THE "Orphic" Gold Tablets and Greek Religion

FURTHER ALONG THE PATH

EDITED BY
RADCLIFFE G. EDMONDS III

CAMBRIDGE

THE "ORPHIC" GOLD TABLETS AND GREEK RELIGION

The "Orphic" gold tablets, tiny scraps of gold foil found in graves throughout the ancient Greek world, are some of the most fascinating and baffling pieces of evidence for ancient Greek religion. This collection brings together a number of previously published and unpublished studies from scholars around the world, making accessible to a wider audience some of the new methodologies being applied to the study of these tablets. The volume also contains an updated edition of the tablet texts, reflecting the most recent discoveries and accompanied by English translations and critical apparatus. This survey of trends in the scholarship, with an up-to-date bibliography, not only provides an introduction to the serious study of the tablets, but also illuminates their place within scholarship on ancient Greek religion.

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Acknowledgements

In some sense, this volume represents the thoughts that emerged, not from a single conference, but from a series of conferences. The first was a conference, "Roads Not Taken: Explorations of the 'Orphic' Gold Tablets," which, under the guidance of our mentor, Christopher Faraone, I put together with Sarah Cohen in 1997 at the Franke Institute for the Humanities at the University of Chicago while we were both graduate students. At that conference, Hans Dieter Betz presented an English version of the paper he was preparing for the festschrift for Walter Burkert that was published the subsequent year. Fritz Graf presented an overview of the tablets and their place within Orphic eschatological literature, ideas which were subsequently adapted and published in an Italian collection. Thomas Dousa, then a graduate student at the Oriental Institute at Chicago, presented a version of the paper he has expanded and revised for this volume. The second conference was the Vergilian Society's Symposium Cumanum "The Cults of Magna Graecia," in June 2002, where I first met Alberto Bernabé and Ana Jiménez and began our long, stimulating, and fruitful dialogue about the nature of Orphic materials. The third conference was "Orfeo y el orfismo: nuevas perspectivas," organized by Bernabé and his colleague, Francesc Casadesús, in Mallorca, Spain, in February 2005. At this conference I met Christoph Riedweg and Miguel Herrero, and began to formulate the idea of putting together this volume, including the papers that Herrero and I presented at that conference.

Some additions have been made to the papers that grew out of these conferences, notably the seminal article of Claude Calame, which was so influential for subsequent scholarship, and the work of Yannis Tzifopoulos. Dirk Obbink's paper had been presented at the APA in 1992, but was never published, although it was cited several times by members of that original audience. Christopher Faraone, whose essay also appears in this volume, was the one who suggested that I try to get it published, and I thank him

and Dirk Obbink for their efforts in bringing this nearly lost text back into the light.

None of these essays has appeared in quite the same form before, but some have been translated or otherwise adapted from previously published pieces. Fritz Graf's chapter, "Text and Ritual: The Corpus Eschatologicum of the Orphics" was originally published as "Text and Ritual: The Corpus Eschatologicum of the Orphics," in *La letteratura pseudepigrafa nella cultura greca e romana, Atti di un incontro di studi Napoli, 15–17 gennaio 1998*, ed. Giovanni Cerri, Naples, 2000, pp. 59–77. "Are the 'Orphic' Gold Leaves Orphic?" by Alberto Bernabé and Ana I. Jiménez San Cristóbal is an adapted translation from their 2001 volume, *Instrucciones para el más allá. Las laminillas órficas de oro*, now published in English as A. Bernabé and A. I. Jiménez San Cristóbal (2008) *Instructions for the Netherworld. The Orphic Gold Tablets*, Leiden, Boston, MA and Cologne. "'A Child of Earth am I and of starry Heaven': Concerning the Anthropology of the Orphic Gold Tablets" by Hans Dieter Betz was originally published as "'Der Erde Kind bin ich und des gestirnten Himmels': Zur Lehre vom Menschen in den orphischen Goldplättchen," from *Ansichten griechischer Rituale: Geburtstags-Symposium für Walter Burkert*, ed. Fritz Graf, B. G. Teubner: Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1998, pp. 399–419, and has been translated for this volume by Maria Sturm. Claude Calame's "'Orphic' Invocations and Commentaries: Funerary Transpositions of Religious Discourse" was originally published as "Invocations et commentaires 'orphiques': Transpositions funéraires de discours religieux," from *Discours religieux dans l'antiquité*, ed. Marie-Madeleine Mactoux and Evelyne Geny, Annales littéraires de l'Université de Besançon, no. 578, Les Belles Lettres: Paris, 1995, pp. 11–30, and has been translated for this volume by Sarah Melker. Christoph Riedweg's "Initiation – Death – Underworld: Narrative and Ritual in the Gold Leaves" was originally published as "Initiation – Tod – Unterwelt: Beobachtungen zur Kommunikationssituation und narrativen Technik der orphisch-bakchischen Goldblättchen," from *Ansichten griechischer Rituale: Geburtstags-Symposium für Walter Burkert*, ed. Fritz Graf, B. G. Teubner: Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1998, pp. 359–398, but has been adapted and translated for this volume by the author, with the assistance of Andreas Schatzmann, incorporating material from Riedweg's "Poésie orphique et rituel initiatique: Éléments d'un 'Discours sacré' dans les lamelles d'or," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 219: 459–481. My thanks to all of those involved in the laborious process of translation, adaptation, and editing of all these essays, and especially to Edward Whitehouse for his work on the indexes.

Thanks are also due to Michael Sharp at Cambridge University Press, who encouraged me in this project and helped shepherd me through the various stages of it, to the readers for the Press, who contributed valuable critiques that helped to shape the final form of these essays, and to the editors and assistants at Cambridge who helped whip the manuscript into shape.

NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations of ancient authors and works follow those of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn. Oxford 1999.

PART I

The tablet texts

CHAPTER I

Who are you?
A brief history of the scholarship

Radcliffe G. Edmonds III

I am parched with thirst and I perish.
But give me to drink from the ever-flowing spring
on the right, by the cypress.
"Who are you? Where are you from?"
I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven.
(gold tablet B4 from Crete = *OF* 479 Bernabé 2004–07)

"Who are you?" ask the unnamed guardians, as the deceased begs for the water of Memory. "Where are you from?" From the discovery of the first gold lamellae in the nineteenth century to the most recent discoveries, scholars have asked much the same questions about the tablets themselves: Who are the people who chose to have these enigmatic scraps of gold foil buried with them in their graves? Where do these texts come from? How can we reconstruct the religious context of these mysterious texts?

Recent discoveries have prompted scholars to examine from new theoretical perspectives both the contexts in which the tablets were produced and the structures of the texts themselves. This collection brings together in English a number of previously published and new studies of the "Orphic" Gold tablets, with the goal of making accessible to a wider audience some of the new methodologies being applied to the study of the tablets. In addition, a survey of the trends in the scholarship and a compilation of the recent bibliography not only provides an introduction to the serious study of the tablets, but also illuminates the place of these tablets within the scholarship of ancient Greek religion.

A brief overview of the texts themselves and of the scholarly attempts to explain where these texts came from may help orient the reader and prepare the ground for the new perspectives offered here. Relative to the mass of material in the canon of classical material, these gold tablets are new discoveries, latecomers to the ongoing study of ancient Greek culture. While much of the other evidence for Orphism and Greek religion came

through the manuscript tradition, in the works of the Neoplatonists or the authors of the classical period, the gold tablets, like the Derveni Papyrus, were buried for centuries, out of the reckoning of scholars in the reception and transmission of the classical tradition.

The scholarship on the gold tablets really begins only in 1879, even though this date is more than forty years after the first of the tablets was discovered. In 1879, excavations in two tumuli at Thurii in southern Italy uncovered four tombs containing gold lamellae. The three tombs in Timpone Piccolo yielded the tablets subsequently labeled A1, A2, and A3, while the nearby Timpone Grande had a single tomb, in which tablet A4 was found, wrapped up in the peculiar tablet C1. The text of A1 is the most extensive:

> Pure I come from the pure, Queen of those below the earth,
> and Eukles and Eubouleus and the other immortal gods;
> For I also claim that I am of your blessed race.
> But Fate mastered me and the Thunderer, striking with his lightning.
> I flew out of the circle of wearying heavy grief;
> I came on with swift feet to the desired crown;
> I passed beneath the bosom of the Mistress, Queen of the Underworld,
> "Happy and most blessed one, a god you shall be instead of a mortal."
> A kid I fell into milk.

A2 and A3 have nearly identical texts, similar to A1.

> Pure I come from the pure, Queen of those below the earth,
> And Eukles and Eubouleus and the other gods and daimons;
> For I also claim that I am of your blessed race.
> Recompense I have paid on account of deeds not just;
> Either Fate mastered me or the lightning bolt thrown by the thunderer.
> Now I come, a suppliant, to holy Phersephoneia,
> That she, gracious, may send me to the seats of the blessed.

A4, from the other tumulus, seems an entirely different text:

> But when the soul leaves the light of the sun,
> go straight to the right, having kept watch on all things very well.
> Hail, you having experienced the experience you had not experienced before.
> A god you have become from a man. A kid you fell into milk.
> Hail, hail; making your way to the right,
> the sacred meadows and groves of Phersephoneia.

Lamella C1, in which A4 was carefully folded, is incomprehensible, a "soup of letters," out of which various editors have picked key words that fit in with their preconceived notions of its meaning – rather like a Rorschach blot.

To explain these odd texts, the excavators called in the eminent classicist Domenico Comparetti, and Comparetti's explanation set the terms of the debate for the next century and a quarter. In his article in the 1882 *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Comparetti linked the tablets from Thurii with another tablet, discovered in nearby Petelia nearly forty years earlier, in which the speaker claims to be the "child of Earth and starry Heaven."

> You will find in the halls of Hades a spring on the left,
> and standing by it, a glowing white cypress tree;
> Do not approach this spring at all.
> You will find the other, from the lake of Memory,
> refreshing water flowing forth. But guardians are nearby.
> Say: "I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven;
> But my race is heavenly; and this you know yourselves.
> But I am parched with thirst and I perish; but give me quickly
> refreshing water flowing forth from the lake of Memory."
> And then they will give you to drink from the divine spring,
> And then you will celebrate? [the rites? with] the heroes.
> This [is the ? . . . of Memory, when you are about] to die ..
> ?write this? . . . . .].?? shadow covering around

The mention of the water of Memory had led the first editors to associate the tablet with the oracle of Trophonius described by Pausanias.[1] The child of Earth and starry Heaven they naturally read as Mnemosyne, goddess of Memory, since all the deities of the pre-Olympian generation had Gaia and Ouranos as parents. Comparetti, however, proposed a different reading. He understood the "child of Earth and starry Heaven" to refer to the Titans, and he took the references to lightning and unjust deeds in the Thurii tablets to refer to murder by the Titans of the infant Dionysos, for which they were blasted by Zeus' lightning.

Drawing on the account in the Neoplatonist Olympiodorus, Comparetti postulated an Orphic doctrine of original sin, founded on the shared guilt of mankind as descendants of the Titans. The tablets, he argued, provide evidence for "the main principles of the Orphic doctrine on psychogony and metempsychosis", since the Olympiodoran myth of anthropogony from the remains of the Titans furnishes mankind with a Titanic element, mixed in with the pure divinity of the soul. "This Titanic element is the original guilt for which the human soul is excluded from the community of the other gods and from her blessed abode, and is condemned to a succession of births and deaths."[2] The anthropogony, attested explicitly only in the sixth CE

[1] Goettling 1843: 8. The first publication of the Petelia tablet was in Franz 1836: 149–150.
[2] Comparetti 1882: 116.

Olympiodorus, thus provides the basis for all of the doctrines about the soul and reincarnation attested to for Orpheus and his followers.[3]

In linking these texts to Orphism, Comparetti brought crucial new evidence into a debate over the nature of Orphism that had been raging throughout the nineteenth century. Perhaps the two most important figures in this debate were Friedrich Creuzer and Charles Augustus Lobeck, but each side had its partisans, and the controversies ranged over various issues. Creuzer's Orphism was very much the heir of the Neoplatonic construction of Orphism – that is, as religious doctrines containing the secret wisdom of the ancients, preserved in enigmatic or allegorical form. For Creuzer it was part of the secret tradition that ultimately went back to India, an abstract theology that had to be passed on in the symbolic form of myths. Lobeck, however, rejected Creuzer's symbolic interpretation and scoffed at the idea of a deep wisdom hidden within the texts. While different scholars fell somewhere between the two extremes, uncomfortable with Lobeck's radical scepticism but unwilling to accept all of Creuzer's symbolism, most accepted one basic Neoplatonic premise, that there was a coherent body of Orphic ideas to be found not only in the various texts ascribed to Orpheus but also other texts that contained similar ideas. In none of these scholars, however, does Comparetti's idea of an Orphic doctrine of original guilt appear, even though Olympiodorus' myth is known and discussed. Nevertheless, Comparetti's Orphic Titanic interpretation was picked up by Dieterich in his 1893 *Nekyia*, which postulated a secret Orphic katabasis tradition that contributed to early Christian eschatological imagery, and the idea made its way into some of the most influential studies of Greek religion at the time, such as Rohde's *Psyche* and Harrison's *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*.

In the succeeding years, more tablets were published. Three tablets from Crete were published in 1893 whose texts were similar to the Petelia tablet, but much abbreviated, containing only the essential features of the tree, the water of Memory, and the claim to be the child of Earth and starry Heaven.

In 1903, Comparetti published a tablet from Rome, A5, which resembles the tablets from Thurii, but also mentions Mnemosyne.

> Pure she comes from the pure, Queen of those below the earth,
> Eukles and Eubouleus, child of Zeus. But receive

[3] For the peculiarities of Olympiodorus' account see Brisson 1992, Edmonds 1999, and Edmonds 2009. Olympiodorus is the only source to combine an anthropogony with the story of Dionysos' dismemberment, rather than with the Titanomachy. For a defense of Comparetti's reading, see Bernabé 2002e and 2003a.

this gift of Memory, famed in song among men.
"Caecilia Secundina, come, having become a goddess by the custom."

This tablet seems to date from the second century CE, nearly five hundred years later than any of the other tablets found. Nevertheless, Comparetti saw this as the link between the two types of tablets, evidence that they shared a common source, a source he imagined as an Orphic sacred text.

Comparetti's interpretation was made canonical by the publication of these tablets in the collections of Diels–Kranz (Orpheus the pre-Socratic!) and Kern, whose 1922 edition of the Orphic fragments has only been replaced by Bernabé's recent edition. The tablets became a standard piece of evidence in the description of Orphism, and Comparetti's explanation of them in terms of the myth of Dionysos Zagreus formed the backbone of the understanding of Orphism for this period.

The nature of Orphism and of other Greek mystery religions was a hot topic among the scholars of religion, and the question of the relation of the Greek mysteries to early Christianity was often debated.[4] Orphism as reconstructed by Comparetti and elaborated by Macchioro and the like was an important player in this game, since Orphism was easily comparable to Protestantism – a movement protesting against mainstream Greek religion, complete with its own doctrine of original sin coupled with the innate divinity of mankind. Graf has discussed the role that Orphism played in the 'culture wars' of this period over the role of institutional religion in the modern nation state, where the historicization of Christianity by tracing its connections with pagan antiquity had significant repercussions for contemporary society.[5] It is important, however, to note that the same basic reconstruction of Orphism was used on all sides of these issues, although the details were manipulated back and forth to support different positions. The elaborations of this imagined Orphism became more and more grandiose, prompting a skeptical reaction and critiques. In the wake of these critiques, the scholarship divided into two camps, the PanOrphist and the Orpheoskeptic, reminiscent of the divisions in the previous century between Creuzer and Lobeck. While the latter denied that Orphism ever existed as a coherent religious movement, the former developed the picture of a dogmatic religion

[4] Comparetti indeed notes the importance and interest of the tablets to the study of Christian origins. "Quindi grande è pure la discrepanza di opinioni emesse su tal soggetto dal dotti moderni, dal Lobeck al Rohde ed alla pleiade di dotti che in questi ultimi tempi hanno scrutato le non numerose notizie pervenuteci sui misteri antichi, oggi particolarmente e **con grande interesse studiati in correlazione colle origini e i precedenti del misticismo cristiano**." Comparetti 1910: 51 (emphasis added).

[5] Graf and Johnston 2007: 58–61. Smith 1990 discusses the long history of the study of Greek mysteries in relation to early Christianity, pointing out many of the uses to which they were put.

whose sectaries and doctrines influenced Greek religion and culture from the Pisistratids to Plato to Paul. In each generation of scholarship, the gold tablets remained central to the debate. In his superb critical work of 1941, *The Arts of Orpheus*, the skeptic Linforth pointedly omitted the tablets and refused even to discuss them as Orphic, while Guthrie relied on their testimony at crucial points in his *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, a balanced and scholarly restatement of the PanOrphist position.[6]

It is worth noting the balance in types of tablets found at this point. Of the tablets found, four were of the "pure from the pure" A type, and four were of the "child of Earth and starry Heaven" B type. No more tablets resembling the Thurii tablets have been found, however, making them seem a more isolated phenomenon, especially since only the two identical tablets A2 and A3 actually have the "lightning and unjust deeds" central to Comparetti's thesis. By contrast, eight more B tablets have been published in the intervening years, and more are soon to be published by Tzifopoulos. Four of these from Crete (as well as the most recently discovered ones) and one said to be from Thessaly are the abbreviated version (B6–B9 and B12), like the other Cretan tablets, but several longer versions, like the Petelia tablet, have been found (B2, B10, B11). Tablet B10 from Hipponion, published in 1975, remains the most significant of these, not only because it seems to be the earliest in date (end of the 5th century), but because it is the longest and most complete version surviving. Indeed, the discovery of the Hipponion tablet, coming as it did so soon after the discovery of the Derveni Papyrus, heralded the next major phase in the debates over Orphism and the tablets' place within it.[7]

The 1987 discovery of a grave at Pelinna in Thessaly with two nearly identical tablets in the shape of ivy leaves added a new type of text.

> Now you have died and now you have been born, thrice blessed one, on this very day.
> Say to Persephone that Bacchios himself freed you.
> A bull you rushed to milk.
> Quickly, you rushed to milk.
> A ram you fell into milk.

[6] Guthrie 1952. The first edition was in 1935, but Guthrie engages directly with Linforth in his second edition almost as little as Linforth had with Guthrie in his work.

[7] Zuntz 1971 pulled together all the tablets discovered before the Hipponion tablet and provided a new critical edition, whose attention to detail and context has made it the fundamental basis for all subsequent editions. Zuntz, however, saw the tablets not as Orphic but Pythagorean and vehemently rejected any association of them with Orphism under any description or Dionysiac religion of any kind. B11, which is said to have been found somewhere in central Sicily, remains in a private collection, where it has not been seen by scholars, except for its initial editor, Jiri Frel, whose publication remains problematic.

> You have wine as your fortunate honor.
> And you go beneath the earth, celebrating rites just like the other blessed ones.

These texts share one salient feature with the tablets from Thurii, the peculiar slogan of an animal going into milk, but they are otherwise different from the other types of tablet. However, the prominent role for Dionysos, under the name of Bacchios, renewed the question of the relation of the tablets, and Orphism in general, to Dionysiac cult, especially since the Hipponion tablet promised that the deceased would walk along the sacred road with the other mystai and bacchoi.

Two recent publications of tablets from Pherai in Thessaly present something different yet again, raising further questions about the tablets' relations to Bacchic or Metroac mysteries. One tablet contains a mystic password – *Andrikepaidothyrsou*, along with an invocation of the goddess Brimo, a figure often identified with Demeter or Hekate.

> Passwords: Male child of the thyrsos, Male child of the thyrsos;
> Brimo, Brimo;
>
> Enter the sacred meadow. For the initiate is without penalty.

Another proclaims bearer's connection with the rites of Demeter and the Mountain Mother.

> Send me to the thiasos of the initiates. I have [seen] the festivals,
> the rites of Demeter Chthonia and of the Mountain Mother.

In recent years, a number of even shorter tablets have been discovered in tombs in Thessaly and Macedonia, many containing simply the name of the deceased or the title, *mystes* – initiate. Clearly, these tablets too were designed for initiates in some mystery, or at least for those claiming the privileges of the initiate. Other tablets convey a greeting to Plouton or Persephone from the deceased, but none of these shorter tablets shares the single uniting feature of all the other gold tablets, a narrative of the soul's journey to the underworld. Such brevity makes drawing the line between "Orphic" gold tablets and, for example, protective amulets on gold lamellae very difficult. While these shorter tablets may come from the same sort of religious context as the other tablets, only the tablets with a narrative lend themselves to the sort of semiotic analysis that has been one of the more fruitful tools for illuminating the enigmatic tablets in recent years.

The discovery of new types of tablets and the continued uncovering of new examples has once again sparked debate over the nature and contexts of these enigmatic documents. Despite the fact that the images of lightning and unjust deeds appear confined to the tablets of Timpone Piccolo at

Thurii alone, some scholars have nevertheless attempted to fit all the tablets into the model of Orphism first set out by Comparetti. Bernabé's edition (with Jiménez San Cristóbal) of the tablets and his new edition of the Orphic fragments rely on the hypothesis of a unified but secret Orphic tradition that produced the tablets. For others, however, these twenty-odd scraps of gold foil seem to come, not just from a variety of places around the margins of the Greek world (Southern Italy, Thessaly, Crete), but from a number of separate sources. The short and long versions of the B texts are clearly related, but the texts from Thurii, Rome, and Pelinna present a number of significant differences. After surveying this motley lot, the questions still remain: who are you? where are you from?

In light of the new evidence, the debate between the skeptics and the PanOrphists has been renewed, and once again, the tablets are central to the debate. However, scholars have also made use of new literary critical methodologies and interdisciplinary approaches, so that there is not only new material being discussed but also new ways in which the material is analyzed. The essays in the volume represent some of these new approaches.

Bernabé, as part of his monumental new edition of the Orphic fragments, has provided new critical editions of all the texts of the tablets, but more tablets continue to be added to the corpus. This volume includes an updated version of Bernabé's texts, along with a critical apparatus and epigraphic transcription for each of the texts.[8] In addition, there is an English translation of these difficult and often fragmentary texts. The texts are grouped into six categories, following the typology set up by Zuntz and expanded by Riedweg and Tzifopoulos.

The A group contains the four texts found at Thurii in 1879, three of which begin with the identification of the deceased as coming "pure from the pure." The tablet A5 from Rome that proclaims that Caecilia Secundina comes pure from the pure also belongs in this category. The B group contains all the tablets with the self-presentation formula "I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven," both the short versions (mostly from Crete) and the longer versions from Petelia, Pharsalos, Hipponion, and Entella. The C group contains only the anomalous text from Timpone Grande at Thurii. No translation has been provided, but the reader may compare

[8] The epigraphic transcriptions are drawn from Pugliese Carratelli 2001, while the critical apparatus is selected from Bernabé 2004–07 fasc. 2, with additions and alterations by Edmonds. The apparatus in Bernabé 2004–07 fasc. 2 is far more comprehensive, but, due to its very size and depth of detail, somewhat unwieldy to work with. Bernabé 2004–07 fasc. 2 should also be consulted for comprehensive bibliographical notes on every detail of the tablet texts. See now Graf and Johnston 2007 for texts that come closer to the epigraphic transcriptions.

Pugliese Carratelli's transcription with Bernabé's attempt to pick some comprehensible words out of this baffling text.[9] The Pelinna tablets have been collected with three other texts in the D group, following the classification proposed by Tzifopoulos in his forthcoming study. All of these texts lack the characteristic formulas of self-presentation that distinguish the A and B tablets, but, with their mention of deities such as Dionysos, Brimo, and Demeter, they contain more than a simple identification of the deceased. The E group contains those tablets which proclaim a greeting to Plouton and/or Persephone, while the F group are those with merely a name or the label *mystes*.

Following the texts and translations are several tables by Tzifopoulos, summarizing the archaeological contexts of the gold tablets. While many of the tablets discovered earlier have no reliable archaeological context, some of the more recently discovered tablets were found in a context whose salient features can be described in detail. As Tzifopoulos stresses in his own essay, the archaeological context of these tablets is an often over-looked source of information for trying to reconstruct the religious contexts from which the gold tablets come. The tablets' use as grave goods clearly marks their importance for understanding ideas of life, death, and afterlife, and their particular significance can only be understood in relation to other ancient evidence of this kind.

The first set of essays in the volume looks at a variety of different kinds of contexts to help illuminate the nature of the gold lamellae. Graf's essay opens the volume by placing the tablets within the context of other writings attributed to Orpheus that pertain to eschatology. Graf surveys the ideas about theogony, eschatology, and ritual found in the texts attributed to Orpheus, particularly the early evidence found in Plato and the Derveni Papyrus. This reprinted essay does not analyze the gold tablets themselves in detail, but it provides the background of other contemporary texts concerned with many of the same issues as the tablets, helping modern scholars to grapple with the question of whether and how these tablets may be considered Orphic. Bernabé's essay in this volume, "Are the 'Orphic' Gold Leaves Orphic?" pursues this question in greater detail, comparing the elements of the tablets with other texts and images considered Orphic. Bernabé is the leading exponent of the new PanOrphist position, arguing

[9] Strictly speaking, tablet A4 really ought to be part of the C group, since it was found wrapped inside tablet C and lacks the characteristic "pure from the pure" formula of the other A tablets. However, it has been grouped with the other A texts since Zuntz, and it shares the "kid in milk" and "god from mortal" elements with tablet A1.

for a fairly coherent religious movement with definable doctrines that can be seen in the gold tablets. This essay, written in conjunction with Jiménez, summarizes in English many of the conclusions from their recent book on the gold leaves.

Several of the other essays place the gold tablets within specific cultural contexts. Betz's essay, translated into English from the version published in a festschrift for Walter Burkert, examines the tablets in a broader philosophical and religious context, comparing their ideas of human nature to those of contemporary religious and philosophical schools, especially those from the literature of Early Christianity. Betz notes the similarities and differences between the B tablets' "child of Earth and starry Heaven" self-presentation formula and various ways of defining human nature in Gnostic, Christian, and contemporary pagan texts. While Betz's survey examines religious contexts somewhat later than the majority of the tablets, Dousa looks into material from a much earlier date, raising the question of the origins of some of the peculiar images and ideas in the tablets. Dousa compares the scenario in the B tablets of the water in the afterlife juxtaposed with a tree with the parallels in Egyptian funerary materials, noting not just the similar images but also noting the important differences. Superficial comparisons with Egypt have often been made by classicists, but the Egyptian material has never been explored in detail, and Dousa points out crucial factors that make a simple continuity of the tablet texts from Egyptian material improbable. Tzifopoulos, in his essay, examines not the general religious context in which the various tablets were produced, but the specific time and place from which the largest group of tablets comes. Since more tablets have been (and indeed continue to be) found in Crete than anywhere else in the Greek world, Tzifopoulos looks at the tablets within the context of specifically Cretan religion, pointing out the ways in which the tablets may have been adapted for the local religious environment. Tzifopoulos emphasizes the importance of the archaeological context for illuminating aspects of the religious context that are not recoverable from the texts alone.

The second set of essays, however, concentrates on the close analysis of the texts alone to uncover aspects of the religious context of the tablets that are not immediately apparent. Semiotic analysis has proved a fruitful method in opening up the mysterious tablet texts, and several of the essays make use of the insights derived from careful attention to the semiotic situation of the tablet texts. Calame's essay, here translated from the original French, was the first to examine the texts in this way, and he draws a number of useful conclusions about the nature of the tablets and the

religious context in which they were produced. In a revised and translated version of his contribution to the festschrift for Walter Burkert, Riedweg makes use of semiotic analysis to reconstruct a hypothetical original text from which all the verses from the various tablets came and to locate the various verses in ritual contexts, be they funerary or initiatory. Edmonds, on the other hand, shows that many of the same semiotic patterns could be produced in a different genre of text. Rather than a didactic poem, excerpted and used for ritual purposes, Edmonds proposes that some of the tablet texts show the characteristics of traditional verse oracles such as the itinerant religious specialists mocked in Plato and Aristophanes used. The second person addresses, future verbs, and imperatives in hexameter verse suggest that the B tablets may have been a short oracle text, one piece from the collections of the oracle-mongers rather than excerpts from a single katabasis text sacred to the followers of Orpheus. Taking a different perspective on the dialogic interchange in the tablets, Herrero compares the soul's dialogue with the powers of the underworld to the scenes in the Homeric epics in which a hero puts forth his own lineage. The similarities between these scenes of self-definition through genealogy are striking, but the differences between the heroes' boasts and the supplications of the tablets are illuminating for an understanding of the religious ideas behind the tablets. These essays all show how much can be gleaned from a semiotic analysis of the texts, as well as the crucial importance in reconstructing the religious context of the model used for the religious phenomenon of Orphism.

The last two essays explore another facet of the language found on the tablets, the performative aspect and its relation to the ritual context of the tablets. Obbink raises the question of why these texts might have been formulated in poetic language and examines the ways in which the poetic verses in the tablets are shaped by the conventions and patterns of the larger Greek verse tradition. Obbink emphasizes the performative aspect of the poetic language and uses his analysis to explore the link between the verses and their possible ritual contexts. Faraone also examines the ritual context of the tablets, but he focuses on the non-hexametrical sections that appear in some of the tablets, rather than the hexameters that make up the bulk of the verses. His analysis links the mysterious declarations in these sections to myths and rituals connected to the cyclical return of Dionysos.

The collection as a whole concludes with a bibliography of the scholarship on the gold tablets. The volume of scholarly literature on these brief and obscure texts is indicative of the crucial role they have played in the scholarship of ancient Greek religion and of Orphism in particular. The breadth of bibliography is also a mark of the recurring and ongoing

controversies in the field, the disputes over the very nature of the religious phenomenon labeled Orphism and the place of the gold tablets within it. The enigmatic nature of these texts invites questions, and the answers scholars have provided have varied widely, often contradicting one another in fundamental ways. Such conflicting interpretations arise not only from the obscure and fragmentary condition of the texts, but also from the absence of any direct contemporary references to the gold tablets that might help provide clear interpretive contexts for them. The essays in this volume continue the exploration of these fascinating gold tablets that was begun over a century ago, and, if they arrive at no clear conclusion or consensus, at least they take us further along the path.

CHAPTER 2

The "Orphic" gold tablets

Texts and translations, with critical apparatus and tables

Radcliffe G. Edmonds III

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

The A group (see Table 2.2)

A1 Thurii, 4th century BCE *(51 × 36 mm)* OF *488*

Pure I come from the pure, Queen of those below the earth,
and Eukles and Eubouleus and the other immortal gods;
For I also claim that I am of your blessed race.
But Fate mastered me and the thunderer, striking with his lightning.
I flew out of the circle of wearying heavy grief;
I came on with swift feet to the desired crown;
I passed beneath the bosom of the Mistress, Queen of the Underworld,
"Happy and most blessed one, a god you shall be instead of a mortal."
A kid I fell into milk.

Ἔρχομαι ἐκ κοθαρῶ‹ν› κοθαρά, χθονί‹ων› βασίλεια,
Εὐκλῆς Εὐβο‹υ›λεύς τε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι·
καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμῶν γένος ὄλβιον εὔχομαι εἶμεν.
ἀλ‹λ›ά με Μο‹ῖ›ρ'{α} ἐδάμασ‹σ›ε {καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι}
καὶ ἀσ{σ}τεροβλῆτα κ‹ε›ραυνῶι.
κύκλο‹υ› δ' ἐξέπταν βαρυπενθέος ἀργαλέοιο,
ἱμερτο‹ῦ› δ' ἐπέβαν στεφάνο‹υ› ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι,
δεσ{σ}ποίνας δ'{ε} ὑπὸ κόλπον ἔδυν χθονίας βασιλείας·
{ιμερτοδαπεβανστεμανοποσικαρπασιμοισι}
ὄλβιε καὶ μακαριστέ, θεὸς δ' ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο.
ἔριφος ἐς γάλ' ἔπετον.

1 BJ, Z Ἔρχομαι ἐκ κοθαρῶ‹ν› κοθαρά, : PC Ἔρχομαι ἐκ κοθαρῶ‹ν›, κοθαρά.
4 BJ, Z ἀλ‹λ›ά με Μο‹ῖ›ρ'{α} ἐδάμασ‹σ›ε {καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι} καὶ: GJ ἀλά με Μο‹ῖ›ρα ἐδάμασε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι καὶ ἀσστεροβλῆ τα κ‹ε›ραυνῶι, Colli ἀλ‹λ›ά με Μο‹ῖ›ρ'{α} ἐδάμασ‹σ›ε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι ˉ ˘ ˘ ˉ ˘ ˘ ˉ ˉ καὶ; BJ, Z κ‹ε›ραυνῶι: lam. Comparetti, Kern, GJ κ‹ε›ραυνόν, TG, PC, Dieterich, O κ‹ε›ραυνῶν, Kaibel κ‹ε›ραυνός.
8 BJ {ιμερτοδαπεβανστεμανοποσικαρπασιμοισι}: GJ ἱμερτοῦ δ' ἐπέβαν στεφάνου ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι, Kern, Colli, PC, TG ἱμερτοῦ δ' ἀπέβαν στεφάνου ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι.

ΕΡΧΟΜΑΙΕΚΚΟΘΑΡΟΚΟΘΑΡΑΧΘΟΝΙΒΑ
ΣΙΛΕΙΑΕΥΚΛΗΣΕΥΒΟΛΕΥΣΤΕΚΑΙΑ
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΙΘΕΟΙΑΛΛΟΙΚΑΙΓΑΡΕΓΩΝ
ΥΜΩΝΓΕΝΟΣΟΛΒΙΟΝΕΥΧΟΜΑΙ
ΕΙΜΕΝΑΛΑΜΕΜΟΡΑΕΔΑΜΑΣΕ
ΚΑΙΑΘΑΝΑΤΟΙΘΕΟΙΑΛΛΟΙΚΑΙΑΣ
ΣΤΕΡΟΒΛΗΤΑΚΕΡΑΥΝΟΝΚΥΚΛΟ
ΔΕƷΕΠΤΑΝΒΑΡΥΠΕΝΘΕΟΣΑΡΓΑ
ΛΕΟΙΟΙΜΕΡΤΟΔΕΠΕΒΑΝΣΤΕΦΑ
ΝΟΠΟΣΙΚΑΡΠΑΛΙΜΟΙΣΙΔΕΣΣΠΟΙ
ΝΑΣΔΕΥΠΟΚΟΛΠΟΝΕΔΥΝΧΘΟΝΙ
ΑΣΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑΣΙΜΕΡΤΟΔΑΠΕΒΑΝ
ΣΤΕΜΑΝΟΠΟΣΙΚΑΡΠΑΣΙΜΟΙ
ΣΙΟΛΒΙΕΚΑΙΜΑΚΑΡΙΣΤΕΘΕΟΣΔΕ
ΣΗΙΑΝΤΙΒΡΟΤΟΙΟΕΡΙΦΟΣΕΣΓΑΛΕΠΕΤΟ
Ν

A2 Thurii, 4th century BCE *(47 × 28 mm)* OF *489*

Pure I come from the pure, Queen of those below the earth,
And Eukles and Eubouleus and the other gods and daimons;
For I also claim that I am of your blessed race.
Recompense I have paid on account of deeds not just;
Either Fate mastered me or the thunderer flinging the lightning bolt.
Now I come, a suppliant, to holy Phersephoneia,
That she, gracious, may send me to the seats of the blessed.

Ἔρχομα‹ι› ἐ‹κ› κα‹θα›ρῶν {σχονων} καθαρά, χ‹θ›ονίων
βασίλ{η}ει‹α›,
Εὔκλε καὶ Εὐβουλεῦ {ι} καὶ θεοὶ ‹καὶ› δαίμο‹ν›ε‹ς› ἄλλοι·
καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμῶν γένο‹ς› εὔχομαι ὄλβιον εἶναι
πο‹ι›νὰν δ᾽ ἀνταπέ{ι}τε{σε}ι‹σ›᾽ ἔργων ἕνεκα οὔτι δικα‹ί›ων.
εἴτε με Μο‹ῖ›ρα ἐδάμασ‹σ›᾽ {ατο} εἴτε ἀστεροπῆτα κ‹ε›ραυνῶν.
νῦν δ᾽ ἱκέτι‹ς› ἥκω πα‹ρα›ὶ ἁγνὴ‹ν› Φε‹ρ›σεφόνε‹ι›αν,
ὥς με{ι} πρόφ‹ρ›ω‹ν› πέμψη‹ι› ἕδρας ἐς εὐαγέ{ι}ων.

1 BJ, O, Z καθαρά, : PC καθαρῶν, .
2 BJ καὶ θεοὶ ‹καὶ› δαίμο‹ν›ε‹ς› ἄλλοι: lam., PC, Z, TG καὶ θεοὶ δαίμο‹ν›ε‹ς› ἄλλοι.
5 BJ ἐδάμασ‹σ›᾽ {ατο}: GJ, TG, PC, O, Colli, Kern ἐδάμασατο, Comparetti ἐδάμασ‹σ›᾽ αὖον; BJ, TG ἀστεροπῆτα κ‹ε›ραυνῶν: GJ ἀστεροπῆτα κ‹ε›ραύνων, Z ἀστεροπῆτι κεραυνῶν, Colli, Comparetti εἰ {ΤΕΑ} στεροπή κεραυνῶν, DK ἀστεροπῆτι κεραυνῶι.
6 BJ, PC, DK, Kern ἱκέτι‹ς› ἥκω: O, Z ἱκέτης ἥκω; BJ, GJ, Colli πα‹ρα›ὶ ἁγνὴ‹ν›: TG, PC, Z, O παρ᾽ ἁγνὴ‹ν›, DK, Kern παρ᾽ ἁγαυὴν.
7 BJ εὐαγέ{ι}ων: DK εὐαγε{όν}των.

ΕΡΧΟΜΑΕΚΑΡΩΙΣΧΟΝΩΝ
ΚΑΘΑΡΑΧΟΝΙΩΝΒΑΣΙΛΗΕΙ
ΕΥΚΛΕΚΑΙΕΥΒΟΥΛΕΥΙΚΑΙΘΕΟΙΔΑΙΜΟ
ΕΑΛΛΟΙΚΑΙΓΡΑΕΓΩΝΥΜΩΝΓΕΝΟΕΥΧΟΜΑ
ΙΟΛΒΙΟΙΕΙΝΑΙΠΟΝΑΙΔΑΝΤΑΠΕΙΤΕΣΕΙ
ΕΡΓΩΙΕΝΕΚΑΟΥΤΙΔΙΚΑΩΝ
ΕΙΤΕΜΕΜΟΡΑΕΔΑΜΑΣΑΤΟ
ΕΙΤΕΑΣΤΕΡΟΠΗΤΙΚΡΑΥΝΩΝ
ΝΥΝΔΙΚΕΤΙΙΚΩΙΠΑΙΑΓΝΗΦΕΣΕ
ΦΟΝΕΑΝΩΣΜΕΙΠΡΟΦΩΠΕΙΨΗ
ΕΔΡΑΣΕΣΕΥΑΓΕΙΩΙ

A3 Thurii, 4th century BCE (46 × 25 mm) OF *490*

Pure I come from the pure, Queen of those below the earth,
And Eukles and Eubouleus and the other gods and daimons;
For I also claim that I am of your blessed race.
Recompense I have paid on account of deeds not just;
Either Fate mastered me or the lightning bolt thrown by the thunderer.
Now I come, a suppliant, to holy Phersephoneia,
That she, gracious, may send me to the seats of the blessed.

Ἔρχομαι ἐ‹κ› καθαρῶ‹ν› καθ‹αρά, χθ›ο‹νίων› βασίλ‹ει›α,
Εὔκλε{υα} κα‹ὶ› Εὐβο‹υ›λεῦ καὶ θεοὶ ‹καὶ› {ὅσοι} δ‹αί›μονες ἄλλοι·
καὶ γὰρ ἐ‹γ›ὼ‹ν› ὑ‹μῶν› γένος εὔχομα‹ι ὄ›λβιον› ε‹ἶ›να‹ι› {ὄλβιο}
ποινὰν ‹δ'› ἀνταπέτε‹ισ'› ἔργω‹ν ἕνεκ'› ο‹ὔ›τι δικα‹ί›ων.
ε‹ἴ›τ‹ε› με Μοῖρα ‹ἐδάμασσ'› ε‹ἴτε ἀσ›τεροπῆτα {κη} κεραυνῶ‹ν›.
νῦν δὲ ‹ἱ›κ‹έτις› ἥκω {ιικω} παρ‹αὶ› ἀ‹γνὴν› Φ‹ερ›σε‹φόνειαν›,
ὥς {λ} με ‹π›ρόφ‹ρων› πέ[μ]ψ‹ηι› {μ} ἕδρας ἐς εὐ‹α›γ‹έων›.

1 BJ, O, Z καθαρά, : PC καθαρῶν, .
2 BJ Εὔκλε{υα}: O Εὔκλε υρ – fortasse ‹Κο›ύρ‹η› supplendum.
3 BJ, Z εὔχομα‹ι ὄλβιον› ε‹ἶ›να‹ι› {ὄλβιο}: TG, PC, Colli, O, Kern εὔχομα‹ι › ε‹ἶ›να‹ι› ὄλβιο‹ν›.
4 BJ, Z ποινὰν ‹δ'› ἀνταπέτε‹ισ'› ἔργω‹ν ἕνεκ'› ο‹ὔ›τι δικα‹ί›ων.: TG, PC ποινὰν ‹δ'› ἀνταπέτε‹ισ'› ἔργω‹ν› ο‹ὔ›τι δικα‹ί›ων.
5 BJ, GJ ε‹ἴ›τ‹ε› με Μοῖρα ‹ἐδάμασσ'› ε‹ἴτε ἀσ›τεροπῆτα: TG, PC, O, Colli, Kern ε‹ἴ›τ‹ε› με Μοῖρα ε‹ἴτε ἀσ›τεροπῆτα, Comparetti ἐδάμασ‹σ›' αὖον; BJ, GJ, TG, PC ἀστεροπῆτα κ‹ε›ραυνῶν: Z ἀστεροπῆτι κεραυνῶν, Colli, Comparetti ε‹ὶ σ›τεροπή τ‹ε› κεραυνῶν, DK ἀστεροπῆτι κεραυνῶι.
6 BJ νῦν δὲ ‹ἱ›κ‹έτις› ἥκω: O, Z νῦν ἱκέτης ἥκω, νῦν δ' ἐ‹π›ήκ‹οον› ἥκω; BJ πα‹ρα›ὶ ἀγνὴ‹ν› Φ‹ερ›σε‹φόνειαν›: GJ, TG, PC, παρὰ Φ‹ερ›σε‹φόνειαν›, Z, O παρ' ἀ‹γνὴν› Φ‹ερ›σε‹φόνειαν›, DK, Kern παρ' ἀγαυὴν.
7 BJ εὐ‹α›γ‹έων›: DK εὐαγεόντων.

recto	verso
ΕΡΧΟΜΑΙΕΚΑΘΑΡΩΚΑΘ	ΑΩΝ(ν)ΕΤΜΕΜΟΙΡΑ
ΟΒΑΣΙΛ•ΑΕΥΚΛΕΥΑΚΑΕΥ	ΕΤΕΡΟΠΗΤΙΚΗΚΕΡΑ
ΒΟΛΕΥΚΑΙΘΕΟΙΟΣΟΙΔΜΟ	ΥΝΟ (ν) ΝΥΝΔΕΚΗΚΩ
ΝΕΣΑΛΛΟΙΚΑΙΓΑΡΕΩΥ	ΙΙΚΩΠΑΡΑΦΣΕ•
ΓΕΝΟΣΕΥΧΟΜΑΕΝΑ	ΩΣΛΜΕΡΟΦΠΕ[.]ΨΕΜ
ΟΛΒΙΟΠΟΙΝΑΝΝΑΤΑΠ	ΕΔΡΑΣΕΣΕΥΓ
ΕΤΕΕΡΓΩΟΤΙΔΙΚ	

A4 Thurii, 4th century BCE OF *487*

But when the soul leaves the light of the sun,
go straight to the right, having kept watch on all things very well.
Hail, you having experienced the experience you had not experienced before.
A god you have become from a man. A kid you fell into milk.
Hail, hail; make your way to the right,
the sacred meadows and groves of Phersephoneia.

Ἀλλ᾽ ὁπόταν ψυχὴ προλίπηι φάος ἀελίοιο,
δεξιὸν †Ε.ΘΙΑΣ† δ᾽ ἐξι‹έ›ναι πεφυλαγμένον εὖ μάλα πάντα·
χαῖρε παθὼν τὸ πάθημα τὸ δ᾽ οὔπω πρόσθ᾽{ε} ἐπεπόνθεις·
θεὸς ἐγένου ἐξ ἀνθρώπου· ἔριφος ἐς γάλα ἔπετες.
χαῖρ‹ε› χαῖρε· δεξιὰν ὁδοιπόρ‹ει›
λειμῶνάς θ᾽{ε} ἱεροὺς καὶ ἄλσεα Φερσεφονείας.

2 BJ δεξιὸν Ε.ΘΙΑΣ δ᾽ ἐξι‹έ›ναι: Santamaría in BJ δεξιὸν ἐς θίασ‹ον› δεῖ {ξ} ‹σ᾽› ἰ‹έ›ναι, TG, PC δεξιὸν ε‹ὐ?›θείας δ᾽ ἐξι‹έ›ναι, Z δεξιὸν †ΕΣΟΙΑΣΔΕΕΤ† ‹ἰέ›ναι, Colli δεξιὸν ΕΣΟΙΑΣΔΕΕ{.}ΝΑΙ, O δεξιὸν ε‹ἰ›ς οἴμας δ᾽ ἐ‹νέρων … |¯ ˘ ˘ ¯, Comparetti δεξιὸν ἐν‹ν›οίας δεῖ τινα; BJ εὖ μάλα πάντα: Colli εἰ‹δ›υ‹ῖα› μάλα πάντα.

3 BJ, Z τὸ πάθημα τὸ δ᾽ οὔπω: TG, PC τὸ πάθημα· τὸ δ᾽ οὔπω.

5 BJ, Z ὁδοιπόρ‹ει›: TG, PC, Comparetti ὁδοιπορ‹ῶν›.

6 BJ λειμῶνάς θ᾽{ε} ἱεροὺς καὶ ἄλσεα Φερσεφονείας: DK λειμῶνάς τε ἱεροὺς κατά ‹τ᾽› ἄλσεα Φερσεφονείας.

ΑΛΛΟΠΟΝΤΑΜΨΥΧΗΠΡΟΛΙΠΗΙΦΑΟΣΑΕΛΙΟΙΟ
ΔΕϜΙΟΝΕ*ΘΙΑΣΔΕϜΙΝΑΙΠΕΦΥΛΑΓΜΕΝΟΝ
ΕΥΜΑΛΑΠΑΝΤΑΧΑΙΡΕΠΑΘΩΝΤΟΠΑΘΗ
ΜΑΤΟΔΟΥΠΩΠΡΟΣΘΕΕΠΕΠΟΝΘΕΙΣΘΕΟΣΕΓ
ΕΝΟΥΕϜΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΥΕΡΙΦΟΣΕΣΓΑΛΑ
ΕΠΕΤΕΣΧΑΙΡΧΑΙΡΕΔΕϜΙΑΝΟΔΟΙΠΟΡ
ΛΕΙΜΩΝΑΣΤΕΙΕΡΟΥΣΚΑΙΑΛΣΕΑ
ΦΕΡΣΕΦΟΝΕΙΑΣ

A5 Rome, 2nd century CE (65 × 24 mm) OF *491*

Pure she comes from the pure, Queen of those below the earth,
Eukles and Eubouleus, child of Zeus. But receive
this gift of Memory, famed in song among men.
"Caecilia Secundina, come, having become a goddess by the custom."

Ἔρχεται ἐκ καθαρῶν καθαρά, χθονίων βασίλεια,
Εὔκλεες Εὐβουλεῦ τε Διὸς τέκος· ἀλλὰ δέχεσθε
Μνημοσύνης τόδε δῶρον ἀοίδιμον ἀνθρώποισιν.
Καικιλία Σεκουνδεῖνα, νόμωι ἴθι δῖα γεγῶσα.

1 BJ, Z καθαρῶν καθαρά, : PC καθαρῶν, καθαρά .
2 BJ, GJ, West Διὸς τέκος· ἀλλὰ δέχεσθε: Z, PC, TG Διὸς τέκος ἀγλαά· ἔχω δὲ, Colli Διὸς τέκος. ἀγλαά ἔχω δὴ, Murray ὅπλα δ' ἔχ' ὧδε Μνημοσύνης. = *hic recipe Memoriae arma*.
4 BJ, Z, PC νόμωι ἴθι δῖα γεγῶσα: Colli νόμωι ἴθι θ‹ε›ία γεγῶσα, Murray νόμωι ἴθι θῖα γεγῶσα.

ΕΡΧΕΤΑΙΕΚΚΑΘΑΡΩΝΚΑΘΑΡΑ
ΧΘΟΝΙΩΝΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑΕΥΚΛΕΕCΕΥΒΟΥ
ΛΕΥΤΕΔΙΟCΤΕΚΟCΑΓΛΑΑΕΧΩΔΕΜΝΗΜΟ
CΥΝΗCΤΟΔΕΔΩΡΟΝΑΟΙΔΙΜΟΝΑΝΘΡΩ
ΠΟΙCΙΝΚΑΙΚΙΛΙΑCΕΚΟΥΝΔΕΙΝΑΝΟΜΩΙ
ΙΘΙΔΙΑΓΕΓΩCΑ

The B group (see Table 2.3)

B1 Petelia, 4th century BCE *(45 × 27 mm)* OF *476*

You will find in the halls of Hades a spring on the left,
and standing by it, a glowing white cypress tree;
Do not approach this spring at all.
You will find another, from the lake of Memory
refreshing water flowing forth. But guardians are nearby.
Say: "I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven;
But my race is heavenly; and this you know yourselves.
I am parched with thirst and I perish; but give me quickly
refreshing water flowing forth from the lake of Memory."
And then they will give you to drink from the divine spring,
And then you will celebrate? [rites? with the other] heroes.
This [is the ? … of Memory, when you are about] to die ..
?write this?
……].?? shadow covering around

Εὑρήσ{σ}εις ‹δ'› Ἀίδαο δόμων ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ κρήνην,
πὰρ δ' αὐτῆι λευκὴν ἑστηκυῖαν κυπάρισσον·
ταύτης τῆς κρήνης μηδὲ σχεδὸν ἐμπελάσειας.
εὑρήσεις δ' ἑτέραν, τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης
ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον· φύλακες δ' ἐπίπροσθεν ἔασιν.
εἰπεῖν· Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος,
αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον· τόδε δ' ἴστε καὶ αὐτοί.
δίψηι δ' εἰμὶ αὖη καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι. ἀλλὰ δότ' αἶψα
ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης'.
καὐτ[οί] σ[ο]ι δώσουσι πιεῖν θείης ἀπ[ὸ κρή]νης,
καὶ τότ' ἔπειτα [τέλη σὺ μεθ'] ἡρώεσσιν ἀνάξει[ς].
[Μνημοσύ]νης τόδε [†εριον†· ἐπεὶ ἂν μέλλησι] θανεῖσθ[αι
….] τόδε γραψ[
in right margin …. . τογλωσειπα σκότος ἀμφικαλύψας.

4 lam., West, GJ, TG ἑτέραν: BJ ἑτέραι, Goettling, Franz ἕτερον.
7 BJ τόδε δ' ἴστε :West τὸ δὲ τ' ἴστε.
10 ἀπ[ὸ κρή]νης B: ἀπ[ὸ λίμ]νης Franz, Kaibel, Murray, Gallavotti.
11 Edmonds καὶ τότ' ἔπειτα [τέλη σὺ μεθ'] ἡρώεσσιν ἀνάξει[ς]: BJ, GJ, TG, Kaibel καὶ τότ' ἔπειτ' ἄ[λλοισι μεθ'] ἡρώεσσιν ἀνάξει[ς], Franz καὶ τότ' ἔπειτα [φίλοισι μεθ'] ἡρώεσσιν ἀνάξει[ς], Goettling καὶ τότ' ἔπειτα [σοὶ ἔστι παρ'] ἡρώεσσιν ἀνάξει[ς].
12 Edmonds [Μνημοσύ]νης τόδε [†εριον†: BJ, Guarducci [Μνημοσύ]νης τόδ‹ε› ἔρ[γον, O τόδε ιγ, Anon in Brit. Mus. Cat. τόδε ν[ᾶμα, Gallavotti [Μνημοσύ]νης τόδε ν[ῆμα καὶ οὔποτ' ἐᾶι σε] θανεῖσθ[αι, PC [Μνημοσύ]νης τόδε ἱ[ερόν·; Merkelbach [Μνημοσύ]νης τόδε [ἐπεὶ ἂν μέλλησι] θανεῖσθ[αι; Marcovich [Μνημοσύ]νης τόδε δ[ῶρον· ἐπὴν μέλλησι] θανεῖσθ[αι.
13 GJ τόδε γραψ: BJ [ἐν πίνακι χρυσέῳ] τόδε γραψ[άσθω μεμνημένος ἥρως], Comp. τόδ' ἔγραψ[ε (Orpheus), West conj. [ἐν πίνακι χρυσέῳ] τόδε γραψ[άτω ἠδὲ φορείτο.
14 GJ τογλωσειπα σκότος ἀμφικαλύψας: BJ ex Janko ined. [μή μίν γ' ἐκ]πάγλως ὑπά[γ]οι, O τὸ κλέος εἶπ[.

ΕΥΡΗΣΣΕΙΣΔΑΙΔΑΟΔΟΜΩΝΕΠΑΡΙΣΤΕΡΑΚΡΗΝ
ΗΝΠΑΡΔΑΥΤΗΙΛΕΥΚΗΝΕΣΤΗΚΥΙΑΝΚΥΠΑΡΙΣΣΟΝ
ΤΑΥΤΗΣΤΗΣΚΡΗΝΗΣΜΗΔΕΣΧΕΔΟΝΕΜΠΕΛΑΣΕΙΑΣ
ΕΥΡΕΗΣΕΙΣΔΕΤΕΡΑΝΤΗΣΜΝΗΜΟΣΥΝΗΣΑΠΟΛΙΜΝΗΣ
ΨΥΧΡΟΝΥΔΩΡΠΡΟΡΕΟΝΦΥΛΑΚΕΣΔΕΠΙΠΡΟΣΘΕΝΕΑΣΙΝ
ΕΙΠΕΙΝΓΗΣΠΑΙΣΕΙΜΙΚΑΙΟΥΡΑΝΟΥΑΣΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΟΣΑΥΤΑΡΕΜ
ΟΙΓΕΝΟΣΟΥΡΑΝΙΟΝΤΟΔΕΔΙΣΤΕΚΑΙΑΥΤΟΙΔΙΨΗΙΔΕΙΜΙΑΥ
ΗΚΑΙΑΠΟΛΛΥΜΑΙΑΛΛΑΔΟΤΑΙΨΑΨΥΧΡΟΝΥΔΩΡΠΡΟΡΕ
ΟΝΤΗΣΜΝΗΜΟΣΥΝΗΣΑΠΟΛΙΜΝΗΣΚΑΥΤ[. .]Σ[.]ΙΔΩΣΟΥΣΙ
ΠΙΕΙΝΘΕΙΗΣΑΠ[… .]ΝΗΣΚΑΙΤΟΤΕΠΕΙΤΑ[… … …]ΗΡΩΕ
ΣΣΙΝΑΝΑϞΕΙ[… … . .]ΝΗΣΤΟΔΕΙ[
ΘΑΝΕΙΣΘ[… … … … … .]ΟΔΕΓΡΑ[
in the right margin ΤΟΓΛΩΣΕΙΠΑΣΚΟΤΟΣΑΜΦΙΚΑΛΥΨΑΣ

B2 Pharsalos, 4th century BCE *(42 × 16 mm)* OF *477*

You will find in the halls of Hades a spring on the right,
and standing by it, a glowing white cypress tree;
Do not approach this spring at all.
Further along you will find, from a lake of Memory,
the refreshing water flowing forth. But guardians are nearby.
And they will ask you for what need have you come;
to them you should relate very well the whole truth;
Say: "I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven;
Starry is my name. I am parched with thirst; but give me to drink from the spring.

Εὑρήσεις Ἀίδαο δόμοις ἐνδέξια κρήνην,
πὰρ δ' αὐτῆι λευκὴν ἑστηκυῖαν κυπάρισσον·
ταύτης τῆς κρήνης μηδὲ σχεδόθεν πελάσηισθα·
πρόσσω δ' εὑρήσεις τὸ Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης
ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προ‹ρέον›· φύλακες δ' ἐπύπερθεν ἔασιν·
οἳ δέ σ‹ε› εἰρήσονται ὅ τι χρέος εἰσαφικάνεις·
τοῖς δὲ σὺ εὖ μάλα πᾶσαν ἀληθείην καταλέξαι·
εἰπεῖν·'Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστ‹ερόεντος›·
Ἀστέριος ὄνομα· δίψηι δ' εἰμ' αὖος· ἀλλὰ δότε μοι πιέν' ἀπὸ τῆς κρήνης'.

5 BJ: Verdelis προ‹ρρέον›, προ lam.
6 BJ: Verdelis οἰδὲ σ'.
7 BJ: Verdelis τοῖσδε
8 BJ: PC, Colli εἰπεῖγ.
9 BJ, Cassio: Verdelis πιεῖν ἀπὸ.

ΕΥΡΗCΕΙCΑΙΔΑΟΔΟΜΟΙCΕΝΔΕΞΙΑΚΡΗΝΗΝΠΑΡΔΑΥΤΗΙ
ΛΕΥΚΗΝΕCΤΗΚΥΙΑΝΚΥΠΑΡΙCCΟΝΤΑΥΤΗCΤΗCΚΡΗΝΗC
ΜΗΔΕCΧΕΔΟΘΕΝΠΕΛΑCΗΙCΘΑΠΡΟCCΩΔΕΥΡ
ΗCΕΙCΤΟΜΝΗ
ΜΟCΥΝΗCΑΠΟΛΙΜΝΗCΨΥΧΡΟΝΥΔΩΡΠΡΟΦΥΛΑΚΕCΙ
ΔΕΠΥΠΕΡΘΕΝΕΑCΙΝΟΙΔΕCΕΙΡΗCΟΝΤΑΙΟΤΙΧΡΕΟC
ΕΙCΑΦΙΚΑΝΕΙCΤΟΙΣΔΕCΥΕΥΜΑΛΑΠΑCΑΝΑΛΗΘΕΙΗΙ
ΚΑΤΑΛΕΞΑΙΙΙΕΙΠΕΙΓΗCΠΑΙCΕΙΜΙΚΑΙΟΥΡΑΝΟΥΑϹΤΩ
ΑCΤΕΡΙΟCΟΝΟΜΑΔΙΨΗΙΔΕΙΜΑΥΟCΑΛΛΑΔΟΤΕΜΟΙ
ΠΙΕΝΑΠΟΤΗCΚΡΗΝΗC

B3 Eleutherna, 2nd–1st century BCE (56 × 10 mm) OF *478*

I am parched with thirst and I perish. But give me to drink from the ever-flowing spring on the right, where the cypress is. "Who are you? From where are you?" I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven.

Δίψαι αὖος ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ πιέ‹ν› μοι
κράνας αἰειρόω ἐπὶ δεξιά, τῆ‹ι› κυφάρισσος.
τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; Γᾶς υἱός ἠμι καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντος.

1 BJ: PC, Comp. πιέ‹μ› μοι; O, Colli πιέ μοι.
2 BJ, Comp. τῆ‹ι› : GJ, TG, Z τῆ; BJ, Colli κυφάρισσος: PC κυφάριζος, O κυφάρισος.
3 BJ, Colli τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; PC τίς δ' ἐζί; πῶ δ' ἐζί; O τίς δ' ἐσί; πῶ δ' ἐσί;

ΔΙΨΑΙΑΥΟCΕΓΩΚΑΙΑΠΟΛΛΥΜΑΙΑΛΛΑΠΙΕΜΟΙ
ΚΡΑΝΑCΑΙΕΙΡΟΩΕΠΙΔΕΞΙΑΤΗΚΥΦΑΡΙΖΟC
ΤΙCΔΕΖΙΠΩΔΕΖΙΓΑCΥΙΟCΗΜΙΚΑΙΩΡΑΝΩ
ΑCΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΟC

B4 Eleutherna, 2nd–1st century BCE *(62 × 13 mm)* OF *479*

I am parched with thirst and I perish. But give me to drink from the ever-flowing spring on the right, where the cypress is. "Who are you? Where are you from?" I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven.

Δίψαι αὖος ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπόλλυ{μα}μαι· ἀλλὰ πιέ‹ν› μοι
κράνας αἰειρόω ἐπὶ δεξιά, τῆ‹ι› κυφάρισσος.
τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; Γᾶς υἱός ἠμι καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντος.

1 BJ: PC, Comp. πιέ‹μ› μοι; O, Colli πιέ μοι.
2 BJ, Comp. τῆ‹ι› : GJ, TG, Z τῆ; BJ, Colli κυφάρισσος: PC κυφάριζος O κυφάρισος.
3 BJ, Colli τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; PC τίς δ' ἐζί; πῶ δ' ἐζί; O τίς δ' ἐσί; πῶ δ' ἐσί;

ΔΙΨΑΙΑΥΟCΕΓΩΚΑΙΑΠΟΛΛΥΜΑΜΑΙΑΛΛΑΠΙΕΜΟΙ
ΚΡΑΝΑCΑΙΕΙΡΟΩΕΠΙΔΕΞΙΑΤΗΚΥΦΑΡΙΖΟC
ΤΙCΔΕΖΙΠΩΔΕΖΙΓΑCΥΙΟCΗΜΙΚΑΙΩΡΑΝΩ
ΑCΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΟC

B5 Eleutherna, 2nd–1st century BCE (54 × 7.5 mm) OF *480*

I am parched with thirst and I perish. But give me to drink from the ever-flowing spring on the right, where the cypress is. "Who are you? From where are you?" I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven.

Δίψαι αὖος {λα·ọς} ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ πιέν μου
κράνας αἰενάω ἐπὶ δε[ξ]ιά, τῆ‹ι› κυφάρισσος.
τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; Γᾶς υἱός ἠμ‹ι› καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντ[ο]ς.

1 BJ: PC, Comp. πιέ‹μ› μοι; O, Colli πιέ μμοι Murray πιέ μμου.
2 BJ, Comp. τῆ‹ι› : GJ, TG, Z τῆ; BJ, Colli κυφάρισσος: PC κυφάριζος O κυφάρισος.
3 BJ, Colli τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; PC τίς δ' ἐζί; πῶ δ' ἐζί; O τίς δ' ἐσί; πῶ δ' ἐσί;

ΔΙΨΑΙΑΥΟCΛΑ[.]ΟϹΕΓΩΚΑΙΑΠΟΛΛΥΜΑΙΑΛΛΑΠΙΕΜΜΟΥ̣
ΙΡΑΝΑCΛΙΕΝΑΩΕΠΙΔΕ[.]ΙΑΤΗΚΥΦΑΡΙCΖΟC
ΤΙCΔΕΖΙΠΩΔΕΖΙΓΑCΥΙΟCΗΜΚΑΙΩΡΑΝΩ
ACTEPOENT[.]C

B6 Eleutherna, 2nd–1st century BCE (45 × 12 mm) OF *481*

I am parched with thirst and I perish. But give me to drink from the ever-flowing spring on the right, by the cypress. "Who are you? From where are you?" I am the daughter of Earth and starry Heaven.

Δίψα‹ι› δ' ἠμ' αὖος καὶ ἀπόλ‹λ›υμαι· ἀλ‹λ›ὰ πιέν μοι
κράνας αἰειρόω ἐπὶ δεξιά, τῆ‹ι› κυπάρισσος.
τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; Γᾶς ἠμι θυ‹γ›άτηρ καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντος.

1 Guarducci: PC ἀπόλλ‹υ›μαι, Colli ἀπόλομαι.
2 BJ αἰειρόω: lam. αιγιδδω, fort. Ἀίδαο Gallavotti, αἰγ‹δ›ῤω fort. αἰγείρων Tzifopoulos; BJ, Comp. τῆ‹ι› : GJ, TG, Z τῆ; BJ, Colli κυφάρισσος: PC κυφάριζος.
3 BJ, Colli τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; PC τίς δ' ἐζί; πῶ δ' ἐζί;
4 BJ, Guarducci θυ‹γ›άτηρ: lam. †γυατηρ†, PC γ‹ενε›τὴρ (?) = γενέτης 'figlio'?, Gallavotti κυητὴρ, Tzifopoulos Γᾶς ἠμοι, μάτηρ.

ΔΙΨΑΔΗΜΑΥΟCΚΑΙΑΠΟΛΟΜΑΙΑΛΑ
ΠΙΕΝΜΟΙΚΡΑΝΑCΑΙΓΙΔΔΩΕΠΙ
ΔΕΞΙΑΤΕΚΥΠΑΡΙΖΟCΤΙCΔΕΖΙΠ
ΩΔΕΖΙΓΑCΗΜΙΓΥΗΤΗΡΚΑΙ
ΩΡΑΝΩΑCΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΟC

B7 Eleutherna, 2nd–1st century BCE (48 × 12 mm) OF *482*

I am parched with thirst and I perish. But give me to drink from the ever-flowing spring on the right, where the cypress is. "Who are you? From where are you?" I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven.

Δίψαι αὖος ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλ‹λ›ὰ πιέν {ε} μοι
κράνας ‹α›ἰ‹ε›ιρ‹ό›ω ἐπ‹ὶ› δεξιά, τῆ‹ι› κυφάρισσος.
τίς δ' {εδ} ἐσσ‹ί›; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; Γᾶς υἱός ἠμι κα‹ὶ Ὠ›ρανῶ ἀστερόεντος.

1 BJ: PC, Comp. πιέ‹μ› μοι; Colli πιέ μμοι, Verdelis πιεμ{ε} μοι.
2 BJ, Comp. τῆ‹ι› : Z τῆ; BJ, Colli κυφάρισσος: PC κυφάριζος.
3 BJ, Colli τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; PC τίς δ' ἐζί; πῶ δ' ἐζί; BJ κα‹ὶ Ὠ›ρανῶ: Verdelis, Colli κἀρανῶ.

ΔΙΨΑΙΑΥΟCΕΓΩΚΑΙΑΠΟΛΛΥΜΑΙΑΛΑΠΙΕΜΕΜΟΙ
ΚΡΑΝΑΙΙΙΡΩΕΠΔΕΞΙΑΤΗΚΥΦΑΡΙΖΟC
ΤΙCΔΕΔΕΖΠΩΔΕΖΙΓΑCΥΙΟCΗΜΙΚΑΡΑΝΩ
ΑCΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΟC

B8 Eleutherna, 2nd–1st century BCE (48 × 12 mm) OF *483*

I am parched with thirst and I perish. But give me to drink from the ever-flowing spring on the right, where the cypress is. "Who are you? From where are you?" I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven.

Δίψα‹ι› {α} αὖος ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπόλ‹λ›υμαι· ἀλλὰ π‹ι›έν μο‹ι›
κράνας αἰενάω ἐπὶ δ‹ε›ξιά, τῆ‹ι› κυφάρισσος.
τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ‹ἐ›σσί; Γᾶς υἱός ἠμι καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντος{σ}.

1 BJ: lam. πεμμο, Verdelis π‹ι›εμ μ‹οι›.
2 BJ αἰενάω: Verdelis ἀενάω; BJ, Comp. τῆ‹ι› : Z τῆ; BJ, Colli κυφάρισσος: PC κυφάριζος O κυφάρισος.
3 BJ, Colli τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί; PC τίς δ' ἐζί; πῶ δ' ἐζί;

ΔΙΨΑΑΑΥΟCΕΓΩΚΑΙΑΠΟΛΥΜΑΙΑΛ
ΛΑΠΕΜΜΟΚΡΑΝΑCΑΙΕΝΑΩΕΠΙΔ
ΞΙΑΤΗΚΥΦΑΡΙΖΟCΤΙCΔΕΖΙΠΩ
ΔΖΙΓΑCΥΙΟCΙΜΙΚΑΙΩΡΑΝΩΑCΤΕΡΟ
ΕΝΤΟCC

B9 Thessaly?, 4th century BCE (22 × 37 mm) OF *484*

I am parched with thirst and I perish. But give me to drink from the ever-flowing spring. On the right is a white cypress. "Who are you? From where are you?" I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven. But my race is heavenly.

Δίψαι αὖος ἐγὼ κ‹αὶ› ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ πίε μου
κράνας αἰειρόω. ἐπὶ δεξιὰ λευκὴ κυπάρισσος
τίς δ' ἐσί; πῶ δ' ἐσί; Γᾶς υἱός εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος·
αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον.

1 BJ πίε μου: Cassio πίε‹ν› μου.
2 BJ ἐπὶ δεξιὰ: Gallavotti ἐπιδεξιὰ.

ΔΙΨΑΙΑΥΟΣΕΓΩΚΑΠΟΛΛΥΜΑΙ
ΑΛΛΑΠΙΕΜΟΥΚΡΑΝΑΣΑΙΕΙΡΟΩ
ΕΠΙΔΕΞΙΑΛΕΥΚΗΚΥΠΑΡΙΣΣΟΣ
ΤΙΣΔΕΣΙΠΩΔΕΣΙΓΑΣΥΙΟΣΕΙΜΙ
ΚΑΙΟΥΡΑΝΟΥΑΣΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΟΣ
ΑΥΤΑΡΕΜΟΙΓΕΝΟΣΟΥΡΑΝΙΟΝ

B10 Hipponion, 5th century BCE (56 × 32 mm) OF *474*
This is the [?] of Memory. When you are about to die …
you will go to the well-built halls of Hades; a spring is on the right,
and standing by it a glowing white cypress tree;
there the descending souls of the dead refresh themselves.
Do not go near to this spring at all.
Further along you will find, from the lake of Memory,
refreshing water flowing forth. But guardians are nearby.
They will ask you, with sharp minds,
why you are seeking in the shadowy gloom of Hades.
Say: "I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven;
I am parched with thirst and I perish; but give me quickly
refreshing water to drink from the lake of Memory."
And then they will speak to the underworld ruler,
and then they will give you to drink from the lake of Memory,
and you too, having drunk, will go along the sacred road that the
other famed initiates and bacchics travel.

Μναμοσύνας τόδε ⸌ἐριονϯ· ἐπεὶ ἄμ μέλλησι θανεῖσθαι
εἶς Ἀΐδαο δόμους εὐηρέας, ἔστ᾽ ἐπὶ δ‹ε›ξιὰ κρήνα,
πὰρ δ᾽ αὐτὰν ἑστακῦα λευκὰ κυπάρισ‹σ›ος·
ἔνθα κατερχόμεναι ψυχαὶ νεκύων ψύχονται.
ταύτας τᾶς κράνας μηδὲ σχεδὸν ἐνγύθεν ἔλθηις.
πρόσθεν δὲ εὑρήσεις τᾶς Μναμοσύνας ἀπὸ λίμνης
ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον· φύλακες δ᾽ ἐπύπερθεν ἔασι.
οἳ δέ σε εἰρήσονται ἐν‹ὶ› φρασὶ πευκαλίμαισι
ὅτ‹τ›ι δὴ ἐξερέεις Ἄϊδος σκότος ὀρφ‹ν›ήεντος
εἶπον· Γῆς παῖ‹ς› ἠμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος.
δίψαι δ᾽ εἰμ᾽ αὖος καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλ‹λ›ὰ δότ᾽ ὤ̣κ̣α̣
ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ πιέναι τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμ‹νης›.
καὶ δή τοι ἐρέουσιν ὑποχθονίωι βασιλῆι·
καὶ {δή τοι} δώσουσι πιεῖν τᾶς Μναμοσύνας ἀπ[ὸ] λίμνας,
καὶ δή καὶ σὺ πιὼν ὁδὸν ἔρχεα‹ι› ἅν τε καὶ ἄλλοι
μύσται καὶ βάχχοι ἱερὰν στείχουσι κλε‹ε›ινοί.

1 lam. ἐριον: BJ, GJ, Burkert ap. Pugliese Caratelli 1974, Guarducci ἔργον, TG ἱρόν, PC hιερόν, Pugliese Carratelli 1974 ἠρίον, Luppe, Merkelbach ἔριον, Gallavotti εἴριον, West θρῖον, Marcovich σρῖον, Riccardelli ἐπιὸν, Lloyd-Jones δῶρον.

2 PC, TG εἶς: BJ, GJ, Merkelbach εἰς, Z εἶσ'; BJ εὐηρέας: Pugliese Carratelli 1974 εὐήρεας, West – corrupt. ex εὑρήσεις.

3 BJ ἑστακῦα: PC hεστακυῖα, Marcovich πὰρ δ' αὐτὰν λευκὰν ἑστακῖαν κυπάρισ‹σ›ον.

6 BJ, TG εὑρήσεις: PC, GJ hευρήσεις.

7 BJ ὕδωρ: PC hύδωρ; BJ ἐπύπερθεν ἔασι: Marcovich, West ἐπ' ὕπερθεν ἔασι‹ν›.

8 BJ, Z οἳ δέ σε εἰρήσονται: PC, GJ, TG τοὶ δέ σε εἰρήσονται, Luppe τ]οὶ δή σε εἰρήσοντ' ἀίεν φρασὶ.

9 BJ ὅτ‹τ›ι: Z † …] ι ΔΕ, GJ ὅ τι, Luppe π]ὸτ ‹τ›ί δὴ; BJ, Ebert ὀρφ‹ν›ήεντος: PC ‹ἠε›ρόεντος, Z Ο[…]ΕΕΝΤΟΣ†.

10 Sacco, BJ, TG Γῆς παῖ‹ς› ἠμι: GJ ὑὸς Γᾶς ἐμι, Pugliese Carratelli 1993 ‹hυ›ὸς Βαρέας, Z ὑὸς Γαίας.

11 BJ, TG δίψαι δ' εἰμ' αὖος: GJ ἐμ', Z ἠμὶ, Merkelbach ἐμὶ; B δότ' ὦκα: West δότω [τις], Gallavotti δότω [μοι].

12 BJ ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ πιέναι τῆς Μνημοσύνης: Z ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον τῆς Μνημοσύνης, Guarducci ὕδωρ πιεῖν αὐτῆς.

13 ἐρέουσιν ὑποχθονίωι βασιλῆι: BJ ἐρέουσιν {ι} ὑποχθονίωι βασιλεί‹αι›, GJ ἐρέοσιν hυποχθονίοι βασιλῆι, TG ἐλεοῦσιν ὑπὸ χθονίωι βασιλῆι, Lazzarini ἐρέουσιν, West ‹τ›ελέουσι σ' ὑποχθονίωι βασιλεί‹ᾳ›, PC ἐλεοῦσιν ‹h›υποχθονίωι βασιλῆι, Z ἐλεοῦσιν †ὑποχθονίοι βασιλειτ, Janko ‹σ›ἐλεοῦσιν τι ὑποχθονίοι βασιλει.

14 BJ, Gallavotti καὶ {δή τοι}: lam. καὶ δή τοι, Lloyd-Jones καὶ δή σοι, Riedweg καὐτοί σοι.

15 BJ, Luppe, PC, Gallavotti σὺ πιὼν: Pugl. 1974 συχνὸν, Merk. συχνῶν, Burkert ap. Z συχνὰν; BJ ὁδὸν ἔρχεα‹ι› ἄν: PC hοδὸν ἔρχεα‹ι› ἁν.

16 PC βάχχοι: BJ βάκχοι, Merkelbach, Burkert ap. Pugliese Caratelli κλε‹ε›ινοί: PC κλεινοί, Feyerabend κλυτάν τε.

ΜΝΑΜΟΣΥΝΑΣΤΟΔΕΕΡΙΟΝΕΠΕΙΑΜΜΕΛΛΕΙΣΙΘΑΝΕΣΘΑΙ
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B11 Entella?, West Sicily, 3rd century BCE OF *475*
When you are about] to die …
] ?remembering? hero
] shadow covering around
You will find in the halls of Hades] a lake on the right,
Standing by it, a glowing white] cypress tree;
This is where all the descending so]uls refresh themselves.
this spring, do no]t go near at all.
Further along you will find,] from the lake of Memory,
refreshing water flowing forth.]But guardians are nearby.
They will ask you,] with sharp minds,
What you seek in Hades' shadowy] gloom
Say: "I am the child of Earth and] starry Heaven;
And I am parched with thirst and I pe]rish; but give me
refreshing water flowing forth] from the lake of Memory."
‹›‹›‹›‹›‹›‹›‹›‹›‹›‹›
But m[y race is heavenly. And this you know yourselves.
And then[they will speak to the underworld ruler.
and then [they will give of the lake of Memory
and then [
Passwords: Ph[
and Phe[
??

ἐπεὶ ἄμ μέλ]λησι θανεῖσθαι
μ]εμνήμε‹ν›ος ἥρως
]σκότος ἀμφικαλύψαι
Εὑρήσεις Ἀίδαο δόμοις, ἐπὶ]δεξιὰ λίμνην
πὰρ δ' αὐτῆι λευκὴν ἑστη]κῦαν κυπάρισσον
ἐνθα κατερχόμεναι ψυ]χαὶ νεκύων ψύχονται
ταῦτης τῆς κρήνης μη]δὲ σχέδον ἐ‹μ›πέλασ‹ασ›θαι
πρόσθεν δὲ εὑρήσεις τῆς] Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης
ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον·] φύλακοι θ' ὑποπέθασιν
οἵ δὲ σε εἰρήσονται ἐνὶ] φρασὶ πευκαλίμησιν
ὅττι δὲ ἐξερέεις Ἀιδος σκότο]ς ὀρφ{ο}νήεντο‹ς›
εἶπον· Γῆς παῖς εἰμὶ καὶ] Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος
δίψαι δ' εἰμὶ αὖος καὶ ἀπόλλ]υμαι ἀλλὰ δότε μμοὶ
ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ πιέναι τῆς] Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης
****

αὐτὰρ ἐ[μοὶ γένος οὐράνιον· τόδε δ' ἴστε καὶ αὐτοί.
καὶ τοὶ δὴ[ἐρέουσιν ὑποχθονίοι βασιλῆι
καὶ τοτὲ τ[οι δώσωσιν τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης
καὶ τοτὲ δ[ὴ
σύμβολα φ[
καὶ φε[
σεν[

1 BJ ἐπεὶ ἄμ μέλ]ληισι θανεῖσθαι: Frel ἐπεὶ ἄμ μέλ]ηνίοιν θανιεσθαι, Riedweg Μνημοσύνης τόδε … ἐπεὶ ἄμ μέλ]ληισι θανεῖσθαι.
2 Riedweg μ]εμνήμε‹ν›ος ἵρως: Frel]ἐμνήμεος ἵρως.
3 Riedweg ἀμφικαλύψας: Frel ἀμφικαλύψαι
4 Riedweg εὑρήσεις δ' Ἀΐδαο δόμοις, ἐπὶ]δεξιὰ λίμνην: BJ ἐπὶ]δεξιὰ λίμνην, Frel ἐστ' ἐπὶ]δεξιὰ λίμνην.
5 Riedweg ἑστη]κῦαν: Frel ἑστη]κῦαι.
11 Riedweg σκότο]ς ὀρφ{ο}νήεντο‹ς›: Frel σκότος?] μου φονηεντά.
13 Riedweg δότε μμοὶ: Frel δοτεμμοὶ.
15 Riedweg αὐτὰρ ἐ[μοὶ γένος οὐράνιον· τόδε δ' ἴστε καὶ αὐτοί.: Frel αὐτὰρ ἐ[μοὶ γένος οὐράνιον·
17 Riedweg καὶ τοτὲ τ[οι δώσωσιν τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης: Frel καὶ τοτὲ τ[οι πιεῖν ὕδωρ πρόρεον.
18 Riedweg: καὶ τοτὲ δ[ὴ: Frel καὶ τοτὲ τ[οι δώσωσιν τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης.

B12 Crete, 2nd–1st century BCE (36 × 13 mm) OF *484a*

He is parched with thirst and he perishes. But give me to drink from the spring of Sauros on the left of the cypress. "Who are you? From where are you?" Earth is my mother and starry Heaven.

Δίψαι {τοι} ‹α›ὖος παραπ‹ό›λλ‹υ›ται· ἀλλὰ π{α}ιέν μοι
κράνας ‹Σ›αύρου ἐπ' {α} ἀρι‹σ›τερὰ τᾶς κυφα{σ}ρίσσω.
τίς δ' εἶ ἢ πῶ δ' εἶ; Γᾶς ἠμ{ο}ὶ μάτηρ {πωτιαετ} ‹κ›αὶ ‹Ο›ὐρανῶ
‹ἀ›στε‹ρόεντος›
{τισδιψαιτοιατοιιυτοοπασρατανηο}

2 Tzifopoulos κράνας ‹Σ›αύρου\Αὔρου: BJ, GJ κράνας αἰ‹ει›ρ‹ό›ου.
3 Tzifopoulos Γᾶ {σ} ‹ἐ›μοὶ μάτηρ, πω; τί; ‹κ›αὶ ‹Ο›ὐράνὸ τε τίς;
4 Tzifopoulos τίς δίψαι τοι

ΔΙΨΑΙΤΟΙΥΟCΠΑΡΔΠΛΛΥΤΑΙ
ΑΛΛΑΠΑΙΕΝΜΟΙΚΙΑΝΑCΑΥ
ΡΟΥΕΠΑΑΡΙΤΕΡΑΤΑCΚΥΦΑC
ΡΙΖΩΤΗCΔΕΙΗΠΩΔΕΙΓΑ
CΗΜΟΙΜΑΤΗΕΡΠΩΤΑΕΤ
ΛΙΥΡΑΝΩCΤΕΤΙCΔΙΨΑΙΤΟ
ΙΛΤΟΙΙΥΤΟΟΠΑCΡΑΤΑΝΗΟ

B13 and B14 Eleutherna, 2nd century BCE – unpublished

The C group (see Table 2.4)

C1 Thurii, 4th century BCE (81 × 23 mm) OF *492*

Pugliese Carratelli

ΠΡΩΤΟΓΟΝΟΤΗΜΑΙΤΙΕΤΗΓΑΜΜΑΤΡΙΕΠΑΚΥΒΕΛΕΙΑΚΟΡΡΑΟΣ ΕΝΤΑΙΗΔΗΜΗΤΡΟΣΗΤ
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ΣΠΑΤΕΡΑΤΙΚΠΑΝΤΑΔΑΜΑΣΤΑΠΑΝΤΗΡΝΥΝΤΑΙΣΕΛΑΒΔΟΝΤΑΔΕΠΑΝΤΕΜΟΙΒΤΗΣΛΗΤΕΑΣΤΩ
ΤΗΜΗΑΕΡΙΠΥΡΜΕΜΜΑΤΕΡΛΥΕΣΤΙΣΟΙΣΛ·ΕΝΤΑΤΟΝΗΣΣΙΝΝΥΞΙΝΗΜΕΦΗΜΕΡΑΝΕΓΛΧΥΕΣ
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ΩΤΑΚΤΗΡΙΕΡΑΜΑΡΔΗΜΗΤΕΡΠΥΡΖΕΥΚΑΡΗΧΦΟΝΙΑΤΡΑΒΔΑΗΤΡΟΣΗΝΙΣΤΗΟΙΣΤΝ
ΗΡΩΣΝΗΓΑΥΝΗΓΑΟΣΕΣΦΡΕΝΑΜΑΤΑΙΜΗΤΝΝΤΗΣΝΥΣΧΑΜΕΣΤΩΡΕΙΛΕΚΟΙΡΗΝ
ΑΙΑΦΗΡΤΟΝΟΝΣΣΜΜΟΕΣΤΟΝΑΕΡΤΑΙΠΛΝΙΛΛΥΕΣΦΡΕΝΑΜΑΡ· ΤΩΣ.

Bernabé 2004–07

Πρωτογόνω‹ι› ΤΗΜΑΙΤΙΕΤΗ Γᾶι ματρί ΕΠΑ Κυβελεία‹ι› Κόρρα‹ι› ΟΣΕΝΤΑΙΗ Δήμητρος ΗΤ
ΤΑΤΑΙΤΤΑΤΑΠΤΑ Ζεῦ ΙΑΤΗΤΥ ἀέρ ΣΑΠΤΑ Ἥλιε, πῦρ δὴ πάνταΣΤΗΙΝΤΑΣΤΗΝΙΣΑΤΟΠΕ νικᾶι Μ
ΣΗΔΕ Τύχα ΙΤΕ Φάνης, πάμνηστοι Μοῖραι ΣΣΤΗΤΟΙΓΑΝΝΥΑΠΙΑΝΤΗ σὺ κλυτὲ δαῖμον ΔΕΥΧΙ
Σ πάτερ ΑΤΙΚ παντοδαμάστα ΠΑΝΤΗΡΝΥΝΤΑΙΣΕΛΑΒΔΟΝΤΑΔΕΠ ἀνταμοιβή ΣΤΛΗΤΕΑΣΤΛ
ΤΗΜΗ ἀέρ ι πῦρ ΜΕΜ Μᾶτερ ΛΥΕΣΤΙΣΟΙΛ-ΕΝΤΑΤΟ Νῆστι Ν νύξ ΙΝΗΜΕΦ ἡμέραΜΕΡΑΝΕΓΛΧΥΕΣ
ἑπτῆμαρ ΤΙ νήστιας ΤΑΝ Ζεῦ ἐνορύττιε(?) καὶ πανόπτα. αἰέν ΑΙΜΙΥ*μᾶτερ, ἐμᾶς ἐπ-
άκουσον ΕΟ εὐχᾶς ΤΑΚΤΑΠΥΑΡΣΥΟΛΚΑΠΕΔΙΩΧΑΜΑΤΕΜΑΝ καλ{η}ὰ Δ ἱερά ΔΑΜΝΕΥΔΑΜΝΟΙ
ΩΤΑΚΤΗΡ ἱερά ΜΑΡ Δημῆτερ, πῦρ, Ζεῦ, Κόρη Χθονία ΤΡΑΒΔΑΗΤΡΟΣΗΝΙΣΤΗΟΙΣΤΝ
ἥρως ΝΗΓΑΥΝΗ φάος ἐς φρένα ΜΑΤΑΙΜΗΤΝΝΤΗΣΝΥΣΧΑ μήστωρ εἶλε Κούρην
αἶα ΦΗΡΤΟΝΟΣΣΜΜΟ-ΕΣΤΟΝ ἀέρ ΤΑΙΠΛΝΙΛΛΥ ἐς φρένα ΜΑΡ*ΤΩΣ

The D group (see Table 2.5)

D1 Pelinna, ca. 275 BCE (40 × 31 mm) OF *485*

Now you have died and now you have been born, thrice blessed one, on this very day.
Say to Persephone that Bacchios himself freed you.
A bull you rushed to milk.
Quickly, you rushed to milk.
A ram you fell into milk.
You have wine as your fortunate honor.
And you will go beneath the earth, having celebrated rites just as the other blessed ones.

νῦν ἔθανες καὶ νῦν ἐγένου, τρισόλβιε, ἄματι τῶιδε.
εἰπεῖν Φερσεφόναι σ᾽ ὅτι Β‹άκ›χιος αὐτὸς ἔλυσε.
τα{ι}ῦρος εἰς γάλα ἔθορες.
αἶψα εἰς γ‹ά›λα ἔθορες.
κριὸς εἰς γάλα ἔπεσ‹ες›.
οἶνον ἔχεις εὐδ‹α›ίμονα τιμὴ‹ν›
καὶ σὺ μὲν εἶς ὑπὸ γῆν τελέσας ἅπερ ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι.

4 BJ, GJ, PC αἶψα: TP δίψᾳ?, Lloyd-Jones αἴξ.
6 GJ εὐδ‹α›ίμονα τιμὴ‹ν›: PC εὐδ‹α›ίμον τιμὴ‹ν›, TP εὐδ‹α›ίμον, ἄτιμο‹ν›.
7 BJ, Luppe καὶ σὺ μὲν εἶς ὑπὸ γῆν τελέσας ἅπερ: GJ κἀπ‹ιμένει σ᾽ ὑπὸ γῆν τέλεα ἅσσαπερ.

ΝΥΝΕΘΑΝΕC
ΚΑΙΝΥΝΕΓ
ΕΝΟΥΤΡΙCΟΛΒ
ΙΕΑΜΑΤΙΤΩΙΔΕ
ΕΙΠΕΙΝΦΕΡCΕΦΟΝ
ΑΙCΟΤΙΒΧΙΟCΑΥΤΟC
ΕΛΥCΕΤΑΙΥΡΟC
ΕΙCΓΑΛΔΕΘΟΡΕCΑΙ
ΨΑΕΙCΓΛΑΕΘΟΡΕC
ΧΡΙΟCΕΙCΓΑΛΑΕΠΕC
ΟΙΝΟΝΕΧΕΙCΕΥ
ΔΙΜΟΝΑΤΙΜΗ
ΚΑΠΥΜΕΝ
ΕΙCΥΠΟ
_ _ _ _ _
ΓΗΝΤΕ
ΛΕΑΑCΑ
ΠΕΡΟΛ
ΒΙΟΙΑΛ
ΛΟΙ

D2 Pelinna, ca. 275 BCE (35 × 30 mm) OF *486*

Now you have died and now you have been born,
thrice blessed one, on this very day.
Say to Persephone that Bacchios himself freed you.
A bull you rushed to milk.
A ram you fell into milk.
You have wine as your fortunate honor.

νῦν ἔθανε‹ς› καὶ νῦν ἐγένου, τρισόλβιε, ἄματι ‹τῶι›δε.
‹ε›ἰπ[ε]ῖν Φερσεφό‹ναι σ'› ὅτι Βά‹κ›χιος αὐτὸς ἔλυσε.
ταῦρος ἐ‹ς› γάλα ἔθορ‹ε›ς.
κριὸς ἐς γάλα ἔπεσε‹ς›.
οἶνον ἔχεις εὐδ‹αί›μον‹α› τιμήν.

5 BJ, GJ εὐδ‹α›ίμονα τιμὴ‹ν›: PC εὐδ‹α›ίμον τιμὴ‹ν›, TP εὐδ‹α›ίμον, ἄτιμο‹ν›.

ΝΥΝΕΘΑΝΕ
ΚΑΙΝΥΝΕ
ΓΕΝΟΥΤΡΙCΟΛ
ΒΙΕΑΜΑΤΙ
ΔΕΙΠΕΙΝΦΕΡ
CΕΦΟΟΤΙΒΑΧΙΟ
CΑΥΤΟCΕΛΥCΕ
ΤΑΥΡΟCΕΓΑΛΑΕ
ΘΟΡCΚΡΙΟCΕCΓΑΛΑ
ΕΠΕCΕΟΙΝΟΝΕ
ΧΕΙCΕΥΔ
– – – – – – – – –
ΜΟΝ
ΤΙΜ
ΗΝ

D3 Pherai, 4th century BCE OF *493*

Passwords: Man-boy-thyrsos, Man-boy-thyrsos. Brimo, Brimo. Enter the sacred meadow. For the initiate is without penalty.

σύμβολα· Ἀν‹δ›ρικεπαιδόθυρσον. Ἀνδρικεπαιδόθυρσον. Βριμώ. Βριμώ. εἴσιθ‹ι› ἱερὸν λειμῶνα. ἄποινος γὰρ ὁ μύστης. ΓΑΠΕΔΟΝ

2 lam.: BJ ex Hordern 2000 ὑπέδυν.

D4 Amphipolis, 4th–3rd century BCE OF *496n*
Holy priestess of Dionysos Bacchios am I, Archeboule (daughter) of Antidoros

εὐαγὴς ἱερὰ Διονύσου Βακχίου εἰμὶ Ἀρχέβου[λὴ] ἡ Ἀντιδώρου

1 BJ: Hatzopoulos Ἀρχέβου [γυν?]ὴ

D5 Pherai, 4th–3rd century BCE OF *493a*
Send me to the thiasos of the initiates. I have seen the festivals
of Demeter Chthonia, and the rites of the Mountain Mother.

πέμπε με πρὸς μυστῶ‹ν› θιάσους· ἔχω ὄργια [ἰδοῦσα]
Δήμητρος Χθονίας, τε ‹τέ›λη καὶ Μητρὸς Ὀρεί[ας].

1 PS ἔχω ὄργια [ἰδοῦσα]: BJ, GJ ἔχω ὄργια [Βάκχου]

The E group (see Table 2.6)

E2 495	[Πλού]τωνι καὶ Φ[ερσ]οπόνει χαίρεν. – To Plouton and Persephone, hail!
E3 496k	Φιλίστη Φερσεφόνηι χαίρειν – Philiste to Persephone, hail!
E4 496b	Φερσεφόνηι Ποσείδιππος μύστης εὐσεβής – To Persephone, Poseidippos the pious initiate
E5 494	Πλούτωνι … Φερσεφόνη‹ι› – To Plouton and Persephone
E6 495a	Φιλωτήρα τῶι Δεσπ‹ό›τε‹ι›{α} χέρε‹ν› ΕΙΜΩ – Philotera to the Mistress, hail!

1 Riedweg = OF 496i Ἄιδος ΑΡΙΤΜΑ εὖ ΠΙΕΑΥΕΙ ψ‹υχή›; GJ Ἄιδος ΑΡΙΤΜΑΕΥΠΙ ΕΝΕΙΨ

The F group (see Table 2.7)

F1 496i	Εὐξένη – Euxena
F2 496e	μύστης – initiate
F3 496h	Φυλομάγα – Phylomaga
F4 496c	Δεξίλαος μύστας – Dexilaos, the initiate
F5 496d	Φίλων μύστας – Philon, the initiate
F6 496a	Φιλοξένα – Philoxena
F7 496j	Φιλημήνα – Philemena
F8	Ξεναρίστη – Xenariste
F9	Ἄνδρων – Andron
F10 496g	Βοττακός – Bottakos
F11 496f	Ἡγησίσκα – Hegesiska
F12	Ἐπιγένης – Epigenes
F13	Παλάθα – Palatha

Table 2.1 *Tablet Groups – sigla in different editions*

#	Editio princeps	Bernabé and Jiménez	Graf and Johnston	Tortorelli Ghidini	Pugliese Carratelli	Colli	Kern
A1	1879	488/L9	5	5	II.B1	4.A65	32c
A2	1879	489/L10a	7	6	II.A1	4.A66a	32d
A3	1879	490/L10b	6	7	II.A2	4.A66b	32e
A4	1879	487/L8	3	4	II.B2	4.A67	32f
A5	1903	491/L11	9	23	I.B1	4.B31	32g
B1	1836	476/L3	2	2	I.A2	4.A62	32a
B2	1951	477/L4	25	8	I.A3	4.A63	–
B3	1893	478/L5a	10	14	I.C1	4.A64	32b I
B4	1893	479/L5b	11	15	I.C2	4.A70a	32b II
B5	1893	480/L5c	12	16	I.C3	4.A70b	32b III
B6	1939	481/L5d	16	17	I.C4	4.A70c	–
B7	1954	482/L5e	13	18	I.C5	4.A70d	–
B8	1954	483/L5f	14	19	I.C6	4.A70e	–
B9	1977	484/L6	29	9	I.C7	4.A70f	–
B10	1974	474/L1	1	1	I.A1	4.A72	–
B11	1994	475/L2	8	13	I.A.4	–	–
B12	2006	484a/L6a	18	21	–	–	–
C	1879	492/L12	4	3	III	4.A68	47
D1	1987	485/L7a	26a	10	II.B3	–	–
D2	1987	486/L7b	26b	11	II.B4	–	–
D3	1991	493/L13	27	12	II.C.2	–	–
D4	2001	496n/L16n	30	–	–	–	–
D5	2007	493a/L13a	28	–	–	–	–
E1	1967	495a/L15a	{38}	–	–	–	–
E2	1893	495/L15	15	20	II.C.1	–	–
E3	1961–62	496k/L16k	37	–	–	–	–
E4	1989	496b/L16b	31	–	–	–	–
E5	1998	494/L16l	17	22	–	–	–
F1	1969	496i/L16i	23	–	–	–	–
F2	1977	496e/L16e	20	–	–	–	–
F3	1986	496h/L16h	35	–	–	–	–
F4	1987	496c/L16c	21	–	–	–	–
F5	1987	496d/L16d	22	–	–	–	–
F6	1989	496a/L16a	32	–	–	–	–
F7	1994	496j/L16j	24	–	–	–	–
F8	1992	–/S3a	–	–	–	–	–
F9	1992	–/S3b	–	–	–	–	–
F10	1992	496g/L16g	36	–	–	–	–
F11	1992	496f/L16f	34	–	–	–	–
F12	1999	–/S5	33	–	–	–	–
F13	1981	–					

Table 2.2 ***GROUP A*** – *Lamellae with "Pure from the Pure" formula*

	Provenance	Date	Gender	Shape	Position in grave	Coin	Burial and grave-goods
A1	Thurii, Italy	IV c. BCE	not known	rectangular unfolded	close to hand	no	Inhumation. A tumulus of three strata: in the first more than ten persons carelessly interred; in the second fragments of pottery; in the third gravel mixed with sand and lime. In this lower third, three graves were found (A1–A3). In the four corners of the chamber of cist-grave 1 small hollows filled with ashes of bones and plants, indications of funeral sacrifice; no mention of a coffin; no other offerings
A2	Thurii, Italy	IV c. BCE	not known	rectangular folded once	close to hand	no	Inhumation. Under the tumulus (A1 above) cist-grave 3: no mention of a coffin; no other offerings
A3	Thurii, Italy	IV c. BCE	not known	rectangular unfolded	close to hand	no	Inhumation. Under the tumulus (A1 above) cist-grave 2: no mention of a coffin; no other offerings
A4	Thurii, Italy	IV c. BCE	male?	rectangular folded nine times and placed inside no. C1 (table 2.4) which was folded like an envelope	near the cranium	no	Inhumation (partial cremation). Above the grave: a tumulus of eight strata, each consisting of ashes and carbon and burnt pottery sherds topped by earth above, indication of rituals and sacrifices and worship of the dead inside as a hero. Ouside the grave: a few small black vases. Inside: bronze locks of the coffin, two silver medallions on the chest decorated with female heads, similar to the ones of Persephone on Apulian vases, a few small pieces of gold from the dress's decoration, two small wooden boxes with inlaid palmettes. The cremation took place in situ and the remains were simply covered by a white sheet which disintegrated when touched by the excavators
A5	Rome, Italy	II c. CE	female	not known	not known	not known	not known

Table 2.3 ***GROUP B*** *– Lamellae with the "child of Earth and starry Heaven" formula*

	Provenance	Date BCE	Gender	Shape	Position in grave	Coin	Burial and grave-goods
B1	Petelia, Italy	IV c.	female?	rectangular rolled in cylinder?	not known	not known	Not known; the leaf itself was found folded up inside a gold cylindrical case with a chain attached, dated to the II–III c. CE [a]
B2	Pharsalos, Thessaly	360–340	male?	rectangular (folded twice?)	inside a hydria-urn	no	Cremation. A limestone round container in which a bronze hydria-urn with a representation below the neck-handle of the 'abduction' of Oreithyia by Boreas and ivy leaves and anthemia at the base; inside the urn the ashes, small bronze ring and a small skyphos
B3	Eleutherna, Crete	II–I c.	not known	rectangular folded	not known	not known	not known
B4	Eleutherna, Crete	II–I c.	not known	rectangular folded	not known	not known	not known
B5	Eleutherna, Crete	II–I c.	not known	rectangular folded	not known	not known	not known
B6	Eleutherna, Crete	II–I c.	not known	rectangular folded?	not known	not known	not known
B7	Eleutherna, Crete	II–I c.	not known	rectangular rolled in cylinder?	not known	not known	not known
B8	Eleutherna, Crete	II–I c.	not known	rectangular rolled in cylinder?	not known	not known	not known
B9	Thessaly?	350–320	not known	not known	inside a hydria	not known	Cremation. Bronze hydria-urn

	Provenance	Date BCE	Gender	Shape	Position in grave	Coin	Burial and grave-goods
B10	Hipponion, Italy	ca. 400	female?	rectangular folded four times	on upper part of chest (hung by perishable material?)		Inhumation in tile-covered grave. Outside: a clay lamp and two skyphoi, one of them with a graffito. Inside: to the right of cranium a small clay jug and to the left bronze fragments of a ring with an incised representation; at the right elbow a hydria and a bronze semi-sphere with a hole of a bell(?); on the pelvis a skyphos; at the left hand a gold finger-ring, a clay lamp, a hydria and two clay lekythoi to the left and right of the left thighbone
B11	Entella?, West Sicily	III c.?	not known	rectangular	not known	not known	not known
B12	Sfakaki, Crete	II–I c.	not known	rectangular unfolded	not known	not known	Inhumation in looted tile-grave above no. B 10. Thirty-two clay unguentaria, fragments of glass, a bronze mirror, small bronze and gilt fragments

Table 2.4 ***GROUP C*** *Lamella with "Orphic" text*

	Provenance	Date	Gender	Shape	Position in grave	Coin	Burial and grave-goods
C1	Thurii, Italy	IV c. BCE	male?	above no. A4 (table 2)	above no. A4 (table 2)	above no. A4 (table 2)	above no. A4 (table 2)

Table 2.5 ***GROUP D*** *Lamellae with Dionysos and Persephone (and/or Demeter) and other deities*

	Provenance	Date BCE	Gender	Shape	Position in grave	Coin	Burial and grave-goods
D1/2	Pelinna, Thessaly	ca. 275	female	ivy-leaves	two on chest	*danake* in mouth with gorgon; coin of Antigonos Gonatas	Inhumation in marble sarcophagus: in the cranium a wreath of lead stem, clay gilt berries and gilt bronze myrtle leaves with gold ornament; near the cranium: a clay aryter, a clay bowl, two gold spirals ending in snake-heads; near the feet clay aryter with a lamp inside, clay unguentarium, two bowls, a shallow skyphos; by the feet bronze lebes with bones of a neonate. On the cover slab of marble sarcophagus: two clay bowls and fragments of a third, clay feeder and clay figurine of comic actor sitting on an altar
D3	Pherai, Thessaly	ca. 300	not known	rectangular	on chest?	not known	not known
D4	Amphipolis, Macedonia	320–280	female	rectangular	folded on chest	silver coin Philip II	Inhumation in stone sarcophagus looted. Gold ring and finger-ring; stone-constructed exedra for funeral rituals
D5	Pherai, Thessaly	ca. 300	not known	rectangular	not known	not known	Cremation? in marble osteotheke cylindrical(?) with few bones and ashes

Table 2.6 ***GROUP E*** *Lamellae and epistomia with chaire-formula to Plouton and/or Persephone*

	Provenance	Date BCE	Gender	Shape	Position in grave	Coin	Burial and grave-goods
E1	Agios Athanasios, Macedonia	III c.	female	rectangular	not known	not known	Not known if Macedonian tomb looted. Trapezoid construction at the entrance for the funeral supper; gold earrings, Illyrian type pin, clay figurines
E2	Eleutherna, Crete not known	II–I c.	not known	rectangular	not known	not known	not known
E3	Aigai (Vergina), Macedonia	III–I c.	female	not known	not known	not known	Cremation under tumulus looted? Hellenistic pottery
E4	Pella, Macedonia	ca. 300	male	myrtle? (laurel)	on bench of the grave's W side	no	Many glass and bone fragments from the decoration of the wooden bier and its legs with incised representation of griffin tearing a deer; iron fragments from bier or small box; part of iron strigil, iron pin; gilt clay myrtle-berries from a wreath. On the bench of the grave's W side: forty-one gilt clay pebbles in the shape of acorn; forty-six bone astragaloi and a bone pebble; fragment of alabaster, and a clay fragment of female figurine
E5	Sfakaki, Crete	20 BCE–40 CE	male(?)	'mouth'	mouth	bronze on chest	Inhumation in cist-grave. Clay and bronze prochous, clay unguentarium, lekythion, two glass phialae, a bronze strigil, obsidian flake

Table 2.7 ***GROUP F*** *Lamellae and epistomia with only the deceased's name or the word* mystes

	Provenance	Date BCE	Gender	Shape	Position in grave	Coin	Burial and grave-goods
F1	Elis, Peloponnese	300–275	female	leaf	not known	not known	Inhumation in pithos. Clay vases?, gold necklace, gold earrings, fragments of gold foils from a diadem
F2	Aigeion, Peloponnese	III–I c.	male	myrtle? (laurel)	not known	gold *danake*	Inhumation in cist-grave looted. Iron strigil, two gold finger-rings, two gold Nike-earrings, fragments of silver and clay vase
F3	Methone, Pieria	ca. 300	female	rectangular	on the body	no	Inhumation in cist-grave looted. Ivory fragments of bier's decoration of floral patterns and of figures from the Dionysiac cycle; two gold earrings, two gold finger-rings, seven clay vessels, bronze phiale, iron scissors, a bronze gilt wreath
F4	Aigeion, Peloponnese	III–I c.	male	leaf	not known	gold *danake* (two)	Inhumation in cist-grave. Six clay vases, iron strigil, two fragments of bronze objects
F5	Aigeion, Peloponnese	III–I c.	male	myrtle? (almond)	not known	gold *danake*	Inhumation in cist-grave. Three craniums and a number of bones; twelve gold lance-shape leaves, gold finger-ring for burial use, two silver bowls, two unguentaria
F6	Pella, Macedonia	ca. 300	female	myrtle? (laurel)	not known	no	Inhumation in cist-grave. Clay myrtle-berries from a wreath; fragments of bone gilt small chous; bronze gilt leaves; forty-three bronze nail-heads; two small bronze rings; three pieces of bone tool; eight glass eyes; two small clay skyphoi; clay lamp; inscribed clay plate; gold finger-ring; gold earrings
F7	Elis, Peloponnese	III c.	female	myrtle	under the cranium	leaf as *danake*	Inhumation in cist-grave. Gold finger-ring, gold earrings, clay pyxis to the left of cranium; small skyphos between the legs, small amphora, four clay unguentaria, clay cup, lamp; bronze, iron, silver, and

Table 2.7 (*cont.*)

	Provenance	Date BCE	Gender	Shape	Position in grave	Coin	Burial and grave-goods
							bone fragments from a small wooden box in which bronze folding mirror, iron tweezers, iron scissors, clay unguentarium, clay pyxis
F8	Pydna, Pieria	336–300	female	gold coin of Philip II	in the mouth	gold coin of Philip II	Inhumation in cist-grave with pit-grave (F9) immediately to the S: ivory fragments from the bier, bronze ladle, bronze bell, a lead pyxis and seven clay vases
F9	Pydna, Pieria	336–300	male	gold coin of Philip II	in the mouth	gold coin of Philip II	Inhumation in pit-grave immediately to the N of cist-grave (F8): ivory fragments from the bier, two bronze-gilt wreaths and four clay vessels
F10	Europos	ca. 300	male	rectangular	not known	not known	Inhumation? in cist-grave looted. Glass eyes, bone fragments and bronze nails from bier's decoration; clay vases, alabasters, Phoenician vase, iron strigils, bronze gilt wreath with berries. Outside to the NE: trapezoid construction for funeral supper with pottery fragments and fragment of kantharos, bones, and shells; traces of enagismos in later times NW of the construction, bronze gilt wreath with clay gilt berries, bronze coin badly worn, red-figure pelike with amazon, griffin, and youths in gymnasium
F11	Pella, Macedonia	ca. 300	small girl	leaf	not known	not known	Inhumation in cist-grave. Gold finger-ring with incised animal; gold earrings of Cupids
F12	Dion	ca. 300?	male	small disc	not known	small disc?	Not known from Macedonian tomb V.
F13	Daphniotissa, Elis	Late IV, early III C.	?	olive leaf	not known	not known	Inhumation in rectangular cist-grave, near a funerary monument, with gold ring, bronze mirror, several clay pots, one with pine resin and beeswax residue inside.

PRINCIPAL EDITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

OF refers to Orphic Fragments in A. Bernabé, *Poetae Epici Graeci. Testimonia et Fragmenta. Pars* II*: Orphicorum et Orphicis similium testimonia et fragmenta*. 3 vols. Munich and Leipzig, 2004–07.

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PART II

Texts and contexts

CHAPTER 3

Text and ritual
The Corpus Eschatologicum of the Orphics

Fritz Graf

INTRODUCTION

The books ascribed to Orpheus must have been legion already in the fifth century. The Euripidean Hippolytus, whom his father regards as a vegetarian and an ecstatic, is said to have Orpheus as a Lord, "to rave and to follow the smoke of many writings";[1] and Plato knows religious specialists who made use of "a hubbub of books by Orpheus and Musaeus."[2] Much later, in the prologue of his own *Argonautika*, Orpheus gives an impressive list of what he is about to sing – a theogony, starting from Chaos, Nyx, and Phanes, followed by the narrations about Demeter and Persephone, her relationship to Zeus and her μέγα πένθος, about the myths and the cults of Cybele, the Corybants and the Cabiri, of Praxidice, Aphrodite and Adonis, Isis and Osiris, and the oracles of Nyx about Bacchus,[3] but also about divination through dreams and signs, purification, "supplications of gods and gifts to the dead";[4] finally a report of what he himself had seen in his travels, his descent into Hades and his visit to Egyptian Memphis, which must mean eschatology on the one hand, magic or theurgy on the other.[5] This sounds impressive, and in some respects enigmatic – and that is just Orpheus' intention: all these, he says, are "frightful songs for mortal men, secrets without fear only to the initiates":[6] Orpheus is the Great Initiator. The list sketches what the Imperial Epoch knew as the most salient topics of Orpheus' poems – mythology,

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[1] Eur. *Hipp*. 952–954; 953f. Ὀρφέα τ'ἄνακτ' ἔχων βάκχευε πόλλων γραμμάτων καπνούς.

[2] Pl. *Resp*. 364a βίβλων ὅμαδον παρέχονται Μουσαίου καὶ Ὀρφέως.

[3] Orph. *Arg*. 12–35. See on the prooemium Luiselli 1993.

[4] Orph. *Arg*. 35–40. [5] Orph. *Arg*. 40–46.

[6] Orph. *Arg*. 10–11. φρικώδεα κῆλ' ἐπίφασκον, θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισιν ἄκη, μεγάλ' ὄργια μύσταις.

especially theogonic myths, mystery cults and their myths, from Eleusis to Isis and Adonis, divination and other crisis rituals, including the ritual address to the spirits in the grave. Specific book titles are attested only in late sources – Clement of Alexandria gives six, four of which (*Katabasis into Hades, Hieros Logos, Peplos*, and *Physika*), he says, were mentioned already by a certain Epigenes, an author who wrote on Ion of Chios and is referred to by Callimachus, which indicates limits for his date.[7] Much later, the *Lexicon Suda* gives no less than twenty-three titles,[8] although most of them rather shadowy and no more than a title to us. It is impossible to deal with all of them in the space of a paper: here, I shall concentrate on the early texts, on what I call "the *corpus eschatologicum* of the Orphics."

TESTIMONIES OF THE FIFTH CENTURY

To talk about "Orphics" involves a conscious choice. It is not something which one would have done a while ago: according to the *communis opinio* to which I too have been adhering for a long time, there were no Orphics, there were only poems by Orpheus. This has been the *status quaestionis* agreed upon after the masterly works of Ivan M. Linforth (1941) and Eric R. Dodds (1951) and which had not substantially changed, a generation later, in the studies of Walter Burkert or the most comprehensive and recent book of Martin L. West on *The Orphic Poems* (1983 – it still is the key study, despite some of its shortcomings).[9] This might have changed by now, in the sense that Ὀρφικοί as a term of self-reference for a distinct group of human beings existed in classical Greece: it all depends on the last two letters in a graffito from one of the bone tablets from Olbia.[10]

[7] Clem. Al. *Strom*. 1.21.131.5 = T 222 Kern. For Epigenes see F 1128 Bernabé who not unreasonably dates him to the fourth century; he could of course be somewhat later.

