14; Henrichs 1998, 33-71 and esp. Versnel 1993, 23-29. This dichotomy is especially popular among those who consider myth as a secondary, explanatory pendant of ritual.

²¹For general theoretical objections to the thought-action dichotomy, see C. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York and Oxford 1992), though at times cryptical.

²²See the introduction to Part 2.

²³See for ideas about history retold and the construction of history in myth and tales, Part 4, and esp. Chapters 7 and 8, in which the work of Dougherty 1993 and others is discussed. See Veyne 1988 for a thorough deconstruction of our own ideas and assumptions about the beliefs of others, and thus of ourselves. See also Burkert 1979, 74-75 on the relation between history and myth: “Historical reality, transmitted in the form of tales, is immediately shaped in accordance with these patterns”. Conversely, too, one may object against the dichotomy myth versus history from the point of view of myth, as myth is often regarded as containing “some meaningful reality hidden or lost in the depths of the past or the psyche” (see Burkert 1979, 1 and 27 and Chapter 5 Section b below).

this presumed historical dimension of ritual which is surpassed by ritual itself, as ritual by nature creates a fictive reality of its own?

As these notions of myth and ritual entail so much discussion and confusion, it may be tempting to follow Calame, who has called into question the validity of these concepts on the whole, basically for reasons of their obvious anachronism. Calame has suggested using the term ‘symbolic process’ for myth, ritual and art instead²⁴. However, as others have pointed out before, this rather seems like throwing the proverbial child away with the bath water.

For practical reasons, in this study the traditional distinctions between myth and ritual are generally kept to. A few examples of crisis management that transgress these traditional dichotomies are also included in this chapter, for example the legendary cleansing of Athens by Epimenides²⁵ or the alleged sacrifice of the three Persians at Salamis²⁶ (legendary and non-repetitive, but some sort of ritual action indeed). Versnel has created an intermediary category for such legendary cases: ‘mythical ritual’, thus implicitly making the assumption that the dichotomy unhistorical - historical applies to respectively myth and ritual²⁷. But on what grounds is it decided that the Athenian ritual Helladius describes is, historically, more true than the ritual cleansing of Athens by Epimenides? This remains a question of interpretation. As the victim in the Rhodian ritual is said to have been killed by sacrifice²⁸, scholars tend to consider it non-historical gossip by a prejudiced author and rather incorporate the case into the mythical (legendary) category, although it is clearly described as a ritual by the author. In short, whereas the main parts of this study have been organised along this traditional division between ritual and myth, it will soon become clear that this also means finding oneself a few times caught within one’s own categories. This is not as problematic as it sounds: it merely makes us aware of the problem of our categorisations and, at the same time, neatly spans a bridge between the ritual and mythical crisis management we are studying.

²⁴C. Calame, ‘Mythe et rite en Grèce: des catégories indigènes?’, *Kernos* 4 (1991) 179-204.

²⁵See Chapter 3 Section e below.

²⁶Plu. *Them.* 13.2-3 = Phainias fr. 25 (Wehrli); Plu. *Arist.* 9.2; and Plu. *Pel.* 21.3

²⁷See Versnel 1993, 44-45.

²⁸See Porph. *de Abst.* 2.54: “For also on Rhodes on the sixth day of the month Metageitnion a human being used to be sacrificed (ἐθύετο) to Kronos”. Compare the Spartan ritual sacrifice of a virgin was mitigated when Helena herself was singled out to be the next victim (see Plu. *parall. min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c) = Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1a; Lyd. *Mens.* 4.147 = Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr 1b; Tz. schol. *Lyc. Alex.* 63 and 92).

Starting from and in dialogue with the research done in this field, the following approach has been chosen in this part: first, the most common manifestations of this type of mythical crisis management will be discussed, the prime example of which we have already found in Menoeceus' heroic death. Of most of such myths, there are only one or two version(s) in full and a lot of short literary references, which nevertheless may tell something about the conceivable variations on a pattern. Next, the flexibilities of a structuring pattern will be further studied by analysing one larger conglomerate of mythical traditions, those featuring king Athamas and his son Phrixus. By accepting the notion of structuring patterns on the one hand, and the idea of a great deal of variation on the pattern in terms of terminology, elements and plot (and therefore on meaning) on the other, the possible shapes this type of crisis management may acquire in the Greek imagination can be explored. Finally, in the last chapter attention will be paid to the (history of) interpretation of these myths, whereas at the same time the interrelation between ritual and mythical evidence will be explored. In the conclusion it will be claimed that in this context of crisis management, we should not speak of myth *and* ritual, nor of myth *or* ritual, but rather of myth *meeting* ritual.

CHAPTER 3

THE ‘COMMON’ FATE

In the Prologue, the fates of Menoeceus, the son of Creon, who sacrificed himself for the sake of Thebes, and the former king of Thebes, Oedipus, whose removal from the city also proved necessary for Thebes’ preservation, have already been discussed¹. There is more royalty in tragedy that is made into saviours or preservers of cities by being either sacrificed or expelled². A heroic and tragic fate indeed, but a fate not exclusively confined to ancient Greek tragedy.

Take for example king Codrus. Several sources make mention of his *acta*³. When Athens was waged war upon⁴ the enemies received an oracle that they would be victorious if they should spare the Athenian king Codrus. Codrus however learned about the oracle, put on a shabby outfit and left the city in disguise⁵. Outside the city the beggar-king was met by two men of the enemy camp who did not recognise him. Codrus struck down one of them, and was killed by the other. And thus the Athenians gained the victory.

Interestingly, the clue of the story is presented in reverse form: ‘the enemy will win if the king remains alive’ is a somewhat cryptic way to say: ‘Athens can be

¹They both feature in other literary sources, too. On Oedipus, whose fate will not further be discussed in detail here, see also Chapter 5 Section b and Chapter 8 Section b. Other sources that make mention of Menoeceus are Cic. *Tusc.* 1.48, 116; Hyg. *Fab.* 68; Iuv. 14.240; Lib. *Decl.* 41; Paus. 9.25.1; (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.6.7; Philostr. *Tab.* 1.4 (= 2.300.3 Kayser); Plu. *Pelop.* 21; schol. Eur. *Ph.* 1010: Σ. ὑπὸ τοῦ Λαίου φησι τεθνηκέναι τὸν Μενοικέα· Ν. δὲ ὑπὸ τῆς Σφιγγός; Stat. *Theb.* 10.580f.

²Especially in Thebes (e.g. Vian 1962), especially in Euripides (e.g. Schmitt 1921).

³For various versions, see Cic. *Tusc.* 1.48, 116; Lycurg. *c. Leocr.* 84-87; Paus. 7.25.2; Plu. *parall. min.* 18 (= *Mor.* 310d) = Stob. *Flor.* 3.7.67 = Sostrat. *Thraikika FGrHist* 23 fr. 2; Poll. 10.128 = Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 fr. 154; Polyean. *Strat.* 1.18; schol. Lyc. 1378; schol. Pl. *Symp.* 208d = Hellanic. *FGrHist* 323a fr. 23; Phot./*Sud.* s.v. Εὐγενέστερος Κόδρου.

⁴By Dorians (Hellanic. *FGrHist* 323a fr. 23), by Peloponnesians (Lycurg. *c. Leocr.* 84-87) or by Thracians (Plu. *parall. min.* 18 [*Mor.* 310d] = Stob. *Flor.* 3.7.67 = Sostrat. *Thraikika FGrHist* 23 fr. 2).

⁵As a woodcutter (Hellanic. *FGrHist* 323a fr. 23; Stob. *Flor.* 3.7.67 = Sostrat. *Thraikika FGrHist* 23 fr. 2), as a beggar collecting wood (Lycurg. *c. Leocr.* 84-87), as a poor man (Plu. *parall. min.* 18 [*Mor.* 310d]), as a farmer (Poll. 10.128 = Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 fr. 154) or as a servant (Cic. *Tusc.* 1.48, 116).

saved by the death of the king'⁶. Notwithstanding the variation, one easily recognises the pattern of crisis and preservation by removal. The pattern is fleshed out at the level of the story, but the situation of war, the mediation of an oracle, the king's willingness to meet his fate, his ambivalent status as king and beggar (or some other being at the fringe of *polis*-society) at the same time, and the city gate as place of action: all are recurrent elements in mythical crisis management. Codrus' story does not stand alone.

This will become clear in the present chapter by an analysis of the constituent parts of mythical crisis management. The survey is presented on the basis of more or less the same categories as those that shaped our analysis of the rituals: circumstances, the victim(s), procedures and ultimate fate, mythical space, and a final section on the possible interrelations between circumstances, remedies, causes and effects.

A. CIRCUMSTANCES

Both Codrus and Menoeceus offered their lives for the sake of their *polis* in times of war. Yet, there are also other circumstances necessitating a human sacrifice, voluntarily or not. The various occasions that gave rise to this 'means of safety'⁷ will be discussed in the present section.

Although war was a regular feature of ancient life, it would always remain a situation of anxiety. Self-induced or not, war implied crisis⁸. Undoubtedly, Phylarchus' claim that 'it was common practice for all the Greeks to kill human beings before setting out against the enemy' may be considered quite extravagant⁹. Nevertheless, in myth, the sacrifice of a human being at the verge of war was a recurrent theme indeed. When Athens had been under siege of Eumolpus for quite

⁶For which see the more straightforward version in Cic. *Tusc.* I.48, 116 ('because of an oracle which said that if the king should fall, Athens would be victorious').

⁷Eur. *Ph.* 890: μηχανή σωτηρίας.

⁸Note that in the *Phoenissae* war is both the occasion for self-sacrifice, and a symptom of other ills, such as divine anger or (paternal) curses. For the multiplicity and entangledness of causes, symptoms and consequences, especially but not exclusively a feature of the tragic-poetic genres, see below.

⁹Porph. *de Abst.* 2.56.7 = Phylarch. *FGrHist* 81 fr. 80 (Φύλαρχος δὲ κοινῶς πάντας τοὺς Ἕλληνας πρὶν ἐπὶ πολεμίους ἐξιέναι ἀνθρωποκτονεῖν ἱστορεῖ). See for a commentary on the historicity of this claim Hughes 1991, 107-108 ('a reference to pre-historic, i.e. mythical time'). See for the army rituals (employing animals), Hughes 1991, 107f. and Jameson 1991, 197-227 and literature cited there.

some time, Apollo proclaimed that the threat would be averted if someone should annihilate himself for the sake of the city. Agraulus, daughter of king Cecrops of Athens, voluntarily killed herself by throwing herself off the city wall. Soon the war ended and a sanctuary was built in her honour near the entrance to the city¹⁰. Other virgins, but also (young) men died for the sake of their city in wartime¹¹. Not all of them threw themselves off city walls. Some, such as Macaria, Marathus or (one of) the daughters of Erechtheus are said to have been sacrificed¹².

However, occasions vary. There are myths in which the protagonists die for the sake of the community in other circumstances: either during a pestilence¹³, a drought¹⁴ or a famine¹⁵. The daughters of Orion for example are said to have voluntarily offered themselves to be sacrificed for the sake of the community in times of a plague¹⁶, the Aenianes stoned their king during a great drought¹⁷ and according to some, the daughters of Leos were sacrificed during a famine¹⁸.

¹⁰Schol. Dem. 19.303 = Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 fr. 105. I discuss the narratives about Agraulus and the daughters of Erechtheus separately, although they overlap in some ways.

¹¹See e.g. the myths on the daughter(s) of Erechtheus (Lycurg. *c. Leoc.* 98f. = Eur. fr. 360 (Kannicht); Plu. *parall. Min.* 20 (*Mor.* 310d) = Stob. *Flor.* 3.39.33 (= Clem. Alex. *Protr.* 3.42, 6 [1.32, 8 Stählin]), on Antipoenus (Paus. 9.17.1-2) or the fates of Policrite (Parth. 9 = Andriscus *FGrHist* 500 fr. 1 = Theophr. fr. 626 (Fortenbaugh); Plu. *Mul. virt.* 17 (*Mor.* 254b-f) = *FGrHist* 501 fr. 2 = Arist. fr. 559 (Rose) = Gell. 3.15.1; Polyaen. *Strat.* 8.36), Macaria (Eur. *Her.*; Paus. 1.32.6; Plu. *Pel.* 21.2; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1151; schol. Pl. *Phaed.* 89c; schol. Pl. *Hp. Ma.* 293a and Zen. 2.61.), Maeandrus ([Plu.] *de fluv.* 9.1 = Timolaus *FGrHist* 798 fr. 1) and Marathus (Plu. *Thes.* 32.4 = Dicaerch. fr. 66 [Wehrli]). All of these will be discussed below.

¹²See e.g. (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.15.4; Aristid. *Or.* 1.87; Cic. *Tusc.* 1.48.116; Demarat. fr. 4; Eur. fr. 360 (Kannicht); Eur. *Ion* 277f.; Eur. *Her.*; Hyg. *Fab.* 46 and 238; Lycurg. *c. Leoc.* 98; Palaeph. 30 (*Myth. Gr.* 3, 451 [Festa]; Phanod. *FGrHist* 42 fr. 4; Plu. *Thes.* 32.4; Phot./*Sud.* s.v. Παιθέων; schol. A.R. 1.211.

¹³See the sacrificial death of the daughters of Leos (Aristid. *Or.* 1.87; Dem. 60.29; Ael. *VH.* 12.28; Paus. 1.5.2, and see Hughes 1991, 226 n.6); of the Laconian virgin/Helena (*Ioimos, nosos*; Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1a = Plu. *parall. min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c); Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1b = Lyd. *Mens.* 4, 147) and of Hyacinthus (*Ioimos and limos* in (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.15.8; Diod. 17.15). See also Lib. *Decl.* 41, where the son of the local seer must be sacrificed in order to save the community from a plague.

¹⁴See e.g. the myths about Lophis (Paus. 9.33.4) and Molpis (Tz. schol. Lycoph. *Alex.* 160).

¹⁵See e.g. the fate of the daughters of Hyacinthus ([Ps.] Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.15.8; Diod. 17.2; Hyg. *Fab.* 238; Harp. s.v. Ὑακινθίδες; see further the commentary by Frazer in his edition of [Ps.] Apollod. *Bibl. ad loc.* and Hughes 1991, 226 n.5 on the identification with the daughters of Erechtheus).

¹⁶See for the daughters of Orion Ant. Lib. *Met.* 25 = Corinna fr. 3 (Page); Ov. *Met.* 13.65-99).

¹⁷See for the Aenianes Plu. *Qaest. Graec.* 13 and 26 (*Mor.* 294a; 297bc).

¹⁸See some versions of the myth on the death of the daughters of Leos (e.g. Phanod. *FGrHist* 325 fr. 8 = Harp. s.v. *Leokoreion*).

Too much wind, i.e. storm, or too little wind have also given occasion to human sacrifices, both at land and at sea¹⁹. On their way to found a colony at Lesbos, colonists hurled into the sea a virgin as an offering to Poseidon. An oracle told them to do so, when they had reached a reef called 'Midway'²⁰.

It is noteworthy that in some mythical narratives even combinations of these circumstances occur, or that, in others, the situations appear interchangeable²¹. Apparently, the fact that there is a crisis of some sort is of primary importance, while the type of crisis is less decisive.

Lives may also be saved and taken by a vow. Vows formed a special way to safety in times of dire peril, which should suffice to ward off the impending doom, but postpones the execution until after safety is secured. A typical example of such a vow is the pledge taken at sea, usually to sacrifice the first person to be met when safely returned ashore²². The risks involved in such a vow were fully exploited in myths.

An interesting example of both multiple and interchangeable causation is the Iphigeneia myth. According to one version she had to die in order to propitiate Artemis, angered by a transgression of Agamemnon. In another version, Agamemnon had promised Artemis the fairest fruit of one year's harvest²³. As he failed to fulfil his vow, Artemis withheld the winds at the time he was to set out for Troy. Only by means of the sacrifice of his fair daughter Iphigeneia, born in the very year the vow was made, he could both fulfil his former vow and remedy the present windcalm by

¹⁹Too little wind induced the sacrifices of Iphigeneia (among other versions, in the one Euripides offered in his *IA*) and Polyxena (Euripides' *Hecuba*). Compare also the sacrifice of two Egyptian children by Menelaus (Hdt. 2.119); contrary winds necessitated the sacrifice of Iphigeneia according to Paus. 9. 19.7. See also Eumathius *Hysmin.* p. 232ff (Hercher) on the sacrifice of a virgin to Poseidon: αὕτη θῦμα καὶ λύτρον τῶν ἡμετέρων ψυχῶν (she is a sacrificial victim and a ransom for us [our souls]). For more examples, see Wachsmuth 1967, 119-120.

²⁰See Athen. 11.466c = Anticl. *FGrHist* 140 fr. 4; Myrsil. *FGrHist* 477 fr. 14); Plu. *sept. sap. conv.* 20 [*Mor.* 163 ab]; Plu. *de soll. an.* 36 (*Mor.* 984e).

²¹See e.g. the various traditions about the death of the daughters of Hyacinthus (plague and/or famine), the daughters of Orion (fatal pestilence or dearth), Melanippus and Comeatho (infertility and plague) or about Athamas and Phrixus (below 2.2). See also the tale about the sacrifice of Aristodemus in order to deliver the Messenians from a plague (Paus. 4.9.3-20) or to ward off the threat of war (Diod. 8.8.1-2).

²²A storm gave occasion to the vow made by Idomeneus to sacrifice the first living human being whom he met once he had arrived safely on Crete (Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.12.1). For similar vows (the 'Jephta-motif'), see the myth of Maeandrus, set in wartime, [Plu.] *de fluv.* 9.1 = Timolaus *FGrHist* 798 fr. 1). For this motif, but without the vow, see the tale about Lophis (Paus. 9.33.4).

appeasing Artemis. Iphigeneia thus was a pre-battle sacrifice, a first-fruit sacrifice, a propitiatory sacrifice and a wind-charm at the same time²⁴.

In various precarious (mythical) circumstances such as war, drought, pestilence, storm or windcalm, famine, but possibly also in times of affluence, accounts offer comparable or even identical solutions to overcome the calamity. As the described situations can all be referred to by one common denominator, crisis, this will be done so from now on, and the strategies to ward off calamity may therefore be called crisis management²⁵.

B. THE VICTIM

So far the examples of mythical crisis management suggest that the sacrifice, or removal, of one in order to save the many was a special prerogative of the privileged few. In this paragraph the status of the victims of mythical crisis management will be discussed, and their selection. Next, a closer look will reveal that there is more to the status of these protagonists of myth than one might realise at first. Finally, some modern explanations of the particular victims of mythical crisis management must be dealt with.

With regard to the question whether the happy few were indeed apt candidates for saving deaths, the source-material leaves little doubt. King Codrus willingly died for the sake of Athens. King Athamas and Oenuclus, king of the Aenianes, are other kings whose royal lives were at stake for the sake of their country. The first by being (nearly) sacrificed²⁶, the second by being stoned to death²⁷. Oedipus' role in the

²³Eur. *IT* 20f. Whether the occasion was scarcity or affluence we do not know.

²⁴See Henrichs 1981, 203 n.4: Iphigeneia sacrificed as a wind-charm: Aesch. *Ag.* 214f.; 1418; Soph. *El.* 570f.; Eur. *IA* 10; 1575; as a first-fruit offering: Eur. *IT* 17-24; as remedy against military disaster: Eur. *IA* 89-93; 1271-1272; 1377-1386; as a compensation: Cic. *Tusc.* 1.48-116.

²⁵It is important to note that the complementary causes which necessitated the self-sacrifice of Menoeceus and the expulsion of Oedipus from Thebes, referred to in the Prologue as multiple causation, may, as such, have been a generic property of tragedy, but taken individually, the causes are firmly rooted in the mythical panoply of occasions that give rise to the removal of a human being for the sake of the remaining lot.

²⁶Hdt. 7.220-228.

²⁷Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 13; 26 (*Mor.* 294a; 297bc). Other kings whose deaths have been discussed in this context are king Lycurgus ([Ps.] Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.5.1), king Pentheus (Eur. *Ba.* 963 and Dodds *ad loc.*, Bremmer 1983, 307; Seaford 1994, 311-318) and king Thoas of Lemnos (Burkert 1985, 84; Burkert 1990, 60-76). These examples are less straightforward and need some extra reasoning to be considered to belong in these categories of community-saving deaths, especially because, again, the problem of guilt also

Phoenician Women has been discussed above. Menoeceus, son of a king, was not the only one of his kind either. More sons of royal blood have willingly died on behalf of their city²⁸, but they are outnumbered by royal virgins offering their lives for the sake of the community. If royalty is not at hand, nobility, purity and beauty may do, too²⁹. When during the Messenian wars a pestilence was sweeping the country, an oracle predicted that if the Messenians would sacrifice a pure virgin of noble blood to the gods they would be preserved³⁰. And when Thebes was involved in a bloody battle with Orchomenos, the oracle given after consultation ordered the saving self-sacrifice of the most noble citizen³¹. Antipoenus, ‘the one for retribution’ would have been the man for the job, but he refused. Thereupon his daughters offered themselves voluntarily. Of the young man by whose blood Epimenides allegedly purified Athens, tradition explicitly mentions his handsomeness³². It is interesting to note that one author praises Menoeceus for his long-haired, muscular handsome appearance, ‘the most beautiful one of the ephebes’ whereas Statius in turn emphasises *virtus* and *pietas*³³. Sometimes the names of the heroes or heroines are telling as such, for instance in the case of Macaria, ‘the happy one’³⁴, or Policrite, ‘the one chosen from (by) many’³⁵. Iphigeneia, ‘the mighty-born’, perhaps the most famous of all victims,

plays a role here. The story about Leonidas’ self-sacrifice for the sake of Greece (giving heed to the words of the Pythia) may also be seen to have been inspired by the theme.

²⁸See 1 Clem. Rom. 55.1: πολλοὶ βασιλεῖς καὶ ἡγούμενοι λοιμικοῦ τινὸς ἐνστάτος καιροῦ χρησιμοδοτηθέντες παρέδωκαν ἑαυτοὺς εἰς θάνατον, ἵνα ῥύσωνται διὰ τοῦ ἑαυτῶν αἵματος τοὺς πολίτας (In times of severe pestilence, many kings and leaders have given themselves to death in accordance with an oracle, to deliver their citizens with their own blood).

²⁹See Georgoudi 1999, 71 and below.

³⁰Paus. 4.9.3-10; Diod. 8.8.1-2. All further intrigues in the story are of secondary importance from the present point of view. For other such explicit prescriptions see e.g. Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1a = Plu. *Parall. Min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c); Eur. *Her.* 487-490; Paus. 8.21.1-4; Paus. 9.8.2; Paus. 19.17.4.

³¹Paus. 9.17.1-2. Compare also Molpis’ voluntary death (Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 160).

³²Athen. 13.602c-d = Neanth. *FGrHist* 84 fr. 16. On the various traditions around Epimenides’ purification of Athens, see below. For another saving death by beautiful young men, see e.g. Hdt. 7.134.2.

³³Philostr. *Tabl.* 1.4.3; Stat. *Theb.* 10.654. See for an analysis of Menoeceus in the *Thebaid*, D.W.T.C. Vessey, ‘Menoeceus in the *Thebaid* of Statius’, *CP* 66 (1971) 236-243.

³⁴Euripides made her fate central to his tragedy *The Children of Heracles* and stresses her noble origins several times, e.g. in 409, 503-510, 525-527, 540-541, 626. References to Macaria’s voluntary sacrifice in Paus. 1.32.6; Plu. *Pel.* 21.2; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1151; schol. Pl. *Phaed.* 89c; schol. Pl. *Hp. Ma.* 293a and Zen. 2.61. Note that the girl was only named Macaria in the later Hypothesis to the tragedy. Euripides does not give her a name of her own, she is ‘the daughter of Heracles’.

³⁵On the fate of Policrite, see below.

embodies all these qualities, as she is of very noble origin, pure and also said to be the fairest offspring of her year³⁶.

Selection of a victim is, evidently, a precarious issue. Often an oracle mediates, or a seer. Sometimes the oracle explicitly ordered the sacrifice of a specific person³⁷. At other times, oracles were less personal, but still specific in their prescriptions, for example in terms of the sacrifice of a noble boy or virgin³⁸. Some oracles mentioned only 'tis', someone³⁹. The number of victims is usually one, in a few cases two or more⁴⁰.

As to the proceedings of selection two variants stand out. Most often someone highly noble and courageous would step forward voluntarily⁴¹. In animal sacrifice, the willingness, or even assent, of a victim was an important facet of a successful sacrifice. No wonder that this element acquires an important role in mythical human sacrifice, too. The more eager the victim, the more valued the sacrifice. Another way to select the candidate was to appoint him or her by lot⁴². In an unknown city that was in the grip of a plague, an oracle proclaimed that the plague would come to an end if

³⁶See for the particular Euripidean accents in his tales about Iphigeneia, Macaria, Menoeceus and the daughter of Erechtheus, O'Connor-Visser 1987; Schmitt 1921.

³⁷See e.g. Lycurg. *c. Leocr.* 99 ('your daughter', but unspecified which one); Dem. Trag. *FGrHist* 42 fr. 4 ('your eldest daughter'); Ael. *VH* 12.28 ('those', referring to the daughters of Leos).

³⁸Eur. *Hec.* 408-410: 'a virgin of a noble father'; Plu. *Paral. Min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c); or Paus. 9.17.1: 'citizen of most noble descent' (Antipoenus). Compare also Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 160 (Molpis, παῖδα εὐγενῆ).

³⁹Schol. Dem. 19.303 (Agraclus).

⁴⁰See on the varying accounts of the number (from one to even six!) of daughters of Erechtheus, giving their lives for their fatherland, see Georgoudi 1999, 72. See for two virgins, e.g. the daughters of Antipoenus (Paus. 9.17.1-2), for three the daughters of Leos (Ael. *VH* 12.28), for two young men, e.g. Athen. 13.602c-d = Neanth. *FGrHist* 84 fr. 16. Diod. 2. 55. I know of a few accounts of a sacrifice of a boy and a girl together, for instance Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 679: "among the Boeotians White Hermes is honoured; for when the people of Tanagra were being attacked by Eretrians they sacrificed a boy and a girl in accordance with an oracle, and as a consequence they set up a statue of White Hermes" (translation Hughes 1991, 134). See also Paus. 17.19.4 (Melanippus and Comaetho) and Phrixus and Helle in Chapter 4 below.

⁴¹See e.g. Marathus (Plu. *Thes.* 32.4), the daughters of Antipoenus (Paus. 9.17.1); Photius s.v. παρθένου; Macaria (Eur. *Her.* 500f) and Menoeceus (see the Prologue and Paus. 3.6.7). Or they are voluntarily offered by their father (see Iphigeneia). In the context of voluntary sacrifices, see also Bremmer 2001, 175-186 with Origen. *c. Cels.* 1.31 who compares the voluntary death of Jesus with 'those who died for their fatherland, to avert plague epidemics, famine, and shipwreck' (see Chapter 1 Section 1). See for voluntary death in tragedy, esp. Schmitt 1921.

⁴²See e.g. daughter of Smintheus: Plu. *Sept. sap. conv.* 20 (*Mor.* 163b); the Laconian virgin/Helena (Plu. *Parall. Min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c) and the daughters of the house of the Aepytiidae (Paus. 4.9.4). See also the case of Cyrene, Chapter 7 Section b below).

the inhabitants would sacrifice one of their sons. The son of the seer was appointed by lot⁴³. Selection by lot is less arbitrarily than it sounds, as the Greeks considered drawing lots a means to discover the will of the gods⁴⁴. The one singled out by lot thus is the one who is likely to be favoured by the gods.

Not surprisingly, those who have written on this subject before, all agree that in myth the protagonists are usually the more (most) valued members of the community, most favourite of the gods⁴⁵.

That a sacrifice to end a catastrophe must be a valuable one is well illustrated by the myth about the self-sacrifice of Anchurus, son of king Midas, to deliver his *polis* from a calamity brought about by the wrath of Zeus Idaeus:

At the city of Celaenae in Phrygia the earth yawned open, together with a heavy rain, and dragged down many homesteads with their inhabitants. Midas the king received an oracle that if he should throw his most precious possession into the abyss, it would close. He cast in gold and silver, but this availed nothing. But Anchurus, the son of Midas, reasoning that there is nothing in life more precious than a human life, embraced his father and his wife Timothea, and rode on his horse into the abyss⁴⁶.

Apparently, a human life is more precious than all the proverbial gold of Midas, a royal life most precious of all.

But why was it Anchurus, the son, and not the king himself who died for the sake of the community? What made the son more fit to meet this fate than his, even still more valuable, father?

This brings us to an important aspect of these protagonists that has often been neglected. Already in the Prologue it has been noticed that both Menoeceus and Oedipus are credited with a more or less ambivalent status. Marathus who offered himself for sacrifice just before a decisive battle was a foreigner in the army on behalf of which he died⁴⁷. The three Persians who (allegedly) were sacrificed by

⁴³Lib. *Decl.* 41.

⁴⁴See *Neue Pauly* 7 (1999) 446-447 s.v. 'Los' (Nollé). See e.g. Hom. *Il.* 7.179.

⁴⁵See for similar statements on the status of the victims in mythical crisis management e.g. Bremmer 1983, 304; Burkert 1985, 84; Seaford 1994, 312. See Georgoudi 1999, 70-71, who nicely plays upon the double value in the French *cher*, valuable and beloved.

⁴⁶Plu. *Parall. Min.* 5 (*Mor.* 306ef) (translation Loeb), who ascribes the story to Callisthenes (see Ps. Call. *FGrHist* 124 fr. 56 but omits his reference to Zeus' wrath. Plutarch himself compares Anchurus' fate with the very similar Roman story about M. Curtius (for which see Versnel 1981, 142).

⁴⁷Plu. *Thes.* 32.5 (an Arcadian).

Themistocles were in a similar position: foreigners, incorporated into the Greek camp as prisoners of war, but at the same time explicitly said to be 'of visage most beautiful to behold' and of most noble origin, being nephews of the Persian king himself⁴⁸. Of Macaria, too, though of most noble stock and being the daughter of an all-Greek hero, it is explicitly stated that she was a stranger, an asylum seeker, in Athens, which she yet was able to preserve by her self-sacrifice. Albeit a stranger, she died 'for her siblings and country', by which Athens was clearly meant⁴⁹. In some versions of the myth about the saving death of the Hyacinthides in Athens, the girls are said to be the daughters of the Spartan immigrant Hyacinthus⁵⁰. In all these examples the hero-victims are characterised as ambiguous persons, they both belong and do not belong to the community they preserve or purify. Both very positive and negative, disqualifying, characteristics are attributed to them. When we now return to king Codrus disguised as a beggar we recognise a similar ambiguity. The first and foremost citizen on the one hand, a non-valeur on the other. Without overstating this point, it seems important enough to note that in a number of crisis management - myths, the much valued protagonists are, to a greater or lesser extent and in various ways (ethnically, socially, economically, morally or as we shall discuss below, in spatial terms) disqualified from the point of view of the community, and thus characterised in an ambiguous manner.

The presence of young men and women with their particular status in society (neither children nor fully adult) has not remained unnoticed in discussions of these myths⁵¹. Bremmer even went so far as to claim that every king, young man and virgin *per se* share the same property of being situated on the margin of Greek society⁵². He thus declared every king to be 'the lonely marginal at the top'⁵³. Versnel, in a reaction, pointed out that useful concepts such as marginality lose much of their analytical value, or even obscure the self-evident, if applied too enthusiastically:

⁴⁸Plu. *Arist.* 9.2; *Pel.* 21.3 and *Them.* 13.2 = Phainias fr. 25 (Wehrli).

⁴⁹Eur. *Her.* 622: πρὸ τ' ἀδελφῶν καὶ γᾶς.

⁵⁰See Diod. 17.2; (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.15.8 (where the sacrifice is not effective); Hyg. *Fab.* 238 and Harp. s.v. Ὑακινθίδες.

⁵¹See e.g. Kearns 1990, esp. 336-337.

⁵²From this perspective Bremmer claims that the ritual victim, the beggar or the disabled one belongs in the same category as the king, young man or virgin. Bremmer 1983, 303-304 with reference to J.N. Bremmer, 'Heroes, Rituals and the Trojan war', *Studi storico-religiosi* 2 (1978) 5-38; C. Calame, *Les chœurs des jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque* (Rome 1977) vol. 1; Graf 1978 and Vidal-Naquet 1981, 151-207.

⁵³Bremmer 1983, 304.

“Albeit ‘egregious’, the king is first and foremost the symbol of the centre of society”⁵⁴. Although being the centre of society is no clear-cut qualification either, I fully agree with Versnel that the concept of centrality is indeed more suitable than marginality to describe the position of a king, even an ancient Greek one.

In consequence, the royalty of the king, the handsomeness of the young man and the beauty, nobility and purity of the virgin should be considered signs of centrality, importance and value. There is something important to add, however, something that is central to the understanding of ancient Greek crisis management at large. The ‘egregious-ness’ of the king, the youth of the young man and the virginity of the virgin are at the same time signs of their potentiality to undergo change of status or be credited with forms of ‘otherness’⁵⁵. From this viewpoint, for example, both the nobility and the foreignness of Macaria, her belonging and non-belonging, can be considered as the explicit extrapolations of an ambiguity that is, latently, present in every virgin. As to the king, whose centrality and high value are undeniable, extra mythical trouble must be taken to create, or activate, his ambiguity. Apart from the disguise already pointed out several times, another strategy is to attribute to him blame, or outright guilt. The figure of the guilty king is familiar in the ancient Greek imagination⁵⁶. These disqualifying strategies may be viewed as ways to legitimise the unthinkable, that is the sacrifice or expulsion of the king

⁵⁴Versnel 1993, 63-65.

⁵⁵The concept of otherness is better suitable than the concept of marginality to express the (potential) ambiguity inherent in this status, and therefore preferred in this study. Virgins are not (yet) part of the sexual, and therefore social, structure of society, which makes them a kind of outsiders, although they belong to the group at the same time. On the ‘untamed’, wild side of virgins, see esp. Versnel 1993, 276-283 and ref.; on young men, see Vidal-Naquet 1981, 151-207. See also the Prologue on the term *πῶλος* (Menoeceus in Eur. *Ph.* 947; Polyxena in Eur. *Hec.* 142). See also Bonnechere 1994, 60 for examples. Parker 1983, 93 points to ‘a kind of analogy between virgins and sacrificial animals, or sacred land, ‘let go’ by mortals for the use of the gods’.

⁵⁶We are not far away from the proverbial chickens and eggs: is the king guilty and expelled for that reason, or is the king to be expelled for other reasons, which is legitimized by making him guilty. See for this already the Introduction to part 3. On the heightened blame-factor of Greek kings in the Greek imagination, see the examples in Parker 1983, 265-271, Horstmannshoff 1989, 162 and the well-known passage in the *Odyssey* (19.109-114) on the belief that prosperity depends upon the king. Compare also Hes. *Op.* 240-247. See also Speyer 1973, 135: “Das Handeln des Königs ist nach magisch-sakraler Auffassung in besonderem Maße für das Wohl und Wehe seines Volkes verantwortlich”. On the king as intermediate between gods and men, see Soph. *OT* 22-34. I tend to be cautious with ancient Greek royalty: the king who retreated from ancient Greek history, was not necessarily of the same stock as the one who was reborn on stage. Especially these imaginary kings embody a highly ambivalent notion of kingship: they can be good ones, but may suddenly turn into bad ones, too.

himself, the most valued being conceivable. But they may also be read in combination with the positive qualifications, that are usually stressed at the same time.

Before we come to a conclusion of this paragraph, one further issue must be dealt with here, in order to clear the way for further exploration of ancient Greek crisis management. There are modern scholars who have tried to account for the presence of young women (and men) in different veins, in terms of sexual symbolism or initiatory practices. However, in order to do so, they used only part of the evidence, which, concurrently, renders these theories of partial interest at best.

Some scholars have argued that virgin sacrifice should not be confused with a sacrifice of what is most valuable. Burkert, for instance, considers all the myths about virgin sacrifices before battle a manifestation of the sexual renunciation required of hunters and warriors: "Man declines to love in order to kill: this is most graphically demonstrated in the ritual slaughter of the virgin, the potential source of a happy union and of disruptive conflict within the group"⁵⁷. Hughes in turn claims that 'their value may lie chiefly in the contrast inherent in the sexual role reversal, which would pose a direct challenge to the male warrior'⁵⁸. This may indeed be a relevant perspective in case of war. However, as we have seen above, virgin sacrifice is - mythically - resorted to also in times of plague, pestilence or famine. It therefore seems unwise to lay too much stress on such a piecemeal explanation.

Other scholars have claimed that original (ritual) contexts of initiation might explain the presence of so many youngsters in these myths⁵⁹. Parker has also followed this trail: "The explanation may be that the primary myths of this type,

⁵⁷Burkert 1983, 64.

⁵⁸Hughes 1991, 76. See also Bonnechere 1994, 253. In Antiquity a similar view was expressed by Lycurgus (c. *Leoc.* 100) when he says that 'Euripides should be praised for his plays in that he considered their (= daughters of Erechtheus, LK) actions would be the finest example to the citizens, and that by looking at them and admiring them they would become used in their souls to loving their fatherland'. Praxithea in her long speech in Euripides' *Erechtheus* invites such reasoning herself by explicitly opposing the young man's dying in battle to the sacrificial death of a virgin: 'if I had sons I would send them out to fight; my daughter equally can face death and be sacrificed' (fr. 360, 22-27 Kannicht).

⁵⁹See e.g. A. Brelich, 'Symbol of a Symbol', in: J.M. Kitagawa and C.H. Long (eds.), *Myths and Symbols. Studies in honor of Mircea Eliade* (Chicago and London 1969) 195-207, 200 n.7; Brulé 1987; Dowden 1989; H. Jeanmaire, *Couroi et Courètes. Essai sur l'éducation spartiate et sur les rites d'adolescence dans l'antiquité hellénique* (Paris 1939) and Vidal-Naquet 1981, to name a few important contributions. On the vast literature on initiation, see Bremmer 1994, 53 n.45 and 46 and Versnel 1993, 48-60. See also Chapter 5 Section c below.

which established the story-pattern, were reflections of the mock deaths of initiates, persons by definition not married”⁶⁰. This, however, would leave the presence of others, particularly kings, in mythical crisis management unexplained. Besides, to hold this view, one must accept widespread initiation cults for ancient Greece, at least in pre-historic times (both for girls and boys) and regard myth’s role as mainly aetiological in character. Moreover, in view of what has been said about myth in general in the introduction above and on account of the pre-historic uncertainties just mentioned, it remains difficult to base arguments on ‘primary myths which establish story-patterns’. Original meaning (if to be reconstructed at all) does not exclude (complementary or successive⁶¹) other readings and interpretations. Without entirely dismissing the insights of these scholars here, I regard their theories as partial contributions at best.

Gradually, by analysing the semiotics of the mythical protagonists, we have entered the field of interpretation. The fact that maiden sacrifice was not only a sovereign remedy in (mythical) situations of war, but also in other crises, such as in times of drought, famine or pestilence, must at least force us to widen our scope when we try to attribute a more general meaning to their role. I therefore propose to approach the virgins in the same way as I approach the other mythical protagonists: as valued beings in a community who have, by virtue of their nature, age or social position, a potential ambiguity assigned to them.

In mythical crisis management the value of the victim is the most important reason for his or her selection to die on behalf of the community. The king is the embodiment of this principle. In the case of other protagonists, their nobility, beauty, or purity is stressed time and again. The function of motifs such as the willingness of the hero-victim, his or her self-selection, or the selection by lot must be viewed in the same light: they idealise the candidate. In addition to this, however, there is another interesting aspect. The very victim who is of value to the community often is at the same time, in some way, subtly or rather bluntly, represented negatively and thus

⁶⁰Parker 1983, 81.

⁶¹Parker 1983, 79 offers a good example of a post-classical reading of the role of these virgins and youngsters in medical and agricultural writers: “... the virgin and the ‘uncorrupted boy’ are credited with magical powers that are obviously conceived as deriving from purity. It is not clear, however, that it was because of their purity that such ministrants were chosen for the classical rites, still less that purity was considered magically effective”.

disqualified as a (full) member from the point of view of the community⁶². This is done, for example, by having a king disguised as a beggar, or by negatively stigmatising him in moral terms, by attributing an immigrant or foreigner status to a valiant youngster or a beautiful maiden or by ascribing to him or her an ignoble descent. This mechanism may also shed light on the frequent performances of young men and especially virgins in these myths whose not-yet status has a special potential for polyvalence, of both negative and positive nature. The immanent potential for ambiguity may in turn become activated at the textual level by characterisations of nobility and foreignness, such as in the case of Macaria. Even if its meaning still remains unexplained, the ambiguity present in the victims of mythical crisis management cannot be further neglected.

C. PROCEDURE AND ULTIMATE FATE

About the actual procedures of ancient Greek mythical crisis management not much is told. The sources rather concentrate on the ultimate fate of the victim. There is quite a panoply of ways to end up as a victim in mythical crisis management, most of them fatal. In this paragraph, we start out with the procedures, even if there is little to say. Next, the fates of the victims will be discussed, including the way modern scholarship has tried to understand these. Finally, a tale that combines several ingredients will receive ample attention.

In general, and in contrast to the ritual material, little mythical attention is paid to the details of crisis management. *Pompe*-terminology is regularly employed⁶³. At times the victim is said to be wreathed⁶⁴, or to be led to the altar dressed up in festive clothing⁶⁵. Most detailed is Euripides' description of the sacrifice of

⁶²See already Henrichs 1981, 224: "In each case, a possession that is valuable and yet dispensable is voluntarily destroyed in order to forestall greater disaster."

⁶³Hdt. 7.197 (Athamas); Eur. *Her.* 528; Eur. *IA* 135, 966, 1475, 1546, 1556; Paus. 7.20.1; Plu. *Them.* 13.5 = Phainias fr. 25 (Wehrli) (Persian prisoners of war).

⁶⁴For wreathed victims, see schol. Ar. *Nub.* 257(Athamas); Eur. *Erechth.* fr. 360, 34 (Kannicht) (the daughter of Erechtheus); Eur. *Her.* 529 (the daughter of Heracles); Eur. *IA* 1477 (Iphigeneia); Plu. *Parall. Min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c) = Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1b (the Laconian virgin/Helena); Diod. 2.55 (Iamboulus and his friend); compare also Plu. *Them.* 13.2-5 = Phainias fr. 25 (Wehrli); *Pel.* 21 (the alleged sacrifice of Persians at Salamis). Compare Hdt. 2.45 on the near-sacrifice of Heracles.

⁶⁵For such descriptions, see Eur. *Erechth.* fr.360, 34 (Kannicht); Aristid. *Or.* 1.87 (the daughter of Erechtheus); Plu. *Parall. Min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c) = Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1a (the Laconian virgin/Helena); Ath. 9.466c, 781c = Anticl. *FGrHist* 140 fr. 4; Myrsil. *FGrHist* 477 fr. 14 = Plu. *de sol. an.* 36 (*Mor.* 984e); Plu. *Sept. sap. conv.* 20 (*Mor* 163a-d)

Iphigeneia⁶⁶. Incidentally, terminology of consecration is employed to describe the status of the victim, who already belongs in the domain of the deity, but has not been actually sacrificed yet⁶⁷.

The ways to save a community are various. Or, as Versnel has observed, “horizontal and vertical eliminations from the human world alternate”⁶⁸. Best known, probably, are the cases of (voluntary) sacrifice, like those of Iphigeneia or Macaria, immortalised by the tragedians. This sacrifice ‘proper’ may be performed on an altar, and is sometimes directed to a specific god, such as Zeus or Artemis⁶⁹.

There are also sacrifices without deities involved⁷⁰, but nevertheless identified as such on the basis of the terminology employed. Interestingly, both the verbs *thyein* and *sphazein* are employed, indifferently, not only in tragedy, but also elsewhere. This is remarkable, as in cultic life they tend to have different uses⁷¹. The absence of a supernatural receptor in ancient Greek sacrifice is nothing extraordinary; on the

(fine rainment and golden ornaments) (the daughter of Smintheus who was thrown into the sea during a storm). P. Bonnechere, ‘La πομπή sacrificielle des victimes humaines en Grèce ancienne’, *REA* 99 1-2 (1997) 63-89 claims, on the basis of textual and archeological evidence (vases), that there is a dichotomy between the festive *pompe* in the context of animal sacrifice and the total lack of joy in the case of human sacrifice. Hence, these latter represent, according to Bonnechere, a complete ‘inversion des valeurs’. Due to a lack of knowledge I do not dare to disagree with iconographical ‘readings’ of this type of evidence. However, I may nevertheless question the conclusions. This total lack of joy may as well be indicative of, for instance, the extremely serious circumstances which necessitate human sacrifice, rather than being an emblem of ‘anti-valeur’.

⁶⁶Eur. *IA* 1477, 1478 (wreath); *IA* 875, 1083-4; 1516-1517; 1428-1429, 1574, 1578-1579 (description sacrifice). The wreath here is a nice example of polysemy: it refers to the sacrificial wreath, but also carries the connotation of a wedding ceremony or, more generally, of initiation. In 1472/3 there is a reference to a wreath of victory, for her who brought safety to Hellas.

⁶⁷See for instance Iphigeneia (Eur. *IA* 1470f); Macaria (Eur. *Her.* 601); Menoeceus (Eur. *Ph.* 946); Helena (Lyd. *Mens.* 4.147 = Aristod. *FGrHist*22 fr. 1b); Polyxena (Eur. *Hec.* 535f); the Persian victims at Salamis (Plu. *Arist.* 9.2; Plu. *Them.* 13.2 = Phainias fr. 25 [Wehrli 1969]); the girl from the house of the Aepeytidae (Diod. 8.8.2).

⁶⁸Versnel 1981, 155.

⁶⁹See the sacrifices of Iphigeneia (Artemis) and Athamas (Zeus).

⁷⁰E.g. the sacrifices of the daughters of Leos (Ael. *VH* 12.28).

⁷¹See e.g. Eur. *Ion* 277 and 278 both referring to the same incident, the sacrificial death of the daughters of Erechtheus to save her land: ἔθυσσε and πρὸ γαίας σφάγια; in Eur. *IA* *thyein* is used in the verses 91, 93, 358, 360, 530-531, 673 etc. and *sphazein* in 135, 533, 906, 1186 etc. for the same sacrifice of Iphigeneia; see further (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.15.4-8; Paus. 4.9.3-10; Phot. s.v. Παρθένοι and Plu. *Ages.* 6.4-5; Plu. *Them.* 13.2-5 and *Pel.* 21 on the sacrifice of the Persians at Salamis, and schol. A.R. 2.652-654 below. See also O’Connor-Visser 1987, 190-195 (who suggests a few partial solutions, e.g. *thyein* covers *sphazein* and more, or *sphazein* is, especially in Euripides’ *IA* used by the opponents of the sacrifice, *thyein* by those who want it); I shall return to this distinction and its striking absence in this context in Chapter 9.

contrary, it is highly common in the practice of sacrificial rites of the *sphagia*-type⁷². Uncommon, however, is the fact that in mythical cases of human sacrifice a *thysia* in word may turn out to be a *sphagion* in appearance. Apparently, human sacrifice is exceptional enough to thwart the usual distinctions.

On closer inspection of the material, sacrifice turns out to be only one of the forms of mythical crisis management. Other protagonists die their saving deaths by means of leaping (or being thrown, *riptein*, *riph(th)esthai*) off a city wall, or into a chasm or the sea⁷³. Then there are terms used of which the actual implications are difficult to define, such as *apothanein* or *anairein*⁷⁴. And finally, terms such as *apokteinein* and *phoneuein* are employed⁷⁵.

With regard to death through stoning, there are only a few examples, which belong, moreover, to legend, rather than to hard-core myth. One example is provided by the Aenianes and their king Oenuclus: when the Aenianes had been driven from their country, they came to the Cirrhaean plain. But there, they were afflicted by great droughts (*megalon auchmon*). Thereupon in accordance with an oracle they stoned to death (*kataleusantes*) their king Oenuclus, but also wandered on themselves. Plutarch, who relates the tale, continues:

...and they came to this country which they now possess, a goodly country, productive of all manner of crops; wherefore it is with good reason that they pray to the gods that they may not return again to their ancient fatherland, but may remain here in prosperity⁷⁶.

⁷²For the time being I follow traditional scholarship and consider *sphagein* to be part of sacrificial vocabulary, although its precise sacrificial nature is a subject for further debate. See the next section for this discussion.

⁷³For leaping off a wall, see Menoeceus in Hyg. *Fab.* 68 and Agraulus in schol. Dem. 19.903 = Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 fr. 105. For jumping into a chasm, see Anchuros in Plu. *Parall. Min.* 5 (*Mor.* 306ef) = Ps. Call. *FGrHist* 124 F 56. For being thrown into the sea, see the daughter of Smintheus (Anticl. *FGrHist* 140 F 4 = Athen. 11.466c; Plu. *sept. sap. conv.* 20 [*Mor.* 163ab] at a reef called 'Midway'; Myrsil. *FGrHist* 477 fr. 14 = Plu. *de sol. an.* 36 (*Mor.* 984e) or Phrixus and Helle below.

⁷⁴*Apothanein* in e.g. Paus. 1.32.6 (Macaria), Paus. 9.17.1-2 (Antipoenus), D.L. 1.110 (two young men in Epimenides' cleansing); *anairein* for instance in Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 fr. 105 = schol. Dem. 19.303 (Agraulus) and Ael. *VH* 12.28 (Leos' daughters).

⁷⁵See Paus. 9.25.1 for *apokteinein*, schol. vet. Ar. *Nub.* 257a for *phoneuein*, used in correspondence with *thyein* and applied on the case of Phrixus, on which below in Chapter 4. See below for attempts (by others) to interpretate the events on the basis of terminology.

⁷⁶Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 13 (*Mor.* 294a) (translation Loeb). Among these same Aenianes a curious ritual was performed at the time of Plutarch, who relates the fate of Oenuclus and his people again in another Greek Question, in which he asks: "What is the intent of the custom by which the maidens who serve as an escort for the men who lead the bull from Aenis to Cassiopaea chant until they reach the boundary, 'Never may ye return to

It is interesting to note how the motif of expulsion can mythically reproduce itself: the Aenianes had been driven from their country, are hit by severe drought and kill their king by stoning him, thereupon leaving their new habitat themselves. By all means, all ends well.

It must be noted that there is hardly any reference to expulsion, to banishment without death, as was Oedipus' fate in the *Phoenissae*. However, one may argue that the myths relating a nearly (self-)sacrificial death interrupted by a miraculous saving, or even substituted by another victim's death, may be studied from this perspective, too. In fact, these myths stand midway between sacrifice and banishment: though sacrifice was the proper remedy, the victim ends up abroad, banished to a far-off place⁷⁷. The debate on the historical implications of this type of substitution can be left aside here⁷⁸. Whether the noble victim is miraculously, evolutionary or otherwise saved and/or substituted by a deer or a goat is less important than that he/she was in fact *meant* to be sacrificed - out of necessity in the given circumstances. A few additional observations can be made: the human life is saved, but the deity is satisfied all the same, as she herself saves the victim and an animal carries through the job (see Iphigeneia). Behold the resourcefulness of mythical thought. Most importantly, however, is the observation that in several of these substitution myths, the victim, albeit alive, ends up all the same in some Hades-type of place, such as Tauria or Colchis. This makes the substitution-variant a sort go-between among the categories sacrifice and expulsion: on the one hand the involved deity is appeased, on the other the victim is discharged to the distant parts of Otherland. To the question why human

the well-loved soil of your homeland”? (see Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 26 [*Mor.* 297c], translation Loeb). Note that the king was stoned in times of great crisis, the bull expelled in times of great prosperity. One wonders how a king and a bull relate to each other, how stoning and banishment, and how myth and ritual do.

⁷⁷In this specific sense, myths, such as the one about Iphigeneia, are clearly different from the sacrifice and last-minute substitution of Isaac in *Genesis* 21.

⁷⁸Scholars have long considered the classical Iphigeneia-myth as a testimony of the moral achievements of the ancient Greeks. Allegedly, it shows how at one point in history the Greeks did away with human sacrifice, and introduced animal substitution. For a criticism of this view, Henrichs 1981, 203-204: “We should desist from seeing human sacrifice and animal substitution as two separate steps in a historical evolution”. Interestingly, as Henrichs points out, the development was rather the other way around: “In both cases (Iphigeneia and Isaac, LK) the mitigating cultic mechanism of animal substitution was abandoned in the course of the literary tradition because the human blood proved a more powerful symbol” (Henrichs 1981, 198 n.1). Henrichs, as others at present, considers substitution as symbolic rather than historical. See for this debate also Hughes 1991, 82f.

beings were sacrificed at all, these substitution myths do not provide an answer. They do show however, that in mythical thought the human victim was the most preferred of a range of sacrificial victims.

Finally, it is noteworthy that in several of the myths under consideration here, the protagonists receive, after their saving deaths, cultic honour or rewarded with straight apotheosis⁷⁹. Their heroism definitely stands out in the way they are remembered. In some stories the honours are more dubious: Hesiod's Iphigeneia, Iphimede, is immortalised as Artemis of the Cross-roads, a Hecate-like deity, or even Hecate herself⁸⁰. Policrite, whose saving activities we shall discuss shortly below, succumbs to her own heroism and also receives a tomb, with cultic honour. This tomb is just outside the city wall, and, interestingly, called *baskanou taphos*, tomb of the evil eye⁸¹. Not only as candidate-victims is their status ambivalent, also after their saving deaths took place, there still is a certain ambiguity to be found in the status of the hero-victims.

With regard to the ultimate fates of victims in mythical crisis management, it may be claimed that in most cases some sort of sacrifice is involved. However, there are alternatives, in which other forms of killing prevail. Are these killing of an entirely different nature? Should we be cautious and distinguish between the various possible fates in order not to mix up notions when we try to understand these phenomena? This is an important discussion which merits careful attention.

⁷⁹This is of course in the first place the case where the myth functions as the *aition* to a cult on site. On these cultic honours, see e.g. the *Parthenoi*, the cultname for the daughters of Erechtheus according to Phot./*Sud.* s.v. Παρθένοι, the Hyacinthides, who are according to Eur. *Erechth.* fr. 60, 71-74 (Austin) the daughters of Erechtheus who have become stars after their saving deaths (Hyades, according to schol. Arat. 172; Pleiades, according to schol. Serv. ad. *Aen.* I 744). According to others, this is the cultic name of the daughters of Hyacinthus (Hyg. *Fab.* 238). See further Agraule (Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 fr. 105 = schol. Dem. 19.103): ἱερὸν ὑπὲρ τούτου ἐστήσαντο αὐτῇ περὶ τὰ προπύλαια τῆς πόλεως and the daughters of Leos (Leokoreion on the Kerameikos, see Harp. s.v. Λεωκορείον = Phanod. *FGrHist* 325 fr. 8; Paus. 1.5.2; Cic. *de nat. deor.* 3.19, 50; schol. Dem. 54.7) and for another so called *katasterismos* the daughters of Orion (Ant. Lib. *Met.* 25; Ovid. *Met.* 13.685-699). In Statius' version of Menoeceus' saving death, the self-sacrifice also turns into immediate apotheosis (*Theb.* 10.781-782).

⁸⁰Hes. fr. 23 (Merkelbach-West). Stesichorus fr. 38 (Page) = 215 *PMG* and Paus. 1.43.1 (Hecate herself). For the discussion on the difference between, or the equation of, Artemis *Einodia* (of the Crossroads) and Hecate, see Gantz 1993, 583. The rescuing passage in the *Ehoiai* may be a later interpolation, see Gantz, *ibidem*. In the two other early sources Iphigeneia is (also) saved by Artemis, but brought to Tauria.

⁸¹Sources for the story are: Parth. 9 = Andriscus *FGrHist* 500 fr. 1 = Theophr. fr. 626 (Fortenbaugh); Plu. *Mul. virt.* (*Mor* 254b-f) = *FGrHist* 501 fr. 2; Arist. fr. 559 (Rose) = Gell. 3.15.1; Polyæn. *Strat.* 8.36.

In the context of mythical crisis management, scholars of religion have often pointed out the difference between ritual killing and sacrifice⁸². The most common claim is that the defining element in this distinction is the involvement of a supernatural being⁸³. When neither demon, deity nor altar is involved, it cannot be a sacrifice. However, I do not see how this criterion should hold for ancient Greece; hardly anyone will deny that we should understand *sphazein* as a type of sacrifice, although in the context of war for example, the *sphagion* is performed without a direct involvement of any god⁸⁴. It will become clear that any such distinction in the context of this study obscures rather than elucidates: it is precisely in the context of crisis that involvement of supernatural beings is often played down, or rather, left in the dark.

Hughes has also acknowledged the utility and phenomenological validity of the distinction between sacrifice and ritual killing⁸⁵. To Hughes terminology is one of the important indicators of the speaker's conception of a killing: while *thyein* and *sphazein* belong to the context of 'sacrifice', terms as *phoneuein* and *apokteinein* never appear in a sacrificial context (of humans or animals), at least according to Hughes⁸⁶. Terminology is a tricky field⁸⁷, however, as it is so much linked up with genre and stylistic interests, with emphasis and perspective.

⁸²Schwenn in *RE* 15 (1931) 948-956 s.v. Menschenopfer (similar to Schwenn 1915) already urged caution: "Vorsichtiger wird man statt 'Menschenopfer' überhaupt 'rituelle Tötungen' sagen, um nicht Zeremonien, die dem Begriff des Opfers fern liegen, von vornherein unter falschem Gesichtswinkel zu Betrachten". Turning away from the 'theological dogmatism' of some of his colleagues, Schwenn distinguished seven categories of ritual killings, for instance 'Menschenopfer als Reinigungsmittel', 'Königsoffer' and 'Menschenopfer als Zaubermittel' (948). See for this discussion also Bonnechere 1994, 12-15 and Hughes 1991, 1-12.

⁸³See e.g. A. Brelich, 'Symbol of a Symbol' in: J.M. Kitagawa and Ch.H. Long (eds.), *Myths and Symbols. Studies in honor of Mircea Eliade* (Chicago and London 1969) 195-207, 200 n.7. See for objections to this distinction, Bonnechere 1994, 13.

⁸⁴With the exception to confirm the rule: the pre-battle sacrifices to Artemis Agrotera, for which see, Xen. *Anab.* 3.2.12 and e.g. Burkert 1983, 65-67. For a more detailed discussion of ancient Greek forms of sacrifice, see Chapter 9 Section b.

⁸⁵Hughes 1991, 3, though he has chosen to use the term human sacrifice in a more inclusive manner, 'deferring to common usage', he nevertheless keeps the basic distinction in mind, as his arrangement of chapters and sections testify: e.g. chapter 3 'Funerary ritual killing in Greek literature and history', chapter 4 'Human sacrifice in Greek myth, cult, and history'.

⁸⁶Hughes 1991, 8-11. Compare however Paus. 9.25.1 on Menoeceus: ἀπέκτεινε δὲ ἐκουσίως αὐτὸν κατὰ τὸ μάντευμα τὸ ἐκ Δελφῶν. The additional 'voluntarily' evokes the sacrificial context in which we generally find Menoeceus' death.

⁸⁷Hughes 1991, 9 has acknowledged this as well.

An account by Pausanias seems to prove Hughes right at first. The importance of terminological differentiation is emphasised in this complicated tale about a sacrifice of a Messenian virgin, in which a seer makes a fierce distinction between killing (*apokteinaí*, *phoneuein*) and sacrifice (*thyein*):

for the daughter of Aristodemus was to no avail of them dead; for the father had murdered (*phoneuein*) her, not sacrificed (*thyein*) her to the gods whom the Pythia ordained.

However, the gap is not as unbridgeable as we may think: the story ends with the acceptance of the death of Aristodemus' daughter as the fulfilment of the oracle all the same⁸⁸.

Without denying a term its specific meaning, I do not agree with Hughes that terminology is a reliable companion in our exploration of mythical crisis management. A passage of Aristides illustrates this well. Although the following deaths technically belong in different categories, Aristides appears to consider them, at least rhetorically, of one type:

Erechtheus is said in this war against Eumolpus to have given (*epidounai*) his daughter on behalf of the city because of the god's oracle; ... And Leos is said to have reached the same resolve, in a time of plague: to abandon (*ekstenai*) his daughters. And Codrus is said in the war against the Dorians and Peloponnesians voluntarily to have died (*apothanein*) on behalf of his land⁸⁹.

The comparative method of the present study makes one aware of the importance *and* the relativity of theory based on terminology: when Athens is in dire peril and the oracle recommends the *anairein* of someone, and Agraulus voluntarily kills herself (*exedoken eis thanaton*) by throwing herself off the city wall (*erripse*)⁹⁰, should we then call her death a ritual (self) killing, whereas Maeandrus, who also makes a deathly leap (*riptein*), but one that is fulfilling a vow to sacrifice (*thyein*),

⁸⁸Paus. 4.9.8-9 (translation Loeb): τῆς γὰρ τοῦ Ἀριστοδήμου πλέον εἶναί σφισιν ἀποθανούσης οὐδέν· φονεῦσαι γὰρ τὸν πατέρα αὐτήν, θεοῖς δὲ οἷς ἡ Πυθία προσέταξεν οὐ θῆσαι; *Apokteinaí* is used where he actually kills her (Paus. 4.9.8, l. 2). See also Plu. *Parall. Min.* 18 (*Mor.* 110d) on Codrus.

⁸⁹Aristid. *Or.* 1.87: resp. ἐπιδοῦναι, ἐκστῆναι, ἀποθανεῖν. This *epididomi* is also employed in Ael. *VH* 12.18, where it is being used in combination with *anairein* and *sphazein*.

⁹⁰Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 fr. 105 = schol. Dem. 19.303: ἐάν τις ἀνέλη ἐαυτὸν ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως. ἡ τοίνυν Ἀγραυλος ἐκοῦσα αὐτήν ἐξέδωκεν εἰς θάνατον. ἔρριψε γὰρ ἑαυτὴν ἐκ τοῦ τείχους.

may indeed be said to have sacrificed himself⁹¹, or whereas the daughters of Leos must be ‘*anairein*’ according to an oracle to save their city and are sacrificed (*sphazein*) accordingly⁹²? What do we do for instance, when *apothanein* is used for Macaria’s death in Pausanias, whereas everyone knew she had been sacrificed⁹³? Should one deal with two, terminologically, different versions under two different headings? But then, what to do if the two are combined in one myth, thus appearing interchangeable as to function and effect? In other words, is the fact that Menoeceus cuts his throat while jumping off the wall a dramatic double, or the necessary act to make his killing a self-sacrifice at the same time? Do we, then, need to attribute a two-fold meaning to his self-immolation? Differentiating between sacrifice and other killing on the basis of terminology appears of little help. Moreover, as we have seen, in an account transmitted by Pausanias about Aristodemus and his daughter, the marked distinction between (ritual) killing, or even murder, and sacrifice is literally overcome by the gods themselves⁹⁴. Who would dare to disagree with them?

In spite of the general feeling that there ultimately is a distinction between ritual killing as a general category and sacrifice as a subcategory, distinction on the basis of supernatural involvement or terminology alone is not valid. Moreover, any view on the question whether gaps between ritual killing and sacrifice are unbridgeable or not, depends on how the nature and meaning of sacrifice are interpreted. On the basis of the material discussed in this chapter, it must be concluded that whereas the various remedies to crisis may be placed on a scholar’s sliding scale⁹⁵ that runs from sacrifice proper to killing (and arguably, to banishment), in mythical practice, variants appear to be interchangeable to a large extent. Where a difference is noticed, it may be annulled symbolically, or rhetorically, as was done by Oedipus⁹⁶ and Aristides⁹⁷, and by order of the divine⁹⁸. Stoning is yet another variant of (mythical) killing, though it needs not end in death, as we have seen in the chapter

⁹¹[Plu.] *de fluv.* 9.1 = Timolaus *FGrHist* 798 fr. 1.

⁹²Ael. *VH* 12.28. See also Dem. 60.29 (σφάγιον) and Stob. *Flor.* 39.33 (Hense and Wachsmuth 1894): θύση/ προσαγαγῶν τοῖς βωμοῖς ἀνεῖλεν for the daughters of Erechtheus.

⁹³Paus.1.32.6, voluntarily, which, again, points to an understanding of the term within a sacrificial context.

⁹⁴Paus. 4.9.9-9.

⁹⁵Seaford 1994, 313 (spectrum).

⁹⁶Eur. *Ph.* 1621: “For you will kill me if you cast me from the land”, for which see the Prologue and Chapter 1 Section g.

⁹⁷Aristid. *Or.* 1.87 (cited above).

on ritual crisis management, where its function of division was emphasised, and the theory to consider stones as vehicles of separation, rather than, necessarily, of death, pain or punishment.

A tale from Naxos about the fate of the virgin⁹⁹ Policrite nicely plays upon the mythical ingredients of procedures and ultimate fate discussed so far¹⁰⁰. The tale was apparently included in the, now lost, fourth book of Theophrastus' *Political responses to crises*¹⁰¹. The following is based on Parthenius' version: when Milesians and Erythraeans besieged Naxos in a long and disastrous war, Policrite is left 'by the providence of some god'¹⁰² in a Delion¹⁰³, not far from the town. A love-affair between her and the enemy-commander ensues. This commander is enticed by Policrite to swear to grant a wish to her, upon which she demands his betrayal. Shortly afterwards, during the (Milesian!) Thargelia, Polycrite finds a way (through the enemy-commander) to help the Naxians vanquish the enemy-soldiers who were all drunk and irresponsible due to the festivities. The defeat of the enemies is attained via a message on a lead tablet hidden in a loaf of bread, which is brought to her brothers who happen to be the generals of the Naxian army. After the victory, Polycrite returns to her home town as the heroine who saved the Naxians from the devastating enemy. However, just before she reaches the city gate, she succumbs under the load of wreaths, shawls and girdles thrown at her by a jubilant crowd. Or, in Plutarch's terms, "she could not bear the immensity of the joy"¹⁰⁴. Her tomb, built

⁹⁸Paus. 4.9.8-9 (cited above).

⁹⁹παρθένος, later also, not marked, ἡ παῖς. Later Parthenius adds that her brothers are the leaders of the Naxian army (something Plutarch contradicts); Gell. 3.15.1: *nobilem feminam*.

¹⁰⁰Sources for the story are: Parthen. 9 = Andriscus *FGrHist* 500 fr. 1 = Theophr. fr. 626 (Fortenbaugh); Plu. *Mul. virt.* 17 (*Mor.* 254b-f) = *FGrHist* 501 fr. 2 = Arist. fr. 559 (Rose) = Gell. 3.15.1; Polyæn. *Strat.* 8.36.

¹⁰¹Theophr. fr. 626 Fortenbaugh. This translation of the title is one of various possibilities.

¹⁰²κατά τινα δαίμονα, which Lightfoot 1999 *ad loc.* translates as 'by some chance'.

¹⁰³According to Lightfoot 1999 *ad loc.* Delion can mean a temple of Apollo (Athen. 6.234f; Hesych. s.v.; Hdt. 6.118.2; Steph. Byz. s.v.; Thuc. 4.76.4), but could apparently be a temple of Apollo, Artemis and Leto jointly, too, (*RE* 4 [1900] 2442-2443 s.v. Delion [Philippson]). It must be noted that in Plutarch she is captivated during a raid.

¹⁰⁴Plu. *Mul. virt.* 17 (*Mor.* 245e) describes her ultimate fate as follows: "When she herself arrived at the gates, and found herself confronting the citizens who came to meet her, welcoming her with joy and garlands and giving expression to their admiration for her, she could not bear the immensity of the joy, but fell down dead beside the gate" (translation Loeb, with minor variation).

right at the spot, is honoured with a cult, but is, at the same time, called a ‘tomb of grudge’ or ‘tomb of the evil eye’, *baskanou taphos*.

Again we see how a valued person, here a Naxian virgin with a telling name, ‘much chosen’ or ‘chosen out of many’ dies on behalf of her community¹⁰⁵. As already seen before, in order to do so she must leave town. In this story, the victim is handed over to, probably, Apollo. She is not allowed to return, not even after being successful in saving her city. For when she is triumphantly returning to the city, as it were, heading for the centre to be publicly honoured, she is killed by the elated community, bogged down with ‘stones of victory’, just outside the city gate. It is as if she is outrun by her earlier destiny of vicarious victim. She is pelted, albeit not with stones, but with wreaths and clothes: thus becoming victim of her own heroism. Her tomb, with cultic honour, is outside the city wall, and called *baskanou taphos*. In spite of ambiguities and reversals the story pattern can be well recognised as one of the kind under scrutiny here. And last but not least it should be noted that the Naxians are saved by Policrite at the very festival of the Thargelia!¹⁰⁶ However, and that is so intriguing, it is the Milesians celebrating the festival, and thus the Thargelia here functions both as an occasion of defeat, ironically for those who celebrate (and had taken in too much), and as a festival of preservation, for those whose member had been expelled.

In conclusion of this paragraph it must be noticed that the procedures followed do not stand out in the tales. Wreaths and altars may be referred to, symbols and terminology point to consecration, but little is said about deities involved. Most activity seems to be taken for granted in view of the ultimate fate of the victim.

Although these fates in mythical crisis management vary from sacrifice ‘proper’ to killing, from throwing or jumping to banishment, it does not seem wise in this context to present these alternatives as wholly distinct forms of crisis management. One may, in theory, rather speak of a ‘sliding scale’, on which sacrifice and exile occupy the extreme ends. In mythical practice, however, the various fates appear to overlap, or even to be interchangeable to quite an extent. Tales in which the sacrificial victim is miraculously saved from the pyre and exported to a far-off

¹⁰⁵See already Burkert 1979, 72-73. See also *RE* 21 (1952) 1753-1759 s.v. Polykrite (Radke) for Policrite and a discussion of a Roman parallel tale of Tarpeia.

¹⁰⁶Plutarch does not mention the Thargelia, but just tells that “all turned to drinking and social gatherings”.

country form a kind of go-between among the categories: the deity is appeased, the victim exiled to distant Otherland.

D. MYTHICAL SPACE

In the prologue it appeared that in the *Phoenissae* crisis and crisis management are also articulated in spatial terms. The whole play, the characters, the plot and the development of action, are constituted by the divergent poles of centrality and marginality, ins and outs, exits and arrivals. Besides, throughout the play another place occupied a special position, the city walls, functioning as the boundaries par excellence, marking the difference between crisis and safety. In order to find out whether these spatial preoccupations are only meaningful within an Euripidean frame of mind, an exploration of the topography of mythical crisis management is due.

When we look at the myths discussed so far, again we find numerous references to city walls, ramparts and gates, to exits and arrivals. Codrus who is to save his *polis* has to leave the king's city centre in order to die just outside the city walls, both king and beggar at the same time. The virgin Agraulus saves Athens by throwing herself off the walls (and receives cultic honour in a sanctuary just at the entrance of the Acropolis). Interestingly, whereas Menoeceus sacrifices himself on one of the ramparts in the *Phoenissae*, in another version he slaughters himself just in front of the city gates¹⁰⁷. Polycrite is abandoned in a Delion, a locus of Otherland par excellence, from which she departs on her saving adventure. Upon returning, she dies just before the city gate, where her tomb is built as well.

Apart from the walls and gates, the area beyond the border also seems suitable for crisis management. Iambulus and his friend were ousted to preserve the Ethiopian community at a festival near the sea¹⁰⁸. The alleged sacrifice of the three Persians by Themistocles took also place outside the city limits, near the seashore¹⁰⁹. Their sacrifice belongs to the *sphagia*-type. Such pre-battle sacrifices usually took place in a no-man's land between two armies, in front of the line of battle, which was also where Marathus 'in accordance with an oracle voluntarily gave himself to be

¹⁰⁷[Ps.] Apoll. *Bibl.* 3.6.7 and Paus. 9.25.1.

¹⁰⁸Diod. 2.55.

¹⁰⁹Plu. *Them.* 13.2-3 = Phainias fr. 25 (Wehrli); Plu. *Arist.* 9.2 and Plu. *Pel.* 21.3 where the sacrifice is taken together with the saving sacrifices of Menoeceus and Macaria.

sacrificed¹¹⁰. Finally, it is worth mentioning that according to one tradition¹¹¹, in times of war the Hyacinthides had been sacrificed on Mount Hyacinthus, a mountain between Attica and Beotia, at least according to some¹¹².

As to the cause of crises, a similar dichotomy to the one found in the *Phoenissae* may be established. Threat comes from outside, such as inimical armies besieging the cities and advancing pestilences that should be stopped¹¹³, or from within: a yawning chasm in the midst of the community¹¹⁴.

Causes and remedies take place, either within or outside of the community. The city walls, as in the *Phoenissae*, feature as a boundary par excellence, marking out the difference between crisis and salvation.

Earlier, we observed that many of these hero-victims both belong and do not belong to the community they save, whether this is expressed in social, moral, ethnical or other ways. In those myths in which the action is articulated in spatial terms, a similar ambiguity finds expression: crisis management is expressed along the inside outside axis of the community and the locus of preservation is the borderline between centre and otherland, and thus, symbolically, between order and (potential) chaos. Again, inside and outside appear the spatial definers of ancient Greek crisis management. If the mythical account pays any attention to the spatial development of the saving event it relates, its topography does not seem fortuitous¹¹⁵.

E. CIRCUMSTANCES, REMEDIES, CAUSES AND EFFECTS

There is one last part in the anatomy of the myths at stake that should be dissected: what are the explanations to be found in the texts themselves to account for this type of crisis management? What are the causes, what effects were attributed to these actions, and why?

¹¹⁰Plu. *Thes.* 32.4.

¹¹¹Phot./*Sud.* s.v. Παρθένοι = Phanod. *FGrHist* 325 fr. 8.

¹¹²See Weber 1925, 239, Roscher 1, 2759, according to whom there was a Dionysos sanctuary.

¹¹³Plu. *Parall. Min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c) = Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1a.

¹¹⁴Plu. *Parall. Min.* 5 (*Mor.* 306ef). = Ps. Call. *FGrHist* 124 fr. 56.

¹¹⁵It must be admitted, that mythology in general has a sense of centre and a sense of distance, a centripetal and a centrifugal nature (see e.g. Dowden 1992, 123).

One model to understand and deal with crisis pertains to an angry god, a valuable propitiatory sacrifice and a community thus saved from the 'present ills', such as plague, hunger or defeat.

However, there are matters that complicate: as we have seen above, the idea that mythical crisis management involves the sacrifice of a valuable victim in order to propitiate an offended deity on behalf of a community in dire peril, has already proved a simplification of mythical practice. The victim is rarely sheer valuable, the 'sacrifice' turns out to encompass a variety of ultimate fates, and deities often are conspicuous by their absence, rather than their involvement. Does this mean that there are other mechanisms at work? Other models to conceptualise and control the events? And if so, do these alternative means of safety concur systematically with particular causes, specific victims or distinctive ends sought after?

In this section the ancient Greek rationale of mythical crisis management will be explored. In doing so, the search for systematic interrelations between causes, remedies and effects will receive due attention. The question whether we have co-existing mechanisms at work that may account for the variety in the material will be dealt with in the last part of this section.

Our first concern regards the question of causality. It is true that in those cases in which an angered deity is said to have caused the crisis, propitiatory sacrifice seems the proper remedy. If divine anger is said to be the cause, the victim may be considered a collective ransom, an *ekluterion*¹¹⁶. In these special cases, the victim usually is a virgin, who herself is not to blame for the deity's wrath. Conversely, however, one cannot claim on the basis of the sources with certainty that whenever human sacrifice is practised, this is to remedy a divine wrath¹¹⁷.

The interrelation between cause and victim is quite complex. Often, as with successful animal sacrifice, the victim is not made responsible for the crisis, or for the divine anger for that matter. Sometimes, however, the offender and the victim are one and the same, as the guy called Pharmakos who stole Apollo's sacred bowls allegedly gave his name to the ritual¹¹⁸. This type of rationalisation, however, occurs

¹¹⁶See Eur. *Ph.* 969, compare Soph. *OT* 392.

¹¹⁷No deity to be found for instance in the tale about the sacrifice (θῦσαι/καθοσιωθῆναι) of Aristodemus in order to ward off the threat of war (Diod. 8.8.1-2).

¹¹⁸Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50= T. 48.

rarely¹¹⁹. In most myths there is no direct interrelation between cause, transgression and victim¹²⁰.

If divine involvement is the case, there usually is an offended deity causing a crisis and exacting propitiation¹²¹. Best known of all supernatural exactors of human lives is, perhaps, Artemis, although she is not even really a hard-liner in most versions of the Iphigeneia-myths, in which she ultimately substitutes an animal for the virgin. Usually, a reason is given to account for her anger. Usually, but not always¹²². Dionysus is another god who exacts a human life from time to time, especially under certain epithets¹²³. But also Zeus¹²⁴ and Poseidon¹²⁵ feature in

¹¹⁹Cf. Parker 1983, 265f on the figure of the guilty king. The question whether this is merely a strategy to legitimise the victimisation of a king or a *sine qua non* to render him an appropriate victim has been raised already above.

¹²⁰With the exception of a few aetiological myths in Pausanias. See e.g. Paus. 7.19.1-10 on the following story about Melanippus, a handsome youth, who was in love with Comaetho, the virgin-priestess of Artemis. They could not wait until their wedding and made love in the temple: "Fortwith the wrath of Artemis began to destroy the inhabitants; the earth yielded no harvest, and strange diseases occurred of an unusually fatal character. When they appealed to the oracle at Delphi the Pythian priestess accused Melanippus and Comaetho. The oracle ordered that they themselves should be sacrificed to Artemis, and that every year a sacrifice should be made to the goddess of the fairest youth and the fairest maiden".

¹²¹See e.g. Paus. 9.8.2: "Here (in Potniae) there is also a temple of Dionysus Goat-shooter. For once, when they were sacrificing to the god, they grew so violent with wine that they actually killed the priest of Dionysus. Immediately after the murder they were visited by a pestilence, and the Delphic oracle said that to cure it they must sacrifice a boy in the bloom of youth. A few years afterwards, so they say, the god substituted a goat as a victim in place of their boy".

¹²²In Euripides' *IA* there is no explicit cause stated to account for the wish of the goddess. Other mechanisms are stressed instead: see e.g. Eur. *IA* 1136: ὃ πότνια μοῖρα καὶ τύχη δαίμων τ' ἐμός (Oh revered fate and chance and my personal spirit). (See also 441, 443, 511-12). Or the oracle fills the legitimacy gap (89, 358, 883) - the mouthpiece of the inescapable, just as Teiresias in the *Phoenissae*. Cf. also Hes. fr. 23 (Merkelbach-West). For other ritual occasions dealing with the wrath of Artemis, see Faraone 2003, 51-53.

¹²³For instance Dionysus in Potniae (Paus. 9.82); Dionysus Omestes (Plu. *Them.* 13.2 = Phainias fr. 25 [Wehrli]). Henrichs denies the historicity of the sacrifice by Themistocles (a.o.) on the basis of this un-Attic epitheton. However, one could argue that the choice of a specific deity known to Phainias may make the legend unhistorical, but the human sacrifice all the more realistic; why else would Phainias choose Dionysus Omestes? Henrichs also argues that no deity was involved at all, as *sphagia*-sacrifices did not require a divine recipient. However, in view of the list of divine receptors that is drawn here, I would rather argue that human sacrifice did not fit in any regular sacrificial system. Not only are deities involved in several examples, the *sphagia*-sacrifices may also be performed on an altar.

¹²⁴In one of the versions about Anchuros' self-annihilation (Plu. *Parall. Min.* 5 (Mor. 306ef) = Ps. Call. *FGrHist* 124 fr.56), in the story about Molpis (Tz. schol. *Lycoph. Alex.* 160) and below in the tales about Athamas and Phrixus (not the uses of the term *sphagion*, and the altar involved).

mythical crisis management. These gods turn up under rather wild epithets, such as 'the Raw-Eater' and 'the Devourer'¹²⁶. Ares receives the sacrifice of Menoeceus¹²⁷. Maeandrus' vow is made to 'the mother of the gods'¹²⁸. Persephone too, not surprisingly, features in several myths¹²⁹, and in other sources, more vaguely, the 'gods below' are mentioned¹³⁰, the *eriounoi theoi*¹³¹, or the 'apotropaeic gods'¹³². One slightly different category is formed by heroes or ghosts demanding human sacrifice, such as Polyxena by Achilleus, or for example in Apollodorus where the daughters of Hyacinthus are sacrificed on a tomb¹³³. Finally, monsters and demons should be mentioned, but they remain outside my scope here¹³⁴.

¹²⁵Poseidon e.g. in Anticl. *FGrHist* 477 fr. 14 = Athen. 11.466c (whereas in Plu. *sept. sav. conv.* 20 (*Mor.* 163b) the same victim is sacrificed to Amphitrite and the nymphs); (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.15.4; Hyg. *Fab.* 46.

¹²⁶For Dionysus Omestius, the Raw-Eater see shortly below, for Zeus Laphystius, the Devourer, see the mythical cluster around Athamas and Phrixus in 2.2 below. Henrichs 1981, 219-220 notes this and explains it from the point of view of the general feeling of uneasiness the Greeks must have experienced with myth and ritual of human sacrifice: "Such 'wild' divine epithets reflect the desire to deflect one's own uneasiness with inherited rituals that involved gross and aberrant behaviour. The desire to invent divine ancestors for very human habits must have been particularly strong in the case of human sacrifice". Contra: Georgoudi 1999, who emphasises the very Greekness of these gods.

¹²⁷(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.6.7; Eur. *Ph.* 934-935 (note that it is a *sphagion*). Cf. Porph. *de Abst.* 2.55 = Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 fr. 125 on the sacrifice of a man to Ares (τῷ Ἀρεὶ θύειν ἄνθρωπον).

¹²⁸[Plu.] *de fluv.* 9.3 = Timolaus *FGrHist* 798 fr. 1.

¹²⁹To Persephone ([and Hades] Ant. Lib. 25; Dem. Trag. *FGrHist* 42 fr. 4, the only source for the saving death of the daughter(s) of Erechtheus, mentioning a deity at all); Persephone wants it (Eur. *Her.* 408-409).

¹³⁰See Paus. 4. 9.4 (the complex story about the saving death of the daughter of Aristodemus). Though situated in the 8th and 7th century, the story itself seems to be no older than 370 BC, for which see Hughes 1991, 74 - although information such as this is usually left aside, it may be important here precisely because of the fact that the 'gods below' are mentioned as a special category.

¹³¹Ant. Lib. *Met.* 25.

¹³²[Plu.] *de Fluv.* 15.1; Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1b = Lyd. *Mens.* 4.147, 'who cannot be trusted', according to Hughes 1991, 83. Plutarch's version lacks this reference (Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1a = Plu. *Parallel. Min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c).

¹³³Polyxena in Euripides' *Hecuba* (for which see Gantz 1993, 658-9); (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.15.8. Other human sacrifices on tombs: Hom. *Il.* 23.175-176 (12 Trojan prisoners on Patroclus' grave) Just. *Epit.* 2.2.1 (Alexander has those he suspects being behind his father's assassination sacrificed on his father's grave); Plu. *Philop.* 21 (Messenian prisoners at the grave of Philopoimon). I have chosen not to include this category explicitly in my research, as the idea of a communal crisis is, though feasible, not made explicit, which would complicate things further, see Hughes 1991, 49-70.

¹³⁴For monsters, see Hughes 1991, 78; Bonnechere 1994 108-118; for the most famous of all monsters, the Minotaur, see the epilogue, and Hughes 1991, 77. As to the demons, they definitely are a subcategory of their own, and seem to have gained popularity in the course of ancient Greek history (See *OCD*³ s.v. *daimon* and references). Apart from

Often, however, there is no explicit reference to wrath or to a specific deity at all. The safety mechanism¹³⁵ is then set in motion by *anangke*, necessity, or lies in the nature of things¹³⁶. One other principle may be seen at work, with or without divine executors, as in the *Phoenissae*: crop for crop and blood for blood: the principle of *talio*¹³⁷. This may be the case also in Electra's designation of the sacrifice of Iphigeneia as *antistathmon*, that which counterweighs, compensates for. Here it is Artemis who had to be compensated for the (accidental) killing of a deer by Agamemnon in her sacred forest¹³⁸. A comparable need for compensation may also be recognised in the name Antipoenus, the one for retribution, the tipped candidate victim to preserve Thebes in a time of war¹³⁹. Interestingly, where no receptors are named, terms such as *sphazein* and *thyein* may be used all the same¹⁴⁰. It is therefore impossible to distinguish between forms of killing merely on the basis of explicit involvement of deities.

In almost all mythical narratives, an oracle prescribes the action, whether this consists of a sacrifice, of killing or throwing. This has led Georgoudi to claim that the god most involved with human sacrifice is, in fact, Delphic Apollo, though not so much as the recipient, but as initiator and mediator¹⁴¹.

In sum, one may claim that it seems less and less relevant to try to distinguish between sacrifice and other means of safety either on the basis of type of circumstances, of victim, or of supernatural involvement. This tallies well with our earlier claim, made on the basis of terminological research in the context of the ultimate fate of the victims, that one can, at best, discern variation among the means of safety chosen, but one cannot distinguish between them in any systematic way. Ultimately, they overlap to quite an extent, or they even turn out to be interchangeable.

the Ephesian tale, they do not really feature literally in our narratives. They are alluded to in the explanations of some later authors, on which below.

¹³⁵Eur. *Ph.* 890: μηχανή σωτηρίας. Compare τὸ μέχαρ in Aesch. *Ag.* 199.

¹³⁶Origen. *c. Cels.* 1.31: ἐν τῇ φύσει τῶν πραγμάτων. See Versnel 1981, 164-185. See also Nancy 1981 esp. in an Euripidean context. See also Chapter 9 Section c.

¹³⁷See the Prologue above, Eur. *Ph.* 937-938.

¹³⁸Soph. *El.* 571: ὡς πατήρ ἀντίσταθμον τοῦ θηρὸς ἐκθύσειε τὴν αὐτοῦ κόρη. For the use of *ekthyein* in the context of crisis management see Chapter 9 Section b.

¹³⁹Paus. 9.17.1-2.

¹⁴⁰For instance Lib. *Decl.* 41; Lycurg. *c. Leoc.* 98; Plu. *parallel min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c). Or *prothyein* is employed (Plu. *parallel min.* 20 (= *Mor.* 310d).

¹⁴¹Georgoudi 1999, 69-70. For Apollo in a similar role, see Part 4.

A further matter of interest is the effect aimed at by mythical crisis management, often described in very general terms such as, for example, 'for the purpose of safety'¹⁴². The dying is 'for', 'on behalf of' (*pro* or *hyper*) either the city, the land, the fatherland, the country, or the people¹⁴³, quite irrespective of the precise way this is to be achieved, through *thyein*, *sphazein*, *riptein*, *anairein* or *phoneuein*.

When the desired results are made slightly more explicit than 'to save' or 'to secure safety (deliverance)', *soteria*, either in the question to the oracle itself, in the oracular formula or in the subsequent account of the myth's dénouement, the following terminology may be found: 'to remove', 'to get rid of' (*apallatto*, *apallatomi*)¹⁴⁴, 'to set free' which seems to be a prerogative of Menoeceus¹⁴⁵, or *lusi*, release¹⁴⁶. Further we find to achieve power (*kratos*) or to gain victory (*nike*), or even a saving victory¹⁴⁷, only in circumstances of war. Finally *pauein*, to stop, ills or a plague¹⁴⁸. Sometimes, several such effects are aimed at at the same time, as for instance in Euripides' *Heracleidae*: "for the averting of the enemies and the saving of the city"¹⁴⁹. These two effects, saving, or gaining safety, and averting, encompass the spectrum of aims of crisis management¹⁵⁰. To get or to get rid of, seem to be the two

¹⁴²Σωτηρία, which can be also translated as deliverance, or preservation. The term is especially favoured by Euripides. See e.g. *IA* 1472-3; *Her.* 402; *Ph.* 890, 893, 898, 918, but also employed by others: ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ κοινῇ (Paus. 1.5.2); σωθῆναι τὴν πόλιν (Ael. *VH* 12.28); Plu. *Them.* 13.2; Paus. 4.9.9. Kearns 1990, 324 pays attention to the term, on which below.

¹⁴³Or 'instead of', though this depends on interpretation. Respectively ὑπὲρ and πρὸ τῆς πόλεως, γαίας, πατρίδος, χώρας or τοῦ δήμου. See e.g. Hellanic. *FGrHist* 323a fr. 23 (Codrus), Aristid. *Or.* 1.87 (daughter Erechtheus), Eur. *Ion* 278 (daughters Erechtheus), Phot./*Sud.* s.v. Παρθενοί. Georgoudi 1999, 67 points out that in this type of formula with the stress on the land, soil or *polis* the link between victim and 'la terre-patrie', on behalf of which he/she dies, is emphasised.

¹⁴⁴ἀπαλλάττω, ἀπαλλάττομαι: as in Eur. *Ph.* 1014 (Menoeceus: the disease through self-immolation). See also e.g. schol. Dem. 19.303 = Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 fr. 105 (Agraulus: of war through self-immolation by leap from the wall).

¹⁴⁵Eur. *Ph.* 1010-1012 and Philostr. *Tabl.* 1.4.3.

¹⁴⁶Paus. 7.21.3 (*loimos* due to wrath, release through sacrifice).

¹⁴⁷For *kratos*, see Paus. 1.32.6, through *sphazein*, Lycurg. *c. Leoc.* 98, through *thyein*. For *nike*, see (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.6.7 (Menoeceus); Paus. 9.25.1 (Menoeceus); Paus. 32.6 (Macaria); [Plu.] *de fluv.* 9.3 = Timolaus *FGrHist* 798 fr. 1 and Plu. *Parall. Min.* 20. Both: Diod. 8.8.2. In all these examples the remedy is to sacrifice (*thyein* and *sphazein*) or *apothanein* someone.

¹⁴⁸Ant. Lib. *Met.* 25 (plague as a consequence of divine anger); Lib. *Decl.* 41 (plague); Plu. *Parallel. Min.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c) (*loimos*).

¹⁴⁹Eur. *Her.* 402: τροπαῖά τ' ἐχθρῶν καὶ πόλει σωτηρίαν.

¹⁵⁰See Kearns 1990, 335 for a similar argument. However, she applies the opposition between the *soter* and the *apotropaïos* to the opposition between mythical, actively saving

main strategies. Again, there is too much overlap to distinguish between sacrificial, semi-sacrificial and non sacrificial killings on the basis of intended effects. If there is any correlation at all, it may be between type of crisis and intended effect of the remedy applied, for instance war and victory, but that is, perhaps, too obvious to mention.

With regard to an ancient Greek rationale for mythical crisis management, there is not much to say. Only a few ancient authors have ever tried to account in greater detail for the crisis management they describe. Philostratus, for example, has Apollonius explain how he ‘plucked out’ the disease rather than stop it¹⁵¹.

Plutarch describes the view of the seers and commanders in Pelopidas’ army, when they were debating the injunction to sacrifice a blond virgin in order to secure victory, as Pelopidas had received in his dream. Those in favour of the human sacrifice adduced

examples of such sacrifice among the ancients, Menoeceus, son of Creon, Macaria, daughter of Heracles; and, in later times, Pherecydes the wise man, who was put to death by the Lacedaemonians and whose skin was preserved by their kings, in accordance with some oracle; and Leonidas, who, in obedience to the oracle, sacrificed himself, as it were, to save Greece; and still further, the youths who were sacrificed by Themistocles to Dionysus Carnivorous before the sea fight at Salamis; *for the successes which followed these sacrifices proved them acceptable to the gods*. Moreover, when Agesilaus, who was setting out on an expedition from the same place as Agamemnon did, and against the same enemies, was asked by the goddess for his daughter in sacrifice, and had the vision as he lay asleep at Aulis, he was too tender-hearted to give her, and thereby brought his expedition to an unsuccessful and inglorious ending¹⁵².

There were also people pleading against the barbarous and lawless sacrifice, and fortunately, in the end, a young and gorgeous, fiery red-haired filly voluntarily offered herself for sacrifice¹⁵³.

In the context of the sacrifice of the three Persians by Themistocles, Plutarch explains the need for such sacrifice a little differently:

saviour and ritual scapegoat, although she also acknowledges the two to be closely akin at the same time.

¹⁵¹Philostr. *VA* 8.7 p. 323: “For the genius of the pestilence, - and it took the form of a poor old man, - I both detected and having detected took it captive, and I did not so much stay the disease, as pluck it out” (translation Loeb): τὸ γὰρ τοῦ λοιμοῦ εἶδος, πτωχῶ δὲ γέροντι εἵκαστο, καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἰδὼν εἶλον, οὐ παύσας νόσον, ἀλλ’ ἐξελὼν. See *SEG* 31 (1981) 1320 for an epigram referring to Apollonius’ main role as ‘to expel men’s troubles’.

¹⁵²Plu. *Pelop.* 21.2-3 (translation Loeb). The italics are mine, of course.

¹⁵³Plu. *Pelop.* 22.

Themistocles was terrified, feeling that the word of the seer was monstrous and shocking; but the multitude, who, as is wont to be the case in great struggles and severe crises, looked for safety rather from unreasonable than from reasonable measures, invoked the god with one voice, dragged the prisoners to the altar, and compelled the fulfilment of the sacrifice, as the seer commanded¹⁵⁴.

Later antique and/or early Christian writers explained why the ancients thought they had to sacrifice human beings by attributing this to the need to ward off demons who cause crises¹⁵⁵. Philo spoke of the need to pay ransom, Origenes about the nature of things which the masses cannot understand.

In the nature of things, unreasonable measures - not very helpful explanations for those who really want to know. Angry gods and gods accepting sacrifices are part of the story, but do not seem to fill all gaps. Is the conclusion then that oracles, seers, ancient traditions or irrational masses carried enough weight to authorise and legitimise forms of crisis management of which the precise workings were not

¹⁵⁴Plu. *Them.* 13.3 = Phainias fr. 25 (Wehrli). See also Plu. *Arist.* 9.2.

¹⁵⁵See for instance Philo *FGrHist* 790 fr. 3b: "Among the ancients it was the custom that in times of great adversity and danger, the rulers of a city or a people gave, instead of the death of all (ἀντὶ τῆς πάντων φθορᾶς), their most beloved child to be sacrificed (εἰς σφαγὴν ἐπιδιδόναι) as a ransom to the avenging demons (λύτρον τοῖς τιμωροῖς δαίμοσι)" (Philo). Origenes (*c. Cels.* 1.31) also blames the demons: "They [apostles] not only dared to show to the Jews from the words of the prophets that he was the prophesied one, but also to the other peoples that he, who had been recently crucified, voluntarily died for mankind, like those who died for their fatherland, to avert plague epidemics, famine, and shipwreck. For there is in the nature of things (ἐν φύσει τῶν πραγμάτων), for reasons mysterious and beyond the grasp of the crowd, such a natural inkling: that one who is just dies voluntarily on behalf of the community, thus averting bad demons, who cause pestilences or infertility or difficulty in sailing or some other threat (ὥς ἓνα δίκαιον ὑπὲρ τοῦ κοινοῦ ἀποθανόντα ἐκουσίως ἀποτροπιασμοὺς ἐμποιεῖν φαύλων δαιμονίων, ἐνεργούντων λοιμοὺς ἢ ἀφορίας ἢ δυσπλοίας ἢ τι τῶν παραπλησίων)". Whereas these passages stem from a cultural background that is different from the culture(s) we study, or at least coloured by different ideas, we find the demons also in writings of Plutarch: "Nor is it credible that the gods demanded or welcomed the human sacrifices of ancient days, nor would kings and generals have endured giving over their children and submitting them to the preparatory rites and cutting their throats to no purpose save that they felt they were propitiating and offering satisfaction to the wrath and sullen temper of some harsh and implacable avenging deities (ἀλαστόρων), or to the insane and imperious passions of some who had not the power or desire to seek satisfaction in a natural and normal way. ..., so powerful and impetuous divinities (δαίμονες), in demanding a human soul (ἐξαιτούμενοι ψυχὴν ἀνθρωπίνην) which is incarnate in a human body, bring pestilences and failures of crops upon states and stir wars and civil discords, until they succeed in obtaining what they desire" (Plu. *de def. or.* 14 (*Mor.* 417de)).

generally known and agreed upon¹⁵⁶? Perhaps, though we may discern a few models, of appeasement and aversion, but they do not exactly coincide with various strategies, for instance of propitiatory sacrifice and of expulsive purification, nor with varying victims or circumstances.

In a few cases the action undertaken is described or explained in terms of purification and purifying, whether this actually relates to a sacrifice or to an expulsion of the victim(s)¹⁵⁷. This is the case in the sacrifice of king Athamas, Epimenides' doings in Athens and in the adventure of Iambulus and his friend in Ethiopia. In Part 2 of this study it has become clear that purification is a complex concept, a remedy against crisis which implicitly describes its own effects. This may be illustrated by the following passage drawn from a larger story by Achilles Tatius, where the leader of a band of bandits orders:

If there is a virgin among the captives, to take her away to the god, in order to become a sacrificial victim and a purificatory instrument of the army¹⁵⁸.

The same victim, a virgin - and not accidentally so, can serve two purposes simultaneously: she is a victim for sacrifice and a purificatory instrument of the army. Can she be both at the same time? The one in the quality of being the other? How then does this work? How should we understand the two parts?

Much of the overlap and intertwining of remedies and effects we have seen so far, returns in the following story, with which we close this section. Once¹⁵⁹, a plague-stricken town, Athens, had called in for assistance a famous seer-healer,

¹⁵⁶Note that the victims were already in full sacrificial attire at the beginning of his tale, even already before the seer ordered their sacrifice. This illustrates very well how multilayered many of the narratives are, and how various the ways to unblame Themistocles.

¹⁵⁷In one of the many accounts about the saving death of the daughters of Erechtheus and their ever changing names and numbers, one of the daughters is said to be called Lousia (Steph. Byz s.v. Λουσία), an interesting name, as *louein* belongs, evidently, in the context of purification. Compare also the Roman version of Iphigeneia (and Polyxena) by Seneca (Sen. *Ag.* 163 and *Tro.* 634), who calls her sacrificial death a purification (*lustrale*). Statius (Stat. *Theb.* 10.793) too describes the self-sacrifice of Menoeceus in purificatory terms: *lustralemne feris ego te [...] Thebis [...]?* See also Origen. *C. Cels.* 1.31: (ἱστορίας) περὶ τοῦ τίνας ὑπὲρ τοῦ κοινοῦ τεθνηγέναι καθαιρετικῶς τῶν προκαταλαβόντων τὰς πόλεις καὶ τὰ ἔθνη κακῶν (stories that tell about those who have died on behalf of their country purifying their cities and peoples from the evils that held them in their grip).

¹⁵⁸Ach. Tat. 3.12.1: Εἴ τις παρθένος ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς εἰλημμένοις, ταύτην ἀπάγειν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, ἱερεῖον ἐσομένην καὶ καθάρσιον τοῦ στρατοῦ. Compare also 3.18.4.

Epimenides. Several accounts relate the ensuing events. Plutarch only describes the general situation after the Cylonian pollution in Athens, the seers' diagnosis (*age* and *miasmous*)¹⁶⁰ and Epimenides' crisis management:

Most important of all, by sundry rites of propitiation and purification (*hilasmois* and *katharmois*) and by sacred foundations, he hallowed and consecrated the city¹⁶¹, and brought it to be observant of justice and more easily inclined to unanimity.

Plutarch does not further specify these rites. The other authors who transmit the story present more details¹⁶²: Neanthes of Cyzicus reports that

at the time when Epimenides was purifying Attica by means of human blood, because of some ancient abomination¹⁶³, Cratinus of Athens (a handsome lad) voluntarily gave himself up¹⁶⁴ on behalf of the land that had nurtured him; following him his lover Aristodemus also died, and so the terrible situation took release?¹⁶⁵.

Diogenes Laertes tells a different story, which is worth quoting for its many interesting details¹⁶⁶. When the Athenians were attacked by pestilence (no cause is mentioned), and the Pythian priestess told them to purify the city¹⁶⁷ they went to fetch Epimenides from Crete:

He came (....), purified their city, and stopped the pestilence in the following way. He took sheep, some black and others white, and brought them to the Areopagus; and there he let them go whither they pleased, instructing those who followed them to mark the spot where each sheep lay down and offer a sacrifice to the local divinity (or: 'the appropriate god', LK). And thus, it is said, the plague was stayed.

¹⁵⁹There is inconsistency in the ancient sources as to the date of this event and the traditional dates for the life and times of Epimenides, see comment Jacoby ad *FGrHist* 457 and Hughes 1991, 155f. On the presumed historicity of this account, see *ibidem*.

¹⁶⁰Plu. *Sol.* 12 (transl. Loeb): οἱ τε μάντις ἄγῃ καὶ μiasμοὺς δεομένους καθαρμοῶν προφαίνεσθαι διὰ τῶν ἱερῶν ἡγόρευον (and the seers declared that their sacrifices indicated pollutions and defilement which demanded expiation).

¹⁶¹Plu. *Sol.* 12.5 (transl. Loeb): Τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, ἱλασμοῖς τισι καὶ καθαρμοῖς καὶ ἰδρύσεσι κατοργιάσας καὶ καθοσιώσας τὴν πόλιν (no further specifications).

¹⁶²Neanthes *FGrHist* 84 fr. 16 = Athen. 13.602c and d.

¹⁶³Επιμενίδου καθαίροντος τὴν Ἀττικὴν ἀνθρωπείῳ αἵματι διὰ τινὰ μύση παλαιά.

¹⁶⁴ἐκὼν αὐτὸν ἐπέδωκεν ὑπὲρ τῆς θρηψαμένης.

¹⁶⁵λύσιν τ' ἔλαβε τὸ δεινόν. Loeb translates: "and so the terrible act was atoned for". Neanthes *FGrHist* 84 fr. 16 = Athen. 13.602c and d. Athenaeus, who transmits the story, adds: "And I am not ignorant (of the fact) that Polemon the geographer says in his replies to Neanthes that the stories about Cratinus and Aristodemus are made up".

¹⁶⁶D.L. 1.110.

¹⁶⁷καθῆραι τὴν πόλιν.

Hence even to this day altars may be found in different parts of Attica with no name inscribed upon them, which are memorials of this ‘atonement’.¹⁶⁸

However, Diogenes is familiar with the other versions, too, for he continues:

According to some writers he declared the plague to have been caused by the *agos* which Cylon brought on the city and showed them how to remove it (*apallagen*). In consequence two young men, Cratinus and Ctesibus, were put to death (*apothanein*) and the city was delivered from the scourge¹⁶⁹.

Interesting here is the tight complementarity of sacrifice and purification, and the apparent interchangeability of the terms purification, sacrifice, putting to death, self-immolation and driving out, which appear ways to respond to both a pestilence, a non-described situation in which an ancient abomination had to be dealt with and a situation of *agos* and *miasma*, complex terms we have not come across often before, but which appear of importance in the context of crisis and will be dealt with later. The remedy is also called an *exilasis*. Interestingly, the author Maximus of Tyrus uses yet another term when he describes Epimenides’ doings in Athens as *ekthvesthai*¹⁷⁰. Elsewhere, it is stated that Epimenides ‘professed to purify people by rite from any damaging influence whatever’¹⁷¹ and Epimenides is generally called a purifier¹⁷². The action, however, evidently is a sacrificial rite. Again, the ritual clearly takes place: the constitutive centre of the community, the Areopagus, is emphasised.

