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Eleusis as Palimpsest: Postcolonial Theory and the Politics of Religion in Roman
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An abstract of

a dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies
of Emory University
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Abstract
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By Annie Vocature Bullock

The dissertation makes use of postcolonial theory to address the interplay between religion and politics in the context of Roman Greece. The project describes and analyzes Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries as a case study. Roman investment in the sanctuary at Eleusis and in the Eleusinian mysteries was in many ways emblematic of the relationship between Greece and Rome. Although Roman benefactors refurbished the sanctuary and encouraged interest in the cult, their patronage also altered the character of the cult. The result was an Eleusis that was at once both Greek and Roman. In postcolonial terms, the relationship between Greece and Rome that is apparent at Eleusis was ambivalent and the resulting culture was hybridized. Postcolonial concepts of ambivalence and hybridity are apparent at Eleusis. Moreover, the ambivalence of Roman imperialism was expressed both textually and architecturally. The hybridity of the emerging culture of Roman Greece can be inferred from textual sources but because the mysteries were a secret, hybridity is better reflected by the architecture of the site. Thus the discourses of Roman imperialism were encoded and expressed in interrelated and overlapping ways at all levels of Roman Greek culture.

The significance of the argument is related to the question of how religion and ideology are related to one another as cultural systems. The same ideas that are expressed in textual sources are found in architecture. The same ideas that belong to Roman imperialism are part of the religious landscape. I interpret this parallel as an illustration of religion's potential to incorporate and interpret political realities and to infuse them with a sense of ultimate significance. At Eleusis, the Roman political system became part of a religious culture that made the things of everyday life meaningful. This gave it a wider reach than it would have enjoyed as ideology.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Introduction—A Postcolonial Approach to an Ancient Sanctuary

The relationship between religious and political concerns is sometimes obscure and

difficult to describe without resorting to gross oversimplification. This is especially the

case in colonial or imperial contexts, where the line between religion and politics is often

blurred. A body of literature known as postcolonial theory has evolved to describe with

care and subtlety the dynamics of the colonial situation and its aftermath. This

dissertation will draw on that body of theory to address the question of the intersection

between religion and the political in the context of Roman Greece.

The project takes Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries as a case study of the

intersection between Greek and Roman culture. The cult was quintessentially Greek and

one of the major centers of Greek religion from at least the archaic period. It was

integrally connected to Athenian politics as well, as a religious expression of civic and

cultural identity. During the second century CE, it was still a center of Greek religion

and an expression of Greek identity, but it was also newly married to Roman

philhellenism. Roman initiates were common and Roman benefactors appealed to the

mythology of the mysteries and refurbished and rebuilt the physical space. The history of

the cult is therefore emblematic of the encounter between Greece and Rome. And

although their relationship was a political reality, their interaction also took place on

religious grounds.

The dissertation comprises a postcolonial reading of the Roman phase of the

Eleusinian mysteries, with attention to both textual sources and archaeological remains

from the sanctuary. The project therefore draws together contemporary theory and

ancient data, which raises questions about translation between ancient and modern

contexts. It also reads an aspect of Greek religion through the lens of a theoretical

literature that often discounts religion. These two issues require preliminary attention.

This chapter will discuss each in turn. The first section addresses the relationship

between postcolonial theory and the data it gathers, analyzes, and interprets. It argues

first that transhistorical comparison would be useful whether or not there is any

fundamental analogy between ancient and modern colonialisms. In this case, there is a

strong resonance between the questions addressed in scholarly literature on the ancient

Mediterranean and postcolonial theory. Stephen D. Moore uses various observations

about early Christianity in its Mediterranean context to argue for the value of bringing

postcolonial approaches into the conversation. The same argument can be made for

Roman Greece. The dissertation adopts an anthropological definition of religion and the

second section addresses the compatibility of an anthropological approach to religion and

postcolonial studies. Brian K. Pennington observes that religion has not been a

significant part of postcolonial theory to this point. According to Pennington,

postcolonial theorists frequently all but ignore religion and where they do discuss it, they

often reduce it to "a mask for political and social ends."[1] That observation is true to some

extent but it does not take account of the range of approaches that can be described as

postcolonial. While Spivak's Marxist approach is limiting for the scholar of religion,

Said and Bhabha offer more flexible options for developing a postcolonial approach to

religion. Bhabha's work, in particular, can be combined with Geertz's approach to

religion as a cultural system.

 After addressing these issues and setting a theoretical framework for the project,

the chapter will establish a context for Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries as a case

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[1] Pennington 2005: 15.

study. The data for Eleusis present certain interpretive challenges. A survey of available data demonstrates that both textual and architectural data are relevant to the project. This observation shapes the overall argument, which will be outlined in the final section. The dissertation demonstrates that Roman imperial discourses were expressed architecturally at Eleusis. There is a parallel between text and architecture. There is also a parallel between Roman imperialism and religion in Roman Greece. I interpret this in terms of both religion and ideology as cultural systems.[2] Roman imperialism is a system that makes sense of the political context. Religion, in turn, facilitates an understanding of Roman imperialism. It infuses Roman imperial discourses with a sense that they have deep, foundational significance that reaches beyond the political realm.

Ancient and Modern: Postcolonial Studies and Eleusis

The first issue is the relationship between contemporary theoretical models and the ancient data. The use of contemporary theoretical models to read ancient data relies on the assumption that the theory in question can yield valuable insights when applied to a wide range of ancient and modern contexts. Among classicists, many or perhaps most conclude that the differences between the ancient and modern contexts are so great that postcolonial theory is not useful for the study of ancient empires.[3] As a result, those who draw on contemporary models are often circumspect about it. Jaś Elsner makes a careful apology for his use of the concept of resistance in which he acknowledges standard criticism of using contemporary theory to read ancient data. He writes:

> [W]e have to be wary of all such (stimulating) comparative cases when we come
> to study the Roman empire. First, its colonialism (if we may still use the word)

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[2] Geertz (1973: 193-196) acknowledges that the term ideology itself has been thoroughly ideologized. I use it here to refer to a discrete cultural system that makes political life intelligible and meaningful.

[3] Cf. the essays in Antonaccio 2005; and Webster and Cooper 1996.

was not a religious or religiously justified exercise in any modern sense. Second, unlike any post-Renaissance colonial empire, Rome's mainstream not only was culturally colonized by one of its own conquests, but was entirely open, self-conscious, even a little embarrassed about the process. Nor was Greek influence on Roman culture the sole foreign "colonization" of the center (though it was certainly the most significant).[4]

Elsner acknowledges the questions raised by transhistorical comparison and concurs in the need for caution. He even questions the application of the term "colonialism" in the modern sense to ancient contexts. The potential danger is loss of perspective. Comparative data can be stimulating but they can also mislead by obscuring the historical particularity of the data. Thus he follows his warning with a brief articulation of what he regards as two significant differences between ancient and modern colonization.

The differences Elsner identifies are historical, as is appropriate to his interests. The role played by religion in modern colonialisms differs from the role of religion in Roman colonialism. In the Roman context, religion was not an overt justification for colonialism. We can assume other factors were more significant in explicitly justifying colonization. Likewise, there was a clear cultural exchange between Roman and Greek. Cultural exchange was certainly also part of modern colonialism. In the context of the ancient Mediterranean, however, there was a particularly strong bond between Rome and Greece, which should be recognized in any interpretation of the Roman Empire. Elsner is anxious about comparisons that obscure historical particularity because his interests are historical. The purpose of his project is to describe something that happened once in a particular time and place. His analysis of the data illuminates a particular time and place. In that context, theoretical models are useful only if they further an understanding of the Roman Empire.

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[4] Elsner 2007: 254.

From another perspective, the differences Elsner identifies generate new questions about both ancient and modern material. Roman imperialism was not tied to missionary work in the same sense that modern colonialisms often were. By comparison with the overt religious component of modern colonialism the role of religion in Rome's imperialism seems slight. And yet by the age of Augustus, Rome identified its own mythological heritage with that of the Greeks, in a system of identification and replacement—Jupiter for Zeus, Juno for Hera. The implicit argument for religious equivalence suggests a potentially stronger role for religion than was at first apparent.[5] Thus while it is true that Roman imperialism was not missionary, religion played some significant role, which deserves investigation. On the other hand, Elsner raises the question of mutual transformation. He assumes that the level of entanglement between Greece and Rome is unparalleled by modern examples. On the surface, the reading is plausible. Modern colonialists certainly worked much harder at differentiating themselves. The new question is why, if imperialism doesn't necessarily entail drawing a hard and fast distinction between cultures, did modern empires insist on it?

These observations are not directed toward illuminating the Roman Empire specifically, which is why they don't fit within Elsner's purview. Instead, they are directed toward the further explication of certain cross-cultural categories of analysis. In that, the exercise is very similar to the use of cross-cultural comparison in the academic study of Religion. J.Z. Smith argues that differences make comparison possible and fruitful. If two objects were truly identical, comparing them would amount to a laundry list of common features. Where objects are different—either slightly or radically—the

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[5] The observation is borne out by Roman policy, which reoriented religious structures across the empire toward a new center in the imperial cult. Cf. Galinsky 1996: 288-331.

differences between them highlight the particularities of each. At the same time, the differences between them prompt new questions as described above.

As Smith describes his method, there are three terms in every comparison. There are the two "objects" compared—frequently they are ideas or phenomena rather than objects in any real sense. The third term is the point of contact between them. The comparison is thus directed toward the illumination of a specified third term of analysis. At the most basic level, religion functions as the third term of comparison in Smith's work. Two sets of practices and beliefs are juxtaposed to one another in order to illuminate religion, not as a real thing but as a conceptual category that encompasses both sides of the comparison.[6] Smith's comparative method can therefore be carried out in three steps. First, the scholar must identify the phenomena to be compared. They should be identified based on two criteria. They must be different from one another. At the same time, they must both be related to a third conceptual category that is the real topic of investigation. Second, careful and contextual comparison should be carried out between the chosen data. Third, the analysis should be redirected toward furthering discussion about the third term. For Smith, this final step is critical. Without it, the comparison may produce "arresting anecdotal juxtapositions or self-serving differentiations" but the "disciplined constructive work of the academy will not have been advanced."[7]

Smith uses this theoretical approach to illuminate religion in Mediterranean antiquity as his third term. He compares non-Christian mystery religions with the Christianities that flourished during late antiquity. What he discovers there is interplay

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[6] As an example, Smith (1990: 121-125) uses this process to illuminate religion in Mediterranean antiquity. On the use of a third term in comparison, see Smith 1990: 33-34; 99.

[7] Smith 1990: 53.

between what he calls locative and utopian modes of religiosity. The locative is

cosmically focused and concerned with the maintenance of prescribed boundaries. Its

"vision is one of stability and confidence with respect to an essentially fragile cosmos,

one that has been reorganized, with effort, out of previous modes of order."[8] According

to Smith, both non-Christian mystery religions and some forms of earliest Christianity

can be characterized as locative. On the other hand, Smith argues that Pauline

Christianity is a utopian religiosity because it emphasizes a distant afterlife and the

resurrection of the body. Smith holds that these two modes coexisted in late antiquity,

although the utopian religiosity of Pauline Christianity eventually became dominant. The

argument, then, is that this-worldly locative religiosity was slowly replaced by a utopian

model that was decidedly other-worldly. This functions as an account of Christian

origins.[9]

Smith's approach is basically anthropological. Locative and utopian describe

systems of symbols and associations that human beings used to interpret their everyday

experiences and order their lives. Smith's approach to religion is therefore consistent

with Clifford Geertz's understanding of religion as a cultural system. Geertz's now

classic definition states that religion is

> (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.[10]

Like other cultural systems, religion establishes itself as a way of interpreting the world.

Smith uses a cross-cultural approach to illuminate locative and utopian religiosities as

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[8] Smith 1990: 121-125; cf. 106-107
[9] Smith 1988: 67-207
[10] Geertz 1973: 90.

competing systems that human beings in a given time and place used to make meaning.

Thus Luke Timothy Johnson criticizes Smith for "dissolving Christianity into its Greco-Roman and Jewish milieu."[11] Johnson's statement is an accurate description of Smith's work because Smith approaches religion as a cultural reality.

Smith's cross-cultural comparison foregrounds a set of categories that are applicable across cultures. This project also adopts an anthropological approach. Although the specific contexts differ, there is both an anthropological and conceptual connection between ancient and modern empires. Stephen D. Moore writes:

> But although colonialism did acquire an unprecedented reach and devastating efficacy in the modern period, many earlier empires, not least those of the ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Basin, also engaged in colonization.[12]

Like their modern counterparts, ancient cultures conquered and settled new lands, many or most of which were already occupied by existing cultures. The invading culture was usually politically dominant, creating an asymmetrical relationship, which is also very much like modern examples. Elsner asks whether the term colonialism should be applied to Rome at all, but there is no denying that Rome was expansionist, that Romans settled new territories, and that formerly sovereign peoples were absorbed into a centralized Roman empire.

In addition, Moore identifies a point of contact between the study of ancient and modern empires. He lists a host of concepts that belong to postcolonial studies but are equally relevant to the ancient Mediterranean, from invasion and settlement to resistance and revolt. His point is that these conversations are already taking place in the study of ancient empires. They overlap with the concerns of postcolonial studies and as a result

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[11] Johnson 1998: 35.
[12] Moore 2006: 9.

they would be enriched by engagement with postcolonial theory.[13] Thus Moore argues

for the value of a postcolonial approach to the New Testament from the common interests

and questions shared by contemporary New Testament scholars and postcolonial

theorists.

There is a similar overlap between approaches to Roman Greece and postcolonial

theory. The evolving conception of Romanization is a useful example. Romanization

refers to the process by which conquered peoples were incorporated into the Roman

Empire. Originally, it was a rather flat term. Progress could be charted on a timeline

from newly conquered to fully Roman, without any acknowledgment of mutual

transformation or of resistance. The conversation presumed that the conquered peoples

of the empire were effectively without agency. The term Romanization has been

questioned recently, although it continues to be used to describe the process of Roman

imperialism.[14] It still refers to increased signs of Roman influence among the conquered

peoples of the empire. It is also still used to describe concrete indicators of Roman

influence like the increased use of Roman coinage in the provinces.[15] At the same time,

it has been increasingly used to describe more subtle signs of influence, drawing on

anthropological models of acculturation. That has in turn called into question the degree

to which the adoption of Roman cultural trappings can be read as a simple sign of Roman

dominance. The situation is more subtle. Reading it requires attention to the mutual flow

of influence and to variations across local contexts. [16] Thus Susan Alcock writes:

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[13] Moore (2006: 9-11) highlights some of the recent New Testament scholarship that engages these and other themes addressed by postcolonial theory.

[14] For a discussion of the history of the term and the issues raised by it, see Alcock 1997: 1-7.

[15] Cf. Kroll 1997.

[16] On the use of anthropology, see Millett 1990a. Local studies abound: Woolf 1998 on Roman Gaul, Hoff and Rotroff 1997 on Roman Greece, and Millett 1990b on Roman Britain. On the relationship between Romanization and local identity in general, see Laurence and Berry 1990; Mattingly 2004; and Revell

> Rebuffing Roman influence in some ways, Athenians welcomed the imperial
> presence in others; following in some ways a highly idiosyncratic career, in other
> areas the city conformed to broader currents in the Imperial East.[17]

Alcock emphasizes Athenian reception of Roman influence. She also calls attention to local context. Athens was in some ways like other cities in how it navigated Roman influence, but it was unlike them in other ways. Most significantly, she carefully balances Athenian agency and Roman dominance.

Recent approaches to Romanization are thus an attempt to re-read Roman imperialism in terms of cultural interaction, which is similar to the approach postcolonial studies takes to colonization. Like Alcock, postcolonial theorists try to account for the role played by both colonizer and colonized in the context of a mutually transformative but asymmetrical relationship. For modern theorists, the colonial situation is characterized first by the unequal distribution of power between colonizer and colonized and second by a process of representation and resistance.[18] Representation constructs a new identity for the colonized in terms defined by the colonizer. The colonizer must also construct a new identity in relationship to the colonized.[19] On the other side, the colonized also have some agency. They may actively participate in the culture of the colonizer or they may resist.[20] The flow of influence moves in both directions. Thus both postcolonial studies and recent conversation about Romanization interpret cultural exchange. And in both cases, the goal is to balance two concurrent realities: the power

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2009. With certain caveats, Romanization is still used as a guiding trope, together with the parallel concept of Christianization. Kaldellis (2007: 42-119), for example, examines the Romanization and then Christianization of Greece as it relates to Hellenic identity. On Christianization in general, see MacMullen 1984; and on the Christianization of Greece, see Trombley 1995.

[17] Alcock 1997: 5.

[18] Cf. Panikkar 2007: 4.

[19] Pennington (2005: 25-37) alludes to the interdependence of identities when he argues that British Christianity was definitively shaped by encounter with Hinduism.

[20] Not all postcolonial theorists agree on this point. Spivak (1988) notably argues that the colonized are without true agency in the context of colonialism.

differential clearly favored one culture over the other, and yet the relationship between them was nevertheless reciprocal.

In sum, this dissertation will approach the similarities and differences between ancient and modern empires from a perspective shared with anthropological studies. Differences, from the perspective of an anthropological approach, provide the opportunity to use contemporary theory to analyze and interpret ancient data. From this perspective it further becomes obvious that there is a genuine similarity between the basics of colonization and imperialism across contexts, ancient and modern. That similarity is borne out by a resonance between recent approaches to Romanization and postcolonial studies. Thus there is every indication that postcolonial theory has something to contribute to conversations about the Roman Empire.

Religion and Postcolonial Theory

The purpose of this project is to contribute to the interpretation of religion in imperial contexts, which raises a second preliminary issue, namely the relationship between religion and postcolonial theory. Brian K. Pennington observes that postcolonial theorists have overlooked religion because they assume that political, economic, and social realities are more significant.[21] As a result, they treat religion as subordinate to those concerns.[22] In fact, they seem to treat religion as an ideological tool rather than a

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[21] In addition to Pennington (2005), Chatterjee (1995), King (1999), Urban (2003), and S. Sugirtharajah (2003) address their work to the underdeveloped role of religion in postcolonial studies.

[22] Pennington's stated objection to these approaches is their violation of the self-understanding of practitioners, as discussed above. Pennington draws a parallel between Marxist scholars and Said, because both privilege western, scholarly voices and concerns, and ignore the position and experience of not only the native in general but the religionist in particular—the religionist on both sides of the colonizer/colonized divide This is also the crux of Pennington's disagreement with McCutcheon (2001), a proponent of the cognitive study of religion, who argues that scholars of religion should not be bound by

cultural reality in its own right. As a result, religion is frequently only a tangential part of postcolonial analysis.

The question, in that case, is how to combine an anthropological understanding of religion as a cultural system with postcolonial studies. This section will explore key postcolonial approaches as potential resources for the project. The definition of religion as a cultural system cannot be combined with postcolonial work that treats religion as an ideological tool. Pennington's observation that postcolonial theorists overlook religion is true of Marxist theorists who read religion as an ideological smoke-screen for an underlying class conflict. This tendency is illustrated by the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and K.N. Panikkar, which will be described in the first section. Spivak and Panikkar are primarily interested in sociological realities, not cultural ones and their work is of limited use to this project as a result.

On the other hand, an anthropological approach to religion can be integrated into postcolonial theory where culture is the primary conceptual category. This is characteristic of the work of both Edward Said and Homi K. Bhabha. Both approach colonial discourse itself as a kind of cultural system. Because he treats discourse as a cultural system, Said's approach to discourse can be applied to religion, as for example in the work of Sharada Sugirtharajah. The work of Said and Sugirtharjah will be discussed in the second section. The third and final section will describe Bhabha's approach. He interprets colonial discourse as a response to not only social and psychological but also cultural strain. Bhabha's work is thus the most anthropological and therefore the most generative for this project.

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the self-understandings or explanations of religious practitioners in his aptly titled book *Critics not Caretakers.* On McCutcheon, see Pennington 2005: 185-188.

Gayatri Spivak and K. N. Panikkar: Religion as Ideology

Spivak and Panikkar share a commitment to Marxism, which is the reason for Spivak's almost complete lack of interest in religion. Where she does discuss it, she sees religion as a tool that can be used for good or ill, toward the improvement of humankind or (more often) for its oppression. Panikkar also describes religion as a tool and a motivating force. In that sense, both describe religion as an ideological cover for the underlying class conflict. Both interpret religious motivation and religious identity in light of economic and political realities rather than as a distinct phenomenon. This limits the usefulness of the approach for the postcolonial study of religion.

Spivak describes her agenda as an "old-fashioned Marxist one," by which she means revolution. Her philosophical discussion of Marx, Foucault, and then Kant is wrapped around an activist core:

> It is now more than ever impossible for the new or developing states—the newly decolonizing or the old decolonized nations—to escape the orthodox constraints of a "neo-liberal" world economic system that, in the name of Development, and now, "sustainable development," removes all barriers between itself and fragile national economies, so that any possibility of social redistribution is severely damaged. [23]

The statement is an indictment of academic postcolonialism. Without hope for real change and without a clear agenda of political activism, Spivak concludes that academic postcolonialism is useless at best. At worst, it is a marginally friendlier version of imperialism, one that justifies itself by drawing attention to the benefits of colonization. Spivak rejects the idea outright: "Imperialism cannot be justified by the fact that India has railways and I speak English well."[24] To suggest that it can be justified

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[23] Spivak 1999: 357.
[24] Spivak 1999: 371.

on those terms merely perpetuates the discourses that funded colonization in the first

place.