[8] *Suda*. s.v. Ὀρφεύς = T 223d Kern = F 1018 IV Bernabé.

[9] Linforth 1941; Dodds 1951: 135–178; Burkert 1977b: 1–10; Burkert 1982, West 1983 (see the review by L. Brisson, *RHR* **202** 1985, 389–420, repr. in Brisson 1995, and my own in *Gnomon* **57** 1985, 585–591.) – [***Addition 2007***: This is still true almost a decade later. The final publication of the Derveni Papyrus and Betegh's impressive analysis (see below n. 46) have not yet resulted in a new synthesis; Radcliffe Edmonds' arguments against an early Orphic anthropogony seem, to me, as hypercritical as was Linforth's book but necessitate the same useful rethinking of the evidence (Edmonds 1999 and 2004, Linforth 1941). And they both highlight a fundamental methodological problem: when confronted with a wealth of evidence spread out over almost a millennium and a master narrative that comes at the very end of this long period, how legitimate is it to retroject this master narrative if very early texts such as Pind. fr. 133 seem ambiguous? Linforth and Edmonds argue against the hindsight that helps create a uniform picture; the Derveni Papyrus and the history of the Gold Tablets have shown that Linforth vastly overstated his case.]

[10] [F 464 Bernabé: do we read Ὀρφικοί, Ὀρφικόν, or even Ὀρφικῶν? See below, n. 15.]

There certainly were Ὀρφεοτελεσταί, "initiators according to Orpheus," as early as Theophrastus: they set up shop as religious specialists for initiations.[11] And there were Ὀρφικά, "things related to Orpheus." The term is attested for the first time in Herodotus 2.81 – a famous, although contested passage where the Father of History postulates the identity of the "so-called *Orphika* and *Bakkhika* which, in truth, are Egyptian and Pythagorean," and which he immediately specifies as "mystery rites," ὄργια.[12] Orpheus is a poet, the oldest poet of the Greeks in the widely attested catalogue which names, "Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer" and which goes back to Hippias of Elis.[13] Thus *Orphika* of necessity must refer to poetry, and to poetry only. And since the sophist Critias thought Orpheus to be the inventor of the hexameter,[14] the poems were in hexameters – as all our preserved fragments of Orpheus are, of course.

These poems, according to Herodotus, are connected with *Bakkhika*: they have to do with Dionysos Bacchios, the ecstatic god, and with his rites. At about the same time, another text confirms the quasi-identity of *Orphika* and *Bakkhika* – one of the bone tablets from the agora of Olbia Pontica that contains, inter alia, the abbreviated name of Dion(ysos) immediately followed, in the next line, by ΟΡΦΙΚ.., the last letter but one being either omicron or omega and the last one, provided it really is a letter and not rather a meaningless scratch, open to guesswork. In this context, it makes perhaps more sense to read a form of the singular of Ὀρφικός as an epiclesis of Dionysos, than to see the plural Ὀρφικοί: thus, one can think of either Διον(ύσωι) Ὀρφικῶ[ι] as the dative of dedication or, perhaps better, the genitive, Διον(ύσου) Ὀρφικο[ῦ], "belonging to Dionysos of Orpheus."[15]

These two testimonies from the fifth century point out the essential connotations of Orpheus at this time. The Olbia text bears, at its top, the

[11] [Theophr. *Char*. 16 = F 654 Bernabé (specialist, especially for initiations); Philodemus, *On Poems* 1.181 Janko = F 655 Bernabé (ecstatic cult) ; Plut. *Lac*. *Epiphth*. 224e = F 653 Bernabé (initiator with a specific eschatology). These same specialists are attacked by Plato, *Resp*. 364b (who calls them ἀγύρται καὶ μάντεις), and by the Derveni author col. XX (who describes them in XX 4 as "those who make craft of the holy rites," τέχνην ποιούμενοι τὰ ἱερά; they perform initiations, ἐπιτελέσαντες, XX 1).]

[12] Hdt. 2.81 = F 650 Bernabé ὁμολογέει δὲ ταῦτα τοῖσι Ὀρφικοῖσι καλεομένοισι καὶ Βακχικοῖσι, ἐοῦσι δὲ Αἰγυπτίοισι καὶ Πυθαγορείοισι. οὐδὲ γὰρ τούτων τῶν ὀργίων μετέχοντα κτλ. – ὄργια being obviously what Orphika and Bacchika are. The text presents problems because there are two different versions; I follow Burkert 1972: 127f.

[13] VS 86 B 6 = T 252 Kern = F 1146 Bernabé; more in Graf 1974: 9 n. 7.

[14] VS 88 B 3. Democritus VS 68 B16 named Musaeus instead.

[15] F 463 Bernabé, with ample bibliography. Still the best account is West 1983. [Even in my perhaps overly cautious reading, it would of course be only a small step to calling the worshippers of this specific form of Dionysus Ὀρφικοί.]

sequence βίος θάνατος βίος, then in the next line ἀλήθεια. With Walter Burkert, I read it, not as the rest of two other parallel opposites found in a parallel text, εἰρήνη πόλεμος| ἀλήθεια ψεῦδος but as an emphatic confirmation – the sequence "from life to death to life: this is the Truth". Life leads to death, but again to new life. As a recent text has it, a gold tablet in the form of an ivy leaf from Pelinna in Thessaly dated about a century later: "Now you have died and now, thrice happy one, you have been born, on this very day."[16] Incidentally, it has been this Pelinna text which conclusively confirmed the Dionysiac character of all these gold leaves – and thus has given a clearer background to the statement of Herodotus: the *Orphika* ("things – i.e. poems and their content – which have to do with Orpheus") and *Bakkhika*, as he makes clear immediately afterwards, are intimately related to ὄργια, mystery rites of Dionysos Bacchios, and those in turn have to do with beliefs about the afterlife (in this case, the use of woollen garments in burials).[17]

The Orphics, the *Orphikoi*, would then be the "people who have to do with Orpheus." To be more precise: they were the people who read and used (and some of them, presumably, who wrote) the poems ascribed to Orpheus, the mythical singer. In the eyes of Herodotus, they – at least the authors of the Orphic poems – had an intimate knowledge of Pythagorean doctrines (which, in turn, he derives from Egypt, as does Isocrates, not much later).[18] They even might have been Pythagoreans; this at least is what another contemporary writer, Ion of Chios, tells us: "Pythagoras wrote some poems and ascribed them to Orpheus."[19] Later accounts, beginning with Epigenes, name specific Italian Pythagoreans as authors of specific works under the name of Orpheus.[20] The most spectacular Pythagorean doctrine, in the eyes of the Greeks, was reincarnation – already Xenophanes makes fun of it, in some well-known verses.[21] The sequence of the Olbia tablet – βίος -> θάνατος -> βίος – can be read as the first step in a longer chain which then would mean just this doctrine; although as it stands, there is no necessity to assume so. It might mean no more than the promise of another life after death, a better one.

[16] F 485 Bernabé. [There have been several recent editions of the tablets, in addition to their inclusion in Bernabé's collection: Pugliese Carratelli 1993 (a private edition, difficult to obtain, but with splendid photographs) has been re-edited (with corrections) as Pugliese Carratelli 2001 (translated as *Les lamelles d'or orphiques. Instructions pour le voyage d'outre-tombe des initiés grecs*, Paris 2003); Graf and Johnston 2007; see also Edmonds 2004: 29–110.]

[17] [The Dionysiac character of all leaves has been challenged by a leaf from Pherae published by Robert Parker and Maria Stamatopoulou 2004, Graf and Johnston 2007: no. 28 that contains the names of Demeter and Meter Oreia; but there is space to supplement the name Bacchos.]

[18] *Busiris* 28 (VS 14 A 4). [19] VS 36 B 2 = OT 248 Kern = 1144 i Bernabé.

[20] Brontinus T 173 Kern = F 1100 Bernabé; Cercops T 174 Kern = F 1101 Bernabé. [21] VS 21 B 7.

Thus, the testimonies of several authors before Plato – Herodotus, Hippias of Elis, Critias, Ion – present a rather coherent picture of what Orpheus can stand for in the fifth and very early fourth century: poems of eschatological content which must have played a role in the mystery rites of the ecstatic Dionysos and whose doctrinal content was so close to Pythagorean doctrines that some authors assumed that Pythagoras or some early Pythagoreans were the real authors. If pressed to make a guess about these Pythagorean doctrines, the most plausible one is the doctrine of reincarnation. Titles are not mentioned at all – if again one might make a plausible guess, there must certainly have been a *Katabasis into Hades*. Orpheus' descent into Hades is attested in fifth century sources.[22] Such an eyewitness account is the most natural vehicle for eschatological contents, as Orpheus explicitly says in the prologue of the *Argonautika*.[23]

THE TESTIMONIES OF PLATO

Among the testimonies about Orpheus and his poems, Plato, as we all know, plays a crucial role: he is the first preserved author to openly and verbatim cite from them. In Kern's edition, there are nineteen fragments which come from the corpus Platonicum;[24] Colli and Bernabé, whose editions make no distinction between testimonies and fragments, have considerably more,[25] underlining even more the crucial importance of Plato for our knowledge of Orpheus.[26]

When we try to bring order into these texts, we can distinguish several topics. The list comes close to the much longer one at the beginning of the *Argonautika*:

(1) One topic is theogony. Some items of information look rather traditional – in the *Cratylus*, Plato cites two hexameters which talk about Oceanus and Tethys as having performed the first marriage (ἦρξε γάμοιο): the couple is Homeric, new is the emphasis on the "first marriage."[27] Other things are less current; according to another hexameter, the Orphic theogony ended with the sixth generation, which gives

[22] See my "Orpheus: A Poet among Men" (Graf 1987). Bernabé, in his introduction to F 707–711, lists the sources, starting with Aeschylus' *Bassaridae*; see also West 1983: 12.

[23] See above n. 4.

[24] F 3–F 21.

[25] Colli 1977: 4 [A 10]–4 [A 52] (43 texts). [Bernabé, whose unpublished index I could use (for which I thank its author), has 44 references.]

[26] See the *mise au point* by Masaracchia 1993.

[27] *Cra.* 402bc = (*OF* 15 Kern = Colli 4 [A35] = F 22 Bernabé), cf. Hom. *Il.* 14.201.

two more than the Hesiodic account, from Gaia to Ouranos to Kronos to Zeus.[28] Plato is silent about the details while later authors offer diverging accounts, although they agree in putting Nyx "Night" somewhere before Ouranos and in adding Dionysos after Zeus.[29] And finally, when talking about Kronos swallowing his sons and castrating his father, Euthyphro hints at "much stranger things which the many do not know" – things clearly not in Hesiod, but in poems read only by a more or less closed group of people.[30]

(2) A second topic is eschatology. In the *Cratylus*, Socrates proposes different etymologies for σῶμα, "body" – from σῆμα "tomb" ("because soul is buried in it") or from σώζειν "imprison" ("because the soul is punished, and the body is its prison").[31] This latter etymology (and not the much-cited σῶμα σῆμα) is given by the people around Orpheus (οἱ ἀμφὶ Ὀρφέα) – either poets like him (that is Musaeus) or people using his poems. Plato's expression allows both interpretations, though the plural seems rather to argue against the first one. But if we concentrate on the second one, Plato's expression forbids the assumption that he read this etymology in a poem by Orpheus;[32] it is given by the people using his poems. Which could mean that it is an interpretation of something read in Orpheus. Orpheus must have sung about the punishment of souls, but not necessarily that our life is such a punishment (which would presuppose reincarnation – as we all know, an Empedoclean doctrine). He might have sung only about the punishment awaiting our soul after death, in a prison in afterlife, and his allegorical expounders, οἱ ἀμφὶ Ὀρφέα, read this in the Pythagorean, allegorical way.

We have another instance of such allegorizing in Plato's writings. In the *Gorgias*, he tells a myth "invented by a clever man from Italy or Sicily": as a punishment after death, the souls would have to pour water into a bottomless barrel, using sieves; another man, a wise one, had explained this as an allegory of human stupidity.[33] This time, the eschatological doctrine is contained in the text to be allegorized which Plato cites in the context of a discussion that life really might be death and death life, and he ascribes the myth to people who are holding the σῶμα σῆμα doctrine: reincarnation thus seems present, and we are not dealing with Orpheus,

[28] *Philebus* 66c = (*OF* 14 Kern = Colli 4 [A45] = F 25 Bernabé).
[29] OF 101 and 107 Kern = F 168 and F 169 Bernabé. See also West 1983: 118.
[30] *Euthyphro* 5e–6b (*OF* 17 Kern = Colli 4 [A27] = F 26 Bernabé).
[31] *Cra.* 400c (*OF* 8 Kern = Colli 4 [A34] = F 430 Bernabé).
[32] See Linforth 1941: 147. [33] *Grg.* 493ac.

but, given the Italian localization, with some sort of Pythagorean mythology. Thus, while the Pythagorean myth allegorized in the *Gorgias* contains reincarnation, the myth told by Orpheus does not necessarily do so.

Eschatology, stories about the life after death, is connected with Orpheus in the iconographic tradition as well. On the one hand, there are the well-known huge Italiote vessels representing the Netherworld and its inhabitants, among whom we sometimes perceive Orpheus as a visitor.[34] But more interesting than those attestations of a well-known myth are some less orthodox representations. On an Apulian crater in Basel, the singing Orpheus stands in front of a seated old man who holds a book scroll in his right hand.[35] Orpheus, the traveler to the Beyond, is a patron of the deceased, and his protection expresses itself in a text – presumably a *Katabasis* or an extract from one, like the texts on the gold tablets. Similarly, a terracotta group of Orpheus whose song overcomes the Sirens from an Apulian tomb must be read as expressing the same protection – this time, however, in an allegorical reading of an episode in the epic *Argonautika* where Orpheus must have been depicted as the poet whose song outdid the Sirens.[36] And finally, a recently published Apulian vase in the Art Museum of Toledo (Ohio) depicts Hades and Dionysos shaking each other's hand: the handshake presumably confirms an agreement which they concluded on behalf of the initiates of Dionysiac mysteries.[37]

(3) Eschatology leads to a third topic, ritual. Euthyphro's reference to "things which the many do not know" sounds like a reference to mystery cults and their ἱεροὶ λόγοι, their "sacred texts." For Plato, Orpheus is firmly connected with mystery cults. While "Homer, Hesiod, and Simonides" have to do with poetry, the followers of Orpheus and Musaeus are busy with initiations (literally: rituals, τελεταί) and oracular verses (χρησμωδίαι).[38] Since in all texts of the fifth century, Musaeus is firmly established as a chresmologue whose oracles, according to Herodotus, were collected by Onomacritus,[39] one might feel tempted to assign the rituals to Orpheus. And Aristophanes confirms this in his list of poetical

[34] See Schmidt 1991.
[35] Basel, Antikenmuseum S 40, see Schmidt, Trendall, and Cambitoglou 1976: 32–37.
[36] For the group, now in the J. Paul Getty Museum, see West 1983: 25 no. iii; for Orpheus and the Sirens see esp. Herodorus, *FGrH* 31 F 43a and Ap. Rhod. 4.891–911; Iacobacci 1993b; for a much earlier, though not undisputed iconographical attestation, see Groppengiesser 1977.
[37] Johnston and McNiven 1996; Schauenburg 1995: 35–37; Schmidt 2000: 86–101.
[38] Pl. *Prt.* 316d = (OT 92 Kern = Colli 4 [A30] = F 549 Bernabé). [39] Graf 1974: 9.

culture heroes in the *Frogs*: "Orpheus showed us rituals (τελετάς) and to abstain from murder, Musaeus the healing of illness and oracles."[40]

Plato, however, blurs the picture. In a key passage, *Republic* 364b–365a, he claims that seers and beggar priests, ἀγύρται καὶ μάντεις come to the doors of the rich and persuade them that they possess a power given to them by the gods through sacrifices and incantations and which allows them to heal with much joy and festivity any unjust deed which was committed by him or an ancestor; and they also promise that they would have the power to harm any enemy with binding spells. Somewhat later, after having cited Hesiod and Homer as witnesses to the gods' venality, Plato defines those practitioners: they rely on "a hubbub of books of Musaeus and Orpheus . . . according to which they perform their rites, and they persuade not only individuals, but entire towns that there are means of redemption and purification from [the consequences of] unjust deeds (λύσεις τε καὶ καθαρμοί ἀδικημάτων) through sacrifices and child's play . . . which they call τελεταί, rites, and which free us from evil over there; but horrible things await us if we would not sacrifice."

These ritual practitioners – wandering initiators as well as sorcerers – concern us here only in so far as they make use of books of Musaeus and Orpheus in order to perform their rites which Plato calls sacrifices, θυσίαι,[41] but which they themselves simply call τελεταί "rites." The aim of these rites is protection against the consequences of evil deeds which await us after death, and they persuade not only isolated individuals, but entire cities. Plato repeats this statement a little later when he emphasizes the power that, in the eyes of the greatest cities, "the τελεταί have and the absolving gods (λύσιοι θεοί), according to the poets, the sons of the gods" – Orpheus and Musaeus again (366ab).

The dichotomy is important. Those practitioners – and presumably the poems of Orpheus and Musaeus which they use – persuade not only rich Athenians who are afraid of what awaits them after death (which would point to private initiations, in Plato's time especially to those of Dionysos), they have persuaded "the greatest cities," Athens among them. Rituals of Orpheus that interest entire cities are either cathartic or eschatological; and since cathartic rituals do not have any effect in the beyond, he must mean mystery cults connected with cities. The consequence seems obvious: the

[40] Ar. *Ran*. 1023f. Ὀρφεὺς μὲν γὰρ τελετὰς ἡμῖν κατέδειξεν φόνων τ' ἀπέχεσθαι, Μουσαῖος δ' ἐξακέσεις τε νόσων καὶ χρησμούς.

[41] 364b8 (θυσίαις τε καὶ ἐπωιδαῖς) 364e6 διὰ θυσιῶν; cf. 364e4 καθ' ἃς θυπολοῦσι, 365a3 μὴ θύσαντας.

poems of Orpheus and Musaeus have also to do with the mysteries of Eleusis.[42]

I shall not go into details of this Eleusinian connection; I tried to do so almost twenty-five years ago, isolating a specifically Athenian pseudepigraphical poetry under the names of Musaeus and Orpheus with the aim of giving expression to Eleusinian mythology and eschatology.[43] Suffice it to point out that, in the light of this dichotomy, details about eschatology which Plato relates could refer either to Eleusis or to Bacchic mysteries. Let us follow instead the panhellenic thread which is indicated by the name of Dionysos and by the epic genre of theogony.

But before going into this, one detail of Plato's account, omitted until now on purpose, has to be cleared up. In his rendering of the practitioners' self-advertisement, Plato says "that there are means of redemption and purification from unjust deeds through sacrifices and child's play, on the one hand for those who still live, on the other hand for those who have died, which they call rites (τελεταί), which free us from the evil there."[44] This literal translation is open to different interpretations. It is obvious that Plato makes a pun: he derives τελεταί "rites", from τελευτάω "to die." Thus he might limit the use of τελεταί only to those rites which have to do with the afterlife, confronting us with two sets of rites: unspecified ones with an effect during this lifetime, and τελεταί with effect after our death. But this is not convincing, since the entire passage focuses solely on the afterlife. I would suggest that, despite the pun, τελεταί is the general name the practitioners give their rites, as do, much later, the theurgists.[45] Although the term τελεταί itself has still a very general meaning at this epoch, it must bear a special connotation in this context, like "initiations": after all, we have Τελεταί as title of a book by Orpheus.

There are still more possible readings of this text. The participles ζῶσιν and τελευτήσασιν could refer either to the same persons in two states, life and death, or to two groups of people. The first would translate as: "There are means for them, both when they are still alive and also after they have died." But this, I think, jars with the addressees of the advertisement, individuals and cities: individuals die and live on in the Netherworld, cities do not (nor

[42] Seen already by Jowett and Campbell in their commentary on the passage. [43] Graf 1974.

[44] *Resp*. 364d5–365a2: ὡς ἄρα λύσεις τε καὶ καθαρμοὶ ἀδικημάτων διὰ θυσιῶν καὶ παιδιᾶς ἡδονῶν εἰσι μὲν ἔτι ζῶσιν, εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ τελευτήσασιν, ἃς δὴ τελετὰς καλοῦσιν, αἳ τῶν ἐκεῖ κακῶν ἀπολύουσιν ἡμᾶς. See Johnston 1999: 144–145.

[45] Augustine, *De trin*. 28 *pollicens etiam purgationem animae, per eas quas* τελετάς *appellant*; CD 10.9 *quasdam consecrationes theurgicas, quas teletas vocant*.

do cities live, ζῶσι, strictly speaking). Thus, it is somewhat easier to understand the phrase as talking about two different groups altogether who are recipients of the rite: living persons, and those who already have died; both might have committed unjust deeds, for which punishment awaits them in the Netherworld – but both individuals and entire cities might feel concern for them and help them by having performed the τελεταί. Or, to put it differently, the practitioners do not only initiate living persons, they do the same for dead ones in order to save them from the evil in the Beyond. In a way, it is a likely step for those priests. Once the fear of punishments in the Beyond and the ritual means to avert them are established, the wish to help a recently deceased relative easily arises, and the priests, having to live by their art, catered for that as well. Such rites are unattested anywhere for Eleusis: they must concern the private Bacchic mystery cults.

THE DERVENI PAPYRUS

But back to theogony. Which means the next important corpus of fragments, the ones contained in the Derveni Papyrus.

Its history is well known, despite the somewhat scandalous fact that we still do not have a critical edition of such a capital text.[46] It is preserved on a charred book roll found in a grave in Macedonian Derveni and dated to the late fourth century. It contained a commentary on a poem of Orpheus which expounded this poem in an allegorical way which was heavily influenced by atomist and Anaxagorean thinking; and, as more recent publications begin to show, it contained other things as well.[47] The commentary begins as late as column VII and is preceded by six columns which seem to deal with eschatology and the means to overcome the terror of the beyond. Its author, as far as the auctorial statements allow us some inference, is someone who consults oracles on behalf of his clients (col. V) and who has outspoken and not very flattering views about people who undergo initiations with private initiators and do not ask them what all this is really about (col. XX). Taking the two things together, the author must be a *mantis*

[46] The text is (partly and without authentication) published in *ZPE* 47 (1982), after p. 300; the most recent studies are those by Collabella 1993 and Laks and Most 1997; on the tomb see Themelis and Touratsoglou 1997. – [***Addendum*** **2010**: In the meantime, things have changed dramatically. We finally have the official edition, Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou 2006, and we have a monograph, Betegh 2004, whose provisional text is based on the 1982 edition and on Richard Janko's text of 2002, as is the text of Jourdan 2003 and Bernabé's text of the fragments in *OF* 2–18 (published 2004–07).]

[47] Laks and Most 1997.

himself who offers initiations as well – but together with ample information about everything. This ample information (at least a considerable part of it) comes from the allegorical interpretation of a specific poem of Orpheus who "intended by means of it to say not contentious riddles, but rather great things in riddles: indeed, he is uttering a holy discourse" (col. VII).

The poem itself has been reconstructed by Martin West.[48] It is a theogony, part of whose content is attested later in other theogonies by Orpheus as well (this sort of literature seems much more fluid than other texts). We follow some of the stages of its narration – from the moment when Zeus, having taken over the lordship from his father, obtains an oracle from Nyx and, in order to keep the power to himself, swallows the entire creation (cols. VIII–XIII). This gives occasion for a retrospective account of how the generation of gods had first come into being (cols. XIVf.); then the poem asserted the supreme power of Zeus ("Zeus the head, Zeus the middle, and from Zeus all things are made", col. XVII). Finally, Zeus recreates the cosmos by varying sexual activity (col. XXI) – we meet Aphrodite, Peitho, and Harmonia (col. XXI), Demeter Rhea Ge Meter Hestia Deo (XXII), Oceanus and Achelous (col. XXIII), and finally catch Zeus committing incest with his mother Rhea-Demeter (col. XXVI).

This last myth is interesting for its consequences. With Demeter, Zeus ordinarily fathers Persephone (as early as Hesiod) with whom in turn he fathers Dionysos, according to several somewhat contradictory traditions that, however, all seem to share a connection with mystery cults.[49] West assumes that already the Derveni text knows this continuation, and it is a tempting suggestion. But Persephone is, in Plutarch's words, the "unspeakable among the mothers of Dionysos", τῶν Διονύσου μητέρων τὴν ἄρρητον[50] – which means the mother whose myths belong to the mystery cults, more precisely to those of Dionysos. The introduction of the Derveni theogony, on the other hand, evokes in turn the context of mystery rites. The text begins with a well-known ritual exhortation, alluded to by many authors and fully attested in the Jewish *Testament of Orpheus*: "I speak only to those who are allowed to listen; close your doors, ye profane";[51] the commentator concludes from it that Orpheus "is uttering a holy discourse,"

[48] West 1983: 82–101. [See now also the reconstructions of Betegh 2004 (n. 46 above) and of Burkert 2006.]

[49] See Diod. Sic. 3.64.1, 4.4.1 (Sabazios); Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.58, more in Pease's note, p. 1121, and in F 89 Bernabé; see also Callim. fr. 43.117 Pfeiffer (Dionysos Zagreus).

[50] Plut. *Caes.* 9.4. 711e.

[51] F 1b Bernabé φθέγξομαι οἷς θέμις ἐστι· θύρας δ' ἐπίθεσθε, βέβηλοι *P. Derv.* col. VII θ]ύρας γὰρ ἐπιθέ[σθαι κελ]εύσας. – See Riedweg 1993.

a ἱερὸς λόγος – holy because it belongs to some cults.[52] Plato alludes to this verse in the context of βακχεία (albeit transformed into philosophical βακχεία)[53] – again, we deal with Dionysiac, Bacchic mysteries with which the theogonic poem cited in the Derveni Papyrus has an intimate relationship.

Theogony and connection with mystery rites are characteristics of Orpheus' poems in Plato as well. The Derveni text of Orpheus, evidently pre-dating the Derveni burial of about 320 and perhaps as old as the later fifth century, fits into a pattern. Orphic theogonies cannot be separated from Dionysiac mystery rites; they belong together. It is less easy to see how that might have worked – was the theogony recited during the mystery rites? Reading from the sacred books was part of later mystery rites, and the fresco of the Villa of the Mysteries attests this for Bacchic rites;[54] but we cannot know what that boy on the left hand side of the fresco was reciting from his scroll. Reading of theogonies belonged to Near Eastern healing rites where the symbolical reconstruction of the cosmos brought healing, illness being a disruption of the cosmos – could initiation be viewed as a similar symbolical reconstruction of a new wholeness for the initiate, resulting in a better status after death? There is simply no evidence for such a hypothesis, tempting as it might be.

Equally vexing is something else. The new columns of the Derveni text which precede the poem of Orpheus deal not only with mystery rites which they expound, they also deal with eschatology – "the terrors of Hades, why don't they believe in them?"[55] Earlier, the text spoke about "the daimones who are under this mound,"[56] and more than once, it speaks about souls; it explains even the preliminary sacrifice of the initiates to the Erinyes by the theory that the Erinyes are souls; initiates thus sacrifice to souls – as do the *magoi*, who do so "just as if they were paying a penalty."[57] The text does not make it clear how these concepts relate to the poem of Orpheus – is it just another riddle, like rituals and eschatological beliefs, or is there a more intimate connection? However that might be, the presence of eschatology, the third element of Orpheus' poetry in Plato, is very intriguing.[58]

[52] See Baumgarten 1998; Henrichs 2003a and Henrichs 2003b. [See now Henrichs 2004.]
[53] Pl. *Symp.* 218b = *OF* 13 Kern = F 1 xviii and F 19 Bernabé; West 1983: 34, 82.
[54] At least I still understand the boy reciting from a book scroll as pointing to a mystery context; see the reciting priest from the Iseum at Pompeii, pictured in *Alla Ricerca di Iside*, Naples (s.a.), 52 no. 1.46.
[55] col. v 6.
[56] col. iii 7 [A problematical and much restored passage; the Greek edition has "the daimones under the earth."]
[57] col. vi 5. [58] See Johnston 1999: 274–279.

THE POEMS AND THE ORPHICS

Looking back at the evidence collected so far, two questions remain: can we find some clearer outline of the poems of Orpheus which we have to assume, and can we know more about the people behind them?

To repeat the obvious: the Derveni text refers to a theogonic poem in which Zeus and his way of establishing his power played a crucial role. There were several generations of kings before the accession of Zeus. He followed Kronos who followed Ouranos – Ouranos being explicitly called "who ruled first of all."[59] He in turn is called *Euphronides*, son of Night. Thus, there was an earlier generation, dominated by Night, even though she was not a ruler. Orpheus talks also about "a reverend one, who first sprang forth into the aither" and whom Zeus swallowed as well;[60] and two columns further on, the commentator cites four hexameters:[61]

> of the first born king, the reverend one. And onto him all
> the immortals grew, blessed gods and goddesses,
> and rivers and lovely springs and everything else
> that had been born then ...

The epithet αἰδοῖος connects the two passages: Orpheus just might talk about the same divine person. Some verses that Proclus cites from Orpheus can illustrate what is going on. According to Proclus, Zeus had swallowed the primary divinity Phanes, and:

> with him, everything was formed anew inside of Zeus,
> the splendid height of the broad aither and of sky,
> the seats of the unfertile sea and of famous earth ...
> rivers and the immense sea and everything else
> and all immortal and blessed gods and goddesses,
> everything that had been born.[62]

[59] col. XIV 6 Οὐρανὸς Εὐφρονίδης ὅς πρώτιστος βασίλευσεν.

[60] col. XIII 4 αἰδοῖος κατέπινεν ὅς αἴθερα ἔχθορε πρῶτος. There is a textual problem: *P. Derv.* reads αἴθερα ἔκθορε. R. Lamberton suggested αἴθερος in order to avoid hiatus, "out of the aither," which would have as a consequence that this divinity originated from aither. I follow the translation given in Laks and Most 1997: 15 (but see 15 n. 28). [Both Betegh and the Greek edition of the papyrus adopt Lamberton's conjecture; Burkert 2006: 102 argues both against this conjecture and against the general assumption that αἴθερα is an accusative of direction; he takes it as a regular object, "who first ejaculated the aether," and connects it with Aesch. fr. 13 Radt and Egyptian cosmogony. I find this reading highly attractive, but it does not affect my argument in the text.]

[61] col. XVI 3–6 πρωτογόνου βασιλέως αἰδοίου, τοῦ δ' ἄρα πάντες | ἀθάνατοι προσέφυμ μάκαρες θεοὶ ἠδὲ | καὶ ποταμοὶ καὶ κρῆναι ἐπήρατοι ἄλλα τε πάντα | ὅσσα τότ' ἦγ γεγαῶτ' ...

[62] *OF* 167 Kern = F 292 Bernabé.

The latter passage explains the former – which also can mean: the "reverend first-born king" might be different from "Ouranos who ruled first of all". Thus, we arrive at a sequence "first (nameless) power" > Nyx > Ouranos > Kronos > Zeus; when we add Dionysos, for which we have no testimony in the text at all but which could be plausible in view of the mystery connection, we arrive at the same six generations of which Plato had spoken. The fact that the key verse "Zeus the head, Zeus the middle, and from Zeus all things are made" is alluded to in a passage in the *Laws* thus might be more than just a coincidence: Plato knew an Orphic text which seems very close to the Derveni theogony.[63]

Do we have a title for this text? Among the four titles mentioned by Epigenes – *Katabasis into Hades, Hieros Logos, Peplos*, and *Physika* – the *Katabasis* is immediately excluded, as perhaps is the *Peplos* if the title refers to Kore's weaving of a peplos. The *Physika* cannot be entirely excluded, given that the one fragment preserved from this poem gives the personal names of the Tritopatores and calls them "doormen of the winds" – such information might occur in a theogony.[64] However, I prefer *Hieros Logos* for two reasons: first, the so-called Rhapsodic Theogony bears in the Suda the title ἱεροὶ λόγοι ἐν ῥαψωδίαις εἴκοσι τέσσαρσι: at least this later theogony had such a title. And secondly, the Derveni commentator seems to allude to this title in the passage already cited, where he explains the first verse by "indeed, he is uttering a holy discourse", ἱερ[ολογ]εῖται μὲν οὖν.[65] Epigenes ascribes this poem to the same Pythagorean Kerkops to whom he also ascribes the *Katabasis* – we have no idea what made Epigenes do this, but we might assume that he noted a doctrinal closeness between the two, which once again brings eschatology and theogony in close contact. (Herodotus, by the way, knows a ἱρὸς λόγος, a "Sacred Story" of the initiates of Dionysos which explains the taboo on wool in graves – it must be a different story, but the terminology is consistent.)[66]

Do we know more about the people behind these texts? Plato vaguely talks about "seers and beggar priests" who made use of the poems of Musaeus and Orpheus for their rites; these specialists thus are the consumers, not the producers. The Derveni papyrus in turn presents private initiators and seers – "people who make sacred things into their profession" (οἳ τέχνην ποιούμενοι τὰ ἱερά)[67] – they too make use of Orpheus'

[63] *Leg.*4 715e = *OF* 21 = Colli 4 [A 50] = F 31 iii Bernabé. [64] *OF* 318 = 802 Bernabé.
[65] col. VII 7. [66] Hdt. 2.81. On hieroi logoi above, n. 52.
[67] col. XX 3. See also Janko 1997.

poems by explaining them, presumably in the course of an initiation rite. In both cases, we meet professionals reading Orpheus. The only non-professional is a caricature – it is the Euripidean Hippolytus, the vegetarian and sectarian, in the distorted picture Theseus gives us;[68] but Plato too might be called a non-professional reader, were it not for the fact that he uses these texts in the course of his philosophy – all the other non-professional recipients, about whom we hear nothing, could have been at most passive listeners to such texts. No surprise then that the authors must have been professionals as well, skilled in ritual lore and in Pythagorean doctrines as well, remote and minor colleagues of the mighty Empedocles, "a god upon earth."[69]

[68] Eur. *Hipp*. 952–954. See above, n. 1.

[69] [See also our book on the Gold Tablets (Graf and Johnston 2007), where Sarah Iles Johnston argues that the producers of the Orphic mythology were professionals that worked as *bricoleurs* of mythology.]

CHAPTER 4

Are the "Orphic" gold leaves Orphic?

Alberto Bernabé and Ana I. Jiménez San Cristóbal

INTRODUCTION: THE DEBATE OVER THE RELIGIOUS CONTEXT OF THE LEAVES

When the first of the gold leaves, that of Petelia, was published in 1836,[1] the studies on the history of religion considered the existence of Orphism a well-established fact, which led that leaf to be interpreted as Orphic, just as happened with the other gold leaves which appeared in subsequent years.[2]

The hypercritical skeptical reaction started by Wilamowitz[3] questioned the Orphic character of these documents, and the authority of the illustrious German philologist meant that the issue was left aside for many years.[4] However, not even in the most skeptical times have the leaves been convincingly assigned to another known religious movement, and it has become usual to call them "Orphic" with resigned inverted commas.

There has been one attempt, by Pugliese Carratelli,[5] to distinguish two types of leaves which would come from two different religious contexts:

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[1] We will use the following abbreviations: *O(rphicorum)F(ragmenta)* (ed. A. Bernabé 2004–07 etc.), *O(rphei)H(ymni)* (ed. G. Ricciardelli Apicella 2000a), *O(rphei)A(rgonautica)* (ed. F. Vian 1987); for the leaves: Aeg(ae), Amph(ipolis) (*OF* 496n), Eleuth(erna), Ent(ella), Her(aclea), Hip(ponion), Mal(ibu), Meth(one), Myl(opotamos), Pel(inna), Pell(a), Pet(elia), Phars(alus), Pher(ae), Rom(a), Thur(ii). In case there is more than one leaf in the same place (like Eleuth. or Thur.) the abbreviation will be followed by the number of *OF*. The numeration corresponding to the Edmonds edition in this book is indicated in parentheses.

[2] Pet. (B1) in Franz 1836: 149–150. They were taken as Orphic by Dieterich 1893 and Harrison 1903, and so they were edited by Comparetti 1910 and Olivieri 1915. Comparetti 1910: 36, referring to the last line of Pet., thinks one should read "he (i.e. Orpheus) wrote this."

[3] Especially Wilamowitz 1931.

[4] It is meaningful that Linforth 1941 does not even mention them, even though he analyzes thoroughly the Orphic evidence. Cf. also Dodds 1951 and Zuntz 1971. In the exhaustive book by West about the Orphic poems they do not deserve more than a couple of allusions and the comment "we have no warrant for calling the gold leaves themselves Orphic" (West 1983: 26).

[5] Pugliese Carratelli 1993: 11–16, maintained in 2003: 10–20.

(a) Those in which Mnemosyne gives instructions based on memory and the recognition formula "I am a son of Earth and starry Heaven." In those leaves there are no allusions to the divine status of the deceased, nor are Persephone, Eucles, Eubuleus and the other immortal gods mentioned, but only the "king of the Underworld".[6] The aim of the *mystai* is to go through "the sacred way over which the other *mystai* and bakkhoi go forward in glory." Pugliese Carratelli calls these leaves "Mnemosynial" and thinks they are Pythagorean.

(b) Those in which Persephone and other chthonic gods are mentioned and whose recognition formula is more generic: "I come, pure from the pure"; in them the initiate insists that he has overcome terrible trials and he has accomplished the expiation, but the fountain of Mnemosyne is not mentioned. The end of the journey of the soul is the divinization of the soul. These leaves would be Orphic.

However, it is not possible, in our opinion, to establish distinctions between the religious pattern of some leaves and others, because there are links which relate both groups. In Hip. 15 (B10.15) "*mystai* and *bakkhoi*" are mentioned, which have very little to do with the Pythagoreans, whose god is Apollo. These terms seem rather to have much more to do with the Bacchic mysteries of the Orphics. In Pel. 2 (D1–D2.2) Bacchus and Persephone[7] appear together, and in Rom. (A5) we find the Queen of the chthonians (i. e. Persephone), and Eucles and Eubuleus – mentioned in the leaves from Thurii – together with Mnemosyne, the main character of the so-called "Mnemosynian."[8] And at the end of Ent. 19–21 (B11.19–21) some letters are read which could be interpreted as part of a reference to the name of Persephone.[9]

Because of all this, it seems most probable that the authors of these leaves and their users belong to the same religious movement, characterized by the belief in a special destiny for the soul of the initiate, and that the different types of texts refer to different moments of the soul's journey and have different functions.

[6] His argument is based on a reading of Hip. 11 (B10.11) ὑπὸ χθονίωι βασιλῆϊ, different from the one we follow in *OF* (474 ii) ὑποχθονίωι βασιλεί<αι> (proposed by West 1975 and accepted also by Riedweg 1998).

[7] Musti 1984: 63–65; Scalera McClintock 1991: 397; Tortorelli 1995b: 472–473; Riedweg 1996: 447; 1998: 387; Bernabé 2000a: 56; Morand 2001: 224; cf. the excellent study of Graf 1993: 250–255, who classifies the leaves just from the formal point of view, cf. also Albinus 2000: 141; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 231; 2008: 179.

[8] Neither is Mnemosyne alien to the Orphics, since she is mentioned in *OH* 77. 9–10 precisely as the granter of remembering the initiation, cf. below "The importance of Mnemnosyne".

[9] 19 σύμβολα φ[(l. Φ[ερσεφόνηι?) / 20 καὶ φε[(l. Φε[ρσεφόνηι? : καὶ Φε[ρσέφασα Chaniotis and Mylonopoulos 2000: 172 / 21 σεμ[(σεμ[Pugliese Carratelli 2003) which we could read as σεμ[νη-, coll. *OH* 29.10, 71.2, 24.10. Chaniotis and Mylonopoulos 2000: 172 think one can read the end of ἔλυσε (cf. Pel. 2 (D1–D2.2) Β<άκ>χιος αὐτὸς ἔλυσε). Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 302 prefers to see in 20 the beginning of φυλάσσω or of φημί.

Thus, Bernabé and Jiménez have established what the stages of the itinerary of the soul would be, just as they would have appeared in the source of the leaves:[10]

The first group (Hip. (B10), Ent. (B11), Pet. (B1), Phars. (B2)) relate to the initial moments of the great journey, in the leaves from Thurii (A1–A3 = *OF* 488–490), the soul must repeat for Persephone some passwords alluding to the purity of the soul, and, finally, Pel. (D1–D2) and Thur. (A4 = *OF* 487) are greetings to the dead, made by another person. The shortest ones (E and F groups = *OF* 494–496a–n) serve either as a salutation to the infernal gods or to identify the user as a *mystes*.

However, though they allude to different moments in the journey of the soul or to different points of view, they all seem to belong to the same religious atmosphere. Riedweg has put together a very likely reconstruction of the *Hieros logos* underlying all the texts we have preserved.[11]

Thus, the type of text (hexameters mixed with other kinds of meter and with unmetrical formulae), the theme of the afterlife, the reiteration of some topoi, the golden material, as well as their great dispersion in space and time (which excludes the possibility that they could be some local phenomenon), all indicates that they are the result of the same movement, which survived for centuries and in different places in Greece. We will claim that the users of the leaves are Orphics[12] and we will consider as most probable that they attributed to Orpheus the texts of the leaves.[13] In the following sections we will distinguish different types of arguments for those claims.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE AUTHOR

The main nucleus of the leaves are the diverse indications addressed to the deceased or his soul, expressed either in the future (or present) tense to reveal to him what he is going to find in the Afterlife,[14] or in the imperative (or infinitive-imperative) to give him an order,[15] or in the prohibitive subjunctive.[16] The narrator[17] not only knows precise details of the

[10] Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 249–251, 2008: 231–233.
[11] Riedweg 2002. Cf. below "Reconstruction of *hieros logos*." See also Chapter 9 below.
[12] Cf. Bernabé 1991: 234 and Riedweg 1998.
[13] Cf. Tortorelli Ghidini 1995b: 474 "with the finding of new Orphic documents the possibility [sc. that the author is Orpheus] seems less and less fantastic". See also Graf and Johnston 2007: 165–184.
[14] E.g. the future tense "you will find" (εὑρήσεις) in Hip. 6 (B10.6), Pet. 1 (B1.1) and 4, Phars. 1 (B2.1) and 4, "you will reign" (ἀνάξει[ς]) Pet. 11 (B1.11). Present tense "there is" (ἔστ') in Hip. 2 (B10.2).
[15] Imper. "say " (εἶπον) Hip. 10 (B10.10), (inf. imper. εἶπεῖν Pet. 6 (B1.6), Phars. 7 (B2.7), Pel. 2 (D1–D2.2)).
[16] Prohibitive subjunctive "do not approach" (μηδὲ … ἔλθῃς) in Hip. 5 (B10.5) (cf. μηδὲ πελάσῃσθα Phars. 3 (B2.3)).
[17] Cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 23–24; 2008: 181–183; Riedweg 2002: 478.

Netherworld geography, but he is also capable of telling the deceased authoritatively what he must and must not do and what words he should pronounce. Such knowledge and authority could only be supposed either of an infernal deity or a visitor to Hades capable of revealing to mortals such precise information.

We should exclude the possibility that the author is an infernal deity, since the most important ones are mentioned in the leaves in the third person. If the speaker was Persephone, for instance, we should expect expressions like "tell me that Bacchus freed you" and not "tell Persephone that Bacchus freed you" (Pel. 2 (D1–D2.2)).

Concerning, on the other hand, the possibility that the speaker is a visitor to the Underworld, the most adequate frame to instructions such as those found in the leaves is a type of eschatological poetry, which usually assumes the form of a Κατάβασις, in which the subject-matter would be the geography of Hades, the liberation of the soul from the cycle of metempsychosis and a special destiny for initiates,[18] coming from the lips of somebody who had descended to Hades. In the Greek mythical tradition there are various characters who risked a journey to the Underworld; the best known are Odysseus, Theseus, Pythagoras, Heracles, and Orpheus. But of all these, only Orpheus is acknowledged as having poetical skills, and only to him is poetry about the Afterlife assigned, especially a hexametrical poem called *Descent to Hades*.[19]

The fact that the name of Orpheus never appears in the leaves is not sufficient argument to deny that they are texts attributed to the mythical singer. To mention some better known parallels, neither Parmenides nor Empedocles mention their own names, in poems that have plenty of connecting points with the type of literature in which the leaves are sustained.

In these conditions, who would be, then, a better candidate for the authorship of the text of the leaves than Orpheus, the mythical Thracian singer, visitor of the Underworld, revealer of the Afterlife secrets, supposed

[18] Cf. Riedweg 2002.

[19] The author of *OA* 40–42 refers to a work of this kind attributed to Orpheus. Clem. Al. *Strom.* 1.21.131.3 quoting Epigenes, questions the real authorship of Orpheus of a poem called *Descent to Hades*, which indicates that the attribution to Orpheus was the most common one. *Suda* s.v. Ὀρφεύς (III 565, 20 Adler) and Const. Lascaris Προλεγόμενα τοῦ σοφοῦ Ὀρφέως 103 (36 Martínez Manzano) take it to be by Orpheus of Camarina, which is but trying to reconcile the attribution to Orpheus with the post-Homeric aspect of the poems (cf. Bernabé 2002b about this matter). About the Orphic *katabasis*, cf. Lobeck 1829: 373–374, 810–818; Dieterich 1893: 72–83, 128 and *passim*; Gruppe 1897–1902: III 1. 1130–1132; Norden 1926: 5, 168–175; Guthrie 1935: 193; Ziegler 1942: 1391–1395; Turcan 1956: 137; Burkert 1972: 130; Schilling 1982: 369; West 1983: 6, 9–10, 12; Brisson 1990: 2915; Kingsley 1995: 115, 135–141, 282–283, 287.

author of a literary corpus about such subject-matters, and transmitter of the τελεταί in which useful information is given to confront death?

GEOGRAPHY OF THE LEAVES

A second argument concerns the geography of the leaves; they have appeared in very specific places: Southern Italy (Hip., Pet., Thur., Ent. in Sicily), Thessaly–Macedonia (Phars., Pel., Pher., Pell., Amph., Meth., Her.; Mal. seems to come also from Thessaly), Crete (Eleuth., Myl.), Achaia and Lesbos (though we do not yet know the contents of the latter). That from Rome is exceptional and its contents are quite different from the others.[20]

Now the great majority of these places are connected with Orpheus or Orphism, either because some episode of the myth of Orpheus takes place in them, or because other documents with Orphic features have appeared in them. We will mention only the most relevant evidence:

In Southern Italy the Apulian pottery contains multiple representations of Orpheus in the Underworld (cf. below, section on Iconography).

Macedonia is related to Orpheus in different ways:[21] the famous papyrus which constitutes one of the most important Orphic documents was found at Derveni;[22] on the other hand, according to Conon, Orpheus forbade the access of women to the mysteries he had founded in Libethras, where he lived, according to the Orphic *Argonautica* among other sources. In that very city there was an image of Orpheus, and Dio claimed that it was where Orpheus' death took place.[23]

The links of Orphism with Crete are as clear as they are numerous.[24] Thus, Diodorus maintains that Orphic τελεταί have their origin in the island[25] and an epigram of the second century BCE from a temple of the Magna Mater[26] has got a clear Orphic sound, as do some verses from Euripides' *Cretans* in which some priests appear with all the characteristic features of the Orphics.[27]

[20] Cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 179–182; 2008: 133–135. [21] Cf. Hatzopoulos 2002.
[22] Laks and Most 1997, Janko 2002, Jourdan 2003, Betegh 2004, Bernabé 2004b: 149–186.
[23] Cf. Conon *FGrHist* 26 F 1.45, *OA* 50–53, 1373–1376, Plut. *Alex.* 14.8, Diog. Laert. 1.5 (*OF* 1046 ii), Paus. 9.30.7 (*OF* 934 ii).
[24] Cf. Kern 1916; Linforth 1941: 215, 232; West 1983: 50, 95–96, 131–133, 153–154, 166–168, 172–174 (who points out that the authors of the Orphic theogonies took many themes from Cretan myths); Casadio 1990b: 284–285; Pugliese Carratelli 1993: 46–48 (= 2001: 86–93; 2003: 87–93).
[25] Diod. Sic. 5.77.3 and 5.75.4; *OF* 529–530 and Bernabé 2000b: 48–49.
[26] Guarducci 1935–50: I XXIII 3; Colli 4 [B 20]; Pugliese Carratelli 1993: 46 (= 2001: 87; 2003: 88); Tortorelli Ghidini 2000: 40–41; Tzifopoulos 2002: 164–167.
[27] Eur. *Cret.* fr. 472 Kannicht (*OF* 567), cf. Casadio 1990, Bernabé 2004a.

Regarding Lesbos, several authors who treat the myth of Orpheus from Hellenistic times onwards, like Phanocles, Vergil, Ovid, Conon, and Lucian,[28] relate that the head of Orpheus, which was thrown either into the Thracian river Hebrus or the sea, arrived at the island, where it was honored and went on dictating poems and oracles.[29] Besides, archaic poetry gives evidence for the relation between Lesbos and Thrace, the mythical fatherland of Orpheus: Alceus, in a fragment of a poem which perhaps dwelt on Orpheus,[30] praised the river Hebrus as the most beautiful of rivers and mentioned its mouth near Ainos. Since Ainos was a colony from Mytilene, it might possibly have been the vehicle to introduce Orpheus in the island.

Not only these coincidences are meaningful, but also the fact that there are constant thematic features in documents which are so far away from each other in space and time. This excludes the possibility that they are local traditions or religious movements. On the contrary, they suggest much more powerfully a coherent religious orientation which, though dispersed, is persistent through time and not integrated in the official religion. All these are features consistent with Orphism and not with any other movement known to us.

THE FRAME OF A MYSTERY

References to initiation

The religious movement to which the leaves belong is a mystery cult.[31] In Hip. 16 (B10.16) we read that the initiates (μύσται) and the *bakkhoi* go forward in glory along the path which leads to Afterlife happiness. The knowledge of certain passwords (σύμβολα) allows the initiate of Pher. (D3) to reach a meadow which represents eternal joy. In the leaves of Pell. (E4) and Aeg. (496c–e) (F4, F5, F2) in addition to the name of the deceased, the term μύστης is engraved, with the probable intention that, when presenting himself before Persephone, he may be identified as an initiate. There are various Orphic texts[32] in which μύστης or the middle-passive participles

[28] Phanocl. fr. 1.11–20 Powell (*OF* 1004, 1038 and 1054), Verg. *G.* 4.523–527, and Serv. *ad loc.* (*OF* 1054 iii and viii), Ov. *Met.* 11.50–60 (*OF* 1054 iv), Conon *FGrHist* 26 F 1.45.4–6 (*OF* 1039 and 1061), Lucian *Ind.* 11 (*OF* 1052), *P Berol.* 13426.16–19.

[29] We find the same topic in figurative representations; cf. Garezou 1994: nn. 68–70.

[30] Alc. fr. 45 Voigt.

[31] Jiménez San Cristóbal 2002a: 127–133. Cf. Graf, Chapter 3 above and Graf and Johnston 2007: 137–164.

[32] Heraclit. fr. 87 Marc. (*OF* 587), Eur. *Cret.* fr. 472.10–15 Kannicht (*OF* 567), *PDerv.* col. VI 8–9 (*OF* 471), *OH* 43.10, 84.3, Diod. Sic. 1.23.7 (*OF* 327 iv), 5.49.5 (*OF* 521), Harp. *Lex.* s.v. ἀπομάττων, Plut. fr. 178 Sandbach (*OF* 594), Clem. Al. *Prot.* 2.16.2 (*OF* 589 i).

μυόμενος, μυηθείς or μεμυημένος appear in a similar context, in which initiation is linked to a way of life subject to rigid prescriptions and to the fulfilling of rites which grant access to a happy existence after death. The fact that in some of these cases[33] the terms μύστης and βάκχος appear together, just as they do in Hip. 16 (B10.16), is also meaningful. In Orphism the term βάκχοι defines more precisely[34] the term μύσται: only those initiates who have made a continuous and constant effort in βακχεύειν will reach the true union with the divinity[35] and will go forward along the sacred way which leads to the paradise of the blessed.

The mention of the sacred way in Hip. 15–16 (B10.15–16) constitutes an indirect reference to initiation which supports the mysteric character of these texts, since the sacred way can be conceived as a reiteration of the initiation path in this world,[36] or perhaps as a projection of an earthly model.[37] Let us not forget that the Hip. (B10) path is reserved to the μύσται καὶ βάκχοι, since it is initiation that guarantees the promise of Afterlife blessing.

The importance of doctrinal knowledge

However, why should we ascribe the leaves to Orphism, when, though one of the most important ones, it is not the only mysteric movement in Greece? In contrast to the Eleusinian mysteries or Dionysiac cults, Orphism can be defined as a mysteriosophic religion.[38] In Dionysiac or Eleusinian cult, the initiate participates in an initiation rite which makes him familiar with the deity, but he does not gain a knowledge which transforms him. The concept of knowledge, on the contrary, is inherent to the nature of Orphic τελεταί, which are oriented to the aquisition of an eschatological wisdom which allows the initiates (and not only them) to know the nature of the soul, her situation in the world, and how to be freed from the mortal

[33] Heraclit. fr. 87 Marc. (*OF* 587); Eur. *Cret.* fr. 472.10–15 Kannicht (*OF* 567).

[34] Burkert 1975: 90–91 thinks that the μύσται καὶ βάκχοι are the initiates and especially those who got into real ecstasy. In this sense, καί would have the function of adding an expression which restricts or limits, cf. LSJ s.v. καί. About βάκχος and βακχεύειν, cf. Jiménez 2009.

[35] Vid. already Rohde 1898[2]: II 128 n. 6; Guthrie 1935: 194ff.; Dodds 1944: 79 (v. 115); Bernabé 1998d: 82 and n. 164.

[36] Feyerabend 1984. The relation between ritual practice and the itinerary of the souls of the initiates is witnessed also by Pl. *Phd.* 108a "He (Aeschylus) says that the way leading to Hades is straightforward, but I think it is neither straightforward nor single . . . but seems to have, on the contrary, plenty of branches and crossroads. My guess comes from the funeral rites and the usual funerary celebrations which take place there."

[37] Cf. Pugliese Carratelli 1990: 412. On sacred ways in antiquity cf. Rosenberg 1920 and above all Caerols 1995.

[38] Bianchi 1965: 154–155, 167–168.

condition. This conception is condensed in the introductory verse to the Orphic *Hieroi logoi*, which we know in two variants:[39]

(a) I will sing to the understanding, close your doors, ye profane.
(b) I will speak to those to whom it is right to speak; close your doors, ye profane.

Only the initiates know the necessary things to reach salvation and only they have the right to access to the knowledge that the poetry attributed to Orpheus provides.

In the leaves, emphasis on knowledge is attested by Mnemosyne's presence as the presiding deity, by the insistence on truth, by the questions of the guardians, whose mission is to prevent those who do not know the answers from having access to the place of blessing, and by the passwords (σύμβολα)[40] that they and Persephone must be told as a proof that one knows the truth.

The importance of Mnemosyne and the insistence on truth

In the realm of myth, the coincidences of Mnemosyne with Orpheus are clear. Mnemosyne is a relative of Orpheus, she is his grandmother, since her daughter, the Muse Calliope, is Orpheus' mother. Like him, Mnemosyne comes from Pieria and is related to poetry and music, since she is mother of the Muses. Now, apart from this mythical relationship, which is after all superficial, there is a deeper relationship on the level of religion which concerns a system of beliefs. The text of the leaves is "the work of Mnemosyne,"[41] a goddess who is the personification of Memory and who ensures that the initiate remembers the instructions revealed to him when alive, thus becoming the protector of the souls and the guide of their journey. She prevents any undesired failing of memory when the initiate confronts the unavoidable questioning before the guardians. What is required of Mnemosyne is that she makes the initiates remember the ritual, probably the initiatic ritual. In the *Orphic Hymn* addressed precisely to Mnemosyne (*OH* 77.9–10) the function we suppose this goddess has in the leaves is made explicit:

> Excite the initiates with the memory of the pious ritual
> and send oblivion away from them.

Taking into account that in Greek the concept of truth (ἀλήθεια) means etymologically "lack of oblivion" (λήθη), to remember turns out to mean

[39] *OF* 1ab, cf. Bernabé 1996a. [40] Ent. 19 (B11.19), Pher. (D3).
[41] Hip. 1 (B10.1), Pet. 12 (B1.12), Rom. 3 (A5.3). There seems to be little ground for the idea of Gallavotti 1978–79: 339–340, who does not see the goddess in the leaves, but a mention of the substantive "memory."

"to know."[42] To remember in the other world means also to get over the divisions of time of the brief mortal life.[43]

In *Ent.* 2 (B11.2) there is a mention of a "hero who remembers" (μ]εμνημέ<ν>ος ἥρως). This expression must allude to the indispensable condition for becoming one of those "heroes" with a special destiny in the other world: to remember the initiation, not to forget all that has been learned, to know what he must do and what he must say in the other world. The term "hero" reappears in the great leaf from Thur. 492.9 (C1.9) followed by the phrase "light to the intelligence" which seems to be a clear reference to the illumination of the mind of the believer, probably along the path to initiation. The expression "who remembers" can be equated to the sentence of Thur. 487.2 (A4.2) "being well aware of all." Only by recalling all that one has learnt in the initiation will the soul of the deceased reach a happy afterlife with the status of ἥρως.

Thus, the insistence on truth means the existence of an initiatic revelation. When the initiate is asked in Phars. 7 (B2.7) to say exactly all the truth to the guardians of Mnemosyne's lake, he answers with passwords indicating that he belongs to a group which knows certain doctrines. The knowledge of that truth must have been acquired earlier, during his lifetime, and it is not shared by everybody, but only by the initiates.

Orphic features of the passwords and the phraseology

The many passwords inscribed in the leaves and the phraseology alluding to the condition of the deceased's soul and to circumstances of the transit to the Afterlife are a clear example that the teachings of initiation are indispensable to go through the infernal journey. Most of them only acquire their full meaning in the light of other Orphic fragments.

Sons of Earth and Heaven

Let us start with the answer of the soul to the guardians so that they allow her access to the lake of Mnemosyne:

> I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven.[44]

[42] Cf. Pugliese Carratelli 1988: 164–165; 1990: 379–380; Bernabé 1999b; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 61–64; 2008: 37–39.

[43] See Foti and Pugliese Carratelli 1974: 117–118; 1983: 71–72 (= 1990: 379–380); 1993: 14–15, 25–26; Guarducci 1978: 263; Cole 1980: 238; Simondon 1982: 141–142; Díez de Velasco 1995: 136; Bañuls Oller 1997.

[44] The formula is attested, with minimal variations, in Hip. 10 (B10.10), Ent. 11 (B11.11), Pet. 6 (B1.6), Phars. 8 (B2.8), Eleuth. 478–480 (B3–B5), 482–483.3 (B7–B8.3), Myl. 481.3 (B 6.3) and Mal. 3 (B9.3).

This declaration implies membership in a mystic γένος. The origin of men from the Titans, sons of Earth and Heaven, is recalled.[45] Now, the deceased does not identify himself with the Titans, he just points out that he descends from them and therefore has a divine origin. It might seem illogical to introduce themselves before Persephone declaring to be descendant of the murderers of her son, but it is not so if, when doing so, the deceased also declares himself to be a descendant of Dionysus[46] and makes it clear that he has freed himself from guilt (i. e. from his "Titanic" part). All mortals would be descendants of Earth and starry Heaven, but only the initiates, who have lived the Orphic life, keeping down their Titanic aspect and cultivating the Dionysiac one, can claim special treatment in the Afterlife which will allow them to recover their divine nature. With this declaration the dead initiate admits his dual essence, earthly and heavenly,[47] and claims to be a brother of Mnemosyne herself, since she is herself daughter of Earth and Heaven.[48]

The main statement "I am a son of Earth and starry Heaven" is completed in some leaves with additional references like "my name is Asterius,"[49] "my lineage is heavenly,"[50] "I am also proud to be of your blessed lineage."[51] With these declarations, the initiate waives his personal name, a symbol of worldly living, and eliminates any doubts about the heavenly origin of the soul.[52]

Asking for water

Once he has made clear his filiation, the initiate must yet go through other trials. In the first place, he declares his thirst[53] and begs for the water of Mnemosyne. The formula is similar in many leaves, with few variations.[54] With this petition, which is a kind of password, the deceased shows he has been initiated by two signs: he is still thirsty (which means he has not yet

[45] Rohde 1898²: II 116–121, Harrison 1903: 575, Olivieri 1915: 13–14, Guthrie 1935: 174ff. For discussion and other proposals, cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 64–71; 2008: 39–44. On the myth of the Titans, cf. Bernabé 2002e.

[46] The Titans have ingested him and in the ashes resulting from their combustion there is also part of the body of Dionysus, so mortals descend in some way also from him.

[47] Dieterich 1925³: 69, Zuntz 1971: 366. Burkert 1975: 89 sees in the expression the reflexion of original unity, since Heaven and Earth coupled in primordial times, before the separation brought the boundaries of our world. Cf. also Betz's Chapter 5, below, Tortorelli Ghidini 2006.

[48] Hes. *Theog*. 135. Cf. § 4.3. [49] Phars. 9 (B2.9). [50] Ent. 15 (B11.15); Pet. 7 (B1.7).

[51] Thur. 488–489.3 (A1–A2.3). [52] Verdelis 1950–51: 103–105.

[53] On the thirst of the dead, cf. Deonna 1939: 53–77; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 49–58; 2008: 29–35.

[54] Cf. Velasco López 1994; Bernabé-Jiménez 2001: 73 and n. 165; 2008: 46 n. 161. See also the variant of the new finding in Sfakaki 484a (B12), cf. Tzifopoulos 2010: n. 9.

drunk from the other fountain) and he knows he must drink from Mnemosyne's fountain.

The declaration of purity

After having given the passwords correctly to the guardians, the initiate must present himself to the chthonian deities themselves and utter some other passwords. In the leaves from Thurii and, with some variants, in Rom.,[55] somebody declares solemnly in first person addressing Persephone, Eucles (Hades), and Eubuleus (Dionysus), and the other gods:

> I come pure from the pure.

The phrase implies that the speaker or his soul is defined as belonging to a united group, characterized by having a similar ritual situation most probably a ritual purity coming from having experienced initiation and having observed all his life the precepts of his religious group, which makes him worthy of a new life in the Underworld. The uttering of this formula is necessary for the divinities to acknowledge the deceased as an initiate and to admit him to the house of the holy.[56] Plato, in a clearly Orphic context, opposes two groups: the "uninitiated and those not participating in the rites," who are condemned to the mud once they are dead, and the purified (κεκαθαρμένος) and participants in the rites (τετελεσμένος), who will dwell with the gods.[57]

The painful cycle

In Thur. 488.5 (A1.5) the deceased declares to the infernal deities:

> I went out flying from the painful cycle of deep grief.

With that statement he makes clear that his soul has left behind the cycle of reincarnations in the mortal world; that is to say, he has managed to get rid of the mortal life to which he was condemned for the fault committed by his ancestors the Titans. In other Orphic fragments, transmitted in the texts of

[55] Thur. 488–490.1 (A1–A3.1), Rom. 1 (A5.1). Cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 137–143; 2008: 100–105. In Rom. (A5) it is not the dead who speaks, but a third person, who could be a guardian of Hades (Zuntz 1971: 334), or a "mediator from this world" or the leaf itself (Riedweg 1996: 479).

[56] As it is expressed in Thur. 489–490.7 (A2–A3.7) ἕδρας ἐς εὐαγέ{ι}ων, cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 155–156, 225–229; 2008: 115, 174–177. In Amph. (D4) the deceased declares εὐαγὴς ἱερὰ Διονύσου Βαχχίου εἰμι, cf. Hatzopoulos 2002: 25 n. 44, Jiménez San Cristóbal 2007.

[57] Pl. *Phd.* 69c (*OF* 434 iii). The Gurob Papyrus col. II 22 has θεεκκα[, a sequence for which Hordern 2000 proposes either, in comparison with Thur. 488–490.1 (A1–A3.1) -θ' (perhaps αὐτόθι?) ἐκ κα[θαρῶν or in comparison to col. I 28 -θε ἐκ κα[λάθου. Kern (*OF* 31) reads θ̣ εικα.

neo-Platonist philosophers, we find the terms "cycle" (κύκλος) or "wheel" (τροχός) referring to the cycle of metempsychosis of the soul, in which it must reincarnate again and again until the guilt is expiated and she can enjoy being with the other blessed.[58]

The eternal world which the soul longs to reach in the leaves is outside this "circle," and escaping from this cycle, characterized as "painful" (ἀργαλέος),[59] is a liberation and a triumph. Besides, the expression of the leaf implies that the initiate conceives this life, or rather, the succession of lives the soul must go through, both as a cycle[60] and as a wheel, understood as a repeated and terrible punishment and as a metaphor of the wheel of fortune,[61] as terrible as the prison or even the grave which we find in other allusions to the Orphics in Plato.[62] All in all, it is a key expression within Orphic doctrines and fundamental for the fate of the deceased initiate. It seems logical that the initiates were taught these expressions in their ritual experiences, where they would have learned and repeated them.[63]

The interpretation of the κύκλος of the Thurian leaf as the cycle of birth and death, not only has parallels in the Orphic fragments we have just quoted, but also helps to explain the phraseology of guilt and punishment which presents a consistent pattern in other leaves.[64]

The primordial guilt and the punishment

According to the leaves, human beings bear a guilt which they must expiate to liberate themselves:

> I have paid the punishment (ποινή) corresponding to impious actions (ἔργων ἕνεκα οὔτι δικα<ί>ων) (Thur. 490.4 (A3.4)).[65]

[58] Procl. *In Ti.* 3.296.7 Diehl (*OF* 348 iii), *In Ti.* 3.297.7 (*OF* 348 i), Simpl. *in Cael.* 377.12 Heiberg (*OF* 348 ii).

[59] Cf. Emp. fr. 187.8 Wright (B 115 DK; *OF* 449) "interchanging the painful paths of life." It is significant that Empedocles uses the same adjective ἀργαλέος in reference to the human life in a fragment in which he speaks precisely of a "Decree of Necessity" (Ἀνάγκη), who in Orphic texts (*OF* 77) is conceived as the principle which encircles and unites the world, companion of Time (Χρόνος), who also is seen as a winged and turning (ἑλικτός) snake, cf. Onians 1954[2]: 332.

[60] Procl. *In R.* 2.338 Kroll (*OF* 338 i) "Since human soul goes from one living being to another, interchanging according to the cycles of time."

[61] Cf. Harrison 1903: 592–593; Thomson 1945: 9.

[62] The grave, in *Grg.* 493a (*OF* 430 ii); the prison, in *Phd.* 62b (*OF* 429 i); both images, in *Cra.* 400c (*OF* 430 i).

[63] Harrison 1903: 588–592 thinks even possible that κύκλος refers to a real cycle which was formed in an initiatic rite celebrated during the lifetime of the initiate. It could be a wheel, or a circle painted round the initiate who was to escape out of it. Cf. Psell. τίνα περὶ δαιμόνων δοξάζουσιν {Ἕλληνες p. 41 Boissonade, who recalls an old Bacchic rite in which daemons were expelled by jumping out of a fiery circle.

[64] Thur. 489–490.4. (A2–A3.4). [65] Cf. Santamaría 2005.

Payment and liberation are achieved through the τελετή, since in Pher. (D3) it is specified that the μύστης is free from punishment (ἄποινος), which implies that the uninitiated will be punished. We must suppose it is a general punishment over all of mankind, which Thur. 488.5 (A1.5) defines as a terrible cycle which only the initiates can escape. The only known relation between guilt and punishment paid through the τελετή and the exit from a cycle is the one expressed in the Orphic τελετή, in which the guilt is Titanic, the punishment (among others) is the metempsychosis, and the cycle one must get free of is the cycle of rebirth. The phraseology of the leaves is similar to other Orphic texts:

> Take my present as expiation (ποινάς) of the impious deeds of my parents (πατ[έρων ἀθεμίστων). (Gurob Papyrus col. I 4 = *OF* 578).
>
> In the same way that unjust men (ἄδικοι) condemned to death (θ̣α̣[νάτωι ζημιούμε]νοι). (Derveni Papyrus col. III 8 = *OF* 472).[66]
>
> This is why the magi do the sacrifice, with the idea that they are expiating a punishment (ποινὴν ἀποδιδόντες). (Derveni Papyrus col. VI 4–5).

We can perfectly imagine that it is a rite like the one described in the Derveni Papyrus which allows the *mystes* to declare in the Afterlife:

> I have paid the punishment corresponding to impious deeds.

A great number of texts insist again and again on the same conceptual system:

(a) A fragment of the *Rhapsodies* (*OF* 350.3) talks about the λύσιν προγόνων ἀθεμίστων "liberation from his unjust ancestors."

(b) Pindar attributes to the τελεταί the liberation from toils, mentions the payment of a punishment and refers to the compensation which men owe to Persephone for an ancient grief.[67] It is obvious that men cannot have provoked Persephone's grief. It must have been their ancestors, the Titans, who did that.

(c) A famous text of Plato recalls that, according to the Orphics, the soul is in the body to pay a punishment which must be paid. In another it is recalled that only the initiate and pure will dwell with the gods (which coincides precisely with the declarations of apotheosis of the *mystes* which we find in the leaves), while the uninitiated will have as punishment to lie in the mud.[68]

[66] We accept the reading proposed by West in Tsantsanoglou 1997: 96; Most 1997: 131–132 compares it with Thur. 489–490.4. (A2–A3.4).

[67] Cf. Pi. fr. 131a Maehl. (*OF* 441) λυσιπόνων τελετᾶν, *Ol.* 2.58 (*OF* 445) ποινὰς ἔτεισαν, fr. 133 Maehl. (*OF* 443) ποινὰν παλαιοῦ πένθεος, Cf. Bernabé 1999a and Santamaría 2000.

[68] Pl. *Cra.* 400c (*OF* 430 i), *Phd.* 69c (*OF* 434 iii).

(d) Aristotle[69] refers to what "the oldest" proclaim about humans living to expiate the greatest crimes. It is evident that if we "live to expiate" (ζῆν ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ κολάσει) we must expiate something preceding our own birth. "We" are the human beings, and this indicates that sin precedes our existence as a whole.

The crown

In Thur. 488. 6 (A1.6) the reference to the "cycle of deep grief" is followed by the declaration

> I rushed with swift feet to the desired crown.

In the Greek world we find crowns in contexts related to the banquet, the funerary world, the triumph of athletic competition and a number of mystical symbols which serve as tokens for recognition of the inititates.[70] All these values find an echo in Orphic testimonies which provide a solid context for the coherent interpretation of the crown of the Thurii leaf.[71] But perhaps the most interesting texts in relation to the use of crowns are those about the rites which the Orphics fulfill in the Afterlife. In Plato's *Republic* the crown and the wine symbolize the eternal happiness promised to the initiates. The crown would be in relation to the banquet, since it is a perpetual banquet that is promised to a good *mystes*:[72]

Musaeus and his son have a more excellent song than these of the blessings that the gods bestow on the righteous. For they conduct them to the House of Hades in their tale and arrange a symposium of the saints where, reclined on couches crowned with wreaths, they entertain the time henceforth with wine, as if the fairest meed of virtue were an everlasting drunk.

The same panorama is found in two passages of Aristophanes: a fragment[73] which refers to some crowned initiates taking part in a banquet in the Afterlife, and the parody of *Clouds*[74] in which Socrates, after alluding to a

[69] Iambl. *Protr*. 77.27 Des Places = Arist. fr. 60 Rose (*OF* 430 v).

[70] Cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 165–173, 2008: 121–128, with bibl.

[71] Dem. 18.260 (*OF* 577 i); Harp. s.v. λεύκη (*OF* 577 viii); Plut. *Alex*. 2.9 (*OF* 579); Clem. Al. *Paed*. 2.8.73.1 "those who celebrate Bacchus do not fulfill the rites without crowns, but, as soon as they feel it on their temples, they feel inflamed when they see the τελετή."

[72] Pl. *Resp*. 363cd (*OF* 431 i).

[73] Ar. fr. 504.6ss KA (*OF* 432 i) "And we would not be crowned, nor anointed (?) / if we did not go to drink once we arrive down there. / That is why they are called 'the blessed'. / For everybody says 'He has left, blessed he.' 'He is asleep, happy he, since he will not suffer any more.' / And we venerate them with sacrifices / like to gods, and we offer them libations, / we ask them to send goods to us up here."

[74] Ar. *Nub*. 254–60.

ceremony of enthronement of an initiate, offers him a crown because among them such is the usual practice with initiates.[75] The crown reappears as a symbol of afterlife blessing in a passage of Plutarch which describes the experiences that the soul suffers after death, taking as references those experienced by the *mystes* during the τελετή.[76] The funerary and the initiatic appear again united in a poem of unknown authorship from the mid-third century BCE[77] which echoes the language and the ideology of the leaves. The addressee of this poem is the tragic poet Philicus, whose head, in the moment he left for the Isles of the Blessed, is crowned with ivy, probably as a sign of his initiation in the mysteries. The symbolism of the funerary crown has ritual echoes because the crown is a sign of identity of the initiated deceased, as it had been for the members of the thiasoi described by Demosthenes and Plutarch. To sum up, obtaining a crown after death meant the triumph of the initiated over the cycle of reincarnations, signalling a culminating point. Thus, in the Orphic evidence the rite, the realm of death, and the destiny of the soul are implied in the metaphor of the crown, mystical, triumphal and sympotic at the same time. Orphism offers, then, the most adequate context for the right interpretation of the crown in the leaf of Thurii.

The wine and Dionysus

At the end of the leaves of Pel. 6 (5) (D1.6 = D2.5) we read:

> You have wine, happy privilege.[78]

Wine may be alluded to either because it was part of an initiatic or funerary ritual, or as an expression of the otherworldly happiness that the deceased will enjoy. These three interpretations, which are not exclusive but may well be complementary,[79] agree with some pieces of evidence and beliefs within the scope of Orphism.[80] Demosthenes[81] describes Aeschines helping his mother to officiate some rites in which wine is mixed. In the Gurob Papyrus

[75] Cf. Dieterich 1893 (who compares this ritual with the one described by Dem. 18.259), Méautis 1938, Burkert 1983: 268 n. 16, Freyburger-Galland 1992. See also the comments of Dover *ad loc*., 187–188, as well as Guidorizzi's, 224–227, where references can be found to the rites he caricatures.

[76] Plut. fr. 178 Sandbach (*OF* 594). [77] *SHell* 980. Cf. Dickie 1995: 84–86, 1998.

[78] The text presents some textual difficulties; see Bernabé *ad loc*. and Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 267–268, 2008: 256–258 for the various proposals.

[79] Cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 117–125, 2008: 84–89 with discussion and bibliography. This triple interpretation also explains the curious metrical structure of the text, cf. Riedweg 1998: 367–368.

[80] Thus, an Italian vase (cf. M. Schmidt 1975: 134–135, fig. XVI), a relief from the Farnesina in Rome (cf. Graf 1991: 100), or one of the frescoes in the Villa dei Misteri in Pompeii (cf. Simon 1961, Sauron 1998, Ricciardelli Apicella 2000b: 279). On the ritual usages of wine, see Velasco López 1992: 216–220.

[81] Dem. 18.259 (*OF* 577 i). Cf. Wankel *ad loc*., 1135–1138.

(*OF* 578) there is an explicit mention of the drinking of the initiate to relieve his thirst during the τελετή:

> col. I 20 . . . after having relieved your thirst.[82]
> col. I 25 . . . I have drunk wine, ass, shepherd.[83]

The Gurob Papyrus and Pel. (D1–D2) coincide also in mentioning wine in a context of liberation in which Dionysus appears as a saviour god. In the papyrus we read the petition of salvation to the god:

> col. I 22a–b Eubuleus, Ericepeus, . . . save me . . . There is one Dionysus.

while Pel. 2 (D1–D2.2) reflects a later moment, after death, in which the *mystes* is told that his wish has been fulfilled:

> Tell Persephone that Bacchios himself has freed you

The use of wine in the rite must have been favored by the belief that the access to spiritual drunkenness, which causes self-forgetting and originates true knowledge, begins with a physical drunkenness.[84] To drink wine during the rite was a solemn sacrament during which the wine turned into liquor of immortality. And, in a way, to drink wine meant to drink the god himself, according to some Latin evidence where wine is called *Liber*.[85] Even the god himself is called Wine (Οἶνος) in the *Rhapsodies* (*OF* 303, 321, 331).

Concerning the possible funerary use of wine, some facts, like the present tense and the references to the actual moment and the present day in the text of some leaves, and also their very location in a grave, authorize us to think of libations offered to the deceased in the moment of the burial.[86] Pure wine is associated[87] with the ideas of life[88] and freedom.[89] Dionysus

[82] On the proposal of interpreting ἀπαυάνας as aorist participle of ἀπαυαίνω with the sense of "having relieved my thirst" cf. Smyly 1921: 6, Hordern 2000: 138.

[83] Hordern 2000: 139 reads ο]ἶν[ο]ν, "wine," against the older proposals ψυχ]ρ[ὸ]ν and ἔφαγο]ν, see Smyly 1921: 6, Tierney 1922: 87.

[84] Velasco López 1992: 215 quotes the example of the Irish *Samain* who think they approach the divine world through drunkenness.

[85] Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.41.

[86] Pel. 1 (D1–D2.1) "You have just died and you are just born, thrice fortunate, in this day," cf. Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 14; Ricciardelli Apicella 1992: 28; Graf 1991: 97–101; 1993: 247–250; Riedweg 1998: 373–374.

[87] Pure wine appears in marginal contexts, especially to contact the Netherworld and the dead, cf. Burkert 1983: 54–55; Graf 1980: 217–218. There is evidence about Bacchic funerary rituals in which wine is present: Dioscor. *AP* 7. 485, *SEG* 33, n. 563 (saec. III CE), Nonnus *Dion.* 19.167–197, cf. Burkert 1987: 23 n. 60. See also the evidence of Apulian funerary vases studied by H. R. W. Schmidt 1972.

[88] Petron. *Sat.* 34.7 *vita vinum est*. Prayers in the Roman feast of Anna Perenna asked for as many years of divine favor as the number of wine glasses which were drunk (Ov. *Fast.* 3.523–526). There are often inscriptions on vases such as *Vivas*, *Bibe multos annos*, Πίε, Ζέσες, Ζήσαις, cf. *BJ* **13**: 107 ff., **16**: 75ff.

[89] Xenarch. fr. 5 "to drink the wine of freedom and to die."

himself, god of wine, receives the epithets of Ἐλευθερεύς and Λυσεύς,[90] so it is not strange that wine appears in our leaves associated with the "liberation" of the soul through the god: the initiate, in the peak of ecstasy, manages to free himself from the ancestral guilt.[91] Perhaps that is the reason why the sentence "you have got wine, happy privilege" has been interpreted as an expression of the happiness awaiting the deceased. The wine appears as the first of all the marvels which the initiate will enjoy in the Afterlife, as an essential element of otherworldly happiness.

It is difficult to resist comparing the promise in Pel. (D1–D2) of the soul's union with the other blessed and the Platonic passage,[92] in which he talks about the doctrine of Museus and his son (that is, Orphic doctrine, according to the ancient commentators of Plato), according to which the souls of the "just" will enjoy in Hades a perpetual banquet with wine. This text was mentioned by Plutarch, who perfectly grasped the irony of the Athenian philosopher:[93]

> And Plato mocks the followers of Orpheus when saying that those who lived justly will enjoy in Hades eternal drunkenness.

The image that illustrates the marvels of the Afterlife as a banquet in which wine cannot be absent is not exclusive to Orphism,[94] nor is the ritual use of wine or the funerary libations. Nevertheless, Orphism is the mystery religion which offers better parallels to interpret adequately the mention of wine in the leaves. The particular connotations which the wine used in the rite had to the Orphics would explain its usage in funerary libations and its presence in descriptions of otherworldly happiness. The wine would overcome the limits of ritual practice to turn into a key symbol of the Orphic doctrine of salvation.

The thiasos

In a new tablet from Pherai,[95] the *mystes* addresses to an unknown divinity (probably Persephone) the following words:

> Send me to the thiasoi of the initiates.

[90] Ἐλευθερεύς Paus. 1.2.5, Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 104 p. 289a, Clem. Al. *Prot.* 4.53.3, Hsch. s.v. Ἐλευθερεύς· Διόνυσος ἐν Ἀθήναις. Λυσεύς *OH* 42.4, 52.2, cf. Ricciardelli Apicella 2000a: *ad loc.*, Dam. *in Pl. Phd.*1.11 (35 Westerink; *OF* 350).

[91] For other symbolic connotations of wine, cf. Velasco López 1992: 216–220; Tortorelli Ghidini 1995a: 84.

[92] Pl. *Resp.* 363c–d (*OF* 431 i).

[93] Plut. *Comp. Cim. et Luc.* 1.2 (*OF* 431 ii). Cf. Casadesús 1999.

[94] Ar. *Ran.* 85, fr. 12 KA, fr. 504. 6–14 KA (*OF* 432 i); Pherecr. fr. 113.30–34 KA (*OF* 432 i); an epigram of Smyrna: *EG* 312.13ff. Kaibel. On the banquet of the Afterlife, cf. Graf 1974: 98–103.

[95] D5 (*OF* 493 a), cf. Graf and Johnston 2007: 38, n. 28; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 151, 158–159, L13a.

This thiasos is undoubtedly the reunion of initiates in the Underworld, and the *mystes* makes "a claim of membership."[96]

On the other hand, Santamaría Álvarez[97] proposes the following reading for A4.2:

> δεξιὸν ἐς θ̣ίασ<ον> δεῖ {ξ} <σ'> ἰ̣<έ>ναι
> You must go to the thiasos on the right,

according to which a thiasos appears also in the Thurii tablets.

Reconstruction of a hieros logos

In the following paragraphs we will briefly explain how the underlying structure of the text also reflects the importance of an initiatic knowledge. It cannot be accidental that from the text of the leaves as a whole it is possible to reconstruct a *hieros logos* along the same essential lines as the one reconstructed from other Orphic fragments.[98] In effect, Riedweg has argued that from certain expressions of the Orphic leaves it is possible to reconstruct the subject-matter of a ἱερὸς λόγος about the fate of the soul in the Underworld, which would be transmitted to the initiates during the ritual.[99] We know that in Orphic cult the importance of knowledge results in the existence of ritual books with the keys to interpret that knowledge.[100] After all, Orphism is defined as a "religion of the book"[101] with constant references to stories which sanction the rites and which contain the keys to have access to that doctrinal knowledge. The Gurob Papyrus (*OF* 578) constitutes doubtlessly the clearest and most complete piece of evidence of what must have been a ritual text, written over a handy material and containing the indispensable instructions for what must be done and said in the different moments of the celebration. In a way, the leaves can be considered an equivalent of the books used by the initiates in the ritual: they are brief because they have only the minimal contents which are indispensable to help the dead believer to remember all that is fundamental to overcome the passage through Hades, and are golden because, in contrast to

[96] Graf and Johnston 2007: 95. [97] Verbal communication.

[98] Cf. Bernabé 2003b. On Orphic *Hieroi logoi* cf. Baumgarten 1998, Henrichs 2003a and 2003b, Graf and Johnston 2007: 175–184.

[99] Riedweg 1998: 387–389, 2002 and Chapter 9 below. According to Graf 1991: 98–101 the lines of Pel. (D1–D2) would be employed in a ritual which dramatized the death and resurrection of the initiate, in imitation of that of the god, followed by a *makarismos* with instructions for life and the promise of future happiness.

[100] Jiménez San Cristóbal 2002b.

[101] The definition comes from Bianchi 1974: 131 (= 1978: 189); cf. Bernabé 1996a: 18 n. 15; 1996b: 67.

the ritual texts in papyrus which can be replaced, the leaves must last for ever. In a system of beliefs in which the τελετή is conceived as a preparation for corporeal death, it is logical to suppose that it served to instruct the initiate on aspects like the infernal geography or the fate of the soul in the Underworld, and it is not impossible to think that initiates and initiators alike used in the rite texts similar to those contained in the leaves, though these must have been inscribed on cheaper (and unfortunately perishable) materials. In any case, the Gurob Papyrus and the Orphic leaves are two instances of absolutely functional texts, which are used in two transcendental moments for the initiate: the τελετή and death.

The relevance of knowledge and doctrinal teaching which is inferred from the leaves makes it difficult to accept the proposal to ascribe them to Dionysiac circles, precisely because the constant usage of a text constitutes one of the differentiating features between Orphism and Dionysism. As we have seen, the concept of knowledge is inherent to the nature of Orphic τελεταί. In Dionysiac cult, on the contrary, the initiate participates in rites which make him familiar to the god and his events, but he has no access to a knowledge which transforms him. A tight link between Dionysiac doctrines and rites does not seem to have ever existed.[102]

PURITY AND JUSTICE

Candidates to dwell in the *locus amoenus* declare themselves to be in a special condition of purity.[103] The same purity is the condition for a better destiny in the Afterlife in texts which are undoubtedly Orphic such as the *Rhapsodies*, but this time in explicit opposition to the fate of those who lived unjustly:[104]

> Those who have been pure[105] under the rays of the sun,
> reach, once they have died, a sweeter destiny
> in the beautiful meadow, in the shores of deep-flowing Acheron ...
> Those who acted against justice under the rays of the sun,
> evil-doers, are carried down to the field of Cocytus,
> to the freezing Tartarus.

Clearly, the contrast between "those who have been pure" and "those who acted against justice" implies that the pure have acted according to justice and that to act against justice is an impurity. The same association and

[102] See Festugière 1956; Dodds 1944: xi–xx; Daraki 1985: 63; Casadio 1994: 98 and n. 75, 119 and n. 12; Versnel 1990: 137–146.

[103] Thur. 488–490.1 (A1–A3.1) " I come pure from the pure."

[104] *OF* 340.

[105] εὐαγέωσιν. The word εὐαγής is a term used in the leaves, cf. Thur. 489–490.7 (A2–A3.7) ἕδρας ἐς εὐαγέων, Amphip. (D4) εὐαγὴς ἱερὰ Διονύσου Βακχίου ... εἰμί.

contrast of concepts is found much earlier in Plato,[106] who ironically states that Museus and his son (i.e. Orpheus) reward the just (δικαίοις) with a banquet of crowned and drunk pious folk (ὁσίων), the same prize which we have seen that awaits the initiates in Pel. (D1–D2). Instead, the impious and unjust (τοὺς δὲ ἀνοσίους αὖ καὶ ἀδίκους) are thrown into the mud and forced to carry water in a sieve.[107]

Justice (Dike) is a well-known deity within Orphic scope. In an ancient Orphic theogony she appears as a goddess who accompanies Zeus in watching over the unjust deeds committed by men so that Zeus may punish them,[108] while in a passage from a legal discourse one of the litigants tries to move the vote of the jury by alluding to the vigilance of Justice over the unjust,[109] postulated, he says, by Orpheus.

The pattern of the leaves also reflects a link between ritual purity and justice (δίκη) which coincides with the idea of justice related to the religious ideas and cultic practices which we found clearly developed in Orphism.[110] Being just is equivalent to being free from punishment, ἄποινος, as the initiate declares in Pher. (D3). Through other Orphic passages we know that to pay the punishment implies to be initiated and to live with purity and rectitude, because the uninitiate will not be able to get rid of his impious and unjust condition and will have to expiate his faults again.[111]

THE GODS IN THE LEAVES AND IN OTHER ORPHIC TEXTS

Some features of the gods mentioned in the leaves put them into relationship with the image of the same gods in other Orphic texts.[112]

Primeval gods and elements

In the Great Leaf from Thurii (C) some divine names and some phrases of religious content can be read within a sea of senseless letters.[113] In the first line three gods are mentioned:

[106] Pl. *Resp*. 363c–d. Cf. Plut. *Comp. Cim. et Luc*. 1.2.
[107] Cf. Pl. *Resp*. 330d, *Phd*. 69c, *Grg*. 493a–c. Justice appears also in the Apulian infernal iconography, which on some occasions is associated with Victory (Nike), cf. below, "Nike and Dike".
[108] Pl. *Leg*. 716a (*OF* 32). Burkert 1969: 11 n. 25 points out rightly that the Platonic passage seems to paraphrase a similar verse of another passage in the *Rhapsodies* (*OF* 233).
[109] Ps.-Dem. 25.11 (*OF* 33).
[110] Jiménez San Cristóbal 2005.
[111] Pl. *Phd*. 69c, *Grg*. 493a, *Resp*. 364e, Julian. *Or*. 7.25, Plut. fr. 178 Sandbach.
[112] For Derveni, cf. Most 1997, Betegh 2004: esp. 331–338.
[113] Cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 183–200; 2008: 137–150; Bernabé 2002a. Betegh 2004: 332–337 points out that the tablet shows undeniable points of contact with the Derveni text.

To the First-Born, to Mother Earth, to the Cybelean,
daughter of Demeter.

Since Phanes does not appear in Orphism till much later, it seems most probable to think that the First-Born is here, as in the theogony of the Derveni Papyrus, Heaven, first son of Night.[114] This idea agrees with the password in one group of leaves:[115]

I am a son of Earth and starry Heaven.

Heaven and Earth form the primeval couple. In the Derveni theogony, Night did not have a partner, as is clearly indicated in the fact that Heaven is qualified with a matronymic "son of Night"[116] and not with the usual patronymic. Following the triad of the Thurian leaf, the Maid daughter of Demeter is Persephone, usually called Κόρη. The epithet Cybelean, "daughter of Cybele" is a tautology which insists on the identification of Demeter and Cybele. The name of Demeter is interpreted in the Orphic texts as Γῆ μήτηρ,[117] so Persephone is also daughter of Earth. The deceased addresses, then, his ultimate ancestors, Heaven and Earth, as well as Persephone, deity of the dead, who decides his fate in the other world.

In line 2 Zeus is identified with air, just as in the Derveni theogony.[118] But it is even more curious that in line 5 of the same leaf four gods are identified with four elements (similarly, but not identically, to Empedocles). Thus, we read:

ἀέρ | πῦρ | μᾶτερ | Νῆστι | νύξ |ἡμέρα

Air, in agreement with line 2, is Zeus, the fire is Dionysus (who has been identified with Sun in line 2); Mother is Earth, usually called "Mother Earth" in many texts, among others line 1 of this one, and is fused with Demeter as we have just seen. And the last element, which must be water (by process of elimination), appears with the same divine name Nestis, by which Empedocles used to call it.[119] As fundamental deities two masculine gods are mentioned, both of the above world of light, of the realm of the living (Zeus and Dionysus), and two feminine goddesses, from the lower world of darkness, from the realm of the dead (Demeter and Persephone).

[114] Burkert 1999, Bernabé 2002d, Betegh 2004, Janko 2002, against West 1983, Brisson 1990, Jourdan 2003.
[115] Hip. 10 (B10.10) etc., cf. section on "Sons of Earth and Heaven" above.
[116] *OF* 10.2 Οὐρανὸς Εὐφρονίδης.
[117] Cf. e.g. Hymn to Demeter in *P. Derv.* saec. IV BCE col. XXII Δήμητερ [P]έα Γῆ Μῆτερ <τε καὶ> Εστία Δηιοῖ.
[118] *P. Derv.* col. XVII (*OF* 14 i), cf. *OF* 14.3 (= 31.5) Ζεὺς πνοιὴ πάντων.
[119] Emp. fr. 31 B 6 DK.

The mention of the four gods-elements is followed by references to νύξ and ἡμέρα "night" and "day," so the entire cosmic order is alluded to: the four elements, and identified with them the gods of above and the gods of below, of life and death, and in the last place, the basic elements of the temporal sequence, night and day, the first one being, besides, a primordial deity in Orphic traditions.[120]

Very similar sequences appear in other works of Orphic literature. The most interesting parallel is two verses of a Hymn to Zeus inserted in the *Rhapsodies* in which, to tell us that Zeus has within himself the whole Universe, the poet mentions four elements and the elemental temporal sequence: night–day, that is, the same six elements mentioned in the aforementioned line (*OF* 243.7–8):

> an only royal body, in which all things fulfill their cycle,
> fire, water, earth and aither, night and day.

We do not believe possible that so close a coincidence could be the result of pure chance particularly since the same elements recur in the so called "Orphic Oath" (*OF* 619):

> Indeed, for the parents of the immortals that exist for ever,
> Fire, Water, Earth, Heaven, Moon,
> Sun and great Phanes, and the dark Night as well.

Three elements reappear here called by their usual names: fire, water and earth. Then Heaven is mentioned (which substitutes for air as in Emped. fr. 25 Wright [22 DK] 2), then the two main heavenly bodies, Moon and Sun (which is another way of expressing the sequence day–night), and Phanes and Night, duplication in divine terms of the light of day and night. We find in this text fundamentally the same idea of the structure of the universe that we find in the leaf of Thurii.

The Moira

In three leaves from Thurii we find an almost identical verse:

> But Moira overcame me and he who strikes from the stars with his thunderbolt.
> Either Moira overcame me or the thrower of thunderbolts.[121]

Traditionally, Moira is the divine personification of destiny and death.[122] In Homer we find parallel expressions to those from the leaves, for instance:

[120] Cf. Bernabé 1998b. [121] *OF* 488.4, 489–490.5.
[122] Cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 148–155; 2008: 109–114.

> But Moira overcame him and the terrible anger of Hera.
> But Moira overcame them and their cruel deeds.[123]

In these examples Homer also refers to death from two points of view: a general one, "Moira overcame them," and a specific one, which indicates the mediate or immediate cause (the anger of Hera, or the deeds of the pretenders). But, as usual, the Orphics adapt the traditional phraseology to alter its meaning and make it compatible with their beliefs. In effect, according to the theogony of the Derveni Papyrus,[124] Moira is a divine name to be identified with Zeus[125] since the Moiras are deities of fate: for the Orphic poet Zeus is thus turned into the Lord of Fate when ruling the world and determining the course of events. Moira is the mind of Zeus, as Ocean is his power, the two features which make him able to rule. The same identification with Zeus can be seen in the Orphic Hymn addressed to the Moiras:[126]

> Since all that happens to us,
> all does Moira know and Zeus' mind.

Thus, in any of the two forms in which it appears in the leaves (with a copulative or disjunctive conjunction) the double reference to Moira and Zeus is a simple hendiadys, two ways of referring to one single fact, the death of the *mystes* brought about by Zeus-Fate. Thus we find a new point of contact between the leaves and the Orphic texts.

Persephone

For Homer, who is the main spokesman of Olympian religion, Persephone is a deity with little importance and usually characterized as terrible and unpleasant. She is alluded to seven times, six of them[127] described as "dreadful" (ἐπαινή), while in the other[128] there is a mere mention of a place called "the groves of Persephone." In Hesiod she appears once in a passage which seems interpolated and which qualifies her also as "dreadful,"[129] and in other places, never in a relevant position.[130] Her role in the most significant poets of the Olympian tradition is, then, minimal.

[123] *Il.* 18.119, *Od.* 22.413. [124] *P. Derv.* col. XVIII–XIX, cf. Funghi 1995, Betegh 2004: 200–202.
[125] Cf. Alderink 1981: 28–30; Casadesús 1995: 381–384. Cf. also Pugliese Carratelli 1993: 56, according to whom it would be harmonious to evoke Zeus at the same time as Moira to underline her role as a minister of the supreme *numen*.
[126] *OH* 59.13f. Cf. already Olivieri 1915: 6. [127] *Il.* 9.457, 569, *Od.* 10.491, 534, 566; 11.47.
[128] *Od.* 10.509. [129] Hes. *Theog.* 768.
[130] Hes. *Theog.* 913, in a list of spouses and children of Zeus, fr. 185.4 M–W, unfortunately too damaged to obtain any information, and in a papyrus fragment which might belong to the Hesiodic *Descent of Pirithous* or the *Minyad* (Hes. fr.280.19 M–W = *Minias* fr. 7 Bernabé).

By contrast, in the leaves the goddess plays the role of protagonist. And in Pel. 2 (D1–D2.2) we read

> Tell Persephone that Bacchius himself has freed you.

In this statement she is clearly linked to Dionysus. She decides the fate of the deceased, but Dionysus acts as mediator. In an unequivocally Orphic fragment[131] both are mentioned as liberating gods, the same function that Pel. (D1–D2) attributes to her.

The same ideas appear in Pindar,[132] in which he talks of the liberation of some souls by Persephone, after having accepted the compensation for her "ancient grief" (Dionysus' death).

None of these features make this goddess who welcomes the initiates similar to the "dreadful goddess" of Homer and Hesiod. One could think of relating the leaves with the Eleusinian world,[133] where Persephone also has a protagonist role and also decides about the fate to come after death.[134] Nevertheless there are powerful reasons to prefer relating the leaves with the Orphic world rather than with the Eleusinian one. The main ones are:

(a) The association of Persephone with Dionysus, her son in the Orphic tradition and who is also associated with her in the Apulian pottery, as we shall see (section below "Presiding deities in the Afterlife").
(b) The circumstance that the leaves emphasize "liberation" rather than the visual experience of the initiate,[135] which is distinctive of the Eleusinian rites.
(c) The fact that the deceased addresses her as "mother"[136] in the "great" leaf from Thurii, which is the same situation that we find in the Gurob Papyrus (*OF* 578),[137] and which has as background the Orphic myth of the Dionysiac part in human beings.
(d) The striking absence of leaves from Athens, the place which is most intimately linked to Eleusis.

Dionysus

Diverse epithets of Dionysus appear in the leaves.

[131] Procl. *In Ti*. 3.297.3 Diehl, quoting *OF* 384; Simpl. *in Cael*. 377.12 Heiberg quotes the same fragment.
[132] Pind. fr. 133 Maehl. (*OF* 443). [133] Cf. Merkelbach 1989: 15, Calame 1995b: 20 (n. 15) and 23–29.
[134] A precision due to Graf 1993: 242. [135] Cf. Segal 1990: 416–419.
[136] Thur. 492.6–7 (C1.6–7) "mother, hear my begging!"
[137] She is invoked here to save the initiate, Demeter is identified with Rea, and a supplication is mentioned: col. 1 5 σῶισόν με Βριμὼ με[γάλη, 6 Δημήτηρ τε῾ Ρέα, 17 εὐχή.

In Pel. 2 (D1–D2.2) Dionysus appears mentioned as Βάκχιος

In Amph. (D4) the deceased (a female) proclaims εὐαγὴς ἱερὰ Διονύσου Βακχίου εἰμι. It is curious that the god is called with the name that would be appropriate to the initiate, since his own name should be Βάκχος. Instead, in Hip. 16 (B10.16) the initiates are called Βάκχοι. There is an identification between the initiate and the god, so their denominations get crossed.[138] He intercedes before Persephone so that the soul of the believer in Pelinna is liberated. No one could be better than Dionysus to point out to his mother the moment a man is liberated.

Thur. 488–490.2 (A1–A3.2), Rom. 2 (A5.2) mention Eubuleus beside Persephone

It must be Dionysus who receives this epithet in diverse Orphic Hymns and in other sources.[139] It is consistent with that fact that in Rom.[140] he is mentioned as "son of Zeus." And he is invoked in the Gurob Papyrus.[141]

It seems obvious that the god invoked as Eubuleus is identified with Ericepeus and must be Dionysus, mentioned in the following line: a god who has many names but is one and only one. His condition of savior and liberator god coincides with the role of Βάκχιος in Pel. (D1–D2).

Ericepeus is a distinctively Orphic epithet, applied to Dionysus or, later, to Phanes[142]

The presence of Dionysus, cited with the epithets we have just mentioned and above all his relationship to Persephone is characteristic of Orphic piety, and it comes from the famous myth according to which Dionysus is the son of Persephone, the Titans dismember him, and from his remains men are born.[143]

[138] Cf. Ricciardelli Apicella 1992: 30; Casadio 1999: 106–110; Tortorelli Ghidini 2006: 127.

[139] Cf. *OH* 29.8, 30.6, 52.4, cf. the *Orphic Hymn* to the Sun quoted by Macrob. *Sat.* 1.18.12 (*OF* 540.4) besides Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 7. 9 p. 714 C and *CIG* II n. 1948. See also Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 140–143; 2008: 102–105.

[140] Rom. 2 (A5.2) Εὐβουλεῦ τε Διὸς τέκος.

[141] *P. Gur.* col. 1 18 "Let us invoke Eubuleus"; 22a "Eubu]leus, Ericepeus . . . save me"; 23b "There is one Dionysus"; 18 and 22a are quotations from a text in verse, while 23b is a ritual declaration in prose. Cf. Hordern 2000.

[142] To Dionysus in *TAM* V 2.1256.5–6 (*OF* 662, saec. II CE) Διονύσωι Ἠρικεπαί[ωι], Hsch. Ἠρικεπαῖος· ὁ Διόνυσος, to Phanes in *OF* 135, 139, 143.4, 162, 167.2, 170, 241.1 cf. *OF* 134 with commentary, Morand 2001: 192–193. In Pher. (D3) we find him hidden in a popular etymology like ἀνδρικεπαιδόθυρσον (that is to say, ἀνήρ καὶ παῖς, θύρσος) but anyway still clearly recognizable.

[143] In a tablet from Heraclea near Hagios Athanassios, period unknown, we read Φιλωτήρα τῶι Δεσπότει χέρε(ιν), "Filotera greets the Lord" (E6, *OF* 495a). The first editor, Hatzopoulos 2002: 28, considers Δεσπότει a name of Dionysus. However, we prefer to identify it with Hades, cf. Chaniotis in *SEG* 2002: 607 (p. 193), Jiménez San Cristóbal 2007, Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008.

ICONOGRAPHY

A fourth argument concerns the iconographic representations, above all those coming from Apulian pottery, whose relations with the Orphic world seem to be more and more clear.[144] We shall analyze in this section how far the images of the Afterlife described in the leaves agree or disagree with those which characterize the traditional one (represented in the first place by Homer), and how far both are comparable to those which the Southern Italian pottery presents. We shall have the opportunity to confirm that the world of the leaves is much closer to the Southern Italian iconography than the Homeric one. This link is pertinent since, as is well known, Orpheus formed an important part of the Apulian image of Hades.

Location: the house of Hades

The leaves locate Hades, the dwelling of the dead, in a subterranean world which they describe as obscure, but also as a building (δόμοι, δῶμα).[145] Homer also presents Hades as a subterranean building,[146] but there is an essential difference between the "rusty and horrid place, which the gods themselves loathe" described by Homer,[147] and the "well-built house" alluded to by Hip. 2 (B10.2). Apulian pottery coincides much more with the description of the leaves, since it presents, as we shall see, a dark Hades (the infernal gods bear torches), in which, however, magnificent buildings of elegant columns rise, a home indeed worthy of its divine dwellers.

A uniform Hades vs. a dual Hades

Another fundamental difference between the image of the leaves and that of Homer is that Homeric Afterlife is unpleasant as a whole, while the one

[144] Guthrie 1935: 187 denies them, while Margot Schmidt 1975 considers that the Apulian vases which represent Hades must be interpreted in an Orphic context, though she does not believe that they coincide with the world of the leaves. Giangiulio 1994 takes in consideration also the Locrian *pinakes* and presents a fair state of the question. Johnston and McNiven 1996 have developed the idea around a fundamental piece of evidence preserved in Toledo (Ohio). Bernabé (2009: 121) criticizes Schmidt's reluctance and tries to show that the image of Hades in the leaves and that of Apulian and Locrian iconography point to the same religious atmosphere which, in all probability, must be Orphic. The arguments summarized here are developed there.

[145] Subterranean place: the souls "go down" there (Hip. 4 (B10.4), probably Ent. 6 (B11.6)) and it is inhabited by "the subterranean Queen" (Hip. 13 (B10.13)). It is "somber" Hip. 9 (B10.9), Ent. 11 (B11.11) and one comes to it "after abandoning the light of the sun" Thur. 487.1 (A4.1). Described as a building: "house (δόμοι) of Hades" in Pet. 1 (B1.1), Phars. 1 (B2.1). Hip. 2 (B10.2) adds a debated epithet which seems to mean "well-built."

[146] Cf. e.g. *Il.* 8.477–481, 22.482f., *Od.* 24.203f.

[147] *Il.* 20.64f.

described in the leaves has two aspects. There are two fountains, that of Mnemosyne, visited only by those who have been told in advance by the author of the sacred story (i.e. the initiates), while the other, unnamed but probably that of Oblivion, is visited by the souls of the other dead.[148] And there is also in Hades a privileged place, a sacred meadow,[149] separated from a much more unpleasant and somber place, often identified with Tartarus. But access to this *locus amoenus* is controlled by various characters, one after another, the guardians and Persephone. Apparently the pottery offered as well some examples of a similar situation. In an amphora, perhaps from Vulci, which has disappeared, the souls of the initiates were represented before the guardians who guard Mnemosyne's fountain.[150]

Apulian iconography represents this duality within the boundaries of iconographic language. In a crater from St. Petersburg[151] we can see a magnificent building, home of the rulers of the Underworld Persephone and Hades. Below, the Danaids are painted as bearing jars (supposedly to try in vain to fill them). In the upper part Ixion, chained to a wheel and accompanied by a Fury,[152] represents those punished in the Afterlife. On two other craters, we find Hades and Persephone out of their temple, on one in St. Petersburg with a Fury on the right side and down in the center the Danaids, while on another one from Ruvo[153] a Fury punishes one condemned who is terrified by the "terrors of Hades."

The space which, according to the leaves, is reserved for the initiates seems much more pleasant. It is situated in Hades, below the earth,[154] and imagined as a meadow.[155] Apulian pottery does not offer us clear images of this place which we can assign to an Orphic atmosphere, although some

[148] Hip. 2 (B10.2) "there is a fountain to the right ... the souls of the dead descend there to refresh themselves," 5 "do not approach at all this fountain," cf. Ent. 4.7 (B11.4.7), Pet. 1.3 (B1.1.3). In contrast to this fountain Hip. 6 (B10.6), Pet. 4 (B1.4), Ent. 8 (B11.8), Phars. 4 (B2.4) refer only to the fountain or lake of Mnemosyne. The idea reappears elsewhere only in Paus. 9.39.8, who tells us that the consultants of the oracle of the cave of Trophonius (which was supposed to be an image of Afterlife) drank water from Lethe (Forgetfulness) and then that of Mnemosyne (Memory). On Trophonius cf. Bonnechere 2003a and 2003b.

[149] Thur. 487.6 (A4.6) "the sacred meadows and groves of Persephone," Thur. 489.7 (A2.7) "to see if, benevolent, she sends me to the abode of the purified," Pher. (D3) "Enter the sacred meadow, since the initiate is free from punishment."

[150] So says, at least, a description of the amphora written by Albizzatti 1921: 260, cf. Pairault-Massa 1975: 199.

[151] B 1717 (325–310 BCE).

[152] On the Furies in Apulian pottery, cf. Aellen 1994: *passim*.

[153] St. Petersburg B 1716 (330–310 BCE); Ruvo 1094 (360–350 BCE).

[154] Cf. above all Pel. 7 (D1.7) "And you will go under the earth, having fulfilled the same rites as the other blessed."

[155] Pher. (D3) "Enter the sacred meadow, since the initiate is free from punishment" (cf. the "meadow of the blessed" in Diod. Sic. 1.96.2–5 (*OF* 55)), Thur. 487.5–6 (A4.5–6) "Hail, hail, when you take the path to the right / to the sacred meadows and groves of Persephone."

pieces seem to point to a kind of Paradise in relation to Dionysus.[156] However, the access of the initiated to a pleasant space can be gathered through other symbols: either the presence of Orpheus, or other details like an open door with Nike at its side, which we will presently examine.

Presiding deities in the Afterlife

Another important point of contact between the leaves and Apulian pottery is the image of the gods in the Afterlife, which is very different from the Homeric one. We saw in the section on "Persephone" above the protagonist role Persephone has, since she has the last word on the fate of those who arrive in the Underworld. By her side Eucles is mentioned, which is an epithet of Hades, although he seems to have no direct participation in the destiny of the souls. We also saw (sections above on Persephone and Dionysus) that Dionysus appeared, under diverse names, as a divine mediator, who in Pel. (D1–D2) authorizes the liberation of the soul of the deceased.

We also saw that both Dionysus' role as mediator for the liberation of the soul and a pleasant Persephone are alien to the Homeric and Hesiodic world. However, both features of this image of the Underworld appear also in Southern Italian iconography.

Persephone is the protagonist of the infernal imagery on most Apulian vases which we will now deal with. On the *pinakes* from Locri, of the second quarter of the fifth century BCE,[157] she is also the most important figure. On one of them[158] we find Persephone, represented as "the Queen of the chthonians" to whom the leaves of Thurii allude, enthroned by Hades and accepting the offers of an invisible donor – doubtless the deceased. On another one[159] Dionysus offers a jar of wine and a branch full of vine shoots to his mother Persephone. In these images Dionysus is the mediator who

[156] We refer to the images studied by Cabrera Bonet 1998. Of course, other works from the immense Dionysiac iconography are not incompatible with this world, like the amphora in Basel S 29 (from the same grave in which the one of Orpheus and the deceased holding a papyrus roll appeared, cf. Schmidt, Trendall, and Cambitoglou 1976: 6 and 35ff., tab. 8e, 10a), in which we find the miracle of the "automatic" wine (which recalls the "wine, happy privilege" of Pel. (D1–D2)). Or a crater from Tarentum 61.602 in which a woman welcomes a satyr into a *naiskos*, like the many symposiastic scenes which could allude to a banquet in the Afterlife, including those decorating the sarcophagus of Tuffatore (cf. Warland 1999). It is obviously difficult in these cases to prove an Orphic presence, but, given the absence of any information about a Dionysian Afterlife, it seems much more probable to relate them to the Orphic scope.

[157] Cf. Giangiulio 1994, Olmos 2001: 296–300.

[158] Reggio Calabria 21016 (V BCE med.), cf. Olmos 2001: 299–300, with bibliography.

[159] Reggio Calabria 58729 (V BCE med.), cf. Olmos 2001: 296–297, with bibliography. There are other exemplars, one of which was found precisely in Hipponion, cf. Giangiulio 1994: 33.

symbolically substitutes the suppliant initiate who arrives in the realm of the dead, when he presents himself before the god's mother.

Dionysus also acts as a divine mediator on an Apulian crater,[160] in which we see him taking Hades' hand before Hermes. Behind Dionysus one can see the characters of his escort, a maenad with her thyrsus and cymbal who dances with uncovered breasts. On the other side of the temple the condemned are alluded to through Acteon and Agave. The contents of the agreement are clear: initiates (*mystai*) in the mysteries of Dionysus will enjoy privileged treatment in the Underworld and will rest from their toils. Precisely the same contents are found in the Orphic leaves.

Orpheus, human mediator

Besides Dionysus, whom we have seen as divine mediator, we find a human mediator, Orpheus. Apulian pottery represents him repeatedly in Hades. It is clear that his presence there is not related to his search for Eurydice (who is never present, at least unambiguously), but rather to his role as protector of some souls upon their arrival in Hades. On an Apulian crater of the Munich Museum,[161] Orpheus, dressed in an Oriental way as a Thracian singer with his kithara, arrives at the palace of Hades and Persephone. One would say he wants to seduce the gods with his singing. After him come a man, a woman and a child. Though the role of these characters may be discussed, it is likely that it is a family of initiates. On that vase there are also many personifications and heroes: Dike (Justice) by Theseus and Pirithous; the judges of the Underworld, Aeacus, Minos and Rhadamanthys; the Erinyes; great sinners such as Sisyphus and Tantalus; Hermes Psychopompos; the dog Cerberus tamed by the liberator Heracles; the Danaids are also there, but Schmidt[162] has pointed out that they do not seem to work too hard, as if they were to be absolved soon from their job.

