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# THE EXPOSURE OF CHILDREN AT ATHENS
## AND THE ἐγχυτρίστριαι

### BY H. BOLKESTEIN

#### PRELIMINARY NOTE

The opinion which had already been expressed more than once in earlier publications (see the literature cited by Blümner, *Privatalter-tümer*[3], p. 77) that, to get rid of undesired children, the Greeks have used to a large extent the expedient of exposing new-born infants has been treated more recently and in a fuller way by Glotz (*Dictionnaire des Antiquités, s.v.,* "Expositio") and has since found general acceptance. After a renewed investigation of the whole problem and the arguments which have been put forward, I have come to the following conclusion: That no fact can be pointed out, nor an utterance cited, as regards the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. which could be used as a proof that the exposure of infants by their parents was a common thing in Athens; that, on the contrary, indications are to be found which justify the drawing of the opposite conclusion. By a coincidence Professor Van Hook has also, as I found out after the writing of my article, devoted a study to the same subject, the results of which have been published in Volume LI of the *Transactions of the American Philological Association*. His conclusions are so similar to those of the first, more general, part of my article, that in concert with the editor, the publishing of that part in this periodical has been omitted. In the following part a special question, which has been left aside by Professor Van Hook in his study, is investigated.

When inquiring into the extent which the phenomenon of the exposure of infants is said to have had at Athens, one meets with a generally adduced fact, which, if it proved to be true, would be capable of silencing all doubt.

It is maintained that the children exposed were generally placed in a pot, χύτρα, for this purpose; so often did this occur, that the

function had become an occupation, almost a profession for the women who discharged it, "in-potters," ἐγχυτρίστριαι. If, indeed, a regular occupation could develop from the custom of exposure, the latter must have assumed extraordinary proportions, and if, moreover, such a coarse, heartless expression for this occupation was usual, then it is evident that, for an Athenian father and mother, the killing of their child was a matter of indifference. Zimmern urges mitigating circumstances: "We have no right to cast stones either at him or his fellows. They were the victims of social forces, like the thousands of civilized working mothers who are forced to neglect their babies today"; in view of the ever-threatening disaster of overpopulation and poverty "it was more merciful in the long run."[1] I doubt whether, by this comparison and apology, he has brought his readers to what he calls the historian's duty, namely "to understand and sympathize"; in most cases, presumably, the prevailing feeling will not be that of sympathy. Generally speaking, however, our judgment is only of subsidiary importance; and we most certainly ought not to regard as impossible, or even improbable, what seems to us hideous and incomprehensible. But what ought to inspire us with legitimate suspicion as to this supposed custom is, that it does not agree with, nay, even flatly contradicts what we have learned, from other sources, to regard as the Athenian view of exposure; there is accordingly double reason for testing the data of tradition concerned, with great accuracy, as to their trustworthiness.

They are derived exclusively from ancient interpreters of Aristophanes, and their statements here, as indeed invariably, have been uncritically accepted by the old lexicographers. In *The Wasps* the chorus says, among other things (vss. 286 ff.):

> ἀλλ᾽ ὦγαθ᾽ ἀνίστασο μηδ᾽ οὕτω σεαυτὸν
> ἔσθιε μηδ᾽ ἀγανάκτει.
> καὶ γὰρ ἀνὴρ παχὺς ἥκει τῶν προδόντων τἀπὶ Θρᾴκης
> ὃν ὅπως ἐγχυτριεῖς.

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[1] Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth*, p. 325, Leopold Schmidt, *Die Ethik der alten Griechen*, II, 138, mentions, as some excuse, "das Vertrauen auf die Gutherzigkeit megarischer Familien, welche nach der Angabe eines Grammatikers (Cramer, *Anecdd. Oxon.*, III, 193: ἐκτιθέντων γάρ, φησί, ᾽Αθηναίων τὰ γένη Μεγαρεῖς ἀναιρούμενοι ἔτρεφον) sich solcher Findlinge gern annahmen."

As to this last word, the scholiast notes:[1]

ἀντὶ τοῦ παρεπομένου. μετενήνοχεν δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν ταῖς χύτραις ἐκτιθε-
μένων βρεφῶν. R. ἀπὸ τῶν ἐκτιθεμένων παιδίων ἐν χύτραις. διὸ καὶ Σοφοκλῆς
ἀποκτείνειν χυτρίζειν ἔλεγεν ἐν Πριάμῳ, καὶ Αἴσχυλος Λαΐῳ καὶ Φερεκράτης.
ὅθεν καὶ ἐγχυτριστρίας[2] ἐκάλουν τὰς διακονουμένας τὰ βρέφη. καὶ νῦν οὖν
ὡς ἐπὶ ἀπωλείας τοῦ κριθησομένου ἔθηκε τὴν λέξιν. παρ' ὅσον τὰ ἐκτιθέμενα ἢ
εἰς ὄρος ἢ εἰς ἔρημον τόπον βάλλεται. V.

When, in *The Frogs* Aeschylus, speaking about Oedipus, says of
the latter

ὅτε δὴ πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὸν γενόμενον,
χειμῶνος ὄντος ἐξέθεσαν ἐν ὀστράκῳ,

the scholium explains: τὸ δὲ ἐν ὀστράκῳ, ἐπεὶ ἐν χύτραις ἐξετίθεσας
τὰ παιδία. διὸ καὶ χυτρίζειν ἔλεγον. Finally, the statement is
made, in connection with one of the tales which Mnesilochus nar-
rates in the assembly of women (*Thesmoph.* 502 ff.):

ἐτέραν δ' ἐγῷδ' ἢ 'φασκεν ὠδίνειν γυνή
δέχ' ἡμέρας, ἕως ἐπρίατο παιδίον·
ὁ δ' ἀνὴρ περιήρχετ' ὠκυτόκι' ὠνούμενος,
τὸ δ' εἰσέφερε γραῦς ἐν χύτρᾳ τὸ παιδίον,
ἵνα μὴ βοῴη, κηρίῳ βεβυσμένον.

