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A NOTE ON THE RITUAL NORMS OF PURIFICATION AFTER HOMICIDE AT SELINOUS AND CYRENE*

Abstract

Hanno a lungo attirato l'attenzione degli studiosi per la loro complessità: questo articolo intende contribuire alla comprensione di alcuni passi di due iscrizioni note come la *lex sacra* di Selinunte e la *lex cathartica* di Cirene. Per il primo testo, si ritorna sulla spiegazione delle espressioni *Meilichios en Mysko* e *Meilichios en Euthydamo*, sui Tritopatores come destinatari delle pratiche catartiche, sull'omicida della colonna B, e, più in generale, sulla funzione rituale e sociale della lamina. Per il testo cirenaico, ci si concentra sugli ultimi paragrafi riferiti a tre 'supplici', qui interpretati tutti e tre come essere umani. Queste iscrizioni erano utilizzate come prontuari sulle norme rituali da rispettare in diverse circostanze. L'obiettivo dell'articolo è tentare di definire gli elementi offerti da questi documenti per la ricostruzione del rituale di purificazione di una persona colpevole di omicidio involontario.

The *lex sacra* of Selinous and the *lex cathartica* of Cyrene have long attracted the attention of scholars for their complexity: this article aims to contribute to the understanding of some passages of these two inscriptions. In terms of the first text, it refocuses on the explanation of the expressions *Meilichios en Mysko* and *Meilichios en Euthydamo*, on the Tritopatores as addressees of the cathartic rites, on the homicide of column B, and, more in general, on the ritual and social functions of the tablet. In regard to the Cyrenaic text, it concentrates on the last paragraphs which are addressed to three suppliants; here all three are interpreted as human beings. These inscriptions were used as reference texts on the ritual norms to be followed in different circumstances. The objective of this study is to attempt a definition of the elements that these documents offer to the reconstruction of the rite of purification for a subject guilty of involuntary manslaughter.

Two extremely precious and enigmatic epigraphical documents, the *lex sacra* of Selinous and the *lex cathartica* of Cyrene,¹ allow us to

* This article refines and elaborates material from the fourth chapter of my doctoral thesis (Salvo 2011). I would like to thank Professor Stella Georgoudi, external referee of my dissertation, for her insightful remarks on the cathartic sacrifice.

1. Selinous (ca. first half of the fifth century BCE?): Jameson–Jordan–Kotansky (1993) – hereafter JJK; *SEG* XLIII 630; Arena, *Iscrizioni I*² 53bis; *IGDS* II 18; *NGSL*² 27; Robertson (2010) 15f. Cyrene (ca. end of the fourth century BCE): *SEG* IX 72; *LSCG Suppl.* 115; Dobias-Lalou (2000) 297–309; Rhodes–Osborne (2003) no. 97; Robertson (2010) 260–263. Epigraphical abbreviations follow those in the *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*.

glimpse the concrete procedure for the implementation of purification rituals after homicide. This *incipit* is intended solely to present the texts that will be discussed in the present study. Indeed, it is difficult to synthesise the complexity of these two inscriptions, and every new contribution must remain only on the level of hypothesis, leaving the debate open to other viewpoints. In what follows, I intend to reconsider the ritual uses of these documents and their social functions.

The first thorny problem concerns the very definition of the documentary typology of these texts. I have referred to them as they are scholarly known. However, there is now a widely shared uneasiness about the denomination *leges sacrae*/"sacred laws," since it is misleading and it does not fully represent the documents themselves.² It is a modern, rather than an ancient, category, and it also includes other kinds of inscriptions which are quite different: laws approved by the popular assembly about priesthoods, sanctuaries, festivals, and public sacrifices; cult calendars; funerary regulations; and ritual purity requirements, to mention only the most common topics. After almost ten years of deconstruction inflicted on the category of "sacred laws,"³ a *pars construens* is finally emerging. Recently, Jan-Mathieu Carbon and Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge have proposed moving beyond Greek "sacred laws" and adopting the concept of "norm." They are working on the online publication of a Collection of Greek Ritual Norms (*CGRN*). Starting from the work of van Prott and Ziehen, Sokolowski, and Lupu, this new collection will gather inscriptions that codify ritual norms on sacrifice and purification matters. Contrary to previous *corpora*, it will include texts on the cults of living or dead individuals, in particular those of the Hellenistic rulers. The *fil rouge* of the collection will be the "normative character" of the chosen inscriptions pertaining ritual performance and practice. The rituals prescribed should also be performed regularly.⁴

This new perspective will be crucial for a better understanding of this class of inscriptions. Perhaps the only criticism that could be made is that "ritual norm" identifies more the contents of the documents rather than their form, their documentary typology. This observation comes from the modern necessity to catalogue ancient texts in different rubrics. A Collection of Greek Rituals Norms will always leave open the problem of how to refer to this group of texts, heterogeneous as it is. Perhaps we should instead use a periphrasis such as "texts concerning ritual norms" or "ritual normative inscriptions." In any case, although the nuances of the concept of "norm" are no less problematic than that of "law," the adjectival specification "ritual"

2. See Parker (2004), (2005b); Lupu (2005); Carbon (2005); Chaniotis (2009); Georgoudi (2010); Gagarin (2011); Carbon-Pirenne-Delforge (2012).

3. See Carbon-Pirenne-Delforge (2012), 164–171 for a critical assessment of the recent contributions to the discussion about the designation "sacred laws."

4. A full account and a first presentation of this project in Carbon-Pirenne-Delforge (2012). The online format will allow the collection to be kept updated, and will increase the number of the included texts. Some inscriptions will be presented with new or revised editions, while most of them will be in their standard edition.

guarantees a clear identification of the normative facts covered by these texts. The “ritual norms” in the title of this study intends to explicitly acknowledge their new path of inquiry that seems to respect the status of the ancient evidence to a greater extent.

Indeed, the two documents here analysed are perfectly representative of texts inherent to prescriptive norms on sacrifice and purification. It is appropriate to ask *in primis* whether we can study these two texts in comparison. It has been noted that they have only a few terms in common, and perhaps we associate them with each other because we know so little about the topic they explore.⁵ Since they present unique problems of interpretation, it is necessary to first examine them separately. I will then compare them at the end.

The Selinuntine text is by now the most famous inscription from Greek Sicily, the longest of the siceliot epigraphy before the Hellenistic period, and the largest inscribed lead tablet we know so far.⁶ Its

5. Carbon (2012) 318. See also Dobias-Lalou in Dobias-Lalou–Dubois (2007) 151: “si les faits sont en gros les mêmes, les mots ne sont pas identiques dans le détail.”

6. SEG XLIII 630:

col. A.1 [..c.8. . .] . AN[.c.4.]A[-----]
 [.c.6. .] . ΔΕΜΑ[.]Α[.]ΤΕ ΗΛΛΑΤΕΡΑ[.]ΚΑΙΟ[-----]
 [.c.4.] . Β[.] καταλ[ε]ίποντάς, κατ[η]αιγίζεν δὲ τὸς ἠομοσεπύος vacat
 5
 10
 15
 20
 τὸν ἠιαρὸν ἠα θυσία πρὸ φοτυτίον καὶ τὰς ἐχεχερίας πένπ[τοι]
 φέτει ἠοιπερ ἠόκα ἠα Ὀλυμπιάς ποτείε· τὸι Διὶ : τὸι Εὐμενεῖ θύ[ε]ν [καὶ]
 ταῖς : Εὐμενίδεσι : τέλεον, καὶ τὸι Διὶ : τὸι Μιλιχίοι τὸι : ἐν Μύσφο :
 τέλεον : τοῖς Τρ-
 ιτοπατρεῦσι · τοῖς · μιαιοῖς ἠόσπερ τοῖς ἠερόεσι, φοῖνον ἠυπολἠεῖ-
 ψας · δι' ὀρόφο · καὶ τὰν μοιρᾶν · τὰν ἐνάταν · κατακα-
 ἠεν · μἠαν. θυόντο θύμα : καὶ καταγιζόντο ἠοῖς ἠοσία · καὶ περιρά-
 ναντες καταλἠνάντο : κἠπειτα : τοῖς κ<α>θαροῖς : τέλεον θυόντο :
 μελἠκρατα ἠυπο-
 λείβον · καὶ τράπεζαν καὶ κλἠναν κἠνβαλέτο καθαρὸν ἠἠμα καὶ στεφά-
 νος ἠλαίας καὶ μελἠκρατα ἐν κἠναῖς ποτερίδε[σ]ι καὶ : πλάσματα
 καὶ κἠ κἠπ-
 αρξάμενοι κατακαἠάντο καὶ καταλἠνάντο τὰς ποτερίδας ἐνθέντες·
 θυόντο ἠόσπερ τοῖς θεοῖς τὰ πατἠοῖα : τὸι ἐν Εὐθυδάμο : Μιλιχίοι :
 κἠιδὸν θ[υ]-
 ὄντο· ἠστο δὲ καὶ θύμα πεδὰ φέτος θύεν· τὰ δὲ ἠιαρὰ τὰ δαμόσια
 ἠξἠ<α>ἠρέτο καὶ τρά[πεζα]-
 ν : προθέμεν καὶ φολέαν καὶ τὰπὸ τὰς τραπέζας : ἀπάργματα καὶ
 τὸστέα κα[τα]-
 20
 κἠαι · τὰ κἠρᾶ μἠχφερέτο· καλέτο [ἠ]όντινα λἠι· ἠστο δὲ καὶ πεδὰ
 φέτ[ος φ]-
 οῖφοι θύεν : σφαζόντο δὲ : ΚΑΟΜΤΕΟ[...]
 [..c.6-7.]
 Ο θύμα ἠότι κα προχορἠι τὰ πατρḠ[ια .] . ΕΞΑΙ . [..... c.24.....]
 Τ[. .] . ΙΤΟΙΑΠΤΟΧΟΙ τρίτοι φέτ[ει] Ε[-----]
 [. c.7-8 . .] ΕΥΣΥΝΒ[-----]
 vacat

interpretation has triggered a lively debate starting with the arrangement of the writing, which consists of two inverted columns which are oriented in opposite directions so that when one column appears right-side up, the other appears upside down.⁷ Although there is no

col. B (inverted)

- 1 [2-3] ἄνθρωπος [6-7] τ [(?) ἐλ]αστέρον ἀποκα[θαίρεσθ]-
[αί], πρόειπὸν ἡόπο κα λῆι καὶ τὸ φέ[τ]εος ἡόπο κα λῆι καὶ [τὸ μενός]
ἡοπέιο κα λῆι καὶ <τᾶι> ἡμέραι ἡοπέια κα λ<ε>ι, π[ο]ροειπὸν
ἡόπυι κα λῆι, καθαιρέσθo. [3-4? . ἡυ]-
ποδεκόμενος ἀπονίνασθαι δότο κάκρατίξασθαι καὶ ἡάλα τὸι ἀν[τὸι]
5 [κ]αὶ θύσας τὸι Δὶ χοῖρον ἐξ αὐτὸ ἴτο καὶ περιστ[ι]ραφέσθo vacat
καὶ ποταγορέσθo καὶ σίτον ἡαιρέσθo καὶ καθευδέτο ἡόπε κ-
α λῆι· αἴ τίς κα λῆι ξενικὸν ἐ πατρῶιον, ἐ ἴπακουστὸν ἐ ἴφορατὸν
ἐ καὶ χῶντινα καθαιρέσθαι, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καθαιρέσθo
ἡόνπερ ἡούτορέκτας ἐπεὶ κ' ἐλαστέρο ἀποκαθάρεται· vacat
10 ἡιαρεῖον τέλεον ἐπὶ τὸι βομῶι τὸι δαμοσίοι θύσας καθαρό-
ς ἔστο· διορίζας ἡαλὶ καὶ χρυσοὶ ἀπορανάμενος ἀπίτο·
ἡόκα τὸι ἐλαστέροι χρέζει θύεν, θύεν ἡόσπερ τοῖς vacat
ἀθανάτοισι· σφραζέτο δ' ἐς γᾶν. vacat
10 lines blank

