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. 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 πολλαὶ 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

1 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 τραγῳδία—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 τραγῳδία 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.”

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.


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. $\tau\rho\alpha\gamma\omega\delta\iota\alpha$ (764.5) which says, after three other explanations, $\eta\; \delta\tau\iota\; \tau\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha\; \alpha\iota\chi\omicron\omicron\omicron\; \varepsilon\kappa\; \sigma\alpha\tau\iota\rho\alpha\varsigma\; \sigma\nu\iota\omicron\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\sigma\varsigma\nu\varsigma\; \omicron\nu\; \varepsilon\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\omicron\omicron\varsigma\; \tau\rho\alpha\gamma\omicron\omicron\nu\sigma\varsigma$. 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 $\varepsilon\kappa\; \sigma\alpha\tau\iota\mu\iota\kappa\omicron\omicron\nu$ (Poetics 1449a20, cf. 22); this may mean that tragedy originated “from the satyr play,” as Chamaeleon, one of Aristotle’s pupils, explained expressis verbis. 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.” So in order to save the theory it becomes

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3 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 $\varepsilon\kappa\; \tau\omega\upsilon\varsigma\; \sigma\alpha\tau\iota\mu\iota\kappa\omicron\omicron\nu$; 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 $\varepsilon\tau\omicron\nu\; \alpha\iota\nu\omicron\omicron\nu\omicron\omicron\nu$ 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 (Oxford 1963) 1258,1; cf. bell-crater Compiègne 1025 = ARV³ 1055,76; chous Leipzig T 527 = ARV³ 1258,2; H. Herter, RE zw.r. VIA (1937) 1897. Dionysus, satyrs, tragedy still belong together.

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; but still they are not τράγοι themselves, as a satyr-play never could be called τραγῳδία. 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 Peloponnes; 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 τραγῳδία will call them “goats.” The ex-

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8 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 νεῖβρις, παρδαλή, θέραμον, χλανή ἄνθης as satyr’s dress, whereas girls wore goatskins in some Dionysiac ritual, Hsch. τραγηφόροι. More important are Δ. fr.207 Nauck=455 Mette, S. Ichneutai 357f, Hsch. τράγους: σάτυρους . . . (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 ἱππος. Webster 301 no.6 affirms that the ΣΙΛΕΝΟΙ 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.

8 Webster 114, arguing that these dancers surely are not horses. Μαλλωτός χείλων of silens: D.H. 7.72.10. On the subject of the Corinthian dancers, cf. Webster 100ff, 113ff, 169ff; L. Breitholz, Die dorishe 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 μαλλωτὸς χιτῶν 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."

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. 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, whereas the horned dancers on the so-called Anodos-scenes may with some probability be identified as Πάνες; they seem to be confined to this special occasion.

So still there is no evidence for choruses of singing goats from which τραγῳδία 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 τραγῳδία originally lack the "tragic" element (so Wilamowitz 93)? We also have to consider a simple, but decisive linguistic fact: the

7 E.g. Wilamowitz 84, Pohlenz II.10, Ziegler 1919f; contra, Nilsson, Opuscula I.93f; C. del Grande, ΤΡΑΓΩΔΙΑ (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 πάθη; 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 Σκηνωτῶν άναγραφή (FGrHist 550) dealing especially with the history of literature and music.

8 The bronze of Methydrion, Athens Nat.Mus. 13789, was found and published in 1911 by F. Hiller von Gaertringen and H. Lattermann, Abh. Berl 1911, 4, p.13; "vier widderartige aufrechte Gestalten" p.24; 'rams' Pohlenz 1.18, M. P. Nilsson, Geschichte der griechischen Religion I (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.

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

10 Reisch 456ff; Patzer 62ff.
primary word formation is not τραγῳδία at all, but τραγῳδός, or rather τραγῳδοί. 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 τραγῳδία: εν τοις τραγῳδοίς, θεάσασθαι τραγῳδούς, νυκάν τραγῳδοίς. Τραγῳδοί—that is, the chorus with its strange masks and splendid robes, as it stood before the eyes of the Athenians. Now the laws of Greek word formation show that τραγῳδός cannot mean 'singing goat'; nor indeed does the word κωμῳδός imply 'singing κώμοι', but 'singers on occasion of the κώμος'. 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 αιλῳδός, κιθαρῳδός: the 'singer' who has something to do with a 'goat', 'flute', 'cithara'; or κωμῳδός can be verbal, 'he who sings the goat', like λυῳδός, μελῳδός, θρηνῳδός. At any rate τραγῳδοί 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

11 τραγῳδοί in the Attic Fasti, A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, The Dramatic Festivals of Athens (Oxford 1953) 104; ἐν τοῖς τραγῳδοίς Ar. Av. 512, cf. Pax 531; IG II/III² 956, 34; Aeschin. 3.41, 45; D. 21.10; ένικα τραγῳδοί ΙΓ II/III² 3091; cf. And. 4.42; τραγῳδῶς χορηγῶν Lys. 21.1, cf. 19.29, 24.9; D. 21.59; Is. 5.36; τεθέασα τραγῳδούς Men. Epit. 149. Considering these well-established usages of τραγῳδός, it is very improbable that the word should be "Rückbildung" (Lesky 22 n.3), secondary to τραγῳδος, cf. Ziegler 1917, Else Origin 25f. Else however holds that τραγῳδός was the actor-poet (Hermes 85 [1957] 20ff). In this case it would be difficult to account for the constant plural νυκάν, χορηγῶν τραγῳδοί; χορηγῶν ένικα τραγῳδοί ΙΓ II/III² 3091: there is only one poet for each χορηγός. The parallelism άνδρῶν - παιδῶν - κωμῳδῶν - τραγῳδῶν in IG II/III² 2318 is revealing, too. Whereas "no one of the ύποκρήτες ever danced" (Περὶ τραγῳδίας ed. R. Browning, ΓΕΡΑΣ G. Thomson [Prague 1963] 70 line 74), dancing is characteristic of the τραγῳδούς, Ar. V. 1476ff. Τραγῳδοί and ύποκρήτες are contrasted in the vita of Aeschines, POxy. 1800 fr. 3 col. ii 47ff: ἑρετιγωνοίτε τραγῳδοῖς ύποκρήτων.

