

# Greek Tragedy and Sacrificial Ritual

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THE PROLIFERATION of theses and hypotheses, of reconstructions and constructions on the subject of the origin of tragedy leads to reflection on a basic problem of philological statements.<sup>1</sup> Evidently we ought not to expect that we can reduce so complex a phenomenon as Greek tragedy to one single formula of origin. Every statement is necessarily one-sided. When we are dealing with an evolution, with *πολλὰ μεταβολαί* (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1449a14), there will be in each case persistence as well as differentiation, yet it is difficult to describe both pertinently at the same time. So, following his own inclinations, a scholar will be apt either to praise the creative achievement of a unique poet, be it Thespis or Aeschylus, or to insist on the primeval elements, with the ritual still preserved. We may collect exact information or formulate precise hypotheses as to the external organization of the Dionysia in the Polis Athens in the sixth century B.C.: temple and theater, chorus of citizens and choregos, *ποιητής*, *διδάσκαλος*, *ὑποκριτής*, masks and actors' dress, musical instruments, figures of dancing, musical and literary technique in the tradition of choral lyric and the iambos. But whoever tries to grasp the unique *καιρός* in the history of the human mind which brought forth tragedy, to understand the intellectual, psychological, and social motives involved, enters a field of basic ambiguity. On the precarious balance and the conflict of tradition and emancipation, individual and society, religion and the profane, myth and reason, not even Thespis himself could have given final elucidation. It is left to us to attempt again and again to form a comprehensive picture of man and his world out of the testimonies of the past. In each individual case, we shall not be able to grasp more than some of the possible aspects, a few strands in a complicated pattern. But we ought

<sup>1</sup> I had the opportunity to discuss this paper at the Oxford Philological Society and at the University Seminar in Classical Civilization at Columbia University, New York, and I wish to thank all participants for their suggestions and criticism. I am especially indebted to Mrs. Stephanie West, Oxford, for most of the translation. Of course I am fully responsible for any defects in style or contents.

to keep in mind just this to avoid the danger that traditional or contemporary prejudices may unduly narrow the possibilities of approach.

It is a single aspect that shall be considered here, the question why tragedy is called *τραγωδία*—a word which seems to impose the animal on the development of high human civilisation, the primitive and grotesque on sublime literary creations. If we seek an explanation of the word, we cannot avoid going back to earlier strata, to the religious basis of tragedy and indeed to Greek cult in general. Whether this has any bearing on fully-developed Attic tragedy cannot be determined in advance. The theory most prevalent today, going back to Welcker and owing its popularity to Wilamowitz, who claimed Aristotle's authority for it, understands *τραγωδία* to mean "song of goats," *sc.* of dancers dressed as goats. Scholars more concerned with the history of religion, however, still uphold the ancient etymology, "song at the sacrifice of a goat."<sup>2</sup> It will be necessary to establish first that philological criticism of the sources does not lead to a decision. When, however, the essence of sacrificial ritual is studied, a new perspective seems to emerge in which, eventually, even plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides may reveal a ritual background.

<sup>2</sup> The derivation of *τραγωδία* from *σάτυροι*=*πάγροι* was advanced by F. G. Welcker, *Nachtrag zu der Schrift über die Aeschylische Trilogie nebst einer Abhandlung über das Satyrspiel* (Frankfurt 1826) 240; cf. U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Euripides Herakles* I [hereafter, WILAMOWITZ] (Berlin 1889, repr. Darmstadt 1959); with different pagination: *Einleitung in die griechische Tragödie* (Berlin 1907) 82ff; *Kleine Schriften* I (Berlin 1935) 372; K. Ziegler, in *RE* zw.R. VI A (1937) 1917ff [hereafter, ZIEGLER]; M. Pohlenz, *Die griechische Tragödie*<sup>2</sup> [hereafter, POHLENZ] I (Göttingen 1954) 18ff; A. Lesky, *Die tragische Dichtung der Hellenen*<sup>2</sup> [hereafter, LESKY] (Göttingen 1964) 15ff. H. Patzer, *Die Anfänge der griechischen Tragödie* [hereafter, PATZER] (Weisbaden 1962) 131f upholds the same etymology, though rejecting any connection with the dithyramb and differentiating satyrs from goats (52ff). The theory of the goat-prize was defended by E. Reisch, *Festschrift Th. Gomperz* [hereafter, REISCH] (Wien 1902) 466ff; R. C. Flickinger, *The Greek Theater and its Drama* [hereafter, FLICKINGER] (Chicago 1918; 4th ed. 1936) 1ff; W. Schmid, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* I.2 (München 1934) 46ff; A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *Dithyramb, Tragedy and Comedy* [hereafter, PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE, *Dith.*<sup>1</sup>] (Oxford 1927) 164ff, whereas T. B. L. Webster in the rev. ed. of this book [Webster's additions are hereafter quoted by WEBSTER only] (Oxford 1962) 123f is inclined to follow Welcker/Wilamowitz. G. F. Else thinks the word *τραγωδός*, while deriving from the goat-prize, to be "clearly jocose or sarcastic," *i.e.* devoid of significance: *Hermes* 85 (1957) 42, cf. *The Origin and Early Form of Greek Tragedy* [hereafter, ELSE, *Origin*] (Cambridge [Mass.] 1965) 69f. M. P. Nilsson, *NJbb* 27 (1911) 609ff=*Opuscula* I (Lund 1951) 61ff, combined goat-sacrifice and singers dressed as goats, cf. *infra* n.61. A. B. Cook, *Zeus* [hereafter, COOK] (Cambridge 1914-1940) I.665ff assumed the sacrifice to have been a *σπαργμός* performed at the Lenaea; the *τραγωδοί* however belong to the Dionysia, not the Lenaea. Further comments on the goat-sacrifice: F. Robert, *Mélanges Ch. Picard* II (Paris 1949) 872-880; K. Kerényi, *Streifzüge eines Hellenisten* (Zürich 1960) 40ff; R. Merkelbach, "Die Erigone des Eratosthenes," in *Miscellanea di Studi Alessandrini in memoria di A. Rostagni* (Turin 1963) 496ff.

## I

There are so many learned, subtle and exhaustive discussions of Wilamowitz' theory of the origin of tragedy that it may suffice here to point out the well-known difficulties involved. The only ancient evidence is a gloss in the *Etymologicum Magnum*, s.v. τραγωδία (764.5) which says, after three other explanations, ἢ ὅτι τὰ πολλὰ οἱ χοροὶ ἐκ σατύρων συνίσταντο, οὗς ἐκάλουν τράγους. The statement that tragic choruses "mostly" consisted of satyrs is clearly wrong. Yet modern scholars have combined this with a passing remark of Aristotle's that tragedy developed ἐκ σατυρικοῦ (*Poetics* 1449a20, cf. 22); this may mean that tragedy originated "from the satyr play," as Chamaeleon, one of Aristotle's pupils, explained *expressis verbis*.<sup>3</sup> The notice in the *Etymologicum Magnum* has therefore been regarded as a somewhat corrupt reproduction of the "Peripatetic theory of the origin of tragedy": that the proto-tragedy was the satyr-play—or, since Aristotle derives tragedy from the dithyramb, a "Satyrdithyrambos"—and this was called "song of the goats." The first difficulty arises from the tradition which names Pratinas of Phlius, the slightly older contemporary of Aeschylus, as the inventor of the satyr-play. This piece of information is supported in a remarkable way by the pictorial tradition: scenes which undoubtedly come from satyr-plays begin to appear in vase-paintings after about 520 B.C., considerably after the first production of tragedy by Thespis. The scholar who has done the most fundamental work on the pictorial representations of satyr-plays, Frank Brommer, therefore concluded as long ago as 1937 that the satyr-play was "keine Vorform der Tragödie, sondern eine neue Erfindung."<sup>4</sup> So in order to save the theory it becomes

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 38 Wehrli, together with Plut. *Q. Conv.* 615A. There was an extensive Peripatetic literature on the history of tragedy; cf., besides Chamaeleon, Heracleides fr.179 W., Aristoxenus fr.113ff, Hieronymus fr.29ff W. On account of the Arabic translation, Gudeman, followed by Lesky 16, emended Arist. *Poet.* 1449a20 ἐκ <τοῦ> σατυρικοῦ; the emendation is not accepted by R. Kassel (OCT 1965), cf. Patzer 53. G. F. Else, *Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1957) 164ff thinks a19 ἐπὶ—a21 ἀπεσεμνύθη to be an interpolation, but hesitates himself (*Origin* 16) to draw conclusions from this hypothesis. A vase-painting from the 5th century represents ΤΡΑΓΩΔΙΑ being awakened by satyrs: Chous Oxford 534=J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*<sup>2</sup> [hereafter, ARV<sup>2</sup>] (Oxford 1963) 1258,1; cf. bell-crater Compiègne 1025=ARV<sup>2</sup> 1055,76; chous Leipzig T 527=ARV<sup>2</sup> 1258,2; H. Herter, *RE* zw.r. VIA (1937) 1897. Dionysus, satyrs, tragedy still belong together.

<sup>4</sup> F. Brommer, *Satyroi* (Würzburg 1937) 36, cf. *Satyrs* (Berlin 1959); Patzer 128ff. Pratinas as inventor of satyr-play: Suid. s.v. ΠΡΑΤΙΝΑΣ, Ps.-Acr. in Hor. *AP* 216 (*Cratini* Cd., *Pratinae* Pohlenz), cf. Dioskorides, *AP* 7.37, 707; M. Pohlenz, *Das Satyrspiel und Pratinas von Phleius* (*GöttNachr* 1926) 298–321=Kleine Schriften II (Hildesheim 1965) 473–496.

necessary to postulate a proto-satyr-play existing before Pratinas; this turns Pratinas' achievement into a mere reform of satyr-play. In so far as the type of the satyr undoubtedly existed long before Pratinas, this is a possible way out of the difficulty; whether the Peripatetics could know anything about this proto-satyr-play is another question.

The other difficulty is more disturbing. The satyrs of the satyr-play and the even earlier satyrs which we know from vase-paintings and sculpture are not "goats," but wild men with animal ears and horses' tails; only in the Hellenistic period did they acquire horns. A satyr may on occasion be called *τράγος*, and when on vase-paintings satyrs and goats are depicted together, their physiognomy becomes remarkably similar;<sup>5</sup> but still they are not *τράγοι* themselves, as a satyr-play never could be called *τραγωδία*. The theory necessitates a further step backwards. It is argued that the home of the proto-satyr-play, or rather goat-play was not Athens, but the Peloponnese; Pan belongs to Arcadia, and in Corinth, about 600 B.C., Arion developed the dithyramb which Aristotle connects with tragedy. Wilamowitz unhesitatingly assumed that Arion's chorus consisted of *τράγοι* (86). Now Corinthian vases of this period offer countless variations on the retinue of Dionysus, but no singing goats. Most frequently one finds the grotesque padded dancers; it is possible that they were called *σάτυροι*, but surely they are much less *τράγοι* than the satyrs of Attic satyr-play. There also appear shaggy creatures with hairy bodies, but they lack any characteristic which would allow us to assign them to a definite species. Only someone who is determined to produce *τράγοι* at all costs for the sake of *τραγωδία* will call them "goats."<sup>6</sup> The ex-

<sup>5</sup> On satyrs, goats, and horses cf. A. Furtwängler, *Kleine Schriften I* (München 1912) 134ff, 190ff; Wilamowitz 83f; Ziegler 1920ff; Lesky 23ff; Patzer 57ff; Else, *Origin* 15ff. Satyrs sometimes wear goatskins (E. Cyc. 80), but Pollux (4.118) also mentions *νεβρίς, παρδαλή, θήραιον, χλαρίς ἀνθινή* as satyr's dress, whereas girls wore goatskins in some Dionysiac ritual, Hsch. *τραγηφόροι*. More important are A. fr.207 Nauck=455 Mette, S. *Ichneutai* 357f, Hsch. *τράγους· σατύρους* . . . (where the accusative shows that the lemma comes from a quotation); together with the vase-paintings (n.25) these texts show that satyr and goat was a current association, whereas there seems to be no evidence for a satyr called *ἵππος*. Webster 301 no.6 affirms that the *ΣΙΑΕΝΟΙ* on the François Vase (Florence 4209) have legs of goats; on the reproduction (A. Furtwängler/K. Reichhold, *Griechische Vasenmalerei* [München 1904-32] pl.11/12) I am unable to see any difference between the silens' and the mule's legs.

<sup>6</sup> Webster 114, arguing that these dancers surely are not horses. *Μαλλωτός χιτών* of silens: D.H. 7.72.10. On the subject of the Corinthian dancers, cf. Webster 100f, 113ff, 169ff; L. Breitholz, *Die dorische Farce im griechischen Mutterland vor dem 5.Jh.* (Göteborg 1960); Patzer 114ff, who, following Buschor, calls them *σάτυροι*. One Corinthian vase has a *τράγος* amidst the Dionysiac revellers, Webster no.37, cf. n.25.

pression *μαλλωτός χιτών* would rather suggest sheepskins. Only the same fixed prejudice in favour of goats explains why the *τραγικοί χοροί* in the cult of Adrastus at Sicyon (Herodotus 5.67) have so often been understood to be "choruses of goats."<sup>7</sup>

There remains what has been thought to be the supreme piece of evidence for the singing goats, an archaic bronze from Methydrion in the Peloponnese, more than a century earlier than Arion. It is so primitive that experts doubted whether the four dancing figures were goats or rams until recently when Roland Hampe, referring to similar bronzes found at Olympia, established that neither goats nor rams are represented but quite simply men. What had been taken to be horns are a primitive attempt at ears.<sup>8</sup> There are, of course, goat-like demons even beside Pan. Terracotta statuettes, mostly from Boeotia, represent an ithyphallic goatman with a cornucopia. His name is unknown,<sup>9</sup> whereas the horned dancers on the so-called Anodos-scenes may with some probability be identified as *Πᾶνες*; they seem to be confined to this special occasion.<sup>10</sup>

So still there is no evidence for choruses of singing goats from which *τραγωδία* could have derived its name. And at any rate there would remain the deeper question—what ever could be the relation between satyr-like gaiety and the high seriousness of tragedy? Did *τραγωδία* originally lack the "tragic" element (so Wilamowitz 93)?

We also have to consider a simple, but decisive linguistic fact: the

<sup>7</sup> E.g. Wilamowitz 84, Pohlenz II.10, Ziegler 1919f; *contra*, Nilsson, *Opuscula* I.93f; C. del Grande, *ΤΡΑΓΩΔΙΑ*<sup>2</sup> (Milano 1962) 40ff; Else, *Origin* 17f; Patzer 19f, 59f. The only natural way to express 'chorus of goats' in Greek would be *τράγων χορός*. A sufficient reason for Herodotus or his source to call these choruses 'tragic' could have been that they wore masks and sang on *πάθῃ*; but a goat-sacrifice is entirely possible (Flickinger 13ff, combining the date given by Eusebius' and Jerome's *Chron.*, Ol.47,2). One ought to take seriously the tradition about Epigenes of Sicyon (the evidence: *RE* VI [1909] 64), considering the fact that there was a relatively old *Σικυωνίων ἀναγραφή* (*FGrHist* 550) dealing especially with the history of literature and music.

<sup>8</sup> The bronze of Methydrion, Athens Nat.Mus. 13789, was found and published in 1911 by F. Hiller von Gaertringen and H. Lattermann, *AbhBerl* 1911, 4, pl.13; "vier widderartige aufrechte Gestalten" p.24; 'rams' Pohlenz I.18, M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* I<sup>2</sup> (München 1955) pl.50,2; identified as 'goats' by F. Brommer, *Satyroi* (Würzburg 1937) 10, cf. Patzer 64f, 124. *Contra*, R. Hampe, *Gymnasium* 72 (1965) 77ff. Lead figurines from the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta represent standing he-goats; Brommer l.c. concluded they were "mythische Wesen oder deren menschliche Nachahmer," cf. Patzer 65. The standing goat, however, is an iconographic type since Sumerian times, cf. n.30 and figure 4, PLATE 4.

<sup>9</sup> F. Winter, *Die Typen der figürlichen Terrakotten* I (Berlin 1903) 220; P. Baur, *AJA* 9 (1905) 157ff; Cook I.704f. Webster no.73 refers to a bronze statuette of similar type, as it seems, from Samos.