Spivak understands religion as part of the system of domination that characterizes

world politics. In fact, she can only imagine a positive role for religion if it could be

extracted from the world's religions. She writes:

> It is my conviction that the internationality of ecological justice in that impossible
> undivided world of which one must dream, in view of the impossibility of which
> one must work, obsessively, cannot be reached by invoking any of the so-called
> great religions of the world because the history of their greatness is too deeply
> imbricated in the narrative of the ebb and flow of power. […] I have no doubt we
> must learn from the original practical ecological philosophies of the world.[25]

Here Spivak contends that the religions of the world are embroiled in the exercise of

power. They cannot be extracted from their history, which is a history of participation in

oppression. Religion's function, in that case, is ideological. Religion furthers the agenda

of the powerful.

Despite her critique of the world's religions, Spivak also imagines a positive

ideological role for a different kind of religion. She looks instead to what she describes

above as original, practical and ecological philosophies. Later in the same passage, she

calls these philosophies a more ancient form of a religion. She goes on to argue that such

a religion should be grounded in love itself.   What she proposes is the dissolution of all

known religious traditions and their replacement by a non-theistic religion based in an

ethic of love. This religion should aim to correct and heal all the errors and breakages

engendered by religions as we know them—which is to say religions as part of the

machinations of the current political economy.[26] Religion as the ideological tool of the

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[25] Spivak 1999: 383.
[26] Spivak 1999: 383-384.

oppressor must be countered by a religion that acts as a vehicle for a revolutionary ideology.

I use the term ideology here because as Spivak understands it religion is effectively a value neutral tool that can be used to support or subvert oppression. Religious goals and motivations act in service of a more fundamental agenda. In fact, only economic realities are irreducible in Spivak's view. She argues that the economic factor in any situation is the most basic because it "reinscribes the social text, even as it is erased, however imperfectly, when it claims to be the final determinant or the transcendental signified."[27] In other words, exposing the underlying economic basis of a given situation reveals the truth about it. Reading another phenomenon as equally or perhaps more fundamental than economics for a given situation not only misses the point, it is an act of complicity in oppressive systems. The social text obscures and denies the reality of class conflict but it is not transcendent and should not be treated as such.[28] Religion, in that case, can never be an independent phenomenon. It is always a symptom of economic conflict, like everything else.

K. N. Panikkar's work illustrates the application of this approach. Panikkar demonstrates a similar understanding of religion as motivation and his work is also pervaded by a Marxist paradigm. Panikkar interprets religion as a cover for political ends, fueled by economic concerns. His treatment of the Mapila peasant revolts in 19th

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[27] Spivak 1999: 266.

[28] Spivak (1999: 265 n. 107) is critical of Foucault for precisely this reason. For example, she calls attention to his imprecise use of the category of power—a criticism she shares with Said—which betrays his exclusion of economic realities from analysis (cf. Said 1983: 243). Foucault (1972: 109;123) argues in general that discourse studies should not seek any hidden or secret elements beneath the surface. For Spivak, this amounts to believing in and rehearsing a lie that denies the foundational character of class conflict. The ferocity of her criticism of both Foucault and Deleuze demonstrates her commitment to a model of political activism, something that is all but entirely missing from Foucault's framework, which is more descriptive than critical.

and 20th century Malabar is a concise example. He argues that, lacking the proper

leadership and class consciousness, the revolt cohered around religion. In other words,

the consolidation of armed resistance to British annexation was funded by a shared

religious identity. He writes:

> Religious belief thus aided the peasantry and gave them the necessary moral
> strength to act against their immediate exploiter. It is pertinent that religion in
> this case only helped to accentuate the existing economic antagonism, rather than
> the economic antagonism deepening communal cleavage. In the absence of
> proper leadership, class organization, and class consciousness, it is not surprising
> that the religious sentiments of the peasantry were exploited and that religion also
> became a factor, though contributory and secondary, in a struggle which was
> essentially agrarian.[29]

Panikkar's description of the situation implicitly argues that religious identity was an

expedient substitute for the kind of class consciousness that might be expected to

underpin resistance to oppression. In fact, Panikkar's language suggests that the revolt

cohered around religious identity because of a failure of leadership. The more general

point is that the act of resistance to oppression was a political act with economic roots.

The religious aspect of the uprising is ultimately incidental. It can be reduced to the

underlying class struggle just as Spivak argues that it should be.

There is a strong resonance between Spivak and Panikkar. Like Spivak, Panikkar

interprets religion in light of economics. Both take the position that economic concerns

are more fundamental to human experience than religious concerns are. In fact, both

proceed under the assumption that economic factors are the most significant in any

situation. Religion is a powerful motivator, on the other hand, and both Spivak and

Panikkar are aware of this fact. Both read religion as ideology. Both understand this as a

potentially positive function. In this case, religious identity fuels a resistance to

oppression. Spivak's discussion is abstract but she also imagines a particular kind of

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[29] Panikkar 2007: 235.

religion that could be used to subvert systems of domination. Religion has historically been used primarily to oppress but in specific situations and in the abstract, it is possible for religion to be used against oppressive systems.

This Marxist paradigm has relatively little to offer an anthropological approach to religion. There can be no such thing as a Marxist approach to religion per se. Instead, Marxist readings like the interest theory of ideology reduce religion to something more basic, namely class conflict. In effect, they take religion out of the way in order to arrive at a clearer picture of what really matters. By definition, then, they do not treat religion as a discrete phenomenon. Their primary concerns are social rather than cultural. Thus, as Pennington observes, this approach does not contribute to a theorization of religion in postcolonial terms, especially where religion is approached anthropologically.

Edward Said and Sharada Sugirtharajah: Religion as Discourse

If Spivak's approach were the sum of postcolonial studies, scholars of religion would have to look elsewhere for resources. Thankfully, it is not. Edward Said's *Orientalism* outlines an approach to discourse that can be applied to discourses about religion. Said does treat religion in his description of Orientalist readings of Islam.[30] Sharada Sugirtharajah takes the project a step further by taking a discursive approach to the colonial construction of Hinduism.[31] Both approach religion by articulating the discourses that defined them, which usefully furthers conversation about religion as a discourse.

Said's purpose is to articulate the grammar of a discourse about the orient that was related to but not synonymous with the orient itself. In order to accomplish that, he

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[30] Said 1979.
[31] Sugirtharah 2003.

what could have motivated" discursive formations.[35] Foucault proceeds by questioning

"those ready-made syntheses, those groupings that we normally accept before any

examination, those links whose validity is recognized at the outset," and among those

syntheses he places some of the most basic categories of analysis: genre, oeuvre, and

author.[36] Said rejects Foucault's position on author and oeuvre, but he follows Foucault's

lead in transcending other boundaries, including genre. He reads travel literature,

memoir, scholarly works, and texts related to colonial administration as expressions of a

single Orientalist discourse.[37]

Said's object of study is Orientalist discourse itself and not religion, but religion

still figures significantly in his discussion. The impulse to contain the Orient was a

response to anxiety. Western travelers encountered unfamiliar religions in the East,

which produced significant anxiety. As a result, representing religion was an integral

part of Orientalist discourse. Islam, for instance, was perceived as a serious threat by

Westerners. Islam came to symbolize

> terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians. For Europe, Islam
> was a lasting trauma. Until the end of the seventeenth century the "Ottoman
> peril" lurking alongside Europe came to represent for the whole of Christian
> civilization a constant danger, and in time European civilization incorporated that
> peril and its lore, its great events, figures, virtues and vices, as something woven
> into the fabric of life.[38]

Islam's menacing influence was construed in a wide range of terms. Travelers were

subject to local customs in terms of food and drink but also dress and personal hygiene.

The threat of creeping sexual immorality or even madness accompanies stories told by

travelers who found themselves living as one of the natives. The underlying concern was

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[35] Foucault 1972: 162.
[36] Foucault 1972: 22.
[37] Said 1979: 23.
[38] Said 1979: 59-60.

that eastern modes of thought would completely replace western rationality. The result would be nothing short of a total loss of identity.[39] Said argues that representations of Islam in Orientalist discourse neutralized the threat by mastering Islam—one example among many "domestications of the exotic."[40]

Religion has a place in Said's analysis as one of the cultural realities represented by Orientalist discourse. Thus although religion is not his focus, his approach could be used to analyze discourses about religion. In fact, Sugirtharajah takes a similar approach to his in her analysis of the discursive construction of Hinduism. She applies a systematic postcolonial analysis to a series of representations of Hinduism, which she argues comprise a complex system of representation. As in Said's discussion of Islam, Sugirtharajah contends that this system of representation is intended to domesticate. Hinduism was attractive to western writers and yet it was also overwhelmingly vast and foreign. Like Islam, it produced a kind of terror in those who encountered it. Their collective response was to study it, missionize it, and govern it—all impulses that were meant to bring it under intellectual, spiritual, and judicial control.[41]

Sugirtharajah describes a number of strategies that were used to construct a Hinduism that was "static, fixed, and palatable," while at the same time justifying colonial rule.[42] For example, she identifies the trope of the child in several colonial texts. The colonized people are represented as primitive and childlike. Because they are children, they are inoffensive and harmless, but they are also subject to being governed. As Sugirtharajah puts it:

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[39] Said 1979: 166-197.
[40] Said 1979: 60.
[41] Sugirtharajah 2003: 1-11.
[42] Sugirtharajah 2003: 1.

> Once this pattern of relationship is in place, the parent exercises authority for the benefit of the child who lacks the tools to manage its affairs. In other words, the trope of the child becomes a convenient strategy to define the place of the Other and neutralize the ambivalent relationship between the ruler and ruled.[43]

The trope of the child appears in Rudyard Kipling's poem "The White Man's Burden."[44]

America, a former colony, is encouraged to step into national adulthood by taking part in colonialism. It is a thankless task but it is the burden of the more civilized to shepherd the world's hapless, primitive folk into a better state. It is a convenient rhetorical strategy, as Sugirtharajah argues, in part because it neatly subverts any possible objection the colonized people might have. The negative aspects of colonialism cannot be criticized from within Kipling's framework without implying a certain naiveté, the perspective of the child who doesn't know what it is to navigate the complicated world inhabited by adults. Thus it is a discourse that dominates by classifying and obviating native objection before it is even voiced.

Said and Sugirtharajah have a great deal in common. Both take discourses as their object of study. Both illuminate the underlying logic of the discourse in question. They differ because their objects of study differ. The discourse Said analyzes includes but is not limited to religion. Sugirtharajah, on the other hand, applies Said's approach to Hinduism as discourse. It is thus a truly postcolonial approach to a religion.

Sugirtharajah's work demonstrates that the approach can be applied directly to religion. She treats Hinduism as a discourse. In this case, she contends that Hinduism was constructed discursively in a colonial context, which makes the approach especially fitting. Although Hinduism is something of a special case, there is a sense in which every religion is constructed discursively. In a colonial or imperial context, the discursive

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[43] Sugirtharajah 2003: 31.
[44] Kipling 1899.

construction of religion is intimately connected with power and politics. The approach thus has the potential to illuminate the relationship between religious discourse and political power.

Homi K. Bhabha: Religion as Culture

On the surface, Homi Bhabha seems as disinterested in religion as Spivak does, and yet his work is a useful resource for a postcolonial approach to religion. The bulk of his scholarly contribution is gathered in a collection of essays aptly entitled *The Location of Culture*.[45] In these essays, he outlines an approach to colonialism that engages not only representation but resistance. Like Said, he outlines the character of colonial discourses but his overall approach illuminates not only colonial discourse but the broader cultural dynamics of the colonial situation.

Bhabha's approach to colonialism is characterized by his interest in culture, especially cultures at the borders between nations and peoples. He describes boundaries and borders as liminal spaces, which suggests the threshold between cultures as discrete entities. It soon becomes clear that Bhabha understands all cultures as border cultures. He writes:

> The very concepts of homogenous national cultures, the consensual or contiguous transmission of historical traditions, or 'organic' ethnic communities—*as the grounds of cultural comparativism*—are in a profound process of redefinition (emphasis original).[46]

Bhabha's work is part of this process of redefinition. He questions the idea of discrete cultures, as for example in his work on cultural hybridity. For Bhabha, cultures are not distinct realities that somehow interact with one another without mutual transformation.

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[45] Bhabha 1994.
[46] Bhabha 1994: 5.

And yet mutual transformation does not imply melding into one thing. Instead, the very source of culture is the space between one thing and another. The borders and boundaries do not only exist at the margins. They are everywhere. Bhabha analyzes colonialism as an asymmetrical cultural interaction that produces hybridized cultural forms. The project is directed toward the illumination of the dynamics of culture itself.[47]

Much like Said, Bhabha is in large part unconcerned with religion itself but religion does figure in his analysis. Said discussed religion where it was relevant to his analysis of the larger discourse of Orientalism. The same can be said of Bhabha. Religion occupies a minor place in his work. It was one point of contact between colonizer and colonized. It was but one of the many topics around which they interacted. And yet, in some cases, it aptly illustrates the cultural dynamic at hand. In those cases, Bhabha uses sources related to religion to illuminate his point.

Missionary work is the most persistent topic related to religion to appear in Bhabha's work. In particular, Bhabha uses it to illuminate colonial mimicry. In postcolonial studies mimicry is theorized as the imitation of one partner in a colonial interaction by the other partner. Often it refers to the adoption of standards of dress or grooming, which are often vastly different between cultures, but it also encompasses behavior, speech, and thought as well. He writes:

> Mimicry is…the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power. Mimicry is also the sign of the inappropriate, however, a difference or recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance, and poses an imminent threat to both 'normalized' knowledge and disciplinary powers.[48]

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[47] On borders, boundaries, and in between spaces, see Bhabah 1994: 1-9; and 212-235.
[48] Bhabha 1994: 86.

Bhabha describes mimicry moving in two directions, precisely because it can be deployed by either colonizer or colonized, and has a distinct function for each. When mimicry is deployed by the colonizer, it functions as part of a strategy of domination. The colonizer performs an imitation of native identity, which then becomes the standard for native behavior. The colonizer appropriates the "Other," to use Bhabha's language, and performs an authorized version of native identity as a form of colonial representation. Put another way, it produces an "authorized version of otherness."[49] Here, it says, is the real content of native identity, visibly enacted by a member of the dominant group. The colonial performance is then presented to the native as a genuine—in fact the most genuine—version of native identity. The colonized are reduced to mimicking this imitation of indigenous identity, which is presented to them by the colonizer as standard. To do otherwise is to fail utterly, as one is neither a colonizer, nor a proper native—at least, not according to the dominant discourse. Colonial mimicry is thus a visible, performative way for the colonizer to master native identity. As in any form of colonial representation, the underlying goal is to domesticate and reduce, such that native identity can be manipulated and controlled.

At the same time, colonial mimicry is a kind of ruse because the mimic's performance is never quite right. Adopting alien customs would seem to betray his pre-colonial identity, which is why the mimic is often an object of ridicule, both with the colonizer and among his own people—an Uncle Tom, for example. He is ridiculous at best, and at worst, a threat. As Bhabha puts it, mimicry is never far from mockery, and the native mimic is equally subject to that charge. At root, the native mimic calls

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[49] Bhabha 1994: 88

attention to the irreducible difference of the native—a difference that is "almost nothing but not quite." [50] The difference is both laughable and frightening.

Bhabha uses the example of missionary activity to illustrate mimicry. The missionary project itself can be read as an exercise in creating mimics. The goal of missionary activity is to make Christians. Thus the missionary invites the native to mimic either a Western version of Christianity or some authorized version of a native Christianity. In either case, it is a call to imitation. The uneasy question for the missionary is always how true and how full the native's conversion really is. And in many cases, the conclusion is that the native has failed to truly become Christian because his version of Christianity is not quite right. Thus for Bhabha the native Christian is a particular instantiation of the native mimic. It is particular form of a broader cultural dynamic. And since that broader dynamic is the subject of his analysis, missionary work and other religious phenomena are raised where they illuminate something more general. [51]

Cultural realities are the underlying focus of Bhabha's work, which makes it amenable to an explicitly anthropological framework. In particular, Bhabha's work is commensurate with with Geertz's approach to ideology as a cultural system. Bhabha argues that the underlying mood of colonialism is ambivalent because the colonial encounter with an "other" produces anxiety. Colonialism thus has a disorienting effect. Understood as a cultural system, ideology is a response to strain. The strain is psychological and social but it is also cultural. Ideology develops as a means to address cultural disorientation and establish a new system of meaning. Geertz writes:

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[50] Bhabha 1994: 91

[51] Bhabha discusses missionary work in relationship to mimicry in a number of places, especially1994: 119-121 and 133-136.

> The function of ideology is to make an autonomous politics possible by providing the authoritative concepts that render it meaningful, the suasive images by means of which it can be sensibly grasped. It is, in fact, precisely at the point at which a political system begins to free itself from the immediate governance of received tradition, from the direct and detailed guidance of religious or philosophical canons on the one hand and from the unreflective precepts of conventional moralism on the other, that formal ideologies tend first to emerge and take hold.[52]

Thus, according to Geertz, ideologies emerge when conventional systems of meaning-making fail. He likens the disorientation to travel in a strange country, which makes his understanding of ideology as a cultural system a potent analogue for the colonial situation. Confronted by unfamiliar or even inscrutable cultural information, existing interpretive frameworks fail. A new cultural system becomes necessary. There is an obvious resonance between Geertz's understanding of ideology as a cultural system and Bhabha's description of the emergence of new cultural forms out of the colonial encounter.

Although Bhabha does not apply his approach directly to religion, his ideas can be used to bridge the distance between the anthropology of religion and postcolonial studies. Bhabha approaches colonialism as a cultural system. The previous section described the overlap between Bhabha's description of colonial cultures and Geertz's work on ideology as a cultural system. This raises a further question about the relationship between religion and ideology.

Geertz describes two approaches to ideology. The interest theory places ideology against the backdrop of "universal struggle for advantage."[53] The strain theory, which reads ideology "against the background of a chronic effort to correct sociopsychological

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[52] Geertz 1973: 218-219.
[53] Geertz 1973: 201.

disequilibrium."[54] Interest theory aptly describes Spivak's work. The approach requires

the theorist to interpret all of the phenomena under consideration in light of an underlying

struggle for power and material wealth. The term "interest" functions as both a

sociological and psychological concept, in that case. Individuals struggle to protect their

own social and psychological interests, often at the expense of the interests of others.[55]

Thus Spivak and Panikkar interpret apparently religious statements in terms of their

function as ideological pronouncements. These pronouncements are understood to

further the interests of an individual or group—interests that tend toward domination or

resistance depending on the social class of the individual or group.

The strain theory is the foundation of Geertz's approach to ideology as a cultural

system. Strain theory presumes the centrality of sociopsychological disequilibrium.

Geertz adds cultural strain to these. Ideology is a response to the strain of social,

psychological, and cultural instability or disorientation. For Geertz,

> [i]t is a loss of orientation that most directly gives rise to ideological activity, an
> inability, for lack of usable models, to comprehend the universe of civic rights
> and responsibilities in which one finds oneself located.[56]

As described above, there is a strong resonance between Geertz's ideas about

ideology as a cultural system and Bhabha's approach to the cultures of colonialism.

Colonization produces disequilibrium. A cultural system emerges as a response. The

culture of colonialism can therefore be identified with ideology.

Geertz also describes religion as a cultural system but although both religion and

ideology can be interpreted as cultural systems, they are not interchangeable. Spivak

conflates religion and ideology, even though they are distinct phenomena. Like Panikkar,

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[54] Geertz 1973: 201.
[55] Geertz 1973: 201-203.
[56] Geertz 1973: 219.

she is primarily concerned with social realities and religion and ideology can serve

similar social functions. Geertz distinguishes religion from other systems that make

meaning of the world by emphasizing religion's

> aura of utter actuality. It is this sense of the "really real" upon which the religious
> perspective rests and which the symbolic activities of religion as a cultural system
> are devoted to producing, intensifying, and, so far as possible, rendering
> inviolable by the discordant revelations of secular experience. It is, again, the
> imbuing of a certain specific complex of symbols—of the metaphysic they
> formulate and the style of life they recommend—which a persuasive authority
> which, from an analytic point of view, is the essence of religious action.[57]

As Geertz describes it, ideology has a more limited function. It addresses disorientation

and it renders politics meaningful. Religion is a symbol system that provides the means

to interpret everyday life. In that respect, it is like commonsense or science. It is

different because it imbues its own symbolic system with a sense of ultimate significance.

Religion and ideology are distinct as cultural systems but this project will

demonstrate that they do sometimes operate together. Ideology renders politics

intelligible. This addresses the disorienting effects of various kinds of strain. In a

colonial context, the cultures of colonialism emerge as a response to an encounter with a

foreign culture. They provide an orienting framework that can be used to interpret this

encounter and its political implications. Religion works together with ideology. It is not

the case that religion merely functions as an ideological tool. As a cultural system,

religion functions as a framework through which everything can be understood. This

includes politics and thus it includes ideology itself. Religion imbues itself with a sense

of the ultimate. The dissertation will demonstrate that it can perform the same function

for ideology. In the context of Roman Greece, religion lent its air of ultimate reality to

the system of beliefs and symbols that constituted Roman imperialism. This is not the

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[57] Geertz 1973: 112.

only thing religion does or can do. It is, however, one possibility. This interpretation moves away from reading religion as secondary to ideology. Instead, it interprets religion as a discrete cultural system with its own meaning-making power. Religion can compete with ideology as a parallel system of meaning. In this case, religion expresses ideological pronouncements as a way of incorporating them into a framework that makes sense of the world.

