Myesis, Telete, and Mysteria

Robert M. Simms

The Eleusinian Mysteries of Demeter and Kore comprised two distinct rites collectively termed τελετή: the Lesser Mysteries in Anthesterion and the Greater in Boedromion. The former served as a preparation—if never quite a prerequisite—for the latter. Initiation in the Mysteries likewise comprised two degrees: μύης and ἐποπτεία, the former required for the latter (Plut. Dem. 26). The ἐποπτεία is known to have been a distinct rite conducted in Boedromion at the Greater Mysteries (Plut. Dem. 26), while myesis was generally understood as ‘initiation’ in general, i.e., the total experience of a mystēs at the Lesser and Greater Mysteries. Some scholars, however, have sought to restrict its meaning. H. Pringsheim, the most influential of these, argued that myesis was a rite distinct from the telete of the mysteria, constituting a “pre-initiation” (Einweihung) conducted individually by members of the two leading priestly gene at Eleusis, the Eumolpidai and Kerykes, at either Athens or Eleusis, and at any time of year. This separation of myesis and mysteria has been generally accepted, but without, I think, the close scrutiny it warrants.

Pringsheim (40ff) drew his evidence from the fifth and fourth centuries, but appears to have believed that his thesis applied to the entire history of the cult. Kevin Clinton (supra n.1: 13 n.15), on the other hand, while concurring with Pringsheim for the

1 K. Clinton, *The Sacred Officials of the Eleusinian Mysteries* (=TAPS N.S. 64.3 [Philadelphia 1974]) 13 n.13. While the Lesser Mysteries clearly looked towards the Greater as a purification (Σ Ar. Plut. 845; cf. Polyaen. Strat. 5.17), there is no evidence that they were a formal prerequisite; and the vast disparity between the receipts from the Greater and Lesser Mysteries in 408/7 (4,399 2/3 vs 45 1/6 drachmas: IG I 1386.144ff) indicates that the latter could be very sparsely attended.

2 See P. Roussel, *BCH* 54 (1930) 53–67, for a conspectus.


two earlier centuries, has recognized that the thesis cannot be maintained for the years after 300. I shall, accordingly, take Pringsheim’s thesis with Clinton’s restriction as the current interpretation to be tested.

Pringsheim’s chief epigraphical evidence is a single inscription, IG I² 6 (before 460) c.40–46:

40 [.]β[.....]εν τὸν [ὁ]ρφ[ανὸν ......]
[.] τὸς ὀρφανὸς παῖ[δας καὶ τὸς]
[μ]ὐστας ἱεκάστῳ l[= [........]
[τ]ὸς μὐστας τὸς Ἑλε[υσίνι ...]
[.]ένος ἐν τῇ αὐλή[τι [ἐντὸς τὸ h] -
45 [.]ερ[δ], τὸς δὲ ἐν ἀστεὶ [.......]
[.] ἐν τῇ Ἑλευσινίῳ. [vac.]

A succession of restored texts, prematurely accepted as valid, has led to sweeping conclusions. Kirchner’s version, for example (IG I² 6 c.123–29), decrees a monthly gathering of mystai at Athens and Eleusis for myesis:

τὸς ὀρφανὸς h[i l[= [...... τὸς μ].]
125 υστας. ἱεκάστο με[νός (σ)υνάγεν]
[τ]ὸς μὐστας τὸς Ἑλε[υσίνι μυο]-
[μ]ένος ἐν τῇ αὐλὴ[τι [τῇ πρὸ τῷ]
[.]ερ[δ], τὸς δὲ ἐν ἀστεὶ [μυομένο]-
κ ἐν τῇ Ἑλευσινίῳ.

Other versions specify such actions as a monthly enrollment of mystai by the Eumolpidai,⁵ a sacrifice by the mystai before (?) their myesis in the hieron court or Eleusinion, and proteleia (hiera) by mystai.⁶ These versions differ both in their restorations and in their authors’ identification of letters on the stone; as sources for the nature of myesis, they are useless.⁷

---

⁵ B. Merritt, Hesperia 15 (1946) 253, c.38–46.
⁶ B. Merritt, Hesperia 14 (1945) 77, c.40–46; Sokolowski, LSCGS 3 c.36–42.
⁷ Crucial to these versions is the restoration μυομένος in lines 126f and 128f Kirchner. Pringsheim and others have taken this closely with ἐν τῇ αὐλή (127) and ἐν τῇ Ἑλευσινίῳ (129), thus localizing myesis (on demand) in these two places, and presumably distinguishing it from the mysteria. The passage need not, however, be read in this way: μυομένος could be understood with Ἑλευσινί (126) and ἐν ἀστεί (128), rather than with the court and Eleusinion, while the latter might specify where a related action, not myesis itself, is to
Our only recourse, in the case of so intractable a document, is a bare version limited to verifiable readings and defensible restorations, such as that of \( \text{I}^3 \) 6 above. Let us see what modest—but incontestible—conclusions it yields.