12 The first to stress this fact was Reisch 467, followed by Pickard-Cambridge, Dith. 1 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); IG Forsch 59 (1944/9) 1ff, 245ff; E. Schwzyrer, 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. ἰπποτόταμος, αἰγαγρός. In an attempt to refute Pickard-Cambridge, Patzer (132) adduces, besides κωμῳδός, χορῳδός and μουρῳδός; this word, however, is found only in Tzetzes, χορῳδός seems not to be attested at all. Lesky (22 n.3) refers to E. Kalinka, Commentationes Aenepontaneae 10 (1924) 31, who, however, shows his unawareness of Greek word-formation by referring to μοδοδάκτυλος: this, the bahuvrihi-type, is exocentric, i.e. used as adjective, Schwzyrer 429, 454; ραβῳδός belongs still to another, the τεφτιμβροτος-type. Del Grande, op.cit. (supra n.7) 50ff, 354ff, thinks τραγῳδός 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 τραγῳδοί and τράγος apart.
earlier name for rhapsodes, ἀρφωδός, explaining the word unhesitatingly τοῦ δὲ ἄθλου τοῖς νικώσιν ἄρνος ἀποδειγμένου.\(^1\)

To this corresponds the explanation of the name τραγῳδία—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 τραγῳδία: Ἰκάριοι τόθι πρώτα περὶ τράγον ὁρχήσαντο. 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 Parian Marble, then an epigram of Dioskorides; Eratosthenes, in his
dercorporated the name τραγῳδία as its explanation.

1. FGrHist 308 f. 2 = Schol. in P. N. 2.1; Eust. p.6.25; EM, Hsch. s.v. ἀρφωδός, Phot. s.v. ἀρφωδός. The Lex sacra of Coreus, SIG⁸ 958.36 assigns κρεόν μερίδα to the rhapsode. So there is no reason to look for another etymology of ἀρφωδός as Welcker, op.cit. (supra n.2) 241 did.

2. Marm. Par. FGrHist 239 A 43, cf. Euseb. Hieron. Chron. III.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 άκάλλα rather than to tragedy, though admitting that περὶ τράγον ὁρχήσαντο 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 τραγῳδία understood as 'vintage-song', to which the άκάλλα too are said to have belonged, cf. Paus. Gr. ed. Erbse a 161=Eust. p.1769.45ff (Erbse is not right in leaving out the phrases on κομοδέων and τραγῳδοί; the word κομοβάτα in Paus. Gr. clearly points to κομοβάτα, cf. Meuli, Lc. 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 τραγῳδοῖ 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 Ael. 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 Νόμος, Ἀγεώς 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 ἔλεγχος which recurs in Diomedes p.484 K. and Procl. Chr. 319f6ff. 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 Johannes Diakonos ed. Rabe, Rhm 63 (1908) 150, Schol. in Dionys. Thom. p.18.3ff; 172.20, 306.27, 475.5 Hilgard; Tz. ad Lyceum p.2.21, 3.1 Scheer; Tz. Diff. Poet. 100, 124 (CGF pp.37f). Cf. G. Kadel, Die Prolegomena ΠΕΡΙ ΚΩΜΙΩΙΑΣ (AbhGött II.4 1898), a study of basic importance for the evaluation of the later sources. Else, Origin 17, declaring Johnnes Diakonos "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 κωμῳδίας 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.\textsuperscript{15}

Among modern scholars the derivation of τραγῳδία from the sacrifice of a goat has not enjoyed much success. "Spielend ersonnene aitia," "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 Peloponnes, the autochthonous origin of tragedy in Attica is here defended. Pohlenz' argument has found wide acceptance.\textsuperscript{16} 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 (\textit{FGrHist} 323 f 27). Phanodemus displays a marked Athenian bias (325 f 14,

\textsuperscript{15} Fr.676 Rose=Schol.Bob. in Cic. \textit{Pro Arch.} p.358 Orelli, on elegists; fr.677=Procl. \textit{Chr.} 320a31, on Arion; Rose included both fragments among the \textit{dubia}, conjecturing 'Αριστοκλῆς instead of 'Αριστοτέλης. He could not yet know Iohannes Diakonos p.150 Rabe (\textit{infra} n.19) and Schol. in Dionys.Thr. p.306.9 Hilgard, on Susaron.
\textsuperscript{16} Pohlenz, \textit{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 Attic. Surely Eratosthenes in his \textit{Erigone} was drawing on the Atthidographers, as did Callimachus in his \textit{Hecale}. Jacoby, however, thought of Ephorus, \textit{Περὶ εὐημέρωτος}, too as a possible source for the Parian Marble, \textit{FGrHist} II b 668, cf. II c 42. It is the merit of Solmsen, Meuli, Merkelbach (\textit{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 ἡφθανός (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 ἀντιποίουνται τῆς τε τραγῳδίας καὶ τῆς κωμῳδίας οἱ Δωρεῖς . . . ποιοῦμεν τὰ ὁνόματα σημείον. αὕτοι μὲν γὰρ κῶμας τὰς περιοικίδας καλεῖν φασιν, Ἀθηναίοις δὲ δήμους, ὡς κωμῳδουσιν ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ κωμάζειν λεχθέντας ἄλλα τῆς κατὰ κῶμας πλάνη ἀτιμαζομένους ἐκ τοῦ ἀστεως . . . (Poetics 1448a29ff). This presupposes two things: a derivation of κωμῳδία 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 κωμῳδία—and an inference from this derivation: the word κώμη is Doric, therefore κωμῳδία 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 ἀντιποίουνται 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 κωμῳδία 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 ἀστυ; and indeed κώμη is an Attic word, too.17 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.