The dissertation will show that Roman imperial discourses were expressed religiously. Homi Bhabha's description of colonial discourse can be used to interpret Roman imperialism. Roman imperialism and Roman revision of Greek religion, however, were parallel processes. The dissertation will demonstrate that the same categories of analysis that Bhabha uses to describe colonial discourse can be used to interpret religion in Roman Greece. This does not mean religion and ideology are interchangeable. Instead, they are discrete and perhaps sometimes competing systems of meaning. I interpret their parallel function as an example of religion's ability to incorporate, express, and lend a sense of ultimate significance to political realities. This argument combines postcolonial studies, especially the work of Homi Bhabha, with an anthropological approach to both religion and ideology, drawing from the work of Clifford Geertz.

Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries as a Case Study of Roman Greece

Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries are a useful case study for this project because the cult was a major part of pre-Roman Greek religion and it was a major point of interest for Roman benefactors. The data for the Eleusinian mysteries present certain complications. The cult was secret, which poses certain interpretive issues. Literary references to the

mysteries are oblique out of respect for the secrecy of the cult. This section will describe the significance of the cult in the context of Roman Greece. It will then overview available evidence and conclude that scholars must rely on non-textual sources to flesh out an understanding of the cult and its significance.

The history of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore is emblematic of the relationship between Greece and Rome. During the archaic period, the first sanctuary was erected on a site of importance in the prehellenic world—a Mycenaean village of some significant size, which included a megaron nestled against the hillside. As a Greek site, it was one of the demes of Athens and the home of the Eleusinian mysteries, which were celebrated in Demeter's honor each autumn. As the site of the mysteries, Eleusis was a major pilgrimage center, the terminus of a procession that began in Athens and drew initiates from across the Mediterranean. Thus, though closely tied to the agricultural cycle, it was also a key part of Athenian civic life. Eleusis was one of the most important religious sites in all of Greece and its mysteries were only equaled by the Samothracian mysteries in fame. The Romans eventually took a keen interest in Eleusis, precisely because of its fame. Consuls traveling to and from posts in the east were often initiated there, but it wasn't until Hadrian became emperor that Eleusis truly became a major Roman site.[58] Its transformation from a Greek to a Roman sanctuary took place over a number of years, and the changes were often subtle. There is no question, on the other hand, that there was a change, from the Greek sanctuary of old to a Roman site, filled with Roman monuments and points of reference. As with the rest of Greece, something that had long existed was incorporated into the new Roman order. The result was necessarily a transformation, which is the sense in which the sanctuary of Demeter

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[58] On known Roman initiates into the mysteries, see Clinton 1989a.

and Kore at Eleusis is emblematic, though not perfectly representative, of what took place all over Greece under the aegis of Rome.

The cult itself was held in strict secrecy, and as a result the data for the Eleusinian mysteries are scattered and provide few definitive answers about the content of the ritual. The mysteries were never described directly by any Greek or Latin author. Rather the textual record contains scattered literary references that often vaguely refer to the sanctuary and its rituals.[59] The Homeric Hymn to Demeter is an additional literary source, often taken to be an aetiology of the cult but even it doesn't reveal the content of the ritual itself. The site itself has yielded extensive archaeological data, which has allowed for the reconstruction of the sanctuary, and some speculation about the mysteries.[60]

The final body of data is epigraphic evidence, from both Athens and Eleusis.[61] The inscriptions have facilitated a reconstruction of the extensive system of cult functionaries and the general shape of the ritual, although the details remain obscure. The inscriptions suggest an extensive hierarchy of priestly administration.[62]   The priests at Eleusis were responsible for certain ritual objects of great significance and for guarding the secrecy of the rites. They were also responsible at a practical level for the coordination of a massive procession, which would have entailed hosting the gathered initiates in Eleusis for two nights, at the least. It was a massive undertaking and at that

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[59] The literary references are gathered (with Italian translation) in Scarpi 2002.

[60] The excavation will be discussed at length later in this chapter. Mylonas (1961) prepared the final excavation report, and his work is the most comprehensive overview of archaeological finds from the site available.

[61] Clinton (2005) collected and published the inscriptions from Eleusis with commentary. Scans of the inscriptions themselves are available online (http://eleusis.library.cornell.edu). See also Cavanagh (1996) on inscriptions regarding finance and religion from both Athens and Eleusis.

[62] Clinton (1969) has collected and published inscriptions specifically related to the cult functionaries at Eleusis.

level, the extensive priestly class seems justified. A secular Athenian authority, the

Archon Basileus, was officially in charge of managing the procession, while the religious

content was handled by officials, drawn from one of the two leading Eleusinian families,

the Eumolpids and the Kerykes. The highest office was that of hierophant or high priest,

who was one of the Eumolpids. The hierophant was responsible for the sanctuary itself.

He was joined by two assistants, priestesses, and the three of them had a key role in the

initiation, all of them being appointed to their posts for life. Two more priestesses of

Demeter were appointed on a yearly basis to live at Eleusis and take part in the initiation,

perhaps acting the roles of Demeter and Kore. The work of the cult was further assisted

by another class of priestesses, whose role is somewhat uncertain. In addition to these,

there were several further offices that were singularly important to the celebration of the

mysteries. The dadouchos was the torchbearer and second only to the hierophant among

male cult functionaries. The hierokeryx was the herald of the mysteries, distinguished by

descent from the family of the Kerykes and a strong voice. With the addition of the

rarely mentioned priest at the altar (*ho epi bomo hiereus*), these comprised the most

important officials of the cult, all of them drawn from either the line of the Eumolpidae or

the Kerykes.[63]

Epigraphic evidence also outlines some of the rituals leading up to the climactic

initiation inside the Telesterion. The celebration began with the Lesser Mysteries in the

Spring and culminated with the Greater Mysteries in the Fall, comprising a nine day

festival in all.[64] There are no data for the rituals that took place on the climactic night

inside the Telesterion. The Greater Mysteries began on the 15th day of Boedromion

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[63] Mylonas (1961: 229-235) outlines the major offices.
[64] On the lesser mysteries, see Mylonas 1961: 239-243.

(September/October), although the hiera of the Demeter would have been removed from Eleusis and transferred to the city Eleusinion in advance of the celebration.[65] The activities began with a gathering at the Stoa Poikile calling the people to the procession. Once gathered and examined, the initiates participated in the *elasis*, which entailed travel to the sea—probably at Phaleron or Piraeus—for purification. Each initiate was required to cleanse both herself and a small pig in the sea. Mylonas speculates that, after purification of initiate and swine in the sea, the animal must have been sacrificed immediately upon return, against others who believe it took place on the third day of the mysteries. Regardless, the third day was primarily a day of prayer and sacrifice on behalf of the people of Athens. The fourth and final day before the procession to Eleusis was called the Asklepieia, as a commemoration of the late arrival and subsequent late purification of Asklepios when he was initiated into the mysteries. It was a day to accommodate stragglers, who had not arrived in Athens in time to begin with the rest of the initiates. The fifth day, which took place on the 19th of Boedromion, marked the beginning of the procession from Athens to Eleusis, a distance of about fourteen miles. Mylonas pictures the initiates gathering at the Pompeion of Athens, near the Dipylon gate. The procession left the city with a wooden representation of Iackhos and a priest assigned to Iakhos riding a carriage at its head, followed by the dignitaries of the cult—including the priestesses of Demeter carrying the *hiera*—and finally the initiates, followed by carriages and pack animals carrying supplies for the journey. The processional road, the Hieros Odos (Sacred Way) winds through the mountains until the sanctuary of Apollo at Dafni, where it turns sharply toward the sea, until the shrine of Aphrodite, where it proceeded over a hill and toward the Rheitoi, an inland sea held

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[65]For a full description of the city Eleusinion, see Miles 1998.

sacred to the goddesses. Here, there were two rituals of uncertain purpose, but attested

by ancient sources. The *krokosis* saw the descendents of the original inhabitant of the

area tying a saffron colored ribbon to the right hand and left leg of each initiate. Mylonas

suggests the procession would have halted here until sundown, only to continue by

torchlight thereafter. Shortly after this period of rest, the procession crossed the

Eleusinian Kephisos, a river spanned by a bridge. At the bridge, masked men shouted

insults at leading citizens of the city as they passed. Mylonas suggests that the mood was

festive. The purpose of these insults, called *gephyrismoi*, was apotropaic, meaning that

they were intended to ward off evil. Insulting the initiates protected them from the

jealousy of evil spirits and thus their wrath.

Reveling apparently followed arrival at Eleusis, at which point our information

about the mysteries, so abundant from epigraphic and literary evidence for the procession

to Eleusis, becomes suddenly scarce after the fifth day.[66] As far as scholars can

determine, the climax of the mysteries took place on the sixth day of the festival, inside

the Telesterion, but very little is known about what those rituals entailed. Mylonas's

view is speculative, although he argues that the scholar can be sure that the ritual

included things enacted (*dromena*), sacred objects shown (*deiknymena*) and words

spoken (*legomena*). For Mylonas, the *dromena* must comprise an enactment of the story

of Demeter and Persephone—of the abduction of Kore, Demeter's peregrination in search

of her daughter, and their reunion—while the *deiknymena* and *legomena* are almost

wholly unknown. Mylonas concludes that the former should indicate the *hiera*, holy

objects he believes were displayed at the height of the ceremonial, and that the latter, he

concludes, must have consisted of short liturgical statements rather than longer

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[66] Mylonas 1961: 247-256.

discourses. On the other side of the shadowy sixth and seventh days, the mysteries continue into an eighth and ninth day. On the eighth day, initiates performed rites for the dead, especially ritual libation using vessels called *plemochoai*. The final day was marked by dispersion, either by way of Athens or directly. This took place individually and not as an organized procession. Mylonas concludes with the observation that although the initiates may have felt renewed or enriched by the experience, they were under no new obligations as a result.[67]

Although there is some scant information about the mysteries in the literary evidence—Dio Chrysostom (Or. 12.33) mentions light and dark appearing at intervals, for example—there is no further definitive evidence for the rituals of the Greater Mysteries. Mylonas, like many others, had hoped for an inscription that would outline the details of the ritual, but none has been discovered. The mysteries remain a secret, which continues to be a major part of their appeal, even for contemporary scholars.[68] In addition to creating and sustaining interest in the cult, secrecy also means that it is necessary to consider both textual and material evidence in order to interpret the cult and its significance.

Overview of Chapters

The project is built on Homi Bhabha's theorization of the cultures of colonialism, more specifically his ideas about ambivalence and hybridity. Bhabha uses the term ambivalence to refer to colonial discourses, but the real experience of both colonizer and

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[67] Mylonas 1961: 261-278.

[68] See, for example, essays by Burkert (1995) and Bremmer (1995). Secrecy itself has been a recent topic of inquiry in religion. The conversation is rooted in the sociological work of Georg Simmel (1908) but has a more recent precedent in Bellman's (1984) anthropology of secrecy among the Poro people. For the relationship between secrecy and religion in late antiquity specifically, see Smith 1987 and the essays in Kippenberg and Stroumsa 1995. For the question of secrecy in religion more generally, see Bolle 1987 and Urban 1998. See also Duncan (2006) for an annotated bibliography of work on secrecy in religion.

colonized is the ultimate source of this discursive ambivalence. In the colonial situation, both parties are powerfully attracted to and repulsed by one another. This sets the stage for a complex and often contradictory interaction between them. The real experience of interaction in turn produces a self-contradictory discourse. For example, the colonizer may both praise the culture of the native and vilify it. The difference is determined by the colonizer's immediate discursive purpose and the aspect of native culture in question. The colonizer experiences attraction and therefore praises the native. At the same time, the colonizer is repulsed and thus distances himself from the native by denigrating native culture. The dynamics are discursive but they are rooted in a real life experience and are therefore embodied in the cultural context in ways that are both textual and non-textual.[69]

Ambivalence describes the basic character of the relationship between colonizer and native. It is likewise the basic character of colonial discourses. Bhabha uses a second category, hybridity, to describe the culture produced by colonial interaction. Here his interest in culture itself is even clearer. Hybridity is a general characteristic of culture inasmuch as all cultures comprise an eclectic mix of elements drawn from disparate sources. Hybridity also describes the emergence of new cultural forms in a colonial context. Cultures are not discrete but they also do not simply meld with one another. Instead, according to Bhabha, they are hybridized. This hybridization is apparent in discourses in which a mixture of elements coexists without dissolving into one another, but Bhabha uses the term primarily to describe cultural identities. Ambivalence

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[69] On ambivalence in Bhabha's work, see 1994: 85-96; and 129-138.

described a discourse that reflected an experience. Hybridity is likewise a characteristic of culture and cultural identity.[70]

The first two chapters examine these themes in textual sources. Chapter One describes ambivalence as a characteristic of Roman discourses about Greece in general, drawing on the example of Cicero's first letter to Quintus (*Ad Quint. Fr.*1.1). The letter comprises advice to a provincial governor. In it Cicero represents the Greeks in terms that recall modern colonialisms. He construes the Greeks as a threat and neutralizes the sense of threat by denigrating them. In the same text, however, he also overtly and lavishly praises Greek culture and philosophy. The internal contradiction is an expression of ambivalence. Chapter Two addresses Cicero's treatment of the mysteries in conversation with Pausanias, a Greek writer. It argues that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries functioned as a Third Space of interaction between Greece and Rome. This is demonstrated by the concurrence between Cicero and Pausanias. Both men engage the mysteries on the same terms. Their differences can be attributed to the cultural position of each man. Because the mysteries were secret, it is impossible to identify the kind of cultural hybridity that emerged from this interaction, but the potential for hybridization is clearly indicated.

Chapters Three and Four address ambivalence and hybridity in the sanctuary space. It is necessary first to make a bridge between the textual realm described by Bhabha and architecture. Chapter Three takes up this task by proposing palimpsest as a postcolonial approach to space. A palimpsest is a text—in the case of postcolonial studies a cultural text—that has been erased and rewritten or simply written over. The

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[70] Bhabha uses the term hybridity extensively. See Bhabha 1994: 112-120 for his most sustained discussion of the term. On the dynamics of identity formation in colonial and postcolonial context, see also Van der Veer 1994 and Nandy 1983.

idea is that both the new inscription and signs of the old are visible. New cultural identities do not simply replace the old. Instead pre-colonial cultures and cultural identities continue in a modified form, overwritten by the colonizer. The resulting coexistence of disparate elements can be characterized as hybridized. The scholar who approaches the colonial or postcolonial situation must therefore attend to these vestiges and examine the relationship between what is written and what was written before. History and change over time matter a great deal.[71]

In my work, palimpsest functions as a bridge between the textual and non-textual. The architecture of an archaeological site can be read as a palimpsest, written and overwritten over time. The chapter draws in particular on the archaeological idea of a palimpsest of meaning, which is an object that accrues new meanings over time. Palimpsest also has a postcolonial use. It is used by analogy with texts. In postcolonial studies, the text is not a physical manuscript or site but a cultural or human text. This text is written and overwritten in different hands, which is a way of describing the process of cultural change. As a postcolonial term, palimpsest calls attention to the asymmetrical dynamics of power that are part of any colonial or imperial situation. The idea is thus a bridge between archaeology and postcolonial studies.

Chapter Four draws on the idea of the sanctuary as a palimpsest of meanings. The chapter first contextualizes two key areas of the sanctuary—the Telesterion and the north gate—in terms of their individual histories. Then it evaluates the continuities or discontinuities in terms of a balance of power that favored Rome by analyzing them in terms of ambivalence and hybridity as markers of Roman imperial discourses.

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[71] For a definition of palimpsest, see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2000. Palimpsest is not often used systematically by postcolonial theorists. It can be found in the work of Harris 1983, Huyssen 2003, and S. Sugirtharajah 2003.

The sum is reading of the sanctuary that establishes a parallel between the textual world of Roman imperialism and the material practices involved in reshaping the sanctuary. Roman imperial discourse is thus not only a matter of rhetorical strategies, whether written or oral. The characteristics that can be identified in textual sources are also expressed architecturally and spatially. The discourse that represented and mastered the Greeks was a fully embodied discourse. It comprised texts and oratory but equally pervaded the processes by which Rome reshaped the provinces, in this case by patronizing a particular sanctuary.

As described above, I interpret this as an example of the confluence of religion and ideology as cultural systems. In this case, Roman imperialism, like ideology, addresses the political situation. As a cultural system, it makes sense of the politics of Roman Greece. Religion functions as a parallel cultural system. It also makes sense of the politics of Roman Greece. It does so in religious terms, however. The imperial discourse embedded in the sanctuary at Eleusis expresses the sense that the Roman Empire had a deeper significance that extended beyond government.

The contribution of the project is twofold. In the dissertation, Homi Bhabha's theorization of the colonial situation functions as the foundation of an approach to a sanctuary and therefore to an aspect of religion. Sharada Sugirtharajah's project directs Said's insights about colonial discourses toward the investigation of a discourse about religion. This project directs Bhabha's work toward the investigation of religion. This demonstrates that while narrowly Marxist approaches have limited value for the study of religion and colonialism, there is much in postcolonial studies that is of use to the scholar of religion. This is the first contribution of the dissertation. The second is the

development of a case study for comparison with other colonialisms. Roman Greece was both like and unlike modern colonial contexts and that is why this discussion is useful to the study of religion and postcolonial theory. The term postcolonial pertains to decolonized nations, many of them African or Asian that were once ruled by Western powers, primarily the British and French. Postcolonial theory aims to describe the colonial situation and its aftermath, toward identifying and correcting the problems faced by decolonized peoples. At the same time, the theory describes the dynamics of a relationship characterized by an unequal distribution of power in a general sense. It is a relationship in which a dominant group justifies and maintains its dominance both politically and culturally—something that can be said of both the British and the Roman Empires. There is enough resonance to justify the application of the theory, as Stephen Moore argues.

Chapter One—Ambivalence and Cicero's Philhellenism

Introduction

The concept of ambivalence is foundational to postcolonial theory. It describes the basic

character of the colonial situation. Colonialism is often described in terms of domination

and resistance.[72] The colonizer dominates the native, materially and culturally, and the

native resists that domination either by armed revolt or by more subtle means. Cultural

domination often takes the form of colonial representation. Colonial discourses define

both the colonial project and the identity of the native in terms that favor the colonizer. It

is thus a form of domination. The colonized native resists representation directly or

indirectly, often by subversion. Ambivalence first describes the experience of all

involved. Both colonized and colonizer regard one another uneasily. They are often both

attracted to and repulsed by one another. For the colonizer in particular, this produces a

split in the dominant discourse. Thus both the experience of colonialism and the

discourses around it are characterized by internal tensions and contradictions that are

never resolved and can be described as ambivalent.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish a resonance between the postcolonial

concept of ambivalence and Roman imperialism. The first half of this chapter will

outline the concept of ambivalence. I begin with Homi Bhabha's use of the term to

describe colonial discourse. Ambivalence is apparent across texts as a general

characteristic of colonial discourse. At the same time, signs of that ambivalence can be

identified in a single text. In both cases, colonial discourse is characterized by an internal

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[72] Cf. Panikkar 2007: 4. Although this is sometimes characterized as a simplistic or heavy-handed model, in fact each concept suggests great subtlety. Theorizing resistance demands attention to questions of subjectivity and agency (cf. Spivak 1988; Hartley 2003). Dominance is theorized in terms of representation, as in the work of Edward Said (1979), where representation is described as a collection of discursive strategies in a Foucauldian sense.

discursive split. It speaks both for and against itself at the same time and as a result, it

can be subverted as a form of resistance. Ambivalence is equally characteristic of

representation. David Spurr describes colonial discourse as a shifting mosaic of

strategies of representation. As the discourse is adapted to new situations, it exhibits ever

greater internal contradiction. Colonial discourse therefore comprises a mass of

incongruous statements that nonetheless coexist—precisely the state of affairs described

by ambivalence.

In the second half of the chapter, I will demonstrate that ambivalence was

characteristic of Roman representation of Greek culture. The parallel can be established

using Cicero first to his brother Quintus on the proper way to govern in the provinces (*Ad

Quintus Fratrem* 1.1). Cicero's advice on the matter is an expression of his philhellenism

and, like modern colonial discourses, Roman philhellenism is characterized by internal

tension and contradiction. In fact, the very same strategies Spurr describes can be

identified in Cicero's text. Like modern colonialists, he engages in strategies of

representation that appeal to an idealized vision of Greek culture and strategies that vilify

Greece as unworthy to self-govern. This basic contradiction can be described as

ambivalent.

Ambivalence

The first goal of this section is to outline the basic meaning of ambivalence as it relates to

colonial discourses. This is accomplished in the first part. Homi Bhabha uses the term

ambivalence to refer to colonial discourses in general. In that context, it is a direct

expression of the ambivalent experience of the colonizer and it is also an occasion for

resistance. The second goal is to overview colonial representation and its relationship to

ambivalence. The second part addresses representation, making use of the work of David

Spurr. Spurr outlines the content of some common forms of representation in modern

colonialism. According to Spurr, these rhetorical strategies shift according to the

immediate needs of the author employing them. As a result, even in the space of a single

text, it is possible to identify points of internal contradiction and thus ambivalence.