Column A: ... leaving behind ... but let the homosepuoi perform the consecration. Traces in a rasura. (ll. 7ff.) ... the hiara, the sacrifices (are to be performed) before (the festival of) the Kotytia and (before) the truce, in the fifth year, in which the Olympiad also occurs. To Zeus Eumenes [and] the Eumenides sacrifice a full-grown (sheep), and to Zeus Meilichios in the (plot) of Myskos a full-grown (sheep). (Sacrifice) to the Tritopatores, the impure, as (one sacrifices) to the heroes, having poured a libation of wine down through the roof, and of the ninth parts burn one. Let those to whom it is permitted perform sacrifice and consecrate, and having performed aspersion let them perform the anointing, and afterwards let them sacrifice a full-grown (sheep) to the pure (Tritopatores). Pouring down a libation of honey mixture, (let him set out) both a table and a couch, and let him put on (them) a pure cloth and crowns of olive and honey mixture in new cups and cakes and meat; and having made offerings let them burn (them), and let them perform the anointing having put the cups in. Let them perform the ancestral sacrifices as to the gods. To (Zeus) Meilichios in the (plot) of Euthydamos let them sacrifice a ram. And let it also be possible to sacrifice after a year. Let him take out the public hiara and put out a table before (them), and burn a thigh and the offerings from the table and the bones. Let no meat be carried out (of the precinct). Let him invite whomever he wishes. And let it also be possible to sacrifice after a year, at home. Let them slaughter ... statues ... [Let them sacrifice] whatever sacrifice the ancestral customs permit ... in the third year ... Column B: [If a ...] man [wishes] to be purified from elasteroi, having (the host) made a proclamation from wherever he wishes and whenever in the year he wishes and in whatever [month] he wishes and on whatever day he wishes, having made the proclamation whithersoever he wishes, let (the killer) be purified. [And on] receiving (him, i.e. the killer), let him give (water) to wash himself with and a breakfast and salt to this same one, and having sacrificed a piglet to Zeus, let him go out from it, and let him turn around; and let him be addressed, and take food for himself and sleep wherever he wishes. If anyone wishes to purify himself, with respect to a foreign or native one (sc. elasteros), either one that has been heard or one that has been seen, or anyone at all, let him purify himself in the same way as the homicide does after he has been purified of an elasteros. Having sacrificed a full-grown (sheep) on the public altar, let him be pure. Having marked a boundary sprinkling seawater from a golden (vessel), let him go away. Whenever one needs to sacrifice to the elasteros, sacrifice as to the immortals. But let him slaughter (the victim so that the blood flows) into the earth. Trans. from JJK, 15, 17, slightly modified.

7. On the layout of the inscribed text, see JJK 3–5; Clinton (1996) 162; Kingsley (1996) 281; Nenci (1994); D. Jordan *apud* SEG XLIV 783; Brugnone (1997–1998) 590;

general agreement on specific details, the text, at least according to the reading that has gained most ground, was intended to regulate cathartic measures. The first editors thought that column A prescribed rites of purification after a contamination brought about by a bloody event or a sacrilegious murder, perhaps crimes committed during a *stasis*, while column B dealt with the purification of a killer.⁸

Recently, Dimartino proposed considering the two columns as two phases of the same cathartic ceremony: first, there was the purification of the one who committed the homicide and then the purification of his kin group. The ritual prescriptions of the two columns were thus addressing the same crime.⁹ The text should be read starting from column B, as the order of transcription needs not necessarily correspond to the order of reading and performance of rituals.¹⁰ This hypothesis is interesting and, as she writes, “the most economical one.”¹¹ It would, however, make our text even more unique, since, as far as I know, in other epigraphical or literary evidence the purification from blood pollution is limited to the culprit, and do not involve a further ritual for his family group. Moreover, in column A the possibility for performing the sacrifices in the following year, and perhaps even in the third year, seems unusual for a purification of a murderer’s family, since purification from blood pollution is effective and sufficient when performed only once. Lastly, this interpretation prompts us to ask why the text – if it dealt with one ritual ceremony – wasn’t inscribed without interruption. The writing field was enough wide to inscribe the text on two columns one after the other, without leaving empty space under column B (the first section according to her reading) or writing column A beyond the guidelines. In other words, the way the text has been inscribed seems to indicate that the two columns were dealing with two different ritual ceremonies.

1. Selinous: A Few Thoughts on Column A

The ritual prescriptions and the cultural protagonists of our inscription are by now well-known in the scholarly literature. I will not examine every passage in detail; I intend to focus only on some

Cusumano (1997–1998) 783; Curti–van Bremen (1999) 23; Prosdocimi (1999) 470–475; Famà–Tusa (2000) 14; Dubois (2003) 109; Dimartino (2003) 309; Robertson (2010) 33.

8. JJK 59f. and *passim*. Other scholars do not believe that there was a bloodshed at the origin of the pollution (North (1996) 299–301), or that the text regulated purificatory rituals, and some propose that it concerned agrarian cults, see Clinton (1996) 160–163; Giuliani (1998); Lupu (2005) 368; Graf (2007) 102 n. 4; Robertson (2010) 85–212.

9. Dimartino (2003) 346.

10. *Ead.* 334, 345f.

11. *Ead.* 345.

selected points.¹² The second sacrifice mentioned in the text was dedicated to Zeus *Meilichios*, a cult widely attested at Selinous, but difficult to understand in the articulation of the “*lex sacra*.” There are, in fact, both a Zeus *Meilichios en Mysko* (A 9) and a Zeus *Meilichios en Euthydamo* (A 18). These obscure specifications have been explained in various ways.¹³ The funerary stele of a man named *Myskos*¹⁴ has influenced the debate: it has been thought that *Myskos* or *Euthydamos* was co-founder of Selinous together with Pammilos, the ecist known from the literary sources; they established gentilicial groups that were linked to the cult of Zeus *Meilichios* or to the prescribed rituals.¹⁵ Other scholars have suggested that the two were ancestors risen to tutelary heroes,¹⁶ or forefathers of two *patriai* involved in the pollution,¹⁷ or delegates of the two *gene* that hold the priesthood of the god and were responsible for the cathartic rites.¹⁸ These various interpretations converge in acknowledging their role as important personalities. Following a different interpretative path, Robertson suggested that *Myskos* and *Euthydamos* were the names of the city districts where the rites took place.¹⁹

An idea that seems to be more feasible explains these expressions as references to two stones of Zeus *Meilichios* set up in the “*campo di stele*,” and marked by a formula preserved only by the Selinuntine tablet: next to these stones the rites prescribed in our text were performed.²⁰ The dissimilar ritual experiences justify the different

12. The monograph of JJK is the work of reference for the study of the text. For later contributions and the discussion of the different hypotheses, see, with further bibliography, Dimartino (2003); Robertson (2010); Grotta (2010) 188–219.

13. For an overview of the suggestions given by modern scholars, see Dimartino (2003) 315f. with notes 29–31; Grotta (2010) 199–210; Robertson (2010) 130–132.

14. *IGDS* 71, seventh century BCE, from the necropolis of Contrada Bagliazzo (Selinous).

15. JJK 28f., 121; see Thuc. 6.4.2.

16. Dubois (1995a) 134.

17. Dimartino (2003) 316. On the *patriai* at Selinous, gentilicial groups with an institutional role, linked to the cult of Zeus *Meilichios* and probably of Megarese origin, see *IGDS* 47 (ca. 450 BCE) with Robu (2009); Grotta (2010) 126–135, with complete previous bibliography.

18. Cusumano (2006) 178.

19. Robertson (2010) 132–134, 200f.: *Myskos* and *Euthydamos* represented two symbolic conditions, one indicated a state of impurity and the other an ordinary member of the *demoi*. On the study of Robertson (2010), see Maffi (2009/2010); Salvo (2012a); Carbon (2012).

20. Grotta (2010) 228. On these ‘stones’, see also JJK 52, 93, 100. On the ‘campo di stele’ see the comprehensive study of Grotta (2010): thanks to a re-examination of the epigraphical and the archaeological evidence and the archaeological reports, he has demonstrated that the cults in the sanctuary of Demeter *Malophoros* and in the sacred area of the *Meilichios* in the Gaggera hill were independent. For a

formulae in the tablet and in the inscriptions of the “campo di stele.” As noted by Grotta, the sacrifices prescribed in the tablet should not be interpreted as periodical cultural practices like those carried out by the gentilicial groups in order to worship their god, since they were both extraordinary and uncommon—just as extraordinary and uncommon as the pollution that requires these cathartic measures.²¹

Myskos and *Euthydamos*, then, might have been cited in the “*lex sacra*” for more pragmatic reasons than hierarchical or cultural rank. It is possible that there was more space available around their “stones” for the performance of sacrificial rites which were different from the usual worship of the *Meilichios*. Otherwise, they were placed in a way that the officiant of the rite was oriented towards the East: in fact, purificatory rites were generally performed facing the Orient.²² Of course, practical reasons do not exclude a relevant social and historical role for the two families. An important gentilicial group might have enjoyed the benefit of a larger ritual space.²³ Nevertheless, it is hard to state the identity and the function of *Myskos* and *Euthydamos* with certainty.

The third addressees of the rites were the impure Tritopatores (A 9–10). Between human forebears (πρόγονοι) and ancestral gods (πάτριοι), they were figures “d’instances surnaturelles.”²⁴ Their cult was connected to the protection of the family and the reproductive line.²⁵ In the tablet, after a few lines they were defined as pure (A 13). The impure Tritopatores were receiving a libation of wine and a “moirocaust.” The sacrifice to them had to be performed “as (though it were) to the heroes,” and could be managed only by those “to whom it was permitted.”²⁶ After a circular aspersion and an anointing of the

social and political inquiry on the communities that frequented these two areas, see Antonetti-De Vido (2006).

21. Grotta (2010) 228.

22. See Schol. Soph. *OC* 477; Orph. *Lith.* 210; Parker (1983) 225 with n. 97.

23. See Lacam (2010) 221, who compares the case of *Myskos* and *Euthydamos* with the preeminent place given in sanctuarial spaces to the family of Kluvatium at Capua and to the *gens* Petrunia at Gubbio.

24. Georgoudi (2001) 153.

25. On the etymology, the evidence, and the nature of these deified ancestors, see Bourriot (1976) 1135–1179; JJK 107–114; Taillardt (1995); Georgoudi (2001); Parker (2005a) 31f. An inscription now also attests their worship in Beotia, see its re-edition in Kalliontzis–Papazarkadas (2013).