<sup>10</sup> Reisch 456ff; Patzer 62ff.

primary word formation is not *τραγωδία* at all, but *τραγωδός*, or rather *τραγωδοί*. This word is used in official inscriptions as well as in colloquial speech until well into the fourth century, where we should expect to find *τραγωδία*: *ἐν τοῖς τραγωδοῖς, θεάσασθαι τραγωδούς, νικᾶν τραγωδοῖς*. *Τραγωδοί*—that is, the chorus with its strange masks and splendid robes, as it stood before the eyes of the Athenians.<sup>11</sup> Now the laws of Greek word formation show that *τραγωδός* cannot mean 'singing goat'; nor indeed does the word *κωμωδοί* imply 'singing κῶμοι', but 'singers on occasion of the κῶμος'.<sup>12</sup> To be more exact: we are dealing with a determinative compound, in which regularly the first part determines in some way the area of operation of the second. It can be either purely nominal, like *αὐλωδός, κιθαρωδός*: the 'singer' who has something to do with a 'goat', 'flute', 'cithara'; or -*ωδός* can be verbal, 'he who sings the goat', like *λινωδός, μελωδός, θρηνωδός*. At any rate *τραγωδοί* are 'singers', one particular group out of different kinds of 'singers'. There is at least one exact parallel: Dionysios of Argos, fourth or third century B.C., has preserved what he states to be an

<sup>11</sup> *Τραγωδοί* in the Attic Fasti, A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens* (Oxford 1953) 104; *ἐν τοῖς τραγωδοῖς* Ar. Av. 512, cf. Pax 531; IG II/III<sup>2</sup> 956, 34; Aeschin. 3.41, 45; D. 21.10; *ἐνίκα τραγωδοῖς* IG II/III<sup>2</sup> 3091; cf. And. 4.42; *τραγωδοῖς χορηγεῖν* Lys. 21.1, cf. 19.29, 24.9; D. 21.59; Is. 5.36; *τεθέασαι τραγωδούς* Men. Epit. 149. Considering these well-established usages of *τραγωδοί*, it is very improbable that the word should be "Rückbildung" (Lesky 22 n.3), secondary to *τραγωδία*, cf. Ziegler 1917, Else Origin 25f. Else however holds that *τραγωδός* was the actor-poet (*Hermes* 85 [1957] 20ff). In this case it would be difficult to account for the constant plural *νικᾶν, χορηγεῖν τραγωδοῖς; χορηγῶν ἐνίκα τραγωδοῖς* IG II/III<sup>2</sup> 3091: there is only one poet for each *χορηγός*. The parallelism *ἀνδρῶν - παίδων - κωμωδῶν - τραγωδῶν* in IG II/III<sup>2</sup> 2318 is revealing, too. Whereas "no one of the *ὑποκριταί* ever danced" (*Περὶ τραγωδίας* ed. R. Browning, *ΓΕΡΑΣ* G. Thomson [Prague 1963] 70 line 74), dancing is characteristic of the *τραγωδός*, Ar. V. 1476ff. *Τραγωδοί* and *ὑποκριτής* are contrasted in the vita of Aeschines, POxy. 1800 fr. 3 col. ii 47ff: *ἐπιτραγωνίστει τραγωδοῖς ὑποκρινόμενος*.

<sup>12</sup> The first to stress this fact was Reisch 467, followed by Pickard-Cambridge, *Dith.*<sup>1</sup> 164f. They could not apply the more exact rules of word-formation developed by linguistics since then; cf. E. Risch, *Wortbildung der homerischen Sprache*, (Heidelberg 1937); *IGForsch* 59 (1944/9) 1ff, 245ff; E. Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik I* (München 1950) 428ff; W. H. Willis, *Studies Presented to D. M. Robinson II* (Saint Louis 1953) 553ff; I am indebted to A. Heubeck (Erlangen) for advice. There are very few exceptions among the determinative compounds where the second part determines the first, e.g. *ἵπποπόταμος, αἶγαγρος*. In an attempt to refute Pickard-Cambridge, Patzer (132) adduces, besides *κωμωδός, χορωδός* and *μονωδός*; this word, however, is found only in Tzetzes, *χορωδός* seems not to be attested at all. Lesky (22 n.3) refers to E. Kalinka, *Commentationes Aenopontanae* 10 (1924) 31, who, however, shows his unawareness of Greek word-formation by referring to *ροδοδάκτυλος*: this, the *bahuvrihi*-type, is exocentric, i.e. used as adjective, Schwyzer 429, 454; *ῥαβωδός* belongs still to another, the *τερψίμβροτος*-type. Del Grande, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.7) 56ff, 354ff, thinks *τραγωδός* has nothing at all to do with *τράγος* 'goat'. If, however, a goat was sacrificed at the Dionysia in the time of Thespis, it is difficult to believe that the Athenians would keep *τραγωδοί* and *τράγος* apart.

earlier name for rhapsodes, ἄρνωδός, explaining the word unhesitatingly τοῦ δὲ ἄθλου τοῖς νικῶσιν ἄρνός ἀποδεδειγμένου.<sup>13</sup>

To this corresponds the explanation of the name τραγωδία—the only one current in antiquity—as ‘song for the prize of a goat’ or ‘song at the sacrifice of a goat’; the two interpretations are identical, for naturally the goat won as a prize was sacrificed to Dionysos. The earliest evidence for the τράγος as ἄθλον in the tragic agon is the Parian Marble, then an epigram of Dioskorides; Eratosthenes, in his *Erigone*, certainly treated Icarius’ sacrifice of a goat as the *aition* of τραγωδία: Ἰκάριοι τόθι πρῶτα περὶ τράγον ὠρχήσαντο. The most familiar descriptions are those in the Augustan poets. Particularly detailed are the accounts given in two late Latin writers, Diomedes—whose source is supposed to be Suetonius—and Euanthius; both use the same Greek material, which may come from Didymos, *Περὶ ποιητῶν*. The same tradition survived in the Scholia to Dionysius Thrax, in the Johannes Diaconus published by Rabe, and in Tzetzes; the intermediate source appears to be the *Chrestomathy* of Proclus.<sup>14</sup> A great

<sup>13</sup> FGrHist 308 F 2=Schol. in Pi. N. 2.1; Eust. p.6.25; EM, Hsch. s.v. ἄρνωδός, Phot. s.v. ῥαψωδός. The *Lex sacra* of Coresus, SIG<sup>3</sup> 958.36 assigns κρεῶν μερίδα to the rhapsode. So there is no reason to look for another etymology of ἄρνωδός as Welcker, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 241 did.

<sup>14</sup> Marm.Par. FGrHist 239 A 43, cf. Euseb./Hieron. *Chron.* Ol.47,2; Dioskorides, AP 7.410, cf. 411; Eratosth. fr.22 Powell=Hygin. *Astr.* p.35.4ff Bunte, cf. F. Solmsen in TAPA 78 (1947) 270ff; K. Meuli, *MusHelv* 12 (1955) 226f; Merkelbach, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 496ff. Patzer 33f thinks Eratosthenes is referring to the ἀσκήλια rather than to tragedy, though admitting that περὶ τράγον ὠρχεῖσθαι does not suit the jumping on the goatskin. Eratosthenes’ theory, however, seems to have been that both tragedy and comedy sprang from the same root, the τρυγωδία understood as ‘vintage-song’, to which the ἀσκήλια too are said to have belonged, cf. Paus.Gr. ed. Erbse α 161=Eust. p.1769.45ff (Erbse is not right in leaving out the phrases on κομωρεῖν and τραγωδοί; the word κομῆται in Paus.Gr. clearly points to κομωδία, cf. Meuli, *l.c.* 226 n.4); other texts gathered by Meuli *l.c.* It seems impossible to accept Eratosthenes’ theory in this respect, because the Dionysia was not a vintage-festival; but the falsity of the combination does not invalidate the single pieces of information Eratosthenes could use, e.g. on τραγωδοί and τράγος. Verg. *Georg.* 2.380ff with Serv.Auct. 383, Prob. 380/4, Schol.Bern.; Hor. AP 220 with Ps.-Acr.; Tib. 2.1.57f. Diomedes, *Grammatici Latini* I.487=Suetonius p.5.16ff Reifferscheid (cf. *infra* n.21); Euanthius in *Aeli Donati q.f. commentum Terenti* ed. P. Wessner, I (Leipzig 1902) 13=CGF p.62. Diomedes and Euanthius present nearly the same material in different arrangement; Euanthius does not use Diomedes (-Suetonius), since he has some more Greek material (*Apollo Nόμιος*, Ἄγναϊος p.13.16 Wessner), but—except the obvious reference to Vergil—not the Latin quotations (Varro, Lucilius) found in Diomedes (-Suetonius). Didymos, *Περὶ ποιητῶν*, is quoted by Orion p.58.7ff Sturz for an etymology of ἔλεγος which recurs in Diomedes p.484 K. and Procl. *Chr.* 319B6ff. Proclus in his *Chrestomathy* must have dealt with tragedy and comedy, but nothing is extant in the excerpts of Photios; from Proclus, however, seem to be derived the excerpts of Iohannes Diaconus ed. Rabe, *RhM* 63 (1908) 150, Schol. in Dionys.Thr. p.18.3ff; 172.20, 306.27, 475.3 Hilgard; Tz. *ad Lyc.* p.2.21, 3.1 Scheer; Tz. *Diff. Poet.* 100, 124 (CGF pp.37f). Cf. G. Kaibel, *Die Prolegomena ΠΕΡΙ ΚΩΜΩΙΔΙΑΣ* (AbhGött II.4 1898), a study of basic importance for the evaluation of the later sources. Else, *Origin* 17, declaring Iohannes Diaconus “worthless,” ignores these affiliations. Patzer, affirming that

deal was written in the Hellenistic period on matters of literary history, and what survives is absurdly scanty. Kaibel was nevertheless able to show in the case of the rather fuller literature *περὶ κωμωδίας* that even in the Byzantine excerptors there are traces of a theory of the fourth century B.C., a theory which did not know the comedy of Menander. Even the latest sources may preserve excellent tradition. It is worth noting that some fragments of Aristotle, from the *Περὶ ποιητῶν*, have survived in this way.<sup>15</sup>

Among modern scholars the derivation of *τραγωδία* from the sacrifice of a goat has not enjoyed much success. "Spielend ersonnene *αἴτια*," "Konstruktionen, keine Überlieferung"—this was the judgment of Wilamowitz (63), who maintained that the whole thing was a fabrication of Eratosthenes; incidentally, he had overlooked the Parian Marble. Pohlenz tried to correct this oversight while retaining the result: he argued that the theory was earlier than Eratosthenes, but still post-Aristotelian, early Alexandrian. The secondary fabrication, according to him, gives itself away by its bias: while Aristotle's evidence about dithyramb and *σατυρικόν* points towards the Peloponnese, the autochthonous origin of tragedy in Attica is here defended. Pohlenz' argument has found wide acceptance.<sup>16</sup> Yet it evidently depends on two assumptions: that Attic local patriotism did not start to consider tragedy until after Aristotle, and that it could contribute nothing but invention, no facts of any sort. But the Atthidographers were at work before Aristotle: Cleidemus wrote *ca.* 350, Phanodemus about a decade later. They were keenly interested in the Attic cults. A fragment of Cleidemus on the lesser Dionysia is extant (*FGrHist* 323 F 27). Phanodemus displays a marked Athenian bias (325 F 14,

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the explanation "*τραγωδία*= 'Gesang beim Bocksopfer'" was "in der Antike nirgends als Namensdeutung versucht" (34 n.1), is overlooking Vergil and Euanthius. Vergil and Euanthius agree with the tradition of the goat as a prize as to the fact that the *τραγωδοί* sang while the goat was still alive; cf. *infra* n.68 at the end.

<sup>15</sup> Fr.676 Rose=Schol.Bob. in Cic. *Pro Arch.* p.358 Orelli, on elegists; fr.677=Procl. *Chr.* 320A31, on Arion; Rose included both fragments among the *dubia*, conjecturing *Ἀριστοκλῆς* instead of *Ἀριστοτέλης*. He could not yet know Iohannes Diakonos p.150 Rabe (*infra* n.19) and Schol. in Dionys.Thr. p.306.9 Hilgard, on Susarion.

<sup>16</sup> Pohlenz, *GöttNachr* 1927, cf. Pohlenz II.8ff, accepted by Ziegler 1925, Lesky 20ff, Patzer 24. Pohlenz, referring to Jacoby, stated the source of the Parian Marble to be an early third century Atthis. Surely Eratosthenes in his *Erigone* was drawing on the Atthidographers, as did Callimachus in his *Hecale*. Jacoby, however, thought of Ephorus, *Περὶ εὐρημάτων*, too as a possible source for the Parian Marble, *FGrHist* II D 668, cf. II c 42. It is the merit of Solmsen, Meuli, Merkelbach (*supra* n.14) to have revived the interest in the 'Eratosthenian' theory of the drama.



F 27). Are we to suppose that the earlier Atthidographers wrote nothing about the Great Dionysia? This festival was certainly treated by Philochorus (328 F 171; cf. F 5, F 206), who took special interest in sacrificial rites (F 178, F 194) and gave an explanation of the word *ῥαψωδός* (F 212). Considering the general inflexibility of Greek cults, it is hard to maintain that even a post-Aristotelian Atthidographer would present sheer invention in matters of sacrifice.

Aristotle, however, says quite explicitly that the dispute between Athenians and Dorians for the glory of the 'invention' of tragedy and comedy had been going on for some time: διὸ καὶ ἀντιποιοῦνται τῆς τε τραγωδίας καὶ τῆς κωμωδίας οἱ Δωριεῖς . . . ποιούμενοι τὰ ὀνόματα σημείον. αὐτοὶ μὲν γὰρ κώμας τὰς περιουκίδας καλεῖν φασιν, Ἀθηναίους δὲ δήμους, ὥς κωμῶδους οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ κωμάζειν λεχθέντας ἀλλὰ τῇ κατὰ κώμας πλάνῃ ἀτιμαζομένους ἐκ τοῦ ἄστεως . . . (Poetics 1448a29ff). This presupposes two things: a derivation of κωμωδία from κώμη in the form of an anecdote—some people, for lack of appreciation, leave the city and wander around in the villages; the song which they sing is the κωμωδία—and an inference from this derivation: the word κώμη is Doric, therefore κωμωδία itself must be of Doric, not Attic, origin. Now it is unlikely that both, etymology and inference from it, were produced at the same time. The word ἀντιποιοῦνται presupposes two parties to the dispute, and therefore Athenian counter-claims. Polemic is most effective when it can take the arguments of an opponent and turn them against him. The derivation of κωμωδία from κώμη is so far-fetched, that from κῶμος so obvious, that it would have been quite idiotic for the Doric partisans to introduce the κώμη-argument into the debate if it had not already been accepted by the Athenians themselves. This means that the etymology, together with the κώμη-anecdote, was first advanced at Athens; this is supported by the specifically Attic word ἄστν; and indeed κώμη is an Attic word, too.<sup>17</sup> So Aristotle's statement presupposes at least two stages in the discussion about the origin of comedy: an Attic etymology based on a 'village' custom, and a counter-attack by the Dorian party.

<sup>17</sup> Else, *Aristotle's Poetics* (supra n.3), pointed out the Attic setting of the anecdote and the Attic word ἄστν (121 n.101). He thinks the pro-Dorian party to consist of Aristotle's own pupils, Dicaearchus and Aristoxenus (123); "the whole idea of a competition between Dorian and Athenian claims to the origination of the drama could only have arisen in the fourth century and in the context of Aristotle's school" (Else, *Origin* 23)—as if the question of the εὐρετής were not already present in Pi. O. 13.18, Hdt.1.23, cf. Jacoby, *FGrHist* II c p.42.25 on Ephorus *Περὶ εὐρημάτων*. On κώμη, Swoboda in *RE Suppl.* IV (1924) 951.