Homi Bhabha: Ambivalence and Colonial Discourse

In Homi Bhabha's work, ambivalence is a basic description of colonial discourse. His

ideas are characteristically dense. He writes:

> If, for a while, the ruse of desire is calculable for the uses of discipline soon the
> repetition of guilt, justification, pseudo-scientific theories, superstition, spurious
> authorities, and classifications can be seen as the desperate effort to "normalize"
> *formally* the disturbance of a discourse of splitting that violates the rational,
> enlightened claims of its enunciatory modality. The ambivalence of colonial
> authority repeatedly turns from *mimicry*—a difference that is almost nothing but
> not quite—to *menace*—a difference that is almost total but not quite. (emphasis
> original).[73]

The basic idea of ambivalence is that colonial discourse conveys contradictory ideas

simultaneously. This is because of the broad contradiction between the practices of

representation used to justify colonial activity and the stated values of Western culture.

Ambivalence is closely connected in that case with representation, which is in turn linked

to the anxiety of the colonizer in the face of a threatening other. The irony, for Bhabha,

is that colonial discourses of representation are intended to master the native and yet

because of their inherent ambivalence, they are actually an occasion for resistance. I will

discuss the connection between ambivalence and representation, anxiety, and resistance

in turn.

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[73] Bhabha 1994: 91.

The need to justify colonialism discursively produces this broad split in the discourse. Enlightenment ideals like autonomy, for example, are fundamentally at odds with the practices of colonization. The colonizer experiences a tension between the values and ideals of her own culture and the activity of colonization. The colonizer also experiences anxiety in the face of the other, where the other is perceived as a threat to identity. The colonial project must therefore be justified and rationalized and the threatening other neutralized. The split is therefore produced by the attempt to normalize colonial practices. Representation is the primary means of normalization. The colonizer represents the colonized as in need of colonization. The colonizer must also represent herself and the colonial project in favorable terms. The colonizer dictates the terms of the discourse. Ironically, the colonizer undermines her own position at the same time.[74]

The value of theorizing colonial discourse in this way is that it accounts for the coexistence of apparently incompatible elements without allowing too much awareness on the part of the colonizer. In this respect, Bhabha's ideas transform the understanding of colonial discourse. It is not a lie to both speak of democracy and engage in undemocratic practices. There is some deception involved—of self and other—but the situation is more complex than the idea of lying implies. If it were a lie, then one side of the discourse would be true and the other false. This is not how Bhabha theorizes

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[74] Bhabha 1994: 86. The ambivalence of colonial discourse may arise from the anxiety of the colonizer, but it also has an effect on the experience of the colonized. According to Bhabha, it opens space for resistance. A split discourse can be turned against itself. Bhabha describes the process by which this takes place in terms of mimicry, because mimicry calls attention to the discursive split. On mimicry as it relates to resistance, see Bhabha 1994: 85-87. Spivak (1991) uses a different term, catechresis, to describe a similar form of resistance. Catechresis refers to the adoption of aspects of the dominant discourse for the purpose of subversion (cf. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1998: 34 and Moore 2006: 105-106). Spivak's idea of catechresis differs from Bhabha's mimicry in that Spivak imagines catechresis functioning as a self-conscious form of subversion. Frantz Fanon (1985: 153) reads mimicry this way as well. For Fanon, mimicry is only potentially resistant. For Bhabha the act of mimicry and thus the state of hybridity itself are inherently subversive. On the difference between Bhabha and Fanon, see Loomba 2005: 149. For a more sustained treatment of mimicry that makes use of both Bhabha and Fanon, see Roy 1998.

colonial discourse. Both sides of the discourse are true, in some sense. The discourse itself is double-minded. It speaks "in a tongue that is forked, not false."[75] The colonialist does not lie simply, but rather the discourse itself is characterized by ambivalence—which is to say it contains internally contradictory content. Thus, the Enlightenment ideals of liberty and autonomy exist in the same discursive space as arguments for the value of wresting sovereignty from indigenous peoples.

In sum, Bhabha uses the term ambivalence to refer to a basic characteristic of colonial discourses. The need to justify and normalize colonialism produces discourses that argue in favor of colonization. The rationale provided for colonial activity is often at odds with the stated values of a culture. Thus colonial discourses contain both the justification for colonialism and rhetoric that could be deployed to undermine the practice of colonization itself. In that respect, colonial discourses speak both for and against themselves. This is the sense in which they are called ambivalent.

David Spurr: Representation and Ambivalence

David Spurr's purpose is to overview the discourses associated with colonialism and imperialism and draw out the tropes that seem to transcend cultural and historical boundaries. Spurr's project is about articulating the way these discourses worked as well as describing their content. He contends that colonial discourse is not "an ideology or a set of ideas that must constantly be repeated" but rather it is an adaptable set of strategies that are intended to preserve "the very basic structures of power" by any means.[76] He proceeds by surveying a wide array of sources—from newspapers to administrative

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[75] Bhabha 1994: 85
[76] Spurr 2004 [1993]: 11.

documents—in order to draw out their commonalities.[77] Spurr calls attention to the underlying anxiety of the colonizer, who fears the loss of identity by absorption into the native culture. In response, colonialists create fixed discursive boundaries that enforce the distinction between the colonizer and the colonized. At the same time, they argue for the colonizer's superiority and right to rule. The sum is that colonial discourses neutralize or control the threat presented by the native and they do so in overlapping but often contradictory ways. Thus as quoted above, the strategies achieve the goal of colonial rhetoric—the maintenance of power—by any means necessary, without concern for the internal cohesion of the discourse.

Spurr outlines eleven distinct strategies that comprise colonial discourse. Each is either a representation of the native of a representation of the colonial project itself. Some are more specifically relevant to modern colonialism than others. I will present five of the most generally applicable here. Insubstantialization describes the nature of the threat posed by the native. Debasement and classification neutralize the threat by representation the native in terms that favor the colonizer. And finally, appropriation and affirmation valorize the colonial project itself. These five strategies paint a general picture of the ambivalence of representation that can be used to interpret Roman imperialism. I will discuss each in turn.

Insubstantialization refers to a dream-like state produced by encounter with the other and the ensuing threat of dissolution, into that dream world. Spurr illustrates using the trope of the cannibal. Stories of cannibalism are an extreme expression of colonial anxiety, where the colonized threatens to engulf and incorporate the colonizer in a direct, physical, and gruesome way. The colonizer is both threatened by the cannibal and

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[77] Spurr 2004 [1993]: 1-6.

fascinated with stories of cannibalistic activity. The other is, in that respect, both terrifying and transfixing. Loss of identity by dissolution into a foreign other is the more subtle threat encoded in such stories. Reassertion of identity alleviates the threat, often by placing both self and the other in a familiar discourse. The encounter is narrated as a psychic drama within the colonizer, and the colonized culture functions as a character in the play. It is a frequent feature of travel literature. The narrator describes the other as mysterious, enchanting, or disorienting, moves through the anxiety produced by the encounter, and finally into a reassertion of self. Throughout, the other cannot be distinguished from the narrator's own experience. The colonialist is "a kind of Prospero who transforms the non-Western world into a series of enchanting or disturbing visions, as easily dissolved as they are conjured up."[78] Like Propsero, the narrator of this psychic drama is in control of the visions and initiates his audience into a vicarious experience of threatened dissolution and reclamation of self. And yet, the world conjured by Prospero is ephemeral and unreal—to use Spurr's term, insubstantial.[79]

Insubstantialization communicates both the sense of threat and the appeal the colonized culture holds for the colonialist. Debasement is a rhetorical strategy that neutralizes the threat by insisting on the absolute difference between them. The rhetoric of debasement represents the colonized native in negative terms defined by the colonizing culture. Debasement conveys that the native culture is disordered because of its intrinsic failings. Every individual weakness has a political counterpart. Spur calls attention to discussions of post-colonial Africa, where this line of reasoning is especially prevalent.

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[78] Spurr 2004 [1993]: 155
[79] Spurr 2004 [1993]:

The AIDS crisis, for example, is attributed to a lack of personal responsibility.[80] The

inability of African nations to address the issue on their own is a failure of government.

Political instability, in turn, is attributed to a lack of character, rather than as the legacy of

decolonization.[81] Because the colonizing culture is necessarily a force for order and

stability, it is presented as the antithesis of the indigenous culture. Debasement creates a

hard, exclusionary boundary between colonizer and colonized. Like insubstantialization,

it is funded by fear of dissolution. But rather than dissolution into a dream-like and

seductive unreality, debasement associates the native culture with filth and defilement.

Thus the "supposed danger of the European's degeneration in the presence of the

primitive becomes both the source and the pretext for an obsessive reprehension of the

Other."[82]

Debasement construes the colonized negatively as compared with the colonized

culture and thus controls the terms of the discourse. Classification accomplishes the

same goal without necessarily associating the colonized with negative traits. The

standards still favor the culture of the colonizer, but cultures and nations are not simply

associated with filth or defilement. Instead, classification establishes standards of

judgment that are then used to rank order nations and peoples. The rankings are not

value neutral. Cultures are judged by how closely they approximate the cultural ideals of

the colonizer. Cultures and nations are praised for their concurrence and vilified for their

deviation from this norm. In modern contexts, this order of nations is often imposed on

an evolutionary timeline. Thus in addition to being superior, Western culture is also

perceived as more developed in an absolute sense. Other cultures are classified by their

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[80] Spurr 2004 [1993]: 90-91.
[81] Spurr 2004 [1993]: 61-64.
[82] Spurr 2004: [1993]: 82-84.

level of concurrence with Western culture, which amounts to evolutionary progress toward the heights reached by the West.[83]

Both debasement and classification control the terms of the discourse, which establishes clear boundaries between the colonizer and the colonized and thus neutralizes the threat. Appropriation, on the other hand, dictates how the colonial enterprise is received. The primary function of appropriation is to co-opt the native viewpoint and use it to argue in favor of colonialism. In some cases, the argument is that the natives actually wanted to be colonized. Appropriation conveys that their desire rather than the colonizer's desire to annex new territory precedes the act of colonization. In other cases, the land itself is portrayed as so rich and fruitful, it ought to be exploited. Where indigenous people lack the technology or the funds to make full use of their natural resources, it is incumbent upon a colonial power to intervene. Spurr argues that appropriation describes colonization such that the "preservation of colonial rule, as well as the exploitation of colonized territories, thus becomes a moral imperative as well as a political and an economic one."[84]

Spurr identifies several permutations of this strategy that provide concrete examples of how it functions in context. Among them, he describes the phenomenon of native gratitude toward the colonizer, which journalists are especially eager to report.[85] The grateful native is a sign to the colonizer that the project of colonization was genuinely justified. It also communicates that the native sees the colonizer as he wants to be seen. The rhetoric thus creates a feeling of sympathy between colonizer and

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[83] Spurr 2004 [1993]: 61-75.
[84] Spurr 2004 [1993]: 29.
[85] The question of gratitude has played a significant role in news coverage of the war in Iraq. See for example [need one].

colonized, founded on a mutual understanding of the interaction. It further eases anxiety produced by the uglier aspects of colonization, which may be its most important function. Appropriation is thus about identifying signs that the native supports the colonial project as a means of justifying colonization and easing the colonizer's guilt.[86]

Spurr addresses the question of necessity under the closely related heading of affirmation. Affirmation idealizes the colonial enterprise by construing the pre-colonial native as unruly and disordered and therefore in need of colonization. In his own words, affirmation places the colonial project "against the setting of emptiness and disorder by which it has defined the other."[87] Native incompetence—politically or morally—results in social chaos, which in turn demands intervention from enlightened Western nations. Rudyard Kipling's "White Man's Burden" is a prime example of affirmation. Kipling urges America, a former colony, to step into national adulthood by taking part in colonialism. It is a thankless task but it is the burden of the more civilized to shepherd the world's hapless, primitive folk into a better state, even if they resist. He writes:

> Take up the White Man's burden--
> And reap his old reward:
> The blame of those ye better,
> The hate of those ye guard--
> The cry of hosts ye humour
> (Ah, slowly!) toward the light:--
> "Why brought he us from bondage,
> Our loved Egyptian night?"[88]

The negative aspects of colonialism cannot be criticized from within Kipling's framework without implying a certain naiveté. The native's viewpoint is the perspective of the foolish Israelites or that of a child who doesn't know what it is to navigate the

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[86] Spurr 2004 [1993]: 34-42.
[87] Spurr 2004: 109.
[88] Kipling 1899.

complicated world inhabited by adults. It thus valorizes the colonial project as an act of beneficence by the strong and wiser for the good of the weaker. The colonizer has not only a right but a duty to impose order to correct the social ills produced by the incompetent native.

Spurr's typology of colonial discourse is ambivalent, just as Homi Bhabha describes. The rhetoric of debasement describes the colonized in negative terms, as a foil to the culture of the colonizer. Classification, on the other hand, may praise the native culture insofar as it is like the culture of the colonizer. A negative and a positive assessment of the colonized culture therefore coexist in the discourse and may even coexist in a single text. Likewise, the trope of insubstantialization dramatizes the potential threat posed by the native and native culture. Affirmation, on the other hand, may construe the native as a child who merely needs guidance. Thus a picture of the native as threatening and the native as innocent child may coexist.

In sum, Spurr describes a shifting discourse that deploys whatever rhetorical means necessary to argue in favor of colonialism. Insubstantialization conveys the sense of threat the colonizer associates with the native culture. The colonizer is in danger of losing his identity by being absorbed. Debasement and classification are examples of responses to this threat. Both represent the native in terms that favor the colonizing culture and both distance the colonizer and the native from one another. This neutralizes the threat by mastering and controlling the native discursively. Appropriation represents the colonial project itself in positive terms. Appropriation is especially related to native gratitude. If the natives are grateful for the colonization effort, colonization was justified—even necessary. The rhetoric of affirmation that Spurr describes conveys the

sense of necessity even more strongly. It is not only the right but the duty of the stronger, more mature colonizer to impose order on the chaotic native. The overall effect in ambivalent. Contradictory impressions of the native, in particular, coexist in a single discourse if not in a single text.

Cicero and Representation

This section will argue that Cicero's representation of the Greeks in his first letter to his brother Quintus is ambivalent. The letter itself is a brief treatise on how to rule properly. It is an example of imperial rhetoric in that he is concerned with issues related to ruling conquered territories. The text is also self-contradictory and thus ambivalent in terms of how it presents the Greek people. This section will proceed by first overviewing Cicero's treatment of the Greeks in his first letter to Quintus. Cicero mentions the Greeks nine separate times and I will describe each in turn. The second half of the section will interpret the same material by correlating Cicero's discussion of the Greeks with Spurr's categories. Cicero warns his brother about the threat posed by the local people. He characterizes them in negative terms, while also classifying them among other nations. He appeals to Greek gratitude for Roman intervention. Finally, he argues that the Romans have a duty to the Greeks to provide proper governance—something the Greeks were not able to accomplish on their own.

Cicero's First Letter to Quintus

Marcus Tullius Cicero was one of the most significant men of the late Roman Republic, known as both a politician and orator, but he was also a philosopher. He was not born in Rome. He was from Arpinum, a town about 100 miles south of the city. He lived much

of his life in Rome, however, and rose to prominence on his merit as an orator. A good deal of his oratory survives as well as a handful of philosophical treatises and a significant body of letters.[89] The letters comprise a mix of private correspondence and tracts intended for circulation, all of which demonstrate Cicero's skill with the written word.[90]

Among the letters, there are three books comprising twenty-one letters from Cicero to his brother Quintus. The letters suggest some friction between the two men, but they also demonstrate genuine affection.[91] The first letter in the collection is an example of a letter that was not purely private correspondence; rather the letter seems intended for at least a limited circulation. It was written in 60 BCE, when Quintus was a proconsul in Asia Minor. It is Cicero's advice to his brother regarding his role as a governor. However, although it refers to Quintus's specific situation, it is clearly intended to outline the proper role of a governor in a general sense.[92]

This section will provide an overview of what Cicero says about the Greeks in this first letter to Quintus. I will first describe the content of the letter. It is concerned with three issues relevant to provincial government. I will discuss each in turn before turning more specifically to Cicero's references to the Greeks specifically. He refers to the Greeks using a derivative of the Latin *Graecus* a total of nine times. I will overview

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[89] For a succinct overview of the events of Cicero's life, see Brittain 2006: ix-xii. A more detailed account can be found in Rawson 1975.

[90] On the literary aspects of Cicero's letters, see Hutchinson 1998. For an overview of the letters and scholarly approaches to them, see Hutchinson 1998: 1-24. Shackleton Bailey produced an edition with introduction and commentary of the whole letters. For his letters to Quintus and Brutus, see Shackleton Bailey 2002.

[91] See Shackleton Bailey (2002: 1-5) for a brief overview of Quintus's life and his relationship with his brother. By all accounts, there were two sources of strife between the brothers. The first was the ill-fated marriage Cicero brokered between Quintus and Pomponia, the sister of Cicero's closest friend, Atticus. The second was Quintus's resentment regarding his elder brother's greater fame and success. Shackleton Bailey refers to the reader to his biography of Cicero (1973) for a more extended discussion.

[92] Cf. Lintott 2008: 253-254.

each in its immediate context in a summary fashion. This will provide a frame of reference for the interpretive analysis of the next section.

Cicero's treatise on provincial government addresses three central issues: establishing appropriate relationships with subordinates, easing tensions over the collection of taxes, and keeping his temper in check. All three are generally applicable to those who govern. Tension over taxes was a persistent provincial issue, and thus appropriate to Quintus's position as a governor in Asia Minor. The other two issues could be applicable in a variety of situations, but they also addressed specific problems Quintus had as governor owing to his particular proclivities and temperament.

The first major issue Cicero addresses is Quintus's relationship with his subordinates. He advises his brother to properly regulate his own subordinates, slaves in particular. According to Cicero, it is especially important that slaves not be allowed to rise above their positions (1.1.6). This is a matter of order and Cicero makes no reference to ethnicity in the discussion. There is some indication that Quintus had taken one of his own slaves, whom he freed, into his confidence and the advice may directly address that situation.[93] The advice also resonates with Cicero's opening discussion of appropriate and inappropriate friendships, in which he warns Quintus not to be careless about choosing counselors and friends (1.1.5-1.1.7). In that context, he does mention ethnicity. He is especially keen to warn Quintus about being overly intimate with local populations—both Greeks and provincial Romans. Such friendships could damage hist reputation and lead him astray. This is a standard piece of advice for governors in the provinces, but seems especially appropriate given Quintus's tendency to make questionable choices regarding friendships.

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[93] Rawson 1975: 176.

Conflict over the collection of taxes was a major problem for governors in Asia and Cicero addresses it next. There was conflict between the local provincials and the Roman *publicani*. The provincials regarded taxes as unfair. Cicero would disagree, of course, but he also recognized that the dishonesty of the *publicani* exacerbated the situation. Cicero advises his brother to remind the locals that there were taxes even before Rome—in fact, he argues that the tax burden under Rome was lighter than it had been prior to Roman rule——and to point out that tax revenue is used to improve life in the province, especially as regards security (1.1.33). Addressing the question of justice is a matter of changing how the local provincials see the tax burden. Cicero addresses their perspective. His advice is more concrete with respect to the *publicani*, whom he argues must be restrained. Their dishonesty and greed cannot be given free reign without serious threat to the peace of the province. It is therefore Quintus's duty to keep them under control (1.1.36).[94]

The third issue is even more specifically addressed to Quintus. Cicero reminds his brother of the need to be firm while keeping one's emotions and temper in check Cicero's language makes it clear that he has addressed this issue with Quintus before. He shifts from extolling his brother's virtues to addressing his most persistent fault: his harsh temper (1.1.37). Although his tone is gentle, his advice is pointed. He makes some excuses for his brother's prior behavior—perhaps he was so shocked by the depravity of his constituents he simply lost himself—but urges him to show greater restraint in the

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[94] Rawson (1975: 174) suggests that tax revenue was not put to good use in Quintus's province, which makes Cicero's advice a little hollow.

future (1.1.40). There is every indication Quintus was unpopular because of his hot

temper. Cicero is clearly invested in doing whatever he can to address the problem.[95]

These three issues are the main thrust of Cicero's advice to Quintus. In the course

of the letter, Cicero warns his brother about relationships with three distinct populations:

slaves, provincial Romans, and Greeks. Each presents distinct issues. Intimacy with

slaves is inadvisable as a violation of the social order. Intimacy with provincial Romans

is inadvisable because provincial Romans may be mercenary rather than sincere in their

interest in the governor. Roman provincials are also suspect because they may have

adopted Greek customs. The Greeks are a distinct category for Cicero, deserving their

own treatment.

Cicero refers to the Greeks (*Graecus*) a total of nine times in the letter. Six of

these references are directly related to the advice described above. The first two warn

Quintus specifically regarding the danger of intimate friendships with Greeks (1.1.16;

1.1.18). Four others are related to Greek suspicion of Roman *publicani* (1.1.33; 1.1.35;

1.1.36). Of the remaining three references, two are short enough to be effectively passing

references (1.1.7; 1.1.19). The other is part of a brief but significant discussion of Greek

philosophical heritage as it relates to Rome (1.1.28). I will describe each in turn.