The scholium here runs: ὅτι ἐν χύτρᾳ τὰ παιδία ἐξετίθεσαν.[3] It
need scarcely be said that in this last case the statement, which has
nothing to do with the matter, has been simply dragged in; in the
scholium on the passage from *The Frogs*, too, it may be observed
that the so-called illustration of the exposure of Oedipus ἐν ὀστράκῳ
does not amount to much more than a generalization of a particular
fact, of which not a single further instance is known. (Euripides'
*Ion* is exposed by his mother in a little basket.) The note on the
verb ἐγχυτρίζειν in *The Wasps* merits a closer scrutiny. In this
scholium, two different things should be clearly distinguished: the
assurance that this word is used for φονεύειν, ἀποκτείνειν ; and the
interpretation of this metaphorical significance. For the first
statement, the writer quotes examples from Sophocles, Aeschylus, and

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[1] I give the scholium as printed by Dindorf.

[2] As to the other version, ἐγχύτρεια, see below, p. 236.

[3] The interpretation has been adopted by all lexicographers, e.g., Hesychius:
ἐνχυτρίζειν· ἐκτιθέναι βρέφος ἐν χύτρᾳ ; Moeris: ἐγχυτρισμὸς ἡ τοῦ βρέφους ἔκθεσις·
ἐπεὶ ἐν χύτραις ἐξετίθεντο.

Pherecrates; by an unlucky chance, however, not one of them has come down to us, on which account, verification on our part is impossible; but it is not very likely that the scholiast, seeking to support his statement in this manner, would have made any serious mistake; and there is accordingly no serious reason to doubt that ἐγχυτρίζειν was used in the sense of "to kill."

The case is otherwise as regards the explanation of this figurative use; for this he is unable to adduce a single reason—presumably it rests upon no other basis than the illegitimate generalization from the case of Oedipus, as related in Aristophanes, suggested by an incorrect derivation of the word ἐγ-χυτρ-ίζειν itself. It is nothing but a conjecture, and a conjecture which, after a little consideration, must be rejected as most improbable; for, after all, how should a word which means, literally, *the exposure of little children* come to signify *the killing of full-grown persons*, as in the case in the passage of Aristophanes which has given rise to this "interpretation"?

Happily, we need not confine ourselves to the expression of strong doubt; the scholiasts refer us, among other things, to the existence of ἐγχυτρίστριαι, and as to the functions of the latter, a passage in the pseudo-Platonic Minos, where they are mentioned, leaves us no room for doubt. Socrates inquires: εἰ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἀεὶ νόμοις χεώμεθα ἢ ἄλλοτε ἄλλοις, a question to which the answer need not be doubtful, according to the "friend," seeing that in Athens itself, in the course of time, the change has become evident: ὥσπερ καὶ ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς οἶσθα που καὶ αὐτὸς ἀκούων, οἵοις νόμοις ἐχρώμεθα πρὸ τοῦ περὶ τοὺς ἀποθανόντας, ἱερεῖά τε προσφάττοντες πρὸ τῆς ἐκφορᾶς τοῦ νεκροῦ καὶ ἐγχυτριστρίας μεταπεμπόμενοι.[1] The context removes all possibility of doubt: ἐγχυτρίστριαι were women whose services were formerly made use of at the burial of adults; there is no question of children or of exposure.

This, too, is what the scholiast says in his note; but, not being content with this, he adds further illustrations, as is the custom of scholiasts, without connection or explanation; the whole runs as

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[1] Minos 315C. Two manuscripts (Parisinus A, Vindobonensis F) give the reading ἐγχυτιστρίας, which has been adopted by Burnet in the text; in my view incorrectly. As shown above, the scholia on Aristophanes mention the word ἐγχυτρίστρια in connection with the verb ἐγχυτρίζειν, from which it is, indeed, regularly formed. How should the form ἐγχυτίστρια be capable of an explanation?

follows: ἐγγυτριστρίας· τὰς χοὰς τοῖς τετελευτηκόσιν ἐπιφερούσας. ἔλεγον δὲ καὶ τὸ βλάψαι καταχυτρίσαι, ὡς Ἀριστοφάνης. λέγονται δὲ καὶ ὅσαι τοὺς ἐναγεῖς καθαίρουσιν, αἷμα ἐπιχέουσαι τοῦ ἱερείου. ἔτι δὲ καὶ αἱ θρηνήτριαι, καὶ δὴ καὶ μαῖαι ἐκτιθεῖσαι ἐν χύτραις τὰ βρέφη.

Those who have expressed their views as to the functions of the ἐγχυτρίστριαι have all (except Glotz) rightly taken, as their point of departure, the Minos passage, the only one affording a firm footing; meanwhile, as no one has yet made use, for the purposes of exegesis, of all the data which are available, a new investigation cannot be condemned beforehand as useless. Let us first examine what explanations have hitherto been given.

a) *Women who carried some kind of vase at the ἐκφορά.*—Brückner and Pernice express this as their assumption, in their well-known article on the Dipylon Cemetery in Athens: "Zu den Geschäften, welche . . . . den zum Leichenbegängnisse angenommenen ἐγχυτρίστριαι zufielen, wird es wohl auch gehört haben, die schweren Loutrophoren ans Grab zu tragen."[1]

Perrot and Chipiez reproduced the Minos passage in the words: "Puis nous mettions en marche des femmes chargées de vases destinés aux libations et au bain."[2]

In his description of the ἐκφορά, Lecrivain says: "Il y a en tête une femme, l' ἐγχυτρίστρια, portant un vase, appelé χύτρις, pour les libations," for which explanation he refers to a drawing of a vase.[3]

Collignon, too, cites a painting on the neck of a λουτροφόρος, where a woman is carrying such a vase: in this connection he says: "Le vase est porté par l' ἐγχυτρίστρια, que suit une pleureuse faisant les gestes de la lamentation."[4]

This interpretation, which is chiefly based upon representations of vases, takes no account, either of the formation of the word, or of its use in Aristophanes: for how can the occupation of one, bearing a vase, be called ἐγ-χυτρίζειν ? And how, from this carrying of a vase, could the figurative use in the sense of ἀποκτείνειν (Aristophanes scholium) or of βλάπτειν (Minos scholium) be derived ?