17 Else, Aristotle’s Poetics (supra n.3), pointed out the Attic setting of the anecdote and the Attic word ἀστυ (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 εὐφημίας were not already present in Pl. O. 13.18, Hdt.1.23, cf. Jacoby, FGrHist II c p.42.25 on Ephorus Περὶ ἔυφημίας. 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 κωμή 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 in fact, in precisely those authors who offer 'song over the goat' as the etymology of τραγῳδία. 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 τραγῳδία, 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. 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


19 Aristotle had little interest in etymology: φύει τῶν ὀνομάτων οὐδέν ἐστιν (Int. 16a27); therefore it is quite doubtful whether in his remarks on σατυρικῶν he was thinking of the word τραγῳδία 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 ἵμω δὲ (i.e. tragedy and comedy) παρ' Ἀθηναίοις ἐφεύρεται, καθάπερ Ἀριστοτέλης φησί. 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, FGrHist 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 ἄρχη of tragedy (Poet. 1449a9fff); whatever he meant by this statement and whether or not he was right, it must be noted that ἄρχη 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 διθυραμβοῦς ἡ τραγῳδίας (Schol. in Ar. Pl. 290), a fortiori Arion came to be considered the first tragic poet (Suid. s.v. Άριων, Tz. ad Lyc. p.3.7 Scheer). If Solon only spoke of Arion's κύκλος χορός (κύκλος ἤγει χορός—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 *τραγῳδιοι* 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.”20 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;21 Euanthius incensis iam altaribus et admoto hirco id genus carminis quod sacer chorus reddebat Libero patri tragoedia

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20 “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 *τραγῳδιοι* from Icaria than from hypothetical Peloponnesian τραγῳ. 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 aIren attischen Dorfbrauch.”

21 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 Porphyry *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 ΠΕΠΙ ΕΥΣΕΒΕΙΑΣ* (Leiden 1964) 22ff. This, however, can be refuted: according to Theophrastus, the sanguinary sacrifice was caused by λύμος ζ των ἀλης δυστυχίας περιástasis (Porphyry *Abst*. 2.9 first sentence)—which is neither “ungeglücklicher Zufall” nor “Missgeschick” (Pötscher 16, 153), but something like “inescapable impact of calamity” (cf. Theophrastus’ definition of tragedy as ἥρωμης τίχες περιástasis Diom. p.487). Introduced by νότικα τῶν κατὰ μέρος... there follow in Porphyry the Attic anecdotes about the first sacrifice of a pig, a goat, a bull, which make ἡ δύναμις ἡ δραχμή ἡ δύναμις the origin of sacrifice; this is not δυστυχίας περιάστασις. 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 λύμος reappears: this is Theophrastus again, the stories before are ἐξιδρωμένου μάθου of Porphyry (*Abst*. 2.32). Nevertheless, the non-Theophrastean anecdotes may still be very old popular tradition, perhaps again preserved by Atthidographers. 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, *MonHist* 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 ½ —*vilis hircus* indeed.
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). 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 διθυραμβος* which originated in Corinth; the scholia explain, as if it were a matter of course, “because a bull was *επαθλον* for the winner.” This is confirmed by an epigram of Simonides (79 D.), who boasts that he has won “56 bulls and tripods.” *Βοηλάτας διθυραμβος*—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. 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 Atheniensiun*, he describes the triumphal procession of the poets: he has the *Νίκαι* themselves march up, *βοῦν επαθλον ἔλκουνας ἦ 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. 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,

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


The Great Dionysia: Pompe (or Theoria), actor with goat, zodiacal sign of Aries, from Calendar Frieze, Athens (cf. p.24)

(Courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Athens)
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)
To which of the Dionysus festivals the τράγος belongs can be seen from Plutarch (De cupid. div. 527D): ἡ πάτριος τῶν Διονυσίων ἔορτη τὸ παλαιὸν ἐπέμπετο δημοτικῶς καὶ ἑλπρᾶς, ἄμφορες οἶνου καὶ κληματίς, εἶτα τράγον τις ἔλκεν, ἂλλος ἑσχάδων ἄρριχον.

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, Lenaeenvasen, 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)
GREEK TRAGEDY AND SACRIFICIAL RITUAL

ἡκολούθει κομίζων, ἔτι πᾶσι δ' ὠ φαλλός. On account of the word πάτριος, this description is usually connected with the Διονύσια κατ' ἀγροῦς.26 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’ ἀγροῦς; 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;27 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 ἔρφος would be better; τράγος, that implies lewdness and foul smell.28 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 ὄχετελα 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, Ποιαδεῶν: Διονύσια κατ’ ἀγροῦς.29 These simple facts of husbandry are however embedded in very ancient religious customs which are by no means confined to Greece.30 But to follow them up seems to lead from obscurum to obscurius.

