

## Civilising the Eleusinian Sacred Way

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**Abstract.** The Sacred Way to Eleusis is one of the most interesting places in Greece for exploring the social and religious construction of the landscape in Ancient Greece. Eleusis was considered to be the borderland of Attica and its incorporation into the *chóra* of Athens was a long and hazardous process that apparently took place between the eighth and sixth centuries BC. In this paper, the spotlight is placed on the process of constructing this sacred way through myths and rituals. These are linked to some crucial places along the way, built as landmarks or nodes where rites, stories and cults intertwined to shape the religious experience of people and their memory of the past. Special emphasis is placed on the relationship between the liminal/reversal aspects of this space –constructed as an “*eschatiá*”– and the civilising and ordering elements integrating this potentially dangerous way in the correct and sacred order of the polis, thus sacralising it. Both aspects –reversal and civilisation– are examined in three areas: the ritual domestication of the agrarian space; rites linked to human sexuality and procreation; and the political appropriation of the territory through ritual.

**Keywords:** *Eschatiá*; Sciron; Daphni; Reversal; Civilization.

### [esp] Civilizar la Vía Sacra a Eleusis

**Resumen.** El camino sagrado a Eleusis es uno de los lugares más interesantes de Grecia para explorar la construcción social y religiosa del paisaje en la Antigua Grecia. Eleusis se consideraba la tierra fronteriza de Ática y su incorporación a la *chóra* de Atenas fue un largo y azaroso proceso que, al parecer, tuvo lugar entre los siglos VIII y VI a.C. En este trabajo se pone el foco en el proceso de construcción de esta vía sagrada a través de mitos y rituales. Éstos se vinculan a algunos lugares cruciales del camino, construidos como hitos o nodos donde los ritos, las historias y los cultos se entrelazaban para dar forma a la experiencia religiosa y a la memoria del pasado de la comunidad cívica. Se hace especial hincapié en la relación entre los aspectos liminales y de reversión de este espacio –construido como una “*eschatiá*”– y los elementos civilizadores y ordenadores que integran esta vía, potencialmente peligrosa, en el orden correcto y sagrado de la polis, sacralizándolo de esta manera. Ambos aspectos –reversión y civilización– se examinan en tres ámbitos: la domesticación ritual del espacio agrario; los ritos vinculados a la sexualidad y la procreación humanas; y la apropiación política del territorio a través del ritual.

**Palabras clave:** *eschatiá*; Escirón; Dafne; inversión; civilización.

**Summary:** 1. Introduction. 2. Domestication of the agrarian space: *Dios Koidion*, *hierós árotos*, Zeus *Meilichios*, Demeter and Phytalus. 3. Domestication of sexuality: marriage and procreation. 4. Integration of spaces and landmarks through the religious act: processions. 4.1. *Scira apompompé*. 4.2. The procession of the Eleusinian Mysteries. 4.3. The *pompé* to Delphi. 5. Bibliographical references.

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## 1. Introduction<sup>2</sup>

It seems that Eleusis was the last place to join the territory of Athens by synoecism, although the mythical stories alluding to that process include this locality among those that Athens coordinated in the time of mythical king Cecrops.<sup>3</sup> The incorporation of Eleusis was a complex and conflictive process that was presumably not without its ups and downs, which the inhabitants of Attica reflected in mythical narratives such as those of Erechtheus, Ion and Theseus, all of whom fought there.<sup>4</sup> Eleusis was undoubtedly important to the polis not only because it was on the frontier with Megara, but also because it was the seat of a powerful cult of Demeter, which can be traced back to a time predating its incorporation into Athens.<sup>5</sup> This cult was supported by a rich and powerful aristocracy in Geometric times.<sup>6</sup> It was perhaps when Eleusis was ultimately incorporated into the Attic *chóra* that its main festival, the Mysteries, was physically integrated into the city of Athens, with the transfer of the *hierá* from Eleusis to the Athenian Eleusinion,<sup>7</sup> before making the return journey. Most authors concur that this happened in Solon's time at the beginning of the sixth century BC.<sup>8</sup> However, Eleusis' conflicts and negotiations with Athens, in which the realm of religion played an essential role, had undoubtedly begun long before. In that process, the road to Eleusis through Mount Aegaleus, described by Pausanias<sup>9</sup>, was characterised by spaces and places, associated with rites, myths and cults, constructed as landmarks that not only fostered contact, but also the appropriation and fleshing out of the history and memory of the ties between the two localities.<sup>10</sup> Memory plays an important role in building the cultural and religious identity of a group.<sup>11</sup> As Alcock notes,<sup>12</sup> "People derive identity from shared remembrance –from social

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<sup>3</sup> Eleusis in Cecrops dodecapolis: Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 94 (Str. 9.1.20 -397-); Th. 2.15 (Eleusis in the dodecapolis as a source of conflict). For Athenian synoecism: Moggi 1976, 1-4, 44-81; Valdés 2012, 103-174 (with sources and bibliography).

<sup>4</sup> Picard 1931; Simms 1983; Valdés 2012, 154-155, 239-245.

<sup>5</sup> In the ongoing debate on this subject, some authors hold that the cult of Demeter even dates back to the Mycenaean era and that it might have been functioning in the Dark Age, at least as from the Geometric period: Travlos 1983, 329-330; 1988, 92; Dietrich 1986, 35-36; Clinton 1992, 29; Polignac 1995, 79. *Contra*: Sourvinou-Inwood 1997, 133; Binder 1998, 131-139; van den Eijnde 2010, 146-148. Evidence of cult activity in the area of the Mycenaean megaron in LH IIB/IIIA1 through LH IIIB and its continuity during the Early Iron Age (twelfth and eleventh centuries BC): Cosmopoulos 2014. Remains from 900 BC in the area of the subsequent *Telesterion* (Mycenaean complex B/B1-B3): Mylonas 1961, 57-58; Travlos 1983, 327-337; Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 148-149, 347-348. These remains could be linked to a main family involved in the cult of Demeter. Since the middle of the eighth century BC, pyre A at the entrance of the terrace built next to a wall (of the LG) belonging to the enclosure surrounding the main buildings or the Mycenaean megaron: Kokkou-Vyridi 1999, 69-71; Valdés 2012, 204-206. For the idea of the continuity of the Mycenaean building B/B1-B3 as a *lieu de mémoire*, see Cosmopoulos 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Coldstream 1977, 79; Morris 1987, 124; Whitley 1991, 143. In relation to the Demeter cult in Thesmophoria: Langdon 2005, 16.

<sup>7</sup> Regarding the archaeological remains of the Eleusinion dating back to 700 BC: Miles 1998, 15; van den Eijnde 2010, 128-130.

<sup>8</sup> Mylonas 1961, 63-76; Garland 1984, 97; 1992, 36; Clinton 1993, 112-114; Valdés – Plácido 1998; Valdés 2002, 227-228.

<sup>9</sup> Paus. 1.36.3-38.5.

<sup>10</sup> Valdés – Plácido 1998; Valdés 2002, 213-231.

<sup>11</sup> Assmann 2006; Rüpke 2018.

<sup>12</sup> Alcock 2002, 1.

memory— which in turn provides them with an image of their past and a design for their future”. These landmarks on the sacred way can be considered as *lieux de mémoire* which, according to Assmann,<sup>13</sup> are “memory sites in which the memory of entire national or religious communities is concentrated, monuments, rituals, feast days and customs”.<sup>14</sup>

In light of recent findings, it would seem that the route to Eleusis was formally constructed as a sacred one—also coinciding with the first stage of the road to Delphi—at the end of the seventh or at the beginning of the sixth century BC.<sup>15</sup> Although ancient authors such as Polemon of Athens (second century BC), who wrote a work on this route, calls it the “sacred way” (*hierá hodós*) which was trod by the *mýstai*,<sup>16</sup> the *hóroi* discovered on it refer to it as “the way to Eleusis”.<sup>17</sup>

This sacred way was sacralised and institutionalised by assuming and integrating “liminal” spaces or through myth and certain ritual practices that lingered as a memory (*mnéma*) of a conflictive relationship. At the same time, these places were “domesticated” and “civilised” through rites and cults. Unfortunately, it is impossible to gain a detailed knowledge of the processes through which these nodes and spaces were shaped over time, or of the changes occurring during the integration of the territory since Geometric times and during the Archaic period. Even so, an attempt will be made here to analyse this process of integration through the traces of the route’s landmarks in the archaeological record or in the written sources.

Priority will be given here to the “Athenian” stage of this route as far as the Rheiti, designated as a “border”,<sup>18</sup> while being aware that it was permanently under construction and was thus modified over time. The Python,<sup>19</sup> before arriving at the

<sup>13</sup> Assmann 2006, 8. Influenced by Halbwachs’ notion of collective memory (1950) and that of “*lieux de mémoire*” coined by Nora (2001, 23-43).