The Attic etymology which Aristotle rejects lived on in Greek literature; though the anecdote varies, the derivation of comedy from *κῶμη* is the prevailing explanation of the name in Diomedes and Euanthius, in the treatises *Περὶ κωμωδίας*, in the scholia to Dionysius Thrax and in Tzetzes<sup>18</sup>—in fact, in precisely those authors who offer ‘song over the goat’ as the etymology of *τραγωδία*. Thus in the case of *κωμωδία* we are dealing with a pre-Aristotelian Attic etymology which survives in the later tradition. If we may assume something analogous for *τραγωδία*, this squares very well with the tradition about the *τράγος*-prize. And whether this tradition really is contradicted by and incompatible with Aristotle’s testimony is by no means certain.<sup>19</sup> So it is quite possible, though it cannot be proved, that the tradition of the goat-sacrifice is pre-Aristotelian. Even this possibility, however, is enough to destroy Pohlenz’ argument: he has not succeeded in proving by *recensio* of the evidence that the tradition of the goat-sacrifice is secondary and therefore to be rejected. The *recentiores* are

<sup>18</sup> Diom. p.488 quoting Varro; Euanthius p.13f Wessner; Donatus p.23.1ff Wessner; CGF p.6, p.14 col.b 39; Schol. in Dionys.Thr. p.18.15ff, 172.26, 306.16, 450.30 Hilgard; EM p.764.13ff; Tz. ad Lyc. p.2.32 Scheer; Iohannes Diakonos p.149f Rabe; Schol. in Pl. Remp. 394c.

<sup>19</sup> Aristotle had little interest in etymology: *φύσει τῶν ὀνομάτων οὐδέν ἐστιν* (Int. 16a27); therefore it is quite doubtful whether in his remarks on *σατυρικόν* he was thinking of the word *τραγωδία* and hypothetical Peloponnesian *τράγοι*. Of course, even satyrs could sacrifice a goat, cf. the vase-paintings (*infra* n.25, esp. no. 17). The Iohannes Diakonos passage p.150 Rabe contains, together with the much discussed testimony of Solon on Arion as inventor of tragedy, the statement *ἄμφω δὲ* (i.e. tragedy and comedy) *παρ’ Ἀθηναίοις ἐφεύρηται, καθάπερ Ἀριστοτέλης φησίν*. There is no methodological reason why we should accept the testimony of Solon and reject the testimony of Aristotle. Aristotle, however, knew and quoted Solon’s elegies (cf. e.g. Ath. 5, 12); so he will not have overlooked so ancient an authority on tragedy, and still he is said to have maintained its Attic origin. So the question comes up again what Solon really said. There is a well-established tradition that Arion ‘invented’ the dithyramb (Hellanikos, FG<sup>1</sup>Hist 4 F 86; Hdt. 1.23; Aristotle in Procl. Chr. 320A31; Dicaearchus fr.75 Wehrli; Schol. in Pi. O. 13.26 b; Schol. in Pl. Remp. 394c; Tz. ad Lyc. p.2.15 Scheer; alluded to in Pindar, O. 13.18). Aristotle thought dithyramb to be the *ἀρχή* of tragedy (Poet. 1449a9ff); whatever he meant by this statement and whether or not he was right, it must be noted that *ἀρχή* in his terminology implies that dithyramb was itself not tragedy, but an ‘ontologically’ earlier step. His followers and epitomators, however, would not always keep to these subtle distinctions. The result was some confusion between dithyramb and tragedy. As Philoxenus is said to have been *διθυραμβοποιὸς ἢ τραγωδοδιδάσκαλος* (Schol. in Ar. Pl. 290), *a fortiori* Arion came to be considered the first tragic poet (Suid. s.v. ARION, Tz. ad Lyc. p.3.7 Scheer). If Solon only spoke of Arion’s *κύκλιος χορός* (*κύκλιον ἦγαγε χορόν*—a somewhat unusual word order—Schol. in Pi. l.c., cf. Procl., Tz. l.c.), this could develop into the statement of Iohannes Diakonos: the author’s name and the title of his work are preserved, but instead of the text we have a questionable interpretation. So the quotation of Solon in Iohannes Diakonos may be similar to the quotation of Hesiod in Diog.Laer. 8.48: Hesiod there is said to have taught the sphericity of the earth, because Zenon (SVF I no.276) read it into his text.

not necessarily the *deteriores*. Before rejecting it, we ought to try at least to make sense of the tradition.

Was a goat sacrificed in connection with the *τραγωδοί* performances at the Great Dionysia? Oddly enough, this question is seldom clearly put. Ziegler (1926) thought that the answer is definitely "No"; in all extant tragedies and comedies, there is "nie mit einem Sterbenswort von einem Bock als Preis die Rede."<sup>20</sup> This clearly is an *argumentum ex silentio*, which is contradicted by the literary-historical sources, beginning with the Parian marble. The evidence of the Latin sources is most detailed: Diomedes—*hircus praemium cantus proponebatur, qui Liberalibus die festo Libero patri ob hoc ipsum immolabatur, quia, ut Varro ait, depascunt vitem*;<sup>21</sup> *Euanthius incensis iam altaribus et admoto hirco id genus carminis quod sacer chorus reddebat Libero patri tragoedia*

<sup>20</sup> "In Ikaria und bei vielen anderen Dionysosfesten" there were goat-sacrifices, according to Ziegler (1926), but not at the Dionysia when tragedy was performed. Even so it would be less far-fetched to derive *τραγωδοί* from Icaria than from hypothetical Peloponnesian *τράγοι*. Patzer (24) thinks the goat-prize to be a mere "inference" from the wrong etymology. Lesky (20) is more circumspect: "Man berief sich dabei gewiss auf alten attischen Dorfbrauch."

<sup>21</sup> Diomedes—who is quoting Varro (*De scaenicis originibus* fr.304 Funaioli) only for the *quia* phrase, as the change in number seems to indicate—explicitly refers to the Attic Dionysia, p.488: *Liberalibus apud Atticos, die festo Liberi patris, vinum cantatoribus pro corollario dabatur* (cf. Philochoros, *FGrHist* 328 F 171); Serv.Auct. in *Georg.* 2.383 states that the Dionysiac goat-sacrifice originated at the Attic Dionysia. For the myth of Icarius and the first goat-sacrifice, there is no incontrovertible evidence prior to Eratosthenes. Attic black-figure vases represent a man receiving Dionysus (amphora BM B 149=J. D. Beazley, *Attic Black-figure Vase Painters*, hereafter, ABV [Oxford 1956] 245,60 and B 153=ABV 243,45); the man is traditionally called Icarius, but 'Amphictyon' and 'Semachus' too are possible names. The story of Icarius in Porph. *Abst.* 2.10 was reluctantly attributed to Theophrastus by J. Bernays, *Theophrastos' Schrift über Frömmigkeit* (Berlin 1866) 61 and, with less hesitation, by W. Pötscher, *Theophrastos ΠΕΡΙ ΕΥΣΕΒΕΙΑΣ* (Leiden 1964) 22ff. This, however, can be refuted: according to Theophrastus, the sanguinary sacrifice was caused by *λμός ἢ τινος ἄλλης δυστυχίας περίστασις* (Porph. *Abst.* 2.9 first sentence)—which is neither "unglücklicher Zufall" nor "Missgeschick" (Pötscher 16, 153), but something like "inescapable impact of calamity" (cf. Theophrastus' definition of tragedy as *ἡρωικῆς τύχης περίστασις* Diom. p.487). Introduced by *αὐτίκα τῶν κατὰ μέρος*. . . there follow in Porphyry the Attic anecdotes about the first sacrifice of a pig, a goat, a bull, which make *ἡ ἀγνοίας ἢ ὀργῆς ἢ φόβου* the origin of sacrifice; this is not *δυστυχίας περίστασις*. In the middle of chapter 10 (p.141.3 Nauck; fr.6 Pötscher), the *κατὰ μέρος*-examples come to an end, and suddenly the motive of *λμός* reappears: this is Theophrastus again, the stories before are *ἐμβεβλημένοι μῦθοι* of Porphyry (*Abst.* 2.32). Nevertheless, the non-Theophrastean anecdotes may still be very old popular tradition, perhaps again preserved by Athidographers. Later testimonies on the Dionysiac goat-sacrifice: Varro, *RR* 1.2.19; *Ov. Met.* 15.111ff; *Fast.* 1.349ff; Serv. in *Aen.* 3.118; Prob. in *Georg.* 2.380/4; above all Leonidas of Tarentum, *AP* 9.99, and Euenus of Ascalon, *AP* 9.75, an epigram which is also inscribed on a Pompeian wall-painting, *MonInst* 10 (1876) T.36, cf. *infra* p.114. Hellenistic and Roman representations of the goat-sacrifice are collected by O. Brendel, *RömMitt* 48 (1933) 153ff. A choregus paid 30 minas for one tragic agon (*Lys.* 21.1), the price of a goat in Erchia (*SEG* 21 [1965] no.541) is 10 to 12 drachmas, i.e. less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  %—*vilis hircus* indeed.

*dicebatur*. In view of this testimony, the burden of proof lies with those who deny that a goat was sacrificed at the Great Dionysia.

The sacrificial victim as prize in an agon occurs as early as the *Iliad* (22.159).<sup>22</sup> Most important was the bull as prize and sacrificial victim in connection with the dithyramb. By chance we have unimpeachable early evidence in this case: Pindar (*Ol.* 13.19) speaks of the *βοηλάτας διθύραμβος* which originated in Corinth; the scholia explain, as if it were a matter of course, "because a bull was *ἐπαθλον* for the winner." This is confirmed by an epigram of Simonides (79 D.), who boasts that he has won "56 bulls and tripods." *Βοηλάτας διθύραμβος*—the bull was led along in solemn procession; vase-paintings show the bull, adorned by the victorious Phyle and ready for sacrifice, beside the tripod.<sup>23</sup> Why should we not suppose that the goat was similarly connected with tragedy? Plutarch sets the two, the prize of bull and goat, victory with dithyramb and tragedy, in vivid proximity when, in his essay *De gloria Atheniensium*, he describes the triumphal procession of the poets: he has the *Νῆκαι* themselves march up, *βοῦν ἐπαθλον ἐλκούσας ἢ τράγον* (349c). This is allegory, influenced by the pictorial tradition (n.23), but the experience of Greek sacrificial festivals lies behind it. In the church of Aghios Eleftherios, the 'Little Mitropolis' at Athens, there is an ancient frieze depicting the months of the Attic year. Elaphebolion is represented by the figure of a comic actor pulling along a goat (PLATE 2): comedy and tragedy as the epitome of the Great Dionysia, the main festival in Elaphebolion.<sup>24</sup> Are we to suppose that this representation, too, owes its existence to early Hellenistic speculation based on a stupid etymology? No one denies that the *τράγος*-sacrifice played a special part in the cult of Dionysus. The earliest evidence are vase-paintings of the sixth century, especially Attic black-figure vases: they show again and again the he-goat together with Dionysus or satyrs, sometimes '*ductus cornu*' (Vergil,

<sup>22</sup> Cf. the foundation of Kritolaos in Amorgos, *IG* XII 7, 515.80: the meat of a sacrificed ram is to be used as *ἐπαθλα* for the victors in an athletic agon. Cf. also Schol. in Theocr. 7.106/8d.

<sup>23</sup> On these 'dithyrambic vases' cf. G. E. Rizzo, *RivFC* 30 (1902) 471ff; E. Pfuhr, *Malerei und Zeichnung* II (München 1923) §617; esp. the neck-amphora BM E 298 = ARV<sup>2</sup> 1581, 20, CVA pl.51.1, with the inscription *AKAMANTIE ENIKA ΦΥΛΕ*; the calyx-crater Bologna PU 286 = ARV<sup>2</sup> 1158, with Dionysus, seated, expecting the sacrifice of the bull led by Nike. On later representations of bull-sacrifices, O. Brendel, *RömMitt* 45 (1930) 196ff. Further testimonies on the dithyrambic bull-sacrifice: Chamaeleon fr.34 Wehrli explaining Simonides fr.69 Diehl; Dionysus *ταυροφάγος*, S. fr.607 Nauck = 668 Pearson; Schol. in Pl. *Remp.* 394c; the expression *θύσων διθύραμβον* Pi. fr.86a.

<sup>24</sup> L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Berlin 1932) 252 and pl.38.

BURKERT PLATE 2



THE GREAT DIONYSIA: POMPE (OR THEORIA), ACTOR WITH GOAT, ZODIACAL  
SIGN OF ARIES, from CALENDAR FRIEZE, ATHENS (cf. n.24)

*(Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Athens)*

PLATE 3 BURKERT



*Figure 1. Skyphos of the Theseus Painter, Agora P 1544*  
(Courtesy of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens)



*Figure 2. Detail of Skyphos, Agora P 1544*  
(Courtesy of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens)

DIONYSIAC PROCESSION WITH FLUTE-PLAYER, WINE-AMPHORA, GOAT (cf. n.25 no.13)

Georg. 2.395).<sup>25</sup> To which of the Dionysus festivals the *τράγος* belongs can be seen from Plutarch (*De cupid. div.* 527D): ἡ πάτριος τῶν Διονυσίων ἑορτὴ τὸ παλαιὸν ἐπέμπετο δημοτικῶς καὶ ἱλαρῶς, ἀμφορεὺς οἴνου καὶ κληματὶς, εἶτα τράγον τις εἴλκεν, ἄλλος ἰσχάδων ἄρριχον

<sup>25</sup> Surprisingly little attention has been paid to these unimpeachable *τράγοι* in the retinue of Dionysus. My collection (surely incomplete):

1. Amphora BM B 168=ABV 142,3 (satyr riding on goat)
2. Amphora New York, Metr.Mus. 06.1021.68=ABV 289 (Dionysus, satyr, goat)
3. Amphora Oxford 213=ABV 340,1 (maenad and satyr, Dionysus, maenad and goat)
4. Amphora E. Gerhard, *Auserlesene Vasenbilder* (Berlin 1840–58) pl.54=ABV 370,127 (Dionysus and Ariadne in a chariot drawn by goats)
5. Amphora ib. pl.32=ABV 372,155 (satyr, Dionysus with goat, satyr)
6. Oinochoe Cambridge 162=ABV 385,28 (man, maenad, winejug, man riding on a goat, amphora, dancing man)
7. Stamnos Bruxelles R 251=ABV 388,2 (on the neck: man between goats, goat between men; main picture: chariot race and dancing men, surrounded by vines and grapes)
8. Pelike Oxford 563=ABV 396,21 (satyrs with goat)
9. Amphora BM B 178=ABV 396,27 (Dionysus with goat, two satyrs)
10. Amphora BM B 258=ABV 402,9 (Ariadne with panther, Apollo with cithara, Dionysus with cantharus and goat)
11. Oinochoe ABV 431,11 (maenad riding on goat)
12. Lekythos Berlin=ABV 518,3 (goats, satyrs, a goat with human face, caught at the horn by a satyr)
13. Skyphos Agora P 1544=ABV 518,47 (procession with flute-player, youth carrying a wine-amphora, old man with ivy-wreath, other comasts, goat); see figures 1 and 2, PLATE 3
14. Skyphos Agora P 1547=ABV 518,49 (procession with flute-player, man catching a goat at the horn); see figure 3, PLATE 4
15. Skyphos Bruxelles R 283=ABV 627,2 (youth holding goat at horn; vines with grapes)
16. Amphora BM B 265=CVA pl.66 (Great Britain 211) 1 (return of Hephaestus, goat beside the mule)
17. Amphora Gerhard l.c. pl.37 (Dionysus with goat)
18. Skyphos Bologna C 44=CVA 2 pl.42 (Italia 341) (goat, satyr, Hermes; suspended, a knapsack containing the head of a goat)
19. Skyphos Baltimore, CVA 1 pl.22 (USA 155) (Dionysus in a chariot, goat, man)
20. Skyphos Athens 820 bis, A. Frickenhaus, *Lenaeevasen*, Winckelmannsprogramm 72 (1912) nr.2 (Dionysus-idol with women; under the handle, goat)
21. Amphora Warsaw 199184=CVA 4 pl.17 (Pologne 146) 2/3 (Dionysus with goat)
22. Amphora Philadelphia L 64.259=ABV 285,6 (satyr and maenad, Dionysus with goat, satyr)
23. Oinochoe Paris, Cab. des Méd. 276, A. de Ridder, *Catalogue des vases peints de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris 1902) fig.28 (silen with flute, goat, wineskin)

A goat is depicted on the altar of Dionysus on the cup of Makron, Acr. 325=ARV<sup>2</sup> 460,20, Frickenhaus, l.c. p.22. There is also a goat on a Boeotian cotyle in the BM, JHS 31 (1911) 4ff (together with satyr) and on one Corinthian kothon, Würzburg no.118 (Webster no.37). Similar representations recur in Attic red-figure, e.g. the cup of Gorgos, Agora P 24113=ARV<sup>2</sup> 213,242. It seems the vase painters felt some equivalence of he-goat and satyr (nos. 3, 12) and an intimate connexion of Dionysus and *τράγος* (nos. 5, 9, 10; 15). The sacrifice of an *ἐπιφος* is represented on a South Italian vase (Naples H 2411, L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* V [Oxford 1909] pl.41); otherwise, the act of sacrifice to Dionysus is not represented in classical vase-painting (H. Metzger, *Recherches sur l'imagerie athénienne* [Paris 1965] 113).