First, there were mystai\(^8\) at Athens and Eleusis (\( \mu\upsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\varsigma \tau\omicron\varsigma \ \acute{\epsilon} \ell\epsilon\nu[\upsilon\omicron \iota \nu] \ ... \ \tau\omicron\varsigma \ \delta\varepsilon \ \acute{\epsilon} \nu \ \acute{o}\varsigma\epsilon\tau\iota\varsigma \)). But this hardly calls for the invention of new rites or ceremonies. We already know of one occasion for the presence of mystai at Eleusis: the Greater Mysteries in Boedromion; and of two occasions for a gathering at Athens: the Athenian portion of the Greater Mysteries (15–18 Boedromion) and, more appropriately, the Lesser Mysteries at Agrai in Anthesterion.\(^9\) It is also clear that the mystai at Eleusis had something to do with the hieron court, as did those at Athens with the city Eleusinion. This, too, is congruent with the program of the Greater Mysteries;\(^{10}\) while even the Mysteries at Agrai can certainly have afforded some rôle, albeit minor, to the Eleusinion in the city.\(^{11}\)

---

\(^{8}\) The term \( \mu\upsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\varsigma \) signified either an initiate or—as here—an initiand, pace LSJ s.v.; W. Burkert, Ancient Mystery Cults (Cambridge [Mass.] 1987) 136 n.33.

\(^{9}\) Despite the location of Agrai outside the Athenian city wall (\( \acute{\epsilon} \xi \omega \ \tau\omicron \varsigma \ \pi\omicron\ell\epsilon\omicron\omicron\varsigma \varsigma \), Anecd. Bekk. 334.11; \( \pi\omicron\ \tau\omicron\varsigma \ \pi\omicron\ell\epsilon\omicron\omicron\varsigma \varsigma \), Steph. Byz. s.v. "\( \acute{\alpha} \gamma\rho\alpha\varsigma \) καὶ "\( \acute{\alpha} \gamma\rho\alpha\varsigma \)"), it was nonetheless \( \acute{\epsilon} \nu \ \acute{o}\varsigma\epsilon\tau\iota\varsigma \) for the demesmen of Erchia: BCH 87 (1963) 606 A.38f [SEG XXI 541; Sokolowski, LSCG 18]. For the dates of the Mysteries see J. D. Mikalson, The Sacred and Civil Calendar of the Athenian Year (Princeton 1975) 65 (Greater), 120f (Lesser).

\(^{10}\) For the city Eleusinion in the program of the Greater Mysteries see G. Mylonas, Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries (Princeton 1961) 246ff with n.120.

\(^{11}\) Duris of Samos (FGrHist 76\( \upsilon \)13=Ath. 253\( \delta \)-f) quotes from an ode stating that Demeter “is coming to perform the sacred mysteries of Kore” (\( \chi\acute{\eta} \ \mu\epsilon\nu \ \tau\omicron \ \sigma\epsilon\mu\omicron\nu\alpha \ \tau\omicron\varsigma \ \Kappa\omicron\rho\omicron\varsigma \ \mu\omicron\sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma\alpha \ \acute{\epsilon}\acute{\rho}\chi\acute{\epsilon}\theta\upsilon \ \iota\nu\alpha \ \pi\omicron\nu\omicron\sigma\iota\varsigma\)). If “the mysteries of Kore” were those at Agrai (Σ Ar. Plut. 845), then one wonders from where Demeter is coming (travel would of course be unnecessary for the local Demeter of Agrai: Anecd. Bekk. 334.11 s.v. "\( \acute{\alpha} \gamma\rho\alpha\varsigma \)"). I suggest that the Demeter to whom the ode
unfortunately lacunose passage can, as it stands, be reasonably interpreted to refer to attested rites, it therefore seems prudent and economical to avoid building new hypotheses upon its shaky foundations.

