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ΣΠΛΑΓΧΝΟΠΤΗΣ

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ΣΠΛΑΓΧΝÓΠΤΗΣ

The elder Pliny knows of a bronze statue called *Σπλαγχνόπτης* "Roaster-of-inwards", representing a young slave so occupied; a similar figure appears on Attic vases, both black-figure and red-figure. The statue must have stood in or near the Acropolis precinct of Athena 'Υγίεια "Health", for it was said to commemorate the healing of the slave by this goddess, in one account after he took a fall from an Acropolis building. So much is generally known and granted. It remains to show that the "Roaster-of-inwards" seen in the statue is not a generic figure but one especially appropriate to the cult of Athena Hygieia. Let us consider first the statue (§ I), then Athena's healing function (§ II), and finally the mode of sacrifice that she prefers (§ III).

I

Pliny describes the young slave as *exta torrens ignemque oris pleni spiritu accendens* "roasting the inwards and kindling the fire with the breath of his puffed-out face" (*Nat. Hist.* XXXIV 81). On the vases it is usually a boy, presumably a slave, who holds the spitted inwards above the fire; in other scenes he carries them up to the altar.¹ The inwards are never recognizable as individual organs (heart, lungs, liver, spleen, kidneys); they appear as a bundle, evidently wrapped in the *omentum*. Sometimes the bundle is rather long, being stretched along the spit; it might contain all the organs of a given victim. More often it is a smaller bundle at the end of the spit; the contents would then be less. There were different ways of dealing with the organs. In a regular sacrifice some were burnt up on the altar, and less was left for roasting. We shall come back to this in § III.

¹ G. Rizza, "Una nuova pelike a figure rosse e lo 'splanchnoptes' di Styppax", *ASAtene* 37-38 (1959-60) 321-345. Cf. J.-L. Durand in M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant (eds.), *La Cuisine du sacrifice en pays grecque* (Paris 1979) 148-150, and again *Sacrifice et labour en grèce ancienne* (Paris 1986) 117-118, 132-133, 137-143; M.H. Jameson in M. Cropp et al. (eds.), *Greek Tragedy and its Legacy. Essays Presented to D. Conacher* (Calgary 1986) 59-61; F.T. Van Straten, *Hiera Kala. Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Leiden 1995) 131-139, 189-190; J. Bremmer in S. Settis (ed.), *I Greci I* (Turin 1996) 262-263.

The label "Splanchnoptes" for the statue is given twice by Pliny, in this description and when he recounts the healing miracle (XXII 44). It is probably a popular rather than a learned term. With the latter, the *nomen agentis* of ὀπτῶω should be *ὀπτητήρ, not -οπτης.² Since the ending belongs mostly to the many common words for "watching" something, the roaster was perhaps also thought of as a "watcher-of-inwards".³ The figure on the vases always watches closely (as indeed he should) the bundle he is holding above the fire.

The statue may go back to the later fifth century, and so to the early days of the cult of Athena Hygieia: it is hard to be sure. The sculptor, Styppax of Cyprus, was known solely for this work, says Pliny (XXXIV 81). But Styppax, rarest of names, is also on record as the contriver of the *hippaphesis* at Olympia, the starting gate of the Hippodrome (*Laterc. Alex.* col. 8.16).⁴ Rather oddly, Pausanias credits the same *hippaphesis*, which he describes at length, to Cleoetas son of Aristocles, and also quotes, from "a statue at Athens", an epigram in which Cleoetas commemorates his achievement (VI 20.14 [Page, *FGE* CLXVIII]). And whereas Cleoetas by his own account "invented" the *hippaphesis*, Pausanias also mentions one Aristeides for a later improvement.⁵ Now Cleoetas was likewise a sculptor, producing a work that Pausanias saw on the Acropolis (I 24.3). Cleoetas' son Aristocles, named like his grandfather, produced a work that Pausanias saw at Olympia (V 24.5). At Athens, again, several surviving statue bases and also a tombstone, all dated by the lettering to the later sixth century, are signed by a sculptor or sculptors named Aristocles.⁶ Since Pausanias' family of sculptors is probably Athenian and confers the name Aristocles in alternate generations, it is more likely than not that the family includes the epigraphic sculptor or sculptors. He or they would be earlier, but not by so very much: a given family does not keep its distinction for many generations. It is feasible to assign Cleoetas to the later fifth century, and to suppose that Cyprian Styppax was a colleague and, at Olympia, a collaborator.⁷ Admittedly, these conclusions are far from secure. Cleoetas could be earlier or later, and Styppax could in any case be later than he, if like Aristeides he merely improved the original *hippaphesis*.