<sup>14</sup> For the importance of places in the construction of cultural memory, see Assmann 2011, 281-325. Through the ritual which combines repetition and representation or “presentification”: Assmann 2012, 3-4, 6-7; see also Rüpke 2018, 30-31.

<sup>15</sup> Although there was apparently already a road between Athens and Eleusis in the eighth century BC, whose remains can be seen on both the outskirts of Eleusis and at the entrance to the agora of the Kerameikos (Mohr 2013, 65, 67), it seems that its sacralisation and institutionalisation did not occur until the end of the seventh century BC or at the beginning of the following one: Daverio Rocchi 2002, 151; Ficuciello 2008, 24-25; Mohr 2013, 65-59.

<sup>16</sup> Harp. s.v. Ἱερὰ ὁδός: Ἰσαῖος ἐν τῇ πρὸς Διοφάνην ἀπολογία. Ἱερὰ ὁδός ἐστὶν ἣν οἱ μύσται πορεύονται ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄσπετος ἐπ’ Ἐλευσίνα. Βιβλίον οὖν ὄλον Πολέμωνι γέγραπται περὶ τῆς Ἱερᾶς ὁδοῦ. Μνημονεύει δ’ αὐτῆς Κρατίνος ἐν Δραπέτισιν.

<sup>17</sup> *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 1095 (before 445 BC; discovered close to the church of Hag. Triada): [ἡ]ὸ[ρος] [τ]εῖς ὁδοῦ τεῖς Ἐλευσινάδε; *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 1096 (from 420 BC; found in the Ceramicus): ἡὸρος τεῖς ὁδοῦ τεῖς Ἐλευσινάδε; *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 2624 (4<sup>th</sup> c.): ἡὸρος τῆς ὁδοῦ] τῆς Ἐλευσινάδε. Ficuciello 2008, 25. On the construction of bridges in the Rheiti and over the river Cephissus, see also *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 79 (422 BC: “so that the priestesses could carry the sacred objects in greater safety”); Dillon 1997, 35-36; *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1191 (321 BC); Miles 2012, 119-120.

<sup>18</sup> Where, according to Pausanias (1.38.1) “only the priests of these goddesses are permitted to catch the fish in them. Anciently, I learn, these streams were the boundaries between the land of the Eleusinians and that of the other Athenians” (trans. W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod, hereinafter for all translations of Pausanias). A Roman inscription mentions a property to the south of the Aegaleus, near the coast, on the Thriasian plain, as an *eschatia* (borderland estate): Miller 1972, 82 (commentary on l. 197). There is a wall that could date back to the eighth century BC: Moggi 1976, 68). For the frontier: Valdés – Plácido 1998.

<sup>19</sup> Paus. 1.36.6-7. According to Mylonas (1961, 27), this Python marked the frontier between Athens and Megara in Philocorus’ description of Pandion’s division of Attica: *FGrHist* 329 F 107; but Jacoby (1954, vol. I, 430, and vol. II, 330-331) contends that it is the Python in Oenoe (in this connection: Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 75). In

Rheiti and the sanctuary of Aphrodite,<sup>20</sup> as well as Sciron itself,<sup>21</sup> next to the Cephisus, can be considered as such. Sciron is precisely one of the most interesting and rewarding places in which to examine this spatial construction, because it was a node where various elements making up the religious experience of the Athenians in different periods intermingled. In this place, both reversion and order and civilisation practices occurred. According to Pausanias, Sciron is the first place on the sacred way recalling the war between Athens and Eleusis in the time of Erechtheus,<sup>22</sup> a memory cemented by the tomb of Scirus who, in one version, was a mythical seer (*mántis*) who came from Dodona to fight for the Eleusinians.<sup>23</sup> This area is characterised by two elements: that of the reversal and inversion of the norm deeply rooted in the place; and that of the “domestication” of the uncultured space.

The road’s landmarks will now be examined in relation to the following three aspects of the two aforementioned elements (reversal and “domestication”): the agrarian element; sexuality and procreation; and the political and religious appropriation of the territory.

## 2. Domestication of the agrarian space: *Dios Koidion*, *hierós árotos*, *Zeus Meilichios*, *Demeter* and *Phytalus*

On the road to Eleusis, there was a sanctuary dedicated to Demeter and her daughter, along with the Acropolitan gods Athena and Poseidon<sup>24</sup> in Sciron itself, next to the ford of the river Cephisus.<sup>25</sup> Several authors have pointed out the agrarian character of both the Eleusinian and the Acropolitan cults, owing to the fact that the Scira festival coincides with the celebration of the harvest near the summer solstice.<sup>26</sup> In this space, the tradition indicates that Phytalus hosted Demeter after he had arrived in Attica, for which the goddess awarded him the fig tree as an act of civilisation linked to the agrarian world. The tomb of Phytalus in this place bears witness to this

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Andron, the frontier is Eleusis not the Pythion: Andron *FGrHist* 10 F 14 (Str. 9.1.6). For the Pythion between Athens and Eleusis, see below, note 131.

<sup>20</sup> Paus. 1.37.7.

<sup>21</sup> Paus. 1.36.4.

<sup>22</sup> Paus. 1.36.4; regarding this war, see also Paus. 1.38.3.

<sup>23</sup> A *mántis* from Dodona involved in the war between Athens and Eleusis: Paus. 1.36.4. According to other sources, the *mántis* was from Eleusis: Sud. s.v. *skiros* and Harp. s.v. *skiron*. See Ellinger 1993, 81. For divination activities in this place, see below and Guarducci 1951. On Sciron as a Megarian figure, see note 70. Regarding this legend, see Ellinger 1993, 81-82.

<sup>24</sup> Paus. 1.37.2.

<sup>25</sup> Graf 1996, 63. The procession of Scira to this sanctuary: Deubner 1932, 47. *Contra* see below in text. According to Parker (2005, 175) it was a “paper sanctuary”, a “product of multiple confusions between a puzzle festival, a puzzling word (*Skirapheia*) and the goddess Athena Sciras”. In my opinion, if this procession dates back to a period prior to the incorporation of Eleusis and the Mysteries, it is not inconceivable that a place of worship, perhaps an altar and/or a *témenos*, might have been erected there for both the Eleusinian and Athenian gods. See below, section 3.

<sup>26</sup> Parke 1977, 158-159. Robertson associated the Scira with the threshing floor: Robertson 1985, 236; 1996, 52-54. Concerning the agrarian elements of the Acropolitan cults: Elderkin 1941; Papachatzis 1989. According to Strabo (9.1.9), “sacred ceremonies” (*ἐπι Σκίρω ἱεροποιία τις*) were held in Sciron, perhaps in the summer in relation to the harvest (in the Scira festival) or maybe in the autumn in relation to the *hierós árotos* ritual (see note 36).

episode.<sup>27</sup> This space cannot be understood without bearing in mind an altar of Zeus *Meilichios*, located just across the river Cephissus, where, according to mythical tradition, Theseus was purified by the Phytalidai, the descendants of Phytalus.<sup>28</sup> Plutarch, who also narrates the event, alludes to the arrival of Theseus in this place, the Cephissus, from Megara, presenting it as a milestone on his route to Athens, a place where the hero was received and purified of the murders that he had committed:

As he went forward on his journey and came to the river Cephissus, he was met by men of the race (*génos*) of the Phytalidae, who greeted him first, and when he asked to be purified from bloodshed, cleansed him with the customary rites, made propitiatory sacrifices, and feasted him at their house.<sup>29</sup>

Zeus *Meilichios* is a god relating to the purification of supplicants and murderers (*enagoi*) and therefore a “dangerous” divinity linked to spaces of reversion and, at the same time, purification and civilisation.<sup>30</sup> Theseus was the hero who, since the sixth century BC, represented initiation and integration into Athenian citizenship. The purification at the altar of Zeus *Meilichios* was a turning point, a step in this process and also in his physical journey to Athens. Although it was Cimon who exploited the potential of this episode linked to Cephissus and Sciron,<sup>31</sup> the place must have been used beforehand as a space for purifications associated with Zeus. The sources mention the purification of murderers with the fleece of Zeus *Meilichios* and Ktesios, a ritual known as “*Dios Koidion*” and connected by the Suda with the Scira feast and with Eleusis.<sup>32</sup> This rite would have also been performed in Athens.<sup>33</sup> There is a clear correspondence between the purification of a murderer, whose crime left the land sterile, and the propitiation of fertility.<sup>34</sup> It was precisely in Sciron where the ritual of the *hierós árotos* or “sacred ploughing” was performed, in parallel to the purifying ritual of *miasma*. This rite was also performed<sup>35</sup> in Athens by the *Bouzygai*, as well as in Sciron and in Eleusis.<sup>36</sup> Albeit an act of civilisation linked to Zeus, it can

<sup>27</sup> Paus. 1.37.2: “There is a legend that in this place Phytalus welcomed Demeter in his home, for which act the goddess gave him the fig tree. This story is borne out by the inscription on the grave of Phytalus: ‘Hero and king, Phytalus here welcome gave to Demeter, August goddess, when first she created fruit of the harvest’”.