The same considerations apply also to a second passage from the same inscription, c.26–31:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Κέρυκας} & \text{ δὲ μυ[έν ......]} \\
[\ldots] & \text{μύστας} \text{ ἡκαστὸν [καὶ Εὐμο]-} \\
[\lambdaπίδ]ας & [κατὰ τα[ύ]τα· ἐ[.......]} \\
[\ldots] & \text{πλεῖος} \text{ εὐθύνεωθα[ι χιλιάς]-} \\
30 & \text{[τ] δρα[χ]μέσι· μὲν δὲ b [οί ἀν hεβ]-} \\
& \text{δοι Κερύκον καὶ Εὐ[μολπίδον·]} \\
\end{align*}
\]

This passage clearly makes an important point: the Kerykes and Eumolpidai had the power of practicing \textit{myesis}. Through restoration it has also been made to refer to \textit{individual myesis}, as in Merritt’s 1945 version (\textit{supra} n.6):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Κέρυκας} & \text{ δὲ μυ[έν τὸς νέ]-} \\
[ο]ς & \text{μύστας} \text{ ἡκαστὸν [καὶ Εὐμο]-} \\
[\lambdaπίδ]ας & \text{κατὰ τα[ύ]τα· ἐ[ἀν δὲ κατ]} \\
& \text{ἀ πλέθος, εὐθύνεωθα[ι κτλ.} \\
\end{align*}
\]

The reading \textit{πλέθος} in line 29, however, was corrected to \textit{πλεῖος} by Merritt in 1946. Further, Clinton has reported that he could not see a \textit{sigma} before \textit{μύστας} in line 27.\textsuperscript{12} These two alterations have opened new possibilities for restoration that either do not

\textsuperscript{12} Merritt (\textit{supra} n.5) 251; Clinton (\textit{supra} n.1) 11, line 27 with note \textit{ad loc}.

\textit{MYESIS, TELETE, AND MYSTERIA}

\textsuperscript{refers is Demeter \textit{Eleusinia}}, and that the visitation in question is parallel to that attested for the beginning of the Greater Mysteries, when the Éleusinian \textit{hiera}, having been carried in procession from Eleusis to Athens, were deposited in the city Eleusinion and their presence announced to the priestess of Athena Polias by the \textit{φαιδοντις} τοιν \textit{θεοῖν} (\textit{IG} II\textsuperscript{2} 1078.13–18). As this official was evidently the caretaker of the goddesses’ statues at Eleusis (Mylonas \textit{supra} n.10) 235f with n.58), it is likely that some representations or tokens of Demeter and Kore were among the \textit{hiera} carried to Athens (\textit{cf.} Farnell, \textit{Cults} III 165). Since the priesthood of Eleusis officiated at the Lesser as well as the Greater Mysteries (\textit{IG} I\textsuperscript{3} 6 269.9–14), it is possible that on both occasions representations or tokens of Demeter \textit{Eleusinia} were brought from Eleusis and deposited in the city Eleusinion.
involve or actually contradict individual myesis. The first results in a reference not to the number of mystai but to the costs of myesis. Since this face of the stone elsewhere concerns the fees to be received from mystai by the various Eleusinian sacred officials, and since lines 20ff begin this specification for the Eumolpidai and Kerykes (E[v]μ[ολπίδ]ας καὶ Kέρ[v]κας λαμβάν[εν παρὰ] τὸ μύστ[o ἢ]εκάστο πέν[τε ὀβολῶς], lines 26f may be restored Ἐκρύκας δὲ μῦ[εν τόσοῦτο (=τοσοῦτο)] μύστας ἕκαστον, as a recapitulation of the amount to be received per head (ἕκαστον). This recapitulation could also introduce a prohibition on the gene from exacting more money than specified: that is, πλεῖος in 29 may refer to πλεῖος ὀβελός, not μύστας. In this case, ἕκαστον in 27 would no more suggest individual initiation by a given Eumolpid or Keryx than does the same word in lines 20ff above imply individual attention to mystai, beyond the simple collection of fees. Both uses would serve an accounting function only, and nothing would be implied about individual or group myesis.

A second possibility for restoration in these lines assumes that they do indeed refer to the number of mystai per Eumolpid or Keryx, but allows this number to exceed one. The lacuna in 26f may be replaced by a number: the options are (for completeness) [καθ’ ἕκας], [κατὰ δύο], [καθ’ ἑκς], [κατ’ ὀκτὸ], [ἕνδεκα], and [ἑκατόν] (ἕκαστον in 27 would then be taken with Ἐκρύκας as subject). This possibility, of course, explicitly contradicts any “prohibition of group myesis.”