This great Apulian crater is a representation of the kingdom of justice and cosmic order, which punishes impious actions of the uninitiate. Queen Persephone and her husband preside in the realm of the Underworld.

A similar model is to be found on other Apulian craters, such as one from Matera and another from Carlsruhe.[163] On another from Naples[164] the same topics are repeated, but without the characteristic representation of a

[160] Preserved in the Art Museum of Toledo (Ohio) 340–330 BCE, cf. Johnston and McNiven 1996; Olmos 2001: 304–307.
[161] 3297 (IV BCE fin.), cf. Olmos 2001: 300–303 with bibliography. [162] M. Schmidt 1975: 123.
[163] Matera n. 336 (320 BCE); Carlsruhe B 4 (350–340 BCE). [164] SA 709 (330–310 BCE).

building. Orpheus arrives before Hades and Persephone and leads a woman with his hand. In the light of the other pieces, it seems clear that we must interpret that Orpheus is introducing a deceased to the gods of the Afterlife, rather than take her as Eurydice.

On another crater from Naples[165] we find Orpheus next to other persons and personifications such as Megara, Poinai, Sisyphus, Ananke, Hermes, Triptolemus, Aeacus, or Rhadamanthys. The presence of the Poinai is particularly interesting in the light of the importance of the concept of ποινή in the leaves and in other texts, Orphic or related to Orphism.[166]

We find a different type on a crater in the British Museum in London.[167] At the entry to Hades, marked by a Herm, are Orpheus and a young man. Orpheus leads Cerberus with a chain, since he has tamed him with his music, and thus assumes the function of a protector who defends the young man, undoubtedly an initiate, from the terrors of Hades.

Orpheus and texts

On an Apulian red-figure amphora attributed to the Ganymede Painter,[168] a white small temple or *naiskos* can be seen, very similar to the Palace of Persephone represented in other pieces: inside, a man seated on a portable chair receives Orpheus.[169] What is most interesting is that the deceased holds a papyrus roll in his hand. As to its contents, we cannot imagine anything better than a text of the type we find in the leaves. The image makes explicit the value of the text as trustee of the knowledge that Orpheus transmits to the initiates.

All these representations seem to confirm the hypothesis that the text of the leaves was thought to be by Orpheus, as would also be the papyrus which the deceased carries on an amphora in Basel, so that the Thracian bard would have been for the users of the leaves like a human mediator who, through initiation, explains the way which the souls must follow to attain salvation. The same idea is repeated in the many texts which attribute to Orpheus the foundation of τελεταί or express thoughts about the Afterlife related to them.[170]

[165] "Altamura" H 3222 (350–340 BCE).

[166] Cf. section entitled "The primordial guilt and the punishment" above. On Poinai, cf. Aellen 1994: n. 2, Lochin 1994: 422–423 (n. 1), Santamaría 2005.

[167] F 270, cf. M. Schmidt 1975: 120–122 and tab. XIV.

[168] From the Antikenmuseum of Basel, 540 (330–320 BCE), cf. Olmos 2001: 292–295 with bibliography.

[169] It is interesting that a chair with such features seems to have been represented on one of the bone leaves from Olbia, also within the scope of Orphism (cf. West 1983: 24).

[170] E.g. the aforementioned passages of Pl. *Resp*. 364e, Ps.-Dem. 2.5.11, Diod. Sic. 1.96.2–5, Procl. *In Ti*. 3.297.3 Diehl, Simpl. *in. Cael*. 377.12 Heiberg.

Nike and Dike

An interesting variant is offered by some fragments from Ruvo,[171] in which beside Persephone, Hekate and Orpheus, also Nike – opening a door – and Dike are represented. The door which Nike is opening seems to allow a deceased follower of Orpheus to go through to a better place, to his own triumph.

Nike and Dike are not expressly mentioned in the leaves, but their presence is totally consistent with an Orphic atmosphere and there are even allusions in the leaves which have much to do with this imagery, especially in relation to the idea of movement in and out.

In Thur. 488.5–6 (A1.5–6) the soul proclaims that she has freed herself from the painful cycle and that she has sprung with swift feet to the desired crown.[172] In Pher. (D3) the initiate, free from punishment, is invited to enter:

> Go into (εἴσιθ<ι>) the sacred meadow.

What sense could the Nike who opens the door have other than to symbolize the victory of the *mystes*?

On the other hand, as we have seen in the section 'Purity and justice' above, Justice (Dike) is a deity who is well known in Orphic scope. The combination in the same underworldly image of Orpheus, Justice and Victory cannot be accidental.

Reservations of Margot Schmidt

Margot Schmidt shows some resistance to accepting that this universe of underworldly Apulian pottery has something to do with that of the leaves, when she states:[173]

> The original inspiration of Afterlife images in Apulian art must be sought perhaps in religious-tainted epics, or rather, in religious poetry belonging to a specific cultural level. This poetic background needs not to have been specifically Orphic.

The presence of Orpheus on the amphora of the Ganymede Painter, however, lead this great scholar to say:

> One could suppose, however, that the figurative invention derived from these sources would have been reused also by sympathizers of certain Orphic ideas . . . in

[171] Antiqua collezione Fenizia (c. 350 BCE).

[172] Though the image of the crown in the leaves has multiple values: funerary, mystic, sympotic and triumphal crown at the same time. Cf. section entitled "The crown" above.

[173] M. Schmidt 1975: 129.

the representation of the new amphora of the Ganymede Painter ... we could have a case of "orphization" of a general prototype.

Both statements are dictated by two prejudices about Orphism which have no sense nowadays, since they have (or at least should have) been left behind:

(a) The leaves mirror a "popular religion" (cf. "a specific cultural level"). But it does not seem adequate to attribute the label of "popular" to a religion believed by persons who can pay for extremely expensive gold leaves, left in rich graves, and which seems to have been shared by the Sicilian tyrants who hired Pindar.
(b) That the verses in the leaves are a kind of sub-literature. Riedweg has made a very good case[174] to see behind them a *hieros logos*, which would no doubt belong to "religious-tainted epics," attributed to Orpheus and which is not necessarily a kind of sub-literature.

There is still a third equivocal point which must be cleared away. Schmidt reckons that the representation of the birth of Dionysus from Zeus' thigh which we find on Apulian vases is not Orphic, because the son of Semele is not Orphic.[175] Bernabé, however, has proved that this subject was treated in the *Rhapsodies* and probably even before, as is reflected in his edition.[176]

Recapitulation of Apulian iconography

We have seen that the basic features of the Afterlife represented in Apulian iconography form a conceptual universe which is practically identical to that presented by the leaves and other textual Orphic fragments:

(a) The Underworld is a subterranean and dark place, although there are buildings in it.
(b) It is presided over by Persephone, a welcoming and kind goddess, accompanied by Hades.
(c) It is a dual space, with rewards for the initiates and punishments for the profane.
(d) For the punishments, the painters choose as paradigms the punishments of the most recognizable sinners of the mythical tradition, like Sisyphus, Ixion, or the Danaids. The agents of punishment are the Erinyes and the Furies.

[174] Riedweg 2002, cf. section on 'Reconstruction of a *hieros logos*' above. [175] M. Schmidt 1975: 133.
[176] Bernabé 1998a, *OF* 327–328. Also Rudhardt 2002 made a convincing case for the presence of Semele in the *Orphic Hymns*.

(e) The prizes are related to the idea of closeness to the divine and are symbolized by the presence of mediators.
(f) There is a divine mediator, Dionysus, and a human one, Orpheus (represented in the boundary of the palace and the rest of the space, sometimes with the believer).
(g) The text is sometimes represented as the material bearer of Orphic revelation.
(h) The personification of Dike alludes to the need that the initiate has to respect justice, and to the fact that it is she who gives each one the reward he is worthy of. The personification of Victory means the triumph obtained in the Afterlife in the form of a privileged status.
(i) The presence of Orpheus in pottery, especially in the case of the Basel amphora, where he appears facing an initiate who carries a text, reinforces considerably the hypothesis that the text of the leaves was attributed to Orpheus.

The only possible doubt is whether we can call Orphic that religious *continuum* we have reconstructed, and which would possibly present some small differences from one place to another. But is is evident that if we do not call it Orphic, the explanation becomes far more complicated. Which other movement could we reconstruct that united Persephone and Dionysus, that had Orpheus as mediator, that used sacred texts, that presented an Afterlife of punishment and reward? It seems easier to think that the texts which served as source for the painters were those used in τελεταί which included representations of the sacred mystery in the form of κατάβασις in a kind of *imitatio mortis* which would prepare the believer for the great experience.

The reasons for the disagreements, not too many in any case, between texts and iconographic representations must be sought in the particular nature of both media, one discursive, the other visual, which would oblige the painter to represent, condensed in a single scene, what the texts would allude to in diverse episodes, and to visualize some concepts which were difficult to move to iconography.

CONCLUSION

Many different arguments have been put forward: the features of the supposed author, the geographical distribution of the leaves, the references to initiation, whose association with doctrinal knowledge leads us to call it Orphic, the phraseology, symbols, and details which other texts link to Orphism, the *hieros logos* from which they seem to proceed, the

identification of purity and justice, the relation of Persephone and Dionysus, plus the idea of liberation from a cycle and the coincidences with the Southern Italian iconography that features Orpheus. All these arguments form a mass of evidence which can neither be associated with any other known religious movement, nor be arbitrarily segmented. On the contrary, it agrees perfectly with the image that we have nowadays of Ophism. The evident conclusion which arises from all these considerations is that the gold leaves can only be Orphic.

CHAPTER 5

"A child of Earth am I and of starry Heaven"
Concerning the anthropology of the Orphic gold tablets

Hans Dieter Betz

It was Walter Burkert who first alerted me to the importance of the Orphic gold tablets many years ago in California – one of the many stimulating ideas for which I have to thank him. Since then, the relevance of these gold tablets for the understanding of Greek religion – those that were known then, as well as those added since – has increased to a degree which would have been unimaginable. The story of the discovery of these texts remains to be written. It is probably too early for a critical, annotated edition, as things are still very much in flux.[1] Instead, we are eagerly awaiting new discoveries. But Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff's laconic comment from 1922 nevertheless still holds true: "This is all very strange."[2] This statement doesn't apply just to the classicist, but just as much to the expert in the New Testament, who finds many points of reference in these gold tablets that haven't yet been thoroughly researched. Burkert himself mentions that "the system of traditional Greek religion is being opened up by mysteries"[3] in these texts, revealing "a deeper level of universal religious devotion."[4]

THE ESOTERICISM OF THE INSCRIPTIONS

For several reasons, the inscriptions on the gold tablets carry great importance for Greek religion.[5] These inscriptions are among the few first-hand

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[1] The older texts will be quoted according to Zuntz 1971; cf. Burkert 1974. Translations are by the author [Betz] unless otherwise noted. The publication information for the tablets found later will be noted in the respective footnotes.

[2] Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1932: 200–201. [3] Burkert 1977a: 440. [4] Ibid. 432.

[5] The parallels in Egyptian religion have already been pointed out by Zuntz 1971: 370–376. See also the general description in Hornung 1989: 11: "Without precise knowledge of the next world, there is no secure way to find it. For the Egyptians, the blessed departed who comes through the journey unharmed, is 'a transfigured one (*Ach*) who knows his saying'. Among his tools are not only grave,

testimonials telling us about the religious experiences and expectations of an ancient cult of mysteries. The testimonials were not meant for a future reader, but were put into the graves of initiated *mystai* as secret memoranda. An absolute minimum of knowledge,[6] without which the road to Elysium could not be found, was inscribed on these pieces of gold foil. This makes them *esoteric* inscriptions, in other words, different from the *exoteric* grave inscriptions aimed at the passing visitor (although they show revealing similarities). Those inscriptions meant for the public, as they often emphasize themselves, also strive to impart basic wisdoms about life and death. In that context, some of them contain hints of the initiation into the mysteries, but without giving away the secret rituals.[7]

However, the *esoteric* inscriptions on the gold tablets were not only meant as a guide through the Netherworld, but they also contain strange formulaic sentences which were familiar to the initiate, and which he was supposed to recite on certain specific and prescribed occasions.

THE SELF-PRESENTATION OF THE INITIATE

Let's take one of these sentences that are so hard to understand for us today, and try to extricate its layers of meaning. It's the well-known "formula of self-presentation":[8]

> Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος
>
> A child of Earth am I and of starry Heaven.[9]

Before we turn to the formula's meaning, I would like to mention a few things about its form and context. As observed correctly by Zuntz, its formal style is a self-presentation, delivered in the context of a dialogue. This dialogue, in turn, is woven into the context of a story which follows from the initiate's expectation of a walk through the Netherworld. This expectation can be reconstructed, at least in part, from the gold tablets as well as from literary texts.

The comparatively strong variability of the texts, even within the similar types developed by Zuntz, excludes the possibility of a fixed written source text and its variations. It can be considered likely that the texts have a close

mummy, statue, and offerings, but also a store of sayings allowing him to get through any critical situation: sayings that teach him about all the beings and places he encounters, as well as others which ward off danger by the magical power of their words."

[6] Burkert 1977a: 437, speaks of "knowledge and certainty"; see also Burkert 1990: 65, in reference to the self-image of the initiate: "it presupposes a 'knowledge' of his origin which is not accessible to an ordinary human being". For the secret knowledge of the mysteries in general see Burkert 1995.

[7] The following inscriptions in Peek's edition suggest an initiation of the respective person into a cult of mysteries: nos. 208, 210, 250, 255, 266, 278, 287, 304, 306, 450, 451.

[8] Zuntz 1971: 364. [9] The translation tries to keep to the chiastic structure.

relationship to rituals, with some sentences being quotations from those rituals.[10] But the texts as such do not leave the impression of being what is usually considered liturgical material. On the other hand, even given their variability, these texts, with their very different geographical and historical backgrounds, also show an astonishing amount of correspondence. These similarities cannot be explained by a direct literary dependence, but have more to do with a presumed and implied mythological and ritual frame of reference which probably has its roots primarily outside of the gold tablets, in originally oral traditions that were only later written down. If today those texts therefore leave the impression of being a compilation of quotes, the initiates of the past were probably in a position, based on their knowledge of the whole mythological and ritual frame of reference, to establish the connections between the various quotes. If this is true, the contemporary researcher can only try cautiously to bring the different texts into relationship with one another and to let them complement each other.

All of the surviving gold tablets tell of a journey through the Netherworld. The initiates – the men as well as the women[11] – expect to be transferred there after their earthly demise, where they must not miss the path to Elysium. They are helped in this task by information about the geography of the Netherworld which I won't discuss here in any detail.[12]

The fact that the gold tablet was put into the grave of the deceased presupposes that forgetting was a main obstacle on the path to Elysium. In that sense forgetting is the real death, the death within death.[13] The gold

[10] In accordance with Burkert 1974: 327. See also the parallels observed by Hornung 1989: 14. In the *Pyramid Texts* § 890 (24th/23rd cent. BCE), it says of the deceased king: "He does not belong to the earth, he belongs in the sky." In the *Coffin Texts* (21st cent. BCE), the deceased is being taken in by Nut, the goddess of heaven, as "son" and as Osiris.

[11] The gold tablets do not always differentiate between men and women. They speak of the person presenting him or herself as "son" (υἱός), "daughter" (θυγάτηρ), or unspecified as "child" (παῖς). See the compilation of the material in Graf 1993, especially 257f. It seems as if women could be included in υἱός, a use of language which can later be found in Paul: those that have been saved are being addressed with the traditional eschatological title of "sons of God," which includes women (see especially Galatians 3: 26–28). However, this is broadened in the adaptation of the prophecy of 2 Samuel 7:8 LXX in Second Corinthians 6:18 to the expression: "you will become my sons and daughters" (καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μοι εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας). See also Betz 1995: 140–142.

[12] See the overviews in Graf 1974: 79–150 and C. Colpe *et al.*, "Jenseits (Jenseitsvorstellungen)," *RAC* 17 (1994): 246–407, esp. 268–282.

[13] Zuntz 1971: 380, finds impressive words to describe this:

> Why, then, is the dead expected to long for a drink of "Remembering" and is warned against "Forgetting"? Death is Forgetting. The dead enter another world beyond our comprehension and beyond our reach; they forget – forget us, and all. This is true with Homer and Plato and a thousand others; because, simply, it is true. Cutting the connection between us and them – wherever, howsoever, they may be; however much we may remember them – death is, in essence, forgetting; their forgetting. And not forgetting would be not-death. To seek the drink of "Memory" is to seek Life.

tablet thus helps to negotiate the most dangerous part of the journey to the fountain of memory,[14] whose waters are fed by a lake and where a cool drink will refresh the wanderer. But the spring is watched over by guardians (φύλακες) who stop the travelers and question them. While the guardians are only simply mentioned in some of the texts, the dialogue to be expected according to the B type[15] can be found on the tablet from Hipponion:[16] "They will ask you cleverly: 'What are you seeking here in the misty shadow of Hades?'"[17]

When confronted by these guardians, the initiate was supposed to identify himself by the words of the formula of self-presentation and ask for a cool drink, which the guardians will grant mercifully, as something due a king of the underworld.[18] Then he would be able to continue on his holy path together with the other bacchics,[19] having been promised according to the Pelinna text[20] that it would lead to an eschatological gathering with the blessed.[21]

So what exactly are we dealing with in terms of this formula of self-presentation? It is certainly more than a formula which, once having been recited, magically opens up the path to Elysium. Instead it must represent a carefully formulated self-definition of the initiate – reminding us of certain grave epigrams – which also entails claims of a philosophical nature. The exact opposite would be grave inscriptions which seem to have been influenced by the doctrines of pessimism and Epicureanism.[22]

[14] For this see esp. the Hipponion text (cf. n. 16 below). Compare epitaph no. 306 Peek: καὶ Λήθης οὐκ ἔπιον λιβάδα ("and I have not tasted from the waters of Lethe"). This inscription combines the mysteries of Osiris at Abydos with Greek conceptions of the beyond. The stele probably originated in Alexandria (2nd cent. CE).

[15] B1; B2 Zuntz (1971: 358f., 363, 368–370).

[16] For the text and a discussion of the Hipponion gold tablet see Foti and Pugliese Carratelli 1974; Merkelbach 1975; West 1975; Zuntz 1976; Marcovich 1976; Luppe 1978.

[17] Lines 8–10 (text after Marcovich): φύλακες δ(ὲ) ἐπ' ὕπερθεν ἔασι<ν>. [h]οἱ δέ σε εἰρήσονται ἐν‹ὶ› φρασὶ πευκαλίμαισι ὅτ‹τ›ι δὴ ἐξερέεις Ἄϊδος σκότος οὐλοέεντος.

[18] Compare Marcovich 1976: 224: "I think Merkelbach is right when reading as printed and writing, 'Apparently the deceased has been elevated to ὑποχθόνιος βασιλεύς'".

[19] Lines 16–17 (Marcovich): καὶ δὴ καὶ συχνῶν ὁοδὸν ἔρχεα‹ι›ς ἁάν τε καὶ ἄλλοι μύσται καὶ βάκχοι ιερὰν στείχουσι κλε‹ε›ινοί.

[20] For this text, compare Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987; Merkelbach 1989; Luppe 1989; Graf 1993.

[21] Line 7 (text after Luppe): κἀπιμενεῖ σ' ὑπὸ γῆν τέλεα ἅσ<σ>απερ ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι. Compare also B10.15f (see above, n. 16). Merkelbach (1989: 16) directs attention to Pindar, fr.133 Maehler (ap. Plt. *Men*. 81 b-c), according to whom the after-life is about being together with the heroes. There are other texts that speak of being with the heroes, among them the epitaphs 209, 250, 255, 266, 287, 304, 306, 450, 451 Peek. Plt. *Phd*. 115d has Socrates say this about his existence in the after-life: οἰχήσομαι ἀπιὼν εἰς μακάρων δή τινας εὐδαιμονίας.

[22] Such influences are represented by some epitaphs with self-presentations that are diametrically opposed to those on the gold tablets. Cf., for example, the epigram on a *herma* from Rome (Pfohl ²1980, no. 31): οὐκ ἐγενόμην· ἤμην, οὐκ εἰμί τοσαῦτα. εἰ δέ τις ἄλλο ἐρεῖ, ψεύσεται· οὐκ

REGARDING THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE SELF-DEFINITION

Even though the deceased identifies him- or herself with this formula as an initiate (μύστης),[23] the question of the actual content of this self-designation remains controversial. It comprises several anthropological aspects, held in tension by "ands" (καὶ). On the one hand, the initiates see themselves as composite beings, as children of Mother Earth and as descendants of Heaven. In other words, they understand themselves as partly mortal, partly divine.[24] It is obvious from text B1 in Zuntz that this connection is full of tension, when line 7 shows an important addition to the formula from line 6: "But my race is heavenly; and this you know yourselves."[25]

On the other hand, the word sequence of the formula points to a historical-mythological aspect: In the beginning, there are Mother Earth and the paternal Heaven, originating the human child which is aware of its individuality. The final word refers to the stars – a place where the initiates not only come from, but are also headed for, turning into stars themselves.[26] Thus the initiates representing themselves with this formula are not only composite but also historical beings. On that level, the formula is a brief summary of the origin of man, while leaving important questions open to further interpretation.

1. How are the initiates being defined? As human or divine? The answer to that remains disputed.

ἔσομαι. ("I was not, [then] I was, [now] I am not [any longer]. That is how it is. If somebody says otherwise, he is lying. I will not be.") Compare also nos. 453, 480 Peek: ἐντεῦθεν οὐθεὶς ἀποθανὼν ἐγείρεται ("No one who is dead can be awakened from here"). Similar declarations can be found in Latin inscriptions, see H. Geist and G. Pfohl 1969, no. 433: *Non fueram, non sum, nescio; non ad me pertin(et)* ("I had not been, am not [any more], I know nothing; it does not relate to me"). No. 434: *n(on) f(ui), n(on) s(um), n(on) c(uro)*. ("I have not been, I am not [any more], I do not care [about it]"). No. 435: *Nil fui, nil sum; et tu, qui vivis, es bibe lude veni* (" I have not been, I am not [any more]; but you who live, eat, drink, play, [then] come"). For the interpretation cf. No. 442: *Nihil sumus et fuimus mortales. Respice, lector: in nihil ab nihilo quam cito recidimus* ("We are nothing and were [mere] mortals. Bear in mind, reader: we fall back from nothing into nothing in the shortest of time"). All translations by the author.

[23] This term can be found in the Hipponion text (B10.16) μύσται καὶ βάκχοι and on gold tablets from Thessaly. Cf. Graf 1993: 246f.; Dickie 1995.

[24] Compare the strange inscription on a stele from Eretria (3rd cent. BCE), no. 220 Peek. It says there: εἰ θεὸς ἐσθ' ἡ γῆ, κἀγὼ θεός εἰμι δικαίως· ἐκ γῆς γὰρ βλαστὼν γενόμην νεκρός, ἐκ δὲ νεκροῦ γῆ ("If Earth is a god, then I am rightfully called a god, too. Because having sprouted from Earth, I have become a corpse and from that corpse Earth again").

[25] B1 Zuntz, 7 (1971: 359): αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον· τόδε δ' ἴστε καὶ αὐτοί.

[26] Indicated also by the name Asterios in B2 Zuntz 7f. (cf. Zuntz 1971, 360f., 367).

Günther Zuntz, in his fundamental work *Persephone* (published 1971), denied a connection of the gold tablets to the Orphic-Dionysiac mysteries, instead assigning them to the philosophy of Pythagoras (in this, following his teacher Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff). Accordingly, he considers the formula of self-presentation as a philosophical definition of man.

Zuntz's interpretation refutes earlier ones which held that the deceased initiate defined himself as a divine. This interpretation is based on the definition of the Immortals as children of Gaia and Uranos in Hesiod's *Theogony*:

> οἳ Γῆς τ' ἐξεγένοντο καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος
>
> Those descended from Earth, and from starry Heaven.[27]

Based on a critical examination of the Hesiodic passage and others, Zuntz thinks he can state that they do not speak of humans[28] but of gods, and it is exactly this which also argues against a connection between Orphism and the gold tablets: "The claimant at the gates of Hades is neither a Titan nor a god but – a man."[29] Zuntz then considers the self-definition of Oedipus in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*.[30] According to Zuntz, in contrast to Sophocles' Oedipus, the departed as described in the gold tablets does not define himself as a son of the Earth in the sense of being made of flesh and bones, but he is aware of another, divine aspect of his persona. Consequently, the essence of being human is this combination of earthly and heavenly parts. This is what the deceased confesses to in front of the guardians of the Netherworld, and this opens the way to a higher existence after death because he has fulfilled the "dual potentiality" of man.[31]

[27] *Theog.* 106, cf. 45, 154, 421.

[28] Zuntz (1971: 365) emphasizes that the Greek myths did not teach a descent of man from Uranos and Gaia: "But many and various as they are, none presents mankind as the offspring of Uranos and Gaia; this primordial couple is, reasonably, the origin of the principal cosmic realities and of the oldest deities but not of man."

[29] Ibid. 364.

[30] Ibid. 365, *OT* 1080. ἐγὼ δ' ἐμαυτὸν παῖδα τῆς Τύχης νέμων τῆς εὖ διδούσης οὐκ ἀτιμασθήσομαι "But I, who hold myself son of Fortune that gives good, will not be dishonored." [[Zuntz here misquotes, without citation, the closing lines of Hölderlin's *Heimat*: "Ein Sohn der Erde bin ich; zu lieben gemacht, zu leiden" (the original has "schein' ich").]]

[31] Ibid. 366: "it is not flesh and bones only that make him a son of the Earth. And he is aware of another, the heavenly element in his person; it is the unity of the two which constitutes the essence of man. This he proclaims before the infernal guardians, and the way to a higher after-life is opened up for him who has fulfilled this, man's dual potentiality."

Zuntz consistently connects this philosophical interpretation with Pindar, Empedokles, and finally Pythagoras, thereby seeing his main thesis confirmed again, according to which the gold tablets mirror old-Pythagorean religion,[32] but not anything Orphic or Dionysiac.[33]

Zuntz is inclined to trace this definition back to Pythagoras himself, who described the journey of the dead to the Netherworld using a folktale popular during his time, and included a magic formula as a central part, namely the definition of man. Poetically elaborated, this tale then became part of Pythagorean funeral traditions.[34]

As already mentioned, Zuntz's interpretation refutes the opinions of Albrecht Dieterich, Erwin Rohde, and W. K. C. Guthrie.[35] Dieterich wants to see the gold tablets as connected to the Orphic–Dionysiac books of Hades which circulated among disciples of Pythagoras in Southern Italy.[36] Pythagoras had already encountered "the Orphic-Dionysiac mysteries and their prophets" in his Ionian homeland. These had spread further in the "Pythagorean-Orphic-Bacchic communities and mysteries" of Southern Italy.[37] Impressed by the parallels to Orphic hymns, which had been the subject of his dissertation, Dieterich considered the gold tablets in part to be quotations from underlying hymns. He also saw the doctrine of the transmigration of souls reflected in them.[38] This, in turn, was reflected in the self-definition of the initiate: "The initiate prides himself on being of divine, heavenly descent and calls himself a child of Uranos and Ge."[39] He connects this doctrine with the other one about "Ge as 'mother of the blessed gods and of mortal man', as she is called upon in the Orphic hymns".[40] Dieterich does allow for changes in the Orphic teachings as they became more widespread, but he emphasizes the "continuity of tradition in these Orphic communities from the 4th century BCE to the 2nd century CE."[41] He thinks that the texts have been taken from larger contexts. "The journey of the dead to Hades was described in a poem, in an Orphic-Pythagorean κατάβασις εἰς Ἅιδου. The formulas which the blessed one has to know upon entering Hades, in order to partake in the Water of Life and gain admission to Elysium, are put into the grave with him, for many centuries

[32] Ibid. 366: "Thus, unqualified, the verse stands on the Cretan leaves; this is the confession which 'opens the gates of hell,' and if it is accepted that the Gold Leaves are Pythagorean, here is a piece of old-Pythagorean religion."

[33] Cf. ibid. 336f., 383f. [34] Ibid. 383–385.

[35] Zuntz only learned of Guthrie through E. R. Dodds; see Zuntz's remark ibid. 366, n. 3.

[36] Dieterich 1913: 84–108. The first edition of this work was published in 1893; after Dieterich's death in 1908, the second edition was published by his student Richard Wünsch.

[37] Ibid. 84. [38] Ibid. 88–100. [39] Ibid. 100.

[40] Ibid. 100–101, with reference to *Hymn. Orph.* 31.1; 4.1. [41] Ibid. 108.

in the same way. Without doubt, these formulas first were contained in a *nekyia* in Southern Italy."[42]

Erwin Rohde's monumental work *Psyche* drew these lines out further.[43] According to Rohde, the inscriptions on the gold tablets come from an "Orphic mysticism mixed with alien elements". On them, "the soul of the deceased" addresses "the Queen of the Underworld and the other gods of the deep (. . .)."[44] "Thus, it belongs to a mortal who has been 'cleansed' by the holy rites of a ritual community, like his parents before him. It prides itself on descending from the divine race of subterranean gods."[45] But now it has left the circle of birth, and it is this redeemed soul that is being praised.[46] In other words, it is neither a human nor a divine being, but the redeemed soul which presents itself to Persephone and receives this promise: "Praised be you as happy and blessed, now that you will be a god instead of a mortal."[47]

It is generally known that Wilamowitz-Moellendorff took a very negative view of these opinions. For him, the gold tablets have nothing to do with Orphism, and looking for alternatives, he assumes: "This is hardly Greek." Apparently, Wilamowitz is thinking of a syncretistic cult: the thirst for fresh water points to Egypt. As it is known from there, "the deceased claims to be a son of heaven and earth. In a longer poem, he is being accepted among the heroes after he has drunk (Petelia 32a Kern); later, this is stepped up to deification."[48]

In his work *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, W. K. C. Guthrie did not align himself with Wilamowitz and Zuntz.[49] Guthrie points out that there is a tension in the self-definition: the deceased does claim divine descent, but the two statements "son of Earth" and "son of Heaven" do not fit together smoothly.[50] For Guthrie, this tension is connected to the myth of the Titans. The Orphic knows of the Titanic part of his human existence, of the evil in him. Therefore he emphasizes the divine, Dionysiac part of his being when he affirms: "But my real lineage is of heaven."[51]

[42] Ibid. [43] Rohde 1898: vol. II, 103–136, 204–222. [44] Ibid. 217. [45] Ibid. 218. [46] Ibid. 219.
[47] Ibid. [48] Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1931–32: II 200. [49] Guthrie 1952.
[50] Ibid. 174: "The two halves of this confession do not fit very well together, and may have been taken from different poems; but it is easy to see that there can have been a clear purpose in the minds of those who wrote them down together for the use of the dead man."
[51] Ibid.:

> The Orphic knows, however, that although the Titans had Ouranos for their father, they were a wicked and rebellious race, and that it is only owing to their crime, which secured that he should have something of the Dionysiac nature in him too, that he can base any claims to divinity in his relationship with him. Consequently it is on that Dionysiac nature that he insists – "But my real lineage is of heaven." This he could boast if he had lived the Orphic life and so quelled the Titanic and cherished the Dionysiac side of his nature.

This controversy was decisively settled by the discovery of more gold tablets, especially the one from Hipponion.[52] We find the self-definition on them, too, but in a new variant (line 10).

Ὑὸς Βαρέας καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος

the son of the Heavy One (i.e., Earth) am I and starry Heaven[53]

Really revolutionary, however, was the fact that in line 16, the person introduced[54] was being included among the μύσται καὶ βάκχοι, that is among the initiates of the cult of Dionysos. It has been confirmed by other finds that this connection to the Bacchic mysteries was no accident. And since the names "Dio(nysos)" and "Orphic(?)" have surfaced on the bone tablets from Olbia, the Orphics are back in play, too.[55]

2. Another question deals with the subject in (ἐγώ) εἰμι: What is being defined here, an earthly-human or a divine soul (ψυχή)?

This question cannot be answered clearly. ψυχαί are mentioned in the Hipponion text, but they are the dead souls of the non-initiated, cooling themselves at the first spring of dark water, which the initiate is supposed to avoid. Are we allowed to conjecture with Zuntz that these souls drink from the fountain of Lethe and return to the world above?[56] The gold tablets do not say. It doesn't help much, either, that the word ψυχή can be found on one of the bone tablets from Olbia, as the context is missing.[57] May we agree with Burkert when he writes cautiously: "The Bacchic gold tablets seem to presuppose a peregrination of the soul without expressly saying so"?[58] Or could we be dealing with an older anthropology which hasn't yet developed a Platonic dualism of mortal body and immortal soul?[59] It is remarkable that the deceased initiates do not introduce themselves in the after-life simply as souls who have left their bodies behind on Earth, but as men and women, some of them even with their

[52] B10; cf. n. 16.

[53] [[Betz here follows the reading of Pugliese Carratelli, which has been superseded in more recent editions.]]

[54] The deceased was a woman, see n. 11. [55] See West 1983: 17–20 and pl. 1. [56] Zuntz 1971: 380f.

[57] West 1983: 19. [58] Burkert 1990: 74 with n. 131.

[59] Cf. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1931–32: II 184f.:

> It is an irrefutable conclusion that the creation and naming of a judge of the dead has occurred in several places simultaneously. . . . Those judges co-existed when Plato wrote his *Apologia* and *Gorgias*, because in those works he doesn't know yet of the Pythagorean peregrination of the soul, but he introduces the concept that the souls will be judged after they have been freed from the body. This must mean that the judgment of the dead originated in places where the whole person went to Hades, which could mean Greece or whatever place it was where the belief in heroes, based on a continued material existence of the dead, started.

names. But in *Phaedo* it is precisely the argument of the Platonic Socrates that a belief in the after-life cannot be sustained against the objections of his friends without a corresponding belief in the immortality of the soul. This would allow the conclusion that the tenets of the mystery cults discussed in the dialogue regarding the after-life originally did not contain the Platonic idea of the immortality of the soul. The conclusion is obvious: When Crito asks him for directions about his burial, Socrates tells him to do as he thinks appropriate. He thinks it regrettable that Crito still assumes that the Socrates who has this talk with him would be the same person he will see shortly as a corpse, and whom he will want to bury. Crito should feel free to bury "him" if "he" hasn't escaped already. His "I" might have already gone to the other world with his soul, thus not being present at the burial at all; therefore, it would be impossible for Crito to bury "him" (*Phd*. 115c).

This brings up the question whether before Plato the ideas about the soul were rather disparate, allowing for different interpretations, with the idea of an immortal soul becoming a general tenet of Greek religion only through the teachings of Plato.[60] There are several other considerations supporting this possibility:

The Orphic tenets contained on the gold tablets stand in a certain opposition to the Delphic maxim "Know yourself" (γνῶθι σαυτόν), which is so crucial for the Platonic idea of the soul.[61] We do not find this maxim on the gold tablets, and we would hardly expect to do so. The Orphic self-presentation recognizes self-knowledge to be a fundamental task of being human, but it denies the assumption that it is possible for humans to decide for themselves who they are. Instead the *mystes* is told in his initiation who he is. He then incorporates this assignment into his self-presentation and repeats it in the Netherworld, after the gold tablet has refreshed his memory of it.

In addition, we have to take into account the idea of reincarnation, which is closely connected to the initiation rite. On the gold tablets from Pelinna "the actual death is conceived as a birth, the beginning of a new existence;

[60] See Baltes 1988. P. Kingsley traced the pre-Platonic mythology assumed in *Phaedo* back to Sicily (1995: 88–95: "The *Phaedo* myth: The sources"). An epitaph from Phrygia (2nd/3rd cent. CE) may be used as an example of the Hellenistic belief in the soul, no. 250 Peek: οὔνομα μοι Μενέλαος· ἀτὰρ δέμας ἐνθάδε κεῖται· ψυχὴ δ' ἀθανάτων αἰθέρα ναιετάει ("My name is Menelaos. But only my body rests here, my soul is in heaven with the immortals"). Translation by the author.

[61] For the Delphic maxim, see my articles "The Delphic maxim ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΑΥΤΟΝ in hermetic interpretation," in Betz 1990a: 92–111 (first published in *HThR* 63, 1970, 465–484) and Betz 1990b "The Delphic maxim 'Know yourself' in the Greek magical papyri", ibid. 156–172 (first published in *History of Religions* 21, 1981, 156–171).

the end is connected to the beginning, as Pindar said already."[62] The Pelinna tablets start out by addressing the deceased:

> νῦν ἔθανες καὶ νῦν ἐγένου, τρισόλβιε, ἄματι τῶιδε.
>
> Now you have died and now you have been born, thrice blessed one, on this day.[63]

We have to imagine that the deceased herself reads these words from the gold tablet, in the sense of reassuring herself about what has just happened to her.[64] The phrasing obviously speaks against a continuity like the one assumed in the Platonic idea of the soul. The description of the Orphic doctrine in Plato's *Meno* (for which Pindar is named as the source) is also strangely ambivalent. According to it, "they say that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time comes to an end, which is called dying, and at another is born again, but never perishes. Consequently one ought to live all one's life in the utmost holiness."[65] The immortality of the soul corresponds to the teachings of Pindar and Plato, while ending and new beginning show a direct parallel to the Pelinna text. Could it be that an older Orphic idea of the soul is being superseded by a more recent Platonic one?[66]

SOTERIOLOGY AND ESCHATOLOGY

It is one aspect of the self-conception of the initiates that they do not see themselves as blank slates. The gold tablets contain various allusions to past transgressions. This leads to the question of what kind of mistakes have been made, and what could their importance be for the idea of man?

At this point, the dialogue found on tablet A1 Zuntz must be mentioned first. From the context, it is possible to learn the following connections: At the end of his journey through the Netherworld, the initiate comes across the goddess Persephone.[67] There is a self-presentation here, too, but it is

[62] Burkert 1990: 85, with reference to Pind. fr. 137 Maehler.

[63] Translation by Burkert 1990: 28.

[64] Cf. the call for joy in Luke 6:23, where it also says: "on this day" (ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ); for an interpretation see Betz 1995: 582f. In Matthew's Sermon on the Mount, one doesn't come across the expression "on this day" in the Beatitudes, but in the judgment scene Matt. 7:21–23 in connection with the damnation (cf. ibid. 549).

[65] *Men*. 81b: φασὶ γὰρ τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι ἀθάνατον, καὶ τοτὲ μὲν τελευτᾶν – ὃ δὴ ἀποθνήσκειν καλοῦσι – τοτὲ δὲ πάλιν γίγνεσθαι, ἀπόλλυσθαι δ' οὐδέποτε· δεῖν δὴ διὰ ταῦτα ὡς ὁσιώτατα διαβιῶναι τὸν βίον· κτλ.

[66] Cf. the deliberations of Lloyd-Jones 1985: esp. 101, who assumes the existence of fundamentally different souls: "The tablets, which are designed simply to help the soul of the initiate to present his credentials, distinguish the common souls who drink of the fountain of forgetfulness from the souls of the initiates who drink at the fountain of memory; but they give no notion of the existence of the special third category whom Pindar places in the Islands of the Blest."

[67] Cf. the mentioning of encounters with Persephone in the epitaphs nos. 208, 210, 266 Peek.

phrased differently from type B of the gold tablets[68] when the initiate addresses the goddess as follows:[69]

> Ἔρχομαι ἐκ κοθαρῶν κοθαρά, χθονίων βασίλεια,
> Εὐκλῆς Εὐβουλεύς τε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι·
> καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμῶν γένος ὄλβιον εὔχομαι εἶμεν.
>
> Pure I come from the pure, Queen of those below the earth,
> and Eukles and Eubouleus and the other immortal gods;
> for I also claim that I am of your blessed race.

But this purity is not merely an incidental feature of the self-presentation. The initiate gives the goddess hints of how he was saved through his own deeds. He escaped from the yoke of Moira, from the cycle of life and death, fleeing to the bosom of the goddess:

> ἀλλά με Μοῖρ᾽ ἐδάμασσε {καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι} καὶ
> ἀστεροβλῆτα κεραυνῶι.
> κύκλου δ᾽ ἐξέπταν βαρυπενθέος ἀργαλέοιο,
> ἱμερτοῦ δ᾽ ἐπέβαν στεφάνου ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι,
> δεσποίνας δ᾽ ὑπὸ κόλπον ἔδυν χθονίας βασιλείας·
>
> But Fate mastered me and the Thunderer, striking with his lightning.
> I flew out of the circle of wearying heavy grief;
> I came on with swift feet to the desired crown;
> I passed beneath the bosom of the Mistress, Queen of the Underworld,
> . . .[70]

In the texts A2, A3.4 the initiate tells that he has done penance:

> ποινὰν δ᾽ ἀνταπέτεισ᾽ ἔργων ἕνεκα οὔτι δικαίων.
>
> Recompense I have paid on account of deeds not just;[71]

Are we dealing here with a personal misconduct of the initiate, or is it the settling, through payment of penalties, of the "ancient cause of grief" that Pindar and Plato talk about? Herbert J. Rose was probably right when he points to the mythical death of Dionysos by the hands of the Titans.[72] According to Plato and Dio Chrysostom, this debt is settled once death has delivered the initiate, after a virtuous life, from the punishment of his soul

[68] This self-presentation is reminiscent of the assertions of innocence found in other mystery texts and even in the Sermon on the Mount. See Betz 1995: 543–556 (for Matt. 7:21–23), with further references.
[69] For text and commentary see Zuntz 1971: 304–308.
[70] A1. 4–7 Zuntz (1971: 301). [71] A2; A3. 4 Zuntz (1971: 303–305).
[72] Plato, *Phdr*. 265b. 244d–e; Pind. fr. 133 Maehler; cf. Rose 1936; Burkert 1977a: 435, 442f.; Graf 1993: 244f.

being imprisoned in his body.[73] Persephone, the mother of murdered Dionysos, then offers this *makarismos*[74] to the initiate:

> ὄλβιε καὶ μακαριστέ, θεὸς δ' ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο.
>
> Happy and most blessed one, a god you shall be instead of a mortal.[75]

It says on the gold tablet that these will be the words of the goddess. Though what she proclaims is not really a promise, but the confirmation of a decision[76] which will lead to the induction of the initiate among the immortals and heroes (B1.11). This decision follows upon the initiate's request for validation, contained in text A2.6f.:[77]

> νῦν δ' ἱκέτης ἥκω παρ' ἁγνὴν Φερσεφόνειαν,
> ὥς με πρόφρων πέμψηι ἕδρας ἐς εὐαγέων.
>
> Now I come, a suppliant, to holy Phersephoneia,
> that she, gracious, may send me to the seats of the blessed.

Text A4.5f. tells of the next step:[78]

> χαῖρ‹ε› χαῖρε· δεξιὰν ὁδοιπόρ‹ει›
> λειμῶνάς θ' ἱεροὺς καὶ ἄλσεα Φερσεφονείας.
>
> Hail, hail; making your way to the right,
> the sacred meadows and groves of Phersephoneia.

We have to assume that the initiates knew about this decision already before their deaths, or it would not have been put into their graves in order to remind them. They must have learned of the *makarismos* while they were still alive, so that the decision of the goddess only represents the redemption of a promise given earlier.[79]

[73] This is how Plato interprets the myth; for him, the philosophical life brings about the cleansing of the souls (*Leg*. 3.702c; *Cra*. 400b–c; *Phd*. 62b, 66b–69e, 70c–73a, 81a; *Ep*. 7.335a. Dio Chr. 30.10–24 describes this interpretation at length in his consolation speech for Charidemos. On the topic "Purity and Salvation" see Parker 1983: 281–307.

[74] Regarding the form and function of the *makarismos*, I would like to refer to my article "Die Makarismen der Bergpredigt (Matt. 5:3–12). Beobachtungen zur literarischen Form und theologischen Bedeutung," in Betz, *Synoptische Studien. Gesammelte Aufsätze 2*, Tübingen 1992: 92–110; first published in *Z. Theol. Kirche* 75, 1978: 3–19; English version in Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*, Philadelphia 1985: 17–36; see also Betz 1995: 92–105.

[75] A1.8 Zuntz (1971: 301).

[76] For this distinction see also Betz 1995: 96f.

[77] Text according to Zuntz 1971: 303.

[78] Text according to Zuntz 1971: 329.

[79] This is also how it is presented in the Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes are already being promised now, but to be redeemed only after the Last Judgment. And here, too, there is an appeal for joy connected with it (Matt. 5:12; Luke 6:23); cf. Betz 1995: 95f. and 582f.

It is strange, now, that we seemingly encounter a different idea in the Pelinna texts. There it says that the initiated mystic should tell Persephone that Bacchios has freed her:[80]

> εἰπεῖν Φερσεφόναι σ᾽ ὅτι Βά‹κ›χιος αὐτὸς ἔλυσε.
>
> Say to Persephone that Bacchios himself freed you.

So here the deliverance from the guilt has been brought about by Dionysos himself. When did this event then take place, and in what context did the initiate learn about it? There can be only one answer to this question: According to everything that we can deduce based on parallels, deliverance and *makarismos* must have been parts of the initiation rite.[81] That means that the three sacred rites, hinted at in the texts by cryptic password phrases, must have been performed already in this life.[82] Apparently, the deliverance by Bacchios is the subject and the result of these rites, and it all ends with a reminder of the eschatological promise:

> κἀπιμενεῖ σ᾽ ὑπὸ γῆν τέλεα ἅσσαπερ ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι
>
> And rites await you beneath the earth, just like the other blessed ones.[83]

On account of the mythic-ritual act of salvation by which the dead have already been "redeemed" and "freed" while still alive, there is a new beginning for their life in the Netherworld.[84]

What does this act of salvation refer to? What is this λύσις that Bacchios brings about? We can agree with Fritz Graf: we are dealing with something that is more than as well as different from simply the freeing of the soul by way of its separation from the body, which death brings about.[85] Graf's interpretation points towards Dionysos Lysios having taken on aspects of a redeemer god, having the power to free initiates from the penalties of the after-life.[86] We can only guess on what mythological assumptions this

[80] Text according to Graf 1993: 241.
[81] Cf. the considerations by Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 11–14; Graf 1993: 243–255.
[82] On the form of the ritual *synthema* see Dieterich 1923: 213–218 and 256–258; Burkert 1990: 82–84; Betz 1995: 99f. Cf. also the three ritual acts described in the scene from the after-life Matt. 7:22 (see Betz 1995: 549 n. 252).
[83] Translated into German by Burkert (1990: 28).
[84] Walter Burkert has directed attention to a recently found gold tablet from Thessaly where it says accordingly: "Go enter the sacred meadow. Free of guilt is the initiate." Cf. Burkert 1995: 96.
[85] Graf 1993: 243: "The term *lusis* cannot just mean death as a freeing of the soul from the body: why should that be the work of Dionysus, and why should that be relevant to Persephone?"
[86] Ibid. 243–245.

power is based, and how Dionysos uses it.[87] Did Dionysos' violent death by dismemberment have a redeeming function, and has this been transferred to the initiate by secret rites? One can only hope that new gold tablets with additional information will be found.

If, accordingly, the initiates are already pure when they encounter Persephone, they have been rendered so by Bacchios, and they are asking her to acknowledge this redemption. This she does, and then with her *makarismos* makes way for them to enter Elysium.

The question remains whether these rather different notions of a redemption of guilt can somehow be reduced to a common denominator. It is possible that there exists some coherence within this world of ideas even where, based on our limited knowledge, we now perceive fundamental differences.[88] But it is equally possible that, as Hendrik Versnel taught us to see, inconsistencies can be an integral part of a "logic" that is far removed from our own thinking.[89]

PECULIAR ANALOGIES IN EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

If the above assumptions are more or less correct, then it is impossible for anyone familiar with the New Testament to ignore certain striking analogies in Paul and Gnosis. The two texts mentioned below deserve a more detailed commentary, but for reasons of space this won't be feasible.

Self-presentation plays a crucial role in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 8:15f. In terms of context, these are his statements on baptism (Romans 6–8) which – as I think to have shown – Paul interprets as a Christian initiation rite.[90] The topic of Romans 8 is the experience of Christian identity as a result of having received the Spirit, as it happens in baptism. With the holy spirit, the person being baptized acquires the "spirit of filiality" (πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6). For Paul, this is proven by the ecstatic prayer (κράζειν) in which the person to be baptized first calls on God as his father (ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ). Paul's interpretation in Romans 8:15f. (slightly different in Galatians 4:6) supposes a kind of information exchange (συμμαρτυρεῖν),

[87] We can assume, based on Plato's polemical report of the happenings of the Orpheotelests (*Resp.* 2.364c), that he knew similar ideas and practices, but renounced them because they are irreconcilable with his philosophy. Cf. also Graf 1993: 244.

[88] This is Graf's conclusion (1993: 254): "But from the point of methodology, a solution that gives a coherent picture is more likely to be right, besides being intellectually more satisfactory."

[89] Versnel 1990; 1993; for the cult of Dionysos 1990: 96–205.

[90] Cf. my article "Transferring a ritual: Paul's interpretation of baptism in Romans 6," in *Paulinische Studien. Gesammelte Aufsätze 3* (Tübingen 1994): 240–271 (also in T. Engberg-Pedersen (ed.), *Paul in His Hellenistic Context*, Edinburgh 1994 and Minneapolis 1995, 84–118).

with the divine spirit telling our human spirit: "We are children of God" (ἐσμὲν τέκνα θεοῦ). Then the person to be baptized addresses God as father, thus identifying himself as a child of God (Romans 8:16).

This self-presentation of course has to be seen in the whole context of Pauline soteriology and eschatology. First, Paul defines man in view of the Adam–Christ typology (First Epistle to the Corinthians 15:47):

ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός, ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ.

The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.

This doctrine is based on an interpretation of Genesis (First Corinthians 15:45–49) according to which LXX Genesis 2:7 tells us about the creation of the earthly Adam (ὁ χοϊκός) who became a human being after God breathed life into him (ἐγένετο ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος Ἀδὰμ εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν). Juxtaposed to this mortal being is the divine Spirit–Adam (ὁ ἔσχατος Ἀδὰμ, ὁ ἐπουράνιος), whose descent pre-supposes his existence as πνεῦμα ζῳοποιοῦν and as σῶμα πνευματικόν. The son of God, in the form of Jesus Christ, was this divine Spirit–Adam (see also Romans 5:12–21). As a divine being he had the power of transformation (Philippians 2:6–11) and was able to "incarnate" himself as a mortal one (Philippians 2:7; see also Galatians 4:4–5):

ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος ...

but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ...

Transformation, incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and enthronement as *cosmocrator* – they represent the salvation (Philippians 2:7–11).

The Pauline idea of redemption posits that the believer is being transformed eschatologically into the spiritual existence of the resurrected Christ. Paul explains this complicated process of transformation in several of his Epistles. Of greatest interest to us is that at the core, we are dealing here, too, with the definition of man, in terms of the redemption of the sins of the past by the atonement of Christ (First Corinthians 15:3; 1:30; 6:20; 7:23; Romans 3:24–26; 4:25; 5:18; 8:10), the re-creation (Galatians 6:15; Second Corinthians 5:17), and the overcoming of death by way of transformation (First Corinthians 15:12–57; Philippians 3:10). As Burkert was right to emphasize,[91] for Paul the redemption already occurs when the death of Christ is

[91] Burkert 1990: 85: "It is nowhere mentioned that already the living could be considered 're-incarnated' after their initiation; accordingly, no ritual of 'dying' is pre-supposed."

visualized during baptism, not after the physical death of the believer, as in the Orphic–Dionysiac mysteries (Romans 6:1–11). Paul, too, speaks of death as the payment for sin (Romans 6:23: τὰ γὰρ ὀψώνια τῆς ἁμαρτίας θάνατος), but this takes place already with baptism. Therefore, the new life does not begin only after death, but at the moment of baptism (Romans 6:4–11; 7:6). The event of salvation does not free you *from* life, but *for* a life devoted to God.[92] But during this interval between baptism and physical death, the life of a Christian is characterized by the internal struggle of the spirit πνεῦμα with the "flesh" σάρξ (Galatians 5:17; Romans 7:15–25). Physical death marks the concluding moment for the metamorphosis from perishability to imperishability, and from mortality to immortality (First Corinthians 15:42–55; Philippians 3:20–21; Romans 8:29). At the Final Judgment, the baptized will appear as the pure and the just who will enter the kingdom of God. But this refers to man as a whole, as Paul puts it in his First Epistle to the Thessalonians (5:23): "May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is granted that the earthly existence of man ends with death: "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable" σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα βασιλείαν θεοῦ κληρονομῆσαι οὐ δύναται, οὐδὲ ἡ φθορὰ τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν κληρονομεῖ (First Corinthians 15:50). But it is the person as a whole, the σῶμα, that steps over into the after-life, and is thereby transformed into a σῶμα πνευματικόν (First Corinthians 15:35–57).

In a strange analogy to First Corinthians 15:50, but also fundamentally different, it says in *Phaedo* (67b): "It cannot be permitted for the impurity to get in touch with the purity." (μὴ καθαρῷ γὰρ καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι μὴ οὐ θέμιτον ᾖ.) There can only be purity if the soul is completely separated from the body, in the sense of being liberated from its prison, and in this life as well as in that beyond (67c–d).

As an example of later parallels to the Orphic formula, I would like to point to a Greek fragment of the Gnostic Gospel according to Philip (transmitted only by Epiphanius) where it says:

ἀπεκάλυψέ μοι ὁ κύριος, τί τὴν ψυχὴν δεῖ λέγειν ἐν τῷ ἀνιέναι εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, καὶ πῶς ἑκάστῃ τῶν ἄνω δυνάμεων ἀποκρίνεσθαι· ὅτι «Ἐπέγνων ἐμαυτὴν (φησὶ) καὶ συνέλεξα ἐμαυτὴν ἐκ πανταχόθεν καὶ οὐκ ἔσπειρα τέκνα τῷ ἄρχοντι, ἀλλὰ ἐξερρίζωσα τὰς ῥίζας αὐτοῦ καὶ συνέλεξα τὰ μέλη τὰ διεσκορπισμένα καὶ οἶδά σε τίς εἶ. ἐγὼ γὰρ (φησὶ) τῶν

[92] The key expression ζῆν τῷ θεῷ can be found with additional interpretations in Galatians 2:19–20; Romans 6:10–13; 12:1–2; 14:7–8; Philippians 1:21–26.

ἄνωθέν εἰμι» καὶ οὕτως (φησὶν) ἀπολύεται. ἐὰν δὲ εὑρεθῇ (φησὶ) γεννήσασα υἱόν, κατέχεται κάτω, ἕως ἂν τὰ ἴδια τέκνα δυνηθῇ ἀναλαβεῖν καὶ ἀναστρέψαι εἰς αὐτήν.

The lord revealed unto me what the soul must say when it is ascending into heaven and how it must reply to each of the higher powers: "I have come to be acquainted with my self" – it says: "I have collected myself from everywhere; I have not sown children for the ruler, but have eradicated its roots and collected the scattered members. And I know who you are. For it is I" – it says – "who belong to those from above." And so – it says – the soul departs. But if – it says – it is found to have produced a child, it is restrained below until it can get back its own offspring and return to itself.[93]

This text combines the Greek tradition of the soul's ascent with a Gnostic interpretation of the Delphic maxim "Know yourself" and with radical asceticism. Here, the acceptance of the tension within man, between the "child of earth" and the "child of heaven," that is so characteristic of the Orphic–Dionysiac as well as the Pauline anthropology, has been renounced in favor of a radical Gnostic dualism.[94]

[93] Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 26, 13, 2f. Holl (*CGS* 25, p. 292), in the translation of Bentley Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures*, Doubleday 1987: 213.

[94] For more Gnostic texts see Origen, *Contra Celsum*, trans. with an introd. and notes by H. Chadwick (Cambridge 1953): 346–348, 402 with ref. to *C. Cels*. 6.31; 7.9; Epiphanius, *Panarion* 36.3.1–6 Holl (*CGS* 31, p. 46f.; second revised edition, ed. by J. Dummer, Berlin 1980); Irenaeus *Adv. haer*. 1.21.5 Rousseau-Doutreleau (vol. 1(2) [*SC* 264] pp. 304–308; with commentary volume 1(1) [*SC* 263] pp. 272–276) = 1.14.4 Wigan Harvey (vol. 1, pp. 186–188); *1 Apoc. Iacobi* (*NHC* V 3.132.23–134.20) (translated by W. R. Schoedel, in: D. M. Parrott (ed.), *Nag Hammadi Codices* V, *2–5 and* VI *with Papyrus Berolinensis 8502, 1 and 4*, The Coptic Gnostic Library, Nag Hammadi Stud. 11, Leiden 1979: 84–89 = J. M. Robinson (ed.), *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, Leiden ^{3}1988, 265f.) Cf. for the Mandaic texts K. Rudolph, *Die Gnosis: Wesen und Geschichte einer spätantiken Religion*, Göttingen ^{3}1990: 191–213; W. Foerster (ed.), *Die Gnosis. Koptische und mandäische Quellen*, introd., trans. and interpreted by M. Krause and K. Rudolph, Zurich and Munich 1971 (reprint 1995): 270–354, 361–368.

CHAPTER 6

Common motifs in the "Orphic" B tablets and Egyptian funerary texts: Continuity or convergence?

Thomas M. Dousa

By virtue of both their context and their content, the "Orphic" gold plates occupy a singular place among the religious texts of the classical and early Hellenistic world. Deposited in tombs in sites as far afield as southern Italy,

This is a revised and updated version of a paper originally given at a workshop entitled "Roads not Taken: Explorations of the 'Orphic' Gold Tablets," held on December, 6 1997 at the Chicago Humanities Institute, the Regenstein Library, the University of Chicago. I should like to thank the organizers, Radcliffe Edmonds III and Sarah Cohen, for inviting me to present my research at this workshop, as well as respondents to the paper and the audience for helpful feedback. I am especially grateful to Radcliffe for his persistent encouragement, bibliographical assistance, and editorial guidance in the elaboration of this published version: without his patience, good will, and sage advice, it would never have seen the light of day. I should also like to thank Janet H. Johnson for making available to me the transliteration font used to render Egyptian words and Elin Jacob for assistance in transferring the original, rather antiquated computer file to a more up-to-date and tractable editing system, as well as the ILL departments of the libraries at the University of Indiana-Bloomington and the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, whose heroic efforts at procuring rare and difficult-to-obtain materials immeasurably aided reference checking. Needless to say, I alone am responsible for any and all deficiencies in style or substance.

The texts of the gold tablets and the sigla used to refer to them follow Edmonds' chapter on "Texts and translations" of the gold tablets, Chapter 2 in this volume. The following abbreviations are used to refer to core Egyptological text corpora and publications: BD = Book of the Dead (cited by spell number and publication); CT = A. de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 7 vols., The University of Chicago Oriental Institution Publications, vols. 34, 49, 64, 67, 73, 81, 87, Chicago: 1935–61 (cited by volume, page, section number, and, if applicable, by siglum of the text version [i.e., the coffin on which the text is inscribed]); PT = Pyramid Texts (cited by spell number, section number, and publication); TT = Theban Tomb (cited by tomb number); *Wb*. = Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow (eds.), *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, 5 vols., Leipzig: 1926–31 (cited by volume, page, and entry number). The chronological framework for dating the Egyptian materials follows the outline in Grimal 1992: 389–395: Old Kingdom (ca. 2700–2190 BCE); Middle Kingdom (ca. 2040–1674 BCE); New Kingdom (1552–1069 BCE), within which fall the Eighteenth Dynasty (1552–1295) and the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties comprising the Ramesside period (1295–1069 BCE); Third Intermediate Period (1069–702 BCE), which comprises the Twenty-First (1069–945 BCE), Twenty-Second (945–715 BCE), and Twenty-Third (825–715 BCE) Dynasties; Saite Dynasty (664–525 BCE); Persian period (525–332 BCE); Ptolemaic period (332–30 BCE); Roman period (30 BCE–395 CE). Abbreviations for periodical literature in the "references" section follow those prescribed by *L'Année philologique*; in the case of Egyptological periodicals not covered by *L'Année*'s conventions, I have adopted the sigla given in the Egyptologists' Electronic Forum list of Bibliographical Abbreviations (version 35, March 2009), available at: www.egyptologyforum.org/EEFrefs.html.

Thessaly, and Crete between the end of the fifth century BCE and the second century CE,[1] these thin pieces of gold foil served as a *vademecum* for the deceased, containing instructions on how one should negotiate his or her entry into the other world: as such, they constitute our sole extant examples of genuinely mortuary texts – i.e., texts intended primarily to aid a deceased person in attaining a blissful afterlife[2] – in the Greek cultural sphere. Equally significant is the milieu within which the laminae appear to have circulated. The rarity of these mortuary texts as grave goods in the Greek world, as well as their wide geographical distribution, make likely the hypothesis that they reflect the post-mortem beliefs and aspirations of a particular group, whose membership was mobile and far-flung.[3] While long-standing scholarly convention has dubbed the gold plates as "Orphic,"[4] the south Italian provenance of the older exemplars, as well as some of the imagery in the texts, has led some commentators to suggest that the tablets might have circulated in a Pythagorean milieu.[5] On the other hand, the reference to "*mystai* and *Bakkhoi*" in one of the laminae and the statement of the deceased in others that "Bacchios himself" has "released" him or her point incontestably to an association with Dionysiac mysteries.[6]

[1] For an overview of the geographical and temporal distribution of the gold plates uncovered to date, as well as a summary of the archaeological contexts in which they have been found, see Tables 2.2.–2.7 in Edmonds' Chapter 2 above on "The 'Orphic' Gold Tablets: Texts and translations," pp. 41–48.

[2] This definition of "mortuary texts" follows that of Assmann 2005: 238: "I understand ... *mortuary literature* to be texts placed in the tomb in order to be of use to the deceased in the afterlife." One might further distinguish between (collections of) texts whose primary purpose was to provide aid and protection for the deceased (as, for example, was the case with the corpora of texts, such as the "Pyramid Texts," "Coffin Texts," and "Book of the Dead," that were inscribed on objects expressly intended to form part of the tomb apparatus) and texts that were used for other purposes while the deceased was alive and were secondarily "reused" in burials, presumably for use by the dead in the afterlife. In the case of the gold tablets, the specifications that the text is supposed to be written on the tablet by or for a person "whenever he is about to die" (so B10.1; cf. B1.12–13) may provide justification for viewing them as "mortuary texts" in the first, more restricted sense; cf. Edmonds 2004: 33 ("The primary audience for the tablet is obviously the deceased herself, since the tablet contains instructions for her after death") and 35 ("Clearly, the purpose of these tablets is to provide a solution to whatever difficulty or obstacle is envisioned for the person after death").

[3] So Zuntz 1971: 286.

[4] For succinct reviews of scholarly positions regarding "Orphism" and its relation to the gold tablets, see, e.g., Burkert 1977b: 1–8; 1980: 28–29; 1982: 3–12; 2004: 74–77; Zhmud' 1992: 160–162; Edmonds 2004: 30–31, 39–46, 102–104; Edmonds, Chapter 1 in this volume, pp. 4–8. Cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal, Chapter 4 in this volume, who argue for the "Orphic" identity of the gold tablets; Edmonds, Chapter 10 in this volume, pp. 257–258, who discusses how "Orphism" is to be understood.

[5] So, e.g., Zuntz 1971: 321–322, 380–381; cf. Burkert 1975: 87–88; Edmonds 2004: 68–69.

[6] See B10.16; D1.2 and cf. 6; D2.2 and cf. 5, with Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 117–119. Cf. Burkert 1980: 35; 2004: 77–78; Edmonds 2004: 60–61 and 62.

Given their singularity, one of the many questions that these enigmatic texts pose is whether they are the products of a purely internal development within the Greek world or whether they might have made use, at least in part, of ideas and practices drawn from other Mediterranean traditions. Here, much scholarly attention has been focused upon certain general affinities between the gold plates and ancient Egyptian texts. Scholars have often noted that the mortuary character of the gold plates finds its closest analogues not in the Greek world but in the funerary traditions of ancient Egypt.[7] The well-known Egyptian concern with securing a happy existence in the afterlife ensured that the practice of providing the deceased with mortuary texts was as common in Egypt as it was uncommon in the Greek and, for that matter, the rest of the ancient Mediterranean world: indeed, a continuous tradition of this type of literature, inscribed on tomb walls, coffins, stelae, statues, mummy bandages, and papyrus rolls can be traced from the latter half of the third millennium BCE through the Roman period.[8] Moreover, already in antiquity, at least one Greek commentator on Egyptian culture – Herodotus of Halicarnassus – appears to have perceived similarities between certain aspects of "Orphic"/"Bacchic" and Egyptian funerary practice and, indeed, to have gone so far as to equate them: the so-called "long" version of a well-known passage from his *Histories* that

[7] So, e.g., Zuntz 1971: 375–376, who observed that "[i]n both countries [sc., Greece and Egypt – TMD] these texts are equally designed to accompany the dead into their graves in order to tell them what awaits them in the other world and how they are to meet it": he noted that this similarity could at least be "quoted in evidence of their [sc., Egyptian and Greek – TMD] interdependence," even if, in his view, such a hypothesis was ultimately to be rejected. Drawing a different conclusion from the same observation was the Egyptologist Siegfried Morenz, who saw the common function of Egyptian mortuary texts and the Orphic gold plates as evidence for derivation of the Greek from the Egyptian practice: cf., e.g. S. Morenz 1960: 240 ("Dieses Phänomen der ägyptischen Totenliteratur steht nun jedenfalls im Bereich der alten Mittelmeerwelt fast allein, und die ihm sachlich an die Seite zu rückenden sog. orphischen Totenpässe dürften nach mancherlei Indizien der Vergleichbarkeit im ganzen wie in einzelnen Punkten nicht selbständig entstanden, sondern von dem ägyptischen Brauche herzuleiten sein"); S. Morenz 1970: 379 ("Theologie und Jenseitsvorstellung der Orphik enthalten ägyptische Anleihen, die sich auf die Literatur erstrecken: Die ägyptische Gattung der 'Totenliteratur' hat sicher das sonst einsame Phänomen der orphischen 'Totenpässe' ausgelöst"). Comparable in tone is the suggestion of West 1971: 65: "There is very good reason to think in terms of a direct Egyptian connection here, for the very idea of providing the dead man with such documents has its only parallel in the *Book of the Dead*." More recently, Assmann 2005: 238 has stressed anew the uniqueness (within the Mediterranean world) of the Egyptian practice of providing the dead with mortuary literature and has adduced the gold plates as (rare) parallels, but without drawing the same conclusions that Morenz and West did. Cf. Betz, Chapter 5 in this volume at p. 102, n. 5.

[8] See S. Morenz, 1970: 226–231, esp. 231. For good general introductions to the various types of mortuary texts available in ancient Egypt, see J. P. Allen 1988a; Coenen and Quaegebeur 1995: 91–113; Hornung 2002.

reports Egyptian prohibitions against wearing wool in temples and burying deceased persons in woolen garb states that "these (observances) agree with those which are called Orphic and Bacchic, but are (in fact) Egyptian and Pythagorean."[9] Herodotus, it may be noted, was eminently well situated in time and place to draw such connections: writing in the third quarter of the fifth century BCE, about a generation before the earliest attested gold plate was inscribed, he not only had visited Egypt, but, as ancient tradition has it, also spent the latter part of his life in the southern Italian city of Thurii, a site whose necropolis has yielded no less than five of the gold plates.[10]

Beyond these suggestive circumstantial facts, however, the texts inscribed on some of the plates contain images and ideas that are, at first glance, quite reminiscent of those expressed in Egyptian funerary texts. These are found in the so-called B-series of plates, which represent different versions of a common textual tradition.[11] The longest and fullest text (B10) is that of the oldest extant exemplar, which was uncovered at the site of ancient Hipponium in southern Italy. Other specimens containing comparatively long versions of the text derive from Petelia in south Italy (B1), Pharsalos

[9] Herodotus 2.81.2. Alongside this long version, which is preserved in the so-called Roman family of Herodotean manuscripts, there exists a shorter version attested in the Florentine family of manuscripts, which may be rendered as "they (sc., the Egyptians) correspond in this to the Orphic and Pythagorean rites." There has been considerable scholarly controversy as to which of these versions represents Herodotus' *Urtext*. The primacy of the longer version has been defended in Burkert 1972: 127–128; 1975: 87, with n. 14; 2004a: 165, n. 118; Dodds 1951: 169, n. 80 and 171–172, n. 96; West 1983: 8 with n. 10 and cf. 16; Kingsley 1995: 263–264, with n. 44. Arguments favoring the short version are presented in Linforth 1941: 39–49 (with extensive references to earlier literature); Zhmud' 1992: 163–164; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 66. Intermediate to these two versions are the "contaminated" vulgate version (cited, e.g., in Froidefond 1971: 188–189 and common to most editions of Herodotus) and the idiosyncratic "compromise" text of Kirk and Raven 1983: 220, no. 263 (who accept, in principle, Burkert's arguments, but remove the phrase pertaining to "Egyptian and Pythagorean" rites). For further discussion, see Graf, Chapter 3, in this volume, pp. 55–56, with note 12.

[10] Namely four exemplars of Zuntz's A-series and the sole example of the C-series. On Herodotus' connections to Thurii, see Jacoby 1913: 206–209, 242–247, some of whose conclusions have been challenged in T. S. Brown 1983; cf. also A. B. Lloyd 1988: 68, with n. 32; Ehrenberg 1948: 169–170. The presence of Herodotus in south Italy and its relevance for assessing the possible *Quellen* for the gold plates, especially that unearthed at Hipponium, have been duly noted in Burkert 1975: 87–88.

[11] For attempts to specify this tradition through the (re)construction of stemmata with archetype for (1) B1, B2, and B10 and (2) the "lesser" tablets B3–B8, see West 1975; Janko 1984: esp. 100. West, as indeed other commentators (e.g., Zuntz 1976: 150) operated on the assumption that the texts were copied from written *Vorlagen*. On the other hand, Janko 1984 has made a strong case that the transmission of the underlying archetype was oral in nature, a hypothesis that would explain the considerable variation between the texts of the different exemplars; cf. Edmonds 2004: 36. For further discussion, see, in this volume, the remarks of Riedweg, Ch. 9 at pp. 220–221 and Obbink, Ch. 12, p. 292.

in Thessaly (B2), and, apparently, Entella in Sicily (B11), whereas later, much abbreviated versions occur on a plate, presumably from Thessaly, housed today in the Getty museum (B9) and six plates unearthed at the Cretan site of Eleutherna (B3–B6). Despite considerable variation in wording and, in the case of the Getty and Cretan plates, in structure and format, all of these texts are based on a common scenario whose basic elements can be summarized as follows. The deceased initiate is instructed that, upon entry into the underworld, (s)he should look for a spring of water, described as a place of refreshment, next to which stands a "white" or "bright" (*leukē*) cypress tree. This spring, however, (s)he is not to approach, but must continue onwards, until (s)he reaches another one, identified as the "spring of Memory," from which "refreshing water" issues.[12] This source, however, is tended by guardians who will confront the deceased and inquire about his or her identity and origin. In response, (s)he is to state that (s)he is "a child of earth and starry heaven" who is "dry with thirst" and to request a drink from the spring. The guardians will allow him or her to drink and the deceased then can join fellow initiates among the blessed dead. At least three of the motifs within this episode invite comparison with those found in Egyptian mortuary literature: the co-occurrence of a tree and a standing body of water in an otherworldly place that serves as the *mise en scène* for the refreshment of the deceased by drinking; the initiate's confrontation with otherworldly guardians; and, finally, his or her response to the guardians' queries, especially the avowal of thirst.

Although the similarities between these motifs, which G. Zuntz deemed to constitute the very "essence" of the B-texts,[13] and those found in Egyptian mortuary literature have long been recognized by both classicists and Egyptologists,[14] approaches to explaining these similarities have varied. In general, these can be divided into two interpretative camps. On one side stand those commentators who explain the resemblances as

[12] So, at least, B1, B2, B10, B11. In the abbreviated version(s) of B3–B9, however, wherein only one spring is mentioned, the deceased is envisaged as quaffing water from the spring alongside which the cypress stands.

[13] Zuntz 1971: 364.

[14] Among classical scholars, see, e.g., Cumont 1929: 235, n. 24; Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1932: 202–203; West 1971: 64–65; Zuntz 1971: 370–376; Burkert 1975: 86–87; 1985: 294; Merkelbach 1999: 3–6; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 57–58, 74–75; Bernabé 2003b: 263; cf., Chapter 11 in this volume, Herrero de Jáuregui at p. 272, n. 2; Obbink Chapter 12 in this volume at p. 307, n. 55. Among Egyptologists, see S. Morenz 1950: 453–454 and cf. the more cautious formulations of Assmann 2005: 207 and 238, as well as the expressly agnostic position of Vittmann 2003: 225.

reflecting independent, parallel developments in the Greek and the Egyptian civilizational spheres respectively and seek to minimize the possibility of Egyptian influence on the B-texts by emphasizing differences of detail between the gold plates and the Egyptian data and arguing that the parallel motifs are also found in other cultures as well and thus constitute universal notions:[15] in their view, the common motifs would be but the product of a conceptual *convergence* of two distinct cultural traditions. On the other side are those who argue that the similarities do reflect Egyptian origins for the motifs in the gold plates, attributing differences of detail to the "natural – and normal – process of cultural contacts and adaptation":[16] they posit a historical *continuity* between Egyptian mortuary texts and the "Orphic" gold plates, seeing the former as having inspired the latter.

Both of these positions have strengths and weaknesses, which should be acknowledged at the outset. Those arguing for convergence are undoubtedly correct in stressing the considerable originality of the gold plates, in noting the differences between them and the Egyptian texts, and in observing that certain ideas and images appear to have a universal, cross-cultural currency explicable by independent development rather than borrowing. This stance, however, rests upon an assumption that perhaps oversimplifies matters – namely, that the intercultural transmission of an idea or an image entails a fairly strict one-to-one correspondence in its function or significance in both the transmitting and the receiving culture: in our case, a given motif or, better, a cluster of motifs would need to have a (near-)identical form in both the gold plates and Egyptian mortuary texts to permit one to posit any significant continuity between the two cultural spheres.[17] While such a view would have the undeniable advantage of allowing one to identify unequivocal cases of intercultural transmission, it does not make adequate allowance for the possibility that in the course of transmission, a motif may be subjected to changes in form and meaning so as to fit better within the thought-world of the receiving

[15] So, e.g., Parrot 1937: 167–168; Zuntz 1971: 374; Edmonds 2004: 47–48.

[16] Kingsley 1994: 3–4. See, already, S. Morenz 1969: 54, who states that "Die kurzen Texte der orphischen 'Totenpässe', und damit im eigentlichen Sinne religiöse Literatur, zweigen sowohl als Gattung (sie sind Totentexte) wie in Inhalt und Tendenz von einem breiten ägyptischen Strome ab" but adds the important proviso that "[d]ie Materialen, aus einer Kultur in die andere herübergeholt, werden dort umgeformt und in ihr neues Bezugssystem eingebaut."

[17] Cf. Versnel 1985: 265: "[T]he more specific, detailed, and exceptional the elements which comparable rites, customs and formulas in two cultures have in common, the greater is the likelihood of a derivation and the smaller is the probability of an independent development."

culture:[18] indeed, paradoxically enough, it downplays a not negligible aspect of the creativity of the receiving culture, the ability to appropriate images and ideas from without and to adapt them in such a way as to make them meaningfully its own.

Conversely, the assumption that the intercultural transmission of a motif can entail its transformation is fundamental to the position of those who see continuity between the gold plates and Egyptian traditions. This position has the advantage of admitting the possibility that different modalities of borrowing, from faithful calques to creative misprisions, wholesale reinterpretations, or newly-spun variations were possible in the course of cross-cultural transmission.[19] However, by the very same token, it also poses a grave hermeneutical challenge for the secure identification of such transmission, for once the possibility of transformation is introduced into the process, it becomes much more difficult to trace the possible pathways of a motif or, indeed, to decide whether the occurrence of a closely similar, but not necessarily identical, idea or image in two (or more) neighboring cultures should be attributed to intercultural contact or to independent intracultural development:[20] in the absence of certain diagnostic features such as indisputably foreign names or iconographic constellations, definitive proof of one or the other alternative often is virtually impossible. Since the gold plates do not contain any such textual or pictorial "smoking guns," it is, in fact, impossible to *prove* that their imagery ultimately derives from an Egyptian source; here, at best, we must be satisfied with plausibilities rather than certainties.

From the foregoing remarks, it should be clear that any attempt at an explanation of the similarity of motifs in the gold plates and Egyptian materials runs the double risk of either under- or overrating the connections between the two. The difficulties are only compounded by the fact that, while there is no lack of possible pathways by which Egyptian funerary ideas could have filtered into the Greek world – one need only think of the activity of Phoenician traders, those purveyors of Egyptian and Egyptianizing artifacts in both the Eastern and Western Mediterranean[21]

[18] Cf. Motte and Pirenne-Delforge 1994: 13–14: "Il semble assez rare cependant que des emprunts s'opèrent d'une religion à une autre sans que n'intervienne d'emblée quelque filtrage ou que ne se dessine l'empreinte du groupe emprunteur. L'adoption s'accompagne le plus souvent d'une adaptation. L'action d'emprunter implique donc une part d'invention et de réinterprétation: c'est l'autre face du phénomène, trop souvent négligée."

[19] Cf. Burkert 1992: 7 and 87. [20] Cf. Versnel 1985: 265–268.

[21] For discussions of the diffusion of Egyptian(izing) artifacts throughout the Mediterranean in the first half of the first millennium BCE, see, e.g., Hölbl 1981, 1986, 2000.

or of the Greek colonies at Naukratis and Memphis in Egypt[22] – there is no collateral evidence to indicate whether such transmission took place and, if it did, which route it took.[23] Thus, we are reduced to drawing whatever conclusions we can from analysis of the plates themselves and their Egyptian parallels. These difficulties notwithstanding, the similarities remain to be explained, and a first step in that direction is for us to examine more closely the Egyptian parallels with an eye to how they are formulated, in what contexts they occur, and, last but not least, how they developed over time. The purpose of this essay, then, is to review the Egyptian parallels for the aforementioned three motifs from the B-series gold plates to offer some preliminary suggestions as to whether these parallels are better accounted for as examples of convergence or continuity.[24]

The B-series of the gold plates open with a strikingly visual image, informing the deceased that upon entry into the underworld, (s)he will see

[22] For recent discussions of the site of Naukratis, located on the Saitic branch of the Nile, which served as a trade entrepôt for Greek traders from the late seventh century BCE and thus formed an important center of contact between Egyptians and Greeks, see Boardman 1999: 118–133; Höckman 2001; Möller 2001; Vittmann 2003: 212–223.

[23] *Quot homines, tot sententiae*: there has been no lack of proposals for the pathways by which Egyptian funerary ideas might have made their way into the Greek world. Zuntz 1971: 372 has pointed to Greek settlements at Naukratis and Memphis, as well as trade and political contacts between Egyptians and Greeks, as possible avenues for intercultural transmission, noting in particular "[s]ettlers at Memphis could have been impressed by the cult of the dead there and even have taken part in it, becoming proselytes like the Jews in Elephantine" – only to reject this hypothesis. Merkelbach 1999: 6 has posited that Greeks resident in Egypt derived the elements of the mythic situation limned in the gold plates from the content of (hypothetical) "sacred dramas" performed at Egyptian funerals. Burkert 2004a: 87 suggests that transmission might have taken place in the sixth century BCE, although he is reticent as to the place where it may have recurred. De Salvia 1989: 138, n. 49 has suggested that Hellenomemphites (i.e., Greeks residing in Memphis) may have served as the vectors of "Orphic" ideas into Greek culture. Elsewhere, however, he speculates that such ideas might have been due to "Egyptian wise men traveling in the Greek world" (De Salvia 1991: 343). This proposal is congruent with Burkert's hypothesis that itinerant practitioners of religious and divinatory arts served as the mediators of Near Eastern religious and magical practices into the Greek world (Burkert 1992: 41–46; cf. 1980: 40–41); however, the sparseness and lateness of evidence for itinerant Egyptian sages (De Salvia 1987) reduces its probative value. Favoring a more indirect, "external" mode of transmission is Kingsley 1995: 312, who interprets the gold plates as magical amulets and argues, on the basis of gold foil strips rolled up inside Egyptianizing cylinder cases discovered in Sardinian and Carthaginian tombs dating to the seventh to fifth centuries BCE, that "it must be considered extremely probable that at least part of the inspiration for them derives from Egypt, as a result of transmission via Phoenicians and Carthaginians"; cf. Kingsley 1994: 4; Burkert 2004a: 87; on the Phoenician and Carthaginian materials, see Kotansky 1991: 115 and 131, nn. 54–55, with further literature. One should note, however, Hölbl 1979: 238 and 387, who observes that, with the (possible) exception of the gold plates, there is no hard evidence for the circulation of Egyptian mortuary beliefs in Italy during the first half of the first millennium BCE. Certainly it is significant that the burials in which the gold plates were found consist of inhumations and cremations: there is absolutely no evidence for embalming, which would have been the Egyptian norm, at least for upper-class burials.

[24] Possible Egyptian antecedents to elements of "Orphic" cosmogonies are discussed in S. Morenz 1950; West 1983: 187–190 and 201, n. 81.

a spring next to which stands a "white" or "bright" cypress tree. The different versions do not all agree on the exact location of this mini-tableau: while most situate it to the right of the road, the Petelia plate (B1) places it on the left.[25] Nor are they of one accord concerning the nature of the spring and how the deceased should act in relation to it: while the later Cretan and Getty texts (B3–B9) describe the spring as the "ever flowing" source from which (s)he should drink, the earlier texts from Hipponion, Petelia, and Pharsalos (B1, B2, B10, B11) warn him or her to avoid it and to proceed further to the "pool of Memory," where (s)he can, at last, slake his or her thirst. The Hipponion plate adds an important specification concerning the forbidden spring, namely that "there the souls *(psu<ch>ai*) of the dead, descending, are cooled *(psuchontai)*."[26] The interdiction of this place of "cooling" to the deceased initiate reflects a "two-tiered" eschatological system. According to this scheme, the souls of initiates, forewarned by the instructions inscribed on the plates, are to drink the waters of Memory, thus gaining recollection of their true origin and identity and assuring themselves of a privileged afterlife,[27] while the benighted souls of the uninitiated shall imbibe the waters of

[25] Taking B2 as his point of reference, S. Morenz 1957 argued that the valorization of the directions "right" and "left" in the funerary geography of the gold plates can be explained by reference to an Egyptian tradition reflected in a passage from two Ramesside-period literary hymns to the god Amun-Re, according to which the god distinguishes between "false ones," who are assigned to the East, and "righteous ones," who are assigned to life of bliss in the West (Gardiner 1937: 2/14–16 [= P. Bologna 1094, 2/5–7] & 16/3–5 [= P. Anastasi II, 6/6–7). Insofar as the Egyptians' canonical orientation of cardinal points was based on facing southwards (Posener 1965: 72–73), the East would be located to the left-hand side of the ideal median line, whereas the West would be on the right-hand side: thus, evildoers would be associated with the left and the righteous dead with the right. This argument must be rejected on several grounds. First, whereas Morenz assumed that the distinction between the initiated und uninitiated in the gold tablets presupposed a preceding "Orphic judgment of the dead" between righteous (= initiated) and unrighteous (= uninitiated) persons, the tablets themselves do not speak of any such judgment: thus their basic scenario is not identical to that of the hymns cited by Morenz. Second, insofar as "right" tended to be valorized over "left" in many spheres of ancient Greek culture (G. E. R. Lloyd 1991: 27–48), there is no need to take recourse to Egyptian materials to explain the leftward localization of the spring to be avoided in B1. Third, most of the B-series plates locate the spring on the *right*, not the left, of the road traveled by the deceased and there is, in fact, reason to believe, that B1's localization of the spring on the left represents a change from an original placement on the right side (so West 1975: 229, n.; Janko 1984: 93). For further discussion, see Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 41–44; Edmonds 2004: 49–52. Tzifopoulos, Chapter 7 in this volume, makes the interesting argument that the cult topographies of the different locales in which the B-series tablets were found may have contributed to the localization of this underworld pool.

[26] On the nature of this "cooling," see Zuntz 1976: 138–139; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 59–60; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 59–60; Edmonds 2004: cf. Janko 1984: 94 with n. 17 and 99.

[27] See the discussion in Edmonds 2004: 52–55. Assmann 2005: 29, 272–273, and 460, n. 39 has noted the importance, within the Egyptian conception of the afterlife, of assuring the deceased's recollection of his/her name and the magical spells that she or he might be called upon to recite in the course of his or her journey through the netherworld and has directly compared the thematization of memory in Egyptian mortuary texts with that of the Orphic gold tablets. Bernabé's 2003b: 263 claim that "no hay

the forbidden pool, understood by most commentators as a corresponding "spring of forgetfulness" and, accordingly, shall be condemned to a diminished post-mortem existence.[28] Important for our purposes here is the fact that embedded within this binary eschatological scheme is an apparently revalorized form of an originally simpler motif, which associated the image of a standing body of water with a tree at its side with the idea of "cooling" or refreshment of the deceased.

When we turn to the Egyptian material, we find that the same constellation of elements – a place marked by a standing body of water and tree that are associated with refreshment of the dead – features prominently in a variety of representational settings, including tomb paintings, mortuary stelae, offering basins, and the vignettes (i.e., illustrations) that accompany certain passages of the so-called Book of the Dead, the compendium of magical spells for use in the afterlife that was current, in various forms, in Egypt from the New Kingdom through the early Roman period.[29] Thus, for

en el *Libro de los Muertos* ninguna referencia a la desparición o conservación del recuerdo" requires some modification in light of such spells as BD Spell 25, a "spell of giving memory (*sḫ³.w*) to a man" (Budge 1910: 121): the Book of the Dead does refer to the (potential) disappearance of memory and provides means for its preservation in the afterlife; however, it does not associate this preservation with the act of drinking from an otherworldly pool.

[28] See, on this point, Zuntz 1971: 378 and 380; Burkert 1975: 91; 1985: 294; Lincoln 1991: 49–52; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 59. Note that scholars are divided as to whether this forgetfulness is preliminary to a new round of reincarnation or whether it simply leads to the reduced existence of a twittering shade, as in the epic poems.

[29] The series of texts known today as the Book of the Dead – a modern title coined by Richard Lepsius in 1842; the Egyptian name was "Coming Forth by Day" – comprises 192 (by some counts, 190) spells of varying length, many of which are derived from spells from the corpus of Coffin Texts. It should be stressed that the textual history of the Book of the Dead is much more complex and less monolithic than a perusal of most modern editions and translations would suggest. During the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period, there was considerable variation in the textual composition of individual exemplars of Books of the Dead: no exemplar from these periods includes the full complement of available spells nor was there any fixed order in which the spells were inscribed, though tendencies towards clustering certain spells into groups did emerge. It was only in the Saite period that a more or less "canonical" sequence for the corpus was established, though even then, the redaction of individual exemplars was subject to considerable variation based on local traditions (cf., e.g., the abbreviated selection of spells found in late-Ptolemaic exemplars from Akhmim [on which see Mosher 2002] with that of the standard Theban and Memphite recensions [on which see Mosher 1992: 152–153]); *mutatis mutandis*, this "Saite recension" was the form under which the Book of the Dead corpus was current throughout the second half of the first millennium BCE. Brief overviews of the development of the Book of the Dead are found in S. Morenz 1950: 453–456; Barguet 1967: 9–13; Hornung 1979: 20–23; Heerma van Voss 1986; Coenen and Quaegebeur 1995: 94–96, 102–105, 110; Assmann 2005: 250–251. Good summaries of the history of modern Egyptological research on the Book of the Dead, as well as content analysis, are offered in Barguet 1967: 13–18; Hornung 2002: 13–22 and 165–168. The standard modern translations are Barguet 1967; T. G. Allen 1974; Hornung 1979. The latest securely dated exemplars of papyri bearing Book of the Dead spells date to the first century CE and stem from Thebes (Lexa 1910: p. v); production, though, appears to have become moribund in that locale already in the later Ptolemaic period (so Coenen 2001: esp. 71 and 83).

example, a scene that occurs in three tombs from the Ramesside workmen's cemetery at the site of Deir el-Medina on the west bank of Thebes depicts the deceased tomb owner kneeling beside a dom-palm tree, his face turned downwards towards a pool of water from which he is drinking or about to drink.[30] At first glance, it would seem that scenes such as this could, as one commentator has put it, "almost serve as illustrations" for the gold plates.[31] Yet a closer look at the texts associated with these images reveals a complex relationship between the pool, the tree, and the refreshment of the dead that differs in its emphases from the setting of the gold plates. In one of the tombs at Deir el-Medina, the scene is accompanied by the following text:[32]

> Spell for drinking water beside the dom palm,
> beside the feet (*rd.wy*) of Min, the god:
> Hail to you, (o) you who come forth with your shade, unique god,
> as you[33] grow (*rd*) upon the ground of the earth:
> you who give water through your roots,
> moisten[34] the heart of Osiris NN!

This short prayer, addressed to the dom palm, identifies it as a god, more precisely as a manifestation of Min, the god of fecundity and

[30] TT 3 (= tomb of Pashedu), reproduced in Lhote and Hassia 1954: pl. 139; Baum 1988: 116, fig. 30; TT 218 (= tomb of Amennakht), reproduced in Baum 1988: 116, fig. 31; TT 290 (=Tomb of Irynefer), reproduced in Lhote and Hassia 1954: pl. 138 (there wrongly attributed to the tomb of Amennakht); Wallert 1962: pl. XI; Baum 1988: 117, fig. 32. In all three tombs, the gesture is certainly one of drinking, as argued by Wallert 1962: 134, with n. 1 and Fecht 1965: 87–88, contra Wreszinski 1923: caption to Tafel III; Bonnet 1952: 206, Abb. 58; and Hennebo 1955: 183, who interpret it as a gesture of prayer.

[31] So Zuntz 1971: 371.

[32] TT 218. Text and translation in Wallert 1962: 134; transliteration, translation, and grammatical commentary in Fecht 1965: 87 and 89–90, with nn. 46, 50–51.

[33] Lit. "as he grows" (*rd=f*). I understand the verb form here to be a circumstantial *sḏm=f*, expressing concomitant circumstance, pendent upon the previous participial and noun clauses. An alternative interpretation is offered in Fecht 1965: 89–90, n. 51, who translates the form as a clause of result. Although Fecht's translation is also grammatically possible, one suspects that the plant-god's "coming forth with one's shade" and "growing upon the ground" are better understood as contemporaneous, rather than consecutive, actions.

[34] On the translation of *iwḥ* as "moisten," see Fecht 1965: 91, n. 55. I interpret *iwḥ* as an imperative (as already translated, without commentary, in Wallert 1962: 134). This differs from the analysis of Fecht, who prefers to interpret it as a prospective passive *sḏm(w)=f* form in a subordinate clause of result (Fecht 1965: 90, n. 51). However, Fecht's interpretation, which is based on stylistic considerations, is weakened by the fact that, in Middle Egyptian, the prospective passive *sḏm(w)=f* form tended to be used in independent clauses expressing wish, not in dependent ones (see, e.g., Lefebvre 1955: §§ 298, 300; Edel 1955: § 562; Westendorf 1962: §§ 250–252). Although it would be possible to understand *iwḥ ib=i* as an independent volitive form (e.g., "May my heart be moistened"), the imperative is equally acceptable grammatically and a better attested form in prayers, both in epicleses and requests (see, e.g., Barucq 1962: 373; Brunner 1977: Sps. 454–455), than the prospective *sḏm(w)=f*.

fertility.[35] Characterized as both a giver of shade and as a source of water, the divine tree is beseeched to "moisten the heart" of the deceased – that is, to keep the organ which the Egyptians considered to be the physiological, cognitive, and affective center of the human being, alive and dead, supplied with life-giving water drawn from chthonic sources through its roots and thus to maintain the life of the deceased in the other world.[36] Another version of this prayer takes the idea further and identifies the purpose of the spell as "making a transformation into a dom palm beside the feet of Min";[37] in this instance, the deceased himself is to assume the form of the tree, thus coming into direct contact with the liquid sources of life below. What is important to note here is that, although pool and dom palm form an organic whole in these scenes,[38] it is the latter, as manifestation of a god or as the form which the deceased himself takes, that serves as the focal point of the accompanying texts.

The paintings which we have just discussed are, to the best of my knowledge, restricted to a handful of Ramesside-period tombs from one

[35] On the association between the dom palm and Min, which was conditioned by the latter's connection with the spheres of vegetable growth, fertility, and rebirth, see Wallert 1962: 108–109 and 134; Fecht 1965: 91, with n. 52. The identity of tree and god is assured by a parallel text that accompanies a scene in which the tomb owner's wife receives water and offerings from a sycamore representing the goddess Nut, which is labeled as "a spell for drinking water beside the date-palm *(bni.t)* and beside the feet of Nut" (Wallert 1962: 135): here too, the tree is an embodiment of the deity in question.

[36] According to Wallert 1962: 134–135, the dom palm has long and absorbent roots that allow it to reach groundwater inaccessible to other kinds of palm trees: a probable allusion to this feature of the tree is also found in a New Kingdom hymn to Thoth from the scribal compositions known as the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies, where the god is assimilated to a dom palm apostrophized as "you who draws water <from> a far-off place" (Gardiner 1937: 86/4–5) [= P. Sallier I, 8/5]; see Wallert 1962: 97–98; Fecht 1965: 78–79 and 91, with n. 54; but cf. Baum 1988: 118–119 for a different interpretation. The association between the water of garden pools and Nile water, which was viewed as emanating from the chthonic primeval waters known as Nun (on which, see J. P. Allen 1988b: 4; 1989: 12–13) is discussed in Fecht 1965: 95; Hermsen 1981: 119–120; Moens 1984: 46, §2.2.2.3; Hugonot 1989: 170. On the importance of the heart as a center of physical, psychological, and moral personality in ancient Egypt, see Piankoff 1930; De Buck 1944: 9–17; A. B. Lloyd 1989: 119, with n. 10; Assmann 2005: 29–30.

[37] The full text of this spell, which accompanies the scene in TT 290, is worded as follows (text in Wallert 1962: 134 and pl. XI; transliteration and translation in Fecht 1965: 92):

> Making a transformation in(to) a dom palm
> in order to drink water in the necropolis
> beside Min, the god.
> Recitation by NN:
> Hail to you, (o) dom palm,
> who grows <upon> the ground beside the Two Truths:
> Moisten my heart which bears you (lit. "is under you" (*ḥr=k*))!

[38] In all three scenes, the trunk of the dom palm is depicted as being contiguous to the pool of water. In TT 3, the palm sits immediately above (i.e., at the edge of) the pool. The connection between tree and pool is even more intimate in the scenes in TT 218 and especially TT 230, where the tree trunk overlaps with the pool, as if it were immersed in, and emerging from the latter.

Upper Egyptian cemetery.[39] Closely related to them, however, is a much more widespread mortuary scene whose elements comprise a tree – most often a sycamore or, less frequently, a date palm – as divine incarnation associated with a pool of water and post-mortem refreshment.[40] A good example occurs in a vignette from a papyrus of the late New Kingdom that depicts a pool of water with a sycamore tree on its upper side and with the deceased sitting on a mat to its left.[41] A female arm emanates from the tree, holding a libation vessel, from which it pours out a stream of water which the deceased catches in a cup. This basic scene was subject to considerable variation in its details. For example, in the famous New Kingdom papyrus of Ani, we again encounter a pool of water and a tree: however, in this case, a female figure emerges from the tree, pouring out water and presenting a tray of fruits to the deceased,[42] whereas a particularly elaborate version from the late New Kingdom tomb of Tjanefer at Thebes depicts both the pool and the tree as a source of refreshment: on the left-hand side of the tableau, the dead person imbibes from a T-shaped pool, while on the right, his *bꜣ* – the motile, spiritual form of the deceased, represented as a human-headed bird[43] – catches streams of water poured down to it by a female figure standing atop the trunk of a

[39] The underlying reasons for this apparent limitation in space and time are unknown. Today, the growth range of the dom palm in the Nilotic region is largely restricted to Upper Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia, as well as the oases in Egypt's western desert (Germer 1985: 234), and thus it might be tempting to ascribe the geographic limitation of the dom-palm scene to the natural geographical distribution of the tree, especially as virtually all of the extant ancient iconographic representations come from the Theban area of Upper Egypt or from the western oases (see Baum 1988: 116–118). However, it is not at all certain that this distribution was the same in antiquity: it has been suggested that in ancient times, the dom palm might have grown as far north as This (present-day Girgeh) in Middle Egypt (so Wallert 1962: 18–19) or even Lower Egypt (so Baum 1988: 108–110).

[40] On this scene, see Keel 1992: 61–138, who offers a detailed and well-illustrated analysis of its iconographic development over the course of the New Kingdom and early Third Intermediate Period. Earlier studies are von Bissing 1924 and Baum 1988: 34–87, the latter of whom includes useful lists of attested exemplars from the New Kingdom through the Late Period. See also Olmos 2001: 323–327.

[41] See Naville 1886: vol. I, pl. LXXIII, vignette to P.d. (= P. Louvre, Papyrus of Sutimes).

[42] Faulkner and Goelet 1994: pl. 16 (P BM 10470, 18th/19th Dyn.), two leftmost vignettes; see also Keel 1992: 117, fig. 66a (reproduction), 79–80 and 94 (discussion).

[43] Derived from a verbal root variously interpreted as meaning "to (be) manifest (as a potent being)" (so Žabkar 1968: 11–15; Borghouts 1982: 1–2) or "to possess supra-mundane power" (so Ward 1978: 67–88), the *ba* was that aspect of a deceased person which functioned as a "separable soul" with the freedom to roam the various realms – the heavenly regions, the land of Egypt, and the underworld – that constituted the Egyptian cosmos. For general discussions of the *ba*, see Žabkar 1968; A. B. Lloyd 1989: 119; Goelet in Faulkner and Goelet 1994: 152; Assmann 2005: 89–96; Greek translations of the concept are treated in Quaegebeur 1978: 253–254, who gives further literature.

sycamore tree.[44] In all scenes of this sort, the sycamore tree, whether merged with a human form or merely associated with one,[45] represents a goddess with funerary associations – most often Nut, sometimes Hathor or Isis, or more rarely, another deity[46] – who incorporates in her arboreal aspect the source of offerings – those vital elements needed to revivify the deceased and maintain him or her in life.[47]

Texts from the Book of the Dead (BD) further clarify the import of this type of scene. Thus BD Spell 59, whose rubric identifies it as "a spell for inhaling air and having disposition over water in the necropolis," opens with the invocation "(O) you sycamore tree of Nut, may you give to me the water and air which are in you!"[48] The same theme receives a fuller treatment in a textual addition to the late version of BD Spell 152, in which "the sycamore tree, lady of offerings" says to Osiris "I have come in order to bring my bread to you." This statement is directly followed by an invocation to the goddess *qua* tree:

O you sycamore tree of Nut, who refresh the Foremost of the Westerners[49] and extend (your) arms to his members: Behold, he is hot! <May you> give cool water

[44] ThT 158 (Doorway to Broad Hall, South Reveal, Right Part, Lower Register), in Parrot 1937: 111, fig. 42 (illustration); Zandee 1959–62: 63, fig. 11 (illustration) and 60–61 (commentary); Moens 1984: 21–22, §1.20 (discussion); Hugonot 1989: 201, fig. 177 (illustration); Keel 1992: 118, fig. 68 (illustration), 80, and 94 (discussion). An interesting variation of this theme is found in the so-called "Book of the Ba," a mortuary composition attested in two late Ptolemaic exemplars of the Book of the Dead, which features a vignette in which a flock of *ba*-birds settle in the branches of a sycamore tree flanked on either side by seated jackals and *bas* standing atop water-filled basins; see Beinlich 2000: 22–23, unnumbered plates [8–9] (P. MacGregor) and [14] (P. Berlin 10477, Teil 4). For general discussion of the representation of the *ba* in conjunction with the sycamore and its religious significance, see Žabkar 1968: 143–145; Baum 1988: 74–75. Some commentators have suggested that the association of the *ba*-bird with the water-bestowing sycamore may have derived from the Egyptians' observation of a common natural phenomenon, the congregation of birds on sycamore trees to forage for food and water; so von Bissing 1924: 217 and Buhl 1947: 92; cf. Assmann 1991: 69–70 for general remarks on the Egyptians' use of careful observation of natural phenomena for religious/symbolic ends.

[45] The various representational possibilities are enumerated in detail in Baum 1988: 67–72; see also von Bissing 1924: 212–216.

[46] For a full enumeration of the different goddesses who could fulfill this role, see Baum 1988: 85–86.

[47] For general interpretations of tree-goddesses as providers of the elements of life to the deceased, see Buhl 1947: 91–97; Gamer-Wallert 1975: Sps. 656–658; Hermsen 1981: 115–122; Baum 1988: 34–38; Keel 1992: 64–95.

[48] Text in Faulkner and Goelet 1994: pl. 16, ll. 8–9 from the left. For translations and discussions of this spell, see Buhl 1947: 85, fig. 5, texts hh, ii (text) and 91–92; Barguet 1967: 93; Lichtheim 1976: 122; Hornung 1979: 129–130 (translation) and 449–450 (commentary); Hermsen 1981: 116–117.

[49] This standard epithet of Osiris refers to his primacy in the realm of the dead (i.e., the West); see Bonnet 1952: 574; Zandee 1966: 10 and 35; A. B. Lloyd 1988: 59, n. to 123; *Wb.* 3, 305/14. From the New Kingdom on, this epithet was frequently interchanged with the variant "Foremost of the dead" (*Wb.* 1, 87/13; M. Smith 1987: 56, n. (c) to I/1); for Greek transcriptions of the latter, cf. Quaegebeur 1978: 253–254, exx. e and f.

to Osiris NN who is under the branches that give the north wind[50] to the Weary-Hearted One[51] in that seat forever.[52]

According to this passage, the goddess *qua* sycamore dispenses bread, cold water, and a cooling wind to the deceased, precisely the same triad of elements that are featured in late funerary offering formulae: "DN shall place bread in your belly, water in your throat, and the breath of life at your nostrils."[53] Worth noting here is the fact that water is only one of several gifts, including the bread and air, which the sycamore bestows upon the deceased: in this respect, the Egyptian scenario differs markedly from that of the gold plates, where water appears to be the sole object of concern.

Both of the passages just cited agree in making the sycamore tree the source of air and water: neither of them, however, breathes a word regarding the presence of an adjacent body of water. Although this absence can be interpreted simply as due to a lack of textual explicitness in evoking the *mise en scène* of the spell – after all, the invocations to the dom palm discussed above did not mention a pool and yet the associated pictures had one – it nevertheless directs us to a salient fact concerning the iconography of this scene, namely that the goddess *qua* sycamore tree is very frequently depicted as providing refreshment to the deceased *without* any corresponding body of water situated nearby.[54] Here, a significant

[50] The ancient Egyptians perceived the north wind (e.g., *mḥy.t*) to be, *inter alia*, a cooling wind – its appellations included "the cool wind" or "the cool breeze of the north wind" (*qb n(y) mḥy.t*; *Wb*. 5, 24/13–14) – and hence it frequently appears in contexts thematizing (post-mortem) refreshment. For discussion of the qualities attributed to the north wind, see Kurth 1986: Sp. 1267; Stricker 1956: 15–16; Gutbub 1977: 340, 343, 349.

[51] This epithet of Osiris, which recurs frequently in the mortuary literature, alludes, by means of a strikingly "physiological" metaphor, to his condition as a god who has died: its association of the lack of vitality with fatigue also exemplifies the frequent assimilation of death to sleep in mortuary literature. For discussion, see Zandee 1960: 81–85; 1975–1976: 24–25, comm. to 13d,e; Assmann 2005: 28–29.

[52] P. OIM 9787, cl, 39–40, 41–48 (T. G. Allen 1960: pl. XLVIII and p. 276); translation adapted from T. G. Allen 1974: 151.

[53] Barta 1968: 188, Bitte 25.c and 1 98, Bitte 25.b, who also lists the various lexical elements that could be used to expand the basic formula. The phrase is attested as early as the Coffin Texts: see CT 1, 56e–f. For an example outside of the standard offering formula context, see S. Leiden V 55, left-most column of lunette text (de Meulenaere 1962: 35, Afb. 64; cf. Erman 1915: 103–104).

[54] For examples of the tree without corresponding body of water, see, e.g., Hermsen 1981: 154, Abb. 3 (painting from tomb of king Tuthmosis III depicting Isis as sycamore and royal mother suckling the king; also reproduced, with parallels and discussion, in Keel 1992: 64–66 and 96, figs. 40–41); Keel 1992: 97, fig. 42 (TT 93, 18th Dynasty); 98, fig. 43 (TT 96, 18th Dynasty); 99, fig. 43a (TT 176, 18th Dynasty); 101, fig. 46 (S. BM EA 307, 18th Dynasty); 124, figs. 76 (TT 138, 19th Dynasty) & 77 (TT 1, 19th Dynasty); 125, fig. 78 (TT 16, 19th Dynasty); 126, fig. 81 (S. Berlin 7291, 19th Dynasty). Conversely, there also appear scenes in which the deceased is depicted drinking from a pool of water without a neighboring tree; see, e.g., the vignette to BD Spell 62, "a spell for drinking water in

chronological development should be taken into account. During the New Kingdom, scenes depicting the water-bestowing sycamore and/or date palm alone were used concurrently with scenes that included a pool in proximity to the tree.[55] However, from the Third Intermediate period through Roman times, scenes that feature the tree goddess but either visually reduce or altogether omit the pool come to predominate in funerary papyri,[56] tomb scenes,[57] grave stelae,[58] sarcophagi,[59] offering

the necropolis," in Lapp 2004: pl. II, lower left vignette (P. BM 9900, 18th Dynasty); the vignette associated with BD Spells in Ratié 1968: pl. XIV (top left vignette of topmost row) and p. 43 (P. Louvre III, 93, 18th Dynasty); cf. Moens 1984: 46–47, § 2.2.3.1.

[55] Examples with both tree and pool are enumerated and discussed in Baum 1988: 83–84, with nn. 402–410. See also Keel 1992: 70, 75–76, 77, 80–81, 94, 105 (figs. 49–50), 108–110 (figs. 52–55), 113 (figs. 58–59), 119–120 (figs. 69–72); for further collections of scenes from New Kingdom sources, see Parrot 1937: 107, figs. 35–39 and 111, figs. 40, 42; Hugonot 1989: 197–203.

[56] For examples of depictions of the tree without pool in 21st-Dynasty funerary papyri, see Piankoff and Rambova 1957: pl.8 and p. 97 (Papyrus of Nesytanebettaui [= P. Cairo 40017], seventh scene from the right), pl. 9 and pp. 105–106 (Papyrus of Nespakashuty [= P. Louvre 17401], third scene from right), and pl. 16 and pp. 145–146 (Papyrus of Neskhonsmes [= P. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna 3859], second scene from left = "scene four"); Niwiński 1989: pl. 47b (P. BM 10002 [the ring circumscribing the area in which the tree grows, within the perimeter of which are situated food offerings, probably represents the limits of the bed in which the tree was planted]). Such depictions are also found in (post-)Saite Books of the Dead: see Verhoeven 1993: Beilage II (P. Col. Aeg. 10207 [Saite], vignette at top right of col. 32); T. G. Allen 1960: pl. LXIX (P. OIM 10486 [Ptolemaic], vignettes under lines 458 and 462); Lepsius 1842: pls. XXII and XXIII (P. Turin [Ptolemaic], vignettes above BD Spells 57 and 59); Barguet 1967: 92 and 93, vignettes to BD Spells 57 and 59 (P. Louvre 3081, col. 28 [Ptolemaic]); Mosher 1992: 171, fig. 8, left-hand side of upper half (P. Louvre L3233 [Ptolemaic]); Lise 1979: 107, pl. 85, right-hand-side (P. Milan 1023, [Ptolemaic]). The pool of water is likewise absent from the vignette above the fourth column of the early Roman-period P. Louvre 3279 (Goyon 1966: 7–9 and unnumbered plate, vignette above fourth column from right). An extreme example is that of the righthand-most image in the series of vignettes above the fifth column of the early Roman-period P. Berlin 3162, which is reduced to the sycamore tree alone, without any accompanying pool, deceased, or goddess (see Frank-Kamenetzky 1914: Tafel II and Sp. 102, where he hesitantly but correctly identifies this as being "wohl der Lebensbaum von dem die Verstorbenen leben"). Conversely, the trees might be absent, while the pool remained, as in vignettes from the Book of the *Ba* that depict winged *ba*-birds drinking from a pool without any accompanying tree; see Beinlich 2000: 20–21, unnumbered plates [4] (P. MacGregor [late Ptolemaic period]) and [12] (P. Berlin 10477, Teil 4 [late Ptolemaic period]).

[57] Cf., e.g., the scenes from the Ptolemaic-period tomb of Siamun at Siwa (reproduced in Baum 1988: 81, fig. 18) and from the early Ptolemaic-period tomb of Petosiris published in Lefebvre 1923–24: I 124 and III, pl. XXV, 1. Note, however, that, in the latter case, the tree and goddess appear to be standing on a very low, thin rectangular form that may be an iconographic vestige of a pool.

[58] Cf., e.g., S. Cairo no. 22136 (Ptolemaic period?), published in Spiegelberg 1904: 67–68 and pl. XXII; Kamal 1905: pl. XXXVIII and pp. 117–119 (lower right corner of stela); S. Berlin 2118 (Memphis, Ptolemaic period), published in Schäfer 1902: with pl. I (partially reproduced in Baum 1988: 84, fig. 20), where it is more likely that the rectangular object on which the *ba*-bird stands is intended to represent a reed mat or some other form of platform rather than a (vestigial) pool of water. Note also the Roman-period stela from Denderah, in whose left-hand corner is carved the image of a lone sycamore without pool, deceased, or goddess (S. Cairo 31120, published in Spiegelberg 1904: pl. XI and p. 47).

[59] For examples from 21st-Dynasty Theban coffins, see, e.g., Wallert 1962: pl. XIII (Coffin Cairo Jd'É 29663); Niwiński 1999: pls. IV.1 (Coffin Cairo CG 6081, exterior left-hand wall of case, scene 4), X.2

tables,[60] and other objects of a mortuary character.[61] To be sure, one still occasionally encounters the association of the tree and body of water in funerary papyri of the Third Intermediate Period and later epochs[62] and echoes of it can perhaps still be discerned in a Ptolemaic-era offering table from Akhmim, where the grooved channel surrounding a tableau with two sycamores, once intended to hold libations, is decorated with striated lines representing water and, thus, assimilated to a pool or canal.[63] Nevertheless, the fact remains that later funerary monuments tended to favor scenes showing the deceased person receiving libations from a sycamore without

(Coffin Cairo CG 6079, exterior left-hand wall of case, scene 4); XIV.2 (Coffin Cairo CG 6241, exterior, left-hand wall of case, scene 4), XIX.2 (Coffin Cairo CG 6183, exterior right-hand wall of case, scene 4); XXVIII (Coffin Cairo CG 6190, exterior left-hand wall of case, scene 5). The colored rings surrounding the area at the foot of the tree in Coffins Cairo CG 6183 and 6190, within the perimeter of which stand offerings of food and drink, may represent the borders of the beds in which the trees were planted; at any rate, they do not represent bodies of water. Further examples from Theban coffins of the early 22nd and 23rd Dynasties are reproduced in Keimer 1931: 314–315, figs. 4–5 and pl. IV; see also the interior backboard of a 23rd Dynasty coffin from Thebes in Brunner-Traut, Brunner, and Zick-Nissen 1984: 126 (= Coffin Tübingen, Ägyptologisches Institut der Universität, 1500). In Coffin AEIN 1069 (22nd Dynasty, Thebes), published in Koefoed-Petersen 1951: pl. 42, reproduced in Baum 1988: 81, fig. 19, the deceased person's *ba* stands upon a thin rectangular base with a transverse stripe running through its center: this base is better interpreted as a mat than as a (highly reduced) pool of water. Early Ptolemaic examples from a coffin from Saqqara (Coffin Cairo 29301) are published in Maspero 1908: pls. I/1 (north face of lid, on either side of central winged Nephthys) and I/2 (south face of lid, on either side of central winged Isis).