<sup>28</sup> Paus. 1.37.4: “Across the Cephissus is an ancient altar of Zeus *Meilichios* (Gracious). At this altar Theseus obtained purification at the hands of the descendants of Phytalus after killing brigands, including Sinis who was related to him through Pittheus”. For a Thesean ritual landscape in Athens, see Cassel 2020.

<sup>29</sup> Plu. *Thes.* 12 (trans. B. Perrin).

<sup>30</sup> For Zeus *Meilichios* and the purification of murderers, see Jameson *et al.* 1993, 81-103. Regarding this god, see also Cusumano 1991.

<sup>31</sup> Parker 1996, 169 and n. 57.

<sup>32</sup> Paus. 1.37.4. Sud. s.v. Διὸς κῳδιον: the fleece was placed on the feet of murderers (τοῖς ποσὶ τῶν ἐναγῶν). According to this lexicon, the “fleece of Zeus” was also worn in the procession (*Pompaia*) held in the month of Maimakterion in honour of Zeus *Maimáktes*, who in some sources is identified with *Meilichios*. See also: Eust. *O.* 22.480-1. Plu. *De Cohib. Ira.* 9 (*Mor.* 458B). Hsch. s.v. *Maimáktes: Meilichios, kathársios*. See Jameson 1965, 161; Parker 1983, 373; Paoletti 2004, 14.

<sup>33</sup> Valdés 2009, 302, n. 42.

<sup>34</sup> Durand 1986, 175-178; 1990, 271-287.

<sup>35</sup> Maybe in the autumn. For ploughing dedicated to Zeus and Demeter in Hesiod in the autumn (but also in the spring and occasionally in the summer): Hes. *Op.* 465-470. For this rite in Sciron: Ellinger 1993, 84-86, who thinks that it might have been performed in this place in the summer.

<sup>36</sup> Plu. *Mor.* 144A-B; Sch. Aristid. II, 130, 1, vol III, 473 Dindorf; Sch. Aeschin. 2.78; Hsch. s.v. βουζύγης. Valdés 2009; Valdés – Plácido 2010. For the *Bouzygion* near the Acropolis: Travlos 1971, 2; this place was probably connected with the sanctuary of Demeter Chloe and Ge Kouroutrophos: Paus. 1.22.3; Parker 2005, 197-198.

be assumed that it was also associated with Demeter and Persephone. This double ascription may be reflected in a vase housed in the British Museum which seems to represent the *hierós árotos* with Bouzyges on one side and the Thesmophoria held in Pyanepsion (October) in honour of these deities (Demeter and Persephone) on the other.<sup>37</sup> This festival included all the aforementioned aspects: sterility, reversal and return to the original chaos, on the one hand, and the propitiation of human and natural fertility with the restoration of order, on the other.<sup>38</sup> As the Thesmophoria took place just before sowing, it was an ideal occasion to promote a plentiful harvest.<sup>39</sup>

Sciron is an “intermediate” place between Athens and Eleusis, a “borderline” established as an *eschatía*, milestone or landmark. On the one hand, *miasma* and reversal occurred in this uncultured space,<sup>40</sup> and on the other –even in the same rite as in that of *Dios koidion*– the domestication and civilisation of nature, namely, the agrarian space, occurred in this case under the protection fundamentally of Zeus and Demeter. Both gods protected agricultural activity and farming, according to Hesiod.<sup>41</sup> It is no coincidence that Demeter, together with the Acropolitian gods, was worshiped in the sanctuary at Sciron,<sup>42</sup> nor that it was both a place where Phytalus welcomed the goddess of agriculture and a place of sacred ploughing, associated with the goddess of grain and Zeus, alike. Nor is it by chance that it was also a space for *miasma* and purification for eliminating the danger of contamination and pollution, thus promoting agriculture. A little further down the road is the famous sanctuary of Aphrodite at Daphni, whose cult was linked not only to human fertility but also to the promotion of natural fertility, in keeping with Demeter with whom Aphrodite was also apparently associated in others Attic places of worship, like Halimous and on the west side of the Acropolis.<sup>43</sup> The goddess of love is embodied by Daphni leaning against a tree<sup>44</sup> and is therefore associated with the promotion of the fertility of nature. She was also linked there to chthonic elements, like the Eleusinian goddesses.<sup>45</sup>

### 3. Domestication of sexuality: marriage and procreation

Returning again to Sciron, this place integrates the two sides of sexuality, on the one hand, reversal, and, on the other, procreation within marriage, both facets frequently linked in the same places and rituals. One of the main functions of the aforementioned

<sup>37</sup> British Museum: 1906.12-15.1. See Ashmole 1946 (560 BC). Bouzyges is also represented on a fifth-century bell krater: Cambridge (MA), Harvard Univ., Arthur M. Sackler Mus: 60.345 (Beazley archive 214755); see Parker 2005, 197-198.

<sup>38</sup> Valdés 2020, 27-44.

<sup>39</sup> Burkert 1985, 245; Versnel 1994, 34; Brumfield 1996, 68.

<sup>40</sup> For this aspect of the term “Sciron”, see Ellinger 1993, 78-80, citing the *Tables of Heraclea I*, 18-19, 23-24, 34-35 (“uncultivated land, covered with thickets and scrub”).

<sup>41</sup> Hesiod links the *árotos* to the cults of Zeus *Chthonios*, Demeter and Zeus Olympios, the god of rain: Hes. *Op.* 465-489.

<sup>42</sup> Paus. 1.37.2.

<sup>43</sup> Demeter and Persephone in Cap Colias in Pyanepsion: Plu. *Sol.* 8; Parke 1977, 88. Aphrodite in Colias: Paus. 1.1.5. For the relationship of both cults, see Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 76-78. Valdés 2002, 206 (also for the cults on the west side of the Acropolis: Ge Kourotrophos, Demeter Chloe and Aphrodite Pandemos).

<sup>44</sup> Delivorrias 1968.

<sup>45</sup> Machaira 2008, 147.



sacred ploughing ritual or *hierós árotos* is the “procreation of legitimate children”, as recorded by Plutarch, who claims,

*The Athenians* observe three sacred ploughings: the first at Sciron in commemoration of the most ancient of sowings; the second in Raria, and the third near the base of the Acropolis, the so-called Buzygius (the ox-yoking). But most sacred of all such sowings is the marital sowing and ploughing for the procreation of children. It is a beautiful epithet which Sophocles applied to Aphrodite when he called her “bountiful-bearing (εὐκαρπὸν Κυθήρειαν) Cytherea”.<sup>46</sup>

The *hierós árotos* is thus related to marriage and human procreation. Women are like soil and the act of fertilising is associated with sowing. This metaphor appears in many ancient sources and in the formula of the ritual of marriage.<sup>47</sup> Women were “domesticated” through marriage epitomised by the sacred ploughing of the earth. Near Sciron, on the river Cephissus, Pausanias refers to a characteristic element of the nuptial rites, viz. the offering of hair.<sup>48</sup> It is significant that the ritual of sacred ploughing (*hierós árotos*), recalling the ritual of marriage, occurred in Sciron, a place that appears in other sources as a space of sexual inversion, of reversal, linked to obscene *lógoi*. On the river Cephissus, next to this place, the ritual of the *gephyrismós*, or ritualised obscene insults, was performed from a bridge during the procession of the Mysteries (from Athens to Eleusis).<sup>49</sup> The *aitíon* of this rite is the *lógos* of Iambe<sup>50</sup> and the *anásyрма* of Baubo.<sup>51</sup> In some sources, (free and/or citizen) women insult each other, but in others the role of prostitutes (*pornáí*) in the ritual is emphasised.<sup>52</sup> Sciron was precisely a place associated very closely with prostitution, dice playing and general licence.<sup>53</sup> The goddess Aphrodite was the patroness of

<sup>46</sup> Plu. *Mor.* 144b (=Prae. *Coniug.* 42; trans. F. C. Babbitt).