Two fourth-century Eleusinian epistatai accounts were also used in Pringsheim’s argument. IG II² 1673 (ca 327/6) contains

---

13 These possibilities were first raised by M. Jameson ap. N. J. Richardson, The Homeric Hymn to Demeter (Oxford 1974) 21 n.1 (cf. his apparatus to IG I² pp.11f).

14 In IG II² 1673 (ca 327/6; see discussion infra) the epistatai Ἐλευσινὸθεν record their myesis of five public slaves (lines 24f), appending also the total cost: ἀνηλόσαμε[ν ΓΔΠ ——]. Clinton ad loc. (supra n.4: 91) calls this “a clear violation” of the prohibition on group myesis. Even if there were such a prohibition, I do not agree: whatever the meaning of μύστας here (see below), the mere fact that the men were accounted as a group hardly requires that they underwent myesis as a group (nor, for that matter, is it even clear that the expenditure was given as a lump sum: the lacuna could just as well contain e.g. [ν ΔΠ ἕκαστῳ or καθ’ ἄνθρωπῳ]. But there is, as argued supra, still greater cause for doubt that these lines violated a prohibition on group myesis, namely, the likelihood that there was in fact no such prohibition.
an apparent sequence: (24) [τ]ῷν δημοσίων ἐμυόσαμεν πέντε ἄνδρας τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἀνακαθαίροντας; (42) ἐν τοῖς μυστήριοις; (44) μετὰ μυστήριο. Pringsheim (40) took this myesis of five public slaves, their cleansing within the hieron, and some building activities in subsequent lines as preparations for the mysteria in line 42—and thus prior to them. But this apparent priority of myesis to mysteria is illusory, as the inscription as a whole is out of order: for example, activities for Metageitnion, the month before that of the Mysteries, are not listed until line 64, while some ancillary costs of the slaves' myesis in line 24 are similarly delayed until line 62.

Pringsheim’s second inscription is IG II² 1672 (ca 329/8). This account does appear to proceed in order by prytany, and in line 207 under the sixth prytany (3 Gamelion–8 Anthesterion) we find μύησις δυνίν τῶν δημοσίων: ΔΔΔ. Neither of the two regular Mysteries fell within this period: the Lesser Mysteries, however, were observed soon afterward, and Richardson has pointed out that in line 204 our inscription also lists expenses for the Choes of the Anthesteria (12 Anthesterion) under the sixth prytany. The explanation, of course, is that this inscription, like the previous one, is first and foremost an account of expenditures, not events: the actual outlay for the Choes was clearly made prior to the festival, and the same may well have been true of the expense for myesis, which can then be associated with the Mysteries later in Anthesterion.

Thus the epigraphical support for Pringsheim’s thesis is far from convincing. But what of the literary evidence? A key passage is Plutarch’s famous account of the initiation of Demetrius Poliorcetes (Dem. 26):

τότε δ’ οὖν ἀναξιευγνών εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας (Δημήτριος) ἔγραψεν, ὅτι βουλεύεται παραγενόμενος εὐθὺς μυηθῆναι καὶ τὴν τελετὴν ἀπαγαγόν ἀπὸ τῶν μικρῶν ἄχρι τῶν ἑποπτικῶν παραλαβεῖν. τούτο δ’ οὖν θεμίτων ἣν οὐδὲ γεγονὸς πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ τὰ μικρὰ τοῦ Ἀνθεστηρίων ἔτελεύτηκα, τὰ δὲ μεγάλα τοῦ Βοσκομιδῶν· ἐκκατεροῦ ἄνθρωπον ἀπὸ τῶν μεγάλων ἐνεπτῦσεν διαιτήσεως, ἀναγνωσθέντων δὲ τῶν γραμμάτων... Στρατοκλέους γνώμην εἰπόντος, Ἀνθεστηρίων τὸν Μουννυχίων ψηφισαμένους καλεῖν καὶ νομίζειν, ἔτελεύτηκα τῷ Δημήτριῳ τὰ πρῶτα Ἀγγέλων· καὶ μετὰ ταύτα

15 Richardson (supra n.13) 21 n.2. The Eleusinia are dated with the period 20–26 Anthesterion: Mikalson (supra n.9) 120f.
Pringsheim distinguished μνηθήναι in these lines from τήν τελετήν ἀπασαν, and took this as proof of a separation of myesis from telete. Let us look more closely at the passage. Demetrius demanded myesis “immediately” (εὐθὺς) on his arrival. But why should this be necessary if myesis were normally available at any time? This sentence, in fact, sets up a weak hendiadys: εὐθὺς gives the time, while τὴν ... παραλαβεῖν gives the degree or extent, of the myesis desired. Nor is there any subsequent account of Demetrius being accommodated with a pre-initiation followed by telete: the Athenians’ only response to Demetrius’ demand for myesis was to reschedule the Mysteries.