¹⁶⁸Καὶ ὃς ἐλθὼν (...) ἐκάθηρεν αὐτῶν τὴν πόλιν καὶ ἔπαυσε τὸν λοιμὸν τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον. Λαβὼν πρόβατα μελανὰ τε καὶ λευκὰ ἤγαγε πρὸς τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον· κάκειθεν εἶασεν ἰέναι οἱ βούλονται, προστάξας τοῖς ἀκολούθοις ἔνθα ἂν κατακλίνουσι αὐτῶν ἕκαστον, θύειν τῷ προσήκοντι θεῷ· καὶ οὕτω λῆξαι τὸ κακόν. ὅθεν ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἔστιν εὐρεῖν κατὰ τοὺς δήμους τῶν Ἀθηναίων βομοὺς ἀνονύμους, ὑπόμνημα τῆς τότε γενομένης ἐξιλάσεως. The translation of ἐξιλάσεως here is provisory, the term is complex. On this and similar terminology, see Chapter 9. Henrichs 1994, 38 understands the ritual as follows: “wherever any one of them happened to lie down, that animal was to be sacrificed ‘to the appropriate god’”. Henrichs *ad loc.* considers these appropriate deities to be (and the nameless altars to belong to) the *Semnai Theai*. See for the sacrifice of a white sheep as a substitution for human sacrifice Lyd. *Mens.* 4. 147 = Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1b. For black and white in crisis management, see Chapter 1 Section e.

¹⁶⁹οἱ δὲ τὴν αἰτίαν εἰπεῖν τοῦ λοιμοῦ τὸ Κυλώνειον ἄγος σημαίνειν τε τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἀποθανεῖν δύο νεανίας, Κρατῖνον καὶ Κτησίβιον, καὶ λυθῆναι τὴν συμφορὰν.

¹⁷⁰Maxim. Tyr. *Diss.* 38.3 (Trapp 1994) = *FGrHist* 457 fr. 4f: ὥστε τὴν Ἀθηναίων πόλιν κακουμένην λοιμῷ καὶ στάσει διεσώσατο ἐκθυσάμενος. Note there was both *loimos* and *stasis*. *Ekthyein* is also used for the sacrifice of Iphigeneia (Soph. *El.* 571). See for *ekthyein* and derivatives Chapter 9 Section a.

¹⁷¹Schol. Clem. *Al. Prot.* 2.26.4 = *FGrHist* 457 fr. 4e.

¹⁷²See Burkert 1985, 77 and references.

Whereas in the one version black and white sheep were sacrificed (*thyein*), in other versions, those in which the cause of the pestilence is identified as the Cylonian *agos* or merely as an ancient abomination, two young men served as ritual victims. In these cases the more neutral *apothanein* is used¹⁷³. Parker tries to explain (away) the potential inconsistency: "Even Epimenides, ..., cleansed the Athenians, according to tradition, not by lustration but by an ingenious sacrificial ritual designed to propitiate offended gods. On this evidence, Epimenides deserves the title 'purifier' in the sense that he was dealing with a 'pollution', but not on the basis of the actual ritual methods that he employed"¹⁷⁴.

Maybe it is time to stop looking for one to one relations in mythical crisis management. After this extensive study of various ancient Greek mythical traditions of crisis and crisis management, the pluriformity of crises, causes, remedies and consequences may be asserted. The variety in shapes of the structuring pattern is remarkable, a variety that is revealing, both in terms of necessary nuances and in terms of narrative equivalences. Sometimes one remedy is deployed in a situation of crisis that has several causes at the same time. Or conversely, several remedies are appropriate to one type of crisis, as in Epimenides' dealings with Athens. The same remedy can be put to service in various circumstances, too. This may be first and foremost a matter of genre (tragedy and poetry being apt producers of co-existing multiple options), but as a genre such as tragedy exploits cultural possibilities par excellence, it is therefore highly instructive all the same. It appeared to be virtually impossible to establish fixed links between causes, crises and remedies on the one hand, or remedies and effects aimed at on the other hand. Neither was a fixed relation found between type of crisis and type of victim, nor even between type of remedy, sacrificial or non-sacrificial, and the ultimate effect strived for, a conclusion which was confirmed by the various traditions concerning the purification of Athens by Epimenides: instead of merely looking for one-by-one relations, or rather, by lack of a transparent system, I suggest to accept and adopt notions of multiple options, multiple relations, ambiguity and overlap, and see where this takes us.

In an overall conclusion of this chapter, some findings stand out and must be repeated here. The pattern that structures the narratives in mythical crisis

¹⁷³As became clear above, *apothanein* may be used for sacrificial killing, but may also be used in opposition to it, see Chapter 3 Section c above.

management consists of a crisis, usually followed by an oracle prescribing a remedy, which comes down to the death of one (or more) members of the community in order to save the remaining lot. However, when studying the shapes this pattern may acquire, descriptions get less univocal. As to circumstances, the data remain relatively simple: a whole range of instances of adversity, such as war, drought, famine, storm, infertility and, interestingly, also affluence, may be considered as equivalents in myths of human sacrifice. Therefore, a common denominator, crisis, may be safely used. With regard to the victims selected to save the community, evidence is less unequivocal: it varies from young men and women, from noble descent, or (and) great beauty, to noble adults and even kings. There is no good reason to discuss the virgins separately: all victims are much valued in both the eyes of the community, as, probably, in the eyes of the gods, and at the same time, to a greater or lesser extent and by various ways (ethnically, socially, economically, morally or in spatial terms), disqualified from the point of view of community. They are thus characterised as ambiguous. As to the ways to safety, there are several: sacrificial, semi- or non-sacrificial, killing, jumping or throwing off walls and exile. Firm distinctions between these alternatives cannot be made, however, on the one hand because the terminology used for these three categories appears interchangeable, or rich in overlap, on the other as the ultimate fate of an exile appears to equal death symbolically. It is noteworthy that the usual distinctions between *thyein* and *sphazein* are defied in mythical crisis management and that deities may or may not be involved explicitly, irrespective of the use of this terminology. Mythical crisis management is also inscribed in space: inside and outside is an important axis of action, the walls, ramparts and city gates feature recurrently. There is no clear-cut, transparent system of crisis management to be drawn, neither in terms of the interrelations between causes and remedies, causes and victims, victims and remedies, nor between causes and ends, victims and ends or remedies and ends. Instead of looking for one-by-one relations, it appears challenging to accept and value the overlap, intertwining and ambiguity in ancient Greek crisis management. The various accounts about Epimenides' cleansing act offer a striking substantiation of these conclusions. Moreover, by the use of purificatory terminology

¹⁷⁴Parker 1983, 209-210. That I defend a less strict and more inclusive attitude in all this will become clear in Chapter 9.

in an otherwise sacrificial context, some link is established between the ritual practice discussed in Part 2 and mythical crisis management.

Now that a general survey of a variety of myths has led to the above conclusion, it is time to explore in detail variations on a pattern (of crisis, sacrifice of valued victim and safety) within one mythical cluster. After all, the established ambiguity and overlap may be the result of the joined discussion of various mythical narratives. That this is not necessarily so has become apparent in the multi-stratified version of the Epimenidian legend. It may therefore be worth its while to enquire whether this more narrowly focused survey will convey a more structural basis to our conclusions so far.

CHAPTER 4

PHRIXUS AND ATHAMAS

The conclusions with regard to interchangeability, counterparts, multiple causes and remedies, and equivalent consequences may be tested by the exploration of one cluster of myths, the traditions around Athamas, his son Phrixus (Phruxus¹) and daughter Helle. Though wrapped in stories about jealousy and power, a familiar pattern structures the myths about Athamas and his children: starting from a community in crisis, leading via Delphi to the sacrifice of one, or two, for the deliverance of all. The means of safety of a community in distress is, again, the sacrifice of the son of a king (together with his sister).

The fate of Phrixus is the focus of attention in this chapter², although a related tradition in which king Athamas is victimised will not be ignored. The identity and status of the victims, but especially the manifold ways in which the ‘means of safety’ are described and explained receive attention. Finally, a ritual counterpart of this cluster of myths will be discussed. In this way ritual is re-introduced in our study of crisis management, thus preparing the ground for the debate about the relation between ritual and myth in the context of ancient Greek crisis management.

This intricate mythical cluster is formed by varied tales, and referred to, or commented upon, by numerous scholiasts³. It is, especially with so many versions at

¹See schol. Aesch. *Pers.* ab; Apost. *Cent.* 58; schol. T. Ar. *Nub.* 257; Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 22. Henceforth only Phrixus.

²The role of Helle is secondary in these myths. It is the son Phrixus who is usually demanded by the oracle, but often both children are actually involved. It has often been claimed that Helle is a later (Hellenistic) addition, clearly motivated by aetiological needs (Hellespont). But see Bonnechere 1994, 98 n.398 on Helle represented on the back of a ram on reliefs, dating as early as 480-430 BC (not undisputed). The earliest iconographical source representing both Phrixus and Helle on the back of a ram is a crater from Paestum, dated mid 4th century BC (*LIMC* VII *ad loc.*- nr. 26). Besides, if we rely on several of the scholia on Aristophanes’ *Clouds*, Helle might have taken part in the version Sophocles staged in his *Athamas Crowned*. Aeschylus already refers to the Hellespont as the place of Helle, the daughter of Athamas (Aesch. *Pers.* 70, 722). It is only for the sake of clarity of the anyhow highly complicated material that I generally leave Helle out of the argument.

³(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.1; Apost. 11.58 (of which the *first* part literally corresponds with schol. T. Ar. *Nub.* 257 and will therefore be ignored); A.R. 2.652-654 (and other short references, on which see below); Ar. *Nub.* 257; schol. A.R. 4.115-117b = Dion. Scyt. *FGrHist* 32 fr. 2; Diod. 4.47 = Dion. Scyt. *FGrHist* 32 fr. 14; Eur. fr. 819-838 (Nauck);

hand, difficult not to regard the plot of the tale as secondary to the structuring pattern. The comparatively straightforward version of the myth(s) as found in the *Library* attributed to Apollodorus may serve as a steppingstone for the enquiry⁴. Let us first turn to the mythographer's account:

Of the sons of Aeolus, Athamas ruled over Boeotia and begat a son Phrixus and a daughter Helle by Nephele. And he married a second wife, Ino, by whom he had Learchus and Melicertes. But Ino plotted against the children of Nephele and persuaded the women to parch the wheat; and having got the wheat they did so without the knowledge of the men. But the earth, being sown with parched wheat, did not yield its annual crops; so Athamas sent to Delphi to inquire how he might be delivered from the dearth⁵. Now Ino persuaded the messengers to say it was foretold that the infertility would cease if Phrixus were sacrificed to Zeus⁶. When Athamas heard that, he was forced by the inhabitants of the land to bring Phrixus to the altar⁷. But Nephele caught him and her daughter up and gave them a ram with a golden fleece, which she had received from Hermes, and borne through the sky by the ram they crossed land and sea. But when they were over the sea which lies between Sigeum and the Chersonese, Helle slipped into the deep and was drowned, and the sea was called Hellespont after her. But Phrixus came to the Colchians, whose king was Aeetes, son of the Sun and of Perseis, and brother of Circe and Pasiphae, whom Minos married. He received Phrixus and gave him one of his daughters, Chalciope. And Phrixus sacrificed the ram with the golden fleece to Zeus the god of Escape (*Phuxios*), and the fleece he gave to Aeetes, who nailed it to an oak in a grove of Ares. And Phrixus had children by Chalciope, to wit, Argus, Melas, Phrontis, and Cytisorus.

Eust. ad Hom. *Il.* 2 p. 409; Hdt. 7.197; Hesych. s.v. Ἀθάμαντα; Hyg. *Astr.* 2.20.1-2; Hyg. *Fab.* 1-5; Lact. *Plac. Comment. in Ach.* 65; Ov. *Fast.* 853-876; Palaeph. 30 (*Myth. Gr.* 3, 451 [Festa]); Paus. 1.24.2; Paus. 1.44.7; Paus. 9.34.5-8; [Pl.] *Min.* 315c; schol. Aesch. *Pers.* 70a and b; schol. A.R. 1.256 = Hecat. *FGrHist* 1 fr. 17; schol. A.R. *Prol.* 2.b; schol. A.R. 2.498-527n.; schol. A.R. 2.652-654a; schol. A.R. 2.1144-1145a = Herod. *FGrHist* 31 fr. 38; Tz. schol. Ar. *Nub.* 256a and 257 (specified below); schol. vet. Hes. *Th.* 993a; schol. Hom. *Il.* 7.86 = Philosteph. *FHG* 3 fr. 37; schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.228 = Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 fr. 98; schol. [Pl.] *Min.* 315c; schol. vet. Pl. *Mx.* 243a; Soph. fr. 1-9, 654-656 (Radt); Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἄλος; Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 22; Vat. *Myth.* 1.23; Vat. *Myth.* 2.134; Zen. 4.38. For fragments of work by Aeschylus regarding these myths, see fr. 1-4 (Radt) and H.J. Mette, *Der verlorene Aischylos. (Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Schriften der Sektion für Altertumswissenschaft 35)* (Berlin 1963) 162-164. For reconstructions of the two tragedies of Sophocles, *Athamas* I and II, see also A.C. Pearson, *The Fragments of Sophocles vol. I* (Cambridge 1917); for Euripides, see also H. Van Looy, *Zes verloren tragedies van Euripides* (Brussels 1964) and Jouan and Van Looy 2002.

⁴(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.1 (translation Loeb with minor variations), the italics are mine.

⁵(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.1: διὸ πέμπων ὁ Ἀθάμας εἰς Δελφοὺς ἀπαλλαγὴν ἐπυνθάνετο τῆς ἀφορίας.

⁶ibidem: ὡς εἶη κεχρησμένον παύσεσθαι τὴν ἀκαρπίαν, ἐὰν σφαγῇ Διὶ ὁ Φρίξος.

⁷ibidem: τοῦτο ἀκούσας Ἀθάμας, συναναγκάζομενος ὑπὸ τῶν τὴν γῆν κατοικούντων, τῷ βῶμῳ παρέστησε Φρίξον. Note the combination of *sphazein*, *bomos* and Zeus as recipient of the sacrifice - another confirmation of our earlier conclusion that the usual distinctions are not valid in the context of human sacrifice.

A. VICTIM(S)

Whereas this tradition in the *Library* (in line with most sources at our disposal) emphasises crisis and the would-be sacrifice of Phrixus, the son of king Athamas, a few other narratives have Athamas himself nearly killed. This occurs for instance in at least one of the two tragedies about Athamas by Sophocles, the one that was probably called *Athamas Crowned*⁸. Although there is little left from this tragedy, its general content can be roughly deduced from scholia on a line from Aristophanes' *Clouds*, in which the main protagonist at some point exclaims in fear: "Don't sacrifice me like Athamas!"⁹. Most scholia comment on this verse by referring to the (second) *Athamas* by Sophocles in which Athamas is represented as wearing a crown, 'like a sacrificial victim', led to the altar to be sacrificed to Zeus¹⁰. Another fifth-century authority who records the sacrifice of Athamas is Herodotus¹¹: when Xerxes arrives at Halos in Achaia, the guides are eager to explain the local customs and they expound, rather incoherently in modern eyes, on a rite concerning the descendants of Athamas, who was made 'a purification of the land' (*katharmon tes chores*) and who was about to be sacrificed when he was saved by his grandson. This passage from Herodotus will be treated in full at the end of this chapter.

However, as mentioned, in the majority of narratives it is the son, sometimes accompanied by his sister, who is to be sacrificed to save the land from its impending

⁸It is highly probable that the sources at our disposal reflect a general popularity of the myth in which Phrixus is nearly sacrificed.

⁹Ar. *Nub.* 257: ὥσπερ με τὸν Ἀθάμανθ' ὅπως μὴ θύσετε. Interestingly, in view of the last remark about the greater popularity of the Phrixus-version, one scholion comments upon this line as follows: ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰπεῖν τὸν Φρίξον τὸν Ἀθάμαντα εἶπεν ὡς ἄγροικος ἀγνοῶν τὰς ἱστορίας· οὐ γὰρ Ἀθάμας ἐφο<νεύθη>, ἀλλὰ Φρίξος. "Being an ignorant farmer, he said 'Athamas' in stead of saying 'Phrixus', for it was not Athamas, but Phrixus, who was killed" (schol. vet. Ar. *Nub.* 257a).

¹⁰Schol. vet. Ar. *Nub.* 257d (see also c): εἰσάγεται ὁ Ἀθάμας ἐστεφανωμένος ὥσπερ ἱερεῖον σφαγισθισόμενος. There are many relevant scholia on Ar. *Nub.* 257. The oldest will be referred to as schol. vet. Ar. *Nub.* 257a-d. Another set of scholia to Aristophanes, the Thomas-Triclinius scholia, contains one relevant scholion, which corresponds with the first part of the account in Apost. *Cent.* 9.58, henceforth referred to as schol. T. Ar. *Nub.* 257. Next there is one scholion by Tzetzes (Tz. schol. Ar. *Nub.* 256a), and finally, the more recent scholia, referred to as schol. rec. Ar. *Nub.* 257a-c, of which the c-scholion is subdivided into α, β, γ. All relevant scholia on Aristophanes are taken from W.J.W. Koster (ed.), *Scholia in Aristophanem. Vol. 1* - (Groningen 1960 -). Further Hesych. s.v. Ἀθάμαντα τὸν θυόμενον νεφέλαις; Sud. s.v. Ἀθάμας (without reference to Sophocles however).

¹¹Hdt. 7.197.

doom. Although the role of Helle is clearly secondary, it is important not to forget that the tale can accommodate her presence¹². Interestingly, the selection of the victim(s) is usually accounted for in the context of the story: the jealousy of a new wife towards the children of the first wife or the other way round. Phrixus and Helle are not always the only children of Athamas' first wife, nor the eldest. On the contrary, one source explicitly calls them the youngest¹³.

As to the victims, their status appears to be the most important reasons for selection, not their age, nor their gender. The youngsters are of royal descent, but youngsters. Again, this suggests the ambiguity of valued, yet dispensable members-to-be of society. In the case of the most valued member, the king, the dispensability is only reached with greater difficulty, which we already observed in the *Phoenissae*: the king is made into a guilty figure, as will be discussed in the next section.

B. MEANS OF SAFETY

Whether they refer to *aphoria*, *auchmos*, *akarpia*, *pestilentia* or *limos*¹⁴, the various versions of our myth all mention a crisis situation as the starting point of the narrative. Nearly all versions that relate Phrixus' would-be death and escape, attribute the crisis to undermining activities of one of the (ex)wives of Athamas. In Apollodorus' tale the crisis is caused through a deliberate corruption of the seeds by Ino, the second wife of Athamas and the stepmother of Phrixus and Helle, whom she wanted to get rid of. One narrative attributes a drought to the sending or passing away of Nephele (Cloud)¹⁵, Athamas' first wife and the mother of the two children¹⁶.

¹²This becomes more important when interpretations of the tale focus too onesidedly on initiation, on which see Chapter 4 Section c and Chapter 5 Section b.

¹³Schol. A.R. 2.1144-1145a = Herodorus *FGrHist* 31 fr. 38.

¹⁴For ἀφορία e.g. (Ps.) Apollod. 1.9.1; Zen. 4.38.18. For αὐχμός e.g. schol. T. Ar. *Nub.* 257a; Apost. *Cent.* 9.58. For ἀκαρπία e.g. (Ps.) Apollod. 1.9.1; Eust. ad Hom. *Il.* 2.409; Philosteph. *FHG* 2 fr. 37 = schol. Hom *Il.* 7.86; Tz. schol. Ar. *Nub.* 256a; Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 22. For *pestilentia* Hyg. *Fab.* 2 where *pestilentia* encompasses both *penuria frugum* and *sterilitas*. For λιμός e.g. Paus. 1.44.7; schol. Aesch. *Pers.* 70a-b.

¹⁵schol. Ar. *Nub.* 257a, or to her jealousy: schol. T. Ar. *Nub.* 257; schol. rec. Ar. *Nub.* 257c. Although Pind. *Pyth.* 4.159-161 already alludes to an evil stepmother, it is not evident from his passage what her evilness amounted to. It is unclear how the evil stepmother motif developed. The so-called Phaedra-motif (stepmother - or aunt - taking revenge when her advances are turned down by stepson/nephew) is also put forward, see Hyg. *Astr.* 2.20 and schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.288a (see the following note). On the malignity of ancient Greek stepmothers, see also P.A. Watson, *Ancient Stepmothers. Myth, Misogony and Reality (Mnemosyne Suppl. 143)* (Leiden 1995); West 1978 ad Hes. *Op.* 825.

In a few cases it is only said that Phrixus' flight was due to 'the plotting' of his stepmother. Herodotus however has the guides explain 'how *Athamas*, son of Aeolus, contrived the death of Phrixus, after taking council with Ino'¹⁷. And finally, in a very early, sixth-century BC-account by Pherecydes, in which the stepmother of Phrixus is called Themisto, just as Athamas' third wife in the *Library*, there is a more no nonsense approach: it is explicitly stated that the crop failure was a natural catastrophe¹⁸.

The community can be saved by the sacrifice of one, or two. But why? According to many sources this 'means of safety' is recommended by an oracle, which is, notwithstanding its apparent credibility, forged by Ino. However much it matters that the oracle was fake in one respect (it is tantalising to wonder what the *real* answer of the oracle was), it is quite irrelevant in another, as the words attributed to the Pythia must have been borrowed from common traditions in order to sound plausible. It is exactly here that the shrewdness of Ino lies: she seeks divine covering for her human misdeeds¹⁹. The human cause of the crisis is countered in terms of the divine. The remedy is then inescapable: one life must be given on behalf of all.

The (faked) oracle is handed down in various wordings, which are interesting in terms of motivation and interchangeability. Compare for instance: "...that the

¹⁶Some versions make Ino into the first and Nephele into the second wife (Eur. fr. 819-838 [Nauck]; Eust. ad Hom. *Il.* 2. p.409; schol. Hom. *Il.* 7.86 = Philosteph. *FHG* 3 fr. 37; Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 2.22). Athamas' marital life is quite confusing. The order of appearances and the number of wives vary, so do their names. In most cases it is Ino and Nephele featuring. Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.288a = Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 fr. 98 mentions four names of stepmothers of Phrixus (and Helle): ματρὺς ἀθέων βελέων] ἐκακώθη γὰρ (sc. ὁ Φρίξος) διὰ τὴν μητρὶν ἐρασθεῖσαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐπεβουλεύθη ὥστε φυγεῖν. ταύτην (Phrixus' mother) δὲ ὁ μὲν Πίνδαρος ἐν Ὑμνοῖς Δημοδίκη· Ἰππίας δὲ Γοργῶν· Σοφοκλῆς ἐν Ἀθάμαντι Νεφέλην· Φερεκύδης Θεμιστώ (the reference to Nephele as stepmother in Sophocles' *Athamas Crowned* must be incorrect, if we follow the scholia on Ar. *Nub.* 257).

¹⁷Hdt. 7.197: ἐμηχανήσατο μόρον.

¹⁸Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.288a = Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 fr. 98: Φερεκύδης Θεμιστώ. ὅς καὶ φησι τῶν καρπῶν φθειρομένων ἐκ ταῦτομάτου ἐθελούσιον δοῦναι ἑαυτὸν εἰς σφαγὴν. This ἐκ ταῦτομάτου, added by Pherecydes (or the scholiast on Pind. *Pyth.* 4.288) adds, may, in my opinion, indicate the existence of alternative readings of the cause. One can doubt if the scholiast quotes Pherecydes as literally as he claims to do. Herodorus (*FGrHist* 31 fr. 38), also refers to Themisto as the mother of Athamas' children, among which, the two youngest, Phrixus and Helle, adding however the better known variant, that they went in exile (ἐκχωρήσασθαι) due to Ino's plotting.

¹⁹Compare Paus. 1.44.7 (translation Loeb) relating Athamas' "unbridled rage, when he learned that the famine which befell the Orchomenians and the supposed death of Phrixus were not accidents from heaven (οὐ τὸ θεῖον αἴτιον οὐ γενέσθαι), but that Ino, the step-mother, had intrigued for all these things".

drought would not *be stopped* in another way, if the children of Nephele would not *be sacrificed*”, “...that the *ills* would *be released* by their *killing*”, “... if Phrixus would *be sacrificed to Zeus*, the *pestilence* would find *an end*”, “that he would get rid of the crisis by sacrificing one of his own stock”, “to *sacrifice* Phrixus and Helle in order to *release the ills*”, “Apollo had replied to *sacrifice* to him Helle and Phrixus”, “if not first the children of Nephele, Athamas’ former wife, would *be annihilated*, the land would *not bear fruit*”, “... that Helle and Phrixus are to *be sacrificed*, if he would want to realise the *riddance* of the *drought*”, “... that due to Phrixus nor the wheat grows, nor the other seeds, for it is necessary to *sacrifice* one of the children of Nephele to the gods”²⁰. There is one scholion to Hesiod comparable to this last one but at the same time diverging in a remarkable way, as it has Phrixus (and Helle) not sacrificed, at least not properly. It tells about seers who are required to tell the *aitia* of the dearth, who (being bribed) claim that the lives of the children are the cause. Upon this Phrixus and Helle were thrown into the sea²¹. Above, we have seen how Agraulus saved her city by leaping, here however, this looks more like an ordinary riddance of the *aitia* themselves. Finally, again, Pherecydes, with his no-nonsense account: there was a *natural* crisis and Phrixus *voluntarily* offered himself to be sacrificed. No plotting, no oracle. Phrixus apparently knew what a brave youngster had to do in times of severe crisis. This needed no further legitimation or rationalisation, it was all self-explanatory²².

²⁰Respectively from Apost. *Cent.* 58.21-22 and schol. T. Ar. *Nub.* 257 (ὥς οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως παύσασθαι τὸν αὐχμὸν, εἰ μὴ τοὺς τῆς Νεφέλης θύσειε παῖδας); Eust. Hom. *Il.* 2.409.3 (ὥς τοῦ κακοῦ λυθησομένου τῷ ἐκείνων φονῇ); Hyg. *Fab.* 2 (*si Phrixum immolasset Ioui, pestilentiae fore finem*); schol. Hom. *Il.* 7.86 = Philosteph. *FHG* 3 fr. 37 (ὥς θῦμα τῆς αὐτοῦ γονῆς προσενεγκὼν ἀπαλλαγῆσεται τοῦ δεινοῦ); schol. Aesch. *Pers.* 70b (ὥς Φρύξον τε καὶ Ἑλλην θῦσαι εἰς ἀπαλλαγὴν τοῦ κακοῦ [τοῦ λιμοῦ]); schol. Aesch. *Pers.* 70a (τὸ τὴν Ἑλλην καὶ τὸν Φρύξον αὐτῷ τυθῆναι ὁ Ἀπόλλων ἀνείργηκεν); schol. vet. A.R. *Prol.* Bb (εἰ μὴ πρότερον τὰ παιδία τὰ ἐκ τῆς Νεφέλης τῆς προτέρας γυναικὸς Ἀθάμαντος ἀναιρεθεῖν, οὐκ ἂν φύσειεν ἡ γῆ τοὺς καρπούς); Zen. *Cent.* 4.38.21-22 (Ἑλλην καὶ Φρίξον σφαγιασθῆναι, εἰ θέλοιεν ἀπαλλαγὴν τῆς ἀφορίας ἔσεσθαι) and Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 22 (ὥς διὰ τοῦτον (Phrixus) σῖτον μὴ φύεσθαι μηδὲ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν σπορίμων, ὅτι τῶν τῆς Νεφέλης παίδων χρεῖα τοῖς θεοῖς ἕνα τυθῆναι).

²¹Schol. vet. Hes. *Th.* 993a: μάντεων δὲ προσκληθέντων εἰπεῖν τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς ἀφορίας, ἡ τῶν παίδων ζωὴ αἰτία τούτοις ἐκρίθη ... ὅθεν ἐν θαλάσσῃ ῥιφέντες Φρίξος καὶ Ἑλλη.

²²Compare also Euripides’ *Phrixus* B (at least according to the detailed reconstruction by Van Looy 1964, 178-9) and Hygin. *Fab* 2: *Phrixus ultro ac libens pollicetur se unum civitatem aerumna liberaturum. itaque cum ad aram cum infulis esset adductus.*

The equivalent use of *sphazein*, *thyein*, *anairein*, ‘with their own death’ (*phonos*) and *riptein* does not need much further elucidation. They fit into the same structural pattern, and share the same effects, described in terms of *pauein*, *apallattein* and *luein* all sorts of crisis. The conclusions from Chapter 3 are confirmed: firm distinctions between the various fates on the basis of terminology would, rather than being insightful, hinder a full understanding of mythical crisis management.

In most versions the sacrifice is required via an oracle or seers, sometimes on explicit demand of some god or other. Most prominent among these is Zeus Laphystius, Zeus the Glutton, though ‘the gods’ in general and Apollo also feature²³. In addition to such divine instigation, some accounts make mention of popular pressure, as in Apollodorus’ version²⁴.

In those cases when Athamas is about to be sacrificed, there is no explicit mentioning of any general crisis. The scholia on Aristophanes’ *Clouds* slightly differ with regard to the motivation given for the sacrifice of Athamas, although they refer to the same source, that is the *Athamas Crowned* by Sophocles. They account for Athamas’ sacrifice either in terms of punishment, Athamas getting what he deserves for slaying Phrixus²⁵ in general, or call it the revenge of angry Nephele. A more recent scholion, which does not explicitly refer to the *Athamas Crowned*, diverges in an interesting way. It describes Athamas being led to the altar, about to sacrifice *himself*, now that Phrixus and Helle had managed to escape²⁶. Athamas thus voluntarily offers himself for sacrifice, as a substitute for his son and daughter, an

²³The designated recipients of the human sacrifice vary (if mentioned at all): Zeus Laphystius ([Ps.] Apollod. 1.9.1; Hdt. 7.197; schol. A.R. 2.652-654d), Zeus (Apost. *Cent.* 58; Hyg. *Fab.* 2; schol. vet. Ar. *Nub.* 257b), Apollo (schol. Aesch. *Pers.* 70a; schol. Pl. *Mx.* 243a), ‘the gods’ (schol. rec. Ar. *Nub.* 257cδ; Tz. schol. Ar. *Nub.* 256a). There is little known about Zeus Laphystius, apart from his role in the Athamas-Phrixus context. For Zeus ‘the Glutton’ or ‘the Devourer’, cf. Burkert 1983, 78; Cook 1925, 899 and 904.

²⁴See also Ov. *Fast.* 3.859-860: *utque recusantem cives et tempus et Ino compulerunt regem...* “and when the citizens, the season, and Ino compelled the reluctant king...”.

²⁵Schol. Ar. *Nub.* 257c: δίκας εἰσπραττόμενος περὶ Φρύξου. Comp. schol. Ar. *Nub.* 257b and d. And 257cβ; 257c1; 257d1 (διὰ Φρίξον).

²⁶Schol. Ar. *Nub.* 257cγ: Ἀθάμας εἰς θυσίαν ἀγόμενος ὀλοκαυτῶθῃναι στέφανον φορῶν ἀπήρχετο τυθησόμενος ὑποσχεθεὶς γὰρ θῦσαι τοῖς θεοῖς τὸν Φρίξον καὶ τὴν Ἑλλην καὶ ἀποτυχῶν ἐκείνων ἀποφυγόντων ἑαυτὸν ἐμελλε θύσειν. Note the unproblematic combination of *holokautoun* and *thyein*.

explanation also found in another scholion²⁷, in which Athamas presents himself to be sacrificed *in stead of* Phrixus, whom Athamas had offered to be sacrificed to the gods because of a drought. Note that in these cases the neutral ‘the gods’ are mentioned as receptors of the sacrifice of Phrixus (and Helle), but in the second scholion Athamas stands at the altar of ‘the god’, Zeus, about to be sacrificed when this sacrifice is annulled by Heracles who makes a last minute epiphany to announce that Phrixus is still alive²⁸.

In the case of Athamas two different motives appear to co-exist. On the one hand, Athamas must be sacrificed *instead of* Phrixus, who managed to escape. On the other hand Athamas’ sacrifice is explained as a *punishment for* slaying Phrixus. So the cause and the remedy can sometimes intermingle. Besides, there are several allusions to Athamas acting by his own free will - a kind of self-sacrifice. The Herodotus’ passage is very puzzling in this respect, as we shall see below. All the more, as it claims there had been an oracle ordering the Achaeans to sacrifice Athamas, making him ‘a *purification* of the land’.

Human sacrifice thus appears the means of safety par excellence for a community in distress. When the crisis is about to be overcome and Phrixus and Helle are approaching the altar of communal preservation, they are themselves saved by divine intervention. Saviours vary, so does their ensuing destination²⁹. But what apparently matters most and what remains consistent throughout the majority of ancient mythography is the fact *that* they escape³⁰. There is a very persistent use of words such as *phugein*, *pheugein* and *apophugein* in most sources. But *ekchorein* is also frequently found. Usually, as in Apollodorus, their ‘*deus ex machina*’ is a ram (*krios*) with a golden fleece, sent either by Zeus, by all the gods or by Nephele. Sometimes Nephele herself ‘simply’ snatches them away. Tales get taller however: other narratives produce a ram with a human voice, who betrays the plan to sacrifice the children and subsequently saves them, or a servant, called Halos or Alos, who

²⁷Tz. schol. Ar. Nub. 256a: Ἀθάμας ... Φρίξον δι' ἀκαρπίαν ὡς ἱερεῖον θεοῖς τυθῆναι παρέσχε κὰν νεφέλῃ αὐτὸν ἢ μήτηρ ἀρήρπαζέ τε καὶ ἔσωσε, στεφανωθείς ἀντ' ἐκείνου τῷ βωμῷ τοῦ Διὸς παρίστατο τυθησόμενος.

²⁸Tz. schol. Ar. Nub. 256a: ἐπιφανεῖς δὲ Ἡρακλῆς τῆς σφαγῆς τοῦτον ἐκσώζει· Φρίξος, εἰπὼν, ζῇ. Heracles, who appeared suddenly, saved him from the sacrificial death, by saying that Phrixus was alive. See also schol. vet. Ar. Nub. 257b and d.

²⁹They leave either for Colchis, Pharos, Phrygia or Scythia. I do not want to dwell on possible differences between these destinations. From a structural-semiotic point of view, it is all ‘way out’, the Otherland par excellence.

tells Athamas, with whom she is romantically involved, about Ino's wicked plotting. By a final, particularly 'rational', twist of the imagination (the *true story* according to those sources that first gave some of the 'mythical' versions above), a *man* named Krios comes to the aid of Phrixus and Helle, places them in a boat and thus takes them to safety outside the borders³¹. The unfortunate Helle drowns in all versions and Phrixus' flight invariably ends successfully; he sacrifices the ram³² and marries a princess.

In Athamas' case endings are more ambiguous. On the one hand he is saved, either by his grandson Cytissorus or by Heracles, on the other hand, and it is here that a second set of tales comes in, terrible things happen to him, forcing him to go in exile³³. It is then, that he founds Athamantia or Athamantion (the place where,

³⁰Most important exception is schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.228 = *FGrHist* 3 fr. 98.

³¹Ram with the human voice: Apost. *Cent.* 58, 24-25; A.R. 1.764; Philosteph. *FHG* 3 fr. 37 = schol. Hom. *Il.* 7.86; Tz. schol. Ar. *Nub.* 257; Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 22 (see also schol. Aesch. *Pers.* 70a) schol. A.R. 1.256 = Hecat. *FGrHist* 1 fr. 17. Halos or Alos the servant: Eust. Hom. *Il.* p.497 (cf. also Steph. Byz. s.v. ἅλος, and the *satelles misericordia* in Hyg. *Fab.* 2). Escape by ram-faced boat: Diod. 4.47; schol. vet. Pl. *Mx.* 243a. Krios is Phrixus' attendant or *paidagogos* and helps them escape by means of a boat: Apost. *Cent.* 58, 2nd part; Dion. Scyt. *FGrHist* 32 fr. 2b; Diod. 4.47 (adding that some mention a love-affair between Phrixus and the king of the Scythians who left him his kingdom in the end. Phrixus' attendant, Krios, was sacrificed to the gods); Palaeph. 30 (*Myth. Gr.* 3, 451 [Festa]) (ram-story could never be true, as children are too heavy for a ram, and a ram cannot fly that far. Besides, they all had nothing to eat...) and Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 22 both stressing the truthfulness of the Krios/boat account (see also schol. A.R. 1.256-259).

³²The ram is sacrificed, something related mostly by later sources, to Zeus (Hyg. *Astr.* 2.20.1), Zeus Laphystius, Zeus the Devourer (Paus. 1.24.2), Zeus Phuxios, Zeus of Escape; ([Ps.] Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.1; A.R. 2.1147; A.R. 4.119; Eust. Hom. *Il.* 2 p.409; Paus. 1.24.2; schol. A.R. *Prol.* 2b; schol. vet. Hes. *Th.* 993; Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 22), Mars (Hyg. *Fab.* 3; Vat. *Myth.* 1.23; Vat. *Myth.* 2.134), Ares or Hermes (Apost. *Cent.* 58; Tz. schol. Ar. *Nub.* 257). The golden fleece is often said to have been hung up in the temple of Ares, which marks the beginning of another set of myths.

³³(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.2. One other difficulty which we must briefly discuss lies in the topographical field. There is no consensus regarding the place of action. One strong tradition claims Athamas to be king of, or in, Boeotia (Orchomenos, Thebes), whereas another makes him the founder of Orchomenos and again another tradition has him arrive in Boeotia after losing all his sons and being expelled from his former habitat. Other traditions focus on Thessaly, on Halos, or Alos, in Achaea, and again inform us paradoxically about both places (Athamas, king of Boeotia, on the verge of sacrificing his son: e.g. (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.1; Hyg. *Astr.* 2.20 (Orchomenos); Ov. *Fast.* 3.865 (Thebes); Paus. 1.44.7; schol. Hom. *Il.* 7.86 = Philosteph. *FHG* 3 fr. 37 (Thebes); Paus. 9.34.5; Tz. schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 22, 27 (Thebes). Athamas, expelled from his kingdom, wandering around and finally founding Orchomenos; Paus. 9.34.6 (note that Pausanias also places the would be sacrifice of Phrixus in Orchomenos in the same chapter); schol. A.R. 1.763. Athamas, king in Thessaly: Apost. *Cent.* 58 (Phthia); Hdt. 7.197 (not explicitly king though, but probably no priest of Zeus either as Hughes 1991, *ad loc.* supposes); Hyg. *Fab.* 4; Hyg. *Astr.* 2.20; Palaeph. 30 (*Myth. Gr.* 3, 451 [Festa]) (Phthia). Athamas, founding a place in Thessaly:

according to an oracle, he would be welcomed by wild animals)³⁴. These tales, as much related to another as they may seem, are normally distinguished in mythography. It would be too speculative to assume a closer connection between the sacrifice tradition and these tales of banishment than the sources we have at our disposal allow for. There is one scholion, however, nourishing assumptions of this kind, by claiming that Athamas was exiled from his country when it was ill³⁵.

However complicated and elaborated the mythical versions get, however learned the scholiasts comment, in conclusion it may be asserted that *the fact that* the sacrifice (in the broadest possible sense) of one (or two) may remedy a situation of crisis, seems to be taken for granted and is apparently in no need of further explanation. The general idea may be well expressed by Pausanias' Athamas who is deeply enraged when he finds out that the crisis and sacrifice of Phrixus had been plotted by Ino, instead of being divinely induced, the common way to explain such ills³⁶. It is striking that in nearly all these versions and variants the sacrifice ends in exile. Again, there is a curious interplay in function and meaning between sacrifice and exile. Exile turns out as effective as sacrifice, as it is divinely sanctioned, too. This interplay between exile and sacrifice is the spine of a related description, that of a ritual in Halos, too.

C. A RITUAL COUNTERPART

In the dialogue *Minos*, traditionally, but probably falsely, attributed to Plato, the descendants of Athamas, notwithstanding the fact that they are Greeks, are said to perform human sacrifices, just like barbarian people such as Carthaginians do³⁷. There is fierce debate on the historicity of this statement³⁸, all the more in view of a passage from the seventh book of Herodotus' *Histories*³⁹. In paying attention to these

E.M. s.v. Athamantia (plain in Thessaly); schol. A.R. 498-527n. Euripides placed the king Athamas of his Phrixus A in Thessaly, of his Phrixus B in Orchomenos.

³⁴See e.g. (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.2.

³⁵Schol. A.R. 2.498-527n: 'Αθαμάντιον· δὲ πεδίον· οὕτω καλούμενον περὶ τὴν Ἄλιν· κατ' ὥκησε γὰρ Ἀθάμας ἐν Ἄλῃ, τῇ νόσῳ τῆς βασιλείας ἐξελθὼν. "Athamantion. Around Halos a plain was so called; for Athamas settled in Halos when he left his kingdom due to a plague".

³⁶Paus. 1.44.7: τὸ θεῖον αἴτιον.

³⁷[Pl.] *Min.* 315c.

³⁸For this discussion, see among others Bonnechere 1994, 96-101; Burkert 1983, 115 and Hughes 1991, 92-96.

³⁹Hdt. 7.197.

two testimonia we again enter the field of what some would refer to as ‘mythical ritual’. The full passage in Herodotus runs as follows:

To Xerxes, who had arrived at Halos in Achaea, the guides, eager to explain the whole about the road, told him the local story, the things about the sanctuary of Zeus Laphystius; how Athamas son of Aeolus, contrived the death of Phrixus, after taking council with Ino, and thereafter, how the Achaeans in accordance with an oracle, imposed on them, who were his descendants, the following tasks⁴⁰: after having ordered him, who was the eldest of this family to stay away from the *Leiton*, they kept watch themselves. (For the Achaeans call the Prytaneum *Leiton*⁴¹). But should he enter, there is no way out for him before he is to be sacrificed. And in addition to these things, how many of those who were to be sacrificed, left in fear going away to another country, and if they, after some time went by, having returned, would be seized, they were sent to the Prytaneum⁴²; they explained how he is sacrificed, covered all over with (woollen) fillets, and how he is led out in a procession. And the descendants of Cytissorus the son of Phrixus endure these things, because when the Achaeans in accordance with an oracle were making Athamas a purification of the land (*katharmon tes chores*), and were to sacrifice him, this Cytissorus who had arrived from Aia in Colchis, saved him; but because he had done this, he brought down the wrath of the god on his own posterity.

The passage is problematic, not only due to textual uncertainties, but also on account of its puzzling content. Herodotus describes contemporary Halos, where the eldest members of an important family endure certain ‘tasks’⁴³. It is forbidden to them to enter the local Prytaneum under penalty of sacrificial death. Of those who had entered the Prytaneum all the same - and many appear to have done so in the past, notwithstanding interdiction and guards - and thus were to be sacrificed, various managed to escape in exile. On their return, however, they were caught and sacrificed nonetheless.

⁴⁰The term used is ἀέθλους.

⁴¹λήιτον. This phrase is generally regarded as a later gloss.

⁴²I follow the reading of the text of most editors. The manuscripts however give either ἐστέλλοντο ἐς τὸ πρυτανήιον or ἐσελθόντες ἐς τὸ πρυτανήιον, in which case a lacuna must be assumed after *prytaneion*, an option favored by e.g. Legrand (Budé) and according to e.g. Hughes 1991, 231 n.77 supported by the wordings (of the main manuscript tradition) of Schol. A. R. 2.653: ὃς Φρίξον τὸν Ἀθάμαντος ἐξένισεν, ἐπὶ τοῦ κριοῦ ὅτε ἐξέφυγε τὸν θάνατον, μέλλων σφαγιαζέσθαι. φασὶ δὲ ἐκεῖνον σφαγιασθῆναι τῷ Λαφυστίῳ Δίῳ, καὶ μέχρι τοῦ νῦν <μὴ ἐξεῖναι> ἓνα τῶν Φρίξου ἀπογόνων εἰσιέναι εἰς τὸ πρυτανεῖον, εἰσελθόντα <δὲ> τινα ἀκουσίως <θύεσθαι> τῷ προειρημένῳ Δίῳ. In my opinion, this may as well refer to the first part of the description of the ‘tasks’ by Herodotus. The odd and sudden change of plural into singular in the next clause however, makes the suggestion of a lacuna less unattractive. In choosing the first option, a return of the exile is rendered virtually impossible.

⁴³ἄεθλος in Herodotus means feat, task, duty, cf. Hdt. 1.42, 1.26, 4.43, etc. (Powell 1977 *ad loc.*).

A puzzling set of actions indeed. Why (and how, in view of the guards) would anyone enter the Prytaneum at all, knowing that this would mean sacrificial death? Why should entering the Prytaneum result in sacrifice? Why would anyone, having escaped this terrible fate, come back after a while to be sacrificed all the same? To account for these ‘tasks’, Herodotus presents us with two stories, two *aitia*, one at the beginning and one at the end of the description. He starts out with the story of the death of Phrixus (not mentioning any crisis, nor any escape⁴⁴ but attributing his death to both Athamas and Ino) and rounds off with the tale about the saving of Athamas by his grandson, when Athamas himself was on the verge of being sacrificed, being made ‘a purification of the land’. Herodotus does not connect both tales and presents them independently. Besides, the relation of these particular mythical accounts and the ritual is highly inconclusive⁴⁵. Thus, a curious action pattern, involving human sacrifice - possibly turning into exile - starting off with the transgression of an interdiction, is ordained by oracles, either because of the death of the son, or because of the failure of the sacrifice of the father, which caused the anger of the god (*menin tou theou*). No physical crisis, but transgressions all the more.

Interestingly, the (sacrificial) ritual, if performed, starts out at the local Prytaneum. The victim is covered with fillets, led out in a procession, supposedly out of town⁴⁶. It is amazing how, in all these mythical and ritual accounts, those who are to be sacrificed end up abroad: Phrixus on his ram, the ones in the ritual who left in fear, and even the ultimate fate of those who were really said to be going to be sacrificed but are led out all the same, is not unequivocal either. The whole myth-ritual cluster of Athamas and Phrixus is permeated with a curious interplay between

⁴⁴Although Phrixus does have a son coming from Colchis at the end of the passage.

⁴⁵The account is set in 480 BC, but this sightseeing of Xerxes-on-the-march is somewhat suspicious. Hughes 1991 *ad loc.*, suggests the possibility that the first tale was local, the second, about Athamas, was more an Athenian version (see the lost tragedies by Aeschylus and Sophocles, among which Sophocles’ *Athamas Crowned*). The *terminus ante quem* for Sophocles’ *Athamas Crowned* is generally set on 423 BC in view of the line 257 of Aristophanes’ *Clouds*. However, there is only a clear reference to the *Athamas Crowned* in the scholia on this line, not in the *Clouds* itself. For Hughes, these issues are highly relevant and he closes his paragraph on the Athamantids concluding that “Hdt. 7.197 is very far from being a reliable eyewitness account of the performance of a human sacrifice”. For the purposes of the present study, there is no need to decide on these questions, if evidence is inconclusive.

⁴⁶Hughes 1991, 232 n.81 points out that the combination of leading out and sacrifice is precisely the same as Herodotus (Hdt. 2.45.1) used in describing the attempted sacrifice of Heracles, whom the Egyptians crowned and led out for sacrifice to Zeus: στεφάντες οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι ὑπὸ πομπῆς ἐξήγον ὥς θύσοντες τῷ Διί. See also Chapter 1 Section g.

sacrifice and exile, expressing, in manifold variations, the apparent functional equivalence between these two ways of crisis management that we have observed before.

To Harrison it was not that curious at all. After her treatment of the *pharmakos* ritual, (a magical ceremony of physical expulsion)⁴⁷, she expressed her doubts whether there was any evidence at all of human sacrifice among the ancient Greeks. She claimed that myths and tales about human sacrifice, including all those under consideration in this chapter, are merely the product of an evolution of religious thought. She illustrated this by 'the supposed human sacrifice' of Athamas:

The point is clear: great stress is laid on the leading forth in procession - the descendant of the royal race was a scapegoat (a *pharmakos*, LK). Herodotus makes this quite clear. Athamas was sacrificed because the Achaeans *were making a purification of the land*. Herodotus gives as the cause of this primitive and perfectly intelligible custom various conflicting reasons which well reflect the various stages of opinion through which the thinking Greek passed. We have first the real reason - Athamas as scapegoat. Then the public conscience is uneasy, and we have a legend that the 'sacrifice' is interrupted at the moment of consummation either by Heracles (according to Sophocles in his lost Athamas) or by Kytissoros. It is wrong to sacrifice; hence the sacrifice is interrupted, but it is wrong to interrupt sacrifice, so the descendants of Kytissoros are punished. Then, finally, it is felt that the sacrifice must go on, but it is a dreadful thing, an *agos*, so a chance of escape is given to the victim. Finally in the same complex legend we have the substitution of a ram for the human victim Phrixos⁴⁸.

With Harrison, a few interesting observations can be made. First, according to Harrison, not only this 'mythical ritual', but most of the mythical accounts studied in this part, deal with purifications, not with human sacrifice, and thus belong in the very same field as the ritual purifications in the Part 2 of this study. Secondly, Harrison claimed that myth and ritual only differ as a result of the growing need for legitimation, which could be easily accommodated by mythical accounts. Whether Harrison is right about these ancient Greek stages of opinion about human sacrifice may be doubted; her analysis as such is valuable. I do agree that it is important to discern different layers in the account, both sacrificial and purificatory, but these layers should be regarded, for the time being, as co-existing.

⁴⁷Harrison 1922³, 108 for which see also Chapter 2 Section c.

⁴⁸Harrison 1922³, 109-110. See 1.2.c for the larger context of her ideas, a context of evolution and magic. I do not see how she can make the step from the 'leading out' of the *pharmakos* to the need for mitigation of this 'sacrifice', which it was not, according to herself. Others, such as Schwenn 1915, 43-45 also argued this was a *pharmakos* ritual.

The last decade or so the prevailing interpretation of this passage, in tune with an overall tendency in classical scholarship, has focused on initiation. Several contributions to the discussion have been made⁴⁹. Hughes tries to explain Herodotus' account as follows: "The only reasonable solution to these problems is to suppose that we are dealing with a prescribed sequence of actions, a sort of ritual drama which must be enacted. ... Much remains mysterious about these unusual rites and I hesitate to speculate further on their nature. But certain features of the ritual sequence - the various ordeals which must be undergone, the seclusion in the prytany building, the myth and the threat of sacrifice, the 'escape' followed by a period of exile - are common elements of '*rites de passage*' and together may suggest that the ritual functioned to initiate a young member of the family into the priesthood of Zeus. Or possibly the fifth-century ritual represented a survival of old initiation rites undergone by all young males in the area, but now conserved only in the family which claimed direct descent from Athamas"⁵⁰.

Although it is not the aim of the present study to present one monolithic explanation of the *meaning* of this particular set of mythical accounts, it might be of interest to take this view into consideration for a moment. Indeed, it cannot be denied that there are various elements to the ritual corresponding to what we call *rites de passage*. However, a few objections are in order.

One objection to the application of the concept of initiation to the ritual is the impossibility of return. In the myths, time and again Phrixus is said to sacrifice the ram in a far-off country, where he also marries the local princess. Although sacrifice and marriage are symbols of incorporation par excellence, it is remarkable, to say the least, that the last of the tripartite scheme of initiation, the *rite d'agrégation* takes place elsewhere, in a foreign household⁵¹. If one wishes, this might be called initiation, but initiation in the broadest possible sense, the use of which in this context is not very helpful, or even misleading. Another consequence of imposing the initiation paradigm on the entire Athamas-Phrixus cluster is the need to smooth over the joint venture of Phrixus and Helle, brother and sister, the fact that they are sometimes the eldest children, but sometimes the youngest, and worse, the sacrifice

⁴⁹See esp. Hughes 1991, 92-96 and Bonnechere 1994, 96-101, both focussing on the historicity of human sacrifice.

⁵⁰Hughes 1991, 94-95.

⁵¹Note that this is not the same as a *rite d'agrégation* on foreign grounds when a colony is founded, as this new place is in fact one's own community displaced.

of Athamas, which Hughes and Bonnechere actually do. Athamas, king of all, father of at least four sons and a daughter, even a grandfather, does not seem to be in need of any further initiation.

In a recent article Stella Georgoudi offered a trenchant critique of initiation paradigms. She argued against the too rudimentary applications of the concept in attempts to understand traditions of human sacrifice in ancient Greece. Her general remarks and criticism will be discussed below, the point she makes in the context of the 'mythical ritual' under scrutiny must be mentioned already here. Georgoudi has pointed out that 'the eldest of this family' as the text reads, in all probability, does not mean the eldest son on the verge of manhood, as Bonnechere and Hughes have understood it, but rather the eldest living descendant of one *genos*⁵².

These are some direct objections against an interpretation of this passage in the *Histories*, or even the whole Athamas-Phrixus cluster, from the point of view of initiation. However, one may also take another step and wonder, with Georgoudi, Versnel and others, if the use of the concept of initiation at large is helpful when interpreting ancient Greek phenomena in general. To this larger debate we shall return in the next chapter.

For the time being, it seems wise only to highlight the structure of the account. First of all, there is a recurrent need to sacrifice an important member of the community, a need that is not induced by a sudden crisis, but born from other concerns. The planned sacrifice seems to end regularly in some sort of exile, which is not supposed to be terminated at any point. Return is fatal. Sacrifice and exile alternate in a dynamic relationship, the first being the official act, the second its practical fulfilment. Finally, it should be noted that there is a remarkable interplay between the very heart of the community, the Prytaneum, and the 'outside'. It seems likely that those who were going to be sacrificed (in fact exiled) spent some time in the Prytaneum first.

We have come to a conclusion of this chapter, in which the Athamas-Phrixus cluster was studied from our overall perspective, the structuring pattern of crisis-preservation. The various versions of the tale indeed reveal a fascinating range of compatible alternatives, not unlike the earlier findings in the study of several myths

⁵²Georgoudi 1999, 73. She compares the phrasing of this indictment to the eldest descendant to enter the Prytaneum with civic honorary decrees by which the eldest descendant of the honouree is entitled to dine in the Prytaneum, on public costs.

and their numerous variants in the first chapter of this part. The occurrence of a crisis within a community, be it crop failure, drought or pestilence, or more general *kakon* or *deinon*, requires (via a seer or an oracle) the removal, through sacrifice or exile, of one (or two) valued member(s) of the community. The sacrifice may also be simply called ‘a purification of the land’. The terminology employed is familiar: *sphazein*, *thyein*, *phoneuein*, *anairein*, *riptein* and ‘with their own death’. Although sacrifice proper may be too narrow an interpretation of these means of safety, it seems unlikely that the various remedies referred to by these terms must be understood in entirely distinct ways. In most cases anyway, the sacrifice, killing or jumping turns into exile. The effect aimed at is described as *pauein*, *apallattein* any form of crisis, and the *luein* of the ills. Oracles and seers, corrupted or not, mediate. If named, the receptor of the sacrifice is Zeus (Laphystius), though Apollo once was mentioned as well. If not, ‘the gods’ may be referred to, or no mention is made of any deities at all. Sometimes the victim-saviour offers himself of his own free will, elsewhere it is under pressure of the whole community that the sacrifice is going to be performed. Once, the victims are considered to be the very *aitia* of the crisis and are thrown into the sea, which thus looks more like a riddance of the evil itself than a saving sacrificial death. The status of the victims has a certain ambivalence, as they are valued, yet dispensable members of the community. The dispensability of the youngsters is expressed in terms of age or descent, of the king in terms of guilt. In the case of the king, his sacrifice is explained either as a punishment for sacrificing his son, or as a substitute of this (escaped) son. In the action pattern described by Herodotus it is the wrath of Zeus in general, and the transgression of a ritual prohibition in particular, that accounts for the sacrifice. A sacrifice however, that also turns into banishment, which may turn into sacrifice again. Although at the level of the tale the crisis is usually explained as caused by mean plotting of a woman, one early source considers it to have arisen ‘on its own’, which by common ancient sense, as represented by Pausanias’ Athamas, may be accounted for in terms of supernatural causation, which needs divine consultation, and, most likely, a solution with a supernatural dimension.

The last section on the ritual at Halos, brought ritual back into focus, as such, but also in establishing a link between the purificatory rituals from Part 2 of this study and the myths in which human victims are sacrificed in the present one. In the next and last chapter of this Part 3 not only interpretations of these tales of mythical

crisis management will be discussed, but also possible interrelations between these myths and the rituals studied in Part 2.

CHAPTER 5

MYTH MEETS RITUAL

The history of the interpretation of these myths is, as that of the ritual, at the same time a history of scholarship, a parade of paradigms. Moreover, matters are further complicated, as the interpretation of these (and related) myths cannot be entirely separated from another debate, that on the interrelation between myth and ritual in general. As was already mentioned in the Introduction to this Part, by and large three different standpoints can be discerned among those who are convinced that there (always) is a connection between myth and ritual: myth seen as arising from ritual, myth seen as the scenario of a dramatic ritual, or myth and ritual seen as having arisen *pari passu*¹. And last but not least, a third issue runs through virtually all discussions of these myths, no matter the perspective of the scholar: the question of the historicity of human sacrifice. Are we dealing exclusively with (*unhistorical*) myth or are some narratives rooted in actual history?

In this chapter, there will be no exhaustive historiographical study concerning all the individual myths discussed above, but rather a rough outline of the developments during the last century and a half. Only the work of a few scholars in particular and one specific interpretative framework, initiation, will be singled out and discussed in more detail. In the first section, intellectualist approaches to mythical accounts of human sacrifice receive attention, including the questions of historicity and of the possible interrelation between these myths and the ritual studied in Part 2. In the next section a second paradigm will be introduced, functionalism. The discussion will focus on the work of René Girard and Walter Burkert, and in doing so on theories about the origin and interrelation of myth and ritual. In the third section one interpretative framework - initiation - will be dealt with, along with which, again, the questions of historicity and the interrelation between myth and ritual. Finally, some more thoughts will be given to this question of interrelation, by drawing our own conclusions from Parts 2 and 3. It will be argued that mythical crisis management and the *pharmakos* rituals may be compared at various levels.

From a functionalist perspective it may be claimed that they share a common ground, socio-biological or socio-psychological, but also at the level of appearance, of textual manifestation, overlap and correspondence can be established. The in-between differences that scholars have signalled and explained away for many decades, turn out to form precisely the intersection where myth and ritual meet.

A. INTELLECTUALIST INTERPRETATIONS OF MYTHICAL ACCOUNTS OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

As myths of human sacrifice were widespread in ancient Greek (and Roman) cultures, they could not remain unnoticed when the study of ancient cultures received growing attention from the 19th-century onwards. In the course of this century, Greek myth, though still studied *per se* as well, became more and more integrated into the domain of religion. Myths, not yet fully separated from ritual on a theoretical basis, were examined for religious ideas and beliefs and interpreted accordingly. Within this context, evidently, some myths acquired a greater status than others².

It was also the time that theories on the universal evolution of religious ideas came to be developed. In chapter 2, the German pinnacle of generalising theological dogmatism, Von Lasaulx' *Die Sühnopfer der Griechen und Römer und ihr Verhältnis zu dem einen auf Golgotha*³ has already been referred to. According to Von Lasaulx there was nothing valuable in Christianity which was not in some form already present in a pagan religion. It was only not yet fully understood or developed⁴. The ancient Greek rituals of human sacrifice thus were sacrifices 'manqués': they were meant to remedy man's disturbed relationship with god, as myth was taken to prove, but did not work, because the wrong victims were used⁵.

¹For the theoretical framework of this chapter, I owe much to Versnel 1993, 15-88.

²Human sacrifice attracted sufficient interest. Around the middle of the century in Germany alone already three studies were published on the subject: J. Becker, *De hostis humanis apud Graecos* (Diss. Münster 1867); von Lasaulx 1854; R. Suchier, *De victimis humanis apud Graecos* (Diss. Marburg (Hanau) 1848). I have not seen the first and the last of these.

³Von Lasaulx 1854.

⁴Von Lasaulx 1854, 233.

⁵See Chapter 2 Section a. As von Lasaulx clearly had higher aims than source-criticism, he was broad-minded in his treatment of the material, whether myth, ritual or whatever source he got hold of: "Überhaupt darf mit Sicherheit angenommen werden, dass in allen Theilen Griechenlands menschliche Sühnopfer fielen: ja von keinem anderen Volke werden sich leicht mehr und mannigfachere Nachrichten über Menschenopfer finden, als bei den Hellenen".

Not everyone had a scope as large as Von Lasaulx, but the approach was usually similar: the interpretation of these mythical human sacrifices was principally focused on the reconstruction of underlying ideas. The sacrifices were regarded as acts of atonement, of appeasement of an enraged deity, as born from a desire to prevent jealousy of a god by timely precautions⁶, or as inspired by a belief that one life may be bought from the dark powers with another life⁷. In due course, however, more and more scholars claimed, with Pearson, that it was ‘impossible to discover precisely how the worshippers believed that their offering would be gratifying’⁸. The intellectualist interpretation of human sacrifice had thus arrived in an impasse.

One way out of this scholarly dead-end was a return to the distant past. Around the turn of twentieth century, it had become accepted to presume that human sacrifice was a (common) ingredient of the oldest stratum of Antiquity, a hypothesis fitting well in with theories of myth in general at the time: myth contained remnants or memories of a distant past⁹. What precisely had happened or had been believed in those pre-historic times remained inconclusive, and was of lesser importance. One of the great advantages of this theory consisted in the removal of responsibility for such barbaric acts as human sacrifice from the ancient Greeks proper. Ultimately, these notions were taken to testify to the primitive beliefs ‘of the race’¹⁰, as, by the way, the ‘classical’ Greeks themselves had already suggested as well¹¹.

Another way to explain the presence of human sacrifice in ancient Greece without the need to reconstruct precise beliefs was to resort to the suggestion of

⁶Pearson 1914, 847. See also Nilsson 1955², 133: “Menschenopfer mögen in alter Zeit häufiger vorgekommen sein, die meisten dafür angeführten Beispiele sind aber mythisch, denn in der Dichtung hatte diese Idee freieres Spiel als in der wirklichkeit, wo der gesunde Sinn und die Menschlichkeit solchen Exzessen mit Missbilligung und Abscheu gegenüberstanden”.

⁷Gruppe 1906, 922: “(der) Vorstellung, dass Menschenleben durch Menschenleben von den unholden Mächten erkauft werden können”.

⁸Pearson 1914, 847. See also Schwenn 1915 and 1931 on the impossibility of uniting the various forms of ritual killing under one theological heading.

⁹E.B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture. Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom* (London 1891³). See e.g. Pearson 1914, 847: “... the prevalence of the custom in the pre-historic age is attested by the persistence of its appearance in the heroic legends which poetic tradition has preserved”. For the notion of remnants from a distance past, also see also, for instance, Cook 1914; Farnell 1907.

¹⁰See Pearson 1914, 848.

¹¹For instances of ancient Greek abhorrence at human sacrifice and its relegation to a distant past, see Aesch. *Ag.* 149; Eur. *IT* 380-391 and 465; Paus. 7.19.3; Plu. *Pel.* 21; [Pl.] *Min.* 315. See Bonnechere 1994, 228-237; Henrichs 1981, 233 n.2, 3 and 4; Hughes 1991, 187-188.

Levantine import. In this way, even the most distant ancestors of the Greeks were exonerated: no such barbarism originated in ancient Greece¹².

A third solution to breach the impasse, and a welcome way to disclaim responsibility for cruel deeds on behalf of the ancient Greeks at the same time, was denying that there was any historical kernel at all in these accounts. The nature of myth was revised and it was claimed that myth, rather than a reflection of a distant past, was a distortion of the past. Human sacrifice as such had never existed in ancient Greece¹³.

But then, if the myths were no longer taken literally, as testimonia of ancient Greek religious belief, how was the widespread presence of these accounts to be explained? Why was the imaginary potential so enormous that human sacrifice became one of the most popular themes on the classical stage? It was virtually impossible to deal with these questions from an intellectualist perspective, at least as long as one sought to deny the existence of such cruelty among the ancient Greeks at the same time. And therefore the question often remained unanswered.

With regard to any possible relation between these myths of human sacrifice and expulsion rituals, it may be pointed out once more that, initially, the mythical perspective prevailed: if one paid attention at all to the *pharmakos* ritual (and related rites), this was done from the mythical perspective, in terms of sacrifice¹⁴.

From an intellectualist perspective, myth and, in a more derived sense, ritual, were both analysed as expressions of religious beliefs, as universal preoccupations with the 'how's' and 'why's' of individual existence. As such, they have also been discussed in combination. This was done in an uncomplicated way, without making explicit how the relation between myth and ritual should be viewed, or even perceiving these categories in a theoretically defined manner. Any inconsistency between myth and ritual was explained away, as we saw in Chapter 2, or somehow incorporated into larger ideas, as Lasaulx did. Sometimes however, differences were used for a purpose: the question of incompatibility of ancient Greekness and the cruelty of human sacrifice was not only circumvented by references to the distant

¹²With the exception of funerary rituals of human sacrifices - as these are indeed Homeric (Hom. *Il.* 23.173-176). See for this thesis, e.g. Hermann 1846, 121-123 (Semitic import), Murray 1934, 15 or cf. Pearson 1914.

¹³See e.g. J. Donaldson, 'On the Expiatory and Substitutionary Sacrifices of the Greeks', *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh* 27 (1871) 427-465.

¹⁴See Chapter 2.

past, or foreign import, but also by means of reference to the *pharmakos* ritual. As discussed in Chapter 2, precisely this difference between sacrifice and expulsion was accounted for by pointing to an increased humane conscience of the classical Greek. Moreover, even the difference between myth and ritual in terms of, respectively, a valuable victim and an exponent of the local riffraff was considered a *mitigation* of original cruelty. Potential differences among the source-material were thus explained away, or used with missionary zeal, to absolve the ancient Greeks from their own incriminating cultural expressions. Evolution again saved the day, ritual proffered the ‘politically correct’, up-to-date version of primitive, or imported myth, though ideas on how the two precisely interrelated were not elaborated on.

The absolute apex of unrestrained parallelism, and of many other theoretical developments of the time, can be found in Frazer’s *Golden Bough*, the relevant ideas of which have already been discussed in Chapter 2¹⁵. The cycle of vegetation, as the all-embracing frame of reference, enabled the author to sweep together not only an enormous amount of ancient Greek mythical, ritual and (pseudo-) historical material, notwithstanding their wide-ranged differences, but even an immense array of comparative material, ancient and modern, from all over the world. Differences, if noticed at all, were explained away, but more often went by unnoticed in the dazzling light of the grand theory: the “dying and rising” of the magic-sacral vegetation king.

By then, not only had vegetation become the centre of scholarly attention, focus had also begun to shift from myth to ritual. As became clear in Chapter 2, these scholarly paths led to an interpretation of the *pharmakos* ritual, away from atonement sacrifice, to a ritual of vegetational renewal, and finally to a ritual of (magical) purificatory expulsion of the (collective) ills. This last line of interpretation provided little occasion for comparative dealings with myths of human sacrifice.

Except for Jane Harrison. Harrison, one of the first scholars who discussed various types of interrelation between myth and ritual in a more theoretical way¹⁶, argued in favour of one of those options, myth deriving from practical ritual, when she dealt with ancient Greek myths of human sacrifice. This led Harrison to a view, almost diametrically opposed to all those of her earlier colleagues: “It may indeed be doubted whether we have any certain evidence of ‘human sacrifice’ in our sense

¹⁵See also Versnel 1993, 21-23 and references: “There thus emerges an almost ideal parallelism of myth and ritual, both reacting to or reflecting the vegetative cycle of nature”.

¹⁶Versnel 1993, 23-29.

among the Greeks even of mythological days. ... (A large number of cases) are primarily not sacrifices, *thysiai* (in the sense of 'service to an Olympian', LK), but ceremonies of riddance and purification, *katharmoi*. The ultimate fact that lies behind such ceremonies is the use of a human *pharmakos*, and then later, when the real meaning is lost, all manner of aetiological myths are invented and some offended Olympian is introduced"¹⁷. According to Harrison, mythical human sacrifice was *pharmakos* ritual misunderstood. And, of course, the welcome side-effect of this theory was that it offered at the same time good opportunities to absolve the classical Greeks from practices 'not done'.

The shift to ritual was complete in Gebhard's dissertation on the *pharmakos* of 1926, in which he hardly ever mentioned, let alone discussed, the term myth. Ritual occupied his central stage and its interpretation had become firmly anchored in the thought and practice of the early modern farmer. Within this world view little space was left for human sacrifice¹⁸.

B. SHARED ROOTS FOR MYTH AND RITUAL

Apart from the theoretical developments mentioned above, another important, paradigmatic, shift took place during these first decades of the twentieth century. Except for certain die-hards, most scholars said farewell to questions of beliefs and individual motivations and to the study of essentialist aims of ritual, and started to concentrate on the function of religion, on religion's contribution to the formation and maintenance of social order, and on ritual and myth as collective, integrating factors, producing and preserving beliefs, rather than being themselves produced by beliefs. Within the context of this study, it is impossible to do justice to the scope and profundity of this paradigmatic shift, nor to its historiography¹⁹. Two main sub-categories have been discerned, 'functionalism proper', mainly focusing on the adaptive role of everything within the larger organic whole that is social life in society, and semiotics, rather looking for *meaning*. As usual with such distinctions,

¹⁷Harrison 1922³, 109.

¹⁸Myth was only there at the background, as ritual misunderstood.

¹⁹The work of Durkheim, Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown, to name but a few of the founding fathers of functionalism, is too voluminous, learned and rich, to be discussed here at all. I owe much to Morris 1987, but it would be a lie to claim that I entirely feel at home in this immense and continuing debate.

they are more of theoretical value than of practical use, as views often combine perspectives.

The consequences of this shift were enormous, not least for the study of myths and rituals and their possible interrelation. The discussion acquired an entirely new dimension due to the focus on a range of, mostly social, structures in which both myth and ritual could be allocated a place, in various possible relations²⁰.

How large the consequences were, also in the context of our subject, can be learned from the work of two important scholars, Walter Burkert and René Girard, who both published in 1972, almost simultaneously, the founding volumes of their work²¹. As said, functionalist and semiotic approaches cannot be neatly divided. Burkert's work more or less belongs to the former tradition and Girard combines various perspectives, but the work of these two scholars can best be discussed together. We start out therefore with their contributions to the world of scapegoating. The discussion of the subject of Section c, initiation, will end in the latter category of semiotics.

At first there are some correspondences to be noticed: both scholars not only understand religion as a social phenomenon, they have also constructed a grand theory to explain religion, and culture in general. Furthermore, they both have found in some original or primitive situation of violent killing (of a human being or of an animal) the clue for understanding much of the subsequent (socio-cultural) history of mankind²². Nonetheless, many differences remain. Let us first turn to the work of Girard.

In Girard's theory of religion, founded on literary criticism and ethnology, sacrifice is of primordial centrality in religion. However, Girard's notion of sacrifice is quite different from the ones advocated by Tylor or Von Lasaulx: "The notion that

²⁰In the words of C. Kluckhohn, who made an important contribution to the debate on the interrelation of myth and ritual with his article 'Myths and Rituals: a General Theory', *Harvard Theological Review* 35 (1942) 45-79: "Both myth and ritual are symbolical procedures and are most closely tied by this, as well as by other facts. The myth is a system of word symbols, whereas ritual is a system of object and act symbols. Both are symbolic processes for dealing with the same type of situation in the same affective mode (p. 58)... (Both) are reinforced because they reduce (by their very nature, LK) the anticipation of disaster" (p. 69).

²¹Burkert 1983 (originally published in German in 1972); R. Girard, *La violence et le sacré* (Paris 1972). I have used, and will quote from, the English translation by Patrick Gregory: R. Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore 1977).

²²See the illuminating comparative introduction to their work (and that of J.Z. Smith) by Mack 1987.

sacrifice serves primarily to bring us into contact with the “gods” makes little sense”, Girard claims²³, and as ‘(s)acrifice deals with humankind, (it) is in human terms that we must attempt to comprehend it’²⁴. According to Girard, ‘the purpose of sacrifice is to restore harmony to the community, to reinforce the social fabric’²⁵. A functional approach has clearly ousted the theological perspective.

In order to understand the generative, curative and preventive role of sacrifice, or ‘sacrificial scapegoating’ as Girard also calls it, in human society, Girard’s underlying concepts must be discussed. Girard regards violence as immanent in civilisation, both at its very origin, and as its inevitable result. Man is naturally driven by an inner mechanism, referred to by Girard as mimetic desire, by which he imitates his fellow human being, which in turn results in competition and rivalry for that other’s object(s) of desire. This process inevitably leads to an increase of tension between humans and a diminishing of mutual differences, which, at some point, results in crisis, that is contagious, reciprocal violence. A ‘sacrificial crisis’, as Girard calls this situation. The community, convinced that there must be someone to be blamed for this, will then look for a culprit, and find one who meets the stereotypical characteristics of victimisation, i.e a marginal being, disqualified from normality in some way, a person unable to retaliate. All accumulated violence is then unanimously redirected onto this victim, this scapegoat, whose violent death thus canalises all destructive violence, and reunites the community. In this way violence may find an end, at least for a while. The victim is at the same time a saviour, whose sacrificial death enables the arrival of a new order, of peace and harmony, and renewed differentiation, in the community. In this way ‘sacrificial scapegoating’ is considered the basis for all religion and culture. It is the structuring mechanism of civilisation, but its efficacy depends on the participants deceiving themselves about its true nature. This scenario of unanimous violence and collective murder once took place, marking out the beginning of human society, and is repeated by surrogate-victim

²³Girard 1977, 89.

²⁴Girard 1977, 90.

²⁵Girard 1977, 8; note the enormous span of phenomena that can be covered by this definition. Even within Girard’s own work, the term is used in various ways, see Mack 1987, 8: “‘Sacrifice’ then becomes a term that can be used to refer to the complex phenomenon of the collective killing of a human victim, its mythic rationalization, and its ritualisation”.

mechanisms ever since, e.g. by sacrificial ritual and myth²⁶. These repeat and commemorate, albeit in concealed, distorted ways, and even reinterpret the original collective murder, thus enforcing the same effects of restoring harmony and reinforcing the social fabric²⁷.

Girard's thesis draws on a wide range of material, most importantly ethnographic and literary. His claims are universal. Nonetheless, ancient Greek culture provides much of his 'evidence'. King Oedipus, but also the *pharmakos*, in fact embody his thesis, at least according to Girard²⁸:

The plague is ravaging Thebes: here we have the first stereotype of persecution (a situation of crisis, LK). Oedipus is responsible because he has killed his father and married his mother: here is the second stereotype (the culprit, LK). The oracle declares that, in order to end the epidemic, the abominable criminal must be banished. The finality of persecution is explicit. Parricide and incest serve openly as the intermediaries between the individual and the collective; these crimes are so oblivious of differences that their influence is contagious to the whole society. In Sophocles' text we establish that to lack difference is to be plague-stricken.

The third stereotype has to do with the signs of a victim. The first is disability: Oedipus limps. This hero from another country arrived in Thebes unknown to anyone, a stranger in fact if not in right. Finally, he is the son of the king and a king himself, the legitimate heir of Laius. Like many other mythical characters, Oedipus manages to combine the marginality of the outsider with the marginality of the insider²⁹.

²⁶Myth and ritual, each in their own way, commemorate the original act of violence: "Myths are the retrospective transfigurations of sacrificial crisis, the reinterpretation of these crises in the light of the cultural order that has arisen from them" (Girard 1977, 64). And: "The objective of ritual is the proper reenactment of the surrogate-victim mechanism; its function is to perpetuate or renew the effects of this mechanism; that is, to keep violence outside the community" (Girard 1977, 92).

²⁷This summary is mainly based on Girard 1977, Girard 1986, Gordon 1979 and Hamerton-Kelly 1987. As it will turn out, my own focus and interest, the relation between sacrifice and expulsion, are situated precisely in what could be called Girard's 'blind spot', as he does not distinguish between the two. I therefore discuss the work of Girard only in a concise way. Others have contributed much more and much better to the debate on Girardian theory.

²⁸Gordon 1979, 281: "One might almost say that what the Priest-King of Nemi was to Frazer, Oedipus, the hero of Sophocles, is to Girard".

²⁹Girard 1986, 25-26; see Girard 1986, 24 on the fourth stereotype of persecution: "The fourth stereotype is violence itself, to lay the responsibility of the crisis on the victim and to exert an influence on it by destroying these victims or at least by banishing them from the community they 'pollute'". However, Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* ends before the fourth stereotype of persecution is effectuated. Nevertheless, hints at his banishment galore (e.g. 455-56, 1290-1291, 1340-1346, 1410-1412, 1436-1437, 1449-1453, 1518). See for this discussion H.P. Foley, 'Oedipus as *Pharmakos*', in: R.M. Rosen and J. Farrell (eds.), *Nomodeiktēs. Greek studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald* (Ann Arbor 1993) 525-538; for a criticism of Girard's reading of *Oedipus Rex*, see Gordon 1979, 294f; P. Pucci, 'The Tragic *Pharmakos* of the Oedipus Rex', *Helios* 17 (1990) 41-49 and R. Drew Griffith, 'Oedipus Pharmakos? Alleged Scapegoating in Sophocles' Oedipus the King', *Phoenix* 47 (1993) 95-

(...)

Associated with the Oedipus myth are rites, like those involving the *pharmakos*, whose true significance becomes clear in the light of the above comments. The city of Athens prudently kept on hand a number of unfortunate souls, whom it maintained at public expense, for appointed times as well as in certain emergencies. Whenever some calamity threatened - plague, famine, foreign invasion, or internal dissension - there was always a *pharmakos* at the disposal of the community³⁰. The complete explanation of the Oedipus myth - that is, the determining of the precise function of the surrogate victim - permits us to understand the aim of the sacrificers. They are striving to produce a replica, as faithful as possible in every detail, of a previous crisis that was resolved by means of a spontaneously unanimous victimization. All the dangers, real and imaginary, that threaten the community are subsumed in the most terrible danger that can confront a society: the sacrificial crisis. The rite is therefore a repetition of the original, spontaneous 'lynching' that restored order in the community by re-establishing, around the figure of the surrogate victim, that sentiment of social accord that had been destroyed in the onslaught of reciprocal violence. Like Oedipus, the victim is considered a polluted object, whose living presence contaminates everything that comes in contact with it and whose death purges the community of ills - as the subsequent restoration of public tranquillity clearly testifies. That is why the *pharmakos* was paraded around the city. He was used as a kind of sponge to sop up impurities, and afterward he was expelled from the community or killed in a ceremony that involved the entire populace.

(...)

Behind the Athenian *pharmakos*, behind the Oedipus myth, there is real violence at work, reciprocal violence brought to an end by the unanimous slaughter of the surrogate victim³¹.

Girard's approach of both the ritual and the myth is striking: violence is violence, whether expulsion, sacrifice, or even an open ending³² is the case. Variety has become meaningless, invisible from the single explanative perspective Girard employs.

But even if we do not agree with his overall theory, and its ensuing interpretations of all material, some of Girard's observations are noteworthy. When discussing, for instance, the 'marginal' status of the victims³³, Girard notices their

114 (p. 100: "Girard says at once that no crime has actually been committed, that there was in fact a crime, but that the scapegoat is innocent of any involvement in it, and that the scapegoat is guilty of the crime, but that this guilt does not justify the punishment he receives"). Pucci concentrates on the theme of the arbitrariness of the victim and on the incompatibility of the ending in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* with Girard's reading of it, Gordon focusses on Girard's selective and wishful reading of the text: "No doubt we could all do some very beautiful criticism if we were free to rewrite our texts" (p. 294). King Oedipus will return to our discussion in Chapter 8.

³⁰The original division in paragraphs is deleted here for the sake of clarity: the next few lines still pertain to the *pharmakos* ritual.

³¹Girard 1977, 109. Note his free use of the evidence.

³²By which I refer to Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and the discussion about its ending.

³³See for instance his observations on the type of victim: "If we look at the extremely wide spectrum of human victims sacrificed by various societies, the list seems

way of belonging and not-belonging at the same time, and tries to explain this from his own perspective:

The victim should belong both to the inside and the outside of the community. As there is no category that perfectly meets this requirement, any creature chosen for sacrifice must fall short in one or another of the contradictory qualities required of it. It will be deficient in its exterior or its interior connections, but never in both at the same time. The goal is to make the victim wholly sacrificeable. In its broadest sense, then, sacrificial preparation employs two different approaches. The first seeks to make appear more foreign a victim who is too much a part of the community. The second approach seeks to reintegrate into the community a victim who is too foreign to it³⁴.

Furthermore, Girard also observes that the victim is ultimately invested with a double status, which he accounts for as follows:

If my thesis is correct, the pharmakos, like Oedipus himself, has a dual connotation. On the one hand he is a woebegone figure, an object of scorn who is also weighed down with guilt; a butt for all sorts of gibes, insults, and of course, outbursts of violence. On the other hand, we find him surrounded by a quasi-religious aura of veneration; he has become a sort of cult object. This duality reflects the metamorphosis the ritual victim is designed to effect; the victim draws to itself all the violence infecting the original victim and through its own death transforms this baneful violence into beneficial violence, into harmony and abundance³⁵.

The revelations of Girard have attracted a world-wide network of disciples and believers. There is hardly any academic discipline that has been safeguarded

heterogeneous, to say the least. It includes prisoners of war, slaves, small children, unmarried adolescents, and the handicapped; it ranges from the very dregs of society, such as the Greek pharmakos, to the king himself. Is it possible to detect a unifying factor in this disparate group? We notice at first glance beings who are either outside or on the fringes of society: prisoners of war, slaves, pharmakos. What we are dealing with, therefore, are exterior or marginal individuals, incapable of establishing or sharing social bonds that link the rest of the inhabitants. Their status as foreigners or enemies, their servile condition, or simply their age prevents these future victims from fully integrating themselves into the community. But what about the king? Is he not at the very heart of the community? Undoubtedly - but it is precisely his position at the center that serves to isolate him from his fellow men, to render him casteless. He escapes from society, so to speak, via the roof, just as the pharmakos escapes through the cellar" (Girard 1977, 12). Compare Bremmer 1983, 304 on 'the marginal at the top'. See Chapter 3 Section b above for a discussion of this comparable view.

³⁴Girard 1977, 272. Note that Girard's observations are similar to mine, his explanations however are different. In fact, Girard distinguishes between a surrogate victim and a ritual victim, who is the stand-in victim. The first is a representative of the community, the second an outsider, whose death does not evoke revenge. The scapegoat-victim therefore combines insider- and outsiderhood.

³⁵Girard 1977, 94-95. Burkert 1979, 70-72 has advocated a similar view, for which see below.

against the import of his theories³⁶. But they have met with fierce opposition, too. Even if we leave aside here the eschatological side of his work, the truly saving death of Jesus Christ³⁷, there remains much to be criticised at a scholarly level. Girard has been reproached for his sweeping anthropological claims³⁸, his circular reasoning³⁹, his conservative perspective on religion⁴⁰, his reductionism⁴¹ and, within our own scope, his careless handling of Greek texts⁴².

³⁶See e.g. T.M. Butler, 'Girard et la modernité. Le bouc émissaire dans l'esthétique de Mondrian' in: P. Dumouchel (ed.), *Violence et vérité, autour de René Girard. Colloque de Cerisy* (Paris 1985) 513-523.

³⁷Girard recurrently emphasises the extraordinary role of the Bible: it sides with the innocent and discloses the arbitrary victimage and breaches the concealing character of a persecution text. The crucifixion of Christ is the most decisive exposure of the innocence of the scapegoat. Only those who follow Christ can fully succeed in overcoming the mechanisms of mimetic desire and scapegoating. See Girard 1987; and especially R. Girard (with J.M. Oughourlian and G. Lefort), *Des choses cachées depuis la fondation du monde* (Paris 1979) and R. Girard, *Quand ces choses commenceront... (Entretiens avec Michel Treguer)* (Paris 1994).

³⁸Gordon 1979, 282: "The same fundamental passions exercise all human beings, who are forced to replicate aboriginal occurrences in spite of the fact that human societies betray the most astonishing detailed differences in their other cultural products and styles. After all, if we look high enough, the sky above is an undifferentiated blue". See also Mack 1987, 11: "Girard moves easily from culture to culture, epoch to epoch, text to text, novel to myth, with a single assumption about language and a single method for its critical reading. The multiplicities of cultural and historical context are acknowledged in certain broad generalisations, but Girard sees no need to qualify his readings severely by considering historical particularities". See also H. White, 'Ethnological "Lie" and Mythical "Truth"', *Diacritics* 8 (1978) 2-9.

³⁹See Mack 1987, 19: "Both the mechanism of mimetic desire and that of the surrogate victim presuppose a social context within which to get started, yet Girard uses both mechanisms to imagine the originary event"; see also R. Kearney, 'Myths and Scapegoats: the Case of René Girard', *Theory, Culture & Society* 12 (1995) 1-14.

⁴⁰See Gordon 1979, 283-284.

⁴¹See Gordon 1979, 286-287 on Girard's univocal geneticism, by which a set of religious practices is explained 'entirely outside the framework of expressed intentions and implicit evocations within which it has meaning for its believers'. Gordon's criticism pertains to the larger theoretical framework as well: "For geneticism is not history; and functionalism nothing but a metaphor in drag: the tired props that sustain so much cultural 'analysis' will not take one far in the understanding of something difficult like religion".

⁴²See Gordon 1979, 289f on Girard's reading of Greek tragedy, that 'renders, per absurdum, far more of that tragic drama opaque and 'unreadable' than it could ever hope to illuminate'. See e.g. for his interpretation of Dionysus and the *Bacchae* A. Henrichs, 'Loss of Self, Suffering, Violence: the Modern View of Dionysus from Nietzsche to Girard', *HSCP* 88 (1984) 205-240, esp. 232-234: "Girard is not interested in either the Greeks or Dionysus but in universal patterns of religious behaviour. Whereas Harrison and Burkert borrowed from other disciplines to illuminate the Greek material, Girard abuses a single piece of Greek evidence to prove his theoretical point" (p. 233) ... "For no good reason, Girard regards Dionysus the wine god as a 'later' palliation of the 'god of violence'". I have encountered many scholars from various academic disciplines who said to be impressed and inspired by Girard's overall theory, but were all quick to add that 'only' his handling of the material in the context of their own field left much to be desired.

This is not the place to deal with Girard's theory in further detail, nor with the critical stir it has created over quite a period of time and among a wide range of scholars. However, one final and for my purposes, crucial, observation must be made in relation with sacrifice, his key-concept. As every critic observes, Girard 'expands the notion of sacrifice to apply to ever larger arenas of human activity'⁴³. One may wonder whether sacrifice plays a role so similar all over the world. Or, to remain closer to home, whether even in Greece it is possible to put everything in the very same box: expulsion, sacrifice (of human and animals), *thyein*, *sphazein*, *anairein*, etc⁴⁴. And if so, and even apart from the explanatory value of such a theory, whether these must be interpreted at all times and circumstances in one and the same way⁴⁵. For Girard, there is no problem at all. The term 'sacrificial scapegoating' already testifies to the way he deals with his material. What may acquire various forms of appearance at the theological level, is rooted in one and the same source: violence. All variance is thus explained in functionalist terms: myth and ritual as such are non-conscious efforts to repress, distort, marginalise, or efface the original (true) pattern itself⁴⁶.

Two conclusions may be drawn from this exploration of Girard's work. By approaching sacrifice as a product of human reality rather than as something with external aims, it has become possible to allow for variations at the level of manifestation, without dismissing the possibility that these are rooted in one common source. This indeed is a liberation from the narrow confinements of intellectualism. On the other hand, if we take the full consequence of Girard's theory and method, the study of one particular culture (and its concomitant phenomena) would loose its

⁴³See e.g. Mack 1987, 7.

⁴⁴See also Burkert 1981b, 110 and 1987, 172 objecting that Girard does not distinguish between the scapegoat and the ancient Greek *sparagmos*.

⁴⁵See Gordon 1979, 285 for similar objections: "That sacrifice might be more profitably considered a member of a wider class of offerings, though important because of its employment of a living mediator; that the rules for such a wider class of offerings may be related to the rules for redistributive economic activity; that most ritual activity may be 'pragmatic' and not cathartic; that we need a dynamic rather than an essentially static model for religious activity, which might involve reference to cognitive structures beyond - none of this, familiar baggage of most current social anthropology, has any interest for Girard".

⁴⁶Girard 1987, 103. According to Girard human sacrifice is original, animal sacrifice comes in as a later, second substitution. Contra: A. Henrichs, 'Loss of Self, Suffering, Violence: the Modern View of Dionysus from Nietzsche to Girard', *HSCP* 88 (1984) 205-240, at 233 n.80 and Henrichs 1981, esp. 208ff.

value entirely: an enquiry like the present one would be no more than an exercise in the study of variations on a misunderstanding⁴⁷.

Whereas Girard has ‘sacrificed’ the particularity of ancient Greek culture to universal laws of a social world, Burkert has enlarged his interpretative framework to encompass the natural world in order to deepen his understanding of ancient cultures.

Inspired by, and elaborating on the work of others⁴⁸, Burkert has inaugurated a new era in the study of ancient Greek religion in various respects⁴⁹. By widening the horizon of the scholar of (ancient) religion to incorporate (socio-)biology, new opportunities arose for the understanding of myth and ritual, as phenomena per se, in relation to one another and as formative forces in (ancient) cultures and human history at large. Burkert claims that both myth and ritual, sharing a similarity of function (as means of communication promoting mutual understanding and solidarity), are ultimately rooted in biological programs of action⁵⁰. Myth and ritual must be seen as counterparts, originating from a shared source, but having become detached from the original situation, and having developed according to their own dynamics, of language and of action, redirected for demonstration, and thus primarily as serving communication and solidarisation. Individual myths and rituals may have arisen in combination, but they may, of course, also have come into being and exist without each other⁵¹.

Like Girard, Burkert singles out one original act of violence as the formative event of human culture and the basic experience of the sacred⁵². His crucial moment in the history of mankind, however, is different from Girard’s more a-historically reconstructed original event: Burkert’s formative period is set in Palaeolithic times,

⁴⁷See Girard 1977, 116: “The endless diversity of myths and rituals derives from the fact that they all seek to recollect and reproduce something they never succeed in comprehending”.

⁴⁸For the various scholars who greatly influenced Burkert, notably Lorenz, Meuli and Propp, see Burkert 1979, 1983 and Hamerton-Kelly 1987.

⁴⁹I cannot do justice to the scope and depth of the Burkert’s work in the following discussion. His major contributions to the study of religion have been discussed at several occasions, see most recently Graf (ed.) 1998, with further references.

⁵⁰Burkert 1979, 18. A cultural belief, for instance the ‘*pars pro toto* principle’, ‘accepting a small loss in order to save the whole’ may be involved too, but is, however, only a secondary development, “repeating at the intellectual level what biology has long taught before” (Burkert 1996, 51).

⁵¹For the theoretical underpinning of his two definitions, see Burkert 1979, 1-58.

⁵²Burkert 1983, 1996 and many of his other writings. Interesting, for various reasons, and very insightful with regard to this specific subject is the discussion between Burkert, Girard and Jonathan Z. Smith in Hamerton-Kelly 1987.

‘when man became man through the hunt, the act of killing’⁵³. When man became a hunting carnivore, he had to adapt his biological makeup and thus lay the basis of collective co-operation, of sexual differentiation and the distribution of food, in short, of human society. The new role of man, the necessary co-operation with his fellows and the differentiation between the sexes triggered much motivational and psychological tension and intrahuman aggression, which was redirected by the hunt. In the hunt, the mutual bonds were thus strengthened, aggression was focused outwards, onto the prey, which, in turn, thus acquired a status almost equal to man himself. In the act of killing, all these new patterns of social behaviour and the concurrent emotions and tensions were co-ordinated. In the words of Burton Mack: “The shock created by the killing of the highly charged prey is resolved by means of the ritualization of the hunt. ... The ritual does not erase anxiety (aggression, LK), but it does channel it creatively. ... Ritual killing (thus) functions as a dramatization of an activity around which society can be structured for the satisfaction of basic survival needs”⁵⁴. In the course of many generations this role of ritual killing was persistent, fundamental as it is to human existence and social formation. Rituals of sacrifice continued to be performed on those occasions when social orders are in need of restoration⁵⁵. According to Burkert, ancient Greek (Olympian) sacrificial ritual is thus in the first place a community-building event of killing and eating: “In the experience of killing one perceives the sacredness of life: it is nourished and perpetuated by death. This paradox is embodied, acted out, and generalised in the ritual”⁵⁶.

As animal sacrifice - killing and eating - is so central in Burkert’s approach, there is little room for human sacrifice. Only the sacrifice of virgins is discussed in more detail, as a preliminary stage to the hunting ritual. Hence, mythical sacrifice of a virgin in situations of war may be seen to function as the strongest expression of the

⁵³Burkert 1983, 22: “The central, practical and necessary act would be to kill animals for food” (see also Burkert 1987a, 164). This so-called hunting-hypothesis, and the important consequences attributed to it, form at the same time one of the weaker points in Burkert’s theory. It has been contested that hunting was the chief source of food at all in Palaeolithic times, and there seems to be little evidence for a ritualisation of the hunt during that period (see Mack 1987, 29).

⁵⁴Mack 1987, 27. See Burkert 1987a, 165: “Basic human actions, represented by basic verbs in most languages, thus come into existence: to get, to bring, to give-and to kill. All this can be seen to be mirrored in sacrifice: to bring, to kill, to give”.

⁵⁵Burkert 1987a, 165.

⁵⁶Burkert 1983, 38.

attempt to renounce sexuality in order to gain victory⁵⁷. Elsewhere, however, Burkert discusses what he calls the Maiden's Tragedy in a context of initiation, corresponding to the natural, biological life cycle of women in transition from childhood to adulthood⁵⁸. Burkert then notes about these myths that 'it is striking that the same myth can refer either to initiation or to sacrifice, to natural maturing as well as to the most unnatural violence'⁵⁹.

It is impossible to do justice to everything Burkert has written on the subject of sacrificial killing⁶⁰. Nor to the acclaim and criticism his work has aroused. Here, most important, perhaps, is the assertion that by making the act of killing and the subsequent eating the basic focal points of sacrifice, and by almost entirely concentrating on animal sacrifice, Burkert's main thesis appears of little direct relevance to the larger part of the phenomena relevant in the present study.

In his attempt to understanding the scapegoat-complex Burkert has sketched in his Sather Lectures⁶¹ quite another 'original scene': the group surrounded by predators that will give up only if at least one member of the group falls victim to them. Not only the *pharmakos* ritual, but also the myths on Codrus, Oedipus, the king of the Aenianes, and in a further transformed stage, Polycrite, may all be regarded as rooted in basic human behaviour in situations of anxiety:

If we take ritual to be a behavioural pattern redirected to symbolic, communicative function, the 'message' contained in this ritual is clear and easily understood: 'This one, singled out and distinguished, is going to his doom; in contrast to him, all you together are safe and clean.' The problem remains, to find the underlying unritualized behaviour. There seem to be two possibilities, or two strata, a more active pattern of communal aggression and another of passive experience. The first is traceable in some ritual details, the second comes out more clearly in myth. Hacking at the outsider is a well known group-reflex. Quite a small detail may be sufficient to set off aggression, such as red hair, or a differently shaped nose. It is enough to be disliked and in situations of crisis and anxiety the irritability grows rapidly. Thus the 'repulsive' compatriot is chased out. ... But this is not the whole story. In most of the rituals so far considered, aggression by the group to be saved plays a minimal role or no role at all. More prominent are the rites of communication, of adornment, of honouring; the victim may be 'led away' peacefully; and myths gladly stress the voluntary decision, as in the case of Codrus, or even Oedipus. It is this situation of the chosen representative going voluntarily to

⁵⁷Burkert 1983, 58-7

⁵⁸Burkert 1996, 69-75. For interpretations of human sacrifice within the paradigm of initiation, see the next Section.

⁵⁹Burkert 1996, 75.

⁶⁰In Chapter 9 Section b, some more attention will be paid to theories on sacrifice, including Burkert's.

⁶¹Published as Burkert 1979.

his doom while the others passively look on with feelings of awe, admiration, and relief that makes one of the most moving scenes in legends, in drama, and in religion. ... I can imagine the non-communicative, unritualised, real situation from which this emotional pattern ultimately stems as being that of a group surrounded by predators: men chased by wolves, or apes in the presence of predators. The utmost danger is met with excitement and anxiety. Usually there will be but one way of salvation: one member of the group must fall a prey to the hungry carnivores, then the rest will be safe for the time being. ... At the level of human consciousness, the troubling injustice must be reduced to overcome the trauma. There are two main possibilities for restoring good conscience to the survivors: either the victim must be termed subhuman, particularly guilty, or even 'offscourings' to be dumped, or else he is raised to a superhuman level, to be honoured forever. The extremes may even be seen to meet, deepest abasement turning into divinity⁶².

According to Burkert, both the *pharmakos* ritual and the related myths are rooted in a biological action pattern of driving out and abandoning, originating in situations of anxiety. Especially myth may develop - at the level of language - strategies to explain the salutary effect, or to legitimise the proceedings. These beliefs or narrative turns, however, are secondary: myth and ritual may be considered to generate metaphysical beliefs. Beliefs which are liable to transform in due course, but the biological origin of myth and ritual, the blueprints of human behaviour, ultimately lie at the root of these.

In spite of these interpretative openings, the precise relation between sacrificial killing and the expulsion of the scapegoat in Burkert's work remains opaque⁶³. On the one hand, Burkert deals with expulsion and sacrifice separately: *Homo Necans* is not exactly the same guy as *Homo Expellens*. On the other hand, when he develops a more subtle typology of sacrifice, there is room for both human

⁶²Burkert 1979, 70-72. See Girard 1977, 94-95. In his survey of Greek Religion Burkert had already observed 'a provocative ambivalence', but not yet tried to explain it: "To expel a trouble-maker is an elementary group reflex; perhaps in the most distant background there is also the situation of the pack surrounded by beasts of prey: only if one member, preferably a marginal, weak, or sick member, falls victim to the beasts can the others escape. The outcast is then also the saviour to whom all are most deeply indebted. The Greek description as *katharmos* makes the process seem unequivocal, as if it were merely dirt which is eradicated; myth, however, points to the provocative ambivalence. It may even be the king who becomes the outcast: King Kodros of Athens has himself killed by the enemy while dressed as a beggar; there is the wandering King Oedipus; (...). Alternatively, the group member handed over to the enemy, pelted, and killed is a particularly beautiful, chosen maiden, such as Polykrite of Naxos, who is honoured with sacrifices at the Thargelia festival" (Burkert 1985, 84).

⁶³In Hamerton-Kelly (ed.) 1987, 178 Burkert admits that he has 'not succeeded in linking together these two kinds of sacrifice, the sacrifice of aversion and the feast-sacrifice (offering and food-sharing). They may perhaps be linked by the fact that the experience or expertise of killing is involved in both, even in the scapegoat pattern'.

sacrifice and the *pharmakos* ritual⁶⁴. Differences however, based on ‘Wirkungsmacht’ and ‘Zeichengehalt’, rooted in (socio-)biology, still remain.

It must therefore be concluded that Burkert, albeit providing a solid basis to do so, in fact refrains from attributing mythical human sacrifice and ritual expulsion to one common source, and, consequently, does not discuss the interrelation of the myths and rituals that matter in this study in a systematic way.

Most modern studies of ancient religion are, inevitably, influenced by Burkert’s work in some way. This study has certainly greatly benefited from his work, though our ways will part again, too. By tracing back ritual and myth to a common (socio-)biological source, beyond language and beliefs, Burkert has created a basis for dealing with apparent parallelism between myths and rituals, and kept room for phenomenological variance at the same time. However, by determining these biological sources, cultural ‘facts’ may be more strictly categorised than their manifestation justifies: again the question of categories and borderlines is due, though in another disguise. Even if an external (e.g. biological) source is ultimately responsible for the creation of cultural manifestations, their interrelation can also be established at the level of appearance⁶⁵. Or, in other words: what precisely justifies

⁶⁴See Burkert 1981b, for this typology with four main types, ‘Fleischspeiseopfer (θυσία)’, ‘Vernichtungsoffer (σφάγια)’, ‘Preisgabeopfer (ἀποπομπή)’ and ‘Gabeopfer (δῶρον)’, based on the combinations of four actions: ‘Töten’, ‘Geben’, ‘Essen’ and ‘Beseitigen’. Burkert immediately adds that the types cannot be fully separated: “Fleischspeiseopfer und Vernichtungsoffer haben das Töten, das Schlachten gemeinsam; Vernichtungsoffer und Preisgabeopfer haben beide den Charakter der Hingabe, können beide als Sühne gedeutet und zusammengefasst werden. Vom Preisgeben wiederum zum personal ausgerichteten Geben ist schwer eine scharfe Grenze zu ziehen; Gabe ihrerseits ist primär Essensgabe und berührt sich darum wieder mit jenen Festen des Fleischessens und der Essensverteilung” (p. 109). The last one, still considered to be ‘das eigentliche Gabenopfer’, is removed most from “das Preisgeben und Wegschicken” (p. 109). In this article however, the *pharmakos* ritual, as (symbolic) ‘Preisgabeopfer’ is ranked among sacrifice, as are the mythical sacrifices ‘Vernichtungsoffer’ and an in-between category of ‘Ablösungsoffer’, among which the example of Menoeceus stands out. Differences in their respective ‘Zeichen’ und ‘Wirkung’ are still emphasised: whereas the function of *pharmakos*-like ritual is a passive ‘feel-good’ atmosphere, ‘Vernichtungsoffer’ rather effect “Angstverlagerung und Angstbewältigung durch die eigene aggressive Aktivität” and Ablösungsoffer must be regarded as an anxiety-release: “Aktive Vorwegnahme ‘löst’ die lähmende Angst” (p. 121). See also Burkert 1987a, 174: “We may be content to state the coexistence of several forms of sacrifice. In ancient Greece, this would be *apotropaia thyein* versus *charisteria thyein*, ... Yet it is precisely ceremonial killing that draws together the separate lines; clear distinction will be difficult in many cases. There must have been considerable overlapping in the course of time”.

⁶⁵Note for example the confusion that arises over some of the myths about virgin sacrifice - whether they refer to sacrifice or initiation, and are thus ultimately rooted in natural maturing or unnatural killing as ultimate form of sexual abstinence - remains

the chosen link between a biological ‘fact’ and a cultural manifestation? Is not this type of biological determination much more arbitrary than Burkert’s theories suggest?

In concrete terms this means that in Burkert’s theory the dividing line between the elimination of a scapegoat and myths of human sacrifice is larger and more definite than can be justified by the overlap in the material itself. The reference to (socio-)biological origins determines categories more strictly than the cultural manifestations in fact allow for⁶⁶.

Whereas Girard disregarded all variety among the *pharmakos* ritual and myths of human sacrifice from his functionalist point of view, Burkert created unbridgeable differences by attributing some of them to entirely different (socio-)biological origins. So far, functionalism has widened our scope, but not solved our problems.