26. For a detailed commentary on this section, see JJK 29–35, 63–67, 70–73; Clinton (1996) 171; Henrichs (2005), Scullion (2000) – especially for the chthonic/olympic sacrificial methods, and for a definition of “moirocaust”; Bergquist (2005) – on the division of the animal victim in nine parts; Parker (2005c) and (2011) 149f. – on the expression “as (though it were) to the heroes” and the verb *enagizein*; Dubois (2008) 48–50 – on the phonetic and lexical peculiarities.

altar,²⁷ the pure Tritopatores received a *θυσία*, a libation of milk and honey, and a *theoxenia*. The sacrifice had to be performed “as (though it were) to the gods.”²⁸

The reading of this passage is crucial for the overall interpretation of column A to establish whether the prescribed rituals had a purificatory function. The sole elements that might induce one to think that column A ruled cathartic rites are the adjectives *μιαρός* and *καθαρός* referred to the Tritopatores. There are no verbs such as *καθαίρω* or *ἀποκαθαίρω*, or the locution *καθαρός ἔστω* as in column B. According to the first editors, the rites performed for the impure caused their purification: the same entity changed its condition from impurity to purity.²⁹ Other scholars, instead, are more inclined toward the identification of two distinct categories, since there is no clear phraseology for the alteration of one type of Tritopatores; without the mention of the name of a specific gentilicial group, the Tritopatores were worshipped by the *polis*.³⁰ They represented a collective entity venerated by a civic cult, and could be conceived of as both impure and pure.³¹ The variance of ritual times and sacrificial procedures was aimed at demarcating the two aspects of impurity and purity; moreover, the anointing of the altar cannot be understood as a purificatory rite.³²

The text is undoubtedly elliptical, and there can be no certainty in terms of its understanding. Nevertheless, it is possible to emphasise that in the tablet every new prescription starts with an asyndeton, or two ritual actions are linked by a *καί*. On line A 13 the adverb *κἔπειτα* seems to establish the relationship between the impure and pure Tritopatores. The adverb is meant to mark the difference and the opposition between what comes before and what comes after it. Furthermore, the sharing of the same altar between two distinct entities, which should not have any contact whatsoever, could provoke the risk of mingling the pure with the impure. The shared altar would be conceivable if the ancestral spirits were one and the same entity. Their condition of impurity/purity, then, should be subject to change, and their mutated state might be implied by the adverb *ἔπειτα*.

The addressees of a hypothetical cathartic process, therefore, were the Tritopatores, not the officiants of the rites. The root cause

27. Lacam (2010) thinks that the anointing concerns the *argoi lithoi*, the stelai typical of the worship of the *Meilichios*, as in the Iguvine tablets (TE IIa.38) the Obelisk is anointed. See *Id.* on the parallel between the Greek stelai in Sicily, the *iuvilas* (inscriptions on stelae) in Campania, and the Obelisks (cippi) at Gubbio.

28. For a detailed commentary on this section, see JJK 35–37, 63–73; on the *theoxenia*, Jameson (1994); Ekroth (2002) 276–286, (2013) 18–19, (in press: 2014).

29. JJK 29f., 53.

30. Clinton (1996) 172, referring to Paus. 8.34.1–3; Robertson (2010) 156f.

31. Georgoudi (2001) 157.

32. *Ead.* 160.

of their pollution should not be sought in a present event, but in the past. It seems unlikely that the Tritopatores were polluted by their descendants who were guilty of a crime.³³ The pollution provoked by a human transgression could spread out and trouble not only those directly responsible but also their offsprings, future generations, and their civic community; however, the *miasma* could not reascend towards the past, it was not retroactive, did not pollute the ancestors.³⁴ Indeed, it seems more plausible that the pollution of the forefathers fell on their posterity.³⁵ Theseus deplors his calamities, and thinks that he is suffering because of the sins of his ancestors.³⁶ Herodotus explains the banishment of the Aiginetan oligarchs in 431 BCE as a consequence of polluting and sacrilegious murders committed around 480 BCE.³⁷

The belief in a pollution or a curse attached to a family dating back generations is well attested in Greek mentality. The stain of a crime was transmitted over time. From Attic tragedies, the vicissitudes of the race of the Atrids and that of the Labdacides are very famous,³⁸ and

33. *Ead.* 161.

34. *Ibid.*

35. Johnston (1999) 53–58; she effectively compares the Selinuntine text with Plat. *Resp.* 2.364b–365a, see in part. 364b–c: ἀγύρται δὲ καὶ μάντεις ἐπὶ πλουσίων θύρας ἰόντες πείθουσιν ὡς ἔστι παρὰ σφίσι δύναμις ἐκ θεῶν ποριζομένη θυσιαῖς τε καὶ ἐπῳδαῖς, εἴτε τι [364ξ] ἀδίκημά του γέγονεν αὐτοῦ ἢ προγόνων, ἀκεῖσθαι μεθ' ἡδονῶν τε καὶ ἐορτῶν, ἐάν τέ τινα ἐχθρὸν πημῆναι ἐθέλη, μετὰ σμικρῶν δαπανῶν ὁμοίως δίκαιον ἀδίκῳ βλάψει ἐπαγωγαῖς τιςιν καὶ καταδέσμοις, τοὺς θεοῦς, ὡς φασιν, πείθοντές σφισιν ὑπηρετεῖν. κτλ. *And begging priests and soothsayers go to rich men's doors and make them believe that they by means of sacrifices and incantations have accumulated a treasure of power from the gods that can expiate and cure with pleasurable festivals any misdeed of a man or his ancestors, and that if a man wishes to harm an enemy, at slight cost he will be enabled to injure just and unjust alike, since they are masters of spells and enchantments that constrain the gods to serve their end; and 364e–365a: βίβλων δὲ ὕμαδον παρέχονται Μουσαίου καὶ Ὀρφέως, Σελήνης τε καὶ Μουσῶν ἐκγόνων, ὡς φασι, καθ' ἃς θυηπολοῦσιν, πείθοντες οὐ μόνον ιδιώτας ἀλλὰ καὶ πόλεις, ὡς ἄρα λύσεις τε καὶ καθαρμοὶ ἀδικημάτων διὰ θυσιῶν καὶ [365α] παιδιᾶς ἡδονῶν εἰσι μὲν ἔτι ζῶσιν, εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ τελευτήσασιν, ἃς δὴ τελετὰς καλοῦσιν, αἱ τῶν ἐκεῖ κακῶν ἀπολύουσιν ἡμᾶς, μὴ θύσαντας δὲ δεινὰ περιμένει. *And they produce a bushel of books of Musaeus and Orpheus, the offspring of the Moon and of the Muses, as they affirm, and these books they use in their ritual, and make not only ordinary men but states believe that there really are remissions of sins and purifications for deeds of injustice, by means of sacrifice and pleasant sport for the living, and that there are also special rites for the defunct, which they call functions, that deliver us from evils in that other world, while terrible things await those who have neglected to sacrifice.* Trans. from Shorey 1953.*

36. Eur. *Hipp.* 830–833.

37. Herod. 6.90–91, see on this passage Parker (1983) 184, 191, 277; Figueira (1991) 104–113; Nenci (1998) 247.

38. In Attic tragedy, the inherited guilt is linked to the problem of the hero's free will and decision-making power; on this vexed issue, see with further bibliography Gantz (1982); Föllinger (2003); Sewell-Rutter (2007).

in Athenian history the burden of the *agos* of the Alcmeonids emerged more than once.³⁹ The belief in the *agos* was not something abstract, but it manifested itself in real mishaps. The effects of a curse as well as those of a pollution were calamities, misfortunes, and famine. As a small but clear example, we might remember that the oracle of Zeus at Dodona received a question about the link between bad weather and pollution: a single person could harm an entire city.⁴⁰

At Selinous as well, a member of the *oikos* could have interpreted the recurrence of calamities and misfortunes as expression of an inherited pollution.⁴¹ The hypothesis that the rites of column A were prescribed for a *miasma* generated not by the current members of the family, but by their ancestors, would be reinforced by the prominent position given to Zeus *Eumenes* and to the Eumenides in the sacrificial sequence.⁴² Although there is no direct influence,⁴³ it is worth recalling that in Aeschylus' *Oresteia* the institution of the cult of the *Semnai Theai* sealed the end of the curse of Atreus' house,⁴⁴ of the τὸν τριπάχοντον δαίμονα,⁴⁵ that had fed on blood for generations. Eumenides' cult was linked to fertility, as hinted by the sacrifice of pregnant sheep offered to them near Sikyon.⁴⁶ No home could flourish without their favour.⁴⁷

39. See, notoriously, Herod. 1.61.1 (Peisistratus wished no children with his new bride, daughter of the Alcmeonid Megacles); Herod. 5.72.1 and Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 20.1–4 (in 508/7 BCE, Cleomenes I, king of Sparta, ordered the exile of Cleisthenes and other seven hundred supporting families); Thuc. 1.127 (during the Peloponnesian war, in 432 BCE, the Spartans ordered to drive out the *agos* of the Alcmeonids from Athens; apparently in reverence of the gods, but primarily because Pericles was connected with them on his mother's side: Athenians could start having a prejudice against him and feeling that his misfortune had contributed in causing the war).

40. SEG XIX 427: ἐπερωτῶντι Δωδωναῖοι τὸν Ἰ Δία καὶ τὰν Διώναν ἦ δι' ἀνθρώπου τινὸς ἀκαθαρτίαν ὁ θεὸς ἰ τὸν χεῖμωνα παρέχει. Dodona, lead tablet, fourth/third century BC (?) = Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus*, 261 no. 7 = Le Guen-Pollet, *La vie religieuse dans le monde grec*, 203 no. 73 = Lhôte, *Les lamelles oraculaires de Dodone*, 64 no. 14.

41. Johnston (1999) 56 thinks in particular of infertility: "A group suffering from impaired fertility might come to suspect, therefore, that one or more of their Tritopatori was *miaros*. This would be the signal to perform the rituals described in the *lex sacra*. If improvement in the form of pregnancies and births did not follow, then another ritual would be performed a year later."

42. See Cusumano (1997–1998) 779: even if attention has been paid, above all, to Meilichios, who is already amply documented at Selinous, it seems useful to point out that in column A the Zeus Meilichios occupies only a position of thirdmost importance, behind Eumenes and the Euminides, and that it is clearly specified that it concerns the Meilichios ἐν Μύσοφo.

43. Clinton (1996) 166.

44. Aesch. *Eum.* 881–925.

45. Aesch. *Ag.* 1476–1479.

46. Paus. 2.11.4, see Henrichs (1994) 42; Johnston (1999) 273; Bremmer (2005). If identified with the Erinyes, they could have been invoked because of their link to blood pollution within the kin group, see Johnston (1999) 57.

47. Aesch. *Eum.* 895.

Once the polluted race achieved purification by complex rituals, and once the changes produced in the world of the deceased were completed, the rites of column A became more accessible, and acquired a greater flexibility. In the following year it was possible to use the public *hiarà*, and other people could be invited; after two years, it was permitted to perform the sacrifice at one's own house, and perhaps the rites could have also been repeated in the third year. This public dimension of the rites can be interpreted as a confirmation of the successful purification of the ancestors. The end of the pollution had to be made known to all.

The dialogue between the private and public spheres in this ritual process is significant.⁴⁸ The lack of a gentilicial name in the worship of the Tritopatores induced one to think that the rites were of civic and public nature.⁴⁹ However, if anyone who incurred pollution could have celebrated the rites, the Tritopatores should not have been linked to a particular family. Furthermore, a polluted race was a risk for the whole city, as exemplified by the mythical and historical stories of the Labdacides and the Alcmeonids. The purification of someone's polluted ancestors benefited, then, the whole civic community.

