GREEK AND ROMAN NECROMANCY

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CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

PREFACE

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All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	*Athens Annals of Archaeology*
AbhMünchen	*Abhandlungen der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, München*
AD	Ἀρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον
AfO	*Archiv für Orientforschung*
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
AM	*Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilungen*
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*
APA	*American Philological Association*
Arch. Ephem.	Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐφημερίς
ArchRW	*Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*
ARV^2	Beazley 1963
BCH	*Bulletin de correspondance hellénique*
BICS	*Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*
BmusB	*British Museum Bulletin*
BSA	*Annual of the British School at Athens*
CA	(*California Studies in*) *Classical Antiquity*
CAJ	*Cambridge Archaeological Journal*
CIL	*Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*
C&M	*Classica et mediaevalia*
CP	*Classical Philology*
CPG	Leutsch and Schneidewin 1839–51
CQ	*Classical Quarterly*
CR	*Classical Review*
DK	Diels and Krantz 1961
EMC/CV	*Echoes du monde classique/Classical Views*
Ergon	Τὸ ἔργον τῆς ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἑταιρείας
FGH	Jacoby 1923–58
GGM	Müller 1882
G&R	*Greece and Rome*
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
HSCP	*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae*
ILS	H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, 5 vols. (Berlin, 1892–1916).

JbAC	*Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*
JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JHS	*Journal of Hellenic Studies*
K-A	Kassel and Austin 1983–
KP	*Der Kleiny Pauly*
K-T	A. Körte and A. Thierfelder, *Menandri quae supersunt*, 2d ed. (Leipzig 1959)
LCM	*Liverpool Classical Monthly*
LIMC	*Lexicon iconographicum mythologie classicae*
LSCG	Sokolowski 1969
LS	C. T. Lewis and C. Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1879)
LSJ	H. G. Liddell, K. Scott, and H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. (Oxford, 1968)
MÉFRA	*Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'école française de Rome*
MH	*Museum Helveticum*
NJKlA	*Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum*
OED^2	J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, eds., *The Oxford English Dictionary*, (2d ed. Oxford, 1989)
OLD	A. Souter et al., eds., *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1968)
PBSR	*Proceedings of the British School at Rome*
PCPS	*Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*
PDM	*Papyri demoticae magicae*
PG	J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus, series Graeca* (Paris, 1857–66)
PGM	Preisendanz and Henrichs 1973–74
PL	J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus, series Latina* (Paris, 1841–64)
PLM	Baehrens 1879–83
PMG	D. L. Page, ed., *Poetae melici Graeci* (Oxford, 1962)
PO	*Patrologia Orientalis* 1903– (Paris)
P.Oxy.	*Oxyrhynchus Papyri*
PP	*La parola del passato*
QUCC	*Quaderni urbinati di cultura classica*
Praktika	*Πρακτικὰ τῆς ἐν Ἀθήναις ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἑταιρείας*
RAC	*Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*
RE	A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll, *Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*
REA	*Revue des études anciennes*
REG	*Revue des études grecques*
REL	*Revue des études latines*

RGVV	*Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten*
RhM	*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*
RHR	*Revue de l'histoire des réligions*
RP	*Revue de philologie*
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*
SHA	*Scriptores Historiae Augustae*
SIFC	*Studi italiani di filologia classica*
SO	*Symbolae Osloenses*
Suppl. Hell.	H. Lloyd-Jones and P. Parsons, eds., *Supplementum Hellenisticum* (Berlin, 1983)
Suppl. Mag.	Daniel and Maltomini 1990–92
TAM	*Tituli Asiae Minoris*
TAPA	*Transactions of the American Philological Association*
TrGF	B. Snell, R. Kannicht, and S. Radt, *Tragicorum Graecorum fragmenta* (Göttingen, 1971–)
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
WS	*Wiener Studien*
YCS	*Yale Classical Studies*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

INTRODUCTION

Why Necromancy?

AS Gulliver learned in Glubbdubdrib, the only certain historian of antiquity is the necromancer who calls up the dead and compels them to disgorge their secrets.[1] If those who continue to research ancient history by conventional methods have avoided the subject of necromancy, it is presumably for fear of exposing the inferiority of their own craft.

How does one hear from, communicate with, and come to terms with lost loved ones and other dead people? Questions of this sort weigh heavily upon most of us, even in our largely secular Western societies in which the culture and representation of death have been marginalized, and even though we mostly assume that death brings oblivion. Such questions were all the more pressing for the peoples of antiquity, for whom death was all around and everywhere represented. The most direct and tangible manifestation of such communication was necromancy, which, accordingly, cries out for an investigation. The subject also offers more immediate attractions. The following pages are populated by the stock-in-trade of modern horror movies: ghosts, of course, but also demons, witches, magicians, mummies, and zombies, and occasionally even werewolves and the antecedents of vampires.

A treatment of Greco-Roman necromancy may in addition be considered timely, interesting, and important (the usual euphemisms for "fashionable") from a scholarly point of view. The relative scholarly neglect of the topic hitherto has become ever more curious in the 1990s, as books in the related fields of death, ghosts, and magic in antiquity proliferate.[2] Hitherto the most useful contribution to the study of Greco-Roman necromancy at a comprehensive level has been Marcelle Collard's brief, unpublished, and all but inaccessible 1949 University of Liège thesis, "La nécromancie dans l'antiquité," which takes as its task the collation and reproduction of some of the more important literary sources for the subject.[3] At a more localized level, there are, admittedly, numerous commentaries upon and discussions of individual necromancy episodes in the ma-

[1] Swift 1726: book 3.7–8.

[2] E.g., for ghosts, Kytzler 1989; Bernstein 1993; Sourvinou-Inwood 1995; Felton 1999; Johnston 1999; and for magic (and more on ghosts), Faraone and Obbink 1991; Bernand 1991; Faraone 1992 and 1999; Gager 1992; Johnston 1994; Graf 1997a; Clauss and Johnston 1997; Rabinowitz 1998; and Jordan et al. 1999.

[3] Honorable mentions for general treatments go also to Headlam 1902; and Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 546–617, and 1935.

jor works of ancient literature. There have also been many treatments of the supposed archeological site of the Acheron oracle of the dead in Thesprotia in northwest Greece by Dakaris and his followers since the late 1950s, but since the site has been misidentified, their contribution to the understanding of ancient necromancy is minimal where not actually deleterious. The relatively virgin nature of the topic obliges me to keep my eye trained as evenly as possible across all the obviously significant evidence (accordingly, no apology is made for the multiplication of examples), and to foreground questions of a relatively basic, albeit by no means uninteresting, nature: Where was necromancy performed (part I)? Who did it (part II)? How did they do it (part III)? What was it like to perform necromancy, how did one think it worked, and why did one do it (part IV)?

One might ask the last of these questions—"Why did one perform necromancy?"—at both the broad (and glib) psycho-sociological level and the smaller, more practical one. As to the former, one might be tempted to think that the ancients' interest in communicating with their dead through necromancy should lead to informative and distinctive conclusions about the nature of their society. But this is not necessarily true. Again, the centrality of death to ancient society and its universal representation must be borne in mind. Death, the dead, and eschatology were subjects of infinite interest and reflection and, consequently, subjects of many contradictory attitudes. In such a context, it was inevitable that necromancy or something like it should thrive, and that it should itself in turn be a topic of much thought and of much contradiction. Accordingly, necromancy does not help us in the generation of simplistic or reductive conclusions about the nature of ancient society. We might rather expect to learn more about our own society from the fact that, perhaps rather more exceptionally, death and its representation have been pushed to its margins. In other words, the pressing question at the broad psycho-sociological level is not "Why did the ancients practice necromancy?" but "Why don't *we* practice it?" But that is not an issue for this book.

It is rather easier to address the question at the small, practical level. At the core of necromantic practice, it will be argued, was ghost-laying and ghost-placation, certainly conceptually, and perhaps also historically (chapter 1). So the impetus for consulting a ghost would often derive from the fact that one was being attacked or troubled by it in its restlessness. The revelation then sought from it would be the cause and remedy of this dissatisfaction, which was typically occasioned by want of perfect burial or want of revenge upon the killer. Often, too, one would call up a given person's ghost because that person had had information in life that one now needed to access: Where had she buried the treasure? What had been the truth of the Trojan War? But one could also call up ghosts,

known or not, and consult them on wider issues of no special relevance to the person from whom they had derived. In such cases, why should one turn to necromancy at all among the myriad forms of divination available? Necromancy could be chosen because the divination required was one that the dead in general were well placed to provide, such as the timing of the deaths of those still living, or the nature of the afterlife or the universe: When will I die? When will the emperor die? How will the war turn out? How does the dispensation of justice in the underworld dictate that one should best conduct one's life?

Beyond this, necromancy could be chosen for questions of any sort simply because the wise had the name of offering the most powerful form of divination available. So why were the dead wise, and why, in particular, could they see into the future? It may initially seem an intriguing paradox that one should have turned to beings so strongly associated with the past for knowledge of the future. Indeed, some ancient authors themselves seem to have been troubled by such an inconcinnity. But it should be borne in mind that revelation of the future constitutes only a small part of the arcane material revealed in necromantic consultations. Antiquity had no simple or agreed explanation of the wisdom of the dead, and it is perhaps best considered a first principle. Some sources offer partial explanations or rationalizations. The dead could impart the wisdom of their own experiences, particularly of those that had led to their own death. The dead in their graves could witness all that went on around them. The congress of the dead in the underworld pooled their knowledge and understanding of all things. The roots of the future lay in the past, so that the people of one's past were better able to perceive one's future. The future was itself prepared in the underworld, be it in the marshaling of souls in preparation for incarnation, or in the spinning of the Fates. Souls detached from their encumbering bodies had a clearer perception of all things and processes. Perhaps the ghosts also drew some power from the fertile earth itself. (See chapters 14–15.)

But if the study of necromancy does not of itself lead directly to larger conclusions about antiquity's attitudes toward death, it does lead to some conclusions about its conceptualization of the relationship between the surface world of the living and the underworld. For the living and the dead to be able to communicate, the barriers between them had to be dissolved. Necromancy could accordingly be conceived of as taking place in a space located indeterminately between the world above and that below. At the same time, consulters and ghosts had to be brought into a common state of being in which to communicate with each other. Hence the notion that the dead were partly restored to life, while the living were brought closer to death, in the course of a consultation—sometimes

dangerously so. It was hardly surprising, then, that consulters were often confronted with prophecies of the imminence of their own death. (See chapter 16.)

The study of ancient necromancy does have its disappointments. First, literary sources revel in the descriptions of necromantic rites, which could be lurid, but are rather less interested in the substance of the ensuing prophecies, which often strike the reader as weak or bland. The prophecies generated by Lucan's grimly entertaining Erictho are a case in point. Second, for all that necromancy constituted the most direct and explicit form of communication between the living and the dead, accounts of consultations with loved ones often seem lacking in humanity. In the few cases of ghosts being called up primarily for love, the context is presented as one of erotic pathology. In myth, Laodameia called up her husband Protesilaus after sleeping with a dummy of him (chapter 11); Alexander the Great's rogue treasurer Harpalus called up his courtesan Pythionice as part of an extravagant, inappropriate, and decadent mourning for her; and beneath the Corinthian tyrant Periander's calling up of his wife Melissa lurked the fact that he had had sex with her corpse (chapter 5).

Definitions: Magic, Necromancy, and *katabasis*

Many of the recent slew of publications on magic in antiquity rehearse the old debate about the definition of magic, usually in relation to religion. The contributions to this debate can be divided into two broad categories, which may be termed "essentialist" and "linguistic." "Essentialists" attempt to develop a unitary underlying definition of magic in antiquity from ancient words and practices provisionally assumed to be of relevance. Often the project extends further still, to the generation of a supreme definition of magic with a supposed validity across time and place and even across societies and languages. In Platonic terms, they attempt to "discover" the "form" of magic. The construction of such a definition is ultimately an arbitrary process. The use of it as a hermeneutic tool blinds one to variations in language and practice between different societies, and indeed within the same one, and to variations across place and time. Here are some of the hypotheses developed by essentialist scholars writing about magic primarily in a classical context: magic is coercive and manipulative in its attitude toward the gods (Frazer); magic is a degenerate and derivative form of religion (Barb); magic is amoral, and magicians do not give thanks to the powers that aid them (Luck); magic is a form of religious deviance in which goals are sought by means alternate to those normally sanctioned by the dominant religious institution

(Aune); magic is unsanctioned religious activity (Phillips); magic divides the magician from his community, whereas religion integrates him into it (Graf); magic constructs a dialogue with religious rituals, imitating them and inverting them by turns (Thomassen). Versnel insists that an essentialist definition of some kind for magic is unavoidable, if only for "heuristic" purposes.[4]

"Linguists" do not concern themselves with the construction of monolithic definitions or concepts of magic for antiquity in particular or across societies in general. Rather, they focus upon one or more "magical" terms employed in their chosen society and chart the variation in their usage across time and place, or indeed competing and contrasting usage in the same time and place. (Admittedly, linguists may well be guided to their first term by an essentialist supposition of equivalence to a modern-language term such as the English term "magic.") They ask not such things as "What was magic?" but such things as "How, under what circumstances, and why was the word *magos* (provisionally translatable as "mage") used?"[5]

My own approach is a basic linguistic one. The conceptual boundaries of this study are not dictated by any essentialist definitions of "magic," or indeed "necromancy," nor is it my project to generate any. Rather, the conceptual boundaries of the study are dictated by ancient vocabulary, in the first instance the Greek terms *nekuomanteion* (neut. sing.), which we may provisionally translate as "place of necromancy" or "oracle of the dead," and *nekuomanteia* (fem. sing.), which we may provisionally translate as "necromancy." These terms referred for the most part to what may in English be termed "necromancy proper," that is to say, communication with the dead in order to receive prophecy from them.[6] By "prophecy" here I mean the revelation of any hidden information, not merely

[4] Frazer 1913; Barb 1963 (cf. Deubner 1922); Luck 1962: 4–5 and 1985: 4–5; Aune 1980: 1510–16; Graf 1991b: 188, 195–96; and 1997a: 61–88; Phillips 1986: 2679 and 2711–32, and 1991: 260–62 and 266 (although he probably does not see himself as an essentialist); Versnel 1991a; Hunink 1997, 1: 14 (following the lines of Graf and Phillips); Faraone 1999: 17–18; and Thomassen 1999.

[5] See my remarks at Flint et al. 1999: 86. I do not hold the view attributed to me at p. xii of that volume. For expressions of views similar to my own, see Segal 1981; Betz 1991: 244–47; Faraone 1991b: 17–20; Gager 1992: 24–25 and 39 (with bibliography there referred to); and Braarvig 1999. I have much sympathy with the project of Graf 1995 and 1997a: 20–60 (despite note 4) to trace the linguistic developments of *magos*-words through the course of antiquity. Tupet (1976: xi) rightly bases her investigation into magic in earlier Latin literature on her sources' use of words. If it is relatively easy to find Greek and Latin words that (provisionally) correspond to "magic," it is difficult to find words that remotely correspond to "religion," which of course denotes a post-Christian concept: see Bernand 1991: 65–69.

[6] Cf. Collard 1949: 11–14.

prediction.[7] But necromancy proper was not always separable from the wider magical exploitation of ghosts, a significance often given to the word in English,[8] and so related aspects of ghost-magic will receive occasional attention.

Nekuomanteion (neut. sing.) is already attested in the fifth century B.C.[9] *Nekuomanteia* (fem. sing.), *nekuia*, and other abstract terms translatable as or related to "necromancy proper" are only attested from the third century B.C., although they may well have been older, and may have begun life as the titles of tales in which prophecies were received from the dead. The specific histories of words in this category have been relegated to an appendix to this introduction. We find many further words used in full or partial association with these terms, or with the practices associated with them. Several such words define persons, and one of the most important of these is *psuchagōgos*, "evocator of souls," also found first in the fifth century B.C. (I shall use the terms "evocate," "evocation," and "evocator" in their technical necromantic significances throughout).[10] A number of the words found in association with these terms or with the practices to which they refer are words that conventionally occupy center-stage in discussions of ancient "magic," such as *magos* (Gk.), *magus* (Lat.), "mage"; *goēs* (Gk.), "sorcerer"; *pharmakis* (Gk.), "witch"; and *saga* (Lat.), "witch." These words and others all have their own distinctive histories. Linguistic considerations bear upon the structuring of the first part of the book, which is largely devoted to an understanding of oracles of the dead (note the opening remarks of chapter 2). They bear also upon the structuring of the second part, where the terms applied to practitioners and to the practices associated with them are dealt with in a largely discrete fashion (see in particular chapters 7 and 9). In this part I confine myself to investigating the application of these words to practitioners of necromancy; I do not attempt the enormous task of supplying general histories of them. It should also be made clear that there are many accounts of ancient necromancy with which none of these "magic" words are associated and which employ no practice exclusively associated with any of the "magic" words.[11] Accordingly, ancient necromancy thrived

[7] For attempts at more elaborate definitions of the term, see Bourguignon 1987; Tropper 1989: 13–23; and Schmidt 1995: 111.

[8] As at Pharr 1932: 279; cf., for a similar usage in French, Annequin 1973: 60.

[9] See chapter 2.

[10] For these technical meanings, see *OED*[2] s.vv. evocate (2), evocation (3a), evocator (a); and note also evocatrix.

[11] See Lawson 1934: 80 for the practice of necromancy without magic. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 333; Headlam 1902: 55; Lowe 1929: 52; and Massoneau 1934: 39 go too far in asserting that ancient necromancy was impossible without magic.

both within and outside the ever-shifting sphere of the "magical," whatever that was.

It is only proper that such attempts as have been made to produce typologies for ancient necromancy should be noticed here, for all that they are mired in the old essentialist tradition. Hopfner's typology distinguished first the "Homeric-Greek" type, based on "religious" offerings to the dead, and represented by the necromancies in the poetry of Homer, Aeschylus, Virgil, Seneca, and Silius Italicus; second, the "Oriental" type, represented in its purest form by the "magical" incantations and corpse-manipulation of the Greek Magical Papyri from Egypt; and third, the "Mixed" type, represented by the necromancies of the poets and novelists Lucan, Statius, Apuleius, Lucian, and Heliodorus. Such a distinction admittedly works reasonably well at the broad descriptive level, although it is not clear that the elements that Hopfner sees as characteristic of "Oriental" necromancy, such as "magical" incantations, were completely absent from the necromancies he assigns to the "Greek" type. Collard saw ancient necromancy as gradually detaching itself from "religion" and becoming more purely "magical."[12] It is certainly true that the more graphically and explicitly "magical" examples of necromancy belong to the A.D. period, but it should be borne in mind that the "witch" Circe lurks, somehow or other, already behind our first necromancy, that of Homer's Odysseus, and that our second necromancy, that of Aeschylus's *Persians*, is probably influenced by ideas about the mages of the Persians.

The focus of the book is necromancy as opposed to descent by the living into the underworld (*katabasis*), but some reference to the latter remains inevitable.[13] Not only did one "descend" into some oracles of the dead, but, as we have seen, even when evocating ghosts a necromancer could be imagined to be dissolving the boundaries between the lower world and the upper one in such a way that the distinction between the descent of the consulter and the ascent of the ghosts was effaced.[14] When in myth Heracles famously descended to carry off Cerberus, he supposedly emerged at *nekuomanteion* sites and perhaps even enhanced their necromantic power for having dislodged the warden of ghosts. According to some other mythological accounts, Theseus and Pirithous made their descents at the Acheron *nekuomanteion*, as did Orpheus.[15] Consequently, the attempt to draw a hard and fast distinction between necromancy and *katabasis* leads to embarrassment: for such a principle, Collard actually

[12] Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 546–49; Collard 1949: 143.

[13] For *katabasis*, see in particular Ganschinietz 1919 (the relationship to necromancy is discussed at 2373) and Clark 1979.

[14] See chapter 16.

[15] See chapter 4.

excluded Virgil's Aeneas's famous and important consultation of the ghosts in the *Aeneid* from his survey of literary accounts of necromancy (an uncharacteristic misjudgment).[16]

A Brief History of Necromancy and Its Sources

This study aims to cover necromancy as practiced and imagined in the pagan Greek and Roman worlds. Spatially, these could of course extend far beyond "Greece," let alone Rome, and the documentary evidence left by the Greek-speaking population of Egypt under the Roman empire is of particular importance. The Latin necromantic tradition as we have it follows on all but seamlessly from the Greek. If the Romans had their own distinctive form of necromancy before submerging themselves in the Greek variety, no trace of it remains. As to period, we begin with the already mature culture of necromancy as it is found in Homer's *Odyssey*, which perhaps reached its final form around 700–650 B.C. We end, notionally, with the fall of the Roman empire in A.D. 476, but Christian writers prior to this time, such as Tertullian, Hippolytus, and Augustine, are only given serious consideration to the extent that they can shed light on pagan necromantic thought and practice. The Christian spin in their discussions is usually self-evident and easily controllable. Surprisingly perhaps, the early Christians did not uniformly dismiss necromancy; Justin Martyr found in it conveniently graphic proof the soul's survival of death. Brief reference will be made to necromancy in the indigenous societies of Mesopotamia and Egypt and among the Jews. No reference is made to the "spiritualism" that so charmed our Victorian forbears.[17]

The investigation unashamedly makes use of a wide range of literary and documentary sources, to many of which only glancing references are made. Some of the more important sources are specifically introduced and contextualized either below or in the body of the book as they are exploited, but pressure of space forbids the provision of such information in all cases, which would in any case be tedious for the expert and inexpert alike. It is trusted, nonetheless, that all sources have been handled with a sensitivity to the contexts, strategies, and agendas of their production sufficient to the role they are called upon to play. A general point that is worth making, however, is that there is little in any of our fields of evidence—arguably even none of it—that, when pressed, can be taken to document directly any one specific historical performance of necromancy

[16] Collard 1949: 43.

[17] For an investigation into "spiritualism" in antiquity, see Dodds 1936; I thank Byron Harries for this reference.

in antiquity. There is, then, a sense in which this is less a history of necromancy itself in antiquity, than a history of ancient ideas, beliefs, and prejudices about it.

The body of the study is organized primarily on a thematic and synchronic basis, rather than a diachronic one, for a number of reasons. First, the most important strand of our evidence, the Greek and Latin poetic tradition, was fundamentally very conservative and projected the evocation of the dead in broadly the same way for over a thousand years. In essence, the "last" of the classical poets, Claudian, was still chasing hares set running by the "first," Homer. Second, the evidence for many institutions of necromantic practice is thin, fragmentary, and distributed across large spans of time, so that we are constrained to take an effectively synchronic approach for the reconstruction of these institutions. Third, for all that inappropriate retrojection is undesirable, the general patchiness of evidence leads us to suspect that the correspondence between the first attestation of any given necromantic institution and its first historical appearance is extraordinarily low. Hence, it is almost impossible to write a meaningful developmental history of the institutions of necromancy in antiquity. Nonetheless, I offer a brief but inevitably vague one here by way of orientation, and, for the final reason, combine it with a review of some of the major literary sources.

We have no evidence for necromancy in Greece prior to that provided or implied by the mythological tale of the wanderings of Odysseus in the Homeric *Odyssey*. The basic rites of necromancy in the historical period closely resembled observances paid to the dead at their tombs. This may, but need not, indicate that Greek necromantic practice had originated in such observances (chapter 1). A little tenth-century B.C. evidence from Lefkandi in Euboea (a broken centaur effigy) may indicate that the Greeks were already using ghost-laying techniques at graves similar to those known in the historical period.[18] Although rites of necromancy partially resembling the Greek ones may have been performed in the Near East at an earlier period, we need not assume a direct line of influence between the two (chapter 9).

Homer's *Odyssey* is a traditional, oral poem. It is usually thought to have reached its final form around 700–650 B.C., but it had been in gestation for hundreds of years—and in some respects for thousands of years—previously. The poem's necromancy sequence, *Nekuia*, occupies book 11. It is night. On Circe's instructions, Odysseus digs a pit (*bothros*). He pours libations around it to all the dead, first of a mixture of milk and honey, *melikraton*, second of sweet wine, and third of water, and then he sprinkles barley on top. He prays to the dead, promising to sacrifice to all

[18] Desborough et al. 1970.

of them on his return home the best sterile heifer of his herd and to burn treasures on a pyre for them. To the ghost of the prophet Tiresias, with which he particularly wishes to speak, he promises a separate sacrifice of his outstanding all-black ram. With his bronze sword, he opens the necks of (jugulates) a pair of black sheep, male and female, holding their heads down toward the underworld while turning his own face in the opposite direction. He lets their blood flow into the pit. At this point the ghosts gather. Odysseus orders his companions Perimedes and Eurylochus to flay the sheep and burn their bodies in holocaust (i.e., to burn them whole), and to pray to Hades and Persephone. All the ghosts are eager to drink the blood, which will give them the power of recognition and speech, so Odysseus must use his sword to ensure that only those ghosts with whom he wishes to converse approach it. But before he can select and speak to the ghost of Tiresias, he is confronted, unbidden, by that of his dead young comrade Elpenor, who asks him to secure his burial. This account was to remain basic to representations of and thinking about necromancy throughout antiquity, and this is particularly true of its evocation technology (chapter 11). The account's influence upon the necromancy or necromancy-related scenes of subsequent Greek and Latin epic poetry, our single most important category of sources for the subject, was particularly direct and pervasive, and can be seen from Apollonius's *Argonautica* onward.

However, the Homeric *Nekuia* curiously dissents in some key respects from the necromantic traditions that evidently preceded and surrounded it, the traces of which can be seen in its text, and that also continued to thrive throughout antiquity. First, it denies that the dead possess any special wisdom *qua* dead. Only Tiresias's ghost gives Odysseus any arcane information, yet he was a prophet in life (chapter 16). Second, and concomitantly, Odysseus receives no arcane information from the ghost that rises first and possesses the ideal characteristics for necromantic exploitation, that of the untimely dead and unburied Elpenor. This ghost is left to intrude uninvited into the necromancy in which it had apparently been groomed to star. Third, Odysseus performs his consultation without an expert necromancer by his side, but traces of direct guidance from both male and female experts remain. The witch Circe instructs Odysseus in the rites he must perform to raise the ghosts, and supplies him with the sheep he needs to sacrifice; after his consultation, she debriefs him. She is, then, the first example of a witch including necromancy in her armory, a type that would come to flourish particularly in Latin poetry (chapter 9). In the course of the consultation itself, the ghost of Tiresias takes up the role of instructing Odysseus in the management of the other ghosts.

The *Odyssey* account is also the earliest attestation of an oracle of the dead, or *nekuomanteion*, namely that of the Acheron in Thesprotia in

northwest Greece. Oracles of the dead were entrances to the underworld and were based either in adapted caves or in lakeside precincts. At these, it seems, one would consult the dead by performing the rites of evocation before going to sleep and encountering the ghost and hearing its prophecy in one's sleep ("incubation," chapter 6). We have substantial amounts of information, literary and archeological, bearing upon four such oracles (chapter 2). The archaic and early classical periods were probably their heyday. The Acheron oracle seems to have consisted of a lakeside precinct. The historian Herodotus may imply that the Acheron oracle still existed when he published in the 420s B.C. It was probably defunct by the time Pausanias wrote his guidebook to Greece, ca. A.D. 150, although later writers may imply that it was used again (chapter 4; this Pausanias will sometimes be given the epithet "periegete," i.e., "guide," in what follows, to distinguish him from another important actor in our story, Pausanias the regent of Sparta). The oracle at Avernus near Cumae in Campania in southern Italy was also probably a lakeside precinct. It seems to have been developed by Greek settlers who relocated Odysseus's mythical visit to the underworld there, and so to some extent calqued it on the Acheron oracle. This was perhaps in the seventh or sixth century B.C. The oracle is first attested, in a mythological projection, by the tragedian Sophocles in the fifth century B.C. In the next century, the historian Ephorus was already speaking of it as a thing of the remote past (his prime concern being to justify the absence of a cave at the site). This was the oracle of the dead that went on to flourish more than any other in Greek and Latin literature, and it is likely that individuals at any rate continued to use the lake for necromancy throughout antiquity (chapter 5). The oracle at Tainaron, at the tip of the Mani peninsula, the Peloponnese's southern extremity, was based in a small cave, the remains of which may still be seen. If one could believe the tradition that Archilochus's killer Corax called up his ghost there, then the oracle would have been in operation by the middle of the seventh century B.C. A Spartan tradition relating to the man of Argilios and the regent Pausanias, vanquisher of the Persians at the battle of Plataea, may at any rate indicate that it was functioning by the early fifth century B.C. Pausanias the periegete suggests that it was functioning still in the second century A.D. The oracle at Heracleia Pontica on the south coast of the Black Sea was based in a rather more elaborate cave, but it cannot have been operational prior to the Greek settlement of Heracleia, ca. 560 B.C. The regent Pausanias supposedly consulted it in the early 470s B.C. The historian Ammianus Marcellinus implies that it was functioning still in his own day, the fourth century A.D. (chapter 3).

Throughout antiquity, Greek prose writers preserve a series of evidently traditional tales about consultations at these oracles. These tales must

originate in the archaic period or the early classical one. The earliest attested and most noteworthy of these is the account of the Corinthian tyrant Periander's necromancy of his wife Melissa at the Acheron *nekuomanteion*, ostensibly around 600 B.C., as preserved by Herodotus (chapter 4). Also preserved in such sources is the important complex of necromantic traditions that form a "diptych" around the death of the regent Pausanias, of which much will be made. Compelled to call up the ghost of Cleonice at Heracleia, to settle it after accidentally killing her, he was driven by it to his own death. His own ghost then in turn had to be called up by *psychagōgoi* or "evocators" to be settled (chapters 3 and 7).

The tragedies of Aeschylus (ca. 525–455 B.C.) have an important role in the history of necromancy. His fragmentary *Psuchagogoi* affords us our first attestation of these necromantic professionals (again, projected into a mythical context). They may well have been around for a long time before. They seem to have been associated with oracles of the dead, but also to have acted independent of them, at least for the purpose of ghost-laying. From the fifth century B.C. also we begin to hear of other professional necromancers, notably *goētes*, "sorcerers," whose very name derives from the mourning wail, *goos*, and indicates that their wide powers actually originated in the manipulation of the souls of the dead (chapter 7). Further, the fragments of the philosopher-mystic Empedocles (ca. 485–435 B.C.) and brief but important notices of Herodotus about Aristeas of Proconnesus and Zalmoxis (420s B.C.) indicate that the rich traditions relating to a chain of the Greek "shamans," which appear to have thrived primarily in Pythagorean schools, were already well established in the fifth century B.C., even though the bulk of our evidence for these traditions derives from the A.D. period. These "shaman" figures fitted necromancy comfortably into their repertoire, which also included the sending of their own souls on journeys outside their bodies, which they abandoned in a state of temporary death; retreat into underworld chambers for the acquisition of wisdom; and a more general interest in prophecy. The "shaman" traditions seemingly permit us to build up a more detailed, "internal," and sympathetic picture of the world of the necromancer in archaic and classical Greece (chapter 8).

Aeschylus's *Persians* of 472 B.C. preserves Greek literature's second major extant scene of necromancy. Here the Persian queen-mother Atossa, with the help of Persian elders, calls up the ghost of her dead husband Darius at his tomb. The Greeks and Romans were to make a particular association between necromancy and the Persian magi. It is disputed whether the yoking of necromancy with Persians here is to be considered merely coincidental or the first manifestation of this trend. I prefer the latter. The assumption that such an association is already being made makes the best sense of Herodotus's subsequent account of the terrors

that fell upon the Persian army on the battlefield of Troy (the soldiers feared that the mages had called up the ghosts of the Trojan War's warriors). At any rate, the link is indisputably attested by Python's fragmentary *Agen* of 326 B.C., which relays the Harpalus episode. The Greeks and Romans were to come to associate Babylonian Chaldaeans and Egyptians, too, with necromancy. This phenomenon is not heavily attested until the imperial period, although the *Agen* again may imply that necromancy was already being attributed to the Chaldaeans on the eve of the hellenistic age. Our first attestation of the attribution of necromancy to the Egyptians may come in the early 30s B.C., with Virgil's sorcerer Moeris. All these peoples alike could be thought to have access to remote, obscure, and ancient forms of wisdom (chapter 9).

The late classical period provides what is probably our first attestation of the association with necromancy of the Cumaean Sibyl, the virgin prophetess inspired by Apollo. This attestation is in the form of a series of vases by the Cumaean Painter. This tradition was to enter Latin poetry. Here it is found first in the work of Naevius (later third century B.C.), and it went on to find its most famous expression in Virgil's necromancy sequence in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, published in 19 B.C. (and less famous expression in Silius Italicus's late first-century A.D. *Punica*; chapter 5).

The apparent dearth of major literary treatments of necromancy from the hellenistic period is partly made good by the Greek satirist Lucian, who wrote in the second century A.D. Among his works, a major series is "Menippean," that is, the works feature either the figure of Menippus himself or at least the underworld themes or Cynic-philosophical outlook of such works. The most important of these for us is the *Menippus* or *Nekuomanteia*, in which Menippus is taken down to the underworld by the Chaldaean necromancer Mithrobarzanes to learn the secret of life from the ghost of Tiresias.[19] These works reflect, to a greater or lesser extent, the writings of the Cynic Menippus of Gadara, who flourished around 300–250 B.C.[20] At the beginning of the twentieth century, Lucian was regarded by Helm as a hack, shamelessly recycling the works of others. Since then he has acquired a reputation rather for originality and innovation, particularly in the form of the comic dialogue with which he usually worked.[21] However, it still has to be conceded that Lucian's *Menippus* bore a fundamental resemblance to Menippus's *Nekuia*, which can

[19] The others are: *Kataplous*, *Dialogues of the Dead*, *Charon*, *Icaromenippus*, *Jupiter tragoedus*, *Jupiter confutatus*, *Deorum concilium*, *Convivium*, *Gallus*, *Vitarum auctio*, *Piscator*, *Fugitivi*, *Bis accusatus*, *Saturnalia*, and *Timon*; cf. Hall 1981: 466.

[20] Most of our knowledge of Menippus's life and work derives from Diogenes Laertius 6.99–101.

[21] Helm 1906; McCarthy 1934 and Hall 1981: 64–150 (both strenuously objecting to Helm's line); and Relihan 1996: 270–80.

be reconstructed from two ancient notices and from the features Lucian's *Menippus* shares with another work that is also partly derived from it, Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis*.[22] Early in the third century B.C., too, Crantor of Soli told his consolation tale of Elysius of Terina, which gives us important evidence for the operation of oracles of the dead (chapter 6). The claim that the second-century B.C. hellenized Egyptian Bolus of Mendes wrote on necromancy seems insecure.[23]

In the late Roman Republic, a citation of the polymath Varro (116–27 B.C.) is our earliest sure indication that necromancy had become associated with scrying, in particular with certain varieties of lecanomancy, divination from bowls, although the late classical "Sibyl" images of the Cumaean Painter may hint that such an association had already been made at an earlier stage. The usual method of divination from bowls was, it seems, to find pictures or messages in the glistenings of the liquids they contained, and perhaps also in the cloudings of mixing liquids within them. A great wealth of recipes for the performance of lecanomancy, some of them explicitly necromantic, is found in the third- and fourth-century Greek A.D. (and Demotic) magical papyri from Egypt (on which more below). It becomes clear from these in particular that the observation of the bowl was often performed by a boy-medium, probably under hypnosis. Here lecanomancy is also strongly associated with lychnomancy, divination by lamps, seemingly from manifestations in the flames, and lychnomancy, too, can be regarded as sometimes necromantic. Boy-mediums had been involved with soul-manipulation from at least the mid-fourth century B.C., the time of Aristotle, as we learn from his disciple Clearchus. It was probably the use of such boy-mediums for necromantic purposes that gave rise to the popular notion in the Roman empire that necromancers sacrificed boys for their rites (chapter 12).

Necromancy scenes flourished in the morbid atmosphere of imperial Latin poetry. There are indications that it had already had some role in pre-Augustan work. Naevius apart, Cicero quotes an anonymous poetic fragment about the evocation of ghosts at Lake Avernus in his *Tusculan*

[22] Suda s.v. *phaios*; and Diogenes Laertius 6.102 ("Menedemus" is clearly a mistake for "Menippus"). Varro's lost Menippean satire, *Peri exagōgēs*, "On Drawing Out (Ghosts?)," may also have been based on it. See Hall 1981: 76, 100, and, for reconstruction of the *Nekuia*, 128–30. At pp. 143, 200, and 509, Hall singles out the purifications of Mithrobarzanes as innovative Lucianic material on the ground that they parody Mithraism, but it is unlikely that they do. The second and third books of the *Silloi* ("Lampoons") of the Skeptic Timon of Phlius (ca. 320–230 B.C.), in which he descended to the underworld to be confronted with a series of dead philosophers, may similarly have owed a debt to Menippus: for fragments and discussion, see Diels 1901: 173–206; see also Long 1978 and Di Marco 1989.

[23] *Pace* Faraone 1999: 11; fragments at DK 68 B'300.

Disputations of 44 B.C.,[24] and Laberius (ca. 106–43 B.C.) wrote mimes entitled *Necyomantea* and *Lacus Avernus*. But from the Augustan period on we find major necromancy sequences extant in the work of Horace (*Satires* 1.8, ca. 30 B.C.), Virgil (*Aeneid* 6, 19 B.C.), Seneca (*Oedipus*, before A.D. 65), Lucan (*Pharsalia* 6, ca. A.D. 65), Silius Italicus (*Punica* 13, late 80s A.D.), Statius (*Thebaid* 4, ca. A.D. 91/2, and closely resembling Seneca's sequence),[25] and Valerius Flaccus (*Argonautica* 1, ca. A.D. 79–95). Horace's text is a satire, Seneca's a tragedy, the remainder are epics. The sequences subsequent to Lucan's seldom make for thrilling reading, but they incorporate much that is useful in the reconstruction of necromantic practices and thinking about them.

It is also with Horace's Canidia that the great Latin tradition of the necromantic witch takes off for us. The topos can be found, sketched in at least a few lines, in most subsequent Latin poets. It is highly likely that the figure of the necromantic witch had already thrived in Greek poetry. Circe apart, Apollonius of Rhodes' witch Medea had instructed Jason in the calling up of Hecate in a heavily necromantic ritual. Perhaps the Cumaean Sibyl contributed something to the development of the Latin variant in the lost literature of the Republic (chapter 9). Horace's satire may also constitute the first attestation of the use of a voodoo doll in necromancy. The issue is complicated by the fact that his witches combine a necromantic rite with an erotic one, in which the voodoo dolls clearly do in any case belong. Voodoo dolls certainly are used much later in a purely necromantic rite by the old woman of Bessa in Heliodorus's *Aethiopica* (fourth century A.D.?). The use of dolls for necromancy in a much earlier period may be indicated by, among other things, the myth of Protesilaus and Laodameia (chapter 11).

Of these Latin poetic texts, by far the most important is that of Lucan. Not only does he provide us with antiquity's most elaborate and entertaining portrayal of necromancy, but he presents us with the single greatest innovation in the representation of it. He introduces us to the technique of reanimation necromancy, as performed by his glorious Thessalian witch Erictho upon the corpse of a Pompeian soldier. She pumps hot blood and numerous far-flung magical ingredients into the corpse. Then she makes inarticulate cries before invoking a range of underworld powers. The ghost materializes beside the corpse, but at first refuses to re-enter it. Erictho lashes the corpse with a snake and begins a second, more threatening address to the underworld powers, and at once the reanimation is completed, and the corpse leaps upright and responds to

[24] Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.16.37.

[25] Liedloff 1884: 19–28; and Collard 1949: 69 and 141.

the questions put to it. Subsequently we find two other major reanimation sequences in romances, Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* (ca. A.D. 160s)[26] and Heliodorus's *Aethiopica*. Reanimation technology, as it is portrayed, builds upon evocation technology, but it is much less conservative in itself. One of the key issues for the development of ancient necromancy is the source of this technology, which at first sight appears to spring fully formed from the head of Erictho. An important text in the background is the seventh book of Ovid's epic *Metamorphoses* (ca. A.D. 8). In an elaborate sequence here, Medea rejuvenates the aged Aeson with a technology that strongly prefigures Erictho's, and that may in turn draw upon previous reanimation episodes. It is not easy to see what institutions of necromancy, if any, in the "real world" such sequences elaborate. It is argued here that these sequences most probably constitute elaborations of necromantic rituals employing skulls or "talking heads." Such rituals can perhaps be taken back to the archaic period with the myth of Orpheus's talking head (chapter 13).

Accusations of the performance of necromancy flew about wildly in the Roman empire. This was no doubt in part because it was effectively outlawed, alongside practices of "magic" and "divination." Often, from the time of Nero, it was the emperors themselves who were the subjects of such accusations. These accusations are for the most part conveniently understood as "myths," the function of which was to portray the emperors as excessive, beyond the law, brazen, and cruel. Where individuals were accused of performing necromancy, we are usually told that their object was the prediction, and perhaps thereby the hastening, of the death of the emperor (chapter 10).

From the third and fourth centuries A.D. there survive a large number of Greek magical papyri, preserved in the sands of Egypt (along with some connected and comparable texts written in Demotic). The most important documents among these are lengthy recipe-books or "formularies," comprising spells of all kinds. These papyri reflect a rich and complex magical culture that combines old Greek material with material from Egyptian and Near Eastern cultures in a distinctive synthesis. It is often impossible to point with certainty to the cultural origins of institutions reflected, and impossible, too, to determine the ages of the institutions represented.[27] A number of these papyri deal importantly with necromancy, the most important of all being the papyrus *PGM* IV, "the Great Magical Papyrus in Paris," which contains a chain of necromantic spells attributed to one "Pitys." These spells derive necromantic prophecies from rituals per-

[26] There is much material of more general interest, too, in the same author's *Apology*.

[27] For general discussion of the phenomenon and its context, see Nock 1929; Gager 1987; Martinez 1991: 6–8; Betz 1982 and 1992: xli–liii; Brashear 1992 and 1995 (especially); and Dickie 1999: 190.

formed on corpses, although it is argued here that only a skull need have been used. These papyri are the sole direct "documentary" evidence for the practice of necromancy in antiquity (chapters 12 and 13).

It is a remarkable fact that there is almost no epigraphy of direct relevance to necromancy. Oracles of the dead were evidently not centers of written display. One can only point to the mention of an evocator (*psuchagōgos*) on a fourth-century B.C. lead question-tablet from Dodona (chapter 4), and two epitaphs from second- to fourth-century A.D. Asia Minor offering the services of their corpse's ghosts for necromancy (chapter 1).

Appendix to the Introduction: Abstract Terms for "Necromancy" in Greek and Latin

Abstract terms equating to "necromancy" built on the Greek *nek-* root (with variant stems *neku-* and *nekr-*) appear to have begun life as titles of literary works in which prophecies were received from the dead. *Nekuia* is first attested as the title of Menippus's account of his necromancy, written in the earlier third century B.C. It was presumably taken from a title already acquired by the eleventh book of Homer's *Odyssey*, although we wait until the first century B.C. before Diodorus explicitly refers to this book under the name by which it is still known.[28] The term is used as a common noun simply equivalent to "necromancy" by the mid-third-century A.D. Herodian.[29] *Nekuomanteia*, "divination from the dead," the feminine-singular abstract, is found first in a Latinized form, *Necyomantia*, as the title of a mime by the first-century B.C. Laberius.[30] In this century also, Cicero uses the Greek neuter-plural term *nekuomanteia* to mean "rites of divination from the dead" and attributes their practice to Appius Claudius.[31] In the next century, the elder Pliny knows the feminine word, now Latinized as *Necyomantea*, as an alternative title for Homer's eleventh book.[32] In the next century again, back in its Greek

[28] Diodorus 4.39; cf. Plutarch *Moralia* 740c; Maximus of Tyre 14.2; and Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* 24.1. Plutarch at *Moralia* 17b applies the plural term to a range of descriptions of the underworld; cf. Theodoret *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 10 (*PG* 83, 1061a). For Tupet (1976: 125), the meaning of *nekuia* should be confined to "descent to the dead."

[29] Herodian 4.12. In the meantime, Cicero had used the word three times in 49 B.C. as a term of abuse for Caesar's entourage—"hell let loose": *Letters to Atticus* 9.10, 11, and 18; see Clark 1979: 37 for the translation.

[30] Aulus Gellius 16.7 and 20.6 (at Bonaria 1956: pp. 52–55).

[31] Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.37.

[32] Pliny *Natural History* 35.132; but the reading is disputed: see LS s.vv. *necyomantea* and *necromantia*; it is found in its proper Greek form at Hermogenes *Progymnasmata* 2.14.13; Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 11.1; and Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* 24.1 (on which see Clark 1979: 53–54).

form, the word constitutes the alternative title of Lucian's satire *Menippus*.[33] The Greek term *nekromanteia* (built on the *r*-stem) is only found as a gloss on *nekuomanteia* in Hesychius, although the Greeks had developed the cognate *r*-stem form *nekromantis* ("necromancer"?) by the time of Ps.-Lycophron's *Alexandra* of ca. 196 B.C.[34] *Nekromanteia* may even have originated as a back-formation from Latin usage, since that language generally preferred to represent the Greek stem to itself as *necromant-* rather than as *necyomant-*.[35]

A Greek neuter-plural term *psuchomanteia*, "rites for divination from souls," is found Latinized as *psychomantia* in first-century B.C. Cicero, and the practice of these rites, too, is attributed to Appius Claudius in a passage parallel to the one cited above, which nicely guarantees that the term is synonymous with *nekuomanteia*.[36] A feminine abstract *psuchomanteia*, "divination from souls," is found much later in Greek form in the sixth-century A.D. Aeneas of Gaza.[37] The feminine abstract *psuchagōgia*, "soul-evocation," is found first in the second- or third-century A.D. Philostratus.[38] The fourth-century A.D. Virgilian commentator Servius indicates that in his day, a more refined typology had been developed. For him, the term *sciomantia*, "divination from shades" (Latinized from Greek *skiomanteia*), was used for the ordinary evocation of ghosts, with the term *necromantia* now reserved for divination by the reanimation of corpses, as in Lucan.[39] How far this distinction was maintained beyond Servius's circle is unclear. It is noteworthy that Latin never appears to have developed an abstract term for necromancy from its own vocabulary.

[33] In the fourth or fifth century A.D., John Chrysostom (*In epistulam ad Romanos*, *PG* 60, 627.15) may apply the term more loosely to magical cursing.

[34] [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 682; see chapters 7 and 16.

[35] See LS and *OLD* s.vv. *necromantia*, *necromantii*, and *necyomantea*.

[36] Cicero *On Divination* 1.132 and *Tusculan Disputations* 1.115.

[37] Aeneas of Gaza *Theophrastus* 54 Colonna.

[38] Philostratus *Heroicus* 19.3; cf. *Suda* s.v. *psuchagōgei*; Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 9.65; and Nicephorus Gregoras, in *PG* 149, 615.

[39] Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.149 and 667; Gordon (1987a: 234) approves.

PART I

PLACES

CHAPTER 1

TOMBS AND BATTLEFIELDS

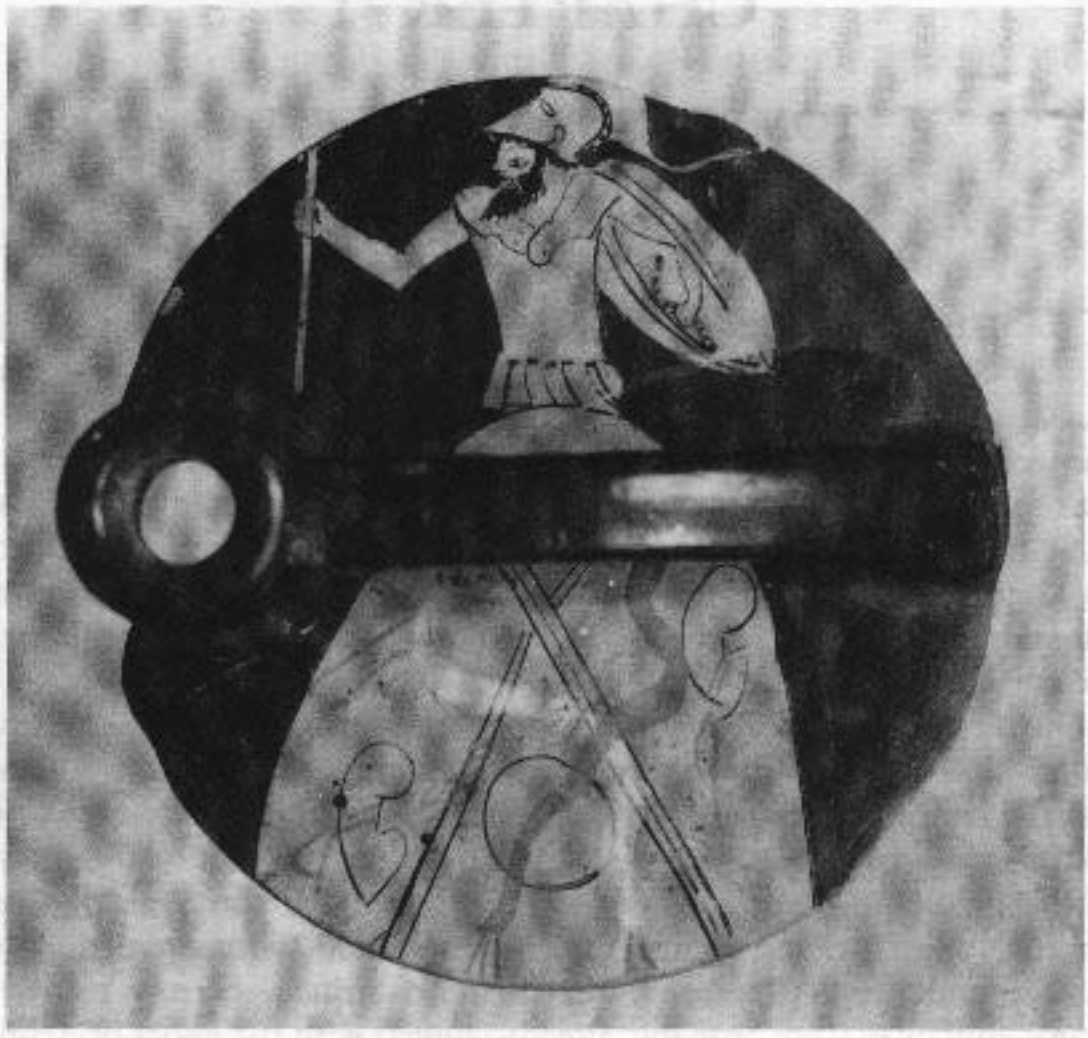
THE prime site for necromancy and its conceptual home in the Greek and Roman worlds was the tomb, which served the living as the home of the ghost. A ghost was often believed to hover in the vicinity of its corpse's place of burial.[1] The importance of tombs as sites for the exercise of control over ghosts is demonstrated by the many curse tablets (in Greek *katadesmoi*; in Latin *defixiones*) and voodoo dolls (in Greek *kolossoi*) deposited in them. The tablets were addressed to the ghosts within, who were required to achieve, by means direct or indirect, the curse described.[2]

Our first fully extant literary instance of necromancy at the tomb is found in Aeschylus's *Persians* (472 B.C.). Here the queen mother Atossa and the chorus of Persian elders make the ghost of her husband Darius, the old king, rise up at his tomb so that she can tell him of the disaster of the new king, their son Xerxes. The staging of this, one of Greek tragedy's most striking scenes, may have required the construction of a passage underneath the stage area or of an artificial barrow above it.[3] Tragic audiences were probably already familiar with the ghost of Achilles similarly rising above his Trojan barrow in his golden armor to demand the sacrifice of Polyxena. This commonplace episode of the cyclic epics is

[1] Greek world: e.g., Plato *Phaedo* 81b–d and Hippocrates 1.38. Roman world: e.g., Apuleius *Apology* 6; Origen *Contra Celsum* 7.5; Lactantius *Divinae institutiones* 2.6; Sallust philosophus 19; Ammianus 19.12.13–14; Gregory of Nyssa *De anima*, *PG* 46, 88b; see also Petronius 65 (dinners with the dead on their tombs on the ninth day after death); Porphyry *On Abstinence* 2.47; and Macrobius *Commentary on the Somnium Scipionis* 1.13.10. See discussions at Cumont 1949: 38–39 and 81–82; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 26–27; Toynbee 1971: 37–39 and 50–51; Jordan 1980: 234; and Garland 1985: 12.

[2] For curse tablets, see in particular: Wünsch 1897 and 1898; Audollent 1904; Besnier 1920; Kagarow 1929; Ziebarth 1934; Solin 1968; Wortmann 1968; Preisendanz 1972; Jordan 1985a (reporting, at 207, that of the approximately 625 tablets of known provenance in 1985, about 325 came from graves), 1985b, and 1994; Faraone 1989, 1991b, 1993, and 1999; Tomlin 1988; Lopez Jimeno 1991; Gager 1992; Jameson et al. 1993: 125–29; Graf 1997a: 118–74; Voutiras 1998; Giordano 1999; Johnston 1999: 71–80; and Ogden 1999. Their use in tombs is described at *PGM* VII. 451–52; cf. Libanius 41.7. Voodoo dolls: Faraone 1991a (nos. 1, 5, 6, 18, 20, 22, and 34 found in graves; cf. also p. 205); further bibliography in chapter 11.

[3] Aeschylus *Persians* 598–842. Staging: Mende 1913; Hickman 1938: 25 and 81–82; and Taplin 1977: 116–19. Pollux (*Onomasticon* 4.127 and 132) speaks of under-stage passages from which ghosts could rise on "Charon's ladders."



1. A hero rises from his tomb. Red-figure Attic *askos*, 500–490 B.C. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 13.169. Gift of E. P. Warren. Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

likely to have entered tragic tradition at an early stage. At any rate, it was subsequently to be found in Sophocles's lost *Polyxena* and, offstage, in Euripides' *Hecabe*. An Attic fifth-century *askos* lid helps us to imagine the scene (fig. 1). It portrays a warrior armed with helmet, cuirass, shield, and spear, rising from his barrow with an alert gesture. The warrior could have been the youthful Achilles himself, had he not been portrayed with a beard. Later on again, in the first century A.D., Achilles' tomb provided the Neo-Pythagorean Apollonius of Tyana with an opportunity to inquire into Homer's account of the Trojan War. He called up the ghost, not by the usual method involving the sacrifice of a sheep (as a Pythagorean he eschewed animal sacrifice), but with an Indian prayer. The ghost grew to a height of twelve cubits, and affably permitted Apollonius five questions.[4]

[4] Epics: Lesches of Mytilene's *Little Iliad*, Arctinus of Miletus's *Sack of Troy*, and Agias of Troezen's *Returns*; fragments at Davies 1988: 49–71. Tragedies: Sophocles *Polyxena* F523 *TrGF*; Euripides *Hecabe* 35–40, 92–152, and 534–36; so, too, Seneca *Troades*

Pythagoreans may have been particularly keen on necromancy at the tomb. Plutarch (first to second century A.D.) tells that Lysis, a member of a sect based in Thebes, died and was buried away from home. His friends were concerned that his burial may not have accorded with their customs, so one of them, Theanor, visited the tomb. By night he poured libations and called on the soul of Lysis to come and prophesy to him, "just as one must do these things." As night went on he saw nothing, but he seemed to hear a voice telling him not to disturb the unalterable, since the body of Lysis had been buried with due piety, and his soul, already judged, had departed for another incarnation. The readiness of Pythagorean ghosts to give voice at their tombs is advertised also in Iamblichus's tale of a shepherd who heard the Pythagorean Philolaus singing from his tomb. Philolaus's pupil Eurytus, when told, nonchalantly asked what tune it was.[5]

Tomb necromancy is found also in Roman culture. A summary of the powers of the sorcerer Moeris in Virgil's *Eclogues* (37 B.C.) includes the ability to call up souls from the bottoms of graves. A complex magical episode is described through the witnessing eyes of a statue of Priapus in Horace's *Satires* (ca. 30 B.C.). The scene, in which the witches Canidia and Sagana appear to conflate necromantic evocation and a spell of erotic attraction, takes place in the garden of Maecenas on the Esquiline, which had been built over a disused cemetery. The grand, tall, white tombs remained; the common trenches for the slaves and the poor had been plowed over, and until recently bleached bones had lain exposed. One could bring forth voices even from burnt ashes: in Horace's *Epodes*, Canidia explicitly boasts the ability to raise the cremated dead (ca. 30 B.C.), and, according to Lucan (A.D. 65), urns had groaned spontaneously as an omen of the disastrous civil war between Caesar and Pompey.[6] The imperial period offers further examples of tomb necromancy.[7]

170–89 (also offstage; and cf. 681–85 for the ghost of Hector); cf. Hickman 1938: 42–50, 57, and 88–91. *Askos* lid: Boston 13.169; cf. Vermeule 1979: 31–33 with fig. 25. Apollonius and Achilles: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.16; cf. Eusebius *Against Hierocles* 24.

[5] Plutarch *Moralia* 585e–f; Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 148.

[6] Virgil *Eclogues* 8.98; Horace *Satires* 1.8 (cf. Cumont 1949: 104 and Tupet 1976: 299–300) and *Epodes* 17.79. For the raising of the cremated dead, cf. the deposition of curse tablets in cremation urns: Ogden 1999: 20, with the tablets cited. Lucan *Pharsalia* 1.568.

[7] A bereaved father in Lucian's satire *On Grief*, lamenting aloud, makes due observances at his son's grave (16; second century A.D.). The son's ghost, obtaining the leave of the underworld powers, sticks its head up out of the offering trough and admonishes him, paradoxically, that the dead are senseless and can gain nothing from such gestures. In a discussion of wonder-workers who display manifestations of the dead, St. John Chrysostom refers vaguely to men who bring forth voices, apparently unaccompanied by apparition, from tombs (*De Babyla contra Iulianum et gentiles* 2; fourth to fifth century A.D.; cf. Bidez and Cumont 1938, 2:23). A recipe for the acquisition of foreknowledge in the Greek magical papyri requires its rite to be performed either in some sort of deep place associated with

At least some of the dead could welcome consultation in the tomb. Epitaphs occasionally invite the passerby to consult their dead for prophecy. Ammias, priestess of a mystery cult at Thyateira in Asia Minor, was buried there in the second century A.D. Her funerary altar offers: "If anyone wishes to learn the truth from me, let him put what he wants in a prayer at the altar and he will obtain it by means of a vision during the night or the day." Ammias's priesthood may have given her an exceptional heroic status in death, upon which her powers may have been consequent. Her cult, if not one of Artemis, who was known to have had mysteries at Thyateira, may have been one of Asclepius, in which case her prophecies will have been healing ones.[8] Athanatos Epitynchanos, a prophet from Akmonia in Phrygia, died in the early fourth century A.D. His epitaph advertises his eagerness to continue prophesying after death in the following terms: "This gift I have from the immortal . . . Athanatos Epitynchanos, the one that chatters out everything." In another Phrygian epitaph, a son appears to describe the parents he buries as "uttering useful things from an oracular crypt." Finally, an undated epitaph from the city of Rome invites the passerby, if he doubts the existence of ghosts, to invoke the dead person with a call, so that he will understand. Evidently the epitaph played a joke with a local echo, but even so it serves to show how a nondoubter might have communicated with a tomb's occupant.[9]

As we shall see (especially in chapter 15), necromancy was heavily associated with the laying of restless ghosts, a process that often entailed, paradoxically, an initial evocation. If the ghost's body was already buried, albeit unsatisfactorily, then the act of laying would take place at the site of this burial. Thus in a fictitious narrative of Ps.-Quintilian, a father hires a sorcerer to lay the ghost of his dead son, much to the mother's annoyance. The sorcerer binds his urn and his entire tomb with spells, and the latter also with stones and chains of iron (a metal superior to ghosts). As we shall see, evocators or *psuchagōgoi* could lay restless ghosts by locating

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a river (i.e., a place close to the underworld?) or beside a tomb, and uses substances familiar from offerings to the dead: honey, wine, milk of a black cow, oil, bread, and eggs (*PGM* III.282–409; fourth century A.D.). Necromancy accordingly appears to be the means of divination envisaged.

[8] *TAM* no. 1055. The translation is based on the text adopted there by Herrmann, which improves the text of Robert 1937: 129–33 with the suggestion of Merkelbach 1974: *di' horamatos* for *dia amatos*. On this text, see also Lattimore 1962: 100; Flacelière 1965: 25; and Potter 1994: 236 n. 21. Date as at Jones 1985: 44 (tentatively), and supported to me in conversation by Marjana Ricl. Heroic status: Robert 1937: 129–33. Artemis: Herrmann, *TAM* ad loc. Asclepius: Jones 1985: 44.

[9] Athanatos Epitynchanos: Cumont 1913: no. 136; cf. Robert 1937: 132–33; and Mitchell 1995, 2:47. "Useful things": Calder 1922: 114 and Lattimore 1962: 100; but Calder 1936 construes the text differently. Rome: *CIL* 6.27365; cf. Lattimore 1962: 92.

the site at which their body lay with the help of a black sheep, and then calling the ghost up and asking it the reason for its restlessness.[10]

. . . . .

The rites traditionally used to summon up ghosts were identical to the normal rites of pious observance made at tombs in the Greek world, with the possible exception of the utterance of "spells."[11] This, too, suggests that tombs constituted the conceptual home of necromancy. Observances at tombs can be distinguished into several types, but the archeological literature on these types is chaotic for want of an agreed terminology. One seldom finds two archeologists meaning the same thing by "tomb cult." As an example of the distinctions that can be made, here are the recent classifications of Antonaccio: observances at the occasion of the burial itself; observances on regular or irregular visits to a relative's tomb thereafter—"tomb attendance" or "tomb visits" or "cult of the dead"; offerings made on a single occasion at or into a Mycenean tomb—"tomb cult"; and offerings made at a hero's shrine, with which no actual burial is associated—"hero cult." Visits to tombs for necromantic purposes are ostensibly most akin to the categories of "tomb attendance" and "tomb cult" here. Literary and archeological evidence combines to show that despite differences in emphasis and variations in practice across place and time, all of these four categories of observance employed the ritual elements traditional in accounts of necromancy: the digging of a pit; libations of milk, honey, wine, water, and oil, and offerings of grain and flowers; offerings of blood (known as *haimakouria,* literally "blood-sating"), together with an associated holocaust animal sacrifice; and prayers.

Blood offering was perhaps less common in the two most necromantically relevant categories, although there were no hard and fast distinctions.[12] It is often contended that it was only used in tomb attendance when the dead in question were conceived of as in some way heroized.[13]

[10] [Quintilian] *Declamationes maiores* 10.2, 6–8, 16, and 18 (*sepulcrum incantatum*); cf. Collison-Morley 1912: 45–48; Collard 1949: 94; Cumont 1949: 104; Morford 1967: 68; see Beard 1993: esp. 51–64, for the notion that the declamations of Ps.-Quintilian preserve "true" Roman myth; see chapter 11 for iron. *Psuchagōgoi*: *Suda* s.v. [*peri*] *psuchagōgias*; see chapter 7, and note the case of Epimenides discussed there.

[11] Cf. Collard 1949: 106; Cumont 1949: 164; Germain 1954: 377–78; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 34; and Tupet 1976: 124.

[12] Antonaccio 1995: 6 and 249, with evidence cited. For the term *haimakouria*, see Pindar *Olympians* 1.90, with scholiast at line 146, and Plurarch *Aristides* 21. There are blood offerings in the apparent "tomb attendances" at Lucian *On Grief* 9 and *Charon* 22; cf. also Rohde 1925: 37, 116, and 200, again with evidence cited.

[13] E.g., Rohde 1925: 116 and 122; Kurtz and Boardman 1971: 215; and Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 83. Offerings to heroes and the ordinary dead: Stengel 1920: 138–49; and Kurtz and Boardman 1971: 64–67, 75–76, 215, and 298.

Blood offering is, however, a usual feature of literary accounts of necromancy, albeit not a universal one (none is made to Aeschylus's ghost of Darius, for example). It may be that blood offering is a commonplace in the literary tradition of necromantic consultations because most of these consultations are in any case of ghosts of heroic status. Or it may be that actual necromancy either favored the heroized dead as subjects for consultation or, ipso facto, conferred a heroized status upon the dead it chose to exploit (the status of Ammias is curiously ambiguous). Curse tablets at any rate sometimes address as heroes the ordinary dead, perhaps warriors in particular, to whom they are entrusted. The mid-fifth-century sacred law from Selinus prescribes on one side the sacrifice of a sheep and the pouring of its blood into the ground to lay unquiet ghosts. On the other, it prescribes the sacrifice of a sheep to the Tritopatores for the purpose of general purification, alongside offerings of wine, *melikraton* (honey and milk), and barley-cakes, and these offerings are explicitly compared to those made to heroes.[14]

The easy glide between tomb attendance and evocation is illustrated by Aeschylus's *Persians* and his *Choephoroi*. When, in the *Persians*, Atossa first arrives with her offerings of honey, water, wine, oil, and flowers for Darius, we do not realize that she intends anything other than ordinary attendance at the tomb of a relative, much as Euripides' Iphigenia contemplates making uneventful offerings of milk, wine, and honey at the tomb of her brother Orestes.[15] In the *Choephoroi* (458 B.C.), Electra brings libations to the tomb of her father Agamemnon and prays to his ghost. The libations are accompanied by the wailing (*kōkutoi*) of the chorus. She addresses Agamemnon directly, "calling her father," appeals to the Earth as the "recipient of the wave of the dead," and asks Hermes, escort of souls and messenger between the upper and lower worlds, to tell the underworld demons (i.e., *nekudaimones*, ghosts of the dead) to listen to her prayers. She begs Agamemnon's ghost to send her brother Orestes home, and to send for itself someone to exact vengeance from its killer Clytemnestra, her mother. The request is immediately granted by the appearance of Orestes. Together the siblings then plot to kill Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus, whereupon Orestes calls to the Earth, "O Earth, send up for me my father to watch the battle!" and Electra responds, "O Persephone, grant us beautiful might in the future." Orestes reminds his father of the insults he suffered from Clytemnestra, asks him whether he is roused yet by the desire for vengeance, and invites him

[14] Curse tablets: e.g., Audollent 1904: no. 72 (= Gager 1992: no. 74 [fourth to third century B.C., Attica]) and the curse at *PGM* IV.1390–95; cf. Hopfner 1921–24; 1:128–29; Cumont 1949: 332; and Bravo 1987: esp. 211. Selinus: Jameson et al. 1993: esp: 63–67.

[15] Aeschylus *Persians* 607–18; cf. Hickman 1938: 18–21; Jouan 1981: 411–21; and Johnston 1999: 29; Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* 157–65 (before 412 B.C.).

to "send justice," while Electra asks him whether he is yet holding his head upright. It does not seem that Electra and Orestes expect the ghost to make a direct physical intervention, but its moral support and supernatural aid are invoked in the strikingly vivid and physical terms of evocation.[16] Similar appeals are made in the *Electra* plays of Sophocles and Euripides.[17]

Illustrations of tomb attendance on Attic fifth-century B.C. white-ground *lēkythoi* convey its latently necromantic aspect. Here the ghost is sometimes represented as a little black-winged figure hovering over the tombstone to greet the visitor and receive the gifts. A Boston vase portrays a woman's ghost as a miniature version of her person sitting in a proportionate chair atop her tombstone to face her visitor (fig. 2). This image reveals the force behind the reliefs of seated ladies so common on fourth-century Attic tombstones, such as those of Demetria and Pamphile and of Hegeso. This way of conceptualizing tomb attendance was probably very old indeed. Already on a Minoan sarcophagus from Hagia Triada, a dead hero is depicted as appearing before his tomb to receive offerings.[18]

We need not necessarily conclude from the similarity between the rites of necromancy and those of ordinary observances at the tomb that the former originated in the latter.[19] (The search for Greek necromancy's historical "origins" is in any case a wild goose chase; see more on this in chapter 9.) But we may properly conclude that in the historical period they were regarded as significantly akin.

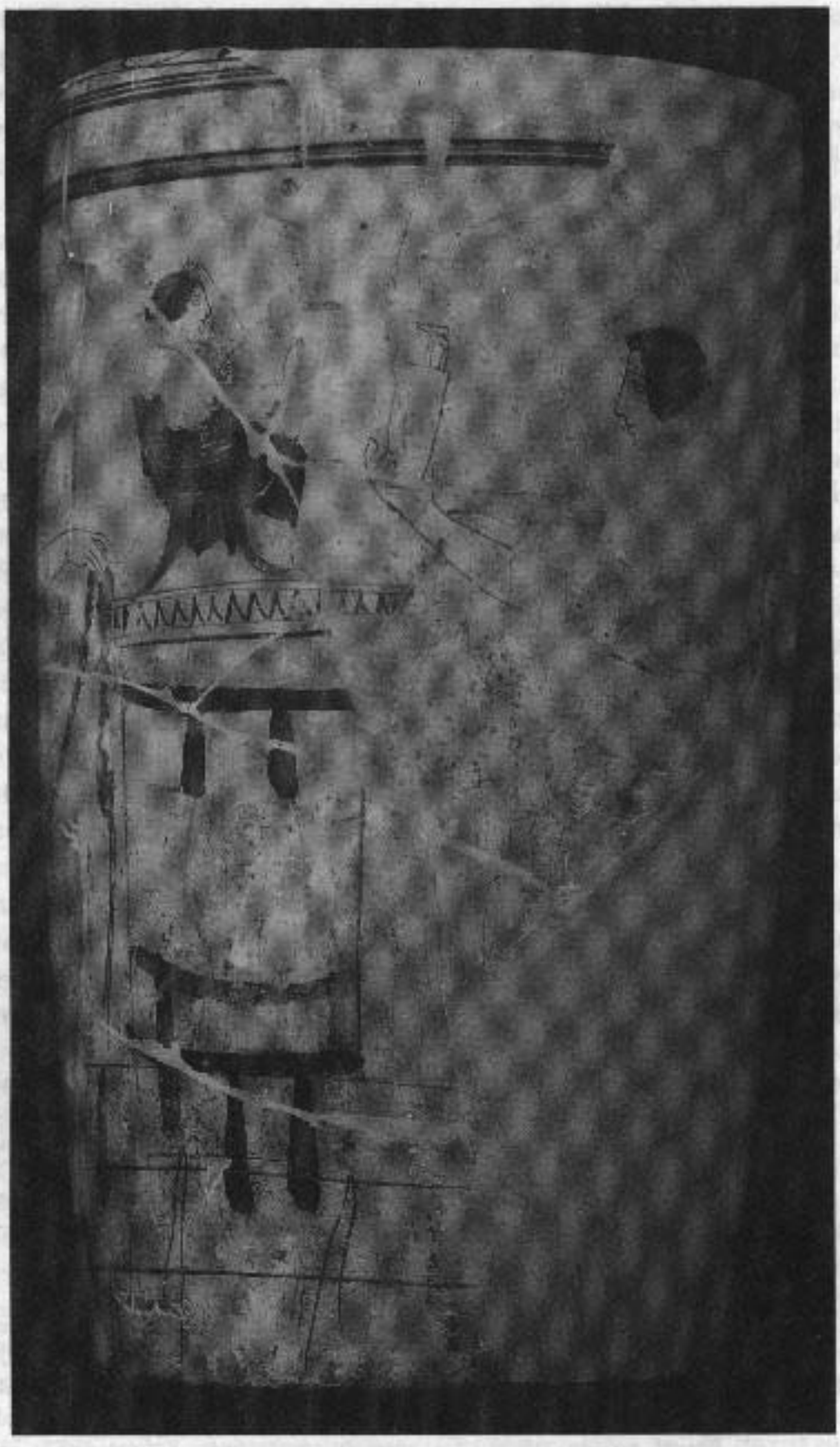
The association between tombs and necromancy was perhaps sometimes read backward. The tale of Harpalus's evocation of his dead courtesan-girlfriend Pythionice around 326 B.C. may have found its origin in the fact that he constructed for her the most outrageously grand tomb in

[16] Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 87, 92, 97, 129, 149, 156, 164 (libations), 150 (wailing), 124–30 (address to Agamemnon, Earth, and Hermes), 138–48 (plea for vengeance), 212–13 (Orestes appears), 489–90 (Earth to send up Agamemnon), 495–97 (head upright?). See Hickman 1938: 31; Rose 1950: 265–68 (arguing that the *Persians* and *Choephoroi* scenes exhibit significantly different ways of addressing the dead); Garvie 1986 on *Choephoroi* 489–96 (also comparing *Persians*); Bernand 1991: 259–67; Hall 1989:90; and Johnston 1999: 117–18.

[17] Sophocles *Electra* 410, 417–25, and 459–60, and Euripides *Electra* 680.

[18] Boston 10.220 = *ARV*² 845.170. For a brief survey and discussion of the problems in interpreting such *lēkythoi* depictions of tomb visits, see Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 324–25 (with further bibliography in n. 98); cf. also Vermeule 1979: 31–32 (with illustration of Boston vase at fig. 24); Bremmer 1983: 94 (with further bibliography) and 108; and Garland 1985: 167. Fourth-century reliefs of women on tombstones: Knigge 1988: 115–17 and 131–34. Hagia Triada: Eitrem 1928: 2 and Broadhead 1960: 302.

[19] However, Goodison (forthcoming) reads necromantic practices out of the archeological evidence for Minoan *tholoi* tombs; she builds upon Branigan 1970, 1987, 1993, and 1998, and Hamilakis 1998.



2. Tomb attendance for the welcoming ghost of a woman. White-ground Attic *lēkythos*, style of Sabouroff Painter, later fifth century B.C. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 10.220. James Fund. Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

all Attica, together with another one at Babylon, spending over two hundred talents on the pair. Was it felt that a man who loved his girlfriend so obsessively must have taken bold steps to see her again? Perhaps the distinctive memorial for Melissa, the wife of Periander, near her paternal city of Epidaurus, an exceptional thing for any woman in the archaic period, similarly helped to inspire the tale of his evocation of her ghost, in which the erotic element is again strong. Did the memorial statues that the emperor Hadrian (ruled A.D. 117–38) put up all over the Roman world to his boy-lover Antinous, so many of which consequently survive, fuel the tale that he had evocated the boy's ghost? It is conceivable that the tales of the evocation of the ghost of the regent Pausanias in Sparta (set in the late 470s B.C.) took their origin from the two distinctive bronze statues erected to him in the forecourt of the temple of Athene Chalkioikos there.[20]

In literary accounts of necromancies at tombs, the manifestation of the ghosts follows on seamlessly from the performance of the necromantic rites. But what "really" happened after a consulter had performed his rites at the tomb? How did he experience the ghost? There is no direct evidence, but there is a strong circumstantial case for believing that he went to sleep and dreamed ("incubation"), perhaps on top of the tomb, and perhaps on the fleece of the sheep that he had just jugulated for the ghost and immolated for the nether gods. Curiously, the Greeks and Romans tended to attribute the practice of incubation on the tombs of the ordinary dead to other races or religions, but in so doing at least demonstrated their familiarity with the custom. It is ascribed to the Libyan Nasamones (first by Herodotus) and Augilae, the Celts, and eventually, in the fifth century A.D., to the Christians and the Jews.[21] The Pythagorean Apollonius of Tyana's consultation of Achilles coincided with him spending the night on his barrow; Philostratus implies that he slept there (*ennucheusein*). Plutarch's tale of the Pythagoreans discussed above may imply that Theanor slept at Lysis's tomb to receive his prophecy; Pythagoras had himself wittily affirmed that the dead spoke to the living in dreams. Ammias's promise in her epitaph to send her consulters visions by day or

[20] Pythionice: Athenaeus 595a–f, including Theopompus *FGH* 115 F235; Python *TrGF* 91 F1; Diodorus 17.108; Plutarch *Phocion* 22; and Pausanias 1.37.4. Melissa: Pausanias 2.28.4 (memorial) and Herodotus 5.92; see chapter 4. Antinous: Dio Cassius 69.11; cf. the "Antinous" curse tablet, *Suppl. Mag.* no. 47; the Antinous statues are catalogued by Meyer 1991. Regent Pausanias: Thucydides 1.134; Pausanias 3.17.7–9; and Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8; see chapter 7.

[21] Herodotus 4.172; Pliny *Natural History* 5.45; and Solinus 3.4 (Nasamones); Pomponius Mela *De chronographia* 1.46 (Augilae); Tertullian *De anima* 57, including Nicander F117 Gow and Schofield (Nasamones and Celts); Cyril *Adversus Iulianum* 10.1024b–c (in *PG* 76; Christians and Jews). See Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1:331; Ganschinietz 1919: 2372; and Collard 1949: 101–3.

night suggests that incubation was at least one of the methods that could be employed to receive one's prophecy from her, whether actually on her tomb or not.[22] The evidence is more decisive in the case of the (indisputably) heroic dead. Strabo tells that the Daunians (Apulians) had a pair of oracular tombs on Mt. Drion, one of Calchas and one of Podalirius (the son of Asclepius), and that one consulted Calchas by sacrificing a black ram to him and sleeping on its fleece. The scholia to Lycophron's *Alexandra* tell that the Daunians used to sleep on sheepskins actually on the tomb of Podalirius to receive dream-prophecies, so we may conclude that one probably slept on the tomb, on a black fleece, in both cases. Both texts add that the healing river Althaeus, good for humans and flocks alike, flowed from the tomb of Podalirius. Broadly comparable is the oracular chamber raised over the pyre of the Cynic philosopher (and much else besides) Peregrinus, after he had immolated himself at the A.D. 165 Olympic Games.[23]

. . . . .

Another obvious place to find bodies, and more particularly necromantically exploitable ghosts of the dead, was on battlefields. The dead soldiers in such plentiful supply and so readily accessible there were especially prone to restlessness, as by definition *aōroi* and *biaiothanatoi*, dead before their time and dead by violence (see chapter 14). Custom dictated that the victors should bury their own dead, and, if not the dead of the enemy as well, that they should then allow the enemy camp the opportunity to make its own arrangements. But in practice, battles left a large number of soldiers inadequately buried, so that dead warriors were often also *ataphoi*, unburied. The restless ghost of one such warrior took possession of a boy from whom Apollonius of Tyana had to exorcise it. Battlefields were, accordingly, a suitable place for the deposition of curse tablets for activation by restless ghosts. The proliferation of the warrior-dead is already clear from Homer. They dominate the hosts summoned up by Odysseus: "Brides, bachelors, and old men who had endured much, delicate maidens with new grief, and many men who had been wounded with spears fitted with bronze, men slain in battle with their bloodied weapons." And when Lucian's Menippus boards Charon's barge to cross the

[22] Apollonius and Achilles: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.16. Theanor and Lysis: Plutarch *Moralia* 585e–f. Pythagoras on dreams: Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 139. Ammias: *TAM* no. 1055; see above.

[23] Daunians: Strabo C284 and Scholiast [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 1050; cf. Edelstein and Edelstein 1945: T205–6; see also Deubner 1900: 27 and 41; Rohde 1925: 133; Eitrem 1928: 4; and Collard 1949: 99. Peregrinus: Lucian *Peregrinus* 41; cf. 7–8.

Styx on his journey to the underworld, the boat is full of groaning soldiers displaying wounds from some war or other.[24]

Battlefields could be haunted in the most terrifying fashion. That of Marathon, site of the Athenian-Plataean rout of the Persian expedition of 490 B.C., is graphically described by Pausanias in the second century A.D. By night, beside the monument to the victorious general Miltiades, one could hear the battle replayed, with the sounds of men fighting and of horses whinnying. The ghosts were angry ones that pursued anyone who came there intentionally, but spared those who happened across them by mistake. Pausanias implies that the ghosts derived from the inadequately buried Persian dead. The Greek dead, he saw, had not only been decently buried (their funeral mound is still to be seen today), but even heroized, given divine honors and associated with the hero-cult of Echetlaos, a miraculous peasant-warrior who manifested himself in the battle to kill some Persians with a plowshare. But he could find no marked grave or any mound for the Persians, and surmised that they had been roughly thrown into a pit, despite the Athenians' claims to have buried them with due obsequies. The archeological investigation of the site confirms that Pausanias got it exactly right.[25]

The battlefield of Troy, upon which Achilles's tomb was located, is of particular interest. When Xerxes' army was on its way to Greece and encamped there (480 B.C.), the mages accompanying his army poured libations to the heroes, as Herodotus tells. As a result, panic fell upon the army during the night. Herodotus is, as often, understated, but evidently the Greeks in the army imagined that the mages had contrived, by accident or design, to summon up the ghosts of the Trojan War warriors (see further chapter 9). In the second century A.D., Philostratus reports that the ghosts could still be seen by night on the Trojan plain in their battle dress, nodding plumes and all. The figures now gave spontaneous necromantic prophecies that were keenly observed by the locals: to predict drought, they appeared covered in dust; to predict rain, they sweated; to predict plague, they appeared with their armor bloodied; if they bore none of these characteristics, they predicted good fortune. The ghosts

[24] Dead abandoned on battlefields: Pritchett 1985: 235–41; cf. also Garland 1985: 89–93. Apollonius: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 3.28. Curse tablets on battlefields: e.g., Audollent 1904: nos. 22–27, and Jordan 1985a: 193 and 1994 (the Amathous cache). Homer: *Odyssey* 11.38–41; a literal mind might ascribe the multitudinous nature of the dead warriors here to the Trojan War, only recently ended. Lucian: *Menippus* 10.

[25] Pausanias 1.32.3–4. For the burial of the Athenian dead at Plataea, cf. also Thucydides 2.34.5 and *IG*^{2} 2.1006 lines 69–70. Heroic status of Marathon dead: Bremmer 1983: 105. Archeology: Pritchett 1985: 236. The Persians also had a miraculous warrior of their own in the battle: Herodotus 6.117.

also acted as individuals. Protesilaus, ever keen, it would seem, to return from the underworld, was not too proud to befriend a local vine-dresser, passing the time of day with him as he worked, intimidating legal opponents for him, and chasing away farm pests. The ever-irritable Ajax shouted and rattled his arms in his tomb when abusively accused by local shepherds of blighting their flocks, frightening them away; and he shooed draughts-players away from his shrine for reminding him of Palamedes. But Hector went so far as to drown a boy who had abused him.[26]

Lucan's Erictho begins her reanimation necromancy on the battlefield. The Thessalian witch is first discovered by her client Sextus Pompey making a special spell to prevent the impending civil-war battle from straying out of her local area, so that she will be able to avail herself of copious necromantic supplies (an ironic inversion of the more familiar variety of spell for warding off war?). When called upon to perform a necromancy for Sextus, she wanders over a corpse-strewn battlefield (which, according to the sequence of the action, should not yet exist) and selects a suitable soldier-corpse for reanimation. She then drags it off by the neck to her cave for the rite, perhaps to be construed as still within the battlefield area. Statius alludes to Lucan's scene in a bizarre simile: Ide, a Theban mother crawling over a battlefield in search of her two dead sons, is compared to a Thessalian witch turning over corpses on a battlefield in order to select one to reanimate. Heliodorus's great reanimation-necromancy scene is also in the tradition of Lucan's. His old woman of Bessa reanimates the corpse of her son on the battlefield on the spot where he fell, in the midst of the other dead. The corpse then prophesies her own immediate death, and this is accomplished indirectly by another of the battlefield dead, upon whose angled spear the old woman accidentally impales herself.[27]

The "Martian plain" near Thebes, battlefield of the Spartoi, the "sown men," afforded full rein to the wit of Latin poets. The dead Spartoi were ideal figures to rise from the plain as ghosts because, as autochthonous men in the first place, they had risen from it at birth, growing from seeds of snake-teeth. The fact that they had died instantly in the bitterest form of conflict, civil war, perhaps added to their restlessness. For Statius, the soil of the plain was particularly rich for having been drenched in blood,

[26] Herodotus 7.43; cf. Bickerman and Tadmor 1978: 250; *pace* How and Wells 1912: ad loc. Philostratus *Heroicus* pp.150–54 Kayser; for Hector, see also Maximus of Tyre *Dissertations* 15.7; cf. Collison-Morley 1912: 25–27. Protesilaus: see further chapter 11.

[27] Erictho: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.576–87, 619–23, and 637–41. Collard (1949: 84) believes the location is immaterial to the effectiveness of Erictho's rite. Spells to ward off war: e.g., [Callisthenes] *Alexander Romance* 1–3 Kroll; and Libanius 41.24. Statius *Thebaid* 3.140–46. Helodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14–15.

and so tempted farmers. But even in the middle of the day (another hour favored by ghosts, curiously, despite its polarity with midnight) the earth breathed out the huge uproars of the dead rehearsing their battle, and the terrified farmers were put to flight. This is the site Statius's Tiresias chooses for his necromancy of Laius. When the blood is poured out for the ghosts there, the Spartoi rise up, still fighting among themselves and more keen to drink each other's blood than that of the sacrifice. Seneca had already associated the Spartoi with Tiresias's necromancy of Laius in his *Oedipus*, even though the evocation in this play did not take place on the battlefield itself. He, too, had perceived the parallelism between the autochthonous and the necromantic rising of the Spartoi from the earth.[28]

The battlefield could also be a place for necromancies of spontaneous reanimation. Phlegon of Tralles, writing in the second century A.D., recounts a tale with a dramatic date of 191 B.C. that perhaps originated soon afterward. As the Romans were collecting the spoils from the battlefield after the defeat of Antiochus the Great at Thermopylae, the Syrian cavalry commander Bouplagos stood up from among the dead (again in the middle of the day). Despite having been wounded twelve times, he walked into the Roman camp and uttered prophecies to the effect that the Romans should stop despoiling the dead, or the gods would punish them for it. He dropped dead again immediately upon completing his prophecy.[29] (Plato's myth of Er, similar in some respects, is discussed in chapters 15 and 16.)

A related phenomenon is the spontaneous appearance of ghost armies as omens of disaster (not, therefore, necessarily on actual battlefields of the past). Lucan speaks of ghosts joining battle on the eve of the civil war between Caesar and Pompey. There are cries and the crashing of arms in dark forests in the depth of the night, and military trumpets, too. The ghosts of the generals responsible for Rome's last civil war also put in appearances. Sulla's ghost rises up in the middle of the Campus Martius (the plain of the war-god) and sings prophecies of doom, while his antag-

[28] Statius: *Thebaid* 4.435–42 (battlefield) and 556–60 (evocation of Spartoi). His description of the underworld entrance at Tainaron (*Thebaid* 2.51–54) is couched in comparable terms: farmers hear the screeching and groaning of punishments; the fields seethe with black uproar; the orders and tortures meted out by the Eumenides are often heard up until the middle of the day; and the barking of Cerberus drives farmers from their fields. For midday as a ghostly hour, see Callois 1937, especially the evidence collated at no. 115 (pp. 160–73); the key texts are Scholiast Aristophanes *Frogs* 293; Philostratus *Heroicus* p. 140 Kayser; Phlegon of Tralles *Mirabilia* 3 (mentioned below); Proclus *On Plato's Republic* at vol. 2 p. 119 Kroll (Teubner); and Lucian *Philopseudes* 22. Cf. also Drexler 1884–1937; and Felton 1999: 6. Seneca *Oedipus* 586–88.

[29] Phlegon of Tralles *Mirabilia* 3; cf. Hansen 1996: 102–3 for date—a piece of Greek resistance literature.

onist Marius breaks open his tomb and sticks his head out, frightening away the local farmers, ever the first victims of battlefield ghosts.[30]

The attendance offerings made to the dead on a battlefield in the normal course of observance corresponded closely to the traditional rites of necromantic evocation, as in the case of tomb attendance. This emerges with particular clarity from Plutarch's description of the annual offerings made to the dead of the battle of Plataea, which were still made at the end of the first century A.D., when he wrote. An elaborate procession went from the city to the battlefield. Offerings were made of wine, milk, olive oil, and sacred-spring water, as well as myrtle leaves, garlands, and myrrh. A black bull was sacrificed, and the dead were explicitly invited to drink its blood (no doubt about the blood offering here, but these glorious dead warriors should presumably be considered heroized). Prayers were made to chthonic Zeus and chthonic Hermes. Offerings of some sort were already being made to the dead of the battle by the citizens of Plataea in 427 B.C., at which point they were already hallowed by tradition.[31]

[30] Lucan *Pharsalia* 1.569–83; other examples at Pliny *Natural History* 2.148 (Cimbri; Armeria and Tuder) and Tacitus *Histories* 5.13 (Titus's siege of Jerusalem); cf. Winkler 1980: 159 and 164 for "spectral armies" in general.

[31] Plutarch: *Aristides* 21. Heroization of dead of Plataea: Bremmer 1983: 105. 427 B.C.: Thucydides 3.58.4–5; cf. Herodotus 9.85 and Pausanias 9.2.4 for the battlefield tombs. See Stengel 1920: 148; Collard 1949: 23; Burkert 1983a: 56–58; and Garland 1985: 113.

CHAPTER 2

ORACLES OF THE DEAD

THE Greeks used several terms for oracles of the dead. *Nekuomanteion*, "prophecy-place of the dead," is found first, in the fifth century B.C. *Psuchagōgion*, "drawing-place of ghosts," was used in a derived sense in the fourth century B.C. The end of the same century witnessed *psuchomanteion*, "prophecy-place of ghosts." Plutarch gives us *psuchopompeion*, "sending-place of ghosts," ca. A.D. 100. The fifth-century A.D lexicographer Hesychius glosses the old Laconian term *nekuōr-(i)on*, "seeing-place of the dead," with the *r*-variant *nekromanteion*.[1] These words were synonymous and were used interchangeably of the same oracles.[2] Latin's dependence upon the Greek terminology suggests that the Greeks introduced the Romans to oracles of this kind.

Whenever these terms are applied to a specific oracle, it is always to one of the "big four": Acheron in Thesprotia, Avernus in Campania, Heracleia Pontica on the south coast of the Black Sea, or Tainaron at the tip of the Mani peninsula. Indeed, no ancient usage of these terms absolutely

[1] *Nekuomanteion*: Herodotus 5.92 (published in 420s) and Sophocles F748 *TrGF*/Pearson (published between 468 and 406). *Psuchagōgion*: Theophrastus *On Fire* 24; *Etymologicum Magnum* s.v. preserves the original meaning; the source term *psuchagōgoi*, "evocator," had been used in the fifth century by Aeschylus (*Psuchagogoi*). *Psuchomanteion*: used by Crantor of Soli in his tale of Elysius, as shown by comparison of Plutarch *Moralia* 109bd (*psuchomanteion*), Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.115 (*psychomantium*, citing Crantor), and *Greek Anthology* app. 6 no. 235 ("oracle from a *psuchomanteion*"). *Psuchopompeion*: references below; the term is common after Plutarch, *pace* Bölte 1932: 2046. *Nekuōr(i)on*: Hesychius s.v.; *nekromanteion* is perhaps influenced by Latin usage, which preferred the *necro-* stem in its Greek borrowings (cf. Collard 1949: 11–12).

[2] Acheron: *nekuomanteion* at Herodotus 5.92 and Pausanias 9.30.6; *psuchopompeion* at Hesychius s.v. *theoepēs*, Photius *Lexicon* s.v. *theoi Molottikoi*; both of these at Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.514; note also Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* hypothesis p. 5 Dindorf, *limnē nekuopompos*. Heracleia: *nekuomanteion* at Plutarch *Cimon* 6; *psuchopompeion* at Plutarch *Moralia* 555c (the same Cleonice story) and Ammianus Marcellinus 22.8.16–17 (with observations below). Tainaron: *nekuomanteion* and *nekuōr(i)on* implied by Hesychius s.v. *nekuōr(i)on*; *psuchopompeion* at Plutarch *Moralia* 560ef. Avernus: *nekuomanteion* at Sophocles F748 *TrGF*/Pearson; Strabo C244; Diodorus 4.22; *Etymologicum Magnum* s.v. *Aornos* and Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.514; *psuchomanteion*, if the tale of Elysius (above note) can be located there. Nitzsch (1826–40: 152, on *Odyssey* 10) and Bouché-Leclercq (1879–82, 1: 334 and 3: 363) attempted a differentiation: *nekuomanteion* was to be a place of prophecy, *psuchopompeion* a place for laying ghosts; Collard (1949: 13–14) rightly dismisses the notion. In any case, one often sought prophecies from ghosts specifically to lay them.

requires us to believe that they applied to any other oracle.[3] Any study of the *nekuomanteion* phenomenon must accordingly be founded primarily upon the cases of the four, and the following three chapters are accordingly devoted to discrete studies of them. Of these, the Heracleia and Tainaron *nekuomanteia* were based in natural caves modified by tooling or walling (chapter 3), whereas the Acheron and Avernus *nekuomanteia* were probably based in mere precincts beside lakes (chapters 4 and 5). These two configurations are perhaps reflected in the derived usages of *psuchagōgion*: an air vent in a mine, and a system for drawing water from underground and distributing it over infertile ground.[4]

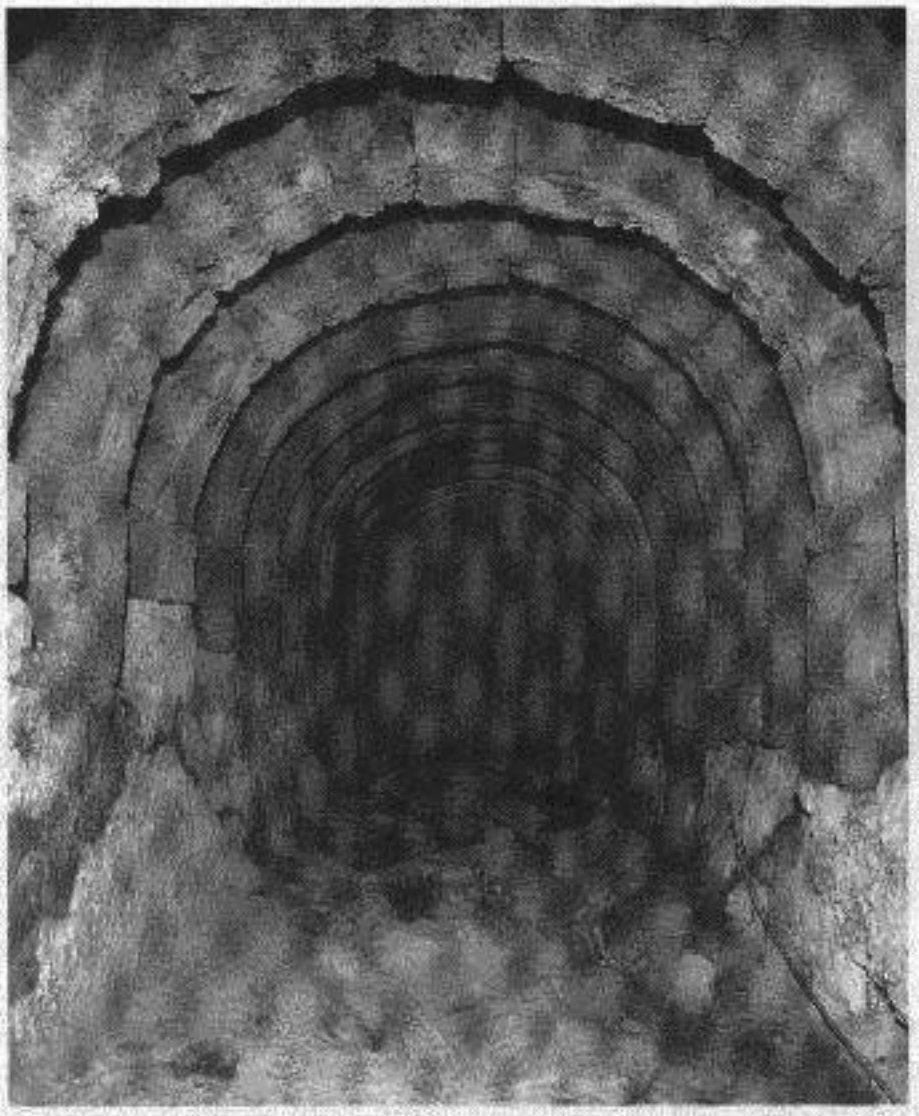
Two difficulties complicate the investigation of Acheron and Avernus. The first is that from the classical period if not before, the two sites were confounded with each other in Greek and Latin mythological literature. The second is the misapprehension that *nekuomanteia* were always based in caves, natural or man-made. This misapprehension is nothing new. Some of our earliest evidence for Avernus already speaks of a (long-lost) cave at the site, and the Sibyl's association with it may have been encouraged by the supposition that she had a cave of her own (at Cumae). In the fifth century A.D., Theodoret could summarily remark that *nekuomanteia* in general were "darkest caves."[5] In the modern age, the fallacy has led archeologists to locate the two *nekuomanteia* wrongly in local man-made caves, and to develop erroneous reconstructions of their use based upon readings of Pausanias's account of the consultation procedure for the oracle of Trophonius and Lucian's account of the necromancy of Menippus. In both cases, these reconstructions send the consulters on minutely choreographed ritual progressions through dark tunnels. These culminate in encounters with ghosts in the form of puppets manipulated by priests who scuttle through further concealed passageways. A precursor of the fun-fair ghost-train or the Disneyland haunted house is envisaged.[6] The truth is less exciting: consulters slept overnight at the *nekuo-*

[3] *Pace* LSJ s.v. *nekuomanteion*, *nekuomanteia* at *PGM* VII.285 is the feminine singular abstract, "necromancy," not the plural of *nekuomanteion*, "oracles of the dead"; admittedly, if the term used here was indeed the plural of *nekuomanteion*, it would seemingly refer to others beyond the "big four."