[1] Brückner und Pernice, "Ein attischer Friedhof, "*Ath. Mitt.* XVIII (1893), 148.

[2] Perrot et Chipiez, *Histoire de l'Art*, VII, 58.

[3] *Dict. des Ant.*, *s.v.*, "Funus," II, 1374, and Fig. 3343.

[4] *Ibid.*, *s.v.*, "Loutrophoros," III, 1319, and Fig. 4560.

*b) Women who perform a ritual purification.*—Starting out from a gloss on Hesychius[1] and the statement of a scholiast,[2] according to which use was made, in ritual purifications, of a χύτρα or ὀστράκινον θυμιατήριον, Lobeck had already expressed a surmise that the ἐγχυτρίστριαι might be comparable with the Roman simpuviatrices or simpulatrices, "hoc est, mulieres divinis rebus deditae, ut Festus ait."[3]   Schoemann-Lipsius connect this conjecture with the well-known custom of all the inmates of a house purifying themselves, after a burial, by ablutions,[4] and surmise that superstitious persons employed yet other purifications, "wozu man sich auch der Dienste einer sogenannten ἐγχυτρίστρια bedienen möchte, d.h. einer weisen Frau, die sich auf dergleichen Reinigungen verstand, die Reinigungsmittel in einem Topfe mitbrachte, und die Verunreinigung in demselben Topfe mit sich hinwegnahm."[5]   This interpretation is wholly accepted by Mau[6] and Stengel,[7] while Rohde still further adduces in its support the fact that a part of the Minos scholium "auf diesen Sinn führt;[8] that of Miss Harrison is in substantial agreement therewith.[9]

It rests chiefly on this—surely very weak—point of similarity, that ἐγχυτρίζειν is supposed to have been, necessarily, only one occupation in which a χύτρα was required, and in some purifications, indeed, this was used.   Will there not have been many operations which were executed with such an everyday object?   Rohde incorrectly sees a similarity between the purifications which are mentioned in the Iulis inscription, and those to which the Minos scholium refers; in the former case, μιαινόμενοι are referred to, on account of

[1] Hesychius, Φαρμακή, ἡ χύτρα ἦν ἑτοίμαζον τοῖς καθαίρουσιν τὰς πόλεις.

[2] Schol. ad Aesch. *Choeph.* 96: ᾿Αθηναῖοι καθαίροντες οἰκίαν ὀστρακίνῳ θυμιατηρίῳ ῥίψαντες ἐν ταῖς τριόδοις τὸ ὄστρακον. ἀμεταστρεπτὶ ἀνεχώρουν.

[3] Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, I, 632.

[4] Schol. ad Aristoph. Nubes 836: ἔθος ἦν μετὰ τὸ ἐκκομισθῆναι τὸ σῶμα καθάρμου χάριν ἀπολούεσθαι τοὺς οἰκείους τοῦ τεθνεῶτος, confirmed by the burial enactment of Iulis (Ditt.³ 1218).

[5] Schoemann-Lipsius, *Griech. Alt.* II⁴, 372.

[6] Pauly-Wissowa, *s.v.*, "Bestattung," III, 345.

[7] Stengel, *Die griech. Kultusaltertümer*³, p. 167.

[8] Rohde, *Psyche*, I, 231, n. 4.

[9] Harrison, *Prolegomena*, p. 38: ἐγχυτρίζειν, "to pot," i.e., to utterly ruin and destroy, to make away with.

their relation to a person deceased; while the κάθαρσις of the latter is of an entirely different character; ἐναγεῖς, indeed, refers to persons charged with bloodguiltiness. And finally, the point remains unexplained, how the word by which the cleansing, the atonement of these persons is indicated, could have assumed the signification of "to kill."

c) *Women who, after the burning of the corpse, collect the bones in a pot.*—Boeckh, who once published a commentary on the Minos[1] considered he could infer the occupation of the women from their name: they were "mulieres ossilegium procurantes"; by way of explication he quotes in reference: "Solon multa, quae olim circa funera Athenis obtinebant, sustulit, v.c. lessum [Cic. *Legg.* ii. 23]: itaque eum etiam ossilegii consuetudinem censeo abolevisse. Quam conjecturam firmat, quod fuit in xii Tabb. Homini mortuo ne ossa legito, quo post funus faciat [*ibid.* 24]; in xii Tabb. inquam, quarum caput illudo quod versatur in funebribus, de legibus Solonis translatum est [*ibid.* 23. 25. 26]." With this view Lobeck associated himself, at the same time expressing the surmise that, in the Minos scholium, instead of βλάψαι, we should read θάψαι.[2] In very recent times this view has again been taken up by Poulsen, who also quotes, with approval, both Boeckh's argument, and Lobeck's conjecture.[3]

At this, one can only be amazed; for nowadays we can surely find, in any handbook, a collection of passages from which it appears clearly that among the Romans ossilegium was neither prohibited nor fallen into abeyance, but on the contrary was performed by the surviving family as a pious duty.[4] We know the same fact, as Poulsen himself mentions, with regard to the Homeric Greeks, and the Athenians of the fourth century, in support of the presumption: "aber in früherer Zeit mag es anders gewesen sein" there is absolutely no evidence to be adduced; no more than there is for the conjecture that ἐγχυτρίστριαι should have been ὀστολόγοι,[5] except that

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[1] Boeckh, *In Platonis qui vulgo fertur Minoem*, 1806, p. 57.