<sup>47</sup> In the legal formula of marriage: “I deliver my daughter unto you for the sowing of legitimate children” (Men. *Mis.* 444-445; *Pc.* 1013; *Sam.* 727; *Dysc.* 842); Morales Ortiz 2007, 139. This image is also to be found in tragedy: women are arable fields (S. *Ant.* 569), the soil (*ge*) in which men plant their seed that produces fruit (*spora*): E. *Andr.* 637. For adulterers: “the unjust seed of men” (ἄδικον ἄροτον ἀνδρῶν): E. *Ion* 1095. *Ároton* (harvest) can mean “sons” (E. *Med.* 1281); Morales Ortiz 2007, 140-141 (with further references).

<sup>48</sup> Paus. 1.37.3.

<sup>49</sup> *Gephyrismós*: Hsch. s.v. γεφυρίς (a *porné* or a disguised man); sch. Ar. *Pl.* 1014 (insults among women); Ar. *Ra.* 391-394; Str. 9.1.24; Picard 1931, 2; Kerényi 1967, 65; Richardson 1974, 214; Burkert 1983, 278. Diatribes, insults and other activities such as divination and dice playing in Sciron: see note 53; Chirassi 1979, 32-33, 44-46; Versnel 1994, 238. For insults at women’s agricultural festivals, see Brumfield 1996, 67-74. Maybe the law, mentioned by Hyperides, imposing fines on “disorderly women” (ἀχομοῦσαι γυναῖκες) κατὰ ὁδοῦς (Harp. s.v. ὄτι χυλίας; Hyp. fr. 14 Jensen), can refer to this rite.

<sup>50</sup> Iambe: *Hom. H.Cer.* 202-205. Iambe of Halimous also cited by Philicus (third century BC): Page 1942, 402-407 (ll. 11-15). Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 103 (=Nic. *Al.* 132 and scholium). See also Hippon. Test. 21 and 21a Degani 1983; Apollod. 1.5.1. Regarding the Iambe and aishcrologia, see Richardson 1974, 213-217; Sfameni Gasparro 1986, 67.

<sup>51</sup> Clem. *Al. Prot.* 2.20 (=Kern fr. 52) y 2.21; Eus. *PE* 2, 3, 31-35. Arnob. *Nat.* 5.25-26. Baubo in a cult context in Paros (*JG* XII 5, 227), Naxos (*SEG* 16.478). See Sfameni Gasparro 1986, 172. For Baubo, see Richardson 1974, 215-216; Graf 1974, 168-71; Olender 1985, 3-55; O’Higgins 2001, 139-141; Vohryzková 2005, 45.

<sup>52</sup> See note 56.

<sup>53</sup> Divination, dice playing: Theopomp. *Hist. FGrHist* 115 F 228 = Harp. s.v. σκιράφια; Hsch. s.v. σκ[ε]ιραφείον y σκ[ε]ιράμαντις (omen taken from the flight of birds; divination associated with Athena in this place: see Guarducci 1951); St. Byz. s.v. *skiros*; *Anecdota Graecae* (Bekker), 1.300.23; *EM* 717.28; Poll. 9.96-7; Phot. s.v. *skiraphaia*; Burkert 1983, 145, n. 39; Jacoby 1954, vol. I, 286-7. Presence of *pornáí* there and insults in the nearby area of the Cephissus associated with the *gephyrismós*: see note 56.

prostitution in Athens (as elsewhere)<sup>54</sup> and, although there are no direct testimonies of her cult in Sciron, her veneration there cannot be ruled out,<sup>55</sup> since the place was associated with *pornai*.<sup>56</sup> Aphrodite was also linked to the Eleusinian goddesses in other places, such as Halimous or Daphni itself, on the road to Eleusis.<sup>57</sup>

Indeed, a ritual of inversion of the established order took place at the women's festival celebrated in Scira during Scirophorion, the last month of the year.<sup>58</sup> These rites might originally have been performed in this space built as an *eschatiá* on the outskirts of the city.<sup>59</sup> It all likelihood the citizen women of Athens disguised themselves as men, usurping their duties during this celebration. This reference seems to point to Aristophanes' *The Assembly of Women* in which, during the feast, the women decide to disguise themselves as men and attend the assembly in lieu of their husbands.<sup>60</sup> The Scira<sup>61</sup> was similar to the Thesmophoria, the Stenia and even the Arrephoria, as evidenced by one of Lucian's scholia in which the Thesmophoria, Scira and Arre (to) phoria are equated. It appears that representations of male and/or female sexual organs were manipulated during them.<sup>62</sup> In the case of the Thesmophoria and Scira, normal relations between the sexes were suspended during a ritual period of reversal, when women ate garlic to keep men at arm's length.<sup>63</sup> The Scira had much in common with the Lemnos feast where this reversal involved the murder of

<sup>54</sup> Aphrodite Pandemos in relation to prostitution, established by Solon (other traditions associated his cult with Theseus and synoecism: Paus. 1.2.3; Nic. *FGrHist* 272 F 9 and Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 F 113 = Harp. s.v. Πάνδημος Ἀφροδίτη = Ath. 13.569d. Also in Philemo *PCG* VII F3; Eubulus *PCG* V F 67 (Ath. 13.568f-569e).

<sup>55</sup> In Euripides, it is Aphrodite who makes the goddess laugh: E. *Hel.* 1341-1352.

<sup>56</sup> A neighbourhood of bad repute and prostitution: Ariptho 2.22, 3.5. Prostitutes: St. Byz. s.v. Σκῖρος: ἐν δὲ τῷ τόπῳ τοῦτῳ αἱ πόρναι ἐκαθέζοντο (although Phot. s.v. *skiron* speaks of *manteis* there [Burkert 1983, 154, n. 39] it is possible to see both in this place; for a *porné* in the *gephyrismós* in nearby Cephissus: see note 49; also Ariptho, above). Aphrodite associated with prostitution: Hdt. 1.199; Str. 8.6.20; Ath. 13.572e, 573c-d. Prostitutes celebrated the festival of Aphrodisias: Ath. 13.574b-c; Romero Recio 1995, 254, n. 5. For prostitution and *porneía* in general in Athens, see Glazebrook 2011. This author demonstrates the close link between the *Aphrodision* of Merenda and the *porneion* there in the fourth century BC, indicating: "There is also the possibility that some *porneía* were part of a sanctuary to Aphrodite and included in her worship" (Glazebrook 2011, 45-46).

<sup>57</sup> On Halimous, see note 43. For Daphni: Machaira 2008, 147.

<sup>58</sup> The women's festival in Scira: sch. Ar. *Th.* 834-35; a women's feast also mentioned in Ar. *Ec.* 18; Men. *Epit.* 522-523; Pherecrat. *PCG* VII F 265; Phot. s.v. *Skiron*. The Scira in honour of Demeter and Kore, while others say that on this occasion they sacrificed to Athena: St. Byz. s.v. *skiros*. There is no mention of the place where the women's feast was celebrated. Some authors opt for Sciron: Jacoby 1954, vol. II, 221. The place where it was celebrated might also have changed over time. From an inscription it is known that in the second half of the fourth century BC the Scira in Piraeus was celebrated, like other women's feasts, at its Thesmophorion: *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1177, ll. 10-12. Also celebrated in Paeania deme but without any reference to the place (that may be the Thesmophorion, as well): *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 250 (450-430 BC); Sfameni Gasparro 1986, 263, n. 148. In Marathon: *SEG* 50.168, l. 30 (with sacrifices to *Kourotrophos* and to the *Tritopatris* before the feast).

<sup>59</sup> On the twelfth day of that month, coinciding with the summer solstice: Sch. Ar. *Ec.* 18; Plu. *Mor.* 350A; Mikalson 1975, 170. For Sciron as *eschatiá*: Ellinger 1993, 86.

<sup>60</sup> In the Scira, the women decided (Ar. *Ec.* 17-18, 59) to disguise themselves as men with false beards (*Ec.* 25, 68, 99, 273) and to "invade" the assembly's place of political deliberation, the Pnyx.

<sup>61</sup> For this festival, see Deubner 1969, 40-50; Parke 1977, 156-162; Brumfield 1981, 156-179; Simon 1983, 22-24; Burkert 1985, 230; Calame 1990, 246-248; Dillon 2002, 124-125; Valdés 2022. For the sources with a commentary: Jacoby 1954, vol. I, 285-287 and vol. II, 193-196.

<sup>62</sup> Sch. Luc. *DMeretr.* 2.1, 275-276 Rabe.