[60] Note the various Ptolemaic-period offering tables from Akhmim published in Kamal 1909: 117–120, 122–130 and pls. XLI–XLIV (Cairo nos. 21.160–163; 21.165–169 and 23.171–172). For a general discussion of these tables, see Buhl 1947: pp. 93–94; some scenes are reproduced in Keimer 1947: 25, figs. 24–27. Although water is not explicitly depicted in proximity to the trees carved on the surfaces of these tables, it is likely that an implicit association with water was retained: not only were BD Spells 59 and 62 – spells intended to insure hydration of the deceased – carved upon them, but libation offerings were poured on the table, thus bringing bodies of water in the "real world" into contact with the images of the tree in the "depicted world" of the offering table. Whether this latter iconographic subtlety would have held any meaning for ancient observers not fully acculturated to Egyptian folkways is a question that cannot be answered for lack of evidence. For a rare example of a Late Period offering table scene featuring libation, pool, and tree, see Hugonot 1989: 193, fig. 162 (T. Berlin 17 038.B): interestingly, the pools of water depicted in this scene dominate the relatively inconspicuous trees.

[61] As, for example, the Late Period situla Louvre 908, whose scenes are reproduced in Parrot 1937: 115, fig. 43 and 119, fig. 44.

[62] For papyri from the 21st Dynasty, see, e.g., Piankoff and Rambova 1957: pls. 1 and pp. 73–74 (P. Cairo 133 [= Papyrus of Her-Uben A], fourth scene from right) and pls. 18 and p. 152 (P. Cairo 531 and 40016 [= Papyrus Tashedkhonsu], top lefthand quadrant of third scene from right). The latter scene, which associates tree and water, but in a scenario other than the bestowal of victuals to the deceased, is also reproduced in Lhote and Hassia 1954: pl. 169, right half. Further examples from 21st-Dynasty Thebes may be found in Niwiński 1989: pls. 32b (P. Cairo VII. 10223 [the dead person's *ba* drinks from a highly reduced pool, while the tree bestows offerings]); 43b (P. Cairo S. R. VII.10247 = Jd'É 339999 [the deceased woman drinks from a pool in which she wades, while two sycamore trees flank either side of the pool, their tips inclining inwards toward the deceased]). For the collocation of the tree and pool of water in a vignette from a late exemplar from the Book of the Dead, see Allen 1960: pls. XXII and XXIII (P. OIM 9787 [= P. Ryerson; Persian-Ptolemaic], vignettes above cols. XXXVII and XXXVIII).

[63] *CGC* no. 23.170, in Kamal 1906–1909: 128 and pl. XLI.

any associated body of water: the tree *qua* divine manifestation, which had always been the focal point of the texts, now enjoyed a virtually exclusive pictorial primacy as well.

At this point, it should be evident that underneath the common nexus of tree, body of water, and refreshment of the deceased, the "Orphic" gold plates and Egyptian mortuary texts and representations diverge in several important respects: it behooves us to examine the nature of these differences and to try to account for them. Immediately apparent is the fact that neither the bodies of water nor the trees correspond precisely to each other. Whereas the gold plates have a spring, the Egyptian scenes feature a garden pool; moreover, the gold plates speak of a cypress tree, while the Egyptian scenes depict a sycamore, date palm, or dom palm. Although Zuntz found these differences, especially that between the types of trees, to be a great stumbling block for any thesis of borrowing,[64] they are, in fact, easily explained by the differing physical and cultural environments within which our documents were composed. In Egypt, not only was the garden pool with surrounding trees a basic amenity of the gardens forming parts of the estates of the well-to-do,[65] but similar elements featured as elements of grave installations as well, with small pools being dug and trees planted in the vicinity of tombs:[66] in other words, the garden pool in the tomb scenes is but an idealized reflection of the realities of everyday life and an iconographic thematization of funerary practice. On the other hand, springs, which do not occur in the Nile valley, were a common feature of the Greek and Sicilian landscape and, thus, it is not surprising to learn that springs (and wells) were preferred sources of water among the Greeks.[67]

[64] Cf. Zuntz, 1971: 372: "this notion of a tree at the desired spring appears to constitute a far from obvious coincidence. It is, however, greatly impaired by the fact that the Egyptian texts and pictures always and exclusively [sic!] exhibit a sycamore and the Greek, with equal consistency a cypress – and there could not be trees more different than these two!"

[65] For general discussions of the layout of Egyptian gardens and the central importance of the pool of water therein, see Hennebo 1955: 177 and 187–194, esp. 193–194; Helck 1977; Wildung 1977: 376–377; Moens 1984: 34–44, esp. 36–38; Hugonot 1989: 158–159. Pools of water, designated by modern scholars as "sacred lakes," also played an important role in temple contexts; see Hugonot 1989: 49–50. Thiers 1999: 117 reviews textual evidence for, and duly emphasizes the importance of, sources for hydration in temple gardens in Saite-, Persian-, Ptolemaic-, and Roman-period Egypt.

[66] Textual and archaeological evidence for tomb gardens is collected in Wallert 1962: 130–133; Hermsen 1981: 105–108; Hugonot 1989: 169–205. Willems 2003: 426–431 offers a survey of tomb-gardens in Thebes, unequivocal examples of which date from the New Kingdom through the Saite period, and examines their ritual connections, while Assmann 2005: 221–225 discusses Egyptian conceptions of the role of these gardens in the afterlife.

[67] See Lincoln 1991: 52 with n. 19.

As for the trees, the sycamore, date palm, and dom palm were a prominent feature of the Nile valley landscape. They were shade trees which, to judge by tomb scenes, were a standard component of Egyptian gardens;[68] their fruits were used for food and medicine,[69] while their leaves and trunks served as materials for furniture and small crafts.[70] Given their ubiquity and cultural utility, it was only natural that, within the symbolic universe of the Egyptians, they became images, or better, manifestations of beneficent, protective, life-giving divinities.[71] By contrast, the cypress was not native to Egypt, although its wood was imported from the Lebanon for use in the production of furniture and coffins.[72] (The cypress grew abundantly in the Levant, southern Asia Minor, Greece, and southern Italy.)[73] Dark in color and possessing an aromatic scent, strength, and durability, cypress wood was used extensively in the Greek world for the construction of large structures, such as buildings and ships, and for the manufacture of boxes, furniture, and cult statues.[74] Significantly, because of cypress's resistance to insects and other vermin, it was also a favored material for the manufacture of coffins.[75] This latter point may help in part to explain why, within the Greek imagination, the cypress appears to have been associated with graves and the otherworld – an association that came into play in the inclusion of the cypress within the post-mortem tableau limned in the gold plates.[76] The differences between the bodies of water and trees in the "Orphic" and Egyptian materials, then, can be explained as reflecting divergent cultural preferences modulated by different ecological settings. Such an explanation, however, does not get us very far, since it could fit either a thesis of convergence or one of continuity: after all, cultural preference is operative both in instances of autochthonous

[68] The Egyptian name for the sycamore, *nh.t*, means "shelter" or "refuge," manifestly reflecting its function as a shade tree (see Buhl 1947: 80; Hermsen 1981: 72 and 119; Baum 1988: 36). On the sycamore as a component of gardens, see Baum 1988: 25–34; cf. Quack 1994: 169.

[69] On the use of palms and their dates as foodstuffs and medicaments, see Wallert 1962: 28–32, 37–44, 50; Germer 1979: 153–166; Moens 1984: 30–32, §§2.1.1.18–2.1.1.19, esp. (2) and (3); Baum 1988: 110; on sycamores, see Germer 1979: 113–119; Moens 1984: 29–30, §2.1.1.16; Baum 1988: 24.

[70] On the sycamore, see Hermsen 1981: 72–73; Moens 1984: 29–30, §2.1.1.16, esp. (5); Germer 1985: 25–27; Baum 1988: 23–24; on the dom palm, Wallert 1962: 50–53; Moens 1984: 31–32, esp. (5); Germer 1985: 234–235.

[71] On this point, see Buhl 1947: 80 and 97; Germer 1985: 26.

[72] On the relative scarcity of cypresses in Egypt, see Germer 1985: 9–10; 1986: 1455–1456.

[73] Meiggs 1982: 46; Olck 1901: Sps. 1909–1911.

[74] See Wiesner 1965: Sp. 3348; Olck 1901: Sps. 1912–1916; Meiggs 1982: 200–201, 293–294, 313.

[75] See Meiggs 1982: 293–294, who notes that "[t]he ashes of the Athenians who died in the first year of the Peloponnesian War were placed in cypress coffins, and in most of the best sarcophagi that have been found in the Russian Crimea the basic structure was in cypress."

[76] See Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 44, but cf. Zuntz 1971: 373.

development and in those of adaptation of a borrowed motif to fit a new cultural environment.

There are, however, further considerations that may tip the scale in favor of convergence here. First, there is the specification in the gold plates that the cypress tree is *leukē*, an adjective that can be translated either as "bright," "clear," or "white."[77] Whatever the precise meaning of this curious qualification may be, an explicit concern with either the color or radiance of the sycamore or dom palm is not, to the best of my knowledge, expressed in Egyptian funerary literature.[78] The brightness of the cypress, at any rate, must have been thought to make it conspicuous in the gloom of the netherworld, and this leads us to another, more substantive difference, that of function. In the gold plates, the shining tree appears to act as a distinctive landmark in the tenebrous underworld landscape, albeit one to be avoided by the initiate: it is a drink from the adjacent spring, it would seem, that constitutes the dubious "refreshment" of which the souls of the uninitiated partake. In the Egyptian texts and pictures, on the other hand, the tree – nothing less than a theophany – is at the very heart of the post-mortem refreshment, providing cooling shade, pouring forth fresh water, and tendering food-offerings to the deceased, while the associated pool, as we have seen, could be altogether omitted from pictorial depictions.[79] Obviously, the emphases are diametrically opposed: the plates stress the body of water, while the Egyptian documents stress the tree.

Finally, chronological factors must be taken into account. As discussed above, funerary papyrus vignettes and tomb-paintings depicting the tree with pool occur in the New Kingdom, but appear to fall out of fashion after the early Third Intermediate period (i.e., the early first millennium BCE), while the scene featuring the tree alone continues to be in use from the New Kingdom through Roman times. This is of some importance, for while it cannot be denied that *Aigyptiaka* – Egyptian or Egyptianizing artifacts – were making their way to the Aegean islands already at the start of the first

[77] Liddell, Scott, and Jones 1925: 1042a, s.v., note that the word is etymologically related to Latin *lux*, "light" and Guarducci 1972 favors the translation "shining," although Burkert 1975: 91, n. 21 claims that this nuance is contrary to normal Greek usage. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 45 observe that "la elección entre 'blanco' o 'brillante' es en realidad un problema de nuestras traducciones, no del término griego, que incluye ambas nociones a un tiempo." For further discussion, cf. Edmonds 2004: 49 with n. 59.

[78] The Egyptian word which most closely corresponds to the Greek *leukos* is the adjective-verb *ḥḍ*, "white, silver," which is used as a predicate of sunlight, silver, milk, etc. See *Wb.* 3, 206/14–208/6, which registers "white wood" (*Wb.* 3, 207/1), but no white trees. None of the representations listed in nn. 54–63 depicts the trees in question as white or radiant.

[79] Already observed in Zuntz 1971: 372.

millennium through Phoenician, Syrian, or Cypriote channels,[80] it was only at the time of the Saite Dynasty (664–525 BCE), that Greek cultural contacts with Egypt intensified, with the introduction of Greek mercenaries into the Egyptian army and the establishment of Greek settlements at the Delta sites of Daphnae and, especially, Naukratis.[81] It is altogether more likely that an iconographic motif used primarily in Egyptian tomb installations and mortuary papyri could have come to the notice of Greek observers living or traveling in Egypt during or after the Saite period, rather than earlier in the first millennium BCE when contacts between Egypt and the Aegean world appear to have been much more indirect and sporadic.[82] If one grants this assumption and recalls the chronological development of the Egyptian motif, then it follows that the version of the scene predominantly in use at the period of the most intensive pre-Hellenistic contact between Greeks and Egyptians would have been the one depicting the tree, but not the pool. This would tend to support the position that the origins of the motif of tree and body of water in the gold plates are probably not to be sought in an Egyptian *Vorlage*. Of course, given the lacunae in our knowledge of Greco-Egyptian contacts in the early first millennium BCE, one cannot place much weight on these chronological considerations alone; nevertheless, when coupled with the markedly different function of the trees in the gold plates and the Egyptian materials, they suggest that convergence rather than continuity may be the best explanation for their shared association of tree and body of water with the refreshment of the deceased. This, however, is not quite the end of the story, as we shall presently see.

Let us turn now to the second motif common to the gold plates and Egyptian texts, namely the guardians whom the deceased encounters at the pool of Memory. The situation is the same in all of the B-series plates: the initiate approaches the pool and is challenged by beings identified simply as "guardians" *(phulakes)*. These "guardians," whose identity is not specified further, ask him/her either about his/her identity or about the reason for his/her presence in the underworld: only a satisfactory answer on the part of the deceased will induce them to let him/her drink of the pool which they tend. The different texts vary in their formulations of this common scenario. The older plates give brief descriptions of the guards' position and the questions with which they shall greet the deceased. The most extensive of these (B10.6–9) is phrased thus:

[80] See de Salvia 1991: 337–338, as well as the studies cited in n. 21 above.
[81] Cf. the studies cited in n. 22 above.
[82] For summary overviews of the evidence for Aegean–Egyptian contacts between the 11th and 6th cents. BCE, see, e.g., Guralnick 1997; Helck 1979: 205–209; Hölbl 1981; 2000: 123–125.

Straight ahead you shall find cold water flowing forth from the pool of
Memory.
And there shall be guards over it *(epuperthen)*,[83]
and they shall ask you with understanding minds
why you seek the darkness of <glo>omy Hades.

On the other hand, the later, more laconic plates present us not with a description of the guardians but rather with vividly direct quotations of the questions, framed in epic diction, which they pose to the deceased: "Who are you? Whence are you?"[84] The older plates go on to assure the deceased that after he has uttered the requisite response, the guardians will indeed give him water to drink, whereas the Getty and Cretan plates end simply with the response of the deceased, thus both achieving an economy of space and evincing confidence in the efficacy of the prescribed formula.

When one turns to Egyptian funerary texts, even a desultory glance at the Book of the Dead reveals that this scenario of confrontation and interrogation by otherworldly guardians is a recurrent motif. It occurs most frequently in a group of spells intended to aid the progress of the deceased through a series of gateways, pylons, or mounds, ranging from seven to twenty-one in number,[85] through which he or she must penetrate in order to reach the presence of Osiris, the ruler of the netherworld.[86] This journey is not without its attendant dangers and obstacles: posted at the different gates and pylons are minor underworld deities, depicted in the vignettes as animal-headed humans, fully theriomorphic or fully anthropomorphic beings, holding knives, whisks, or wheat ears in their hands as they sit or stand by the doorways in their charge, guarding them against any intruders

[83] B2.5 also has *epuperthen*, whereas B1.5 has *epiprosthen* "in front of (the pool)." This textual alternation is discussed and explained in Zuntz 1971: 369, n. 5; 1976: 139–140; Janko 1984: 94.

[84] For the "epic" form of these questions, see Zuntz 1971: 363, at n. 3; Herrero de Jáuregui, Chapter 11 in this volume, esp. p. 274.

[85] See, e.g., BD Spell 144 (passage through 7 gateways necessary "for entering" to Osiris), BD Spell 145 (18th-Dynasty version: passage through 14 gates of the house of Osiris in the field of rushes; 19th-Dynasty version: passage through 18 gates; 21st-Dynasty version: passage through 21 gates); BD Spell 146 (passage through 21 "secret portals of the house of Osiris in the Field of Rushes"); BD Spell 147 (passage through 7 "gates of the house of Osiris in the west and the gods who are in their twin caverns while offerings are made to them upon earth"); and BD Spell 149 (14 "mounds of the house of Osiris in the Field of Rushes"); translated in T. G. Allen 1974: 120–121, 123–133, 137–139, 142–146; Hornung 1979: 276–316; Barguet 1967: 190–213.

[86] The aim is stated clearly in the colophon to BD Spell 147 in P. Louvre 3074 (= Pc [Naville]; 18th Dynasty): "to be said on arrival (at) the 7 gates. It is the entrance of this *akh* through the portals without his being turned away or kept from Osiris and the letting him be among the excellent *akhs*, so that he shall have power over the chief followers of Osiris. As for every *akh* for whom this is used, he shall exist there as lord of everlastingness in one body with Osiris (*mwᶜ ḥᶜ ḥntᶜ Wsir*). Do not use for anyone (else). Be very careful" (Naville 1886: II 376; translation adapted from T. G. Allen 1974: 139).

from the outside.[87] In order to pass by these guardians and enter through each gate, the deceased must demonstrate his fitness to do so; and this he does generally in two ways. First, operating on the principles that knowledge is power and that the name is an essential ontological component of every being, the deceased recites the names of the portals and their guard(s), revealing his knowledge of them and thereby establishing the superiority of his power over theirs, a superiority to which they must yield.[88] Second, the deceased presents himself as a being worthy of admission into the august presence of the lord of the underworld: this he does by identifying himself as someone who is ritually pure and desirous of gaining access to Osiris so that he might bring aid and comfort to this potent yet vulnerable god. Both of these strategies are well illustrated by the following passage from a twenty-first Dynasty version of BD Spell 145, in which the deceased, here identified as Horus, son and heir of Osiris, addresses the seventh of the twenty-one portals in the "House of Osiris":

"Hail to you" says Horus, "(o) seventh portal of the Weary-Hearted One! Make way for me, for I know you, I know your name, I know the name of the god who guards you. 'Storm-Cloud-Veiling-the-Weary-One, mourner-whose-desire-it-is-to-conceal-the-body' is your name. 'He-of-*ikn.t*'[89] is the name of the god who guards you. I am pure with those waters with which Isis and Nephthys purified

[87] The number of these divine guardians per doorway varies from spell to spell, with either one "doorkeeper" (*ỉry-ʿȝ*; so BD Spells 145 and 146); or a team of three, consisting of a "doorkeeper" (*ỉry-ʿȝ*), a "guard" (*sȝw*) and an "announcer" (*smỉw*) stationed at each gate (so BD Spells 144 and 147). For examples of vignettes, see, e.g., Lapp 2004, pls. 4–11 (P. BM 9900 [18th Dynasty]: top register, vignette for BD Spell 144/46); Faulkner and Goelet 1994: pl. 11 (P. BM 10470 [18th/19th Dynasty]: top register, vignette for BD 147 with three guardians; lower register, vignette for BD Spell 146, with one guardian); Clère 1987: pl. xv, scene above ll. 4–10 (Papyrus of Nesmin [Ptolemaic period]: truncated version of BD Spell 147). On the function of these guardians, who are essentially apotropaic protectors of Osiris, see Assmann 1989: 148, with n. 72.

[88] On the significance of the "name" as an essential constitutive element of beings, see Vernus 1982: esp. Sps. 320–321. For further discussion, see, e.g., Zandee 1960: 179–180; A. B. Lloyd 1989: 119; Guglielmi 1991: 9, and cf. the Roman-period mummy-tag formulae discussed in Quaegebeur 1978: 251–252 and 254, with n. 214. On the significance of "knowledge" of the underworld topography for the passage of the deceased, see Zandee 1960: 123; Kees 1956/1980: 76; Assmann 1989: 143–44; Willems 1989.

[89] Or: "he who relates to *ikn.t*". The same entity appears in BD Spell 146 as the doorkeeper of the seventh portal enumerated there (Budge 1910: II 241/2 and 245/12; Naville 1886 II pl. CLV ("Kapitel 144.146. u. Ueberschrift zu 148"; bottom register, first gate to left). The meaning of the term *ikn.t* from which the guardian's name is derived is unknown: the name *ikn.ty* is written without a determinative and thus does not provide any semantic clue. In the Saite-period P. Col. Aeg 10207, 78/7, the name is written *iwkn.t* with the "egg" determinative often following the name of goddesses in New Kingdom and Late Period texts: this has led the editor to suggest the translation "Du bist [die Göttin – TMD] Neith" for the name, at least in its Late Period guise (Verhoeven 1993: 110* [text] and 282 [translation]). This interpretation, which presupposes the reading *iw=k-<m->| | N.t*, is unlikely. Although the equation of a male entity *(=k* is the 2nd person masculine suffix pronoun) with the goddess Neith is perfectly possible within the framework of Egyptian theology

themselves when they conducted the crocodile-who-snatches to the entrance of the pure place. I am anointed with *knw*-oil and clothed in a garment; my scepter in my hand is an oar." "Proceed, for you are pure, (o) Osiris NN!"[90]

"I know you, I know your name" and "I am pure": these core statements constitute a kratophanic self-accreditation on the part of the deceased, to which the response of his interlocutor, here the gate itself, can only be "Proceed, for you are pure."[91]

The general resemblance of the situation in spells of this type to that of the gold leaves is obvious, but, as G. Zuntz did not fail to point out, there are differences in the specifics of their respective settings: in the Egyptian spells, the confrontation with the guardians has to do with passage through a gateway with no mention of water, whereas in the gold plates, the guardians are charged with safeguarding the pool of Memory, without any gates.[92] Although such an objection does not take adequately into account that, from a thematic point of view, drinking a draught from the pool of Memory – without which one cannot enter upon the sacred road reserved for "initiates and Bakchioi" – is no less a "passage" than traversing a gateway, it must be conceded that the guardian spells considered thus far could be construed solely as typological parallels to the gold plates: beyond the broad structural similarities of the response of the deceased to the presence of guardians, there is no other detail that would strongly suggest a trajectory from the one to the other. Nevertheless, before declaring the motif of the guardians to be yet another case of convergence, we shall do well to look at another text from the Book of the Dead, one which has often been cited *en passant* as a parallel to the gold plates, but the significance of which has not yet been fully appreciated.

(cf. Hornung 1963: II 180, nrs. 800 & 803; Bergman 1970: 78, with n. 4), its mode of expression runs counter to the typical grammatical structure used to assert identity with a god: one would expect **ntk N.t* "You (m.) are Neith" or similar. Rather, the group *ỉw-* is simply a graphic (or phonetic ?) variant of the initial yod (as already in Middle Egyptian, cf. Roccati 1988: 119), while the writing *-N.t* may simply be a phonetic reflex of *-n.ty*. The Ptolemaic-period form of the name, written *ỉmn.t* (cf. P. OIM 9787, CXIX/11 [= T. G. Allen 1960: pl. XLI]) has been hesitantly translated as "enfant(?) de Neith" (i.e. **ỉm-N.t*) in Barguet 1967: 194, with n. 13. However, it is likely that the element *ỉm-* is simply a graphic corruption of the Saite *ỉw-* (for a similar example of corruption featuring interchange between the graphemes for *w* and *m*, see Willems 1996a: 484, n. bp): indeed, it is quite likely that, by the Ptolemaic period, the name no longer held any meaning for the scribes charged with copying Book of the Dead texts.

[90] Text in Verhoeven 1993: 110 (P. Col. Aeg. 10207, 78/1–15); translation adapted from T. G. Allen 1974: 130.

[91] For a general discussion of this scenario at the gates, see Assmann 1989: 143–149.

[92] Zuntz, 1971: 375: "the guardians are at the fountain in the Greek, but at various gates in the Egyptian texts; the former knows of no gates; in the latter the refreshing water is not guarded, but readily offered . . . "

The text in question is BD Spell 58, sections of which also recur as part of BD Spell 122. The body of BD Spell 58 is worded as follows:

To be recited by Osiris NN: "Open to me!" "Who are you? What (sort) are you? Where did you come into existence?" "I am one of you (pl.)!" "Who are those who are with you?" "It is the two Meruty-serpents."[93] "Upon whom are you advancing?" "Upon the one who draws near the Beaten Path,[94] so that he might cause that I cross over to the mansion of 'The-One-Who-Recognizes-Faces.'[95] 'Collector of Bas' is the name of the ferryman. 'Dresser of hair' is the name of the oar. 'Thorn' is the name of the boat's bailer. 'Tested and Precise' is the name of the steering oar." The like is similar[96] when you (m. sg.) immerse yourself[97] in the pool, so that you

[93] Literally, *Mrw.ty* signifies "the beloved ones," presumably a re-etymologized form of the name of *Mr.ty* "The two (f.) singers" (see Guglielmi 1991: 9–10, 154–155). On these two infernal serpents, which fell into that ambiguous class of dangerous and potent "demonic" beings that, depending upon one's relation to them, could be either effective allies and guardians or redoubtable enemies, see the detailed discussion in Guglielmi 1991: 153–166. In the passage under consideration, the Meruty-serpents appear to function as protective deities stationed at a point of entry to the underworld, acting on behalf of the deceased (so Guglielmi 1991: 161–162 and 217, with n. 8), whereas they appear to take an inimical position vis-à-vis the deceased in BD Spells 37 and 38B, the former of which was expressly designed "to drive off the Meruty-serpents" (cf. T. G. Allen 1974: 45–48; Barguet 1967: 79, n. 1 to cap. 37).

[94] E.g., *msq.t*, a deverbal mim-formative noun from the root *sqi* "to strike" refers to the Milky Way (< *msq.t sḫd.w*: "the beaten path of the stars" in the Pyramid Texts). See J. P. Allen 1989: 7, with nn. 41–43; Guglielmi 1991: 161, n. 68; Willems 1996a: 263–270. A different interpretation that situates *msq.t* in a this-worldly mythographic geography, is given in Willems 1996a: 264–270.

[95] On this epithet, see Guglielmi 1991: 161, with n. 68, who notes that it appears to occur only in this passage and its precursor in CT Spell 395.

[96] This phrase poses cruxes of reading, translation, and interpretation that I have been unable to resolve. I read *mit.t=s twt* (a more likely segmentation than *mit.t stwt*), understanding the latter word to be a qualitative form of the verb *twt* "to be similar (to)" (*Wb.* 5, 257/1–12), here serving as adverbial predicate to the subject *mit.t*. The LiLi version of the precursor of this passage (CT v, 72b) and the parallel passage in BD Spell 122, add the prepositional phrase *n=s* "to it" after *twt*, yielding the clause "its like is similar to it." Whether one adopts the "short" form of the clause in BD Spell 57 or the "long" form in BD Spell 122, its reference is unclear and, accordingly, it has been understood in divergent ways by different scholars. Barguet (1967: 155, n. 1 to Chapitre 122) translates "de même ce qui lui est propre," and suggests that the expression means "et ainsi de suite," serving as a functional equivalent of our "etc." (more commonly expressed in Egyptian by the phrase *ḥmw.t-rȝ* "craft of the mouth"; *Wb.* 3, 85/1–2; Ritner 1993: 42–43, with n. 195). In this he is followed by T. G. Allen 1974: 54, n. 105, who glosses his translation – "its like (to be) added to it" – as "continue with more of the same," though the translation of the verb *twt* as "added" diverges from the meaning of the word currently accepted by Egyptologists. Note that both of these interpretations presuppose that the following verbal form *qrs=k* initiates a new sentence. On the other hand, Hornung 1979: 129, followed by Verhoeven 1993: 151, translates as "Seinesgleiches ist ähnlich": this is more accurate at the literal level than Barguet's or T. G. Allen's renderings, but leaves unanswered what the referent of the 3rd person feminine suffix pronoun *s=* would be. *Faute de mieux*, I have adopted Hornung's "literal" interpretation but cannot claim to understand the import of the clause.

[97] Following the interpretation of Hornung 1979: 129, I read *qrs=k tw* as a circumstantial *sḏm=f* form, and understand the verb *qrs*, which literally means "to bury" (*Wb.* 5, 63/11–64/14), as meaning "to immerse." The 2nd person masc. singular form of the suffix pronoun here is a crux, for it is unclear to whom it refers. Elsewhere in the spell, the second person plural is used with reference to a plurality of interlocutors: there is no indication within the text that any one of these has been singled out. (Note,

(pl.) might give to me[98] a jug of milk, a *šns*-loaf, a *psy*-cake, a large portion of meat in the Mansion of Anubis!"

This spell can be analyzed into three sections. The first takes the form of a dialogic exchange between the deceased and a plurality of beings who inquire about his identity and his origins: as several commentators have noted, here the formal similarity to the Getty and Cretan versions of the gold plates is palpable.[99] In response, the deceased claims that he is the same type of being as his interrogators with the assertion that "I am one of you (pl.)."[100] The second section, which actually is a continuation of the

however, that the LiLi variant of the CT *Vorlage* [CT v, 72e] does have a 2nd person singular pronoun, but in a text that has been garbled.) Alternatively, one might associate the 2nd person masc. reference to the deceased himself, with the immersion alluding either to a purificatory bath (cf. the references gathered in Zandee 1975–76: 34, comm. to 17b and 36–37, comm. to 17i; Kaplony 1992: Sp. 23, with nn. 185–186), assimilation of the deceased to the drowned Osiris (cf. Kaplony 1992: Sp. 23, with nn. 173–174), or assimilation of the deceased to an oar on a divine barque (cf. the references in Zandee 1975: 16, comm. to 10i and 22, comm. to 12c). Other BD versions have the textual variant *qrs k,w,i* (see, e.g., P. Col. Aeg. 10207, 28/14 in Verhoeven 1993: 39*), which can be interpreted in two ways. First, one can read it as a 1st person singular qualitative form *qrs=kwi* as Verhoeven 1993: 151, with n. 3 has done. This, however, requires emending the text to read <*iw=i*> *qrs=kwi* (cf. T. G. Allen 1974: 54): otherwise, the interpretation as a qualitative form would be ungrammatical, since it lacks the obligatory antecedent subject in the preceding clause (cf. Gardiner 1957: § 311; Lefebvre 1955: § 347) and is certainly not a case of independent use of the qualitative (cf. Gardiner 1957: § 312; Lefebvre 1955: §§ 341, 343), a comparatively archaic usage which occurs only in (past tense) narrative (Doret 1986: 57–63, 145). Alternatively, one could read it as a circumstantial *sdm=f* form with 1st person direct object, *qrs=k wi*, and translate "when you (m. sg.) immerse me." This interpretation, which is to be preferred here on grammatical grounds, returns to the situation of the CT precursor, with an entity (addressed in the 2nd person) placing the deceased (here in the 1st person as the speaker of the spell) in a body of water.

[98] E.g., *r rdy=tn n=i* (conjunctive preposition + prospective *sdm=f* + indirect obj.) in both the New Kingdom and Ptolemaic recensions. All versions of the CT *Vorlage* read *r rdi.t n=i* "in order to give to me" (preposition + inf. + indirect obj.). The presence of the prepositional conjunction *r* in the Ani version requires the semantically awkward subordination of the purpose clause with the preceding clauses. In later versions of the spell, this conjunctive preposition can be omitted (see, e.g., P. Colon Aeg. 10207, 28/14 in Verhoeven 1993: 39*), thus permitting reinterpretation as an independent optative clause: "May you (pl.) give to me a jug of milk, *šns*-loaves, *p(r)s*-bread (and) a large jar of meat in the house of Anubis."

[99] See Zuntz 1971: 374; West 1971: 64–66; Kingsley 1994: 3, at n. 18.

[100] For direct parallels to this locution, see BD Spell 81B (Budge 1910: II 40/2–3); TT 183 (text unpublished; translation in Assmann 2005: 60 at n. 45). The identification of a deceased person as a member of a group of otherworldly beings by means of the expression "one of" (*wꜥ m*) is well attested in Egyptian mortuary literature. Examples include PT Spell 606, §1697a (The collectivity of gods in the entourage of the sun god acclaim the deceased with the statement "One of us is coming to us!" [text in Sethe 1910: 395]); CT Spell 407 (at the end of "a spell for knowing the 7 utterances of (the goddess) Mehetweryt," the deceased declares "As for me, I am one of the gods" [text in CT v, 223h, B2L version]); BD Spell 1 (the deceased states "I am one of those gods of the royal tribunal who justified Osiris against his enemies on that day of judging the affairs" and "I am one of those gods whom Nut bore, who slay the enemies of the Weary-hearted one (i.e., Osiris) (and) hold back enemies from {him}" [text in Lepsius 1842, pl. I, ll. 1–3, emended according to Budge 1910: II 19/2)]); BD Spell 17 (the deceased announces "I am one of these gods who follow Horus" [text in Grapow 1915–17: 39/1 (New Kingdom version); cf. pp. 38/14 (Middle Kingdom

deceased person's response to his/her interrogators, consists of the recital of the name of an otherworldly ferryman, as well as a listing of the parts of the ferryboat that he operates: this enumeration again serves to present the deceased as a ritually knowledgeable, hence potent being, just as in the gateway spells discussed above, and thus confirms his ability to commandeer the vessel. The third and final section opens with a cryptic, opaquely phrased clause alluding to immersion in a pool and closes with a request that clearly articulates the aims of the deceased – to obtain assorted funerary offerings from his interlocutors.

At first sight, this spell appears to weave together disparate, somewhat ill-fitting bits of thematic bricolage: interrogation of the deceased by an unspecified group of otherworldly beings, the enumeration of the boat parts, and the hope for provisions in the beyond. To understand better its contents and significance for our theme, we must briefly consider its redactional history as reflected in rubrics and colophons. The earliest versions of the spell occur in the Coffin Texts (CT), mortuary spells inscribed for the most part on sarcophagi of the Middle Kingdom, many of which are direct literary precursors for the later Book of the Dead spells. In its earlier guise as CT Spell 395, it is labeled either as a "spell for descending to the ferryboat" or a "spell for bringing a ferryboat."[101] These titles identify it as a specific type of mortuary spell, which modern commentators have come to designate as "ferryman spells."[102] As this name implies, these spells, already attested in the Pyramid Texts, the oldest extant body of Egyptian funerary literature, were intended to obtain for the deceased passage on a ferryboat through the watery regions of the world

version) and 39/7 (Late Period version)]); BD Spell 148 (where it is said of the deceased: "As for every *akh* for whom one makes this written text (lit., "papyrus roll"), his *ba* goes forth by day together with the living; he has power among the gods, without being repulsed . . . ; the gods go around him and know him: then he is like one of them" [text in Verhoeven 1993: 122* (= P. Col. Aeg. 10207, 117/7–10)]).

[101] CT Spell 395 (CT v, 68a). Versions B2Lb and B2Lc have *rȝ n(y) ḥȝi.t r sšn* (var. *sḫn*) "spell for descending to the *sšn*-ferryboat"; while B1C and B5C have *rȝ n(y)ỉnỉ.t mḥn.ty* "spell for bringing a ferry-boat." For discussion of the term for the ferryboat used in the B2L versions, see Willems 1996a: 183 and 262.

[102] Classic examples of ferryman texts are CT Spells 118, 397–399; and BD Spells 98, 99A, 99B. Examples from the Pyramid texts, which differ substantially in their content from the foregoing, include PT Spells 359, 472, 475, 516–520; "ferry crossing" texts whose contents more closely resemble the textual strategies of the Coffin Text and Book of the Dead examples are PT Spells 473, 303. The "classic" Egyptological interpretation of these spells in the Pyramid Texts and Coffin Texts is presented in Kees 1956/1980: 73–76, 188–190, though many of the presuppositions and conclusions expressed there require modification in light of the reinterpretations advanced in Willems 1996a: 156–196, esp. 157–164; 1996b: 60–68. Further discussion, concentrating on the Book of the Dead examples, may be found in Assmann 2005: 132–134.

beyond to the Egyptian equivalents of the Elysian Fields.[103] Their central scenario is an encounter between the deceased person and the ferryman commanding the boat in which the deceased has to demonstrate, by means of answering questions posed by the ferryman, that (s)he possesses knowledge of the underworld and so is worthy of being conveyed to his/her desired destination.

The notion of passage appears to have been the defining idea of CT Spell 395, for in its later versions in the Book of the Dead, the rubrics and colophons allude not to its connection to the ferryboat, but rather to its efficacy as a spell for facilitating entrance into the otherworld. As BD Spell 122, it bears the title "spell for entering after going forth by Osiris NN in the necropolis"[104] while the colophon to the spell's other avatar, BD Spell 58, commends its utility in the following terms: "As for the one who knows this spell, he enters after going forth from the necropolis of <the goodly West>."[105] Although such statements certainly imply that the deceased will enjoy uninhibited movement, they have a more precise meaning. It is possible that, as some commentators have claimed, we must understand the necropolis here as a point of departure for the deceased on a journey toward some more central otherworldly location.[106] However, the sequence of actions – entering after going forth – as well as the terms employed,[107]

[103] In the Pyramid Texts and, to a certain extent in the Coffin Texts, the funerary geography underlying these spells appears to have been located in the sky, with the celestial regions imagined as being surrounded by, and composed of water (see J. P. Allen 1989). However, already in the Coffin Texts and more pervasively in the mortuary literature from the New Kingdom onwards, there was a tendency to diversify images of the afterlife, which could also be imagined as localized in an "underworld." For discussions of the otherworldly destination(s) of the deceased, see A. Moret 1931: 735, n. 25; Rössler-Köhler 1980: esp. Sps. 253, 259–260, 264 (n. 8), and 266 (n. 25); Demarée 1983: 223–224, 240–241; Assmann 2005: 213–214, 141–163, 232–233, 389–392.

[104] E.g., *r³ n(y) ʿq (m-)s³ prí.t;* cf. Lepsius 1842: pl. XLV; the accompanying vignette in this papyrus depicts the deceased standing, slightly stooped, in front of a hill with a gateway surmounting it.

[105] Faulkner and Goelet 1994: pl. 16, l. 7 from left; suppletion according to Budge 1910: II 170/9. The Saite version of the spell does not include the phrase "of the goodly West"; see P. Colon. Aeg. 10207, col. 28/15 (Verhoeven 1993: 39*–40*).

[106] Cf. the interpretation of the colophon to CT spell 87 (= CT II, 47b–48a) at Demarée 1983: 223 with n. 144. At the end of this text, the benefits conferred by knowledge of the spell are enumerated: "It means a going forth (*prí.t*) by a man, at his desire, from the necropolis. It means becoming a capable *akh* with Osiris." However, Demarée's claim that this means that "one becomes *ỉḫ* only *after* leaving the necropolis" (emphasis his) is not borne out by the grammatical structure of the text. "Going forth from the necropolis" and "becoming *ỉḫ*" are here predicates of bipartite nominal sentences, and thus there is no necessarily sequential connection between them: free movement out of the necropolis (ostensibly into the realm of the living) and being an *akh* with Osiris can be more aptly viewed as two coordinate benefits that one derives from knowing the spell.

[107] In a funerary context, the verbs "to enter" (*ʿq*) and "to go forth" (*prí*) are *termini technici* for the movement of a dead person's *bȝ*, the motile spiritual aspect of a dead person typically represented in pictures as a human-headed bird; thus the general title of the canonical form of the Book of the Dead, "spells of going forth by day (*rȝ.w n(y)w prí.t m hrw*)" alludes to the capacity of the deceased

strongly suggest a different interpretation, namely that the spell was intended to be used by the spirit of a deceased person who, already having been established as a citizen in good standing in the realm of the dead, might wish to travel for a time outside of the otherworld: the spell would then serve as a sort of netherworldly visa, allowing the spirit to return unimpeded to its necropolis abode.[108]

Such an understanding of the spell is helpful in that it directs us toward an identification of the hitherto anonymous interrogators of the deceased. As we have seen, the dead person responds to the questions about his identity and origin by claiming to belong to the same group as his interlocutors. If he is already a denizen of the realm of the dead who has merely been, so to speak, abroad, then this claim of affiliation with his or her interlocutors should identify them as other dead individuals now resident in the otherworld. This, in fact, is confirmed by a unique variant of CT 395, inscribed on a late Middle Kingdom coffin from Lisht, which frames the dialogic exchange at the beginning of the spell as a type of narrative, in the course of which the identity of the questioners is given:

NN says: "Open [for me]!" Then they, the *akhs* who are in the necropolis, say: "Who are you? [What] are yo{u}? Where did [you] come into existence?" NN says: "I am one of yo[u] (pl.)." Then they, the *akhs* who are in the necropolis, say: "Who, pray, are the ones who are with you?" NN says: "It is the two Meruty-snakes." Then they, the *akhs* who are in the necropolis, say: "Upon whom are you advancing?" NN says: "{Up}on the one who approaches the Beaten Path, in order that he might cause that I cross over to the temple of the 'Finder of faces'."[109]

to move freely in any place where (s)he might wish to go, a capacity bestowed upon him through the performance of the proper funerary rituals; see, e.g., CT Spell 225 (CT III 212b–d, T1L version): "Going forth by day by an *ỉḫ* to every place where his heart desires to be," cited in Demarée 1983: 226 at n. 168. For a general discussion of what "going forth by day" involved, see Assmann 2005: 209–234.

[108] On movement outside of the netherworld, see Koenig 1994: 263–264. The texts of the so-called "Letters to the Dead" – missives written to deceased individuals by family members or friends – as well as allusions in mortuary literature and sapiential texts, reflect the ancient Egyptian belief that deceased persons might manifest themselves in the world of the living either as helpers in times of trouble or as troublesome revenants; see Zandee 1960: 197–198; Demarée 1983: 267–275; Ritner 1993: 180–182; Quack 1994: 182; Assmann 2005: 158–163.

[109] CT V, 68g–70g, L1Li version. Noteworthy is the grammatical structure of the "frame statements" since both narrative and non-narrative verb forms are used. The utterances of the deceased are always preceded by the formula NN *dd=f*, which is best analyzed as a noun + circumstantial *sḏm=f*, a construction that typically expresses a general present or gnomic present statement (Doret 1980: 38–43; Loprieno 1995: 79; cf. Vernus 1990: 165, 172 and 191 [erratum sheet]); much less likely is the other possible interpretation as a prospective *sḏm=f* with focalized subject in frontal extraposition [Doret 1983: 43–44]: such a tense is not, strictly speaking, a "narrative" tense. The utterances of the questioners, on the other hand, are preceded by the contingent form *dd.in=sn*, which, in Middle Egyptian, functions as a sequential form marking the next stage in a

Here, the examiners of the deceased are identified as "the *akhs* who are in the necropolis." For the Egyptians, the term "*akh*" (*3ḫ*), related to a verbal root meaning "to be effective,"[110] designated deceased persons who had undergone the proper funerary rituals and thus were ritually "reanimated" and equipped with the magical power and the knowledge needed to pass successfully through the various menaces of the otherworld and to enjoy the company of the gods and other blessed dead.[111] Great gods, such as Re or Osiris, and lesser divinities could also be called *akhs*, thus sharing the same quality of effectiveness vouchsafed to the deceased: to be an *akh* was to participate as a full member in the divine world of the beyond.[112] Thus, the beings who here confront and interrogate the deceased before allowing him or her to "(re)enter" are but members of the community of the "transfigured" dead, to which (s)he, as a person who had been properly buried and furnished with the requisite spells, can rightly claim to belong.

Thus far, we have seen that the spell is concerned with passage into the netherworld and that it involves an encounter with a plural number of *akhs*, "citizens" of the underworld, apparently acting as guards. Now it is necessary to consider a final point, the rubric of BD Spell 58, which designates it as "a spell for breathing air and having disposition over water in the necropolis."[113] The reasons why the ancient redactors of the Book of the Dead chose to apply the text of this spell to obtaining air and water are not

series of actions and frequently occurs in narratives (as well as instructions). When occurring in narrative passages, the *sḏm.in=f* form has past tense reference; however, it can take on a "gnomic" present (or future) reference, as seems to be the case in our passage; for discussion, see Gardiner 1957: 345, § 429.2; Westendorf 1962: § 281; Vernus 1990: 114; Depuydt 1993: 247, § 32; J. P. Allen 2000: 302–303.

[110] Traditionally, Egyptologists have posited the primary meaning of the lexical root *3ḫ* to be "to be radiant," taking its other, more abstract meanings ("to be effective, to be useful") to be derived therefrom; see, e.g., Demarée 1983: 191, with n. 11 (with references to earlier literature); Friedman 1984–85; Assmann 1989: 136–137; 1991: 108 and 110; Ritner 1993: 30 with n. 130; Assmann 1999: 61. However, Jansen-Winkeln 1996 has recently presented convincing arguments that the root's primary meaning was not "radiance" but rather "eine Wirksamkeit besonderer Art, nämlich eine ohne erkennbaren Kausalzusammenhang zwischen Wirkung und Handlung oder Handelndem" (p. 215). For a recent overview of the *status quaestionis*, see Janák 2003: 61.

[111] For recent discussions of the concept, see, e.g., Zandee 1960: 174; Demarée 1983: 190–274; A. B. Lloyd 1989: 119–120; Assmann 1991: 108, 110, 186; Jansen-Winkeln 1996: 209–210; Janák 2003: 59.

[112] See Demarée 1983: 198–99, 219–238, and 239: "the concept of *3ḫ* is associated above all with the divine world and the Hereafter"; Assmann 1989: 136, with n. 17: "The AKH-sphere is a world of 'mythical' values and realities."

[113] See Faulkner and Goulet 1994: pl. 16, leftmost line. The same title was used for BD Spells 57, 59, 60 and 62 in the New Kingdom; see, e.g., Buhl 1947: 85, fig. 5, texts hh and nn. Budge 1910: I 167/6 and 13, 170/11, 171/4. This distribution did not remain constant in later times: in the Ptolemaic-period exemplar at Turin, for example, only Spells 57–58 bear this title, while 60–62 bear the rubric "spell for drinking water" (Lepsius 1842: pls. XXII–XXIII).

entirely clear, though one may suspect that the mention of a pool as well as the list of funerary offerings at the end may have played a role.[114] What is significant here is that we are thrust back to a theme already encountered in association with the dom palm, date palm, and sycamore – the presentation of air and water to the deceased. No less important is the fact that BD Spell 58 formed part of a series of spells specifically devoted to procuring air and/or water in the underworld. Although the selection of texts could vary from exemplar to exemplar, in the fullest "canonical" versions of the Book of the Dead, Spell 58 was preceded by three spells "for giving air to a man in the necropolis" (BD Spells 54–56) and another "spell for breathing air and disposing over water in the necropolis" (BD Spell 57) and followed by four spells for "drinking water in the necropolis" (BD Spells 59–62) and "a spell for drinking water (and) not being consumed in flame" (BD spell 63).[115] Now, the vignettes for these spells revolve around two images, a human being holding a miniature sail (which can be understood as an ideographic writing of the word for "breath")[116] and a human being drinking water, either from a pool surrounded by trees or from a beneficent sycamore tree. For example, in the famous New Kingdom copy of the Book of the Dead inscribed for the scribe Any, the vignette to BD Spell 58 shows the deceased and his wife drinking from a large body of water in which they are wading, and which is surrounded by trees, including a tall dom palm, while the neighboring BD Spell 59 is illustrated with the now familiar scene of a man sitting by a pool receiving sustenance from a sycamore.[117] Similarly, in the magnificent Ptolemaic-era Book of the Dead housed at Turin, one of our finest exemplars of the late "canonical" recension, the vignette to BD Spell 58 depicts a man holding a sail with his left hand, and a cup in the right hand, while the vignettes to the spells on either side depict the deceased, standing (BD Spell 57) and sitting (BD Spell 59) next to a sycamore tree that dispenses

[114] The association with the pool may well be a secondary feature of the text. The Coffin Text *Vorlagen* (CT v, 72e) to this passage mention boat names (*šḫn* in B2Lb; *šn* in B2Lc; *šḫn* in B9C) whose first and last radical consonants are similar enough to those of the BD version's word for "pool" (*swnn*) to suggest that the presence of the pool in BD Spells 58 and 122 may be the result of textual corruption (see CT v, 72e, B1C, B5C, B2La, LiLi versions, all of which end with a "water" hieroglyph denoting a body of water), a hypothesis already mooted in T. G. Allen 1974: 54, n. 106 and 95, n. 210 (in the latter case, he proposes an emendation back to *šn*!); Hornung 1979: 489, commentary to Spruch 122.

[115] See Lepsius 1842: pls. XXII and XXIII. For the general order of spells in the "canonical" Late-Period recension of the Book of the Dead, see the convenient listing in Mosher 1992: 153, n. 49.

[116] For *ṯ3w* "breath, wind, air" as the logographic value of the sail hieroglyph, see Gardiner 1957: 499, P. 5; *Wb*. 5, 350–352, s.v., see esp. the writing marked "m." on 350. On the importance of "breath" or "wind" to the deceased in the afterlife, see S. Morenz 1950: 470–472; De Buck 1947: 13.

[117] See Faulkner and Goelet 1994: pl. 16, left-hand side (P BM 10470 [18th/19th Dyn.]); reproduced in Keel 1992: 117, fig. 66a.

water to him.[118] Although, as we have seen, it is probable that the image of the sycamore tree in the Egyptian vignettes was not the direct model for the cypress and spring of the gold plates, it is nevertheless worth noting that, from the New Kingdom on, our spell occurred in proximity to images forming a nexus between tree, water, and refreshment.

By now, it should be apparent that BD Spell 58 contains the same complex of themes as the B-series gold plates, namely (1) passage into the otherworld, (2) interrogation of the deceased person by a plurality of otherworldly guardians to whose community he belongs and (3) the obtainment of water by the deceased. This is not to say that these common themes are articulated in the same manner or that the Egyptian and Greek texts correspond in detail. An obvious divergence lies in their respective treatment of theme (3). In BD Spell 58, the procurement of water by the deceased is stated to be the aim of the spell, but otherwise doesn't play any role in the unfolding of the mythic scenario: on the other hand, in the gold plates, the dispensation of water forms part and parcel of the mythic scenario, whose ultimate aim is admission of the deceased into a privileged part of the underworld.[119] Moreover, there are elements in BD Spell 58 that are completely absent from the gold plates, such as the theme of the ferryboat, clearly a legacy of the spell's earlier incarnation as a ferryman spell. Yet, despite these differences of emphasis and detail, the same basic themes are brought into conjunction in both BD Spell 58 and the gold plates and one is entitled to ask whether this is purely the result of convergence. In light of the facts that BD Spell 58 was still in use in the first millennium BCE and that images and ideas from Egyptian mortuary literature do appear in early Hellenistic writings about Egypt (albeit in a distorted fashion),[120] it is tempting to

[118] See Lepsius 1842: pls. XXII–XXIII. However, it should be noted that the texts of spells were not always exactly aligned with their respective vignettes on the papyrus. The latter could be physically separated from the former, as, for example, in the Saite-period P. Col. Aeg. 10207, where the texts of the spells in question form part of the 28th column of text on the papyrus, but the corresponding vignettes appear only at the top of the 32nd column (see Verhoeven 1993: Beilagen 10 [spells] & 11 [vignettes]). The reason for this was that the drawing of the vignettes and the inscription of the text were two separate processes liable to lapses in coordination on the part of the producers.

[119] Indeed, the relative importance of the motifs of "refreshment" and "admission" is here reversed: BD Spell 58 uses the motif of admission into the underworld as a means of procuring water, while the gold plates use the receipt of the water of Memory as a means of gaining admission into (a privileged sector of) the underworld.

[120] See Diodorus Siculus 1.92.1–5, a passage that purports to describe Egyptian funeral customs. Here it is recounted that on the day of interment, the mummified and encoffined deceased is placed in a skiff that is rowed across a pool (or: lake) *(limnēn)* by a ferryman whose name, in the Egyptian language, is "Charon" (cf. also 1.96.8, with Wilson *apud* Oldfather 1933: 315, n. 1; Burton 1972: 277, note *ad loc.*; Lincoln 1991: 62, with nn. 1–2), while on the other side of the lake sit forty-two judges arrayed in a semicircle. Before the dead person is placed in the skiff, anybody who wants to accuse him or her of

hypothesize that, *mutatis mutandis*, BD Spell 58 may well have been *a* source – not necessarily *the* source – of inspiration for the interweaving of the various motifs – the presence of otherworldly guardians, the confrontation of the deceased therewith, and his/her self-accreditation followed by a refreshing drink from an otherworldly body of water – found in the gold plate texts of the B-series. However, given both (1) the comparatively loose connection between the search for water and the interrogation by the guardians in the Egyptian spell and (2) the vexed question of how likely direct textual transmission from an Egyptian mortary text to hellenophone speakers

having "lived evilly" *(bebiōkyta kakōs)* has the opportunity to do so. Should anybody bring a complaint against the deceased, then the body of the latter is "excluded from the customary burial" (*eirgetai tēs eithismenēs taphēs*); if the accusation should seem false, however, then it is the accuser who is subject "to severe punishments" (*tois megalois prostimois*). On the other hand, if no accuser steps forward, then the relatives of the deceased extol the virtues of the deceased, "call on the gods below to receive (the deceased) as a companion of the pious ones" (*parakalousi tous katō theous dexasthai sunoikon tois eusebesi*) and venerate "the glory of the deceased, as one who is about to spend eternity in Hades with the pious ones" (*tēn doxan tou teteleutēkotos, hōs ton aiōna diatribein mellontos kath' haidou meta tōn eusebōn*).

This passage presents the reader with a pastiche of motifs well attested in Egyptian mortuary texts – a ferryman and passage by boat (cf. nn. 101–102 above), a posthumous judgment by forty-two judges (see BD Spell 125, which contains the famous so-called "negative confession" of the deceased, on which see Yoyotte 1961; Merkelbach 1993: 71–72; Assmann 2005: 77–83), and the characterization of those who dwell in Hades as "pious ones" (perhaps underlying the term *eusebēs* is the Egyptian term *ḫsy* ["praised one"], which was routinely applied to the blessed dead in texts of the Greco-Roman period [*Wb*. 3, 156/12–16; Erichsen 1954: 329–330], though it is just possible that lurking behind the association of the "glory" of the deceased with his or her inclusion among the "pious ones" is the Egyptian idea of the *akh*) – that have been transposed into an expressly this-worldly ritual context and presented as an ethnographic curiosity (albeit one that, in tandem with other observations about Egyptian mortuary practices, could serve to buttress observations on social morality; cf. Diod. Sic. 1.96). Although there are numerous points at which Diodorus' account does seem to reflect authentic Egyptian tradition, its accuracy has been the subject of considerable debate. Some commentators have viewed it as "an absorbing mixture of fact and fiction, an amalgamation of incidents drawn from actual funerary practice and from purely literary sources" (Burton 1972: 268) that, on the whole, cannot be considered a trustworthy guide to Egyptian funeral practices (so, e.g., Diez de Velasco and Molinero 1994). Others have taken Diodorus' description to be essentially accurate, arguing on the basis of comparison with the "communicative situations" depicted in Egyptian mortuary texts and apparent allusions to analogous practices in sapiential literature that it provides evidence for an actual "Schauspiel" performed at Egyptian funerals of the Late Period (see, e.g., Merkelbach 1993: esp. p. 81; 1999: 6; Quack 1999: esp. pp. 31–38, whose arguments and conclusions have been criticized by Stadler 2001, but more favorably received by Assmann 2005: 85).

Any assessment of the reliability of Diodorus' description of Egyptian funerals must reckon with the fact that the nature of his sources on Egyptian religion is uncertain. Most commentators have held that, although Diodorus himself visited Egypt in the mid-first century, the bulk of his account of Egypt is derived from Hecataeus of Abdera (fl. 320–305 BCE), who visited Egypt in the early Hellenistic period and wrote an extensive, idealizing work on the country (see, e.g., Murray 1970: 42–50, esp. 44–46; Burton 1972: 3–7; Burstein 1992: 45 with n. 1; cf. Graf 1974: 22–25, esp. 23; but cf. Oldfather 1933: xvii and xxvi; Burton 1972: 9–15, 33–34). Alternatively, one would have to posit that Diodorus based his description on his own first-hand observation of funerals, iconographic depictions thereof, and/or information drawn from local knowledgeable, Greek-speaking informants. However, as Stadler 2001: 335 and 344 has noted, neither option provides assurance that Diodorus' information was accurate or that he interpreted it accurately.

would have been,[121] one may well harbor doubts concerning such a hypothesis.

Let us turn now to the third and final motif to be discussed, the thirst of the dead. The gold plates give instructions to the deceased as to the response (s)he should give to the questions of the guardians at the pool of Memory. This response consists of three elements: (1) a self-presentation of the deceased, in which (s)he claims to be a "son" or "child of earth and starry heaven"; (2) a claim that (s)he is "dry with thirst" to the point of death; and (3) a request for a drink from the pool, to which, we are told in B1 and B10, the guardians readily accede. Again, there are variations among the different recensions of the tablets, both in the wording and in the structure of the response. Since only the structural elements are relevant for our immediate purposes, they alone shall be dealt with here. B1, B2, B10, and B11 present the statements

[121] Although commentators have suggested many different potential pathways for the transmission of Egyptian mortuary lore to Greek speakers (cf. n. 23 above), little attention has been paid to the specific factors involved in any such transmission, such as linguistic and social access of non-Egyptians to Egyptian texts. As regards language, Herodotus (2.154.2) informs us that Psammetichus I established a cadre of Egyptian interpreters for facilitating communication with the Greek mercenaries settled in the eastern Delta (cf. Mosley 1971: 3): given the general disinclination among Greeks to learn "barbarian" languages (cf. Werner 1992: 12; Thissen 1993: 241), it is likely that these Egyptian interpreters would have, in the vast majority of cases, served as linguistic mediators for the Greeks in Egypt: nevertheless, it is possible that at least some of these mercenaries, especially those who rose to higher ranks within the army, may have learned at least spoken Egyptian (Haider 2001: 200 and 205). It thus seems highly unlikely that Greeks would have had direct linguistic access to such texts as the Book of the Dead. Another barrier may have been social. A passage from BD Spell 148 admonishing its reader to secrecy typically has the text "it is a true mystery: the rabble (*ḫw-mr*; cf. *Wb.* 3, 18/10) should not know it in any place." In a Saite-period exemplar of the Book of the Dead from Herakleopolis, this passage is altered in a telling way: "it is a true mystery: the Greeks (*ḫ3wtiw-nbw*; cf. *Wb.* 3, 11/5; cf. Verhoeven 1993: 304, n. 4) should not know <it> in any place" (P. Colon. Aeg. 10207, 117/13, in Verhoeven 1993: 122* [text] and 304 [translation]). Although the substitution of "Greeks" for "rabble" may have been nothing more than a *lapsus calami* or a reflection of blurring in the pronunciation of two phonetically similar words, one cannot exclude the possibility that it reflects a sentiment of cultural withdrawal wherein texts containing information about sacred rituals are to be kept away from the hands of inquisitive foreigners (cf. Verhoeven in Haider 2001: 207, and in Grallert 2001: 192; Vittmann 2003: 246, with n. 43).

Despite such (potential) obstacles to direct Greek access to Egyptian mortuary texts, it would be wrong to assume that Greeks had absolutely no access to Egyptian mortuary beliefs. The sixth-century anthropoid coffin of Wahibre'emakhet, son of Alexikratēs and Zēnodotē, most likely from one of the Greek settlements in the eastern Delta, is decorated in a purely Egyptian manner and presupposes standard Egyptian mortuary beliefs (Pestman 1989: 139; Grallert 2001; Vittmann 2003: 203 and Tafel 22a): it thus offers impressive testimony that a person born of Greek parents in Egypt could acculturate to Egyptian culture to such a degree that he had himself buried in the Egyptian manner, although it tells us nothing about the extent of the deceased's knowledge of Egyptian funerary mythology. Furthermore, as many commentators have noted, observation of mortuary imagery, either as displayed in art and artifacts or as enacted in ritual could have provided Greeks (and other non-Egyptians) with at least some access to Egyptian mortuary beliefs (cf. Merkelbach 1999: 6; L. D. Morenz 2002: 82; Burkert 2004: 87; Assmann 2005: 85). Whether the Book of the Dead served as a source for such imagery remains one of the great imponderables concerning Egyptian-to-Greek cultural transmission.

of the deceased in the order given above: (1) self-presentation, (2) claim of thirstiness, and (3) request. By contrast, B3–B9 begin with (1) a claim of thirstiness unto death and (2) an apparently garbled form of the request. It is only after the guardians have posed their query – "Who are you? Whence are you?" – that the deceased recounts (3) his/her cosmic filiation. This recombination of the elements changes ever so slightly the emphasis of the response: whereas the argument of the longer text is that the deceased is of cosmic/divine origin and should be given a drink because (s)he is thirsty, the argument of the shorter texts appears to be that the deceased is thirsty and should be given a drink because (s)he happens to be a being of cosmic/divine origin. However that may be, the message of both arguments is essentially the same. Not only does the condition of thirst not befit the status of the soul of an initiate, but it threatens the soul's very being: thus, it behooves the guardians to permit it to drink from the life-giving pool of Memory, a privilege that allows the soul to progress further along the sacred road with fellow initiates, as we learn from the Hipponion plate.

Both the self-presentation of the initiate and the claim to thirst find analogies, in form and content, in Egyptian funerary texts. About self-presentation, we can be brief, for the identification of oneself as a divine being in the so-called *Ich-Stil* – "I am DN" – is a well-known commonplace of Egyptian mortuary spells, from the Pyramid Texts on through the end of Egyptian paganism.[122] Here it will suffice to quote a singularly good example from a Ptolemaic-period text, which demonstrates both the range

[122] See, e.g, Klasens 1952: 67, n. to M48; Morenz 1960: 242–243; Barguet 1967: 18–20; Thausing and Kerszt-Kratschmann 1969: 5; Zandee 1975–76: 16, comm. to 10h; Donadoni 1985: 21; Willems 1989: 33. A partial listing of passages containing self-identifications is given in Assmann 1975a, Sp. 427. Although the Pyramid Texts typically frame identifications of deceased individuals with gods in the form of 3rd-person statements (i.e., "This NN is DN"), examples of 1st-person predication do occur, as, for example, in the "älterer Text" of the Pepi I version of PT Spells 504–506 (Sethe 1910: 95–115). It should be noted that, relying upon a typology originally formulated by the New Testament scholar Rudolf Bultmann, Egyptologists have sought to distinguish the different kinds of *Ich*-predication found in mortuary literature (so S. Morenz 1960: 34, n. 77 and 243, n. 85; Assmann 1975a: Sp. 426 with nn. 13 and 15; but cf. Bergman 1968: 221 with n. 2). Above all, they have sought to distinguish between "formulas of identification" (whose function is simply and purely to identify the speaker as/with a god) and "formulas of presentation" (whose function is to answer the question, be it implicit or explicit, "who are you?"): the former of these would be more "magical" in nature, whereas the latter would be more "aretalogical" in nature, akin to the extensive self-predications found in temple texts and the Hellenistic Isis-hymns; so Assmann 1975a: 426–428, who does not specify an original "Sitz im Leben"; cf. Willems 1996a: 273, n. 1569 and, for further discussions of the *Ich-Stil* form, see Bergman 1968: 221–224, who stresses association with cultic ritual; Quack 2003: 332–333 and 364–365, who would situate the Hellenistic Isis-hymns, at least, in a ritual context as well. Although the distinction between formulas of identification and those of presentation is doubtless useful for distinguishing the different types of communicative situations depicted within texts containing *Ich-Stil* passages and perhaps reconstructing the ritual background to these texts, one should not lose sight of the fact that such text-internal distinctions

of identifications as well as the continued vitality of this form of magical argument in Egypt, long after the *Blütezeit* of the Orphic gold plates. In one of the spells found on the early Roman-period mortuary papyrus of a Theban woman named Tawa, she claims that:

> Geb is my father; Mut is my mother; my name is Osiris, foremost of the West. I am the Horus of millions of jubilees, ruler of a throne in every land. I am a great one, son of a great one (and) an important one, son of an important one. I am Horus, the heir of Re. I am the image of my father, Re. I am the fledgling of Shu and Tefnut. I am the one whom Geb and Mut bore. I am the august *ba* in Thebes; Amun is my name. I am the power of the god in every land, the one who arose as king of the gods. I shall not die anew in the necropolis![123]

Amidst the welter of accumulated self-presentations encountered here, we find the deceased not only identifying herself as a god (*in casu*, Osiris, Horus, and Amun) but also as the offspring of divine progenitors ("I am a great one, son of a great one ... I am the fledgling of Shu and Tefnut; I am the one whom Geb and Mut bore") – a type of self-identification formally very close to the initiate's claim of being a "son (or child) of Earth and starry Heaven."[124]

were of relatively little relevance for the use of these texts *qua* mortuary texts: what mattered, above all, was that the deceased person could claim divine identity that would allow him or her to make his/her way through the afterlife with a minimum of impediments.

[123] Text from P. Louvre N. 3279, ll. XXX–XXXVI (= 3, 1–6), published in Goyon 1966: 43–46 [text and translation] and plate. For a comparable accumulation of self-identifications, see, e.g., the Ptolemaic-period P. BM 10194, ll. 2–5 (Caminos 1993: 107, fig. 1 (text), 109 (translation) and 110 (commentary).

[124] Indeed, not only the form, but also the content of the self-identification is susceptible to an "Egyptian" reading. Traditionally, the deceased person's claim to be the "son (or child) of Earth and starry Heaven" has been viewed as reflecting Dionysus' twofold lineage from both divine and Titanic ancestors (see, e.g., Guthrie 1952: 177; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 62; Bernabé 2003b: 264–265; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal, Chapter 4 in this volume, pp. 76–77; Herrero de Jáuregui, Chapter 11 in this volume, pp. 280–281), although this has been countered by an alternative interpretation according to which the statement would refer to the pristine, integral condition of the cosmos in its primordial state, shared by the initiate (so Burkert 1975: 89; Edmonds 2004: 78–79); other interpretations are discussed in Ch. 5 of this volume by Betz. Now within the framework of Egyptian mortuary beliefs, non-royal deceased persons could, at least from the Middle Kingdom onwards, claim identity as (a form of) Osiris, the prototypical "dying god" and lord of the dead (see M. Smith 1987: 75–79, with literature). According to the standard divine genealogy of Osiris expressed in religious texts, Osiris was the eldest child (of five siblings) of the earth-god Geb and the sky-goddess Nut (see, e.g., S. Louvre C 86, l. 9, in A. Moret 1931: 737 [text] and 738, with n. 38 [translation and commentary]; for a diagrammatic representation, see Assmann 1991: 145) and, thus, a person asserting identity with Osiris could also lay claim to being a son of earth (*qua* Geb) and heaven (*qua* Nut), as recognized by Merkelbach 1999: 5; cf. Betz, Chapter 5 in this volume, p. 104, n. 10. In fact, such a claim is made *expressis verbis* in CT Spell 227, which variously bears the titles "Making a transformation into a successor (lit., seat-holder) of Osiris" (CT III, 260a, P. Gard. II) or "Making a transformation into Osiris" (CT III, 265e, Sq3C version). In this spell, over the course of which the deceased individual explicitly identifies himself as Osiris numerous times (CT III, 260c, e; 261d; 262c; 264c; 265d), (s)he states at one point "Geb is my father; Nut is my mother" (CT III, 264e–f) – *mutatis mutandis*, an almost direct parallel to the declaration in the B-tablets. It should be noted that this statement is not isolated, but occurs in other text types as well: transposed to the third person, it features as the fourth element in a titulary of Osiris in a late-Ptolemaic inscription from the

Within mortuary texts and indeed, Egyptian magical texts in general, this form of first-person self-presentation as a god served as a form of self-actualizing kratophany that heightened the spell-user's ontological status by verbally transposing him/her into the mythic sphere *in illo tempore*: the claim to divine identity in effect put the him/her on the same level as the beings possessing disposition over the world (at least at the moment of the spell's enaction) and so enhanced his/her ability to effect his/her ends.[125] In the case of the deceased, claims to divine status and origin could not but help in negotiating his or her passage through the perils of the otherworld.

Among the negative aspects of the otherworld, one that is routinely mentioned in mortuary texts is that of suffering thirst.[126] It is, in fact, the occurrence of this theme in the gold plates that has impressed many commentators as evidence of Egyptian influence on the plates, on the grounds that, since the Egyptians buried their dead on the desert escarpment hemming

temple of Denderah (Chassinat 1934: 101, ll. 4–5 [text]; Yoyotte 1977: 145 [translation] and 147 [commentary]), which is paralleled in a text inscribed on the back pillar of a Saite-period statue of Osiris (Statue Cairo 38368; see Yoyotte 1977: 146).

These parallels are, at first glance, striking and may seem to offer warrant for an "Egyptian" reading. However, there is good reason to regard such an interpretation with suspicion and, indeed, to reject the notion that the Orphic declaration derives from an Egyptian source. The fact that the B-tablets' formulation refers to cosmic regions ("earth" and "sky") whereas the Egyptian texts refer only to deities associated with, or personifying, those regions ("Geb" and "Nut") does not offer a stumbling block for an "Egyptian" reading, since the difference in formulation could be interpreted simply as a form of "naturalizing" textual adaptation on the part of the Greek authors. More troublesome, but not insuperable, is the fact that, whereas "heaven" was conceptualized as masculine and "earth" as feminine in Greek mythography, the situation was inverse in the case of the Egyptians, who represented the "sky" as feminine and the "earth" as masculine. This difference, which can be attributed, at least in part, to differences in grammatical gender distribution among lexemes in Greek and Egyptian (i.e., the common noun *ouranos* "heaven" is masculine in Greek and *gē* "earth" feminine, whereas the common noun *p.t* "heaven" is feminine and *t3* "earth", masculine in Egyptian), does not affect the "deep" structural distinction between "celestial" and "terrestrial," whose "surface" form, one might hypothesize, could be rearticulated according to cultural (and linguistic) presuppositions. The gravest obstacle to the "Egyptian" reading, however, is the fact that, although Greek writers were aware of Geb and Nut as parents of Osiris, they did not identify them with Ouranos and Gaia/Ge, but with Kronos and Rhea (see, e.g., Diodorus Siculus, 1.13.4; Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 12 [= 355D]; note, however, that Rhea could be identified with Demeter within purely inner-Greek contexts, including Orphic ones such as the *Derv*. P. xix.11 [West 1983: 81–82, 93, and 217]): in other words, those persons responsible for formulating the *interpretatio graeca* of Nilotic deities did not establish a genetic relation between the Egyptian and Greek earth-sky god(dess) dyads, but mapped the former upon a functionally different pair of entities in Greek mythology. This would seem to indicate that the parallels between the Orphic self-identification as "child of Earth and the starry Heaven" and the Osirian claim to be the son of Geb and Nut are best interpreted as constituting an interesting coincidence, rather than as indications of any dependence of the former on the latter.

[125] On the use of this discursive strategy in (non-mortuary) Egyptian magical practice, see Gardiner 1915: 265 (left column); Lexa 1966: 47–50 (some interpretations problematic); Koenig 1994: 62–63, 65–66; and, especially, Sørensen 1984: 9–10.

[126] For discussion and references, see Kees 1956/1980: 203; Zandee 1960: 67–68; 1975–1976: 40, comm. to 18a–c, and 22, comm. to 12d; see also Frandsen 1999: 136–137.

in the Nile valley, the dry, desiccating heat of this environment would lead easily to the idea that the dead would be plagued by thirst.[127] Others have argued that the "thirst of the dead" is not unique to the gold plates and Egyptian texts, but is, in fact, a theme of universal scope, being found in many diverse cultures – western and eastern European, Indian, south Chinese, Amerindian, and even Eskimo, not to mention ancient Greek – and that it can be explained by the universal experience that dying people suffer from thirst: in their view, there is no reason to posit a specific origin to a generally occurring motif.[128] The universality of the motif is not to be denied. However, one may well ask whether it was thematized in other cultures to the extent that it was in Egypt. It will be useful briefly to review the evidence.

As is well known, the Egyptian conception of the individual's existence in the otherworld was, to a certain degree, based on the projection of experience of this world into the next.[129] If the afterlife state entailed, on the one hand, a transfigured, enhanced, divine existence as an *akh*, it nevertheless was imagined as recapitulating many elements of this-worldly existence and one of these was the need for supplying the body with sufficient food and drink to keep it alive. The Egyptians were perfectly aware of this basic biological fact, as is reflected in an oracular amuletic papyrus of the Third Intermediate Period that was written in the name of the Theban divine triad of Amun, Mut, and Khonsu and detailing promises made concerning the future well-being of a young girl:

We shall open her mouth to eat and to drink: we shall cause that her heart desire to eat and to drink. We shall cause that her heart receive every*thing* (?), all flesh and every fish, which she shall eat. We shall cause that her heart receive all the beer and

[127] So, e.g., West, 1971: 66: "There is good reason to think in terms of a direct Egyptian connection . . . the longing for cool water is especially appropriate to an Egyptian." And, already, Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1932: 202: "Der Durst nach frischen Wasser weist viel eher nach Ägypten," discussed by Betz, Chapter 5 in this volume, at p. 109. See also Delia, 1992: 188–189 and, with far greater reserve, Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 57–58.

[128] See, e.g., Parrot 1937; Deonna 1939: 72–77; Zuntz 1971: 374. For a wide-ranging, but speculative, reconstruction of the "folk physiology" underlying libation practices that concentrates on Greco-Roman evidence, but adduces numerous parallels from other cultural spheres, see Onians 1954: 271–291 (and cf. 212–228). On the role of libations in Greek religion, see, in general, Burkert 1985: 70–73.

[129] For discussion of this point, see S. Morenz 1965: 176–183 (whose use of the term "Nationalreligion" with regard to the influence of the Nilotic landscape on the Egyptian image of the afterlife unfortunately obscures the fact that such "local color" is more a matter of cultural and natural ecology than of "national" feeling); A. B. Lloyd 1989: 123; Assmann 2005: 18–19 (who understands the images of the afterlife drawn from the world of the living as forming part of the "counterimages" created by the Egyptians in an attempt to negate the "negative" aspects of death).

all the water which she shall drink[130] ... We shall cause her to eat in order to live. We shall cause her to drink in order to be healthy.[131]

To eat and drink was to maintain oneself in life. Conversely, not to eat and not to drink – that is, to hunger and to thirst – was to invite death. The association between thirst and death is well brought out in a passage from a popular literary work, the Story of Sinuhe, composed in the Middle Kingdom, but still read in New Kingdom times and perhaps still circulating well into the first millennium BCE.[132] In the course of the narrative, its hero, Sinuhe, flees Egypt in the wake of a political upheaval and finds himself in a Levantine desert, where he begins to suffer thirst, an experience that he recounts in the following terms: "An attack of thirst overtook me (so that) I was parched and my throat was dry. I said: 'This is the taste of death.'"[133]

Thirst, however, does not only precipitate death in a living person, but also is itself characteristic of the state of death. This idea finds expression in two remarkable texts inscribed on grave stelae. The first of these, dating to the early Saite period,[134] is a lamentation placed in the mouth of a young girl

[130] Note that Papyrus Ebers, an extensive New Kingdom compilation of medical texts, contains prescriptions (P. Ebers 284–293) for stimulating appetite designated as "prescriptions of causing that the heart receive food" (von Deines and Westendorf 1962: 868, III s.v. *šsp*; Westendorf 1999: I 115 and II 600–601; cf. Bardinet 1995: 176 and 294–295). Cf. P BM 10730, ll. 4–7: "I shall cause that the bread which he shall eat shall be pleasant for him. I shall cause that <the beer (or: milk) which he shall drink> shall be pleasant for him" (I. E. S. Edwards 1960: pl. XVI and p. 48, with n. 2 [text and restoration]).

[131] P Turin 1983 (= OAD T.1), ll. 36–43; 48–49; see I. E. S. Edwards 1960: pl. XVIII (text) and pp. 52–53 (translation).

[132] The story of Sinuhe is attested on five Middle Kingdom papyri, two of which (P. Berlin 3022 = B; P. Berlin 10499 = R) are the primary textual witnesses for the composition, as well as a series of ostrakon texts from the New Kingdom that provide direct evidence for continued textual transmission; for lists of the relevant manuscripts, discussion, and further literature, see Simpson 1984: Sps. 952–953; Koch 1990: p. vi; Blumenthal 1994: 884–886; Parkinson 2002: 297–298 and cf. 53–55. Apparent citations in later period texts suggest that the text of Sinuhe may have been in circulation well into the Late Period; see Jasnow 1999: 196–198 (Quotations 3–4, 11), 204–205, with further literature. Editions are Blackman 1972: 1–41; Koch 1990. Standard translations include Lichtheim 1975: 222–235; Blumenthal 1994; Parkinson 1998: 21–53.

[133] Sinuhe, B21–22: *ḫr n(y) ib.t ỉs.n=f wỉ ntḅ=kwỉ ỉw=ỉ ḫm(w). dd.n=ỉ dpt mwt nn.* (Text in Blackman 1972: 13; Koch 1990: 20; translation in Blumenthal 1994: 890, §7, 4–5). The translation given here follows the grammatical analysis of Greig 1990: 302–303, ex. 43, but understands *ntḅ=kwỉ* and *ỉw=ỉ ḫm(w)* as "resultative" statives (J. P. Allen 1984: § 589; Lefebvre 1955: § 350; cf. Hornung 1992: 127, à propos of Sinuhe B 159f.). The alternative analysis of Depuydt 1993: 180 (Example 25), which is based on a different variant (R), interprets the initial elements of the first sentence as a verb form (*ḫr.n ỉb.t*) rather than a genitival noun phrase (*ḫr n(y) ỉb.t*). However, it founders in the B version, where the masculine pronoun *=f* in the verb form *ỉs.n=f* can refer only to the masculine infinitive *ḫr*: Depuydt's (1993: 180, n. 94) suggestion that, in this case, it refers to the feminine infinitive *ỉb.t* will find few adherents. For a further thematization of the association between the desert and thirst, one may note a passage from a hymn to Thoth in the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies, where the god is addressed in the following terms: "O well that is sweet for the man who thirsts <upon> the desert!" (Gardiner 1937: 86/5–6 [= P. Sallier I, 8/5]).

[134] So Lichtheim 1980: 58, and Jansen-Winkeln 1993: 41, following Munro 1973: 263–64, who dated the stela to the last third of the seventh century BCE; de Meulenaere, 1962: 134, on the other hand, prefers a date in the first half of the seventh century BCE.

named Istemkheb from the town of Abydos, who addresses the god Osiris, bewailing her lot:

> I worship your Ka, (o) Lord of the Gods (i.e., Osiris),
> because I have come to be as a child who has perished.
> This (fell) upon me, (although) I had been a young child without fault,
> one who spoke (and) it came to be,
> with the result that I am lying in the valley as a child and I am thirsty,
> although water is at my side.
> I was despoiled of my childhood without time having come to pass, . . .
> As for darkness, it is the abomination of a child. How it drew near upon
> me, while the breast was on my mouth!
> O Lord of the gods, ruler of eternity, to whom everybody approaches, give
> to me
> bread, beer, incense, and libations that have come from your altar:
> I am a young girl without fault![135]

Istemkheb's complaint that she is thirsty, despite the fact that there is water beside her serves as a resonant image of the reduced and helpless condition of the inert dead. The same theme, considerably amplified, recurs on a stela dating to the first century BCE, which belonged to a certain Taimhotep, the wife of the high priest of Memphis, where we find the following plangent description of the straitened existence of the deceased:

> As for the living water in which there is the nourishment[136] of every mouth:
> It is thirst to me! It is to the one who is upon the earth that it comes!
> Although water is beside me, I have become thirsty!
> I do not know the place {where}in {it} is, since I have drawn near
> to this valley.
> Give to me flowing water![137] Say to me "Your Self shall not be far
> from water!"

[135] S. Leiden v 55. Published in Boeser 1915: p. 13 and pl. 15 (excellent photograph); Erman 1915: 103–107 (text, translation, and commentary); de Meulenaere 1962 (photograph and translation); Jansen-Winkeln 1993: 44–45 (text, translation, and commentary). Translations in Lichtheim 1980: 58–59; Frandsen 1999: 136–137.

[136] Literally, *t(i)* "bread." For the reading, see Erman 1915: 108, n. 2 and 109, com. A, as well as the transcription in Frandsen 1999: 137.

[137] Literally, "water which goes" (*mw nty (ḥr) šm(i)*), on which see Kaplony 1992: 16–17 with n. 5. The water referred to here is doubtless Nile water, which was held to be revivifying and rejuvenating (Goyon 1966: 53, n. 5) not only because of the symbolic association of the annual inundation with renewal, but also because, in the symbolic universe of the Egyptians, it was believed to be derived from the primeval (and hence generative) water of Nun (see n. 36 above) and to be an embodiment of Osiris (see, e.g., Kaplony 1992: 23, with nn. 178–184). Unsurprisingly, then, a phrase that frequently recurs in mortuary contexts expresses the wish "to drink from the inundation waters of the river" (see Goyon 1966: 53, n. 4 and 70, with nn. 4–5; Ward 1978: 101–105, §§ 195–197, 200–202).

> Turn my face towards the north wind upon a bank of water:[138]
> Assuredly, then, my heart shall be cooled from its affliction.[139]

Here again, death is characterized as a condition of thirst and privation. The cooling effects of the "flowing water" of the Nile, whose movement represents life, are readily available to the living, but not accessible to the dead, who lie immobile, ensconced in their tombs in the desert valley, and thus are not in a position to allay their thirst. In effect, to thirst is to be truly dead.

The depictions of death given by Istemkheb and Taimhotep stress the terrifying helplessness of the deceased in the face of tormenting post-mortem thirst. The Egyptian answer to this was two-fold: (1) the production of funerary spells designed to enable the deceased to have disposition over water in the afterlife and (2) the presentation of offerings within the framework of mortuary cult. We have noted the existence of such funerary spells throughout this paper and there is little to add here. However, it is worth recalling that in Roman times, an echo of these spells is found in a formula written in Greek that occurs on grave stelae from Egypt, Alexandria, Carthage, and Italy, and reads "May Osiris give you refreshing water" *(to psukhron hudor)*:[140] as one commentator has correctly observed, this *psukhron hudor* is "a very special kind of cool water, one that bestows eternal life."[141] Despite the chronological gulf of half a millennium that separates

[138] Note the conceptual association between wind and water, which mirrors that between "air" (or "breath") and water in the rubrics to BD Spells 57–59 and recurs elsewhere in the mortuary literature (e.g., P. Louvre N. 3279, L–LII [= col. 4, 6–8], published in Goyon 1966: 51 [text], 54–55 [translation], and p. 70 [commentary]); brief remarks on this association may be found at Kees 1956/1980: 203.

[139] S. BM 1027 (formerly 147), ll. 17–19. The most recent publications of this text are Reymond 1981: 165–172 and pl. XII (a highly problematic edition containing a handcopy of the hieroglyphic text, translation, and rather poor photograph); Maystre 1992: 414–421 (hieroglyphic text and translation); Walker and Higgs 2001: 186–187 (excellent photograph, with brief commentary). Erman 1915: 107–115 remains a fundamental analysis of the inscription. For translations, see Lichtheim 1980: 59–65 (with bibliography of earlier editions); Ockinga 1988; Frandsen 1999: 136–137; Assmann 2005: 123–124.

[140] The most extensive treatment of this formula is in Delia 1992. In regards to the qualification of the water as "cold" or "refreshing" (cf. Guthrie 1952: 177), it is worth noting that the Egyptian lexeme *qbḥ(w)*, derived from the verbal root *qbḥ* "to be cold/cool" (*Wb.* 5, 26/5–12; related to *qb(b)* "to be cool/cold" [*Wb.* 5, 22/6–20]; cf. Edel 1955: § 428cc) could denote both "cold" or "cool water" (*Wb.* 5, 28/1–4) and "water offering, libation" (*Wb.* 5, 28/6–29/3), while the verbal root itself could take on the meaning "to present a libation" (*Wb.* 5, 27/2–4; cf. *qb(b)* "ditto" *Wb.* 5, 24/6–12) and the causative verb formed from the same root, *sqbḥ*, meant "to refresh" (*Wb.* 4, 304/14–15 [cf. *sqb* "to cool to refresh" *Wb.* 4, 304/12–305/18]).

[141] Delia 1992: 187. Cf. Zandee 1975–76: 3 regarding the intended effects of libations in the Egyptian mortuary cult: "Das Wasser verursacht die Auferstehung des Toten. Sein durch den Tod verwester Körper wird wiederhergestellt. Dieses geschieht durch das Überschwemmungswasser des Nils, ... Das Wasser des Toten wird dem Ausfluss (*rdw*) des Osiris gleichgesetzt. Dieser ist sein Leichensekret, das seine Lebenskraft enthielt. Dieses Wasser verursacht die Auferstehung des Toten und die Wiederherstellung des Körpers." See also Hermsen 1981: 119–120, who writes of the water offered

the Greek version of this Osirian formula from the gold plates,[142] the verbal and thematic parallels between the "cool water" of Osiris and that of the spring of Memory are striking and suggestive, for, in both cases, "cool water" is a *sine qua non* for post-mortem well-being.[143] In regards to mortuary cult, only one fact need be noted here: throughout the long course of Egyptian history, the practice of offering libations constituted one of its fundamental elements.[144] From the sixth century BCE through the Ptolemaic period, many demotic and, later, Greek papyri document the existence of professional mortuary priests associated with major cemeteries, whose responsibilities included preparation of a tomb, the interment of the deceased, and the presentation of mortuary offerings: the fact that the occupational designation of these priests is "water-pourers" (*wʿḥ mw* in

by the tree goddess: "Es ist das kosmische Wasser, das die Neuerschaffung und Fortexistenz des Toten bewirkt"; Moens 1984: 46, §2.2.2.3 and Hugonot 1989: 170, who note that, by virtue of its symbolic assimilation to the Nile flood and chthonic waters of Nun, the water of garden pools was believed to have regenerative effects. On the associations between Nile water and Osiris, see also n. 137 above.

[142] As Burkert 1975: 86 noted, "la distanza cronologica è tuttavia assai grande." This temporal distance is perhaps somewhat mitigated when one recalls that the famous "Carpentras stela," an Aramaic funerary inscription from Egypt (exact provenance unknown), dated to the fifth or fourth centuries BCE includes a version of the Osirian formula: the stela, however, was clearly erected by an Aramaic speaker who had adopted Egyptian religion as his own (Donner 1969: 42–44; Vittmann 2003: 108 [excellent photograph] and 110 with n. 81 [commentary]; L. D. Morenz 2002).

[143] Otherwise Zuntz 1971: 371, who argues in regards to the Osirian formula and the gold plates that "their similarity is confined to the wish for a cool drink for the dead; and this . . . is not enough." This, however, may be too reductionistic a reading, for it overlooks the deeper soteriological significance that, in both cases, the water possesses.

[144] For a general discussion of libation in ancient Egyptian mortuary cult, see Assmann 2005: 355–363. A linguistic indice of the importance of libations in the Egyptian imagination is the large number of idioms referring to the practice; see Kaplony 1992: Sps. 20–21, who lists eighteen expressions in all. No less significant, libation counted as "das wichtigste Element des Totenopfers" and so could metonymically represent, by itself, the full panoply of funerary offerings (notionally including other comestibles, such as bread, meat and vegetables) (Kaplony 1992: Sp. 22). Allusions to libation in mortuary texts are collected in Zandee 1975–76: 1–3 and 4–5, comm. to 8a. The cultural expectations that libations would form an element of mortuary cult are well expressed in a passage from a New Kingdom gnomological work known as the "Instructions of Ani" (P. Cairo CG 58042 [= P. Boulaq 4], 17/4–17/6; see Quack 1994: 290 [text], 94–95 [transcription and translation], and 159 [commentary]):

> Make libations (to) your father and your mother / Who are at rest in the valley
> Righteous is libation water done with respect to the gods:
> In short, they receive (it).
> You should not be negligent in public / While performing it (sci., the libation),
> So that your son may do it for you likewise.

These expectations continued well into the Late Period, as is apparent from the closing lines of a demotic inscription carved upon the Ptolemaic(?)-period mortuary stela of a childless woman from Akhmim that bears an image of the tree goddess dispensing water to the deceased (S. Cairo 22136, Demotic text, ll. 6–8 [= Spiegelberg 1904: pl. XXII and pp. 67–68; cf. n. 58 above]): "As for the one who shall read this stela, may he make libations for me!" For a parallel formulation, found on a Roman-period stela from Denderah bearing an image of a sycamore in its lower left-hand corner, see Spiegelberg 1904: pl. XI and p. 47 (S. Cairo 31120, Demotic inscription above scene, ll. 2–3).

Egyptian, *khoakhytai* in Greek) surely points to the continued prominence of libation, the cooling of the deceased, in the Egyptians' conceptualization of mortuary practice in the first millennium BCE.[145]

By now, it should be apparent that the self-presentation of the soul and its claim of thirst in the gold plates have no lack of parallels in the Egyptian materials, and it is tempting indeed to ascribe these parallels to some continuous tradition rather than to convergence. Even if one does so, however, there are two important respects in which the gold plates differ from our Egyptian sources. First, one must note their conjunction of the self-presentation formula vaunting the noble cosmic origins of the deceased with an admission of thirst. As discussed earlier, in Egyptian funerary texts, the self-presentation formula is essentially kratophanic: it is the self-revelation of the deceased as a being both divine and powerful that can effect what it wants and which accordingly will be allowed to pass through the gateway, will not suffer thirst, and will not die again. On the other hand, the soul's avowal in the gold plates that it is "dry with thirst and perishing" presents it as being of divine origin and yet as suffering a lack that must be remedied: it is only upon receipt of the water that it can enjoy fully the fruits of initiation. There is thus a discernible difference in tone between the self-presentation of the deceased in Egyptian mortuary texts and that in the "Orphic" plates. Second, one must consider what might be called the aspectual dimension of drinking. In the gold plates, the drink from the pool of Memory is essentially a punctilinear *rite de passage*: once the initiate has drunk his/her fill and entered upon the sacred road, there is, presumably, no further need for him/her to imbibe from it again in order to be, as it were, "recharged." On the other hand, the effects of the spells giving one disposition over water in the Egyptian materials were not restricted to the moment of entry into the otherworld, but were intended to maintain the deceased in a well-hydrated state in perpetuity.[146] The image of the deceased

[145] For discussions of the water-pourers/choachytai, see Bataille 1952: 265–66; Donker van Heel 1992: 24–25; Kaplony 1992: 22; Pestman 1993: 6–8, 425–426; 1994: 1 10–14; Vleeming 1995. Cf. the Mesopotamian office of "pourer of water," assumed by kinsmen of a deceased person, briefly discussed in Onians 1988: 285.

[146] It is at this point that the hypothesis sketched out in Merkelbach 1999 falters. According to it, the mortuary scenario of the gold tablets would have derived from Greek observations of ritual dramas performed at Egyptian funerals depicting the following mythic scenario:

> Die Ägypter stellten sich vor, daß der Tote einen langen Weg durch die Unterwelt nehmen müsse. Er würde durstig sein und nach Wasser lechzen. Er kommt zu einem Baum an einer Quelle und will trinken. Da treten ihm Wächter in den Weg und stellen Fragen. Erst wenn er diese richtig beantwortet, lassen sie ihn das kühle Wasser trinken und verliehen ihm Atem. Dann muß er vor ein Totengericht treten und eine lange Erklärung über seine Sündlosigkeit abgeben. Wenn diese

person seated while receiving water from a sycamore tree, is essentially a durative one, aptly mirrored by the closing statements of BD Spell 62, a "spell for drinking water in the necropolis": "eternity without limits has been given to me, for I am the heir of eternity (*nḥḥ*), to whom everlastingness (*ḏ.t*) has been given."[147]

Whereas eternity is without limits, we have reached those of our essay and, since our journey has been a long one, it may be useful to recapitulate the main points. As we have seen, the B-series gold plates and Egyptian funerary literature share a series of related motifs – an otherworldly landscape featuring a tree and a body of water from which the deceased might take refreshment; the presence of otherworldly guardians who confront the deceased and demand knowledge of his/her identity; and the satiation of post-mortem thirst – that can be explained as reflecting either convergence or continuity between the two corpora of materials. Chronological considerations have shown that it is unlikely that the motif of tree, water, and refreshment in the gold plates is directly derived from Egyptian tradition. On the other hand, analysis of BD Spell 58 has shown that the theme of otherworldly guardians could be brought into conjunction with that of access to cool water within Egyptian tradition, as is also the case in the gold plates: it is possible that this spell may have been one of the sources underlying the imagery of the gold plates, although differences in the articulation of the themes and questions regarding the intercultural transmission of mortuary texts invite interpretative prudence here. Likewise, both the formula of self-presentation and the avowal of thirst in the gold plates can be seen as reflecting forms and motifs that occur pervasively in Egyptian mortuary literature: however, they have been combined in a fashion quite unlike that found in the Egyptian texts.

akzeptiert wird, muß er sich einem Verhör unterziehen, seinem Namen nennen und seine Kenntnis des ägyptischen Mythos beweisen. Dann durchschreitet er das Tor, hinter dem Osiris thront. Dieser spricht den Toten als einen Reinen frei und entläßt ihn in das Binsengefilde, den Wohnart der Frommen. (p. 1)

This interpretation presupposes that the receipt of the water at the tree was held to be a unique moment in the ritual passage from life to the Field of Reeds prior to the judgment of the deceased, whereas the Book of the Dead treats the drinking scene as an ongoing part of the cycle of life in the otherworld without any reference to the judgment of the deceased: there is thus a fundamental difference between the significance of the drink in the gold texts and that in Egyptian texts that underlie Merkelbach's reconstructed funerary "Schauspiel", on which see n. 120 above.

[147] Naville 1886: 1 pl. LXXII, "Kapitel 61.60.62", ll. 9–10 (= P. Louvre 3092 [18th/19th Dynasty]). This passage is derived from the closing lines of CT Spell 357 (= CT V, 9f–i), which is discussed, with parallels, in Zandee 1975–76: 12, comm. to 9e, f, h (end) and 9i. The fundamental work on the Egyptian concepts of cyclical eternity (*nḥḥ*) and everlastingness (*ḏ.t*) is Assmann 1975b; see, in addition, Assmann 1977: esp. Sp. 48; 1991: 90–97; 1999: 18–19, 73.

The final word is perhaps best left to an ancient source. In a passage treating Egyptian burial customs, Diodorus Siculus[148] writes that, according to the Egyptians, Orpheus, after having come to Egypt and having observed their funerary traditions, "invented myths *(mythopoiēsai)* about the things that are in the underworld, imitating *(mimēsamenon)* some things and making up *(plasamenon)* other things on his own." I would suggest that, *mutatis mutandis*, this description of the origin of Orphic funerary practices is a plausible model for the line of development behind the gold plates, involving both Egyptian inspiration and Greek adaptation, innovation, and elaboration. It is all too easy to dismiss Diodorus' statement on the grounds that he or his source either was duped by native informants or succumbed to Hellenistic egyptomania.[149] Of course, this is possible. But one cannot exclude the possibility that Diodorus (or his sources) may have been right after all. However, if the latter was indeed the case, the evidence currently at our disposal concerning the question of an Egyptian background to the Orphic gold tablets is simply too ambivalent to allow us to ascend from the realm of possibility to that of probability, much less certainty.

[148] Diod. Sic. 1.92.3, a passage most probably derived from Hecataeus of Abdera (see Murray 1970: 146; West 1983: 26 and 53–54; Bernabé 2002c: 69 and 95; cf. n. 120 above). See also Diod. Sic. 1.23.2, 6–8 and 1.96.4–6, where Orpheus is credited with having introduced both Egyptian funerary practices and Osirian initiatory rites, under the guise of Dionysiac practices, into the Greek world, and 1.69.3–4 and 1.96.1–3, in which Orpheus is included among a list of legendary (at least in the eyes of modern readers) and historical figures from the Greek world purported to have visited Egypt and imbibed of its lore and wisdom. It is worth noting that all these passages contain verbal echoes of one another; cf., e.g., the use of *teletē* at 1.23.2,7 and 1.96.4,5; *paraballein* at 1.69.3, 1.92.3, and 1.96.1, 2; *metekhein* at 1.23.2, 1.69.3, and 1.96.1; *mythopoiein* at 1.92.3 and *mythopoiia* at 1.96.4; *mimeisthai* at 1.92.3 and 1.96.5. Diodorus Siculus also quotes fragments of cosmo-theological texts attributed to Orpheus at 1.11.3, 12.4 in support of his own interpretation of Egyptian religion. For discussions of Orpheus in Diodorus' Book 1, see Bergman 1968: 33, n. 1; Burton 1972: 99–101; on the Egyptian background of other "Orphic" elements in the Osiris myth as formulated by Diodorus (above all, the god's aretalogical "tomb inscription" at 1.27.5), see Oldfather 1933: 88, n. 3; Bergman 1968: 33, n. 2; 1970: 73–98. The most recent and comprehensive treatment of Orphic texts in Diodorus Siculus is that of Bernabé 2002c.

[149] So, e.g., S. Morenz 1950: 488, who views Diodorus' claim of Egyptian origins for Orphic afterlife beliefs as simply yet another stereotypical topos of hellenistic literature: "Die bedeutenden Anregungen und kennzeichnenden Merkmale, die sie [sc. die Orphik – TMD] von Ägypten erhielt, mögen den spate Autoren ein gewisses Recht geben, die da überliefern, daß Orpheus ein Ägypter, seine Lehre aus Ägypten entlehnt sei. Aber solche Ansetzungen sind loci communes der hellenistischen Überlieferung. Welcher Grieche von Rang würde Diodor nicht zum Ägypter, mindestens zum Ägyptenschüler gemacht?" More measured, but no less skeptical, about Orpheus' alleged journey to Egypt is Bernabé 2002c: 80–83. Cf. Assmann 2005: 232–233, who characterizes Diodorus' thesis of the derivation of Greek notions of the afterlife from Egypt as a conjecture, but points out that an as yet unpublished Egyptian text corroborates the ancient historian's claim that an area named for underworld domains – "meadows" next to an "Acherousian" lake in Diodorus' terms, the "fields of reeds" (*sḫ.t ỉ̈r.w*) in Egyptian parlance – was located to the southwest of Memphis (1.96.7); on the latter point, cf. Quack 2004: 494–495.

CHAPTER 7

Center, periphery, or peripheral center
A Cretan connection for the gold lamellae of Crete

Yannis Z. Tzifopoulos

Center and periphery are problematic terms and may be misleading, especially when applied literally to areas and metaphorically to ideas of the ancient Greek world, because center and periphery imply power and influence exerted and sustained. An area or city-state that may have been a periphery may gradually become a center and vice versa. The engraved gold lamellae and *epistomia* are a case in point.[1] The texts engraved on these artifacts express ideas that are usually characterized as peripheral to the central Olympian ideology and culture, whereas the provenance so far of these artifacts indicates that the periphery of the Greek world is privileged over the center: Macedonia, Thessaly, Crete, the Peloponnese, Magna Graecia. This is only partially true, however. Crete and Macedonia, located at the southern and northern borders of Greece, eloquently present the problematics of the terms center and periphery. Macedonia is a periphery before Philip and Alexander but with their leadership becomes a domineering center during the Hellenistic period and then gradually changes into a peripheral center. Crete, because of its geographical position in the middle of the wine-dark sea (*Odyssey* 19.172–173), is one of the centers during the Minoan civilization, but becomes a periphery during the classical period, although its laws and customs continue to exert influences. During the Roman and especially the Imperial periods, however, Crete becomes again one of the peripheral centers. Therefore, especially when these concepts are employed for the ancient Greek world – Rome relatively soon became the

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[1] For the corpus of the lamellae and *epistomia* see Edmonds 2004 and Chapter 2 in this volume; Parker and Stamatopoulou 2004; Graf and Johnston 2007: 50–65; Graf (in press) and Chapter 2 in this volume. Throughout the text incised on the lamellae and *epistomia* are referred to by letter and number according to their classification in Chapter 2 of this volume (Tables 2.2–2.7), except for lamellae in group G (see appendix to this chapter p. 199; also Tzifopoulos 2010).

center of the known world – center and periphery provide only a partial picture. It is far more accurate to understand the Greek world as composed of centers in the periphery and in the mainland, which diachronically may interchange because of dynamic interaction.

In like manner, ideologies and customs within a polis may become central from peripheral and vice versa for a variety of reasons. The ideology and eschatology expounded in the Bacchic–Orphic texts engraved on the gold lamellae and *epistomia* may have been peripheral to the Olympian ideology and religion of a polis. This idea, however, is only an educated guess and a working assumption for which strong evidence is lacking. The individuals who were buried with the incised (or not) lamellae and *epistomia* participated in the religion of the polis – at least there is no evidence to suggest otherwise – but at the same time chose to be initiated into one or more mystery cults, which ensured a special treatment in the afterlife. This need not be incompatible, nor need a tension between public and private be postulated. Moreover, even within the Bacchic–Orphic discourse on the afterlife, as it is presented by the incised (or not) lamellae and *epistomia*, there are strong similarities and divergences, which by definition invite two approaches: to emphasize the similarities, as is customarily done, and conclude that behind all these versions one dominant/central text was in circulation (a stemmatological approach); or to shift the emphasis from similarities to divergences, and allow for the possibility that within the same Bacchic–Orphic discourse on afterlife existed simultaneously dominant and peripheral ideas and texts, for which local, or even individual cultic and religious considerations may be accountable.

In what follows, the twelve gold lamellae and *epistomia* unearthed so far in Crete are discussed as a case study, which *mutatis mutandis* may shed light on the other areas of Greece and Italy from which the remaining gold incised lamellae come. First, the shape and the burial context, where there is one, of all lamellae and *epistomia* is addressed, because the five Cretan *epistomia* found during rescue excavations in Sfakaki present an interesting test case. Then, in addition to Günther Zuntz's Panhellenic epic *Kunstsprache*, a Cretan context is argued for the twelve Cretan lamellae and *epistomia*, which comprises similar or analogous cults and rituals especially in Phaistos, in the Idaean Cave, and in Eleutherna and environs. This Cretan context serves as a useful background especially for understanding the deviant readings in two of the nine texts. More importantly, it emphasizes that the Bacchic–Orphic discourse on afterlife disseminated through these texts, which was facilitated by their composition in a Panhellenic epic *Kunstsprache*, may have undergone modifications, dictated by local or even individual beliefs, cults, and rituals, as the deviant texts and the differences in burial custom suggest.

Since their publication, the first seven Cretan lamellae and *epistomia* (B3–B8, E1) have thrown in relief the problematics of the interpretative tension between local and Panhellenic cults, as well as between central and peripheral ritual and cult. The texts engraved on these paper-thin gold foils betray strong similarities to (and in some points are identical with) texts discovered in Italy, Thessaly, and Macedonia. In recent years five more gold *epistomia* (E5, B12, G2–G4), discovered in graves at Sfakaki, approximately 10 km east of Rethymno and 10 km north of Eleutherna, have increased the number to twelve.[2] This small group of twelve lamellae and *epistomia* presents a very interesting if bewildering case. When compared and contrasted with each other but also with the other similar texts from Italy, Thessaly, and Macedonia, these texts betray both strong similarities and strong differences. If these twelve deceased were not Macedonian, Thessalian, or Italian residents in the wider area north of the Idaean Cave and Eleutherna, then in this part of the island from the third century BCE to the first century CE some people felt strongly the need to be initiated into a mystery cult of eschatological beliefs and of promising life after death. These *mystai*, however, did not express this need in an identical way. Not only do the nine texts present differences, even if only in detail, but the burial context and even the shape of the gold lamellae and *epistomia* are also different.

The shape and burial context of the foils on which a text was engraved, and their significance, if any, has been treated so far only sporadically in discussions of these texts. In Crete lamellae and *epistomia* B3–B5, B7–B8, B12, E1, and G3–G4 are oblong, whereas B6, E4, and G2 are ellipsoid, in the shape of the mouth, indicating their use as an *epistomion*. This word has become a *terminus technicus* at least among the majority of Greek archaeologists, who have no difficulty in identifying paper-thin gold foils as *epistomia*,[3] using as a definitive criterion the position of the foils inside the grave.

The custom, however, of covering the mouth or the whole face of the deceased did not start with the incised lamellae, nor did it end in late

[2] As I was reading and correcting the manuscript in July 2007, two new incised *epistomia* (B13 and B14) were unearthed in the Mnemata site, one of Eleutherna's cemeteries whence come the seven engraved *epistomia* of Crete (B3–B8 and E1). Eva Tegou, in charge of the excavations conducted by the 25th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, graciously showed me the new finds, and kindly informed me of the progress since March 2007 of the ongoing excavations. As excavation is still in progress, which means that more incised lamellae may show up, we decided to present the new incised *epistomia*, and their archaeological context in the near future.

[3] Oikonomou (2004: 91–92), instead of the word *epistomion* employed earlier (2002), defines these objects as "burial jewels: the custom of mouth bands" (Νεκρικά κοσμήματα: τα ελάσματα κάλυψης του στόματος), on account of the meaning of ἐπιστοματίζω and the like (LSJ). Interestingly, however, the noun derived from this verb is the feminine *epistomis*, whereas *epistomion* appears not to have been a word in antiquity, as a search in *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* has shown.

antiquity. The *epistomia* date from the end of 5000 BCE until the second and third centuries CE, and their shapes are relatively few: oblong, rhomboid, ellipsoid in the shape of the mouth, and (very rarely) rectangular or triangular. The decorative motifs of the unincised *epistomia*, embossed or engraved, vary greatly.[4] The majority of these artifacts were thought to be jewelry, which formed part of the body's *kosmos*, until Pierre Amandry suggested that the lamellae are descendants of the Mycenaean gold masks.[5] Instead of covering the whole face of the deceased, people gradually employed (for economic and perhaps for more practical reasons) smaller foils for the forehead, eyes, mouth and ears.[6] Aikaterini Despoini (1998) has shown incontrovertibly, under the telling title *Gold epistomia*,[7] that, as the excavations of the cemetery at Sindos in Macedonia during 1980–82 and subsequent discoveries in graves throughout Macedonia testify, the paper-thin gold foils, which were found near the cranium or even on the chest of the skeleton where some of these may have slipped, and which were described earlier as diadems or pectorals, had been used as *epistomia*, mouth-bands. Shape and motif of these *epistomia* do not appear to be important factors, except that these mouth-bands, rectangular, oblong, or rhomboid, approximate the shape of the mouth. The drawing by Arnold von Salis offers an idea of the way in which these *epistomia* were fastened behind the head with a string passing through holes on either end.[8]

[4] Oikonomou (2002: 17–21; 2004) has gathered all the information of 239 published lamellae, the majority in gold and only 8 in silver (Oikonomou 2002: 43), which may be classified as *epistomia*, and studied this custom diachronically. For jewelry from the Neolithic period and its symbolism, if any, see the sensible remarks of Demakopoulou 1998; and Kyparissi-Apostolika 1998; 2001: 155–166; for Greek and Roman jewelry in general see Higgins 1961. For a brief, on-line overview on Greek burial customs see: www.ims.forth.gr/joint_projects/e-mem/burial_customs-gr.htm.

[5] Amandry 1953: 37; Laffineur (1980: 364–366) accepts as *epistomia* only those foils in the shape of a mouth; Oikonomou 2004: 102–103.

[6] For gold masks and gold foils covering the eyes and other body-parts, recently discovered in graves at Archontiko near Pella, Macedonia and dated to the archaic period see Chryssostomou and Chryssostomou 2001 and 2002. Another mask of solid gold, weighing more than half a kilogram, portraying a face with closed eyes and robust expression, has been unearthed in the outskirts of Shipka Peak, near the town of Kazanlak, Bulgaria, by a team of archaeologists led by Georgi Kitov (2005) (www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=39360); Williams 2006 (and www.nationalgeographic.com); for a second mask discovered by the same archaeologist in a Thracian mound near the village of Topolchene, in the municipality of Sliven, see the reports in: dsc.discovery.com/news/2007/07/16/mask_arc.html?category=archaeology; and in: www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=83027.

[7] The title of her article in modern Greek: Χρυσά επιστόμια; Despoini had excluded this group of gold artefacts from her earlier study *Greek Art: Ancient Greek Gold Jewelry* (1996).

[8] von Salis 1957: 98 Abb. 8; see also Vermeule 1979: 14; Garland 1985: 23–24, 138; and Kurtz and Boardman 1994: 210–213. Recently, from four graves of male warriors, dated in the sixth century BCE, gold *epistomia* were recovered in a unique shape which is reminiscent of the archaic smile, according to the excavators, Keramaris, Protopsalti and Tsolakis 2002: 233–234, 239 no. 3; the shape is almost identical to von Salis' drawing.

Despoini, however, suggested that in all probability they were sewed on the garment that eventually covered the head, but, as not all *epistomia* bear marks of a needle, they may have been simply put on the mouth or on the chest of the deceased. The grave-goods in some of these graves, which are published, do not delineate a recurrent pattern so as to substantiate a distinct burial custom for those deceased bearing an *epistomion*, incised or not.[9] As a result, the reasons for this custom or its presence in different areas and especially in different times cannot be ascertained, despite Lucian's satire, wherein the deceased is unable to open his mouth and speak, as his jaws are tied up by the cloth.[10] To state the obvious: people in different periods and in different areas felt the need to cover the face or, more specifically, the mouth of the deceased.

There is, however, a special category that deserves attention: the incised or unincised lamellae in the shape of certain leaves, a word which sometimes is also employed for the incised lamellae to describe thinness, regardless of shape.[11] Some of these leaves were used as *epistomia*, but not exclusively. Unfortunately, the excavators' preliminary reports seldom provide detailed information regarding the exact findspot of these gold leaves or of their accompanying grave-goods. Even when such information is provided, few students have paid attention to the archaeological context of the lamellae, in order to understand shapes, material, usage and texts.[12] Only nine (D2, E3, F2, F4, F5, F6, F7, F11, F13) incised gold leaves have been found so far in graves in Macedonia, in Thessaly, and in north-northwestern Peloponnese. A tenth leaf may have been written on in ink, now lost, as Pavlos Chryssostomou (1992) has proposed (G1, see Table 7.1, p. 193 below). What emerges from the excavators' reports is that, except for the unambiguous ivy leaves from Pelinna (D2), and for Philemena's myrtle leaf from Elis which is also employed as a *danake* (F7),[13] the shape of the remaining six leaves is either unknown or described as laurel-or almond-shaped. In his study of the shapes of the incised leaves that have been published, Matthew

[9] Oikonomou 2002: 6, 43–44, and 2004.

[10] Lucian, *Περὶ πένθους* 19.16–20: ὥστε μοι νὴ τὴν Τισιφόνην πάλαι δὴ ἐφ' οἷς ἐποιεῖτε καὶ ἐλέγετε παμμέγεθες ἐπῆλει ἀνακαγχάσαι, διεκώλυσε δὲ ἡ ὀθόνη καὶ τὰ ἔρια, οἷς μου τὰς σιαγόνας ἀπεσφίγξατε.

[11] Parker and Stamatopoulou (2004: n. 1) clarify the conventional use of the word. Actual (ivy-) leaves, incised with just a name, were also used as "mantic votes," as the scene on the krater by the Sisyphos painter in Munich indicates (Tiverios 1985: 49–56, pls. 5–6); for the ivy of liberation see Lewis 1990.