[4] Theophrastus *On Fire* 24 and *Etymologicum Magnum* s.v.; cf. Ganschinietz 1919: 2377. As applied to the mine, the term could also be construed as "drawing-place of breath," and, as applied to the water system, "drawing-place of life."

[5] Theodoret *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 10.3.11; this fallacy is still perpetuated even by Baatz 1999: 153.

[6] Pausanias 9.39 and Lucian *Menippus*. For the attempt to elucidate Acheron and Avernus with the Trophonius oracle, see Thomson 1914: 26, 29, 92–93, and 111–12; Papachatzis 1963–74 on Pausanias 9.39; Paget 1967b: 149–52; Clark 1968: 72; Van Straten 1982: 220; and Dakaris 1993.

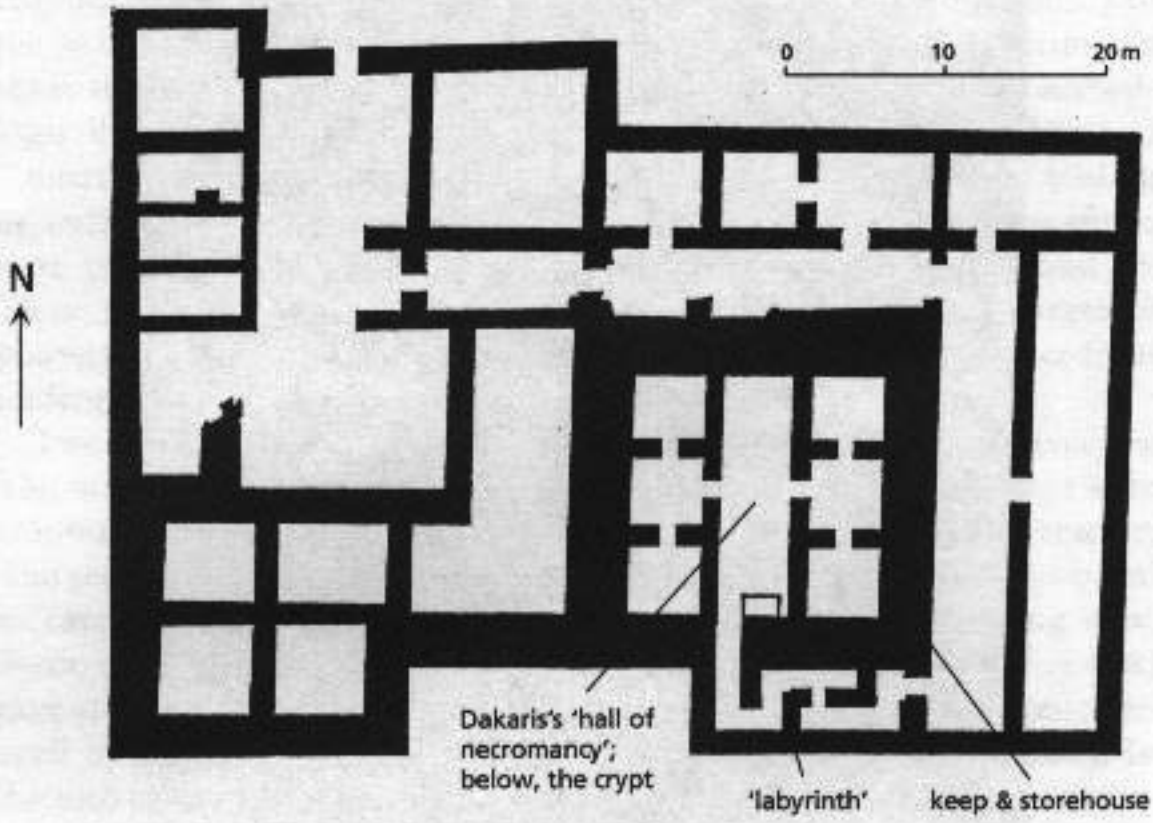


3. The "crypt" of Dakaris's Acheron *nekuomanteion*. © Hellenic Republic Ministry of Culture Archaeological Receipts Fund.

manteia and encountered the ghosts in their dreams, just as they did on tombs.

Following a suggestion of Frazer, Sotirios Dakaris identified the Acheron *nekuomanteion* with a hellenistic complex beneath the monastery of St. John Prodromos at Mesopotamo. This had been burned down in the Roman devastation of Epirus in 167 B.C. Dakaris's excavations of the site and his interpretations of it formed the subject of many publications between 1958 and 1993.[7] The site's most striking feature is an elaborate, subterranean, vaulted "crypt" (fig. 3)—the "underworld" itself, supposedly. Above the underworld (why not in it?), in a square structure with

[7] Dakaris: his publications are listed in the bibliography; 1993 summarizes his last thoughts; Frazer 1931: 386–87; cf. Janssens 1961: 387–88.



4. Site plan of Dakaris's Acheron *nekuomanteion*, after Dakaris 1993: 15, 1963a: 53, and 1990a: 74–75.

walls over three meters thick, consulters encountered models of ghosts or underworld powers (fig. 4). These were swung out at them in a cauldron by priests who operated an elaborate crane from secret passageways within the hollow upper courses of the walls. The machine's ratchets, cast-iron counterweights, and six statuettes of Persephone were discovered in the structure. The consulters' experience of the ghosts was enhanced by the consumption of supposedly hallucinogenic lupines and beans, the carbonized remains of which were found in jars in the corner storerooms. The consulters had progressed to the theater through the significantly right-winding corridors around it, making sacrifices and submitting to purifications along the way, and finally passing through a brief underworld-evoking labyrinth.[8] But this cannot stand. The *nekuomanteion* hypothesis does

[8] Right-winding corridors: Van Straten 1982: 215–30 argues that the rightward winding of the corridors salutes the notion that a fork in the path to the underworld sends one to happy Elysium on the right and grievous Tartarus on the left (e.g., Plato *Republic* 614c; Virgil *Aeneid* 6.540–43; Zuntz 1971: Orphic leaf no. A4; cf. Paget 1967b: 71–72, 160–61, and 164; and Hardie 1969: 26–27); he further argues that piles of stones found in the corridors were apotropaic "hills of Hermes," as described by Cornutus (*De natura deorum* 16.168, p. 72 in Osann's 1844 edition; cf. Nilsson 1967–74, 1: 503). Labyrinths: Clark 1979: 125–50, for their association with the underworld. For more on hallucinogenic beans, cf. chapter 6.

not account for the copious quantities of other foodstuffs also found carbonized in the storerooms, or the vast amounts of crockery and agricultural and domestic tools found on the site. In 1979, Baatz proved beyond doubt that the ratchets belonged rather to dart-firing torsion catapults and derived from ten separate weapons. Twenty-seven iron darts for them to fire have also been identified from the site. It becomes clear that the square building, with its three-meter thick wall, was a defensive keep. The labyrinth that gave admission to it protected its entrance against assault, perhaps against Roman battering-rams in particular. The "crypt" was a mere cellar or cistern. The site is an elaborate example of the hellenistic building-type known as a "tower-farm" (Turmgehöft).[9] The story of its last days is easily written: as Roman troops approached, its farming occupants withdrew into the keep with their tools and as much produce as they could garner, and, making sure their cistern (if it was such) was full, prepared to withstand a siege. But their catapult defenses were unable to prevent the Romans from burning their fort down. Only the Persephone statuettes, two of which wear her distinctive *polos* headdress, give pause for thought, but she was in any case the local goddess, and I do not deny that the real *nekuomanteion* was somewhere close. However, Dakaris's interpretation of the site has continued to be influential, and Papachatzis even reinterpreted the archeological evidence for the Tainaron *nekuomanteion* cave on the basis of it.[10]

Similarly, in 1962, R. F. Paget tentatively discovered his Avernus *nekuomanteion* a mile distant from the lake itself in a 350-meter complex of tufa tunnels in the hillside of Baiae. This came to be known as the "Great Antrum." Consulters progressed, Paget suggested, through the tunnels,

[9] Baatz 1979, 1982, and 1999; and Wiseman 1998. Baatz's negative arguments, against the identification of the site as a *nekuomanteion* (1999: 153), are less compelling: the lack of cult statue, sacred sculpture, altars, offerings, and inscriptions. At no *nekuomanteion* site do we find any of these things. Baatz prefers "cellar" to "cistern" for the want of detectable hydraulic cement. Haselberger (1978 and 1980) describes the phenomenon of hellenistic tower-farms. Dakaris (1993: 22) accepted that the ratchets derived from catapults, but then argued that they were *reused* for his crane. Wiseman reports the geohistorical findings of the Nikopolis Project that in antiquity the Acheron's bay (Ammoudia) may have reached almost to the foot of the Prodromos hill, and that the river itself may not have run quite so closely beneath it; for the project, see also Wiseman et al. 1991, 1992, and 1993.

[10] Dakaris is followed by Vanderpool 1959: 282 and 1961; Daux 1959, 1961, and 1962; Webster 1966: 9; Hammond 1967: 63–66 and 667–68; Cabanes 1976: 509; Papachatzis 1963–74 (on Pausanias 9.30.6) and 1976 (for reinterpretation of Tainaron); Clark 1979: 60; Vermeule 1979: 200–201, Van Straten 1982: 215–30; Dalègre 1983; Tsouvara-Souli 1983; Burkert 1985: 114–15; Garland 1985: 3; Mouselimis 1987; Müller 1987: 909–13; Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 75–76, 104, 306, 308, and 314; Arnott 1996: 244; Donnadieu and Vilatte 1996: 87; Hall 1996: 152; and Ekschmitt 1998. Potter 1994: 236 n. 21 hesitates about the identification. Professors Jan Bremmer and Ronald Stroud both dismiss it (personal conversation).

which were supposedly constructed by the sixth-century B.C tyrant Aristodemus of Cumae. They turned significantly right at a fork, crossed cisterns of seething sulphurous spring-water—the Styx—in a boat, then doubled back into a square chamber in which they were confronted by images of ghosts projected by priests with lamps from wooden cut-outs. A number of scholars have taken the identification more seriously than Paget did himself.[11] But this cannot stand either. The literary evidence for the supposed *nekuomanteion* cave locates it within the crater of Avernus.[12] In the spa town of Baiae, the Roman-period tunnels connecting the *tepidarium* of a bathhouse (*le Piccole Terme*) at their entrance with hot-spring cisterns at their deepest point served the needs of bathers, not necromancers. However, it may be conceded that bathhouses were often haunted in their own right, the ghosts being delivered into them by the underground waters on which they drew, and curse tablets exploited the fact.[13]

Nekuomanteia beyond the "big four" are hard to identify with certainty. This is not surprising given that even the four were unglamorous and low in profile. No ancient account of a consultation of a *nekuomanteion* retains the appearance of historicity after scrutiny. Not even the most miserable piece of epigraphy can be associated with a *nekuomanteion*. Even in the cases of the four, only Tainaron can be said with certainty to have been integrated into a state-sponsored sanctuary (that of Poseidon, controlled by Sparta); there is no indication that the Heracleia *nekuomanteion* was state-sponsored, even if the state had in a sense drawn its name from the oracle. The notion that the four shrines were in some sense "official" is therefore difficult to support. Who was to say whether any given cave or lakeside was or was not a *nekuomanteion*?[14]

Candidates for further *nekuomanteia* fall into three categories: sites at

[11] Paget 1967a–c; his account of the discovery, 1967b, remains thrilling and evocative. For the projection technique, cf. Plato *Republic* 514–15. Paget's case is taken seriously by Hardie 1969 and 1977 (arguing, however, for incubation); McKay 1972: 141–59; Clark 1979: 70; and Frederiksen 1984: 77.

[12] Marcus Aurelius *Ad M. Caesarem* 1.4 (pp. 6–8 van den Hout), in describing himself, while at Baiae, as "spending time in this ancient labyrinth of Odysseus," appears to have found a witty way of referring to his palace, which was decorated with a statue group of Odysseus and Polyphemus, while saluting the tradition that Odysseus performed his necromancy at nearby Avernus: Ameling 1986a.

[13] Tunnels as belonging to baths: Burkert 1972: 155 and 1985: 393 n. 33; Castagnoli 1977: 77–78; Giuliani 1976; Amalfitano et al. 1990: 218–23; Nielsen 1990, 1: 21; and Yegül 1992: 101–2. Haunted bathhouses: Plutarch *Cimon* 1 (Chaeronea); Solin 1968: 31 = Gager 1992: no. 82 (Carthage, second or third century A.D.); Jordan 1985a: no. 151 = *Suppl. Mag.* no. 42 (Hermoupolis, third or fourth century A.D.), with notes; *PGM* VII.467–77; cf. Bonner 1932b; Mitchell 1993, 2: 142–43; and Felton 1999: 37.

[14] *Pace* Hopfner 1921–24, 1: 552 and 587; and Eitrem 1928: 5; and cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 333, and Potter 1994: 70.

which literary sources may indirectly imply the existence of a *nekuomanteion*, oracles of named dead heroes, and known underworld entrances. In the first category, a good case can be made only for Phigalia. Plutarch sends the regent Pausanias to the Heracleia *nekuomanteion* to call up the ghost of Cleonice. Pausanias-periegetes' version of the same tale sends him rather to "the *psuchagōgoi* (evocators) at Phigalia in Arcadia." The parallelism may suggest that the Phigalian *psuchagōgoi* were based at a *nekuomanteion*. *Psuchagōgion* was indeed a synonym for *nekuomanteion*, and *psuchagōgoi* are said to have presided over the Avernus *nekuomanteion*. The actual site of a Phigalian *nekuomanteion* can only be speculated upon.[15] Byzantine scholarship offers three further candidates for *nekuomanteia*, all unlikely. First, a commentator on Euripides' *Alcestis*, confused by the tragedian's use of the term *psuchagōgos* where he expected *goēs*, "wizard," lamely appeals to the Thessalian context of the play and suggests that it was a Thessalian term for *goēs*. He goes on to mention Plutarch's tale of *psuchagōgoi* being brought in to lay the ghost of Pausanias in his *Homerikai Meletai*. This has tricked some modern scholars into the belief that Plutarch had explicitly derived these *psuchagōgoi* from Thessaly, and into one of two erroneous emendations of his unproblematic assertion elsewhere that they came from Italy (Ἰταλίας, Θεσσαλίας). There is no acceptable evidence for Thessalian *psuchagōgoi*, and no consequent need to look for a Thessalian home for them.[16] Second, Aeschylus's *Psuchagogoi* was certainly set at a lakeside *nekuomanteion*. The fourteenth-century Aristophanes commentator Triclinius tells us that the lake in question was Stymphalus in Arcadia. However, this is probably a knock-

[15] Tales of the regent Pausanias: Plutarch *Moralia* 555c and *Cimon* 6; Pausanias 3.17.9. Avernus *psuchagōgoi*: Maximus of Tyre 8.2. Site of Phigalian *nekuomanteion*: Pausanias would have told us if it was in the cave of Black Demeter on Mt. Elaion (8.42.1–10; cf. Bruit 1986; and Borgeaud 1988:57–58), or in the sanctuary of Demeter the Fury at Thelpousa (8.25.4–11; cf. Johnston 1999: 258–65); Levi (1971: 61) locates it at a deep hole into which the river Neda disappears. Pausanias's Phigalia visit may have been contextualized with his helotic intrigues in neighboring Messenia: Thucydides 1.132. One of two erroneous emendations of Plutarch *Moralia* 560e–f transforms *ex Italias* into *ex Phigalias* (Ἰταλίας, Φιγαλίας) to have the same Phigalian *psuchagōgoi* brought in to lay Pausanias's own ghost in due course: Mittelhaus at Meyer 1938: 2084. For the other erroneous emendation, see the following main text. Was Cleander a *psuchagōgos*? He was the Phigalian prophet (*mantis*) who wrongly advised the former "slaves" of the Argive Servile Interregnum, now based at Tiryns, to attack their "masters," at some point shortly before 480: Herodotus 6.83.

[16] *Psuchagōgoi* from Thessaly: Scholiast Euripides *Alcestis* 1128, including Plutarch *Homerikai Meletai* F1 Bernadakis. Plutarch's *psuchagōgoi* from Italy: *Moralia* 560e–f, needlessly emended by Burkert (1962: 48–49 and 1992: 42) and Faraone (1991a:186 and n. 78). Bowie 1993: 119 implies the belief that these *psuchagōgoi* were brought in from Thrace! For the other erroneous emendation, see the note above.

on error caused by misconstruing a reference to Hermes as "Cyllenian," as he is termed when he escorts the souls of the dead suitors down to the underworld at the end of the *Odyssey*. Mt. Cyllene was beside Stymphalus.[17] Third, the poorly phrased text of a Byzantine compiler may, on one reading, imply that, in addition to the Avernus *nekuomanteion* in Campania, there was another one in *Tyrsenia* in the sense of "Etruria," to which Sophocles had referred. However, comparison of parallel Byzantine notes makes it clear that all references in question are to Avernus alone, which is in *Tyrsenia* in the sense of "Italy." And this lake was indeed later described as "Tyrrhenian" by Virgil. Furthermore, Clement of Alexandria's "necromancies (*nekuomanteiai*) of the Tyrrhenians" probably refers to Avernus similarly.[18] Modern scholarship produces a fourth candidate. Will makes the arbitrary suggestion that Herodotus's tale of Periander and Melissa, which includes a procession for Hera, had been transferred to the Acheron *nekuomanteion* from an otherwise unattested Corinthian *nekuomanteion* in Hera's sanctuaries at Perachora.[19]

The second category is made up of oracles of dead heroes, such as those of Trophonius at Lebadeia, Amphiaraus at Oropus, and Faunus at Tibur (?). The ancients associated these closely with *nekuomanteia*, often mentioning them in the same breath, and this similarity is valuable for the reconstruction of the use of *nekuomanteia*, particularly in the matters of incubation and the use of fleeces. But, significantly, hero-oracles are never alluded to under the term *nekuomanteion* or its synonyms, despite copious literary and epigraphic evidence in the cases of Trophonius and

[17] Aeschylus *Psuchagogoi* at lakeside *nekuomanteion*: F273a. Stymphalus: Triclinius on Aristophanes *Frogs* 1266, followed by Dover 1993: ad loc., Radt at Aeschylus *Psuchagogoi* F273 *TrGF*, and Lloyd-Jones 1981: 22. "Cyllenian" error: Fritzsch 1845 on Aristophanes *Frogs* 1266; and Rusten 1982: 34–35. For Cyllenian Hermes, see Homer *Odyssey* 24.1 and Pausanias 8.17. However, at Pheneos on the far side of the mountain from the lake, there was a hole through which Hades had taken down Persephone: Conon *Narrationes* 15, at Photius *Bibliotheca* 3 pp. 8–39 Henry; cf. Rohde 1925: 186 n. 23. Did Heracles' killing of the Stymphalian birds (Pherecydes *FGH* 3 F72, etc.) make the lake "birdless"?

[18] Compare Bekker *Anecdota graeca* 414.3 = Sophocles F748 *TrGF*/Pearson with *Etymologicum Magnum* s.v. *Aornos* and Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.514; see Radt and Pearson on Sophocles ad loc.; Erbse 1950: a 127; and Clark 1979: 65–68. Sophocles takes a broad view of the territory designated by *Tyrsenia* at F598 *TrGF*/Pearson. Virgil *Georgics* 2.164. Clement of Alexandria *Protrepticus* 11P, recycled at Eusebius *Praeparatio Evangelica* 2.3.4–5. At Strabo C762 Persian necromancers (*nekuomanteis*) are listed as parallel to but (weakly) differentiated from Etruscan horoscope-mongers (*hōroskopoi*). Phillips (1953: 61–65) argues on the basis of Scholiast [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 799–805 that there was a hero-oracle of the dead Odysseus at Perge in Etruria.

[19] Will 1953 and 1955: 83 and 242, followed by Donnadieu and Vilatte 1996: 55 and 86–90 and rejected by Germain 1954: 372 and Salmon 1972: 165–66. See Johnston 1997 for Hera at Perachora.

Amphiaraus.[20] This suggests that there remained a conceptual difference between the two phenomena. The obvious hypothesis is that at *nekuomanteia*, one consulted any ghost of one's choosing, whereas at hero-oracles one consulted the hero himself. However, it may be that in both types a privileged dead being presided over lesser ghosts. There are indications that Tettix and Melissa had special roles at the Tainaron and Acheron *nekuomanteia*, and that the hero Faunus presided over ghosts in his oracle. So, if we have correctly identified the significant distinction, it was perhaps one of emphasis rather than of quality.

The third category, known underworld entrances, provides potentially the most prolific source of further *nekuomanteia*. These entrances could manifest themselves as caves, sometimes mephitic ones, or as "birdless" lakes. Perhaps every small town had one of its own. To the caves attached myths of the descent of Persephone or the ascent of Cerberus, the latter of which is associated with the Heracleia and Tainaron *nekuomanteia*. Both of these myths attached to Hermione, which had an elaborate complex of chthonic sanctuaries sacred to Demeter and Clymenus (Hades). These incorporated a chasm leading to the underworld and an "Acherusian" lake. Access to the underworld was so direct this way that the local dead were dispensed from paying the ferryman. In Sicily, Hades had driven his chariot up through a cavern below the Henna plateau, snatched Persephone as she picked flowers on it, and taken her down again at the pool of Cyane near Syracuse.[21] Mephitic sanctuaries were known as

[20] Ancient sources associating *nekuomanteia* with hero-oracles: Plutarch *Moralia* 109; Maximus of Tyre 8.2; Theodoret *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 10.3.11; Lucian retrieves Menippus from his necromancy through Trophonius's hole; cf. Luck 1985: 210. Scholarship's tendency to refer to Trophonius's oracle as a *nekuomanteion* is regrettable: e.g., Eitrem 1928: 5 and Johnston 1999: 29; and cf. Cumont 1949: 86.

[21] Hermione: Pausanias 2.35.4–10 (site; cf. Wyatt 1975); Strabo C373 (ferryman; cf. *Orphic Argonautica* 1136–38 on the mythical Hermioneia); Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 1.5.1; and Callimachus *Hecale* F99–100 Hollis (Persephone) and Euripides *Heracles* 615 (Cerberus). Sicily: Diodorus 5.1–4; Cicero *Verrines* 2.4.107–13; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 5.285–429; and Solinus 5.14. Hades also snatched Persephone down caverns at the following places. Lerna: Pausanias 2.46.7. Pheneos: Conon *Narrationes* 15 at Photius *Bibliotheca* 3 pp. 8–39 Henry. Erineos near Eleusis: Pausanias 1.38.5 and *Orphic Hymns* 18.12–15 Quandt (cf. Boersma 1970: no. 62 and Garland 1985: 53–54). Crete: Bacchylides F46 Snell-Mähl. Cyzicus: Propertius 3.22.1–4 and *Priapea* 75.11–12. Sicyon (?): Callimachus F99 (cf. Rohde 1925: 186–87; Griffin 1982: 4; and Hollis 1990: ad loc.). Colonus: Sophocles *Oedipus at Colonus* 1590–94, with scholia, and Phanodemus *FGH* 325 F27 (also the site of Theseus's descent). In addition to Heracleia and Tainaron, Cerberus was brought up at the following places. Mt. Laphystios near Coroneia: Pausanias 9.34.5 (Cerberus; cf. Schachter 1981–94, 3: 75). Troezen: Pausanias 2.31.2 (Semele, too). Pylos: Pausanias 6.25.2–3 (where Hades's hatred of Heracles is presumably a response to the theft of Cerberus; cf. Clark 1979: 81 and 87). See the lists of such places at Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 3: 366; Ganschinietz 1919: 2383–87 (some sites given separate entries under variant names); Hop-

ploutōnia, and their vaporous caves themselves as *charōnia*, places of Plouton or Charon. The term *ploutōnion* again perhaps implies an association with the rape of Persephone, *Ploutōn* being another of Hades' names. The Maeander valley was particularly rich in such mephitic caves. A cave at Hierapolis in Phrygia, probably known already to Alcman in the seventh century B.C., still belches vapors from waters within. The natural cave was enhanced by tooling and walling, and a forecourt was built for it. The harmless fumes supposedly killed all but eunuch-priests (*galli*) and mystery-initiates. As an initiate, Damascius ventured into the cave in the sixth century A.D., and subsequently dreamed that he was the *gallus* Attis, that he had been ordered by the mother of the gods to celebrate the Hilaria, and that he had been delivered from Hades. The mephitically inspired dream prophetically mapped the promise of deliverance from the terrors of death given to *galli* and initiates onto Damascius's return from the underworld hole. Further down the valley, in Caria, was Acharaca. Here, above the *ploutōnion* sanctuary of Hades and Persephone, was a mephitic cave, *charōnion*, now lost, which killed the healthy (human or animal) but cured the sick. These would incubate in it under fast. But more usually the priests of the sanctuary, similarly immunized from the gases by initiation, would incubate on their behalf and derive cure-prophecies from gods in their dreams.[22]

In addition to the famous "birdless" (*aornos*) lakes of Avernus and the Thesprotian Acherusia, we hear of a number of others, including one in remote Tartessos in Spain.[23] The notion and name of birdlessness could also be applied to *charōnia*. In the Maeander valley again, the *charōnion* at Carian Thymbria was known as *Aornos*.[24] Babylon is of particular inter-

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fner 1921–24, 2: 552–53 and 1935; Collard 1949: 92; Germain 1954: 373; and Clark 1979: 89.

[22] The terms *ploutōnion* and *charōnion*: LSJ s.vv. The distinction may be observable in Strabo's discussion of Acharaca (see below), but it is less so in his references to Hierapolis (C579 and 629). *Charōnia* are listed by Antigonus of Carystus 123. Bouché-Leclercq (1879–82, 3: 333) believes *ploutōnia* functioned as *nekuomanteia*. Hierapolis: Damascius at Photius *Bibliotheca* 344b–345a Henry; for the nature of the site, see Strabo C629–30 and Dio Cassius 68.27; cf. Brice 1978; Bean 1971: 235–38, with plate 75, and 1975: 391. The *Kerbēsios bothunos* of Alcman F126 *PMG* (Strabo C580) is to be identified with Antigonus of Carystus's *Kimbros*, a *charōnion* and *bothunos* in Phrygia; cf. Rohde 1925: 186. Acharaca: Strabo C549–50; cf. Bean 1971: 219–20, with plate 63.

[23] Tartessos: Scholiast Aristophanes *Frogs* 475. Others—Sauromatai/Sarmatians: Heraclides of Pontus F128a–b Wehrli. There was also a "bottomless" lake at Argos Hippoboton: Hesychius s.v. *abussos*. Lake Titaresios in Thessaly was connected with the rivers of Hades: Lucan 6.375–77. See chapter 5 for Ampsanctus.

[24] Thymbria: Strabo C636. Hierapolis, too, killed birds (references above); there was yet another *charōnion* on the Maeander at Myous in Caria, according to Antigonus of Carystus

est here. The ancients could not decide whether its *aornos* was a lake or a cave. For Python, mages offered to perform a necromancy for Harpalus beside a "birdless" lake; but Trajan supposedly looked into a "birdless" mephitic hole there. Lucian's Chaldaean Babylonian, Mithrobarzanes, performed a necromancy for Menippus in dark woods beside a marshy lake, but used his magic to open up a hole in the ground there.[25] Perhaps the notion that there was some kind of *aornos* at Babylon was derived from an attempt to find a base for the mages and the Chaldaeans that the ancients loved to associate with necromancy. The notion that Greek *psuchagōgoi* were based at *nekuomanteia* would have provided the template (see chapters 7 and 9). Worthy of mention here also is Nonacris in Arcadia. Here the Styx, no less, issued in the form of a tiny stream from the side of Mt. Chelmos and fell 200 meters down a sheer rock-face into a small pool, which was ringed by a stone wall. The falls are now known as Mavroneri ("Black Water"). The place would seem to have been ideal for the performance of necromancy, though we hear nothing of it there.[26]

In literary necromancies, the action is sometimes given a setting that is not presented as an established *nekuomanteion*, but that nonetheless exhibits or is made to exhibit the topographical features associated with them, namely caves, marshes, or lakes and (after Acheron and particularly Avernus) dark woods. Thus Lucan's Erictho performs her necromancy in Thessaly in a cave hidden by a lightless canopy of trees that is cavelike in itself. Seneca's Tiresias performs his necromancy in Thebes beside marshes in dark woods, and uses magic to open up fissures of his own (compare again Lucian's Mithrobarzanes). His wood is dark underneath, even when there is daylight above. Ovid's Circe goes a stage further and sprinkles magic potions to create the requisite dark woods as well as a fissure, when she evocates ghosts to help her turn Picus's companions into animals. The battlefield on which Statius's Tiresias performs his nec-

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123 and Strabo C579. The hole at Potniai near Thebes, where, by one account, Amphiaraus had descended, was birdless and so also probably mephitic: Pausanias 9.8.3. Statius *Thebaid* 2.32–57 has the Tainaron cave killing birds, although it does not appear to have been mephitic.

[25] Lake: Python *TrGF* 91 F1, *Agen*, with Snell 1967: 99–117. Hole: Dio Cassius 68.27; cf. Lucretius 6.740–68. Mithrobarzanes: Lucian *Menippus* 9.

[26] Descriptions at Herodotus 6.74 (where Cleomenes contemplates exacting an oath by the river; cf. How and Wells 1912: ad loc.) and Pausanias 8.17.6 (with Papachatzis 1963–74: ad loc., including illustration). Hermes of Nonacris appears adjacent to, albeit not in direct association with, the "necromancer" Tiresias at [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 680–82. The water was supposedly a quick poison, killing Alexander among others, but the only vessel in which it could be contained was a mule hoof (or horn); see Plutarch *Alexander* 77.2; Vitruvius 8.3.16; Aelian *Nature of Animals* 10.40; and the other sources cited at Meyer 1936.

romancy is beside a wood so thick that there is only a "ghost" of light beneath its canopy.[27]

It need not have been the case that one could evocate ghosts by the traditional method just anywhere. But in addition to graves, battlefields, and *nekuomanteia* (however loosely defined or artificially manufactured), one could exploit a ghost's affinity with the house in which it had lived (illustrated in Phlegon's tale of Philinnion) to evocate it there. Lucian's Hyperborean mage calls up the ghost of Glaucias in the courtyard of his son's house, which had presumably been Glaucias's own. The action of Menander's fragmentary *Phasma* also turned on the belief that a ghost was being called up inside a house. Reanimation necromancy was a different matter. This could, it seems, be performed anywhere one took a corpse or a piece of one, since in this case rites were grounded in the corpse itself. Apuleius's Zatchlas reanimates Thelyphron in the middle of a public market. There could hardly have been a place less naturally suited to necromancy than this.[28]

[27] For the general characteristics of such sites, cf. Liedloff 1884: 17–19; and Headlam 1902 :54. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.639–53. Seneca *Oedipus* 530–47 and 583. Ovid *Metamorphoses* 14.403–11; the woods created are so dark that they turn the surrounding woods pale from terror and by contrast. Statius: *Thebaid* 4.419–72.

[28] Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 1; Lucian *Philopseudes* 14. For Menander's *Phasma*, see Donatus on Terence *Eunuch* 9.3 (there were other *Phasma* comedies by the fourth to third-century B.C. Philemon, F87 K-A, and the third-century B.C. Theognetus, F1 K-A). It is a special case when a ghost haunts a house in which it has been murdered and buried without due rites, as in Plautus *Mostellaria* 451–531; Pliny *Letters* 7.27; and Lucian *Philopseudes* 31. Apuleius: *Metamorphoses* 2.27–30. Broadhead (1960: 304) believes necromancy could indeed be performed anywhere.

CHAPTER 3

THE HERACLEIA PONTICA AND TAINARON *NEKUOMANTEIA*

IN these next three chapters, the evidence for each of the "big four" *nekuomanteia* is reviewed. Consideration is given to their histories, locations, and configurations, and to the traditions attached to them. The cases of the Heracleia Pontica and Tainaron oracles, discussed in this chapter, are relatively simple. They were based in caves, and the literary evidence for them, although limited, leads us fairly directly to the sites in question. More plentiful literary evidence bears upon the lake oracles of Acheron and Avernus, but the layers of mythology, ancient and modern, in which these sites are wrapped makes their cases more complex, and a separate chapter is devoted to each.

. . . . .

When the Megarians established a colony in the territory of the Maryandyni on the south coast of the Black Sea, ca. 560 B.C., they found that Heracles had dragged Cerberus up from the underworld through a nearby passage to it. Accordingly, they named their city for him, Heracleia. Terrified by unaccustomed daylight, the dog had vomited upon an innocent plant, and so produced the poisonous aconite for which the area became renowned. His eviction had left the passage an easy ascent for ghosts, and a *nekuomanteion* was already established in the cave by 479–477, when the Spartan regent Pausanias visited it.[1] Homer and the Thes-

[1] Foundation and naming of the city: Xenophon *Anabasis* 6.2.2; Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 2.727–48; Diodorus 14.13; and Pomponius Mela 1.103; cf. Hoepfner 1966: 28–29 (Heracles on the city's coins) and Burstein 1976: 16 (foundation date). The Heracles myth: in addition to Xenophon, Dionysius Periegetes 788–92, with scholia; Eustathius ad loc. (including Arrian *FGH* 156 F76); Nicander *Alexipharmaka* 14; Pomponius Mela 1.103; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.406–19; Pliny *Natural History* 27.4; Diodorus 14.31.3; Strabo C543; Theophrastus *Historia Plantarum*. 9.16.4–7 (an interesting—and implausible—description of the plant's poisonous effects); etc. Date of Pausanias's visit: the mythologized nature of the tale frustrates attempts to give it a precise date; Pausanias-periegetes (3.17) locates the antecedent killing of Cleonice during Pausanias's original period of command in Byzantium, but Plutarch after his dismissal from it; see Blamire 1989 and Carena et al. 1990 on Plutarch *Cimon* 6. Was it believed that the indigenous Maryandyni had previously operated an oracle of the dead in the cave? Scholiast Dionysius Periegetes 791 refers to the cave as "the descent of the Maryandyni"; cf. Burstein 1976: 6–11 for this people.

protian *nekuomanteion* provided some names: the cave became "Acherusian" (*specus Acherusia*), as did the chersonnese on which it was situated. The river that flowed beneath the cave became an Acheron, among other things, and a nearby lake *Acherousias*.[2] The peoples that had invaded the area in the eighth century conveniently called themselves by a name the Greeks could recast as "Cimmerians," the name their mythology had given to the neighbors of the underworld.[3] The fourth-century A.D. Ammianus implies that the *nekuomanteion* still existed in his own day.[4]

The tale of Pausanias the regent and Cleonice is our sole attestation—if it can be called that—of a consultation of this oracle. Pausanias, vanquisher of the Persian invasion force at Plataea, became tyrannical while taking the battle to the enemy from the allied base at Byzantium:

> It is told that Pausanias sent for a virgin of Byzantium, Cleonice by name, a girl of distinguished parents, in order to subject her to sexual disgrace. Her parents sent the girl out to him, under compulsion and in fear. She asked the men before the bedroom to remove the light, and she approached the bed in silence through the darkness. Pausanias was already asleep. But she stumbled into the lamp-stand and accidentally overturned it. He was disturbed by the noise and drew the dagger at his side, thinking that an enemy was coming against him. He struck the girl and dropped her to the ground. She died from the blow, and would not permit Pausanias to be at peace, but during the night she would visit him as a ghost in his sleep, and declare this hexameter in anger: "Go to justice; hubris is a very bad thing for men."
>
> The allies took this outrage particularly badly, and, with Cimon, forced him out of the city. Chased out of Byzantium, and hounded to distraction by the ghost, as it is said, he fled to the *nekuomanteion* at Heracleia. He called up (*anakaloumenos*) the ghost of Cleonice and tried to beg off her anger. She came before his vision and said that he would quickly be

[2] Cave: Pliny *Natural History* 6.4; cf. Pomponius Mela 1.103 and Ammianus Marcellinus 22.8.16–17. Chersonnese: Xenophon *Anabasis* 6.2.2; Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 2.727–48; and Diodorus 14.31.3. River: Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 2.727–48 (Soonautes); Ammianus Marcellinus 22.8.16–17 (Arcadius). Lake: *Etymologicum Magnum* s.v. *Acherousias*.

[3] Cimmerians at Heracleia: Heraclides of Pontus F129 Wehrli; Domitius Callistratus of Heracleia *FGH* 433 F2; and Arrian *FGH* 156 F76. The peoples were the Gimmirai and their land Gamir in Assyrian; in Hebrew their land was Gomer (Genesis 10.2–3, etc). See Burstein 1976: 6–8 and Heubeck et al. 1988–92: vol. 2 at Homer *Odyssey* 11.14–19. Heubeck (1963) argued for *Kimmerioi* being a speaking name meaning "misty" (cf. Hesychius s.v. *kammeros*). In view of the importance of Cerberus at Heracleia, it may have been here that it was first suggested that Homer's reference to "Cimmerians" be emended to "Cerberians" (Cerberians appear already at Sophocles F1060 *TrGF*/Pearson and Aristophanes *Frogs* 187). Among attempts to historicize Homer's Cimmerians, Bury 1906 locates them in Britain.

[4] Ammianus Marcellinus 22.8.16–17.

delivered from his troubles when he was in Sparta, making a riddle about, as it seems, the death that was awaiting him. Anyway, many tell this tale.
—Plutarch *Cimon* 6[5]

Heracleia was, plausibly, a short sail along the Black Sea coast from Byzantium.[6] We learn little of the actual consultation procedure from Plutarch's narratives. We hear nothing of attendant priests or *psuchagōgoi*, or of any presiding deities.[7] Plutarch's second version of the tale in his *Moralia* mentions propitiations and libations. There is no real indication of how the ghost was experienced. Dream-visions of the ghost brought Pausanias to the *nekuomanteion* in the first place; according to Aristodemus, Cleonice whipped Pausanias in these like a Fury. Did Pausanias then seek a more constructive interaction with the ghost by the same method, that is, by incubation? Plutarch implies that consulters called the ghosts up to them, but Pomponius Mela may imply rather that the consulters descended to the ghosts: "The Acherusian cave that goes all the way down to the ghosts." By what technical term was the oracle known? Plutarch applies the term *nekuomanteion* to it in the *Cimon*, but uses *psuchopompeion* in the parallel *Moralia* version. We should almost certainly restore this same term to the corrupt manuscripts of Ammianus (i.e., ψυχοπομπεῖον for the nonsensical υυχοπόντιον and νυχοπόντιον). But some have preferred to restore a term otherwise unattested in Greek, *muchopontion* (μυχοπόντιον), which would have to mean "nook of the sea." The "sea" element is difficult to contextualize, but Apollonius Rhodius refers to the cave itself precisely as a "nook" (*muchos*), and Quintus Smyrnaeus applies the derivative *muchatoi* to the niches within it.[8]

Plutarch's tale does not appear to be a historical one, but a traditional one attached, in this instance, to Pausanias and Heracleia.[9] The tale re-

[5] Cf. Plutarch *Moralia* 555c; Pausanias 3.17; and Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8. Cleonice's "Go" is *steiche* in the *Cimon*, *baine* in the *Moralia*.

[6] Indeed, the *Moralia* passage probably said that Pausanias sailed there: *pleusas* is a more natural reading than *pempsas* (which has Pausanias sending to the oracle by proxy, as Periander did to the Acheron oracle at Herodotus 5.92) or *emblepsas* (which has Pausanias "peering into" the oracle).

[7] No evidence for attendant priests: *pace* Hoepfner 1972: 46. Presiding deities: a nice little marble relief of triple-bodied Hecate of the middle imperial period, 32.5 cm high by 20.5 cm wide, was discovered at Heracleia itself (Erichsen 1972, with plates 4–5), but worship of Hecate was in any case widespread by this point (cf. Kraus 1960: 153–65, and, for Erythrae, Graf 1985: 257–59).

[8] Pomponius Mela 1.103. Ammianus Marcellinus 22.8.16–17; cf. Rohde 1881: 556 and Collard 1949: 90. *Muchopontion* is read by Gelenius, Gardthausen, and Rolfe (Loeb); Apollonius Rhodius 2.737, cf. 742; Quintus Smyrnaeus *Posthomerica* 6.477.

[9] Plutarch may have derived the tale from the third-century B.C. Nymphis of Heracleia, whom he cites elsewhere (*Moralia* 248d = *FGH* 432 F7) and who is known to have spoken of Pausanias's hubris (F9); cf. Blamire 1989 and Carena et al. 1990 on *Cimon* 6. The source for Aristodemus's parallel account may have been the fourth-century B.C. Ephorus; cf. Ja-

sembles Thucydides' story of this same Pausanias's interview with the man of Argilos at Tainaron (see below). It also resembles the traditions relating to Periander and Melissa at the Acheron *nekuomanteion*, elements of which predate the lifetime of Pausanias (chapter 5). Pausanias-periegetes locates the regent's consultation of Cleonice rather in Phigalia, as we have already seen (chapter 2).[10] Cleonice and Coronides, her father (according to Aristodemus), seem to have speaking names. The former, "Glorious victory," salutes Pausanias's achievement at Plataea, and the latter, "Crow-son," may salute the girl's ghostly nature, since disembodied souls could be perceived as crows.[11] The traditional tale may have been hung upon the peg of Pausanias's historical suit for the hand of a Persian girl, be it that of the daughter of Megabates, or even that of the daughter of Xerxes himself.[12]

The literary sources locate the cave for us well: we learn that it is in the wooded valley of the river below the highest point of the chersonnese, now called Baba Burnu, and not far from the port of Akone. Of the greatest help is the third-century A.D. (?) Quintus Smyrnaeus's description of the cave's internal configuration, in which it is identified with a cave of the nymphs:[13]

> . . . Lassus, whom godlike Pronoe bore beside the streams of the river Nymphaeus, near a broad cave, a marvelous cave. It is said that it is a sacred cave of all the nymphs who live over the long hills of the Paphlagonians and Heracleia of the grape-clusters. The cave resembles the work of the gods, since it is made immense to see and from stone, and cold, crystal-like water passes through it. All around in niches stone craters on the rough rocks look as if they have been made by the hands of strong men. Around them, too, are Pans and lovely nymphs and looms and distaffs and the products of all the crafts of men. Men who enter within the sacred recess wonder at these things. In it there are twin paths, of descent and ascent. One is oriented toward the sounding gusts of the North Wind, and the other is turned to-

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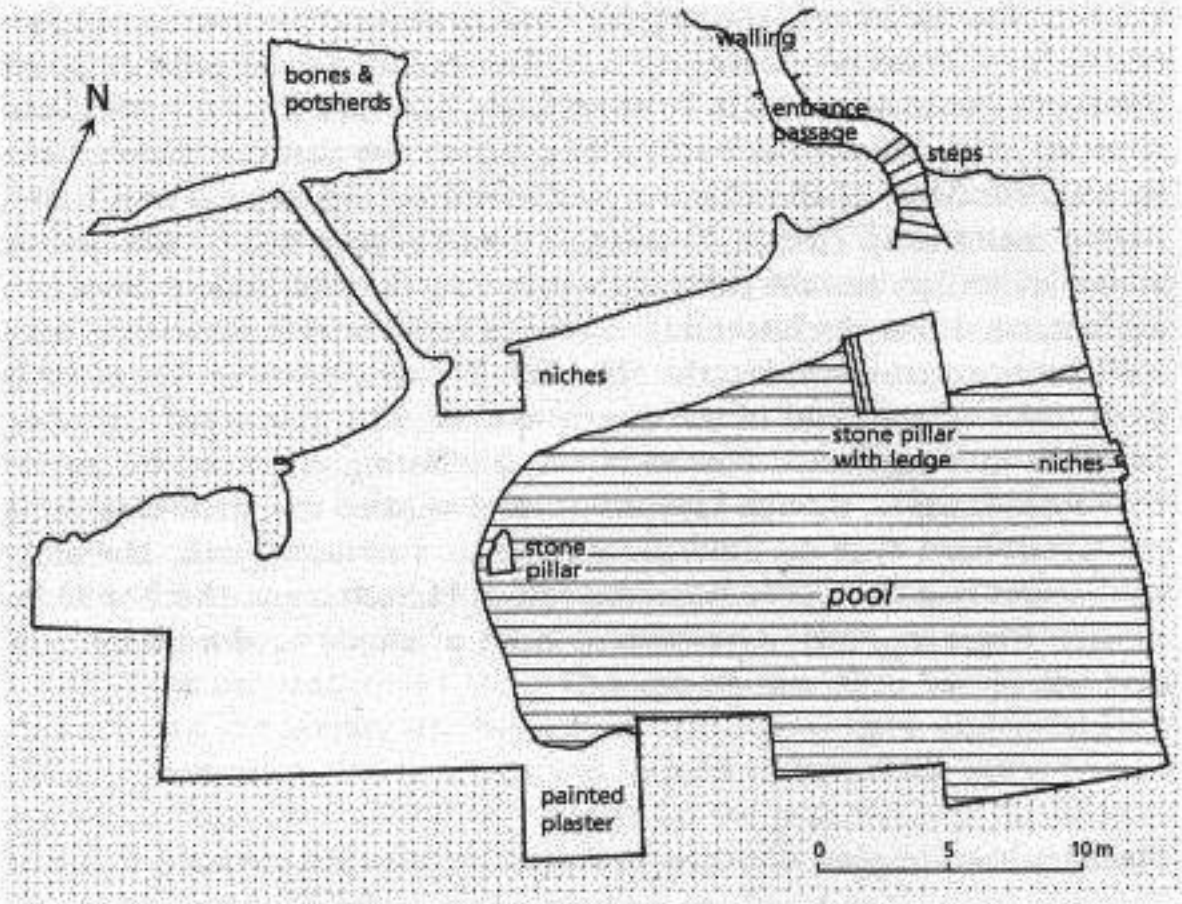
coby 1923–58 on *FGH* 104 F4–10. The tale also resembles Apuleius's famous account of Cupid and Psyche in his *Metamorphoses*, esp. 5.22–23; here Psyche brings out a lamp to discover the identity of her secret lover, and makes him start by accidentally dripping hot oil from it on him.

[10] The unspecific Aristodemus (fourth century A.D.) favors the Heracleia location, since the propitiation takes place before Pausanias leaves Byzantium.

[11] Herodotus 9.64: "Pausanias won the fairest victory of all those of whom we know." Crow-souls: Pliny *Natural History* 7.174 (Aristeas); cf. below on Corax at Tainaron and chapter 14 for soul-birds.

[12] Herodotus 5.32 (Megabates); Thucydides 1.128; Diodorus 11.44; Justin 2.15.14; and *Suda* s.v. *Pausanias* (Xerxes).

[13] Further sources for the location of the site: Xenophon *Anabasis* 6.2.2; Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 2.727–48; Ammianus Marcellinus 22.8.16–17. For caves of nymphs, see Péchout et al. 1981–84.



5. Site plan of the Heracleia Pontica *nekuomanteion*, after Hoepfner 1972: plan 5.

> ward the wet South Wind. By the latter route mortals come down into this wide cave of the goddesses. But the other is the path of the blessed gods, and men do not tread it easily, since a broad chasm has been made that goes down as far as the pit of high-minded Hades. But it is right for the blessed gods to see these things.
>
> —Quintus Smyrnaeus *Posthomerica* 6.469–91[14]

This passage enabled Hoepfner to identify the cave beyond reasonable doubt, although it emerges that Quintus Smyrnaeus's details are a little kaleidoscoped.[15] It is the middle one of three on the south side of the Acheron valley (fig. 5). The only aspect of any source in significant conflict with this identification is Xenophon's claim that the cave was more than two stades (1,200 Greek feet) deep, but none of the caves even approaches this depth.

The cave is entered by a passageway only one meter wide, initially open and flanked by ashlar walls, and so resembling a *dromos*. A large stone lintel straddles it as it enters the hillside. Thence one descends a twisting

[14] Ovid's brief description of the cave at *Metamorphoses* 7.406–19 is not incompatible with this, but merely assembled from commonplaces, *pace* Hoepfner 1972: 45–46.

[15] Hoepfner 1966: 2, 21, with plan 1, and 1972: 41–46, with plan 4 and plate 1a–b.

stairway. One penetrates the roughly rectangular central chamber, 45 meters wide by 20 deep, on its north side. Two polished stone pillars support the roof. The eastern face is 7 meters high, and its walls are vertical and worked; on the western side the ceiling falls so low that one must crouch to proceed. Most of the chamber is flooded by a pool of crystal water, over a meter deep (the *Acherousias*?). Small niches shaped like gothic arches are tooled into the three high walls. On the south side there is also a plastered alcove. Architectural fragments indicate that there may once have been structures within the chamber. A barely passable tunnel leads from the northwest end of the cave to a small, low, unworked chamber, in which there are some human bones. No dating is offered for any of the tooled features, though Hoepfner seems satisfied that there is nothing pre-Greek here; Quintus Smyrnaeus provides a *terminus ante*. Hoepfner conjectures that the alcove housed a cult of Heracles, and that the architectural fragments may have derived from a temple or dormitory. The cave was reused in Byzantine times.[16]

. . . . .

Heracles also dragged Cerberus up through the underworld passage at Tainaron, now Cape Matapan, the isolated tip of the Mani peninsula, and the dog may have poisoned this area, too. It was known as a general place of descent for the dead, and it was one of the holes through which Orpheus and Theseus (together with Pirithous) were said to have visited the underworld.[17]

Literary descriptions of the *nekuomanteion* cave make it fairly easy to identify: Pomponius Mela explicitly compares it in both myth and appearance to Heracleia. It was close to the tip of the promontory, close to the temple of Poseidon in its grove, and in a bay.[18] Pausanias-periegetes

[16] Hoepfner 1972: 45–46, with fig. 2 (vertical cross-section), plan 5 (ground plan), plate 2a–c (photographs of cave entrance and interior).

[17] Cerberus: Sophocles *Heracles at Tainaron* F224–34 Pearson and *Epi Tainarōi (Satyroi)* F19a–e *TrGF*; Euripides *Heracles* 23; Strabo C363; Pausanias 3.25 (including Hecataeus *FGH* 1 F27); Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 2.15.12; Scholiast Dionysius Periegetes 791; see Lloyd-Jones 1967: 218. Poison: Nicander *Alexipharmaka* 41 (with Meinecke 1843: ad loc., p. 64: poisonous aconite also at Tainaron?); cf. Hecataeus—Cerberus was really a poisonous snake. Dead: Aristophanes *Frogs* 187 (Charon's ferry stop); Seneca *Hercules furens* 662–96; Statius *Thebaid* 2.32–57; Pausanias 3.25. Orpheus: Virgil *Georgics* 4.467; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 10.13; Seneca *Hercules furens* 587 and *Hercules Oetaeus* 1061–62; *Orphic Argonautica* 41; cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 3: 367. Theseus: Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 1.101–2, with scholiast; Hyginus *Fabula* 79; etc.

[18] Pomponius Mela: 2.51. Promontory: Menander F785 Körte-Thierfelder; cf. Tzetzes on [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 90; Scholiast Pindar *Pythian* 4.76d; Scholiast Aristophanes *Acharnians* 509. Temple: Strabo C363. Bay: Statius *Thebaid* 2.32–57. Seneca's description

associates it with the Achillean and Psamathous ("Sandy") harbors; Poseidon's statue stood before it; it was a "temple made like a cave" ("cave made like a temple" would have been more logical). Pausanias was disappointed with what he saw: no path extended underground from the cave, and it was hard to be persuaded that the gods had some underground house (*oikēsis*) there into which they gathered souls.[19] The humble temple of Poseidon, latterly a Christian chapel, stands prominently on the eastern side of the cape, its identity confirmed by finds of seventy bronzes of the god's bulls and horses. Two Ionic capitals now in the apse indicate that the surviving structure was *distyle-in-antis* and of hellenistic date. Fifty meters below the temple, above the beach of Sternis Bay, are the remains of a small cave, 15 meters deep and 10–12 meters wide, its roof now collapsed. A two-meter-thick ashlar wall, built on rock-cut foundations and fitted with a doorway, closed the entrance. Before this entrance stood a rectangular precinct kerb; on the adjacent western side of this were cuttings for the erection of stelai and statues (fig. 6).[20] The fit between this site and the literary descriptions is tight. Some have understandably thought that the *nekuomanteion* was located rather in the sea-cave now known as "the Cave of Hades," higher up the peninsula on the western side.[21] It has impressive halls, stalactites, and stalagmites, but the ancient descriptions cannot license this identification. It is a puzzle that this spectacular place should have been passed over and the underworld found instead in the unpromising nook in Sternis Bay. Presumably the *nekuomanteion* originated as an adjunct to the adjacent Poseidon temple, which custom dictated be placed on the promontory tip. Tainaron is the only

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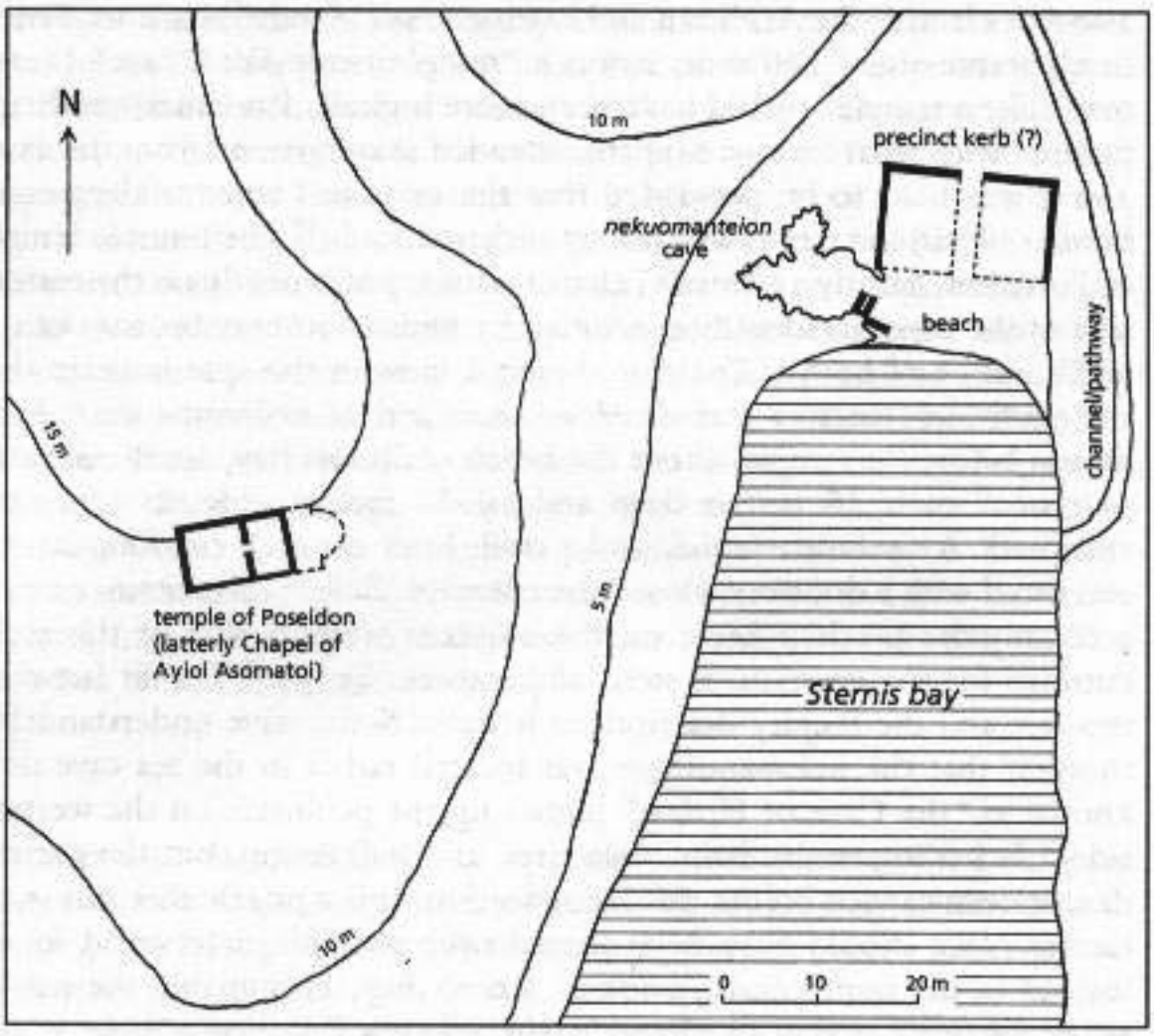
of thick forests, a high crag, and an immense cave, *Hercules furens* 662–96, is assembled from commonplaces.

[19] Pausanias 3.25. It is possible that Pausanias has conflated the Poseidon temple and the *nekuomanteion* here; cf. Ziehen 1929: 1503. Cooper (1988: 69–70) thinks he is speaking *only* of the Poseidon temple and finds its cavelike quality in its supposed barrel-vaulting. Schumacher (1993: 72–74) reads Pausanias to imply that the Poseidon temple was the *nekuomanteion*.

[20] The best site description is that of Cummer 1978; see also the plans, photographs, and discussions at Moschou 1975a; Papachatzis 1976; Günther 1988; Musti et al. 1982–, on Pausanias 3.25; Müller 1987: 858–61; and Schumacher 1993: 72–74. For the bronzes, see Frazer 1898 on Pausanias 3.25 and Bölte 1932: 2038. Inscriptions from the temple, *IG* VI.1224–26 and 1258, make no mention of any *nekuomanteion*. Interestingly, when the temple was christianized, it was dedicated to the "Bodyless Saints" (*Ayioi Asōmatoi*, i.e., the angels Michael and Gabriel). Did this choice of dedication salute the disembodied ghosts of the former *nekuomanteion*? Papachatzis takes the precinct before the cave to have been a complete structure (following the old view of Bursian 1853–55; and cf. Musti et al. 1982–) and to have itself constituted the *nekuomanteion*: his project is to map the use of the site onto Dakaris's (wrong) interpretation of his Acheron *nekuomanteion*.

[21] E.g., Cooper 1988: 69–70. For a description, see Fermor 1958: 129–32. For the Diros caves in general, see Vermeule 1979: 51–53.



6. Site plan of the Tainaron *nekuomanteion*, after Papachatzis 1976: plate 35, and Cummer 1978: 36–37.

one of the "big four" *nekuomanteia* with which no lake or pool is associated.[22]

Archeology provides no dates for the *nekuomanteion*. The literary sources take Corax there soon after the death of Archilochus, ca. 650 B.C., but the tale is hardly historical (see below). In the second century A.D. Pausanias implied that it was still functioning. Pomponius Mela calls the *nekuomanteion* a "cave of Neptune," that is, "of Poseidon," confirming the god's direct patronage of the oracle. Myth explained that he had been given Tainaron by the more oracular Apollo,[23] whose continuing goodwill toward it is seen in the tale of Corax. Poseidon's priests may

[22] Pausanias (3.25) knew, however, of a nearby spring that displayed (prophetic?) images of ships and harbors (appropriately to Poseidon), until it was ruined when a woman washed dirty clothes in it.

[23] Pomponius Mela 2.51; Strabo C373–74; Pausanias 2.33; and *Suda* s.v. *aneilen*; cf. Bölte 1932: 2042; Ginouvès 1962: 342; and Schumacher 1993: 74.

have managed the oracle, but we know nothing of them.[24] It is curious that when the ghost of the regent Pausanias needed laying, the Spartans called in *psuchagōgoi* all the way from Italy, rather than turning to the local expertise of Tainaron (see chapter 7 for further discussion of this point).[25] How were ghosts experienced there? Vague indications may support incubation. First, Hesychius tells us that *nekuōr(i)on* was a Laconian word for *nekromanteion*. The term literally means "seeing-place of the dead" (*horaō*). We would expect the Spartans' term to have applied to their own Tainaron in the first instance, which suggests that ghosts were *seen* there, at least in some shape or form. Second, Statius has Hermes bring the ghost of Laius out of the Tainaron cave to deliver a prophecy to Eteocles in his sleep, albeit at Thebes.[26]

As with Heracleia, tradition preserves one unhistorical tale of a consultation of the *nekuomanteion*:

> The gods do not forget excellent men even after their death. At any rate, Pythian Apollo took pity on Archilochus, a noble poet in other regards, if one were to take away his obscene and abusive language and rub it out as if it were a blemish. This was even though he was dead, and that, too, in war, where, I suppose, Enyalios is even-handed. And when the man who had killed him came, Calondas by name, nicknamed Corax, asking the god about the things he wanted to inquire about, the Pythia did not admit him as polluted, but uttered those famous words. But he countered with the fortunes of war, and said that he had been in an ambivalent situation in which he had either to do what he did or have it done to him. He claimed that he should not be hated by the god, if he lived in accordance with his own fate, and he cursed the fact that he had not died rather than killed. The god took pity on this situation, and bade him go to Tainaron, where Tettix ("Cicada") was buried, and to propitiate the soul of the son of Telesicles and render him friendly with libations. He followed these instructions, and freed himself from the wrath of the god.
>
> —*Suda* s.v. *Archilochos* = Aelian F83 Domingo-Forasté (Teubner)
> = Archilochus T170 Tarditi[27]

Corax comes to the *nekuomanteion* to beg off the anger of the person he had killed, just as Pausanias did at Heracleia.[28]

[24] Late Spartan inscriptions, *IG* V.210 and 211, record a prophet (*mantis*) of Posedion of Tainaron, but he cannot have run the *nekuomanteion* because he was based in the city; Nilsson 1967–74, 1: 170.

[25] Plutarch *Moralia* 560e–f.

[26] Hesychius s.v. *nekuōr(i)on*; cf. LSJ s.v.; Plutarch *Moralia* 560e–f applies the word *psuchopompeion* to Tainaron. Statius *Thebaid* 2.32–57.

[27] Cf. Plutarch *Moralia* 560e–f (= Archilochus T141 Tarditi) and *Numa* 4; and Galen *Protreptici* 9.1.

[28] Cf. Papachatzis 1976: 107.

The dead Tettix perhaps had a mediating role at the oracle. Plutarch's version of the tale refers to the oracle as "the house (*oikēsis*) of Tettix"; Pausanias similarly refers to it as "an underground house (*oikēsis*) of the gods into which souls are gathered." Hesychius says that "the seat of Tettix" was a soubriquet for Tainaron and explains that Tettix the Cretan had colonized the promontory. Perhaps he introduced consulters of the oracle to the other ghosts, as did Homer's Tiresias at the Acheron and Virgil's Anchises and Silius's dead Cumaean Sibyl at Avernus.[29] Tettix was a cicada not merely because the creatures were prolific on Mani, but because of their rich symbolism, as encapsulated by this Anacreontic poem:

> You are the honored sweet prophet of summer for mortals. The Muses love you, and Apollo himself loves you, and gave you shrill song. Old age does not wear you down, wise one, earth-born one, lover of song. You cannot suffer, your flesh is bloodless, you are almost like the gods.
>
> —*Anacreontea* 34. 10–18

The cicada's affinity with necromancy is clear. It sang as a prophet. Just like a ghost, it derived from the earth, it was ancient and bloodless, and it was wise. The Greeks paradoxically attributed the qualities of both blackness and pallor to cicadas, just as they did to ghosts. But at the same time the cicada was immortal, and so resembled oracular heroes such as Trophonius and Amphiaraus, who were at once dead and alive. In myth Eos (Dawn) fell in love with Tithonus and secured him immortality from Zeus, but forgot to ask also for eternal youth. Like the Cumaean Sibyl, he shriveled until he became immobile, or even a mere disembodied singing voice, whereupon the goddess transformed him into a cicada and hung him up in a basket.[30]

Corax's consultation of the ghost of Archilochus merges into a consultation of the proprietorial Tettix himself, for Archilochus had identified himself as a cicada in his poetry. He and cicadas alike were sacred and

[29] Pausanias 3.25; Hesychius s.v. *Tettigos hedranon*; Homer *Odyssey* 11.90–151; Virgil *Aeneid* 6.679–901; and Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.488–894.

[30] Cicada symbolism: Bodson 1975: 16–20; Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 113–33; Brillante 1987 and 1991: 112–43 (with a valuable discussion of the cicada's ability to mediate with worlds both above and below at 138–40); and King 1989. Cicadas on Mani: Fermor 1958: 41; Hesychius s.v. *ligantōr*, a type of Laconian cicada. Tithonus: *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 218–38; Scholiast Homer *Iliad* 11.1. Tithonus shrivels: Athenaeus 548c; Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 5.121 and *Iliad* 23.791; and Tzetzes on [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 18. Like ghosts, cicadas exhibit the paradoxical qualities of blackness and pallor: Hesiod *Shield* 393–94; Aristotle *History of Animals* 556b10; Meleager *Palatine Anthology* 7.196.4 = *Hellenistic Epigrams* 4069 Gow and Page ("Ethiop"); Pliny *Natural History* 11.93; Martial 1.115.4–5; and Hesychius s.v. *killos*; cf. Winkler 1980: 160–65 and below for ghosts. In China, too, cicadas are taken as symbolic of immortality and resurrection. In the Han period and after, delightful jade cicada-amulets were placed in the mouths of corpses to prevent their decomposition (Teague at Sheridan 2000: 58).

dear to the Muses. Plutarch's version of the Corax tale makes the poet's sacredness to the Muses the cause of the Pythia's rejection of him. Aesop told that the Muses created cicadas out of pity from men who shriveled to death for neglecting food and drink in their devotion to song. The battle between Corax and Archilochus had, accordingly, been a battle between the crow and the cicada, and again we draw near the world of Aesop.[31] Corax's defense of the equality of battle is persuasive in the context of a contest between men, but it becomes specious in the context of a contest between a bird and an insect.

Perhaps the rationalized traces of the tradition of another consultation at the Tainaron *nekuomanteion* can be detected in the accounts of the final fall of the regent Pausanias after his Persian treachery:

> 132. . . . A man of Argilos (*anēr Argilios*), who was to take Pausanias's last letter to Artabazus, and who had formerly been his boy-lover and was intensely loyal to him, became an informer. For he had taken fear when he had considered that none of the messengers before him had ever come back. He made a copy of the seal, in case he should be wrong or in case Pausanias should ask to alter the text, and opened the letter. In it, in accordance with the sort of thing he suspected, he found it written that he should be killed.
>
> 133. When he had shown them the letter, the ephors were more persuaded, but they still wanted to hear Pausanias himself admit something. They contrived a plot. The man went to Tainaron as a suppliant (*hiketou*) and built a hut/tent divided in two by a partition (*skēnōsamenou diplēn diaphragmati kalybēn*). He concealed some of the ephors inside. Pausanias came to him and asked him the reason for his supplication (*hiketeias*), and they heard everything clearly. The man accused Pausanias of writing his death warrant, and went through everything else in sequence. He said that although he had never betrayed Pausanias in the services he had performed him by going to the king, he had been given the same reward as the majority of his servants—death. Pausanias admitted these things and tried to persuade him not to be angry (*ouk eōntos orgizesthai*) about the current situation. He gave him a pledge of security should he get up from the altar and urged him to go on his way as quickly as possible and not hinder his project.
>
> 134. The ephors heard this in accurate detail and went off. Now that they knew for sure, they planned his arrest in the city.
>
> —Thucydides 1.132–34[32]

[31] Archilochus as cicada: F223 West; other poets, such as Callimachus *Aetia* F1 line 29, took up the imagery. Aesop no. 470 Perry. Both cicadas and crows are favorite characters in Aesop's fables: cicadas, usually about to be eaten, in Aesop nos. 236, 241, 373, 387, 397, and 470 Perry; crows in nos. 123, 125, 128, 162, 190, 245, 323, 324, and 398 Perry. For the mythologized nature of Archilochus's biography, see Lefkowitz 1981: 25–31.

[32] Versions of the tale also at Diodorus 11.45; Nepos *Pausanias* 4–5; and Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8.2. Westlake (1977) supposes that Thucydides had a written source for the

Pausanias is then chased into the temple of Athene Chalkioikos and starved to death there. This tale's many logical gaps[33] can be accounted for if we suppose it to be a rationalization of a story that was essentially a doublet of that of Cleonice and the Heracleia *nekuomanteion*. Pausanias would have come to the Tainaron *nekuomanteion* to beg off the anger of the ghost of a man he had killed. I offer six considerations.

1. The man-of-Argilos tale leads into the coordinated tale of the aftermath of Pausanias's death, with which it forms a diptych. From this second tale Thucydides has manifestly and indisputably subtracted the ghost of Pausanias, which is still to be found in other accounts of it (see chapter 7).[34]

2. It performs the same function as the Cleonice tale, in that it directly causes the death of Pausanias. Pausanias-periegetes tells that (like the man of Argilos) Cleonice compelled the regent to reveal his medism. We are not told explicitly how she achieved this. Perhaps she did it by harassing him until he became distracted, or perhaps we are to imagine an eavesdropping exercise as in the man-of-Argilos tale.[35]

3. It shares with the Cleonice tale a central vignette in which Pausanias makes a special journey to an enclosed chamber to beg off the anger of a (prospective) lover for his own preservation.

4. It also corresponds in theme with the Corax tale set at the Tainaron *nekuomanteion* itself, in which Corax journeys to the oracle to beg off the anger of the ghost of Archilochus after killing him.

5. Nepos and Aristodemus make the term *Argilios* not the man's ethnic (Argilos was a small town in Thrace) but his name, and some ancient scholars thought that Thucydides's text should be read the same way. If *Argilios* is a speaking name, it must mean "of the earth": *argilos* is earth or clay, whereas an *argilla* is a hole in the ground and is a term applied by Ephorus to the holes inhabited by the Cimmerians who once supposedly managed the Avernus *nekuomanteion*.[36] "Of the earth" suits a ghost and colleague of the Cicada well.

tale, either Charon of Lampsacus (*FGH* 262) or Stesimbrotus of Thasos (*FGH* 107; cf. Carawan 1989); see also Hornblower 1991–, 1: 211.

[33] Catalogued by Gomme 1945: ad loc.; Rhodes 1970: 388–89 and 392; Cawkwell 1971: 50–52; Podlecki 1976: 296–98; and Westlake 1977: 95 with n. 4; cf. also Hornblower 1991, 1: 219.

[34] The Themistocles/Pausanias excursus also contains a rationalized version of the Telephus myth at 1.136–37; cf. Gomme 1945: ad loc.; and Hornblower 1987: 15.

[35] Pausanias 3.17. In the Cleonice narratives, the regent Pausanias's own death is made the price of her placation. However, Aristodemus (*FGH* 104 F8) alone tells both the tale of Cleonice and that of the man of Argilos in sequence. The first tale, that of Cleonice, has therefore to be resolved before the second can be told, and she is accordingly represented as satisfied with Pausanias's offerings.

[36] *Argilios* as proper name: Scholia Thucydides ad loc. *Argilios* as proper name in Nepos and Aristodemus: Jacoby 1923–58 on Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8, but translators and com-

6. Thucydides' partitioned hut or tent is particularly curious. In Nepos's version, Argilios sits on the altar before the temple of Poseidon while the ephors make and descend into (*descenderunt*) an underground hole (*locum . . . sub terra*) to cavesdrop. This is surely a refraction of the *nekuomanteion* itself, which nestles below the temple (not that one could actually hear a conversation beside the temple from it).[37]

The original story may, by way of example, have taken the following form. The boyfriend "Argilios" loyally takes Pausanias's letter as bidden and is accordingly killed by Artabazus. This killing and the cynical betrayal of trust and love give rise to an angry and vengeful ghost, which harasses Pausanias and, like Cleonice's ghost, deceptively promises him peace when he returns home. Like Corax, Pausanias is commanded to make propitiation at the Tainaron *nekuomanteion*. Meanwhile, the ghost also appears to the ephors to denounce Pausanias, perhaps as a traitor, but almost certainly as its murderer. The ghost is mistrusted, as can initially be the case when ghosts reveal their murderers, and so more tangible proof is required.[38] Accordingly, the ghost summons the ephors to the Tainaron *nekuomanteion*. Pausanias duly arrives there and asks the ghost the reason it has been attacking him. The ghost appropriately explains that Pausanias was reprehensibly responsible for its death. In attempting to propitiate it, Pausanias begs it not to be angry, and promises not security but placatory offerings. In the course of this exchange, Pausanias admits his responsibility for the death and consequently his own treachery.

Thucydides' necromantic tale, therefore, appears to share its underlying schema with the tale of Corax and Archilochus, that of Pausanias and Cleonice, and in some ways that of Periander and Melissa (chapter 4). Hence, all of these accounts should be regarded in the first instance as manifestations of a traditional folktale (to avoid the word "myth," so compromised in a Greek context). The tales remain historically valuable insofar as they attest the existence of the *nekuomanteia* to which they attach themselves, but they can hardly be taken to report actual episodes in the lives (or deaths) of their protagonists. But, though we lose a series of "historical" episodes from the lives these men, we gain an insight into a typical way of thinking about the function and practice of necromancy in archaic and classical Greece.

One detail in Thucydides's tale does ring true: the temple of Poseidon

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mentators remain under the spell of Thucydides. *Argilla*: Ephorus *FGH* 70 F134a at Strabo C244; cf. Maximus of Tyre 8.2; see chapter 5.

[37] Diodorus and Aristodemus have a *skēnē*. Nepos's hole refracts *nekuomanteion*: cf. Günther 1988: 60.

[38] Cf. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.29–30, where the accusation by the ghost of Thelyphron that he was murdered by his widow is disbelieved until he adduces as tangible proof the mutilation of the living Thelyphron.

at Tainaron was indeed a place to which living suppliants would turn. Thucydides himself tells of suppliant helots fleeing there (the Spartans raised them up and then put them to death), and Polybius and Plutarch refer to it as an asylum sanctuary in the third century B.C.[39] Now, as we shall see in chapter 7, where traditions relating to Pausanias are given further discussion, living suppliants and attacking ghosts shared the same designation in ancient Greek: *hikesios*, a term closely cognate with Thucydides's *hiketēs* and *hiketeia*. This may have been because an attacking ghost "supplicated" the living to confer peace upon it, be it via the punishment of its killer or via the bestowal of due burial. In this case, the collocation of *nekuomanteion* and asylum-sanctuary at Tainaron will not have been the product of mere coincidence, but of a desire to offer supplication to the living and the dead alike. And if this is so, then the laying of restless ghosts would seem to have been the prime function of this *nekuomanteion* at any rate. Did the man of Argilos originally go to Tainaron as an attacking-ghost *hikesios* rather than as a living-suppliant *hiketēs*? And when Pausanias originally asked him the reason for his *hiketeia*, was he asking him not the reason for his living supplication, but why, as a ghost, he was harrying him?

[39] Thucydides 1.128 and 135. Polybius 9.34 and Plutarch *Agis* 16. See Schumacher 1993: 72.

CHAPTER 4

THE ACHERON *NEKUOMANTEION*

THE Acheron in Thesprotia was the site of a number of mythical descents: Orpheus descended there, as did Theseus (with Pirithous) and Heracles (perhaps twice: once for Theseus and once for Cerberus). No authority tells that Hades himself had taken Persephone down at the Acheron, but it is likely that he had done so, since they were the patron gods of the area.[1] The actual *nekuomanteion* on the Acheron is directly attested by four authors: Herodotus and Pausanias, both of whom use the term *nekuomanteion*; an *Odyssey* scholiast, who refers to the *limnē Nekuopompos* ("Lake Sending-the-dead"); and Lucius Ampelius, who speaks of a "descent to the dead below for the purpose of taking up prophecies." The lexicographers were undoubtedly referring to the same thing when they spoke of a *psuchopompeion* ("place of soul-sending") among the Molossians, the neighboring tribe to the Thesprotians in Epirus.[2]

The Homeric *Odyssey*'s description of Odysseus's journey to consult the ghosts of Tiresias and others is strongly grounded in the geography of Thesprotia, as Pausanias saw.[3] The obvious and seemingly unavoidable explanation of this is that the *nekuomanteion*, like the Dodona oracle, was already established there when the *Nekuia* episode found the form in

[1] Orpheus: Pausanias 9.30.6 and 10.30.6 (describing Polygnotus's *Nekuia* fresco). Theseus (with Pirithous) and Heracles to retrieve Theseus: Pausanias 1.17.4–5 (cf. Frazer 1898: ad loc.) and Plutarch *Theseus* 31 and 35; these accounts are rationalized; cf. Merkelbach 1950; Dakaris 1958a: 102, 1972a: 142, and 1976a: 310; Janssens 1961: 387; Brommer 1982: 97–103. Coins of nearby Elea, struck ca. 370–30 B.C., portray Persephone, Hades's bonnet, and Cerberus; Dakaris 1993: 31. Did Heracles also bring Cerberus up at the Acheron? Aristarchus and Crates wished to emend Homer's adjacent "Cimmerians" to "Cerberians" (Scholiast and Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 11.14), and Strabo C338, referring to Homer *Odyssey* 1.259–62 and 2.328, tells that Odysseus found poisons at Thesprotian Ephyra; cf. Dakaris 1960c: 121–22 and Bernand 1991: 208. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 3: 365, erroneously claims that Hyginus *Fabulae* 87–88 also brought Thyestes to the *nekuomanteion*; cf. Collard 1949: 88.

[2] Herodotus 5.92; Pausanias 9.30.6; Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* hypothesis p. 5 Dindorf; and Ampelius *Liber memorialis* 83. Molossian *psychopompeion*: Hesychius s.v. *theoepēs*; Photius *Lexicon* s.v. *theoi Molottikoi*; and Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 1.393 and 10.514; cf. Collard 1949: 86.

[3] Homer *Odyssey* 10.488–11.640; Pausanias 1.17.4–5; Janssens 1961: 386; Hammond 1967: 370 with n. 1; and Dakaris 1960c: 131, 1963a: 54, 1973: 142, and 1993: 8–9 agree with Pausanias.

which we know it. After crossing Ocean, Odysseus beached his ship adjacent to the home of the Cimmerians before walking through the grove of Persephone, which consisted of black poplars and willows, to the place of consultation at the confluence of the Acheron and Cocytus rivers.[4] The mythical Cimmerians appear in this instance to have been mapped onto the Cheimerians who occupied Cape Cheimerion on the north side of the bay (now Ammoudia) into which the Acheron debouches. This cape offers a natural harbor.[5] The third-century B.C. Proteas Zeugmatites indeed argued that Homer's "Cimmerians" was a corruption of "Cheimerians."[6] The Acheron valley, along which one would have walked to reach its confluence with the Cocytus, is clothed in poplars and willows even today (fig. 7).[7] It appears that the mythical underworld Acheron and Cocytus rivers that were to manifest themselves at various other points on the world's surface as well took their names from these Thesprotian rivers rather than vice versa, and this was presumably a result of the impact of Homer. There is no indication that the Thesprotian rivers had any other names in antiquity.[8] In Odysseus's lying version of his oracular journey, he still takes himself to Thesprotia, this time to the adjacent oracle of Zeus at Dodona. When Hermes escorts the souls of the dead suitors to the underworld, he takes them there from Ithaca past the "white rock" of Leucas, which lies directly between Ithaca and the Acheron mouth. Tradition told also that when Odysseus fulfilled Tiresias's instructions for placating Poseidon by introducing the art of sailing to an inland people, he did this in Epirus.[9] The Greeks' own subsequent transference of the site of Odysseus's consultation to Avernus, which seems to have been

[4] Homer *Odyssey* 10.508–16 and 11.13–22; see map of Acheron valley at Dakaris 1993: 7.

[5] Thucydides 1.46.4; cf. Huxley 1958; Dakaris 1958b: 109, 1993: 8; Hammond 1967: 478; and Clark 1979: 207

[6] Proteas Zeugmatites at *Etymologicum magnum* s.v. *Kimmerious*; cf. Huxley 1958; Dakaris 1960c: 121, 1961b: 116, 1963a: 54, 1972: 32, 1973: 142, and 1993: 9; and Clark 1979: 60–61. For the notion that Homer thought he was referring to the historical Cimmerians here, see Bury 1906. Aristarchus and Crates both preferred the ever-popular emendation "Cerberians" (see chapter 3).

[7] Dakaris 1993: 8–9.

[8] Thus Clark 1979: 59 and Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 76; *pace* Rohde 1925: 52 n. 73. Though *Kōkustos* is easily read as an appropriate speaking name, "Wailing," the same is not true of *Acherōn*. Folk etymologies derived it from *achos*, "grief," and, desperately, *a-chairōn*, "joyless": Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* 10.514 and Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.107. West 1997b: 156 now compares it with the Hebrew *aharōn*, "western" (souls of the dead departing westward to the darkness).

[9] Dodonan lies: Homer *Odyssey* 14.316–33 and 19.287–99; cf. Phillips 1953: 64–66; Huxley 1958: 248; and Clark 1979: 49 and 58. Leucas: Homer *Odyssey* 24.11; cf. Janssens 1961: 389 and Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 104. The rock at the confluence of Homer's Acheron and Cocytus may be a refraction of Leucas: Heubeck et al. 1988–92:vol 2, on Homer

7. The vale of Acheron. © Hellenic Republic Ministry of Culture Archaeological Receipts Fund.

common from at least the time of Sophocles, was therefore a considerable feat.[10]

Behind its confluence with the Cocytus, the Acheron broadened out into a marshy lake, known as the "Acherusian" lake, and later on, from at least the time of the elder Pliny, actually as Aornos/Avernus, under the influence of its by then more famous Italian counterpart.[11] The lake was drained in the earlier twentieth century. In its literary representations in connection with the underworld, the Acheron is accordingly repre-

Odyssey 10.515. Thesprotians taught to sail: Scholiast [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 80 and Stephanus of Byzantium s.v. *Bouneima*; cf. Phillips 1953: 65 and Huxley 1958: 248. Thesprotia featured much in the archaic epics, notably the *Telegonia/Thesprotis*; see Davies 1988: pp. 70–73.

[10] As recognized by Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 3: 367, and Collard 1949: 91. Claudian *In Rufinum* 1.123–25 managed the even greater feat of transferring the consultation to Gaul!

[11] For which see Thucydides 1.46.4; Plato *Phaedo* 112e–113a (in a mythical register); Strabo C324; Livy 8.24 (*stagna inferna*); Pliny *Natural History* 4.1 (Aornos); Pausanias 1.17.5 and 9.30.6 (Aornos); Hyginus 88 (*lacus Avernus*); Ampelius *Liber memorialis* 8.3. See Dakaris 1958b: 109 and 1993: 8–9 and 27; Hammond 1967: 478; and, for a view of the plain in which the marsh stood, Müller 1987: 890.

sented as both river and lake, and sometimes as something ambivalent between the two, as seems to be the case already in the *Odyssey*.[12]

The *Odyssey* indicates that the *nekuomanteion* was located somewhere close to the Acheron-Cocytus confluence. Circe guides Odysseus:

> Go yourself to the dank House of Hades. There the Pyriphlegethon and the Cocytus, which is an off-flow of the Styx, flow into the Acheron, and there is a rock and the confluence of two loud-thundering rivers. Draw near to there and, as I bid you, dig a trench.
>
> —Homer *Odyssey* 10.512–17

The north-south-flowing Cocytus runs into the east-west-flowing Acheron at Likoresi near the ancient town known first as Ephyra and then as Cichyrus, and the modern village of Mesopotamo.[13] By way of confirmation, Pausanias's rationalized account of the attempt of Theseus and Pirithous to steal Persephone from the underworld makes Hades into a King Thesprotus (eponym of the Thesprotians), who duly imprisons them at Cichyrus.[14] As we see, the *Odyssey* associates a third river with this confluence, the Pyriphlegethon, "Flaming with fire," of which there is no sign. Perhaps, in view of its name, and like the Styx from which the Cocytus is said to flow, Pyriphlegethon only existed at the mythological level.[15]

None of the literary descriptions of the *nekuomanteion* explicitly mentions a cave. The closest we come to one are Homer's reference to the rock at the confluence and the third- or fourth-century A.D. Ampelius's

[12] Heubeck et al. 1988–92:vol. 2 on Homer *Odyssey* 10.513–15; Dover 1993 on Aristophanes *Frogs* 470–73; and Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 307; *pace* Rohde 1925: 52 n. 67 and Dakaris 1993: 8.

[13] For Ephyra/Cichyrus, see Thucydides 1.46.4 and Strabo C324 and 338; Hammond (1945: 28–30 and 1967: 477–78) insecurely derives the information of the name change from Hecataeus (*floruit* ca. 500 B.C.), which would thus constitute a *terminus ante*. For Dakaris (1958b: 109 and 1976a: 310), Cichyrus had been the prehellenic name to which the town reverted.

[14] Pausanias 1.17.4–5; in Plutarch's version, *Theseus* 31 and 35, the rationalized Hades becomes King Aidoneus of the neighboring Molossians; cf. Clark 1979: 62–63. However, Huxley 1958: 247 locates the *nekuomanteion* much further up the Acheron than the Cocytus debouch, where the river boils over rocks and throws up a mysterious mist at the bottom of a perpendicular-sided gorge (see photograph at Hammond 1967: plate X.a).

[15] However, Hammond (1967: 66–67 and 478; cf. Dakaris 1960b: 204–5, with plate 172) found the Pyriphlegethon in the local tradition of a now-disappeared phosphorescent stream that used to flow into the Acheron from the south, opposite the Cocytus debouch. Heubeck et al. (1988–92:vol. 2 at Homer *Odyssey* 10.513–15) fancifully hypothesize that Homer's rock at the confluence is a waterfall. Plato (*Phaedo* 112–113b) imagines a complex underworld system for the rivers of Ocean, Styx, Cocytus, Acheron, and Pyriphlegethon. For the name Pyriphlegethon, cf. Homer *Iliad* 23.197, where *pyri phlegethoiato* is applied to burning corpses; cf. Rohde 1925: 35; Dimock 1989: 135; and, differently, Vermeule 1979: 52–53.

abstract reference to a "descent to the dead."[16] But the general implication of the sources, including these two, is rather that the *nekuomanteion* focused upon, and indeed consisted of, the Acheron, river or lake, itself. This point is so important, while the contrary assumption is so prevalent, that I make no apology for belaboring it. The unforced reading of the *Odyssey* text implies that Odysseus performed his rite beside, and perhaps facing, the river(s) or lake. The *Odyssey* scholiast tells, as we have seen, that Odysseus came to "the lake called 'Sending-the-dead' (*Nekuopompos*)." Herodotus speaks of Periander sending messengers "to (*epi*) the Acheron," "to (*epi*) the *nekuomanteion*," in what may be read as a hendiadys. Pausanias similarly says, "Orpheus came to Aornos [i.e., the Acherusian lake] in Thesprotia on Eurydice's account. For, they say, there had been a *nekuomanteion* there (*autothi*) of old." Plato's highly mythologized Acherusian lake is portrayed as itself the repository of dead souls. Ampelius's "descent to the dead" is said to be at Argos in Epirus, which was near Ephyra. He associates it with a temple of Zeus-Typhon and a lake across which Medea built a double bridge, supported by piers. This is evidently the 1,000-foot bridge across the Acherusian lake described by Pliny. It is curious that the witch Medea should be portrayed as an engineer: all would be explained if the lake and perhaps the bridge itself were considered to have had necromantic functions.[17]

A number of sources portray necromancies being made actually at lakesides, and some can be tied to the Acheron. A lake takes the focal role in the fragments of Aeschylus's account of Odysseus's necromancy, *Psuchagogoi*. The "evocators" of the title announce themselves with the words, "We, the race that <lives> round the lake, do honor to Hermes as our

[16] Homer's phrase is pressed hard by Dakaris (n.d.: 6 and 1993: 6); *contra*, Powell 1977: 22. Ampelius *Liber memorialis* 83.

[17] Herodotus 5.92; Pausanias 9.30.6; Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* hypothesis p. 5 Dindorf (cf. John Malalas p. 121); Plato *Phaedo* 113a; Pliny *Natural History* 4.1 (Medea is not mentioned here). Hammond (1967: 66 and 236) guesses that the bridge was hellenistic and spanned from Pounda to Kastrion. A "Medea" is also credited with the construction of a tunnel under the Euphrates at Babylon at Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 1.25. A parallel from ancient Japanese culture may be particularly suggestive here. I quote from Sheridan (2000: 36), inserting brief observations of my own in square brackets: "At the northern tip of Japan's main island of Honshu, the mountain [sc. Osorezan] and its associated lake and river have been a locus of mystical power since pre-Buddhist times. Souls are believed to go to this mountain, crossing a red bridge over a stretch of water (Sanzunokawa, the Buddhist River Styx [but cf. also, more particularly here, the Acheron]), before finding themselves in their heavenly or hellish destination. Parents leave offerings on the shore of lake Usoriyama [cf. the Acherusian lake] for their dead children [cf. *aōroi*], to help them escape from where their souls are stranded, to reach the 'other shore'; and each July blind female mediums [cf. Medea and, of course, Tiresias] congregate here to contact the dead on behalf of their relatives."

ancestor."[18] Like Circe in the *Odyssey*, they instruct Odysseus in necromantic rites:

> Come now, guest-friend, be stood on the grassy sacred enclosure of the fearful lake. Slash the gullet of the neck, and let the blood of this sacrificial victim flow into the murky depths of the reeds, as a drink for the lifeless. Call upon primeval earth and chthonic Hermes, escort of the dead, and ask chthonic Zeus to send up the swarm of night-wanderers from the mouths of the river, from which this melancholy off-flow water, unfit for washing hands, is sent up by Stygian springs.
>
> —Aeschylus *Psuchagogoi* F273a *TrGF*[19]

The blood of the sacrificial sheep is poured not into a pit in the ground, as in the *Odyssey*, but directly into the lake itself. The rites take place in a special precinct marked off on the lakeshore. The ghosts were evidently held to rise up out of the lake itself. Similarly, the Argives used to summon up Dionysus from the bottomless lake of Alcyonia at Lerna, into which Perseus had thrown him dead, by throwing a lamb into it for the "Gatekeeper," namely Hades.[20] The *Odyssey* seems to imply that souls were channeled upward from the Styx into the Cocytus, which in turn deposited them in the Acheron. Significantly, curse tablets that required ghosts to carry out acts of binding were often deposited for them in "underground" bodies of water.[21]

The general parallelism with Homer *prima facie* suggests that the setting of Aeschylus's consultation was similarly the Acheron. The parallel is reinforced by the use of the distinctive term "off-flow" (*aporrhōx*). Another fragment's reference to "a stagnant stream of water" also suits the Acheron's particular ambivalence between lake and river.[22] But since Fritzsch assumed in 1845 that the *Psuchagogoi* was set at Avernus simply because of the reference to the "lake" in F273, this notion has thrived,

[18] Aeschylus *Psuchagogoi* F273 *TrGF*.

[19] Kramer in Kramer et al. 1980: 14–23 provides an excellent commentary upon this papyrus fragment; see also the discussion at Henrichs 1991: 187–92.

[20] Plutarch *Moralia* 364f (rite); Pausanias 2.37.5; Scholiast Homer *Iliad* 14.319; Augustine *City of God* 18.13; Cyril *Adversus Iulianum* 1.10 p. 341 (myth of Perseus and Dionysus); cf. Ganschinietz 1919: 2384; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 44; and Clark 1979: 105. For Hades as gatekeeper, cf. Homer *Odyssey* 11.277. Note also the sanctuary of Dionysus *en limnais* ("in the lakes") in Attica, which may have had underworld associations: see Hooker 1960: 116 (on Aristophanes' *Frogs*).

[21] See, e.g., Wünsch 1897: no. 55 = Gager 1992: no. 64; Audollent 1904: nos. 109–10 = Gager 1992: no. 16; Fox 1912; *Année épigraphique* 1975: no. 497; Jordan 1980a: 232–33 and n. 23; Jordan 1985a: nos. 22–38 and pp. 79–80 = Gager 1992: no. 117; and Jordan 1985b: 207–9 and 231; cf. Tomlin 1988 (Bath cache).

[22] Aeschylus *Psuchagogoi* F276 *TrGF*.

largely uncritically, in the scholarly tradition.[23] However, the deities mentioned in the fragments make the case for the Acheron strong. Both Hermes and Hades in the aspect of a chthonic Zeus are attested for the Acheron *nekuomanteion*, but neither is attested for Avernus. A tantalizing fragment of the *Thesprotians* of the comic playwright Alexis is addressed to Hermes: "Hermes, you who escort the dead forth (*nekrōn propompe*), you to whose lot Philippides has fallen, and eye of black-robed night. . . ."[24] In the *Odyssey* the association of Hermes with the *nekuomanteion* goes unmentioned in the necromancy scene, but it is latent in the "Second *Nekuia*," in which Hermes escorts the souls of the dead suitors from Ithaca past Leucas in the direction of the Acheron.[25] Chthonic Zeus's connection with the Acheron *nekuomanteion* is supplied by Ampelius, as we have seen.[26]

A red-figure Attic *pelikē* of ca. 440 B.C. by the Lycaon Painter depicts Odysseus sitting poised with his sword as the ghost of Elpenor rises from the ground on the other side of a trench into which blood drains from jugulated sheep (fig. 8).[27] The vase yokes the *Odyssey*'s description of the

[23] Fritzsch 1845 on Aristophanes *Frogs* 1266; Wilamowitz 1914: 246 n. 1; Hardie 1977: 284; Rusten 1982: 34–35 (astoundingly denying that there was a lake at the Acheron *nekuomanteion*); Ameling 1986a; Parke and McGing 1988: 95 n. 5; Dunbar 1995 on Aristophanes *Birds* 1553–55. Two weak arguments can be made in favor of the Avernus setting. First, a one-word fragment from the play, F277 *TrGF*, which need have nothing to do with the necromancy, consists of "Daeira," a name applied to Persephone at Avernus by [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 710 (cf. 698); cf. Phillips 1953: 56 and 59; and Clark 1979: 64 (for the argument). But Daeira was far from confined to Avernus: she appeared, for example, also at Eleusis: Pausanias 1.38.7; Clement of Alexandria *Protrepticus* 3.45; Eustathius on Homer *Iliad* 6.648; *LSCG* no. 20 B11–12 (the sacrificial calendar of the Marathonian Tetrapolis); and *IG* I³.250 lines 15–16 (Eleusinion and Paiania); cf. Nilsson 1935: 82–83 and Larson 1995a: 70, 167, and 177. Second, Avernus did enter tragedy as the home of a *nekuomanteion*, in Sophocles at any rate: F748 *TrGF*/Pearson. Triclinius's claim that the play was set at Lake Stymphalus was dismissed in chapter 2.

[24] Alexis *Thesprotians* 93 K-A; the context of the fragment in Athenaeus shows that Philippides is mocked for scrawniness; cf. Collard 1949: 40 and Arnott 1996: ad loc.

[25] Hermes in Second *Nekuia*: Homer *Odyssey* 24.1–14. In the First *Nekuia*, however, Heracles tells Odysseus that he had been escorted down to the underworld to collect Cerberus by Hermes, together with Athene, 11.626. For Hermes as escort of souls (*psuchopompos*, *psuchagōgos*, *nekropompos*), see Eitrem 1909: esp. 41–54; Harrison 1922: 43–46; Lowe 1929: 65; Raingeard 1934–35; Kerenyi 1976; Vermeule 1979: 25–26 and 207; Burkert 1985: 157–58; Garland 1985: 154–55; and Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 307. Note the neat encapsulation of Hermes' ability to bring back the souls he takes down at Petronius *Satyricon* 140. Does the intaglio reproduced at *LIMC* Hermes no. 645 (Berlin, Staatliche Museum FG439, third century B.C.) show Hermes bringing up a soul for necromancy? He holds his caduceus over a talking head, which is apparently emerging from the ground.

[26] Ampelius *Liber memorialis* 8.3.