<sup>63</sup> The women ate garlic and their "bad smell" led to the separation of the sexes and the absence of sexual intercourse: Phot. s.v. *tropelis* (Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 89); Burkert 1970, 10-11; 1983, 145; Sfameni Gasparro 1986, 263.



husbands and sexual abstinence, before a return to order and the lighting of a new fire, thus commencing a new cycle. The Lemnian festival was dedicated to Aphrodite and Hephaestus. It is also possible that during the Scira, which was celebrated at the end of the year, close to the summer solstice, Aphrodite was present in this facet of reversion that led to the return of the established order, although the sources only record the presence of other Acropolitian gods (such as Athena Polias, Poseidon and Helios) in the procession.<sup>64</sup> It would not be farfetched to posit that Aphrodite formed part of this “delegation” in the *pompé*, considering her probable archaic cult on the Acropolis and its slopes,<sup>65</sup> plus the relationship of the goddess with the parasol (*skiás*), a conspicuous element in the celebration.<sup>66</sup>

In any case, it is not Aphrodite who is to be found in this place in the sources, but the Eleusinian goddesses and the Acropolitian gods (Athena Polias and Poseidon), in addition to Athena Scira. This epithet, like the term “Sciron”, is closely associated with Salamis and Megara.<sup>67</sup> To all appearances the conquest of Salamis in the time of Solon led to a major reorganisation of cults and rites on the coast of Athens and in Salamis itself, while also coinciding with the introduction of the goddess “Scira” from the island in Athens.<sup>68</sup> Athena Scira was introduced in the bay of Phaleron<sup>69</sup> and on the road to Eleusis, which was perhaps already associated with a Megarian hero known or renamed as Sciro.<sup>70</sup> The goddess Scira was perhaps established in a sanctuary there—a much-debated topic—but, in any case, was linked to the women’s feast.<sup>71</sup> There are grounds for thinking that the goddess Athena “tamed” the place in

<sup>64</sup> See below note 90. For the priest of Helios as an innovation in Hellenistic times, see Burkert 1983, 44. But the cult of Helios might be ancient in Athens, as the god was venerated in the Thargelia and Pyanopsia: Porph. *Abst.* 2.7; Sud. s.v. *eiresione* (Simon 1983, 75). Helios identified with Apollo Patroos in Athens: sch. Pl. *Euthd.* 302 c; sch. Hom. *Il.* 18.240; Phot. s.v. *tritopatores*.

<sup>65</sup> For this cult on the Acropolis, see Elderkin 1941, 122. Regarding its links to the bastion of Nike in the seventh century BC, see Valdés 2005, 105. On the Nike bastion and on the slopes of the Acropolis: Valdés 2020, 338-352 (with further references).

<sup>66</sup> For the parasol in Scira, see below note 90; Ellinger 1993, 83. A parasol in the frieze of the Parthenon linked to Eros and Aphrodite: Neils 2001, 229, fig. 164. Aphrodite under the parasol (with Erotes) on a lekythos of the Meidias Painter (450-400 BC): Taranto, Museo Archeologico Nazionale: 4531. For the meaning and symbolism of the parasol: Miller 1992. Also linked to women in Dionysian feasts: Valdés 2022. Ancient commentators on the name Sciron thought that it meant the striking canopy or any sort of parasol, see Lysimachides in note 90; Poll. 7.174; Phot. and Sud. s.v. Sciros; *Anecdota Graecae* (Bekker), 1.304.3.

<sup>67</sup> Athena Scira on Cape Sciradion in Salamis, where Solon introduced a cult of Enialios: Plu. *Sol.* 9.6. Athena Scira on Cape Sciradion: Hdt. 8.94.2; Str. 9.1.9. See Lonis 1979, 120-121; Valdés 2002, 179. Sciron of Megara: Plu. *Sol.* 10; Harp. s.v. *Skiron*. Sciron of Salamis: Sud. s.v. *Skiros*; Plu. *Thes.* 17; Ellinger 1993, 82. For the Scira and the hero Sciron, see Valdés 2002, 179-180, with n. 51 and 52 (with further references); 2020, 367-383.

<sup>68</sup> Introduction of Athena Scira and Sciron in Athens, after the Solonian conquest of Salamis: Ferguson 1938, 18-20; Nilsson 1938, 389; 1951, 32; Deubner 1969, 142-144; Parke 1977, 79-80; Valdés 2002, 180.

<sup>69</sup> As indicated by the Salaminian calendar: *SEG* 21.527, l. 92. For her links to the Oscophoria, see Valdés 2002, 187-212.

<sup>70</sup> Sciros from Megara: Plu. *Thes.* 10; Paus. 1.39.6, 1.44.6 (see the commentary by Musti – Beschi 1982, 440-441). For Sciros as a *mántis* from Dodona or Eleusis, see note 23.

<sup>71</sup> *Naos* of Athena Scira in Sciron: Poll. 9.96-7; *Anecdota Graecae* (Bekker), 1.300.23; *hieron*: Phot. s.v. *σκιραφεΐα*. Since Robert (1885), many authors have contended that there was never any sanctuary of Athena Scira in this place: van der Loeff 1916; Ferguson 1938, 19; Parker 2005, 175. In favour of that cult in Sciron: Jacoby 1954, vol. I, 290-291. For Athena Scira temple in Phaleron: *SEG* 21.527 l. 52. According to the legend, Theseus made an image of Athena out of white earth and established the temple of the goddess in Phalerum: *EM* 718.6 (Phot. and Sud. s.v. *Sciros*); Ellinger 1993, 82-83. Temple in Salamis: Hdt. 8.94. For the cult of Athena Scira in the Scirophoria, see notes 25 and 58.

a fashion, perhaps as a counterweight to Aphrodite or even replacing her –an idea already put forward by Elderkin<sup>72</sup> in her facet of reversal. In the same way, Athena (Scira) replaced Aphrodite as the hero Theseus' guide and probably at the Oscophoria festival on the coast of Attica in the sixth century BC.<sup>73</sup>

In the account of the procession to Sciron,<sup>74</sup> which will be discussed in the following section, this is referred to as a sign to people that they should build houses and shelters because it was the best time of year for this activity.<sup>75</sup> The festival was therefore related to both construction and urbanisation and to the arrival of the Acropolitian gods, which may indicate the introduction of an element of civilisation, urbanisation and order<sup>76</sup> in this uncultured place of reversion, linked to license and non-domesticated sexuality. Not only Aphrodite but also Athena played an important role in marriage in Athens, as the ritual of *protéleia* before weddings was performed for the Acropolitian goddess in this city.<sup>77</sup>

A little further on, in Daphni, there is a sanctuary of Aphrodite<sup>78</sup> dating to the late Classical and Hellenistic period, but whose origins are probably to be found in the Archaic period.<sup>79</sup> The cult was established in an open-air enclosure overlooking a rock, on the slopes of Mount Aegaleus. Next to it there is a rectangular construction that could be the “worthy wall of unwrought stone” in front of the sanctuary, described by Pausanias.<sup>80</sup> It might have had Archaic origins and a military role relating to surveillance.<sup>81</sup> The sanctuary of Aphrodite at Daphni looks like the *alter ego* of that of Aphrodite and Eros on the north side of the Acropolis: open-air with niches in which representations of female sexual organs (vulvas), among other elements, were dedicated to the goddess.<sup>82</sup> It is no coincidence that the cult of the goddess Aphrodite was established at this sanctuary in Daphni, on the road to Eleusis in the area between this locality and Athens, just before the Rheiti, given her close relationship with the Eleusinian goddesses and her role in human procreation. In this place, the goddess, as at her sanctuary of Pandemos, and at that which she shared with Eros on the north side of the Acropolis, protected sexuality aimed at human procreation, possibly also with Eros.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Elderkin 1941, 120.

<sup>73</sup> Valdés 2020, 323-337.

<sup>74</sup> See below note 90.

<sup>75</sup> This allusion to construction may also be related to the white calcareous earth that is etymologically associated with the word *sciros*: *Anecdota Graecae* (Bekker) 1.304.8; sch. Ar. V. 926. See Burkert 1983, 146; Ellinger 1993, 77-80, who also emphasises the meaning of uncultivated land (see note 40) and that could be suitable for construction. See Jacoby 1954, vol. II, 201. The summer is the best season for building, as Hesiod stresses: Hes. *Op.* 503.

<sup>76</sup> For the notion of the civilisation of nature: Valdés – Plácido 2010.

<sup>77</sup> Sud. s.v. *Προτέλειο*; Garland 1984, 93; Blundell 1998. The priestess of Polias is linked to a ritual in which she walked especially among newly-wed women making a collection: *Paroemiogr.* Suppl. I 65; Burkert 1985, 101. Aphrodite is also related to marriage: Plu. *Mor.* 138C-D, 264B.

<sup>78</sup> Paus. 1.37.6-7. See Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 73-74; Rosenzweig 2003, 41; Pala 2010, 201. For the remains of the site: Machaira 2008.

<sup>79</sup> An earlier Aphrodision was postulated on the top of the hill (Machaira 2008, 140), but Greco believes that Archaic remains can be found under later strata: Greco 2016, 168.

<sup>80</sup> Paus. 1.37.7.

<sup>81</sup> Machaira 2008, 141; Greco 2016, 168.