[12] Notable exceptions are: Zuntz 1971; Guarducci 1974; Bottini 1992; Graf 1993; Dickie 1995; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001; Oikonomou 2002; Roberts 2002; and Parker and Stamatopoulou 2004.

[13] Themelis 1994; on the name Philemena see Zoumbaki 2005: 354–355.

Dickie has argued convincingly that the literary sources and the archaeological record allow for only a few trees to be represented by these gold leaves: primarily myrtle and ivy, and less often olive.[14] All three are evergreen trees associated with fertility, vegetation, and the chthonian aspects of Dionysos, Demeter and Persephone, Aphrodite, and also perhaps Athena. In Macedonia, where more than half of the lamellae discovered are incised with only a few words and where no lamellae have been found bearing a longer text, shape did not matter, or so it appears. The lamellae of Hegesiska, Poseidippos, Philoxena, Palatha and the blank leaf (F11, E4, F6, F13 and G1) are myrtle or olive leaves, as most probably are the ones from the Peloponnese (F2, F4, F5, F7). The shape of the remaining lamellae with short texts is either rectangular or rhomboid. As Dickie discovered, and as Davaras, Despoini, and Kaninia also stressed in their studies of gold wreaths, there is an insurmountable difficulty in distinguishing especially between myrtle, laurel and sometimes olive leaves.[15] This may be due to the shape of these leaves, all of them being oblong with differences in details which the ancient goldsmiths could not or did not care to reproduce. The goldsmiths may have been interested simply in a more schematic representation, letting the customer decide, or as Dickie aptly put it, letting the "context determine which plant was imagined to be represented."[16]

Further evidence from the graves' burial context not only corroborates Dickie's interpretation of these as myrtle leaves, instead of laurel- or almond-shaped leaves, but provides an overall picture, more or less similar (for details of the grave-goods see Chapter 2 of this volume, Tables 2.2–2.7).[17] In seven cases, the deceased appear to have received offerings, sacrifices, and *enagismoi* in some form of ritual after burial, with Timpone Grande standing out perhaps as a case of a local hero-cult (A1–A4, C1, D4,

[14] Dickie 1995: 84–86.

[15] Davaras 1985: 180–182; Despoini 1996: 26; and Kaninia 1994–95: 105 with n. 21 and n. 22; for wreaths in Macedonia, in particular, Tsigarida 1993. In the archaeological record of Macedonia laurel-wreaths are scarce (so far only one has been uncovered in a grave at Europos, for which see Savvopoulou 1995: 399, 404 no. 14). Despoini (1996: 26) observed that laurel is the sacred tree of Apollo, whose relations with the dead and the Underworld are virtually non-existent, and that the oak-wreaths in Macedonia are related to Zeus, whose cult was boosted by the Argead dynasty, whereas olive-wreaths appear in graves of Amphipolis (and perhaps Potidaea), colonies of Athens and therefore associated with Athena. For excellent photographs of wreaths recovered from graves: a rare one of ivy (Despoini 1996: 47 pl. 1; add also Adam-Veleni 2000), four of myrtle (Despoini 1996: 48 pl. 2, 52 pl. 5, 53 pl. 6 (zoom of pl. 5) and 54 pl. 7), two of oak (Despoini 1996: 49 pl. 3 and 50–51 pl. 4), and one of olive (Despoini 1996: 55 pl. 8); to these add also Kallintzi 2006: 148 pl. 20.1.

[16] Dickie 1995: 86.

[17] There always will be an interpretative tension between textual and archaeological evidence and the methodological attempts to make sense of them both, for which see Morris 1987; the essays in Small 1994; and Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: especially 413–444.

E6, F10).[18] There are also four cases in which Dionysiac overtones emerge, irrespective of the text incised on the gold lamellae: D2 was accompanied by a clay figurine of a comic actor seated-on-altar in addition to the two incised ivy leaves placed over each breast of the buried female; in the Timpone Grande, two medallions with a female head looking like the Persephone on the Apulian vases were placed on the chest of the deceased (A4, C1);[19] the Pharsalos hydria bears a representation of the "abduction" of Oreithyia by Boreas, which reminds the excavator of the more familiar one of Persephone by Plouton and which "prepares and complements the text on the lamella" (B2);[20] finally, ivory fragments from the bier's decoration in Pydna represented figures from the Dionysiac cycle (F3).

In certain cases, the deceased was crowned with wreaths of gold or of gilt clay, which were less expensive (E4, F5, F6, F10, G1),[21] or, in two instances, with a diadem (D2 and F1). The presence of gold or gilt clay wreaths inside a grave in addition to an engraved lamella seems to defy explanation. Despoini has noticed that relatively few wreaths have been found in the hundreds of graves in Attica, despite the frequent references in literature and in inscriptions to honors individuals received, sometimes including a gold wreath, and other times including a myrtle crown after initiation at Eleusis.[22] Most of these, as with the gold athletic wreaths, would have been dedicated to the appropriate god after the celebration and some would have ended up in graves.[23] The number of wreaths, however, recovered from graves in Macedonia, indicates, according to Despoini, that the crowned deceased, re-enacting the *persona* of either 'an athlete' or 'a symposiast', or (less likely in Macedonia) 'an honored citizen', would have

[18] For the trapezoid constructions or exedrae used for rituals after burial see: Tsimbidou-Avloniti 1992; Savvopoulou 1992; and Malama 2000 and 2001. These exedrae, however, are not exclusively for deceased with incised or unincised lamellae, as they are also found elsewhere, e.g. in the Europos cemetery (Savvopoulou, Giannakis, and Niaouris 2000), and in other parts of the Amphipolis cemetery (Malama 2000 and 2001).

[19] Graf 1993: 254–255.

[20] Ricardo Olmos in Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 310–313, quotation at 313. Roberts (2002: 20–21) draws on Richter's (1946: 361–367) study of hydriae with related subjects, Dionysos and Ariadne, and Dionysos with a satyr, all symbolizing love and marriage.

[21] See also Vermeule 1979: 13–15.

[22] Despoini 1996: 26–28. Dickie (1995: 84–86) suggests that the myrtle crowns are reminiscent of Eleusinian initiation, but Parker and Stamatopoulou (2004) rightly stress that the texts on the lamellae defy any one association with a specific mystery cult.

[23] Kefalidou (1996) discusses representations of athletes in iconography. Chaniotis (2005a: 50–55) argues that *stephanosis* accommodated a variety of purposes from the Hellenistic period onwards, each time with different symbolism and meaning. Scafuro (2005) discusses instances in inscriptions, which prescribe that wreaths were to be dedicated to gods, and that statues of gods were to be crowned by wreaths. Günther (2003) examines the crowning with wreaths of the prophets in inscriptions from Didyma as an immortalizing self-representation.

certainly expected to attain eternal life among the blessed.[24] The metaphor of the foot-race and the crowning of the victorious 'athlete' is employed in lines 9–10 of the lamella from Thurii (A1): ἱμερτο<ῦ> δ' ἐπέβαν στεφάνο<υ> ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι. According to Zuntz,[25] the line is spurious because it is repeated in lines 12–14 of the same lamella, even though he admits that *stephanos*, the normal prize of victors, is appropriate for the occasion, and that it is used elsewhere, again metaphorically, to denote purpose and distinction. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal have discussed in more detail the literary references to events for which a wreath was employed and have concluded that the wreath-metaphor, rich in symbolism, may at the same time stand for mystic initiation, athletic triumph, and symposium.[26] But what about the deceased (especially in Macedonia) in whose graves both an *epistomion* and a wreath have been recovered?[27] Is it sheer coincidence, or is this *stephanosis* nothing more than the material sign of the lines in the Thurii text A1? Does this connote not only a metaphorical but also an actual event of the initiation? Would this burial practice in Macedonia thus allow us to associate the texts of group A with the ones in groups B and E? Whatever the case, the coincidence is indeed remarkable.

These differences in the burial context of the deceased with a lamella or *epistomion* may be compared to the excavated part of the Sfakaki cemetery for a rule of thumb, although, at present, the nature of the evidence is such as to allow only for assumptions and educated guesses (the previously published lamellae from Eleutherna were chance finds).

It appears that, as with the other lamellae, the shape of the *epistomia* was not crucial, as in addition to those in the shape of the mouth (E4, G2), even rectangular gold foils (G3–G4) could very well serve as *epistomia* (B12 was discovered in a disturbed grave). Of the fifty-six burials excavated so far, five graves, whose context cannot be called Dionysiac, contained gold *epistomia* (B12, E4, G2–G4). The overall picture of "Men and Women, Rich and Poor" (to borrow Graf's title)[28] that emerges from the graves where lamellae

[24] Despoini 1996: 28. [25] Zuntz 1971: 319 n. 2.

[26] Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 165–173, 241; and also Guthrie 1993: 180–182. Seaford (1986: 23–25) discusses the roundness of the wreath and the association of its origin with Prometheus. Kokkinia (1999) associates the ritual of roses (*rhodismos*) over the grave during the Roman period with the *rosalia* and *parentalia*, and also with the wreaths offered to the dead in Greece.

[27] Soueref (2002) has excavated graves dated to the late archaic period, in which together with an *epistomion* amber beads were found inside or on the mouth; for two probable cases in Athens see Theochari 2003. Wreaths or parts of them, most often gilt clay but also gold, are very often recovered from graves in Macedonia and are usually dated to the Hellenistic period, as can be seen by a perusal of the archaeological reports published in the volumes *Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη*.

[28] Graf 1993: 255.

have been found is not clear, as the evidence is inconclusive and perhaps misleading. In terms of gender, males and females are equally equipped with the necessities for their eternal trip. There is no evidence to suggest any preferences, besides the usual, of males or females regarding certain types of offerings or concerning the texts incised. In terms of affluence, richer graves may give an impression of a "Dionysiac context," while poorer graves may allude to an "Orphic/Pythagorean" one. The archaeological finds at the Thurii graves (A1–A4, C1) are moderate if not austere in comparison to the finds in some graves in Macedonia, but grave-goods at Thurii may have been of less importance as compared to the tomb's actual construction and the later ritual over the tumuli. Even so, as Themelis and Touratsoglou have shown convincingly with regard to the Derveni grave, generalizations and *prima facie* conclusions should be resisted. The discovery of the papyrus in Derveni grave A led to the conclusion that the deceased was an Orphic follower. The richness, however, and the strong Dionysiac character of the grave's archaeological context stand in sharp contrast to the Orphic–Pythagorean austere life and to its more moderate means. As has become evident only recently, "Orphism" and Dionysos are not, after all, mutually exclusive.[29] The graves with a lamella at Hipponion, Thessaly, and Sfakaki constitute an intermediate stage between the "rich" burial customs in Macedonia and the "poor" ones in Thurii. The grave-goods recovered from the five graves with a lamella in the Sfakaki cemetery indicate that the deceased were of moderate means. These five graves are not among the richest of the fifty-six excavated so far, but they are richer than the pit-graves, and the overall picture of the undisturbed graves is that of a careful and well-ordered burial but with no extravagance.

The Sfakaki *epistomia* together with their grave-goods demonstrate similarities in burial customs – whether this might also indicate familial relations of the deceased must remain a conjecture – but at the same time, they militate against generalizations. Of the twenty-six graves in Sfakaki studied so far, which include those with *epistomia* B12, E4, and G2–G4, twenty-two contained burial-coins. Of the five graves with *epistomia*, coins were also discovered in two graves (E4, G2). This may be accidental, but it may also be that the deceased with *epistomia* E4 and G2 and their relatives felt strongly about the burial-coin practice, as most probably also did the deceased with lamellae D2, D4, E4, F2, F4, F5, G1.

[29] Themelis and Touratsoglou 1997: 148–149; Laks and Most 1997; Oikonomou 2002: 48–49. Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou 2006: 3–5. See also Nilsson 1957: especially 116–147; and Burkert 1987.

Three unique (thus far) examples in Pieria, Macedonia bring together the use of the burial-coin practice with the mystic *symbola*. Matthaios Bessios recovered from two graves in Pydna two gold coins of Philip II incised with a male and a female name: Andron and Xenariste, respectively (F9 and F8); the coins were found in the mouths of the deceased, buried in two almost identically decorated graves. Dimitrios Pantermalis has published a photograph of a small gold disc on which the name Epigenes was incised with dotted letters from Macedonian grave V in Dion (F12).[30] Coins on which personal names are incised are extremely rare: either because of a lack of a gold lamella, or lack of time, or for some other reason, the relatives(?) of Andron, Xenariste, and perhaps Epigenes employed two gold coins and a small gold disc (as a token, or as a pseudo-coin?), on which they engraved the names of the deceased. These three examples appear to combine, in a manner so far unique, the burial-coin with the gold *epistomion* practices, a fact that Margherita Guarducci and Petros Themelis had already postulated for B3–B8 and for F7, respectively.[31] In this regard, the deceased with *epistomia* G2–G4 probably employed these three unincised *epistomia* both as pseudo-burial-coins, because of their intrinsic value, and at the same time perhaps as unincised tokens of initiates for passage and transfer to a special place of the Underworld.

The five *epistomia* from Sfakaki attest that differentiation in burial customs may have been both a diachronic and a synchronic phenomenon, as they seem to embrace diversity or, as Sourvinou-Inwood (1995) has argued convincingly, individualization rather than homogeneity. Among the five graves at Sfakaki in which a deceased was buried with an *epistomion*, three different practices are evident. This variety suggests that, even though these people were inhabiting the same area, practiced similar burial customs, became *mystai* in an Bacchic–Orphic cult promising life after death, and lived one sometime between the third to the early first century BCE (B12), another between 20 BCE and 40 CE (E4), and three in the first century CE (G2–G4), they nevertheless developed a more personal attitude towards death.

[30] Bessios 1992: 247, and Bessios in Tzifopoulos 2010; Pantermalis 1999: 271 (*SEG* 49.703); Chryssanthaki-Nagle 2006. Bernabé (2004–07: fasc. 2 75–79 496 F) is cautious and does not include the three names incised on the coins and the gold disc in the group of the other lamellae with short texts, but he mentions Andron and Xenariste in the endnote (78), among other texts suspected of being "Orphic"; skeptical are also Graf and Johnston (2007: 28 no. 18).

[31] Guarducci 1939: *IC* II: 314–315; and especially 1974: 8–18; Zuntz's skepticism (1971: 335–336 n. 2); and Themelis (1994). A comparable but not entirely similar case is presented by a gold rectangular tablet with an inscription addressing Serapis, found inside a skull in a cinerary urn in Columbarium III at Rome. Although not Orphic, this phylactery, with its address to Serapis, presents a curious case of either a Charonian obol or a mystic *symbola*, according to Jordan 1985: 162–167.

This individualization is also evident when the texts themselves are studied. The five deceased buried with *epistomia* in Sfakaki manifest three different attitudes towards death (or more if the presence of a burial-coin is another criterion), just as the deceased buried with lamellae and *epistomia* in Macedonia, Thessaly, and Italy: those with an unincised *epistomion* (G2–G4), those with an *epistomion* incised with greetings to Plouton and Persephone (E4, similar to E1 published from Eleutherna), and the deceased with an *epistomion* incised with a long text (B12, similar to B3–B8 published from Eleutherna).

The unincised *epistomia* (G2–G4), provided they fulfill the same function, may be understood as implying a content analogous to the texts of the other lamellae and *epistomia* from Crete, Macedonia, Thessaly, and Italy. Their being left blank need not present a problem, as this would be a perfect, if extreme, example of symbolic epigraphy.[32]

The two short texts (E1, E4) address Plouton and/or Persephone with the verb χαίρειν, incised or understood. On account of Plouton's presence, these lamellae have not traditionally been classed with the other incised lamellae and *epistomia* B3–B8, B12. According to Margherita Guarducci, the presence of Plouton may have been due to a conflation of Orphic beliefs, as expounded in the gold lamellae with the long texts, with some sort of local cult and ritual in Eleutherna, chief among them the mystery cult of Cretan Zeus in the Idaean Cave. Günther Zuntz accepted Guarducci's explanation, but modified her formulation: the conflation of Orphic beliefs was not with a local, but with a general tradition. By focusing on the overwhelming similarities of the Cretan texts with the ones from Italy, Thessaly, and Macedonia he understood them as part and parcel of a Panhellenic epic *Kunstsprache*, through which was transmitted an eschatological discourse on life after death.[33] It is hard to deny that Plouton's role is kept very much in the background in the long texts of group B (in the texts of group A he is addressed euphemistically), but at the same time his presence is always implied as the husband of Persephone and as Lord of the Underworld. Zuntz, as it turns out, was right about Plouton's presence: it is due not to a local but to a general tradition, as more pieces of evidence have since appeared.

[32] Bodel 2001: 19–24; see further Skouteri-Didaskalou 1997; Chatzitaki-Kapsomenou 1997; Frankfurter 2004. The performative aspect of symbolic epigraphy is the only one shared by curse-tablets, amulets, phylacteries, and the gold lamellae. For this aspect of the texts see Obbink and Calame in this volume.

[33] Guarducci, *IC* II.xii.31bis: 171; Zuntz 1971: 384.

Until recently, the known examples from Macedonia addressed only Persephone (E3 and E4), but a new lamella (E5), contains a text where Plouton alone is addressed as *despotes*.[34] Moreover, the Apulian volute-krater, attributed to the workshop of the Darius painter whose themes and motifs are usually inspired from dramatic works, presents a unique narrative scene at its center:[35] Hades with sceptre in his left hand is seated upon a throne inside his palace and extends his right hand to Dionysos, who, coming from the right side, "grasps" it with his right hand; to Hades' left side, Persephone is standing with a torch in her hands, and Hermes is holding a caduceus and resting against one of the columns of the palace. The connection with Euripides' *Bacchae*, noted by Trendall and Cambitoglou, and the scene's eschatology are evident enough. The dominant role of Plouton, previously attested only in two Cretan texts (E1 and E4), is corroborated by E5 from Macedonia, and is also evident on the main narrative scene of the Apulian krater, although admittedly the deceased buried with this krater may not have been a *mystes* in a Bacchic-Orphic cult, similar to the one of the deceased with the incised lamellae and *epistomia*. In these instances Plouton's prominence does not jibe well with the tradition in which Persephone is the key-figure, but it accords perhaps with another, final(?) stage of the initiate's Underworld journey, in which final approval and consent depended ultimately on the Lord of the Dead. If such a stage existed, the long texts on the lamellae and *epistomia* offer no proof, except for the cryptic form of E1, E4, and E5.

Turning to the seven longer texts from Crete (B3–B8, B12), two motifs of the long versions from Thessaly and Italy seem important enough to be incised: (a) a deadly thirst that is quenched by drinking from a specific, revitalizing spring, whose location appears to be a crucial factor;[36] and (b) the recognition of the deceased's identity through certain questions and answers. Zuntz proposed that the Cretan texts contain the absolute

[34] Hatzopoulos 2002, 2006 and 2008.

[35] The krater was found in Tomb 33 at Timmari (Basilicata) and was acquired by the Toledo Museum of Art (1994.19). Since its publication by Trendall and Cambitoglou (1992: 508 no.41a1), it has attracted much attention and rightly so: Graf 1993: 256; Johnston and McNiven 1996: 25–36, pl. 1; Gavrilaki and Tzifopoulos 1998; Tzifopoulos 2002; and Avagianou 2002 in relation to Thessalian inscriptions to Hermes Chthonios. Kefalidou (2005–2006) discusses afresh the iconography and she tentatively suggests for the painter's inspiration some dramatic work like the *Minyas* or *Nostoi* or even another painting such as Polygnotos' in the Knidian Lesche at Delphi. Chicoteau (1997) discusses a similar interaction with and/or influence of Bacchic–Orphic beliefs on a fresco in a Roman catacomb. For depictions of the Underworld on Apulian vases see Schmidt (1991, 1996, and 2000, the Toledo scene on pp. 96–97); and Carpenter in press. For Bacchic themes see Rauch 1999.

[36] On the motif of thirstiness and the Egyptian parallels see Dousa's balanced and convincing discussion of the evidence in this volume.

minimum form, what he termed "the cardinal words" of the longer, expanded versions, but concluded that "the Cretan text, however solid and primordial its substance, cannot be taken for the original of the expanded versions."[37] It is impossible to find a reasonable explanation for the synoptic character of some of the texts in the B series, the seven from Crete (B3–B8 and B12), and B9 from Thessaly (the only synoptic one, so far, outside the island).[38] For that matter, it is just as difficult to find any suitable explanation in this regard for all of the lamellae with brief texts. The identical repetition of the same formulae and motifs (except for the two questions in rhythmical prose) proves beyond doubt that these lamellae belonged to the same tradition which was responsible for the four long texts in the same group: B1, B2, B10, and B11.

As with the deceased buried with the *epistomia* E1 and E4, and G2–G4, similarly with those buried with the *epistomia* B3–B8 and B12 from Crete homogeneity is lacking. Two of the texts (B6 and B12) deviate in the topography of the spring and in the *symbolon* the deceased has to utter in order to be recognized by the guards of the spring and the Underworld powers. Instead of the expected *symbolon* in the question-and-answer trial scene *I am the son of Earth and starry Sky*,[39] or the like (this much at least seems to have been the engraver's intention), lines 4–6 of B12 read: *Who are you? Where are you from? Earth is my mother; from where? and what . . . And the (starry) Sky* (τ<ί>ς δ᾽ εἶ ἢ πῶ δ᾽ εἶ; Γᾶ |{σ} <ἐ>μοί μάτηρ· πῶ; τί; ΑΕΤ | [κ]αὶ <Ο>ὐρανός). Another equally possible reading of these lines may be: *Of Earth I am, mother*, (questions interrupting the *symbolon*: *from where? what? . . .*) *and of the starry Sky* (Γᾶ|ς ἠμ{ο}ί, μάτηρ, (πῶ; τί; ΑΕΤ) [κ]αὶ <Ο>ὐρανῷ <ἀ>στε<ρόεντος>), in which case *mater* should be

[37] Zuntz (1971: 381–382) explained the deficiencies the Cretan texts present as follows:

> First, because of its informal imperfections. This combination of perfect poetry with completely unmetrical prose cannot possibly represent the primitive form of conveying this eschatological vision; nor obviously, is it in the least likely to have been done, originally, in a local Cretan dialect. The obvious vehicle would have been the traditional epic *Kunstsprache*, retranslation into which indeed can afford a cure for the most striking irregularity: namely the question in prose ('v. 3'); but not for all (unless indeed one were to rewrite the whole *ad lib.*).
>
> And yet, only a few pages earlier, in his discussion of the "rhythmical prose" in the announcement of the deceased's deification in the A-texts (a quality he denied line 3 of the Cretan texts), he awards the dialect a distinct importance: "The Doric dialect in both these legends is remarkable. It seems to have conveyed, in this late period, an aura of archaic sanctity" (Zuntz 1971: 341–342, the quotation from 342 n. 1).

[38] As John Papadopoulos, at the time Associate Curator at the Getty Museum, informed me, the Thessalian provenance of this lamella is not certain.

[39] For the parallels in terms of poetics and composition of this formula with Homeric epic see Herrero de Jáuregui in this volume; and for Gnostic and early Christian echoes Betz in this volume.

understood as a vocative, even though the ending in eta is again problematic. In the second half of line 6 the engraver is either repeating by mistake the letters from the previous lines 4–5 (ΠΩΔΕΙΓΑ and ΠΩΤΙΑΕΤ), or this is an additional formula in the question-and-answer trial scene: *And who (are you)? (Are) you thirsty?* (τε τίς; δίψαι το|ι . . .). A similar difficulty is encountered again in the *symbolon* incised in line 4 of B6: ΓΥᾸΤΗΡ, which Guarducci emended to <θ>υ<γ>άτηρ (*I am the daughter of Earth and starry Sky*), and Pugliese Carratelli to γ<ενε>τήρ (*figlio?*).[40] In light of the reading of B12 above, however, the word may also be emended to <μ>ᾰ́τηρ, an equally sound emendation palaeographically, but with grammatical problems. If so, lines 4–5 of B6, and lines 4–6 of B12 would read: *I am of Earth, mother, and starry Sky* (Γᾶς ἠμι, <μ>ᾰ́τηρ, καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντος), the *mystes* addressing her/his reply to the *mother*, none other than Persephone.

These deviant readings in the *symbola* of B6 and B12 do not create any serious obstacles in understanding the gist of what was intended. They may present different choices of text for incision on the lamellae of the kind we encounter in Macedonia, the Peloponnese, and Rome, where only the name, or the word *mystes*, or a few words are chosen to be incised.

Most intriguing and challenging is the reading in lines 2–4 of the new text B12: *but (give) me to drink from the spring of <S>auros to the left of the cypress* (ἀλλ<ὰ> π{α}ιεῖν μοι κράνας <Σ>αύ|ρου ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ τᾶς κυφα{σ}|ρίζω). The spring is located at the left of the cypress (the genitive in its Doric form), a topographical indication so far unique in all the texts of group B, and also different from the other Cretan texts (B3–B8), to which, when compared, it appears to be contradicting the topography in Hades.[41] In all other Cretan texts the location of spring and cypress is clearer: either the spring is to the right, and the cypress is disassociated from it, if τῆ is understood as the deictic interjection (κράνας . . . ἐπὶ δεξιά. τῆ! κυφάριζος, *from the . . . spring to the right; there! the cypress*); or, if a comma is placed after δεξιά and τῇ is understood as the locative relative pronoun, the cypress marks the place, to the right of which the deceased must look for the spring whence to drink (*from the . . . spring to the right, where the cypress*). Moreover, whereas the spring in the Cretan texts is specified by two epithets: ἀ(ι)είροος in three texts (B3–B4 and B7, line 2); or ἀ(ι)έναος in two texts (B5 and B8, line 2), *epistomion* B6 line 2 reads: ΑΙΓΙΔΔΩ, and the new text B12 in lines 2–3 reads: κράνας <Σ>αύρου, or κράνας Αὔρου (*the spring of Sauros/Auros*), both equally possible readings.

[40] Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 82–83 no. 1B4. [41] Cole 2003: 193–217.

For B6 Guarducci's easiest solution was to emend the problematic reading ΑΙΓΙΔΔΩ to αἰ<ε>ι<ρό>ω, one of the two epithets of the spring attested in B3–B4, B7. This emendation may likewise be accepted for the problematic reading in the new text B12: <Σ>αύρου or Αὔρου into ἀ<ει>ρό<ω>. If emended, these deviations in the texts of B12 and B6 may be eliminated, and thus the two texts may be made to conform to the other long texts especially from Crete, but also from Thessaly and Italy.

But perhaps before emendation of both divergent texts is considered final, other plausible options should also be entertained, in particular the possibility that these divergences may have been influenced by local (or individual) cultic and religious considerations. This is after all the golden rule of epigraphy, expounded constantly and most eloquently by Louis Robert: inscriptions, before all else, belong to, and should be understood within their *local context* first and foremost, and then within wider contexts of similar texts from other areas. It may not be a coincidence, or the engraver's mistake that both texts present divergent readings in the same places: the *symbolon*, and the location of cypress and spring. The process, by which a minor detail was allowed to creep into the dominant version, if such a text was ever in circulation, can only be guessed at, and this constitutes one important objective in the study of these texts, which is based primarily on their strong similarities (the stemmatological approach). Another objective, equally worth the effort, is to shift the emphasis from similarities to divergences, and, instead of one central document behind these texts, to entertain the possibility that these texts may all have been dominant and peripheral at the same time.[42] The deviant readings in texts B12 and B6 (and E1 and E4 for that matter) from Crete may also be understood not as scribal mistakes by an engraver/copyist, but as local influences on, or individual choices from the Bacchic–Orphic discourse of afterlife, which to judge from the present state of the evidence did not meet with unanimous approval, as only two (or four if E1 and E4 are counted) of nine texts betray such local or individual considerations and prejudices.

Before attempting to place the twelve Cretan *epistomia* within their local context, it will be useful to briefly review the record of the island, particularly that of Phaistos, the Idaean Cave, and Eleutherna, for parallels or analogous cases of mystery cults, for a Cretan context as it were, which may support in a significant way the two deviant texts B12 and B6. Especially the evidence from these three areas is concrete and tangible and strongly suggests specific rituals and cultic activities.

[42] On this see Obbink in this volume.

In Phaistos, the city south of the Idaean Cave and close to Gortyn, an epigram was set up in the temple of Magna Mater. This text has been commented upon briefly but convincingly by Giovanni Pugliese Carratelli, who associated it with the Cretan *epistomia* (the text is printed below in its hexametric form with verticals indicating line-divisions on the stone):[43]

θαῦμα μέγ' ἀνθρώποις | πάντων Μάτηρ προδίκνυτι:
τοῖς ὁσίοις κίνχρητι καὶ οἳ γονεὰν ὑπέχονται,
τοῖς δὲ π|αρεσβαίνονσι θιῶν γέν|ος ἀντία πράτει.ν
εὐσεβίες τε καὶ εὔγλωθ|{ι}οι πάριθ' ἁγνοὶ ν
ἔνθεον ἐς | Μεγάλας Ματρὸς ναόν, ἔνθεα δ' ἔργα
γνώσηθ' ἀθανάτας ἄξια τῶδε ναῶ.

A great marvel for humans the Mother of all performs by example (in advance):
for the *hosioi* she divines and (for those) who maintain (stay within) their race;
but for the transgressors of the race of gods she does the opposite.
Every pious and eloquent (or sweet to the ear) come pure
to the holy temple of the Great Mother, and the divine works
you will learn of the immortal (Mother), worthy of this very temple.

The epigram is divided either into two or three parts, as the empty spaces on the stone indicate after the verb πράτει and after ἁγνοί. In the first case (3:3), the first three hexameters state the ways of the goddess; the latter three invite all who are *pious* and *eloquent* or *sweet to the ear* to enter the temple *pure* and learn the *divine works*. In the second case (3:1:2), the fourth hexameter forms the central portion of the epigram, where there is also a change from the third person of the first three hexameters to the second, while the last two hexameters form an elegiac couplet (the problematic sixth line is not a hexameter, but a pentameter). The shift in metrical rhythm and in the person of the verbs is not alien to compositional techniques of funerary epigrams, with which the Phaistian epigram invites comparison. This is also the case concerning the Cretan texts on the *epistomia* of group B, which follow the same compositional techniques of the epic *Kunstsprache*, but aim at a different target, as they present different discourses on death and afterlife. Thus, the great miracle in line 1 is picked up again in the concluding lines 10–12, where it is explicated as the god-inspired *erga* worth performing in this temple. The pentameter highlights the transition from the ways of the goddess in the first part to the invitation to the pious in the second and complements the shift of the verbs from third to second person.

[43] Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 86–89 = *OF* 568. For cults and rituals in Phaistos and environs see Sporn 2002: 195–218; Prent 2005: 519–523.

The first part of the epigram (especially the second and third hexameters) is difficult to understand. The first verb προδίκνυτι (*show by example, show first, make known beforehand*, LSJ), clearly indicates an oracle and/or a cultic place where mysteries (*a great miracle*) are performed. The verb's semantics allude to the ritual and performative aspect of the text itself,[44] and the deictic at the end, τῶδε ναῶ, emphasizes forcefully the performative present, the *hic et nunc* performance of the ritual.[45] The goddess' foreknowledge and divination (κίνχρητι)[46] is exclusively reserved for the *hosioi* and for those who literally *put themselves under/within their generation* (LSJ), and who *maintain their origin* (lines 3–4). But to those who *transgress the divine generation*, the goddess performs the opposite, i.e. does not foretell or divine. Pugliese Carratelli proposed to associate the two sentences, οἳ γονεὰν ὑπέχονται, and τοῖς δὲ παρεσβαίνονσι θιῶν γένος, to the same confession, none other than the one encountered in the texts of group B, where the deceased introduces him/herself as: *the son of Earth and starry Sky*; and in two of the B texts from Thessaly, the deceased also adds: *my name is Asterios* (B2: Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστ<ερόεντος>, | Ἀστέριος ὄνομα); or *my generation is from heaven* (B9: Γᾶς υἱός εἰμι | καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος· | αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον).

What kind of mystery cult and ritual is behind this epigram is not clear, although tempting suggestions have been proposed. Pugliese Carratelli emphasized the relation between this text and Euripides' *parodos* of the *Cretans*, where *divine works* are also performed in honor of the triad: Zeus, (Dionysos) Zagreus, and Mountain Mother. Behind these cults and rituals, according to Pugliese Carratelli, may lie an interrelation between a Cretan Dionysiac mystery cult and an "Orphic-Pythagorean belief about Mnemosyne", because only through Memory can the initiates accomplish the divine message: to remain within and not to transgress their divine origin.

What this epigram does demonstrate is that the Phaistian mystery cult, if not directly related, is at least similar in concept to the cult and rituals behind the *Cretans' parodos*, performed in honor of Zeus, (Dionysos) Zagreus, and the Mother Oreia (who by analogy is closer to Magna Mater

[44] For δείκνυμι as a term of performance, semantically close to σημαίνω and its relation to *kleos* see Nagy 1990: 217–221; and Lateiner 1989: 13–51; for the monumental character of Herodotus' *prooemion*, analogous to funerary inscriptions see Bakker 2002: 30–31 n. 64 and n. 65 with earlier bibliography; for the funerary epigram and Homeric epic see Létoublon 1995; but especially Day 2000, and Depew 2000.

[45] Bakker 1997: 28–29 and 78–80.

[46] Chantraine 1980: 1274 s.v. χράομαι; Bile (1988: 227 n. 298) Attic κίχρησι; Pugliese Carratelli (2001: 87–88) χρήιζει or χρᾶι.

than to Rhea or Leto).[47] Both cults and rituals also appear similar in concept to the mystery cult(s) behind the texts of the gold *epistomia* discovered in the wider area of Eleutherna, but also in Pherai, Thessaly (text D5). Moreover, in this epigram the priest/poet employs the verbs προδίκνυτι and κίνχρητι to denote the activity of the goddess. Magna Mater, inside her god-inspiring temple, reveals the only god-inspiring deeds that count. She pronounces "*the oracle*" of life and death by answering the awe-inspiring question "what happens when humans die?"[48]

Phaistos and Eleutherna lie on opposite sides of Crete's most famous site in antiquity, the Cave of Zeus on Mount Ida, where a mystery cult and rituals were also performed (although of what kind remains a mystery). It would be quite astonishing, however, if the mystery cult and rituals in the Cave were very different from what the Phaistian epigram, the twelve Eleuthernaean *epistomia*, the Thessalian D5 text, and the *parodos* of Euripides' *Cretans* imply. The Cave, located at an altitude of ca. 1500 m, has intrigued visitors and students alike. Literature concerning the location and its enticing qualities and mesmerizing effects stretches back to ancient times. The recent excavator Yannis Sakellarakis has presented solid evidence that confirms continuous worship from the Minoan period until well into the fourth century CE:[49]

As is to be expected, the sanctuary particularly prospered during certain periods when it received panhellenic offerings and at other times worship shows signs of decline. Most frequently worship was transformed, a subject of particular

[47] The evidence is scanty, but at present these female deities seem to be separate, although Lekatsas (1985: 172–189) understands all the female divinities associated with Dionysos as *personae* of Magna Mater.

[48] For the similarities in composition and technique between the texts on the lamellae and *epistomia* and the oracles see Edmonds in this volume, and Tzifopoulos 2010.

[49] Sakellarakis 1988: 209, 212–213 and 214 respectively. The bibliography is extensive: for the recent excavations see Sakellarakis 1983, 1988–89; Chaniotis 1987, 1990, 2001a, 2001b, 2006, and in press (for the inscriptions from the recent excavations), who rightly calls the Idaean Cave "eine überregionale Kulthöhle"; Sporn 2002: 218–223; and Prent 2005: 565–604. Verbruggen (1981) raised doubts about the nature of Zeus Kretagenes and proposed not to view this god as a dying and being reborn young god; see Chaniotis' 1986 critical assessment; Lekatsas (1985: 77–79) identifies Cretan Zeus with Dionysos and discusses his association with caves; see further Kokolakis 1995a, 1995b; Vikela 2003. Psaroudakis (1999–2000) studies the often neglected relation of Dionysos with metals, which are mined in caves, and the "magical" world of technology. For the possibility of the presence of Zeus' throne inside the cave see Sakellarakis 2006, who presents an informed array of this object's ramifications in the cave's cult and ritual; for possible cultic activity near Ida's top see Kritzas 2006; for iron finger-rings with very interesting, if intriguing, depictions see Moustaka 2004; for the depictions on "shields" and phialae see Galanaki 2001 and 2006; for the possible production in Eleutherna of some orientalizing artifacts recovered from the cave see Goula 2006; for the cave during neolithic times Mandeli 2006; for the cave's Minoan period Vassilakis 2006; for the Roman period Melfi 2006; for the cave's literary uses in Latin texts see Braccesi 2004; and George 2006.

importance for religion, to blend other divinities, chiefly in later times … The origin of the singular worship of Cretan Zeus, the god who was born and died every year, lies in the prehistoric, Minoan deity, the young god who personified the yearly birth and death of the vegetation cycle, despite the lack of archaeological proof. *This evidence is now explicit and unquestionable*, and furthermore indicates the extent and dynamism of Minoan worship which preceded … Fortunate, too, are the names of the neighbouring mountain tops, one of which is called Tympanatoras, which alludes to an act of worship, namely the beating of the drums by the Kouretes at the birth of Cretan Zeus (my emphasis).

The findings are overwhelming.[50] Conclusive evidence has not been found for the worship of the triad and the mysteries found in the *parodos* of Euripides' *Cretans*, except for Zeus Idaeos, mentioned in a number of treaties between Cretan cities as their guarantor.[51] But even so, rituals in the Idaean Cave were still performed in the fourth century CE, as an inscription from Samos testifies.[52] Some of the artifacts are associated with ephebic initiation rites and fertility, while others indicate worship of other deities in addition to Zeus.[53] Motifs on bronze art works from the Idaean Cave, dated from the ninth century BCE to the archaic period, include the *potis* and *potnia theron*, ritual dancing and musical processions, warriors and hunters, and female divinities enthroned or lying on a couch.[54]

The very few texts from the Cave that have been published and those whose publication is forthcoming include: a dedication to Zeus Idaeos of the Imperial period engraved on a clay tabula ansata(?) by Aster son of Alexandros;[55] a gold lamella with a curious text (perhaps a phylactery); and a first-century CE dodecahedral die made of rock crystal, and engraved with a letter or number on all twelve sides. The presence of the latter two in the Cave is intriguing and not easily explainable, as a number of different reasons may account for their findspot, but a connection with the activities, oracular and/or ritual, in the Cave seems the most probable.[56]

[50] More will definitely come to light, as excavations have resumed at Zominthos, a late Minoan site close to the Idaean Cave, perhaps the last stop from the north and east roads leading to the Cave, for which see Sakellarakis and Panagiotopoulos 2006 with the earlier bibliography.

[51] Chaniotis 1996b: 70; Sporn 2002: 222–223.

[52] Chaniotis 1987 and 1990. In the text Ploutarchos mentions that before his appointment as *praeses insularum* he performed sacrifices on Mt. Ida.

[53] Sporn 2002: 220–221; for the terminology of initiation in Cretan inscriptions see Bile 1992.

[54] Galanaki (2001: 39–44, and passim) has argued that the *potis theron* motif is reminiscent of the later mystery cult of Zeus Idaeos and Dionysos Zagreus; compare Pappalardo 2001 and 2004.

[55] *IC* I.xii.1 (on the back side the letters ΔΙ are probably Zeus' name again in the dative): Διὶ Ἰδαίῳ | εὐχὴν | Ἀστὴρ Ἀ|λεξάν|δρου.

[56] For the incised gold foil with the curious text Halbherr tentatively suggested a gnostic formula, and Guarducci labeled it an *inscriptio abracadabrica?* (*IC* I.xii.8; line 4 is incised retrograde): [- -]ΙΟΥΩΗ | [- -]ΩΑΙΙΗ | [- - φυλ]|άσσου. Chaniotis (2006) rightly associates the rock crystal die with

Finally, Eleutherna and its environs, the city north of the Idaean Cave and the provenance of the nine incised and three unincised gold *epistomia*, provides enough evidence to support the view that these *epistomia* may not have been out of context, especially from this particular part of the island. Chance finds and the excavations by the University of Crete over the last twenty years have brought to light structures, artifacts, and especially inscriptions that demonstrate continuous but fluctuating habitation since the late Neolithic period.[57]

The intra-mural necropolis at Orthi Petra, dated from the ninth to perhaps the end of the sixth century BCE, attests to a variety of burial practices which demonstrate a developing ideology and self-consciousness of the city's inhabitants during this period.[58] The necropolis comprises a number of remarkable finds:[59] the Orthi Petra itself, a huge stone-pessos around which the cemetery itself gradually developed; the pyre A of the warrior with the beheaded skeleton at its corner (an example reminiscent of Patroklos' pyre and Achilles' revenge in Homer, as the excavator has argued);[60] the lady of Auxerre and a second Kore of Eleutherna, most probably grave monuments;[61] and a cenotaph or *heroon*, a public burial monument to 'the unknown warrior' as it were, inside which were discovered no skeletal remains, but only a baetyl, and on whose roof probably stood as akroteria or cornices the ten shield-bearing warriors, none other than the ten Kouretes, among them no doubt Eleuther himself (after whom the city was named). If the excavator is correct, what may have begun in Eleutherna as an intra-mural burial

divinatory activities which may have taken place in the Idaean Cave, where Cretan Zeus was prominent, as the legends about Epimenides also indicate. He cautions, however, that, if an oracle existed in the Idaean Cave, as Capdeville (1990) has argued, it need not have been permanent. A parallel case is the sanctuary of Trophonios at Lebadeia, near Delphi, which appears to have been regarded both as an oracle and as a mystery cult, where divinatory practice depended upon *Lethe* and *Mnemosyne*, for which see Bonnechere 2003a and 2003b; and Maurizio 1999. Ustinova 2002 discusses mythical figures with prophetic traits and their association with subterranean places in the southern Balkans; and Ustinova 2004 argues that Apollo's epithet *pholeuterios* in Histria on the Thracian Black Sea coast should rather point to the god's oracular activities in dens and caves as well.

[57] Sanctuaries and public buildings from the late Geometric and Archaic to the Hellenistic and Roman periods have been excavated on the hills Pyrgi and Nesi (Kalpaxis 2004), and also at the site Katsivelos (Themelis 2002 and 2004a).

[58] This is also the case in the Prinias-stelai, dated to the seventh century BCE: they were fitted on the outer walls of grave monuments in the necropolis of ancient Rhizenia or Apollonia (modern Patela of Prinias) and were engraved with male and female figures representing all social classes, in an impressive posture and with iconographic elements that "may characterize the figures ... as 'heroic', in the secular sense of the word," according to Lebessi 1976: 176 and passim; and also Sporn 2002: 176–177.

[59] Stampolidis 2004a: 116–138; and Stampolidis 2001 for the burial practices in the necropolis.

[60] Stampolidis 1996a; 2004a: 127–129; 2004c: 69–70.

[61] As argued by Stampolidis 2004b: 235–236 nos. 252–253. For the problematics of describing statues, especially the Lady of Auxerre, see Donohue 2005: 131–143, 202–221.

monument of one or more aristocratic clan-members who claimed their ancestry from one or more of the Kouretes, became gradually by the sixth century BCE the city's most prominent and "official" necropolis.[62] What rituals and burial rites, if any, were performed at the necropolis and whether the necropolis continued to function as such in the Hellenistic and Roman periods are at present open questions.

Moreover, from 400 BCE onwards, the epigraphical record of Eleutherna together with other finds provides strong indications about the presence of certain divinities who may suggest the existence of cults and rituals relevant to the texts on the *epistomia*.[63]

Apollo was apparently one of the major divinities of the city. The silver and bronze coins, issued by Eleutherna's mint and dated from the middle of the fifth to the middle of the second centuries BCE, carry on the obverse Apollo laureate. On the reverse, two legends appear: in one Apollo is standing nude and is holding a sphere and a bow in his hands; in the other, nude Apollo with bow and quiver and a sphere in his right hand is seated on an omphalos with a lyre beside it.[64] The latter coin-legend in particular alludes clearly not only to the hunter-motif, but also to the motifs of prophecy and music, associated in the literary record with Epimenides and Eleutherna.[65] The god's epithets include: Δελφίνιος (in two inscriptions), Βιλκώνιος, and Σασθραῖος.[66] Furthermore, a very fragmentary text from ca. 500 BCE, which Guarducci tentatively calls *lex ad kitharoedos*, may be a regulation regarding the location within the city where the *kitharistai* might live (according to Paula Perlman's cautious reconstruction), but it cannot be taken in itself as evidence for foreign-residents in the city.[67] Perlman is correct in stressing that the legendary figures of poetry and

[62] Stampolidis 2004a: 137–138; 2004b: 234–235 nos. 250–251.

[63] For Eleutherna and environs see Stampolidis 2004a; Sporn 2002: 234–244.

[64] The sphere is variously described as a round object, a stone, a rock, a disc. Sidiropoulos 2004; Furtwängler and Spanou 2004; Stampolidis 2004b; *SNG Kopenhagen*: 429–436; Le Rider 1966: 105; Svoronos 1890: 128–136, 131–135 nos. 2–34.

[65] It should be noted that a rock and a tree form the scenery, where communication with the divine, and poetic and/or prophetic inspiration, are achieved, as Hesiod's proverbial apostrophizing indicates (*Theog.* 35): ἀλλὰ τίη μοι ταῦτα περὶ δρῦν ἢ περὶ πέτρην; see O'Bryhim 1996 with previous bibliography. West (1997: 431) adduces Near Eastern texts where birth from a tree and a rock is mentioned; in Minoan times a similar scenery appears in what Nannó Marinatos (2004) calls scenes of epiphany, and Burkert (2004: 19 and passim) tentatively describes as "some form of 'divination'." For the line's use in Plutarch see Alexiou 1998.

[66] van Effenterre 1991: 26–30 (*SEG* 41.743; *BE* 1992.360); Chaniotis 1995: 16–27, and Chaniotis 1996a: 190–195 no. 6 (*SEG* 45.1258; 46.1206; *BE* 1996.324, 332; 1998.318); Themelis and Matthaiou 2004 (*SEG* 52.852); and Tzifopoulos 2009, 107–111 no. 6.

[67] Perlman 2004: 109–112, especially 112. The inscription reads: κιθαριστᾶν, and not Guarducci's (*IC* II.xii.16Ab line 1): κι[θ]αριστὰς (van Effenterre and Ruzé 1995: 118–119 no. 26 read κι(θ)αριστὰς).

music from Eleutherna and this single fragmentary attestation are not proof for the city being a center of music and poetry. But perhaps there is more to this than an intriguing coincidence. If these legendary stories predated this inscription, and if the coin-legends are therefore later than the inscription or at the least contemporary with it, then the Eleuthernaeans were conforming to their legends for obvious reasons. If, however, the stories were later inventions and postdate the inscription, then Eleuthernaean perceptions of themselves were projected onto these legends, which for some reason became widespread beyond the island – hence their attestation in non-Cretan literary texts.

Zeus' presence at Eleutherna is attested in the epithets: Fidatas, Thenatas, and possibly Skyllios in two fragmentary treaties from the third century BCE;[68] Ὕψιστος in a small altar;[69] and Πολιάο[χος], Μα[χανεύς?] in the calendar of sacrifices dated to 150–100 BCE.[70]

In the same calendar-of-sacrifices inscription, the cult of the Materes is also attested for the first time, as is [?Δάματερ Μεγάλα?]ρτος, and probably a month Damatrios. Eutychia Stavrianopoulou has argued convincingly that this inscription is the missing evidence that the Materes-cult in Engyon Sicily originated in Crete in the area around the Idaean Cave. Who these Materes were is not clear. Their identification with Demeter and Kore is an easy solution, but the literary evidence does not support it and it is not certain that the number of the Materes was two. Stavrianopoulou has recognized in them the Nymphs, mentioned in the context of the Idaean Zeus-cult, Amaltheia and Melissa. She has also argued for a connection of their cult with the locality Pantomatrion or Amphimatrion, thus probably named after them, north of Eleutherna in the area of modern Chamalevri, Stavromenos, and Sfakaki,[71] whence the *epistomia*. Sporn, although in general agreement, is skeptical about the specific identification of the Materes with Amaltheia and Melissa.[72] In the same calendar of sacrifices, however, a Nymph (Λύμφα<ι>) is also to receive a sacrifice, and in the

The text is very difficult to read, because the stone was re-inscribed without erasing completely the previous text; thus, the strokes of both texts are visible at places; see also Stampolidis 2004a: 69–70; and Guizzi 2006. Presence of Anatolians at an earlier date is attested in the necropolis as three Phoenician *cippi* have been found, for which see Stampolidis 2003; 2004b: 135, 238 no. 257; 2004c: 67–68.

[68] On Zeus Skyllios see Psilakis (2002) who relates the epithet with σκυλλίς, the "vine-shoot" according to Hesychios.

[69] Sporn (2002: 241 and 244) follows the reading in Themelis (1989–90: 266; *SEG* 39.958): Ὑέτ[ιος], but see Tzifopoulos 2009, 113–115 no. 8.

[70] Stavrianopoulou 1991 (*SEG* 41.744); on Zeus Machaneus see Martin 1983: 76–84.

[71] Stavrianopoulou 1991 and 1993.

[72] Sporn 2002: 239–240; on maiden triads see further Scheinberg 1979; for reliefs depicting Pan and Nymphs in Crete see Sporn 2004.

treaty between Eleutherna and Rhaukos, the last divinities mentioned in the oath are: [κ]αὶ Λύμφας καὶ θιὸνς πάντ<α>[νς]. It appears, therefore, that the cult and ritual of the Nymph(s) is rather distinct from that of the Materes, who may thus be identified with the Magna Mater of Phaistos and the Mater Oreia of Euripides, and/or Rhea, Leto, Hera or some other Magna Mater figure.

Persephone and/or Demeter, or even a chthonian Aphrodite were most likely worshipped in a sanctuary at the site Elleniko on the hill SE of the modern village.[73] In the calendar-of-sacrifices inscription, Artemis is to receive offerings in her *adyta*,[74] while the epithet ἀγρο[τέραι], if the restoration is correct, most probably refers to this goddess; she is also included in the oath of the treaty between Eleutherna and Rhaukos without epithet, followed by Velchanos (Fέλχανος).[75] To Aphrodite and Hermes was dedicated the excavated Hellenistic temple in the site Katsivelos, as the discovery of a small naiskos with the couple in relief, and the statue of Aphrodite and Pan demonstrate. Aphrodite is also included in the oaths of the two fragmentary treaties, together with Ares and Hermes.[76]

The presence of Dionysos and his entourage at Eleutherna and the existence of Dionysiac cult(s) and ritual(s) in the city was until recently conjectured on the basis of a few pieces of evidence: a fragmentary text dated to the sixth or fifth century BCE which preserves the name of the month Dionyssios;[77] a statue group of Dionysos and Silenos in the Rethymno Museum;[78] a few coins depicting a bunch of grapes issued by Eleutherna;[79]

[73] Stampolidis 2004a: 57. For Aphrodite see Pirenne-Delforge 1994; for Aphrodite and Dionysos see Pingiatoglou 2004.

[74] On the stone: AADYTITAAPTE (, [ἐς τ]ὰ ἄδυτ<α> τὰ Ἀρτέ[μιδος]). Stavrianopoulou (1991: 33 and 38; *SEG* 41.744) reads: [ἐς τ]ὰ ἄδυττα <τὰ> Ἀρτέ[μιδος].

[75] Themelis and Matthaiou 2004 (*SEG* 52.852); Artemis is missing from what survives from another treaty (above n. 66).

[76] Themelis 2002; 2004a; and 2004b: 183 no. 78 (naiskos), 178–180 no. 71 (statue). For the inscriptions above n. 66 and n. 75. For more artifacts relating to Aphrodite see Tegou 2004: 147 no. 1; Themelis 2002; and 2004b: 181 no. 72, 182 no. 77, 184 no. 81, 218 no. 191. For phylacteries, magic amulets, and demonic/apotrotopaic figurines see Yangaki 2004 (with an addendum of known phylacteries); Themelis 2002: 60, 62 figure 67, 74, 76 figure 84, 78 figures 88–89; Themelis 2004b: nos. 87, 219, 224, 246, 411. For the fascinating ivory plaques decorated with mythological scenes from Achilles' life, dated to the fourth century CE, see Themelis 2004b: 231–232 no. 248.

[77] *IC* II.xii.9 line 2, as restored by van Effenterre and Ruzé 1994: 114–117 no. 25: Διονυσσίαν νεμον[ηίαν]; see also Bile 1988: 154 n. 334; and Sporn 2002: 239. The month Dionyssios is attested only in Praisos (*IC* III.vi [Praisos].7A line 14; and Trümpy 1997: 195), and Sybritos (Tzifopoulos 2004–2009, 569–573 no. 1).

[78] Sporn 2002: 239 and n. 1768.

[79] Eleutherna, Sybritos, and Kydonia were the only three cities of Crete that issued coins whose legends employed Dionysiac motifs; Marangou-Lerat 1995; and Perlman 2004: 102–103.

and the asylia-treaty between Eleutherna and Teos, dated *paulo ante* 201 BCE, inscribed on the wall of the temple of Dionysos at Teos.[80]

A number of recently discovered artifacts, most of them dated from the second century BCE onwards and displaying Dionysiac motifs and themes, add important pieces to this sketchy picture and strengthen Dionysos' presence at Eleutherna: a fragment of a marble vessel, depicting a Maenad in the characteristic stance of ecstasy, and reminiscent of the Dionysiac scenes on the Derveni krater; a bronze lamp in the shape of a panther with Dionysos as rider;[81] a clay dramatic mask, a clay figurine of Ganymedes carrying wine, and a clay-figurine of Papposilenos.[82] The most remarkable find, however, an exquisite piece of work imported from Athens and a unique example for Crete, comprises the three "Herms" of Pentelic marble unearthed during the excavations of the protobyzantine Basilica's narthex, and dated according to the excavator Petros Themelis to the years of Hadrian or Septimius Severus.[83] The Eleutherna example, however, is not truly a "Herm" (hence the quotes for all three), because the one whose head has been recovered depicts, according to Themelis, Dionysos and Ariadne crowned with an ivy-wreath and wearing a band. The features of the two heads are nearly identical, and instead of Dionysos and Ariadne perhaps other identifications may be entertained, a representation of Dionysos and Apollo, or even a double Dionysos. All three identifications seem plausible, but whichever may be correct, it is clear that Dionysos is connected with a divinity intimately associated with poetry, either Apollo or Ariadne, who in the literary record have overlapping spheres.[84] If, however, its identification with the Delphic odd couple is correct, this "Herm" would visually represent most eloquently the true nature of the two gods: being identical, but

[80] *IC* II.xii.21, especially lines 19–29; on this and the similar asylia-decrees from Lappa and Sybritos (and other Cretan cities) see Kvist 2003 with previous bibliography.

[81] Tegou 2004: 147 no. 2 (Maenad), 151 no. 8 (lamp). For the Derveni krater see Yiouri 1978; and Themelis and Touratsoglou 1997.

[82] Themelis 2004b: 210 nos. 162, 163 and 164.

[83] Rethymno Museum (Λ[ίθινα] 2579 stele + Λ[ίθινα] 2377 head with two faces); Themelis 2002: 96–99; and 2004b: 185–186 no. 86. So far, this is one of the rarest representations in the Hellenic world and a quite unexpected find at Eleutherna. The few rare "Herms" of Dionysos depict the god on one side as a youth, and on the other as a bearded adult. Themelis has suggested that the original, in all likelihood, was a fourth-century BCE bronze work(s) by Praxiteles, which was used as a model for later copies. He compares the Eleutherna copy with the scene of the couple on the bronze kalyx-krater B1 from Derveni tomb B, and also with Dionysos on the western pedimental sculpture of Apollo's temple at Delphi. For "Herms" of Dionysos in Macedonia see Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 1992: 81. For a sanctuary of Apollo (*kitharoidos*), in which Artemis and Dionysos were also worshipped, in Western Macedonia see Karamitrou-Medessidi 2000.

[84] For Ariadne's poetic associations see Sarinaki in press.

looking in different directions, they share an intimate relationship often alluded to in the literary works.

The evidence presented so far, despite its piecemeal and sketchy nature, if it does not prove beyond reasonable doubt, at least reveals a Cretan context for the mystery cult behind the texts on the Cretan *epistomia* and the archaeological and epigraphical record of the area around the renowned Idaean Cave. The context that produced these texts is not only a Bacchic–Orphic Panhellenic mystery cult, as the other texts denote from Italy, the Peloponnese, Thessaly, and Macedonia with which they share strong similarities. The Cretan example argues in favor of a process by which the Bacchic–Orphic Panhellenic mystery cult which produced these texts underwent changes and adaptations in order to cater to local (or individual) cultic and ritual concerns about the afterlife, a process that in all probability had also taken place in Italy, the Peloponnese, Thessaly, and Macedonia. The Cretan context is manifest in the similar in concept mystery cult(s) and rituals in Phaistos, in the Idaean Cave, and in Eleutherna and environs wherefrom the *epistomia*. As the texts on the *epistomia*, so the evidence from these areas betrays both similarities and divergences. More importantly, they also point to a renaissance of cults and rituals in these and in other places of Crete from the third century BCE until the late fourth century CE, notably after the Roman conquest and the organization of the island as a Roman province. In fact, the extensive necropolis, wherefrom come the twelve gold *epistomia*, follows closely the west–east artery, which near Sfakaki by the sea-shore turns north–south, and through Viran Episkopi, Eleutherna, and Sybritos finally reaches the Roman capital Gortyn.[85]

During the Roman and imperial periods, the Cretans apparently revitalized and emphasized the long-standing perceptions about their island and themselves, chief among them the Idaean Cave and its rituals and mystery cult(s). Milena Melfi has argued that during the classical and Hellenistic period, when Crete was plagued by internal strife, the artifacts from the excavations in the Idaean Cave are few and indicate a decline, but from the imperial period onwards, the number of artifacts increases remarkably. This suggests, as she argues, that in the first centuries CE the Idaean Cave, among

[85] Martha Baldwin Bowsky (2006, with earlier bibliography) has argued cogently that the Romans took a particular interest in realigning and reorganizing the regional zone between Mt. Ida and the White Mountains, with the result that Eleutherna was privileged over Axos, despite the latter's proximity to the Idaean Cave, because Eleutherna's strategic position facilitated mobility along routes of trade, transit, and communication; for the Roman reorganization of the island and its ramifications see further Viviers 2004; Sonnabend 2004.

other places on the island, became a fashionable destination, mainly among Neoplatonic circles, which, however, may have been only one of the crucial factors.[86]

Moreover, the evidence from Eleutherna corroborates that this was the city's golden period (and, after the Minoan period, the entire island's for that matter), and it may very well provide the missing answers for the renaissance of old cults and rituals from the third century BCE onwards throughout the island, but chiefly around Mount Ida. In all probability, the priesthood in the Idaean Cave and the neighboring cities, Phaistos/Gortyn, Knossos, Axos, and Eleutherna exploited to their advantage this Roman interest and tried to accommodate the needs of those frequenting cult-places.

The Cretan context sketched above, the evidence from the area around the Idaean Cave, to the south at Phaistos, and to the north at Eleutherna, does point to intensive and continuous ritual and cultic activity. Such a context is fitting for, and may explain not only the presence of the deceased buried with incised *epistomia*, but also the deviant choices and ideologies in these texts, because of the various but similar in concept mystery cults and rituals in Phaistos, the Idaean Cave, and Eleutherna. The piecemeal nature of the evidence, however, advises caution, and the dedication by Aster, son of Alexander may illustrate how far the argument can be pushed. It is indeed far-fetched to argue that Aster – a rare name anyway[87] – was not his true name but the name he received after initiation into the mystery cult in the Idaean Cave, because Aster is reminiscent of: 1) the *mystes* from Pharsalos who identifies himself as: Ἀστέριος ὄνομα (B2); 2) the *mystai* of the B-texts, who identify themselves as: Γῆς παῖς καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος; 3) the entry of Hesychios: Ἀστερίη. ἡ Κρήτη καὶ ἡ Δῆλος οὕτως ἐκαλοῦντο (and of Herodianos: Χθονία. οὕτως καλεῖται ἡ Κρήτη); and 4) Asterion or Asterios or Asteros, in myth the childless king of Crete to whom Zeus

[86] Melfi 2006; and Di Branco 2004. A number of cases attest this renewed interest in certain locations of Crete, e.g. other caves become religious destinations and attest Roman fascination in this period in the wider area of the Idaean Cave in the Rethymno Prefecture, for which see Tzifopoulos 1999; Niniou-Kindeli 2002; Sporn 2002: 251–252, all with previous bibliography; for two lamps from the Melidoni and Amnissos Caves with unique depictions of *taurokathapsia*, dated to the Roman period, see Sapouna 2004. For the Diktynnaion and its funding activities see Tzifopoulos 2004, Sporn 2001, Baldwin Bowsky 2001, and Baldwin Bowsky and Niniou-Kindeli 2006. For the Asklepeion at Lebena see Melfi 2004, Girone 2004, and Di Branco 2004. For the sanctuary at Palaikastro, where in this very period arose the need to reinscribe the Hymn to Megistos Kouros in a new copy, see MacGillivray, Driessen, and Sackett 2000; Furley and Bremer 2001, vol. I: 69–76; Sporn 2002: 45–49; Prent 2005: 532–550; and Alonge 2005.

[87] Bechtel 1917, s.v.; and *LGPN* I, II, IIIA, IIIB, IV, s.v.

gave Europa in marriage and who reared Zeus' and Europa's children Minos, Rhadamanthys, and Sarpedon.[88] All this is far-fetched, but the coincidence is bewildering, as most probably is the relation between mystery cult and prophecy expounded in the Phaistian epigram, and the presence of the incised rock crystal die, and the phylactery(?) in the Idaean Cave.

Even so, however, and given the Cretan context(s) sketched above, the deviant readings in the *symbolon* and particularly in the topography of the *epistomia* B12 and B6, before they are dismissed as rather simple palaeographical oversights or mistakes, deserve serious consideration as significant variant readings. The expression: *I am of Earth, mother, and starry Sky* (Γᾶς ἠμι, <μ>ά̣τηρ, καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντος), may have undergone a small change, perhaps because of the cult of Magna Mater or the Materes, so as to be in concert both with local cult and with the Bacchic–Orphic mystery cult on afterlife. The *mystes* addressing her/his reply to the *mother*, none other than Persephone in a Bacchic–Orphic mystery cult, or the Magna Mater or the Materes in their mystery cult, would thus have it both ways, not unlike the *mystes* in D5, or the chorus in the *parodos* of Euripides' *Cretans*. This much at least, in spite of the problems in grammar, is an equally plausible understanding of the *symbola* in B6 and B12.

The topographical variants in B12 and B6 are more intriguing. Lines 2–3 of B12 locate the cypress near *the spring of Sauros/Auros* (κράνας <Σ>αύρου or Αὔρου), and line 2 of B6 near *the spring of* ΑΙΓΙΔΔΩ (κράνας ΑΙΓΙΔΔΩ). Both texts deviate from all other texts in group B from Eleutherna, Thessaly, and Italy, in which the spring is simply ever-flowing, divine, or its water is ice-cold (ἀ(ι)είροος, ἀ(ι)έναος, θεία, or ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ); or it is not a spring but the lake of Mnemosyne (λίμνη Μνημοσύνης). If the reading in B12 is not a nonsensical topographical mistake, then the *spring of Sauros/Auros* should be identified with the only other attestation for such a spring on Mount Ida. Theophrastos, in his narrative on black poplars (αἴγειροι, some of which bear fruit and some not) records that in the Idaean Cave and environs, most of the black poplars bear fruit. He locates one at the entrance to the Cave, another smaller one

[88] In Hesiod's *Theogony* 376 and 409 Astraios and Asterie are assigned minor roles, which may be due to their importance in poetry rivaling Hesiod's epic (*Asterie* was also the original name of Delos; see West 1966: 270 and 281). According to Pausanias (2.31.1) Minos had also a son *Asterion* whom Theseus defeated, if *Asterion* is not another name for Minotauros, for which see the discussion in Willetts 1962: 166–167; and Lambrinoudakis 1971: 301, 343–344. For a later development of Asterios' myth see Vian 1998 with previous bibliography.

nearby, and, at a distance of twelve stades from the entrance (approximately 2,200 m), he notes many black poplars around *some spring called of Sauros*.[89]

There is no way of determining the source of Theophrastos' information. In the Nida plateau at the foot of the Cave, a number of springs are interspersed. One of them, *Christ's spring* has been identified as Theophrastos' so-called *spring of Sauros* by Spyridon Marinatos and Eleutherios Platakis.[90] A second spring called *Partridge-water* (Περδικόνερο) was used by Sakellarakis' team during excavations in the 1980s (*personal communication*). Sauros, *the lizard-man*, and especially Auros, are not very common names,[91] and this accounts well for Theophrastos' skepticism (περί τινα κρήνην Σαύρου καλουμένην). It is almost as if the author himself does not believe what he is writing (the manuscript tradition is sound and presents no difficulties in this sentence). And yet, a close parallel may be found in the name of the Nymph Saora or Aora after whom the city of Eleutherna was originally named Saoros or Aoros. If not a reference to some unknown local tale, then in all probability, Sauros/Auros should be associated with Eleutherna's earlier name Σάτρα or Σάωρος, attested in the grammarians Stephanos Byzantios and Herodianos:[92] "*Satra*: a city in Crete that changed the name to Eleutherna; the citizen is called Satraios. *Eleutherai*: a city in Crete, named after Eleuther, one of the Kouretes, which used to have also the name Saoros/Aoros after a nymph Saora/Aora."

Nymphs gave their names to springs and cities, and in the epigraphical record of Eleutherna, they are included in treaties and in the calendar of sacrifices, as noted above. Moreover, the inhabitants' name Satraios is also a

[89] Theophrastos, *Historia plantarum* 3.3.4: ἐν Κρήτῃ δὲ καὶ αἴγειροι κάρπιμοι πλείους εἰσί· μία μὲν ἐν τῷ στομίῳ τοῦ ἄντρου τοῦ ἐν τῇ Ἴδῃ, ἐν ᾧ τὰ ἀναθήματα ἀνάκειται, ἄλλη δὲ μικρὰ πλησίον· ἀπωτέρω δὲ μάλιστα δώδεκα σταδίους περί τινα κρήνην Σαύρου καλουμένην πολλαί. (I owe this reference to Angelos Chariotis.) For this passage see also Stampolidis 1996b; 1998a: 114–116; 1998b; 2003.

[90] Apud Sakellarakis 1983: 419 and n. 3.

[91] Bechtel 1917; *LGPN* I, II, IIIA, IIIB, IVS. The form *Sauros* as a name is already attested in a Linear B tablet from Knossos: *Saurijo* (Chantraine 1980: 991). There is, of course, a Roman name Σάτριος/ S*atrius*, relatively uncommon in Greek nomenclature (see Baldwin Bowsky 1995: 272–273; *SEG* 45.1239). Another intriguing coincidence is the form of the month at Lato: *Sartiobiarios*, "a strange-sounding foreign word," according to Robertson (2002: 26–27), for which see Chaniotis 1996b: 322–323 no. 55 A22, B16 (= *IC* I.xvi.4 line 22); Chaniotis 1996a; and Trümpy 1997: 193–194.

[92] Stephanos Byzantios, *Ethnica* s.v. Σάτρα. πόλις Κρήτης, ἡ μετονομασθεῖσα Ἐλεύθερνα. ὁ πολίτης Σατραῖος; and s.v. Ἐλευθεραί. ἔστι καὶ Κρήτης ἀπὸ Ἐλευθῆρος ἑνὸς τῶν Κουρήτων, ἥτις καὶ Σάωρος ἐκαλεῖτο ἀπὸ Σαώρης νύμφης. Herodianos s.v. Ἐλευθεραί. πληθυντικῶς λεγόμενον. ἔστι καὶ Κρήτης ἀπὸ Ἐλευθῆρος ἑνὸς τῶν Κουρήτων, ἥτις καὶ Σάωρος ἐκαλεῖτο ἀπὸ Σαώρης νύμφης; and s.v. Ἄωρος. πόλις Κρήτης ἀπὸ Ἀώρας νύμφης. ἐκαλεῖτο καὶ Σάωρος; and s.v. Ἀώρα ἢ Σαώρα νύμφη, ἀφ' ἧς Ἄωρος ἢ Σάωρος πόλις Κρήτη μετονομασθεῖσα Ἐλευθεραί. Stampolidis 1993: 24–25; 1994: 143–144; 2004d; see also van Effenterre 1991: 29; and Themelis 2002: 11–14; 2004a: 48.

local epithet of Apollo (Σασθραῖος), attested in the oath of a fragmentary treaty dated to the third century BCE.[93] The form Sasthraios most probably provides the original name of the nymph, which perhaps the grammarians changed first to Σαστραῖος and then to Σατραῖος. If the grammarians are to be trusted, then it appears that the two names, Sa(s)t(h)ra and Eleutherna, may have been understood as similar in meaning;[94] hence the change into a Greek and more intelligible name.

Be that as it may, the coincidence is remarkable. Meaning either *free/sovereign*, or *fatherland/kingdom*, *Sasthra/Satra* or the like,[95] after it was changed to *Eleutherna*, may have been retained as a name of one of Eleutherna's districts or neighborhoods, where Apollo's worship was prominent and ancestral links were thriving.[96] Could *Sasthra/Satra* and *Eleuther/Eleutherna* have been Eleuthernaean (re)inventions of the past, especially promoted from the late Hellenistic period onwards, when people began flocking to the city and the neighboring reputed Cave-sanctuary on Ida? The stories could presumably have been about a Nymph named so and so, who had an escapade with Apollo in such and such a place, whence the epithet of Apollo and the name of the spring on Mount Ida. And about Eleuther, one of the most important of the Kouretes, there could also have been stories, about how he took such and such an action on behalf of the baby-god, and came down from Ida to such and such a place, whence

[93] van Effenterre 1991: 29; Faraklas et al. 1998: 78; and Chaniotis 1996b: 190–195 no. 6 (*SEG* 46.1206).

[94] An intriguing coincidence in understanding Satra and Eleutherna as similar in meaning is in Herodotus' narrative (7.110–112) about the Thracian tribe Satrai, the only one that remained always free (ἐλεύθεροι), because of their unparalleled military valor and their habitat high in the mountains, covered with every kind of forest and with snow; the Satrai also possessed the oracle of Dionysos, whose prophets were from a group of Satrai called Bessoi, and whose female promantis was divining in exactly the same way as the priestess at Delphi (I owe the reference to Nicholas Stampolidis). Another intriguing coincidence is the modern names of the cities *Eleuthero(u)polis* and *Eleutherai* in the wider area of ancient *Satrai* (for ancient Pieria see Pikoulas 2001); and the name of the village Satres (Σάτρες) in the Thracian Prefecture of Xanthi. And one should also keep in mind that Dionysos entered Attica from the Boeotian *Eleutherai*.

[95] *Satra*, in all probability, should be associated with the Iranian root χšaθra, whence the Old Persian χšaθra-*pavan* and *satrap*, literally *kingdom/fatherland protector*; alternately, it may have originated from a form *Sat(a)ra* or *Sat(u)ra*, after syncopation, from a root *Sat-*(*Ksat-*) which meant *free, master, ruler*, or even *fatherland*; see Chantraine 1980: 989 (*satrapes*), 990 (*saturos*); and LSJ s.vv. *satres, satra, satrap-*. Stampolidis (1993: 24–25; 1994: 143–144; 2004d) calls the root *sat-* (*free, master, ruler*) Thraco-Pelasgian and entertains the possibility of *Sat(a)ra* being related to the Linear B toponym *Katara*.

[96] This much has been proposed by Henri van Effenterre (1991: 29–30) for the other epithet of Apollo, *Vilkonios*, derived from *Vilkon*, most probably the name of Eleutherna's western hill Nesi, where presumably Apollo's presence was also prominent, a proposal, however, not supported at present by the evidence, for which see Chaniotis' arguments (1996b: 191–192 and 195; *BE* 1996.332, 324). Until 2002 in Greek cities the districts or neighborhoods were given in most cases the names of the parish-churches dominating the district, according to which the voting catalogues were prepared.

the new name of the city. Such mythistorical creations,[97] or "archaeologies" as Claude Calame (2003) would call them, would more than sanction Eleuthernaean presence in the Idaean Cave and its lucrative administration. The Eleuthernaeans apparently employed in certain periods for their own political, social, economic, and religious purposes some or all of the names for their city, names far more numerous than for any other Cretan city:[98] Satra/Sasthra, Saoros/Saora, Aoros/Aora, Eleuther, Eleutherai, Eleuther(r)a, Eleuthernai, Eloutherna, Eleuthenna, Eleutherna, Apollonia. These names variously reflect the inhabitants' prejudices and ideology regarding self-awareness of their past and self-identity.

Eleutherna's distance from the Nida plateau and the Idaean Cave (today approximately an hour and a half by car, but in antiquity probably a full day's walk up the mountain) should not present an insurmountable difficulty, as a modern example aptly illustrates. The pasture of the Nida plateau (or at least the majority of it) belongs today to the village of Anogeia, located at a distance of 21 km to the north, and not to the village of Vorizia, located at a much closer distance of 8.5 km to the south. Whoever wished to visit the Idaean Cave and return could not have done so in one day, but had to spend at least one night, and probably more if s/he also wished to be initiated. The Nida plateau is scattered with Roman remains,[99] some of which no doubt belonged to structures for the accommodation of the visitors, perhaps similar to the ones excavated in the Diktynnaion. As the Idaean Cave was an interstate sanctuary (whether this was the case all along or if it only happened gradually is unclear) whose logistics and priestly responsibilities were administered by the citizens of Gortyn/Phaistos, Knossos, Axos, Eleutherna (and perhaps other cities), it is only natural that these citizens who had to spend a considerable number of days or months in the Nida plateau would have their own lodgings somewhere near the Cave. An analogous case is the so-called *thesauroi* of cities in the sanctuaries at Delphi and Olympia, which housed and protected the city's dedications to the god, because the principle behind the *thesauroi* is the same. The sanctuary-authorities permit cities to build within the precinct their own *oikiskoi* as dedications to the god, in which the city also housed and protected its smaller offerings. Likewise, in the Nida plateau, albeit not within the precinct itself (but its borders can only be guessed at), the neighboring cities would have had to come to terms and divided up the

[97] Baldwin Bowsky (2000) argues that the Cretans responded to Roman influence by revitalizing local traditions.

[98] See above n. 92 and n. 95.

[99] Sakellarakis 1983: 418 and *passim*; Melfi 2006.

space proportionately(?), presumably to everybody's benefit. If such an amiable agreement, as described, ever existed, the evidence for it is wanting, as is also information about the sanctuary's administration. In fact, evidence to the contrary is presented by the fate of the interstate sanctuary of Diktaean Zeus in eastern Crete.[100]

With names sounding so strange (Saoros and Aoros), no wonder Theophrastos was skeptical about the spring's name. His reading and that in B12 are in all likelihood related to the "older" name of Eleutherna, Satra/Saoros/Sauros, and the name of the spring can thus denote nothing else but the *spring of Eleutherna (Sauros/Saoros/Satra)* in the Nida plateau. This would imply that the area around this spring "belonged" to Eleuthernaeans, where presumably they would have camped when visiting the sanctuary, or would have built more permanent lodgings.

Thus, B12 provides a strong link between Eleutherna and the mystery cult initiations performed in the Idaean Cave sometime from the third century BCE onwards, if not earlier. More importantly, however, if the *spring of Eleutherna* in the Nida plateau did exist (and at present there is no compelling reason to doubt that it did – whether it is the *Christ's spring* which Marinatos and Platakis identified as Theophrastos' so-called *spring of Sauros*, or one of the other springs in the plateau), then the Underworld illustrated in the texts on the Cretan gold *epistomia* (and perhaps also in those of the other gold lamellae) gains a significant local dimension. It is commonly assumed that initiation into a cult comprised the *legomena*, *dromena*, and *deiknymena*. The texts on the lamellae and *epistomia* provide some of the dialogue and the action, but what kind of performance and what was shown to the initiates is anybody's guess. The drama, re-enacted constantly for each initiation and supposedly with minimal changes, must have also included some kind of scenery for the Underworld journey.[101] Some persons, the priest(s?), would have acted out the roles of the guards of the spring/lake, and perhaps also those of Dionysos, Hermes(?), Demeter/Mater Oreia/Persephone, and Hades. The whole ritual performance should have been so impressive as to be inculcated into the initiate who thus would have no trouble during the "actual journey" *recognizing the cypress and the spring*, and *remembering* the *symbola* dialogue. What is astonishing,

[100] Guizzi (2001 with previous bibliography) discusses the fierce and long-lasting disputes between the neighboring cities Itanos, Dragmos, Praisos, and Hierapytna about their borderline and about control of the arable land and pastures of the sanctuary, which eventually ended each time with the annihilation of one of the parties involved, until the Romans reorganized the island as a province.

[101] For the ritual(s) behind the texts on lamellae and *epistomia* and their eschatology see Graf and Johnston 2007: 94–164; and in this volume Riedweg (Chapter 9), and Faraone (Chapter 13).

provided this is a plausible scenario, is that an actual spring, the *spring of Eleutherna/Sauros/Saoros* in text B12 and its surrounding scenery may have been used as a "prop" during the deceased's initiation. If so, this may also account for the "wrong" topography of the spring to the left of the cypress, as *the spring of Eleutherna/Sauros* on Ida may have been actually to *the left of a cypress-tree*.

In that respect, the reading in B6 line 2: κράνας AIΓIΔΔ(ω), if it does not refer to some topographical detail unknown so far, and if emendation is imperative, may also be emended to κράνας αἰγί{δ}ῥω, *the black-poplar spring*, an equally, if not more, acceptable emendation, as Verbruggen had proposed.[102] For *the black-poplar spring* may also have been another element conveniently appropriated from the epic by the composer of this particular text (and perhaps of other texts), and given a new and very specific symbolism within the local Cretan context on Mt. Ida. Although the cypress is absent from Circe's detailed instructions to Odysseus, poplars are not. These trees and a spring are part not only of Persephone's grove at the entrance to the Underworld, but both also appear on the islands of Calypso, the Cyclops, Phaeacia, and Ithaca.[103] The scenery of the Nida plateau included both black poplars, as Theophrastos attests, but also the famous cypress-trees, exported throughout the Mediterranean, near which springs were flowing.[104]

Like the black poplar, the cypress and the spring are mythic stock-elements, which, as Radcliffe Edmonds has argued, do not illustrate a clear-cut operative dichotomy of left and right, but they can signify different things in particular texts.[105] This accounts well for the divergent readings in the B group texts, but B12 and B6 may add another significant explanation of a more mundane nature. It appears that during initiation, a kind of Underworld scenery and atmosphere was created for the re-enactment and performance of the ritual, which may indeed sound far-fetched, but is not unprecedented, as Merkelbach has documented the small ritual acts

[102] Verbruggen (1981: 90–91) also suggested that the cypress and the spring may have originated in Crete. Comparetti (1910: 34) understood the *leuké* cypress as identical to the white poplar (in Greek *leúke*); but Guthrie (1993: 182 and 192 n. 16) was skeptical; on the cypress' whiteness and brightness see Graf and Johnston 2007: 108–109.

[103] *Odyssey* 5.238–240 (Calypso's island); 6.291–294 cp. 7.105–106 (Phaeacia in the grove of Athena); 9.140–142 (island of the Cyclops); 10.509–510 (entrance to the Underworld, in the grove of Persephone); and 17.208–210 (Ithaca); for the "catabatic" associations of these passages see Martin 2007: 15–17 and passim.

[104] Theophrastos' text above n. 89; for the cypress of Ida see Chaniotis 1993; Chaniotis 1999: 208–209; Perlman 2000: 145–146.

[105] Edmonds 2004: 46–55.

performed during the initiation ritual into the cult of Isis and Sarapis.[106] This "stage" for the performance of the ritual had to be plausible enough and had to represent as closely as possible the Underworld scenery as imagined by the "priesthood," for which sometimes real props, ready at hand, would have had to be employed, and which from one place to the other would no doubt be tinted with a local coloring.[107] Thus, the Underworld illustrated in the texts of the gold lamellae and *epistomia* is a unique combination not only of stock mythic-elements, but also of "real" ones, a combination conveniently present on the Nida plateau, the *black-poplar*, a *spring*, and a *cypress*, which may account for the divergent topographical hints in these texts. The world above, more familiar and less dangerous, lends to the world below some real objects, a *cypress* nearby the *spring of Eleutherna/Sauros*, and *the black-poplar spring*, in order to render it less threatening, and thus more attainable.

The deviant readings in texts B12 and B6 (and E1 and E4 for that matter) from Crete may present a case of local (or individual), and therefore "peripheral," influences on the Bacchic–Orphic discourse of afterlife, and not another typical case of an engraver's mistake. To judge from the present state of the evidence, it may not be sheer coincidence that both texts present divergent readings in the same places, the *symbolon*, and the location of cypress and spring. The Cretan context(s) of mystery cults and rituals, especially the context sketched above from Phaistos, the Idaean Cave, and Eleutherna, amply illustrates that especially from the third century BCE onwards mystery cult(s) and eschatological beliefs, similar in concept to the one expressed in the texts on the lamellae and *epistomia*, were in vogue and flourishing. These were not always and in all areas of the island peripheral or central to the polis religion, but apparently co-existed side by side not only with Olympian religious ideas but also with other cults and rituals. Nor was there one central Bacchic–Orphic doctrine which prescribed specifically how the Underworld journey should be accomplished, and how the promised life after death should come true.

Within the small group of the twelve incised *epistomia* there is evident differentiation. Different *mystai* felt differently and expressed their beliefs and attitudes in differing, more individual(?) ways, as the shapes of the

[106] Merkelbach 1995: 147–181, 328–331, 343–346; the small ritual acts include impersonation of gods by priests, theatrical devices, machines, etc.

[107] Graf and Johnston (2007: 109–111) explain the topographical divergence in B12 as a probable innovation by an *orpheotelestes*, claiming that *his* is the correct knowledge of the Underworld topography; this need not exclude a local context for the incised *epistomion*, unless he was an itinerant *orpheotelestes*.

epistomia, the burial-coin practice, and the choice of the words to be incised strongly suggest. Although the majority of the *mystai* conform to the general and therefore central ideology of eschatological beliefs as expressed in the long texts from Italy and Thessaly, two *mystai* insist on engraving in texts B6 and B12 a local and therefore peripheral version of the Underworld topography, not to mention the two *mystai* addressing Plouton and Persephone (E1, E4), and the three who do not engrave anything but leave the matter completely blank to be filled in accordingly (G2–G4). Why are the specific details of topography so significant for the two *mystai*? Have these two *mystai* been initiated in the Idaean Cave on the Nida plateau, whereas the other ten elsewhere? Is this a local change of the Underworld narrative-topography, or were similar attempts also made elsewhere but so far are unknown?

These are legitimate questions that show the limitations imposed by the evidence. Crete, located in the periphery of Greece, and Phaistos, the Idaean Cave, and Eleutherna and environs, in turn peripheral centers on the island, provide strong evidence against hasty emendation of both deviant texts so as to make them conform to their similar Cretan examples, and in support of further research particularly of local idiosyncrasies. Center and periphery, employed either literally or figuratively, are useful interpretative tools but only to a certain degree. Religious attitudes and ideologies not only within a polis but also within a specific group of *mystai*, as is the case at Sfakaki, need not, or could not always conform to identical practices. The evidence from Eleutherna and Sfakaki, in the "periphery" of the Greek world, and a peripheral center of Crete, reveal an interpretative tension and dynamic interaction between local and Panhellenic, central and peripheral rituals and mystery cults, burial practices and ideologies, and discourses on afterlife.

APPENDIX

Table 7.1 ***GROUP G*** *Unincised lamellae*

	Provenance	*Date*	*Gender*	*Shape*	*Position in grave*	*Coin*	*Inscription*	*Burial and grave-goods*
G1	Pella, Macedonia	200–150 BCE	female	olive leaf	inside the larnax	gold stater of Philip II	no text (written in ink?, now lost)	Cremation in chamber tomb. On the dromos pottery and amphora-handle with seal. Inside marble sarcophagus: wooden larnax with cremated bones covered with gold-purple cloth; two gold myrtle-wreaths (24 and 30 leaves each); gold jewel shoe-shaped; burnt bone object. On the floor of the chamber: bronze phiale, small clay pyxis, two clay unguentaria, a small bone object, clay Thasian amphora, clay lamp, iron lamp-stand, glass skyphos
G2	Sfakaki, Crete	1–50 CE	male?	*epistomion*	mouth	silver coin	no text	Inhumation in cist-grave. Around the feet from the knees down: clay prochous, four glass cups, glass phiale, bronze lekythion, and bronze strigil
G3	Sfakaki, Crete	50–100 CE	female?	rectangular *epistomion*	mouth	no	no text	Inhumation in cist-grave. Around the feet: a clay kylix, a clay prochous, four clay unguentaria, glass cup, bronze mirror, lead pyxis, and bronze nails
G4	Sfakaki, Crete	I C. CE	female?	rectangular *epistomion*	mouth	no	no text	Inhumation in cist-grave. Deceased A buried later than deceased B to the N, and B (an older burial probably of a female) to the S. Around the feet of both: a clay prochous, three aryballos-shaped lekythia, a clay unguentarium, a clay cup, and a glass phiale; deceased A also a bronze coin; deceased B also *epistomion*, and between the legs bronze foils (from a wooden pyxis?)

PART III

Semiotic and narrative analyses

CHAPTER 8

Funerary gold lamellae and Orphic papyrus commentaries
Same use, different purpose

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OFFICIAL RELIGIOUS DISCOURSES AND MYSTICAL DISCOURSES

French anthropologists studying ancient Greek religion have readily interpreted the theological re-elaborations and religious practices of the Pythagoreans and the Orphics in terms of inversion and subversion: inversion of the path of cosmo- and theogonic creation to return from multiplicity and disparity to unity; subversion of the official sacrificial acts of animals through different forms of vegetarianism.[1] Generally considered as autonomous systems of signification, the corresponding texts have been cut off in their reading and interpretation by modern readers from the circumstances of their production and performance. The attention brought to long poems seen as literary texts has often been accompanied by a certain disregard for the discursive practices of the "sectarians" themselves. In these practices, spoken words often held value as acts of worship, being accompanied by written records which have been restored to us with surprising regularity as the excavations progress, particularly from funerary sites.

Among the texts deposited near the remains of the deceased, there are two that are both from a similar time period (end of the fourth century) and from neighboring locations (Macedonia/Thessaly). One is the well-known "Derveni Papyrus," excavated in 1962 from a cist-grave of a soldier near Thessaloniki and whose official publication is now finally completed; and

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[1] For more on the wish for theogonic unity for the followers of Orpheus, see Vernant 1990: 104–113; for subversion of animal sacrifice by cult dietary practices: Detienne 1977: 135–160 and 163–217; for the Orphic theogony considered as literary text: West 1983: 68–113.

the other is the pair of gold lamellae found in 1985 in a grave for a woman on the site thought to be ancient Pelinna.[2] Three criteria – functional, chronological, and geographical – ought to justify the possibility of a comparative analysis between two specific practices of the Greeks' religious discourse. In reality, despite the ritual differences that we will explore, the funerary use of these two types of "texts" seems to indicate that they are both, from a functional point of view and in their pragmatic dimension, not only last rites, but more precisely a kind of passport for the other world. We can then assume that the words, transcribed either onto a papyrus roll or onto gold leaf, were destined to facilitate, if not carry out, the passage of the deceased from this world into the next. The hypothesis that the pragmatic, not to say "performative" function of the texts fills the role of a funerary act involves an examination of their enunciative aspect.

At the same time, however, the study of the markers of enunciation exposes fundamental divergences between the two texts, differences that are necessarily reflected in the content. The differences reveal both the simultaneous existence in classical Greece of several kinds of discourse that we will tentatively call "mystical"; these variations and transformations through ritualized words and "mystical" practices operate generally within the official religious discourse. Religious discourses are those of the polytheistic theology and cults of the city-state, which itself varies from polis to polis and in the history of each city-state.

THE ERUDITE COMMENTARY OF THE DERVENI PAPYRUS

The roll of the Derveni Papyrus was not found in the tomb itself of the deceased, who has been identified as a soldier by the arms that were buried by the ashes. It is highly probable that it rolled from the funerary pyre, where it was supposed to have been burned.[3] Should we gather from this that the scholarly work was meant to end up like any other flammable material?

Inasmuch as it is possible to decipher from the fragments that are two-thirds burned away, the text on the papyrus is organized into two parts. Object itself of numerous modern commentaries, the second longer part of the text takes on the form of a more or less erudite commentary on a cosmo-theogonic

[2] Official *editio princeps* of the *P. Derv.*: Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou 2006; the lines of the Orphic theogony quoted and commented by the author of the Derveni text have been recently edited as T 2 and F 3–18 by Bernabé 2004–07 (with extended bibliography). Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 3–17 give the circumstances of the excavation and the text of the tablets from Pelinna; the two texts have been also republished recently by Bernabé 2004–07 as F 485–486; see now the new edition and commentary by Tortorelli Ghidini 2006: 85–87 and 139–142 as well as that of Graf and Johnston 2007: 36–37.

[3] The conditions in which the Derveni Papyrus was found are given by Kapsomenos 1964: 7–25; on the issue of its dating, see the hypothesis mentioned by West 1983: 77 and the indications given by Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou 2006: 8–9; for the controversial and vain question of the authorship of a text which is fundamentally anonymous, see Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou 2006: 45–59.

poem in epic meter and diction. In anticipation of the Alexandrian tradition of ὑπόμνημα, the hexameters commented on are cited and distinguished by the insertion of παράγραφοι. To this scholarly practice are added the repeated affirmations of the ancient commentator on the "enigmatic" (αἰνιγματώδης) character of the verses whose exegesis he performs. This means that figures, generally anthropomorphic, which the poem presents, are considered in an allegorical fashion as the representatives of entities that are physical and abstract.[4] In this light, the theogonic narration becomes the tale of the creation of the material world.

Much more mutilated, the first part of the text appears to criticize the actions of the worshipers known as μύσται when faced with the powers of the underworld. This part is also concerned with their ritual practices; among these rites are libations of water and of milk as well as offerings of cakes, destined for the Eumenides, which are interpreted as being the representations of souls.[5] One can imagine that in this prelude, by contrasting the official practices vis-à-vis the powers of the underworld, the commentator makes oblique references to the ritual and religious circumstances that surround the recitation of the Orphic poem on which the commentary was based. However, this is purely a hypothesis.

Be that as it may, both the part devoted to the acts of worship and the one intended for the exegesis of the theogony in epic diction are presented, from the discursive point of view, in the mode of the "narrative" or "story" (in the sense Benveniste intended as contrasted with the "discourse" characterized by the marks of the *I/you, hic* and *nunc*), more generally in the mode of assertion.[6] The process of correctly accomplishing and interpreting the ritual practices as well as the procedure for an accurate reading of the poem are thus expressed by the use of an objectivizing third person. In the part dealing with the poetic text, the interpretive indications are generally attributed to the poem itself, that is, to its author: he is the one who affirms (ἔφη), who signifies (σημαίνει), who indicates (αἰνίζεται), who has made the revelation (ἐδήλωσεν). The poet is named twice in col. XVIII: Orpheus is the author of the cosmo-theogony. Now, if Orpheus is represented as the implicit interpreter of his own poem, he who by Moira

[4] The erudite references of the Derveni commentary have been explained, notably by Burkert 1968 and 1970, while Henry 1986 has brought up the linguistic and etymologizing aspects of the interpretation proposed by the commentator. See now Betegh 2004: 349–372.

[5] Cols. II, 4 and VI, 9; on the role played by the Eumenides see now the commentary by Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou 2006: 143 and 166–171, and also the references given below n. 8.

[6] The distinction between "story" or "narrative" and "discourse" was proposed by Benveniste 1966: 237–250. In a recent and rushed work, Perret 1994: 69–77, tries to nuance this distinction, but ends by adopting it (93). On this important instrumental distinction for the reading of the different Greek poetic forms in their pragmatics, see my introductory remarks to Calame 1995a: 3–26.

signifies breath, it is in order to be in contrast with "other men." These "other men," all the while "speaking correctly" (λέγοντες ὀρθῶς), "do not know" (οὐκ εἰδότες) what is hiding behind the words that are used. This opposition between those who possess the correct knowledge (τοῖς ὀρθῶς γινώσκουσιν, col. XXIII, 2) because they have learned (μανθάνουσι; cf. col. V, 9–11) and those who do not know and are thus doomed to mere appearance (οἱ οὐ γινώσκοντες δοκοῦσι . . . ; cols. IX, 2–3, XII, 3–5, XXIII, 5–6, XXVI, 8–9) is present throughout the text, both in the section devoted to rites and in the section having to do with the poem.[7]

Without a doubt, it is not by chance that the only two enunciative interventions that the text offers in the incomplete state in which it was found happen to be in the context of this opposition between the knowing and the ignorant.

In the ritual part, the consultation of oracles in order to know the fate in store for man in Hades is apparently assumed by a *we* (πάριμεν; col. V, 4) that includes the ignorant; it does most probably not include the (Orphic) speaker of the text and commentary, but it refers to the generally admitted worship. In effect, the tie between doubt (ἀπιστίη) and ignorance (ἀμαθίη) is made stronger in the immediate context of this form whose lesson is not entirely guaranteed. This lack of confidence that prompts mankind to have recourse to oracles leads one to think that the mystical practices described in col. II are subject to the same critical line. Probably it is the same ἀπιστίη that, in vain, compels mortals to offer libations and sacrifices to the δαίμονες and to the Eumenides to appease them. Libations of water and of milk, as well as sacrifices of poultry, recall either the public offerings made to goddesses such as the Eumenides or official mysteries like the Eleusinian mysteries.[8]

These are probably the same mystical practices that the second enunciative intervention, focusing on the commentary on the poem, squarely rejects at the beginning of col. XX.

[As for those men who believe that they learned] when they witnessed the rites while performing them [together with other] people in the cities, I wonder

[7] I have tried to analyze this opposition in order to interpret its function in relation to the "voice of the commentary," in Calame 2005: 157–169.

[8] Even before the new reading of these columns by K. Tsantsanoglou and G. M. Parássoglou, Henrichs (1984a) suggested that these lines make reference to the Eleusinian mysteries. If milk plays an essential role in these so-called "Orphic" tablets of Pelinna and of Thurii (cf. below n. 18), the libations of water and milk bring us closer to the offerings given to the Eumenides, for example: cf. Graf 1980. For wineless offerings destined for Demeter and Kore, cf. Richardson 1974: 224. On the nature of this inclusive *we* corresponding to the other ones, see now the commentary of Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou 2006: 53–56 and 161–163, *contra* Betegh 2004: 79–82.

(θανμάϛω) less that they do not understand; for it is not possible to hear and simultaneously comprehend what is being said. (trans. K. Tsantsanoglou and G. M. Parássoglou)

Many readers of the papyrus have not failed to group together with the Eleusinian mysteries these "sacred rites in the cities of man" that affect vision and hearing without bringing any additional knowledge or learning (col. xx, 1–3), thus leading to despair.[9] However that may be, the evocation of the initiation (ἐπιτελήσαντες; col. xx, 1) into the official mysteries provokes the personal astonishment of the speaker – and thus of the commentator – astonishment in that the rites precede the knowledge, and then pity because the price demanded is not followed by the desired result.

This rare and two-fold enunciative intervention marks the contrast of the practices and the poem commented upon with the public and official mystery cults; from such a record one can conclude that the commentary does indeed come from a follower of the Orphic initiatory group.[10] It is that of an erudite who, from the enunciative distance of a discourse with intellectual pretensions, makes the necessity of exegesis depend on the secret, coded nature of the poem's messages specifically targeting the sect's initiates. From this one can suppose that the burning of the papyrus on the funeral pyre is ritualistic in character.

PERFORMATIVE ADDRESSES AND INITIATION IN THE GOLD LAMELLAE OF PELINNA

In contrast to the Derveni Papyrus, the gold tablets from Pelinna in the shape of ivy leaves were not intended to perish on the pyre of the deceased. Like other documents of the same type, the tablets were buried with the deceased woman and placed symmetrically on her chest with a gold coin slipped between her lips to assure her passage into the underworld.[11] The two lamellae are the same in format and carry in essence the same text. It simply appears that the slightly superior size of the capital letters written in cursive employed in the second tablet prevented the scribe from inscribing

[9] The identification of rites of initiation discussed here with those of Eleusis was proposed by Rusten 1985 (with n. 42).

[10] The question of the identity of the "Derveni author" is extremely controversial; on the various proposals around it, see Betegh 2004: 64 and 373–380, with the caution expresssed by Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou 2006: 58–59.

[11] The context of the inhumation of the Pelinna lamellae is reconstructed by Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 3–4. See the parallels found notably in Magna Graecia, which Graf 1993: 254–258, brings up. Further bibliography in Bernabé 2004–07: 43–45.

all the text that appears on the first. The systematic recurrence of faulty or omitted letters indicates the rapidity of the transcription.[12]

> Now (νῦν) you have died and now you have been born, thrice blessed,
> on this day.
> Say to Persephone that Bacchios himself has released you.
> Bull, you jumped into the milk.
> Quickly, you jumped into the milk.
> Ram, you fell into the milk.
> You have wine as your fortunate honour.
> And an end awaits you under the earth such as the rest of the blessed have.
> (trans. J. N. Bremmer)

From an enunciative point of view, the text contains marks that, according to the instrumental distinction drawn by Benveniste, distinguish the "discourse" from the "narrative" or the "story": forms in second person presupposing an "I" (the speaker) addressing a "you" (addressee), imperative aorist ("without limit") tense, time indicated as the present day and coinciding through the use of a deictic with the moment (and space) of the enunciation and communication (νῦν, ἄματι τῶιδε; l. 1). This does not in any way hinder the address to the deceased from presenting itself as a story with a consistent actor, space, unfurling in time, and also with the transformation of state that occurs from a "before" to an "after." In short, in that case level of the "narrative" and level of the "discourse" overlap, and actors, space, and the tense of the story are marked in respect to the *you*- addressee (and to the implicit *I*-speaker) to the place of the enunciation and to its temporal moment. The double νῦν in the beginning of the text builds the bridge between the state preceding the transformation and that which results. Although the deceased has passed away, she has also just been reborn, "on this day" when physical death coincides with the burial interpreted as the passage to the afterlife (ὑπὸ γῆν; l. 7).

This passage to the other world is articulated in three phases marked by differences in tense: the jump "into the milk" as a bull and as a ram takes place in the past tense, the present corresponds to the possession of the wine, and the future describes the mystical honors (τέλεα; l. 7) that await the blessed deceased. It appears to be legitimate to identify these three moments, seen in their chronological sequence, with the sequence of the three consecutive phases of the rites of passage. The immersion in milk would then represent the moment of rupture; the possession of the wine

[12] The difficulties in establishing these two highly cursory texts are noted by Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987 and by Graf 1991: 88–95. See also the proposed readings and interpretations formulated by Luppe 1989 and Merkelbach 1989.

would be the equivalent of the liminal stage; and the attainment of the blessed state would correspond to the moment of reintegration. What is more, at the end of the text, by recalling the state enjoyed by the blessed (ὄλβιοι) in the afterlife, the epithet "thrice blessed" attributed to the deceased at the beginning of the text is brought to mind.[13] As for the two agents of this transformation, the semio-narrative "destinateurs," one of them, Persephone, invites the (female) "addressee" to speak in the near future indicated by the imperative infinitive form εἰπεῖν; the other is Bacchios, who previously had freed her. Thus, milk and wine refer to Dionysos, and the honors of the afterworld to Persephone.

The first readers of the two lamellae from Pelinna had already questioned the role played in this short enunciative story, in which the level of the "narrative" overlaps with that of the "discourse," by the two deities and by the qualities and functions attributed to them. Through references made to two famous scenes from Euripides' *Bacchae*, the milk bath taken in animal form reminds us both of the metamorphosis of the god with bullhorns into a bull, envisioned by Pentheus when possessed by the deity, and of the scene in which the Maenads feed young wild animals with their own milk. In that scene, the Maenads also cause springs of water, wine, and milk to gush forth where they have struck the earth with their thyrsoi. Both scenes coincide with the moment when the Maenads, filled with the power of the god, freely rush to the mountains. From antiquity, the liberating effect of a god such as Dionysos, often called Lysios or Lyseus, has been attached to the initiation practices conducted by the god. In this light, the leap (ἔθορες; l. 3 and l. 4) into the milk does not occur without bringing to mind the mad rush of the Maenads in a natural environment where beneficial liquids spurt forth in abundance.[14] One may suppose that, for the deceased, this time of

[13] The ring composition of the longest text was noted by Segal 1990: 411–419, who observes that this process of calling the "addressee" thrice-blessed links the blessed person to the end of the text. See also Obbink, Chapter 12 in this volume, 296–297, who observes, following Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 5–6, that τέλεα refers clearly to the "mystical" honors obtained once buried, through the progression of the initiation represented by the burial. On the meaning of ὄλβιοι in this context, cf. Levêque 1982: 113–126, and on the meaning of the "jump into the milk," Faraone, Chapter 13 in this volume, with footnote 18 below.

[14] Dionysos as a bull: Eur. *Bacch*. 100 and 920–922; cf. also Soph. fr. 959 Radt, Ion Ch. fr. 744 Page and *carm. pop*. fr. 871 Page. The Maenads and milk: Eur. *Bacch*. 699–711; cf. again Pl. *Ion* 534a. For the liberating effect of the "mysteries" of Dionysos, see *Suda*. s.v. λύσιοι τελεταί (Λ 867 Adler = Hercleid. Pont. fr. 155 Wehrli); see also Paus. Att. *s. eod. v* (Λ 78 Erbse) etc.; other documents on this subject by Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 12, and by Graf 1991: 89–90 (cf. also Graf 1993: 243–244) who, by referring to the hexameters attributed to Orpheus (*Orph*. fr. 232 Kern = F 350 Bernabé) and conferring upon Dionysos the qualities of Lysios, makes the Dionysiac liberation into an Orphic practice; see now Tortorelli Ghidini 2006: 140–141. With reason, Ricciardelli Apicella 1992 relates ἔθορες to the analogous expression that can be found in the hymn to Zeus Kouros (pp. 160–162 Powell); but one can also see the

separation from the world of the city and from civilization happened in reality before death, on the occasion of the participation in a preliminary Bacchic initiation ritual, or that it represents symbolically the moment of death, under the auspices of Dionysos Bacchios who has the power to "unbind" (ἔλυσε; l. 2). Let us acknowledge, however, that for want of parallels, the metamorphosis of the deceased, during the leap into milk, not only into a bull but also into a ram remains enigmatic.[15]

In this context, and as a hypothesis, to use wine as an "honor" might refer to the (present) state of death. Consumed pure, wine is the instrument of Dionysiac possession. Like sleep or death, wine removes us from ourselves to put us in a state of otherness.[16]

INITIATORY CONFIRMATIONS AT THURII

It is this transitory state that would lead the initiate to Persephone; it is this state that would allow the deceased to receive the honors that await her in the underworld and which she will enjoy with the other blessed ones. The commentators of the text have observed that the evocation of Persephone brings us to the practices of the cult of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Nevertheless, they have not adequately underlined the fact that, within a funerary context, the form of *makarismos*, brought up partially in the Pelinna address, points us in the same direction.[17]

Without delving into the details of complex hexametrical texts, we may note that three of the gold lamellae from Thurii, wrongly identified as and called "Orphic," reproduce a narrative journey of initiation that parallels the one represented in the lamellae from Pelinna. Spoken in the first person and in the feminine, the text literally inscribed on the lamellae places the speaker between a time past and an imminent future. Even if the order of the narration reverses the chronological sequence of these three time periods,

usage of the same verb in the Orphic poem cited in the *P. Derv.* col. XIII, 4 (= F 8 Bernabé; cf. also col. XIV, 1–2 and col. XXI, 3–4) to describe the gushing forth (from the penis?) into the ether; cf. Kouremenos, Parássoglou and Tsantsanoglou 2006: 26–28, 194–199 and 243–247.

[15] Ricciardelli Apicella 1992: 32, reviews the few slim proofs we have of the link between Dionysos and the ram; see now *P. Gur.* F 578, col. 1, 10 Bernabé.

[16] The text and images that evoke the effects of wine have been assembled by Lissarrague 1987: 7–22; on the affinities between sleep and death according to the Greek representation, see Mainoldi 1987. On the literal understanding of l. 16 of the two tablets where the wine is presented as an "honor," see Graf 1991: 91–92, but also 1993: 241, n. 9, as well as Ricciardelli Apicella 1992: 38.

[17] The role played by Persephone in probable relation to the mysteries of the Eleusinian kind was uncovered by Merkelbach 1989, and by Segal 1990: 416. As for the *makarismoi* pronounced in the Eleusinian context, see Pind. fr. 137 Maehler and Soph. fr. 837 Radt, naturally not forgetting the closing lines of the story of the *Hymn. Cer.* 480–482; within the context of Bacchic rites, cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 72–77; see Richardson 1974: 313–314, and my own study on the performative dimension and function of the conclusion of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* in Calame 1997.

their logical succession is nonetheless apparent: if the *I* now presents himself to Persephone (ἔρχομαι; l. 1), it is because he wishes (καὶ γὰρ ἐγών . . . εὔχομαι . . . ; l. 3) to be included in the class of the blessed, along with the immortals. If he can lay claim to this accession, it is because, according to the Homeric expression, he was "overcome by destiny" (με μοῖρ' ἐδάμασσε; l. 4 or 5). After mentioning, in the aorist, these acts that, varying from lamella to lamella, have led the autobiographical speaker to the queen of the earth, the text adopts, in ring composition, the two final steps of the journey transitioning from the present to the future (ll. 6–7):

now (νῦν), I arrive (ἥκω) as a suppliant to the venerable Persephone so that with goodwill she might let me attain (πέμψηι) the residence of the saints.

And with these two hexameters, the first of the three closely related tablets substitutes the following statements, first an embedded address to the *I*-speaker as *you*, and than a conclusive *I*-statement :

"Fortunate and happy amongst the blessed, from a mortal you will become (ἔσηι) a god."
A kid, I fell (ἔπετον) in the milk.[18]

The present moment thus corresponds to that of the passage (ἥκω in l. 6 evokes ἔρχομαι in l. 1). This stage is the intermediary between a future in which one enters the blessed state and a past marked by the atonement for sins and the immersion in the milk. In both Thurii and Pelinna, and in the absence in Magna Graecia of any explicit intervention from Dionysos, the deceased – speaker or addressee – goes through a phase of rupture from the old order marked by death, then through an interval that insures the

[18] The three lamellae from Thurii, edited as *IG* XIV, 641, 1, 2, and 3 (= *Orph*. fr. 32 c, d, and e Kern = F 488–490 Bernabé, with extended and updated bibliography), present thus approximately the same text: see the commentary of Zuntz 1971: 299–327 and 335–343, who re-edited them using the numbers A 1, A 2, and A 3, while recalling the circumstances of their discovery in Timpone Piccolo (287–293); they were placed in the right hand of each of the three corpses, of unidentified sex, buried in the funerary site, whereas a fourth (A 4: cf. n. 20 below) was found in Timpone Grande, near the head of a corpse incinerated and probably made into a hero. Going forward at least six centuries in the same tradition, the text of lamella A 5 (= *Orph*. F 491 Bernabé), found near Rome, refers to a woman (334–335). The discovery of the Pelinna lamellae where one can find, although in the second person, the statement "I fell into the milk," has given weight to the hypothesis of a (metaphorical) metamorphosis of the deceased into an animal protected by Dionysos: cf. Hsch. s.v. Ἐρίφιος (Ε 5906 Latte): ὁ Διόνυσος, with the few parallels cited by Zuntz 1971: 323–326, and the less skeptical observations of Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 13, and by Graf 1991: 93–95. On the Dionysiac metamorphoses, see Henrichs 1982. Perhaps it is fitting to add to these testimonials of the immersion in milk that of Alcm. fr. 56 Page: cf. Schlesier 1994. On the denomination of the golden lamellae from Thurii as "Orphic," see Calame 2009: 204–224; see also the contrasted positions of Edmonds, Chapter 12 this volume, and of Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal, Chapter 4 this volume.

transferal into the underworld, in order to finally reach the moment of integration into the world of the blessed. With the help of this progression in initiation, the deceased is transformed from a mortal into a deity.[19]

A fourth lamella from Thurii confirms the three phases of this journey with an address made to the deceased. In it, the moment of rupture corresponds explicitly to the instant when "the spirit abandons the light of the sun." In contrast, the deceased, appearing not any more as *I* but as *you*, is called upon, by a triple χαῖρε, to rejoice because he has faced tribulations (πάθημα) never before seen. It is in this moment of transition, which corresponds to the present time of the statement, that the man addressed becomes a god. And it is in such a way that he will be able to take the favorable path leading to the fields and woods sacred to Persephone: the time of gathering.[20] Here again, in asyndeton and in the second person as in the Pelinna lamellae, the statement "a kid, you fell into milk" marks the beginning of the passage.

"Now you have died and now you have been born, thrice blessed, on this day": this Pelinna address may be understood as the development (as narration of an initiation) of the *makarismos*. In the last mentioned lamella from Thurii, also in a statement in second person (and notably masculine), the development consecrates the accession to the realm of the blessed in an identical journey: "Rejoice, rejoice, to the right you are going towards the sacred meadows and holy groves of Persephone." The ring composition that marks the Pelinna narration allows the text from Thessaly to begin with the concluding phrase of the first mentioned text from Magna Graecia: "Ram (or: kid), you fell into the milk." This structural parallelism is even more interesting because in the second text from Thurii the substitutive and concluding address as *makarismos* to the blessed one is followed abruptly by the statement (as *I*!) concerning the immersion in the milk. That non-metrical statement is simply tacked on to the text, without a syntactical link explicitly joining the two. It brings to mind the enunciations of the famous σύνθημα, of the "password" spoken by the initiates of the Eleusinian

[19] I have now developed the idea of the initiatory character of the itinerary proposed to the deceased person in various gold lamellae in Calame 2009: 196–206; see also the important observations of Edmonds 2004: 88–109; the initiatory interpretation has been followed by C. Riedweg, Chapter 9 this volume.