A third way has been suggested, from a similar perspective, which should be mentioned here. To the work of Versnel some more attention will be paid in other chapters too, but one of his contributions to the present debate from a socio-psychological perspective, cannot be omitted here.

In an important contribution to a session at the Fondation Hardt, held shortly after Burkert’s Sather lectures were published, Versnel opened the way for a further advance in the understanding of the apparent overlap between ‘our’ myths and rituals. Versnel suggested, in the context of the Roman *devotio*, a shared *psychological* basis: the principle of compensation, “that led (and leads) people to give up and renounce (parts of) private or communal possessions, to set them apart, to destroy or manipulate them in a ritual way, irrespective of what *specific form* the ritual may have acquired or what *specific intention* may have been attributed to it in various periods and civilisations”⁶⁷. According to Versnel, this principle of compensation may be acknowledged in addition to Burkert’s (socio-)biological

unclear. Furthermore, the tale about Polycrite, which may well be included in the initiation category, but is set at a time of war where sexual renunciation would be effective as a preparation for warfare, is discussed at large in the context of the scapegoat-complex (Burkert 1979, 72-73).

⁶⁶See e.g. the interpretative ‘gap’ between the virgins and the other victims of sacrifice, discussed in Chapter 3 Section b.

⁶⁷Versnel 1981, 136-137.

origins⁶⁸, as “the matrix in which certain types of what W. Burkert labelled as ‘Preisgabeopfer’ or ‘Hingabeopfer’ have originated”⁶⁹. Hence Versnel formulates the following hypothesis:

Should we not seriously consider the proposition, then, that any type of sacrifice that forces people to renounce a possession, to eliminate it from society, to destroy, kill, spill, bury or burn it - either as ἀπαρχή or as χαριστήριον, as θυσία or as σφάγιον, as σπονδή or *daps*, as *piaculum* or φαρμακός, as *votum* or *donum* - is ultimately motivated by the same innate feeling of compulsion that payment must be made and compensation provided?⁷⁰.

Although Versnel may be accused of applying a familiar principle too enthusiastically on a universal scale, the case he makes for the Graeco-Roman world is well-founded and certainly deserves further consideration, although the problem of inconsistency in our material will not be solved in this way. Here, it is most important to note, that for the first time, a common ground for a joined discussion of all myths and rituals of ancient Greek crisis management has been prepared at a theoretical level.

The functionalist perspective has indeed widened the scope of scholarship and has broken the confinements of intellectualism. Variety at the level of manifestation of phenomena no longer provided an impregnable obstacle for a combined approach of them. Beliefs were no longer the point of departure and goal of any exploration of myth and ritual. However, functionalism generated problems of its own. Apart from the well-known general objections⁷¹, one may claim that functionalist approaches in general, and ‘feel-good’ theories of myths and rituals in particular, tend to ignore or neglect the, perhaps meaningful, variety of myths and rituals at the level of

⁶⁸Versnel, at the time, positioned himself as follows: “Although, again, I accept the main line of argument (of Burkert 1979, LK) the reader will easily notice where our views diverge: my argument is that the idea of the vicarious (human) sacrifice should not only (!) be explained by references to ‘aboriginal experience’ going back to times immemorial, but also, or primarily, by the investigation of psychological and ethological reactions to the principles of balance and compensation that dominate every facet of actual life and of actual human societies. I am convinced that both types of approach are valid and do not exclude each other but, on the contrary, form two complementary parts of one indivisible whole” (Versnel 1981, 183 n.2).

⁶⁹Versnel 1981, 184.

⁷⁰Versnel 1981, 184. The two main occasions at which this principle of compensation can be seen at work, ‘be it debt or guilt, man always pays (177)’, dire need or peril, and abundance or great prosperity, will be discussed in Chapter 9 Section c.

⁷¹These are perfectly listed by Morris 1987 *ad loc.*

manifestation⁷². Especially in the work of Girard this appeared to result in crude generalisations. Finally, one may even claim that beliefs never really left the scene, but remained a crucial ingredient in functionalist theory, albeit perhaps in disguise. An original event, a ritualisation of the Palaeolithic hunt, or an innate feeling of payment and compensation - all three functionalist approaches are ultimately rooted in the improvable. Religious beliefs have given way to academic beliefs.

Before we return to the correspondence and overlap between the myths and rituals under consideration here, another strategy to interpret the myths in the present part must be dealt with. A strategy within the functionalist paradigm, developing over time from a more hard-core functionalism to a more structural-semiotic perspective. A strategy that also incorporates standpoints in the myth and ritual debate, though not especially with regard to the *pharmakos* rituals. And, finally, a strategy that has flourished especially on the assumption that human sacrifice has never been a reality in ancient Greece.

C. MYTH AND RITUAL ACCOUNTED FOR: THE INITIATION SCHEME

Changes never come in isolation. Not only did myth yield to ritual, but in due course fertility also lost its central place in the study of classical religion. As was already set forth above, scholars started to ask different questions and attempted to find answers at another level. Instead of the search for (metaphysical) beliefs, and instead of conclusions in terms of magic and fertility, issues were raised from a different, functionalist, perspective, interpretations sought within the social context of rituals. One of the key concepts used in this perspective came to be initiation, or, as Versnel has aptly observed: “The initiant arose from the dying god’s ashes”⁷³.

As initiation has played an important role in the twentieth-century interpretations of myths of human sacrifice, which became clear already in the discussion of mythical virgin sacrifice and, especially, of the ritual in Halos reported by Herodotus, it is now time to turn our attention to the interpretative potential of initiation in the context of mythical crisis management and discuss its impact on the present enquiry. Inevitably, the interrelation of myth and ritual and the historicity of human sacrifice will also be touched upon.

⁷²See the rituals of communication discussed in Chapter 1 Section c.

⁷³Versnel 1993, 49.

For those scholars who did not regard human sacrifice as an original, historical component of ancient Greek culture, a few ways to explain the recurrence of the theme in ancient Greek myth were available, as mentioned above. Import from abroad was one of them, a misunderstanding or re-interpretation of an originally concurrent ritual another. Some scholars referred to the imaginative powers of the ancient Greeks, as Hughes did in the conclusion of his thorough study, which was mainly devoted to the question of historicity of human sacrifice:

In the past, the written evidence for human sacrifice (and its widespread acceptance by religious historians) seems to have had an influence on archaeologists, who quite naturally expected confirmation to be forthcoming from the soil. But the curious and varied collection of texts studied here - in which human sacrifice, originally a significant symbol at the level of myth, becomes in turn a stirring subject for poets, playwrights, historians, and novelists, and then an object of much misunderstanding for writers of late antiquity - is more a testament to the capacity and breadth of the imagination of the Greeks than a documentary record of their practices⁷⁴.

Puzzling, however, remains in this case the precise nature of the *signifié* of this 'symbol', and hence its popularity.

One possible answer has recently been (re)formulated by Bonnechere, another scholar who regards human sacrifice as decisively non-Greek⁷⁵, who explains this discrepancy between the (presumed) absence of historical evidence for human sacrifice and the popularity of the theme in the ancient Greek imagination by reference to the initiation paradigm⁷⁶. And he is not the only one: ever since the introduction of the concept in the beginning of the twentieth century⁷⁷, virtually all individual myths discussed so far have been claimed by scholars in favour of the initiation paradigm, either as originating in initiatory ritual or else, as having arisen

⁷⁴Hughes 1991, 192-193. For archeological evidence, see Hughes 1991.

⁷⁵See Bonnechere 1994, 243: "tant dans l'espace que dans le temps, le sacrifice humain est décidément non grec". Hughes 1991, on the basis of a thorough study of the archeological evidence, arrived at a similar conclusion, claiming to be in good company as Brelich, Burkert, Graf and Henrichs had also expressed similar scepticism.

⁷⁶See already Chapter 4 Section e.

⁷⁷Van Gennep, at the beginning of the last century, studied transition rites by distinguishing three constitutive stages: rites de séparation, rites de marge, and rites d'agrégation, by which he referred to a period of leaving the old situation, a period of seclusion, what has rather come to be known as 'the marginal period' or 'the liminal period', and finally, the entering of a new situation, see A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (London 1960), transl. of: *Rites de passage* (Paris 1909). This transitional pattern used within a social interpretative framework especially focussed on the initiands and initiates, who would be granted a long and active life in the study of ancient Greek history. See for the vast literature related to Van Gennep's work the references in Versnel 1993, 51-74).

pari passu, representing a similar social institution⁷⁸. Some of the myths discussed in the present part are directly transmitted in a context of cult, which facilitates any such claim⁷⁹. Other myths were shown to bear marked similarities to, or originate in, known cult practices, the most famous example of which is the Iphigeneia-myth and the girls 'initiation' cults at Brauron and Mounychia⁸⁰. The term 'mythes de passage' has thus been coined, analogous to Van Gennep's widely accepted 'rites de passage'. Of course, there are differences among the contributors as to the type of interpretative theory: the later in the twentieth century the study appears, the more 'symbolic' the interpretation. Evidently, new concepts have replaced outdated ones, larger frames of references have incorporated others. Gradually, the concept of marginality has become a major term in scholarship, a key term also in initiation theory. In general, 'marginality may be recognised in persons, situations and places by means of signals emphasising their extraordinary character'⁸¹. As soon as persons, situations or places showed the slightest sign of marginality, be it in terms of their age or dress, in any term of non-daily routine, or be it at the outskirts of town or in a temple, the initiation club has laid its claims. The most recent initiation standpoints in the debate on human sacrifice are formulated by Hughes and Bonnechere. To Hughes, optionally,

⁷⁸As was already discussed above (Chapter 3 Section b), this has been a most popular interpretative strategy in dealing with the myths in which virgins prominently feature. See on virgin-sacrifice for instance Bonnechere 1994, 26-70; Brulé 1987; Burkert 1983, 64-68; Burkert 1990, 40-59; C. Calame, *Les chœurs des jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque vol. 1* (Rome 1977); Dowden 1989; Hughes 1991, 82-86. See for girls' initiation the literature referred to in Versnel 1993, 52-53.

⁷⁹Plu. *Parall.* 35 (*Mor.* 314c) = Aristod. *FrGrHist* 22 fr. 1a. See Bonnechere 1994, who takes this group as central, the cultless myths as related, but secondary.

⁸⁰See esp. Bonnechere 1994; A. Brelich, *Paides e Parthenoi vol. 1 (Incunabula Graeca 6)* (Rome 1969); Brulé 1987, 178-283; Dowden 1989, 9-47; Hughes 1991, 83-84 and notes; H. Lloyd-Jones, 'Artemis and Iphigeneia', *JHS* 103 (1983) 87-102. For a reconsideration of this interpretative framework for the rituals at Brauron, see esp. Faraone 2003. With regard to the self-sacrifice of Agraulus (schol. Dem. 19.303 = Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 fr. 105) the testimony adds that at that place, the Athenian ephebes swear an oath before they go to war. Because of this addition the myth about Agraulus has been considered an aetiological myth in a context of boy-initiation, see e.g. Brulé 1987, 31 and R. Merkelbach, 'Aglauros (Die Religion der Epheben)', *ZPE* 9 (1972) 277-283, 280-281: "Dieser Mythos bezeichnet den Sinn der Ephebie: Das Land kann nur gerettet werden, wenn seine junge Menschen in der Gefahr bereit sind, es unter Einsatz des eigenen Lebens zu verteidigen, so wie Aglauros sich einst für die Stadt geopfert habe." (note that Aglauros is a variation on Agraulos).

⁸¹See esp. Versnel 1993, 60-74 for a discussion of the profits and pitfalls of this concept.

and to Bonnechere, definitely, the tales of human sacrifice have generally provided an explicatory basis for the symbolic death of adolescents in initiation rituals⁸².

There are several types of reservations to be expressed with regard to the (unrestrained) application of the initiation paradigm. First, one may object against an interpretation of a particular case, such as Georgoudi has done with regard to the Athamas-Phrixus complex⁸³, or Kearns to the Hyacinthides⁸⁴. Or, in the same vein, though at a more general level, one may put forward arguments against the application of the initiation paradigm on myths of human sacrifice on the basis of the age⁸⁵, the unspecificity in the selection⁸⁶ or the contradictory details on the identity of these so-called initiands⁸⁷.

For a second type of reservation one may follow Versnel (and others) in his general remarks on the underlying presumption of the primacy of ritual within the interpretative framework of initiation, on reductionism, and on the problematic side of the concept of marginality, emphasising that the “general applicability of the concept and its inherent fatal elasticity, on the one hand, and the lack of specificity of really unmistakable marginal signals, on the other, are, *mutatis mutandis*, in general a threat to any theory that tries to recognise a pattern within a diversity of phenomena”⁸⁸.

Finally, a recent development with consequences for the present perspective must be pointed out. After Henrichs reopened the historicity debate in 1981, several contributions were added to his conclusion about the unhistoricity of three cases of

⁸²See for this comparison Georgoudi 1999, 63.

⁸³Georgoudi 1999, 73, for which see Chapter 4 Section c.

⁸⁴E. Kearns, *The Heroes of Attica* (London 1989), 61-63, who points out that the ritual worship of the Hyacinthides involving dancing is not the sort of action typical for initiation. Cf. various contributions to Dodd and Faraone 2003.

⁸⁵See Georgoudi 1999, 72-73 on the differences between the (self-)sacrifice of Menoeceus (the youngest son, Eur. *Ph.* 944-946) and the oldest daughter of Erechtheus (Dem. *FGrHist* 42 fr. 4), his youngest one ([Ps.] Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.15.4) or his two eldest daughters (Phanod. *FGrHist* 325 fr. 4). See also the discussion about the age of the ‘Bears’ at Brauron (between 5 and 10 years) and that of the *Arrephoroi* (between 7 and 11 years).

⁸⁶See e.g. the oracle asking for ‘tis’ in schol. Dem. 19.303 = Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 fr. 105 where Agraulus throws herself off the city wall. Georgoudi 1999, 72-73 points out that, rather than age, it is the important *genos*, the noble origin of the victim, and perhaps beauty, that is stressed, if some particularity of the victim is stressed at all.

⁸⁷Georgoudi 1999, 72-74.

⁸⁸For this discussion of the blessings and dangers of the initiation complex in the study of myth and ritual, see Versnel 1993, 48-74, esp. 67. See also Dodd and Faraone 2003, esp. the introduction by Graf (3-20).

human sacrifice in ancient Greece⁸⁹. About a decade later two substantial monographs on human sacrifice seemed to have finalised the debate in favour of the imaginary, either influenced by barbarisms or inspired by initiatory practices. More recently, however, in reaction to such claims, voices are heard that stress the actual Greekness of human sacrifice or, at least, emphasise that the conclusions drawn by scholars as Hughes and Bonnechere are themselves inspired by wishful thinking⁹⁰. If human sacrifice once was practised in ancient Greece, it is unnecessary, and perhaps even entirely wrong, to account for all myths of human sacrifice with a reference to initiation practices.

Are there no profits to be drawn from the initiation paradigm, nor from heuristic concepts such as marginality or otherness, no fruitful uses at all? It is, as with all other interpretative schemes, mainly a matter of prudence. Within the context of our study, the explanatory value of initiation remains a possibility and should be pleaded for or argued against in each individual case⁹¹, unless one denies the

⁸⁹See Henrichs 1981 on Iphigeneia, the sacrifice of the three Persian captives at Salamis, and the Eucharist, opening as follows: "The Greeks clearly preferred the fiction of human sacrifice to its reality". And concluding: "According to Greek tradition, ritual killing is something which uncivilised men inflict upon one another, but which no Greek in his right mind would ever contemplate. Its ideal practitioners and victims are never members of the social group with which a given author identifies but always someone else. It remains to ask, although I shall forgo the answer, why Greeks of so vastly different periods and backgrounds were so preoccupied with the notion of human sacrifice, even though they repudiated its practice. I suspect that the proper answer would have to do no less with human nature in general than with the Greeks as such".

⁹⁰See M. Jost, 'Les Sacrifices humains ont-ils existé?', *l'Histoire* 191 (1995) 12-14, at 14: "Au total, il serait vain, au nom d'une certaine idée de la civilisation grecque, d'affirmer que les Hellènes n'ont jamais pratiqué les sacrifices humains. Ceux-ci tiennent trop de place et dans leur mythes et dans leur réflexions pour que l'on se satisfasse d'une approche réductrice. Certes ce rite a sûrement été exceptionnel, mais sa réalité est trop présente dans les textes pour être niée en bloc. Il reste que les preuves matérielles ne sont pas satisfaisantes à l'heure actuelle, ce qui impose de laisser ouvert le débat". See further Geourgoudi 1999, 79: "Le sacrifice humain constitue donc un élément non négligeable de la culture grecque, il fait aussi partie de l'espace et du temps grecs, il engage toute une série de divinités grecques".

⁹¹Two questions which are relevant especially in the present study need further consideration, though: the meanwhile familiar borderline-syndrome lurks here, too. Whether a ritual or a myth is rooted in a context of initiation or not, it may belong in the larger category of transition. In other words, on what precise grounds do we decide whether a ritual is an initiation ritual? How should initiation and transition be defined? How important, for instance, is the last stage, the reintegration? The absence of this stage in ritual makes initiation a rather improbable interpretation. It is generally accepted among scholars, however, that myth may end at low-point, whereas ritual provides a happy ending, a return, a reintegration. This discussion is relevant for instance when we try to make sense of the tribute of Locrian Maidens, who unlike Theseus, do not return. This issue pertains also to Part 4 of this study, with regard to expelled groups that are not allowed to return, and have to

relevance of the concept of initiation as such for the study of the ancient Greek world.

With regard to any possible interrelation between myth and ritual, it has already become clear that this interrelation is of great importance to the initiation scholars, who usually stress the primacy of ritual. However, it is not the *pharmakos* ritual that is drawn upon. Bonnechere leaves little doubt in this respect: only a few legends may be compared to the *pharmakos* ritual. They, however, are claimed not to have arisen from, nor elucidate the ritual, but to have been modified by secondary developments, such as a growing stress at the time on patriotic death and the import of a 'schème de type expiatoire' in the original 'mythes de passage'⁹². According to Bonnechere this development took a persistent form that combined sacrificial, that is initiatory *and* cathartic elements. Furthermore, these reinterpreted myths, in turn, influenced late antique scholars to describe the *pharmakos* ritual in more sacrificial terms. The differences, however, between these myths and the *pharmakos* ritual are, according to Bonnechere, still far larger than this superficial, or secondary, 'rapprochement'. Bonnechere especially stresses the unbridgeable differences between these myths and the *pharmakos* rituals with regard to the social status and ultimate fate of the victims, and to the role of the supernatural⁹³. We shall return to

find a new life, elsewhere. Finally, it may be interesting to realise that the use of such concepts varies when looking from the point of view of the community, which reintegrates, or of the ritual protagonist, who does not. See Faraone 2003, 43-68 for a reconsideration of one of the showpieces of the initiation paradigm: the rituals at Brauron. Faraone reinterprets the evidence and considers these rituals "a subset of the much larger general category of self-sacrifice designed to appease angry gods and ward off destruction". At the end (p. 61), he actually compares the rituals at Brauron with the *pharmakos* ritual: "To assume that there was some such individual growth or preparation or experience would be similar to suggesting that the *pharmakos* chased out of Ionian towns under the vague threat of death also underwent some kind of initiatory experience. The focus in each case is on a gift dedicated to a god, not on the internal experience of the gift".

⁹²Bonnechere 1994, 118-121 and 303-304.

⁹³Bonnechere 1994, 118-121: "Ce rapprochement (between *pharmakos* rituals and myths on human sacrifice, LK) se fonde néanmoins sur une ressemblance qui, si elle n'est pas superficielle, est secondaire. L'acceptation presque unanime de l'expulsion, et non de la mise à mort des φαῦλαχοί, engendre d'abord d'insolubles questions à propos des différences essentielles entre boucs émissaires historiques et ceux dits mythiques: le φαῦλαχός de la réalité, choisi par sa bassesse et divers signes physiques distinctifs, via un rite de transmission des miasmes au cours de déplacements circumambulatoires, est chassé du territoire civique; celui des légendes, aux qualités exceptionnelles que sont jeunesse, beauté, virginité, abnégation et patriotisme, est voué à l'égorgement sacrificiel: curieuse disparité, nullement résolue par l'affirmation facile d'une fréquente inadéquation entre mythe et réalité". And a few paragraphs below Bonnechere adds a further 'différence essentielle': "De surcroît, les cérémonies de φαῦλαχοί ne ressortissent, dans la plupart des

these issues below. One may already wonder, however, why the two layers, the sacrificial and the cathartic one, proved to be such a good and persistent match.

It is not necessary to discuss the initiation paradigm in more detail here, as the present issues are only of secondary relevance to the subject of this study. In fact, the focus of this enquiry is not so much on shared, or interdependent *origins*, but rather on parallel manifestations. Of central interest are the narrative patterns, the cultural concepts at work in these mythical narratives of human sacrifice, whether they are a verbal transposition of, or originating in, initiation ritual or not. Until now, there has been one point at which this method of analysing and interpretation at the level of manifestation actually interfered with the claims of those working from the perspective of initiation: in the context of the question why virgins were deemed fit to die for the city⁹⁴. Another possible disagreement may arise if we would analyse the reasons why various deities are involved in crisis management.

Without wishing to compromise before taking arguments at face value, I do want to point out again that it is one of the specific strengths of myth and ritual that they function and render meaning in various contexts, times and places in a non-exclusive way; the symbolic meaning of the role of virgins in myths of human sacrifice (their ambiguous status, partly belonging, partly not-belonging) may coexist with an original involvement in some context of initiation.

In sum, it must be sufficiently clear that myths containing human sacrifice have been accounted for by many by being linked to initiation rites, either as aetiological myths, or in a *pari passu* perspective. Whether this approach is truly justified and fruitful must be discussed for every single case. Much depends also on one's standpoint in the historicity debate and, evidently, whether one accepts initiation as an ancient Greek institution at all. But even if one allows for initiation as an explanatory model, there is still much space left for other approaches. Even if a

cas, au contrôle d'aucune divinité spécifiée (on dirait, selon la distinction évoquée au début de ce travail, qu'elles entrent dans la catégorie des meurtres rituels), alors que le mythe dits 'de φαρμακοί' sont toujours placés sous le patronage d'une personnalité divine, variable d'ailleurs (selon cette même distinction, on dirait qu'il s'agit de mythes de sacrifice humain)". And a third essential distinction follows later in his study: "La disparité, traditionnellement soulignée et déjà évoquée, entre boucs émissaires mythiques et réels serait de la sorte ramenée à sa juste valeur: les seuls boucs émissaires historiques auraient été les pauvres hères extraits des classes défavorisées. Le soi-devant φαρμακοί issus de la noblesse n'auraient dû leur existence qu'à l'attraction des légendes initiatiques dans le domaine des boucs émissaires" (idem, 304-305).

⁹⁴See Chapter 3 Section b above.

context of initiation would have caused the coming into being of these myths, this does not restrain us from studying the pattern that propels the narratives. Origin, and even symbolic meaning, do not, or do hardly, interfere with our main interest: the shapes of mythical crisis management.

CONCLUSION

MYTH AND RITUAL MEET

After we have reviewed our earlier conclusions about the possible interrelation between myth and ritual from various functionalist perspectives, one new element will be introduced in this conclusion: the arguments made by Bonnechere who argues against a combined approach of the *pharmakos* ritual and myths of human sacrifice. His standpoint offers the most convenient steppingstone for the final thesis of this part. For it will appear that the essential differences between the *pharmakos* ritual and myths of human sacrifice as put forward by Bonnechere present precisely the common ground where these myths and rituals meet.

Scholars have long felt, and at times have even theoretically underpinned, some kind of interrelation between the *pharmakos* ritual and myths of human sacrifice (or expulsion). Until the beginning of the twentieth century this was done in an unmarked way, even without clear concepts of myth and ritual, let alone of their possible interrelation. Differences among the sources were ignored or explained away. Once myth and ritual became formal heuristic categories in the study of religion, differences were either explained as the result of generic distinction, ignored for the sake of larger ideas, or remained unnoticed, as the two no longer attracted much joined interest.

Functionalism opened up new ways to deal with old problems. By introducing a joined external (socio-biological or psychological) reality and stressing function rather than belief, apparent divergence and variety between (sets of) myth and ritual could be validated in a different manner. Thus a combined approach of the *pharmakos* ritual and certain myths was theoretically founded, and could be made fruitful at a deeper level, regardless of superficial differences. Instead of spending all intellectual energy on discarding or readjusting parts of the evidence, scholarship was now applied to establish the common denominator. Both myth and ritual may be taken to channel the same collective experience, catered for the same social needs and produced the same benefit for the community, irrespective of their actual variety at the level of manifestation.

This variety was, although acknowledged and dealt with in a stricter (Burkert) or a more inclusive way (Versnel) or virtually ignored by Girard, above all considered of lesser importance, as the perspective had shifted: these were 'feel good-rituals and -myths' with a manifest social dimension, open to evolution, transformation and general variety, which was taken as a secondary development. Myth and ritual were taken to produce beliefs instead of being produced by beliefs. Interestingly, from their differing, but functionalist perspectives, both Girard and Burkert noticed the double function of the victim: despicable culprit and innocent saviour at the same time.

Within this functional perspective, Girard developed his grand theory on sacrificial scapegoating and the formation of culture, drawing extensively on ancient Greek material, among which both the *pharmakos* ritual and the mythical tradition around Oedipus featured prominently. However, this happened without much eye for nuance: in Girard's view, ultimately, all rituals and myths were variations on the one hidden truth about the role of violence among mankind.

With the work Burkert, the interrelation between (ancient Greek) myth and ritual returned to the heart of scholarship, and acquired a firm (socio-)biological basis. However, the *pharmakos* ritual and myths of human sacrifice were treated as in-laws at best; the differences between expulsion and sacrifice and their respective biological origins hindered a whole-hearted embrace of the two phenomena. It was only by further adaptations, such as the one by Versnel, that more of these myths and rituals fitted into a shared category of interpretation.

Within the functionalist initiation paradigm, where myth and ritual were also considered to have strong links, either aetiologically or sharing a common origin in social structure, the outcome with regard to the phenomena that interest us here was again different: the *pharmakos* rituals were marginalised, and any overlap between 'mythes de passage' and the *pharmakos* rituals was regarded as accidental and secondary; their respective origins and meanings were considered to be of entirely differing orders.

When discussing the work of Bonnechere we already touched upon his three main criteria for his fierce separation between the *pharmakos* ritual and the myths of human sacrifice. In having a closer look at his arguments, we shall, at the same time, prepare the ground for a conclusion of our own with regard to the interrelation between the myths and rituals studied so far.

At first sight Bonnechere's claim that the *pharmakos* ritual deals with the city's purification on a regular basis, by means of the expulsion of one or two members of the community of low status, whereas mythical crisis management deals rather with a sudden crisis, which might be of divine origin, the sacrifice of a valued member of the community (sometimes to [propitiate] a specific deity), indeed seems the general rule and leaves little ground for comparison between the two phenomena. However, after these two parts of this study in which the anatomy of both the myths and rituals were discussed in detail, it can be claimed that some congruence and overlap can be established, not only from a functionalist perspective, but also at the level of their outward appearance.

With regard to the first main point of difference stressed by Bonnechere, the difference between exile and (sacrificial) death, it must be clear by now that the gap between the two is less unbridgeable than he suggests. First, not only some of the sacrificial terms used in descriptions of the ritual and mythical narratives overlap, a circumstance which one could explain away at the level of interpretation, but also other terms, which are less contested, still occur in both contexts, such as *anairein*¹ or *riptein*². Secondly, it may be claimed that myth itself explores and uses exile as a perfect alternative to sacrifice, indeed arguably even a better option, as in a few of the narratives both the deity involved is propitiated and the candidate-victim safely gone off to a far away country. Thirdly, as was established above, the ultimate fate of the saving victims in mythical crisis management runs from exile and stoning, to killing and sacrifice. However, and different from what has been claimed by others, on the basis of inter- and intramythical comparative analysis of narratives, these alternatives, rather than representing places on a spectrum, appear to be interchangeable to a large degree. Finally, as has been pointed out already in Chapter 1, at a more symbolic level, exile virtually equals social death anyway.

Another 'essential difference' put forward by Bonnechere pertains to the involvement of the gods. Though he is quite right that the involvement of gods in the *pharmakos* ritual is absent (or almost), the role of the divine in the myths is less

¹For *anairein* compare Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 fr. 105 = schol. Dem. 19.303 (Agraulus) or Ael. *VH* 12.28 (daughters Leos) with *Sud.* s.v. φαρμαχός = T. 53.

²ῥιπείσης (Plu. *de soll. an.* 36 (*Mor.* 984e) = Myrsill. *FGrHist* 477 fr. 14) and ἔρριπεν (Ps. Plu. *de fluv.* 9.1. = Timolaus *FGrHist* 798 fr. 1) or ἔρριπε (schol. Dem. 19.903) is the same as in some ritual accounts of *pharmakoi*, see Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) = T. 27 or (Ps.) Ammon. 494 = T. 59.

unequivocal than Bonnechere seems to suggest. Indeed, there are enough examples of angered deities exacting human sacrifices in the mythical narratives studied above, especially in those related to a cult, but just as often there is no explicit divine involvement, apart from the god speaking through the oracle that prescribes a human sacrifice. The mechanisms seen at work here need further exploration.

The last difference Bonnechere stresses, is the status of the victims: low in ritual, high in myth. However, as has been claimed in both Part 2 and Part 3, whereas the representation of the victims in ritual does not seem to be consistently negative, the mythical victims, though of important origin and impeccable physique, show signs of dispensability, or marginality, too. In short, the status of both types of victims is ambiguous to a greater or lesser degree. Bonnechere's dichotomy is clearly both too rigid and too superficial and not firmly rooted in the evidence itself.

Moreover, it should be remembered that it appeared impossible to find an unequivocal answer to the question whether the *pharmakos* ritual was exclusively a ritual of purificatory riddance, or whether it had a sacrificial dimension as well. When studying the myths, which are more clearly sacrificial in nature, it nevertheless appeared that even when the description clearly referred to sacrifice, the proceedings could also be presented as a purification³. Whereas one of our conclusions from Part 2 was the need for a further enquiry of the concept of purification, which seems to have been defined too narrowly in the context of the *pharmakos* ritual, this part has definitely proved the need for a reconsideration of the notion of ancient Greek sacrifice, which seems to encompass a greater variety of phenomena than Bonnechere and others suggest in the present context.

In sum, it may be claimed that the threefold dichotomy Bonnechere so firmly presupposes, must, at least, be modified, not only on the basis of other functionalist perspectives (in the sense that both in ritual and myth the community is collectively relieved by the elimination of one (two) of its members), but also at the level of the outward appearance of ritual and myth and the terminology employed. Interestingly, it is precisely in those areas where Bonnechere localises essential differences, that in fact the starting points of comparison lie: the ultimate fate, the involvement of the gods and the status of the victims. It is precisely here, and in the overall nature of these rituals and myths - purificatory *and* sacrificial - that myth and ritual meet.

More important than the issue of the nature of their interrelation in terms of origin, is the present question why then the *pharmakos* rituals and the myths on human sacrifice are both comparable (contra Bonnechere c.s.) *and* different (contra Girard c.s.). By pointing out that both the differences and the analogies are not only *between* myth and ritual but also *within/among* the myths and rituals themselves, Parts 2 and 3 have prepared the ground for, and justify, a combined analysis.

The way in which the differences have been accounted for in the past, by being neglected, or rather ignored, by being explained away, or by being exaggerated so as to deny all possible analogy, has not given much occasion for approaches that dealt with both the differences and the analogies at the same time, let alone for theories that placed them in a meaningful and coherent context, as I shall try to do in chapter 9. However, before widening the scope to deal with ancient Greek crisis management at large, there is a third phenomenon which must be discussed, as it occupies a middle ground between myth and ritual in yet another way.

³See both the case of Athamas (Chapter 4) and the doings of Epimenides in Athens (Chapter 3) above.

PART 4

COLONISATION AS REMEDY

INTRODUCTION

One of his journeys did not turn out exactly the way the Greek merchant Iambulus had expected. Once, when travelling to the heart of spice-bearing Arabia, he and his crew were taken captive by robbers. After having served as herdsmen for a while, they were again kidnapped, this time by Ethiopians. They were carried off to the coast of Ethiopia in order that, 'being foreigners, they might be used for purification of the land'¹. This was a very ancient custom among the local Ethiopians, and, allegedly, the explicit command of the gods, that they should purify their land once every 600 years.

By the time when the purification by means of these two men was to take place, a strong, well manoeuvrable boat had been built. It was loaded with enough food to feed two men for six months. Then the Ethiopians held a great festival near the sea, offered costly sacrifices, and crowned both men, whom they were to send forth to accomplish the purification of the people². They ordered them to set sail to the south, where they would arrive at a happy island. There they would live a blessed life among virtuous people. Should they arrive safely at that Utopia, the Ethiopians themselves would also enjoy peace and happiness throughout the coming 600 years. However, if, put off by the vastness of the sea, they were to come back, they would be regarded as impious and as the destroyers of the entire community, and be punished accordingly.

Fortunately, Iambulus and his companion, after having sailed for months, and having been tossed about by storms, were borne towards the island about which they had heard so much³.

The story of Iambulus is related by Diodorus, who claims that Iambulus himself wrote down his adventures once he had returned to Greece⁴. Be that as it

¹Diod. 2.55.3 (εἰς καθαγμόν τῆς χώρας).

²Diod. 2.55.3 (καθαγμόν ποιησομένους τοῦ ἔθνους ἐξαποστεῖλαι).

³Diod. 2.55. After seven happy years Iambulus and his companion are forced to leave the island again. Their boat suddenly turns out less seaworthy and only Iambulus survives the subsequent shipwreck and arrives in India, where he is cordially received by a king who knows how to appreciate a man of letters. After some time Iambulus receives a safe-conduct back to Greece (Diod. 2.56-2.60).

may, it will become clear below that Iambulus' Ethiopian adventure is not the unique product of some creative Hellenistic mind, fabricating weird customs in far-off countries, but that it is firmly rooted in traditions of ancient Greek culture and crisis management⁵.

At first sight, an unusual, even contradictory, variety of elements is united in the account. On the one hand we hear about a purification ceremony which occurs at 'regular' intervals, in which two marginal beings, here foreigners, must be expelled for the sake of the well-being of the Ethiopian people. They are explicitly instructed not to return, for this would make them into the impious destroyers of the Ethiopian community. On the other hand, this pair of marginals who are to be cast out, are crowned with wreaths, well-equipped and well-provided for, and carefully given the right directions to arrive safely at a utopian place where they will dwell with people who are far better off than the average human being. People who seem to be the favourites of the gods.

This story can be read in a threefold perspective. First, in the context of the annual *pharmakos* ritual by means of which Greek communities sought to purify themselves, as was discussed in the part 2 of this study. Secondly, against the background of the mythical narratives of human sacrifices that turn into exile, studied in part 3, and thirdly, in the light of certain ancient Greek tales of forced colonising expeditions, which are the subject of the present part⁶.

Every period in ancient Greek history has known its own colonising movements. Best known, and central in this enquiry are the colonising expeditions of the archaic age, the formative period of classical Greek, city-state based society⁷. The memory of these colonisations and foundations has been kept alive in written

⁴See M. Winiarczyk, 'Das Werk des Iambulos. Forschungsgeschichte (1550-1988) und Interpretationsversuch', *RhM* 140 (1997) 128-153 and ref.

⁵There are also Roman (Italic) parallels, for which see Chapter 6 Section e below.

⁶The expulsion of Iambulus has already been related to the *pharmakos* ritual by Kroll, *RE* 9 (1916) 681-683 s.v. Iambulos, and more recently by Burkert 1985, 84; Versnel 1977, esp. 40-41 and others. Correspondences between the *pharmakos* rituals and the *dekateusis* colonisations have been noted, among others, by Burkert 1985, 84; Ducat 1974, 106; Eisenhut 1955; Ogden 1997. See above all Versnel 1993, 289-334, whose line of thought is followed here.

⁷Literature abounds. Well known contributions to this field of study are made by e.g. J. Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas. Their Early Colonies and Trade* (London 1964, 1999⁴); Graham 1964; also A.J. Graham, 'The Colonial Expansion of Greece' and 'The Western Greeks', in: J. Boardman and N. G. L. Hammond (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge 1982) vol. 3.3, 83-195.

documents and narrative traditions by mother-city and colony alike. Many causes and motives have been suggested to explain this tendency for expansion: demographic, economic, strategic-political and even personal (of the 'go west, young man'-type). Evidently, these motives were not mutually exclusive; every single colonisation was the result of several factors. Some colonisations nonetheless lend themselves to classification on the basis of a dominant motive or remarkable feature which is stressed in their narrative traditions. It is important to state at once that the focus of the present enquiry into these tales of forced colonisations is not so much placed on 'what exactly happened', but rather on the patterns and shapes of what is said and thought to have happened, or, in this specific context, on what was deemed necessary to be done in times of severe communal crisis.

Tales of forced colonisations belong in a larger category of narrative traditions, of so-called *ktiseis*, foundation sagas: semi-, or pseudo-historical testimonies of a city's birth and beginnings. Modern scholars have collected and published these *ktiseis* as if they were a genre of their own⁸. There is, however, a tension between the characterisation of these tales as a genre with its own recurrent features on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the fact that foundation tales and references are found in various types of texts, which one could call genres in their own right. One of the theories is that 'ktistic poetry' used to be a genre, largely oral, in the archaic and classical ages, and has only become part of prose writing in the Hellenistic period⁹. However, ktistic material can be found in many different genres at a much earlier date. Recently, it has been argued that ktistic poetry became a genre of its own only in Hellenistic times and that for the archaic and classical period, 'a *ktisis* is better understood as a literary topos or theme'¹⁰. The traditions relating the foundation of Cyrene provide a splendid example of the wide variety of source-material contributing to the (re)construction of Cyrene's origins, both with regard to genre and date: Pindar, Herodotus, Diodorus, Menecles of Barca and learned scholiasts - they all contribute their own bits and pieces to Cyrene's early history. A controversial inscription adds a further dimension. Though these bits and pieces

⁸See esp. Schmid 1947. Other collections are published by Gierth 1971 and F. Prinz, *Gründungsmythen und Sagenchronologie (Zetemata Heft 72)* (Munich 1979).

⁹See for the discussion and the occasion-oriented definition of genre Dougherty 1994 and Ogden 1997, 49 and 191 n.5.

¹⁰See Dougherty 1994.

certainly derive and contribute specific meaning within their own context, they offer, as we shall see, sufficient ground for comparison and mutual complement.

As with the *pharmakos* ritual, these tales of forced colonisations can only be defined polythetically. The number of relevant sources is limited, and the source-material consists of mostly shorter (fragmentary) references showing (parts of) a structuring pattern that consists of a communal crisis and a forced colonising expedition of part of the community to remedy the crisis. Fortunately, a few more elaborate traditions are extant, for instance on the foundations of Rhegium and Cyrene.

The method applied in this part is very similar to the one employed in Parts 2 and 3: without entirely losing sight of developments and variations in ancient Greek thought and literature, the source-material will be approached in a synchronic and synthetic way. As in the two earlier parts the source-material offers sufficient ground for this method. There are differences among the sources, evidently, but there is also much overlap and complementary information¹¹. For fear of reductionism, of missing out on what may be equivalent and interchangeable, and therefore of losing instead of gaining insight, historical and generical source-criticism is not our primary concern here. Moreover, the shapes of ancient Greek crisis management may be considered to range among the more fundamental and persistent notions of ancient Greek culture. Variation at the narrative level is thus not necessarily explained as the product of genre or evolution, but may be interpreted in other ways as well: competing versions may turn out to be compatible truths.

In Chapter 6, attention will be paid to the so-called *dekateusis* colonisations, and to the various shapes they may acquire. These *dekateusis* colonisations are an umbrella term covering colonisations that involve a group of consecrated people, expelled from their former communities, sent as a tithe (*dekate*) to Delphi, and subsequently leaving from there to found a new habitation¹². Then, in Chapter 7, a slightly different, but within the larger perspective of this study certainly comparable, narrative tradition will be discussed. In these tales the leaders of the colonising

¹¹Moreover, the tales themselves do not seem to distinguish between various periods of colonisation, as others have already pointed out. See Ogden 1997, 49 and ref.

¹²Δεκάτη literally means a tenth part, tithe, and was used both in religious and profane (e.g. taxes) contexts. It seems to have been a very ancient custom to dedicate a tithe from the spoils of war or any other increase to the god(s). Apollo (Δεκατηφόρος) was a

expedition resulting from a forced expulsion to remedy a communal crisis are represented in a negative way, as bastards, murderers and the like. Next, several versions about the foundation of Cyrene are singled out. These will appear to span a bridge between the two types of tales discussed in this part. Moreover, they may be considered to provide an exemplary illustration of the ambivalent status of all those who are forced to leave their communities in times of crisis. In Chapter 8, first some attention will be paid to (the history of) the interpretations of these tales of colonisation. Although in the interpretative debates the issue of historicity has long been the most important and contested question, we shall only dwell relatively shortly on this discussion, as it is of little relevance from our point of view. Most of Chapter 8, however, will be devoted to what may be called structural-semiotic approaches of the three phenomena at stake in this study, the *pharmakos* rituals, the myths on human sacrifices and these colonisation tales. From this perspective, the ambiguous status of the victims of this type of crisis management strikes the eye. Other scholars have tried to make sense of this ambiguity, for instance by *reading* it and concluding that the ancient saviour had to be an outsider. In the last section, the notions of purification and sacrifice will be reconsidered. Instead of interpreting both at the level of outward appearances (and inherent aims), they will both be taken as transitional, re-ordering strategies in the first place, by means of which a community recreates its own 'clean' self-image in the mirror of, what may be called, otherness. Otherness of place, of the victims' destination, but also otherness of their status. This otherness seems to have a potential for both very negative and highly positive properties. The notion of sacrality, of being transferred to the domain of the sacred, seems to allow for, or even enhance such potential ambiguity. Finally, in an overall conclusion it will be claimed that a joined approach of these three phenomena is not only justified at various levels of interpretation, but even a necessity for those who seek a deeper understanding of ancient Greek crisis management.

prominent receiver of such dedications, which could also be called ἀπαρχή, ἀκροθίνια or ἀνάθημα. For these terms see below.

CHAPTER 6

THE *DEKATEUSIS* TRADITION

In the following section the foundation of Rhegium will be the first *dekateusis* tale to be discussed in more detail, not only for the reason that is the showpiece of those who seek historical truth in these tales, but especially because its tradition is one of the richer and more elaborate ones among these. Next, comparable traditions will be analysed thematically, in particular with regard to the circumstances of departure, the status of the colonists, their promised destination, and, finally, with regard to ancient explanations of the events¹.

A. RHEGIUM

The foundation of Rhegium, traditionally dated around 730-720 BC, is commonly attributed to Chalcidians, possibly in collaboration with others². One of our sources for the foundation of Rhegium, Heraclides Lembus, gives the following account, probably relying on information transmitted by Aristotle:

Rhegium was founded by Chalcidians who emigrated³ from Euripus on account of a famine. They also took with them from the Peloponnesus the Messenians who found themselves at Macistus as a result of their rape of Spartan virgins and made a joint settlement first at the site of Iokastus' grave, one of the sons of Aiolus, who died,

¹I have greatly benefited from the detailed analysis of these colonisations by Malkin 1987.

²The following sources relate the foundation of Rhegium: Antioch. Hist. *FGrHist* 555 fr. 9 = Str. 6.1.6 (C 257); Arist. fr. 611.55 (Rose) = Heraclid. Lemb. 55 (Dilts); Diod. 8 fr. 23.2; D.H. 19.2; Timae. *FGrHist* 566 fr. 43b = Str. 6.1.9 (C 257). For other sources (e.g. Thuc.) than the ones quoted below on the Chalcidian founders of Rhegium, cf. G. Vallet, *Rhégion et Zancle. Histoire, commerce et civilisation de cités chalcidiennes du détroit de Messine* (Paris 1958) 66. Unless otherwise stated the translations are Malkin's. For general discussions and literature concerning e.g. origins and date, see Malkin *ad loc.*; J. Ducat, 'Les thèmes des récits de la fondation de Rhégion', *Mélanges helléniques offerts à Georges Daux* (Paris 1974) 93-114; E. Manni, 'L'oracolo delfico e la fondazione di Regio', *Perennitas. Studi in onore di Angelo Brelich* (Rome 1980) 311-320, and the work of Vallet just mentioned, 66-80. There is no strict unanimity in the sources, nor in the secondary literature about the date of foundation and the origin of the founders.

³A more specific translation of ἀναστάντες could be 'were compelled to migrate', see *LSJ* s.v. B.II.2 and Malkin 1987, 34 n.99.

they say, being slain by a dragon; and they received an oracle (to found a city) where a female (embraces) a male ... and seeing a vine growing around an acorn (a wild fig tree) they understood that this was the place. The site where they founded the city was named Rhegium after some local hero⁴.

The oracle is handed down more elaborately by Diodorus who omits any reference to the precise circumstances of their departure, but does mention that these Chalcidians left their homeland invested with a special status:

The Chalcidians who were consecrated from the tithe went to consult the oracle about the colonising expedition and the god responded: 'Where Apsia the most sacred of rivers falls into the sea, there at the point of embarkation the female marries the male, there found a city, as the Ausonian land⁵ is given to you'. Finding by the river Apsia a vine entwined around a wild fig tree (that which is called hermaphrodite) they founded there a city⁶.

The version handed down by Strabo confirms this special status:

Rhegium is a foundation of the Chalcidians who according to an oracle were consecrated as a tithe to Apollo because of dearth; later, it is said, they set out from there (to Rhegium) as colonists from Delphi, taking with them also others from home⁷.

⁴Heraclid. Lemb. 55 (Dilts) = Arist. fr. 611.55 (Rose): 'Ρήγιον ὄκισαν Χαλκιδεῖς οἱ ἀπ' Εὐρύπου διὰ λιμὸν ἀναστάντες· παρέλαβον δὲ καὶ ἐκ Πελοποννήσου τοὺς Μεσσηνίους τοὺς ἐν Μακίστῳ τυχόντας διὰ τὴν ὕβριν τὴν Σπαρτιάδων παρθένων. καὶ συνῶκισαν πρῶτον παρὰ τὸν Ἰοκάστου τάφον, ἐνὸς τῶν Αἰόλου παίδων, ὃν φασιν ἀποθανεῖν πληγέντα ὑπὸ δράκοντος· καὶ χρησμὸν ἔλαβον, ὅπου ἂν ἡ θήλεια τὸν ἄρρενα καὶ ἰδόντες πρίνῳ (ἐρινῳ) περιφυκυῖαν ἄμπελον, τοῦτον εἶναι τὸν τόπον συνῆκαν· τὸ δὲ χωρίον, ἐν ᾧ τὴν πόλιν ὄκισαν, Ῥήγιον ἐκαλεῖτο ἀπὸ τινος ἐγχωρίου ἥρωος. The translation is Malkin's with adaptations of my own. Although the manuscripts have πρίνῳ, virtually everyone agrees we should read ἐρινῳ.

⁵Ausonian Land may be the old Greek name for Italy, see Malkin 1987, 37 and references.

⁶Diod. 8.23.2: ὅτι οἱ ἐκ τῆς δεκάτης ἀνατεθέντες Χαλκιδεῖς ἦλθον χρησόμενοι περὶ ἀποικίας, καὶ ἀνεῖλε· Ἀψία ἥ ποταμῶν ἱερώτατος εἰς ἄλλα πίπτει ἐνθ' εἰσὼ βάλλοντι τὸν ἄρρενα θήλυς ὁπύει ἐνθα πόλιν οἴκιζε, διδοῖ δέ σοι Αὔσωνα χώραν. Οἱ δὲ κατὰ τὸν Ἀψίαν ποταμὸν εὐρόντες ἄμπελον περιπεπλεγμένην ἐρινεῶ (τὸ λεγόμενον ἀρσενόθηλον), ἔκτισαν πόλιν. (Translation Malkin 1987 *ad loc.* with adaptation.) The oracle is also referred to by D.H. 19.2, who adds the name of the *oikist*, Artimides the Chalcidian, who received the oracle, and that he chased away the locals when he reached the place. Note that this name is different from the name of the *oikist* according to Antiochus (below). There are various theories on this matter, which we further ignore, as this type of problem does not really concern us here.

⁷Str. 6.1.6 (C 257), relying on various earlier sources: Κτίσμα δ' ἐστὶ τὸ Ῥήγιον Χαλκιδέων, οὗς κατὰ χρησμὸν δεκατευθέντας τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι δι' ἀφορίαν, ὕστερον ἐκ Δελφῶν ἀποικῆσαι δεῦρὸ φασι, παραλαβόντας καὶ ἄλλους τῶν οἰκοθεν. Malkin *ad loc.* supposes that Strabo followed both Timaeus and Heraclides Lembos. Strabo continues by relating an alternative version by Antiochus (Antioch.Hist. *FGrHist* 555 fr. 9 = Str. 6.1.6 [C

Of a different order, but revealing in its own way, is a relatively early reference by Timaeus to the extraordinary relationship between the people of Rhegium and Apollo. Timaeus mentions a quarrel at the Pythian Games at Delphi at which occasion Ariston of Rhegium asks the Delphians to side with him,

because his ancestors were sacred to the god and the colonising expedition had been sent off from there⁸.

These accounts show the following sequence: a crisis of some sort occurs, the community's reaction (possibly at the oracle's command) involves the consecration of a tithe, a tenth of the community, to Apollo in Delphi. This group of people, once they had been instructed by a cryptic oracle in Delphi, leaves from there to found a city. Other people may join the expedition, either from elsewhere or from their own hometown. In the tales about the foundation of Rhegium, *aphoria* and *limos*, dearth and famine, appear interchangeable, but also *dekateuthentes*, *ek tes dekates anatethentes* and *hieroi*⁹ may, on the basis of this evidence, be marked as mutually comparable or even compatible notions.

Ancient historians have put forward various views with regard to the authenticity of these traditions, their mutual incompatibilities and the precise nature of the relation between Delphi and the groups of colonists involved¹⁰. In this study, the focus will be different. It is the recurrent pattern in these tales of colonisation and

257]), who claims that the Zancleans took the initiative for the foundation of Rhegium and had sent for the Chalcidians and had appointed Antimnestus as their leader. Next, Strabo (possibly still following Antiochus) also mentions the participation of Messenians, who were fugitives from the Peloponnesus who had been defeated by the men of the opposing faction, and had asked Apollo how they, being ruined, could be saved. They received an oracle that told them to join the Chalcidians. Paus. 4.23.5-7 knows the name of the Messenian leader, Alkidamidas, which makes three of them. Pausanias' account, highly confusing as such, is not of interest from the point of view of the *dekateusis* tradition and will therefore be ignored.

⁸Timae. *FGrHist* 566 fr. 43b = Str. 6.1.9 (C 260): ἱεροὺς γὰρ εἶναι τοῦ θεοῦ τοὺς προγόνους αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὴν ἀποικίαν ἐνθ' ἑνὸς ἐστάλθαι.

⁹Respectively δεκατευθέντες, ἐκ τῆς δεκάτης ἀνατεθέντες and ἱεροί.

¹⁰Some scholars have argued, for instance, that the oracle was given to the Messenians rather than to Chalcidians, as the latter ones apparently never received oracles on their many colonising expeditions, and Dorians and Peloponnesians did consult Delphi with regard to such matters. Others have pointed out that the oracle is comparable with the foundation oracle of Tarentum, another Messenian/Spartan colony. See e.g. E. Manni, 'L'oracolo delfico e la fondazione di Regio', *Perennitas. Studi in onore di Angelo Brelich*

foundation, its various shapes, its compatible and comparable elements that are of primary interest.

With this *dekateusis*-sequence in mind, other, perhaps more legendary, cases of *dekateusis* colonisations will now be drawn into the discussion, in order to further outline the various shapes this kind of crisis management may acquire. Material is drawn from the traditions concerning the Mysian people and the colonisation of Asine (by the Dryopes), of Bottiaea, of Claros/Colophon, of Magnesia on the Maeander and the colonising activities by the Gephyraeae and the Eretrian people. In passing, traditions concerning the colonisation of Heraclea Pontica will also be referred to.

B. OWING TO CIRCUMSTANCES

Circumstances that gave rise to the dedication of human beings to Apollo, which ultimately led to the foundation of a new city under the auspices of the god, were in essence situations of crisis. However, there are distinctions to be made. In this section, attention will first be paid to a range of well-known misfortunes, such as drought, famine and pestilence and to situations of war. A subcategory consists of vows taken in situations of crisis, but effectuated at a later date. Interestingly, such vows may also have been made in periods of transition, or even highly prosperous circumstances, which sheds another light on the ancient Greek notion of crisis.

First there is the extensive range of collective misfortunes that may befall any society or community. In case of the Chalcidians who founded Rhegium, these involved, as we have seen, dearth (*aphoria*) and famine (*limos*). The situation on Thera, which induced the expulsion that ultimately led to the foundation of Cyrene, is similarly characterised by Herodotus, either as a drought or in more general terms such as misfortunes and present ills¹¹. However, another author claims that a *stasis*, a political crisis, had been the cause¹², and a third refers to a *pestilentia* from which the

(Rome 1980) 311-320, at 314-315 and G. Vallet, *Rhégion et Zancle. Histoire, commerce et civilisation de cités chalcidiennes du détroit de Messine* (Paris 1958) 76-77.

¹¹Interestingly, as will become clear below, Herodotus gives two versions of the foundation tale of Cyrene, a Theraean one and a Cyrenean one. In the Theraean version it says that for seven years there was no rain (Hdt. 4.151); in the Cyrenean account we find the more general terminology: τὰς συμφορὰς and περὶ τῶν παρῶντων κακῶν.

¹²Menecl. *FGrHist* 270 fr. 6. Compare also the foundation narrative of Tarentum below.

Theraeans sought delivery¹³. Here, we have just about the entire range of possible crises projected on a small island.

The following oracles concerning the foundation of Heraclea Pontica by Boeotians underline the compatibility of these various disasters in view of their remedy: when Boeotia was struck by a pestilence and the Pythia was consulted, the oracle ordered the foundation of a city sacred to Heracles. The Boeotians however, afraid of such a grand expedition, hesitated. Thereupon they were duly defeated in a war against Phocis. Again, they went to Delphi, and the oracle replied that the remedy for the war would be the same as the one for the plague¹⁴. It must be pointed out though, that this remedy presents a different variation, as it does not involve a 'regular' *dekateusis* colonisation: instead of consecrating a group to Delphi, the new city as a whole was to be made sacred to Heracles.

About situations of war, a further observation is in order: consecrating people to Delphi in situations of war often involved the dedication (of a tithe) of prisoners of war¹⁵, rather than of one's own people. There are, at least, three known traditions about dedicated captives having been instructed by the Delphic oracle to found a colony elsewhere. The first one, about the Dryopes, reports that they had been consecrated by Heracles who had defeated them. These Dryopes left for the Peloponnesus, at the instigation of an oracle, and ultimately settled in Asine¹⁶. Secondly, it is said that the Gephyraeae were dedicated as a tithe to Apollo by the Athenians. Later, they left Delphi for Tanagra¹⁷. Thirdly, the people from Argos dedicated booty to Apollo, among which was the daughter of Teresias, for they had

¹³Justin. 13.7.1-4.

¹⁴Justin. 16.3.4-7: *responsum idem belli quod pestilentiae remedium fore*. Heraclea Pontica was founded around 560 BC as a joint settlement by Boeotians and Megarians (schol. A.R. 2.848).

¹⁵There are more examples, literary, legendary or historical, of dedications of human beings to Delphi in the Archaic and Classical period, without, however, any further indication that afterwards these people went elsewhere to found a city. Best known are Diod. 11.65.5 (Argives dedicating a tenth of the defeated Mycenaeans); Polyb. 9.39.5 and, of course, the tragic women of Sophocles' *Trachinae* and Euripides' *Phoenissae* (for which see the Prologue). For more examples and for the discussion about the status of these people see Bömer 1990², index s.v.; *R.E.* 8 (1913) 1459-1468 s.v. 'Hieroduloi' (Hepding), and the next subsection.

¹⁶(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.7.7; A.R. 1.1219; schol. A.R. 1.1212-1219a/d; schol. A.R. 1.735; Arist. fr. 99 (Rose); Diod. 4.37, 1-2; Ov. *Ib.* 487-489; Hdt. 8.43 and 73; Paus. 4.34.9f; Paus. 10.6.2; Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 fr. 19 and fr. 41cde = schol. A.R. 1.1212a; Serv. *Aen.* 4.146; Speus. *Ep. Socr.* 30; schol. *Il.* 13.302.

¹⁷Paus. Gr. in Eust. *ad Hom. Il.* 3.222, p. 408,4 (Van der Valk). See also Apostol. 6. 33; *Sud.* s.v. Δόρυ κηρύχειον; Zen. 3. 26.

vowed that if they took Thebes, they would dedicate to the god the fairest of spoils¹⁸. In due course, these Thebans allegedly left Delphi in order to found Claros or Colophon¹⁹.

This last example points to another distinction that can be made when discussing occasions for *dekateusis* colonisations, that is dedication as redemption of a vow. The vow can be taken on the verge of war, but also in other situations of impending doom²⁰. Whatever its immediate cause, it is clear that such vow was no regular affair. According to Plutarch, Aristotle reported in one of his *Constitutions* that a number of Cretans were sent to Delphi as a first fruit offering (*aparche*), paying off an ancient vow²¹, which remains, unfortunately, unspecified. These Cretans later founded Bottiaea. Another example of such redemptive dedication of fellow human beings is given by Conon, who claims that, in accordance with a vow, Thessalian Magnesians consecrated to Delphi those, who would later become the founders of Magnesia at the Maeander. In this tale, these Magnesians were on their way back from Troy, the vow might thus be taken at the onset of the Trojan war²². However, one other original occasion, perhaps in connection with the same vow, is also given. Parthenius mentions an *aparche* of Thessalian Magnesians, who were consecrated as a tithe by king Admetus to Delphi (occasion unknown), as the leader of whom Apollo designated one Leucippus, the alleged founder-hero of Magnesia²³.

¹⁸(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.7.4: ἡΐξαντο γὰρ αὐτῷ Θήβας ἐλόντες τὸ κάλλιστον τῶν λαφύρων ἀναθήσειν.

¹⁹(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.7.4; Diod. 4.66.5-6 (ταύτην ἀνέθεσαν εἰς Δελφοὺς κατὰ τινα εὐχὴν ἀκροθίνιον τῷ θεῷ); Paus. 7.3.1-3 (Claros); 9.33.2 (Colophon); schol. A.R. 1.308b = Epigoni fr. (ἀκροθίνιον ἀντέτεθη). There is some variation regarding the name of the daughter of Teiresias (Manto or Daphne), the colony (Colophon or Claros) and the founders (Manto with her husband or the whole group of Thebans).

²⁰Compare the Italic *ver sacrum*, for which see Section e below.

²¹Arist. fr. 485 (Rose) = Plu. *Thes.* 16.2: εὐχὴν παλαίαν ἀποδιδόντες. See also Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 35 (*Mor.* 298f-299a): Κρητὰς εὐξαμένους ἀνθρώπων ἀπαρχὴν εἰς Δελφοὺς ἀποστεῖλαι.

²²Conon *FGrHist* 26 fr. 1 (29) = Phot. *Bibl.* 186. Other sources on this and a related foundation tradition are Arist. fr. 631 (Rose) = Athen. 4.173ef; Parth. *narr. am.* 5; Plu. *de Pyth. or.* 16 (*Mor.* 402a); Ps. Plu. *Prov.* 57; Str. 14.1.11 (C 636); 14.1.40 (C 647) (Δελφῶν ἀπόγονοι); schol. A.R. 1.584; *FGrHist* 482 fr. 3, a third century inscription found on the *agora* of Magnesia, giving the, at that time, official account of the city's foundation.

²³Parth. *narr. am.* 5. The discussion about the place of origin of the Magnesians at the Maeander is an ancient one. Even Strabo could give two varying accounts. Str. 14.1.11 (C 647) says that Magnesia at the Maeander is a colony from Thessalian Magnesians and Cretans, whereas in Str. 14.1.40 (C 647) the Magnesians are said to be descendants of Delphians who had settled near Didyma in Thessaly. Thessaly, Crete and Delphi keep popping up in different constellations. For a careful examination and an attempt to

Interestingly, this tradition about the foundation of Magnesia may also be connected to a remark of Plutarch, who records that by the people of Eretria and Magnesia

human first fruit offerings had been offered to the god (Apollo), because they were in the belief that he is the giver of crops, the god of their fathers, the author of their being, and the friend of man²⁴.

This dedication may have been the fulfilment of an ancient vow as well, though this is not explicitly mentioned. It may also have been an act of gratitude in compensation of prosperity. The recurrent use of the term *aparchai* in various versions of the foundation of Magnesia is striking. The value of this particular testimonium for the purpose of this study, however, is unclear, as it does not mention whether these consecrated people were also sent forth again from Delphi to found a colony elsewhere. A reason though for including this passage in our study is found in another passage from Plutarch, in which a reference is made to a *dekateusis*-type of context for the Eretrian *aparchai*, as it mentions Eretrians being expelled from newly founded Corcyra and not allowed to return²⁵.

The people of Eretria and Magnesia may thus have implemented an ancient vow once prosperity had been regained, but the passage may also be considered a reference to some kind of ritual practice, as Bömer suggests²⁶. From this perspective the dedication would rather be comparable to the type of crisis management implemented at the Thargelia, when anxiety about the upcoming harvest was dealt

reconstruct the history of the foundation tales of Magnesia, see F. Prinz, *Gründungsmythen und Sagenchronologie (Zetemata Heft 72)* (Munich 1979) 111-137 and U. von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, 'Die Herkunft der Magneten am Maeander', *Hermes* 30 (1895) 177-198. Prinz distinguishes two main layers in the surviving testimonia, that is the Admetus-gratitude-tithe and the Nostoi-Cretan-episode, the one superseded by the other under influence of the 'Hellenistic Critical Mind', which was no longer satisfied with the improbabilities of the older account. However sharp his analysis of the various testimonia, Prinz' discussion and reconstruction of the material may be too rigidly intellectualistic. I try to approach the material as much as possible in a flexible way, from the point of view of a vivid and flexible tradition around the basic combination consecration-colonisation. From this point of view, the Cretan excurs fits very well in the overall pattern of the story, on which below.

²⁴Plu. *de Pyth. or.* 16 (*Mor.* 402a): ἀνθρώπων ἀπαρχαῖς δωρησαμένους τὸν θεόν, ὡς καρπῶν δοτήρα καὶ πατρῷον καὶ γενέσιον καὶ φιλάνθρωπον.

²⁵Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 11 (= *Mor.* 293ab); see e.g. Malkin 1987, 38.

²⁶See Bömer 1990², 23. In view of the aorist δωρησαμένους I am hesitant to conclude from *this* passage that there is some kind of ritual practice, as Bömer suggests on the basis of καρπῶν δοτήρ, which, one can reasonably expect, is an annually returning reason for festivities. One must add though, that Bömer himself is also doubtful about this in view of the complete silence of the sources.

with, and overcome. One could even argue that this dedication was an act of gratitude in times of affluence²⁷.

In sum, circumstances that gave rise to the consecration of human beings to Apollo, which ultimately led to the foundation of a new city under auspices of the god, all belong within the larger category of situations of crisis, that is the entire scale of natural disasters, or humanly induced misfortunes, either war or *stasis*. Moreover, the types of disaster appear interchangeable and equivalent to each other. Times of prosperity may have presented an occasion of their own to offer a human tithe to Apollo. Interestingly, though it is yet uncertain if this is relevant in the context of the *dekateusis*-colonisations, communities may also have consecrated a group of their inhabitants in anxious times of transition, or even in highly prosperous circumstances. The remedy to crisis may be applied at once, or vowed, and implemented at a later date. It may therefore safely be concluded that, although with considerable variety at the level of appearance, circumstances which gave rise to *dekateusis* colonisations may indeed be referred to as situations of crisis, which renders these *dekateusis* colonisations a form of ancient Greek crisis management.

C. AN EXCEPTIONAL STATUS

In these circumstances in need of a saving remedy, the crisis management consisted of the dispatch of a group of people who subsequently founded a colony elsewhere under the auspices of Apollo. Expulsion was a measure to insure the survival of the community. But who were expelled and what was their new status? These questions are the subject of the present section. As in earlier ones about the status of the victims of crisis management, it will be attempted to distinguish between the original status of those who were to be expelled and their subsequent status as expelled ones.

In general, one may presume that those who left their homesteads to settle elsewhere were mostly young, unmarried men. Although the hypothesis can not be verified, it does seem a quite natural and logic way to proceed, also in forced colonisations, to send away on a foundation expedition those who are able and healthy²⁸. The recurrent marriage-metaphors in colonisation narrative, although

²⁷See the combination of Parth. *narr. am.* 5 and Plu. *de Pyth. or.* 16 (*Mor.* 402a) read against the light of e.g. D.H. 1.16 in Section e below.

²⁸See the Cyrenean evidence and also some of the Roman *ver sacrum* traditions below. Note that the presence of young and female Manto among the consecrated Thebans

expressing different concerns, may be rooted in the actuality of necessary intermarriage between these young male colonists and female natives²⁹.

The status of such young unmarried males may be ambivalent as such, as we saw in the Chapters 1 and 3 of this study. In these *dekateusis* tales, there are more signals that characterise the ones who were expelled as ambivalent. Take for instance those who founded Bottiaea after having been sent away to Delphi by the Cretans³⁰. The original status of this group is not unequivocal: according to Plutarch, Aristotle claims that the group partly consisted of descendants of those Athenian youngsters who were sent to the Minotaur as a human tribute³¹. Plutarch himself, however, considers it necessary to add that they were ‘indeed counted as Cretans’³². Not unlike other victims of crisis management, these people offered to Delphi thus appear to have been considered both insiders and outsiders at the same time.

As we have seen, there are also narratives concerning people who, consecrated to Apollo, set out from Delphi to found a settlement elsewhere, though of a slightly different order: they were sent to Delphi not by their own community, but after having been captured. Of the Dryopes it is said that they were taken to Delphi as offering (*anathema*) by Heracles, which, for that matter, they themselves denied³³. And the Gephyraeae were consecrated as a tithe (*dekateuthentes*) by the Athenians to Delphi, and they left from there for Tanagra³⁴. As also mentioned above, the Argives had vowed to dedicate a portion of their booty if they would be victorious in their war against Thebes³⁵. Such a vow, evidently, bears upon the

seems an exception rather than the rule. However, cf. A.J. Graham, ‘The Colonial Expansion of Greece’, in: J. Boardman and N. G. L. Hammond (eds.), *Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge 1982) vol. 3.3, 148-149 on this matter.

²⁹For ways to *read* these metaphors, see Dougherty 1993.

³⁰Plu. *Thes.* 16.2 = Arist. fr. 485 (Rose). Compare also Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 35 (*Mor.* 298f-299a).

³¹Note the process of accumulation and duplication: the Athenian ancestors of these youths were once sent to Crete as a tribute to the Minotaur in order to expiate drought after the unlawful murder of Androgeus (Plu. *Thes.* 15). On the other hand, one of the aetiologies of the *pharmakos* ritual precisely points to the same situation except for the dearth being pestilence (Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 = T. 48).

³²Although the account serves to explain why maidens in Bottiaea always sing: “Let us go to Athens!”

³³Paus. 4.34.9.

³⁴See Apost. 7.33; Eust. *ad Hom. Il.* 3.222, p. 408.4 (Van der Valk); *Sud.* s.v. Δόγου κηρύκειον; Zen. 3.26.

³⁵(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.7.4; Paus. 9.33.2; Diod. 4.66.5-6; schol. A.R. 1.308 = Epigoni fr. 3 (Bernabé). For Claros: Paus. 7.3.1. Diodorus in fact relates that the Epigoni, in

possession most striven for of all, the enemy and all his belongings. Evidently, the vow can only be effectuated if the enemy is vanquished and incorporated first. Interestingly, just as Iambulus and his friend, these captives both belong and do not belong to the community on behalf of which they are consecrated. They both represent the evil threat of the enemy and embody in a most valuable way the victory just gained. To emphasise their value, something like ‘the fairest of spoils’ is also used to describe their status.

The status of these colonists is symbolically emphasised in foundation tales in which the leaders of the colonising expeditions receive special attention. They may be considered a metonymy of the colonising group as a whole. They are typical examples of persons who belong and do not belong at the same time, of centrality and marginality, as others would call it. Take for example Battus, the founder of Cyrene, who is characterised as a noble bastard³⁶. Manto, the prominent member of the captivated Thebans who founded Clarus or Colophon, is also stigmatised in a two-fold way, as a beautiful virgin, as the daughter of the seer and therefore in special relationship with Apollo, and as captivated war booty³⁷. We may therefore conclude, that in those cases in which individual characteristics are more elaborated, the original status of those sent off to Delphi is of an ambivalent nature. They are defined both in terms that are of central value to a community, such as beauty, nobility, civic identity, and in a marginal way that disqualifies them as members, e.g. as bastards, captives, or foreigners.

The expulsion of these people is described in various ways, which come down to more or less the same ritual means: a consecration to Apollo. In the case of Rhegium we observed that the colonists were consecrated as human tithe (*dekate*) to Apollo. They were also referred to as sacred ones (*hieroi*). Other tales present other variations: The forbears of the Mysians allegedly were once put out (*ektethenai*) near Mount Olympus when they had been consecrated as a tithe (*dekateuthentas*)³⁸. Those

accordance with a vow, ‘only’ dedicated the daughter of Teiresias, whom he calls Daphne, as a first-fruit offering to Apollo.

³⁶Hdt. 4.155 (the Cyrenean version of the foundation of Cyrene).

³⁷(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.7.4; Diod. 4.66.5-6; Paus. 7.3.1-3; 9.33.2; schol. A.R. 1.308b = Epigoni fr. 3 (Bernabé).

³⁸Str. 12.8.3 (C 572): (ὅπου ἐκτεθῆναι φασὶ τοὺς δεκατευθέντας). Strabo refers to Xanthus the Lydian and Menecrates of Elaea. According to these authors the Mysians were thus called after the many beech-trees in the region around Mount Olympus. Note that these Mysians were also said to be famous cheese-eaters (Posidon. ad Str. 7.3.3 (C 296) = fr. 277a (Kidd)).

who founded Bottiaea were sent as a first fruit offering of people (*anthropon aparche*) to Delphi by Cretans³⁹.

The same expression *anthropon aparchai* is used by Plutarch when praising the inhabitants of Eretria and Magnesia ‘who presented the god with first-fruits offerings of people’. As already stated above, it is not certain whether this remark by Plutarch refers to the same Magnesians who, after many years of wanderings, finally founded Magnesia on the Maeander, and were, according to Aristotle, ‘sacred to the god, colonists from Delphi’ (*hieroi tou theou, Delphon apoikoi*)⁴⁰. According to both Conon and Parthenius these latter Magnesian colonists were members of a human tithe (*dekateuthentes*) to Delphi⁴¹.

Though expressed in varying terminology, as a *dekate*, *aparche*, *akrothinia* or *anathema*, the dispatched body is consecrated to Apollo⁴². *Dekate* literally means a tenth part, and is often used in the context of booty for the part destined for a deity⁴³. *Aparche*, as *akrothinion*, first-fruit offering, does not so much emphasise the quantity as the choice quality⁴⁴. *Anathema*, the actual setting-up in the temple, stresses the fact that the offering is set up in the temple, transferred to the domain of the god⁴⁵. The terms can be used interchangeably, both in contexts of war and other situations of

³⁹Plu. *Thes.* 16.2 = Arist. fr. 485 (Rose). Compare also Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 35 (*Mor.* 298f-299a).

⁴⁰Arist. fr. 631 (Rose) = Athen. 4.74 p. 173ef: ἱεροὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, Δελφῶν ἀποικοί. Strabo (Str. 14.1.40 [C 647]), at one occasion, mentions that the Magnesians were thought to be descendants of Delphians who dwelled in the Didyma-mountains in Thessaly, mountains that were sacred according to Hesiod (Hes. fr. 59 [Merkelbach-West]), but elsewhere claims they were from Thessalian Magnesia and Crete (Str. 14.1.11 [C 647]).

⁴¹Conon *FGrHist* 26 fr. 1 (29) = Phot. *Bibl.* 186; Parth. *narr. am.* 5.6.

⁴²Bömer 1990², 12 points out that both the name Manto and Daphne refer to the close connection between Apollo and the girl: “...dass die Eroberer dem Apollon gaben, was des Apollon war, d.h. also das, was ἱερόν war”. On the characterisation of Manto as a metonymy for the status description of the group, see above.

⁴³Usually Apollo (see Bömer 1990², 10, 15-16). See esp. H.W. Parke, ‘Consecration to Apollo’, *Hermathena* 72 (1948), 82-114 on the various forms of *dekateuein*. Parke 1948, 85 interprets a *dekate* as something set apart from secular use, either positively, as a gift, or negatively, as a form of destruction. For tithing as a consequence of pollution, see Parker 1983, 341-343 (*SEG* 9.72, 33-72).

⁴⁴For *aparchai*, see Burkert 1985, 66-69. See also W.R. Halliday, *The Greek Questions of Plutarch* (Oxford 1928) ad Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 6 (*Mor.* 292bc): tithes, offerings of first-fruits. For *akrothinia*, see Burkert ibidem. See also Nilsson 1955², 134: ‘Dankgabe’. Compare the Phoenician women (Eur. *Ph.* 282), who were sent to Apollo as an *akrothinion* of the Theban war booty. For all terms, see Rudhardt 1958, 219-258.

⁴⁵See Burkert 1985, 68-69 and e.g. *Neue Pauly* 1 (1996) s.v. Anathema (Versnel): “Weihgeschenk das in den Besitz der Gottheit übergeht und damit selbst zum ἱερόν wird”. In due course, and mostly under influence of Jewish and Christian use, the term *anathema* has acquired a mainly negative sense.

crisis⁴⁶. For all cases the same holds good: the dedicated objects have been transferred to the domain of the god. As such, they were, explicitly or implicitly, regarded as *hieroi tou theou*, sacred to the god.

This new status is not unequivocally positive, however. The expelled are no longer members of their original communities and not yet members of a new one. At the narrative level this *status aparte* is expressed in various ways. Some tales recall decades of wanderings, such as in case of the Magnesians, who spent eighty years on Crete⁴⁷ before they finally received a sign (white crows instead of black)⁴⁸ to leave again. When they came to Delphi, in the belief that they were finally homeward bound, they received instructions not to return, but rather to settle elsewhere. Other attempts by such groups to return home failed: the inhabitants of Thera pelted the expelled ones who were to found Cyrene but who came back after some years of unsuccessful endeavour. The unfortunate ones were not allowed to land as if they were polluted criminals⁴⁹ and were forced to sail away again. Plutarch tells about the similar fate of colonists from Eretria, perhaps those offered to Delphi as first fruit offerings⁵⁰, who founded Corcyra, but were chased away from there again later by others. Upon their return to Eretria, they were driven off by their former compatriots by means of stones. Thus forced to leave again, they finally founded Methone. For

⁴⁶Bömer 1990², 10: *Aparche*, *dekate*, *akrothinion* and *anathema* of war booty, see (in this order) Soph. *Trach.* 183 (ἀπαρχὰς θεοῖσι τοῖς ἐγγυρίοις); the Gephyraeae; schol. A.R. 1. 308b (= Epigoni fr. 3 (Bernabé)) or Eur. *Ph.* 203 (ἀκροθίνια Λοξία), 282 and schol. *ad loc.* (ἀπαρχαί); the Dryopes. For the interchangeable use of *dekatai* and *aparchai* see Delcourt 1955, 184. See e.g. ἀκροθίνιον ἀνετέθη (schol. A.R. 1.308b) or ἐκ τῆς δεκάτης ἀνατέθεντες (Diod. 8.23.2).

⁴⁷This according to their own official version of the foundation of Magnesia at the Maeander, publicly inscribed on the market-place around 200 BC. See *FGrHist* 482 fr. 4; O. Kern, *Die Gründungsgeschichte von Magnesia am Maiandros* (Berlin 1894) 14ff, and also *I.Magnesia* 20; Parke and Wormell 1956, vol 1, 52ff and vol. 2, 153ff, no. 378. There is a wide consensus with regard to the forged character of the document, but less agreement on the actual place of the detailed account in the foundation tradition of Magnesia. For Crete and purification see Parker 1983, 142-143 and references. See also Epimenides in Chapter 3 Section e.

⁴⁸See *FGrHist* 482 fr. 3, l. 16-18. This is a fascinating detail. We have already seen that black and white are apt carriers of symbolic meaning in this context. But also the crow deserves attention, both as one of Apollo's special animals and as a symbol of the ultimate far-off. See for instance the curse 'to the crows' (Chapter 1 Section g) or the *Korakes* as last stop before Hades (Ar. *Ran.* 186). See also the tale in (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.3 in which a white crow is cursed by Apollo for bringing bad news and becomes black. Cf. also Photius s.v. κόρακας (about founding a place where colonists would spot white crows).

⁴⁹Hdt. 4.158, on which see Chapter 7 Section b below.

⁵⁰Plu. *de Pyth. or.* 16 (*Mor.* 402a).

centuries after, they were nicknamed *apospheondetoi*, ‘those driven away by slings’⁵¹.

This double aspect of their new status, being offerings and *personae non gratae* at the same time, is allowed for, or even enhanced, by the term used for their new status: *hieroi tou theou*. *Hieros* is one of several ancient Greek terms pertaining to the sacred, with a large and complex semantic field⁵². Its general meaning is not so much one of ‘holiness’, but rather of ‘marking out things that in some way are associated with the gods’⁵³: temples for instance, priests, a garland, land which cannot be cultivated. Offerings, gifts to the gods are *hiera*, just as sacrificial animals⁵⁴. That being *hieros* is not always only, or not automatically, a blissful state is emphasised by some scholars. They ascribe (potential) ambiguity to the state of being *hieros* and its possible workings⁵⁵: being *hieros/a/on* can be the result of a consecration, a ‘positive’ transference to the (protective) domain of a god⁵⁶, or a ‘negative’ transference, a malediction⁵⁷; to be *hieros*, and to be the direct object of divine workings can have a beneficial or a harmful effect⁵⁸. However, as we shall see

⁵¹Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 11 (*Mor.* 293ab): ἀποσφενδόνητοι.

⁵²For some recent literature see E. Benveniste, ‘Das Heilige’, in: C. Colpe (ed.), *Die Diskussion um das ‘Heilige’ (Wege der Forschung 305)* (Darmstadt 1977) 223-254; Dihle 1984, 107-114; *RAC* 14 (1987) 1-63, esp. 1-16 s.v. ‘Heilig’ (Dihle); A. Motte, ‘L’expression du sacré dans la religion grecque’, in: J. Ries (ed.), *L’Expression du sacré dans les grandes religions Vol. 3 Mazdéisme, cultes isiaques, religion grecque, manichéisme, Nouveau Testament et Vie de l’homme religieux* (Louvain-la-Neuve 1986) 109-256; Parker 1983, 147-168 and 328-331. See also Bremmer 1998, esp. 24-32, where various anachronistic uses of the concept of ‘the sacred’ are discussed.

⁵³See Parker 1983, 151. Note the use of *hieroi* for temple slaves below.

⁵⁴See Burkert 1985, 269.

⁵⁵Some (see esp. Hubert and Mauss 1909) would even argue that this sacrality confers a special power on the victims - again ambivalent, for it can work both in a beneficial and in a harmful way. A discussion of this aspect would take us too far now, for it touches upon one of the most debated notions in the study of religion: the nature and/or workings of sacrality, but we shall return to this in Chapter 8 Section c below.

⁵⁶See the use of *ta hiera* and *ta hierieia* for rites, ritual objects and ‘normal’ sacrificial victims (Casabona 1966).

⁵⁷See e.g. Dem. *Or.* 18.149.

⁵⁸Compare a seer/healer (or Oedipus in Soph. *OC* 287) on the one hand and the famous sacred disease on the other. See e.g. A. Dihle, ‘Beobachtungen zur Entstehung sakralsprachlicher Besonderheiten’, in: E. Dassmann and K. Thraede (eds.), *Vivarium. Festschrift Theodor Klauser zum 90. Geburtstag (JAC Suppl. 11)* (Münster 1984) 107-114, at 107: “Adjektive wie ἱερός und *sacer* besagen, daß durch sie qualifizierte Gegenstände, Personen, Örtlichkeiten, Zeiten und Handlungen in einem Nahverhältnis zu einer göttlichen, unverfügbaren Macht stehen, und man sich in und zu ihnen darum in anderer Weise als in der profanen Welt verhalten muß. Da nun dieses Nahverhältnis ebenso das Resultat eines Fluches wie einer Weihung sein kann, ist es nicht merkwürdig, wenn jene beiden Adjektive in den Bedeutungen ‘heilig’ und ‘unrein, verflucht’ vorkommen”. See also A. Motte,

below, the negative aspect of sacrality is usually expressed by other terminology⁵⁹. Burkert's poetic description of the term catches its basic sense: "*Hieros* is as it were the shadow cast by divinity"⁶⁰. In the context of this study, it is impossible to dwell on the term *hieros* too long, nor on the highly controversial issue of the notion of the sacred in the study of ancient Greek (and other) religion. Here, it is enough to assert that qualifications as *hieroi* mark out a special status of those qualified as such, a status which may be less unequivocal than one may think.

With regard to this special status of these colonising groups, one more issue must be dealt with. It has been argued that these groups, expelled and sent to Delphi, shared the fate of, and must be considered as, so-called sacred slaves, *hierodouloi*, who lived and served at sanctuaries⁶¹. Some scholars suggest that consecration only resulted in colonisation when the sanctuary at Delphi became overcrowded⁶². One passage in the context of the Cretans who end up founding Bottiaea may be considered to support this view: according to Plutarch, Aristotle claims that the men who had been sent to Delphi by the Cretans, set out again from Delphi, 'when they saw that there was no abundance there'⁶³. In those cases, where the founders are referred to as 'colonists from Delphi'⁶⁴ the possibility cannot be excluded either. In most cases, however, the link between mother city and colony remains intact, which suggest a more direct and more straightforward colonising process, though 'others might have joined in', as in the case of Rhegium.

Bömer has a further reason to doubt that the *dekateusis* colonists and the *hierodouloi* must be identified. In his opinion the ancient Greeks did not confuse the status of slavery and the quality of being within the power/domain of a god - which

'L'expression du sacré dans la religion grecque', in: J. Ries (ed.), *L'Expression du sacré dans les grandes religions Vol. 3 Mazdéisme, cultes isiaques, religion grecque, manichéisme, Nouveau Testament et Vie de l'homo religiosus* (Louvain-la-Neuve 1986) 109-256, at 126: "On voit, ..., qu' une notion de vertu active, d'efficace, qui peut être bénéfique ou maléfique, s'attache volontiers à l'idée du sacré signifiée par le mot *hieros*". Contra: e.g. E. Benveniste, 'Das Heilige', in: C. Colpe (ed.), *Die Diskussion um das 'Heilige' (Wege der Forschung 305)* (Darmstadt 1977) 223-254, who argues that *hieros*, unlike *sacer*, does not carry an ambivalent sense. Benveniste, mainly inspired by Indo-European etymology, renders as the main sense of *hieros*. '... das von göttlicher Kraft erfüllte' (esp. 238-239).

⁵⁹Chapter 8 section c.

⁶⁰Burkert 1985, 269.

⁶¹See e.g. Daremberg and Saglio 1877-1919, s.v. Hierodulie (Hild); Schmid 1947, 55-56.

⁶²See *RE* 1 (1894) 2666-2668 s.v. Ἀπαρχαί (Stengel).

⁶³Arist. fr. 485 (Rose) = Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 35 (*Mor.* 299a).

indeed results in a restriction of personal freedom, but is definitely not the same as being a slave⁶⁵. In case of war booty, however, the two may have conflated⁶⁶. Nevertheless, as mentioned, even these groups appear to have remained intact and settled elsewhere. One may presume that a longer stay in Delphi as *hierodouloi* would have had a more disintegrating effect on groups of colonists. In fact, no single testimonium explicitly mentions that these colonists have been *hierodouloi* for a while before they leave Delphi and hence, for various reasons, it seems unlikely to suppose so.

This does not mean, however, that ties were not close between Apollo and the colonists. On the contrary, the bonds were very tight. At the level of the narrative, this close relationship may acquire various forms of expression. We have seen that *hieroi tou theou* was used, but also that one prominent member of a colonising group was said to be the daughter of Teiresias, Apollo's own seer. Another, the leader of the Dryopes, was even believed to be his son. Last but not least, there is one famous founder who should be mentioned, and whose mythical life may have influenced the theories on *hierodouleia* above: Ion, the mythical leader of one of the most important colonising movements in ancient Greek history. Euripides put him on stage in a revealing way. For not only is his Ion a foundling saved by Apollo, and the god's slave, he also turns out to be the very son of the god⁶⁷. Two ways to express the two sides of a close bond with Apollo. The subhuman, servile side, personally and physically at the mercy of the deity, and the suprahuman, semi-divine side, being the son of a god. The mythical leader of the great colonising movement is both entirely

⁶⁴Arist. fr. 631 (Rose) = Athen. 4.74 p. 173ef (and Str. 14.1.40 [C 647]). See also Timae. *FGrHist* 566 fr. 43b = Str. 6.1.9 (C 260).

⁶⁵Bömer 1990², 12 n.6 and 14: "Für den Griechen bedeutet die Berührung mit den Göttern Anerkennung einer höheren Macht und Beschränkung der persönlichen Freiheit, aber nicht gleich auch *douleia theou*. ... Wenn Griechen in diesen Zusammenhang als Sklaven erscheinen, dann waren sie bereits vorher versklavt; durch die Zugehörigkeit zur Gottheit werden sie es nicht".

⁶⁶See however the remark by Bömer 1990², 22 with regard to the status of the Phoenician women: "Man möchte auch diese Lage des Chors für typisch für die Stellung dieser Menschen zwischen Freiheit und Unfreiheit halten. In dieser Lage befinden sich nämlich nahezu alle die Menschengruppen, die in der frühen Zeit in dieser Form dem note pandelphischen Apollon überantwortet werden". It is striking and does not seem a mere coincidence that here the beauty of the offering is emphasised, as happened with Manto; see also Eur. *Ph.* 215 (καλλιστεύματα).

⁶⁷See Eur. *Ion*: exposed in a basket with sacred ribbons (1338), destined for the wild beasts (951), thrown out to Hades (1495/6); Apollo's servant (327, 1343); son of Apollo (1482-1486, 1530, 1560, 1607-1608).

in the power of the god and his favoured protégé. In his creation of Ion, Euripides may have played upon the ambiguous status of this type of colonists.

With this observation in mind, the various traditions regarding the Dryopes may be less confusing than scholars in the past have judged them. This people was scattered around all over the Peloponnesus living in four different *poleis* in relative isolation⁶⁸. They seem to have had a special relationship with Apollo, whose sanctuary was very important in Asine, one of the Dryopes' settlements. Several tales account for this exceptional position on the Peloponnesus and the close bonds with Apollo. According to one version⁶⁹, they are said to have come to live around Parnassus for a while, after they had already taken up the name Dryopes. But two generations later, conquered by Heracles⁷⁰, they were brought to Apollo as an offering⁷¹. From Delphi they were sent on to the Peloponnesus, where they ultimately settled in Asine (Messenia). The Dryopes from Asine themselves however tell a different tale. They admit having been conquered by Heracles, but strongly deny that they were made captives and presented to Apollo. They tell that they had been able to flee, first to the heights of the Parnassus, later to the Peloponnesus. Their connection with Apollo is accounted for by their claim that their founder Dryops was a son of Apollo. They took pride in their name and origins, whereas other Dryopes-of-origin, the people of Styra, according to Pausanias, are ashamed of the name⁷².

The special status of the Dryopes and their connections with Apollo have thus been translated in virtually contradicting terms. In a scholion to Apollonius Rhodius

⁶⁸Asine for instance did not take part in the Persian Wars, see Fourgous 1989, 12.

⁶⁹Paus. 4.34.9 (and 5.1.2). Compare the decimated Mysians, the oxya-tree people, who were put out in the neighbourhood of Mt. Olympus (Str. 12.8.3 [C 572]).

⁷⁰According to other authors, this happened because of an impious act by their king (Diod. 4.37.1-2) or after a certain Theodamas refused to present Heracles with an oxen (Ov. *Ib.* 487; A.R. 1.1219).

⁷¹Paus. 4.34.9: τῶν Ἀπόλλωνι ἀνάθημα.

⁷²Paus. 4.34.10-12. Another meaning of the name Dryopes might be 'the ones who live near the oak' (ἡ δρυς being an oak) or 'the Woodpeckers' (ὁ δρυόψ is a kind of woodpecker), see Fourgous 1989, 5-8. According to Arist. fr. 99 (Rose) = Str. 8.6.13 (C 373), Dryops is the son of Arcas, the eponymous hero of Arcadia, which brings the Dryopes in close connection with the Arcadians, one of the oldest peoples of Greece, who are said to have lived even before the existence of the moon, and to have fed themselves on acorns (cf. Bourgeaud 1979). For acorns as precultural food or animal food, see Apul. *Met* 11.2; Hom. *Od.* 10.241-243; 12.357-358; Zen. 2.40. For acorns as highly ambiguous food, both for barbarians and pigs and for gods and inhabitants of the Golden Age, see S. Mason, 'Acornutopia? Determining the Role of Acorns in Past Human Subsistence', in: J. Wilkens, D. Harvey and M. Dobson (eds.), *Food in Antiquity* (Exeter 1995) 12-24. For special, divine

both representations are combined: the Dryopes are said to have been a most unrighteous people, who lived near Parnassus and were descendants from Dryops, son of Apollo, at the same time⁷³. Fourgous feels ill at ease in her article ‘Les Dryopes: peuple sauvage ou divin?’, noticing their double status, both wild and divine, both impious and pious, and she refers to ‘certaines incohérences apparentes’ (various striking inconsistencies) in one and the same text⁷⁴. However, Fourgous overlooks the possibility that both aspects might be correlates, the two sides of one and the same status. This example of the Dryopes illustrates once more the interconnectedness of positive and negative aspects of the status of certain groups of colonists. A people without roots, without civilised identity, a wandering people, may be endowed with divine or wild origins or with both - with a superhuman or a less-than-human status⁷⁵. And it is such a people, ambivalent outsiders, about whom tradition records that they had once been consecrated to Apollo.

In sum, the human expulsions we have been studying so far were couched in ritual terms. People, both valuable and dispensable at the same time, were removed from a community by means of a consecration to Apollo, either as *aparchai*, or *akrothinia*, first fruit offerings, *dekate*, tenth part of something, or as such, *anathema*. They were ritually transferred to another domain, ‘kicked upstairs’ by ‘good riddance’. The new *status aparte* these people were endowed with was also one of ambivalent character, which becomes clear both in the relevant terminology and at the narrative level. They were dedicated as valuable offerings, and they belonged to the special sphere of the god, upon which they were called sacred, which accommodated something potentially negative about them too. This negative aspect became activated especially if they try to return to their former homesteads: then they were chased away, driven off as enemies of the people.

connotations of oaks, see e.g. Paus. 8.21.2 and Paus. 10.32.10. There are more tales about the origins of the Dryopes (cf. Fourgous 1989, 5-8), all with pre- or anticultural elements.

⁷³Schol. A.R. 1219d.

⁷⁴Fourgous 1989, 17: “Elle (la généalogie, LK) semble bien illustrer l’ambiguïté des Dryopes, qui oscillent dans l’image que nous donnent d’eux les textes entre divinité et sauvagerie, piété et impiété. L’aspect négatif l’emporte le plus souvent et beaucoup d’auteurs se plaisent à souligner l’injustice des Dryopes. Mais l’aspect positif réurgit parfois de façon inattendue, ce qui peut entraîner certaines incohérences apparentes, lorsqu’il se juxtapose au premier dans un même texte”.

⁷⁵Compare also the “pious and peaceful Mysians, also known as the hand-to-hand fighters, because they were indomitable” – and cheese-eaters! (Strabo 7.3.3 [C 296] = fr. 277a [Kidd]). See in more general terms Arist. *Pol.* 1.1253a: ὁ ἄπολις ... ἥτοι φαῦλός ἐστιν ἢ κρείττων ἢ ἀνθρώπος. And: ... οὐθὲν μέρος πόλεως, ὥστε ἢ θηρίον ἢ θεός.

D. THE WAYS OF THE GOD

The role of the divine in these tales of colonisation and foundation is much more explicit than in the case of ritual expulsion of the *pharmakos*, and much more specific than in mythical crisis management. This section deals with the role of the divine, and with two subjects in particular. First with the role of Delphi, and secondly, with the specific deity involved, Apollo, in a first attempt to understand his role in the context of the *dekateusis* colonisations.

With regard to Delphi's involvement in ancient Greek colonisation there has been much disagreement among scholars. Opinions differ for instance on the dating of the rise Delphi's influence, the nature of the involvement and the authenticity of the traditions reporting such involvement, especially of the oracles⁷⁶. Traditionally, scholars have tried to distinguish between authentic and false oracles in order to reconstruct the history of ancient Greek colonisation⁷⁷. Some scholars have even argued that Delphi usurped its prominent place in this history only at a later stage⁷⁸. Usually however, Delphi's involvement in these matters is dated from around the 7th century BC onwards⁷⁹.

Another issue at stake in this context is the question why Delphi was involved at all. Again theories abound. More recently, the prevailing view has focused on the

⁷⁶See esp. Malkin 1987, 18f and Miller 1997, 89f. for a overviews of the main standpoints. See further P. Londrey, 'Greek colonists and Delphi', in: J.P. Descoeudres (ed.), *Greek Colonists and Native Populations (Proceedings of the First Australian Congress of Classical Archaeology held in Honour of Emeritus Professor A. D. Trendall, Sydney, 9-14 July 1985)* (Canberra and Oxford 1990) 117-127. Important contributions to this discussion are Defradas 1972², Fontenrose 1978, Graham 1964, Parke and Wormell 1956 and various collections of colonisation tales mentioned in the Introduction to Part 3.

⁷⁷See for specific theories with strict criteria esp. Parke and Wormell 1956 ('Only straightforward sanctions and geographical directions are admitted as authentic'), Fontenrose 1978 (see p. 144: 'Delphi's modern reputation for advising colonists arises from scholars reading too much into the passages cited and from accepting foundation legends and the spurious oracles in them as historically sound') and Malkin 1987 (see p. 27: 'we are inclined to accept as authentic an oracular response about the foundation of a colony when it answers the criteria of straightforwardness [i.e. a direct command to found a particular place], sometimes with the addition of geographical directions, unless there are additional reasons in an individual case which tell strongly against it').

⁷⁸Esp. Defradas 1972², who denies that Delphi had any substantial historical role in the colonisation movement and claims that all is post eventum imperialist propaganda.

⁷⁹As mentioned, opinions differ strongly on the precise dating of Delphi's involvement in colonising activity. Late eighth-century BC (Malkin 1987, 22) is quite early, the late sixth century BC (Defradas 1972, Fontenrose 1978) is definitely late. See Malkin 1987, ch. 1 for the relevant discussion.

need for religious justification and sanction, both of the expedition and of its leader, the oikist⁸⁰. Initially, Delphi was, theoretically, not the only place to obtain such religious fiat, nor was Apollo the only deity to function as guardian of the ancestral cult, although his position as mediator between men and gods made him a very suitable one⁸¹, and his epithet *Archegetes* was indeed popular already in early colonies⁸². Only gradually⁸³, in this view, Delphi gained supremacy in these matters and came to play the pivotal role in ancient Greek colonisation, even, at times, retrospectively⁸⁴.

Finally, and more specifically, it is difficult to decide whether Delphi's initiating and directing role in the *dekateusis* colonisations must be viewed primarily in the light of its concerns with all sorts of colonising activity or that there are other, more specific motives that account for Delphi's, and perhaps Apollo's, prominent role in these tales. It is noteworthy that some scholars have even reasoned the other way around and have tried to account for Delphi's involvement in colonising activities in general on the basis of Apollo's role in the *dekateusis* colonisations⁸⁵. Without entirely losing sight of these discussions, a distinction should be made between the problems of dating and historicity on the one hand, and the question of patterns and meaning at the narrative level on the other.

Only few *dekateusis* tales contain the 'actual' foundation oracles given at the onset of the expedition. They present curious material. In our discussion of Rhegium, its foundation oracle has already been mentioned: 'where Apsia the most sacred of rivers falls into the sea, there at the point of embarkation *the female marries the*

⁸⁰See already Nilsson 1955², 637-640; Leschhorn 1984, esp. 108-109 and Malkin 1987.

⁸¹See already Nilsson 1955², 637-640.

⁸²E.g. in Naxos on Sicily (Thuc. 6.3.1; 3.3.). Leschhorn 1984, 112 points out that *Archegetes* is not only the divine leader of a colonisation, but also the mythic ancestor of a family, a tribe, a polis. In this latter usage *Archegetes* is closely related with *Patroos*. For Apollo *Patroos* see Plu. *de Pyth. or.* 16 (*Mor.* 402a) on the human first fruit offerings of Magnesians and Eretrians.

⁸³Distinctions have been made between the role of Apollo and Delphi in the colonisation by Western Greeks and other Greeks and/or in the Western part of the Mediterranean and the Eastern part (cf. Leschhorn 1994, 110f). For an emphasis on initial regional importance, see W.G. Forrest, 'Colonisation and the Rise of Delphi', *Historia* 6 (1957) 160-175, at 172.

⁸⁴Leschhorn 1984, 108-109. For the emphasis on the post eventum insertion of the Delphic element into the tales of foundation, see Defradas 1972, Valenza Mele 1977.

⁸⁵See the thesis by Parke and Wormell 1956, vol. 1, 55. See for arguments against this view Malkin 1987, 40.

*male*⁸⁶. Others translate ‘embrace’. Either way, the occurrence of the verb *opuio* in this context is remarkable: it is normally, in its active form, solely applied to men⁸⁷. Quite opaque as a route description, to be sure⁸⁸. Only when the colonists find a vine entwined around a wild fig tree (or an oak) by the river, do they understand that that is the place. The ways of the god are puzzling indeed.

There is another oracle that resembles this one in a way. It pertains to the foundation of Tarentum which will be discussed in the next chapter. According to Diodorus, the colonists, an entire generation of *atimoi* from Sparta, on consulting Delphi received the following directions from the Pythia:

Mark Satyrion and the gleaming waters of Taras and the harbour on the left and where a goat loves the briny surge, dipping the tip of his hoary beard. There makes Taras mounted on Satyrion⁸⁹.

According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus the colonists set sail to Italy,

(...) found the river and observed a wild fig tree growing near the sea and overspread with a vine, one of whose tendrils hung down and touched the sea. Assuming this to be the ‘goat’ which the god had foretold that they would see dipping his beard in the sea, they remained there (...) ⁹⁰.

Another highly puzzling oracle to be understood only by those who employ the same word *tragos* both for a goat and a wild fig tree. According to Diodorus, however, the colonists did not understand the first oracle and were given a second

⁸⁶Diod. 8 fr. 23.2: τὸν ἄρσενα θῆλυς ὀπιύει.

⁸⁷See *LSJ* s.v. and Malkin 1987, 36.

⁸⁸It is precisely because of the paradoxical and puzzling nature of the oracle, which they consider a motif from folklore, that Parke and Wormell 1956, vol. 1, 54 dismiss the oracle as a late invention.

⁸⁹Diod. 8.21.3 (translation Parke and Wormell 1956, vol. 1, 72): Σατύριον φράζου σὺ Τάραντος τ’ ἀγλαὸν ὕδωρ καὶ λιμένα σκαιὸν καὶ ὅπου τράγος ἀλμυρὸν οἶδμα ἀμφαγαπᾷ τέγγων ἄκρον πολιοῖο γενεῖου ἔνθα Τάραντα ποιοῦ ἐπὶ Σατυρίου βεβαῶτα.

⁹⁰D.H. 19.1.4 (translation Loeb): (...) δὲ τὸν τε ποταμὸν ἐξεῦρον καὶ κατὰ τινος ἐρινεοῦ πλησίον τῆς θαλάττης πεφυκότος ἄμπλον ἐθεάσαντο κατακεχυμένην, ἐξ ἧς τῶν ἐπιτράγων τις καθειμένος ἤπτετο τῆς θαλάττης. τοῦτον ὑπολαβόντες εἶναι τὸν τράγον ὃν προεῖπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς ὅψεσθαι τέγγοντα τὸ γενένειον τῇ θαλάττῃ, αὐτοῦ μένοντες (...).

one that was less incomprehensible. The god tells them that he has given them Satyrion and Taras, ‘a rich country to dwell in and to be a plague to the Iapygians’⁹¹.

This second oracle is not only less puzzling, it is straightforwardly positive. No wild fig trees with their particular connotations, but the attractive perspective of a rich country to dwell in. This reminds one of Iambulus who was instructed to set sail to the Heliopolitans, a blessed people favourite to Apollo, who spend their time in the meadows, as food-stuffs are produced of themselves in abundance⁹². The Magnesians were promised fruitful lands and great glory⁹³. In fact, several times a colonial site is explicitly mentioned to be a gift from the god⁹⁴. Apparently, the Delphic descriptions of the colonial sites could pair a topsy-turvy world with golden age-like expectations.

As mentioned, the discussion about these oracles has long been dominated by considerations concerning authenticity and historicity. Hypothetical reconstructions were combined with arguments about contemporary political and strategical motives to incorporate new elements into foundation stories, or to get rid of other ones. Only more recently attention has shifted towards questions of meaning⁹⁵. Malkin, though remaining highly conscious of the work and traditions of his predecessors, has had an eye for other interpretations in his analysis. For instance when he discusses the recurrent Pythian announcement that the site was ‘a gift of the god’ he is not so much concerned with the oracular repetition as such, but stresses the legitimating and authorising function of this phrase⁹⁶.

A more radical divergence from the traditional approaches has been made by Dougherty in her important study *The Poetics of Colonization*⁹⁷. Dougherty is no longer concerned with what she calls the *realia* of ancient Greek colonisation, but with its representations. She distinguishes three cultural metaphors by which the ancient Greeks, in her view, have sought to describe and understand their colonisations: as purification, as riddle-solving and as marriage. We shall return to the views of Dougherty below, but let us here shortly dwell on the second metaphor,

⁹¹Diod. 8.21.3; Strabo 6.3.2: Σατύριόν τοι δῶκα, Τάραντά τε πίονα δῆμον οἰκῆσαι καὶ πῆματ’ Ιαπύγεσσι γενέσθαι.

⁹²Diod. 2.57.1-2.

⁹³*FGrHist* 482 fr. 3, l. 35 and 41.

⁹⁴Diod. 8.21.3; Strabo 6.3.2: (Σατύριόν τοι δῶκα); Diod. 8.17 (Myscellus regarding the foundation of Croton, formally outside our scope).

⁹⁵See esp. Dougherty 1992 and 1993; but also Ogden 1997.