Even if there were no contrary evidence, the material above would lend dubious support at best to the separation of myesis and mysteria even before 300: but there is evidence, and plenty of it, against any such separation. Given that μυεῖν, μύησις, and μυστήρια are etymologically cognate, one would expect them to reflect a single entity ab initio.

Our earliest source is Herodotus 8.65, referring to the mysteria: τὴν ... ὅρθων ταύτην ... ἀγούσι Ἀθηναίοι ἀνά πάντα ἔσας τῇ Μητρὶ καὶ τῇ Κόρῃ, καὶ συνάν τε ὁ βουλόμενος ... μυεῖται. This is very close to an explicit linking of myesis and mysteria. Early in the fourth century, Andocides (De Myst. 11) quotes Pythonicus, Alcibiades’ accuser, as offering to prove that a parody of the Mysteries had taken place by producing a witness who ἀμύητος ὃν ἐρεῖ τὰ μυστήρια: one having experienced μύησις, then, would know the content of the mysteria. On the same occasion, [Lysias] (In Andoc. 51) attacks Andocides, claiming that οὗτος γὰρ ἐνδίκη στολῆν μυοῦμενος τὰ ἱερὰ ἐπεδείκνυ τοῖς ἀμύητοις καὶ εἶπε τῇ φωνῇ τὰ ἀπόρρητα. This looks superficially as though a preliminary stage of μύησις was prerequisite for seeing the hiera in the Mysteries: but here the emphasis is not on the ἀμύητοι, but on the unqualified person acting as “Hierophant”: presumably the ἀμύητοι were not amiss in viewing the hiera and hearing the aporrheta, but in viewing and hearing at the hands of an imposter. This is exactly the point of Diogenes Laertius’ well-known report of the exchange between Theodorus and the the Hierophant Euryclides (2.101):
MYESIS, TELETE, AND MYSTERIA

"λέγε μοι," ἐφη (ὁ Θεόδωρος), "Εὐρυκλείδη, τίνες εἰσίν οἱ ἀσε-βοῦντες περὶ τὰ μυστήρια;" εἰπόντος δὲ ἐκείνου, "οἱ τούς ἀμύντοις αὐτὰ ἐκφέροντες, "ἀσεβεῖς ἀρα," ἐφη, "καὶ σὺ, τοὺς ἀμύντοις διηγοῦμενος."

That is, the *mysteria* are regularly shown to ἀμύντοι, those who are being initiated—the important distinction being by whom; and again, *myesis* does not precede *mysteria*. Later in the fourth century, Plato (Gorg. 497c) makes Socrates say εὐδαίμων εἶ, ὥς Καλλίκλεις, ὧτι τὰ μεγάλα (μυστήρια) μεμύησαν πρὶν τὰ σμικρά. Here too τὸ μυεῖσθαι is identified with τὰ μυστήρια. Still more explicit is [Dem.] *In Neaeram* 21:

Ἀυσίας ... ἐβουλήθη πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους ἀναλώμασιν ὡς ἀνήλισκεν εἰς αὐτῆς καὶ μυῆσαι (τὴν Μετάνειραν), ἡγούμενος ... ὡς ἐν τῇ τὴν ἐορτὴν καὶ τὰ μυστήρια ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ἀναλώσῃ, πρὸς αὐτῆς τὴν ἀνθρωπὸν χάριν καταθήσεσθαι, ἐδεήθη ὡς τῆς Νικαρέτης ἐλθεῖν εἰς τὰ μυστήρια ἀγούσαν τὴν Μετάνειραν, ἵνα μυηθῆ, καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπέσχετο μυῆσειν.

In these lines the singular and exclusive connection of μύη-σις/μυεῖν with τὴν ἐορτὴν/τὰ μυστήρια is unmistakable: this, Metaneira's first experience of initiation, is no "pre-initiation" ceremony, but the Mysteries themselves, the ἐορτή.