[20] *IG* XIV, 642 = A 4 Zuntz = *Orph.* fr. 32 f Kern = F 487 Bernabé. Once again, I base my statements on the commentary of Zuntz 1971: 330–333; besides, Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 195–197, notes that this form of greeting is characteristic of addresses to those who died and were made into heroes and deified. Let us note that in lamellae A 1–A 3, neither Eucles, nor Eubouleus, invoked along with Persephone, can be identified solely with Dionysos: Zuntz 1971: 310–312 and Calame 2006: 264–266.

mysteries.[21] In Pelinna, these statements in the aorist follow each other in paratactic structure; they refer to the completion of the ritual acts by the addressee. The enunciation of these actions in a form that we find at Eleusis and at Thurii or Pelinna confirms that the initiatory acts (mystical or funerary rites) of the rupture from the preceding state have been accomplished; it demonstrates that the speaker, whose corpse has been placed in the ground, is now ready to attain the world of the blessed. This is the root of the address calling the deceased fortunate, in both Pelinna and Thurii. It also offers the possible link with the *makarismos* already figured in Pindar and Sophocles in relation to Eleusis.[22]

Both the narrative and enunciative modes in the twofold text from Pelinna as well as the ritual collaboration that it creates between Dionysos and Persephone lead us from the Orphic domain towards ritual gestures relating to practices tied in with official mysteries, possibly inspired by Eleusis. In Derveni, an erudite text was burned for an individual, a text inscribed according to the rules of scriptural practices in the book represented by the papyrus roll. Taking the status of the text in this way, the discourse is pronounced by a distanced third person and from a perspective of generalized (*one*) truth, in order to comment on a cosmo-theogonic poem attributed to Orpheus. On the corpse in Pelinna was placed a text whose hasty writing seems to reveal an oral aspect, but on which was conferred the permanence of gold; the inscription is pronounced as a direct address to the deceased to blaze the trail for the journey of initiation. And whereas at Eleusis the passage consecrated by the "passwords" is symbolic, in Pelinna (as in Thurii) it is materially produced in the funerary ritual itself. Probably prepared by cult practices resembling Eleusinian or Bacchic ones, the ritual act represented by the placing of the Pelinna texts on the corpse of the deceased consecrates the very moment of the passage; the texts were most probably declaimed by a priest on this occasion. The coincidence between the burial ritual and the *now* spoken in the funerary text appears to be obvious: it is situated between the physical death (ἔθανες), symbolized itself by the immersion in the milk in reference to a preceding "mystical" practice,

[21] These statements are quoted by Clem. Al. *Protr.* 2, 21–22 (pp. 26–27 Stählin); see also sch. Pl. *Grg.* 497c. The serendipitous connection between the statements from Eleusis and the non-metrical statements on the lamellae from Pelinna that also follow each other in paratactic manner was suggested by D. Obbink, Chapter 12 this volume, pp. 293–296. In this case, it is necessary to relinquish the idea of seeing συνθήματα in the metric statements and tied together by δέ's that follow each other in the aorist in ll. 5–7 of lamella A1 from Thurii, contrary to what Zuntz 1971: 318–319 proposes; see now the commentary of Tortorelli Ghidini 2006: 130–131 and 135.

[22] On these *makarismoi*, see above n. 17.

and the future introduction into the world of the blessed thanks to Persephone's intervention.[23]

NEITHER ELEUSIS NOR ORPHEUS, BUT DIONYSOS

Since Dionysos is the god associated with the preliminary phase of the deceased's inductive journey and thus with the liberation from the former life, it seems legitimate to question the connection, up to this point assumed, of the woman buried at Pelinna with the Eleusinian-type mysteries. One may ask if instead of being an Eleusinian initiate, the deceased might have simply participated in the Bacchic rites of initiation, of which there remains attestation, particularly for women in many Greek villages and cities during the classical era.[24]

"It is not permitted for anyone who has not been possessed by Bacchos (βεβακχευμένον) to be interred here (βεβακχευμένον)," proclaims a famous inscription from the fifth century, found at the funerary site of Cumae. To be possessed by Bacchos is to be liberated. Let us remember in particular the two antique wooden statues of Dionysos that were displayed in the agora of Corinth, which according to the aetiological legend were fashioned from the tree where Pentheus perched spying on the women of Thebes celebrating the god on Mount Cithaeron. One of the statues received the epiclesis of Lysios, the other that of Bacchios. And in Sicyon, alongside the statues of Dionysos and the Bacchae possessed by the god and venerated along with him in the temple near the theater, a nocturnal procession led to the god's sanctuary, carrying the old statues of Dionysos Bacchios, and then that of Dionysos Lysios. Dionysos transports and liberates. In the funerary ritual, Bacchic liberation is associated with liberation by death: the former is often the indispensable prerequisite for the latter.[25] In this case, it is better to speak of a rite of passage or initiatory practice than about "mysteries."

[23] This coincidence between the act of speaking that the text represents and the ritual act of burial reinforces the hypothesis postulated by D. Obbink, Chapter 12 this volume, pp. 297–298, that interprets the texts of these "Orphic" lamellae as "speech-acts" with a perlocutionary purpose in the sense intended by Austin 1975: 4–24 and 101–132, but that does not resolve the issue of the passing from *I* to *you* in these texts.

[24] Documentation on Bacchic rites in classical Greece is critically examined by Versnel 1990: 131–155; as for the Hellenistic era, see the recent Burkert 1993; for the link between ritual practices and death, see Cole 1993, as well as Segal 1990: 416–418; for the connection with purification, see Parker 1983: 286–290 and 302–304.

[25] *DGE* 792 Schwyzer = *LSCG* 120 Sokolowski, with the exhaustive commentary by Turcan 1986, who interprets the perfect of the form βεβακχευμένον as the definitive state of asceticism reached by the Orphic worshipper, in contrast with the ephemeral ecstasy experienced by a follower of Dionysos;

As far as the power to free oneself from sorrow and the quotidian trials of mortal life was attributed to Dionysos and to wine, the god, as Iacchos, naturally was associated during the classical era with the fulfillment of the Eleusinian mysteries.[26] Of course, the Orphic graffiti of Olbia have been interpreted as the ritual counterpart to the role played by the figure of Dionysos in the Orphic anthropogony. Dionysos was associated with the explicitly Orphic series "life-death-life-truth" found on the bone plaques from Olbia, and seems to be operative in the rebirth of man, as is the case in the (late) Orphic myth. Men are born, supposedly, from the ashes of the Titans whom Zeus had struck with lightning after they tore apart and consumed the young Dionysos.[27] There is a clear epigraphic link between Dionysos and the "Orphics" in Herodotus' famous and enigmatic text that compares the ban on Egyptians having wool shrouds with the analogous ban in Greece for those participating in ὄργια called Ὀρφικά or Βακχικά. If the expression Herodotus uses follows the form of a chiasmus, the latter rites surprisingly would be originally Egyptian and the former Pythagorean. However this may be, Ὀρφικά and Βακχικά, all the while being inscribed in the context of the initiation and funerals, are well differentiated.[28] But the function assumed by the god of possession and liberation in the official mysteries celebrated in Eleusis as well as in the secret rites reserved for the followers of Orphism is not a sufficient reason to amalgamate all the funerary rites where either Dionysos and/or Persephone intervenes in the texts either to the Eleusinian domain or to Orphism. Designations such as "*Eleusinian–Dionysiac*" or "*Dionysiac–Orphic*" are nothing more than linguistic expedients.

At Derveni, because of the incomplete state of the papyrus, the text ends before we find out the progeny of the incestuous relationship between Zeus

Paus. 2.2, 6–7, and 7.5–6, with the commentary of Musti and Torelli 1986: 220–221 and 241–242; cf. Detienne 1986: 35–43. In the fr. 131a Maehler of Pindar, excerpt from a *Threnos*, the λυσίπονος τελετά that guarantees a fortunate destiny to everyone seems to refer to a Dionysiac celebration: cf. Cannatà Ferra 1990: 187–190, with the documents with the same meaning quoted by Burkert 1987: 21–23; cf. also Hdt. 4.78–80 and Graf 1993: 249–253.

[26] For the link between Iacchos–Bacchos and the Eleusinian mysteries, see in particular Graf 1974: 51–58; for the hypothesis of a preliminary initiation, see also now Calame 2009: 196–204 and 220–224.

[27] The relation between the graffiti in Olbia (published by Rusajeva 1978 = *Orph.* T 463–T 465 Bernabé) and Orphism was studied by West 1983: 17–18, and by Zhmud' 1992, while Vinogradov 1991 studied their relation to Dionysos. On Orphic anthropogony and its sources, see Burkert 1977b: 442–443, and West 1983: 74–75 and 140–175; Graf 1993: 242–245, sees the relation between Dionysos and Persephone in Pelinna within the framework of Orphic anthropogony.

[28] Hdt. 2.81; for the interpretation of this succinct passage, see Burkert 1972: 127–128; Graf's extensive bibliography, Graf 1974: 92 n. 60.

and his mother Ge/(De)meter.[29] In Pelinna, Bacchios does not appear as the son of a Persephone who is herself the daughter of Zeus and Demeter. As for the three similar texts from Thurii, it was only by using a particular interpretation of a famous fragment of one of Pindar's *Threnoi* that it was possible to relate them not only to Dionysos, but more specifically with the god's Orphic biography. In effect, the compensation "for an ancient grief" that Persephone gets from those humans to whose souls she would grant rebirth is seen as the recompense for the grief she endured at the death of her son, himself the indirect cause of the birth of men. However, both the construction of the term ποινή as the price paid for something, as well as the way in which Plato interprets this passage by drawing from the sadness an argument for exhorting man to live his life as piously as possible, refers the cause of Persephone's sorrow not to the death of her son Dionysos, but to men and their actions. It is appropriate to read the corresponding passages of the lamellae from Thurii in the same way: in one, the sorrow is tied to the painful lifetime of mortals; in the two others, the compensation (ποινή) is presented as the payment for wrongdoing.[30] Following the rules of asceticism of the βίος ὀρφικός, the followers of Orphism removed themselves during their mortal life from injustice. It was out of the question for them to provoke or to expiate "Persephone's sorrow."

If it is not apparent in the case of Thurii, in Pelinna, on the other hand, the job of liberating the deceased from mortal life and probably from life's burdens is attributed to Dionysos. Here it is fitting to call to mind the text on the tablet from Hipponion (Locri) that, dating from the end of the fifth century, provides not the "archetype" but the more developed example for funerary texts found also near Thurii and Thessaly or in Crete. Made thirsty by death and addressed in the second-person form, the deceased may drink the cold water flowing from the pool of Memory and is invited to follow the

[29] *P. Derv.* col. XXII, 7–16 and col. XXVI, 9–12; cf. Kouremenos, Parássoglou, and Tsantsanoglou 2006: 253–256 and 272.

[30] Pind. fr. 133 Maehler cited by Pl. *Men.* 81c; Thurii A 1, 6 as well as A 2, 4 and A 3, 4 Zuntz (= *Orph.* F 488, 5, 489, 4 and 490. 4 Bernabé. The parallel provided by Hom. *Il.* 9.632–636 displays how the genitive depending on ποινή indicates, in relation to the verb δέχομαι, the object of compensation: cf. Seaford 1986, which dissociates the reference from the Titans' cannibalism; see now Calame 2006: 271–284. Cannatà Ferra 1990: 222–226, enumerates all the Orphic interpretations given of Pindar's fragment. The subject is considered again carefully by Lloyd-Jones 1985, who recognizes that it is fitting to attribute a wide range of senses to "Orphic" so as to interpret in this way all the funerary practices that function as initiations; see also Graf 1974: 182–185, which shows that, already in classical Athens, the relations established between Orpheus and the Eleusinian mysteries were situated outside of any sectarian doctrine. Let us remember that Zuntz 1971: 327–329, denies any Orphic reference in the lamellae from Thurii. On the rules of βίος ὀρφικός, see in particular Detienne 1977: 148–149 and 169–170.

path taken by the other "mystics and bacchants."[31] Free from any allusion to the birth of men from the ashes of the Titans who murdered the god, Dionysos as a Bacchant allows the deceased to present himself as liberated before Persephone to have access to the world of the blessed.

Striking confirmations of this collaboration between Dionysos and Persephone to guarantee the passage into and the welcoming in the afterlife can be found in the Apulian iconography. This is particularly true in the case of a volute crater attributed to the Darius painter and the subject of a recent and very rich commentary.[32] Seated facing Persephone, carrying the cross-shaped torch indicating her under-worldly function, Hades is represented giving a gesture of greeting to Dionysos who is either approaching or leaving the building of the two deities. The god of Bacchic possession is himself accompanied by two Maenads with a thyrsus, torch, and tambourine, and with a satyr named Oinops, the brilliance of wine. Hermes' presence in a symmetrical position with regard to that of Dionysos makes the meeting a scene of passage. Is this a myth or a rite? Apparently, the children of Cadmus depicted in the same image represent the characters that Dionysos and Hermes have just led to Hades and Persephone. It is more a scene of legendary character that would correspond to the depiction of the ritual heroization of the deceased on the other side of the vase. However that may be, the scene conveys well the role played by Dionysos and by his Maenads, or by the Satyr who embodies wine, for the passage into the underworld. Of Orpheus, however, there is no trace!

The Dionysiac initiation at Pelinna paves the way for the rite of passage granted by Persephone. In contrast with the written and literary practices that already characterized for the ancients the followers of Orpheus, all this takes place through a ritual and performative address to the deceased, hastily committed to the memory of writing.[33]

[31] *SEG* 26, 1139 (= *Orph*. F 474 Bernabé); the tablet from Hipponion was published by Foti and Pugliese Caratelli 1974: 91–126; the other tablets were edited again under the designation B 1–8 and commented by Zuntz 1971: 355–393; see now my extended commentary in Calame 2009: 181–204. After a first try by West 1975, that notes that the term βάκχος refers to different forms of initiation including a state of ecstasy, but not necessarily Dionysiac, Janko 1984 reconstitutes the "archetype" from the text of these different tablets; see also, Lloyd-Jones 1985: 269–272, and the strange proposition made by Riedweg 2002. Cole 1980 and 1993: 276–280, on the basis of later documents, is in favor of Dionysos; see also Turcan 1986.

[32] Volute crater, *RVAp*. *Suppl*., II, 18/41 *a* 1, brilliantly commented upon by Moret 1993.

[33] Testimonies on the relation between Orphism and writing are brought up by Burkert 1977a: 442, and commented upon by Detienne 1989: 110–115 and 119; see in particular Eur. *Hipp*. 952–955, in which the expression βάκχευε refers to a Dionysiac-type religious behavior: cf. Barrett 1964:342–345, and Calame 2002.

DISCURSIVE TRANSFORMATIONS OF MAN INTO GOD

In conclusion, this limited comparative study, intended to bring to light certain modalities of religious discourse in classical Greece and some of its "mystical" transformations, calls for two remarks.

First, from the enunciative point of view, in the funerary gold lamellae, the act of addressing a *you* denotes an *I*, implicitly delivering the statement. If the enunciatee corresponding to the "addressee" *you* in the two tablets from Pelinna must also be identified with the deceased woman, then we must ask who pronounces the words inscribed on the gold leaves. The command to address Persephone by referring to the liberation that Dionysos Bacchios operates sends us most probably back to the voice of the priest who presided at the burial ceremony. He is the one who is able to define the initiation journey that awaits the deceased woman and to help her to perform it.

As for the second concluding (comparative) remark, in the official religious discourse, known through hymns and prayers, the speaker who takes on the voice of a priest, often in choral form, addresses himself in general to the deity. The god then takes on the role of the enunciatee or addressee, and, in the discourse, he occupies the place of *you*. The *I* in erudite Orphic discourse appears, by contrast, in his distant autonomy. It is doubtless in this way that he seeks to assert the interpretive practices whose results are presented as *he-* or *one*-truths in contrast to the normal verbal *your* practices of cult within the official mysteries. We may perhaps find in this opposition the manifestation of one of the initiatory reversals attributed to classical Orphic practices and thought, which address themselves, so it seems, only to mortal men. On the other hand, in funerary religious discourse inspired by Dionysiac mysteries, despite the initiatory performance that it represents, the reversal never comes into play. If a mortal could occupy the place of a deity in the direct addresses of the cultic texts, it is because through the funerary ritual with an initiatory dimension that consecrates the "performative" discourse, the human being is in the process of becoming a god. For women as well as for men first initiated to the Dionysiac mysteries, the funerary ritual, with its initiatory form and function, tends to eliminate, at the end of their lifetime, the difference that separates mortals from gods.

CHAPTER 9

Initiation – death – underworld
Narrative and ritual in the gold leaves

Christoph Riedweg

I

I first came across the intriguing pieces made of gold in a seminar run by Walter Burkert in the winter semester 1978/79.[1] Ever since then the scenery evoked on these strange little burial offerings, with all its highly suggestive details, has cast a spell on me: the House of Hades, with two springs off to the right;[2] next to one of them a radiant cypress, over the other (the one fed by the Lake of Memory) guardians posted; moreover the soul, perishing from thirst: its dialogue with the guardians; a sacred path on which μύσται and Βάκχοι are treading (heading wherever they may), and so forth.

The various fragments of pictures and thoughts certainly stimulate our imagination and may induce one to sense a higher concept. However, uninitiated as we are, it is already difficult for us to clear up the puzzling ambiguity of *single* utterances – let alone to bring together all these elements into a coherent unity, or, as semioticians would put it, to create 'monosemy'. Moreover, a comprehensive interpretation of these documents is hampered by the fact that even pure philological work in this case rather quickly seems to

The present paper combines two articles published earlier: C. Riedweg, "Initiation – Tod – Unterwelt: Beobachtungen zur Kommunikationssituation und narrativen Technik der orphisch-bakchischen Goldblättchen," in F. Graf (ed.), *Ansichten griechischer Rituale. Geburtstagssymposion für Walter Burkert* (Castelen bei Basel 15. bis 18. März 1996), Stuttgart and Leipzig 1998: 359–398, and C. Riedweg, "Poésie orphique et rituel initiatique: Éléments d'un "Discours sacré" dans les lamelles d'or," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 219 (2002): 459–481. Both articles have been revised and updated on this occasion and redundancies have been eliminated. I should like to warmly thank Franziska Egli (Zurich) and in particular Andreas Schatzmann (Zurich / Rome) for having produced drafts of the English translation of the second and the first article respectively, and for generally assisting me in writing this paper.

[1] The original version of the first section of this paper was published in honor of Walter Burkert's 65th birthday (cf. above). I am very grateful to Yannis Z. Tzifopoulos for kindly allowing me access to his profoundly learned study on the Cretan leaves (henceforth referred to as Tzifopoulos 2010). Tzifopoulos proposes a partly new classification of the material (ch. 3 section "The Corpus of the Lamellae: Nature and Classification"), which I am happy to mainly adopt for the leaves discussed in this paper. Please note that the line numbering refers to the edition in the original 1998 publication, which may sometimes differ slightly from the numbering in other editions.

[2] For the isolated reading ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ in B1.1 cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 22ff.

come to its limits. Already at a first glance, some of the leaves so far published display a closer relationship. This observation led Günther Zuntz, in his fundamental edition and philological exegesis of 1971, to distinguish between groups A and B. (I will leave aside in this place the isolated and quite peculiar C1 leaf, which has provoked different interpretations: while some scholars believe it to contain a magical text,[3] others would look at it as a mystical item, in which the initiated could recognize, in the middle of meaningless characters, names and epithets of gods of the initiation, as well as some mystic formulas.)[4] Since Zuntz's work, the B group has been substantially augmented: for details I refer to Edmonds' introduction in this volume.

In view of some extensive literal correspondences, we should expect that at least the leaves closely related to each other may be traced back to a common archetype according to the rules of textual criticism. If it is possible with any, this seems feasible to a certain degree with the two Pelinna leaves, with A2–A3 from Thurii and with the very short leaves B3–B9 from Crete and Thessaly. But already in the case of the B group as a whole one has to face remarkable difficulties,[5] which in the case of the A group turn out virtually insuperable, particularly if the Pelinna leaves are included.

This rather unpleasant state may be due to various reasons. On the one hand, a considerable number of leaves seem to be composite units, made up of mainly two heterogeneous ingredients: (1) a hexametrical poem about the underworld, and (2) cultic acclamations evocative of ritual actions (needless to say that these two elements ought to be separated in any attempt at reconstruction).[6] On the other hand, we have to reckon with a peculiar situation of transmission. There are strong indications that at least some of

[3] Cf. Murray 1908: 664 "That the tablet is unintelligible as it stands, no one will deny. It seems indeed to belong to that class of magical or cryptic writings in which, as Wünsch puts it, 'singulari quadam scribendi ratione id agitur ne legi possint' "; Harrison 1908: 584; Comparetti 1910: 14; Burkert 1974: 326; Scarpi 1987: 215; Kingsley 1995: 310 (according to whose somewhat problematic interpretation the gold leaves would have generally been used as magical amulets); such a view was however opposed by Zuntz 1971: 345ff. (following partly Olivieri 1915: 23): "the sequences of meaningless letters bear no similarity to the well-known methods of magical abracadabras, 'Ephesia Grammata', or secret codes. Nor can they, where failing to yield Greek words, be held to convey any Italic language, although it is conceivable that the engraver was an Italic native with imperfect command of Greek" etc.

[4] Bernabé 2002e: 55ff.; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 137ff.

[5] Cf. West 1975: 229 on B1, B2, and B10 "Hinter den Einzelexemplaren steckt offenbar ein Archetypus, den man jetzt ins 5. Jahrhundert (wenn nicht gar früher) hinaufdatieren muss. Man wird ihn wohl nie ganz richtig rekonstruieren können, doch jeder neue Zeuge bringt uns näher daran" (and so he nevertheless ventures to propose a reconstruction); a well-balanced discussion of the difficulties may be found in Janko 1984: 89ff., who takes his own attempt at reconstructing the long archetypus of the B leaves as "but one of the many possibilities" (98); cf. also Tessier 1987: 238ff.; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 24f.; Cassio 1994: 184; Bernabé 2000a: 53ff.

[6] Cf. n. 21. For a tentative reconstruction not of the text of the hexameter poem, but just of its sequence of thoughts and events see below section VI.

the engravers did not work from written models, but rather from memory.[7] Moreover, both the engravers and the authors of the texts in their present form seem not to have ranked among the most erudite contemporaries of Plato and Aristotle, or (in the case of the "late arrival" A5) of Plotinus, as is suggested by the numerous writing errors and violations of metric rules.[8] Finally, one has to bear in mind, that we are dealing here with *functional texts*, which hardly were subject to any central control, but could easily be altered according to the requirements and external circumstances. We should therefore not be too much surprised if occasionally we encounter discrepancies which we are unable to explain. They may well just reflect different concepts held by different groups.[9]

Still, there are not insignificant reasons to consider all gold leaves in the end as a unity, regardless of all differences concerning their individual form, their geographical, chronological, and socio-cultural provenance. There are external correspondences, like the fact that all the texts were engraved on thin gold foil and found in graves – some of them were folded (or rolled up), others were not; if the corpses were not cremated, the unfolded leaves would lie in the right hand and on the chest respectively (Pelinna and Pherai), whereas the folded (or rolled up) ones may have been put into the corpse's mouth (as hypothesized by Margherita Guarducci).[10] As a matter of course, such external criteria are of relatively little importance in contrast to the agreements on the level of content. Since the new discovery of the Pelinna

[7] According to Janko 1984: 90ff. this holds true for the B group (with the exception of the Cretan leaves B3–B8). For the A group, instead, he assumes a "transcription of either a written master-text or another, equally diminutive, gold leaf" (90). Cf. also Graf 1993: 247, in the context of the Pelinna leaves; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 24ff.; Obbink, Chapter 12 this volume, p. 292 n. 4.

[8] At least in the case of A2 and A3 one may even ask if the engravers were at all Greek-speaking persons. Cf. also Zuntz 1971: 334 on A5, and 349 on C (see above n. 3); in general, see 299 on A1–A3: "none of them succeeded in producing a fully satisfactory text. Even A1 – by far the most careful – omits and interchanges letters and wrongly repeats whole phrases; A2 is lazy and careless, and A3 has produced nonsense which, without the other two, would in many places baffle any attempt at interpretation"; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 24, about the texts of the A group: "... spesso quasi incomprensibili per la somma di errori che li caratterizza, tale da giustificare l'impressione che alcuni siano stati considerati magici φυλακτήρια dagli stessi loro γραφεῖς" (similarly already Foti and Pugliese Carratelli 1974: 124).

[9] Cf., among others, Janko 1984: 97f., following Pugliese Carratelli 1975: 228; Graf 1991: 97; Edmonds 2004: e.g. 61; 82f.; 98f.; on Orphism in general Casadio 1990b: 298 "Infatti non crediamo che l'orfismo sia mai stato una 'chiesa', e neanche una 'setta': un movimento spirituale con un corpo di dottrine coerenti sì, ma non un movimento unitario"; Parker 1995: 486.

[10] Guarducci 1939: 91ff., 1974: 13ff., and 1985: 385. For P cf. Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 4 (one of the two leaves seems to have been folded at an earlier time [during the deceased's lifetime?]; in the grave, however, it was found unfolded); also Graf 1993: 254. When there was a cremation, the gold leaves were included in the cinerary urn, in the case of A4 and C next to the remains of the skull (cf. Guarducci 1974: 12). B11 was found "dentro una lampada di terracotta, perduta" (Frel 1994: 183). See now also Tzifopoulos 2010: ch. 2 sections "Shape – Burial Context" and "Usage" and above pp. 166ff.

leaves, however, cross connections can be established even between leaves of different groups, and this again hints at a common background.[11] Thus, the new finds are linked with the A leaves, as has been stressed by the first editors and then particularly by Fritz Graf, in formal respect by the wavering between poetry and "rhythmical prose,"[12] and on the level of contents by the *makarismos*,[13] the conversation with Persephone, the purification and "liberation" respectively,[14] and the falling-into-milk.[15] With the B leaves they share the mention of Βάχ‹χ›ιος and βάχχοι respectively,[16] furthermore the instruction to the deceased εἰπεῖν,[17] the naming of the "other" blessed whose lucky lot the soul of the deceased is going to share.[18] Looking at the characteristics common to A as well as B leaves, we note amongst other things, on a rather outward and formal level, the reporting of an utterance of the deceased in direct speech; and as to contents, the common features include the underlining of belonging to the heavenly race[19] and perhaps also the mentioning of the Queen of the underworld (this, however, cannot be definitely ascertained, as the text is slightly distorted in this place).[20]

Whether or not the common features just mentioned are sufficient for assuming that at least the hexametric parts all go back in the end to one single poem of larger scale remains subject to scholarly dispute (as is the case with virtually everything concerning Orphism).[21] The method of extracting core phrases out of a longer narrative text and depositing them, engraved as they were on a gold lamella, amongst other burial objects in the grave, was,

[11] Even before, it was possible to see as an element linking the two groups not only the late example A5, with its combination of components typical of A as well as of B, but also A4; cf. below n. 94. Cf. in general Graf 1991: 93ff. and 1993: 246f. and 250ff.; already Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 9f.; furthermore Giangiulio 1994: 28, 30; Burkert 1998: 392f.; Burkert 2003: 85ff.; for a further possible link between the A and B groups on the new Entella leaf cf. Bernabé 1999c: 59; moreover Bernabé 2000a: 53 and 56f.

[12] This term has been established by Zuntz 1971: 341.

[13] D1–2.1 τρισόλβιε – A1.8 ὄλβιε καὶ μακαριστέ.

[14] See below on A1–3.1 first lines of section III.

[15] D1–2.3–5 – A1.9 and A4.4b.

[16] D1–2.2 – B10.16; for the spelling cf. also the inscription nr. 120 Sokolowski 2 (below n. 50); Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 11.

[17] D1–2.2 – B1.6 and B2.8.

[18] D1–2.7 – B1.11 and B10.15f.

[19] A1–3.3 (cf. A5.2) – B1.7 and B9.5, and presumably also B11.15; cf. B2.9.

[20] B10.13 with the emendations by Lazzarini (ἐρέουσιν) and West (ὑποχθονίωι βασιλεί‹αι›).

[21] The skeptic statements as a rule refer to the gold leaves as whole units, not only to their hexametric parts; cf. for example Zuntz 1971: 383f. who is well aware that the narrative hexametric sections of the A and B leaves may constitute a continuous sequence of action ("The scenery of B is at, or near, the entrance of the Netherworld, while A places the bearer face to face with its queen; one might, therefore, incline to regard them as fragments of a full vade-mecum for the soul on its way through Hades"). It is, however, the prose sections in A, amongst other things, which keep him from accepting that the A and the B texts might be "excerpts from one comprehensive poem." See also Bernabé 1991: 234; Scarpi 1987: 215f.; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 17ff., who does not miss the "affinità" between the A and B leaves but judges them "episodiche e marginali" (24); Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 227ff.; Scarpi 2002: 670ff.; Edmonds 2004: 32, etc.

at any rate, a well-known practice. We may deduce this from the evidence of leaves B3–B9 which in my opinion clearly represent an excerpt from the more detailed narrative from which parts are preserved on B1, 2, 10, and 11.[22] It therefore seems *a priori* not to be ruled out at least, that in the A and the B leaves different sequences of a certain poem, used in Orphic–Bacchic[23] rituals, were excerpted (and thus preserved).

Before returning to this evidently important point later on, I should like to deal with the leaves, however, as composite units and to consider how these texts, often puzzling by their aphoristic brevity,[24] *relate to ritual*.[25] My working hypothesis is that, with changing refractions, three crucial moments within an initiand's life are highlighted on the preserved lamellae: (1) initiation, (2) death, and (3) the passage to the underworld. It seems largely accepted that these three instants were closely interconnected in the ideology of Orphic–Bacchic initiation rites. This is elucidated already by Plato (*Resp*. 2.365a1–3) when he talks about initiations for the deceased, which, according to these wandering priests, "save us from misery in the underworld," whereas "evil awaits those who did not make sacrifices." Obviously it is part of the self-image of Orphic–Bacchic initiations that they claim to prepare the *mystes* for the emergency case: They want to remove their adherents' fear of death by rendering them acquainted with this great unknown (and just for that reason awe-inspiring),[26] and they do this in mapping, as it were, the underworld landscape and giving instructions which, if followed, would guarantee a better lot there.

Despite being interlaced, initiation, death, and passage to the underworld have, of course, to be taken apart as single events. It therefore seems absolutely appropriate to ask the question (discussed over many years and

[22] The opposite view put forward by Zuntz 1971: 378, viz. that the first five verses of B1 and B2 had been added "to a pre-existing wording of the type B3," can hardly be maintained any longer since B9 has become known. See Janko 1984: 90f., 93; Scalera McClintock 1991: 399, 408; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 56ff.; Tzifopoulos 2002: 154ff. (agreeing, instead, with Zuntz, Iacobacci 1993a: 255 n. 12 and 262; similarly Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 25; but cf. also Cassio 1994: 192 on B3–9.1 πιέμ μοι).

[23] Even if there are numerous points of contact between Orphism and Pythagoreanism, as has been well known since antiquity (see Parker 1995: 501ff.), the attribution of the gold leaves to Pythagorean ritual, defended most energetically by Zuntz 1971 (for example 343 ["I can imagine that they contain main items … of a Pythagorean *Missa pro defunctis*"]; 385; 392f.), is unlikely to find a great number of followers nowadays, after the discovery of B10 and P which mention μύσται καὶ βάχχοι (B10.16) and a "liberation" by Βάχ‹χ›ιος (D1–2.2); cf. also Baumgarten 1998: 94f. Still much disputed, however, seems the question about the justification of the term "*Orphic*–Bacchic", cf. below nn. 220 and 221; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal, Chapter 4 in this volume; Graf in Graf and Johnston 2007: 142f.

[24] Cf. Bernabé 1991: 230 "Se trata de textos, digamos, alusivos, que expresan sólo los mínimos indispensables."

[25] Cf. now also Obbink, Chapter 12 in this volume.

[26] On this aspect of religion in general see Luhmann 1993: 272f.

answered variably by Fritz Graf in his discussions of the Pelinna leaves),[27] whether the events narrated on the leaves originally belonged to the initiation or to the burial ritual.[28] I should like to add that, precisely because of the strong interconnection, we may well have to go beyond a simple 'either-or' and to reckon with the possibility that the perspective may change within one and the same text, be it once or even several times.

If we want to try to bring this problem closer to clarification, we need to check more thoroughly than has been done so far the situation of communication as presupposed in each individual case, and – not to be separated from that – the narrative techniques which have been adopted.[29] It seems appropriate to analyze the texts again using the tools of modern narratology, with special regard to the following points: Which authority is speaking? Who is the addressee? Which message is given in which form and in which context? How do the narration and the narrated action, or, to speak with Genette, *récit* and *histoire*, relate to each other? Does the narrative structure allow us to draw some conclusions about ritual?

To be sure, the brevity of the texts and the numerous blank spaces make it appear right from the beginning rather unlikely that we will arrive at unambiguous answers. Still, at least some new insights into the nature and function of the gold leaves and their relation to the rites may be hoped for, if the situation of communication, the segmentation of the narration according to time and space, its syntactical and metrical form are fully exploited.

[27] Cf. Graf 1991: 98 "Il me paraît bien probable que le texte P n'est rien d'autre que le macarisme actuel prononcé lors de l'initiation bacchique de la femme défunte," as against Graf 1993: 249f. "As it stands, the sequence of assertion of death and new life, then the libations, and finally the *makarismos* over the grave all fit slightly better into the context of a funeral"; see now also Graf in Graf and Johnston 2007: 137ff.; pleading in favor of the ritual of the dead are among others: Segal 1990: 413 "Discovery of all texts of this type in tombs favors funerary performance, although of course an initiation rite for a *mystes* cannot be excluded"; Burkert in Graf 1991: 99 n. 31; Burkert 1996: 119 "addressing the initiate who has just died"; Calame 1995b: 17, as frequently (2006: 234ff. and in this volume 207ff.); for the different positions of earlier scholars see Burkert 1975: 96 n. 32.

[28] Cf. also Burkert 1975: 96 regarding A1.5–7 and A4.3 "L'incertezza principale è quella: si riferisce ciò ad atti rituali che il morto ha compiuto nell'iniziazione, oppure a ciò che gli è accaduto al momento della morte?" The qualification that follows "Ora, proprio l'alternativa, iniziazione oppure morte, sembra sbagliata, dato che Plutarco scrive in un testo famoso (fr. 178): 'Nella morte l'anima sta soffrendo come quelli che sono sottoposti a delle enormi iniziazioni; perciò l'espressione assomiglia all'espressione, il significato al significato: τελετή (iniziazione) – τελευτή (morte)'," however, seems slightly questionable only insofar as the fragment by Plutarch, quoted in support of the statement, is in its essence clearly inspired by Plato (cf. *Resp*. 2.365a1–2 εἰσὶ δὲ [sc. λύσεις τε καὶ καθαρμοὶ ἀδικημάτων] καὶ τελευτήσασιν, ἃς δὴ τελετὰς καλοῦσιν κτλ.).

[29] Some observations on this may be found already in Graf 1993: 251, 257f. and now Graf in Graf and Johnston 2007: 137ff.; see also Calame 2006: 233ff. and in this volume 208ff.

II

Let us first approach the texts in question, as it were, from outside. With all their diversity, they share at least one feature: They show a basically *dialogic* structure and contain a communication between an 'I' and a 'you' (sg. and pl. respectively). Sometimes the situation of communication may change, the first-person speaker turning into a second person and, conversely, a second person who was addressed into a first. The change can take place all of a sudden or else be prepared within the narrative.

One of the dialogue partners is always the *mystes* (male or female). The initiated person is introduced in different functions: sometimes (s)he her/himself is the speaker (A2 and A3), sometimes (s)he is being addressed by a subject not specified (A4; D1 and D2, also D3). Sometimes we experience the change of speaker already mentioned: in this case the initiated person either gives up for a moment his/her role of a speaker in order to be addressed by whomever this may be (A1),[30] or, in the role of the addressee, (s)he is exhorted by the "you" (sg.) to talk to a third person or group of persons – an address which in that case mostly is reported in direct speech (we may therefore talk of *mise-en-abîme*: B1 and B2; B10 and B11; in indirect speech: D1 and D2).

Depending on the leaf, the primary dialogue partner of the *mystes* is either not indicated in greater detail (as hinted at above; cf. D1 and D2; A4; B1 and B2; B10 and B11; D3) or the Goddess of the underworld and deities closely related to her (A1–A3 and A5).[31] In some instances, the Goddess of the underworld appears again as a second person to talk to (D1–2.2); furthermore "guardians" in the underworld appear (B1–2.5ff.; B10.7ff.: B11.9ff., although they are not marked as such in the shorter version: B3–9.3).

A main difficulty of interpretation lies in the fact that the primary partner of communication repeatedly remains unspecified. To begin with the two leaves from Pelinna in Thessaly, published in 1987 and dated to the end of the fourth century BCE, there is at least one possibility of identification which can be ruled out immediately. If the speaker exhorts in line 2 the female *mystes* to tell Persephone – εἰπεῖν as an exhortative infinitive instead of imperative, 2. sg.[32] – that it was Βάκχιος himself who had released her, and as no hint is given of any change of speaker, the *makarismos* in the first line "Now you have died,

[30] Cf. also the change of speaker in A5.4; moreover line 3 of B3–9, which however are likely to be short versions of the long B text, as mentioned before.

[31] No precise indication is given about the speaker in A1.8, see below. [32] See Kühner-Gerth, 2, 20f.

and now you have been born, thrice happy, on this very day," as well as the rest of the text, can hardly be uttered by the Goddess of the underworld, who according to Orphic Theogony at same time is also the mother of Dionysus.

This rather plain fact is not without significance for other leaves. In the case of the *makarismos* in A1.8 which is accompanied by a change of speaker that is not marked as such – "Blest you and happy, god you will be instead of a mortal" – the narrative context might suggest the Queen of the underworld as speaker.[33] However, comparison with the text from Pelinna speaks against such an assumption, as does the parallel in A4 where in the same context the "meadows of Persephone" are mentioned (l. 6) – a phrase which also would hardly fit the Queen of the underworld herself.

Who else then might qualify as speaker? Theoretically conceivable are, I think, (1) a character in the underworld other than Persephone, (2) the leaf itself, (3) an initiation priest or fellow initiates in the course of the initiation, or (4) a participant at the burial ceremony which followed the πρόθεσις and the ἐκφορά of the deceased and about which we are unfortunately only poorly informed. (It may well be that an initiation priest was present when a *mystes* was buried; at any rate Robert Garland is surely right when he writes: "It is hardly conceivable that the bereaved proceeded without the benefit of any established liturgy or approved form of words.")[34]

The first possibility, viz. that someone else was speaking in the underworld,[35] was adopted by Zuntz for the leaves A1, A4, and A5. For A1 and A4 he proposes – following all too closely Christian concepts, I think – a *coetus sanctorum* welcoming the newcomer in the abode of the blessed.[36] In doing so, Zuntz fails to pay sufficient attention to the differences between the two leaves (the deification of the *mystes* is promised for the future in A1.8, whereas in A4.4 it has already taken place; even if the formulas are for a good part identical in both cases, this should not obscure the fact that in each of them the situational context most probably is fundamentally different).[37] For A5 from Rome, the least ancient example, which shows a transposition of the first line well known from the other A leaves ("I am coming out of the pure ones, myself being pure, Queen of the underworld")

[33] Even if in line 7 Persephone is already mentioned in the 3rd person; cf. Zuntz 1971: 322f.

[34] Garland 1985: 36. Cf. also below, n. 50.

[35] Wiliam D. Furley, in an oral discussion following my paper in Heidelberg, proposed Hermes ψυχοπομπός as another candidate. Yet this god seems not to have played in the Orphic–Bacchic realm a role going beyond normal Greek concepts. For Dionysos proposed as a speaker see below n. 41.

[36] Zuntz 1971: 323, cf. 331 "some 'chorus mysticus' "; slightly differently, referring to A1, Guarducci 1974: 23 "All'iniziato si rivolgono i fratelli di fede (rimasti sulla terra), che lo proclamano beato e ne invidiano la sorte" etc.

[37] More on this below, last paragraph of section III and p. 240, respectively.

into the third person, Zuntz brings a *ianitor* of the underworld into play. By doing so, he is however forced to accept an abrupt change in the grammatical person at the end of the second line: ἔχω would have the same subject as ἔρχεται – a solution which I consider rather improbable.[38] The assumption that the second of the discussed possibilities holds true for A5, viz. that the leaf itself is personified and introduced as speaking, seems much more plausible (a stylistic device which we are familiar with from sepulchral and book epigrams).[39] As to the Pelinna leaves, not yet known to Zuntz, the first two possibilities may be ruled out: Against the gathering of the Blessed or a porter *in the underworld* functioning as dialogue partner speaks the fact that the one who talks is evidently thought to be still on earth – as can be seen from the contrast to line 7 ὑπὸ γῆν[40] –, and any indication, be it external or internal, of the leaf itself as speaker is also lacking.

What remains then are possibilities 3 and 4. It is not entirely to be excluded that the dactylic verses and the insertions of rhythmical prose were uttered by the τελέστης or by fellow initiates at the initiation, for we can assume with some plausibility that such an initiation also included a ritual enactment of death which thus was symbolically anticipated.[41] Yet the last line in particular still fits better the context of a funeral ritual, however doubtful the correct understanding must remain: "And rites [or 'prizes' or 'honors'], which the other Blessed [<perform>,[42] or <have>?[43]], await you"

[38] Zuntz 1971: 334 speaks of a "syntactical *contredanse*." His explanation seems highly doubtful. As he puts it, the versificator first would have had the intention "to give brief expression to the necessary claim of divine descent which in the model filled a whole verse (καὶ γὰρ ἐγών, κτλ.). Διὸς τέκος filled the bill for him … Ἔχω δέ at the end of his verse left a metrical gap to be filled; he knew the Homeric tag ἀγλαὰ τέκνα and boldly borrowed the adjective from it … The difficulty of syntax and scanning he left to the reader (if any) … it was unsuitable, he felt, for Secundina to introduce herself as 'the glamorous child of Zeus': hence he put the verb in the third person" etc. Following Graf 1993: 251, on the other hand, A5 is "spoken by a sort of counselor helping the deceased in her confrontation with Persephone." Yet another interpretation can be found in Colli 1981: 414: He takes ἀγλαὰ as a subject together with ἔχω and writes: "In tal modo la laminetta si può forse intendere come un dialogo tra l'anima dell'iniziata e chi l'accoglie (presumibilmente i 'custodi' di 4 [A62–A64]), secondo il modello di altre laminette (cf. soprattutto 4 [A70] …). I custodi parlerebbero nei vv. 1–2; poi da ἀγλαὰ sino alla fine del v. 3 replicherebbe l'anima; infine il v. 4 sarebbe detto di nuovo dai custodi."

[39] The gift of Mnemosyne, which the gold leaf holds (ἔχω δὲ | Μνημοσύνης τόδε δῶρον), most probably consists of the ritual greeting, which may have been uttered (as was A4.4a) at the graveside: "Καικιλία Σεκουνδεῖνα, νόμωι ἴθι δῖα γεγῶσα."

[40] Cf. also Graf 1993: 248.

[41] Cf., among others, Wieten 1915: 105ff. Incidentally, Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 117 is also most likely thinking of the initiation when he presumes: "Al *mystes* parla probabilmente Βάκχιος αὐτός."

[42] Cf. Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 16; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 115 ‹τελέονται›.

[43] My textual basis for the line is κἀπιμένῃ σ' ὑπὸ γῆν τέλεα ἅσ‹σ›απερ ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι. If we write with Lloyd-Jones and Jordan, following a proposal by Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou, κἀπιμένεις, a supplementation "which <await> the other Blessed" would be conceivable as well. One may argue that after ἔθανες, ἐγένου, ἔθορες (twice), ἔπεσε‹ς›, and ἔχεις we rather expect a second person

(i.e. now, for κἀπιμένει, standing beside ἔχεις, on this leaf, most probably is present tense rather than future, as well)[44].

If we try then to read the Pelinna text as a whole under the premise that the deceased female *mystes* is solemnly being addressed on the occasion of the funeral ritual by a mystery priest[45] or another initiated and particularly authorized person,[46] a fairly consistent overall picture emerges.[47] For the first line this means that νῦν (given special emphasis by iteration) and ἄματι τῶιδε point at the actual moment of the burial.[48] There is no need to underscore the extraordinary significance of the burial in Greek culture, which was an indispensable requirement for the deceased to be able to "cross the gates of Hades," as Homer has it (*Il.* 23.71). In the present case, it remains somewhat obscure to us how this ritual act, which definitely sealed, as it were, death,[49] could be regarded as being equivalent to coming-into-being (νῦν ἔθανες καὶ νῦν ἐγένου) and would thus be reason for the *makarismos* (a burial ritual performed at the grave, which for *mystai* and βάκχοι surely had special features,[50] may

singular; but cf. for the *lectio difficilior* Heraclitus 22 B27 DK (= fr. 74 Marcovich) ἀνθρώπους μένει ἀποθανόντας, ἅσσα οὐκ ἔλπονται οὐδὲ δοκέουσιν; Pl. *Resp*. 2.361d8 … οἷος ἑκάτερον βίος ἐπιμένει; 365a3 μὴ θύσαντας δὲ δεινὰ περιμένει etc. (Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 15). Supposing that κἀπιμένει σ' is correct, the quotation then probably breaks off before the end of the clause in the original version. (e.g. "which also the other Blessed <on the meadows of Persephone for ever perform>" etc.; cf. already Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 16: "one should not altogether discard the possibility that the sense was completed in another verse, which the scribe had no room to incise"). The reading of Luppe 1989: 13–14 adopted by Edmonds above p. 36 in this volume (καὶ σὺ μὲν εἷς ὑπὸ γῆν τελέ‹σ›ας [or τελέ‹σ›ασ'] ἅπερ ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι) fails to convince me.

[44] Graf 1993: 247 favors future tense, pointing at B1.11 καὶ τότ' ἔπειτ' ἀ[λλοισι μεθ'] ἡρώεσσιν ἀνάξει[ς; but at the second parallel passage, also mentioned by him, B10.15, the present tense is being used: ὁδὸν ἔρχεα‹ι› ἅν τε καὶ ἄλλοι | μύσται καὶ βάχχοι ἱερὰν στείχουσι κλε‹ε›ινοί). To be sure, for the original Hieros Logos, probably recited at the initiation (and not at a funeral as this leaf), the future tense seems clearly preferable also to me (cf. below n. 175).

[45] Cf. also Calame 1995b: 29 = this volume p. 218; "L'ordre de s'adresser à Perséphone en se référant à la libération opérée par Dionysos Bacchios renvoie vraisemblablement à la voix du prêtre qui a présidé à la cérémonie d'inhumation; c'est lui qui est en mesure de définir pour la morte l'itinéraire initiatique qui désormais l'attend."

[46] Theoretically one may also think of the μυστάγωγος. Certainly it cannot be totally excluded that a chorus of initiated persons was giving these instructions to the deceased; however, I deem it less probable.

[47] Cf. Segal 1990: 413f., who by the way rightly observes: "The repetitive, rhythmic, and formulaic qualities of the new texts … would make them highly suitable for oral performance."

[48] Cf. also Graf 1993: 248f. [49] Cf. Graf 1993: 249.

[50] It can be deduced for example from Hdt. 2.81.2 (cf. Apul. *Apol*. 56) that special rules applied for burying initiates: To initiates into Orphic and Bacchic ὄργια it was not allowed, … ἐν εἰρινέοισι εἵμασι θαφθῆναι. ἔστι δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν ἱρὸς λόγος λεγόμενος. Cf. on this Parker 1995: 484f. who in this context rightly points to the well-known Cumaean inscription *LSCG* 120 (mid-5th cent. BCE) οὐ θέμις ἐντοῦθα κεῖσθαι [ε]ἰ μὴ τὸν βεβαχχευμένον (cf. also Bottini 1992: 58ff. and now Tzifopoulos 2010: ch. 2 section "Topography" [towards the end]). Special funeral rituals are incidentally also attested for the Pythagoreans; cf. Plut. *De genio Socr*. 585e–586a, e.g. ἔστι γάρ τι γιγνόμενον ἰδίᾳ περὶ τὰς ταφὰς τῶν Πυθαγορικῶν ὅσιον, οὗ μὴ τυχόντες οὐ δοκοῦμεν ἀπέχειν τὸ μακαριστὸν καὶ οἰκεῖον τέλος; moreover Iambl. *V.Pyth*. 143 (= Arist. Περὶ τῶν Πυθαγορείων fr. 1 Ross, p. 132 = fr. 172 Gigon), 154f.; Plin. *HN* 35.160; Hermipp. fr. 23 Wehrli.

have assured the initiates that at this very moment finally everything came true which was anticipated in the initiatory ritual).[51] Be that as it may, that the soul is "now" thought to be on its way through the underworld and thus has definitely "crossed the gates of Hades," is clear from the ensuing order to tell Persephone that Bacchios has released it.

In this phrase, εἰπεῖν Φερσεφόναι still refers to the present, to "this very day," whereas in σ᾽ ὅτι Βάχ‹χ›ιος αὐτὸς ἔλυσε a change of perspective may be assumed. Here past events seem to come to the fore – i.e. the "liberation and purification from injustice," to use Plato's words, "by means of sacrifices and delightful pleasures" in the initiation (however long ago it may have taken place).[52]

The next three lines, whose verb forms ἔθορες and ἔπεσε‹ς› are on a par with ἔλυσε, may then similarly be part of the flashback and give an allusive summary of the purification ritual (see below).

The focus is evidently altered once more in line 6[53] where the speaker turns back again to the present (ἔχεις). We may hardly be mistaken in considering the four dactyls "you have got wine as a fortunate gift of honor" either the reflection of a wine libation at the tomb[54] or a hint at a receptacle filled with wine which was put down as one of the burial objects.[55] In contrast, the last line turns one's eyes to the blessed future which is about to dawn for the deceased, and with ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι the *makarismos* of the first line (τρισόλβιε) is taken up in a kind of ring composition.[56]

[51] The interpretation of death as coming into being at any rate recalls the Orphic re-definition of life on earth as prison or even death; see Riedweg 1995: 45ff.; Bernabé 1995: 204ff.; in general Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 64ff.

[52] *Resp*. 2.364e3–5a βίβλων δὲ ὅμαδον παρέχονται Μουσαίου καὶ Ὀρφέως, Σελήνης τε καὶ Μουσῶν ἐκγόνων, ὡς φασι, καθ᾽ ἃς θυηπολοῦσιν, πείθοντες οὐ μόνον ἰδιώτας ἀλλὰ καὶ πόλεις, ὡς ἄρα λύσεις τε καὶ καθαρμοὶ ἀδικημάτων διὰ θυσιῶν καὶ παιδιᾶς ἡδονῶν εἰσι μὲν ἔτι ζῶσιν, εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ τελευτήσασιν, ἃς δὴ τελετὰς καλοῦσιν, αἳ τῶν ἐκεῖ κακῶν ἀπολύουσιν ἡμᾶς, μὴ θύσαντας δὲ δεινὰ περιμένει; cf. also 366a7 αἱ τελεταὶ αὖ μέγα δύνανται καὶ οἱ λύσιοι θεοί κτλ.; *OF* 232 (= Dam. *In Pl. Phd*. I.11, p. 35 Westerink); Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 12.

[53] Graf 1993: 248, in his segmentation of the text, takes the sixth line together with 3–5 (1–2, 3–6, 7) and is inclined to see in this passage a "sequence of libations accompanied by the respective acclamations – three times milk, one time wine." His division of the text, however, neither takes into account the change of the tense between 3–5 and 6 nor the difference in metre (this is not all that surprising since Graf 1991: 91 and 1993: 246 strangely considers line 6 to be unmetrical).

[54] Cf. e.g. Hom. *Od*. 11.27; Aesch. *Pers*. 614f.; Eur. *IT*. 164.

[55] This verse is at the same time open toward the past and to the future, as wine plays a crucial role both in the Bacchic initiation (which has taken place in the past) and in the future συμπόσιον τῶν ὁσίων, celebrated by the pious people in the afterlife (cf. Pl. *Resp*. 2.363c; Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 14; Graf 1993: 246 and now in Graf and Johnston 2007: 157f.; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 85ff.). The hypothesis expressed by Calame 1995b: 19 = this volume p. 210 is a rather bold one: "disposer du vin comme d'un 'honneur' pourrait renvoyer à l'état de mort. Consommé pur, le vin est l'instrument de la possession dionysiaque. Comme le sommeil ou la mort, il nous met hors de nous-mêmes."

[56] Cf. Segal 1990: 415; Calame 1995b: 18.

If this interpretation is correct, the Pelinna leaves thus do not tell us the *histoire*, the events, in a straight linear sequence. Rather, the focus of the speaker changes within short units from the present to the past and back again, and it also glides into the future.[57] In other words, the composite text, with its clear segmentation, may well represent as a whole an extract of what would have been uttered at the grave, i.e. of the λεγόμενα of the burial ritual. The δρώμενα of the liberation, however, the threefold falling-into-the-milk, on which the deceased's confidence must have been primarily based, will actually have been performed already during the initiation ceremony.[58] This is at any rate suggested by the narrative structure which is also mirrored in language and metre: The two dactylic lines, the first of which is a hypermetric hexameter rather than an intentional heptameter (as proposed by Giangrande),[59] are followed by three lines in rhythmical prose. They have their parallel in ἔριφος ἐς γάλα ἔπετες or ἔπετον in A4 and A1 and they recall, as has been pointed out already by Zuntz in his analysis of the two A leaves, also cultic acclamations.[60] Line 6 serves, as it were, as a hinge: although it can be read again as dactyls and explained as the end of a hexameter, the words continue reflecting *ritual* action, which now, however, takes place at the tomb.[61] The only lines which display pure hexameters are 2 and 7. They alone may be assigned with some confidence to a hypothetical poem of larger extent.[62] It fits in well that on the level of contents only these two lines deal with the soul's passage to the underworld and its fate down there, whereas in lines 1 and 6 the focus is on the burial ritual and in 3–5, as I think, the initiation ritual is in the centre of attention.

III

The first three leaves of Zuntz' A group resume, as it were, the "action" of line 2 on the Pelinna leaves: The dialogue which is only hinted at on the latter – "Tell Persephone that Bacchios himself has released you" – is here fully developed and given in direct speech: "I am coming out of the pure ones, myself a pure [soul], Queen of the inhabitants of the nether world" etc. The expression Ἐκ κοθαρῶν κοθαρά is comparable in its substance

[57] See also Calame 1995b: 17, 23 = this volume pp. 208, 213f.
[58] Conceivably the funeral ritual may have referred back to it by means of a threefold libation of milk. On gifts of milk in burial context cf. e.g. Aesch. *Pers.* 611; Soph. *El.* 895; Eur. *IT* 162.
[59] Giangrande 1991: 82f. But cf. for another hypermetric verse B10.14 (some of the engravers obviously were not specialists of Greek metre); also Parmenides 28 B8.57 DK.
[60] Zuntz 1971: 341ff.; cf. below section V.
[61] For this function of line 6 as a hinge cf. also above n. 55.
[62] Cf. below section VI.

with σ᾽ ὅτι Βάχ‹χ›ιος αὐτὸς ἔλυσε:[63] The "release" no doubt consisted in a purification ritual, the "pure" soul therefore being also a "released" one. It may be deduced from this correspondence, despite differences which surely also exist,[64] that the text of these A leaves is no "self-sufficient" and closed unity as once proposed by Zuntz[65] but only a fraction out of a larger poem in which the passage in direct speech may have been preceded by an exhortation, comparable to εἰπεῖν Φερσεφόναι, pronounced by the *narrator*. It is, moreover, hardly conceivable that the soul at the moment of its imagined meeting with the Queen of the underworld embarks on a longer speech without having a signal from her side to do so. We may therefore assume that also *Persephone* will most likely have addressed the soul in the original narrative.[66]

On such a hypothesis, a very similar narrative structure seems to be presupposed in lines 2 and 7 of the Pelinna leaves and at the beginning of A1–3, a structure, which in the B leaves emerges even more precisely: an omniscient narrator[67] prepares his addressee for what (s)he is going to experience in the underworld and instructs him/her how to behave in that situation. "Then you will get to Persephone. In answer to her question, tell her that Bacchios has released you and that you are coming out of the pure ones, yourself a pure one": The sequence of actions on the A and the Pelinna leaves may roughly be paraphrased thus, whereas the B leaves tell us the events at the entrance of the "Houses of Hades" (events then, which most likely preceded the meeting with Persephone): "On your right you will find a spring, beside which there is a brightly shining cypress. Do by no means approach it! Further ahead you will find cold water flowing forth from the Lake of Memory and above which guardians are standing; they will ask you with shrewd mind on what purpose you are investigating the darkness of Hades. Tell them [again εἰπεῖν!]: 'I am a child of Earth and of starry Sky, but my descent is from heaven. I am dying of thirst: Please give me quickly to drink from this water.' And they will report to the Queen of the underworld[68] and will give you to drink." Then follows the prospect of a future shared with the "other *mystai* and *Bakkhoi*," as the Hipponion leaf B10 has it, or with the "other heroes," as on B1. Both variants strongly recall the ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι of

[63] Cf. Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 12; Graf 1993: 252; now also Edmonds 2004: 70f.; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal Chapter 4 in this volume p. 78.

[64] Cf. Graf 1993: 252f. [65] Cf. Zuntz 1971: 384.

[66] Should we assume that ἔρχομαι ἐκ καθαρῶν καθαρά is perhaps answering a question similar to the Homeric τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν . . . ? At any rate, the following statement quite in general holds true: "Eine Kommunikationssituation, in der ein Sprecher ohne Einleitung und Motivation eine Erzählrede von sich gibt, ist im praktischen Redegebrauch nicht üblich und entspricht nicht der Norm menschlichen Verhaltens" (Janik 1985: 28).

[67] Cf. also Graf 1993: 251. [68] Cf. above, n. 20.

Pelinna l. 7.[69] And it is just this close correspondence which suggests the conclusion that both the events at the entrance area of Hades (two springs, the dialogue with the guardians etc.) as well as the dialogue with Persephone are sequences taken from one and the same continuous narrative.

An attempt at reconstructing the content of this narrative will be presented later on. Whereas the B leaves are satisfied with quoting sections of different length taken from this poem and thus do not pose any further problems in relation to the situation of communication,[70] matters are quite different with the A leaves. The direct form, in which the Queen of the underworld and other deities are addressed here at the beginning, is in contrast to later lines in A1–3 where the same Queen is spoken of in the third person. And the surprise does not end here: in the *makarismos* of A1, the grammatical person unexpectedly changes from the first to the second and again back to the first person. These switches are of great importance for the interpretation and should therefore be given a closer scrutiny before turning to the situation of communication of leaf A4.

The first three lines are almost identical in A1–3 and run like this: "I am coming out of the pure ones, myself a pure [soul], Queen of the inhabitants of the nether world, / Eucles and Eubouleus and [you], the other immortal gods [or, other Gods, as many δαίμονες you are]. For, I too pride myself to belong to your blessed family." In what follows, A1 pursues a track different from A2 and A3. Let us start with A1: "But fate has overpowered me and he, who throws the thunderbolt with his lightning. / But I have flown out of the cycle of deep affliction and grief; / I have set foot on the crown I longed for with swift feet; / I have sunk into the lap of the mistress, the Queen of the nether world." Next, there is the *makarismos* with its change of perspective: "Blest and happy you, a god you will be instead of a mortal," and finally, again in rhythmical prose: "Kid, I fell into the milk."

The details of this narrative are quite enigmatic and not only at first sight. In order to get somewhat closer to an understanding, I propose to make use of Algirdas Greimas' radical reduction of Propp's morphemes of action to two basic functions, viz. "rupture de l'ordre et aliénation" and "réintégration et restitution de l'ordre," which in my opinion turns out to be a helpful conceptual tool.[71] As

[69] Cf. also the similar sentence structure D1–2.7 τέλεα ἄσ‹σ›απερ ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι – B10.15f. ὁδὸν ἔρχεα‹ι› ἄν τε καὶ ἄλλοι | μύσται καὶ βάχχοι ἱερὰν στείχουσι κλε‹ε›ινοί; Graf 1991: 93 and 1993: 246f.

[70] On one side there is the narrator (i.e. in fiction most probably Orpheus [cf. below], in the cultic reality presumably an Ὀρφεοτελεστής reciting verses of Orpheus), on the other side there is the person addressed, who is being initiated.

[71] Greimas 1966: 199ff.

comparison with the Pelinna leaves has shown, the process of "réintégration" has already been completed at the moment of the conversation with the underworld goddess. The soul is released and pure; it has regained the original order. This order, which we can take as the starting point of the whole drama, is expressed in line 3: The soul boasts of being, by its very nature, of divine descent (note the durative infinitive εἶμεν).[72] But, it appears, this essence was not always equally recognizable: instead, some malfunction had occurred, a "rupture de l'ordre et aliénation."

This change of course is clearly marked with ἀλλά at the beginning of line 4.[73] If we take it for granted (as is nowadays taken for granted not only by semioticians) that sense is not inherent in single words and phrases but rather constitutes itself in relation to other word bodies, the conclusion for line 4 must be that ἀλλά με μοῖρα ἐδάμασε καὶ ἀστεροβλῆτα κεραυνῷ does not simply mean, as in the Homeric parallels,[74] that the person buried in the Timpone Piccolo of Thurii has been struck by fate and died of a lightning blast.[75] Rather, a new meaning for the traditional wording accrues from its opposition to καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμῶν γένος ὄλβιον εὔχομαι εἶμεν: "to be struck by Moira" under these circumstances must mean a suspension, be it only temporarily, from being a member of the blessed race of the gods. Μοῖρα then does not designate the mournful lot of death, but rather of mortality: to be separated from the gods and entering the "cycle" of reincarnations,[76] which was obviously equated with "death" by adherents of Orphism.[77] In other words: if we do not read line 4 in isolation but within the narrative context, it is, as it were, "becoming man," anthropogony, which is at stake here – and, as has often been observed, the mention of Zeus' lightning is not out of place in

[72] Cf. also B1.6f., B2.8f., B10.10, B11.12, and B3–9.4f. (see Burkert 1975: 88f.); for the origin of the soul ἐκ θεῶν cf. Pind. fr. 131b (with Lloyd-Jones 1990=1985: 94f.).

[73] Zuntz 1971: 315f. plays down the importance of ἀλλά in a rather doubtful way: "The connection, in A1, of this verse with the preceding, by ἀλλά, is taken over from the Homeric model. Its bearing must not be tested too severely – there is no particular, contrasting relation between the two – but it may be felt to afford a passable start for a fresh statement." But the "contrasting relation" between lines 3 and 4, in my opinion, cannot be overlooked (already Wieten 1915: 94 saw that the main break must be at that place, cf. also Kerényi 1928: 324 n. 2).

[74] Above all *Il.* 18.119 and 16.849; cf. Zuntz 1971: 314.

[75] Thus Zuntz 1971: 316 (following Rohde 1898: 2.218 n. 4), approved e.g. by Burkert 1974: 326 (cf. also Burkert 1975: 94, moreover Kingsley 1995: 257f.; Obbink Chapter 12 in this volume, p. 304 n. 48). Critical of Zuntz however are Musti 1984: 64; Lloyd-Jones 1990=1985: 100; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 109ff.; cf. also Cosi 1987.

[76] Cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 117ff.; for a different interpretation cf. Edmonds 2004: 95ff.

[77] Similarly Empedocles, e.g. 31 B115.8 DK ἀργαλέας βιότοιο … κελεύθους, 31 B119 DK ἐξ οἵης τιμῆς τε καὶ ὄσσου μήκεος ὄλβου … (μεθέστηκεν … οὐρανοῦ καὶ σελήνης γῆν ἀμειψαμένη [sc. ἡ ψυχή], as Plutarch, one of our sources regarding this fragment, continues the line [*De exil.* 17.607d]). For the Orphic assessment of life on earth see above n. 51.

this context.[78] For, in the Orphic anthropogony, still very much disputed as to its dating, humans owe their existence to the cannibalistic crime committed by the Titans against Dionysus. Zeus stopped their misbehaving with a lightning strike, and out of the soot which was going up humans arose.[79]

"Aliénation" is followed by "réintégration" in line 5 from the end: "I have flown out of the cycle of deep affliction and grief." The statement does not tell us how this came about. Still, there is no "restitution de l'ordre" without preceding "épreuves" (to use another term adopted by Greimas).[80] The Pelinna text refers to a Bacchic ritual of purification. There are reasons to believe that the text of A1 in the subsequent section alludes to it, the rite functioning as a kind of helper ("adjuvant")[81] in returning to the old order. First, the narrative fiction which has the soul speaking with Persephone and other deities of the underworld, seems to be given up by line 7 (δεσ{σ}ποίνας δ'{ὲ} ὑπὸ κόλπον ἔδυν χθονίας βασιλείας): clearly there is no need for the soul to tell the Queen of the underworld, that it had sunk into her, "the mistress' lap."[82] Second, the change in the mode of expression between lines 5 and 6 is worth noticing: on the one hand we have the Homeric idea of a winged ψυχή escaping from the body, or, as in this passage, from mortality in general, as if from a cage;[83] on the other, there is the imagery of a racer who "sets foot on the crown he longed for with swift feet."

To be sure, one may still understand this last line in a metaphorical sense.[84] Yet a figurative interpretation is hardly sufficient for line 7.[85] Referring to the

[78] See e.g. already Harrison 1908: 587; Olivieri 1915: 6; Musti 1984: 63f.; Lloyd-Jones 1990=1985: 100; Graf 1993: 253; Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 22 (different statement in 106); Giangiulio 1994: 23, 48; Parker 1995: 498; now Johnston in Graf and Johnston 2007: 125ff.; a different view in Edmonds 2004: 73ff.

[79] For more bibliographical information on this myth see Riedweg 1995: 45 n. 68; cf. also Parker 1995: 494ff., who (496) rightly remarks that already the Orphic poem of which the Derveni Papyrus offers a commentary hardly found its end with the rape of Rhea / Demeter by her son Zeus. Rather, it is reasonable to assume that it contained also the subsequent episodes (birth of Persephone with whom again Zeus united by force and created Dionysos, murdered by the Titans while still being a child); Bremmer 1996: 98f.; Bernabé 2002e, arguing mainly against the overskeptical attitude adopted by Brisson 1992 and Edmonds 1999; following Bernabé now Johnston in Graf and Johnston 2007: 66ff.

[80] Cf. Greimas 1966: 196ff. [81] See Greimas 1966: 202 (following Propp).

[82] On l. 8 cf. above, pp. 225f. (next to n. 33).

[83] E.g. *Il.* 22.362 ψυχὴ δ' ἐκ ῥεθέων πταμένη Ἄϊδόσδε βεβήκει; 23.880 ἐκ μελέων θυμὸς πτάτο; cf. also Empedocles 31 B2.4 DK etc. (the verbal form ἐξέπτη also occurs in Hes. *Op.* 98).

[84] Cf. e.g. Zuntz 1971: 319; Guarducci 1974: 22; Lloyd-Jones 1990=1985: 101; now also Johnston in Graf and Johnston 2007: 128f. In view of the role which crowns played in initiation rituals (cf. on Bacchic initiations e.g. Harp. s.v. λεύκη with Burkert 1977a: 438; Dickie 1995: 84ff.; more generally Blech 1982: 205, 283, 305f.), one may not want to exclude *a priori* a more concrete interpretation (cf. also Burkert 1975: 96 "La 'corona' può essere una metafora agonistica, anche se una 'corona mistica' nella processione dionisiaca di Tolemeo II è notevole"). For a detailed interpretation see now Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 121ff. and above in this volume 81ff.

[85] For a metaphorical interpretation of this line see e.g. Rohde 1898: 2.421; Zuntz 1971: 319; Guarducci 1974: 23; Lloyd-Jones 1990=1985: 100f.; Kingsley 1995: 267f.; cf. also Edmonds 2004: 88ff.

myth at the end of Plato's *Republic*, Walter Burkert has made it highly plausible that "un rito di nascita" is shimmering through here.[86] However this rite may actually have been staged, it will at any rate have formed part of the initiation ritual and have prepared the *mystes* for the *new birth* of death.[87]

The next two lines may similarly derive from a ritual context ("ὄλβιε καὶ μακαριστέ, θεὸς δ' ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο." | ἔριφος ἐς γάλ' ἔπετον). This origin is indicated by their form, which will be dealt with below. That the original frame was an initiation rather than a ritual for the dead is suggested by the future form ἔσηι (8): the person in question obviously is still a normal βροτός at the moment of the acclamation. In this respect, the *makarismos* on A1, which in language and contents takes up line 3 καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμῶν γένος ὄλβιον εὔχομαι εἶμεν, is in contrast not only with Pelinna l. 1 (νῦν ἔθανες καὶ νῦν ἐγένου, τρισόλβιε, ἄματι τῶιδε), but also with the formula θεὸς ἐγένου ἐξ ἀνθρώπου on tablet A4, which most likely was also spoken at the graveside.

On the assumption that such an analysis of A1 is correct, this tablet from Thurii begins with an excerpt from the hypothetical hexametrical Logos, in which the soul is talking with Persephone and other deities. The soul points at its own divine origin, and, very briefly, hints at its fall and its return. The allusion to the latter leads – as may also be assumed for Pelinna lines 3–5 – to a more detailed exposition of the particulars of the "réintégration," including a clear reminiscence of the initiation ritual in retrospective, at which point finally the metrical form is completely given up. In sharp contrast to the Pelinna text, A1 lacks, as it seems, any direct reference to the ritual for the dead.

I shall deal with tablets A2 and A3 found together with A1 in the Timpone Piccolo of Thurii only briefly.[88] Their narrative order differs from A1 mainly in that they lack any lines alluding to ritual at all. Instead, they end with two lines (6f.: νῦν δ' ἱκέτ‹ις› ἥκω παρ‹ὰ› ἁγνὴ‹ν› Φε‹ρ›σεφόνε‹ι›αν | ὡς με

[86] Burkert 1975: 94ff. Cf. already Harrison 1908: 593, and Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 129ff.

[87] Interpreted in this way, A1.7 also throws some light on D1–2.1 and A4.4a.

[88] Incidentally, the "rupture de l'ordre" and its "restitution" seem to be condensed into one single verse (v. 4: ἔργων ἕνεκα οὔτι δικαίων hints at the rupture, whereas ποινὰν δ' ἀνταπέτεισ' resounds the process of restoration of the order). The fact that in A2 and A3, in contrast to the rest of the A leaves, nothing is said about deification or the completion of the painful cycle of reincarnations, has since Rohde 1898: 2.219ff. invited the assumption that the textual variant on these tablets was meant for the deceased who after an "interval of bliss" (Zuntz 1971: 337) had to undergo further reincarnations (cf., apart from Zuntz 1971: 336f., also Burkert 1975: 94; Graf 1993: 254; similarly Scarpi 1987: 205ff. who however takes together with A2 and A3 also tablet A1 which promises deification only for the future, and bases his view on the archaeological evidence: A1–A3 were found together in the Timpone Piccolo where, unlike the case of A4, interment took place; Zuntz's view is called into question by Edmonds 2004: 98f.). Basically, such an interpretation seems to make sense, above all against the background of Pind. fr. 133 Snell–Mähler and *Ol.* 2.68ff. (cf. also Pl. *Phdr.* 249a3 "three times in a row" [τρὶς ἐφεξῆς]), even if some problems remain: the elements discussed, for example, are also lacking on the

πρόφ‹ρ›ω‹ν› πέμψηι ἕδρας ἐς εὐαγέων), which are not to be found on A1. In their transmitted form, they may not be absolutely metrically sound, but the dactylic rhythm is not to be missed.[89] It is therefore very probable that they too are drawn from the postulated hexameter poem. What is strange about these verses is the fact that Persephone is now spoken of in the third person. Should we think of the dialogic structure as being abandoned at this point? And if so, was this already the case in the hypothetical model, or may the alteration rather be due to the engraver?[90] Or does the soul continue talking with Persephone *and* the other deities, choosing the third person to express its respect for them?[91] One thing at any rate seems clear to me, the two verses as such would perfectly well round off the dialogue: in conclusion, the soul expresses its main request to Persephone, and moreover, by mentioning the "dwelling places of the pure ones" to which it is eager to be sent, it refers back to line 1 (ἔρχομαι ἐκ καθαρῶν καθαρά).[92]

Leaf A4, found in the Timpone Grande,[93] differs profoundly from the other A leaves:[94] the soul of the deceased is not shown here in conversation with Persephone, but after a general introduction, it is addressed by somebody in a solemn style. The situation of communication can thus be compared with the one of the Pelinna text.

The first line of the introduction is a flawless hexameter: "But as soon as the soul leaves the light of the sun (. . .)." Quite a few oracles start with ἀλλ' ὁπόταμ.[95] It may therefore perhaps not be excluded that this line, too, stood at the beginning (or, at least, in the introductory part) of a

Pelinna leaves; could it be that τρισ- in the first line of these Pelinna leaves means that the deceased, after three successful incarnations, now definitely are to arrive at Elysium? Cf. Ricciardelli Apicella 1992: 28f.; also Giangiulio 1994: 25 on the contents shared by A2–A3 and A4.

[89] In line 6 one might emend παρ‹ὰ› ἀγνὴ‹ν› (from παιαγνη A2 and παρα A3) with Diels (1 B19 DK) to παρ' ἀγαυὴν (approved by Zuntz 1971: 317); the end of line 7 ἕδρας ἐς εὐαγέων is restituted by Zuntz 1971: 340 e.g. ‹εἰς εὐαγέων λειμῶνα›.

[90] At least in line 7 it would be easy to change the personal ending to πέμψηι<ς>.

[91] Considered as a possible solution by Zuntz 1971: 317.

[92] Cf. Zuntz 1971: 317 "The poem thus ends on the same note on which it began; namely, ritual purity."

[93] Its exact position was next to the head of the half-burnt corpse, on whose chest, moreover, were lying two silver tablets. On these were imprinted female heads which according to Graf 1993: 254f. may well represent Persephone.

[94] It generally has a special status among the gold leaves found so far. Still, numerous lines of coincidence with other tablets can be drawn: 1) l. 1: cf. B1.12b and 14b, B10.1b, B11.1b; 2) l. 2 δεξιόν (also 5 δεξιάν): cf. B2.1, B10.2, B11.4; 3) l. 4: cf. A1.8f., also D1–2.1 (ἐγένου) and D1–2.3–5 (εἰς γάλα ἔπετες); 4) l. 5 ὁδοιπόρ‹ει›: cf. B10.15 σὺ πιὼν ὁδὸν ἔρχεα‹ι›; 5) l. 6 λειμωνάς τε ἱερούς: cf. D3 (see below p. 244).

[95] Cf. J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, Oxford 1954, 2nd edn., 21, 173, and above all Zuntz 1971: 330 with n. 1 (following Dieterich 1891: 41 n. 2). For a comparison of the gold leaves with oracles cf. now Tzifopoulos 2010: ch. 3 section "In search of a context: rhapsodizing and 'prophesying'? The afterlife"; Edmonds, Chapter 10 below in this volume.

poem – why not of our Hieros Logos? At any rate, it seems to be again the omniscient narrator who makes himself heard.

The next line looks desperately corrupt.[96] Was it originally perhaps even more than one verse?[97] What can be read clearly is the beginning: δεξιὸν ("right") – a word which links A4 to the B tablets which mention the two springs on the right side at the entry of Hades, one of which should be avoided.[98] Also the end of the line is intelligible: " . . . bearing all things very well in your memory." It is evident from the gender of πεφυλαγμένον that the subject can no longer be the soul in this place. Rather, this might be an exhortation to the implied hearer, viz. the initiand in question, to keep in mind carefully the explications about the topography and the correct behavior in the underworld.[99] It may be that this exhortation belonged to the beginning of the Logos, but it would actually fit just as well, if not better, in the end. Let us recall parallels such as the end of the so-called 'testament of Orpheus',[100] or *OF* fr. 138 F Bernabé, which includes a fragment most probably to be placed at the end of the fourth Orphic rhapsody: ταῦτα νόῳ πεφύλαξο, φίλον τέκος, ἐν πραπίδεσσιν, | εἰδώς περ μάλα πάντα παλαίφατα κἀπὸ Φάνητος;[101] moreover, the closest parallel is Hesiod *Op*. 491 (at the end of the passage on ploughing): ἐν θυμῷ δ' εὖ πάντα φυλάσσεο.[102] If my hypothesis is correct, by using the *incipit* formula ἀλλ' ὁπόταμ . . . as well as the *explicit* . . . πεφυλαγμένον εὖ μάλα πάντα, the engraver would then have evoked the *entire* Hieros Logos and perhaps intentionally have placed some scraps of words or (more or less significant) letters in between, just as filler.[103]

The rest of the leaf at any rate strikes quite a different note; it is best described as hymnic acclamations. Their original place may have been, as in the case of the Pelinna leaves, the ritual for the dead at the graveside. This is

[96] Cf. Colli 1981: 403 "La corruzione del v. 2 è risultata sinora insanabile."

[97] As proposed already by Murray 1908: 663, following Kaibel; cf. Harrison 1908: 583 "The second line seems to be a fragment of a whole sentence or set of sentences put for the whole, as we might put 'Therefore with Angels and Archangels,' leaving those familiar with our ritual to supply the missing words"; Zuntz 1971: 330.

[98] See above n. 94.

[99] Less convincing Pugliese Carratelli 1993: 61 who suggested seeing in πεφυλαγμένον an "accenno alla presenza di custodi" (translating "procedi diritto verso destra, ove sono custodi [?]"); this idea has been given up by Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 113, who now translates "tu che hai ben tenuto a mente tutti (i precetti)" and comments: "L'interpretazione di πεφυλαγμένον - πάντα è suggerita da testi quali Esiodo, *Op*., 263 e 561, Pindaro, *Ol*., VII, 40."

[100] *OF* 378.41 F Bernabé εὖ μάλ' ἐπικρατέων, στέρνοισι δὲ ἔνθεο φήμην, on which cf. Riedweg 1993: 51ff.

[101] Used by Colli 1981: 182 for his reconstruction εἰ‹δ›υ‹ῖα› (out of ειυ).

[102] Cf. also *hymn. Apoll*. 544 εἴρηταί τοι πάντα, σὺ δὲ φρεσὶ σῇσι φύλαξαι.

[103] Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 96 cautiously approve of this hypothesis.

suggested by the past tense in θεὸς ἐγένου ἐξ ἀνθρώπου (4a),[104] in contrast to the future ὄλβιε καὶ μακαριστέ, θεὸς δ᾽ ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο in A1.8; and particularly the threefold repetition of χαῖρε hints at the funeral, for ever since Homer χαῖρε has remained the traditional formulaic salutation of the deceased (*Il.* 23.19; 179; Eur. *Alc.* 436; 626; 743 etc.). Furthermore, it is also clear from δεξιὰν ὁδοιπόρ‹ει› κτλ. that, in the view of the speaker, the soul is already making its way through the Underworld.

IV

To summarize the argument up to this point, it may be stated that the gold leaves, as far as they have come to light to this day, open up different views of Orphic–Bacchic rituals. A2, A3 and the B leaves seem generally to content themselves with recording relevant passages of a ἱερὸς λόγος which would give individuals the absolutely essential knowledge for faring well in the inevitable passage to the "Houses of Hades." As will be discussed later, the *mystai* most likely got acquainted with this Logos at the παράδοσις of the initiation.

Other tablets offer a deeper insight into ritual actions. In A1 the scene taken from the ἱερὸς λόγος in which the soul is portrayed in its conversation with Persephone and other deities fades out in the course of the narration, and the focus, almost unnoticed, is drawn back to the cathartic initiation ritual (this change becomes so predominant that towards the end also the hexametric form is given up).[105]

A similar flashback on the λύσεις τε καὶ καθαρμοί of the initiation can also be found, in my opinion, on A4 and the Pelinna leaves, those leaves which, as composite units, are most likely belong to another ritual, viz. the funeral. As to their narrative structure, these texts are by far the *most complex* examples known to date. In the crucial moment of the burial for which they apparently have been produced,[106] they not only celebrate the immediate fulfillment of all that had been laid out in the purifying ritual of the initiation, but also recall this earlier event through rhythmic formulae. At the same time they conjure up the final aim of the catabasis of the *mystes*: his blissful rest on the sacred meadows and groves of Persephone, in community with the other blessed ones. Here, at the graveside, the three moments of initiation, death, and passage to the underworld become perceivable in their diversity as well as in their internal coherence.

[104] The continuation ἔριφος ἐς γάλα ἔπετες (4b) may be, similarly to D1 – 2.3–5, a reminiscence of the initiation ritual which laid the ground for the deification, coming now, at the moment of death, to its completion.

[105] Cf. below pp. section V. [106] Cf. also below pp. 255f.

Based on the observations made so far, an "archaeology" of the rituals as mirrored on the tablets may result in the following tentative conclusions:[107]

(1) For the *ritual for the dead* the Pelinna text as well as A4.3–6 can be claimed.[108] Both include a part of the λεγόμενα at the graveside, for which a blend of verses taken from the Hieros Logos and cultic acclamations was obviously characteristic. Whether there ever existed one single standard version of these composite texts seems very doubtful. Different groups may have had their individual formulae. Any attempt at tracing back the Pelinna text and A4 as whole units to one archetype is at any rate illusory, despite all similarities. The only δρώμενον which can be derived from the two texts is a libation of wine at the grave or its inclusion into the burial offerings (Pelinna l. 6).[109]

(2) As to the *initiation ritual*, at least the *makarismos* of A1.8 can be counted among its λεγόμενα with some confidence (ὄλβιε καὶ μακαριστέ, θεὸς δ' ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο). Ἔριφος ἐς γάλ' ἔπετον and the corresponding expressions on the Pelinna leaves respectively may represent the original reply of the *mystes* to this *makarismos*[110] pronounced by the mystery priest[111] or other people involved in the initiation ritual.[112] These formulae, at any rate, seem to reflect cathartic-initiatory δρώμενα.[113] Attempts at decoding them have been made repeatedly in the past without any sweeping success. I would, moreover, count lines 6 and 7 of A1 among the δρώμενα of the initiation,[114] whose precise interpretation, again, remains somewhat elusive.

V

As pointed out above, the Pelinna leaves display a striking *alternation of dactylic verses and lines in rhythmical prose*.[115] I should like to draw the

[107] Cf. now also the discussion of this aspect in Edmonds 2004: 104ff.

[108] Zuntz 1971: 385 quite in general wanted to trace back all A and B leaves known at that time to "verses and acclamations which were recited at . . . funerals."

[109] Given the importance of wine in Dionysian ritual, it is not to be ruled out that this line could at the same time also contain an echo of initiation rituals, as mentioned above n. 55.

[110] The second person of D1 – 2.3–5 and A4.4b would then perhaps have to be changed back into the first person in an attempt at reconstructing the initiation ritual, unless both parties used the same formula in a kind of echo exchange.

[111] Cf. Wieten 1915: 118f.; Watkins 1995: 283.

[112] According to Demosthenes *Or.* 18.259 Aeschines assisting his mother in celebrating the mysteries of Sabazius would have ordered the initiands after the καθαρμός to speak the formula ἔφυγον κακόν, εὗρον ἄμεινον.

[113] Cf. e.g. Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 12f.; Schlesier 1994: 22f. etc.; see now in particular the careful analysis by Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 76ff. (with earlier literature on the topic).

[114] Cf. also Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 104 "A questa (*sc.* the μύησις) sembrano alludere i versi 6 e 7."

[115] Cf. also Segal 1990: 413: "If the Pelinna texts are unmetrical in places, they are certainly not unrhythmical, especially in the sequence of the four short lines 3–6 of the longer text" etc.

attention now to this significant feature. The lines in rhythmical prose – they could also be considered cretic–paeonic[116] – are of identical structure in the Pelinna text:

3 ταῦρος εἰς γάλα ἔθορες·
4 αἶψα εἰς γ‹ά›λα ἔθορες·
5 κριὸς εἰς γάλα ἔπεσε‹ς›.

3 Bull, you jumped into the milk.
4 Quickly (? rather "goat"), you jumped into the milk.
5 Ram, you fell into the milk.

Other gold leaves present a similar picture. At the end of A1 we find the same ἰσόκωλον slightly altered (the most remarkable alteration being the change of the verb into the first person: A1.9: "Kid, I fell into the milk" [ἔριφος ἐς γάλ' ἔπετον]), and Günther Zuntz has rightly observed, that already the preceding verse, the *makarismos* "Blest you and happy, god you will be instead of a mortal" (ὄλβιε καὶ μακαριστέ, θεὸς δ' ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο [A1.8]), "bears the mark of a prose-utterance laboriously and imperfectly turned into a hexameter."[117]

The leaf A4 contains an even more varied non-dactylic section:

4a θεὸς ἐγένου ἐξ[.] ἀνθρώπου· (rhythmical prose, or ia + 2 sp [or mol?]?)
4b ἔριφος ἐς γάλα ἔπετες (rhythmical prose, or 2 pae?)
5 χαῖρ‹ε› χαῖρε· δεξιὰν ὁδοιπόρ‹ει› (rhythmical prose, or 3 tro?).

4a You have become a god out of man!
4b Kid, you fell into the milk.
5 Hail, hail! Go on the road on the right side!

As far as the third line of this leaf is concerned "Hail, you, to whom things have happened, that never yet before did happen to you" (χαῖρε παθὼν τὸ πάθημα τὸ δ' οὔπω πρόσθε ἐπεπόνθεις), suffice it to quote another highly accurate observation by Günther Zuntz: "In fact, the verse preceding it loudly proclaims its origin in a prose formula, awkwardly and ineffectually disguised."[118]

[116] See also Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 13. The paeon is recommended by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* as rhythm suitable to prose (Arist. *Rhet*. 3,8).

[117] Zuntz 1971: 323. He continues:

> The shibboleth establishing this fact is the particle δ' after θεός, indispensable for the metre but ruinous to the syntax. An equally bad δ' has to do the same service in A4, v. 3. At this point, in fact, the poetical form of A1 breaks down finally; the poem ends with a statement in prose: ἔριφος ἐς γάλα ἔπετον. The conclusion drawn from the style of the last two statements is, again, borne out by comparing A4; they both occur there, undisguised, in prose. And yet it is these, formally so poor, phrases which convey that culminating fact: the dead has become god.

[118] Zuntz 1971: 331; cf. also 332: "these lines are quite unconnected with the preceding, in which rules for the entering of Hades are hinted at rather than given."

There are then, as it seems, parts in the gold leaves, which clearly differ from the dactylic sections, and some of them seem to have been versified only afterwards.[119] This change of form, so easily perceived, finds an obvious correspondence on the level of content, for a clear contrast between narration (dactylic) and ritual (non-dactylic) may be observed. First and foremost, the lines ending with "you jumped / you fell / I fell into the milk" (ἐς γάλα ἔθορες/ἔπεσες/ἔπετον) have a properly performative ring.[120] They seem to be retrospective, as we have seen, and to remind the initiates of an important event which happened in the past – no doubt the ritual of initiation, upon which the firm belief of the *mystai* must have been rooted that they will obtain a better lot in the afterlife. As for the actual function of these formulas, they can be compared to the "symbols" (σύμβολα) or the "password" (σύνθημα)[121] – i.e. some sort of watchword (well-known for instance from the Eleusinian mysteries)[122] –, in which was crystallized the act of initiation. The lines in question have certainly an affirmative value and are indicative of the fact that the person in question belongs to the group: "Yes, I am / you are an initiate."

In order to grasp an idea of the possible original context, one has to notice (and also to savor) the highly solemn stamp of lines 3–5a on leaf A4:

3 Hail, you, to whom things have happened, that never yet before did happen to you:
4a You have become a god out of a man!
4b Kid, you fell into the milk.
5a Hail, hail! etc.

[119] For the prose parts of B3–9 and of D3 see below section V.

[120] Cf. Calame 1995b: 12 = Chapter 8 this volume, p. 203: "ces pratiques où les paroles prononcées ont souvent la valeur d'actes de culte" etc.; Dirk Obbink, as summarized in Watkins 1995: 277ff. and now Chapter 12 in this volume, pp. 293ff.; Faraone Chapter 13 in this volume.

[121] Cf. Burkert 1975: 99f. on A1.9 and A4.4b:

> La funzione di queste parole è chiara: garantiscono l'immortalità; ma la sua comprensione diretta resta impossibile . . . Si potrebbe pensare ad un sacrificio d'iniziazione bacchica, analoga al sacrificio del porcellino da Eleusis. Ma è impossibile provarlo. Il detto preserva la funzione di *sintema*, in quanto è comprensibile soltanto agli iniziati, mentre il non-consacrato non vede altro che un seguito di parole semplici ed innocenti.

Burkert 1990: 85 on D1–2.3 and 5; Calame 1995b: 22 = Chapter 8 this volume pp. 212f.; Chrysostomou 1994: 127f.; Obbink in Watkins 1995: 278, 282 and Chapter 12 this volume, pp. 294, 296; Bernabé 2000a: 49f.; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 152ff.; Faraone Chapter 13 below, p. 312.

[122] Clem. Al. *Protr.* 21.2 "And this is the password of the Eleusinian mysteries: 'I have fasted, I have drunk the κυκέων, I have taken from the κίστη; having worked, I have laid down into the κάλαθος and from the κάλαθος into the κίστη' " (Κἄστι τὸ σύνθημα Ἐλευσινίων μυστηρίων· «ἐνήστευσα, ἔπιον τὸν κυκεῶνα, ἔλαβον ἐκ κίστης, ἐργασάμενος ἀπεθέμην εἰς κάλαθον καὶ ἐκ καλάθου εἰς κίστην.»); cf. Burkert 1990: 49, 79, 83–85.

The phrases give the impression of being hymnic acclamations which would belong to a ritual of confirmation. An "I" (which could also represent a group) assures a "you" of his/her privileged situation. The borderline between god and man has been overcome; what an unheard-of triumph! One feels as if one is partaking in a liturgy – most likely, in this case, a liturgy of the dead.[123] Interestingly again the text resorts to dactylic poetry here: note how the acclamation turns into a hexameter on its way from line 5 to 6:

5 χαῖρ‹ε› χαῖρε· δεξιὰν ὁδοιπόρ‹ει›
6 λειμῶνάς τε ἱεροὺς καὶ ἄλσεα Φερσεφονείας.

5 Hail, hail! Follow the road on your right
6 [to] the holy meadows and groves of Persephone.

It follows from these passages that there is no neat separation between ritual performance and poetry within these texts, but that we are rather facing moving frontiers between the two components. At least if seen from a purely formal point of view, this also applies to the Cretan leaves B3–B8 including B9, where we find – in the middle of sentences that indisputably derive from hexametric verses – two questions in rhythmical prose (admittedly they could also be analyzed as palimbacchei)[124] and which are formulated in good local dialect (doric) (line 3):

1 δίψαι δ' αὖος ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ πιέμ μοι
2 κράνας αἰειρόω ἐπὶ δεξιά, τᾶ κυφάρισσος.
3 "τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί;"
4 Γᾶς υἱός ἠμι καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντος.
5 αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος ὠράνιον.

1 I am dried out with thirst and perishing: but [give me] to drink
2 from the everflowing spring on the right, where the cypress [stands/grows].
3 "Who are you? Where do you come from?"
4 I am a son of the Earth and of the starred Sky.
5 And my descent is heavenly.

It is highly instructive to compare these leaves with the longer texts from which they are certainly to be considered extracts.[125] Take for instance B10, where we not only find all the basic material out of which the hexametrical lines of the shorter lamellae seem to be compiled, but we also meet with two lines which seem to have triggered off the two prosaic questions in B3–9 (the

[123] Cf. above pp. 228f., 239. [124] Cf. Tessier 1987: 238.
[125] Cf. above pp. 222f. A new version of these leaves, originating from Sfakaki/Eleutherna, is published by Tzifopoulos 2010.

more or less identical parts are set off by bold characters and those lines, from which the two questions in B3–9.3 seem to derive, are italicized):

1 Μναμοσύνας τόδε ἔργον· ἐπεὶ ἂμ μέλλητισι θανεῖσθαι
2 εἰς Ἀΐδαο δόμους εὐήρεας, ἔστ᾽ **ἐπὶ δ‹ε›ξιὰ κρήνα**,
3 πὰρ δ᾽ αὐτὰν ἑστακῦα λευκὰ **κυπάρισ‹σ›ος**·
4 ἔνθα κατερχόμεναι ψυχαὶ νεκύων ψύχονται.
5 ταύτας τᾶς κράνας μηδὲ σχεδὸν ἐγγύθεν ἔλθηις.
6 πρόσθεν δὲ εὑρήσεις τᾶς Μναμοσύνας ἀπὸ λίμνας
7 ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προ**ρέον**· φύλακες δὲ ἐπύπερθεν ἔασι.
8 *τοὶ δέ σε εἰρήσονται ἐν φρασὶ πευκαλίμαισι*
9 *ὅτ‹τ›ι δὴ ἐξερέεις Ἄϊδος σκότος ο[. .]εεντος.*
10 εἶπον· "**Γᾶς παῖ‹ς›**[126] **εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος**.
11 **δίψαι δ᾽ εἰμ᾽ αὖος καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλ‹λ›ὰ δότ᾽ ὤ[κα**
12 ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ **πιέναι** τᾶς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμ[νης" κτλ.

Cf. also B1.7 **αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον·** τόδε δ᾽ ἴστε καὶ αὐτοί.

1 This is the work of Memory: When one is about to die
2 [and to go to] the well fitted house of Hades, there is **on your right a spring**,
3 and next to it a white **cypress**:
4 That's where the descending souls of the dead cool themselves.
5 Do by no means go near this spring!
6 Further on you will find cold water **flowing** forth
7 from the lake of Memory: There are guardians standing above [it].
8 *They will ask you with shrewd mind*,
9 *why you are searching through the darkness of gloomy Hades*.
10 Say: "**I am a child of the Earth and of the starry / starred Sky**.
11 **I am dried out with thirst and perishing. So** give me quickly
12 **to drink** from the cold water flowing forth from the lake of Memory!" etc.

Cf. also B1.7 "**And my descent is heavenly**: you know that well yourself."

What is to be concluded from this comparison of the two types of text? My impression is that with the shorter leaves, taking over only direct speech, we confront an adaptation of a poetic narrative text aiming at providing *a kind of libretto for* δρώμενα, i.e. for putting on stage at least parts of the poem on the occasion of an initiation ritual.[127] In other words, I think that we are dealing with a transformation of mixed διήγησις to pure μίμησις, to use Plato's terminology (taken up and developed with some modifications by Gérard Genette). A manifest result of this procedure lies in the fact, that the metrical form has partly been abandoned.[128]

[126] Cf. Sacco 2001: 27ff.
[127] Cf. also Ricciardelli Apicella 2000a: 266; Obbink Chapter 12 in this volume.
[128] For metrical problems in the different leaves B3–9 see Tessier 1987: 238.

Thus, clear interferences between hexametric poetry and rhythmical prose are to be made out, both of the two being tightly interwoven. And the assimilation operates in both directions: in the case just dealt with poetry turns into "mimetic" prose, whereas in A4.3 (χαῖρε παθὼν τὸ πάθημα) ritual prose is transformed into a hexameter, as we have seen. There are other passages in the gold leaves, where we can spot similar interferences. In the most recent example, the Roman leaf dating from the third century CE, A5, it is the name of the woman initiated which seems to be *extra metrum*:[129]

A5.4 Καικιλία Σεκουνδεῖνα, νόμωι ἴθι δῖα γεγῶσα.
(for the second half cf. A4.5 ὁδοιπόρ‹ει› and D3.3f.).

"Caecilia Secundina, go according to custom, you,
who have become divine."

The most astonishing case, however, is that of the leaf originating from Pherai (D3), where poetry seems entirely replaced by a short dialogue in prose:[130]

1 σύμβολα; :: Ἀν‹δ›ρικε-
2 παιδόθυρσον. :: Ἀνδρικεπα-
3 ιδόθυρσον. :: Βριμώ. :: Βριμώ. εἴσιθ‹ι›
4 ἱερὸν λειμῶνα· ἄποινος
5 γὰρ ὁ μύστης. †.απεδον†

1 "The symbols!" "Andrike-
2 paidothyrsos." "[Yes,] Andrikepa-
3 idothyrsos." "Brimo." "[Yes,] Brimo. Enter
4 the holy meadow! For the mystes
5 is free from penalty." † I have given back †

This verbal exchange lends itself to the interpretation, that once more we are dealing with a kind of libretto for δρώμενα, a libretto completely "mimetic" without any hints at the staging. Whereas in the short leaves B3–9 the process of the transformation from poetry into prose has only just started, we are facing here a full-fledged change from "epic" διήγησις to "dramatic" prose.

If we now try to determine the place of this Pherai episode within the whole "story" of the descent of the initiated soul into Hades, there seem to be two clues: (1) In view of D3.3f. "Enter the holy meadow" (εἴσιθ‹ι› | ἱερὸν λειμῶνα)

[129] At least as long as one restrains from writing Σ{ε}κουνδεῖνα with Diels, Olivieri, and Kern.
[130] Unless we follow Tsantsanoglou 1997: 116, who proposes to write ἀνδρικὲ παῖ δὸ‹ς› or δοῦ (written δὸ) θύρσον ("male child, give" or "bind a thyrsos for it") ("a hexameter up to the feminine caesura").

as against A4.5f. "Follow the road on your right [to] the holy meadows and groves of Persephone" (δεξιὰν ὁδοιπόρει | λειμῶνάς τε ἱεροὺς καὶ ἄλσεα Φερσεφονείας), the conclusion suggests itself, that the Pherai leaf most likely refers to the culmination point of the event, to the moment of the apotheosis of the initiated. Being admitted to "the holy meadows and groves of Persephone" seems to be the symbol and confirmation of the fact, that the eternal bliss has finally been reached. If this interpretation is correct, we have to distinguish this stage of events from the episode described in the leaves of the type B, which also include a dialogue with the "guardians" (φύλακες) ("l'épreuve" told in this group of texts has to be placed chronologically at the beginning of the "histoire," – i.e. at the entering of the house of Hades: it consists in not quenching one's thirst with the water coming from the very first spring). (2) The suggested interpretation seems to be confirmed by the fact that in B11.19 we find indeed the word "symbols" (σύμβολα: line 1 of D3) only *after* this first trial in the underworld.

It would seem then that it was the definitive admission to the "paradise" of the "holy meadow" of Persephone that was being performed according to the libretto of Pherai. If, as I would suggest, this admission is not granted by the goddess herself but by other guardians,[131] in front of whom the deceased had to prove their identity by means of oral "symbols" (σύμβολα), this dialogue in the course of the "story" is to be placed *after* the meeting of the purified soul with Persephone – an important meeting performed either in the short salutation ("I greet [or "greet"] Pluto and Persephone" Πλούτωνι καὶ Φερσεφόνῃ [χαίρειν]) in two Cretan leaves,[132] or in the longer discourse of the leaves A1–A3 and A5.

VI

If our observations up till now are not altogether off the mark, there are two different kinds of rhythmical prose to be found in the gold leaves: one *originating from ritual actions and acclamations* and showing a certain tendency to adjust to its hexametric surroundings by assuming versified form

[131] Chrysostomou 1994: 127f. makes no difference between these guards and those posted at the entrance of the house of "the guardians of the underworld": τους Φύλακες τῆς εἰσόδου του Κάτω Κόσμου), and Bernabé 1999c: 59 prefers to see the goddess Persephone as the soul's dialogue partner here (cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 208).

[132] E2 (cf. Zuntz 1971: 384) and E5 (first edition: Gavrilaki and Tzifopoulos 1998); cf. also E3 and E6. I am following the interpretation proposed by Guarducci 1978: 266f. ("formula di saluto suggerita all'anima per il momento in cui essa si troverà all'augusto cospetto die sovrani del mondo infero"; cf. also Guarducci 1985: 396f. and Tzifopoulos 2010: ch. 3 section "The corpus of the lamellae: Nature and classification"), whereas Gallavotti 1988: 28–31 proposes another meaning of the sentence: "'gioire dei numi tutelari dell'Ades', 'godere di Plutone e di Proserpina' (30)"; cf. also the interpretation of Dickie 1995: 82f.

(A1.8f.; A4.3–5a; D1–2.1; D1–2.3–5; cf. A5.4a); the second kind, on the other hand, which may be influenced by ritual acclamations, results from an *adaptation of the poetic narration in order to be used as a libretto* within the frame of a performance of the events narrated – this performance most likely was part of the initiation of the *mystai* (B3–9.3; D3; cf. E2 and E5).[133] As hinted at above, it is futile to search for a uniform prototype in the first case (ritual acclamations and actions). Even if there are some common elements like the watchword (σύνθημα) or the glorification of the *mystai*, the texts were not invariable at all but could easily be adapted to various ritual circumstances – be it the initiation or funerals, be it the first or the last reincarnation.[134] It may well be, moreover, that each local community or rather each priest (τελεστής) had his/her own formulas and variations of rites at his/her disposal. Needless to add that these ritual formulas do not contribute anything to our knowledge of the poem, which by all appearances lingers behind these remarkable documents.

The situation is completely different in the second case, where I see no serious objection to taking even the leaf from Pherai into consideration for an attempt at reconstructing not the words, to be sure, but at least the facts of the "story" narrated in this *Hieros Logos*. For, given the various links between the leaves (links which have become stronger and stronger due to new discoveries over the last few years),[135] it seems to me generally much more economical to start from the hypothesis of a single hexametric poem.[136] This poem narrated a sequence of different "trials" ("épreuves") which would await the soul in the underworld after death and of which the leaves of the various groups have taken out only one or the other.[137]

Richard Janko in fact has produced in 1984 an interesting reconstruction of the hypothetical archetype of group B.[138] However, no serious

[133] See previous note. [134] Cf. above n. 88. [135] Cf. above n. 11.

[136] In contrast to other scholars, who sometimes, I think, do not sufficiently distinguish between hexametric parts and rhythmical prose. Cf. above n. 21.

[137] Cf. also Ziegler 1942: 1386f.; Guarducci 1974: 31; Guarducci 1978: 261; Sorel 1995: 115; Baumgarten 1998: 93f.:

> Trotz der auf den ersten Blick selbständigen Stellung der Thurioiblättchen stehen ähnliche Vorstellungen wie bei den anderen Goldlamellen im Hintergrund. So läßt das Thurioiblättchen A4 (Zuntz) trotz starker Korruptel noch erkennen, daß auch hier eine knappe Anweisung zum Gang durch die Unterwelt gegeben ist. Die Blättchen mögen so auf unterschiedliche Etappen des Jenseitsweges zielen: die Petelia-Hipponion-Kreta-Gruppe auf den Anfang der Reise mit dem Wächtergespräch, die aus Thurioi auf die Begegnung der Seele mit den Unterweltsgottheiten. Der Bezug auf verschiedene Etappen, aber auch das unterschiedliche Maß an Ausführlichkeit verraten ein komplexeres Jenseitsbild im Hintergrund. Die Texte auf den Blättchen sind damit nur als Reminiszenzen an schon Bekanntes zu verstehen [etc.].

See also below n. 176 and n. 212.

[138] Cf. above n. 5.

attempt has been made up to now (to the best of my knowledge) at reconstructing as far as possible the whole hexametric poem,[139] taking from the corpus of the gold leaves all the elements that possibly originate from the supposed poem, and putting these *membra disiecta* into a plausible narrative order.

To my mind, six different "scenes" may be discerned on the gold leaves hitherto excavated:

I. Death and katabasis of the soul: the beginning of the narrative, represented mainly by one verse in A4.1[140] (but cf. also B10.1b; B1.12b; B11.1b);[141] the omniscient narrator starts speaking (his substitute within the realm of the ritual of initiation is most likely the hierophant).

II. Description of the topography in the palace of Hades: the two springs, the first "trial": not to quench one's thirst with the water flowing from the first spring; dialogue with the guardians at the second spring; the path of the *mystai* and *bakkhoi* (leading first towards Persephone, but finally aiming at entering the "meadows and groves of Persephone"; cf. v.). Principal witnesses to this scene: the leaves of group B.

III. Meeting with Persephone and the other gods: the omniscient narrator (the hierophant) requests the *mystes* to address Persephone (III.a.); the *mystes* tells his or her story, his alienation and reintegration, his fall and liberation, and his desire to enter the "meadow" (III.b.). Principal witnesses: the leaves of group A, moreover Pelinna line 2 and the prosaic leaves with greetings to the god(s) of the underworld.

IV. Exchange of the oral symbols: dialogue with other guardians which forms the last "trial" before the admission to the "holy meadow" of Persephone. Witness: the leaf from Pherai (D3); cf. now also D5.

V. Description of the situation of the blessed: which is alluded to in A4.6, D1–2.7 and B1.11.

VI. Final admonition of the initiated: the omniscient narrator (or in the case of the initiation the hierophant) urges that the person he is speaking to guard with great care the things (s)he has learned. Witness: A4.2.[142]

[139] The hypothetical content is given in outline in Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 231ff.; cf. also 171ff.

[140] Cf. above pp. 236f.

[141] One could imagine that the formula "darkness covering all up" (σκότος ἀμφικαλύψας) (B1.14b; B11.3b) also belonged to the beginning of the poem (see below p. 252 [last lines of section VI]).

[142] Cf. above p. 237.

Following this rough outline, a global reconstruction of the original *Hieros Logos* according the traces left in the gold leaves could read as follows:

A. Greek Text[143]

I.

1 (A4.1) ἀλλ᾽ ὁπόταμ ψυχὴ προλίπηι φάος Ἠελίοιο (. . .)

II.[144]

1 (B2.1)[145] εὑρήσεις Ἀΐδαο δόμοις ἐπὶ[146] δεξιὰ κρήνην,
2 (B2.2)[147] πὰρ δ᾽ αὐτῆι λευκὴν ἑστηκυῖαν κυπάρισσον·
3 (B10.4)[148] ἔνθα κατερχόμεναι ψυχαὶ νεκύων ψύχονται.
4 (B2.3 with B11.7)[149] ταύτης τῆς κρήνης μηδὲ σχεδὸν ἐμπελάσηισθα·
5 (B10.6)[150] πρόσθεν δὲ εὑρήσεις τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης
6 (B10.7)[151] ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον· φύλακες δὲ ἐπύπερθεν ἔασι.
7 (B10.8)[152] τοὶ δέ σε εἰρήσονται ἐνὶ φρεσὶ πευκαλίμηισι
8 (B10.9)[153] ὅτ‹τ›ι δὴ ἐξερέεις Ἄϊδος σκότος ὀρφνήεντος.

9 *in "mimetic" prose* (B3–9.3)[154] "τίς δ᾽ ἐσσί; πῶ δ᾽ ἐσσί;"

10 (B2.7) τοῖς δὲ σὺ εὖ μάλα πᾶσαν ἀληθείην καταλέξαι·
11 (B2.8)[155] εἰπεῖν· "Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος·
12 (B1.7)[156] αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον· τόδε δ᾽ ἴστε καὶ αὐτοί.
13 (B10.11)[157] δίψηι δ᾽ εἰμ᾽ αὖος καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλ‹λ›ὰ δότ᾽ ὦ[κα
14 (B10.12)[158] ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ πιέναι τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμ[νης."
15 (B10.13)[159] καὶ δή τοι ἐρέουσιν ὑποχθονίωι βασιλεί‹ηι›·
16 (B1.10)[160] καὐτοί σοι δώσουσι πιεῖν θείης ἀπ[ὸ κρή]νης·
17 (B10.15) καὶ δὴ καὶ σὺ πιὼν ὁδὸν ἔρχεα‹ι› ἥν τε καὶ ἄλλοι
18 (B10.16) μύσται[161] καὶ βάχχοι[162] ἱερὴν στείχουσι κλε‹ε›ινοί.

III.a.

1 (D1–2.2) εἰπεῖν Φερσεφόνηι σ᾽ ισ ὅτι Βάχ‹χ›ιος αὐτὸς ἔλυσε.

[143] The text is given here without an *apparatus criticus* for which I refer to Riedweg 1998: 392ff. and particularly Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 241ff. The variants chosen are those I take to be the most probable ones. The vocalization has been basically standardized toward an 'epic' ionian. As for the dialect see Cassio 1994; Dettori 1996.
[144] For this section cf. also Janko 1984. [145] Cf. B1.1; B10.2; B11.4; also B3–9.2. [146] B10.2.
[147] Cf. B1.2; B10.3; B11.5. [148] Cf. B11.6. [149] Cf. B1.3; B10.5. [150] Cf. B11.8; B2.4; B1.4.
[151] Cf. B1.5; B2.5; B11.9. [152] Cf. B11.10; B2.6. [153] Cf. B11.11.
[154] Without changing the dialect (doric). [155] Cf. B1.6; B10.10; B11.12; also B3–9.4.
[156] Cf. B11.15; B9.5. [157] Cf. B1.8; B2.9; B11.13; B3–9.1. [158] Cf. B1.9; B2.10; B11.14.
[159] Cf. B11.16. [160] Cf. B10.14; B11.17. [161] Cf. D3.5. [162] Cf. D1–2.2.

2 *in prose* (E2 and E5)[163] "Πλούτωνι καὶ Φερσεφόνῃ (χαίρειν)."

III.b.

1 (A1.1)[164] "ἔρχομαι ἐκ καθαρῶν καθαρή, χθονίων βασίλεια,
2 (A1.2)[165] Εὐκλὲς Εὐβο‹υ›λεύς τε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι·
3 (A1.3)[166] καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμῶν γένος ὄλβιον εὔχομαι εἶναι.
4 (A1.4)[167] ἀλ‹λ›ά με μο‹ῖ›ρα ἐδάμασσε καὶ ἀστεροβλῆτα κεραυνῶι.
5 (A2–3.4) ποινὴν[168] δ' ἀνταπέτεισ' ἔργων ἕνεκα οὔτι δικα‹ί›ων·
6 (A1.5) κύκλο‹υ› δ' ἐξέπτην βαρυπενθέος ἀργαλέοιο·
7 (A1.6)[169] ἱμερτο‹ῦ› δ' ἐπέβην στεφάνο‹υ› ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι,
8 (A1.7) δεσποίνης δὲ ὑπὸ κόλπον ἔδυν χθονίης βασιλείης.
9 (A2–3.6) νῦν δ' ἱκέτι‹ς› ἥκω παρ‹ὰ› ἁγνὴ‹ν› Φε‹ρ›σεφόνε‹ι›αν
10 (A2–3.7) ὥς με πρόφ‹ρ›ω‹ν› πέμψηι εἰ‹ς› εὐαγέων ‹λειμῶνα›."[170]

IV. *last "trial" entirely converted into "mimetic" prose*

1 (D3) *σύμβολα.*[171] :: *Ἀν‹δ›ρικε-*
2 *παιδόθυρσον.* :: *Ἀνδρικεπα-*
3 *ιδόθυρσον.* :: *Βριμώ.* :: *Βριμώ. εἴσιθ‹ι›*
4 *ἱερὸν λειμῶνα·*[172] *ἄποινος*[173]
5 *γὰρ ὁ μύστης.*[174] *†.απεδον†*

V.

1 (A4.6) (. . .) λειμῶνάς τε ἱεροὺς καὶ ἄλσεα Φερσεφονείης.

2 (D1–2.7) κἀπιμενεῖ[175] σ' ὑπὸ γῆν τέλεα ἄσ‹σ›απερ ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι (. . .)

3 (B1.11) καὶ τότ' ἔπειτ' ἄ[λλοισι μεθ'] ἡρώεσσιν ἀνάξει[ς.[176]

[163] Cf. also tablet E4 found at Pella Φερσεφόνηι Ποσείδιππος μύστης εὐσεβής (E3 fr. 496-b Bernabé) and from Vergina Φιλίστη Φερσεφόνηι χαίρειν (fr. 496-k Bernabé); moreover E6 from Agios Athanasios in Macedonia with a greeting to Hades only, apparently (Φιλωτήρα τῶι Δεσπ‹ό›τε‹ι› {α} χέρε‹ν›).

[164] Cf. A2–3.1. [165] Cf. A2–3.2. [166] Cf. A2–3.3. [167] Cf. A2–3.5.

[168] Cf. D3.4. [169] Cf. A1.7b.

[170] For the original poem I take over the conjecture proposed by Zuntz 1971: 340. [171] Cf. B11.19.

[172] Cf. A4.6; A5.4b. [173] Cf. A2–3.4. [174] Cf. B10.16.

[175] For the original poem, read at least in part during the initiation ritual, the future seems more appropriate than the present tense. On the other hand, the latter fits better the funerals for which the two Pelinna leaves seem to have been intended; cf. above around n. 44.

[176] For the relation of this verse with B10.15f. (11.) cf. Janko 1984: 97: "there is no reason why the two versions cannot stand alongside each other as successive stages in the progress of the deceased towards happiness. The dead man is to travel a holy road with the other initiates, and then, i.e. at his journey's end, he will rule among the other heroes. This will be his final state: he will hardly find bliss journeying for ever."

VI.

1 (A4.2)	(. . .) πεφυλαγμένον εὖ μάλα πάν[τ]α.