Within this background, the temporal limits of the *Kotytia* and of the Olympic truce appear more reasonable. The difficulty in understanding these limits consists in reconciling an annual festival with a quadrennial event. It has been suggested that the Olympic truce should be considered as the main temporal indicator, and perhaps the rites were performed only in the Olympic year.⁵⁰ Otherwise, both dates were important, and the community had to be completely pure when taking part in these events.⁵¹ Along this last path of thought, it is plausible to imagine that the festival of the *Kotytia* and the Olympic truce have been chosen as *termini ante quem* in virtue of a functional link with the ritual prescriptions: the pollution envisaged in column A had to be removed before the *Kotytia* and the Olympic truce.⁵² If the source of the pollution was a curse landing on a whole race, it would have been transferred from generation to generation. It could render every effort ineffectual. Before propitiating new births and reproduction at the festival of the *Kotytia*, an annual rite of fertility, it was necessary to set the house free from its *agos*.⁵³ Similarly, taking part in the Olympic

48. See Cusumano (1997–1998) 777–783: there was no sharp public/private dichotomy. Jourdain-Annequin (2006) 201f. highlighted the intersections between *ta demosia* and *ta idia* in the Selinuntine rituals. See also *infra*.

49. Clinton (1996) 172, 163; Georgoudi (2001) 157.

50. Clinton (1996) 161–163; Curti–van Bremen (1999) 25–28; Henrichs (2005) 53; Dubois (2008) 46.

51. Rausch (2000) 47; Dimartino (2003) 347.

52. JJK 27.

53. See Johnston (1999) 58: "(...) Behind this picture of the *Kotyttia* as a fecundity festival we may glimpse why it was important to make sure that all the spirits responsible for facilitating reproduction during the succeeding year

games would have been more profitable without the negative influence of pollution.⁵⁴

The rites of column A were aimed, then, towards purifying a pollution that had not been originated by a present crime, but by a transgression perpetrated by the ancestors, whose effects fell on their descendants. This reading allows to explain the rites using only the elements in the text, without imagining other possible polluting causes, such as a murder, a sacrilegious act, or crimes committed during a *stasis*, famine, or plague, to which there is no reference in column A.

2. Selinous: A Few Thoughts on Column B

Different but not easier problems are raised by the text of column B. Two key terms are attested here for the first time: *houropéktaç* and *élastepocç*. Their meaning, however, can be restored. *Aútop(ρ)éktaç* stems from *ρέζω*, “do, act,”⁵⁵ and it has been translated as “homicide,”⁵⁶ given the parallel with other synonyms such as *αúτοφόνος*,⁵⁷ *αúτόχειρ*,⁵⁸ *αúθέντης*,⁵⁹ *αúτουργός*.⁶⁰ *Élastepocç* was already attested as epithet of Zeus in some inscriptions of Paros,⁶¹ and it has been equated with

(including the Tritopatores) were in good working order before the Kotyttia began.”

54. The continuity of family enterprises in athletic contexts was always glorified, see, for example, Pind. *Isthm.* 6.3: *εúáθλοç γενεά*; Paus. 6.7.1: at Olympia, the statue of the famous boxer Diagoras of Rhodes was placed between those of his sons and grandsons. See Pomeroy (1997) 86: “Family traditions of excellence in athletics were significant in the creation and commemoration of athletes.” Equally interesting is Pind. *Pyth.* 7, dedicated to the Alcmeonid Megacles IV, ostracized in 486 BCE, just before his athletic victory. The epinicion, perhaps, was performed during a symposium at Delphi; he could not have been welcomed and celebrated in his hometown. The glorification of the family is accompanied with gnomic thoughts on the alternate circumstances of human beings, see Mingarelli (2001).

55. Cf. LSJ s.v. *αúτόρρεκτοç*, “self-produced, *Opp.C.* 2.567, H.1.763,” and LSJ s.v. *αúτορέγμων*, “self-wrought, ‘πότμοç’ *A.fr.*117.”

56. Contrary to the idea that the text concerns a homicide: Dubois (1995a), (1995b), (2003), who translates “auteur personnellement responsable d’un acte, coupable” – but Dubois (2008) “meurtrier”; North (1996); Giuliani (1998), “colui che ha materialmente/personalmente compiuto l’azione”; Robertson (2010) thinks of the person who performs the killing of the sacrificial victim, “the one slaying with his own hand”; Cusumano (2012) does not exclude the possibility of a murder, but rather prefers as root cause of the pollution a careless behaviour, *εμφύλιocç* bloodshed as in a *stasis*, or a violence that polluted the entire city.

57. See e.g. Aesch. *Ag.* 1091; Rhodes–Osborne no. 97.132.

58. See e.g. Soph. *OT* 231; Dem. 21.116.

59. See e.g. Herod. 1.117; Eur. *HF* 1359; Antiph. 3.3.4. See for a lexical analysis Gernet (1955) 29–50.

60. Cf. Aesch. *Eum.* 336.

61. Sixth century BCE: *IG XII* (5) 1027; *IG XII Suppl.* 208; *BE* 1999 no. 419.

Zeus *Alastoros* known from two inscriptions from the *Thesmophorion* of Thasos,⁶² and with the noun ἀλάστωρ.⁶³ The *elasteroi* have been identified by the first editors with the avenging spirits that hunt the homicide on behalf of the victim.⁶⁴ JJK compared the ritual management of the Selinuntine *elasteros* with the rites prescribed for the ἰκέσιος ἐπακτός in the *lex cathartica* of Cyrene.⁶⁵ Furthermore, the ritual of hospitality of the spirit recalls Assyrian rituals for the banishing of evil and polluting spirits.⁶⁶ This parallel with Cyrene depends on the interpretation of the lines B 3–4. The editors think that the subject of the participle *ἠυποδεκόμενος* is the homicide, active agent of all the ritual prescriptions in lines B 1–6, and that the object is the *elasteros*: the spirit, then, was received and hosted like at Cyrene.⁶⁷ The salt was a symbol of hospitality, and had the function of establishing a strong tie with the guest.⁶⁸ However, there are some troubling points in this hypothesis.⁶⁹ It is especially hard to accept the need to entertain an *elasteros*. At Cyrene, the offering of a meal served to attract the spirit and subjugate it.⁷⁰ At Selinous, there is no reference to objects that could represent the *elasteros*, nothing analogous to the Cyrenaic *kolossoi*, which must be carried out, far away from the city, together with the food offerings.⁷¹ Furthermore, it seems strange to give water for washing to a spirit:⁷² the verb ἀπονίπτω means in the medium diathesis “to wash one’s body.”⁷³ The washing with water seems to be better understood as part of the purification process.⁷⁴

62. End fifth/beginning fourth century BCE, Rolley (1965) nos. 1, 4.

63. On its etymology, see Matthaiou (1999); Dimartino (2003) 320; Dubois (2003) 118f.; Robertson (2010) 230–235; Marino (2010).

64. Comparing the *elasteroi* to the Erinyes, Clinton (1996) 179 cites Eur. *IT* 970f. (ὄσαι δ’ Ἐρινύων οὐκ ἐπέισθησαν νόμῳ, δρόμοις ἀνιδρύτοισιν ἠλάστρου μ’ ἀεί).

65. JJK 116–120, see Rhodes–Osborne no. 97.111–121 and *infra*.

66. JJK 41, 55, 59.

67. JJK 41, 119. See also Dubois (1995a) 140f., (1995b); Cordano–Arena (1997) 431; Giuliani (1998) 68–70; Camassa (1999) 144; Johnston (1999) 47; Sorensen (2002) 110f.; Dimartino (2003) 324.

68. See Dem. 19.191; Lycoph. *Alex.* 134f. with Schol. *ad loc.* See also JJK 42.

69. Clinton (1996) 175.

70. On the discussion about this section cf. *infra*.

71. Maffi (2001) 211. Cf. Dubois (1995a) 141, who thinks that we can presume that small images were used also at Selinous; the presence of an object representing the spirit is suggested by the expressions τῷ αὐτῷ and ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἴτο.

72. See also Jordan (1996) 328: at Cyrene there is no offering of salt or water to the ἰκέσιος ἐπακτός.

73. See Hom. *Od.* 18.172, 179.

74. See Lupu (2005) 383: “Here water for washing is obviously provided for purification purposes.”

In light of these considerations, I would rather exclude the interpretation that the *elasteros* was the object of the participle *ὑποδεκόμενος*. The subject of the participle is the person that managed the rite of purification and received the polluted homicide.⁷⁵ The presence of a second figure in the accomplishment of the rite of purification from blood pollution is consistent with other literary and epigraphical evidence.⁷⁶ The Cyrenaic law would be a valid comparison for the section on the *αὐτοφόνος*.⁷⁷ Certainly, this reading requires an abrupt change of subjects between lines B 3 and B 4, and between lines B 4 and B 5.⁷⁸ However, it has been noted that in archaic laws it is often problematic to identify the subject of every provision.⁷⁹ This change of subject would be less unusual than the continuous alternation between the third plural and the third singular person of the verbs in column A.⁸⁰ Although this alternation could not be fortuitous, and it can be explained with a single individual performing the rites together with his group,⁸¹ it cannot be denied that most of the times the verbs do not have an explicit subject, and that the subjects can be implied by the plural or the singular form. In column B, it is harder to identify the protagonists of the prescribed actions, because there are two persons who are both subjects of verbs at the third person singular form.

The second person should probably be identified with the closest relative of the victim,⁸² who could be the same person responsible of the proclamation. Granting pardon to the one guilty of homicide, the family of the victim made known the time and the place of the purification of the culprit, indicating in this way the day from which he was not anymore a danger for the civic community.⁸³ The individual guilty

75. Clinton (1996) 176; Jordan (1996) 327f.; Curti-van Bremen (1999) 33; Burkert (1999) 23–38, (2000) 211; Maffi (2001) 210; Dubois (2003) 119, (2008) 59; Lupu (2005) 383.

76. Cf. Apollo and Orestes, Aesch. *Eum.* 282f.; Iphigenia, Orestes and Pilade, Eur. *IT* 1222; Croesus and Adrastus, Herod. 1.35.1; Circe, Jason and Medea, Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 4.690–720; *FGrHist* 356 F 1; Rhodes–Osborne no. 97.132.

77. Clinton (1996) 176.

78. JJK 56 n. 2; Dimartino (2003) 324 n. 73.

79. Maffi (2001) 210; Dubois (2003) 121, who thinks in particular at the Gortynian laws. Cf. also *IG V* (2) 262: there is a sudden change of subject at lines 14–15. To avoid the abrupt change of subject, the participle *ὑποδεκόμενος* could have a passive meaning, “after having been received,” but parallels are scant and late (Cass. Dio. 55.10; *POxy* 1894.14, sixth century CE). Otherwise, it could be restored on B 3f. – ἄ]ποδεκόμενος, “accepting” (what one gives to him).

80. Lupu (2005) 381 n. 98. See also Jordan (1996) 328: “Since the document’s Greek is not particularly distinguished, as the bad orthography also suggests, abrupt changes of subject may not be entirely unexpected.”