[27] Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 34–79 = *LIMC* Odysseus 149; see Caskey 1934a, 1934b, and 1934c; Caskey and Beazley 1954: 88–89; Touchefeu-Meynier 1968: 135–36

8. The ghost of Elpenor, Odysseus, and Hermes. Red-figure Attic *pelikē*, Lycaon Painter, ca. 440 B.C. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 34–79. William Amory Gardner Fund. Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Drawing by L. D. Caskey. © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

necromancy rite and its topography with the circumstances of the *Psuchagogoi*. Elpenor rests his hand on a large rock that rises out of picture, surely that of the *Odyssey*'s confluence. But behind Odysseus stands the *Psuchagogoi*'s Hermes. The lake- or riverside setting of the scene is clear:

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and plate 21.1; Brommer 1983: 81–82; Buitron and Cohen 1992: 98. The "background" details of rock, reeds, and pit were painted with a yellow-white pigment that has now almost entirely flaked off, leaving only a matte finish that is unphotographable; one must refer to Caskey's drawing. The widespread notion that this image is based upon the corresponding section of Polygnotus's famous *Nekuia* in the Cnidian *lesche* at Delphi (ca. 450 B.C.) is misconceived. Pausanias 10.29 clearly states that in this painting, Odysseus was kneeling, not sitting on a rock (did Polygnotus misinterpret *gounousthai/gounoumen* at Homer *Odyssey* 10.521 and 11.29?). For the Polygnotus *Nekuia*, see Robert 1892 (with Odysseus's posture correct); Touchefeu-Meynier 1968: 133–34; Felten 1975: 46–64; Brommer 1983: 81–82; Kebric 1983; Stansbury-O'Donnell 1990 (wrongly calquing Odysseus's posture on the Elpenor vase); Buitron and Cohen 1992: 98; and Cohen and Buitron-Oliver 1995: plate 14. Elpenor also appears on the name-vase of the *Nekuia* painter, an Attic red-figure calyx-crater, ca. 450 B.C., in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, reproduced at Richter and Hall 1936, 1: no. 135 and 2: plate 137. The claim of Weizmann (1941: 175–76) to have found a representation of Elpenor on a "Tabula Odysseaca" seems speculative.

behind the ghost of Elpenor rises a fine collection of marsh-reeds.[28] Even if the *Psuchagogoi* is after all to be located at Avernus, the transference of Odysseus's consultation there from the Acheron in the first place presupposes a basic similarity in configuration between the sites.

In the *Frogs*, Aristophanes makes brief mention of three underworld rivers: "The black-hearted rock of the Styx and the crag (*skopelos*) of the Acheron, dripping with blood, and the dogs that run around the Cocytus. . . ." The "crag of the Acheron" is most easily read as denoting a rocky outcrop over the Acheron on which or from which blood offerings are made into it. In the *Birds*, Aristophanes gives us Socrates performing necromancy explicitly beside a lake that is in turn beside the *Skiapodes*, "Shadefeet," a comic reflex of the Cimmerians. This passage, a parody of the *Psuchagogoi*, is valuable as a further testimony to the practice of lakeside necromancy in general, although it cannot be positively associated with the Acheron in its own right.[29] Another valuable testimony for the practice in general is provided by the fragment of Python's satyr-play *Agen* of ca. 326 B.C. In this, mages evidently offered to call up the ghost of Pythionice for Harpalus at a lakeside: we hear of a "reed" (*kalamos*) and of something "birdless."[30]

When was the *nekuomanteion* active? The *Odyssey* constitutes a *terminus ante* for its establishment.[31] It is usually held that the *Odyssey* as a whole reached its final form around 650 B.C. at the latest.[32] Herodotus's tale of Melissa is located within the reign of Periander, around 627–587 B.C., although the tale is not historical. Herodotus perhaps implies that the *nekuomanteion* remained a going concern at his time of publication, probably in the 420s B.C. Pausanias implied that the *nekuomanteion* was long gone when he wrote, about 150 A.D. However, Clement of Alexandria, writing around A.D. 190, may have again seen it as a going concern,

[28] The plants might in theory represent rather the asphodels of the underworld plain behind Elpenor, but they in no way resemble the modern asphodels of Greece, for which see Murr 1890: 240–43 and Baumann 1982: 63 and 68.

[29] Aristophanes *Frogs* 470–72; Aristophanes *Birds* 1553–64 (see chapter 7).

[30] Python *Agen*, *TrGF* 91 F1. The word defined by "birdless" is corrupt in the manuscript, which has (ε)φετωμ(α), and there is no agreement as to emendation: *stomōma*, "mouth" (Erbse); *ochurōma*, "fortress" (Gulick); *phatnōma*, "platform" (?) (Fiorillo); *helōma*, "marsh" (Meineke); *phuteuma*, "plant" (Lumb).

[31] Since it is unclear whether the Thesprotians originally spoke Greek, Hammond (1967: 433) raises the possibility that another language was once spoken at the oracle.

[32] Lobeck 1829: 316 curiously argued that the *Odyssey*'s supposed silence about the *nekuomanteion* meant that it predated it. *Nekuomanteion* does not fit into a hexameter. We can divine nothing of the prehistory of the *nekuomanteion* from the presence of a few Mycenean burials on the hill of the Prodromos monastery, *pace* Hammond 1967: 314, 362, 369–70, 400, and 414. For details, see Dakaris n.d.: 19, 1963b, 1972: 69, 1975: 150–51, 1977a: 68–69 (with illustration), 1977b: 140–41, and 1993: 27 and 31; and Donnadieu and Vilatte 1996: 86.

as may Lucius Ampelius, writing in the third or fourth century A.D.[33] Dakaris found a dump of Persephone terracottas and Corinthian pottery from the seventh to the fifth century B.C. on the hillside 100 meters beneath the Prodromos monastery and its hellenistic predecessor building. It is possible that this dump derived from a nearby *nekuomanteion* that flourished in the classical period.[34]

Hades and Persephone were apparently the initial presiding deities. In the *Odyssey*, the site of the *nekuomanteion* can be referred to succinctly as "the house of Hades," but it is Persephone's prerogative in particular to assemble and scatter the shades, and to send up Gorgon heads for consulters who tarried too long. The Persephone statuettes from the Prodromos monastery site and its hill attest her importance in the immediate area. Persephone was, appropriately, a goddess defined by her own supreme ability to return from the underworld. Plutarch's rationalized version of Theseus's attempted abduction of Persephone is located at the court of King Aidoneus, that is, Hades, king of the Molossians. The same variant of Hades' name may be reflected in the name of a local Christian saint, Aidonati.[35] As we have seen, Hades also came to be conceived of there in the aspect of chthonic Zeus (eventually Zeus-Typhon in particular). Hermes perhaps became involved with the oracle between the composition of the first and second *Odyssey Nekuias*.[36] Alexis's *Thesprotians* indicates he had some role at the oracle, perhaps even the major role, by the fourth century B.C., and Aeschylus's *Psuchagogoi* and the Elpenor vase indicate that this was true already in the fifth, if they have been interpreted correctly. The gods of the *nekuomanteion* eventually became known as "Molossian gods," even though it was in Thesprotia.[37]

We can say little about the staff of the *nekuomanteion*. Aeschylus's eponymous *Psuchagogoi* may reflect the oracle's attendants. A late fifth-century B.C. lead inquiry tablet of Zeus and Dione at Dodona intriguingly

[33] Herodotus 5.92 (cf. Salmon 1984: 186–230 for reign of Periander); Pausanias 9.30.6 (cf. Collard 1949: 88 and Papachatzis 1963–74: ad loc.); Clement of Alexandria *Protrepticus* 10P (see below); Ampelius *Liber memorialis* 8.3.

[34] Daux 1959: 669; Dakaris n.d.: 19, 1960a, and 1993: 27–29; Hammond 1967: 65, 427, 436, 478, 489, and 721; van Straten 1982: 218; and Tsouvara-Souli 1983.

[35] Persephone marshals the shades: Homer *Odyssey* 10.491, 512, 534, 564; 11.47, 69, 213, 226, 386, and 635; for what it is worth, Persephone appears more frequently than Hades on curse tablets (Gager 1992: 5). Return of fertility goddesses from the underworld: see especially Bérard 1974. Aidoneus: Plutarch *Theseus* 31 and 35; Persephone-Kore is differentiated into a wife *Pher*sephone and a daughter Kore. Aidonati: supposedly a corruption of Hagios Donatios: Janssens 1961: 388.

[36] Book 24 is often regarded as a later "continuation" of the *Odyssey*: Heubeck et al. 1988–92, 3: 356–58; Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 14; and Johnston 1999: 14; cf. also bibliography above for Hermes *psuchopompos*.

[37] Photius *Lexicon* s.v. *theoi Molittikoi*, and Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.514; cf. Plutarch *Theseus* 31 and 35; and Hesychius s.v. *theoepēs*.

asks, "They shouldn't use Dorios the *psuchagōgos*, should they?" Did Dorios work in the nearby *nekuomanteion*? But the tablet may, for all we know, have been written by someone from far away, and may have referred to difficulties back home.[38]

Homer's account of the rites performed by Odysseus may reflect the rites performed at the *nekuomanteion*.[39] Perhaps one had the choice of pouring the blood directly into the lake or into a pit beside it, the latter custom possibly influenced by the techniques of tombside offerings. There are vague indications that ghosts were experienced through incubation, presumably within the lakeside precinct or in an associated temple (or on Medea's bridge?). Homer's ghost of Anticleia three times evades Odysseus's embrace "like a shadow or a dream." Herodotus merely says of the ghost of Melissa that she "appeared" (*epiphaneisa*). In Lucian's parody of this tale, admittedly not set at the *nekuomanteion*, we are led to think, at one level, that Eucrates experienced the ghost of his wife Demainete in a dream (see below). Ampelius says that consulters saw visions of Zeus-Typhon himself.[40] The Melissa tale also suggests that one could consult the *nekuomanteion* by proxy and that one could call up the same ghost at it twice.[41]

Clement of Alexandria almost certainly believed that lecanomancy, bowl divination, was used as a means of experiencing ghosts at the Acheron. He dismisses commonplaces of pagan divination:

> So do not busy yourself with sanctuaries without gods or the mouths (*stomata*) of pits full of the marvelous (*terateia*) or the Thesprotian basin (*lebēs*) or the tripod of Cirrha or the bronze of Dodona. . . .
>
> —Clement of Alexandria *Protrepticus* 10P[42]

[38] Evangelidis 1935: no. 23 = Christidis et al. 1999: no. 5; cf. van Straten 1982: 215 and 218; and Johnston 1999: 62, 81, and 109. For the Dodona tablets in general, see Parke 1967b: 18 (listing publications thitherto) and 259–73 (publication of select tablets); the full corpus of 1,400 tablets excavated by Evangelidis will soon be published by Christidis. I thank Professor Robert Parker for first bringing the Dorios tablet to my attention.

[39] Homer *Odyssey* 10.516–37 and 11.23–50; cf. Collard 1949: 172. Janssens (1961: 383 and 390–91) speculates that the custom of hurling oneself from the Leucadian rock (Ptolemy Chennos *Bibliotheca* 6, etc.) began as a rite of advance purification for those en route to the *nekuomanteion*. He points to Servius on Virgil *Eclogues* 8.59, "Those people were accustomed to throw themselves from the Leucadian rock who either wanted to find their parents or wanted to be loved by those whom they loved." For the purificatory qualities of the sea, cf. Polyaenus *Strategemata* 3.11 ("To the sea, Mystai," of the Eleusinian initiates) and Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* 1193 ("The sea washes away all the evils of men").

[40] Homer *Odyssey* 11.207; Herodotus 5.92; Lucian *Philopseudes* 27 (see chapter 11); Ampelius *Liber memorialis* 8.3 (who has a temple of Zeus-Typhon at or even as the *nekuomanteion*; if this ever existed, it could have provided shelter for incubation).

[41] Thus violating the principle of Servius on Virgil *Georgics* 4.502; but see chapter 11.

[42] Repeated by Eusebius *Praeparatio evangelica* 2.3.1 and paraphrased by Theodoret *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 10.3.

Further types of pagan divination follow. The "mouths of pits full of the marvelous" looks like a reference to Trophonius's hole at Lebadeia. At Delphi, near lost Cirrha, the Pythia prophesied from her tripod. Dodona prophesied not only from its oak tree but also from lots shaken from bronze vessels or from the sounding of bronze vessels.[43] In the midst of these references, the "Thesprotian basin" ought to refer similarly to an established site of divination and to the object characteristic of its mode of divination. Since Thesprotian Dodona is ruled out, the "Thesprotian basin" can only refer to the *nekuomanteion*.[44] Tzetzes twice claims that Odysseus's descent to Hades in the *Odyssey* was an allegory of an original consultation in which he interrogated the soul of Tiresias though lecanomancy. He also interprets Philostratus's claim that Homer called up the ghost of Odysseus in Ithaca by *psuchagōgia* as indicating that he used lecanomancy, and says that the origin of lecanomancy was the consultation of blood, human or animal, in a pit.[45] However, in all probability the Christian tradition is misled by the partial association between necromancy and lecanomancy that developed in the imperial period. It is found in the Greek magical papyri, and is first firmly attested by Varro.[46]

The one extant account of a supposedly historical consultation at the Acheron is Herodotus's tale of the Corinthian tyrant Periander's evocation of the ghost of his wife Melissa:

> On one day he stripped all the women of Corinth on account of his wife Melissa. For he sent messengers to her, to Thesprotia, to the Acheron River, to the *nekuomanteion*, on the question of the deposit of a guest-friend (*xeinikēs*). Melissa appeared and said that she would neither indicate nor declare where the deposit lay,[47] for she was cold and naked. The clothes that had been buried with her were of no use to her because they had not been burned. As witness to the truth of these assertions stood the fact that Periander had thrown his loaves into a cold oven. The token was proof: he had had sex with Melissa's corpse. When these utterances were reported back to Periander, he at once issued an edict that all the women of Corinth should

[43] Trophonius: cf. Butterworth 1919: ad loc. Dodona: Callisthenes *FGH* 124 F22a–b, etc.; cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 2: 304–7; and especially Parke 1967b: 84–93.

[44] Van Straten 1982: 224–26.

[45] *Nekuia* as lecanomancy: Tzetzes *Exeg. in Iliadem* p. 110, 5; and on [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 813; cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 388; and Delatte 1932: 186. Odysseus's ghost and lecanomancy: Tzetzes *Exeg. in Iliadem* p. 148, 7, on the basis of Philostratus *Heroicus* 29.5–6. Lecanomancy originates in blood pit: Tzetzes *Exeg. in Iliadem* p. 110, 5; cf. Ganschinietz 1925: 1888.

[46] See chapter 12. In the magical papyri, necromancy is also exploited for the consultation of gods.

[47] For the theme of withheld speech in association with Periander, cf. also the Lycophron episode, 3.50–53 (speech withheld both by Lycophron and by Periander himself).

go out to the Heraion. So they came out as to a festival in their finest adornments, but he posted his bodyguards in ambush and stripped them all alike, free and slave, piled their clothing up into a trench, and burned it with a prayer to Melissa. After doing this he sent to Melissa a second time, and she told him where she[48] had put the guest-friend's deposit.

—Herodotus 5.92

Elsewhere we learn background details. Periander had killed his wife himself unintentionally in a fit of temper by kicking her or throwing a footstool at her while she was pregnant. He had then burned his concubines for driving him to it with their slander. Her rivals had presumably alleged infidelity and allowed Periander's obsessive and jealous desire for his wife to do the rest. Periander's necrophilia testifies at once to this obsession and also to his repentance for the killing. Melissa's father Procles subsequently asked Periander's son by Melissa, Lycophron, whether he knew who had killed his mother. The question set father and son at variance, with the result that Periander's dynasty was undone.[49]

At one level, the tale has perhaps been constructed to make a point about the extent of Periander's (historical) empire. He controlled a range of territories adjacent to the Acheron through the subordinate members of his family: Corcyra, perhaps under Lycophron, Leucas under Pylades, and several colonies along the coast of Epirus, Ambracia under Gorgus and another Periander, Anactorium under Echiades, Apollonia under Gylax, and Epidamnus under Phalius.[50] The range of Periander's power is better expressed if he is made to deal with the oracle from Corinth through messengers rather than to visit it in person. Periander may or may not have directly controlled the actual territory in which the oracle was situated, but it is noteworthy that the diagnostic pottery from the seventh- to fifth-century dump on the Prodromos monastery hill is Corinthian.[51]

[48] The text is more naturally interpreted with "she" than "he" at this point: see Stern 1989: 16. The folktale parallels discussed below invite the same conclusion.

[49] Herodotus 3. 50–53 (killing of Melissa, undoing of dynasty; see Sourvinou-Inwood 1988 on this text); Pythaenetus of Aegina *FGH* 299 F3; Nicolaus of Damascus *FGH* 90 F58 (Periander's erotic attachment to Melissa); and Diogenes Laertius 1.94 (concubines), 96 (women stripped specifically of their gold), and 100 (unintentional killing).

[50] Herodotus 3.53; Nicolaus of Damascus *FGH* 90 F57.7; Strabo C325 and 452; Stephanus of Byzantium s.vv. *Apollōnia*, *Gulakeia*; Plutarch *Moralia* 552e; Thucydides 1.24; Appian *Civil War* 2.39; Eusebius 2.88–89 Schöne; and Syncellus 213b. Cf. Salmon 1984: 209–17, with further sources; and, for the Epirote colonies, Hammond 1967: 425–28 and 442. Blakesley (1854 on Herodotus 5.92) made the interesting suggestion that the tale had originally starred the lesser Periander of Ambracia (Plutarch *Moralia* 768f and Aristotle *Politics* 1304a and 1311a), since Ambracia was so close to the *nekuomanteion*.

[51] Significance of messenger: cf. Clark 1979: 71–72. Pottery: Dakaris 1960a; and Hammond 1967: 65, 427, 436, 478, 489, and 721.

The tale is rich in its mythological and folktale elements.[52] Melissa has a speaking name that consists of the word "bee" (*melissa/melitta*).[53] Like cicadas, bees had a number of associations significant for necromancy: they were held to emerge from the carcasses of dead humans or animals; they were thought to live in caves; they had prophetic powers of their own, and had notably revealed the quasi-necromantic oracle of Trophonius. Swarms of ghosts were even visualized as swarms of bees in necromantic contexts.[54] Another Corinthian Melissa, an old woman to whom Persephone's mother Demeter had entrusted her rites, was destroyed, like Periander's wife, by the envy of her peers, who tore her apart. Demeter accordingly caused bees to be born from her body, in a sort of ghostly resurrection.[55] *Melissa* was also a common title for priestesses of Demeter and Persephone.[56] Did Periander's Melissa the bee have a comparable role at the Acheron to that of Tettix the cicada at Tainaron? Stern goes so far as to argue that Melissa is actually a demythologized version of the patron goddess Persephone. In the Mesopotamian myth that parallels the Greek myth of Hades' abduction of Persephone, the fertility goddess Inanna/Ishtar descends to the underworld shedding a piece of clothing at each of the underworld gates before temporarily dying there. Stern sees Melissa as in origin an Inanna-like Persephone who must have her clothing restored if she is to be warmed up to produce the fruits of the earth (there is, however, no indication that Inanna ever recovered her clothing).[57] At any

[52] For a treatment of some aspects of the tale not covered here, see Ogden 1997: 92–93 (a structural analysis); cf. also duBois 1988: 112–13 and Loraux 1993: 7–8. Note the thematic links between Dionysius II's prostituting, stripping, and torturing of the Locrian women at a festival of Aphrodite to find their money (Justin 21.3), the supposedly Babylonian custom of prostituting women at the temple of Aphrodite's counterpart Mylitta (cf. Melitta; Herodotus 1.199; Stern 1989), and the thousand prostitutes of the Corinthian Aphrodite temple (Strabo C378).

[53] Diogenes Laertius 1.94 says her original name was Lysida. Bee motifs appear elsewhere in Periander's family. His father Cypselus was so called for having been hidden from assassins as a baby in a ceramic beehive (*kypselē*): Herodotus 5.92; Roux 1963.

[54] Carcasses: Herodotus 5.114 (human head) and Virgil *Georgics* 4.317–558 (Bugonia). Caves: Homer *Iliad* 2.87 and 12.156. Prophetic powers: Aristotle *History of Animals* 627b10; cf. Larson 1995b: 354–57. Trophonius: Pausanias 9.40 and Scholiast Aristophanes *Clouds* 506. Swarms: Sophocles F879 *TrGF*/Pearson; Aeschylus *Psuchagogoi* F273a *TrGF*; and Virgil *Aeneid* 6.706. Bees, too, like cicadas, were beloved of the Muses: Varro *De re rustica* 3.16; cf. Cook 1895: passim; Bodson 1975: 20–43; and Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 51, 64–68, and 72.

[55] Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 1.430.

[56] Blakesley 1854 on Herodotus 5.92; Weniger 1884–1937a and 1884–1937b; Cook 1895: 5 and 14–17; Will 1955: 242; Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 70; Loraux 1993: 28–30; and Larson 1995b: 352–54.

[57] Stern 1989. For the Mesopotamian myth, see Clark 1979: 15–19. Weber (1930: 21–27; cf. Dale 1954: x) similarly argued that the tale of the return of Alcestis was also in origin one of a returning fertility goddess.

rate, it seems that Melissa may be have been more than an ordinary ghost at the *nekuomanteion*.

The Melissa tale closely resembles that of Pausanias and Cleonice: in both cases the men kill the women they love accidentally in an instinctive emotional reaction; in both cases they call up her ghost at a *nekuomanteion*. Pausanias's goal had been to placate Cleonice. Although Herodotus does not present this as Periander's initial goal in calling up Melissa, the act of placation she then requests in the burning of the clothes constitutes the focus of his narrative.[58] There is no indication that Melissa's ghost had been actively vengeful like Cleonice's, unless we see its hand in her father Procles' disastrous question to Lycophron about her killing. The act of placation may also have included the setting up of a (single) "replacement" statue of her. Diogenes Laertius tells that Periander stripped the Corinthian women of their gold in order to make a statue from it for Olympia in fulfillment of a vow.[59]

Herodotus may indicate that the tradition upon which he drew for the Melissa tale included a hexameter account in the heavily dactylic phrase that translates as " . . . into a trench and burned it with a prayer to Melissa."[60] The story-type can perhaps be traced back almost to the time of Periander himself. Strabo makes elliptical reference to a tale that he tentatively ascribes to Stesichorus (*floruit* ca. 600–550 B.C.). In this, an unnamed tyrant of Corinth was betrothed to Rhadine, but she was loved by her cousin. The tyrant killed them both and dispatched their bodies from Corinth in a chariot, but then repented and had their bodies brought back for burial.[61] Again, sexual jealousy led to a hasty killing, to be followed by regret and a rectification of burial.

Another tradition relating to the young Periander aligns itself with the Cleonice tradition in a different way. Parthenius tells how Periander's own mother Crateia ("Power") fell in love with him and deceived him into having sex with her regularly in a darkened room. Keen to discover the identity of his secret lover, Periander hid a lamp in the room and brought it out when his lover arrived. In horror at the discovery, he leapt at his mother to kill her, but was restrained from so doing by a demonic apparition (*daimonion phasma*). As a result, he went mad and began to kill his citizens, while his mother committed suicide.[62] As in the Cleonice

[58] Macan 1895: ad loc. The placatory function of the clothes-burning is more explicit at Diogenes Laertius 1.100 (and in the parody of Lucian *Philopseudes* 27); the burning of the concubines at Diogenes Laertius 1.94 is in some respects a doublet.

[59] Diogenes Laertius 1.96; Ephorus *FGH* 70 F178; see chapter 7 (and cf. chapter 11) for "replacement" statues.

[60] Stern 1989: 15–16, finding the original in cyclic epic; How and Wells (1912: ad loc.) find it in the work of the Athenian diviner Lampon.

[61] Stesichorus F278 Campbell = Strabo C347.

[62] Parthenius *Erotica pathemata* 17. The tale is alluded to by Plutarch (*Moralia* 146) and Diogenes Laertius (1.96), who cites Aristippus's first book, *On Ancient Luxury*. That tyrants

tale, we have the elements of illicit sex, a lamp instigating the action, the male partner passionately lashing out with a sword, the (eventual) death of the woman partner, a ghost or something akin thereto, and the ensuing madness of the man.[63]

Two comparative Jewish traditions also enhance our understanding of the Melissa tale. First, the Talmud tells how Zeēraj gave an innkeeper money to keep safe for him, but returned to find her dead. He went to her grave to ask her where it was. Her ghost told him that it was under the door-hinge and asked him to bring her offerings.[64]

Second, Josephus tells of Herod the Great's obsessive love for his wife Mariamme I. But his mother and sister (rival womenfolk) hated her for her haughtiness and slandered her before Herod with the allegation that they knew would most afflict him: adultery. In a fit of anger, he had her killed, together with her supposed lover, and then immediately repented it. In a distracted state he would speak to her as if still alive. The Hebrew traditions preserve another intriguing detail: Herod had Mariamme's corpse preserved in honey for seven years while he had sex with it.[65] In

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should have sex with their mothers was a productive theme. *Oedipus Tyrannos* (etc.) aside, the Athenian tyrant Hippias dreamed of sex with his mother (6.107). Another Corinthian, Diocles, was so disgusted by his mother's incestuous passion for him that he abandoned the city (Aristotle *Politics* 1274a). Cf. Loraux 1993: 22.

[63] In the Pausanias 3.17 version of the Cleonice tale, she accidentally knocks over a burning lamp as she approaches Pausanias's bed; in the Plutarch *Moralia* 555c version, she asks the servants to remove the lamp out of modesty, and she therefore blindly bumps into the lampstand. Does necromantic lychnomancy (on which see below) lurk here? The tale of Periander and his mother, lamp and all, also resembles, in addition to Apuleius's tale of Cupid and Psyche (*Metamorphoses*, esp. 5.22–23), Ovid's tale of Myrrha (= Zmyrna) and Cinyras (*Metamorphoses* 10.298–502, esp. 472–75; cf. Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 3.14.4; Hyginus 58; and Liberalis 34), in which a daughter seduces her father. In this tale, too, a sword is hastily drawn. There are also indirect similarities with the tales of Philinnion (Phlegon of Tralles *Mirabilia* 1) and Laodameia (see chapter 11); cf. Hansen 1980: 76.

[64] Talmud Berachot 18b. Cf. two Christian examples: Augustine (*De cura gerunda pro mortuis* 13) tells how a man dies after paying off a debt. The opportunist creditor attempts to dun his son for the money a second time. The father's ghost appears to the son to locate the receipt for him. See Russell 1981. *Apophthegmata Sancti Macarii* at *PG* 34.244–45 tells how a husband dies after receiving money from a guest-friend and hiding it for him. When his widow cannot produce the money, she is threatened with slavery. Macarius consoles her and prays to the dead man at his grave and interrogates him. He is told the money is under the leg of the bed, and there it is indeed found. See Ganschinietz 1929. A similar motif appears to underlie Virgil *Aeneid* 1.353–59, where the ghost of Sychaeus discloses hidden treasure to his widow Dido.

[65] Josephus *Jewish War* 1.436–44 and *Jewish Antiquities* 15.202–52; at 241 Josephus may make a conscious joke when he tells that Herod threw parties "to distract himself" (*eis psuchagōgian*) from calling upon Mariamme discordantly; Talmud Bab., *Baba Batra* 3b and *Kiddouschin* 70b; Sifra on *Deuteronomy* 22.22; cf. Reinach 1907 (deliberating, inconclusively, whether we are dealing with a folktale held in common between two cultures or a Greek tale that penetrated Jewish tradition) and Nenci 1994 on Herodotus 5.92. For the more historical Mariamme, see Schalit 1969: 566–88 and Kokkinos 1998: 211–14.

the light of this, the conjunction of Periander's necrophilia and Melissa's bee-name strongly suggests that he was believed to have treated her corpse in exactly the same way. The Greeks used honey as a general preservative, and in particular made use of it when they wished to embalm their dead. There are several Spartan examples of this: the body of King Agesipolis was returned to Sparta preserved in honey; that of Agesilaus was returned in wax only for the want of honey; Cleomenes' preservation of the head of Archonides in honey is discussed in chapter 13.[66] Other Greek traditions preserve a link between honey, resurrection, and necromancy. Thus the Cretan king Minos's son Glaucus disappeared and died by falling into a pot of honey. Polyidus ("the much seeing"), commissioned by the king to find him, was led to the jar by a dream. Minos then ordered Polyidus to restore the boy to life, and, when he could not, had him immured with him in his tomb. A snake then brought and demonstrated a magic herb, which Polyidus used to resurrect Glaucus. The honey was evidently integral to the resurrection, for the summary proverb said, "Glaucus drank honey and rose again."[67]

A third tradition, from Roman culture, can be aligned here, too. Nero supposedly kicked his wife Poppaea Sabina to death in a fit of temper during her pregnancy in A.D. 65, before having her body stuffed and embalmed. He, too, was said to have had sex with his mother, Agrippina.[68] (Nero's associations with necromancy are discussed in chapter 10.)

We can identify a parody of the Melissa tale. In Lucian's *Philopseudes* (second century A.D.), Eucrates consoles himself for his wife Demainete's death by reading Plato's *Phaedo* on his couch. Her ghost appears by his side and complains that one of her favorite slippers has not been burned with her, because it has lain hidden under a chest. Eucrates tangibly embraces his wife, but then she disappears when a Maltese lapdog barks underneath the couch. The slipper (like the deposit) is found where she said it was and burned. Here the themes of the recovery of the lost item

[66] Honey embalming at Sparta: Xenophon *Hellenica* 5.3.9 (Agesipolis); Diodorus 15.93; Plutarch *Agesilaus* 50; and Nepos *Agesilaus* 8.7 (Agesilaus). See also Lucretius 3.889 (for the principle); *TAM* 49 (Boethus of Tarsus in first-century B.C. Telmessos); [Calisthenes] *Alexander Romance* 3.34 (Alexander the Great). Cf. Robert-Tornow 1893; Pritchett 1985: 241; and Richer 1994: 71.

[67] Hyginus *Fabula* 136 (myth) and Apostolius 5.48 *CPG* (proverb); cf. Cook 1895: 11; Furtwängler 1900, 3: 253; Willetts 1959; Clark 1979: 25–26; Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 68–69; and Palagia 1988, with the sources cited there. The myth is portrayed on several third-century B.C. Etruscan gems. See Burkert 1972: 163–64; and M. L. West 1983: 149 for Polyidus as a shaman. Asclepius was also credited with the resurrection of Glaucus: see testimonia at Edelstein and Edelstein 1945: T70–72, 75, and 81. See further chapter 13 on Cleomenes and the head of Archonides.

[68] Tacitus *Annals* 16.6; Suetonius *Nero* 35; and Dio Cassius 62.28; cf. Pliny *Natural History* 12.83; see Cumont 1949: 47; Volpilhac 1978: 286; Ameling 1986b; Holzrattner 1995: 128–132; and chapter 10.

and the rectification of inadequate burial are rolled into one. The tribute to Herodotus becomes explicit in the Maltese (*Melitaion*) designation of the dog (cf. *Melissa/Melitta*). The tale is delightfully ambivalent: a true visit from an unsettled ghost, suddenly called back to the underworld by Cerberus, "the dog . . . underneath," and warden of souls? Or does Eucrates merely sleep (relaxed on the couch, boring book) and dream (on the book's theme), suddenly to be awakened by the bark of a real dog?[69]

[69] Lucian: *Philopseudes* 27; cf. Felton 1999: 78.

CHAPTER 5

THE AVERNUS *NEKUOMANTEION*

THE *nekuomanteion* at Lake Avernus near Cumae in Campania receives the most attention in ancient literature, yet remains the most elusive. The earliest extant reference to it is a fragmentary one of Sophocles (*floruit* 468–406 B.C.), who referred to it as "a *nekuomanteion* in/on a Tyrsenian [i.e., Italian] lake," and who probably described it as birdless.[1] Strabo and Diodorus also apply the term *nekuomanteion* to Avernus, and Servius perhaps implies a similar designation in referring to *necromantia* in connection with the lake. The same implication would follow if Laberius's mimes *Lacus Avernus* and *Necyomantia* are to be identified (Laberius's *floruit* was the earlier first century B.C.). If Crantor of Soli took his fictional Elysius of Terina, a city in southern Italy, to the Avernus oracle, then it may also have been known as a *psuchomanteion* (see chapter 6). Maximus of Tyre refers less specifically to a *manteion antron*, an oracular cave, at the lake.[2]

From at least the late sixth century B.C., a tradition began to flourish that located Odysseus's wanderings along the west coast of Italy. The colony of Circeii, mentioned in the Carthaginian treaty of 508 B.C., was reputedly founded in the reign of Tarquinius Superbus (ca. 543–510 B.C.). It occupied a promontory, halfway between Rome and Cumae, that was considered to have once been Circe's island. Odysseus's cup was later displayed there. At about the time of Circeii's foundation, a few lines were

[1] Sophocles F748 *TrGF*/Pearson = Bekker *Anecdota graeca* 414.3; cf. *Etymologicum magnum* s.v. *Aornos* and Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.514. Avernus was both a lake (*limnē*) and a harbor (*limēn*), which results in some confusion in these Byzantine notes; so, too, in Hesychius and Zonaras s.v. *Aornos*; cf. Clark 1979: 65–67. The possibility that these sources may attest an additional *nekuomanteion* in Etruria was dismissed in chapter 2. Radt (*TrGF* ad loc.) raises the possibility that the Sophocles in question was not the tragedian but Sophocles Grammaticus.

[2] Strabo C244; Diodorus 4.22; Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.107. Laberius: fragments at Bonaria 1956: 47 and 52–55. Crantor's Elysius: Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.115; Plutarch *Moralia* 109c–d; and *Greek Anthology* appendix 6 no. 235; cf. Rohde 1925: 186 n. 23; and Luck 1985: 209; see chapter 6. We cannot be sure from Eustathius's gloss of the term *nekuomanteion* as applied to Avernus with the term *psuchopompion* (Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.514) that this latter term was also applied to Avernus in antiquity. Maximus of Tyre 8.2.

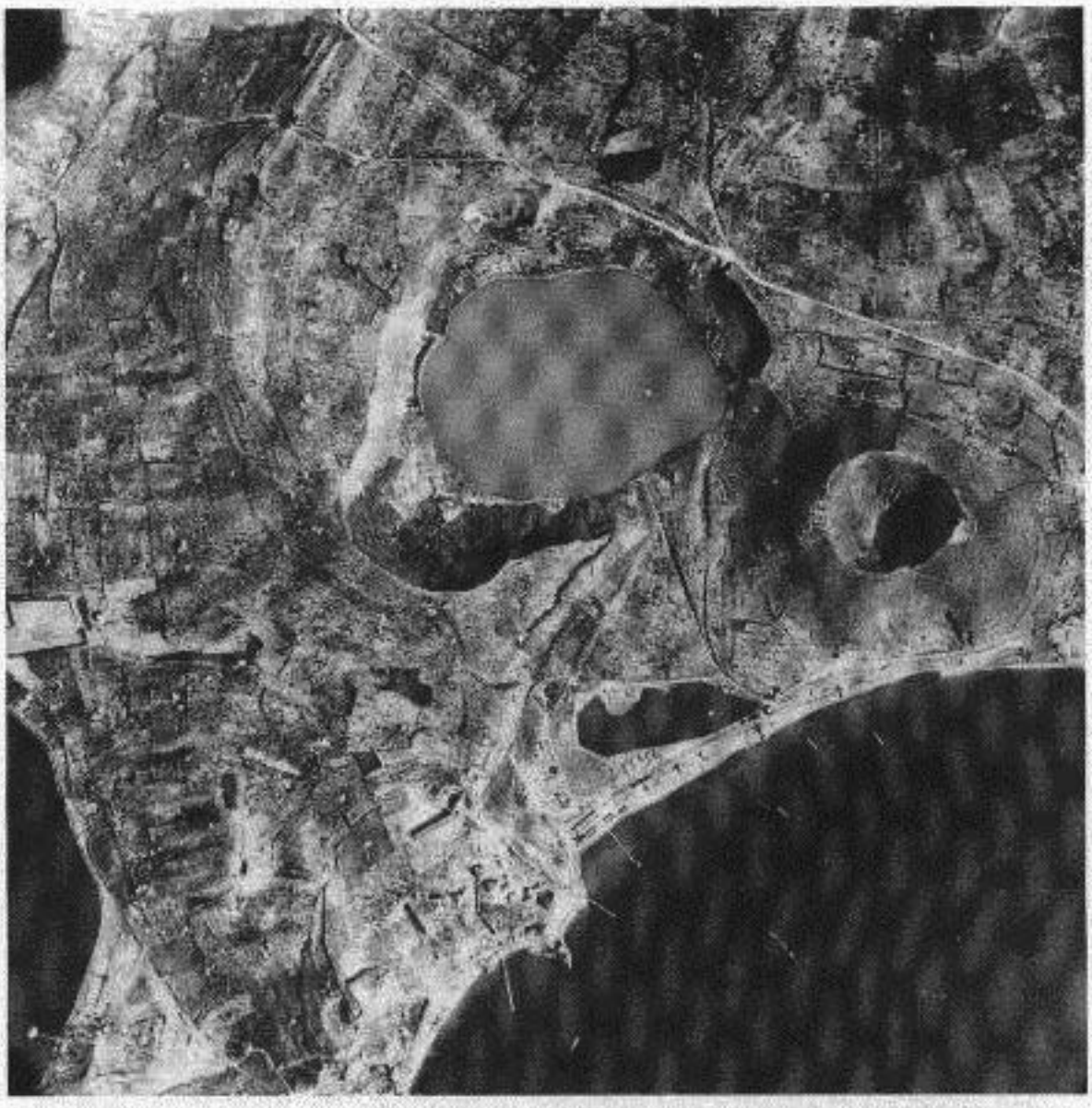
being interpolated into Hesiod's *Theogony* to make Agrius and Latinus, Odysseus's sons by Circe, rulers among the Tyrrhenians.[3]

The underworld entrance to which Odysseus had sailed from Circe's island was easily found. The configuration of the Acheron *nekuomanteion* required that it be a lake. Avernus, beside Cumae, the very point at which Greek colonists had first penetrated the Italian mainland, ca. 760 B.C., was an ideal candidate (fig. 9). It was a flooded volcanic crater. Its steep rim was covered in thick, dark trees. Its environs, the Phlegraean ("fiery") fields, offered further volcanoes, fumaroles, mephitic gases, and hot springs galore. The surrounding soft tufa rock abounded in caves, natural and man-made.[4] Even the lake's name seemed appropriate: the Italic form *Avernus*, ironically signifying "place of birds" by etymology (cf. Latin *av-is*, "bird"; *-ernus*, productive suffix), was taken into Greek as *Aornos* and thus easily read as signifying "birdless" (cf. *a*-privative; *ornis*, "bird"). The lake, it was explained, emitted gases of its own, and these were fatal to birds (similar stories attached also to another Campanian lake, Ampsanctus). And, like the birds, even leaves falling from its surrounding trees avoided the lake. Appropriately, the "Acherusian lake" itself was also manifest in the area: the name is variously said to have been applied either to Gulf Lucrinus or to the nearby Lake Fusaro, or even to Avernus itself. Indeed, Avernus was so obviously an entrance to the underworld that it may itself have been the chief inspiration of the project to map Odysseus's wanderings onto the west of Italy.[5]

[3] Odysseus on west of Italy: Phillips 1953 (important); and cf. Martin 1984: 18–25. Circeii: Livy 1.56 (cf. Ogilvie 1965: ad loc.); Polybius 3.22 (treaty; cf. Walbank 1957: ad loc.); and Strabo C232 (cup); cf. Hardie 1969: 15 and 33 and 1977: 283; and Castagnoli 1977: 73–75. Hesiod: *Theogony* 1015–18; West (1966: ad loc.) dates the lines to ca. 550–500. Another important early reference to Odysseus in the west of Italy is Hellanicus (ca. 480–395 B.C.) *FGH* 4 F84. See Hardie 1977: 283 for a weak argument that Odysseus had been sent to the west of Italy by Stesichorus (*floruit* ca. 600–550).

[4] The modern Avernus and adjacent fumaroles are superbly illustrated at Monti 1980: 4–15 and 26–27. Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.197 explains (fantastically) that Avernus is only illumined by the sun at midday, when it is directly overhead, so steep is its rim; the *Orphic Argonautica* 1120–42 extends the principle to the entire Phlegraean fields area, confining it beneath steep mountains.

[5] Etymology of Avernus: for the productive suffix *-ernus* in Italic place-names, cf. *Falernus, Liternum, Privernum, Salernum, Tifernum*, etc.; cf. Austin 1977 on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.239 and Castagnoli 1977: 47. Avernus as birdless: Heraclides of Pontus F128ab Wehrli; Timaeus *FGH* 566 F57 (= Antigonus *Historiae mirabiles* 152 [168], denying the tradition); Lucretius 6.740–46 (denying the tradition); Strabo C244; Virgil *Aeneid* 6.237–42 (including probable interpolation) with Servius ad loc.; Silius Italicus *Punica* 12.120–29; [Aristotle] *Mirabilium auscultationes* 95, 838a5; and Scholiast [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 704. Ampsanctus: Cicero *On Divination* 1.36; Pliny *Natural History* 2.208 (also for the goddess Mephitis); and Servius on *Aeneid* 7.563; cf. Ganschinietz 1919: 2383 and 2386–87. Avernus's leaves: Bekker *Anecdota graeca* 414.3; *Etymologicum magnum* s.v. *Aornos*; Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.514. The local "Acherusian lake": Strabo C243 and 245.



9. Lake Avernus. RAF air photograph, British School at Rome archive 23 S 64 = 3031. © British School at Rome.

The Sophocles *nekuomanteion* fragment may be the earliest trace of the transferal of Odysseus's necromancy to Avernus, if it derived from his *Odysseus Acanthoplex*. Odysseus's interview with Tiresias, in which the prophet told him that he would be killed by his own son, had probably taken place before the action of the play. Odysseus suspected Telemachus, but was killed with a spear tipped with the barb of a roach ("death from the sea") by Telegonus, his son by Circe. Even so, Thesprotia continued to figure heavily in this play: its fragments refer no less than four times to Dodona.[6] The first author certainly to have located Odysseus's necro-

[6] Sophocles F453–61 *TrGF*/Pearson. Cf. the role of Dodona in Odysseus's lying version of his journey of divination at Homer *Odyssey* 14.316–33 and 19.287–99. However, Holzinger 1895 gave the *nekuomanteion* fragment rather to the *Euryalus*. Those who believe

mancy at Avernus is Ephorus (ca. 405–330 B.C.); many followed thereafter.[7] Heracles probably brought up Cerberus at Avernus, too. This may have been true for Sophocles if his reference to "Cerberians" was made in the *Odysseus Acanthoplex*, and the notion may have been entertained by Ephorus, if he did indeed refer to the oracle as "Cerberian" as well as a "Cimmerian," presumably participating in the familiar debate between the two terms.[8] Aeneas was taken to Avernus in Odysseus's footsteps first by Naevius, so far as we can tell, and most famously by Virgil.[9]

There was a healthy tradition that the *nekuomanteion* had in the remote past consisted of or included an underworld cave within the crater of the lake. The Augustan Strabo gives us a rich, extended account of the lake and its necromantic associations, a significant part of which derives from Ephorus:

> [C244] . . . Before me people used to tell the myth that the Homeric *Nekuia* episode took place in Avernus (*en tōi Aornōi*). And they tell us that there was a *nekuomanteion* there and that Odysseus came to it. The gulf of Avernus is deep close to shore and has a good entrance. It has the size and nature of a harbor, but it cannot be used as a harbor because in front of it lies Gulf Lucrinus, which is large and shallow. Avernus is shut in by steep beetling banks that overhang it from all sides except for the entrance. Now they have been worked hard and cultivated, but formerly they were covered over with a wild wood of black and impenetrable trees. These made the gulf into a home for shades, because of superstition. The locals used to tell another myth that birds that flew over the gulf fell into the water, because they were destroyed by gases that came off it, as in *ploutōnia*. They took this place for a *ploutonion*, and they believed that the Cimmerians lived there. Those who had sacrificed in advance and intended to propitiate the underworld powers sailed into it.[10] There were priests to guide one through the process, who

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Aeschylus's *Psuchagogoi* was set at Avernus (see chapter 4) may wish to make this the first trace of the tradition of Odysseus at Avernus (this play, incidentally, had a different version of Odysseus's death: see below). Bérard 1930: 134 (cf. 1927) argued that Odysseus's consultation had been set at Avernus from the first; *contra*, Clark 1979: 64 and 68.

[7] Ephorus *FGH* 70 F134a–b; [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 681–707; [Scymnus] *Periegesis* 236–44; Strabo C243–46; Pliny *Natural History* 3.61 (based on the reference to Cimmerians); Silius Italicus *Punica* 12.113–57; Maximus of Tyre 8.2; Dio Cassius 48.50.4; Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.107; and Festus p. 43 M.

[8] Sophocles F1060 *TrGF*/Pearson; cf. Phillips 1953: 56 n. 29; and Clark 1979: 65. Ephorus *FGH* 70 F134b = [Scymnus] *Periegesis* 236–43 (pp. 205–6); cf. Müller 1882: ad loc. Lucian (*Dialogues of the Dead* 12) has Heracles subjecting Avernus. For Heracles' other works in the area, see [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 681–707; Diodorus 4.22; and Strabo C245 (quoted below).

[9] Naevius *Punic War* F12 Strzlecki, and Virgil *Aeneid* 6.237–42.

[10] Thus, meaningfully, the Greek text as it stands in the manuscripts, with *prothusamenoi*, aorist, and *hilasomenoi*, future. Editors like to emend to *hilasamenoi*, "and had propitiated

managed the place under contract (*ergolabekotōn*). There is a source there of drinkable water by the sea, but all kept back from this, considering it to be the water of the Styx. And the oracle is situated somewhere there (*entautha*).[11] And they took the hot springs nearby, and the Acherusian lake, to be evidence of Pyriphlegethon.

Ephorus, assigning the place to the Cimmerians, says that they live in underground houses, which they call *argillai* (clay-houses), and that they visit each other through tunnels, and that they receive strangers visiting the oracle, which is situated a long way under the earth. He says that they live on the profits of the mines and the consulters of the oracle, and the king who decreed contributions to them. He says that there is an ancestral custom for those who live around the oracle, that they should never see the sun, but that they should come out of their holes at night. It was for this reason, he says, that the poet said of them that "nor ever does the shining sun look on them." [C245] He says, however, that these people were later destroyed by a king, when a divination did not succeed for him, but that the oracle still remains, removed to another place.

These are the things people before me have said, but now that the woodland around Avernus has been cut down by Agrippa, and the land has been built up, and an underground tunnel has been cut from Avernus to Cumae, all those things have been shown to be mere myths. Cocceius, who made this tunnel and also the one to Naples from Dicaearchia near Baiae, perhaps followed the tale I have just told about the Cimmerians, possibly because he considered it traditional to the area that its roads should be through tunnels. Gulf Lucrinus broadens out until Baiae. It is divided from the open sea by an earthwork eight stades long and of the breadth of a wagon road. They say that Heracles built this, when he was driving the cattle of Geryon. But it would allow waves over the top in storms, so that it was not easy to walk along, and so Agrippa built it up further. It allows only light boats to enter. It is useless for mooring, but it provides a plentiful catch of oysters. And some say that this is actually the Acherusian lake, but Artemidorus says that Avernus itself is the Acherusian lake.[12] They say that Baiae is named after Baios, one of the companions of Odysseus, and so, too, Misenum. Next come the headlands around Dicaearchia and the city itself. It was formerly a port-town of Cumae, situated on a bank, but during Hannibal's campaign the Romans colonized it and renamed it Puteoli after the wells (Latin *putei*). But others say that they named it after the stench (Latin *puteo*) from the

. . . ," after Eustathius. But as we see from the cases of Pausanias and Cleonice, propitiation of the dead was a key function of necromancy; see chapter 15.

[11] In context, "there" must mean "in Lake Avernus." Paget (1967a: 102) read the term closely with the immediately preceding reference to the drinkable Styx by the sea, and thus licensed his identification of the Baiae tunnels as the *nekuomanteion*.

[12] Artemidorus of Ephesus, *floruit* ca. 104–101 B.C.

> waters that occupy the whole area as far as Baiae and Cumae, because it is full of sulphur and fire and hot waters. Some say that the territory of Cumae was called Phlegra because of this and that it is the thunderbolt-inflicted wounds of the fallen giants that send up such projections of fire and water. . . . [C246] There lies immediately above the city the forum of Hephaestus, a plain shut in by very fiery banks, which have somewhat stinking vents everywhere. The plain is full of swept sulphur.
>
> —Strabo C244–46, including Ephorus *FGH* 70 F134a[13]

The linked fragment of Ephorus preserved by Ps.-Scymnus, who wrote ca. 90 B.C., speaks of a "Cerberian underground oracle" at Avernus.[14] The claim that the cave-oracle had been moved from Avernus after its destruction probably served primarily to explain why there was no sign of it in the crater. It is possible that Ephorus neither said nor knew to where the oracle had been moved.[15]

Diodorus, writing a little before Strabo, tells that Avernus was of an unbelievable depth, and similarly says that there had been a *nekuomanteion* there that had been destroyed long ago. Diodorus does not explicitly mention a cave, but the fact of the *nekuomanteion*'s destruction and the parallelism with Strabo imply that this is what he had in mind.[16] The most famous description of the cave is that of Virgil, referring back to the mythical age of Aeneas:

> There was a deep cave, huge with vast gape, rugged, safe because of the black lake and the darkness of the groves. Over this lake no flying creatures could stretch their wings without paying the price. Such an exhalation, pouring itself out, carried itself above the vault of the sky from the black jaws [whence the Greeks called the place "Aornos" by name].[17]
>
> —Virgil *Aeneid* 6.237–42

Virgil then tells that after performing the necromantic rites, the Sibyl threw herself into the "open(ed) cave" (*antro . . . aperto*). This may sug-

[13] Strabo asserts the identification of these Campanian places with Odysseus's underworld consultation also at C26. Some of this material is recycled by Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 3.442, 6.107, and *Georgics* 2.162, and much of it by Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.514–15 and 11.14. Cf. Hardie 1977: 281. "The poet" is Homer: *Odyssey* 11.15–16.

[14] Ephorus *FGH* 70 F134b *apud* [Scymnus] *Periegesis* 236–43, *GGM* pp. 205–6.

[15] Cf. Hardie 1969: 15 and 33; and Clark 1979: 70. It seems unlikely that he believed that it was transferred to the "Sibyl's cave" beside the Cumaean acropolis, as Collard (1949: 93) and Parke and McGing (1988: 92) believe, since this is unlikely to have been created by the time Ephorus wrote, and even then it appears to have been defensive rather than oracular in origin: see below.

[16] Diodorus 4.22.

[17] The last line is usually considered an interpolation to make Virgil's folk-etymological explanation of the Greek name of the lake crassly explicit.

gest that the rites had magically opened up a finite cave all the way to the underworld. Silius Italicus's Scipio finds the Sibyl waiting to perform necromancy for him deep inside a "Stygian cave" fronted by a "Tartarean mouth" that "belches out the bitter marsh of Cocytus." The ostensible historical setting of this episode is 212 B.C., but we can hardly conclude from this that a cave existed in Avernus at this time: the episode is a mere dutiful reworking of Virgilian epic material. As we have seen, Maximus of Tyre (*floruit* second century A.D.) also speaks of a "cave oracle" (*manteion antron*) in Avernus, but for him, too, the existence of this was long in the past.[18]

The notion that there had been a cave-*nekuomanteion* at Avernus may be implied also by the beautiful Esquiline frescoes (now in the Vatican Library) that tell the story of the *Odyssey*. These were painted ca. 40 B.C., on the model of an earlier set, ca. 150 B.C.[19] If the artist had any actual location for Odysseus's necromancy in mind as he painted, it was presumably Avernus. The "continuous narrative" takes us from Odysseus's ship moored offshore through a natural rock archway. As we come through the arch, we meet a marshy lake. Here Odysseus speaks with the ghost of Tiresias. The close relationship between the lake and the sea, no doubt imposed in any case by the need to compress the visual "narrative," nonetheless vaguely evokes the view across Avernus and the sea beyond it from its north rim, looking out toward Misenum. The rock arch surely represents a cave entrance, the rest of the cave having been cut away to allow us to see inside.

It is hardly surprising that there is (still) now no sign of any cave suitable for a *nekuomanteion* within the crater of Avernus. By contrast, the Agrippan works in Avernus mentioned by Strabo, the tunnel of Cocceius from the lake to Cumae, and a tunnel on the south side of the lake now known erroneously as the *Grotta della Sibilla* are plain to see.[20] It has been suggested that Virgil's description of the *nekuomanteion* cave was inspired by these works, but this seems unlikely given that the tradition of the cave within Avernus had thrived for at least four hundred years before them. The myth that there had been a cave was perhaps inspired

[18] Virgil *Aeneid* 6.262 (cf. Clark 1979: 187 and Smiley 1948: 101–2); Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.421–29 (cf. also 894); Maximus of Tyre 8.2.

[19] Touchefeu-Meynier 1968: 233; Brommer 1983: 82; Pollitt 1986: 185–90; Ling 1991: 109–10; and Buitron and Cohen 1992: 99.

[20] Tunnel of Cocceius: Castagnoli 1977: 69–70; De Caro and Greco 1981: 76–78; Pagano et al. 1982: 295–96; and Amalfitano et al. 1990: 177–78 (and 166–67 for a convenient plan of archeological sites round the rim of Avernus). *Grotta della Sibilla*: Phillips 1953: 62–63; Maiuri 1963: 155–57; Pagano et al. 1982: 296–319; and Amalfitano et al. 1990: 174–75.

by the presence of caves at some other *nekuomanteia*, such as Heracleia and Tainaron.[21]

Even for the sources that speak of a (former) cave in Avernus, the significance of the connection of the lake itself with the underworld remains strong. It is likely that the ghosts were held to emerge from the lake alongside its supposed mephitic vapors. (This will be readily accepted by those who in any case locate Aeschylus's *Psuchagogoi* at Avernus.) As in the case of the Acheron, the point is worth harping on because of the prevalence of the contrary assumption. Cicero quotes an unknown Latin poem in describing Avernus: "From where souls are called up in dark shade from the open mouth of deep Acheron with poured/false/salt blood, ghosts of the dead." Propertius gives a short list of icons of true prophecy: hieroscopy, augury, and "the dead shade (*umbra*) that comes forth from magic waters." The key term here is contrived to be ambivalent between necromantic lecanomancy and lakeside necromancy. Nothing ties the reference explicitly to Avernus, but this lake was clearly the default site for necromancy for one working in the Latin poetical tradition. Apuleius makes use of an informative simile. The witch Pamphile, who has necromantic powers among others, practices lychnomancy with a lamp her husband ironically calls a "Sibyl." The narrator Lucius describes himself as casting his eyes onto her face in terror just as if he were looking into Lake Avernus. In the late antique *Orphic Argonautica*, the souls of the newly dead travel in the opposite direction, down to the underworld, through the lake.[22] Curiously, Silius Italicus implies that ghosts rose up not from the waters of Avernus but, quite appropriately from a Thesprotian point of view, from the waters of the nearby "Acherusian lake" (i.e., presumably, Gulf Lucrinus or Lake Fusaro):

> Neighboring [Avernus] is a marsh, which is said to provide passage to the waters of Acheron. It opens up yawning abysses full of water and dreadful gaping holes in the earth, and sometimes it upsets the ghosts with unexpected daylight.
>
> —Silius Italicus *Punica* 12.126–29

Avernus is the only *nekuomanteion* among the "big four" with which no record of an ostensibly historical consultation can be associated. The closest we come is Livy's remark that Hannibal pretended that he was going to sacrifice at Lake Avernus (*per speciem sacrificandi*) as a blind for a surprise attack on Puteoli in 214 B.C. Given the notional location of

[21] Eitrem 1945: 92 and Clark 1979: 187 and 204. Virgil's description inspired by Agrippa's works: Pagano et al. 1982: 323. Collard (1949: 93–94) insists that the cave was once a reality.

[22] Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.37 (see chapter 11 for the disputed reading); Propertius 4.1.103–9 (cf. Tupet 1976: 24–25 for the ambivalence); Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.11; *Orphic Argonautica* 1120–42.

the sacrifice, it is possible that its purported function was necromantic. Underworld-related cult practice at Avernus may be tangibly attested for late antiquity. A Capuan inscription of A.D. 387 listing the city's feasts and festivals, the *Feriale Capuanum*, prescribes for 27 July a *profectio ad inferias Averni*, apparently a "procession to the underworld places of Avernus," although the reading of *inferias*, "underworld places," is insecure.[23]

Our sources for the identity of the patron deity at Avernus agree that she was female but are otherwise vague and contradictory, perhaps indicating that there was no continuous cult there: Ps.-Lycophron and Diodorus offer Persephone, Virgil Hecate-Trivia. Dio Cassius (third century A.D.) tells that a statue of a female deity, who may or may not have been Calypso, overlooked the lake, and that she sweated during Agrippa's alterations.[24] An unconvincing case has been made for Hera. A bronze disc, apparently an oracular *sors* or "lot" for cleromancy, and probably from Cumae, is inscribed with Greek script of the mid-seventh century or early sixth century B.C. It reads, depending on decipherment and intepretation, either "Hera does not allow a supplementary consultation of the oracle" (Guarducci, Jeffrey) or "Hera does not allow consultation of the oracle in the morning/Spring" (Renehan). Renehan insists that if Hera was oracular at Cumae, then she was probably chthonic there, and therefore presided over the *nekuomanteion*. But there is simply no logical or even contextual basis for moving from Hera's oracular nature to her chthonic nature. Parke and McGing rather relate the lot to the Sibyl herself (but not in her *nekuomanteion*-related aspects).[25]

Avernus is, however, the only *nekuomanteion* to which our sources explicitly appoint a resident staff. We hear mention of three roughly comparable groups in association with the supposed cave. First, Ephorus's Cimmerians received strangers who visited the oracle and lived in part from the fees paid to them by consulters, this income being supplemented by their mines and the contributions of the local king (of Cumae?). Since they were then destroyed along with the oracle by one of these local kings for a false response, they were presumed to have effective control of it. Second, Strabo, apparently drawing on a source other than Ephorus, tells that priests would guide people through the consultation process, and that they managed the place under contract. Was this awarded by the

[23] Livy 24.12.4 (cf. Clark 1979: 69). *Feriale Capuanum*: Hardie 1969: 31–32.

[24] [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 698 and 710; Diodorus 4.22; Virgil *Aeneid* 6.118, 247, and 564; and Dio Cassius 48.50.4 (cf. Hardie 1969: 32); Silius Italicus *Punica* 12.120–29 speaks more vaguely of Stygian powers.

[25] Hέρε οὐκ ἐῶι ἔρι μαντευέσθαι: Schwyzer 1923: no. 789 and Jeffrey 1990: 238. See Guarducci 1946–48 and 1964: 136–38; Renehan 1974; Castagnoli 1977: 75–76; Pagano et al. 1982: 273; Pugliese Carratelli 1986: 17; and Parke and McGing 1988: 80–94.

king? Third, Maximus of Tyre says the mantic cave was attended by evocators, *psuchagōgoi*, so called because of their work. When the Spartans brought in *psuchagōgoi* from Italy to lay the ghost of Pausanias, did they come from Avernus?[26]

Although Virgil's famous association of the Cumaean Sibyl with the *nekuomanteion* may initially appear contrived, the association of some kind of Sibyl with the *nekuomanteion* was an old one. Already in the late third century B.C. Naevius had taken Aeneas to visit a "Cimmerian" Sibyl. The epithet connects her with the oracle. Varro's differentiation between the Cumaean Sibyl and the Cimmerian one was doubtless a mere pedantry. Propertius refers to a "trembling Sibyl of Avernus." In the wake of Virgil, Silius Italicus has a pair of Sibyls, one dead and one alive, guide Scipio through his consultation at Avernus.[27]

A series of thirty vases painted by the "Cumaean Painter" (*floruit* ca. 350–320 B.C.) probably depict a Sibyl-like woman in the performance of necromancy, as Kerrigan has shown.[28] A woman seated on a rock or a chair with a *phialē* (bowl) and various other accessories faces various standing figures. These have whitened faces, are wrapped tightly in *himation*-shrouds, and may reflect a burial posture in the unnatural crook of their legs. They often have a *thyrsus* tucked into their shrouds, expressing a Dionysiac affiliation. Between woman and standing figure there is often an altar, sometimes garlanded, and a fillet hangs on the wall behind. The obvious conclusion is that the standing figures are ghosts, that the subject of the scenes is necromancy, and that they reflect local traditions or practices. Though the ghosts vary in form, the seated female figures conservatively resemble each other and are broadly comparable to the Delphic Pythia on the Aegeus vase: they are surely Sibyls. Sometimes the woman holds a branch: some antecedent of the golden bough of Virgil's Sibyl? Perhaps we are to imagine that the woman sees the ghost represented as standing opposite her lecanomantically in the liquid of the *phialē* from which she libates the offering to it.[29] On one vase the ghost stands directly

[26] Maximus of Tyre: 8.2. *Psuchagōgoi* for Pausanias: Plutarch *Moralia* 560e–f; cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 3: 366; and Collard 1949: 91–92.

[27] Naevius: *Punic War* F12 Strzlecki (Teubner); cf. Corssen 1913; Waszink 1948: 54–58; Castagnoli 1977: 76–77; Clark 1979: 207; Parke and McGing 1988: 72–74 (and passim for Sibyls in general). Varro: as quoted at Lactantius *Institutiones divinae* 1.6.7; *pace* Corssen 1913; Waszink 1948: 55; and Clark 1979: 205–7 and 211. The Cimmerian Sibyl was also mentioned by Piso (Lactantius *Institutiones divinae* 1.6.9, source of the Varro fragment also) and [Aurelius Victor] *Origo gentis romanae* 10. Propertius: 4.1.49; cf. Eitrem 1945: 108. Silius Italicus: *Punica* 13.400–895.

[28] E.g., Portland Art Museum inv. 26.282 and 26.288; Cleveland Museum of Art inv. 67.234; and Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva inv. 11588 (mirror: fig. 10); Kerrigan 1980.

[29] Cf. Delatte 1932: 185–86 for the Aegeus vase, although there is no corroborating evidence for the Pythia's use of lecanomancy. Like the Pythia, Virgil's Sibyl is ecstatic: *Aeneid* 6.77–82. See chapter 11 for the golden bough.

behind a mirror the woman holds up to gaze into (fig. 10). Are we to think that the ghost is seen catoptromantically in the mirror? For Kerrigan, the rock-seats indicate an outdoor setting, and we may suggest a precinct beside Avernus. But it may equally well, admittedly, indicate a cave setting.

A further link between the Cumaean Sibyl and the *nekuomanteion* is suggested by the similarity of her myth to that of Tithonus, the cicada, in view of that insect's role at the Tainaron *nekuomanteion*. The Sibyl likewise had immortality, but not eternal youth, from a god, Apollo this time. She, too, withered to almost nothing, or indeed to a mere (prophetic) voice, and so was kept in a small container. Petronius has a striking image of her shrivelled in a bottle (*ampulla*). When asked by boys, "What do you want, Sibyl?" she responds, "I want to die." The bottle is perhaps to be identified with a stone *hydria*-jar in which the third-century B.C. Hyperochus of Cumae said that the Sibyl Demo's bones were displayed.[30] A Sibyl shrivelled between life and death would have been an appropriate creature to preside over Avernus.

In 1932 Maiuri discovered a 150-yard-long man-made cave in the hill linked to the Cumaean acropolis, about a mile from Avernus, and identified it as the "cave of the Sibyl." The identification has been accepted by many, on the basis of the site's *prima facie* correspondences with the descriptions of the Sibyl's cave by Virgil and the third-century A.D. Ps.-Justin. Its position matches well enough Virgil's description of the Sibyl's cave as hewn into the side of the Cumaean acropolis, and its (one time) nine openings to the air through the cliff face on its west side may well have inspired the "hundred mouths" of Virgil's cave. Its cisterns perhaps gave rise to the Sibyl's baths described by Ps.-Justin, and its inner chamber matches well enough that in which he tells us the Sibyl prophesied. But it is now thought that the cave was originally defensive in purpose. The main gallery is dated by its trapezoidal section to the later fourth century B.C. The cisterns were perhaps only used as such from Roman times, and the inner chamber, which is cruciform, may only date, as currently configured, from the late imperial period. It seems unlikely that a Sibyl ever prophesied from here, but it remains likely that ancient antiquarians believed that she had done so.[31]

[30] Sibyl in a container: Petronius *Satyricon* 48.8; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 14.101–53; and perhaps hinted at at Virgil *Aeneid* 6.42–44; cf. Eitrem 1945: 114–19; and King 1989: 73–77. Sibyl's bones in jar: Hyperochus of Cumae *FGH* 576 F2 (at Pausanias 10.12.4); cf. [Justin] *Cohortatio ad Graecos* 37 p. 35e (*phakos*); see Bonner 1937 and Larson 1995a: 127.

[31] Virgil *Aeneid* 6.42–44 and 77–82; and Ps.-Justin *Cohortatio ad Graecos* 37–38; cf. also [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 1279; and Ps.-Aristotle *Mirabilium auscultationes* 95, 838a5. The case for the identification: Maiuri 1963: 125–34; Austin 1977: 48–58; Castagnoli 1977: 49–51; Clark 1977; Frederiksen 1984: 75–76 and 161 (cautious); De Caro and Greco 1981: 83–85; Gigante 1986: 69–78; Parke and McGing 1988: 80–94 (with weak arguments for dating the cave to the age of Aristodemus, the late sixth century B.C.). The

How was one supposed to consult and experience the ghosts at Avernus? Strabo implies that consulters usually arrived at the Avernus *nekuomanteion* by sailing into the lake directly from the sea, after making preparatory purificatory sacrifices. Virgil's Aeneas, however, approached it on foot.[32] Maximus of Tyre gives us the following ostensibly realistic account of procedure there, after a discussion of the oracle of Trophonius:

> And there was I suppose in Italy, in the region of Magna Graecia at the so-called Lake Aornos, a cave oracle, and evocator-men (*psuchagōgoi*) were attendants of the cave, being so termed because of their work. The man who needed to do so came there, prayed, cut up his sacrificial victims, poured libations, and called up the soul (*psuchē*) of whomever he wanted among his ancestors and friends. And the ghost (*eidōlon*) confronted him, obscure to see and disputable, but endowed with the power of utterance and prophecy. And when the consulter had conversed with it on the matters about which he asked, he would depart. Homer, too, seems to have known this oracle, since he attributed to Odysseus a journey to it, and to have removed the place poetically from our sea.
>
> —Maximus of Tyre 8.2

The final sentence, however, may imply that Maximus is merely extrapolating his account from the *Odyssey* narrative.[33] The "necromancy" pots of the Cumaean Painter all show the seated female consulter libating to the ghost from a *phialē*, onto an altar if there is one, and otherwise onto the ground. Sometimes eggs, appropriate offerings to the dead, sit on the altar, and sometimes the woman holds a platter of food.

The *Aeneid* may hint that incubation was (supposedly) the means by which ghosts were experienced. As Aeneas descends through the Avernian cave to the underworld, he passes the brothers Sleep and Death who live in its vestibule.[34] The lines that describe his exit from the underworld are more informative:

> There are double Gates of Sleep. Of these, the one is said to be of horn. By this route an easy exit is given to true shades. The other shines with white, polished ivory, but (through this one) the ghosts send false dreams to the upper world. There Anchises accompanies his son, together with the Sibyl, with these words, and sends them out through the ivory gate. He makes his way quickly back to his ships and companions.
>
> —Virgil *Aeneid* 6.893–99

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case against: Amalfitano et al. 1990: 289–94 (denying even that Virgil and [Justin] had this cave in mind).

[32] Virgil *Aeneid* 6.236–42.

[33] The descriptions of initial consultation procedure at [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 681–708 and Virgil *Aeneid* 6.236–63 are more evidently literary.

[34] Virgil *Aeneid* 6.28–29.

10. A female necromancer with a *phialē* and a mirror, and a male ghost in a winding-sheet. Red-figure Cumaean bail *amphora*, Cumaean Painter, ca. 350–320 B.C. Geneva, Musée d'art et d'histoire 11588. © Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva.

The Gates of Sleep surely constitute the way out of the underworld because consulters of the *nekuomanteion* received the ghosts, or their false-dream counterparts, in their sleep, as they emerged from the underworld. Philostratus similarly associates a Gate of Dreams with the incubation-oracle of Amphiaraus: "There is a Gate of Dreams, for those consulting the oracle there must sleep. Oneiros (Dream) himself is there . . . he has a horn in his hand to indicate that he brings up true dreams." Why Aeneas should be brought out of the false-dream gate is a puzzle: does Virgil joke that his account of Aeneas's necromancy has been a lie? Incubation would be confirmed for Avernus if we could be sure that Crantor's tale of Elysius, to which we turn in the next chapter, was set there.[35]

Denial of the ghosts is a repeated feature of the Avernus tradition: there used to be a necromantic cave here, but now it is gone; there used to be ghosts here, but now they have been swept away. Should such denial be regarded as "mytheme"? Did the ancients attempt to palliate the inherent terrors of the place by repeatedly consigning its ghosts to history?

[35] Amphiaraus: Philostratus *Imagines* 16 *Amphiaraus*. Significance of Virgil's ivory gate: Norden 1916: ad loc.; Highbarger 1940; Austin 1977: ad loc.; Tarrant 1982; Gotoff 1985; and O'Hara 1990: 170–72. Crantor's Elysius: Plutarch *Moralia* 109b–d; cf. Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.115.

CHAPTER 6

INCUBATION AND DREAMING

WE have seen that such evidence as there is for the means by which ghosts were experienced at tombs or in *nekuomanteia* points to incubation. The one ancient account to describe openly the means of experiencing a ghost in an oracle of the dead, here a *psuchomanteion*, is Plutarch's version of the parable of Elysius ("Elysian") of Terina, a city in southern Italy:

> They tell the following sort of tale about the Italian Euthynous. He was the son of Elysius of Terina, who was first among people there in virtue, wealth, and reputation. He died suddenly from an uncertain cause. The thought that would have occurred to anyone else in the same circumstances occurred to Elysius: perhaps he had been killed by poisons. For he had been his only son, and he had a large estate and much money. He was at a loss as to how to test this possibility, so he arrived at some *psuchomanteion*. He made the customary preliminary sacrifices, went to sleep, and saw the following vision. His own father seemed to stand by his side. Seeing him, he told him about his misfortune concerning his son, and he besought him and asked him to help in discovering the cause of his son's death. His father replied, "This is the reason I have come. Take from this one here what he brings you, and from this you will know everything you are grieving about." The one he pointed out was a young man who was following him, and he resembled Elysius's son in age and generation. He asked the boy who he was. He replied, "I am the ghost (*daimōn*) of your son." And thus he offered him a small written tablet. He unrolled it and saw these three lines written on it:
>
> Indeed the minds of men wander in folly. Euthynous lies in his destined death. It was not good for him himself to live, nor was it good for his parents.
>
> —Plutarch *Moralia* 109b–d (*Consolation to Apollonius*)

In other words, destiny had done Elysius a favor: had the boy lived, he would have gone to the bad.[1] Cicero tells the same story more briefly, omitting the detail of sleep, but using the term *psychomantium* and ascribing the tale to the *Consolation* of Crantor of Soli (*floruit* ca. 300 B.C.). It seems that the tale had become a commonplace of consolation literature, which concerned itself with untimely death in particular.[2] If the

[1] Plutarch appropriately associates the tale with that of Cleobis and Biton, *Moralia* 108d.

[2] Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.115; the prophecy is found also at *Greek Anthology* appendix 6 (oracula), no. 235 Cougny, under the title "oracle from a *psuchomanteion*."

oracle of the dead consulted was supposed to correspond to any known one, then the Italian Avernus is the most obvious candidate. But insofar as it is a parable, the tale is valuable for indicating the means by which one might generally expect to experience a ghost in any oracle of the dead.[3]

The same conclusion can be drawn from the words of Euripides' Oedipus (ca. 411–408 B.C.), in which he apparently compares himself both to a ghost emerging from a *nekuomanteion* and to a dream:

> Why, girl, did you bring (*exagages*) me, a white, obscure ghost (*eidōlon*) made of air, or a dead person (*nekun*), or a winged dream, from below out of dark chambers, in which I lay bedridden, into the light, with stafflike support (*baktreumasi*) for my blind step, by your pitiful crying?
>
> —Euripides *Phoenician Women* 1539–45[4]

It is not surprising that ghosts should have been sought in dreams, since they often visited the living spontaneously in this way. This was, for example, how Patroclus appeared to Achilles in the *Iliad*, how Diapontius appeared to Philolaches in Plautus's *Mostellaria*, and how his dead son visited Epicrates in first-century A.D. Nakrason in Asia Minor.[5] Literary texts associate spontaneous visits by ghosts in dreams with the practice of necromancy in several ways. When, during the course of his actual necromancy, Odysseus tries to embrace the ghost of his mother Anticleia, it slips away like a dream. Aeschylus's Atossa calls up the ghost of Darius after being visited by it in a dream. When Lucan's Pompey is visited by the ghost of Julia in a dream, he sees it rise out of a hole in the ground, as if he is performing an evocation. Plutarch's Pausanias calls up the ghost of Cleonice after being terrorized by it in dreams.[6] An analyst of modern

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Consolation literature: see Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 40–42; cf. also Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 3: 368; and Rose 1950: 274–75.

[3] Cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 330–31 and 338; Frazer 1898 on Pausanias 3.17; Collison-Morley 1912: 37; Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 562; Collard 1949: 95; and Cumont 1949: 97. For a concise review of the evidence for incubation in Greece, see Deubner 1900: 1–48.

[4] Cf. Brillante 1987: 49–50 and 1991: 112.

[5] Homer *Iliad* 23.65–91 (Patroclus); Plautus *Mostellaria* 490–92 (Diapontius); Hermann and Polatkan 1969 (Epicrates). Some further examples: Aeschylus *Eumenides* 94–139 (Clytemnestra appears to her own Erinyes); Theopompus *FGH* 115 F350 (Cillus to Pelops); Cicero *Somnium Scipionis* (Scipio Africanus to his son, Aemilianus; the episode is significantly modeled on Plato's myth of Er, who returned from the dead); Propertius 4.7, esp. 87–92 (Cynthia to Propertius); Virgil *Aeneid* 2.268–97, 771–95, and 5.719–45 (Hector, Creusa, and Anchises to Aeneas); [Virgil] *Culex* 202–9 (gnat to shepherd); Seneca *Troades* 438–60 (Hector to Andromache); [Seneca] *Octavia* 115–24 (Brittanicus to Octavia) and 714–55 (Agrippina to Poppaea); Statius *Thebaid* 2.1–127 (Laius to Eteocles); Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 9.31 (the miller to his daughter).

[6] Homer *Odyssey* 11.207 (cf. Pocock 1965: 38 and 52; Vermeule 1979: 213 n. 3; Bremmer 1983: 78; and Brillante 1991: 20 and 29–34). Aeschylus *Persians* 197–98 and 221 (cf.

experiences of ghosts has interestingly concluded that they are typically perceived by people on the verge of sleep, whether entering into it or emerging from it.[7]

In general the association between sleep, death, dreams, and night was tight. Homer's Hermes escorts the souls of the dead suitors to the underworld by taking them past the "people of Dreams," and he guides them there with the golden rod with which he also lulls the living to sleep or wakes them. Hesiod tells that "Night gave birth to hateful Doom and black Fate and Death, and she gave birth to Sleep and to the tribe of Dreams." She lives in dark Hades with Sleep and Death, holding the former in her arms. This scene was represented on the archaic "Chest of Cypselus" seen by Pausanias at Olympia: Sleep and Death are boys; white Sleep sleeps in his mother's arms, while Death is black; both of them have their feet turned backwards.[8] Homer has the pair of Sleep and Death carrying off Sarpedon when he is killed in battle. Archaic vase illustrations of this scene can portray the brothers as a pair of beautiful bearded, winged warriors, with Sarpedon's departing soul as a miniature version of his body, also winged, and floating above it (fig. 11).[9]

Plutarch offers the hypothesis in his *Roman Questions* that the ritually pure are bidden to abstain from the bean (*lathuros*) and chickpea (*erebinthos*) because of their use in funeral feasts (*perideipna*) and in necromancy. Pliny seems, *prima facie*, to be talking about the same sort of thing when he explains that beans contain souls of the dead, an idea he ascribes to Pythagoras, and are for that reason used in offerings to the dead. This in turn looks like a reference to the Roman *Lemuria*. At this festival, ghosts (*lemures*) roamed abroad and looked to steal away the living from their homes, as we learn from Ovid. In the middle of the night, the father of the household would redeem the souls of his family members from the ghosts by throwing beans over his shoulder at them without looking back, while proclaiming "Go out, ancestral ghosts" nine times. The ghosts took the beans as substitutes for the souls of the living. So is Plutarch's reference to necromancy misleading? Not necessarily. It could be that

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Devereux 1976: 2–23). Lucan *Pharsalia* 3.8–35 (Julia). Plutarch *Cimon* 6 (and cf. Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8).

[7] Tyrrell 1953; cf. Felton 1999: 19–21.

[8] Homer *Odyssey* 24.1–4 and 11. Hesiod *Theogony* 211–12 and 748–57; cf. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.278. Chest of Cypselus: Pausanias 5.18.1; see Highbarger 1940: 6; Vermeule 1979: 145–53; Mainoldi 1987: 18–22; Brillante 1991: 38; and Faraone 1992: 133–34 (apotropaic hobbling?).

[9] Homer *Iliad* 16.454; cf. 14.231. The iconography of Sleep and Death carrying Sarpedon off is catalogued and discussed in detail by Mainoldi 1987; see especially Paris, Louvre F388 (fig. 11 = *LIMC* Sarpedon no. 7; cf. no. 6); and Metropolitan Museum of Art 1972: 11.10 (*LIMC* Sarpedon no. 4). See also Shapiro 1993: 132–65; and Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 326–27.

11. Sleep and Death with the corpse and ghost of Sarpedon. Black-figure Attic neck-amphora, early fifth century B.C. Paris, Musée du Louvre F388. © Musée du Louvre, Départment des Antiquités Grecques, Etrusques et Romaines. Photo by M. and P. Chuzeville.

such satisfactory offerings were also made to the dead in truly necromantic contexts, perhaps specifically to spare the soul of the consulter. But there is another possibility. Beans contain a substance called levodopa or L-dopa that can induce on the one hand insomnia, but on the other hand also nightmares and waking hallucinations. The ancients were aware that the consumption of beans could produce such effects. Pliny's discussion says that beans fog up the senses and cause dreams; Plutarch elsewhere explains that they are harmful to dreams (as is the head of the octopus), so that those who seek prophecy through dreams are bidden to avoid them. The oracle of Amphiaraus at Oropus was consulted by incubation. His consulters were debarred from eating beans because they were held to fog up the perceptual abilities of the heart. Amphiaraus himself had supposedly abstained from beans for the sake of prophecy through dreams. It seems, therefore, that beans were held to induce dreams, sleeping or waking, of a distinctive kind, or to pervert sleeping dreams in a particular way, and that such bean-induced or -influenced dreams were regarded as false or corrupt by Amphiaraus. But their role as dream-inducing or -influencing may have been regarded more positively in a properly necromantic context. Indeed, perhaps it was thought that one could experience the soul of a dead person in a dream specifically by ingesting it in a bean.[10]

Sleep is used as a means of experiencing summoned ghosts also in the Greek magical papyri. One of the Pitys spells achieves a necromancy by laying out a dead body (or, more probably, just a skull) on an ass's hide inscribed with magical figures. The recipe states that the dead man will stand beside one in the night, which seems to indicate that he will appear to one in a dream. Another papyrus preserves in fragmentary form a hymn to Hermes in which he is praised as an escort of souls and also a rouser thereof, and mention is made of his mantic skill. Hermes is asked to prophesy through dreams. The notion is probably therefore that he will send ghosts in dreams. Justin Martyr (second century A.D.) seems to have regarded necromancy and the sending of prophetic dreams in general as akin. As proofs of the continued existence of the soul after death, he cites

[10] Plutarch *Moralia* 286d–e (*Roman Questions* 95: necromancy), 15b and 734f (dreams). Pliny *Natural History* 18.118. Pythagoreans and beans: Pliny *Natural History* 18.118; Diogenes Laertius 8.19, 24, 33–36 (including Aristotle F195 Rose), 39–40; Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 60, 109, 191–93; Lucan *Oneiros* 4, 18, *Bion praxis* 6; and Hippolytus *Refutations* 1.3. *Lemuria*: Ovid *Fasti* 5.419–92; cf. Lowe 1929: 18–19; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 56–59; Phillips 1992; and Felton 1999: 104. Beans and Amphiaraus: Aristophanes *Amphiarai* F23 K-A and *Geoponica* 2.34.4 p. 179 Niclas and 2.35.8 p. 182; cf. Deubner 1900: 15–16. For the properties of levodopa and much on the Pythagorean bean-embargo, see Grmek 1989: 221. Dakaris 1993: 19–21 hariolates an elaborate hallucinogenic role for beans in his Acheron *nekuomanteion*. See chapter 11 for some similar thinking about the properties of the mullein plant, and chapter 12 for more on ingesting souls.

necromancy, boy-medium divination (*hai adiaphthorōn paidōn epopteuseis*), invocations of the souls of the dead, dream-senders (*oneiropompoi*) among the magi, and demon-assistants (*paredroi*).[11]

Ghosts play only a minor role in Artemidorus of Daldis's major second-century A.D. manual for the interpretation of dreams (oneiromancy). He does accept that some dreams are caused by apparitions (*phantasmata*), which doubtless include ghosts, but dreams of this type do not belong to the predictive, allegorical category to which his book is devoted, and which emanate rather from the dreamer's own soul or from the gods. Even so, the significance attributed to the appearance of the dead in interpretable dreams sometimes appeals to popular notions of necromancy. First, the dead always speak the truth in dreams because they have nothing to fear. By contrast, when necromancers themselves appear in dreams, they never tell the truth, belonging as they do to a group of cheating diviners that lie in order to profit by inspiring fear. This group includes, among others, Pythagoreans, cheese-prophets, sieve-prophets, and lecanomancers, but not, of course, dream-interpreters. Second, to dream of exchanging a gift with a corpse, of kissing one, of sleeping on a grave, or of a man dying twice can portend death, and death, as we shall see, is often the subject of necromantic prophecy. But not every appearance by the dead in dreams appeals to necromantic culture: to dream of weeping over a corpse predicts successful business, and to dream of the dead returning to life predicts turmoil and losses. The dead go unmentioned in the extant fragments of other ancient dream-interpretation manuals.[12]

. . . . .

Incubation was the method used also to receive prophecies in hero-oracles such as those of Trophonius, Amphiaraus, and Faunus, which, as we have seen, were regarded by the ancients as strongly akin to but nonetheless distinct from *nekuomanteia*. These oracles accordingly offer possible models for the practice of incubation at *nekuomanteia*, and may also afford insights into other aspects of their use.

Trophonius was already being referred to in the earliest Greek poetry. The first arguably historical reference to his oracle at Lebadeia in Boeotia,

[11] Pitys recipe: *PGM* IV. 2006–2125. Hermes recipe: *PGM* XVIb, as reconstructed by Preisendanz and Henrichs 1973–74 and O'Neill (in Betz 1992) ad loc. Justin Martyr: *Apologies* 1.18.

[12] Artemidorus on *phantasmata*: *Oneirocriticus* 1.2, 3.22, 4.2, 27, 59, and 63 (cf. Price 1990: esp. 371 and 377). Dead speak the truth: 2.69 (cf. Rose 1950: 275–76 and Festugière 1975: ad loc.). Dead portend death: 1.5, 1.81, 2.2, 2.63, 4.82, and cf. 1.60 (see chapter 15). Dead portend things other than death: 2.60 and 62. Other dream-interpretation manuals: collected by Del Corno 1969. See also Van Lieshout 1980.

which became known as a *katabasion*, or "place of descent," comes in Herodotus's account of Croesus's consultation, supposedly ca. 560. (The tale of its consultation by Aristomenes of Messene during the second Messenian War in the mid-seventh century B.C. is presumably a myth.) Thereafter it is the subject of frequent testimonia until the third century A.D. From this century also date some crude remains, on Mt. Hagios Ilias, that broadly resemble the structure Pausanias (as quoted below) had described in the preceding century. They consist of a circular well some four meters deep and two in diameter. From its bottom, a small hole extends out in a southwest direction. When discovered, this was blocked by a large stone. The original oracle had perhaps been destroyed by one of the earthquakes to which the area is subject, and may, like the Heracleia and Tainaron *nekuomanteia*, have consisted of a worked natural cave.[13]

Pausanias gives us an elaborate account of the procedure for consulting Trophonius. The consulter was first purified over a number of days by sacrifices, feasting, and ritual baths. As was common in necromancy, the actual consultation took place by night, and began with the sacrifice of a ram (color unspecified) in a pit. Further rituals, involving boys termed *Hermai* ("Hermeses"), presumably after the escort of the dead, followed. Then,

> . . . [The consulter] goes toward the oracle clothed in a linen tunic that is girt up with ribbons, and with high boots (*krēpides*) of a local type on his feet. The oracle is above the sacred grove on the mountain. A platform (*krēpis*) of white stone has been built around it. The circumference of the platform is akin to that of a very small threshing-floor. It is not quite two cubits in height. On the platform stand posts and chains that link them together, all made of bronze, and doors have been made through these. Inside the round platform is a hole in the ground, not a natural one, but one constructed with skill and the most exacting architectural balance. The plan of this construction is akin to that of a potter's kiln [i.e., conical,

[13] Earliest references to Trophonius: *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 295–97 and Hesiod F245 Merkelbach and West (a new discovery, only in the 1990 edition, on p. 190a). *Katabasion*: Scholiast Aristophanes *Clouds* 508 and *Suda* s.v. *Trophōnion*. . . . Croesus: Herodotus 1.46–48. Aristomenes: Pausanias 4.16 and 9.39. Third-century A.D. references: Tertullian *De anima* 46.11 and inscriptions recording "Zeus Trophonius" at Roesch 1982: 182–83 and *IG* VII.4326. On the Trophonius oracle, see Frazer 1898 on Pausanias 9.39; Dossin 1921; Radke 1939; Brelich 1958: 52–59; Papachatzis 1963–74 on Pausanias 9.39 (with diagram of oracle, but the inner hole is surely drawn too big); Schachter 1967 and 1981–94; 3: 66–89 (with exhaustive sources but eccentric interpretation), Clark 1968; Waszink 1968 (for the Hercyna valley, with photographs); Vallas and Pharaklas 1969 (for the third-century A.D. site, with photographs); Hani 1975 (on Plutarch's story of Timarchus); Roesch 1976; Levin 1989: 1637–42; Bonnechère and Bonnechère 1989 (a sound summary); and Bonnechère 1990.

domed, or straight-sided?]. The diameter of its width would provide roughly four cubits. As to the depth of the construction, one would not guess this to come to more than eight cubits. They have not made a way down (*katabasis*) to the bottom. Whenever a man goes to Trophonius, they bring a narrow portable ladder for him. When one has gone down, one finds an opening between the construction and the bottom. It seemed to be two hand-spans wide and one hand-span high. The man going down lays himself down on the floor with the barley-cakes mixed with honey, and thrusts his feet into the opening and pushes forward in his eagerness to get his knees inside it. Then the rest of his body is immediately dragged along and follows quickly after his knees, just as if the greatest and swiftest of rivers were about to engulf one caught in its current. Thereafter there is no one or same way in which those who have entered the inner shrine (*aduton*) are instructed about the future, but sometimes a man hears, and sometimes another man sees [sc. as well/instead?]. The way back for those who have gone down is through the same mouth, with their feet running before them.

—Pausanias 9.39[14]

The consulter then returned to the surface, where the priests sat him on the throne of Memory and made him relate his experiences. The consulter no longer had the ability to laugh, and this gave rise to a proverb applicable to the morose, "He has consulted the oracle of Trophonius."[15]

As in the case of the *nekuomanteia*, it has been supposed that Trophonius was experienced by his consulters through trick effects manipulated by his priests. Among such speculations are machines lurking within the inner hole, hidden priests waiting inside it to pull the consulter through and perform a sound and light show for him or to bump him on the head, and hallucinogenic drugs.[16] But again, as in the case of *nekuomanteia*, the evidence points more mundanely to incubation.

[14] Also important for the experience of consultation are Plutarch *Moralia* 590–92 (consultation by Timarchus) and Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.19 (his descent in defiance of the priests).

[15] Cf. Athenaeus 614b (including Semos *FGH* 396 F10, an entertaining story made all the more real by the epigraphy cited at Schachter 1981–94, 3: 81). The proverb is reported by all the major paroemographers, among others: Apostolius 6.82; Diogenianus 1.8; Gregory of Cyprus 2.24; Makarios 3.63; Plutarch *Proverbs* 1.51; Zenobius 3.61; Nonnus *PG* 36.1069; Cosmas at Gregory of Nazianz *Carmina, PG* 38.512–13; *Suda* s.v. *Trophōnion* . . . ; and Scholiast Aristophanes *Clouds* 506–8.

[16] Machines: Burkert 1972: 154. Priestly show: Wagenvoort at Waszink 1968: 30 and Schachter 1981–94, 3: 83. Drugs and bumps on the head: Clark 1968: 64 and 73. The prophecy received by Plutarch's Timarchus in the oracle, in which his soul was taken on a tour of the universe like that of Plato's Er, was initiated and concluded by bangs on the head as he lay in the inner chamber (*Moralia* 590b and 592e; Plato *Republic* 614–21). But these bangs were purely internal in nature, and were caused by the departure of Timarchus's soul from his body and its re-entry into it.

Pausanias's reference to seeing and/or hearing tells us little of the mechanics of experiencing the ghost in itself, and indeed the combination of these two terms of perception appears to have been a traditional way of speaking about experiences of ghosts or of the underworld.[17] The only source to address the means by which Trophonius was experienced explicitly, Tertullian, tells us that it was through dreaming. Dicaearchus probably said the same: the fragments of his *Descent to Trophonius* assert that dreaming and ecstasy are the only valid modes of divination. And incubation best explains the repeated claim that the consulter of Trophonius was himself the medium of the prophecy. Heraclides of Pontus told that Trophonius appeared in a dream to some Boeotians who fled to his sanctuary after being captured by Thracians. He told them that Dionysus would help them, so they got drunk, attacked the Thracians sucessfully, and founded a temple to Dionysus the Deliverer in gratitude. Although this tale does not apparently envisage a formal consultation, it hints that Trophonius normally communicated through dreams. One of the mythical versions of Trophonius's death may also support incubation. According to Pindar, Apollo promised the master-architects Trophonius and Agamedes their pay for building his temple at Delphi on the seventh day, and bade them feast in the meantime. This they did, but on the seventh night they fell asleep and died, thus receiving the ultimate prize of Cleobis and Biton. This seven-day feasting may be re-enacted in the several days' feasting of consulters in the house of *Agathos Daimōn* and *Agathē Tychē* prior to descent. In this case, the incubatory sleep and communication with the dead Trophonius may likewise have corresponded to Trophonius's own final sleep and death.[18] Dreams were doubtless made vivid by the outlandish and terrible nature of the experience, which may have stayed the laughter of his consulters but made Trophonius himself a favorite subject for the comic poets.[19]

[17] There is a further reference to "things seen" at Pausanias 9.39.8. Maximus of Tyre (8.2) tells that the consulter "hears some things and sees others." For the "seeing and/or hearing" combination, cf. the *lex sacra* of Selinus at Jameson et al. 1993: side B; Lucan *Menippus* 2; and Proclus *Commentary on Plato's Republic* 16.113–16 (on 614b4–7). Cf. Deubner 1900: 10; and Felton 1999: 17 and 71–72.

[18] Tertullian *De anima* 46.11. Dicaearchus F13–22 Wehrli. Consulter as medium of prophecy: Maximus of Tyre 8.2; Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.19; and cf. Strabo C414. Heraclides of Pontus F155 Wehrli. Myths of Trophonius's death: Pindar F5–6 Turyn; cf. also Homer *Hymn to Apollo* 295–97 and [Plato] *Axiochus* 367c. Consulters' feasting: Pausanias 9.39.

[19] Aristophanes *Clouds* 506–8 and Menander F397–400 K-T. Comedies entitled *Trophonius* are recorded for Cratinus (*floruit* ca. 450–21), F233–45 K-A (and perhaps, too, F358 and 507); Cephisodorus (*floruit* ca. 400 B.C.), F3–6 K-A; and Alexis (*floruit* ca. 300 B.C.), F238–40 K-A.

The mysterious sucking of the consulter into the inner hole remains to be explained. Some sources speak not of a sucking river but a sucking wind. Perhaps underworld rivers or blasts of mantic gas, as supposedly at Delphi, are envisaged.[20] The obvious explanation is that one was in fact pulled through the hole by the weight of the special boots. The platform of the oracle corresponded in name with these boots (*krēpis*), and its internal shape was itself apparently bootlike.

Like his fellow incubation-prophet Asclepius,[21] Trophonius appeared to his consulters in both plain human form (albeit sometimes with the size and beauty of Olympian Zeus) and in the form of a snake, the *Suda* telling us that a snake did the prophesying.[22] In the latter case it may have been held that Trophonius was identified with the snakes of the reddish-brown *pareias* variety said to live in his hole (this was also the variety sacred to Asclepius). The honey-barley cakes taken down were variously said to be for these snakes or for Trophonius himself.[23] Snakes, significantly chthonic creatures, were often kept for prophecy and fed on honey cakes in the ancient world.[24]

As a hero, Trophonius had once been a living man, but was now both divine and, paradoxically, dead. In his divine aspect he was partly identified with (presumably chthonic) Zeus, and possibly, too, with chthonic Hermes. His deadness is emphatically advertised in an admittedly jocular

[20] River: cf. also Aristophanes *Clouds* 506–8 and Maximus of Tyre 8.2. Winds: Scholiast Aristophanes *Clouds* 506–8; and Scholiast *Aristides* 3 (p. 65.30 Dindorf) and [Aristotle] *On the Cosmos* 395b. See Fontenrose 1978: 199 and 202 for mantic winds.

[21] For Asclepius, see Weinreich 1909: 80–136; Edelstein and Edelstein 1945; Grègoire et al. 1949; Kerenyi 1959; and Aleshire 1989 (for the Athenian shrine). His famous healing oracles offer fewer correspondences with *nekuomanteia* than those of Trophonius, Amphiaraus, and Faunus, but note the following points: he had a cave at Cyphanta (Pausanias 3.24.5 = Edelstein and Edelstein 1945: T755); he was at once dead (T105–15), divine (T232–336), and a snake (T421 lines 732–47, T423 no. 39, T448, T630, T688–706; Grègoire et al. believe he was originally a mole); a healer in life, he was killed by Zeus for reanimating the dead (T66–93).

[22] Human: Origen *Contra Celsum* 7.35. Zeus-like: Plutarch *Sulla* 17. *Suda* s.v. *Trophōnion* . . . ; it appears from Pausanias 9.39 that Trophonius's cult statue (the work of Praxiteles) embodied him as a man with a snake twisting round his staff, like statues of Asclepius. It does not appear that Trophonius specialized in healing-prophecy, as Asclepius and Amphiaraus did (but note that the honey-barley cake taken down to him was called a *hygieia*, "health": Pollux *Onomastikon* 6.76).

[23] *Pareias*: Cratinus F241 K-A (cf. Pausanias 2.28.1 and Aelian *History of Animals* 8.12 for Asclepius). Cakes for the snakes: Aristophanes *Clouds* 506–8, with scholia; Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.19; Maximus of Tyre 8.2; Lucian *Dialogues of the Dead* 10; Hesychius s.v. *magides*. Cakes for Trophonius: Pollux *Onomasticon* 6.76.

[24] E.g., Herodotus 8.41 (the Ericthonius-snake on the Athenian acropolis); and Herodas 4.91 (Cos). For the prophet Melampus's association with snakes, see Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 1.9.11, and for Tiresias's, see the sources collected by Brisson 1976: 135–42.

exchange in Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead*.[25] And his death was integral to the myths attached to the site, such as that of Pindar. According to another of these, Trophonius, master-architect again, constructed the descent chamber for his oracle, retreated into it, and prophesied until he died of hunger, whereupon a *daimonion* (his ghost?) inhabiting the place continued to give out prophecies. According to another, he fled into his hole and died after being chased for the robbery of the treasury that he had constructed with Agamedes for Hyrieus or Augeias.[26] Trophonius was perhaps "half-dead": this is what Strepsiades, in Aristophanes's *Clouds*, fears he will become, like Chaerephon, if he enters Socrates' school, which he compares to Trophonius's hole.[27] We shall return to Trophonius when we come to consider the oracle of Orpheus's head (chapter 13).

The healing oracle of Amphiaraus, which from ca. 420 B.C. was located at Oropus on the Boeotian-Attic border, is often mentioned by ancient sources in the same breath as that of Trophonius.[28] Already a prophet when above ground, he, too, now straddled the divide between life and death in a curious way, for he had entered the underworld directly when the earth had swallowed his chariot, and so he had bypassed the phase of dying. Like Trophonius, too, he had risen up as a god, at the site of his sacred spring. We cannot be sure that Amphiaraus manifested himself as a snake, but he could send these creatures to enact his cures. Before the 420s, the oracle had been located at the undentified *Knōpia* near Thebes, a place-name possibly signifying "place of snakes." Amphiaraus could also send Hygieia, the personification of health herself, to do his job for him, or even the image of one his priests.[29] Although, like Asclepius, he specialized in prophecies of cure, he did not confine himself to this subject: he

[25] Trophonius as divine: cf. Pausanias 1.34. Identified with Zeus: *IG* VII.3090 (third century B.C.) and other inscriptions from the site; Strabo C414 (cf. Photius *Lexicon* s.v. *Lebadeia*, derived therefrom); Livy 45.27.8; Obsequens *Prodigia* 50; and Plutarch *Sulla* 17. Identified with Hermes: Cicero *De natura deorum* 3.56; cf. the *Hermai*. Trophonius as dead: Lucian *Dialogues of the Dead* 10.