<sup>82</sup> For these similarities: Travlos 1988, 177-188; also in Machaira 2008, 101-106. For dedications of vulvas: Machaira 2008, 47-49, 144 (fig. 18-19, pl. 21 and 22.1-6).

<sup>83</sup> The cult of Eros postulated also for Daphni: Machaira 2008, 147; 2018, 242. For Eros also linked to human love and reproduction in marriage: Stafford 2013, 197-206.

Thus, once again, elements not only of reversal, but also of order and renewal of human sexuality and procreation, were closely intertwined with the fertility of the land, the Eleusinian goddesses and marriage on the road to Eleusis.

#### 4. Integration of spaces and landmarks through the religious act: processions

This last section is devoted to analysing a specific ritual act, the procession or *pompé*, which went a long way not only to integrating the territory,<sup>84</sup> but also to taming it through land occupation and appropriation. The procession was at the same time a performance that reflected self-representation and social order,<sup>85</sup> thus contributing to creating and consolidating it and to shaping the religious experience of the participants<sup>86</sup> in which emotions played a role.<sup>87</sup> Three fundamental Athenian processions were organised on the road to Eleusis. The first was the aforementioned Scira *pompé* in the last month of the year, a type that Graf calls a “centrifugal procession”.<sup>88</sup> The second one was that of the Eleusinian Mysteries (“centripetal procession”),<sup>89</sup> and the third was that of the Athenian officers sent to Delphi, which also travelled this route.

##### 4.1. Scira *apompé*

This procession is mentioned by Lysimachides (first century BC), but was probably already cited by Lycurgus of Athens (fourth century BC) in his work on priestesses:

Lycurgus in the speech *About the Priestess*. Scira is a festival of the Athenians, from which comes the month Scirophorion. Writers on Athenian months and festivals, among them Lysimachides say that the *skíron* is a large sun-shade (*skiádion*), under which the priestess of Athena and the priest of Poseidon and the priest of Sun walk as it is carried from the acropolis to a place called Sciron. It is carried by the *Eteoboutadai*. It is a token (*sýmbolon*) on the need to build and make shelters, since this is the best season for building.<sup>90</sup>

C. Robert was the first to accept the idea that the procession was established as a reconciliation between Athens and Eleusis at a time when the latter was independent of the former.<sup>91</sup> Deubner posited that the procession arrived at the joint sanctuary of the Eleusinian goddesses and the Acropolitan gods.<sup>92</sup> According to this hypothesis, the procession would be very old, corresponding to a period in which there were struggles

<sup>84</sup> Polignac 1984; Graf 1996; Kavoulaki 1999, 298-299.

<sup>85</sup> Graf 1996; Kavoulaki 1999; Kindt 2012, 67-70; in relation to sacred ways: Mohr 2012, 357.

<sup>86</sup> Rüpke 2018.

<sup>87</sup> Chaniotis 2013, 22.

<sup>88</sup> Graf 1996, 55-59.

<sup>89</sup> Graf 1996, 55-59.

<sup>90</sup> Lysimachid. *FGrHist* 366 F 3 *ap.* Harp. s.v. Σκίρον (Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 14; trad. R. Parker). See also: sch. *Ar. Ec.* 18; Sud. s.v. Σκίρον. Lycurgus in his speech possibly mentions this procession of the priestess of Athena, as he uses the word *skiron* (fr. 46 Bl, VI.19 Conomis); Parker 2005, 174-175, n. 76.

<sup>91</sup> The idea of the procession being a form a reconciliation between Athens and Eleusis, when the latter was still independent dates back to Robert 1885.

<sup>92</sup> Paus. 1.37.2. As regards this sanctuary, see above note 71. Deubner 1932, 47; Simon 1983, 24. *Contra* Jacoby 1954, vol. II, 204.

but also pacts and agreements between both localities. At the time, Eleusis would not have yet been incorporated into the territory of Athens or, if it had, it was still a conflict zone,<sup>93</sup> as the myth of Theseus and Diocles would evince.<sup>94</sup> In light of this, Eleusis would still have independently led the cult of Demeter and the Mysteries. Pausanias,<sup>95</sup> in effect, points out that, following its integration into the polis, Eleusis retained complete control over its Mysteries for a time, before they were taken over by Athens. This state of affairs can also apparently be deduced from the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, which ostensibly dates back to the end of the seventh century BC.<sup>96</sup> The existence of a joint sanctuary of the Eleusinian goddesses and the Acropolitian gods at Sciron might suggest that it was a meeting place for the Eleusinian and Athenian clergy,<sup>97</sup> although, as Parker<sup>98</sup> rightly points out, the sanctuary –near Sciron– is not even halfway between the two localities, being much closer to Athens. Notwithstanding this, it seems that the place was soon identified as a milestone in the war between Eleusis and Athens, as a *lieu de mémoire* of this conflict, as evidenced by the tomb of the hero Sciron, the seer who came to help the Eleusinians and was buried there.<sup>99</sup> Sciron was built not only as a place of conflict, but also as a memory landmark of the pact between Athens and Eleusis, as attested by the joint sanctuary of the main divinities (Demeter and Core, Athena and Poseidon) of both localities. Athens' control over the Eleusinian, which might have been Solon's doing, is evidenced by the probable imposition of an Athenian priestly family –the Ceryces– in Eleusis at the beginning of the sixth century BC. Back then, the ritual of the transfer and the return of the *hierá* in a *pompé* would have begun at the same time that the sacred way was formalised.<sup>100</sup> However, the procession to Sciron led by the *Eteoboutadai* might predate the incorporation of the Mysteries into the city during the time of Solon, and its destination would have been the joint sanctuary of the Eleusinian goddesses and the Acropolitian gods near Sciron. The conflictive incorporation of Eleusis with its independent clergy was marked by moments of consensus and peace staged with a performance: a meeting between members of the Eleusinian and Acropolitian priesthoods in a place constructed as an “*eschatiá*” (the area of Sciron)<sup>101</sup> or at least the inclusion of the main cults of both localities in a joint sanctuary. The space between Athens and Eleusis was under “construction” at the time, still being a major point of transit, a “no man's land”, with all the dangers that this

<sup>93</sup> For this process, see Valdés 2012, 239-245, 294-298 (with further references).

<sup>94</sup> Plu. *Thest.* 10. Diocles in Eleusis: *h.Cer.* 153, 474, 477. Also, in Megara where there are games in honour of Diocles: *Ar. Ach.* 747 and scholium; Theoc. 12.27-33 and scholium (Theocritus says that he was a *xénos* from Eleusis in Megara). See Kearns 1989, 156. The hero chosen to represent Eleusis and other bordering areas of Attica in the Cleisthenic territorial system was Hippothoon (Paus. 1.5.2; Polignac 2011). The tomb of his mother, Alope, was remembered by Pausanias (1.39.3) on the road from Eleusis to Megara, also marked by the exploits of Theseus at least since the late 6th century, but his tribal shrine was situated on the road from Athens to Eleusis, just before crossing the eleusinian Cephissus and entering Eleusis itself (Paus. 1.38.4; Polignac 2011).

<sup>95</sup> Paus. 1.38.3.

<sup>96</sup> In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, the Mysteries (*orgia*: *h.Cer.* 477) are mentioned but not the eponymous of the Ceryces. For the dating the hymn: Richardson 1974, 11. See Valdés 2002, 223-227. *Contra* Sourvinou-Inwood (1997; 2003), who believes that Athens had already organised the cult of Eleusis since the middle of the eighth century BC and that its nature changed in early sixth century BC, acquiring an eschatological dimension.

<sup>97</sup> Valdés 2002, 209.

<sup>98</sup> Parker 2005, 175.

<sup>99</sup> See note 23. Also the Megarian hero in conflict with Theseus: see note 67.

<sup>100</sup> See note 15.