[2] Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, I, 632.

[3] Poulsen, *Die Dipylongräber und die Dipylonvasen*, pp. 48 ff.

[4] Marquardt, *Das Privatleben der Römer*, I, 382: Blümner, *Röm. Privat-Altertümer*, p. 501.

[5] Of the tragedy of this name by Aeschylus (Athen. xv. 667c) nothing further is known.

the derivation of the word appears to admit the possibility of such a meaning.

*d) Women who interred young children in χύτραι.*—The correctness of the rule given by Pliny: "hominem prius quam genito dente cremari mos gentium non est"[1] is sufficiently demonstrated by the excavations: young children have been regularly found buried. In the Dipylon Cemetery, small corpses have been encountered in tubs and in obliquely placed amphorae.[2]    Kinch gives an elaborate description of children's graves in the report of his excavations at Vroulia, on the island of Rhodes; here the children, up to the age of six years, have been interred in pots, the smallest, "ceux d'un ou plusieurs mois, les nouveau—nés et probablement aussi les enfants nés avant terme," in χύτραι.[3]    An archaeologist, who happened to be acquainted with the word ἐγχυτρίζειν, must naturally have hit upon the idea that this was the way of burying children which was called ἐγχυτρίζειν ; and indeed, we find this opinion in Orsi's account of his excavations at Gela.[4]    There he gives statistics as to the modes of interment in the archaic necropolis, in the following terms:

a) inumazioni di adulti e fanciulli . . . . . . . . 223
b) ἐγχυτρισμοί di feti, bambini, piu di rado di fanciulli . 233
c) ὀστεολογίαι . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 13
d) καύσεις di adulti, di rado di fanciulli . . . . . 101
                                                    ———
                                                    570

Orsi here uses the term without any explanation; presumably, therefore, it had already been employed by others.    But, whoever brought it into vogue, the tempting conjecture can only be accepted by those who take no account of what we know further about the word; from the Minos passage it is obvious that ἐγχυτρίστριαι performed their duties at the burial of adults; it is, moreover, difficult to see how the word, by which the interment of young children is supposed to be indicated, could have been figuratively used for the killing of adults.

[1] Plin. *Hist. Nat.* vii. 72.

[2] Brückner and Pernice, *op. cit.*, pp. 99, 118.

[3] Kinch, *Fouilles de Vroulia*, Berlin, 1914, pp. 38–49.    The burial of children's corpses was a custom among numerous ancient peoples, see the vbb. in Bertholet, *Kulturgeschichte Israels*, pp. 51 f.

[4] Orsi, "Gela. Scavi del 1900–1905," *Monumenti Antichi*, XVII (1906), 242.

I have reproduced Orsi's figures as a whole, because they have served Wilamowitz as a basis for an assumption with extensive implications: "Auf 337 wirkliche Gräber in einer Nekropole von Gela, unter denen auch Kindergräber sind, kommen 233 Beisetzungen von Kinderleichen in einfachen Töpfen; von diesen werden die meisten absichtlich beseitigt sein."[1]  The erroneous conception as to the frequency of exposure, and the mistake of the scholiasts with regard to the meaning of ἐγχυσρίζειν must have had powerful after-effects, to seduce such a remarkably astute scholar to this ill-considered assumption.  For surely every investigator, not under the spell of tradition, would infer from the occurrence of a great number of children's corpses in a cemetery, nothing more than a high rate of infant mortality in that particular district.  This view of the case is taken by Orsi himself, and by way of illustration he has published, in a note, some figures as to the infant mortality in modern Sicily which are little, if at all, more favorable.[2]  In a subtropical climate, and among a population which, in the nature of the case, had scarcely any knowledge of hygiene, we can hardly expect anything else; nevertheless we are appalled to read—indeed, we can hardly repress a suspicion of exaggeration—the sober statement of a Greek author, that children received no name before the seventh day; for only then was any confidence felt in their capacity of survival, most of them dying before that age.[3]

I return to the ἐγχυτρίστριαι; we have seen that an explanation of the term, satisfactory in all respects, has not yet been given.[4] To my thinking, this was so far impossible, because in the case of all investigators, the point of departure was wrongly chosen, it having been assumed, without more ado, that the word χυτρίζειν and its compounds were derived from χύτρα, a pot; and that, accordingly, the action thereby indicated was performed with a pot.  There existed, however, in Greek also a word χύτρος, from which a verb

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[1] *Staat und Gesellschaft*, p. 35.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 236.

[3] [Arist.] *Anim. Hist.* vii. 588a. 8: τὰ πλεῖστα δ'ἀναιρεῖται πρὸ τῆς ἑβδόμης.  διὸ καὶ τὸ ὀνόματα τότε τίθενται ὡς πιστεύοντες ἤδη μᾶλλον τῇ σωτηρίᾳ.

[4] Once more, in addition, I beg to point out that none of those who, purposely or incidentally, have occupied themselves with the word, accept the derivation and explanation of the Aristophanes scholiasts.

ending in -ιζειν might just as well have been derived.[1] What does χύτρος mean?