[26] Trophonius constructs descent chamber: Scholiasts Thomas-Triclinius and *Anonyma recentiora* on Aristophanes *Clouds* 506–8; cf. Pausanias's admiration of the stonework. Trophonius's flight after robbery: Pausanias 9.37; Scholiast Aristophanes *Clouds* 506a; and fragments of the epic *Telegonia* at Davies 1988: 73–74.

[27] Aristophanes *Clouds* 503–8.

[28] Association with Trophonius: e.g., Pausanias 1.34; Aristides 38.21; Cicero *De natura deorum* 3.49; and Origen *Contra Celsum* 3.34 and 7.35. For Amphiaraus, see in particular Coulton 1968; Petrakos 1968 and 1974; cf. also Schachter 1981–94, 1: 19–26 (listing literary sources) and Roesch 1984. The Oropus site was founded on virgin soil in the 420s; inscriptions extended into the third century A.D.

[29] Amphiaraus bypasses death: the point made by Euripides *Suppliants* 925–27; a graphic account of the episode at Statius *Thebaid* 7.794–823 (cf. Vessey 1973: 258–69). Sacred spring: Pausanias 1.34. Snakes enact cures: Aristophanes *Amphiaraus* F28 K-A (cf. F33) and *LIMC* Amphiaraos no. 63 (a superb relief dedicated in thanks for cure by Archinos).

prophesied (erroneously) to Croesus about his soup in the mid-sixth century (his first attested prophecy), to a representative of Mardonius about the course of the 480 B.C. Persian invasion, and to Euxenippus about the right to occupy adjacent land. Amphiaraus, too, attracted a number of comedies, although he was hardly as daunting to consult as Trophonius.[30]

Pausanias again explains the consultation procedure:

> I think Amphiaraus was most concerned with the interpretation of dreams. This is clear to me because he was considered a god for having established prophecy through dreams. Those who come to consult Amphiaraus customarily purify themselves first. Purification consists of sacrificing to the god, and they sacrifice to him and to all the gods that have their names on his altar. When these things have been done in advance, they sacrifice a ram, spread out the fleece, and go to sleep waiting for the revelation in a dream.
>
> —Pausanias 1.34

Philostratus tells that consulters abstained from food for a day and wine for three days before consultation. We learn from him also that there was a *phrontistērion*, a "place of reflection," within the sanctuary. This was a "sacred and godlike fissure" and was associated with a "Gate of Dreams." The fissure seemingly corresponds with Trophonius's hole, and it was presumably here that Amphiaraus had entered the earth. (Did Socrates's "*phrontistērion* of wise souls" in Aristophanes's *Clouds* salute Amphiaraus as much as Trophonius?[31]) However, most incubations took place not in the hole itself but in a purpose-built *koimētērion*, "sleeping-house," in the form of a *stoa*. In 350 B.C. a vast new *stoa*, the remains of which can still be seen, replaced its more modest predecessor.[32]

Knopia: Strabo C414; for speculation about the location of this site, see Keramopoullos1917; Farnell 1921: 58–62; Petrakos 1968: 66–67; Schachter 1981–94, 1: 22–23; Symenoglou 1985: 108 and 136; Bonnechère and Bonnechère 1989: 54; and Bonnechère 1990: 53–54. Hygieia appears: Petrakos 1968: no. 46. Priest appears: Plutarch *Aristides* 19 and *Moralia* 412a–b.

[30] Cures: inscriptions listed at Schachter 1981–94, 1: 23; and cf. Petrakos 1968: 96–99; Pausanias 1.34 lists the healing deities named on his altar, Aphrodite Panacea, Iaso, Hygieia, Athene Paion. Croesus: Herodotus 1.46, 49, 52, and 92. Mardonius: Herodotus 8.134, and Plutarch *Aristides* 19 and *Moralia* 412ab. Euxenippus: Hyperides 3.14–17. Comedies: see the fragments of plays entitled *Amphiaraus* in Kassel and Austin 1983– under Aristophanes, Apollodorus of Carystus, Carcinus, Cleophon, and Philippides.

[31] Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 2.37 (abstinence) and *Imagines* 16 Amphiaraus (*phrontistērion*); Aristophanes *Clouds* 94 (cf. 506–8).

[32] *Koimētērion*: Petrakos 1968: 177–78 no. 39 = Sokolowski 1969: no. 69 lines 25–48 (a law from the sanctuary, ca. 400 B.C., with information on the sleeping arrangements for men and women). The two *stoas*: Papachatzis 1963–74 on Pausanias 1.34; Coulton 1968: 180–83; Petrakos 1968: 77–84 and 93–94, with plates 6–9; Roesch 1984: 183–84. Plutarch *Aristides* 19 may imply that incubation could be properly performed anywhere within the sanctuary's enclosure (*sēkos*). For incubation at the sanctuary, see further Hyperides *Euxenippus* 14 and 16.

12. The ghost of Tiresias and Odysseus, with Eurylochus and Perimedes. Red-figure Apulian *kratēr*, Dolon Painter, ca. 440–390 B.C. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Cabinet des médailles, 422. © Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Amphiaraus's consulters performed their incubations upon the fleeces of the rams they had sacrificed to him.[33] As we have seen, one similarly consulted the dead heroes Podalirius and Calchas in Apulia by lying upon their tombs on the fleeces of sacrificial victims. Fleeces may well have been used in this way in *nekuomanteia*, too. An Apulian-style *kratēr* from Lucania by the Dolon Painter, around 440–390 B.C., depicts Odysseus consulting the ghost of Tiresias (fig. 12; cf. figs. 13 and 14). As with the Elpenor vase, Odysseus sits on a rock with his sword drawn, while the hoary, blind head of the dead Tiresias rises up before him from the base of the frame (it is impossible to tell therefore whether he rises from the earth, from a pit, or from water). Odysseus's feet appear to rest firmly on

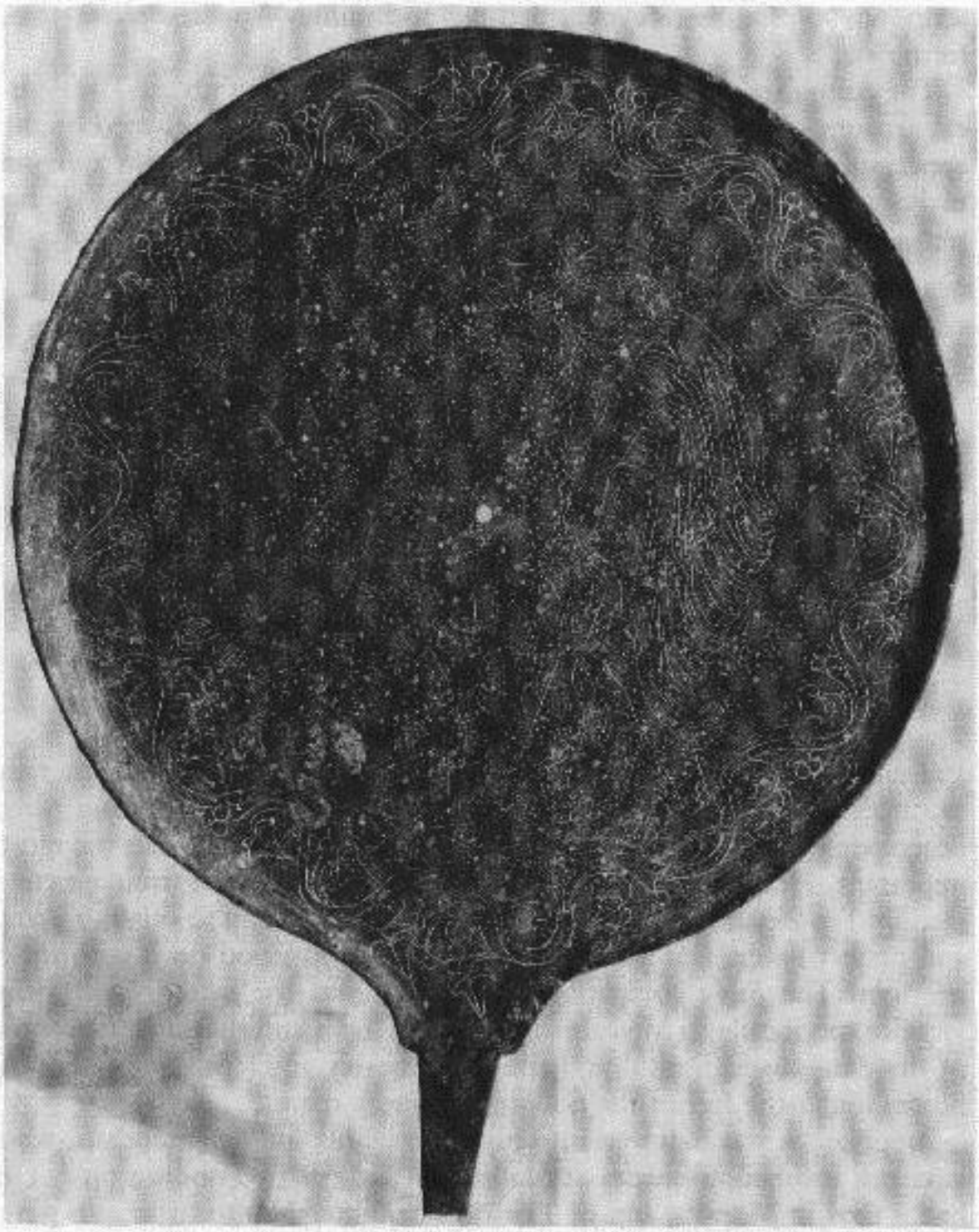
[33] A sacred law from the site (Petrakos 1968: 177–78 no. 39 = Sokolowski 1969: no. 69 lines 25–48) implies that these fleeces were subsequently displayed in the temple, in tribute to Amphiaraus's power.

13. Odysseus and the ghost of Tiresias. Relief from the Villa Albani, second or first century B.C. Paris, Musée du Louvre Ma574. © Musée du Louvre, Départment des Antiquités Grecques, Etrusques et Romaines. Photo by Christian Larrieu.

the fleece of the ram he has slain, with one foot on either side of its head.[34] An Etruscan gemstone portrays him standing with sword poised and resting one foot on the head of his victim.[35] The attention Homer gives to the fleecing of the ram prior to its holocaust in his two de-

[34] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles no. 422, superbly illustrated in color at Brisson 1976: frontispiece (cf. plate iv); cf. also Harrison 1922: 74–75; Touchefeu-Meynier 1968: 136 and plate 21.1; Brommer 1983: 82; Buitron and Cohen 1992: 98. Apulian influence may admittedly allow that the imagery reflects practice on hero-tombs in that area as much as *nekuomanteion* practice.

[35] Touchefeu-Meynier 1968: 142 no. 242. Odysseus's pose resembles that of the impressive second-or-first-century B.C. relief from the Villa Albani, Louvre Ma 574 (fig. 13), where he faces the ghost of Tiresias (without fleece); cf. Brisson 1976: plate v. Odysseus consults



14. Odysseus, Hermes, and the ghost of Tiresias. Etruscan mirror, late fifth century B.C. Vatican, Gregorian Etruscan Museum 12.687. © Musei Vaticani.

Tiresias also on a late fifth-century B.C. Etruscan mirror, Vatican, Gregorian Etruscan Museum 12.687 (fig. 14; Hermes brings a youthful, beardless, possibly effeminate Tiresias, either blind or dead or both, to Odysseus, seated with his sword); cf. Touchefeu-Meynier 1968: 139–40; Brisson 1976: plate vi; and Buitron and Cohen 1992: 98; see further chapter 8.

scriptions of Odysseus's consultation accordingly appears more than formulaic.[36]

The Argo myth, too, conjoins fleece and evocation of ghost. The earliest account of it is Pindar's. Here the Argo's voyage is motivated by the appearance of the ghost of Phrixus, who had died at Colchis, in a *dream* to Pelias at Iolcus. Phrixus asks him to bring home his soul (i.e., lay his ghost) and fetch the golden fleece. Pelias entrusts the tasks to Jason:

> Already the aged part of life attends my years, but your flower of youth is recently at its peak. You will be able to remove the anger of the chthonic powers. Phrixus gives the order to go to the chambers of Aietes and bring back his soul, and to bring the deep woolly fleece of the ram, by which he was saved from the sea and from the godless missiles of his stepmother. A wonderful dream comes to me and says these things.
>
> —Pindar *Pythian* 4.156–63

> Pindar is unique in this detail too, in ordering Jason to call back/call up (*anakalesthai*) the soul from Aia along with the fleece. Others merely say that he was sent to bring the fleece. Homer shows that they called back/called up the souls of those who had died in foreign lands.
>
> —Scholiast a, ad loc.[37]

Pausanias's account of Amphiaraus indicates that the purpose of the ram sacrifice, as with the other sacrifices, was purificatory. Other purifying fleeces are known, of which the "fleece of Zeus" (*Dios kōdion*) is the most important. Hesychius reports that this was a sacred fleece from a victim sacrificed to Zeus, according to Polemon, but according to others a great and perfect fleece, and that it purified those who stood on it with their left foot. The *Suda* compatibly tells that it was the sacred fleece of a sacrifice specifically to Meilichian or Ctesian Zeus and that the organizers of the *Skirophoria* festival and the torch-bearer at Eleusis strewed such fleeces under the feet of the polluted to purify them.[38]

Amphiaraus was followed into his trade by his son Amphilochus, who gave out incubation oracles at Mallos in Cilicia at two obols a time. He had a rival in Mopsus, son of Tiresias's daughter Manto, who also gave out incubation oracles in Cilicia.[39]

[36] Homer *Odyssey* 10.533 and 11.46.

[37] Cf. also Scholiast c; the reference is to Homer *Odyssey* 9.64 (see chapter 7); cf. Johnston 1999: 21 and 155.

[38] Hesychius and *Suda* s.v. *Dios kōdion*; cf. Pley 1911: 10–13; Harrison 1922: 23–24; Clark 1968: 71; and Johnston 1999: 133–36.

[39] Amphilochus: Lucian *Dialogues of the Dead* 10, *Philopseudes* 38, *Alexander* 19, and *Assembly of the Gods* 12; Aelius Aristides 38.21 Keil (Amphilochus did the same in Acarnania); cf. Rohde 1925: 104 n. 5. Mopsus and Manto: Strabo C642. Mopsus in Cilicia: Plutarch *Moralia* 434d. Celsus made a string of Trophonius, Amphilochus, Mopsus, and

Virgil describes the oracle of Faunus:

> But the king [Latinus], upset by the portents, went to the oracle of Faunus, his prophesying father, and consulted the woods beneath the lofty Albunea. This, the most vast of forests, resounds with a sacred spring and, dark as she is, breathes out a cruel mephitic gas. From here the Italian tribes and the whole of the Oenotrian land seek responses in ambiguous situations. When the priest(ess) had brought offerings here and had lain on the strewn fleeces of slaughtered sheep under the silent night, s/he would see many images/ghosts (*simulacra*) flitting about in wondrous ways and hear diverse voices and enjoy converse with the gods and speak to Acheron in lowest Avernus. Here, too, then, father Latinus in person, seeking responses, duly slaughtered a hundred wool-bearing sheep and lay down on their strewn fleeces, propping up his back. A voice was suddenly given out from the deep wood: "Do not seek to make a Latin marriage-alliance for your daughter, my son, and put no trust in the marriage-bed you have prepared. Sons-in-law will come from abroad, to carry our name to the stars with their blood. Descendants from their stock will see everything that the sun sees on each side of the Ocean as it repeats its runs, turned and ruled beneath their feet."
>
> —Virgil *Aeneid* 7.81–101

"Albunea" is here made the name of the wood, and the location of the consultation may appear to be close to Lavinium. However, Albunea was normally the name of a Sibyl who prophesied from a grotto beneath a waterfall of the Anio at Tibur, and we are perhaps to imagine the consultation as taking place there, despite no mention by Virgil of a cave, river, or waterfall. In this case, his "priest(ess)" will denote this Sibyl. Despite the presence of a priest(ess), Latinus performs the incubation in person. Numa also performed his incubation at the oracle in person, as Ovid tells. In this account, after elaborate purification ceremonies, Numa sacrifices two sheep, one to Faunus and one, appropriately, to Sleep. As Numa then sleeps on the fleeces, Faunus arrives and stands upon them with his hooves, on the well-omened right side, to deliver his prophecy about deliverance from pestilence.[40]

As described by Virgil, the oracle of Faunus appears to be an amalgamation of a *nekuomanteion* and a hero-oracle. The former is indicated by the dark woodland setting and mephitic gases, by the many images/

Zalmoxis: Origen *Contra Celsum* 3.34 and 7.35. See also Tertullian (*De anima* 46.11), who lists some more obscure dream-oracles, those of Sarpedon in the Troad, Hermione in Macedonia, and Pasiphae at Thalamae in Laconia (cf. Plutarch *Agis* 9; Cicero *On Divination* 1.96; and Pausanias 3.26.1); cf. Waszink 1947; ad loc.

[40] Albunea: Horace *Odes* 1.7.12 (with Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: ad loc.); Lactantius 1.6.12 (citing Varro); and Tibullus 2.5.69–70; cf. also Dionysius of Halicarnassus 5.16.2–3. Numa: Ovid *Fasti* 4.629–76.

ghosts that can be seen flitting about at it, by the speaking of the consulters to Acheron in Avernus, and also, perhaps, by the cave and the Sibyl.[41] The latter is indicated by the fact that Faunus presides. The nighttime consultation, the sacrifice of sheep, and the performance of incubation on the fleeces of sheep, belong to both oracle types. Was Faunus's oracle a *nekuomanteion* presided over and mediated by one privileged dead man, as Tainaron perhaps was by Tettix and Acheron perhaps was by Melissa? Faunus may have other necromantic connections: he was the son of Circe and, according to Plutarch, helped to teach Numa magic when captured by him.[42] But it remains possible that Virgil just fictively blends a hotchpotch of oracular motifs. The voice that comes from the wood is also reminiscent of tree-oracles, as at Dodona, and this might be considered appropriate to a woodland power such as Faunus.

Each of these three hero-oracles may have some light to shed on *nekuomanteia*. The more plentiful evidence for the Trophonius oracle may help us to recreate the experience of performing necromancy. The evidence for the Amphiaraus oracle may enhance our understanding of the role of the fleeces in necromantic incubations. And the evidence for the Faunus oracle may support the supposition that individual ghosts could play a presiding role at *nekuomanteia*.

[41] Cf. Deubner 1900: 8–19 and Collard 1949: 99.

[42] Circe: Nonnus *Dionysiaca* 12.328; cf. Phillips 1953: 55. Numa: Plutarch *Numa* 15.3–6.

PART II

PEOPLE

CHAPTER 7

EVOCATORS, SORCERERS, AND VENTRILOQUISTS

IN part II, we turn our attention to the professionals of ancient necromancy, and to those specifically associated with its practice. In the earlier evidence, specialists are usually Greek and male. It is these men who form the subject of this chapter. The discussion is organized, once again, primarily in accordance with ancient terminology. The key terms here are *psuchagōgos*, "evocator"; *goēs*, "sorcerer"; and a series of words denoting ventriloquism. The attitude toward those to whom such terms were applied was usually disdainful, and this becomes particularly clear in the remarks of Plato and Aristophanes. But we perhaps find a more sympathetic and "internal" representation of necromantic specialists, or a variety of them, in the portraits of the miracle-working Greek "shamans" of the Pythagorean tradition (chapter 8). There was also a developing tendency to associate a specialization in necromancy with aliens—Persians, Babylonians, and Egyptians—and with women or witches. The heyday of this tendency was the imperial period, but ancient literature's first great necromancy sequence, that of the *Odyssey*, already provides us with our first witch in Circe, and the second great necromancy sequence, that of Aeschylus's *Persians*, already provides us with our first Persian necromancers. The identification of aliens and women with necromancy may, if it has any particular significance, constitute an act of "cultural distancing" and therefore support other indications that necromancy was perceived as a little bizarre (chapter 9). Finally, in part II, attention is turned to the city of Rome, and the notions of necromancy that thrived there. The practice of necromancy was particularly associated with the emperors themselves, probably because it could economically convey a series of appropriate, negative, imperial stereotypes, including harassed anxiety and extraordinary cruelty (chapter 10).

. . . . .

We are told little of resident specialists at the oracles of the dead, as the review of these sites in part I has shown. By contrast, the evidence for the duties and privileges of priests at the oracles of Trophonius and Amphiaraus is copious.[1] The Greeks employed two terms for necromantic special-

[1] Trophonius: e.g., Plutarch *Moralia* 431c–d (his brother Lamprias); Pausanias 9.39–40 (priests minutely managing every stage of the consultation); Philostratus *Life of Apollonius*

ists cognate with their terminology for oracles of the dead: *psuchagōgos* ("soul-charmer," "evocator"; cf. *psuchagōgion*) was reasonably common. *Nekuomantis* ("prophet of the dead"; cf. *nekuomanteion*) is first found in the Augustan Strabo. Ps.-Lycophron had used the variant form *nekromantis* around 196 B.C., *metri gratia*, but curiously in a context indicating a primary meaning "dead-man prophet." A Latinized equivalent *necromantius* is found only in the seventh-century A.D. Isidore of Seville. A third term, *psuchomantis*, which *prima facie* promises a signification such as "prophet of souls" (cf. *psuchomanteion*), is used by our only authority for it in a context indicating rather that it denoted one who divined the future through the wisdom of his own living soul.[2]

Psuchagōgoi were probably based at *nekuomanteia* but traveled out from there to lay ghosts when necessary. I repeat in summary the evidence considered above. *Psuchagōgoi* are explicitly located at Avernus by Maximus of Tyre, where they appear to have played a role similar to that of Ephorus's race of Cimmerians, and it may well have been from here that Plutarch's *psuchagōgoi* came "from Italy" to lay the ghost of the regent Pausanias. The parallelism between the accounts of this same Pausanias's consultation of the ghost of Cleonice, which Plutarch (twice) sets at the Heracleia *nekuomanteion* and which Pausanias-periegetes sets among the *psuchagōgoi* of Phigalia, may suggest that the Phigalian *psuchagōgoi* had a *nekuomanteion* of their own. *Psuchagōgoi* first appear in Greek literature in Aeschylus's fragmentary play of that name. The *psuchagōgoi* of the title, who seem to have been a race, again akin to the Cimmerians, rather than a defined group of experts ("We, the race [*genos*] that dwells around the lake . . ."), are based at a lake *nekuomanteion*, which is probably to be identified as the Acheron one. It is possible that the consulter of the Thesprotian oracle of Zeus at Dodona who asked whether the *psuchagōgos* Dorios should be employed had in mind a person based at that same, local, Acheron *nekuomanteion*.[3]

8.19 (priests attempting to obstruct Apollonius's descent); and the inscriptions at *IG* VII. 3426, Roesch 1982: 182–83; and Vatin 1971 = Schachter 1981–94, 3: 84–88. Amphiaraus: Plutarch *Aristides* 19 and *Moralia* 412a–b; and the inscriptions collected by Petrakos 1968 (of which the important sacred law, no. 39 [pp. 177–78] = Sokolowski 1969: no. 69). Strabo C459–50 goes into some detail on the priests of Acharaca.

[2] *Psuchagōgoi*: it is curious that there is no *RE* article on this subject; there are a few useful words at Bravo 1987: 207 and Jouan 1981: 417–20; see now, more generally, Johnston 1999: 82–123. *Nekuomantis*: Strabo C762; Ptolemy Mathematicus *Tetrabiblos* 181; Artemidorus *Oneirocriticus* 2.69; and *Suda* s.v. *nekuomantis* ("interrogator of a dead person"). *Nekromantis*: [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 682 (further discussion in chapter 16). *Necromantius*: Isidore of Seville *Etymologiae* 8.9.11. *Psuchomantis*: Hesychius s.v. *thumomantis* [sic].

[3] *Psuchagōgoi*, etc., at Avernus: Maximus of Tyre 8.2; Ephorus *FGH* 70 F134a = Strabo C244; Plutarch *Moralia* 560e–f. Consultations by Pausanias: Plutarch *Moralia* 555c and

Aristophanes's brief parody of Aeschylus's *Psuchagogoi* in the *Birds* of 414 B.C. provides a comic cameo of a *psuchagōgos* at work:

> Beside the Shade-feet (*Skiapodes*) there is a lake (unfit for washing in: *aloutos*) where the (unwashed) Socrates draws up souls (*psuchagōgei*).[4] There came Pisander asking to see the courage/ghost (*psuchē*) that had deserted him while he was still alive. He had a camel-heifer to sacrifice. He cut its throat, just like Odysseus, and then went off. And then there came up for him from below, for the spilt blood[5] of the camel, Chaerephon the bat.
>
> —Aristophanes *Birds* 1553–64

Socrates as *psuchagōgos* shepherds Pisander through his consultation as Aeschylus's *psuchagōgoi* had shepherded Odysseus through his. Aristophanes' conceit has its origin in Socrates' interest in the manipulation of souls, familiar from Plato's dialogues. The joke about Pisander depends upon the equivocation in *psuchē* (cf. "spirit"): the notorious coward comes in search of "courage," but runs off, in appropriately cowardly fashion, before the appearance of the "ghost," and perhaps, too, at the sight of blood. Another joke derives from the syntactical ambivalence of *aloutos*, which can be taken both with the lake and with Socrates. The lake is "unfit for washing in," just as Aeschylus's lake was unfit for washing hands in, and Socrates is "unwashed," a condition for which he had already been mocked in Aristophanes' *Clouds* of 423 and for which he is mocked elsewhere in the *Birds*, too. The "Shade-feet" were a bizarre mythical race of beings who had four feet, each bigger than their body, which they raised one at a time to shield themselves from the sun. They serve here as a comic substitution for the Cimmerians in their eternal darkness. Their name gratifyingly salutes both the ghostly context (*skia* being one of Homer's terms for "ghost") and the fact that Socrates avoided the sun and went about unshod. Aristophanes had similarly already established the conceit in the *Clouds* that Socrates and his associates were deathly pale both from such sun avoidance and from their death-obsessed life. Chaerephon, Socrates' partner in the school of the *Clouds*, was the most corpse- or ghostlike of all. In the *Wasps* of 424 he is "yellow-faced," in the *Clouds* "half-dead" (*hēmithnēs*) and, alongside Socra-

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Cimon 6; and Pausanias 3.17.9. Aeschylus *Psuchagogoi* especially F273 and 273a *TrGF*, both quoted in full above; another play in the same trilogy, *Ostologoi*, "Bone-Gatherers" (F179–80 *TrGF*), also dealt with the manipulation of the dead; in this play the relatives of the suitors slain by Odysseus come to collect their remains. Dorios: Evangelidis 1935: no. 23 = Christidis et al. 1999: no. 5; he is attached to Acheron by van Straten 1982: 215; also, Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.495 uses the abstract term *psuchagōgia* in connection with Odysseus's necromancy at the Acheron.

[4] The reference is noted by *Suda*'s general definition of *psuchagōgia*, s.v. *psuchagōgei*.

[5] Reading either *laima* ("slaughtering") with Sommerstein 1987 on line 1563, with his note ad loc., or *laitma* ("deep pool [of blood]") with Dunbar 1995 on lines 1563–64.

tes, "pale and unshod." Here in the *Birds* he is a bat, the creature to which Homer compares the souls of the dead suitors, and in a fragment of the *Horai*, probably written around the same time as the *Birds*, he is a "child of the night." Aristophanes' rival Eupolis similarly described him as "boxwood." It is, then, entirely appropriate that Socrates should here call up his partner as if a ghost. In their unshod, unwashed, ascetic, soul-obsessed states, Socrates and Chaerephon are portrayed as Pythagoreans, and perhaps this had some basis in life: note the involvement of the Pythagoreans Simmias and Cebes in Plato's *Phaedo*.[6]

Psuchagōgoi were often concerned also with the laying of ghosts. Hermes himself, whose job it was to deposit the ghosts of the dead safely in the underworld, could take *psuchagōgos* as an epithet (alongside those of *psuchopompos* and *nekropompos*). In a summary definition of *psuchagōgoi*, a Euripides scholiast asserts that they "summon up and drive out ghosts." Paradoxically, it was often necessary to call up a ghost to lay it. As we shall see in chapter 15, one could often be attacked by a ghost in a form in which it could not communicate meaningfully with one. One would then have to call it up with necromantic rites in a form with which one could communicate and learn from it the cause of its disquiet and the appropriate remedy: From what killer must vengeance be exacted? What satisfaction could a known killer give? Where did the ghost's remains lie without due burial? What had been found wanting in an at-

[6] Socratic interest in soul-manipulation: see Plato *Apology* esp. 29d–30b, and in general *Gorgias*, *Meno*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, and *Republic*. *Psuchē* joke: cf. Sommerstein 1987 on line 1561 and Dunbar 1995 on lines 1556–58; the argument of Cavaignac 1959 that the person abandoned was Socrates and the abandoning *psuchē* consequently the ghost of Chaerephon fails, because Chaerephon was still alive to return with Thrasyboulos in 403 (Plato *Apology* 20e) and because Pisander's role is thus left unexplained. Socrates mocked as unwashed: Aristophanes *Clouds* 145, 699, and 836–37 and *Birds* 1282; cf. Scholiast, Sommerstein 1987, and Dunbar 1995 on Aristophanes *Birds* 1553–55. "Shade-feet": Scholiast Aristophanes *Birds* 1551a. Other references to them in ancient literature (they did not originate with Aristophanes) are listed at Sommerstein 1987 and Dunbar 1995: ad loc. Homeric *skia*: e.g., Homer *Odyssey* 10.495 and 11.207; cf. Dunbar 1995 on Aristophanes *Birds* 1553–55. Socrates avoids sun: Aristophanes *Clouds* 119–20, 198–99, 1112, and 1171b. Socrates unshod: Aristophanes *Clouds* 103 and 362; Plato *Symposium* 220b; and Xenophon *Memorabilia* 1.6.2; cf. Sommerstein 1987 on line 1553. Chaerephon and Socrates: Chaerephon shares the *phrontistērion* with Socrates, apparently as an equal partner, at *Clouds* 104, 144–68, 503, 830–31, and 1465; at 501–4 he is a former pupil. Perhaps he should be identified as "Pupil B" in the final lines of the play; he may have had a more prominent role in the earlier version; see Dover 1968: xcv and on line 1497. Plato *Apology* 21a also attests his close association with Socrates: Chaerephon asks the Delphic oracle whether any man is wiser than Socrates. Chaerephon's pallor: Aristophanes *Wasps* 1413, *Clouds* 103–4 and 504, *Birds* 1294–99 (with Dunbar 1995: ad loc.) and *Horai* F584 K-A; Eupolis *Poleis* F253 K-A, perhaps produced in 422. Pythagoreans in *Phaedo*: cf. Cavaignac 1959; Dover 1968: xxxix–xliii; and A. M. Bowie 1993: 112–24. I owe the insight that Aristophanes' Socrates is above all strongly Pythagorean to Mr. E. L. Bowie.

tempted due burial? Many of the necromantic episodes of which we hear seek, appropriately, revelations of this sort.[7]

A thrilling description of the way *psuchagōgoi* went about their business of ghost-laying is preserved for us by the *Suda*:

> On evocation: They accomplish certain acts of sorcery with regard to the dead. For the people that invite them in want them to drive away the ghosts from a place. They come to the place where those to be subjected to evocation are dead. However, they do not immediately find the exact place, but track it down in the following fashion. They bring along with them a black sheep, taking hold of it either by one of its horns or by its front feet, and they lead it around standing on its other feet. It follows the dragging very readily. But whenever it comes to the place where the man or woman in question lies buried, there the sheep casts itself down.[8] When this happens, they remove the sheep and burn it completely[?][9] and then, together with certain elaborate sacrifices and spells, they mark off and walk around the place and they listen to the ghosts as they speak and ask the reasons for their anger. Antoninus the emperor of the Romans evocated concerning his father Commodus.[10]
>
> —*Suda* s.v. [*peri*] *psuchagōgias*

The procedure's primary function appears to have been the location of a corpse that is already in the ground but in an unmarked spot and in want of due burial. The text does not add the anticipated detail that the *psuchagōgoi* would proceed to dig up the remains and accord them due burial. This may be due to its elliptical nature, or perhaps the burial could be made right in whatever place it had initially occurred, or perhaps the remains were imperceptibly teleported to their new home. Such practices would have spared *psuchagōgoi* the public embarrassment of the failure to find bones at the bottom of their hole. But in popular traditions, the counterparts of *psuchagōgoi* could easily find the relevant bones for reburial. In a traditional Greek tale, of which the younger Pliny and Lucian preserve variants, a philosopher spends the night in a haunted house. When the ghost duly appears and attempts to scare him to death, he retains his composure. Eventually the ghost meekly leads him to the place

[7] Hermes: e.g., Hesychius s.v. *psuchagōgos* and Lucian *Dialogues of the Gods* 7.4; see chapter 4 for Hermes *psuchopompos*. Euripides scholiast: on *Alcestis* 1127–28. Necromancy for divination and necromancy for ghost-laying: Ganschinietz 1929 is overschematic in his differentiation between the two; see below.

[8] *Pace* Collard 1949: 122–23, it is not stated that the sheep is led around in a cathartic circle.

[9] I conjecture κατακαύσαντες, the normal term for the holocaust-sacrifice expected at this point, for the manuscripts' nonsensical κατακρύψαντες, "hide it completely," *Psuchagōgoi* are associated with sheep sacrifice in Aeschylus's play of that name (F273a *TrGF*) and, implicitly, at Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.16 and *Heroicus* pp. 194–95 Kayser.

[10] See chapter 10 for this puzzling final sentence.

within the house where its body lies without due rites, and disappears into the ground there. The philosopher marks the spot, and the next day the ground is opened to reveal the mistreated bones of a man murdered in the house. Due burial follows, and the house is exorcized. The philosopher of Lucian's version, Arignotus, is, significantly, a Pythagorean.[11] Alternatively, the *Suda*'s procedure might have been used to locate the marked and adequate grave of an unrecognized ghost restless for some other reason, so that one could identify the ghost and thereby reconstruct the causes of its distress.

The use of the sacrifice of the black sheep gratifyingly corresponds with the traditions of literary necromancy. Porphyry adds the confirmatory information that *psuchagōgoi* libated the honey-and-milk mixture *melikraton* to the dead.[12] The activities of the *psychagōgoi* as described by the *Suda* also resemble the technique supposedly employed by Epimenides to purify Athens after the murder of the Cylonians, as we shall see in the next chapter.

After the Spartans had starved the regent Pausanias to death while a suppliant in the temple of Athene Chalkioikos, his ghost haunted the place and drove people away from it. Eventually the Spartans received an oracle bidding them to propitiate the ghost, and so sent for *psuchagōgoi* from Italy. They came, made a sacrifice (a black sheep, no doubt), and drew the ghost away from the temple. These brief details we owe to Plutarch. A ps.-Themistoclean letter (first century A.D.) also attests the ghost story with a passing reference to an "avenging spirit" (*palamnaios*) or "avenging ghost" (*alitērios*) of Pausanias. It was probably the goddess herself that sent upon the city the pestilence to which Aristodemus refers, angry both for her mistreated suppliant and for her own ensuing deprivation of cult. It was no doubt the pestilence that had sent the Spartans in search of oracular solutions.[13]

The rationalizing Thucydides edits the ghost, and with it the *psuchagōgoi*, out of his account of these events. A logical gap is left in his narrative, as the Spartans' oracular consultation is left unmotivated, and the oracle itself can in consequence only speak vaguely of the city being under a

[11] Pliny *Letters* 7.27 and Lucian *Philopseudes* 31 (the summary conflates details); cf. Plautus *Mostellaria* 474–515 (based on Philemon's *Phasma*) for an example of the sort of murder that could give rise to such a haunting. On these texts, see Felton 1999; cf. Wendland 1911; Nardi 1960; and Römer 1987.

[12] Porphyry *Cave of the Nymphs* 28.

[13] Plutarch *Homerikai Meletai* F1 Bernadakis (at Scholiast Euripides *Alcestis* 1127–28; the fragment is most easily found at F. H. Sandbach's Loeb edition of Plutarch, vol. 15 p. 241 F126) and *Moralia* 560e–f. [Themistocles] 4.14 Hercher/Doenges. Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8.

state of religious pollution (*agos*).[14] Even so, Thucydides' account and others written in a similar vein preserve details that flesh out our understanding of the *psuchagōgoi*'s activities. First, Pausanias's ghost was restless not only for the circumstances of his killing, but also for the fact that his body had been cast out without burial. The tradition that he had been put in the ground without rites somewhere near the temple prevailed. Thucydides takes this line, but salutes and implicitly denies a more spectacular countertradition that his body was thrown down the Caeadas crevasse on Taygetus, where criminals were put, by including it as an abortive plan.[15] In either case, the skills of the *psuchagōgoi* as described by the *Suda* would have been valuable in locating Pausanias's body for its reburial and for the laying of the ghost. The tradition that the body was put down the Caeadas, from which it would in fact have been physically irretrievable, was probably the older one.[16] The notion that ghosts primarily haunted the place in which their remains lay will then have transferred the site of the body's initial disposal to near the temple itself. However, a ghost did have the ability to haunt at once both the place in which its body lay and the place of its death. Thus, during the period of his provisional and inadequate burial in the Lamian gardens, Caligula contrived to haunt both the gardens and the building in which he had been cut down.[17]

Second, Thucydides reveals that the oracle that advised the Spartans was none other than the Delphic oracle itself. This august institution, it appears, could lend its authority to the work of *psuchagōgoi*, just as it did to the Tainaron *nekuomanteion*. But then, it often seems to have given advice on ghost-laying.[18] We do not know whether the august Zeus of

[14] Thucydides 1.134. For the obvious "gap" in Thucydides' tale, see Burkert 1962: 49 and Faraone 1991a: 186–87 n. 79. Thucydides hides behind the inadequate fig-leaf of a temporal connection, "later on" (*hysteron*).

[15] Pausanias put in the ground near the temple: Thucydides 1.134; Diodorus 11.45; and Nepos 4.5. Put down the Caeadas: *Suda* s.v. *Pausanias*; Nepos imitates Thucydides on the abortive plan. Plutarch *Moralia* 308b = Chrysermus of Corinth *FGH* 287 F4 and Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8 emphasize deprivation of due burial. For a similar notion that Thucydides here implicitly argues against other traditions, see Rhodes 1970: 389; *pace* Cawkwell 1971: 50.

[16] The nature of Caeadas is well conveyed by Pausanias-periegetes' tale of Aristomenes of Messene, 4.18; cf. Strabo C367 (*kaietoi*: crevasses opened up by earthquakes); Dio Chrysostom 80.9 and Scholiast Thucydides 1.134 misunderstand the place.

[17] Suetonius *Caligula* 59; cf. Cumont 1949: 84–85 and 319; and Felton 1999: 10.

[18] Delphic advice on Pausanias: so, too, explicitly, Diodorus 11.45; Nepos 4.5; Pausanias 3.17; and, implicitly again, [Themistocles] 4.14 Hercher/Doenges. Tainaron: Plutarch *Moralia* 560e–f (= Archilochus T141 Tarditi) and *Suda* s.v. *Archilochos*. Delphi's advice on ghost-laying: *SEG* 9 no. 72 (Cyrenean ghost-laying laws: see below); Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 568 (ghost of Agamemnon); Pindar *Pythian* 4.160–64 (ghost of Phrixus); Justin 20.2 (ghosts of youths of Siris: see below).

Dodona similarly lent his authority to the work of the *psuchagōgos* Dorios, as he was invited to do.

Third, Thucydides tells that the pollution was ended by the reburial of Pausanias in the forecourt of the temple and the dedication there of two bronze statues in his place.[19] The dedication of double "replacement" figures (*kolossoi*) was a very old ghost-laying technique. When the men of Croton and Metapontum stormed Siris in the mid-sixth century, they slaughtered Athene's priest and the fifty youths embracing her statue in her temple, according to a myth preserved by Justin. Like Pausanias, the youths were suppliants of Athene. As a result, the cities were afflicted by pestilence and civil strife. Croton learned from Delphi (the great oracle again coming to the rescue) that they should placate Athene and the ghosts of the dead, and they set about doing this by making an elaborate life-size statue for each of the youths killed, and another one of Athene, too. The material used is unspecified. Learning of this, the men of Metapontum, wishing to seize the peace of the ghosts and the goddess for themselves, tried to get in first by swiftly making miniature stone effigies for the young men and instituting an offering of cakes for the goddess. But both cities were delivered, Croton for its magnificence, Metapontum for its expedition. This tale functions as an aetiology for the custom of placating ghosts each with the dedication of double effigies. It may be significant that these two ghost-laying cities became Pythagorean strongholds.[20] The resulting different-sized replacement pairs resemble the pair of "menhirs" found in a Mycenean cenotaph chamber-tomb at Midea. These are flat, oblong stones with headlike protruberances at the top, one around four feet tall, the other two, and their the function was evidently to replace a (single) missing body.[21] A seventh-century B.C. grave from

[19] Thucydides does not explicitly assert that the statues represented Pausanias, but Pausanias-periegetes (3.17), who saw them himself, does. Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8 and *Suda* s.v. *Pausanias* (as against Thucydides, Pausanias-periegetes, and [Themistocles] 4.14 Hercher/Doenges) reduce the number of effigies to one, doubtless for failure to understand the significance of the double dedication. No trace of these statues was found in the excavation of the temple (Dickins 1906–7). See Woodward 1923–25: 263–66 for a tentative argument that the stone "Leonidas" statue found there was a third effigy of the regent. This statue, now the glory of the Sparta Museum, was already buried when Pausanias-periegetes visited the site.

[20] Justin 20.2. Pythagoreans in Croton and Metapontum: Herodotus 4.14 (Aristeas); Aristotle F191 Rose; and Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 134, etc.

[21] See Persson 1931: 108–17 and plate xxix; Picard 1933; Burkert 1962: 47; Andronikos 1968: 104–5; Vermeule 1979: 214; and Faraone 1991a: 183–84. An early legend about Alcmene, who came from Midea, has Zeus send Hermes (the *psuchopompos*) to replace her dead body with a stone, which the Heraclidai then set up in a wood (cf. below on the Cyrenean sacred law), making the place a *heroon* for her (Pherecydes *FHG* 2.82 = Antonius Liberalis 33; cf. Plutarch *Romulus* 28). The Midean menhir-pair makes the claim of Scholiast Thucydides 1.134 that two *stelai* were set up for Pausanias potentially interesting, al-

Thera (Schiff's grave) similarly contained no bones but two rough-carved stone statuettes, both of these about eight inches high.[22] In the fourth-century redaction of ancient purification rules supposedly given to Cyrene by Delphi (once again), one is to lay an attacking ghost (*hikesios*) by proclaiming its name for three days, if one knows it. If one does not, one is to lay it by addressing it as "O person, whether a man or a woman," making male and female dolls from earth or wood, entertaining them to a meal, and depositing them in unworked woodland.[23] These provisions in turn have much in common with those of the sacred law from Selinus, which instruct a killer pursued by an angry ghost (*elasteros*; cf. *alastōr*) to rid himself of it by inviting the ghost to an outdoor meal and addressing it there. The use of double effigies in the placation of ghosts remains constant, but its rationalization seems to differ. In the Cyrenean law, the dolls' duality is rationalized in terms of the need to cover both genders for an unknown ghost. These measures are remarkably similar to Akkadian provisions for banishing diseases brought upon the living by ghosts with the use of a male and female pair of clay figurines. There was no such need in the case of the youths of Siris or in the cases of cenotaphs for known individuals. Perhaps in these cases the large-and-small pairs were rationalized rather as standing for body and soul. We think in particular of archaic vase illustrations of Sarpedon's ghost quitting his body in the form of a parallel but miniature version of the body itself (see fig. 11). Indeed, Richer has proposed precisely such an interpretation for the Pausanias pair. No doubt the archaic notion that a wronged person should be compensated to twice the value of his loss was also significant. We find the use of a single bronze replacement-effigy in the tale of the ghost of Actaeon, which devastated the country around Orchomenos by throwing rocks. Delphi (yet again) commanded the Orchomenians to cover such remains of Actaeon as they could find with earth, make a bronze image of the ghost, and then rivet it with iron to rock, presumably to stop it wandering around. We also find the use of single replacement effigies in another Spartan context: the Spartans buried effigies (*eidōla*) of their kings who died far away, Herodotus reports. Pausanias-periegetes briefly

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though the information may derive merely from a conflation of Thucydides' own references to (plural) *stelai* and to the two statues.

[22] Hiller von Gaertringen 1903: esp. 304–6 and figs. 492–93; Kurtz and Boardman 1971: 178–79 and 257–59, with fig. 34; and Faraone 1991a: 184. A further cenotaph effigy is known from fifth-century B.C. Western Locri, a pot-burial with the remains replaced with a female bust; cf. Kurtz and Boardman 1971: 259 fig. 56; and Faraone 1991a: 184.

[23] *SEG* 9 no. 72 lines 111–21. See Parker 1983: 332–51; Faraone 1991a: 180–87 (with further bibliography on the law at 181 n. 55) and 1993: 82–83 (for a briefer summary of the same material); Burkert 1992: 68–73; and Johnston 1999: 58–59; cf. also Faraone 1993 on Meiggs and Lewis no. 5 for more on *kolossoi* at Cyrene.

mentions that another pair of statues stood adjacent to those of the regent, representing Sleep and Death: might these have saluted the *psuchagōgoi*'s use of incubation to lay his ghost?[24]

The use by the Cyrenean law of the curious term *hikesios*, which normally means "suppliant," to denote "attacking ghost" sheds light on Pausanias-periegetes' brief reference to the aftermath of the death of Pausanias the regent. He tells that in fulfillment of Delphi's behest, the Spartans made the two bronze effigies of Pausanias and honored the demon Epidotes, "saying that he averted the anger of (the) *hikesios* over Pausanias."[25] It is normally assumed that the *hikesios* (only found here in a Spartan context) placated in this narrative is Zeus Hikesios, Zeus of Suppliants and of Avenging Ghosts, and therefore that he serves as a functional alternative in the story to Athene Chalkioikos.[26] But the assumption is probably wrong. Why should Zeus step in to avenge a wrong done to Athene? Also, the averter of the anger of (the) *hikesios*, Epidotes, is himself Zeus (or an aspect thereof). In other words, he is the Spartan equivalent of the Zeus Phyxios, whom Pausanias-periegetes tells us Pausanias the regent had himself just supplicated for purification over the death of Cleonice (alongside his trip to the *psuchagōgoi* of Phigalia). It is improbable that Zeus should have averted his own anger. Rather, it seems that, just as in the Cyrenean law, the term *hikesios* here describes the attacking ghost itself, that is, the ghost of Pausanias the regent. Almost certainly the term

[24] Selinus: Jameson et al. 1993: 54–56 and 76. Akkadian provisions: *BAM* 323: 79–88/ *BID* p. 210: 1–13; cf. Bottéro 1992: 283–85 and Scurlock 1995: esp. 94–95, 99, and 107. Sarpedon: see chapter 6; for the notion that grave-*kouroi*, often used in pairs, were originally conceptualized as "replacements" for the dead person, see Stewart 1997: 65. Pausanias pair as body and soul: Richer 1994: 83–84. Double compensation: e.g., Hesiod *Works* 710–11 and Theognis 1089. Actaeon: Pausanias 9.38; cf. Fontenrose 1968: 83–85 and 1978: 130–31; Schachter 1981–94, 1: 8 and Faraone 1991a: 187–88; cf. also Quintilian's tale of binding a ghost into its grave with iron, *Declamationes maiores* 10, *sepulcrum incantatum*. Effigies of Spartan kings: Herodotus 6.58; cf. Schäfer 1957; Burkert 1962: 47; Pritchett 1985: 242; Faraone 1991a: 184; and, importantly, Richer 1994. What relationship, if any, did these have to the Dioscuri effigies that traditionally accompanied the Spartan kings into battle (Herodotus 5.75)? Sleep and Death: Pausanias 3.18; cf. Richer 1994: 85–88 and chapter 6 for incubation.

[25] Use of the term *hikesios* in the Cyrenean law: see Stukey 1937; Burkert 1992: 68–70; Faraone 1991a: 181–82 nn. 60–61 and 1992: 91 n. 60; and Jameson et al. 1993: 119; *pace* Parker 1983: 344–51. Pausanias 3.17.

[26] Thus Hitzig 1896–1910 and Levi 1971: ad loc. But Wide (1893: 14–17 and 272) rightly detached *hikesios* from Zeus. Some editors are less sure that *hikesios* is Zeus, but still make him a god: Meyer 1954; Papachatzis 1963–74; Rocha-Pereira 1973; and Musti et al. 1982–. Zeus Hikesios as god of suppliants: e.g., Aeschylus *Suppliants* 616. Zeus Hikesios is identified with Zeus Alastoros by Pherecydes *FGH* 3 F175; for Zeus Alastōr, see Hesychius s.v. *alastōr* and the other lexicographical references collected at Jameson et al. 1993: 118–19. Cook (1914–40, 2: 1101) believes that Zeus Hikesios originally protected suppliants specifically from the attacks of avenging ghosts.

is a common noun, not a proper one, and is therefore wrongly printed capitalized in texts.[27] Boldly attacking ghosts may at first seem to have little in common with self-abasing living suppliants, but they do nonetheless in their own way make petition—for the bestowal of peace (cf. chapter 4). It is noteworthy that the theme of living supplication is itself also integral to the tale of Pausanias's death: he supplicated Zeus Phyxios over the ghost of Cleonice, and he supplicated Athene to protect him from the Spartans.

Plutarch does not indicate how many *psuchagōgoi* made up the Italian team that came to lay Pausanias's ghost, but the fact that more than one was required suggests they had much work to do. As we have seen, there were other *psuchagōgoi* based closer to Sparta. There were some at Phigalia to whom Pausanias had himself turned, albeit unsuccessfully, for the laying of Cleonice's ghost, and there may well have been others at Sparta's own Tainaron *nekuomanteion*. The distance the Italian *psuchagōgoi* traveled was doubtless an index of the exceptional nature of their powers and arcane skill. As traveling consultants, these *psuchagōgoi* fit the pattern identified by Burkert of eastern Mediterranean "itinerant diviners and magicians" summoned from afar for great tasks of purification. Sparta had similarly summoned Thaletas from Gortyn, around 670 B.C., to deliver its inhabitants from a plague, and Athens had summoned Epimenides from Cnossos after the sacrilegious murder of the Cylonians, around 630 B.C.[28]

Plato suggests that *psuchagōgoi* could also, and perhaps usually did, use their powers for ill. In a complex series of tirades linked by common vocabulary and attitudes, he portrays them as part of a wider phenomenon of shabby hucksters and charlatans.[29] These hire themselves out cheaply and call up the dead not to lay them, as they pretend, but to exploit them to carry out the work of destructive binding magic against the living. In the *Laws*, Plato applies the vocabulary of *psuchagōgia* to the group:

> But let us address those who take up the wild belief that the gods do not care or are placable, and who, in contempt for men, charm the souls (*psuchagōgousi*) of many of the living, by alleging that they charm the souls (*psuchagōgein*) of the dead. They undertake to persuade the gods, through the practices of sorcery (*goēteuontes*), with sacrifices (*thusiais*) and prayers (*euchais*)

[27] Epidotes: Hescyhius s.v. *Epidōtas*. Zeus Phyxios: Pausanias 3.17. So, *pace* Burkert 1992: 72, we do have an example of *hikesios* meaning "haunting spirit" outside the Cyrenean law.

[28] Significance of distance: cf. Germain 1954: 373. Itinerant diviners: Burkert 1983b: 118 and 1992: 42 (where one must correct "Phigalia" to "Italy"). Thaletas: Pratinas *TrGF* 4 F9 = Plutarch *Moralia* 1146b. Epimenides: *FGH* 475 especially T4b; see chapter 8.

[29] For the association between *goētes* and charlatanry, see Burkert 1962: 50–53; cf. Gordon 1999: 210–19.

and spells (*epōidais*), and try to destroy root and branch individuals and entire houses for the sake of money.

—Plato *Laws* 909a–b

He goes on to prescribe the punishment of lifelong banishment to the inland prison for such practitioners, a punishment only justifiable, surely, by the underlying belief that their powers could indeed be efficacious. Other terms are applied to what is evidently the same group in the *Republic*:

> Beggar-priests (*agurtai*) and prophets (*manteis*) go to the doors of the rich and persuade them that they have the power, acquired from the gods by sacrifices (*thysiais*) and spells (*epōidais*), to cure with pleasures and festivals any wrong done by the man himself or his ancestors, and that they will harm an enemy, a just man or an unjust man alike, for a small fee, if a man wishes it, since they persuade the gods, as they say, to serve them, by certain charms (*epagōgais*) and bindings (*katadesmois*).[30]
>
> —Plato *Republic* 364b–c

Plato's text goes on to associate the group also with Orphic initiators, who claim to purify individuals and cities and to deliver the living and the dead from the terrors of the afterlife through the rites prescribed by their books.[31] Elsewhere in the *Laws*, Plato advocates execution for the makers of binding spells (*katadesesi*, *katadesi*), who, for example, set up voodoo dolls at tombs. To these people he here applies the terms *mantis*, "prophet," again, and also *teratoskopos*, "portent-inspector."[32] The use of the term *mantis* seemingly indicates, in the context of binding spells, the group's association with necromantic prophecy.

It would not have been out of character for Plato to conflate for his own purposes categories of soul technicians normally considered distinct, but broadly similar strings of associations can be found in other authors. Thus Heraclitus groups together "mages (*magoi*), bacchants, maenads, initiates (*mustai*), and night-wanderers (*nuktipoloi*)." Sophocles' Oedipus in anger abuses Tiresias as a mage (*magos*), beggar-priest (*agurtēs*), and prophet (*mantis*). Hippocrates speaks in his *On the Sacred Disease* of "mages (*magoi*) and purifiers (*kathartai*) and *agurtai* and charatans (*alazones*)," who purify possessed people by incantations and sacrifice, and finally bury the refuse in the soil or the sea or "carry it to mountains, where nobody will touch or step on it." Later on, Libanius (fourth century A.D.) draws a portrait of a mage (*magos*) who calls himself a comrade of the gods, overthrows houses for money, rolls around (*kalindoumenos*) graves, and inflicts death from them upon those that have done no

[30] It was from a reading of this text that Frazer derived his influential notion that the compulsion of supernatural powers was fundamental to magic: see Graf 1995: 35 and 40.

[31] Plato *Republic* 364 d–e; see chapter 8 for the problem of Orphism.

[32] Plato *Laws* 933a–e.

wrong, troubling the dead (*nekroi*) and denying peace to the ghosts (*psuchai*). Celsus was able to fit Jesus into the group, too, identifying his "miracles with the acts of sorcerers (*goētes*), since they promise rather amazing things, and with the things that the disciples of the Egyptians bring about, who sell their august learnings for a few obols in the middle of the market and expel demons from men and blow away diseases and call up the souls of heroes. . . ." The term *agurtēs* was primarily used of mendicant priests of Cybele, but it was held equivalent to "sorcerer" (*goēs*) by Plutarch, and to "mage" (*magos*) by Zosimus.[33]

The perception that *psuchagōgoi* were typically shabby hucksters may lurk behind Aristophanes' assignment of the role to his *ne plus ultra* of shabby hucksters, Socrates, and behind the quick and indignant denial of Heracles that he is one in Euripides' *Alcestis*. When Admetus takes Alcestis, retrieved from the underworld, to be a mere ghost, Heracles, her restorer, protests, "I am not a *psuchagōgos*!" An association between *psuchagōgoi* and binding-curse sorcery is perhaps implied also by a brief fragment of Euripides, "A very great evocating (*psuchagōgos*) evil-eye-er (*baskanos*)." The notion of *baskania*, "the evil eye," was in general associated with competitive envy, which, as Faraone has shown, was the emotion that characteristically underpinned the use of the curse tablets.[34] There were perhaps ways in which necromancy proper could stray into cursing, almost despite itself (see the final chapter). Like Plato's Orphics, the *psuchagōgoi* brought in by the Spartans after Pausanias's death had purified their city; expulsions of ghosts and purifications of pestilences were associated also among the activities of Epimenides (see chapter 8).

An important feature of the *Laws* passage quoted above is its wordplay, Plato playing on original and derived meanings of the *psuchagōg-* stem. Undoubtedly "evocate (the dead)" was the original meaning of *psuchagōgeō*, literally "lead the soul along," and related terms, but its semantic field was extended and banalized to cover "mislead (the living)," i.e.,

[33] Heraclitus: DK 12 B 14 = Clement of Alexandria *Protrepticus* 22.2; cf. Bickerman and Tadmor 1978: 250 and Graf 1995: 31–32. Sophocles: *Oedipus Tyrannus* 388–90; cf. Headlam 1902: 60; Bickerman and Tadmor 1978: 258; and Graf 1995: 31–32. Hippocrates: *On the Sacred Disease*, 6.362f. Littré; cf. Burkert 1983b: 116 and Gordon 1987b: 62. Libanius 41.7; *kalindoumenos* seems to imply both "roaming" and "circling," as, no doubt, for purification (see chapter 11). Celsus: Origen *Contra Celsum* 1.68. Cybele mendicants: Antiphanes F157 K-A and Demosthenes 19.249 and 281; cf. Burkert 1987: 35. Plutarch: *Moralia* 165f. Zosimus: 1.11.

[34] Euripides *Alcestis* 1127–28; despite this protestation, see Clark 1979: 79–92 and 125–31 for Heracles' necromantic aspects. *Baskanos*: Euripides F933 Nauck. Competitive envy: Faraone 1991b. For the evil eye in ancient Greece, cf. Jahn 1855; Elsworthy 1895; Schmidt 1913; Geffcken 1930; Kötting 1954; Moreau 1976; Tupet 1976: 178–81, 1986: 2606–10; Dundes 1981; Dunbabin and Dickie 1983; Yatromanolakis 1988; Dickie 1990, 1991, 1995; Bernand 1991: 85–105; Limberis 1991; Schlesier 1994; Vernsel 1999.

"fool," "charm (the living)," i.e., "entertain," "lead the spirit (of the living)," i.e., "encourage," and even "kidnap (the living)." "Fool" and "entertain" are the meanings it carries in the vast majority of its extant usages throughout the history of ancient Greek. The same equivocation doubtless underpins Aristophanes' application of *psuchagōgei* to Socrates. The great fourth-century Athenian courtesan Phryne also exploited the equivocation according to Athenaeus, but in a different way. She joked that wreaths were hung on doors "because they charm souls (*psuchagōgousi*) [sc. of both the living and the dead]." We often find the *psuchagōg-* terms used in their banalized senses in contexts that yet salute their necromantic origin. Thus, Diodorus tells that Orpheus used *psuchagōgia* to persuade Persephone to let him bring Eurydice's soul out of the underworld.[35]

In general, it is unclear to what extent such strings of associations were the product of appropriate perception or malicious and competitive misrepresentation. Under the last option it should at least be borne in mind that, while Socrates and Plato abusively represented soul technicians and those who would offer enlightenment and a better condition after death as mages, sorcerers, and beggars, they themselves contrived paradoxical arguments, were would-be manipulators of souls, offered enlightenment and a better condition after death, and lived off the charity of their clients. And although Hippocrates abusively represented as mages those who offered dietary prescriptions for the cure of epilepsy in his treatise *On the Sacred Disease*, he himself proceeded to offer dietary prescriptions for the cure of epilepsy in the same tract. Evidently there was a tendency to cast the allegation of magic and sorcery at one's close professional rivals. Perhaps the projection of Socrates himself as a *psuchagōgos* and sorcerer in turn, if not a fair assessment of him, given his interests, derived from corresponding or retaliatory propagandist activity on the part of the rivals he abused.

A more positive attitude toward a layer of ghosts is expressed in a myth attached to Euthymus of Locri. The city of Temesa was terrorized by a "ghost in a wolfskin," which had formerly been Odysseus's comrade Polites, who was stoned to death by the townspeople for raping a girl. The ghost was terrifying and dark, and subsequently known, depending

[35] *Psuchagōg-* wordplay: Graf 1995: 33. Meanings of *psuchagōgeō*: see LSJ s.v.; cf. Collard 1949: 13 and de Romilly 1975: 15. The various meanings of the word are reviewed by Aphthonius (fourth to fifth century A.D.) at *Progymnasmata* 5. He preserves a fragment of Sophocles (*Epi Tainarōi* F224 for Radt [*TrGF*], *Kerberos* F327a for Pearson), *all' hoi thanontes psuchagōgountai monoi*. This appears to have become a proverb, exploiting the equivocation in *psuchagōgeō*: "Only the the dead can be evocated," or "Only the dead are amused/fooled"? Socrates *psuchagōgei*: as noted by Collard 1949: 12 and de Romilly 1975: 94 n. 47. Phryne: Athenaeus 585e. Orpheus: Diodorus 4.35.4.

upon how we interpret the manuscripts, as Lykas, "Wolfy," or Alibas, "Corpse." Each year it had to be dissuaded from random acts of terror by the gift of the city's most beautiful virgin. Euthymus fell in love with the latest victim, who promised to marry him if he saved her. This he did by lying in ambush for the ghost as it came to collect her and chasing it into the sea. We are reminded of Heracles' restoration of Alcestis to life by the wrestling of *Thanatos*, "Death," into submission as he came to collect her for himself.[36]

We know of further, more precautionary ghost-laying techniques, which may or may not have been employed by *psuchagōgoi*. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus transported the ghosts of comrades he was unable to bury into their cenotaphs by calling their names three times. Aeneas did the same for Deiphobus in the *Aeneid*. It was customary, too, to erect a cenotaph on the beach for those who died at sea and again to call their names three times (cf. the three days of the Cyrenean law).[37] Another means of laying a ghost, or rather a preventative technique against its arousal, particularly useful to those murdering kin, was *maschalismos*, "arm-pitting." This was most famously done by Clytemnestra to the corpse of Agamemnon.[38] The lexicographical sources that discuss the term are, as often, contradictory, but it seems clear that the process comprised cutting off hands, feet, noses, ears, and genitals, and stringing these under the armpits from a band around the corpse's neck.[39] Why was this effective? For Kittredge, it was because ghosts reflect the state of their corpses, as in the case of Virgil's Deiphobus, and as in the thinking that stakes and decapitates vampires, so that the "disabling" of the body entails that also of the ghost. For Bouché-Leclercq, however, the case of Deiphobus argued that the mutilated ghost is not crippled per se, but is just rendered too ashamed to show itself. In Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica*, Jason performs *maschalismos* on the body of Medea's brother Apsyrtus, whom

[36] Pausanias 6.6.7–11; Euripides *Alcestis* 1141; cf. Collison-Morley 1912: 61; Rohde 1925: 135; and Phillips 1953: 57 (Polites a variant of Elpenor?).

[37] Homer *Odyssey* 9.64–65, with scholia and Eustathius ad loc., and Pindar *Pythian* 4.159 with scholiast (281a–c Drachman); for other cenotaphs in the *Odyssey*, see 1.289–92 and 4.548. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.505–6. See Rohde 1925: 42; Collard 1949: 124; Burkert 1962: 47; Toynbee 1971: 54; Faraone 1991a: 183–84; and Johnston 1999: 155. Beaches: Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 9.62; cf. Burkert 1962: 47.

[38] Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 439–43 and Sophocles *Electra* 445, with scholia. Also, Achilles performs *maschalismos* on Troilus at Sophocles F623 Radt. This takes place in the sanctuary of Apollo Thymbraios, where snakes had torn apart Laocoon and his sons: see Bremmer 1997: 87–88.

[39] Hesychius, Photius, and *Suda* s.v. *maschalismata*; *Suda* s.v. *emaschalisthē*; *Etymologicum magnum* s.v. *apargmata*; and the scholia cited above and to Apollonius Rhodius 4.477–80, all deriving from Aristophanes of Byzantium F142 Slater. See Kittredge 1885; Harrison 1922: 70; Rohde 1925: 582–86; Garland 1985: 94; Vermeule 1979: 49 and n. 16; Parker 1984; Bremmer 1997: 84–87; and Johnston 1999: 156–59.

he has killed. He then sucks his blood and spits it out three times, with the express purpose of propitiating the ghost.[40]

. . . . .

The texts cited above give strong reason to regard *psuchagōgoi* as closely related to or associated with *goētes*, "sorcerers." Socrates, whom Aristophanes portrayed as a *psuchagōgos*, is portrayed by Plato's Meno as a *goēs*. The association is particularly explicit in some later sources. As we have seen, a scholiast to Euripides' *Alcestis* contends that *psuchagōgoi* is the Thessalian term for *goētes*; though wrong in point of fact, the contention serves to demonstrate the proximity of these words' meanings. So, too, Phrynichus Arabius (second century A.D.) tells that the ancients applied the term *psuchagōgos* to those who charmed the souls of the dead with certain acts of sorcery (*goēteiais*). Proclus (fifth century A.D.) associates *psuchagōgia* and *goēteia* in their metaphorical usages. Synesius (fourth to fifth century A.D.) was attacked by ghosts sent through his dreams by *psuchopompoi* ("ghost-sending") *goētes*.[41] The *Suda*'s definition of *goēs* recalls Plato's amalgam: "flatterer, meddler, wandering, deceiver."

The etymology of the term *goēs* indicates that *psuchagōgia* originally constituted the heart of the concept: it is a derivative of *goos*, "mourning-song," and *goaō*, "sing a song of mourning." The *goos* was the improvised mourning-song of the dead man's relatives, predominantly the women, and stood in contrast to the *thrēnos*, the formal mourning-song of professionals. It was perhaps usual for the former to be sung in antiphony to the latter. The original Indo-European root was **gow-*, which, as Burkert notes, was onomatopoeic for grief. The derivation continued to be perceived throughout antiquity and beyond, which may indicate that *psuchagōgia* or kindred activities continued to be central to the concept of the *goēs*. Thus Cosmas (sixth century A.D.) said, "*Goēteia* is the calling-upon of evil demons that hang around tombs. . . . *Goēteia* got its name from the *gooi* and *thrēnoi* of those around tombs." The *Suda* was to say that "*goēteia* is said of the bringing up of a dead person (*anagein nekron*) by the invocation of his name (*epiklēsis*), whence it derives its name, from

[40] Kittredge 1885: 163–64. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 336; cf. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.30, where the living Thelyphron is so ashamed of his mutilations that he will not return home. Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 4.477–80; cf. Rohde 1925: 586; Garland 1985: 94; and Bremmer 1997: 84–86.

[41] Plato *Meno* 80b (cf. Bowie 1993: 112–24 and Graf 1995: 33). Scholiast Euripides *Alcestis* 1127–28. Phrynichus Arabius at Bekker *Anecdota graeca* p. 73 lines10–14. Proclus *In rempublicam* 203.3. Synesius *De insomniis* 14.2 (cf. Nicephoros Gregoras ad loc., *PG* 149, 615; Collard 1949: 110).

the lamentations (*goōn*) and threnodies of people around the grave." It is uncertain at what point the term *goēs* began to be assimilated to the term *magos*.[42]

Goos and *goēs* are several times associated with the raising of the dead in Greek literature. In Aeschylus's *Persians*, the ghost of Darius observes of the Persian elders that they summon him "in pitiful fashion, making high shrieks with psychagogic lamentations (*psuchagōgois goois*)." It was these lamentations that persuaded him to come. It is possible that the summoning-song as a whole constituted the *gooi*: otherwise the term will have referred to the nonverbal noises interspersed through it.[43] The ghost of Achilles likewise appears to have risen to *gooi* at his tomb in Sophocles' *Polyxena*. Gorgias speaks metaphorically of the (living) soul being charmed by *goēteia*. Plato similarly speaks of a *goēs* exercising power over the living soul of another, and of sophists "bewitching" (*goēteuein*) the young by showing them "ghosts" (*eidōla*). Apollonius of Tyana, who had raised the ghost of Achilles, was debarred from Trophonius's oracle by its priests on the ground that he was a *goēs*.[44]

For Vermeule, the role of the *goēs* grew out of that of the chief mourner, the *exarchos gooio*, whose job it was temporarily to resurrect the dead and exchange messages with them. She draws attention to a seventh-century Attic funerary plaque on which the *goos* is sung around a bier as a soul-bird sits in attendance. For Burkert, the original role of the *goēs* was shamanic: he made an ecstatic journey to conduct the soul of a dead man to the underworld with magical lamentation and music, and the psychagogic Hermes was his divine projection.[45]

[42] Reiner 1938: passim; Burkert 1962: 45; Chantraine 1968–80 s.v. *thrēnos*; Alexiou 1974: 12–13; Vermeule 1979: 15; Garland 1985: 29–30 and 142; Bernand 1991: 47; and Rabinowitz 1998: 137. Etymology: Headlam 1902: 57; Frisk 1960–72; and Chantraine 1968–80 s.v. *goaō*; cf. Burkert 1962: 43–44; Graf 1995: 32 (but his claim that the word *goēs* does not have a good Greek pedigree is curious); and Johnston 1999: 100–123, with important observations on the links between *goētes* and mystery-initiation. Cosmas: *PG* 38, 491. *Suda*: s.v. *goēteia*; Burkert (1962: 38) regards the three-way distinction made here by *Suda* between *goēteia*, *mageia*, and *pharmakeia* as a late antique development; cf. also Graf 1995: 34; see Plutarch *Moralia* 415a for an indirect association between *magoi* and the rites of grief. Assimilation of *goēs* and *magos*: Graf 1995.

[43] Aeschylus *Persians* 687 (*psuchagōgois goois*; cf. Euripides *Electra* 36, where it is stipulated that Agamemnon will *not* be called back with *gooi*; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 36), 697 (*goois*), 651, 656, 663, 671 (*ēe* and *oi*), and 672 (double *aiai*).

[44] Sophocles: *Polyxena* F523 *TrGF*. Gorgias: *Helen* 10. Plato: *Meno* 80ab (cf. Burkert 1962: 42–43) and *Sophist* 234c (cf. also *Euthydemus* 288b–c; *Menexenus* 235a; and especially *Politicus* 291c; see Burkert 1962: 42 and De Romilly 1973: 31–32 and 97 n. 16). Apollonius: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.19 (cf. 4.16).

[45] Vermeule 1979: 17–19, including fig. 13, and 200. The plaque is Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 27.146. Burkert 1962: 44–45.

It seems that *goos* and *goēteia* encompassed the same partly contradictory qualities as *psuchagōgia*: they both laid and roused the dead.[46] A curious recurrent feature of ancient Greek funeral culture is the placing of legal restriction on the expression of grief. Limitations were placed upon the number of mourners one might have, the length of time for which mourning might be undertaken, the degree of squalor of the mourners' dress, the degree to which the mourners might lacerate themselves, the splendor of sacrifices, and the splendor of the grave gifts that might accompany the dead man. These restrictions fell more heavily upon women, who were primarily responsible for the business of mourning. It is fashionable to explain such restrictions in terms of "social" or "political" (i.e., anti-aristocratic) or "gender control."[47] Whatever merits such explanations may have, the fundamental justification for the limitation of the expression of grief is clear: if there is too much of it, one might bring the dead back. The only thing to be dreaded more than the loss of a loved one is that loved one's return (one thinks of W. W. Jacobs's magnificent 1902 short story *The Monkey's Paw*).

. . . . .

A rather different variety of professional associated with necromancy was the "ventriloquist." Allusive references to "Eurycles" by Aristophanes, Plato, and Plutarch entail that he was originally some sort of power that took up residence in the stomachs of one or more individuals, took partial possession of their voices, and uttered prophecies in muttering fashion. By Plutarch's time, the name had become a generic term for the hosts themselves of such powers, and he supplies as equivalent terms for such hosts *engastrimuthos*, literally "in-the-stomach-speaker," and "Python." The latter had superseded "Eurycles" in contemporary parlance. The Aristophanes scholia add that the term "Eurycleidai," literally "sons/descendants of Eurycles," could also be applied to the hosts. It was such a phenomenon that the English term "ventriloquist" originally denoted. Eurycles probably had a reputation for tenacity toward his hosts and for accuracy in prophecy. It is not certain that the power or powers associated

[46] Cf. Graf 1995: 35 for this paradox in the case of the *goēs*; cf. Holst-Warhaft 1992: 144–49.

[47] The principal cases are: Solon's laws in Attica, Plutarch *Solon* 21 (594 B.C.?); Attica after Solon, Cicero *Laws* 2.64 (date uncertain); the lawgiver Charondas's rules for Catana, Stobaeus 44.40 (sixth century B.C.); inscribed laws from Iulis on Ceos, *LSCG* no. 97 (fifth century B.C.); funerary rules of the Labyad phratry at Delphi, *LSCG* 2 no. 74 (ca. 400 B.C.); Plato's ideal rules for burial, *Laws* 873c–d (fourth century B.C.); inscribed laws from Gambreion, *LSCG* no. 16 (third century B.C.). See De Martino 1958: 195–222; Kurtz and Boardman 1971: 142–61; Alexiou 1974: 14–17; Garland 1989 (a useful survey of the evidence); Holst-Warhaft 1992; Ogden 1996: 369–70; and Loraux 1998: 9–28.

with the name Eurycles were ghosts as such. However, the term used by Plato and reflected by Plutarch to describe the nature of their muttering speech, *hupophthengomai*, may suggest a voice from the underworld: Josephus applies it to the lost Niger's cries to his companions from an underground cave as they search for his body for burial.[48]

The association between the *engastrimuthos* and the necromancer was strong in the hellenistic period. First, the early hellenistic Septuagint several times uses *engastrimuthos* to translate the Hebrew term *ōb*, which indeed seems to have denoted a prophet who similarly contained an alien entity within him, since its literal meaning is "bottle." *Ōb* is the term applied to the most famous necromancer of them all, the witch of En-dor, who called up the soul of Samuel for Saul, and the Septuagint duly translates it as *engastrimuthos*, even though the narrative of her necromancy makes it clear that she was not a ventriloquist.[49] Second, the novelist Iamblichus (*floruit* A.D. 165–80) associates *engastrimuthoi* with *nekuomanteiai* in a list of curious forms of magic.[50] It is possible that already in the fourth century B.C., Philochorus was making the same association. A scholiast to Plato says he mentioned female *engastrimuthoi*, which is interesting in itself, but the *Suda* goes further:

> In the third book of his *On the Prophetic Art* (*Peri mantikēs*) Philochorus also mentions women *engastrimuthoi*. These women called up the souls of the dead. Saul used one, who called up the soul of the prophet Samuel.
>
> —*Suda* s.v. *engastrimuthos*, incorporating Philochorus *FGH* 328 F78

However, the elucidation that "these women called up the souls of the dead" probably does not derive from Philochorus but constitutes an ex-

[48] Aristophanes *Wasps* 1018–22, with scholia; Plato *Sophist* 252c, with scholia; Plutarch *Moralia* 414e; and *Suda* s.v. *engastrimuthos*. For assemblages of synonyms, see also Iamblichus the novelist at Photius *Bibliotheca* 75b; Hesychius s.v. *Puthōn*; Scholiast W to Plato *Sophist* 252c; and *Suda* s.v. *engastrimuthos*. See Pearson 1917 on Sophocles F59 *TrGF*/ Pearson. For the term *engastrimuthos*, see Tropper 1989: 170–85. MacDowell (1971) and Sommerstein (1983, on Aristophanes ad loc.) are misled by the modern usage of the term "ventriloquist." An ancient phenomenon more equivalent to the modern usage of "ventriloquist" is found in Alexander of Abonouteichos's remote-voiced snake-puppet, Glycon (Lucian *Alexander* 26–27), and Hippolytus's speaking skull (*Refutations* 4.41), for which see chapter 13. Tenacity and veracity of Eurycles: Aristides 1.30 Dindorf. Niger: Josephus *Jewish War* 3.27.

[49] 1 Samuel 28:3 and 7–9 (En-dor); the term is also used at Leviticus 19:31, 20:6, 20: 27; Deuteronomy 18:11; 1 Chronicles 10:13; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Isaiah 8:19 and 19:3. Hellenized Jewish and Christian writers continue to apply the term to the witch of En-dor: e.g., Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* 6.239–30 and 327–50; Athanasius *De sententia Dionysii* p. 51 Opitz; and Gregory of Nazianz *Against Julian* 1.54 p. 577. Cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 592–94; Tropper 1989: 189–200; Schmidt 1995: 125; and Rabinowitz 1998: 125–30.

[50] Iamblichus at Photius *Bibliotheca* 75b; a similar association is made by Clement of Alexandria *Protrepticus* 11 P and Theodoret *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 10.3.3.

trapolation from the subsequent application of the term to the witch of En-dor.[51]

Sophocles used the term *sternomantis*, "one who prophesies in the chest," but we know not in what context; Photius may indicate that it was his coinage.[52] Later sources supply *gastromantis*, *engastrimantis*, *engastritēs*, and *enteromantis* as synonyms to *engastrimuthos*. Here again, an ambivalence developed similar to that in the case of Eurycles, with Hesychius telling us that the terms *engastrimuthos* and *engastrimantis* applied not to the hosts but to the prophetic demon within.[53]

Helpful ghosts that possessed willing hosts and would-be prophets were all well and good, but those of less constructive attitude that possessed the unwilling had to be exorcised from their human hosts, just as others had to be exorcised from the places they haunted. Greco-Roman sources bearing on the exorcism of people all derive from the A.D. period and often display Jewish influence. They indicate that exorcism was not in itself the subject of specialization, but was an element in the repertoire of general magicians and miracle-workers. Apollonius of Tyana was responsible for one clear case of ghost-exorcism from a person. A playboy heckled him as he lectured, laughing at things that were not funny and appearing drunk without drinking. Apollonius looked at the possessing ghost (*eidōlon*) within the man, whereupon it cried out in fear and anger, as if being branded and racked. Apollonius angrily ordered the ghost out and required it to give proof of its departure. The ghost promised to throw down a statue as proof and duly did this. The delivered young man forsook the dissolute life and took up philosophical austerity. In the *Philopseudes*, Lucian constructs a portrait of a "Syrian from Palaestine" who exorcises demons from people for a huge fee. These demons send people into fits in the light of the moon, and make them roll their eyes and foam at the mouth. As they lie there, the Syrian compels the possessing demon to tell from where and how it came into the body. It answers in its native language, whether this is Greek or another tongue. The Syrian then adjures the demon to leave and, if this does not work, utters threats. When the demon leaves, it is black and smoky. These qualities of appearance, typical of ghosts, may suggest that the possessing powers are ghosts in this case, too. When St. Theodore freed a victim of a possessing

[51] Scholiast W to Plato *Sophist* 252c. See Jacoby 1923–58: note 1 to commentary on Philochorus F78; but Collard (1949: 125) accepts the link to necromancy.

[52] Sophocles *Aichmalotides* F59 Pearson/*TrGF*; *Suda* s.v. *engastrimuthos*; Scholiast Plato *Sophist* 252c; Photius *Letters* 64 p. 368; and cf. Hesychius s.v. *ensternomantiais* (glossed as *ensternomuthois*), apparently a misreading of the Sophoclean fragment.

[53] Alciphron *Letters* 4.19 Benner/Fobes; Scholiast Plato *Sophist* 252c; Scholiast Aristophanes *Wasps* 1019b; and *Suda* s.v. *engastrimuthos*; Hesychius s.v. *Puthōn*; cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 463, with further references.

demon, a black woman was seen departing through a window; so she, too, was perhaps a ghost. The exorcising technique of making the demon confess its name was old and widespread: in a Sumerian/Akkadian tablet, a possessing demon is twice asked, "Who are you?" and Jesus famously compelled the demons of Gerasa to own the name "Legion" as he expelled them. Lactantius also refers to the custom of making demons confess their names in the course of their expulsion. However, when exorcists took it upon themselves to exorcise helpful prophetic demons, it could give rise to understandable outrage. Such was the reaction at Philippi of the owners of the slave-girl possessed by an oracular demon exorcised by Paul; they had him flung into prison and flogged.[54]

This, then, is the evidence for necromantic or necromantically related professionals of a variety originating in, or held to have originated in, the Greek world. In chapter 9 we go on to review further evidence for necromantic or necromantically related professional men of varieties originating in, or held to have originated in, other parts of the world. The two sets of characterizations are not entirely distinct. But first, in chapter 8, the evidence for the tradition of the (mostly) Greek shamans is considered, for its ability to provide what may be a more sympathetic and internal impression of the way in which some Greek necromantic professionals may have conceptualized their art.

[54] See Justin Martyr *Apologies* 1.18 for the notion that the living might be possessed by the ghosts of the dead. Apollonius: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.20; cf. Thraede 1969: 55. For the proof technique, cf. the exorcism of a demon by the Jewish exorcist Eleazar before Vespasian, in which the departing *daimon* is made to throw over a bowl of water: Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* 8.44–49; cf. Dodds 1973: 206. Lucian: *Philopseudes* 16; cf. Thraede 1969: 50–51. Theodore: *Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon, PG* 86.19–20; Mitchell 1993, 2: 139–50 has much on Christian exorcism in Anatolia. Sumerian/Akkadian tablet: BM 36703; cf. Finkel 1983–84: 2–3. Gerasa: Mark 5.1–7. Lactantius *Divine Institutions* 2.16. Philippi: Acts 16.16–24. For possession in general, see Oesterreich 1930: esp. 147–72 for classical antiquity.

CHAPTER 8

SHAMANS, PYTHAGOREANS, AND ORPHICS

WE can flesh out the meager evidence for *psuchagōgoi* and necromantic *goētes*, which is by and large disdainful, with material from the Pythagorean and Orphic traditions of the Greek "shamans." These men included necromancy among a range of allied miraculous powers. The "shaman" tradition is sympathetic toward and ostensibly more "internal" to its subjects, and so can perhaps give us an idea of how at least some ancient necromancers perceived themselves. The bulk of our evidence for the shaman tradition derives from the A.D. period, but such evidence for it as we do have from the classical period (notably Herodotus and the fragments of Empedocles) guarantees that its main features, including its necromantic elements, were already in place by then. Finally, in this chapter, Orphism's affinities with necromancy prompt us to consider the partial parallelism between initiation into mysteries and necromantic consultation, for living consulter and consulted ghost alike.

. . . . .

From the archaic period, the process began of stringing together a series of essentially mythical wise men into a canon. These figures concerned themselves with the manipulation of the soul in various ways. The principal members of the canon (with their supposed *floruits*) are: Orpheus (mythical era), Trophonius (mythical era), Aristeas of Proconessus (early seventh century B.C.), Hermotimus of Clazomenae (seventh century B.C.?), Epimenides of Cnossus or Phaestus (ca. 600 B.C.), Pythagoras of Samos (530s–520s B.C.), Abaris the Hyperborean (sixth century B.C.?), Zalmoxis of the Thracian Getae (sixth century B.C.?), and Empedocles of Acragas (ca. 485–435 B.C.).[1] Modern scholarship carries the associations

[1] Strings of these at: Plato *Charmides* 158b–c; Apollonius *Historiae mirabiles* 1–6; Pliny *Natural History* 7.174; Apuleius *Apology* 27; Maximus of Tyre 10.1; Diogenes Laertius 8.4–5; Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 29; Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 135 and 138; Proclus *Commentary on Plato's Republic* 2.113; Justin Martyr *Apologies* 1.18; Clement of Alexandria *Stromateis* 1.133.2; Origen *Contra Celsum* 3.34 and 7.35; Eusebius *Praeparatio evangelica* 10.11.27; Tertullian *De anima* 44; and Gregory of Nazianz 4.59. Other figures associated in these lists are: Amphilochus, Mopsus, Zoroaster, Polyaratus, Empedotimus (a conflation of Empedocles and Hermotimus), Phormion, Amphion, and Pherecydes of Syrus. Bouché-Leclercq (1879–82, 1: 334) saw the importance of such figures for necromancy.

further and terms the figures "shamans," after the Tungus medicine-men of that name, and sometimes even finds a historical link between the two phenomena, via the figures of Abaris and Aristeas, with their Hyperborean associations. The Tungus shaman detaches his soul from his body in an ecstatic trance. His soul then speaks with the gods in their own language, and cures the sick by retrieving their souls from the land of the dead or by defeating death-bringing demons in battle. The shaman attracts animals to the hunt with his music, and by defeating with his soul the gods that preside over them. The term is at least superficially appropriate, and I retain it for convenience.[2] For the ancients, the key linking factor between the figures was an association with Pythagoras, be it as his teacher or as his pupil (e.g., Epimenides and Abaris, said to have been both, and Empedocles and Zalmoxis, his pupils), as a "Pythagorean" (e.g., Aristeas and even Trophonius), or as the man himself in a different incarnation (e.g., Hermotimus).[3]

Late sources at any rate assert that Pythagoras himself practiced necromancy. Augustine reports that Pythagoras had learned the craft from the Persians. Pythagoras's practice was probably already known when Cicero was able to derive from Vatinius's vaunted Pythagoreanism credence for the audacious allegation that he cut up boys for necromancy. Iamblichus reports that when a man asked Pythagoras what it meant that he had dreamed that was speaking with his dead father, Pythagoras told him it meant nothing, for he had simply been speaking with him. The Christian Justin Martyr listed as proofs that the soul survived death Pythagoras, Empedocles, Socrates, Plato, necromancy, divination by child-sacrifice, dream-senders of the magi, familiar spirits (*paredroi*), the possession of demoniacs by ghosts of the dead, and Homer's *Nekuia*. Eustathius speaks

[2] For discussion of the shaman hypothesis, see Meuli 1935 (*prōtos heuretēs* of the shaman hypothesis); Dodds 1936 and 1951: 135–78 (the populizer of it); Bolton 1962 (especially for Aristeas); Burkert 1962: 36–38, 1972: 147–62, and 1979: 78–98; Eliade 1964: 387–93 and 1972; Philip 1966: 159–61; Clark 1979: 34; Bremmer 1983: 25–46; West 1983: 5; and Graf 1987: 83–84. Rohde 1925: 209–303 had laid the foundations. Zhmud (1992: 165–66 and 1997: 107–13) opposes the hypothesis.

[3] For Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism, see: Lévy 1926; Philip 1966; Burkert 1969, 1972, and 1982; van der Waerden 1979: 44–63; and Zhmud 1997. Epimenides: Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 29; Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 104, 135, and and 221–22 (teacher); Apuleius *Florida* 15 p. 15 Hildebrand; and Diogenes Laertius 8.3 (pupil). Abaris: *Suda* s.v. *Abaris*; and Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 90–93, 140, 147, and 215–21. Empedocles: Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 6, 104, 267, with scholiast; Diogenes Laertius 8.54; *Suda* s.v. *Empedoklēs*; Simplicius on Aristotle *Physics*; *Commentaria in Aristotelem graeca* 25.19–21. Zalmoxis: Herodotus 4.95–96; Strabo C297–98; Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 14; Diogenes Laertius 8.2; Hippolytus *Refutations* 1.2.17; Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 104 and 173; and Hesychius and *Suda* s.v. *Zalmoxis*. Aristeas: Claudianus Mamertus *De statu animae* 2.7. Trophonius: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.19. Hermotimus: Diogenes Laertius 8.4–5 and Lucian *Oneiros* 4–17.

of Pythagoras's and Zalmoxis's "necromantic *psuchagōgiai*."[4] We have already noted a number of necromantic activities by Pythagoreans, such as the evocation by Aristophanes' Pythagorean-style Socrates, the consultation by Theanor of Lysis at his tomb, and the house exorcism by Arignotus (see chapters 1 and 7).

Among the other shamans, Empedocles in particular appears to have been an exponent of necromancy. In a tantalizing fragment, he tells his disciples that they will "bring from Hades the strength of a dead man." He is also credited with the permanent reanimation of a woman who had been dead thirty days.[5] Epimenides was responsible for a famous ghost-laying at Athens, which, on inspection, has much in common with the traditions about the laying of the ghosts of both the youths of Siris and (especially) the regent Pausanias, and gives him very much the appearance of a *psuchagōgos*. The supporters of the would-be tyrant Cylon were butchered by the Alcmaeonids under Megacles. They were killed as they left the acropolis while maintaining a supplication of Athene by clinging to threads attached to her statue. Athens, like Pausanias's Sparta, was attacked by ghosts and afflicted with pestilence. The expert Epimenides was brought in to purify the city from a distant home, like Pausanias's *psuchagōgoi*, in this case Crete. Diogenes Laertius's account of his method of purification is similar to the ghost-laying technique ascribed to *psuchagōgoi* by the *Suda*: a number of black and white sheep were freed to roam from the Areopagus. The spot at which each sheep lay down was marked, it was sacrificed there to "the relevant god," and a nameless altar was erected. These spots were probably where each of the supporters had supposedly been killed, and the "relevant gods" accordingly were their ghosts or avenging demons acting on their behalf. Diogenes Laertius also knows a variant tradition in which he purified the city by the sacrifice of two young men, Cratinus and Ctesibius—an extreme example, perhaps, of placation through the dedication of a pair of "figures." His foundation of a temple to the Semnai Theai, associated with the Eumenides, the Erinyes, and the vengeful spirits of the dead, was no doubt also part of the same process.[6] Several of the shamans are credited with the

[4] Augustine *City of God* 7.35 and 8.25 (cf. Lobeck 1829: 316 and 900). Cicero *In Vatinium* 18. Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 139. Justin Martyr *Apologies* 1.18. Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 9.65.

[5] Empedocles F111 and 112 and Diogenes Laertius 8.59–62 and 67; cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 589; Bolton 1962: 154; Burkert 1972: 153–54; Bremmer 1983: 49; and Johnston 1999: 104–8. For Empedocles, see above all Kingsley 1995: esp. 217–317, discussing at length the underworld imagery in the traditions about him.

[6] The fullest account of the episode is that of Plutarch *Solon* 12; Diogenes Laertius 1.110 and 112 for Epimenides' purifications; see also Herodotus 5.71; Thucydides 1.126–27; Plato *Laws* 642d; [Aristotle] *Ath. Pol.* 1, and *Suda* s.v. *Epimenidēs*. For Semnai Theai, see Henrichs 1991: esp. 162–80, 1994: esp. 25–46 and 54–58; and Lardinois 1992: 315–22.

expulsion of pestilence more generally: Pythagoras himself, Abaris, and Empedocles.[7]

Necromancy lies at the intersection of three major themes in the traditions about the shamans: their ability to detach and transport their own souls (since in traditional evocation one transports the souls of the dead); their exploitation of underground chambers of wisdom; and their ability to prophesy, in particular about death and the dead. It is well known that reincarnation (or metempsychosis) was the central tenet of Pythagorean doctrine and underpinned the sect's vegetarianism. Among the shamans, Hermotimus was himself an earlier incarnation of Pythagoras (as we have seen), Epimenides was a reincarnation of Aeacus, brother of Minos, and Empedocles had been, among other things, a fish. Zalmoxis taught the doctrine.[8] Furthermore, the shamans had the ability to send their souls flying out of their bodies, which they left in a temporary state of death, on voyages of discovery. Epimenides could send his soul roaming out of his body whenever he wished. This was how Aristeas, a *goēs* according to Strabo, visited the remote lands of the Hyperboreans, the Arimaspians with their gold-guarding griffins, the one-eyed Issedones, and, appropriately, the Cimmerians, before returning to his body to publish his discoveries in his poem *Arimaspeia*. His soul flew out of his mouth in the form of a crow. Abaris was thought to fly around the world on a golden arrow. When Pythagoras was reincarnated as a cockerel, according to Lucian, he had a magic feather that would take him wherever he wished unseen, even through locked doors. These last three flying souls all used feathers in their different ways. Hermotimus's soul-flights are explicitly said to have given him the ability to prophesy. His final death came when his enemies disingenuously burned his "corpse" during one of his trips.[9] The shamans had two further related abilities. The first was bilocation: Aristeas appeared at once at Proconessus and on the road to Cyzicus; Pythagoras at Metapontum and Croton.[10] The second was the ability to suspend their

[7] Pythagoras: Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 135–36. Abaris: Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 91–92, 140, and 217; and Apollonius *Historiae mirabiles* 4. Empedocles: F111 DK; Diogenes Laertius 8.59–60; Plutarch *Moralia* 515c and 1126b; Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.7; and *Suda* s.v. *Empedoklēs*.

[8] Epimenides: Diogenes Laertius 1.114. Empedocles: F117 DK, etc. Zalmoxis: Herodotus 4.95; Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 173, etc.

[9] Epimenides: *Suda* s.v. *Epimenidēs*. Aristeas: Herodotus 4.13–16; Strabo C21 and 589; Pliny *Natural History* 7.10 and 174; Maximus of Tyre 10.2; Pausanias 1.24.6 and 5.7.9; and *Suda* s.v. *Aristeas*; see further the sources collected at Bolton 1962: 207–14. Abaris: Herodotus 4.36 (rationalized); Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 29; and Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 91 and 136. Pythagoras: Lucian *Oneiros* 28. Hermotimus: Pliny *Natural History* 7.174; Plutarch *Moralia* 592c–d; Apollonius *Historiae mirabiles* 3 (prophecy); and Tertullian *De anima* 44.

[10] Aristeas: Herodotus 4.14. Pythagoras: Aristotle F191 Rose; and Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 134.

lives for protracted periods. Pythagoras disappeared into the underworld for 207 years before reappearing. Aristeas disappeared at Proconessus, to reappear 240 years later at Metapontum. As a boy Epimenides slept in the Idaean cave for fifty-seven years, but then lived to the age of 154, 157, or 299, retaining his youth all the while.[11] Sophocles remarked that the wise won special honor by being regarded as dead for a time and then returning, and Democritus's book *On the Things in Hades* contained a discussion of such men.[12]

Several of the shamans are said to have retreated into underground chambers, natural or man-made, to acquire wisdom. Pythagoras is said to have withdrawn into a number of them, and these visits perhaps accounted for his 207 years in the underworld, during which time he witnessed the tortures of unfaithful husbands alongside those of Homer and Hesiod, for misrepresenting the gods. In Italy he retreated into a chamber he had constructed himself. When he emerged he was skeletal, and claimed to have died and been to Hades; as a result, he was regarded as divine. The tradition that his mother passed notes to him in the hole perhaps constitutes a rationalization of the notion that the Great Mother, Demeter, gave him instruction in the underworld, as Burkert thinks. In this case, the chamber should be compared with underground chambers of Demeter, known as *megara*, into which offerings were lowered for her. In Egypt Pythagoras descended into a number of inner sanctuaries (*adyta*) to inspect the learned books of Isis and Horus. In Crete he withdrew into the Idaean cave, where Epimenides also had experienced the fifty-seven-year dream that made him wise.[13] Edifying periods of deathlike retreat into such chambers are recorded also for Trophonius, as we have seen, as well as for Zalmoxis, Aristeas, and Empedotimus. We may guess that Empedocles did the same: he spoke of entering the underworld in the form of a roofed cave and of seeing hellish abstractions there, includ-

[11] Pythagoras: Diogenes Laertius 8.41. Aristeas: Herodotus 4.13 and 15. Epimenides: Xenophanes DK 21 B20; Diogenes Laertius 1.109 and 111–12; Pliny *Natural History* 7.175; Pausanias 1.14.4; and Apollonius *Historae mirabiles* 1.

[12] Sophocles *Electra* 62–64; Democritus DK 68 B1.