81. See Dimartino (2003) 333, 345.

82. Dubois (2003) 121, (2008) 59, see Plat. *Leg.* 9.865d.

83. Maffi (2001) 213, who compares the role of the family of the victim at Selinous and at Athens: at Selinous the proclamation acted as a counterbalance of the Athenian *πρόρρησις*, that excluded the culprit from public places.

of homicide probably being in exile, it is unclear how he could have carried out the proclamation.⁸⁴

If the one to be received was the one responsible for the homicide, and not the *elasteros*, the order of the ritual actions appears more plausible. On B 4 ἄλς was perhaps indicating the seawater, as probably in B 11.⁸⁵ Salt and seawater had cathartic properties, and were used as agents of purification.⁸⁶ It can be understood that the purification of the homicide was conveyed in receiving him and washing him with seawater (B 3–4). The elliptical Selinuntine text does not allow to find an unquestionable solution: the cathartic process has not been made explicit. But the presence of water as a cathartic element in other sources gives at least a slight amount of support to this reading.⁸⁷

After the washing, the man or woman guilty of homicide would be able to perform a sacrifice to Zeus. It has been questioned whether the sacrifice of a piglet in B 5 was a normal offering to Zeus or a καθάρσιον,⁸⁸ since iconographical and literary sources indicate that the piglet's blood was sprinkled over the killer's hands.⁸⁹ It is important to remember here that Georgoudi has stressed the importance of distinguishing, when possible, the "sacrifice" from the "purification." She drew attention to the impropriety of a general use of the expression "cathartic sacrifice": often the sacrifice was made after the purification, and it was aimed to thank the gods or to mark the reintegration in the civic community.⁹⁰ At Selinous, the agent of the sac-

84. See *Id.* 212f. on the difficulty of having the homicide himself performing the proclamation. On the adverbs and the adjectives starting with *ἡοπ-* at the lines B 2–3, see Lupu (2005) 383, Dubois (2008) 57f.

85. See Dubois (1995a) 142.

86. See Parker (1983) 226f., 371; JJK 42; Paoletti (2004) 19f.

87. On water in purificatory rites, see Eur. *IT* 1193: θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τᾶνθρώπων κακά; Eur. *IT* 1039; Soph. *Aj.* 655; Rhodes–Osborne no. 97.134f.; *FGHist* 356 F 1; Theoph. *Char.* 16.12; Lycoph. *Alex.* 134s.; Iambl. *VP* 153; Schol. Hom. *Il.* 1.314 b (I p. 96 Erbse); *LSCG* 97 A 14–16; *LSCG* 154A.29, 30, 43, 45, B.2, 4, 6, 15, 26: the cathartic lustration has to be performed with water sprinkled from a golden vessel. "In Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 662–671, Circe banishes bloody dream washing her head with seawater." Use of water after a sacrifice: *LSCG* 151 B 23f.

88. Normal sacrifice: JJK 43: "here it is mentioned simply as an offering to Zeus"; Lupu (2005) 384: "This sacrifice is not purificatory but a normal sacrifice. It is not performed as a part of the purificatory ritual but rather after purification is completed, indicating that the homicide is now engaging in normal activity as an unpolluted person"; Clinton (2005) 175: "normal sacrifice, [...] purificatory victims were not designated to specific gods"; Cusumano (2012): sacrifice to Zeus *Meilichios*, cf. Xen. *Anab.* 7.8.4. Καθάρσιον: Clinton (1996) 176; Johnston (1999) 47; Dimartino (2003) 324f.; Dubois (2008) 60. On the role of Zeus in the purification of homicides, see Parker (1983) 139; Ellinger (2005).

89. Aesch. *Eum.* 283, 449, Fr. 327 N; Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 4.690–720; *LIMC* VII s.v. *Orestes* no. 48, III s.v. *Erinyes* nos. 64, 67. See Parker (1983) 370–374; Burkert (1983) 116; Dimartino (2003) 324f.; Clinton (2005) – on pigs in Greek animal sacrifice.

90. Georgoudi (2001–2002).

ricide was the committer of homicide himself, and the piglet's blood seems not to be used for an actual sprinkling over his hands done by someone else. Most probably, then, the piglet was an offering testifying his new state of purity. His return to everyday life was additionally denoted by the recovered freedom to talk, eat, and sleep wherever he preferred.⁹¹

A killer seeking purification at home after his exile was responsible for manslaughter.⁹² A different interpretation of the *elasteros* would confirm this legal aspect: the spirit was not an avenging one, but it was the evil genius that solicited the culprit to commit the crime.⁹³ The Selinuntine rituals were prescribed for someone that killed involuntary without malice aforethought, since a demon induced him to act: the culprit was only an intermediary.⁹⁴ The *elasteros*, then, was the cause, not the effect, of the crime.⁹⁵

Although incisive parallels in literary sources support this reading,⁹⁶ it has been rightly noted that it raises another problem: cathartic rites were aimed to remove the effects, not the cause, of a polluting transgression.⁹⁷ In regards to this, it is worth to explore the nature of this blood pollution. The power of the *elasteros* could have worked in the same way as the *agos*: the culprit was the symbol and the incarnation

91. On the silence of the homicide: Aesch. *Eum.* 278, 448, with Schol. *ad loc.*; Soph. *OT* 350–353, *OC* 488f.; Eur. *IT* 951; *Or.* 428, 1605; Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 4.720f.; Herod. 1.35.1–3.

92. Dem. 23.72–73; Plat. *Leg.* 9.865c–d, 872e.

93. Dimartino (2003) 321–323. On the etymology of ἀλάστωρ, from ἀλιταίνω “sin or offence against someone,” see *Ead.* 320; Hesych. and Suid. *s.v.* ἀλάστωρ, and add also *Lex. Seg.* (Δικῶν Ὀνόματα) in Bekk. *Anecd.* I p. 184, 6: Ἀλάστωρ: ὁ τὰ μεγάλα ἀδικήματα ποιῶν. καὶ Ἀλιτήριος ὁ πολλὰ ἡδίκηκῶς καὶ κολάζεσθαι ἄξιος.

94. *Ead.* 345. She recalls the “religious criminality” of Gernet (1917, 2001²) 305–346; see also L. Gernet in Di Donato (2008) 923–925. It should be noted that this durkheimian idea was considered a characteristic of a pre-legal society before the ‘birth’ of the *polis*. On the “religious criminality” of tragic heroes, see J.-P. Vernant in Vernant-Vidal-Naquet (1972) 28–31, 37–40, 43–74, and especially *Id.* p. 55: “Dans le contexte de cette pensée religieuse où l’acte criminel se présente, dans l’univers, comme une force démonique de souillure et, au-delà de l’homme, comme un égarement de l’esprit, c’est toute la catégorie de l’action qui apparaît autrement organisée que chez nous. L’erreur, sentie comme une atteinte à l’ordre religieux, recèle une puissance néfaste qui déborde de beaucoup l’agent humain. L’individu qui la commet (ou, plus exactement, qui en est la victime) se trouve pris lui-même dans la force sinistre qu’il a déclenchée (ou qui s’exerce à travers lui)”.

95. Dimartino (2003) 323.

96. Dimartino (2003) analyses in particular Attic tragedies: Aesch. *Ag.* 1497–1507 (cf. Paus. 8.24.8); *Pers.* 354, 724f.; Soph. *Trach.* 1235; *OC* 788; Eur. *Or.* 1668f. (cf. 337, 1546); *Med.* 1059, 1259f., 1333–1335; *Hipp.* 820; *El.* 979; *IA* 878, 946 (cf. *IT* 934, 971).

97. Chaniotis (2007).

of the committed crime, and he was subdued by a supernatural agency. In the Selinuntine text, the cause of an unlawful act could have been treated because the pollution was of demonic nature. To be prey to a demon was the same as to be impure.⁹⁸ Purification was reached by setting the person free from the demon.⁹⁹ Demonic possession was overcome thanks to cathartic rituals that functioned as a therapy.¹⁰⁰

On lines B 7–8 other kinds of *elasteroi* are mentioned: foreign or local demons,¹⁰¹ manifesting themselves by auditive or visual hallucinations, or instigator demons of any other type. These demons would have solicited someone to commit less serious crimes or transgressions.¹⁰² For the purification from them, one had to perform only the rituals in lines B 10–11: conceivably, the cathartic measures were diversified according to the degree of pollution.¹⁰³ If for every kind of *elasteroi* the purificatory rite was the same, the provision of lines B 7–9 would have been inscribed after – not before – lines B 10–11, when the person was deemed completely pure.

The rite of purification from the various *elasteroi* and the conclusion of the purification of the homicide are described at the lines B 10–13.

98. See Hipp. *Morb. sacr.* 1.93–99: καθαίρουσι γὰρ τοὺς ἐχομένους τῆ νόσῳ αἵματι τε καὶ ἄλλοισι τοιούτοισιν ὡσπερ μίασμά τι ἔχοντας, ἢ ἀλάστορας, ἢ πεφαρμαγμένους ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων, ἢ τι ἔργον ἀνόσιον εἰργασμένους, οὓς ἐχρῆν τάναντία τούτοισι ποιέειν. θύειν τε καὶ εὐχεσθαι καὶ ἐς τὰ ἱερά φέροντας ἱκετεύειν τοὺς θεοὺς. *For the sufferers from the disease they purify with blood and such like, as though they were polluted, haunted by evil demons, bewitched by men, or had committed some unholy act. All such they ought to have treated in the opposite way; they should have brought them to the sanctuaries, with sacrifices and prayers, in order to supplicate the gods.* Trans. from Jones 1981, slightly modified. Cf. also Hipp. *Virg.* 1.4–8: the sacred disease, the apoplectic stroke and other terrors were popularly believed to be a form of attack by demons.

99. Cf. the distinction between a physical and a demonic pollution among the Sherpa, Tibetan Buddhists living in East Nepal: the cathartic ceremony, *tu*, functions in case of a physical pollution as birth and death, while the *sang* ceremony is celebrated against demonic assaults. The demons manifest themselves in the aggressive and violent instincts of men or in the cosmic forces of chaos and anarchy. See Ortner (1973), (1978).

100. On purification as a therapy see the figure of Melampus, μάντις ὄν καὶ τὴν διὰ φαρμάκων καὶ καθαρμῶν θεραπείαν πρῶτος εὐρηκῶς (Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.27.5–6). See Hoessly (2001); Sorensen (2002) 95–117.

101. In B 7, πατρῶιον, “ancestral,” should mean “national, local” rather than “of the family,” cf. A 17 τὰ πατρῶια, the ancestral rites of the civic community. See also Jordan (1996) 328: “foreign or native.”

102. Other interpretations: different victims (stranger or host/kinsman) or vengeful spirits manifested in various forms (heard/seen), JJK 44; Clinton (1996) 178; Johnston (1999) 52; Dubois (1995a) 141f., (2003) 121f., (2008) 61f.; Lupu (2005) 385. Robertson (2010) 220–222 refers the four adjectives to the type of ritual (rite of hospitality/customary rite) and to the ways in which the ritual was apprehended (heard/seen).

103. Dimartino (2003) 328f.

The purification would consist in the sacrifice performed on the public altar,¹⁰⁴ the marking of a boundary sprinkling seawater from a golden vessel, and the draining of the animal's blood into the earth. This time, contrary to the animal sacrifice of line B 5, the θυσία could be interpreted as a "cathartic sacrifice," as seems to be suggested by the participle θύσας followed by the expression καθαρὸς ἔστο.