In the course of his description of Thermopylae, Herodotus says: ἔστι δὲ ἐν τῇ ἐσόδῳ πάντῃ θερμὰ λουτρά, τὰ Χύτρους καλέουσι οἱ ἐπιχώριοι.[2] Pausanias, too, mentioning the same water, speaks of τὴν κολυμβήθραν ἥντινα ὀνομάζουσιν οἱ ἐπιχώριοι Χύτρους γυναι-κείους:[3] and these χύτροι are also mentioned in a Delphic inscrip-tion, according to which money was paid to an ἀρχιτέκτων for their maintenance; the publisher describes them as follows: "les piscines ou plutôt les baignoires, excavations creusées par le courant, arrangées à main d'homme, et où était reçue l'eau chaude des sources."[4]

But the occurrence of openings in the ground of this name, at Thermopylae artificially laid out as water reservoirs, is not limited to this district; Theophrastus mentions a spot in Attica called Πελεκανία, τοῦτο δ᾽ ἐστὶν ἄττα χύτροι καλούμενοι βαθύσματα τῆς λίμνης.[5] Hesychius explains the word χυτρῖνοι· τὰ κοῖλα τῆς γῆς, δι᾽ ὧν αἱ πηγαὶ ἀνίενται. The same writer mentions, s.v., λίθωνχοαί· αἱ διὰ λίθων ἐκχύσεις καὶ χυτρῖνοι. Χοὰς δὲ ἐκ λίθων ὑπονόμους καὶ χυτρίνους, οὓς καὶ διώρυγας.[6] Χύτροι or χυτρῖνοι, therefore, was the name given, here and there, to the holes and hollows in the soil characteristic of the "Karst" regions; Ξῦτροι was also the name of a place in Cyprus, like Βόθυνος of one in Attica[7] Is χυτρίζειν perhaps derived from χύτρος in this meaning?

By chance a word has come down to us, besides ἐγχυτρίζειν in Aristophanes and ἐγχυτρίστριαι in the Minos, the only one, so far as I know, derived from the same verb, which allows us, with a fair amount of confidence, to answer this question in the affirmative. In an Attic inscription of the year 364–65 B.C., which comprises the

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[1] My attention was drawn to the word by reading Miss Harrison's chapter on the Anthesteria. For the derivation of the verbs in -ιζειν, see Müller's dissertation, *Zur Geschichte der Verba auf -ιζειν*, Freiburg, 1915.

[2] Her. vii. 176.  [4] *Bull. de Corr. Hell.*, XXVI (1902), 15.

[3] Paus. iv. 35. 9.  [5] Theophr. *Hist. Pl.* iv. 11. 8.

[6] The Thesaurus mentions the occurrence of this word in *Antig. Car. Mirab* chap. 176 (cavum terrae) and *Arrian. peripl. mar. Erythr.*, p. 167, Bl.

[7] Both mentioned by Harpokration. In Thrace these was a place called Chy-tropolis.

conditions under which the demos Aexone lets out a piece of land, appears among other things this stipulation, that the former lessee may cause the olive trees now standing to be cut down, provided he shall μύκητας καταλιπεῖν μὴ ἔλαττον ἢ [π]αλα [σ]τιαίους ἐν τοῖς περιχυτρίσμασιν, ὅπως ἂν αἱ ἐλᾶαι ὡς κάλλισται καὶ μέγισται γένωνται.[1]  As to the meaning of the word περιχύτρισμα there can be, in the given context, no possible doubt; the man must take care that, after felling, stumps of a certain height remain standing in the depressions in which the trees had been planted.    In the ninth book of the *Geoponika*, containing maxims for the culture of olives, these βόθροι are repeatedly mentioned; cap. vi treats περὶ βόθρων τῶν εἰς φυτείαν ἐλαιῶν.   Boeckh, who was the first to publish the inscription with a detailed commentary, and has illustrated this passage by a reference to the *Geoponika*, got as far as rendering the word by scrobes, but was doubtful as to the explanation: "scrobem conjicio fictilis testae gyro ab Atticis cinctum esse, postquam plantata olea et terra expletas scrobs esset; ita fiebat ut oleae dicio ab reliquo separaretur agro censito atque ita ejus περιχυτρίσματος spatium commode perfici possent quae ab arboris curam necessaria essent." This explanation, subsequently adopted by all later editors, starts merely from the view that the word is derived from χύτρα (which by the way, as far as I am aware, never means *fragment* of pottery);  of such a singular encircling of each tree, the use of which is difficult to see, no example is known; in the case to which the editors of the *Inscr. Jur.* refer, mention is made of a low wall round all the fruit trees together.[2]   After the above-mentioned use of χύτρος, the explanation is simple: χυτρίζειν is to do something with a hole in the ground, in this case to dig a hole; περι—round something, in this case the tree.

Starting from this newly won result, let us again investigate what operation was indicated by ἐγχυτρίζειν ; now we know that it took place at *funerals*, and had something to do with a *hole in the ground;* and, moreover, it was possible to use the expression in the figurative sense of *"to make away with," "to kill."*

[1] *C.I.G.* 93 with commentary by Boeckh, *I.G.*, II², 1055, Ditt.³ 966, *Inscr. Jur. Gr.* 1. 238.

[2] *Inscr. Jur.* i. 504;  Ditt.³ 963.

Excavations have made it clear, that frequently in the vicinity of a grave, a pit was dug, which served as an altar for sacrifices to the deceased. Such a sacrificial pit, of Mycenaean times, has been discovered before the door of the domed tomb of Vafio; the pits of the Attic barrows of Vurva, Velanideza, and Marathon date from early Grecian times; Pfuhl found them, to the number of 44, in the archaic cemetery of Thera, all in direct connection with the graves.[1]

The custom of making sacrifices in a pit to the dead and to the θεοὶ χθόνιοι is also well known from literature, and maintained itself throughout ancient times; it will suffice if I give one or two examples by way of reminders. Circe gives Odysseus the following indication:

βόθρον ὀρύξαι ὅσον τε πυγούσιον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.[2]

In order to receive an oracle from the dead from his deceased wife, Periander causes all the Corinthian women to take off their garments, συμφορήσας δὲ (τὰ ἱμάτια) ἐς ὄρυγμα Μελίσσῃ ἐπεχόμενος κατέκαιε.[3] Lucian represents Charon as asking Hermes why people βόθρον τινὰ ὀρύξαντες καίουσι τε παντὶ τὰ πολυτελῆ δεῖπνα καὶ ἐς τὰ ὀρύγματα οἶνον καὶ μελίκρατον, ὡς γοῦν εἴκασι, ἐκχέουσιν.[4] Eusebius has preserved for us a fragment of Porphyry, in which are the lines

τῶν χθονίων διάειρε τριχῇ θυσίας ἐναρίζων
νερτερίων κατάθακτε, καὶ εἰς βόθρον αἵματ' ἴαλλε.[5]

Throughout ancient times, therefore, sacrifices were made to the dead in a pit; if we now associate this custom with the fact that an ancient word for pit was χύτρος, the presumption naturally arises that (ἐγ)χυτρίζειν must have meant: to throw into a pit, viz., a sacrificial pit, and hence, to sacrifice to the dead. That is to say, by this word the operation was indicated, for which ἐναγίζειν afterward remained the usual expression. Further evidence may be adduced in support of this explanation.