[13] General statements about Pythagoras's underground chambers: Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 34 and Hippolytus *Refutations* 1.12.18. Italy: Diogenes Laertius 8.41 (cf. 8.14, citing Hermippus); Tertullian *De anima* 28; and Scholiast Sophocles *Electra* 62. Demeter's *megara*: Menander F870 Körte; Pausanias 1.27.3 and 9.8.1; Plutarch *Moralia* 378c; Scholiast Lucian p. 275.23 Rabe; Aelius Dionysius s.v. *magaron*; Pausanias Atticus s.v. *megaron*; Hesychius s.v. *Megara*. Egypt: Clement of Alexandria *Stromateis* 1.66 (also telling the same of Thales); Lucian *Oneiros* 18; and Diogenes Laertius 8.3. Crete: Diogenes Laertius 8.3; and Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 17. Epimenides' dream: F1 DK. See Lévy 1926: 36–41; Eliade 1964: 389; Burkert 1969: 25–26, 1972: 112 and 155–59; van der Waerden 1979: 44–63; Bremmer 1994: 102–3; Graf 1994: 161 and 1997a: 91–92; and Zhmud 1997: 114–15.

ing Deaths. In healing the sick, he was said to have retrieved them from the inner chambers (*aduta*) of Persephone. Much (but by no means all) of the evidence for this sort of practice is late.[14]

The Greeks came to associate underground chambers of wisdom with the Egyptians above all. Lucian's Egyptian sorcerer Pancrates, he of the famous apprentice, had spent twenty-three years in underground chambers (*aduta*) being instructed in magic by Isis (although his name, "All-ruler," perhaps salutes the influence of more chthonic powers). This experience resembles that of Pythagoras in Egypt. It also resembles the perhaps Greek-influenced Demotic tale of the discovery by the Egyptian sorcerer Prince Khamwas of a book of magic written by Thoth in the tomb of Naneferkaptah. Thessalus of Tralles was similarly instructed in the powers of medicinal herbs by Asclepius after being sealed into an Egyptian chamber by a priest; he was offered the chance also to meet a dead man there. Finally, one of the Greek magical papyri gives instructions for the acquisition of wisdom to conquer death by retreating into an underground *megaron* of the Dactyls.[15]

The shamans derived the ability to prophesy from their soul-flights and from their descents into their chambers of wisdom. Pythagoras taught that the purified soul, one that could be detached from the body, could hold special converse with the gods and the dead through dreams and waking visions. In consequence, the dying were particularly adept at prophecy, because their souls were already separating themselves from their bodies and so acquiring percipience, but yet retained sufficient control over the bodies to make them speak (see further chapter 16). Death and the dead were in turn often the subject of Pythagoras's prophecies. He also knew that earthquakes were the manifestations of gatherings of the dead, and so was able to predict their occurrence after drinking underground water from a well.[16] Epimenides' prophecies included the pre-

[14] Trophonius: see chapter 6. Zalmoxis: Herodotus 4.95; Strabo C297–98; Diodorus 1.94; *Suda* s.v. *Zalmoxis*. Aristeas and Empedotimus: Gregory of Nazianz 4.59 (*adusta*; Trophonius is included). Empedocles F118 and F120 DK; and Diogenes Laertius 8.67. The notion that one may radically improve oneself by confining oneself for long periods in an underground chamber is found also in Plutarch's *Demosthenes*: Demosthenes made himself into a great orator by confining himself for months on end in an underground practice room (*katageion meletérion*, 7.6).

[15] Pancrates: Lucian *Philopseudes* 34, with Voutiras 1999: 80–81 for the significance of the name. Khamwas: *Setne* I, at Lichtheim 1973–80, 3: 125–38. Thessalus: see his *De virtutibus herbarum* p. 53 Friedrich. Dactyls: *PGM* LXX. 4–25; cf. Betz 1980: 292–93 and 1992: ad loc.; and Graf 1997a: 91.

[16] The purified soul: Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 70, 106, 139 (dreams of the dead), and 228. The abilities of the dying: Diodorus 18.1; cf. Kalitsounakis 1953–54. Pythagoras predicts deaths: Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 142. Earthquakes: Pliny *Natural History* 2.191; cf. Cicero *On Divination* 1.112 and Maximus of Tyre 13.5 for a similar claim for Pherecydes, another "teacher" of Pythagoras.

diction that Mounychia would bring doom upon Athens. It is likely that after death, Epimenides went on to prophesy through the medium of his own corpse. His skin was found to be tattooed with letters and was accordingly preserved. That these letters made up oracles is suggested by the seemingly parallel tradition that the Spartan king Cleomenes dug up the skin of the hero Anthes in order to tattoo it with oracles. Pythagoras and Zalmoxis in particular were also tattooed.[17] As prophets, the shamans were close to Apollo. Aristeas was possessed by him (*phoibolamptos*), and the crow, the form in which Aristeas's soul appeared, was sacred to him as a prophetic bird. The Hyperborean race was devoted to him, and Abaris was his priest. Abaris himself perceived a manifestation of Hyperborean Apollo in Pythagoras, whose name indeed signifies "Apollo-speaker," while others, including Epimenides, saw Pythagoras as a son of this god.[18] At the intersection of these three shaman phenomena—metempsychosis, underworld sojourns, and prophecy—lies necromancy, which can thus be seen to belong quite appropriately to the shamans.

In the A.D. period, two distinguished Neo-Pythagoreans revived the work of the shamans. Apollonius of Tyana's life was roughly coterminous with the first century A.D. Our principal source for it is the ironic biography of Philostratus. Apollonius was capable of bilocation. We have already referred to some of his numerous necromantic adventures. He called up the ghost of Achilles at his tomb on the Trojan plain, "not by *psuchagōgia*," but with an Indian prayer. After complaining about the Thessalians' neglect of his cult, Achilles allowed Apollonius to put five Homeric questions to him. Apollonius was also accused of more antisocial forms of necromancy, namely the sacrifice of a boy. It was alleged that he had attempted to divine the future from the boy's entrails to help Nerva usurp Domitian, but the latter was not persuaded of his guilt (see chapter 12 for the association between hieroscopy and necromancy). At Rome Apollonius reanimated a bride who had died on the eve of her marriage, in an act Philostratus compares to Heracles' retrieval of Alcestis. He gave her his reward money for dowry. He exorcised a possessing ghost from a young man in his audience. He descended into Trophonius's hole, despite the objections of its priests, who considered him a *goēs*, and spent

[17] Mounychia: Diogenes Laertius 1.114 and Plutarch *Solon* 12; cf. Plato *Laws* 642d; more generally, see Epimenides F1–19 DK, "oracles." Skin of Epimenides: *Suda* s.v. *Epimenidēs*, cf. Svenbro 1993: 137–44. Skin of Anthes: Stephanus of Byzantium s.v. *Anthana*. Zalmoxis: Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 15. Pythagoras: Scholiast Lucian p. 124 Rabe (a variant of the notion that he had a golden thigh).

[18] Aristeas: Herodotus 4.13 and 15. Crow sacred to Apollo: Aelian *History of Animals* 1.48; and Horace *Odes* 3.27.11. Abaris: Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 91–92 and 140; cf. Diodorus 2.47 for Hyperboreans. Pythagoras: Artistotle F181 Rose; Diogenes Laertius 8.11; and Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 30, 91–92, 140, and 177.

longer in it than any other man. He returned with a book of Pythagorean tenets given to him by Trophonius in answer to his question as to which was the most pure and perfect philosophy.[19] Alexander of Abonouteichos (*floruit* mid-second century A.D.), for whom our principal source is Lucian's character-assassinating *Alexander* or *False Prophet*, was pupil to a pupil of Apollonius. A reincarnation of Pythagoras, even down to his golden thigh, he specialized in the promulgation of the prophecies uttered by his snake, Glycon, in which the god Asclepius was manifest. For Lucian, this was an elaborate puppet. In a passing reference we are told that Alexander also raised the dead.[20]

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One of the major conundrums of the religious history of archaic Greece is the relationship between Pythagoreanism and "Orphism," by which term I mean the songs and mysteries ascribed to Orpheus and the initiators and initiates into these mysteries. The Greeks linked Orpheus and Pythagoras by having the latter initiated into the mysteries of the former by Aglaophamus at Leibethra. In recent scholarship, the prevailing belief is that Pythagoreanism was an organized and doctrinal movement that grew out of the unorganized and nondoctrinal Orphism. Outside the Pythagorean movement, Orphism is strongly associated with Bacchism and Dionysus.[21] Orpheus is now regularly classed as a "shaman," both for his similarities to the other Greek "shamans" and for sharing with the Tungus shamans the ability to attract animals through music.[22]

[19] Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.10, 5.30, 8.25–26 (bilocation), 4.16 (Achilles), 4.20 (exorcism), 4.45 (bride), 7.11, 8.7 (boy-sacrifice), 8.19 (Trophonius). Apollonius was also denied admission to the underworld mysteries of Eleusis by the hierophant, again on the ground that he was a *goēs*: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.18; cf. Eusebius *Against Philostratus's Life of Apollonius* 26. For Apollonius in general, see Annequin 1973: 116–22; Bernard 1977; Bowie 1978; Dzielska 1986; and Anderson 1986 and 1994. The first-century B.C. Asclepiades of Bithynia had similarly reanimated a corpse on its way to the pyre: Pliny *Natural History* 26.15.

[20] Lucian *Alexander* 4 (school of Apollonius), 15–16 (Glycon), 40 (thigh; for Pythagoras, see Aristotle F191 Rose, etc.), and 24 (raising the dead). For Alexander in general, see Cumont 1922; Nock 1928; Caster 1938; and Annequin 1973: 101–6.

[21] Leibethra: Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 146 and 151. For Orphism, see Lobeck 1829; Robert 1917; Kern 1920 and 1922; Deonna 1925; Eisler 1925; Nock 1927; Linforth 1941; Bowra 1952; Guthrie 1952; Dronke 1962; Schuchhardt 1964; Lee 1965; Böhme 1970; Detienne 1971; Schmidt 1972, 1975, and 1991; Graf 1974, 1987, 1991a, and 1993; Burkert 1975, 1976, and 1982; Athanassakis 1977; Alderink 1981; Robbins 1982; M. L. West 1983; Borgeaud 1991; Bremmer 1991; Zhmud 1992; Masarrachia 1993; Kingsley 1995: 112–48, 256–77, and 289–316; Parker 1995; Johnston and McNiven 1996 (with interesting new evidence for the role of Dionysus in Orphism); and Laks and Most 1997.

[22] Thus Meuli 1975: 697 (reprinted from 1940); Dodds 1951: 147–59; Eliade 1964: 391; Böhme 1970: 192–254; M. L. West 1983: 3–7 and 143–75; Graf 1987 ("warrior-

The myth of Orpheus's descent into the underworld to retrieve his wife Eurydice may mark him out as a paradigmatic necromancer. As we have seen, Orpheus was said to have made his descent at two *nekuomanteion* sites, Acheron and Tainaron. In the famous narratives of Virgil and Ovid, the retrieval fails when Orpheus turns to look upon Eurydice before she has emerged, but in older versions it was apparently successful. Plato contends that Orpheus brought the ghost of Eurydice out of the underworld (as opposed to the real woman), and that he used his song to charm it. He and Isocrates even imply that Eurydice was only one of many Orpheus brought out.[23] A scholium to the *Aeneid* explicitly represents Eurydice's retrieval as an evocation (*evocare*). It reports that the technique Orpheus used was, again, the singing of songs or spells (*carmina*) to the accompaniment of his lyre. It also tells, after Varro, that Orpheus wrote a poem on the evocation of the soul called *Lyre*. The poem appears to have correlated the seven strings of the lyre with seven heavenly spheres through which souls rose by stages after death as they purified themselves. A classical Attic relief may represent Orpheus's discovery of the secrets of the afterlife in his lifting of Eurydice's veil. According to Hecataeus of Abdera, Orpheus introduced Hermes *psuchopompos*, the escort of souls, into Greece from Egypt, supposedly the source of all his afterlife lore. After his death, Orpheus's disembodied head itself gave out necromantic prophecies from a hole on Lesbos. Eliade sees this, too, as a distinctively shamanic notion, and draws comparison with the practices of Yukagir shamans. And Orpheus's ghost could be evocated with the sacrifice of a cock and some special formulas, according to the fifth-century A.D. Aeneas of Gaza.[24]

Orpheus was a beggar-priest who made his living from music, prophecy, and orgiastic initiation. His work was continued in the historical period by *Orpheotelestai*, "Orphic initiators," who took poems or books

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shamanism"); Bremmer 1983: 46 and 1991; Nagy 1990: 209; and Fiore 1993. Orpheus's animal-attracting music: Simonides F567 Page, etc.

[23] Orpheus as paradigmatic necromancer: cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 332; and Nock 1927. Retrieval fails: Virgil *Georgics* 4.453–525; [Virgil] *Culex* 286–93; Conon *Narrationes* 45.2 (contemporary with Virgil); and Ovid *Metamorphoses*, esp. 10.1–63. Retrieval succeeds: Euripides *Alcestis* 357–62 and 962–71; Isocrates 11.8; Plato *Protagoras* 315a (song) and *Symposium* 179d (ghost). Discussions of Orpheus's original success: Guthrie 1952: 31; Bowra 1952; Dronke 1962: 200–205; Schuchhardt 1964; Clark 1979: 99 and 108–24; Robbins 1982: 15–16; Graf 1987: 102 n. 5; Bernand 1991: 221; and Heath 1994 (this last arguing against there ever having been a successful version of the tale).

[24] *Lyre*: the scholium is published at Savage 1925: 2356 and discussed by Nock 1927 (important) and M. L. West 1983: 30–32. Relief: Lee 1965: 406 and Clark 1979: 116–18. Hecataeus of Abdera: *FGH* 264 F25, at Diodorus 1.96. Orpheus's head: Philostratus *Heroicus* p. 172 Kayser; Eliade 1964: 391; see chapter 13 for further discussion. Aeneas of Gaza: *Theophrastus* pp. 18–19 Colonna.

attributed to Orpheus as their sacred texts. The characteristic beggarliness of these is well conveyed in Plutarch's anecdote: the Spartan king Leotychidas (ruled 491–469 B.C.) jokingly asked the *Orpheotelestes* Philip, who promised riches in the afterlife, why he did not kill himself at once.[25] These men may have practiced necromancy. As we have seen, Plato associates them directly with prophets, the beggar-priests known as *agurtai*, and the manufacturers of binding spells, and indirectly with *psuchagōgoi* and purifiers of cities. They claimed, he says, to be able to deliver one from the bad things in the afterlife through their rites, and to be able to do this for the dead, too. The exact nature of this last claim is obscure. It could mean that they could bestow initiation retrospectively on those who had already died, as Olympiodorus thought, or it may mean that they could lay restless ghosts, or, indeed, it may mean both.[26]

The performance of necromancy in many ways resembles initiation into mysteries. Necromantic consultations and mystery initiations could both be preceded by prolonged rites of purification; Lucian's Menippus has to undergo protracted rites in Babylon prior to his necromancy, as did those preparing to consult Trophonius.[27] Mystery initiations often took place in dark enclosed chambers, such as the famous Telesterion, "House of Initiation," used for the mysteries of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis, which ultimately derived their authority from Orpheus.[28] Orpheus himself had been initiated by the Idaean Dactyls, doubtless in the underground *megaron* of theirs in which the Greek magical papyrus promises initiation for its readers. His decapitated head would in turn, as we saw, make revelations from its own hole in Lesbos.[29] The initiatory aspect of the retreats of the other shamans into their underground chambers of wisdom becomes clear. We saw that Pythagoras may, significantly, have met with Demeter in one of his chambers. Initiates and necromancers alike received advance access to privileged knowledge about the afterlife. Like necromancers, initiates into the Bacchic mysteries were confronted with ghosts

[25] Orpheus as beggar-priest: Strabo C333 F18. *Orpheotelestes*: Plutarch *Moralia* 224e–f; the term is also found at Theophrastus *Characters* 16.11–12; cf. also Derveni Papyrus col. xx lines 3–4, "one who makes a craft of the sacred."

[26] Plato *Republic* 364b–e; see chapter 7; Olympiodorus on Plato *Phaedo* p. 87, 15 Novin; discussion at Linforth 1941: 80–81; Burkert 1987: 24; and Johnston 1999: 54.

[27] Lucian *Menippus* 7; see chapter 6 for Trophonius. For a general comparison (and contrast) of mystery initiation and magic inititiation, see Graf 1994.

[28] Orpheus's authority at Eleusis (via Musaeus and Eumolpus): Plato *Republic* 363c–e; Demosthenes 25.11; Clement of Alexandria *Protrepticus* 2.20–21; *Parian Marble FGH* 239, at 264/3 B.C., etc. For the Eleusinian mysteries in general, see Foucart 1914; Magnien 1929; Nilsson 1935; Graf 1974; Mylonas 1961; Kerenyi 1967; Burkert 1987; and Clinton 1992 and 1993.

[29] Orpheus and Dactyls: Diodorus 5.64; *PGM* LXX; cf. Betz 1980: 292–93. Cf. also Boyancé 1961, for initiations in caves of Dionysus.

and terrors, according to Origen. In the Eleusinian mysteries also, initiates were confronted with underworld horrors, including the monster Empusa, and again perhaps ghosts.[30] As with mysteries, revelations made in necromancy were often a matter for secrecy. When Lucian's Menippus returns from his underworld consultation of Tiresias, he at first refuses to tell his friend what he learned there for fear of impiety, but he relents when the friend reassures him that he has been initiated into the (presumably Eleusinian) mysteries. Immediately before opening up the underworld, Virgil's Sibyl dismisses the profane from the grove of Avernus. The poet himself then takes a moment to apostrophize underworld powers to permit him to reveal their secrets to his readers as we follow her inside. Ovid's Medea likewise dismisses the profane before her rejuvenation-reanimation of Aeson. Heliodorus's old woman of Bessa is abused by her reanimated son for revealing the mysteries (*mystēria*) of necromancy to eavesdroppers, in particular an innocent girl, and she is then driven to her death, apparently for this reason.[31] Plutarch's observation that mystery initiation constituted a symbolic death and rebirth for the initiate has become a platitude of modern scholarship. When Eurynous of Nicesipolis died for fifteen days and came back to life, he reported that he had seen and heard amazing things under the earth, but that he had been ordered to keep them all secret (see chapters 15 and 16 for further Er-like experiences). Similarly, performers of necromancy could be regarded as temporarily dying in the process. When Odysseus returns to Circe after his consultation, he is greeted as "of double death." The necromantic specialist who guides a novice through a consultation can accordingly resemble an initiator into mysteries or "hierophant": Clark sees Virgil's Sibyl as taking on this role.

Perhaps the paraphernalia of mysteries also intrudes into necromancy. The notoriously obscure golden bough that Virgil's Sibyl carries into the underworld may salute the myrtle bough carried in procession by the Eleusinian initiates. The thyrsi staffs in the necromancy scenes of the Cumaean Painter may be symbols of Orphic-Dionysiac initiation.[32] Heracles' initiation at Eleusis is portrayed on the Lovatelli urn and on the Torre Nova sarcophagus. As he is initiated, he sits, veiled, with his feet resting

[30] Origen *Contra Celsum* 4.10. Empusa, etc.: Idomeneus of Lampsacus *FGH* 338 F2; Lucian *Cataplus* 22; and Plutarch F178 Sandbach; see Brown 1991; Dover 1993 on Aristophanes *Frogs* 143; and Johnston 1999: 130–39.

[31] Lucian *Menippus* 2; Virgil *Aeneid* 6.258–59 and 264–67; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.255–56; Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.15.

[32] Plutarch's observation: F178 Sandbach. Eurynous: Naumachius, as quoted by Proclus *In rempublicam* 16.113–16 (on 614b4–7). Homer *Odyssey* 12.21–22; see chapter 16. Sibyl as hierophant: Clark 1979: 208 and 216–17. Golden bough: see chapter 11. Thyrsi: Kerrigan 1980: 21–24 and 28.

on the head of a fleece spread beneath him. The role of the fleece in the mysteries was explained by the fact that Demeter had sat, veiled, on a stool covered by a fleece as she underwent her own archetypal initiation. But Heracles' pose strongly recalls that of Odysseus as he calls up the ghost of Tiresias on the Apulian-style crater in Paris (fig. 12), and may indicate that the configuration of that image is influenced as much by the themes of initiation as by the themes of incubation.[33]

In necromancy, the evocated ghosts also could be compared to initiates. The Orphic poem *Lyre*, as we saw, seems to have drawn a parallel between the evocation of the ghost of Eurydice and the salvation of the initiate from the horrors of the underworld. These horrors are symbolized by Cerberus on an Orphic pot from Tarentum, ca. 350–300 B.C., on which a young man is conducted to the boundary of Hades, symbolized by a herm-statue, but Orpheus stands by, restrains Cerberus, and offers him his lyre.[34] We have seen that *Orpheotelestai* may have been able to initiate the dead. Initiation in life had perhaps enabled after death the prophecies of the mystery-priestess Ammias, who died at Thyateira in the second century A.D., and of the chattering ghost-prophet Athanatos Epitynchanos, who died in Akmonia in the fourth century. He proclaimed that he had been initiated by the priestess Spatale.[35]

[33] Lovatelli urn, Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome. Torre Nova sarcophagus, Palazzo Borghese, Rome. Demeter's fleece: *Homeric hymn to Demeter* 195–98. See Norden 1916: 43–44; Eisler 1925: 205–6; Mylonas 1961: 205–13; and Foley 1994: 45, 68, and ad loc.

[34] Calyx crater, British Museum F270; M. L. West 1983: 25, 30–32, and plate 3; for Orpheus on South Italian vases in general, see also Schmidt 1975; Burkert 1976: 3; and Cavaretta 1993. Lucian's Menippus, posing as Orpheus, soothes Cerberus with his lyre: *Menippus* 10.

[35] *Orpheotelestai* initiate dead: Plato *Republic* 364b–e; cf. chapter 7. Ammias and Athanatos: see chapter 1.

CHAPTER 9

ALIENS AND WITCHES

ALTHOUGH the evidence reviewed so far in this part has indicated that necromantic professionals in antiquity were normally Greek in ethnicity and male, high literature often preferred to represent them as alien (notably as Persian, Babylonian, or Egyptian), or as female (notably as witches), or indeed as both. The heyday of such representations was the imperial period, but their roots went back to the archaic period. If this phenomenon is of any significance, a modern sociologist of antiquity might point to "cultural distancing." the projection of attributes regarded as either undesirable or, more generally, bizarre onto other races or onto the other sex.[1] If this is to be the general explanation of such representations, it would confirm that necromancy was generally regarded as at least somewhat strange.

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Imaginary alien necromancers were supplied in particular by the Near East and by Egypt. Persian mages or Chaldaeans of Babylon are often linked with Egyptians when commonplaces of necromancy are rehearsed. Lucan contrasts the magical abilities of his necromantic witch Erictho with those of "Persian Babylon" and "secret Memphis." Tertullian ascribes the development of necromantic theory (in regard to *aōroi* and *biaiothanatoi*) to the great Persian mage Ostanes and the Egyptians Typhon, Berenice II (originally of Cyrene), and Nectanebo. In the pseudo-Democritean *Physica et mystica*, the foundation text of alchemy, perhaps written in the early first century A.D., the pupils of Persian Ostanes summon up his ghost in Egyptian Memphis; we shall have more to say about this. Aeneas of Gaza refers to Chaldaeans, Egyptians, and Greeks as able to evocate the souls of the long dead. The Greeks in question will be Pythagoreans, since Posidonius indirectly associates them with both the Persian mages and the Chaldaeans. Indeed, Pythagoras reputedly acquired his own wisdom in both Egypt (like Orpheus) and Babylon, being

[1] For this notion, the *locus classicus* in English is, for aliens, Hall 1989, and for women, Zeitlin 1996 (re-editing earlier work). For the notion in a magical context, see Gordon 1987b: 73–80 for aliens and 80–84 for women. In chapter 1 I noted the Greco-Roman tendency to ascribe tomb incubation to other races or other religious groups (Argilae, Celts, Jews, Christians). For gender and *goēteia*, see also Johnston 1999: 112–15.

taught in the latter place by Zaratas/Zoroaster and mages.[2] The association made between the Chaldaeans, originally a sacerdotal cast within Babylon, and the mages, according to Herodotus in origin a priestly clan of the Medes that came to serve the Persians as wizards, is due to the fact that Babylon was part of the Persian empire when the Greeks first began to concern themselves with oriental necromancers.[3]

We begin with Persians. Our first substantial literary necromancy after Homer is that of Aeschylus's *Persians* of 472.[4] Here the ghost of King Darius is called up by his widow Atossa and the chorus of Persian elders in the entirely Greek fashion perhaps tried and tested upon the ghost of Achilles in earlier dramas. But how significant, even so, is the association between Persians and necromancy at this stage? An old textual and interpretative crux bears upon the issue. As the elders of the chorus summon the ghost of Darius, all manuscripts have them asking him whether he hears their "foreign, clear (*barbara saphēnē*), manifold, continual, ill-sounding (*dysthroa*) utterances (*bagmata*)." The term "foreign" is used elsewhere in the play by Persians as if from a Greek perspective to mean simply "Persian," and Persian words should indeed be clear to Persians. But why should clear Persian words be ill-sounding? The supposition that the words are ill-sounding because grief is inherently ill-sounding is inadequate. It is accordingly tempting to read the key phrase with Headlam as "foreign, obscure" (*barbar' asaphēnē*) and understand it to refer to the

[2] Erictho: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.449; cf. 425–34 for Sextus's knowledge of the secrets of the cruel magi; see Germain 1954: 371. Tertullian *De anima* 55 and 57; cf. Bidez and Cumont 1938, 1: 184 and 2: 287–88. [Democritus] *Physica et mystica* 2: p. 42, 21 Berthelot (at Bidez and Cumont 1938, 2: 317–18; the other vestigial references to the tale collected by Bidez and Cumont show that Memphis was the setting). Aeneas of Gaza: *Theophrastus* pp. 18–19 Colonna; cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 595; and Collard 1949: 116 and 122. Posidonius F133 Theiler; cf. Strabo C762. Pythagoras: Herodotus 2.81 and 123; Aristoxenus F13 Wehrli; Isocrates *Busiris* 28; Strabo C638; Pliny *Natural History* 30.1.9; Lucian *Biōn prasis* 3; Diogenes Laertius 8.2–3; Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 6–7; Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 12–13, 18–19, 151, 154, and 158; and Hippolytus *Refutations* 1.2; cf. Phillip 1966: 189–91. Compatibly, Clement of Alexandria *Stromateis* 5.103 cast Zoroaster himself in the role of Plato's very Pythagorean Er in order to explain his initial enlightenment; cf. Ganschinietz 1919: 2414. Orpheus (and Pythagoras) as deriving his wisdom from Egypt: Hecataeus of Abdera *FGH* 264 F25 at Diodorus 1.96; see chapter 8.

[3] Median origin of the mages: see Bickerman and Tadmor 1978: 250 and 259–60; and Bernand 1991: 44–47. Herodotus (1.101) alone claims Median origin for them, but he may only be making a further inference from his false etymological derivation of the name "Medes" from magical Medea, as at 7.62. Chaldaeans: Massoneau 1934: 49–50; and Bernand 1991: 48–54.

[4] Aeschylus *Persians* 598–680. For discussion of this episode, see Headlam 1902; Eitrem 1928; Lawson 1934; Bidez 1937; Hickman 1938: 19–24; Rose 1950; Scazzoso 1952; Broadhead 1960: 302–9 and ad loc.; Alexanderson 1967; Haldane 1972; Taplin 1977: 114–19; Bickerman and Tadmor 1978; Jouan 1981; Belloni 1982 and 1988: ad loc.; and Hall 1989: 89–90 and 1996: ad loc.

non-Greek semi-meaningless words found in Greek magical spells and now conventionally referred to as *voces magicae*. The nearest we come to such things in the text as we have it are the cries of "*ēe*," "*oi*," and "*aiai*," although Aristophanes tells that in performance the chorus shouted out "*Iauoi*" (cf. Iao?). Aeschylus may well be having his cake and eating it too. The two readings would have sounded identical to the ears of the audience (accentuation is unaffected). Has he deliberately merged in the phrase the foreignness of normal Persian speech to Greek ears and the foreignness of the *voces magicae* that a (Greek) necromancer employed to call up the dead? The glide between the two would have been facilitated if Aeschylus and his audience considered the *voces magicae* a Greek necromancer used to include or to be equivalent to Persian words. In this case, the association between necromancy and Persia would already be a very significant one. Headlam believed that the chorus was supposed to represent magi, comparing its description of the sea as "stainless" with the Armenian mage Tiridates' refusal to travel by sea for fear of defiling it.[5]

The association between Persian mages and necromancy seems more certain in Herodotus (420s B.C.). He tells that at Troy, en route to invade Greece, Xerxes had the mages make libations to the heroes of the Trojan War. "After they had done this, panic fell upon the encamped army during the night." Herodotus says no more, exercising his familiar reticence in matters of the supernatural. But the clear implication of the passage is that the mages had called up the Trojan War ghosts (which, as we have seen, were always ready to appear), or at any rate that the army believed that they had done so. It is incumbent upon those who would deny that the notion of magian necromancy underpins this account to explain otherwise the nature of the panic that fell upon the army. Herodotus probably wants us to think that the mysterious dream-apparition he uses to drive Xerxes to the invasion of Greece against his better judgment is the ghost of Darius, or at any rate a false dream pretending to be it, perhaps in tribute to the *Persians*.[6]

It was mages from among the "barbarians," that is, the Persians, who persuaded Python's Harpalus that they could call up for him the ghost of Pythionice at Babylon, at some point before 326. The Augustan Strabo told that the Persians had their "mages and necromancers (*nekuoman-*

[5] *Barbara . . . bagmata*: Aeschylus *Persians* 633–37. *Ēe*, etc.: 651, 656, 663, and 671–72. Aristophanes: *Frogs* 1028–29; cf. Dover 1993: ad loc. Headlam 1902: 55–56, followed by Lowe 1929: 55; Bidez 1937; Scazzoso 1952; Hopfner 1935: 2220–22; Cumont 1949: 99–100; and Johnston 1999: 117–18; *contra*, Lawson 1934: 81; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 35; and cf. Hall 1989: 87–88. "Stainless sea": Aeschylus *Persians* 580. Tiridates: Pliny *Natural History* 30.17.

[6] Mages at Troy: Herodotus 7.43; Bickerman and Tadmor 1978: 250; and Johnston 1999: 110; see chapter 1 for the Trojan-plain ghosts. Darius: Herodotus 7.12–18.

teis)." In Chariton's *Callirhoe*, written around the turn of the eras, the heroine asks whether the appearance of Chaereas at a trial was the manifestation of a ghost called up by the Persian Mithridates in the role of mage. When Nero needed to call up the ghost of his mother, he turned to the skills of magi, although the chief of these, Tiridates, was in fact Armenian. By the elder Pliny's day, Ostanes, who had accompanied Xerxes in his invasion of Greece, had become a master mage to whom treatises on magic were attributed. In these, he claimed to be able to divine by water, globes, air, lamps, bowls, and axes, and to be able to converse with ghosts and people in the underworld. Pliny attributed other necromantic techniques to the mages more generally, such as the eating of the still-palpitating heart cut from a mole for divination, and the use of the *synochitis*, or "holding stone," for retaining ghosts once called up from the underworld. The fact that his pupils were able to evocate his ghost in the ps.-Democritean *Physica et mystica*, perhaps written shortly before Pliny's work, also indicates that he was conceived of as a master necromancer himself. Plutarch knew that the Persian disciples of Zoroaster mixed a plant *omōmi* with wolf-blood to lay ghosts. Arnobius (*floruit* ca. 300 A.D.) told that the Persian mages claimed to be able to bring back feelings and spirits into cold limbs.[7]

The Persian mages were sometimes held to combine necromancy with lecanomancy, as by Pliny. Posidonius (second century B.C.) associated together among the Persians the magi, necromancers, and so-called lecanomancers and hydromancers. Augustine, building on Varro, explains that Persian hydromancy becomes necromancy when blood is used in place of water. It is possible that the emperor Didius Julianus (ruled A.D. 193) was believed to have used mages for lecanomantic necromancy (see further chapter 12).[8]

In the A.D. period, the term *magos/magus* can be found applied to necromancers without significantly Persian associations. We have met the Armenian Tiridates. Simon Magus, who made a boy out of thin air and then sacrificed him for necromancy, was a Samaritan. His adherents promised that they could stir up the souls of prophets from the lower

[7] Pythionice: Python *TrGF* 91 F1, at Athenaeus 595e–f. Snell (1967: 99–117) argues for the dating of the satyr-play to 326 and for Babylon as the setting, because this was the site of Pythionice's tomb (Theopompus *FGH* 115 F253). Strabo C762. Chariton *Callirhoe* 5.9.4; cf. 5.7.10. Nero's mages: Suetonius *Nero* 34 and Pliny *Natural History* 30.14–18; cf. Cumont 1949: 99–100. Pliny: *Natural History* 30.14 (Ostanes; cf. Bidez and Cumont 1938, 1: 167–212 and 2: 267–356), 30.19 (palpitating heart), 37.192 (*synochitis*). *Physica et mystica*: see note 2. Plutarch: *Moralia* 369e–f; cf. Cumont 1949: 99. Arnobius: *Against the Pagans* 1.52; cf. Bidez and Cumont 1938, 1: 141.

[8] Posidonius: F133 Theiler; his words were repeated by Strabo C762. Augustine *City of God* 7.35; cf. Cumont 1949: 99 and chapter 12. Didius Julianus: see chapter 10.

world.[9] An anonymous, undated, anapaestic Latin poem preserved in a seventh-century A.D. manuscript, *Against a Lying Mage*, ascribes necromancy, albeit no other Persian traits, to its subject:

> When you don't have your day's bread, you ignorantly sate your magical skills! When your stomach is empty, you long to go staggering through the shades and tombs. Nor do the ghosts respond to your spells while, driven by hunger, you throw all Tartarus into chaos with your incantation in the belief that there is something that Pluto could give to the poor above. Why don't you devour the dead limbs, I ask, so as to be in worse need, mage for always and forever?
>
> —*Anthologia Latina* no. 294 Shackleton-Bailey[10]

Libanius ends his speech *Against the Lying Mage* with the ironic point that the mage should not be worried by the state's decision to sacrifice his son: "You will have your son even after his sacrifice. He will hear you when you call, he will appear, he will converse with you, he will spend the nights with you, and indeed he will do your bidding more eagerly than other ghosts. So you have no need to be upset when you yourself are profiting personally along with the city."[11]

We turn to necromantic Chaldaean Babylonians. Lucian shows us two of them. In the *Philopseudes* a Chaldaean Babylonian restores to life the slave Midas, who has been bitten on the foot by a snake, before blowing up all the snakes that lived on the farm. The necromancy of Lucian's *Menippus* takes place at Babylon under the guidance and supervision of Mithrobarzanes, a Chaldaean Babylonian who is also identified with Persian mages and the disciples of Zoroaster, and who wears a Median robe for his necromantic rites. His hair is gray and his beard long and august. It is possible that already in 326 B.C. Python had similarly identified his mages with Chaldaeans, since it was at Babylon that they offered to call up the ghost of Pythionice. In his novel *Babyloniaca*, Iamblichus (second century A.D.) had an aged Chaldaean astrologer reanimate the corpse of a young woman carried out to a funeral, in the fashion of Apollonius. In the course of the novel the author expatiated on magicians and necromancers and the Babylonian ventriloquist Sacchouras, the equivalent of the Greek Eurycles.[12]

[9] Clement of Rome *Recognitions* 2.13–15 (boy) and Tertullian *De anima* 57 (adherents). See Johnston 1999: 137–39 for the broad use of the term *magus*.

[10] = *Anthologia Latina* no. 299 Riese and *PLM* 4 p. 392 (ed. Baehrens); cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 589–90. The text of the last sentence is disputed: Baehrens's version translates, "What I think worse—you'll be in want forever, if you address your requests to dead bodies!"

[11] Libanius 41.51.

[12] Lucian *Philopseudes* 11–13 and *Menippus* 6–11 (cf. Bidez and Cumont 1938, 2: B30). Python *TrGF* 91 F1. Iamblichus *Babyloniaca* at Photius 75a–b (cf. Tropper 1989: 56–57 and 178–80). There is a passing reference to necromantic Chaldaean Babylonians also at Theodoret *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 10 (*PG* 83 p. 1061).

The origins of Greek necromancy, as with Greek magical practices in general, are quite unclear, but it remains theoretically possible that Mesopotamia exercised some indirect influence on Greek necromantic culture during the Mycenaean age or the earlier archaic period, the period of Burkert's "orientalizing revolution." During this time, as he sees it, itinerant oriental religious craftsmen were a major conduit of oriental ideas into the Greek world, and purveyors of what he calls "black magic" were influential among these. But we cannot know what Greek necromancy looked like prior to any supposed Mesopotamian influences, and we may in any case presume that there was, at some level, a very ancient east Mediterranean necromantic *koinē*. Hence, no necromantic practice ostensibly shared between Greece and Mesopotamia can be said with certainty to have been borrowed by the former from the latter. We should at any rate be clear that the Greco-Roman traditions about Chaldaean necromancers cannot be used as evidence that Greek necromancy originated in Babylon. The Greeks association of Babylonians with necromancy clearly grew out of, and clearly was secondary to, their association of the Persians with it. Yet Homer (mid-seventh century at the very latest) shows the Greeks' necromantic culture to have been well established long before they had thought to associate it even with the Persians.[13]

There is a considerable amount of evidence for necromantic practices in ancient Mesopotamia in Akkadian sources.[14] In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the underworld god Nergal opens a hole in the earth through which the ghost of Enkidu emerges like a breath and holds a conversation with Gilgamesh. In 672 B.C. the Assyrian king Esarhaddon called up the ghost of his wife Esharra-khamat, to ask her whether their son, the crown prince, was a fit successor; she said yes. A term for a professional necromancer is recorded, *lú gidim-ma*, "he who makes the ghosts of the dead rise." A number of necromancy "manuals" survive under the title "Incantation to See a Ghost in Order to Make a Decision." The usual method was to smear an ointment, rue (?) crushed in water and cedar oil, over the face of the consulter, or on a figurine or skull that "housed" the ghost. The month of Abu, in which ghosts in any case returned, was an

[13] Burkert 1983b and 1992: 65–73. East Mediterranean *koinē*: cf. Tupet 1986: 2591. For the notion that the Persian empire was significant in the transmission of magical ideas into Greece, see Graf 1997a: 172.

[14] For necromancy in ancient Mesopotamia, see especially Finkel 1983–84 and Tropper 1989: 47–109; see also Meier 1937; Reiner 1938; Castellino 1953; Bayliss 1973; Tsukimoto 1985; Bottéro 1992: 268–86; Schmidt 1995: 117–18 and 121–26; Scurlock 1988 and 1995; and Johnston 1999: 87–90. For Mespotamian magic more generally, see Contenau 1940; Reiner 1966 and 1987; Abusch 1987; Bottéro 1987–90; Caplice 1970; and Graf 1997a: 287 (for further recent bibliography). For necromancy at Ugarit, see Dieterich and Loretz 1990; and, for the Hittites, Goetze and Sturtevant 1938; and Tropper 1989: 110–17.

appropriate time for the rite. These instructions do not much resemble old Greek necromancy, but the similarities between Akkadian ghost-laying rites and those of archaic Greece are admittedly rather more striking, as we have seen.[15]

The Old Testament's famous tale of the witch of En-dor's necromancy of the ghost of Samuel for Saul is now thought to reflect Assyrian practices.[16] The witch's "Canaanite" designation identifies her merely as some sort of non-Israelite inhabitant of Israel. Schmidt interprets the confusing phraseology of the story to indicate that the witch first calls up gods proper (*elohim*), and then has them in turn produce the required ghost of Samuel (the alternative is to construe the "gods" and the ghost of Samuel as one and the same). In Akkadian sources, offerings are similarly made to Shamash and other gods for their help in raising ghosts. The tale's composition is usually dated to the mid-second millennium B.C., but Schmidt down-dates it to the mid-first millennium. If he is right, Greek influence cannot be absolutely excluded either: by this time Homer already had Persephone presiding over the sending up of ghosts for Odysseus.

We turn to the Egyptians. The more explicit extant associations of Egyptians (or Egyptian Greeks) with necromancy derive from the imperial period. Virgil's Moeris (39 B.C.), who often called up souls from the bottoms of graves, is not given an explicit place of origin. As the namesake, however, of one of Herodotus's pharaohs, he is implied to be Egyptian.[17] For all that the necromantic abilities of Lucan's Erictho (ca. A.D. 65) are contrasted with those of "secret Memphis," the magical ingredients she feeds into her cauldron of reanimating blood are designed to evoke, perhaps parodically, Herodotus's descriptions of the marvels of the outlying parts of Egypt: Arabian flying serpents, the skins of Libyan

[15] *Gilgamesh*: 12.3.1.28; cf. Ganschinietz 1919: 2389–91; Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 592; Collard 1949: 6; Germain 1954: 375–76; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 2; Clark 1979: 34; Tropper 1986 and 1989: 62–69; Burkert 1992: 65; and West 1997b: 151–52 and 344–45. Esarhaddon: Finkel 1983–84: 1–3; Tropper 1989: 76–83; and Schmidt 1995: 117. *Lú gidim-ma*: Lu II iii 27'; Lu Excerpt I 183; OB Lu A 357, C_4 4; Hg. B IV 149; OB Lu C_4 6; Lu Excerpt II 19; cf. Tropper 1989: 58–62 and Scurlock 1995: 106. Incantation manuals: *BAM* 215:59//*SpTU* 2 no. 20 r. 22–26; cf. Tropper 1989: 83–103 and Scurlock 1995: 106–7. Akkadian ghost-laying: see chapter 7.

[16] 1 Samuel 28.3–25. For discussion of the episode see Klostermann 1912; Caquot 1968; Ebach and Rüterswörden 1977; Burns 1978; Smelik 1979; Finkel 1983–84: 15; Grotanelli 1987; Tropper 1989: 161–350 (esp. 205–27, with further bibliography at 362–71); Schmidt 1995; and West 1997b: 550–52 (with a close comparison to Aeschylus's necromancy of Darius). The ghost of Samuel prophesies after death also at (the apocryphal) Ecclesiasticus 46.23.

[17] Virgil *Eclogue* 8.95–99; Herodotus 2.13 and 101. His herbs are Pontic, as a nod to Medea (and to Heracleia?) and to the arcane nature of his supplies.

horned snakes, and the ashes of the phoenix. Volpilhac went so far as to argue that her rite reflected in part a recipe similar to those found in the Greek magical papyri from Egypt and in part an Egyptian mummification process. There is much ingenuity in her detailed points of comparison, but she has persuaded few.[18]

Two sources in particular make much of the association of necromancy with Egypt and its priests. The *Ps.-Clementina* (third century A.D.?) offer a simple example. They tell that as a young man, Clement of Rome was desperate to know whether the soul was immortal. He resolved to go to Egypt to find a priest to call up a dead man before him so that he could be sure. A philosopher friend dissuaded him from this impious course of action. But of particular interest and importance for its wider affinities is the tale told by Thessalus of Tralles in the preface to his book on the medicinal powers of plants, which he dedicated to Nero (ruled A.D. 54–68). He explains that as a keen young student, he had been frustrated by his failures to make the medicinal recipes of Nechepso work, despite following them faithfully, and that he eventually turned to a priest of Diospolis (Thebes) to find the key to them. This priest inspired the confidence of Thessalus by the gravity of his morality and the greatness of his age. He could produce visions (ghosts?) in a bowl of water. He arranged for Thessalus to consult a power. First he was made to fast for three days, while the priest prepared a special chamber. He then asked Thessalus whether he wanted to converse with the soul of a dead man (*psuchēi nekrou tinos*) or a god. Thessalus chose the god Asclepius. The priest accordingly summoned Asclepius with secret words and sealed Thessalus into the chamber, commanding him to look at the throne before him, on which the god duly materialized. Given that Thessalus is only asked to choose between ghost and god at an advanced stage in the proceedings, we may assume that the technique for calling up the ghost would have been identical. Clement of Alexandria (second–third century A.D.) doubtless had a similar chamber in mind in his passing reference to "*aduta* of the Egyptians" in association with *nekuomanteia* of the Etruscans. Of particular interest for the Thessalus narrative is an almost complementary fragment of a Greek novel in which a person expecting a manifestation of Asclepius is confronted rather by a ghost. But in any case, gods were not always what they seemed in such a context: Eunapius (later fourth century A.D.) tells of the ghost of a gladiator conjured up before

[18] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.677–80; cf. Herodotus 2.73–75. Volpilhac 1978: esp. 278–80 and 285–86; cf. also Collard 1949: 60 and 132; Baldini-Moscadi 1976; and Brashear 1992: 46. Neither Tupet (1988: 424) nor Gordon (1987a, unfairly describing Volpilhac's article as "worthless" at 235) are persuaded.

the philosopher Iamblichus by an Egyptian magician; it claimed to be Apollo.[19]

The elements of Thessalus's tale strongly recall those of the fragment of the perhaps slightly earlier ps.-Democritean *Physica et mystica* mentioned above. The great Persian mage Ostanes had begun to teach Democritus and his other keen pupils, including his own son, a second Ostanes, about the natures of substances, but he had died before he could teach them how to transmute them. So they called up his ghost in Memphis, whereupon it indicated to them that his secret books were hidden inside a temple. Unable to find them, they continued with their own attempts at transmutation, but, to their frustration, kept failing in it. Eventually a pillar in the temple split open to reveal the books. Democritus and his companions saw that they had been following the correct procedures, but that they had failed to appreciate the ideas that were key to the art, ideas encapsulated in a phrase written everywhere in the books: "Nature delights in nature; nature conquers nature; nature dominates nature." Both tales alike play with Egypt, inner chambers, magic books, eager pupils who follow correct technical procedures but fail to appreciate underlying principles, the revelation of these principles, and the evocation of ghosts. According to a related tradition, referred to by Pliny, Democritus also took the books of the Phoenician mage Dardanus from that man's tomb.[20]

The elements of both these tales in turn strongly recall those of the splendid Demotic Egyptian tale of Prince Khamwas or Setne, known from a Ptolemaic-period papyrus. It is difficult to judge the extent to which this tale is itself influenced by Greek culture; perhaps heavily. At the behest of a priest, Naneferkaptah steals the magical book of Thoth, who obtains from Pre (Ra) permission to destroy him, together with his family. Thoth accordingly drowns first his son Merib, then his sister-wife Ahwere, and finally Naneferkaptah himself in the Nile. Prior to his own death, Naneferkaptah uses a spell to call up the ghosts, or to raise up the bodies, of his wife and son from the bottom of the river, and then uses a further spell to make them reveal to him what had passed between Thoth and Pre. Then he buries them in Coptos. After his own drowning, Nanefer-

[19] [Clement of Rome] *Recognitions* 1.5; cf. Cumont 1949: 87 and 100. Thessalus of Tralles *De virtutibus herbarum* pp. 43–53 Friedrich; cf. Merkelbach and Totti 1990–92, 3: 84–85; and Bernand 1991: 269; cf. also the instruction of the Egyptian sorcerer at Lucian *Philopseudes* 34; ghosts and demons appear in underground Egyptian chambers also at Vettius Valens 67.5, 112.34, and 113.17 Kroll. Clement of Alexandria *Protrepticus* 111 P; cf. Eusebius *Praeparatio evangelica* 2.3.4–5 and Theodoret *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 10 (*PG* 83 p. 1061). Novel: *P.Oxy.* 416; cf. Stephens and Winkler 1995: 409–15. Eunapius: *Lives of Philosophers* 473.

[20] [Democritus] *Physica et mystica* 2 p. 42, 21 Berthelot (at Bidez and Cumont 1938, 2: 317–18). Pliny *Natural History* 30.9.

kaptah is buried in Memphis together with his precious book. Setne penetrates his tomb to steal the book for himself, despite the opposition of the manifested ghost of Ahwere and the awakened mummy of Naneferkaptah. But the pair torture Setne from afar with hallucinations until he returns the book and brings back the bodies of Ahwere herself and Merib from Coptos, where a chief of police has built a house over their resting place, to join Naneferkaptah in his tomb. In this tale, too, we have Egypt of course, priestly advice, a magical book, two young men keen to acquire technical expertise, penetration into an inner chamber, necromancy, and ghosts aplenty, and the revelation of hidden information.[21]

In Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, of the second century A.D., the Egyptian Zatchlas is called upon to reanimate the dead Thelyphron so that he may indicate his murderer. He is introduced as "an outstanding Egyptian prophet," and is said to resemble a typical Egyptian priest of Isis in appearance: shaven head, long linen shift, and palm-leaf sandals. Despite his expertise, he is still a young man. He must be persuaded to his task not only by the promise of a high fee, but by exhortations in the names of a series of Egyptian commonplaces. He achieves the reanimation and prophecy simply by placing one herb on the mouth of the corpse and another on its chest, by making appeal to the rising sun, and by threatening the corpse with torture by the Erinyes. The appeal to the sun-god and the laying of herbs on mouth and breast have been compared to the Egyptian mouth-opening ceremony.[22] Heliodorus's account of the reanimation of her dead son by an old woman of Bessa in Egypt is one of the most striking necromancy episodes from ancient literature. Her necromantic practices are described as impious but nonetheless common among the women of Egypt.[23] We shall discuss this episode shortly. There are several further examples of Egyptian necromancy in the Greco-Roman literary tradition.[24]

[21] *Setne* 1 = *P.Cairo* 30646, translated at Lichtheim 1973–80, 3: 127–38. See S. West 1983: 57; and (for Greek influence) Schmidt 1995: 116. For more on initiations and books in Egyptian *aduta*, see [Cyprian] *Confessions* 12; Jerome *Life of Hilarion the Hermit* 12; Arnobius *Against the Gentiles* 1.43; and Dio Cassius 75.13.2; cf. Graf 1997a: 90.

[22] Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.28–30; cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 579–81; and Collard 1949: 72; see Otto 1960 for Egyptian mouth-opening rituals.

[23] Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.13–15; cf. Bernand 1991: 282. Note also the general imputation of the central feature of her rite, circling around dead bodies, to the vulgar and earthly of Egypt's two wisdoms at 3.16.

[24] In the reign of Tiberius, Apion, an Alexandrian rhetorician, came to Rome and spoke of necromancy, but Pliny regarded him as an impostor (Pliny *Natural History* 30.18). In the *Confessions* attributed to Cyprian (earlier third century A.D.) the subject claims to have "heard the voice of the dead in tombs" in Egypt ([Cyprian] *Confessions* 2 p. 1107; cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 596). Macrianus, the chief of the Egyptian magicians, corrupted the emperor Valerian (ruled 253–60) into sacrificing children and babies for necromancy (Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* 7.10; see chapter 10). Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria under

When Lucian's Arignotus, the Greek Pythagorean, set out to lay the ghost in the haunted house of Eubatides in Corinth, he fortified himself during his nighttime ordeal in the house by reading "Egyptian" books by lamplight. When the ghost appeared, he drove it back into its grave with spells from the books. The compilers and users of the formularies or handbooks among the Greek magical papyri from third- and fourth-century A.D. Greco-Roman Egypt were magicians with wide-ranging interests, of which necromancy was of course one. Among their myriad influences, they believed themselves, rightly or wrongly, to be drawing upon ancient Egyptian wisdom. The largest of the handbooks, *PGM* IV, "the Great Magical Papyrus in Paris," contains recipes for necromancy and much else besides, including initiations, phylacteries against demons, lecanomancies, erotic binding, anger-restraining, astrology, the production of trances, exorcism, the promotion of business, and the inducing of dreams.[25]

There is much of the necromantic that can be pointed to in native Egyptian culture, but whether it had any impact on earlier Greek necromancy is doubtful. The Demotic tale of Setne we have already mentioned, but we noted that it may itself owe much to Greek culture. Isaiah's prophecy of the doom of Egypt raises the possibility that the Egyptians might resort to idols and oracle-mongers, ghosts and spirits. Egyptian "letters to the dead" have more in common with the Greek exploitation of ghosts for binding curses than for divination, although even this association is weak.[26]

Babylon and Persia effectively constituted the eastern extreme of the world for the Greeks, and Egypt similarly the southern. By chance, we also have preserved two stray references to necromancers from the other extremes of the compass. From the far north of the earth came Lucian's Hyperborean necromancer, who called up the ghost of Glaucias's father in his house, perhaps a salute to the shaman tradition of Abaris. The necromancer-witch turned by Virgil's Dido was a "Massylian" based in remote Ethiopia, but she was also, curiously, warden of the temple of the Hesperides in the far west.[27] These stray references do indicate that there was a tendency for the ancient imagination to locate necromantic specialists among the peoples on the margins of the known world. The origin of this tendency may have been the feeling that, like the Cimmerians,

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Julian (ruled A.D. 361–63), supposedly cut up boys and girls to inspect their entrails (Socrates *Ecclesiastical History* 3.13).

[25] Lucian *Philopseudes* 30–31. See chapter 13 for necromancy in *PGM* IV.

[26] Isaiah: Isaiah 19:3. For native Egyptian necromancy, see Demarée 1983; Tropper 1989: 27–46; Ritner 1993: 180–83; Schmidt 1995: 115–16; and Johnston 1999: 90–94.

[27] Lucian *Philopseudes* 13–14; for Hyperboreans, see Mellor 1968. Virgil *Aeneid* 4.478–93.

necromantic specialists should most appropriately live adjacently to the underworld. It was believed that one could reach the underworld by traveling to the edge of the (flat) earth, as Homer's Odysseus did.[28] But it may be that the notion of "cultural distancing" explains the phenomenon more efficiently, if only because it also accounts for the ancients' parallel tendency to project necromancy onto women.

. . . . .

The association of necromancy with female specialists in the Greco-Latin tradition begins already with the *Odyssey*, in which Circe presides in a significant way over Odysseus's consultation. But it was the Romans above all who took the literary female necromancer to their hearts, and Latin poetry affords many instances of them. In almost all cases, necromantic expertise is portrayed as one among a range of diverse supernatural powers exercised by the women, who should be conceptualized first and foremost as witches, with necromancy as one of their commonplace powers. The literary tradition produces no simple examples of nonspecialist women turning to necromancy. Aeschylus's Atossa is not particularly characterized as a specialist, but she is queen of a magical race. Valerius Flaccus's Alcimede, mother of Jason, has recourse to a Thessalian woman specialist to call up the ghost of Cretheus, to reassure herself about the fate of her son. Though this might imply that Alcimede was herself at best an amateur necromancer, her name suggests that she is nonetheless no stranger to witchcraft herself, since the *-med-/-mēd-* element is distinctive of witch names.[29]

Homer's Circe is the first great multitalented "witch" of Greek literature. She can tame animals with drugs; turn men into animals with potions, a wand, and perhaps spells; turn animals into men with ointment; pass through space unseen; and send magic winds.[30] She also appears to command some sort of erotic binding magic against which Odysseus must protect himself.[31] It is Circe who is the guiding expert behind Odys-

[28] Homer *Odyssey* 11.13–19.

[29] Atossa: Aeschylus *Persians* 598–842; cf. Lawson 1934: 80. Alcimede: Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 1.730–51; see Halm-Tisserant 1993: 35 for the name (cf. Medea and Perimede).

[30] Circe's general powers: Homer *Odyssey* 10.212–15, 237–43, 316–20, 392–96, 569–74, and 11.7. For Odysseus and Circe in general, see Paetz 1970; and Marinatos 1995. For the notion that Circe is "Persian," daughter of Perse or Perseis, see Headlam 1902: 55; and Lowe 1929: 87.

[31] Homer *Odyssey* 10.301 and 341. Those ensnared by witches do not return home: compare in the *Odyssey* Odysseus's fate at the hands of Calypso (1.13–15) and the fate of those ensnared by the songs of the Sirens (12.41–46). In Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, the witch Meroe was able to enslave Socrates and keep him from home by making him sleep

seus's necromancy. She tells Odysseus he must consult Tiresias by necromancy, gives him detailed instructions as to how to perform the rite, and provides him with the sheep he must sacrifice in the course of it. The text of the *Odyssey* as we have it entails that Circe's involvement in the necromancy goes further. First, Odysseus's ostensible purpose in making the consultation, as laid down by Circe, is to take directions for the journey home from Tiresias. But Tiresias gives no directions beyond implying that he may touch on Thrinacia, in the course of his warning not to eat the cattle of the Sun. When Odysseus returns to Circe, directly after the consultation, she already knows what Tiresias has said about Thrinacia, apparently without a word from Odysseus, and not only repeats the warning but even supplies proper route directions. This implies some sort of presence for Circe during the consultation. It is as if Circe had gone to the consultation herself (she could, after all, pass through space unseen), or even as if Odysseus had, at one level, never actually left Circe's island during it.[32] Second, as Odysseus and his men set off for the consultation, the youth Elpenor falls off Circe's roof and dies, remaining unburied before the house. His ghost accordingly confronts Odysseus first as he performs the necromancy and begs for burial, which Odysseus duly accomplishes on his return to the island. The poem as we have it seems undecided as to whether Odysseus is aware of the death before he sails. But Circe must be well aware of it, so why, given that she is now in a kind and generous mode, does she not bury him? Since the untimely dead, the unburied dead, and the request for burial are so integral to other necromancy scenes in Greek literature, it is probable that at some stage in the archeology of this oral poem, Elpenor or an equivalent figure, as opposed to Tiresias, was the prime agent of prophecy in Odysseus's consultation. The first implication of this is that Circe left Elpenor unburied in order that Odysseus could accomplish his consultation, and the second is that Circe mysteriously contrived his death in the first place.[33]

For all that the *Nekuia* contains some of the oldest poetry in the *Odys-*

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with her once (1.7), and the witches of Larissa rendered Thelyphron too ashamed to return home by mutilating him (2.30).

[32] Homer *Odyssey* 10.488–540 (Circe's necromantic instructions), 10.538–40 (Odysseus's purpose), 11.105–13 (Thrinacia), and 12.37–141 (Circe's directions); the scholiasts at 12.492 and Eustathius at 12.491 were troubled by this. For ancient scholarship on the *Nekuia* problems, see Petzl 1969; and Heubeck et al.1988–92, 2: 82–83. Cf. the observations of Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 3: 332–33; Headlam 1902: 55; Lowe 1929: 52; Lawson 1934: 80; Collard 1949: 24; and Lloyd-Jones 1967: 224. Marinatos 1995 interestingly argues that Circe should be seen as (among other things) a "goddess of death" and a liminal figure between the realms of life and death.

[33] Odysseus's silence about Elpenor as he describes his departure from Circe's island at 10.551–60 implies ignorance of his loss (what were his bench companions doing?). But at 11.53–54 *kateleipomen*, if read strongly, could imply deliberate abandonment of the body.

sey, it gives the appearance of having been inserted into the middle of a separately existing Circe episode. It starts at Circe's island and ends there, and it fulfills its ostensible narrative function of providing Odysseus with the information he needs to continue his journey less well than Circe herself does on his return. But the tempting inference that the *Nekuia* episode originated in a form independent of a Circe figure is probably fallacious. In the Akkadian *Gilgamesh*, a figure corresponding closely to Circe, Siduri, directs Gilgamesh to a forest across waters of death to find the dead Utnapishtim.[34]

We hear more of the necromantic Circe in later literature. Apollonius's Circe purifies Jason and Medea with a sacrifice after the murder of Apsyrtus and so helps in the laying of his ghost. She herself has experienced it in the form of a vision in which her palace walls dripped with blood. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, she calls up ghosts as a preliminary to turning Picus's companions into animals. A scholiast to Ps.-Lycophron tells that after Odysseus was killed by Telegonus, he was raised up again by Circe (*anestēse*). Tiresias's daughter Manto, his aide in necromantic rites, is said by Statius to resemble Circe and Medea, "but without the crimes."[35]

Medea, the multitalented Colchian, Circe's aunt or sister, was the most popular witch in Greek and Latin literature, but no elaborate necromancy scene survives for her. Apollonius implies in passing that she would wander in search of the dead. Ovid briefly attributes necromancy to her in a breathless resumé of her abilities (she can split the earth open and bring the dead from their tombs), and Valerius Flaccus tells that she raised ghosts with "Haemonian incantations." Seneca's Medea summons up the crowd of the silent dead to attend the wedding of Jason and Creusa (= Glauce) and to help her poisoned wedding dress do its work. Statius makes a second implicit attribution of necromancy to her when his Tiresias compares himself favorably to a Colchian woman calling up ghosts

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Cf. Clark 1979: 161. West 1997b: 164–65 notes that in the Sumerian version of *Gilgamesh* (12.4-6), those who have fallen from roofs constitute a special category of dead in the underworld.

[34] Homer *Odyssey* 11.1–5 (start) and 12.1–7 (end). For views on the compositional archeology of the *Nekuia* episode, see, e.g., Rohde 1881 and 1925: 32–33; Schwartz 1924: 137–49; Van der Valk 1935; Merkelbach 1969: 185–91, 209–30; Kirk 1962: 236–40; Bona 1966: 55–58; Clark 1979: 39–45 and 98; Vermeule 1979: 28; Bremmer 1983: 81; Burkert 1985: 196; Garland 1985: 150; Heubeck et al. 1988–92, 2: 5–11, 75–77, and 90–91; Bernstein 1993: 23 and Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 70–76. Utnapishtim: *Gilgamesh* tablet 10; cf. Clark 1979: 25–26 and 208; and West 1997b: 405–12. I use *Gilgamesh* as an example of an eastern Mediterranean folktale type. I do not suggest that the epic was a direct ancestor of the *Odyssey*.

[35] Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 4.659–717. Ovid *Metamorphoses* 14.403–15; cf. Headlam 1902: 58; Lowe 1929: 96; and Rabinowitz 1998: 105–6. Scholiast [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 805. Statius *Thebaid* 4.50–51.

with Scythian drugs. We have seen that Medea was associated with the building of the bridge across the Acherusian lake beside the Acheron *nekuomanteion*, which may imply that she performed necromancy there.[36]

Some more detailed descriptions of Medea at work show her involved in activities strongly akin to necromancy. In Apollonius's *Argonautica*, she instructs Jason in the activation of the drug of invincibility she has given him. The required rites strongly resemble the traditional ones of evocation, but no ghosts manifest themselves, and it seems that the function of the rites is simply to acquire the help of Hecate. Jason waits until the exact middle of the night, goes apart from others, washes in a river, puts on dark clothes, digs a round trench (*bothros*), piles faggots into it, slaughters a female sheep over it and makes a holocaust of it, propitiates Hecate, and pours libations over the sacrifice. Hecate duly appears in terrifying form with her attributes of snakes, dogs, and torches.[37] As we shall see in chapter 13, there is much that echoes reanimation necromancy in the tradition of Medea's various rejuvenations, as in the cases of Aeson, Pelias (deliberately perverted), Jason, the nurses of Dionysus, and a demonstration ram. The rejuvenations are accomplished either by hacking up the subject and boiling his limbs with magical ingredients in a cauldron, or by jugulating the subject, draining all the blood out of him, and then refilling his veins with a blood infused with magical ingredients.[38] According to one account, the rejuvenated ram with which Medea tricked the Peliades into murdering their father was itself a ghost she had conjured up.[39]

A popular topos of Latin poetry was the thumbnail sketch of a witch in a few lines. The splitting open of the earth, the evocation of ghosts, and the gruesome, maniacal plundering of tombs and pyres for body parts for magical purposes are commonplaces of these sketches. Other commonplaces include drawing down the moon or stars for erotic purposes,

[36] Apollonius of Rhodes *Argonautica* 4.51. Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.206; cf. Halm-Tisserant 1993: 28. Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 6.439–50. Seneca *Medea* 740–49, cf. 771–842 (prayer to Hecate). Statius *Thebaid* 4.504–6. Acherusian bridge: Ampelius *Liber memorialis* 8.3; cf. Hammond 1967: 366 n. 4; and see chapter 4. Speculation that Medea once supervised a necromancy in the lost Argonautic tradition is weakly founded: Huxley 1969: 67 and 72; cf. Clark 1979: 61 For Medea in general, see Lowe 1929: 67–87; Moreau 1994; and Clauss and Johnston 1997.

[37] Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 3.1024–45 and 1194–1224; cf. Rabinowitz 1998: 111. The *Orphic Argonautica* reworks Apollonius's sequence. Here Medea, alongside Orpheus, calls up Hecate and other dread underworld powers using, among other things, barleymeal voodoo dolls and sacrifices of black puppies.

[38] Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.159–349 is the most elaborate account; other accounts, going back to the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., are catalogued at Halm-Tisserant 1993: 243–47, with important discussion at 26–36. Cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 332 and chapter 13 for the kinship of such rejuvenation techniques with necromancy.

[39] Diodorus 4.51–52.

dissolving mountains, turning back rivers, controlling the weather, spiriting away crops (*excantatio cultorum*), compelling love with "horse-madness" (*hippomanes*) or a wryneck-wheel (*iunx*), often for themselves, and breaking existing loves. Such sketches are found in the work of Tibullus, Virgil, Ovid, and Claudian.[40] A favorite sub-type is the drunken bawd-witch, an old hag who uses her magic to make men fall in love with her girls and hand over vast sums for access to them. We find these, too, associated with necromancy in a passing way in the poetry of Tibullus and Ovid again, and also that of Propertius.[41] Within the Greco-Roman lands, Thessaly, the land into which Medea married, was the particular home of witches. Striking examples of necromantic Thessalians are to be found in the cases of Lucan's Erictho and Apuleius's various witches (discussed below). In addition, Statius and Valerius Flaccus furnish minor examples of the phenomenon.[42]

[40] Tibullus knows a witch who can split the ground, entice ghosts from graves, and call down bones from the warm pyre, holding ghosts with a magical screech and dismissing them by flicking milk at them (1.2.45–48; cf. Tupet 1976: 338–40). It is implied that Virgil's Amaryllis (if that is her name) has the ability to conjure up ghosts from the bottom of tombs with Pontic herbs, but she admittedly learned the skill from the male Moeris (*Eclogues* 8.98). Virgil's Dido has a Massylian witch, who makes the dead move by night and the earth bellow under one's feet (*Aeneid* 6.478–91). A hypothetical witch constructed by Ovid takes the form of an old woman who breaks open the ground with a disreputable spell and orders ghosts forth from the tomb (*Remedia amoris* 249–60). In Claudian's *In Rufinum* of A.D. 395–97 the Fury Megaera disguises herself as a male wizard but then boasts of a range of magical abilities familiar from earlier thumbnail sketches of witches; among these is the claim, "I have often propitiated the ghosts and Hecate with my rites at night and I have dragged back buried corpses to live by my incantations" (*In Rufinum* 1.154–56; cf. Levy 1971; ad loc.). For necromancy as a competitive topos in Latin poetry, see Liedloff 1884 and Collard 1949: 49. For drawing down the moon, see Hill 1973; Tupet 1976: 92–103; and Bicknell 1984. For the witches of Latin poetry in general, see Luck 1962; Caro Baroja 1964: 17–40; and Tupet 1976.

[41] In his curse against one such Tibullus prays that ghosts should ever flit around her complaining of their fates (1.5.49–56). Ovid's Dipsas ("Thirsty") calls forth remote ancestors from tombs and splits open the earth (*Amores* 1.8.17–18). Propertius's Acanthis, too, may be involved with necromancy: the raising of ghosts to achieve a curse (against crops?) may lie behind the obscure phrase, "If she were to move Colline herbs to the trench, things that stand would be dissolved in running water" (4.5.11–12, as interpreted by Goold 1990: ad loc.; but Tupet (1976: 361–64) has a different interpretation that deserves serious consideration; for Acanthis's bawd-witch qualities, see lines 2, 9–10, 13–18, 75–76).

[42] When Statius's ghost of Laius is led out of the underworld by Hermes, another ghost supposes that he has been ordered to move from his secret tomb by a Thessalian priestess (*Thebaid* 2.19–25). The same poet's Tiresias indignantly claims that he has better title to be heeded by the underworld powers as he attempts to call up ghosts than does a crazed Thessalian woman (*Thebaid* 4.504). When Jason's mother Alcimede is worried about her son in Valerius Flaccus's *Argonautica*, she turns to an old Thessalian woman, who organizes sacrifices to underworld Zeus and the Stygian ghosts, pours blood into a trench, makes incantations, and has the ghost of Alcimede's father-in-law Cretheus lay her fears to rest (*Argonautica* 1.730–51 and 780; cf. Eitrem 1941: 72–74). For the general phenomenon

We turn now to some of Latin's more elaborate literary portraits of witches in necromancy. Horace builds up a portrait of the hag Canidia in a series of poems from about 30 B.C. In the *Epodes* she claims the ability to raise even the cremated dead. In the *Satires* she is joined by a similar colleague, Sagana, and the two are described as "Furies." Here Canidia is pallid, she is dressed in black, her feet are bare, and her hair is in disarray. The two dig their trench in the former cemetery on the Esquiline with their nails and tear apart the sacrificial lamb with their bare hands. Sagana holds a shrill and mournful conversation with the ghosts called up. They are frightened off by the fart from a watching statue of Priapus. As they run, Canidia leaves behind her false teeth and Sagana an unfashionable tall wig. Their purpose in summoning the ghosts had been, in part at least, to achieve some erotic binding magic. Erotic magic is again their concern elsewhere in the *Epodes*, where, with two further friends, they starve a boy to death inside a house to make a love potion from his longing-imbued marrow and liver. Here we learn also that Canidia's hair is entwined with vipers and that she chews her uncut nails. Sagana lustrates the house with water from Lake Avernus.[43]

The most elaborate portrait of a witch setting about necromancy in Greco-Roman literature is the 400-line treatment of Erictho, who reanimates a corpse for Sextus Pompey in Lucan's *Pharsalia* of about A.D. 65.[44] Her entry is preceded by two elaborate introductions, the first on the wider phenomenon of Thessalian witches. The witches exercise the range of powers familiar from the thumbnail-sketch tradition, among which their ability to split open the earth is jocularly expressed: "Struck by a voice, the weight of such a great mass [planet earth] draws back and affords a view through to revolving Olympus." The second introduction focuses on Erictho herself, and in particular on her obsession with and

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of the Thessalian witch, see Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.413–506 and Pliny *Natural History* 30.1; cf. Bowersock 1965: 278–79 and Hill 1973. The name of Thessaly may originally have meant "land of magicians": Grégoire 1949.

[43] Horace *Epodes* 5 (starved boy; cf. Tupet 1976: 309–29), 17.79 (cremated dead), and *Satires* 1.8 (Esquiline; see the important discussion of Tupet 1976: 298–309). For a detailed study of Horace's three Canidia poems see Ingallina 1974 (esp. 97–101 for necromancy); see also Della Corte et al. 1991–94: ad loc. Porphyrion's claim at Horace *Epodes* 3.8 and 5.43 that "Canidia" represented a real Neapolitan witch Gratidia is believed by Manning (1970).

[44] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.413–830. For discussion of this episode, see Fahz 1904; Bruce 1913; Rose 1913; Bourgery 1928; Eitrem 1941: 70–72; Dick 1963; Morford 1967: 59–74; Ahl 1969 and 1976: 130–49; Schotes 1969: 50–99; Paratore 1974 and 1992: 55–66; Fauth 1975; Baldini-Moscadi 1976; Martindale 1977 and 1980; Volpilhac 1978; Marastoni 1979; Gordon 1987a (Erictho inspired by the Lamia?); Johnson 1987: 19–33; O'Higgins 1988; Tupet 1988 (an anti-book 6 to that of the *Aeneid*?); Verberne 1988; Braund 1989; Longo 1989; Masters 1992: 179–215 (good for the combination of comedy and horror in the scene); Viansino 1995: ad loc.; and Korenjak 1996.

magical exploitation of the dead, whom she resembles. She is old and wasted, she has a Stygian pallor and disheveled hair (which she binds up with vipers as she gets down to the work of the reanimation), and even her tread brings death to plants. She manipulates ghosts with ease: she speaks with the "silent" dead and sends messages down to the ghosts in the underworld through the mouths of corpses. In a humorous inversion of ghost-laying practice, she drives ghosts away from their tombs so as to live in the tombs herself, only emerging at night, again as if a ghost herself.[45] A paradox harnesses her magical assassinations with her exploitation of cadaverous material for necromancy or cursing:

> She buries in tombs the living souls that still direct the body's limbs. Death approaches them against her (Death's) will, when the fates still owe them years. With inverted procession she brings the funeral back from the tomb, and the corpses escape death.
>
> —Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.529–32

Her techniques for collecting body parts are expounded in detail. The bones of the untimely dead are snatched from hot pyres, eyeballs are clawed out of coffined corpses, and fetuses are ripped from wombs. When the muscle of a hanging corpse defies her attempts to detach it, she bites it and hangs her weight from it. She inveigles herself into funerals and gnaws off facial parts while pretending to kiss the corpse. She weaves spells to bind the raging Roman civil war to Thessaly in order to procure a massive fund of body parts for her work, and she particularly anticipates the opportunity to lay hands on the more exalted generals. But when Erictho enters the action, the personality she exhibits is at odds with the monster we have been led to expect. She displays a touching pride that her fame has preceded her, she is pleased to respond to Sextus's request for help, and throughout the ensuing selection of the battlefield corpse and reanimation of it, she is presented as an affable, courteous, reassuring, and competent professional.[46]

Statius (late first century A.D.) twice alludes to the Erictho scene. In the *Thebaid*, he compares Theban Ide, crawling and wailing over the bodies on a battlefield in search of her dead twins, to a Thessalian witch. He explains that it is the traditional Thessalian obscenity to reanimate (*renovare*) a person by incantation. Such a witch turns over the host of the dead on their battlefield by night and tries out the ghosts (*manes*) to see to which body-tomb (*bustum*) she should give orders for the gods (curiously the gods above), while the sad assemblies of souls (*animae*) complain and the father of black Avernus is indignant. In the *Silvae*, Statius

[45] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6. 483–84, 507–21, 654–56 and 568.

[46] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.533–87 (garnering of body parts; cf. *Anthologia Latina* no. 294 Shackleton-Bailey, quoted above), 6.604 (fame and pride; cf. 569), 6.657–66 (affable professional; cf. Ahl 1976: 132). See chapter 13 for the reanimation.

consoles Lucan's widow Polla Argentaria by suggesting that Lucan's ghost may respond to her calling by returning to the surface for a day (like Protesilaus).[47]

Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* (ca. A.D. 160s) introduces us to several Thessalian witches whose powers include necromantic ones, alongside the usual gamut of powers from the thumbnail-sketch tradition, in particular the ability to transform themselves and others into all sorts of animals. The terrible old hag Meroe, an innkeeper at Hypata near Larissa, can raise ghosts and open up the underworld. She achieves binding curses with the ghosts called up. By making tomb offerings in a ditch, she prevails upon them to seal up an entire town in its houses. In a thrilling narrative, Apuleius tells how, together with her colleague Panthia, she hunts down her errant lover Socrates and magically bursts the door to his hotel room from its hinge during the night as he sleeps. She jugulates him, collects his blood in a leather bottle, pulls his heart out through the wound, inserts a sponge into it, leaving no sign of harm, and then recites a spell, "O sponge, born in the sea, be sure not to pass over a river." The witches empty their bladders over Socrates' terrified companion Aristomenes before departing and magically restoring the door to its hinge. Aristomenes's belief that Socrates has been killed seems mistaken when he awakes, but later on, when Socrates leans over a river to drink from it, the sponge leaps out again and he is dead once and for all. It emerges that he was after all killed in the night, but has been temporarily reanimated to allow the witches time to dissociate themselves from the crime. The witch Pamphile, also of Thessalian Hypata, is said to be a mistress of every tomb-related incantation and to be obeyed by ghosts. Her workshop contains many body parts, alongside crucifixion nails with flesh still clinging to them and inscribed metal tablets, all presumably for necromantic or cursing purposes. And at Thessalian Larissa, the local witches, "Harpies," who have the ability to shape-shift into birds, dogs, mice, flies, and weasels, and who wish to gather body parts for their magic, attempt during the night to raise the corpse of Thelyphron from outside the locked room in which it is kept, and make it march over to a chink in the wall through which they can slice off its nose and ears before replacing them with wax prostheses. Later on in Lucius's adventures, the miller's wife prevails upon a greedy old crone known to be skilled in binding curses and witchcraft to send the miserable ghost of a woman to kill her husband. He is found hanged, presumably after having been terrified into suicide by the ghost. As a result of this death, the miller's ghost acquires prophetic powers and

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appears before his daughter to tell her what has happened. The localization of this episode is vague, but Lucius appears to be still in Thessaly at this point.[48]

Heliodorus perhaps wrote his Greek novel *Aethiopica* as late as the fourth century A.D. His old woman of Bessa in Egypt initially appears to be merely a harmless grieving mother looking for the body of her son on a battlefield, like Statius's Ide, but once she has found the body she sets about reanimating it to ask after its brother's fate. Heliodorus at first implies that there is nothing abnormal about the practice of necromancy in itself by Egyptian women, but by the end of the episode the vituperation of the woman by the corpse makes it clear that her actions are highly unsanctioned. The corpse's revelation that she has been spied upon during her rite turns her into a murderous frenzy. She seems to fear that she has become a victim of the evil eye.[49]

The association of the Sibyls with necromancy is confined to the traditions relating to Avernus discussed above. Virgil's Sibyl Deiphobe, daughter of Glaucus, is to some extent assimilated to a witch. Thus, she is "to be shuddered at" (*horrendae*), she is aged, and she is a priestess of Hecate/Trivia. Also, she plays the structural role in the *Aeneid* taken by Circe in the *Odyssey*, that of guiding the hero through the process of consultation. But there is nothing "unauthorized," destructive, wicked, or deceitful about her, and she also occupies the venerable role of priestess of Apollo. Silius Italicus's living Sibyl Autonoe (late first century A.D.), who advises Scipio Africanus in his necromancy, is not heavily characterized, but she resembles a witch also insofar as her directions to him for the rite conservatively follow those of Circe to Odysseus, and her own participation in it conservatively follows that of Virgil's Deiphobe. Autonoe stands in awe of the far greater powers of the dead Sibyl that preceded her, who again is basically uncharacterized, but is presumably to be identified with Virgil's Deiphobe. Once the dead Sibyl's ghost appears, Autonoe relinquishes control of the consultation to her, and it is the dead woman who, just like Homer's Tiresias and Virgil's Anchises before her, takes on the role of expertly presenting the underworld, its organization, and its inhabitants to the consulter.[50]

Some of these women necromancers are strongly characterized as wicked, but this is by no means true of all of them. The tendency toward such a characterization is explicable by fact that most of the evidence for

[48] Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 1.7–19 (Meroe and Panthia), 2.5, 3.15–18 (Pamphile), 2.21–30 (Thelyphron), and 9.29–31 (miller; this episode takes place within Thessaly in view of 10.18; I thank John Morgan for advice on this point).

[49] Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.12–15.

[50] Virgil *Aeneid* 6, esp. lines 10–13, 35–36, 268, and 564; cf. Eitrem 1945: 90–91 and 102–8. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.401–34 and 488–894.

consoles Lucan's widow Polla Argentaria by suggesting that Lucan's ghost may respond to her calling by returning to the surface for a day (like Protesilaus).[47]

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appears before his daughter to tell her what has happened. The localization of this episode is vague, but Lucius appears to be still in Thessaly at this point.[48]

Heliodorus perhaps wrote his Greek novel *Aethiopica* as late as the fourth century A.D. His old woman of Bessa in Egypt initially appears to be merely a harmless grieving mother looking for the body of her son on a battlefield, like Statius's Ide, but once she has found the body she sets about reanimating it to ask after its brother's fate. Heliodorus at first implies that there is nothing abnormal about the practice of necromancy in itself by Egyptian women, but by the end of the episode the vituperation of the woman by the corpse makes it clear that her actions are highly unsanctioned. The corpse's revelation that she has been spied upon during her rite turns her into a murderous frenzy. She seems to fear that she has become a victim of the evil eye.[49]

The association of the Sibyls with necromancy is confined to the traditions relating to Avernus discussed above. Virgil's Sibyl Deiphobe, daughter of Glaucus, is to some extent assimilated to a witch. Thus, she is "to be shuddered at" (*horrendae*), she is aged, and she is a priestess of Hecate/Trivia. Also, she plays the structural role in the *Aeneid* taken by Circe in the *Odyssey*, that of guiding the hero through the process of consultation. But there is nothing "unauthorized," destructive, wicked, or deceitful about her, and she also occupies the venerable role of priestess of Apollo. Silius Italicus's living Sibyl Autonoe (late first century A.D.), who advises Scipio Africanus in his necromancy, is not heavily characterized, but she resembles a witch also insofar as her directions to him for the rite conservatively follow those of Circe to Odysseus, and her own participation in it conservatively follows that of Virgil's Deiphobe. Autonoe stands in awe of the far greater powers of the dead Sibyl that preceded her, who again is basically uncharacterized, but is presumably to be identified with Virgil's Deiphobe. Once the dead Sibyl's ghost appears, Autonoe relinquishes control of the consultation to her, and it is the dead woman who, just like Homer's Tiresias and Virgil's Anchises before her, takes on the role of expertly presenting the underworld, its organization, and its inhabitants to the consulter.[50]

Some of these women necromancers are strongly characterized as wicked, but this is by no means true of all of them. The tendency toward such a characterization is explicable by fact that most of the evidence for

[48] Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 1.7–19 (Meroe and Panthia), 2.5, 3.15–18 (Pamphile), 2.21–30 (Thelyphron), and 9.29–31 (miller; this episode takes place within Thessaly in view of 10.18; I thank John Morgan for advice on this point).

[49] Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.12–15.

[50] Virgil *Aeneid* 6, esp. lines 10–13, 35–36, 268, and 564; cf. Eitrem 1945: 90–91 and 102–8. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.401–34 and 488–894.

women necromancers derives from the Latin literary wicked-witch tradition. This tradition, of which necromancy proper forms a relatively small part, has its own dynamics. The negative attitudes focused upon witchcraft were not out of place in Roman society, which was in general far more anxious about magic and divination than Greek society ever had been, as we shall see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 10

NECROMANCY AMONG THE ROMANS

THE Romans generally took a dimmer view of the practitioners of necromancy than the Greeks did. Already in the late Republic, one could abuse one's enemies by attributing necromantic practices to them, and the deviance of necromancy was built up by association with human sacrifice. In the imperial period, if not before, the practice of necromancy would have fallen foul of general laws against magic and divination and (in the cases of alleged human sacrifices) murder. Under the empire, the practice was associated above all with the emperors themselves and with their supposed enemies, who allegedly used it to divine the occasions of their deaths. The attribution of necromancy to the emperors helped to portray them as distracted, desperate, and excessive in a number of ways. The emperors' fear of the performance of necromancy to divine the occasions of their deaths may have been caused not just by the fear of the implicit hostile intent and of its revolutionary resonances, but also by the fear that such an act of prediction might in itself hasten their demise.

. . . . .

Among Republican Romans, necromancy is explicitly associated with Vatinius, Nigidius Figulus, Appius Claudius Pulcher, and Sextus Pompey. Cicero accuses Vatinius of the practice in a superb piece of invective in 56 B.C.:

> You, who are accustomed to call yourself a Pythagorean and to conceal behind the name of a most learned man your monstrous and barbarian customs, what crookedness of mind possessed you, what frenzy so great, that, although you have undertaken unheard-of criminal rites, although you are accustomed to call up the spirits of the dead, although you are accustomed to make sacrifices to the ghosts of the dead with the entrails of boys. . . .
>
> —Cicero *Against Vatinius* 14

If this rhetoric is rooted in any reality, that reality is likely to have been Vatinius's espousal of Pythagoreanism.[1] If any necromancer did sacrifice

[1] Tupet (1976: 206–8 and 1986: 2664 and 2671–72) urges that the allegations are true; cf. Garosi 1976: 55–58 and 68. For Neo-Pythagoreanism at Rome and its magical associations, see Furtwängler 1900, 3: 257–63; Nock 1927 and 1929: 187–88; Dodds 1973: 207; and Rawson 1985: 30 and 94.

boys, it will have been to create a ghost for necromantic exploitation, but the more usual association of boys with necromancy was probably as mediums for it (see chapter 12).

The scholiast to the *Against Vatinius* misidentifies the "learned man" behind whose name Vatinius hides as the Pythagorean Nigidius Figulus (died 45 B.C.), but the misidentification serves to indicate that Nigidius Figulus was independently associated with necromancy. He is at any rate said to have put a boy-medium under a spell so that he could find the fate of some stolen money, part of which had been buried and part of which had been spent. The boy may have communicated with ghosts like that of Melissa, which located lost treasure for Periander. The extant fragments of Nigidius's writings display interest in a range of divination techniques: augury, hieroscopy, oneiromancy, brontoscopy (divination by thunder), and astrology. The widespread notion that Nigidius was responsible for introducing necromancy to Rome appears unfounded and implausible given that the Romans had long been familiar with the necromantic traditions of Cumae.[2]

In 45–44 B.C. Cicero twice claimed briefly and disparagingly that "rites of necromancy" were practiced by Appius Claudius Pulcher, the consul of 54 B.C. and subsequently governor of Achaea. At the same time, he slyly compared Appius's emergence at gladiatorial shows to the emergence of the ghost of Deiphilus in Pacuvius's *Iliona* by using a distinctive quotation from the ghost's speech in that play. The allegation of necromancy, if untrue, was lent credibility by Appius's demonstrated devotion to divination, the underworld, and the combination of the two. Augur in 63 B.C., he wrote a book on the office; in 50 B.C. he restored the small propylaea at Eleusis and was rewarded by the Athenians with a statue; and his benefactions toward Amphiaraus were similarly rewarded with a statue by the Oropians. Appius must have had a name for necromancy already in 56 B.C., when Cicero abused his brother and sister Clodius and Clodia in his speech in defense of Caelius. The jury will have assumed that the "empty terrors of the night" that had driven Clodius incestuously into Clodia's bed had been summoned up by Appius. In another dig at Appius, Cicero rhetorically raised their austere ancestor Appius Claudius Caecus from the dead (*exsistat*) to abuse the dissolute Clodia.[3] Cicero

[2] Scholiast Cicero *Against Vatinius* 14 = Nigidius Figulus T x Swoboda; cf. Furtwängler 1900, 3: 260–61; Morford 1967: 63; Garosi 1976: 55–56; Tupet 1976: 205 and 1986: 2670–72; Volpilhac 1978: 275; and Dickie 1999: 168–72 (the last of whom, however, does think that Cicero is naming Nigidius as Vatinius's mentor). Nigidius uses boy to find money: Apuleius *Apology* 42. Nigidius's fragments: collected in Swoboda 1964; he pronounces astrological prophecy at Lucan *Pharsalia* 1.638–72. Nigidius did not introduce necromancy to Rome: *pace* Kroll 1936; Cumont 1949: 98; and Viansino 1995: 499.

[3] Appius's necromancy: Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.37 (*nekuomanteia*, n. pl., Greek, 44 B.C.) and *On Divination* 1.132 (*psychomantia*, n. pl., Latin, 45–44 B.C.); cf. Tupet 1976: 206 and 1986: 2671. Appius as Deiphilus: Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.44; Pacuvius at

more than once justified this sort of trope: "It is permitted to orators and philosophers that the mute should speak and the dead be evocated from the lower world." When the trope acquired a technical term, it was *eidōlopoiia*, "ghost-making." (Another entertaining use of such imagery in the courtroom deserves mention. In 55 B.C. Pompey the Great joked that Helvius Mancia of Formiae, the lowborn and very aged accuser of Libo before the censors, had been "sent up from those below." Helvius appropriated the notion and remarked upon how many ghosts of fine Romans he had seen down there lamenting the fact that Pompey had butchered them.[4]) Lucan was to portray the divination-obsessed Appius forcing the Pythia Phemonoe to reopen the defunct Delphic oracle and prophesy about his fate in the civil war, thus causing her death. Critics contend that the episode mirrors Erictho's necromancy scene in a significant way.[5]

Necromantic stories clustered around the figure of Sextus Pompey, son of Pompey the Great. He is the instigator of the reanimation necromancy by Lucan's Erictho. It was to him that the corpse of Gabienus gave a spontaneous necromancy during the Sicilian war (38–36 B.C.). By tradition, the ghost of his father visited him in a dream and told him to flee or to come to him the night before he died in Sicily in 36 B.C. (In fact, though, he died in Asia.) Might not Sextus be, or be associated with, the "impious chief priest of an unspeakable religion" that shamefully calls up the ghost of Pompey the Great in the Latin epigram attributed to Seneca? The description "impious" (*impius*) appears to be an ostentatious contradiction of Sextus's assumed surname of "Pious" (*Pius*). The projection of Sextus Pompey as a keen necromancer was perhaps a consequence of Agrippa's eradication of the ghosts from Avernus when he converted it into a military harbor in 37 B.C.; this was in the course of and in pursuance of the war against Sextus. Libo Drusus, who was to be accused of calling up ghosts under Tiberius (see below), was the grand-nephew of Sextus.[6]

Warmington 1935–40, 2: 239; cf. Hickman 1938: 81. Augurship book: Cicero *Ad familiares* 3.4.1, 3.9.3, and 3.11.4; cf. Münzer 1899: 2853. Eleusis: *CIL* 1.619 = *CIL* 3.547 (inscription); *IG* II^2 4109 (statue base); and Cicero *Ad Atticum* 6.1.26 and 6.6.2; cf. Münzer 1899: 2853. Amphiaraus: Petrakos 1968: 154 no. 9. Clodius's incest: Cicero *Pro Caelio* 36. Caecus: Cicero *Pro Caelio* 34.

[4] Cicero on the trope: *Topica* 45; cf. *De oratore* 1.245 and *Orator* 85; cf. Ganschinietz 1919: 2417. *Eidōlopoiia*: Hermogenes *Progymnasmata* 9 (second century A.D.) and Aphthonius *Progymnasmata* 11 (fourth to fifth century A.D.). Helvius Mancia: Valerius Maximus 6.2.8.

[5] Lucan *Pharsalia* 5.111–236; see Ahl 1976: 130 and Masters 1992: 181–95; cf. also Morford 1967: 65–66. Phemonoe's correspondence with Virgil's frenzied Sibyl becomes explicit at 183; cf. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.77–97.

[6] Erictho: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.419–830. Gabienus: Pliny *Natural History* 7.178–79. Dream: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.813 with scholiast ad loc., for which see Masters 1992: 203 and Viansino 1995: ad loc. Sextus's actual death in Asia: Dio Cassius 49.18. Senecan epigram:

In the imperial period, necromancy was particularly associated with the emperors themselves. The attribution of necromancy to them was a convenient way of expressing their distracted insanity, their attachment to bizarre un-Roman customs, their abuse of wealth and power, their anxiety about their own position, their homicidal cruelty and ensuing guilt, and their desire to compete with gods.

Nero (ruled A.D. 54–68) is the emperor to whom the most elaborate traditions of necromancy attach. After killing his mother Agrippina at Baiae in A.D. 59, he felt himself pursued by her ghost and by Furies, who chased him with whips and torches, as we learn from Suetonius. He turned to Persian mages to conjure up the ghost so that he could beg its forgiveness. Before the killing, Nero had never dreamed, but afterward he was plagued by doom-laden dreams that included the doors of a mausoleum opening of their own accord and bidding him enter. His awareness of his impious condition after the killing deterred Nero from participation in the Eleusinian mysteries; perhaps he feared meeting Agrippina again in the underworld descent that initiation entailed. Tacitus and Dio tell of the terrible effect upon Nero, in the aftermath of the killing, of the sight of the Baiae coast and of the sounds of trumpet blasts from nearby hills and the wails from Agrippina's (inadequate) place of burial. He could not escape them even by changing house, and so he ran off to Naples. But what else could one who had committed murder beside Avernus, of all places, expect? Indeed, Nero's first attempt to murder his mother with a collapsible boat had even taken place on Gulf Lucrinus, just before Avernus, and, according to some, the Acherusian lake.[7]

Several details of Nero's "biography" uncannily recall the Corinthian Periander's. Just as Periander had kicked Melissa to death in pregnancy, so Nero kicked to death his wife Poppaea in pregnancy in A.D. 65. Nero had her body stuffed and embalmed: an unusual way for Romans to dispose of their dead, but precisely the necrophilia-driven fate we reconstructed for Melissa, with the help of the tale of Mariamme. We saw also that the tradition that Periander had sex with his mother was closely bound up with the tradition relating to Melissa. There were rumors simi-

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Anthologia Latina no. 406 Riese = *PLM* 4 p. 60 Baehrens (Seneca no. 16); Herrmann (1946: 305–7) and Grenade (1950: 28–33) both believe *Magnus* to refer to the evocator, but it surely refers to the ghost, not least in view of the fact that the poem's lemma is "On rites to evocate the ghosts of the Magni"; cf. Collard 1949: 51–52; Herrmann argues that the evocator was Cn. Pompeius Magnus, the son-in-law of Claudius executed in A.D. 47, and that his impious religion was Christianity. Agrippa: Strabo C245. Libo Drusus: Tacitus *Annals* 2.28; cf. Syme 1986: 256–57.

[7] Suetonius *Nero* 34 and 46; Tacitus *Annals* 14.5 and 9–10 (cf. Köstermann 1963–68: ad loc.); and Dio Cassius 61.14; cf. Statius *Silvae* 2.7.119. The ghost of Agrippina appears also at [Seneca] *Octavia* 593–645. See chapter 5 for Gulf Lucrinus.

larly of attempted incest between Nero and Agrippina. If Agrippina was held to be the more ardent, Nero even so kept a mistress who was the spitting image of her. After her killing, Nero fondled his mother's limbs and discussed their beauty, in necrophiliac fashion. Agrippina had significantly invited her assassins to strike her in the womb that had borne Nero, just as Melissa and Poppaea died by blows to the womb. Nero encountered some Corinthian ghosts of his own when he started work on the Corinth canal.[8]

For Pliny, Nero was obsessed with magic in general, and longed to issue commands to the gods themselves. No rites, however alien or wild, were less gentle than his thoughts. Despite devoting the world's greatest power and wealth to the pursuit of necromancy, he achieved nothing with it, and so eventually abandoned it. The ironic observation is added that Nero's cruelty, by contrast, did succeed in filling Rome with ghosts. Pliny names the Armenian mage Tiridates as his chief instructor in necromancy. He came to Rome in A.D. 66 long after Agrippina's death, but shortly after Poppaea's. Pliny scoffs at the excuses Tiridates gave Nero for failure, namely the want of a perfectly black sheep and the want of human sacrifice. Some critics believe Nero to have been the model for his poet Lucan's necromantic Sextus Pompey. Is it significant that Thessalus dedicated his book with its quasi-necromantic introduction to Nero?[9]

The practice of necromancy was attributed to several subsequent emperors, pagan and Christian. In the earlier empire it was practiced by Otho (ruled A.D. 69) and Hadrian (ruled A.D. 117–38). Otho killed Galba and had himself declared emperor. During the following night he was terrified by Galba's ghost and made to scream aloud. After this he did all he could to propitiate it, which will certainly have included some form of necromancy. Though some believed that Hadrian's favorite, Antinous, died by drowning in the Nile, others held that he had been sacrificed (*hierourgētheis*) by Hadrian, who was interested in all sorts of divinations and sorceries, so that he could practice necromancy, "for a willing soul was required." Hadrian made an artificial underworld at his Tiburtine villa: a *psuchomanteion* in which to converse with the ghost of Antinous? Antinous's restless ghost may have continued to lend itself to magical

[8] Killing of Poppaea: Pliny *Natural History* 12.83; Tacitus *Annals* 16.6; Suetonius *Nero* 35; and Dio Cassius 62.28; cf. Ameling 1986b and Holzrattner 1995: 128–32 and chapter 4, for the Periander parallel; cf. Cumont 1949: 47; and Volpilhac 1978: 286, for the embalming. Incest with Agrippina: Tacitus *Annals* 14.2–3 and 8; and Dio Cassius 61.11 and 13. Corinth canal: Dio Cassius 67.16.