The first two are related to Cicero's advice regarding friendships. The crux of

Cicero's advice to Quintus on the matter is simple: Choose your friends carefully. Cicero

is especially concerned about two classes of people, namely Greeks and the local

provincials. Individual members of these groups may be trustworthy, but as a rule both

Greeks and those who live among them in the long term are suspect. The reasons are

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[95] Cicero seems to have been invested in his brother's prospects as affecting his how reputation. See
Rawson 1974: 99-100.

slightly different. Cicero assumes provincial Romans are likely to be more interested in swaying the governor than they are in true friendship. Those who show no interest in the man are primarily interested in money, which makes them dangerous. Among the Greeks, however, he has a different concern. He argues that there may be a few exceptional Greeks who are worthy of their heritage, but most cannot be trusted. Because they have been subjugated so long, they are by nature flatterers (1.1.16). The question of friendship is significant because it affects how Quintus is perceived publicly. Cicero advises careful conduct in governing subordinates and navigating personal relationships with provincials and Greeks, and the strict management of slaves. These are the foundation for Quintus's honor—the very basis of his fittingness to rule (*fundamenta dignitatis*, 1.1.18).

Cicero refers to the Greeks four times in his discussion of the conflict between the local people and the *publicani* responsible for collecting their taxes. Cicero's advice to Quintus regarding the *publicani* is two-fold. On the one hand, he has a responsibility to restrain the *publicani* from abusing their position and excessively extorting money from the people. On the other hand, he must remind the Greeks that taxes are necessary. Cicero observes that the Greeks seem offended that they must pay taxes at all, which is a situation that would not change even if they were not under Roman rule. Cicero further observes that their own tax collectors were not more forgiving than the Romans (*leniores*, 1.1.33). In sum, it is up to Quintus to bring the Greeks and the Roman *publicani* into agreement (1.1.35). Cicero then relates his own success story and observes that both the *publicani* and the Greeks have expressed their gratitude to him for making peace between them (1.1.36).

The previous six references were directly related to the substance of Cicero's advice. Two more amount to passing references, although they are not insignificant. Early in the text, Cicero advises his brother that if he shows self-control in his manner of life, the local Greeks will perceive him as divine (1.1.7).[96] Cicero seems to presume that the Greeks are credulous, perhaps even primitive. The association with divinity would firmly establish Quintus in his position as governor. The solidification of his position is the reward of a well-regulated life. The other refers to a man named Paconius, whom Cicero describes as a Mysian or Phrygian rather than a Greek (1.1.19). Cicero describes the man in unfriendly terms—he is a mad and base individual (*homini furiosi ac sordidi*)—and apparently means to imply that he isn't even a real Greek (*hominis ne Graeci quidem*), perhaps as a means of separating him from the Hellenic culture both Cicero and Quintus admired.

Cicero's final reference to the Greeks praises Greek literature and learning (*monumentis disciplinisque*) as the basis of his own success (1.1.28). He goes so far as to claim that whatever he has achieved has been funded by his training in Greek thought. Cicero makes the confession as part of a longer discussion about the duty a governor has to his constituents. The Romans, he argues, owe it to the nations they govern to act in the best interest of the people. This is the case even for barbarous people, which is how he describes the people of three other Roman provinces: Africa, Hispania, and Gaul (1.1.27). Cicero goes on to argue that this is even more the case for the Greeks, from whom the Romans learned so much. He concludes the discussion with a reference to Plato's

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[96] Cicero actually says that they will believe he is a *divinum hominem*, either from their own history (*ex annalium memoria*) or from heaven (*de caelo*).

Republic. The Greeks never realized Plato's vision. Thus it falls to the Romans to fulfill the role of the philosopher kings (1.1.29).

In sum, Cicero's first letter to Quintus addresses three central issues: managing subordinates, easing tensions between locals and *publicani*, and finally controlling one's temper. In the text, Cicero refers to the Greeks by using a derivative of the Latin *Graecus* a total of nine times. Twice he warns Quintus about close friendships with Greeks. He mentions the Greeks four times in his advice regarding tension over taxes. He mentions the Greeks once early in the treatise, suggesting that they would honor Quintus as a divine figure if he adheres to an appropriate manner of life. Cicero elsewhere makes it a point to distinguish between the unseemly Paconius and a proper Greek. In addition to these two brief references, he argues that the Romans have a duty to act in the best interest of those they rule, especially the Greeks.

Cicero's Representation of the Greeks

The previous section provided an overview of Cicero's references to the Greeks. This section will interpret the same material from the perspective of postcolonial theory. I argue that Cicero's treatment of the Greeks in his first letter to Quintus is ambivalent. The ambivalence inherent in Cicero's text can be observed by correlating his representation of the Greeks with the categories that were drawn from the work of David Spurr, outlined above. Spurr uses the term insubstantialization to describe the colonizer's sense that the native culture poses a threat to her identity. His terms debasement and classification refer to strategies intended to manage that sense of threat by representing the colonized. Finally, appropriation and affirmation refer to ways of representing the colonial project in positive terms. The resulting discourse is internally contradictory, at

times praising the native culture for its concurrence with the colonizing culture and at other times vilifying native incompetence. This section will first describe the correspondence between each of these terms and Cicero's representation of the Greeks and then highlight specific points of contradiction within Cicero's text.

Spurr uses the term insubstantialization to refer to a rhetorical trope that dramatizes the anxiety of the colonizer faced with the threat of dissolution into the native culture. The psycho-drama Spurr describes was not part of Cicero's world but the sense of threat posed by the native culture is apparent in the text. Early in his treatise, Cicero advises his brother that the Greeks will think him a *divinum homininem* (1.1.7) if he conducts himself appropriately. He concludes the main section of his advice with the observation that a well-governed life—both in terms of personal conduct and correctly managed relationships—must seem divine given the context. The province, he contends, is characterized by both moral depravity (*depravatis moribus*) and a corrupting influence (*corruptrice*, 1.1.19). Thus although he does not dramatize the experience of the colonizer nearly overtaken by native culture, he clearly alludes to the corrupting influence of the colonial context and warns his brother to preserve himself against the threat.

According to Spurr, the anxiety produced by the threat of incorporation into or corruption by the native culture is managed by rhetorical strategies like debasement and classification. The rhetoric of debasement interprets the native culture in negative terms, especially as compared to the colonizing culture. The rhetoric of classification assesses and ranks cultures according to their correspondence with the colonizing culture. Both can be observed in Cicero. In the first place, Cicero calls the Greeks false (*fallaces*) and

trifling (*leves*) and contends that they are not trustworthy (*neque tam fideles sunt*, 1.1.16).

His second letter to Quintus is a less formal, more personal version of the first letter. As

a result, Cicero speaks more freely and more specifically about the issues at hand.[97] In

the second letter, he states that the complaints made by the Greeks against the *publicani*

should not be taken too seriously because they have talent for deception (*ingenia ad*

fallendum). In the same passage, he castigates them for being shallow (*levitatis*) and

because they are known flatterers (*assentationis*, 1.2.4). Spur's debasement is a

rhetorical strategy that associates the native culture with negative traits. Cicero

represents the Greeks as shallow and trifling and he associates them with flattery and

deceit. As a result, he warns his brother that they cannot be trusted and are potentially a

corrupting influence for a Roman (1.1.6). By contrast, he urges his brother to self-control

and virtue, to firmness and seriousness of purpose, to impartiality, and to consideration of

the good of the people above his own ambition (cf. 1.1.1; 1.1.7). The Greeks, then,

embody in those things Cicero despises as a Roman. And they are an apt foil for the kind

of virtue he urges his brother to embrace.

Classification is another strategy that distances the colonizer from the native by

controlling the terms of the discourse. Cicero makes use of classification to classify

Greece among the nations conquered by Rome. He further uses it to distinguish between

contemporary Greeks and ancient Greece. When he classifies Greece among the nations,

his assessment is favorable. They are the most civilized among all the people ruled by

Rome (1.1.1). He makes the same argument later, when he places Greece ahead of

Africa, Spain, and Gaul. The latter are savage and barbarous nations (*immanibus ac*

barbarous nationibus, 1.1.27). For Cicero, Greece contributes to Roman culture because

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[97] Cf. Lintott 2008: 254.

it is more civilized than other nations. It therefore occupies a special place among them

(cf. 1.1.28-29). Cicero's assessment is less positive when he distinguishes between

contemporary Greeks and the ancients. His condemnation of Paconius illustrates.

Paconius is not even worthy of being called a Greek. He is merely a Mysia or

Phrygian—in other words a native of Greek Asia Minor (1.1.19). Cicero makes the

distinction to distance the undesirable Paconius—a man who might be considered a

Greek—from the heart of what it means to be a true Greek. Elsewhere, he makes the

same distinction between ordinary Greeks and their ancient counterparts. Ordinary

Greeks cannot be trusted as intimate friends. There are, however, a few among them who

are worthy of their heritage (*qui sunt vetere Graeci digni*, 1.1.16). Cicero thus forges a

link between a true Greece, best represented by the ancients, as a civilized nation and

Rome. In so doing, he claims authority about what it means to be a Greek. His

conclusion is that, because of their heritage, the Greeks are the best among the nations

and therefore the most like Rome. Contemporary Greeks, on the other hand, fall short of

the ancient example more often than not and are worthy of contempt as a result.

In both cases, the standard of comparison and judgment is the colonizing culture

itself. Cicero debases the Greeks by associating them with traits that are contrary to

Roman virtue. He classifies Greece by praising them for their civilization and their

resulting contribution to Roman culture. He also vilifies them for falling short of the

ancient ideal. According to Spurr, the result is the neutralization of the threat posed by

the native. The discourse defines, fixes, and otherwise masters the native. It reduces the

native culture to a reflection of the culture of the colonized. In Cicero's letter, the Greeks

he and Quintus encounter are one of two things. Either they are shining exemplars of the

best of Greek culture—a culture that coincides with Rome—or they are a contemptible shadow of that ancient glory.

In addition to representing the colonized, colonial discourses also represent the colonial enterprise itself. Spurr used the terms appropriation and affirmation to describe the process. The rhetoric of appropriation suggests that the native wanted to be colonized, in some way or other, and is grateful for the presence of the colonizer. Affirmation construes the colonial project as a necessity. The colonizer had a duty to colonize for the good of the native. Both are apparent in Cicero in some form. Appropriation can be observed in a small way in Cicero's insistence that the Greeks were grateful to him. He describes his own work reconciling the Greeks and *publicani* before concluding that both sides were grateful to him for brokering peace (1.1.35). The work Quintus must do will garner him the gratitude of those he governs. In this case, Cicero observes that the Greeks thank him daily for putting them at ease regarding the payment of taxes to Rome. The idea that they would be grateful resonates with Cicero's advice to his brother to remind the Greeks that taxes are necessary and to their benefit. Without Roman presence, the province would be subject to internal discord and calamity. Providing security costs money. Their taxes therefore purchase perpetual peace (*pacem sempiternam*, 1.1.34). The subtext is clear. If the people of the province are not grateful to the Romans, perhaps they ought to be. Appropriation, as Spurr describes it, transfers desire from the colonizer to the colonized. It isn't that the colonizer wanted to take control. Instead, the colonized wanted it for some reason, in most cases for the security and peace foreign rule provided. The gratitude of the native demonstrates that the colonial effort was received positively. In other words, it affirms that the colonial effort

was correctly understood by the colonized. In Cicero's letter, he does allude to the gratitude of the Greeks. Further, he clearly suggests that Greek opposition to Roman taxes is inappropriate. By complaining about taxes, they fail to see Roman occupation for what it is: an instrument of their peace and security for which they ought to be grateful.

Affirmation is closely related. It introduces the idea of necessity by positing that the native was in chaos and the colonizer was forced to impose order. Colonization is not, in that case, motivated by the colonizer's desire for gain. Instead, it is undertaken for the good of the colonized people and their land. That is exactly the argument Cicero presents to Quintus regarding his role as governor. It is his duty to act in the best interest of the people. This is common to all who rule, according to Cicero, but the Greeks present a special case. Because Cicero classifies them as more civilized than other nations, the Romans have a special obligation to act in the best interest of Greece. Rome owes something to the ancient Greeks.[98] Many modern scholars who posited a link between the ancient Aryans and Western civilization also denigrated contemporary Indian culture.[99] Cicero likewise bypasses contemporary Greek culture and posits a direct link between the ancient Greeks and the Romans. According to Cicero, Rome learned civilization from the Greeks (1.1.28). He argues that they must now guide contemporary Greece according to the same principles. He appeals to Plato specifically. It falls to Rome to fulfill the vision of government laid out in the *Republic* (1.1.29). Cicero represents Roman rule in Greece in terms that deny any Roman self-interest.

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[98] Cf. Horace *Epist.* 2.1.156.
[99] Cf. Sugirtharajah 2003: 50-61.

In sum, Cicero construes the provincial context as potentially corrupting, in much the way Spurr describes colonial anxiety and the threat presented by the native culture. Debasement and classification are rhetorical strategies that manage the threat. Cicero represents the Greeks as contemptible and false. He also classifies them as the most civilized among the nations, and thus in a special relationship to Rome. At the same time, contemporary Greeks are found wanted as compared with their ancient counterparts. Cicero forges a direct link between the Romans and the ancient Greeks. Cicero also represents Roman rule. He valorizes Roman rule in Greece as necessary for the peace and prosperity of the region—something for which the local people should be grateful. He further represents Roman rule as a continuation of the ancient tradition of Greece. Cicero therefore appropriates ancient Greece and makes it Roman. Roman culture therefore functions as the standard by which contemporary Greeks are judged. They are good or poor examples of what it means to be Greek to the extent that they are like or unlike Romans.

Like the colonial discourses described by Spurr, the overall character of the text can be described as ambivalent. In the first place, Cicero's representation of the Greeks is ambivalent. On the one hand, he denigrates Greek culture by associating it with a series of negative traits. In the same text he credits Greece with civilizing Rome and calls Greece the best among all the nations. He manages the ambivalence by drawing a distinction between ancient and contemporary Greece. The fact remains that in one and the same text he both fulsomely praises Greece and calls the Greeks liars and flatters. Cicero's representation of Roman rule in Greece adds a further layer of contradiction. He argues that the Romans can and should govern according to the principles laid out by the

Greeks. Elsewhere, he implies that without Rome, Asia Minor at least would fall into disorder and strife. The subtext is that the Greeks are incapable of self-governance. Again, Cicero manages the ambivalence by appealing to a strong distinction between ancient Greece and the Greece of his time. The split between what Cicero says about ancient Greece and how he must construe contemporary Greece in order to justify Roman rule is clear.

Ambivalence and Philhellenism

This chapter began with an overview of the concept of ambivalence in Homi Bhabha's work. It is both a description of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized and a characteristic of colonial discourses. I used David Spurr's account of imperial and colonial representation to illustrate the internal contradictions that can pervade a single text. These contradictions express the ambivalence of author. Thus Spurr's categories flesh out the dynamic Bhabha refers to when he describes ambivalence.

Together Bhabha and Spurr laid a foundation for my reading of Cicero's *Ad Quintus Fratrem* 1.1. I used Spurr's categories to illustrate the ambivalence of the text. Cicero construes the local provincial culture as a corrupting influence and therefore a threat. He warns his brother to guard against this influence and in the process, he denigrates the Greek people as flatterers and deceivers. In the same text, however, he praises ancient Greece lavishly. He thus construes contemporary Greek culture as a threat to wholesome Roman virtue, even as he appropriates ancient Greek culture. The result is an ambivalent representation of Greece. It masters both ancient and contemporary Greek cultures and places them in a hierarchical relationship.

Contemporary Greece is distasteful at best and should be shunned by the Roman

governor. Ancient Greece is superior because it coincides with Rome.

The ambivalence of Cicero's text expresses his ambivalence about Greece itself,

which Homi Bhabha describes as a characteristic of colonial relationships. The

relationship between Greece and Rome was not identical to modern colonial

relationships. At the same time, the imbalance of power between parties is analogous.

This accounts for Cicero's ambivalence. There is an analogy between ancient and

modern that produces a similar dynamic in texts from widely disparate periods. If this is

the case, we should also expect to find some version of hybridity in ancient texts, to

coincide with the modern theorization of colonial cultures. The next chapter will argue

that hybridity does have explanatory value for ancient data.

Chapter Two—Hybridity: Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries as Third Space

Introduction

The previous chapter used the term ambivalence to characterize the interaction between Rome and Greece in general. Ambivalence describes the basic dynamics of the colonial situation. Colonizer and colonized are simultaneously attracted to and repulsed by one other, which sets the stage for a complicated and often self-contradictory set of interactions. The colonizers represent the colonized. That fixes an identity for the colonized in terms defined by the dominant group. The colonized acquiesce or resist but no matter what they do, they are never quite as the colonizers represent them. The term ambivalence describes the underlying mood of the relationship. The same term describes the self-contradictory character of colonial discourse itself. Colonial discourses manifest the ambivalence of those who deploy them by speaking at once for and against themselves. Resistance subverts colonial discourse by exploiting that ambivalence and turning the discourse against itself.

Ambivalence describes the character of the colonial interaction but hybridity is its result. The concept of hybridity allows the critic to mediate between two extremes of interpretation. On the one hand, it may be tempting to treat cultures as interdependent but nevertheless discrete, but that position is problematic because cultures are never wholly distinct from one another. At the other extreme, it is equally problematic to conclude that cultures simply dissolve into one another. Although the idea of the melting pot has been—and perhaps remains—an ideal for some, it is not an accurate description of the way cultures interact. Hybridity charts a path between these two positions. Cultures are permeable and when they interact, the relationship is mutually

transformative. At the same time, they retain distinctive characteristics and do not simply dissolve into one another.

The argument of this chapter is that Eleusis was a hybrid space between Greece and Rome—what might be called a "Third Space of enunciation."[100] Space is metaphorical in this context. It refers to the "space" of discourse. The argument is that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries were a discursive point of contact between Greek and Latin writers. Even if they didn't interact directly, they participated in a common discourse characterized by a certain level of cohesion. Put another way, they share a set of common assumptions about the mysteries and make similar kinds of statements about them. This discursive space was shared by Greeks and Romans from the same time period, writing in both Greek and Latin. Thus, it was a shared discursive space and therefore one of the spaces in which hybridized identities and cultural forms could emerge.

The chapter proceeds by exploring the concept of hybridity as it is presented in the work of Homi Bhabha, especially as it relates to his ideas about Third Space. It then turns to what Greek and Roman writers say about Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries. While their interests are not identical, there is a significant area of overlap between Greek and Latin writers under Rome when it comes to the Eleusinian mysteries. Writers from both groups actively preserve the secrecy of the mysteries and associate them with other secret cults. They associate the mysteries and the natural world by way of agriculture. And they associate the cult especially with the fame of both Athens and Greece. The point is not to identify any specific content. It is to demonstrate that there was a cohesive

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[100] Bhabha 1994: 37; cited in Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2000: 118.

discourse about the mysteries during the Roman period and that individuals writing in both Greek and Latin shared that discursive space.

Homi Bhabha: Hybridity and Third Space,

The concept of hybridity is difficult to isolate in the work of Homi Bhabha. It is frequently described in relationship to other concepts, among them Third Space. This section will begin with a general summary of the meaning of hybridity in Bhabha's work, and will then clarify the significance of the concept by discussing it in relationship to Third Space. For Bhabha, hybridity is both a general description of culture and a specific description of something about the colonial situation.

As theorized by Homi Bhabha, hybridity describes the culture that emerges from the interaction between native and non-native. Postcolonial theorists have borrowed the term from horticulture, where it refers to the "cross-breeding of two species by grafting or cross-pollination to form a third, 'hybrid' species."[101] In the abstract world of postcolonial studies, hybridization refers to the emergence of new cultural forms which are neither purely an expression of the colonizer's culture, nor that of the colonized. As hybrids, these emerging identities are neither of one culture nor the other.

Despite the meaning of the horticultural term, hybridity does not mean that the cultures and identities that emerge from the colonial situation form a simple *tertium quid*—a uniform blending of elements from both sides into a distinct, third thing. For Bhabha, the term hybridity preserves "the stubborn chunks" that simply won't dissolve into one another.[102] Native and non-native navigate a hybridized cultural context,

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[101] Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2000: 118.
[102] Bhabha 1994: 219

working out new identities in relationship to one another. They do not abandon their former connections to older cultural forms. Those older points of reference are the stubborn chunks Bhabha has in mind. Thus, the concept is intended to subvert the assumption that one culture simply replaces another—especially that pre-colonial cultures are superceded—which is implicit in the argument that one culture can be folded wholesale into a new synthesis. On the other hand, hybridity is not identical to diversity, which suggests that cultural elements interact with one another as independent agents. Instead, Bhabha stresses their mutual participation in an exchange that is always embedded in a particular set of power relations. For Bhabha all cultures are hybrid, but in a colonial situation, the balance is always tilted toward the colonial or imperial power.[103]

Hybridity, then, is a description of culture in general, even as it describes something about the colonial situation in particular. Those who occupy this space articulate emerging cultural identities in relationship to one another and those identities are irreducible to either original culture and truly represent something new. In fact, for Bhabha, hybridity is "how newness enters the world."[104]

It is difficult to isolate hybridity from other postcolonial ideas, including Bhabha's understanding of a Third Space of enunciation. Third Space draws an analogy between space and discourse. Each culture occupies a particular discursive space. The region in which they overlap and interact doesn't belong to either one, but instead stands between them. Thus, their interaction produces not a third thing but a third space. It is

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[103] Bhabha's use of the term has been critiqued. For an account of the issues, see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2000: 119-121.
[104] Bhabha 1994: 212-235.

from this space that hybrid forms emerge. It therefore precedes and underpins hybridity

itself, which is why Bhabha discusses hybridity and Third Space together.