Most accidentally, Athenaeus has preserved, in the middle of an enumeration of kinds of soap, a few particulars of the ritual, by a

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[1] Pfuhl, "Der archaïsche Friedhof am Stadtberge von Thera," *Ath. Mitt.*, XXVIII, 1903; where, on p. 293, the examples known from elsewhere are enumerated.

[2] Od. x. 517.     [3] Her. v. 92η. 23.     [4] Luc. *Charon*. 21.

[5] Euseb. *Praep. Ev.* iv. 145d. Other examples Apoll. *Rhod. Argon.* iii. 1031. 1205; Ovid *Metam.* vii. 243.

quotation from Kleidemos' work περὶ ἐναγισμῶν. The passage runs as follows:

ἰδίως δὲ καλεῖται παρ' 'Αθηναίοις ἀπόνιμμα ἐπὶ τῶν εἰς τιμὴν τοῖς νεκροῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν τοὺς ἐναγεῖς καθαιρόντων ὡς καὶ Κλείδημος ἐν τῷ ἐπιγραφομένῳ 'Εξηγητικῷ. Προθεὶς γὰρ περὶ ἐναγισμῶν γράφει τάδε· "Ορυξαι βόθυνον πρὸς ἑσπέραν τοῦ σήματος. 'Επειτα παρὰ τὸν βόθυνον πρὸς ἑσπέραν βλέπε, ὕδωρ κατάχεε, λέγων τάδε· 'Υμῖν ἀπόνιμμα οἷς χρὴ καὶ οἷς θέμις. "Επειτα αὖθις μύρον κατάχεε. Παρέθετο ταῦτα καὶ Δωρόθεος φάσκων καὶ ἐν τοῖς Εὐπατριδῶν πατρίοις τάδε γεγράφθαι περὶ τῆς τῶν ἱκετῶν καθάρσεως. "Επ-ειτ' ἀπονιχάμενος αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι οἱ σπλαγχνεύοντες, ὕδωρ λαβὼν κάθαιρε ἀπόνιζε τὸ αἷμα τοῦ καθαιρομένου καὶ μετὰ τὸ ἀπόνιμμα ἀνακινήσας εἰς ταὐτὸ ἔγχεε.[1]

What deserves attention, for our purpose, in this description of ἐναγισμός is that the same ceremonial is adopted *in sacrifices to the dead* and *in the purification of blood-guilty persons*, just as it is stated in the Minos scholium also of the ἐγχυτρίστριαι, that they τὰς χοὰς τοῖς τετελευτηκόσιν ἐπιφέρουσι and τοὺς ἐναγεῖς καθαίρουσιν.[2]

For the fact that χυτρίζειν = to throw into a χύτρος, has assumed the special meaning of *to sacrifice* in a χύτρος, a striking analogy may be adduced. Besides χύτρος and βόθρος, there was in use, for the same object, another word, which we know, among other examples, from the well-known definition of Porphyry: τοῖς γὰρ 'Ολυμπίοις θεοῖς ναούς τε καὶ ἔδη καὶ βώμους ἱδρύσατο, χθονίοις τε καὶ ἥρωσιν ἐσχάρας, ὑποχθονίοις δὲ βόθρους καὶ μέγαρα.[3] These μέγαρα are mentioned in a scholium on Lucian, in which the occasion of the Thesmophoria feast is related:

ἤγετο δὲ κατὰ τὸν μυθωδέστερον λόγον, ὅτι ἀνθολογοῦσα ἡρπάζετο ἡ Κόρη ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλούτωνος. τότε κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν τόπον Εὐβουλεύς τις συβώτης ἔνεμεν ὗς καὶ συγκατεπόθησαν τῷ χάσματι τῆς Κόρης. εἰς οὖν τιμὴν τοῦ Εὐβουλέως ῥίπτεσθαι τοὺς χοίρους εἰς τὰ χάσματα τῆς Δήμητρος καὶ τῆς Κόρης. τὰ δὲ σαπέντα τῶν ἐμβληθέντων εἰς τὰ μέγαρα καταναφέρουσιν ἀντλήτριαι καλούμεναι γυναῖκες καθαρεύσασαι τειῶν ἡμρεῶν.[4]

[1] Athen. ix. 409 E, quoted by Harrison, *Prolegomena*, p. 59.

[2] As to the agreement with ἐναγίζειν, reference may also be made to the scholium Eur. *Phoen.* 281. ἐσχάρα κυρίως ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς βόθρος ἔνθα ἐναγίζουσι τοῖς κάτω ἐρχομένοις.

[3] Porph. *De antro nymph.* 6; the similarity between βόθρος and μέγαρον also appears from Paus. ii. 22, compared with ix. 8.

[4] Schol. Luc. *Dial. Meretr.* ii. 1.