⁹⁶Malkin 1987, 37.

⁹⁷Dougherty 1993.

the riddle-solving, that has a special bearing on the oracles in colonisation tales. Whereas Parke and Wormell dismiss an oracle that includes a riddle as a late invention, Dougherty shows that by *reading* the oracle more may be revealed about ancient Greek colonisation than by dismissing it as unhistorical or unauthentic.

As we have seen, the oracle pertaining to the foundation site of Rhegium contained a riddle. The riddle itself may be understood in the light of a chaos-order schema, an 'impossible site', a site being described in inverse terms, as a topsy-turvy place, a locus of abnormality⁹⁸. The impossibility is overcome when the riddle is solved by the colonists⁹⁹. According to Dougherty 'the civic ordering process is represented in the colonial tale as the act of solving the colonial riddle'. The oracle thus functions in the larger context of the tale and forms an integral and meaningful part of the representation of the foundation of Rhegium. Founding is interpreting¹⁰⁰. In her enthusiasm Dougherty may have overlooked the fact that riddles are far more characteristic for Delphi's oracles beyond being a fixed ingredient of the tales of colonisation.

In a more modest view these oracles may be considered to point to yet another example of otherlandish conditions. Earlier in this study we discussed already the imaginary zone 'beyond the borders', what we called 'otherland', an ambivalent space with suprahuman and subhuman, highly positive and highly negative properties. A place where gods and nymphs dwell, but also where wild beasts lurk behind wild trees (fig-trees, olive trees etc.)¹⁰¹. In one tradition, king Athamas had

⁹⁸See Dougherty 1993, 54f; Dougherty argues that the colonial tales create the abnormal, inverted image of a colonial site before Greek occupation as a way to underscore the absence of that inversion once the Greeks take possession. Two earlier contributions had already opened up this new way of understanding the inverse, or ab-normal world of the oracles of Rhegium and Tarentum as a useful schema for explaining the foundation of cities as a development from chaos to order. S. Pembroke, 'Locres et Tarente: le rôle des femmes dans la fondation de deux colonies grecques', *Annales (ESC)* 5 (1970) 1240-1270; Vidal-Naquet 1981, 267-288. See also Ogden 1997, 199 n.5.

⁹⁹Dougherty 1993, 45f.

¹⁰⁰Dougherty 1993, 45.

¹⁰¹With regard to the wild fig-tree in Rhegium Valenza Mele 1977, 517f and Versnel 1993, 309 have drawn attention to the 'analogy in representation and symbolism' of the *pharmakos* ritual and the *dekateusis* colonisation. Though they are right to point out the parallel, the significance of this parallel is quite complex. Wild fig-trees are quite popular in the ancient Greek imagination and occur in various contexts. Both the *dekateusis*-colonisation and the *pharmakos* ritual draw on a common symbolic system, which apparently provides an apt symbol, but in view of the polysemy of cultural symbols it is difficult to narrow down one precise meaning for both contexts. One should therefore remain cautious, and perhaps restrict oneself to a more general level of interpretation.

been forced to leave his fatherland, wandered through this otherland, and finally founded Athamantion, where ‘he was received by wild animals as their guest’¹⁰².

From a strictly structural perspective this otherland may be considered to represent chaos, where *polis* represents order. The ancient Greek imagination, however, seems to have been less stringent, more flexible. We have seen that the otherland may encompass highly positive and highly negative elements at the same time, both self-growing corn, and cruel one-eyed Cyclopes, but may also carry the seeds of cultured life, the protocultural cheese, barley and figs. Ancient wild fig-trees, sacred river mouths or a fountain of Apollo ‘where there is a hole in the sky’¹⁰³ are all spatial representations of such otherland. A fertile area of contrast for the ancient imagination, functioning as counterpoint, yet never in a static way. At times order is born from chaos, for instance in the foundation tales of Rhegium and Athamantion. At other times, the otherland has to be abandoned in order to found a colony elsewhere. In the foundation tale of the Magnesians at the Maeander, Crete functions as otherland par excellence. Not surprisingly at all, as Crete had a special status in the ancient Greek imagination. Zeus was raised there, the great purifier Epimenides was a typical Cretan healer/seer¹⁰⁴. The Magnetes who had been consecrated to Apollo by an ancient vow had been waiting on Crete for eighty years before Apollo sent white crows (instead of black ones) as a sign that they could leave from there¹⁰⁵. Various topographical and natural symbols may thus be viewed to function in these *dekateusis* tales as contrast signals, as markers of otherness, whose specific role and meaning must be narrowed down in each particular case.

Explanatory strategies of riddle-solving as a founding process are not extremely useful, for various reasons. In the context of the present study it is both

¹⁰²(Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.2. Note the fact that different traditions stress different, but apparently equivalent fates. Athamas was either expelled or sacrificed (see Chapter 4).

¹⁰³Hdt. 4.158 (pertaining to the foundation of Cyrene, on which below); compare another oracle given to Phalantus which orders him to settle ‘where rain falls from clear skies’ (Paus. 10.10.6-8). In the context of the foundation of Tarentum the oracle turns out to be a riddle. When Aithra, Phalantus’ wife cries in despair for lack of success in finding the right site, Phalantus realises that rain (the tears) is indeed falling from a clear sky (Aethra, the name of his wife, means ‘clear sky’). Evidently, the oracle has been dismissed as later phantasy by those who believe that folklore motifs are not part of authentic Delphic responses. I wonder whether we must take the information of the married colonist accompanied by his wife seriously. In view of the entire tale, (the status of the Partheniae) on which below, I do not think this represents an important aspect of the tradition. For wild fig trees etc. see Chapter 1 Sections d, e and f.

¹⁰⁴See also Parker 1983, 142.

¹⁰⁵*FGrHist* 482 fr. 3, l. 11-12, 17-18.

more obvious and more rewarding to read the topographical elements in these tales as markers of the sphere the colonists belong in, and, hence, as markers of their status. Colonists who had been consecrated to Apollo needed to stay in a space that befitted their own status, the status of *hieroi*, of people who belonged to the god and were no longer members of a cultured community. A puzzling oracle about an impossible site, a Cretan episode, a promised land of wine and honey, they all mark out and emphasise the ‘otherlandish’ status of the dispatched people, irrespective of the specific impact of the element in the particular tale they belong to. These elements all represent, in the first place, the ways of the god the colonists are destined to keep to.

The ways of the god, but which god and why? If we look at our sources all *dekateusis* colonisations are connected with Delphi and/or Apollo. The connection may be expressed in two manners: first, with regard to the fact that the colonists are consecrated to Apollo. Secondly, in the sense that Apollo takes the lead, either through an oracle, sometimes even with route descriptions, via a guiding animal, or by appointing a leader in his place¹⁰⁶. In the second part of this section these roles of Apollo in the foundation tales will be discussed.

In the past, scholars argued that Apollo’s involvement in these colonisations resulted from his role as the oracular god from Delphi. It was from there that most colonising activity was initiated by powerful functionaries¹⁰⁷. However, this presupposes a very early role of the Delphic oracle. As we have seen, opinions differ strongly on the presumed date of the establishment of Delphi as the national centre for colonising activities.

Others have therefore attempted to find alternative explanations for Apollo’s involvement, for instance by emphasising his capacity of *Dekatephoros*¹⁰⁸, by stressing his role as *Delphinios*, the seafarers’ deity¹⁰⁹, or by claiming Apollo to be the *Archegetes* par excellence¹¹⁰. The earliest attestation of Apollo’s involvement in colonisation is found in Naxos on Sicily and dates from the late eighth BC where

¹⁰⁶It must be pointed out at once, however, that these elements also occur in tales that we do not range among the *dekateusis* colonisations.

¹⁰⁷This view, defended by scholars such as Curtius and Bouché-Leclercq, now counts as outdated. See Malkin 1987, 18 for references.

¹⁰⁸Delcourt 1955, 183-189 following H.W. Parke, ‘Consecration to Apollo’, *Hermathena* 72 (1948); Schmid 1947, 155f. For Apollo *Dekatephoros* = *Archegetes* see e.g. Paus. 1.42.5 (see Bömer 1990², 16).

¹⁰⁹See Leschhorn 1994, 111 for references.

¹¹⁰See e.g. Nilsson 1955², 660; W.H. Roscher (ed.), *Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie* (Leipzig 1884-1937), vol. 1, 438f.

Apollo is honoured as Apollo *Archegetes*. Whether this was the Delphic Apollo is, however, contested¹¹¹.

Additional elements in some narratives stress the active role of Apollo as the one who guides and protects the colonists en route. Two motifs expressing Apollo's involvement along the way may be mentioned: a sacred animal accompanies or aids the group¹¹², or a leader of the expedition, an *oikist*, is especially designated by the god, someone who may be considered his personal representative¹¹³.

A further epithet of interest in this context and indeed relevant in the present study is *Phoibos*, the purifier, the god who 'washes away' evil¹¹⁴. From this perspective Apollo's involvement in the *dekateusis*-colonisations in particular can be explained from his natural involvement in the crisis management that preceded the colonising activity, whether as a prominent consultant or the dispenser of divine remedies: colonisation as purification of the community. Callimachus sings praise of Apollo's colonising activities precisely in this quality of purifying deity, but rather emphasises the founding of a new order as one of Phoibos' favourite activities:

Following Phoebus men measured out their cities,
for Phoebus always takes pleasure in the establishment of cities;

¹¹¹See I. Malkin, 'Apollo Archegetes and Sicily', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* 16 (1986) 959-972; Malkin 1987, 19. Malkin considers this Apollo Archegetes the Pythian (Delphian) Apollo in his aspect of colonisation (contra e.g. Valenza Mele 1977). For Apollo Archegetes see also Pi. Pyth. 5.60; *SEG* 9.3, 11.

¹¹²For the crows in the Magnesian foundation tale see *FGrHist* 482 fr. 3, l. 11-12, 17-18; see also the Gephyraeae who had to follow cows (Paus. Gr. ap. Eust. ad Hom. *Il* 3.222 p. 408, 4f. (Van der Valk); *Sud.* s.v. Δόρυ κηρύκειον; Zen. 3.26) or the Boeotians who had to found a colony where they would spot a white crows (Photius s.v. κόρακας); see also the foundation of Cyrene below. On the close relation between Apollo and the *korax*, crow (or 'raven'), see e.g. Ael. *HA* 1.48; Demon *FGrHist* 327 fr. 7; Hdt 4.15; Pherec. *FGrHist* 3 fr. 3a; Gebhard 1926, 85. It should be pointed out that the sources mentioning such sacred animals as guides in this context are 3rd-century BC or later. This is of some importance in the discussion about mutual influence between the Italic *ver sacrum* traditions and the *dekateusis*, on which more in the next section.

¹¹³See for instance Leucippus in the Magnesian tale (*FGrHist* 482 fr. 3, Parth. *narr. am.* 5) and Battus in the foundation tale of Cyrene (below). See Malkin 1987, 27-28 on these 'oikists by surprise'.

¹¹⁴See Dougherty 1993, ch. 2 for the emphasis on Apollo's role in colonisations as Purifier: 'It is especially the need for purification in cases of murder that demands Apollo's participation and provides the connection with colonisation legends'. See however Parker 1983, 139 (with references) on Phoibos Apollo being rather a healing god than a god of (murder) purification (the epitheton *Katharsios* belongs to Zeus in the first place). See further Ogden 1997, 50: It is appropriate that Apollo should be the dispatcher of colonies, for it is he who is the lord of the *loimos* that so often occasions them. It is Phoibos, 'Purifier', who dispatches Battus to Cyrene, and it is this aspect of Apollo that Callimachus invokes as colony-founder.

Phoebus himself weaves their foundation¹¹⁵.

As far as the source-material on the *dekateusis* colonisations is concerned, Apollo is involved as *Archegetes*, as *Phoibos*, as *Patroios*¹¹⁶, and as Pythian Apollo. Usually he is just referred to as Apollo. In some narratives epitheta coexist¹¹⁷.

In sum, various explanations may be and have indeed been offered to account for Apollo's role in ancient Greek colonisation, and in the *dekateusis* in particular, stressing different epithets, differing qualities, capacities and functions of the god, partly substantiated with explicit references in the source-material. Do we need to choose or should we allow for a variety of (co-existing) explanations? Are we still dealing with one god? The complexity of drawing a characterisation of a deity in ancient Greek polytheism has been the subject of much recent scholarly attention¹¹⁸. To avoid gross simplification, or helpless entanglement in a complex debate, we may follow one scholar's structural approach of Apollo's multifaceted nature, in order to establish some unity in the phenomenological diversity disclosed above.

In a comparative approach of Apollo and Mars 'one hundred years after Roscher' Versnel sets out to show that both deities have much more in common than has been recognised during the last century, at a structural and functional level, but even - at second sight - at the level of iconography. Versnel's main thesis is not our principal concern here, although of importance in view of the next section on the *ver sacrum*. His interpretation of both gods, however, appears to be extremely relevant for the present enquiry, as for instance in the following passage:

Apollo and Mars specifically operate in periods, places and situations which demand control over the division of two worlds, the inner region of order, society, culture, and the outer one of chaos, wilderness, nature. They maintain a necessary balance by governing and regulating the transitional rituals by which familiar and beneficial elements are kept safe for, and inside the community, and harmful and foreign ones are dissociated and expelled. Accordingly, they are at home in both the marginal territories and at the centre. As we shall see in more detail below, they are able to create order out of a disorderly situation and to create or restore a social

¹¹⁵Callim. *Ap.* 55-57 (transl. Dougherty 1993, 32): Φοῖβῳ δ'έσπόμενοι πόλιας διεμετρήσαντο ἄνθρωποι· Φοῖβος γὰρ αἰεὶ πολίεσσι φιληθεῖ κτιζομένησι, αὐτὸς δὲ θεμείλια Φοῖβος ὑφαίνει. Purification and colonisation form the subject of the next chapter.

¹¹⁶Plu. *de pyth. or.* 16 (*Mor.* 402a). The link with colonisation is here only indirect however.

¹¹⁷The best example is the foundation tale of Cyrene in Chapter 7 Section b.

¹¹⁸See for the debate Versnel in the first chapter of the forthcoming publication of his Sather Lectures.

unity. On the other hand, they are capable of eliminating from the cultural centre those elements which endanger the existing cultural order. Their basic function of dividing and hence giving shape to two contrasting worlds manifests itself in terms of both space (civilization versus wilderness) and of time (tracing the boundary between old and new periods), but we shall discover that the division in the social field is certainly not less important and is perhaps the most essential of all¹¹⁹.

The colonists with their special status who are the subject of this chapter are included in Versnel's analysis:

The emigrants have been ousted from society by way of a ritual which has rendered them 'sacred', i.e. 'outsiders' or even 'outcasts'. They are no longer recognized as familiar. To regulate the elimination of this type of superfluous and indeed 'foreign' material is one of the essential tasks of both 'lustrative' gods. This may have some connection with the fact that they also guide the outsiders during their wanderings. Once having been put on this track, we might also consider explaining their founding activities in the light of the other side of their function: the task of establishing a new social order, the centripetal component of their activities¹²⁰.

Apollo's role in the rituals and the myths studied in the first two parts, though perhaps not this prominent, fits in well with this analysis¹²¹. It is, however, too early yet to turn to a combined approach of the three phenomena under scrutiny.

In conclusion of this section, no firm claims will be made on the rise of Delphi's involvement or on the original nature of Apollo's role in ancient Greek colonisation. A few oracles and passages about endless wanderings in otherland have been read as to underline the ambivalent character of the place where people belong who are 'sacred to the god', without however denying the value of other complementary readings. The tales on the *dekateusis* colonisations that interest us here belong to the larger category of the histories of ancient Greek colonisation, but occupy a place of their own at the same time. With their stress on crisis, expulsion through consecration to Apollo, and the impossibility of return, they perhaps have given a particular shape to, and legitimation of, more general problems and fears of colonisation practices. Colonists always were between worlds, their destinations beyond the horizons, where lethal threats and blessed affluence meet. However, the

¹¹⁹Versnel 1993, 310-311.

¹²⁰Versnel 1993, 311. Versnel proceeds by arguing that this structural pattern complies with the role these gods once played in early society, thus combining different levels of discourse in one approach. Although the debate on the socio-historical origins of Apollo's involvement in colonisation deserves our attention, it is not of primary importance in the context of this study and will therefore be left as it is.

¹²¹See Versnel 1993, 309.

shape these *dekateusis* tales acquired, whether they reflect historical events or not, is definitely rooted in existing patterns in ancient Greek thought on crisis management. Apollo's role in these particular circumstances does not seem fortuitous, whether as *Archegetes*, *Phoibos* or oracular god. As the god of two worlds, of order and chaos, or of culture and otherland, Apollo may be the deity par excellence to be involved in crisis management.

E. AN APPROVED REMEDY?

There is one last route to the *dekateusis* phenomenon still to be explored. Although taken from an Italic context, there is a group of sources that has bearings on the ancient Greek *dekateusis* as well. Albeit in a complex way, they are revealing and deserve our careful attention.

As with the ritual accounts and myths studied in the first two parts, the *dekateusis* tales offer little explicit comment on the ancient Greek 'rationale' behind this form of crisis management. The context seems a religious one, but this is, in times of dire peril, hardly surprising. However, before it is asserted that the evidence is inconclusive in this respect, the following accounts must be studied first. These passages do not only attest to a widespread existence of rituals of forced expulsions as an approved remedy in times of crisis, but also illuminate the circumstances in which they took place and the shapes these expulsions may have acquired. Moreover, they identify some motives behind the rituals. Their only disadvantage is that they are set in an Italic context.

In this final section these related sources will be analysed and discussed, especially with reference to the Greek material that has been studied in the earlier sections. Special attention will be paid to information regarding the interrelation between causes, remedies and effects, and any ancient motivation of this type of crisis management.

Let us begin with the following story concerning the Sabines related by Strabo:

The Sabini, since they had long been at war with the Ombrici, vowed - just as some of the Greeks do - to dedicate (*kathierosai*) everything that was produced that year; and, on winning the victory, they partly sacrificed (*katethusan*) and partly dedicated (*kathierosan*) all that was produced; then a dearth (*aphoria*) ensued, and someone said that they ought to have dedicated (*kathierosai*) the babies too; this they did, and

devoted (*epephemisan*) to Ares all the children born in that year; and these children, when grown to manhood, they sent away as colonists (*esteilan eis apoikian*), and a bull led the way¹²².

Although Strabo does not mention the term, it has been generally acknowledged that he describes a *ver sacrum*, an Italic custom with a historical-legendary dimension¹²³. One should not ignore the fact, however, that Strabo

¹²²Str. 5.4.12 (C 250)(translation Loeb): ... διότι πολεμοῦντες Σαβῖνοι πολὺν χρόνον πρὸς τοὺς Ὀμβρικοὺς εὖξαντο, καθάπερ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τινές, τὰ γενόμενα τῷ ἔτει τούτῳ καθιερωσάιναι, νικήσαντες δὲ τῶν γενομένων τὰ μὲν κατέθυσαν, τὰ δὲ καθιέρωσαν· ἀφορίας δὲ γενηθείσης, εἶπε τις ὡς ἐχρῆν καθιερωσάιναι καὶ τὰ τέκνα. οἱ δ' ἐποίησαν τοῦτο καὶ τοὺς γενομένους τότε παῖδας Ἄρεως ἐπεφήμισαν, ἀνδρωθέντας δ' ἔστειλαν εἰς ἀποικίαν, ἡγήσατο δὲ ταῦρος: Tradition records how an animal, usually one with a close relationship to Mars, guided these groups to their new homeland. Often their names reflect this: the Picentes (Paul. ex Fest. 235 L; Plin. *N.H.* 3.110; St. 5.4.2; compare the Dryopes), the Hirpini (Paul. ex Fest. 93 L; Str. 5.4.1-2 [C 240-241]).

¹²³The *ver sacrum* ritual is known from various other sources, too: a sacred spring ritual in which every living being born in the following year (or spring) was to be dedicated (or sacrificed immediately in the case of animals) when grown up, which apparently resulted in a colonising expedition. The *ver sacrum* is mostly a Samnite-Sabine tradition, whether historical or legendary. See for instance Paul. ex Festo 150 (L): *ver sacrum ... id est, quaecumque vere proximo nata essent, immolatueros sibi* (that is, that they should offer to him whatever was born in the next spring). This account, based on Alfius' first book of the Carthagian War, describes a course of action very similar to the Strabo passage. The Samnites, when struck by a pestilence, vowed a *ver sacrum* as the ultimate remedy to the plague. The next spring, freed from the terrible adversity, they sacrificed all newborn animals, but when revisited by the same kind of pestilence twenty years later, it appeared that their sacrifice had not been adequate; they had omitted to consecrate (sacrifice) the *human* increase of that sacred spring. Fortunately, Apollo showed mercy, the youngsters were expelled and everything returned to normal. These youngsters became the Mamertini, named after Mars. (Note how they called themselves after Mars, although it is Apollo who features throughout the story. Several reasons might be given for this, such as influence from Rhegium, or strategic reasons to construct an identity which is more Greece-oriented. This is all far beyond the scope of this study). And elsewhere Paul. ex Fest. 519 (L): *ver sacrum vovendi mos fuit Italis. Magnis enim periculis adducti vovebant, quaecumque proximo vere nata essent apud se, animalia immolatueros. Sed cum crudele videretur pueros ac puellas innocentes interficere, perductos in adultam aetatem velabant atque ita extra fines suos exigebant*. See also Sisenna Hist. Lib. 4. 99 (Non. Marc. 522): *quondam Sabini feruntur vovisse, si res communis melioribus locis constitisset, se ver sacrum facturos*. And 100: *quod voto damnati fetum omnem dicuntur eius anni statim consecrassent*. The authority *par excellence* on the historicity of the Roman *ver sacrum* is Liv. 22, 9, 7ff and 22, 10; 33, 44, 1-2 and 34, 44, 1-3, according to whom the vow was pledged in 217 BC, performed in 195 and repeated in 194 because of presumed flaws in the first execution. It is interesting both to assess that there were no human beings sacrificed, which is often pointed out as the main difference between the Italic traditions and the Roman *ver sacrum* (see also Plu. *Fab. Max.* 176 3-4), and to discover at the same time that the actual period between the pledging of the vow and its execution was 22, or, according to Liv. 23.44.2-3 only 21 years, the precise period of time between the vow and the expulsion of the grown-up sacred spring babies in the Festus passage. Moreover, in virtually all accounts cited in this section one senses a certain uneasiness concerning the fate of the human increase born in a sacred

explicitly adds that the practice was also current among some of the Greeks. The general idea is indeed quite familiar, although the story has a particular turn of its own: in the midst of a severe crisis - here a grim situation of war - a community vows its annual produce for the sake of its self-preservation. On winning the war they consecrate and sacrifice, but neglect to include the new-born children. The subsequent occurrence of a drought is interpreted as the result of this omission. Then, the human produce is also consecrated, but sent forth (to found a colony) only after they have grown to adulthood. Crisis is interpreted - explicitly in the case of *aphoria* - as the result of divine wrath. Consecration involves sacrifice *and* expulsion. We have also seen the animal guide before. Different from our earlier findings is the group selected as ritual victims: the entire annual increase. Whereas the ancient Greeks consecrated either a communal *dekate*, an *aparche* or an *akrothinion*, the Sabines vow an entire generation of all living beings and wait a decade or two before they implement the consecration by sending away the human beings.

A second account, this time one related by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in the context of the early history of the Aborigines, must be quoted in extenso, as its scope is of even wider and more general interest:

First, a sacred band of young men went forth, consisting of a few who were sent out by their parents to seek a livelihood, according to a custom which I know many barbarians and Greeks have followed. For whenever the population of any of their cities increased to such degree that the produce of their lands no longer sufficed for them all, or the earth, injured by unseasonable changes of the weather, brought forth her fruits in less abundance than usual, or any other occurrence of like nature, either good or bad, introduced a necessity of lessening their numbers, they would dedicate (*kathierountes*) to some god or other all the men born within a certain year, and providing them with arms, would send them out of their country. If, indeed, this was done by way of thanksgiving to the gods (*charisteria theois apodidoien*) for populousness or for victory in war, they would first offer the usual sacrifices and then send forth (*propemportes*) their colonies under happy auspices; but if, having incurred the wrath of gods, they were seeking deliverance from the evils that beset them, they would perform much the same ceremony, but sorrowfully and begging forgiveness of the youths they were sending away (*apelaunomenous*). And those

spring. This is not the place to go into more detail. For *ver sacrum* in general, cf. R. Bloch, *Recherches sur les religions de l'Italie antique (Hautes études du monde gréco-romain 7)* (Geneva 1976) 38ff; E. Dench, *From Barbarians to New Men. Greek, Roman, and Modern Perceptions of Peoples of the Central Apennines* (Oxford 1995); Eisenhut 1955, 911f., Heurgon 1957; Martin 1973; U.W. Scholz, *Studien zum altitalischen und altrömischen Marskult und Marsmythos* (Heidelberg 1970) 49ff. See also the more recent contribution to the discussion about the (historical) origins and the actual character of the *ver sacrum* by E. Herman, 'Le Lapis Satricanus et la colonisation militaire au début de la République', *MÉFRA* 111 - 2 (1999) 847-881.

who departed, feeling that henceforth they would have no share in the land of their fathers but must acquire another, looked upon any land that received them in friendship or that they conquered in war as their country. And the god to whom they had been dedicated (*katonomastheien*) when they were sent out (*apelaunomenoi*) seemed generally to assist them and to prosper the colonies beyond all human expectation. In pursuance, therefore, of this custom some of the Aborigines also at that time, as their places were growing very populous (for they would not put any of their children to death, looking on this as one of the greatest crimes), dedicated (*kathierosantes*) to some god or other the offspring of a certain year and when these children were grown to be men they sent them out of their country as colonists¹²⁴.

Although again in context an Italic event, this description closely corresponds with structures and elements of the *dekateusis* colonisations studied above. Dionysius himself points out this correspondence and stresses the widespread currency - also among both barbarians and Greeks - of the custom¹²⁵: a forced expulsion by means of a consecration to a god, either necessitated by a crisis, such as famine or drought, provoked by divine anger, or as a thanksgiving on the occasion of extraordinary fortune, perhaps ultimately induced by an ancient vow, results in a colonisation expedition under close guidance of a god. The colonists are literally called a sacred

¹²⁴D. H. 1.16.1-4 (translation Loeb): τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἱερὰ τις ἐξελθοῦσα νεότης, ἄνδρες ὀλίγοι κατὰ βίου ζήτησιν ὑπὸ τῶν γειναμένων ἀποσταλέντες, ἔθος ἐκπληροῦντες ἀρχαῖον, ὃ πολλοὺς βαρβάρων τε καὶ Ἑλλήνων ἐπίσταμαι χρῆσαμένους. ὁπότε γὰρ εἰς ὄχλου πλῆθος ἐπίδοσιν αἱ πόλεις τισὶ λάβοιεν ὥστε μηκέτι τὰς οἰκείας τροφὰς ἅπασιν εἶναι διαρκεῖς, ἢ κακωθεῖσα ταῖς οὐρανίοις μεταβολαῖς ἢ γῆ σπανίους τοὺς εἰωθότας καρποὺς ἐξενέγκειν, ἢ τοιόνδε τι πάθος ἄλλο τὰς πόλεις κατασχὼν εἴτε ἄμεινον εἴτε χεῖρον ἀνάγκην ἐπιστήσειε μειώσεως τοῦ πλῆθους, θεῶν ὅτῳ δὴ καθιεροῦντες ἀνθρώπων ἐτείους γονὰς ἐξέπεμπον ὅπλοις κοσμήσαντες ἐκ τῆς σφετέρως· εἰ μὲν ὑπὲρ εὐανδρίας ἢ νίκης ἐκ πολέμου χαριστήρια θεοῖς ἀποδίδοιεν, προθύνοντες ἱερὰ τὰ νομιζόμενα, εὐφήμοις οἴωνοις τὰς ἀποικίας προπέμποντες· εἰ δ' ἐπὶ μηνίμασι δαιμονίοις ἀπαλλαγὰς αἰτούμενοι τῶν κατεχόντων σφᾶς κακῶν τὸ παραπλήσιον δρῶεν, αὐτοὶ τε ἀχθόμενοι καὶ συγγνώμονας ἀξιοῦντες γενέσθαι τοὺς ἀπελαυνομένους. οἱ δὲ ἀπαναστάντες ὡς οὐκέτι τῆς πατρῴας γῆς μεταληψόμενοι, εἰ μὴ κτήσαιντο ἑτέραν, τὴν ὑποδεξαμένην αὐτοὺς εἴτε πρὸς φιλίαν εἴτε ἐν πολέμῳ κρατηθεῖσαν πατρίδα ἐποιοῦντο· ὃ τε θεός, ὃ κατονομασθεῖεν ἀπελαυνόμενοι, συλλαμβάνειν αὐτοῖς ὡς τὰ πολλὰ ἐδόκει καὶ παρὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην δόξαν κατορθοῦν τὰς ἀποικίας. τούτῳ δὴ τῷ νόμῳ χρώμενοι καὶ τότε τῶν Ἀβοριγίνων τινὲς ἀνθούτων ἀνδράσι τῶν χωρίων (κτείνειν γὰρ οὐδένα τῶν ἐγγόνων ἡξίουσιν, ἄγος οὐδενὸς ἔλαττον τοῦτο τιθέμενοι), θεῶν ὅτῳ δὴ καθιερώσαντες ἐνιαυσίους γονὰς ἀνδρωθέντας ἀποικίζουσι τοὺς παῖδας ἐκ τῆς σφετέρως. Elsewhere Dionysius comments upon Aborigines driving out Sicels from Roman territory: "They were a band of holy youths consecrated to the gods according to their local custom and sent out by their parents, it is said, to inhabit the country which Heaven should give them" (ἱερὰ τις αὕτη νεότης καθοσιωθεῖσα θεοῖς κατὰ τὸν ἐπιχώριον νόμον ὑπὸ τῶν πατέρων ἀποσταλῆναι λέγεται χώραν οἰκήσουσα τὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ δαιμονίου σφίσι δοθησομένην). These Aborigines were descendants of the Oenotrians, who were an Arcadian tribe, at least according to Dionysius *ad loc.*

¹²⁵Note that the Aborigines are said to have had Arcadian roots themselves (D.H. 2.1.2).

band¹²⁶. Again it is the Italic variant of the dedication of one entire generation on the verge of manhood that is described. With regard to the circumstances, it is especially noteworthy that in this passage extremes meet again: dedications may take place at times both too good and too bad¹²⁷. Most other elements are very familiar. Irrespective of the direct cause, the ceremonies were virtually identical. Just like in the case of Iambulus, first there were sacrifices. Then the consecrated people, here explicitly described as youths belonging to the same age-group, were ousted. They were sent forth under happy auspices in case of the community's gratitude, but sorrowfully in case of an appeasement. In the first case *propempein* is used, a term regularly used in sacrificial contexts¹²⁸, in the second *exelaunein* is employed, which belongs in a purificatory context and sounds definitely more merciless¹²⁹. Both terms refer to a form of consecration. The youngsters were outlawed, they were no longer members of the community and would have no more share in the land of their fathers. However, their prospects were believed to be beyond all human expectation. They now belonged in the sacred domain of the god, the very same god who first demanded the sacrifice and the consecrations that had led to their outlawed state. This god now protected them and guided them to their new homeland. Note that there is not one particular god in charge of these proceedings, nor one in particular keen on these dedications.

Another Italic example of the demanding nature of the gods is also recorded by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in connection with the Pelasgians. This people, when they were at the very zenith of their prosperity, were visited by divine wrath, which

¹²⁶As Versnel 1993, 305 already pointed out, the adolescents in Paul. ex Fest. 519 were expelled *capite velati*, veiled, which is a symbolic illustration of their sacred status. Another group of youngsters born in a sacred spring vowed during a pestilence and subsequently expelled were literally called *Sacrani* (Paul. ex Fest. 424L.; Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 7.796: *qui aliquando cum pestilentia laborarat, ver sacrum voverunt, unde Sacrani dicti sunt*). There are various other examples of Italic (of mostly Sabine-Samnite origins) peoples claiming a similar past (see Eisenhut 1955, 923).

¹²⁷Dionysius is quite unique in this respect, but compare Plutarch's account of the *aparchai anthropon* by the Magnesians and Eretrians above (Plu. *de Pyth.* or 16 (*Mor.* 402a)).

¹²⁸See e.g. Aesch. *Pers.* 622. See also F. Graf, 'Pompai in Greece. Some Considerations about Space and Ritual in the Greek *Polis*', in: R. Hägg (ed.), *The Role of Religion in the Early Greek Polis. Proceedings of the Third International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult, organized by the Swedish Institute at Athens, 16-18 October 1992* (Stockholm 1996) 55-65, esp. 62 and ref. (*propempein* used for the escorting of the *hiera* by ephebes in a centrifugal *pompe*).

¹²⁹See *LSJ* s.v.; Parker 1983, 223 n.87, see Sophron, fr. 3-9 (Hordern); Thuc. 1.126 (*agos elaunein*).

revealed itself through crushing defeats in war, drought, infertility, pestilences and uncommon deaths¹³⁰. When they asked the oracle

what god or divinity they had insulted to be thus inflicted and by what means they might hope for relief, the god answered that, although they had obtained what they desired, they had neglected to pay (*ouk apedosan*) what they had vowed (*euxanto*), and that the things of greatest value were still due from them (*alla prosopheilousi ta pleistou axia*). For the Pelasgians in a time of general scarcity (*aphoria*) in the land had vowed to offer (*katathysein*) to Jupiter, Apollo and the Cabeiri tithes (*dekatas*) of all their future increase; but when their prayer had been answered, they set apart (*exelomenoi*) and offered (*apethysan*) to the gods the promised portion of all their fruits and cattle only, as if their vow had related to them alone¹³¹.

It was only then that they realised that they had failed to execute the vow in full, for

of material things they had indeed rendered to the gods all the first-fruits (*aparchas*) in the right and proper manner, but of human offspring, a thing of all others the most precious in the sight of the gods, the promised portion still remained due; if, however, the gods received their just share of this also, the oracle would be satisfied¹³².

¹³⁰The description of the crisis that beset the Pelasgians is worth quoting in full for its completeness and severity (D.H. 1.23.2-3, translation Loeb): “The first cause of the desolation of their cities seemed to be a drought which laid waste the land, when neither any fruit remained on the trees till it was ripe, but dropped while still green, nor did such of the seed corn as sent up shoots and flowered stand for the usual period till the ear was ripe, nor did sufficient grass grow for the cattle; and of the waters some were no longer fit to drink, others shrank during the summer, and others were totally dried up. And like misfortunes attended the offspring both of cattle and of women. For they were either abortive or died at birth, some by their death also destroying those that bore them; and if any got safely past the danger of their delivery, they were either maimed or defective or, being injured by some other accident, were not fit to be reared. The rest of the people, also, particularly those in the prime of life, were afflicted with many unusual diseases and uncommon deaths.”

¹³¹D.H. 1.23.4-5 (translation Loeb): ... τίνα θεῶν ἢ δαιμόνων παραβάντες τάδε πάσχουσι καὶ τί ποιήσασιν αὐτοῖς λωφῆσαι τὰ δεινὰ ἐλπίς, ὁ θεὸς ἀνεῖλεν ὅτι τυχόντες ὧν ἐβούλοντο οὐκ ἀπέδοσαν ἃ εὔξαντο, ἀλλὰ προσοφείλουσι τὰ πλείστου ἄξια. οἱ γὰρ Πελασγοὶ ἀφορίας αὐτοῖς γενομένης ἐν τῇ γῇ πάντων χρημάτων εὔξαντο τῷ τε Διὶ καὶ τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι καὶ τοῖς Καβείροις καταθύσειν δεκάτας τῶν προσγενησομένων ἀπάντων, τελεσθείσης δὲ τῆς εὐχῆς ἐξελόμενοι καρπῶν τε καὶ βροσκημάτων ἀπάντων τὸ λάχος ἀπέθυσαν τοῖς θεοῖς, ὥς δὴ κατὰ τούτων μόνων εὐξάμενοι. Next Dionysius of Halicarnassus refers to his source for the story, that is Myrsilus of Lesbos (first half of the third century BC).

¹³²D.H. 1.24.1-2 (translation Loeb): χρημάτων μὲν γὰρ ἀποδεδόσθαι τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτοῖς ἀπάσας ὀρθῶς τε καὶ σὺν δίκῃ, ἀνθρώπων δὲ γονῆς τὸ λάχος, χρῆμα παντὸς μάλιστα θεοῖς τιμιώτατον, ὀφείλεσθαι· εἰ δὲ δὴ καὶ τούτων λάβοιεν τὴν δικαίαν μοῖραν τέλος ἔξειν σφίσι τὸ λόγιον.

From the last part of the story it appears that many emigrations resulted from the vow, for the selection of the first-fruits of the youth continued every year:

For the rulers in the cities did not cease to select the first-fruits (*tas aparchas*) of the youth as soon as they arrived at manhood, both because they desired to render what was due to the gods and also because they feared uprisings on the part of lurking enemies¹³³.

With regard to circumstances giving rise to dedications this account is very informative: at the zenith of prosperity the Pelasgians were hard-handedly reminded of an earlier vow pledged in less prosperous times. Moreover, defeats in war, drought, infertility, pestilences and mysterious deaths are here explicitly considered to be equivalent expressions of a severe divine wrath. This wrath can be remedied by valuable offerings to the appropriate god(s), alternately referred to as tithes (*dekatai*) or first fruits (*aparchai*). There is also the possibility of suspension. First, there had been a situation of general scarcity and they had vowed tithes of all future increase. Next, after a period of time of uncertain duration (in which times had improved, part of the vow had been performed and times had taken their turn for the worse again) they are made to realise their own neglect. Consequently they start consecrating the human tithe as well. And many tithes thereafter, resulting in a continuous flow of migrations. Interestingly, in this account *dekate* and *aparche* are used interchangeably, and there is no mention of the dedication of one entire age-group, but of a portion each year. Two other details should be noticed: first the literal confirmation of our earlier hypothesis that the sacrifice of human beings must be regarded as the most valuable sacrifice of all. Secondly, the full equivalence of sacrifice and expulsion in this account.

This account does not explicitly refer to corresponding Greek customs, but comes in fact in its description as close as possible to the ancient Greek *dekateusis*. As the Pelasgians might have had northern Greek origins¹³⁴, and Dionysius' source

¹³³D.H. 1.24.4 (translation Loeb): ... οὐ γὰρ ἀνέεσαν οἱ δυναστεύοντες ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι τῆς ἀνδρουμένης ἀεὶ νεότητος ἐξαιρούμενοι τὰς ἀπαρχάς, τοῖς τε θεοῖς τὰ δίκαια ὑπουργεῖν ἀξιοῦντες καὶ στασιασμοὺς ἐκ τῶν διαλαθόντων δεδιότες. For this last argument, see also Pl. *Leg.* 5.735b-736a.

¹³⁴D.H. 1. 23-24. The Pelasgians at the time were a people in Italy, though possible from northern Greek origins (D.H. 1. 17. 2f.). In Antiquity, the Pelasgians became more and more a kind of common name for pre-Greek and pre-Italic vagrant people (cf. e.g. Hdt. 1.56f; Str. 5.2.4 [C 220-221]). It is therefore not surprising that they also feature in this type of account. Compare the fate of the Dryopes. For a thorough study of Greek and/or Etruscan

for the story is Myrsilus of Lesbos, it is open to doubt whether the custom described is entirely Italic indeed.

This, in fact, holds for all accounts quoted so far. Many of the elements and particularities which structure and characterise the *dekateusis* colonisations, such as established above, feature in these accounts which are set in an Italic context. Should we therefore follow both Strabo and Dionysius of Halicarnassus who explicitly point out that Italic people, Greeks (and Barbarians) practised a similar, or even the same, custom? May we then consider their information as confirmation, and even supplement of, our ancient Greek source-material?

Modern scholars have been hesitant to identify the Greek and Roman practices completely. Some even deny the existence of parallel customs. With regard to the latter, it is either argued that there is no Greek authentic evidence for a *dekateusis* tradition¹³⁵, which must be regarded as the result of Romanised (collective) imagination. Or it is claimed that some original *ver sacrum* ritual, in which the annual increase of animals (and perhaps humans) was consecrated to Mars in times of dire peril, developed under Greek influence into the colonisation traditions at our disposal¹³⁶.

Those who acknowledge the practice among both the Greeks and Italic peoples¹³⁷ generally try to distinguish between the two by pointing out several differences¹³⁸. They emphasise for instance a difference in motive (shortness of food in the *dekateusis* versus religious propitiation of divine anger in the *ver sacrum*), in type of action and portion (expulsion of a tenth of the community versus - originally -

influences on the construction of Pelasgian history, see D. Briquel, *Les Pélasges en Italie: recherches sur l'histoire de la légende* (Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 252) (Rome 1984).

¹³⁵See also W.R. Halliday, *The Greek Questions of Plutarch* (Oxford 1928) on Plu. *Quaest Graec.* 35 (*Mor.* 298f-299a) on the *aparche anthropon* of Cretans: "(F)or once Greek legend has been influenced by Italic custom. In fact, what is described, with slight distortion due to its Greek dress, is the *ver sacrum* of the Italic peoples". However, see E. Dench, *From Barbarians to New Men. Greek, Roman, and Modern Perceptions of Peoples of the Central Apennines* (Oxford 1995) for the reverse argument.

¹³⁶Heurgon 1957; Martin 1973; Roscher 1873, 85: "... so dann ist es im höchsten Grade unwahrscheinlich, dass man bei Überbevölkerung, Misswachs, Pest oder grossen Gefahren erst 29-30 Jahre später zu dem Mittel der Auswanderung gegriffen haben soll, das im Momente der Noth allein erfolgreich sein konnte".

¹³⁷Burkert 1985, 84; Parke and Wormell 1956, vol. 1, 51; Versnel 1993, 289-334. Some scholars draw an even wider, Indo-European, circle, for which see Martin 1973.

¹³⁸See for instance Malkin 1987, 39.

the sacrifice a whole annual increase of animals and, possibly, human beings¹³⁹, and in gods involved (Apollo versus several Roman gods, most importantly among these, Mars). Finally, some other differences have been mentioned, for instance the Greek emphasis on personal leadership. Others have stressed the Italic motif of the guiding animal, which is, however, not entirely absent from ancient Greek tradition, though only in late sources¹⁴⁰.

With regard to the difference in portion, there may indeed be a difference between the Greek tenth, the *dekate* and the Italic custom to dedicate, or sacrifice, the entire increase of a year. Moreover, it remains possible that the *ver sacrum* originally involved animals only, though the uneasiness about the involvement of human ‘victims’ may also point to the inverse, as does the striking period of 21 years in the accounts of a *ver sacrum* of animals transmitted by Livy¹⁴¹.

Interestingly, the other presumed differences that have been pointed out in this discussion may also be considered arguments for further comparison. First, for instance, it is misleading to present the ancient Greek traditions as devoid of divine anger¹⁴². The *ira deorum* is not as literally present in the *dekateusis* tales as in these Italic accounts, but, as we have seen in earlier chapters, *aphoria*, *limos*, *loimos* and the like, were definitely considered to be expressions of divine wrath¹⁴³. Secondly, the difference between original sacrifice and expulsion through consecration must not be exaggerated. The accounts underline what has been argued already above: expulsion and death, or rather, consecration and sacrifice have a synonymical value in various respects¹⁴⁴. References to a distant past when a sacrifice was still a

¹³⁹Heurgon 1957, 9-10.

¹⁴⁰See e.g. Callim. *Ap.* 65-66.

¹⁴¹For these accounts in Livy (Liv. 22.9.7ff; 22.10; 33.44.1-2 and 34.44.1-3).

¹⁴²Contra Eisenhut 1955, 911-912 who claims that this distinction is so basic that any relation between the two can in consequence only be denied.

¹⁴³See for this e.g. Delcourt 1938; and e.g. Hes. *Op* 240f.; Soph. *OT* 25f., 171f., 269f.; Thuc. 2.54.

¹⁴⁴See Chapter 1 Section g and Chapter 6 Section c. For this discussion, see Eisenhut 1955, at 916 and 922. Schwenn 1915, 169ff has some important observations: “Opferung, d.h. Verbrennung auf dem Altar und Vertreibung gehen nebeneinander her. Ist das nicht wieder das alte Verhältnis, ..., und das am besten seine Erklärung darin findet, daß es sich um die Beseitigung eines Tabus handelt? Auch daß die geweihten Jünglinge und Jungfrauen verhüllten Hauptes über die Grenze gebracht wurden - eine Äußerlichkeit, die nicht unwichtig ist-, lehrt uns, daß sie tabu, d.h. besonderes heilig oder besonders unheilig waren”. About the relation between ‘Opferung und Beseitigung’ Schwenn is hesitant: “Die Beseitigung der Tiere durch Verbrennen konnte leicht zum Opfer werden, möglicherweise war sie schon von Anfang an eine Gabe an die Götter - eine Gabe in dem uns freilich schon bekannten Sinn, daß man einen gefährlichen Gegenstand, um nicht von ihm noch Schaden

sacrifice, have to be taken serious, though not necessarily by the historian: they may also be regarded to testify to an uneasiness about existing practices. Finally, with regard to the deities involved, it is precisely in the context of a comparative study of Apollo and Mars that Versnel has discussed and juxtaposed both customs. In this study he argues that the two gods are deeply akin in various respects and at several theoretical levels¹⁴⁵. Whether his argument is entirely convincing is beyond the scope of this study, the mere fact that it has been made in such a thorough way at least proves that the gap between the gods involved is not entirely unbridgeable, and therefore may count as a weak basis to claim the difference between the two practices.

Though, conversely, it may also be unwise to plead a complete identification between the *ver sacrum* and the *dekateusis*, there seems to be enough reason to follow the ancient authors in their claims that their information on the Italic events pertains to ancient Greek practices as well. Evidence from our earlier sections substantiates these claims. In conclusion of the present section one may argue therefore that the accounts pertaining to the Italic world not only confirm the existence of colonisation as an approved remedy in the ancient world, but also justify more detailed assumptions on these practices, such as made in the earlier sections of this chapter. With regard to the occasion - both situations of crisis and extremely prosperous circumstances - to the special status of the victims - *sacrani*, who are consecrated and expelled and expected not to return - to their otherlandish expectations, of both a blessed and dreadful world beyond the horizon - and to the involvement of the gods, who both cause the crisis and offer the way out, these

erleiden zu können, einem Gott schenkte. Und auch die Austreibung konnte durch die Annahme als Opfer aufgefaßt werden, daß dem Gotte das Verfügungsrecht über die geweihte Sache eingeräumt wurde". Eisenhut disagrees, drawing upon arguments which must be quoted, as they are of interest to this study (923): "Zuweilen wird das *ver sacrum* in Zusammenhang gebracht mit dem Opfer von *pharmakoi* in Griechenland. Auch hier werden Menschen zur Sühne geopfert: Allerdings ist dies kein *ver sacrum* und es werden nur Menschen geopfert, nicht Tiere, Menschen, denen die Schuld der Gemeinde aufgeladen wird und die dann samt der Schuld vernichtet werden. Ist diese Reinigungszeremonie nicht etwas anderes als das Gelübde (man darf nicht vergessen, daß das Gelübde wesentlicher Bestandteil ist) eines heiligen Frühlings? Bei festgestellter Befleckung wird man diese möglichst sofort zu beseitigen suchen, nicht ein Gelübde tun, daß man die Geburten des nächsten Frühjahrs dem Gotte weihen will. Man darf nicht zu sehr Gewicht auf Reigung (und Tabu) legen, wie Schwenn es tut, sondern wird das *ver sacrum* als eine dem Gotte dargebotene Gabe mit der Bitte um Versöhnung und eine Leistung (z.B. Ablassen vom Zorn und Beseitigung des nationalen Unglücks - *do ut des*;..)". Gift or purification, also in the Roman material this question appears crucial.

accounts sustain our earlier conclusions. Moreover, other insights gained in earlier chapters, such as the functional and symbolic equivalence of sacrifice and expulsion, and the supreme value of human beings in offerings to the god, have been endorsed as well.

As mentioned, there are scholars who deny the existence of at least one of these comparable practices in the ancient Greek and Roman world. However, the fact that variation between the ancient Greek *dekateusis* and the Italic *ver sacrum* seems to exist as well, primarily with regard to the selected portion of the population and the timing of the expulsion, seems to invalidate the arguments of complete Romanisation or Hellenisation: why should one ‘invent’ a past in terms of the traditions of another people, and consequently deviate from it in several respects at the same time?

From the additional insights from these accounts, indeed in context Italic, yet in tenor explicitly Greek as well, a final outline of the *dekateusis* phenomenon may be drawn. In certain situations of dire peril, when disaster seemed inevitable, in anxious times of transition or perhaps in times of great prosperity, a community tried to ensure its survival and avert impending doom by means of the removal of a part of its community, most likely of its youth. The ambivalent status of the candidate-colonists, as those who both belong and do not belong to the community at the same time, is repeatedly stressed. The expulsion, either executed directly or in the long term as a vow to be paid off later, was couched in the form of a consecration, a dedication to, usually, Apollo. In this manner, the band of colonists-to-be was transferred from their former habitat to the sacred sphere of the god. Their status changed accordingly. They became sacred, a term that allows for further ambiguity. Their departure was thus shaped in a way that prevented their return, as they were no longer members of the community: they were social outlaws. Their destinations were described accordingly: they were to set out to otherlandish places. They were the special wards of the god, blessed with the most prosperous prospects, who were to travel to the rich and fertile lands beyond the horizon. But if things went wrong, if *eutopia* turned into *dystopia*, and they tried to return to their homelands, they were not allowed to land and were even driven off by lapidation. Their *status aparte* then turned against them.

¹⁴⁵Versnel 1993, 289-234.

It is precisely this potentially negative dimension of the status of the colonists that is emphasised and elaborated on in a few other traditions to which we shall now turn. They have often, and rightly so, been compared to the *dekateusis* tales, but they deviate from them at the same time in a revealing way.

CHAPTER 7

COLONISATION AS PURIFICATION

In his *Laws* Plato explains that one can keep a flock healthy by regularly applying the appropriate purge: after separating the well-bred from the ill-bred, one sends the latter away to other herds¹. Interestingly, Plato claims that not only in case of animals, but also, or even particularly, in the case of man such purges are of the highest importance. Various methods for such cleansings of a city (*to peri katharmous poleos*) are available. A mild form of purification (*katharmos*) is one of the following kind:

When, owing to scarcity of food, people are in want, and display a readiness to follow their leaders in an attack on the property of the wealthy, then the lawgiver, regarding all such as a disease inherent in the body politic, ships them abroad as gently as possible, giving the euphemistic title of emigration to their dispatch².

Some lines below Plato again speaks of ‘emigration, or any other instrument of purification (*katharseos*)’³.

Although described in a Platonic frame of reference, this instrument of purification strongly reminds us of the *dekateusis* colonisations discussed above. However, there are differences, too. Whereas both types of colonisations originate in forced expulsions, the Platonic purifications of the city are devoid of the supernatural involvement that characterises the causes and remedies typical of the *dekateusis* colonisations. Hence, one of the major differences seems to be the status of the expelled. Whereas the *dekateusis* colonists were consecrated, called sacred, the special wards of the god, and only turned out to have a potentially negative side to their status when they tried to return to their homelands, the status of these Platonic

¹Pl. *Leg.* 5.735b: τὸν προσήκοντα καθαρόν ... διαλέξας δὲ τὰ τε ὑγιῆ καὶ τὰ μὴ καὶ τὰ γενναῖα καὶ ἀγεννῆ τὰ μὲν ἀποπέμψῃ πρὸς ἄλλας τινὰς ἀγέλας.

²Pl. *Leg.* 5.735e-736a: ὅσοι διὰ τὴν τῆς τροφῆς ἀπορίαν τοῖς ἡγεμόσιν ἐπὶ τὰ τῶν ἐχόντων μὴ ἔχοντες ἐτοίμους αὐτοὺς ἐνδείκνυνται παρσκευακότες ἔπεσθαι, τούτοις ὡς νοσήματι πόλεως ἐμπεφυκότι δι’ εὐφημίας ἀπαλλαγῆς ὄνομα ἀποικίαν τιθέμενος, εὐμενῶς ὅτι μάλιστα ἐξεπέμψατο.

émigrés leaves little doubt: they are described as potential revolutionaries whose prolonged presence forms a threat to the community from within.

Notwithstanding these differences, it is difficult to deny any relation between Plato's prescribed cure for diseased cities and the colonisations discussed in the previous chapter. It may be argued by anyone who is inspired by Plato's words that the *dekateusis* tales, once stripped off their legendary elements, in fact boil down to precisely such purifications⁴. Conversely, however, it is also possible to claim that Plato merely offers a rationalisation of existing (*dekateusis*) practices⁵. In this view, the negative potential in the status of the dispatched parties is elaborated on in order to account for the compulsory character of the colonising expeditions. The role of the divine is played down or annulled.

As a matter of fact, there are also colonisation tales in which the expelled ones are described in the first place in a negative way, for instance as bastards or murderers. In the first section of the present chapter our focus is shifted to a few instances of these tales, in which a communal crisis is overcome by the expulsion of outsiders, even of murderers, who consult the god at Delphi and thereupon found a colony. In the second section, the relation between this type of forced expulsions and the *dekateusis* colonisations will be further explored in presenting one last case, the foundation of Cyrene. It will turn out that the former and the latter type of colonisation may in fact be considered to represent two sides of the same coin. The pivot may be found in the status of all these colonists, who are, in some way, characterised as important, or prominent members of the community on the one hand, yet dispensable ones on the other. Saving victims who should both belong and not belong to the community they are to preserve, and, more importantly, whose newly gained status has a potentially positive and negative side at the same time.

A. BASTARDS AND WORSE

The tradition concerning the foundation of Tarentum, traditionally dated in 706 BC, is both comparable and contrary to the accounts so far. According to various

³Pl. *Leg.* 5.736a: οὔτε γὰρ ἀποικίαν οὔτ' ἐκλογὴν τινα καθάρσεως δεῖ μηχανᾶσθαι πρὸς τὸ παρόν.

⁴Parker 1983, 257f. is evidently inspired by these ideas in his social-realistic explanation of the *pharmakos* ritual. But can the expulsion of one or two scoundrels really make a difference?

testimonia, Tarentum was founded by a group of young men, in fact an entire generation, who had been expelled from Sparta. The precise circumstances of their departure are uncertain, but the narratives are nevertheless telling⁶.

These youngsters were called Partheniae or Epeunactae⁷. Although both names may originally only refer to an age-group on the verge of manhood, tradition has come to explain it in various meaningful ways. The Partheniae are said to be of one generation, conceived during the first Messenian War, when all regular sexual contact was suspended on account of the long-term absence of all male Spartan adults. Whether they were the sons of Spartan women by Helots⁸, by draft-dodging Spartans reduced to slavery⁹ or the illegitimate fruits of short visits by young Spartan soldiers sent on leave for this very purpose¹⁰, it is by all means evident that there was something wrong with their fathers and they were not regarded as full-fledged Spartan *homoioi*. And what is worse, they were not even considered bastards, they were regarded as sons of girls¹¹. Antiochus is most explicit on the matter and calls the unfortunate ones *atimoi*.¹² A highly significant term, implying, at the time of our source, the actual disqualification from social and political life.

The sources state - with minor variations - that these Partheniae have been expelled after a failed coup d'état. There was also some connection with an Apolline festival, the Hyacinthia¹³. Their leader, Phalantus, whose name signifies 'the bald

⁵See Pl. *Leg.* 5.740e where he refers to colonisation as an age-old contrivance.

⁶See esp. Str. 6.3.2-3 (C 278-279) which incorporates Ant. Syr. *FrGrHist* 555 fr. 13 and Ephorus *FrGrHist* 70 fr. 216). See further Athen. 271 cd (= Theopomp. *FrGrHist* 115 fr. 171); Arist. *Pol.* 1306 b22, Diod. 8.21; Polyb. 12.6b; Justin. 3.4, 1-18; D. H. 19.1-2; Heracl. Pont. *FHG* ii p. 220 xxvi, Paus. 10.10.3-8; Hesych. s.v. *Eneunaktoi* and *Epeunaktoi*. There is another tale relating the foundation of Tarentum, with another founder-hero, Taras, which we shall leave aside here.

⁷*Epeunactae* literally means 'bedmates' or 'those that lie on top'. *Partheniae* can be interpreted as 'children of virgins' but also as 'whimps'. S. Pembroke, 'Locres et Tarente: le rôle des femmes dans la fondation de deux colonies grecques', *Annales (ESC)* 5 (1970) 1240-1270, argues at 1247-1249 against the identification of Epeunactae and Partheniae, claiming that it was only in due course that these groups had become identified.

⁸See Arist. fr. 611.57 (Rose); Polyb. 12.6b; Serv. *ad Aen.* 3.551.

⁹Antioch. *FrGrHist* 555 fr. 13. Maybe the same Helots as mentioned before.

¹⁰Ephorus *FrGrHist* 70 fr. 216.

¹¹Vidal-Naquet 1981, 281. See also M. Ebbot, *Imagining Illegitimacy in Classical Greek Literature* (Lanham 2003) 67-83.

¹²Antioch. *FrGrHist* 555 fr. 13 (5th century BC).

¹³A closer look at the *Hyacinthia* and its historiography is revealing: Not only has Hyacinthus been considered a Vegetation Spirit (Mannhardt) and the *Eniautos Daimon* (Harrison), the *Hyacinthia* has also been regarded as the Dorian equivalence of the *Thargelia*. In 1975 B.C. Dietrich, 'The Dorian Hyacinthia. A Survival from the Bronze Age', *Kadmos* 14 (1975) 133-142 argued that the *Hyacinthia* was a 'Sühnefest' connected

one'¹⁴, allegedly started the rebellion during this festival by putting on (or lifting) a leather cap (*kune*)¹⁵. However, the conspiracy was discovered and the Partheniae were expelled¹⁶.

At Delphi, as mentioned, Phalantus was instructed to settle 'where they should see a goat dipping his beard in the sea'¹⁷. When they arrived in Italy and saw a wild fig tree growing near the sea covered by a vine, one of whose tendrils hung down and touched the sea, they realised that they had arrived at the designated place, as the Messenian term for wild fig tree is the same as for goat¹⁸. Another tradition, recorded among others by Pausanias, claims that the oracle declared that Phalantus should found the city 'when he should feel rain under a cloudless sky'. This turns out to be the place where the tears of Phalantus' crying wife, Aethra ('clear sky'), who is desperate to find the site, drip on his own head which he had laid in his wife's lap¹⁹.

As we have seen before, ancient Greek tales may enlarge specific features of the dispatched group in the person of their leader. In this tale, the hyperbastardy, the non-citizen status of the Partheniae is symbolically reflected in the name and appearance of Phalantus, the bald one. In Lacedaemonian society baldness is a signal

with Apollo in his aspect of *Apotropaïos* and *Alexikakos*, a festival, however, 'with incongruous elements'. M. Pettersson, *Cults of Apollo at Sparta. The Hyacinthia, the Gymnopaïdiai and the Karneia* (Stockholm 1992), following on the general line of interpretation already put forward by others, has argued that it is one of three Spartan festivals which together form a cycle of rites de passage. The three days of the Hyacinthia betray a dual structure in his opinion: the *Hyacinthia* start as a festival of ritual defilement, from which the community is then liberated so as to reestablish its order. It seems hardly a coincidence that Phalantus' rebellion is said to have taken place at this festival. See Pettersson for further details, such as wreaths and sacred meals consisting of, among other ingredients, cheese, barley cakes, fresh and dried figs.

¹⁴*LSJ* s.v.; see also Str. 6.3.2 (278).

¹⁵See Ogden 1997, 76 for a discussion of the meaning of this cap (a sign of diminished status), its donning or doffing.

¹⁶D.H. 19.2.

¹⁷D.H. 19.2, or Diod. 8.21.3: 'where the goat catches with joy the salt smell of the sea, wetting the tip of his grey beard'.

¹⁸We have observed several times already how these foundation oracles again represents the otherland as an inverse, chaotic place. A place that may be civilised, cultured, by unveiling the oracle as a riddle that can be solved (see already 3.1.d). Paus. 4.20.1-3 mentions another tale from the region with an oracle playing on this homonym.

¹⁹Paus. 10.10.6-7. See for this motif also *Sud.* s.v. *Myskellos*; schol. Ar. *Nub.* 371. It seems quite unusual that the colonists, or the founders, were accompanied by their wives. Later sources introduce other elements, for instance that Phalantus had been saved from drowning by a dolphin, unmistakably a symbol of Apolline favour (Paus. 10.13.10, perhaps also reflected in Hellenistic Tarentine coins depicting a dolphin-rider, for which see Malkin 1987, 219). Still later sources make Phalantus a son of Hercules or Neptune, see M. Corsano, 'Sparte et Tarente: le mythe de fondation d'une colonie', *RHR* 186.4 (1987) 130-131.

of contrast par excellence, a sign of otherness, as others have pointed out repeatedly²⁰. The outlawed status of this group of colonists is unmistakable.

The foundation tale of Tarentum has been mentioned by others in the margins of their discussion of the *dekateusis* tales²¹. There are certainly correspondences: following a *stasis*, an entire generation is expelled via Delphi to found a colony elsewhere. Interestingly, the events are said to have taken place at an Apolline festival, the *Hyacinthia*. However, differences stand out as well. At the narrative level there is no consecration to Apollo, no innocent party of colonists, but a rebellious group of marginals who are the very reason of the communal trouble. In this way their expulsion seems fully justified. The forced expulsion thus complies with the Platonic instrument of purification, the riddance of socio-political dirt. Be that as it may, two issues remain intriguing: first, there is hardly any version of the tale that explains in an entirely satisfactory way the relation between the fathering and the expulsion of an entire generation. Secondly, and closely related to the first observation, is the fact that the dynamics of the tale precisely lie in the tension between inclusion and exclusion. The Partheniae are no outsiders pur sang, but disqualified members of the community. Again, the status of the colonising group is ambivalent, and much trouble is taken at the narrative level to reconcile both sides.

A second colonisation tale that deserves attention in this context of bastard-founders (and worse) pertains to the foundation of Syracuse, allegedly one of the wealthiest places on earth²². The pattern is clear: a crisis (*auchmos* and *loimos*) has afflicted Corinth. Delphi is consulted and an oracle specifies the reason for the natural disasters as the wrath of Poseidon (or ‘the gods’). The god is angry on account of the murder of one young Aktaion, ‘the handsomest and most modest youth of his age’, by his rejected lover, Archias, ‘of the family of the Heracleidae, in wealth and general influence the most outstanding man in Corinth’ and demands punishment. Among the party consulting Delphi on the nature of the crisis and the

²⁰See Ogden 1997, 75-79 for discussion and references. One may add the meaning of the leather cap, a symbol of Phalantus’ diminished status (see Ogden 1997, 76).

²¹See for instance Bömer 1990², 23 (“Von einer *dekate* ist in diesem Falle allerdings nicht die Rede”); Malkin 1987, 70-51; Rohrbach 1960, 13-20.

²²See Strabo’s version (Str. 6.2.4 [C 269-270]): “Syracuse was founded by Archias, who sailed from Corinth about the same time that Naxos and Megara were colonised. It is said that Archias went to Delphi at the same time as Myscellus, and when they were consulting the oracle, the god asked them whether they chose wealth or health; accordingly, the god granted to the former to found Syracuse, and to the latter Croton”.

possible remedy the culprit himself is present. Archias decides not to return to Corinth, but sails to Sicily and founds Syracuse²³.

There are more murderers and bastards who founded a colony, but we shall not pay attention to them²⁴, as they mostly represent an individual motif rather than that they are part of a larger story pattern that consists of a communal crisis, divine wrath, consultation of Delphi and subsequent colonisation. In the Syracusan case above, the pattern is embedded in an unhappy love-story, featuring an angry god who must be propitiated, and a wealthy nobleman, who ends up as the leader of a colonising expedition, outlawed because he is guilty of murder. Colonisation as purification, as Plato would say, albeit (partly) expressed in personal terms.

In his study on religion and colonisation Malkin already pointed out that the sequence in the Syracusan foundation tale is precisely the same as the one structuring the *dekateusis* tales: 'loimos; divine wrath thought to be its cause; inquiry at Delphoi by delegation which includes the oikist; colonization'²⁵. However, the way one should relate this type of tale to the *dekateusis* tales was not further explored by Malkin. As in the past, historicity still outweighed meaning in the discussion: as soon as tales were labelled legendary, they lost most of their value for the historian.

More recently, a novel approach was introduced in the study of this material. The historicity of the *ktiseis* was no longer the main focus of discussion. From this new perspective, the stories are read as metaphors: telling one thing, but meaning something else, with a historical importance of its own. Two studies appeared virtually at the same time, the one by Dougherty which was already mentioned earlier, the other *Tyranny and Political Culture in Archaic Greece* by McGlew. They do not differ greatly in their approach, but have an emphasis and theoretical underpinning of their own.

McGlew considers the foundation tales in the first place as myths. Mainly focusing on bastards in colonisation tales, McGlew argues that, at the individual level, the social marginality of these outlaws served to express the appropriate

²³See Paus. 5.7.3; Plu. *amat narr.* 2 (*Mor.* 772d-773b); schol. A.R. 4.1212; Thuc. 6.3.2; *Sud.* s.v. *Archias*.

²⁴For more bastards and criminals, see e.g. McGlew 1993.

²⁵Malkin 1987, 42: "It may even be possible to argue that what we have here is a hidden motif of *dekate*; but this is not necessary. The situation implies overpopulation (which is inherent in any shortage of food caused by natural disaster) and a need to colonize".

severance between them and their community, their ‘social alienation’²⁶, which, at the same time, defines their distinct political potential. Moreover, at a political level, ‘the founder’s quest to overcome domestic crime or illegitimacy articulated the colony’s own distinct history of autonomy’²⁷.

McGlew offers a way to read these ‘negative’ foundation tales as positive sources of personal power and collective autonomy. His approach however is set in a different context with different aims than ours. McGlew has not set out to deal with tales of colonisation in a more encompassing way, as he focuses, primarily, on tyrannical discourse in Ancient Greece. The question whether and, if so, how these tales featuring bastard colonists may relate to the *dekateusis* colonisations is beyond his scope.

Dougherty’s study on the other hand is, as we have seen above, entirely focused on colonisation, especially ‘on the cultural metaphors active in colonial discourse’. According to Dougherty purification was a very apt metaphor for leaving home and (re) establishing society: “Rituals of purification, then, provide the Greeks with a conceptual model with which to describe colonization in terms of the expulsion of part of its population, its galvanization of individuals into a unified group, and its creative role in founding a new city”²⁸. In her discussion of the material Dougherty concentrates on colonisation tales featuring murderers, as these offer the clearest expression of the purification metaphor at the individual level: “In a kind of narrative metonymy, the purification of an individual becomes a model for that of the city”²⁹. In Dougherty’s view, it is not surprising that Apollo is prominently present in these tales: in Phoibos Apollo, both purifier and coloniser, the two cultural systems, purification and colonisation, meet³⁰.

From within her own perspective, one may claim that Dougherty’s approach is too short-sighted. Just as with her interpretation of riddles, which she tied up too much with colonisation instead of with Delphic activity in general, her approach of purification, though initially of a general scope, is too narrowly applied.

Conversely, another contribution to the discussion recently made by Ogden should be criticised for the opposite reason. Ogden deals with both the *dekateusis*

²⁶McGlew 1993, 162.

²⁷McGlew 1993, 162-169.

²⁸Dougherty 1993, 37.

²⁹Dougherty 1993, 37.

³⁰Dougherty 1993, 33.

colonists and the bastard-, murderer- and criminal-oikists in a highly inclusive way. He places them all under one heading: colonist-groups as scapegoats. Ogden presents a theory, his so-called *loimos* schema, which offers shelter to all dispatched groups, and individuals, irrespective of their particularities, whether murderer, bastard or sacred colonist. This schema runs broadly as follows: “the birth of an unsatisfactory individual, who either embodies a *loimos* for his society or brings *loimos* upon it; the expulsion of this individual from his community; the individual’s triumph over his expulsion and achievement of rulership; the transference of his blighted status to his enemies”³¹. The function of the schema is, according to Ogden, “to explain the extraordinary power of an individual ruler. (Super-)legitimacy is portrayed as deriving from its opposite”³². However, thus generalising, Ogden ignores all variety and difference among the sources³³. For now, it suffices to conclude that Ogden’s inclusive approach is too undifferentiated to shed any light on the complex relation between *dekateusis* colonisations and the colonisation tales of Tarentum and of Syracuse.

This type of approach, heralded by scholars such as Dougherty, McGlew and Ogden has indeed opened up new ways of dealing with the colonisation tales. The historian’s traditional burden has been cast off by approaching the tales as active forces in the construction of (a new) reality, no longer concerned with the pressing myth-or-history-question. However, apart from more specific counter-arguments, one more general objection may be made. The historian feels ill at ease when historical facts are entirely dismissed as unimportant. Should one really turn the entire narrative tradition on colonisation into metaphor? Ultimately, this is a clash of paradigms, which we shall not try to pacify here and now³⁴.

In conclusion of this section, in which a second type of forced colonisations, the ‘negative’ colonisation tales, has been discussed, a few observations must be made. This type of forced colonisation may be labelled negative in the sense that the crisis management takes a negative turn at the narrative level: the expelled colonist(s) are the ones who are to blame for the crisis. In both tales the leaders of the colonising

³¹Ogden 1997, 1.

³²Ogden 1997, 2.

³³Note that Ogden also includes the *pharmakos* ritual and some of our myths in his overall theory.

³⁴At the beginning of Chapter 8 some more attention will be paid to Dougherty’s methodology.

expedition were portrayed as marginalised, or even outlawed men. Their expulsion was a purification of the community, in the Platonic sense. In both cases, however, there appeared to be an additional dimension to the mainly negative status of the colonists. Time and again the Partheniae were carefully described as disqualified members of the community, not as strangers *pur sang*: they were outsiders from within. Archias in turn was a murderer, but noble member of the polis elite at the same time.

A similar ambivalence was discovered in the *dekateusis* narratives, which might be labelled 'positive' in the sense that the victims were described, at least at first sight, as innocent youth consecrated to the god. On closer inspection, however, the status of these colonists appeared to have a negative side as well, both before they were expelled and afterwards, especially if they tried to return.

Notwithstanding the differences, there indeed seems to be interrelation and overlap between these tales and the *dekateusis* colonisations, both with regard to their structuring patterns, their function as crisis management, and, on second sight, even at the level of the narrative, in terms of the ambiguous status of the victims. The questions remain whether this relation between sacrificial consecration and purification as forms of crisis management has a structural basis and, if so, what should be done with the remaining differences. McGlew and Dougherty offer interesting ways to read these 'negative' tales, but they do not approach them in the wider context of the *dekateusis* colonisations, thus leaving out part of the relevant material. Ogden on the other hand includes too much too enthusiastically, disregarding all variety. Before trying to find an answer of our own to these questions we must call at one more place on our tour d'horizon of colonisation tales, at Cyrene.

B. CYRENE AND THE AMBIGUITIES OF OTHERNESS

The rich literary source material concerning the foundation of Cyrene, dated around 630 BC, has received ample scholarly attention, both within a *dekateusis* frame of reference and apart from it³⁵. There are three main versions of the foundation tale:

³⁵For a comprehensive survey of the material see Malkin 1987, 60f, further J. Bremmer, 'Myth and History in the Foundation of Cyrene', in: P. Azara (ed.), *Mites de fundació de ciutats al món antic (Mesopotàmia, Grècia i Roma)* (Barcelona 2001) 155-163. Ogden 1997, 53-61; Rohrbach 1960, 31f (*dekateusis* foundation); Schmid 1947, 108-116. Much interesting work on the foundation narratives of Cyrene has been done by Calame, see

Herodotus presents us with both a Theraean and a Cyrenean version of the foundation of Cyrene, and there is an inscription, the so-called Founders' Oath, the authenticity and historicity of which is much debated³⁶. In addition, there are many shorter references and fragments, some of which add new variants or provide narrative synonyms³⁷. The foundation tale of Cyrene does not correspond with the *dekateusis* tales in a literal sense, but shows close similarities with both this type of colonisation and the traditions about the foundation of Tarentum and Syracuse discussed above.

e.g. C. Calame, 'Mythe, récit épique et histoire: le récit Hérodotéen de la fondation de Cyrène', in: C. Calame (ed.), *Métamorphoses du mythe en Grèce antique (Religions en perspectives 4)* (Geneva 1988) 105-125; idem, 'Narrating the Foundation of a City: the Symbolic Birth of Cyrene', in: L. Edmunds (ed.), *Approaches to Greek Myth* (Baltimore 1990) 227-341 and idem, *Mythe et histoire dans l'antiquité grecque. La création symbolique d'une colonie* (Lausanne 1996) and most recently, C. Calame, *Myth and History in Ancient Greece. The Symbolic Creation of a Colony* (Princeton 2003), transl. by D. Berman of C. Calame, *La création symbolique d'une colonie* (Lausanne 1996). This translation is said to be 'a second, updated, and enlarged edition', which I, unfortunately, have not been able to assess myself. Calame's discussions, and his interpretation of Pindar's handling of the Cyrenean material is too different from the more modest aims of this chapter, and too complicated to be dealt with in passing.

³⁶See Hdt. 4.150-157 and SEG 9.3. The inscription consists of two or three parts, the first (l. 2-22) a fourth-century decree from Cyrene, granting equal citizenship to Theraeans in Cyrene, ordering the publication of the original Founders' Oath in which such granting had been stipulated. The original agreement (l. 23-51), allegedly from the seventh-century, consists of the decree of the Theraean *ekklesia* (!) at the time (l. 23-40), and a narrative part (l. 41-51) with a conditional curse taken by the whole Theraean community. As for authenticity, see L. Jeffrey, 'The Pact of the First Settlers of Cyrene', *Historia* 10 (1961) 139-147 and A.J. Graham, 'The Authenticity of the OPKION TΩN OIKISTHPΩN of Cyrene', *JHS* 80 (1960) 94-111. The conclusion drawn by R. Meiggs and D.M. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford 1988) 9 is widely supported: "(we) prefer to assume a long and complex moulding of a genuine original within the tradition of Thera. We would not care to make precise the elements of oral and written transmission in this tradition, but we are sure that we are dealing with a situation to which our standards of literal authenticity are inappropriate, and think it not unsafe to assume that we have before us genuine elements of what was said and done in seventh-century Thera." There is much literature on this Oath, see apart from the works already cited e.g. S. Dusanic, 'The OPKION TΩN OIKISTHPΩN and fourth-century Cyrene', *Chiron* 8 (1978) 55-76; C.A. Faraone, 'Molten Wax, Spilt Wine and Mutilated Animals. Sympathetic Magic in Near Eastern and Early Greek Oath Ceremonies', *JHS* 113 (1993) 60-80, who argues that 'the melting wax in the Cyrenean foundation-oath reflects a form of cursing already native to the Greek world in the archaic period'; F. Létoublon, 'Le serment fondateur', *Métis* 2 (1989) 101-115.

³⁷See e.g. Diod. 8.29; Justin. 13.7.1-4; Pi. *Pyth.* 4.4-8 and 55-62; 5.85-95; schol. A.R. 4.1750-1757, 1760-1764d; schol. Pi. *Pyth.* 4.10a = Menecl. *FGrHist* 270 fr. 6. Some less directly relevant, and generically highly complex primary source-material will not be studied in detail, e.g. most of the other references to the founding of Cyrene in Pindar, including his ninth Pythia.

The Founders' Oath, fascinating in its own right, unfortunately does not give a full account of the events - doom, defeat or drought - causing the expulsion of the colonists from Thera. It does, however, explicitly attribute the initiative to Apollo³⁸, and stresses how the Theraeans sent away (*apopempen*)³⁹ a certain Battus as 'leader of the expedition and king'⁴⁰ and with him as companions (*hetairous*), chosen on equal terms and in like manner, young men (*tous hebontas*) from the seven regions of Thera, though others were free to join. The sending away seems absolute and final. Insubordination was regarded a capital offence. Even complicity in disobedience to this emergency measure was punished by death. The actual oath was taken by the whole population of Thera, men and women, boys and girls, both those who stayed on Thera and those who were forced to leave. The oath was accompanied by a striking ritual, which involved the burning of moulded waxen images, a clear instance of a conditional self-curse⁴¹. All those involved swore to the oath's agreement, and placed themselves under the new, in this way divinely sanctioned order which was committed to the prosperity of Thera and Cyrene. A communal act, a ritually marked new beginning. But what, then, was the old situation like, what were the severe circumstances that had to be renounced, or remedied, by such serious means?

The traditions about the circumstances that motivated the expulsion from Thera vary: drought, *stasis*, pestilence and general ills are mentioned⁴². From the two versions of the foundation of Cyrene handed down by Herodotus it appears that the Pythia ordered the colony's foundation as a remedy against a persistent drought. In the Theraean account⁴³ it is first king Grinnus of Thera, when consulting Delphi

³⁸l. 25-26: ἐπεὶ Ἀπόλλων αὐτομάτιξεν Β[άτ]τωι καὶ Θηραίοις ἀποι[κί]ξαι Κυρῶναν. Compare the first lines of the Cyrene Cathartic Law ('Apollo decreed that (the Cyreneans) should live in Libya ...'), for which see *SEG* 9, 72 and Parker 1983, 332ff. On αὐτομάτιξεν, see H.W. Parke, 'A Note on αὐτοματίζω in Connexion with Prophecy', *JHS* 82 (1962) 145-146.

³⁹l. 27: ἀποπέμπεν. Compare the terminology in the *pharmakos* ritual.

⁴⁰l. 27-28: ἀρχαγέτα[ν τ]ε καὶ βασιλῆα.

⁴¹For details and analysis, see C.A. Faraone, *Talismans and Trojan Horses. Guardian Statues in Ancient Greek Myth and Ritual* (New York and Oxford 1992) 39, 80-84. See further Burkert 1992, 67 ('a powerful rite of annihilation'). See both authors mentioned for ancient Mediterranean cultural borrowing in this respect. On images as 'le double' of humans, see J.-P. Vernant, *Figures, idoles, masques* (Paris 1990).

⁴²Hdt. 4.150-158 (drought, present ills); Justin. 13.7: *pestilentia*; schol. Pi. *Pyth.* 4.10a = Menecl. *FGrHist* 270 fr. 6 (*stasis*).

⁴³Hdt. 4.150-153 and 157-158.

concerning ‘other matters’⁴⁴, who is ordered to found a colony in Libya. But he thought himself too old for such undertakings, and points to some nobleman in his entourage, Battus⁴⁵. At first, however, this Battus, the king and all other Theraeans, fearful of an uncertain expedition to an unknown place, disregarded Delphi’s command. Then there was no rain for seven years on Thera⁴⁶. Again Delphi is consulted, and again the Pythia orders the founding of a colony in Libya. This time, a delegation is sent ahead to investigate the area and some time later, after they have returned again to announce that they have founded a colony on an island just off Libya, a hundred men are sent, and Battus is appointed ‘leader and king (*hegemon kai basilea*) of all’. There is no indication that all of this happened in anything but a voluntary and friendly atmosphere.

Whereas this Theraean version is, but for the severe drought, a happy one, Herodotus’ Cyrenean account⁴⁷ and the Oath reveal in contrast the more awkward aspects of the expedition. In the Cyrenean account a much more prominent role is ascribed to the man named Battus, here the bastard son of a notable Theraean and his Cretan concubine, a princess who had fallen into disgrace with her stepmother. This Battus apparently went to Delphi to enquire concerning his speech impediment⁴⁸. The Pythia replied that he should found a colony in Libya: “Battus, you came because of your voice; the lord Phoibos Apollo sends you to sheepfeeding Libya⁴⁹ as the founder

⁴⁴Note, with Malkin 1987, 61 that the king brings Apollo a hecatomb, something too costly to be done without a good reason.

⁴⁵Hdt. 4.150: Battus is the son of a certain Polymnestus, who is a descendant of the Minyan Euphemus (‘he who speaks well’).

⁴⁶Note Fontenrose 1978, 121 where the oracle is dismissed as legendary: “Droughts have certainly occurred in Greece, but it is unlikely that the driest year has not had some rain.”

⁴⁷Hdt. 4.154-156 and 157-158.

⁴⁸The name Battus is controversial. Herodotus (Hdt. 4.155) himself doubts if Battus was the original name of the man. He claims it was Aristotle (see also e.g. Arist. fr. 528 and fr. 611.6 (Rose); Callim. *Ap.* 76f.; Diod. 8.29; Pi. *Pyth.* 5.87). According to Herodotus, Battus is the Libyan title of the kings of Cyrene. Etymologically, the name Battus may derive from βατταρίζω, stammering, for which see Hesych. and *Sud.* s.v. βατταρίζειν; see also O. Masson, ‘Le nom de Battos, fondateur de Cyrène, et un groupe de mots grecs apparentés’, *Glotta* 54 (1976) 84-98, who rejects the possibility that Battus is a Libyan term in origin. The speech impediment is a persistent element in the traditions concerning Battus.

⁴⁹Other utopian adjectives found in this context: fair-crowned, harvest-bearing (Pi. *Pyth.* 4.5). Compare also the oracle’s reference to the hole in the sky (Hdt. 4.158) On the other hand, all accounts describing the actual cure of Battus refer to very wild lions roaming this Libyan soil. Both sides fit in well with what has been said above about ancient Greek ideas of ‘Otherlands’.

of a city”⁵⁰. Battus ignores the odd command. Then however, matters turn to the worse both for Battus and for the Theraeans, who then leave for Delphi, ‘ignorant of the cause of their suffering’, to enquire concerning their present misfortune⁵¹. The priestess proclaims that they would fare better if they joined Battus in founding Cyrene in Libya. Colonisation is thus presented as a twofold remedy, a *poina*⁵², at a personal level a remedy against a speech impediment, at a collective level against communal ills. Then the Theraeans dispatch (*apestellon*)⁵³ Battus and one hundred men. In due course, however, they try to return home, unable to achieve their goal. Upon their attempt to land on Thera they are prevented to moor, pelted and chased away. After founding a settlement off the coast of Libya and living there for a while (at this point the Theraean version takes up with the Cyrenean again), they finally succeeded in founding Cyrene at a place called ‘the Fountain of Apollo’, where ‘the sky has holes in it’⁵⁴.

Menecles in turn calls the motif of the stammering voice mythical, and claims that civil disruption at Thera was the true cause for the expulsion of Battus, who was the leader of one of the factions. Menecles’ version thus fits in well with Plato’s remark on the purification of a city and with the foundation tale of Tarentum. Finally, Justin refers to a pestilence, from which the Theraeans sought delivery⁵⁵.

With regard to the Theraean ills, it may be concluded once again that drought, pestilence or *stasis* are in fact interchangeable elements in a larger story pattern, of which crisis, expulsion, Delphic consultation and subsequent foundation form the backbone. Again, the pattern strongly reminds us of the *dekateusis* tales and the foundation tales of Tarentum and Syracuse, notwithstanding the variety at the narrative level.

There is another ground for comparison with the *dekateusis*: although the colonists are never explicitly said to have been sacred to the god, or consecrated, the

⁵⁰Hdt. 4.155. It is not unusual in foundation tales that the *oikist*-to-be visits Delphi regarding other matters, when he is unexpectedly assigned to become the leader of an colonisation expedition. Compare e.g. Myscellus and the foundation of Croton (Diod. 8.17). The initiative is thus claimed by Delphi in absolute terms.

⁵¹Hdt. 4.156.1, translation Malkin 1987, 64.

⁵²Cure, compensation in Pi. *Pyth.* 4.63.

⁵³For *apostellein* see also Arist. fr. 485 (Rose) = Plu *Quaest. Graec.* 35 (*Mor.* 299a).

⁵⁴Hdt. 4.158, compare the foundation oracles given to Phalantus and Myscellus: Paus. 10.10.6-7; Diod. 8.17.

⁵⁵Justin. 13.7.1-4.

role of Apollo in the foundation of Cyrene is prominent⁵⁶. Not only do the colonists settle at this Fountain of Apollo, Apollo has also played an active role in the entire process of the establishment of Cyrene, both as initiator and as guide⁵⁷. As we have seen, the Oath credits the god, Apollo Archagetes, with the initiative⁵⁸. The colonisation of Cyrene is ordered by the oracle as a remedy against various ills, whether personal or collective⁵⁹. In all versions of the colonisation tale, even in Menecles' one, the Delphic oracle is consulted. A fourth-century BC sacred law from Cyrene starts with the reminder that it was Apollo who decreed to colonise Cyrene: 'Apollo ordered in an oracular response to inhabit Libya using purifications, expiatory rites and'⁶⁰. Callimachus too points out how Phoibos Apollo showed Battus fruit bearing Libya. A crow, a *korax*, one of Apollo's sacred animals, showed the way⁶¹. Delphic Apollo, Phoibos Apollo, or Apollo Archegetes - Apollo plays a crucial role in the foundation of Cyrene. Though the colonists are never literally referred to as being sacred to Apollo, they seem to be his special wards all the same.

In order to further explore the interrelation between the two types of colonisation tales one last question stands out: what was the status of the colonists from Thera? An answer to this question may not only be found at the narrative level of the tale, but also in the figurative language used to describe the leader of the colonising expedition, Battus. One reservation must be made, however: as was pointed out before, on the basis of the narratives it is possible up to a certain extent only to distinguish between original status and the status of the colonists once they have been expelled.

In the Cyrenean version, it is simply stated that a hundred men were dispatched with Battus as their leader. The Oath offers more specific information: it stipulates that from every family one son, selected on equal terms and in likewise manner, should leave⁶². According to the Theraean version in Herodotus one hundred men set sail, coming from seven different regions of Thera, taken by lot from every

⁵⁶Even if we disregard Pindar's ninth Pythian, the relation between Apollo and Cyrene is tight.

⁵⁷Diod. 8.29.1, see also Hdt. 4. 155.

⁵⁸l. 10-11, see also Pi. *Pyth.* 5.54-62.

⁵⁹See Pi. *Pyth.* 5.63-64 for Apollo the founder and dispensing authority of antidotes against serious illnesses.

⁶⁰*SEG* 9.72.1-3

⁶¹Callim. *Ap.* 65-66; see also Pi. *Pyth.* 4.53-56.

⁶²Oath: l. 39-41. For a detailed discussion of the procedures cf. J.H. Oliver, 'Herodotus 4.153 and *SEG* IX.3', *GRBS* 7 (1966) 25-29.

pair of brothers. Others were allowed to join, as long as they were free born. Both the oath and the Theraean tradition thus record a severe and systematic, but impartial, procedure for the recruitment of the colonists. In consequence it can be concluded that they must have been free-born, male members of the community, sons, no fathers yet.

One clause in the Oath sheds some light on the status of the colonists. The Oath allows for the possibility to return, for 'if the colonists don't maintain the settlement and the Theraeans cannot help them and they are forced by hardships during five years, they shall leave that country without fear to return to Thera to their own prosperity and they shall be citizens'⁶³. Interestingly, the corollary of this clause is that those who were sent away lost their citizenship, if they had it already (being young men), at least for five years. Consequently, they were in fact stateless, a wandering band of companions under the guardianship of Apollo. But the promise must have alleviated the pain of departure.

That this clause was taken seriously can be read in the Cyrenean account of the colonisation of Cyrene. According to this version the colonists tried to return not long after they had been expelled, but they were not allowed to set foot on Thera at all and were forced to leave again. If this was not on account of any disloyal or revolutionary behaviour in the past, which is unlikely in view of the criteria for selection, it must be assumed that it was something about their new status that prevented their homecoming⁶⁴. They were kept off, chased away instead. Originally, they were no criminals, nor enemies, but they had been made into ones, they had become outsiders, or even outlaws.

The colonists belonged to the community, they were no foreigners or slaves, but had to be 'dismembered' to be expelled. Battus embodies this double status. As others have pointed out, Greek narrative tends to personalise public action and to project collective characteristics onto an individual⁶⁵. Approaching the material on the foundation of Cyrene in this way, one more expression of the anomalous status of the colonists can be read in the figurative language describing Battus. Whereas in the

⁶³Oath: l. 34-36.

⁶⁴On outlaws not allowed to set foot on land, see Paus. 2.29.10; Pl. *Nom.* 866c-d, 867e. See also Parker 1983, 119.

⁶⁵See e.g. Dougherty, 1993, 17 referring to M. Labate, 'L' iniziativa individuale nella colonizzazione greca come topos narrativo', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* ser. 3, vol. 2.1 (1972) 92-104.

Theraean version Battus is described as of noble descent, one of the king's intimates⁶⁶, in fact the one who takes the king's place' the Cyreneans mark him as a bastard troubled by a speech impediment: a multiple disqualification from normality⁶⁷. The semiotics of physical defects is a complex phenomenon far beyond the scope of this study, but one more observation must be made. It is safe to assert that in the context of Greek culture, in which the outsider, the stranger is described in terms of his deviant speech (the '*Barbaros*'), the stigma of stammering implies more than an ordinary handicap. It can be viewed as a contrast signal, a powerful symbol of otherness⁶⁸ Battus' bastardy and stammer disqualify him from full membership of the community, though it must be added that his bastardy at the same time linked him to Theraean and Cretan nobility⁶⁹. Noblesse manquée, one might call this - a suitable victim in crisis management.

Gierth attributes the stigmatisation of Battus to internal strife in Cyrene between anti- and pro-Battiades factions. She nevertheless does not know how to deal with the remaining inconsistency: "Dabei fällt auf, dass Battos einerseits als der Ausgewählte dargestellt wird, andererseits aber mit dem Makel des Bastards behaftet ist. Diese beiden Teile der Erzählung harmonieren nicht miteinander"⁷⁰. Gierth misses the point: it is only half the truth to think that physical handicaps indicate otherness only of an inferior kind. As with 'otherlands'⁷¹, 'otherness' is seldom a univocal state. Many handicaps are also token of an especially favoured position, and may be viewed as an extraordinary gift at the same time, take for example Teiresias'

⁶⁶Justin. 13.7.2 even calls him adolescent son of king Grinus - with speech impediment though ...

⁶⁷Contra Malkin 1987, 67, who denies that bastardy is a disqualification in any respect. See Ogden 1997, 53-54 for an elaboration on this theme of bastardy.

⁶⁸Aristotle regards speech as the special property of man in contradistinction to the other animals (Arist. *Pol.* 1253a). There are more ancient sources that single out speech as the human determinant *par excellence*. Speech as the symbol of the *polis*-culture, of community life. In A. *Pr.* 201-204 it is described how the god created order from chaos by giving man, among other things, a tongue, the messenger of words. Comp. also e.g. E. *IT* 947f.; S. *OT* 237 and 1436-1437. From this point of view it is significant that Pindar has Battus regaining his speech when he was frightened by lions in Lybia, where he is to found the new community. Chaos had to be turned into order. (Pi. *P.* 5.57; compare also Paus. 10.15.7 and schol. Callim. *Ap.* 65 [p.51 Pfeiffer]).

⁶⁹For lameness equals bastardy, see Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.1-4 and Pl. *Rep.* 535f.

⁷⁰Gierth 1971, 100.

⁷¹Note another example in Diod. 8.29, where the oracle twice calls Cyrene 'fair crowned', a desirable place where Apollo himself will guide him to, but warns Battus at the same time that 'barbarian warriors there, clad in the skins of beasts, will rush against you'.

blindness that allowed him to see much more than an ordinary mortal⁷². We have come across a similar ambiguity in the case of the Dryopes, famous both for being most unrighteous *and* of divine descent. The same holds true for Battus, the chosen bastard, the one with the telling stammer.

The original status ambivalence (member, non-member of the community) on the one hand and the ambiguity of otherness on the other hand are complex ingredients in semi- or pseudo-history. When reading about Battus' 'limping' origin and tongue⁷³, it must be realised that such figurative language does not comply with any scholarly dismantling of the narrative sequence of the story. On the one hand, Battus' bastardy is a comment on his original status - Theraean and non-Theraean, illegitimate nobleman - and thus renders him someone who belongs and does not belong to the community he lives in. His stammer may be read and explained similarly. It is another way to show his deviant status: he shares the same language, but he is not able to express himself as the others. On the other hand, as social and physical handicaps, as contrast-signals, they also function as metaphors of his outsiderhood, of his newly gained status after the dispatch. Here the symbolic value of these stigmata, the ambiguity of being rejected and gifted, of being outsider and saviour, is triggered. Contrast signals, such as physical deformity, can function to disqualify the person in question from the point of view of the polis community, but can simultaneously function as an indication of a special fate, as has been claimed in the case of the Dryopes. Moreover, the contrasting characteristics of Battus and his kind may be regarded as a metonymy of the extraordinary status of this type of colonists, who have lost their identity and not yet assumed a new one. Battus embodies their anomalous nature: they are non-persons, no longer part of the Greek cultural matrices, but lost in-between, belonging to the world of gods and animals.

For a better understanding of these narrative mechanisms, one must resist the temptation of wanting to find out exactly what symbolises what. The same symbols function differently at different moments. Moreover, it cannot be decided whether this outsiderhood is ambivalent because Battus, and consequently, his band, is stateless, or because he is under special protection of the god.

⁷²See the Prologue of this study.

⁷³Cf. J.-P. Vernant, 'The lame Tyrant', in: J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece* (New York), 207-236 at 209; trans. of *Mythe et tragédie en Grèce ancienne* (Paris 1972).

Battus' ambiguous status, the noble, stammering bastard, is exemplary for all those colonists removed from their community by way of crisis management. Already disqualified from normal membership of their community in one way or another, their ambiguous status grows to full stature once they have been ousted, whether consecrated to Apollo as innocent youths, or expelled as outlaws.

Some scholars have ranged the colonisation of Cyrene among the *dekateusis* colonisations⁷⁴, or have compared the proceedings to the Italic *ver sacrum*⁷⁵. The structuring pattern of the tale is indeed very similar to the *dekateusis*- and *ver sacrum* pattern, just as Apollo's role and some details, for instance the sacred guiding animal. However, although one should indeed acknowledge correspondence, typical *dekateusis* terminology is absent from the various versions of the foundation tale. Moreover, some narratives, emphasising Battus' bastardy or claiming that the colonists formed a rebellious faction on Thera, may rather be compared to the colonisation tales of Tarentum or Syracuse. To say, with Rohrbach and others, that the foundation of Cyrene was another example of a *dekateusis* colonisation might be saying too much⁷⁶. To claim, however, with Defradas, that it is simply an expulsion, might be too little⁷⁷. Strictly speaking, the foundation tale of Cyrene therefore forms a category of its own, related to the *dekateusis* tales on the one hand, but also comparable with the purificatory colonisation tales on the other hand.

The two types of forced colonisation tales may even be seen to converge in the protagonists: a few sources report that the leader of the *hieroi* who founded Magnesia, their *oikist*, designated by Apollo himself, was one Leucippus⁷⁸. This Leucippus, of noble birth, first among his peers, had actually murdered his father: a noble *atimos* in charge of a band of sacred colonists.

Crisis and the dispatch of colonists in order to save the lot form the backbone of all these tales. It seems unwise, however, to lump them all together. The

⁷⁴See e.g. Rohrbach 1960, 31f.

⁷⁵See e.g. P. Roussel in: *RÉG* 49 (1936) 42-43. Or see the combination of colonists founding Rhegium, the *hieroi* from Chalkis who were joined by Messenian *atimoi* (Heraclid. Lemb. 55 (Dilts) = Arist. fr. 611.55 [Rose])

⁷⁶One of the arguments of the supporters of the *dekateusis*-option compares the in-between time on the island off Libya, and the following consultation in Delphi, to the Magnesian tradition of wandering *hieroi* (Rohrbach 1960, 33: 'prototypische *dekateusis*' and elsewhere (37): "Die Tatsache, dass die Kolonie ein Opfer an den Gott ist, wird in der Tradition der "Geopferten" umgewandelt in die Vorstellung der Erwählung durch den Gott und seines besonderen Segens für die Stadt").

⁷⁷Defradas 19722, 248 (justified by means of religious arguments).

dekateusis tales relate about the consecration of (innocent) human first-fruits to Apollo in order to remedy a crisis, whereas the ‘negative’ tales rather describe the crisis management as the riddance of communal dirt. Battus occupies middle-ground between the two: being a bastard, a stammerer, he nevertheless has a special relationship with Apollo, designated to be leader of the colonising expedition and under special protection of the god. On closer inspection, however, the status of all colonists is far from univocal. The polluted murderer is an important member of the community at the same time, of noble origins, a leader in disguise, about to acquire a special relation with the god. The sacred colonists may not have been full-fledged members of their community. Moreover, when they try to return to their fatherland they appear to be considered *personae non gratae*. Apart from functional and structural similarities between these tales and the *dekateusis* colonisation, there appears to be a further correspondence: the potentially ambiguous status of the expelled. Precisely there where the main contrast between the tales has initially been located - a further argument for comparison and mutual clarification presents itself.

In outward appearances, one last difference between the types of forced colonisation remains: the difference between (sacrificial) consecration on the one hand, and (purificatory) expulsion on the other. A distinction we have encountered in various forms before.

⁷⁸*I. Magnesia* 17.1.30f; *Parth. narr. am.* 5.

CHAPTER 8

INS & OUTS OF ANCIENT GREEK CRISIS MANAGEMENT

In the first section of this chapter attention will be paid to the history of interpretation of the tales of forced colonisations. It will soon become evident that the question of historicity of these tales has long been all-pervasive. However, within the framework of this study, the difference between real action and the imagination matters mostly for the victims involved. For the historian of mentality the proceedings described are informative either way.

In the second and third section a last approach of crisis management is in order, the one that will be called the semiotic, or structural-semiotic approach. From this perspective, attention will be given to the victims of ancient Greek crisis management first. Three contributions to the discussion of the *pharmakos* rituals and/or the myths of crisis management will receive attention. All three add insight into the ambiguous nature of these victims of the phenomena discussed so far. Suggestions will be made to render this ambiguity meaningful in the context of ancient Greek culture.

There is, evidently, a risk in talking about ‘ancient Greek culture’. One would prefer less general statements, tied up with a particular place and time (e.g. fifth-century Athens). The nature of our material does not really allow for such fine-tuning. Hence, conclusions that can be drawn, such as ‘saviours must fall outside the norm’ may be of such a general scope that they rather belong in handbooks of sociology than in a study of a specific ancient Greek phenomenon.

In the last section the two major ways of crisis management will be discussed: sacrifice (or sacrificial consecration) and purification (purificatory riddance). By looking at these actions from a structural-semiotic perspective, the differences diminish or even vanish. Both sacrifice and purification appear in the first place to be transformative strategies, or processes, by which a community re-establishes order. By setting apart, the community is reunited, by redefining, its self-image restored. The ambiguous victim appears an apt discriminatory means: in representing the conflation of categories, hence in representing chaos, his exclusion re-establishes and

re-emphasises order. This redefining of categories and boundaries is articulated in space as well, whether acted out in ritual or expressed in myth or tale.

By using these wider definitions of sacrifice and purification, one is liberated from the confinements of intellectualism: there is more to a phenomenon than its appearance at the level of observation, and meaning may be found in other than its taxonomic or theological capacities. However, as was already observed in Part 2 in the context of ‘feel-good rituals and myths’, from this perspective various phenomena are in fact reduced to carriers of the same or highly similar meaning. Even if everyone is relieved by the acting out fear, or purified and reborn by a redefinition of collective identity - the myths and tales and rituals studied so far are *not* identical. One way to explain the differences is to relate them to a supposed ambiguity of the sacred, as the victims of rituals, myths and tales of crisis management seem to meet, ultimately, in the sphere of sacrality. However, other differences remain and must be acknowledged, or dealt with. But that will be the subject of the next, and last, part of this study.

A. FACT OR FICTION

In entering the realm of colonisation tales, the historian of colonisation ventures into difficult territory. The *dekateusis*-area in particular has often been labelled a danger-zone, or was even shunned at all. The question whether these tales should be approached as historical or literary sources has long dominated the studies on the subject. The subtleties of this discussion are not of interest here, as we are primarily concerned with the mental landscape that has shaped these traditions. Nevertheless, a short overview of the main standpoints in the discussion is necessary. In passing, we shall also pay some attention to the interpretation of the events.

One may say that during the nineteenth century, the tales of forced colonisations were usually taken for granted and explained as they had been handed down, rather than scrutinised on being true or false. Scholars did not distinguish sharply between the *dekateusis* and regular colonisation, and, explicitly or implicitly, took the former as a kind of prototype of the latter. Generally, the consecration of human tithes was considered to be a mitigation of propitiatory human sacrifice¹.

¹See e.g. S.P. Lampros, *Ta kata tous oikistas ton par Ellenikon apdikion kai tas autois aponeomenas timas kai pronomias* = *De conditorum coloniarum graecorum indole*,

In due course scholars became more critical about the historicity of these traditions. Until the last decade of the twentieth century, contributions to the discussion have been made, roughly speaking, from three angles: by historians of colonisation, who virtually ignored the *dekateusis*², by scholars who were primarily interested in the role of religion in colonisation or in the Delphic oracle in general, and finally, by scholars who collected *ktiseis* as a literary phenomenon in the first place. The latter two types of contributors did pay some attention to the *dekateusis*. Although their emphasis and conclusions varied, they were all caught within the debate whether these colonisation tales represented fact or fiction.

The rigorous application of sound criteria has offered no relief. Defradas and Fontenrose, who applied very strict criteria to test the historicity of oracles, dismissed virtually all Delphic oracles as false (and/or late inventions), and even ignored the *dekateusis* phenomenon entirely. Others, with less rigour, have arrived at different conclusions. Parke and Wormell, for instance, have also doubted the historicity of the *dekateusis* tales on the basis of their criteria of authenticity (straightforward sanctions and geographical directions, no riddles etc.). Nonetheless, at the same time, they have suggested, in line with earlier views, that the *dekateusis* custom as such may have been at the basis of Delphi's involvement in ancient Greek colonisation in general³. Nowadays, still within this line of thinking, as cautious a historian of ancient Greek religion and colonisation as Malkin accepts the possibility that one colony, Rhegium, was actually founded with the dedication of a human tithe to Apollo to Delphi⁴.

praemiisque et honoribus (Leipzig 1873) which I have not seen myself; Müller 1824, 255-260; W.H. Roscher (ed.), *Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie* (Leipzig 1884-1937) vol. 1, 440. See also Malkin 1987, 18 and Miller 1997, 89f.

²See e.g. J. Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas. Their Early Colonies and Trade* (London 1964, 1999⁴); Graham 1964; also 'The Colonial Expansion of Greece' and 'The Western Greeks' in: J. Boardman and N.G.L. Hammond (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge 1982) vol. 3.3, 83-195, and most other contributions on colonisation in reference books.

³Parke and Wormell (1956) vol. 1, 55. Rohrbach 1960, 174 makes a similar argument in his *Kolonie und Orakel*. On the one hand he has questioned the historicity of the majority of *dekateusis* narratives. On the other hand, he has claimed that the dedication of human beings to remedy divine anger used to be a fixed religious belief, even more ancient than the involvement of Delphi in colonisation.