3. Uses and Functions of the Selinuntine Tablet

The Selinuntine text must now be evaluated in its entirety. The interwoven relationship between the private and public spheres of the rites induces to think that a civic body promulgated the document, although leaving to private citizens and families the freedom to perform the rites when needed.¹⁰⁵ From the careful details and poetic expressions such as ἀθανάτοισι,¹⁰⁶ it can be deduced that religious experts, local or foreign, contributed to its drafting.

According to the interpretation here followed, the use of tablet concerned pollution and purification. Other functions have been suggested, and the text has been associated with agrarian cults.¹⁰⁷ Festivals for the harvest or good weather could appear more reasonable when every provision is considered by itself, unrelated to the others and linked to a particular cult. The rituals were performed in different times of the year.¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, reading each entire column as pertaining to a whole ceremony, purification seems the most likely purpose, although the interpretation of the root cause of the *miasma* remains at a hypothetical level.

Accepting the thematic unity around the categories of pollution and purity, the text would be organised in two sections, each one dealing with a specific case of pollution. The first section sorted out the pollution of ancestors, a stain that could be manifested in the form of calamities, misfortunes, infertility, ineffectualness of actions, and ruinous projects. The second one concerned the pollution of a homicide and the demonic possession. It seems that the civic authorities

104. Cf. Cusumano (1997–1998) 780, and (2006) 179: "è forte la tentazione di pensare a quello [all'altare] di Zeus *Agoraios* sul quale, secondo il racconto erodoteo (V, 46), Eurileonte, compagno di Dorieo, fu assassinato perché aspirava alla tirannide." The sacrifice was to the *elasteros* rather than to Zeus *Elasteros*, Dimartino (2003) 329 with nn. 97 and 98.

105. JJK 58; Johnston (1999) 50; Burkert (2000) 214: "Social pressures met with individual 'needs'"; Maffi (2001) 210; Cusumano (2006) 174; Jourdain-Annequin (2006) 201; Lacam (2010) 221f. Other scholars prefer to imagine a temple context: the performance of the rites was supervised by priests (Sorensen (2002) 112; cf. also Lupu (2005) 386), or the tablet was kept and used by priests (North (1996) 301).

106. Col. B 13. See JJK 45, 58f.

107. Clinton (1996) 160–163; Lupu (2005) 368; Robertson (2010) 85–212.

108. Robertson (2010).

deemed it necessary to regulate widespread emotions with collective norms.¹⁰⁹ A social, legal, and religious answer was needed for the fear of polluted ancestors, the fear of the *elasteroi*, and the fear of the effects of these pollutions in the everyday life. The city asserted its ability in controlling the world of the deceased and of demons, containing the negative consequences of illicit acts.¹¹⁰ Gentilicial groups or single individuals celebrated the cathartic ceremonies, but in either case rituals benefited the whole civic community. To this day, the cult of Zeus *Eumenes* is attested only here.¹¹¹ It cannot be established with certainty whether this uniqueness depends on the state of our evidence, or whether the cult was set up by this document, so as to uphold new resolutions on sensitive matters.

4. Hikesioi at Cyrene

The second document I intend to consider here is the *lex cathartica* of Cyrene. As is well known, it prescribes ritual norms of purity for different circumstances, for instance plague, use of a sacred wood, sex and birth, funerary rites and heroic cults, animal sacrifice, marriage, as well as pregnancy and miscarriage.¹¹² The last three paragraphs of the text are of interest because of a parallel with Selinous.¹¹³ This

109. On ritual norms and emotions in sacred regulations, see Chaniotis (2010).

110. Cf. Johnston (1999) 61: “The dead could indeed cause citywide problems. However, the very fact that the Selinuntine *lex sacra* and the Cyrenean inscription were *public* documents indicates that cities wanted to ensure that ghostly problems suffered by individuals could be cleared up quickly and correctly.” Cf. also JJK 131 and Eck (2012) 273f. on the manipulation of evil spirits in the “*lex sacra*” and in the *defixiones*.

111. One should not consider the royal cult of Zeus *Eumenes*, worshipped at Pergamum, see JJK 77; Robertson (2010) 87f. The cult of the Eumenides was already attested at Selinous, as testified by the theophoric anthroponym Εὐμενίδοτος (IGDS 50, funerary stele, sixth century BCE), and at Entella, where there was the month Εὐμενιδεῖος (IGDS 204, 205, 207, bronze tablets, third century BCE).

112. For a detailed commentary, see Parker (1983) 332-351; Dobias-Lalou (2000) 307-309; Rhodes-Osborne (2003) 500-505; Dobias-Lalou-Dubois (2007); Robertson (2010) 259-374.

113. Rhodes-Osborne no. 97.110-141 :
 110 Ἰκεσίων
 _ικέσιος ἐπακτός· αἶ κα ἐπιπεμφθῆι ἐπὶ τὰν
 οἰκίαν, αἰ μέγ κα ἴσαι ἀφ’ ὅτινός οἱ ἐπῆνθε, ὀ-
 νυμαξεῖ αὐτὸν προειπῶν τρὶς ἡμέρας· αἰ δ[έ]
 κα τεθνάκηι ἔγγαιος ἢ ἄλλη πη ἀπολώλη[ι],
 115 αἰ μέγ κα ἴσαι τὸ ὄνυμα, ὄνυμαστὶ προερεῖ, αἰ
 δέ κα μὴ ἴσαι, “ὦ ἄνθρωπε, αἶτε ἀνὴρ αἶτε γυνὰ
 ἐσσί”, κολοσὸς ποιήσαντα ἔρσενα καὶ θήλεια[v]
 ἢ καλίνος ἢ γαίνος ὑποδεξάμενον παρτιθ[έ]-
 μεν τὸ μέρος πάντων· ἐπεὶ δέ κα ποιήσεσ τὰ
 120 νομιζόμενα, φέροντα ἐς ὕλαν ἀεργὸν ἐρε-
 [ί]σαι τὰς κολοσὸς καὶ τὰ μέρη.
 _ικέσιος ἄτερος, τετελεσμένος ἢ ἀτελής, ἰσ-

section has a title of its own: *ικεσίων* has been engraved with larger and spaced out letters on a whole line.¹¹⁴ Rituals concern three different types of *ικέσιοι*. *Ίκέσιος* is attested in Athenian tragedies as an adjective, and as an epithet of Zeus, protector of suppliants;¹¹⁵ as a noun it has been considered a synonym of *ικέτης*.¹¹⁶ The interpretation of the nature of these *ικέσιοι* has been controversial. In current scholarship, there are mainly three readings: (i) all the three are de-

- σάμενος ἐπὶ τῷ δαμοσίῳ ἱαρῶι· αἱ μέγ κα προ[φέ]-
ρηται, ὁπόσσω κα προφέρηται, οὕτως τελίσκ[ε]-
125 σθαι· αἱ δέ κα μὴ προφέρηται, γὰς καρπὸν θ[ύ]-
εν καὶ σπονδὰν καθ' ἔτος αἰεί· αἱ δέ κα παρήι, ἐ[κ]
νέω δις τόσσα· αἱ δέ κα διαλίπηι τέκνον ἐπι[λά]-
θόμενον καὶ οἱ προφέρηται, ὅ τι κα οἱ μαντέ[υ]-
ομένῳ ἀναιρεθῆι, τοῦτο ἀποτεῖσει τῷ θεῶι κ[αί]
130 θυσεῖ, αἱ μέγ κα ἴσαι, ἐπὶ τὸμ πατρώιον· αἱ δὲ μή, [χρή]-
σασθαι.
_ικέσιος τρίτος, αὐτοφόνος· ἀφικετεύεν ἐς [3-4]-
πολίαν καὶ τριφυλίαν· ὡς δέ κα καταγγήλε[ι ἰκέ]-
σθαι, ἴσσαντα ἐπὶ τῷ ὠδῶι ἐπὶ νάκει λευκῶ[ι νί]-
135 ζεν καὶ χρίσαι καὶ ἐξίμεν ἐς τὰν δαμοσί[αν]
ὀδὸν καὶ σιγὸν πάντας ἢ κα ἔξοι ἔωντ[ι τὸ]-
[ς] ὑποδεκομένος· τὸν προαγγελτῆ[ρα]-
[..]ν παρίμεν τὸν ἀφικετευ[όμενον]ν ..]-
[....]ων καὶ τὸς ἐπομένος [- - - - -]
140 [....]ύσεῖ θύη καὶ ἀλλ[α - - - - -]
[- - - δ]ἔ μὴ - - - - -

(110) *Of Suppliants*. (111ff.) *Imposed suppliants*. If a suppliant is sent to the house, if (the householder) knows from whom he came, he shall make a proclamation and name him for three days. And if he has died in the land or has perished somewhere else, if he knows his name, he is to call out by name, but if he does not know (he is to proclaim): 'O person, whether you are a man or a woman'. He is to make figurines, a male and a female, either from wood or from clay, and give them hospitality, offering them a portion of everything. When you have performed the customary rites, carry the figurines and the portions to an unworked wood and deposit them. (122ff.) *Second suppliant*, paying taxes or free from tributes, who has sat down at the public sanctuary. If there is a pronouncement, for however much is pronounced, offer consequently. If there is no pronouncement, let there be a sacrifice of the fruit of the earth and a libation annually for ever. But if he omits it, then twice as much. If a child forgets and omits and there is a pronouncement to him, whatever is told him when he consults the oracle, he is to pay this to the god and make sacrifice at his ancestral tomb, if he knows where this is, and if not to ask the oracle. (132ff.) *Third suppliant, murderer*. He is to present the suppliant to the [---] office and the three tribes. When he announces that he has come, having set him down on the threshold on a white fleece, wash and anoint him and go out to the public road, and all to be silent while they are outside, obeying the announcer. The one presented as a suppliant is to go -- -- and those who follow --- sacrifices ---. Trans. from Rhodes-Osborne (2003) 499–501, slightly modified.

114. As [Ἄ]πόλλων ἔχρη[σε] at the beginning of the law.

115. See e.g. *Soph. Phil.* 495; *Eur. HF* 108, *Supp.* 39, 102, 108. Zeus *Hikesios*: *Aesch. Supp.* 616; *Soph. Phil.* 484; *Eur. Hec.* 345; *IG XII* (3) 402. See *ex plurimis* Mikalson (1991) 69–80; Dowden (2006) 78–80; Sommerstein (2010) 100, 134f. On the *ικετεία*: Gould (1973); Naiden (2006).