Clemens Alexandrinus, mentioning this custom, does so in the following terms: βούλει καὶ τὰ Φερεφάττης ἀνθολόγια διηγήσωμαί σοι καὶ τὸν κάλαθον καὶ τὴν ἁρπαγὴν τὴν ὑπὸ 'Αιδωνέως καὶ τὸ χάσμα τῆς γῆς καὶ τὰς ὗς τὰς Εὐβουλέως τὰς συγκαταποθείσας ταῖν θεαῖν, δι' ἣν χιτίαν ἐν τοῖς Θεσμοφορίοις μεγαρίζοντες χοίρους ἐμβάλλουσιν ;[1] Derived from μέγαρον, therefore, there is a verb μεγαρίζειν = to throw into a μέγαρον, with the special meaning of "to sacrifice."[2] That ἐγχυτρίζειν, which according to its derivation generally means "to throw into a pit," has acquired the special meaning of "to sacrifice in a pit" is therefore, besides its intrinsic probability, further illustrated by an analogous development in the meaning of other words. There now remains the last difficulty to be explained: how is the use in a figurative sense for ἀποκτείνειν, φονεύειν to be accounted for ?

It has been shown above, that ἐγχυτρίζειν must have indicated approximately the same action, for which the term ἐναγίζειν subsequently remained in vogue. Now it is very remarkable—and, in my opinion, my whole argument is confirmed by the fact—that ἐναγίζειν proves to have had the same figurative meaning. This word is defined by Hesychius as follows: τὸ γοὰς ἐπιφέρειν ἢ θύειν τοῖς κατοιχομένοις, ἢ διὰ πυρὸς <δαπανᾶν>, ἢ φονεύειν (cod. φονεύς) ; δαπανᾶν was rightly supplied by Schmidt from Suidas, and φονεύειν restored for φονεύς by the aid of the Etym. magnum, both of which also mention the same meaning; Suidas gives ἐναγίζων· φονεύων, κατακαίνων.

For the explanation of this figurative meaning, it is now sufficient to recall the essential difference which was made, in the Greek cultus, between sacrificing to the Olympic gods, and sacrificing to the chthonic gods and to the dead. The sacrifices to the former were meat offerings, of which the worshipers themselves partook, and of which they jointly consumed (the best part); those to the latter were θυσίαι ἄγευστοι, of which mortals might retain no part, and

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[1] Clem. Alex. Protrept. ii. 17. 1.

[2] A similar development in meaning may be shown in the case of βυθίζειν. What Diodorus had first indicated by (iv. 23. 4) εἰς τὴν Κυάνην τὸν καλλιστεύοντα τῶν ταύρων καθαγίζειν, he calls elsewhere (v. 4.) ταύρους βυθίζειν ἐν τῇ λίμνῃ.

which were wholly burnt up (Suidas: ἐναγίζειν· ὁλοκαυτεῖν) or destroyed.[1] This last custom makes it perfectly clear that the words, which indicated this action, might have acquired the meaning, in a figurative and general sense, of "to destroy," "to do away with," i.e., precisely that meaning which we required for ἐγχυτρίζειν, as used by Aristophanes. The ἐγχυτρίστριαι who, according to the statement in the Minos, were usually summoned πρὸ τοῦ at funerals, must therefore have been women who rendered their services at the bloody sacrifice to the dead, just as at the bloody sacrifice that was demanded for the purification of the ἐναγής ; the appearance of women at such ritual functions does not surprise us; we know of ἀντλήριαι, περιμάκτριαι, περιαγνίστριαι, καθάρτριαι. The only question we still have to answer is this: to what must it be attributed that their employment disappeared, so that subsequent writers were able to state little with accuracy as to their actual occupation ?

It is an obvious conjecture that this disappearance is closely connected with the abolition of the bloody sacrifices themselves. To whatever this last may be ascribed—change in religious views, or other grounds—the fact is certain: " Die Blutopfer werden seltener, an ihre Stelle treten die χοαί, die Totenspenden. In Athen verbot Solon ein Kund als Totenopfer zu schlachten, und ähnliche Bestimmungen, die zunächst wohl den Zweck hatten, dem Aufwand zu steuern, gab es auch an andern Orten."[2] That drink offerings formed the principal part of the ἐναγίζειν, appears from the connection ἐπὶ τὰ μνήματα ἰέναι χεόμενον καὶ ἐναγιοῦντα (Isaeus vi. 51) ἐναγίζουσι καὶ χέουσι (vi. 65). Hence also that ἐγχυτρίστριαι were explained as women αἳ τὰς χοὰς τοῖς τετελευτηκόσιν ἐπέφερον. Hence also that, as appears from the different versions of the scholium on Aristoph. *Vespae* 289, the no longer understood word ἐγχυτρίστριαι threatened to be replaced by the more comprehensible ἐγχύτρια ;[3] a derivation from ἐγχεῖν might the more easily suggest itself, as ἐγχυτλοῦν was already known as a term for sacrifice to the dead.[4]

[1] Harrison, *Prolegomena*, pp. 53 ff. Stengel, *Die griech. Kultusaltertümer*[3], pp. 124 ff. As to the ἄγευστοι, Stengel says, p. 134: " Was schliesslich die Opferhandlung selbst angeht, so haben wir schon gesehen, dass in einzelnen Fällen die Tiere lebendig verbrannt wurden, bei weitem am häufigsten wurden sie geschlachtet und dann *verbrannt oder auf andere Art vernichtet.*"

[2] Stengel, p. 148.     [3] See above, p. 224.     [4] Herondas v. 84: ἐγχυτλοῦν τοῖς καμοῦσιν.

With the above I think I have given an explanation of the functions of the ἐγχυτρίστριαι, as far as this is to be found by means of the available data; but which also takes account of every one of these data. If in this connection anything is certain, it is this: that their existence and occupation has absolutely nothing to do with the alleged custom of exposing infants; that the Athenian fathers and mothers ever allowed their children to be "potted" by "angel-makers" (viz., practitioners of infanticide) was an absurd figment of the brains of scholiasts, to which, quite wrongly, belief has been accorded by modern scholars.