⁴Malkin 1987, 31-40. Myth, or legend, and history still belong to different worlds in this approach, see for instance p. 21: "Because we are concerned with historical colonies we shall have little to say on legendary oikists and legendary foundation oracles".

Apparently, only the traditions concerning the colonisation of Rhegium do not fall short of the criteria of authenticity that Malkin has established⁵.

However, one may wonder whether it is justified to distinguish between history and legend in such an absolute way on the basis of a few criteria with regard to the narrative traditions concerned. Is a narrative unhistorical if it contains some improbable elements? Is it authentic if it happens to contain no such improbabilities? What is improbable anyway? A riddle in an oracle, a reference to the Trojan war? Moreover, could it be that the foundation of Rhegium was a unique incident in ancient Greek history? These questions are difficult to answer in a straightforward way, and are particularly pressing in the context of the *dekateusis* tales. Consequently, the *dekateusis* phenomenon has usually occupied quite a marginal place in scholarship, as most historians have preferred to deal with ‘what really happened’ in ancient Greek colonisation⁶.

Entering the same field of ancient Greek colonisation tales, but from the other side, the scholar who is interested in the literary phenomenon, the *ktiseis*, has trodden a ground hardly more firm. Apart from discussions about the antiquity and genre of these narrative traditions, the question of their historicity looms large. The problematic relation between history and literature also runs through these studies, as the titles and subtitles show: *Griechische Gründungsgeschichten als Zeugnisse historischen Denkens vor dem Einsetzen der Geschichtsschreibung* (Greek foundation tales as evidence of historical thinking before the beginning of historiography)⁷ or ‘Ktisissagen und tatsächlich erfolgtes Kolonisationsgeschehen’ (*Ktiseis* legends and colonisations that actually took place)⁸. Here too, the distinction between fact and fiction remained crucial⁹.

⁵Malkin 1987, 27 (straightforwardness of the oracular response) and 31-37. Note that Malkin dismisses the riddle in the oracle’s response on the foundation of Rhegium as a late invention.

⁶Defradas 1972²; Fontenrose 1978.

⁷Gierth 1971. See e.g. idem, 81: “Das Motiv der Menschenweihung ist keine literarische Erfindung, es beruht auf realem Geschehen”.

⁸Subtitle of Schmid 1947.

⁹See esp. the work of Calame on the foundation of Cyrene, mentioned in Chapter 7 Section b. Although Calame has contributed considerably to our understanding of myth and the way the individual myths are shaped by the media and contexts in which they are communicated, the aims of the present study are more modest and Calame’s work is left out of consideration. Moreover, whereas Calame sets out to stress the differences between individual myths, I try to use them in a mutually illuminating way, albeit not with regard to meaning, but to shapes (see the Introduction to Part 3).

Starting from the 1960s onwards, some historians have tried to make sense of the themes in our tales, rather than dismissing them merely as being unhistorical¹⁰. As we have seen, more recently scholars have explicitly attempted to circumvent the intellectual trap of the fact-fiction discussion. Dougherty¹¹ for instance is, in her own words, ‘concerned with the representations, not the realia, of archaic colonisation’¹². In setting aside ‘the often problematic distinctions between what modern scholarship identifies as myth, legend, folklore, and history’ she focuses ‘on the kinds of cultural metaphors that the Greeks use to describe and to understand colonization’¹³. These metaphors informed reality and played their role in the construction of history. One of these metaphors is, as we have seen, purification. However, as pointed out above, the historian may feel ill at ease with her work, because the metaphorical character of the material may be overstressed. As often with theories that realise a breakthrough at one level, they create a new dead end on another. Should one really abandon all attempts to distinguish between fact and fiction in ancient Greek historiography? By choosing to read the narratives as metaphors, Dougherty, too, makes a choice between fact and fiction.

No matter how important the question of the historicity is judged, some scholars have paid some attention to the interpretation of the *dekateusis* colonisations. The views hardly varied. As we have seen, these tales were usually interpreted within a sacrificial frame of reference, as a propitiatory offering, as a gift of appeasement¹⁴. Delcourt, however, points to another dimension, noticing an

¹⁰See e.g. Ducat 1974; S. Pembroke, ‘Locres et Tarente: le rôle des femmes dans la fondation de deux colonies grecques’, *Annales (ESC)* 5 (1970) 1240-1270; Vidal-Naquet 1981, 267-288.

¹¹Dougherty 1993 and C. Dougherty, ‘It’s Murder to Found a Colony’, in: C. Dougherty and L. Kurke (eds.), *Cultural Poetics in Archaic Greece. Cult, Performance, Politics* (Cambridge 1993) 178-198.

¹²Dougherty 1993, 5. Dougherty spends her intellectual energy no longer on distinguishing between authentic and false, between historical truth and literary representation, but follows Hayden White in his view that ‘historical narratives are not so very different from poetic or literary texts in their use of narrative strategies and figurative language’ in order ‘to familiarize the unfamiliar’ (ibidem). See also idem, 32: “Given the nature and scarcity of our sources, we can probably never know ‘what really happened’, but we can still learn a great deal about how the Greeks conceptualized colonization from the kinds of stories they tell”.

¹³Dougherty 1993, resp. 4, 5, 6.

¹⁴See e.g. Rohrbach 1960, 174: ‘Abhilfe gegen eine göttliche Strafe’; Malkin 1987, 40: “If we are to consider this tradition (about the foundation of Rhegium, LK) authentic, we must impute a religious reason to it. Probably some natural disaster occurred that was

element of purification, too. She points out that the archaic notion of an offering should not be regarded too easily as a gift only. The forced colonisations, for instance, involve an expulsion of the ills as well as offering a *dekate* of youngsters. “The point of departure of the tithe”, according to Delcourt, “must be searched in purification”¹⁵. We shall return to this in Chapter 9, but it deserves to be mentioned here already. Unfortunately, Delcourt does not elaborate her observation, nor does she relate the purificatory dimension to the other, ‘negative’ tales of forced colonisation.

These latter were taken even less seriously by scholars: stories of blood-stained oikists were generally considered to be purely legendary¹⁶. Murder-heroes have long been regarded as a mythical aberration. More recently however, they have become ‘good to think with’. For it is especially this second type of forced colonisations that are the focus of attention in the more recent, alternative approaches, as we have seen in the previous chapter¹⁷. The story need not be taken literally, but is made sense of in a metaphorical way.

As far as I know, only a few scholars have paid attention to both types of forced colonisation at the same time. In a more intellectualist tradition, it was Rohrbach who included the *dekateusis* colonisations and the foundations of Tarentum and Cyrene in his ‘*Untersuchungen zur sakralen Begründung der griechischen Kolonisation*’¹⁸. An actual *dekateusis* may not have taken place very often, but as a model to understand Delphi’s involvement it is of great importance. Others made mention of both types in their collections of *ktiseis*, but did not analyse both types in any systematic way.

regarded as an expression of divine wrath and an attempt at appeasement took such an extraordinary form.”

¹⁵Delcourt 1955, 186-189: “(...) il faudrait être mieux renseigné sur le sens archaïque de l’offrande. Nous y voyons trop facilement un cadeau, sans plus. (...) Certaines communautés frappés par des fléaux ont expulsé, par mesure de purification, une partie de leur jeunesse, (...). On expulsait avec eux - et peu importait qu’ils fussent ou non dignes de reproches - le Fléau, le Malheur, la Famine de toute groupe social. (...) Le point de départ de la dîme est à chercher dans la cathartique”. See also Versnel 1993, 309: “However, there is another aspect as well: their expulsion implies an apompe of threats, famine, or internal conflicts”. For tithing as a consequence of pollution, see Parker 1983, 341-343 (*SEG* 9.72, 33-72).

¹⁶Malkin 1987, 42: “An inquiry at Delphoi by a founder who wishes to atone for a bloodguilt is a common motif in legendary foundation oracles but never in historical foundations” (with ref. to Parke and Wormell 1956, vol. 1, 54 and 304).

¹⁷See esp. Dougherty 1993; McGlew 1993.

¹⁸Rohrbach 1960.

When Burkert, in the context of the *pharmakos* ritual, explained the elementary group-reflex of expelling one for the sake of the others, he made the following observation:

In the foundation sagas of a number of colonies it is related that the first settlers had been dedicated as tithes to the god at Delphi and so had been sent abroad; the driving out, a kind of *ver sacrum*, is here interpreted as a first fruit offering instead of as a *katharmos*; in other foundation sagas it is again outsiders, bastards, slaves, who are driven out and find a new beginning in the foreign land¹⁹.

From this more functionalist point of view, one might say, with a reference to the discussion of Burkert's work in Part 3 of this study, that there are 'feel good foundation sagas', rooted in socio-biological patterns, with a comparable structure, but fleshed out in different ways at the narrative level.

Furthermore, as we have seen, Ogden has approached all forced colonists as scapegoats, whether they were consecrated in a tithe or expelled as bastards or murderers. Ogden has emphasised the so-called '*loimos* structure' of all these tales. Ultimately, they all serve to show that (super-)legitimacy is derived from its opposite, inadequacy. As a consequence of his approach, however, Ogden has also ignored all divergence between the tales at the narrative level. Gift or cast-off, *hieroi* or *atimoi* - it does not matter much any more from this perspective. At the same time, however, it is not immediately obvious where - in his view - precisely lies the inadequacy of a sacred colonist.

Finally, in a recent study of Apollo, Detienne has stressed the fact that both groups of colonists were united in their connection with Apollo²⁰. Whether murderers or tithes, they were forced to go to Apollo in times of dire peril, as crises of all sorts are the domain of Apollo. Not unlike Dougherty, Detienne approaches the tales as representations of events. Unlike Dougherty, Detienne speaks of 'conceptual modes',

¹⁹Burkert 1985, 84.

²⁰Detienne 1986, 227: "C'est dans la même visée que nous devons reconnaître l'horizon commun aux meurtriers et aux décimés d'Apollon. Assassins familial du seuil et dîmes vivantes envoyées à Delphes convergent vers ce qui semble être leur destin assigné par l'oracle, c'est-à-dire la découverte d'un site hospitalier et la fondation d'un nouvel espace 'politique'. Mais les uns et les autres, par des voies parallèles, s'en viennent préalablement vers le dieu de l'oracle, pressés par l'épreuve, que ce soit une souillure immédiate ou le poids terrible d'un fléau, d'un *loimos* aveugle. Pestes, épidémies et fléaux sillonnent le domaine du dieu en colère."

rather than metaphors. In his view, both the tithed group and the murderer symbolise the violent rupture between mother-city and colony²¹:

In conclusion of this section, we may repeat, with Dougherty (and others), that the reconstruction of phenomena like colonisations is largely dependent on the construction of history by the Greeks themselves. We therefore have to cope with the constant tension between fact and fiction, or rather, with an amalgamation of the two. The historian's basic classifications are thus rendered obsolete: possible realia have become embedded in larger structures of imagination, which, in turn, have become a reality of their own.

These structures, whether exclusively at the level of imagination, as Dougherty claims, or rooted in a ritual format giving shape to actual proceedings, have been explored in this part and deserve to be compared with the two phenomena studied in Parts 2 and 3. The two types of colonisation tales, the 'positive' *dekateusis* and the 'negative' purificatory ones, have usually been regarded as legendary tales in which gift-giving and blood-guilt played their narrative roles at the level of the tale. If the two types of colonisation tales were discussed together, they were interpreted within an intellectual framework in which the mutual differences did not matter: either because there were common socio-biological roots or because there was a common meaning attributed to the tales which were read as a kind of metaphor.

It is this track we should follow further in order to see if this type of approach may lead to a fruitful analysis not only of the two types of forced colonisations, but of the three phenomena that are central in this study. As we have seen, initially the main differences between the phenomena lie in the type of crisis management, sacrificial consecration or purificatory riddance and in the status of the victims. We have already seen that, at second sight, these differences appeared smaller, or less sharp, than expected, both between the rituals and myths studied in Part 2 and 3, and, in the previous two chapters, among the sources pertaining to two types of forced colonisations.

The subject of the next section, therefore, will be the victim of ancient Greek crisis management. The last section will centre on the two main types of crisis management. It will turn out that a combined analysis of these three phenomena of

²¹Detienne 1986, 225-226: "Décimés et meurtriers semblent faire écho à la rupture violente plutôt qu'à la paisible continuité entre cité mère et sa fille fraîchement implantée."

ancient Greek crisis management is justified, but also that, by doing so, these phenomena become mutually illuminating.

B. HIGH AND LOW, CENTRAL AND MARGINAL, VALUED AND DISPENSABLE - THE VICTIM

In the present section the victims are of central interest. As we have seen in Chapters 6 and 7, the status of the protagonists of forced colonisations tales turns out to be ambiguous. So far we have not paid ample attention to the work of scholars who have established comparable status ambiguities in the victims of ritual and myth, especially instructed by a semiotic approach of the source-material.

Paradigms dominate our investigation into the theories on ritual and mythical crisis management. After the intellectualist and functionalist perspectives discussed in Parts 2 and 3, the focus will now be on a third approach to the study of religion, or culture in general, which we shall refer to as semiotics. This is an umbrella-term for various approaches that in fact also belong within the larger framework of functionalism. The focus however has shifted from the effect of (religious) phenomena to their meaning. Semiotics, or what used to be called symbolism, is the analysis of non-verbal cultural meanings, and involves a decoding of phenomena, taking them as signs, or symbols, in order to retrace a culture's system of meaning. This may be done by way of structuralism, an approach that considers these phenomena, to a greater or lesser extent, to be structured by, mostly bipolar, mental principles²². In that case we may also refer to structural-semiotics. Sometimes the method is applied to individual signs (e.g. the referential potential of dried figs), sometimes the structure that is disclosed is taken as a signifier itself (see Vernant on Oedipus below), and sometimes the entire ritual, or narrative, is *read* (e.g. Dougherty on the 'negative' colonisation tales).

²²This is a very crude way to unite many schools of thoughts and individual approaches. See e.g. Morris 1987 for a good introduction to the diversity of what may be called structuralist, semiotic and symbolist approaches. It is evident that the present arrangement of views, on the basis of theoretical perspectives and themes, sometimes involves arbitrary choices. A large part of the work of Girard fits, thematically, well in with a discussion of Burkert's work (as we have seen in Chapter 5), but theoretically as well with the work of Douglas and Turner in the following section. Evidently, most of the discussion on initiation in Chapter 5 Section c belongs in this category, too.

When we discussed the foodstuffs the *pharmakos* was fed on, or the necklace he may have worn, the semiotic perspective has already been put to use²³: the diet and the necklace were taken to function as contrast signals that marked the ritual status of the victim. They pointed to his outsiderhood, his ‘otherness’. The disadvantages of the method have already been met as well: symbols are polyvalent, hence their imputed meaning is potentially arbitrary. Other criticism pertains to the disregard of historical change and the (mis)understanding of culture as a unified and fixed system of meaning, to name the most important objections. One may add the circularity of many of the arguments made from this perspective.

Nevertheless, a few important and stimulating contributions have been made to the study of various phenomena of ancient Greek crisis management from a semiotic perspective, that were cited in earlier Parts of this study, but deserve a more overall discussion at this point. Three important articles pertaining to the *pharmakos* ritual and the related myths need to be discussed: Vernant’s famous study of the enigmatic structure of Oedipus Rex, Bremmer’s classic article on the scapegoat ritual, and Kearns’ valuable article ‘saving the city’, which is less referred to, but contains at least as many interesting thoughts and observations²⁴.

The first article to be discussed deserves attention if only for being such a telling example of the employment of the structuralist method in our context. Vernant’s approach is insightful, but the outcome is different from ours, and as king Oedipus may fill a dozen of bookshelves on his own, I cannot discuss the subject in detail. A brief discussion of Vernant’s famous article is, however, in order.

In Chapter 5 we saw how Girard has declared Oedipus the scapegoat par excellence²⁵. Girard was not the first, nor the last, to compare Oedipus to a *pharmakos*²⁶. In his famous but controversial article ‘Ambiguity and Reversal: On the Enigmatic Structure of Oedipus Rex’²⁷ Vernant identifies what he calls ‘the double nature of Oedipus’, whom he regards as both *turannos* and *pharmakos*:

²³See Chapter 1 Section d and e.

²⁴Bremmer 1983, Kearns 1990 and Vernant 1988.

²⁵See Chapter 5 Section b.

²⁶For more recent contributions to this discussion see e.g. R. Drew Griffith, ‘Oedipus pharmakos? Alleged scapegoating in Sophocles’ Oedipus the King’, *Phoenix* 47 (1993) 95-114; H.P. Foley, ‘Oedipus as *Pharmakos*’, in: R.M. Rosen and J. Farrell (eds.), *Nomodeiktes. Greek studies in honor of Martin Ostwald* (Ann Arbor 1993) 525-538; P. Pucci, ‘The Tragic *Pharmakos* of the Oedipus Rex’, *Helios* 17 (1990) 41-49.

²⁷Vernant 1988.

(T)he figure of Oedipus proves to be in every aspect - social, religious, and human - the opposite of what as leader of the city, he seems to be. (...) Oedipus, he who is renowned to all, the first among men, the best of mortals, the man of power, intelligence, honors, and wealth discovers himself to be the last, the most unfortunate, and the worst of men, a criminal, a defilement, an object of horror to his fellows, abhorred by the gods, reduced to a life of beggary and exile. (...) The divine king, the purifier and savior of his people becomes one with the defiled criminal who must be expelled like a *pharmakos* or scapegoat so that the town can regain its purity and be saved. (...) It is this axis on which the divine king occupies the highest point and the *pharmakos* the lowest that governs the whole series of reversals that affect the figure of Oedipus and turn the hero into a 'paradigm' of ambiguous, tragic man²⁸.

According to Vernant the polarity between king and scapegoat is part of the religious practice and social thought of the Greeks. The two figures appear symmetrical and in some respects interchangeable in their opposition. Both are presented as individuals responsible for the collective salvation of the group:

This is indeed what the *pharmakos* is: the king's double, but reversed like the carnival kings crowned for the duration of the festival, when order is turned upside down and the social hierarchies reversed: sexual taboos are lifted, theft becomes lawful, slaves take the place of their masters, women exchange their clothes with men - and in these circumstances the one who sits upon the throne must be the lowest, the most ugly, the most ridiculous, the most criminal. But when the festival is over and the counter-king is expelled or put to death, carrying away with him all the disorder that he embodied and of which he thereby purges the community²⁹.

Oedipus is both *turannos* and *pharmakos* at the same time, both above and below ordinary human beings. Vernant argues that in ancient Greek eyes this polar structure of the superhuman and the subhuman defines the boundaries within which man is contained³⁰. By presenting the ambiguous king Oedipus Sophocles therefore questions the *condition humaine*³¹.

There is no need to discuss the merits of Vernant's interpretation of Sophocles' play. His interpretation of the *pharmakos* (ritual) may, however, be

²⁸Vernant 1988, 118-125.

²⁹Vernant 1988, 132-133. Vernant (ibidem) further points out that certain features in the Thargelia ritual (pure food, adornment like the *eiresione* and the victim being beaten on his genitals) that evoke the sovereign, the master of fertility, are still present in the figure of the *pharmakos*. According to Vernant the *pharmakos* possesses the beneficent virtue of fertility.

³⁰Vernant 1988, 135 quotes Aristotle on the non-citizen, the *apolis* 'who is either a brutish beast or a god' (Arist. *Pol.* I 1253a 2-7).

³¹Vernant 1988, 139.

criticised on the basis of our own findings in Chapter 1. Vernant regards the *pharmakos* as the *homo piacularis* whose expulsion equals a removal of the defilement³². However, the *pharmakos* figure is less univocally negative a character than Vernant claims. We observed that the *pharmakos* has a more complex ritual nature, more ambiguous too. Moreover, Vernant's interpretation of the Thargelia as a festival of reversal is questionable. It does not comply with what is known about this pre-harvest festival. As Vernant's interpretation of the Thargelia and his one-sided description of the *pharmakos* do not comply with our own findings, his main argument cannot be supported. It is obvious, however, that there is some sort of connection between Oedipus and the figure of the *pharmakos*, but it would take another chapter, at least, to elaborate on that relationship. It is my impression, however, that they both partake in the same ambivalent configuration of ancient Greek crisis management³³.

Returning to the *pharmakos* rituals and mythical crisis management of the first two Parts of this study, it may be remembered that, at the end of Chapter 5, we concluded that myth did meet ritual, but that so far there had not been a scholar who had combined both our myths and rituals in a satisfactory interpretation. They were either separated too radically, or identified too crudely. Let us now turn to Bremmer and Kearns, who have both had an open eye for the complex nature of the interrelation between our ritual and mythical saviour-victims.

In an article that has become the standard reference on the subject since it appeared in 1983, Bremmer not only noticed the interrelation between the *pharmakos* ritual and myths of sacrifice but has also tried to deal with the analogies and differences from a semiotic perspective³⁴. Bremmer argued that the dichotomy between the valuable victims of myth and the despicable ones of the *pharmakos* ritual disappears: the king is, in fact, 'the lonely marginal at the top', the virgin leads

³²Vernant 1988, 127. He considers the decoration, foodstuffs and beating as symbols of fertility which evoke the role of the divine king the *pharmakos* plays during the ritual of reversal. In other words, he in fact allows for some ambiguity, but only in a secondary way (because Vernant wants only Oedipus to be truly ambiguous).

³³Note the following references to crisis management discourse: μῖασμα ἐλαύνειν (97-98); ἀνδρῆλατοῦντας, ἢ φόνῳ φόνον πάλιν λύοντας (100-101); ἀγῆλατήσιν (402); ὅπως τάχιστα πρὸς θεῶν ἔξω μέ που καλύψατ', ἢ φονεύσατ', ἢ θαλάσσιον ἐκρίψατ', ἔνθα μήποτ' εἰσόψεσθ' ἔτι (1410-1412 quickly, for the gods' sake, hide me, kill me, or cast me into the sea, where you can never look on me again).

a marginal existence. All victims, therefore, in myth and ritual, thus belong in comparable - negative - categories of social marginality³⁵. Bremmer has been the first to point out that the marginality of the ritual victims is also symbolically expressed by the use of marginal plants: “marginal persons are connected with marginal plants”. This observation has already been discussed and elaborated on in Chapter 1³⁶. The second important difference between ritual and mythical crisis management, the difference between expulsion and sacrifice, is also played down by Bremmer: “The expulsion of the scapegoats in practice amounted to a killing, since, like the dead, they disappeared from the community, never to return”³⁷.

Notwithstanding the fact that the dichotomy has thus been more or less dissolved by his arguments, Bremmer still feels the need to explain it, too:

When a catastrophe can be averted from the community by the death of one of its members, such a member must naturally be a very valuable one. This is continually stressed in the mythical tales. ... In real life, during the annual scapegoat ritual, there was of course little chance that the king (if any) would sacrifice himself or his children. Here society chose one of its marginals. Nevertheless the people realised that they could not save their own skin by sacrificing the scum of the polis. For that reason the scapegoat was always treated as a very important person. ... Summing up, we conclude that in historical reality the community *sacrificed* (my italics, LK) the least valuable members of the polis, who were represented, however, as very valuable persons. In the mythical tales one could pass this stage and in the myths we always find beautiful or important persons, although even then these scapegoats remain marginal figures: young men and women, and a king³⁸.

By providing a common ground for elements from myth and ritual and establishing their interrelationship in terms of the one clarifying the other, Bremmer reconciles the two most important differences between our myths and ritual: “symbolic acts in the ritual became a reality in the myths”³⁹.

³⁴Bremmer 1983 and J. Bremmer ‘Scapegoat Rituals in Ancient Greece’, in: R. Buxton (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Greek Religion* (Oxford 2000) 271-293, which is unaltered, and only has a postscriptum to explain why it did not need to be revised.

³⁵Bremmer 1983, 303-304. See Versnel 1993, 63-65 and Chapter 3 Section b above for criticism on the view of a king as the lonely marginal at the top.

³⁶Bremmer 1983, 308-313, for which see Chapter 1 Section f.

³⁷Bremmer 1983, 318.

³⁸Bremmer 1983, 306-307.

³⁹Bremmer 1983, 318. Bremmer himself does not elaborate on the precise nature of the interrelation between myth and ritual, but in a note he refers to the following statement by Graf in an approving manner: “Der Mythos stellte das Ritual weniger abgemildert dar, extrapolierte sozusagen vom tatsächlichen Geschehen zum Verständnis dieses Geschehens in den Augen der Praktizierenden” (Graf 1978, 66 in Bremmer 1983, 318 n.95).

On closer inspection, however, his article raises new questions as well. For instance, remaining within Bremmer's own frame of thinking, one may wonder why the mythical victim had to be a marginal figure, too. That seems to render the sacrifice only less valuable. On the other hand, if the *pharmakos* ritual is a symbolic sacrifice, and expulsion amounts to killing anyway, why then is the *pharmakos* not sacrificed, but expelled? Is ritual expulsion the official symbolic equivalent of mythical sacrifice? And why, moreover, does Bremmer conclude his article with so much emphasis on cleansing: 'no new beginning before a complete *katharsis* of the old situation'⁴⁰? Does a *katharsis* necessarily involve sacrifice?

It is obvious that Bremmer's analysis is of great importance for the present study. This study contains the same ingredients as the ones used in Bremmer's article: the valuable victims, their dispensability, sacrifice, expulsion, annual cleansing and crisis situations. The outcome is, however, different. Or rather, Bremmer's argument is unfinished as it is. It seems as if he has been in two minds: on the one hand he has tried to reconcile the differences between myth and ritual while taking both at face value (wretched ritual and valuable mythical victims coincide because they are both outside the norm), on the other hand he has sought to explain the (purificatory) ritual in terms of the (sacrificial) myth. Consequently, both the proposed marginality of the mythical victims and the purificatory dimension of the ritual remain unexplained.

Another contribution from a similar perspective was made by Kearns in 1990. After she has pointed out that in ancient Greek thought city saviours may come from within or from outside the city, from the centre or the margins of society, she discusses the *pharmakos* figure, 'in some ways the saviour's opposite, but also oddly akin: it is his expulsion (in stead of an active intervention, LK) which constitutes a saving action'⁴¹.

However, after discussing the Massilian scapegoat/honoree and the saving death of King Codrus/the woodman, Kearns claims that the extremes may meet:

⁴⁰Bremmer 1983, 320.

⁴¹Kearns 1990, 335. In an accompanying footnote Kearns compares the difference between saviour and scapegoat with the ancient Greek concepts of *soter* and *apotropaïos*. (Kearns 1990, 335 n. 20, with a reference to Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.4, where both terms are employed in opposition).

The scapegoat, starting from the outermost point, is drawn to the centre of the city, both physically and figuratively, while Kodros, as king, begins from the centre and journeys to the circumference (again physically as well as figuratively, for as a woodman he is situated outside the city walls)⁴².

Kearns observes that the *pharmakos* figures on the one hand and mythical saviour figures on the other hand often occupy ambivalent positions and poses the following rhetorical question: “Can it be that both centrality and marginality in the city are qualifications for saving it, and that the most satisfactory pattern combines the two”⁴³? According to Kearns the female saviours of myth demonstrate this best:

It is the king’s daughter or daughters who give their lives to the city: the king gives centrality, the girls marginality. Even more neatly than with the scapegoat or with Kodros, because no element of pretence is involved, both saviour-rich areas of society are drawn on simultaneously⁴⁴.

Kearns observations correspond with those of our own. In her explanation of the centrality/marginality paradox, however, she chooses a specific frame of reference in which to understand it. According to Kearns these myths deal with issues of identity and membership: these stories about saviour figures who belong both in the margin and in the centre of society deal with the ambivalent positions of certain groups outside the free, *heliokoi andres*: integral part of the community on the one hand (women are truly indispensable for a vital polis), but unequal to the men on the other hand. In Kearns’ words:

It is (...) those outside the clearly-defined centre of belonging, which so often come forward to save the city and assert their claim to form part of it. Yet this is a claim which is always held at arm’s length. If the city is saved by unlikely means, that suggests the unpredictability usually associated with the divine, an unpredictability which actually reaffirms the norms which are to be followed by human beings and which supports the effectively unequal organization of society. If the challenge, implicit at one level in the stories, to the more exclusive concept of the city were to be taken to its conclusion, the paradox of the unlikely saviour itself would be rendered impossible. Story and society are mutually dependent⁴⁵.

⁴²Kearns 1990, 336.

⁴³Kearns 1990, 336. Note that Kearns does not follow Bremmer here. She disagrees with Bremmer’s marginality of the king as such, but derives Codrus’ marginality from the story itself.

⁴⁴Kearns 1990, 337.

⁴⁵Kearns 1990, 343-344.

Once again, and in a very subtle way, corresponding features have been established in the hero-victims of ritual and mythical crisis management. They are said to occupy ambivalent positions, constructed along centrality-marginality poles, figuratively, but also physically. Valuable insiders, but dispensable outsiders at the same time. Although Kearns explores in the first place the relation of unlikely stories of *soteria* to actual ancient Greek thought-patterns about the city, her observations about the various paradoxes inherent in these hero-victims remain of great value, also outside her own explanatory framework.

Ultimately, this type of approach often serves another purpose than clarifying the material involved. The source-material is read and used as a statement about the social or mental order. Hence, it is difficult to comment adequately on these readings. They often illustrate what has been established (or presumed) on other grounds. And because their main thesis ultimately pertains to something else than the subject-matter of our study, we should not dwell for too long on their main thesis.

The importance of the three articles discussed for the present enquiry lies in the first place in their analysis of the ambiguous nature of hero-victims of ancient Greek crisis management. What Vernant still kept apart when dealing with king or *pharmakos*, but considered conflated in the figure of Oedipus, Bremmer regarded as a structural dichotomy in the protagonists of both our myths and rituals, while Kearns united them in the ideal hero-victim. Whether one refers to high and low, central and marginal (or, as I have put it in earlier chapters, valuable and dispensable) or member of the community and outsider, the conflation of contrasting social (and mental) categories generates ambiguity - an ambiguity present in various degrees in all the *pharmakos* figures of ritual, myth and tale we have discussed so far.

Elaborating on these contributions, a second insight might be gained, pertaining to the various ways to *read* this ambiguity. Within this type of approach, one may argue, that the ambiguous hero-victims of ancient Greek crisis management represent a status of abnormality which, in contradistinction, may serve to identify normality. All *pharmakos* figures may be considered to challenge, in an elaboration on Vernant's thesis, the *condition humaine*. Or, conversely, one may conclude from all this that in ancient Greek eyes a saviour-figure could not belong to the normal order. An ancient Greek community could not be saved by an ordinary member of the community.

In conclusion it may be claimed that the established dichotomies in the status of the victim, whether marginal and central, high and low, marginal and valuable, or dispensable and valuable, and the way these respective poles become interdependent in crisis management, have interconnected yet more tightly our rituals, myths and tales. The victims of all these forms of crisis management have been understood to embody this conflation of social (and mental) oppositions to some extent. Apparently, saviour-victims must fall outside the norms.

Either way, whether by purificatory riddance or by means of a sacrificial consecration, in ritual, myth and tale the ambivalent victims are transferred to another world, more specifically, to the domain of the sacred, ambiguous in its own way. As we noticed earlier, in this sphere of sacrality purification and sacrifice may meet. To round off this chapter a closer look at structural-semiotic approaches of purification and sacrifice in the context of crisis management is in order. It will turn out that the various rituals, myths and tales of crisis management have, irrespective of their differences in appearance and vocabulary, even more in common than the ambiguity of the victim.

C. A SCIENCE OF DIVISION

In the two previous chapters on tales of forced colonisation it became evident that two types of *ktiseis*, the *dekateusis* colonisations and the ‘purificatory’ colonisations, had much more in common than one would expect at first sight. Although differences remain at the level of the narrative, patterns appear very similar: a situation of precariousness, the ousting of a group in order to save the lot, the route via Delphi and, finally, colonisation under auspices of the god. The victims too appear to have much in common, especially their ambivalent status, before and after their expulsion. How can it be that two types of forced colonisation, the one an offering of innocent people to the god, the other the expulsion of unwanted elements, are different yet so similar at the same time?

In order to understand this, it is necessary to depart from our ‘narrow’ interpretations of sacrifice and purification, and to approach these two in the first place as transformative strategies, as two ways to change the social, or mental state of

the participants, rather than to remain struggling with definitions such as the offering of a gift to a god or the riddance of dirt⁴⁶.

To approach purification in this wider sense, as a re-ordering strategy, is not new, not even in the study of ancient history⁴⁷. Various ancient historians have been influenced by the work of the anthropologist Mary Douglas. In her seminal study *Purity and Danger* Douglas has related the notions of pollution and purification to every culture's desire for order. She has argued that purification should be considered, in the first place, an attempt to impose system again⁴⁸. Concurrently, notions of the 'clean' and 'dirty' pertain to fundamental assumptions concerning the natural and cultural (moral) order. From this point of view dirt is 'the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements'⁴⁹. "Dirt offends against order. Eliminating is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organise the environment", as Douglas has formulated it⁵⁰.

Douglas' approach is applicable to a wide range of fields and subjects. It will come as no surprise that it has attracted attention from scholars in various academic disciplines. The scope of the debate that her work has started is too large to be covered here⁵¹. For our present purposes, it is not necessary to elaborate on this approach in a very detailed way. The most important contribution from the Douglasian perspective is the liberating insight that purification is a form of behaviour, a creative, restorative act and not necessarily the mere removal of physical dirt, or a wretched individual. Whether by means of a consecration, a sacrifice or an expulsion, 'dirt' was created and eliminated accordingly: hence, in contradistinction, cultural categories were redefined, insiders and outsiders distinguished, and order was re-established. Purification, or lustration, is, as one ancient historian has put it,

⁴⁶In Chapter 9 more attention will be paid to the interpretations of sacrifice and purification from these 'narrower' perspectives.

⁴⁷See e.g. Parker 1983.

⁴⁸See Douglas 1966, 1-6.

⁴⁹Douglas 1966, 35.

⁵⁰Douglas 1966, 2.

⁵¹Douglas' work has not remained without criticism. In her own *Implicit Meanings. Essays in Anthropology* (London 1975) she has revised and refined some of her standpoints. See further e.g. A.S. Meigs, 'A Papuan Perspective on Pollution', *Man* 13 (1978) 304-318; Morris 1987, s.v. and Parker 1983, 61-62 and references.

‘another word for maintaining, creating or restoring boundary lines between the centric order and the ex-centric disorder’⁵².

‘Purification: a science of division’ runs the title of the first chapter of Parker’s *Miasma*, with a reference to Plato’s analysis of a *katharmos* as a *techne diakritike* that retains what is better but expels the worse⁵³. And dividing it was, as has become clear in the previous chapters: the victims were singled out and set apart. ‘Us’ were distinguished from ‘them’, the pure from the impure. If necessary, the separation was affirmed by beating or by the throwing of stones. Processions leading out of town drew definite lines of demarcation, emphasising the constitutive centre on the one hand and the chaotic otherland on the other.

Following Douglas, we may claim that purifying the community basically means restituting order, the re-installment of a clean and untainted self-image. In order to achieve this, all dirt must be removed. The *pharmakoi* figures of myth and ritual and the colonists, ritually redefined as over- or disqualified from the point of view of the community, have become out-siders, strangers, ‘dirt’ and must be removed accordingly. Seen from this perspective, not only the *pharmakos* rituals and the colonisation tales in which murderers or rebels are expelled, but also the *dekateusis* colonisations and the myths of (self-) sacrifice may be considered a purification of the community. Whether the victims are consecrated, sacred or polluted, they all represent ‘otherness’, ‘dirt’ so to speak⁵⁴. They provide the counter image of the clean and tidy community that fares well. By removing them, the community feels relieved, cleansed, one again. Order is restored.

A comparable argument may be made starting from the sacrificial side of crisis management. Sacrifice, in this context, may be approached in a wider sense as well, not merely as offering a (slaughtered) gift to angry gods. Again the ancient historian borrows from anthropology, this time from another famous anthropologist, Victor Turner, who, not unlike Mary Douglas, has related ritual symbolism to social structure⁵⁵. Although sacrifice has not been one of his best-known subjects (as

⁵²Versnel 1993, 311 who, in turn, quotes Parker 1983, 23: “Purification, therefore, marks off sacred places from profane, creates special occasions, and unites individuals into groups”.

⁵³Parker 1983, 18 (Pl. *Soph.* 227c-d).

⁵⁴See also Versnel 1993, 308-311.

⁵⁵The scope of Turner’s work is large, its influence stretches out over many decades and fields of academic activity. See e.g. Morris 1987 for an introduction to his work and its place in modern anthropology.

purification has been for Douglas), various times Turner has paid attention to the classic debate on the nature of sacrifice. For the present purpose we shall concentrate on one smaller article in which Turner presents this alternative perspective on sacrificial ritual⁵⁶. Although Turner's approach of sacrifice fits in well with his overall theory of ritual as a social process, more especially as part of a social mechanism that restores equilibrium and solidarity within the group, we shall not elaborate on the larger context of this approach.

Sacrifice may be interpreted, with Turner, as a transformative process that is ultimately set on the restoration of order. Honouring the gods, expiation, communication - in short all features common to sacrificial activity - may ultimately be regarded as the transformative phases a community has to go through when restoring order in times of crisis or when maintaining order periodically. Ultimately, in all forms of sacrificial ritual, whatever precise form it takes, the community acts upon itself. The following quotation from Turner's work may illuminate this approach:

In summary, anthropology knows many theories of sacrifice, including those of the evolutionists, diffusionists, functionalists, and structuralists. Each has tended to focus on a component act, object, relationship, or concept of what it is, in reality, a complex ritual process, verbal and non-verbal, which has to be grasped from the outset as a totality. Gift-exchange, tribute, propitiation, penitence, atonement, submission, purification, communion, symbolic parricide or filicide, impetration, and many more ideas or practices have been advanced as clues, even keys, to its understanding. Sacrifice, as we have seen, may be performed by or for individuals, groups, or types of persons. It may involve the offering of a gift or the immolation of a victim - which may be partially or totally destroyed, consumed totally or as a special portion by officiants, or eaten by all present, often after special preparation. Prayers as well as objects are offered. Most sacrifices, whether embedded in seasonal, curative, life-crisis, divinatory, lustrational, or other kinds of rituals, or performed as isolable ritual sequences, are intended to transform the moral state of those who offer them, through the intermediacy of a victim, (...) ⁵⁷.

Turner distinguishes two main types of sacrifice: structure-maintaining sacrifice (sacrifice as prophylaxis) and structure-dissolving sacrifice (sacrifice as abandonment), the former more likely in the context of periodical rituals, the latter in times of crisis. It is not so much this distinction itself that matters in our context, but it is especially the perspective that deserves attention. It is neither the ultimate goal of

⁵⁶V. Turner, 'Sacrifice as Quintessential Process: Prophylaxis or Abandonment?', *History of Religions* 16 (1977) 189-215.

⁵⁷Turner 1977, 213-214.

the action, nor the intention of the participants, nor the specific form the ritual action takes, but it is the effect the ritual has on the community that counts:

In the sacrifice of abandonment, the classical theological notions of sin, redemption, and atonement all find their place as phases in a process which seeks personal and social renewal through the surgical removal, interiorly in the will, exteriorly by the immolation of a victim, of the pollution, corruption, and division brought about by mere participation in the domain of social structure. Sacrifice is here regarded as *limen*, or entry into the domain of *communitas* where all that is and ever has been human and the forces that have caused humanity to be are joined in a circulation of mutual love and trust. In the sacrifice of prophylaxis structure is entirely cleansed, but left intact⁵⁸.

This distinction may seem helpful in the analysis of ancient Greek sacrificial practice. From a structuralist perspective *thysia*-sacrifice, considered the normal type of ancient Greek sacrifice, usually consumed afterwards, has been shown to be integrative, to affirm and emphasise the (sacrificial) community's bond, esp. in the sacrificial meal⁵⁹. Following this line of thinking, one may claim that the *sphagion*-type of sacrifice (generally not eaten), the contradistinctive, ab-normal sacrifice, rather stresses separation. It may therefore be categorised as the type of abandonment Turner refers to, and may be considered a community-restoring ritual.

However, our *pharmakos* rituals and myths of human sacrifice have been seen to defy these usual categories of sacrifice, in the first place because *thysia*- and *sphagion*-terminology is used interchangeably. Moreover, periodical rituals have been shown to deal with the tension of transitional situations (e.g. in the agricultural year) and may thus be considered crisis management as well. Hence, in this specific context we must be careful not to hypothesise too easily on the basis of a distinction we do not find in our source-material.

What may be retained from this perspective and applied to present uses, however, is the interpretation of sacrifice as a transformative strategy, a means to reaffirm or re-establish order by including and excluding, by delimitating and identifying. From this perspective, to sacrifice, or to consecrate, is primarily to relegate someone/something to another domain in order to transform the state of being of those who sacrifice. Sacrifice is part of a larger social process. Within this

⁵⁸Turner 1977, 213. Note that Girard's basic approach is not that much different from Turner's; only at a more specific explanatory level his views take a specific direction of his own.

⁵⁹See esp. Detienne and Vernant 1979 and Vernant 1981.

line of thinking, sacrifice (consecration) is a separative strategy, a re-ordering of the environment, by which the community redefines what belongs and does not belong.

If we follow Douglas and Turner in their wider definitions of purification and sacrifice it is not very surprising anymore that sacrificial and purificatory remedies have so much in common⁶⁰. They are forms of social surgery, separative and re-ordering strategies, with a comparable function and structure. Notwithstanding their precise forms, which are symbolic statements that can be interpreted in their own right, they are, however, in the first place, rituals of transition, acted out on behalf of those who need to undergo a transformation, or performed by those who are in need of a transformation themselves.

Before we draw our conclusions from these wider approaches, let's see how the victims fit in. As we have seen in the previous chapters, from a structural-semiotic perspective, the new status of all victims of ancient Greek crisis management may be referred to as the status of 'others', of people who are no longer familiar and do not belong to the community any more. In the ritual this otherness was expressed by means of floral and food symbolism, by a ritual outfit, a ritual name and ritual action that stressed separation. In the myths the otherness was more straightforwardly expressed in terminology of consecration, but also in outward appearances, such as the wearing of wreaths⁶¹, or the beggar's clothes of king Codrus⁶². In the tales of forced colonisation it was expressed by the figurative language employed to describe the leaders of the expedition, such as boldness and bastardy. Qualifications as such may be considered contrast signals. As has been pointed out various times already: one needs others to define oneself. By thus defining otherness, the ancient Greeks performing the *pharmakos* rituals or telling these myths and tales, defined themselves. What belongs together is thus identified and reunited by doing so.

This dividing and defining is spatially articulated as well. As we have pointed out both ritual, and to a lesser degree, myth emphasised the ins and outs of crisis management: the centre and the margin, as Kearns called it, or otherland as we have

⁶⁰One could even point to other rites de passage, such as initiation, and observe similar correspondences. The tripartite pattern A. Van Gennep, *Les rites de passage* (Paris 1908) observed (and influenced many scholars afterwards, Turner not in the last place) applies in one way or another to many rituals (not only in ancient Greece).

⁶¹See Chapter 3 Section c.

⁶²See e.g. Lycurg. c. *Leocr.* 84-87 (Chapter 3 above).

done. In the tales of forced colonisation the contrast between the community and this otherland is, evidently, of central importance. The social redefinition of community was, both in ritual, myth and tale, inscribed in space, too: limits were emphasised, reset and renewed. Processions were started up at the very centre to end up 'beyond the borders', or encircled the community outside the walls, as in Abdera. Victims may also be seen to die just outside the city-gate to mark off here and there, order and chaos.

Ritual beating and especially stoning confirm the importance of separation in an almost tangible way. They work on various levels, but they first and foremost create a dividing line between those who throw or hit and those being thrown at or being hit. The former are relieved by the act and reunited as a community, the latter stigmatised as outsiders, no longer members of the group. The community redefines its *limen*, and thus its identity, and regains its wholeness, its purity⁶³.

Iambulus and his friend, 'foreign' material as they were, had to be incorporated in order to be ousted again. Ousted as ritual victims, on the explicit command of the gods, consecrated *hieroi* perhaps, wreathed, destined to leave for a far but blessed otherland. At the same time Iambulus and his friend are dispensable others, whose departure cleanses the community. Their expulsion is called a *katharmos*. Whatever the precise intentions one may attribute to the ritual, its function and meaning was evident: in contradistinction with these two guys, who represent otherness and who are destined for otherland, all remaining Ethiopians belong together and are safe and clean

There are many ways to express this all. So far we have used the term otherness, not so much as an explanatory concept, but as a heuristic device useful to designate a position of contrast. Notions of purity and pollution may be employed as well, and seem to have been employed in the ancient Greek case. Purity then refers to a state of order, wholeness, and pollution to chaos - that which does not fit in the categories the proper order consists of. But sacrality may come in too, as we have seen. From this perspective, notions such as sacrality and purity may perform similar roles as indices of difference, rather than being substantive categories⁶⁴.

⁶³See e.g. Pl. *Leg.* 873b.

⁶⁴See most notably the work of J.Z. Smith. See e.g. J.Z. Smith, *To Take Place. Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago and London 1987), 104-105 on sacred and profane not being substantive categories, but situational ones, transitive categories, indices of difference.

Turner⁶⁵ and Douglas⁶⁶, but also many other scholars, have discussed these concepts of otherness, formlessness, liminality, albeit within their own intellectual frameworks, and have observed that otherness is at the same time a forceful location of power, with strongly negative and extremely positive, with harmful and beneficial connotations, whether in religious terms (the ambivalence of the sacred⁶⁷), in sociological terms (stigma and charisma⁶⁸) or in any other way⁶⁹. In this way, perhaps, one could argue that it is not so much the nature of sacrality, but its contradistinctive role that engenders ambiguity. Ritual, in this line of thinking, is one way to control this ambiguity, and an attempt to use it for the good.

In the same line of thinking, the interplay of the very inside (the centre of the polis, e.g. the Prytaneum) and the outside (the formless, the ambiguous, or the liminal), the centre and periphery, that establishes the defining matrix of the community could be elaborated on so as to point out that they were at the same time sources of structure, form, culture and society⁷⁰.

In their interesting *Tragic Ambiguity* Oudemans and Lardinois have applied this type of approach to the study of Sophocles' *Antigone* and ancient Greek culture at large. They have observed the following⁷¹:

Note that this means that one cannot apply the notions of purity or sacrality from one context directly onto another.

⁶⁵See esp. V.W. Turner, 'Betwixt and Between', in: J. Helm (ed.) *Proceedings of the American Ethnological Society for 1964* (Seattle 1964) 4-20 for Turner's ambivalence of the liminal. See also his useful summary of his theories on liminality 'Process, System, and Symbol: A New Anthropological Synthesis', *Daedalus* 1977, vol. I, 61-80.

⁶⁶See esp. Douglas 1966, ch. 6, e.g. "Formlessness is also credited with powers, some dangerous, some good" (p.94) or "To have been in the margins is to have been in contact with danger, to have been at the source of power" (p. 97). Or 1966, ch. 10, e.g. "In its last phase then, dirt shows itself as an apt symbol of creative formlessness. But it is from its first phase that it derives its force. The danger which is risked by boundary transgression is power. Those vulnerable margins and those attacking forces which threaten to destroy good order represent the powers inhering in the cosmos. Ritual which can harness these for the good is harnessing power indeed."

⁶⁷See e.g. E. Leach, *Culture and Communication: the Logic by which Symbols are connected* (Cambridge 1976) esp. 33-36.

⁶⁸See e.g. W. Lipp, *Über soziales Grenzverhalten (Schriften zur Kulturosoziologie I)* (Berlin 1985).

⁶⁹See Aristotle on the non-citizen, the *apolis* 'who is either low in the scale of humanity or above it' (Arist. *Pol.* I 1253a 2-7).

⁷⁰See e.g. E. Leach, *Culture and Communication. The Logic by which Symbols are connected* (Cambridge 1976).

⁷¹Th.C.W. Oudemans and A.P.M.H. Lardinois, *Tragic Ambiguity. Anthropology, Philosophy and Sophocles' Antigone* (Leiden 1987) 57. The accompanying reference is to the work of Girard, not to ancient Greek sources. This nicely illustrates the flaw of this stimulating, but at the same time too academic approach of ancient Greek culture: where is

Scapegoats are excellent examples of ritual ambiguity. They are saddled with all the pollutions of the community, and are therefore extremely dangerous, despite their often humble appearance. That this danger is double-edged shows itself in the ritual of expulsion. By reversal, the initially maleficent power of the scapegoat is turned into an equally strong power of healing. It saves the whole society from disaster. This means that *ex post facto* the scapegoat can be revered as a holy saviour.

This power, inherent in formlessness, liminality of otherness may –in ancient Greek practice –not have the undifferentiated force some of these scholars would want to, but as we have observed, to a certain extent there is indeed ambiguity⁷².

From a strictly functionalist perspective it can be argued that sacrality does not mean much more than ‘being separated’⁷³. Any additional value, positive or negative, is secondary. Perhaps separated with a special emphasis, in a highly marked way, but separated in the first place. Along this line of thinking, sacrality is just a form of otherness, perhaps liable to be credited with special qualities.

However, from a structural-semiotic perspective it is tempting to stress the properties of this otherness, formlessness, liminality and relate it to the concept of the sacred. As a matter of fact, in the previous two chapters, on forced colonisation tales, we have seen how the initial ambiguity of the protagonists was enhanced by the next stage of crisis management, the actual relegation of the victim(s) to another domain – *qualitate qua* the homeland of hero-victims. The change of status was most explicit and exemplary in the *dekateusis* tales: the colonists were rendered sacred, *hieroi* and did no longer belong to the community. They were ‘kicked upstairs by good riddance’. The status of *hieroi* turned out to have a potentially reverse side, too. It appeared comparable to the status of a polluted criminal who has disqualified himself from normal community-life, who must be kept at pace. In turn, however, the polluted murderer and the rebellious sissy appeared to have a special relationship with the divine as well. The polluted murderer, the sacred colonist, the captivated Dryopian and the stuttering bastard all ended up in an otherland, ambiguous in its own way, and befitting their extraordinary status.

the holy saviour? Another difficulty with this type of approach is the theory that all peoples with these so-called interconnected cosmologies confound sacredness and pollution. The ancient Greek practice is, however, more complex, as Parker 1983 had already argued in his Introduction.

⁷²We shall return to this ambiguity once more in Chapter 9 Section b.

⁷³Baudy 1980, 74: “Sacer meint nichts anderes als Verlust der Zugehörigkeit zum kollektiven Ganzen”.

In many of the myths and rituals the victims also acquired a new status. Many of the mythical victims are consecrated as well, before they are actually sacrificed⁷⁴. Those who jump from a wall, or are thrown into the sea may also be considered consecrated⁷⁵, although, as we have seen, their ritual status is more opaque. In the *pharmakos* ritual the victim himself is never called sacred⁷⁶, but particular features point in a similar direction: the victim is singled out and set apart. Sacred boughs, pure food and a special outfit mark him out as being different from all the others. The public feeding of the victim has a clear analogy in the ritual feeding of sacrificial victims which are set apart but not yet sacrificed. On the other hand, other features seem to stress the outsiderhood of the ritual victim in a much more negative way. In an accompanying aetiological tale the victim is described as a temple-robber, a typical *atimos* or even *enages*, the impure outlaw to be expelled at once⁷⁷. As we have seen in our discussion of the colonists, the status of being *hieros* allows for both sides. The Abderaean victim, the *katharsion*, who is excommunicated for seven days, is called a *devotus*, someone ‘devoted’ to the gods. Although it cannot be claimed that all *pharmakoi* are rendered *hieroi*, sacred, in the literal sense, it cannot be denied that they are ritually set apart in a way that shares features which definitely belong in the sphere of sacrality.

As to the ultimate fate of the victims, we have seen that by sacrifice or purification, either way, the victims were transferred to what we, in general terms, referred to as otherland, but what may be, more specifically, called the realm of the Sacred. One *ver sacrum* tale explicitly presents both alternatives side by side: a happy sending forth (*propempein*) in situations of gratitude, a sorrowful expulsion (*apelaunein*) in case of dire peril, when gods needed to be propitiated. In both cases, much the same ceremony was performed and both *propempein* and *apelaunein* appear ways of consecration to the gods (*kathieroun*)⁷⁸.

⁷⁴See for instance Iphigeneia (Eur. *IA* 1470f); Macaria (Eur. *Her.* 601); Helena (Lyd. *Mens.* 4.147 = Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1b); Polyxena (Eur. *Hec.* 535f); the Persian victims at Salamis (Plu. *Arist.* 9.2; Plu. *Them.* 13.2 = Phainias fr. 25 [Wehrli]); the girl from the house of the Aepytiidae (Diod. 8.8.2).

⁷⁵Menoeceus (Eur. *Ph.* 946).

⁷⁶Although Servius in fact does so indirectly, see Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 = Petr. fr.1 = T. 25.

⁷⁷Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48.

⁷⁸D.H. 1.16.1-4.

Ever since the concept has become popular in scholarship the presumed ambivalence of the sacred has been the subject of debate among historians of ancient Greek religion⁷⁹. Whereas the Latin term *sacer* clearly covers both a positive and a negative sense⁸⁰, ancient Greek is less transparent. The terminology is more disparate: *hieros*, *hosios*, *hagnos*, *hagios* and *agos* all represent particular aspects of the sacred, and their precise senses remain controversial⁸¹. But even leaving aside the possibility of an etymological relation between the *hag*- and *ag*-words and therefore the terminological basis for the claim of ambivalence⁸², one cannot deny that at the phenomenological level sacrality has a potential for both a positive and a negative side in ancient Greek religion. In one area in particular the ambiguity of the sacred

⁷⁹See already Chapter 6 Section c. As Bremmer 1998 rightly points out, one should always remain cautious: the notion of the sacred is a modern construct. Ancient Greeks and Romans did not have one term, but a number of words with various meanings

⁸⁰See, most importantly, Fugier 1963.

⁸¹See for this discussion in terms of vocabulary esp. Casabona 1966, *ad loc*; Chantraine and Masson 1954; Dihle 1984, 107-114; A. Motte, 'L'expression du sacré dans la religion grecque', in: J. Ries (ed.), *L'Expression du sacré dans les grandes religions Vol. 3 Mazdéisme, cultes isiaques, religion grecque, manichéisme, Nouveau Testament et Vie de l'homme religieux* (Louvain-la-Neuve 1986) 109-256; Parker 1983, 6, 147-168 and 328-331; Rudhardt 1958, 21-50.

⁸²Most sources observing some kind of ambiguity in the relevant terminology are of a later date, but do not invalidate this hypothesis, for instance Eust. ad Hom. *Il.* 24. 420, p. 1356, 60-62 (Van der Valk 1987): οὕτω καὶ ἅγιος παρὰ τοῖς παλαιῶσι οὐ μόνον ὁ καθαρὸς. ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ μιαινὸς διὰ τὸ τοῦ ἄγους διπλόσημον· ἐξ οὗ καὶ ὁ ἐναγῆς καὶ ὁ εὐαγῆς καὶ αὖ πάλιν ὁ ἐξάγιστος καὶ τὰ τούτῳ ἐναντία ἡ ἀγιστεία (for the ancients it was not just the pure that was *hagios*, but the defiled too, owing to the ambiguity of *hagos*; from this comes the *enages*, but also the *euages*, and then again the *exagistos* and the opposite the *agisteia*). See also Cratinus in Bekker, *Anecd. Graec.* I 337.16: ἅγιος· ὁ σεβάσμιος· καὶ ἅγιον τὸ σεβάσμιον καὶ τίμιον. Λέγοιτο δ' ἂν καὶ ἅγιος ὁ μιαινός, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄγους, ὡς Κρατῖνος (*hagios*: the venerable; and *hagion* that which is venerable and precious. However, the defiled too may be described as *hagios*, which is derived from *agos*, as Cratinus does) or Hesych. s.v. ἄγος· ἄγος ἄγνισμα· θυσία· Σοφοκλῆς Φαίδρα (*agos*: purification; sacrifice). See also E.M. 12.26: ἄγος· σημαίνει δύο τό τε καθαρὸν, ὅπερ κυρίως, καὶ τὸ ῥυπαρὸν κατὰ ἀντίφρασιν (*hagos* signifies two things, both what is pure, its proper sense, and, as opposed to this, what is defiled); Photius s.v. ἄγος· ἄγος κατ' ἀντίφρασιν τὸ μύσος [...], σημαίνει δὲ καὶ ἄγνισμα καὶ θύσιαν [...]· λεγέται δὲ ἄγος καὶ τὸ τίμιον καὶ ἄξιον σεβάσματος... (*agos*: in its opposite sense (it means) the defilement, but it also means purification and sacrifice. The precious and that which is worthy of veneration are also described as *agos*). This subject is too complex to be dealt with here in any satisfying way. To underline the complexity, Parker may be quoted twice on the possible etymological connection between *agos* and **hag*-root words: "Even if the etymological connection is fallacious, it is plausible that Greeks of the classical period imagined it to exist," (p. 6) and: "... if the etymological connection is correct, differentiation occurred early, through the loss of the aspirate, between beneficial and destructive forms of consecration" (p.12). See for the discussion esp. Chantraine and Masson 1954 and Dihle 1984.

may be retrieved, namely in the sphere of consecration⁸³. The ancient Greek terms *hieroma*, *hieros* may be used for the consecrated sacrificial victim of a *thysia*⁸⁴, but *kathieromenos* is also employed in the context of a negative consecration, for instance for Orestes' state of being after he has offended against the Eumenides⁸⁵. It may be telling that precisely this term was used by Dionysius of Halicarnassus to describe the consecration of colonists in case they were sent forth under happy auspices (*propempein*) in case of the community's gratitude but also when they were ousted sorrowfully (*exelaunein*) in case of an appeasement⁸⁶. As we have seen, others have observed a similar potential of ambiguity in the use of other, comparable terms, such as *anathema/anatithemi* and *dekate/dekateuein*⁸⁷.

Speyer has discussed this 'Doppelpoligkeit' in his contribution to the *Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum* on the Curse and has shown that the ancient Greek act of cursing resulted in a state of sacrality⁸⁸. Speyer regards the purificatory elimination, with or without the stoning, of our *pharmakoi*, as a form of cursing. In this view, then, the elimination is also a sacral act. The *pharmakos*, the cursed one, carries the curse away with him, beyond the borders. However, at the same time, by being cursed, he partakes in the sacred, and thus in its positive, blessed and blessing, dimension too.

One need not follow Speyer in all the consequences of his thesis to accept at least a certain ambivalence in ancient Greek notions of sacrality and the sacred. The sphere of sacrality in which the victims of ancient Greek crisis management are

⁸³See also Parker 1983, 328. Parker even supposes that 'this possibility of a perilous punitive consecration' lies at the root of the ambiguity of the sacred.

⁸⁴*LSJ* s.v.

⁸⁵*LSJ* s.v. See e.g. Aesch. *Eum.* 304. See also Aeschin. 3.110; Dem. 49.66; *SGDI* 1153 ('let him go away to Zeus' with K. Latte, *Heiliges Recht* (Tübingen 1920) 62-64 and Parker 1983, 6-7 and ref. Compare the Latin *sacer*, and *sacer esto*, which needs even less discussion (see, principally, Fugier 1963). *Καθιερόω* is also the Greek term to use to describe the Roman *devotio*, see e.g. Plu. *Cam.* 21.

⁸⁶*D.H.* 1.16.1-4.

⁸⁷Parke 1948, 85; Delcourt 1955, 186-189. See the Cyrenenan cathartic law (*SEG* 9. 72, 33-72) where tithing is a consequence of pollution (Parker 1983, 339-343). See also Rudhardt 1958, 213f. on *anathemata* and *aparchai*.

⁸⁸*RAC* 7 (1969) 1160-1288 s.v. 'Fluch' (Speyer) 1174f. on ἄρα and ἐπευχή. See also and in much greater detail D. Aubriot-Sévin, *Prière et conceptions religieuses en Grèce ancienne jusqu'à la fin du Ve siècle av. J.-C.* (Paris 1992), esp. 15 n. 23 and 295ff (esp. 350f) on the 'le caractère virtuellement double de l'ἄρά'; A. Corlu, *Recherches sur les mots relatifs à l'idée de la prière, d'Homère aux tragiques* (Paris 1966); S. Pulleyn, *Prayer in Greek Religion* (Oxford 1997) and O. Weinreich, 'Primitiver Gebetsegoismus', in: idem,

placed, may therefore be considered to accommodate, if not reinforce, their own ambiguity. Or, conversely, one may argue, as in the case of Battus, that the initial description of the victims foreshadows their ritual status.

At the end of this chapter one may wonder if this 'wider' approach may, finally, be considered the ultimate ground for comparison between the three phenomena of crisis management discussed in this study. The answer is both yes and no. By liberating oneself from the narrow definitions of sacrifice as the offering of a valued gift to the gods and purification as the elimination of offscourings, the two ways to deal with crises can be approached and understood in a similar way. Indeed they are both transformative strategies with a comparable function, a comparable structure and a comparable message and effect. The victim was considered ambiguous, outcast and saviour at the same time. Perhaps part of the healing force may be found in the 'feel good' acts of separation and redefinition. Those who no longer belong are handed over to another realm: to 'otherland', as opposed to the community they have to leave. This otherland is ambiguously defined, as a 'promised land of milk and honey', but also as a wilderness where danger is immanent and fearful animals dwell. Otherland can even be characterised as the place where women rule or where everything grows automatically, thus emphasising the normal rule of male supremacy or the need to work⁸⁹. By handing over these others to otherland, order and chaos are redefined and re-established.

So far therefore, yes. But does all this explain why sacrificial and purificatory terminology and features intermingle in our sources? Did this happen because either way, by means of a negative or a positive consecration, the victims all ended up in an ambiguous sphere of sacrality and the ancient Greek did not know the difference anymore between sacrificial and purificatory consecration?

This seems unlikely. At the level of outward appearance and vocabulary sacrifice and purification seem distinct enough to be considered two different phenomena. Although perhaps not as different as one would have thought at first, the three phenomena of crisis management studied above are not identical and should not be treated as such, as was argued various times above against those scholars who include and identify too enthusiastically. Perhaps one should rather say that

Religionsgeschichtliche Studien (Stuttgart 1968) 7-44, p. 17 on 'das Nebeneinander Stehen von Segensbitte und Fluch'.

⁸⁹See e.g. Vidal-Naquet 1981, 267-288.

purificatory riddance and sacrificial consecration can be seen to meet in the sphere of the sacred, and that the ambivalent status of the victims is accommodated, if not reinforced by this sacrality.

One last question therefore remains: is there, apart from misunderstanding and confusion due to similarity at the functional and emotional level, another explanation for the intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory features and vocabulary in this context of ancient Greek crisis management?

To answer this question we must, once more, widen the scope and place our three phenomena with their ambiguous victims in a larger context of crisis management. For precisely there where rituals, myths and tales meet, yet differ, may lie the key to a deeper understanding of ancient Greek crisis management.

CONCLUSION

Tales of forced colonisation can be divided into two groups, which we have labelled *dekateusis* colonisations and purificatory colonisations. The first group of tales shows the following pattern: a crisis occurs, a community consecrates a part of its members to Apollo in Delphi. These sacred colonists are subsequently sent from Delphi to settle elsewhere. The second group only slightly varies from the first one: a crisis occurs, one or more member(s) of the community are expelled in a more negative way, ousted. In Delphi they also receive instructions to found a colony elsewhere. Differences between the two types of tales stand out at the narrative level, rather than with regard to the structuring patterns of the tales. In the *dekateusis* tales the colonists are innocent youngsters, who are tithed by lot or selected in another way to be presented to the god as first-fruits of their community. In the purificatory tales the ones who are ousted have disqualified themselves from the community already in one way or another, as bastards, murderers or rebels. However, at second sight, the tales confirm the observations already made in the context of the *pharmakos* ritual and the myths of crisis management. Although differences stand out at the observational level between sacrificial (here: sacrifice as an offering) and purificatory phenomena, the differences turn out to be less dominant than presumed at first sight. The sacred band of youths, the *aparchai*, turn out to have a negative dimension, too: when they try to return home again they are kept at bay, regarded as impious enemies, as polluted persons whose presence endangers the community. Conversely, the murderers and bastards, often of noble birth, of great strength and physical beauty, turn out to have some special relationship with the god as well. Some tales clearly span a bridge between the two types. The sacred band of wandering Magnesians, for instance, are headed by one Leucippus, who murdered his own father, and was specially designated by Apollo to fulfil this task.

Apart from functional and structural similarities between these tales, there appears a further correspondence: the ambiguous status of the expelled. Precisely there where the main contrast between the tales has initially been located a further argument for comparison and mutual clarification presents itself.

Moreover, it has become evident that two other properties for differentiation, sacrifice (here: sacrificial consecration) and purificatory riddance, ultimately meet in the ambivalent status of the expelled colonists: either way, they ended up in another domain, the territory of gods and wild beasts, of chaos and sacrality. The Dryopians, and Battus, the *oikist* of the Theraeans who founded Cyrene, explicitly exemplify this ambiguity of otherness at the narrative level.

Finally, a further correspondence between the two groups of colonists can be found in the connection of both groups to Apollo. Whether as tithes or as murderers they were forced to go to Apollo in times of crisis. As we have seen, Versnel has pointed out that Apollo's role is illuminating in this context. The dispatch of those who do not belong may be regulated by Apollo. His lustrative function as regulator of the elimination of this kind of 'superfluous' material, and as establisher of a new order, might explain his prominence both in the colonisation expeditions and at the Thargelia¹.

From a structural-semiotic perspective, scholars have tried to 'read' these myths and/or tales of crisis management. According to some the marginality of the victim legitimates his extraordinary power (Ogden), others consider the victim to be either above or below humanity and therefore an apt symbolic mirror for the 'condition humaine' (Vernant on Oedipus), or understood the paradoxical nature of hero-victims in relation to the city's image of itself (and its discourse on membership, Kearns). However, none of these 'readings' is entirely satisfactory. Either parts of the material are ignored or the thesis is too specific to be useful in a thematic study, which draws on a large body of sources, from various places, periods and genres. In general, one cannot help thinking that the tales are here used as an illustration of something else that has been established (or presumed) on other grounds, rather than studied in their own right.

However, from a structural-semiotic perspective, a few observations can be made nonetheless. In approaching both sacrificial and purificatory phenomena as remedial strategies of an endangered community, as re-ordering and re-defining processes, indeed highly similar concerns can be seen to be expressed. Rituals, myths and tales show a remarkable need for dividing between here and there, 'us' and 'them', even in spatial terms by the locating of action, and seem to contribute

symbolic value to either side: pure versus impure, order versus chaos and safe versus lost. Beating and stoning in this perspective are performative actions that separate and redefine; walls, gates, seashores and borders the telling boundaries between safety and destruction. Sacrifice and purification may thus be considered transformative and discriminatory strategies shaping the ins and outs of crisis management.

Our analysis of the three phenomena of ancient Greek crisis management is nearly completed. One may claim that so far a combined approach has been justified at various levels of interpretation. By liberating oneself from the confinements of the ‘narrow’ definitions of sacrifice and purification (the offering of a gift versus the riddance of *katharmata*), one starts to discover how similarly sacrifice and purification may have worked. However, differences remain as well, especially at the level of outward appearances and terminology. Similarity in function and structure does perhaps accommodate these differences, but that should not be confused with a full identification of the two. Nor does this necessarily explain the intertwining of features and vocabulary from purificatory and sacrificial contexts.

In the last chapter of this study we return to the level of observation, of outward appearances, and to the differences between sacrifice and purification that were highlighted by the study of the *pharmakos* ritual, the myths of (self-)sacrifice and the tales of forced colonisation from an intellectualist perspective.

It is true, the distinction and connection between sacrifice and purification has been noted before, but has never been made productive for the understanding of ancient Greek crisis management. This is the last challenge to be taken in this study.

¹Versnel 1993, esp. 304-311. Apollo’s prominence at the Thargelia is slightly more debatable than suggested here, see Chapter 1 Section a.

PART 5

AMBIGUITIES IN ANCIENT GREEK CRISIS MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER 9

THE DOUBLE BIND OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

This final chapter deals with the remarkable interrelation of sacrifice and purification in times of crisis. This subject is of great importance for the present study, as *pharmakos* figures in myth, ritual and tale turn out to be the hybrid victims of procedures invested with both sacrificial and purificatory features. And although we have seen that sacrifice and purification in times of crisis can be interpreted from a functionalist and structuralist-semiotic perspective in highly similar ways, at the level of outward appearances the two can not be identified.

At the onset of this chapter a few words must be said about its aims and methodology. What follows is not an exhaustive nor a detailed discussion of sources, nor is it meant to make a final statement on the nature of sacrifice and purification: it is a survey of possibilities. Evidently, time, place and genre matter. However, the aim of this chapter is to demonstrate and understand the two-fold structure that is formative of ancient Greek crisis management, rather than the study of its manifold appearances. The discussions in the following sections owe much to the work of other scholars¹. With such an ambitious project it is clearly not possible to be comprehensive. New research or new interpretations fall beyond the scope of this chapter.

By widening the scope in the first section, it will be demonstrated that the intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory elements is a recurrent phenomenon in the context of crisis. Rather than being restricted to the hero-victims studied above, it forms a structural potential of ancient Greek crisis management at large.

In the second section this insight will be refined by a closer study of sacrifice and purification. Although the dichotomy between the two may, at times, be viewed as a mere differentiation, their intertwining, overlap, or even amalgamation in times of crisis remains a striking feature, and of central importance to this study.

In the third and last section of this chapter an attempt will be made to place the phenomenon within the larger framework of ancient Greek ideas of order and

¹What follows owes much to Parker 1983. In the last section Padel 1992 has been of substantial influence.

disruption. It will be shown that these ideas are nurtured by two sources. On the one hand they reflect the general preoccupation with the divine. On the other hand they are structured by the understanding of order as a balance of powers, and the disruption of such balance by either overgaining of one such power or the intrusion of an alien force². Seen from this perspective, purification thus involves the elimination of the disturbing factor, but at the same time implies the restoration of the relation with the divine. Sacrifice is in the first place directed towards the divine, but must *qualitate qua* involve the elimination of the disruption as well.

The implication of all this is that the various rituals, myths and tales from ancient Greek texts discussed in this study can be rendered meaningful *as they are*. It is unnecessary to explain away part of the evidence or to take recourse to arguments of ‘incidental’ or ‘accidental’ import. On the contrary. Precisely in the area where rituals, myths and tales meet lies the key to a deeper understanding of ancient Greek crisis management. Though being the final chapter of one study, this could well be the first of another.

A. WIDENING THE SCOPE

In this section the scope will be widened. Various phenomena, from ritual, literary and conceptual contexts will be discussed. Some will be more sacrificial, others more purificatory in kind, but all demonstrate to some degree the intertwining of sacrifice and purification in the context of crisis management. Attention will also be paid to the three main points of difference between purificatory ritual and sacrificial myth: the type of action, the status of the victim and the role of the gods.

In 1977 Versnel published an article on Herodotus’ tale about Polycrates, the extremely fortunate tyrant who is advised by the wise Amasis to give up his most valued possession in order to avert the envy of the gods. Polycrates throws away his valuable ring into the sea. However, the ring turns up again (in the stomach of a fish) and Polycrates’ ruin is inevitable³. Versnel argued that in all extant interpretations of the tale two aspects had been neglected: on the one hand Polycrates’ ring could be

²This is not an explanation in terms of origins. Perhaps, the structuring role of the in & out opposition in the perception of oneself and the world is (much) more ancient than the notion of balance. However, during the centuries our source-material covers, the notion of balance plays a considerable role as well.

³Versnel 1977 on Hdt. 3.40-43.

considered a substitution sacrifice, even a *pars pro toto*, but on the other hand, the ring could be compared with the evil-bearing *pharmakos* who is sent away and should never come back. In one single sentence the ring is both described as ‘the most precious and dearest possession’, and ‘that which he throws away in order that it never returns among the people’⁴. The terminology employed is familiar. The act itself is referred to as *riptein* and *apoballein*, terms also employed in ritual and mythical crisis management⁵.

In the context of this tale, Versnel also pointed out the role of *to theion*, the anonymous divine, in crisis management and the principle of compensation, ‘the general idea that there must be proper retribution for the preservation of life and happiness’. Moreover, he noticed the medical imagery, employed to describe the reinstatement of the proper balance. We shall elaborate on these themes in the last two sections of this chapter.

In Polycrates’ tale sacrificial and purificatory elements coincide. Ruin can be bought off by a substitution sacrifice which here serves at the same time as the elimination of evil. Polycrates’ crisis management turns out to be the example par excellence of a structural intertwining of both notions in ancient Greek crisis management, as will become clear from the examples discussed below.

Evidently, for practical reasons, these examples are isolated from their larger contexts and form a random selection with a mere illustrative status. They should all be studied in their own right, but, as I see it, at the root of these phenomena and as a major shaping force in the various forms of their manifestations, lies the intertwining of sacrifice and purification in reactions to crisis.

APODIOPOMPEISTHAI AND THE FLEECE OF ZEUS

Six months after the Thargelia, again various purification ceremonies were held in Athens. Just as the month *Thargelion* marked an important turning point in the agricultural year, the beginning of summer and of the harvest season, the month *Maimakterion* marked the beginning of winter and of ploughing⁶. Among the rituals

⁴Hdt. 3.40: πλείστου ἄξιον καὶ ἐπ’ ᾧ σὺ ἀπολομένῳ μάλιστα τὴν ψυχὴν ἀλγήσεις, τοῦτο ἀπόβαλε οὕτω ὥπως μηκέτι ἦξει ἐς ἀνθρώπους.

⁵See Hdt. 3.40 and 3.41. See Chapter 1 Section g and Chapter 3 Section c.

⁶See Parker 1983, 28-29 and notes. See Harp./Sud. s.v. Μαιμακτηριών. ‘*Maimakterion* was especially known for its fierce storms. Now, as winter begins in this

in *Maimakterion*, the *Pompaia* were celebrated, which Parker explains as follows⁷:

The evidence for this ceremony is scanty, but we are told that, 'among the purifications', the fleece of a ram sacrificed to Zeus *Meilichios* (a *dion*) was carried out of the city. The sense of the rite is clear from the verb derived from it, *apodiopompeisthai*, to purify by expulsion; the fleece was an inanimate scapegoat, an object that absorbed evil and was then expelled. So one of *Thargelion*'s most important rites has a close parallel in *Maimakterion*.

It is fascinating that at the two turning points of the year such highly similar purification rituals were performed. What is even more fascinating is the fact that the ritual activity reveals an ambiguity similar to that of the *pharmakos* ritual of the *Thargelia*, as a discussion of various testimonia on the term *(apo)diopompeisthai* will show. A further similarity with the *pharmakos* can be found in the hybrid 'fleece of Zeus' (*Dios koidion*) or 'divine fleece' (*dion koidion*).

The term *(apo)diopompeisthai* clearly belongs to the context of crisis management⁸. Its sense, however, is less obvious. The ninth edition of *LSJ* notes as the first sense of *apodiopompeomai* 'to escort out of the city (the *Dion Koidion*)', hence generally, 'to conjure away', and also 'to free from pollution'. In the seventh edition of *LSJ*, however, the first rendering of the same verb is 'to avert threatened evils by offerings to Zeus (*apo, Dios, pompe*)'⁹. The identity of these 'offerings' is far from clear, as *(apo)diopompeisthai* often takes a suppressed object. Apparently, with these two divergent descriptions by two editions of the same dictionary, the character of the proceedings is not unequivocal. The divergence between these editions is illuminating and in fact reflects a general uncertainty with regard to the precise sense of this ritual term. What was escorted out, and why?

Even among ancient scholars no unanimity can be found. The *Suda* is only partly elucidating: '*apodiopompeisthai*: with accusative. To send away to Zeus

month, the air is disturbed and suffers change (ἀρχὴν δὲ λαμβάνοντος τοῦ χειμῶνος ἐν τούτῳ τῷ μηνί, ὃ ἂν ταράττεται καὶ μεταβολὴν ἴσχει). To Zeus Maimaktes is ascribed the sending of wild storms and cold blasts'. See also Hesych. s.v. μαιμάκτης· μειλίχιος, καθάρσιος.

⁷Parker 1983, 29. Deubner 1932, 157 denies the connection between Maimakteria and the fleece of Zeus. But see Nilsson 1955², 111.

⁸As the following reference in Pollux I.33 (Bethe) confirms: ἄλλης δὲ χρείας καθήρασθαι, μίασμα ἐκνίψασθαι, [ἄγος ἀποπέμψασθαι], μύσος λύσασθαι, ἀπολύσασθαι, ἀποτρέψασθαι, ἀποδιοπομπήσασθαι.

⁹See also the Oxford 1992 intermediate edition of *LSJ*, based on the 7th ed. of Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon (1883).

Prostropaios and as it were to purify (oneself) or to appease'¹⁰. Note the juxtaposition of these last two options. According to a variation on this statement it is Zeus *Prostropaios* himself whom one should turn away¹¹. One wonders why.

The Etymologicum Magnum explains the term differently: '*apodiopompeisthai*: of the first conjugation; from *Dios* and *pompos*. It signifies the turning away by Zeus *Apotropaios*; for Zeus is an *Apotropaios* and a god who turns away the *age*'¹². Phrynichus gives the following explanation, similar in content, but again different in derivation: '*apodiopompeisthai* and *diopompeisthai*: this means the sending away and purifying (oneself) of defilements. The name is a compound from '*dios*' which is the fleece of the victim sacrificed to Zeus, standing on which they cleansed themselves, and from 'sending off'¹³. Eustathius also exploits etymology¹⁴:

Those who interpret the word *diopompein* say that they applied the term *dion* to the fleece of the animal that had been sacrificed to Zeus Meilichios in purifications at the end of the month *Maimakterion*, when they performed the *Pompaia* and when the casting out of pollutions at the crossroads took place: and they held in their hands a 'sender' which they say was the *kerukeion*, the attribute of Hermes, and

¹⁰*Sud.* s.v. Ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαι (= Bekk. *Anecd. Gr.* I p. 427.5): Ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαι αἰτιατικῇ. ἀποπέμπεσθαι πρὸς τὸν προστρόπαιον Δία καὶ οἶονεῖ καθαίρεσθαι ἢ ἰλάσκεσθαι. Next, another example of the use of ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαι is added, here clearly in the sense of riddance: τοὺς νυκτικόρακας εἰς τοὺς ὄρνις ἀποδιοπομποῦνται ('they send away the long-eared owls to the birds'). See Hesych. s.v.: διοπομπεῖσθαι· καθαίρειν. ἰδίως δὲ τὸ καθαίροντας <πρὸς> τὸν προστρόπαιον Δία <ἀποπέμπειν>, '*diopompeisthai*: to purify, specifically the sending away to Zeus *Prostropaios* during the purifying process.

¹¹Schol. Pl. *Crat.* 396E: ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαί φασι τὸ ἀποτρέπεσθαι τὸν προστρόπαιον Δία, καὶ οἶονεῖ καθαίρεσθαι τὰ δεινὰ, '*apodiopompeisthai* is the turning away of Zeus *Prostropaios*, and as if to purify oneself of the ills'. In view of the scholion below and *Sud.* s.v., it is not unlikely that <πρὸς> may be added here as well (as in Hesych. s.v., but there it is less radical, as there is already an object to be sent away). However, it does not occur in the manuscripts and we leave it as such for the time being.

¹²*E.M.* s.v. ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαι· πρώτης συζυγίας διοπομπῶ διοπομπήσω· ἀπὸ τοῦ Διὸς καὶ τοῦ πομπός. σημαίνει δὲ τὸ ἀποτρέπεσθαι διὰ τοῦ ἀποτροπαίου Διὸς· ἀποτρόπαιος μὲν Ζεὺς καὶ δαίμων ἀποτρέπων τὰ ἄγῃ.

¹³Phrynich. ap. Bekk. *Anecd.* 7, 15: Ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαι καὶ διοπομπεῖσθαι σημαίνει μὲν τὸ ἀποπέμπεσθαι καὶ ἀποκαθαίρεσθαι μύσῃ· σύγκειται δὲ τὸ ὄνομα ἐκ τοῦ δίου, ὃ ἐστὶ δέσμα τοῦ ἱερείου τοῦ θυομένου τῷ Δίῃ, ἐφ' οὗ ἐστῶτες ἐκαθαίροντο, καὶ τοῦ πέμπεσθαι. μετὰ γοῦν τῆς ἀπὸ προθέσεως Ἀττικώτατόν ἐστιν. (The most Attic form is with *apo*).

¹⁴Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 22.481, p. 1935, 8 (Stalbaum 1825): καὶ οἱ τὸ διοπομπεῖν δὲ ἐρμηνεύοντές φασιν ὅτι διὸν ἐκάλουν, κώδιον ἱερείου τυθέντος Διὶ μελιχίῳ ἐν τοῖς καθαρμοῖς φθίνοντος μαιμακτηριῶνος μηνὸς ὅτε ἤγοντο τὰ πομπαῖα. καὶ καθαρωῶν ἐκβολαὶ εἰς τὰς τριόδους ἐγίνοντο. εἶχον δὲ μετὰ χειρὸς πομπόν· ὅπερ ἦν, φασί, κηρύκιον, σέβας Ἑρμοῦ. καὶ ἐκ τοῦ τοιούτου πομποῦ καὶ τοῦ ῥηθέντος δίου τὸ διοπομπεῖν (translation Harrison 1922³, 26).

from the sender thus defined, *pompos*, and from the word *dion*, they get the word *diopompein*, divine sending.

Finally, once more Eustathius, from the same passage: ‘and alternatively, more in general *diopompein* and *apodiopompein* was seen to be the sending away of bad things with an invocation of Zeus *Alexikakos*’¹⁵. According to Hesychius, however, it is the *apotropaios* himself that should be sent far away: ‘to turn away, to send the *apotropaios* far away, to purify away’¹⁶.

In sum, ancient interpretations vary as well. Various, or multiple, effects have been ascribed to the ritual action: to avert, to purify (away), to turn away, and to appease. There seems to be even more variation with regard to the means by which this should be attained: by the sending away of bad things, of a ram’s fleece or of an *apotropaios*. The destination of these objects, if mentioned at all, is either ‘far away’, or Zeus *Apotropaios*, Zeus *Prostropaios*, Zeus *Meilichios* or Zeus *Alexikakos*. There is both an aspect of riddance and of offering to the ritual action undertaken and the conclusion must be drawn that, when *apodiopompeisthai* is the suggested way out, there is indeed ambiguity as to how to deal with the situation.

It may be helpful to pay special attention to ‘the fleece of Zeus’ or ‘the divine fleece’, which was, as we saw above, sometimes closely connected with *apodiopompeisthai*, even etymologically. According to Hesychius, Polemon, who had apparently written a whole treatise on the subject¹⁷, accounts for this fleece as follows: ‘it is the fleece of the victim sacrificed to Zeus’. Hesychius further explains: ‘The fleece of Zeus: thus they called where the victim has been sacrificed to Zeus, on which those who were purifying themselves stood with their left foot. Some say it means a great and perfect fleece. And Polemon calls it the fleece taken from the victim sacrificed to Zeus’¹⁸. This so-called fleece of Zeus, or divine fleece, is said to

¹⁵Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 22.481, p. 1935, 8 (Stallbaum): ἄλλως δὲ κοινότερον διοπομπεῖν καὶ ἀποδιοπομπεῖν ἐφαίνετο τὸ Διὸς ἀλεξικάκου ἐπικλήσει ἐκπέμπειν τὰ φαῦλα. In Timaeus Grammaticus’ comment on Pl. *Crat* 396e Zeus gets a similar intermediary role attributed: ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαι· ἀποπέμπεσθαι καὶ διωθεῖσθαι τὰ ἁμαρτήματα, συμπράκτορι χρώμενος τῷ Διί, ‘to send away and to get rid of the faults, calling on Zeus for help’.

¹⁶Hesych. s.v. ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαι· ἀποστρέφεσθαι, τὸν ἀποτρόπαιον ἐκπέμπεσθαι μακράν, ἀποκαθαίρεσθαι. (One may, however, propose another translation: ‘that the *apotropaios* sends one far away’).

¹⁷See Athen. 11.478c.

¹⁸Hesych. s.v. Διὸς κώδιον· οὕτως ἔλεγον, οὗ τὸ ἱερεῖον <Διὶ> τέθυται, ἐφ’ οὗ οἱ καθαιρόμενοι ἐστήχεσαν τῷ ἁριστερῷ ποδί. τινὲς δὲ τὸ μέγα καὶ τέλειον. ὁ δὲ

have been used not only in the above-mentioned *Pompaia*, but also in various other cathartic contexts such as in murder purifications, in initiatory purification rites and temple incubations¹⁹. As an instrument of purification, this fleece functions both as an evil-absorbing sponge and as a pars pro toto of a sacrificial victim that emphasises the relationship with the god²⁰.

Hence, the function of the fleece of Zeus was also double, or rather, ambivalent. On the one hand the fleece served as the instrument of absorptive riddance, on the other hand as a means of appeasement. As we saw, when drawing the parallel between the *Thargelia* and the *Pompaia*, Parker has claimed that 'the fleece was an inanimate scapegoat, an object that absorbed evil and was then expelled'²¹. One could not agree more. However, Parker mentions only half of the truth, for the fleece symbolises at the same time the sacrificial and appeasing aspect of the purification ceremony, just as the scapegoat Parker refers to, who, in its capacity as *pharmakos*, also embodies both aspects, the sacrificial offering and the evil that should be ousted. Interestingly, 344 pages later, in the context of purification from homicide, Parker makes the following observation²²:

The two aspects (actual purification and rites of appeasement, LK) seem to be united in the symbolism of the so-called "fleece of Zeus". (...) indeed, ancient scholars were perhaps correct in deriving the verb *apodiopompeisthai*, 'send away (pollution)', from the fleece of Zeus. But since from a ram sacrificed to Zeus Meilichios or Ktesios, it also brought the candidate into symbolic contact with the god he sought to appease.

Πολέμων τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς τεθυμένον ἱερεῖον; See also *Sud.* s.v.: θύουσι τε τῷ τε Μειλιχίῳ καὶ τῷ Κτησίῳ Δίῳ, τὰ δὲ κώδια τούτων φυλάσσουσι καὶ Δία (δῖα) προσαγορεύονται, χρῶνται δ' αὐτοῖς οἱ τε Σκιροφορίον τὴν πομπὴν στέλλοντες καὶ ὁ δαδούχος ἐν Ἐλευσίνι καὶ ἄλλοι τινὲς πρὸς καθαρμούς ὑποστορνύντες αὐτὰ τοῖς ποσὶ τῶν ἐναγῶν. 'They sacrifice the victims to Zeus *Meilichios* and to Zeus *Ktesios* and they keep the fleeces, calling them *Dia*, and the people who use them in those the procession at the *Skirophoria*, and by the Dadouchos at Eleusis and by a number of others who use them purificatory purposes spreading them beneath the feet of those in need of purification (or those who are under a curse, 'enagoi'). Among the *lexeis rhetorikai* in Bekker, *Anecd. Gr.* 1814/1965, 242.26 the following entry can be found: Δῖον κώδιον· ἐπὶ τῶν καθαιρουμένων λέγεται, ἐπειδήπερ Διὶ θύουσι καθαίροντες τοὺς μύσει κατεχομένους. (The fleece of Zeus: this is used in the context of those who are being purified, for they sacrifice to Zeus when purifying those who are being seized by a *musos*).

¹⁹See Parker 1983, 28-29, 230, 284-5 and appendix 6 (and references).

²⁰See Nilsson 1955², 113 under the heading 'Abwehr des Bösen': "Die ursprüngliche Verwendung des Schaffelles im Kult ist nicht einheitlich; eine Einheitlichkeit täuscht nur der Name Διὸς κώδιον vor, der auf verschiedene Verwendungen ausgedehnt wurde".

²¹Parker 1983, 29.

²²Parker 1983, 373.

A brief survey of the term *apodiopompeisthai* and the fleece of Zeus has affirmed our earlier conclusion that sacrificial and purificatory features may intertwine in a context of crisis management. Also, the hybrid victim of the *pharmakos* ritual has found his counterpart in the fleece of Zeus, both sacrificial offering and the embodiment, or emblem, of the pollution that should be eradicated.

HECATE'S MEALS

Other turning points, too, were ritually marked. At every new moon, transition was given shape in nocturnal rituals addressing Hecate, the goddess of triple ways, crossroads and pathways²³. Offerings, the so-called ‘meals for Hecate’, were brought to these crossroads. They consisted of puppies, cakes, cheese perhaps, and fish and had been prepared at home²⁴. Some ancient sources stress that they were typically rich people’s offerings, and there are suggestions that these meals for Hecate may have ended up in poor people’s bellies rather than in hers²⁵. They must have been quite a doubtful dinner (‘fishy’ indeed), all the more since the offerings were considered purifications at the same time²⁶. Remarkable is the double nature of the

²³See *RE* 7 (1912) 2770-2782 s.v. ‘Hekate’ (Heckenbach); Johnston 1991; Th. Kraus, *Hekate Studien zu Wesen und Bild der Göttin in Kleinasien und Griechenland* (Heidelberg 1960).

²⁴See for Hecate’s meals Apollodorus 244 *FGrHist* fr. 109 (=Athen. 7.126 p. 326AB); Ar. *Plut.* 594-597 and schol.; Dem. 54.39; schol. Theocr. 2.12d (=Ar. *Dait.* fr. 209 Kassel-Austin); Harp. s.v. τριακάς; Lucian. *Dial. Mort.* 331 and 425; idem, *Catapl.* 7; Philoch. 328 *FGrHist* fr. 86; Soph. fr. 734 (Radt). On the substantials of these meals see Parker 1996, 30 n.65 and the catalogue in *RE* 7 (1912) 2770-2782 s.v. ‘Hekate’ (Heckenbach) at 2780.

²⁵Ar. *Plut.* 594-596: παρὰ τῆς Ἑκάτης ἔξεστιν τοῦτο πυθέσθαι, εἴτε τὸ πλουτεῖν εἴτε τὸ πεινῆν βέλτιον. φησι γὰρ αὕτη τοὺς μὲν ἔχοντας καὶ πλουτοῦντας δεῖπνον κατὰ μῆν’ ἀποπέμπειν, τοὺς δὲ πένητας τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀρπάξειν πρὶν καταθεῖναι (note the simultaneous use of *katatithenai* and *apopempein*). The scholia (594c α and β) explain the workings of religion: κατὰ τὴν νομηνίαν οἱ πλούσιοι ἔπεμπον δεῖπνον ἐσπέρας, ὥσπερ θυσίαν, τῇ Ἑκάτῃ ἐν ταῖς τριόδοις· οἱ δὲ πένητες ἤρχοντο πεινῶντες καὶ ἡσθιον αὐτά, καὶ ἔλεγον ὅτι ἡ Ἑκάτη ἔφαγεν αὐτά.

²⁶For the purificatory context, see e.g. Lucian. *Dial. Mort.* 331 who mentions the meals together with lupines and eggs ‘from a purification (ἐκ καθαρσίου)’ or ‘anything of the sort’; Plu. *Quaest. Rom.* 68 (*Mor.* 280c) (‘dogs are carried out to Hecate with the other *katharsia*’). It is disputed whether the somewhat puzzling term *oxuthumia* must be identified with these meals, with *katharmata* in general, or with *katharmata* from purifications of the house only (see Phot./*Sud.* s.v. ὀξυθύμια). See Johnston 1991 and Parker 1983, 30 for the discussion and references.

ritual meal: on the one hand unmistakably an offering to a goddess, on the other hand offscourings²⁷. In sum: purificatory left-overs for a divine meal.

Puppies were, according to Plutarch, common victims in purificatory contexts. Their status fitted such occasions: “Nor, in fact, did the men of old think that this animal was wholly pure, for it was never sacrificed to any of the Olympian gods; and when it is sent to the crossroads as a supper for the earth-goddess Hecate, it has its due portion among ceremonies that avert and expiate evil (*apotropaion kai katharsion*)”²⁸. Elsewhere Plutarch states: “Nearly all the Greeks used a dog as a sacrificial victim (*sphagion*) for ceremonies of purification (*pros tous katharmous*); and some, at least, make use of it even to this day²⁹”. In a third passage from Plutarch concerning puppies, or dogs, in the context of purification, the intertwining of sacrifice and purification is made most explicit: “*If the sacrifice is a purification* (my italics, LK), one might say that the dog is sacrificed as being a suitable victim for such rites, since the Greeks, in their rites of purification, carry forth puppies for burial, and in many places perform the rites called ‘*perikulakismoï*’”³⁰.

Hecate’s own role in these rites is far from unequivocal, too. Her status deserves more attention than can be paid here. In Antiquity, she was regarded both as a glorious goddess who is most honoured by the other gods, especially by Zeus, and

²⁷Johnston 1991 distinguishes between these two types by marking out two fundamental types of crossroad rituals: protective and exploitive. The former consist of offerings, the *deipna*, by which people asked for the goddess’ protection against the dangers inherent in the crossroads. The latter pertains to the leaving behind of purificatory material and can be seen to exploit the dissociative dimension of the crossroads’ liminality. It is only from Plutarch onwards, according to Johnston, that these two different types of rituals became confused. However, one may wonder why Plutarch suddenly started to confuse them. Moreover, an earlier source (Apollodorus) already describes the ingredients of these offerings as of a dubious nature.

²⁸Plu. *Quaest. Rom* 111 (*Mor.* 290d) (translation Loeb with minor adaptations). See also Paus. 3.14.9-10 for black puppy sacrifices to the Wayside Goddess at night by the people of Colophon and by Laconian youths; for more puppy-sacrifices to Hecate see schol. Theocr. 2.12 (=Ar. *Dait.* fr. 204 Kock) (white dog); Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 3, 274, p. 1467, 35 (Stallbaum); Hesych. s.v. Ἑκάτης ἄγαλμα (=Bekker, *Anecd. Gr.* I 327, 13); Theophr. *Char.* 16; Jul. Imp. *Or.* 8.(5.) 17 [176d]; Plu. *Quaest. Rom.* 52 (*Mor.* 277b); Lycophr. *Alex.* 77 and schol. (αὐτῇ [Hecate] κύνας θύεσθαι). Cf. Ov. *Fast.* 1.389.

²⁹Plu. *Quaest. Rom.* 68 (*Mor.* 280c), continuing: “They bring forth for Hecate puppies along with the other materials for purification, and rub round about with puppies such persons as are in need of cleansing, and this kind of purification they call *periskylakismos* (‘puppification’)”. See also Julian *Ep.* 8.(5.)17 [176d] (dogs as θύματα for Hecate).

³⁰Plu. *Rom.* 21.7-8: τὸν δὲ κύνα φαίη τις ἄν, εἰ μὲν ἡ θυσία καθαρός ἐστι, θύεσθαι καθαροῖς χρωμένων αὐτῷ· καὶ γὰρ Ἕλληνες ἐν τε τοῖς καθαροῖς σκύλακας

by men³¹, and as an uncanny and chthonian deity par excellence³², as a mistress of magic³³ and as one among the other *Apotropaioi*³⁴, at home at triple ways and entrances of houses and temples. In line with various earlier interpretations, Parker has suggested that the meals were a way of 'keeping away Hecate'³⁵, whereas Johnston on the other hand, denying the uncanny nature of Hecate, claims that Hecate was supplicated for protection³⁶. Moreover, a fragment from the work of Sophron that may well deal with Hecatean ritual (a dog sacrifice as a meal) must be mentioned here as well. It has been connected with a surviving title of a lost mime by the same author: 'the women who claim that they are driving out the goddess'³⁷. It seems that the goddess who deals with impurity may become impure herself. Something similar has been noticed earlier, when it seemed that Zeus *Prostropaios* had to be turned away³⁸.

It is therefore not only the ritual action and the objects of action which may be ambiguous in the context of crisis management, but also the precise role of the divinities themselves is difficult to grasp³⁹. Hecate's meals, offered at a turning point in the calendar, or at uncertain places, such as crossroads, provide us with another example of the intertwining of purificatory and sacrificial vocabulary and features at

ἐκφέρουσι καὶ πολλαχοῦ χρῶνται τοῖς λεγομένοις περισκυλακισμοῖς. See also Plu. *Quaest. Rom.* 52 (*Mor.* 277b); on *peri*-rituals see below. See further Parker 1983, 357-358.

³¹See Hes. *Theog.* 411-452 for a long passage praising the virtues and the glory of Hecate. See also Paus. 2.30.2 for Hecate's primacy on Aegina.

³²See e.g. schol. Theocr. 2.12 for Hecate as 'chthonic and president of the beings below'. See Padel 1992, 104f on Hecate's ambiguity (power to help in that sphere in which she harms and vice versa).

³³See Eur. *Med.* 397. See Diod. 4.45f and Ap. Rhod. 4.827 (on Hecate as the mother of Medea).

³⁴Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 7.6 (*Mor.* 708f).

³⁵Parker 1983, 224. See also Parker 1983, 30 n. 65.

³⁶Johnston 1991, 219, esp. n. 12. Johnston claims that Hecate acquired the more uncanny image only at a latter stage, from the times of Plutarch onwards.

³⁷Sophron, fr. 3-9 (Hordern): τὰ γυναῖκες αἱ τὰν θεὸν φαντι ἐξελάων. For sheer lack of understanding, other translations have been suggested, e.g. 'Women who claim the goddess is riding out'. However, Parker 1983, 223 rightly points out that the verb that is used, *exelaunein*, very much belongs in the context of purification and ritual expulsion. See also Page 1942, 328-331 with bibliography.

³⁸Schol. Pl. *Crat.* 396E (above).

³⁹See already Moulinier 1952, 303: "Pour conclure sur la question des carrefours d'Hécate il semble donc que l'activité purificatrice de la déesse s'y soit manifestée de deux façons très différentes: d'une part on lui apportait toutes sortes d'impuretés, notamment les restes des cérémonies lustrales, que sa puissance anéantissait; d'autre part on lui offrait de temps en temps des 'banquets' qui la rendaient favorable à ceux qui les lui présentaient, moyennant quoi elle détournait les grands fléaux et les souillures".

moments of transition⁴⁰. Usual categories, even divine ones, appear less clear-cut than we tend to think.

KATHARMOI AND KATHARSIA

“If the sacrifice (*thysia*) is a purification (*katharmos*)”, Plutarch explains, as mentioned above, “dogs are suitable sacrificial victims” - and they are carried forth and buried. A puzzling passage for those who seek to distinguish sharply between sacrifice and purification, a challenge for those who accept a more complex relationship. In the present section we turn to some other *katharmoi* in order to find out whether Plutarch is just careless or rather to the point in his usage of ancient Greek ritual terminology⁴¹. We shall discuss a few purifications of cities and assemblies first, and then a *katharmos* by a famous individual.

Apart from the *Thargelia*, the *Pompaia* and other instances of periodical crisis management we have come across so far, there are also sudden occasions that necessitate community-cleansings. Polybius relates how the Cynaetheans, an Arcadian people, neglected all civilizing institutions, such as sacrifices, dances, music, and became ‘so savage that in no city of Greece were greater and more constant crimes committed’⁴². As an example of their deplorable state, Polybius reports the following:

At the time when, after the great massacre, the Cynaetheans sent an embassy to Sparta, the other Arcadian cities which they entered on their journey gave them instant notice to depart by cry of herald, but the Mantineans after their departure even made a purification (*katharmon*) and carried the sacrificial victims⁴³ (*sphagia*) round their city and all their territory⁴⁴.

⁴⁰See also Parker 1983, 30: “These meals for Hecate are constantly associated with the purificatory offscourings thrown out in the same place, and, although their exact relation to such relics is not quite clear, it is certain that like them they were a way of carrying evil away from the place of habitation, or at least of pinning the dangerous goddess at the crossroads by prophylactic offerings”.

⁴¹See *LSJ* s.v. and Chapter 1 Section g.

⁴²Polyb. 4.21.

⁴³The translation of *sphagia* as sacrificial victims is, although common usage, debatable. Ritual victims is perhaps more neutral. This question of translation touches upon the essence of the questions at stake in this study. We shall come back to this below.

⁴⁴Polyb. 4.21 (translation Loeb): Μαντινεῖς δὲ μετὰ τὴν μεταλλαγὴν αὐτῶν καὶ καθαροὺν ἐποιήσαντο καὶ σφάγια περιήνεγκαν τῆς τε πόλεως κύκλῳ καὶ τῆς χώρας πάσης. Compare also Athenaeus’ similar version: ... Μαντινεῖς δὲ καὶ μετὰ τὴν

A comparable occasion is reported by Plutarch about the Athenians:

How, when they heard of the clubbing at Argos, in which the Argives killed fifteen hundred of their own citizens, they decreed that a purificatory sacrifice⁴⁵ (*katharsion*) be carried around the assembly⁴⁶.

Note that the remedial object in a *katharmos* can be referred to as *sphagion* or as *katharsion*, a term also employed to describe the victim of *pharmakos* ritual⁴⁷.

There are more such purifications known. In Athens and elsewhere, the city, the assembly, other community buildings such as theatres or temples, and gatherings of the people in general, were, regularly, or in times of crisis, purified by means of *katharsia*; usually little piglets killed for the occasion, which were then carried around the place that was to be purified⁴⁸. The custom is called *ta peristia*, which *LSJ*

μεταλλαγὴν αὐτῶν καθαρόν τῆς πόλεως ἐποιήσαντο σφάγια περιαγαγόντες κύκλῳ τῆς χώρας πάσης (Athen. 11. 626f).

⁴⁵As we have seen in Chapter 1 Section g the translation of *katharsion* as purificatory sacrifice may be contested. As with the term *sphagia*, this question of translation pertains to the central issues of this study.

⁴⁶Plu. *Praec. Reip. Ger.* 17 (*Mor.* 814): τὸν δ' ἐν Ἀργεὶ πυθόμενοι σκυταλισμόν, ἐν ᾧ πεντακοσίους καὶ χιλίους ἀνηρέκυσαν ἐξ αὐτῶν οἱ Ἀργεῖοι, περιενεγκεῖν καθάρσιον περὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐκέλευσαν.

⁴⁷For *katharsion* see Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48; *Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24.