116. *Hesych. s.v. ἰκέσιος*; *Suid. s.v. ἰκέσιος*; *Soph. Ant.* 1230; *Eur. Med.* 710.

monic spirits;¹¹⁷ (ii) the first is a spirit, while the other two are men, suppliants;¹¹⁸ (iii) all the three are human suppliants.¹¹⁹

The publication of the “*lex sacra*” of Selinous, and the parallel made by its first editors between the ἐλάστερος of column B and the ἰκέσιος ἐπακτός, reinforced the idea that both documents referred to a spirit to host and to drive off.¹²⁰ This interpretative line has been criticised by those scholars who think that the ἰκέσιος is not a spirit, but a suppliant man: the equivalence ἐλάστερος-ἰκέσιος ἐπακτός is not legitimate.¹²¹

Indeed, it seems to me more plausible that the three paragraphs all concerned the same entity. Although the same term might indicate different beings,¹²² the consequential numbering of the ἰκέσιοι (ἄτερος, τρίτος) induces one rather to hypothesise a homogeneous nature.¹²³ The most harmonizing reading seems to identify three suppliants of human nature, although the first case remains odd.¹²⁴ In this first paragraph, the repetition of compounds in ἐπι- (ἐπακτός, ἐπιπέμπω) seems to suggest that the action was an aggressive one.¹²⁵ Ἐπακτός denotes something hostile:¹²⁶ there is a reference to someone or something opposed to the house. It is tempting to speculate, though impossible to prove, that there was a deviation from the norm: a foreign suppliant was received, and then he turned himself out against the home. The text, in a brachilogical expression, omitted that the suppliant had been thrown out of the house. Rejected suppliants should not have been

117. Stukeley (1937) 36; Burkert (1984) 68–73.

118. Parker (1983) 347–349; Lupu (2005) 283; Faraone (1991) 180–189, (1992) 81f.; Traulsen (2004) 186–193.

119. Ferri (1927); De Sanctis (1927); Radermacher (1927); von Wilamowitz Möllendorff (1927); Latte (1928); Vogliano (1928); Oliverio (1933); Luzzatto (1936) 92–100; Servais (1960) 121–129; Dobias-Lalou (1997) 268; Kontorini (1987); Kontorini (1989) 17–29; Cassella (1997). Robertson (2010) 357–369 offered a completely new interpretation: ἰκέσιος is an adjective used substantively with the noun καθαρός understood, “of suppliant (purifications).”

120. JJK 44, 55f., 76, 119f.; Dubois (1995a) 139–143; Cordano (1996) 140; Jordan (1996) 327f.; North (1996) 295, 297f.; Giuliani (1998) 68, 73f.; Johnston (1999) 58–61; Sorensen (2002) 111–113; Rhodes–Osborne (2003) 505; Traulsen (2004) 193 n. 361.

121. Dobias-Lalou (1997) 268; Clinton (1996) 175–179; Lupu (2005) 383. Cf. *supra*.

122. See Lupu (2005) 283: “A modern code would not group under the same heading a supernatural visitant and a human suppliant. But this does not mean that the promulgators of this code (ascribed to Apollo in the heading) would not have done so. They seem to have applied the word *hikesios* to different yet semantically related phenomena.”

123. See also Giuliani (1998) 73 n. 21.

124. Cf. Burkert (1984) 69: “eigentlich kurios.”

125. Parker (1983) 348.

126. Army: Aesch. *Sept.* 583, 1025; Soph. *Trach.* 259. Disease: Soph. *Trach.* 491; Eur. *Ion* 591f. Enemy’s spell: Eur. *Hipp.* 318. Imposed oath: Lys. fr. 251 S., Isoc. 1.23.

rare.¹²⁷ The rejected person could have violated hospitality rules, or he could himself turn out to be an enemy or someone imposed by an enemy. There are some famous cases of violation of hospitality. Paris abducted the wife of his guest Menelaos;¹²⁸ Eolos sent Odysseus away from his palace, because he was hated by the gods;¹²⁹ Aristagoras, tyrant of Miletus, went into Cleomenes' house as a suppliant, and then tried to corrupt him.¹³⁰ To refuse a request for reception was not a law-breaking wrong. After a rejection, the suppliant could leave or stay, and the host could ignore him or banish him out violently. The last option was the most dangerous, and one could incur the wrath of the gods. There are several cases of suppliants forced to leave their shelter, an altar or a sanctuary, and then killed.¹³¹ There is no exact parallel with our hypothetical circumstance at Cyrene, a suppliant welcomed in a private house and then driven off. However, the consequences of a comparable action would be consistent with the topic of the other provisions of the law, which is to say with the topic of pollution. When the herald of Eurystheus pulled Heracles' sons away from the altar of Zeus *Agoraios*, Iolaus deplored the violence and the defiling of the suppliants wreaths, "a disgrace to the city."¹³² It can be imagined that at Cyrene it was deemed necessary to regulate a case of a violation of the *ἰκετεία*. If the suppliant was alive, a public proclamation was ordered, while if he was dead, the ritual with the *kolossoi* should be performed.¹³³ Because of the involvement of the Underworld, the ritual was complex. The *kolossoi* rite symbolically represented the refused hospitality: the banquet was re-enacted and at the same time exorcised. That the *kolossos* stood in for a human being, rather than an evil spirit, seems to be confirmed by the parallel with the famous Founders' stele from Cyrene, in which the *kolossos* was used to ritually replace those breaking the oath, that is, the real persons.¹³⁴ Furthermore, the uncertainty about the knowledge of the name seems to be more logical if it referred to a person rather than to a ghost. The *lex cathartica* regulated, then, the ritual reparation for having violated the norms of supplication. When the *kolossos* and *ta mere* were brought in the wood, the householder was finally set free from the hostile suppliant, perhaps imposed by an enemy. This reading is merely hypothetical, but it is coherent with the other sections of the

127. See Naiden (2006) 129: "Ordinary though rejection is, scholars seldom acknowledge it." For a philosophical analysis on the *hospes* who turns out to be an *hostis*, see Montandon (2004).

128. Hom. *Il.* 2.353–365; 6.54f.

129. Hom. *Od.* 10.73–75.

130. Herod. 5.51.

131. For the sources on rejected suppliants, see Naiden (2006) 129–169.

132. Eur. *Hcl.* 69–72, cf. also 389–473, and Aesch. *Suppl.* 824–953. On violations of *xenia* in Greek tragedies, see Belfiore (2000).

133. Cf. Traulsen (2004) 192: the ceremony with the *kolossoi* was performed in any case.

134. SEG IX 3.44–49 = Meiggs-Lewis, *GHI* no. 5. For a definition of *kolossos*, see Vernant (1965); Dickie (1996); Dobias-Lalou (2000) 272f.

text, in particular with those about a defilement provoked by an error, carelessness or a transgression.¹³⁵

The understanding of the second category of suppliants is no less difficult. The suppliant was sheltered in a sanctuary. This *ικέσιος* was *τετελεσμένος ἢ ἀτελής*, a specification that is obscure. Without surveying all the interpretations,¹³⁶ here the possibility will be considered that the *ικέσιος* was a suppliant of human nature, and *τετελεσμένος* and *ἀτελής* meant respectively “taxpaying” and “exempt from tax.”¹³⁷ Perhaps, when someone was requesting to be accepted as a suppliant at the public sanctuary, probably that of Apollo,¹³⁸ he had to pay a tribute irrespective of his fiscal condition. As far as I know, there is no precise parallel for an economic tie between the suppliant and the sanctuary. However, a believer or a pilgrim had to pay a fee, for example, for gaining access to a sanctuary for the first time, for performing sacrifices, for the consultation of oracles, or for the practice of healing treatments.¹³⁹ At Cyrene, there was an injunction, the received suppliant had to pay the price set by the oracle, also if the person had a tax-free status (*ateleia*). Without an explicit injunction, he had to offer fruits and libations every year for his entire life. Defaults in the payments were sanctioned. In this highly hypothetical picture, the defilement was provoked by the non-fulfillment of the payment.¹⁴⁰ To shelter suppliants was an onerous task for the sanctuary, and involved a great organising effort: a request for a compensation would not be completely unexpected.¹⁴¹

135. Cf. in the cathartic *lex* the ll. 26–29 on the sacrifice of a victim *μὴ νόμος*. Similarly, in the bronze tables of Gubbio, an extraordinary document for the religious history of pre-Roman Italy, purification was performed in case there was an omission, error, delinquency or transgression in the sacrifices to Jupiter Grabovius (Prosdocimi (1984) 197–200, 204f., tablet VIa.29–55, VIb.30–32 propitiatory offerings for a purification made by Tefer Jovius. These tablets were engraved between the third and the second century BCE, but preserve older liturgical texts).

136. See, for a summary, Servais (1960) 130–139; Parker (1983) 349f.; Traulsen (2004) 194; Robertson (2010) 361–364.

137. Cf. Robertson (2010) 362: “As a translation ‘paid or not taxed’ would be accurate, but ‘paid or not paid’ is better because it reproduces the assonance.” He thinks that the oracle prescribed a payment for its consultation.

138. Servais (1960) 133.

139. See the rules and the rates of the *Amphiareion* of Oropos in the fourth century BCE: *LSCG* 69.20–24 (payment of nine obols), ll. 25–36 (sacrificial rules), ll. 39–43 (payment and registration of persons staying overnight); *NGSL* 9; *LSCG* 74 (fourth century BCE), tax for the consultation of the oracle of Trophonius at Lebadea. Further examples in Lupu (2003) 335–339; see Melfi (2007) 41, 464, 485, for the preliminary payments in the *Asklepieia*. For the expenses of a pilgrim, see also Dillon (1997).

140. See Servais (1960) 138: “il est normal d’offrir un sacrifice expiatoire pour apaiser celui dont on n’a pas respecté l’engagement.” For the pollution caused by a missing payment for a sacrifice, see *LSCG Suppl.* 72.3–5 (Thasos, first century BCE): τῶι δὲ μὴ ἀπαρξαμένῳ καθότι προγράφεται ἐνθυμιστὸν εἶναι.

141. On the concrete problems around the *hiketeia*, as for example the board and lodging for several people, see Sinn (1993) 94–97.

Finally, the last paragraph is about a third *ικέσιος*, most probably a man, one who had committed homicide and who needs to be purified. This suppliant is designated as *αὐτοφόνος*: “kin-killer”, “slaying with one’s own hand.”¹⁴² A less restrictive “killer” seems the most appropriate meaning for the context.¹⁴³ This section would be extremely interesting for the analysis of purificatory rituals after homicide, but unfortunately the last lines of the inscription are fragmentary.

The verb *ἀφικετεύειν* opens the ritual sequence. It is also attested in a document from Lindos concerning suppliants,¹⁴⁴ where it indicates the figure that plead for the suppliant and received him.¹⁴⁵ The element of receiving the person to purify recalls also the Selinuntine tablet.¹⁴⁶ At Cyrene, the host had to plead for the suppliant with two offices that are hard to explain. The *τριφυλία* is attested only here: it seems to be a representing body of three tribes.¹⁴⁷ To present the suppliant to the political delegates guaranteed the official and public character of the rituals. For restoring the lacunose name of the second body, [...] *πολία*, several ideas of comparable validity have been proposed: *τριπολία*,¹⁴⁸ *ἐπιπολία*,¹⁴⁹ *ἀρχεπολία*,¹⁵⁰ *δικασπολία*,¹⁵¹ *θυηπολία*,¹⁵² *μεταπολία*,¹⁵³ *ιαροπολία*.¹⁵⁴ The only firm point is that it is an abstract form of a compound of *-πολος*,¹⁵⁵ indicating a public office. It is unclear whether the civic bodies were merely validating the performance of the rite, or were deciding whether to accept or reject the request of the suppliant.¹⁵⁶

142. See *LSJ* s.v. *αὐτοφόνος*.

143. Parker (1983) 351. Stukeley (1937) 38f. thinks at the ghost of a victim of murder; Servais (1960) 140 at a murderer killing with his own hands; Burkert (1984) 71 at the ghost of a suicide.