26 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.

27 The Leges Sacrae make a distinction between the sacrifice of an ἄρφος and a τράγος, cf. F. Sokolowski, Lois sacrées de l’Asie Mineure (Paris 1955) no. 67n.3, 10; id., Lois sacrées des cités grecques (Paris 1962) no.104: Διονύσιος τράγον... The Erchia-inscription (SEG 21 [1965] no.541) distinguishes ὀς from κρᾶς (n 52), it has 11 times the sacrifice of an ἄλξ, no τράγος (cf. also S. Dow, BCH 89 [1955] 199ff).

28 Hor. Epod. 10.23; Mart. 3.24 (cf. infra n.62).

29 The αἴημος 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 ὧν ἀίημι τῷν βλάστημαν (Thphr. CP 3.13.1), i.e. about April.

30 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,
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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 πολυπάτογα θυμέλαν. What exactly the θυμέλη was like, was a matter of dispute even in antiquity: εἴτε βωμός τι εἴτε βωμός. 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) 21ff, 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, p1.7d: goat gnawing grapes, threatened by beastlike demons. Some connection of Dionysus-cult and Tammuz-cult is entirely possible, considering esp. the equation βάκχον κλαυθένων. Φοίνικες (Hsch.) and 'Ικαρός—Accadian ikkaru ‘farmer, planter’ (M. C. Astour, Hellenosemitica [Leiden 1965]) 174ff; 194 n.6).


32 Pollux 4.123. To make the problem more complicated, the Tholos in Epidaurus was called θυμέλη (IG IV.1 103), a Dorian inscription mentions τὴν θυμέλην τοῦ βωμοῦ (IG XI.2 161A95), whereas Pherocrates (CAF I.204, fr.214) is said to have used the word instead of θυμήλαι. The tragic poets use θυμέλη as a kind of equivalent to έστία, A. S. F. Gow, JHS 32 (1912) 213ff, F. Robert, Thyméle (Paris 1939) 259ff, Hsch. s.v. θυμέλη...οἱ δὲ τὰ ἐπίσπουραν; E. Supp. 64 δεξίππουρον θυμέλαια—but E. Ion 114 θυμέλαιαν διάσερσιν 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. 173, 177; The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens [Oxford 1946] 9f). Metzger, op.cit. (supra n.25) 101ff calls the round altar amidst the Dionysiac thiasos on a vase painting θυμέλη (calyx crater Athens 12255 = ARV² 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 supplicium ad aras consecutionem partium scenici [Diss. Königsberg 1911]); his derivation of θυμέλη from the root θ-, θεμέλιον must however be discarded on linguistic grounds; on the suffix -μέλ-, H. Frisk, Eranos 41 (1943) 51, and Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch (Heidelberg 1960) s.v. θῦμα 2. Other testimonies point to θυμέλη=βωμός τι: Orion p.72.8 Sturz (~Et.Gen., EM 458.32ff) s.v. θυμέλη: τράπεζα δὲ ἄυα...ἐφ’ ής ἐστώτες ἐν τοῖς ἀγορίστοις ἰδον, μήπω τάξιν λαβοῦσα τραγῳδίας (cf. Pollux 4.123 on ἀλέος); EM 743.35 μετά δὲ τὴν ὥρας (meaning ‘stage’ here) βωμός ἄγας τοῦ Διονύσου, τετράγωνον οἰκείον κενὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ μέσου, δι’ αὐτᾶς τὸ θυμέλη. This rectangular platform was discovered by G. Löschcke (in E. Bethe, Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Theaters im Alterthum [Leipzig 1896] 76f; cf. A. Fricke, Denkmäler zum Theaterwesen im Altertum [Berlin 1920] 8ff; History of the Greek and Roman Theater² [Princeton 1961] 55, fig.48) on the Brygos-cup BM E 65=ARV² 370.13, in a scene of a satyr-play; the same platform on calyx-crater Bologna 329=ARV² 1410.21, in a Dionysiac scene. Musicians are often represented performing on similar platforms, so the later concept of θυμελικὸς σχηματισμὸς (J. Frei, De certainibus thymelicis [Diss. Basel 1900]) is easy to explain (Bieber, Denkmäler l.c.). Pollux 4.123 mentions an altar ἐπὶ τῆς σχήματος. 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 Priene² [Berlin 1964] 70ff); a similar altar in a theater on Cos (Encyclopædia dell’arte antica II [1959] 799). That the choroeuts (of dithyramb and tragedy?) in strophe and antistrophe were dancing round the altar is stated by the Hellenistic scholar Ptolemaios (RE XXIII [1939] 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 βοηλάτος διθύεμβος was introduced in Athens later than tragedy, there remains for the original festival in the precinct of Διόνυσος 'Ελευθερεύς just the sacrifice of the τράγος; and the τραγῳδοῖ.

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 τραγῳδία 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 θυαία, which for the ancients was the sacred experience par excellence: ιερόν, ιερεύς, ιερεῖον, ιερεύειν. Perhaps this is the reason why we find it so difficult to accept the explanation of the word τραγῳδία which seemed almost self-evident in antiquity.

Greek sacrificial practice is of course a complex phenomenon;

33 510/508 B.C. according to Marm.Par. A 46; Pickard-Cambridge, Dith.1 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.