⁴⁸As with the *pharmakoi*, a substantial part of the evidence is derived from a few related scholia. Two earlier passages, in Aristophanes and Aeschines, are relevant too: Ar. *Ach.* 44: πάριθ' ὡς ἂν ἐντὸς ἦτε τοῦ καθάρματος (move up within the purified grounds) and Aeschin. 1.23: ἐπειδὴν τὸ καθάρσιον περιενεχθῆ, ... (after the *katharsion* had been carried around, ...) with: schol. Ar. *Ach.* 44: (...) ὅτι ἐκαθαίροντο οἱ ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ χοίρου σφαζομένου καὶ ὁ ῥήτωρ μαρτυρεῖ τὸ δὲ θυόμενον χοιρίδιον ἐπικαθάρσει τῶν τόπων κάθαγμα ἐκαλεῖτο, ὁ δὲ περικαθαίρων καθαρτής (for those in the popular assembly purified themselves by means of a slaughtered piglet, as the orator testifies and the piglet that is sacrificed for the purification is called *katharma*, and the one who purifies *kathartes*); schol. Aeschin. 1.53a: τὸ καθάρσιον] οἷον χοῖρον ἐσφαγμένον, δι' οὗ ἐκάθηραν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν (*katharsion*: the slaughtered piglet by means of which they purified the popular assembly) and schol. Aeschin. 1.53b: ὁ λεγόμενος περιστάρχος ἱερεῖον λαβὼν τούτῳ καθαίρει τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. τοῦτο λέγεται κάθαγμα καὶ καθάρσιον. Ἀριστοφάνης Ἀχαρνέῦσι (44) “ὡς ἂν ἐντὸς ἦτε τοῦ καθάρματος”.- ἔθος δὲ ἦν καθαίρειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ τὰ θέατρα μικροῖς χοιριδίῳις, ἃ καθάρσια ἐκάλουν, καὶ προσηγορεύοντο οἱ περικαθαίροντες περιστάρχοι. Τὸ δὲ καθάρσιον ἦν χοῖρος ἐσφαγμένος, δι' οὗ ἐκάθηραν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν (the so-called *peristiarchoi* takes the piglet and purifies with it the popular assembly. They call this the *katharma* and *katharsion*; (Aristophanes etc.). It was the custom to purify the popular assembly and the theatres by means of small pigs, which they called *katharsia*, and those who were in charge of the purification were called *peristiarchoi*. The *katharsion* was the slaughtered piglet, by means of which they purified the popular assembly.) See also Hesych. s.v. κάθαγμα· τὸ χοιρίδιον, ᾧ τὴν ἐστίαν ἐκαθαίρον ἐν ταῖς ἐκτροπῆαις (*katharma*: the piglet, by means of which they purified the Hearth in the rites of aversion). See also Harp. s.v. καθάρσιον.

renders as ‘the sacrifice of a pig at the lustration of the popular assembly at Athens, or the lustration itself’. It is true that some scholiasts comment on these proceedings employing sacrificial vocabulary⁴⁹, but more often the term *katharsia* is used for the piglets. As we have seen, however, *katharsia* and *sphagia* could be used as equivalents. What happened to the sacrificial remainders, or the ‘offscourings’ is uncertain. Most likely, they were thrown away⁵⁰.

Similar purificatory sacrifices are known from other contexts as well⁵¹. *Katharmoi* may for instance mark stages of larger processes of initiation, as in Eleusis⁵². Or compare Iphigeneia’s purificatory activity at Tauris, ‘about to light the

ἔθος ἦν Ἀθήνησι καθαίρειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ τὰ θέατρα καὶ ὅλως τὰς τοῦ δήμου συνόδους μικροῖς πάνυ χοιριδίους, ἅπερ ὀνόμαζον καθάρσια (it was the custom at Athens to purify the popular assembly, the theatres, and the gatherings of the people in general by means of small pigs, which they named *katharsia*). See also Poll. 8.104; schol. Dem. 4, 1b (Dilts); schol. Ar. Ec. 128 (=Sud. s.v. περιστρίαρχος = Ister FGrHist 334 fr. 16). See further Moulinier 1958, 106 (epigraphical evidence on pig-purifications at Eleusis, Athens and Delos); Parker 1996, 30 n.66 and ref.: “Purification of the sacred area, usually by pig’s blood, before an important festival or on a regular calendar basis was no doubt a general practice”.

⁴⁹Schol. Ar. Ach. 44 (*thyein*); schol. Aeschin. 1.53ab (*hiereion/sphagein*); schol. Dem. 4, 1b (Dilts) (*sphagein*). For the time being I follow traditional scholarship and consider *sphagein* to be part of sacrificial vocabulary, although its precise sacrificial nature is a subject for further debate. See the next section for this discussion.

⁵⁰Two testimonia must be taken into account, one from oratory on ‘the lowest of men who even eat the testicles of these pigs’ (Dem. 54.39), the other (schol. Dem. 4, 1b [Dilts]) quoting Homer, referring to the sea as the final destination of the ritual produce.

⁵¹The same complex relationship between sacrificial and purificatory features can be observed in another family of phenomena, the purification rituals (*katharmoi*) in the context of homicide, to which much attention has been paid. The whole issue of homicide, its religious and judicial consequences, the relation between historic reality and mythology and tragedy deserve more attention than I can pay to these matters in the context of this study. Here I shall only present a few examples which may illustrate the close intertwining of the sacrificial and purificatory sphere, of divine or demonic wrath and pollution. A famous example is Eur. HF 922-923 on the purification of Heracles after his killing of Lycos: Ἱερὰ μὲν ἦν πάροιθεν ἐσχάρας Διὸς καθάρσι’ οἴκων (victims were set before the Hearth of Zeus to cleanse the house). Other well known passages are Aesch. Eum. 282-283: μητροκτόνον μίασμα δ’ ἐκπλυτον πέλει· ποταίνιον γὰρ ὃν πρὸς ἐστίᾳ θεοῦ Φόβου καθαρμοῖς ἠλάθη χοιροκτόνοις (the matricidal stain is washed away. Still fresh it was when at the sacred hearth of Apollo it was purged by sacrifice); A. R. 4.685-717; Paus. 1.37.4. For the intertwining at the conceptual level, see the speeches of Antiphon in which the overlap of pollution and divine anger, of rituals of purification and appeasement is striking. See for this extensive subject Parker 1983, 370-374 and esp. his further references. By way of conclusion the observation of Burkert 1985, 70 may be quoted: “The use of blood sacrifice for purification is ambiguous, but nevertheless purification is thereby brought within the central reserve of the sacred work”.

⁵²Parker 1983, 283; Schmitt Pantel and Bruit Zaidman 1992, 137: ‘scapegoat-pig’; Van Straten 1995, 7-8. There is a telling debate on the final destiny of these pigs: some sources relate that the ‘mystic piglets’ served as purificatory sacrifices, either by being thrown into the sea or into pits in the Eleusinian sanctuary, others seem to suggest that the

inviolable fire, and do the cleansings (*thyousa katharmon*) for which she came⁵³. And Pausanias relates about the exiled Theban seer Amphiaraus, who has acquired divine status by disappearing into a chasm in the earth, and who runs a dream oracle among the Oropians. Anyone who comes to consult the god, should first purify himself:

The mode of purification is to sacrifice to the god, and they sacrifice not only to him but also to all those whose names are on the altar⁵⁴.

Even if being referred to as a sacrifice, in most cases, it does not seem justified to categorise these purificatory rituals among sacrifices proper. It is the same issue over and over again: They are no sacrifices ‘proper’, but are they ‘pure’ purifications instead?⁵⁵ Why then does the vocabulary employed draw upon both procedures? It is time to acknowledge that, also with these rituals, sacrifice and purification are inextricably intertwined.

This conclusion will, finally, be exemplarily illustrated by the following passage, which deserves our full attention: Oedipus arrives at Colonus and enters, foreign suppliant as he is, the sacred precinct of the local deities, the Eumenides, and takes his seat, against the custom, on the sacred rock. The transgression is serious, but can be remedied: “Perform now a purification for these deities, to whom you first came and whose ground you have trodden⁵⁶!”

The purification he has to perform is described in detail and is an interesting variation on what may be called a libation-ritual⁵⁷. The crux in this phrase is the

piglets were being handled as proper sacrificial victims, who are roasted and (partly) eaten. The latter view is mainly based on Ar. *Ran.* 337-338. See however also Plu. *Phoc.* 28.3; *IG* 1.3.1, 84.35f.

⁵³Eur. *IT* 1331-1332 (translation Loeb): ...ὥς ἀπόρρητον φλόγα θύουσα καὶ καθαρόν ὃν μετόχετο. The purification consists of a sacrificial killing (*thyein* is used in 1231) of young lambs, ὥς φόνῳ φόνον μυσσάρον ἐκνιψῶ (‘so that I may cleanse the killing stain by killing’ [1223-1224]).

⁵⁴Paus. 1.34.5: ἔστι δὲ καθάρσιον τῷ θεῷ θύειν, θύουσι δὲ καὶ αὐτῷ καὶ πᾶσιν ὅσοις ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τῷ βωμῷ τὰ ὀνόματα. Note that it is a *thysia*, hence also the connection with the altar.

⁵⁵Compare the category of *katharteriai thysiai*, Reinigungsopfer, a category so problematic for Nilsson that he even did not include them in his chapter ‘Opfer’, as Burkert 1981b, 93 observed. But they are *thysiai*. And purifications. See e.g. D.H. 9.40, 2.

⁵⁶Soph. *OC* 466-7 in the translation of H. Lloyd-Jones (Loeb): τοῦ νῦν καθαρόν τῶνδε δαιμόνων, ἐφ’ ἃς τὸ πρῶτον ἵκου καὶ κατέστειψας πέδον.

⁵⁷Soph. *OC* 468-492 (translation Lloyd-Jones): Oe: In what fashion, strangers? Explain to me! Ch: First bring sacred libations from an ever-flowing stream, touching them with hands that are pure! Oe: And when I have obtained this untainted liquid? Ch: These are basins, the work of a skilled artist; crown their tops and the handles on both sides! Oe: With

construction of *katharmon tonde daimonon*. The genitive is slightly unsettling. According to Jebb the genitive is a possessive genitive ‘as belongs to them, is due to them’, not an object genitive, ‘since *kathairein* could not stand for *hilaskesthai*’⁵⁸. Kamerbeek agrees on the latter, but takes the genitive rather as establishing a relation, and thus reads ‘making a lustration (a purificatory offering) in relation to these deities’, *i.e.* an offering that will avert their wrath for having encroached on their sacred domain. Kamerbeek compares the construction with constructions such as with *hieros* and adds that ‘we should possibly perceive in it a separative element: by acting thus he will be cleansed of the pollution and kept free from the punishment ensuing from their wrath’⁵⁹.

Both textually and in content the *katharmos* mediates between the agent and the deities. The middle voice of the imperative links the doing to the doer, the genitive the doing to the deities. Although each little step in the ritual process is meticulously described, neither the particular function nor the effect of the *katharmos* is made explicit. Jebb may be right, Kamerbeek may be right, and on formal grounds one may even claim the genitive to be a genitive objective, which makes the Eumenides impure as a result of the transgression, and in need of purification themselves. The means to achieve this is, apparently, the type of sacrifice described immediately afterwards, to be performed by him who caused the impurity. One does not necessarily have to choose between the three interpretations, the ancient Greek allows for all of them, and not only according to rules in our grammar books, as we shall see below.

branches, or with woollen cloths, or in what fashion? Ch: With the newly sheared fleece of a young lamb that you must take. Oe: So be it. And then how must I make an end? Ch. You must pour a libation, taking your stand facing the first morning light. Oe. Must I pour it with these buckets that you speak of? Ch: Yes, three streams; and the last one altogether. Oe: What must I fill it with? Tell me that too! Ch: Water, and honey; but do not add wine! Oe: And when the land black with leaves has received this? Ch: Place three times nine twigs of olive wood and utter these prayers... Oe: This I wish to hear, for it is most important! Ch: That as we call them the Kindly Ones, they may receive the suppliant with kindly hearts, protecting him; do you ask this yourself and any other on your behalf, speaking low and not crying out aloud. Then depart without turning round; and if you do this, I would stand beside you with confidence; but if not, stranger, I would be afraid for you!

⁵⁸R.C. Jebb, *Sophocles. The Plays and Fragments. Vol. II. The Oedipus Coloneus* (Cambridge 1928) *ad loc.*

⁵⁹J.C. Kamerbeek, *The Plays of Sophocles. Commentaries vol. VII. The Oedipus Coloneus* (Leiden 1984), *ad loc.* Parker 1983, 4: ‘*katharmos*: the sacrifice that remedies the desecration of a sacred grove’.

Burkert has drawn attention to two complementary aims of the *katharmos* (although no one and nothing is “purified” in a direct way)⁶⁰. On the one hand the *katharmos* should repair the transgression of Oedipus *vis-à-vis* the Eumenides, on the other the *katharmos* regulates the reception, integration of the foreign suppliant into the community, and thus into his role as saviour⁶¹. Burkert has called it Oedipus’ entry into the powers of the locality⁶². Clearly, this is another transition in need of, or marked by, a purification. A purification, however, that remains opaque as to its precise nature and effects. It is as if language itself protects religion against too much modern scholarly analysis.

For our present purposes, most important in this passage are the facts that a *katharmos* mediates between agent and deities, that the *katharmos* is to be performed by, and on behalf of the one who caused the impurity, that the result may have both an effect on the agent and on the deities involved, and that the prescribed ritual activity, the *katharmos*, very much looks like a certain type of what we normally refer to as a libation-ritual, not a proper sacrifice, but nevertheless usually discussed in a sacrificial context⁶³. It is not surprising that a scholiast commenting upon these verses employed the term *ekthysis*, if he did⁶⁴. As we will see in the next subsection, this term is highly revealing in the wider context of crisis management.

EKTHYESTHAI

Language can be revealing, too. As a final example of the complex relation between sacrifice and purification, I would like to draw attention to the verb *ekthyein*, *ekthyesthai* and derivatives. The terms themselves already bear witness to a duality,

⁶⁰W. Burkert, ‘Opferritual bei Sophokles, Pragmatik, Symbolik, Theater’, *Der altsprachliche Unterricht* 28.2 (1985) 5-20, at 11 (‘obwohl da niemand und nichts in direkter Weise “gereinigt” wird’).

⁶¹Burkert 1985, 13: “Die scheinbar vom Zufall, je durch Sakrileg hergestellte Beziehung wandelt sich in eine legitime, von ‘Besänftigung’ und ‘Wohlwollen’ getragene, um dann zur Erwähnung und einzigartigen Auszeichnung zu werden”, with a reference to δέχεσθαι τὸν ἰκέτην σωτήριον (487).

⁶²W. Burkert, ‘Opferritual bei Sophokles, Pragmatik, Symbolik, Theater’, *Der altsprachliche Unterricht* 28.2 (1985) 5-20, at 13 (‘das Eingehen des Oidipus zu den Mächten dieses Orts’).

⁶³See e.g. Bruit Zaidman and Schmitt Pantel 1992, 39-41; Burkert 1985, 70-73. Cf. Casabona 1966, 231-297 and Rudhardt 158, 240-248.

⁶⁴Schol. Soph. *OC* 477: χοὰς χέασθαι σπάντα πρὸς ἔω· πρὸς τὴν ἀνατολήν· καὶ γὰρ δὴ καὶ τὰς ἐκθύσεις πρὸς ἥλιον ἐποιοῦντο. Another manuscript, however, has ἐκχύσεις. See also *Sud.* s.v. χοάς· ἐκχύσεις.

which clearly manifests itself in their contextual usage, as I shall explain below. *Ekthyein* very much belongs in a context of crisis and reparation, as we have just seen above, where a scholiast commented upon the *katharmos* of Oedipus at Colonus as on an *ekthysis*⁶⁵.

LSJ makes the following distinction between *ekthyein* and *ekthyesthai*: whereas the active voice can be translated as ‘to sacrifice’ (with intensified force) or, more rarely, ‘to destroy utterly’⁶⁶, the second, the middle voice, is said to denote in a more specific sense ‘to atone for, to expiate by offerings, to propitiate, to appease’. In the following I shall attempt to show that the use of the middle voice and of the nouns derived from it belong in the context of situations of crisis, where there is not only a need to sacrifice and propitiate, but also of riddance. In these contexts the use of the prefix *ek* must be understood in the very literal terms of ‘out’, ‘away’⁶⁷.

It is not surprising that, at least in terms of categories, modern scholars feel slightly awkward about this ritual phenomenon. Parker for instance has offered the following compromise: “An *ekthyma* may well have differed from the characteristic form of Olympian sacrifice, but the point remains that this is a deistic rite”⁶⁸. Casabona has described the basic sense of *ekthyein* as follows: “(...) on peut dire que dans *ekthyo*, l’idée de sacrifice n’est pas absente, mais passe au second plan; ce composé signifie à peu près faire disparaître au moyen d’un sacrifice” (one may say that in *ekthyo* the idea of sacrifice is not absent, but has receded to a position of secondary importance; the compound noun signifies more or less to make disappear by means of sacrifice)⁶⁹. And more specifically, referring to a passage in Herodotus⁷⁰:

⁶⁵See previous note.

⁶⁶Some examples from tragedy show that this distinction is less sharp, see e.g. Soph. *El.* 570-574: *κᾶκ τοῦδε μηνίσασα Λητώα κόρη κατεῖχ’ Ἀχαιοῦς, ὥς πατὴρ ἀντίσταθμον τοῦ θηρὸς ἐκθύσειε τὴν αὐτοῦ κόρην. ὥδε ἦν τὰ κείνης θύματ’· οὐ γὰρ ἦν λύσις ἄλλη στρατῶ πρὸς οἶκον οὐδ’ εἰς Ἴλιον*, ‘And angry due to that, the daughter of Leto detained the Greeks, in order that, in compensation for the animal’s life, my father should sacrifice his own daughter. And so she was sacrificed. For there was no other release for the fleet homeward or to Troy’.

⁶⁷I leave the question open if more or less the same can be argued for the active voice as well, but I am under the impression that the distinction *LSJ* suggests, is too rigid (see the examples in the previous note). Other terms that may be of similar interest, such as ἀπολύτρωσις and ἐξίλασις (and derivatives) are not further researched here. Note, however, Hesych. s.v. ἐκθύεσθαι· ἐξιλάσκεσθαι and *Sud.* s.v. ἐκθύσασθαι· τὸ ἐξιλεώσασθαι καὶ ἐκμειλίσασθαι.

⁶⁸Parker 1983, 10 n.42.

⁶⁹Casabona 1966, 97.

⁷⁰Hdt. 6.91 (see below).

“le sacrifice cathartique, *agos ekthvesthai*, c’est chasser une souillure au moyen d’un sacrifice” (the cathartic sacrifice, *agos ekthvesthai*, is to expel a defilement by means of sacrifice)⁷¹. Is it, then, a sacrifice or a purification? Or is it both?

As we have seen above, when Athens suffered from a pestilence and *stasis*, the Cretan healer-seer (purifier) Epimenides saved the city by expiatory sacrifices (*ekthysamenos*)⁷². Unfortunately, we only know from disparate sources by what means he succeeded in driving out - which is, strikingly, called ‘purifying’ - the Cylonian *agos*: either by the sacrifice of one or two handsome youths, or the sacrifice of black and white sheep⁷³. Our observation in Chapter 3 that sacrifice and purification are thoroughly intertwined in the story of Epimenides’ saving of Athens seems reinforced by the employment of this term.

We find *ekthvesthai* regularly used not only in times of *agos*, *stasis* and *loimos*, or in the presence of other evils⁷⁴, but also in the context of disturbing portents, or in both situations at the same time⁷⁵. Plutarch for instance reports the following story about Cleitus and Alexander: once, when Alexander had called him, Cleitus came leaving the sacrifice he was performing unfinished:

Three sheep on which libations had already been poured followed him. Alexander, when hearing this, informed the soothsayers. Then, on their telling that the omen was bad, he ordered them that sacrifices of expiation be made (*ekthysasthai*) in all haste for the safety of Cleitus⁷⁶. For he himself, two days before this, had seen a

⁷¹Casabona 1966, 97.

⁷²Maxim. Tyr. *Diss.* 38.3 (Trapp 1994) = *FGrHist* 457 fr. 4f. τὴν Ἀθηναίων πόλιν κακουμένην λοιμῷ καὶ στάσι διεσώσατο ἐκθυσάμενος. Note also the use of ἐξίλασις in D.L. 1.110.

⁷³See D.L. 1.110.

⁷⁴See e.g. Eust. *ad Hom. Il.* 9.688, p. 783, 30 (Van der Valk) (ἐκθυόμενος τὸν ἐντεῦθεν φθόνον), to which the following explanation is added: ἤγουν ὡς οἷα διὰ τινος θυσίας ἰλεώσατο. See also Iambl. *De Myst.* 9.3 (τὰ εἰμαρμένα ἐκθύσαιτο).

⁷⁵See Zos. 2.1.2 (an interesting case of μῆνις θεῶν, with highly disturbing portents and very sick children, an unsuccessful attempt at propitiation through expiatory sacrifices and an unaccepted offer of the father and the mother to die in stead of the sons. Finally, a miraculous healing by drinking hot water, boiled on the altar of the infernal gods).

⁷⁶Plu. *Alex.* 50.3. Compare also Theophr. *Char.* 16.6: When Theophrastus’ Superstitious Man finds his barley sack being gnawed at by mice, he regards this as an omen which he should sacrifice out at once (ἐκθύσασθαι). The text is problematic and ἐκθύσασθαι is a conjecture. The manuscript reads ἐκλύσασθαι, which however seems to need a reflexive pronoun. Other proposals include ἐκλούσασθαι and ἐκθείωσθαι. Plutarch also informs us that from these expiatory sacrifices seers received (bad) omens (Plu. *Marc.* 28): περὶ τὰς ἐκθύσεις καὶ ἀποτροπὰς δυσιεροῦντες οἱ μάντιες κατεῖχον. In the context of this remark the portents are again fascinating: mice had been gnawing the gold in Jupiter’s temple, an ox had uttered human speech, and a boy had been born with an

strange vision in his sleep (of a dead Cleitus, LK).

Cleitus never finished his interrupted sacrifice and died soon afterwards. The ‘sacrificing out’ had clearly failed.

Ekthysthai usually has a suppressed object. Only a few sources are more explicit on the nature of the object of expiatory sacrifice. In inscriptions one may read the general term for sacrificial victims *ta hiera*⁷⁷. One source mentions lambs and sheep and loudly bellowing calves and young bulls with gilded horns⁷⁸, another mentions that the victim for the *ekthysia* is a *choiros*, a pig⁷⁹. Elsewhere a sheep is referred to⁸⁰. But when Hesychius explains the word *septeria* he uses two terms, *katharmos* and *ekthysis*, presumably as equivalent in sense⁸¹. And Plutarch, in a more indirect context, employs *ekthysima* and *miara* as synonyms in a purificatory context⁸². Though it is never really made explicit, there is enough reason to assume that the double bind of *ekthysthai* may well have resulted in an ambivalent nature of the object involved, the *ekthysia* or the *ekthysima*. This brings in mind the hesitant assertion by Parker, quoted above, that ‘an *ekthuma* may well have differed from the characteristic form of Olympian sacrifice, but the point remains that this is a deistic rite’.

This is the last issue to dwell upon here, the question to whom the *ekthysia* was directed. Unfortunately, this is not always made explicit, a feature quite typical in the context of crisis management, as we have seen. But there is another complication to deal with. As one would expect, the receiving party, if mentioned at all, is put in the dative, as in the following example: according to Posidonius there once occurred a terrible eruption of a volcano on Sicily, with the most awful side-effects. The Senate, after being informed at once by the governor of Sicily, ‘sent a deputation to offer expiatory sacrifices (*ekthysasthai*), ..., to the gods both of the

elephant’s head. Cf. Syn. *Calv. enc.* 10.42. Already in Athens there was, according to Arist. *Pol. Ath.* 54.6, a body of ten sacrificial officers, who were called Superintendents of Expiations (*tous epi ta ekthymata kaloumenous*), and whose duty it was ‘to offer the sacrifices prescribed by oracle, and for business requiring omens to be taken, to obtain good omens in co-operation with the soothsayers’.

⁷⁷See e.g. *SIG* 1106.65 (Cos).

⁷⁸*Or. Sibyl.* 5. 355.

⁷⁹E.g. *ID* 145 in P. Bruneau, *Recherches sur les cultes de Délos à l’époque hellénistique et à l’époque impériale* (BÉFAR 217) (Paris 1970) and the discussion at 286-288 esp. on the *ekthysiai* of piglets during the *Thesmophoria*.

⁸⁰*Ibidem ID* 142, 59.

⁸¹Hesych. s.v. *σεπτηρία*.

underworld and of the sea (*tois te katachthoniois theois kai tois thalattiois*)⁸³. In a well-known fragment of Euripides, however, drawn from another context of crisis, one reads: *tina dei makaron ekthysamenous eurein mochthon anapaulan*⁸⁴, which is commonly translated as: ‘Which of the blessed gods must one placate by expiatory sacrifice to find an end of sufferings?’. The Greek allows, however, for yet another reading, too: ‘Which of the blessed gods must one sacrifice out to find an end of suffering?’ This would not be an isolated case, as we have seen above⁸⁵. Whatever precise role the gods play, an *ekthysimos* is an effective remedy in times of crisis⁸⁶: “As to expiatory sacrifices”, Iamblichus explains, “they heal any present evil on earth”⁸⁷.

However, not everything could be remedied by *ekthymata*. Herodotus relates how, when the rich men of Aegina killed a group of rebellious Aeginetans, ‘a curse fell upon them because of that, whereof for all their devices they could not rid themselves by expiatory sacrifice. They were driven out of their island before the goddess would be merciful to them’⁸⁸. Thus, first they hoped to get rid of the *agos* by sacrifice, or rather by sacrificing it out. Whatever they tried, it did not work: the goddess could not be propitiated. They had to leave themselves, for they themselves were the embodiment of the *agos*.

All the words in the *ekthysthai*-group appear to belong to situations of disruption, disorder and crisis, when the action to be undertaken should set things straight again. Whether it was the presence of an *agos*, of a *miasma*, of disturbing

⁸²Plu. *de Curios*. 6 (*Mor.* 518b).

⁸³Posidon. fr. 227 (Kidd) = *FGrHist* 2a 87 fr. 88 = Str. 6.2.11 (C 277).

⁸⁴Eur. fr. 912, 12-13 (Nauck): τίνα δεῖ μακάρων ἐκθυσάμενους εὖρειν μόχθων ἀνάπαυλαν.

⁸⁵See e.g. schol. Pl. *Crat.* 396E (Zeus *Prostropaios*); Sophron fr. 3-9 (Hordern) (Hecate). Compare Eust. *Comment. ad Hom.* II. 4.290-292: ... ἥ κατὰ τιμὴν, ὡς χρεὼν ὄν ἐκθύεσθαι τὴν Ἀτὴν οἷα δυναμένην βλάπτειν καὶ οὐλομένην (either in terms of honour, as it was necessary to sacrifice out Ate, because she could harm and destroy).

⁸⁶See Hesych. s.v. ἐξίατρος: ἐκθυτικός (= ἐκθύσιμος).

⁸⁷Iambl. *De Myst.* 1.13: Αἱ δὲ ἐκθύσεις ὅ τι πάρεστι κακὸν ἐν τοῖς περὶ γῆν τόποις ἰατρῶν. He proceeds by giving the ‘Iamblican’ version of the way these expiatory sacrifices work: “Whether they work through gods or demons, they invoke them as helpers and averters and preservers, and through them they avert any threatening harm...”. (βοηθοὺς ἐπικαλεῖται καὶ ἀλεξικάκους καὶ σωτῆρας τούτους, καὶ δι’ αὐτῶν ἀποδιοπομπεῖται πᾶσαν βλάβην).

⁸⁸Hdt. 6.91 (translation Loeb): (...) ἀπὸ τούτου δὲ καὶ ἄγος σφι ἐγένετο τὸ ἐκθύεσθαι οὐκ οἷοί τε ἐγένοντο ἐπιμηχανώμενοι, ἀλλ’ ἔφθησαν ἐκπεσόντες πρότερον ἐκ τῆς νήσου ἢ σφι ἴλεον γενέσθαι τὴν θεόν. See also Corn. *De Nat. Deor.* 9 (Lang): μιάσματα ἀνέκθυτα.

portents or of any other evil, and doom was impending, the action undertaken can be interpreted in terms of a sacrifice, but involved the expulsion of evil at the same time. The compound *ek-thyesthai* literally expresses both the sense of riddance and of sacrificial offering, a combination which has become familiar by now. It may well be that this double intention was reflected in a kind of ambivalence of the *ekthysia*, whose nature is sometimes described in negative terms, as something to get rid of, sometimes more positively, as of a sacrificial victim, but mostly left obscure. Only a few times there is a hint as to whom the rite was directed; apparently both underworld gods and the blessed ones could be involved. It remains opaque however, what their involvement amounts to: that of an angry deity who needs to be propitiated, that of a benevolent deity whose assistance is invoked, or that of a (malevolent) deity who needs to be kept at bay.

AGOS AND MIASMA

To round off this investigation, a short inquiry may be made into the two central ancient Greek notions in the context of pollution and religious danger, *agos* and *miasma*: how do these two concepts relate to each other, and how does each of them relate to purification and sacrifice? The most obvious assumption is to relate *agos* ([the result of] ‘avenging divine power’) to sacrifice, and *miasma* (pollution) to the need for purification⁸⁹. However, ancient Greek practice again proves more complex.

Parker’s rich and penetrating study of pollution and purification, *Miasma*, is the standard work on the subject and the principal frame of reference in this survey⁹⁰. Parker’s argument on the relation between the different forms of religious danger and the various ways to deal with them, therefore, forms the obvious starting point⁹¹. In his Introduction Parker marks out the boundaries of his investigation. First, the ‘*mia*-words’, like *miasma*, ‘with their basic sense of defilement, the impairment of a thing’s form or integrity’. According to Parker the *mia*-condition has the following characteristics: it makes the person affected ritually impure, and thus unfit to enter a

⁸⁹See for instance Parker 1983, esp. 10-11.

⁹⁰Parker 1983. Note that the following survey is not a thorough investigation of the meaning of these terms at large, nor a study of all relevant modern scholarship, but a discussion of one scholar’s struggle to get a grip on these complex notions.

⁹¹I quote Parker rather extensively, as his treatment of the relevant problems is not only a thorough and learned discussion of all the relevant issues, but also serves as a valuable insight into the limits of the approach.

temple, it is contagious, it is dangerous, and this danger is not of familiar secular origin⁹². Secondly, a few other words, such as *mysos* and *lyma* and thirdly the noun *agos*, with its adjective *enages*. About *agos* Parker notes: ‘the condition of *agos* has all three characteristics of *miasma* mentioned above, and can actually be referred to as *miasma* (although the relation is not fully reciprocal)’. But he adds⁹³:

It should be emphasized, however, that the partial overlap between the two concepts is perhaps due to a convergence rather than to a real similarity in origin. On this view they would be two distinct forms of contagious religious danger created by different acts and to some extent conceived in different ways, which were assimilated because *for the outsider* (my italics, LK) the practical consequences were the same.

Which leaves the reader with the pressing question: *who* is the outsider here? After elaborating on the different etymology and semantic origins of both terms, Parker returns to the question of overlap⁹⁴:

Diverse though they are in origin, *miasma* and *agos* do, as we have noted overlap in usage. Every *agos* is probably also a *miasma*, and *agos* is often constructed as though it meant pollution rather than something like ‘avenging divine power’. It seems, however, that, at least in the early period, not all *miasmata* are *agê*.

Concurrently, Parker tries to formulate the essential distinction: *agos* can be seen as a product of avoidable, even if involuntary, transgression, whereas *miasma* refers rather to a certain unavoidable physical condition. Whereas *agos* seems ‘to provide middle ground between two sources of religious danger, impersonal pollution and the anger of a personal deity, to *miasma* gods, (originally) seem irrelevant⁹⁵:

it is a dangerous dirtiness that individuals rub off on one another like a physical taint. *Agos* by contrast has its source in a sacrilegious act, and the *enages*, as the attached genitive suggests, is in the grip of the avenging power; the reason for avoiding him is not fear of contamination but to escape being engulfed in the divine punishment that awaits him’.

However, at the end of this paragraph, Parker nevertheless rejects the illusion of clear-cut categorisations again: “Divine anger, *agos*, and *miasma* can become

⁹²Parker 1983, 4.

⁹³Parker 1983, 6.

⁹⁴Parker 1983, 8.

⁹⁵Parker 1983, 9.

inextricably intertwined”⁹⁶. This observation is central indeed to the present study, as is what follows:

The same convergence can be seen on the ritual level. In theory sacrifice and purification may seem to be distinct operations, the one intended to appease a deity and the other to efface an impersonal pollution. In practice, what is spoken of as a purification often takes the form of a sacrifice, while the effects of divine anger, at least when it manifests itself as a disease, can sometimes be washed away ... As a result, it becomes extraordinarily hard to draw lines of demarcation between pollution and the consequences of divine anger. Religious danger is almost always potentially communal in Greece, ... If the consequences of different offences had once been more distinct, they had been assimilated by the date of most of our sources to an extent that makes them now almost inextricable. (...) To unite all these situations in an undifferentiated category of pollution would be unacceptable; the language of defilement is more natural in some cases than in others, and will not always have the same implications. It seems better, however, to operate with a concept that is flexible and, at its edges, ill-defined, than to impose a demarcation by force⁹⁷.

Parker’s struggle to come to terms with the blurring of (original) distinctions, is symptomatic for his subject matter. In the subsequent chapters he hovers between the idea of approaching all pollution ‘as a vehicle through which social disruption is expressed’ and his drive to further distinguish between divine anger, *agos* and *miasma*⁹⁸. The result, though very subtle and insightful, remains unsatisfactory in this particular area. Or, in other words: why does a book about *miasma* carry on its cover a Fury running wild?

⁹⁶As a striking illustration of this intertwining Parker draws on the multiple ways in which the consequences of disregarded supplication in Aeschylus’ *Suppliant Maidens* are expressed. In 366 the King says: τὸ κοινὸν δ’ εἰ μιáινεται πόλις, (if the *polis* is polluted in its commonalty, ...), to which the chorus replies: ἄγος φυλάσσου (375: beware pollution). This *miasma*, or *agos*, is also Ζηνὸς ἰκταίου κότος (385: the wrath of Zeus of Suppliants), or τὸν πανώλεθρον θεὸν βαρὺν ... ἀλάστορα. (414-416: the hostility of the all-destructive god); and in 649-650 even the presence of an avenging Zeus perched on the roof-top, polluting (ὃν τίς ἂν δόμος ἔχοι ἐπ’ ὀρόφων μιáινοντα;). See Parker 1983, 9-10. The rhetoric of the *Tetralogies* is another striking example of this (inextricable) intertwining of pollution and divine anger (see Parker 1983, 104-110).

⁹⁷Parker 1983, 10-11. The overlap has been noticed by other scholars too, e.g. Rudhardt 1958, 48: ‘Il résulte de ce rapprochement une certaine interférence entre les deux notions. Τὸ μίáσμα paraît une expression figurée de l’ἄγος tandis que celui-ci se matérialise quelque peu. Il conserve toutefois un sens spirituel, désignant les conséquences de fautes qu’on ne saurait tenir, même d’une manière imagée, pour salissantes, auxquelles le mot μίáσμα ne convient en aucun cas. Un μίáσμα, en outre, ne peut résulter d’un simple imprécation et encore moins revêtir un aspect favorable’. And 168: “C’est toutefois avec la notion d’ *agos* que celle de *miasma* se trouve le plus souvent confondue. Il en résulte que *kathairein*, au sens matériel: dissoudre et faire disparaître un *miasma*, signifie du même coup: interrompre les effets nuisibles de l’*agos*”.

At the end of the three main parts of this study about the *pharmakos* rituals, mythical crisis management and the tales of forced colonisation we concluded that these three phenomena, with their mutual differences and similarities, necessitated a further inquiry into the intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory features in the context of ancient Greek crisis management, the role of the gods and the status of the victims. In this first section of the final chapter the scope has been widened. The phenomena discussed here were diverse but all related to a context of crisis, be it dire peril, regular anxiety or some other kind of transition in the communal or personal sphere.

Again it has been established that both purificatory and sacrificial action and vocabulary coexisted, intertwined, or concurred, also in these wider contexts. We observed that gods were not always present in sacrificial contexts, nor entirely absent from a purificatory sphere. If present, their involvement varied: they were sometimes merely invoked, sometimes the ones who had to be propitiated, or even kept at bay themselves. At other times, their role was more ambivalent and possibly included all of these options at once. Furthermore, it was established again that the objects (or victims) of this type of ambivalent ritual action were hybrid themselves. The fleece of Zeus and Hecate's meals exemplify this very well. Moreover, not only has it become clear that ritual vocabulary (*apodiopompeisthai*) allowed for two differing interpretations at the same time, both in ancient scholarly literature and in a modern dictionary, but also ritual action appeared equivocal, in deed (*katharmos*) or in word (*ekthysthai*). Finally, from Parker's discussion of *agos* and *miasma*, terms that seem related to respectively sacrifice and purification at first sight, it turned out that these notions thwart the categories themselves. The conclusion is inevitable: the intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory features and vocabulary reflects a structural potential of ancient Greek crisis management.

B. SACRIFICE OR PURIFICATION?

Before we place the intertwining of sacrifice and purification within the larger framework of ancient Greek ideas about order and disruption, the two phenomena are in need of some further attention *per se*. In this section therefore ancient Greek

⁹⁸A distinction he seeks to make on the basis of the immediate cause (avoidable physical condition versus avoidable even if involuntary transgression).

sacrifice and purification will be discussed, their distinction and their connection in times of crisis. Inevitably, attention will also be paid to the role of the gods, the ultimate fate of the victim, and the status of the victims in ancient Greek crisis management, as these are usually regarded as the hallmarks of distinction between the two ritual procedures.

It must be pointed out at the outset that this is not the place to formulate new interpretative theories of sacrifice and purification, nor to discuss the existing ones in any exhaustive way. What is aimed at is, in the first place, a survey of possibilities. By looking at sacrifice and purification in times of crisis from a different angle, all kinds of phenomena in this context can be explained as they are, without having to explain away part of the evidence, or taking recourse to arguments of ‘accidental’ or ‘incidental’ import. It is therefore not so much the redefinition of sacrifice and purification that matters, but a compartmentalised way of scholarly analysis that needs to be revised.

Sacrifice and purification were central notions in ancient Greek religion. It hardly needs saying that their connotations, meanings and uses may have shifted over time. The extent to which one may expect this to have happened is, however, debatable. With regard to such shifting of religious notions, a rather cautious standpoint is taken in the present study and a distinction is made between more stable notions (e.g. the divine order) and notions that are more liable to change (e.g. purificatory techniques). Moreover, our main focus is the intertwining of sacrifice and purification in times of crisis, which shapes phenomena at a very basic level, virtually independent of such changes of meaning. Finally, our discussion cannot, and need not, be at a level specific enough to pay attention to these issues in great detail.

In conclusion of the first section of this chapter it was claimed that the intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory features and vocabulary in times of crisis reflects a structural characteristic of ancient Greek crisis management. However, do we not jump too readily to far-reaching conclusions and have we not too easily adopted the axiom that sacrifice and purification are two entirely distinct phenomena? For even if sacrifice and purification are far from identical phenomena, we should not, by stressing basic distinctions, create false dichotomies. What is the exact difference between these phenomena? What is sacrifice? What is purification?

First, it must be pointed out that the English term sacrifice has so far been employed to cover *thyein* and *sphazein*, as well as various forms of consecration - dead or alive. Purification, in turn, has been used whenever *kathairein*, *katharmos* and derivatives were used, but also in the context of various more specific 'terms of riddance', such as *apopempein* and *elaunein*. Hence, in this discussion of sacrifice and purification we cannot dodge the crucial question: are we discussing modern concepts from religious anthropology, or are we talking ancient Greek concepts? What, then, is the common denominator of *thysia*, *sphagion*, *aparche*, *dekate* and *anathema*? What is a *katharma*, what does a thorough *katharmos* involve? Much depends on one's definition, as usual.

Let us first recapitulate our understanding of these notions so far. With regard to the intellectualist interpretation of sacrifice and purification in the context of crisis, we have so far borrowed Parker's description: "the one intended to appease a deity, the other to efface an impersonal pollution"⁹⁹ and adapted it by (implicitly) adding respectively 'by means of a valued gift', and 'either as such or symbolically'. We may call these the narrow interpretations of sacrifice and purification. Hence, from this 'narrow' perspective differences between the two phenomena are to be located in the nature of the action itself, reconstructed on the basis of the role of the gods, the ultimate fate and the status of the victims.

From a more functionalist (including a structural-semiotic) perspective, however, these differences faded as other properties were stressed: the community-building dimension of both 'feel-good' procedures, the identity-confirming role of separation rituals and the role of the Sacred, prone to encompass the consequences of both a positive consecration and a negative elimination. From this perspective, both sacrifice and purification could be considered to be restorative actions. This may be labelled the wider interpretation of purification and sacrifice. However, we have also established that it remains unsatisfactory to completely identify the two procedures. Therefore, we must return to the level of outward appearances again in order to deepen our understanding of sacrifice and purification in times of crisis and of their connection and differences. As sacrifice is the most complex notion of the two, we shall set out with that one.

⁹⁹Parker 1983, 10-11.

SACRIFICE

The literature on sacrifice is immense¹⁰⁰, as the phenomenon belongs in one form or another to virtually all cultures of the world. A student of sacrifice is torn between the search for the common essence, kernel, perhaps even origin, of sacrifice, and the explanation and interpretation of sacrifice at one particular place and time. But let us quickly narrow down the discussion to ancient Greek sacrifice.

The ancient material, too, is vast and diverse. Ancient sources are of partial help only. Others have already pointed out that ‘the system itself produced no theological account of the meaning and purpose of sacrifice’¹⁰¹. There are a few scattered reflections on the nature of sacrifice, by people like Plato, Theophrastus and Lucian, who are not known for representing the average view of the public¹⁰². However, in our context, as we have seen, especially in the mythical accounts, narratives sometimes motivate the need for sacrifice. We shall return to these more indirect and more specific traces of ancient Greek ‘theology’ below.

In modern times, sacrifice has often been perceived as the central religious ritual of ancient Greek religion¹⁰³. We all know that the debate about its nature and

¹⁰⁰See Carter 2003 for a good general introduction to the subject.

¹⁰¹R. Gordon, ‘The Veil of Power: Emperors, Sacrificers and Benefactors’, in: M. Beard and J. North, *Pagan Priests. Religion and Power in the Ancient World* (New York 1990) 206, adding: “That certainly does not imply it was meaningless; but it does imply that new meanings could very easily be attached to it. To a degree, sacrifice was a ‘vacant sign’”. Gordon refers to the Roman context, but one may safely claim the same for ancient Greek sacrifice.

¹⁰²See e.g. Pl. *Euthphr.* 14c: τὸ θύειν δωρεῖσθαι ἐστὶ τοῖς θεοῖς. Note also Lucian. *On Sacr.* 2: “So nothing, it seems, that they (the gods) do is done without compensation. They sell men their blessings, and one can buy from them health, it may be, for a calf, wealth for four oxen, a royal throne for a hundred, a safe return from Troy to Pylos for nine bulls, and a fair voyage from Aulis to Troy for a king’s daughter”. Theophr. *On Piety* fr. 584a, 24.1 (Fortenbaugh) = Porph., *de Abst.* 2.24: “There are altogether three reasons why we sacrifice to the gods: to show them honour, to give them thanks, or to express our need for some benefit”. See also Arist. *Nic. Eth.* 1160, 8.9.5; Hes. *Theog.* 535-560; Hom. *Il.* 8, 548-552; 9, 535f and *Od.* 1, 22-27; 7, 201f; Pl. *Rep.* 427b; *Leg.* 716d. See e.g. F.T. van Straten, ‘Gifts for the Gods’, in: H.S. Versnel (ed.), *Faith, Hope and Worship. Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World* (Leiden 1981) 65-151, esp. 66f. for Theophrastus being not representative in his analysis. Already in Antiquity voices were sceptical about the gift-interpretations, as the most savoury parts were withheld from the gods (e.g. Hes. *Theog.* 535-557).

¹⁰³For a bibliography of ancient Greek sacrifice up to 1979, see J. Svenbro, ‘Bibliographie du sacrifice grec’, in: M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *La cuisine du sacrifice* (Paris) 309-323. More recent work includes: J.L. Durand, *Sacrifice et Labour en grèce ancienne. Essai d’anthropologie religieuse* (Paris 1986); M.H. Jameson, ‘Sacrifice and Ritual: Greece’, in: M. Grant and R. Kitzinger (eds.), *Civilization of the Ancient Mediterranean. Greece and Rome* (New York 1988) vol. 2, 959-979; M.H. Jameson,

meaning is long standing and that many ways to approach the phenomenon have been suggested. Again, one may distinguish between different approaches, such as belief-oriented perspectives, functionalism, structuralism, symbolism, semiotics and combinations of these. Different questions receive different answers. Different sources (as to place, date and genre, or written sources versus archaeological source-material) provide differing perspectives, too. It may seem that when trying to define ancient sacrifice one runs the risk of ending up as the victim oneself.

One of the ways to handle the multifarious material is to classify various types of sacrifice on the basis of e.g. type of action, victim and recipient. This may result in the categories blood sacrifice and bloodless sacrifice. The first category is subdivided into *thysiai* and *sphagia*, the former normally consumed by the (sacrificial) community, the latter usually not, but wholly destroyed, either by burning, burying, throwing away or immersion. The second category, the bloodless sacrifices, consists of vegetarian offerings (fruits etc.), libations, *aparchai*, *dekatai* etc. So far matters are not too complicated. However, once one tries to attribute meaning to the distinctions made, the system becomes less transparent. The risk of confusing form and motivation is obvious. Moreover, every typology leaves out certain important aspects, and studies of sacrifice usually end up differentiating according to several criteria at the same time¹⁰⁴. Another criterion often used to create a meaningful distinction is the question to whom the sacrifice was directed. The two main categories that scholars usually distinguish are Olympian and Chthonian sacrifice. This distinction is then linked with the distinction between *thyein* and *sphazein/enagizein*, respectively participation-sacrifice on high altars to Olympian gods, and non-participatory sacrifice to no god in particular, to the dead, to heroes and gods of the underworld on low altars (or holes in the ground). However, there is

‘Sacrifice before Battle’, in: V.D. Hanson (ed.), *Hoplites: The Classical Greek Battle Experience* (London and New York 1991) 197-227; T. Linders and G. Nordquist (eds.), *Gifts to the Gods (Boreas 15)* (Uppsala 1987) (various contributions); S. Pierce, ‘Death, Revelry, and Thysia’, *CA* 12.2 (1993) 219-260; Rudhardt and Reverdin (eds.) 1981 (various contributions). See also *Neue Pauly* 8 s.v. ‘Opfer’ (Bremmer).

¹⁰⁴See e.g. Burkert 1981b, 92-93: “Die Schwierigkeit eines geordneten Inventars, geschweige denn eines Systems der Opferrituale zeigt sich, was Griechenland betrifft, bei einem Blick in die vollständigste ältere Behandlung, Paul Stengels *Kultusaltertümer*: Stengel unterscheidet zunächst unblutige und blutige Opfer, schliesst dann Opfer für chthonische Gottheiten, Sühn- oder Ablösungsopfer, Menschenopfer, Opfer für Meeres- und Flussgottheiten sowie Eidopfer an; wie hier die Einteilungskategorien Gegenstand, Empfänger und Motiv des Opfers durcheinandergehen, bedarf keiner weiteren Ausführung. Allerdings, wie Stengel entschuldigend bemerkt, ‘die Motive fliessen zusammen’.”

much debate as to whom these two groups exactly consist of and whether the *thysiasphagion* distinction fully coincides with this second distinction¹⁰⁵. Furthermore, as one can expect, these two basic categories of sacrifice are then interpreted differently.

The most important and persistent general theories of (ancient Greek) sacrifice have involved the notion of the gift on the one hand¹⁰⁶, often set in the context of the well-known maxim *do ut des*, and the idea of a communal meal of god and man on the other¹⁰⁷. As for the former interpretation, ancient Greek sacrificial ideology offers many leads¹⁰⁸, whereas the ancient Greek sacrificial practice of festive banqueting nourishes assumptions of the latter type. Both theories have survived in many disguises and in many different theoretical settings. No version has ever proved

¹⁰⁵A few ancient sources are drawn on to sustain this distinction: Hdt. 2.44.5; Isoc. 5.117; Plu. *Quaest. Graec.* 6 (*Mor.* 292C); schol. Aesch. *Lib.* 484c; schol. A. R. I 587; schol. Eur. *Ph.* 274. The way these sources should be read and the extent to which they reflect a general practice is subject to discussion. Another distinction made in this context is between the two types of libations, *spondai* and *choai*. For the distinction between Olympian and Chthonian see most importantly Scullion 1994 and ref. For scepticism see Rudhardt 1958, 251 all the way to R. Schlesier, *Kulte, Mythen und Gelehrte. Anthropologie der Antike seit 1800* (Frankfurt am Main 1994) 21-34. See further e.g. Burkert 1983, 9 n. 41 ('we are dealing with an antithesis within the ritual, not with two fundamentally different and separate things') and F. Graf, 'Milch, Honig und Wein. Zum Verständnis der Libation im griechischen Ritual', in: *Perennitas. Studi in onore di Angelo Brelich* (Rome 1980) 209-221, who claimed that it was 'die innere Logik des Rituals' that explained the type of ritual offered. For exceptions, see e.g. Nock 1944 and *RE* 3.2a (1929), 1669-1679, esp. 1674-1675 s.v. 'Sphagia' (Ziehen).

¹⁰⁶The idea of sacrifice being a gift to the gods was already present (and criticised) in Antiquity (see Burkert 1985, 57 and ref.; Jameson 1988, 975-1976 and ref.). As we have seen in Chapter 2, it was Tylor who introduced the gift-interpretation in scholarship in 1871. Fundamental is M. Mauss, 'Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques', *L'Année Sociologique NS vol. 1* (1923-4).

¹⁰⁷See for this interpretation (in an evolutionary setting) W.R. Smith, *The Religion of the Semites* (London 1899). See for its application to ancient sacrifice e.g. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Der Glaube der Hellenen* (Berlin 1931) vol. 1, 287: 'die Tischgemeinschaft des Gottes mit den Opfernden Menschen war die entscheidende Grundvorstellung' and in a different theoretical setting Detienne and Vernant 1979. For those who are willing to read it as such, the communal meal approach can be traced back to the myth of Prometheus (Hes. *Theog.* 535-616). Other theories include sacrifice as a ritual control of death and magical transference (Frazer); as a substitution for persons whose lives were in danger (Westermarck); as a communicatory technique to link up the sacred and the profane and to establish contact with the source of life (Hubert and Mauss 1909).

¹⁰⁸See e.g. Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.29 and other references in *RE* 18.1 (1939) 592-593 s.v. 'Opfer' (Ziehen) stressing the ideal animal victim to be the finest, most beautiful one available, or, conversely, jokes about cheap offerings or reflective writings about why the gods receive in fact so little when they ought to get the best (see Henrichs 1998, 42 n. 29; Kirk 1981, 61f and Burkert 1981, 81f). See further F.T. van Straten, 'Greek Sacrificial Representations: Livestock Prices and Religious Mentality', in: T. Linders and G. Nordquist (eds.), *Gifts to the Gods (Boreas 15)* (Uppsala 1987) 159-170.

entirely convincing and much ink has been spilt on all the exceptions to be dealt with.

As we have seen, in order to get away from these difficulties, arising from attempts to grasp the multifariousness of sacrificial ritual in one defining framework on the basis of beliefs, perspectives had to be changed and new questions asked¹⁰⁹. Intentions and beliefs were exchanged for meaning, controversial terms such as signs, signifiers and symbols gained theoretical prominence. For some scholars violence and anxiety became key concepts¹¹⁰, others focussed on principles of classification with (ancient Greek) man between gods and beasts¹¹¹. However, from these perspectives, entire sets of phenomena were either excluded (such as the *sphagion* in *La Cuisine du Sacrifice*)¹¹² or reduced to characteristics which they shared with many other (ritual) phenomena. As became clear above, although such perspectives may illuminate certain facets of a phenomenon, they remain unsatisfactory in other respects. In terms of the present investigation: as we have seen, sacrificial and purificatory rituals in times of crisis share quite a few functional and structural features, but one should reject the claim that they are identical phenomena.

¹⁰⁹In recent decades the discussion of the ancient Greek material has been dominated by two ‘schools’ of thought. One, inspired by socio-biology, with universalist traits, whose most important exponent Burkert we already met, and the other, the Parisian School, with its structuralist approach, whose main representatives are Vernant and Detienne. The latter stress the ‘community-binding force of the shared meal’, and the status and norms affirming role of sacrificial ritual. Sacrifice is considered a social contract in the first place. These scholars very much concentrate on *thysiai*, virtually ignoring the *sphagia*-types of sacrifice (see esp. Detienne and Vernant 1979; Vernant 1981). Burkert’s work has already received ample attention. For Burkert the act of killing remains the central focus of sacrifice (and formative essence of the sacred). One passage from his work may be quoted, in order to illuminate his general approach of sacrifice, in which the different types are traced back to four archetypical forms of human behaviour, to kill, to eat, to give, and to set apart: “Wer weiter gehen will, könnte die vier Typen systematisch ableiten aus dem Nebeneinander der Handlungen ‘Töten’ und ‘Geben’ in Überkreuzung mit einer Opposition von ‘Essen’ versus ‘Beseitigen’: Töten und Essen ergibt das Fleischspeiseopfer, Töten und Beseitigen das Vernichtungsoffer, Geben und Beseitigen das Hingabeopfer, Geben und Essen - in Analogie oder Gemeinsamkeit von Mensch und Gott - das eigentliche Gabenopfer” (1981, 107). And a few pages later (p. 109): “Am fernsten steht diesem Modell das Preisgeben und Wegschicken an sich.” For Burkert the *sphagia* (Vernichtungsoffer: ‘to fight like a cornered rat’) from mythical crisis management and the *pharmakos* ritual (Preisgabeopfer: in contradistinction to this one the others feel safe) thus belong to different categories. Next, however, Burkert concentrates on ‘Ablösungsoffer’ (θύματα λυτήρια), and calls them ‘Vernichtungs- oder Preisgabeopfer’: “die active, selbst bestimmte Vernichtung will der unkontrollierbaren Vernichtung zuvorkommen” (p. 119).

¹¹⁰See esp. Girard and Burkert in Chapter 5 Section b.

¹¹¹See esp. Detienne and Vernant 1979; Vernant 1981.

¹¹²See Detienne and Vernant 1979.

Hence, back to sacrifice, to the level of outward appearances and to its interpretation from this perspective. It is important to realise that it is not necessary to formulate an overall theory on ancient Greek sacrifice in general. The specific context of our sacrifices, situations of crisis, allows us to draw on a more piecemeal approach. In fact, part of the difficulty is precisely that most existing theories do not cover sacrifice in the context of crisis: the gift-theory seems of little use in the context of a sacrifice that is wholly destroyed. The communal meal-theory appears even less appropriate when the victim is not eaten at all. In either case the occasional absence of a deity is difficult to accommodate. Scholars have therefore suggested that these non-edible, or ‘giftless’ sacrifices rather express the opposite, the averting of all table fellowship or contact with these gods¹¹³. However, it is one thing to point out exceptions, but it is another to attribute an opposite meaning to them, especially when the phenomena at stake cannot be sharply distinguished. For even the most basic typologies are thwarted by our source-material in which *sphagia* and *thysiai* are sometimes used as equivalents¹¹⁴, or a *sphagion* may be presented at a high altar, or a *thysia* offered to a Chthonian deity¹¹⁵. Moreover, our sacrifices encompass both actual killings and forms of consecration without killing.

Should we then, perhaps, decide that sacrifice in the context of crisis management makes up a category of its own, entirely different from regular sacrificial practice? From a theoretical standpoint this may seem strange (since the same vocabulary is employed), but at a practical level it has proved a useful strategy. Nock, for instance, has labelled these (and similar) ‘anomalous’ sacrifices ‘heilige Handlungen’,

ceremonies wherein an animal was consumed (not always) by fire in a proceeding intended to exercise direct and effacious influence upon divine powers or upon forces of nature. (...) The destruction of the animal was complete in almost all of these, whether the gods invoked in historical time came from the clear air of Olympus or from the earth or from the underworld. Human sacrifice, whether offered or said to be offered to Zeus Lykaeos, Zeus Laphystius, Artemis, or

¹¹³See e.g. Nock 1944, 141-142 n. 3 for references. See also Burkert 1981b, 109.

¹¹⁴See e.g. Eur. *IA* for Iphigeneia as *thysia* (16 x) and as *sphagion* (2 x). See also Eur. *Ion* 277 and 287; Paus. 4.9.3-10; (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.15.4-8.

¹¹⁵For human sacrifice on a high altar see e.g. Aesch. *Ag.* 232; Plu. *Them* 13.4. For *sphazein* on a *bomos* to Zeus, see e.g. (Ps.) Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.1, or to Artemis, see Hes. fr. 23 (Merkelbach-West); For *thyein* equals *holokautein* see e.g. schol. A. *Nub.* 257cγ. See e.g. Paus. 4.9. 3-20 for *thyein* to the gods below, as in Clem. Alex. *Protr.* 3.42, 6 [1.32, 8 Stählin] where *thyein* is used in combination with Persephone and the ‘Averters of Evil’.

Dionysos Omestes or again without the naming of any supernatural character, constitute a classic instance. They are powerful forms of action¹¹⁶.

According to Nock, other examples of these 'heilige Handlungen' consist of the fertility rites of the Thesmophoria, the symbolic offerings of puppies to the war god Enyalios and purificatory rites with the use of the same animal, the meals for Hecate, oath-sacrifices, offerings of victims in crisis, cathartic sacrifices and various ceremonies to avert evil.

Is it by chance that these examples overlap to a great extent with the instances discussed in the first section of this chapter? No, evidently not. All these examples belong within the larger context of crisis management. They all deal with a difficult situation of transition or dire peril. It seems that the type of sacrifice depends on the circumstances. The deity involved seems to be of secondary importance¹¹⁷.

This category of 'heilige Handlungen' is comparable with Jameson's 'powerful actions', a category of semi- or pseudo-sacrificial ritual that deviates from the normal procedure in order 'to express different concerns'¹¹⁸. According to Jameson it is the purpose of these rites that determines their character. One of these aims could well be to emphasise the separation, as was often the case with *katharmoi* or *sphagia*, 'powerful but when compared to normal sacrifice, relatively simple and single-minded actions'. "Generally", according to Jameson, "the purposes expressed in these powerful actions overshadowed the notion of communication with a particular deity"¹¹⁹. Although I share Jameson's pragmatic approach and shall emphasise the importance of the circumstances to understand all sorts of crisis management, his claim that these powerful actions are single-minded and unambiguous must be refuted.

More recently, Scullion has further elaborated on Nock's 'heilige Handlungen': He first rehabilitates the by now somewhat outdated distinction between Olympian and Chthonian sacrifice, albeit in a more flexible way, allowing for ritual variation in special circumstances. For those rituals without a named

¹¹⁶Nock 1944, 158-159.

¹¹⁷In fact Nock 1944, 159 has suggested something similar when he asks 'would it not be true to say that non-participation followed upon the purpose and atmosphere of the ritual and upon the disposition or aspect imputed to the deities rather than upon their identity or supposed habitat?'.
¹¹⁸See Jameson 1988, 973-975.

recipient, 'the idea that the character of the divine recipient determines the type of ritual offered' obviously does not work. Hence, Scullion also adopts the special category of 'heilige Handlungen':

(they) fall outside the ordinary routine of worship; they are resorted to in accordance with the needs of men: in crises of various sorts, when oaths are required, when steps need to be taken against some immediately threatening danger. In such cases a stereotyped ritual is employed, which takes its character from the situation rather than being suited to that of any divinity with whom it may be associated. ... Here the gods are clearly secondary, and are seldom mentioned by name; the danger that threatens is more palpable, but it is of course the sense of immediate danger that accounts for the similarity of ritual, the feeling that this is not the occasion for a festal meal, perhaps a sense that in this situation one must give something up to have any hope of survival¹²⁰.

Under this heading, 'heilige Handlungen', human sacrifices, 'the heiligste of heilige Handlungen' also resort. They are slightly different again, however, for

- what is seldom the case in the other varieties of heilige Handlungen, those actually practiced - a divinity may be prominently associated with the rite, and the particular sphere or conceptual associations of the divinity are fundamental to the exceptional rite demanded. But human sacrifice remains *sui generis*¹²¹.

Hence, in Scullion's view, human sacrifice is an exception to the exceptions to the rule. However, as Scullion points out at the same time, the closest analogue in actual cult is nevertheless the *sphagia*, and it is clear to him that the case of Iphigeneia must be understood against this background¹²². In conclusion Scullion therefore unites human sacrifice, *sphagia*, and other sorts of heilige Handlungen in 'this distinctive class of rituals standing apart from ordinary cultus'¹²³.

However, what is the distinctive feature here? In fact, the common denominator of these rituals is that they do not fit neatly into the basic typology of sacrifice being determined by the type of divinity to whom it is offered, either because they are without recipient, or because their grimness, the context of danger,

¹¹⁹Jameson 1988, 975 including, just as Nock had done, human sacrifice in this category: "If killing an animal was a powerful action, killing a human being was the most powerful action possible". See also Jameson 1991, 201.

¹²⁰Scullion 1994, 95.

¹²¹Scullion 1994, 96-97. The last sentence is in fact the first of a new paragraph.

¹²²Scullion 1994, 97 and 98: "These basic similarities to the chthonian paradigm are readily comprehensible in terms of the special anxieties or purposes underlying human sacrifice, *sphagia*, and the other sorts of heilige Handlung. But because the gods play an obviously secondary role in them, it makes sense to retain the designation heilige Handlungen for this distinctive class of rituals standing apart from ordinary cultus."

and lack of participation mark them as different. Although Nock, Jameson and Scullion may be right to emphasise the importance of the situation in the formation (and understanding) of these sacrifices, and the (at least at times) secondary role of the gods, it seems unnecessary to separate these sacrifices from regular sacrificial ritual. Moreover, instead of labelling human sacrifice as still more exceptional, one may also regard this, with or without a divine recipient, as the prime example of such sacrifices in times of crisis.

In our myths of crisis management, the human sacrifices are motivated and described at the narrative level in a way that is, at least, comparable with other types of sacrifice. Often the voluntariness of the victim is stressed, a typical motif from sacrificial practice¹²⁴. Whenever a deity is involved, the sacrificial victim is qualified as a valued gift. At first sight, the human victim as such seems to represent great value more than anything else. The gift is perhaps not a joyful one, rather a ransom, meant to propitiate or appease the deity¹²⁵, (terms such as *lusi* and *lutron* are used¹²⁶), but ideologically presented as valued all the same. Familiar sacrificial terminology is employed, such as *thyein*, *sphazein* and derivatives. Should one ignore this terminology and consider it, with Scullion, as ‘unmarked’¹²⁷, even though it is employed to describe something most extraordinary and outrageous? Perhaps one should rather claim that human sacrifice is described with the help of various terms at the same time, just because it involves all their connotations, and more¹²⁸? It is true that the regular categories are thwarted, but one may wonder whether it is necessary to create an entirely special category for these ‘heiligste’ of ‘heilige Handlungen’,

¹²³Scullion 1994, 98.

¹²⁴See Chapter 3 Section b. For voluntariness in animal sacrifice, see Burkert 1985, 58 and ref.

¹²⁵See Chapter 3, with e.g. Iphigeneia as ‘first bloom’ (Eur. *IT* 20-4; 209), and the story of Anchurus, son of Midas, who realises that there is nothing more precious than a human life.

¹²⁶Eur. *Ph.* 969 ἐκλυτῆριον and also Soph. *OT* 392.

¹²⁷Scullion 1994, 97. Or, with for instance Casabona 1966, 162; Rudhardt 1958, 281 and Stengel 1910, 92 as compatible notions, e.g. the one emphasising the burning (*thyein*), the other the slicing of the throat (*sphazein*).

¹²⁸See also Georgoudi 1999, 81-82: “Les divinités grecques, on le sait bien, recoivent normalement et régulièrement sur leurs autels des victimes animales ou des offrandes non sanglantes. En temps de crise et de malheur, à des moments où les humains – qu’ils aient ou non commis une faute – sont frappés par des fléaux, ou menacés par des désastres, certaines de ces mêmes divinités exigent, des communautés humaines, non pas des ‘anti-sacrifices’, non pas des ‘anti-victimes’, mais des actes sacrificiels forts, insolites, exceptionnels, des sacrifices ‘extrêmes’, des mises à mort marquées par le signe ‘plus’”.

which in fact share of the several characteristics associated with regular sacrificial practice.

Although appeasement of an angry deity is a major explanatory model for this type of sacrifice, the ways the divine world is involved in the sacrifice may differ¹²⁹. Sometimes, especially in the context of *sphagia*, as we have noticed, the recipients are left anonymous, and are vaguely called, ‘the gods’ or ‘the blessed ones’¹³⁰. Elsewhere, there seems to be no god directly involved, and the sacrifice implies a deposition, an immersion, a burning or a throwing away¹³¹. It may well be that this happens on account of the divine *anagke*, or some other supernatural force, but even this is sometimes left in the dark¹³². It has been suggested that one should, perhaps, stress the aspect of renunciation of a valuable, rather than the establishment of a direct relationship with a deity¹³³. As we have seen Versnel has suggested that the innate feeling of compensation may be primary to the involvement of the divine¹³⁴. The sacrificial victim is a means, a *mechar*, or a *mechane soterias*, an *antistathmon*,

¹²⁹See Chapter 3 Section e and as was observed already in the Prologue of this study various explanatory models may be activated at the same time: in the *Phoenissae* the sacrifice of Menoeceus was necessitated both by an ancient wrath, a principle of compensation (fruit for fruit and human blood for human blood), a paternal curse and as a remedy to an internal conflict in Thebes at the time.

¹³⁰Ant. Lib. *Met* 25; Aristod. *FGrHist* 22 fr. 1b = Lyd *Mens.* 4.147; Eur. fr. 912, 12-13 (Nauck); Paus. 4.9.4.

¹³¹Paus. 3.20.9; Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 6.8.1 (Mor. 694a); Xen. *Anab.* 7.8.5-6. There are many other examples to present: the whole complex of sacrificial offerings sunk in springs, rivers, sea, and many sacrifices that were completely burnt. However, these sacrifices are not always without a named recipient. Poseidon, for example, is a typical deity who receives this type of sacrifice (see e.g. Athen. VI, 261e; Eur. *Hel.* 1584). See further also M.H. Jameson, ‘Sacrifice before Battle’, in: V.D. Hanson (ed.), *Hoplites: The Classical Greek Battle Experience* (London and New York 1991) 197-227; Ogden 1997, 17-18; Versnel 1977, 41-42; Wachsmuth 1967, 119 and 310-311; *RE* 3.2a (1929), 1669-1679, 1674 s.v. ‘Sphagia’ (Ziehen).

¹³²Aeschylus has Iphigeneia sacrificed because of her father’s transgression and the divine *anagke*. See also Rudhardt 1958, 105: “Après avoir invoqué Zeus, Arès, Aglauros et d’autres dieux, Léocrate s’est parjuré: il a commis, dit le très conformiste Lycurge, une impiété à l’égard du divin, εἰς τὸ θεῖον. (Lyc. c. Leocr. 76). Zeus, Arès, Aglauros sont des noms efficaces, des moyens d’accès à la réalité divine, elle-même indéfinissable. Cet exemple n’est pas unique. Xénophon et Isocrate emploient également des expressions neutres ou impersonnelles pour signifier l’intervention d’un dieu: le divin, τὸ θεῖον (Xen. *Hell.* 7.5.12), τὸ δαιμόνιον (Isocr. 5, 149-152; 9, 25) ou la nature divine, θεῖα φύσις (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.2) et Thucydide désigne par un neutre pluriel, τὰ δαιμόνια, tout ce qui résulte dans la destinée humaine d’une action divine (Thuc. 2.64)”.

¹³³See e.g. Burkert 1985, 66: “Gift sacrifice turns into sacrifice through destruction”. See Scullion 1994, 95: “One must give something up to have any hope of survival”.

¹³⁴Versnel 1981, 184 (Chapter 5 Section b) for which he also refers to G. Gusdorff, *L’Expérience humaine du sacrifice* (Paris 1948) esp. 120f.

to redress the proper balance¹³⁵. The employment of sacrificial vocabulary, however, still places the action in a sacrificial sphere. Hence, instead of creating an entirely different category, expressing entirely different concerns, one may also speak of a sacrificial spectrum reaching from (appeasing) gift and ransom all the way to renunciation.

PURIFICATION

Renunciation, as the extreme pole on the sacrificial spectrum in crisis management, seems not so far removed anymore from the notions of elimination and removal, key terms in the context of purification, to which we shall turn next.

The concept of purification has its own history of interpretations, although perhaps not as long and intricate as that of sacrifice. The concepts of pollution and purification, too, are virtually universal, and theoretical perspectives have been offered by many different scientific and scholarly disciplines, medicine, anthropology, theology, psychology and sociology, to name a few, all tapping the intellectual trends of their times. The range of potentially polluting situations, activities or events is vast, and so is the scope of purificatory activity. As with sacrifice, interpretations range from attempts to formulate universal theories to views of particular phenomena at certain times and places¹³⁶. One of the major points of reference in the modern debate is still the work by Mary Douglas, who has related, as was discussed earlier, purification to the desire for order, and considered pollution as the confusing of (social, mental) categories¹³⁷.

¹³⁵See Aesch. *Ag.* 199 for μήχαρ; Eur. *Ph.* 890 for μηχανή σωτηρίας; Soph. *El.* 571 for ἀντίσταθμον. At the basis of such mechanisms of crisis management scholars have identified 'the principle of the talion', for which see for instance J.P. Guépin, *The Tragic Paradox. Myth and Ritual in Greek Tragedy* (Amsterdam 1968) 151-178, e.g. 'fruit for fruit and human blood for human blood' in Eur. *Ph.* 937-958; Eur. *IT* 1223-1224 and Soph. *OT* 100 and Arstid. *Or.* 48, 26-27) and the 'principle of substitution' (Guépin, *ibidem*), e.g. See further Burkert 1996, 53-55 (on life for life); Georgoudi 1999; Nancy 1983; and Versnel 1981.

¹³⁶See M. Eliade (ed), *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York and London 1987) vol. 12, 91-100 s.v. 'purification' (Preston); R.S. Khare, 'pollution and purity' in: A. Barnard and J. Spencer (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology* (London 1996) 437-439 for a short introduction to the subject and the role of esp. Indian culture in the (modern) debate. See also *Proceedings the XIth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions. Vol. 2 Guilt or Pollution and Rites of Purification* (Leiden 1968).

¹³⁷Douglas 1966. See Chapter 8 Section c.

With regard to ancient Greece, scholars have long struggled with the concepts of pollution and purification in search of a fixed set of beliefs. The material is vast and varied. One may find for instance what we would call physical and metaphysical pollutions, since not all pollutions pertain to actual dirt, for instance sacrilege. Moreover one may distinguish between natural, or inescapable, pollutions and avoidable pollutions¹³⁸. With regard to purification, the spectrum of activities covered by the term appears at least as wide, from all possible types of removal and elimination all the way to incantations and even sacrificial activity¹³⁹. Moreover, not all purifications seem to respond to specific pollutions, or even to any pollution at all.

The concepts of pollution and purification indeed turn out to be highly complex, especially if one includes in the discussion terms such as purity and impurity with their various Greek equivalents and possible uses, and the relation between these and the ancient Greek concept of the Sacred¹⁴⁰. Another recurrent theme in the debate pertains to the presumed Homeric absence of pollution belief, and hence to a postulated growth of pollution fears from the Archaic Age onwards. This development, in turn, has been closely linked with the ‘rise of Delphi’ and the issue of morality¹⁴¹. Finally, the nature of the alleged ‘contagiousness’ of pollution is

¹³⁸See for a detailed presentation of the wide variety of ancient Greek notions of dirt and defilement and purificatory procedures in general Moulinier 1952.

¹³⁹The difficulty in earlier discussions always pertained to the wide range of purificatory phenomena, their various applications, and hence their purpose and meaning. *RE* 10 (1919) 2517 s.v. ‘*katharmos*’ (Hamburg) for instance distinguishes three main categories of *katharmoi*: “a) rein kathartische, b) hilastische, c) separierende”, but even these categories can be seen to overlap. Earlier unifying interpretative attempts in approaches of pollution, purification and purity involved the notions of superstition and anxiety (Rohde), of primitive hygiene (Tylor) and of magical contagiousness and transference (Frazer). See Parker 1983, 55f. and references for a short survey. After the introduction of the word taboo, notions of the impure and the pure long remained closely linked up with ‘the sacred’, another academic category of great complexity. More recently, as we have seen, pollution has been understood in social (psychological, cultural) terms and purification has been regarded in the first place as a social (symbolic) process: “To belong to a group is to confirm to its standards of purity; the reprobate, the outsider, and the rebel are unclean” (Burkert 1985, 75). Modern stances are in fact variations on the tune set by Douglas 1966, whose principal ideas have been discussed in Chapter 8 (and will be returned to below).

¹⁴⁰One of the words for pollution, *agos*, is etymologically connected with the terminology denoting sacredness, *hagnos*, *hagios*. Within a religious frame of reference this led in the first half of the last century to elaborations on the notions of taboo, to claims concerning the confusion of the sacred and the defiled, or of holiness and pollution, by primitive people (see Douglas 1966, 18-120). For this discussion see also Parker 1983, 11, 159, 180, 223 and 361.

¹⁴¹See Nilsson 1976³, 632-637 for Delphi’s role. See esp. E.R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951), 28-63, elaborating on K. Latte, ‘Schuld und Sühne in

subject to much speculation¹⁴². Most of these discussions can be safely left aside for they do not substantially relate with the present argument. As with sacrifice, we cannot, and need not, go into great theoretical detail. The general thesis of this study does not depend on one ultimate interpretation of either sacrifice or purification.

At present, as we have seen, in the field of ancient Greek studies, Parker's *Miasma* is the standard work on the subject¹⁴³. Although initially inspired by Douglas' *Purity and Danger*, Parker in fact presents a very thorough scrutiny of specific categories of ancient Greek pollutions, such as in the context of birth and death, sex, bloodshed, sacrilege and disease. Moreover, apart from purificatory activity in response to these specific pollutions which form the main gist of his study, Parker draws attention to the fact that purification may also function as a preparation

der Griechischen Religion' in: idem, *Kleine Schriften zu Religion, Recht, Literatur und Sprache der Griechen und Römer* (eds. O. Gigon, W. Buchwald and W. Kunkel) (Munich 1968) 3-35. Contra: H. Lloyd-Jones, *The Justice of Zeus* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1983²), and more recently D.L. Cairns, *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford 1993) 27-47 (abandoning the static shame-culture versus guilt-culture antithesis). See for the discussion also Moulinier 1952, esp. 58-61 who stresses continuity of forms, but not of meaning, and Parker 1983, 130-142, who emphasises continuity rather than sudden transformation, and finds no proof of obsessive anxieties among the Archaic Greeks: "If the archaic Greek in times of affliction desired 'purification', that is testimony to a cultural idiom but not to an obsession, since a remedy of some kind is sought by all afflicted societies. We have no evidence that healer-seers were summoned in response to mere anxieties. (...) The elimination of evils of various kinds, and by various means, seems to be seen in this period as a 'purification', without it necessarily being felt that they had been caused by a pollution' (Parker 1983, 211). See also Hoessly 2001, 56f. for an overview of the various positions. See also Burkert 1985, 77 on the 'coming into being of a moral component adhering to the concept of pollution': "From the practice of ritual, in the figure of impurity, a concept of guilt develops; purification becomes atonement", revised in Burkert 1996, 123-127 and ref., in which he takes leave of the evolutionary approach and regards pollution and guilt as two exchangeable models of causation, with parallel occasions and functions, mixed up in 'action': "What matters is to establish a structure of cause and possible relief" (p. 126). On this mixing up, see also Section c below.

¹⁴²See esp. Dodds 1951, 36: "There is no trace in Homer of the belief that pollution was either infectious or hereditary. In the archaic view it was both, and therein lay its terror: for how could a man be sure that he had not contracted the evil thing from a chance contact, or else inherited it from the forgotten offence of some remote ancestor?" And Dodds, *ibidem* for his famous comparison of pollution with a typhoid germ. Others, however, have pointed out that ancient Greek behaviour stressing the contagiousness of pollution seems the exception rather than the rule. Parker 1983, 130 makes the following observation in the context of homicide and the danger to the community at large, such as stressed in some plays and in the *Tetralogies*: "It seems that the author of the *Tetralogies* has taken the doctrine of pollution to a theoretical extreme some way beyond the level of unease that in practice it created". In my view, it seems wiser to understand this presumed contagiousness in the (practical) context of the overlap of *miasma* and *agos*, or of the nature of crisis and crisis management, as will become clear below.

¹⁴³Parker 1983.

for particular events, and actions, and as an articulation of space and time. In these contexts averting danger is not the principal concern, according to Parker, but the restoration of normality¹⁴⁴. However, as we have established in this study, transitions of status, space and time are potential situations of crisis and may be as such in need of crisis management just the same. Although insights about order and transition offer some unifying interpretative aids, Parker does not follow this line of interpretation down to all its consequences: he emphasizes at the same time the many different concerns that may be expressed by ancient Greek pollution belief. It is true that in Chapter 8 we have seen that the approach of purification and sacrifice in terms of order, fruitful as it is, tends to minimize or ignore the mutual differences at the level of manifestation. Let us therefore turn first to a brief survey of purificatory activity at the level of manifestation so as to establish the weight and scope of these differences. After doing so, we shall return to the interpretation of purification and sacrifice in relation to order in the next section and try to reconsider its consequences *in extenso*.

At the level of outward appearance, ancient Greek purification covers a wide range of (symbolic) actions, all the way from what may be called ritual cleansing, e.g. by charms, spells, incantations, prayers and sacrifice, to physical purgation which may for instance involve emetics. One may list aspersion and fumigation among the ancient Greek purificatory techniques, and more direct ways of eliminating the pollution, or of the emblem of pollution, such as washing, wiping and rubbing off. With the Hippocratic doctors, purification became to be defined more narrowly as the elimination of the peccant matter¹⁴⁵. And although they themselves may have considered their approach to disease to be diametrically opposed to that of the Archaic seers-healers and the purifiers of their own times, various scholars have pointed out that they were heirs to a tradition in which the conception of disease as something to be washed or purged away was already deeply embedded¹⁴⁶.

In our context of crisis management, this eliminatory dimension of cathartic activity is paramount. By the act of purification, no matter what the specific technique applied, something bad, polluted or defiled had to be removed in order to

¹⁴⁴Parker 1983, 31.

¹⁴⁵See Chapter 9 Section c below.

¹⁴⁶See Parker 1983 212-215. See also Lloyd 2003.

achieve a state of cleanness, purity. Terms such as *elaunein*¹⁴⁷, *apopempein*¹⁴⁸, *ekpempein*¹⁴⁹, *exagein*¹⁵⁰, *apo- en ekballein*¹⁵¹ recur in our sources. The related concept of *apopompe* has been discussed above¹⁵². Elimination can be wholly destructive, for instance by burning, but often consists of mere riddance, a casting far away¹⁵³. The classic instance of such purification can be found in one of the Hippocratic treatises, *On the Sacred Disease*:

... and of the remains of such purifications, some they hide in the earth, others they throw into the sea, and others they carry away into the mountains where no one will touch them or tread on them¹⁵⁴.

The final character of the eliminatory separation in purificatory ritual may also be expressed in the prescription of not looking back after the concluding activity, as in a well-known purificatory ritual described by Theocritus¹⁵⁵:

And at dawn let one of your handmaids gather up the ashes (of the purificatory burning, LK) of the fire and bear them over the river to the rugged rocks and cast them all and utterly away beyond our boundaries; and then return without a backward glance.

Interestingly, in other contexts where one should not look back, the activities concerned belong to the extended category of sacrifice¹⁵⁶. In one case the ritual

¹⁴⁷See e.g. *Dieg.* 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer) = T. 24 and Jul. Imp. *Or.* 7.209 = T. 52 for the *pharmakos*. See further Aesch. *Lib.* 967f (*musos*); *Eum.* 283 (*miasma*).

¹⁴⁸See e.g. Lys. 6.53 = T. 46 for the *pharmakos*. See also Eur. *Hec.* 72; *SEG* 9.3, 27 (foundation of Cyrene).

¹⁴⁹See e.g. Hesych. s.v. *καρδίης νόμος* = T. 10 for the *pharmakos*. See also Ael. *VH* 14.7; Aesch. *Lib.* 98; see Parker 1983, 230: "Sometimes used of the disposal of the polluted remains as though there were something slightly animate about them".

¹⁵⁰See e.g. Harp. s.v. *Φαρμακός* = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 = T. 48.

¹⁵¹See e.g. Phot. s.v. *περίψημα* = T. 54 (*emballein*) for the *pharmakos*. See also Paus. 3.23.8; *Sud./E.M.* s.v. *φάνιον*; Hdt. 5.72 (*ἐξέβαλλε τοὺς ἐναγέας*); Hughes 1991, 244: "Often used of casting out corpses without burial", with reference to Pl. *Leg.* 9.873b and 10.909c; Soph. *Aj.* 1388.

¹⁵²See Chapter 1 Section g.

¹⁵³For burning see e.g. Harp. s.v. *Ὀξυθύμια* = Hyper. 14 fr. 79 (Jensen); for being thrown away or into the sea see e.g. Aesch. *Lib.* 98; Athen. *Deip.* 9.410b; for a combination see e.g. Theocr. 24.93ff. See further Parker 1983 *ad loc.*

¹⁵⁴Hp. *Morb. Sacr.* 4 (Jones II, 145f). Compare e.g. Soph. *OT* 1410-1412.

¹⁵⁵Theocr. 24.93ff (cf. Gow *ad loc.*). See also Eur. *Andr.* 293f. and Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 22.481, p. 1935, 8 (Stallbaum).

¹⁵⁶A. R. 3.1038f (after a nocturnal ritual to propitiate Hecate) and Aesch. *Lib.* 98-99 and schol. (a libation-ritual in the context of the cult of the dead). See also Soph. *OC* 488 (*ἄστροφος*, after the libation-ritual relating to the Eumenides, above Section a).

action, a libation sacrifice, is explicitly compared to, but not identified with, purificatory activity. The observation that purificatory and sacrificial activity may be comparable or even overlap at the level of manifestation is again confirmed in such prescriptions.

Terms such as *katharmos*, *katharma*, *katharsion* and *kathairein* place the action in an explicitly purificatory context, but as we have seen, these terms are not entirely free from ambiguity either, with regard to the precise action undertaken, to the validation of the purifying victim (positive or negative) and to its or his/her precise role¹⁵⁷. We have even noticed the term *katharmos* being employed for ritual action which we would, at first sight, be inclined to range among forms of sacrifice¹⁵⁸.

Contrary to what may seem to be a ‘godless’ practice, divine involvement was far from absent from purificatory activity. Involvement came in various disguises: first of all there were gods who presided over special types of purifications, esp. Zeus (*Katharsios*, homicide,)¹⁵⁹ or who may have helped to get rid of pollution, such as Apollo¹⁶⁰ (‘he who washes away evil’), or Asclepius, who was reported to ‘stretch his gentle hand and wipe off diseases’¹⁶¹. Some were good at causing the pollutions¹⁶².

¹⁵⁷See Chapter 1 Section i. See e.g. Parker 1983, 258: “But the parallel between the treatment of the scapegoat and contemporary magical cures for impotence (Hipponax fr. 78, 92 with M. West, *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus* [Berlin 1974] 144f) suggests that this was a complex ritual in which the idea of ‘purifying the scapegoat’ coexisted with that of ‘purifying the city’ by expelling him”. Something similar will be observed below in Paus. 8.34 and the recently published sacred law from Selinous, in which a purification sacrifice by an individual (killer) seems to result in a purification of both the supernatural beings involved and the ones who offer the sacrifice. Here ‘purifying the doer’ coexists with ‘purifying the supernatural beings involved’, which reminds us also of Oedipus’ *katharmos* at Colonus (Soph. *OC* 466-468, Chapter 9 Section a above). Finally the following dialogue (Soph. *OT* 99-100) may be interpreted in this light. Thebes suffers from a pollution (*miasma*), which Apollo orders to banish (*elaunein*). Oedipus then asks: ποίῳ καθαροῦ; τίς ὁ τρόπος τῆς ξυμφορᾶς; to which Creon responds: ἀνδρηλατοῦντας ἢ φόνῳ φόνον πάλιν λύοντας. (For similar purificatory sacrifice see Eur. *IT* 1223-1224 (ὡς φόνῳ φόνον μυσσάρῳ ἐκνίψω).

¹⁵⁸Soph. *OC* 466-468, Chapter 9 Section a above.

¹⁵⁹See e.g. A.R. 685-717; Eur. *HF* 922-923 and Parker 1983, 139, 393 and ref.

¹⁶⁰See e.g. Aesch. *Eum.* 62; Pl. *Cra.* 405B; *SEG* 9.72, 4-7 (Apollo *Apotropaïos*) and Parker 1983, 139.

¹⁶¹Herodas 4.17f, see Parker 1983, 216.

¹⁶²See e.g. Aesch. *Suppl.* 649-650 on a polluting Zeus or Hp. *Morb Sacr.* 4 (Jones II, 145f) fulminating against the idea that gods pollute. Apollo, evidently, was the sender and healer of plagues (which, however, is not necessarily the same as pollution). See also Parker 1983, 107 (in the context of homicide): “Erinyes, above all, are animate agents of pollution who embody the anger of one slain by a kinsman. Although they are not formally identical

There were gods, or supernatural beings, who received purificatory offerings¹⁶³. At the same time, there must have been a fair number of deities who had to be kept at bay by purificatory activity or might even have been, occasionally or permanently, impure themselves¹⁶⁴. The ritual act of purification may also have changed that status¹⁶⁵. Finally, it has already been observed above that *agos* and *miasma*, the concepts of (the result of) divine anger and pollution, were in fact inextricably intertwined, and so far no effort to establish the nature of, or disentangle, that intertwinement has been entirely satisfactory¹⁶⁶.

In sum, it seems impossible to grasp the entire phenomenon of purification in one single definition. Even if one restricts oneself to one term, *kathairein* and its

with pollution, there is no difference between its effects and theirs, and the operations of the two are normally co-extensive.”

¹⁶³See the examples in Chapter 9 Section a with regard to Hecate or the Eumenides. See also for instance *I.Cos* 95: καθαίρεται χοίρῳ Ἀθαναία Πολιάδι ὄν τε[λέων]. It is true, the offerings are of a special kind, ambivalent meals, libations, piglets, but the point is that they are offered to a supernatural being all the same.

¹⁶⁴See Sophron fr. 3-9 (Hordern); schol. Pl. *Crat.* 396E; and perhaps also Eur. fr. 912, 12-13 (Nauck). See Burkert 1985, 76 who cites Cleidemus *FGrHist* 323 fr. 14 from his περὶ ἐναγισμῶν: “For you the dirty water for whom it is necessary and for whom it is right” (Ἵμῖν ἀπόνιμμα οἷς χορὴ καὶ οἷς θέμις. ἔπειτα αὖθις μύρον κατάχεε). Burkert analyses the passage as follows: “Whatever is ritually and forcibly eliminated in the act of purification can be interpreted as a gift to certain powers who are therefore uncanny and perverse and better not mentioned by name.” However, this status may also pertain to more prominent deities: see Aesch. *Suppl.* 643-653 for a defiling Zeus on the rooftop; Eur. *Heracl.* 264; Eur. *IT* 941f for Ares’ blood-stained hands and idem, 1191f for the image of Artemis in need of purification. Perhaps we should add Hecate (see Chapter 9 Section a) and ‘the other *Apotropaiōi*’ (Plu. *Quest. Conv.* 7.6.3, *Mor.* 709A). See also the 5th-century BC Sacred Law from Selinous on the two sacrifices to the Tritopatores (Jameson, Jordan and Kotansky 1993). This fascinating, but puzzling text has received quite a lot of scholarly attention after its publication in 1993, see e.g.; E. Curti and R. van Bremen, ‘Notes on the *Lex Sacra* from Selinous’, *Rivista di antichità* 8 (Napels 1999) 21-33; K. Clinton, ‘A New *Lex Sacra* from Selinus: Kindly Zeuses, Eumenides, Impure and Pure Tritopatores, and Elasteroi’, *CP* 91 (1996) 159-179; S. Scullion, ‘Heroic and Chthonian Sacrifice: New Evidence from Selinous’, *ZPE* 132 (2000) 163-171. See Parker 1983, 217-218 on the most unsettling consequence of the assimilation of dirt and divine anger, i.e. the possibility that a god ‘pollutes’. However, according to Parker, ‘it is only in a restricted and temporary context that the gods become unclean. This is one of the anomalies in traditional belief that philosophy was to remedy by the postulate of impure demons acting as agents of the divine vengeance, to whom the rites of purification and expulsion are addressed’ (Parker 1983, 217 and ref.). See also Burkert 1996, 127 n. 100 on Apollo in need of purification.

¹⁶⁵See the Eumenides in Paus. 8.34 (who changed from black to white after Orestes’ *pars pro toto* sacrifice of his finger) and perhaps in Soph. *OC* 466-468. See also the Tritopatores who may be seen to change status (from impure to pure?) after the purificatory sacrifice (pro: Jameson, Jordan and Kotansky 1993, 53 and 80; contra: K. Clinton *op. cit.* previous note. Evidently, this is not the place to discuss source-material in such a detailed manner.

¹⁶⁶See Section a above.

derivatives, and even if one were able to identify the changes overtime, and identify all local and generic variety, the semantic scope of this term appears extensive, its employment covering a wide spectrum of activities, ranging from some sort of sacrificial ritual all the way to unconditional destruction. However, as we have seen, in the context of crisis, one of the basic distinctive traits of purification appears its eliminatory dimension¹⁶⁷. Whether symbolically or physically, whether by identification or transference, whether in the context of present ills or of an imaginary threat, purification -ideally- deals with a negativum that has to be removed and gotten rid off.

INTERTWINING

In this view, then, when looking at both sacrifice and purification in terms of operations credited with wider spectra of meanings, the dichotomy between the two is played down. In exceptional cases the procedures may even be seen to merge¹⁶⁸. In fact, already in Chapter 1, it was seen that it could not be decided whether the *katapontismos*, the victim's plunge into the sea, should be considered a sacrifice or a purification¹⁶⁹.

In Chapter Three the hallmarks of this distinction between purification and sacrifice have been identified and discussed: the involvement of the divine recipients,

¹⁶⁷See also the recurrent use of ἐλατήριος in this context (e.g. *LSCG* 56: ἐλατήριον ἀπόβαμμα); Aesch. *Lib.* 968: καθαρμοῖσιν ἀτᾶν ἐλατηρίοις; Hp. *Acut.* 2.1 [II, 63 Jones]: φάρμακα ἐλατήρια).

¹⁶⁸Others have noticed this before. See e.g. Gladigow 1984, 37 (below). See further Burkert 1987b, and esp. p. 45 on an interesting example of a Mycenaean tablet listing gifts to various gods and sanctuaries (consisting of vessels, men and women [!]), perhaps in times of crisis, using Mycenaean forms of *agein* and *hienai* (to send, i.e. to let go).

¹⁶⁹See Chapter 1 Section g. See also Tz. *Exeg. II.* 1, 314 on the *lumata*, the cleansings, thrown into the sea compared with the sacrifices to Poseidon (or the sea) offered by those who were to depart on a journey over sea. See also Hdt. 3.40 (Polycrates' ring) and Paus. 3.23.8: "About two stades to the right is the water of Ino, as it is called, in extent like a small lake, but going deeper into the earth. Into the water they throw cakes of barley meal at the festival of Ino (ἐς τοῦτο τὸ ὕδωρ ἐν ἑορτῇ τῆς Ἰνοῦς ἐμβάλλουσιν ἀλφίτων μάζας). If good luck is portended to the thrower, the water keeps them under. But if it brings them to the surface, it is judged a bad sign. The craters in Aetna have the same feature; for they lower into them objects of gold and silver and also all kinds of victims (καὶ γὰρ χρυσοῦ ἐς αὐτοὺς καὶ ἀργύρου ποιήματα, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἱερεῖα τὰ πάντα ἀφιᾶσι). If the fire receives and consumes them, they rejoice at the appearance of a good sign, but if it casts up what has been thrown in, they think misfortune will befall the man to whom it happens". See Burkert 1987b, 45: "One privileged form of *riddance* is immersion, to make truly irretrievable what is abandoned; if, at the 'water of Ino', the *offerings* come up again, this was a bad sign (my italics, LK).

the ultimate fate of the victim (dead or not) and the status of the victim. It may be useful to review these distinctions in the light of the present discussion. We shall find our earlier conclusion on the basis of the mythical material confirmed. The hallmarks are less helpful than expected: there is no sharply defined dichotomy. The differences between the two are vague and fluid, and sometimes seem to vanish completely.

With respect to the involvement of divine recipients, we have established that they were less prominent in sacrificial crisis management than one would expect. The angry deity who must be appeased represents only one end of the spectrum. Other sacrifices are performed without a named recipient or without any recipient at all¹⁷⁰. Conversely, one would expect no gods to be involved in purification rites. But as we have seen, this is not always borne out by the facts. The involvement varies: some gods receive purification sacrifices and seem to be invoked as averters of ills, and others are perhaps themselves kept at bay by purificatory activity. In fact, it appears that deities who are concerned with impure things may even sometimes be considered impure themselves. The Eumenides at Colonus present a perfect example of the polyvalence of divine involvement in purification ritual¹⁷¹. Although at times the difference between a valued sacrifice of appeasement offered to an angry deity and the elimination of offscourings in no man's land is evident, at other times the distinction between sacrifice and purification is less obvious, and cannot be established on the basis of the presence or absence of the divine alone.

With respect to the ultimate fate of the victim, there is even less distinction to go on. In the first chapter, especially in the context of the *katapontismos*, it was seen that (purificatory) riddance and (sacrificial) killing/consecration could not always be distinguished sharply. In Chapter 3 it was pointed out that mythical crisis management uses and explores exile as a perfect alternative to sacrifice. In Chapter 6 this observation was found to be confirmed by the *dekateusis* and *ver sacrum* tales, in which the expulsion from a community was presented in the form of a consecration

¹⁷⁰Various explanations may be offered: e.g. it was considered dangerous to call these gods by name (Burkert, 1985, 76) or it was unimportant, as 'the action itself, engaging the supernatural in human concerns, was paramount' (M.H. Jameson, 'Sacrifice and Ritual: Greece', in: M. Grant and R. Kitzinger (eds.), *Civilization of the Ancient Mediterranean. Greece and Rome* (New York 1988) vol. 2, 959-979, at 962) or the absence of the receiving party stresses the link between the victim and the homeland (Georgoudi 1999, 67: "Car on n'est pas immolé, en l'occurrence, à une divinité précise, mais on se sacrifie *pour* cette terre [θῦσαι πρὸ γαίης] *pour* le pays [ὑπὲρ χώρας] – ce qui n'est pas la même chose").

¹⁷¹Soph. *OC* 466-68.

to a god, the equivalent of the actual sacrifice of an animal tithe¹⁷². And even those who were expelled ‘negatively’, in what we have referred to as purificatory colonisations, ended up in the same realm.

In Chapter 8 it was observed that the ambiguity of the sacred and the sphere of sacrality interconnected the myths, rituals and tales more tightly. One need not follow those scholars who claim that the sacred is inherently ambiguous into all consequences of their thesis to accept the existence of at least a certain degree of ambivalence in the ancient Greek notion of the sacred and sacrality. It is possible that the two poles diverged in due course, as the different terms *agos* and *hagios* may suggest. However, there is sufficient reason to conclude, as we have claimed earlier, that the transference of an object, or a victim, from a profane, or unmarked, into a sacral sphere, could be the result both of a negative and of a positive ritual act. In the sphere of sacrality, our rituals, myths and tales meet. The ultimate fate of a victim is therefore not the best point of departure either to distinguish between sacrifice and purification.

This brings us to the last, and perhaps hardest, distinctive criterion between sacrifice and purification: the status and validation of the object of action. One would expect sacrifice and purification to be truly incompatible in this respect. The victim or object is characterised in a ‘positive’ way, that is as valued, or valuable, in a sacrificial context, and ‘negatively’, that is as dispensable, or worse, in a purificatory setting. Much can be said about the victim in either context, as we have seen. The victim may for instance be a substitute for someone or something else. In a sacrificial context the victim may be considered a substitute for the one who must die, or even for an entire community in danger¹⁷³. In a context of purification, the victim may be, or serve as, a substitute for the pollution that must be eliminated, or for the guilt or transgressions of other(s)¹⁷⁴. In practice, however, as we have seen, the categories are

¹⁷²See esp. Str. 5.4.12 (C 250).

¹⁷³See Eur. *IA* 1384-1390 and Eur. *El.* 1024-1026; Eur. *Her.* 579-580 and Eur. *Erechth.* fr. 360, 16-18 (Kannicht) for the idea of ‘one for many’. As a *pars pro toto*: Ael. *Ar. Hier. Log.* 2. 26-27: ‘Also it was necessary to cut off some part of my body for the sake of the well-being of the whole.’ Faraone 2003, 47 calls this ‘representative sacrifice’, ‘to keep the wrath away from the rest of the populace.’ If one adds the *pars pro toto*-principle to the notion of substitution one may arrive at a candidate of less value (see Burkert 1996, 51-53.) On substitution sacrifice see e.g. Versnel 1981, 159-160. See Chapter 3 Section e.

¹⁷⁴The victim of purificatory ritual may be made into the vehicle of evil, into the symbol of the crisis, but he may also be considered the one who is to blame for the anger of the gods (as in the aetiological story mentioned in Harp. s.v. Φαλαχός = Ister *FGrHist*

less transparent, or even blurred. In consequence, scholars have argued that we should not apply these status criteria too rigidly, as Gladigow for instance has pointed out:

Die Prämisse, das Opfer müsse einen ‘Wert’ darstellen, der transferiert wird, hat bei den modernen Interpreten zu der Konsequenz geführt, rituell behandelte Objekte, die einen ‘Unwert’ darstellen, nicht als ‘Opfer’ zuzulassen. Das religionshistorische Material umfasst hier jedoch ein viel breiteres Spektrum, (...). Die Diskussion ist insofern unbefriedigend verlaufen als es keine allgemein akzeptierte Begrifflichkeit von ‘Opfer’ gibt, weder auf der Objektebene noch auf der Metaebene, und daher eine Scheidung zwischen richtigem Opfer und eliminatorischem Ritus auf ein ungeklärtes Gebiet führt. Ähnliches gilt für die Wertkomponente in der Argumentation. Was unter welchen Bedingungen für wen einen Wert darstellt, ist - selbst wenn man dieses Argument übernimmt - nicht sonderlich klar auszumachen. Dass Opfer und Opfergegenstände grundsätzlich auch Substitute sein können, kompliziert das Problem ein weiteres Mal und lässt die Alternative Opfer-eliminatorischer Ritus noch weiter verschwimmen¹⁷⁵.

It should be clear, therefore, that the victim, too, is quite a feeble hallmark for distinction between purification and sacrifice¹⁷⁶.

‘One head for many’, but, as Parker has observed, ‘there is ambiguity as to whom it should be’¹⁷⁷. As we have seen, in purificatory ritual the victim may be a wretched figure, who is, at the same time, represented as a valuable individual. In myth, the victim is a much more prominent person, but the valued individual may at the same time be disqualified from being an important member of the community. Scholars have tried to explain this in terms of justification, as part and parcel of the fact that *human* victims are involved: feelings of guilt about the events inspire the community afterwards to regard the dispensable, and hence suitable, victim as a hero¹⁷⁸. However, this does not explain the analogous ambiguity in myth, nor the

334 fr. 50 = T. 48), who must be removed at once. See also e.g. Hes. *Op.* 225-247. See Parker 1983, 258: “By this conception the pharmakos ceases to be the mere vehicle onto which, like the original scapegoat of the Old Testament, the ills of the community are loaded by a mechanical process of transference, and becomes instead, through his crime, the actual cause of whatever affliction is being suffered.” See Chapter 1 Section j.

¹⁷⁵B. Gladigow, ‘Die Teilung des Opfers. Zur Interpretation von Opfern in vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Epochen’, *Jahrbuch des Instituts für Frühmittelalterforschung der Universität Münster* 18 (1984) 19-43, at 36-37. This is the only passage in this entire study that is left untranslated, as its purport, in my view, deserves to be formulated in the German language.

¹⁷⁶Others have pointed to what they call ‘an element of trickery’: the loss involved is so much less than that which is preserved (see Burkert 1987b, 46).

¹⁷⁷Parker 1983, 258.

¹⁷⁸Burkert 1996, 52-53.

ambivalence of impersonal objects of purificatory and sacrificial action in the context of crisis management.

One way to understand this status ambiguity is, perhaps, to place it in the context of the ambivalence of the sacred, as was suggested in Chapter 8. Either way, by purificatory riddance or sacrificial consecration, the victims ended up in an ‘otherland’ that may be considered, on various grounds, a sphere of sacrality. Many scholars have stressed the ambiguity of the sacred, as we have observed earlier¹⁷⁹. And although the origin and the precise nature of the interrelation between these two sides of the Sacred is debatable, few scholars would categorically deny that there is a potential for ambiguity in many manifestations of the sacred, for instance in the power of gods, who are able to harm and to bless, or in the figure of the *hieros*, who may be, as the sacred colonists testify, both blessed and cursed, or both special wards of the gods and an impious *atimoi* at the same time. However, as we have seen, the ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ properties of the victim do not pertain solely to the ambivalence of the sacred, but are sometimes already active before the actual transference is realised. As was pointed out in the case of Battus, this may be explained at the level of the narrative: the characterisation of a person anticipates his future fate. Furthermore, one may also wonder, if the ambivalence of the sacred is always as structurally present as is often argued. Ancient Greek terminology does not encourage such absolute claims. On the contrary, as we have seen, different words seem to express particular aspects of the sacred and only distant etymological connections can be pointed out. Moreover, if ambiguity was structurally present in the ancient Greek notion of sacrality, one may wonder why a similar mechanism was not activated in every sacrificial context, which does not seem the case. Hence, would it not be wiser to say that the sacred, with its potential for ambiguity, was suited to accommodate the ambiguity of the victims, rather than causing it?

There is a second explanation, which has the additional advantage of accounting for more inconsistencies in the context of crisis management than just the ambivalent status of the victim. Instead of formulating ideas of justification and legitimation, or of evolution, and instead of extending the definitions of sacrifice and purification ever further in order to ‘solve’ the problem of the victim, the status ambivalence, as such, may in fact present the key to the understanding of ancient

¹⁷⁹See Chapter 6 Section c and Chapter 8 Section c.

Greek crisis management, in which sacrifice and purification must be considered structurally intertwined.

In this way sacrifice and purification may still be considered to be different notions with differing manifestations and different terminology. In fact, the source-material leaves little doubt: time and again the value-criterion is emphasised, whether the most beautiful youngster¹⁸⁰ or the *pleistou axion* of Polycrates' ring¹⁸¹. This is ancient Greek sacrificial ideology par excellence¹⁸². Just as the emphasis on voluntariness¹⁸³. But at the same time another voice can be heard, a much more negative voice. As was mentioned, the victim of crisis management may also be characterised as a non-entity, or at least a dispensable person, disqualified from being a full member of the community, whether morally, socially, economically, or in any other way. Precisely this negative dimension may render the victim fit to be identified with the pollution, or to serve as an emblem, a substitute, or symbol of trouble, which needs to be removed. There is clearly an echo of both sacrificial and purificatory ideologies in our material. Instead of stretching the concepts of sacrifice and purification ever further, one may retain a basic distinction¹⁸⁴, but need not choose between the two: the ambivalent victim strikingly embodies an intertwining of sacrifice and purification. What is true for the victim, can also be illustrated - as we have seen in the previous section - at the level of terminology and at the conceptual level, in both literary and cultic evidence: in ancient Greek crisis management sacrifice and purification are structurally intertwined.