[9] Pliny: *Natural History* 30.14–18; cf. Cumont 1933, 1949: 102; Massoneau 1934: 124–25; Garosi 1976: 24–25; and Gordon 1987b: 76–77. Nero as Lucan's model: Bourgery 1928: 304; Cumont 1949: 102; Morford 1967: 70; Fauth 1975: 332; Baldini-Moscadi 1976: 141–42; Volpilhac 1978: 286; Gordon 1987a: 241; and Masters 1992: 179 and 211. Thessalus's dedication: so Volpilhac 1978: 285.

exploitation. One of the most important ancient curse texts to survive, a text from the third or fourth century A.D. that accompanied the Louvre voodoo doll from the namesake city of Antinoopolis, is addressed to Antinous, the local restless ghost.[10]

The end of the second century A.D. and the beginning of the third were particularly rich in imperial necromancy, with Commodus (ruled A.D. 180–92), Didius Julianus (ruled 193), Caracalla (ruled A.D. 198–217), and Elagabalus (ruled A.D. 218–22) all allegedly practicing it. The *Suda* appends to its note on *psuchagōgoi* the puzzling claim that "Antoninus the emperor of the Romans called up the ghost of his father Commodus." But none of the Antoninus emperors was son of Commodus. The neat solution is Bernhardy's, which posits that the names of the protagonists have been transposed: the emperor Commodus called up the ghost of his father Marcus Aurelius, who was indeed an Antoninus. If so, perhaps Commodus's purpose was to lay a vengeful ghost, for he had had his father poisoned. Collard's solution is rather that "the emperor Antoninus" was Caracalla (formally M. Aurelius Severus Antoninus), and that he called up Commodus not *as* but *as well as* his father. Dio tells that Caracalla was pursued with a sword by the ghosts of his father Septimius Severus and his brother Geta, the latter of whom he had killed. To be free of them he called up many ghosts, including that of his father, who came accompanied by the unsummoned ghost of Geta, and that of Commodus, which was the only ghost that would speak to him. Necromancy hastened Caracalla's own demise, too. Concerned that he was being fed false prophecies by his prophets, he wrote to Maternianus, whom he had left in charge in Rome, and told him to consult the best diviners and to call up the dead (*nekuiai chrēsamenōi*), in order to see how he would die, and whether anyone was plotting to overthrow him. Maternianus, either for personal reasons or because the ghosts had spoken accurately, named Macrinus as plotting to seize the empire. But by a quirk of fate Macrinus intercepted the letter, and so assassinated the emperor in order to escape death himself. Didius Julianus killed many boys for magical rites "as if he would be able actually to divert part of the future, if he knew it in advance," according to Dio. This may again be a malicious reading of his use of boy-mediums. Spartianus tells that he performed catoptromancy by bandaging a boy's eyes and then (presumably after unbandaging them)

[10] Otho: Suetonius *Otho* 7. Hadrian's necromantic sacrifice of Antinous: Dio Cassius 69.11. Tiburtine *psuchomanteion*: thus Ganschinietz 1919: 2379, on the basis of Spartianus (SHA) *Hadrian* 26.5. Antinous curse text: published at *Suppl. Mag.* no. 47 (= Gager 1992: no. 28 and Jordan 1985a: no. 152); it closely resembles *PGM* IV.296–408; the doll is Faraone 1991a: no. 27; it is not certain that the tablet's Antinous is to be regarded as the famous one.

having him look into a mirror. Elagabalus is similarly said to have interrogated the entrails of beautiful boys.[11]

Among the later emperors, Valerian (ruled 253–60) and Maxentius (ruled 306–12) are said to have turned to necromancy. Eusebius tells that the Christian Valerian was corrupted by Macrianus, the chief of the Egyptian magicians. He persuaded Valerian to perform magical rites. These involved the cutting of poor boys' throats, the sacrificing of the children of poor men, and the investigation of the entrails of newborn babies to obtain prosperity. If this was not actually necromancy, it was close. Eusebius similarly tells that Maxentius turned to witchcraft, summoned up demons, opened the wombs of pregnant women, and inspected the entrails of newborn babies. Constantius II (ruled 337–61) is not directly attributed with the performance of necromancy, but he is said to have been attacked in his dreams by the shrieking ghosts of those he had killed.[12]

Ironically, the Rome of the emperors witnessed antiquity's most hostile legal environment for necromancy. Already in the days of the Republic, the Roman state had been anxious about foreign cults, with which it associated the divinations and other activities of the mages and the Chaldaeans. It had seen such cults as hotbeds of revolutionary activity. This was well illustrated in the notorious Bacchanalian affair of 186 B.C. With the arrival of the empire, the state effectively came to be embodied in the person of the emperor, and the revolutionary threat supposedly represented by foreign cults, mages, and Chaldaeans now accordingly became focused upon him.[13] The point is well made in a speech Dio puts into Agrippa's mouth after his expulsion in 33 B.C. of "astrologers and sorcerers":

[11] *Suda*: s.v. [*peri*] *psuchagōgias*; Bernhardy 1843: ad loc.; and Collard 1949: 113; cf. also Massoneau 1934: 128. Commodus poisons his father: Dio Cassius 72.33. Caracalla, Geta, and Commodus: Dio Cassius 77.15. Caracalla, Maternianus, and Macrinus: Herodian 4.12–14 and Dio Cassius 79.4–7; cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 590–91. Didius Julianus: Dio Cassius 73.16; Spartianus (SHA) *Didius Julianus* 7; cf. Delatte 1932: 139–41. Elagabalus: Lampridius (SHA) *Elegabalus* 8; Bevan 1926 identifies him as the *Suda*'s "Antoninus."

[12] Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* 7.10 (Valerian), 8.14, and *Life of Constantine* 1.36 (Maxentius). Constantius II: Ammianus 14.11.17.

[13] The Bacchanalian affair: see the *s.c. de Bacchanalibus* = *ILS* 18 and Livy 39.8–14. Cf. Cornelius Hispalus's expulsion of the Chaldaeans and Jews in 139 B.C. (Valerius Maximus 1.3.3), and Ps. Paulus's commentary on the Sullan *Lex Cornelia* of 81 B.C., with its insistence on the burning of mages (*Sententiae* 5.23.14–19). For Roman legislation against magic, see in particular Pharr 1932: 277–95; Massoneau 1934: 136–261; Barb 1963; and Gordon 1999: 243–66; cf. also Segal 1981: 357; Annequin 1973: 150 has a useful table. For views on the function of sorcery accusation in general in the late empire, see Brown 1970.

> You should hate and punish those who introduce foreign elements into our religion, not just for the sake of the gods (for if a man despises the gods, he could hardly have respect for anyone else), but because men of this sort, by importing new powers (*daimonia*), persuade many people to take up foreign customs, and from this are born conspiracies and gatherings and secret clubs, which are the last thing a monarchy needs. Do not, then, permit people to be atheists or sorcerers (*goētes*).
>
> —Dio Cassius 52.36.1–2 (cf. 49.43.5)

This anxiety was repeatedly realized in the specific fear that people were divining the point of the emperor's death. The divination of death was the sort of prediction to which necromancy above all lent itself. So far as an emperor was concerned, the intent or aspirations behind inquiries into his death could only be malicious. But it may also have been feared that making such inquiries of ghosts could in itself, paradoxically, hasten the point of his death. Such inquiries may have been tantamount to cursing their subject, given that in the simplest form of binding curse, one merely handed over the name of one's chosen victim to a ghost (see chapters 15 and 16). In another respect, the accusation of the practice of necromancy was a convenient one to bring against those whom emperors wished to destroy, since the traditional secrecy of its practice dispensed with the tedious need for evidence and witnesses.

Thus in the earlier empire, Augustus (ruled 27 B.C.–A.D. 14) banned the use of magic and divination to predict death. Tiberius (ruled A.D. 14–37) made it a capital offense to consult a prophet about the death of the emperor. Libo Drusus was accused of plotting revolution against Tiberius and driven to suicide. He had supposedly progressed from Chaldaean oracles and oneiromancy to persuading one Iunius to call up (*elicere*) ghosts with incantations. He had also written mysterious symbols against the names of the imperial family and of senators, which were perhaps construed as magical instructions to ghosts to kill them. In the wake of the Drusus affair, the senate expelled from Italy astrologers (*mathematici*) and mages, executing two of the latter. Nero exiled Furius Scribonianus for consulting Chaldaeans and looking into the date of his death in A.D. 52. Apollonius of Tyana was supposedly accused, as we have seen, of sacrificing boys to divine the future and so help Nerva succeed Domitian (ruled A.D. 81–96). Septimius Severus (ruled 193–221) executed people for having asked Chaldaeans or soothsayers how long he was to live. An edict of 199 by the prefect of Egypt prescribed capital punishment for divination, magical or otherwise.[14]

[14] Augustan legislation: Dio Cassius 56.23 and 25; cf. 49.43 and 52.36. Tiberian legislation: Paulus *Sententiae* 5.21.3; cf. Suetonius *Tiberius* 63.1. Libo Drusus affair: Tacitus *Annals* 2.27–32, esp. 28; cf. Bourgery 1928: 300; Barb 1963: 103–6; Potter 1994: 16 and

In the later empire, necromancy was effectively outlawed also under the terms of the law *De maleficis et mathematicis et ceteris similibus* of Constantius II, made in A.D. 357. The reports of the law preserved in the *Theodosian Code* and the *Code of Justinian* reveal that it banned all forms of divination, explicitly including those of the Chaldaeans and "magicians." It also banned nighttime sacrifices and incantations to *daemones*, and it cursed those who summoned up the ghosts of the dead or disturbed them with the purpose of destroying their enemies. Ammianus Marcellinus tells that the law prescribed death for those suspected of having gone past graves by night to procure poisons or exploit cadaverous material or ghosts, and treated them as if they had consulted Claros, Dodona, or Delphi about the death of the emperor. The oracular comparison seems to imply that such men were suspected of using the dead for necromancy as well as for cursing. Ammianus presents the motivation behind this law as the emperor's personal fear of losing his position. Libanius was accused by one of his pupils of cutting off the heads of two girls for magical purposes, one of which was to use against the emperors Constantius II and Gallus Caesar (ruled A.D. 351–54). In A.D. 371 an avenging spirit (*alastōr*) exploited the cruelty of Valens (ruled A.D. 364–78), as we learn from Socrates Ecclesiasticus. It persuaded some interfering people to make a necromancy (*nekuomanteia*) to discover the name of the next emperor. The demon revealed the first four letters of the name as Th, E, O, and D, and said that it was a compound form. On learning this Valens set aside his Christian precepts to destroy as many candidates as he could—Theodoroi, Theodotoi, Theodosioi, Theodouloi, and even a Theodosiolos. Because of the general fear, many changed their birth names. But it was an indication of Valens's arbitrariness that he refused to punish Pollentianus in any way. This man had been convicted on his own admission of having cut a fetus out of a living woman in order to call up ghosts of the dead and ask them about a change of emperors.[15]

By contrast, no known Greek law had explicitly banned necromancy. It could probably only approach illegality in the Greek world insofar as it became assimilated with the rousing of the dead for harmful binding curses. In his "ideal" *Laws*, which may sometimes reflect laws of some

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69; Graf 1997a: 54. Scribonianus: Tacitus *Annals* 12.52. Apollonius: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 7.11 and 8.7. Septimius Severus: Spartianus (SHA) *Severus* 15. Egyptian edict: *P. Yale* inv. 299, published by Parassoglou 1976.

[15] *De maleficis*: *Theodosian code* 9.16.4 and *Code of Justinian* 9.18.6; cf. Pharr 1932: 283 and Graf 1999. Ammianus Marcellinus: 19.12.14–15. Libanius: 1.98. Valens and the *alastōr*: Socrates *Ecclesiastical History* 4.19; Ammianus Marcellinus 29.1 has a slightly different version of events; cf. Barb 1963: 111–14. Valens and Pollentianus: Ammianus Marcellinus 29.2.17.

Greek states, Plato banned harmful binding curses, and fixed the penalty for making them at death for prophets and diviners (*mantis, teratoskopos*). This implies, as we have seen in chapter 7, a strong continuum between rousing the dead for prophecy and rousing them for cursing, and a correspondence between the groups of personnel that might seek to do these things. Necromancy proper, if not done for harm, ought to have been safe under the letter of such a law, but proving that one had been raising the dead for harmless as opposed to harmful purposes may have been difficult in practice. We know of two actual Greek laws against harmful magic. An inscribed law from Teos, the *Dirae Teiorum*, from some point after 479 B.C., proclaims death for those who practice harmful magic (*pharmaka dēlētēria*) against the Teians. It is unclear whether the law envisaged the trial and execution of suspects, or merely itself placed a preemptive curse of death upon offenders. A first-century B.C. sacred law from a private cult in Philadelphia in Lydia also banned the use of harmful drugs and charms; it seems that love potions, abortifacients, and contraceptives are primarily envisaged. It has recently been suggested that harmful magic may have been prosecutable in classical Athens under an all-purpose "public prosecution for damage" (*dikē blabēs*). In the later fourth century B.C., the Athenians executed the Lemnian priestess-prophet Theoris. According to some, this was for impiety (*asebeia*); prophecy aside, the supposed witch's arts were said to include incantations and drugs or spells (*pharmaka*), while her son was reckoned to have the evil eye. The attribution to her of prophecy raises the remote but theoretical possibility that necromancy may have been prosecutable as a form of impiety, perhaps even with capital effect. However, others told that she had been executed for inducing slaves to deceive their masters.[16]

The response of the early Church to necromancy was not as uniformly hostile as one might have supposed. Justin Martyr (second century A.D.) appealed to the truth of necromancy as proof of the immortality of the soul. Clement of Rome supposedly went so far as to devise a plan to go to Egypt and have an Egyptian hierophant or prophet call up the ghost of a dead man so that it could be proven to him, as we saw in the last chapter. St. Macarius of Egypt (fourth century A.D.) was happy to perform necromancy in order to spare an honest woman from slavery.[17] But then did not the Old Testament underwrite the successful performance of nec-

[16] Plato: *Laws* 933c–e; cf. Johnston 1999: 122. *Dirae Teiorum*: Meiggs and Lewis 1969: no. 30 = Dittenberger 1915–24; no. 27; cf. Pharr 1932: 275–76. Philadelphia: Dittenberger 1915–24: no. 985 lines 15–26. *Dikē blabēs*: Gordon 1999: 250. Theoris: Demosthenes 25.79–80; Philochorus *FGH* 328 F60; and Plutarch *Demosthenes* 14.

[17] Justin Martyr 1.18. [Clement of Rome] *Recognitions* 1.5, *Epitome altera auctore Symeone metaphrasta* 5.4, and *Epitome de gestis Petri praemetaphrastica* 54; *Apophthegmata S. Macarii*, *PG* 34, 244–45 (see chapter 4).

romancy by the witch of En-dor? And Elijah's reanimation of a boy at Zarephath? Had not Jesus raised Lazarus and the daughter of Jairus from the dead, and then himself, too? Tertullian's attempt to differentiate the raising of Lazarus from necromancy is uncomfortable. The *Martyrium Pionii* reports that Jews attributed Jesus with necromancy, and no doubt many Christians agreed with them. So recourse to necromancy need not in itself have entailed that the Emperor Valens and Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria abandoned their Christian beliefs. But for other Christians, such as Basil of Caesarea, necromancy was understandably a vice.[18] Some hostile Christians could concede that supernatural powers were indeed at work in necromancy, but they objected that these powers were not ghosts, but deceitful demons passing themselves off as such.[19] The problematic witch of En-dor understandably became the focus of theological debate. For some, the witch had indeed called up the ghost of Samuel; for others, the ghost of Samuel or a demon in his shape had appeared only by an extraordinary dispensation of God; for still others, a deceitful demon had appeared without dispensation; others again did not know what to think.[20]

[18] En-dor: 1 Samuel 28.3–25. Elijah: 1 Kings 17. Lazarus: John 11.1–44; Tertullian *De anima* 57. Daughter of Jairus: Luke 8.49–56. Martyrium *Pionii* 13.8.2 (fourth century A.D.). Athanasius: see chapter 9. Basil of Caesarea *Orationes/Exorcismi, PG* 31. 1684.43.

[19] Augustine *City of God* 7.35; Lactantius *Institutiones divinae* 2.17; Nicephorus Gregoras *Scholia to Synesius* p. 615; Aeneas of Gaza *Theophrastus* p. 54 Colonna (citing Pythagoras of Rhodes); cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 588 and Collard 1949: 116–17.

[20] Jerome *On Matthew* 6.31, *On Ezekiel* 13.17, and *On Isaiah* 7.11; Justin Martyr *Dialogus cum Tryphone Judaeo* 105, *PG* 6. 721; Origen *In librum Regum homilia* 2.493–94 and *Commentary on John* 20.42.393 and 28.17.148; Augustine *De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* 2.3 and *De cura pro mortuis gerenda* 15; John Chrysostom *Commentary on Matthew* 6.3, *PG* 57, 66; Theodoret *Quaestiones in I Regum* 28, *PG* 80.590; Ps.-Justin *Quaestiones et responses ad Orthodoxos* 52, *PG* 6, 1296–97; Tertullian *De anima* 57.8–9; Eustathius of Antioch *De engastrimytho contra Origenem* 3; Gregory of Nyssa *De pythonissa, ad Theodosium episcopum epistula*; Sulpicius Severus *Quaestiones et responsiones de variis argumentis* 112; Gregory of Nazianz *Contra Julianum* 1.54. For a fuller discussion of these views and more, see Klostermann 1912 (uniting the texts of Origen, Eustathius of Antioch and Gregory of Nyssa); Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 594; Waszink 1947: 582–83; and Smelik 1979: esp. 164–65.

PART III

TECHNOLOGY

CHAPTER 11

TRADITIONAL RITES OF EVOCATION

IN part III, we turn our attention to the technology of necromancy. Three broad categories of technology may be distinguished for analytical purposes, but they overlap heavily. First, the most commonly described and basic form of technology was that of simple evocation, as found first in the *Odyssey* (this chapter). Second, we learn particularly from the Greek magical papyri of necromantic varieties of scrying, via lecanomancy and lychnomancy; these techniques typically employed boy-mediums, and the notion that children could be sacrificed in necromancy may partly derive from such a custom (chapter 12). Finally, the single most important innovation in the necromantic tradition was the introduction of reanimation. Literary reanimation sequences build on evocation sequences; if they had any counterpart in the "real" world, it was probably the performance of necromancy through the manipulation of body parts (chapter 13).

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The bulk of our evidence for the basic rites of evocation in antiquity derives from a relatively conservative tradition of necromancy scenes in high literature, but there is no reason to doubt that the more sober details among these literary accounts reflect the normal circumstances, elements, and structures of rites actually employed. The rites of evocation used by Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, which were laid out in the introduction, remained basic to representations of necromancy throughout antiquity. There is nothing manifestly "magical" about these rites in themselves, for all that Apuleius could refer to the "magical pit" of Odysseus.[1] In this chapter we shall consider the meaning of the various features of the *Odyssey* rites, the development of these features in the literary necromantic tradition, and further features of the tradition that were more or less directly integrated into those of the *Odyssey*. Such documentary evidence as there is will be incorporated into the discussion along the way.

It is here that we meet one of the greatest conundrums of the history of necromancy. As we have seen, it is probable that evocated ghosts were

[1] Homer *Odyssey* 10.516–37 and 11.24–50; for the cult of the dead in Homeric archeology see Andronikos 1968; Apuleius *Apology* 31.

usually experienced through sleep in incubation (chapter 6). But the literary accounts of evocation do not send their consulters to sleep in midrite. Rather, the ghosts are portrayed as rising before their waking eyes to converse with them directly. It may well have been believed that this could happen on occasion in evocations. However, the poets needed no excuse for representing consultations so: portrayed in this way, the ghosts make a more immediate, more dramatic, and in a sense a more "tangible" impact. But for us, the problem remains that there is no easy or obvious way to integrate the act of incubation into the elaborate set of rites of evocation so repeatedly and conservatively laid out for us in the literary tradition. I advertise this difficulty, but have no definitive solution to offer. My best guess is that one usually began the incubation after first constructing pit and fire, pouring libations, sacrificing the sheep, and uttering prayers and spells. We recall that Elysius of Terina "made the customary preliminary sacrifices, went to sleep, and saw the following vision. . . ."[2] The techniques for managing the presence of the ghosts once they had manifested themselves must have either been performed before and/or after the incubation, as appropriate, or performed notionally by the consulter in his dream.

The main significance of the basic rites of evocation lies in the fact that their system as a whole (pit, libations of *melikraton*, wine and water, barley offering, blood offering, holocaust, and prayers) is identical to that of normal offerings to the dead at tombs, as we have seen (chapter 1). Some have argued that this normal offering-system was transformed into a "necromantic" one by the additional utterance of some sort of magical "incantation" (*epōidē*). However, there is no evidence for any such incantation in the *Odyssey* as distinct from the prayers to ghosts and underworld gods. Indeed, the evident lack of such a magical incantation in the *Odyssey* eventually led to the composition of one and its interpolation into the text. The interpolation, perhaps composed by Aristodemus of Nysa in the first century B.C., is preserved in a fragment of Julius Africanus's *Kestoi*, "Magical Embroideries." Others have argued that the normal offering-system was transformed by being relocated to an underworld entrance. But this renders the phenomenon of necromancy at the tomb inexplicable.[3]

[2] Plutarch *Moralia* 109b–d.

[3] Magical incantation needed for necromancy: Headlam 1902: 56–57; cf. Dodds 1973: 207–8 for the notion that "magic" was integral to ancient necromancy, which leads him to conclude that necromancy was not practiced in oracles of the dead! Julius Africanus: *Kestoi* 18 = *PGM* XXIII; cf. Vieillefond 1970: 30–39 and 279–81; and Thee 1984; Eustathius (on Homer *Odyssey* 10.535) also felt an incantation was missing. Underworld entrance needed for necromancy: Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 333; cf. Collard 1949: 23.

Advance Purification. The first evidence for rites of purification in advance of the rites of consultation derives from the imperial period. Purification could be applied to the person evocating, to the site of evocation, or, in the case of reanimation, to the body to be reanimated. Examples of the latter two phenomena are afforded by Statius's Tiresias, who purifies his site with sheep entrails, sulphur, freshly gathered herbs, and incantations, and by Ovid's Medea, who purifies Aeson with sulphur prior to his rejuvenation-reanimation. We find purification of both person and place prior to Thessalus's consultation with Asclepius, which could instead have been a necromancy. He kept himself pure for three days (by fasting?) and was then sealed into a pure room for the consultation. More can be said of personal purification. Lucian's Menippus is purified for twenty-nine days before his consultation. On each of these days, Mithrobarzanes bathes him before dawn in the Euphrates. The magician makes complex invocations of demons and spits into Menippus's face three times. They return home without looking at anyone. They eat only nuts and drink only milk, *melikraton*, and the water of the Choaspes. They sleep outdoors on grass. The night of consultation itself brings further purifications. Mithrobarzanes bathes Menippus in a different river, the Tigris, walks around him to protect him from ghosts (*phasmata*), and takes him home walking backward. The personal purifications that preceded a descent to Trophonius, from whose hole Menippus emerges after his consultation, were similar. The consulter lived for several days in the house of Good Fortune and Good Demon. He used no hot water, and bathed only in the river Hercyna. He made many sacrifices to a range of gods, feeding off the meat, and the entrails were scrutinized by a soothsayer. Again, the night of consultation brought further purifications. A ram was sacrificed in a pit while Agamedes was invoked, and its entrails were then inspected for a definitive omen. If the sacrifice was successful, the consulter was anointed with olive oil and washed in the Hercyna by Hermai-boys. He then drank water from the springs of Lethe and Mnemosyne, Forgetfulness and Memory. Before consulting Amphiaraus, one also purified oneself by sacrificing a sheep to him and the other gods with whom he shared his altar.[4]

Virgil's Aeneas also undertakes a purification in preparation for his necromancy, but in a paradoxical way. He cleanses the fleet of the defilement of the death of Misenus by burying him. An unburied Misenus ought to have facilitated rather than hindered necromancy. We must assume that

[4] Statius *Thebaid* 4.416–18; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.261; Thessalus of Tralles *De virtutibus herbarum* pp. 51 and 53–54 Friedrich; Lucian *Menippus* 7. Trophonius: Pausanias 9.39.4 and *Suda* s.v. *Trophōnion*. . . . Amphiaraus: Pausanias 1.43.1–3.

Virgil rode roughshod over the configuration and significance of true pre-necromancy purification practice in order to express the extreme piety of his hero.[5]

Time of Consultation. Necromantic consultations normally took place in the night, the time of ghosts. Incubation, the usual means of experiencing ghosts at tombs or in *nekuomanteia*, most naturally took place by night. The fragment of the necromantic prayer from Alexis's *Thesprotians* appeals to the eye of dark-robed night, alongside Hermes. Virgil's Aeneas sacrifices his black-fleeced ram to the Night as mother of the Furies before his consultation.[6] Ideally the procedure begins at midnight and endures until dawn, when the ghosts must flee back to their graves or to the underworld, as did the ghosts of Virgil's Anchises (in *Aeneid* book 5), Statius's Laius, Phlegon's Philinnion, and Philostratus's Achilles.[7] In the *Odyssey*, night is daringly transferred from the dimension of time to that of space. Odysseus travels to the dark land of Night to perform his rites, and once finished returns to the land of Dawn. Lucan's Sextus turns to Erictho in the precise middle of the night, when it is noon on the far side of the earth, and their consultation ends at dawn. Silius's Scipio begins his consultation when the portion of the night spent is equal to that to come. Lucian's Hyperborean mage also calls up the ghost of Glaucias's father at midnight. The Greek magical papyri schedule a human-skull necromancy and an ass-skull necromancy for midnight. But in Egypt, necromantic rites could also begin at sunset. This is when another human-skull necromancy in the Greek magical papyri begins, and this is also when Heliodorus's witch begins her rite, only to complete it at dawn. Aeneas's elaborate rites take all night to perform, and he is only able to start meeting ghosts just before dawn. He can get away with such a delay because he is undertaking *katabasis* rather than calling the ghosts up. However, Apuleius's Zatchlas appears to squeeze in his quick necromancy of Thelyphron during the last minutes of the night, because the divine power he exploits is that of the sun, and so he must address his prayer to it as it rises. This limitation of time can put pressure on the consulter. Silius's dead Sibyl is constantly aware of how much time is available for Scipio's consultation and how many ghosts have to be packed into it. The one clear case of a necromancy being performed during the day is that of

[5] Virgil *Aeneid* 6.150.

[6] Alexis *Thesprotoi* F93 K-A; Virgil *Aeneid* 6.249–51; cf. Headlam 1902: 52.

[7] Virgil *Aeneid* 5.721–23; Statius *Thebaid* 2.60 and 120–21; Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 1; and Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.16 (ghost flees at cock-crow); the principle is enunciated by Propertius's ghost of Cynthia, 4.7.87–92.

Aeschylus's *Persians*, but here the timing of the rite is constrained by the rule that the action of a tragedy should take place within a single day.[8]

The darkness necromancy required could also be found in the place exploited for it and in the person of the necromancer. As we have seen, locations such as caves and thick woods could be chosen for necromancy because of their inherent darkness even during daylight (chapter 2). Ericho magically redoubles the darkness of the night, and additionally envelops herself in a personal mist. Statius's blind Tiresias lives in a permanent night; when he perceives the ghosts, the slow clouds accordingly part, and the black air leaps from his face.[9]

For all the importance of darkness, necromancy was ideally performed when the moon was full. Lucian's Hyperborean mage calls up the ghost of Glaucias's father at the midnight of a full moon. Advance purifications begin for Lucian's Menippus on the night of a full moon, and the actual consultation takes place on the full moon of the next lunar month. Heliodorus's witch uses the second night of the full moon. Ovid's Medea similarly rejuvenated Aeson at the midnight of a full moon.[10] This timing did not coincide with that usual in the case of general offerings to the dead, which normally took place after the twentieth day of a calendar month.[11] According to horoscopes in the Greek magical papyri, Libra was favorable for necromancy. Among Byzantine magical texts, the treatise of Salomon recommends Pisces; a Bonn treatise recommends a Friday, and an astrological treatise the ninth hour of Saturday.[12]

One might think that festivals at which ghosts returned to visit the living constituted particularly suitable occasions for necromancy, although nothing in our evidence explicitly supports this supposition. The chief festivals in question would be, at Athens, the *Anthesteria* and *Genesia*, and at Rome, the *Parentalia*, the *Lemuria*, and the thrice-yearly

[8] Homer *Odyssey* 11.19 and 12.3; Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.569–71 and 828; Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.406 (midnight), 752–66, 807–8, and 850–52 (awareness of time); Lucian *Philopseudes* 14.413 and 419–20; *PGM* IV.1955 (sunset), IV.1969, and XIa.5 (midnight); Heliodorus 6.12 and 14; Virgil *Aeneid* 6.255; Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.28; Aeschylus *Persians* 598–680 (cf. Lawson 1934: 82 and Hickman 1938: 22).

[9] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.642–48 (cf. Martindale 1977: 380–81); Statius *Thebaid* 4.584–85.

[10] Lucian *Philopseudes* 14 and *Menippus* 7; Heliodorus 6.14; and Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.184.

[11] And the thirtieth day was sacred to Hecate. See Plutarch *Moralia* 272c; Scholiast Aristophanes *Clouds* 408; *Etymologicum magnum* s.v. *apophrades*; Zonaras 240 Leutsch; and Bekker *Anecdota graeca* 308.5 (Hecate); see Headlam 1902: 53, with further references.

[12] Horoscopes: *PGM* III.275–81 and VII.284–99. Byzantine texts: Delatte 1927, 1: 403, lines 1–5 (Salomon), p. 589 line 31–p. 590 line 28 (*Cod. Bononiensis Univers.* 3632); and Olivieri et al. 1898–1936 (*Catal. codd. astrol. graec*), 8.2: 149 line 12. Cf. Collard 1949: 140.

opening of the *mundus*, the underworld hole from which ghosts could emerge.[13]

Pit and Fire. Necromantic rites were normally organized around two focal points: a pit (*bothros*) for blood and libations, and a fire for the burning of the holocaust sacrifice. This is the case already in the *Odyssey*, and it becomes particularly clear in Heliodorus's necromancy, where the witch is said to leap back and forth between the two (presumably in a circle, as we shall see). The general rule was that offerings that went into or around the pit were for the ghosts, whereas those that went into the fire were for the underworld gods. But sometimes all the rites could be focused upon a single site, the pit serving also as a hearth for the fire. In such cases, the pit can be seen as an appropriately inverted altar for nether powers.[14] It was not necessary to use a sword to dig the pit, as Homer's Odysseus did; desperate and bestial witches, like Horace's Canidia and Sagana, could use their nails. Odysseus's pit was a "cubit in both directions," probably round as opposed to square.[15] He poured the blood into the pit and the libations around it, but in other narratives blood and libations could both go either into the pit or around it.[16] Since offerings traveled down to the ghosts through the pit, the ghosts themselves could sometimes travel upward through it. Horace at any rate seems to imply

[13] *Anthesteria*: see Harrison 1922: 32–76; Deubner 1932: 93–123; Rose 1948; Burkert 1983a: 213–47; Bremmer 1983: 108–22; Hamilton 1992: 50–53; and Johnston 1999: 63–71; Heubeck et al. (1988–92: vol. 2 on Homer *Odyssey* 10.516–40) compare Odysseus's necromantic rites most closely with the rites of the *Anthesteria*. *Genetia*: see Jacoby 1944; Kurtz and Boardman 1971: 147–48; and Johnston 1999: 43–46. *Parentalia* and *Lemuria*: see Lowe 1929: 18 and 66; Cumont 1949: 396–98; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 56–59; Deonna and Renard 1961: 125–26; Heurgon 1961; Toynbee 1971: 63–64; and Bernstein 1993: 101–2. *Mundus*: see in particular Magdelain 1976; cf. also Cumont 1949: 59 and 82; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 55; Burkert 1972: 155; Puhvel 1976; Castagnoli 1986; Bernstein 1993: 100; Byrne 1997; and Felton 1999: 12–14.

[14] Heliodorus 6.14. General rule: however, in Euripides F912 Nauck as it is preserved, all offerings seem to go the gods. Single site: Statius *Thebaid* 4.451–52; Seneca *Oedipus* 550–66; and cf. Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 3.1034 and 1207–8 and *Orphic Argonautica* 569–75; Periander burns the clothes for Melissa in a pit at Herodotus 5.92; see Nitzsch 1826–40, 3: 160; Stengel 1920: 16; Headlam 1902: 53; Lawson 1934: 79; and Collard 1949: 18.

[15] Nails: Horace *Satires* 1.8.26–27; so, too, Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14, where the witch only acquires her sword after digging the pit. A sword is explicitly used also at Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.406 and 427. Cubit: Homer *Odyssey* 10.517 and 11.25; round pits are found on the Elpenor vase (fig. 8; see chapter 4) and at Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 3.1032 (cf. 1207); see Robert 1939: 321. Eitrem (1928: 2) and Tupet (1976: 125) think the pits were initially square. Eustathius (on Homer *Odyssey* 10.517) was already debating the shape in Homer.

[16] Into: Statius *Thebaid* 4.451–52; cf. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14 (libations only). Around: Lucian *Menippus* 9–10.

that Canidia and Sagana called their ghosts forth out of their pit, while Lucian has a ghost stick his head up through a tombside offering-pit.[17] When literary necromancies magically split the earth open to release or reveal ghosts, the pit is presumably the epicenter of the fissure.[18] Nine pits are dug for the necromancy of Statius's *Thebaid*, probably because of the Latin poet's wish to "top" the necromancy scenes of his predecessors. The Latin poets generally aggrandized the role of underworld gods in necromantic rites, and accordingly increased the size and number of fires employed for them. Virgil's Aeneas makes a pyre-altar for Hades and burns bull holocausts on it. Seneca's Tiresias burns black sheep and oxen. Statius's Tiresias has separate pyre-altars built for Hecate, the Furies, Hades, and Persephone.[19]

Libations. The libations used in necromancy and general offerings to the dead alike were full ones (*choai*) as opposed to token ones (*spondai*). Their principal significance lay in their soothing and life-giving qualities. All the liquids used were distinctively propitiating and soothing, as Aeschylus says, or bewitching and thereby able to summon the dead, as Euripides says. Water quenches thirst and bathes. Milk soothes babies. Honey sweetens. Wine is also sweet and ameliorates with inebriation. To Homer's liquids, Aeschylus adds olive oil, which is also soothing.[20]

These products, together with grain, were representative of the range of normal rustic foods of the living, and so also symbolized fertility in general.[21] A tantalizing fragment of Euripides preserves a prayer to Hades

[17] Horace *Satires* 1.8.28; Lucian *On Grief* 16; but Eitrem (1928: 4) does not believe ghosts came up this way. Cleidemus of Athens *FGH* 323 F14 (ca. 350 B.C.) explains that offering-trenches are dug on the west side of tombs.

[18] Thus Seneca *Oedipus* 574–81; Statius *Thebaid* 4.520 (cf. 477); Lucian *Menippus* 10; and perhaps Aeschylus *Persai* 685 (*charassetai pedon*), with Headlam 1902: 57–59. Other important instances of the earth splitting open to release ghosts: Lucan *Pharsalia* 3.8–11, 6.483–84; and Lucian *Philopseudes* 24.

[19] Statius *Thebaid* 4.451–52 (nine pits; cf. Collard 1949: 67) and 4.473–87 (pyre-altars); Virgil *Aeneid* 6.252–53; Seneca *Oedipus* 557–58.

[20] *Choai*: Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.518; cf. Stengel 1920: 102–5; Rudhardt 1958: 240–48; Casabona 1966: 231–97; Henrichs 1984: 259; Garland 1985: 114 and 169; and Jameson et al. 1993: 70–73. Aeschylus *Persae* 609–10 (*preumeneis, melikteria*). Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* 159–66 (*thelkteria*) and *Hecabe* 535 (*choas kletterious agogous*); cf. *Orphic Argonautica* 569–75; see Eitrem 1928: 7 and Garland 1985: 118. Water: Collard 1949: 30. Milk and honey: Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.519 and Nicephoros Gregoras, scholia to Synesius *De insomniis*, *PG* 149 p. 615; see Sophocles F879 *TrGF*/ Pearson for ghosts as bees; see also Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 64–65. Wine: Nicephoros Gregoras, scholia to Synesius *De insomniis*, *PG* 149 p. 615. Oil: Aeschylus *Persians* 615–17; cf. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.254.

[21] But for Graf (1980) the liquids represented the opposite of the habitual food of the living: he considers *melikraton*, sweet (i.e., unmixed: cf. Aeschylus *Persians* 614) wine, water, and oil all to be symbolically antithetical to the normal drink of the living, wine mixed

for beginning a necromancy. The speaker offers a libation, a grain offering (*pelanos*), and also a "fireless sacrifice of *pankarpeia*, full, poured forth." *Pankarpeia* literally means "all-fruits," and the term specifically denoted a cake or potage made with honey and fruits of all sorts. Gifts symbolic of fertility, it seems, imparted life temporarily to the ghosts. It is noteworthy that the olive is evergreen. Since *melikraton* was given to the newborn, it was suitable also for the reborn; it further resembled the food of the immortals, nectar and ambrosia. The renunciation of these valuable products by the living may also have constituted an enactment of their grief, and so had a summoning effect. But, paradoxically, the sterility of death could also be saluted in the offerings. Those given to Aeschylus's ghost of Darius are "virgin": water from a virgin spring, wine from a wild vine, and milk from a metaphorically virgin (i.e., unyoked) cow. Already in Homer such thinking leads to the sacrifice of a sterile heifer.[22]

Additional significance may have attached to individual elements of the libations. The sprinkling of the water, among the other liquids, in a circle around the pit resembles a purificatory lustration. And water was itself regarded as chthonic. Red wine resembled blood, perhaps particularly spilt blood when libated. The wine libation was sometimes distinguished in its treatment from the others: Seneca's Tiresias pours it alone with the left hand; Statius's Tiresias makes it the first of the libations and pours it nine times. White milk relieved ghostly darkness. Antiseptic honey was a preserving agent, and ghosts could be conceptualized as the bees that produced it. Heliodorus's witch gives extra significance to her grain offering by making it into a cake shaped like a voodoo doll.[23]

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with water, and thereby marked out as proper for the dead; this explanation does not account well for their conjunction with grain offerings.

[22] Euripides F912 Nauck; cf. Collard 1949: 38 and, for sacrificial cakes in general, Stengel 1920: 98–102. Symbolic fertility: Collard 1949: 34. *Melikraton*: Scholiast Aristophanes *Thesmophoriazusae* 506; and Porphyry *Cave of the Nymphs* 28; cf. Collard 1949: 33 and Tupet 1976: 125 and 340. Renunciation: Burkert 1983a: 54–55. Sterility: Aeschylus *Persians* 607–15; Homer *Odyssey* 10.522 and 11.30, with, importantly, scholiast ad locc.; for the sterility of death, see Euripides *Suppliants* 545; cf. Rohde 1925: 38 and n. 75; Eitrem 1928: 8; Vermeule 1979: 54–55, and Garland 1985: 72.

[23] Circular lustrations: Robert 1939: 321 and Tupet 1976: 125–26; a further example of pouring libations in a circle around the pit is found in Orpheus's rite to call up Hecate et al. at *Orphic Argonautica* 950–87. Water as chthonic: Ninck 1921: 1–46 passim; cf. also Eitrem 1915: 76–132. Red wine as bloodlike: Collard 1949: 33; Tupet 1976: 125; and Faraone 1993:74. Tiresias: Seneca *Oedipus* 566–67; Statius *Thebaid* 4.449–54. White milk: Nicephoros Gregoras, scholia to Synesius *De insomniis*, *PG* 149 p. 615. Donnadieu and Vilatte (1996: esp. 81–86) argue that the libations and sacrifice significantly manipulate a range of colors (red blood, black sheep, white grain, beige *melikraton*, clear water, dark wine) that are emblematic of the mortal transition from life to death and of the wider natural cycle; I am not persuaded. Honey: cf. Tupet 1976; see chapter 4. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14.

Other solid (non-meat) foods, too, could be given to the dead. Eggs, also particularly symbolic of fertility, were commonly given. The woman-necromancer of the Cumaean Painter (see fig. 10) is sometimes portrayed as offering eggs to her ghosts on a mini-altar.[24]

Sacrifice and Blood. Animal sacrifice was not essential to the performance of the basic rites. None is made in the evocation of Darius in Aeschylus's *Persians*, nor is there any mention of sacrifice in the Euripidean necromantic fragment, which appears to summarize all the offerings being made, and the *pankarpeia* here is actually described as fireless. However, some think sacrifice was omitted from tragic necromancies only because of the difficulty of enacting sacrifice onstage. When Apollonius of Tyana called up the ghost of Achilles using an Indian spell, he eschewed animal sacrifice, since generally opposed to it as a (vegetarian) Pythagorean. Interestingly Philostratus's phraseology implies that sheep sacrifice constituted the core rite of normal evocation (*oude arnōn haimati psuchagōgēsas*). No victim is directly slain in the course of their rites either by Lucan's Erictho or by Heliodorus's old woman of Bessa, although both make use of blood.[25]

The usual sacrificial animal for necromantic rites was a single black sheep or a pair of them. Both of the sheep sacrificed by Odysseus were probably black. Homer's artfully balanced phrase "male sheep and black ewe" should not be taken to preclude the ram's blackness. The same goes for his description of the promised further sacrifices, "sterile heifer and all-black ram." Their blackness salutes the darkness of the underworld, and perhaps, too, the darkness of the ghosts themselves. Even their sacrificial blood is "dark-clouded" (*kelainephes*).[26] In the spirit of one-upping poetic predecessors that imbues the Latin tradition, Roman poets brought numbers of black cattle also into the necromantic rite itself. Virgil's Aeneas sacrifices four black heifers, a barren heifer, a black sheep, and an unspecified number of bulls, all on the spot. Seneca and Statius have Tiresias sacrifice an unspecified number of sheep and cattle, all

[24] Eggs for the dead: Garland 1985: 113 and 158. Cumaean Painter: e.g., Campanian red-figured neck amphora, Portland Art Museum, inv. 26.282; cf. Kerrigan 1980: 24. Eggs could themselves be used for divination: Delatte 1932: 178 (citing a Byzantine method using an egg from a black chicken) and Luck 1999: 156.

[25] Aeschylus *Persians* 598–680; Euripides F912 Nauck. No sacrifice on tragic stage: cf. Eitrem 1928: 6 and Collard 1949: 35 and 38. Philostratus *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 4.11 and 16. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.667–69; Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14–15.

[26] Interpretation of Homeric phraseology: cf. Rohde 1925: 36 and n.71; Eitrem 1928: 2; and Germain 1954. Darkness of underworld: Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 10.535; cf. Headlam 1902: 54, Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 551; and Eitrem 1945: 100–101. Darkness of ghosts: see chapter 14. Dark blood: Homer *Odyssey* 11.36.

black.[27] More humble creatures could be sacrificed for necromancy, too. The *Orphic Argonautica*'s Orpheus sacrifices three black puppies in a similar rite to call up Hecate (black puppies were this goddess's traditional offering). Aeneas of Gaza tells that the Chaldaeans, Egyptians, and Greeks could call up the souls of Homer, Orpheus, Phoroneus, or Cecrops by sketching magical Characters and sacrificing cockerels.[28]

As Odysseus's sheep are jugulated, their heads are forced down toward the underworld (in Olympian sacrifice, a victim's head would be held upward toward heaven), while Odysseus holds his gaze back toward the river of Ocean. Clearly at the moment of sacrifice the gaze creates a devotional bond with its object, so that Odysseus must look back to the land of the living if he wishes to return to it.[29] These themes are refracted in Menippus's pre-necromancy purifications. He avoids looking at the living after his daily bath in the Euphrates and walks home backward after his final bath in the Tigris. Perhaps he avoids eye contact with the living for the complementary reason, namely to detach himself from devotion to them and so facilitate his descent. But Odysseus looks away for the sake of the ghosts, too, since they apparently do not like to be looked upon, particularly when they first emerge from the underworld. When Orpheus looked upon the ghost of Eurydice as she emerged from the underworld, she famously flew irretrievably right back into it. And the same thing happened to the ghost of Philinnion, when she was spied upon by her parents.[30] Consequently, it was often the practice to avert one's gaze in formal encounters with ghosts, as in the ghost-laying rites of Selinus and in the Roman *Lemuria*, or in formal encounters with related underworld entities, such as Hecate.[31] According to Pliny, the mages held that ghosts

[27] Virgil *Aeneid* 6.245–53; Seneca *Oedipus* 556; and Statius *Thebaid* 4.443–50; a black bull also at Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 1.774–80; cf. the important discussion at Eitrem 1945: 97–101.

[28] *Orphic Argonautica* 950–87. Aeneas of Gaza *Theophrastus* pp. 18–19 Colonna; Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 563 and 587.

[29] Scholiast Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 1.587; cf. Dimock 1989: 136. However, a ca. 300 B.C. Etruscan sarcophagus in the Museo dell'Opera, Orivieto, represents Odysseus (if it is he) holding the head of the sheep upward for jugulation. He has his two companions with him, one of whom kneels: Touchefeu-Meynier 1968: 140 and plate 22.2. The river in question cannot be the Acheron, as Dakaris (1993: 9) thinks, for this is in front of the pit.

[30] Lucian *Menippus* 7. Walking backward after the performance of rites is common in the Greek magical papyri: *PGM* I.1–42, IV.26–51, 2441–621 (at 2493), and XXXVI.264–74. Orpheus and Eurydice: see chapter 8; cf. Clark 1979: 122–23 and Johnston 1999: 47. Philinnion: Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 1. But the aversion of the gaze could also have other magical significances: Medea averted her gaze while cutting plants for magic in Sophocles' *Root-Cutters* (*Rhizotomoi*, F543 *TrGF*).

[31] Selinus: in the *Lex sacra* from Selinus it appears to be stipulated that one must turn oneself back after offering a meal to a vengeful ghost (Jameson et al. 1993: B line 5; cf. commentary at p. 43, with important further references). *Lemuria*: when the father of the

would not allow themselves to be looked upon at all by those with freckles, and would not obey them. Statius provides us with an exception proving the rule: his Tiresias explicitly asks the reluctant ghost of Laius to meet his gaze—but he, of course, is blind. The manuscripts of Seneca's *Oedipus* have Tiresias's cattle dragged backward (*retro*) to their slaughter. Perhaps the notion that animals should proceed to their sacrifice willingly when given to Olympian gods is symbolically inverted. One did not have to use a sword to jugulate: Horace's witches tear open the throat of their single black lamb with their teeth.[32]

In the *Odyssey* and Silius Italicus's *Punica*, the different parts of the sacrificial animal are clearly destined for different recipients. The blood goes into the pit for the ghosts, whereas the flayed carcass is burned in holocaust for the underworld gods (sacrifices to underworld gods are made in holocaust; those to the Olympians are eaten).[33] The *Odyssey* leans toward the idea that the drinking of the blood partly restores to the ghosts their lost corporeality, and so restores to them the physical mechanism with which to speak and also that with which to perceive and think; but the idea is imperfectly carried through.[34] The manuscripts of Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* have ghosts being called up at Avernus with "salt" (*salso*) blood in a quoted poetic fragment. This is perhaps a corruption of "false" (*falso*). If so, the implication must have been that animal blood was substituted for human.[35] Human blood is used in Heliodorus's necromancy, in which the old woman of Bessa draws the sword across her

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household placated ghosts during the Roman *Lemuria* by casting beans before them, he averted his gaze (Ovid *Fasti* 5.435–39). Hecate: in the quasi-necromantic rites with which Apollonius of Rhodes' Jason activates the ointment of invincibility given him by Medea, he must retreat from his pit as Hecate rises and not look back, or else vitiate the magic (*Argonautica* 1036–41).

[32] Freckles: Pliny *Natural History* 30.1.16. Blind gaze: Statius *Thebaid* 4.619–20. Cattle dragged backward: Seneca *Oedipus* 557; the editors need not therefore emend. Teeth: Horace *Satires* 1.8.28–29.

[33] Homer *Odyssey* 11.35–46 and Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.405–33. For holocausts and underworld gods, see Stengel 1886; Rohde 1925: 116; and Winkler 1980: 166. Eitrem (1928: 3) regards the jugulated carcass merely as unimportant taboo material, which is why Odysseus relinquishes it to his companions to burn; cf. also Robert 1939: 160 and Tupet 1976: 126. The scholiast and Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 11.23 upset themselves needlessly that Homer uses the word *hiereia* of the victim, which they think should be reserved for sacrifices for the gods.

[34] Homer *Odyssey* 11.147–49; cf. Eitrem 1928: 6; Cumont 1949: 32 (blood as the seat of life itself); and Vermeule 1979:57 (the dead characterized by thirst) and 213.

[35] Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.37. Hickman 1938: 85 ascribes the fragment to Accius's *Troades*. *Falso* is read by many older editors, including Ernesti. *Fuso*, "poured," was suggested by Bentley. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 563 (followed by Clark 1979: 69) is happy with *salso*, comparing Ennius *Cresphontes* F59 Jocelyn, *salsum sanguinem*; for the purificatory use of salt, cf. Parker 1983: 226–27.

own arm. Seneca's Medea had similarly let blood from her arm flow over Hecate's altar when invoking her aid in the manufacture of the poison wedding dress for Glauce/Creusa. Blood could have applications in other necromantic rites, too. Some spells in the Greek magical papyri require its use for writing as part of a magical rite, and it could also be used as the liquid in lecanomantic necromancy.[36]

In the necromancy of Aeschylus's *Psuchagogoi*, the blood went directly into the lake, and this may have been a common procedure at lake *nekuomanteia*. In this case, the lake presumably took on the functions of the pit. Sometimes the blood went, curiously, in the fire, and was therefore given to the gods. Seneca and Statius reserve the blood from their victims' throats in vessels, and then have it poured over the holocausts as they burn. Since Statius still wants blood in pits for the ghosts, too, he produces quantities from an unspecified source prior to the jugulation of the victims, alongside some purificatory sheeps' entrails. Perhaps Seneca and Statius respond in part here to Virgil. Although the rites performed by Aeneas prior to his necromancy are presented as within the usual tradition of necromantic rites, the fact that Aeneas accomplished his necromancy by descent rather than by the raising of ghosts entailed some recasting of them. Thus Aeneas's libations of wine and oil are transferred from the ghosts to the gods; prayers are addressed to gods only, not to ghosts; and, most awkwardly of all, the victims' blood cannot be sent into the earth, and so is collected up in bowls, for no explicit end. Later on, Heliodorus's witch also flicks the blood from her arm into the fire.[37]

When a sheep was sacrificed to Agamedes in a pit at the oracle of Trophonius, or to Amphiaraus and a selection of gods at that prophet's oracle, the purpose was explicitly purificatory. The sacrifice of the sheep in necromancy proper may also have been purificatory. The *Odyssey* does not say what became of the sheep's fleece after it was removed from the carcass, but, as we have also seen, there are indications that if one's necromantic rites produced a fleece, one would perform incubation on it in order to experience the ghosts. And fleeces could be purificatory in themselves. This is the role they appear to have played in the Eleusinian mysteries (see chapter 8).[38]

[36] Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14. Seneca *Medea* 805–11. Blood-writing: *PGM* IV.1928–2005 and 2006–2125, and Xia.1–40. Lecanomancy: see chapters 9 and 12.

[37] Aeschylus *Psuchagogoi* F273a; see chapter 4. Seneca *Oedipus* 563–65. Statius *Thebaid* 4.542–24 and 464–72. Collecting blood from jugulation: cf. Rohde's intepretation, 1925: 194, after Scholiast [Plato] *Minos* 315c, of the obscure term *enchutristriai* as denoting women who caught sacrificial blood in bowls and used it for purification; see also Bolkestein 1922; and Garland 1985: 144. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.244–54; but Norden (1916: ad loc.) and Eitrem (1945: 99) think the blood was then poured from the bowls into an unmentioned pit. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14; Collard 1949: 82.

[38] Cf. Eitrem 1928: 3–4 and chapters 6 and 8.

Utterances. Significant utterances in necromantic rites can be classified into a number of overlapping categories: nonverbal utterances (discussed in chapter 14); prayers to/incantations over the dead; prayers to/incantations over underworld gods; vows to the dead; threats against the dead; threats against the gods. Prayers must usually be made both to the dead themselves to rise and to the underworld gods to let them go. The order of prayers in Aeschylus's *Persians* seems logical: here appeal to the ghosts follows seamlessly from appeal to their masters. The two are closely associated by Seneca's Tiresias. Homer generally makes a terminological distinction between prayers to the dead and those to the gods, the former being *litai*, the latter *euchai*. In the *Odyssey*, the prayers to Hades and Persephone, who control the ascent of the dead, seem curiously delayed within Homer's ordering of the rite. The dead have already risen by the time they are made by Odysseus's companions. Eustathius was worried, and proposed that the initial prayers to the ghosts must already have contained prayers to Hades and Persephone. Since Virgil's Aeneas does not bring ghosts up, but rather goes down to them himself, he prays only to the underworld gods, as we have seen. Lucan's Erictho directly addresses the underworld powers alone in reanimating her corpse. Although Heliodorus's witch is not explicitly said to pray to any gods, she does utter incantations into the ear of the corpse she reanimates, and these may in part have been addressed to the gods below as well as to the reanimating ghost, since Erictho had the ability to send messages down to the underworld through the mouth of a corpse.[39]

As time went on, the range of underworld deities that might be included in necromantic prayers continued to widen. Homer has just Hades and Persephone. Aeschylus has Earth, Hermes, and Hades (the address to them is in the form of a "cletic," i.e., summoning, hymn). Chariton has "the rulers of heaven and the underworld," Lucan's Erictho names the Furies, Styx, Poinai, Chaos, Hades, Elysium, Persephone, Hecate, Ianitor ("Doorkeeper"; i.e., Aeacus?), the Fates, and Charon. Statius's Tiresias names Tartarus, Death, Hades, Poinai, Persephone, Charon, Hecate, Tisiphone (the Fury), and Cerberus. Lucian's Mithrobarzanes invokes demons, Poinai, the Furies, Hecate, Persephone, and many *voces magicae*.[40] There could be no deities less chthonic than the Sun and the

[39] Aeschylus *Persians* 627–80; cf. Eitrem 1928: 3 and 6; for another tragic prayer to the gods to send up ghosts, see Euripides F912 Nauck. Seneca *Oedipus* 559–63 and 567–68. Homeric terminology: Eitrem 1928: 2. Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 11.34. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.563–68 (through mouth of corpse) and 695–749 (address to underworld powers; cf. Graf 1997a: 190–98 for this as a "perverted" version of a normal prayer). Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14.

[40] Homer *Odyssey* 11.46–47; Aeschylus *Persians* 627–56; Chariton *Callirhoe* 5.7.10; Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.693–718; Statius *Thebaid* 4.473–87; Lucian *Menippus* 9. For Aeschylus's use of the cletic-hymn form, see Eitrem 1928: 9–10; Collard 1949: 35; Rose 1950: 263–

Moon, but in the world of the Greco-Egyptian magical papyri, they were principal powers, and here the Sun at least can call up souls (see below). The Sun is accordingly the only deity to which Apuleius's Egyptian priest Zatchlas appeals for his reanimation, and the Moon is the only deity to which Heliodorus's witch appeals, *voces magicae* aside. Another magical papyrus provides a simple prayer to Thoth/Hermes to bring up the dead.[41]

Odysseus's vows of further sacrifices to the dead on his return home are not made simply because he does not have the requisite victims at hand; Circe could have given them to him along with the sheep. The function of the vows is rather to create an incentive for the dead both to cooperate with him once they have drunk the blood and to release him back to the land of the living afterward. Similarly, Lucan's Erictho promises the ghost of her corpse that she will free it of all possibility of further magical exploitation if it cooperates with her, and she is as good as her word. And Statius's Tiresias likewise promises that he will give the ghost of Laius peace in holy ground and send him in a boat across Lethe (here, apparently, a river). In the same way, curse tablets can promise to free from restlessness the ghosts they exploit if only they do their bidding, as in the Antinous curse that accompanied the Louvre voodoo doll. Once again, the affinities between cursing and ghost-laying are clear.[42]

A common feature of imperial-period necromancy is the "second spell." The necromancer begins with a polite and deferential request to the ghost to rise or to the underworld powers to send up the ghost. When this fails, he resorts to a second spell that is compulsive and terrible to them, with the result that the necromancy is usually achieved as soon as the second spell is initiated or even just threatened; the threat can be seen, therefore, as a sort of second spell in its own right. When Seneca's Tiresias makes a second address to the dead, it is with a voice more intense and frantic, and the earth opens immediately after it. Lucan's Erictho gives us our most dramatic example. After the failure of her first

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64; Citti 1962; Taplin 1977: 115; Belloni 1988: 208; and Hall 1989: 89; cf. also Moritz 1979: 190–92; and Volpilhac 1978: 272. For a useful tabulation of most of the deities addressed in literary necromancies, see Lowe 1929: 55. For Hecate in general, see Heckenbach 1912; Kraus 1960; Nouveau-Piobb 1961; Johnston 1990: esp. 21–38, and 1999: esp. 72–74 and 203–49; and Rabinowitz 1998.

[41] Sun and Moon in the papyri: see, e.g., *PGM* XII.270–350. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.29. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14. Thoth/Hermes: *PGM* XVIIb.

[42] Reason for Odysseus's vows: *pace* Eitrem 1928: 2. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.762–64 and 822–27. Statius *Thebaid* 4.622–24. Curse tablets: Jordan 1985a: no. 152 = Gager 1992: no. 28 = *Suppl. Mag.* no. 47, from third- or fourth-century A.D. Antinoopolis; see chapter 10 for this tablet and the Louvre doll; cf. also Jordan 1985a: 173 = Gager 1992: no. 48, from third- to first-century B.C. Olbia (an excellent grave gift is promised for cooperation).

spell, she threatens the ghost of her corpse with being driven with whips through the underworld by the Furies. The underworld powers are threatened in a number of ways. She will address the Furies by their true names (thus exercising complete power over them), strand them in daylight, and deprive them of contact with the dead. She will reveal Hecate to the gods above without her makeup (comedy). She will reveal the secret food that keeps Persephone beneath the earth and how she became defiled with the result that her mother Demeter refused to call her back (this looks like a threat to reveal the Eleusinian mysteries). She will expose the underworld rulers to sunlight. Finally, she threatens that she will invoke against them Demogorgon, the underworld god to underworld gods. Before she has even finished her description of Demogorgon, the ghost has reanimated the corpse at her feet. In a very similar way, Statius's Tiresias is forced to issue abusive threats to utter a second spell that will reveal the name of Hecate and to invoke Demogorgon. Again, the underworld opens up as soon as Demogorgon is mentioned. The corpse of Thelyphron at first refuses to answer the questions put to it by Apuleius's Zatchlas, begging instead to be released. So Zatchlas addresses the corpse again in an angrier tone and threatens it with torture by the Furies. Heliodorus graphically illustrates the superior power of the second spell: his witch's first spell is sufficient only to stand the corpse on its feet and make it nod in a vague and unhelpful way; the second spell stands it up again and forces it to speak clearly. Lucian's Syrian magician uses a similar technique for exorcism: he first adjures the possessing ghost or demon to depart, and if that does not succeed, he drives it out with threats. In the Greek magical papyri, one of Pitys's erotic-attraction spells offers both carrot and stick to its ghost, like Erictho: the ghost is to be threatened with punishment if it does not bring the beloved, but is to be promised sacrifice if it does.[43]

One could exercise power over ghosts, too, by addressing them by their true names. This may be why the ghost of Darius is summoned under the name *Darian*. Aeschylus perhaps regarded this form as closer to the Persian original.[44]

Sometimes a considerable effort was needed to make oneself heard by

[43] Seneca *Oedipus* 567–68. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.730–49; cf. Nock 1929: 186–87 and Volpilhac (1978: 281–83), who finds Egyptian precedents; for Demogorgon, see *Adnotationes super Lucanum* at 6.746; and Fauth 1987: 57–61. Statius *Thebaid* 4.500–518. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.29. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14. Lucian *Philopseudes* 16. *PGM* IV.2006–2125. For a possible earlier example of the compulsion of the divine in a necromantic context, see Plato *Republic* 364b–e, in conjunction with *Laws* 909a.

[44] Eitrem 1928: 11 and Moritz 1979: 191. But it was actually more remote from *Darayavaus*.

the dead buried in the earth. This could mean shouting hard to get through.[45] A common way of drawing the attention of the dead was to bang on the ground. For example, in Euripides' *Trojan Women*, Hecabe calls upon the dead by beating on the earth with both her hands, and Philostratus tells that Herodes Atticus threw himself to the ground and beat it, crying out to his dead daughter, asking her what he should bury with her. In a similar way, the *Iliad*'s Althaea bangs on the ground and calls to Hades and Persephone, and an Erinys responds to her.[46] Some take a line in the necromancy scene of Aeschylus's *Persians* to indicate that the chorus is drumming on the ground to call up the ghost of Darius, but others take it to indicate that earth is rather being magically split open by its incantation so as to release the ghost.[47]

Circular Movements. Sometimes one could move in a circle around the focal point of the necromancy, whatever this was to be. Heliodorus twice speaks of Egyptian necromancers circling around dead bodies. When he tells us that his old woman of Bessa leaped repeatedly between the pit and the fire, between which she had laid out her son's corpse, we are presumably to imagine that she did so in a circle. Libanius's lying mage is said to "roll around" (*kalindoumenos*) graves, presumably established ones. Ps.-Quintilian's sorcerer binds a restless ghost into its tomb by "surrounding" it (*circumdantur*) with a harmful spell. After the *Suda*'s *psuchagōgoi* have located the spot in which the corpse of a restless ghost lies, they mark it off and walk around it, conversing with the ghosts and asking them the reasons for their disquiet. An obscure clause of the sacred law from Selinus (ca. 460 B.C.) prescribing mechanisms for ridding oneself of an attacking ghost (see chapter 8) seems to suggest that one should move in a circle after offering the ghost a meal and sacrificing a piglet to Zeus.[48]

[45] Shouting hard: Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 315–19; cf. Haldane 1972: 43; and Hall 1996: 153.

[46] Euripides *Trojan Women* 1302–6. Philostratus *Lives of the Sophists* 2.1.10. Homer *Iliad* 9.568–72. Cf. also *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 332 and 340; Sophocles *Epigonoi* F186 *TrGF*/ Pearson; Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 7.311; and Plutarch *Moralia* 774b. See Headlam 1902: 53 and Rohde 1925: 105 n. 10, with further examples.

[47] Aeschylus *Persians* 683. Drumming: Lawson 1934: 79, 83–84 and 86 (but the emendation proposed at 89 is extreme and arbitrary); Taplin 1977: 118; Broadhead 1960: 275–77 and 309; and Jouan 1981: 406–7. Splitting of earth: Headlam 1902: 57–59; and Belloni 1988: 222–24.

[48] Heliodorus 3.16 and 6.14 (both with εἴλουμαι). Libanius 41.7. [Quintilian] *Declamationes maiores* 10.7. *Suda* s.v. [*peri*] *psuchagōgias*. Selinus: Jameson et al. 1993: col. B. For circular movements in ghostly or ghostlike contexts, see also Plato *Phaedo* 81c–d (impure souls wheel around their tombs); Petronius *Satyricon* 61 (a werewolf urinates around his clothing); Plutarch *Numa* 14.4 (a Pythagorean custom) and *Moralia* 267b = *Roman Questions* 14, citing Varro (Roman men turn around at grave; cf. Rose 1924: ad loc.); *Orphic Argonautica* 887–1021 (Pandora and Hecate, summoned up by Orpheus in a quasi-necromantic rite, wheel around his pit).

This accords with the use of circular libations around the pit, discussed above. As with these libations, the purpose of circular movements was clearly to purify the area marked off by them. The circle can concomitantly be thought of as constituting some sort of protective barrier between the living and the ghosts, as appears from the complementary process in Lucian's *Menippus*. Here it is not a matter of an individual ghost being summoned into the realm of the living, but of an individual living person descending into the realm of the dead. As part of the purifications Mithrobarzanes performs for Menippus prior to his necromantic descent, he walks around him in order to protect him from the ghosts. The Greeks often carried sacrificed victims around areas or individuals to be purified, and indeed, human scapegoats and adulterous people were led (still alive) around entire cities to purify them.[49]

Management of the Ghosts. Contradictory ideas were entertained about the attitude of ghosts toward their evocation. They could be conceived of as desperately eager or as bitterly reluctant. Both responses caused difficulties, and technologies were developed to cope with them. We consider the positive response first. The dead could covet life in any form. Homer's ghost of Achilles famously expresses a preference for living as a slave in abject poverty to being king of the dead. When another ghost saw Statius's Laius being escorted out of the underworld by Hermes and conjectured that he was being called up by a Thessalian witch, he congratulated him on his temporary good fortune.[50] The outcome, direct or indirect, of necromancy was often the laying of a restless ghost, and the ghost in question for that reason ought to have been at least at some level sympathetic to the project. Those who evocated their loved ones presumably did not believe they were thereby subjecting them to undue suffering, be it men evocating wives (Orpheus and Eurydice [?]; Periander and Melissa), girlfriends (Harpalus and Pythionice), or boyfriends (Hadrian and Antinous), wives evocating husbands (Laodice and Protesilaus; Atossa and Darius), fathers evocating sons (Elysius and Euthynous), or sons evocating fathers (Ostanes the younger and Ostanes the elder; Glaucias and Alexicles). And those who offered themselves for necromancy after death did not presumably expect to suffer unduly by the performance of this service (chapter 1). The basic offerings made to the dead in necromancy were those of normal observances at tombs, and these were certainly welcome to them.

Hence, when one made the necromantic offerings, one faced the dan-

[49] Lucian *Menippus* 7. Animals: e.g., *LSCG* no. 156 A lines 14–15; cf. Jameson et al. 1993: 43. Scapegoats and the adulterous: Ogden 1997: 15–23.

[50] Contradictory attitudes of ghosts: cf. Collison-Morley 1912: 41. Homer *Odyssey* 1.488–91. Statius *Thebaid* 2.19–25.

ger of being overwhelmed by a pressing host of ghosts, all eager to partake. Odysseus is confronted by unmarried girls and boys, old men and wounded warriors, who press around the pit of blood from all sides with an unnatural cry, and turn him pale with fear. One must therefore have the ability to repel unwanted ghosts from the blood and select those with whom one wishes to speak. Odysseus uses his sword (probably bronze rather than iron) to permit only Tiresias and his other chosen ghosts access to the blood. Ghosts were insubstantial, and one might have thought that a sword blow would have passed harmlessly through them, just as Odysseus's embrace passed through the ghost of his mother. However, Silius Italicus's living Sibyl tells Scipio that if any ghosts approach his blood before the desired one of the dead Sibyl, he should hack it to pieces with his sword. Servius explains that Aeneas used his sword to sacrifice the black sheep to Night and barren heifer to Persephone so as to consecrate it against the ghosts he would meet, and he duly plunges into the underworld brandishing it. The sword seems to function as a protective amulet for the consulter. Reading backwards, we assume that the sword with which Odysseus guarded his pit was the bronze object with which he jugulated his sheep, despite the scholiast's claim that his sword was made of iron. Both bronze and iron were superior to supernatural forces. Ps.-Lycophron describes Odysseus's sword as "the terror of those of the underworld."[51] The very clink of bronze or iron frightened ghosts.[52] Perhaps this is why Erictho cuts up her corpses with a lodestone knife. Heliodorus's witch waves a sword around in the air while leaping back and forth between pit and fire. The purpose of this in context is unclear; we are not explicitly told that unwanted ghosts are hovering near. Metal could be used to confine ghosts, too: Ps.-Quintilian's mage binds a restless ghost into its grave with stones and iron, and the bronze statue of the ghost of Actaeon was pinned to a rock with iron. In Statius's *Thebaid*, Tiresias's daughter Manto uses a spell to drive back the pressing barge-load of ghosts Charon has punted back across the Styx for them,

[51] Homer *Odyssey* 11.42 (ghosts press around), 11.48–50, 206–22, and 231 (sword, etc.); cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 83. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.443–44. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.249–51 and 260, with Servius ad locc.; cf. Eitrem 1928: 2; Collard 1949: 22; and Tupet 1976: 37. Odysseus's sword bronze or iron?: Homer *Odyssey* 11.45, with scholiast at 11.48; [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 686; even witches, such as Circe, feared the sword when it was brandished against them—Homer *Odyssey* 10.323–24 (cf. Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 11.48) and Petronius *Satyricon* 63.

[52] Theocritus *Idylls* 2.35–36, with Gow 1950: ad loc.; Plutarch *Moralia* 944b; Lucian *Philopseudes* 15–16; Alexander of Aphrodisias *Problemata* 2.46; and Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* 11.48. See Rohde 1925: 37; Tupet 1976: 37; Martinez 1991: 2 n. 6; Kingsley 1995: 240; and Felton 1999: 5. But Pliny's house-haunting ghost rattles its chains to frighten the living (*Letters* 7.27.8–10). Since Homer's ghostly warriors still wear their armor, ghostly bronze is apparently not a problem.

so that Tiresias can calmly select those with whom he wishes to speak, notably Laius.[53]

Homer's Odysseus implies that he did nothing in particular to bring his session to a formal end, and that he just scuttled off when the fear that Persephone might send up a gorgon's head got the better of him. Perhaps for Homer it was Persephone's job alone to scatter the ghosts. In imperial times, one could dismiss the ghosts by flicking milk at them. When Statius's Tiresias has finished with his ghosts, Manto sprinkles them with milk and bids them leave the grove. Tibullus similarly has a witch flicking ghosts with milk in order to make them retreat. Perhaps the underlying notion is that if the milk is scattered in droplets, every member of the host can get a bit and retreat with honor.[54] A lecanomantic necromancy recipe in the Greek magical papyri includes a spell for dismissing the ghost when one has finished. Usually there is no need to employ special technology to end a reanimation session: after giving its prophecy, the corpse dies again, spontaneously and instantly. But Lucan understands it differently: a body has the ability to die once and once only, so a reanimated corpse will live forever, unless further special spells and drugs are employed to engineer a second death.[55]

We turn to the negative response. This seems to have been underpinned by the notion that necromancy could disturb ghosts who are already at peace or already strongly devoted to the underworld. Apuleius's reanimated Thelyphron begs Zatchlas to leave him to his rest. The ghost of Heliodorus's corpse is so angry at being disturbed by its mother that it utters a prophecy of her death. Servius derives *Orcus*, the Latin name for the underworld, from the Greek *horkos*, "oath," and explains that the dead had to take an oath not to help the living. The ps.-Democritean Ostanes explained, when evocated, that a demon would not permit him to reveal the secrets of alchemy, although he was able to say where his books, in which the secrets were written, could be found. In some circumstances, as we have seen, the dead could not abide to be looked on by the living. It could also be thought that the ghosts were licensed only for a strictly limited period of release by their underworld masters. Aeschylus's ghost of Darius tells his evocator Atossa to be quick so that he

[53] Erictho: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.551–52; Volpilhac 1978: 277. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14–15. [Quintilian] *Declamationes maiores* 10. Actaeaon: see chapter 7; see also below for the iron ring of Lucian's Eucrates that protected him against Hecate. Statius *Thebaid* 4.478–79, 549–50, and 610–24.

[54] Odysseus: Homer *Odyssey* 11.633–37; cf. 385 for Persephone. Statius *Thebaid* 4.544–46. Tibullus 1.2.45–48; Tupet 1976: 339–40.

[55] *PGM* IV.154–285. Spontaneous death: Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.15; cf. Pliny *Natural History* 7.173–79 (Gabienus); and Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 3 (Bouplagos). Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.822–24.

can be blameless on the matter of time. Protesilaus's ghost was granted a license for only one day, or even just three hours, with Laodameia. Ghosts consequently had a tendency to slip away as soon as they could, leaving their interlocutor frustrated and with questions still unanswered. This is what the ghost of Anchises does to Aeneas (in *Aeneid* book 5) and that of Lucian's Demainete to Eucrates. Ghosts were particularly reluctant to re-enter their corpses for reanimation necromancies; Lucan explains that the process of reintegration is akin to a second dying.[56]

Hence complementary technologies were developed to retain ghosts once evocated, although we hear less of them. The same witch of Tibullus that flicked ghosts with milk also has the power to hold (*tenet*) ghosts with magical speech. Pliny makes a brief but intriguing reference to a "holding stone" (*synochitis*) used by magicians to hold onto ghosts once they have been summoned up (see chapter 12). Servius contends that the same ghost could not be evocated twice, but this is probably just an *ad hoc* hypothesis to explain why Orpheus could not retrieve Eurydice from the underworld a second time. Perhaps the claim is disproved by Erictho's promise to her corpse's ghost to free it of the possibility of being exploited again.[57]

As was made clear at the beginning of this chapter, the practices discussed in this section are those most difficult to integrate with the general practice of experiencing ghosts through incubation. Either these rites were performed in one's sleep (that is to say, one merely dreamed their performance), or they were performed in a rather abstract way before or after the act of incubation, as appropriate. Does Heliodorus's witch hold the key after all? Did one wave one's sword around frantically at the thin air to ward off unwanted but unseen ghosts before snuggling down to sleep? Or did one wave one's wand to attract a desired ghost (see next section)? And did one then flick milk about to dismiss the tarrying ghosts after waking from one's slumbers?

Wands. There is no direct evidence for the use of wands in necromancy, but the circumstantial case for their use is strong. In the *Odyssey*, Hermes, the divine escort of souls, calls the souls of the dead suitors out of their

[56] Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.29. Heliodorus 6.15. Cf. also the disturbed peace of the ghost at Lucian *On Grief* 16. Servius on Virgil *Georgics* 1.227; cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 335. [Democritus] *Physica et mystica* 2 p. 42, 21 Berthelot (at Bidez and Cumont 1938, 2: 317–18). Aeschylus *Persians* 692; cf. Eitrem 1928: 12. Protesilaus and Laodameia: Scholiast Aristides vol. 3 pp. 671–72 Dindorf; and Hyginus *Fabula* 103. Anchises and Aeneas: Virgil *Aeneid* 6.539. Eucrates and Demainete: Lucian *Philopseudes* 27. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.758–59.

[57] Pliny *Natural History* 37.192; see chapter 12. Servius on Virgil *Georgics* 4.502; cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 579 and Collard 1949: 123 for the disproof. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.730–49.

bodies and takes them to the underworld with his golden wand (*rhabdos*), the wand with which he can also charm men to sleep and wake them up. He brandishes this distinctively shaped wand—*caduceus*—as he attends Odysseus's necromancy of Elpenor on the Elpenor vase (fig. 8). Burkert sees Hermes in his soul-charming role as a projection of a shaman figure. We should perhaps compare the golden arrow on which Abaris's soul flew. Clearchus reported that Aristotle was convinced of the immortality of the soul when he witnessed a man striking a sleeping boy with a "soul-charming wand" (*psuchoulkos rhabdos*), drawing the soul out of him and directing it with the wand. The boy's body was beaten, but was insensible to pain. The man then struck the body again with the wand, upon which the soul returned into it and reported what had happened.[58]

Homer makes no mention of any rod in direct connection with Odysseus's consultation, although the brandished sword may perhaps be attributed with a similar function. Circe, who, as we have seen, may have significantly presided over Odysseus's necromancy in a mysterious way, has a wand (*rhabdos*) with which she turns men into animals, and to which Odysseus's sword is counterpart. But the closest thing to a wand in Homer's necromancy scene itself is Tiresias's staff, which, like Hermes' wand, was golden. It is possible that at some point in the tradition Tiresias had been with Odysseus on his side of the pit, in the role of living, specialist-necromancer guide to the hero (as the Sibyl was to Aeneas, Erictho to Sextus Pompey, and Mithrobarzanes to Menippus).[59]

When Euripides' blind Oedipus describes his emergence into the light through the metaphor of the evocation of a ghost, he refers to his daughter Antigone's support in a slightly awkward phrase as "with staff (*baktreumasi*) for a blind step." The contrived nature of this particular image would be well explained if it was usual for necromancers to use staffs in conducting ghosts out of the underworld.[60]

Sometimes the female necromancers of the Cumaean Painter's necromancy series hold branches as they confront their evocated ghosts.[61] The branch probably functioned in part as a necromantic wand. As we have seen, the women of these scenes are probably related to the Cumaean Sibyl (chapter 9). This suggests a similar function for the mistletoe-like

[58] Hermes: Homer *Odyssey* 24.1–4; cf. *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 4.14, where Hermes is "leader of dreams." For Pindar (*Olympian* 11.33), Hades himself also conducts the dead with a wand (*rhabdos*); cf. Harrison 1922: 44–45. Elpenor: see chapter 4 and fig. 8. Burkert 1962: 46. Abaris: Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 29; and Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 91 and 136. Clearchus F7 Wehrli; cf. Bolton 1962: 148; and Bremmer 1983: 50.

[59] Homer *Odyssey* 10.238, 293, 319–21 (Circe's wand), and 11.91 (Tiresias's staff). Tiresias as living necromancer: see chapter 16.

[60] Euripides *Phoenician Women* 1539–45; some discussion at Mastronarde 1994: ad loc.

[61] Kerrigan 1980: 25.

golden bough that Virgil's Aeneas plucks in the forest of Avernus and that the Sibyl carries through the underworld, as he carries his sword. She uses it as a passport to make Charon take them on his ferry, and finally deposits it at Persephone's threshold. The bough's origin and significance are the subject of notorious scholarly controversy, ancient and modern. It is plausibly seen as a reflex of Hermes' golden wand by Heyne and Clark. But there have been many other views. Macrobius's Cornutus thought Virgil just made it up. Servius derived it from the cult of the nearby crater of Nemi, but said that others derived it from the bough carried by initiates in the mysteries. Frazer famously took up the former view and Norden the latter.[62] When Aeneas first plucks it, at any rate, the bough is covered in golden leaves. Were they significant in themselves? They appear at least superficially similar to the Orphic gold lamellae buried with the initiated dead, which provided them with instructions as to how to negotiate their way through the underworld. Negotiation of a path through the underworld is precisely the task that lies ahead of Aeneas, and Aeneas accordingly takes the right-hand path at the underworld fork, just as the Orphic lamellae urge. It may not be significant that these lamellae are now commonly referred to by scholars as "leaves," but the fact that the Orphic lamellae discovered at Pelinna were cut into the shape of ivy leaves surely is significant.[63] Seneca speaks vaguely of his Tiresias waving a branch in his necromancy of Laius (the wood is unspecified); this may be merely derivative of Virgil, or it may draw upon a wider wand tradition.[64]

Dolls. In this section and the next we consider two accoutrements of necromantic rites with a more minor role in the necromantic tradition, dolls and rings. Dolls had a distinctive use in laying ghosts (attested as far back as the Mycenean period) and in making ghosts enact binding

[62] Virgil *Aeneid* 6.183–211, 406–10, and 636. Bough reflex of Hermes's wand: Heyne 1873–92, 2: 1015; and Clark 1979: 217–18 (also rightly stressing that it is carried by the Sibyl), and 195–224 more generally for a review of the golden-bough debate. Bough invented: Macrobius *Saturnalia* 5.19.2. Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.136. Bough of Nemi: Frazer 1913. Bough of initiates: Norden 1916 on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.138 and 142–43. Further views at Eitrem 1945: 103–4; Brooks 1953; Préaux 1960; Kresic 1968; and Austin 1977 on lines 138–39.

[63] For the Orphic gold lamellae, see Guthrie 1952: 171–91; Zuntz 1971: 277–93 (still the best general publication of the texts, but the analysis is defunct); Foti and Pugliese Caratelli 1974; M. L. West 1975 and 1983: 22–26; Burkert 1976 (very useful); Segal 1990; Graf 1991a and 1993; Giangrande 1993; and Kingsley 1995: 256–77 and 289–316. The golden bough was seen as Orphic by Six 1894; cf. Clark 1979: 192–93. The right fork: Virgil *Aeneas* 6.540–43 and Zuntz 1971: Orphic leaf no. A4. Pelinna ivy leaves: Johnston and McNiven: 1996: 30.

[64] Seneca *Oedipus* 555.

spells on the living (attested as far back as the archaic period). In the former case, they "represented" the ghost, in the latter the living victim, and in both cases their function was to curtail the activities of their referents. It is a puzzle how the transference of reference came about. Perhaps at first the names of the meddlesome living were incorporated into actual ghost-laying rites, with the ghost being asked to take a living soul (in part) with it when it went to rest. As the cursing technique developed, the doll's indirect reference to the living person who was being included in the laying will have become more significant than its original direct reference to the ghost.[65]

The only simple example of the use of a doll in necromancy is found in Heliodorus's episode. Here the witch makes a doll from a wheat cake, gives it a crown of bay and fennel, and throws it in the pit. Horace's Canidia and Sagana use a pair of dolls in conjunction with their necromantic rite, too: a large (black?) wool one subjects a small wax one, which is then burned. But the configuration of the doll pair and the melting of the wax one derive from erotic magic, and it is clear that Horace has melded a necromantic session together with an erotic binding-curse session. Whether Horace believed that dolls were used in pure necromancy as well is not clear.[66] In the *Orphic Argonautica,* Orpheus calls up a range of underworld powers with the help of Medea, among them Hecate (in the parallel sequence of Apollonius's *Argonautica*, Jason's calling up of Hecate, following Medea's instructions, is highly necromantic). Orpheus tells us that he fashioned plural dolls of barleymeal (*ouloplasmata*) as part of this process, threw them onto the pyre in his pit, and slaughtered three all-black puppies as a sacrifice to the dead. The term *ouloplasmata*, found only here, could, from an etymological point of view, as well be derived from *oulos*, "wool," as from *oulos*, "barley." It is likely that Aemilianus accused Apuleius of using a doll for necromancy. He claimed that Apuleius possessed a statuette of a squalid and terrifying figure, which he described variously as a skeleton, emaciated, disemboweled, a ghost, and

[65] For Greek and Roman "voodoo" dolls, see in general: Trumpf 1958; Wortmann 1968; Faraone 1989, 1991a (especially), 1992, and 1993; Gager 1992; Dickie 1996; and Ogden 1999: 71–79. For early ghost-laying dolls, see chapter 7, and Desborough et al. 1970 for another Mycenean example. For cursing dolls as representing their living victims, see Tupet 1976: 232–66 (bust of Aeneas, etc.); Faraone 1991a: 190 and nos. 5, 15–16, and 22; and Graf 1997a: 138–40 (important but wrong). It cannot be denied that dolls refer to their curse victims in the case of erotic pairs. The hobbling of the cursing dolls is superficially akin to the *maschalismos* done to corpses to restrain their ghosts.

[66] Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14. Horace *Satires* 1.8; cf. Tupet 1976: 307. For Canidia and Sagana's interest in erotic magic, see also Horace *Epode* 5. For erotic doll-pairs, see Faraone 1991a: nos. 12, 18, 20, 25, 28, and 29. A wax-and-wool doll-pair is found also at Ovid *Amores* 3.7. For the melting of wax dolls in erotic magic, see Theocritus *Idylls* 2.28 and Virgil *Eclogue* 8.80; cf. Faraone 1989.

a *daimonion*; that Apuleius had had it manufactured from a precious wood, in secret, for maleficent magic; and that he hailed it as "king" (*basileus*). Apuleius's defense does not appear strong: it was really a statuette of Hermes (i.e., the escort of souls), and made of ebony (i.e., black wood). He finishes his discussion of the doll with some ironic remarks. First, he jokes that anyone who thinks that the doll represents a ghost (*larva*) is himself "evocating ghosts" (*larvans*, a rare term). Second, he delivers a mock curse against Aemilianus, in which he requires Hermes to confront him with ghosts of all sorts from the underworld (*umbrae, lemures, manes, larvae*), all the apparitions of the night, and all the terrors of tombs and horrors of graves. These remarks presumably reflect the function Aemilianus had imputed to the doll. A fragmentary Greek magical papyrus uses a similar doll, a hollow laurel-wood statuette of Apollo, for what appears to be necromancy: the spell is for foreknowledge, and it is to be performed at either a deep river or a tomb.[67]

We may find hints of the use of some sort of doll for necromancy already in two similar morbid, erotic dramas of Euripides. Much in the extant accounts of the myth of Protesilaus and Laodameia probably derives from Euripides's lost *Protesilaus*. After spending only one night with his bride, Protesilaus became the first Greek to die at Troy. The nether gods took pity on the bride's desperate love and sent the ghost of Protesilaus back up to her for three hours (or a single day). Before this (or after, according to some) Laodameia had had a life-size effigy of Protesilaus made, which she had kept in her bedroom and slept with. The effigy was variously said to be made of wax (Ovid), wood (Tzetzes), or bronze (Hyginus). Tzetzes says the tale of the effigy was invented out of the fact that Laodameia saw Protesilaus's ghost (*eidōlon*) in her sleep during the night. Hyginus tells that her father Acastus, thinking the effigy unhealthy, had it burned on a funeral pyre. This is evocative of the practice of giving funerals to effigies to lay ghosts. It is odd that a bronze effigy should be burned. Perhaps Hyginus's "brazen," *aereum*, should be emended to "waxen," *cereum*, to bring him into line with Ovid (and note that Horace's wax doll is burned). Is it significant that Laodameia is Thessalian?[68] Euripides probably had Protesilaus, and perhaps

[67] *Orphic Argonautica* 950–87 (cf. Apollonius of Rhodes *Argonautica* 3.1008–1224). Faraone (1999: 52 n. 53) argues, however, that wool was representative of female flesh. Apuleius *Apology* 61–64; cf. Abt 1908: 296–306 and Hunink 1997: ad loc. (esp. for the reading and interpretation of *larvans*). Apollo doll: *PGM* III.282–409; since Apuleius's doll was constructed from separate pieces of ebony wood, it, too, may have had a compartment to receive magical insertions.

[68] Sources for Protesilaus: Homer *Iliad* 2.695–702, with Eustathius ad loc.; Propertius 1.17.9–10; Ovid *Heroides* 13, esp. 151–66; Lucian *Dialogues of the Dead* 28; Pausanias 4.2.7 (citing *Cypria* F18 Davies); Apollodorus *Epitome* 3.29.30; Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.447; Hyginus 103–4; Scholiast Aristides vol. 3 pp. 671–72 Dindorf (important for Eurip-

even his own play of that name, in mind when he wrote the *Alcestis*. Admetus, king of Thessalian Pherae, pines for his dead wife. He declares that he will have his craftsmen make an image of her that he will lay out in his bed and embrace (the craftsmen are *tektones*, carpenters, which suggests that the medium will be wood). He invites her ghost to visit him in his dreams by night; he wishes he could sing like Orpheus so that he could descend into Hades and enchant Hades and Persephone to release her back to him. It seems, accordingly, that the doll is to be used to stimulate encounters with the ghost.[69]

Presumably the function of dolls in necromancy was, as in ghost-laying, to supply a substitute house for the evocated ghost. They appear to have exercised a similar role in Mesopotamian necromancy. But if so, why was a doll needed in Heliodorus's reanimation, where the corpse itself provides the house? Hopfner suggests that the ghost was drawn first into the doll and thence into the body, but there is no indication of this in the text. Wax in particular might seem an appropriate material from which to make a substitute body, since the "corpse" parts eaten away by Apuleius's Thessalian witches were replaced by wax prostheses. Collard sees the function of Heliodorus's doll quite differently: as a substitute for human sacrifice.[70]

Some ancients believed that healing statues were animated by the ghosts of the people they represented. In the 170s, Athenagoras claimed to refute the idea by pointing out that at Alexandria Troas, the gilt healing statue of Neryllinus, a man of his time, had enjoyed its powers even before its subject's death. Lucian describes domestic statues of Hippocrates and the ugly Corinthian general Pellichus (this one also gilt). These could cure diseases or send them upon others, and the statues would get off their pedestals to wander about the house by night.[71]

Rings. A number of recipes for the manufacture of rings that may be considered necromantic in function survive. The Greek magical papyri contain one for a ring that will give its wearer the power to control the minds of others, open doors, inflict suffering and illness, exorcise demons, call up the

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ides); Tzetzes *Chiliads* 2.736–759–84. We learn little of interest from the extant fragments of Euripides's play, F647–57 Nauck. Protesilaus exercised power beyond the grave also at Herodotus 9.120. Cf. Pausanias 1.34 for a general comparison of Protesilaus to Amphiaraus and Trophonius.

[69] Euripides *Alcestis* 348–68; cf. Dale 1954: ad loc.; Brillante 1991: 110–11; and Heath 1994: 172–78.

[70] Mesopotamia: Scurlock 1995: 106. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 585. Apuleius *Apology* 61–64. Collard 1949: 81–82.

[71] Neryllinus: Athenagoras *Legatio pro Christ.* 26.3–5, with Jones 1985. Lucian *Philopseudes* 18–21; cf. Weinreich 1909: 137–46.

souls of the dead, cause dreams, and give prophecies. The key to the ring's power is its stone. A heliotrope, a stone of green chalcedony with flecks of red jasper, is to be engraved with an image of Helios, the Sun, represented as an *ouroboros* (a snake in a circle, swallowing its tale), with a scarab in the center from which rays emanate. Helios's name is to be inscribed in hieroglyphs on the reverse. The ring is to be consecrated with incantations, including many *voces magicae*, at dawn over fourteen days before the Sun. One is then to cut open a live rooster and insert the gem into its guts, without breaking its entrails, and leave it there for a day. The ring is to be activated by the name OUPHOR and a *historiola* (a paradigmatic tale). Another papyrus recipe gives instructions for the manufacture of a scarab ring of Hermes that will allow its wearer to know the minds of both the living and the dead. The first book of *Cyranides*, compiled in the fourth century A.D., gives a recipe for the manufacture of a Nemesis ring, which should also be considered necromantic. An image of Nemesis with her cubit-rule, wand, and wheel of Fortune is to be engraved upon a stone that has been sacralized upon the goddess's altar. Behind the stone is to be enclosed a dove's wing-tip and a portion of the plant mullein, *phlomos*, which is also known as *nekua* or *nekudia*, the "death plant" in divinatory context (see chapter 12). The ring is said to reveal to its wearer—presumably in sleep—the number of years in his life and the manner and place of his death, types of prophecy peculiarly appropriate to necromancy (cf. chapters 15 and 16). The ring can also exorcise possessing demons, and it is said to be able to avert demonic manifestations and children's nightmares. Accordingly, it may function in a fashion broadly parallel to that attributed to bean consumption, insofar as it interferes with dreaming in general, but promotes necromantic dreaming in particular (for beans, see chapter 6; for more on the mullein, chapter 12). Lucian's Eucrates has a ring that controls underworld powers by virtue of being made of iron, specifically crucifixion nails. It was given to him by an Arab. Confronted by a monstrous Hecate with dogs the size of Indian elephants as he walked in the woods, Eucrates turned the ring's seal to the inside of his hand, and Hecate stamped a hole open in the ground and jumped back down it, revealing in the process the ghosts below.[72]

Dress. We know little of the dress worn by consulters of *nekuomanteia*. Those who descended to Trophonius wore a full-length white linen shift,

[72] Helios: *PGM* XII.270–350. Hermes: *PGM* V.213–303. *Cyranides* 1.13.16–29 Kaimakis; for this text, cf. Kaimakis 1976 and Waegeman 1987: esp. 103–9. Lucian *Philopseudes* 17 and 22–24; Plato's invisibility-conferring ring of Gyges is activated in the same way at *Republic* 359d–60b. [Augustine] *Hom. de sacrileg.* 22 (seventh century A.D.) tells that the sacrilegious wear iron rings or armlets or keep iron in their house to frighten

heavy boots, and, perhaps optionally, a red military cloak, although Apollonius of Tyana successfully went down in just his rough philosopher's cloak. The boots were specific to the Trophonius oracle. In the necromancy scenes of the Cumaean Painter, the woman necromancer's head is hooded. In illustrations of the *Odyssey* episode, Odysseus is usually (all but) heroically naked.[73] In literary necromancies, if the necromancer's dress was to be significant, it reflected either funereal dress or dress in some way appropriate to the underworld. Seneca's Tiresias explicitly dons funereal dress and a wreath of death-bringing yew in the course of his rite, and Aeschylus's Atossa leaves her fancy clothes behind and brings a wreath of flowers.[74] The most obviously appropriate dress for the underworld itself was black, since it was dark in all things. Necromantic Night herself was black-robed. Horace's Canidia wore black for her necromancy. Apollonius's Jason also wore black when he called up Hecate in his quasi-necromancy in accordance with Medea's instructions, as did Orpheus in the parallel sequence in the *Orphic Argonautica*. Witches also tended to avoid bindings as they performed their rites (binders should not be bound), and this included the necromantic ones. Thus Canidia's hair and feet were unbound (i.e., she was unshod), although she did have a belt on her dress. When Ovid's Medea performed a rejuvenation-reanimation on Aeson, she was unbound in hair, dress, and feet.[75]

It is probable that the multicolored dress Lucan's Erictho dons for her necromancy has a protective function, like fillets twisted from threads of three different colors; perhaps it should also be compared with the multicolored fillets tied around tombstones on Attic white-ground *lēkythoi*. Erictho also binds her hair with snakes to take on the appearance of Hecate or a Fury, and such a headdress perhaps similarly functioned as a protective phylactery for her.[76] Lucian's Menippus protects himself by

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demons away. But the ghost of Philinnion accepted an iron ring from her lover (Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 1).

[73] Trophonius: Pausanias 9.39.4; Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.19; Lucian *Dialogues of the Dead* 10; Maximus of Tyre 8.2 (red cloak); and *Suda* s.v. *Trophōnios* . . . ; see chapter 6. Cumaean Painter: Kerrigan 1980: 24–25. *Odyssey* illustrations: Elpenor vase (fig. 8); Tiresias vase (fig. 12); Villa Albani relief (fig. 13).

[74] Seneca *Oedipus* 552 and 555. Aeschylus *Persians* 608 and 618. Cf. Eitrem 1928: 7 and Garland 1985: 116.

[75] Necromantic Night: Alexis F93 K-A/Arnott. Horace *Satires* 1.8.2–5; Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 3.1026–62; *Orphic Argonautica* 950–87; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.179–85. For Medea performing rites unbound in other contexts, cf. esp. Sophocles *Rhizotomoi* F543 *TrGF* (completely naked) and Ovid *Heroides* 6.83–94. Cf. the table of witches and their attributes at Annequin 1973: 166–67.

[76] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.654–56. For protective multicolored fillets, see Petronius *Satyricon* 131.4; cf. also Virgil *Eclogues* 8.74–75, with Servius ad loc.; see Bourgery 1928: 309; Col-

adopting the attributes of mortals who have successfully penetrated and returned safely from the underworld: the cap of Odysseus (illustrated on the Elpenor vase, fig. 8), the lion skin of Heracles, and the lyre of Orpheus. However, his guide Mithrobarzanes wears the Median dress of the mage.[77]

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lard 1949: 56 and 78; Volpilhac 1978: 276–78; and Rabinowitz 1998: 139–40 ("shamanic death-garb"). Tombstone fillets: Kurtz 1975: plate 19.2, etc.; see Garland 1985: 116 and 170–71. Snake phylactery: Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 579.

[77] Lucian *Menippus* 8, and cf. 1; for the ability of Orpheus's lyre to protect one from underworld horrors, see chapter 8.

CHAPTER 12

FROM BOWL DIVINATION TO BOY-SACRIFICE

IN this chapter, consideration is given to a range of perhaps peripheral necromantic technologies unified by their association with children, particularly boys. The Greek (and Demotic) magical papyri contain many recipes for scrying via lecanomancy (bowl divination) and lychnomancy (lamp divination). Sometimes the prophesying power behind bowl and lamp divination was a ghost or ghosts, although gods and demons, too, could be consulted by this method. The act of observation for divinations of this variety was often carried out by a boy-medium. Boys were, it seems, felt more able to perceive messages from these various kinds of power because their souls were less corrupt. Necromancy is also sometimes associated, in different ways, with human sacrifice, and often here the human concerned is a boy. It could well be that the notion that necromancy could involve human sacrifice developed in part out of the practice of the exploitation of boys for bowl and lamp necromancy.

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In lecanomancy, one took divination from shapes or images in glitterings or cloudings or possibly distorted reflections in liquid in the bowl. The reading of tea-leaves is a very rough latter-day equivalent. Augustine tells that pagans usually regarded these images as manifestations of ghosts, but he himself knew them to be manifestations of demons (*daimones*) pretending to be ghosts pretending to be gods. The notion that ghosts could manifest themselves in liquid sits easily with the practice of lake necromancy, and indeed, it may have been believed that lecanomancy was practiced at the lakeside *nekuomanteia* of Acheron and Avernus (see chapters 4 and 5). Propertius perhaps deliberately identifies lake consultation and bowl consultation in his mysterious reference to "a dead ghost that comes forth from magic waters." A level of identification between lecanomancy and necromancy is implied, too, by a variation between the Greek and Latin manuscripts of Thessalus of Tralles. In the Greek version, the Egyptian priest tells Thessalus that he will see for himself the power of the vessel (*lekanē*). The Latin "translates" this as a promise that he will see the power of necromancy (*necromantia*) in the crypt (which also anticipates his encounter with Asclepius in a crypt more directly). Tzetzes, presumably reflecting much older views, was to hold that lecano-

mancy originated in the pouring of blood, human or animal, into a necromantic pit.[1]

Varro, whose views are included in Augustine's discussion, held that hydromancy, that is, lecanomancy with water, was powered by demons, but that it became "necromancy" when blood was used instead, whereupon it was powered by ghosts.[2] One of the spells in the Greek magical papyri, introduced as "lecanomancy for direct vision together with necromancy (*nekuagōgē*)," similarly finds different sorts of power acting through different types of liquid in a bronze vessel. Whereas rainwater, which emanates from heaven, summons the gods of heaven, spring water, from the depths of the earth, summons ghosts. One holds the vessel between one's knees, pours green olive oil onto the surface, and bends over it, uttering the spell prescribed. The god or ghost communicates to one whatever one wishes, probably through glittering, to which the polished surface of the vessel could contribute, but also perhaps through the shapes formed by the oil. A further spell dismisses the god or ghost. A Demotic magical papyrus gives a number of recipes for lecanomancy. A spell of particular interest permits one to consult a god, spirit, drowned man, or dead man. The liquid employed is oasis oil, and the bowl must be new (and so shiny?). The act of observation is to be carried out by a boy-medium, who must not have had sex with a woman.[3] Varro told that the course of the Mithridatic War had been predicted in 160 lines of verse at Tralles by a boy-medium who gazed at a reflection of a statuette of Hermes in bowl of water. Did Hermes escort ghosts into the water?[4]

As we have seen, Pliny makes mention of a "holding stone" (*synochitis*) used by magicians to hold onto ghosts they have evocated. He associates it with the *ananc(h)itis*, "compulsion stone," which has the power of procuring the appearance of divinities in hydromancy. Much later, Isidore of Seville (seventh century A.D.) tells that the *anancitis* was said to be used in necromancy (*necromantia*) to evocate images of demons (*daemonum imagines*). Damigeron (originally first century A.D.?) speaks of a *lapis diadochos*, a stone that resembles a beryl. This is used in hydromancy and

[1] Augustine *City of God* 7.35; cf. Isidore of Seville *Etymologiae* 8.19.13. Propertius 4.1.106, with the important discussion of Tupet 1976: 24–25. Thessalus of Tralles *De virtutibus herbarum* pp. 51–52 Friedrich; Ritner (1993: 219) seems to think that Thessalus went on to converse with Asclepius in the sealed chamber by lecanomancy, but this is not obviously true. Tzetzes *Exeg. in Iliadem* p. 11, 5; cf. 148, 7. For lecanomancy in general, see Böhm 1916; Ganschinietz 1925; and Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 387–458; cf. also Graf 1999: 284–89.