34 Only sanguinary sacrifices are studied here, not σπονδαί, ἐσπαρχαί etc. One of the most important contributions to the question is still W. Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites (London 1894), though his theory of totemism has been abandoned. He vitally influenced S. Freud, Totem und Tabu (Wien 1913) = four essays in Image 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, in Homer θυεύω 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 λειπεύω and βεβεύω. Θυεύω in a narrower sense is quite often contrasted with ἐναγιζεύω, 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. 

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 Kultusaltertilte (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. θυεύω. Of special importance are: A. Thomsen, "Der Trug des Prometheus," ArchW 12 (1909) 460ff; A. D. Nock, "The cult of Heroes," HTKR 37 (1944) 141ff; above all K. Meuli, "Griechische Opferbräuche," in Phylllobolia, Festschrift P. von der Mühll (Basel 1946) 185ff [hereafter, Meuli], who established the connection of the Olympic sacrifice with the 'Schädel- und Langknochenopfer', on which cf. A. Vorbichler, Das Opfer auf den heute noch erreichbaren ältesten Stufen der Menschengeschichte (Müdling 1956), and H. Kuhn, Das Problem des Urmonothämus (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 1927]; Y. Rosen­garten, Le régime des offrandes dans la société sumérienne d'après les textes présargoniques de Lagash [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 Mycenaeans had quite different sacrificial rites, because they had no altars of the Greek type (C. G. Y avis, 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.460ff; ANEP nos.576/577), and that Semitic (Phoenician and Hebrew) sacrificial rites offer the closest parallels to Greek ritual (R. K. Y erkes, 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.

35 Schol. A in Il. 9.219=K. Lehrs, De Aristarchi studiis Homericis9 (Leipzig 1882) 82ff; Schol. in Od. 14.446; Eust. p.641.61; Frisk, GriechEtymWörterb. 1.699. The more comprehensive use of θυεύω is to be seen in the gloss Hsch. s.v. θεύω-επεύω: θυεύω δολοκτώματα.

36 On 'Olympic' and 'chthonic' sacrifice cf: Stengel, Kultusaltertilte 105ff; Ziehen, op.cit. (supra n.34); Meuli 201ff; the evidence for the contrast ἐναγιζεύω - θυεύω is most fully collected by F. Pfister, Der Reliquienkult im Altertum II (Giessen 1912) 460ff. In slaughtering, the throat of the animal was sometimes turned to the sky, sometimes pressed to the earth (H. v. Fritzte jdl 18 [1904] 58ff; Schol. in A.R.1. 387; Et.Gen. p.115 Miller=EM s.v. ἐπεύω). There are, besides the high 'Olympian' altars, altars low and large for holocausts, but there are also ἐπεύω just on the earth and βδῆραι 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 δολοκτώματα were
But as the words ἱερεῖον, ἱερεύειν 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.\(^{37}\) 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 χάνινοι (the evidence: Ziehen, RE zw.rr. IIIa [1929] 1674ff), and they occur also in cults of ‘Olympians’ (cf. Meuli 209ff); the Erchia-inscription has Δι Εὐαντει χανινοῦ δικαιαστός (SEG XXI [1965] no. 541 Γ 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 [Berlin 1894] 117 n.2). On the other hand, the sacrificial feast is quite common in the cult of heroes and χάνινοι (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. 5.13.2ff). People even ate from καθάρεια, cf. οἱ σφαλγχρειόντες Αθ. 9.4108; only Porphyry’s θεολογοι tried to eliminate this custom (Abst. 2.44). At the oath-sacrifices, however, the victim was not eaten (II. 19.266, Schol. in II. 3.310, Paus. 5.24.10, 3.20.9), nor were, of course, the σφάλγκα proper, slain on the battlefield 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—χανινοῦ οὗ ἄφθα—, for the normal sacrificial feast—mostly βοῦς—in honour of the god: inscription from Cos, SIG\(^5\) 1027 (Hercules); Paus. 3.19.3 (Hyacinthus-Apollon); Paus. 2.11.7 (Alexandros-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 εὐνούχειον (infra n.62), or οὗ φορᾶ, 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. 1136 c. schol.; Theopompus fr.70 (CAF I.751); SIG\(^4\) 1004, 1024, 1023, 1026, 1041, Sokolowski, Lois sacrées de l’Asie Mineure, no.34; L. Ziehen, Leges Graecorum sacræ et 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).

\(^{37}\) The most elaborate descriptions of sacrifice are in Homer, II. 1.447ff, 2.410ff, Od. 3.429ff, 14.414ff; Hes. Th. 535ff; most detailed is Pherecrates, fr.23 (CAF I.151): people burn τὸ μυρώ, τὴν ὀσφὺν κομηθ ὕλην, τὸν σπόνδυλον. Menander mentions ὀσφὺν ἄκραν and χολήν Dyss. 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 E 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 σφαλγχρειότητος, wine-libations, flute-player. The cup of Brygos (supra n.32) shows Iris, who came to fetch from the altar ὀσφὺν καὶ σπόνδυλον, attacked by satyrs. Most surprising survivals of sacrificial ritual were found until recent times among the Greeks of Pharsala, Cappadocia: there is a stone in the chapel opposite the altar, on which incense is burnt; it is called θάλη (<&λάρας); the victim is led three times round the θάλη, pelted with leaves and flowers, slaughtered in the chapel so that the θάλη may receive its blood; the minister (παμάς) receives the right thigh, the hide, head and feet of the victim; G. A. Megas, Ελληνικά κτηρια καὶ θιμα τῆς λαϊκῆς λατρείας (Athens 1956) 15f; he also refers to similar customs in Thrace (17: the victim is slaughtered εἰς βίδρον in the churchyard) and at Lesbos (17f). Cf. also Cook III.1168ff.
held; the pious congregation appropriates almost all the rest. The phrase ἐν θυσίαὶ τε καὶ εὐπαθεῖσαι 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, also is impossible in view of the ‘Promethean’ division. Certainly, there were θεοζέναι—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 μυρία 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. 2 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. 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