ἡκολούθει κομίζων, ἐπὶ πᾶσι δ' ὁ φαλλός. On account of the word *πάτριος*, this description is usually connected with the *Διονύσια κατ' ἀγρούς*.<sup>26</sup> The combination of fig-basket and goat recurs however in the Marmor Parium (A 39; 43) and Dioskorides (AP 7.410) with reference to comedy and tragedy, performed together at the Great Dionysia; so it is probable that Plutarch's source is referring to the same festival. Indeed a sixth century institution was *πάτριος* already in the fifth century. Nevertheless it is usually assumed that the *Διονύσια ἐν ἄστει* were modelled on the *Διονύσια κατ' ἀγρούς*; so the *τράγος* will not have been missing in either of the festivals, any more than the phallus.

The sacrifice of a *τράγος* is quite an unusual event;<sup>27</sup> one finds only one *τράγος* in a herd, perhaps in a village; he is the *dux pecoris*, Tibullus (2.1.58) says. Nor is the appetizing smell of roast meat the idea primarily associated with the *τράγος*; a kid, an *ἔριφος* would be better; *τράγος*, that implies lewdness and foul smell.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless the *τράγος* is sacrificed—because his procreative power is coming to an end. A five year old *τράγος* is no longer fit for use, Columella (7.6.3) tells us. So at least every four years the old he-goat must be removed. To get rid of the old and risk a fresh start may have been an exciting course for the farmer and goatherd. Now there follows the *ὀχeteía* of the she-goats in late autumn, that the kids may be born in spring (Varro, RR 2.3.8; Columella 7.6.6); then the *τράγος* has done his duty. It is still necessary to wait for a little while until it is certain that the she-goats are pregnant—then we come to January-February, *Ποσιδεών*: *Διονύσια κατ' ἀγρούς*.<sup>29</sup> These simple facts of husbandry are however embedded in very ancient religious customs which are by no means confined to Greece.<sup>30</sup> But to follow them up seems to lead from *obscurum* to *obscurius*.

<sup>26</sup> Deubner, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.24) 136; Pickard-Cambridge, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.11) 41; Else, *Hermes* 85 (1957) 18 n.3: "in any case not the Greater Dionysia"; Patzer 36: "ohne jede Rücksicht auf die Tragödie." Pohlenz, however, pointed out the connection with the Parian Marble and Dioskorides, *GöttNachr* 1927, p.304 n.1.

<sup>27</sup> The *Leges Sacrae* make a distinction between the sacrifice of an *ἔριφος* and a *τράγος*, cf. F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure* (Paris 1955) no. 67B.3, 10; *id.*, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* (Paris 1962) no.104: *Διονύσιω τράγον* . . . The Erchia-inscription (SEG 21 [1965] no.541) distinguishes *οἷς* from *κριός* (E 52), it has 11 times the sacrifice of an *αἰξ*, no *τράγος* (cf. also S. Dow, *BCH* 89 [1955] 199ff).

<sup>28</sup> Hor. *Epod.* 10.23; Mart. 3.24 (cf. *infra* n.62).

<sup>29</sup> The *αἴτιον* of the goat gnawing the vine, however, fits Elaphebolion, the month of the Greater Dionysia: the goat 'invented' the pruning of the vine (Hygin. *Fab.* 274.1), which takes place *ὕπ' αὐτὴν τὴν βλάστησιν* (Thphr. *CP* 3.13.1), i.e. about April.

<sup>30</sup> The goat eating from a tree, endangered by carnivorous beasts, is an iconographic type down from Sumerian times; cf. the gold-silver-statuettes from Ur, J. B. Pritchard,



One piece of evidence however is unambiguous: characteristic of the Dionysiac orchestra, perhaps the very center of the circle, is the *θυμέλη*. Already Pratinas makes the chorus conquer *Διονυσιάδα πολυπάταγα θυμέλαν*.<sup>31</sup> What exactly the *θυμέλη* was like, was a matter of dispute even in antiquity: *εἴτε βῆμά τι εἴτε βωμός*.<sup>32</sup> Most probably

*The Ancient Near East in Pictures* [hereafter ANEP] (Princeton 1954) nos.667/668; a seal from Uruk, Berlin VA 10537, ANEP no.672; H. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals* (London 1939) 21f, pl.3a (cf. pl.3b, 4j, 17c): a man, standing beside a block (altar?), feeding goats (or a kind of sheep?) with a (stylized) twig; he is probably to be called Dumuzi-Tammuz: A. Moortgat, *Tammuz* (Berlin 1949) 3ff, 29f; a relief from Assur, first half of second mill. B.C., ANEP no.528, see figure 4, PLATE 4: a god with grapes, on each side a goat gnawing the grape-vine; a relief-vase, W. Andrae, *Kultrelief aus dem Brunnen des Assurtempels zu Assur* (Berlin 1931) 10, pl.7d: goat gnawing grapes, threatened by beastlike demons. Some connection of Dionysus-cult and Tammuz-cult is entirely possible, considering esp. the equation *βάκχων κλανθμόν. Φοίνικες* (Hsch.) and *Ἰκάριος*—Accadian *ikkaru* 'farmer, planter' (M. C. Astour, *Hellenosemitica* [Leiden 1965] 174f; 194 n.6).

<sup>31</sup> Fr. 708 Page; cf. Pohlenz, *GöttNachr* 1927, and E. Roos, *Die tragische Orchestik im Zerrbild der altattischen Komödie* (Lund 1951) 209ff.

<sup>32</sup> Pollux 4.123. To make the problem more complicated, the Tholos in Epidaurus was called *θυμέλα* (IG IV.1<sup>2</sup> 103), a Delian inscription mentions *τὴν θυμέλην τοῦ βωμοῦ* (IG XI.2 161A95), whereas Pherecrates (CAF I.204, fr.214) is said to have used the word instead of *θυγαῖ*. The tragic poets use *θυμέλη* as a kind of equivalent to *ἐστία*, A. S. F. Gow, *JHS* 32 (1912) 213ff, F. Robert, *Thymélè* (Paris 1939) 259ff, Hsch. s.v. *θυμέλη*: . . . οἱ δὲ τὸ ἐπίπυρον; E. Supp. 64 *δεξιπυροὶ θυμέλαι*—but E. Ion 114 *θυμέλαν*=*δάπεδον* 121; therefore Pickard-Cambridge concluded that there was an altar in the centre of the orchestra, the upper part of which was the *θυμέλη* (Dith.<sup>1</sup> 175, 177; *The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens* [Oxford 1946] 9f). Metzger, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.25) 101f calls the round altar amidst the Dionysiac thiasos on a vase painting *θυμέλη* (calyx crater Athens 12255 = ARV<sup>2</sup> 1435, Metzger pl.44). C. Robert had vigorously contested that there could have been an altar in the orchestra (*Hermes* 32 [1897] 438ff, followed by F. Schmidt, *De supplicum ad aras confugientium partibus scenicis* [Diss. Königsberg 1911]); his derivation of *θυμέλη* from the root *θη-*, *θεμέλιον* must however be discarded on linguistic grounds; on the suffix *-μελ-*, H. Frisk, *Eranos* 41 (1943) 51, and *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg 1960) s.v. *θύω* 2. Other testimonies point to *θυμέλη*=*βῆμά τι*: Orion p.72.8 Sturz (~Et.Gen., EM 458.32ff) s.v. *θυμέλη*: *τράπεζα δὲ ἦν . . . ἐφ' ἧς ἐστῶτες ἐν τοῖς ἀγροῖς ἦδον, μήπω τάξιν λαβούσης τραγωδίας* (cf. Pollux 4.123 on *ἐλεός*); EM 743.35 *μετὰ δὲ τὴν ὄρχηστραν* (meaning 'stage' here) *βωμός ἦν τοῦ Διονύσου, τετράγωνον οἰκοδόμημα κενὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ μέσου, ὃ καλεῖται θυμέλη*. This rectangular platform was discovered by G. Löschcke (in E. Bethe, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Theaters im Alterthum* [Leipzig 1896] 76f; cf. A. Frickenhaus, *Die altgriechische Bühne* [Strassburg 1917] 83ff; M. Bieber, *Denkmäler zum Theaterwesen im Altertum* [Berlin 1920] 8ff; *History of the Greek and Roman Theater*<sup>2</sup> [Princeton 1961] 55, fig.48) on the Brygos-cup BM E 65=ARV<sup>2</sup> 370,13, in a scene of a satyr-play; the same platform on calyx-crater Bologna 329=ARV<sup>2</sup> 1410,21, in a Dionysiac scene. Musicians are often represented performing on similar platforms, so the later concept of *θυμηλικοὶ ἀγῶνες* (J. Frei, *De certaminibus thymelicis* [Diss. Basel 1900]) is easy to explain (Bieber, *Denkmäler* l.c.). Pollux 4.123 mentions an altar *ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς*. In the theater of Priene, there is an altar at the rim of the orchestra opposite the stage, accessible from the orchestra (M. Schede, *Die Ruinen von Priene*<sup>2</sup> [Berlin 1964] 70ff); a similar altar in a theater on Cos (*Enciclopedia dell'arte antica* II [1959] 799). That the choreuts (of dithyramb and tragedy?) in strophe and antistrophe were dancing round the altar is stated by the Hellenistic scholar Prolemaios (RE XXIII [1959] 1862–3 s.v. no.78) in Schol. in Pi. III p.311 Drachmann, cf. EM 690.44ff, Byz.Schol. in E. Hec. 647 (ed. Dindorf; not in Schwartz), cf. F. Robert, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 874ff; L. B. Lawler, *The Dance of the Ancient Greek Theater* (Iowa City 1964) 11ff.

it was a kind of platform or flat table, as it is depicted on vase-paintings amidst Dionysiac scenes: perhaps it was used as an altar when this was required in the play. But *θυμέλη* cannot be separated from *θύειν*. Is it in origin the block or bench on which the victim was slaughtered and divided up? The memory of sacrifice stands in the center of the Dionysiac performance. And since the *βοηλάτας διθύραμβος* was introduced in Athens later than tragedy,<sup>33</sup> there remains for the original festival in the precinct of *Διόνυσος* 'Ελευθερεύς just the sacrifice of the *τράγος*; and the *τραγωδοί*.

## II

In fact, it was not critical caution in the face of late testimony or unprejudiced *recensio* of the tradition which has nearly expelled from modern discussions the explanation of the name *τραγωδία* most favoured in antiquity, but the seeming triviality and pointlessness of the etymology. What has the *vilis hircus* to do with tragedy? What would be the point of the sacrifice of a goat? But this is in fact the fundamental question: what is the sense of animal sacrifice, and, in particular, of a goat sacrifice in the cult of Dionysus? The slaughter of animals for sacrifice ceased in the West with the victory of Christianity (cf., however, n.37); practically no feature of ancient religion is so alien to us as the *θυσία*, which for the ancients was the sacred experience *par excellence*: *ιερόν*, *ιερεύς*, *ιερείον*, *ιερεύειν*. Perhaps this is the reason why we find it so difficult to accept the explanation of the word *τραγωδία* which seemed almost self-evident in antiquity.

Greek sacrificial practice<sup>34</sup> is of course a complex phenomenon;

<sup>33</sup> 510/508 B.C. according to Marm.Par. A 46; Pickard-Cambridge, *Dith.*<sup>1</sup> 15, 22f; it was organized by Lasos of Hermione, who therefore was sometimes called 'inventor' of dithyramb. There is no reason to assume earlier performances of dithyrambs in Athens at the time of Peisistratos, as e.g. Patzer 93 does.

<sup>34</sup> Only sanguinary sacrifices are studied here, not *σπονδαί*, *ἀπαρχαί* etc. One of the most important contributions to the question is still W. Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*<sup>2</sup> (London 1894), though his theory of totemism has been abandoned. He vitally influenced S. Freud, *Totem und Tabu* (Wien 1913)=four essays in *Imago* 1/2 (1912/13)=*Gesammelte Schriften* 10 (Leipzig 1924). There is the sociological approach: H. Hubert and M. Mauss, "Essai sur la nature et la fonction du sacrifice," *Année sociologique* 2 (1898) 29ff, Engl. transl.: *Sacrifice, its Nature and Function* (Chicago 1964); their definition: "sacrifice is a religious act which, through the consecration of a victim, modifies the condition of the moral person who accomplishes it. . ." (13)—which leaves the question open why such advantage is gained by the destruction of life. They also define sacrifice as "establishing a means of communication between the sacred and the profane worlds through the mediation of a victim" (97)—basically the same definition as in E. O. James, *Sacrifice and Sacrament* (London 1962), who gives a convenient survey of the material and literature. An

different elements may have been amalgamated in the course of time. We can still observe a change in terminology. As Aristarchus rightly observed,<sup>35</sup> in Homer *θύειν* still means, in accordance with its etymology, 'to burn so as to provide smoke'; later it is the technical term for sacrificial slaughter, for which Homer uses *ἱερεύειν* and *ρέζειν*. *Θύειν* in a narrower sense is quite often contrasted with *ἐναγίζειν*, the term appropriate to hero-cults; in accordance with this it is customary to distinguish as the two basic forms of Greek sacrifice the 'Olympian feast-sacrifice' and the 'chthonic holocaust'. This convenient dichotomy must however not be overestimated; it is by no means all-pervasive, there are more and other differences of equal importance.<sup>36</sup>

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original attempt at explanation: A. E. Jensen, "Über das Töten als kulturgeschichtliche Erscheinung," *Paideuma* 4 (1950) 23ff~ *Mythos und Kult bei Naturvölkern* (Wiesbaden 1951) 197ff (*infra* n.55). On Greek sacrifice: P. Stengel, *Die Opferbräuche der Griechen* (Leipzig 1910); *Die griechischen Kultusaltertümer*<sup>3</sup> (München 1920); S. Eitrem, *Opferritus und Voropfer* (Oslo 1915); F. Schwenn, *Gebet und Opfer* (Heidelberg 1927); L. Ziehen, *RE* XVIII (1939) 579ff s.v. OPFER, *RE* ZW.R. IIIA (1929) 1669ff s.v. σφάγια. Of special importance are: A. Thomsen, "Der Trug des Prometheus," *ArchRW* 12 (1909) 460ff; A. D. Nock, "The cult of Heroes," *HThR* 37 (1944) 141ff; above all K. Meuli, "Griechische Opferbräuche," in *Phyllobolia, Festschrift P. von der Mühl* (Basel 1946) 185ff [hereafter, MEULI], who established the connection of the Olympian sacrifice with the 'Schädel- und Langknochenopfer', on which cf. A. Vorbichler, *Das Opfer auf den heute noch erreichbaren ältesten Stufen der Menschheitsgeschichte* (Mödling 1956), and H. Kühn, *Das Problem des Urmonotheismus* (*AbhMainz* 1950, 22). Unfortunately there is no exhaustive study of interrelations of Greek and ancient Near Eastern sacrificial rites (on which cf. B. Meissner, *Babylonien und Assyrien II* [Heidelberg 1925] 73ff; G. Furlani, "Il sacrificio nella religione dei Semiti di Babilonia e Assiria," *MemLinc* VI, 4 [1932] 103-370; F. Blome, *Die Opfermaterie in Babylon und Israel* [Rom 1934]; K. Galling, *Der Altar in den Kulturen des alten Orients* [Berlin 1925]; Y. Rosen-garten, *Le régime des offrandes dans la société sumérienne d'après les textes présargoniques de Lagaš* [Paris 1960]; on the still very frustrating Ugaritic evidence, A. de Guglielmo, *Cath BiblQuart* 17 [1955] 196ff. It seems to be well established that, on the one hand, the Minoans and Mycenaean had quite different sacrificial rites, because they had no altars of the Greek type (C. G. Yavis, *Greek Altars* [Saint Louis 1949]), and, on the other hand, that the nearest relatives of Greek altars are to be found in Assur, 13th cent. (Galling pp.46ff; *ANEP* nos.576/577), and that Semitic (Phoenician and Hebrew) sacrificial rites offer the closest parallels to Greek ritual (R. K. Yerkes, *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and Early Judaism* [New York 1952]). It is one of the paradoxes of our discipline that neither Nilsson nor Meuli, in their expositions of Greek sacrificial ritual, refer to the Old Testament, which contains the largest extant collection of ancient sacrificial rites.