B. Translation

I.

1 (A 4.1)	But as soon as the soul leaves the light of Helios [. . .]

II.

1 (B2.1)[177]	[. . .] you will find in the palace of Hades on your right a spring
2 (B2.2)[178]	and next to it a white cypress:
3 (B10.4)[179]	That's the place where the descending souls of the dead cool themselves.
4 (B2.3 + B 11.7)[180]	Do by no means go near this spring!
5 (B10.6)[181]	Further on you will find cold water flowing forth from the lake of Memory:
6 (B10.7)[182]	There are guardians standing above [it].
7 (B10.8)[183]	They will ask you with shrewd mind,
8 (B10.9)[184]	why you are searching through the darkness of gloomy Hades.
9	*in mimetic prose (B3–9.3)*: "*Who are you? Where do you come from?*"
10 (B2.7)	You, tell them absolutely the whole truth!
11 (B2.8)[185]	Say: "I am a son of the Earth and of the starred Sky.
12 (B1.7)[186]	And my descent is heavenly: you too know that well yourself.
13 (B10.11)[187]	I am dried out with thirst and perishing. So give me quickly
14 (B10.12)[188]	to drink cool water from the lake of Memory!"
15 (B10.13)[189]	And they will actually tell it to the queen of the nether world.
16 (B1.10)[190]	And they themselves will give you to drink from the divine spring.
17 (B10.15)	And then having drunk you will take the holy path

[177] Cf. B1.1; B10.2; B11.4; also B3–9.2. [178] Cf. B1.2; B10.3; B11.5. [179] Cf. B11.6.
[180] Cf. B1.3; B10.5. [181] Cf. B11.8; B2.4; B1.4. [182] Cf. B1.5; B2.5; B11.9. [183] Cf. B11.10; B2.6.
[184] Cf. B11.11. [185] Cf. B1.6; B10.10; B11.12; also B3–9.4. [186] Cf. B11.15; B9.5.
[187] Cf. B1.8; B2.9; B11.13; B3–9.1. [188] Cf. B1.9; B2.10; B11.14. [189] Cf. B11.16.
[190] Cf. B10.14; B11.17.

18 (B10.16) which are treading also the other *mystai*[191] and *bakkhoi*,[192] the renowned.

III.a.

1 (D1–2.2) Tell Persephone that Bacchios himself has released you.

2 *in prose (E2 and E5) "I greet [or greet] Pluto and Persephone!"*

III.b.

1 (A1.1)[193] "I am coming out of the pure ones, myself a pure [soul], queen of the inhabitants of the nether world,
2 (A1.2)[194] Eucles and Eubouleus and [you], the other immortal gods.
3 (A1.3)[195] For, I too I pride myself to belong to your blessed family.
4 (A1.4)[196] But fate has overpowered me and he, who throws the thunderbolt with his lightning.
5 (A2–3.4) I have repaid the penalty[197] for the sake of deeds unjust.
6 (A1.5) I have flown out of the cycle of deep affliction and grief.
7 (A1.6)[198] I have set foot on the crown I longed for with swift feet.
8 (A1.7) I have sunk into the lap of the mistress, the queen of the nether world.
9 (A2–3.6) Now I come as a suppliant to the pure Persephone,
10 (A2–3.7) so that she may send me graciously to the <meadow> of the purified."

IV. *last "trial" entirely converted into "mimetic" prose*

1 *(D3)* *"The symbols!"*[199] *"Andrike-*
2 *paidothyrsos." "[Yes,] Andrikepa-*
3 *idothyrsos." "Brimo." "[Yes,] Brimo. Enter*
4 *the holy meadow!*[200] *For the mystes*[201]
5 *is free from penalty."*[202] † *I have given back* †

V.

1 (A4.6) [. . .] and [to] the holy meadows and groves of Persephone.
2 (D1–2.7) And rites [or "prices" or "honors"] will await you[203] below the earth, which also [enjoy or celebrate] the other blessed.
3 (B1.11) and then you will reign hereafter together with the other heroes.[204]

[191] Cf. D3.5. [192] Cf. D1–2.2. [193] Cf. A2–3.1. [194] Cf. A2–3.2.
[195] Cf. A2–3.3. [196] Cf. A2–3.5. [197] Cf. D3.4. [198] Cf. A1.7b. [199] Cf. B11.19.
[200] Cf. A4.6; A5.4b. [201] Cf. B10.16. [202] Cf. A2–3.4. [203] Cf. n. 175. [204] Cf. n. 176.

VI.

1 (A4.2) [. . .] bearing all things very well in your memory.

Let me add a few complementary remarks on remaining bits of hexametrical verse. As for the "self-referential" lines B10.1a[205] Μνημοσύνης τόδε ἔργον ("This is the work[206] of Memory") and B1.13]τόδ᾽ ἐγράψ[("has written this")[207] – lines which have a ring of instructions for use[208] –, it seems rather unlikely that they formed part of the original poem, whereas the second half of B10.1[209] (. . .) ἐπεὶ ἄμ μέλλησι θανεῖσθαι (. . .) ("when (s)he is about to die") looks like a variant of A4.1 (ἀλλ᾽ ὁπόταμ ψυχὴ . . .). The end of B1.14[210] σκότος ἀμφικαλύψας ("darkness covering all up") could belong either to the beginning or to the end of the poem, and similarly for B11.2b μ]εμνημέ‹ν›ος ἥρως ("when the hero remembers") the original place must remain uncertain: the two words could either be put close to B10.1a, or be attributed to the final exhortation (VI).[211]

VII

To be sure, what we are doing here is a rather bold attempt: Because of the highly fragmentary transmission of our texts, it goes without saying that the reconstruction must remain hypothetical in many respects. Yet one is at least able to show that it is not absolutely impossible to assemble in a reasonable narrative order the scattered elements of the poem.[212] As a result we may get, I think, a clearer and more coherent picture of a hexametric

[205] Cf. B1.12a; B11.1a ?; also A5.3a.

[206] Or the monument or the leaf or the gift or the thread – or whatever else has been read or conjectured so far, with more or less plausibility. It is not the place here to discuss in full detail the different proposals, instead I refer to Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 12ff. and 246.

[207] Smith : ἐν χρυσίωι] τόδε γράψ[αι ("write this on a piece of gold") Guarducci : ἐν πίνακι χρυσέωι] τόδε γραψ[άτω ἠδὲ φορείτω ("one has to write this onto a gold tablet and carry it") *ex. gr.* West : ἐν δέλτωι χρυσῆι] τόδε γράψ[αι χρὴ μάλ᾽ ἀκριβῶς ("one has to write this onto a gold tablet in a very exact manner") *ex. gr.* Gallavotti :]τόδ᾽ ἔγραψα ("I have written this") Diels.

[208] See below p. 255. [209] Cf. B1.12b; 11.1b. [210] Cf. B11.3b.

[211] As suggested by Alberto Bernabé (cf. Bernabé 1999c: 57, and Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 20f), perhaps preferable in view of "in the company of heroes" (ἡρώεσσιν) on B1.11?

[212] One could easily think of further elements the poem may once have included; cf. Guarducci 1985: 392 on B10: "Ma è possibile, anzi probabile, che nel testo originario qualche altro particolare ci sia stato, per esempio un accenno alla via da seguire per giungere al palazzo di Ade" etc.; see also above p. 231. According to a highly convincing suggestion by Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 232f. another topic could probably not have been absent – the fate of the non-initiated:

> An account was probably given in this katabasis of the alternative possibility, that is, the destiny met by those who have not been initiated, who forget the password before the guardians or who are not accepted by Persephone. All the known poems narrating descents to the underworld of this type (from the *Bologna Papyrus* by way of Book VI of the *Aeneid*, to Dante's *Divine Comedy*) present both the fate of those who do achieve a better destiny and that of those who fail to achieve it. In the tablets, we lack

poem which constitutes the unifying bond of all leaves and which, at least in its broad outline, can actually be recovered from the gold leaves. Its narrator distinguishes himself by his exact knowledge of underworld topography: B2 starts off with "You will find in the Houses of Hades on your right a spring." The first-person narrator, described in none of the texts in greater detail, knows precisely the difference between the first and the second spring and is capable of explaining that the latter is fed by the Lake of Memory; he is well informed about whom the soul will come across during its passage to the Underworld and in what sequence. Omniscience of this kind is unlikely except for someone who has already once been in the underworld and therefore knows it from personal experience.

We will hardly credit an ordinary initiation priest with such an experience – unless he were invested with shamanistic gifts, but one has become rather reluctant to adopt the category of shamanism to Greek phenomena in the last years.[213] Given the fact that Plato, in the context of Bacchic "releases," purifications and initiations talks about "books by Musaeus and Orpheus" (Pl. *Resp*. 364e3), it seems quite legitimate, rather than calling up people like Heracles,[214] Theseus, Odysseus, or Pythagoras,[215] to bring Orpheus into play,[216] the exceptional Thracian minstrel who indeed obtained detailed knowledge of the underworld in the course of his attempt at rescuing his wife Eurydice out of Hades. His importance for deceased *mystai* unmistakably emerges from the famous sepulchral amphora illustrated by the Ganymede painter in the Ludwig collection of Basel.[217] Here

information with regard to those who fail to achieve a better situation in the other world. And it is logical that things should be this way, for only the information that is immediately useful for the initiate has been selected, that which refers to what he must do and say, therefore references to what he must not do or say are taken for granted. It might also be considered a bad omen to recall such a possibility of failure at the moment of death.

However, Platonic references to a *Sacred Tale* in which it is said that the non-initiates will lie in the mud or will be condemned to carry water in a sieve, the omnipresent references in other sources to those who have "fallen in the mud" make feasible the supposition that in the poem or poems that served as a basis for tablets' references, there could have also been a mention of the punishment received by the non-initiated in similar terms.

[213] Cf. Parker 1995: 502 with n. 90. [214] Cf. Baumgarten 1998: 83.

[215] One might also think of Dionysus or Hermes Psychopompus. Amongst the mythical heroes, however, Orpheus was doubtless the most famous visitor of the underworld in antiquity.

[216] It would go beyond the scope of this paper to discuss this problem in more detail; suffice it to refer to Graf 1991: 89ff., 97ff.; Graf 1993: 251ff.; Kingsley 1995: 261ff.; Parker 1995: 484, 498; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 179ff. and above in this volume, also Edmonds 2004: 102f. and now Graf and Johnston 2007: 165ff.; radically opposing such a hypothesis: Schlesier 2001a; also Calame 2006: 271ff.

[217] Cf. Burkert 1977b: 3 and 1980: 38f.; for Orpheus on Apulian vase painting in general Burkert 2003: 92ff.; see already Schmidt 1975: 112ff.; Schmidt, Trendall, and Cambitoglou 1976: 32ff.; also Wegner 1988: 183f.; Bottini 1992: 145; Giangiulio 1994: 46; Parker 1995: 497; R. Olmos, "Iconographical notes on the Orphic tablets," Appendix II in Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 280ff.

Orpheus is depicted singing in a ναΐσκος (symbolizing the tomb) in front of an old man. This old man is sitting in heroic pose, with a *book roll* in his left hand. As to the contents of this roll, one should probably think not so much of a Presocratic commentary on cosmogonic–theogonic verses assigned to Orpheus, as was burnt together with the corpse of the deceased in the case of the Derveni Papyrus. Rather, given the special constellation of elements here, we may conjecture some kind of Orphic ἱερὸς λόγος περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου or περὶ τῆς εἰς Ἅϊδου καταβάσεως[218] similar to the poem which can be grasped at least partly in the gold leaves.[219] In favor of Orpheus as supposed narrator may be added that in many passages of Graeco-Roman literature strong relations between Orpheus and Dionysos in general and Bacchic mysteries in particular are established.[220]

To which ritual context would such a *Logos* belong? First and foremost to the ritual of initiation.[221] The poem was probably made known to the *mystes* by the Orphic–Bacchic priest within the frame of the παράδοσις.[222] In favor of this "Sitz im Leben" can be adduced the future form εὑρήσεις,[223] stressed with a certain emphasis as it is: "You will then – i.e. once you die[224] – come across all these things." As was common practice in initiation cults, the "handing over" of this Logos to the *mystes* will have happened orally only.

In addition, it cannot be excluded in my opinion that certain passages of this Logos which were considered to be of particular importance for the soul's future happiness may have been recalled over the grave. Such, at any

[218] Cf. *OF* p. 304ff. Kern; the assumption that such a poem could have been the model for the gold tablets is already found e.g. in Dieterich 1893: 128; cf. Guthrie 1952: 171f.

[219] Unfortunately we know nothing of the contents of the papyrus found in Kallatis in the right hand of the deceased; see E. Condurachi in: *Orfismo in Magna Grecia* 1975: 184f.; Bottini 1992: 149f.

[220] Cf. the list in Riedweg 1995: 37 n. 27; of particular importance is the extensive parallelism, emphasized also by Burkert 1982: 4f., between the remarks by Plato in *Resp*. 2.364b5ff. on the Ὀρφεοτελέσται and those on the Dionysiac τελεσταί in *Phdr*. 244d5ff.; 265b3 (cf. Riedweg 1995: 41 n. 39); the conclusion suggests itself that Plato in both passages thinks of *Orphic*–Bacchic "liberations," "purifications," and "consecrations" – a fact not unimportant for the interpretation of our gold leaves. The numerous intersections between Orphic and Bacchic elements may find an explanation in the observation that Orphism was by its very nature something like a "riforma spirituale del dionisismo" (Burkert 1975: 92). The fact that Orpheus is not mentioned on the leaves is of no importance; cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 182f:

> The fact that the name of Orpheus never appears in the tablets is not a sufficient argument to deny that the texts were attributed to the mythical bard. To cite better-known parallels, neither Parmenides nor Empedocles mention their names in poems that have many points of contact, above all formal, with the katabatic literature.

[221] For the use of books in Orphic–Bacchic initiation rituals cf. e.g. Pl. *Resp*. 2.364e3ff.; Burkert 1982: 5; Parker 1995: 484ff.; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal Chapter 4 in this volume, p. 97.

[222] Cf. on this Riedweg 1987: 5ff.; Burkert 1990: 59; Casadio 1990a: 190ff.

[223] B1–2.1 and 4; B10.6; also to be assumed in B11.4 and 8.

[224] B1.12; B10.1; B11.1; cf. A4.1 (see above pp. 236f.).

rate, was the purpose of the gold leaves we have been dealing with here:[225] they were destined to record core passages taken from the ἱερὸς λόγος on durable material and to save them indelibly in the *mystes*' memory. This function is referred to unambiguously in a supplement to be found on leaves B1, B10 and B11, as well as A5: "This is the work of Memory (Μναμοσύνης), when (s)he [i.e. certainly, the *mystes*] is about to die."[226] This autoreferential statement[227] obviously could be placed either in the beginning or at the end. It reads like an "instruction for use," as it were.

Considering the precious material they used to write on, it is not surprising that only short extracts of the poem were chosen to be engraved on the gold leaves.[228] Moreover, it may well be that under these circumstances different cathartic priests (καθαρταί)[229] made different choices. Some considered as absolutely decisive that the soul should not fail at the entrance to the underworld in drinking from the wrong spring; to others it seemed that the most important thing was not to forget the right formulas in addressing the queen Persephone.

In conclusion, it may be asked at what particular moment the leaves would normally have been engraved: was the engraving done already within the framework of initiation (or only shortly afterwards) – the leaves being subsequently kept as "symbols" (σύμβολα) secretly at home[230] –, or were they produced rather at the moment of death, when the leaves were needed to be given to the dead as mnemonic aid?[231] Neither the first nor the second possibility can be ruled out. While the leaf A1 contains a *makarismos* which, I think, better suits the situation of an initiation,[232] the leaves D1, D2, and A4 seem to issue from funeral rites and therefore invite to the second solution.[233] In this second case, it perhaps also becomes somewhat easier

[225] Dickie 1995: 82f. presumes that the leaves (not regarded in this article) which frequently have but a name inscribed represent "a yet more truncated version of the same message" in comparison to D1 and D2.2 ("It is as though they were meant to utter the name of the deceased on his or her behalf"). However, his interpretation of the dative on the Pella leaf Φερσεφόνῃ Ποσείδιππος μύστης εὐσεβής against the background of D1 and D2.2 εἰπεῖν Φερσεφόναι (82 "Persephone in the dative in the lamella from Pella is not, accordingly, a dative of dedication but means something like: 'Tell Persephone,' or 'This is for Persephone's attention'"; similarly Rossi 1996: 59) seems doubtful in view of the fact that he does not take into account the Cretan leaf E2 (Zuntz 1971: 384 = Inscr. Cret. ii. xii 31bis), where the dative is governed by χαίρεν.

[226] The verse is preserved in B1.12 and B11.1 but in a very fragmentary form. A5.3 contains only the first half.

[227] Cf. Janko 1984: 92. In A5, the original sense is altered, cf. above n. 39.

[228] Cf. also Janko 1984: 91; Bernabé 2000a: 54f.; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008: 230, etc.

[229] For the type of priests cf. Burkert 2003: 86f.

[230] Cf. Burkert 1990: 48–50.

[231] For the function of the tablets see also Bernabé 1991: 233f.; Sorel 1995: 111 etc.

[232] A1.8; see above pp. 235 and 238f.

[233] See above n. 27; p. 227ff.; 237f.; 238f.

to explain the sometimes deplorable quality of the orthography and knowledge of Greek in general to be noted from time to time.[234] After the death of the initiated an engraver had to be found in a great hurry, possibly not always and not everywhere an easy task; apparently quite often one had to be content with a semi-educated person. As stated earlier, the texts also show clear signs of the fact that the engravers often did not use written models but were doing their job from memory.[235] It is quite possible that only the *orpheotelestai* were in possession of a written copy of the "sacred discourse" (ἱερὸς λόγος).[236] Fortunately enough, the gold leaves have preserved at least some traces of this, and these traces remain impressive indeed.

[234] This is true in particular for A2 and A3; cf. also above p. 221 with n. 8.

[235] Cf. above pp. 220f.

[236] Cf. the famous edict by Ptolemaeus (Philopator?) giving order to the ones "initiating [others] to Dionysus" (τελοῦντες τῶι Διονύσωι) among other things to present their ἱερὸς λόγος sealed to the authorities: *BGU* 1211; cf. Baumgarten 1998: 134ff.

CHAPTER 10

Sacred scripture or oracles for the dead? The semiotic situation of the "Orphic" gold tablets

Radcliffe G. Edmonds III

Orphism did not exist for the ancient Greeks. Even Bianchi, who argued for the opposite conclusion, admitted that a term like "Orphism" must refer to a modern scholarly construct, a category by which we classify certain phenomena of the ancient world.[1] Like any "ism," therefore, Orphism would have to be a religious phenomenon comprised of the beliefs and practices, texts and artifacts, individuals and social organizations that were, by some definition or other, "Orphic."

Problems arise, however, because not only modern scholars but also the ancient Greeks themselves labeled certain things as "Orphic," and, as is the case with the term "magic," the ancient, primary category is not precisely the same as the modern, secondary one.[2] Not only did some ancient authors choose Orpheus as an authoritative pseudonym for their own compositions, but other ancient commentators also labeled certain texts, ideas, rites and so forth as Orphic, either for praise or for blame. As Linforth showed over sixty years ago, if we take merely those things explicitly sealed by the ancients with the name of Orpheus or the adjective Orphic, we cannot reconstruct a coherent religious movement founded upon specific central doctrines, manifested in particular social organizations, or engaged in activities peculiar to its members.[3] In the years since Linforth, however, scholars have objected that, if we abandon the idea of Orphism as a coherent religious movement, we have no other alternative for a coherent religious movement that would explain the evidence.[4] What then are we to do with all the

[1] Bianchi 1974. Compare Smith 1982: xi. "Religion is solely the creation of the scholar's study. It is created for the scholar's analytic purposes by his imaginative acts of comparison and generalization."

[2] As I have argued in Edmonds 2008.

[3] Linforth 1941: 67, 172–173, 292.

[4] Cp. Bernabé 1997:38:

> Debemos denunciar la falacia de un argumento reiteradamente expresado: que no existe un orfismo como movimiento religioso, sino sólo libros atribuidos a Orfeo. Basta con preguntarse cuál es el motivo de que alguien atribuya un libro a Orfeo para descubrir que hay un punto referencia, un núcleo de pensamiento en el que cada escritor se integra o no. El orfismo es un ideología, y atribuirse una obra órfica es el resultado de haber optado previamente por una forma de pensar en materia de religión.

theogonies, rituals, and visions of the afterlife labeled by modern scholars or ancient sources as Orphic?

I would argue that we can, in fact, better explain the evidence once we abandon the idea of a coherent religious movement, since the evidence has often been warped and constrained to make it fit within the model of Orphism as a religious sect. If we follow the distinction made by Burkert between religious craft and sect, we can view the evidence in the context, not of a religious community or even of a movement unified by a nucleus of religious ideas, but rather of religious craftsmen competing for authority with their clientele.[5] Rather than implying any particular ideas about the soul and its vicissitudes before, during, and after mortal life, "Orphic" simply becomes (like "magic") a polemical rather than objective definition, a label applied in the ancient sources that designates the extra-ordinary nature of whatever is so labeled. Following this model, the label "Orphic" can be used by modern scholars more in the way it was by the ancients, to designate, both for praise and for blame, religious materials that seem out of the ordinary, counter to or claiming greater importance than the regular religious practices of polis religion.

Taking seriously Burkert's model of Orphism as a craft rather than a sect can help us better understand some of the most puzzling evidence from antiquity. Instead of trying to figure out how a secret gospel of the salvation of the soul from its original sin could have been transmitted over the centuries without leaving more than vague allusions in an astonishingly wide variety of texts, we can re-examine the evidence to see how particular texts may help us reconstruct a picture of these religious craftsmen and their clientele.

As an example of such a study, I propose to reconsider the nature of some of the so-called Orphic gold tablets, particularly the longer version B tablets (such as those from Petelia, Pharsalos, and Hipponion). I show that presupposing a lost, canonical didactic *hieros logos* with instructions from Orpheus as the source of these texts is no more plausible, on stylistic and

[5] Burkert 1982. Burkert summarizes his idea of the Orphics in Burkert 1998: 393. "Die Realität, die hinter dies Texten steht, läßt sich mit hinlänglicher Sicherheit fassen. Nichts spricht für eine bakchische oder orphische 'Kirche' mit Klerus und Dogma. Es handelt sich um wandernde Reinigungspriester, καθαρταί, τελεσταί, die ihren Klienten durch Weiherituale, 'Lösung' aus allerlei Not und Ängsten bieten, einschließlich der Angst vor dem Tod und vor Jenseitsstrafen." Cp. West 1983: 3. "It is a fallacy to suppose that all 'Orphic' poems and rituals are related to each other or that they are to be interpreted as different manifestations of a single religious movement . . . There was no doctrinal criterion for ascription to Orpheus, and no copyright restriction. It was a device for conferring antiquity and authority upon a text that stood in need of them." Contrast the definition of Orphism by Bernabé 1997.

semiotic grounds, than presuming a short, hexameter oracle. Such an oracular text, moreover, fits better with the model of itinerant ritual specialists adapting their materials to serve a varied clientele, and a number of such texts, devised by craftsmen in different areas, would better explain the variety of types of texts among the corpus of tablets.

Since the archaeological context provides insufficient clues and no reference to the gold tablets or their texts survives in the literary record, the details of the texts themselves provide the best indicators of the nature of these tablets. Recent scholars such as Graf, Calame, Riedweg, and Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal have focused upon the semiotic situation of these "Orphic" gold tablet texts, analyzing the ways in which the texts construct a narrator and addressee, as well as the discourse between them.[6] These scholars have pointed out how the forms of address indicate a discourse between an unidentified narrator and the deceased in some of the tablet texts.[7] Since the narrator is passing his superior knowledge of the Underworld on to the deceased, one apparently plausible speculation has been that this speaker is Orpheus, who descended to the Underworld and returned full of special knowledge.[8] Riedweg, for example, following up on Comparetti's 1882 suggestion, hypothesizes an Orphic *hieros logos* from which the hexameter verses may have been excerpted, a longer text in which Orpheus perhaps described his experiences for the benefit of others.[9] The verses in the shorter texts from Pelinna, Thurii, and Crete would then perhaps be excerpts of this excerpted didactic text, preserving only the dialogue portions without the elaboration of the narrative. The conclusion drawn, by Riedweg and others, is that the tablets represent the initiation of the deceased into a group which makes use of a *hieros logos* attributed to Orpheus, that is, an Orphic initiated into a group of Orphics.[10]

[6] Graf 1991 and Graf 1993, Calame 1995b, Riedweg 1998, and Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001. The essays by Bernabé and Jiménez, Calame, and Riedweg are all adapted and reprinted in this volume.

[7] "Ici, il s'agit encore d'instructions données par un initiateur omniscient." (Graf 1991: 93, but compare the more cautious approach in Graf 1993.) See also, Calame 1995b: 17. "Ein allwissender Erzähler bereitet eine angesprochen Person auf das vor, was ihr in der Unterwelt widerfahren wird, und gibt Anweisung, wie sie sich zu verhalten haben werde" (Riedweg 1998: 376, cp. pp. 366, 372). Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001: 23–24.

[8] "¿a quién atribuir esta poesía, si no a Orfeo, el mitico cantor tracio, visitante de los infiernos, revelador de asuntos del más allá y presuntamente autor de un corpus de literatura sobre estos temas?" (Bernabé 1991: 234), cp. Riedweg 1998: 377.

[9] Comparetti 1882: 113, 117.

[10] Riedweg 1998 and in this volume; cp. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2001 and Chapter 4 in this volume. Calame 1995b and Chapter 8 in this volume, however, argues that the Pelinna tablets, at least, are neither Eleusinian nor Orphic, but Bacchic.

I argue, to the contrary, that such a conclusion is unjustified. Despite the assumption in much modern scholarship that Orphic doctrines about the soul must have come from a katabasis poem narrated by Orpheus himself, no ancient source ever credits Orpheus with special knowledge about the soul and its fate on the basis of his own descent to the Underworld.[11] Moreover, none of the Orphic fragments quoted, in Proclus and other sources, about the soul and its fate show any signs of coming from a first person, autobiographical account; the characteristic semiotic indicators of first person references and second person addresses are absent.[12] It is, of course, always possible that such an autobiographical katabasis poem did exist, with such characteristic semiotic markers, but such a hypothesis, without corroborating evidence, cannot pinpoint the source of the tablet texts to the exclusion of other reasonable possibilities. While my semiotic argument here is just one piece of the larger argument about the nature of the religious phenomenon labeled "Orphism" and the place of the gold tablets within it, I would like to use the same kind of analysis of the semiotic situation of the tablet texts to offer an alternative to the epic-length didactic *hieros logos* – a short hexameter verse oracle. The famous oracle of Apollo at Delphi produced such verses, but hexameter oracles of Bakis, Mousaios, and various sibyls also circulated both privately and publicly. We know of special collections of verse oracles kept in Sparta and Athens, and the activities of the oracle mongers who peddled all-too-apt oracles to a gullible populace were a favorite source of jokes for Aristophanes.[13]

[11] contra Parker 1995: 500. "Orphic poetry can almost be defined as eschatological poetry, and it was in such poems perhaps that 'persuasive' accounts of the afterlife – accounts designed, unlike that in *Odyssey* XI, to influence the hearer's behaviour in the here and now – were powerfully presented for the first time." Cp. West 1983: 12, who supposes that the references to the Katabasis must be to a poem "in autobiographical form." The lack of emphasis on ideas of the soul in Orphic literature renders even more problematic Bernabé's definition of Orphism in terms of doctrines of the soul (cp. Bernabé 1998c: 172). Indeed, it is worth noting that, when ancient authors refer to myths of the Underworld, Orpheus himself does not make the list. Plutarch (*Quomod. Adul.* 17b7) mentions Homer, Pindar, and Sophocles as authors who tell of the Underworld, while Pausanias (10.28.7) compares the underworld vision in Polygnotus' painting at Delphi with the well-known katabases in Homer and the (lost) epics *Nostoi* and *Minyas*. By contrast, Orpheus is often listed as an expert in rites and purifications, as well as oracles and other special divinatory knowledge.

[12] Bernabé 2004–07 collects the fragments quoted from Orphica that pertain to the fate of the soul *OF* 337–350B.

[13] For Spartan and Athenian oracle collections, cp. the story in Herodotus of Cleomenes taking the collection of Pisistratid oracles from Athens to Sparta 5.90.2. Herodotus also lists the guarding of the oracle collections among the privileges of the kings, 6.57.4. cp. Cic. *Div.* 1.43.95; *Suda* Π 3078 s.v. Pythioi. See also the discussion in Fontenrose 1978: 164–165. For Aristophanes on Athenian oracle-mongers, see Smith 1989.

While the Trophonius oracle at Lebadeia did not always produce responses in verse,[14] it did require a ritual journey to the otherworld before the god's oracular wisdom could be imparted.[15] Indeed, the numerous parallels in the imagery between the B tablets and Pausanias' description of this ritual prompted one of the earliest editors of the first gold tablet discovered (B1) to assume that it in fact was a response from the Trophonius oracle.[16] Not only does the addressee in the gold tablet request the Water of Memory, which is given to the inquirer at the Trophonius oracle, but in both there is a second source of water, which seems to induce oblivion. As for the tablet's identification formula, "I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven," Mnemosyne herself is a child of Earth and Heaven. The verse response on the gold tablet with these striking features made the editors conclude that it must be an oracle response from Trophonius. While such a conclusion is both unprovable and unlikely, it is nevertheless worth noting that the communication situation of the tablets identified by the semiotic analyses of Calame and Riedweg in fact fits an oracle as well as, if not better than, it might a didactic *hieros logos*.

These tablets (to be precise – the longer tablets of the B series from Petelia, Pharsalos, and Hipponion and to some extent the two tablets from Pelinna) feature an authoritative speaker who addresses a second person, describing with future verbs the situation that this person will encounter in the Underworld and telling her what to do in a series of imperatives. While an instructional poem such as Hesiod's *Works and Days* does indeed contain in some places the same constellation of second-person addresses, future

[14] τὸ δὲ ἐντεῦθεν τοῖς ἐντὸς τοῦ ἀδύτου γενομένοις οὐχ εἷς οὐδὲ ὁ αὐτὸς τρόπος ἐστὶν ὅτῳ διδάσκονται τὰ μέλλοντα, ἀλλά πού τις καὶ εἶδε καὶ ἄλλος ἤκουσεν. After this those who have entered the shrine learn the future, not in one and the same way in all cases, but by sight sometimes and at other times by hearing. (Pausanias 9.39.) Bonnechere has recently explored the modalities of the Trophonian revelation in some detail (Bonnechere 2003a: 130–170).

[15] κάτεισι δὲ οὕτω. … ὑπὸ τῶν ἱερέων οὐκ αὐτίκα ἐπὶ τὸ μαντεῖον, ἐπὶ δὲ ὕδατος πηγὰς ἄγεται· αἱ δὲ ἐγγύτατά εἰσιν ἀλλήλων. ἐνταῦθα δὴ χρὴ πιεῖν αὐτὸν Λήθης τε ὕδωρ καλούμενον, ἵνα λήθη γένηταί οἱ πάντων ἃ τέως ἐφρόντιζε, καὶ ἐπὶ τῷδε ἄλλο αὖθις ὕδωρ πίνειν Μνημοσύνης· ἀπὸ τούτου τε μνημονεύει τὰ ὀφθέντα οἱ καταβάντι. … τὸν δὲ ἀναβάντα παρὰ τοῦ Τροφωνίου παραλαβόντες αὖθις οἱ ἱερεῖς καθίζουσιν ἐπὶ θρόνον Μνημοσύνης μὲν καλούμενον, κεῖται δὲ οὐ πόρρω τοῦ ἀδύτου, καθεσθέντα δὲ ἐνταῦθα ἀνερωτῶσιν ὁπόσα εἶδέ τε καὶ ἐπύθετο·

The procedure of the descent is this. … He is taken by the priests, not at once to the oracle, but to fountains of water very near to each other. Here he must drink water called the water of Forgetfulness, that he may forget all that he has been thinking of hitherto, and afterwards he drinks of another water, the water of Memory, which causes him to remember what he sees after his descent. … After his ascent from Trophonius the inquirer is again taken in hand by the priests, who set him upon a chair called the chair of Memory, which stands not far from the shrine, and they ask of him, when seated there, all he has seen or learned. (Pausanias 9.39)

[16] Goettling 1843: 7.

verbs, and imperatives found in the tablets, such features are perhaps even more characteristic of verse oracles.[17] When Aristophanes, for example, creates a parody of a Bakis oracle, he puts in all the familiar and recognizable features of the verse oracle genre.

> ἀλλ' ὅταν οἰκήσωσι λύκοι πολιαί τε κορῶναι
> ἐν ταὐτῷ τὸ μεταξὺ Κορίνθου καὶ Σικυῶνος,
> πρῶτον Πανδώρᾳ **θῦσαι** λευκότριχα κριόν·
> ὃς δέ κ' ἐμῶν ἐπέων ἔλθῃ πρώτιστα προφήτης,
> τῷ **δόμεν** ἱμάτιον καθαρὸν καὶ καινὰ πέδιλα
> καὶ φιάλην **δοῦναι**, καὶ σπλάγχνων χεῖρ' **ἐπιπλῆσαι**.
> κἂν μὲν θέσπιε κοῦρε ποιῇς ταῦθ' ὡς ἐπιτέλλω,
> αἰετὸς ἐν νεφέλῃσι **γενήσεαι**· αἰ δέ κε μὴ δῷς,
> οὐκ ἔσει οὐ τρυγὼν οὐδ' αἰετὸς οὐ δρυκολάπτης.
>
> But when the wolves and the white crows
> dwell together between Corinth and Sicyon,
> sacrifice first a white-fleeced ram to Pandora,
> and give the prophet who first reveals my words
> a good cloak and new sandals and besides this a goblet
> of wine and a good share of the entrails of the victim.
> If you do as I command, divine youth, you shall be
> an eagle among the clouds; if not, you shall be
> neither turtle-dove, nor eagle, nor woodpecker.
>
> (Ar. *Av.* 967–968, 971–973, 975, 977–979)

A comparison of the gold tablets with other traditional verse oracles quoted in sources such as Herodotus and Pausanias reveals that all the features of the tablets that *might* make the tablet texts resemble a didactic poem are also features of the traditional verse oracle.

The second person address is a semiotic feature characteristic of verse oracles. In his didactic *Works and Days*, Hesiod is presenting his Muse-inspired advice first and foremost to his no-good brother Perses and secondarily to any aspiring farmer. In the tablets, an authoritative speaker, unspecified but often assumed to be Orpheus, gives instructions to an unspecified second person, presumably the deceased who has chosen to be buried with the tablet. Likewise, the verse oracles of Bakis and other inspired manteis usually address an unspecified person in the second

[17] Cp., for example, Hesiod *Op.* 458–466. εὖτ' ἂν δὲ πρώτιστ' ἄροτος θνητοῖσι φανείῃ, ¦ δὴ τότ' ἐφορμηθῆναι ὁμῶς δμῶές τε καὶ αὐτὸς ¦ αὔην καὶ διερὴν ἀρόων ἀρότοιο καθ' ὥρην, ¦ πρωὶ μάλα σπεύδων, ἵνα τοι πλήθωσιν ἄρουραι. ¦ ἦρι πολεῖν· θέρεος δὲ νεωμένη οὔ σ' ἀπατήσει. ¦ νειὸν δὲ σπείρειν ἔτι κουφίζουσαν ἄρουραν· ¦ νειὸς ἀλεξιάρη παίδων εὐκηλήτειρα. ¦ εὔχεσθαι δὲ Διὶ χθονίῳ Δημήτερί θ' ἁγνῇ, ¦ ἐκτελέα βρίθειν Δημήτερος ἱερὸν ἀκτήν. Such constellations of these features are, however, rare across the bulk of the poem.

person, as the response either to an explicit question or to implicit request for advice in a crisis situation. Plutarch's *Life of Lysander* provides some examples of verse oracles that use such a second-person address.[18]

> ὁπλίτην κελάδοντα φυλάξασθαί σε κελεύω
> γῆς τε δράκονθ' υἱὸν δόλιον κατόπισθεν ἰόντα.
>
> Be on thy guard, I bid thee, against a sounding Hoplites,
> And an earth-born dragon craftily coming behind thee.
>
> (Plutarch *Lysander* 29. 5)

> ἐσχατιὰν πεφύλαξο λύκους καμάκεσσι δοκεύων
> καί λόφον Ὀρχαλίδην, ὃν ἀλώπηξ οὔποτε λείπει.
>
> When thou huntest the wolf with the spear, watch closely the border,
> Orchalides, too, the hill which foxes never abandon. (Plutarch *Lysander* 29. 6)

Aristophanes may mock this familiar feature of the oracles as something that permits unscrupulous oracle mongers to apply the oracles to any credulous person, but the tablets' unspecified second-person address allows the instructions on the tablets to be used by anyone who needs directions in the Underworld. The authoritative voice in the tablets, then, that gives instructions to the deceased, need not be Orpheus describing from his personal experience what should be done in the Underworld, but, from the parallels, is just as likely to be the voice of an oracle explaining what to do after death.

Fontenrose, in his analysis of traditional Greek verse oracles, identifies six components that are often found in these oracle responses: salutation, restatement of the question, assertion of mantic authority, condition precedent, message, and explication. Although he notes that all six components are almost never found in a single oracle, most traditional verse oracles contain several of these elements.[19] Although the gold tablets never contain any restatement of the question, assertion of authority, or explication, the description of a future situation and the consequent imperatives instructing the addressee what to do in that situation correspond to Fontenrose's "condition precedent" and "message." Even the specific language in the tablets for these components resembles that of a number of verse oracles. The Bakis oracle in the *Birds*, like tablet A4 from Thurii and many other verse oracles, begins with ἀλλ' ὅταν, "but when." The longer B tablets also include such a "condition precedent," since the sights of the Underworld

[18] cp. Paus. 9.17.5 καὶ τότε δὴ πεφύλαξο πόλει κακὸν οὐκ ἀλαπαδνόν. Beware then of no slight disaster threatening the city.

[19] "Few verse oracles contain five or six components. Very many, if not most, are constructed of three or four components." Fontenrose 1978: 181.

are in store for the addressee when she is about to die.[20] This "condition precedent" sets the scene for the "message," instructions provided in a series of future verbs and imperatives. "Sacrifice first a white-fleeced ram to Pandora," says the Bakis oracle from the *Birds*, "and give the prophet who first reveals my words a good cloak and new sandals."[21] The long B tablets such as B1 have just such a collection of futures and imperatives:

> You will find in the halls of Hades a spring on the left,
> and standing by it, a glowing white cypress tree;
> Do not approach this spring at all.
> You will find the other, from the lake of Memory,
> refreshing water flowing forth. But guardians are nearby.
> Say: "I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven.
>
> **εὑρήσ[σ]εις** δ' Ἀιίδαο δόμων ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ κρήνην,
> πὰρ δ' αὐτῆι λευκὴν ἑστηκυῖαν κυπάρισσον·
> ταύτης τῆς κρήνης μηδὲ σχεδὸν **ἐμπελάσειας**.
> **εὑρήσεις** δ' ἑτέραν, τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης
> ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον· φύλακες δ'ἐπίπροσθεν ἔασιν.
> **εἰπεῖν**· Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος.

While these messages following on conditions precedent show most clearly the similarities between the tablet texts and traditional verse oracles, even the salutation at the end of the Bakis oracle "divine youth, you shall be an eagle among the clouds" (θέσπιε κοῦρε ... αἰετὸς ἐν νεφέλῃσι γενήσεαι), finds a parallel in the *makarismos* of the deceased in the Thurii tablet ("Happy and most blessed one, a god you shall be instead of a mortal." ὄλβιε καὶ μακαριστέ, θεὸς δ' ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο. A1.8 = *OF* 488.9B). In short, all the features of the discourse which *could* indicate that the tablets have their origin in a didactic *hieros logos* are even more likely to originate in a verse oracle of the sort purveyed by the oracle mongers whom Aristophanes lampoons. No lost but canonical, long but excerpted, epic didactic *hieros logos* need be imagined.

What of the other gold tablets? While the long tablets of the B series show many of the semiotic features characteristic of a verse oracle, some of the A

[20] ἀλλ' ὅταν οἰκήσωσι λύκοι πολιαί τε κορῶναι (967)
ἀλλ' ὁπόταμ ψυχὴ προλίπηι φάος Ἀελίοιο (A4.1)
ἀλλ' ὁπόταν Τιθορεὺς Ἀμφίονί τε Ζήθῳ τε (Paus. 9.17.5)
ἀλλ' ὅταν Ἀρτέμιδος χρυσαόρου ἱερὸν ἀκτήν (Hdt. 8.77)
... ἐπεὶ ἄμ μέλλησι θανεῖσθαι (B10.1)
ὁππότε δ' ἄνθρωπος προλίπηιν φάος Ἠελίοιο (*OF* 223K = 339B = Proclus *In R.* 2.339)

[21] πρῶτον Πανδώρᾳ **θῦσαι** λευκότριχα κριόν· ὃς δέ κ' ἐμῶν ἐπέων ἔλθῃ πρώτιστα προφήτης, τῷ **δόμεν** ἱμάτιον καθαρὸν καὶ καινὰ πέδιλα.

tablets from Thurii present a semiotic situation that differs from the second person address found in the B tablets (both long and short) and the tablets from the Pelinna grave. The speaker in tablets A1, A2, and A3 is not an omniscient narrator, but a first person feminine voice, presumably the deceased herself. Only in A1 does another voice intrude, with a second person address indicating future action, θεὸς δ' ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο "a god you shall be instead of a mortal." This line is found in a slightly varied form in A4, which has a second-person address throughout, perhaps suggesting that this portion of A1 comes from the same hexametrical text, a text that begins with the familiar oracle opening, "But when the soul leaves the light of the sun."

The shorter B tablets found in Crete and Thessaly seem to derive from the same text as the longer ones through a process of abbreviation that stripped away most of the narration, leaving only the essential question and answer, along with the cypress tree that marks the scene. This process of adaptation, in which quoted speech in the long tablets is transformed into direct speech, may serve as a model for understanding the semiotic situation of the Thurii tablets as well. Just as the second-person imperative address, "Say: 'I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven'" (B10.10) is transformed into direct speech, "I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven," so too the direct speech of the Thurii tablets, "Pure I come from the pure," may be an adaptation of an imperative followed by indirect speech, "Tell Persephone: 'Pure I come from the pure'" or, on the model of the Pelinna tablets, "Tell Persephone that you come pure from the pure." Some of the metrical peculiarities of the Thurii tablet could well have resulted from such an adaptation made by the religious specialist in the interactions with his clientele.

This hypothesis, of course, imagines that the Thurii tablets are adapted from a different short, hexametrical text than the tablets of the B type (or even the Pelinna tablets), but the presumption of various texts being used by ritual practitioners in different areas is no less plausible than the assumption that all the tablets must be adapted from a single source. Indeed, the multiple source hypothesis provides a much neater explanation for why the tablets at Thurii include entirely different verses than the B tablets, since there is no need to explain why one group excluded all the material from the B section of the original, while the others excluded the A material. The only tablet that contains material from both A and B texts is the late A5, which seems to be several centuries later than all of the others. On the hypothesis of a single source, this text must have somehow preserved together material from the original source that only appears separately in earlier evidence. Comparetti indeed proposed such an idea in 1882, and Riedweg has revived

and elaborated on the idea.[22] On the hypothesis of multiple sources, however, this late exemplar appears as the product of bricolage, in which the reference to Mnemosyne from the B series is combined with the "pure from the pure" declaration in the A series and the semiotic situation is shifted into the third person as the name of Caecilia Secundina is added in.

Deriving each of the individual tablet texts from one of several postulated verse oracles used by itinerant ritual specialists in Magna Graecia, Crete, and Thessaly is, no doubt, a complicated and speculative hypothesis, but less complicated and speculative than the hypothesis of a single canonical text from which all were excerpted to produce such different texts. Moreover, evidence contemporary with the gold tablets attests to a variety of religious specialists making use of oracles and oracle collections. A special collection of oracles was maintained both at Athens and at Sparta, and Herodotus and Thucydides both refer to the presence of rival oracle interpreters offering conflicting advice about how to handle the war.[23] The hexameter verse oracle was an authoritative form of discourse that was used in many venues in society, a plausible choice for any religious specialist seeking to win over clientele.

A verse oracle is, of course, not the only other kind of text besides a didactic katabasis epic that would produce such a semiotic situation. The ritual instructions in the magical papyri, for example, show a similar pattern of future verbs and imperatives in their discourse, although the instructions are not in hexameter.[24] Indeed, Kingsley has suggested, on ritual grounds, that the best parallel for the situation in the tablets is the immortalization ritual in the so-called Mithras Liturgy in the magical papyri.[25] In this rite, the individual journeys to the otherworld, not to return as the initiated member of a group, but to attain personal immortality. I would note,

[22] Comparetti 1882; Riedweg 1998 and in this volume.

[23] The Spartan collection of oracles was monitored by the kings and the Pythioi (Hdt. 6.57.4), but Xenophon (*Hellenica* 3.3.3) describes how the foreigner Diopeithes interprets an oracle about Spartan kingship. Herodotus (5.90.2) describes how the Spartan king Cleomenes took the Athenian collection of oracles from the Acropolis after the Spartan invasion. From the story of Onomacritus (7.6.3), this collection must have contained oracles attributed to Mousaios, but there is no reason to believe that other types were not included, especially since Pisistratus was said to have been given the nickname "Bakis" (scholiast to Aristophanes *Peace* 1071). Thucydides mentions the increase in oracles in the lead up to the Peloponnesian War (2.8.2), while Herodotus cites a number of oracles pertaining to events in the Persian War throughout his work. Cp. Dillery 2005 and Bowden 2003 for recent treatments of the place of oracle collections and oracle specialists in classical Greek society.

[24] καὶ εὐθέως ὄψῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ δίσκου ἀστέρας προσερχομένους πενταδακτυλιαίους πλείστους καὶ πιπλῶντας ὅλον τὸν ἀέρα. σὺ δὲ πάλιν λέγε 'σιγή, σιγή.' καὶ τοῦ δίσκου ἀνυγέντος ὄψῃ ἄπυριν κύκλωμα καὶ θύρας πυρίνας ἀποκεκλεισμένας. And immediately you will see many five-pronged stars coming forth from the disk and filling all the air. Then say again: "Silence! Silence!" And when the disk is open, you will see the fireless circle, and the fiery doors shut tight. (*PGM* IV.579–585)

[25] Kingsley 1995: 313.

however, that this immortalization ritual, as it is described in the papyrus, actually ends up providing a verse oracle for the performer, rather than permanently transforming him into an immortal.[26]

Even if the instructions for the Mithras Liturgy's immortalization ritual are not in hexameter, hexameter instructions do survive in other verse oracles, since oracles often provided ritual solutions to the problems faced by the questioner. Demosthenes cites the authority of the oracles from Delphi and Dodona to ordain festivals for Athens; the most prestigious oracles performed the function for whole cities that the less prestigious might for lesser clientele.[27] Although nothing remains of the oracle collections of Athens and Sparta, a trace of early Rome's Sibylline Books may survive in an excerpt from Phlegon, ordaining ritual propitiations in response to a portent.[28] Aristophanes may mock such oracle collections, but, outside of comedy, many people obviously took them quite seriously. One example of an oracle collection that attained enormous prestige survives in the fragments of the Chaldaean Oracles, which may have been the basis for theurgical rituals of many sorts.

> ἡνίκα δὲ βλέψῃς μορφῆς ἄτερ εὐίερον πῦρ
> λαμπόμενον σκιρτηδὸν ὅλου κατὰ βένθεα κόσμου,
> κλῦθι πυρὸς φωνήν ...

But when you see the formless, very holy fire / shining by leaps and bounds throughout the depths of the whole world, / (then) listen to the voice of the fire. ...

> ἡνίκα δαίμονα δ' ἐρχόμενον πρόσγειον ἀθρήσεις,
> θῦε λίθον μνίζουριν ἐπαυδῶν.

When you perceive an earthly demon approaching, / offer the *mnizouris* stone while making an invocation. (Chaldaean Oracles frs. 148 and 149)

[26] "χρημάτισον, κύριε, περὶ τοῦ δεῖνα πράγματος. κύριε, παλινγενόμενος ἀπογίγνομαι, αὐξόμενος καὶ αὐξηθεὶς τελευτῶ, ἀπὸ γενέσεως ζωογόνου γενόμενος, εἰς ἀπογενεσίαν ἀναλυθεὶς πορεύομαι, ὡς σὺ ἔκτισας, ὡς σὺ ἐνομοθέτησας καὶ ἐποίησας μυστήριον. ἐγώ εἰμι φερουρα μιουρι." ταῦτά σου εἰπόντος εὐθέως χρησμῳδήσει. ὑπέκλυτος δὲ ἔσει τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σεαυτ ἔσει, ὅταν σοι ἀποκρίνηται. λέγει δέ σοι διὰ στίχων τὸν χρησμὸν καὶ εἰπὼν ἀπελεύσεται. "Give revelation, O lord, concerning the NN matter. O lord, while being born again, I am passing away; while growing and having grown, I am dying; while being born from a life-generating birth, I am passing on, released to death – as you have founded, as you have decreed, and have established the mystery. I am PHEROURA MIOURI." After you have said these things, he will immediately respond with a revelation. Now you will grow weak in soul and will not be in yourself, when he answers you. He speaks the oracle to you in verse, and after speaking he will depart (*PGM* IV. 719–729).

[27] PW 282 = H27 F = Demosthenes 21.52.

[28] Sibylline Oracle in Phlegon of Tralles *Mirabilia* 1.10 = *FGrH* 2B. Orlin 1997 (pp. 203–210) provides a list of all the recorded Sibylline consultations, along with the rituals advised, but most of the information comes from indirect references rather than direct quotations.

Such a collection of short oracle responses remains another possibility for the origin of the tablet texts, regardless of how or even whether they were used in a ritual.

The tablets could well be from a famous oracle response in answer to a question about the nature of the afterlife. Although no inquiry about the afterlife survives in the evidence for oracle responses in the classical period, the public nature of the recorded oracles makes such an absence in the record unsurprising, since such inquiries are more likely to have been personal, rather than polis-sponsored. The Derveni Papyrus author, after all, refers to those who look to oracles for reassurance about the afterlife, and he claims to seek such responses for his clientele: "for them, we go into the oracular shrine in order to ask, on behalf of those seeking oracular answers, if it is right ... the terrors of Hades, why are they distrustful?"[29] The Derveni Papyrus provides an early witness to a practice of consulting oracles about the afterlife that turns up in later evidence; Plutarch tells of Timarchus' inquiry about the afterlife at the Trophonius oracle, and a certain Polites asked the oracle of Apollo at Didyma whether the soul survived death.[30]

> Ψυχὴ μὲν, μέχρις οὗ δεσμοῖς σῶμα κρατεῖται
> φθαρτὰ νοοῦσα πάθη θνηταῖς ἀλγηδόσιν εἴκει·
> ἡνίκα δ' ἀνάλυσιν βροτέην μετὰ σῶμα μαρανθὲν
> ὠκίστην εὕρηται, ἐς αἰθέρα πᾶσα φορεῖται
> αἰὲν ἀγήραος οὖσα, μένει δ' εἰς πάμπαν ἀτειρής.
> πρωτόγονος γὰρ τοῦτο θεοῦ διέταξε πρόνοια.

As long as the soul is bound by fetters to the body, / perceiving corruptible sufferings, it yields to mortal pains; / but when, after the wasting of the body, / it has found a very swift dissolution of mortality, it is altogether borne into the air, / never growing old, and it remains always uninjured; / for the first-born providence of God made this disposition. (Lactantius inst. 7. 13)

So too, Plotinus' faithful followers asked the Delphic oracle about their master's fate and received, according to Porphyry, an elaborate set of verses describing the blissful afterlife their revered master had attained on account of the way he had lived his life.

[29] χρη[στη]ριαζομ[ ] οι ε[¦ χρη[σ]τηριαζον[ται ¦ αὐτοῖς παριμεν [εἰς τὸ μα]ντεῖον ἐπερ[ω]τής [οντες], ¦ τῶν μαντευομένων [ἕν]εκεν εἰ θεμι[ ] ¦ ἐν Ἅιδου δεινὰ τί ἀπιστοῦσι; (*P. Derv.* col. v. 2–6)

[30] Plutarch's tale of Timarchus' otherworld journey and preview of the afterlife when consulting the Trophonius oracle at Lebadeia, *De gen.* 590a ff. Cp. Bonnechere 2003a: 166–170. In 1843, Goettling first suggested that the Petelia tablet (B1) might be from an oracular consultation about the afterlife: "Totum epigramma videtur oraculum pythium esse nescio cui personae datum quae cum in ipso mortis limine esset, de statu post mortem futuro sciscitaretur atque ad Trophonii oraculum a Pythia amandaretur." (Goettling 1843: 8) For the oracle of Polites, see Busine 2005: 389–390, 413–414.

Νῦν δ' ὅτε δὴ σκῆνος μὲν ἐλύσαο, σῆμα δ' ἔλειψας
ψυχῆς δαιμονίης, μεθ' ὁμήγυριν ἔρχεαι ἤδη
δαιμονίην ἐρατοῖσιν ἀναπνείουσαν ἀήταις,
ἔνθ' ἔνι μὲν φιλότης, ἔνι δ' ἵμερος ἁβρὸς ἰδέσθαι,
εὐφροσύνης πλείων καθαρῆς, πληρούμενος αἰὲν
ἀμβροσίων ὀχετῶν θεόθεν ὅθεν ἐστὶν ἐρώτων
πείσματα, καὶ γλυκερὴ πνοιὴ καὶ νήνεμος αἰθήρ,
χρυσείης γενεῆς μεγάλου Διὸς ἦχι νέμονται
Μίνως καὶ Ῥαδάμανθυς ἀδελφεοί, ἦχι δίκαιος
Αἰακός, ἦχι Πλάτων, ἱερὴ ἴς, ἦχί τε καλὸς
Πυθαγόρης ὅσσοι τε χορὸν στήριξαν ἔρωτος
ἀθανάτου, ὅσσοι γενεὴν ξυνὴν ἐλάχοντο
δαίμοσιν ὀλβίστοις, ὅθι τοι κέαρ ἐν θαλίῃσιν
αἰὲν ἐυφροσύνῃσι τ' ἰαίνεται. Ἆ μάκαρ, ὅσσους
ὀτλήσας ἀριθμοὺς ἀέθλων μετὰ δαίμονας ἁγνοὺς
πωλέεαι ζαμενῇσι κορυσσάμενος ζωῇσι.

But now you have been freed from this tabernacle and have left the tomb / which held your heavenly soul, you come at once to the company / of heaven, where winds of delight blow, / where is affection and desire that charms the sight, / full of pure joy, brimming with / streams of immortality from the gods which carry the allurements of the Loves, / and sweet breeze and the windless brightness of high heaven. / There dwell Minos and Rhadamanthus, brethren / of the golden race of great Zeus, there righteous / Aeacus and Plato, the sacred power, and noble / Pythagoras and all who have set the dance of immortal love / and won kinship / with the spirits most blessed, there where the heart / keeps festival in everlasting joy. O blessed one, / you have borne so many contests, and now move among holy spirits / crowned with mighty life. (Porphyry *Vita Plotini* 22)

Such an oracular response, whether to a general question or for a particular charismatic person, might be preserved and transmitted over the ages because of a religious message that was meaningful to individuals in a wide variety of times and places. The Derveni author is precisely the sort of religious craftsman who might provide clients who were anxious about their fate after death with the text of an oracle response or with the rituals the oracle ordains, even if he would make sure to provide sufficient exegesis to explain why his interpretation of the text or performance of the rituals was superior to his rivals. Indeed, not only does the Derveni author cite Orpheus to back his claims, but he repeatedly asserts his superiority to a variety of others who offer expertise in religious affairs with that same holier-than-thou attitude that characterizes those labeled "Orphic" in the ancient sources, from Euripides' Hippolytus to the orpheotelests of Theophrastus and Plutarch.[31]

[31] Eur. *Hipp*. 950ff.; Theophr. *Char*. 16; Plut. *Apoph. Lac*. 224e = OT 203, cp. Diog Laert. 6.1.4 = OT 203. See Edmonds 2008 and (forthcoming) for a further development of this idea of the Orphic label.

I am not here trying to argue that the hexameters on the gold tablets *must* have been taken from a verse oracle, by Mousaios or Bakis or anyone else. Rather, I simply want to show that assuming one particular kind of source for the verses on the tablets, a canonical, didactic *hieros logos*, excludes other viable possibilities. The evidence of the tablet texts themselves does not allow us to eliminate the possibility either of a didactic *hieros logos* transmitted within a group or of a prestigious oracle peddled by itinerant oracle mongers or orpheotelests to whomever was willing to buy. The tablets therefore cannot be used as independent evidence for a canonical *hieros logos* of the Orphics that had eschatological significance. The modern scholarly reconstruction of Orphism changes, however, if no sacred scripture can be presumed that gives the religion a doctrinal center, that provides the nucleus of doctrines by which Orphism might be defined.[32] If religious specialists like the Derveni author are grounding their religious expertise in their conflicting interpretations of various texts – oracles from Bakis, Mousaios, or Apollo, as well as cosmogonies attributed to Orpheus – then the nature of the religious phenomenon labeled "Orphism" begins to look less like the Protestantism of the ancient Greeks, as it was labeled by twentieth-century scholars, and more like the "hubbub of books" that is found in the ancient evidence.

[32] Compare Bernabé's (1997: 38) formulation – see n. 1 above.

CHAPTER II

Dialogues of immortality from the Iliad *to the gold leaves*

Miguel Herrero de Jáuregui

NEW LIGHT FROM OLD TEXTS

"You have turned into a god, from the man you were":[1] The deification of man explicitly formulated in some gold leaves introduces such a radical novelty into the Greek religious panorama that these plates have naturally piqued the interest of scholarship for the last century and a half. It may thus seem adventurous to risk any new thoughts on them without submitting some new evidence which might fill the still enormous holes surrounding their interpretation. Yet it might prove useful to look at the scenes depicted in the already published leaves, which are dialogic in a great part, from the point of view of some texts which, perhaps precisely because of their celebrity as portraits of the traditional conceptions of life and death, have not yet been linked with them: I am referring to the dialogues of the heroes of the Homeric poems, in which notions very relevant for the understanding of the leaves, such as *kleos*, *genos* or *xenia* have their canonical expression. Admittedly, these dialogues are far from the gold leaves in their handling of these concepts, as in many other respects. But they offer some structural and formal parallels with the dialogues of the soul and the guardians and deities of the Underworld which suggest that the leaves are following the same poetic patterns that inspired the Homeric dialogues. The new ideas and experiences they

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[1] *L. Thur.* (*OF* 488–489). The leaves are cited and abbreviated from their place of origin: *Eleuth*(*erna*), *Ent*(*ella*), *Hipp*(*onion*), *Mal*(*ibu*), *Myl*(*opotamos*), *Pel*(*inna*), *Pell*(*a*), *Pet*(*elia*), *Phars*(*alus*), *Pher*(*ae*), *Rom*(*a*), *Thur*(*ii*). When there are more than one from one place, they are followed by their number in Bernabé's new *Orphicorum Fragmenta* (*OF*), whose text I follow. All Homeric English translations are from R. Lattimore.

contain, frequently thought to be un-Greek,[2] will be shown to be shaped in the most traditional Greek formulations and categories.

The gold leaves present original conceptions of identity, of lineage and of immortality. Three famous Iliadic dialogues dwell precisely on these matters: Diomedes and Glaucos (*Il.* 6.121–236), Achilles and Aeneas (*Il.* 20.177–352), and Achilles and Asteropaeus (*Il.* 21.149–160, 182–199).[3] The heroes speak in the supreme moment of their life, that is to say, just before a duel: the individual fight decides whether the *kleos aphthiton* is going to be achieved through victory or whether, on the contrary, the warrior is going to lose, die, and grant *kleos* to his enemy. Previous to this supreme moment an identification of both participants is necessary, and the *genos* is strongly emphasized as the cornerstone of the identity of the warrior, on which he also founds his claim to success. We shall see how the three scenes have different endings, but they all reflect similar ideas, which can also be found, transposed into eschatological terms, in the gold leaves: indeed, the supreme moment the soul must face immediately after death in the Underworld resembles this Homeric climactic moment in many ways.

I should briefly explain the position I hold on the relationship of the leaves to each other and to other pieces of evidence, many of which belong to the literary and ritual tradition under the name of Orpheus. I think it probable that the different leaves take their hexameters from one poem or from several poems similar to each other, which described the descent of the soul to the Underworld, and from which each leaf selects those verses which are considered essential to its function as guide in the Afterlife.[4] Most of these verses refer to an encounter with the guardians of the Underworld (Hipponion leaf) or to a supplication to the Chthonian Queen (Thurii leaves). These may have been two scenes of the archetypical poem or (less probably) alternative possibilities stemming from different poems.[5] In any

[2] Independently of the true foreign influences there may be in the leaves (cf. Dousa this volume), Orphic ideas have been often seen as alien to Greekness. This sensation of otherness can be clearly seen in ancient sources (e.g. Diod. Sic. 1.92.3), as well as modern authors (un-Greekness is a clear bias of Orpheo-skepticism, e.g. Wilamowitz or Zuntz: cf. the beginning of Betz's chapter this volume). Yet also Dionysus was thought to be a new foreign god till the Mycenaean evidence demonstrated that "otherness" was part of the Greek Dionysiac experience, as W. F. Otto had already said.

[3] Recent discussions of the passages in Di Benedetto 1991: 319–328, Lowry 1995, Susanetti 1999, and Grethlein 2006. This paper, focused on the *Iliad*, is complemented by Herrero (in press), where I compare the leaves with the *Odyssey*.

[4] Graf (this volume) makes a convincing case to bridge the gaps between the different leaves. Riedweg 2002 (translated in his chapter in this volume) reconstructs the approximate contents of the archetypical poem, composed around the early 5th cent. BCE, from which they would proceed.

[5] Riedweg 2002 places the encounter with Persephone after the dialogue with the guardians in the archetypical poem he reconstructs. Both encounters are not present together in any leaf. The fact that the soul just needed instructions for one encounter means they both had a similar function and

case both encounters have similar contents and respond to the same principle, since in both of them the soul must identify herself to her hosts, directly or indirectly. I therefore take the eschatological ideas underlying the different leaves to be the same at least in their general lines. Whether or not Orpheus was the supposed author of these poem(s), though a tempting possibility, does not really matter here, but the connection with the myth of Dionysus and the Titans is relevant to explain some crucial points. I think it probable – though my argument is not essentially dependent on it – that the idea that men are descended from the Titans and must expiate their crime is present in the leaves, since no detail in them is in contradiction with it but many are in correspondence.[6] That in this sense they are Orphic does not mean, of course, that the users of the leaves either were or deserve to be called "Orphics," a term which tends to be said and understood, no matter how much one nuances it, as reflecting a sect or at least a uniform type of people holding similar ideas and practices.[7] I do not think that there was any such uniformity of doctrine and practice. On the contrary, the comparison with the Homeric scenes will show, among other things, that these "Orphic" conceptions were much more diffuse, flexible, ambivalent, and unsystematic than any sect would have held.

The Homeric parallels can help to make better sense of some lines, and to throw some new light on the religious experience and ideology which the leaves reflect. They can also be used for the reconstruction of the structure, the formulas and the narrative patterns of the hypothetical poem(s) from which the leaves take their abbreviated story. The explanation of such resemblances will depend, of course, on the conception one holds about the state of epic poetry in the sixth to fifth centuries BCE. I am inclined to believe that the oral epic tradition was not yet completely fossilized and wholly dependent on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*: therefore, the *katabasis* of the soul might of course have been influenced by Homer, but may also have drawn from the formulaic sources of an epic tradition which was still alive in rhapsodic recitations. The fact that the eschatological dialogues in the Underworld offer not only lexical and formulaic parallels, but also follow

content, i.e. identification of the dead as a *mystes*. Supposing there was one archetypical poem which contained both scenes (several receptions are common in epic journeys, cf. *Od.* 6.255, 7.28, 7.146), it could have been divided soon into two parts with one scene each, and these sub-poems would have been the most probable direct source for the leaves. Two originally independent poems following the same pattern (obstacle–solution–result, as Edmonds 2004: 34 draws it) are not impossible either.

[6] All the arguments are now summarized in Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008 (and in their chapter in this volume).

[7] The best discussion of the ancient uses of the term "Orphics" is Burkert 1982: it should be kept for the poets and perhaps also for the itinerant initiators (not for their clients). The term is, however, regularly used to describe what Burkert shows it never was, that is, a self-conscious class of people.

very similar narrative and structural patterns to scenes which are not immediately comparable, seems to point to the reutilization of shared poetic traditions rather than to mechanical textual dependence. The same could be said of other examples of theological hexametric poetry like Orphic poems or Empedocles. The poetic affinity between theological poetry and traditional epic poetry thus goes, despite Aristotle's judgment, much beyond their common use of hexameter.[8]

INVOCATION

Both the heroic and the eschatologic dialogues start with a question about the identity of the other party.[9] This is the first, the most obvious, and therefore also the most banal parallel. Aeneas and Achilles omit this part, since "they both know their lineage and know their genitors" (*Il.* 20.203). But Diomedes asks Glaucos and Achilles asks Asteropaeus in the most direct way: τίς δὲ σύ ἐσσι; (*Il.* 6.122), τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν; (*Il.* 21.150). So do the guardians of the Underworld ask the soul: τίς δ' ἐσσί; πῶ δ' ἐσσί;[10] These clear parallels are hardly surprising: there is no better way in all times and places of asking about the identity of the other than the simple "who are you and where do you come from?" Such questions are ubiquitous in eschatological dialogues from Egypt, Persia or India. In fact, even today when a joke is told about someone going to Heaven or Hell after death, it frequently begins with the Devil, St. Peter or an equivalent character asking him "who are you?"

Anyone who has been stopped by the police will not be surprised either that the question about identity always comes from the stronger part. The weaker one is already aware of the identity of his interlocutor, as shown by the respectful vocative which opens the answer of Glaucos and Asteropaeus (*Il.* 6.145: Τυδείδη μεγάθυμε; *Il.* 21.153: Πηλεΐδη μεγάθυμε). Aeneas and Achilles, both of equal status, address each other with their proper names

[8] Arist. *Poet.* 1447a: "Homer and Empedocles have nothing in common but the metre." But cf. Gemelli 1990 on Empedoclean recycling of Homeric tradition, and Betegh 2004: 98–101 on the Homeric parallels of the Orphic theogony of the Derveni Papyrus. Cf. Obbink's chapter on the poetic quality of the gold leaves.

[9] Killing an anonymous rival brings no glory, just as *xenia* requires knowing who the *xenos* is and what brings him there. Cf. e.g. *Od.* 9. 16–18 and Heubeck *ad loc*: Alcinous' *xenia* is not complete till Odysseus reveals his identity, and though the moment can be retarded for politeness, it is unavoidable. In the heroic combats, if there is no time or suitable occasion for a complete presentation of both combatants, it will be done after the duel over the dead corpse of one of them (*Il.* 20.389 ff.). A key issue is whether the addressee is a god (cf. *Il.* 6.128, *Od.* 6.149), a point significant for the leaves as well.

[10] *Eleuth.* (*OF* 478–483) 3, *Myl.* 3, *Mal.* 3. Other leaves present an indirect question: *Hipp.* 8 = *Ent.* 10 = *Phars.* 6: οἱ δέ σε εἰρήσονται ὅτι . . .

without epithets or patronymics (*Il.* 20.178, 198). Correspondingly, in the Thurii leaves, the underworld gods are addressed in the vocative by the humble soul in the first two lines, not with their proper names (i.e. Persephone, Hades) but with religious titles (Queen, Eukles, Eubuleus).

Eukhomai

It is in the dialogue following these questions and vocatives where the correspondence turns meaningful. Let us start with the well-known epic formula which both Glaucos and Aeneas use to declare their lineage after having told their genealogy: "such is my generation and the blood I claim to be born from" (*Il.* 6.211, 20.241: ταύτης τοι γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος εὔχομαι εἶναι). It constitutes a clear verbal parallel with the statement of the soul in the Thurii leaves after the invocation: "for I too claim to be of your blessed lineage" (*OF* 488–490.3: καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμῶν γένος ὄλβιον εὔχομαι εἶναι).

This statement is far from being an empty formulaic verse.[11] The verb *eukhomai* has been subject to much study due to its intriguing polysemy: from the works of L. Muellner and J.-L. Perpillou one can assume with certainty that, probably derived from an original meaning as a functionally marked word for "say," the verb appeared in Homeric Greek in three definite contexts in which it held different significations: "to pray" in sacral context; "to say (proudly, accurately, contentiously)" in secular context – usually duelling heroes, whence its usual translation "to boast"; and "to claim" in a legal context. Obviously the heroic dialogues fall within the second category, though a certain quasi-juridical ring of "declaring one's own superior status within the community" can also be perceived.[12] Now the *eukhomai* uttered by the soul has an even more pregnant meaning, which condenses all three possible contextual meanings of the verb.

Firstly, as the heroes do, the soul declares her lineage "proudly, accurately, contentiously." When the warrior boasts, it is because he, like his ancestors, has achieved (or believes he will achieve) *kleos* through victory and claims the right to the *timé*. Now other expressions in the leaves support

[11] Cf. Muellner 1976: 69–76 for a thorough metrical analysis of the formula and its variants.

[12] Muellner 1976: 105 concludes that εὔχομαι can be reduced to the same sense both in the secular and legal context, as an emphatic marked synonym of φημί. Perpillou 1972, whose study is not fully integrated in Muellner's since it appeared shortly before, also identifies both contexts, but to the advantage of the legal one: his translation "to assert one's own right within the community" is, according to him, what the heroes do when declaring their ancestry. Adkins 1969 offers a clear summary of the issues at stake. Cf. recent discussions of the verb in Pulleyn 1997: 59–76 and Depew 1997.

the agonistic connotations that the formula has in epic poetry. "I reached the desired crown with swift feet" (*L. Thur.* 6: ἱμερτο<ῦ> δ᾽ ἐπέβαν στεφάνο<υ> ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι); "you have wine, happy honor" (*L. Pel.* 6: οἶνον ἔχεις εὐδ<α>ίμονα τιμή<ν>); "the other initiates and *bakkhoi* go in glory" (*L. Hipp.* 16: ἄλλοι μύσται καὶ βάκχοι ἱερὰν στείχουσι κλε<ε>ινοί). This vocabulary (*stephanos*, *oinos*) may of course also carry ritual, initiatic and sympotic connotations, but the presence of *timé* and *kleos* suggests that the agonistic tone of the prize earned in war or tournaments is also explicit. It could be thought that the soul has more reasons to be a humble suppliant than to boast contentiously. Yet pride and humility are not incompatible in heroic epics: when Odysseus arrives at Scheria, he is in a situation of need among a potentially hostile people, but it is precisely the pride he shows in defending his position that will earn him the respect of the Phaeacians.[13] The soul utters, as we shall see, some self-assertive phrases that would sound boastful in a fighting context, yet here show respectful self-consciousness.

This leads us to the juridical meaning of "asserting one's own right." The hero claims right to recognition and glory (*eukhos*) which he has earned through victory. But does the soul have right to anything? A first line of approach to finding her rights can focus on the Thurii leaves which say that the soul "comes as a suppliant" (ἱκέτις ἥκω) to Persephone and the gods: furthermore, a specially entitled suppliant, from their own family. The status of suppliant earns the ἱκέτης some rights to protection similar to those of the ξεῖνος: by claiming her family ties with the gods, the soul prepares the ground for being accepted by Persephone. The supplication scene deserves separate study.[14] But we may press yet further the relevance of this juridical meaning of *eukhomai* and find a second reason for the soul to claim her rights. The verb appears in a plainly legal context in the famous trial described in the Shield of Achilles in which a man charged with homicide claims his right to solve his debt by paying money to the family of the victim.[15]

[13] Rose 1969 analyses the Odyssean passage under this light. Adkins 1969 shows the compatibility of supplication and self-assertiveness.

[14] Cf. *Od.* 5.450: ἱκέτης δέ τοι εὔχομαι εἶναι; *Od.* 16.67: ἱκέτης δέ τοι εὔχεται εἶναι. In Herrero (in press) I examine the supplication of the soul in contrast to the Odyssean supplication scenes. Cf. Muellner 1976: 87f.

[15] *Il.* 18.497–501. I prefer this interpretation, with Perpillou and Muellner, to the other possible one: "one alleged to have paid in full, the other denied to have received anything" (in line 500 οὐδέν would be expected in this case instead of μηδέν). The latter interpretation would not change my point, however.

> Two men were fighting over a compensation (ποινῆς)
> for a murdered man: one was claiming (εὔχετο) he had paid in full
> saying it to the people, and the other refused to take anything.
> And each as fain to win the issue on the word of a daysman.

Let us now recall that just after the *eukhomai* verse in the two leaves from Thurii, the soul alleges to have paid the compensation (*poiné*) for unjust deeds (ποινὰν δ᾽ ἀνταπέτεισ᾽ ἔργων ἕνεκα οὔτι δικαίων), and hopes that Persephone will accept him as *apoinos* and grant him salvation.[16] Such acceptance, however, is not automatic and depends on her benevolence, as shown in the last line (ὥς με πρόφρων πέμψηι ἕδρας ἐς εὐαγέων). Though I believe that the unjust deed is the murder of Dionysus, the parallel need not be pressed to that extent. Whatever the *poiné* has to be paid for, the analogy with the scene depicted in the Shield is obvious, and the fact that the allegation of the soul follows immediately upon the *eukhomai* verse supports the idea that the "claiming" meaning is already present in the verb.

Last but not least, the third meaning of *eukhomai* ("to pray") is also evident: the soul *eukhetai* to "the Queen of the chthonians, Eukles, Eubuleus and all the immortals." There can hardly be a more explicit way of praying than addressing the gods in the vocative as the soul does. Given the position of the verb, immediately after the invocation, it seems clear that the soul is addressing the gods through it.[17] M. Depew has shown with evidence from both inscriptions and poetry that the self-assertive meaning of *eukhesthai* stays the same in secular and religious contexts until classical times. It is the interlocutor who changes: men in secular contexts, gods in religious ones in which the self-assertion turns into a prayer.[18] In fact, the elocutionary force of the verb *eukhomai* is akin to an oath in which the speaker offers himself as proof of the truth of his statement before both gods and men.

Thus, the leaves manage to concentrate the juridical reciprocity of the legal context, the religious meaning of the sacral one, and the formulaic "secular" usage of the word. With one single word the poet of the leaves (or rather, of the poem(s) underlying them) depicts an agonistic, juridical, and religious moment which the souls must go through. It is not an innovation

[16] Cf. *L. Pher.*: ἄποινος γὰρ ὁ μύστης. The acceptance of a *poiné* is usually expressed with the verb *dekhomai*, which the preserved leaves do not have, except the later one from Rome (cf. below n. 24). It appears, however, in Pind. fr. 133 SM (οἵσί κε Φερσεφόνα ποινὰν παλαιοῦ πένθεος δέξεται), best interpreted in connection with the leaves (Lloyd-Jones 1985). Cf. also *P. Gur.* I 4 (*OF* 578): δῶρον δέξ]ατ᾽ ἐμὸν ποινὰς πατ[έρων ἀθεμίστων.

[17] Cf. *L. Pel.* 2, with the speaking verb + dative: εἰπεῖν Φερσεφόναι.

[18] Depew 1997, quoting e.g. *CEG* 195 and Pind. *Ol.* 7.23. Pindar deploys a great variety of such uses of assertive verbs which imply, directly or indirectly, a praise (Cf. Race 1972 on Pindar's vaunt).

of meaning: rather, it preserves very ancient meanings of the word *eukhomai*.[19] It may be taken as another instance of the "Orphic" taste for very pregnant brief formulations (e.g. the dual oppositions of the Olbia plates) and the ability of Orphic poets to load traditional formulae with radically new religious contents without changing their form.[20]

IDENTIFICATION

The primary aim of the *eukhomai* formula is to declare one's own ancestry, but it has turned out to be a quasi-juridical statement which states one's position within the community. Thus, it may require some kind of proof, because identity could easily be forged, as Odysseus does when inventing a Cretan genealogy (*Od.* 14.199, 204) or Athena when posing as Mentes (*Od.* 1.180). Both use solemnly the same formula *genos eukhomai einai*, easy to use as a cover for false identities in a world of travellers and *xenoi* like the *Odyssey*. In such a world, the *eukhomai* alone is not enough and can be received with a slightly skeptical distance.[21] In the far more reduced world of the *Iliad* these subterfuges are much more unlikely to happen. The only case occurs precisely when Priam travels to the alien camp, where of course he is a stranger and can be deceived by Hermes disguised as a servant of Achilles: Priam's awareness that he is a potential subject of deception makes him ask to be told "the whole truth" (24.407: πᾶσαν ἀληθείην κατάλεξον). Such precision, very common in the *Odyssey*, is unique in the *Iliad*. Yet it is well known that Priam's trip is the most Odyssean episode in the whole poem.[22] All other Iliadic identifications are very straightforward. The first reaction of Glaucos and Asteropaeus to the question "who are you?" is even of slight offense at being asked, as if implying that the other should know: "why do you ask?" (6.145=21.153: τίη γενεὴν ἐρεείνεις;). And the proof is brought immediately through the knowledge that others have of the claimed lineage: Glaucos and Aeneas boast that

[19] The juridical meaning is evident only in the Homeric Shield of Achilles and a Mycenean tablet (PY Ep 704). Cf. Pulleyn 1997: 60–63.

[20] Cf. Betegh 2004: 232, 348 for other clear examples of this Orphic strategy. There may be an example of the Orphic use of the *eukhomai* formula in eschatological poetry in Proclus (*In Ti.* III 297, 3 Diehl): one of the Orphic fragments more akin to the leaves (*OF* 348: "liberation from the cycle and a respite from evils") is attributed to "those who claim to be initiated (τελούμενοι τυχεῖν εὔχονται) in the rites of Dionysus and Kore."

[21] The verb in the third person does not have the same ring of authority as in the first person, as is often the case with judicial verbs ("he claims"): *Od.* 16.62, 67; 17.373.

[22] The formula ἀληθείην καταλέγειν seems particularly adequate to introduce oneself (*Od.* 21.212), specially from the lips of a traveler who tells his journey (*Od.* 7.297, 16.226, 17.108, 17.122). Cf. Montiglio 2005: 142. On the Odyssean features of Priam's trip cf. the introduction of N. Richardson to *Iliad* 24 in Kirk's general commentary to the *Iliad*.

many men know their lineage (6.151=20.214: πολλοὶ δέ μιν ἄνδρες ἴσασιν); more modestly, Asteropaeus says that "men say I am his son" (21.159–160).

The exiled soul, like the wandering hero, does not lose her self-consciousness, as we have seen. The soul answers with a touch of pride, in which Iliadic soundings can be perceived, that the guardians already know their heavenly lineage (*L. Pet.* 7. *Ent.* 15: τόδε δ' ἴστε καὶ αὐτοι). But the situation depicted in the leaves is naturally closer to the *Odyssey*: since no witnesses can confirm the claimed identity, the ξεῖνος or the ἱκετής, like the soul in the Underworld, is alone in the moment of identification. Odysseus in Scheria finally reveals his name, "so that you also know it" (*Od.* 9.16). Likewise as a cosmic wanderer, the soul must provide further proof of her *euchesthai* to show she is saying "the whole truth," which is explicitly required in one of the leaves with the Odyssean formula (*L. Phar.*7: τοῖς δὲ σὺ εὖ μάλα πᾶσαν ἀληθείην καταλέξαι). This is the probable function of repeating the *symbola* learnt by the *mystai* in their initiation, which are most fully transcribed in the gold leaf from Pherai.[23] In a way, these *symbola*, which carry with them the proof of the initiate's identity as such and are the proof of initiation, are comparable to the arms – spear, shield, armour, arrows – which mark a hero's identity as a warrior and are the instrument for and proof of his *kleos*.[24]

TALES OF ANCESTRY

Let us move from the claiming and the proof to the matter at stake, marked by the word *genos*. What does the soul *eukhetai* about? Exactly the same as the hero: "pride in race, pride in fatherland and pride in superior achievement: when a hero *eukhetai*, he says the most significant facts about himself" (Muellner 1976: 92). What is alleged and proved when asked about the identity is not a proper name, but the lineage from which the hero stems and the glory of which he is the heir. Glaucos (6.150–211) and Aeneas (20.213–241) answer with a long account of the deeds of all their forefathers. Asteropaeus' tale is shorter, conscious as he is that the deeds of his fluvial ancestors are less worth telling, but he follows the same pattern in his answer as more illustrious heroes (21.157–159). Boasting over his dead body, Achilles will also proclaim his superior lineage (21.187–189). None of them gives their

[23] In *L. Ent.* 19 the word *symbola* can be read precisely in the moment of identification before Persephone. The (ritual?) sentences of the Pelinna leaves or the name Asterios in *L. Phar.* probably function themselves as *symbola*. Cf. Riedweg 2002: 467.

[24] Cf. Muellner 1976: 82 on *Il.* 5.171–173, where Pandaros' identity and his way to immortal *kleos* are equated to his bow and arrows. Cf. *Od.* 21.335ff. for Odysseus' bow playing the same role for disclosing the identity. Another usual word to designate this proof is *sema*, like Odysseus' scar (*Od.* 23.73, 110). Cf. n. 45.

own name, but they establish their identity referring to the *genos*. This is exactly what the soul does when proclaiming her divine *genos*: in the long leaves no proper name is given,[25] except in one where Ἀστέριος ὄνομα (*L. Phar.* 4.9) is read. Asterios is obviously not the real name of the *mystes*, but a nickname alluding to his heavenly ascent, a synonym of the γένος οὐράνιον which appears in other leaves (*Ent.* 15, *Pet.* 7): both expressions can be taken as the reference to the fatherland (Heaven), which no hero forgets to report when telling his lineage.

There is an obvious difference with the heroic genealogies, which, however, is only apparent. The brevity of the gold leaves, dictated by their small size, does not allow the digressions of the heroes. Yet the soul alludes to the story of her ancestors, condensed in some pregnant sentences. To evoke a whole myth as understood by the audience with just a meaningful allusion is a common technique in archaic poetry to expand or compress the myth-telling. In addition to the allusions to a divine lineage, we find in the leaves from Thurii, after the reference to the "unjust deeds," the description of the punishment received: to be struck by a thunderbolt (εἴτε με Μοῖρα ἐδάμασσ᾽ εἴτε ἀστεροπῆτα κεραυνῶν). There is no contradiction, within the epic models, in "proclaiming" (εὔχεσθαι) the divine punishment suffered by important ancestors: so did Glaucos proclaim that his grandfather Bellerophon "also became hateful to the gods" (*Il.* 6.200). But the clearest reference of all to the ancestry is a verse repeated in several leaves as the direct answer to the question "who are you?": "I am a son of the Earth and starry Heaven" (*L. Hipp.* 10: υἱὸς Γᾶς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος).

The ancestral myth to which the soul is alluding is generally thought to be the tale of the Titans, out of whose ashes or soot mankind was born: the unjust deeds whose *poiné* the soul claims to have paid would of course be the murder of the child Dionysus. In addition to the usual arguments, the structural parallels with the heroic dialogues demand the telling of the genealogy when questioned about the identity, and the myth of the Titans

[25] The brief, later leaves (groups E and F) break this rule and just have a proper name with the word *mystes*. The long leaf of Rome (*OF* 491), dated in the 3rd cent. CE, includes the name of Caecilia Secundina. They may be thought degenerations of the primitive model, or independent phenomena, but an alternative possibility must be considered: since Caecilia Secundina is not the speaker (Ἔρχεται ἐκ καθαρῶν καθαρά), the first two or three lines could preserve the report by the guardians to Persephone and the other gods that the soul has come (alluded to in *L. Hipp.* 13). That would explain the presence of the verb *dekhomai* that we missed in the other leaves (cf. n. 15): ἀλλὰ δέχεσθε (being told either by the guardians to the gods or vice versa). The final line ("go having become divine") would be the answer to the initiate. Self-introduction does not include one's own name in the heroic code, but it does appear when speaking in the third person of somebody or in the vocative (Muellner 1976: 74f.). The short leaves could thus be conceived to have been read by the guardians of the Underworld to identify the *mystes*, not by the soul herself.

is the easiest choice to explain these various allusions of the identification dialogues. Other myths cannot be discarded as possible references, but they have a much less obvious genealogical connection as ancestors of the soul.[26] All the long leaves in which the soul introduces herself choose one or other way of alluding to the heavenly lineage: the three leaves from Thurii which do not mention Earth and Heaven do mention instead the thunderbolt, absent from the dialogues with the guardians.[27]

The leaves, then, appear to avoid any superfluous repetitions while including all possible relevant elements, a technique obviously appropriate to their small size. We might think that, if there was a longer poem or poems on the descent of the soul which served the leaves as a source to take their hexameters, perhaps the whole episode of the Titans was narrated in this moment at greater length, just as Glaucos or Aeneas dwell freely on the intricacies of their genealogy. However, short and solemn lines seem to be more appropriate to an eschatological dialogue: there is no time to lose, since the soul is "dying" (*L. Hipp.* II: ἀπόλλυμαι). In fact, most moribunds tend to have little time or strength for long monologues, and short phrases seem to be more appropriate to them, either to say goodbye to this world or to prepare themselves for the next. Single-sentence dialogues may also reflect the ritual in which the *mystai* had been initiated in this life, perhaps preparing themselves for this journey to the Underworld.[28] Since the primary aim is not to entertain the audience, but to show awareness of their own ancestry, some allusions would be enough. It is thus probable that even in the hypothetical archetypical poem(s), the myth of the Titans was told in the same allusive,

[26] Edmonds 2004: 74 suggests Heracles, Asclepios or Semele as possible analogies of apotheosis or heroization through the thunderbolt, but the genealogical structure suggests actual descent rather than mere analogy or archetypes.

[27] Cf. n. 4 above for the complementarity and functional identity of the encounters with the guardians and the gods. In the leaf from Rome, the soul does not utter a word, but the lines are addressed to her or she is spoken about in third person (as in the short ones which have just one name (cf. n. 24)). In the leaves from Pelinna and one from Thurii (*OF* 487, and partly *OF* 488), the ritual expressions do not integrate easily in the archetypical poem (Riedweg 2002), nor in the genealogical schema suggested by the comparison with Homeric scenes. They can be either addressed to the soul or uttered by her, or both. Faraone in his chapter studies the Pelinna leaves and proposes other Dionysiac myths as archetypes for the rebirth of the initiate. Though I prefer sticking (with Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal) to the myth of the Titans as main mythical reference, my argument against the alternatives proposed by Edmonds (cf. last note) is not valid against Faraone's proposal for the Pelinna leaves, since there is no hint of genealogy in them.

[28] Cf. the stichomythic dialogue between the dying Hippolytus and Artemis and Theseus (Eur. *Hipp.* 1390–1460). Seaford 1996 takes the stichomythia of the *Bacchai* (792–847, 912–970), with a one or two-lines question–answer dialogue between Pentheus and Dionysus, as a dialogue mirroring elements of mystery cults.

concise and obscure way in which we are frustratingly used to finding it – as one would expect of such an *arreton*.

The contrast with the heroic dialogues can bring out other issues. Glaucos and Aeneas say "ταύτης γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος" where the soul says "ὑμῶν γένος ὄλβιον." The different formulation raises some questions: first, does the difference between γένος and γενεή play a role or is the opposition neutralized?[29] It would seem that *genos* reflects more precisely the direct descent from the gods. But one can also ask: does the absence of the blood in the leaves mean that the divine nature of the soul is conceived in less physical and "genetic" terms? Or to put it another way: does the divine *genos olbion* to which the soul claims to belong designate a direct descent, a physical offspring, or has it got a more general meaning like "class" or "kind"? The only specifically "genetic" term in the leaves is "son" (υἱός), but since it is referred to the Earth and Heaven, from which all the gods come, it does not say much about the way humans descend from them. The myth of the Titans, after all, does not make the descent of mankind from the gods too "genetic," since men are born from their soot, not through sexual generation (in contrast to the frequent use of the verb τίκτω in the epic genealogies). The published leaves do not offer enough data to answer how the *syngeneia* is conceived,[30] but it is worth noticing that the comparison with the Homeric scenes just makes the question arise.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A SUPERIOR *GENOS*

Let us come, finally, to the crucial point. What is the importance of the *genos* for the heroes? Obviously their insistence on it does not come from mere snobbery. On the contrary, so much is the lineage what really matters that it determines the destiny of the hero in the three Iliadic battle-scenes. Each of these deserves a separate paragraph, since they all can be related to the determination of the destiny of the soul by her divine *genos*. As might be expected, the verb *eukhomai* is ubiquitous in the three scenes: heroes "claim" their *xenia*, kinship with the gods (20.349), or the superiority of lineage which grants victory (21.183).

[29] Muellner 1976: 77 and n. 15, with references to *Il.* 21.186 and Hdt. 1.35.1. If it does play a role, should we take the opposition in Homeric terms (immediate ancestry (γένος) / long-range ancestry (γενεή)) or in the form it took in later times (family vs. race)? The evidence is too scant to answer these subtle questions with any security. But poets were free to play with these subtleties; cf. Grethlein 2006.

[30] The epic kings are said to be *dion genos*, a title Hesiod also gives to the plebeian Perses (*Op.* 299). It does not mean literally a blood kinship. Even less genetic kinship is there in later formulations such as Aratus *Phaen.* 5 (quoted by Saint Paul in Acts 17.28). On *syngeneia* between men and gods, cf. Des Places 1964 (without mention of the leaves or any other Orphic material).

From Glaucos' tale it results that he has a *xenia* relationship with Diomedes' family, which saves him from fighting and perishing at the hands of an obviously stronger enemy. The moment he has finished telling his ancestry with the *eukhomai* formula (6.211), Diomedes thrusts his spear into the ground (6.212) and through exchange of gifts they declare together (6.231: *eukhometha*) that they are tied by familiar guest-friendship. Diomedes has recognized Glaucos' *genos* as an equal and friend of his own, recognition that provides Glaucos' acceptance and salvation (in epic terms). We must now recall how the salvation of the soul (in eschatological terms) relies on being recognized as a relative of the gods and accepted as a ἱκετής, that is, a would-be ξεῖνος.

Let us pass on to the second scene: Aeneas' kinship with the gods had already spared him death at Achilles' hands on a previous occasion of which Achilles reminds him (20.194: "Zeus and the other gods saved you"). In the *Iliad* also his mother Aphrodite had taken him away from death before Diomedes (5.311ff.). Achilles does not think they will save him this time (20.195f.). But Aeneas insists in contrasting his ancestry with Achilles' (20.206–241):

> For you, they say you are the issue of blameless Peleus
> and that your mother was Thetis of the lovely hair, the sea's lady;
> I in turn (αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν) claim (εὔχομαι) I am the son of great hearted Anchises,
> and that my mother was Aphrodite; and that of these parents
> one group or the other will have a dear son to mourn for this day.

In contrast to Achilles, Aeneas trusts that his superior pedigree will grant him victory, and goes on telling his genealogy for fifty lines more. He is of course wrong in trusting victory over Achilles, but Achilles was also wrong when he thought that this time Aeneas' expectations would fail. It is precisely his descent from Dardanos that moves such a distinguished enemy of the Trojans as Poseidon to save him from death, in order to grant the sovereignty over the Trojans to him and his descendants after Priam's lineage disappears (20.302–308). It is indeed nothing but the *genos* that once again saves Aeneas and will grant him and his family immortal glory. Achilles must finally acknowledge that Aeneas had not boasted in vain (εὐχετάασθαι) when claiming his familiarity with the gods (20.347–349). The analogy with the leaves is clear: it is precisely kinship with the *genos* of the gods that the soul claims in order to be saved from death and admitted to the realm of the immortals.

If Aeneas' superior lineage saved him from an enemy who was stronger than him but less well-connected with the gods, the unfortunate Asteropaeus suffers exactly the opposite destiny. His descent from a river

does not suffice against Achilles' descent from Zeus, as the latter boasts (21.183: εὐχόμενος) over his dead corpse (21.184–191):

> Lie so: it is hard for those sprung of a river
> to fight against the children of Kronos, whose strength is almighty.
> You said (φῆσθα) you were of the lineage of the wide running river,
> I in turn (αὐτὰρ ἐγώ) claim (εὔχομαι) that I am of the generation of great Zeus.
> The man is my father who is lord over many Myrmidons,
> Peleus, Aiakos' son, but Zeus was the father of Aiakos.
> And as Zeus is stronger than rivers that run to the sea,
> So the generation of Zeus is made stronger than that of a river.

And Achilles goes on, claiming that not even Ocean can match Zeus' supreme might as the reason of his victory (21.194–199). A few lines later the angry Scamander will frighten Achilles in his waters (21.273ff.), which shows the relative value of this principle. Yet the fact that it does not succeed automatically does not hide that it is widely accepted and believed. The epic heroes formulated as a natural law that the offspring of the weaker must perish under a superior spear, from a superior *genos*. When they encounter a yet unknown rival, Diomedes threatens Glaucos as Achilles to Asteropaeus: "the children of the miserable face my might!" (δυστήνων δέ τε παῖδες ἐμῶι μένει ἀντιόωσιν).[31] This exclamation, uttered just after having asked the lineage of their rivals, implies it will turn out to be inferior, and the implication causes an offended reply. Instead, Achilles knows who Aeneas is and of course does not utter this offensive formula. He claims superior strength, not superior lineage: he just hopes lineage will not be this time the decisive point, though he must finally acknowledge his mistake.[32]

Apart from this phrase and from the ubiquitous *eukhomai* (expressively contrasted with the *phemi* attributed to Asteropaeus), there is another meaningful verbal hint which appears in the last two scenes: Achilles

[31] 6.127 = 21.151. The usual translations of this formula – e.g. "Woe to those fathers whose sons face my might" (Butler); "Unhappy are they whose children face my might" (Murray); "Yet unhappy are those whose sons match warcraft against me" (Lattimore) – seem to take it as a sinister pity for the parents who will lose their children, but thus the sense of the inferiority of their *genos* is lost. Instead, the translation I propose is not only grammatically more literal, but also marks the emphasis on the superiority of the *genos* which must grant victory. The etymology of δύστηνος, connected with ἵστημι (the unable to stand) makes clear the link with the idea, expressed by Achilles after killing Asteropaeus, that the weaker lineage cannot resist against the stronger one.

[32] Cf. another instance of lineage considered decisive for the final victory in *Il.* 5.243ff. Sthenelos contrasts the combined noble ancestry of Pandaros and Aeneas, using the *eukhetai* formula, "with his own and Diomedes' power to resist" (Muellner 1976: 77). Diomedes does not care and welcomes the possibility of winning more glory. The result is ambiguous: he kills Pandaros and would have killed Aeneas if he had not received help from his divine mother. Again, lineage helps in the fight, but it does not grant automatic victory.

underlines his superiority over the rival boasting about his ancestry with the phrase "I in turn . . . " (αὐτὰρ ἐγώ). The fact that the soul says proudly to the guardians αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον can hardly be casual.[33] This phrase is rightly interpreted as underlining the heavenly element and therefore downgrading the earthly one, in connection with the preceding verse "I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven." Thus the αὐτάρ reveals the core of the matter: in the leaves, as in the duels of the heroes, there is also a competition of lineages: the divine lineage in men must prevail over the human one. If the first one stems from the gods, the second results from those who were punished for their unjust deeds.[34] While the human *genos* keeps men trapped in the "painful cycle of deep grief" (*L. Thur.* 5) to which they were condemned, the divine *genos* will allow them to rule over the other heroes (*L. Pet.* II: ἄ[λλοισι μεθ'] ἡρώεσσιν ἀνάξει[ς]).[35] Thus, the comparative glory or misery of the ancestors, be it in the heroic terms of the epic, or in the cosmic terms of the leaves, is reflected in the destiny of their offspring.

The anthropology of the gold leaves is clearly based on a dualistic opposition between human and divine nature.[36] The first one is almost absent from the leaves, because the soul omits almost any reference to her human dimension and refers only to her divine lineage. Yet two leaves from Thurii leave little space to doubt: θεὸς ἐγένου ἐξ ἀνθρώπου (*OF* 487.4); θεὸς δ' ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο (*OF* 488.8). The human part (the body) dies and the divine part (the soul) lives. On a Cretan inscription of the second century BCE from a temple of the Great Mother, whose affinity with the leaves has been recognized long ago,[37] the same idea is explicitly formulated in terms of *genos*:

> The Mother of all shows a great wonder to men
> she pours wine to the blessed and they maintain their lineage (οἳ γονεὰν ὑπέχονται)

[33] *L. Pet.* 7, *L. Ent.* 15. In both cases it is followed by the proud τόδε δ' ἴστε καὶ αὐτοι. Cf. *Od.* 9.16.

[34] Burkert 1975: 89 on the underlining of the heavenly ancestry, with the same function as Asterios in *L. Phar.*, which also comes after the verse about Heaven and Earth (in *Ent.* the collocation is altered, in *Pet.* it seems closer to the original poem, cf. Riedweg 2002: 475). Pugliese Carratelli's reading of Βαρέας ("heavy") instead of Γᾶς in *L. Hipp.* 10 would reinforce the negativity of the earthly element. The Earth is probably taken as mother of the Titans, from which the un-heavenly *genos* (i.e. the human part, the body) springs.

[35] Di Benedetto (2004: 299–301) argues that μεθ' here should be understood as "over," following epic usage, instead of the egalitarian "among," as Benabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008 and Graf and Johnston 2007 translate, from analogy "with the other mystai and bacchoi" on *L. Hipp.*

[36] Cf. Betz Chapter 5 in this volume.

[37] *OF* 568. I am thankful to W. Burkert for having called my attention to this inscription. Cf. Pugliese Carratelli 2001: 86–93 for its links with the leaves. The reading and meaning of some terms is disputed, but none of them affects my point. Tzifopoulos (Chapter 7, this volume) discusses the inscription and its problems of reading and interpretation.

but to those who deviate from the lineage of the gods (τοῖς δὲ παρεσβαίνονσι θιῶν γένος)
she does the opposite.
All pious and well-tongued come pure
to the divine temple of the Great Mother, and there you will know
divine works worthy of the immortal of this temple. (my translation)

The way to be accepted by the Mother is to declare the divine lineage, not to deviate from it. This victory of the divine side over the human one (ἀνθρώποις / θιῶν γένος) seems to be achieved through words and works. We cannot be sure about how the initiates had won their access to Persephone's meadows, but it is reasonable to suppose that their means to reach salvation had not been too different from those prescribed by the inscription, that is, purity and initiation.

THE AGONISTIC EXPERIENCE

It is not wholly clear what purity may have meant for the composers and users of the leaves. But however the state of *katharos* is reached, the initiate must create through purification the appropriate conditions to allow his divine nature to prevail over the human one. Now this purification which leads to final glory seems to bear some resemblance to victory in a contest. The proud overtones of some utterances of the soul have the boastful rings of the dueling heroes. Like the characters of epic, the heroes of the leaves – for this is the title the souls receive in some of them (*L. Ent.* 2, *L. Pet.* 11) – are *kleinoi* after prevailing in a competition or a fight. There are some scarce hints of the battle in which one lineage wins over the other. The agonistic vocabulary of victory that we have seen in the leaves (*stephanos, timé, kleinoi*) can be understood in terms of this internal contest. This is not just "a way to put it," a poetic ornament to present an abstract anthropological idea. Contest and battle are one of the main conceptual metaphors, to use the terms of cognitive semantics,[38] through which the new idea of salvation is construed. Metaphor frames the experience in its own terms. The poetic mould, rather than being a mere literary envelope, shapes the ideas contained in the leaves and also the experience with which they are associated.

The parallels with the epic scenes can throw some light on how the "experience you never had before" was perceived. There is a certain affinity

[38] Cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980. The "glory" of the leaves should be distinguished from Christian expressions like "eternal glory," which indicate participation in God's *doxa*. The *kleenoi* of the leaves derives from the epic *kleos* which heroes must gain to be immortalized by poets.

between the psychological experience of the hero going to the fight and that of the initiate preparing himself for the decisive encounter with the Queen of the Dead. In effect, the journey is difficult and full of traps, and the consent of Persephone is by no means automatic. When heroes go to war, they have both hope and fear, confidence in victory and awareness of the danger of defeat: the *eukhos*, the right to claim the glory, can be obtained or be given to another (*Il.* 12.327 =13.328). A superior *genos* gives the hero a good chance of achieving victory and glory, but it is in no way a mechanical pass to it: many sons of Zeus have died (e.g. Sarpedon), and we have seen Achilles counting on the possibility that Aeneas' *genos* might not play a role this time. A false *eukhesthai* can be subject to a terrible punishment, and even more if it pretended a false equality to the gods, as is shown by the disgrace of Thamyris, who "claimed" that his song would prevail over the Muses (*Il.* 2. 597f.). The soul has every reason to be alert and humble, and at the same time proud of and relieved by her victory.[39] This combination of moments of hope and fear recalls Plutarch's famous description of the initiation experience, and it is tempting to think of similar feelings in the moments both of initiation (*teleté*) and death (*teleuté*).[40] In fact, constructing those feelings in terms of combat, as the agonistic vocabulary shows, may have been a way of rationalizing and mastering them.

Granted, the agonistic metaphor is not the only dimension of this *pathema*, and other ones, like supplication, contribute as well to shape the experience reflected in the leaves. But fighting has a long history before and after the leaves as a part of religious experience. The use of the word *eukhomai* "to pray," of venerable Indo-European roots, shows that "the communication with the divinity has to win out" (Muellner 1976: 135). Christianity will greatly expand the metaphor of the combat, and the modern term "agony" shows its success. We must avoid projecting backwards the intense internal battles of the Christians. But as in other cases, a

[39] Edmonds 2004: 55 points out that there is no suspense in the narration of the tablets, since a happy end is clear from the beginning. The comparison with Christianity is quite pertinent here: it does not grant an automatic salvation, and many people are afraid of Hell, but its rituals and prayers take for granted that it will be reached.

[40] Plutarch fr. 178 Sandbach makes explicit an etymological relationship between both words. The "experience you never had before" (*Thur.* = *OF* 487.3) suffered by the initiate might be death or / and preparation for it in the initiation ritual. In Christian contexts, initiation is most urgent when death is approaching, and this must also have been the case with the rites which threatened the uninitiated with terrors in Hades. In the *Iliad*, the proximity of death makes also more urgent that the warrior achieves glorious deeds which will grant him immortality (*Il.* 15.610–614, 22.304f.). In some mysteries the initiates were encouraged, with the epic exhortation, θάρσει (take heart!), which shows the agonistic spirit in which initiation and death could be envisioned. Cf. Joly 1955.

certain parallel with Christianity must not prevent recognizing the presence of an element in classical Greece.

FROM THE EPIC HERO TO THE HEROIC SOUL

Similarities in form and content of the text of the leaves with earlier epic poetry is not surprising. Analogy is in this case easy to explain from genealogy. After all, the *katabasis* of the soul depicted in the poem(s) from which the leaves take their lines has its obvious model and precedent in the poems which told the trips to Hades of epic heroes, like for example Heracles. However special *katabasis* was as an epic episode, and however unique Homer was among his contemporary poetic traditions, these early epic poems about the heroic descents to Hades surely shared many formulas, scenes, and concepts with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It is thus only natural that the new heroes, the souls, have many attitudes in common with the traditional ones.

The (Orphic) poets of the *katabasis* of the soul turned a traditional epic tale into a soteriological program, and their theological elaboration stems from subtle reformulation of traditional ideas: it is not a matter of using old material to adapt it to alien conceptions originated elsewhere, but of developing new notions directly out of the ancient tradition. To stick to the aforementioned texts, the inherited guilt from the ancestors which haunts the epic and tragic heroes turns into the inherited guilt from the cosmic ancestors, the Titans, whose penalty is fully paid by their "innocent" offspring.[41] The epic heroes show that the life of the individual matters less in itself, than as a necessary piece to keep the *genos* alive and glorious through the generations. Poseidon talking about Aeneas' *genos* is a clear example (*Il.* 20.300–309). The successful comparison made by Glaucos (*Il.* 6.146–149) about the ephemeral human *genea* – just before telling the long history of his *genos*, where he himself is just one step more – could be interpreted in the same way. In the reincarnation system, perhaps alluded to in the gold tablets,[42] the function of the individual lives in different bodies of the transmigrating soul is only to take the soul to a better position and lead it to the next life. None of the reincarnations really matters

[41] Because one notion derives from the other, it is sometimes not easy to say to which ancestors (cosmic or human) the evidence is referring, as in *P. Gur.* 4: δῶρον δέξ]ατ' ἐμὸν ποινὰς πατ[έρων ἀθεμίστων. On the development of inherited guilt in Greece, cf. now Gagné 2007.

[42] Reincarnation is a plausible explanation of the *kyklos* in *L. Thur.* (*OF* 488.5). Glaucos' image was very successful in post-Homeric poetry (Mimn. fr. 2. West, Simon. fr. 8 West), and Orphic poets also used the image of the natural cycle when developing the reincarnation scheme (*OF* 438).

individually, because it is the *genos ouranion* which unites them all and which, in the last resort, holds the real identity and effectively survives. The theological elaboration of new ideas within traditional poetic form is indeed a distinctive feature of that intellectual movement which is usually put under the patronage of Orpheus and therefore is called Orphism.[43]

Still, no matter how striking the formal and structural similarity may be between heroic and Orphic immortality, in fact parallel categories and formulations express very different notions. In the preceding texts, the most obvious instance showing a radical shift in values within the same terminology is the role of Memory. Heroic immortality is granted by *kleos*, the memory the living keep of the dead; in the leaves, however, it is granted by Mnemosyne, personification of the memory the soul must keep of its divine origin. The memory of the dead as object has been transformed into memory of the dead as subject: the lexical transition is easy to explain through epic lines in which *mnemosyne* grants *kleos*.[44] On the opposite side, the "lethal" role of oblivion is exactly symmetrical in both worlds, since it can bring its heavy burden upon a forgotten object or a subject who forgets.

Memory, then, be it object or subject, grants immortality just as forgetfulness thwarts it,[45] and the eschatological glory is constructed in the terms of the epic glory.[46] However, there is no doubt a good difference between a great tomb (*sema, erion*) as the way to grant memory, and a small tablet, be it called *erion*, *ergon*, *doron*;[47] between wealth or skill in war and sport, and the ability to understand hidden and deeper meanings; between

[43] The Derveni theogony (Betegh 2004) expresses very innovative ideas on the gods and the cosmos following the traditional Hesiodic pattern with minimal but meaningful changes. Other examples may be the exile from the fatherland which makes the man a wanderer (e.g. *Od*. 15.276, *Thgn*. 1209ff.) transformed into the cosmic exile from divine fatherland (Emp. 115.13 DK); or the pessimistic *gnome* that the man had better never been born (*Thgn*. 425ff.) transformed into the image that this life is a prison for the soul (*soma–sema*). Cf. Obbink, Chapter 12 (this volume), on Orphic re-mythologizing.

[44] Cf. *Il*. 8.181. There is still some ambiguity concerning the memory of the heroes in the leaves: they are *kleinoi* (*L. Hipp*. 16) which seems to bear the old meaning of object of memory (cf. Pind. fr. 133 SM). But in the very similar leaf of *L. Ent*. 2 the mention of a μ]εμνημέ<ν>ος ἥρως seems to make him subject of memory. The ambivalence is probably intended.

[45] On oblivion as death, cf. Zuntz 1971: 380 (and Betz, above Ch. 5 n. 13). The opposition visible in the epic between *kleos* and *penthos* (Nagy 1979: 95) might also be relevant for the ideology of the leaves, in which *penthos* seems to be the obstacle to immortality (L 9.5, Pind. fr. 133 SM), though the evidence is too scant to be sure.

[46] Vernant 1969: 51–79 describes the continuity of the role of memory in both worlds, and points to the Oracle of Trophonios as a place where the Mnemosyne which inspires the epic poet with ancient heroic deeds is also the memory which the consultant keeps of the future he has seen. Bonnechere 2003a: 286–291 explores the relations of Trophonios'oracle with the leaves also in this important aspect.

[47] All three are possible variants for *L. Hipp*. 1. The first one literally means "grave monument" (Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 127) and the other two are used to designate the golden amphora in

victory and initiation, however agonistic the vocabulary of the latter may be; between the social elitism of a human *genos* to the spiritual elitism of a heavenly one; between an oral song composed by an epic poet, and a written text used by an itinerant initiator for his purification rituals. Indeed, formal and lexical conservatism is an excellent strategy to develop radical novelties within an acceptable frame and hide an enormous ideological gap. The transition between the heroic and the "Orphic" conceptions of immortality must have been smooth, and both conceptions probably coexisted in different forms during that lengthy process. Pindar, for one, has no problem in preaching both types of glory in the same poem.[48]

Perhaps new discoveries of gold leaves will shed more light on the way, full of mediations and ambivalences, in which the conquest of immortality was transferred from the Homeric heroes to the Orphic souls. However, their dialogues in the supreme moment of glory show clearly that radical ideological shifts kept and developed the traditional forms and patterns of thought. Whatever foreign influences and revolutionary ideas the leaves may show, their words, images and conceptions derive directly from those we find in the Homeric poems. When asked by scholars where they came from, that is indeed a lineage they could well *eukhesthai*.

which Achilles is buried in *Od.* 24.73–75 (gift of Dionysus, work of Hephaestus). The *sema* designates both the tomb which grants immortality and the proof of identity (*Od.* 23.73, 110). The leaves fulfill both functions at the same time, but their self-designation as *semata* has yet to be found.

[48] *Ol.* 2.56, where in the same line he praises wealth and knowledge of eschatology. Later in the same poem (83–85) Pindar claims to be dispenser of knowledge for the understanding (φωνάεντα συνετοῖσι) and accuses others of mere babbling (παγγλοσίᾳ γαρύετων). Maybe this invective is primarily directed against initiators (cf. Pl. *Resp.* 364e), and not, as is usually taken, against poetic rivals. Cf. Obbink, Chapter 12 this volume, p. 309: "Pindar and the compositors of the gold leaves fulfilled a comparable social and ritual role."

CHAPTER 12

Poetry and performance in the Orphic gold leaves

Dirk Obbink

Now that new texts brought to light within the past decade have restored Dionysus to the role once posited for him in the texts of the Orphic gold leaves,[1] it is time to re-examine those enigmatic texts as being in some sense poems themselves. All significant advances on these texts have been made by assuming that their archetypes were in poetic form, used standard epic diction, and made sense.[2] Yet no one has succeeded in explaining why these texts should have been in poetic form in the first place. Most scholars have been content to see these texts primarily as parasitic upon early hexametric poetry for their formulaic phraseology. That is to say, the compositors of these texts are believed by and large to have drawn rather arbitrarily or slavishly and mechanically upon earlier poetry for the form and language of these texts, producing at best a derivative hodge-podge of formulae pirated from the language of earlier, canonized poems.

I want to argue in this paper that this view is fundamentally flawed. The one feature shared by all the texts alike is that they prescribe actions to be performed and words to be spoken by an unnamed addressee in response to the utterances of an underworld speaker. I will argue that these utterances can be seen as a function of a real or imagined performative context: that is to say, that they presuppose a scenario of enacted drama and contain their own dramatic structure, in which the enactment of ritual is linked to the performance or inscription of a poetic text. Thus, the texts of the gold leaves are poetry, but they are neither arbitrarily, nor affectedly, nor derivatively so. In what follows I will try to show how I think the status of these texts as poetry in this independent sense is grounded in and, in a way, equivalent to their ritual context.