The main result of the foregoing inquiry may be summed up in a few words:

An unrestricted right, which the Greek father is alleged to have possessed, of killing or exposing his legitimate children born in wedlock, and acknowledged by him as such, has never been demonstrated, either as regards prehistoric or historic times: nor have facts or expressions been adduced, from which it appears, or must be inferred, that, in the Athens of the fifth and fourth century B.C., the exposure of children by their parents (fathers) was common, or was considered common; it has even appeared that not a single case of such action can be mentioned, and that people did not expect it in their own surroundings, or considered it as an inhuman survival from primitive times.

To this summary of the result, a few final remarks may be attached.

In the first place a clarification, which is perhaps not superfluous: of course we have not the right to conclude or to infer from the above that exposure by the parents never took place in Attica; whoever investigates phenomena (and, most certainly, social phenomena) of ancient times, will, in view of the extent and the character of our tradition, only in very special circumstances be warranted in using an *argumentum e silentio*. What we have shown amounts to no more, but also no less, than this, that the current idea as to the normality of *expositio* is totally unfounded, and therefore inaccurate; there is no single reason to doubt that the Athenians, with regard to their children, acted and thought in just the same way as other civilized peoples in ordinary circumstances.

Once this fact has been ascertained, we may of course disregard all reflections, intended to serve as an explanation of the phenomenon of frequent *expositio*, which after all is found not to have occurred.[1]

For the same reason, the imaginary throngs of foundlings need play no further part in the discussion of the population problem of Athens at its prime. It is extremely probable, in view of the many and various indications, that the number of children in Athenian families was small, in sharp contrast, for example, with the conditions in ancient Latium. This is a very remarkable fact, the explanation of which is far from easy or simple;[2] in this place I will only point out that in this connection the assumption frequently made, that the Athenians regularly got rid of a certain number of their children by exposure, must be absolutely eliminated as a contribution to that explanation.

The inquiry of which the results are presented here, has been restricted, for the reasons given above, to Attica and the conditions of that state in the fifth and fourth centuries. No one will be able to deny that, both in this territory and in the rest of the Greek world, in the subsequent centuries, exposure was a means, frequently employed also by the parents, of getting rid of undesired children, especially when the latter were girls.[3]

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[1] In a footnote, however, there is some justification for expressing our astonishment at the uncritical way in which Glotz adduces expressions in Greek authors which speak of aversion to carrying the burden of children, or anxiety as to the expenses of education, as so many indications which might explain the alleged frequency of *expositio*. For indeed, whoever would take the superfluous trouble, after the manner of Stobaeus, to collect all the quotations which bear witness of the distaste for educating children ("ὅτι ἀσύμφορον τὸ ἔχειν τέκνα") would be able to collect a fair-sized parcel for any country, even those with the greatest number of children, and those where there is no trace of exposure, except by despairing unmarried mothers. With such unmethodical collections, in which the origin of each quotation and the character of the author is not accurately considered, one may prove everything and nothing.

[2] For the data, on the grounds of which the fact is to be concluded, and an attempt at explanation, I beg to refer to a thesis by one of my pupils, Miss Mulder: *Quaestiones nonnullae ad Atheniensium matrimonia vitamque conjugalem pertinentes* (Utrecht, 1920), and especially cap. iii: "De numero liberorum."

[3] From the beginning of the third century B.C. are the lines by Posidippus, quoted in Stobaeus, ὅτι κρείττονες οἱ ἄρσενες τῶν παίδων· υἱὸν τρέφει πᾶς κἂν πένης τις ἂν τύχῃ, θυγατέρα δ' ἐκτίθησι κἂν ᾖ πλούσιος. In the year 1 B.C., Hilarion, already become notorious, gives the following instructions to his wife, who is expecting a child: ἐὰν πολλὰ πολλῶν ( ? ) τέκῃς, ἐὰν ἦν ἄρσενον, ἄφες, ἐὰν ἦν θήλεα, ἔκβαλε. To other examples in papyri, references are given by Schubart, *Einführung in die Papyruskunde*, p. 467. From the middle of the second century A.D. is the tale of Apuleius (*Metam*. x. 23):

In considering this phenomenon and its explanation, we shall do well not to operate with the vague term "overpopulation" to which no clearly defined notion corresponds; here, too, we may assume the connection, statistically shown to exist for other countries and periods, viz., that between increase in the number of foundlings, and times of economic depression and poverty.[1]

Utrecht, Holland

maritum habuit cujus pater proficiscens mandavit uxori suae, matri eidem juvenis— quod enim sarcina praegnationis oneratam eam relinquebat—ut si sexus sequioris edidisset foetum, protinus quod esset necaretur.  at illa per absentiam mariti natam puellam <perimere> insita matribus pietate praeventa, descivit ab obsequio mariti.

[1] See J. de Bosch Kemper, *Geschiedkundig onderzoek naar de Armoede in ons Vaderland* ("Historical Inquiry as to the Poverty in Our Native Country"), 1851, p. 31: "History teaches us that destitution is the chief cause (of the exposure of children).  In the first place, it has appeared from statistical returns, that . . . . a remarkable correspondence exists between years of commercial and industrial stagnation on the one hand, and the increased number of foundlings on the other."  The following statement as to the course of the number of foundlings and that of the population in Amsterdam is instructive:

|  | Population | Number of Foundlings |
|---|---|---|
| 1744 | 200,000 to 240,000 | 17 |
| 1795 | 217,024 | 409 |
| 1804 | 197,000 | 394 |
| 1815 | 180,179 | 682 (in 1817: 855) |
| 1825 | 191,460 | 196 |
| 1830 | 202,364 | 151 |
| 1840 | 211,349 | 63 |
| 1849 | 224,949 | 14 |
| 1916 | *circa* 650,000 | 5 |

As will be seen, there is absolutely no connection between the number of inhabitants and the number of foundlings; that of the latter rises to an alarming degree during the economic depression caused by, and following, the French supremacy and the Napoleonic wars; in 1805, of the 471,524 inhabitants of 25 towns of Holland, 154,973 were in receipt of poor relief: i.e., nearly 33 per cent!