Obviously, Bhabha's Third Space is only a space by analogy—as always, his

primary concern is discourse itself—but the idea has been incorporated into critical

spatiality in a way that illuminates the discussion at hand. For example, Edward Soja

uses the term thirdspace to describe the social and cultural implications of actual,

physical spaces. Both Bhabha and Soja appeal, implicitly or explicitly, to Henri

Lefebvre's seminal work, *The Production of Space*. The concept of thirdspace is

grounded in Lefebvre's distinction between space as perceived, conceived, and lived,

which is often referred to as his conceptual triad. Perceived space corresponds to the

physical; conceived to representations of space; and finally, lived space indicates the

intersection of the two, or what Lefebvre calls representational space. Together, they

comprise a dynamic whole. [105] The intention is to distinguish between the physical

realities of space and the social and cultural meanings implicit in their arrangement.

Drawing on Lefebvre, a Third Space of enunciation should transcend the words as written

and encompass their meaning, in order to illuminate the dynamic intersection of what is

said, what is left unsaid, and what is therefore articulated. It is the real, living meaning of

the discourse, just as Lefebvre's lived space encompasses both what a space is and what

it means culturally and socially. And, as in Lefebvre, the nuts and bolts of a space,

whether physical or discursive, are not irrelevant, but describing them in detail is not the

point. Bhabha and Lefebvre concur in their desire to conceptualize the site of cultural

meaning, which Bhabha calls Third Space. Thus, for Bhabha, Third Space is the "cutting

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[105] Lefebvre 1991: 33. Perceived space in Lefebvre's triad corresponds to Soja's firstspace; conceived space to secondspace; and lived space to thirdspace. On those terms, see Soja: 1996: 1-35; see 61-62 on their derivation from Lefebvre.

edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space…that carries the burden of the meaning of culture."[106] Put another way, the association between colonizer and colonized engenders fresh possibilities for articulating cultural identities in relationship to one another. The concept of Third Space theorizes the relationship as a region by analogy with physical space. The value of the analogy is a shift in frame of reference. It replaces the analogy of a relationship between two individuals with the analogy of space, which shifts emphasis away from the individual or personal toward the broader cultural context.

In the new cultural space created by colonization, new identities emerge that are specific to that context and indecipherable outside of it. Third Space is thus a generative space, but it is also an ambivalent and contradictory space. Neither hybridity nor Third Space can be understood in a colonial context without attention to the power dynamics between colonizer and colonized. Put simply, native and non-native must navigate new cultural terrain in order to construct a cogent identity, but they do so from vastly different positions of power.

In sum, the concept of hybridity serves an important function in Homi Bhabha's work, by establishing a midway between two extremes. On the one hand, it posits continuity between pre-colonial cultures and identities and their colonial and post-colonial existence. The elements of native culture do not simply dissolve into the colonial culture, nor do they dissolve into a new, amalgamated culture. Instead, both native and non-native interact with one another as irreducibly different, even though they occupy the same cultural space. At the other extreme, the concept of diversity suggests that cultures interact with one another as free agents, relatively unaffected by their interaction with one another. In simplest terms, then, hybridity establishes a middle way

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[106] Bhabha 1994: 38

between the opinion that cultures dissolve into one another and the counter-argument that cultures are discrete. Instead, they exist in intimate relationship to one another—a relationship that is mutually transformative and which must be constantly negotiated.

Hybridity, in the sense described above, is a characteristic of culture. Culture itself is a conglomeration of elements, accrued from various sources over time and through cultural exchange. Culture thus comprises something that is cohesive and yet both permeable and malleable. It always continues to accrue new forms and can always be reshaped as it continues to evolve. In a certain sense, all cultures are hybrid in their own way.

Hybridity is also a description of the permutations of culture in a colonial context—that is, in the context of an asymmetrical power relationship. The relationship described by hybridity is embedded in a system of power relations in which the balance of power very clearly favors one side. The exchange is thus reciprocal but asymmetrical, the very situation that creates the ambivalence described in the previous chapter. The negotiation between parties often produces ambivalent and contradictory results. The colonizer enforces and undermines his own power over the native. The native acquiesces or resists.

Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries as Third Space

The previous section outlined the significance of Third Space in light of the idea of hybridity. This section will demonstrate that Greek and Roman writers participated in a single discourse around the mysteries at Eleusis. In that sense, Eleusis functioned as a Third Space. It was shared discursive space and both Greek and Roman writers took part in a single, cohesive discourse about the mysteries. As a Third Space, it is a space from

which hybridized cultural forms emerge, as described above. What makes it a Third

Space is that it functioned as a point of contact between two cultures. In the broader

context of postcolonial studies, Third Space indicates the space where the colonizing

culture meets the colonized. Here, it is one point of contact between Greek and Roman

culture. The argument, then, is that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries were a space of

interaction between Greece and Rome.

The argument presupposes an understanding of the relationship between hybridity

and Third Space as described above. There are three additional questions that must be

addressed before I continue. First, if Third Space refers to a discursive space, what is the

meaning of discourse? Second, what does interaction imply? And third, who is Greek

and who is Roman? Put another way, in light of the hybridity of culture, how should

Greek and Roman be differentiated and defined? I will consider each in turn.

The first question is essential to an understanding of Third Space as discursive

space. What is implied by discourse? To answer the question, I look to Michel Foucault.

Foucault defines discourse in the process of outlining his method in *The Archaeology of

Knowledge*. He begins with what he calls the unities of discourse for the purpose of

dismantling those unities in order to reconceptualize his field of inquiry. The unities he

has in mind are the ordinary conventions of division, the most basic of which are book

and *oeuvre*. Scholars presume that a single book is a cohesive unit of discourse.

Likewise, the *oeuvre* of a given author should also form a unit. Foucault calls attention to

these as the most basic and apparently unassailable units, but he also has other divisions

in mind. His purpose is to deconstruct whatever seems obvious. From there the inquiry

proceeds from deconstruction to reconstruction. The unities of discourse are broken up

"to see whether they can be legitimately reformed."[107] They may fall into place along the same lines, but they also may not. In either case, they can be interpreted from a fresh perspective as a result of the process.[108]

In fact, Foucault discards the conventional organization of discourse by book, author, and the like and therefore must look for a new organizing principle. Toward that end, he adduces four hypotheses, each of which fails for one reason or another. He begins with the idea that discourses are unified by reference to one and the same object. The proposition fails because his object is diffuse. He uses the example of madness—the subject of his previous work—which is apparently the object of discourse and yet itself constructed by discourses. The second hypothesis is that discourses cohere around a certain style of expression. This is insufficient because it does not take account of the more fundamental information embedded in discourses. In the case of medicine, a whole group of presumptions about life and death—among other concerns—underlies everything that is said. His third and fourth hypotheses suggest organization around concepts and themes. Both fail because they "isolate small islands of coherence," where he would rather "reveal latent conflicts" and "study forms of division."[109] He must therefore build a theory of discourse around what he calls enunciative statements—a fresh unity of discourse, which allows him to account for disruption as well as continuity and deconstruct the ordinary divisions of intellectual history into book, *oeuvre*, and theme. [110]

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[107] Foucault 1972: 26.
[108] Foucault 1972: 21-30.
[109] Foucault 1972: 37.
[110] Part II of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1972: 79-131) is occupied with the task of defining statements and their enunciative function.

Although Foucault rejects his own first hypothesis, the discourse I have in mind coheres around Eleusis as an object, with a few caveats. Foucault argues that his first hypothesis fails because "objects" can be deconstructed. The argument works because Foucault's "object" is not an object in any normal sense. Madness cannot be described definitively because what constitutes sanity and insanity shifts over time and across cultures. Thus, madness itself cannot be an object around which the discourse coheres. It is constructed according to a particular set of discursive practices. By contrast, the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis is first and foremost a physical space. As a physical space, Eleusis is not merely defined discursively. It is a real thing, a group of ancient buildings enclosed by a peribolos, located 14 km to the northwest of Athens. At the same time, it is not static. The sanctuary space changed over time and the sanctuary that existed during the Archaic period was in some sense not identical to the sanctuary as it existed under Rome. The cult itself was also subject to development. Even so, these changes still refer to physical realities—to the sanctuary as it existed and exists in physical space and to a specific set of rituals that were actually performed in that space. And in that sense, the discourse can be said to cohere around Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries as an object.

Discursive space, then, refers to a body of statements that each refer to a single object—in this case the sanctuary at Eleusis and the rituals of the Eleusinian mysteries. A more thorough appropriation of Foucault could proceed by deconstructing the apparent cohesion of Eleusis as an object, but it would not suit my purpose here. Foucault aims to press beyond islands of coherence in order to discover the workings of discourse at a more general level. For the task at hand, an isolated island of coherence—is this case,

gathered around the sanctuary at Eleusis—is sufficient. The sanctuary and cult did

change over time, but there is consonance between Greek and Roman writers from

roughly the late 1st century BCE through the 2nd century CE, a period during which Greek

and Roman culture were in significant contact with one another. The discourse

comprises statements made by various writers about Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries

during this time period. It is a discursive "space" by analogy.

In what sense did Greek and Roman writers interact in this space? At its most

basic, the term interaction suggests direct engagement. One writer makes a statement and

another writer responds directly to that statement. In this context, it means something

less overt. As defined above, the discourse in question coheres around Eleusis and the

mysteries as an object. Writers participate in the discourse whenever they make

statements about Eleusis and its rites. They can be said to interact in those statements say

the same sorts of things. The fact that they convey the same kinds of information

strongly suggests that their content would be mutually intelligible. Whether or not they

respond to one another directly, they share a common frame of reference. Thus,

interaction is meant to imply mutual intelligibility rather than direct engagement, where

mutual intelligibility is demonstrated by a certain level of homogeneity between

statements.

The argument that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries are a Third Space also

hinges on a distinction between Greek and Roman. The discourse in question is shared

by Greek and Roman writers, who interact with one another by entering a particular

discursive space. Who is Greek, then? And who is Roman? Perhaps the simplest

division is between Greek and Latin language. Dividing them there distinguishes

between the Western half of the Roman Empire, where Latin was the predominant language of both government and culture, and the Eastern half of the Empire.[111] The description reveals the problem: both areas—and thus languages—were part of the Roman Empire. During the period in question, they were both part of a unified Roman Empire, which calls into question the value of dividing between Greek and Latin.[112] The concept of hybridity itself raises doubts about discerning Greek from Roman from one another culturally as well. Hybridity, however, also suggests that Greek and Roman necessarily remained distinct. Rather than relying solely on language as a point of division, I will use the terms Greek and Roman to distinguish between Greek speaking writers who were born and maintained loyalties to cities that were culturally Greek and Latin writers who were born or who spent most of their lives in Italy and whose cultural and political loyalties were clearly Roman.

Writers from both categories participated in the discourse that this section will describe. I have chosen a representative Roman author, Cicero, and a representative Greek, Pausanias, to ground the discussion. I will first describe how each treats the mysteries. Then I will outline their similarities and differences. While their interests are not identical, there is significant overlap between them. Both preserve the secrecy of the mysteries, both associate the cult with the natural world, especially agriculture, and both make a strong connection between the status of Athens and the mysteries. There is also a major point of difference between their respective treatments of the secrecy of the mysteries, on the other hand. The general concurrence between them is evidence that Cicero and Pausanias both participated in a more general discourse about the mysteries

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[111] On the context of Greek and Latin literature of the Roman empire, see Dihle 1994: 1-61. On Greek literature in the context of the Eastern Roman empire, see see Whitmarsh 2001: 1-38.

[112] Cf. Petrochilos 1974: 15-33 on the issues involved in differentiating Greek and Roman.

that was current during their time. The same themes cut across the distinction between Greek and Roman. This establishes that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries functioned as a Third Space between Greece and Rome.

Cicero and Pausanias on the Mysteries

This section will overview both Cicero and Pausanias on the mysteries. The first section describes Cicero's treatment of the mysteries in the context of two philosophical works, *De Natura Deorum* and *De Legibus*. In both texts, Cicero writes obliquely about the mysteries and he reveals his great respect for the mysteries. He also makes a connection between the cult and the natural world, while also describing the significance of the mysteries in relationship to Athens. The second section will outline Pausanias's major references to the Eleusinian mysteries. There are two key passages: his description of the city Eleusinion and his description of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis. Pausanias is conspicuous about preserving the secrecy of the mysteries in both. He makes a connection between the cult and the natural world—a link he makes by including the hero Triptolemos in both discussions. Athens also carries some significance.

Cicero

Marcus Tullius Cicero was one of the most significant men of the late Roman Republic, known as a politician and orator, but he was also a philosopher. Although not born in Rome—he was from Arpinum, a town about 100 miles south of the city—he rose to prominence on his merit as an orator, and a good deal of his oratory, as well as a significant body of letters, survives. He enjoyed some influence as a politician for a period of time, before being forced into exile. His waning political involvement

coincided with an increasing interest in philosophy. He produced a series of philosophical works, which aimed to translate the Greek philosophical tradition for a Roman audience and form the seed of a Roman philosophical tradition. This work took place near the end of his life. As the Republic began to unravel, Cicero sided against Marc Antony. When Antony and Octavian joined forces and began eliminating their enemies, Cicero was on the list. He was ultimately murdered.[113]

Cicero's work is rich and varied, and he refers to Eleusis and the Eleusinian the mysteries in several places, two of which deserve some discussion. The first comes from Cicero's treatise on the gods, *De Natura Deorum*. In it, Cicero refers to the mysteries only indirectly, as is appropriate to their secrecy, but he makes it clear that he holds them in high regard and that they have some basic link to nature. The second is from his philosophy of law, *De Legibus*. There is some overlap with *De Natura Deorum*. His remarks are also indirect and demonstrate a high regard for the mysteries. In *De Legibus*, Cicero also introduces the idea that Athens gave the mysteries to the world as a gift, and the idea that there is an intimate connection between the development of civilization and the mysteries.

Cicero's express purpose in *De Natura Deorum* is to translate certain aspects of Greek philosophy for a Latin audience, and he makes clear that his personal opinion is not expressly represented by any participant in the dialogue (1.3-5). The dialogue is carried on by a representative Epicurean, Velleius, a Stoic, Balbus, and Cotta, an Academic. Although Cicero distances himself from the content, there is likely some resonance between his views and those of Cotta, as Cicero himself should be counted an

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[113] For a succinct overview of the events of Cicero's life, see Brittain 2006: ix-xii. A more detailed account can be found in Rawson 1975. For his career as a politician, see Habicht 1990. See Rawson 1975: 230-247 and Powell 1999 for a more specific discussion of his philosophical goals and achievements.

Academic.[114] The overall structure for the work is straightforward. The Epicurean and

Stoic representatives each present their positions and are in turn critiqued by Cotta, the

Academic. On the whole, Cicero seems more sympathetic to the Stoic position than the

Epicurean, but his own position is probably closer to Cotta's. Further, in some places,

there is apparent reference to traditional Roman views, which suggests that Cicero's

contribution is more substantial than he admits.[115] The mysteries are mentioned in Book

1, which is entirely occupied with Epicureanism. The dialogue opens with brief

introduction (1.1-17) followed by Velleius's statement of the Epicurean position (1.18-

56). The remainder of the book is taken up by Cotta's critique (1.57-124).

Freedom from superstition is central to the Epicurean view articulated by

Velleius. Lucretius, a contemporary of Cicero's and a major source for Epicurean

philosophy, praises Epicurus for relieving humanity of the burden of superstition, which

is a burden of fear (1.69-72; cf. 3.1-30 on the fear of death). Without eulogizing

Epicurus, Velleius makes effectively the same point. It is not the nature of the gods to be

angry, for example, and thus there is no need to fear their wrath or to behave so as to

avoid angering them. Put another way, human ethics should not be grounded in fear of

offending the gods. In order to arrive at this, it is first necessary to understand that the

gods exist, as Velleius argues that all human beings do innately, but it is also necessary to

know that they are by nature blessed (*beata*) and eternal (*sempiterna*) and thus beyond

such things as anger (1.47). According to Velleius, the nature of the gods can be

discerned by comprehending nature, which is the same path laid out by Lucretius.

Epicurean philosophy begins with the innate knowledge of the gods, but it proceeds by

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[114] On Cicero as Academic, see Brittain 2006: viii-xxix.
[115] Powell 1999: 1-35.

articulating the nature of things. Thus, Lucretius argues, understanding the inner

workings of the natural world is the path to freedom from superstition (1.146; 3.93).

Cotta responds to Velleius at some length, and his mention of the mysteries comes

near the end of his critique. The basic structure of his reply is a detailed discussion of

Velleius's construction of the gods, followed by a final observation: why would such

gods be worthy of our worship? Cotta raises the mysteries in the context of that final

observation. Epicureanism subverts superstition by effectively reducing the gods to

natural principles. Cotta observes that while this does subvert superstition, it also

undermines the basis of piety. He draws on the example of atheistic philosophers whose

ideas have also undermined appropriate devotion to the gods. Velleius is a crypto-atheist

by implication (1.118).

Cotta includes Diagoras in his list of atheist philosophers, a man accused of

profaning the Eleusinian mysteries. Diagoras revealed the mysteries because he didn't

believe in the gods. The Epicureans wouldn't have profaned the mysteries, but they

might explain it according to rational principles. Cotta makes the following remark:

> I say nothing of the sacred and august Eleusinian mysteries into which members
> of the most distant peoples have been initiated, nor of the Samothracian or
> Lemnian rites secretly practiced by night in the dense and shady groves, which
> when explained and reduced to rational principles have more to do with natural
> philosophy than the gods (1.119).

In the context of the passage, Cotta's point seems to be that the mysteries can be reduced

to natural principles just as any other form of piety can be. From the Epicurean

perspective, this should be positive, but Cotta clearly has reservations. The remark

comes on the heels of a list of atheists who undermined belief in the gods in different

ways using an array of arguments. Explaining the mysteries in terms of natural

philosophy is a further example of the sort of argument that could at least potentially undermine piety.

Cicero is like all other Greek and Latin writers in that he mentions the mysteries in an indirect way, a practice required by their secrecy. The language he chooses (*omitto*) suggests evasion. He clearly does not simply omit the mysteries from discussion. Rather, he seems to mean he will say nothing of substance about them, even though he intends to use them as an example. The results are a little obscure. It is not entirely clear in what sense the mysteries can be reduced to natural philosophy, but clearly he cannot reveal more without profaning the rites. This is true for the Eleusinian mysteries, but also holds for other cults of this type—he mentions the rites at Samothrace and Lemnos. Thus he is aware of the secrecy of these cults and he navigates it in a culturally appropriate manner.

His careful navigation of the secrecy of the rites suggests that he holds them in high esteem and the specific language he chooses to describe them supports the inference. The rites at Eleusis are called both sacred (*sanctam*) and august (*augustam*). He invokes their fame by noting that they draw initiates from every part of the world (*gentes orarum ultimae*). The Eleusinian mysteries were not a local cult, important primarily to the Athenians. They have far-reaching significance for the ancient world. And both by preserving their secrecy and appealing to their fame and sanctity, he pays respect to that significance.

Because Cotta can't discuss the mysteries at any length, he doesn't elaborate on their purported relationship to natural philosophy. He doesn't need to provide any details to make his point. The mysteries can be described in natural terms and it seems likely

that someone in his purview has explained them in those terms. It also seems likely that the cycle of seasons and the practice of agriculture are part of the connection between the natural world and the mysteries but that point is not made clear in Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*.

There is a further reference to the Eleusinian mysteries in *De Legibus*, Cicero's treatise on law. The treatise is a companion to Cicero's *De Republica*. Book 1 of *De Legibus* overviews the philosophical basis for law in natural reason, but the laws outlined in the later books are not explicitly built on that foundation. Instead, they extend *De Republica*, as a further exercise in imagining the ideal state. Plato's *Laws* followed from his outline of the ideal state in the *Republic*, and Cicero seems to intend his laws to follow from his vision of the state as well (Cic. *De Leg.* 2.6).[116] He moves, then, from a philosophy of law as rooted in natural reason into Book 2, which outlines a set of religious laws as a foundation for the ideal state. He places his outline of magisterial power in Book 3 on that foundation. Two further books are mentioned in the text but they do not survive, and there may have been one additional book planned for a total of six. The work outlines the laws first, and then takes up its own commentary on the proposed laws in a dialogue between Cicero himself and is friend Atticus.[117]

Cicero mentions in the mysteries in the context of his religious laws in Book 2 of *De Legibus*, toward the beginning of the book. Cicero argues that religious beliefs and practices form the foundation for a well-ordered society. Specifically, he contends that the gods direct all things, which means the fortunes of a given state are bound up in their proper relationship to the gods. Because they know all things, the gods also know whose

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[116] Dyck 2004: 238-241.
[117] Dyck 2004: 28-30. On Cicero's friendship with Atticus, see Shackleton Bailey 1967: 2-59.

piety is real and whose is false. They will therefore favor a society whose members are truly and not only apparently pious, and punish those who ignore religion or are otherwise irreligious. It is in the interest of the state, then, to encourage appropriate forms of piety by promoting traditional beliefs and practices and by prohibiting certain other forms of religiosity (2.16).