[2] Varro is credited with this view also at Isidore of Seville *Etymologiae* 8.9.11.

[3] *PGM* IV. 154–285. *PDM* xiv. 1–92; cf. also 851–55 (with vegetable oil and a ghost) and 1110–29 (with the "shadow" of a god); I rely here on the translation of Johnson in Betz 1992.

[4] Varro as cited by Apuleius *Apology* 42; cf. Ganschinietz 1925: 1883.

allows one to call up spirits (*umbrae*), with the exception, however, in this case, of ghosts, because the stone is resistant to the dead. It seems, then, that necromantic stones functioned in the context of lecanomancy. It was common to put shiny metal or gemstones into vessels of liquid to enhance the flashing for divination. This phenomenon perhaps partly explains Erictho's insertion of stones into her reanimating blood-brew.[5]

The Christian apologist Hippolytus exposes, he would have us believe, a pagan lecanomantic confidence trick. A bowl with a glass bottom is placed over a hole in a platform. The mage's assistants, duly costumed, take on the roles of gods and demons, including, no doubt, ghosts, and display themselves through the bottom of the bowl from underneath the platform. As with his comparable exposé of a supposed pagan confidence trick with a talking skull (see next chapter), Hippolytus's claims mesh poorly with pagan evidence for lecanomancy and may owe more to his own hostile ingenuity than to observation of practice. It would be gratifying if we could at least accept from him the implication that when a pagan peered into a bowl for lecanomancy, he expected to see, however it was constructed, an upturned face looking back at him.[6]

The Greeks and Romans attributed lecanomancy, including, probably, its necromantic variant, to the Persians. Posidonius (second century B.C.) and Strabo told that the Persians had mages, necromancers (*nekuomanteis*), lecanomancers, and hydromancers, seemingly associating the terms to a certain extent. For Varro, the Persians invented hydromancy, and presumably "necromancy," too, and instructed Pythagoras and Numa, king of Rome, in it. This was supposedly the origin of the myth that Numa married the water-nymph Egeria. Pliny told that the mages conversed with gods in bowls, lamps, and other media. This was all part of the hellenistic lore of Ostanes.[7]

In lychnomancy, one took divination from images or shapes in the flame of the lamp. It depended upon the manifestations of gods or ghosts, just as lecanomancy did.[8] The clearest example of ghost-powered lychnomancy is found in a recipe in a Demotic magical papyrus that actually combines lecanomancy and lychnomancy. The "vessel enquiry of

[5] Pliny *Natural History* 37.192 (cf. chapter 11). Isidore of Seville *Etymologiae* 16.14. Damigeron *De lapidibus* 5. Gemstones in liquid: Böhm 1916: 84; Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 397–99 and 587; Delatte 1932: 140–42; and Collard 1949: 122. Erictho: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.676; the argument of Volpilhac 1978: 279 that Erictho's "moon liquid" (6.669) is to be identified with the *synochitis* seems far-fetched.

[6] Hippolytus *Refutations* 4.35; Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 339.

[7] Posidonius F133 Theiler. Strabo C762. Pliny *Natural History* 28.104 (including Varro); Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 388–89. Ostanes lore: Bidez and Cumont 1938, 1: 168–207, esp. 184, and 2: 267, 287; cf. Ganschinietz 1925: 1879–80.

[8] For lychnomancy in general, see Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 345–82; for shadows, see *PDM* xiv. 150–231.

Khonsu" first requires the lion-god Mihos to bring the souls of the dead from the underworld to the mouth of the vessel containing water and oil to speak to the consulter. The observation is again carried out by a pure boy, who sits bending over the vessel while the consulter stands over him with his hands on his head. If the consulter is to carry out the observation himself, he must put a magical ointment in his eyes, evidently to disrupt normal vision. But a further imprecation, addressed to the dead in general and the drowned in particular, asks them to appear at the mouth of a lamp. Doubtless the flickering lamp enhanced the visual effects in the bowl. The *Cyranides* may also attest lecanomantic-lychnomantic necromancy. It specifies that *nekua* and *nekudia* were names applied to the plant mullein (*phlomos*) when used in necromantic lecanomancy, but it also tells that the plant could be used to make a lamp-wick (cf. chapter 11 for mullein). Another recipe in the same Demotic papyrus permits a boy-medium to see the Great God sitting in the flame of a lamp, but also asks the underworld to open up, which suggests that ghosts might be seen in it as well.[9]

Greek-language lychnomancy recipes borrow necromantic procedures. In one, the lamp is set on the (disembodied?) head of a wolf. Chthonic demons are summoned, and Hades is invoked. There are libations of wine, honey, milk, and rainwater, and offerings of flat and round cakes. A demon, probably a *nekudaimōn*, appears, and can prophesy and send dreams and diseases. One dismisses him by extinguishing the flame. Another recipe derives a prophecy from Apollo with a boy-medium. It is to be performed at night. Significant parts of a black ram are to be sacrificed to the god if he does not appear. If he still declines to appear, one is to wrap up a papyrus figure of Akephalos, "the Headless god," in material from the clothes of a man killed by violence and throw it into the furnace of a bathhouse (bathhouses were traditionally haunted, as they were fed from underground water). In a variant recipe, one is to cast the clothing of the man killed by violence into the flame itself. Yet another recipe petitions a lamp for a dream oracle from Bes, assimilated both to the Headless god and to a corpse in a coffin executed by beheading.[10]

[9] *PDM* xiv.239–95 (Mihos; cf. also 395–427, 528–53, 750–51, 805–50, and 1078–89) and *PDM* xiv.489–515 (Great God). Lecanomancy, lychnomancy, and boy-mediums (but not, explicitly, necromancy) are also combined in the Greek recipe at *PGM* V.1–53. *Cyranides* 1.13.1 Kaimakis; cf. Ganschinietz 1925: 1884; Collard 1949: 122. For visions in the flame, see also *PGM* IV. 930–1114 and *PDM* xiv. 117–49 and 516–27. At Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.11, the witch Pamphile predicts rain by looking into the flame of a lamp (cf. 3.21).

[10] Wolf's head: *PGM* I.262–347; for dream-sending lamps, see also *PGM* IV.3172–3208, VII.250–59, XXIIb.32–35; *PDM* lxi.63–78; and *PDM* suppl. 28–40; cf. Eitrem 1991: 176–77 and 180–81. Akephalos: *PGM* II. 1–64; for haunted bathhouses, see chapter 5.

The practice of necromantic lychnomancy in earlier Greek culture may be hinted at by the presence of lamps in ghost stories. Pliny's Athenodorus waited for the ghost to appear during his haunted-house vigil by reading with a lamp. When the ghost materialized, he followed it, taking the lamp with him. Periander discovered that his secret lover was his mother by uncovering a lamp in the bedroom; as he leapt to kill her, an apparition appeared and stayed his hand. A lamp, whether burning or snuffed, plays a pivotal role in the Cleonice tale, too, albeit prior to her death and transition to ghostly status.[11]

Catoptromancy was divination from images in the glittering or distorted reflections of mirrors. It is first attested in Greek culture by Aristophanes, whose Lamachus, on seeing Dicaeopolis reflected in his polished and oiled bronze shield, "sees" an old man who will be charged with cowardice. Much later, the allegation that Apuleius had performed catoptromancy constituted, as it would appear, a plank in his enemies' case that he was a magician. Literary evidence perhaps associates it with necromancy in three contexts. First, Pausanias tells that at Patras, a mirror was lowered on a string into a spring sacred to Demeter in such a way that its plane lightly kissed the surface of the water. When it was withdrawn, it gave out the image of a sick person as either dead or alive, and so predicted death or recovery. It is the possible contact with ghosts in underground water, rather than images of the living as dead, that associates this custom with necromancy. Pausanias compares the oracle of Thryxean Apollo at Cynaeae in Lycia, where one looks into spring to see everything one wishes.[12] Second, the emperor Didius Julianus was said both to have killed boys for divination and to have had mages perform catoptromancy for him with a boy-medium. They first blindfolded the boy but then made him look into a mirror, presumably after removing the blindfold. Meanwhile, they spoke incantations down into his head.[13] Third, it is possible that some sort of necromantic catoptromancy underlies the obscure tale of Pythagoras's "mirror-game," in which he wrote letters in blood on a mirror, which was then used—somehow—to reflect them

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Clothing in flame: *PGM* II.64–184; cf. Merkelbach and Totti 1990–; 1: 35–64. Bes: *PGM* VII.222–49; cf. *PGM* CII.

[11] Pliny *Letters* 7.27 (Athenodorus); Parthenius *Erotica Pathemata* 17 (Periander; cf. chapter 5); Plutarch *Cimon* 6 and Pausanias 3.17.7–9 (Cleonice). For the association between ghosts and lamps, see Felton 1999: 14, 55, 70, and 85.

[12] Aristophanes *Acharnians* 1124–28. Pausanias 7.21.5. Apuleius *Apology* 13–16 (with Abt 1908 and Hunink 1997: ad loc.). For catoptromancy, see Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 387–38 and 455; Delatte 1932: 133–38 and, more generally, McCarty 1989.

[13] Dio Cassius 74.16 (killing of boys); Spartianus *Didius Julianus* (SHA) 7 (catoptromancy); Bouché-Leclerq 1879–82, 1: 340; Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 456; and Delatte 1932: 139–41.

onto a full moon, from which they were read by an assistant.[14] As we have seen, it is possible that one of the Cumaean Painter's necromancy scenes represents the woman-necromancer looking at a ghost in a mirror (fig. 10; see chapter 5).

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Boy-mediums who had not been with a woman were often used in these varieties of necromantic scrying. It seems that they were typically hypnotized as the magician spoke incantations down into their heads, while they focused on glittering patterns in liquids, flames, or mirrors and experienced soothing smells. One lychnomancy recipe explicitly speaks of putting the boy-medium into a trance. The association of "uncorrupted" boys with necromancy in a more general way is also made by Justin Martyr: "Necromancy and the divinations you practice through uncorrupted (*adiaphthorōn*) children, the invoking of departed human souls, those who are called among the mages dream-senders and familiars—let these things persuade you that after death souls remain conscious."[15]

Apuleius has a Pythagorean/Platonizing explanation for the phenomenon of boy-mediums. Such boys had a pure (*simplex*) soul, that is, one that was not excessively bound to the things of the body (such as sex) and that could be withdrawn even further from the body through the (deathlike) state of sleep, thus increasing its perceptual abilities. No doubt a similar rationalization underlies Clearchus's tale of the drawing out of a boy's soul before Plato's pupil Aristotle. This is perhaps why Plato's own Socrates had used a boy to demonstrate the ability of the soul to perceive things beyond the physical experience of its body in the *Meno*. The Pythagorean Nigidius Figulus found stolen money by subjecting boys to incantations, presumably sending their souls off to look for it, or to ask ghosts about it. Such projected souls were akin to ghosts, and so evidently able to communicate with them directly. Such a notion of parallelism between the soul of the boy-medium and that of the ghost consulted is found in a recipe among the Greek magical papyri in which the practitioner is instructed to lay the boy-medium on the ground and speak an incantation addressed to the inhabitants of the underworld (among others), whereupon a dark-colored (*melanchroun*) boy (that is, probably, a ghost) will appear to him.[16]

[14] Scholiast Aristophanes *Clouds* 752 and *Suda* s.v. *Thettalē gynē*; Delatte 1932: 149.

[15] For the role of smells, see Apuleius *Apology* 42. For boy-mediums in general, see Abt 1908: 160–65; Hopfner 1926; and Lowe 1929: 36–39. Explicit trance: *PGM* VII.540–78 (*kataspasthēnai*). Justin Martyr *Apologies* 1.18; cf. Cumont 1949: 106.

[16] Apuleius *Apology* 42 (also for Nigidius); Clearchus F7 Wehrli; Plato *Meno* passim. Dark-colored boy: *PGM* VII.348–58.

Boy-mediums needed to be uncorrupted in other ways, too. Some of the recipes in the Greek magical papyri stipulate that they should not have been used as mediums before.[17] Apuleius was accused of the performance of some sort of divination with a boy-medium. The boy had supposedly collapsed as part of the process and had not known who he was when he came round. Apuleius's defense assumes that such boys also had to be uncorrupted in the sense of having a beautiful and perfect body and of being healthy, bright, and articulate. The boy in question, Thallus, could never have been used for such a purpose, for he was a sore-ridden and gaping-nostrilled wretch, who had in fact collapsed in an epileptic fit. The need for "pure" boys for mediumship conveniently coincided with the pederastic tastes of antiquity. Such is the implication of the requirements that the boys be beautiful and perfect in body and that they should not have slept with a woman (this requirement having implications both for the youth of the boy and for his want of heterosexual socialization). Such is the implication also of the physical contact between magician and boy during these rites. Indeed, Apuleius's prosecutors had used his love poems about boys as evidence of his magical activities.[18] The evidence for girl-mediums in a necromantic context, ventriloquists apart, is slight. But in Statius's necromancy of Laius, blind Tiresias's virgin daughter Manto very much acts as a medium for her father, describing to him the ghosts he has called up, which she can see but he cannot.[19]

It was also believed that one could perform necromancy through the hieroscopic sacrifice of boys (as opposed to holocaustic sacrifice of animals in traditional evocations).[20] Cicero accused Vatinius of evocating ghosts and of sacrificing the entrails of boys to the dead. We are not told the ages of the people Nero killed for divination under the guidance of Tiridates and other mages, but they may well have been boys, too. Simon Magus turned air into water, water into blood, and blood into flesh to

[17] E.g., *PGM* VII. 540–78 and 664–85.

[18] Apuleius *Apology* 9–13 (pederastic poems) and 42–46 (Thallus); cf. Hunink 1997; ad loc.; and especially Abt 1908: 160–5. But we learn from, e.g., Lucian *Philopseudes* 16 that the curing of epileptics was part of the ancient magician's stock-in-trade. Sophronius, bishop of Tella in the fifth century A.D., stripped his boy-medium naked for his lecanomancy, according to the Syriac records discussed at Luck 1999: 155. For pederasty, see, *inter alia*, Dover 1978 and Buffière 1980. That the Greek and Demotic magical papyri tend to think of boys as opposed to girls when they speak of mediums as *paides* (which could in theory denote children of common gender) is indicated by the fact that it is often additionally stipulated that the child exploited should not have slept with a woman (e.g., *PDM* xiv. 1–92). Apuleius licenses the use of boys' souls for mediumship with an appeal to Plato's notions of the souls of boys (cf. his *Meno*); the abilities of girls' souls were of little interest to that philosopher.

[19] Statius *Thebaid* 4.519–79.

[20] For hieroscopy and holocausts, see Van Straten 1995: 156–58. For a general treatment of human sacrifice in Greece (if there was any at all), see Hughes 1991.

create a pure boy whom he could kill for necromancy (*necromantia*). He explained that he did not fear vengeance from the ghost because the dead knew the punishments one could receive for wrongdoing in the afterlife and were anxious not to acquire more for themselves. Apollonius of Tyana was accused before Domitian of attempting to divine the future from the entrails of boys with a view to aiding Nerva's succession. He had supposedly cut open a free and beautiful Arcadian boy by night, despite his entreaties, eaten some of his entrails, dipped his hands in his blood, and asked the gods to reveal the truth. In denying the charge, Apollonius scoffs that perhaps he did it in a dream, which may refer ironically to a belief that one could experience prophecy in dreams after boy-sacrifice. According to some, Hadrian's boy-lover, the beautiful youth Antinous, volunteered to die in human sacrifice so that the emperor could perform necromancy, because, as Dio explains, there was need of a willing ghost (*hekēsiou psuchēs*). In both of these last cases, the pederastic overtones should again be noted. Juvenal, writing under Trajan, speaks of an Armenian or Commagenian soothsayer (*haruspex*) who examines the entrails of a boy when those of a chicken or a puppy are unclear. Elagabalus supposedly investigated the entrails of beautiful boys as well. St. John Chrysostom and Gregory of Nazianz also associated necromancy with the sacrifice of boys, and the latter with girls, too.[21] Sometimes even younger children were preferred. Lucan's great necromancer Erictho ripped fetuses from wombs to lay on altars to attract the powers of cruel ghosts, made offerings to the underworld gods of the heads and entrails of babies, opened human breasts, and consumed human entrails. The emperor Maxentius supposedly ripped open a pregnant woman, investigated the bowels of newborn infants, and evocated demons with magical arts. Under Julian (ruled A.D. 361–363), it was alleged, the pagans began sacrificing pure children, both male and female, inspecting their entrails and tasting their flesh. Athanasius, the bishop of Alexandria, was accused of participating in this. Under the emperor Valens, the tribune Pollentianus cut a fetus from the womb of a living woman to consult the ghosts about a change of emperor. Eusebius also knew of a necromancer who sometimes took fetuses from wombs and at other times examined the entrails

[21] Cicero *Against Vatinius* 14. Nero: Pliny *Natural History* 30.16. Simon Magus: [Clement] *Recognitions* 2.13 and 15; Tupet 1986: 2664. Apollonius: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 7.11 and 8.5–7, esp. 8.7.12–15. Antinous: Dio Cassius 69.11; Bidez and Cumont 1938, 2: 317–19 hypothesize that the rather more elderly great mage Ostanes may have been supposed to have committed suicide ([Democritus] *Physica et mystica* 2 p.42, 21 Berthelot) so as to make his ghost available for necromancy. Juvenal 6.548–52. Elagabalus: Lampridius (SHA) *Elagabalus* 8; cf. Annequin 1973: 60–61. St. John Chrysostom *De Babyla contra Iulianum et gentiles* 79.4. Gregory of Nazianz *Contra Iulianum imperatorem, PG* 35, 624.27.

of the newborn. Sorcerers that ripped fetuses from wombs were perhaps an imaginative development of humble abortionists.[22]

A school of thought believed hieroscopy in turn to function through a sort of necromancy, the departing soul of the sacrificed creature responding to the question posed by leaving a visible sign in its entrails. Within the school it could be debated whether human or animal souls and entrails were more revelatory or truthful. When Porphyry advocated vegetarianism, he argued that human entrails, as deriving from the higher animal, were better for prophecy. When Apollonius defended himself of the charge of cutting up the boy for divination, he argued rather that animal entrails were better. Human souls' fear of their impending death led them to churn up their entrails, while their anger at it swamped the prophetic parts of the liver with bile. For this same reason, excessively spirited animals, such as cocks, pigs, and bulls, should also be avoided for hieroscopy. A related school held that one could take the mantic souls of sacrificed creatures into one's own body by consuming key entrails. An anonymous Egyptian priest thought one could acquire prophecy thus by eating the hearts of crows, moles, or hawks. Pliny tells that the mages similarly placed the highest confidence in the entrails of the mole. The heart of the mole, eaten fresh and still beating, gave one the ability to see how immediate business would turn out. The mole is particularly powerful, he explains, because it is permanently blind, buried in darkness, and resembles the interred.[23] A similar set of notions underpins the manufacture of a love potion by Horace's Canidia, Sagana, and colleagues. As we have seen, they snatch a boy and bury him up to his neck in their house so that they can starve him to death while wafting delicious food before him, just out of reach. The yearning of his soul as he dies suffuses his liver and marrow, which can then form the basis of a love potion that will transmit the yearning, in an erotic register, to the consumer of it.[24] Given that Erictho devours entrails, it is curious that Lucan should say that she is completely ignorant of them, but the purpose of the contention is doubtless to construct an antithesis between the piety of divination by

[22] Erictho: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.557–60 and 706–11. Maxentius: Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* 8.14 and *Life of Constantine* 1.36. Julian and Athanasius: Socrates *Ecclesiastical History* 3.13. Pollentianus: Ammianus Marcellinus 29.2.17; Bourgery 1928: 307; and Massoneau 1934: 216. Eusebius's necromancer: *Ecclesiastical History* 8.14. For fetus sacrifice, see Cumont 1949: 107 and Tupet 1986: 2664. For magical abortions, cf. Aubert 1989.

[23] Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.51. Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.7.15. Egyptian priest: text at Bidez and Cumont 1938, 1: 186; cf. Festugière 1936. Pliny *Natural History* 30.19.

[24] Horace *Epodes* 5. In the late fifth century A.D. law students in Beirut planned to disembowel an Ethiopian slave-boy in the circus at midnight so that his master, John Faulon of Thebes in Egypt, could obtain the favors of a woman who was resisting him: Zacharius Scholasticus *Life of Severus of Antioch, PO* 2 pp. 57–59 (in Syriac; I depend upon the French translation); cf. Cumont 1945: 137 and 1949: 108; and Bernand 1991: 150.

normal animal sacrifice and the terrible necromantic divinations of the witch.[25]

The more general idea that a boy could be killed to provide a soul for necromancy may already be present in the mysterious circumstances of the death of Elpenor at Circe's house in advance of Odysseus's necromantic discussion with him. Elpenor was the youngest member of Odysseus's crew, and he is still beardless on the Elpenor vase (fig. 8). From this death and from the *Aeneid*'s reflexes of it, the deaths of Palinurus and Misenus, Servius extrapolates the principle that "the evocation of ghosts (*sciomantia*) could not take place without the killing (*occisione*) of a person."[26]

When Cicero says that Vatinius sacrificed the entrails of boys to a ghost/ghosts (*manes*), and Ammianus says that Pollentianus tore out a fetus to consult ghosts (*manibus*), they perhaps think not that the sacrificed person will provide the communicating ghost, but that his sacrifice constitutes an offering to other ghosts, who will then do the communicating. The sacrifice thus fulfills a similar role to the jugulation of Polyxena on the tomb of Achilles in Euripides' *Hecabe*. We have seen that in traditional evocations, sheep's blood may sometimes have been construed as a substitute for human blood.[27]

The notion that boys were sacrificed in necromancy may be set in the context of the wider belief that witches and sorcerers snatched children for their works. Canidia and Sagana we have seen. St. Peter reputedly killed and carved up a boy in order to secure the success of Christianity. A famous Latin epitaph (ca. A.D. 20s) laments the death of four-year-old Iucundus, the slave-boy of Livilla, after being snatched by witches. Petronius's witches use an elaborate decoy routine to snatch the (already dead) body of a boy from well-guarded house. The ghosts of dead children and babies were ideal for all sorts of magical exploitation as "dead before their time" (*aōroi*), and if they could be "killed by violence" (*biaiothanatoi*), too, so much the better. But probably the main starting-point for the notion that there was such a thing as necromantic boy-sacrifice was the more mundane exploitation of "pure" boys as necromantic mediums.[28]

[25] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.524–26.

[26] Elpenor: see fig. 8 and chapter 9; Crane 1988: 95–96 and Baldick 1994: 119 see Elpenor as a disguised sacrifice preliminary to the consultation of the dead. Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.107; Tupet 1986: 2664. Palinurus: Virgil *Aeneid* 5.833–71 and 6.337–83. Misenus: 6.149–82.

[27] Euripides *Hecabe* 518–81; Eitrem 1928: 7. Sheep's blood as substitute: see chapter 11.

[28] St. Peter: Augustine *City of God* 18.53. Petronius *Satyricon* 63. Epitaph: *CIL* 4.3 19747; Tupet 1986: 2664. It is not apparent whether there was a magical context to the sacrifice of the boy at Lollianus *Phoinikika* fragment B1 *verso*; cf. Winkler 1980: 166–67 and 173–74.

That the purposeful killing (of adults) may have preceded some necromantic reanimations is hinted at by some quasi-necromantic episodes. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Medea kills Aeson, jugulating him and draining out all his blood, in preparation for his magical rejuvenation-reanimation. Apuleius's Meroe kills Socrates, even pulling out his heart, before temporarily reanimating him with a sponge and an incantation.[29]

[29] Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.285–93. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 1.13.17.

CHAPTER 13

REANIMATION AND TALKING HEADS

THE single most striking innovation in the Greco-Roman necromantic tradition is corpse reanimation. The technology for this, as represented to us, seems to have built upon evocation technology, but was in itself more variable and less conservative. Even so, some themes recur in the representations of it, notably the standing-up of the corpse. Corpse reanimation makes its first appearance, already in a fully and gloriously developed form, in the hands of Lucan's Erictho. The antecedents, literary and cultural, of this important and influential sequence are difficult to fathom. It is suggested that if the sequence is to be regarded as an imaginative representation of any practiced necromantic rites, then we should look primarily to the tradition of skull divination. The Greek magical papyri preserve a particularly interesting series of recipes for this from late antiquity, but the phenomenon may be attested for archaic and classical Greece, by, for example, the myth of Orpheus's head.

. . . . .

Subsequent to Lucan's description of Erictho, we find two more elaborate sequences of necromantic reanimation in the novels of Apuleius and Heliodorus: Zatchlas reanimates Thelyphron, and the old woman of Bessa reanimates her son. There are also more brief references to the phenomenon. In a simile clearly derivative of Lucan's episode, Statius compares Ide as she searches for her dead sons on a battlefield to a Thessalian witch planning necromancy. Claudian's Megaera, posing as a sorcerer, claims to have dragged corpses back to life with incantations. Statius's fifth- or sixth-century A.D. commentator Lactantius Placidus thought that Virgil's Moeris called up ghosts from the bottoms of tombs actually in order to reanimate corpses. Finally, Isidore of Seville speaks of *necromantii* who resuscitate the dead for prophecy by their prayers.[1] Some other reanimation sequences, although not involving prophecy, are important for the elucidation of the technology used in the mantic variety. In Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* again, Socrates is reanimated by the Thessalian

[1] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.654–827. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.28–29. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.14–15. Statius 3.140–46. Claudian *In Rufinum* 1.154–56. Lactantius on Statius *Thebaid* 3.141, with reference to Virgil *Eclogues* 8.95–99. Isidore of Seville *Etymologiae* 8.9.11.

Meroe, and the living Thelyphron is "reanimated" by unnamed Thessalian witches. In Lucian's *Philopseudes*, a Hyperborean mage is said to have the power to reanimate even moldy corpses, whereas a Chaldaean restores the slave Midas to life after he has been bitten by a snake. Important, too, and preceding Lucan, is the sequence of the rejuvenation-reanimation of Aeson in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[2]

The Erictho and Bessa sequences in particular build upon evocation technology. Erictho's prayers/incantations belong within the evocation tradition, and she does in fact evocate the ghost before compelling it back into the corpse, apparently through the wound in its breast. In addition to incantation, the old woman of Bessa uses pit and fire, libations, meal, blood, and sword. But blood-sacrifice is not found in either of these sequences or the Zatchlas one. The prime function of blood-sacrifice in evocation, the provision of blood to restore temporary substance to the ghost, was redundant when the ghost's own corpse remained available.

Whereas evocation technology in general was highly conservative, the additional reanimation technology was not. Erictho, who has the ability to reanimate entire armies at once, reanimates her chosen corpse by pumping hot blood and diverse magical ingredients into it, and by lashing it with a snake.[3] Zatchlas reanimates Thelyphron simply by laying sprigs of herbs on his mouth, to permit speech, and his chest, to restart the breathing. The old woman of Bessa positions her corpse between the pit and the fire, leaps between the two, uses a voodoo doll, and speaks into the ear of the corpse. Non-mantic reanimations employ yet other methods. Apuleius's Socrates is reanimated with an enchanted sponge. Lucian's Midas is reanimated when the Chaldaean ties a fragment of a virgin's tombstone to his snake-bitten toe.

Despite these variations, the three principal sequences of necromancy-reanimation—those of Lucan, Apuleius, and Heliodorus—do exhibit some common characteristics. First, all three have an Egyptian context, and two of them also have a Thessalian one. Heliodorus's is performed by an Egyptian woman in Egypt; Apuleius's is performed by an Egyptian priest in Thessaly; and some of the ingredients of the potion of Lucan's Thessalian Erictho are distinctively Egyptian (chapter 9). The Greek magical papyri from Egypt provide a significant degree of context, if not for reanimation, then at least for the physical manipulation of corpses and body parts to achieve evocation. The most important group of recipes for this also has a Thessalian connection, for the recipes are attributed to the

[2] Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 1.12–17 and 2.30. Lucian *Philopseudes* 11 (Chaldaean) and 13 (Hyperborean); cf. also Photius's summary (74b) of Iamblichus's *Babyloniaca*, for another Chaldaean reanimation. Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.179–349.

[3] Masters (1992: 192) sees the forcing of blood into a corpse as a symbolic inversion of human sacrifice.

wisdom of the Thessalian king Pitys (see below). But it was also held that the Near East, too, knew how to reanimate, if not for the purpose of prophecy. Apart from Lucian's Chaldaean, Arnobius tells that the mages, the disciples of Zoroaster, could restore sense and spirit to once-cold limbs.[4]

Second, the corpses of the three main sequences are relatively recent and remain unburied, Lucan's and Heliodorus's both lying where they have fallen on battlefields. Lucan's Erictho exploits this recentness in arguing for the temporary restoration of its soul from the underworld powers: the soul has not yet reached the depths of the underworld, but still hovers on the threshold, and will still only have to enter it once.[5]

Third, all three sequences make some use of magical herbs. Erictho puts them in her potion. Heliodorus's Egyptian old woman uses a sprig of bay to flick her blood into the fire, and uses bay and fennel to crown her voodoo doll. Apuleius's Zatchlas lays them upon Thelyphron's body. Herbs are also vital to Ovid's Medea's rejuvenation magic: Aeson is made to lie on a bed of herbs, others are pumped into him, and it is specifically by omitting them from her potion that she is able to leave Pelias merely dead. A Greco-Egyptian, Apion Grammaticus, is said by Pliny to have called up the ghost of Homer (evocation admittedly, not reanimation) with the herb *cynocephalia*, "dog-head," which the Egyptians called *osiritis*, "Osiris-herb"; the god Osiris had been raised from the dead.[6] Zatchlas's reanimation has strong old Greek and Greco-Egyptian resonances. Some told that the dead boy Glaucus was reanimated by Polyidus after he had been taught by an Asclepian snake to lay a particular magical herb on top of his body. Others told that it was Asclepius who had reanimated Glaucus in this way, and that he had used the same method to reanimate Hippolytus, Androgeon, and Iphicles, too.[7] For Hopfner, both the Zatchlas episode and the Asclepian myths reflect the Egyptian mouth-opening ceremony. One of the Pitys recipes in the Greek magical papyri makes a corpse—or probably just a skull – speak by the insertion into its mouth of a flax leaf inscribed with *voces magicae* (see below). A related recipe derives an oracle from an iron lamella inscribed with three Homeric verses. One is to inscribe one's question, together with *voces magicae*, on a bay leaf in ink made from myrrh and from the blood of a man dead by

[4] Arnobius *Against the Pagans* 1.52.

[5] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.712–16.

[6] Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.254. Pliny *Natural History* 30.18.

[7] Polyidus: Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 3.3.1; Aelian *Nature of Animals* 5.2; Hyginus *Fabula* 136, etc. Asclepius: Propertius 2.1.57–62; Virgil *Aeneid* 7.765–73; Ovid *Fasti* 6.749–52 and *Metamorphoses* 15.531–36; and Eutecnius *Metaphrasis Theriacorum Nicandri* 685–88.

violence. The leaf is then placed under the lamella.[8] The use of human blood for necromantic ink is intriguing.

Fourth, the corpse must be "raised" upright onto its feet from its prone position before it can speak. The gesture graphically symbolizes the return to life, as in the case of the reanimation of Midas by Lucian's Chaldaean (*anestēse*). Such a feat is particularly impressive because rigor mortis deprives the corpse of the normal control of its limbs. Hence Erictho's corpse magically bounds to its feet without moving its limbs, in a fashion similar to the famous sequence of F. W. Murnau's classic expressionist movie of 1922, *Nosferatu*, in which the Dracula figure, Count Orlok, rises from his coffin onboard ship.[9] When the first reanimation attempt of Heliodorus's witch falters, the uprighted corpse's stiffness causes it to fall flat onto its face. Before uprighting it again, the witch rolls it onto its back, which suggests that this corpse depends upon the same method as Lucan's to rise. When Apuleius's Thessalian witches attempt to raise the dead Thelyphron by calling his name, his limbs respond so sluggishly as he struggles to rise that the living Thelyphron responds first. When Zatchlas subsequently reanimates the dead Thelyphron from his bier, he is more immediately successful (*assurgit*), although it is possible that the corpse raises only his torso rather than his entire body. One of the Pitys recipes in the Greek magical papyri is for an erotic attraction spell. It similarly requires one to lay out a corpse (or, perhaps, just a skull) on an ass's skin inscribed with a magical figure and *voces magicae*, in order to make the ghost of the dead man "stand" beside one as an assistant (*parastathēnai*) in the night.[10]

The evidence for necromantic reanimation and for reanimation in general is highly literary. What were its literary antecedents, and what necromantic practices in the "real world" inspired it? Consideration needs to be given to the tradition of non-mantic reanimation that stretched back into Greek myth; to the importantly related tradition of magical rejuvenation; to the tradition of spontaneous necromancies of corpses; and finally, to the practice of deriving prophecies from disembodied heads or skulls. The tradition of the reanimation of the dead reached far back into Greek myth, as we have seen, with the skill attributed to such individuals as Asclepius and Polyidus. Much later, a recipe book among the Greek magical papyri calling itself the *Eighth Book of Moses* contains a brief spell for

[8] Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 579–81. Flax leaf: *PGM* IV.2140–44. Bay leaf: *PGM* IV.2145–2240.

[9] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.754–57; but the corpse is at least able to walk by the end of its prophecy, 825.

[10] *PGM* IV.2006–2125.

the reanimation of a corpse that may be used by those initiated in accordance with the book's rites: "*Arousal of a dead body*: I adjure you, spirit traveling in air, enter this body, inspire, energize, and arouse it by the power of the eternal god, and let it walk around over this place, for I am the one who acts with the power of Thauth [i.e., Thoth], the holy god. Say the name." The spell has no explicit purpose other than making the corpse walk around. Collard guesses that the ultimate goal would nonetheless be prophecy. The spell is very concrete in terminology, and does appear to envisage physical reanimation of a corpse, but perhaps even so, as with the talking-head recipes discussed below, one was just to see the dead man walking in a dream. A recipe that began with the phrase "If you want to call upon ghosts . . ." is lost from the end of the same papyrus.[11]

The tradition of Medea's magical rejuvenations of Aeson, a demonstration ram, Pelias (deliberately perverted), Jason, and the nurses of Dionysus also stretched far back into Greek myth. The earliest source, a fragment of the seventh-century B.C. epic *Nostoi*, says that she eradicated Aeson's old age by cooking drugs in a golden cauldron. In the sixth century, Simonides was telling that she hacked up Jason and cooked him in her cauldron, presumably along with the magical herbs she had gathered, and this was to be the method usually attributed to her thereafter. The fullest account of Medea's reanimations is found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[12] Here the demonstration ram and Pelias are hacked up and cooked in the cauldron as usual, but the method she uses for Aeson strongly anticipates Erictho's reanimation.[13] She jugulates Aeson (inevitably killing him), drains the old blood out of him, and cooks new blood with magical ingredients in a cauldron. These techniques are accompanied by many rites familiar from evocation. Her prayers address Hades, Persephone, Hecate, Earth, and Night, and she claims to be able to split the earth open and bring the dead from their tombs. Black sheep are jugulated, and their blood is poured into trenches. Into these, honey and warm milk are also poured. The centerpiece of both sequences is the pumping of hot liquids into the corpse through its wounds. Medea pumps the blood from a cauldron in which a protracted and bizarre range

[11] Moses: *PGM* XIII.278–82. "If you want to call up ghosts": *PGM* XIII.1077.

[12] *Nostoi* F6 Davies. Simonides F548 *PMG*/Campbell. Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.179–349; cf. Bömer 1976: ad loc., for a general commentary. For Medea's rejuvenations, see the literary and iconographic sources collected at Halm-Tisserant 1993: 235–37 and 243–47, with plates, and at Moreau 1994: esp. 45–49; cf. Graf 1997b: 33–34; Sourvinou-Inwood 1997: 262–66, and *LIMC* Iason nos. 59–62, Peliades 4–21, and Pelias 24. Kurtz and Boardman (1971: 282–83) argue that the ram-skeleton found above a silver bucket in a Thessalian tumulus at Pilaf Tepe symbolized rebirth.

[13] Cf. Fahz 1904: 162–63; Bourgery 1928: 306 and 309; Morford 1967: 67 and 71; Vessey 1973: 242; Tupet 1988: 424–25; and Rabinowitz 1998: 97.

of magical ingredients is mixed.[14] Erictho also pumps seething blood into her corpse, presumably also from a cauldron. It may be that her protracted and bizarre range of magical ingredients is also mixed into the blood, or it may be that the blood is pumped in first simply to wash out the putrefaction, with the magical ingredients being pumped in subsequently, mixed in moon-liquid. The two lists of magical ingredients are broadly similar: Medea's contains Thessalian roots, seeds, flowers, black juices, pebbles, sands, hoarfrost, wings, flesh of screech-owl, guts of werewolf, skin of water-snake, liver of long-lived stag, eggs, head of nine-generations-old crow, and many other nameless things. Erictho's contains moon-liquid, foam of rabid dogs, guts of lynx, hump of hyena, marrow of snake-fed stag, *echenais* (a ship-stopping sea-monster), eyes of dragon, eagle-incubated stones,[15] Arabian flying serpents, Red Sea pearl-guarding vipers, skin of horned snake, ashes of phoenix, spat-on leaves, and herbs and poisons. Whereas the items of technology used in standard evocation all have at least one direct and transparent significance for the process, these reanimation and rejuvenation ingredients do not appear to do so. The basics of the technique Ovid's Medea uses to reanimate Aeson may have derived from an earlier account. The *Nostoi* fragment does not as it stands say that Aeson was himself cooked in the cauldron of magical ingredients. But it is also possible that Ovid drew the basics of the technique from a lost narrative of reanimation necromancy.

We turn to the tradition of prophecies uttered spontaneously by corpses. Phlegon of Tralles relates a tale set at Thermopylae in 191 B.C. in the course of the war against Antiochus. The dead Syrian commander Bouplagos rose at midday from the battlefield, despite twelve wounds, to walk into the Roman camp and prophesy disaster for Rome, collapsing "dead" again as soon as he had delivered his prophecy. The tale, along with the accompanying one of Publius, was probably developed soon after its historical setting, since it belongs to the resistance literature that opposed the Roman intervention into Greece and since its prophecy is historically false.[16] In the more immediate background of Lucan's reanimation sequence is a tradition attaching to Erictho's own consulter, Sextus Pompey. During the Sicilian War (38–36 B.C.), he had taken the Caesarian Gabienus prisoner, cut his throat, and abandoned the body on the beach. It lay there all day groaning, begging for Pompey or one of his personal staff, and claiming to have returned from the lower world with news for him. Pompey's friends came and were told by Gabienus that the underworld gods favored his cause and that he would win. As proof that

[14] Cf. also Seneca's *Medea* 670–843, in which she calls upon underworld powers while cooking herbs in a cauldron; cf. Annequin 1973: 88–89 and Paratore 1974: 173–79.

[15] Barb 1950 explains the origin of this notion.

[16] Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 3; cf. Hansen 1996: ad loc.

what he said was true, he would die on completion of the prophecy. This duly happened, but the prophecy was again false, which may indicate that the tale arose in the course of the war. Some scholars regard this episode as the chief model for Lucan's necromancy sequence.[17]

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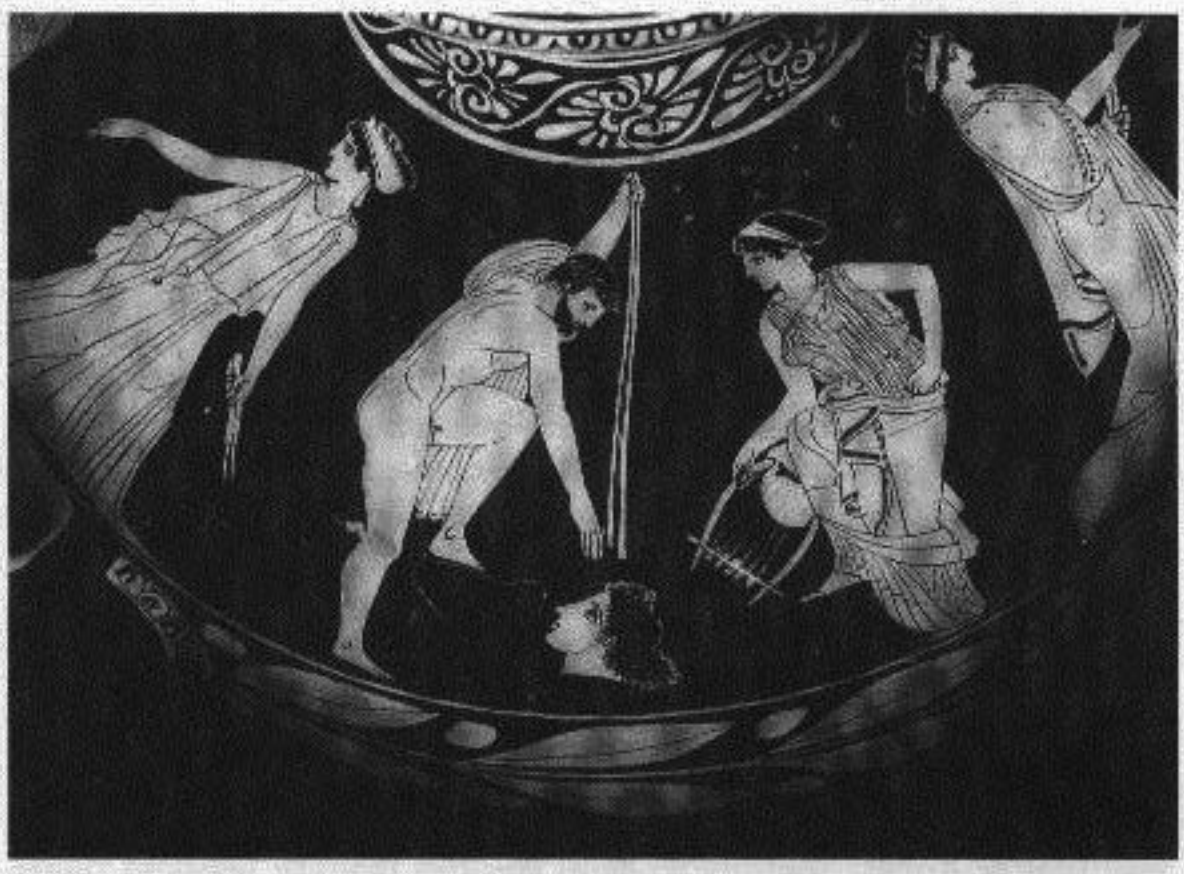
Mantic decapitated heads ("cephalomancy") went a long way back into old Greek tradition.[18] The most striking example is the oracle of Orpheus's head. When the Thracian women tore Orpheus apart, they cast his disembodied head into the sea. It came ashore at the island of Lesbos, where, Philostratus explains, it "took up residence in a cleft (*rhēgma*) in Lesbos and gave out oracles from a hollow in the earth (*en koilēi tēi gēi*)." The oracle was evidently configured as a small hole within a larger one. It is beautifully illustrated on an Attic red-figure *hydria* of the 440s, now in Basel (fig. 15). The central scene is surrounded by Muses, of which the innermost holds Orpheus's lyre. Orpheus's head nestles in a nook between two rocks on the ground. A consulter leans over and reaches down toward the head with his right hand. With his left, he still holds two ropes that hang down from above the frame; he has evidently used them to climb down a vertical shaft.[19] The configuration closely resembles that of the oracle of Trophonius, in which one consulted him in a small hole at the foot of a vertical shaft down which one descended with ladders. That oracle, too, is associated with a decapitated head. The *Telegonia* told that the master-builders Trophonius and his brother Agamedes used to rob the treasury they constructed for Augeias through a secret entrance they had built into it. Eventually Agamedes was caught in a trap set by Augeias. Trophonius, unable to free him, and knowing that Agamedes' discovery would reveal his own guilt, decapitated him and ran

[17] Pliny *Natural History* 7.178–79. Grenade 1950: 38–40 and 52; Ahl 1969: 341–42 and 1976: 133–37; Martindale 1980: 367–68; Tupet 1988: 420–21; Masters 1992: 196 and 203; Gordon 1987a: 232; and Viansino 1995: 501.

[18] Cf. Deonna 1925 and Nagy 1990; for necromantic skulls in Mesopotamia, see Scurlock 1995: 106; for possibly necromantic skulls in the Minoan world see Goodison forthcoming, building on Branigan 1970: 113–20 and 1998: 23–26; for comparative material from a range of cultures, see Deonna 1925: 48–69 and bibliography at Bremmer 1983: 46–47.

[19] Philostratus *Heroicus* 306 [p. 172 Kaiser]; cf. *Life of Apollonius* 4.14. *Hydria*: Basel, Antikenmuseum, BD 481 = *LIMC* Orpheus no. 68 (Mousa/Mousai no. 100); see above all Schmidt 1972 for reproductions and discussion. For other representations of the prophesying head of Orpheus, see Furtwängler 1900, 3: 245–56 and plates 22.1–9, 12–15 and 30.45–48, Cook 1914–40, 3: 102 and plate 18; and *LIMC* Orpheus no. 70 = Apollo no. 99 (dictating oracles to Musaeus). Cf. also Robert 1917; Linforth 1941: 123–33; Eliade 1964: 391 (comparing the practices of Yukagir shamans); Graf 1987: 92–94 (misinterpreting the ropes as spears); Doerig 1991: 62; Nagy 1990: 208–14; and Small 1994.



15. The oracle of Orpheus's head. Red-figure Attic *hydria*, 440s B.C.
Basel, Antikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig, BS 481.
© Antikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig. Photo by Claire Niggli.

off with the head. Augeias was able to hunt him down through the trail of blood left by the head, but Trophonius crawled into his hole at Lebadeia (presumably still with the head) and died there. The tale is better known in the Egyptianized version Herodotus attaches to the treasury of the pharaoh Rhampsinitus.[20] Some versions of Orpheus's myth perhaps reduced him beyond a head to a mere disembodied prophetic voice, as in the cases of Sibyl and Tithonus.[21]

There were many other mantic heads. Cleomenes I of Sparta, before coming to the throne, swore that he would include his friend Archonides in all his affairs if he came to power. When he did so, he cut off Archonides' head and kept it in a jar of honey. Before he embarked upon any enterprise, he would lean over the jar and "discuss" it with the head.[22]

[20] For fragments of the *Telegonia*, see Davies 1988: 73–74. Rhampsinitus: Herodotus 2.121. Pausanias 9.37 has a related tale of Trophonius's and Agamedes' robbery of the treasury of Hyrieus; cf. Frazer 1898: ad loc., with twenty-eight parallel folktales from a wide range of cultures. See also Brelich 1958: 53; Clark 1968: 71; and Schachter 1981–94, 3: 69, 74–75, and 84.

[21] Euripides *Alcestis* 966–71.

[22] Aelian *Varia historia* 12.8. For Devereux 1995: 111–13, the tale concerns rather Cleomenes III (why?). For much Indo-European comparative material, see Nagy 1990; the

When, during the Ionian revolt, the Amathusians hung up the head of the decapitated Onesilus over their gates, a swarm of bees entered it and filled it with honey, and this was interpreted as an omen. An oracle told them to take the head down and bury it, and to make an annual sacrifice to Onesilus as a hero.[23] Aristotle tells that when a priest of Zeus Hoplosmios in Arcadia had been decapitated by person unknown, the head had repeatedly sung, "Cercidas killed man upon man." A local man of the name was accordingly arrested and tried.[24] The detection of a murderer always was a prime occasion for necromancy. Phlegon recounts two hellenistic tales of prophetic heads. The first he derives from a letter written to a King Antigonus. Polycritus the Aetolarch died after impregnating his wife. The child was born hermaphrodite. The dead father appeared dressed in black, tore the baby apart, and ate it, except for the head, which uttered prophecies of doom for the Aetolians. The second tale is coordinated with that of Bouplagos, set in 191 B.C. (see above). In this, the Roman general Publius was consumed by a huge red wolf, which again left his head behind, and this uttered prophecies. At Rome in around 510 B.C. the discovery in the earth of the head (*caput*) of Aulus/Olus Vibenna gave name to the Capitoline and prophesied the future greatness of Rome. Apuleius scoffs at the idea that the sea-skull (*marinum calvarium*) should be exploited for necromancy, and in so doing indicates that it was a common belief that normal human skulls should be so used.[25]

The skulls of children, untimely dead, were no doubt popular for cephalomancy. We have seen Phlegon's hermaphroditic baby. Libanius was accused of cutting the heads off two little girls, one of which was for use against the emperors Caesar Gallus and Constantius II, perhaps for cursing, or perhaps for the common and perhaps related activity of divining the end of their reigns. The babies' heads sacrificed by Erictho may also have been designed to speak.[26]

The Christian apologist Hippolytus would have us believe that he unmasks a confidence trick perpetrated by pagan necromancers: a translucent skull, ringed with incense-burners, gives voice to prophecies (albeit without opening its mouth), before melting away into nothingness. The

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Icelandic tale of Odin and Mimir seems quite close (Snorri, *Heimskringla* 1.12–13). For honey, embalming, and necromancy, see chapter 4.

[23] Herodotus 5.114. See Virgil *Georgics* 4.281–320 and 548–58 for Orpheus's association with honey in *bougonia*; cf. Detienne 1971.

[24] Aristotle *Parts of Animals* 673a; cf. Linforth 1941: 134–36, citing the Grimms' folktales nos. 28 and 47 as parallel.

[25] Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 2 and 3; cf. Hansen 1996: ad loc. Aulus Vibenna: Varro *De lingua latina* 5.41; Livy 1.55 and 34.9; and Arnobius 6.7. Apuleius *Apology* 34; cf. Abt 1908: 215–18; and Hunink 1997: ad loc.

[26] Libanius 1.98. Erictho: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.710–11.

skull, it turns out, is artificial, folded out of an ox's caul, and held together with wax and gum. The heat from the burners slowly melts the wax to make the skull dissolve. The voice is supplied by an assistant in a concealed room, who talks down a speaking-tube made from a crane's windpipe and fed into the skull. As with Hippolytus's comparable supposed exposé of a pagan lecanomantic confidence trick (see last chapter), his claims mesh rather poorly with our pagan evidence for skull necromancy, and so may be largely mendacious. It is a pity, then, that we cannot with confidence embrace such a thrilling and vivid vignette within the realm of pagan necromantic practices. However, the technique allegedly used to give the skull a voice corresponds to that which the pagan (but nonetheless hostile) Lucian claims was used by Alexander of Abonouteichos to give a voice to his prophetic snake-puppet Glycon.[27]

The Greek magical papyri contain a number of recipes for skull necromancies. Of particular importance is a series of five spells in the Great Paris papyrus supposedly copied from a letter from the Thessalian king Pitys to the Persian mage Ostanes. The papyrus copy is believed to have been made in the fourth century A.D., while its contents are thought to derive from the second century A.D.[28] Pitys appears to be a refraction of the Egyptian prophet Bitys or Bitos, who discovered, Khamwas-like, eschatological hieroglyphics written by Thoth-Hermes (i.e., "Hermetic" texts) in a sanctuary at Sais and translated them on a tablet for the pharaoh Ammon.[29] All five spells have their points of interest. In the first recipe the practitioner is instructed to go out, face east at sunset, and invoke the Sun over the "skull-cup" (*skyphos*) of a man who died by violence. He is to burn amara and uncut frankincense and go home. He can make any inquiry he wishes of the skull by inscribing his query on its forehead together with a series of *voces magicae* in ink made from snake-blood and soot from a goldsmith's forge. He must write the same inquiry with myrrh on thirteen ivy leaves and wear them as a wreath. Helios, the sun-god, will then send the skull's ghost as an assistant to the practitioner at midnight (i.e., in his sleep), and it will tell him everything he wants to hear.[30]

[27] Hippolytus *Refutations* 4.41 (formerly wrongly ascribed to Origen); cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 616–17. Alexander: Lucian *Alexander* 15 and 26.

[28] *PGM* IV; see Brashear 1995: 3419 for dating and 3516–27 for further emendations and discussions.

[29] Iamblichus *On the Mysteries* 8.5 and 10.7 (Bitys); Zosimus *On Apparatus and Furnaces* fr. gr. 230–35 Jackson (Bitos); cf. Preisendanz 1950 and Fowden 1986: 150–53. Graf 1997a: 198 also relates Pitys to the Bithus of Dyrrachium cited by Pliny (*Natural History* 28.82) for behavior of mirrors. Potter (1994: 69) sees the attribution of the recipes to him as an attempt to make "low-grade" necromancy respectable.

[30] *PGM* IV.1928–2005. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 416–23 reads the *skyphos* in these recipes as an actual cup, and therefore classifies them as lecanomantic.

In the second Pitys spell, an ostensible inquiry from Ostanes about skull cups prompts Pitys to supply him with a recipe to raise a ghost by laying (part of) a dead man out on the hide of a (Sethian) ass inscribed with *voces magicae* in ink made from ass's blood. Although the German translation of Preisendanz and the English translation of O'Neill stipulate that the whole body is to be used, the Greek is vague, and it is probably envisaged that again only a skull cup will be employed. This is the implication of the opening sentence, the recipe is located between two skull-cup recipes, and the top of the head is again the only part of the body to which magical ingredients are applied.[31] (Cf. the Byzantine recipe using skull and cat-skin discussed below.)

The third recipe in the series, not explicitly attributed to King Pitys, serves to restrain skulls that are *akatallēlos*, which probably means that they are unsuitable for necromancy because they are prophesying falsely or incoherently. The symbolism of the technology is self-explanatory. The mouth of the skull is to be sealed with dirt from the temple doors of Osiris or a grave-mound. Iron (superior to ghosts) from a leg fetter (particularly binding, therefore) is then to be made into a ring that is to be engraved with a headless lion wearing the crown of Isis on his neck and trampling a skeleton, with the right foot crushing the skull (a clear enough message). In the midst is to be a cat with its paw on a gorgon's head. It is not clear what is to be done with the ring: must it be buried with the skull? We can only assume that such unsuitable skulls must, once activated, have continued to interrupt one's sleep unbidden with useless or misleading information.[32]

The fourth recipe, attributed again to Pitys, makes a dead person speak by the insertion of a flax leaf inscribed with *voces magicae* into his mouth. Even though the recipe is entitled "Pitys the Thessalian's enquiry of a corpse (*skēnos*)," it again need only envisage the utilization of a skull.[33]

A fifth spell, not explicitly attributed to Pitys, gives multiple magical uses for an iron lamella inscribed with three Homeric verses. Metal lamellae are the usual means of instructing the dead to carry out binding curses. If one attaches this lamella to an executed criminal and utters the same verses into his ear, he will tell one everything one wishes. If the lamella is inserted into his wound, one will gain the favor of superiors. This part of the recipe could again be performed with just a skull. But it elsewhere envisages the use of a full body when it encourages the magi-

[31] *PGM* IV.2006–2125. O'Neill: in Betz 1992.

[32] *PGM* IV.2125–39.

[33] *PGM* IV.2140–44, again, *pace* the translations of Preisendanz and Grese (the latter in Betz 1992); cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 595–96; Collard 1949: 132; and Eitrem 1991: 177.

cian to attach the lamella alternatively to a man on the point of death, again to learn whatever he wishes.[34]

Another of the magical papyri seemingly prescribes an animal-based necromancy. A dream is to be sent by inscribing a papyrus with myrrh and inserting it into the mouth of a black cat killed by violence. Again, the skull alone may have sufficed for this.[35]

A Demotic recipe for the necromantic discovery of a thief exploits the skull of a drowned man, and flax again. The head is to be buried and flax grown over it. The flax is then gathered, and the head is recovered, washed in milk, wrapped up, and deposited. One can tell if any given man is a thief by taking a small amount of the flax, saying a spell to it, uttering the name of the suspect twice, and knotting the flax. If the guilty suspect is named, he will speak as the knot is tied.[36]

Byzantine necromancy recipes bearing a strong resemblance to this Demotic one prove that its technology entered, if it did not originate in, the Greek tradition. One recipe is for the summoning of the ghost of a dead man so that he may be interrogated about whatever one wishes, probably in a dream. It requires one to place the head of a dead man, preferably one killed by violence, in running water for three days and three nights to clean it, then to wrap it in new linen, take it to a crossroads, and write on its forehead.[37] The remainder of the recipe is lost, but some of its further provisions can be reconstructed from a very similar one for summoning demons. The names of the demons, Bouak, Sariak, and Lucifer, are to be written on the forehead of a skull similarly prepared. This is to be placed on the skin of a black cat in a circle drawn with the rib of a dead man at the crossroads, apparently during the night. An imprecation is made to the demons to appear and speak the truth. The head is then to be left there until the cock crows, when it is to be retrieved and kept in secret. When one wishes to consult it, one must fast for three days without bread or water (a sort of advance purification), and then put questions to it by night.[38] Another recipe brings a familiar ghost to speak to one on the fifth day of every week. A skull is to be washed in a thick soup of savory and mercury (the plant). Characters are to be inscribed on

[34] *PGM* IV.2145–2240.

[35] *PGM* XII.107–21; cf. Eitrem 1991: 180. The "Old serving woman of Apollonius of Tyana" recipe at *PGM* XIa.1–40 also uses the skull of an ass, but the old woman conjured up is presumably not the ass's ghost. See Deonna 1925: 51–52 for the medieval development of cephalomancy with asses' skulls.

[36] *PDM* lxi.79–94.

[37] Text at Delatte 1927: 57.

[38] *Codex Parisinus* Gr. 2419, at Delatte 1927: 450; cf. the astrological text at Olivieri et al. 1898–1936, 3: 53; Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 613–15; and Collard 1949: 135–37. For Byzantine magic in general, see Maguire 1995.

its front and back, and five demonic names on its top, in the form of a cross. On the fifth day, one is to place the skull on the roof of the house, or at a crossroads, and leave it there for the night. On the following day, one is to dress in a long clean tunic and put on a cat-skin belt, take the skull to the crossroads (again), sit down there with laurel branches, and invoke the five demons inscribed to appear in the name of Christ and give truthful responses.[39]

Some of the Greek material here is prefigured, perhaps only by coincidence, in Mesopotamian magic. A Neo-Babylonian Akkadian tablet contains an incantation to the sun-god Šamaš to bring up a ghost from the darkness and make it enter a skull. The necromancer is then to say, "I call [upon you], o skull of skulls: may he who is within the skull answer me." A magical ritual follows in which an oil preparation made from animal parts is used to anoint either the ghost or the skull or something else, which may be a voodoo doll. A further incantation allows the necromancer to see the ghost. This is accompanied by the application of an ointment to his eyes.[40]

Skulls were no doubt particularly favored for corpse-based necromancy because they were more conveniently obtained and more easily manipulated than an entire corpse or skeleton, and because, as always, they were symbolic of the dead person, and indeed of death as a whole. Some have considered that the skull was the seat of the soul for magical purposes. But the literary sequences of whole-corpse reanimation for prophecy suggest that even in these cases, the severing of the neck may, paradoxically, have been significant. Perhaps the corpse's mechanical inability to speak guaranteed the ghostly cause of the speech it did indeed produce. The spontaneous necromancy of Gabienus's corpse was delivered after he had had his throat cut almost to the point of full decapitation. Lucan's Erictho searches on the battlefield for a corpse with its lungs intact and warm and fresh enough to speak with full voice, eschewing the ghostly squeak of a corpse dried out by the sun.[41] This might seem to imply that the corpse's voice-producing mechanism needs to remain fully functional. But such a notion is then undermined by the fact that Erictho drags the chosen corpse from the battlefield to her cave by a hook in a noose round its neck, probably after also slitting its throat.[42] And perhaps the tradition of the spontaneous necromancy delivered in Sicily by the ghost of the great

[39] *Codex Bononiensis Univers.* 3632 at Delatte 1927, 1: 589–90; Collard 1949: 139–40.

[40] BM 36703 obv. ii; cf. Finkel 1983–84: esp. 9–10 for the translation.

[41] Skull as magical seat of soul: Hopfner 1921–24, 1: 195 and 2: 616; Collard 1949: 38. Gabienus: Pliny *Natural History* 7.178–79; Deonna (1925: 47) rightly includes this episode in the mantic tradition. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.619–31.

[42] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.637–39. The cutting of the throat depends upon the interpretation of *traiecto gutture*: see discussion at Grenade 1950: 39; Ahl 1976: 137; Volpilhac 1978:

Pompey to his son Sextus on the eve of his death owed something to the fact that he had been decapitated.[43] Again, Apuleius's Meroe cuts Socrates' throat prior to his reanimation, and Ovid's Medea cuts Aeson's throat prior to his rejuvenation. The corollary is that the culture of (detached) skull necromancy and magical skull-manipulation in general constituted a significant precedent for literary reanimation sequences.

Other body parts may also have been exploitable for necromancy. We have considered, for example, the possibility of necromantic skins (chapter 8). The collection of body parts for magical purposes is a commonplace of literary witch descriptions. Among the many garnered parts in the workshop of Apuleius's Pamphile are "mutilated skulls twisted out of the mouths of wild beasts." Cadaverous material that had been worried by a wolf or wild dog, and had, ideally, actually been snatched from its jaws, was particularly effective, and indeed a term, *kunobrōtos*, was developed to define such material. Lucan's Erictho, too, among her many techniques for garnering body parts, snatches bones from the mouths of starving wolves, and when she comes to the battlefield to select her corpse for the featured reanimation, she drives off the wolves and vultures before her. Horace's Canidia uses "bones snatched from the mouth of an emaciated bitch," and Tibullus's curse against a bawd-witch requires her to starve to such an extent that she should seek after the bones left by wolves no longer for magic, but to eat. The head of Phlegon's Publius prophesied to his army after the rest of him had been eaten by a huge red wolf.[44] The power bestowed by the wolf or dog on such material is obvious. Consumption by a wild animal was the symbolic antithesis of due burial. Already in Homer, those denied burial are cast out for dogs and birds.[45] The person thus devoured is accordingly *ataphos* par excellence. Dogs perhaps conferred the blessing of Cerberus and Hecate on the parts they snatched, whereas wolves enjoyed a kinship with ghosts, sorcerers, and witches through the werewolf. As to ghosts, Petronius's werewolf underwent transformation in a cemetery, whereas Alibas or Lykas, the demon chased into the sea by Euthymus of Locri, was a ghost in a wolfskin. As to sorcerers and witches, the Neuri were sorcerers to Herodotus for

284; Gordon 1987a: 232; Tupet 1988: 423; and Masters 1992: 197. The need for a warm corpse is also undermined by the fact that the corpse chosen is in any case cold, 750–52, and full of putrefaction, 668.

[43] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.813, with scholiast ad loc., for which see Viansino 1995: ad loc. and Masters 1992: 203. Decapitation of Pompey: Valerius Maximus 5.1.10; Pliny *Natural History* 5.68; Plutarch *Pompey* 80, etc.

[44] Witches collecting body parts: cf. Tupet 1986: 2657–68. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 3.17. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.526–68, esp. 550–53, and 6.627–28. Horace *Epodes* 5.23; Tibullus 1.5.53–54 (cf. Propertius 4.5.4.). Phlegon *Marvels* 3. Cf. Cumont 1949: 316 (*kynobrōtos*).

[45] E.g., Homer *Iliad* 23.182; cf. Segal 1971 and Pritchett 1985: 238–39.

transforming themselves into wolves once a year. Virgil's Moeris, who called up ghosts from tombs, could turn himself into a wolf, as could Propertius's bawd-witch Acanthis. Ovid's Medea even used the entrails of a werewolf in the potion with which she rejuvenated Aeson.[46] The danger of snatching parts from a starving wolf's mouth will also have conferred power upon them.

The case remains far from clear, but the manipulation of body parts for necromantic prophecy, and the manipulation of skulls in particular, seems to offer the best "real-world" counterpart to the imaginative scenes of necromantic corpse-reanimation in the narratives of Lucan, Apuleius, and Heliodorus.

[46] Petronius *Satyricon* 61–62 (the tale is paired with one of witches). Euthymus: Pausanias 6.6.7–11. Herodotus 4.105. Virgil *Eclogues* 8.96–97. Propertius 4.5.14. Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7.270–71. For werewolves, see Smith 1894; Cook 1914–40, 1: 63–99; Schuster 1930; Eckels 1937; Villeneuve 1963; Tupet 1976: 73–78, 1986: 2647–52; Gernet 1981: 125–39; Burkert 1983a: 84–90 and 1983a: 83–134; Mainoldi 1984; Jost 1985: 258–67; Buxton 1987; and Hughes 1991.

PART IV

THEORY

CHAPTER 14

GHOSTS IN NECROMANCY

IN part IV, attention is turned to the experience of the performance of necromancy and the rationale behind it. What sorts of ghost might one expect to meet in necromancy? What might they look like? What might they sound like? Such questions are considered in this chapter. We then go on to ask the sixty-four-thousand-dollar question of ancient necromancy, namely, "Why were the dead actually wise?" Ancient writers hint at a range of partial explanations, but none is decisive, and in the end the wisdom of the dead is best taken as a first principle (chapter 15). Finally, a range of evidence is drawn together to suggest that necromancers were often conceived of as meeting the dead with whom they conversed in a shared state or space halfway between life and death (chapter 16).

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Greek and Latin each employed a wide range of terms to denote "ghost." The Greek terms, for all their diverse derivations, do not appear to have distinguished significant categories within the world of ghosts: *skia*, literally "shade"; *psuchē*, "soul"; *phasma*, "manifestation"; *eidōlon*, "image"; *nekros* and *nekus*, "dead person"; and *pemphix*, "cloud."[1] The Romans did feel that at least some of their various terms distinguished different categories of ghost, but there was little agreement as to how these categories broke down: *umbra*, "shade"; *anima*, "breeze, soul"; *larva*, and the plural forms *manes*, *lares*, and *lemures*. For Apuleius, *Dei Manes* and *lemures* were general terms for ghosts, and other terms denoted subsets of them. *Lares familiares* were the ancestral household ghosts that looked after their living descendants kindly. *Larvae* were ghosts of those punished for misdeeds in life and compelled to wander as exiles; they were dangerous to the bad among the living but could only be harmless terrors to the good. We learn elsewhere that *larvae* were hideous of face, or were skeletons, and that they tortured the other dead in the underworld.

[1] The last is rare, but found at [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 1106. See Lateiner 1997 for the equivalence between these terms. For the representations of the soul in Homer, see now Clarke 1999.

The terms *lares* and *larva* were probably cognate. Some authors held that the term *lemures* also denoted bad ghosts, and this is certainly the implication of the rites of the *Lemuria*. The general term *Manes* derived from the adjective *manus*, "good," although its significance may have been propitiatory.[2]

The appearance of ghosts in necromantic contexts can be broken down into matters of substance, form, color, and size. Necromantic ghosts could be anything from insubstantial vis-à-vis the living to superhumanly substantial. Homer's ghosts are *amenēna*, "fleeting," "shadowy," "weak."[3] When Odysseus moves to embrace the ghost of his mother, his arms slip through her. She explains that her funeral pyre has eaten away all the former substance of her body. Nor, concomitantly, can the insubstantial arms of Agamemnon's ghost in turn embrace Odysseus. Such insubstantialness is comically conveyed by Virgil: Charon hustles the massed ghosts out of his barge to make way for the living Aeneas, who, by contrast, weighs the boat down and causes it to leak.[4] Ghosts were consequently represented in terms of all the obvious metaphors of insubstantialness: shadows, breaths of air, smoke, and dreams. This last is particularly important in view of the probability that ghosts were usually encountered as dreams in necromancy. It was partly as a consequence of their insubstantial nature that ghosts were often portrayed as trembling fearfully.[5] But ghosts could also be tangible. Lucian's ghost of Demainete could embrace her husband. The ghost that kills Apuleius's miller can lay her hand upon him. Phlegon of Tralles' ghost of Philinnion could eat, drink, and even have sex, and his ghost of Polycritus could even pull his hermaphroditic baby apart and devour it. But in these last two cases we may be dealing with spontaneously reanimated corpses, or "revenants."[6]

[2] Apuleius *De deo Socratis* 15; cf. Massoneau 1934: 39–46. Characteristics of *larvae*: Horace *Satires* 1.5.64; Petronius *Satyricon* 34; Pliny *Natural History* 1 Proef. 31; and Seneca *Apocolocyntosis* 9; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 59–60. *Lares and larva* cognate: Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 60. Characteristics of *lemures*: Horace *Epistles* 2.2.209, with Porphyrio ad loc.; Persius 5.185, with scholiast ad loc.; and Augustine *City of God* 9.11; see Jobbé-Duval 1924; Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 56–60; Winkler 1980: 159 and 162; and Felton 1999: 23–25. *Lemuria*: Ovid *Fasti* 5.419–92; cf. chapter 11. *Manes*: LS s.v. *Manes* and *manus*; cf. Vrugt-Lentz 1960: 54–55.

[3] Homer *Odyssey* 19.521, etc.; cf. Virgil *Aeneid* 2.793–94; and Seneca *Troades* 460.

[4] Homer *Odyssey* 11.206–22 and 392–94; cf. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.648–49. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.411–16.

[5] Shadows: e.g., Homer *Odyssey* 11.208, etc. (cf. Scholiast to 10.495, and Vermeule 1979: 213 n. 13); Aristophanes *Birds* 1553 (*Skiapodes*); and Lucian *Menippus* 11; in Latin, *umbra* is the usual term for ghost. Breaths: e.g., Virgil *Aeneid* 6.684–85 and 705; and Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 11.41. Smoke: e.g., Homer *Iliad* 23.100; Lucian *On Grief* 9 and *Philopseudes* 16. Dreams: e.g., Homer *Odyssey* 11.207 and 222. Trembling: Virgil *Aeneid* 6.489, 544; Seneca *Oedipus* 609; and Statius *Thebaid* 2.7.

[6] Lucian *Philopseudes* 27; cf., too, the ghost at [Quintilian] *Declamationes maiores* 9.7. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 9.30. Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 1 and 2, with Hansen 1996: ad

Ghosts in necromantic contexts were usually conceived of as human in form, as is obviously the case in the *Odyssey*. Sometimes they seem to be conceived of as in life, as when they carry as attributes objects with which they were particularly associated when alive; thus, Homer's Orion holds his hunting club. Often they reflect the state of their bodies at death. Homer's battle-dead come up still wounded and wearing their arms. The idea is developed by Virgil, most notably in the case of the mutilated Deiphobus, and by Statius, whose ghost of Laius can vomit forth blood from the wound in his throat. In this respect, the ghost's appearance often forms a visual counterpart to the story of its death, which it is always so keen to narrate. A ghost can also reflect the state of its corpse in current condition. When the ghost of Cynthia appears to Propertius, she is half-charred from the pyre. This is presumably why ghosts could be portrayed as emaciated, squalid, and ragged. The ghost exorcised from the house of Eucrates by Arignotus was squalid, long-haired, and blacker than the dark, and reflected a rotten corpse. The ghost sent to murder Apuleius's miller was squalid and the color of boxwood.[7] Perhaps the beggarly appearance of these ghosts also reflects their supplication for due burial (cf. chapters 4 and 7). The ghosts of Lucian's *Menippus* lie around in the underworld as piles of bones, with the embalmed Egyptians alone retaining some of their earthly appearance. Moral lessons are clear: ugly Thersites is indistinguishable from beautiful Nireus, beggar Irus from King Alcinous. The dead demagogue that proposes a decree against the rich is appropriately called "Skully, son of Skeleton."[8]

The most common alternative to conceiving of ghosts as humanoid was to conceive of them as tiny winged creatures. On classical Attic white-ground *lēkythoi*, such as those portraying visits to the tomb, or portraying Charon's barge, they are miniscule black figures hovering on wings, somewhat akin to dragonflies (fig. 16). Ghosts are often black-winged in poetry.[9] Metaphors for ghosts in this aspect were afforded by bats, birds,

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locc.; for the Philinnion narrative, cf., importantly, Proclus *On Plato's Republic* 2: 116 Kroll; and see further Hansen 1980 and 1989; and Felton 1999: 25–29.

[7] Orion: Homer *Odyssey* 11.575. Battle-dead: Homer *Odyssey* 11.38–41; cf. Bremmer 1994: 100–101 and Felton 1999: 18–19 for the problem of ghostly clothing. Deiphobus: Virgil *Aeneid* 6.494–534; cf. 445–50, for wounded women. There is a mutilated ghost also at the novel fragment *P.Oxy.* 416 line 17; cf. Stephens and Winkler 1995: 409–15. Statius *Thebaid* 2.123–24; cf. also 4.590–94. Cynthia: Propertius 4.7.1–8. Arignotus: Lucian *Philopseudes* 31; the ghost in Pliny's version of the same tale (7.27) is similarly squalid and long-haired, but its color goes unspecified. Miller: Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 9.30.

[8] Lucian *Menippus* 15–16 and 20; cf. *Dialogues of the Dead* 5 and *Philopseudes* 32. See Lattimore 1962: 175 for a similar conceit in an epitaph, this time employing Hylas and Thersites.

[9] *Lēkythoi*: see, e.g., *LIMC* Charon 1 nos. 1–3; Vermeule 1979: 9–10, 30, and 65 (for an important Mycenaean antecedent), and 75–76. Poetry: e.g., Sappho 58d and Euripides *Hecabe* 71 and 704–5.

16. Charon with batlike ghost. Attic white-ground *lēkythos*, ca. 460–450 B.C. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum G258. © Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

and bees. The bat was particularly appropriate for being a creature of ragged appearance, black and nocturnal (*nukteris* literally means "night creature"). Homer compares the ghosts of the suitors, as they are escorted to the underworld by Hermes, to agitated bats twittering in a cave. Chaerephon, portrayed as a ghost by Aristophanes, was given the epithets "the bat" and "child of the night."[10] Homer and Virgil compare ghosts to agitated flocks of birds. Sophocles speaks of the soul leaving the body as a "fair-winged bird." As we have seen, when Aristeas of Proconessus's soul temporarily detached itself from his body and flew out of his mouth, it was in the form of a crow. The soul-bird, hovering over or perching on the body of a dead man, is common in archaic and classical art.[11] Tibullus associates screech owls with the ghosts that are to hover around his bawd-witch. Silius seems to construct a bridge between necromancy and oeonomancy or augury (bird divination) by locating in Hades a yew, fed by the Cocytus, as a home to birds of ill omen, the corpse-devouring vulture, the owl (*bubo*), and the blood-spattered screech owl (*strix*), alongside the batlike Harpies. It is curious, given all this, that lakes at which ghosts were evocated should have been considered "birdless" (*aornoi*; chapters 2 and 5).[12] The notion that the dead could resemble bees is probably found first in Aeschylus's *Psuchagogoi*, where the ghosts Odysseus is to summon up are described as a swarm (*hesmos*) of night-wanderers (*nuktipoloi*). It is certainly present in a Sophoclean fragment: "The swarm (*smēnos*) of the dead buzzes and comes up." Virgil uses bees in a simile for souls, and Porphyry reports that the ancients called souls waiting to be reborn "bees."[13] As we have seen, the conceptualization of the ghost as a bee may underlie the tale of Periander and Melissa (chapter 4). A scholiast to the *Odyssey* bids us imagine the ghosts that come up for blood as carrion-flies, although this does not really square with Homer's explicit representation of the ghosts at that point. An important corollary

[10] Suitors: Homer *Odyssey* 24.5–9; Thomson 1914: 8. Chaerephon as bat: Aristophanes *Birds* 1296 and 1553–64; cf. Dunbar 1995: ad locc. Chaerephon as child of night: Aristophanes *Horai* F584 K-A.

[11] Homer *Odyssey* 11.605–6; and Virgil *Aeneid* 6.310–12. Sophocles *Oedipus tyrannus* 175. Pliny *Natural History* 7.174; cf. Herodotus 4.15. Soul-birds: Weicker 1902; Vermeule 1979: 18–19 and 213 n. 13; Bremmer 1983: 35–36 and 63–66; Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 64–65; and West 1997b: 162–63; cf., more generally, Haavio 1958.

[12] Tibullus 1.5.51–52. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.595–600. The *bubo* prophesied Dido's death: Virgil *Aeneid* 4.462. Canidia's erotic magic employed the feather of a *strix* smeared with toad-blood: Horace *Epodes* 5.19–20; cf. Lowe 1929: 44. For oeonomancy, see Dillon 1996.

[13] Aeschylus *Psuchagogoi* F273a *TrGF*, cf. Rusten 1982: 35. Sophocles F879 Pearson/*TrGF*, cf. Bremmer 1994: 101. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.706–7; cf. Norden 1916: ad loc. Porphyry *On the Cave of the Nymphs* 18.

of such representations was that the hosts of the dead were held to swarm in vast and dizzying numbers, and this idea is often directly expressed. Virgil compares the ghosts flooding toward Charon's barge to the leaves of fall. Seneca contrives to combine the imagery of birds, bees, leaves, and breezes in his description of swarming souls.[14] Ghosts could also change their form. Statius's ghost of Laius can disguise itself as Tiresias. The ghost exorcised by Arignotus from the house of Eubatides transforms itself into a dog, a bull, and a lion.[15]

As to color, it was doubtless the peculiar grayness that corpses can display that led to the seemingly paradoxical representation of ghosts as both exceptionally black (like Death himself) and exceptionally white. On the black side, we have the little winged ghosts of the Attic *lēkuthoi*. Homer's ghost of Heracles resembled the night. Exorcised ghosts were often perceived as black. Thus Alibas or Lykas, the ghost of Polites chased into the sea by Euthymus of Locri, was "terribly black," and the ghost exorcised from an epileptic boy by Lucian's Syrian from Palaestine was said to be black and smoky. As for an example in a necromantic context, we have seen that a recipe from the Greek magical papyri conjures up a dark-colored boy before a boy-medium, and that this is almost certainly a ghost. Ghosts could dress in black, too, as did Phlegon's ghost of Polycritus, and the wags that tried to frighten Democritus by pretending to be ghosts.[16] On the white side, Euripides' Oedipus compares himself to an "obscure white ghost made of air." Homer's black ghost of Heracles surprisingly explains that ghosts are pallid because deprived of the sun. Their pallor can also be appropriately rationalized in terms of their bloodlessness or their fearfulness. When the Erinyes appeared to Orestes at Ace in Arcadia (where they were called *Maniai*), they were black. They made him eat one of his fingers, whereupon they became white.[17]

As to size, necromantic ghosts could be as small as the tiny winged black creatures on the *lēkuthoi* or as large as the twelve-foot Achilles con-

[14] Flies: Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* 11.37. For a remote possibility that Hermotimus's separated soul could be conceptualized as a fly, see Bremmer 1983: 66. Dizzying numbers: e.g., Homer *Odyssey* 10.526, 11.34, and 632, etc. (*ethnea*); and Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.759–61. Leaves: Virgil *Aeneid* 6.309–10; cf. Homer *Iliad* 6.146. Seneca *Oedipus* 598–607.

[15] Statius *Thebaid* 2.94–95. Lucian *Philopseudes* 31.

[16] Blackness of death: Homer *Iliad* 3.360, etc. Heracles: Homer *Odyssey* 11.606. Alibas: Pausnias 6.6.11. Syrian: Lucian *Philopseudes* 16. Dark-colored boy: *PGM* VII.348–58. Polycritus: Phlegon *Marvels* 2. Democritus: Lucian *Philopseudes* 32. See Winkler 1980: 160–65 for a detailed exegesis of the blackness and whiteness of ghosts; cf. Donnadieu and Vilatte 1996: 60–61 and 65; Johnston 1999: 6 and 52; and Felton 1999: 14–18.

[17] Oedipus: Euripides *Phoenissae* 1539–45. Heracles: Homer *Odyssey* 11.619. Bloodlessness: Statius *Thebaid* 2.98, 123–24, 4.510, and 519; and Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* 24.11. Fearfulness: Statius *Thebaid* 4.506; cf. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 1.19. Erinyes: Pausanias 8.34.2–3; cf. Jameson et al. 1993: 53 and 80.

jured up by Apollonius of Tyana.[18] But most necromantic ghosts appear to have been of life-size; this, for example, is the implication of Odysseus's attempt to embrace the ghost of his mother.

Only in the case of one necromantic text does the possibility arise that death might produce from the body both a soul and a ghost that are separate and distinct from each other. Lucan's Erictho persuades the ghost (*umbra*) to materialize beside the corpse she is attempting to reanimate, but it refuses to re-enter it. Incensed, she whips the corpse with a snake and barks down through the chasm she has opened to order the Furies to drive his soul (*anima*) through the emptiness of Erebus. If Lucan does indeed intend these terms to be read as referring to distinct phenomena, he may be alluding archly to the Platonic notion that the soul (*psuchē*) in turn had a little soul, a demon of its own (*daimōn*). It is possible that Statius also and concomitantly works with such a tripartite distinction in the Thessalian witch simile that he develops for Ide in reminiscence of Lucan's Erictho scene. Lactantius's commentary on the passage seems to read it this way at any rate, although the *animae* that complain in the underworld need not have belonged to the same people as the *manes* directly exploited for the necromancy.[19]

The dead exploited for ancient magic, in particular for the enactment of binding curses, could have been dear to their exploiter in life or unknown to him,[20] but they typically belonged to one of the categories of the restless laid out in an important discussion by Tertullian: those that had died before their time (*aōroi*, predominantly thought of as babies, although including men and women who died before marriage); those that had been killed by violence (*bi*[*ai*]*othanatoi*), including suicides and the battle-dead; and those that remained unburied (*ataphoi* or *atelestoi*).[21]

[18] Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.16.

[19] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.720 and 732; cf. Duff 1928: ad loc. Plato: e.g., *Republic* 620de (Er); and Plutarch *Moralia* 592c–d (Hermotimus). Statius *Thebaid* 3.140–46.

[20] Curse exploiting ghost of curser's brother: Jordan 1985a: no. 129 = Gager 1992: no. 79 (third century A.D., Rome). Curse exploiting ghost of curser's son: Libanius 41.51 (cf. Bonner 1932a: 41–42). Curse exploiting unknown ghost: Jordan 1985a: no. 173 = Bravo 1987: 189 (cf. 194–96; third century B.C., Olbia), "Just as surely as we do not know you. . . ."

[21] Tertullian *De anima* 56, with Waszink 1947: ad loc. For the categories of dead exploited in magic, see Audollent 1904: cxii–cxv; Wide 1909; Norden 1916: 10–20; Rohde 1925: 593–95; Eitrem 1933; Massoneau 1934: 39–46; Preisendanz 1935: 2243–59; Bidez and Cumont 1938, 1: 180–86; Delcourt 1939; Waszink 1954; Cumont 1945 and 1949: 306–18; Nock 1950; Vrugt-Lentz 1960 (important); Schlörb-Vierneisel 1964; Annequin 1973: 59–60; Tupet 1976: 82–91; Bremmer 1983: 101–8; Garland 1985: 77–88; Bravo 1987: 196; Jordan 1988: 273–75; Bernand 1991: 131–55; Faraone 1991b: 22; Gager 1992: 19; Johnston 1999: esp. 127–249 (good on the ghosts of childless virgins); and Ogden 1999: 15–23. The pollution that arises from the unburied is described at length at Sophocles *Antigone* 998–1032; cf. Parker 1983: 43–48.

The literary tradition liked to schematize the places in or out of the underworld given to these categories and their subtypes. For Homer, the unburied could not cross the underworld river to join the other ghosts. For Plato, the *atelestoi* were left "buried" in the mud of Hades. For Virgil, all the restless remained liminal. The unburied are confined to the living-side bank of Acheron for a hundred years before they may cross (a hundred years symbolically representing a full human life). On the dead-side bank, but still outside the underworld proper, are those that died before their time, divided into two main groups according to whether or not they died by violence. Those that did not are characterized as wailing babies. The group that died by violence is then further subdivided into four: those unjustly executed, general suicides, love suicides, and the battle-dead. Silius sent his restless categories into the underworld through different gates: the first for battle-dead, the fifth for those dying at sea (and so unable to receive burial), the eighth for *aōroi* babies and unmarried virgins. Lucian's restless dead come in slightly different divisions: *aōroi* babies, battle-dead, love suicides, murder victims, executed criminals, and, among others, those who died at sea.[22]

How significant were these categories of dead for necromancy in particular? Often the prime criterion in selecting a ghost for necromancy was the relevance of the individual ghost to the matter in hand. Hence, the ghost exploited was often a dear one.[23] This is why Lucian's Glaucias calls up the ghost of his father, who, for all we are told, died naturally after a full term.[24] But it was helpful if the relevant ghost did also belong to one of the key categories, as in the case of Periander's wife Melissa (chapter 4). Often the occasion of the necromancy would in any case be the restlessness of a ghost—known or unknown—in one of these categories, and the purpose of the consultation would be to learn how it could be given peace.[25] In the next chapter we shall see that such restlessness may have been the usual motor of ghosts' prophetic abilities. When necromancy was employed for divination on wider issues and no one ghost was of particular relevance, ghosts in the restless categories were probably turned to by default. Thus Lucan's Erictho chooses the ghost of an unburied, battle-dead soldier.[26] The manufacture of a ghost for necromancy, as in

[22] Homer *Iliad* 23.69–92. Plato *Phaedo* 69c; cf. Audollent 1904: no. 68b = Gager 1992: no. 22 = Jameson et al. 1993: 130 (fourth century B.C., Attica). Virgil *Aeneid* 6.315–534. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.532–62. Lucian *Kataplous* 6–7.

[23] See chapter 11 for a list of dear ones called up in necromancy. In the Near East, necromancy may typically have exploited the ghost of a member of the family: Tropper 1989: 104 and West 1997b: 550.

[24] Lucian *Philopseudes* 14.

[25] E.g., *Suda* s.v. [*peri*] *psuchagōgias*.

[26] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.637.

some varieties of boy-sacrifice, inevitably produced a ghost in a restless category (chapter 12).

Apollonius of Tyana called up the ghost of the long-dead Achilles, apparently without undue difficulty. Lucan's Erictho, however, implies that it was much easier to recall a recent ghost when she asks the underworld powers not for the return of a ghost buried deep in Tartarus, but of one still on the threshold of the chasm of Orcus.[27]

A further category that may have been particularly valued for necromancy was that of the exalted ghost. Aeschylus's ghost of Darius boasts that his royal status gives him some influence in persuading the infernal powers to give him temporary leave. Erictho again particularly relishes the prospect of getting her hands on the bones of Roman commanders from their battlefield.[28]

Accounts of necromancies usually give no indication that the dead spoke in anything other than a normal voice, but ghosts are otherwise often found squeaking. The verb used by Homer to denote the sound of the ghosts of Penelope's suitors and that of Patroclus is *trizō*, which was, appropriately, the proper term for the squeaking of bats. Eustathius compares the sound to the crying of a baby. Elsewhere in Greek it is applied to the twittering of birds, the creaking of wheels, and tinnitus, and it appears to have denoted a thin, high-pitched, continuous, plaintive, and mournful sound.[29] The noise made by the ghosts that flit around the ghost of Homer's Heracles (*klangē*) is similarly compared to that made by frightened birds. When the ghosts press around his Odysseus before he abandons his consultation, the noise they produce cumulatively is described as an "awful cry" (*ēchēi thespesiēi*). Homer's notions remained central to the tradition. The ghosts called up by Horace's Canidia and Sagana speak in a voice that is "sad and shrill." Virgil's ghosts can only speak in thin voices. The ghosts of Lucian's *Menippus* also squeak (*trizō*), and the voice in which his ghost of Tiresias prophesies is a weak one (*leptophōnos*). The complaining aspect of the ghostly squeak can be explicitly noticed, as in the case of the ghosts that are to flutter around Tibullus's bawd-witch. The sounds that emerge from Statius's underworld mix a high-pitched noise (*stridor*) with a wailing (*gemitus*). Lucian's dead wail (*oimōgē*) in Charon's ferry. Occasionally ghosts are attributed with a much

[27] Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.16; cf. Collison-Morley 1912: 35–36; and Collard 1949: 104. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.712–16.

[28] Darius: Aeschylus *Persians* 691–93; cf. Jouan 1981: 420. Erictho: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.583–87.

[29] Homer *Odyssey* 24.5–9, with Eustathius ad loc.; and *Iliad* 23.101; cf. also Herodotus 3.110 for *trizō* of bats. Range of meanings of *trizō*: LSJ s.v. For discussion of the language of the dead, see Preisendanz 1935: 2263; Cumont 1949: 105; Wagenvoort 1966; Bremmer 1983: 85.

lower-pitched, grumbling, muttering, or droning noise. Heliodorus's reanimated corpse gives voice at this other end of the vocal range: it "mutters in a deep and ill-sounding undertone (*hypotrizō*) as if out of some recess or ravinelike cavern." The root of the word is, significantly, *triz-* again. The cavern imagery is, of course, highly appropriate to necromancy.[30]

Lucan observes that even though Erictho is still alive, she can already hear the speech of the silent. Although "the silent" is a commonplace way of referring to the dead, Lucan apparently uses the term significantly in context, and so may imply that Erictho possesses a special ability to hear or to decipher the speech of the dead that the ordinary living do not. Erictho explains that she will reanimate a fresh corpse so that "the mouth of a recently dead and still-warm corpse may sound with full voice and we won't have a deathly ghost, whose limbs are all dried up in the sunlight, squeaking something unintelligible to our ears" (cf. chapter 13). Here two simpler distinctions appear to have been overlaid: that between the strong voice of a living person and the traditional squeak of a ghost, and that between the strong voice of a fresh voice-box and the weak voice of a dried-up one.[31]

Two further minor points may be made about the manner of ghosts' speech. First, it emerges from the exorcism scene of Lucian's Syrian from Palaestine that demons, presumably including *nekudaimones*, ghosts of the dead, speak in the language of their country of origin, although they can understand any living language. Second, ghosts could prophesy in meter, as Cleonice did to Pausanias in hexameter.[32]

When the living spoke to the dead, it could help if they adopted their sound patterns. Hence they could communicate with them by squeaking, by wailing, and by muttering or droning. The summoning wailing of *goētes* was discussed above (chapter 7). As for the squeaking sound, Aeschylus's Darius remarks that he has been summoned by people "shrieking shrilly (*orthiazontes*) with psychagogic wailings (*goois*)." Horace's Canidia and Sagana begin their necromantic-cum-erotic rite by shrieking (*ululantem*). Ovid's Circe calls Hecate prior to calling up ghosts with long shrieking (*ululatibus*), and Tibullus's friendly witch can hold ghosts with a magical screech (*stridore*).[33]

[30] Homer *Odyssey* 11.605–6 (Heracles) and 11.633 (Odysseus). Horace *Satires* 1.8.41. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.492–95. Lucian *Menippus* 10 (*oimōgēs*), 11 (*trizō*), and 21 (*leptophōnon*). Tibullus 1.5.51–52. Statius *Thebaid* 2.51. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.15.

[31] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.513–15 and 621–23.

[32] Lucian *Philopseudes* 16; such a notion is contradicted by Broadhead (1960) on Aeschylus *Persians* 633–37. Cleonice: Plutarch *Cimon* 6.

[33] Aeschylus *Persians* 687; Horace *Satires* 1.8.25; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 14.405; Tibullus 1.3.47. The notion that the dead can be evocated by *ululatus* is found also at [Quintilian] *Declamationes maiores* 10.7.

Necromancers also mutter or drone for apparently purificatory purposes at the start of their consultations. Statius's Tiresias accompanies the purifications with which he begins the necromancy of Laius with a long muttering (*murmure*). Lucian's Mithrobarzanes also drones in an undertone (*hupotonthorusas*) to accompany Menippus's final purifications before his necromancy.[34] The complex and horrible animalian noise with which Lucan's Erictho begins her reanimation combines elements of both muttering (*murmura*) and screeching (*strident*), alongside the sounds of creatures with familiar significance for necromancy: dogs, wolves, owls, screech owls, and snakes. Also, she can send a message down to the underworld by prizing open the mouth of a corpse with her teeth, biting its tongue, and muttering (*murmura*) into its mouth.[35] Ps.-Quintilian's mage uses a muttering (*horrido murmure*) to torture gods above and ghosts. Lucan explains, too, that Thessalian witches in general use an unspeakable muttering (*infandum murmur*) to summon gods, this being more powerful than any summoning sound used by the Persians or Egyptians. The similarity between the ways in which ghosts and their consulters speak is brought home by Seneca. His Tiresias and ghost of Laius both speak "with frenzied mouth" (*ore rabido*).[36]

Ghosts in necromancy sometimes communicate rather by visual means. Agamemnon's ghost appears in a spontaneous necromantic dream to Clytemnestra and predicts her death at the hands of Orestes by planting his scepter beside the hearth, from which a branch grows to overshadow Mycenae. When Elysius of Terina consults the ghost of his son at a *nekuomanteion*, the ghost hands him his prophecy inscribed on a tablet (chapter 6). Before the ghost of Laius is brought forward to speak in Statius's necromancy, other ghosts of Thebes appear silently before Manto and Tiresias in various configurations that are themselves predictive of the horrors ahead, a kind of dumb-show. The spontaneously appearing Trojan War ghosts of Philostratus's *Heroicus* predicted drought if manifesting themselves covered in dust, rain if covered in sweat, and plague if covered in blood. In Lucan's *Pharsalia*, the spontaneous appearance of the ghost of Julia to Pompey is in itself heavily meaningful, utterances aside: Julia was the symbol of the bond between Caesar and Pompey, and her death in itself was representative of the bond's dissolution, and therefore of

[34] Statius *Thebaid* 4.418; Lucian *Menippus* 7.

[35] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.565–68 (mouth of corpse) and 685–94 (animalian noise). Erictho barks also at 728–29, when issuing her threat of a second spell; Nock (1929: 185) and Volpilhac (1978: 273) compare the noise to the vowel series of *PGM*; other notions at Masters 1992: 191.

[36] [Quintilian] *Declamationes maiores* 10.7. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.445–51. Seneca *Oedipus* 561–68 and 626.

civil war.[37] We may suspect that in practiced necromancies, image-based prophecies were more important than they were in literary ones. After incubation, it was surely easier to bring to mind a fleeting image than an utterance from one's dream, and scrying necromancy was presumably heavily image-based.

[37] Statius *Thebaid* 4.553–602. Philostratus *Heroicus* 2, esp. pp. 150–54 Kayser. Lucan *Pharsalia* 3.30–34.

CHAPTER 15

THE WISDOM OF THE DEAD

THE central issue of ancient necromancy is that of the source of the wisdom of the dead. Why should one turn to the dead at all for knowledge? What were their sources and kinds of knowledge? It is particularly puzzling that the dead should have been sought out for prediction. Were not their affinities with the past rather than the future? As we shall see, much of the wisdom attributed to them can be derived, directly or indirectly, from the notions of ghostly restlessness reviewed in the last chapter. Further partial explanations were also provided in antiquity, with varying degrees of explicitness: the Pythagorean-Platonic explanation looked to the enhanced perspicacity of the soul detached from its body; explanations could be found, too, in the power of the earth in which the ghosts resided; other explanations again were specific to individual ghosts and denied wisdom to the dead in general, so effectively undermining the concept of necromancy as a divinatory category. But none of these explanations is completely satisfactory in itself, and the proliferation of such partial explanations suggests that they are post-hoc rationalizations and that the wisdom of the dead is best taken as a first principle: the dead were wise because they always had been and because necromancy did, after all, "work."

. . . . .