<sup>101</sup> Ellinger 1993, 86.

entailed. The procession took place during a festival characterised by the dissolution of order and reversal in the last month of the year, a month also linked to reversal, as Burkert has observed.<sup>102</sup> It is an *apompompé* whose staging is graphically described in Euripides' *Erechtheus*, when the king departed to fight against Eumolpus of Eleusis and, on his death, was "hidden within the earth by Poseidon",<sup>103</sup> identifying himself with this god in the Acropolitian cult.<sup>104</sup> In the *Erechtheus*, the war results in the sacrifice of the king's daughters, delivered up by Praxitea, his own mother and the wife of Erechtheus, as well as the establishment of the female priesthood of Athena Polias. Both priests, one of Erechtheus and the other of Polias, moved to a place that was sacred as a *mnéma* of this war and the Athenian victory, into which the most emblematic Eleusinian cults were integrated, that of the mother and the daughter in the place where Demeter has also been welcomed by Phytalus. There was a reversal, a dissolution, which entailed "the death of the king",<sup>105</sup> roughly equivalent to the death of an ox,<sup>106</sup> and which allowed for the establishment of a new order and the city's salvation. The myth of the confrontation between Eumolpus and Erechtheus, which is probably very ancient, was recuperated and/or comprehensively reworked by Euripides in the fifth century BC, perhaps with the novelty of the establishment (or revitalisation) of the cult of the Hyacinthides<sup>107</sup> in the city, in times of strife and peril during the Peloponnesian War.<sup>108</sup>

Despite not being the geographically intermediate border between Athens and Eleusis, which would rather correspond to Daphni or the Rheiti, Sciron was constructed in the imaginary of the Athenians as a place of *eschatía* and from whose perspective it was probably considered as the beginning of a no man's land (*metaichmíon*),<sup>109</sup> a *mnéma* of conflict and war and a place associated with licence, dice playing and divination, all elements linked to war.<sup>110</sup> By the same token, it was also constructed in the imaginary as a space of consensus, sacralised as a "meeting" place between two localities in conflict and their cults, thus remaining in the memory of all Athenians not only as a place of dissolution of order, but also of its possible restoration, salvation and victory.

## 4.2. The procession of the Eleusinian Mysteries

The second procession that took place on the road from Athens to Eleusis (some 21 km apart) was that of the Mysteries in Boedromion.<sup>111</sup> This *pompé*, which was

<sup>102</sup> Burkert 1983, 143-149.

<sup>103</sup> E. (*Erechtheus*) fr. 370N, 12-22 (Collard-Cropp 2008 = Fr. 65 Austin). Confining Erechtheus below the earth: II. 59-60.

<sup>104</sup> E. (*Erechtheus*) fr. 370 N, 93-94: "and on account of his killer he shall be called August Poseidon surnamed Erechtheus, by the citizens in their sacrifices of oxen". For the cult of Poseidon-Erechtheus: Paus. 1.26.5; *IG I<sup>2</sup>* 580 (460-445 BC); Hsch. s.v. Ἐρεχθεύς; Darthou 2005; Luce 2005.

<sup>105</sup> Burkert 1983, 149.

<sup>106</sup> Elderkin 1941, 116.

<sup>107</sup> For the Hyacinthids, see Mikalson 1976; Kearns 1989, 59-63, 201-202; Larson 1995, 102, 122-123; Kron 1999, 78. See E. *Erechtheus* (370 N or 65 Austin) II. 74-89. For the *katharmon* of these heroines: Gawlinski 2007, 47, 53 (face B, l. 17).

<sup>108</sup> Clairmont 1971, 490.

<sup>109</sup> A term appearing in a Solonian poem (Sol. fr. 37 W, l. 8): "I stood as a mark (*hóros*) in the midway in 'no man's land'" (trans. J. M. Edmonds).

<sup>110</sup> See notes 53 and 56. For divination linked to the war: Bremmer 1996.

<sup>111</sup> For this feast, see Mylonas 1961, 224-285; Burkert 1985, 285-290; Parker 2005, 342-360.



possibly established in the time Solon, involved the transfer of the *hierá* to the Athenian Eleusinion, escorted by the ephebes in classical times, on 14 Boedromion.<sup>112</sup> A few days later, the *hierá* were turned in procession to Eleusis on 19 and/or 20 Boedromion. As the dates are unclear (there are indications for both days), some authors, like Clinton, have postulated two *pompái*, one with the *hierá* on the 19th and another with Iacchus and the *mýstai* on the 20th<sup>113</sup> (although this does not seem likely, at least in origin). It was precisely during Boedromion, which was the month dedicated to war, that the struggles between Athens and Eleusis involving several heroes (Erechtheus, Ion and Theseus) were remembered in another festival, the Boedromia.<sup>114</sup> The conflict was followed by the restoration of order, relating to the memory of the war and its outcome. By acquiring the Eleusinian sacred things for a few days, Athens appropriated in some way the Mysteries, leaving local families like the Eumolpids as priests, but managing the procession from the Athenian Eleusinion, which seems to have existed since the seventh century BC,<sup>115</sup> and tasking a new Athenian family with controlling the Mysteries: the Ceryces.<sup>116</sup> In the procession, there were landmarks like the bridge over the river Cephissus, near Sciron, the place of the *gephyrismós*,<sup>117</sup> and the *Iaccheion*, perhaps integrated into a sanctuary of Demeter on the outskirts of Athens.<sup>118</sup> This is the place of Iacchus, known not only as the song or ritual shout (*Iacché*), as well as the *mystagogós* or leader in chief of the *pompé*, but also as the *alter ego* of the child Dionysus.<sup>119</sup> Iacchus resembled the officer “*dadouchos*” of the Ceryces family.<sup>120</sup> In Athens,

<sup>112</sup> Parker 2005, 346-347; Agelidis 2020, 181; Clinton 2020, 163-164.

<sup>113</sup> Regarding the *pompé*, see Mylonas 1961, 252-258; Burkert 1985, 286-287; Parker 2005, 348; Agelidis 2020. For two *pompái*, the first with the *hierá* accompanied by the priestesses, magistrates and the ephebes and the second with Iacchus and the *mýstai*: Clinton 1988, 70; 2020, 162-163 (with new arguments, this author recognised only one exception in the unique *pompé* organised by Alcibiades in times of war in 407 BC: p. 169); Sourvinou-Inwood 1997, 144-145; Robertson 1998 (with a different view); Nielsen 2017, 31. *Contra*: Graf 1996, 61-63. For the *pompé* (or *pompái*) see: *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1078, ll. 19-20 (on 19 Boedromion; but as it is a very late inscription –AD 220– it had possibly changed by that time); *Hdt.* 8.65; *Plu. Alc.* 34 (20 Boedromion also in *Plu. Cam.* 19); *Plu. Phoc.* 28; *sch. Ar. Ra.* 320, 399. The participation of the ephebes also in *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1006, l. 9. The similarities between *Plu. Alc.* 34.4 and *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1078, ll. 29-30 makes it probable, according to Parker (2005, 349, n. 93), that there was only one procession. But, as Clinton has argued, it might have derived from an exceptional situation in which both *pompái* were celebrated together because of the war. For a description of the *pompé* (only one day), see Bremmer 2014, 5-7.

<sup>114</sup> Parke 1977, 53-55; Simon 1983, 82. See Valdés 2002, 115-117.

<sup>115</sup> For this building complex, see Miles 1998.

<sup>116</sup> On the idea of the Ceryces as a family of Athenian origin, see Foucart 1914, 157; Mylonas 1961, 234; Garland 1984, 97. *Contra*: Sourvinou-Inwood 1997, n. 26; Valdés 2004. For the Eleusinian priesthoods: Clinton 1974. On the control of the Mysteries by Athens: Clinton 2020, 161.

<sup>117</sup> See note 49.

<sup>118</sup> *Plu. Aristid.* 27.3; *Paus.* 1.2.4.

<sup>119</sup> Eleusinian *Pompé* and Iacchus: *Ar. Ran.* 316-459. A shout or ritual song associated with the child Dionysus: *E. Palamedes* (fr. 586 Nauck<sup>2</sup> = *Str.* 10.3.13). As a child at the breast of Baubo: *Clem. Al. Protr.* 2.21.1; in *Lucr. De Nat.* 4.1168. *Sud. s.v. Ἰακχος*. Strabo (10.3.10) mentions that the name of Iacchus is given to both Dionysus and the *archegetes* of the Mysteries. In *The Frogs* by Aristophanes, Iacchus is Dionysus himself and the one who leads the *mýstai*, star of light (324-336); Iacchus as a ritual song in Dionysiac frenzy of the Bacchae: *E. Cyc.* 69-70; *Ba.* 725. Iacchus linked to the *liknon*: *Serv. Georg.* 1.166. For Iacchus as Dionysos in the Eleusinian context: Graf 1974, 51-52. For the statue of Iacchus led in the procession on a wagon: Clinton 2020, 268 (according to this author 20 Boedromion, the day after the ephebes had escorted the *hierá* to Eleusis).

<sup>120</sup> Both are crowned with myrtle and carry torches: *Plu. Arist.* 27; *Paus.* 1.2.4; Kerényi 1967, 79 (Iacchus in the role of the *dadouchos*); Garland 1984, 99; Sfameni Gasparro 1986, 46-48. For the crowns of myrtle worn by the initiates and priests of Eleusis: Agelidis 2020, 182; Istros *FGrHist* 334 F 29.