II

The healing miracle locates the figure of Splanchnoptes in or near the precinct of Athena Hygieia and illustrates her worship. In one version the miracle does not concern this figure at all, but rather a bronze statue of the goddess which Pericles set up in gratitude (Plut. *Per.* 13.12-13). Here the injured person is a valuable workman who fell from the Propylaea during its construction; Athena appeared in a dream and prescribed the remedy. The statue in question is doubtless the one that stood on a circular base, signed by the sculptor Pyrrhus, beside the southeastern column of the east porch of the Propylaea (*IG* I³ 506, "paullo post a. 433").⁸ As the inscription shows, it was dedicated to Athena Hygieia at just this pe-

² Callimachus furnishes a correct form, ὀπτήτειρα κάμινος (*Hec.* fr. 268 Pfeiffer [93 Hollis]). "Roasting" words in -οπτης are proletarian, e.g. ἀρόπτης ("baker" or "bread-pan") and γαστροόπτης ("sausage-pan").

³ E.g. αὐτόπτης ("eye-witness"), πανόπτης ("all-seeing"), προόπτης ("scout"), ὑπερόπτης ("disdainful"), ὑπόπτης ("wary"). Ἱερόπτης ("Watcher-of-rites") is a good Athenian name (*LGPN* II s.v. 1-5), and Cassius Dio thus renders *haruspex*, but the πλάγχνοπτης does not "watch" the inwards in the same sense, i.e. inspect them for omens.

⁴ G. Lippold, *RE* IV A 1 (1931) 454 s.v. Styppax, equates the two bearers of the name without hesitation. *LGPN* I s.v. Τύππαξ 1-2 is more cautious (while firmly assigning the sculptor to the fifth century).

⁵ Lippold *loc. cit.* (n. 4) thinks of all concerned, Styppax and Cleoetas and Aristeides, as "bronze-founders", as if this technique were essential to the *hippaphesis*.

⁶ *IG* I³ 1009, "c. a. 550-540?"; *IG* I³ 1218, "c. a. 510" (Hansen, *CEG* I 50); ?1218 bis, "c. a. 510?"; 1229, "c. a. 510-500?" (*CEG* I 54); ?1229 bis, "c. a. 510?"; 1256, "c. a. 510?"; 1344, "c. a. 525-520?". *LGPN* II registers the first item as Ἀριστοκλής 2, all the rest as Ἀριστοκλής 3.

⁷ Page's heading to *FGE* CLXVIII says "date unknown; probably V/IV B.C.", and his discussion is inconclusive. Yet he omits to mention the epigraphic Aristocles(s). Frazer, *Pausanias* III 635-636, was inclined to identify the epigraphic Aristocles (already known from two items) with Cleoetas' father, so that Cleoetas himself would belong to "the early part of the fifth century B.C." If this is right, Styppax with his statue Splanchnoptes can hardly be contemporary.

⁸ For the position of the base (and of other features, altar and offering table, which we come to below), see Frazer, *Pausanias* II 278 (a plan, after R. Bohn); W. Judeich, *Topographie von Athen* (Munich² 1931) 243 fig. 27 (the same, more com-

riod, though by "the Athenians" at large, not by Pericles alone.⁹ The statue then suggested the story. And the story may have arisen almost as soon as the statue was erected, for it conveys a lesson of contemporary interest, that Athena herself gave assistance in the construction of the Propylaea (so Plutarch). In the other versions it is a household slave of Pericles who takes a fall; the healing is commemorated with a statue of the slave, Splanchnoptes. These versions are plainly secondary, departing ever further from the other. In Pliny the slave is still engaged in construction on the Acropolis, but of a "temple", and he falls from the roof-top (*Nat. Hist.* XXII 44).¹⁰ In other sources he is sleep-walking on a roof-top (Pyrrho the Sceptic *apud* Diog. Laert. IX 82), or climbing an olive-tree (Hieronymus fr. 19 Wehrli).¹¹ Pliny preserves a detail that is likely to go back to the first version, with the workman. The remedy prescribed in the dream was an herb called Parthenium. The herb is a specific for injuries caused by a fall (so Pliny), and was said to grow round the Acropolis (Plut. *Sull.* 13.3).

Athena Hygieia heals by dreams, like many healing deities. In Aristophanes' *Knights* the Paphlagonian and the Sausage-seller report rival dreams about Athena anointing Demos with a magic liquid (lines 1090-1095). In the Paphlagonian's dream, she poured down πλουθυγία "Wealth and Health" with a bath-ladle. In the Sausage-seller's, "she came from the Polis [i.e. Acropolis], and an owl perched on her", and she shed ambrosia on Demos, but garlic-brine on the Paphlagonian. Both the dreaming and the details evoke our cult.¹² The goddess who gives health can also bring harm. She did so in the war between Octavian and Antony. According to Cassius Dio (LIV 7.3), a certain statue of Athena on the Acropolis turned round from east to west, i.e. favoured Octavian instead of Antony, and spat blood, i.e. inflicted a wasting illness on the city. It was obviously Athena Hygieia.¹³ Her will was done some years after Octavian's victory, when he visited Greece and penalized Athens in a new dispensation (so Dio). The Athenians sought to placate him by setting up a statue of Livia in the precinct, with the title Σεβαστή Ὑγεία "Augusta Health" (*IG* II² 3240).