¹⁸⁰See Chapter 3 Section b, for instance Athen. 13. 602cd = Neanth. *FGrHist* 84 fr. 16; Plu. *Arist.* 9.2.

¹⁸¹Hdt. 3.41. See also D.H. 1.23.4-5 on the youths in the Pelasgian *ver sacrum* or Paus. 3.23.8 on the craters in Aetna into which objects of gold and silver and also all kinds of victims are lowered. See also Plu. *Parall. Min.* 5 (*Mor.* 306ef).

¹⁸²Also in times of crisis: see Xen. *Cyr.* 7.2.17 on how to propitiate a god: by sending many offerings of gold and many of silver and by sacrificing very many victims (ἐπεὶ δ' ἐγὼ πολλὰ μὲν πέμπων ἀναθήματα χρυσᾶ, πολλὰ δ' ἀργυρᾶ, πάμπολλα δὲ θύων ἐξιλασάμην ποτὲ αὐτόν, ...). See also e.g. Eur. *Hec.* 537; Eur. *IA* 1572. As to sacrificial ideology, compare also Eur. *IA* 1186: τί σοι κατεύξη τ' ἀγαθόν, σφάξων τέκνον (What boon will you pray for when you sacrifice your child?).

¹⁸³On voluntariness in ancient Greek sacrificial ideology, see W. Burkert, 'Greek tragedy and sacrificial ritual', *GRBS* 7 (1966)106-107.

¹⁸⁴Note that there are also examples of the two neatly distinguished but combined to remedy situations of crisis: Dem. 23.72 (θῦσαι καὶ καθαρθῆναι); Plu. *Thes.* 12.1 (καὶ δεομένου καθαρθῆναι, τοῖς νενομισμένοις ἀγνίσαντες καὶ μειλίχια θύσαντες εἰστίσαν οἴκοι); Plu. *Marc.* 29 (θυσιῶν καὶ καθαρμῶν); Paus. 8.18.7 (θυσίαις καὶ καθαρμοῖς); Theocr. 24.94-98. And also examples of *age* and *miasmata* side by side: Plu. *Sol.* 12, 1-5 (see Chapter 3 Section e).

In sum, although the dichotomy between sacrifice and purification may, as has been discussed in this section, at times, be considered less sharp than expected they are, basically, two different (differing) phenomena, described with, mostly, different terminology, which, for some reason, intertwine, overlap or even merge in times of crisis. In the next, and final section of this study, an attempt will be made to understand why sacrifice and purification prove to be such a good and persistent match in the context of ancient Greek crisis management.

C. RESTORING ORDER

In this last section we turn to the larger context of the intertwining of sacrifice and purification in ancient Greek crisis management. The impact of the circumstances on this type of ritual activity should not be underestimated, as Nock, Jameson and Scullion already pointed out. They attributed the ‘exceptional’ characteristics of a group of (sacrificial) rites to the grimness of the situation in which they took place. However, in order to really understand these (and other) rites, one must not stop at that conclusion. Instead of creating a special category by pointing to the extraordinary circumstances, one must study these circumstances in order to understand the rites in their own generic right.

At the onset of this final section it must be mentioned that the complex of crisis management exceeds the boundaries of ancient Greek culture. Attempts to grasp its nature cannot be entirely separated from the larger ancient Mediterranean context¹⁸⁵. One thus runs the risk of a piece-meal approach. However, one may also claim that whereas form may perhaps be shared, meaning need not be. By including Hittite, Biblical and Roman sources in this study, one would therefore run at least as large a risk of making crude generalisations. It is for this reason defensible to approach the Greek material in isolation here.

We have seen in the three main parts of this study that one type of crisis was not specifically tied up with one type of cause, nor with one type of solution¹⁸⁶. We

¹⁸⁵I have studied Hittite, Roman and Biblical crisis management as well, but on account of the consideration given in the text above I have decided to publish them separately. For similar efforts, see Bremmer 2001.

¹⁸⁶See Lloyd 2003, 216-217 for similar conclusions with regard to the rather sophisticated field of ancient medicine: “Although a fundamental gap opened up between those who thought the divine was involved directly in disease and their cures, and those who denied that, we have seen that there was, in practice, considerable overlap both in the remedies used and in the discourse employed to justify them.”

have also established, with Parker, that in ancient Greek practice *agos en miasma* do not exactly coincide either with divine anger and pollution, or with sacrifice and purification as remedial strategies. Although both sacrifice and purification can be fruitfully approached as re-ordering strategies with comparable functions and structure, as we have seen in Chapter 8, they can not be entirely equated. From an intellectualist perspective, the latter retains in the first place an eliminating dimension with regard to a negativum, the former involves a valued gesture to the divine. However, as we have seen in the last section, this dichotomy may at times weaken and both strategies may intertwine, overlap, or even merge. How come?

Distinctions and connections between sacrifice and purification have been noted before¹⁸⁷. However, so far, as we have seen, scholars have considered overlap an aberration, an incident due to participatory misunderstanding¹⁸⁸, or an evolutionary accident¹⁸⁹, and the interrelatedness has never been considered to be a structural potential of ancient Greek crisis management.

In order to understand the structural intertwining of sacrifice and purification in the context of crisis, one has to explore that specific context. But to understand crisis and crisis management, one must also comprehend order. Two well-known observations are of great importance. First, as various scholars have pointed out, ancient Greek notions of health and order, *kosmos*, were very much constructed in terms of balance, either cosmic, political, or physical¹⁹⁰. Moreover, disturbance of that balance was very much perceived as taking place along an inside-outside axis, as

¹⁸⁷See also Jameson, Jordan and Kotansky 1993, 73-74: "The need for purification arose both from contact with polluting acts or substances and from the anger of supernatural forces. Between the two no clear demarcation can be drawn." ; Parker 1983, 10: "In practice, what is spoken of as a purification often takes the form of a sacrifice, while the effects of divine anger, at least when it manifests itself as a disease, can sometimes be washed away"; Rohde 1898, vol. 1, 272: "Die Handlungen der Reinigung und Sühne, jene im Interesse des Staates und seiner Gottesdienste, diese als letzte Beschwichtigung der gekränkten Unsichtbaren ausgeführt, werden, wie sie in der Ausübung meist verbunden waren, so in der Überlieferung vielfach vermisch; so dass eine ganz strenge Scheidung sich nicht durchführen lässt"; Rudhardt 1958, 170 and 270-271.

¹⁸⁸Parker 1983, 10-11 (see Chapter 9 Section a).

¹⁸⁹Harrison 1922³, 103-108 (see Chapter 2 Section c). Or, differently viewed, but evolutionary all the same: Burkert 1985, 77: "From the practice of ritual, in the figure of impurity, a concept of guilt develops: purification becomes atonement". See Burkert 1996, 126 for a revision of this insight and Chapter 9 Section b for the discussion. Burkert 1996, 126 now recognizing parallel occasion and function, locates the difference elsewhere: 'A difference exists at the level of verbalization. If the concepts of guilt, wrath, and punishment demand a tale, the declaration of pollution calls for silence. There is no discussing dirt; it simply must be removed in a practical way.'

was its redressing¹⁹¹. Secondly, the ancient Greek perception of that order, in body, mind, state and world, always implied a stable relationship with the divine¹⁹². Hence, crisis is a disturbance of that divinely sanctioned order, and crisis management the attempt to re-establish that order. In this final section it will be argued that in a situation of crisis the two types of crisis management, sacrifice and purification, both serve a double purpose: the redressing of the balance, which implies both the elimination of the disturbance itself and the re-establishment of the proper relations with the divine.

REINSTATING THE PROPER BALANCE

In order to better understand the implications of the first of these two observations for the central subject of the present study, a short foray in ancient Greek medicine will be expedient. This parallel field of crisis management is informative on the notions of order and disruption, in terms of health and disease. That this is more than just exploring a parallel field can be amply illustrated by passages from ancient literature, in which medical vocabulary and thought is applied to other contexts¹⁹³. Moreover, in our own material, we also find medical terminology used to express

¹⁹⁰See e.g. Padel 1992.

¹⁹¹It may well be, as was pointed out earlier, that the structuring role of the in & out opposition in the (ancient Greek) perception of oneself and the world is (much) more ancient than the notion of balance. However, during the centuries our source-material belongs to, the notion of balance is deeply embedded in Greek mentality as well.

¹⁹²See e.g. Hdt. 2.52.1; Xen. *Cyr.* 8.7.22 (the gods who keep this ordered universe together).

¹⁹³See e.g. Pl. *Leg.* 5.735e-736a (Chapter 7). See Padel 1992, 57 (focusing on the late fifth century parallels between the tragic and medical perception of the ancient Greek self): “The well being of the community, politics and *stasis* can also be reflected on in terms of medical imagery, that in turn reflects ideas of the cosmic order: ... theories of balance in the universe interacted in Hippocratic imagery with a picture of health as a balance of forces within the body, while political ideas increasingly articulated an image of health in society and government as a balance of inner powers that may be upset, either by the emergence of a single stronger power or by the intrusion of an alien, outside force”. See also Padel 1992, 63 and ref. and Lloyd 2003, 1: “... the full extent of the grip that disease had on the ancient Greek imagination has yet to be revealed. We shall see that it has ramifications far beyond the field of Greek medicine as such, in politics, philosophy, religion, historiography, epic, tragedy, and indeed most genres of literature”. See further e.g. R. Brock, ‘Medical Imagery in the Greek Polis’, in: V.M. Hope and E. Marshall (eds), *Death and Disease in the Ancient City* (London 2000) 25-34; J. de Romilly, ‘Alcibiade et le mélange entre jeunes et vieux: politique et médecine’, *Wiener Studien* 10 (1976) 93-105.

crisis (the *polis* that is ill)¹⁹⁴, and crisis management (to cure)¹⁹⁵, not in the last place by means of a *pharmakos* - the personalised medicine. Health and disease were, apparently, good to think with.

That health was considered an equilibrium of powers is, for instance, claimed by Alcmaeon¹⁹⁶. The idea of a necessary balance of forces within the body is fundamental in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, a large and heterogeneous collection of medical treatises written by various authors between the 5th century BC and Hellenistic times, stemming from various, mostly Ionian places, Cos and Cnidus in particular¹⁹⁷.

Hence, disease was, essentially, a disturbance of that balance¹⁹⁸. This may be caused either by internal overgaining, or as a result of an outside force, as has been amply discussed by Padel: “In Hippocratic theories disease is caused by flow from outside or from inside, or by the interaction of the two”¹⁹⁹. Padel points out that especially the outside cause is cardinal in Hippocratic nosology: “Disease comes

¹⁹⁴Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13. In the *Phoenissae*, we have come across the expression various times, e.g. Eur. *Ph.* 867, 1014.

¹⁹⁵*Akeo*, *akeomai* in Hdt. 3.40 (Polycrates) or *Ake* in Paus. 8.34 (Orestes). See also Aesch. *Suppl.* 366-367: τὸ κοινὸν δ' εἰ μιáινεται πόλις, ξυνῆ μελέσθω λαὸς ἐκπονέειν ἄκην (If the city is polluted in its commonalty, in common let the people strive to work out the cure).

¹⁹⁶Alc. *KRS* 310, p. 260 (at *AET.* 5.30.1 [Diels-Kranz 24b4]): “What preserves health is *isonomia* between the powers - wet and dry, cold and hot, bitter and sweet and the rest, and monarchia among them is the cause of sickness”.

¹⁹⁷See e.g. Hp. *VM* 14 (Jones I, 37f.); Hp. *Nat. Hom.* 4 (Jones IV, 11f.): “Now he enjoys the most perfect health when these elements are duly proportioned to one another in respect of compounding, power and bulk, and when they are perfectly mingled. Pain is felt when one of these elements is in defect or excess, or is isolated in the body without being compounded with all the others.” See e.g. A. Krug, *Heilkunst und Heilkult. Medizin in der Antike* (Munich 1985) e.g. 49: “Gesundheit ist gleichbedeutend mit der Harmonie und Ordnung all dessen, was die Natur, die Physis des Menschen ausmacht, die ihrerseits ein Bild des übergeordneten Kosmos ist. Krankheit als Störung der Gesundheit ist daher etwas, was gegen die Natur verstößt, παρὰ φύσιν ist. See also Lloyd 1979, 248: “.... reflection on the idea of political and legal order is a source of models not just in cosmology, but in other areas of inquiry as well (medicine and physiology), where the functioning, and malfunctioning, of the human body were often conceived in terms of the interrelation of opposing factors, health and disease being seen as, for example, a state of equal rights, *isonomia*, or a lack of it, between these factors” (with ref. to Alc. fr. 4 Diels-Kranz [above], various passages in the Hippocratic treatises and Eryximachus in Pl. *Symp.* 186d f.).

¹⁹⁸See also Hp. *Nat. Hom.* 9 (Jones IV, 25): “All diseases which are generated by repletion are cured by depletion, and all which arise from depletion are cured by repletion”, and Lloyd 2003, 154 n.2 for other Hippocratic references. See also Galen, *On temperaments* 2.1.

¹⁹⁹Padel 1992, 57.

from *ta esionta*, the things coming in, *exothēn*, from outside”²⁰⁰. To express this incoming force even martial vocabulary may be employed such as to attack, to seize and to conquer²⁰¹.

In and out, however, was not only the matrix for disruption, but also provided the poles along which preservation was attained: the importance of both diets and bloodletting in ancient medicine need no further comments²⁰². *Katharsis*, the elimination of every harmful element that disturbs the balance of bodily powers and causes disease, is of central importance in the Hippocratic Corpus²⁰³. There are various means to attain this and the type of *katharsis* to be applied was one of the main areas in which the Hippocratic doctors reacted against earlier ‘purifiers’ and the like²⁰⁴. By all means, taking an emetic, washing away and purging away were prominent among them, but wiping off or spitting out occurred as well²⁰⁵.

A *pharmakon* provided an appropriate means for such a *katharsis*²⁰⁶. The Hippocratic doctor describes the effect as follows: “Purging is a key strategy, because when the drug enters the body it clears out first the part of the body that is most like itself, then it draws out and purges the other parts”²⁰⁷. Part and parcel of maintaining a balance is, hence, periodical or instant elimination of that which threatens the equilibrium, either from outside, or from inside.

²⁰⁰Padel 1992, 54. See the Prologue for the same type of ‘nosology’ in tragedy.

²⁰¹See Padel 1992, 56, with a reference to Hp. *Reg.* IV, 88 (Jones IV, 424): “(A healthy soul) is conquered neither by fullness nor by emptiness, nor by anything intrusive from outside”. See also Hom. *Od.* 5, 396: στρυγερὸς δέ οἱ ἔχραε δαίμων. See for vocabulary, or imagery, of attack in our source-material: Eur. *Ph.* 806-811, 1019-1042 (attack of Sphinx) and Eur. *Ph.* 1556-1559 (attack *Alastor* of Oedipus); Eur. *Ph.* 239-240 (furious Ares comes before the walls). See also Horstmanshoff 1989.

²⁰²See Longrigg 1993, 53; Parker 1983, 213-214: “The body is a container whose purity is naturally maintained by periodic spontaneous ‘purifications’ (excretion, menstruation and the like). When one of them develops in excess, disease occurs, and an artificially induced purification of the peccant matter becomes necessary”. For breath as an ‘incoming’ saviour, see Padel 1992, 55f.

²⁰³Hoessly 2001, 247-313; Lloyd 1979, 44 n.91; Padel 1992, 55f; Parker 1983, 213-214.

²⁰⁴See e.g. Lloyd 1979, 10-58; Parker 1983, 209-215. Parker points out that the early purifiers were at the same time of the seer/healer type, but in the fifth and fourth century BC purifiers rather removed disease by a kind of washing. Note, however, that they employ highly similar terminology (see Hoessly 2001, 312 and ref.; Lloyd 2003).

²⁰⁵See Parker 1983, 208 and 212.

²⁰⁶See Parker 1983, 214. See Chapter 1 Section i on the term *pharmakon*.

²⁰⁷Hp. *Nat. Hom.* 6. (Jones IV, 17), quoted from Padel 1992, 55.

This idea of balance, *kosmos*, structured thought in various areas of ancient Greek life²⁰⁸. So did the notion of disease as a state of disorder and disturbance²⁰⁹, as Padel, among others, has observed: “Disease, disruption, disorder in these areas of human existence, were all essentially disturbances of balance, whether versed in medical, religious or political terms”²¹⁰.

Just as in the medical perception, ways to attack and to preserve that cosmic or political balance were organised along an in and out-matrix²¹¹. Centre and periphery played an important role in the construction of the body, the *polis* and the world, as parameters of that balance²¹². In crisis the centrifugal route was paramount.

²⁰⁸See especially Lloyd 2003 and Padel 1992 on the way these fields mutually informed each other. This is not the place to discuss what influenced what. For contributions to this discussion see J. Longrigg, ‘Philosophy and medicine, some early interactions’, *HSCP* 67 (1963) 147-175; Longrigg 1993; M.R. Wright, *Cosmology in Antiquity* (London and New York 1995) e.g. 66, 71. See in general W. Kranz, ‘Kosmos und Mensch in der Vorstellung frühen Griechentums’, *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaft zu Göttingen* I, 2, 7 (1938) 121-161; F. Solmsen, ‘Nature as Craftsman in Greek Thought’, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 24 (1963) 473-496; M.R. Wright, *Cosmology in Antiquity* (London and New York 1995) esp. 71. See for balance in food and diets E. Craik, ‘Hippocratic Diata’, in: J. Wilkins, D. Harvey and M. Dobson (eds.), *Food in Antiquity* (Exeter 1995) 336-350, esp 346-348. See for equilibrium in the body of politics (*isonomia* and *isegoria*) the work of V. Ehrenberg and G. Vlastos, e.g. V. Ehrenberg, ‘Origins of Democracy’, *Historia* 1 (1950) 515-548; G. Vlastos, ‘Isonomia’, *AJPH* 74.4 (1958) 337-366. It must be pointed out that there have been other notions than that of balance structuring thought in these fields, but balance was certainly among the most influential and long-lasting ones.

²⁰⁹Pollux 8.152; see Lloyd 2003, 12 and references;

²¹⁰See Padel 1992, 65. See e.g. Pl. *Leg.* 10 (906c) on excess causing disease in the body, plague in nature, and injustice in society.

²¹¹See Aesch. *Lib.* 619 on a διπλοῦν μίasma, from strangers and from members of the polis at the same time. See also Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 6.8.1 (*Mor.* 693f) for a nice example of the in and out matrix of crisis management: Hunger out, Wealth and Health in! See for incoming ills for instance all the ἐπι-compounds, such as ἐπιπέμπω, ἐπαγωγή, see F. Pfister, ‘Zur antiken Daemonologie und Zauberei’, *WKP* 27 (1912) 753-758. See further for incoming remedies for instance Soph. *Ant.* 1140-1145 (‘to come with cathartic foot’- to heal the city’s ills [*nosos*]) or the oracle commanding to bring in Hesiod’s bones to rid the plague (Paus. 9.38.3), or Pelops’ bones (Paus. 5.13.6). See also Lyc. *Alex.* 1204-1213 (and schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 1194). See Buxton 1994, 187f on Cadmus; Graf 1985, 85f. on ‘Anschwemmungssagen’; Ogden 1997, 127-129 and 219 n. 37 (restore exiles during *akarpia*).

²¹²See esp. Padel 1992, but also F. de Polignac, *Cults, Territory, and the Origins of the Greek City State* (Chicago 1995) on the importance of centre and periphery in the ancient Greek construction of community; see also D. Wiles, *Tragedy in Athens: Performance Space and Theatrical Meaning* (Cambridge 1997) on the importance of in & out in ancient Greek thought: “We are not used to thinking of our universe, our living spaces and our bodies in terms of a centre point. Yet the relationship of centre and periphery was the key to democratic thinking about space and the theatre must be seen as one democratic spatial practice among many” (p. 78). For the importance of opposition and binary thinking

Vocabulary reveals much: trouble, plague, ills, threats – they always have to be ousted, eliminated, whether carried away, sent out and washed away and so on, no matter the cause²¹³, no matter how²¹⁴. As we have amply seen, the ancient Greek term *kathairein* and cognates provided apt terms for centrifugal remedies²¹⁵.

The notion of balance sheds also light on another of our observations about ancient Greek crisis management: remedies were sought in very bad times as well as in highly prosperous circumstances²¹⁶. As we have seen, the proper balance, *to metron*, can be disturbed by an outside force, by deficiency or by excess²¹⁷.

In sum, any disorder, any imbalance in an ancient Greek body or state, whether caused by repletion or depletion, or by excess or deficiency, must be remedied by cures, whatever the precise form these may take²¹⁸, in order to remove what is bad and to restore the original ideal balance, the proper order of everything.

in ancient Greek thought see G.E.R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy. Two types of argumentation in early Greek thought* (Cambridge 1966).

²¹³Whether as a consequence of an *agos* or a *miasma*: compare e.g. τὰ ἄγῃ ἐλαύνειν (Thuc. 2.13 or Thuc. 1.26); ἀγῆλατέω (Hdt. 5.72.1; Soph. *OT* 402) and μίασμα ἐλαύνειν (Soph. *OT* 97-98) or ἄγος ἐκνίψασθαι (Paus. 3.17.7). But also if the crisis occurs by itself (ἐκ ταῦτομάτου, see schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.288a = Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 fr 98).

²¹⁴See e.g. *apopempein*, *ekpempein*, *ekballein*, *apelaunein*, *apallattesthai* disease, ills, war etc. Compare term such as *apotrepein*, *ektrepein* and curse-formulae, such as ἔρρε ἐς κόρακας. Or the ways to deal with demons and the like, for which see R. Wunsch, 'Zur Geschichte der Geisterbannung im Altertum', *Breslauer Festschrift des Schles. Vereins für Volksk.* (1911) 9-32 and Herter, 'Böse Dämonen im frühgriechischen Volksglauben', *Rh. Jahrb. F. Volkskunde* 1 (190) 112-143. The *pharmakos* ritual was, among other explanations, said to *remove* disaster, ills and draught, or to *avert* of all sorts of evil (see Chapter 1 Section j). In the myths humans were sacrificed in order to *remove* plague, to *get rid of* ills (see Chapter 3 Section e; Phrixus and Helle had to be sacrificed in order to get rid of the ills, the famine or the drought, see Chapter 4 Section b). See further the many instances in Chapter 9 Sections a and b.

²¹⁵See e.g. Pl. *Soph.* 227c-d: (Th.): "I do understand, and I agree that there are two types of cleansing (καθάρσεως), one dealing with the soul and a separate one dealing with the body." (...) (Vis:) "And to cleanse something was to leave what's good and throw out whatever's inferior" (Καὶ μὴν καθαρός γ' ἦν τὸ λείπειν μὲν θάτερον, ἐκβάλλειν δὲ ὅσον ἂν ἦ πού τι φλαῦρον). (Th.): "Yes." (Vis:) "So insofar as we can find some way to remove what's bad in the soul, it will be suitable to call it cleansing" (Καὶ ψυχῆς ἄρα, καθ' ὅσον ἂν εὐρίσκωμεν κακίας ἀφαίρεσιν τινα, καθαρόν αὐτὸν λέγοντες ἐν μέλει φθελγόμεθα).

²¹⁶Aesch. *Ag.* 1008-1016; D.H. 1.16; Parth. *narr. am.* 5 and perhaps also Plu. *Quaest Graec.* 11 (*Mor.* 293ab). See also Pl. *Leg.* 909e. See Burkert 1987b, 44.

²¹⁷See also Versnel 1977 and 1981.

²¹⁸Principal notions, such as the one of balance, remained remarkable stable throughout Antiquity (for balance, see Versnel 1977, 43-44 and ref. establishing the currency of this notion until at least the 4th century AD). Variety and evolution rather pertained to the precise character of the balance (e.g. *isonomia* or *monarchia*), the identification of the constituent parts or techniques to remove imbalance (see the differences between the Hippocratic doctors and the 'purifiers and the like') - see Lloyd 2003.

RE-ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH THE DIVINE

There is, however, more to ancient Greek order than a proper cleansing of body, house and state from time to time. Order was also a matter of the gods. One cannot think about ancient Greek notions of order, health and prosperity without thinking about the gods: “Die Gottheit ist das alles im Gleichgewicht haltende Gesetz” (the god is the law by which all is kept in balance)²¹⁹. According to Herodotus, the word *theoi*, ‘disposers’, hence gods, is even derived from the notion that they had ‘disposed’ and arranged everything in due order, and assigned each thing to its proper division²²⁰.

This notion of *divine* order is fundamental, although its ramifications may vary, as Kearns has observed:

Greek religion formulates conceptions of a general order of existence inasmuch as the gods themselves, particularly Zeus, are seen as disposing order in the universe and are even the objects of a quasi-identification with that order. The order which is theirs has much to do with morality, something also to do with categories of beings (gods, humans, animals; mortals and immortals) for whom different paths are marked out, and something to do with the rules governing divine-human communication. In its broadest sense, this divine order covers all the dealings of the gods with our more familiar world; everything that happens is in accord with a pattern. From a slightly different point of view, however, we can see the interaction of the two as operating in three main ways: in the establishment and maintenance of an overarching system of order; in unexpected and paradoxical interventions, which often upset limited human notions of order; and in the sort of standard divine-human exchanges, which, depending on view, can be labelled ‘religious practice’ or *ta hiera*²²¹.

Order is a state of well-being, when all is normal and healthy and in accordance with the divinely appointed order of the universe (which may also, but need not, equal being righteous²²²). A blessed state of being, in which gods and men

²¹⁹Speyer 1973, esp. 127, referring to (Ps)Arist. *de mundo* 400 b 27f. (under the god’s harmonious rule the whole ordering of heaven and earth is administered). See also Xen. *Econ.* 7.18-31. See esp. Kearns 1995.

²²⁰Hdt. 2.52.1: θεοὺς ... ὅτι κόσμῳ θέντες τὰ πάντα πράγματα.

²²¹Kearns 1995, 518. Evidently, as said earlier, concepts evolve, and critical voices may be heard. However, by and large, the fundamental notion of the divine order of things has never been rejected throughout Antiquity. See Kearns 1995, 519 for some nuances.

²²²See esp. Hes. *Op.* 217 f. where the just city is depicted as enjoying peace, prosperity and population increase, whereas the unjust ones suffer plague, famine and defeat by will of all-seeing Zeus. See Kearns 1995 for the necessary nuances on the issue of the relationship between morality and the gods.

and animals occupy their proper place and all happens according to nature, *kata physin*, a nature however definitely divine²²³. This order was shaped, lived by and maintained in normal cult practice, personal and communal. Living with the gods was shaped and experienced mostly by daily routine, where religion was, albeit perhaps in an unmarked way, present in every aspect of ancient Greek life²²⁴.

This *divinely* sanctioned or even embodied order may have become more manifest on special occasions, during festivals, but especially in times of crisis. Crisis was regarded as a disturbance of that divine order, in which things happened contrary to nature, *para physin*²²⁵. A situation of *loimos*, plague, may be described as follows:

You too have seen our city's affliction, caught in a tide of death from which there is no escaping - death in the fruitful flowering of her soil; death in the pastures; death in the womb of women; and pestilence, a fiery demon gripping the city, stripping the house of Cadmus, to fatten hell with profusion of lamentation²²⁶.

This equals a state of being cursed, as we learn from Aeschines:

That their land bear no fruit; that their wives bear children not like those who begat them, but monsters; that their flocks yield not their natural increase; that defeat await them in camp and court and market-place, and that they perish utterly, themselves, their houses and their whole race. And never may they offer normal sacrifice to Apollo, nor to Artemis, nor to Leto, nor to Athena Pronaea, and may the gods refuse to accept their offerings²²⁷.

In sum, in times of crisis, the divinely appointed, sanctioned, or even embodied, order is disturbed, broken. Crisis management, the attempt to return to the

²²³For which see for instance Thales according to Aristotle (*Metaph.* A3, 983B6). As others have pointed out already, even one of the more outspoken 'naturalists' among the Hippocratic authors, the one of the treatise on the Sacred Disease, who argues against the supernaturalist approaches of the so-called Sacred Disease by others, nevertheless claims that all diseases are divine and natural (see Lloyd 1979, 25-26 and ref. and Lloyd 2003, 43f and ref.). See further Padel 1992, 48: "Even in the natural philosophers, divinity is part of the fabric of the world and of the self".

²²⁴One may argue that as a result of the influential Durkheimian dichotomy between the sacred and the profane, scholars have long neglected the gods' role as crucial 'stakeholders' in the 'profane', which is therefore much less 'profane' than presumed. For an important contribution to the latter insight see Connor 1988.

²²⁵See Plu. *Symp.* Conv. 6.8 (*Mor.* 694ab) for the opposition *para physin* and *kata physin*.

²²⁶Soph. *OT* 22-29. See also Hdt. 6.139 and Soph. *OT* 171f and 269f. Cf. also D.H. 1.23.

²²⁷See e.g. Aeschin. 3.110-112 and Aesch. *Eum.* 902-987 and *Suppl.* 656-709 for the inverse.

normal order of things, therefore necessarily implies a restoration of the relations with the divine.

Indeed, as we have seen, the role of the gods in times of crisis is not always easy to grasp²²⁸, not even for the ancient Greeks themselves: “To which of the gods should one sacrifice to fare better and more well and get rid of one’s illness?”²²⁹, the oracle of Zeus at Dodona was asked, as this was not always obvious, nor why. But sacrifice one should anyway, as Xenophon’s Socrates knew well:

“You see men at war appeasing the gods before they engage in battle and asking by means of sacrifices and omens what they ought to do. Do you think we should propitiate (*hilaskesthai*) the gods any the less when we come to engage in farming²³⁰?”

The ways the gods are involved in situations of crisis varies: gods may have caused a crisis, but they were at the same time regarded as the source for recovery²³¹.

²²⁸Place, genre but especially time cannot be ignored. Various developments have been observed. For instance the growing differentiation between types of saving gods and gods that deal with evil, or the growing importance of the evil demon who has everything bad ascribed to him (e.g. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 6.3.31.1 [ii. 446, 8-11 Stählin]). Evidently, such claims have also been contested. This is not the place to reopen this debate, nor to incorporate such nuances, although their importance is evident. See for entrances to these discussions Burkert 1996, 151f and Parker 1983, e.g. 220.

²²⁹Various examples may be found in H.W. Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus. Dodona, Olympia, Ammon* (Oxford 1967) e.g. appendix no. 15 (quoted above), 14 (“by sacrificing and appeasing which god will one become healthier as to the eyes?”) and 12 (“... concerning health and the present circumstances both for now and the future by appeasing which gods will he fare better and more well”) on questions concerning health. See also Xen. *Anab.* 3.1.5-8 or Eur. fr. 912, 12-13 (Nauck): τίνα δεῖ μακάρων ἐκθυσσάμενους εὖρειν μόχθων ἀνάπαυλαν (Chapter 9 Section a, above).

²³⁰See Xen. *Oec.* 5.19-20. See Burkert 1996, 121: “In Greek belief, rituals are constantly claimed to restore good humour to gods, *hilaskesthai*.”

²³¹Again a subject too large to deal with, even in terms of references. See Kearns 1995, 517: ‘to regard the divine both as source of order (or as order itself) and as transcending or disrupting order’. See e.g. Eur. *Ph.* 379: “some god has ruined Oedipus’ house” and idem, 1199: “some god has saved her” (Thebes) and Eur. *IT* 975: “except Apollo saved me, who destroyed me”). See for instance Horstmanshoff 1989 for Apollo being one of the gods par excellence who may cause plague and may cure from it as well. See Jameson, Jordan and Kotansky 1993, 79: All Greek divinities were potentially both beneficent and dangerous, depending on the contexts in which they functioned, and the kindly Eumenides are but a different aspect of the terrifying Erinyes. Their dangerous force, however, is so strong and distinctive that it is described by that unambiguous title. ... As Erinyes they can blight, while as Eumenides they bless (cf. Aesch. *Eum.* 778-87, 938-47). See also A.B. Cook, *Zeus. A Study in Ancient Religion. Vol. II.2* (Cambridge 1925) 1101 on Zeus *Hikesios*, *Alastoros*, and *Prostropaios*: “the protective and punitive powers of Zeus are fused”. This standpoint is not shared by everyone. Not with regard to the gods in general, nor with regard to the Erinyes/Eumenides. For a good introduction to the discussion see Jameson, Jordan and Kotansky 1995, ibidem.

As to the first type of divine involvement, as the cause of crisis, further specification is due²³². Crisis may be the result of divine intervention. Throughout Antiquity there are numerous examples of individual sickness regarded as an attack by a god or by other supernatural powers²³³. Not only madness²³⁴, but also more ‘physical ailments’²³⁵. Communal crisis may be caused by angry gods, too, as we know ever since Apollo’s shot his arrows in the *Iliad*²³⁶. Artemis and Dionysus are also quickly enraged, as we have seen in Chapter 3 Section e)²³⁷. However, the divine cause of

²³²Another complicating factor is presented by the element of individual guilt, which may, but need not necessarily present the occasion for appeasement. Or conversely, in case of individual injustice, one cannot assume that divine retribution was always expected. We cannot discuss this in detail.

²³³Note Lloyd 1979, 29 n. 98: “Such beliefs can be attested from Homer and Hesiod to late antiquity” (and ref.). See L. Edelstein, ‘Greek Medicine in its Relation to Religion and Magic’, in: O. Tempkin and C.L. Tempkin (eds.), *Ancient Medicine: Selected Papers of Ludwig Edelstein* (Baltimore 1967) 205-246, esp. 219-224 (perhaps not for the thesis itself, but for his detailed information; H. Herter, ‘Böse Dämonen im frühgriechischen Volksglauben’, *Rh. Jahrb. F. Volkskunde* 1 (1950) 112-143; Parker 1983, 207-210, 213-215; 237, 251 (Parker 1983, 246 emphasizes that the divine causation of disease is not identical with the notion of disease as punishment, for which there are not very many examples to be found); Padel 1992, 162-192. In tragedy: Aesch. *Lib.* 1054; Aesch. *Eum.* 264-267; Soph. *Aj.* 581; Soph. *Tr.* 1235: ‘he might be sick on account of avenging demons (ἐξ ἀλαστόρων)’. See also Arist. *HA* 605a4f; Hom. *Od.* 5.396; Pl. *Crat.* 405ab.

²³⁴On madness, see E. Krummen, ‘Ritual und Katastrophe. Rituelle Handlung und Bildersprache bei Sophokles und Euripides’, in: Graf (ed.) 1998, 296-325, esp. 304-305; Padel 1992, esp. 162-192 and 1995.

²³⁵Everything but wounds (Horstmanshoff 1989, 106 and ref.). See the author of *On the Sacred Disease* ch. 4 (Jones) in his attack on the ‘supernaturalists’: “If the patient imitate a goat, if he roar, or suffer convulsions from the right side, they say that the Mother of the Gods is to blame. If he utter a piercing and loud cry, they liken him to a horse and blame Poseidon. Should he pass excrement, as often happens under the stress of the disease, the surname Enodia is applied. If it be more frequent or thinner, like that of birds, it is Apollo Nomius. If he foam at the mouth and kick, Ares has the blame” (etc.).

²³⁶See Hom. *Il.* 1. esp. 49-67. For Apollo (and Artemis) as plague-gods in the Ionian and Attic cults, see Faraone 2003, 61. For Ares as a harmful deity, see Hughes 1991, 128 and ref. (ad Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 fr. 125 = Porphy. *de Abst.* 55, see also Eur. *Ph.* 934-935).

²³⁷The poets and playwrights in particular have stamped this explanatory model of crisis for ever on the ancient Greek mind (but also Herodotus offers various examples of this type of thinking, see e.g. Hdt. 6.12.3: “Toward which god did we commit transgression that we are suffering this?”). For other examples of divine causation in Herodotus, albeit anonymous, see e.g. 1.32.9; 7.18.3. It is difficult to establish to what extent these beliefs played a role in daily life. The notion of divine anger is definitely part of the ancient Greek imagination, but one has to be cautious about its practical relevance. For various contributions to the question of how large the gap between belief and actual practice may have been, see J. D. Mikalson, *Athenian Popular Religion* (Chapel Hill 1983); idem, *Honour thy Gods: Popular Religion in Greek Tragedy* (Chapel Hill 1991) and idem, *Herodotus and Religion in the Persian Wars* (Chapel Hill 2003). Compare the remarks by Parker 1983, 130 (also quoted above) on the rhetoric in the *Tetralogies* which are full with pollutions and angry gods and spirits: “It seems that the author of the *Tetralogies* has taken the doctrine of pollution to a theoretical extreme some way beyond the level of unease that in practice it

crisis may also be represented as a general, anonymous, principle²³⁸, without further explanation, but as such. Pausanias, in his version of the events taking place at Orchomenos may be quoted as exemplary: “those things (the famine and Phrixus’ supposed death, LK) did not have a divine cause, but Ino, the stepmother had intrigued for all these things”²³⁹. The opposition is telling: crisis was not heavenly induced, as one would normally suppose, and (possibly) remedy by sacrificing a human being, but in this very special case a human being was responsible. This small six-words’ subordinate clause, *hou to theion aition ou genesthai*, captures - *e contrario* - one of the fundamental notions in Antiquity. Hence, as Xenophon has pointed out, even without apparent divine anger as a cause, in times of crisis, or anxiety, propitiation of the gods is necessary.

If the gods were not considered to be (partly) responsible for the crisis, they were by all means regarded to be an important source of safety. In general, prosperity was considered to depend largely on the gods²⁴⁰. Concordingly, the belief that recourse to the divine was likely to bear fruit was widespread, not in the last place in times of crisis²⁴¹. Gods may be asked for assistance in the aversion of evil²⁴². Some

created.” However, see also Parker 1983, 108: “The atmosphere of Aeschylus and the *Tetralogies* is too thick with spirits for everyday habitation; but they perhaps, by their imaginative exaggeration, set before us the fundamental structure of popular belief.”

²³⁸See Hdt. 1.32.1: τὸ Θεῖον πᾶν φθονερόν τε καὶ ταραχῶδες (the divine [is] full of jealousy and disturbance).

²³⁹Paus. 1.44, 7.

²⁴⁰See the colossal mass of votive inscriptions (see e.g. W.H.D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings* (Cambridge 1902). Various illustrations of this mentality may be found among the extant enquiries at oracles (see e.g. H.W. Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus. Dodona, Olympia, Ammon* (Oxford 1967) appendix no. 6, no. 25). See further e.g. Aesch. *Ag.* 973; Eur. *Hercl.* 869-870; Pind. *Pyth.* 8.53; *Ol.* 8.67; Pl. *Phaedr.* 279 B 8; Xen. *Hell.* 7.1. 5-9.

²⁴¹See Eur. *IA* 1186: τί σοι κατεύξῃ τ’ ἄγαθόν, σφάξων τέκνον (What boon will you pray for when you sacrifice your child?). See for instance *e contrario* Eur. *Tr.* 1242 where Hecuba exclaims at the sight of the ruins of Troy: “In vain we sacrificed!” or Cassandra in Aesch. *Ag.* 1168f. See esp. the epigraphical evidence, e.g. F.T. van Straten, ‘Gifts for the Gods’, in: H.S. Versnel (ed.), *Faith, Hope and Worship. Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World* (Leiden) 65-151. See further E.J. Edelstein and L. Edelstein, *Asclepius. Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies. Vol. 1 and 2* (Baltimore and London 1945 repr. 1998); R. Herzog, *Die Wunderheilungen von Epidauros* (*Philologus Suppl.* 22[3]) (Leipzig 1931); F. Kutsch, *Attische Heilgötter und Heilheroen* (*Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten* 12.3) (Giessen 1912-1913).

²⁴²See for instance ‘*Apotropoi kakon*’ (Eur. *Ph.* 586: ὦ θεοί, γένοιθε τῶνδ’ ἀπότροποι κακῶν [ο gods, turn away these evils] or Plu. *Sept. Sap. Conv.* 3 (*Mor.* 149d): to get rid of a *katharmon* and hence provide work to the *apotropaioi*) or Ascl. *IG* ii 2. 4473, 22: στρυγερὰς δ’ ἀπέρυκε νούσους). Note that Herakles, the Averter, is also called *Kathartes* (cf. Ar. *Vesp.* 1043: ἀλεξίκακον· τῆς χῶρας τῇσδε καθατήν; Eur. *HF* 225 and Soph. *Tr.* 1012). Or procedures are more ambiguous, as became clear above in the context of

may excel in re-establishing order²⁴³ and still others may be the anonymous embodiments of the system's workings²⁴⁴. A general principle of balance may also be seen to work autonomously, without an explicit role of the gods²⁴⁵. Compensation, the principle of the *talion*, referred to as 'fruit for fruit and human blood for human blood' may set off the mechanism²⁴⁶. However, as we observed, in these cases, sacrificial terminology is nevertheless employed. Hence, one way or another (or various ways at the same time), in Burkert's words 'it was unthinkable to try to overcome any crisis without religion'²⁴⁷.

In sum, and this is crucial, the well-balanced order was thus at the same time a divine order, with gods in a variety of roles. Not every crisis had to be the result of divine anger, but the state of crisis *per se* was a disturbance of the relations with the gods. It is true, the role of the gods in crisis management may be regarded fluid and

apodiopompeisthai. See also Schol. Pl. *Leg.* 854B: τὰς ἀποστροφὰς τὰς γιγνομένας ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀποτροπαίου Διός, διὰ τὸ καθαίρεσθαι τὰ δεινὰ· ἢ τὰς ἀποπομπὰς τὰς πρὸς τὸν προστρόπαιον Δία, καὶ οἷονεὶ καθάρσεις καὶ ἰλασμούς (the 'turnings away' that were realised by Zeus Apotropaïos, through the act of purifying the ills; or 'sendings away' to[wards] Zeus Prostropaïos, and as it were purifications and appeasements).

²⁴³See the role of Apollo in Part 4 for a wider interpretation of his involvement in crisis management. For Apollo as the guardian of *to metron* see Rudhardt 1958, 94-95. For Apollo being associated with purification: 'the god who purifies and washes away and delivers from evils' (Pl. *Crat.* 405ab), see Burkert 1985, 145-147 and Parker 1983, 25, 275-276.

²⁴⁴The Erinyes/Eumenides or *Semnai Theai* are prominent redressers of the divine equilibrium (overseers of things contrary to nature (schol. Hom. *Il.* 19.418b), perhaps best known to us from Aeschylus' dramatic staging. Moreover, they feature in a significant way in a version of the story about Orestes in Paus. 8.34. When the Eumenides were about to drive Orestes mad, they appeared to him in black; when he had bitten off his finger, they appeared white, and he was cured at the site. This place where he recovered is called *Ake* ('Remedies'). The double identity of these groups (simultaneously or complementary) of goddesses is subject to discussion.

²⁴⁵See for the emphasis on balance and 'innate compensatory feeling' Versnel 1981, 162, 176-177: "irrespective of the interpretation, be it debt or guilt, man always pays", 179: "Compensation and anonymous gods are apparently two complementary aspects of one fundamental principle: nothing for nothing, man always pays." See Section b above. Versnel has definitely contributed to the understanding of (ancient Greek and Roman) sacrifice in times of crisis. However, there is more to the redressing of a balance. Our ways part here: whereas Versnel sought an explanation for sacrifice at a deeper, (universal) level of human psychology, I use the ancient Greek notion of balance at a more 'superficial' level, of cultural cognitive perceptions of the world, structuring phenomena at the level of appearances. See also Georgoudi 1999, who also stresses the role of the gods in this inevitable law of compensation or ἀνάγκη.

²⁴⁶See Eur. *Ph.* 937-938 (ἀντὶ καρποῦ καρπὸν ἀντί θ' αἵματος αἶμ'); Eur. *IT* 1223-1224 (ὡς φόνῳ φόνον μυσαρὸν ἐκνήψω); Soph. *OT* 100-101 (ἀνδρηλατοῦντας, ἢ φόνῳ φόνον πάλιν λύοντας).

²⁴⁷Burkert 1985, 268. See also Parker 1983, 169 on 'the especial need for sound relations with the gods when danger threatens'.

secondary, sometimes even ambiguous: they seem to fill in the gaps, in various ways. Notwithstanding this variety of divine involvement in crisis and crisis management, the fundamental principle is clear: There is no order without the gods.

Ultimately, and this is the final step to take in order to understand ancient Greek crisis management, these components of ancient Greek mentality may all coincide in response to crisis: to reinstate the well-balanced order involved both the removal of the disturbing factor, and the re-establishment of the relations with the gods.

DOUBLE BIND

All this may be explained at various levels. Some would for instance point to the fact that ancient Greek cosmology was a so-called interconnected cosmology, in which nature and the divine are not entirely separated, and human actions have repercussions throughout the cosmos. In such cosmologies ambiguity and paradox are paramount, especially with regard to power and transgressions²⁴⁸. The disadvantage of such an approach is its intellectualism and its absoluteness, as if ancient Greek minds could not (and did not) distinguish between various fields at all. We discovered something else: two distinct phenomena that appear to intertwine in times of crisis in various ways. Also at the cognitive level, but without an all-embracing theoretical setting, the following is suggested by Scarborough in the context of medicine: “In some respects, this medley of approaches need not be dissected, since the multicomination of views - whether described as magical or religious or rational - had been characteristic of Greek thought since the days of Homer”²⁴⁹. This seems to make sense, at least to a considerable extent, and can be

²⁴⁸See esp. T.C.W. Oudemans and A.P.M.H. Lardinois, *Tragic Ambiguity. Anthropology, Philosophy and Sophocles' Antigone* (Leiden 1987). Others have made similar observations, but in a lighter theoretical context, e.g. Padel 1992, 114: “Forces of ‘nature’, but to the Greeks, ‘nature’ was also (as we would put it) supernatural, a medium of daemonic expression, whether tender or aggressive. The elements are the gods’ arsenal. The gods both use and are inherent in the weather.”

²⁴⁹Scarborough 1991, 138. Often, both ‘natural’ and ‘supernatural’ causes were identified at the same time: As has been pointed out very often, in the Hippocratic treatise on the Sacred Disease ‘*miasma* and *alastores*’ stand side by side (Burkert 1985, 77 n.13.). In fact, as various scholars have observed, the term *nosos* generally denotes anything bad, covering both demonic and human, or supernatural and natural, causes (see e.g. Burkert 1985, 110; Padel 1995, 158 and 161; Parker 1983, 220. The rivalry between, but also the overlap of, the varied views of Greek medicine, notable the ‘naturalist’ and the ‘supernaturalist’ ones is one of the important themes of Lloyd 2003).

compared with what we termed multiple options and multiple solutions in the Prologue of this study. Another comparable view held by scholars pertains to the ‘common archaic and classical Greek notion of what has been called double determination. An act may be at once the responsibility of a human agent, and ascribed to a divinity’²⁵⁰. This comes close to my own thesis. However, in my view the multiplicity or duplicity is not accidental, and to point merely to a multicomination of views or double determination also remains unsatisfactory. Parker in turn, also within the context of medicine, has tried to find an explanation by adapting definitions of the concepts: “It is the sensation of being in the grip of an invasive supernatural force that is, for them, the pollution. What unites dirtiness and divine intervention, and makes the one somehow equivalent to the other, is that both are an external intrusion upon the integrity of the body²⁵¹”. Seen from this perspective, cathartic medicine ‘aims to restore the sense of personal wholeness that has been disturbed by attack from outside’²⁵². Pollution as disturbance, purification as the way to re-order and re-organize. Purity, in this perspective, denotes wholeness, the normal state of things. This is what may be called the wider interpretation of pollution, purification and purity. As we have seen in Chapter 8, such an approach is insightful on the one hand, but hinders on the other hand a full view of the phenomena involved. To approach pollution and purification in terms of (the need for) order is a fruitful approach. However, instead of widening the concepts so as to include a metaphorical usage, it is wiser to take the ancient Greek notion of order into full account when using it, and grant the gods their proper place, for there is no order without the gods²⁵³.

²⁵⁰Lloyd 2003, 22-23, referring to Dodds 1951, ch. 1. See also Aesch. fr. 154a, 15f (Radt): “God plants the cause in mortals when he wants to destroy a house”. In ancient Greek medicine, both ‘natural’ and ‘supernatural’ causes were often identified at the same time (see previous note).

²⁵¹Parker 1983, 217.

²⁵²Parker 1983, 220. See also Eur. *IT* 693 for the opposition of being ill and pure: καθαρό τ' οὐ νοσοῦντ' ἔχεις μέλαθρ' (pure and not ill is your house).

²⁵³See however Parker 1983, 215 for an important, albeit quite isolated, observation. “The relation between these two forms of purification, by rite and by medicine, is a delicate one to define. To see the one as a secular transposition of the other would make it seem secondary, whereas there is, in fact, nothing advanced about the use of purgative drugs. Rather, the two methods both derive from an undifferentiated ideal of purity, physical and metaphysical, necessary both for health and for the proper relations with the gods”. As we shall see below, this observation fits in well with what will be claimed below in a more general way.

Although the cognitive argument that the ancient Greeks are unable to distinguish between different fields, phenomena or views cannot be entirely rejected, the pre-rationalist road is not the most satisfactory one to take. Nevertheless, we must dwell on one aspect of ancient Greek thought for a moment. Various scholars have drawn attention to the fact that, just as in the term *pharmakon*²⁵⁴, ambiguity seems to be inherent in many of the terms used for remedies and ills²⁵⁵. One may extend this observation to the larger context of crisis and crisis management. *Agos*, for instance, as we have seen, may be used for the avenging divine power, but also of the disturbing factor itself²⁵⁶, just as *apotropaïos* may be the one who turns away and the one who should be turned away²⁵⁷. *Palamnaios*, *alastor*, *aliterios* and *miastor* too, may be used in several ways²⁵⁸. Padel has made a similar observation about the

²⁵⁴See Chapter 2 Section i. See esp. Artelt 1937, 55, 58, 75, 89f.

²⁵⁵See Lloyd 1979, 43-44; Lloyd 2003, 9-10 and below.

²⁵⁶Parker 1983, 7 n.31: "While one expects the offender to be in the *agos* (Hdt. 6.56, and *enages*), in fact he himself is often virtually equivalent to the *agos* (Soph. *OT* 1426, Thuc. 1.126.2, 128.1-2; Hdt. 5.72.1; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 20.2) or an *agos* happens to him (Aesch. *Supp.* 376; Hdt. 6.91.1). See also Aesch. *Lib.* 98; Soph. *Ant.* 775; and Soph. fr. 689 (Radt) for *agos* used for expiatory offerings. For a Zeus *Agos* see Phot. s.v. ἄγος ὁ Ζεὺς παρὰ Τροιζηνίοις. See also Rudhardt 1958, 45 on *enages*: à la fois la victime et le véhicule de l'*agos*. See Chapter 9 sections a and b. See further also *Prostropaïos* which may be employed for the unclean person, the evil spirit from the dead, the suppliant, and as an epitheton of the god who deals with these issues, See *LSJ* s.v.; Moulinier 1958, 219-220 and 163-270; W.H.P. Hatch, 'The Use of ΑΛΙΘΗΠΙΟΣ, ΑΛΙΤΡΟΣ, ΑΡΑΙΟΣ, ΕΝΑΓΗΣ, ΕΝΘΥΜΙΟΣ, ΠΑΛΑΜΝΑΙΟΣ, and ΠΡΟΣΤΡΟΠΑΙΟΣ. A Study in Greek Lexicography', *HSCP* 19 (1908) 157-186, esp. 159. See esp. Hewitt 1908, esp. 112: "Belonging to the same apotropaeic class we find also Zeus *Alexikakos*, in whose cult practically the same ritual appears as in that of Zeus *Apotropaïos* and Zeus *Prostropaïos*. His function was *ekpempēin ta phaula*". However, as we have seen, sometimes it may have been Zeus *Prostropaïos* himself who had to be averted (schol. Pl. *Crat* 36e). See also Poll. 5.131. Compare further in the context of murder purifications the role of Zeus *Katharsios*, *Meilichios*, *Phuxios*, *Phixios*, *Palamnaios*, *Hikesios*, *Alastoros*, for which see Hewitt 1908 and Parker 1983, 139.

²⁵⁷See *Sud.* s.v. ἀποτρόπαιοι· φευκτοί, μισεῖσθαι ἄξιοι ἢ ἀποτρέποντες τὰ κακά. Οὕτω γὰρ ἐδόκουν ἀποτρόπαιοί τινες εἶναι καὶ ἀλεξικάκοι (*Apotropaïoi*: to be shunned, deserving to be loathed; or: averting evil; for it was held that there were some [gods] averting and warding off evil in this way). See Nock 1944, 599-601. Various suggestions have been offered to deal with these two sides of the *apotropaïoi*. Burkert 1981b, 116 rather suggests a distinction between two kinds of apotropaeic gods: 'Die großen bekannten Götter, die aktiv abwenden' and 'undeutliche, unheimliche Mächte, mit denen man sich nur befaßt, um sie samt dem Unheil loszuwerden'. R. Schlesier, *Kulte, Mythen und Gelehrte. Anthropologie der Antike seit 1800* (Frankfurt am Main 1994) 54 suggests that it is only in Plutarch and Pausanias that "unter den *apotropaïoi* vorwiegend geisterhafte Gestalten verstanden [werden], von denen weniger die Abwendung des üblen erwartet wird, sondern die vielmehr ihrerseits als Übel abgewendet werden müssen".

²⁵⁸See ref. above on *prostropaïos*. See also *LSJ* s.v.; Parker 1983, 108 n.13: "The seemingly contradictory use of the same word *hikesios* to mean both demonic attacker and suppliant can be paralleled by the puzzling semantic range of *palamnaios* which can mean murderer, the *daimon* sent by the murder victim against the murderer, and also a suppliant

shifting references of *ate*, which she calls ‘nomadic’ in the damage-sequence, mingling both the cause and the consequence of harm. In sum, there seem to be words in the context of crisis that encompass both the cause and consequences of something, or the cause and the remedy²⁵⁹. We have encountered a similar phenomenon in the terms *katharmos* and *katharma*, with a wide semantic range, in fact encompassing the entire purificatory action and widely differing means to attain this²⁶⁰. As one would expect, scholars have tried to solve ensuing inconsistencies by explaining the various senses from the point of view of evolution²⁶¹, place or genre. However, though their weight may vary, the terms seem to contain these various senses at the same time²⁶². One may call this mechanism semantic stretch, or even semantic slippage. All this invites a great deal of research, which would take us too far for our present purposes.

It is important to keep in mind that situations of crisis, whether murder, plague, disease or war, are suitable occasions for multiplicity, semantic slippage and ambiguity, as this short foray testifies. Moreover, what can be observed in individual

polluted with blood’. See further Jameson, Jordan and Kotansky 1993, 118 and ref.: “Both ancient and modern commentators have remarked on the use of ἀλάστωρ/ἀλάστορος and a number of other words, such as ἀλιτήριος, παλαμναῖος, προστροπαῖος, to refer to a wrongdoer and to a punisher of wrongdoing.” *Elasteros* is equivalent of *alastor* and *alastoros*, used both of a wrongdoer and the punisher of wrongdoing. The resemblance to the Cyrenean *Hikesioi* in *SEG* 9.72 is interesting (for which see also Jameson, Jordan and Kotansky 1993, *ibidem*, but also Parker 1983, appendix 2. See however K. Clinton, ‘A New *Lex Sacra* from Selinus: Kindly Zeuses, Eumenides, Impure and Pure Tritopatores, and Elasteroi’, *CP* 91 (1996) 159-179. See Parker 1983, 109 on the rich semantic field of terms such as *prostropaios* and *palamnaios*: “The unifying factor is the polluting act, which sets up a chain of abnormal relations between humans – victim, killer, associates of killer – the connecting links in which are supernatural powers. It is hard to believe that semantic configurations of this kind correspond to no felt reality.”

²⁵⁹Padel 1995, 167-187.

²⁶⁰See Chapter 1 Section i. See also Parker 1983, 2 and 22 on the Hippocratic doctor who sees impurity as both a cause and a symptom of disease

²⁶¹See e.g. Padel 1995, 171-172.

²⁶²I came across Lloyd 2003 too late to incorporate his arguments in my main thesis. His approach only slightly differs when he refers to ‘semantic stretch’ of words such as *pharmakon* and *kathairein* and cognates. According to Lloyd this semantic stretch covers the varied views that were entertained on health and disease: “In particular *katharsis* does double service in Hippocratic naturalism and healing that invoked the divine. It is as if both traditions expected patients to respond positively to the idea that what they needed was a ‘cleansing’. Yet the kind of cleansing they received proved to be very different in the two cases, for the Hippocratics used laxatives and emetics, not charms and spells, and incantations. If the common vocabulary suggests certain assumptions widely shared by healers and patients, the divergent meanings and uses of the terms in question point to the struggle to appropriate the concepts in question and give them the interpretation favoured by one tradition against its rivals.”

terminology may also be found at the conceptual level. However, cognitive inabilities, or perhaps rather cognitive stretch and slippage, on the part of the ancient Greeks do not explain all that is inconsistent in crisis management. The roots of some of these inconsistencies may be found to stick deeper in ancient Greek mentality.

The intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory features and terminology in times of crisis cannot be explained by merely pointing to variation in time, place and genre, nor by stretching definitions or attributing it to ancient Greek pre-rationalism alone. The intertwining is far from accidental. The circumstances of crisis management are crucial for its understanding. To really comprehend ancient Greek crisis management, one must realise that crisis implied the disturbance of a divine well-balanced order. A redressing of that equilibrium therefore involves not only the elimination of the disturbing factor (by means of a purificatory technique), but also a restoration of that relationship, which is, in whatever precise form, what sacrifice may do²⁶³. In other words: that which is separated out can be regarded as the emblem of the crisis, or even its cause, or as an absorptive sponge (whatever precise interpretation of purification is given), but at the same time as the vehicle through which the relation with the divine is restored (whatever precise understanding of sacrifice is chosen). Crisis management involves a double bind: the elimination of the disturbance and the restoration of the relations with the divine.

The system is far from transparent. And as we have seen, crisis is not the moment best suited for intellectual consistency. Categories, even divine ones, are not always clear-cut examples of classificatory thought. Crisis management requires action, not a scholar's desk. However, once realising that the intertwining of sacrifice and purification is a structural potential of ancient Greek crisis management, the forms of overlap, semantic slippage and ambiguity may at least be better understood²⁶⁴.

²⁶³To atone for the city's offense towards the god', or 'as a deliverance and ransoming' (see Chapter 1 Section j for the ritual accounts and Chapter 3 Section e for the propitiation of angry gods by means of human sacrifice). Note that sacrifice is not the only way to communicate with the divine. Prayers and the setting up of statues are, evidently, other ways to improve or restore the relationship with the gods. Sacrifice, however, is one of the central phenomena in the types of crisis management discussed in this study.

²⁶⁴From this perspective of order as a divine balance, it is understandable that when *kathosioun ten polin* is aimed at, the restoration of the proper order of things, both sacrificial (*hilasmoi*) and purificatory (*katharmoi*) remedies are involved, as in the case of Epimenides' cleansing of Athens (Plu. *Sol.* 12.5). One tradition, as we have seen, relates that Epimenides sacrificed (*ekthysamenos*) both black and white sheep to the appropriate divinity. Another

To round off this final chapter, a few conclusions may be drawn. From the first section it may be concluded that the intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory features and terminology is a structural feature of ancient Greek crisis management. Secondly, although sacrifice and purification may not be as different as one may think at first sight, they still remain of a nature distinct enough that their intertwining is remarkable. However, instead of smoothing over this intertwining by various intellectual strategies, one may also take the source-material at face value. In this way one need not ignore the references to either the sacrificial or the purificatory ideology, for both have their echoes in our source-material simultaneously. Instead, coherence may be sought in a different way, by looking at the ancient Greek concepts of order and disruption. Two well-known observations have been combined in this

tradition, as we have seen, relates that Epimenides sacrificed (*ekthysamenos*) both black and white sheep to the appropriate divinity (D.L. 1.110). In Chapter 1 the symbolic potential of black and white as a multipurpose frame for dualities has been emphasised. Since then, we have seen goddesses who first appeared black and then, after an *enagismos*, white, and crows who finally, after eighty years, turn white in stead of black. Adding the black and white fig-necklaces the *pharmakoi* were decorated with, one may well wonder if in the context of crisis, in a dynamic way, black and white express this formative double bind of crisis management we have established. It may be pointed out here as well that the term *kathosioun* is also interesting from our perspective: Rudhardt 1958, 168 noticed the use of this term (καθοσιῶν) and observed the following: “quoiqu’il en soit, il importe de souligner que ces rites ont pour effet, non seulement l’éloignement de la souillure, mais aussi le rétablissement dans la cité de la justice, de la confiance et de la concorde”. See also Rudhardt 1958, 168 on ἀφοσιῶν: “rétablir dans l’ordre en éloignant, en éliminant ce qui l’a détruit ou menace de le perturber”. See Aeschin. 3.120: καὶ τὴν πόλιν τὴν ἡμετέραν τὰ πρὸς τοῦς θεοῦς ἀφοσιῶ. And schol. *ad loc.* (271b): ἀφοσιῶ οἶονεὶ καθαρὰν ποιῶ καὶ ἄμemptον (...). See Moulinier 1952, 293: “ἀφοσιῶν: écarter un danger en obéissant aux dieux”. See also Parker 1983, 121.

chapter: on the one hand the ancient Greek idea of order as an equilibrium, one that could be redressed by inward or outward bound remedies, and on the other hand the idea that such a balanced order always implied a good relationship with the divine.

Seen from this perspective, in situations of crisis the two operations of sacrifice and purification mutually informed each other, complemented each other, or even merged with each other due to this double bind. There was no single recipe at hand. Gods and humans feature in various roles. Crisis management is pragmatism, but the various remedies chosen were shaped by its double bind.

CONCLUSION

Three clusters of phenomena of ancient Greek crisis management, each polythetically defined, were discussed in detail in the Parts 2, 3 and 4 of this study. First the so-called *pharmakos* rituals, secondly, mythical human (self-)sacrifice, and thirdly, tales of forced colonisations. These three clusters have also been compared with each other on the basis of a common structuring pattern of ‘effective elimination’, that consists of a communal crisis and its resolution, prescribed by ancestral tradition or ordered by an oracle, which involves the expulsion or death of one or several member(s) of the community for the sake of the remaining population. It is true, a pattern is in the eye of the beholder, but it has proved worthwhile to have a closer look at all three clusters from this perspective.

At first sight the differences between the *pharmakos* rituals, the myths of (self-)sacrifice and the tales of forced colonisations seem to outweigh the correspondences: victims, either prominent or despicable, valued or dispensable, were either sacrificed (consecrated) or expelled, either at a regular festival or in times of dire peril. A closer look at the sources, however, reveals that these differences are much smaller than they at first sight seemed to be. They can even be bridged: the regular festivals deal with an anxious turning-point (a *krisis*) in the year; the idea of the exclusively ‘negative’ status of the victims in ritual crisis management and tales of purificatory colonisations has to be corrected and the positive image of the victims in the myths and tales of *dekateusis* colonisations appears to have a reverse, too. Moreover, the remedies themselves, purification (purificatory riddance) or sacrifice (sacrificial consecration) can not be distinguished in a clear-cut and straightforward way on the basis of either type of crisis, victim or desired effect. In fact, the three phenomena, the *pharmakos* rituals, the myths and the tales of forced colonisations turn out to share functions and meanings, which justifies a joint analysis. What’s more, the initial dissimilarities even appear to provide the key to a deeper understanding of ancient Greek crisis management.

The investigation of the *pharmakos* ritual has set the tone. Although it has established one model of crisis management, namely the (symbolic) riddance of ills,

the annual ritual expulsion of one or two person(s) in order to purify the community soon appeared to be a more complex procedure than the expulsion of “the animate form of the ‘offscourings’ (*katharmata*), carrying impurity with them”¹. Contrary to the first impression, the *pharmakos* ritual appears to be no straightforward example of a purificatory ritual in the sense of the (symbolic) riddance of evil. There are also ritual elements and features involved that belong rather in the sphere of sacrifice, such as the feeding of the victim, his ritual outfit and some descriptions of his ultimate fate. His negative status is matched by some indications of ritual prominence. Ritual names for the victim, such as *pharmakos* and *katharsion*, also turn out to be ambivalent, and thus further complicate the understanding of his role and status in the ritual.

The inconsistencies in the material appear obstinate: arguments in terms of variation in place, time or genre can not account for them in an entirely satisfying way. Even the Byzantine scholars can not be blamed for everything anomalous, as they seem to have made explicit only what had been implicit in the ritual already. They introduced both sacrificial vocabulary and the term *katharmata* in their accounts of the ritual. Nor can the inconsistencies be regarded as a product of the methodology employed: the respective triads ‘purificatory riddance – negative victim – expulsion of ills’ on the one hand and ‘sacrifice – positive victim – appeasement of angry deity’ on the other hand can not be systematically distinguished on the basis of the source-material. Moreover, various sources mention a so-called *katapontismos* of the victim, a ritual jump into the sea– which qualifies for both a purificatory and a sacrificial interpretation. Finally, as mentioned, ambiguity appears inherent even in the names of the ritual victim.

A closer study of the ritual’s historiography has confirmed this observation. As mentioned, ancient commentators had already introduced both a specific kind of purificatory vocabulary and sacrificial terminology in their accounts of the *pharmakos* ritual and the question whether the *pharmakos* was sacrificed or expelled has dominated the discussions ever since. As scholars concentrated in turn either on the positive or the negative status of the victim and elements in the rituals, the interpretations widely differed or were even contradictory. Both the purificatory and the sacrificial sides were duly stressed before, only hardly ever simultaneously: the

¹Parker 1983, 24.

pharmakos has been considered a vegetation spirit, a sacrificial victim, or a sponge taking in (and out) all ills of the community. Again and again scholars had to go at great lengths to smooth out or even smuggle away part of the evidence. Some scholars have noted the contradictory aspects, but they have tried to clear our minds in other ways. According to Harrison, for example, who acknowledged both sides of the ritual, the way out of the paradox was provided by evolution: in her view the ritual consisted of two strata. The older stratum, corresponding with the most primitive stage of Greek religion, provided the real meaning of the ritual, that is the riddance of a pollution. This was, however, reinterpreted as a sacrifice, so as to make it conform with the later 'Olympian' stage of Greek religion. Others however argued precisely the other way round and claimed the ritual to be an original sacrifice which became a purificatory riddance at a later stage in ancient Greek history.

The study of mythical crisis management has in the first place deepened our understanding of human (self-)sacrifice as an effective strategy to overcome situations of crisis: to offer a highly valued member of the community, for instance in order to propitiate (an) angry god(s), appears a popular means of safety, at least in myth. However, these myths, too, prove less unequivocal than expected: some terminology employed clearly belongs in a purificatory context, for instance in the case of Athamas' purification of the land or Epimenides' cleansing of Athens. Moreover, although sacrifice (both *sphazein* en *thyein*) is one option, the ultimate fate of the victims can also be referred to in more ambiguous terms such as *anairein* and *riptein*. Furthermore, the supernatural features less prominently than one would expect in a context of propitiatory sacrifice. Again, at second sight, the victims of mythical crisis management also turn out to be more ambiguous: their valuedness is matched with some kind of dispensability, whether socially, morally or in any other way (for instance a king in beggar's disguise). With regard to the circumstances, in mythical crisis management one other type of occasion can be observed in addition to situations of dire peril: highly prosperous circumstances may have necessitated some sort of crisis management as well.

From a functionalist perspective, these myths and rituals have sometimes been interpreted as interrelated, albeit not at the level of manifestation and outward appearances, but on the basis of corresponding social, emotional, or psychological functions, as 'feel good' myths and rituals. Various scholars have pointed out that 'us against him(them)' has proved a most effective community-building strategy of

survival throughout history, in myths as well as in rituals. Intra-communal aggression and violence is redirected and used for the good. A further ambiguity may be observed: the victim is at the same time the saviour. Girard for instance considers the scapegoat-mechanism the formative mechanism of civilisation in which ever accumulating communal violence is unanimously redirected on the victim, whose violent death thus canalises all destructive violence and reunites the community (at least for a while). Burkert explained the original behaviour underlying the *pharmakos* ritual as that of a group surrounded by predators that can only survive by giving up one member. Versnel introduced an additional, less violent, underlying impulse: the compulsory feeling that somehow compensation should be given for anything people receive or wish to receive.

From this perspective, the differences at the level of manifestation of the phenomena were ignored by some, but stressed by others. Burkert for instance stressed the differences between myths and rituals in assigning them different socio-biological origins. Girard, however, did not feel the need to distinguish between our rituals and myths at all, and interpreted them all as instances of 'scapegoating'. Versnel acknowledged the differences but did not think them relevant at his level of interpretation, which could accommodate various phenomena. A combined analysis of the *pharmakos* rituals and the myths involving human sacrifice had thus become more obvious in this perspective, but it did not deal with the phenomena in all respects.

Scholars working within the explanatory framework of initiation, such as Bonnechere, even enlarged the differences: within this explanatory model in which myths of human sacrifice are linked up with initiation rituals our myths and rituals were radically separated. However, precisely in those areas where Bonnechere localised the essential differences, in the status and ultimate fate of the victim and in the involvement of the supernatural, lies in fact their common ground.

The study of the tales of forced colonisation has further expanded our understanding of ancient Greek crisis management. In situations of dire peril, but perhaps also in times of great prosperity, a community tried to ensure its survival (avert impending doom) by means of the removal of part of that community, preferably its youth. There are two types of such tales that differ substantially, at least at first sight: the *dekateusis* tales in which the expulsion takes the form of a consecration to Apollo, and the 'purificatory' ones, in which the expelled ones are

characterised as *atimoi*, ignominious outcasts. At second sight, the *dekateusis*- and the purificatory colonisations do not only show similar patterns of communal crisis, consultation, expulsion and foundation of a colony, but they even coincide in the nature of the victims: the *hieroi* of the *dekateusis* turn out to be considered polluted beings once they try to return to their former communities. The impure murderer, the rebelling *atimoi* and the stuttering bastard appear to be the special wards of the god at the same time. Combinations are possible as well: Battus the leader of expelled Theraeans is a noble, but stammering, bastard and the designated leader of the sacred band of Magnesians is a murderer of noble descent. Either way, through sacrificial consecration or purificatory riddance, the victims of these forced colonisations end up far away, in what may be labelled ‘otherland’. Accounts set in an Italic context but explicitly compared with ancient Greek customs, confirm our observations. What turns out to function synonymously, purificatory riddance and sacrificial consecration, can even be used in an equivalent way at a textual level, or combined in one expression (*kathieroun*). Moreover, the observation that remedies may have been due not only in situations of dire peril, but also in times of great prosperity, is confirmed as well.

Ambiguity has been observed in the status of the victims of the rites and myths of crisis management. The victims in the tales of forced colonisation show similar characteristics. A few earlier studies have already called attention to (some) ambiguity in the status of these victims. However, the way they dealt with this ambivalence remains unsatisfying. Burkert for instance has explained what he calls a ‘provocative ambivalence’ as an incidental result of justificatory strategies in the context of human victimisation. However, the ambiguity can also be found in objects used in comparable procedures and is therefore not restricted to human victims whose fate is in need of a justification. Moreover, Burkert refers to an incidental meeting of extremes, whereas we have established a recurrent ambivalence. Among ancient historians, Bremmer was the first to point to the structural ambiguity of the victims of mythical and ritual crisis management. However, as we saw in Chapter 8, Bremmer stopped at that observation and did not actually investigate it in detail, nor incorporate the ambiguity in his interpretation of myth and ritual. Kearns also noticed an ambivalence in the ideal hero-victims of crisis management, and read its message: saviours had to be outsiders. But does that also *explain* the ambivalence?

From a strictly structural-semiotic perspective, as we have seen, one observation about the status of the victims is particularly telling: various signals of contrast, such as the 'threshold food' the *pharmakos* was fed on, or the dried figs in his necklace, point to his status of otherness, just as the speech impediment of Battus, or the baldness of Phalantus. An otherness as yet unspecified, but with a referential potential of both positive and negative connotations.

From a similar perspective, as a matter of fact, the differences between sacrifice (consecration) and purification diminish, or even vanish at all. Instead of interpreting sacrifice and purification 'narrowly', at the level of outward appearances, the two can also be approached, following Turner and Douglas, as transitional, re-ordering strategies, by which a community in fact acts upon itself. By separating and defining what belongs and what does not, and by ritually transferring the others to a domain of otherness, the community recreates, restores and re-establishes order. Beating and stoning may be approached in a similar vein: as expressive acts of separation and stigmatisation.

The social redefinition of community is, both in ritual, myth and tale, inscribed in space, too: boundaries are emphasised, reset and renewed. Processions are started up at the very centre to end up 'beyond the borders', or encircle the community outside the walls, as in Abdera. Victims may also be seen to die just outside the city-gate to mark off here and there, order and chaos.

This line of thought in which the interplay of inside and outside, centre and periphery, establishes the defining matrix of community has lent itself for further elaboration. The very centre on the one hand and that which is 'beyond the border', the formless, the ambiguous, or the liminal, the 'otherland' in our words, on the other hand, can be regarded as the source of structure, form, culture and society.

From a structural-semiotic perspective, this otherness, whether of place, of status or of symbols, is often credited with forms of sacrality. Such an approach appears fruitful indeed. One way to deal with the ambivalence of the victims and the inconsistencies in our source-material is to place it in the context of sacrality and the sacred. It seems that in both the ritual and the myths and tales the victims are transferred to the domain of the sacred. This is done either literally, by making them *hieroi*, or *devoti*, and ousting them as such, or straightforwardly, by a consecration and subsequent sacrifice to a deity, or symbolically, by setting them apart in a marked way and feeding them just as animal victims for sacrifice, and then expelling them

beyond the borders. Either way, by means of a negative riddance or a positive consecration, it is in the sphere of sacrality that all victims meet.

The concept of the sacred is controversial. Scholars have pointed to its ambiguity from various perspectives, whether phenomenological, or structural-semiotic or whatever other ones. However, in the context of ancient Greece, it seems unwise to exaggerate the *structural* ambivalence of the sacred. This concept appears to work better in theory than in ancient Greek practice. The ancient Greek terminology of the sacred is differentiated, and although an etymological connection between more 'positive' and more 'negative' aspects of sacrality can be postulated, the poles have been usually separated (or differentiated), although convergence is not entirely absent. In consequence, it seems quite a demanding claim to argue that the ambiguity of the sacred causes the ambivalence of the victims discussed in this study. Moreover, as we have seen, the status of some of our victims has ambivalent traits already before they are ritually, or mythically, transferred to the realm of the sacred. One may, more cautiously, argue that the *potential* ambiguity of the sacred, although disputed as to its precise nature, may be seen to accommodate, or perhaps even enhance the ambivalent status of the victims.

At the end of Part 4 it has been concluded that a combined, multi-layered analysis of the three phenomena of ancient Greek crisis management is not only justified, but also necessary for those who seek a deeper understanding of ancient Greek crisis management, as the phenomena mutually illuminate each other in various ways. By liberating oneself from the confinements of the 'narrow' definitions of sacrifice and purification (the offering of something valuable versus the riddance of *katharmata*), one starts to discover how similarly sacrifice and purification may have worked in the context of crisis. Similar in their social and emotional function in the community, but even similar in their diverging structure. However, although the differences among the phenomena, and their internal inconsistencies, pale before this similarity in function and structure, differences do remain, especially at the level of manifestation and terminology. In other words: similarity in social and emotional functions, structure and meaning should not be confused with a full identification of the two remedies. Nor do they necessarily explain the intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory features and vocabulary.

It should be emphasized, that the various inconsistencies, such as the (partial) overlap of sacrificial and purificatory features and vocabulary, and the ambiguous

status of the victims can be discovered in all three clusters of phenomena, and therefore, even unsolved, provide an additional reason for comparison.

The remarkable intertwining of sacrifice and purification in ancient Greek crisis management forms the subject of the final chapter of this study. It is not the first time that the relation between purification and sacrifice has been noticed, but it has never been considered a structuring phenomenon of ancient Greek crisis management, as a formative force with explanatory value. In other words, precisely where inconsistency can be observed within the three phenomena discussed, and differences be pointed out between the phenomena at stake, the key to a deeper understanding of ancient Greek crisis management can be found.

First, the scope of the study had to be widened in order to show that the intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory features and vocabulary is not restricted to myths, tales and rituals in which humans feature, but can also be found in a variety of other phenomena in a similar context of crisis and transition. Again, it has been established that gods are not always present in sacrificial contexts, nor totally absent from a purificatory sphere. If present, their involvement varies: they are sometimes merely invoked, sometimes the ones who have to be propitiated, or even be kept at bay themselves. At other times, their role appears more ambivalent and possibly includes all of these options at once. Furthermore, we have again observed that the objects (or victims) of this type of ambivalent ritual action are hybrid themselves. The fleece of Zeus or Hecate's meals exemplify this very well. Moreover, it is not only ritual vocabulary (*apodiopompeisthai*) that allows for two differing interpretations at the same time, both in ancient scholarly literature and in a modern dictionary, but ritual action, too, appears equivocal, in deed (*katharmos*) or in every respect (*ekthyesthai*). Finally, from Parker's discussion of *agos* and *miasma*, terms that seem to tied up with respectively sacrifice and purification at first sight, it turns out that these notions thwart all categories themselves. The conclusion seems inevitable that the intertwining of sacrificial and purificatory features and vocabulary reflects a structural potential of ancient Greek crisis management.

Next, however, at the level of outward appearance and meaning, sacrifice and purification are studied again. The need to reconsider these concepts had already been formulated in Parts 2 and 3: are not we ourselves the creators of false dichotomies by focussing too emphatically on mere distinctions?

As a matter of fact, the ideal types of ‘valued victim offered to appease angry deity’ and ‘riddance of (symbolic) dirt to do away with communal troubles’ are not always that explicit. Ancient terminology and practice prove much more complex than our modern single terms ‘sacrifice’ or ‘purification’ may suggest. Many scholars from various fields have struggled with these concepts. Especially in the context of crisis and transition, the material appears obstinate. In order to remove overlap and apparent inconsistency, some reinterpreted the source-material as far as necessary to get rid of anomalies, others stretched the definitions of the concepts involved (esp. sacrifice) as wide as possible. Again others invented new categories, for instance ‘of powerful actions’, to accommodate a type of abnormal ‘sacrifices’ in which deities are usually absent and the situation is particularly grim. Many of these powerful actions coincide with the examples of crisis management discussed in this study. Especially in times of crisis, of threat, ills or transition, the dichotomy between sacrifice and purification appears to be less sharp than expected, or even vanishes at all. One should therefore not exaggerate the differences between the two remedies.

However, at the same time, as we have seen, there are clear echoes of both sacrificial and purificatory ideologies present in our source-material, of ‘valued victims offered to a deity’ (e.g. in propitiation or as a compensation) and of ‘(symbolic) riddance of communal ills’. It therefore seems also unfounded to abolish the concepts of sacrifice and purification in this context and create an entirely distinct category of powerful actions.

Instead of smuggling away source-material, creating new categories or overstretching concepts, one may rather claim that sacrifice and purification are basically two different (differing) phenomena, with, mostly, different terminology, which, for some reason, intertwine, overlap or even merge in times of crisis. In this way one retains a basic distinction between sacrifice and purification, but need not choose between the two. The ambiguity of the victim may be seen to embody this intertwining in a most striking way.

Finally, an attempt has been made to understand this intertwining: why are sacrifice and purification such a good and persistent match in times of crisis? Both sacrifice and purification may be considered re-ordering strategies, as we have seen. This so-called wider interpretation of both appears fruitful at one level, but ignores the contradictory evidence that is striking at the level of observation of ancient Greek

crisis management. At that level, it turns out that the ancient Greek concept of order itself provides the clue to a further understanding of this intertwining.

Two well-known observations appear of great importance. First, as various scholars have pointed out, ancient Greek notions of health and order were very much constructed in terms of balance, either cosmic, political, or physical. Disturbance of that balance was perceived as taking place along an inside-outside axis, as was its redressing. Secondly, the ancient Greek perception of order, in body, mind, state and world, implied a stable relationship with the divine. Hence, crisis is a disturbance of that well-balanced, divine order, and crisis management the attempt to redress that balance, which involves both the elimination of ills and the restoration of the relations with the divine. This is what may be called the double bind of crisis management.

The circumstances of crisis management are therefore crucial for its understanding. Perhaps some basic instinct, animal (Burkert) or human (Versnel), induces imperilled humans to react by giving up in order to save. However useful such general theories, they leave us with questions at the level of outward appearances and their possible meanings. The ideas of an innate feeling of compensation (Versnel) or of the re-direction of intracommunal aggression (Burkert and Girard) do not explain the variety of forms which the remedies have taken. To comprehend ancient Greek crisis management also at that level, one must realise that crisis implied the disturbance of a divine well-balanced order and that the redressing of that balance involves a double bind.

Approaching crisis management from the sacrificial side, we must understand sacrifice not only as an attempt to restore the relations with the divine by, for instance, offering a valued gift. The ancient Greek perception of order was based on the idea of a cosmic balanced unity of men and the divine. Disruption of this balance, in this worldview, either caused within the system or by an outside force, was understood as, or invoked, a reaction on the part of the divine. Sacrifice was regarded as an appropriate means to re-establish order (the wider interpretation of sacrifice), which implied a restoration of relations with the divine (the narrow interpretation of sacrifice), and at the same time and *qualitate qua*, the elimination of the disturbing factor, the pollution (the narrow interpretation of purification).

If we approach crisis management from the purificatory side, we arrive at a quite similar understanding. Purification may be regarded as an attempt to impose

system again, (the wider interpretation of purification). Purification then is not only the elimination of dirt, evil, anomaly, or whatever pollution (the narrow interpretation of purification), but also, and as importantly so, the imposing of system, order, which in the case of an ancient Greek community's crisis, certainly implied the restoration of the relations between man and the divine (the narrow interpretation of sacrifice).

Purification and sacrifice, or what may be called crisis management, expressed the same two-fold idea: they aimed at restoring the proper balance, at the re-installment of order, the recreation of 'cosmic harmony', which involved both a proper relationship with the divine and the absence of the disturbance of that order. In situations of crisis the two operations of sacrifice and purification mutually informed each other, complemented each other, or even merged due to this double bind.

From this point of view it is no longer surprising that, although they may express different concerns and represent different actions, *age* could be at the same time *miasmata*, and *lutra katharmata*, or sacrifice purification, and purification sacrifice. Nor should the ambiguous victims of crisis management disconcert us any longer: they embody the intertwining of these two remedies.

The system is far from transparent. Necessity breaks the rules. As we have seen, crisis is not the moment best suited for intellectual consistency. Crisis management requires action, not a scholar's desk. "Save us, Zeus!" Crisis management is pragmatism. There is not one recipe at hand. Gods and humans feature in various roles. But the remedies chosen at disparate places, at diverging moments in ancient Greek history and told and retold in many different ways can be much better understood in the light of this double bind of ancient Greek crisis management.

APPENDIX

THE *PHARMAKOS* RITUALS

THE TESTIMONIA

This catalogue presents the Greek and Latin sources on the *pharmakos* ritual. The sixty testimonia are grouped geographically. There are two major categories: the Ionian material, comprising T. 1-28, and the Athenian material, T. 29-50. Geographically unspecified references make up the rest of the list (T. 51-60). The criteria for in- or exclusion have been discussed in the Introduction to Part 2.

Any attempt to order the material systematically is bound to involve compromises. The scholia and commentaries for instance cannot be labelled easily: do they belong with the texts they comment upon, or are they a non-specific category of their own, consisting of compiled and homeless knowledge? The former option has been chosen here, for practical reasons. Notwithstanding the disadvantages, it seems worthwhile to organise the material in this way. Geographical considerations have not played a decisive role in the discussion of the *pharmakos* ritual in Chapter 1, even though scholars have sometimes reserved a major place for geography in their interpretations of the ritual¹.

A. IONIAN AND IONIA-RELATED TESTIMONIA

HIPPONAX

The earliest extant source on the *pharmakos* ritual consist of fragments from the invective poetry of Hipponax, a iambographic poet who lived and worked in sixth-century BC Ionia, probably in Ephesus and Clazomenae². The fragments derive from

¹To begin with Gebhard 1926 all the way to Hughes 1991.

²Hipponax is said to have lived in Ephesus and (after having been expelled) in Clazomenae (*Sud.* s.v. Ἰππῶναξ), but various other Ionian places are also mentioned in his

different poems. Six of them are handed down by Tzetzes³, the other two stem from a papyrus. Most, if not all, of these verses may have been directed against a certain Boupalus, who must have been the poet's enemy. Quite a lot of fragments from the work of Hipponax have been taken to allude to the *pharmakos*⁴. I have only adopted the ones that do so explicitly or in all probability.

T. 1 = Hippon. fr. 26 (Degani)⁵

πόλιν καθαίρειν καὶ κρόδησι βάλλεσθαι

to purify a city and to be hit with fig branches

T. 2 = Hippon. fr. 6 (Degani)⁶

βάλλοντες ἐν λειμῶνι καὶ ῥαπίζοντες
κρόδησι καὶ σκίλησιν ὥσπερ φαρμακόν

work. See Degani 1991, 1-22; West 1990, 109-110 and R.M. Rosen, *Old Comedy and the Iambographic Tradition* (*American Classical Studies* 19) (Georgia 1988) esp. 21-24.

³See Tzetzes, *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13 below.

⁴See e.g. Hippon. fr. 31 (Degani) (= fr. 65 West): πρύμνης ἀπ' ἄκρης ἐς θάλασσαν σπένδοντες ('pouring [libations?] from the top of the stern into the sea). And Hippon. fr. 19 (Degani) (= fr. 95a West): ὥς οἱ μὲν ῥά γεῖτ' Βουπάλῳ κατηρῶντο ('as they called down curses on [the] accursed [?] Boupalos'). Next, Hippon. fr. 46 (Degani) (= fr. 37 West): ἐκέλευε βάλλειν καὶ λεύειν Ἰππῶνακτα ('He urged to hit and throw stones at Hipponax'). And finally Hippon. fr. 126 (Degani) (= fr. 128 West): Μοῦσά μοι Εὐρυμεδοντιάδεω τὴν ποντοχάρυβδιν, τὴν ἐγγαστριμάχαιραν, ὃς ἐσθίει οὐ κατὰ κόσμον ἔννεφ', ὅπως ψηφίδι <κακῇ> κακὸν οἶτον ὄληται βουλῇ δημοσίῃ παρὰ θῖν' ἀλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο ('Sing for me, Muse, Eurymedon's son, the sea-Charybdis / the knife-in-the-belly, who eats not nicely / sing, that he by a pebble [...] suffer an evil fate, by popular will, along the shore of the barren sea'). For translation and a thorough discussion of this fragment, see Hughes 1991, 145f and S.R. Slings, in: J.M. Bremmer e.a., *Some Recently Found Greek Poems* (Leiden 1987) 89-92. Apart from their textual complexities, the difficulty with these fragments is that they are too indirect and too unspecified to be of any use.

⁵H. Degani, *Hipponax Testimonia et Fragmenta* (Leipzig 1991). I shall provide cross-references to the other major edition of West 1990 (M.L. West, *Iambi et Elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum Cantati* I [Oxford 1990²]). I mention alternative readings only if relevant to the interpretation of the *pharmakos* ritual. The reason to include this fragment will become evident below.

⁶= fr. 6 West. On ῥαπίζοντες κρόδησι see Hippon. fr. 30 = T. 6 and compare Hippon. fr. 26 = T. 1. The codices have ἐν χειμῶνι (in winter), but Degani accepts Schneidewin 1844, 104 who emended ἐν λειμῶνι for interpretative reasons (the winter is unlikely if *pharmakoi* were expelled during the Thargelia). As to the interpretative reasons, precisely the opposite may be argued, too: Hesych. s.v. χειμών: (ἢ ὥρα καὶ κίνδυνος, ταραχή, ζάλη, διωγμός) explains the Greek term χειμών not only as a season, but also as danger, disorder, trouble. For this, more metaphorical, use, see also *LSJ* II.2. See further Degani *ad loc.*, but also Henrichs 1980, 26-27

hitting on the meadow and striking
with fig branches and squills like a *pharmakos*

T. 3 = Hippon. fr. 27 (Degani)⁷

δεῖ δ' αὐτὸν ἐς φαρμακὸν †ἐκποιήσασθαι†

And it is necessary to remove him by turning him into a *pharmakos*

T. 4 = Hippon. fr. 28 (Degani)⁸

κάφῃι παρέξειν ἰσχάδας τε καὶ μᾶζαν
καὶ τυρόν, οἷον ἐσθίουσι φαρμακοί

and in the hand to provide dried figs and barley bread
and cheese, such as *pharmakoi* eat

T. 5 = Hippon. fr. 29 (Degani)⁹

πάλαι γὰρ αὐτοὺς προσδέκονται χάσκοντες
κράδας ἔχοντες ὥς ἔχουσι φαρμακοῖς

for they have long been waiting for them gaping
having fig-branches like they hold for *pharmakoi*

⁷ = fr. 7 West. †ἐκποιήσασθαι† is a corrupt tradition according to Degani 1991. For the many emendations by numerous scholars, see Degani 1991 *ad loc.* See for translations, among others, F.W. Schneidewin, *Beiträge zur Kritik der Poetae Lyrici Graeci* (Göttingen 1844) 76: 'Man muss ihn sich vom Halse schaffen wie einen armen Sünder'; E. Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca* (Leipzig 1925) vol. 1, *ad loc.*: 'quasi gente expulsum', referring to Isae. 7.23: Θρασύβουλος ἐκποιήτος εἰς τὸν οἶκον τὸν Ἴππολοχίδου γέγονε. A.D. Knox, *Herodes, Cercidas and the Greek Choliambic Poets (except Callimachus and Babrius)* (Loeb Classical Library) (Cambridge 1929) *ad loc.*: 'He must be chosen from you as a scapegoat' or 'put him forth for a purification' (φαρμ. = καθαρόν). O. Masson, *Les Fragments du poète Hipponax* (Paris 1962) 111: 'transformer complètement en' or 'réduire à la condition du *pharmakos*', a translation inspired by comparison with εἰσποιεῖσθαι, 'to adopt' (*LSJ* s.v.). M.L. West, *Greek Lyric Poetry. The Poems and Fragments of the Greek Iambic, Elegiac, and Melic Poets (excluding Pindar and Bacchylides) down to 450 BC* (Oxford 1993) 116 translates: 'He must be adopted as our scapegoat.' But ἐκποιέω, to put out (e.g. a child), to alienate (*LSJ* s.v.), has a clear connotation of severe separation. 'Adopted out', then, would be a more adequate translation. The aorist depends on the prescriptive force of δεῖ, the middle voice specifies the separation as a movement away from the agents. Therefore, if not corrupt, the expression may be seen to denote both a transformation and a separation, which may be covered better by two separate words in English.

⁸ = fr. 8 West. κάφῃι = καὶ ἀφῃ. See Hesych. s.v. ἀφή· αἴσθησις χειρῶν. See Tzetzes, *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13 at 732 below.

⁹ = fr. 9 West. Codd. ἔχοντας, corr. Schneidewin 1844, 105, but see other conjectures, Degani 1991 *ad loc.* This fragment has been subjected to much emendation (such as φαρμακοί, ὥς ἔθουσι or even ἔχοντες αἷς ἐλῶσι φαρμακούς), cf. Gebhard 1926, 8: "Tzetzes habe es, ganz seiner Art entsprechend, unterlassen, einige für den Sinn notwendige Worte mit abzuschreiben."

T. 6 = Hippon. fr. 30 (Degani)¹⁰

λιμῶι γένηται ξηρός· ἐν δὲ τῶι θυμῷ
φαρμακὸς ἀχθεὶς ἐπτάκις ῥαπισθείη

that he becomes dry due to hunger; and may he be hit
seven times on his penis, being led like a *pharmakos*.

T. 7 = Hippon. fr. 95, 3-4 (Degani)¹¹

καί μοι τὸν ὄρχιν τῆς φαλ[
κ]ράδης<ι> συνηλοίησεν ὥσπερ[ε]ρ φαρμακῶ

and [...] the scrotum (?) of my [...]
she/he trashed with a figbranch [as if I were a *pharmakos*

T. 8 = Hippon. fr. 107, 47-49 (Degani)¹²

ὁ δ' ἐξολισθὼν ἰκέτευ]ε τὴν κρά[μ]βην
τὴν ἐπτάφυλλον, ἣ θύεσ]κε Πανδῶρ[η
Ταργηλίοισιν ἔγχυτον] πρὸ φαρμακ[οῦ]

but he, escaping, beseeched the sevenleaved
cabbage, to whom Pandora sacrificed
a cake at the Thargelia in place of/ before/ on behalf of a *pharmakos*

HESYCHIUS

The lexicon of Hesychius was compiled around the fifth century AD from earlier sources. It contains three testimonia and a short gloss that are relevant. At least two of them have been ascribed to stem from the work of Hipponax. There are some more entries in the lexicon of Hesychius that are sometimes included in studies on

¹⁰= fr. 10 West. In the fragment as such the subjunctive γένηται is inexplicable. It may have depended on a conjunction that preceded in the original poem, see Degani 1991 *ad loc.* I read the optative as part of a curse. Codd. θυμῷ, θύμῳ. Schneidewin 1844, 105. For θυμός = πέος, see Degani 1991, *ad loc.*; Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13 at 735 and the references cited there.

¹¹= fr. 92, 3-4 West. On various conjectures, see Degani 1991, *ad loc.* The main problem of this fragment, the fact that φαλλός, which one would expect here, is masculine, does not really concern us. M.L. West, *Greek Lyric Poetry. The Poems and Fragments of the Greek Iambic, Elegiac, and Melic Poets (excluding Pindar and Bacchylides) down to 450 BC* (Oxford 1993) 121: 'and [pulling down] my ball by the bal[d patch]/ she trashed me with a fig branch, like [a scapegoat]'.

¹²= fr. 104, 47-49 West. See Athen. 9.370B. Everything about this fragment is problematic, from the text to the interpretation of almost every word, see Degani 1991, *ad loc.* According to most scholars this fragment establishes the link between the *pharmakos* and the Thargelia. However, this link has a far from solid basis in the text, and I remain hesitant about such conclusions. See for an interesting discussion of this fragment Hughes 1991, 144-145.

the *pharmakos* ritual¹³. However, they do not really add to our knowledge, but rather confirm what one seeks to confirm.

T. 9 = Hesych. s.v. κραδησίτης (Latte)¹⁴

κραδησίτης· φαρμακός, ὁ ταῖς κράδαις βαλλόμενος

kradesites: pharmakos, he who is struck with fig branches

T. 10 = Hesych. s.v. κραδίας νόμος (Latte)¹⁵

κραδίας νόμος· νόμον τινὰ ἐπαυλοῦσι τοῖς ἐκπεμπομένοις
φαρμακοῖς, κράδαις καὶ θρίοις ἐπιραβδιζόμενοις

fig-melody: some kind of melody they play on the flute to accompany the *pharmakoi* who are being sent away, beaten with fig branches and fig leaves.

T. 11 = Hesych. s.v. φαρμακοί (Schmidt)¹⁶

φαρμακοί· καθαυτήριοι, περικαθαίροντες τὰς πόλεις¹⁷, ἀνὴρ καὶ γυνή.

pharmakoi; purificatory ones, who purify the cities all around, a man and a woman.

T. 12 = Hesych. s.v. χάλιμα (Schmidt)

χάλιμα· φαρμακός

shameless: *pharmakos*.

TZETZES

The testimonia 1-6 were joined together and handed down by the Byzantine scholar John Tzetzes, who lived in the twelfth century AD, in his collection of Histories, in a section on ‘the *katharma*’. Tzetzes’ own description of the *pharmakos* ritual must be

¹³See e.g. Hesych. s.v. φαρμακὴ· ἡ χύτρα, ἣν ἡτοίμαζον τοῖς καθαίρουσι τὰς πόλεις (‘*pharmakè*; the pot, which they would prepare for those who purify the cities’). Hughes 1991, 243 notes that Hesych. s.v. κάθαγμα does not refer to the *pharmakoi* at all.

¹⁴K. Latte, *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon* (Copenhagen 1966). The passage is attributed to Hipponax, see Degani 1991, fr. 203. Compare Hippon. fr. 26 = T. 1.

¹⁵Attributed to Hipponax by Degani, reconstructed on the basis of a reference in Plu. *de Mus.* 8 (*Mor.* 1134f): καὶ ἄλλος δὲ ἐστὶν ἀρχαῖος νόμος, καλούμενος Κραδίας, ὃν φησιν Ἰππῶναξ Μίμνερμον αὐλῆσαι (And there is another ancient melody, called Fig-melody, which Hipponax says Mimnermos played on the *auloi*) (ed. Degani 1991, fr. 146). Compare Hippon. fr. 6 = T. 2 and Hippon. fr. 29 = T. 5.

¹⁶M. Schmidt, *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon* (Jena 1986).

¹⁷Note the plural πόλεις. περικαθαίρειν is stronger than καθαίρειν and may just mean to purify completely, but is more likely to imply that this is realised by a circular movement.

quoted here in full. One more passage from the same collection is mentioned here as well, and a scholion which shows clear traces of Tzetzes' work. A few others, scholia to Aristophanes, will be given further consideration below (T. 31 and T. 38).

T. 13 = Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 (Leone¹⁸)

Ὁ φαρμακὸς τὸ κάθαρμα τοιοῦτον ἦν τὸ πάλαι.
 Ἄν συμφορὰ κατέλαβε πόλιν θεομηνία,
 εἴτ' οὖν λιμὸς εἴτε λοιμὸς εἴτε καὶ βλάβος ἄλλο, 730
 τὸν¹⁹ πάντων ἀμορφότερον ἦγον ὡς πρὸς θυσίαν,
 εἰς καθαρμὸν καὶ φάρμακον πόλεως τῆς νοσοῦσης.
 Εἰς τόπον δὲ τὸν πρόσφορον στήσαντες τὴν θυσίαν
 τυρόν τε δόντες τῇ χειρὶ²⁰ καὶ μᾶζαν καὶ ἰσχάδας,
 ἐπτάκις τὲ ῥαπίσαντες ἐκείνουν εἰς τὸ πέος²¹
 σκίλλαις, συκαῖς ἀγρίαις τε καὶ ἄλλοις τῶν ἀγρίων,
 τέλος πυρὶ κατέκαιον ἐν ξύλοις τοῖς ἀγρίοις,
 καὶ τὴν σποδὸν εἰς θάλασσαν ἔρραινουν εἰς ἀνέμους,
 εἰς καθαρμὸν τῆς πόλεως, ὡς ἔφην, τῆς νοσοῦσης,
 ὡς καὶ Λυκόφρων μέμνηταί που περὶ τῶν Λοκρίδων, 740
 ὧδέ πως λέγων, ἀκριβῶς τὸν στίχον οὐ γινώσκω·
 Ὅταν ἀκάρποις γυῖα συμφλέξας κλάδοις
 Ἥφαιστος εἰς θάλασσαν ἐκβράσσει σποδόν
 τῆς ἐκ λόφων Τρᾶρωνος ἐφθιτωμένης.
 Ὁ δὲ Ἰππώναξ ἄριστα σύμπαν τὸ ἔθος λέγει·
 (T. 1)
 Καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ δέ πού φησι πρῶτῳ ἰάμβῳ γράφων·
 (T. 2)
 Καὶ πάλιν ἄλλοις τόποις δὲ ταῦτά φησι κατ' ἔπος· 750
 (T. 3)
 (T. 4)
 (T. 5)
 Καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ δέ πού φησιν ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἰάμβῳ·
 (T. 6)
 Ταῦτα περὶ τοῦ ἔθους μὲν τῆς φαρμακοῦ θυσίας.
 Φαρμακουργὸς δὲ καὶ φαρμακεὺς καὶ φαρμακὸς διοίσει. 760
 Φαρμακουργὸς ἐργάτης τε καὶ πωλητῆς φαρμάκων,
 ὡς φαρμακεὺς ὁ χρώμενος φαρμάκοις ὡς πρὸς βλάβην,
 ὁ φαρμακὸς δὲ καθαρμὸς²² τῆς πόλεως, ὡς ἔφην.

The *pharmakos*, the *katharma*, was as follows long ago:
 If misfortune had the city in its grip due to divine wrath,
 whether famine or pestilence or any other disaster, 730
 they would lead [the man] who was more ill-featured than all

¹⁸P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae, Historiae* (Napoli 1968).

¹⁹Only one manuscript has τὸν. Kiesling: τῶν.

²⁰Cf. Hippon. fr. 28 = T. 4. Tzetzes also reads κάφῃ as τῇ χειρὶ.

²¹Tzetzes renders Hipponax' ἐν δὲ τῷ θυμῷ with εἰς τὸ πέος. We shall come across a third way to express the same in a scholion by Tzetzes on Ar. *Pl.* 454g: Tz. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454g = T. 38: ἐς τὸ αἰδοῖον.

²²One manuscript has κάθαρμα.

the [others] as if towards a sacrifice
 for the purpose of purification and cure of the city that was ill.
 And having placed the sacrifice at a suitable place
 having given [him] in his hand cheese and barley bread and dried figs,
 having whipped him seven times on his penis
 with squills, with wild figs and with other [branches] of wild [flora]
 they finally burnt him completely in a fire on wild wood
 and they scattered the ashes to the winds into the sea
 for the purpose of purification of the city that was ill, as I said.
 As also Lycophron relates somewhere about the Locrian Maidens, 740
 saying something like this, I don't exactly know the verse:
 When burning the limbs with barren branches
 Hephaistos throws the ash into the sea
 of her who perished from the tops of Traron²³.
 And Hipponax explains the whole custom very well:
 (T. 1)
 And somewhere else he says, writing in his first *Iambos*:
 (T. 2)
 And again elsewhere he says these things as follows: 750
 (T. 3)
 (T. 4)
 (T. 5)
 And somewhere else he says in the same *Iambos*:
 (T. 6)
 These are the things regarding the custom of the sacrifice of a *pharmakos*.
 There is a difference though between a *pharmakourgōs* and a *pharmakeus* 760
 and a *pharmakos*.
 A *pharmakourgōs* is the maker and seller of drugs (*pharmaka*)
 just as a *pharmakeus* is he who uses drugs (*pharmaka*) in order to harm
 and the *pharmakos* was a purification²⁴ of the city, as I said.

T. 14 = Tz. *Chil.* 8, 911-919 (Leone)

Τίς φαρμακὸς καὶ φαρμακεύς· καὶ νῦν συντόμως φράσω.
 ὁ φαρμακὸς τὸ κάθαγμα τοιόνδε τι ὑπῆρχε
 τὸν πάντων δυσμορφότατον καύσαντες (ὥσπερ εἶπον)
 εἰς καθαγμόν τῆς πόλεως ἐν συμφοραῖς μεγίσταις,
 τὴν τέφραν ἔρραινον αὐτοῦ πάσῃ σχεδὸν τῇ πόλει.
 Τοῦτο μὲν οὖν τὸ κάθαγμα πρὶν φαρμακὸν ἐκάλουν.
 Ὁ φαρμακεὺς ὁ χρώμενος φαρμάκοις εἰς τὸ κτείνειν.
 Φαρμακεργάτην κάλει τε καί γε φαρμακοπώλην,
 τὸν φάρμακα σκευάζοντα καὶ πρῶτην τῶν φαρμάκων.