<sup>35</sup> Schol. A in *Il.* 9.219=K. Lehrs, *De Aristarchi studiis Homericis*<sup>3</sup> (Leipzig 1882) 82ff; Schol. in *Od.* 14.446; Eust. p.641.61; Frisk, *GriechEtymWörterb.* I.699. The more comprehensive use of *θύειν* is to be seen in the gloss Hsch. s.v. *θύμα*: *ἱερεῖον σφάγιον ὀλοκαύτωμα*.

<sup>36</sup> On 'Olympic' and 'chthonic' sacrifice cf. Stengel, *Kultusaltertümer*<sup>3</sup> 105ff; Ziehen, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34); Meuli 201ff; the evidence for the contrast *ἐναγίζειν* - *θύειν* is most fully collected by F. Pfister, *Der Reliquienkult im Altertum II* (Giessen 1912) 466ff. In slaughtering, the throat of the animal was sometimes turned to the sky, sometimes pressed to the earth (H. v. Fritze *JdI* 18 [1904] 58ff; Schol. in *A.R.* I. 587; *Et.Gen.* p.115 Miller=EM s.v. *ἐντομα*). There are, besides the high 'Olympian' altars, altars low and large for holocausts, but there are also *ἐσχάραι* just on the earth and *βόθροι* dug out (Yavis, *op.cit.* [*supra* n.34] 91ff; Schol. in *E. Ph.* 274; Porph. *Antr.* 6; Serv. in *Verg. Buc.* 5.66 etc.). In fact *ὀλοκαυτώματα* were

But as the words *ιερεῖον*, *ιερεύειν* and, in the classical period, *θύειν* cover all forms of sacrifice, we ought to keep the whole complex in view.

We are best informed on the 'Olympian' feast-sacrifice.<sup>37</sup> It seemed puzzling as early as Hesiod. The thigh-bones, the tail, the fat and the gall-bladder are burnt for the god in whose honour the sacrifice is

not very frequent, either in the cult of heroes or of those gods whom the Greeks called *χθόνιοι* (the evidence: Ziehen, *RE* zw.r. IIIA [1929] 1674ff), and they occur also in cults of 'Olympians' (cf. Meuli 209ff); the Erchia-inscription has *Διὶ Ἐπωπετεῖ χοῖρος δλόκαυτος* (SEG XXI [1965] no. 541 I<sup>2</sup> 23), i.e. for the god whose name seemed to designate the sky-god 'looking down from above' (L. Preller and C. Robert, *Griechische Mythologie* I<sup>4</sup> [Berlin 1894] 117 n.2). On the other hand, the sacrificial feast is quite common in the cult of heroes and *χθόνιοι* (Nock, *op.cit.* [*supra* n.34] with 11 examples; the ram sacrificed to Pelops in Olympia was eaten, too, but not by participants in the festival, Paus. 5.13.2f). People even ate from *καθάρσια*, cf. *οἱ σπλαγχνεύοντες* Ath. 9.410b; only Porphyry's *θεολόγοι* tried to eliminate this custom (*Abst.* 2.44). At the oath-sacrifices, however, the victim was not eaten (*Il.* 19.266, Schol. in *Il.* 3.310, Paus. 5.24.10, 3.20.9), nor were, of course, the *σφάγια* proper, slain on the battle-field under the eyes of the enemy. The holocausts themselves usually have their place as a preliminary rite in a larger context: first the burnt sacrifice—*χοῖρος* or *ἀρήν*—for the hero, then the sacrificial feast—mostly *βοῦς*—in honour of the god: inscription from Cos, *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 1027 (Heracles); Paus. 3.19.3 (Hyacinthus-Apollon); Paus. 2.11.7 (Alexanor-Euamerion). This goes along with the rhythm night-day in Greek time-reckoning: the new 'day' begins at sunset, cf. *Pi. I.* 4.67ff c. schol. In an analogous way, the 'normal' sacrifice consists, first, in the burning of sacred parts, secondly, in the meal. In one case, the same animal was half burnt, half eaten (Paus. 2.10.1, Sicyon). There are many other special provisions in sacrificial ritual, each of which has its own function and meaning, e.g. about *εὐνουχίζειν* (*infra* n.62), or *οὐ φορά*, i.e. the victim must be consumed at the spot: 22 times in the Erchia-inscription (SEG XXI no.541); S. Dow, *BCH* 89 (1965) 210, thinks this to be a "purely secular matter," but cf. *Ar. Pl.* 1138 c. schol.; Theopompus fr.70 (*CAF* I.751); *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 1004, 1024, 1025, 1026, 1041, Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure*, no.34; L. Ziehen, *Leges Graecorum sacrae e titulis collectae* (Leipzig 1906) no. 125; Paus. 2.27.1, 10.4.10, 10.38.8, 8.38.8; the same rule from the Old Testament (*Ex.* 12.8, Passover; cf. 29.31, 34) through Rome (Cato, *Agr.* 83; *CIL* VI 1,576) up to Alaska (A. Gahs, *Festschrift W. Schmidt* [Wien 1928] 251). The rite of drowning a victim in a spring or lake (*D.S.* 5.4: Cyane) is also attested as early as the palaeolithic period (Kühn, *op.cit.* [*supra* n.34] 22).

<sup>37</sup> The most elaborate descriptions of sacrifice are in Homer, *Il.* 1.447ff, 2.410ff, *Od.* 3.429ff, 14.414ff; Hes. *Th.* 535ff; most detailed is Pherecrates, fr.23 (*CAF* I.151): people burn *τῷ μηρῷ, τὴν ὀσφύν κομίδῃ ψιλὴν, τὸν σπόνδυλον*. Menander mentions *ὀσφύν ἄκραν* and *χολήν* *Dysc.* 447ff, cf. fr.264 Koerte. The comedians used to make fun of this ritual, cf. also Eubulus fr.95 (*CAF* II.197) and 130 (*CAF* II.210), *Adesp.* fr.1205 (*CAF* III.606). An interesting description of a sacrificial meal is given by Harmodios, *FGrHist* 319 F 1. Vase paintings containing sacrificial scenes are collected by G. Rizza, *ASAtene* 37/8 (1959/60) 321ff and Metzger, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.25) 107ff; they usually represent the altar with the fire and the tail of the victim, the *σπλαγχνόπτης*, wine-libations, flute-player. The cup of Brygos (*supra* n.32) shows Iris, who came to fetch from the altar *ὀσφύν καὶ σπόνδυλον*, attacked by satyrs. Most surprising survivals of sacrificial ritual were found until recent times among the Greeks of Pharasa, Cappadocia: there is a stone in the chapel opposite the altar, on which incense is burnt; it is called *θάλι* (< *λιθάρι*); the victim is led three times round the *θάλι*, pelted with leaves and flowers, slaughtered in the chapel so that the *θάλι* may receive its blood; the minister (*παπᾶς*) receives the right thigh, the hide, head and feet of the victim: G. A. Megas, *Ἑλληνικαὶ ἐορταὶ καὶ ἔθιμα τῆς λαϊκῆς λατρείας* (Athens 1956) 15f; he also refers to similar customs in Thrace (17: the victim is slaughtered *εἰς βόθρον* in the churchyard) and at Lesbos (17f). Cf. also Cook III.1168ff.

held; the pious congregation appropriates almost all the rest. The phrase *ἐν θυσίῃσί τε καὶ εὐπαθείῃσι* in Herodotus (8.99) is revealing. Hesiod can only explain this as the result of a trick by Prometheus. This amounts to an admission that these sacrifices could not be understood as a gift to the divinity, at any rate not as the gift of a meal. But the theory adopted by Wilamowitz and Nilsson, following Robertson Smith, that the sacrifice was a common meal of men and gods,<sup>38</sup> also is impossible in view of the 'Promethean' division. Certainly, there were *θεοξένια*—in which the menu was largely vegetarian, corresponding to the normal diet—and there were, as in the Orient, *τράπεζαι* for the gods. But the sacral center of the *θυσία* is the *μηρία καίειν*, the burning of the thigh-bones. When Nilsson supposes that some pieces of meat were sent to the gods by fire and the inedible parts were immediately consumed by the same "convenient medium" (*Griech. Rel.*<sup>2</sup> I.144f), he supplies his own *reductio ad absurdum*: homage and garbage-disposal combined?

It was Karl Meuli's article "Griechische Opferbräuche" (n.34) which provided a decisive advance.<sup>39</sup> He pointed out the evident connection with the 'Schädel- und Langknochenopfer' practised by Siberian hunting people and attested as early as the palaeolithic period. When an animal is caught and slaughtered, the skull and the bones, above all the thigh-bones are presented to the god; they may be buried, or hung on a sacred tree, or set up in a sanctuary. Meuli also offered an explanation: the hunter wishes to save from complete destruction the

<sup>38</sup> ἡγοῦντο γὰρ ὥσπερ συσσιτεῖσθαι τοῖς θεοῖς Schol. AT in Il. 3.310; U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Der Glaube der Hellenen* I (Berlin 1931) 287; M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*<sup>2</sup> I (München 1955) 144f; *contra*, Nock, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34) 150ff, 156: "there was a conscious fellowship of the worshippers with one another, rather than of the worshippers with the deity honored." Wilamowitz thought the Promethean division was an "early" depravation of the original common meal; he could not know that this would lead back to times earlier than the palaeolithic age. That *μηρία* really means thigh-bones is proved by Meuli 215ff.

<sup>39</sup> Nilsson, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.38) objects to Meuli, stressing that "nur gezähmte Tiere, fast nie wilde geopfert werden"; but this, far from being a "durchschlagender Einwand," merely means that the neolithic farmers took over and transformed for their kind of civilization the rites of the palaeolithic hunters. Another change took place when the Greeks (like the Western Semites) began to burn the sacred parts, establishing as it were fire as a means of communication with the divine, cf. n.34. Whether the sacrificial rites presuppose from the start some kind of belief in god, even an 'Urmonotheismus', is a question difficult to answer. Meuli wrote: "diese Jagdriten sind weder deistisch noch prädeistisch und sagen über Götterglauben überhaupt nichts aus... in der Beziehung von Mensch und Tier gehen sie vollständig auf" (249); *contra*, Kühn and esp. Vorbichler, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34); curiously enough, Freud's theory in this case comes to the same result as P. W. Schmidt.

animal he has killed, his source of food. The thigh-bones, as it were the marrow of its existence, remain preserved. In mythical terms, the life of the animal is restored to the lord of life. "If we should not do this, we would never catch animals again," the hunters explained. Meuli is right in interpreting this concern about the continuity of life as a deep-rooted human respect for life as such, which prevents man from utterly destroying other beings in an autocratic way. In the situation of killing, man feels guilty, and he has to overcome this reluctance by means of a complicated ritual pattern, which Meuli pertinently calls 'comedy of innocence' ('Unschuldskomödie'), though we must not forget that this 'comedy' has a very serious basis. At the center of the sacrifice stands neither the gift to the gods nor fellowship with them, but the killing of the animal,<sup>40</sup> and man as its killer. As Meuli put it: "the Olympian sacrifice is simply ritual slaughter" ("nichts anderes als ein rituelles Schlachten," 223). The definition must be expanded only a little to cover all kinds of sacrifices involving bloodshed: sacrifice is ritual killing.<sup>41</sup> In the sacrificial ritual man causes and experiences death.

Thus in the sacrificial feast the joy of the festival and the horror of death interpenetrate. The Greek sacrificial rites represent in vivid detail human aversion to killing and the feelings of guilt and remorse caused by the shedding of blood. Adorned for the festival, garlanded like the celebrants, sometimes with gilded horns<sup>42</sup> the animal was led along. Many legends tell how the victims have pressed forward voluntarily to the sacrifice, *θηλάτου βοὸς δίκην* (Aeschylus,

<sup>40</sup> The Greeks were fully aware of this: *ζωῆς δὲ διὰ θυσιῶν ἀπαρχόμεθα* Sallust 16.1. Iamblichus turns the same idea into magic: by destruction (*ἀνάλυσις*) sacrifice provokes to action the higher principles (*Myst.* 5.24). In a very crude form, the same concept returns in a modern definition of sacrifice: "Mobilmachung von Kraftstoff zu Gunsten des Opfernenden," A. Bertholet, *Der Sinn des kultischen Opfers* (*AbhBerl* no.2, 1942) 10.

<sup>41</sup> As a reverse, every slaughter is a sacrifice. The Mosaic law was very outspoken about this, *Lev.* 17.2ff (Yerkes, *op.cit.* [*supra* n.34] 147), but Josiah, concentrating the cult in Jerusalem, had to allow profane slaughter (*Dt.* 12.15), which had been common in the civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia. The Arabs still perform every slaughter "in the name of Allah" (*Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*<sup>3</sup> IV [Tübingen 1956ff] 1640); for the Siberian *čukčes*, every slaughter of a reindeer is a sacrifice (A. Gahs, *Festschrift P. W. Schmidt* [Wien 1928] 253); and in India, some temples still are slaughter-houses (H. Zimmern, *Eranos-Jb* 6 [1938] 180).

<sup>42</sup> *Od.* 3.432ff; this was preserved in German and Slavic folk-custom down to modern times: a 'Pfingstochse' with gilded horns led along through the streets of the town, to be slaughtered afterwards; each family would buy part of his meat: U. Jahn, *Die deutschen Opferbräuche bei Ackerbau und Viehzucht* (Breslau 1884) 137ff, 315ff; a striking example in a festival at Lesbos: Megas, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.37) 17.

*Agamemnon* 1297).<sup>43</sup> The beginning of the rite was emphatically harmless: a vessel containing water and the basket with the sacrificial barley, brought to the place by a virgin, were carried round the altar; a line is drawn which separates the sacred from the profane.<sup>44</sup> Then the participants wash their hands—their first common action—and the victim has its share, too: it is sprinkled with water; *σείου*, Trygaeos exclaims (Aristophanes, *Pax* 960): the animal was supposed to express its consent by bowing its head, *έκούσιον κατανεύει*<sup>45</sup> (see figure 5, PLATE 5). The meaning of the *οὐλαί* has been much discussed,<sup>46</sup> though the Greek expression is quite clear: *χέρνιβά τ' οὐλοχύτας τε κατάρχεσθαι*—it is the act of beginning. The participants take the barley out of the basket as if they were to prepare for a vegetarian meal; but beneath in the basket there is the knife, which is now uncovered. There is a prayer, a moment of silence and concentration; then all participants throw the *οὐλαί* “forward” at the victim and the altar. Throwing

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Ael. NA 10.50 (Eryx), 11.4 (Hermione); Apollon. *Mir.* 13 (Halicarnassus); Arist. *Mir.* 844a35 (Pedasia); Plut. *Pel.* 21 (Leuktra), *Luc.* 24.6f (Persian Artemis=Anahita); Porph. *Abst.* 1.25 (Gadeira, Cyzicus); Philostr. *Her.* 17, p.329 Kayser (Leuke), 8 p.294 (Rhesus); Plin. *NH* 32.17 (Atargatis); the same is required for human sacrifice, Neanthes, *FGrHist* 84 F 16 (Epimenides), Serv. in *Aen.* 3.57 (Massalia), cf. Euripides' tragedies. Cf. also the lore of the haruspices, Serv. Auct. in *Georg.* 2.395, Macr. *Sat.* 3.5.8. and Lucan 7.165, D.C. 41.61; for India, cf. Hubert/Mauss, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34) 30. At the sacrifice of Poseidon Helikonios, on the contrary, the bull was expected to bellow fiercely, Schol. B in *Il.* 20.404. Cf. Paus. 4.32.3.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. e.g. Ar. *Pax* 956ff, E. *IA* 1568ff; Eitrem, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34) 7ff; *supra* n.37.