One could turn to necromancy as obviously the most appropriate form of divination for certain sorts of query: when, for example, one needed to get information from a specific ghost, perhaps to lay it, or when one wished to learn about one's death, or about death in general. But one could also turn to necromancy, whatever the nature of one's enquiry, simply because it had the name of being the most powerful form of divination. Lucan's Sextus Pompey knew that the ghosts were more reliable than the heavenly gods, whose prophecies were embodied by Apollo's Delphi and Zeus's Dodona, and than lightning divination and astrological divination. Statius's Tiresias compares the power of necromancy favorably with augury, hieroscopy, Delphi, and astrology. Philostratus explains that ghosts called up beside the blood and the pit could not lie. Hence the ghost of Odysseus was forced to tell Homer even about his disgraceful treatment of Palamedes, and so had to exact from him a promise that he

would make no mention of the matter in his poems.[1] Despite the theoretical power of necromancy, the necromantic prophecies of the literary tradition are often rather weak, authors concerning themselves more with the description of the rites themselves. The slightness of the prophecy exacted by Lucan's Erictho from her corpse after all her hard work is noteworthy in this respect.[2]

But necromancies were not always truthful. Ephorus reported that a king (of Cumae?) destroyed the Cimmerian *nekuomanteion* at Avernus when an oracle did not succeed for him. The emergence of Virgil's Aeneas from that same *nekuomanteion* through the Gate of False Dreams may, as we saw, be the poet's indication that the preceding narrative of Aeneas's consultation is untrue (chapter 5). Some of those who, in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, witnessed the reanimated Thelyphron's accusation that he had been murdered by his wife declared that the corpse was lying; it was not lying, in fact, but the possibility could at any rate be entertained. Two literary examples of false necromancies resemble each other. The first is the hellenistic tale of the prophecy given by Publius's head, probably composed not long after its dramatic date of 191 B.C. It prophesied that the Romans would be driven out of Greece, which they never were. But Hansen is surely right that the tale derives from the propaganda of the Greek resistance to Roman domination, so that its composers designed the prophecy to be read as very much true. The second is the prophecy of Gabienus's corpse to Sextus Pompey that he would be victorious in the Sicilian War. This story probably owes its origin to pro-Pompeian propaganda, so that this prophecy, too, was designed by its composers to be true. But the fact that these two stories could continue to be recounted long after the prophecies they contained were proved false perhaps gives further support to the notion that false necromancies could be tolerated. When Statius's Laius visits Eteocles in a dream, the ghost is a true one, but it fears that if it appears as itself, it will be dismissed as a "false apparition of the night." So it disguises itself as an (inevitably false) apparition of the still-living Tiresias, in order to increase its credibility, before finally tearing off its disguise even so.[3] The belief that false dreams could masquerade as ghosts perhaps operated on different levels. On the one hand, it could undermine the credibility of true ghosts; on the other,

[1] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.425–34; cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 337; and Masters 1992: 186. Statius *Thebaid* 4.409–14. Philostratus *Heroicus* pp. 194–95 Kayser.

[2] Cf. Ahl 1976: 131, 138, and 146; Volpilhac 1978: 287; and Masters 1992: 196 and 199–201.

[3] Avernus: Strabo C245, including Ephorus *FGH* 70 F134a. Thelyphron: Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.29. Publius: Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 3, with Hansen 1996: ad loc. Gabienus: Pliny *Natural History* 7.178–79. Statius *Thebaid* 2.94–124.

it could preserve faith in the fundamental integrity of necromancy by providing a means of discounting prophecies that turned out to be false.

So why were ghosts wise? Much of the wisdom attributed to ghosts in necromancy, even predictions, can be derived, directly or indirectly, from the fact that the focal reason for performing necromancy was the settling of an unquiet ghost. If the ghost's known murderer had not made due recompense for the killing, this could be demanded, from him or from others. If it had been the victim of an undetected murderer, it could reveal his identity. If it was dissatisfied with the circumstances of its burial, or the honors paid to it after death, the source of dissatisfaction could be explained. In such cases, it is pointless to ask how the ghost knew the facts it was asked to reveal: the ghost was itself the product of those facts.

Ghosts of murder victims often went directly to their murderers in their attempts to reach peace, terrorizing them and driving them mad.[4] A recurring two-stage scheme is found. First, the ghost attacks and harries its murderer in a form that is terrifying and in which it cannot be communicated with; this may be because in this form the ghost will simply brook no communication, or because its victims, when confronted with such a manifestation, are distraught beyond the ability to comprehend. Second, the murderer is thus driven to perform rites to call the ghost up in a form with which he can indeed communicate, and so learn from it what he must do to give it peace. Thus, after killing Cleonice, Pausanias is driven by her ghost to call it up at the Heracleia *nekuomanteion* (or Phigalia) in an attempt to propitiate it. After killing Pausanias, in turn, the Spartans are similarly forced by the terror inflicted by his ghost upon them to call it up using *psuchagōgoi* (Delphi advised). And after killing his mother Agrippina, Nero is similarly driven by her ghost to call it up and propitiate it using mages. A similar pattern again may underlie Herodotus's tale of Periander and the ghost of Melissa. It may also be apparent in the fifth-century B.C. sacred law from Selinus. This law, which provides directions for the purification of murderers under attack from vengeful ghosts, stipulates that the ghost "may be addressed" after the performance of some initial rites, as if this will not have been possible hitherto. This two-stage process is curious. If the ghosts were going to the trouble of manifesting themselves before their murderers, why did they not tell them what satisfaction they required right away in a single appearance? Felton draws at-

[4] Plato *Laws* 865; Xenophon *Cyropaedia* 8.7.18–19; and Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 3.389–90. At Livy 3.58, the ghost of Verginia is said to have gone from house to house taking direct revenge upon those responsible for her death. Ghosts can even pursue the ghosts of their murderers, as that of Claudius pursues that of Agrippina at [Seneca] *Octavia* 614–47. Cf. Bevan 1926: 61; Hickman 1938: 119–21; and Johnston 1999: 28, 55–56, 141–48.

tention to a folk tradition that may explain the phenomenon, namely that ghosts cannot speak unless spoken to.[5] In their harrying aspect, ghosts acted like Erinyes/Furies. Rohde's theory that the Erinyes were themselves in origin the vengeful souls of the murdered dead, disbelieved by many, may or may not now receive support from the *Derveni Papyrus*.[6] In tragedy, we find ghosts driving on Erinyes/Furies to harass their murderers (Aeschylus's Clytemnestra), Erinyes driving on ghosts to do their haunting (Seneca's Tantalus), and ghosts presenting themselves as Erinyes (*Octavia*'s Agrippina).[7]

Ghosts were understandably keen to effect revenge also by revealing the identities of their murderers to third parties. In Seneca's necromancy, the ghost of Laius denounces his son Oedipus as his murderer and asserts that he will set a Fury upon him. The uncle of Apuleius's dead Thelyphron has Zatchlas reanimate his corpse so that he can declare that he was poisoned by his wife and her lover. Crantor's Elysius of Terina called up the ghost of his son to ask him whether he had been poisoned, although it turned out that he had not been (chapter 6). Such killers were also revealed in spontaneous necromancies. The ghost of Cynthia told Propertius in a dream that she had been poisoned by her slaves. Virgil's ghost of Sychaeus appears to his wife Dido in a dream to tell her of his murder by Pygmalion. Apuleius's ghost of Tlepolemos appears to his wife Charite to tell her that he was killed by her suitor Thrasyllus, and the ghost of Apuleius's miller appears to his daughter, noose around his neck, to tell her that he was killed by her stepmother. The decapitated head of Aristotle's Arcadian priest of Zeus Hoplosmios repeatedly sang "Cercidas," the name of his killer. Cicero and Aelian recount variants of a Megarian tale in which an Arcadian visitor to the city, Chrysippus, is killed by his innkeeper for his money. His ghost appears in a dream either to an Arcadian friend in the city or to a citizen of the place, explains what has happened, and relates that his body has been concealed in a dungcart. The man is able to stop the cart at the citygate, and the murderer is revealed. The Ciceronian version includes the intriguing detail that the

[5] Cleonice: Plutarch *Moralia* 555c and *Cimon* 6; Pausanias 3.17.7–9; and Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8.1 Pausanias: see chapter 7. Agrippina: Suetonius *Nero* 34, etc.; see chapter 10. Melissa: Herodotus 5.92 (cf. chapter 4). Selinus: Jameson et al. 1993: Side B. Cf. also Corax's propitiation of Archilochus at Tainaron, again on the advice of Delphi (Plutarch *Moralia* 560e and *Numa* 4; and Aelian F83 Domingo-Forasté). In a more minor way, the manifestation of Agamemnon's ghost induced Clytemnestra to take offerings to his tomb (Sophocles *Electra* 410, 417–23, and 459–60). Folk tradition: Felton 1999: 7.

[6] *Derveni Papyrus* col. 2; Rohde 1925: 179; Henrichs 1984: 257 and 261–66; and Jameson et al. 1993: 81 and 116–20; *pace* Garland 1985: 94 and Johnston 1999: 273–79; see Brown 1984 more generally on the Erinyes.

[7] Aeschylus *Eumenides* 94–177; Seneca *Thyestes* 1–121; [Seneca] *Octavia* 619–20; cf. Hickman 1938: 32–38, 95, 116, and 121; and Devereux 1976: 152–57.

ghost had already appeared to the man in advance of the murder to warn him that it was plotted. (A similar proleptic appearance by the ghosts of those about to be killed is found in the *Odyssey*: Theoclymenus sees Odysseus's hall full of the suitor's ghosts before his slaughter of them has begun. The logic and mechanics of such proleptic appearances are difficult to fathom.[8])

Ghosts were ever eager to describe their deaths plaintively even to people who had little or no opportunity to avenge them. This is understandable enough: a person's ghost is in a sense an embodiment of his death. Polydorus's ghost told the audience of Euripides' *Hecabe* how he had been killed and dumped unburied on the shore by Polymestor. When Plautus's ghost of Diapontius supposedly appeared to Philolaches in his sleep, it told him how he had been murdered by the previous owner of the house. In the *Aeneid*, the ghost of Palinurus tells Aeneas how he was killed by savages, and Deiphobus's tells him how he was tricked, mutilated, and killed by Helen and Menelaus. The ghosts that are to flit around the head of Tibullus's bawd-witch will be "complaining about their deaths."[9] Indeed, ghosts were so obsessed with their deaths that they even discussed them among themselves. When Homer's Hermes takes down the ghosts of the suitors, they come across Agamemnon and Achilles discussing their deaths with each other, and proceed to tell the pair of the circumstances of their own deaths in turn. Even deaths without human agent are discussed: the mother of Silius's Scipio told him how she died in childbirth. An intriguing fragment from a Greek novel describes how a person expecting a manifestation of Asclepius is instead confronted with a ghost, who begins to narrate the circumstances of his death as the papyrus breaks off. The papyrus recipe for conjuring up the ghost of a dead man by laying out his body (or probably just his skull) on an ass's skin explains that on its manifestation, the ghost will tell one whether or not it has any power, and then how it died.[10]

The progression from a ghost's revelation of the circumstances of its killing to its revelation of other events it participated in or witnessed during life was easy. It seems probable that Herodotus's Periander asked

[8] Seneca *Oedipus* 643–45. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.27–30 (Thelyphron), 8.8 (Tlepolemos), and 9.31 (miller). Crantor of Soli at Plutarch *Moralia* 109b–d. Propertius 4.7.35–46. Virgil *Aeneid* 1.353–59. Aristotle *Parts of Animals* 673a. Megarian tale: Cicero *On Divination* 1.57; and Aelian F82 Domingo-Forasté; cf. Felton 1999: 20–21 and 29–34 (for "crisis apparitions"). Theoclymenus: Homer *Odyssey* 20.351–57; cf. Johnston 1999: 32.

[9] Euripides *Hecabe* 1–27. Plautus *Mostellaria* 497–504. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.347–62 and 511–29. Tibullus 1.5.51.

[10] Homer *Odyssey* 24.24–97 and 122–90. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.654–57. Novel fragment: *P.Oxy.* 416; cf. Stephens and Winkler 1995: 409–15. Papyrus recipe: *PGM* IV.2006–125.

Melissa where, in life, she herself had buried the guest-friend's deposit. Silius's Pomponia revealed to her son Scipio that he was sired on her by Jupiter in the form of a snake. Apion called up Homer to ask him about his fatherland and parents. As we have seen, Homer had himself called up Odysseus to ask him about the events of the Trojan War in which he had participated, and Apollonius of Tyana called up Achilles for the same reason.[11]

Ghosts were also well aware of the circumstances in which their corpse lay, as is indicated by the other significant, and overlapping, cause of restlessness for ghosts: deprivation of burial, inadequate burial, or insufficient tomb-attendance subsequent to burial. Manifestations of ghosts to demand burial were many. Elpenor appears unbidden to Odysseus at his necromancy in order to ask for burial, and warns that if he does not receive it, he may become a cause of wrath for the gods against Odysseus. The form of burial he requests bears a remarkable similarity to Tiresias's instructions for the placation of Poseidon: in both cases, an oar is to be planted in the ground.[12] Many further examples of ghosts manifesting themselves to ask for due burial could be given, among which are those of Polydorus, Cillus, Deiphilus, Palinurus, and even, in the pseudo-Virgilian *Culex*, that of a gnat.[13] So anxious could ghosts be about their due burial that they could even manifest themselves when it was already assured. Thus the ghost of Homer's Patroclus appears spontaneously to Achilles in a dream to give him directions for the funeral that is already inevitable. Silius's Appius Claudius actually complains that his friends are misguidedly making excessively elaborate preparations for his funeral, including the embalming of his body, and so prolonging unnecessarily his agony in his unburied state.[14]

This obsession with the circumstances of burial and attendance ensured that ghosts took a keen interest in and had a good awareness of what

[11] Herodotus 5.92, with Ganschinietz 1929 and Stern 1989; *pace* Johnston 1999: viii. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.615–49. Apion: Pliny *Natural History* 30.18. Philostratus *Heroicus* 29 (Homer) and *Life of Apollonius* 4.16 (Apollonius).

[12] Elpenor's instructions: Homer *Odyssey* 11.61–79; cf. Hopfner 1921–24, 2: 550. Tiresias's instructions: Homer *Odyssey* 11.77 and 129; for the folktale context of the technique for placating Poseidon, see Hansen 1977 and 1990; Dimock 1989: 145; Nagy 1990: 214; Baldick 1994; and Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 115.

[13] Polydorus: Euripides *Hecabe* 47–54. Cillus: Theopompus *FGH* 115 F350. Deiphilus: Pacuvius *Iliona* at Warmington 1935–40, 2: 328–41. Palinurus: Virgil *Aeneid* 6.365–66. Gnat: [Virgil] *Culex* 210–383. Cf. Felton 1999: 8–12. Cunning Sisyphus exploited the inevitable restlessness of those denied due burial, by ordering his wife to deny it to his own body, so that he could return to the realm of the living after death (Alcaeus F38; Theognis 711–12; Pherecydes *FGH* 3 F119; and Eustathius on Homer *Odyssey* 11.592; cf. Johnston 1999: 9).

[14] Homer *Iliad* 23.69–92. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.457–65.

went on around their tomb or the place in which their body lay, even if they had received some sort of due burial. Plato implies that it was commonly believed that ghosts actually hovered around their tombs. Propertius's duly buried Cornelia knew that her husband Paullus cried at her tomb. The same poet's Cynthia appeared to him spontaneously in a dream to complain about the shabbiness of her funeral and the unkempt state of her grave, and to demand the erection of an epitaph, which she dictated; she was aware that he had not cried at her tomb. When Achilles was called up by Apollonius of Tyana, he grumbled that he was in the early stages of dissatisfaction with the neglect of his tomb by the Thessalians. He asked Apollonius to pass the message on before he had to start causing trouble: they should give him tithes of seasonal fruits, and seek his peace with a suppliant branch. He was also able to tell him that he had been buried as Homer told, and that Polyxena had been slaughtered on his tomb. At Nakrason in Asia Minor, Epicrates was visited by the ghost of his son in a dream, to be told to found a garden of remembrance for him. It is curious that Silius's Scipio has to tell the ghost of Paulus that Hannibal had built him a tomb at Cannae.[15] A ghost without any kind of due burial could exercise a particularly vigorous and active presence in the vicinity of its body. In the parallel philosopher-stays-the-night-in-a-haunted-house stories of Pliny and Lucian, the ghost terrifies visitors to the house in which its body lies until the philosopher stands his ground against it, whereupon it meekly reveals the place in which its body lies (here again, a ghost manifests itself first in a terrifying and then in a more communicative aspect).[16]

Ghosts were accordingly well aware of anything their corpse was able to witness directly. Herodotus's Melissa revealed that Periander had had sex with her corpse. Apuleius's dead Thelyphron revealed that witches had stolen the living Thelyphron's nose and ears as he lay beside his corpse.[17] In these two cases, this information is given to prove that the dead person speaks the truth, although it functions better as proof that the prophesying voice genuinely belongs to the ghost of the corpse in question.

It is sometimes indicated, beyond this, that ghosts have an awareness of events of the present and of the past since their death over a wider area. A conservative example is the evocation by Lucian's Glaucias of the ghost of his father, Alexicles, just seven months after his death, as he plans

[15] Propertius 4.7.23–34, 79–86 (Cynthia), and 4.11.1 (Cornelia). Plato *Phaedo* 81b–d. Achilles: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.16. Nakrason: Hermann and Polatkan 1969; for gardens of remembrance, see Toynbee 1971: 94–100. Paulus: Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.696–716.

[16] Pliny *Letters* 7.27; and Lucian *Philopseudes* 31.

[17] Herodotus 5.92; Bernstein 1993: 98. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.29–30.

an unsuitable love-affair. He fears the ghost's disapproval and, presumably, consequent trouble-making, and so chooses to propitiate it in advance. The Achilles called up by Apollonius knew why, subsequent to his death, Homer had omitted Palamedes from the *Iliad*, although this did not directly affect him. Valerius Flaccus's ghost of Cretheus can see Jason speeding over the sea at a remote distance (Colchis, from Thessaly). Heliodorus's reanimated corpse can see the sons of Kalasiris currently squaring up to each other in battle in a remote place.[18]

The literary sources are sometimes awkwardly inconsistent with themselves as to how much wider knowledge of the present or of the past intervening since their death ghosts can have. The main impetus for restricting their knowledge was probably dramatic effect. Thus Homer's ghost of Odysseus's mother, Anticleia, knows what is currently happening in Ithaca, but, paradoxically, not that Odysseus has not yet returned there. And Achilles' threats against those who wrong his father Peleus evince knowledge of his situation, even though he asks Odysseus about him in ostensible ignorance. Aeschylus's ghost of Darius is first summoned up to be told such news of the current disaster as Atossa knows, and he is clearly initially in ignorance of it, as well as of the fate of his son. But then he can see the events by the faraway Asopus in Boeotia as they unfold.[19]

Homer indicates that one way available to ghosts of keeping up with the intervening past was to keep track of those who subsequently died and came down to join them, and to interrogate them. Thus Homer's Agamemnon knows that his son is still alive because he has not yet found him in the underworld. The underworld grapevine is shown in operation when Hermes takes down the ghosts of the suitors slain by Odysseus and they immediately relate everything that happened to them to the ghosts of the Trojan War. Lucan's reanimated corpse gauges the extent of the civil war among mortals from the fact that it has spread even to the dead.[20]

Matters of the future are addressed in surprisingly few ancient accounts of necromancy, and in few of these again is the future predicted in a straightforward and uncompromised fashion. The most prosaic, matter-of-fact, specific, and detailed example of future-revelation is that of Silius Italicus's dead Sibyl to Scipio Africanus: he will command young, win a

[18] Lucian *Philopseudes* 14. Achilles: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 4.16. Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 1.741. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.15.

[19] Homer *Odyssey* 11.155–62, 181–96 (Anticleia), and 492–504 (Achilles). Aeschylus *Persians* 700–738 and 805–6; cf. Hickman 1938: 29–30.

[20] Homer *Odyssey* 11.457–61 (Agamemnon) and 24.98–204 (suitors). Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.776–805.

battle on the Ebro, avenge his father, take New Carthage, become consul, drive the Carthaginians back into Africa, defeat Hannibal, and be unjustly exiled. But the ghost speaking here was a prophet in life. Reasonably direct revelations of the future are also found in Virgil's sequence, where Anchises tells Aeneas of the wars he will have to face, and how he is to address each of the difficulties he will meet. Lucan's Sextus is told that his father will be defeated and that he will receive a prophecy from him in turn, and Statius's Eteocles is told by Laius that Thebes will be victorious in war, but that neither he nor Polynices will retain control of the city. Valerius Flaccus's Cretheus predicts the misery Jason will bring to Colchis and the rape of Medea. The element of future-revelation in Heliodorus's sequence is vigorous, inasmuch as the corpse not only answers the future-related questions put to it by its mother, but, unbidden, goes on to make revelations about the futures of the eavesdropping Charicleia and Kalasiris.[21]

At the earlier end of the tradition, Homer and Aeschylus, and later Seneca, are uncomfortable with the notion that ghosts should be able to reveal the future in necromantic consultations, and so introduce their ghosts' future-revelations by a series of indirect methods. Only the final utterance of Homer's Tiresias, about the manner of Odysseus's death, constitutes an uncompromised revelation of the future. But this revelation is "buffered" by his previous utterances, which, though in effect revealing details of Odysseus's future journey home, are presented as wise advice and instructions, couched in "if-then" terms: Odysseus *may* reach home, *if* he stops his comrades eating the cattle of the Sun, etc. This is all in spite of the fact that Tiresias had been a prophet in life.[22] Aeschylus's Darius directly reveals that the Persian army in Greece will be massacred at Plataea. But this is similarly "buffered": Darius has first begun by giving strategic advice against a land campaign of the sort currently being undertaken, and has observed that oracles known to him in life can now be seen to be coming true. Although Seneca's ghost of Laius asserts that certain things will happen, for example, "I, your unavenged father, will pursue you . . . ," these are explicable merely as avowals of the ghost's own intentions.[23]

[21] Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.507–15; cf. 874–93 on Hannibal's future career. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.886–92. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.803–15. Statius *Thebaid* 4.637–44. Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 1.744–45. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.15.

[22] Homer *Odyssey* 11.101–33 ("if-then") and 134–37 (death). Later sequences borrow the "if-then" formula: e.g., Virgil *Aeneid* 6.770 and 828–29; Propertius 4.11.79 and 85 (spontaneous), and Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.15. The future-related utterances of the ghost of Agamemnon at 451–52 are conjecture rather than formal prediction.

[23] Aeschylus *Persians* 739–41, 790–803, and 816–17; cf. Eitrem 1928: 14; Hickman 1938: 28–29; and, importantly, Alexanderson 1967. Seneca *Oedipus* 642–58.

In a sense, the ability of Darius's ghost to reveal the future is derived from its knowledge of its own person's past, in this case the oracles he heard in life. The notion that the ghosts can reveal the future because they witnessed the future's roots in their own lifetime seems to be found also in Euripides' necromantic prayer fragment:

> Send to the light the souls of those below for those who wish to learn in advance (*promathein*) from where the struggles began to grow (*eblaston*), what was/is the root of evils, which of the blessed gods we must propitiate with sacrifice to find a cessation from toils. Euripides F912 Nauck

Revelation of the perpetrator of a ghost's murder can have direct implications for present and future, as in the case of Seneca's Laius's indication that Oedipus was his killer.[24]

A ghost can come close to revealing the future through knowledge of its own past in a different way. It can give pertinent advice based upon its own experiences—often, indeed, the experiences that led to its own death, the most effective of tutors, and the thing that ghosts are in any case most eager to discuss. The advice of Homer's Agamemnon to Odysseus, to approach his home in stealth, derives from his own murder by his wife Clytemnestra when he returned openly. In Silius's necromancy, Scipio's father explicitly advises him not to adopt the hasty tactics against Hannibal that have just led to his own demise. Alexander's early experience of death leads him to give more general advice, which sits a little contradictorily with that of Scipio's father: Scipio should accomplish as much as he can quickly before death overtakes him. It might be thought that the dead in general, as being super-old, were well endowed with the wisdom of age, but we seldom find such a notion in a necromantic context, perhaps because the dead typically exploited for magical purposes, the untimely dead, were characterized rather by extreme youth. An exception is perhaps found in Aeschylus's *Persians*, where the wise counsels of the relatively elderly ghost of Darius are contrasted with the youthful rashness of Xerxes.[25]

Such future-revelations as are made often address an issue singularly appropriate to ghosts, namely death, especially that of the consulter himself. Thus, the one uncompromised future-revelation made by Homer's Tiresias relates to Odysseus's death; and Lucan's corpse predicts the death of Pompey and indirectly hints at that of the consulter Sextus.[26] There

[24] Seneca *Oedipus* 633–41.

[25] Homer *Odyssey* 11.405–56. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.372–5 (Alexander) and 669–71 (father). Aeschylus *Persians* 782–86.

[26] Homer *Odyssey* 11.134–37, on which see Schwartz 1924: 140–43 and Hansen 1977: 44; a similar prophecy is the only one extant from Aeschylus's *Psuchagogoi*, F275 *TrGF*. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.803–20; cf. Morford 1967: 72; Ahl 1969: 345 and 1976: 147; Fauth 1975: 342; Volpilhac 1978: 287–88; and Masters 1992: 202–3.

are many further examples of this phenomenon, and tragedy is particularly rich in them.[27] Sometimes, and importantly, such prophecies can be self-fulfilling. The vigorous prophecy of Heliodorus's corpse of its mother's imminent doom (alongside that of its brother) is remarkable in this respect. In revealing that her rite has been watched, the corpse sends her chasing over the battlefield in an attempt to kill Charicleia and Kalasiris, thus causing her to impale herself accidentally on a spear. Self-fulfilling also was the necromancy delivered to Caracalla when he inquired into the circumstances of his own death. He was told that he would be usurped by Macrinus. When Macrinus by chance intercepted Maternianus's letter carrying these prophecies to the emperor, he was forced to kill him in order to preserve his own life. Relevant here, too, is the prophecy of Valerius Flaccus's ghost of Cretheus: he predicts that Pelias will soon kill Aeson and Alcimede and bids them commit suicide first, which they do. All this may imply that necromancy was particularly used for the grim task of discovering one's own death, but it may also be that the literary sources upon which we depend enjoy placing thematically appropriate prophecies in the mouths of the dead. Lucan's Erictho is not only able to reveal destined deaths through necromancy, but, within limited scope, she can also alter them: she can advance or postpone the scheduled date of death for those who are dispensable within Destiny's grand schemes.[28] These considerations draw the practice of necromancy close to that of the

[27] Among tragic examples, the revelations of Aeschylus's ghost of Darius principally address Persian deaths (*Persians* 816–20; cf. above note for *Psuchagogoi*). When Sophocles' ghost of Agamemnon appears to Clytemnestra in a dream, he prophesies events entailing her death (*Electra* 417–27). The one future-revelation of Euripides' Polydorus is the impending death of his sister Polyxena (*Hecabe* 40–46; cf. Hickman 1938: 55–56 and 72–74—for Ennius's *Hecuba*). Seneca's ghost of Hector predicts the death of Astyanax (*Troades* 452–55), and his ghost of Thyestes that of Agamemnon (*Agamemnon* 44–48); his ghost of Laius wills on the doom of his own house (*Oedipus* 645–46; cf. Hickman 1938: 106–11). The *Octavia*'s ghost of Agrippina predicts the death of Nero ([Seneca] *Octavia* 620–30).

Among nontragic examples, the spontaneous necromancy made by the ghost of Patroclus to Achilles prophesies his death under the walls of Troy (Homer *Iliad* 23.80–81). Cleonice's revelation to Pausanias is about his death, although he does not realize it (Plutarch *Moralia* 555c and *Cimon* 6). The ghost of Tiberius Gracchus appeared in a dream to his brother Gaius to warn him of his imminent death (Valerius Maximus 1.7.6). Cynthia's one future-revelation in her spontaneous necromancy to Propertius addresses his imminent death (Propertius 4.7.93). Lucan's ghost of Julia also gives a spontaneous prophecy of Pompey's death (Lucan *Pharsalia* 3.30–34). Statius's Laius reveals impending death all around (*Thebaid* 4.637–44). The ghost of Nero visited his biographer Fannius to predict that he would die after the completion of the third book of his work (Pliny *Letters* 5.5). The ghost of Samuel, called up by the witch of En-dor, also prophesied the death of Saul (1 Samuel 28.3–25 and Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* 6.335–36).

[28] Heliodorus 6.15. Caracalla: Herodian 4.12–14 and Dio Cassius 79.4–7. Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 1.747–51 and 812–24. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.605–18, and cf. 529–31.

exploitation of ghosts for cursing, a connection we shall investigate further in the next chapter.

The dead can also impart eschatological information about the nature of life, death, and the universe, information not really grounded in past, present, or future. This wisdom, akin perhaps to that imparted to initiates, they acquire simply by experiencing the afterlife. Already in Homer the ghosts explain the workings of the underworld to Odysseus: Tiresias tells him how to make other ghosts recognize him by letting them drink the blood; Anticleia explains to him the insubstantial nature of the ghosts. Crantor's Elysius of Terina learns from the ghosts of his father and his son that Fate's decision as to when one should die is best. The ps.-Democritean Ostanes indirectly reveals the secrets of alchemy. Propertius's Cynthia tells him of the two houses of the underworld. Virgil's Anchises teaches Aeneas about reincarnation. Lucian's Menippus performs his necromancy specifically to discover the meaning of life: Tiresias tells him the simple life is best, that he should ignore philosophers, live for the day, and laugh a lot. During his temporary death, Plato's Er the Armenian goes on a tour of the universe in which he learns the principles of the judgment of the dead and of reincarnation and hears the music of the spheres. Cicero's Scipio and Plutarch's Timarchus have similar tours of the universe under similar circumstances.[29]

In many of the cases discussed, ghosts or corpses offer information and conversation beyond answering any questions specifically put to them. This should not be possible according to a principle uniquely enunciated by Lucan, who says that in Erictho's reanimation, voice and tongue were given to the corpse solely so that it could reply. This restriction appears to operate at the level of utterance rather than intention, for her corpse asks Erictho to let him die again "with silent face."[30]

There is a broad correspondence between the themes discovered in ancient epitaphs by Lattimore in his masterly study of them and the subjects that the literary sources show ghosts discussing in necromantic contexts. A vast wealth of epitaphs survive from Greco-Roman antiquity, around a hundred thousand in Latin and tens of thousands in Greek. They could be written from three basic perspectives: an impersonal voice could describe the dead man in the third person; the composer and/or

[29] Initiate comparison: cf. Clark 1979: 94 and 168. Homer *Odyssey* 11.146–49 and 216–24. Elysius: Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.115; and Plutarch *Moralia* 109a–d and *Cimon* 6. Ostanes: [Democritus] *Physica et mystica* 2, p. 42, 21 Berthelot (at Bidez and Cumont 1938, 2: 317–18). Propertius 4.7.55–70. Virgil *Aeneid* 6.724–51. Lucian *Menippus* 3–5 and 21; Lucian draws many lessons for life from the underworld—see *On Grief* 16–20, *Dialogues of the Dead* 1, *Anabiountes*, and *Kataplous*. Plato *Republic* 614b–21d. Cicero *Somnium Scipionis* (*Republic* 6.9–29). Timarchus: Plutarch *Moralia* 590–92.

[30] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.761–62 and 821.

the passerby could address the dead man, using first person or second person as appropriate; the dead man could address the passerby, using first person or second person as appropriate. This third category resembles necromancy in that the dead, often explicitly in their post-death condition, speak to the living, and that, too, at their tomb. The second and third categories are mixed to form a dialogue in the following example: "I am undying, not a mortal woman." "I wonder at you. But who are you?" "Isidora." But even in "pure" examples of the third category, dialogues are implicit, because the composer of the words given to the dead person to speak attempts to say something to the dead person's soul through them, and to provoke a sympathetic attitude toward, if not actually a greeting to, the dead person in the passerby who reads it: "Even though I am dead I love my husband." The themes found in epitaphs include description of the manner of the dead person's death (in battle or childbirth, by murder, disease, drowning, etc.), the premature deaths of children and of girls before marriage being particularly remarked upon; wishes, instructions, and curses with a view to the protection and maintenance of the tomb or the paying of honors to the dead person; lamentation for loss of sunlight and one's ineffectual nature after death; consolation for both the dead and the living; exegesis of the underworld and the afterlife (including its denial); and even prophecies of doom, insofar as it is a commonplace of epitaphs to admonish the passerby that the fate of the dead man upon whose tomb he looks will one day be his.[31] As we have seen, epitaphs occasionally invite the passerby to consult the dead person in necromancy (chapter 1).

. . . . .

We have seen that all types of necromantic revelation can in theory ultimately be derived from ancient ideas about ghosts, their motivations, and their circumstances. But additional explanations or contextualizations of necromancy's prophetic mechanism were offered. Indeed, it seems, too many explanations for the wisdom of the dead jostled with each other. Their overall number tends to undermine their individual significance and leave the impression that the wisdom of the dead was a first principle subject to a variety of rationalizations.

The Pythagorean-Platonic tradition held that a soul detached from the

[31] Lattimore 1962: 14 (numbers), 21–26 (exegesis of afterlife), 49 (Isidora), 58 (love my husband), 107–41 (maintenance of tomb), 142–58 and 184–203 (manner of death), 159–64 and 172–77 (ineffectualness), 215–65 (consolation and *memento mori*). Cf. also Strubbe 1991 for tomb-protection curses, and for epitaphs in general, Kurtz and Boardman 1971: 259–66.

body, whether temporarily or permanently, and so purified of fogging corporeal elements, enjoyed a special perspicacity. This notion underpins Plato's myth of Er in the *Republic* and his theory of forms, as enunciated, for example, in the *Phaedo*: "Knowledge cannot be obtained in any circumstances, except by the dead."[32] The ps.-Clementine *Recognitions* explicitly explain the working of necromancy by the fact that when separated from the body, the soul immediately perceives the future. A scholiast to the *Odyssey* explains the ghost of Anticleia's knowledge of current events in Ithaca in the light of these ideas: "For, they say, after the dissolution of their bonding with the body, souls somehow retain a perception and knowledge of things here, a knowledge that is less corporeal and purer than that of people who are composed from both body and soul." The soul was also believed to detach itself somewhat from the body during sleep, and thus increase its perspicacity then, too. Xenophon explained that in sleep, which is akin to death, a man's soul is most revealed in its divine aspect, and can look toward the future, for it is not tied down so much by the flesh. Cicero, too, asserts that sleep, being like death, allows the soul to be more perspicacious. The notion may already be present in Aeschylus's observation that "the sleeping mind (*phrēn*) is lightened with eyes." Iamblichus the philosopher explains the prophetic power of dreams from the fact that during sleep, the soul is no longer distracted by the management of the body, and so is free to contemplate realities, from which it can extrapolate the future because it encompasses within itself an understanding of all processes. Also, the more a soul separates itself from the body, the more it becomes one with its original source, an omniscient intellectual or divine principle. In the separation of sleep, the soul can also attend to the sickness of its body, and this explains how incubation dreams in temples of Asclepius operate.[33]

One development of this sort of thinking was the more concrete notion that the future was prepared in the underworld, and that ghosts could observe these preparations. Virgil's Anchises, after alluding to the theory of forms, exhibits to Aeneas the souls of great Romans waiting in the underworld for incarnation above. For Lucan, ghosts can derive knowledge of the future from watching the Fates (*Parcae*) spin men's lives in the underworld. His ghost of Julia has seen the Fates growing weary for breaking so many threads, the Furies brandishing their torches, Charon

[32] Plato *Republic* 614b–21d (Er) and *Phaedo* 62–68 (forms; quotation: 66e); cf. Festugière 1944–45, 2: 441; and Bolton 1962: 146–47.

[33] [Clement] *Recognitions* 2.13. Scholiast Homer *Odyssey* 11.174. Xenophon *Cyropaedia* 8.7.21. Cicero *On Divination* 1.63–65. Aeschylus *Eumenides* 104; cf. Rohde 1925: 7 and Bremmer 1983: 51. Iamblichus *On the Mysteries of Egypt* 3.3; this builds in part on the notions found at Hippocrates *De victus ratione* 4.86; cf. also Plotinus *Enneads* 4.3.27.

marshaling extra boats, and Tartarus opening wide in preparation for the war between Caesar and Pompey.[34]

It was also possible to derive the prophetic abilities of ghosts from the earth in which they lived. The prophetic powers attributable to the earth in antiquity are most famously observable in the traditions relating to Delphi, which Knight could actually regard as a *nekuomanteion*.[35] Delphic myth held that the oracle had once been presided over by Earth herself and her daughter Themis, and the place's famous Python was a chthonic snake.[36] Under Apollo, the Pythian priestess drank water from an underground spring before prophesying. Some ancients believed that the prophecies she uttered from her tripod were caused by emanations from a chasm or cave in the earth beneath the temple; the view is found first in Cicero.[37] Fruitless excavations of the earth beneath the temple over the course of the twentieth century have established the general belief among scholars that if the earth emitted emanations there, these did not exist in the physical dimension as mephitic gases. But a new geological survey concludes that the earth did indeed emit mephitic gases into the temple.[38] A few necromantic affinities can be found for Delphi in the tradition. Euripides told that when Apollo wrested control of Delphi from Earth's daughter Themis, Earth, in an indignant attempt to spoil his prophetic trade, gave birth to "manifestations/ghosts of dreams" (*phantasmata o<neirōn>*), which visited men in their sleep by night and told them of the past and future. But Zeus pitied Apollo and put a stop to these visions. Earth was also worshiped alongside Zeus at Dodona, and Justin Martyr associates Delphi and Dodona (alongside the oracle of Amphilo-

[34] Virgil *Aeneid* 6.752–892 (cf. 730–34, theory of forms). Lucan *Pharsalia* 3.12–19 (Julia) and 6.777–78 (Fates). Of Plato's Fates, Lachesis spun the past, Clotho the present, and Atropos ("Unavertable") the future, *Republic* 617c.

[35] Knight 1970: 67–69.

[36] Aeschylus *Prometheus Bound* 209–10 and *Eumenides* 1–8; Euripides *Orestes* 164; Strabo C422; Diodorus 16.26; Plutarch *Moralia* 402d; Pausanias 10.5.5–6; Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 1.4.1.3; Menander Rhetor p. 441 Spengel; Aelian *Varia historia* 3.1. Cf. Amandry 1950: 201–14; Fontenrose 1959: esp. 47–49 and 394–97; Clark 1968: 74; Price 1985: 139–42; and, importantly, Sourvinou-Inwood 1987.

[37] Cicero *On Divination* 1.19.38, 1.36.79, 1.50.115, and 2.57.117; Diodorus 16.26; Strabo C419; Valerius Maximus 1.8.10; Lucan *Pharsalia* 5.132 and 165; Pliny *Natural History* 2.208; [Longinus] 13.2; Plutarch *Moralia* 402b, 432c–38d; Pausanias 10.5.7; Dio Cassius 62.14.2; [Aristotle] *On the Cosmos* 395b (first or second century A.D.); Iamblichus *On the Mysteries* 3.11; Justin 24.6.9; St. John Chrysostom *In epistulam I ad Corinthios homilia* 29.1 (*PG* 61, p. 242); Origen *Contra Celsum* 3.25 and 7.3; Scholiast Aristophanes *Wealth* 39.

[38] Old surveys: see Amandry 1950: 214–30; and Fontenrose 1978: 196–203. New survey: Hale 1997; I thank Professor Deborah Boedeker for drawing this to my attention.

chus) closely with necromancy. Night also had prophesied at Delphi before Apollo.[39]

Apollo shared other oracles with Earth. At his oracle at Claros in Asia Minor, his priest prophesied after drinking mantic water from a secret spring in an artificial labyrinthine cave in the basement of the temple (the construction was in place from at least the fourth century B.C.). One's life was shortened by drinking the water. The oracle predicted the death of Germanicus.[40] In Sparta, the altar of Apollo was associated with a sanctuary of the earth, Gasepton. Earth had an oracle of her own at Gaios in Achaea. The oracle was based in a cave and presided over by a chaste priestess, who descended into it for prophecy after drinking bull's blood (regarded as poisonous). Earth was believed once to have had an oracle of her own at Olympia, too.[41]

What was the source of the earth's prophetic power? For Dempsey, it was precisely its association with the prophetic dead: if he is right, then the earth can hardly be looked to, circularly, for an explanation of the power of necromancy. However, the earth's prophetic power was more probably a corollary of its other great power, that of fertility, which itself was a power that looked to the future and constituted the single greatest cause of future-related anxiety for any ancient community. It was, after all, Persephone, daughter of the fertility goddess Demeter, who presided over the ghostly prophecies at the Acheron. The Roman hole, the *mundus*, from which ghosts emerged annually, was also the hole into which a descent was made, three times a year, to divine the future of the harvest. For Rohde and others, the inherent prophetic power of the earth itself explained the prophetic abilities of the heroes buried within it, such as those of Trophonius, Amphiaraus, and Asclepius. Trophonius's name itself signifies fertility (*trephō*, *trophos*, etc.). Amphiaraus seems to promise

[39] Earth's children: Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* 1259–82; the supplement is not controversial; cf. Delcourt 1955: 70–85. Earth at Dodona: Pausanias 10.12. Justin Martyr *Apologies* 1.18. Night at Delphi: Scholiast Pindar *Pythians* argument and Plutarch *Moralia* 566c.

[40] Strabo C642; Pliny *Natural History* 2.232 (shortened life); Tacitus *Annals* 2.54 (Germanicus); and Iamblichus *On the Mysteries* 3.11. See Robert 1954: 14–16; Robert and Robert 1992: 286–87; Parke 1985: 112–70 (esp. 137–39) and 245–46; Parke and McGing 1988: 84–85; and Faraone 1992: 61–64. See Ninck 1921: 47–99, for the prophetic nature of water.

[41] Gasepton: Pausanias 3.12.8. Gaios: Pliny *Natural History* 28.147 and Pausanias 7.25 (according to whom the drinking of the bull's blood was rather a test of chastity); cf. Ganschinietz 1919: 2373; Parke and Wormell 1956, 1: 18; Parke and McGing 1988: 90 and 93; and Larson 1995: 125–27. Themistocles supposedly committed suicide by drinking bull's blood (Plutarch *Themistocles* 31, etc.; cf. Lenardon 1978: 194–200); for bull's blood in a necromantic context, see Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 1.730–38 and 816–26, with chapter 16. Olympia: Pausanias 5.14.10.

both helpful prophecies and fertility when he proclaims, in Aeschylus's *Seven against Thebes*, "I shall enrich this land."[42] The interesting suggestion has recently been made that the Minoans had placated their dead (probably the prime purpose of historical Greek necromancy) in order to dissuade them from interfering with the earth's fertility.[43]

Some explanations of mechanisms of necromantic divination paradoxically serve to deny inherent prophetic abilities to ghosts. This is already the case in the *Odyssey*, where Tiresias's ghost is the only one with the ability to prophesy, and this is because he was a prophet in life. The lucid prophecies given to Silius's Scipio are similarly supplied by the ghost of the Sibyl, also a prophet in life.[44] Another fundamentally antinecromantic belief is found in that strand of the Homeric poems which holds the dead to be witless. Tiresias had a privileged lot in that in death he retained his wits and consciousness, whereas the other ghosts just flitted about.[45] This witlessness is best illustrated in the case of Odysseus's mother Anticleia. She cannot recognize him when she first comes forward, but she then comes to recognize him immediately after her wits are temporarily restored by the drinking of the blood. However, the notion is imperfectly carried through even in the immediate context. Even if Elpenor retained such wits as he had for the special reason that he remains unburied, Ajax sulkily refuses to drink the blood because he already recognizes Odysseus.[46] Nor do the ghosts of the second *Nekuia* have difficulty recognizing each other, even though there is no blood in sight. Sourvinou-Inwood considers the notion that the dead are witless to be alien to the archaic period and to be a remnant of Mycenean eschatology.[47] But per-

[42] Dempsey 1918: 5–6. Mundus: Magdelain 1976: 109. Rohde 1925: 23; cf. also Brelich 1958: 47; Bonnechère and Bonnechère 1989: 293; and Bonnechère 1990: 53–55; and Motte 1973: 243–44; *pace* Schachter 1981–94, 3: 72. Walton (1894: 35) once laid out the case for Asclepius having been an "earth spirit" in origin. Aeschylus *Seven against Thebes* 587.

[43] Goodison (forthcoming), building upon Branigan 1993 and 1998.

[44] Homer *Odyssey* 11.100–137; cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1879–82, 1: 334; Collard 1949: 23; and Johnston 1999: 16. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.497–515.

[45] Homer *Odyssey* 10.493–95; cf. *Iliad* 23.104. For discussion of the Homeric soul, see Bickel 1925; Böhme 1929; Rüsche 1930; Darcus 1979; Bremmer 1983 and 1994; Jahn 1987; further bibliography at Heubeck et al. 1988–92, 2:90. Homer's Tiresias was parodied by Matron in the figure of Cleonicus, to whom Persephone gave the right to chatter after death: see Eustathius on *Odyssey* 10.485, and *Suppl. Hell.* F540.

[46] Homer *Odyssey* 10.553 (Elpenor's witlessness in life), 11.51–83 (Elpenor in death; cf. Powell 1977: 22), 11.141–54 (Anticleia; cf. Agamemnon at 11.390), and 11.541–67 (Ajax). There is no mention of the drinking of blood in the cases of Achilles or Heracles either (467–73 and 601–17), but this could be attributed to elliptical treatment.

[47] Second *Nekuia*: Homer *Odyssey* 24.15–23, etc. Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 76–94; cf. Rohde 1925: 38; Vermeule 1979: 9; Bremmer 1983: 84; and Johnston 1999: 8, etc.

haps ghosts could after all be at once knowledgeable and witless. Binding curses can paradoxically require the ghosts they exploit to be simultaneously vigorous to achieve the binding mechanistically and ineffectual to achieve it sympathetically, as in the case of a curse addressed to the ghost Pasianax (= "Ruler of all"?) from second- or first-century B.C. Megara: "Whenever you, o Pasianax, read these words—but neither will you ever, o Pasianax, read these words, nor will Neophanes ever bring a case against Agasibolus. But just as you, o Pasianax, lie here ineffectually, so may Neophanes also become ineffectual and nothing."[48] Also arguably antinecromantic in implication is the fact that Lucan's Erictho must cast a spell on her reanimated corpse to give it the knowledge to answer the questions put to it.[49]

The tradition of Lethe, "Forgetting," is a phenomenon that, like the selective witlessness of Homer's ghosts, sits awkwardly with a belief in the possibility of necromancy. Lethe was either a plain of the underworld over which souls passed or a spring from which they drank, so casting off all memory of mortal life. Thus it is suggested in Lucian's *Kataplous* that the tyrant Megapenthes be punished in the underworld by being, exceptionally, forbidden to drink from Lethe, so that he may be tortured by the recollection of his lost earthly luxuries. And in his *Dialogues of the Dead*, Diogenes encourages Alexander to overcome his grief at the fraudulence of Aristotle's philosophy by drinking from Lethe.[50] It was apparently the goal of the Orphic gold leaves to prevent their bearers, again exceptionally, from drinking from Lethe in the underworld, and to encourage them to drink rather from Mnemosyne, "Memory," so that they could be fully aware of the cycle of reincarnation in which they were involved and so work it to their advantage. But if the dead could not remember their past mortal lives, how could they make the revelations, so basic to necromancy, of the things they had experienced in life? Or how could ghosts recognize their loved ones so as to give them spontaneous prophecies? It could be that many of the ghosts exploited in necromancy had for some reason not drunk yet from Lethe. The untimely dead, the dead by violence, and the unburied, the categories of ghost much favored for magical exploitation in general, would presumably not yet have drunk from it. But for Lucan at least, Lethe did constitute a

[48] Audollent 1904: no. 43 = Gager 1992: no. 43; cf. Bravo 1987: 199–200; Jordan 1999: 118; and, for a new edition of the text and for the interpretation of the name, Voutiras 1998: 64–66 and 1999.

[49] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.775–76.

[50] For Lethe as a plain, see Aristophanes *Frogs* 196; Plato *Republic* 621a, etc.; cf. Clark 1979: 179–80. Megapenthes: Lucian *Kataplous* 28. For Silius Italicus, however, it was only the happy ghosts of the Elysian fields that were allowed to drink from Lethe: *Punica* 13.552–55. Diogenes: Lucian *Dialogues of the Dead* 13.

problem to be negotiated: when his ghost of Julia gives spontaneous necromancy to Pompey, she explains that her love for him is so strong that it has survived the drinking of Lethe. Others simply rode roughshod over the difficulty: Apuleius's Thelyphron complains about being reanimated after he has already drunk from Lethe, but nonetheless proceeds to reveal experiences from his life and his death pre-Lethe. When the ghost of Cynthia gives a spontaneous necromancy to Propertius, he notes that Lethe had worn away her lips. Even so, she goes on to reveal a full recall of their life together and even accuses Propertius of having forgotten it: an artful paradox, no doubt. When Statius refers to necromancy under the sobriquet of "the rites of Lethe," he may also be offering us a deliberate paradox; if the term "Lethe" merely serves as a metonymy for "the underworld," it is ineptly chosen.[51]

The issues discussed in this chapter were treated by Augustine at the end of antiquity. His words deserve quoting at length as a neat rearticulation from a Christian perspective of pagan thinking on the wisdom of the dead:

> *How the dead know what goes on here.* One must, similarly, concede that the dead do not in fact know what goes on here, at least, not as it unfolds, but that they do learn of it subsequently from the people who come to them from here by dying. Nor indeed do the people that are allowed to remember things from here tell them everything, but just those things they are permitted to, and the things the people they are informing ought to hear. The dead can also learn what He to whom all things are subject judges that each individual one of them ought to hear, from the Angels that attend what goes on here. For if there were not Angels that could visit the realms of both the living and the dead, the Lord Jesus would not have said, "But it came to pass that that poor man died and was carried off by Angels into the bosom of Abraham [Luke 16.22]." Accordingly, the agents that took away the person God wanted from here to there had the ability to be here at one point and there at another. The spirits of the dead can also learn some of the things that go on here by the revelation of the Holy Spirit—the things they need to know, and those that need to know them, and not just things that have happened in the past or are happening in the present, but even things that will happen in the future. Similarly the Prophets alone, and not all men, used to know things whilst they were alive here, and not even they knew everything, but just the things that the providence of God judged should be revealed to them. Divine scripture also testifies that some of the

[51] Orphic leaves: Bernand 1991: 381–96, and cf. chapters 8 and 11. Lucan *Pharsalia* 3.28–29. Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.29. Propertius 4.7, esp. 10 and 15–20. Statius *Thebaid* 4.14.

dead are sent among the living, just as, going the other way, Paul was snatched up into paradise from the realm of the living [2 Corinthians 12.2]. For the dead prophet Samuel predicted the future to King Saul whilst he yet lived [1 Kings 28.7.9].

—Augustine *De cura pro mortuis gerenda* 15 (*PL* 40.602)[52]

[52] This fascinating work discusses much of interest for ancient thinking about ghosts, including manifestations of the dead seeking burial (10), near-death experiences (14), the witch of En-dor (the discussion in 15 continues), and the intervention of martyrs in the realm of the living (16).

CHAPTER 16

BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH

WHEN necromancy takes place, the living and the dead, individuals from different realms and of different conditions, meet and communicate. This confrontation is often accordingly conceived of as taking place equidistantly between life and death, whether these are viewed as spatial realms or as conditions.

In spatial terms, surface world and "underworld" merge in necromancy, with the result that one can speak with equal validity of the living descending into the underworld and the dead rising up out of it to meet the living. Evidently, the meeting takes place in some sort of no-man's land between the two realms. This ambivalence is already present in and can be doubly illustrated from the *Odyssey*.[1] First, Achilles and Circe refer to Odysseus as going down to Hades in performing his necromancy, but the ghosts are said to rise up to meet him.[2] Second, the meeting takes place in a space between two boundary rivers. Odysseus has crossed Ocean, and the dead, in some way, are apparently crossing Acheron, be it horizontally or vertically, to meet him.[3] The ambivalent space in which necromancy takes place is knowingly characterized by Lucan:

> For although the Thessalian witch does violence to fates, it is doubtful whether she looks upon Stygian shades because she has drawn them to her or because she has descended to them.
>
> —Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.651–53

Similarly, the ancients could be vague as to whether the consultation of a ghost in a *nekuomanteion* constituted an act of descent for the consulter

[1] Clark (1979) is blind to this sort of consideration. For him, Homer has "conflated" a *nekuomanteia* (fem. sing., here in the sense of "evocation") with a *katabasis* (descent) in *Odyssey* 11 (54, 62, and 74–75, building on Lobeck 1829: 316); Pausanias has confused *katabasis* with a *nekuomanteion* consultation in sending Orpheus down at the Acheron (121), and *nekuomanteia* (n. pl., oracles of the dead) were for evocation as opposed to descent (61).

[2] Homer *Odyssey* 11.37 (ghosts rise to Odysseus), 11.475, and 12.21 (Odysseus goes down to Hades, cf. 10.491 and 11.635). Indeed, at 11.568–600, where Odysseus views the traditional grotesques of the underworld, he gives the implicit but strong impression that he is wandering around within Hades, even though by 627 it appears again that he has not moved at all; cf. Clark 1979: 76–77 and, importantly, Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 85.

[3] Odysseus crosses Ocean: Homer *Odyssey* 11.13–22; cf. Dimock 1989: 133–36. Dead cross Acheron: Eitrem 1928: 5 and Bernstein 1993: 25–26. Cf. the river beyond which the buried dead live at *Iliad* 23.73.

or an act of ascent for the ghosts. In the case of the Heracleia *nekuomanteion*, Plutarch says that Pausanias called Cleonice up (*anakaloumenos*) there. But Pomponius Mela tells that the cave went down all the way to the ghosts. The ghost of Melissa manifested itself (*epiphaneisa*) at the Acheron *nekuomanteion*, but Orpheus supposedly performed his famous descent there.[4]

Indeed, the underworld is often best viewed as having what we might nowadays call a "dimensional" rather than a "physical" relationship with the surface world. The *prima facie* supposition that the underworld is laid out beneath the surface world and enjoys a parallel and static relationship with it in its various parts, as if they were two stories of a house, is often shown to be untenable. Distance traveled in the underworld does not map onto distance traveled on the surface. Thus Lucian's Menippus descends into the underworld from Babylon, and after a trip through the underworld on foot lasting only a day, conveniently emerges from it into Greece through Trophonius's oracle at Lebadeia. Nor was a given place in the underworld always correspondingly beneath a given place in the surface world. Philostratus explains that those who descended into Trophonius's hole were sent up again by it onto the surface at different points, some nearby, others far away. Although most emerged at least within the borders of Boeotia, some emerged beyond Locri and Phocis. Apollonius of Tyana emerged with his companions at Aulis. There is no indication that place of and delay in emergence depended upon how well consulters were able to find their way through a maze of subterranean tunnels of many exits. It is implied rather that the intelligent hole had an unstable relationship with the surface. It was a mark of Apollonius's own wisdom that he had correctly predicted the place of his emergence, and this was surely not simply due to good map-reading. He spent the longest time of any consulter down the hole, seven days, a mark of Trophonius's favor toward him. That it was the intelligent hole itself, or the intelligent Trophonius presiding over it, that "sent" consulters to the surface in different places is indicated by the fact that the hole had the power to suck people into it automatically. Plutarch tells of the competition between the bad Strato and the good Callisthenes for the hand of Aristocleia at the site of the oracle, which left the girl herself dead. Callisthenes immediately disappeared, and we are probably to assume that he had been magically sucked into Trophonius's hole to be with his bride in the underworld. Pausanias tells of a wicked bodyguard of Demetrius, who went down into the hole to steal treasure, and whose dead body consequently "appeared" on the surface in another place.[5]

[4] Plutarch *Cimon* 6. Pomponius Mela 1.113. Melissa: Herodotus 5.92. Orpheus: Pausanias 9.30.6.

[5] Lucian *Menippus* 9 and 22. Apollonius: Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 8.19. Plutarch *Moralia* 771e–772c. Pausanias 9.39.

Furthermore, a passage leading out of the underworld could open onto the surface at many different points simultaneously. How else could Heracles have dragged up Cerberus at Heracleia, Tainaron, Acheron, Hierapolis, and perhaps also Avernus? When the scholiast to Dionysius Periegetes tells us that Heracles went down at Tainaron to fetch Cerberus and brought him up at Heracleia, it is not obvious that Heracles purposefully used a different exit.[6] And similarly, but perhaps with less violence to logic, the underworld waters of the Acheron and the Acherusian lake could manifest themselves on the surface at many different points simultaneously: in Thesprotia, of course, but also at Heracleia, at Avernus, and perhaps at any of the *aornos* lakes. That underworld features were capable of such bilocation, indeed multilocation, should not surprise us: after all, this was within the abilities of those devotees of the underworld, the Greek "shamans." It is not good enough to justify Heracles' multiple exits by appealing to the claims of competing local traditions. Though this may or may not have been a contributory factor in the initial proliferation of such exits, it does not begin to explain how Pausanias, for example, can be aware of so many of them, record them all separately, and yet not perceive or advertise any unacceptable contradiction between the claims made for them.

The Heracleia and Tainaron *nekuomanteia*, Trophonius's cave, and the crypts of the "shamans" were finite holes. How did the ancients persuade themselves that one could access the underworld through them? Pausanias for one was disconcerted by the fact that no road led underground from the Tainaron cave.[7] "Physical" explanations could perhaps be found: the waters that flooded the Heracleia cave could have been imagined to be infinitely deep, or to derive from infinitely deep springs. The narrows of other caves through which a man could neither fit nor see may likewise have afforded passage to slight ghosts from enormous depths. But it should already be apparent that such explanations were unnecessary. These holes did not *lead to* the underworld: they *were* the underworld, and they were all simultaneously the same underworld.

. . . . .

For the living to be able to communicate with the dead, they had to enter into a common condition with them. Necromancers perhaps made an effort to mirror in their own appearance the figure of the ghost they called up opposite themselves. We have seen that they appear to have favored black dress, and that blackness was the most typical color of ghosts. And we have seen that they addressed the ghosts in the mixture of high-

[6] Scholiast Dionysius Periegetes 791.
[7] Pausanias 3.25.

pitched squeaking and low droning that characterized the ghosts' own language (chapters 11 and 14). Perhaps it was from the figure itself of the necromancer that ancients derived their most "vivid" experience of ghosts.

But the construction of a common condition with the ghosts went further than this. The living had to die a little, and the dead had to come to life a little. Odysseus restores a little life to the ghosts he consults by giving them blood to drink. But he himself correspondingly loses a little of his own life. Circe tells him, on his return, that he has died and will therefore die twice.[8] Odysseus tells us that a "pale fear" had seized him as the ghosts came up to drink the sheep's blood. In other words, Odysseus's own blood drained from his flesh. It is almost as if his blood level, and life level, are brought into a sort of hydraulic equilibrium with that of the ghosts, so that communication can take place.[9] Homer is also conscious of a sort of symmetry across the trench between necromancer and ghost. Odysseus summarizes his conversation with Elpenor: "So we sat exchanging sad words with each other, I on the one side holding my sword out over the blood, while from the other side the ghost of my companion said much." In Josephus's account of the witch of En-dor, Saul falls on the ground "like a corpse" after his encounter with the ghost of Samuel.[10]

Similar ideas about blood in necromancy underpin some Latin texts. When Plautus's Theopropides is terrified by an approaching ghost, he exclaims, "I don't have a drop of blood: the dead are summoning me to Acheron alive." Horace's Canidia and Sagana are pallid as they call up ghosts on the Esquiline. Seneca's Creon describes his experience of the necromancy performed by Tiresias by telling that "my blood stopped frozen in my veins and congealed" and "our spirits (*animus*) abandoned us," and in mere reaction to this narrative, Oedipus remarks that "an icy trembling has invaded my bones and limbs." Statius works with a contrasting model of blood-action, yet one that again serves to bring ghost and consulter into a harmonious state. When his ghost of Laius drinks the blood, his cheeks are given color, which in itself fits well enough into the "hydraulic" tradition. But the necromancer Tiresias mirrors him: his white hair trembles and rises, blood rushes into his face, and he no longer needs the support of his staff or his daughter. Tiresias himself is portrayed

[8] Homer *Odyssey* 11.146–49, etc. (blood) and 12.21–22 (died). Heubeck et al. (1988–92 at 10.496–99) regard Odysseus's reaction to the news that he must visit Hades as akin to the reaction to a death; cf. also Bernstein 1993: 26.

[9] Homer *Odyssey* 11.43; cf. 633. Consulters emerged from their consultations with Trophonius pale (*ōchros*) and sullen: Scholiast (*Anonymna recentiora*) Aristophanes *Clouds* 508b.

[10] Homer *Odyssey* 11.81–83. Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* 6.337.

as originally ghostlike and as acquiring blood, and with it a vigor of life. Valerius Flaccus works with yet another model. His Aeson and Alcimede perform a necromancy of Cretheus with the blood of an unspecified animal. The ghost of Cretheus advises them to commit suicide, which they then do by in turn drinking blood themselves—the blood of a bull poisoned for them by a Fury. Here blood gives life to the ghost while bringing death to the consulter.[11]

A "ghostly" pair face each other also in Aristophanes' parodic necromancy in the *Birds*, in which Socrates as *psuchagōgos* calls up Chaerephon "the bat."[12] The success of the joke in bringing Chaerephon up as a ghost before Socrates depends not only on the notion that he was ghostlike, but also on the notion that he was of a kind with Socrates (chapters 7 and 8). We are to imagine a scene in which both "Pythagorean" men, half-dead, pale, dirty (and therefore dark?), unkempt and unshod, in short, ghostly, faced each other. Pythagoreans and ghosts are identified also, perhaps, in Lucian's *Philopseudes*. The Pythagorean Arignotus confronts and lays the ghost that has been haunting the house of Eubatides. Arignotus and the ghost are both described as long-haired (*komētēs*, exactly the same term used in both cases). The ghost is also said to be squalid (*auchmēros*) and blacker than the dark, the typical Pythagorean attributes. It seems that Lucian invites us to perceive a similarity between Arignotus and the ghost he lays.[13] As we saw, Cicero jokingly alluded to Appius Claudius's necromantic practices by comparing the man himself to a ghost (chapter 10).

The ghosts may sometimes have been reflections of their necromancers in a more literal way. As we have seen, in one of the Cumaean Painter's necromancy scenes, catoptromancy seems to be portrayed (fig. 10). The ghost stands opposite the woman and behind the mirror into which she gazes, as if the painter wishes to indicate that the ghost is the image seen in the mirror, an image that must, of course, have been based on, or at any rate superimposed on, the necromancer's own. A curious "reflection" is contrived on the Apulian Tiresias vase (fig. 12). Here the head of Tiresias, upturned, upward-facing, and elongated with its hoary beard, mirrors the head of the jugulated sheep beside which it rises. If this is not merely a coincidence, and not merely a symmetry contrived for its own aesthetic sake, it may hint that the image of the ghost's face could be

[11] Plautus *Mostellaria* 508–9. Horace *Satires* 1.8.25–26. Seneca *Oedipus* 585, 595, and 659. Statius *Thebaid* 4.579–87 (Tiresias) and 625 (Laius). Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 1.730–38 and 816–26.

[12] Aristophanes *Birds* 1553–64.

[13] Lucian *Philopseudes* 29. Felton (1999: 71) notes that Pliny's description of the ghost in his parallel tale at *Letters* 7.27 is reminiscent of his description of the philosopher Euphrates at 1.10.

found in the reflection of the sheep's head as it was hung over the pit to allow the blood from its severed neck to drain into it. When the ghost of Chaerephon appears to Socrates in his lakeside necromancy, are we to think that Socrates merely sees his own reflection in the water? In the brief and obscure papyrus recipe for a divination from a boy-medium, a dark-colored boy is to materialize before him: blackness suggests a ghost, and the ghost is perhaps a boy because untimely dead, but even so, the manifestation mirrors the medium.[14]

The usual mode of experiencing ghosts in practical necromancies was probably through sleeping and dreaming. As we have seen, for the ancients sleep was a state strongly akin to death, and it was held that during sleep, the soul separated itself a little from the body in a kind of temporary death. In this way, too, the necromancer drew near the condition of the dead in consulting them (chapters 6 and 15).

But contact with ghosts was in any case "deadening" in itself. This notion underpinned the practice of entrusting binding-curses to them.[15] There was always a danger in meeting ghosts that they would take one down to the underworld with them for good, even if they had no cause for vengeance against one. Apuleius's miller was killed by an ostensibly harmless ghost, and Phlegon's Machates was driven to suicide shortly after making a girlfriend of the ghost of Philinnion. In Plautus's *Mostellaria*, Theopropides is terrified that by knocking on the door of his haunted house he has disturbed a ghost that will summon him down to the Acheron "alive." It emerges, indirectly, that it will do this by calling his name. This would perhaps constitute a complementary reversal of the technique for summoning ghosts. The living brought ghosts into cenotaphs by calling their name three times (chapter 7), and Apuleius's Thessalian witches attempted to raise the corpse of Thelyphron by calling his name. The ghost could probably drag one down also by beckoning with a finger. This is the implication of the misdirection in Pliny's tale of Athenodorus's house-exorcism, where the ghost turns out only to want to show the philosopher where its body lies.[16] As for actual accounts of necromancy, Lucan's reanimated corpse urges Sextus and his men "hasten to death." The host of the dead in Valerius Flaccus's *Argonautica* summon (*ciet*) Aeson and Alcimede to their suicide after their consultation of the ghost

[14] Cumaean Painter: Kerrigan 1980: 25. Apulian vase: see fig. 12; for the upturned face, see chapter 12. Dark-colored boy: *PGM* VII.348–58.

[15] Jameson et al. 1993: 129; cf. Parker 1983: 198. *PGM* IV. 449–56, an erotic curse, begins by begging off the anger of the dead man exploited from the person of the curser.

[16] Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.30 (Thelyphron) and 9.29–30 (miller). Phlegon of Tralles *Marvels* 1. Plautus *Mostellaria* 451–531; cf. Collart 1970: ad loc. Pliny *Letters* 7.27. Finkel (1983–84) notes that death normally follows from personal contact with a ghost in Akkadian sources.

of Cretheus. The ghost of Cleonice effectively kills Pausanias by sending him to Sparta (chapter 3). Heliodorus's reanimated corpse effectively drives its consulting mother to her death on the spot by its revelations, as we have seen. Homer's Odysseus visualizes the threat of death implicit in his contact with the ghosts in terms of a gorgon-head that Persephone might send up among them.[17] We have seen that it was common for ghosts to give their consulters a prophecy of the imminence of their death (chapter 15). It seems to have been felt that the performance of necromancy could in effect, and somewhat paradoxically, shorten one's own life; the case of Caracalla and Macrinus is particularly apposite. For these reasons, performers of necromancy were regarded as bold or desperate, and it was normal to make one's consultation in a state of terror.[18]

The threat of death that emanated from contact with ghosts perhaps even extended to the living about whom one made one's inquiry. Again, it is worth remembering that deadening binding-curses against one's enemies could be achieved simply by entrusting their names to ghosts. Did one therefore risk cursing or killing anyone whose name was mentioned to a ghost in necromancy, whatever one's attitude toward them? This could provide one explanation as to why the Roman emperors were particularly anxious that others should not use necromancy to ask about their death. They may have considered such inquiries as tantamount to cursing. The emperors' vast wealth and unnumbered legions were powerless to defend them against this sort of attack. One is reminded of the case of the great and good of the town council of Tuder, brought low by a curse tablet deposited in a tomb by a humble slave.[19] Such considerations perhaps put further flesh on the bones of Plato's assimilation of necromantic professionals to binding-curse professionals (chapter 7).

The literary tradition identifies necromancers with the dead they consulted in another interesting way. The same figures are often shown both consulting and being consulted in necromancy. In the *Odyssey*, Tiresias is consulted as a ghost, as perhaps happened at his obscure oracle at Orchomenos; in Seneca and Statius, he is a necromancer consulting ghosts.[20]

[17] Lucan *Pharsalia* 807. Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 1.750–51. Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.15. Homer *Odyssey* 11.633–35.

[18] Caracalla: Herodian 4.12–14 and Dio Cassius 79.4–7. Boldness of necromancers: Homer *Odyssey* 12.21 (*schetliosi*); John Chrysostom *In Matthaeum*, *PG* 57, 403.45. Despair: e.g., the cases of Pausanias (chapter 3) and Nero (chapter 10). Terror: Homer *Odyssey* 11.633–35; Aeschylus *Persians* 696; Statius *Thebaid* 4.489–90; and cf. Trophonius (chapter 6).

[19] *CIL* 11.2.4639. For the notion that an entire city can be brought low by magical activity, presumably of a sole individual, cf. Meiggs and Lewis 1969: no. 30 (Teos); Graf 1992 (voodoo dolls at Sardis); and *SEG* 14.615 (curse against the gates of Rome).

[20] Homer *Odyssey* 10.488–95 and 11.90–151; Seneca *Oedipus* 530–660; and Statius *Thebaid* 4.406–645. Orchomenos oracle: Plutarch *Moralia* 434c; for Stengel (1920: 77), this was indeed a "Totenorakel" (oracle of the dead); cf. Collard 1949: 100; for other

The details of Tiresias's portrayal in the *Odyssey* already approximate his role there to that of a living professional necromancer guiding a client Odysseus through his necromancy and suggest that a tradition in which he did just that already existed. First, Tiresias is in any case a prophet.[21] Second, Tiresias is set apart from the other shades by his retention of wit, as if he were alive. Third, it was usual, in subsequent literature at any rate, for the amateur consulter to have his professional guide by his side as he performed the necromancy. Thus Mithrobarzanes guided Menippus, the Sibyl guided Aeneas, and Erictho guided Sextus Pompey.[22] Although Odysseus has been given professional advice by Circe, she is not (physically at any rate) by his side as he consults, but Tiresias is, in part, and like Circe, he advises Odysseus on how to manage the ghosts with his sword before the blood. Fourth, his golden staff may resemble a psychagogic wand.[23] Tiresias's staff takes on a magic role also in the myth in which he strikes copulating snakes with it and is transformed first into a woman and then back again into a man. It may be significant that we find sorcerers blasting snakes in association with the raising of the dead in two other cases: Polyidus's raising of Glaucus and Lucian's Chaldaean's raising of Midas. One expected to see snakes, the chthonic creatures *par excellence*, when one entered the underworld. Another early trace of the necromancer-Tiresias tradition is perhaps to be found in Sophocles' *Oedipus*, where the king abuses Tiresias as a prophet, mage, and beggar-priest (*mantis*, *magos*, *agyrtēs*).[24]

Tiresias's necromantic role is again tellingly ambivalent in a difficult passage of Ps.-Lycophron's *Alexandra*. Cassandra prophesies that Odysseus will go to the underworld and seek out the *nekromantis* Tiresias. The *Suda* defines the *u*-variant of this word, *nekuomantis*, as "interrogator of

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sacred Boeotian sites associated with Tiresias, Thebes, Tilphossa, and Haliarta, see Pausanias 7.3, 9.16, 18, and 33, and Diodorus 4.67; cf. also Spyropoulos 1973: 381–85; Schachter 1981–94, 3: 37–39; and Bonnechère 1990: 59.

[21] Tradition of a living Tiresias: Clark 1979: 46 and 56, building on Rohde 1925: 35. Hardie (1969: 15 and 1977: 280) believes that Homer has contaminated a necromantic sequence with a visit to Tiresias as a living prophet; for literary sources for Tiresias, see Ugolini 1995. Tiresias a prophet in life: Homer *Odyssey* 10.492–95.

[22] Heracles was perhaps guided similarly through the underworld by Hermes in a lost epic account thought to be reflected at Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 2.5.12; cf. Norden 1916: 43–44 and 154; and Lloyd-Jones 1967: 225–26.

[23] Homer *Odyssey* 11.91 (staff; see chapter 11; for the prominence of Tiresias's staff in his iconography, see Brisson 1976: 132–34), and 95–96, and 146–49; cf. 10.535–40 (necromantic advice; cf. Lloyd-Jones 1967: 224–25).

[24] Ovid *Metamorphoses* 3.316–39 and other sources collected at Brisson 1976: 135–42. Polyidus: Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 3.3.1, etc. Lucian *Philopseudes* 11; we find snake-blasting associated with a ghostly manifestation also in the ps.-Virgilian *Culex*, 186–383. Snakes in the underworld: Aristophanes *Frogs* 278–79; cf. Lloyd-Jones 1967: 219. Sophocles *Oedipus Tyrannus* 297 and 388–90; cf. chapter 7.

the dead," that is, "necromancer." This is indeed the meaning *nekromantis* would most naturally carry of itself, and the lexicon and Ciani accordingly define it so here. So it seems that Tiresias is attributed with the performance of necromancy in his former life. But in context it is very difficult to exclude the connotation "dead man who prophesies," particularly since we are shortly afterward told that Odysseus will in turn give prophecies as a *mantin . . . nekron*, "dead-man prophet." Statius, too, gives us Tiresias on both sides of the necromantic divide in his *Thebaid*. Prior to the living Tiresias's evocation of Laius, this same ghost, in a fashion we have noted to be somewhat contrived, had taken on Tiresias's identity in order to deliver a spontaneous necromancy to Eteocles.[25]

In the lines of Ps.-Lycophron just referred to, Odysseus similarly passes from being a living consulter of the dead to being a consulted corpse. These allusive verses, when disentangled with the help of the scholiast, reveal that Odysseus prophesied as a dead man both in Trampya, appropriately in Epirus, and among the Eurytians in Aetolia. They may also indicate that the Trampyan Odysseus prophesied Polyperchon's murder of Alexander the Great's son Heracles.[26] It is not known whether Odysseus also prophesied from his heroon in Sparta.[27]

Homer himself, because he was able to narrate Odysseus's journey to the underworld, came to be regarded as an authority on necromancy. Julius Africanus was even to credit him with knowledge of Greco-Egyptian-style necromantic spells, whereas Apuleius regarded him as a master of all forms of magic, necromancy included.[28] As we have seen, in the Greek magical papyri, Homer's verses could be used to bring about necromancy when written on an iron lamella and attached to a dead body or skull. Such expertise provided the key to his detailed knowledge of the Trojan War: he had called up the ghost of Odysseus in Ithaca by *psuchagōgia*, and the ghost had recounted all to him, on condition that he keep

[25] [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 682 (*nekromantis*) and 799 (*mantin . . .*). *Suda* s.v. *nekuomantis*. LSJ and Ciani 1975 s.v. *nekromantis*; cf. Collard 1949: 11–12. Statius *Thebaid* 2.95–127.

[26] [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 799–804, with scholiast, including Nicander *Aitolika* F8 Gow and Scholfield. Nilsson (1967–74, 1: 170) classifies the Eurytian oracle as a Totenorakel. Cf. Schwartz 1924: 140–43. In addition to the ghosts he consults in the *Odyssey*, there may have been a tradition that Odysseus went to the underworld to consult the ghost of his father Laertes: Hyginus *Fabulae* 251, MS F, *propter patrem*, but Rose's emendation to *propter patriam* is plausible.

[27] Plutarch *Moralia* 302cd; cf. Holzinger 1895 on [Lycophron] *Alexandra* 799.

[28] Julius Africanus *Kestoi* 18 = *PGM* XXIII; Apuleius *Apology* 31. The Homer oracle among the Greek magical papyri, *PGM* VII. 1–148, does not appear to be significantly necromantic: *Odyssey* 11 is represented by six lines (16: 358, 48: 366, 56: 80, 110: 224, 133: 43, 187: 278) out of the 216 drawn from all twenty-four books of Homer. Homeric verses are exploited for a wide variety of functions in the *PGM* handbooks.

silent about his treatment of Palamedes. So it was quite appropriate that Homer's ghost should be consulted in turn. Pythagoras descended to Hades and conversed with him (and Hesiod, too). Apion of Alexandria told Pliny that he had called up Homer's ghost with the herb *cynocephalia*, "dog-head," or *osiritis*, "Osiris-herb" (cf. chapter 13), to ask him about his parents and his fatherland. Silius Italicus has him called up before Scipio. In the fifth century A.D. Aeneas of Gaza was still speaking of Egyptians and Chaldaeans calling up Homer's ghost with cockerels. For the Middle Ages, it was of course rather Virgil's *Aeneid* that constituted the authoritative text for necromancy, and so it was he who then became the archetypal necromancer-figure and earned his place as underworld guide in Dante's *Inferno*.[29]

Some further examples of the phenomenon may be mentioned more briefly. After Orpheus attempted to call up the ghost of Eurydice, he not only gave oracles as a dead man through his decapitated head, but he could also be called up as a ghost himself: Aeneas of Gaza's Egyptians and Chaldaeans called him up alongside the ghost of Homer (chapters 8 and 13). The great Persian mage and master necromancer Ostanes was himself supposedly evocated by Democritus (chapter 9). Between the epics of Virgil and Silius Italicus, the Cumaean Sibyl is shown to make a similar transition to Tiresias's: the Sibyl that is Aeneas's necromantic guide, Deiphobe, becomes the dead Sibyl of exceptional prophetic powers consulted by Silius's Scipio. As we saw, the tradition of the Sibyl's dried-up longevity perhaps indicates that she was regarded as having a special mediating role at the Avernus *nekuomanteion*. The regent Pausanias is portrayed as an evocator becoming evocated in the "diptych" of traditions relating to his death. He was driven to call up the restless ghost of Cleonice at Heracleia or Phigalia, and perhaps, too, that of the man of Argilos at Tainaron, and was brought to his death by them. His own restless ghost was then in turn evocated by imported *psuchagōgoi*. Nero, who was so devoted to necromancy in life, made a spontaneous prophecy after his death to his biographer Fannius.[30]

People or animals that are in the process of dying bridge the gap between

[29] Lamella: *PGM* IV. 2145–2240. Homer calls up Odysseus: Philostratus *Heroicus* pp. 194–95 Kayser and Tzetzes *Exeg. in Iliadem* p.148, 7. Pythagoras: Hieronymus of Rhodes F42 Wehrli; cf. Burkert 1972: 155. Apion: Pliny *Natural History* 30.18; Bouché-Leclerq 1879–82, 1: 336; and Collard 1949: 111. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.778–97. Aeneas of Gaza *Theophrastus* pp. 18–19 Colonna. Virgil in the Middle Ages: cf., more generally, Spargo 1934: esp. 62; cf. Tupet 1976: 281.

[30] Virgil *Aeneid* 6 passim, name at 35. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.383–895. Cleonice: Plutarch *Moralia* 555c, and *Cimon* 6; Pausanias 3.17; and Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8. Argilos: Thucydides 1.128–34; Diodorus 11.45; Nepos 4.4–5; Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8; see chapter 3. Pausanias-*psuchagōgoi*: Plutarch *Moralia* 560e–f and Scholiast Euripides *Alcestis* 1128. Nero: Pliny *Letters* 5.5; cf. chapter 10 and Felton 1999: 74.

life and death in themselves, and so this condition is valued for necromantic purposes. As the corpse being exploited by Lucan's Erictho is reanimated for necromancy, it paradoxically passes backward into this state of "dying." The sacrificial victim can also significantly bridge the gap between life and death. The blood that is given to the ghosts in Silius's necromancy flows from the necks of sheep that are still breathing. When, as occasionally, entrails are laid on altars in necromancy, they explicitly bridge the gap: "The living animal trembles in the deadly fire"; "[Manto] makes offerings of the half-dead tissues and the still-breathing entrails."[31]

The notion that a dying man had prophetic abilities was already well established in Homer, where the dying Patroclus prophesies death to his killer Hector at the hands of Achilles, and the dying Hector in turn prophesies death to Achilles at the hands of Paris.[32] Plato, doubtless under the influence of Pythagoras, used the idea to explain the beauty of the song of the dying swan. Xenophon's dying Socrates explicitly refers to the Homeric phenomenon and himself prophesies the moral decline of the son of Anytus. Diodorus, with allusion to Homer and also to Pythagorean beliefs, reports that Alexander foresaw the wars of his successors on his deathbed and that Antipater foresaw the atrocities of Olympias on his. Posidonius told of a Rhodian who, on the point of death, correctly prophesied the order of death of six contemporaries. We have already considered the distinctive case of the prophecies of the dying Gabienus to Sextus Pompey (chapter 13). The iron lamella inscribed with three Homeric verses could also be attached to someone on the point of death, so that one could learn whatever one asked.[33]

A subcategory of the dying man's prophecy was the prophecy of those who died briefly before returning to life in what we would today call "near-death experiences." Such people were known as *deuteropotmoi*, "those who die twice," or *husteropotmoi*, "those whose death is postponed." Plato tells how the Phrygian Er was killed in battle and lay dead for twelve days before returning to life. In the meantime, his detached soul was given a tour of the cosmos and watched the judgment of souls, whereupon he returned to life with exceptional wisdom.[34] Many experi-

[31] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.758–59. Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.404–7. Entrails: Seneca *Oedipus* 558 and Statius *Thebaid* 4.466–67; cf. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.554–56; see chapter 13.

[32] Homer *Iliad* 16.851–59 and 22.356–60; cf. Janko 1992: 420 and Bremmer 1994: 99. For this notion more generally, see Kalitsounakis 1953–54; and Donnadieu and Vilatte 1996.

[33] Plato *Phaedo* 84e, with Olympiodorus ad loc., p. 214 Westerinck; so, too, Aristotle *History of Animals* 615b and Aelian *Varia historia* 1.14; cf. Vidal-Naquet 1993. Xenophon *Apology* 29–30; cf. Plato *Apology* 38c, with Most 1993. Diodorus 18.1 and 19.11. Posidonius: Cicero *On Divination* 1.30. Lamella: *PGM* IV. 2145–2240.

[34] *Deuteropotmoi*, etc.: for the terms, see Plutarch *Moralia* 265a and Hesychius s.vv.; cf. Garland 1985: 100–101. Plato *Republic* 614b–21a.

ences of this sort are recounted.[35] Often the *deuteropotmoi* were able to bring back prophecies of the type so common in necromancy, those of death. We have mentioned the prophecies of Posidonius's Rhodian. Aristotle told the tale of a Greek king whose soul was caught between life and death for several days, while he experienced souls and forms. On his recovery, he correctly predicted the life-spans of his friends. Varro told how his relative Corfidius died and came to life again. He brought back a message from his brother, who had died, permanently, shortly after him, with instructions for his burial, the request that he take care of his daughter, and guidance as to where to find his buried gold. In Lucian's *Philopseudes*, Hermes by mistake escorts the fever-afflicted Cleodemus down to Hades instead of his neighbor, Demylus the smith. Hades sends him back, and Cleodemus is accordingly able to predict upon his revival the imminent death of Demylus.[36]

Sometimes a dying man's final, future-related utterances could cross the line from prophecy to a curse, which his embittered ghost would enact. Such is the case with some of the prophecies of Sophocles's dying Oedipus, Virgil's dying Dido, and the boy starved to death by Horace's Canidia and friends.[37] This phenomenon again underscores the potential danger for those whose deaths ghosts are asked to predict.

A dying man could also, perhaps with greater logic, be used to send a message in the opposite direction, from the living to underworld gods. Thus, Herodotus tells, the Getae sent messages to Zalmoxis by hurling a messenger onto the points of spears, and then uttering the message to him as he died impaled. As we have seen, Lucan's Erictho sends messages down to the underworld by speaking into the mouths of corpses.[38]

The notion of the existence of an intermediate status between life and death manifested itself in many forms and appears to have been central to the understanding of the mechanisms of necromancy in antiquity.

[35] Proclus *Commentary on Plato's Republic* 16.113–16 (on 614b4–7) compares the out-of-body experiences of the shamans Aristeas, Hermodorus (i.e., Hermotimus), and Epimenides. He cites Clearchus F8 Wehrli for the tale of Cleonymus and Lysias (cf. Augustine *City of God* 22.28, citing Cornelius Labeo) and Naumachios for the tales of Eurynous of Nicopolis and Rufus of Philippi. See also Plutarch *Moralia* 563b–568a for the tale of Aridaios/Thespesios of Soli, and cf., more generally, 590b–592e (Timarchus), and Cicero *Somnium Scipionis*. Cf. Bidez and Cumont 1938, 1: 19; and Bolton 1962, 1: 149.

[36] Aristotle, Arabic fragment translated at Ross 1952: 23 (F11). Varro: at Pliny *Natural History* 7.176–77. Lucian *Philopseudes* 25.

[37] Sophocles *Oedipus at Colonus* 605–28, 1348–96, and 1517–55. Virgil *Aeneid* 4.607–29; cf. Eitrem 1933; Betz 1992: 76; and Kraggerud 1999. Horace *Epodes* 5.87–122. But does the boy actually die? See Watson 1993.

[38] Herodotus 4.94. Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.563–68.

CONCLUSION: ATTITUDES TOWARD NECROMANCY

SINCE death, ghosts, and magic in general were subject to so many conflicting attitudes in antiquity, it is all but impossible to characterize a unitary ancient "attitude" toward necromancy. Perhaps the most common notion, however, was that one had to be somewhat bold, desperate, or strange to turn to it. Why so? Presumably because of the inherent fearfulness of the practice, and the possibilities that one might return from a consultation with one's life shortened or, worse still, not return at all (chapter 16). Thus, when Odysseus and his men returned from their consultation, Circe told them that they were *schetlioi*, a word meaning something between "unflinching in the face of horror" and "headstrong," for having gone to Hades and dying twice, this for all that she herself had told them to go. At the other end of the tradition, necromancy remained a thing of boldness (*tolmaō*) for the fourth-century A.D. St. John Chrysostom. The Spartan regent Pausanias was driven to distraction by the ghost of Cleonice and so impelled to call it up, and Nero was impelled to call up the ghost of his mother by its harassment. It has been supposed that a distinct lack of Stoic self-control induced Lucan's panicky Sextus Pompey to turn to necromancy.[1] Sometimes the despair was erotic: this was what led Laodameia to call up Protesilaus. A similar consideration may lie beneath the tales of Periander and Melissa, and Harpalus and Pythionice.[2]

It was no doubt the fact that necromancy was regarded as something rather strange that secured a high profile for it in Attic comedy. The *psuchagōgia* scene in Aristophanes's *Birds* and the *katabasis* that forms the subject of his *Frogs* apart, we can presume that necromancy featured centrally in the *Thesprotians* of Alexis. It was possibly used also in Cratinus's *Chirons* to bring Solon into the age of Pericles, and in Eupolis's *Demoi* to bring Solon, Miltiades, Aristides, and Pericles back from the dead.[3] We have seen that many comedies were named for Trophonius

[1] Homer *Odyssey* 12.21. St. John Chrysostom *In Matthaeum* at *PG* 57 p. 403. Cleonice: Plutarch *Cimon* 6 and *Moralia* 555c; Pausanias 3.17; and Aristodemus *FGH* 104 F8. Nero: Suetonius *Nero* 34, 46. Sextus: Martindale 1977: 375; cf., more generally, Schotes 1969: 50–99.

[2] Protesilaus: see chapter 11. Melissa: Herodotus 5.92; see chapter 4. Pythionice: Python *Agen*, *TrGF* 91 F1; see chapter 4. Cf. also, perhaps, Chariton *Callirhoe* 5.7.10.

[3] *Psychagōgia* scene: Aristophanes *Birds* 1553–64. Alexis *Thesprotians* F93 K-A/Arnott. Cratinus *Chirons* F246–68 K-A and Eupolis *Demoi* F99–146 K-A; cf. Collard 1949: 40–41.

(chapter 6). So, too, necromancy lent itself well to the satirical writings of Menippus, Timon of Phlius, Laberius, and Lucian (cf. introduction).

Necromancy's strangeness also made it an appropriate attribute for Roman emperors, as we have seen. It constituted a convenient way of expressing their exceptional status, their distracted insanity, their anxiety about their own position, their attachment to bizarre un-Roman customs, their preparedness to abuse their wealth and power, their homicidal cruelty and ensuing guilt, and their desire to compete with the gods (chapter 10).

The strangeness of necromancy affected in different ways the representation of its professionals. They could be portrayed as a curious race living an unconventional and miserable life, as in the case of the Cimmerians. They could be seen as shabby, contemptible, and beggarly, as we see *psuchagōgoi* portrayed in the writings of Aristophanes and Plato (chapter 7). They could be seen as men endowed with arcane insight and miraculous powers, as in the representations of the "shamans" (chapter 8). Or they could be seen as sorcerers endowed with the wisdom of remote and ancient lands, as in the case of Persians, Babylonians, and Egyptians. That remoteness is a key notion here may be indicated by the fact that we find necromancers also from the far west, namely the Hesperides, and the far north, namely the land of the Hyperboreans. It may once have been believed that such remote peoples were in closer contact with the underworld for living nearer to the edge of the flat earth. Or necromancers could be seen as women, as in the witch tradition (chapter 9).

Antiquity's moral evaluation of necromancy is particularly difficult to pin down. If we must generalize, then perhaps we should extrapolate a rule from Statius, to the effect that necromancy was as good or as bad as the person practicing it. In persuading the underworld powers to respond to his request for necromancy, his Tiresias contends that he is a more deserving recipient of such enlightenment as an august prophet-priest than a Thessalian witch would be. Tiresias's assistant-daughter Manto is explicitly said to resemble Medea and Circe in power, but to be without their criminality.[4] It seems that necromancy was correspondingly wicked when practiced by someone wicked, even though the person might practice it in effectively the same way as a benign necromancer. Let us take reanimation, for instance. Apuleius's Zatchlas is introduced as an outlandish but nonetheless respectable, if not august, figure in his reanimation of Thelyphron.[5] But Lucan's Thessalian Erictho is built up in her introduction as the ultimate example of a wicked necromancer, even though there is little that is truly harmful (to innocents) about the reanimation she

[4] Statius *Thebaid* 4.504–6 and 550–51.

[5] Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.28.

achieves, and the dead man himself actually completes the transaction in profit, securing due and irreversible burial.[6] Similarly, Heliodorus's old woman of Bessa is reproached by her corpse for transgressing the laws of human nature by reanimating it.[7]

It may be that female necromancers were more often portrayed as wicked than male ones, but no categorical pattern emerges here. On the male side, we have the harmless Tiresias and Mithrobarzanes, the miracle-working shamans, the benign Neo-Pythagorean Apollonius of Tyana, the uncensured users of the papyrus recipes, and the all-too-pious Aeneas. Yet Euripides, Aristophanes, and Plato held *psuchagōgoi* in contempt, the Romans accused Vatinius and others of practicing necromancy through the cruelty of child sacrifice, Lucian attributed necromancy to the supposedly malevolent Neo-Pythagorean Alexander of Abonouteichos, and Libanius's lying mage included necromancy in his repertoire. On the female side, despite Erictho and the wicked-witch tradition of Latin literature, Circe is in "good" mode when she directs Odysseus to the Acheron, the necromantic Sibyls are indisputably forces for good, and Statius's Manto is, as we have seen, explicitly said to be without criminality. If female necromancers are more often wicked in our evidence, this may be because Latin poetry's conservative topos of the wicked witch forms such a large part of it.[8]

The dead themselves, too, held ambivalent attitudes toward being subject to necromancy (chapter 11): did it constitute a grievous disturbance of their rest, or a precious opportunity to return briefly to longed-for life? Ghosts already restless were often afforded the opportunity to achieve the rest they sought by necromancy (chapter 15). The living, of course, also exercised such ambivalent views on the dead's behalf, but those who evocated the ghosts of their dear ones presumably did not fear that they were thereby subjecting them to significant suffering.

The existence of *nekuomanteia* in the Greek world presumably does indicate a general level of acceptance of the practice of necromancy, at least in this particular context. But we must be cautious. We have seen that only in the case of the Tainaron oracle is there any indication of a *nekuomanteion* being under the authority of a temple or a state. The

[6] Lucan *Pharsalia* 6.762–70 and 820–30; indeed, Statius evidently has Erictho in mind in making the above remarks, as the Ide similarly at *Thebaid* 3.140–46 indicates.

[7] Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 6.15.

[8] Tiresias: Homer *Odyssey* 11; Seneca *Oedipus*; Statius *Thebaid* 4. Mithrobarzanes: Lucian *Menippus*. Shamans: chapter 8. Apollonius: Philostratus: *Life of Apollonius*; cf. chapter 8. Papyri: chapters 12 and 13. Aeneas: Virgil *Aeneid* 6. Euripides, Aristophanes, and Plato: chapter 7. Vatinus: Cicero *In Vatinium* 14. Alexander: Lucian *Alexander*; see chapter 8. Erictho: Lucan *Pharsalia* 6. Circe: Homer *Odyssey* 10. Lying mage: Libanius 41. Sibyls: Virgil *Aeneid* 6 and Silius Italicus *Punica* 13.

notion that the "big four" *nekuomanteia* were in some sense "official" seems misguided, and the complete lack of epigraphy associated with the sites is telling. And when a *nekuomanteion* consisted of little more than a lakeside, it is difficult to see what measures a disapproving state could have taken to shut it down (chapter 2). Although we hear little about the patron gods of the various *nekuomanteia* (Heracles [?] at Heracleia; Poseidon [?] and Hermes [?] at Tainaron; Persephone, Hades, Hermes, and Zeus-Typhon [?] at Acheron; Persephone [?] and/or Hecate [?] at Avernus), the patronage of deities was not subject to any form of copyright and did not in itself confer any particular status on the shrines (chapters 3–5). More validating perhaps was the seal of approval that the august Delphi gave to the *nekuomanteia* by referring consulters to them—according to tradition, at any rate. It was Delphi, supposedly, that referred Corax to Tainaron for the laying of Archilochus's ghost (chapter 3) and that referred the Spartans to the *psuchagōgoi*, perhaps specifically those of Avernus, for the laying of the ghost of the regent Pausanias (chapter 7). Indeed, Delphi often gave advice on the laying of ghosts; we have seen that it told Croton and Metapontum how to achieve peace from the ghosts of the slaughtered youths of Siris, and that the ghost-banning procedures of Cyrene derive their authority from it.[9] Similarly, the august Zeus of Dodona was asked whether he would underwrite the work of Dorios the *psuchagōgos*.[10] One wonders whether the tradition of denial associated with the Avernus *nekuomanteion*, from Ephorus's insistence that the oracle had been destroyed long ago to Strabo's observation that Agrippa had chased the ghosts away, represented attempts to contain the inherent terror of the place (chapter 5).

When pagan authors do condemn necromancy outright, it is less often on the basis that it is an affront to the dead or an attack upon the living than on the basis that the practice itself (or, at any rate, its supposed practitioners) is a fraud. This was the view, for example, of Plato, Cicero, and Artemidorus. Plato associates necromancers with the practitioners of malicious binding-curses, and there may also lurk in Plato's words on such men a disdain for *banausoi*, men who depended for their living on the patronage of others. Of course, both Plato and Artemidorus were in their own ways pedaling trades in more or less direct competition with necromancers, and their objections may have seemed to many of their contemporaries to manifest the narcissism of small differences.[11] Thucyd-

[9] Justin 20.2; and Jameson et al. 1993. See further discussion of Delphi's interest in ghost-laying in chapter 7.

[10] Evangelidis 1935: no. 23 = Christidis et al. 1999: no. 5; chapter 7.

[11] Plato *Laws* 909b, 933a–e, and *Republic* 364b–e (see chapter 7); Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.16.37; and Artemidorus *Oneirocritica* 2.69 (see chapter 6); cf. Collard 1949: 116.

ides' elimination of two necromantic tales from his excursus on the regent Pausanias perhaps attests a rationalizing disdain (chapters 3 and 7).

The Greeks in general probably felt that one could not do much serious or lasting harm by the practice of necromancy proper other than to oneself. In certain modes and contexts, the ghosts may find the process undesirable and uncomfortable, but there was a limit to the damage one could do to those already dead. It does not seem to have been held, for example, that an irresponsible or incompetent necromancer could strand a once-peaceful ghost in a permanent state of restlessness after evocation. But then, the practice of necromancy was centered on the project of bringing permanent peace to ghosts already restless. Hence, necromancy proper does not appear to have been outlawed in any Greek state. But magic perceived as harmful, notably binding-curses, probably was generally outlawed. So the greatest danger facing one performing necromancy proper (perhaps particularly at graves as opposed to *nekuomanteia*) was the possibility that he might be suspected of calling up ghosts to carry out binding-curses rather than to provide prophecy (chapter 10), or be suspected of asking questions of a sort that might, whatever his intention, bring a ghostly curse upon others (chapter 16). And as we have seen, Plato is an example of someone ready to elide the distinction between necromancy and binding-cursing, justly or not (chapter 7).

The Romans in general seem to have found necromancy proper, and indeed its entire context, more threatening. Already in the late Republic we find an association being made between necromancy and human sacrifice, particularly of boys. The contexts of this association are, however, usually abusive, and it should probably not be taken to attest the practice of human sacrifice in necromancy; rather, it should be viewed as an attempt to build up its ostensible deviance. Although we cannot find a Roman law that explicitly and directly outlaws necromancy as such, its practice would inevitably have fallen foul of laws against magic in general, divination in general, and the prediction of the death of others, especially that of the emperor (and, of course, against murder if human sacrifice was actually used). Our supposedly historical references to the practice of necromancy in the Roman empire, other than those attributed to the emperors themselves, usually concern attempts to predict the death of the emperor. Why should it have been a particular crime to divine the time of the emperors' death? Was it not fixed by Fate anyway? A number of responses are possible. The more megalomaniac emperors may have wished themselves superior to Fate. It may have been felt that the desire to make such a divination reflected hostile attitude or intent. It may have been felt, on the assumption that such divinations were basically fraudulent, that they could be used as mechanisms to encourage rivals to strike against them. Or the emperors, too, may have feared that the act of nec-

romantic divination itself could indeed defy Fate and shorten the life of the person about whom the inquiry was made, in a fashion akin to cursing. It is a curiosity that there are indications that some of the *nekuomanteia* were still openly operating in the imperial period, but the evidence for this is not compelling.

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INDEX