After the fourth century countless sources use *myesis* and its cognates in intimate connection with *telete* and the annual *mysteria*: one example is Σ Soph. OC 1053: τινὲς δὲ φασί καὶ τὸν Εὐμολπὸν ἐφείν τὴν μύησιν τὴν συντελομένην κατ᾽ ἐνιαυτὸν ἐν Ἑλευσίνι Δήμητρι καὶ Κόρη. But the identity of *myesis* and *mysteria* is scarcely less clear for the earlier period as well. Thus I believe that it is safe to reject the notion of any free-floating *myesis—"pre-initiation" separate from the Eleusinian Mysteries. On the contrary, *myesis* formed the very core of these Mysteries—as the respective names clearly indicate.

One point now remains to be clarified. We observed above that IG I3 6 c.26–31 does grant to the Eumolpidai and Kerykes the right to perform *myesis*. This right is also implied about a century later (ca 367–348) in a law concerning the Mysteries:16 ἕαν δὲ τις μνη[τ Ε]ὑμολ[πιδῶν ἦ Κηρύκων οὐκ ὧν ε]ἰδώς, ἤ ἕαν προσάγη τις μυησόμε[νον. I have argued above that *myesis* was conducted exclusively at the *mysteria*, and have implied that this

---

was the province of the Hierophant and other sacred officials of the festival. What power of myesis, then, belonged to every member of the Eumolpidai and Kerykes without distinction? To answer this we need to survey the range of meanings of μυέιν. Although most occurrences of this word have the simple denotation ‘initiate’, we find one noteworthy exception. In the passage already cited from In Neaeram 21, Lysias wishes to “initiate” (μυησοι) his mistress Metaneira. Now, there is no evidence whatever that the ‘initiator’ was a member of the Eumolpidai or Kerykes, and in any case his myesis is clearly an item of expense (προς τοις ἄλλοις ἀναλώμασιν οίς ἀνήλισκεν), not of ritual. Thus in the fourth century, and probably earlier still, μυέιν could have the connotation ‘pay/arrange for, or contribute to, one’s myesis.’

This, I think, is the key for understanding μυέιν as applied to the Kerykes and Eumolpidai. Members of these gene were charged with a highly significant contribution to myesis: that contribution, I suggest, which has long been associated with the office of mystagogos. Mystagogoi evidently conducted the indoctrination of mystai early in the Mysteries which would prepare them for the confusing and perhaps frightening events to come, then accompanied their charges through much of the ceremony.

---

17 "Presentation for myesis": Roussel (supra n.2) 55. The English verb ‘marry’ illustrates the principle: the cleric or justice of the peace marries man and woman, but woman ‘marries’ man, and vice versa, and father ‘marries’ (off) child. Two other possible cases of μυέιν as ‘pay or arrange for myesis’ appear in IG II 2 1672.207, and 1673.24 (supra 181 and n.14): for the latter, cf. Clinton (supra n.4). A doubtful instance is Andocides De Myst. 132: ἀλλὰ γὰρ, ὦ ἄνδρες, διὰ τί ποτε τοίς ἐμαὶ νυν ἐπειθεμένους ... τρία μὲν ἐτη ἐπιδημῶν καὶ ἵκον ἐκ Κύπρου οὖν ἀσεβεῖν ἐδόκουν αὐτοῖς, μοῦν μὲν Ἀ... (τὸν) Δελφόν, ἔτι δὲ ἄλλους ἔξους ἔμαυτοῦ.... If Andocides was in a fact a member of Kerykes ([Plut.] Vit. Andoc.; J. Toepffer, Attische Genealogie [Berlin 1889] 83ff. contra, F. Blass, Die attische Beredsamkeit I [Leipzig 1887] 281 n.2; Wilamowitz, Aristoteles und Athen [Berlin 1893] II 74 n.5; J. K. Davies, Athenian Propertied Families [Oxford 1971] 27), then the myesis he conducts here is that authorized in IG 1 3, etc., for members of the two gene. If not, then his myesis will, as above, take the connotation ‘arrange for initiation’ (“sponsoring ... for initiation”: Richardson [supra n.13] 21).