Iacchus was venerated in other rites such as the Lenaia in which the *dadouchos*, together with the *basileus*, also played a role. The seemingly ancient role of “torchbearer” in the Athenian festival of Dionysus would have been performed by a member of a family or families that surrounded and served the *basileús* in Athens itself,<sup>121</sup> before his ordainment as “*dadouchos*” in Eleusis, at the same time as the figure of “hieroceryx” was established, plausibly at the beginning of the sixth century BC. The “scream/song” of Iacchus, coming from the Dionysian ritual environment in Athens, was incorporated, along with the Ceryces, in Eleusis and in the Athenian procession.<sup>122</sup> The *pompé* would have been accompanied by “sacrifices, libations, dances, paian” performed at the landmarks, converted into resting places on the long journey to Eleusis.<sup>123</sup> The procession included elements of *miasma* and reversal,<sup>124</sup> such as the need for purification, fasting<sup>125</sup> and ritualised insults (*gephyrismós*).<sup>126</sup> These elements were, however, integrated into the regulated and orderly celebration linking both localities, already pacified and united. The procession allowed Athens to represent in a performance its control not only over Eleusis, but also over its Mysteries. The chorus of the *mýstai* (men and women)<sup>127</sup> was an orderly affair and, although Eleusinian and Athenian officers and priests participated in the *pompé*, it was organised by Athens.<sup>128</sup> The fundamental institution through which Athens began to control the Mysteries –presumably since the time of Solon– was the *Boulé*, located in the new Agora of the Ceramicus, through which the procession would have passed on the Panathenaic way from the Athenian Eleusinion, the sanctuary from where it began and where documents concerning the management of the Mysteries were deposited.<sup>129</sup>

Just as Eleusis and the cult of Demeter, as well as its Mysteries, were elements essential to Athenian identity-building, so too was the road to Eleusis and the procession of the Mysteries central to shaping the memory of its constitution as a polis through conflict, compact and victory. The festival would also acquire, from an early stage (with the tyrants),<sup>130</sup> huge international fame.

<sup>121</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 479 and scholium (*PMG* 879 Page). See Valdés 2020, 155.

<sup>122</sup> Valdés 2002, 77-79, 180-182; 2004.

<sup>123</sup> Plu. *Alc.* 34.4; *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1078, ll. 29-30; Ar. *Ra.* 316; Parker 2005, 349; Bremmer 2014, 6; Agelidis 2020, 183.

<sup>124</sup> Bremmer 2014, 7.

<sup>125</sup> Agelidis 2020, 181-183.

<sup>126</sup> Agelidis 2020, 185-186. This author emphasises the “gradual disengagement of people from their socially determined position resulting in a relocation of the focus back on the individual” in the procession to Eleusis and the idea that the *pompé* in this case can be classified as both a “sacred travel” and a procession (2020, 185-187).

<sup>127</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 316-416.

<sup>128</sup> On the intervention of some Athenian officials, like the *basileús* and *epimélétai*, see Arist. *Ath.* 57.1. See Clinton 2020, 166-168. Regarding the religious figures probably involved in the *pompé* (or *pompai*, according to Clinton): *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1092; Clinton 2020, 168-169.

<sup>129</sup> Solon’s regulations concerning the Mysteries and the *Boulé*: And. 1.111. The *Boulé* was in charge, together with *Heliaea*, of controlling and sanctioning any infraction committed during the celebration of the Mysteries, as evidenced by an extant fragment of a law on the Mysteries, found in the Eleusinion (380-350 BC): Clinton 1980, 279-280. For the role of the *Boulé*, see Valdés 2002, 27, n. 74 (with other sources and bibliography). Regarding the intervention of the archon *basileús* in the sacrifices at Eleusis the day after the *pompé*, see *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 847, ll. 13-16; Bremmer 2014, 8.

<sup>130</sup> Valdés 2004.

### 4.3. The *pompé* to Delphi

Lastly, mention should go to the procession of the Pythaistai to Delphi because the first stage probably coincides with the sacred way to Eleusis.<sup>131</sup> It is likely that the Pythais, the delegation sent sporadically whenever there was lightning over Harma,<sup>132</sup> became official in the sixth century with or after Solon, thus re-establishing good relations with Delphi and its oracle.<sup>133</sup> This stage of the road to Eleusis, which was one of the natural routes from Athens to Delphi, was constructed also in relation to the mission to Delphi,<sup>134</sup> specifically at the sanctuary of Apollo situated between Sciron and the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Daphni.

The link between Aphrodite in Athens and Apollo on the banks of the river Ilissos –from where the mission to Delphi, in the Pythion, would have departed<sup>135</sup>– was reproduced on the road to Eleusis at the sanctuaries of Aphrodite and Apollo in Daphni.<sup>136</sup> Machaira<sup>137</sup> has also highlighted the coincidence of cults in the topography of this sacred route (Eleusinian goddesses, Aphrodite, Pan and Apollo) with those found on the north side of the Acropolis (Eleusinion, Apollo Hypoakraios, Pan and Aphrodite) and on the river Ilissos (Aphrodite, Pythion, Meter and Pan). Daphni's Pythion was associated with elements inherent to war, such as the Sciron area linked to a *mántis* and to the war between Athens and Eleusis. Pausanias<sup>138</sup> alludes to the legend of the foundation of the temple of Apollo in Daphni in the place where a “triere” was seen navigating on land. In the myth, this place is described as one of those through which Apollo passed on his journey from Athens to Delphi, acquiring civilising features, exploited by Athens, in relation to agriculture and road construction.<sup>139</sup> In the Athenian imaginary, this sanctuary on the road to Eleusis embodied its official relationship with Delphi, which it monopolised and centralised as of the sixth century, for it seems that before then perhaps other localities in Attica might have had their own independent delegations to the oracle.<sup>140</sup> Athens controlled

<sup>131</sup> For this route, see Daverio Rocchi 2002. This author believes that the route started at the sanctuary of Apollo, also known as the Pythion, on the Acropolis. The situation of the Pythion in the city is problematic. Some see it in this place (Travlos 1971, 9) but others on the banks of the river Ilissos (Greco 2016, 164-165). See recently for this mission: Pirisino 2015 (who proposes an alternative route through Mount Parnes) and Kühn 2018.

<sup>132</sup> Str. 9.2.11 (404); Hsch. s.v. ἀστραπή δι' ἄρματος; *LSCG* 17, B y C; Kühn 2018, 112-124.

<sup>133</sup> Solon's activity was supported by the oracle: Parke – Wormell 1956, vol I, 110-112; David 1985, 9; Malkin 1989, 129-153.

<sup>134</sup> A fourth-century *hóros* with the inscription: “Marker of the Sacred Road by which the Pythais proceeds to Delphi”; see Parsons 1943, 237.

<sup>135</sup> See note 131.

<sup>136</sup> Despinis 2011; Greco 2016.

<sup>137</sup> Machaira 2008, 148; 2018.

<sup>138</sup> Paus. 1.37.6. Musti – Beschi (1982, 408-409) hold that this place is an old border landmark. For this Pythion, see Mylonas 1961, 255. See note 131.

<sup>139</sup> Ephor. *FGrHist* 70 311 (=Str. 9.3.12). See also A. *Eu.* 12-14; Daverio Rocchi 2002, 150, 152-154 (Apollo as an agent of civilisation in relation to agriculture and road construction). See also Karila-Cohen 2005, 222-224, 227.

<sup>140</sup> For the *theoría* to Delphi in general, see: Boëthius 1918; Parker 2005, 83-88; Rutherford 2013, 222-230. The *theoría* from the Tetrapolis of Marathon that could be a reminiscence of an independent relationship with Delphi before the unification: Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 75. The role of the *kolakretai* and the naucraric fund (in Solon's legislation: Arist. *Ath.* 8.3) in the *theoría*: Androt. *FGrHist* 324 F 36: sch. Ar. *Av.* 1541. The *theoría* in the Nicomachean code: Lambert 2002, 363, 370-371; Rutherford 2013, 376-377. The *theoría* to Delphi organised for the first time in Solonian Athens, postulated by Jacoby 1949, 31.

the territory as far as Eleusis, while also maintaining a special relationship with Attica as a whole, from the political centre –the *ásty*– with the oracle of Delphi.

The way to Eleusis was doubly sacred because it led to the sanctuary of Demeter and to the oracle of Delphi,<sup>141</sup> but its control, despite the concessions made to Eleusis, was in the hands of the Athenians.

The sixth century BC brought the curtain down on a conflictive and prolonged process of integration and “domestication” of a territory of *eschatía* and in that process the civilisation of rites and cults of reversion played an essential role. These cults and rituals were introduced into the polis in an orderly and controlled manner, in a spatial context in which elements of dissolution and reversal coexisted with those of civilisation and order, and in which the community’s cultural memory was constructed with the help of a number of landmarks or “*lieux de mémoire*”.

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<sup>141</sup> Daverio Rocchi 2002.

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