[1] B10.16 μύσται καὶ βάκχοι; D1.2 Βά‹κ› χιος: see Segal 1990: 411–419, and Burkert 1993 and Graf 1993. On the evidence of the Orphic bone plates from Olbia see Zhmud' 1992, with bibliography.

[2] Janko 1984.

The gold leaf texts have been found as far afield as Hipponium and Thurii in southern Italy, at Rome, at various sites in Crete, and in Thessaly. There are as yet no Attic examples, but one was recently unearthed on Lesbos (as yet unedited),[3] and there are duplications of some of the phraseology on several unpublished phylacteries on lead. As a result of the accumulation of examples, a coherent if complex picture can be said to have emerged.

The texts fall into several distinct groupings, each having its own tradition of textual recension from a common archetype, originally transmitted in oral, memorized form.[4] For convenience I refer to composite texts of each of the three main groups, indicated by the letters P, B, and A.[5] The procedure by which these composites were established by West and Janko and others on the basis of stemmatic reconstruction is irrelevant to my main argument, though I am willing to defend it in detail.[6] Zuntz, for example, believed that the shortest versions of the texts were primitive and original and that the longer versions were the products of exegetical expansion and extrapolation. West and Janko, on the other hand, proceeded on the assumption that the longer versions were primary, viewing the shorter texts as the products of successive abbreviation in a medium so obviously restricted in size (the average size of the leaves is 3×5 cm).[7] It should

[3] Reported in *AR* 1988–89: 93.

[4] One class of error in the texts is clearly the result of copying from a written exemplar (graphic corruption), e.g. ΔΜΟΝΕΣ ΑΜΟ in A3 line 2 for δαίμονες ἄλλοι (the scribe obviously had no comprehension of what he was writing); whereas other mistakes are demonstrably the result of anticipation of what is to follow, repetition of similar matter that has preceded, reproduction of the sounds without the sense, and the replacement of formulaic phrases by others of like meaning – i.e. occasioned by the writing down of memorized or oral texts. See Janko 1984: 90. The latter are especially frequent in the B group (except in the short Cretan form of the B texts, referred to by Janko as K), whereas the A group and the K texts of the B group exhibit considerable graphic corruption (i.e. errors of copying, as illustrated above).

[5] For the A texts I imagine a composite based most closely on A1 as corroborated by A2 and A5 and incorporating the significant additional line in A4 (A3 is a much corrupted version of A1); you may also consult the individual editions of these witnesses in Zuntz 1971: 277–393. The texts of A4 and A5, shorter versions of the A archetype which contain significant variations, are from Zuntz 1971: 329 and 333. The B composite of the long archetype is that of Janko 1984: 99; it follows most closely the Hipponium tablet, on which see also Foti and Pugliese Carratelli 1974. For the two Pelinna tablets (which differ only in that D2 lacks lines 4 and 7 of the composite P), I use the composite text of Segal 1990: 411 which is also that of Graf 1993; see also the ed. pr. Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987 and Graf 1991. Most editors now correct to the standard, sub-Homeric spellings in the orthography of the period after 406 for purposes of intelligibility. The Doric coloring in a number of the texts is superficial (so Janko 1984: 98 with n. 24), though probably real: see n. 17 below.

[6] West 1975: 229–236; Janko 1984 passim, esp. 89–91. Like West and Janko I proceed on the assumption that all lines in the different versions are to be included or accounted for if possible.

[7] Some are smaller. The otherwise faultless engraver of the tablet from Pharsalus, a B witness, managed to write nine lines within 16 mm, condensing into prose in the process verses 7–9 of the Petelia text, skipping five letters in verse 5, and omitting the final three lines altogether.

probably be cautioned, however, that in the long run the variants that appear in individual texts cannot be totally ignored, for in some cases they may represent significant variation in procedure and preferred phraseology over time and place (see e.g. below on variation by gender of addressee). From a performative and ritual point of view, a certain amount of textual variation (even to the extent of violating prosodic form) may have been intentional or desirable (the result of "controlled modulation") to keep the ritual and its liturgy from degenerating into banality through familiarity.[8] In any case, all my points could be equally illustrated from individual, though textually less coherent examples in each series.

I will be on less certain ground in suggesting that the texts instantiate their own class of poetic utterance,[9] parallel to but essentially different from the genres of cult hymn, performance of narrative poetry (including elegy) at festivals, *defixiones* in metrical form, and verse oracles. But the uniformity and textual relation of the gold leaves directly support this, as do their archaeological contexts (all burials). It remains to show that their language, content, and real or imagined performative contexts individuate these texts as a class as well.[10]

In all three texts some type of ritual (probably funeral or initiation) is closely connected with the performance and ritual context of poetry. It is standard hexameter poetry in attested epic locutions that conveys both the actions to be undertaken by the addressee as well as *legomena* stipulated as part of the instructions to be spoken by the addressee at critical moments.[11]

[8] For the concept of "controlled modulation," whereby distinctive features of art and ritual such as formality, invariance, repetition, stereotypy are carefully varied, suspended, or otherwise adapted to forestall atrophy and ensure perpetuation through time, see Tambiah 1979: 134, 160–165.

[9] Zuntz 1971: 285, at least, thought that they were graphically *sui generis*, i.e. originally distinct as a class from phylacteries, *defixiones*, and other miscellaneous texts inscribed on metal, papyrus, pottery and stone. He also regularly spoke of their texts as "poems." In passing he makes the suggestion (p. 286) that the gold leaves and their texts were consciously devised as a positive counterpart to traditional *defixiones*, incorporating a new attitude to life after death.

[10] Noted by Segal 1990: 413. Certain graphic features make it almost certain that at some stage the texts (or parts of them) were memorized oral texts rather than written, copied ones (see above n. 4).

[11] I cannot list here all the attested parallels. In n. 45 below I give a representative listing for the A composite. Roughly one-third of the diction of the gold leaf texts, by my estimate, recapitulates formulae or close variants attested in Homeric and sub-Homeric hexameter poetry, including Hesiod and verse inscriptions. Zuntz 1971: 277–393 and Janko 1984 (for the B texts including Hipponium) provide some parallel poetic expressions, but remain incomplete. A complete study of this subject would, of course, require examining each significant parallel in its original context to determine what might have qualified it for imitation or caused it to be remembered. See e.g. B, 14 where Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος "is drawn from" (or better: "is spoken from") Hes. *Theog*. 106 οἳ Γῆς τ' ἐξεγένοντο καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος; cf. 45, 154, 421 where it is significant which gods are indicated. The compositors of the gold leaves share very closely with Empedocles their manner of recycling epic hexameter locutions.

In ritual utterance as in ritual, features such as formality (including stylization and repetition) and invariance of liturgical form[12] generate sanctity (an impression of unquestionable truthfulness), and conviction or the impression of certainty of meaning.[13] Even in places where the texts are deficient in meter,[14] or even non-metrical, their repetitive, rhythmic, and formulaic qualities make them highly suitable for oral performance. For example, lines 3–6 of P and the parallel line 11 of A seem to be in prose (though of a rhythmical kind with considerable assonance: P, 4–6 [εἰς ... εἰς ... ἔχεις]).[15] Yet the lapse into prose need not in itself indicate a formal flaw: the lines are in this way highly marked with respect to the hexameter portions that precede and follow: here the lines in prose (P, 3–6) set out in the first person the sacred *legomena* of the encounter narrated in third person in the hexameters.[16] So also the contrast of meter in the shift from hexameters to pentameter at

[12] A good example of such ritually marked speech in traditional poetry is noted by Watkins 1976: 38. The description of Nestor's cup at *Il.* 11.628f. is "framed in archaic ring-composition style between two thematically archaic and closely related formulas referring to the performance of a sacral, ritual act (631, παρὰ δ' ἀλφίτου ἱεροῦ ἀκτήν; 640 ἐπὶ δ' ἄλφιτα λευκὰ πάλυνε)" and thus is "in the fullest sense traditional" (see his n. 20 for Indo-European parallels, comparing Hes. *Op.* 597, 805 Δημήτερος ἱερόν ἀκτήν in which "the 'Motionslosigkeit' of the adjective preserves and [sic] archaic shape of the formula itself").

[13] Rappaport 1979 and 1971. Moore and Meyerhoff 1977: 8–9 single out repetition, stylization, ordering, evocative presentational style, and staging as formal features which enable ritual to imitate the rhythmic imperative and processes that attach thereby permanence and legitimacy to what are actually social, political and intellectual structures: "Even in the case of a newly invented ritual (or a ritual performed only once), it is constructed in such a way that its internal repetitions of form and content make it tradition-like" because "it is supposed to carry the same unreflective conviction as any traditional repetitive ritual."

[14] The hexameters of P, 1–2 are less than perfect: not only is τρισόλβιε in line 1 unmetrical (τρισ + vowel scanned as long), but the whole line is hypermetrical, so that the word by itself is not likely to have mechanically supplanted some earlier formula (which, in order to scan, as H. Hoenigswald points out to me, would have to have been something exceedingly short; perhaps the whole end of line was recast). Line 6 of P, corrupt at the end, may originally have been hexametrical (it forms the final line in the shorter version). W. Burkert suggested to me that something has dropped out between a verse beginning οἶνον ἔχεις and the hexameter ending εὐδαίμονα τιμήν.

[15] Watkins 1976: 39 with n. 21 analyzes parallel instances of these phenomena as "phonetic figures."

[16] The prosodic structure of P, unknown to Zuntz 1971, thus effectively confirms his suspicion about the parallel prose locution ("kid in the milk") at A, 12, on which he commented: "the transition from verse to prose is a uniquely effective means of conveying the significance of an important statement" (p. 342; he compared the canon of the Roman Catholic Mass, where everything else may be set to music but not the words of Christ instituting the Eucharist; so also the intentionally monotonous setting of words spoken by Christ in J. S. Bach's passion music; the oracles in Gluck's *Alcestis*; the speaking statue in *Don Giovanni*; the Great Oz in *The Wizard of Oz*). The prose locutions of the shorter B tablets may have been thus similarly marked, being excerpted from a surrounding hexameter context like the corresponding portions of B (where these same locutions, however, appear in hexameters). Other (perhaps "marked") variations in prosody: A, 9 (=A2, line 7) is apparently a pentameter (I see no reason to exclude it from the composite archetype; for the original witness [A2] see Zuntz 1971: 303). The acclamations in A4 line 5 are in trochees.

A, 10,[17] and from hexameters to trochees at A4 line 5 may serve to score an ascending or descending "hierarchy" of relative markedness in ritual utterance.[18]

Each text sketches out a dramatic scenario involving an encounter between an addressee and certain personages (P: Persephone; A: Queen, Eukles, Eubouleus; B: guardians, kings, heroes). The scenario is specifically located: B presents a more detailed sacred geography or roadmap of the underworld; P looks forward to things ὑπο γῆν. The addressee is directed to undertake certain actions ("Go here," "do this") and avoid others: e.g. A, (line) 6: the cycle of deep mourning; B, 7: don't go near the spring by the cypress. There is a variant on this in some individual examples: in the short archetype of the B tablets (K) the addressee is directed to drink from the spring by the cypress; as Janko remarks,[19] one set of initiates has clearly been misdirected.

This culminates in the prescribed recitation of credentials and qualifications for enrollment in a privileged group: "I am the child of earth and heaven; of heaven am I born" (B); "I claim to be of your blessed race" (A, 3: for parallels see below note 45); "say that Bacchios himself set you free" (P).

There is usually a rehearsal of a dramatic encounter or dialogue between addressee and a divinity (A, P) or "guardians" (B). Part of the performative context of the recitation is clearly that of death or a funeral rite: "When he is about to die . . . " "darkness having covered him," "where the dead souls descend," "I come hither, O Queen of the underworld" (B), "Now you died, on this day" (P); possible also initiation: "I have crept beneath . . . " (B), "that Bacchios himself set you free" (P). To this is probably to be added the performance of certain consumption rituals: wine drinking (P), milk libation (A, P), chill draughts from the spring of Mnemosyne (B),[20] as well

[17] Scanning ἕδρας at A, 10 with a "Doric" short alpha as a trochee. Edwards 1971: 142 quotes Troxler 1964 as listing short-vowel accusative plurals in "Tyrtaeus, Alcman, Stesichorus, Simonides, Epicharmus, Empedocles and Theocritus." Henry Hoenigswald (to whom I am grateful for valuable advice) points out to me that this phenomenon does occur in Hesiod (e.g. *Theog.* 804 εἴρας/εἴρας ἐς ἀθανάτους), but that Morpurgo Davies 1964: 138–165 has shown that Hesiod, who, unlike these seven, has no other Doricisms, does not belong in this company. Unlike them and the compositors of the gold leaves, Hesiod will have devised his own short-vowel forms from scratch, without dialectical influence. Zuntz 1971: 317 with n. 2 had argued that the parallels for this line are in lyric and not in Homeric formulae. A single pentameter, after a series of hexameters, is found in some epigrams on stone. Other "Doricisms" that remain in A after a comparison of individual witnesses: A, 1 καθαρά; 5 ποινάν; 12 ἔπετον. In A, 1 one of the three witnesses has κοθαρῶν κοθαρά (cf. *Tabl. Heracl.* 1.103).

[18] Watkins 1976: 39 notes a similar effect in the transition from iambic trimeter to dactylic hexameter in the first two lines of the "Nestor's Cup" inscription: "the contrast of iambic trimeter and dactylic hexameter is iconic to the contrast of the two ποτήρια, and the ascending hierarchy of relative "nobility" of the two meters mirrors the relative evaluation of the two vessels in the poetic message.

[19] Janko 1984: 91.

[20] On the distinction and its significance see Graf 1980: 209–221, and below n. 55.

as processional ritual (B, 19–21 ὁδὸν ... ἱερὴν στείχουσι). P may look forward to further unspecified attractions (P, 7 τέλεα). In all cases, the sequence envisaged is an actively performed one. Success is marked by the attainment of a concrete object marked by an epithet that indicates its positive value as a symbol of preferred status: P, 6 οἶνον εὐδαίμονα; A, 7 ἱμερτοῦ στεφάνου.[21]

Clearly the desired result of the performance is assimilation to a privileged group: "just as the ὄλβιοι ἄλλοι" (P); "with the other initiates (μύσται) and bacchants" (B); "and rule among the other heroes" (B). In addition the addressee may be envisaged as mimetically performing designated roles in animal form: bull, ram (P); kid (A, P).[22] The prescribed recitation of sacred actions, marked here in P by prose, is distinctly reminiscent of the similarly prosaic σύνθημα or *symbolon*, the "password" recited by Eleusinian initiates and quoted by Clement of Alexandria (ἔπιον τὸν κυκεῶνα, ἔλαβον ἐκ κίστης, κτλ., "I drank the barley drink, I took from the basket," etc.).[23] So funeral ritual is not the only possible ritual context alluded to in the texts. The difficulty of identifying the ritual for which the texts were produced, whether funeral or initiation or some other, is made especially clear by ambiguity of the τέλεα promised by P (line 7).[24] These are said to await the addressee in the lower world, i.e. in addition to the ritual described by the text itself. (These future rites correspond to the events predicted for the lucky individual in B, 19–21:

[21] So Segal 1990: 416, adding that both have a personal verb of reacting or attaining (ἔχεις; ἐπέβαν), standing between the noun and its adjective.

[22] Plut. *De anima* ap. Stob. *Flor*. 4.52.4 says that in the final stages of the mysteries the initiate "walks at liberty like a crowned and dedicated victim" (ἄφετος περιὼν ἐστεφανωμένος), and for the crown see A, 6. For the otherwise un-Dionysiac ram, Luppe 1989: 13 adduces a possible parallel in the *Dionysalexandros* of Cratinus, though this is doubted by Segal 1990: 415 n. 17 because of the satyric parody involved.

[23] Clem. Al. *Protr*. 2.21–22 pp. 16–17 Stählin, where the full form reads: "I have fasted, I have drunk the *kykeon*, I have taken from the chest, I have done my task and placed in the basket and from the basket into the chest." Cf. schol. ad Pl., *Grg*. 497c: "I have eaten from the drum, I have drunk from the cymbal, I have carried the offering-dish (*kernos*), I have gone down into the bridal chamber (*pastos*)." Graf 1993 argues that the prose lines 3–6 in P cannot be "passwords," but are rather expressions of the bliss following transformation, on the grounds that giving the right response ("Bacchios himself released me") has already opened the path to blessedness. But this is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of συνθήματα: they are spoken not to achieve access to initiation and its benefits, but to prove or verify that one has been initiated; for this reason they are "taught" to initiates. Zuntz 1971: 318 argued that A, 6–8 which make similar claims in the first person for the initiate's accomplishments cannot be "passwords" comparable to the Eleusinian ones because they are metrical, and thus describe mystical experience, whereas *symbola* describe actual ritual acts performed. I doubt the line of division can be so neatly drawn. Cf. ἔφυγον κακόν· εὗρον ἄμεινον, spoken in various mysteries from as early as Demosthenes (a *versus paroemiacus*, but is it poetry?).

[24] Even if τέλεα here means "prizes," "honors," "dignities" or the like, it probably carries connotations of the initiatory sense as well: see Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 15; Segal 1990: 411 n. 2.

the sacred drinking-procession with the other μύσται καὶ βάκχοι).[25] But are the actions that are prescribed in the text, and is the inscription of the text itself, parts of a ritual of initiation, or rather those of a funeral? Our confusion here is partly due to the similarity, often noted by anthropologists, between funeral rites and procedures for initiation. Since a very common feature of initiations is for the novice to undergo a symbolic or metaphorical "death" and then be "reborn" as a new initiate, rites of initiation often take on the trappings, actions and language of death rites – and vice versa (death being viewed as the ultimate age transition).[26] The current scholarly opinion on the gold leaves favors funeral rites, though this is based mainly on the fact that the texts were all found in burials, together with the eschatological imagery of the texts, which may of course relate to a myth deemed significant in some other ritual context.[27]

But the fact that the exact ritual context remains unrecoverable need not make it completely impossible to discern an intelligible ritual pattern in the locutions of these texts. This may be even more significant than knowing the original context for which the texts were inscribed and/or performed. (At any rate it may compensate somewhat for the loss of that context.) The poetry and ritual (whether initiatory or funeral) are each different ways of provoking a rehearsal of the addressee's credentials and qualifications for enrollment among a privileged group, and eventually among the souls of the blessed dead, heroes, kings, and divinities of the Underworld. They give us a glimpse into what the dead are supposed to *do* down there, for which remarkable accomplishments they are to achieve the status of the truly great. The responses prescribed by the texts require their addressees to practice behaving performatively in speech, not in the sense of acting out roles or parts (which they then come unwittingly to assume as "initiates"), but in Austin's original sense of the speech-act as performative,[28] as doing something, with the perlocutionary outcome (read: admission to the

[25] On the possible performative force, however, of the future tense here see below p. 306 with n. 54.

[26] van Gennep 1960: 65–115, 146–165, first published as *Les rites de passage* (Paris, 1909), noted how often even anthropologists with an intimate knowledge of a culture could be mistaken in telling the two apart. The similarity and frequent confusion by anthropologists of funeral rites with those of age transition, initiation, and marriage is also noted in Turner 1969: 94–130 and Douglas: 1966: 29–40, 159–179.

[27] Segal 1990: 414 and passim favors "funerary performance," though he gives some good reasons for preferring initiation (p. 13: double copies of P in the same grave suggests that both are copies of a pre-existing formula, rather than an ad hoc creation for burial). Graf 1993 favors funerals, but is hesitant. I note that in the Greek pagan tradition *threnoi* are composed for particular occasions, and there is in general no set liturgy for funerals (though one did exist for marriage rites e.g. Pherecydes B2 DK on the *anakalupteria*).

[28] Austin 1962: esp. 4–24.

privileged group) being in this case pre-programmed by the mimesis of the ritual drama. That is to say the language of the texts is marked as ritual in the first instance by the fact that these locutions are obviously not verifiable as true or false. Yet at the same time they clearly presuppose a stylized, conventional context in which they would be at home and make a kind of sense ("be felicitous" in Austin's terminology), as well as achieve a perlocutionary or functional end. As the addressees are made to rehearse their responses, it is as though the gold leaves offer a crash-course, if you will, on how to do things with words. For it is as a result of speaking the appropriate response as prescribed by the text (or perhaps reciting the text as a whole, or even hearing it recited) that the addressees act to directly achieve the goal of enrollment among the privileged and blessed in the Underworld, or, for the living, as devotees of an exclusive private cult.

What is it then that the words of the gold leaves "do"? What is the pattern enacted, and by and for whom? It may be relevant to draw attention here to the fact that a striking number of the texts were composed grammatically to address a woman. This is the case with the A texts (line 1 καθαρά),[29] while one of the six leaves from Eleutherna, Crete (B6 = K4 Janko), has the variant θυγάτηρ in place of the υἱός or παῖς that appears here in the other B series texts.[30] And in A5 the woman Caecilia Secundina is actually addressed by name.[31] In the cases of at least two other texts, the gold leaves are known from the archaeological remains actually to have been buried with women

[29] A, 1 καθαρά (one witness has κοθαρά), a feminine nominative attributive adjective in apposition with the (presumably feminine) subject of ἔρχομαι. That this must be so should have been obvious from a comparison with A5 where the name of the woman, Caecilia Secundina, addressed as καθαρά in line 1, actually appears (in line 4). Zuntz 1971: 306 thought that the feminine καθαρά was in apposition with an unstated noun ψυχή, i.e. of the dead person addressed, and he is followed, e.g. by Lloyd-Jones 1985; Graf 1993 raises as a possibility the position I argue for here. In all fairness to Zuntz, it will be readily admitted that the dead person's ψυχή is mentioned in A4 line 1; but two lines later when the initiate is addressed, he is named in the masculine: line 3 παθών; the addressees clearly retain their identities as persons. P, which was buried with a woman – her description in the literature as a "maenad" is based solely on the fact that a statuette of a maenad was found outside the burial chamber (she probably was a female devotee of Dionysus) – seems to have been composed in such a way as to accommodate addressees of either gender: τρισόλβιε in P, 1 could be masculine or feminine. (For the possible reading of a feminine participle in P,7 see Luppe 1989: 13–14).

[30] In the composite I retain παῖς with Janko 1984: 95 who suggests it was introduced to make the text applicable to both genders (but this would ignore the masculine participle πιών in line 20). It is true θυγάτηρ spoils the meter, though this could easily be rectified, and υἱός as in the other K texts is also uncomfortable scanned as an iamb.

[31] For her distinguished ancestry (A5 line 2 ἀγλαά = *clarissima*), possibly including the elder and younger Pliny, see G. Murray and J. Harrison in Harrison 1903: 585 n. 4, 674; Zuntz 1971: 334 n. 1, and cf. Martial 7.84 – assuming that she was the daughter of a Caecilius Secundus. John Morgan suggested to me that she may have been the daughter of a Caecilius Secundus, styled as the diminutive (relatively uncommon) "Secundina" to avoid confusion with the formation "Caecilia Secunda" designating the second daughter of a Caecilius.

(Hipponium among the B texts, while the Pelinna texts, in the shape of ivy leaves, were found in the grave of a "maenad").[32] A familiar sequence of actions in Greek myth is that of a woman who metaphorically or in actuality dies, descends to the Underworld or is translated to some suitably "other" stylization of the place of death (Egypt, Tauris), and either through her own actions or the intervention of one of several heroes returns (at least periodically or metaphorically) to the world of the living and eventually assumes immortality and the status of a heroine. The pattern, well represented by the Demeter and Kore myth, was dramatized by Euripides in a series of plays (of which we have *Helen*, *Alcestis*, and the *Iphigenia at Aulis*) which have been studied as "*anodos* dramas" by J.-P. Guépin and more recently by Helene Foley.[33] This particular pattern has been connected with age transition rituals, cultic initiation, and even marriage. Because women who died before reaching a marriageable age were customarily "married to Hades" in funeral ceremony, often a male is analogously grafted onto the sequence as husband who is made to undergo a similar sequence and received a similar kind of immortality by association with the woman's fame (e.g. Menelaus in Euripides' *Helen*, cf. the prediction of eternal happiness in the Elysian field for Menelaus at *Odyssey* 4.563ff., specifically said at 4.569f. to be a result of his association with Helen). Like the gold leaves, this pattern clearly also articulates a connection between the upper and lower worlds, between life and death, and it is particularly in this respect that the newly established Dionysiac connections of the new Pelinna tablet, the Hipponium tablet and the bone plates from Olbia become particularly interesting. The chorus of the *Alcestis* (965–967), for example, is strikingly aware of "Thracian tablets" (Θρήσσαις ἐν σανίσιν) on which are written the "songs of Orpheus' voice" (Ὀρφεία κατέγραψεν / γήρυς) and which promise to defeat the necessity of death.[34] It would thus be interesting to see

[32] Hipponium: Foti and Pugliese Carratelli 1974: 91–126; Pelinna: Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 3–17.

[33] Guépin 1968: passim, esp. 120–133 and 137–142; Foley 1992: 133–160.

[34] Segal 1990: 418. The chorus' insistence that such tablets do *not* defeat the necessity of death is belied by the outcome of the drama (see also 617–619 where Pheres might well be thought to deposit a gold leaf in Alcestis' grave; δέχου δὲ *κόσμον τόνδε*, καὶ κατὰ χθονὸς/ ἴτω). The civic-minded chorus immediately make the same suspicious rejection of the φάρμακα of Asclepius, whose "death" initiates the action of the play (lines 1ff.). And they go directly on to predict (955–1005) that Alcestis' tomb will be honored not like the graves of corpses who have died but like the shrines of divinities, while Alcestis herself will be revered as πότνια, for νῦν δ' ἐστὶ δαίμων (1003). Nor can there be any question of Dionysus coming here in competition with Orpheus: the scholion on 966–972 quotes Heraclides Ponticus as authority for the existence of a collection of Orphic σανίδες at a temple of Dionysus on the Thracian Haemus.

the gold leaf texts as presenting a kind of diminutive *anodos* drama, charting the boundaries and passage between old and young, human and animal, male and female, individual and group, and between life and death to something like personal immortality and even divinity.[35] Dionysus fits here. The identical pattern is recapitulated in the motif of his catabasis and successful rescue of a dead mortal from Hades as parodied in the *Frogs*, as well as in the death of Semele in the *Bacchae*[36] and her revivification in Pindar and Hesiod:

ἀθάνατον θνητή· νῦν δ' ἀμφοότεροι θεοί εἰσιν.[37]

The prominence given Persephone in the gold leaf texts (P, 2; A, 1, 8; A4 line 6, C) and her mother in their Eleusinian connections, especially in light of the gender of the addressees, makes the pattern of ἄνοδος or ἀναγωγή more attractive as a dramatic scenario with the appearance of each new gold leaf.[38]

Charles Segal has suggested that the Pelinna text in fact has its own "quasi-dramatic" structure: noting the urgent tone in νῦν of the first line of P together with the immediacy of ἄματι τῷδε at the end of the line, and αἶψα of line 4, he suggests that these markers of urgency contrast with the calmer mood of the last line, the assurance of the bliss that awaits the addressee. This "progression from crisis in the present to a calm view of the future that 'awaits,' ἐπιμένει," and from "intensity to reassurance, constitutes the dynamics or implicit drama of the represented event."[39] Segal points out that this dramatic movement is scored in the text by the return to the long hexametric verse in the final line answering the long

[35] It might be objected that the texts could at best represent a kind of *kathodos* drama, since we seem to be dealing with the dead and their fortunes in the underworld. This would not however be so if the addressees are simply initiates into private cult, and the funeral and eschatological imagery simply vehicles for the new life one takes on as an initiate. And in any case the texts clearly have as their stated goal some form of rebirth or revivification: P, 1; A, 11; B, 19–21. Segal 1990: 414 thinks that the dramatic movement of P is better understood literally, because of the placement of the leaves in the grave, as referring to the addressee's death and fortunes in the next life, though he notes that it would also be effective to mark the initiate's symbolic death and rebirth. Note that A, 2 invokes "Eukles," who is probably parallel or equivalent to "Theoklymenos" of Euripides' *Helen* (the plot of which turns on a dialogue ἄγων with that shadowy king), and the Eleusinian variant "Diokles" of *Hymn. Hom. Cer*. 174, 475, 479.

[36] Both cited by Segal 1990: 417 (together with Soph. *Ant*. 1114–21 and 1284) who does not, however, make any claim for the connection between this pattern in Attic drama and myth and the dramatic structure of the gold leaves.

[37] Hes. *Theog*. 940ff.; Pind. *Ol*. 2.25 ζώει μὲν ἐν Ὀλυμπίοις ἀποθανοῖσα; Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.5.3; Dodds on Eur. *Bacch*. 6–12.

[38] According to schol. ad Pl. *Gorg*. 497c, the Greater mysteries (i.e. at Eleusis) "were celebrated in honor of Demeter and Kore, because Pluton carried off Kore, and Zeus slept with Deo."

[39] Segal 1990: 414–15.

hexametric (though slightly unmetrical) text of line 1; and by the progression of the aorist verbs of the first five lines to the present tense in the last two verses, ἔχεις and ἐπιμένει. In addition, the initiate, pronominally addressed as τρισόλβιος in the first line is finally incorporated pronominally in the ὄλβιοι in the climax of the final line.

A similar sort of structure can be discerned in the B composite. Here the urgency of the insistent ὦκα of line 16 is answered reassuringly by the particle δή in line 20. Ultimately a sacred path emerges from the murky geography of the Underworld; this welcome path is envisaged as traversed by the initiate while drinking, after likewise joining the "other initiates" in the penultimate line. In the A composite, the announcement of arrival (line 1, ἔρχομαι) culminates after the recitation of accomplishments in the climactic declaration of suppliancy in line 8: νῦν δ' ἱκέτις ἥκω, answered reassuringly by Persephone with the *makarismos* in line 10. The poem of the A composite also ends on the same note on which it began, namely ritual purity: A "pure from the pure" enters before the presences of Persephone; to the sojourn of the pure (A, 10 ἕδρας ἐς εὐαγέων)[40] she hopes to be sent by her. And the final hexameter verse (the *makarismos* that you shall be a god from a mortal) meaningfully echoes the first verse of the poem ("I come pure from the pure").

Comparable for its mention of ritual language relaying messages to the underworld and its powers is the first stasimon of Euripides' *Helen*, in which Helen invokes the Sirens as "daughters of Earth" to hymn her sorrows, that Persephone herself might respond in return for receipt of a paean for the dead (lines 167–178):

> πτεροφόροι νεάνιδες, | παρθένοι Χθονὸς κόραι, | Σειρῆνες, εἴθ' ἐμοῖς | †γόοις μόλοιτ' ἔχουσαι Λίβυν | λωτὸν ἢ σύριγγας ἢ | φόρμιγγας αἰλίνοις κακοῖς† | τοῖς ἐμοῖσι σύνοχα δάκρυα, | πάθεσι πάθεα, μέλεσι μέλεα, | μουσεῖα θρηνήμα|σι ξυνωιδά, πέμψαιτε | Φερσέφασσα †φονία χάριτας† | ἵν' ἐπὶ δάκρυσι παρ' ἐμέθεν ὑπὸ | μέλαθρα νύχια παιᾶνα | νέκυσιν ὀλομένοις λάβηι.

Winged maidens, daughters of earth, O Sirens, if you would only come to attend my mourning with Libyan harp, with pipes, with lyres, with tears of your own to give the singing of all my unhappiness; then would Persephone of the dead send passion for passion, sorrow for sorrow, melody matching my dirges, that she in turn might receive in her halls of night a paean for the dead who are mourned.

It is significant here that Helen presumes in her lament that in the nether world the Sirens engage in responsional interchange with Persephone in

[40] Probably to be equated with the place of the ἥρωες of B, 21 and that described by Pindar *Ol.* 2.61–67.

musical (i.e. poetic) form. As the otherworldly avatars of the souls of untimely dead women, the tuneful chorus of dead maidens are here probably to be thought of as perpetually so engaged, frozen timelessly in the liminal twilight zone occupied only in passing by the souls of the gold leaves. For this reason Helen can call on them to act as go-between with Persephone and thus, locutionally through responsional sacred poetry (here paeanic hymn for the dead), to allow her return to the world of the living (i.e. reunion with husband, return to Argos), or, like the souls of the gold leaves, to pass safely to the places of the blessed. Odysseus' otherworldly, Nekyia-like encounter with the dead maidens may be similarly seen to form part of the backdrop against which the compositors of the gold leaves worked – with the Sirens likewise enticing Odysseus through promises of secret knowledge as they seductively interweave imitations and quotations of Iliadic hexameters into their sacred, deadly song.[41]

Some scholars even postulated that the gold leaf texts originally had been speeches excerpted from longer hymns[42] or poems, and adapted as scripts for the performance of funerals[43] or initiations.[44] One problem with this view, however, is that in several cases the texts of the gold leaves refer to themselves as linguistic objects, as inscribed artifacts: "This (τόδε) is the tablet of Memory; let him write this (τόδε) . . . " (B, 1–2); "This (τόδε) is the gift of Memory" (A5 line 3). This self-referentiality draws attention to the fact that as objects bearing inscribed utterances, they are supposed to *do*

[41] *Od.* 12.184–91. Promises of secret knowledge, reiterated: 11.189 ἴδμεν γὰρ τοι πάνθ' ὅσα, 191 ἴδμεν δ' ὅσσα γένηται, echoing the second invocation, *Il.* 2.485–486. In *Od.*, of course, they may be thought to be lying outright. Iliadic quotation: *Od.* 11.184 (their address to Odysseus) = *Il.* 9.673 πολύαιν' Ὀδυσεῦ, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν. See Pucci 1979: 121–132, esp. for implications for an oral text. On aspects of Sirenic voice and memory: Ford 1992: 83–84, 169, 176–177, 191 n. 60. Thamyris, who similarly vied with the Muses, had his voice taken away by them and in consequence was made into a singer without memory (*Il.* 2.594–600 αὐτὰρ ἀοιδὴν / θεσπεσίην ἀφέλοντο καὶ ἐκλέλαθον / κιθαριστύν). On memory and audience: Segal 1992: 3–29.

[42] Tablet C may have contained the lament of Persephone introduced but unfulfilled at *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 20f. (unfortunately it was copied by a scribe working from memory or oral performance who produced, apart from the odd formula, largely sounds without sense).

[43] Zuntz 1971: 306–345, esp. 339–345: "part of a Pythagorean *Missa pro defunctis*." Further subscribers to this view at Zuntz 1971: 278 n. 3.

[44] Wieten 1915: 148 imagines part of a didactic Ἱερὸς Λόγος in hexameters which taught the faithful what awaited them after death and how they were to face it, and was used in dramatic mystery celebrations involving the mystic death and resurrection of initiates. See also Zuntz 1971: 343. Janko 1984: 97, following Pugliese Carratelli 1975: 228–229, provides an interesting combination of the two views – funerals vs. initiations – accounting for the variations in individual versions of the texts: "The initiates must have undergone a certain doctrinal preparation, which, if it did not prevent alterations in their sacred texts, did preserve them from incomprehensible deformations . . . The redactors of the Ἱερὸς Λόγος, writing down versions from time to time upon the burial of an initiate, might reassemble its formulae as each knew or could, perhaps even from memory." [See Riedweg, Chapter 9 this volume.]

something, i.e. be ritually effective. The fact that part of the ritual involved the actual inscription of *legomena* and *drômena* may suggest further that the performative elements of their narratives are only putatively enacted, that their recitation or inscription alone is deemed to be ritually effective. As inscribed artifacts the gold leaves could be seen as the response of specifically religious groups (i.e. private cults) or itinerant technicians at a time when writing threatened to substitute for the poetic or ritual performance of the deceased's deeds and credentials in a ritual context.

It is thus possible to address the question of the distance that lies between a given (quasi-literary) text and a ritual formula. Since there is no clear distinction between "literary" and "religious" language in these texts (and possible not even in this period), it would be incorrect to say that the ritual text in this case "imitates" (= is parasitical upon) epic poetry or literary language, or is simply derivative from it, since cultic language may present itself as imitating an earlier divine (or divinely inspired) speech act recorded or remembered in poetic form.[45] A clear example of this is to be found at B, 14 Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος, which seems to "imitate" (if that is the right word):

[45] For the sake of illustration, I give a representative selection of such "imitations" of early hexameter mythological poetry, mostly Homeric and sub-Homeric, incorporated in their poem by the compositor(s) of A (this list is not complete):

A, 2 καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι: formula at *Il.* 3.298, 308, 18.116; *Od.* 14.53, 119, etc.
A, 3 καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν: *Il.* 2.377, 6.365; *Od.* 7.24; *Hymn Hom. Merc.* 450.
A, 3 καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμῶν γένος εἶναι: cf. Epimenides 3 B 2,1 DK καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ γένος εἰμι Σεληνης ἠυκόμοιο; Cleanthes, *Hymn ad Jovem* 4 ἐκ σοῦ (sc. Διός) γὰρ γενόμενσθα (Meinecke's emendation for γένος ἐσμέν of the ms.); Aratus *Phaen.* 5 τοῦ (sc. Διός) γὰρ καὶ γένος εἰμεν; Acts 17, 28 τοῦ γὰρ γένος ἐσμέν.
A, 3 εὔχομαι εἶναι: *Od.* 14.204, 21.335; *Il.* 21.187, 14.113, 6.211 = 20.241.
A, 4 ἀλλά με Μοῖρ' ἐδάμασσε καὶ: *Il.* 18.119 ἀλλά με μοῖρα ἐδάμασσε καὶ ἀργαλέος χόλος Ἥρας (Achilles speaking of Herakles); *Il.* 16.849 ἀλλά με Μοῖρα ὀλοὴ καὶ Λητοῦς ἔκτανεν υἱός (Patroklos).
A, 4 at line-end καὶ ἀστεροπῆτα κεραυνῶι: *Od.* 5.128 Ζεὺς, ὅς μιν κατέφνε βαλὼν ἀργῆτι κεραυνῷ, and other verses ending on κεραυνῷ: *Od.* 5.131, 7.249, 12.387 (always the thunderbolt of Zeus), esp. *Il.* 15.117 εἴ πέρ μοι καὶ μοῖρα Διὸς πληγέντι κεραυνῷ κεῖσθαι.
A, 5 ποινὰν δ' ἀνταπέτεσ' ἔργων ἕνεκ' οὔτι δικαίων: cf. Pind. *Ol.* 2.57 ἀπάλαμνοι φρένες ποινὰς ἔτεισαν, fr. 133 οἵσι γὰρ ἂν Φερσεφόνα ποινὰν παλαιοῦ πένθεος δέξεται. (Are the leaves "echoing" Pindar, or is Pindar "echoing" with artful variation the liturgy of some ἱερὸς λόγος?)
A, 6 ἀργαλέοιο at verse end: *Il.* 11.812, 16.528; *Od.* 24.531.
A, 7 ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι at verse end: *Il.* 16.342, 22.166; *Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 225.
A, 8 ὑπὸ κόλπον ἔδυν: Teucer seeks protection in battle from his big brother: *Il.* 8.271 παῖς ὥς ὑπὸ μητέρα, δύσκεν εἰς Αἴανθ'; Hektor's son, *Il.* 6.467 πρὸς κόλπον . . . τιθήνης ἐκλίνθη; the queen of Eleusis carrying her infant son in her bosom meets Demeter, *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 187 παῖδ' ὑπὸ κόλπωι ἔχουσα; the goddess of the sea receives Dionysos and Hephaistos *Il.* 6.136 and 18.398 Θέτις δ' ὑπεδέξατα κόλπωι.

A4 line 1 Ἀλλ' ὁπόταν ψυχὴ προλίπηι φάος ἀελίοιο: see below, note 49.

οἳ Γῆς τ' ἐξεγένοντο καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος.[46]

The formulae of this line doubtless suggested themselves to the compositors of B because of their repeated resonances and associations in Hesiod's poem with cosmogony and especially with the Titans. Another clear instance occurs at A, 4 ἀλλά με Μοῖρ' ἐδάμασσε καὶ ἀστεροπῆτα κεραυνῶι, an amphiboly of a type common in Homer, as, for example, at *Il.* 18.119 ἀλλά με Μοῖρ' ἐδάμασσε καὶ ἀργαλέος χόλος Ἥρας. But here too the dependence is neither arbitrary nor mechanical: in Homer souls frequently couch their description of their manner of death in the form of such an amphiboly: e.g. Elpenor at *Od.* 11.61 ἆσέ με δαίμονος αἶσα κακὴ καὶ ἀθέσφατος οἶνος.[47] In this case there is an even closer "model" for the utterance of A, 4; as the dying Patroklos says to Hektor (*Il.* 16.849):

> ἀλλά με μοῖρ' ὀλοὴ καὶ Λητοῦς ἔκτανεν υἱός
> ἀνδρῶν δ' Εὔφορβος· σὺ δέ με τρίτος ἐξεναρίζεις
>
> Deadly destiny and Leto's son [Apollo] have killed me,
> and of men it was Euphorbus; you are the third to slay me.

For one facing death but temporarily lodged in the liminal drama of funeral or initiatory ritual, A, 4's "*But Destiny and* the lord of lightning with his bolt *subdued me*"[48] must have seemed like a typologically sacred, special utterance, spoken out of the distant, poetic, oral past.[49] From a performative point of view, the whole point about recapitulating the Homeric formulae

[46] Hes. *Theog.* 106, from the "third" proem to that poem, immediately after the final invocation of the Muses and thus at the very beginning of the cosmogony proper; cf. 45, 154 (Kottos, Briareos, and Gyes), 421 (Hekate) where it is significant which gods are indicated (cf. A, 3).

[47] Sometimes classed as instances of "double motivation" or "overdetermination": see Edwards 1987: 135, cf. 231, 263–264, 318.

[48] I would paraphrase: "I died (it doesn't matter how), and so now have paid the penalty." Thus A4's (unmetrical) variant εἶτα ... εἶτα makes the amphiboly explicit. Zuntz objects that the speaker surely *knows* whether or not she died by being struck *by lightning*. But I have pointed out above that Homeric souls often allude to their manner of death in the form of an amphiboly. It is true that this de-emphasizes the death by lightning, which was always problematic. Zuntz's explanation that the dead person was actually killed by lightning fails to convince because it occurs in all three texts (A1–A3), each in a different burial (though in the same mound). The other explanation, now adopted by Graf, that the motif alludes to Zeus' punishment of the Titans for cooking up baby Dionysus Zagreus is preposterous, for there is neither parallel nor motivation for Zeus' continuing to punish *by lightning* the human descendants of the Titans (once thus punished). I take the reference to death by lightning as fairly transparently indicating that this is a death, literal or metaphorical, that *results in heroicization* as promised in the texts. (Cf. the use made of Semele's death through Zeus' lightning bolt, completely unrelated to his punishment of the Titans, at Eur. *Bacch.* 6–12; see also n. 37 above). Similarly, the whole point of recapitulating the Homeric formula (especially in light of its Iliadic context) is that the addressee is made to verbally claim honors in cult comparable to figures of the heroic, poetic past.

[49] I have stressed above (n. 11) the necessity for examining every such parallel in its original context in order to determine precisely what might have qualified it for recapitulation by the compositors of the

in the gold leaves may be that the addressee is made to verbally (and in an ulterior, "marked" voice) claim honors in cult comparable to figures of the heroic, poetic past.

Since these texts accompanied the deceased to the grave, it is also possible to see the putative performance of deeds and speech prescribed by the texts as messages and speech acts projected into the nether world[50] and the next life, the performance of which is to be thought of as continuing or taking place in the next life.[51] It is for these deeds that the soon to be blessed dead are praised in the texts in recited, poetic form. The ultimate objective is of course revivification, rebirth, immortality. The tablets thus offer an immortality that consists primarily in the possession of poetry that preserves memory or activates it in advance. In the same way Pindar on several occasions activates Mnemosyne and makes her instrumental in communicating the poem's news of the victory to the victor's dead ancestors, i.e. to relay messages to the underworld and its powers (e.g. *Olympian* 8.70–83; so also Echo at the end of *Olympian* 14).[52]

Pindar in his sixth *Isthmian* can be seen as operating in a similar performative context.[53] The poem, divided into three parts, consists of a long mythical portion about the descendants of Aiakos (lines 19–59), preceded by a two-stanza introduction and followed by a two-stanza conclusion. In both of the first two sections, Lampon, the father of the victor, rather than

gold leaves as appropriately representing divine speech. (Certainly a good deal more could be said in this light than I have done here.) An example that will bear scrutiny is A4.1 Ἀλλ' ὁπόταν ψυχὴ προλίπῃι φάος ἀελίοιο, appropriately "modeled" on *Il.* 18.11 = Hes. *Op.* 155 λείπεν (ἔλιπον) φάος Ἠελίοιο (cf. Pind. *Isthm.* 6.62 discussed below; *OF* 223, 6 Kern); *Hom. Hymn. Aphr. (Hymn.* 5) 272 τῶν δέ χ' ὁμοῦ ψυχὴ λείποι φάος ἠελίοιο (I owe this reference to Jenny Clay: further below n. 56). Similarly, A4 line 6 where καὶ ἄλσεα Φερσεφονείας = *Od.* 10.509, and the holy meadows are an echo of the ἀσφόδελος λειμών in the Nekyia.

[50] Graf 1993 points out that the final hexameter in P (that rites/prizes await you "below the earth") is spoken from the level of the living, addressed to someone going down. As he notes, apposite here is the Eleusinian *makarismos* at *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 480–485 (the initiates will have a different fate "under the dark earth"), Pind. fr. 137 and Soph. fr. 753 N^2, which address those who will go "under the earth."

[51] The performance of rituals in the underworld is envisaged already in Aristophanes *Frogs*. In so far as these acts are projected into the future in the gold leaf texts, but experienced / recited / heard as performed in the here and now (I mean by initiates or mourners), it is tempting to regard the future tenses in the gold leaves as "performative" futures in the sense discussed below (with note 41, cf. Pind. *Nem.* 6.74 πίσω σφε Δίρκας ἀγνὸν ὕδωρ), i.e. as bringing about their perlocutionary consequences immediately in the present. In this case I would see P, 7 ἐπιμενεῖ (and perhaps even the very notion itself of rewards *after death*) as a literalization or remythologizing of this very traditional and ritual device of speech.

[52] On these passages and the eschatological topoi presupposed by epinician memory and praise see Segal 1985: 199–212.

[53] In what follows I am summarizing the argument of Chris Faraone in a forthcoming study of this ode, of which I benefitted from having seen an advance version. [Now Faraone 2002.]

the victor himself, is made the focus of the poet's attentions. This poem ends with great praise for him (lines 66–76):

> Λάμπων δὲ μελέταν | ἔργοις ὀπάζων Ἡσιό|δου μάλα τιμᾷ τοῦτ' ἔπος, | υἱοῖσί τε φράζων παραινεῖ, | ξυνὸν ἄστει κόσμον ἐῷ προσάγων· | καὶ ξένων εὐεργεσίαις ἀγαπᾶται, | μέτρα μὲν γνώμᾳ διώκων, μέτρα δὲ καὶ κατέχων | γλῶσσα δ' οὐκ ἔξω φρενῶν φαί|ης κέ νιν ἄνδρ' ἐν ἀεθληταῖσιν ἔμμεν | Ναξίαν πέτραις ἐν ἄλλαις χαλκοδάμαντ' ἀκόναν. | πίσω σφε Δίρκας ἁγνὸν ὕ|δωρ, τὸ βαθύζωνοι κόραι | χρυσοπέπλου Μναμοσύνας ἀνέτει|λαν παρ' εὐτειχέσιν Κάδμου πύλαις.
>
> But Lampon, lavish
> in his devotion to work, truly keeps alive and honors
> Hesiod's advice, and recommends (παραινεῖ) it to his sons,
> bringing glory to his city in the eyes of all.
> He is loved for his kindnesses to strangers, following
> measure in his thought, achieving
> measure in his deeds.
> His speech never wanders
> from his mind's control.
> You would say of him
> that he is, among athletes, a Naxian whetstone
> among other stones, a sharpener of bronze.
> I will offer him to drink of the sacred water (ἁγνὸν ὕδωρ)
> of Dirka, which the slim-waisted daughters
> of Memory in her golden robes have made to spring by the strong
> gates of Kadmos. (trans. Nisetich)

The conclusion of the ode serves to identify the poet, his homeland, and the genre of poetry in which he excels. The reference to Dirke, the famous Theban river, is usually interpreted biographically, as sealing the poem as Pindar's (his house was believed to have been nearby). The gold leaf texts suggest that the stream, haunted by the daughters of Mnemosyne, has other connotations here. The future tense of the verb πίσω in the penultimate line is a so-called "performative" future, which (as Bundy and Slater have shown)[54] refers not to planned or intended action, or even as equivalent to a hortatory subjunctive in a wish (i.e. "I'd like to toast . . . "), but rather to the present action of the ode, including its composition and presentation; thus the performance of the ode (or the poem itself) is assimilated to the presentation of a drink of poetically sacred Theban water, with its immortalizing effect. (The similarity of function between Pindar's "drink"

[54] Bundy 1986: 21; Slater 1969: 86–94. For other examples of the performative future in Pindar see *Ol.* 11.79m 84; *Pyth.* 9.89; *Nem.* 7.61. In tragedy, see Henrichs 1994–95, nn. 24, 65, 76, 106.

produced by the daughters of Memory and the revivifying "drink from the pool of Memory" in the gold leaves (B, 16–17, 19; K, 1–2; cf. P, 5–6; A, 12)[55] is confirmed by the fact that the Hellenistic scholiasts on Pindar duly concluded, rightly or wrongly, that Lampon was extremely aged, tottering on the brink of death.)

The ode's proem had compared the genre of *epinikia* to a series of after-dinner libations: a previous ode to the victor's brother at Nemea (=*Nem.* 5) is there likened to the traditional first "toast" to Olympian Zeus; the present Isthmian ode is assimilated to the second libation to the Heroes and the Earth; and a projected, third victory song will match the final offering to Zeus Soter. The poet reiterates these images in the midst of the mythic portion of the ode, where Herakles offers a libation and a flattering prophecy about Telamon's unborn child Ajax (Aeginetans traced their ancestry back through Telamon to Aeacus). At lines 63–64 we find another image of libation used to describe the positive benefits which Lampon and family bring to the Aeginetan people: they are said to nurture their πάτρα with the glittering waters of the Graces.

The libation at the ode's conclusion, then, completes this series of images and singles out the victor's father Lampon, who was similarly praised in a discussion of death and fame at the opening of the ode (lines 10–18). There Pindar says that on account of the glory of his son's victory, Lampon welcomes death, having "already cast his anchor at the furthest shore of happiness" (12–13 ἐσχαταῖς ἤνη πρὸς ὄλβου / βάλλετ' ἄγκυραν), which may well recall underworld eschatology in the myth of the Isles of the Blessed. Later in line 62 in reference to songs generated by the family's

[55] It is my view that B, 16–17, 19 and K, 1–2 substitute water for what in A, 12 and P, 5–6 are references to libations or draughts of milk and wine. (After all, what else can one do with substances like milk and wine besides drink them or pour them in libation or both, as is usual in ritual contexts?) For a possible significance for the distinction between water and wine in libation see n. 20 above and below n. 59; cf. Henrichs 1983: 87–100. For the distinction recognized in an Orphic context: Henrichs 1984a: 255–268. Apposite may be the ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ sought from Osiris in inscribed prayers from Alexandria and elsewhere in Egypt, Carthage, and Italy. Rohde 1925: 576 with n. 152 had argued that the "cool water" inscriptions developed among Greeks and Romans along the lines of earlier *Greek* traditions, especially as exemplified in the Orphic gold leaves. Recently Delia 1992: 181–190, in a complete review of the inscriptional evidence, argues that the formulae of the "cool water" inscriptions derive from ancient *Egyptian* religious ritual and belief. This does not, however, preclude an earlier, parallel connection between the language and procedure of the gold leaves and the original Egyptian context of the "cool water" formulae. The matter clearly requires further study. Parallels between the Orphic gold leaves and the eschatological imagery and instructional format of the spells in the Middle Kingdom *Pyramid Texts* and the New Kingdom *Book of the Dead* are treated by Delia 1992: 182–189, and Zuntz 1971: 370–376 who did not deny the possibility of Egyptian antecedents, concluding (p. 376): "the Greek gold leaves are not comprehensive 'guide books', like the Egyptian, but centre on one single and final situation." Further on the thirsting dead: Deonna 1939: 53–77; Delia 1992: 185 with n. 30. See now Dousa in this volume, Chapter 6.

victories, the poet uses the phrase ἀνάγειν ἐς φάος, "to bring back to the light," which elsewhere in Greek is used only in descriptions of the successful return of a hero from a trip to the Underworld, i.e. a type of myth which focuses on the inability of all but a few to conquer death.[56]

Chris Faraone suggests that in the epilogue of the sixth *Isthmian*, Pindar is alluding to the same myth and performative pattern found in the gold leaves.[57] In both cases the offered drink delivers eternal bliss and a kind of immortality to the recipient.[58] The "chill water flowing from the pool of Memory" (B, 7 and 16) is transformed by Pindar into the "holy water" of the Dirke, which the "Daughters of Memory" cause to spring up near Thebes.[59] There remains, however, a difference: Pindar suggests in reference to Lampon that death itself may be, if not overcome, at least mitigated by the power of song, and uses language and images that suggest a connection between Lampon's present happiness and the bliss that awaits a select few in the next life. The B composite, on the other hand, is usually understood according to one particular interpretation of Orphic doctrine, as meaning that the magical drink from the mythical pool of Memory ensures that the person will remember past lives, not be further reincarnated, and thus gain eternal happiness. Like Pindar, however, the texts of the gold leaves may at least originally have entailed that performance of the poetry of the text, through either recitation at the appropriate time or inscription on durable material for later reading or re-enactment, will effectively grant happiness and immortality. Pindar could also be seen as offering in the epilogue of the sixth *Isthmian* an exegesis of the sacred doctrine (as he similarly treats other

[56] Jenny Clay reminds me that at *Hymn. Hom. Aphr.* (*Hymn.* 5) 256–272 the souls of the nymphs whom Aphrodite predicts will nurture her son together with their associated trees, are said eventually to leave the light of the sun together: τῶν δέ χ' ὁμοῦ ψυχὴ λείποι φάος ἠελίοιο (272).

[57] See n. 53 above.

[58] For other instances of the epinician compared to a preliminary water libation in hero cult see *Pyth.* 5.94–104 (the other Cyrenaic hero-kings whose portion is in Hades, hear in their χθονίᾳ φρενί of the victor's lofty prowess besprinkled with soft dew = libations, Lefkowitz 1985: 52f. with n. 60); *Pyth.* 8.57 (to the hero Alcmaeon); *Isthm.* 1.4. Cf. *kleos* as an unfailing stream of water, e.g. *Nem.* 7.61–63 where the reference may be to poetic inspiration: the two tropes are easily fused by the poet and confused by commentators.

[59] In the case of the promised wine of P, 6 we may have a more direct link with Dionysiac cult (perhaps from a stage before the Orphic insistence on cultic purity), or possibly a reference to a different stage of initiation. (Graf 1993 argues that P, 3–6 cannot refer to different grades of initiates, like the *hippoi* in the regulations of the Athenian *Iobakkhoi* because it is impossible to belong to three different degrees at the same time. But the declarations may be sequential and narrative, while the Eleusinian *symbola* do similarly narrate in past tense different stages of the initiation *rite*: cf. ἔφυγον κακόν· εὗρον ἄμεινον.) The fact that the dead person was in this case a woman may be relevant for the reference to wine (on the leaf with the shorter version of the text this formed the final line). On the drink of wine see above nn. 20 and 55, and cf. Proverbs 31.6: "Give strong drink unto him that is perishing and wine unto the distressed in soul. Let him drink and forget his misery and remember his sorrows no more."

aspects of Orphic eschatology in *Olympian* 2),[60] by suggesting that his own poem will at any rate grant happiness and immortality by ensuring that Lampon and his family will be remembered through its performance for all eternity. In this case, it looks as though the compositors of the gold leaves were engaged in a deliberate re-mythologizing (characteristic, for example, of the Derveni commentator) of the poet's originally conceptual insight.

For the addressees of the gold leaves, as for those of Pindar's epinicians, it is poetry which offers an unparalleled opportunity for immortality. This immortality consists primarily in the possession of poetry that activates memory, and thus facilitates recitation,[61] deploying images of water and wine and milk and gold (and, in the case of P, the ivy-shaped object itself) to invoke "the presence of that Dionysiac power that its words create through it ritual formulae,"[62] and provide consolation in the face of death. Insofar as the poem is a gift (i.e. becomes the possession of its addressee) and in terms of its potential or prescribed re-performance, Pindar and the compositors of the gold tablets fulfilled a comparable social and ritual role.

[60] See Lloyd-Jones 1985: 245–283.

[61] According to the Hesiodic *Certamen* (92ff. Rzach), a Hellenistic redaction of a text which Wilamowitz showed to be of classical date, select lines of Homer (specifically *Od.* 9.6–11) were traditionally and still in historical times (ἔτι καὶ νῦν) solemnly intoned as a preliminary ritual (προκατεύεσθαι) by all present at public sacrifices (ἐν ταῖς κοιναῖς) before sacrificial meals and libations (πρὸ τῶν δείπνων καὶ σπονδῶν). Of course the gold leaf poems differ in that they derive from the rituals of private groups and were certainly not recited in public contexts. Most of our descriptions of what happened at mysteries emphasize the spectacular visual element, what people saw. But col. 17 of the Derveni Papyrus shows that in the late fifth or early fourth century people did go for initiations to private professional priests (παρὰ τοῦ τέχνημ ποιουμένου) to *hear* things; the Derveni commentator there quotes a sophistic author as objecting that after being initiated they go away without having understood what they saw or learned or *heard* (lines 6–8 ἀπέχονται ἐπιτελέσαντες πρὶν εἰδέναι οὐδ' ἐπανερόμενοι ὥσπερ ὡς εἰδότες τ[ι] ὧν εἶδον ἢ ἤκουσαν ἢ ἔμαθον). The gold leaf texts give us an idea of what they might have heard.

[62] Segal 1990: 414.

CHAPTER 13

Rushing into milk
New perspectives on the gold tablets

Christopher A. Faraone

The publication more than twenty years ago of the gold leaves from Pelinna in Thessaly revolutionized, yet again, our understanding of the religious context of these types of documents, further complicating the already complex mixture of Orphic and Bacchic imagery and thought:[1]

> νῦν ἔθανες καὶ νῦν ἐγένου, τρισόλβιε, ἄματι τῶιδε.
> εἰπεῖν Φερσεφόναι σ᾽ ὅτι Βά<κ>χιος αὐτὸς ἔλυσε.
> ταῦρος εἰς γάλα ἔθορες.
> αἶψα εἰς γάλα ἔθορες.
> κριὸς εἰς γάλα ἔπεσε<ς>.
> οἶνον ἔχεις εὐδαίμονα τιμήν.
> κἀπιμενεῖ σ᾽ ὑπὸ γῆν τέλεα ἄσ<σ>απερ ὅλβιοι ἄλλοι.
>
> Now you have died and now you have come into being,
> o thrice happy one, on this day.
> Tell Persephone that Bakkhios himself set you free.
> Bull, you jumped into milk.
> Quickly you jumped into milk.
> Ram, you fell into milk.
> You have wine as your fortunate honor.
> And below the earth, there are ready for you the same prizes as for the other blessed ones.

Most importantly for this study, this new text has in the last twenty years revived an old way of looking at the whole series of gold

This essay was originally presented as a lecture entitled "Rushing and Falling into Milk: New Perspectives on the Orphic Gold Tablets" at a conference, "The Cults of Magna Graeca," held at the Villa Vergiliana in Baiae in June 2002. I am especially grateful to Patricia Johnston and the other organizers and for the helpful comments of the other participants. Thanks also to Radcliffe Edmonds for his editorial help on the final written version.

[1] Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987. For the definitive discussion, see also Graf 1993: 240–242, whose composite text (of the two tablets) and translation I give below, with two small excisions to the latter. The text is relatively unproblematic, except for the word αἶψα in line 4, which breaks the pattern of animal name + the phrase "jumped/fell into milk." Some have suggested reading αἴξ ("goat, usually female") instead, but Graf 1993: 241 demurs because "a female animal would break the series of male ones." At the end of the essay I offer another defense of keeping the animals male.

tablets as a kind of performance-script for a religious ritual. Graf, for example, argued that the Pelinna text refers specifically to Bacchic initiation and funerary rituals: on his reading, the milk and wine in the text recalls a ritual in which the initiate may have poured three libations of milk followed by one of wine. Riedweg and Calame have, in different ways, extended this kind of analysis to the rest of the gold tablets and in recent years the approach has found increasing acceptance.[2]

This neo-ritualist approach was triggered primarily by the non-hexametrical portion of the Pelinna text (indented above for emphasis), which forced scholars to re-evaluate the standard understanding of the similar expression that appears in a similar context in two of the gold lamellae found at Thurii:[3]

> "ὄλβιε καὶ μακαριστέ, θεὸς δ' ἔσηι ἀντὶ βροτοῖο"
> ἔριφος ἐς γάλ' ἔπετον.
>
> "O happy and blessed one! You are a god, instead of a mortal."
> A kid, I fell into milk.
>
> θεὸς ἐγένου ἐξ ἀνθρώπου· ἔριφος ἐς γάλα ἔπετες.
>
> You became a god from a mortal. A kid, you fell into milk.

Here the "into the milk" formula follows the proclamation that the owner of the text is blessed and has overcome death, an idea that is similar, albeit not identical, to the first line of the Pelinna text: νῦν ἔθανες καὶ νῦν ἐγένου, τρισόλβιε.

Nearly a half century ago, Zuntz, building on the interpretation of Nilsson and others, argued that this peculiar reference to "a kid in milk" was borrowed from a tradition of secular proverbs about ultimate happiness. He was able to cite a number of examples from the paroemiographers, for example, "a donkey into hay" (ὄνος εἰς ἄχυρα); "an ox into the reaped grain" (βοῦς εἰς ἄμητον) or "water to a frog" (βατράχωι ὕδωρ).[4] As you can see, his parallels all hinge on the appropriateness of the animal to its environment. This approach worked quite well in the case of the gold tablets from Thurii, where we find a kid (a young unweaned goat) who has fallen "into the milk" (presumably its mother's milk) – precisely like a frog into water or an ox into the reaped grain. The peculiar metaphor of

[2] Calame 1995b and Riedweg 1998 and 2002, which are combined and translated in Chapter 9 of this volume. Edmonds 2004: 104–107, offers a succinct summary of this approach, which ultimately goes back to Harrison 1922: 572–599.

[3] Zuntz 1971: nos. A1 (lines 8–9) and A4 (line 4). In the first example someone addresses the dead initiate in the first line and they then respond in the second. The second example is spoken entirely to the initiate.

[4] Zuntz 1971: 322–327, whose comparanda I give here.

"falling" or "throwing oneself" is odd, but presumably refers to the energetic act of a young animal rushing to the udders of its dame.[5] The new texts from Pelinna, however, present an insurmountable problem for this interpretation, since they speak of a grown animal – a bull or a ram – rushing or falling into the milk; if the expressions on the gold tablets really do derive from the proverbs collected by Zuntz, we would expect something like "a bull into grain" not "a bull into milk."[6] Zuntz's best parallels were, moreover, nominal phrases[7] and until the discovery of the Pelinna tablets most scholars followed his lead in stressing the blessed state of being "a kid in milk." This approach, however, ignores the fact that the animals – clearly the subjects of active verbs – "fall" or "rush" into the milk. The Orphic formulas, in short, seem to stress the action of the animals rather than the state achieved by them.

Graf, however, reframed the question nicely in light of the Pelinna tablets by noting how the gold leaves seem to stress – by repetition and anaphora – the verbal actions of "rushing" and "falling." He also reiterated a point made nearly a century ago that the aorist verbs here most easily recall the boasts of initiates in other mystery-rites, which in turn usually refer back to a status-transforming ritual performed by the speaker:[8]

> Eleusinian: "I drank the *kukeon*, I took from the *kistes*"
> (ἔπιον τὸν κυκέωνα// ἔλαβον ἐκ κίστης)
> Attis and Kybele: "I ate from the tympanon, I drank from the *kumbalos*, etc."
> (ἐκ τυμπάνου ἔφαγον// ἐκ κυμβάλου ἔπιον κτλ.)
> Sabazios: "I escaped the bad; I found the better"
> (ἔφυγον κακόν// εὗρον ἄμεινον)

Here, the short repeated phrases, often a tri-syllabic second-aorist verb and short prepositional phrase, provide a much closer parallel. The focus, moreover, is on the action, not the happy state that the initiate has achieved, although this is implied in the last case. There is, moreover, no need to understand these parallels metaphorically: the initiate claims that she or he actually ate, drank or fled something during a previously performed ritual. Graf suggests that the "into the milk" formula is metaphorical and refers obliquely

[5] Kingsley 1995: 267–268.

[6] Graf 1993: 245–246, stresses the problems. Guarducci 1990: 9–19 alone has tried to defend Zuntz, by arguing (unpersuasively) that the Pelinna texts represent a historical development or later adaptation of the original idea (a metaphor for complete ease) to a new meaning based on the animals of the zodiac.

[7] Zuntz 1971: 326 gives seven examples of such phrases with verbs, one of which is essentially static ("sleeps in the kneading trough") and three others are catastrophic ("you marched in revelry into bees," "[like] a mouse tasting pitch," or "let him also drown in sweet honey").

[8] Graf 1993: 249–250, who notes that these parallels were collected earlier by a number of scholars, including Harrison and Guthrie.

to ritual performances, for example, to libations of milk that were poured out in a previous ceremony. This approach is on the right track, but is, I think, focused too narrowly on libations and other forms of quotidian cult. I will suggest instead that these texts – especially in their references to past acts of "rushing" and "falling" – refer to ritual movements during which the devotee imitates the significant actions of the god himself or his divine companions, for example, in a dance or in a frenetic leap. This approach does not, admittedly, get us completely away from the metaphorical realm, for (as I shall argue below) the claim to have rushed into milk seems to refer either to a maenadic dance in imitation of Dionysus' springtime leap into (and thereby vivification of) the milk of herd animals or to an initiation rite which recalls the god's youthful escape from destruction by "falling into" the foam of the sea. Or perhaps to both. As we shall see, these two moments of ritual action occur at points in the ritual calendar that seem to balance one another and illustrate one persistent feature of Dionysus as a vegetative god who arrives or is "born" at a time of new growth and departs or "dies" at the end of this period of growth.[9]

My argument depends on and is structured by inquiries into two different understandings of the word "milk" (γάλα) in these texts. In the first part, I adduce parallels from some important Greek hymns to show that the verb "to rush" (θρώσκειν) used twice in the Pelinna texts points to the cyclical and enthusiastic return of the god each year. The god (the "dying" Zeus or Dionysus) is thought to be reborn and leap or rush into (and thereby vivify) a variety of products, both vegetal and animal, upon which human life depends. In the second part of the essay, however, I take up the passing suggestion of two ancient scholiasts that the Greeks used the word γάλα ("milk") to refer to the white "sea-foam" at the edge of the sea. I then go on to suggest that the boast "I rushed into the milky-surf" refers to an incident, narrated briefly in the sixth book of the *Iliad*, in which a terrified Dionysus dives into the sea and is saved by Thetis. In both cases I will argue that the aorist verbs of leaping or falling on the tablets refer to dances or ritual actions that the initiate performed in imitation of Dionysus or his nurses.

This is not an uncontroversial argument. Nearly a century ago Frazer and the Cambridge ritualists argued for the ritual mimesis of the gods in ancient Greek religion, but their approach was fatally marred by the dependence of their model on Christian sacramentalism.[10] But with the revival of ritualist

[9] For a recent summary, see C. Sourvinou-Inwood 2005: 149–233 passim.

[10] Henrichs 1993: 26–28. There are similar problems with Dodds' now discredited arguments for a "male celebrant" who leads the maenads and somehow serves as a stand-in for the god. See Henrichs 1984b: 71–73.

interpretations of the gold tablets, it seems an appropriate time to re-explore the possibility of the ritual mimesis of Dionysus or his divine attendants. Henrichs has, in fact, shown us that in Dionysiac cult especially there is a much closer identification between worshipper and god.[11] Indeed from a human perspective Dionysus begins his life as a human-and-divine half-breed like Achilles, but then at some point either becomes entirely divine or comes to the self-realization that he has been a god all along. Given the explicit claims of divinity or rebirth that appear in the gold tablets directly before the boasts about the leap or fall "into the milk," we can, I think, make a similar claim about initiates who identify themselves with a god who was once part or all human. In the Dionysiac context this moment of divine rebirth has in the past been connected with the well-known Theban myth of the young god's second birth from Zeus' thigh, after he "dies" in the thunder-blast that kills his mother, a motif that likewise shows up on a few of the gold tablets. As we shall see, however, there was an alternate, Thracian myth about Dionysus, in which the raving Dionysus is attacked by Lycurgos and saves himself by diving into the sea.[12]

LEAPING AND RUSHING IN SPRINGTIME

As noted above, the new Pelinna texts confront us for the first time with the image of adult herd animals "jumping into milk." An excellent parallel for the same verb *thrôiskein* ("to leap," "to spring") appears in the last two stanzas of the so-called "Dictaean Hymn to the Kouros" found at Palaikastro in Crete (lines 47–60):[13]

ἀ[λλ' ἄναξ θόρ' ἐς στα]μνία
καὶ θόρ' εὐποκ' ἐς [ποιμνία
κὲς λάι]α καρπῶν θόρε

[11] Henrichs 1984b: 90–91 although critical of the naïve ritualism of earlier scholars, does allow for the "external imitation of the god's mythical image through ritual action."

[12] Apollodorus 3.5.1 preserves a continuous resume of the story, parts of which can be traced back to the archaic poet Eumelus; see Carpenter 1993: 197–199 for discussion.

[13] I give the text and translation of West 1965 with some minor changes to the latter, most notably abandoning his rendition of the key request (θόρ' ἐς) as "spring up in." Instead I follow the lead of Perlman 1995: 161–162, and return to the rendition of Latte 1913: 49, Nilsson 1950: 549–550 and others: "leap into" or "fertilize." Perlman prefers Guarducci's restorations of ποι]μνία ("flocks") at the end of line 61 and μῆλα ("flocks") at the end of line 62. West, however, rightly follows Murray in restoring ποι]μνία ("jars") at the end of line 61, which gives the sequence wine, flocks and grain and thereby gives a fuller view of agricultural life. Most recently Furley and Bremer 2001: II 69 render the key phrase θόρ' ἐς as "leap up for" and in two places prefer Wilamowitz' text to West's: at the end of line 62, where they restore πώια ("sheep") instead of ποιμνία ("flocks"), and in the third line of the refrain, where Wilamowitz printed γάνος ("splendor").

κὲς τελεσφ[όρος οἶκος] (lines 47–50)
ἰὼ μέγιστε Κοῦρε,
χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε
παγκρατές, γᾶν ὃς, βέβακες
[δαιμό]νων ἀγώμενος·
Δίκταν ἐς ἐνι[αυτὸν]
ἔρπε, καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾷ.
[θόρε κὲς] πόληας ἀμῶν,
θόρε κὲς ποντοπόρος νᾶας,
θόρε κὲς νέος πολίτας θόρε,
θόρε κὲς θέμιν κλ[. . . .

O [lord, leap into the wine-j]ars
and leap into the fleecy [flocks,
and into the crop]s of the fields leap
and in the [houses of ful]fillment.
Io! Greatest Kouros,
hail, son of Kronos,
master of all, who art to earth gone
with powers in train, now come again
to Dicte at the year's end
and hear with gladness our refrain,
Leap into] our towns and peoples,
leap into the seafaring ships,
leap into the y[oung of the peop]le,[14]
and into the . . . order.

In this hymn, a chorus of young men urge a young seasonal god identified as "the greatest Kouros (= Youth) . . . son of Kronos (= Zeus)" to "leap into" and thereby bring fertility or vitality to various aspects of human life, beginning in the first stanza with agricultural production and herding and then moving on to the people themselves and, presumably by analogy, to more abstract human creations like trade and social order.[15] Perlman, moreover, noted in passing an important verbal parallel between this hymn and the Pelinna tablets: the repeated use of the verb *thrôskein* in the aorist with the preposition εἰς (cf. the εἰς γάλα ἔθορες and θόρ' ἐς στα]μνία), especially in the final stanza.[16] The Pelinna tablets and the

[14] The supplement here of "the y[oung of the peop]le" is universally accepted – see Furley and Bremer 2001: II 18–19 – but seems out of place after "cities" and "ships" and before "custom." One would expect some other cultural (as opposed to natural or biological) target.

[15] West 1965 and Bowra 1970.

[16] Perlman 1995. The original word order in the first three lines of the final stanza is θόρε κὲς πόληας ἀμῶν//θόρε κὲς νέος πολίτας//κτλ., but this changes the meter from *ionici a maiore* (in all of the other stanzas) to *ionici a minore*. West 1965: 154, suggests that this is the error of the engraver working from a written exemplar, who transferred the verb from the end of one line to the beginning of the

Cretan inscription both date to the late classical or Hellenistic periods, but both are thought to preserve much older, archaic texts. The alternate verb *pesein* ("to fall") in the tablets could, moreover, also be used to describe the fructifying effect of a god on the human community. In the famous hymn to Eros in Sophocles' *Antigone*, for example, the chorus says that the god "fell upon the herds" (781: ἔπεσε ἐν κτήμασι) – i.e. he directly induced in the animals the desire to mate.[17] This sexual dimension is, in fact, also part of the semantic range of the verb "to leap" (*thrôskein*), which appears in Apollo's infamous dictum in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, that "the one who leaps (i.e. 'mounts') engenders the child (ὁ θρῴσκων τίκτει)" and not the mother.[18]

There is no hint that this Cretan dance imitates the movement of the kind of herd animals that we find in the boasts on the gold tablets. We do find this feature, however, in a fragment of an Elean hymn, in which the god Dionysus is encouraged to arrive, perhaps also in the springtime,[19] in the form of a rushing bull:[20]

> ἐλθεῖν ἦρ', ὦ Διόνυσε,
> ἅλιον ἐς ναὸν ἁγνὸν
> σὺν Χαρίτεσσιν,
> ἐς ναὸν
> τῷ βοέῳ ποδὶ θύων
> ἄξιε ταῦρε
> ἄξιε ταῦρε.
>
> Come in springtime, O Dionysus,
> to thy pure temple by the sea[21]

next one. West corrects the problem by printing κὲς πόληας ἁμῶν θόρε, κὲς νέος πολίτας θόρε // κτλ., which also follows the word order that we find in line 49. If he is correct, then the word order and the anaphora of the verb θόρε at line end make the parallel even closer. Furley and Bremer 2001: II *ad loc*. prefer the version on the stone, but offer no parallels for the switch from *maiore* to *minore* within the same poem.

[17] Griffith 1999 *ad loc*.

[18] *Eumenides* 658–661; the verb is apparently closely connected with the noun *thôros*, "sperm"; see Padel 1999: 107–108.

[19] I follow Halliday and older commentators in printing ἐλθεῖν ἦρ', ὦ Διόνυσε. Furley and Bremer 2001: II *ad loc*. follow Bergk ad *PMG* 871 and print ἐλθεῖν ἥρω Διόνυσε ("come hero Dionysus"). C. Brown 1982 gives good arguments against both, but his own suggestion (ἐλθ' ἡμῖν, ὦ Διόνυσε) is difficult to explain paleographically. See below for the existence of springtime advents of Dionysus elsewhere in the Greek world.

[20] Plut. *Quaest. Graec*. 36 = *Mor*. 299a–b = *PMG* 871. Text and translation: Halliday 1928: 29 and 152–159. Plutarch is apparently quoting here from Socrates of Argos' *Treatise on Rituals*, which is cited at *Mor*. 364f, where Plutarch discusses the same festival; see Halliday 1928: 153.

[21] I follow Halliday in preserving the MSS' ἅλιον. Most editors, however, follow Bergk ad *PMG* 871 and emend this to Ἀλείων ("of the Eleans"), but this seems to be an odd and distanced way for a chorus of Elean women to speak, rather than simply "into *our* temple" or "to *Elis*" (for the latter see

with the Charites in thy train
to thy temple
with ox-foot rushing.
noble bull,
noble bull.

Here the approach of Dionysus is twice likened to that of a rushing bull, a form that the god takes elsewhere in the Greek world.[22] The repetition of the words ἐς ναὸν in lines 2 and 4 prompts the suggestion that the text is damaged at one of these places and – given the parallels with the Cretan hymn[23] – one wonders if a second and entirely different destination has been displaced in the manuscript tradition. Indeed, we hear elsewhere that this same Elean festival involved an annual miracle associated with Dionysus' arrival: three sealed and empty jars were placed in the sanctuary the night before the god's arrival and were found the next day with seals broken and filled with wine. The appropriate conclusion of the devout was that the arrival of the god in the form of a bull causes the miraculous filling of the wine jugs.[24]

These two hymns suggest that we might interpret the "into the milk" formula as a boast, in which the owners of the tablets claim that at one point in their lives they imitated in ritual the annual leaping or rushing of a seasonal god like the Cretan Kouros or the Elean Dionysus. Such an interpretation depends, of course, on the idea that worshippers of this type of seasonal god assimilated themselves to the deity. The situation is a bit complicated in the case of the Dictaean Hymn, where there seems to be a double level of mimesis: the youthful singers of the hymn dancing around the altar imitate the dancing of the divine Kouretes (whose name means "Youths"), who are themselves modeled on the youthful god Kouros.[25] We know from other sources, moreover, that the special armed dance of the Kouretes required dramatic leaping in its performance.[26] It is easy to

the refrain of the Dictaean hymn quoted above). For parallels of women worshipping Dionysus by the sea, see Schlesier 2001a, who cites a number of examples from Pausanias: Argos (2.20.4 and 22.1), Brasiae in Laconia (3.24.3–4), and Tanagra (9.20.4).

[22] Since the word *bous* and its derivatives can mean both "ox" and "bull" (see LSJ s.v.), there is no contradiction between the god's "ox-foot" and his invocation as "bull." The English word "ox" is a similarly vague term for all large bovid males, see e.g. *OED* s.v.: "The domestic bovine quadruped (sexually distinguished as *bull* and *cow*); in common use, applied to the male castrated and used for draught purposes or reared to serve as food."

[23] Furley and Bremer 2001: II 376–377 compare the "rushing" (*thuôn*) of the bull in this Elean text to the "leaping" of the Kouros (*thore)* in the Dictaean hymn.

[24] Pausanias 6.26.1–2 and Theopompus *FGrH* 115 F 277; for discussion see Halliday 1928: 155–156.

[25] Furley and Bremer 2001: II 11–13, who argue (against Latte and Guarducci) that the first stanza and the final line of the refrain imply a circular dance around the altar.

[26] Lonsdale 1993: 155–157.

suggest, therefore, that a chorus of *kouroi* perform a leaping dance in imitation of the leaping dance of the mythic Kouretes as they bid the Kouros to leap into the flocks. This cult, moreover, seems to have been similar to ecstatic Dionysiac cults and may have offered a similar benefit to its followers.[27] We can more easily see this kind of double imitation in the performance of the cult hymn of Dionysus at Elis, which seems to have been sung during the Thyia festival ("The Rushing") by mature female Bacchic votaries called Thyiades ("The Rushers").[28] In this case the worshippers directly imitate in their maenadic dances both the dances of Dionysus' original divine female companions (his mother or his nurses, for which see below in the next section), as well as the forceful onslaught of Dionysus himself who is urged to come to Elis in the guise of a bull "rushing (*thuôn*) with his ox-foot." Thus both hymns mark this mimesis linguistically by close parallels between the names of the seasonal god and his worshippers: on Crete the presumably youthful male performers of the hymn imitate the Kouretes' dance, while they sing a hymn to the Kouros (i.e., youths imitate the mythic "Youths" in their worship of the "youthful god"), while the "Rushers" sing a hymn to Dionysus in the hope that he, too, will "rush" with his ox-foot to their temple.

The maenadic performance of the Elean hymn takes on even greater importance, when we recall the heavily Dionysiac context of the Pelinna texts, which are engraved on pieces of gold foil cut to the shape of ivy leaves, a traditional Dionysian plant,[29] and which boast that "Bacchios himself had released" the female owner of the tablet. More significantly, close to the sarcophagus in Pelinna that held the tablets archaeologists found a terracotta statuette of a maenadic dancer, a detail that suggests that the dead woman may have worshipped the god by imitating his frantic rushing motion.[30] Maenadic dancing was, of course, widespread in mainland Greece.[31] We know, for example, that maenads at Delphi were also called "Thyiades" ("Rushers"),[32] and in the first *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* we learn that the god's mother Semele was called "Thyone" ("Rusher"). Later sources claim that she took on this name only after she was reborn as a

[27] West 1983: 170–171.
[28] The sixteen Thyiades at Elis and Delphi were women of mature years, not maidens; see Halliday 1928: 156.
[29] Graf 1993: 240 and Cole 1993: 279.
[30] Tsantsanoglou and Parássoglou 1987: 3–4. They found in the same spot the shattered remains of another terracotta statuette too damaged for identification, but apparently nothing else. Within the sarcophagus they discovered the two gold tablets, some coins and terracotta pots and a gold *kados* containing the cremated remains of a child.
[31] Henrichs 1978. [32] Pausanias 10.4.2–3; see also Diod. Sic. 4.3.3 and Plut. *Mor.* 249e–f.

goddess.[33] According to the Theban tradition Semele's sister Ino nursed the baby Dionysus after Semele dies and then Ino herself becomes immortal after her own death and is revered as one of the leaders of the "nurses" of Dionysus, who were believed to be the first companions of Dionysus and, because they imitated the god's mad dancing, became the archetypal maenads.[34] It may well be the case, then, that the female devotees of Dionysus modeled themselves on Dionysus himself (as seems the case at Elis) or on his mother or nurses. On the other hand, the confusion or elision of gender seems to have been a crucial part of Bacchic cult, for although maddened women in Greek myth usually metamorphosed into mature *female* animals, for example, Io and the Proetides into cows or Hecuba and the daughters of Pandareus into bitches, the female owner of the Pelinna gold leaves boasts that she "rushed" and "fell" as a "bull" and "ram."[35]

Aside from the streams of milk in Euripides' *Bacchae* (705ff.), there is to my knowledge only one other early Greek text that connects maenadic dancing with milk: a fragment of Alcman (no. 56 [Page] = Athenaeus 11.498F–499A) describes a night of maenadic dancing by torches that also involves milking and cheese-making: "Often among the mountain-peaks, when the festival of the many torches gives pleasure to the gods, you [NB female] held a golden vessel, a great cup (*skyphos*) like the one shepherds carry, and putting into it with your own hands the milk of a lioness you made a great firm cheese for the Slayer of Argos."[36] Plutarch reports another example without the maenads: Boiotians living in the neighborhood of Galaxion ("The Milking Spot" or "Milk Town") once perceived the epiphany (*epiphaneia*) of a god in the "copious and overabundant flow of milk" and he quotes a fragment of lyric poetry that describes it:[37]

> for from all the flocks, as finest water from springs, gurgled milk in plenty, and they speedily filled their jars (*pithoi*). And neither wineskin (*askos*) nor amphora lingered idle, in their houses: wooden buckets and *pithoi* were also filled.

Since the speaker in Plutarch then goes on to talk about the epiphany of Apollo at Delphi, and since Apollo is indeed connected with herding in

[33] Apollodorus 3.5.3 and Pausanias 2.37.5. The "rushing" of maenads is a very old feature; see the description of Andromache (*Il.* 22.460–461) and Demeter (*Hom. Hymn. Dem.* 368) who are said to run "like maenads" in their grief. See Seaford 1993 for discussion. Dionysus himself was apparently invoked as "Thuônidas" ("Son of the Rusher") by the Rhodians. Cf. Hsch. s.v. "Thuônidas."

[34] Burkert 1987: 34 with n. 19.

[35] Faraone 1999: 90–93 with Table 3.

[36] I give the translation of Campbell 1988: 432 no. 56 (quoted by Athenaeus 11.498F–499A); see Henrichs 1978: 144 for maenadic context. See also Anacreon fr. 357 (Page) and *PMG* 929b.

[37] I give the translation of Campbell 1993: 400 no. 997 (quoted by Plutarch *De Pyth. or.* 29).

some parts of Greece, scholars have understandably assumed that Apollo is the god mentioned here.[38] I suggest, however, that the persistent emphasis here on filling up traditional wine containers with milk (e.g. *askos*, *amphoreus*, and *pithoi*) more likely points to Dionysus, who also had a presence at Delphi, especially in winter and early spring. The connection between the worship of Dionysus and herding was, in fact, common enough. We have already had occasion to discuss the bull-shaped Dionysus who arrives at Elis each year. And it is hardly coincidental that all of the animals on the tablets from Thurii and Pelinna (bulls, kids, goats) are domesticated. Hellenistic Pergamene, morover, provides detailed evidence for a group of Bacchic worshippers called *boukoloi* and led by an *arkhiboukolos*, and we find scattered evidence elsewhere, from the *boukoleion* – a sacred building in classical Athens where the sacred marriage of Dionysus took place each year – to the cowherd's crook that appears on Roman-era tombstones and sarcophagi of Bacchic initiates.[39]

The notion of the annual arrival of a youthful god, who in animal form "rushes" or "leaps" into milk, wine, or flocks provides us, therefore, with one new way to think about the boasts inscribed on the "Orphic" gold leaves from Thurii and Pelinna – boasts that the owner of the tablet once in ritual imitation of the god likewise "jumped into the milk." Does this mean that the initiate actually leapt into a tub of milk? Probably not. As I suggested above, the boast more likely refers to some kind of ritual action or dance in which the worshipper imitated or pantomimed the actions of the god, just as Cretan youths imitated the dance of the divine Kouretes or "rushing" Elean maenads imitated the arrival of their tauromorphic god. If such imitation or impersonation of a god seems at first glance improbable, we must recall that all four instances of the "into the milk" formula are preceded on the gold tablets by a much simpler and more direct claim to divinity. The tablets from Thurii claim "you are/became a god (*theos*) instead of a mortal," while those from Pelinna assert a kind of rebirth that is often attributed to seasonal gods like the Cretan Zeus or the Elean Dionysus: "Now you died and now you have been born." Indeed, it is the incongruous mortality of some deities that so often provides the model for a human or mystery cult: if originally mortal characters like Heracles on Mt. Oeta or Dionysus in the burning bed of his mother can overcome a fiery death and become a god, why not other mortal men and women as well?

[38] See, e.g. Schachter 1981: 48–49. [39] See Burkert 1993: 267–268.

RUSHING INTO THE SEA

Now I turn to the second part of my thesis, the proposal that rushing or leaping into *gala* ("milk") may also refer to the act of rushing into the foam of the sea. This assimilation of "milk" and "sea foam" or "surf" is, in fact, inherent in the ancient Greek confusion (in our eyes) about the nymph Galateia ("Milky"). Galateia's connection with the sea is quite old: she shows up in the two earliest catalogues of the Nereids, first at *Iliad* 18.41 in the train of Thetis, and again in Hesiod *Theogony* 250. The scholiasts on these passages offer two explanations: (i) her name is an odd variant of Galene, the "calm" of the sea; or (ii) her name refers to the "whiteness (*leukotês*) of the waves, when the winds blow over the surface of the sea" (ad *Theogn*. 250). Eustathius (ad *Il*. 18.41) concurs with the latter, when he asserts that her name comes from the "white-skinned foam of the waves." There was, however, an ancient shrine to Galateia near Mt. Aetna in Sicily putatively dedicated by the Cyclops Polyphemus as a thank-offering to the nymph for his abundant supply of milk (Duris of Samos *FGrH* 76 F58). The Syracusan Theocritus, presumably drawing on the same Sicilian tradition, has no trouble imagining a sea-nymph who is closely connected with herding and cheese-making. His Polyphemus invokes the sea-nymph as "white Galateia ... whiter than cheese" (*Id*. 11.19–20) and invites her to share his life as a shepherd and help him produce milk and cheese (11.36 and especially 63–66, a prayer for Galateia to come out of the sea and live with him as a milkmaid). But it is especially noteworthy that Theocritus describes her epiphany not as a sudden abundance of milk in the sheep-pens (as we saw earlier in the description of Galaxion above), but rather in the foaming white waves on a beach (*Id*. 5.10–15).

What, then, is the connection between the boasts in the Pelinna texts (which refer to some kind of ritual performance) and the milky waves of the surf? I suggest that it may lie in a very old Thracian story, briefly summarized by Homer, of Dionysus' narrow escape from the murderous assaults of Lycurgus (*Il*. 6.130–140):

> οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ γε θεοῖσιν ἐπουρανίοισι μαχοίμην
> οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ Δρύαντος υἱὸς κρατερὸς Λυκόοργος
> δὴν ἦν, ὅς ῥα θεοῖσιν ἐπουρανίοισιν ἔριζεν,
> ὅς ποτε μαινομένοιο Διωνύσοιο τιθήνας
> σεῦε κατ' ἠγάθεον Νυσήιον. αἱ δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι
> θύσθλα χαμαὶ κατέχευαν, ὑπ' ἀνδροφόνοιο Λυκούργου
> θεινόμεναι βουπλῆγι. Διωνύσος δὲ φοβηθεὶς
> δύσεθ' ἁλὸς κατὰ κῦμα, Θέτις δ' ὑπεδέξατο κόλπῳ

δειδιότα· κρατερὸς γὰρ ἔχε τρόμος ἀνδρὸς ὁμοκλῆ.
τῷ μὲν ἔπειτ᾽ ὀδύσαντο θεοὶ ῥεῖα ζώοντες,
καὶ μιν τυφλὸν ἔθηκε Κρόνου παῖς.

I, for my part, would not fight against the heavenly gods. / For the son of Druas, the mighty Lycurgus, / did not last long, who quarreled with the heavenly gods. / He once drove the nurses of raving Dionysus / down the slope of sacred Mt. Nyseia and all of them at the same moment / let go of their sacred-wands (θύσθλα = *thyrsoi*), because they were being beaten by the ox-goad / of man-slaying Lycurgus, and Dionysus took fright / and dove down into the wave of the sea and Thetis took him in her bosom, / fearful as he was, because a powerful trembling held him at the menacing shout of the man. / Then the gods who live easily became enraged with him / (i.e. Lycurgus) and the son of Zeus made him blind.

This is a standard Dionysian story, of course, about a *theomakhos* like Pentheus, who harasses the god and his followers. But it is a puzzling story, nevertheless, because it stresses the helplessness and fear of a presumably young Dionysus (φοβηθείς and δειδιότα), whose nurses are struck by the ox-goad (136: θεινόμεναι βουπλῆγι). But of what can a god be frightened? Since there is a version of the myth, in which Dionysus dies after he fled Lycurgus (Philochorus *FGrH* 328), it may well be that in the *Iliadic* version he feared for his life.

I have already mentioned a good parallel to this story of rebirth in the better known Theban myth, in which the human son of Semele is presumably killed *in utero* by the same thunderbolt that killed her, and then the divine son is born a second time from a divine womb (Zeus' thigh). The initiates' claim, for example, on the three gold tablets from the Timpone Piccolo (A1–3) that they were struck by lightning, is quite similar to the claim about falling into milk, and probably refers to Semele, Heracles or some other figure, who died in the resulting fire and then became a god.[40] I suggest, tentatively, that the Lycurgus story may have provided a similar model for Bacchic initiates in Thrace or northern Greece to contemplate their own triumph over death. Homer, in fact, seems to hint at this, when he describes how "Dionysus ... dove down into the wave of the sea and

[40] Edmonds 2004: 73–75 notes three possibilities: Semele, Asclepius, and Heracles, who in some versions of the pyre on Mt. Oeta is incinerated by Zeus' thunderbolt. In the past, the mention of the thunderblast in the A1–A3 tablets has been connected with the so-called Orphic myth of the Titans and Dionysus Zagreus, and although there clearly was an Orphic theogony that narrates (as Hesiod does) the destruction of the Titans by Zeus, the elaborate myth of anthropogony from the ashes of the blasted Titans seems to have been a modern construction, for which see Edmonds 1999. The bottom line is that in the gold tablets the mention of the thunderblast is a boast and therefore must refer to a positive action of Zeus that is designed to heroize the "victims," not punish them; see Edmonds 2004: 74.

Thetis took him in her bosom" (Διώνυσος δὲ ... δύσεθ' ἁλὸς κατὰ κῦμα, Θέτις δ' ὑπεδέξατο κόλπῳ). It is, I think, no coincidence that on tablet A1 from Thurii – which uses the kid-into-the-milk formula – the initiate expresses his claim to immortality in the somewhat similar language of "diving" and eventually being protected in the "bosom" of a goddess – in this case Persephone: "and I dove under the breast the lap of the Lady, the chthonic Queen (δεσ{σ}ποίνας δὲ ὑπὸ κόλπον ἔδυν χθονίας βασιλείας)." In both passages, then, a terrified child dives into the bosom of a kourotrophic goddess, and in tablet A1 the owner boasts that this action is yet more proof of his or her divine status.[41]

Homer refers to the Lycurgus story a second time, when he explains why Dionysus gave Thetis the golden amphora that will eventually hold the ashes of Patroclus and Achilles (*Od.* 24.73–75).[42] This story seems to arise out of the same eschatological concerns that we saw in the *Iliad* passage, for an amphora can store both wine and human remains. But from the point of view of Dionysus' biography, we might ask why it is that the god gives up the golden amphora after his visit to Thetis. Is it because he realizes that he is no longer human and therefore will no longer need it for his own burial? If so, then perhaps Dionysus' dive into the sea and subsequent transformation into a god provided an aition for a human ritual in which devotees actually leapt into the surf of the sea, a leap they recalled as leaping "into milk." Thus the initiatory metamorphosis from mortal to immortal seems to be narrated as the moment of realization that comes to a young and parvenu male god of mixed or uncertain divine parentage. In the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, for instance, the young Hermes (son of Zeus and a nymph) discovers his divinity only after he realizes that he cannot eat roasted meat.[43] Hermes, too, is of ephebic age or younger and seems to have been the overseer in the Peloponnese (the setting of the hymn) of age-grade initiations connected with athletic competitions.[44]

It is true that despite the importance of the sea in Greek myth, it rarely serves as a place of rebirth. We do find, however, a nice parallel in Bacchylides 17, where Theseus, another ephebic hero, also proves his divine paternity when he leaps into the sea (17.94: ἥρως θόρεν πόντονδε) and is carried by dolphins to the palace of his father Poseidon,

[41] Kingsley 1995: 267–268. See also below n. 45 for a similar event in Bacchylides 17.

[42] Burkert 1987: 21 n. 47 and Segal 1990: 417–418. Stesichorus (fr. 234 *PMG*) says that Dionysus gave Thetis the wine-jug when she received him in the sea.

[43] Clay 1989: 116–123.

[44] Johnston 2003. As far as we can tell, however, the *Hymn to Hermes* does not seem to reflect any of the eschatological concerns that we find in initiations into mystery cults.

where he is greeted and given gifts by his step-mother Amphitrite and entertained by the Nereids.[45] Theseus' leap (the verb is θρῴσκειν, as in the Pelinna tablets) is, moreover, generated by an argument with Minos and designed to match Minos' successful prayer to his father Zeus to send a sign of his paternity. By leaping Theseus proves or at least discovers two things: that Poseidon is indeed his father and that he himself is divine enough to survive underwater. The interpretation of the poem is, however, problematic on this point, because Theseus is not actually received by Poseidon himself (as, for example, Apollo is by Zeus in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*), but rather by the sea-nymph Amphitrite, who greets him and wraps him in a robe. Bacchylides' version, in short, just like Homer's story of Dionysus' dive into the bosom of Thetis, seems to stress the kourotrophic role of the goddess in saving the young man. There are similar tales about Melicertes/Palaimon, who leaps into the sea with his mother (Ino/Leukothea – the "White Goddess") and then drowns. After his body is transported back to shore by a dolphin he is apparently revived and becomes the focus at Isthmia and elsewhere of an important mystery cult.[46]

There is a Dionysiac connection here: as was mentioned earlier Ino was originally a sister of Semele, who nursed the god after her sister died. The idea, moreover, that Dionysus, like Melicertes/Palaimon, might drown and then return to life as a god has at least one important parallel: another myth about a human king harassing Dionysus, one that explains why the women of Argos summon Dionysus Bougenes ("Ox Born") from a lake at Lerna each year with hymns, maenadic dances, and war trumpets hidden in their *thyrsoi*. According to the attached myth Perseus in his role as the Argive king attacked Dionysus' maenads and threw the god himself into the lake where he drowned.[47] Since the nineteenth century, scholars have argued that the dying god in the myth must be the "Orphic" Dionysus Zagreus (son of Demeter), but Sourvinou-Inwood has rightly argued that he more likely was the non-Orphic Dionysus, son of Semele, rightly stressing the similarities between this Argive tale and the Iliadic version of Lycurgus' attack on the god.[48] Part of her argument is that Dionysus does not, in fact, die, but since he disappears from Argive view, they assume that he has died and they endeavor each year to get him to return, like the women of Elis, by performing an advent ritual that involves hymns and maenadic dancing, in

[45] Burnett 1985: 15–37. [46] Hawthorne 1958: 92–98; Koester 1990: 355–366.

[47] The textual evidence is Hellenistic (Socrates of Argos again; see n. 20 above), but there are late sixth- and early fifth-century vase paintings of Perseus attacking maenads; see Sourvinou-Inwood 2005: 200–201.

[48] Schol. *Il.* 14.319. See Sourvinou-Inwood 2005: 190–207 for discussion.

this case focused on the Ox-Born Dionysus. The appearance here, yet again, of the tauromorphic god is surely significant. There are also important eschatological features of the story, for the lake at Lerna also serves as an entrance to the Underworld. Indeed, according to another Argive myth Dionysus entered Hades from a lake at Lerna, when he went down to find his mother Semele and bring her back to the upper world as a goddess.[49] Here the equation of water and Hades is explicit, and the return from the lake is (in Semele's case) assimilated to the change from mortal to immortal status.[50]

If my second hypothesis is correct, then the boast of "rushing into milk" may also assert – like the allusion to death by thunderbolt that appears in the A tablets – that the initiate died and was reborn. At first glance it seems that the initiate's model for rebirth must be Dionysus himself, who is driven into the sea, where he is either revived in the lap of Thetis or, after a moment of total panic at the expectation of his death, realizes that he is, in fact, divine. Other ancient sources for this same Thracian myth suggest, in fact, that Dionysus served as the archetypal initiate, for they explain that just prior to his dive into the sea he had been initiated by Rhea into some kind of mystery religion. Thus, according to Apollodorus (3.5.1), Hera drove the young Dionysus mad and for a time he danced madly about like a maenad and tore apart fawns with his bare hands.[51] Eventually, however, "after he is purified by the goddess Rhea and learned the rites of initiation, he received from her his costume (*stolê*) and hastened along through Thrace." Thus this Thracian Dionysus, like Heracles in the lesser Eleusinian Mysteries, explicitly provides a model for the initiate into a mystery cult. Unfortunately Apollodorus' discussion is confused and the chronology of events is not clear. We might expect, for instance, that the episode of maenadic dancing and the initiation were part of the same ritual sequence, for Dionysus is both the god who sends madness and then releases his votaries from it.[52] In Apollodorus' account, however, jealous Hera sends the frenzy and Rhea cures it. And although Homer makes it clear that Lycurgus interrupts Dionysus and his nurses in the midst of their mad dancing, Apollodorus places the madness and initiation *before* Lycurgus chases Dionysus into the

[49] Pausanias 2.37.5–6. See Sourvinou-Inwood 2005: 194–195.

[50] One might worry that a lake contains fresh water and has no surf or sea foam, but the name of the lake (Alkyonia) suggests that it was the home of the sea-bird *alkuôn* (perhaps the kingfisher), which was thought to plunge itself into the sea; for discussion see Casadio 1994: 233–234. In any event Lerna is not far from the sea and was undoubtedly even closer in antiquity.

[51] This is depicted on Attic vase paintings, some of which seem influenced by tragic dramas produced in the first half of the fifth century; see Carpenter 1993.

[52] Burkert 1993: 273; cf. Pl. *Leg.* 672b–d.

sea. Thus his version may illustrate the principle that initiation rites can protect an initiate from death and destruction in this life.[53] This narrative about Dionysus provides, then, a model for the initiate, because he begins his life as a human and is threatened with or even experiences death, but thanks to his initiation he either survives miraculously or dies and then is miraculously reborn as a god.

SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Let me begin to conclude by reiterating the fact that these moments of rushing, both into the sea and out of it, explicitly or implicitly connect the Pelinna text with maenadism. In the Lycurgus story, the god's nursemaids (i.e. mature kourotrophic women), who later become the prototypical maenads, are attacked alongside of Dionysus and share his fear. He is said to be "raving" at the time of the attack (133: μαινομένοιο Διωνύσοιο) and they throw down their *thyrsoi* (133: θύσθλα). In Homer's account, moreover, the nurses are the ones that Lycurgus strikes with his ox-goad and as a result scatter and run down the mountain. Homer does not say explicitly that they, too, run into the sea to escape Lycurgus' rage, but in an alternate version of the story, in which Lycurgus' brother Boutes ("Ox-Herder") plays the villain, the nurses throw down their cultic implements (*hiera*), and some of them escape into the sea.[54] Similarly, we saw earlier that the female singers of the Elean hymn, who call on the god Dionysus to "rush with his ox foot" to his temple, were also "rushers" (Thyiades), a label shared by other worshippers at Delphi who are also called "maenads."[55] We saw, in fact, this same complicated triad of worshipper, mythic attendant, and god in the Dictaean Hymn to Zeus, where the young men dancing around the altar seem to imitate the Kouretes (whose name derives from *kouroi*, "youths"), who in the myth were the attendants and protectors of the baby Kouros ("Youth").

These parallels are summarized in Table 13.1. The data are admittedly messy and do not add up entirely, but the general pattern is clear: by leaping, rushing, or performing other forms of frenetic ritual dancing the worshipper imitates divine motion. The bivalence of these actions,

[53] Burkert 1987: 18–20. In Homer's version, then, the dive into the sea may have been the moment of *lusis* for the mad god, but this is not clear.

[54] Diod. Sic. 5.50.2–5, with discussion in Sourvinou-Inwood 2005: 204 n. 302.

[55] Graf 1993: 255–256 and Sourvinou-Inwood 2005: 211–212.

Table 13.1

	Worshipper	*Mimetic Action*	*God*	*Object of Motion*
ARRIVAL:				
Elean Hymn	"Rushers" (*thyiades*)	"rushing" (*thyein*)	Dionysus/bull	"into temple" (wine jars in sanctuary fill up during festival)
Delphic Rites (Paus. 10.4.3)	"Rushers" (*thyiades*)	maenadic dancing (*mainontai*)	Dionysus Liknites	aim to wake the god up
Dictaean Hymn	young men	"leaping" (*thorein*) imitate Kouretes and the Kouros	Kouros (= Zeus)	"into wine-jugs, crops etc."
Pelinna texts	"bull" "ram"	"leaping" (*thorein*) "falling" (*pesein*)	bull or ram (Dionysus?)	"into milk"
Thurii texts (A1 and A4)	"kid"	"falling" (*pesein*)	kid (Dionysus?)	"into milk"
Ritual at Lerna (Socrates of Argos *FGrH* 310 F2)	Maenads	"summoning" (with hymn and war trumpets hidden in *thyrsoi*)	Dionysus the "Ox-Born" (Bougenes)	
DEPARTURE:				
Lycurgus' attack	"Nurses"	maenadic dancing (they carry *thyrsoi*) like oxen? (L. strikes them with an ox-goad)	Dionysus (*mainomenos*)	"into the sea" (*Iliad* 6)
Boutes' attack (Diod. 50.2–5)	"Nurses"	maenadic dancing like oxen? (Boutes = Ox-Herder)		"into the sea" (nurses, not Dionysus)

moreover, can be summed up as follows: in the spring, to encourage the advent of gods who "rush" or "jump" into their world, devotees dance, like the women of Elis, in imitation of their god and/or their god's divine assistants, while at the end of the growing season, they once again rush about (like the "nurses" of Dionysus in the *Iliad* passage) in imitation of the mad god's action just prior to his "death" in the milky foam of the sea.

I suggest, moreover, that these rites assimilate the time of arrival (rebirth) and that of departure (death). In both cases the worshipper imitates the divine attendants (the Kouretes or the Nurse-Maenads) of the presumably helpless child or boy god (Kouros or Dionysus), who is in turn in danger of destruction at the hands of a powerful adult (Kronos or Lycurgus/Boutes). In both cases the god's devotees seem to imitate the dances performed by the divine companions at the mythic time of the god's near destruction and salvation. And in both cases the worshippers also seem to imitate the god directly. The leaping dance of the young Cretan men imitates the leaps of the "Greatest Kouros" himself, just as the maenadic dancing of the Elean "Rushers" imitates the tauromorphic Dionysus, who rushes to the temple. Indeed, given the cletic context of both hymns, the term imitation hardly seems apt: one could argue that both cases aim at encouraging – almost by sympathetic magic or persuasive analogy – the absent god to imitate the dance and return quickly to the human realm.

It would seem, then, that my double hypothesis reflects the two seasonal directions of Dionysus' rushing: in the spring he rushes back from the sea (i.e. the place where he "died") and is worshipped as a "returning" fertility god, who like the Kouros at Palaikastro vivifies various forms of nourishment by leaping or rushing into them. At the end of the harvest season, however, Dionysus – chased by the evil king Lycurgus – "rushes" back into the sea, where once again he dies, but is saved by the Thessalian nymph Thetis or some other sea nymph connected with fertility, perhaps in Sicily by the milky sea-nymph Galateia. (We should recall that Galateia appears in Thetis' train at *Iliad* 18.41.) Thrace/Thessaly and Sicily may seem rather distant from one another and perhaps even peripheral to the cultural centers of the classical Greek world, but they were, in fact, important centers of Orphic activity. Indeed, of the four gold tablets that preserve this "into the milk" formula, two were found at Thurii in Calabria and two in the town of Pelinna in Thessaly, not far from the Thracian border.[56] And the fact that

[56] The ivy-leaf tablets from Pelinna also are related to Thracian ideas, e.g. Socrates' magic amulet in Plato's *Charmides*; see Faraone 2009. For the wider argument that some gold tablets were used as amulets, see Faraone 2008.

in the oldest version of the myth Lycurgus chases Dionysus and the maenads with an ox-goad suggests that they may all have been transformed into a bovine herd, at least in the eyes of the mad Lycurgus, who like Euripides' Pentheus is suffering at the time from divinely induced hallucinations. (Indeed the deluded Pentheus likewise imagines that Dionysus is a bull.)[57] Another version of the story known to vase-painters in classical Athens, however, depicts Lycurgus chasing the god (not the nurses) with a pruning hook, equating the god with his grapevine and suggesting that the time of Dionysus' "death" coincided with the post harvest pruning of the vine. When he fails to find and kill the god, the insane Lycurgus mistakes members of his own family for grapevines and hacks them to death instead.[58]

It has been my goal in this paper to suggest some novel approaches to the problematic boast "a kid I fell into milk" or "a bull I rushed into milk," found on the gold tablets from Thurii and Pelinna. From the methodological point of view, I have tried to extend the current neo-ritualist approach beyond libations by suggesting that these boasts might refer to the ritual mimesis of actions performed either by the god Dionysus himself or by his divine nurses, who were the primordial maenads. The first action is connected to his rushing return and "rebirth" in the spring, when the mature female devotees seem to imitate the rushing of the tauromorphic god directly as they rush about in their maenadic dances. In the second case, however, the same kind of dancing seems to imitate the god's mature female nurses, who at the time of Lycurgus' attack are themselves imitating the god's maenadic rushing. Lycurgus' different weapons suggest that the god's departure and "death" occurs sometime after the grape harvest (the pruning hook) or at the time of the culling of the herd (the ox-goad).[59]

Finally it is necessary to address the question of age and gender, for there seem to have been two models for the death and rebirth of the initiate. For the female, the claim to have jumped into milk probably arises from a maenadic dance in which she imitates (as a mature woman) the rushing of the god himself, and since the god is repeatedly imagined as a mature domesticated animal, these women can make the paradoxical claim that during their lifetime they like Dionysus leapt into milk as a bull or ram. In other contexts, where a woman seems to imitate a goddess, these deities

[57] *Bacchae* 920–922: "I think you walk before me as a bull (ταῦρος); I think your head is horned now . . . for certainly you have turned into a bull (τεταύρωσαι)."

[58] Carpenter 1993: 197–199. For other myths that equate Dionysus with the grapevine or grapes, see Diod. Sic. 3.62.4–5 and Sourvinou-Inwood 2005: 180.

[59] Sourvinou-Inwood 2005: 205. This stream of imagery recurs in Dionysiac ritual, especially in the Hellenistic period; see n. 39 above.

are always mature females of a kourotrophic inclination, for example, Dionysus's nurses, mother, or aunt. That they (only in the Dionysiac sphere) also imitate mature *male* animals seems, I think, to be part of the culturally transgressive aspect of the maenad, one that is easily apparent in the words of the herdsman in Euripides' *Bacchae*, who describes the actions of the Theban maenads (led by Cadmus' three mature daughters: Autonoe, Agave, and Ino), tearing a herd of cattle limb from limb with their bare hands (735–745) and then ransacking two Boeotian towns at the foot of Cithaeron and carrying away heavy bronze and iron booty on their backs (751–757). For the male initiate, however, the ephebic or even pre-ephebic god Dionysus seems to be the preferred model for the far less paradoxical claim that they leapt into the milk as kids, i.e. immature goats. This is, however, mere conjecture, as we cannot be sure of the genders of the owners of tablets A1 and A4, the only tablets which contain the kid-into-the-milk formula.[60] We are, however, on much firmer ground in the case of the texts from Pelinna: they were placed on the body of a mature woman, who was buried with the cremated body of a child (surely her own) and a statuette of a dancing maenad (see n. 30). The second item strongly suggests that she, as a former maenad, was once involved in some kind of ritual dance, like that performed by the Elean women in imitation of the arriving tauromorphic Dionysus, or perhaps more likely (given the location of her grave in Thessaly near to Thrace) in imitation of the divine nurses of Dionysus, who shared the danger and perhaps the fate of the god himself as he was chased to his death into the foam of the sea. The acclamation at the start of her tablets, in fact, suggests that the latter is the best option: "now you died and now you were born on this day!" In her case, then, the claim to have played the role of a mature bull or ram (like Dionysus) seems to be mythically underscored by the detail in Homer's account that Dionysus' *thyrsus*-wielding nurses were struck by an ox-goad during the attack of the mad Thracian king Lycurgus.

[60] The feminine adjective κοθαρά ("pure") in the first line seems to indicate a female petitioner, but there is a long modern tradition of understanding "soul" (*psykhê*) as the (absent) noun being modified. Likewise the masculine participle παθών ("sufferer") in the fourth verse of A4 suggests a masculine addressee, but could also be a generalized reference to male or female. But if both A tablets are addressed to males, then we have an interesting split in gender- and age-categories: female initiates claim to be mature male animals (bulls and rams), whereas male initiates claim to be immature male ones (kids) – although Graf 1993: 246 is right to caution us that *eriphos* in one Homeric formula refers to "goats" of all ages.

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Note: Abbreviations of journal titles and series titles follow those of *L'Année philologique* or *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn. Oxford 1999.
In addition:

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SNG Kopenhagen	*Sylloge nummorum graecorum Kopenhagen: The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals*. Copenhagen.

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