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38 Ἰφωνότο γάρ ὅσπερ οὐσινείωθαι τοῖς θεοῖς Schol. AT in II. 3.310; U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Der Glaube der Hellenen I (Berlin 1931) 287; M. P. Nilsson, Geschichte der griechischen Religion 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 μυρία really means thigh-bones is proved by Meuli 215ff.

39 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 ‘Urmonothemismus’, 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, 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. 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 the animal was led along. Many legends tell how the victims have pressed forward voluntarily to the sacrifice, θειλάτου βοὸς δίκην (Aeschylus,

40 The Greeks were fully aware of this: ζωῆς δὲ διὰ θυσίων ἀπαρχήμεθα Sallust 16.1. Iamblichus turns the same idea into magic: by destruction (ἀνάλυς) 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 Opfenden," A. Bertholet, Der Sinn des kultischen Opfers (AbhBerl no.2, 1942) 10.

41 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 IV [Tübingen 1956ff] 1640); for the Siberian Eukše, every slaughter of a reindeer is a sacrifice (A. Gahs, Festchrift P. W. Schmidt [Wien 1928] 253); and in India, some temples still are slaughter-houses (H. Zimmern, Eranos-Jb 6 [1938] 180).

42 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.
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. Then the participants wash their hands—their first common action—and the victim has its share, too: it is sprinkled with water; σείου, Trygaios exclaims (Aristophanes, Pax 960); the animal was supposed to express its consent by bowing its head, έκούσιον κατανεύει (see figure 5, Plate 5). The meaning of the οὐλαί has been much discussed, 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

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43 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=Anaitis); 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 r 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 Lucas 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 ll. 20.404. Cf. Paus. 4.32.3.

44 Cf. e.g. Ar. Pax 956ff, E. IA 1568ff; Eitreem, op.cit. (supra n.34) 7ff; supra n.37.

45 Delphic oracle in Proph. 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 435bca, 437a; SIG 1025.20 (Cos): θύετα δὲ (δ’ βοσκ.), αἱ μέγι κα υπο(κέφλει) τα ἱεραῖα; an Arabian parallel in Eitreem, op.cit. (supra n.34) 7 n.1. Cf. the stamnos Munich 2412=ERV 1036.5: the dithyrambic bull (supra n.23) bowing to drink water poured by Nike; Iraliotte 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); λινε δο το τογαντζει τα ζω ο ... .

46 “Dunkel” according to Meuli 265. Stengel concluded from the word προβάλλωντο that the οὐλοχύτα “originally” were thrown at the earth, ergo it was a gift to the earth-goddess (Kultusaltertümer 110); Ziehen used the term “cathartic,” Hermes 37 (1902) 39ff, RE XVIII (1939) 626f; Eitreem, op.cit. (supra n.34) 262, saw the equivalence to the καταχάσματα butt, 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 κατάρχεσθον Od. 3.445, cf. E. IA 953, 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 L62), 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 ll. 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 ll. 1.449, cf. Eust. I.,c., Schol. in Od. 3.441; he seems to have taken as a real religious rite the φιλοβολία Od. 12.357f: Eust. p.132.39f. In Pharsa the victim is pelted with χορτάρια κα κουλούνια, 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 ἰερεύς 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, though the Greek expression again is both clear and simple: this, too, is ἀρχεθαύα, 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, ὀλοίζουν (Odyssey 3.450); this is the Ἐλληνικὸν νόμωμα θυσίας βοίς (Aeschylus, Septem 269); this marks the emotional climax of the θυσία; this is ἰέζειν. The blood is caught in a vessel and poured out at the altar; 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—ὁμοθετή, 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 μυρία, the σπλάγχνα—heart, lungs, liver, kidneys—are roasted on the altar and eaten at once. 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

47 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 ἐμπαρχεθαύα 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 ἀρχεθαύα in another situation of violence.


49 The altars depicted on vase-paintings clearly show the traces of the αἰμόσεια τῶν βουμοῦς; cf. e.g. B. 11.111, Poll. 1.27, Eust. p.1476,41; ἀμύλιον ll. 3.4444; σφυρείων Poll. 10.65.

50 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 εʔβετίας Hes. Th. 541. The flute-player is often seen on vase-paintings (supra n.37); cf. Hdt. 1.132; Apollod. 3.15.7.4; παυμις, Sokolowski, Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure no.24 α.34 (Erythrai); the Paian of Iphigeneia, E. Λ. 1468ff. Flutes play the Καστορέων μέλος when the Spartans slaughter the οφάγια before battle, Χ. Λακ. 13.8, H.G 4.2.20; Plu. Lyc. 22.2.