18 See O. Kern, RE 16 (1935) 1209.

19 Hesych. s.v. μυησταγωγός; Liban. Decl. 13.19; Plut. Alc. 34.6. Livy (31.14.7f) writes of two uninitiated Acharnanian youths who wandered into the bieron at Eleusis late in the telete and gave themselves away by their ignorant ques-
pidai and Kerykes is an old suggestion of Foucart\textsuperscript{20} that warrants reconsideration. Though it has no explicit attestation,\textsuperscript{21} the idea provides a reasonable and economical link between two well-known Eleusinian institutions, answering such long-standing questions as “Who were the mystagogoi?”

Moreover, the evidence supposed to support \textit{myesis} (on demand) can apply, \textit{pari passu}, to \textit{mystagogia}. The inscription quoted above, for example, comprises two acts: leading a \textit{mystes} to a Eumolpid or Keryx for \textit{myesis} (ἐὰν προσάγῃ τις μυστηριών), and then the actual \textit{myesis} (ἐὰν δὲ τις μυ[η ...]. Clinton (\textit{supra} n.16: 279) comments: “A prospective initiate ... had somehow, in the days before the Mysteries, to find someone who could give him \textit{myesis}, and he usually had to pay for this service.... There were men posing as members of either of these clans, and others were ready to introduce people to the imposters.” Exactly the same could reasonably be said with \textit{mystagogia} replacing \textit{myesis}: that is, mystagogoi also must have been qualified personnel, had somehow to be found by the \textit{mystai} before the \textit{telete}, and must have received pay—creating, 

\textit{emphasis of others (\textit{absurde quaedam percutanties)}: at least part of the crucial knowledge of the \textit{mystai} around them will have been owed to \textit{mystagogoi}.}

\textsuperscript{20} P. Foucart, \textit{Les Grands Mystères d’Éleusis} (Paris 1900) 281–84; Farnell, \textit{Cults III} 161 n.b; Kern (\textit{supra} n.18).

\textsuperscript{21} The one Attic inscription that mentions \textit{mystagogoi} (J. H. Oliver, \textit{Hesperia} 10 [1941] 65–72 no. 31 [Sokolowski, \textit{LSCGS} 15]: first century B.C.) does name the two \textit{gene} (line 22) in a section containing frequent references to \textit{mystagogoi} (18, 25, 35, 41). The immediate context of the reference is as follows (lines 17–25 Sokolowski):

\textit{The officials who are to “serve the initiates” (20: Oliver restores το[η]ς τέλ[εσί] will certainly have included the \textit{mystagogoi}, and in 21f one could restore \textit{e.g. ... καὶ οἱ μυσταγγοὺς οἱ ἐκ τῶν} Κηρύκων καὶ Ἐυμολπίδων [τεταγμένοι].}
therefore, an opportunity for imposters and their accomplices. Assuming that this was so, the state will surely have issued regulations for the costs and conduct of mystagogia; and it is incredible that we have no record of this in IG I 3 6 or elsewhere. Again the economical solution is to recognize the regulation of mystagogia for the Eumolpidai and Kerykes in I 3 6, under the term myesis.\(^{22}\) Moreover, on Clinton's reasonable assumption that a typical mystes would seek myesis just before the telete, we should have to imagine hundreds and thousands of mystai looking about before the Mysteries for people to perform two distinct services—myesis and mystagogia. Both economy and order, therefore, are served if myesis=mystagogia.

In this connection it is important, though insufficiently noticed,\(^{23}\) that μυσταγωγός and its cognates are relatively late words. μυσταγωγός is attested only twice before the first century A.D.: first in a fragment attributed to Menander,\(^{24}\) next more than 200 years later in an Attic decree of the first century B.C. (supra n.21). Plutarch (Alc. 34.6) projects the word back to fifth-century Athens, but this is very likely an anachronism.\(^{25}\)

\(^{22}\) The specification of their individual fee for myesis/mystagogia is then to be found in c.20-23: Ε[ύ]μ[ολπίδαι]ας καὶ Κέρ[υ]κας λαμβάν[εν παρά] το μύστ[ο b]ικάστο πέν[τε ὅμοιος τῷ [ὀρρόνοις, θελειον δὲ τρεῖς].

\(^{23}\) See Foucart (supra n.20) 93.

\(^{24}\) Fr.714 K.: ἀπαντὸ δαίμων ἀνδρὶ συμπαράσταται εὐθύς γενομένῳ μυσταγωγῷ τοῦ βίου ἄγαθος.