III

When healing is wanted, a healing deity is approached with sacrifice. The story of Pericles dreaming about the injured workman or slave may indicate that individuals applied to Athena privately. Or it may not; for in the earlier versions the injury and the healing have to do with an Acropolis building project. In Aristophanes and Dio, the dreams and the sign are about Demos and the city. At all events, Lycurgus' law on the Lesser Panathenaea prescribes a sacrifice to Athena Hygieia, perhaps the very first at the festival (*IG* II² 334 + [Schwenk, *Athens in the Age of Alexander* 17 B], 9).¹⁴ The arrangements for sacri-

plete); J. Travlos, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Athens* (New York 1971) 126 fig. 170 (a photograph). Athena's feet were set well apart, but otherwise the appearance of the statue is unknown. For various suggestions, see C. Picard, *La Sculpture grecque II. Période Classique, Ve siècle* (Paris 1939) II 547-551. For a possible Archaic predecessor, see n. 17 below.

⁹ Plutarch as usual "substitutes his hero for a less specific agent": P.A. Stadter *ad loc.*

¹⁰ Pliny's "temple" may be the Parthenon, or just a slip for the Propylaea. If it is the Parthenon, we must not suppose, as Lippold does (n. 4 above), that Splanchnoptes stood close to it. It was close to Athena Hygieia, else it would not have been associated with a healing miracle.

¹¹ The strange uses to which the story is put by these philosophers indicate how banal it had become.

¹² The passage has been scouted by some critics, but C.A. Anderson, *TAPA* 121 (1991) 149-155, shows that it fits the play well. It is still more apt when we remember that Athena Hygieia was known for dreams of healing benison.

¹³ See Robertson in J. Neils (ed.), *Worshipping Athena. Panathenaia and Parthenon* (Madison 1976) 47-48.

¹⁴ It is the first to be mentioned, and with the sacrifice "in the Old Temple" (according to an agreed and certain restoration) provides portions of meat for officials and processioners, whereas the sacrifices to Athena Polias "at the great altar of Athena" and to Athena Nike at her own altar (just one animal) provide meat for a general distribution. "The Old Temple", scil. the so-called "Erechtheum" which is built upon the most ancient cult-site, has a quite substantial altar in the north porch, "the altar of the Thyechoos" in the building accounts. The indications on the floor and in the accounts (at least four orthostate blocks) show that it was considerably larger than the altar of Athena Hygieia described below (2.21 x 1.45 m. according to Judeich). So these first two sacrifices need not be on the same scale, no more than the sacrifices to Athena Polias and Athena Nike. All the same, they are both leading elements of the festival. But the sacrifice "at the great altar" will be traditional too, for this is the altar in front of the Dörpfeld temple, the predecessor of the Parthenon. Lycurgus has merely contrived a new source of funding.

fice, an altar and an offering table, can still be traced on the ground. The offering table was right in front of Pyrrhus' statue, which looked to the east; the altar was a little further east.¹⁵ Both were of marble and are represented by existing marble bases or steps. The altar was renowned. Plutarch situates the statue, Pyrrhus', "beside the altar, which was there even before, as they say" (*Per.* 13.13). Aelius Aristeides ascribes the altar to "the earliest Athenians" (*37 Athena* 20 Lenz-Behr).¹⁶

It is true that the arrangements we trace on the ground, the arrangements seen by Plutarch and Aristeides and also Pausanias (I 23.4), are the result of evolution. On the evidence of two inscribed dedications, both by potters (*ARV*² 1556, Callis; *IG* I³ 824 [*CEG* I 271], Euphronius), the cult goes back to the early fifth century at least;¹⁷ if Aristeides knew anything, it was much older. In any case, the precinct must have been transformed by the construction of the Propylaea. The altar on the ground is assigned to the late fifth century, after this construction, and can hardly antedate Pyrrhus' statue; it may of course occupy the same site as an earlier altar. Since Pyrrhus' statue is labelled as a dedication, it was not meant to be the recipient of cult, but was so treated when the offering table was placed in front, at an indeterminate date. It is sometimes assumed that an authentic cult statue stood elsewhere in the precinct.¹⁸ That seems most unlikely. For Plutarch, Pyrrhus' statue is the one "beside the altar"; facing east, it is surely the statue of Dio's portent; and it is surely the statue of "Athena with Hygieia as an epithet" which Pausanias selects for mention, together with a statue of Asclepius' like-named daughter. Accordingly, there is no reason to think that the cult itself, or the notion of the presiding deity, somehow changed in the course of time. The altar and the offering table are staple furnishings, though the ones we know were not the first of the kind.