51 Cf. Meuli 246f, 268ff. That the σπλάγχνα were roasted on the altar is shown by the name σπλάγχνων μετονοία (Plin. NH 22.44, 34.81) together with the pictorial tradition (Rizza, op.cit. [supra n.37]). On σπλάγχνων cf. Ar. Παξ 1115, Eup. fr.108 (CAF I.286), Ath. 9.410b; σπλάγχνων μετονοία D.H. 1.40.4; D.C. 37.30.3.
first of all. No wonder that \textit{συνπληγχυνεύουν} is the firmest foundation of fellowship. The shudder dies away in a feeling of physical well-being. When the \textit{συνπληγχυα} have been eaten and the fire has died down, the preparation begins for the main meal, which was generally of a quite secular character.\footnote{Cato, Agr. 50: \textit{ubi daps profanata comestaque erit; καθεγοσάνων δὲ ταῦτα . . .} Ath. 149c; on the exception, \textit{οδ φορά,} supra n.36.}

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 were resurrected.\footnote{Cf. Deubner, \textit{op.cit. (supra n.24)} 158ff. I cannot discuss here his somewhat hypercritical treatment of Porph. \textit{Abst.} 2.29f; Meuli 275f.} 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.

“\textit{Das Opfer ist die älteste Form der religiösen Handlung}” (Kühn, \textit{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
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 εἰπερίς 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 cooperation. 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\textsuperscript{54} 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 cooperation. So it is safe to say: in the center of

\textsuperscript{54} 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 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’; 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.

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.

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. 'Ierōn metēxein—the community is knit together in the common experience of shock and guilt. All participate, but one stands at their head, the sacrificer, ὥριον, 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 ὥριον claims and seems to reestablish e contrario his vitae potestas. There is a curious ambivalence in ἑσθαν which is already Indo-European: the same expression means 'to sacrifice on one's own behalf' and 'to be sacrificed'.\textsuperscript{57} 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,\textsuperscript{58} be it Isaac or Iphigenia. 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

\textsuperscript{57} ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυματῳ τὸδε μέλος Α. Ευ. 328f, τεθυματὸς ἐπίγγανεν Xen HG. 5.1.18.

also knows the horrible converse, the sacrificial slaughter of a man instead of an animal; at the έστια 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 σφάγεια 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 σφάγεια; and they were. On one occasion, even Caesar sacrificed insurgents. The Catilinarians were supposed to have sealed their conspiracy by eating human σπλάγχνα. Classical Rome betrays an almost palaeolithic imagination.

III

Perhaps the larger context has made clearer what the significance of the sacrifice of a τρέψις 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. The ancient texts call the goat the enemy of Dionysus,

59 D.C. 43.24.4, connected with the equus-October-sacrifice by G. Wissowa, Religion und Kultus der Römer² (München 1912) 421 n.2. Bacchides, general of Antiochus IV, is said to have 'sacrificed' prisoners, ἐδόσεσεν εἰς τὸ φρέσκος LXX 1 Ma. 7.19. On the analogies of capital punishment and sacrifice, K. v. Amira, Die germanischen Todesstrafen (AbhMünchen 1922).

60 Sallust, Cat. 22; D.C. 37.30.3.

61 That Dionysus is killed as a goat is a theory advanced esp. by Cook and Nilsson (supra n.2). Dionysus is called Ἔρφος in Sparta (Hsch. εἰραφώς), in myth he was transformed into an Ἑρφός (Apollod. 3.4.3); but Ἑρφός is not τρέψις (supra n.27). The theory of the Eniautos-Daimon was developed by J. Harrison in cooperation with F. M. Cornford and G. Murray, in Themis² (Cambridge 1927) 331ff, 341ff. It is accepted, with modifications, by Webster (128f; BullInstClassStud 5 [1958] 43ff); criticism in Pickard-Cambridge, Dith.¹ 185ff; Else, Origin 27f. The oriental texts are interpreted according to the "seasonal pattern" by Th. Gaster, Thespis² (New York 1961). In fact, ἑναυρός 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 τραγῳδοί are said to have received a wine-skin full of wine—δοκεί 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. In the center of the developed tragedy, ἀκμὴν πρὸς αὐτὴν ἡμέρης τραγῳδίας (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. 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.  

62 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.


64 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. p.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. The τραγῳδοὶ 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 τραγῳδοὶ are originally a troop of masked men who have to perform the sacrifice of the τραγὸς 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 τραγῳδία, all combined in the basic situation of sacrifice: man face to face with death.

We may ask why it was τραγῳδία in particular which became tragedy, not a hypothetical *βωμία or *κρωμία. 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 αὐτοσχεδιάζοντας; 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

---G.R.B.S.---
altar. This was the reason why τραγῳδία could come to depict the 'tragic' condition humaine.

Τραγῳδία 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, θύεων. 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, ἑρείς θανόντων (25), whereas Aegisthus is slain by Orestes with the sacrificial knife at the sacrifice. What is more general and more important: any sort of killing in tragedy may be termed θύεων as early as Aeschylus, and the intoxication of killing is called βακχεύεων. 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. The situation of the sacrifice may be just the point where heroic myth and Dionysiac τραγῳδία meet each other.

66 E. El. 785ff, 816, 838. Clytaemestra, too, arrives for sacrifice, 1125; 1132, 1142; afterwards Orestes says: κατηρράμισ (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. Polyphonies 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 Ἀθηναίς ἐν θυαίαις (Carm.Pop. 895 Page).

67 Cf. E. HF 451 (with Wilamowitz ad loc.): Megara, returning towards the altar which failed to protect her, asks for the ἑρείς, the οφαγεύς. Heracles himself is to accomplish the sacrifice (922ff; 925.995), cf. infra n.69. S. El. 1422f: φοινίκα δὲ χεὶρ στάζει θυλῆς Ἄρεος . . . The metaphorical use of θύεων 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 Philoctetus (fr.823 Page), cf. Schol. A. in II. 9.219. On βακχεύεων see A. Septem 498, E. Hec. 1077, HF 1119, Or. 1493. Orestes as gravis saceros, Accius, Erigone fr.55 Ribbeck.