144. *SEG XXXIX 729.5* (= *NGSL 17*, third century BCE): *ἀφικετεύων ἢ δεκόμε[ενος]*, with Lupu (2005) 279f. Cf. also Aesch. *Suppl. 1*: *Ζεὺς ἀφίκτηρ*.

145. Cf. instead Servais (1960) 141: the verb *ἀφικετεύειν* means ‘to proceed with the purification of the suppliant’. See also Dobias-Lalou in Dobias-Lalou-Dubois (2007) 151–153: she translates it as “sortir de l’état de suppliant.”

146. Lines B 3-4: *ὑποδεκόμενος*.

147. See Parker (1983) 350; Robertson (2010) 366.

148. Ferri (1927): union of three cities.

149. De Sanctis (1927): epithet of a god.

150. Oliverio (1933): civic center of the city.

151. Sokolowski (1962): lawcourt whose members were elected by three *phylai*.

152. Masson (1969–1970): office of the sacrifice personnel.

153. Burkert (1984) 72 n. 44: among the cities.

154. Robertson (2010): office of the chief priest.

155. Robertson (2010) 366.

156. See Naiden (2006) 186 with n. 68.

The herald, as in Lindos,¹⁵⁷ was announcing the arrival of the suppliant,¹⁵⁸ who was being seated on a threshold on a white fleece, and who was washed and anointed.¹⁵⁹ Then, the little procession went out into the public road, probably directed towards the place for the concluding sacrifices. On the road, the herald ordered the participants in the rite to stay in silence. The imposition of silence had several functions. Because of the polluting presence of the homicide it was dangerous to communicate.¹⁶⁰ This silence reveals the temporary suspension of the social order, creating a distance from a “dislocated figure.”¹⁶¹ Similarly, at Selinous, after the purification the killer gained the permission of talking again, a fundamental symbol of his reintegration and of the end of his marginality.¹⁶² At Cyrene, the silence imposed on the killer was met with a similar silence imposed on the bystanders.¹⁶³ It is realistic to imagine that the silence of the bystanders was likely not certain: the killer might have attracted the insults and abusive shouts of other citizens, perhaps opposed to his readmittance. The invectives of Jason against Medea perfectly exemplify the kind of language a killer could expect.¹⁶⁴ The requested silence, then, could also show a concern for the public order.¹⁶⁵ It seems to evoke the injunction of staying in silence dur-

157. SEG XXXIX 729.5, 7: τοὶ κάρ[υκες].

158. The restoration by Ferri (1927), ἰκε]σθαι, has been widely accepted, and it seems preferable to δέκε]σθαι suggested by Robertson (2010), “when he has announced that he [receives].”

159. On the identification of this building in the Cyrenaic topography, see Laronde (1987) 178. On the seated posture as symbol of submission and mortification, see Montiglio (2000) 19f.

160. Silence of the killer: Aesch. *Eum.* 448f.: ἄφθογγον εἶναι τὸν παλαμναῖον νόμος, ἔστ’ ἂν πρὸς ἄνδρὸς αἵματος καθαρσίου; Eur. *IT* 951: σιγῆ δ’ ἔτεκτῆναντ’ ἀπόφθεγκτόν μ’, 956f: ἤλγουν δὲ σιγῆ κἀδόκου οὐκ εἰδέναί, μέγα στενάζων οὔνεκ’ ἢ μητρὸς φονεύς; Eur. *HF* 1218f.; *Antiph.* 2.1.3, 10; *Apoll.* *Rhod.* 4.693. Announcement of silence: Eur. *IT* 1209–1211: Ἴφ: καὶ πόλει πέμψων τιν’ ὅστις σημανεῖ. Θ: ποίας τύχας; Ἴφ: ἐν δόμοις μίμνεν ἅπαντας. Θ: μὴ συναντῶεν φόνω; Ἴφ: μυσσαρὰ γὰρ τὰ τοιάδ’ ἐστί. 1229: φεύγετ’, ἐξίστασθε, μὴ τῷ προσπέση μύσος τόδε.

161. Montiglio (2000) 17–23. On the silence of the homicide, see also Parker (1983) 371; Lupu (2005) 281, 385. A different interpretation of this silence in Servais (1960) 145, who thinks at the *euphemia*, the word of good omen typical of solemn ceremonies; and in Ferri (1927) 93f., who explains this silence with funerary prescriptions. *Contra*: Montiglio (2000) 22.

162. JJK B 6.

163. See Parker (1983) 350; Montiglio (2000) 22.

164. Eur. *Med.* 1323f.: ὦ μῖσος, ὦ μέγιστον ἐχθίστη γύναι θεοῖς τε κάμοι παντί τ’ ἀνθρώπων γένει; 1329: ὅλοι; 1342–1346: λέαιναν, οὐ γυναῖκα, τῆς Τυρσηνίδος Σκύλλης ἔχουσαν ἀγριωτέραν φύσιν. ἀλλ’ οὐ γὰρ ἂν σε μυρίοις ὀνειδέσιν δάκοιμι: τοιόνδ’ ἐμπέφυκε σοι θράσος; ἔρρ’, αἰσχροποῖε καὶ τέκνων μιαιφόνε.

165. *Contra*: Montiglio (2000) 22: “the silence that receives this murderer is not dictated by a mere concern for civic discipline.”

ing a funeral cortege,¹⁶⁶ although the contexts and the functions of silence are rather different. The killer could have provoked feelings of frustration and revenge, while the rite of purification was aimed to overcome negative states and to reconcile both sides involved in the crime.

5. Conclusions

It is now time to answer the initial question about a reasonable comparison of these two documents. It has been suggested that the cultural analogies can be ascribed to a *koinè* of Doric origin that reached Cyrene through Thera and Selinous through Megara.¹⁶⁷ However, it is not necessary to postulate a common origin. At least in regard to the purification of the individual guilty of homicide, the rituals norms seem to have had a Panhellenic character. Every “law” had a narrow local range, but similar provisions appear in different, and distant, geographic places. The comparison between these ritual normative inscriptions of Selinous and Cyrene can be practicable under two aspects: 1) the general outline of the documents, and 2) their contents, and the problems addressed.

Firstly, the Selinuntine text was supposedly dealing with a pollution caused by the ancestors, with a polluted homicide, and with the pollution provoked by tormenting spirits. It amounted to a sort of vademecum of cathartic practices to perform in various situations. The first case required more complex rituals since it envisaged interactions with and changes in the Underworld. The tablet, then, falls perfectly within the documentary typology of other cathartic “laws”: a series of ritual norms to be followed in case of different pollutions. Similarly, a logic of records structures the *lex cathartica* of Cyrene: every kind of pollution provides for a precise cathartic procedure. At Cleonai, a very fragmentary inscription seems to be organised in clauses, and every clause seems to decree when there was a risk of incurring pollution and when it was necessary to perform purificatory rites; it was perhaps related to bloodshed and different ways of killing.¹⁶⁸ The same outline can be found in a long cultural regulation from Cos, which offers the most appropriate solution for several cases of pollution, purificatory acts, and purity requirements as necessary conditions for the practice of the priesthood to Demeter Olym-

166. See *LSCG* 77 C 13–15, Delphis, fourth century BCE (there is another copy at Panopeus, sixth century BCE, see McK. Camp (2003) 184f.): τὸν δὲ νεκρὸν κεκαλυμμένον φερέτω σιγᾷ. On the emotions involved in funerary rituals and the sacred regulations, see Chaniotis (2010) 220–223.

167. Lazzarini (1998), with an analysis of the cult of Zeus *Meilichios* and the Eumenides at Selinous and at Cyrene (see the inscriptions from the rocky sanctuary of Ain-El-Hofra, *SEG* IX 325, 327, 330, 336, fourth century BCE; on this sanctuary, see Fabbricotti (2007), in part. 95f. on the dedications to the Eumenides).

168. *IG* IV 1607 = *LSCG* 56 = Koerner, *Gesetzestexte* no. 32 = *Nomima* II.79, first half of the sixth century BCE.

pia.¹⁶⁹ Another inscription, from Latos, seems to grant a pure state to the person who involuntary killed in particular circumstances.¹⁷⁰ A similar organization of thought, a purity norm for every occasion, is characteristic of the inscriptions regulating the purity requested before accessing a sanctuary, although they are more schematic.¹⁷¹

Secondly, the subject matter of the Selinuntine and the Cyrenaic inscriptions analysed here seems to concern the pollution perhaps caused by bloodshed. Selinous preserves a detailed, though puzzling, description of the performative process of the purificatory rites. The *miasma* of the killer could be of demonic nature. Polluted ancestors could negatively influence the life of their descendants. These were considered urgent problems to tackle through an official document. Also at Cyrene, the purification of the homicide was believed a question to be institutionally faced. The necessity to regulate blood pollution can be found in other inscriptions. At Mantinea, a murder in the sanctuary of Alea obliged the civic authorities to deliberate the banishment of the culprits and their reprobation from the goddess.¹⁷² At Dikaia, after a civil war, the popular assembly decreed that the return to civic peace was to be confirmed by the performance of purificatory rites: every citizen was purifying his fellow citizen and being purified by him.¹⁷³ At Thasos, a washing and a libation to Zeus *Katharsios* were perhaps prescribed in case of blood pollution, but the inscription is too fragmentary to venture any conjecture.¹⁷⁴

The social weight of blood pollution should not be overestimated. However, the belief in the blood pollution and in an effective rite of purification offered pre-established rules of interaction in a situation of crisis. They allowed to understand why it was required to behave in a certain way. Channeling the negative emotions around the homicide, the rites of purification contributed to limiting social tensions and clashes between fellow citizens. Without the need of postulating an evolution from blood feud and religious sanctions to a

169. LSCG 154, first half of the third century BCE.

170. ICret. 1.16.6 = LSCG Suppl. 112, second century BCE.

171. On purity regulations in the “*leges sacrae*,” see Lupu (2005) 77–79; Robertson (2012); Chaniotis (1997), (2012).

172. IG V (2) 262 = IPArk. 8 = Koerner, *Gesetzestexte* no. 34 = *Nomima* II.2, about 460–450 BCE, see Thür (2003), with previous bibliography, and Maffi (2007) 223–232.

173. Voutiras–Sismanidis (2007), second quarter of the fourth century BCE; see Salvo (2012b) with previous bibliography. For other *staseis* that provoked a *miasma* or an *agos* see Paus. 2.20.1–2 (Argos, offering of an *agalma* to Zeus *Meilichios*); Arist. *Pol.* 1303a 28–31, Heracl. *Pont. fr.* 49 Wehrli *apud* Athen. 12.521f. (Sybaris: as consequence of a sacrilegious pollution the city was completely destroyed, see on this Ampolo (1993) 218f.).

174. LSCG Suppl. 65, beginning fourth century BCE. See Chaniotis (1988) 16 on this inscription and on its possible link with other inscriptions concerning the life of the athlete Theogenes.

legal management of the crime,¹⁷⁵ the belief in the pollution cooperated with the laws to control the public order and to overcome any feeling of victimization and injustice. The rites, following the norms prescribed by official documents, were working automatically and immediately,¹⁷⁶ and their authority was recognised by everyone in the civic community. It is within this picture that the formal propositions for ritual actions from Selinous and Cyrene could be imagined to have operated.

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175. For a critique of the evolutionary paradigm in the history of Greek homicide law, see Salvo (2011).

176. On automatism and moral distinctions in the concept of Greek purity, see Chaniotis (1997), (2012).

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