An offering table is a much less common fixture than an altar.¹⁹ Whereas offerings are burnt up on an altar so that they ascend to a deity some way off, they are laid on a table to be enjoyed by a deity who is present. Here the table is placed right in front of Athena *qua* statue. Table offerings are typical of healing cults, since the deity must come to the scene, as in a dream, in order to heal.²⁰ The offerings may be either cakes or meat. If the latter, the favourite portion by far is the inwards, *splanchna*.²¹ At the be-

¹⁵ For details, see Frazer, *Pausanias* II 278-281; Judeich, *Topographie*² 242-244.

¹⁶ If the sacrifice to Athena Hygieia was the first of the series, and was a prelude to dreams such as those of Pericles and the Paphlagonian and the Sausage-seller, it was likely offered on the evening before the procession and the other sacrifices, when the torch-racers brought the fresh fire. Such a prominent occasion might well be carried back in fancy to "the earliest Athenians".

¹⁷ The name "Athena Hygieia" should be restored in the last line of Euphronius' dedication; see S.B. Aleshire, *The Athenian Asklepieion* (Amsterdam 1989) 12 n. 1. On the dating of both items, see H.A. Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art* (Kilchberg 1993) 125. The striding Athena of Panathenaic vases (unwarrantably called "Promachos") may depict an Archaic statue of Athena Hygieia; that would explain why the potters were so fond of her.

¹⁸ So Frazer, *Pausanias* II 281; Judeich, *Topographie*² 244.

¹⁹ See H. Mischkowski, *Die heiligen Tische im Götterkultus der Griechen und Römer* (Königsberg 1917); S. Dow and D.H. Gill, *AJA* 69 (1965) 103-114; B. Levick, *JHS* 91 (1971) 80-84; Gill, *HTHR* 67 (1974) 117-137.

²⁰ The following examples are all from the cult of Asclepius: Ar. *Plut.* 676-678; *LSAM* 24 A (*IvErythrai* 205.13-25); *SIG*³ 1007 (*LSAM* 13) lines 12-16; *AltPergamon* VIII 3 no. 161, 1-8; L. Beschi, *ASAtene* 45-46 (1967-68) 398-400, 404 fig. 12, and *AAA* 15 (1982) 31-33, 41-42, Telemachus' relief; Van Straten, *Hiera Kala* (n. 1) 70 with fig. 70, an Athenian votive relief. At Athens and Peiraeus inscriptions also speak of "adorning", κοσμεῖν, Asclepius' table. In Mischkowski's general collection of sculptural and epigraphic instances (n. 19 above), Asclepius with 7 had more than any other Greek deity. All the numbers would now be greatly increased, and Asclepius might be even further ahead of the rest.

²¹ Besides the literal expression παρατιθέναι ἐπὶ τὴν τράπεζαν. . . καὶ πλάγχνα "lay out such and such, including the *splanchna*, on the table", which occurs very often (so e.g. *LSAM* 24 A as cited above), there is also a figurative one for the *splanchna* alone, δίδόναι πλάγχνα τὰ εἰς χεῖρας, or τὰ εἰς χεῖρας καὶ γόνατα "give the *splanchna*, those for the hands", or "those for the hands and the knees", of the deity in question (inscriptions of Chios, and also Ar. *Av.* 518-519, citing νόμος at Athens). This has been taken to mean that the *splanchna* are placed on the outstretched hands of a standing image, or on the knees of a seated one: F. Puttkammer, *Quo modo Graeci victimarum carnes distribuerint* (Königsberg 1912) 21-22; L. Ziehen, *RE* XVIII 1 (1939) 617 s.v. Opfer 1; F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte* (Vevey 1985) 40-41; Van Straten, *Hiera Kala* (n. 1) 132-133. Such a drastic procedure is not only unlikely in itself, but inconsistent with the fuller form of the expression, un-

gining of a regular sacrifice some were burnt up on the altar, and the rest were roasted and eaten straightway by the worshippers; partaking of the *splanchna* was synonymous with festive cheer and fellowship.²² This general custom dictated the preference for *splanchna* as table offerings, a special custom in certain cults. It is the latter that is advertised by the statue of Splanchnoptes.

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less we suppose that a seated statue also had outstretched hands, and received a double helping of *splanchna*. It is rather that the deity is imagined to be seated at the table, with hands and knees ready for the *splanchna*.

²² See P. Stengel, *Opferbräuche der Griechen* (Leipzig 1910) 73-78; Ziehen, *RE* XVIII 1, 616-619. Homer in his formulaic description of sacrifice always mentions the eating, but never the burning, of the *splanchna*. It is hard to decide whether the omission was true to life in early days: Stengel and Ziehen take opposite views.