68 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, lon 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-Quiche, übertragen und eingeleitet von E. W. Palm (Frankfurt 1961): here the whole play is an ἄρχεοθαῖα 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, ἤμέρες ταυροσφάγας (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 Cenaeum 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 ἐδόειτο φλόξ αἰματηρά (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 ὀψετήρα. The myth of the death of Heracles is based on a sacrifice, a holocaust offered on Mount Oeta; the site of the ὀψετήρα has been excavated. Nilsson interprets the custom as an annual fire ("Jahresfeuer"), although the literary evidence on this festival states that it was penteteric. 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):
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 ἐναγιζεῖν, 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.71

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.

71 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. αἰγός τρόπον; Zen.Athous 2.30 p.361.12ff Miller (abridged in App.Prov. 4.16); by mistake, Zenobius and Appendix Proverbiorum have οἷς instead of αἷς; Markellos in Eus. Adv.Marc. 1.3 (ed. Klostermann [Berlin 1906] fr.125). Markellos says: φασὶν γὰρ Μηδείαν ἐν Κορίνθῳ τὰ τέκνα ἀποκτείνασαν κατακρύβας τὴν μάχαιραν αὐτῶθι τοὺς δὲ Κορινθίους κατὰ χρησμὸν αὐτοῖς δοθέντα αἶγα μείλαιαν ἐναγιζόντας ἀπορεῖν μαχαιρας· τὴν δὲ αἶγα σκάλλουσαν τῷ ποδὶ τὴν Μηδείας ἀνεφέρειν μάχαιραν. Zenobius has substantially the same, but is more explicit on the rite: . . . οἱ δὲ Κορινθιοὶ θυσίας ἀνὰ πὰν ἔτος διὰ τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ παρθένων ὀσφαντος ζῆσῶν τοίς παρθένως μειλαίαις τὸ ἐξής ἐν τῷ ιερῷ τοῦ δὲ ἔτους περιπλάνως οἱ κληρονόμοις νέοι θύουσαν, ἢ δὲ οἷς . . . ἀνακρέουσε τὸ ξίφος. The ‘comedy of innocence’ is particularly apparent in Photios: οἱ τὴν παροχὴν μεμισθασμένοι γῆ κρύβατο τὴν μάχαιραν ἐκστίτοτο ἐπιπλεύσας . . . . (=Paus.Gr. ed. Erbse η 2) . . . μετὰ τὸ ἐναγιζόντα τὴν μάχαιραν ἀποκτείνουσαν, τῷ δὲ ἐξῆς ἔτει τὸ μέλλον πάλιν ἐναγιζόταται ιερεῖον . . . (=Paus.Gr. ed. Erbse α 42; cf. Zen. Par. 1.27, Hsch. s.v. αἷς αἶγα, Suid. αι 235 etc.). It is not quite clear whether the knife was left in the soil for the whole year or 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 θυμα 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,” οπενδομένα θυσίαν ἐτέραν (151). So Agamemnon becomes the “sacrificer” of his own daughter, ἔτελα δ’ ὧν θυτήρ γενέσθαι θυατέρος (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 οἰκείας (1056f). Yet instead of the smell of sacrifice, Cassandra scents murder (1309f). She calls for ὀλολυγή (1118) at the unprecedented θυμα which is going to happen here: he who commits it deserves lapidation. 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, τέλον 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 τὸδε μέλος (Eumenides 329ff, cf. 305) runs the binding-song.

This again is more than a mere metaphor, a stylistic ornament. Agamemnon dies ὅς τίς τε κατέκτανε βοῶν ἐπὶ φάτη (Odyssey 4.535,

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72 On θυμα λεύσιμον see E. Fraenkel (Oxford 1950) ad loc.; but he does not quote the decisive parallel from sacrificial ritual, the sacrifice to Dionysus in Tenedus, Ael. NA 12.34: δὲ μὴν παντάζας αὐτῷ (the calf) τῷ πελέκει ἄλυμος βάλλεται τῇ ὀσίᾳ καὶ ἔστε ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν φεύγει. Cf. the aition for the bull-sacrifice in Lindos, Philostr. Im. 2.24; the rite of mummmification, 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, βουφόνα. 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 ταύρος, caught in the "black-horned device," the net.78 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—βουφόνα—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 βουφόνας. 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 λεβάμος. Incidentally, Pausanias mentions ἀπόρρητον θυσία (2.17.1) at the Heraion.74 They may have preceded the

78 Aeschylus associates the net with fishing, 1382, 1432, but ἄγρευμα θηρὸς 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.

74 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—Danaïs, Phoronis, Aigimios, Hesiodean 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.3fDrachmann; 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, ARV7 579.84=Cook III.633, ARV7 1409.9=Cook 1.460. 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 fr 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 τραγῳδία. 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 τραγῳδία.

90), the cult devoted to Argos (Varro in Aug. Civ. 18.6) must therefore originally have dealt with the Panoptes. Ζεὺς πασορνής A. Eu. 1045, cf. Pселлер/Роберт, op.cit. 1 (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 βουφώνος Ηυμν.Мерц. 436. The symbolic lapidation of Hermes for slaying Argos: Xanthos, FGrHist 765 v 29, Antikleides, FGrHist 140 v 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 'bombagiros' 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?