<sup>45</sup> Delphic oracle in Porph. *Abst.* 2.9=no.537 in H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* II (Oxford 1956), cf. Meuli 254ff, 266f; Schol. in Ar. *Pax* 960; Schol. in A.R. 1.425; Plu. *QConv* 729f, *DefOrac* 435BC, 437A; SIG<sup>3</sup> 1025.20 (Cos): *θύεται δὲ (ὁ βοῦς), αἰ μέγ κα ὑπο[κύψ]ει τῷ Ἰστίῳ*; an Arabian parallel in Eitrem, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34) 7 n.1. Cf. the stamnos Munich 2412=ARV<sup>2</sup> 1036.5: the dithyrambic bull (*supra* n.23) bowing to drink water poured by Nike; Italiote Calpis Altenburg, CVA pl.84 (Germany 869): bull kneeling down to be adorned by a woman (the Phyle). A modern survival in Megas, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.37) 18 (Lesbos): *λένε ὅτι τότε γονατίζει τὸ ζῶο . . .*

<sup>46</sup> “Dunkel” according to Meuli 265. Stengel concluded from the word *προβάλλοντο* that the *οὐλοχύται* “originally” were thrown at the earth, ergo it was a gift to the earth-goddess (*Kultusaltertümer*<sup>3</sup> 110); Ziehen used the term “cathartic,” *Hermes* 37 (1902) 391ff, *RE* XVIII (1939) 626f; Eitrem, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34) 262, saw the equivalence to the *καταχύσματα* but, following E. Samter, *Familienfeste der Griechen und Römer* (Berlin 1901) 1ff, he thought them to be a gift to ancestor-ghosts or demons. *Χέρνιβά τ' οὐλοχύτας τε κατάρχετο* *Od.* 3.445, cf. E. *IA* 955, 1568ff; Ar. *Pax* 956ff, Av. 850. That the knife is hidden (cf. Scandinavian customs of slaughter, E. Klein *ArchRW* 28 [1930] 167) in the basket, is stated at Pl.Com. fr. 91 (CAF I.626), Ar. *Pax* 948 c. schol., E. *El.* 810, *IA* 1565f, Philostr. VA 1.1, Juv. 12.84. The barley is thrown at the victim, according to Schol. A in *Il.* 1.449, Schol. in *Od.* 3.441, Schol. in Ar. Nu. 260, D.H. 7.72.15; at the altar, according to E. *IA* 1112, *El.* 804, Schol. in A.R. 1.409, Eust. p.132.25. Theophrastus thought the *οὐλαί* to be a relic of an “old way of life,” Porph. *Abst.* 2.6, Schol. A in *Il.* 1.449, cf. Eust. l.c., Schol. in *Od.* 3.441; he seems to have taken as a real religious rite the *φυλλοβολία* *Od.* 12.357f: Eust. p.132.39f. In Pharsala the victim is pelted with *χορτάρια καὶ λουλούδια*, Megas, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.37) 16. *Ψηφίδες* instead of *οὐλαί* Paus. 1.41.9, at the sacrifice to Tereus in Megara, cf. Schol. in Ar. Nu. 260.

together at a common object is the primeval gesture of aggression: lapidation, transformed into something harmless, as in the *φυλλοβολία*. Indeed, instead of the barley, leaves can be used and, at least in one instance, stones. Everyone takes part, is guilty and innocent at the same time. There is still a last delay: the *ἱερεύς* cuts off a few hairs from the victim's forehead and throws them in the fire. With extraordinary obstinacy, scholars have looked for daemons who demanded hair,<sup>47</sup> though the Greek expression again is both clear and simple: this, too, is *ἄρχεσθαι*, the beginning. The first cut does no harm, does not yet draw blood, but the victim is no longer physically inviolate. This step is irreversible. Now the fatal stroke follows. At this moment, the women scream, *ὀλολύζουσιν* (*Odyssey* 3.450); this is the *Ἑλληνικὸν νόμισμα θυστάδος βοῆς* (Aeschylus, *Septem* 269);<sup>48</sup> this marks the emotional climax of the *θυσία*; this is *ρέζειν*. The blood is caught in a vessel and poured out at the altar;<sup>49</sup> the most appalling element is set first of all within the divinely appointed order. Then the thigh-bones are cut out, and small pieces of meat from each limb laid with them on the altar—*ὠμοθετεῖν*,<sup>50</sup> and they are burnt. Wine is poured over the flames, the music of the flute and song accompany the action. Along with the burning of the *μηρία*, the *σπλάγχνα*—heart, lungs, liver, kidneys—are roasted on the altar and eaten at once.<sup>51</sup> The slightly uncanny 'vitals', the internal organs which come to light only now and may seem to contain the 'life', which sometimes cause disgust and sometimes are regarded as rather a delicacy, must be disposed of

<sup>47</sup> Eitrem, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34) 344ff, takes it to be "eine selbständige Opfergabe," for the souls of the dead, of course (413). Meuli 265f, who adduces a parallel from Mexico, refrains from giving an explanation. This *ἀπάρχεσθαι* is mentioned e.g. *Od.* 3.446, 14.422; *E. Alc.* 74ff, *El.* 811. E. Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, describes the cutting of the hair as *ἄρχεσθαι* in another situation of violence.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Schol. *ad loc.*, Aesch. *Ag.* 595, 1118; Hdt. 4.189. L. Deubner, *Ololyge und Verwandtes* (*AbhBerl* 1941, 1). An inscription from Pergamon mentions *αὐλητρίς* and *ὀλολύκτρια* as belonging to the sanctuary, *SIG<sup>3</sup>* 982.25.

<sup>49</sup> The altars depicted on vase-paintings clearly show the traces of the *αἱμάσσειν τοὺς βωμούς*; cf. e.g. *B.* 11.111, *Poll.* 1.27, *Eust.* p.1476,41; *ἄμνιον Il.* 3.4444; *σφαγεῖον Poll.* 10.65.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Meuli 218, 256f, 262; *D.H.* 7.72.15ff. That there was some rule how to place the pieces on the altar is implied in *εὐθετίσας Hes. Th.* 541. The flute-player is often seen on vase-paintings (*supra* n.37); cf. *Hdt.* 1.132; *Apollod.* 3.15.7.4; *παιωνίζων*, Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure* no.24 A.34 (Erythrai); the Paian of Iphigeneia, *E. IA* 1468ff. Flutes play the *Καστόρειον μέλος* when the Spartans slaughter the *σφάγια* before battle, *X. Lac.* 13.8, *HG* 4.2.20; *Plu. Lyc.* 22.2.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Meuli 246f, 268ff. That the *σπλάγχνα* were roasted on the altar is shown by the name *σπλαγχνόπτης* (*Plin. NH* 22.44, 34.81) together with the pictorial tradition (*Rizza, op.cit.* [*supra* n.37]). On *συσπλαγγνέειν* cf. *Ar. Pax* 1115, *Eup. fr.* 108 (*CAF* I.286), *Ath.* 9.410b; *σπλάγχνων μετουσία D.H.* 1.40.4; *D.C.* 37.30.3.



first of all. No wonder that *συσπλάγγνεύειν* is the firmest foundation of fellowship. The shudder dies away in a feeling of physical well-being. When the *σπλάγγνα* have been eaten and the fire has died down, the preparation begins for the main meal, which was generally of a quite secular character.<sup>52</sup>

We see, then, that the ritual of a Greek sacrifice is designed to display the destruction of life as the sacral center of the action. The many complicated preparations stress how unnatural and shocking this is. There are some special cases in which the representation of the feelings of guilt, the "comedy of innocence" seems quite excessive. Above all, the Buphonia at Athens: the ox must himself be responsible for his own death; he is induced to eat barley cakes from the altar of Zeus, and then punished for sacrilege with the axe. But the sacrificing priest immediately throws the axe away and flees, a trial follows the sacrificial meal, in which the responsibility is passed from one to another, until finally a knife is pronounced guilty and thrown into the sea. But the ox is stuffed and harnessed to a plough—he is, as it were resurrected.<sup>53</sup> The goat-sacrifice to Dionysus is in fact another example of making the victim responsible for its own death: the goat, it is said, has gnawed the vine, and must therefore die. In Corinth, at the festival of Hera Akraia, the she-goat was made to dig up for herself the knife with which she was slaughtered (n.71).

Most characteristic of all these rites is the ambivalence of feeling displayed in the ceremony. Man, sacrificing according to the will of the god, still has to overcome or even to outwit his reluctance to kill. Expressing his feelings of guilt and remorse, man shows his deeply rooted respect for life. Prevalent however is a higher necessity, which commands him to kill.

"Das Opfer ist die älteste Form der religiösen Handlung" (Kühn, *l.c.* 17). From this fact, the inference has been drawn that there was some kind of 'Urmonotheismus', a primordial revelation of the idea of God. The 'Promethean' division and the horrible fascination of bloodshed are perhaps less comforting. It could seem advisable to resign completely, considering the fact that we are led back well into palaeolithic times. We shall never have direct evidence for religious belief in this period; and even if we had, as modern ethnologists were

<sup>52</sup> Cato, *Agr.* 50: *ubi daps profanata comestaque erit; καθαγιασάντων δὲ ταῦτα . . .* Ath. 149c; on the exception, *οὐ φορά*, *supra* n.36.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Deubner, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.24) 158ff. I cannot discuss here his somewhat hypercritical treatment of Porph. *Abst.* 2.29f; Meuli 275f.

in a position to ask hunters living under similar conditions about their motives, it would still be a question whether primitive man could give a more lucid explanation of his ritual than the Greeks, who are so often said to have misunderstood their own cults completely. But we must not overestimate the importance of beliefs and explanations in religion. Down to the beginnings of Christianity and even farther on, the justification of religion is tradition. Rites are performed *κατὰ τὰ πάτρια*, and this is the reason why so little change took place in these rites between palaeolithic times and the Greeks, during tens of thousands of years. So the essential matter cannot have been what a hypothetical *εὐρετής* came to feel or believe, owing to his private experience or associations, but rather it was the effect of the rite on society according to the structure of the human psyche. Instead of asking which incident could bring forth some special form of religion, we should ask why it succeeded and was preserved. The answer can be seen in its function in human society. We may still speak of 'ideas' inherent in the rites, but we must discard the rationalistic preconception as if there had been, first, a concept or belief, which led in a second step to action. Behavior is primary, but its form is correlated to typical human situations and, therefore, understandable. In this respect, rites may make sense. To some extent, even biology can contribute to understanding; animals, too, have their rites which control mutual recognition and coöperation. The contrast of man and animal will emerge immediately.

Indeed carnivorous animals show no sign of ambivalent feeling when eating their animal of prey; the cat has neither reluctance nor repentance while killing the mouse. But even in animals there are psychological antagonisms as regards their behavior towards animals of the same species. Here the impulses of intraspecific aggression come to work, the impulses to fight. Konrad Lorenz<sup>54</sup> has brilliantly shown the social importance of this instinct. But it is inhibited and controlled by contrary impulses, fear above all, but often also by a special reluctance to kill, especially important in dangerous animals. Man, by his physical endowment, is neither carnivorous nor particularly dangerous; the other primates are rather innocent creatures. Man, however, starting from the earliest times came to be a hunter, a hunter even of big animals. This presupposes the use of tools, of weapons, and social coöperation. So it is safe to say: in the center of

<sup>54</sup> *Das sogenannte Böse. Zur Naturgeschichte der Aggression* (Wien 1963).

the earliest human society, the earliest 'Männerbund', there is common killing, killing the prey. The very problem of human civilization arose at the same time: his instincts will not tell man what he has to do with his weapons; instead of killing the bear or bison he can as well slay a man, it is even easier. No wonder cannibalism is attested in the oldest strata of human civilization; and man has continued killing man to an extent that no carnivorous animal has done. In the Bible, there is at the very beginning of human civilization the story of the sacrifice combined with the murder of Abel; man is the descendant of Cain. Sigmund Freud<sup>55</sup> went still farther with his hypothesis that human society arose with the brothers killing and eating their father; since then, they are compelled to repeat again and again this primordial crime in the sacrificial slaughter. I think Freud is basically right in describing the psychic impulses underlying sacrifice, though he is wrong in assuming that this crime must have occurred as one historical fact. Generally man has been living on animals; but the hunter is always at the same time a warrior, animated by the impulses of aggression. Human sacrifice, therefore, is a possibility which, as a horrible threat, stands behind every sacrifice. This is the reason why sacrificial ritual has this complicated pattern, the 'comedy of innocence.'

On the other hand, more sympathetic forces too have been developing in man's psyche; the respect for life has grown universal. The hunter may imagine the animal which he is going to kill as his 'brother';<sup>56</sup> he recognizes death in all its manifestations. So the feelings of guilt and remorse crystallize into symbolic acts through which man tries to restore the equilibrium disturbed, to stress the continuity of life through death. Man alone among living beings buries his dead. In a similar way, he restores at least the remains of the animals he had to kill to some super-human order, on which in fact the continuity of his own civilization depends.

<sup>55</sup> *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34); he immediately saw the connection with tragedy, *Ges. Schr.* 10.187f. A. Winterstein, *Der Ursprung der Tragödie* (Leipzig 1925) was too dependent on Freud on the one hand, on the philologists on the other, to bring progress. On man 'aping' beasts of prey, R. Eisler, *Man into Wolf* (New York 1951). A. E. Jensen, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34) tries to understand the rites of killing as an expression of a "mythical perception" ("mythische Erkenntnis") of a fundamental law of life: man cannot exist without destroying other living beings for food. In this respect, however, a symbolic way of expression ought to be sufficient, and Jensen is forced to assume that actual bloodshed is a depravation of a more sublime form of religion.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Meuli 225f, 250f.

Society is built on the impulses of aggression controlled by ritual, as Konrad Lorenz has shown. So precisely in communities familiar with agriculture, in which meat is of secondary importance as a source of food, rites involving bloodshed become the center of religion. They stir the depths of the soul, the fear of death, the frenzy of killing. *Ἱερῶν μετέχειν*—the community is knit together in the common experience of shock and guilt. All participate, but one stands at their head, the sacrificer, *θυτήρ*, the *pater familias* or the king. To him belongs the *vitae necisque potestas*, and he demonstrates this power of his in the sacrifice. In reality, of course, there is only a *necis potestas*, but by exercising it the *θυτήρ* claims and seems to reestablish *e contrario* his *vitae potestas*. There is a curious ambivalence in *θύεσθαι* which is already Indo-European: the same expression means 'to sacrifice on one's own behalf' and 'to be sacrificed'.<sup>57</sup> Sacrificer and victim are so correlated as to be nearly identified. Self-asserting life presupposes death. So sacrificial festivals are the traditional means to overcome all sorts of social crisis. Extraordinary situations of emergency, famine, disease may again and again lead to human sacrifice. More firmly established are the customs which deal with the recurrent crises of society, the succession of the young to the old: no initiation without sacrifice. The continuous renewal of the year, too, is given dramatic accents by sacrifices, which celebrate the destruction of the old for the sake of the new.

The myths, too, are concerned with sacrificial ritual. They clearly tell of the mutual substitution of man and animal: the animal dies instead of the man,<sup>58</sup> be it Isaac or Iphigeneia. The equivalence of man and animal may also lead to successive interchange, as in the cult legend of Artemis of Munichia: to atone for the killing of a bear belonging to the goddess, a girl is supposed to be sacrificed, but a she-goat is substituted—man for animal and animal for man. Greek mythology

<sup>57</sup> ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῳ τόδε μέλος A. Eu. 328f, τεθυμένος ἐτύγγανεν Xen HG. 5.1.18.

