

Chthonians in Sicily

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To the memory of Giuseppe Nenci

SICILY WAS FAMOUS for her chthonic deities.¹ According to tradition, Hades abducted Kore at Syracuse, Henna, or Aetna; Pindar calls Acragas Φερσεφόνως ἔδος (*Pyth.* 12.2); and the whole island was said to be sacred to Demeter and Kore (Diod. 5.2.3; Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.106). Indeed, archaeological and numismatic evidence abundantly confirms the literary sources.² This paper deals with some previously unnoticed epithets of Sicily's chthonic gods and with the reflection of their cult on personal names on the island.

I. The Kyria

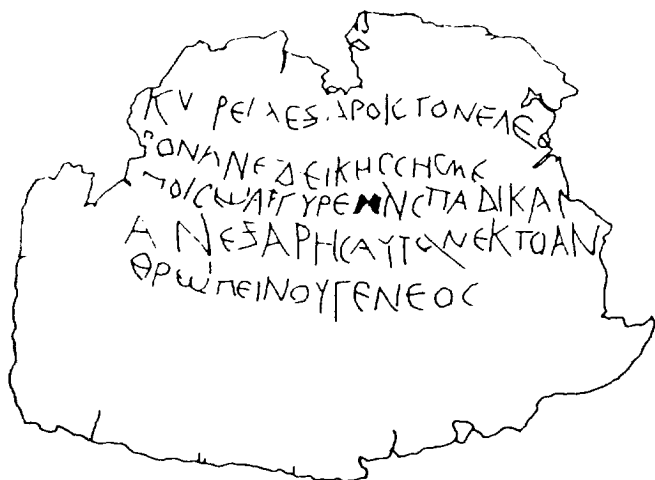
Earlier in this century, a grave in ancient Centuripae, some 30 km southwest of Mt Aetna, yielded an interesting lead curse tablet, first published by Domenico Comparetti after a drawing by Paolo Orsi, and again, in apparent ignorance of Comparetti's edition, by Francesco Ribezzo with a drawing from autopsy.³ Neither text was satisfactory. Using Orsi's and Ribezzo's drawings, J. J. E. Hondius, "adiuvantibus Cr[öner]t] et Wilh[elm],"⁴ produced in 1929 what is now the best text, *SEG* IV 61.

¹ Abbreviations: *DTAud*=A. Audollent, *Defixionum tabellae quotquot innotuerunt* (Paris 1904); *DTWü*=R. Wunsch, *Defixionum tabellae* (Berlin 1897); *IGDS*=L. Dubois, *Inscriptions grecques dialectales de Sicile* (Rome 1989); Jordan=D. R. Jordan, "A Survey of Greek Defixiones Not Included in the Special Corpora," *GRBS* 26 (1985) 151–97.

² See e.g. E. Ciaceri, *Culti e miti nella storia della Sicilia antica* (Catania 1911) 187–214; B. Pace, *Sicilia antica* III (Rome 1945) 463–80; E. Manni, *Sicilia pagana* (Palermo 1963) 105–29; A. Brelich, "La religione greca in Sicilia," *Kokalos* 10–11 (1964–65) 35–62, esp. 47–51; G. Zuntz, *Persephone* (Oxford 1971); L. Polacco, "Il culto di Demetra e Kore a Siracusa," *NumAntCl* 15 (1986) 21–41; V. Hinz, *Der Kult von Demeter und Kore auf Sizilien und in der Magna Graecia* (Wiesbaden 1998).

³ P. Orsi, "Varietà epigrafiche siceliote," *AStSicOr* 16–17 (1919–20) 197–200; F. Ribezzo, "Defissioni greche di Sicilia," *RivIGI* 11 (1927) 145ff.

In October 1998 I examined the inscription in the Syracuse Museum and can present a few improvements to the *SEG* text and a new sketch:



Syracuse
Museo archeologico regionale
(inv. 39856)

H. 12.0, W. 16.4 cm

I–II^p
Centuripae

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | κυρεία, ἑξάρχους τὸν Ἐλέθ[ε]- |
| 2 | ρον. ἂν ἐδεικxήσσης με, |
| 3 | ποίησῶ ἀργυρέαν σπάδικαν, |
| 4 | ἂν ἑξάρης αὐτὸν ἐκ τοῦ ἀν- |
| 5 | θρώπινου γένεος. |

2: ἐ(κ)δεικxήσσης *SEG*. 3: ποίωσῶ ἀργύρε[ο]ν σπάδικα *SEG*. The cursive ε, σ, and ω, and particularly the Ξ, formed almost in one continuous stroke, point to the Roman period. Forms such as Ἐλέθερον (for Ἐλεύθερον) and σπάδικαν (for σπάδικα) also point to a late date, and the spellings κυρεία and ἐδεικxήσσης, in which εἰ is used for a short ι, exclude a date prior to I^p or II^p. The uncontracted forms ἀργυρέαν (3) and γένεος (5) do not contradict such a dating, for Doric forms are found even in Christian inscriptions from Sicily, e.g. ἔτα (IG XIV 506), λανῶ (IG XIV 150). ποίωσῶ (3) is not a faulty spelling of ποιήσῶ, for another inscription from Centuripae has the aorist ἐποίησε (IG XIV 576, II^p?) and similar forms are well documented in Greek.⁴ It would be also possible to read the future of

⁴ E.g. P. Kretschmer, *Die griechischen Vaseninschriften ihrer Sprache nach untersucht* (Gütersloh 1894) 7 (ἐποίησεν, VII^a); ARV² 1531 (ἐποίησεν, V^a); *IOlympia* 164 (ἐποίησε, ca 392^a?); *FdD* III.2 70.51 (ἐποίησαντο, 112/111^a); *CorpPapRain* 36 (ποίησῶ, 266^p), etc. The spelling with diaeresis ποίωσῶ (*SEG*) implies πο(ι)ήσῶ (with η=i/i) as the origin of this form, but the date of the earliest instances of the phenomenon is against an itacistic explanation.

ἐπιφέρω, viz. με ἰ ποίσω (D. R. Jordan, *per litt.*), but ποιέω is well documented in this kind of offering with the meaning "make a dedication."⁵ το (4) is a popular variation of τοῦ or an abbreviated το(ῦ).

The author asks an unnamed goddess to eliminate one Eleutheros and offers in exchange a silver σπάδιξ. The text belongs to the category of prayers for justice motivated by the hope of revenge for wrongs suffered.⁶ Unlike the authors of *defixiones* proper, authors of prayers for justice did not take the law into their own hands, but submitted their complaints to divinities. Typical features are the use of ἐκδικέω (Lat. *vindico*), the offering of a *votum* to the deity, or the use of respectful forms of address. In this case the goddess is called κυρεία and she is addressed in the equally respectful optative ἐξάρους. It is worth remembering that Protagoras rebuked Homer for using the imperative in a prayer (ἄειδε), where he should have used the optative (FVS 80A 20). Now who is the κυρία? Preisendanz⁷ thought that she was Demeter, but she is more likely to be Persephone.⁸ In fact, Persephone appears to be a 'vengeance' goddess;⁹ in contrast to Demeter she is often invoked in Sicilian curse tablets¹⁰ and, as the wife of the lord of the lower world, she is known to have had titles of majesty and kingship (ἄνασσα, βασιλῖς, δέσποινα, πασικράτεια, πόντια). In particular, the use of Κυρία alone for Persephone must have been quite common, for it passed on to the Latins as her proper name, as we see in two inscriptions from Amaula (Mauretania

⁵ A. E. Raubitschek, *Dedications from the Athenian Acropolis* (Cambridge (Mass.)) 1949 no. 331; M. L. Lazzarini, *Le formule nelle dediche votive nella Grecia arcaica* (=MemLinc SER. 4 19.2 [Rome 1976]) 112.

⁶ H. S. Versnel, "Beyond Cursing: The Appeal to Justice in Judicial Prayers," in C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink, *Magika Hiera* (New York 1991) 60–104, esp. 64f.

⁷ K. Preisendanz, "Fluchtafeln (Defixion)," *RAC* 8 (1972) 1–29, esp. 8.

⁸ Thus B. Bravo, "Une tablette magique d'Olbia Pontique, les morts, les héros et les démons," in *Poikilia: Études offertes à J.-P. Vernant* (Paris 1987) 185–218, esp. 192.

⁹ A curse tablet from Cyrene explicitly identifies Praxidike and Kore: G. Pugliese Carratelli, *ASAtene* 23–24 (1961–62) 324f; cf. Jordan no. 150.

¹⁰ A. Brugnone, IV *infra* (παρά Φερσεφόνα, end III *); *SEG* XXIX 929 (Γᾶ, Ἐρμᾶ, Φερσεφόνα, IP?), XXXIV 953 (τῆ κυρεία Περσεφόνη, τῆ κυρεία ἄδευ[κεῖ], IP); *MonAnt* 24 (1916) 154 (Κόρα, IP?). The expression παρ' τὰν ἁγνῶν θεῶν on a fifth-century curse from the Malophoros sanctuary at Selinus (*IGDS* 38) could allude to Demeter, but the ἁγνὰ θεός could equally well be Persephone, who was also worshipped there.

Caesariensis): *CIL* VIII 9020 (*ILS* 4456: *Pluto, Cyria, et Ceres*) and 9021 (*ILS* 4457: *Plutoni et Cyriae, Cereri*).¹¹ Now from Diod. 14.70–77 and some ritual features it is generally accepted that the worship of Demeter and Kore (the so-called *Cereres*) came to Africa from Sicily.¹² The inscriptions of Amaula, therefore, may be indirect evidence that the use of *Κυρία* for Kore/Persephone was common in Sicily and that *Κυρία* here should be identified with Persephone.

The *votum* promised is an ἀργυρέα σπάδιξ. A σπάδιξ is either a palm branch or a stringed instrument. Probably because of the detail about the silver, Comparetti interpreted σπάδιξ as the latter, and the editors of both *SEG* and *LSJ* consider that possibility. σπάδιξ here, however, should rather be interpreted as “palm branch,” for silver palms are well documented as offerings to various gods: *IL Afr* 256 (*palma argentea* to Saturnus); *ILTun* 709 (*palma argentea* to Saturnus), 868b (*palma argentea* to Aesculapius and Pantheus); *ILS* 5471b (*palma ex argento* to the city-genius). A gold palm for an unknown god is documented at *CIL* X 1598 (Pozzuoli).¹³ Indeed the offering of branches is not completely unknown in the cult of Persephone, for Vergil’s *aureus ramus* was a gift (*Aen.* 6.142: *munus*; 408, 632: *donum*) to her.

II. Pluto

American excavations at Morgantina have produced six curse tablets (Jordan 116–21: I^P–II^P). One has two illegible lines followed by a phrase that has been edited as τὰν λιβέρτιαν αὐτᾶς παρδέξαι, | Πλούτω καὶ Γᾶ καὶ | Ἑρμῆ.¹⁴ The name of the first deity invoked is striking. Valentina Hinz, in a discussion of the

¹¹ According to G. Wilmanns and H. Dessau, editors of *CIL* and *ILS* respectively, *Cyria* in the second inscription is a title of Ceres (*Plutoni et cyriae Cereri*), but the copulative *et* indicates here the close relationship of Plouton and Kore, who were worshipped as a couple, as at *IG* XI.4 1235: Πλούτωνι καὶ Κόρη, Δήμητρι, Ἑρμῆ, Ἀνούβιδι κατὰ πρόσταγμα τοῦ θεοῦ.

¹² See e.g. J. Carcopino, “Le culte des Cereres et les Numides,” in *Aspects mystiques de la Rome païenne* (Paris 1943) 13–47; P. Xella, “Sull’ introduzione del culto di Demetra e Core a Cartagine,” *StudMatStorRel* 40 (1969) 215–28.

¹³ For similar metal offerings see W. Deonna, *La vie privée des Déliens* (= *TravMémEFA* 7.4 [Paris 1948]) 87–99.

¹⁴ R. Stillwell, *AJA* 67 (1963) 164f; N. Nabers, *AJA* 83 (1979) 463 no. 1 (*SEG* XXIX 927). The best edition is that of Jordan no. 116 (*SEG* XXXV 1011); cf. *IGDS* 195.

worship of Demeter and Kore in Sicily, speaks of this tablet as a dedication to Ploutos, Ge, and Hermes,¹⁵ as if Πλούτω were the dative of Πλούτος. The parallel invocation Γᾶ, Ἑρμᾶ καὶ θεοὶ καταχθόνιοι found in other tablets of the same series indicates, however, that the names of this text are vocatives and not datives. Πλούτω here is usually interpreted as the vocative of Πλούτω(ν), and this interpretation is *prima facie* likely.¹⁶ Among the six Morgantina tablets, however, this would be the only instance in which final -ν is omitted, and we may note that in general, omission of the nasal before a guttural is not very common.¹⁷ In order to explain this peculiarity one might think that the author confused the Latin form *Pluto*, but there is a likelier and more fruitful solution. An oracle reported by Phlegon of Tralles (*FGrHist* 257F36 X 24, 26, 31) calls Persephone Πλουτωνίς and an Orphic fragment refers to her as Πλουτώνη (*Kern Orph. frag.* 200). Now, goddesses' names in -ώ, normally shortened forms or popular nicknames, are very common in Greek (e.g. Ἄφρῶ, Βριμῶ, Δηῶ, Ἐνυῶ, Σιτώ). My proposal is to read not Πλούτω but Πλουτώ, a local epithet of Persephone formed on the analogy of the name of her husband. The form Πλουτώ may be interpreted either as a shortened form of Πλουτωνίς/Πλουτώνη or as the feminine form corresponding to Πλούτος or Πλουτεύς—alternative names of Plouton.¹⁸

This suggestion needs two clarifications. In classical Greek the vocative of a name Πλουτώ would have been Πλουτοί, but vocatives in -ώ are well documented in later Greek: cf. e.g. *P.Gur.* 1.5 (σῶτισόμ με Βριμῶ), *SB* I 5961 (χαίρε Θεανῶ), *Hymn. Orph.* 35 (Λητώ κυανόπεπλε), and the observations of C. Brixhe (*REG* 103 [1990] 225). One could also object that Πλουτώ is the name of an Ocean nymph (*Hes. Th.* 355; *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 422) and of the mother of Tantalus (e.g. *Paus.* 2.22.3), but such homonyms are common in Greek. Thus, Ἑρμιόνη, in addition to being the name of the daughter of Menelaus and Helen, was also that of both Kore and Demeter at Syracuse (*Hsch.*).

¹⁵ Hinz (*supra* n.2) 33, 133. Her assertion that the tablets from Morgantina document the manumission of a slave and her dedication to the deity (134) is plainly wrong.

¹⁶ Cf. *SEG* XXIX, index s.v. Πλούτων, or *IGDS*, index p.288.

¹⁷ Such omission is much more frequent before a dental, but even so it is not documented in the texts from Morgantina: cf. *Jordan* nos. 117, 119, 121: Βενούσταν τοῦ Ῥούφου τὰν θεράπαιναν.

¹⁸ H. Usener, *Götternamen* (Bonn 1896; repr. Frankfurt a.M. 1948) 16f.

If this interpretation is correct, the divinities invoked in this text would be the same as the triad Γᾶ, Ἑρμᾶς, and Φερσεφόνα invoked on another tablet of the same group (*SEG* XXIX 929) and frequently in other curse tablets (e.g. *DTWü* 101; *DTA*ud 69; L. Robert, *Coll. Froehner* 11; Ziebarth, *SBBerl* [1934] 1022–50 nr. 13). Elsewhere I have noted the tendency of the Morgantina tablets towards variation, both in the names (Ῥοῦφος~Ῥοῦφος Σέξιτιος~Σέξιτιος) and in the verbal forms used in every tablet (ποτιδέκεσθαι~ποτιδέξεσθαι~ἀπαγαγεῖν).¹⁹ That of Φερσεφόνα~Πλουτώ could be another instance.²⁰

III. Gaos

A lead tablet from Camarina (IV–III^a) recording the purchase of an οἶκησιν and a καπηλείαν mentions a quarter “over the sanctuary of Gaos and Phersophassa,” λαύρα [ύ]πὲρ Γάου καὶ Φ[ε]ρσσοφάσας (probably for Φερσοφάσσας).²¹ The occurrence of the localism Φερσόφασσα instead of Φερσεφόνα, the form usual in Sicilian curse tablets, has a good parallel in Attic epigraphy, where the ‘poetic’ form Περσεφόνη is more frequent on curse tablets, while prose inscriptions have the proper Attic Φερρέφαττα and its variants.²² Here Γᾶος is a form of γᾶϊος/γᾶϊος with consonantal ι dropped between vowels; his actual identity, however, is less apparent. Hinz speaks of a “Heiligtum von Gaia und Persophasa,” but this is obviously not the case. Cordano interpreted Γᾶος as the name of a local and otherwise unknown πάρεδρος of Persephone, but it would be odd to find an obscure figure named *before* the goddess herself. This difficulty can be avoided if we understand Γᾶος as an epithet of Hades and see in this tablet a sanctuary of Hades and Persephone, a divine couple greatly honoured in Sicily.²³ This

¹⁹ J. Curbera, “Venusta and her Owner in Four Curse Tablets from Morgantina,” *ZPE* 110 (1996) 295ff.

²⁰ For a similar proposal (Πλουτώ—the Ocean nymph?—instead of the transmitted Πλούτων in Lucian’s *Tragopodagra*), see H. Grégoire and R. Goossens, “La nourrice de la déesse Podagra,” *AntCl* 22 (1953) 419ff.

²¹ F. Cordano, *BArte* 26 (1984) 35–41 (*IGDS* 124, *SEG* XXXIV 940). For the sanctuary see now Hinz (*supra* n.2) 121.

²² L. Threatte, *The Grammar of the Attic Inscriptions I: Phonology* (Berlin 1980) 450f; F. Bräuninger, “Persephone,” *RE* 19 (1937) 945.

²³ The Sicilians celebrated their wedding at the Ἀνακαλυπτῆρια (*SPind. Ol.* 6.160) and Θεογάμια (*Poll.* 1.37).

interpretation presupposes that γᾶ(τι)ος ("earthly") has been used in the sense of χθόνιος ("of the nether world"), a common epithet of Hades. Such a use is probably a Doric colloquialism. The terms χθών, χθόνιος, καταχθόνιος, *etc.* were indeed typical of the language of poetry and religion and were alien to everyday speech,²⁴ while γάϊος and related terms were ordinary Doric words.²⁵ The writer of the text from Camarina used Γᾶος instead of Χθόνιος, just as he used Φερσόφασσα instead of Φερσεφόνα: both Γᾶος and Φερσόφασσα were colloquial forms more suitable for a prose text than Χθόνιος and Φερσεφόνα.²⁶

This interpretation may have some significance in the study of Aeschylus. At *Supp.* 156 Hades is called Ζεὺς γάϊος (τὸν γάϊον [ταιον M, *corr.* Wellauer], τὸν πολυξενώτατον Ζῆνα).²⁷ Wellauer's γάϊον has been challenged on the grounds that γάϊος does not elsewhere signify χθόνιος,²⁸ but the text from Camarina may now prove that such a use was known in Greek. On the other hand, γάϊος is one of the forms put forward by those who see Sicilian influence in the extant work of Aeschylus. Although recent studies tend to diminish the value of his alleged Sicilianisms, γάϊος is one of the words still considered distinctively Sicilian.²⁹ This inscription provides more positive evidence for a Sicilian origin, for it shows that this particular sense of γάϊος (= χθόνιος) applied to Hades was current in Sicily. In adopting γάϊος for one of his songs, Aeschylus gave poetic dignity to this popular epithet of Hades.

²⁴ U. von Wilamowitz Moellendorff, *Der Glaube der Hellenen* (repr. Darmstadt 1959) 205f.

²⁵ Cf. Epich. 42.9 K; *Etym. Mag.* 223.24; Hsch. *s.v.* It is not surprising that an author like Pindar does not use the word: G. Björk, *Das Alpha impurum in die tragische Kunstsprache* (Uppsala 1950) 332.

²⁶ It may be relevant that an epitaph from Centuripae (*IG* XIV 581, I-II^P?) shows, instead of the learned formula θεοῖς καταχθονίοις, the more local expression θεοῖς καταγαῖδίοις.

²⁷ For Zeus (Chthonios, Catachthonios, *etc.*) in the sense of Hades see M. L. West, *Hesiod: Works and Days* (Oxford 1978) ad 465; Wilamowitz (*supra* n.24) I 307.

²⁸ See the discussion in A. F. Garvie, *Aeschylus' Supplices* (Cambridge 1969) 188f.

²⁹ Garvie (*supra* n.28) 52; M. Griffith, "Aeschylus, Sicily and Prometheus," in R. D. Dawe *et al.*, *Dionysiaca: Nine Studies in Greek Poetry by Former Pupils Presented to Sir Denis Page* (Cambridge 1978) 108.

IV. "Priestesses of Demeter"?

We know that, from at least the fifth century B.C., the Eumenides received official cult in Selinus.³⁰ In 250 B.C. the entire population of Selinus was moved to Lilybaeum (Diod. 24.1.1), and it is possible that this or a similar cult was continued in the new city. A curse tablet from Lilybaeum recently published by Antonietta Brugnone may contain an unnoticed allusion to the Erinyes.³¹ The tablet has on Side A eight lines of text written retrograde; Side B has only three short lines in Greek followed by a list of nine Latin names in the Latin alphabet. Brugnone's text of Side A begins:

- 1 ← καταδέω Ζωπυρίωνα τᾶς Μυμβυρ παρὰ Φερσε-
- 2 ← φόναι καὶ Τιτάνεσσι καταχθονίους καὶ παρὰ
- 3 ← π[ρ]ιχομένοισι νεκύους ^{vac} ἐς τοὺς ἀτελέστους καὶ παρ-
- 4 ← ἃ [.]αρίαις Δάματρος παρ' ἀπευχομέ[ν]α[ισ]ιν.

(κατα)χθόνιος belongs to the realm of poetry and religion (*cf. supra* III). Thus *PGM* IV 1444–55 contains an invocation of seventeen infernal powers, every one followed by the (solemn) word χθόνιος ('Ερμῆ χθόνιε καὶ 'Εκάτη χθονία, καὶ 'Αχέρων χθόνιε καὶ ὠμοφάγοι χθόνιοι καὶ πνεύματα χθόνια καὶ 'Αμαρτίαι χθόνια, *etc.*).³² Φερσεφόνα is the form used by Pindar, Bacchylides, the Orphic Hymns but not in everyday Sicilian speech (*supra* III). To judge from Plato (*Cra.* 404c) this form was considered especially formidable, no doubt for it popularly connoted the word φόνος (*cf. Hymn. Orph.* 29.16). The datives in -οῖσι and -αῖσιν have a strong epic flavor. It is clear that the gods are named in the most elevated terms. This solemn character suggests a supplement for the small lacuna (one letter) of [.]αρίαις (line 4). Brugnone posits παρὰ [ὦ]αρίαις (for παρὰ ἄωρίαις), and understands ἄωρίαι as "le anomalie di stagione" during the months that Kore must spend

³⁰ M. H. Jameson, D. R. Jordan, and R. D. Kotansky, *A Lex Sacra from Selinus* (=GRBM 11 [Durham (N.C.) 1993]).

³¹ B. Bechtold and A. Brugnone, "Novità epigrafiche da Lilibeo. La tomba 186 della Via Berta," *Seconde Giornate internazionali di Studi sull'area elima. Atti* (Pisa 1997) 111–40. The editors date the tablet to the end of the III^a. For a new edition of this text see David Jordan's article in this volume.

³² A similar text on a selenite tablet from Cyprus (III^p) in D. R. Jordan, "Late Feasts for Ghosts," in R. Hägg, ed., *Ancient Greek Cult Practice from the Epigraphical Evidence* (=Proceedings of the Second International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult, Swedish Institute at Athens, 22–24 November 1991 [Stockholm 1994]) 131–43, esp. 140.

in the Underworld. The sense, however, is not what is required (we expect some infernal deity or being), and to solve a difficulty by positing an anomaly in a lacuna is always questionable.³³ My suggestion is to read [ι]αρείαις, viz. a late spelling of Doric ἰαρείαις (Attic ἱερείαις) and a new instance, therefore, of the mixture of Doric and later forms seen *insupra* I. Both the plural and the sinister purpose of the text suggest that the ἰαρείαι Δάματρος were the Erinyes, who, as ministers of vengeance, are often invoked in curse tablets.³⁴ This proposal is supported by Eur. *Or.* 261, where the Erinyes are called ἐνέρων ἰερείαι—“priestesses of the nether ones.”³⁵ The subordination of the Erinyes to Demeter is not documented elsewhere (they are often subordinated to Plouton), but we know that in several places Demeter had the title of Erinys.³⁶ If this suggestion is correct, ἰερείαι could be a title of the Erinyes that was used independently by Euripides and this writer drawing on the same tradition. One cannot rule out, however, that this writer, who followed literary patterns, had Euripides or a tragic model in mind.³⁷

V. Personal Names

The recent publication of P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews' *Lexicon of Greek Proper Names III A* (Oxford 1997) offers an immense field of research for scholars interested in the religion of Greek Sicily. The Greeks were always conscious of the meanings of their names; as a result they did not derive personal names from gods of ill omen. As Letronne put it, “les noms des divinités infernales ne sont jamais entrés dans la formation des

³³ R. Merkelbach, “Lex Youtie,” *ZPE* 38 (1980) 294.

³⁴ On the Erinyes on *defixiones* see Versnel (*supra* n.6) 92 n.17. In Sicily they appear on *MonAnt* 24 (1916) 154 (Messina, I-II^a): [Ἐριν]ύες αὐτὲ κομ[ί-σω]ντε ἀνθρώπι[σκο]ν.

³⁵ According to C. W. Willink, *Euripides: Orestes* (Oxford 1986) *ad loc.*, the use of ἰερείαι adds connotations of blood and slaughter suitable for the Erinyes.

³⁶ E. Wüst, “Erinys,” *RE Supp.* 8 (1956) 94f.

³⁷ A similar case in *DTAud* 79, where Γῆ is called μήτηρ ὀνάρων (*sic*) just as at Eur. *Hec.* 70f Χθών is called μήτηρ ὀνειρών: E. G. Kagarow, *Griechische Fluchtafeln* (Lwow 1929) 60.

noms propres.³⁸ The name Εὐμενίδοτος of Selinus (*IDGS* 50, ca 550^a) could allude to the kindly aspect of the Erinyes (Εὐμενίδες), but as εὐμενής is an epithet documented for various deities (e.g. Zeus, Hermes, Nymphs), Εὐμενίδοτος is likelier to allude to some other god or goddess.³⁹ Similarly, the name Ἐκαταῖος of Himera (*IGDS* 14, ca 450^a) is not to be referred to the goddess of sorcery and black magic, but to the benevolent goddess as described at Hes. *Th.* 411–20 and enthusiastically worshipped in Asia, where Ἐκαταῖος is frequent. Chthonic deities, however, may form personal names that are not properly theophoric. One of the oldest—and unnoticed—testimonia of the cult of Kore in Camarina is found in the personal name Κόρειος.⁴⁰ In Greek there is a group of personal names formed on the names of festivals and given to people born during those holidays. The personal names Ἀπατούριος, Θαργήλιος, Παναθήναιος, and Ἐορταῖος are formed on the feast names Ἀπατούρια, Θαργήλια, Παναθήναια, and the generic ἑορτή.⁴¹ Plutarch (*Dion* 56) documents a festival Κόρεια at Syracuse, during which Dion was killed in 353 B.C. The personal name Κόρειος of Camarina derives from the Κόρεια and shows that the festival was also celebrated at Camarina.

It is not entirely clear what was celebrated during the Κόρεια, for in Sicily the different episodes of Kore's myth were the subjects of several separate celebrations (e.g. Κόρης Καταγωγή, Ἀνθροσφόρια, Θεογάμια).⁴² One cannot rule out that Κόρεια was a generic name valid for any of these feasts. This sense is found in Strabo (2.3.4), who instead of using the official name of the festival of Kore in Cyzicus (τὰ Σωτήρια) uses τὰ Κόρεια (σπονδοφόρον τοῦ τῶν Κορείων ἀγῶνος): he had no reason to use the official name and he simply used a generic and more common

³⁸ A. J. Letronne, "Mémoire sur l'utilité qu'on peut retirer de l'étude des noms propres grecs pour l'histoire et l'archéologie," *Œuvres choisies* III² (Paris 1885) 1–126, esp. 125.

³⁹ But, instead of Π(υ)ρρία, Εὐμενίδοτο, Πεδιάρχο, the text could also be read Π(υ)ρρία, Εὐμενίδ(α) τῷ Πεδιάρχο: see Dubois' commentary; also see D. R. Jordan, "A Meilichios Stone from Selinous," *ZPE* 86 (1991) 279–82 (*SEG* XL 806).

⁴⁰ F. Cordano, *Le tessere pubbliche del tempio di Atena a Camarina* (Rome 1992) no. 129, ca 450^a.

⁴¹ See F. Bechtel, *Die historischen Personennamen des Griechischen bis zur Kaiserzeit* (Halle 1917) 522–26; R. Hirzel, *Der Name* (Leipzig 1918) 40–46.

⁴² See e.g. Nilsson, *Feste* 358; Polacco (*supra* n.2) 26.

designation of the festival.⁴³ As for Sicily, Plutarch used τὰ Κόρεια to emphasize the impiety of Kallipos, who after swearing to Kore that he was not plotting against Dion, killed him at the feast of this very goddess (τὴν ἑορτὴν ἧς ὤμοσε θεο), no matter which one this feast was. Similarly, the name Κόρειος shows that the child was born during a feast of Kore.

The name of Demeter, unlike that of Persephone, does form theophorics. Curiously enough, however, these names do not seem to have been frequent in Sicily: there are some 100 theophoric names of Apollo, some 100 of Heracles, some 80 of Zeus, some 70 of Artemis, but only 35 bearers of Δαμάτριος or Δαματρία. It is significant that only one of the more than seventy Sicilian landowners and magistrates listed in Cicero's *Verrines* was called Demetrius (2.4.92). This is striking in view of the importance that literary sources ascribe to the cult of Demeter in Sicily: ἱερὰν ὑπάρχειν τὴν νῆσον Δήμητρος καὶ Κόρης (Diod. 5.2.3). It would be tempting to interpret this dearth of 'Demetriac' names as a reflection of the chthonic connotations of her cult. Demeter's absence on Sicilian curse tablets suggests, however, that, unlike her fellow chthonians, she was not considered a goddess of ill omen. A non-religious explanation may be possible. Most onomastic evidence in Sicily comes from official inscriptions; the majority of the proper names that are preserved are thus those of magistrates and officials of Sicilian cities. It is true that Demeter was an immensely popular deity in Sicily, but her cult and festivals seem also to have had a strongly plebeian (and feminine) character.⁴⁴ It is fair to posit that—in contrast to the theophorics based on Apollo, Heracles, or Zeus—'Demetriac' names were not thought appropriate to the ruling classes, whose onomastics are the best known. Therefore, the evidence for the importance of this goddess in Sicily is not in conflict with the relative scarcity of

⁴³ L. Robert, *Documents d'Asie Mineure* (Paris 1987) 166f.

⁴⁴ D. White, "Demeter's Sicilian Cult as a Political Instrument," *GRBS* 5 (1964) 261–79, esp. 264ff.

personal names derived from hers, just as Homer's rare references to Demeter do not prove her insignificance in his time.⁴⁵

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⁴⁵ J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford 1980) 186f: "[In the *Iliad*] the gods who would be irreconcilably out of place in the society of Olympus—fertile Demeter, raging Dionysus—are as far as possible *stylized out* of the poem and the world" (my italics).

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