\(^{25}\) This is the most famous account of Alcibiades' armed escort of the pompe of the Greater Mysteries from Athens to Eleusis under the eyes of the Spartans (cf. Xen. Hell. 1.4.20): ιερεῖς δὲ καὶ μύστας καὶ μυσταγωγὸς ἀναλαβὼς καὶ τοῖς ὀπλοῖς περικλάσθησα, ἤγεν ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ μετὰ αἰσβής, θέαμα σεμῶν καὶ θεοπρεξές τὴν στρατηγίαν ἔκειν ἐπίδεικνυμένος. ὑπὸ τῶν μὴ φθονοῦντων ἱεροφαντίαν καὶ μυσταγωγίαν προσαγορευομένην. Plutarch's source for this story was probably either Ephorus or Theopompus (see 32.2), but the question is to what extent his use of μυσταγωγός and μυσταγωγία is a personal elaboration of his material based upon his familiarity with the Eleusis of his own day. The text does claim that Alcibiades' generalship on this occasion was actually described (προσαγορευομένη) as mystagogia. But two things should make us doubt that this is an exact quotation from a fourth-century source. First, abstractions, especially those in -τα, are a characteristic feature of Plutarch's style. Second, we have an apposite example of how Plutarch uses his sources: in Dion 54.1, describing the friendship of Dion with the Athenian Callippus, Plutarch 'quotes' [Plato] (Ep. 7.333ε) to the effect that Callippus ὅπω παίδειας, ἀλλ' ἐκ μυσταγωγῶν καὶ τῆς περιτρεχούσης ἐπαιρείας γνώμην αυτῷ γενόθαι καὶ συνήθη. [Plato], however, had written of the brothers Callippus and Philostratus as ὅπω ἐκ φιλοσοφίας γεγονότε φίλω (τῷ
is an explosion of appearances of μυσταγωγός in the period after ca A.D. 100, especially in Christian writers, who apply it metaphorically to saints, priests, Christ, etc.26

I suggest that the late and meager attestation of μυσταγωγός, μυσταγωγία, etc., is significant and that these terms are not attested before ca 300 B.C. because they were not in use at Eleusis, but were adopted there in Hellenistic times as a replacement for μυείν, in the sense of what the Eumolpidai and Kerykes did at the Mysteries. It is also significant that in its later development μυσταγωγείν exhibits two meanings: ‘initiate’ and ‘guide’.27 At first sight, ‘initiate’ is odd: mystagogoi almost certainly did not perform any formal initiation, but were limited to instructing mystai and leading them through the Greater Mysteries. In what sense, then, did the mystagogoi initiate? Just as I have argued in respect to the Eumolpidai and Kerykes, the mystagogoi initiated in the sense of ‘contributing to another’s initiation’; and I suggest that the later equation μυσταγωγείν= μυείν arose from the earlier use of μυείν to connote this same contribution.

If, then, the two gene had exclusive rights to mystagogia, would there have been enough of them to service the crowds of mystai each year? There would, if—as I have tried to show—we need not assume a 1:1 ratio. One possibility mentioned above, 1:11, would have required 200 gennetai to be on hand for the ca

26 Origen XVII, p.32 (Migne, P G); Phot. Bibl. 232.287a; Joh. Chrys. Catechess ultima ad baptizandos 174, In catenas sancti Petri 36; Joh. Philoponus De opificio mundi 204; etc.

27 Plutarch (Mor. 795d) uses μυσταγωγείν as the exact antonym of μυείσθαι: οὕτως ὁ τελέως πολιτικός ἀνήρ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα μανθάνειν ἔτη πολιτεύεται καὶ μυσταγωγείν τὸ δ' ἔσχατα διδάσκον καὶ μυσταγωγών. The initiate is thus a learner, while the mystagogos/initiator is a teacher. For the meaning ‘guide’ see Strab. 17.1.38, Alciphrr. 2.28.2; cf. LSJ s.v.
2,200 initiates of the year 408/7. Other ratios, of course, are also possible.

Thus it appears that *myesis* and *mysteria* were always united, and that the *myesis* allotted to the Eumolpidai and Kerykes, ultimately termed *mystagogia*, was the distinctive and crucial contribution of these priestly *gene* to the general *myesis* of the festival.

Emma Willard School
State University of New York, Albany
September, 1990

---

28 Clinton (*supra* n.1) 13 n.13 with IG 13 386.145. These possibilities were discussed *supra* as restorations of IG 13 6 c.26–31.

29 Since there is no need to suppose that c.26–31 contained anything about number of *mystai* per *mystagogos*, we are not restricted to the numbers listed *supra* that happen to fit the lacuna in 26f.