<sup>58</sup> Theophrastus (Porph. Abst. 2.27=fr.13 Pötscher) already assumed, like some modern anthropologists (E. M. Loeb, *The Blood Sacrifice Complex* [Mem. Anthropol Assn. 30, 1923]), that sacrifice arose out of cannibalism. Pythagoreans sacrificed animals ἀνθ' ἑαυτῶν Porph. Abst. 2.28, cf. FGtHist 752 f 1. On Abraham sacrificing Isaac (Gen. 22.13, cf. Lev. 17.11) see Robertson Smith, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34) 309ff. Munichia: Zen.Athous 1.8 p.350 Miller, Eust. p.331.25=Paus.Gr. ed. Erbse ε 35. Luc. SyrD 58 tells how people sacrificed children in Barmbyke, shouting "they are calves"; Athamas kills Learchos "as a deer," Apollod. 3.4.3. The rite described at Ael. NA 12.34 explains sufficiently why Palaimon of Tenedos could be called βρεφοκτόνος Lyc. 229. At Salamis (Cyprus), the human sacrifices were replaced by βουθυσαία Porph. Abst. 2.54, as among the Carthaginians at least temporarily, G. Charles-Picard, *Les religions de l'Afrique antique* (Paris 1954) 491. Cf. *infra* nn.59 and 66.

also knows the horrible converse, the sacrificial slaughter of a man instead of an animal; at the *ἑστία* at Delphi, Neoptolemus was cut up with sacrificial knives. Such scenes are not mere phantasy. Phainias of Eresus (fr.25 Wehrli) gives an account of the preparations for the battle of Salamis which seems intrinsically probable: in full view of the enemy, the *σφάγια* are slaughtered, blood is flowing, the altars are burning with fire. In this moment, by chance, three captured Persians are led along. The fire blazes up, and suddenly the seer and then the whole crowd of warriors, greedy of blood and death, demand that these three enemies be killed as *σφάγια*; and they were. On one occasion, even Caesar sacrificed insurgents.<sup>59</sup> The Catilinarians were supposed to have sealed their conspiracy by eating human *σπλάγχνα*.<sup>60</sup> Classical Rome betrays an almost palaeolithic imagination.

### III

Perhaps the larger context has made clearer what the significance of the sacrifice of a *τράγος* at the *θυμέλη* may be. The rites of sacrifice touch the roots of human existence. In the ambivalence of the intoxication of blood and the horror of killing, in the twofold aspect of life and death, they hold something fundamentally uncanny, we might almost say tragic. Our information about the goat-sacrifice to Dionysus is scanty. Whether we are entitled to see in the goat Dionysus himself impersonated, or to understand both goat and Dionysus as representing an 'eniautos-daimon' or even the dying king, is difficult to assess.<sup>61</sup> The ancient texts call the goat the enemy of Dionysus,

<sup>59</sup> D.C. 43.24.4, connected with the *equus*-October-sacrifice by G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*<sup>2</sup> (München 1912) 421 n.2. Bacchides, general of Antiochus IV, is said to have 'sacrificed' prisoners, *ἔθυσεν εἰς τὸ φρέαρ* LXX 1 Ma. 7.19. On the analogies of capital punishment and sacrifice, K. v. Amira, *Die germanischen Todesstrafen* (*AbhMünchen* 1922).

<sup>60</sup> Sallust, *Cat.* 22; D.C. 37.30.3.

<sup>61</sup> That Dionysus is killed as a goat is a theory advanced esp. by Cook and Nilsson (*supra* n.2). Dionysus is called *Ἐριφος* in Sparta (Hsch. *εἰραφιώτης*), in myth he was transformed into an *ἐριφος* (Apollod. 3.4.3); but *ἐριφος* is not *τράγος* (*supra* n.27). The theory of the Eniautos-Daimon was developed by J. Harrison in cooperation with F. M. Cornford and G. Murray, in *Themis*<sup>2</sup> (Cambridge 1927) 331ff, 341ff. It is accepted, with modifications, by Webster (128f; *BullInstClassStud* 5 [1958] 43ff); criticism in Pickard-Cambridge, *Dith.*<sup>1</sup> 185ff; Else, *Origin* 27f. The oriental texts are interpreted according to the "seasonal pattern" by Th. Gaster, *Thespis*<sup>2</sup> (New York 1961). In fact, *ἐνιαυτός* is rather seldom personified and never called *δαίμων* (cf. *RE* V [1905] 2568f); what is more important, the 'seasonal' festivals seem to be a secondary interpretation, indeed the most harmless designation of older ritual. The exceptional fires lit in times of emergency ('Notfeuer', Jahn, *op.cit.* [*supra* n.42] 34f) are more primitive than the annual fires; and the fires as well as the combat rites can take place in any time of the year: the rites are independent of the

making his death a triumph of aggression. When Domitian tried to restrict viticulture, the epigram of Euenus (AP 9.75) was turned against him as an almost deadly weapon (Suet. *Dom.* 14.2): people readily associated the dying goat with the emperor they hated. On the other hand, there is the 'comedy of innocence', making the vine-gnawing goat responsible for his own death. And perhaps there was even a kind of mock resurrection, analogous to the Buphonia: the *τραγωδοί* are said to have received a wine-skin full of wine<sup>62</sup>—*ἄσκοί* were made of goat-skin. So we are reduced again to the basic ambivalence of sacrifice, and perhaps this ambivalence is the most essential feature.

It is possible to establish, though by conjecture only, some striking connections between the situation of sacrifice and tragedy. One form of the 'comedy of innocence' is lament at the sacrifice. There seem to be no immediate parallels in the Greek world for lamentation over the victim, but the practice is found elsewhere, e.g. in Egypt.<sup>63</sup> In the center of the developed tragedy, *ἀκμὴν πρὸς αὐτὴν ἡρμένης τραγωδίας* (Tzetzes, *De trag.* 63) stands the *kommos*. Sacrifice was usually accompanied by the music of the flute, and while the *cithara* is the normal instrument for choral lyric otherwise, the *aulos* is used predominantly in tragedy.<sup>64</sup> There is a more important point: there is a form of the 'comedy of innocence' in which masked, disguised men have to kill

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seasons. Of course man has always been apt to project his feelings into surrounding nature, and the invention of agriculture and the establishment of an annual calendar of festivals were to stress this interpretation. Still, the main problem for man is not winter, but man.

<sup>62</sup> *Uter musti plenus* Euanthius p.13.10 Wessner; Serv.Auct. in *Georg.* 2.380; Diom. p.488. Another possibility of mock resurrection would be that one of the participants dresses in the skin of the victim and begins to dance. There is abundant evidence for such customs elsewhere (Meuli 242 n.2), and it would be tempting to see the interrelation goat-satyr in this way, but there is no Greek evidence to support it. Martial explicitly states that the he-goat was castrated in the moment of slaughter, 3.24; in a similar way, the *equus October* had its tail torn off (cf. H. Wagenvoort, *Serta philologica Aenopontana* [Innsbruck 1962] 273ff). Whether this rite was always connected with the Dionysiac goat-sacrifice we do not know.

<sup>63</sup> Hdt. 2.39f, 42; Tibullus 1.2.28; cf. Robertson Smith, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.34) 299ff, 430ff. In Siebenbürgen (Rumania), there was, down to the 19th century, a ceremony of pig-slaughter called 'pig-memorial' ('Schweinegedenkmal': H. v. Wlislöcki, *Aus dem Volksleben der Magyaren* [München 1893] 30), in which "sich der jüngste Ehemann auf den Fussboden und zwar auf den Bauch gekehrt und ausgestreckt niederlegt. Er darf kein Gleich rühren . . . während die Hausfrau auf einem grossen Teller den gesottenen oder gebratenen, mit Tannengezweig und Immergrün umwundenen Schweinskopf ihm auf das Hinterhaupt setzt, worauf die Gesellschaft ihn wild stampfend und jubelnd umtanzt. Fällt der Teller dabei von seinem Haupte, so gibt dem daliegenden Genossen jeder der Gäste einige Hiebe"; cf. *Ἰκάριοι τόθι πρῶτα περὶ πράγον ὠρχήσαντο*. On the *kommos* in tragedy, cf. esp. Nilsson, *Opuscula* I.75ff.

<sup>64</sup> H. Huchzermeyer, *Aulos und Kithara in der griechischen Musik* (Diss.Münster 1930) 54ff.



*Figure 3. Skyphos of the Theseus Painter, Agora P 1547*

*(Courtesy of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens)*

DIONYSIAC PROCESSION WITH FLUTE-PLAYER AND GOAT (cf. n.25 no.14)



*Figure 4. Relief from Assur, early Second Millennium B.C.*

(W. Andrae, *Kultrelief aus dem Brunnen des Assurtempels zu Assur* [Berlin 1931] plate 1)

PLATE 5 BURKERT



*Figure 5. Detail of Caeretan Hydria, Copenhagen 13567*

(Courtesy of National Museum, Copenhagen, Department of Oriental and Classical Antiquities)

BULL SACRIFICE: ALTAR WITH FIRE, COLUMN WITH CAULDRON, MAN CARRYING AXE,  
BULL BOWING HIS HEAD (cf. n.45), ATTENDANT CARRYING WATER-VESSEL,  
KANEPHORUS, FLUTE-PLAYER



*Figure 6. Detail of Campanian Amphora Paris, Cabinet des Médailles 876*

(A. de Ridder, *Catalogue des vases peints de la Bibliothèque Nationale* [Paris 1902] figure 126)

MEDEA'S SON DYING AT AN ALTAR



the animal.<sup>65</sup> The *τραγωδοί* too hide their identity; no tragedy without masks. By preference, the choruses of tragedy wear the masks of foreigners or of women; if they represent Athenians, they can only be very old men (Sophocles, OC 112), hardly ever the young citizens of Athens they really are. And whereas the Greeks were so fond of names that they even made catalogues a form of poetry, no member of the tragic chorus ever seems to be called by an individual name (cf. Freud, *l.c.* 187).

All this would fit the following hypothesis: the *τραγωδοί* are originally a troop of masked men who have to perform the sacrifice of the *τράγος* which falls due in spring; they perform with lamentation, song, and mumming, and in the end they may feast on the goat. It is possible that the custom was at home in Icaria; seriousness and "satyr-like" fun may have interpenetrated in a curious way. Rudiments of an agon, competition between several groups could arise at an early date. The transformation to a high level of literature, the adaptation of the heroic myth remains, of course, a unique achievement. Nevertheless, it is based on pre-existing elements: the use of masks, song and dance at the *θυμέλη*, lamentation, the music of the flute, the name *τραγωδία*, all combined in the basic situation of sacrifice: man face to face with death.

We may ask why it was *τραγωδία* in particular which became tragedy, not a hypothetical *\*βωδία* or *\*κριωδία*. By comparison with the ox and the ram, the goat is the least attractive. But this may be just the reason. The victim has only a representative function, he is used for the fulfilment and discharge of an inevitable threat in the human soul which is really directed against man. In the sacrifice of the goat these psychological forces are least absorbed by the symbol on which they concentrate; matter and form are never perfectly adjusted, and thus there arises the continual need for new forms of expression. The sacrifice of the bull especially had long ago become an official, civic affair, it was an immutable and established part of the ritual of the *polis*. But in the sacrifice of the goat village-custom still allowed an element of *αὐτοσχεδιάζεσθαι*; there were changes and additions. Because it was not too serious, the mummers' play could evolve. The *θυμέλη* provoked what would have been impossible at an ordinary

<sup>65</sup> Meuli 228: "Die Jäger des Kreises Turudansk bemalen sich das Gesicht mit Russ, dann kennt sie der Bär nicht." In Württemberg (Germany), pigs are slaughtered on Shrove Tuesday, and mummers break into the house and fetch their share of the freshly killed meat: *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* VII (1935–36) 1083.

altar. This was the reason why *τραγωδία* could come to depict the 'tragic' *condition humaine*.

*Τραγωδία* emancipated itself from the *τράγος*. And yet the essence of the sacrifice still pervades tragedy even in its maturity. In Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, there still stands in the background, if not in the center, the pattern of the sacrifice, the ritual slaying, *θύειν*. A few instances may suffice. I deliberately pass over those tragedies in which the whole plot is concerned with human sacrifice—Iphigeneia at Aulis, *Iphigeneia in Tauris*, *Bacchae*; Sophocles wrote a *Polyxena*, Aeschylus a *Pentheus*. Euripides used the motif of human sacrifice in many variations—*Heracleidae*, *Hecuba*, *Phoenissae*; *Erechtheus*, *Phrixus*. He made even Alcestis' death a sacrifice, Thanatos a sacrificial priest, *ἱερεὺς θανόντων* (25), whereas Aegisthus is slain by Orestes with the sacrificial knife at the sacrifice.<sup>66</sup> What is more general and more important: any sort of killing in tragedy may be termed *θύειν* as early as Aeschylus, and the intoxication of killing is called *βακχεύειν*.<sup>67</sup> In earlier choral lyric, these metaphors do not occur. This imagery however is not something superficial: if tragedy draws on heroic myth, every hero has his cults, i.e., his sacrifices.<sup>68</sup> The situation of the sacrifice may be just the point where heroic myth and Dionysiac *τραγωδία* meet each other.

<sup>66</sup> E. El. 785ff, 816, 838. Clytaemestra, too, arrives for sacrifice, 1125; 1132, 1142; afterwards Orestes says: *κατηρξάμεν* (1222); cf. Murray in Harrison, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.61) 356. Neoptolemus in Delphi is killed when sacrificing, E. *Andr.* 1112ff; Pi. N. 7.42, *Pae.* 6.116ff. Polyphontes in Euripides, Kresphontes is killed on occasion of a sacrifice (Hygin. *Fab.* 137). Cf. the saga of Titus Tatius, D.H. 2.52.3. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the skolion on Harmodios and Aristogeiton expressly states that their deed occurred *Ἀθηναίης ἐν θυσίσαις* (*Carm.Pop.* 895 Page).

<sup>67</sup> Cf. E. HF 451 (with Wilamowitz *ad loc.*): Megara, returning towards the altar which failed to protect her, asks for the *ἱερεὺς*, the *σφαγεύς*. Heracles himself is to accomplish the sacrifice (922ff; *θύμα* 995), cf. *infra* n.69. S. El. 1422f: *φοινία δὲ χεῖρ στάζει θνηλῆς Ἀρεος* . . . The metaphorical use of *θύειν* is found once in Pindar, fr.78, never in the earlier lyrics; it is common then in Timotheus (*Pers.* 29; cf. fr.783 Page) and Philoxenus (fr.823 Page), cf. Schol. A. in Il. 9.219. On *βακχεύειν* see A. *Septem* 498, E. *Hec.* 1077, HF 1119, Or. 1493. Orestes as *gravis sacerdos*, Accius, *Erigone* fr.55 Ribbeck.

<sup>68</sup> This is completely overlooked by Else, who writes (*Origin* 63): "The regular source of tragic material is heroic epic, not religious cult." Of course the tragic poets drew on the epic, Stesichorus *et al.*, but they saw them through the medium of their experience of Greek religious life, in which a hero was not a purely literary figure. It would lead too far, though it would not be impossible, to investigate the ritual of destruction in the case of Eteocles and Polyneices, of Aias, Antigone or King Oedipus. It is significant, however, that even those plays of Euripides which seem to foreshadow Menander have as their climax a sacrifice: *Hel.* 1554ff, *Ion* 1124ff. R. Merkelbach drew my attention to the only surviving drama of the Maya: *Der Mann von Rabinal, oder Der Tod des Gefangenen, Tanzspiel der Maya-Quiché*, übertragen und eingeleitet von E. W. Palm (Frankfurt 1961): here the whole play is an *ἄρχεσθαι* for the human sacrifice which forms its conclusion.

Three examples will illustrate these interrelations. First, Sophocles' *Trachiniae*. Heracles must sacrifice before returning (287); so Deianeira sends him the garment of Nessus with express instructions to put it on for the first time when he is sacrificing a bull to Zeus, ἡμέρα ταυροσφάγω (609); he shall present himself to the gods, a "sacrificer, new in a new garment" (613, cf. 659). So it happens: Heracles is sacrificing to Zeus at Cape Ceneae in Euboea (750ff), he stands there in his new garment, he slaughters the bulls. But "when the bloody flame of the solemn rites blazed up," ὅπως δὲ σεμνῶν ὀργίων ἐδαίετο φλόξ αἱματηρά (765f), at that moment the garment of Nessus too begins to burn and destroys Heracles. Priest and victims, Heracles and the bulls suffer the same fate in the same ὄργια. The myth of the death of Heracles is based on a sacrifice, a holocaust offered on Mount Oeta; the site of the πυρά has been excavated. Nilsson interprets the custom as an annual fire ("Jahresfeuer"), although the literary evidence on this festival states that it was penteteric.<sup>69</sup> It is not the nature-symbolism that is primary, but human actions and passions. Fascinated by their own fire-controlling power, men celebrate the destruction of the old, originally perhaps the old king's death. The myth elucidates the sacrificial rite, which still pervades tragedy.