In particular, Cicero is concerned about private devotion. He doesn't object to private worship per se. In fact, private worship of the publicly approved gods should be encouraged. It is in the realm of private devotion, however, that men and women are likely to depart from traditional practices. Left to themselves, they are inclined to import new gods, including foreign gods. These practices compete with and thus at least potentially detract from traditional piety. They have the potential, in that case, to create problems for the state. Thus, Cicero proposes outlawing the worship of certain gods altogether as well as regulating private devotions to prevent the proliferation of novelties (2.19).[118]

Owing to his suspicion of private religious practices, women's nocturnal rituals are outlawed under Cicero's system. The commentary raises the Eleusinian mysteries as a point of clarification. If nocturnal rituals were in fact outlawed, that would mean the end of the mysteries, as Cicero observes in the dialogue. Atticus presumes that his friend means to make an exception for the mysteries, into which both Atticus and Cicero were themselves initiates. Cicero confirms this intention (2.35). Both Cicero and Atticus had studied at Athens and continued to be fond of the place. Atticus acquired his cognomen because of his connection to Athens, and Cicero is explicit about his own love for Athens elsewhere (cf. *Ad. Att.* 6.1-6).

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[118] Cf. Radford 2002: 50-52.

The reason Cicero gives has to do with the high esteem in which he holds the mysteries, owing to their significance to human life:

> It seems to me that your Athens has brought forth many excellent and divine things and given them to human life, but nothing is better than the mysteries, by which we have developed from a rustic and wild life into humanity. And in the initiations, as they are called, we know the first principles of life, and we have accepted with joy not only this way of living but also a better hope in dying (2.36).

Cicero makes these remarks himself in the context of the dialogue, but they resonate with what Cotta, his fellow Academic, said about the mysteries in *De Natura Deorum*. He calls the mysteries the best (*melius*) of the things Athens has given the world. He credits the mysteries with bringing the human race out of a primitive existence he characterizes as rustic (*agresti*) and wild (*immani*). In the final sentence, he plays on the resonance between *initia* and *principia*, by casting initiation as the beginning of knowledge about first principles. By way of initiation we become acquainted with the principles of life, which in turn suggests a way of both living and dying. [119]

In addition to holding the mysteries in high esteem, Cicero also refers to the mysteries indirectly, just as he did in *De Natura Deorum*. While his language doesn't call attention to an omission, he describes the significance of the mysteries without explaining their content. The mysteries have improved human life in general, but they also improve the lot of the initiated, especially as touches death and the afterlife. The statement gives some clue as to why the mysteries were so highly regarded, but it doesn't give away any details. He doesn't account for how or why the mysteries accomplish so much. The most obvious reason is that in the context of the dialogue, he addresses his comments to Atticus, a fellow initiate. It seems fair to assume that an initiated reader would understand Cicero's comments in greater depth. The uninitiated reader is not

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[119] Cf. Dyck 2004: 352-353 on the resonance between *initia* and *principia*.

inappropriately privy to any protected information.

While there is some overlap between this passage and *De Natura Deorum*, Cicero also introduces new elements. First, he credits the city of Athens with giving the mysteries to the world. According to Cicero, there are many things that Athens has contributed to the world. As mentioned above, the mysteries are the best among Athens's gifts. Second, the passage connects the mysteries with the development of civilization. According to Cicero, the mysteries played a role in the development of the human race. From a beginning state that was wild and rustic, people were led toward humanity (*humanitatem*). The progression is described in terms of improvement (*mitigati sumus*). It is therefore a development from a rude, primitive existence toward civilization. The overall advancement of the human race is paralleled in the growth of the individual initiate toward a fuller understanding of life and death, which results in a better life.

In sum, Cicero's references to the mysteries engage a web of themes. Both passages discuss the mysteries indirectly. In *De Natura Deorum*, the language itself is oblique, and in *De Legibus*, the content of the passage outlines the significance of the mysteries without saying anything about their content. Both also demonstrate Cicero's high regard for the rites. His respect for the mysteries is evident in the particular language he chooses to describe them, as well as in his preservation of their secrecy. Both treatises also make some connection between the mysteries and nature, although the nature of the link is fairly obscure in *De Natura Deorum*. *De Natura Deorum* is distinct in that it links the mysteries at Eleusis with two other similarly secret cults, the mysteries at Samothrace and Lemnos. That association is not repeated in *De Legibus*. The passage from *De Legibus* is distinctive in that it introduces the idea that Athens gifted the

mysteries to humanity and the related idea that the mysteries were integral to the development of the human race.

Pausanias

Unlike Cicero, Pausanias was an obscure figure. He was born sometime during the second century CE and he is best known for writing what has been variously described as a travel memoir, a guidebook, or a geography of ancient Greece. In the text itself, he describes some contemporary events, from which it is possible to infer that he flourished between 117 and 180 CE. He says very little about himself in his work, which makes determining his place of birth problematic. He is conventionally believed to be a Lydian, based on his statement that certain monuments in Lydia were located "among us" (παρ᾽ ἡμῖν, 5.13.7), although the inference is obviously highly conjectural. In all, we know very little about who Pausanias was, what kind of family he was from, and where he spent the majority of his life.[120]

Pausanias was not a politician, but he was apparently thoroughly Greek, even in the context of the Roman Empire. Pausanias's stated focus is Greece (1.26.4), and his approach to Rome aptly illustrates his loyalty to Greek interests. Pausanias's attitude toward Rome is fluid. It shifts according to whether Roman and Greek interests coincide. He is positive about Roman presence in Greece where Roman rule engendered prosperity. Thus he is complimentary toward the emperor Hadrian because Hadrian acted as a patron of Athens (1.5.5).[121] He is less positive about Republican figures. Sulla, for instance, receives a negative assessment. Pausanias's language is somewhat

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[120] Hutton 2005: 9-11. See Hutton 2005: 30-53 on Pausanias in the context of Roman Greece.
[121] For a comprehensive overview of Hadrian's patronage of Athens, see Graindor (1934) and Travlos (1971).

ambiguous. Either Sulla is a typical Roman and his cruelty is evidence, or his cruelty is evidence that he is less than a true Roman (Σύλλα δὲ ἔστι μὲν καὶ τὰ ἐς τοὺς πολλοὺς Ἀθηναίων ἀγριώτερα ἢ ὡς ἄνδρα εἰκὸς ἦν ἐργάσασθαι Ῥωμαῖον, 1.20.7).[122] Whether he is even worse than most or his actions betray his culture, both readings amount to a negative assessment of Sulla as a Roman. In another context, Pausanias is willing to shift some blame for Roman occupation onto the Greeks. By behaving in an unseemly manner—betrayals and other conflicts amongst themselves—the Greeks weakened their own position. They were forced to call on Rome for help as a result, which ended with the Roman imposition of order (7.9.1-7.10.1). Pausanias clearly resents Roman subjugation as a historical reality. He is critical of Romans who participated in conquering Greece. He credits internal strife among the Greeks with creating the conditions that allowed Rome to take power. And yet, he also freely acknowledges that Roman presence has created stability and prosperity, which was positive for the cities of Greece. Thus he is only positive about Rome's presence where it correlates directly with Greek prosperity. He is negative in his assessment of Romans who abused Greece in some way, like Sulla. He is completely focused on Greece in his work but his he is negative in his assessment of the Greeks where poor Greek behavior facilitated the advent of Roman rule. His loyalty is clearly with Greece.[123]

Pausanias's *Description of Greece* was written during the first half of the 2nd century CE, and covers the whole of Greece in ten books. Book 1 covers Attica and from there, the description winds its way to the west and south into the Argolid in Book 2 and

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[122] Scholars disagree as to the correct reading, usually based on whether they believe Pausanias is basically hostile toward Rome or not. For example, Arafat (2004: 202) accepts the reading that Sulla's cruelty is actually anti-Roman and Swain (1996: 352-356) reads the statement that Sulla's cruelty was unusually extreme even among Roman, who were known for being cruel.

[123] On Pausanias's attitude toward Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius and Antonius Pius, see Arafat 2004: 139-190.

further still to Laconia in Book 3. Book 4 covers Messenia and Books 5 and 6 describe

Elis, before returning to Achaia in the northern Peloponnese in Book 7. From Achaia,

Pausanias crosses Arcadia, which is described in Book 8, and then Boetia and Phocis in

Books 9 and 10 respectively. Pausanias's work has long been read as a marginally

accurate guide book to ancient Greece and Pausanias himself has been interpreted as a

mere pedant. Recent work on the literature of Roman Greece has rehabilitated him,

calling attention to the literary character of his work, and highlighting the ways in which

he constructs a fresh vision of Greece, especially in relationship to Rome.[124]

Pausanias mentions the Eleusinian mysteries in several places, but the most

significant discussion comes in conjunction with his description of the city Eleusinion in

Athens (1.14.1-3) and the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis (1.38.6-7). The city

Eleusinion was closely tied to the sanctuary at Eleusis, and although its full function is

somewhat unclear, it seems to have been an integral part of the celebration of the

mysteries.[125] Pausanias describes it as part of the Athenian Agora, early in his overview

of Attica. The sanctuary at Eleusis itself was home to the Telesterion and thus of

initiation into the mysteries. It was the terminus of the Hieros Odos, and Pausanias

describes it at the end of his overview of the processional path between Athens and

Eleusis (1.38.6-7).

In the context of Pausanias's description of the Agora in Athens, the city

Eleusinion functions as a narrative turning point. Throughout his description, Pausanias

organizes his discussion around a succession of shifting points of reference, rather than

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[124] For an overview of trajectories in the study of Pausanias as they relate to scholarship on Roman Greece, see Alcock (1993: 174). See Sidebottom (2002: 494 n. 1) for a brief but complete overview of recent scholarship on Pausanias. See also the more recent work Elsner (2004), Arafat (2004), and Hutton (2005).
[125] For a full description of the city Eleusinion, see Miles 1998.

following a linear path. The opening section of his description of Attica is a useful illustration. Pausanias begins at Piraeus. With his back to the mainland, facing the Cyclades, the author imagines a path out to Sounion, around the cape to Laurion, and back to Piraeus (1.1.1). From there, he describes Piraeus itself, and then he imagines a path inland toward the former ports of Athens, Mounychia and Phaleron (1.2.1-5). Piraeus orients the reader, as the author describes what lies first to the south along the coast before moving inland to the north. [126] The next point of reference in Pausanias's narrative is the Kerameikos, which he uses to structure his description of the Agora itself, where the city Eleusinion stood. Approaching Athens from the south, he moves through the Kerameikos and into the Agora, where he comes to a narrative halt at the city Eleusinion. From there, he reverts again to the Kerameikos in order to move on to the Hephaisteion and a new path to the north. The city Eleusinion functions as a kind of boundary and is therefore the narrative telos of that section of the description.

The description itself gives no details about the interior of the Eleusinion itself. Approaching from the Odeion in the Agora, Pausanias describes a statue of Dionysos, and a spring called Enneacrunos. According to Pausanias, above this spring stood two temples, one to Demeter and the other to Kore. In addition to these, there was a third temple that contained a statue of Triptolemos (1.14.1). A digression on Triptolemos follows (1.14.2-3). Pausanias returns to the physical space in front of the temple that contained a statue of Triptolemos to describe a statue of a bull in the courtyard, and another of Epimenides (1.14.4). The mention of Epimenides leads to another digression into Athenian history (1.14.4-5).

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[126] On Pausanias's use of "multiple hubs" to orient his reader and organize his description, see Hutton 2005: 83-174. Hutton applies the concept to Pausanias's description of the city of Corinth (127-174).

Pausanias makes a strong connection between Triptolemos and the mysteries at Eleusis. Pausanias's digression into the mythology of Triptolemos occupies most of his discussion of the city Eleusinion. Triptolemos was a culture-bringer, credited with distributing Demeter's gift of agriculture to human kind. He is mentioned in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* as one of the stewards of the royal court at Eleusis and one of the men to whom Demeter first revealed the mysteries (*Hom. Hymn Dem.* 474; 477). Unlike some heroes, he is not associated with any other deeds. Thus his iconography is likewise singular and depicts him riding in a winged chair or car, disseminating the seed.[127]

The substance of Pausanias's digression is a point of difference between Athenian and Argive versions of the myth of Triptolemos. The Argive tradition is that Demeter went to Argos and was received by Pelasgus, where Chrysanthis told her the story of the rape of Kore. Her mysteries were established there until Trochilus, a priest of the mysteries, was forced to flee Argos. He came to Eleusis where he married a local woman and had two children, Eubouleus and Triptolemos (1.14.2).[128] To the contrary, the Athenian tradition related by Pausanias held that the Triptolemos who was the first to sow seeds was the son of Keleos, king of Eleusis (1.14.3). In both versions, Triptolemos is from Eleusis, but the two stories give different accounts of his parentage.

Pausanias places the stories in direct competition, although he clearly favors the Athenian version. Pausanias is aware that there are other claims about Triptolemos's parents. He mentions verses written by Musaeus—he thinks incorrectly attributed—that maintain that Triptolemos was the son of Oceanos and Earth, for instance.[129] Another

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[127] Cf. Schwarz (1987) for a survey of the iconography of Triptolemos, including a catalog of literary references. See especially 7-18 for references in Greek.
[128] Clinton 1992 on eubouleus.
[129] The apparent source for the tradition is Pherekydes (Apollodorus *Bibl.* 1.5.11). See Schwarz 1987: 12.

source, ascribed to Orpheus, links Triptolemos and Eubouleus to Dysaules. Yet another

says Triptolemos was the brother of Kercyon and both the grandsons of Amphictyon.

Each claim to Triptolemos is also a claim to the core of his myth. The location with the

strongest claim on the hero also has the strongest claim to the prestige that comes with

being the cradle of civilization. Pausanias contextualizes the disagreement between the

Argive and Athenian traditions in a broader web of competing claims, but ultimately

favors Athens. His language choices make that clear. He juxtaposes the story told by the

Argives (λέγεται) with what the Athenians know (ἴσασι). Given the testimony of the

Homeric Hymn to Demeter and the fact that the mysteries were still celebrated in Eleusis,

one of the demes of Athens, the Athenian claim does seem particularly strong.

At the end of this digression, Pausanias abruptly cuts off the discussion, thereby

protecting the secrecy of the mysteries. He first remarks that he had intended to relate

more of the story of Triptolemos and to describe the interior of the sanctuary. But he

says he was prevented from pursuing either by a vision that came to him in a dream

(ἐπέσχεν ὄψις ὀνείρατος). For this reason, he says he will continue only with what he

is permitted to write to all people (1.14.4). The result is that he leaves his description of

the city Eleusinion unfinished and moves to another subject entirely. As he continues, he

describes statuary in the courtyard, which leads to another digression into Athenian

history (1.14.4-5).

Pausanias ultimately says very little about the Eleusinian mysteries in this

passage, but he does make two important associations. First, he connects the cult with

the hero Triptolemos. Triptolemos is only known for his association with the

dissemination of agriculture. He acts as a link between the cult and the myth of the origin

of agriculture. Pausanias can therefore be said to connect the Eleusinian mysteries with

agriculture, its origin, and its dissemination. Second, Pausanias conspicuously preserves

the secrecy of the mysteries. He omits details about the interior space of the city

Eleusinion and by his own admission, he doesn't reveal everything he could about the

mythology of Triptolemos. His preservation of the secrecy of the mysteries is

conspicuous because he draws attention to his omissions by claiming that a dream

prohibited him.

Pausanias's description of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore is toward the end of

his survey of Attica. Pausanias describes Athens itself at some length (1.2.4-1.30.4),

before moving into a survey of eastern Attica (1.31.1-1.34.5), and the islands nearby

(1.35.1-1.36.2). At that point, he shifts to Eleusis, although not directly. Instead, he

approaches Eleusis from the Hieros Odos, the processional way between Athens and

Eleusis (1.36.3). The Hieros Odos evokes a discussion of a number of things (1.36.3-

1.38.4), before he arrives at Eleusis itself (1.38.5-7). The rest of the book proceeds

beyond Eleusis into Megara before finishing on the road to Corinth (1.38.8-1.44.10).

When Pausanias approaches Eleusis, he uses the same tactic he used in his

description of the city Eleusinion to preserve the secrecy of the sanctuary of Demeter and

Kore at Eleusis. After describing the surrounding area and various topics in relation to it,

when he arrives at the sanctuary itself, he writes:

> The Eleusinians have a temple of Triptolemos, of Artemis Propylaia and Poseidon
> Father, and a well called Kallichoron, where first the women of the Eleusinians
> danced and sang in praise of the goddess. They say that the plain called Rharian
> was the first to be sown and the first to grow crops, and for this reason it is also
> customary to use barley to make cakes for sacrifice from its produce. There is
> also a threshing floor here, called that of Triptolemos, and an altar. But my dream
> forbade me to write about the things inside the wall of the sanctuary, so as not to

allow the uninitiated, as many as the goddess shuts out, to pry into that in which they share no part (1.38.6-7).

His description doesn't go beyond the outer courtyard of the sanctuary. As in the earlier passage, he cites a dream that prohibited him from writing more (τό τε ὄνειρον ἀπεῖπε γράγειν, 1.38.7). And as in the previous passage he uses this as a reason to cut off further discussion. The statement is followed by a brief excursus on the hero Eleusis, for whom the city was named. The next thing he describes is Eleutherae, between Eleusis and Boeotia (1.38.8).

Like the earlier passage, the description also makes a connection between the mysteries and agriculture. The temple of Triptolemos is the first thing Pausanias mentions, which recalls the significant role the hero played in his description of the city Eleusinion. In that passage, the connection between the cult and agriculture was made through Triptolemos. Here, Triptolemos is mentioned by name twice. To that, Pausanias adds the Rharian plain—the first place to be sown. The mythical first-sower, which is again the only story associated with Triptolemos, is juxtaposed with the first place to be sown. The threshing floor suggests the real practice of agriculture, completing the picture of a fertile region, associated with both the practice of agriculture and its origins.

While there is some overlap between Pausanias's description of the city Eleusinion in Athens and his description of Eleusis and the Eleusinian sanctuary, there are differences between the passages. The most significant difference is Pausanias's invocation of Demeter's mythology when he is describing Eleusis. Pausanias does not mention Demeter by name, but she is the goddess for whom the Eleusinian women danced at the Kallichoron well (1.38.6). Demeter wandered the earth after the rape of her daughter in search of the girl. Wandering is thus a major trope in Demeter's mythology.

In other contexts in Pausanias alone, there are a number of stories that claim she visited specific places and was received by the local people. For example, a sanctuary of the Mysian Demeter in Corinth is named for a man from Mysia who received her there during her period of wandering (2.18.3).[130] In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, she arrives at Eleusis and sits beside a well where she is greeted by the daughters of Keleos (*Hom. Hymn Dem*. 99-117).[131] This seems to be the tradition Pausanias has in mind when he refers to the dancing of the Eleusinian women in relationship to the well.

In sum, Pausanias's description of the city Eleusinion in Athens and the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis diverge at some points, but they also share certain elements. In his description of the city Eleusinion in Athens, Pausanias discussion of Triptolemos is extensive, where in his description of the sanctuary at Eleusis, he mentions the hero almost in passing. In the description of the sanctuary at Eleusis, on the other hand, he includes not only a reference to Triptolemos, the first-sower, but also to the Rharian plain, the first place to be sown. He also invokes a specific aspect of Demeter's mythology by mentioning the place where the Eleusinian women danced for her, a story recorded in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. They concur on two significant points, on the other hand. In both, he refers to a dream that prohibiting him from giving a fuller description of the sanctuary space. And in both, he makes a strong association between the hero Triptolemos and the mysteries, which acts as a link between the origin of agriculture and the cult.

Eleusis as Third Space

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[130] Cf. 1.36.5-1.37.2; 1.44.3; and 2.35.4-5. For an overview of this trope, see Montiglio 2005: 63-64.
[131] The well is called the Parthenion in earlier versions of the *Hymn to Demeter*, but Richardson (1974: Appendix 1) argues that it is the same as the Kallichoron. Cf. Foley 1994: 42.

Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries function as a Third Space between Greece and Rome inasmuch as writers who can be identified primarily with Rome and those who are culturally loyal to Greece both participate in a common discourse about them. I have outlined references to the mysteries in two of Cicero's philosophical works. Pausanias includes the mysteries in his description of the city Eleusinion in Athens and the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis, where they were celebrated, as described in the previous section. It is not enough that both mention the mysteries. If there is a common discourse, there must also be a demonstrated resonance between the kinds of things each one says about the mysteries. This section will outline areas of overlap between Cicero and Pausanias. There are three themes that are found in both Cicero and Pausanias: secrecy, an association between the mysteries and agriculture, and a link between Athens and the mysteries. The same themes can be mapped in contemporary literature. Cicero and Pausanias concur, then, with other Greek and Roman writers. The discourse they share establishes the character of Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries as a Third Space and therefore a space from which hybridized forms might emerge.

The first theme present in both Pausanias and Cicero is secrecy. The mysteries were a secret, which means the place of secrecy in the discourse is expected. It is also consistent. Pausanias is unique in that he calls explicit attention to his own secrecy, but Cicero also avoids providing any specific details about the rites. Pausanias cites a dream that forbade him to describe either the interior of the city Eleusinion or to further elaborate on the mythology of Triptolemos (1.14.3). Then, he cites another dream, this time one that prohibited him from describing the interior of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis (1.36.7). Cicero is less conspicuous, but he also conveys information

about the mysteries indirectly. Cotta uses the mysteries as an example in his reply to Velleius, but effectively prefaces his remarks by saying he will not speak of the mysteries (*De Nat. Deo.* 1.119). Elsewhere, Cicero himself mentions the mysteries in a conversation with Atticus, a fellow initiate. In it, he describes the significance of the mysteries, but not their content (*De Leg*. 2.36). Although they approach the issue differently, both authors show their awareness of the mysteries as a secret cult.