Who is a *pharmakos* and who is a *pharmakeus*? Now, then, I shall briefly explain.
 The *pharmakos*, the *katharma* was originally something like this:
 Having burnt (as I said) the ugliest of all
 for the sake of purification of the city during very large misfortunes,
 they scattered his ashes almost over the whole city.

²³The interpretation of this passage is highly controversial. Why did Tzetzes feel the need to quote Lycophron on the Locrian Maidens here? Were they *pharmakoi* as well? Or did they provide him with a helpful analogy? On this discussion, see Hughes 1992, 142-143.

²⁴On the differences and similarities between *katharmos*, *eis katharmon* and *katharma*, see Chapter 1 Section i.

This *katharma* they formerly called *pharmakos*.
 The *pharmakeus* is he who uses drugs (*pharmaka*) for the sake of killing.
 One calls a *pharmakergates*, one who is also called a *pharmakopoles*,
 him who prepares and sells drugs (*pharmaka*).

T. 15 = Schol. Tz. *Ep.* 104 (Leone²⁵)

κάθαρμα· δυσειδέστατον ἀνθρώπιον ἔθρον ἐν ταῖς συμφοραῖς ὑπὲρ πάσης πόλεως, καὶ τοῦτο φαρμακὸς καὶ κάθαρμα ἐκαλεῖτο.

katharma: they sacrificed a most ugly, paltry fellow during misfortunes on behalf of the whole city, and this one was called *pharmakos* and *katharma*.

OVID AND SCHOLIA ON ABDERA

In a passage in his *Ibis*, written ca. 11 AD, Ovid hints at a custom in Abdera, a Thracian town which had been first colonised by Clazomenae and then by emigrants from Teos. Located at the fringes of the Greek world, Abdera evidently had strong Ionian roots. Ovid's allusion is further specified by scholiasts on the *Ibis*.

T. 16 = Ov. *Ib.* 467-468 (La Penna²⁶)

Aut te devoveat certis Abdera diebus,
 Saxaque devotum grandine plura petant

Or may Abdera at fixed days devote you
 And stones more numerous than hailstorms seek the devoted

T. 17 = Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467a (La Penna²⁷)

Mos erat in Abdera civitate singulis annis hominem immolari pro peccatis civium, sed prius vii diebus excommunicari ut sic omnium peccata solus haberet.

In the city of Abdera it was custom that every year a man was sacrificed for the transgressions of the citizens, but he was excommunicated seven days earlier so that in this way he alone would have the blemishes of all.

T. 18 = Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467b (La Penna)

Abderitae dicti sunt in uno quoque anno lustrasse se publice, et in his emptum hominem pro capitibus omnium devotum lapidibus occidebant.

The Abderites allegedly had the custom of purifying themselves publicly every single year, and on these occasions they stoned to death a man bought and devoted on behalf of the lives of all.

²⁵P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae, Epistulae* (Leipzig 1972).

²⁶A. La Penna, *Publi Ovidi Nasonis Ibis* (Florence 1957).

T. 19 = Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467c (La Penna)

Abdera terra est, in qua pro more antecessorum in capite anni in festis Iani unus exponitur morti pro populo, ut ait H²⁸.

Abdera is a place, in which by ancestral custom at the beginning of the year during the festival of Ianus, someone is exposed to death on behalf of the people, as says H.

T. 20 = Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467d (La Penna)

Abdera urbs est, in qua certis diebus victima humana pro salute populi inmolatur.

Abdera is a city, in which on fixed days human victims are sacrificed on behalf of the welfare of the people.

T. 21 = Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467e (La Penna)

Abdera est terra in qua in Kalendis Ianuarii homines indigenae unum emptum pro capitibus omnium devotum lapidabant. Unde homines illius terrae dicuntur Abderitae.

Abdera is a place in which on the Calends of Ianuarius the locals devoted on behalf of the lives of others someone who was bought, and stoned him. That is why people from that place are called Abderitae.

T. 22 = Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467f (La Penna)

Callimachus dicit quod Abdera est civitas in qua talis est mos, quod quoque anno cives totam civitatem publice lustrabant, et aliquem civium quem in illa die habebant devotum pro capitibus omnium lapidibus occidebant.

Callimachus says that Abdera is a city in which there is the following custom: each year the citizens publicly purified the whole community, and someone of the citizens whom they were keeping on that day, 'devoted' on behalf of the lives of all, they stoned to death.

CALLIMACHUS ON ABDERA

Callimachus' text which the scholiast refers to, cannot be traced in his extant works. In 1934 however, a papyrus was published, from the Egyptian village of Tebtynis, which contained *diegeseis* (expositions) on the *Aetia* of Callimachus, a work in which the Hellenistic poet derived many customs, festivals, games, and sanctuaries from historical and mythical events²⁹. One such exposition concerned the *pharmakos*

²⁷A. La Penna, *Scholia in P. Ovidi Nasonis Ibin* (Florence 1959).

²⁸The H. may probably be taken as a misread K. (from Kallimachos), see La Penna 1959 *ad loc.*

²⁹Ed. pr. M. Norsa and G. Vitelli, *Διηγήσεις di Poemi di Callimaco in un papiro di Tebtynis* (Firenze 1934). I have used the edition of Pfeiffer 1949.

ritual in Abdera. Although the verse from the work of Callimachus remains puzzling, the discovery secured the place of the Abderean ritual among the *pharmakos* rituals:

T. 23 = Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer³⁰)

Ἔνθ', Ἀβδηρῶ, οὗ νῦν . [...] λεω φαρμακὸν ἀγινεῖ³¹

T. 24 = *Dieg.* 2, 29-40 on Callim. fr. 90 (Pfeiffer)

Ἔνθ', Ἀβδηρῶ, οὗ νῦν . [...] λεω³² φαρμακὸν
ἀγινεῖ Ἀβδήροισι ὠνητὸς ἄνθρω-
πος καθάρσιον τῆς πόλεως, ἐπὶ πλίν-
θου ἐστὼς φαιᾶς, θοίνης ἀπολαύων
δαψιλοῦς, ἐπειδὴν διάπλεως γένηται,
προάγεται ἐπὶ τὰς Προυρίδας καλου-
μένας πύλας· εἴτ' ἔξω τοῦ τείχους
περίεισι κύκλῳ περικαθαίρων (?)
αὐτῷ³³ τὴν πόλιν, καὶ τότε ὑπὸ
τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τῶν ἄλλων λι-
θοβολεῖται, ἕως ἐξελασθῇ τῶν
ὀρίων.

(...) In Abdera a bought man³⁴, a purificatory instrument of the city, standing on a grey block, enjoying an abundant meal, as soon as he is saturated, is led forth to the gates called the Prourides³⁵. Then, outside the wall he goes around in a circle purifying with it (?) the city all around, and then he is stoned by the Basileus and the others, until he is driven beyond the borders³⁶.

SERVIUS AND PETRONIUS ON MASSILIA

Servius, a late fourth-century commentator on Vergil, explains an expression in Virgil's *Aeneid* with reference to a Massilian custom. Servius mentions Petronius as his source, although it is unclear what exactly was to be read in Petronius³⁷. We do

³⁰R. Pfeiffer, *Callimachus*. Vol. 1 (Oxford 1949).

³¹A very difficult fragment, the meaning of which largely escapes us. Ἀβδηρῶ may be Abderus, the eponymous hero of Abdera or Abdera, the Thracian town itself. In view of the *Diegesis* the latter option seems preferable.

³²Norsa and Vitelli 1934 restore and emend δ[ιὰ π]λεω<ν>. But cf. Pfeiffer 1949 *ad loc.*

³³Norsa and Vitelli 1934 ἐνιαυτῷ, Deubner (next note) αὐτῷ i.e. κύκλῳ 'magico'.

³⁴Usually said with regard to slaves (cf. *LSJ*), but see L. Deubner, 'Der Pharmakos von Abdera', *StIt* n.s. 11 (1934) 187, repr. in: idem, *Kleine Schriften zur klassischen Altertumskunde* (Hain 1982) 443, who takes it as referring to a poor fellow who had himself well paid for this ritual job. Compare *emptum hominem* in schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467b = T. 18 and schol. Ov. *Ib.* 467e = T. 21 and Lact. Plac. *Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 10, 793 = T. 26.

³⁵As far as I know, the name of these gates are not mentioned elsewhere.

³⁶Translation Hughes 1991, 157 (with adaptations).

³⁷See Bücheler 1958 (prose) fr. 1, who takes the whole fragment as Petronian.

know, however, that the first century AD poet Petronius was familiar with the term *pharmakos*³⁸. In the context of Massilia, however, the term *pharmakos* itself is not employed. Massilia, today's Marseille, was founded around 600 BC by Ionian Phocaeans and although the custom described here is said to be Gallic, most scholars accept that it had its ancient roots in a distant Ionian past³⁹.

T. 25 = Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.57 (Thilo and Hagen⁴⁰) = Petr. fr.1 (Bücheler)

auri sacra fames - sacra execrabilis, ut "sacrae panduntur portae". alii sacra 'devota' accipiunt, unde et 'ver sacrum'. alii 'sacrum' pro 'scelestum', vel 'sacrilegum'. Tractus est autem sermo ex more Gallorum. nam Massilienses, quotiens pestilentia laborabant, unus se ex pauperibus offerebat alendus anno integro publicis <sumptibus> et purioribus cibis. hic postea ornatus verbenis et vestibis sacris circumducebatur per totam civitatem cum execrationibus, ut in ipsum reciderent mala totius civitatis, et sic proiciebatur⁴¹. hoc autem in Petronio lectum est.

accursed hunger for gold - sacra accursed, like "the sacred (accursed) gates are opened".⁴² some consider 'sacra' devoted hence *ver sacrum*. Others (take) *sacrum* as impious, or as sacrilegious. The expression, however, is derived from a custom of the Gauls. For whenever the Massilians suffered from a pestilence, one of the poor offered himself to be fed during an entire year at public expense and on especially pure foods. After that, this man, decorated with boughs and sacred vestments was led around through the whole community with curses, so that the ills of the whole community would come down upon him, and he was thus cast out. And this can be read in Petronius.

LACTANTIUS PLACIDUS ON MASSILIA

In a fifth- or sixth-century collection of scholia on Statius' *Thebais* attributed to Lactantius Placidus a comparable report on the Massilian ritual has survived. The relevant verses in Statius' *Thebais* run as follows: *lustralemne feris ego te, puer inclite, Thebis devotumque caput vilis ceu mater alebam?* (Was it to be a purification

³⁸Petr. *Satyr.* 107: *pharmace, responde (pharmakos, answer).*

³⁹See e.g. Hughes 1991, 159 and n.64, who also points out, drawing on Val. Max. 2.6.7 and Sil. It. *Pun.* 15.168-172, that the Massilians were even renowned for preserving and adhering to their ancestral customs among their barbarian neighbours. Interestingly, the Greek custom is barbaric enough to be ascribed by these Roman authors to the barbarian Gauls.

⁴⁰G. Thilo and H. Hagen, *Servii Grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii carmina commentarii* I (Leipzig 1881).

⁴¹On *proiciebatur* having been emended into *praecipitabatur* (he was hurled from a cliff) and back into *proiciebatur*, see Bremmer 1983, 316 n. 89.

⁴²Verg. 6.573, referring to the gates of Hades.

for cruel Thebes, my illustrious boy, to become someone consecrated to death, that I nurtured you, like some low-born mother?)⁴³.

T. 26 = Lact. Plac. *Comm. in Stat. Theb.* 10, 793 (Sweeney⁴⁴)

Lustralemne: lustrare civitatem humana hostia Gallicus mos est. nam aliquis de egentissimis proliciebatur praemiis, ut se ad hoc venderet. qui anno toto publicis sumptibus alebatur purioribus cibus, denique certo et sollemni die per totam civitatem ductus ex urbe extra pomeria saxis occidebatur a populo.

Purifying: to purify a community with a human victim is a Gallic custom. For someone of the most needy was enticed by rewards to sell himself for this. He was fed during an entire year at public expense on especially pure foods, and thereupon at a fixed and solemn day he was led through the whole community out of the city beyond the boundaries, and he was killed with stones by the people.

STRABO AND AMPELIUS ON LEUCAS

Strabo, the Greek geographer who lived from 64 BC until after AD 24, describes a ritual that was current on Leucas, one of the isles in the Ionian sea. This ritual is included into this collection of testimonia on the basis of its apparent similarity with the *pharmakos* ritual. It must be realised, however, that there is little terminological overlap. The ritual is also mentioned by a few other sources⁴⁵, one of which, Ampelius, is clearly related to Strabo's account. There is little known about this Ampelius, but he probably lived and worked in the second half of the 2nd century AD.

T. 27 = Str. 10.2.9 (C 452) (Radt⁴⁶)

ἦν δὲ καὶ πάτριον τοῖς Λευκαδίοις κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἐν τῇ θυσίᾳ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος ἀπὸ τῆς σκοπῆς ῥιπτεῖσθαι τινα τῶν ἐν αἰτίαις ὄντων ἀποτροπῆς χάριν, εξαπτομένων ἐξ αὐτοῦ παντοδαπῶν πτερῶν καὶ ὀρνέων ἀνακουφίζειν δυναμένων τῇ πτήσει τὸ ἄλμα, ὑποδέχεσθαι δὲ κάτω μικραῖς ἀλιάσι κύκλῳ περιεστῶτας πολλοὺς καὶ περισώζειν εἰς δύναμιν τῶν ὄρων ἔξω τὸν ἀναληφθέντα.

⁴³R.D. Williams, *P. Papini Statii Thebaidos Liber Decimus (Mnemosyne Suppl. 22)* (Leiden 1972).

⁴⁴R.D. Sweeney, *Lactantii Placidi. In Statii Thebaida Commentum I* (Stuttgart and Leipzig 1997).

⁴⁵The ritual is also referred to by Ael. *NA.* 9.8; Ov. *Fast.* 5.629-630; Ov. *Tr.* 5.2.76 and Serv. ad Verg. *Aen.* 3.279: *unde nunc auctorare se quotannis solent qui de eo monte iaciantur in pelagus*. See Chapter 1 Section g.

⁴⁶S. Radt, *Strabonis Geographika. Vol. 3* (Göttingen 2004).

Among the Leucadians it was an ancestral custom that every year during the sacrifice to Apollo someone of those lying under a charge was thrown off the cliff for the sake of averting evil. To him were attached all kinds of feathers and birds capable of relieving with their flight the leap, and below many men were waiting around in a circle in small boats to receive him and with all their might to rescue him, and take him beyond the borders⁴⁷.

T. 28 = Amp. 8.4 (Arnaud-Lindet⁴⁸)

In summo monte fanum est Apollonis, ubi sacra fiunt. Et, cum homo inde desiluit, statim excipitur lintribus.

On the top of the mountain is a precinct of Apollo, where rites are performed. And when the man has jumped from there, he is immediately caught in boats.

B. ATHENIAN EVIDENCE AND RELATED SOURCES

ARISTOPHANES AND SCHOLIA

Another relatively early source, referring and alluding to *pharmakoi*, is Aristophanes⁴⁹. Not only passages from his comedies provide us with information, but also the scholia on these verses are informative. The difficulty with the content of these scholia is that they are mostly Byzantine sources containing knowledge accumulated over many centuries. On the basis of the recurrent identification of *pharmakoi* with *katharmata*, and on account of the great scholiastic activity that the verses aroused, a few passages are included. Although most manuscripts in which these scholia are found date from the later Byzantine Age, the notes sometimes go back to the Hellenistic Age.

⁴⁷For *riptein* see also (Ps.) Ammon. 494 = T. 59 below. See also Str. 14.6.3 (C 683) on Curium: καὶ εὐθὺς ἐστὶν ἄκρᾳ ἀφ' ἧς ῥίπτουσι τοὺς ἀψαμένους τοῦ βωμοῦ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος; (and nearby there is a height from which they throw those who touch the altar of Apollo). Although this action shows similarities with the Leucadian ritual, it may well be that it belongs in a different context, only sharing some features with the *pharmakos* ritual. I therefore do not include the testimonium in the catalogue.

⁴⁸M.P. Arnaud-Lindet, *Liber Memorialis / Ampelius* (Paris 1993).

⁴⁹R.M. Rosen, *Old Comedy and the Iambographic Tradition* (*American Classical Studies* 19) (Georgia 1988) 23 draws attention to the possibility that Aristophanes' mentioning of *pharmakoi* in his comedies is directly inspired by Hipponax' use of the motif and as such an example of a tradition which the Old Comedy inherited from the iambographic (invective) tradition. Albeit interesting, this question does not really concern us here, for we may presume that the allusions and references were understood by the Athenian public.

T. 29 = Ar. *Ran.* 730-733 (Hall and Geldart⁵⁰)

...τοῖς δὲ χαλκοῖς καὶ ξένοις καὶ πυρρῖαις
καὶ πονηροῖς καὶ πονηρῶν εἰς ἅπαντα χρῶμεθα
ὕστατοις ἀφιγμένοισιν, οἷσιν ἡ πόλις πρὸ τοῦ
οὐδὲ φαρμακοῖσιν εἰκῇ ῥαδίως ἐχρήσατ' ἄν⁵¹.

... the coppers, the aliens, the red-heads,
and worthless men, sons of worthless people, we use for everything,
those who came last, whom the city in the past
would not have employed easily even as *pharmakoi*.

T. 30 = Schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a (*SA* III, Ib⁵²)

φαρμακοῖσι, καθάρμασι. τοὺς γὰρ φαύλους καὶ παρὰ τῆς φύσεως
ἐπιβεβουλευμένους εἰς ἀπαλλαγὴν αὐχμοῦ ἢ λιμοῦ ἢ τινος τῶν τοιούτων
ἔθνον, οὗς ἐκάλουν καθάρματα.

pharmakoi, katharmata. For they sacrificed the meanest and the physically disabled
for the sake of (the) removal of draught or famine or of such the like, whom they
called *katharmata*.

T. 31 = Tz. schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733a (*SA* IV, III)⁵³

φαρμακοῖσι τοῖς καλουμένοις καθάρμασι. τὰ καθάρματα δὲ τοιαδί· συμφορᾶς
οἰασδήτινος κατασχούσης πόλιν τινὰ δυσμορφότερον πάντων καὶ
ἀηδέστερον ξύλοις ἀκάρποις ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως τῆς θεηλατουμένης ἐκείνης
κατέφλεγον καὶ τὴν τέφραν ἀπανταχοῦ ὡς καθάρσιον ἐξελίκμων καὶ
ἀπερρῶντιζον.

pharmakoi: those who are called *katharmata*⁵⁴. *katharmata* were as such: when
some kind of misfortune had seized the city they burnt someone who was the ugliest
and most odious of all on barren branches on behalf of that city which was in the
grip of the god and they scattered and sprinkled the ashes everywhere as a rite of
purification.

T. 32 = Ar. *Pl.* 454-455 (Hall and Geldart)

⁵⁰F.W. Hall and W.M. Geldart, *Aristophanis Comoedia*. Vol 2 (Oxford 1970, 1st ed. 1901).

⁵¹The lines are part of the parabasis of the Chorus. The translation is inspired by the translation of Henderson (Loeb 2002). They are quoted repeatedly, see Aristid. *Or.* 3.684 = T. 51; Stob. *Anthol.* 4.1.28; *Sud.* s.v. πόνηρος = *Sud.* s.v. φαρμακοῖσιν.

⁵²W.J.W. Koster (ed.), *Scholia in Aristophanem*. Vol. 1 - (Groningen 1960 -).

⁵³Comp. also *Sud.* s.v. φαρμακοῖσιν. There is one more scholion to a passage in *Ranae*, albeit a very puzzling one: schol. Ar. *Ran.* 151 ἀντὶ τοῦ θανάσιμόν τινα λόγον ἔγραψεν, οἷα νῦν πολλὰ γίνονται τοῖς φαρμακοῖς.

⁵⁴See also schol. Ar. *Ran.* 733b, also attributed to Tzetzes (*SA* IV, III). See also *Sud.* s.v. φαρμακοῖσιν: Ἀριστοφάνης· πονηροῖς καὶ πονηρῶν εἰς πάντα χρῶμενος, οἷσιν ἡ πόλις πρὸ τοῦ οὐδὲ φαρμακοῖσιν εἰκῇ ῥαδίως χρήσασατ' ἄν. τουτέστι τοῖς λεγομένοις καθάρμασι. *pharmakoi*; Aristophanes: “worthless men, sons of worthless people, we use for everything, whom the city in the past would not have employed easily even as *pharmakoi*.” That is to say those who are called *katharmata*.

γρύζειν δὲ καὶ τολμᾶτον, ὃ καθάρματα⁵⁵
ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ δεινὰ δρῶντ' εἰλημμένῳ;

You dare to mutter, you two *katharmata*,
being caught in the act doing dreadful things?

T. 33 = Schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454a (*SA* III, IVa)

καθάρματα δ' αὐτοὺς φησιν ἀντὶ τοῦ εὐτελεστάτους.

and he calls them *katharmata* instead of most worthless.

T. 34 = Schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454d (*SA* III, IVb)

κάθαρμα· τὸ βδέλυγμα. γίνεται δὲ ἀφ' ἱστορίας τοιαύτης, ὥς [ὅτι] ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις ἦν ἔθος τοιοῦτον, ὅτι εἰ [ἐ]συνέβη ἀμαρτῆσαι τὴν πόλιν τι εἰς τοὺς θεοὺς, εἰς ἐξιλέωσιν τοῦ τοιοῦτου ἀτοπήματος, ἀφόριζεν ὁ λαὸς ἕνα ἄνθρωπον ὃς πάντων δυσειδέστατος ἦν. ἔθουν γοῦν αὐτὸν εἰς λύτρον παντός. κάθαρμα καὶ καθάρσιον διαφέρει· κάθαρμα μὲν τὸ καθαιρόμενον, καθάρσιον δὲ τὸ καθαῖρον.

katharma: the abomination⁵⁶. It derives from the following account, that in Athens there was a custom as follows, that if it happened that the city had done wrong in some matter towards the gods, to atone for such an offence⁵⁷, the people set apart one human being who was the ugliest (man) of all. And they sacrificed him as a ransom for all.

katharma and *katharsion* differ: *katharma* is that which is being purified and *katharsion* that which purifies.

T. 35 = Schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454e (*SA* III, IVb)

[...] ὅτε γὰρ χρησμὸς περὶ τοιοῦτου ἐγένετο, εὐρίσκετο δυσειδὴς πάντα ἐκεῖσε ἄνθρωπος. τοῦτον ἔκαιον, κάθαρμα ποιοῦντες τῆς πόλεως διὰ τινα θεομηνίαν. ἀρμένου οὖν τούτου εἰς τὸ καθῆναι, περιέψων αὐτὸν πάντες, λέγοντες "γενοῦ ἡμῖν ἀπαλλαγὴ κακῶν". ἐκ τούτου ἐλέγετο καὶ "περίψημα".

[...] for when an oracle with regard to such a thing/person occurred, a human being, who was ugly in all respects, used to be fetched to that place. They burnt that person, making a *katharma* of the city because of some divine wrath. While this person was raised to be burnt, they all wiped him off all around, while saying: be our removal (deliverance) of evil. From this he is also called "*peripsēma*"⁵⁸.

⁵⁵καθάρματα (var. lect. -τα).

⁵⁶This term, τὸ βδέλυγμα, belongs in the context of the Septuagint, and also occurs in the New Testament. Compare also Schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454b (*SA* III, IVb): καθάρματα· βδελύγματα· μιάσματα· ἀφανισμοῦ ἄξια· ἀποσπογγίσματα (*katharmata*: abominations, *miasmata*, worthy of destruction (*LSJ* s.v., or 'disappearance'), dirt wiped off with a sponge). There is also a small gloss on this verse, attributed to Tzetzes (*SA* IV, I) that runs as follows: καθάρματα γρ(άφε) τὰ καθάρματα· μισροί· εὐτελέστατοι· οἱ δεόμενοι καθάρσεως (defiled ones; most ugly ones; those in need of purification).

⁵⁷This term, ἀτοπήματος, is employed in papyri, and means literally 'out-of-placement'.

⁵⁸Compare Phot. s.v. περίψημα = T. 54.

T. 36 = Schol. Ar. Pl. 454f (SA III, IVb)

τοὺς φαρμακοὺς τῆς πόλεως καὶ τοὺς γόητας "καθάρματα" ἐκάλουν διὰ αἰτίαν τοιαύτην· πόλις τις ἐδυστύχει, καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῇ χρησμός, ἵνα ἐκτεφρώσῃ τὸν ἔχθιστον τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἀθλιώτατον, καὶ λάβωσι τὴν τέφραν ἐκείνου πρὸς ἀποτροπιασμὸν τῶν τῆς πόλεως κακῶν. ὃ δὴ καὶ γέγονε. καὶ λαβόντες τὸν δυστυχέστατον τῆς πόλεως, κατὰ μέσσην τὴν ἀγορὰν κατέκαυσαν ἀργίαις συκαῖς. τὴν δὲ τέφραν τούτου λαβόντες, εἰς ἀποσόβησιν τῶν τῆς πόλεως κακῶν ἐκέκτηντο. καὶ ἐντεῦθεν ἐπεκράτησε λέγειν πάντας τοὺς δυστυχεῖς καὶ πένητας καὶ ἀθλίους καὶ γόητας καὶ φαρμακοὺς "καθάρματα".

They called the *pharmakoi* of the city and the magicians *katharmata* for the following reason: some city was in misfortune, and an oracle was given to it, that they should burn to ashes the most hateful and wretched one of the city, and that they should take the ashes of him for aversion of the city's ills. And that in fact has happened. And having taken the most unfortunate man of the city, they burnt (him) on wild figs in the middle of the *agora*. And having taken his ashes, they kept them for the sake of the scaring away of the ills of the city. And hence it has become customary to call all the unfortunate ones and the poor and wretched ones and the magicians and the *pharmakoi* "*katharmata*".⁵⁹

T. 37 = Schol. Ar. Pl. 454g (SA III, IVb)

καθάρματα ἐλέγοντο οἱ ἐπὶ καθάρσει λοιμοῦ τινος ἢ τινος ἐτέρας νόσου θύομενοι τοῖς θεοῖς. τουτὶ δὲ τὸ ἔθος καὶ παρὰ Ῥωμαῖοις ἐπεκράτησε, λέγεται δὲ καὶ καθαρισμός.

katharmata were called those sacrificed to the gods to effect purification from some pestilence or some other illness, and this custom has prevailed among the Romans as well, and is also called purification.

T. 38 = Tz. schol. Ar. Pl. 454g (SA IV, I)

οἱ φαρμακοὶ δὲ καὶ πρὸς θεραπείαν θύομενοι πόλεων ἐκαλοῦντο καθάρματα. οὗτω δὲ ἡ τοιαύτη θυσία ἐγίνετο· ἐνσηκηψάσης τινὲ πόλει δεινῆς συμφορᾶς, κρατήσαντες ἢ τὸν δυσειδέστατον πάντων ἢ ὃ μὴδεὶς συγγενῆς, τῇ χειρὶ τε δόντες ἰσχάδας, μάζαν καὶ τυρόν, ἐς τὸ αἰδοῖόν τε ἐπτάκις ῥαπίσαντες σκίλλαις τε καὶ ἀργίαις συκαῖς, καὶ μέση τῇ ἀγορᾷ πυρὰν ὑπανάψαντες ξύλοις ἀργίοις τε καὶ ἀκάρποις, καὶ τοῦτον ὀλοκαυτώσαντες, τὴν τέφραν εἰς ἀποτρόπαιον πάσῃ τῇ πόλει περιερρᾶντιζον.

And the *pharmakoi*, sacrificed with a view to the cure of cities, were also called *katharmata*. And such a sacrifice (rite) was as follows: when some terrible misfortune had befallen the city, they seized either the ugliest of all or someone who had no relative, and they gave (him) dried figs, barley bread and cheese in his hand, and they struck (him) seven times on his private parts with squills and wild figs, and they kindled a fire in the middle of the *agora* with wild and also barren wood, and they burnt this (fellow) wholly, and they sprinkled his ashes over the whole city for the sake of averting evil⁶⁰.

⁵⁹Compare schol. Ar. Pl. 454g = T. 37 and Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13.

⁶⁰This is more or less the same text as Tz. *Chil.* 5, 728-763 = T. 13 and schol. Ar. Pl. 454e = T. 35.

T. 39 = Ar. *Eq.* 1131-1140 (Hall and Geldert)

Χοῦτῳ μὲν ἄν εὖ ποιοῖς,
 εἴ σοι πυκνότης ἔνεστ'
 ἐν τῷ τρόπῳ, ὥς λέγεις
 τούτῳ πάνυ πολλή,
 εἰ τούσδ' ἐπίτηδες ὥσ-
 περ δημοσίους τρέφεις
 ἐν τῇ πυκνί, καὶ ὅταν
 μή σοι τύχῃ ὄψον ὄν,
 τούτων ὅς ἂν ἦ παχύς,
 θύσας ἐπιδειπνεῖς.

Thus I see you do well
 and there is, as you say,
 in this way of yours
 very much cleverness,
 if on purpose these fellows
 like *demosioi* you nourish
 on the Pnyx, and then when
 you chance to have no meat on hand,
 whichever of these is fat
 you sacrifice and dine on⁶¹

T. 40 = Schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136a (*SA* I, II)

ὥσπερ δημοσίους τρέφεις· λείπει βοῦς ἢ ταύρους⁶², ἢ ἄλλο τι τοιοῦτον θῦμα.
 ἢ δημοσίους τοὺς λεγομένους φαρμακοὺς, οἵπερ καθαίρουσι τὰς πόλεις τῷ
 ἑαυτῶν φόνῳ. ἢ τοὺς δημοσίᾳ τρεφομένους [καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς πόλεως]⁶³.

You feed them as *demosioi*; he leaves out (the word) oxen or bulls, or some other kind of sacrificial victims. Or *demosioi* means the so-called *pharmakoi*, who cleanse the cities through their own death. Or those being fed on public expense (and (that is) by the city).

T. 41 = Schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1136c (*SA* I, II)

δημοσίους λέγει τοὺς λεγομένους φαρμακοὺς, οἵπερ καθαίρουσι τὰς πόλεις
 τῷ ἑαυτῶν φόνῳ. ἔτρεφον γὰρ τινὰς Ἀθηναῖοι λίαν ἀγεννεῖς καὶ πένητας καὶ
 ἀχρήστους, καὶ ἐν καιρῷ συμφορᾶς τινος ἐπελθούσης τῇ πόλει, λιμοῦ λέγω ἢ
 τοιοῦτου τινός, ἔθνον τούτους ἔνεκα τοῦ καθαρθῆναι τοῦ μιάσματος καὶ τῆς
 ἑαυτῶν κακίας, καὶ θεραπείαν εὐρεῖν τοῦ ἐπικειμένου κακοῦ. οὗς καὶ
 ἐπωνόμαζον καθάρματα. μέμνηται τούτων ἐν Βατράχοις· “οἷσιν ἡ πόλις πρὸ
 τοῦ οὐδὲ φαρμακοῖσιν εἰκῇ ῥαδίως ἐχρήσατ' ἄν”.

⁶¹Translation Hughes 1991, 149.

⁶²One manuscript adds ἢ σῦς.

⁶³Cf. *Sud.* s.v. φαρμακοὺς: τοὺς δημοσίᾳ τρεφομένους, οἱ ἐκάθαιρον τὰς πόλεις τῷ ἑαυτῶν φόνῳ. Ἀριστοφάνης· ὥσπερ δημοσίους τρέφεις. The passage between the brackets is deleted by the editors, as it is only transmitted by one manuscript tradition.

By *demosioi* he means the so-called *pharmakoi*, who cleanse the cities through their own death. That is to say, the Athenians fed some (people) of very low birth and poor and useless ones, and at the occasion of some misfortune having come over the city, I speak of famine or something similar, they sacrificed them in order to cleanse themselves from the defilement and from their own evil, and to find a cure for the pressing adversity. And those they called *katharmata*. He (Aristophanes) mentions them in the *Frogs*. “whom the city in the past would not have employed easily even as *pharmakoi*”⁶⁴.

T. 42 = Ar. *Eq.* 1404-1405 (Hall and Geldert)

καί σ' ἀντὶ τούτων ἐς τὸ πρυτανεῖον καλῶ
ἐς τὴν ἔδραν θ', ἵν' ἐκεῖνος ᾗν ὁ φαρμακός.

and in return I ask you to the Prytaneum
and to the seat, where that *pharmakos* was⁶⁵

T. 43 = Eust. *ad Hom. Od.* I. 260, p. 1415, 63-64 (Stallbaum⁶⁶) = Ar. fr. 656
(Kassel and Austin⁶⁷)

ὁ δὲ φαρμακὸς ἦτοι τὸ κάθαρμα, ἑτεροῖόν τι ἐμφαίνει φαρμάκου
σημαινόμενον. Ἀριστοφάνης· πόθεν δ' ἐγὼ σοι συγγενὴς ὦ φαρμακέ;

The *pharmakós* that is the *katharma*, seems to display a somewhat different meaning than *phármakos*⁶⁸. Aristophanes: How can I be a relative of yours, you *pharmakós*?

T. 44 = *Sud.* s.v. κάθαρμα (Adler⁶⁹) = Ar. fr. 686 (Kassel and Austin)

Κάθαρμα· οὐ φθείρη κάθαρμα, εἶπε, καὶ ἐκποδὼν ἡμῖν ἄπει;
Ἀριστοφάνης φησὶν. ὕπερ δὲ καθαρμοῦ πόλεως ἀνήρουν ἐστολισμένον
τινά, ὃν ἐκάλουν κάθαρμα.

katharma: “shouldn’t you perish (be off), *katharma*, he said, and go far away from us?” Aristophanes says. For the sake of purification of the city they remove someone who was dressed up, whom they called *katharma*.

⁶⁴See Ar. *Ran.* 730-733 = T. 29.

⁶⁵One manuscript has ἦσθ' (he sat) instead of ᾗν. Comp. *Sud.* s.v. ἔδρα: καὶ ἡ προεδρία παρὰ Ἀριστοφάνει· καί σ' ἀντὶ τούτων εἰς τὸ πρυτανεῖον καλῶ, ἐς τὴν ἔδραν θ', ἵν' ἐκεῖνος ᾗν ὁ φαρμακός.

⁶⁶G. Stallbaum, *Eustathii Archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis Commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam* (Leipzig 1825).

⁶⁷R. Kassel and C. Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci* (Berlin 1983-).

⁶⁸It is most likely from the context that we should read *phármakos* and not *phármakon*, although the latter possibility cannot be ruled out with certainty. The next line runs as follows: ὁ μέντοι φαρμακεὺς ἢ κατὰ Πλάτωνα φαρμακευτὴς ὁ φαρμάκοις διαφθείρων, τῷ φαύλῳ φαρμάκῳ παρωνόμασται (‘The *pharmakeus* or, according to Plato, the *pharmakeutes*, however, is he who harms through drugs [*pharmaka*], which is a slight variation on the ordinary [word] *phármakos*’).

⁶⁹A. Adler, *Suidae Lexicon. Vol. 3* (Leipzig 1933).

A SCHOLION ON AESCHYLUS

The following scholion on a line from Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* regarding the word καθάρσιον⁷⁰ is noteworthy, for it adds to our understanding of the relevant vocabulary. Curiously, we find no direct mentioning of the ritual *pharmakos* in any of the Greek tragedies from the classical period. Allusions galore however, if one is willing to follow the many studies written on the subject.

T. 45 = Schol. Aesch. *Th.* 680 (Smith⁷¹)

κάθαρμα, καθάρσιον καὶ κάθαρσις διαφέρει· καθάρσιον τὸ καθαῖρον, κάθαρσις αὐτὴ ἢ ἐνέργεια τῆς καθάρσεως, κάθαρμα δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ εἰς κάθαρσιν διδόμενον, οἷον λιμοῦ συμβάντος παρ' Ἑλλησιν ἢ τινος ἄλλου τῶν ἀπευκτῶν, λαμβάνοντες τὸν ἀηδέστατον καὶ παρὰ τῆς φύσεως ἐπιβεβουλευμένον πηρόν, χολόν, τοὺς τοιούτους, τοῦτον ἔθουν εἰς ἀπαλλαγὴν τοῦ ἐνοχλοῦντος δεινοῦ.

katharma, *katharsion* and *katharsis* are different; a *katharsion* is that which purifies, a *katharsis* itself is the activity of the purification, and *katharma* is that which is being offered for the sake of purification, such as when a famine or any other of the abominable things had befallen the Greeks, they took the most odious and physically disabled person, one who is maimed, lame, such kind of people, and they sacrificed him for the purpose of the removal of a troubling disaster.

ORATORS FROM ATHENS AND LATER COMMENTATORS

The classical Athenian orators Lysias and Demosthenes both refer once to the *pharmakos* in an abusive rhetorical context. Both references are quoted in a larger and very informative context by Harpocration, an Alexandrian scholar from the second century AD, who also incorporates knowledge derived from Ister and Didymus in his description of the Athenian ritual. Ister was a third century BC-pupil of Callimachus, Didymus a first century BC-grammarian. Both lived and worked in Alexandria. There is much discussion about this entry from Harpocration's *Words of the Ten Orators*. Most problematic are the connection between Athens and Achilleus⁷² and the whole question of the 'Quellenforschung', especially regarding the authority for the description of the Attic ritual⁷³.

⁷⁰καθάρσιον here refers to a purification of blood, but fortunately the scholiast provides us with more information on purification and its cognates.

⁷¹O.L. Smith, *Scholia graeca in Aeschylum quae exstant omnia* (Leipzig 1982).

⁷²See for the discussion Gebhard 1926, 17.

⁷³See Gebhard 1926, 16, who is convinced that the general description is based on an *Atthis*. Deubner 1932, 181 however suggests that it is based on Ister, but see Jacoby's commentary on *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50 where he refers to a book Πεὶ ἐορτῶν, possibly written

T. 46 = Lys. 6.53 (Hude⁷⁴)

(ν)ὺν οὖν χρὴ νομίζειν τιμωρουμένους καὶ ἀπαλλαττομένους Ἀνδοκίδου τὴν πόλιν καθαίρειν [ἀρὰν ἀπάγεσθαι] καὶ ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαι καὶ φαρμακὸν ἀποπέμπειν καὶ ἀλιτηρίου ἀπαλλάττεσθαι, ὥς ἐν τούτων οὗτός ἐστι.

(s)o now it is necessary to think that by taking vengeance on and getting rid of Andocides we purify the city [lead away the curse] and to conjure away⁷⁵ and send away a *pharmakos* and get rid of an offender, as this man is all of these in one.

T. 47 = Dem. 25.80 (Butcher⁷⁶)

οὗτος οὖν αὐτὸν ἐξαιρήσεται, ὁ φαρμακός, ὁ λοιμός, ὃν οἰωνίσαιτ' ἅν τις μᾶλλον ἰδὼν ἢ προσειπεῖν βούλοιτο, (...) ⁷⁷

So this one will get him off the hook, the *pharmakos*, the plague, whom anyone would rather shun as an ill omen than want to address, (...)

T. 48 = Harp. s.v. Φαρμακός (Keaney⁷⁸) = Ister *FGrHist* 334 fr. 50⁷⁹

Λυσίας ἐν τῷ κατ' Ἀνδοκίδου ἀσεβείας, εἰ γνήσιος⁸⁰. δύο ἄνδρας Ἀθήνησιν ἐξῆγον καθάρσια ἐσομένους τῆς πόλεως ἐν τοῖς Θαργηλίοις, ἓνα μὲν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνδρῶν, ἓνα δὲ ὑπὲρ τῶν γυναικῶν. ὅτι δὲ ὄνομα κύριόν ἐστιν ὁ Φαρμακός, ἱερὰς δὲ φιάλας τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος κλέψας ἀλοῦς ὑπὸ τῶν περὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλέα κατελεύσθη, καὶ τὰ τοῖς Θαργηλίοις ἀγόμενα τούτων ἀπομιμήματά ἐστιν, Ἴστρος ἐν α' τῶν Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπιφανειῶν εἴρηκεν. Δημοσθένους δ' ἐν τῷ κατ' Ἀριστογείτονος λέγοντος “οὗτος οὖν αὐτὸν ἐξαιρήσεται ὁ φαρμακός”. Δίδυμος προπερισπᾶν ἀξιοῖ τοῦνομα· ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς οὐχ εὕρομεν οὕτω που τὴν χρῆσιν.

Lysias in the *Against Andocides' impiety*, if genuine. In Athens they used to lead out two men to be purificatory instruments of the city during the Thargelia, one on behalf of the men, one on behalf of the women. But that Pharmakos is a proper name and that he stole the sacred bowls of Apollo, was caught by the companions of Achilles, and was stoned to death, and that the things performed at the Thargelia are imitations thereof, Istros has said in the first book of the *Epiphanies of Apollo*. And although Demosthenes in his *Speech against Aristogeiton* says “So this one will

by Philochorus, as the source on Athenian ritual (although he does not entirely exclude the possibility of an Atthis). Jacoby suggests Didymus as Harpocration's source for Ister's excerpt, a suggestion elaborated on by Hughes 1991, 153, who supposes that Didymus was responsible for combining Ionian material from Ister with a description of the Athenian ritual. This would explain the discrepancy between the *aition* concerning one *Pharmakos* and the ritual involving two *pharmakoi*.

⁷⁴C. Hude, *Lysiae Orationes* (Oxford 1989).

⁷⁵See the discussion on *apodiopompeisthai* in Chapter 9 Section a.

⁷⁶S.H. Butcher, *Demosthenis Orationes*. Vol 2.1 (Oxford 1988, 1st ed. 1907).

⁷⁷This line is also quoted by Harp. s.v. φαρμακός; Hermog. *Id.* 1.8.16; *Sud.* s.v. φαρμακός; Syrian. in *Hermog.* 30.1.

⁷⁸J.J. Keaney, *Harpocration. Lexeis of the Ten Orators* (Amsterdam 1991).

⁷⁹See also *Sud.* s.v. Φαρμακός.

⁸⁰Here follows the text as quoted in Lys. 6.53 = T. 46 above.

get him off the hook, the *pharmakos*”, Didymus thinks that the word should be circumflexed on the penultimate; but we have not found such usage anywhere⁸¹.

HELLADIUS ON ATHENS

There is another descriptive account of the Athenian *pharmakos* ritual by Helladius. Helladius, who is said to have lived in the beginning of the 4th century AD in Alexandria, is only known to us through Photius, a ninth century Byzantine scholar and Patriarch of Byzantium.

T. 49 = Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 279 (534a Henry⁸²)

“Ὅτι ἔθος ἦν ἐν Ἀθήναις φαρμάκους ἄγειν δύο, τὸν μὲν ὑπὲρ ἀνδρῶν, τὸν δὲ ὑπὲρ γυναικῶν, πρὸς τὸν καθαροὺν ἀγομένους. Καὶ ὁ μὲν τῶν ἀνδρῶν μελαίνας ἰσχάδας περὶ τὸν τράχηλον εἶχε, λευκὰς δ’ ἄτερος. Συβάκχοι⁸³ δὲ φησιν ὠνομάζοντο. Τὸ δὲ καθάρσιον τοῦτο λοιμικῶν νόσων ἀποτροπιασμός ἦν, λαβὼν τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀπὸ Ἀνδρόγεω τοῦ Κρητός, οὗ τεθνηκότος ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις παρὰ νόμον τὴν λοιμικὴν ἐνόσησαν οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι νόσον, καὶ ἐκράτει τὸ ἔθος αἰεὶ καθαίρειν τὴν πόλιν τοῖς φαρμακοῖς.

That it was the custom in Athens to lead two *pharmakoi*, the one on behalf of the men, the other on behalf of the women, led for the sake of purification. And the one on behalf of the men had black figs around his neck, the other white. And *su(m)bakchoi*, he says, they were called. This purification was a means of averting pestilential diseases, taking its origin from Androgeus the Cretan, because of whose unlawful death in Athens the Athenians suffered from a pestilential disease, and the custom persisted always to cleanse the city with *pharmakoi*⁸⁴.

UDIOGENES LAERTIUS

There is one explicit statement which combines Athens, purification and the Thargelia. It does not make mention of *pharmakoi*, but it is nevertheless often used in combination with T. 48 and T. 49 as evidence for the regular character of the *pharmakos* ritual in Athens. The testimonium is from the 3rd century AD-author

⁸¹Translation Hughes 1991, 152 (with minor adaptations).

⁸²R. Henry, *Photius Bibliothèque* (Paris 1977) vol. 8.

⁸³As Masson 1950 points out, the fact that the reading *subakchoi* has become the widely accepted alternative name for the Athenian *pharmakoi* is contestable from the point of view of the manuscript tradition. It became commonly accepted due to Bekker’s 1824-1825 edition of the text that has long been the standard edition of Photius. The manuscripts that were used by Bekker did not contain the codex 279, only indirectly, copied at one point from the second main tradition. In this second tradition, the text gives *sumbakchoi*, and it is only in the copied version in the first tradition that one can find *subakchoi*. To suggest that the copy contains the mistake, as Masson cautiously does, cannot be dismissed as pure speculation. On possible interpretations of the terms, see Chapter 1 Section i.

⁸⁴Translation Hughes 1991, 152-3.

Diogenes Laertius' chapter on Socrates and concerns Socrates himself. Apollodorus, whom he quotes, was an Alexandrian grammarian from the 2nd century BC.

T. 50 = D.L. 2.44 (Marcovich⁸⁵) = Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 fr. 34

Ἐγεννήθη δέ, καθά φησιν Ἀπολλόδορος ἐν τοῖς Χρονικοῖς, ἐπὶ Ἀψεφίωνος τῷ τετάρτῳ ἔτει τῆς ἐβδόμηκοστῆς ἐβδόμης Ὀλυμπιάδος, Θαργηλιῶνος ἑκτῇ, ὅτε καθαίρουσιν τὴν πόλιν Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ τὴν Ἄρτεμιν γενέσθαι Δήλιοί φασιν.

He was born, according to Apollodorus in his *Chronology*, during the archonship of Apsephion in the fourth year of the 77th Olympiad, on the sixth day of *Thargelion*, when the Athenians purify their city and the Delians say that Artemis was born.

C. GEOGRAPHICALLY UNSPECIFIED REFERENCES

AELIUS ARISTIDES

In his third oration 'to Plato: in defense of the four', Aelius Aristides (Ionian born, educated at Pergamum and Athens, well-travelled, second century AD rhetorician) turns against the Plato-type of philosophers, whom he deems as utterly useless to humanity. In making his point he plays on a verse from Aristophanes⁸⁶ and elaborates this allusion with some more detailed knowledge on the *pharmakos* ritual, which apparently made sense even to his second century audience.

T. 51 = Aristid. *Or.* 3.684 (Lenz and Behr⁸⁷)

τί γὰρ οὗτοι χρήσιμοι τῷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένει, οἷς οὐδὲ φαρμακοῖς, τὸ τοῦ κομφοδιοποιοῦ, χρήσαιτ' ἂν τις ῥαδίως; ἀλλ' ὅμως ἡμεῖς τούτου γ' αὐτοῖς μεταδῶμεν καὶ μὴ φθονῶμεν, πρὸς ἐν τοῦτο ἔστων χρήσιμοι ταῖς πόλεσιν, θρέψαντας ἐκρῖψαι. ὥς οὐκ εἶναι γέ τις ἂν φαίη πραγμάτων καὶ κακῶν αὐτοῖς ἀπαλλαγὴν καλλίω καὶ καθαρωτέρω ἢ εἰ τῶν θηρίων τούτων ἀπολυθεῖεν.

For in what respect are they useful to the human race, people whom one would "not even easily employ as *pharmakoi*", in the words of the comic poet. Still let us grant them this and not grudge it them. Let them be useful to their cities in this one respect, to expel them after having nourished them, since no one would claim that men would have any better and purer deliverance from their troubles and evils than if they should be freed from these beasts⁸⁸.

⁸⁵ M. Marcovich, *Diogenes Laertii. Vitae Philosophorum. Vol. 1* (Stuttgart and Leipzig 1994).

⁸⁶ See Ar. *Ran.* 730-733 = T. 29.

⁸⁷ F.W. Lenz and C.A. Behr, *P. Aelii Aristidis. Opera quae exstant omnia* (Leiden 1976-1980).

JULIAN

The following passage from the seventh speech of the emperor Julian was probably composed in 362 AD and directed against his Cynic enemy.

T. 52 = Jul. Imp. *Or.* 7.209d (Hertlein⁸⁹)

ἄρ' οὐκ ἔστι βαράθρου τὸ πρᾶγμα ἄξιον; ἄρ' οὐ τοὺς ταῦτα ἐπαινοῦντας ὥσπερ τοὺς φαρμακοὺς ἐχρῆν οὐ θύσθλοις πολεμουμένους ἐλαύνεσθαι, κουφοτέρᾳ γάρ ἐστι τῶν ἀδικημάτων ἡ ζημία, λίθοις δὲ βαλλομένους ἀπολωλέναι;

Is not this deed worthy of the pit⁹⁰? Shouldn't those who approve of such things be driven out like the *pharmakoi*, not struck with wands - for the penalty is too light for the crimes - but put to death by stoning?

SUDA

The *Suda* is the name of a Greek literary encyclopaedia (lexicon) compiled at the end of the tenth century AD. It contains an entry on the *pharmakos*.

T. 53 = *Sud.* s.v. φαρμακός (Adler⁹¹)

ὁ ἐπὶ καθαρχῷ πόλεως ἀναιρούμενος, ὃν λέγουσι κάθαρχμα.

the one who is removed for the purification of the city, whom they call *katharma*.

PHOTIUS

Photius is the ninth century AD scholar and patriarch of Byzantium, whose learned work we came across above already (T. 49). His work contains two more relevant references.

T. 54 = Phot. s.v. περίψημα (Naber⁹²)

Περίψημα· κάταμαγμα⁹³. ἢ ὑπὸ τὰ ἴχνη· ἢ ἀπολύτρωσις. οὕτως ἐπέλεγον τῷ κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἐμβαλλομένῳ τῇ θαλάσσει νεανία ἐπ' ἀπαλλαγῇ τῶν συνεχόντων

⁸⁸Translation C.A. Behr, *P. Aelius Aristides. The Complete Works*. Vol. 1 (Leiden 1986) (with minor adaptations).

⁸⁹F.C. Hertlein, *Juliani Imperatoris quae supersunt praeter reliquias apud Cyrillum omnia* (Leipzig 1875-1876).

⁹⁰ὁ βάραθρος was a cleft in Athens into which criminals were thrown, see *LSJ* s.v. See also *Ar. Nu.* 1450; *Hdt.* 7.133.

⁹¹A. Adler, *Suidae Lexicon. Vol. 4* (Leipzig 1935).

⁹²S.A. Naber, *Photii Patriarchae Lexicon* (Leiden 1964). The same entry can also be found in *Sud.* s.v. περίψημα (Adler).

κακῶν· περίψημα ἡμῶν γενοῦ. ἦτοι σωτηρία καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις· καὶ οὕτως ἐνέβαλον τῇ θαλάσσει, ὥσανεὶ τῷ Ποσειδῶνι θυσίαν ἀποτινύντες.

Peripsēma; something wiped off or that which is under the shoes or ransoming. Thus they said every year to the young man who was thrown into the sea for the sake of the removal of the ills that held them in their grip: be(come)⁹⁴ our offscourings⁹⁵, that is our deliverance and ransoming. And they cast him into the sea in such a way, just as if they were paying a due sacrifice to Poseidon.

T. 55 = Phot. s.v. φαρμακός (Naber⁹⁶)

φαρμακός· τὸ κάθαρμα, βραχέως. οἱ δὲ Ἴωνες ἐκτείνοντες λέγουσι φαρμακόν· οὗτοι γὰρ διὰ τὴν τῶν βαρβάρων παροίκησιν ἐλυμήναντο τῆς διαλέκτου τὸ πάτριον, τὰ μέτρα, τοὺς χρόνους. δηλοῖ καὶ Ἰππῶναξ.

pharmakos; the *katharma*, with a short vowel. But the Ionians, lengthening the vowel, say *pharmakos*: for they, due to the fact that they live close to the foreigners, brought damage to their common language, with respect to the convention, to meter and to quantities. Also Hipponax shows this.

EUSTATHIUS

Eustathius lived in the latter half of the twelfth century AD, and was archbishop of Thessalonika. In his extensive commentary on Homer he made in passing mention of *pharmakoi*.

T. 56 = Eust. ad Hom. *Od.* 22, 481, p. 1935.15f (Stallbaum⁹⁷)

λέγονται δὲ ὡς οἱ περὶ τὴν τοιαύτην τέχνην καὶ μάλιστα οἱ τὰς πόλεις καθαίροντες φαρμακοὶ Ἀττικῶς ἐλέγοντο, καθὰ δηλοῖ καὶ ὁ Δημοσθένης, Ἴωνες δέ, φασι, προπαροξυτόνως. τοῦ δὲ τοιούτου καθαίρειν παράγωγα τὸ καθάρσιον καὶ τὸ κάθαρμα, ἐκεῖνο μὲν οὐ μωμητόν, τοῦτο δὲ ψεκτόν, ἀφ' οὗ καθάρματα τοὺς ῥυπαροὺς καὶ ἀποβλήτους φασμέν·

and they say that those who are concerned with such *technè* and especially the ones who purify the city were called *pharmakoi* in Attic Greek, as Demosthenes shows as well, but the Ionians accentuate on the antepenult. And from this *kathairein* are the derivations *katharsion* and *katharma*, the first not pejorative, the second very much so, whence we call the base and filthy folks *katharmata*.

⁹³Cod. κατάγμα.

⁹⁴In *genou* the idea of becoming must be acknowledged, and so one may argue that it can be read functionally, almost as 'serve as' instead of the personal and static 'be'.

⁹⁵See schol. Ar. *Pl.* 454e = T. 35.

⁹⁶S.A. Naber, *Photii Patriarchae Lexicon* (Leiden 1964).

⁹⁷G. Stallbaum, *Eustathii Archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis Commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam* (Leipzig 1825).

HERODIAN

Herodian was a specialist on Greek accents, who lived in the latter half of the second century AD. There are two references to *pharmakoi* in his work.

T. 57 = Hdn. 1.150, 3-4 (Lentz I) = Arc. 51.10 (Barker)⁹⁸

φαρμακός· ὁ ἐπὶ καθαρωῇ τῆς πόλεως τελευτῶν, φάρμακος δὲ ὁ γόης.

a *pharmakós*; the one who dies for the purification of the city, but a *phármakos* is a magician.

T. 58 = Hdn. 2.128, 12 (Lentz II)⁹⁹

φυλακούς· Ἀρίσταρχος κατ' ὀξεῖαν τάσιν προεφέρειτο ὡς φρουρούς. ἔστι δὲ καὶ ὁ λόγος συναγωνιζόμενος τῇ ὀξεΐᾳ τάσει ὅπως, ὡς τὰ εἰς *κος* καθαρὸν λήγοντα ὑπὲρ δύο συλλαβάς, παραληγόμενα τῷ *α*, προσηγορικὰ ἢ ἐπίθετα ὀξύνεται, ἀνακός, φαρμακός, φυλακός·

phylakous (guards): Aristarchos cited [it] with oxytone accentuation, just as *phrourous* (watchers). In fact, the rule, supporting the oxytone accentuation, is as follows, that the appellatives or adjectives in *-kos* with a preceding vowel, ending in more than two syllables, ending on *-a* in the penultimate syllable, have oxytone accentuation, as *anakos*, *pharmakos*, *phylakos*.

(Ps.) AMMONIUS

De adfinium vocabulorum differentia transmitted under the name of Ammonius draws on the work of Herrenios Philon, who lived in the first half of the 2nd century AD.

T. 59 = (Ps.) Ammon. 494 (p. 128 Nickau¹⁰⁰)

φαρμακός δὲ ὀξυτόνως, ὁ ἐπὶ καθάρσει τῆς πόλεως ῥιπτόμενος.

and a *pharmakos* is accented on the ultima, the one who is thrown out/off for the purification of the city¹⁰¹.

⁹⁸There is one small variation: Arc. 51.10 adds *φαρμακεὺς δὲ ὁ γόης*. Arcadius Grammaticus probably lived in the 4th century AD and published excerpts from Herodianus.

⁹⁹Cf. E. M. 802.5f.; Eust. *Comm. ad Hom. Il.* 4.955 (οὗς Ἀρίσταρχος λέγεται οὐ βαρυτόνως φυλάκους προφέρειν, ἀλλ' ὀξυτόνως, καὶ κανόνα παράγειν, ὡς τὰ εἰς <κος> ὑπὲρ δύο συλλαβάς, παραληγόμενα τῷ <α>, ἐπιθετικὰ ὄντα, ὀξύνονται· μαλακός, παρδακός, φαρμακός, ἀνακός). Comp. also Schol. in *Hom. Il. Vet.* 24.566 d1 and d2. Note that these remarks on Aristarchus (third century BC) do not regard accentuation, but concern instructions on the pitch in pronunciation (with consequences for the later accentuation).

¹⁰⁰K. Nickau, *Ammonius, De Adfinium Vocabulorum Differentia* (Leipzig 1966).

ANECDOTA GRAECA

The *ΛΕΞΕΙΣ ΠΗΤΟΙΚΑΙ* is a collection of ancient and Byzantine Greek passages, edited by a 19th-century German scholar.

T. 60 = *Anecd. Graeca* 1 s.v. (p. 315, 22 Bekker¹⁰²)

φαρμακός· ἄνθρωπος πονηρός

pharmakos: a worthless fellow

¹⁰¹ὑπτόμενος is slightly complicated, as it is employed here without further qualification, and has been translated by others as ‘being thrown over a cliff’, which it may well have implied, but we do not know for sure. Hughes 1991, 154 suggests ‘the one expelled for the purification of the city’, ‘though here too we would expect a prepositional phrase’.

¹⁰²I. Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca. Vol. 1* (Berlin 1814).

CONVENTIONS

For abbreviations of Greek literary sources see the lists in *LSJ*: H.G. Liddell, R. Scott and H.S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, available in several editions. Note however that in many cases the abbreviations have been expanded to forms that are easier intelligible. In cases of more obscure fragments or cases where disagreements of editors about the text are important for the argument, I have added in brackets the edition that is used.

Unless otherwise stated, translations of ancient sources are my own.

Frequently cited modern literature is referred to by author-date. Works mentioned only once or twice are cited in full in the footnotes and are not listed in the bibliography. Titles of journals are abbreviated according to the conventions of the *American Journal of Archaeology*, whose list is currently located at <http://www.ajaonline.org/>.

As a rule, I have Latinised Greek personal and geographical names. Only in cases where the results would be too awkward I have retained Greek forms.

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SAMENVATTING

“Waar is Menoeceus?” – Wanneer Teiresias deze vraag stelt in de *Phoenissae* van Euripides weten we dat Menoeceus’ laatste uur geslagen heeft. Thebe wordt belegerd, het bestaan van de stad wordt bedreigd door een strijd op leven en dood in de koninklijke familie. Er is geen hoop meer op verzoening. Red ons Zeus! Teiresias, de ziener, wordt ontboden: is er nog een kans op redding, kan de zieke stad nog genezen? De ziener weet, maar aarzelt. Het enige medicijn dat rest is wel heel erg bitter. Maar Creon, vader van Menoeceus, en oom van de twee strijdende troonpretendenten, dringt aan: “Spreek, ziener, wat kan de stad en de burgers redden?” Het is dan dat Teiresias vraagt: “Waar is Menoeceus?”

De spanning in deze passage is het werk van een groot kunstenaar. De tragedie is weliswaar de unieke geestesvrucht van Euripides, maar is tegelijkertijd diep geworteld in de antiek Griekse mentaliteit. Teiresias weet wat Menoeceus te doen staat, het publiek weet dat, wij weten het ook. Alleen Creon wil het (nog) niet weten. Menoeceus kan met zijn eigen dood de stad redden. Waarom precies blijft in het midden. Onderling inwisselbare en complementaire redenen worden hiervoor aangevoerd. De *Phoenissae* exploreert een antiek Griekse crisissituatie en antiek Grieks crisis management tot het uiterste. Een jonge man van goede komaf, Menoeceus, sterft om zijn vaderland te redden. Maar de oude, vervloekende, blinde koning Oedipus, de belichaming van het onheil zelf, moet daarna ook de stad nog uit. Pas dan kunnen de Thebanen weer in voorspoed leven.

Het proefschrift ‘Saving the City. Ambiguities in ancient Greek Crisis Management’ onderzoekt bepaalde typen antiek Griekse reacties op crisissituaties aan de hand van drie clusters van fenomenen, waarin mensen een centrale rol spelen als slachtoffers en reddingbrengers in situaties van nood. Ten eerste de zogenaamde *pharmakos*-riten, ten tweede mythen over mensoffers en, ten slotte, verhalen over gedwongen kolonisaties. De *pharmakos*-riten zijn (jaarlijks terugkerende) reinigingsriten die plaats vonden in diverse Griekse gemeenschappen, waarbij een of twee mensen van nederige status buiten de grenzen van de gemeenschap werden verbannen. Deze riten werden waarschijnlijk in de 6^{de} eeuw v.C. op diverse plekken

in de Griekse wereld gepraktiseerd, en misschien ook nog eerder en later. De mythen over mensoffers gaan daarentegen stevast over edele maagden en mooie jonge mannen zoals Menoeceus, en soms zelfs over een koning: over waardevolle mensen die, meestal vrijwillig, hun leven gaven ten behoeve van de gemeenschap in nood. De kolonisatieverhalen, ten slotte, worden gekenmerkt door de uitstoting van een groep van (jonge) gemeenschapsleden, al dan niet gewijd aan een godheid, als reactie op een ernstige crisis. De grondstructuur van deze fenomenen is derhalve vergelijkbaar: er doet zich telkens een crisis voor die kan worden overwonnen, al dan niet op instigatie van een orakel of een ziener, door het verwijderen of doden van één of enkele leden van de gemeenschap.

Op het eerste gezicht lijken de overeenkomsten echter niet veel verder te reiken dan deze grondstructuur en springen met name de verschillen tussen de drie fenomenen in het oog: de slachtoffers, waardeloos uitschot of juist waardevolle inwoners van de gemeenschap, worden ofwel verjaagd ('weggezuiverd') ofwel geofferd (gewijd aan een godheid), hetzij tijdens een jaarlijks feest, hetzij in tijden van nood. Voor de ene oplossing wordt hoofdzakelijk reinigingsterminologie gebruikt, voor de andere oplossing wordt terminologie uit de offersfeer gehanteerd.

Nadere bestudering van het bronnenmateriaal wijst echter uit dat de verschillen veel kleiner zijn dan verondersteld. Vaak worden ze zelfs overbrugd. Ten eerste blijken de jaarlijkse feesten een spannend keerpunt (*krisis*) in het (agri-)culturele jaar te markeren en kunnen zij derhalve ook als (anticiperend) crisismanagement worden beschouwd. Ten tweede blijkt een exclusief negatieve status van de rituele slachtoffers niet altijd aanwijsbaar, terwijl in de mythen en kolonisatieverhalen het positieve imago van de slachtoffers ook een keerzijde blijkt te hebben. Bovendien blijkt dat de twee belangrijkste remedies, het reinigen (het vuil verwijderen) en het offeren (wijden), niet helder en eenduidig van elkaar kunnen worden onderscheiden. Uiteindelijk blijkt tevens dat vocabulaire uit de offercontext en reinigingsterminologie door elkaar gebruikt worden. Een grondige bestudering van de drie clusters van fenomenen wijst uit dat zij verschijningsvormen, functies en betekenissen delen die een gemeenschappelijke analyse van hen rechtvaardigt. Deze analyse toont dat de aanvankelijk geconstateerde verschillen tussen de fenomenen bij nadere bestudering de sleutel vormen tot een dieper inzicht in Grieks crisis management. De verwevenheid van offer- en reinigingsactiviteiten in situaties van (dreigend) onheil veroorzaakt de meeste inconsistenties in het materiaal. Deze

verwevenheid kan worden verklaard wanneer men zich realiseert dat de antiek Griekse voorstelling van orde gebaseerd was op de afwezigheid van een evenwichtverstorend element en tegelijkertijd ook op een goede verstandhouding met de goden. Verstoring van dat goddelijke evenwicht, crisis dus, vereiste derhalve een dubbele remedie: de verwijdering van het verstorende element én het herstel van de goede relatie met het goddelijke.

Het proefschrift bestaat uit vijf delen. Het eerste deel is inleidend, bevat de ‘warming-up’ door de *Phoenissae*, en een inleiding. De eigenlijke bestudering van de riten, de mythen en de kolonisatieverhalen beslaat de delen twee tot en met vier. Daarbij komen interpretaties vanuit diverse wetenschappelijke invalshoeken aan bod. Het laatste deel, deel vijf, biedt de eigenlijke ‘ontknoping’, het inzicht dat crisismanagement dikwijls een dubbel doel moest dienen.

Een studie als deze ziet zich bij uitstek geconfronteerd met bekende, algemene methodologische problemen. Het gebrek aan bronnenmateriaal in de eerste plaats, maar ook het feit dat de bronnen die beschikbaar zijn betrekking hebben op verschillende plaatsen in verschillende tijden, in dit geval soms zelfs uit de Byzantijnse tijd stammen. Daarnaast speelt ook hier het eeuwige probleem van de spanning tussen moderne theoretische concepten en de antieke praktijk een rol. Hoewel voortdurend rekening wordt gehouden met deze methodologische problemen en valkuilen, is het methodologische uitgangspunt in beginsel ‘inclusief’. Dat betekent dat geprobeerd wordt, in eerste instantie, materiaal beschikbaar te houden voor het onderzoek, in plaats van een al te schielijke, en daardoor voorbarige, eliminatie van bronnen op grond van een late datering of een geïsoleerde herkomst. In de gangbare ‘bronnenkritische’ schifting die andere wetenschappers geneigd zijn misschien iets eerder toe te passen, speelt overigens interpretatie altijd een grote rol. Late bronnen die een bepaalde, door de auteur gewenste interpretatie ondersteunen zijn stevast minder verdacht dan late bronnen die het tegendeel beweren. Het uitgangspunt in dit proefschrift is de eventuele beslissing tot diskwalificering van bronnen uit te stellen totdat een analyse gebaseerd op de meeste gegevens daartoe aanleiding blijkt te geven.

Dit proefschrift betreft in de eerste plaats een grondige bestudering van de *pharmakos* riten, de mythen over mensoffers en de verhalen over gedwongen kolonisaties. Over deze drie fenomenen zijn weliswaar al diverse studies verschenen, maar de aard van deze publicaties verschilt sterk van de voorliggende studie.

Methodisch is de aanpak, de ‘inclusieve’ benadering (zelfs als het inconsistenties betreft) uiterst vruchtbaar gebleken. De wijze waarop de inconsistenties en ambiguïteiten in het bronnenmateriaal in het licht van de verwevenheid van reiniging en offer in de context van crisis worden geplaatst is nieuw, evenals de vaststelling, dankzij het verbreden van de horizon in het laatste deel van deze studie, dat deze verwevenheid geen zeldzaam verschijnsel is in antiek Grieks crisismanagement. Ten slotte vormt ook de verklaring van deze verwevenheid vanuit de antiek Griekse voorstelling van orde en verstoring van orde een nieuw inzicht.

De riten, mythen en verhalen bieden een inzicht in de aard van antiek Grieks crisismanagement. De rol die menselijke slachtoffers hierin spelen staat wellicht dichter bij de Griekse verbeelding dan bij de ‘werkelijkheid’. Maar de wijze waarop in dit bronnenmateriaal de verwevenheid van offer en reiniging als structureel verschijnsel in antiek Grieks crisismanagement wordt uitvergroot, biedt een belangrijk aanknopingspunt voor het doorgronden van allerlei meer alledaagse reacties van de antieke Griek in nood. De samenhang is geen statisch of noodzakelijk gegeven: vaak bestaan reiniging en offer naast elkaar. Maar daar waar terminologie en karakterisering verwijzend naar de sfeer van het offer functioneren in een context van reiniging (en andersom), heft het nieuwe inzicht de noodzaak op om een deel van het bronnenmateriaal te verdoezelen of te herinterpreteren.

De bestudering van de *pharmakos*-riten zet de toon. Hoewel deze rite voornamelijk het aspect van reiniging vertegenwoordigt, blijkt deze jaarlijkse uitstoting van een of twee slachtoffer(s) een complexere procedure dan louter de verwijdering van de levende variant van uitvaagsel (*katharmata*). Bepaalde rituele ingrediënten behoren eerder in een offerachtige sfeer, zoals het feit dat het slachtoffer apart wordt geplaatst en gevoed, voorts diens rituele kledij, en sommige verwijzingen naar zijn uiteindelijke lot. De negatieve status van de *pharmakos* gaat gepaard met verwijzingen naar een positieve waardering in de rite. De naam *pharmakos*, maar ook de term *katharsion*, die eveneens voor het slachtoffer wordt gebruikt, blijken ambivalent, en compliceren het begrip van de rol en status van het slachtoffer in deze reinigingsrite verder.

Deze inconsistenties verzetten zich hardnekkig tegen traditioneel gehanteerde oplossingen. Verwijzingen naar rituele variatie in tijd of plaats of naar het specifieke genre van een bron bieden geen afdoende verklaring. Vaak ook wordt de oorzaak van de tegenstrijdige beschrijving van de riten bij de Byzantijnse geleerden gezocht. Zij

lijken echter eerder expliciet te maken wat al impliciet aanwezig was in de *pharmakos*-riten. We moeten dus uitgaan van wat op het eerste gezicht een aporie lijkt te zijn: de respectievelijke reeksen ‘reinigende uitstoting – negatief getypeerd slachtoffer – verwijdering onheil’ enerzijds en ‘offer – positief gewaardeerd slachtoffer – verzoening met een boze godheid’ anderzijds kunnen niet systematisch worden onderscheiden op grond van het bronnenmateriaal. Daar voegen zich andere ambiguïteiten bij. Bijvoorbeeld dat de rite van de *katapontismos*, het op rituele wijze in zee storten van een slachtoffer, waaraan volgens sommige bronnen de *pharmakos* wordt onderworpen, zowel als offer en als reiniging kan worden geïnterpreteerd. Ten slotte, zoals gezegd, zijn zelfs de rituele namen voor het slachtoffer polyïnterpreteerbaar.

Nadere bestudering van de historiografie van de *pharmakos*-rite bevestigt bovenstaande indruk van meerduidigheid. De Byzantijnse geleerden hadden al zowel expliciete offerterminologie geïntroduceerd in hun beschrijvingen van de rite, als de slachtoffers voor het eerst tot de levende variant van uitvaagsel (*katharmata*) bestempeld. Deze twee interpretaties van de rite zou een lang leven beschoren zijn. Aangezien wetenschappers sinds de 19^{de} eeuw hetzij de negatieve hetzij de positieve status van de slachtoffers en bepaalde elementen in de rite benadrukten (maar zelden of nooit beide kanten tegelijk onderkennen), lopen de bestaande interpretaties van de rite sterk uiteen, of spreken ze elkaar ronduit tegen. In deze lange periode is de *pharmakos* onder meer als slachtoffer van een offerrite beschouwd, als stervende en herboren vegetatiegodheid, maar ook als kwaadabsorberende spons die moest worden verwijderd. Steeds moesten de interpreten zich veel moeite getroosten om het weerbarstige bronnenmateriaal in een eenduidige interpretatie te dwingen, hetgeen meestal alleen lukte door een deel van het materiaal te verwerpen. Sommige geleerden wezen weliswaar op tegenstrijdigheden in de bronnen, maar deze ‘lostten zij op’, bijvoorbeeld door deze toe te schrijven aan de evolutie van de rite. Zo veronderstelde Harrison dat de rite uit twee verschillende interpretatielagen bestond: een oudere laag, de ‘echte’ rite, die werd gevormd door een reinigingsrite, en een recentere laag, waarin de rite werd geïnterpreteerd als een offerrite, omdat dat beter aansloot bij de ‘Olympische’ fase van de antiek Griekse religie. Anderen beweerden precies het omgekeerde en gingen uit van een oorspronkelijke offerrite die in een later stadium ‘ontaardde’ in een reinigingsceremonie. In plaats van deze competitie tussen twee onvereenigbare standpunten te continueren heeft dit proefschrift een ander uitgangspunt. Deze studie onderkent dat zowel het antiek

Griekse fenomeen reiniging als het Griekse offer aanknopingspunten biedt voor de interpretatie van de *pharmakos*-riten. Daarbij wordt dankbaar gebruik gemaakt van het werk van vorige generaties geleerden: zij hebben (vaak ongewild) de inconsistenties in de riten en de ambiguïteit van het slachtoffer, direct en indirect, vastgesteld.

De bestudering van crisismanagement in mythen heeft in de eerste plaats ons begrip voor menselijke (zelf)opoffering als effectieve remedie tegen vele vormen van onheil verdiept: het offeren van een waardevol lid van de gemeenschap, bijvoorbeeld ter verzoening van een vertoornde godheid, blijkt een beproefd medicijn in tijden van nood, althans in mythen. Bij nader inzien, echter, blijken ook deze mythen minder eenduidig dan verondersteld: ook hier duikt terminologie uit de context van reinigen op, bijvoorbeeld wanneer koning Athamas zijn land expliciet ‘reinigt’ met zijn (offer)dood, of in de legende over Epimenides’ reiniging van Athene door middel van twee mooie jongelingen. Bovendien komen behalve offerterminologie (zowel *thyein* als *sphazein*) ook meer ambivalente termen als *anairein* and *riptein* voor, begrippen die ook (en beter) passen in een reinigingscontext. Daarnaast blijken goden minder prominent aanwezig te zijn dan men zou verwachten in een context van offer en verzoening. Daaraan kan nog worden toegevoegd dat, bij nadere bestudering, zelfs de slachtoffers van crisismanagement in deze mythen meer ambivalentie vertonen dan men tot dusver heeft ingezien: hun waardevolle status gaat gepaard met een vorm van misbaarheid, of dat nu sociaal, moreel of anderszins wordt uitgedrukt (bijvoorbeeld een koning vermomd als bedelaar). Overigens blijkt ook nog uit het mythische materiaal dat niet alleen situaties van grote dreiging aanleiding konden geven tot een vorm van crisismanagement, maar ook uiterst voorspoedige tijden.

Vanuit een zogenoemd functionalistisch perspectief (waarbij niet zozeer de intentie van de handeling wordt bestudeerd, maar veel meer de functie of het effect ervan) zijn de hierboven besproken riten en mythen wel als onderling verwant beschouwd, niet op het niveau van de fenomenologie, maar op basis van overeenkomstige sociale, emotionele of psychologische functies, als ‘feel good’ riten en mythen. Geleerden hebben er al vaker op gewezen dat gedurende de hele geschiedenis van de mensheid het ‘wij tegen hem/hen’-principe zich als een buitengewoon effectieve gemeenschapversterkende overlevingsstrategie heeft bewezen. Agressie en geweld binnen de gemeenschap worden op deze wijze in een andere richting geleid en ten goede aangewend. Een nieuwe ambiguïteit kan worden

waargenomen: het afgedankte of afgestane slachtoffer is tevens de redder. Burkert, bijvoorbeeld, verklaart het gedrag van de mensen in de *pharmakos*-rite door de parallel te trekken met een groep dieren die belaagd wordt door roofdieren en zich alleen kan redden door een lid van de groep (meestal de zwakste) af te staan. Girard, op zijn beurt, beschouwt wat hij noemt het zondebokmechanisme als het basismechanisme van iedere beschaving, waarin steeds opnieuw zich opeenstapelende onderlinge agressie in een gemeenschap unaniem op een slachtoffer (groep slachtoffers) wordt gericht, wiens gewelddadige dood zo alle destructieve geweld kanaliseert en transformeert. Als gevolg daarvan wordt de gemeenschap herenigd en kan zij voortbestaan. Versnel introduceert nog een ander principe van (menselijk) gedrag: het dwangmatige gevoel dat op de een of andere manier compensatie gegeven moet worden voor alles wat men in het leven krijgt of wenst te krijgen: voor wat hoort wat.

Vanuit deze functionalistische invalshoek werden de verschillen tussen riten en mythen op het niveau van de waarneming genegeerd door sommigen, maar benadrukt door anderen. Burkert benadrukte juist de verschillen en scheidde mythen en riten definitief door aan beide een zeer uiteenlopende sociobiologische oorsprong toe te dichten. Girard daarentegen maakte in het geheel geen onderscheid tussen de riten en mythen en beschouwde ze allemaal als uitingen van zijn ‘zondebokmechanisme’. Versnel erkende de verschillen maar achtte deze niet relevant binnen zijn verklaringsmodel dat diverse verschijningsvormen kon omvatten. Vergelijking tussen riten en mythen werd vanuit dit perspectief derhalve vergemakkelijkt, al werd daarbij de fenomenologische aspecten niet op alle niveaus recht gedaan.

Een subvariant op deze invalshoek is het verklaringsmodel waarbinnen de mythen over mensoffers beschouwd worden als ‘symbool’ van iets anders, van initiatiegebruiken bijvoorbeeld. Op de achtergrond speelt daarbij steeds de vraag of mensoffers wel of niet in werkelijkheid hebben plaats gevonden in een (ver) Grieks verleden. Zij die deze vraag ontkennend beantwoorden zoeken een andere *raison d'être* voor deze verhalen. Bonnechere, bijvoorbeeld, als een van de belangrijkste vertegenwoordigers van deze benadering, beschouwt de mensoffers in de mythen als transformatie van de symbolische dood van adolescenten in initiatieriten (mythes de passages naast rites de passages). Tegen deze achtergrond verdwijnen de *pharmakos*-riten haast geheel uit het zicht. Weliswaar behandelt Bonnechere deze wel in zijn

boek over mensoffers, maar hij concludeert dat dit type rite pas in een later stadium zijn invloed deed gelden op enkele legenden over mensoffers. Voor hem zijn offer en reiniging geheel verschillende fenomenen die in de loop der tijd, als secundaire ontwikkeling, in sommige gevallen met elkaar in verband werden gebracht. De cruciale verschillen tussen de *pharmakos*-riten en de mythen over mensoffers zijn in zijn ogen gelegen in de status en het uiteindelijke lot van de slachtoffers en in de betrokkenheid van het goddelijke. Er zijn zowel algemene als meer specifieke bezwaren in te brengen tegen de benaderingen van de voorstanders van het initiatiedenken. Los van deze meer principiële discussie, valt echter nog iets op: juist waar Bonnechere de cruciale verschillen tussen *pharmakos*-riten en mythen over mensoffers lokaliseert, ligt, zoals we gezien hebben, eigenlijk de grootste gemene deler. De status van de slachtoffers is zowel in de ritens als in de mythen minder eenduidig negatief of positief, hun uiteindelijke lot kan eveneens minder scherp onderscheiden worden dan Bonnechere suggereert en de expliciete betrokkenheid van de goden bij mensoffers blijkt ook genuanceerder te liggen en wijkt soms nauwelijks af van die bij reinigingsriten.

Na de bestudering van de offermythen en een verdieping in bovengenoemde benaderingen van het materiaal dringt de vraag zich op hoe het komt dat de *pharmakos*-riten en de mythen over mensoffers zowel vergelijkbaar (contra Bonnechere) als verschillend (contra Girard) zijn. Deze vraag krijgt extra nadruk doordat, zoals we zagen, deze verschillen en overeenkomsten niet alleen tussen mythen en ritens, maar ook binnen de clusters van respectievelijk *pharmakos*-riten en mythen over mensoffers bestaan.

De bestudering van de verhalen over gedwongen kolonisaties levert een nieuwe bijdrage tot het begrijpen van antiek Grieks crisismanagement in het algemeen. In noodsituaties, maar ook in tijden van grote voorspoed, kon een gemeenschap zichzelf redden door een deel van de eigen, waarschijnlijk vooral jonge, bevolking uit te stoten. Er zijn twee typen van dat soort gedwongen kolonisaties, die op het eerste gezicht nogal verschillend lijken: de zogenaamde *dekateusis*-verhalen, waarin de uitstoting de vorm krijgt van een wijding aan Apollo, en de 'reinigings'-verhalen, waarin de uitgestoten worden getypeerd als '*atimoi*', als eerlozen, als schaamteloze verstorelingen. Bij nader inzien echter vertonen deze *dekateusis*- en reinigingsverhalen niet alleen vergelijkbare verhaalpatronen met elementen als gemeenschappelijke crisis, raadpleging van een orakel, uitstoting en

stichting van een kolonie, maar komen zij ook overeen waar het de status van de slachtoffers betreft. De *hieroi*, de gewijden, uit de *dekateusis* blijken als bezoedelden beschouwd te worden wanneer ze onverhoeds terugkeren naar hun vroegere gemeenschap. Anderzijds zijn de bezoedelde moordenaar, het rebellerende uitschot en de stotterende bastaard tegelijkertijd de speciale beschermelingen van de godheid. Een combinatie van elementen komt ook voor: Battus, de aanvoerder van de verbannen inwoners van Thera is een stotterende bastaard van nobele komaf, terwijl de door de godheid aangewezen leider van de Magneten een adellijke moordenaar is. Rechtsom of linksom, via offerachtige wijding of reinigende verwijdering, de slachtoffers van gedwongen kolonisaties eindigen allemaal in een soort 'Anderland'. Verhalen die weliswaar uit een Italische context komen, maar waarin expliciet parallellen getrokken worden met oud Griekse praktijken, bevestigen de eerdere observaties. Dat wat hetzelfde functioneert, reinigende uitstoting en offerachtige wijding, kan op tekstueel niveau als elkaars equivalent worden gebruikt, of worden gecombineerd in een en dezelfde uitdrukking (*kathieroun*). Bovendien wordt de eerdere vaststelling bevestigd dat dergelijke remedies niet alleen in tijden van nood, maar ook in tijden van grote voorspoed konden worden aangewend.

In het voorgaande stelden we reeds ambivalentie in de status van de slachtoffers in de riten en mythen vast. Hieraan kunnen nu ook de slachtoffers uit de kolonisatieverhalen worden toegevoegd. In enkele eerdere studies werd (een spoor van) dubbelheid in de status van de slachtoffers door anderen al opgemerkt. De wijze waarop vervolgens met de waargenomen ambivalentie werd omgegaan is echter onbevredigend. Burkert, bijvoorbeeld, spreekt van een incidentele ontmoeting van uitersten, terwijl toch een telkens terugkerende ambivalentie kan worden vastgesteld. Burkert verklaart overigens de tegenstelling tussen prominente en marginale reddingbrengers als het resultaat van twee verschillende strategieën om de gebeurtenissen achteraf te legitimeren (ontmenselijken enerzijds of verheerlijken anderzijds). Echter, zo blijkt in het vijfde deel van deze studie, een vergelijkbare tweeslachtigheid kan worden waargenomen in de waardering van objecten die in vergelijkbare procedures van crisismanagement worden gebruikt. Bremmer, die als eerste wees op de meer structurele ambivalentie van de protagonisten van ritueel en mythisch crisismanagement, werkte die ambivalentie verder niet uit, noch betrok hij deze constatering in zijn verdere interpretatie van deze riten en mythen. Kearns nam eveneens een tweeslachtigheid waar in de protagonisten van riten en mythen,

namelijk van held én slachtoffer, van centrale én marginale figuur, maar beperkte haar interpretatie tot de betekenis van die ambiguïteit: reddingbrengers moesten in antiek Griekse ogen wel buitenstanders zijn. Dit is een interessante suggestie, die overigens de antiek Griekse context lijkt te ontstijgen, maar *verklaart* dit ook de ambivalentie?

Vanuit een perspectief dat semiotisch genoemd zou kunnen worden (waarbij de, eventueel te decoderen, *betekenis* van een fenomeen in het grotere culturele geheel centraal staat), verkleinen, of verdwijnen zelfs, de verschillen tussen reiniging en offer (wijding). In de eerste plaats kan verbanning als ‘sociale dood’ worden gezien, hetgeen een brug slaat naar het daadwerkelijke doden van een mens in bijvoorbeeld de mythen. Bovendien kunnen offer en reiniging, behalve op het ‘smalle’ niveau van interpretatieve van de fenomenologie (de waarneming en de daaraan gekoppelde zingeving), ook benaderd worden als overgangsstrategieën, door middel waarvan een gemeenschap orde op zaken stelt (Douglas, Turner). Door te definiëren en te onderscheiden wat bij de gemeenschap hoort en wat niet, en door de aldus gecreëerde ‘Anderen’ over te hevelen naar een domein dat ‘Anderland’ genoemd zou kunnen worden (eveneens gedefinieerd door alles wat niet tot het hier en nu van de gemeenschap behoort), herstelt en herdefinieert een gemeenschap de normale orde. Slaan en stenigen hebben in dit perspectief niet langer een uitsluitend intrinsieke betekenis, maar zijn expressieve, differentiërende en stigmatiserende handelingen. Zo beschouwd verschillen reiniging en offer niet meer wezenlijk.

Deze herdefinitie van wat eigen aan de gemeenschap is vindt, zowel in de rituelen als de mythen en de kolonisatieverhalen ook letterlijk plaats: grenzen worden vernieuwd en benadrukt, het ‘binnen’ en ‘buiten’ geherdefinieerd. Processies beginnen in het centrum om te eindigen buiten het grondgebied, en trekken buiten de muren rondom de stad. Het hier en daar, orde en chaos, het eigene en het andere worden zo voor allen helder gemaakt. Het zelfbeeld opgewreven tot het zo glimt dat de Ander zich er in gespiegeld weet.

Vanuit een dergelijk structuralistisch-semiotisch perspectief krijgt het Andere, zich manifesterend in plaats, tijd, status of symbolen, dikwijls een vorm van sacraliteit toegedicht. Zo’n benadering lijkt vruchtbaar in de context van deze studie. De ambivalentie van de slachtoffers en ook andere inconsistenties in het materiaal kunnen in de context van sacraliteit worden geduid. Het lijkt erop dat zowel in de rituelen als in de mythen en de kolonisatieverhalen de slachtoffers naar een sfeer van

sacraliteit worden overgeheveld. Dit gebeurt ofwel letterlijk, door hen *hieroi* te maken, of *devoti*, en hen als zodanig uit te stoten uit de gemeenschap, of rechtsreeks, door hen te wijden en vervolgens te offeren aan een godheid, of symbolisch, door hen af te zonderen en te voeden, als dieren die in gereedheid worden gebracht voor het altaar, en dan over de grenzen van de gemeenschap te jagen. Via een ‘negatieve’ verwijdering of een ‘positieve’ wijding, de slachtoffers van antiek Grieks crisismanagement kwamen in beide gevallen terecht in een sfeer van sacraliteit.

Het sacraliteitsconcept is controversieel. Geleerden hebben vanuit diverse wetenschappelijke invalshoeken gewezen op de ambivalentie van het heilige. Het concept draagt een lange traditie van betekenisgeving mee, zowel in de studie van de oude Grieken, als in de antropologie en godsdienstwetenschap. Tegenwoordig wordt door sommigen overigens, in elk geval binnen de studie van het oude Griekenland, het bestaansrecht van het concept überhaupt betwist. Maar zoals blijkt uit het voorgaande gebruik van minstens even hachelijke termen als ‘mythe’ en ‘rite’, is het vermijden van moderne conceptuele terminologie uiteindelijk niet de meest bevredigende oplossing. Wel dienen de begrippen, om dienst te kunnen doen als heuristische instrumenten, nauwkeurig te worden gedefinieerd. Sommige geleerden veronderstellen, zoals gezegd, een structurele ambivalentie van het heilige. Bij nadere bestudering blijkt dat deze structurele ambivalentie beter niet kan worden overdreven. Hoewel er in de Griekse taal een zekere (etymologische) verwantschap kan worden verondersteld tussen bepaalde termen die de meer ‘positieve’ en de meer ‘negatieve’ kanten van deze sacraliteit uitdrukken, is de desbetreffende terminologie meer gedifferentieerd. De suggestie dat de ambivalentie van de slachtoffers een gevolg zou kunnen zijn van een eventuele ambivalentie van het heilige, lijkt dan ook te sterk. Bovendien lijken sommige bronnen al te wijzen op een ambivalente status van slachtoffers in een stadium voor hun rituele of mythische verbanning naar het domein van het heilige. Wel zou men, veel voorzichtiger, kunnen stellen dat de potentiële ambivalentie van het heilige, los van de vraag wat dit heilige nu precies inhoudt, de vastgestelde ambivalente status van de slachtoffers in elk geval kan herbergen, of zelfs versterken.

Aan het eind van deel vier werd vastgesteld dat een gecombineerde benadering (vanuit verschillende wetenschappelijke perspectieven) van de drie fenomenen die centraal staan in dit onderzoek niet alleen gerechtvaardigd is, maar tevens noodzakelijk voor een beter begrip van antiek Grieks crisismanagement. De

fenomenen verhelderen elkaar op verschillende manieren. Door zich te bevrijden van de beperkingen van de ‘smalle’ definities van offer en reiniging (het aanbieden van iets waardevols versus de verwijdering van uitvaagsel) ontstaat ruimte voor het inzicht dat offer en reiniging in bepaalde omstandigheden op vergelijkbare wijze gewerkt kunnen hebben. Vergelijkbaar in hun sociale en psychologische functie voor de gemeenschap en zelfs vergelijkbaar in hun differentiërende structuur. Ook al verbleken de aanvankelijk vastgestelde verschillen bij dergelijke punten van overeenkomst, verschillen blijven natuurlijk bestaan, met name op het niveau van de waarneming en de terminologie: op dat eerste niveau van wat we de ‘smalle’ definitie van offer en reiniging hebben genoemd. Een poging om de verschillen op het gebied van de waarneming te verklaren vanuit een structurele ambivalentie van het heilige, bleek onbevredigend.

Met andere woorden: overeenkomsten in sociale en psychologische functies en structuur zijn niet hetzelfde als en mogen niet leiden tot een volledige identificatie van deze twee remedies, offer en reiniging, in tijden van crisis. Noch verklaren dergelijke overeenkomsten op zich het feit dat terminologie en eigenschappen van offer en reiniging door elkaar worden gebruikt in beschrijvingen van antiek Grieks crisismanagement.

De opmerkelijke verwevenheid van offer en reiniging in antiek Grieks crisismanagement vormt ten slotte het onderwerp van het laatste hoofdstuk van deze studie. Het is overigens, zoals gezegd, niet voor het allereerst dat een onderlinge relatie tussen offer en reiniging is opgemerkt, maar deze is nooit een zelfstandig onderwerp van studie geweest als een structurerend fenomeen in de context van crisismanagement. Met andere woorden: precies daar waar inconsistentie kan worden vastgesteld binnen de bestudeerde fenomenen, en verschillen kunnen worden aangewezen tussen riten, mythen en kolonisatieverhalen, ligt de sleutel tot een beter begrip van antiek Grieks crisismanagement.

Hiertoe moest de horizon van het onderzoek opnieuw worden verlegd. De verwevenheid van elementen van offer en reiniging beperkt zich namelijk geenszins tot de hiervoor bestudeerde riten, mythen en kolonisatieverhalen met menselijke slachtoffers, maar kan ook worden aangetroffen in de context van allerlei andere Griekse crisis- en overgangssituaties. Opnieuw kon worden vastgesteld dat goden hierbij niet altijd aanwezig zijn in een offercontext, noch stevast afwezig in de sfeer van reiniging. Als goden aanwezig zijn, blijkt hun betrokkenheid bovendien sterk te

kunnen variëren: soms worden ze alleen maar aangeroepen, soms moeten ze gunstig gestemd worden, maar soms ook moeten zij juist op afstand worden gehouden. Niet zelden, overigens, worden diverse mogelijkheden gecombineerd. Ook in deze andere vormen van crisismanagement vertonen de objecten (of slachtoffers) hybride trekken. Bovendien blijkt dat niet alleen rituele terminologie zich leent voor meerdere (tegenstrijdige) interpretaties, overigens zowel in commentaren van antieke scholiasten als in verschillende edities van een modern woordenboek, maar ook dat rituele activiteiten niet eenduidig zijn, in handeling (*katharmos*) of zelfs in aard (*ekthyesthai*). Ten slotte kon uit Parker's analyse van twee belangrijke begrippen in de context van crisismanagement, *agos* en *miasma*, op het eerste gezicht (en vaak geïnterpreteerd als) gerelateerd aan respectievelijk offer en reiniging, worden opgemaakt dat ook deze twee begripssparen bij nadere bestudering de bovengenoemde categorisering doorbreken. De bestudering van dit nieuwe materiaal bevestigt derhalve de conclusie die op basis van de uitgebreidere analyse van de riten, mythen en kolonisatieverhalen werd getrokken: de verwevenheid van elementen en terminologie uit offer- en reinigingscontext is geen toevallig incident, maar kan worden beschouwd als een structureel potentieel van antiek Grieks crisismanagement.

De volgende stap die genomen moest worden betreft de concepten offer en reiniging als zodanig. Al in de delen over de riten en de mythen bleek dat deze concepten voor toepassing op de Griekse Oudheid heroverweging behoeften. De vraag drong zich namelijk op of er geen dichotomieën worden *gecreëerd* door in de smalle definitie van beide te nadrukkelijk de aandacht te richten op dat wat slechts onderlinge accentverschillen zouden kunnen zijn.

Inderdaad zijn het 'zuivere' offer (in de eerder voorgestelde 'smalle' definitie van een waardevol geschenk voor een [vertoornde] god) en de 'zuivere' reiniging (in de eerder voorgestelde 'smalle' definitie van de verwijdering van de levende variant van uitvaagsel) lang niet altijd expliciet herkenbaar. Antieke terminologie en praktijk blijken veel complexer dan onze enkelvoudige moderne begrippen 'offer' en 'reiniging' doen vermoeden. Talrijke wetenschappers uit verschillende disciplines hebben in de loop van vele jaren geworsteld met deze concepten. In de studie van de Griekse Oudheid bleek het materiaal in de context van dit onderzoek, situaties van crisis en overgang, weerbarstig. Alles wat niet goed paste binnen de voorgestelde definities van offer en reiniging werd of geherinterpreteerd, of verworpen als niet-

authentiek. Soms ook werden de definities van offer en reiniging zo ver mogelijk opgerekt, zodat zij uiteenlopende verschijnselen konden herbergen, hetgeen uiteindelijk ten koste ging van de bruikbaarheid en verklarende waarde van beide concepten. Een potentieel belangrijke ontwikkeling in de context van crisismanagement is de introductie van de categorie ‘Heilige Handlungen’ of ‘powerful actions’, ter aanduiding van bijzondere, ‘abnormale’ offers in tijden van nood, zoals de *sphagia*-rituelen, waarbij veelal geen god is betrokken. De nadruk zou daarbij liggen op de ééndimensionale, krachtige handeling van vernietiging of scheiding, veel meer dan op enige vorm van communicatie met de goden. Veel van deze ‘powerful actions’ vallen samen met het materiaal in dit onderzoek.

Het is echter de vraag of het creëren van een aparte categorie het begrip van dit materiaal bevordert. Er zijn dan wel weinige ‘zuivere’ voorbeelden van offer en reiniging in de context van crisismanagement te vinden, maar er zijn wel degelijk duidelijke echo’s van zowel een antiek Griekse offer- als van een reinigingsideologie aanwezig in ons materiaal, van ‘waardevolle slachtoffers aangeboden aan een godheid (ter verzoening of compensatie van het een of ander)’ en van de ‘verwijdering van menselijk uitvaagsel’. Het lijkt derhalve onjuist om de concepten offer en reiniging geheel los te laten in deze context en een aparte categorie van ‘powerful actions’ te creëren.

In plaats van het verdoezelen van bronnenmateriaal, of het herinterpreteren ervan, in plaats van het eindeloos oprekken van definities of het creëren van nieuwe categorieën, moeten we vaststellen dat offer en reiniging twee onderling verschillende fenomenen zijn, met een eigen vocabulaire, die in tijden van nood, om de een of andere reden, overlappen of zelfs samenvallen. Op deze wijze kan op conceptueel vlak een onderscheid tussen reiniging en offer gehandhaafd blijven, terwijl men niet gedwongen wordt bij de interpretatie van het bronnenmateriaal een keuze te maken voor de een en de ander uit de discussie te elimineren. De ambivalente status van het slachtoffer kan beschouwd worden als de perfecte belichaming van deze verwevenheid.

Ten slotte is er een poging ondernomen om deze verwevenheid te begrijpen: waarom vormen offer en reiniging in tijden van nood zo’n passende en steeds terugkerende combinatie? We zagen dat beide beschouwd kunnen worden als herordeningsstrategieën van een gemeenschap. Deze ‘ruimere’ interpretatie van offer en reiniging blijkt vruchtbaar op het ene interpretatieniveau, maar negeert de

opmerkelijke verstrengeling van beide fenomenen en de daarmee samenhangende inconsistenties in het bronnenmateriaal die oplichten vanuit een ander perspectief. Vanuit dat perspectief, op het niveau van de waarneming en zingeving van beide fenomenen, blijkt nadere bestudering van de antieke Griekse voorstelling van orde uitkomst te bieden.

Twee overbekende observaties blijken samen van groot belang. Ten eerste werden antiek Griekse ideeën over orde en gezondheid vaak uitgedrukt in termen van evenwicht, of het nu een kosmisch, een politiek of een fysiek evenwicht betrof. Verstoring van dat evenwicht voltrok zich van binnen naar buiten of van buiten naar binnen. Langs diezelfde as verliep de weg naar het herstel, meestal overigens van binnen naar buiten. Bestudering van de medische literatuur leert ons dat Griekse termen voor ‘reiniging’ bij uitstek gebezigd worden voor het afvoeren van het evenwicht verstorende element of het herstellen van het lichamelijk evenwicht via andere, bij voorkeur ‘uitdrijvende’ remedies. Daarnaast echter, en minstens zo belangrijk, bestond voor de Grieken orde, in lichaam, geest, staat en wereld, bij de gratie van een goede relatie met het goddelijke. Zo beschouwd is crisis derhalve de verstoring van een goddelijk (belichaamd, gesanctioneerd) evenwicht, en crisismanagement een poging dat evenwicht te herstellen. Crisismanagement bestaat derhalve uit twee strategieën: de eliminatie van de verstoring zelf (via die binnen-buiten as) en het herstellen van de relatie met de goden. Dit zou het dubbele doel van Grieks crisis management genoemd kunnen worden.

Uiteindelijk zijn de omstandigheden van cruciaal belang om antiek Grieks crisismanagement werkelijk te doorgronden. Misschien leidt een of ander basisinstinct ertoe dat in benarde omstandigheden wordt gegeven (of afgestaan) om te overleven. Maar dergelijke algemene theorieën, hoe verhelderend op zich zelf ook, laten andere vragen op het niveau van de waarneming en de betekenisgeving onbeantwoord. Ideeën ten aanzien van een aangeboren gevoel voor de noodzaak van compensatie (Versnel) of het met betrekking tot het oergedrag van primaten in nood (Burkert) of het herleiden van agressie binnen een gemeenschap (Girard) bieden geen verklaring voor de verschillende vormen die dit instinctief gedrag in de culturele praktijk krijgt. Om antiek Grieks crisismanagement ook op dat niveau te doorgronden, moet men zich realiseren dat crisis werd beschouwd als de verstoring van de normale orde die als een goddelijk evenwicht werd gepercipieerd, een verstoring ofwel veroorzaakt van binnenuit, of van buitenaf. Orde op zaken stellen

impliceerde derhalve niet alleen de verwijdering van vuil, van de verstorende factor (of de drager daarvan), maar ook het herstel van de relatie met de goden.

Offeren en reinigen als reacties op noodsituaties, of dat wat crisismanagement genoemd zou kunnen worden, dienden zo beschouwd het zelfde doel: beide remedies werden aangewend om de orde te herstellen, het door de goden gedragen, of gesanctioneerde, of zelfs belichaamde, evenwicht. Het doel van crisismanagement was tweeledig: het uitbannen van de verstorende factor en het herstel van de relatie met de goden. In situaties van nood of overgang vulden offeren en reinigen elkaar wederzijds aan, of vielen zelfs samen, als gevolg van dit dubbele doel.

Zo beschouwd is het niet langer verbazingwekkend dat, hoewel zij op zichzelf geen equivalenten zijn, een *agos* een *miasma* kon zijn, en een *lutron* een *katharma*, een offer de gemeenschap kon reinigen en een reiniging de goden kon betreffen. Ook hoeven de ambivalente slachtoffers van crisismanagement ons niet langer te verontrusten: zij belichamen de verwevenheid van de twee remedies.

Het systeem is verre van transparant. Nood breekt wet en het doel heiligt de middelen. Zoals we hebben gezien leent crisismanagement zich niet bijzonder voor de academische behoefte aan coherentie en consistentie. Crisismanagement is een kwestie van actie, en geen studeerkameraangelegenheid. Crisismanagement is vooral pragmatisch. Er is niet één oplossing. Goden en mensen kunnen allerlei rollen spelen. Maar de remedies die werden gekozen, op uiteenlopende plaatsen en uiteenlopende tijdstippen in de antiek Griekse geschiedenis, verteld en doorverteld op vele manieren en door vele verschillende monden, kunnen veel beter worden begrepen in het licht van dit dubbele doel van antiek Grieks crisismanagement.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Elisabeth Jennifer Brigida Knibbeler (Lily), geboren op 5 november 1968 in Laren, behaalde in 1986 haar Gymnasiumdiploma aan het Marnix College in Ede. In 1987 ontving zij ter gelegenheid van het 50-jarig bestaan van deze school een prijs voor bijzondere prestaties op het gebied van de Klassieke Talen. Na een jaar in het buitenland (Engeland, Zwitserland en Ghana) te hebben doorgebracht, begon zij in 1987 in Leiden haar studie Geschiedenis die zij in 1993 *cum laude* afsloot. Aanvankelijk oriënteerde zij zich breed en volgde zij vakken aan diverse faculteiten, maar aan het einde van haar studie specialiseerde zij zich in de Oude Geschiedenis, nadat zij onder meer een half jaar had gestudeerd in Parijs aan de École Pratique des Hautes Études (5ième section) en de École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. Het academisch jaar 1993-1994 was zij als Visiting Fellow verbonden aan het Classics Department van Harvard University in de V.S. Bij terugkomst werd zij aangesteld vanwege N.W.O. om een dissertatie over het zondebokmechanisme in de Oudheid voor te bereiden. Deze aanstelling werd diverse malen gecombineerd met tijdelijke docentschappen, zowel aan de Universiteit Leiden in 1996-1997 als in 1998-1999 aan de Universiteit Groningen. Daarnaast verbleef zij in 1997 voor een korte periode nogmaals aan Harvard University (op uitnodiging van het Ford Foundation Seminar) en in 1998 een trimester aan University College in Londen. Sinds 2000 is zij werkzaam bij het Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds.