

Myesis, Telete, and Mysteria

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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 prerequisite¹—for the latter. Initiation in the Mysteries likewise comprised two degrees: μύησις and ἐποπτεία, the former required for the latter (Plut. *Dem.* 26). The *epopteia* 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 *mystes* at the Lesser and Greater Mysteries. Some scholars, however, have sought to restrict its meaning.² H. PRINGSHEIM, the most influential of these,³ 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,⁴ but without, I think, the close scrutiny it warrants.

Pringsheim (40f) 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. Polyæn. *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 I³ 386.144ff) indicates that the latter could be very sparsely attended.

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

³ *Archäologische Beiträge zur Geschichte des eleusinischen Kults* (Munich 1905: hereafter ‘Pringsheim’) 39ff.

⁴ A. D. Nock, *Mnemosyne* SER. 4 5 (1952) 179; Nilsson, *GGR* I³ 656; K. Clinton, *ArchEph* 1971, 91.

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 I³ 6* (before 460) c.40–46:

- 40 [.]β[....]εν τον [ό]ρφ[ανον]
 [.] τὸς ὀρφανὸς παῖ[δας καὶ τὸς]
 [μ]ύστας *hekastio* | = [.....]
 [τ]ὸς μύστας τὸς Ἐλε[υσῖνι ...]
 [.]ενος ἐν τῆι ἀλύει [ἐντὸς τῷ *h*] -
 45 [ι]ερῶ, τὸς δὲ ἐν ἄστει [.....]
 [.] ἐν τῷ Ἐλευσινίῳ. [*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*:

- [α] β[λάπτ]εν τῶν [ό]ρφ[ανῶν μεδ' ἐς]
 τὸς ὀρφανὸς *h* | | [..... τὸς μ]-
 125 ύστας. *hekastio* με[νὸς (σ)υνάγεν]
 [τ]ὸς μύστας τὸς Ἐλε[υσῖνι μυο]-
 [μ]ένος ἐν τῆι ἀλύει [τῆι πρὸ τῷ]
 [ι]ερῶ, τὸς δὲ ἐν ἄστει [μυομένο]-
 ς ἐν τῷ Ἐλευσινίῳ.

Other versions specify such actions as a monthly enrollment of *mystai* by the Eumolpidae,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 ἀλύει (127) and ἐν τῷ Ἐλευσινίῳ (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 Ἐλευσῖνι (126) and ἐν ἄστει (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 I³ 6 above. Let us see what modest—but incontestible—conclusions it yields.

First, there were *mystai*⁸ at Athens and Eleusis (μύστας τὸς Ἐλε[υσίνι] ... τὸς δὲ ἐν ἄστει). 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 Since this

take place. The structure of the passage, in fact, favors some such specification, applied to *mystai* during their *myesis* (μυομένος); and it will be noted that all the versions above (except Merritt's first [*supra* n.6]) posit an action ancillary to *myesis*, affecting the *mystai* either as object (the gathering of *mystai*, their enrollment) or subject (their performance of *proteleia*). Nor is μυομένος, despite its privileged status since Kirchhoff, even a necessary restoration of the lacuna: Sokolowski (*supra* n.6) suggests θυομένος. The point is that the inscription in its present condition provides no basis for a choice of restoration here.

⁸ The term μύστης 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 (ἔξω τῆς πόλεως, *Anecd. Bekk.* 334.11; πρὸ τῆς πόλεως, Steph. Byz. *s.v.* "Ἄγρα καὶ Ἄγραι), it was nonetheless ἐν ἄστει 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* 76F13=Ath. 253D-F) quotes from an ode stating that Demeter "is coming to perform the sacred mysteries of Kore" (χή μὲν τὰ σεμνὰ τῆς Κόρης μυστήρια ἔρχεθ' ἴνα ποιήσῃ). 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.* "Ἄγραι). 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:

Κέρυκας δὲ μυ[ἔν]
 [..] μύστας *ἑκάστον* [καὶ Εὐμο]-
 [λπίδ]ας [κ]ατὰ τα[ύ]τά· ἐ[.....]
 [.] πλείος εὐθύνεσθα[ι χιλιάσ]-
 30 [ι] δρα[χ]μέσι· μὲν δὲ *ἡ* [οἱ ἄν *ἡεβ*]-
 ὄσι Κερύκον καὶ Εὐ[μολπίδων·]

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

Κέρυκας δὲ μυ[ἔν τὸς νέ]-
 [ο]ς μύστας *ἑκάστον* [καὶ Εὐμο]-
 [λπίδ]ας κατὰ ταῦτα· ἐ[ἄν δὲ κατ]
 ἂ πλῆθος, εὐθύνεσθα[ι κτλ.

The reading *πλῆθος* in line 29, however, was corrected to *πλείος* by Merritt in 1946. Further, Clinton has reported that he could not see a *sigma* before *μύστας* in line 27.¹² These two alterations have opened new possibilities for restoration that either do not

refers is Demeter *Eleusinia*, and that the visitation in question is parallel to that attested for the beginning of the Greater Mysteries, when the Eleusinian *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 *φαιδωντής τοῖν θεοῖν* (*IG II² 1078.13–18*). As this official was evidently the caretaker of the goddesses' statues at Eleusis (Mylonas [*supra* n.10] 235f with n.58), it is likely that some representations or tokens of Demeter and Kore were among the *hiera* carried to Athens (*cf.* Farnell, *Cults III* 165). Since the priesthood of Eleusis officiated at the Lesser as well as the Greater Mysteries (*IG I³ 6 s.c. 9–14*), it is possible that on both occasions representations or tokens of Demeter *Eleusinia* were brought from Eleusis and deposited in the city Eleusinion.

¹² Merritt (*supra* n.5) 251; Clinton (*supra* n.1) 11, line 27 with note *ad loc.*

involve or actually contradict individual *myesis*.¹³ 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 Eumolpidae and Kerykes (Ε[ὺ]μ[ολπίδ]ας καὶ Κέρ[υ]κας λαμβάν[εν παρὰ] τῷ μύστ[ο ἢ] ἐκάστο πέν[τε ὀβολός]), lines 26f may be restored Κέρυκας δὲ μύ[ἐν] τῷσούτο (=τοσοῦτου) μύστας ἑκάστον, as a recapitulation of the amount to be received per head (ἑκάστον). This recapitulation could also introduce a prohibition on the *gene* from exacting more money than specified: that is, πλείος in 29 may refer to πλείος ὀβελός, not μύστας. In this case, ἑκάστον 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' ἑνά], [κατὰ δύο], [καθ' ἑχς], [κατ' ὀκτό], [ἑνδεκά], and [ἑκατόν] (ἑκάστον in 27 would then be taken with Κέρυκας as subject). This possibility, of course, explicitly contradicts any "prohibition of group *myesis*."¹⁴

Two fourth-century Eleusinian *epistatai* accounts were also used in Pringsheim's argument. *IG II*² 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 I*³ pp.11f).

¹⁴ In *IG II*² 1673 (ca 327/6; see discussion *infra*) the *epistatai* Ἐλευσινίθην record their *myesis* of five public slaves (lines 24f), appending also the total cost: ἀνηλώσαμε[ν ΓΔΔΠ —]. 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 μύησις 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 ἐκάστῳ or κατ' ἄνθρωπον]). 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]ῶν δημοσίων ἐμύησαμεν πέντε ἄνδρας τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἀνακαθαίροντας; (42) ἐν τοῖς μυσ[τηρί]οις; (44) μετὰ μυστήρια. 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 δυοῖν 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.¹⁵ 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 ἀναζευγνύων εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας (Δημήτριος) ἔγραψεν, ὅτι βούλεται παραγενόμενος εὐθὺς μνηθῆναι καὶ τὴν τελετὴν ἅπασαν ἀπὸ τῶν μικρῶν ἄχρι τῶν ἐποπτικῶν παραλαβεῖν. τοῦτο δ' οὐ θεμιτὸν ἦν οὐδὲ γεγονὸς πρότερον, ἀλλὰ τὰ μικρὰ τοῦ Ἀνθεστηριῶνος ἐτελοῦντο, τὰ δὲ μεγάλα τοῦ Βοηδρομιῶνος· ἐπώπτευον δὲ τοῦλάχιστον ἀπὸ τῶν μεγάλων ἐνιαυτὸν διαλείποντες. ἀναγνωσθέντων δὲ τῶν γραμμάτων.... Στρατοκλέους γνῶμην εἰπόντος, Ἀνθεστηριῶνα τὸν Μουνυχιῶνα ψηφισαμένους καλεῖν καὶ νομίζειν, ἐτέλουν τῷ Δημητρίῳ τὰ πρὸς Ἄγραν· καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα

¹⁵ Richardson (*supra* n.13) 21 n.2. The Eleusinia are dated with the period 20–26 Anthesterion: Mikalson (*supra* n.9) 120f.

πάλιν ἐξ Ἀνθεστηριῶνος ὁ Μουνοχιῶν γενόμενος Βοηδρομιῶν
ἐδέξατο τὴν λοιπὴν τελετὴν, ἅμα καὶ τὴν ἐποπτεῖαν τοῦ
Δημητρίου προσεπιλαβόντος.

Pringsheim distinguished *μνηθῆναι* in these lines from τὴν τελετὴν ἅπασαν, and took this as proof of a separation of *myesis* from *telete*. Let us look more closely at the passage. Demetrius demanded *myesis* “immediately” (εὐθύς) 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: εὐθύς 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 ... ὀρθὴν ταύτην ... ἄγουσι Ἀθηναῖοι ἀνὰ πάντα ἔτεα τῇ Μητρὶ καὶ τῇ Κόρῃ, καὶ αὐτῶν 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 ὢν 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 ἐνδὺς στολὴν μιμούμενος 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 Hierophant Euryclides (2.101):

“λέγε μοι,” ἔφη (ὁ Θεόδωρος), “Εὐρυκλείδη, τίνες εἰσὶν οἱ ἀσεβοῦντες περὶ τὰ μυστήρια;” εἰπόντος δ’ ἐκείνου, “οἱ τοῖς ἀμύητοις αὐτὰ ἐκφέροντες,” “ἀσεβεῖς ἄρα,” ἔφη, “καὶ σύ, τοῖς ἀμύητοις διηγούμενος.”

That is, the *mysteria* are *regularly* shown to ἀμύητοι, 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, ὦ Καλλίκλεις, ὅτι τὰ μεγάλα (μυστήρια) μεμύησαι πρὶν τὰ σμικρά. Here too τὸ μνεῖσθαι is identified with τὰ μυστήρια. Still more explicit is [Dem.] *In Neaeram* 21:

Λυσίας ... ἐβουλήθη πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀναλώμασιν οἷς ἀνήλισκεν εἰς αὐτὴν καὶ μυῆσαι (τὴν Μετάνειραν), ἡγούμενος ... ἃ ... ἂν εἰς τὴν ἑορτὴν καὶ τὰ μυστήρια ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ἀναλώσῃ, πρὸς αὐτὴν τὴν ἄνθρωπον χάριν καταθήσεσθαι. ἐδεήθη οὖν τῆς Νικαρέτης ἐλθεῖν εἰς τὰ μυστήρια ἄγουσαν τὴν Μετάνειραν, ἵνα μυηθῇ, καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπέσχετο μύησειν.

In these lines the singular and exclusive connection of μύησις/μνεῖν with τὴν ἑορτὴν/τὰ μυστήρια is unmistakable: this, Metaneira’s first experience of initiation, is no “pre-initiation” ceremony, but the Mysteries themselves, the ἑορτή.

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 φασὶ καὶ τὸν Εὐμόλπον εὐρεῖν τὴν μύησιν τὴν συντελουμένην κατ’ ἐνιαυτὸν ἐν Ἐλευσίνι 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 Eumolpidae 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 ἐὰν δὲ τις μνη[ι Ε]ὐμολ[πιδῶν ἢ Κηρύκων οὐκ ὦν ε]ιδῶς, ἢ ἐὰν προσάγη τις μνησόμε[νον]. I have argued above that *myesis* was conducted exclusively at the *mysteria*, and have implied that this

¹⁶ Clinton, *Hesperia* 49 (1980) 263–68, A.27 [SEG XXX 61].

was the province of the Hierophant and other sacred officials of the festival. What power of *myesis*, then, belonged to every member of the Eumolpidae and Kerykes without distinction? To answer this we need to survey the range of meanings of *μυεῖν*. 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" (*μυῆσαι*) his mistress Metaneira. Now, there is no evidence whatever that the 'initiator' was a member of the Eumolpidae or Kerykes, and in any case his *myesis* is clearly an item of expense (*πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀναλώμασιν οἷς ἀνήλισκεν*), not of ritual. Thus in the fourth century, and probably earlier still, *μυεῖν* could have the connotation 'pay/arrange for, or contribute to, one's *myesis*.'¹⁷

This, I think, is the key for understanding *μυεῖν* as applied to the Kerykes and Eumolpidae. 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*.¹⁸ *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.¹⁹ That these officials were drawn from the Eumol-

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 *μυεῖν* as 'pay or arrange for *myesis*' appear in *IG* II² 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, ὧ ἄνδρες, διὰ τί ποτε τοῖς ἐμοὶ νυνὶ ἐπιτιθεμένοις ... τρία μὲν ἔτη ἐπιδημῶν καὶ ἡκῶν ἐκ Κύπρου οὐκ ἀσεβεῖν ἐδόκουσιν αὐτοῖς, μῶν μὲν Ἄ... (τὸν) Δελφόν, ἔτι δὲ ἄλλους ξένους ἐμαντοῦ.... If Andocides was in fact a member of Kerykes ([Plut.] *Vit. Andoc.*; J. Toepffer, *Attische Genealogie* [Berlin 1889] 83ff. *contra*, F. Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit* I² [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* I³ 6, 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.* μυσταγωγός; Liban. *Decl.* 13.19; Plut. *Alc.* 34.6. Livy (31.14.7f) writes of two uninitiated Acharnian youths who wandered into the *hieron* at Eleusis late in the *telete* and gave themselves away by their ignorant ques-

pidai and Kerykes is an old suggestion of Foucart²⁰ that warrants reconsideration. Though it has no explicit attestation,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 *myesis* (on demand) can apply, *pari passu*, to *mystagogia*. The inscription quoted above, for example, comprises two acts: leading a *mystes* to a Eumolpid or Keryx for *myesis* (ἐὰν προσάγητι τις μυσσομέ[νον]), and then the actual *myesis* (ἐὰν δέ τις μυσῆ[ι] ...). Clinton (*supra* n.16: 279) comments: “A prospective initiate ... had somehow, in the days before the Mysteries, to find someone who could give him *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 *mystagogia* replacing *myesis*: that is, *mystagogoi* also must have been qualified personnel, had somehow to be found by the *mystai* before the *telete*, and must have received pay—creating,

tioning of others (*absurde quaedam percunctantes*): at least part of the crucial knowledge of the *mystai* around them will have been owed to *mystagogoi*.

²⁰ P. Foucart, *Les Grands Mystères d'Éleusis* (Paris 1900) 281–84; Farnell, *Cults* III 161 n.b; Kern (*supra* n.18).

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

----- ἐκάστη [τῶν φυ]λ[ῶν---]ντ[-----
 ---τ]ῶν μυσταγωγῶ[ν..]κλησ[-----οὶ πάρε]-
 [δροὶ τοῦ βασι]λέως καὶ οἱ ἐπιμεληταὶ τῶν μυστηρίων [-----
 20 [--]ς, λειτουργεῖτῶσαν δὲ τ[ο]ῖς τελ[ο]υμένοις οἱ-----
 [καὶ οἱ ἱερεῖ]ς οἱ τε δημόσιοι πάντ[ε]ς [καὶ---καὶ οἱ]
 [ὑπὸ τῶν] Κηρύκων καὶ Εὐμολπιδῶν [ἀποδεικνύμενοι--ἔχοντες]
 [τῶν δημοσί]ων τοὺς ἱκανοὺς καὶ [-----ἐλαύ]-
 [νεῖν δὲ κατὰ] τάξιν καὶ τὴν πορείαν ε[ύ]κόσμως ποιεῖ[ν]
 ὥστ[ε] ἀτ[-----]
 25 [--ἐὰ]ν δὲ οἱ μυσταγωγοὶ μὴ συνπ[ο]ρεύωνται τοῖς [μύσταις----]

The officials who are to “serve the initiates” (20: Oliver restores τ[ο]ῖς τέλ[ε]σι) will certainly have included the *mystagogoi*, and in 21f one could restore e.g. --- καὶ οἱ μυσταγωγοὶ οἱ ἐκ τῶν] Κηρύκων καὶ Εὐμολπιδῶν [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 I³ 6* or elsewhere. Again the economical solution is to recognize the regulation of *mystagogia* for the Eumolpidae and Kerykes in *I³ 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 There

²² The specification of their individual fee for *myesis/mystagogia* is then to be found in c.20–23: Ε[ὺ]μ[ολπίδ]ας καὶ Κέρ[υ]κας λαμβάν[εν παρὰ] το μύστ[ο] ἡ]εκάστο πέν[τε ὀβόλος τ]ῶν [ἀρρ]ένων, θελειῶ[ν δὲ τρεῖς].

²³ See Foucart (*supra* n.20) 93.

²⁴ Fr.714 K.: ἅπαντι δαίμων ἀνδρὶ συμπαρίσταται εὐθὺς γενομένῳ μυσταγωγὸς τοῦ βίου ἀγαθός.

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): ἱερεῖς δὲ καὶ μύστας καὶ μυσταγωγούς ἀναλαβὼν καὶ τοῖς ὅπλοις περικαλύψας, ἦγεν ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ μετὰ σιωπῆς, θέαμα σεμνὸν καὶ θεοπρεπὲς τὴν στρατηγίαν ἐκείνην ἐπιδεικνύμενος, ὑπὸ τῶν μὴ φθονούντων 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 (*προσαγορευομένην*) 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 -ία, 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.* 7.333E) to the effect that Callippus οὐκ ἀπὸ παιδείας, ἀλλ' ἐκ μυσταγωγῶν καὶ τῆς περιτρεχούσης ἑταιρείας γνῶριμον αὐτῷ γενέσθαι καὶ συνήθη. [Plato], however, had written of the brothers Callippus and Philostratus as οὐκ 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 μυεῖν, in the sense of what the Eumolpidae and Kerykes did at the Mysteries. It is also significant that in its later development μυσταγωγεῖν 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 Eumolpidae and Kerykes, the *mystagogoi* initiated in the sense of 'contributing to another's initiation'; and I suggest that the later equation μυσταγωγεῖν = μυεῖν arose from the earlier use of μυεῖν 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*

Δίωνι), ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς περιτρεχούσης ἐταιρίας ταύτης τῆς τῶν πλείστων φίλων, ἦν ἐκ τοῦ ξενίζειν τε καὶ μυεῖν καὶ ἐποπτεύειν πραγματεύονται. Obviously, Plutarch's 'quotation' is quite loose, and for his source's μυεῖν καὶ ἐποπτεύειν he has substituted μυσταγωγία (μυεῖν here, incidentally, appears to have an intransitive meaning unnoticed by LSJ). With this example in hand, then, it is hardly necessary to imagine that in *Alc.* μυσταγωγίαν, or for that matter μυσταγωγούς, derives from Plutarch's source(s); for another example of "stylistic elaboration" reflecting "the limitations of Plutarch's grasp of the finer nuances of the fifth- and fourth-century source material to which he had such enviable access," see D. Whitehead, *The Demes of Attica* (Princeton 1986) 305–08.

²⁶ Origen XVII, p.32 (Migne, *PG*); Phot. *Bibl.* 232.287A; Joh. Chrys. *Catechesis ultima ad baptizandos* 174, *In catenas sancti Petri* 36; Joh. Philoponus *De opificio mundi* 204; *etc.*

²⁷ Plutarch (*Mor.* 795D) uses μυσταγωγεῖν as the exact antonym of μυεῖσθαι: οὕτως ὁ τελέως πολιτικός ἀνὴρ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα μανθάνων ἔτι πολιτεύεται καὶ μούμενος τὰ δ' ἔσχατα διδάσκων καὶ μυσταγωγῶν. The initiand is thus a learner, while the *mystagogos*/initiator is a teacher. For the meaning 'guide' see Strab. 17.1.38, Alciph. 2.28.2; *cf.* LSJ *s.v.*

2,200 initiates of the year 408/7.²⁸ Other ratios, of course, are also possible.²⁹

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.

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²⁸ Clinton (*supra* n.1) 13 n.13 with *IG* I³ 386.145. These possibilities were discussed *supra* as restorations of *IG* I³ 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.