Secondly, Euripides' *Medea*: at the climax of the famous soliloquy is an echo of the language of sacrificial ritual (1053ff):<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> On the site of Mount Oeta, M. P. Nilsson *ArchRW* 21 (1922) 310ff = *Opuscula* I (Lund 1951) 348ff; Y. Béquignon, *La vallée du Spercheios* (Paris 1937) 204ff; the main testimony: Schol. T in *Il.* 22.159 καὶ νῦν Οἰταῖοι Ἡρακλεῖ πεντετήριον ἄγωνα ποιοῦντες βύρσας διδῶσιν (to the victorious athletes); βύρσα usually is oxhide (the passage in Homer has βοεήην), which presupposes βουθυσία. On Cape Ceneae there was an altar of Zeus said to be founded by Heracles, S. Tr. 752f, Apollod. 2.7.7.7. On earlier testimonies for the myth, cf. S. G. Kapsomenos, *Sophokles' Trachinierinnen und ihr Vorbild* (Athens 1963) 1ff. Many vase-paintings show Heracles as a θυτήρ, cf. Rizza, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.37); sometimes he is represented in a 'new garment', not in the lion-skin, holding a cantharus (e.g. Berlin 3232 = ARV<sup>2</sup> 117,2), but the presence of a satyr makes it difficult to find here the event of Cape Ceneae. In Sophocles, Hyllos is forced to sacrifice his father (1192); the Theban myth presents the reversal of the situation, Heracles burning his sons (Pherecydes, *FGrHist* 3 F 14, Apollod. 2.4.12). Pindar describes the pyre of the corresponding festival, "blazing up to the sky throughout the night" (*I.* 4.67ff).

<sup>70</sup> Cf. sacrificial regulations as γυναικὶ οὐ θέμις, ξένῳ οὐ θέμις SIG<sup>3</sup> 1024.9,27; Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* nos.63, 66; E. IT 1226ff. Pohlenz (*I.*256, *II.*105) failed to understand the ritual language of *Medea* 1053ff; cf. the commentary of D. L. Page (Oxford 1938) *ad loc.*, who, however, thinks the words to be "simply a macabre metaphor." The 3 vase-paintings (Paris Cab.d.Méd. 876; see figure 6, PLATE 5; Louvre K 300; Munich 3296; see F. Brommer, *Vasenlisten zur griechischen Heldensage*<sup>2</sup> [Marburg 1960] 349) are reproduced in L. Séchan, *Etudes sur la tragédie grecque dans ses rapports avec la céramique* (Paris 1926) 403f and pl.8.

ὄτῳ δὲ μὴ  
θέμις παρῆναι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι θύμασιν,  
αὐτῷ μελήσει . . .

So this killing of the children is a secret sacrifice, an ἀπόρρητος θυσία. Mere metaphor? Vase-paintings constantly show Medea killing her children at an altar (see figure 6, PLATE 5). By chance we are fairly well informed about the ritual in the temple of Hera Akraia at Corinth, which underlies the Corinthian saga of Medea: seven Corinthian boys and seven girls were interned for a year in the sanctuary of Hera, where the tombs of Medea's children were shown. They wore black clothes. The climax and conclusion of their service was a sacrifice at the festival of Akraia, the sacrifice of a black she-goat. It was a holocaust, an ἐναγίζειν, and it was combined with that special form of the 'comedy of innocence' which was already mentioned: the goat had to dig up for itself a knife or sword, μάχαιρα, with which it was killed. Then the sword was buried again, as it was said until next year.<sup>71</sup> Once a year the instrument of destruction emerged from the darkness of the earth, to remain buried there and almost forgotten for the rest of the year. It is clear that the black she-goat died as a substitute for the black-clad children; they were then free from their obligation.

<sup>71</sup> On the Corinthian rite see M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste* (Leipzig 1906) 58, who however does not quote the most important sources: Phot. ed. Reitzenstein s.v. αἶγος τρόπον, Zen. Athous 2.30 p.361.12ff Miller (abridged in *App. Prov.* 4.16; by mistake, Zenobios and *Appendix Proverbiorum* have οἷς instead of αἶξ); Markellos in Eus. *Adv. Marc.* 1.3 (ed. Klostermann [Berlin 1906] fr.125). Markellos says: φασὶν γὰρ Μήδειαν ἐν Κορίνθῳ τὰ τέκνα ἀποκτείνασαν κατακρύψαι τὴν μάχαιραν αὐτοῖσι· τοὺς δὲ Κορινθίους κατὰ χρησμόν αὐτοῖς δοθέντα αἶγα μέλαιναν ἐναγίζοντας ἀπορεῖν μαχαίρας· τὴν δὲ αἶγα σκάλλουσαν τῷ ποδὶ τὴν Μηδείας ἀνευρεῖν μάχαιραν. Zenobios has substantially the same, but is more explicit on the rite: . . . οἱ δὲ Κορίνθιοι θύοντες ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος διὰ ζ' ἡμέρων καὶ παρθένων ὡσαύτως ζ' κρύπτουσι τὸ ξίφος ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ· τοῦ δὲ ἔτους περιελθόντος οἱ κληρωθέντες νέοι θύουσιν, ἡ δὲ οἷς . . . ἀνιχνεύει τὸ ξίφος. The 'comedy of innocence' is particularly apparent in Photios: οἱ τὴν παροχὴν μεμισθωμένοι γῇ κρύβαντες τὴν μάχαιραν ἐσκήπτοντο ἐπιλελῆσθαι . . . (=Paus.Gr. ed. Erbse η 2) . . . μετὰ τὸ ἐναγίσαι τὴν μάχαιραν ἀποκρύπτουσι, τῷ δὲ ἐξῆς ἔτει τὸ μέλλον πάλιν ἐναγίσεσθαι ἱερεῖον . . . (=Paus.Gr. ed. Erbse α 42; cf. Zen. *Par.* 1.27, Hsch. s.v. αἶξ αἶγα, Suid. αἰ 235 etc.). It is not quite clear whether the knife was left in the soil for the whole year or removed and rehidden in secret, but this does not make any difference for the meaning of the rite. The fate of the goat was proverbial, Com.adesp. fr.47 Demianczuk, Klearchos fr.83a Wehrli; the anecdote was even transmitted to Arabs and Indians, S. Fraenkel, *ZDMG* 46 (1892) 737ff; R. Pischel, *ib.* 47 (1893) 86ff. Besides the paroemiographers, the main testimony on the Corinthian rite is Parmeniskos in Schol. in E. *Med.* 264; black garments: Paus. 2.3.7. That Medea, though inadvertently, killed her own children in the temple of Hera Akraia was already in Eumelos (Paus. 2.3.11); as it seemed strange that the Corinthians should atone for Medea's crime, the myth was altered to make the Corinthians the murderers of the children. On the connection with initiation rites, A. Brelich, *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 30 (1959) 227ff. Cf. also G. Dobesch, *Wst* 75 (1962) 83–89.

The myth told that the children of the Corinthians suffered this penalty to atone for the children of Medea, who had died and were buried there in the temenos of Hera Akraia. The mysterious sword, which year by year was dug up and then re-buried, was said to be the very sword with which Medea killed her children. We need not here go into the question of how far the ritual along with the myth is to be understood as an initiation ceremony. At all events, the metaphor of the *θύμα* at the climax of Euripides' play leads back to a sacrificial ritual which comprises the mystery of death.

Lastly, the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus: through it the language of sacrificial ritual runs like a leitmotiv. The choral song begins with the portent of the two eagles tearing in pieces the pregnant hare, *θυόμενοι* (137); to this corresponds the goddess' demand for "another sacrifice," *σπενδομένα θυσίαν ἑτέραν* (151). So Agamemnon becomes the "sacrificer" of his own daughter, *ἔτλα δ' οὖν θυτῆρ γενέσθαι θυγατρός* (224, cf. 215), and now one evil generates another. When the news comes of Agamemnon's victory and imminent return, Clytaemestra prepares a great sacrifice (83f, 261ff, 587ff); does the sacrificial fire burn on the altar in the orchestra? In the palace herds of sheep stand ready *πρὸς σφαγᾶς* (1056f). Yet instead of the smell of sacrifice, Cassandra scents murder (1309f). She calls for *ὀλολυγή* (1118) at the unprecedented *θύμα* which is going to happen here: he who commits it deserves lapidation.<sup>72</sup> Later Clytaemestra boasts that she has slain her husband "for Ate and Erinys," that is, as a sacrifice (1433, cf. 1415ff). Then she tries to disclaim responsibility: the Alastor of Atreus himself has killed, or rather sacrificed, Agamemnon, has slain him as the full-grown victim after the young animals, *τέλεον νεαραῖς ἐπιθύσας* (1504). Even so, at the great sacrificial festivals, first the lesser, then the full-grown victims fell. Cassandra is another sacrifice. With full knowledge she goes to her destruction, "like a heifer driven on by a god, you go unafraid to the altar" (1297f). One sacrifice leads to another: finally Orestes is the victim of the Erinyes—*ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῳ τόδε μέλος* (*Eumenides* 329ff, cf. 305) runs the binding-song.

This again is more than a mere metaphor, a stylistic ornament. Agamemnon dies *ὥς τις τε κατέκτανε βοῦν ἐπὶ φάτνῃ* (*Odyssey* 4.535,

<sup>72</sup> On *θύμα λεύσιμον* see E. Fraenkel (Oxford 1950) *ad loc.*; but he does not quote the decisive parallel from sacrificial ritual, the sacrifice to Dionysus in Tenedos, Ael. NA 12.34: *ὁ γε μὴν πατάξας αὐτὸ (the calf) τῷ πελέκει λίθοις βάλλεται τῇ ὀσίᾳ καὶ ἔστε ἐπὶ τὴν θάλατταν φεύγει*. Cf. the *aition* for the bull-sacrifice in Lindos, Philostr. *Im.* 2.24; the rite of mummification, D.S. 1.91; *infra* n.74.

11.411); to be more exact, Clytaemestra throws a net over him and strikes him down with the axe, *πέλεκυς, βουπλήξ*. This is in fact how a bull was killed; the famous gold cup from Vaphio shows the bull struggling in the net—the table decoration of some Mycenaean prince who had himself celebrated as a victor over the bull. So Cassandra in her vision sees Agamemnon as the *ταῦρος*, caught in the “black-horned device,” the net.<sup>73</sup> A *λέβης* receives his blood (1129, *cf.* 1540)—even this a feature of the ritual.

We have very little information about the Argive cults. But it is not mere fancy to conjecture that the myth of the death of Agamemnon was connected with a sacrificial ritual, a bull-sacrifice—*βουφόνια*—in a similar way as the myth of the death of Medea’s children was connected with the Corinthian sacrifice of a goat at the Akraia festival. The bull as a symbol of the king must have played a very important part in the Mycenaean-Minoan world, and this bull-symbolism concentrates on the major sanctuary of the Argive plain, the Heraion which was called Argos itself. Here we have herds of sacred cows, Zeus as a bull, Io as a cow, Epaphos, their common son, again as a bull, Cleobis and Biton drawing the sacred chariot as substitutes for oxen. Most remarkable is Argos Panoptes, slain by Hermes, apparently the eponym of sanctuary and city. Argos was clad in bull’s hide, having conquered the bull, and was in his turn killed by Hermes, the *βουφόνος*. As was seen long ago, the epithet Panoptes makes him a duplicate of Zeus himself; and how the community of Argos arose and got its name from the primordial crime of Argos’ death may now be understandable. It was a *θυσία λεύσιμος*. Incidentally, Pausanias mentions *ἀπόρρητοι θυσίαι* (2.17.1) at the Heraion.<sup>74</sup> They may have preceded the

<sup>73</sup> Aeschylus associates the net with fishing, 1382, 1432, but *ἄγρευμα θηρός* Ch. 998; the crater Boston 63.1246 (E. Vermeule, *AJA* 70 [1966] 1ff, pl.1–3) depicts it as a kind of Coan garment. On Aesch. Ag. 1127 *cf.* Fraenkel’s discussion.

<sup>74</sup> On the cults performed in the Heraion see Ch. Waldstein, *The Argive Heraeum* I (Boston 1902) 1ff; Nilsson, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.71) 42ff. The myths were told at least in four different ways already in the old epics—Danaïd, Phoronis, Aigimios, Hesiodic Catalogues; *cf.* E. Meyer, *Forschungen zur alten Geschichte* I (Halle 1892) 67ff. The connection with Egypt may, however, be much older than Meyer argued, *cf.* Astour, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.30) 80ff, and T. T. Duke, *CJ* 61 (1965) 134. ‘Euboia’, Paus. 2.17.1; sacred cowherds, Schol. in Pi. N. pp.3f Drachmann; Argos and Io in the sanctuary, Apollod. 2.1.3; Zeus transformed into a bull, A. *Supp.* 301; Epaphos=Apis, Hdt. 2.153, Meyer *op.cit.* 78;=Apopi ‘Bull’, Duke *op.cit.*; Argos clad in oxskin, Apollod. 2.1.2, Schol. in E. Ph. 1116, vase-paintings e.g. ABV 148.2=Cook III.632, AR V<sup>2</sup> 579.84=Cook III.633, AR V<sup>2</sup> 1409.9=Cook I.460. Genealogists contrasted Argos the king to Argos Panoptes, though they differed considerably as to the relationship of the two Argoi (Hes. in Apollod. 2.1.3.3; Pherekydes, *FGrHist* 3 F 66/67 with Jacoby’s commentary). Argos the king clearly is the secondary figure (*cf.* Meyer, *op.cit.*

main festival of Heraia, as in Athens the Buphonia are due in the last month of the year, to be followed by the new year festival, the Panathenaia.

Not all the problems can be solved. It was not the intention of this paper to show *the* origin of tragedy, but only to investigate the clue offered by the word *τραγωδία*. It has emerged that the tradition of a goat-sacrifice deserves to be taken seriously; it leads back to the depths of prehistoric human development, as well as into the center of tragedy. This will do no damage to the originality of the Greeks. Indeed the uniqueness of their achievement emerges most clearly when we compare what in other civilizations sprang from similar roots: ceremonial hunting and warfare, human sacrifice, gladiators, bullfights. It may be that the sublimation and transformation performed by the Greek poets are so fundamental as to reduce to nothingness any crude 'origins'. Or do the greatest poets only provide sublime expression for what already existed at the most primitive stages of human development? Human existence face to face with death—that is the kernel of *τραγωδία*.

TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

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90), the cult devoted to Argos (Varro in Aug. Civ. 18.6) must therefore originally have dealt with the Panoptes. *Zeus πανόπτης* A. Eu. 1045, cf. Preller/Robert, *op.cit.* I (*supra* n.36) 396 n.1. Meyer thought there was no answer to the question "wie soll man es erklären, dass er (Argos), also ursprünglich Zeus, von Hermes erschlagen wird?" (*op.cit.* 72 n.1). On the death of the aboriginal king, cf. *Historia* 11 (1962) 365ff. Hermes is called *βουφόνος* *Hymn.Merc.* 436. The symbolic lapidation of Hermes for slaying Argos: Xanthos, *FGrHist* 765 F 29, Antikleides, *FGrHist* 140 F 19, Eust. p.1809.38ff. Varro (Aug. Civ. 18.6, from *De gente populi Romani*; Varro, RR 2.5.4) mentions an Argive hero 'Homogyros' (changed to 'bomagiros' by Wilamowitz in the edition of Varro, RR by G. Goetz [Leipzig 1912], but he overlooked the parallel passage in Augustine), equivalent to the Athenian Buzyges, slain by the thunderbolt. Could his name mean 'he who leads the bull round the altar' (cf. *supra* nn.37 and 44) in an Argive Buphonia-ritual?