The second theme is the connection between the Eleusinian mysteries and the natural world. Pausanias's inclusion of Triptolemos in relationship to the mysteries is peculiar to him but the underlying connection between the mysteries and agriculture is not. Triptolemos was the mythical first-sower and Pausanias includes references to him in both his description of the city Eleusinion (1.14.1-4) and in his description of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis (1.38.6-7). The latter also makes a connection between Eleusis and the first place to be sown, a concrete allusion to the agricultural significance of the mysteries. Agriculture is the result of human labor, but it also relies on the changing seasons. It is integrally linked to nature, in that case. Cicero makes a clear connection between the mysteries and nature in *De Natura Deorum*, where Cotta argues that the mysteries can be reduced to natural rather than theological significance (1.119). Cicero further connects the mysteries and the progression of civilization from a primitive to a more humane form, a likely tacit allusion to the development of agriculture De Leg. 2.36). Agriculture is a human labor, but it relies on the cycle of seasons and the rest of the natural processes of plant life and death. Pausanias and Cicero both seem to refer to those realities.

The third theme apparent in both Pausanias and Cicero is the connection both

make between the mysteries and the city of Athens. At some level, the connection is obvious and in Pausanias, it is largely implicit. He discusses the mysteries as part of his description of Athens, because the city Eleusinion was in the Athenian Agora and Eleusis was one of the demes of Athens. But Pausanias also rehearses a specifically Athenian account of the hero Triptolemos. He associates Triptolemos and the origin of agriculture specifically with Athens (1.14.3). Later, he makes a connection between Triptolemos and the original sowing of grain and Eleusis, specifically (1.38.7). Athens, then, is the cradle of agriculture and by implication of civilization. Cicero's remarks infer the same conclusion. Cicero reminds Atticus that, among the many gifts Athens has given the world, the mysteries are the best. He them credits the mysteries themselves with ushering humankind into a state of true civilization and out of a primitive existence (*De. Leg.* 2.36). That is the apparent source of Cicero's great respect for the mysteries and their significance.[132]

The same themes can be identified in contemporary literature, beginning with the secrecy of the mysteries. Dio Chrysostom, a Greek writer of the late first and early second century CE, is oblique and allusive in his approach to the mysteries in much the same way as Cicero. Also called Dio of Prusa, he was from the province of Bithynia, and acquired both his name and his reputation for his skills in oratory. He left a body of work that largely comprises a series of public discourses delivered in a variety of locations

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[132] Plutarch is similarly impressed with the joy and beauty of the mysteries: "Then, as if brought home from banishment abroad, they savor joy most like that of initiates, which attended by glad expectation is mingled with confusion and excitement" (De Facie 943). Although the connection to Athens is not a major theme in contemporary literature, both Cicero and Pausanias call to mind the words of Isocrates, who identifies agriculture and the mysteries as the twin gifts of Demeter, and further identifies Athens as the original recipient of those gifts, which were then distributed from Athens to the rest of the world (*Paneg*. 28-29; Cf. Clinton 1997: 175).

around the Empire. [133] Although he was necessarily and deeply engaged with Rome, like many of the local elites in Asia Minor, he was deeply committed to his city of origin (cf. *Or.* 45.3).[134] He refers to the Eleusinian mysteries in Oration 12, called Olympicus because it was delivered at Olympia in either 101 or 105 CE.[135] The reference is part of a discussion about humankind's innate sense of the divine. Dio's stated intention in the introduction to his speech is to explore how human beings arrive at knowledge of the divine (12.16-20). According to Dio, human beings have an inborn knowledge of the existence of the gods and as a result, they can't help but believe (12.27).[136] He uses the mysteries to illustrate the way the cosmos itself—the beauty and size of the night sky, the coming and going of night and day, and the cycle of the seasons—functions as a kind of initiation hall for humankind. In that context, he refers obliquely to the many mystic sights (πολλὰ μὲν ὁπῶντα μυστικα) and many mystic sounds (ἀκοὺντα τοιούτων φωνῶν) that an initiate experiences, without providing any further details (12.33). He does not call attention to his secrecy the way Pausanias does. He does use the mysteries as an example while only alluding to their real content, much like Cicero.[137]

Likewise, Dio Chrysostom makes a similar connection between the mysteries and the natural world. He argues that human beings have an innate sense of the divine using the mysteries as an example. The cosmos is an initiation hall, much like the Telesterion. He writes:

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[133] Russell 1992: 3-7; cf. Swain 2000: 1-10

[134] Salermi 2000: 53-59; 63-67.

[135] Russell 1992: 16. In his introduction, Dio refers to preparations for war, which he observed on his way to Olympia. The date corresponds with either Trajan's first or second attack on Dacia.

[136] Russell 1992: 177; he also has some references to other people talking about this stoic stuff.

[137] Cf. historical accounts of the profanation of the mysteries. Livy (31.14) recounts the story of two Acarnanian youths who were executed for accidentally violating the mysteries prior to the start of the second Macedonian War (cf. Warrior 1996). Both Plutarch (Alc. 19.1-20.2) and Diodorus Siculus (13.27.1; 13.31.1-2; 13.69.2) provide versions of the life of Alcibiades, who allegedly profaned the mysteries by performing a drunken parody. On the profanation of the mysteries, see Murray 1990.

> Really, it is just the same as if a particular man, Greek or Barbarian, were taken to be initiated in a certain mystic shrine of surpassing beauty and size, there seeing many mystic sights and hearing many likewise mystic sounds, and with light and darkness appearing alternately and a whole myriad of other things taking place. Is it likely for such a man not to engage his mind and not to realize the things taking place are done with rather clever reasons and arrangements, even if he happened to belong to the most altogether remote and Barbarian people and be without a guide or interpreter present, so long as he had a human mind? (12.33)

His point is that even the most uneducated foreigner would understand that the mysteries are a kind of show. They are arranged for a particular reason and conducted by unseen people. The corresponding insight is that human beings innately understand that there is some reason or law, some unseen being or beings ordering the universe. Just prior to the passage quoted, Dio mentions the ordering of the seasons, a system created for the benefit of humankind. It is likewise one of the ways in which human beings know that the gods are real. Here, in addition to the cycle of seasons Dio mentions light and dark appearing at intervals, a parallel to the natural cycle of day and night. He draws a connection, then, between the cosmos and the mysteries, and the revelation encoded in the natural world and whatever was revealed in the mysteries. That amounts to an implicit analogy between the natural order and the mysteries themselves.

Persephone herself is the real link between the mysteries and the cycle of seasons and Ovid makes that connection clear. Ovid includes a version of the rape of Persephone in his *Metamorphoses*. At the end of the story, he describes the transformation (*vertitur*) of the maiden's unhappy face into one beaming with joy. In that context, he explains the connection between the goddess and the cycle of seasons. Zeus and Demeter settled their dispute over the marriage of their daughter by striking a deal. Persephone would live with her mother during the spring and summer months and with her husband during autumn and winter (5.567; cf. *Hom. Hymn Dem*. 445-447). The arrangement relieved the

famine caused by Demeter's anger and grief, which further clarifies the link between

Demeter herself and the practice of agriculture. According to Ovid, she was the first one

to till the earth and she gave agriculture itself to humankind as a gift (5.341). Ovid even

identifies Triptolemos as the hero who scattered the seed at her request (5.646-648).

Ovid doesn't connect any of this information directly to the mysteries, although

Pausanias and Cicero do.

The third theme, the particular connection between the mysteries and Athens, can

also be identified in contemporary literature, especially Diodorus Siculus. Despite a

moniker associating him with Sicily, Diodorus was born in Agyrion in Asia Minor.[138]

His only surviving work is a history in forty books, the *Bibliotheke*, that begins before the

Trojan war and ends with war between Rome and the Celts. Like Polybius and

Posedonius, his project was a universal rather than a local history. And like most ancient

historians, he understood history as didactic. He was unlike some, on the other hand, in

that he includes myth.[139] In fact, the work begins with an overview of the mythologies of

the world (cf. Diod. Sic. 1.3.2). The overview occupies the first six books and it is in that

context that Diodorus rehearses the mythology of the mysteries.[140] In Book 5, he

recounts a Sicilian tradition that Demeter bestowed the gift of agriculture on the people of

Sicily because they received her when she was searching for her daughter.[141] Although

he associates the origin of agriculture with Sicily, he goes on to introduce Athens. The

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[138] He traveled for a good deal of his life, although he eventually returned to his city of origin at the end of his life. For an overview of his life and travels, see Green 2006: 2-7.

[139] On the aims of the *Bibliotheke*, see Green 2006: 23-25. Like Pausanias, he was long interpreted as a mere pedant, an unoriginal compiler of sources and not a historian in his own right. On his reception, see Green 2006: 25- 34; cf. Sacks 1990: 9-14.

[140] On his use of myth in these six books, see Sacks 1990: 55-82.

[141] This is an outgrowth of the tradition that the rape of Kore took place near Mt. Etna. On the Sicilian tradition of the rape of Kore and its relationship to stories of the origin of agriculture, see Gasparro 1986: 142-143.

Athenians, he relates, had also been hospitable to her and they were the first after the Sicilians to receive the grain. The gift was disseminated from Athens to the rest of the world. Diodorus contends that the Eleusinian mysteries were established in response to Demeter's gift of grain by the citizens of the city out of gratitude to the goddess (5.4.4). Thus Diodorus configures the elements in a distinctive way. Unlike Pausanias, for example, he does not associate the original establishment of agriculture with Eleusis. And yet, he makes a link between Demeter, the mysteries, and Athens as the source of agriculture just as Cicero and Pausanias do.

In sum, there are three major points of concurrence between Pausanias and Cicero. First, both preserve the secrecy of the mysteries. Second, both draw a connection between the mysteries and the natural world, especially agriculture. And third, both make a particular connection between the city of Athens itself and the mysteries. The same themes can be charted in contemporary literature. Dio Chrysostom is similarly oblique in his treatment of the mysteries and he also connects the cycle of seasons, which supports agriculture, with the mysteries. Ovid, likewise, associates Eleusinian mythology and the seasonal cycle of agricultural production. Finally, Diodorus Siculus makes a similar connection between Athens and its relationship to Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries. Thus there is substantial evidence for a common discourse, shared by both Greek and Roman writers, which establishes that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries functioned as a Third Space of interaction between Greece and Rome. It was therefore a space from which hybridized forms might emerge.

Eleusis and Hybridity

The argument of this chapter is that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries were as a Third

Space. A Third Space is a discursive space of interaction between two cultures. It is the space from which hybridized cultures emerge. The concept of hybridity is an attempt to strike a balance between two extremes in interpretation. Cultures do not simply dissolve into one another. They also don't interact as discrete entities, without mutual transformation. In any cultural interaction, there is mutual influence, but there are also elements that do not dissolve. Third Space, then, is a description of the shared discursive space in which cultures meet.

In plainer terms, Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries were an object of discussion for both Greek and Latin writers. They shared a discourse inasmuch as both Greek and Latin writers discuss the mysteries. It is not enough, on the other hand, that they both mention the mysteries. It is more significant that they describe the mysteries in consonant terms. Although they have different interests, there is a significant area of overlap between them.

I demonstrated this using Cicero and Pausanias, with reference to contemporary authors for context. Literary references to the Eleusinian mysteries are limited by the secrecy of the cult, but Cicero and Pausanias each refer to the mysteries in more than one place. Each has distinct interests and both make remarks that are not duplicated in the other. Even so, there is overlap between them. I highlighted three themes. First, as might be expected both approach the mysteries as a secret cult. Second, the both connect the mysteries with the natural world, especially agriculture and the seasonal cycle. Third, both mention Athens specifically in their discussions, which also might be expected, but which relates to a more general connection between Athens and the origins of agriculture. These themes are consonant with the kind of things authors from the Roman era say,

whether their cultural loyalties were with Rome or with Greece.

Connecting Eleusis as Third Space and cultural hybridity is complicated by the secrecy of the mysteries. The fact that there is an identifiable area of overlap between Cicero and Pausanias—a Roman and a Greek—demonstrates that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries were an area of interaction between Greece and Rome. As a Third Space, there should be hybridized forms that emerge from that cultural space. But because the literary references to the mysteries are truncated by secrecy, it is impossible to identify any such forms in them. It is necessary to look to a different body of data for hybridity. In support of the inference that Eleusis was a point of contact between Greece and Rome, Romans were initiated at Eleusis. They traveled to Athens to take part. Even the Roman emperor, especially during the time of Pausanias, showed interest in the cult, patronizing it by undertaking a series of building projects. The interaction took place in real terms and not only in discourse. For that reason, a closer look at the sanctuary and the changes that Roman benefactors made there should reveal the nature of the relationship.

Chapter Three – Eleusis as Palimpsest: A Postcolonial Approach to Archaeological Space

Introduction

The previous two chapters argued for a postcolonial reading of Roman imperial rhetoric, particular Roman imperial rhetoric about Greece. Chapter One argued that Roman philhellenism was ambivalent with respect to Greece. Chapter Two extended the discussion by arguing that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries functioned as a Third Space of discursive interaction between Greece and Rome. Thus I argued that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries were the kind of space from which a hybridized culture might emerge. Because the Eleusinian mysteries were secret it is not possible to say more about their cultural hybridity using textual sources. There is a deposit of material data that should not be overlooked, however. In order to bring these data into conversation with postcolonial theory, it is necessary to make a bridge between the theoretical concepts discussed in the previous chapters and the study of material culture.

The chapter will argue that Eleusis as an archaeological site is a palimpsest. More specifically, it will argue that the monumental architecture of the site is a palimpsest of meaning. Palimpsest itself functions as a bridge between the ideas of postcolonial studies and archaeological inquiry. It refers to a manuscript that is erased and rewritten, where traces of the previous inscription remain. As a postcolonial idea, palimpsest is similar to the more frequently used category of hybridity, although they have different emphases. Hybridity calls attention to the mutually transformative aspect of cultural interaction. Palimpsest emphasizes layering, where the final writing is dominant because it is the most apparent, even if traces of earlier writings remain. In archaeology, palimpsest is

used as an approach to space. Palimpsest is thus a potential link between archaeological

data and a postcolonial reading of space.

The chapter will proceed by first outlining the concept of palimpsest as it is used

in postcolonial studies. In postcolonial studies, palimpsest illustrates the dynamics of

cultural continuity and discontinuity that characterize colonial interaction. The chapter

will then outline palimpsest in archaeology. Paleolithic archaeologist Geoff Bailey

outlines five types of palimpsest in archaeological research. The strongest point of

contact between postcolonial palimpsest and archaeology is what Bailey calls a

palimpsest of meaning. Although Eleusis could be characterized in terms of several of

Bailey's categories, the remainder of the chapter will argue that the monumental

architecture of Eleusis can be understood as a palimpsest of meaning. This will establish

a link between postcolonial studies and archaeology.

Palimpsests

Palimpsest is a relatively minor term in postcolonial studies. Only a few theorists use it

and even they do not necessarily use it extensively.[142] The postcolonial ideas implicit in

the concept are more clearly expressed by hybridity. Palimpsest is, on the other hand,

sometimes used as an approach to space, both by literary critics and by archaeologists.

This section will first describe the limited use of palimpsest in postcolonial studies. It

will then outline approaches to space that use the idea of the palimpsest, especially

Bailey's five types of palimpsests. Bailey's spatial and temporal palimpsests refer to

archaeological realities that don't necessarily contribute to a postcolonial idea of

palimpsest. True and cumulative palimpsest can be correlated with palimpsest as a

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[142] See, for example, Harris 1983. The idea of palimpsest is implicit in Harris's literary analysis but it is
not a major part of his theoretical apparatus (cf. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1998: 175).

postcolonial category in some ways but they differ in other ways. Most significantly, the postcolonial conception of palimpsest presupposes a particular interpretation of the superimposition of new layers of meaning. Bailey's palimpsest of meaning also overlaps with the postcolonial conception, which functions as a useful complement to the archaeological idea.

Borrowed from manuscript studies, palimpsest denotes a manuscript that has been erased and rewritten. It refers to the manuscript itself, which bears the marks of that history of reinscription. Thus it refers indirectly to the erasure and rewriting of a manuscript. In the context of postcolonial studies, palimpsest can be defined as follows:

> Originally the term for a parchment on which several inscriptions had been made after earlier ones had been erased. The characteristic of the palimpsest is that, despite such erasures, there are always traces of previous inscriptions that have been 'overwritten.' Hence the term has become particularly valuable for suggesting the ways in which the traces of earlier 'inscriptions' remain as a continual feature of the 'text' of culture, giving it its particular density and character. Any cultural experience is itself an accretion of many layers, and the term is valuable because it illustrates the ways in which pre-colonial culture as well as the experience of colonization are continuing aspects of a post-colonial society's developing cultural identity.[143]

Like its parallel in manuscript studies, the postcolonial appropriation of palimpsest clearly implies more than a single overwriting. It suggests layers of inscriptions, in various hands, all overlaying one another. As such, it is an apt description of the complex interaction between a culture and its colonial interlopers.

The definition also clearly implies the persistence of traces and in that sense it is a metaphorical approach to the same questions addressed by hybridity. There is seldom if ever a complete erasure. The point is essential to the argument that the pre-colonial necessarily leaves traces. Like hybridity, palimpsest is intended to subvert a reductionist view of colonial interaction. Palimpsest replaces a static model of cultural

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[143] Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1998: 174.

supercessionism. A static view suggests that the colonial simply replaced the pre-colonial. To the contrary, the idea that the colonial context is a palimpsest argues that colonization and decolonization should be understood as processes of interaction. In turn these processes contribute directly to the evolving identities of all involved, as in the definition of palimpsest quoted above. Palimpsest thus illustrates the idea of evolving identities that exist in relationship to one another.

Palimpsest is used in postcolonial studies but it has a wider application in literary criticism. It can describe accrued layers of meaning, particularly in relationship to practices of editing.[144] It has also been used to read cultural texts by analogy, as in the work of Andreas Huyssen. Huyssen takes a literary approach to physical spaces in the belief that spaces are analogous to texts and the same techniques can be used to interpret both. He uses palimpsest as an approach to "urban spaces as lived spaces that shape collective imaginaries."[145] Urban spaces comprise layers of meaning, even where physical traces of former spatial arrangements are not visible. Spaces that are lived in necessarily change over time. They are remade by renovation and construction as their significance and use shifts. Even when the traces of that history are not visible, the memory of what used to be remains in the imagination of the people who live in and use a given space. Huyssen concludes that memory is integral to understanding the lived experience of the urban environment.[146]

Huyssen's approach relies on the analogy between textual palimpsest and space as a cultural text and the same idea of palimpsest drawn from manuscript studies is also used by analogy in archaeology. Palimpsest functions differently in ancient and modern

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[144] See the essays in Bornstein and Williams 1993.
[145] Huyssen 2003: 7.
[146] For example, Huyssen (2003: 72-84) treats post-war Berlin as a palimpsest.

contexts. In a modern context, as in Huyssen's work, palimpsest is useful because even where traces of former structures are not retained, the memory of what was once there remains—a memory held by living human beings. In an ancient context, memory is lost but the remains of former configurations of space are often visible, if only because the site has fallen out of use and it is therefore possible to excavate it. Thus palimpsest is as useful for archaeologists as for cultural critics.

Geoff Bailey, a Paleolithic archaeologist, uses palimpsest as an approach to space but he does so as an archaeologist grounded in the realities of material data.[147] Among archaeologists, palimpsest is a kind of common-sense observation. Archaeological sites comprise layers of information superimposed on one another. Most view this as a handicap. It is understood as

> an unfortunate consequence of having to rely on a material record that is incomplete and one that requires the application of complex techniques to reconstitute the individual episodes of activity, or alternatively a focus on the best preserved or most highly resolved exemplars at the expense of everything else, or the application of theoretical or imaginary narratives to fill the gaps, which are in consequence immune to empirical challenge.[148]

Bailey argues against the view that palimpsest is a negative for the archaeologist. On the contrary, he sees palimpsest as a virtue.[149] It allows the archaeologist to focus on long-term trends. Bailey argues that for prehistorians, whose data is more limited than most, observing patterns across a longer period of time may prove especially revealing.

Bailey also argues against the commonsense reading of palimpsest as a mere description of the layers present in any archaeological site. Instead he proposes five distinct types of palimpsest, each of which presents different issues and different

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[147] Bailey 2007.
[148] Bailey 2007: 203.
[149] Bailey (2007: 203) refers to his own work (Bailey 1981) and that of Binford (1981) and Foley (1981) as examples of archaeologists who have argued that palimpsest is a positive rather than a negative feature of archaeology.

possibilities for interpretation. The true palimpsest implies a total or near total erasure of previous activity, such that only the latest phase of activity is apparent. The cumulative palimpsest does not imply such careful erasure. New layers are added without removing material from previous layers such that it becomes difficult to differentiate individual phases. Bailey's idea of the spatial palimpsest is similar to the cumulative palimpsest but it refers to a larger scale reality. From a sufficient distance, an entire geographical area appears as a palimpsest, with various settlements overlapping one another, often without clearing evidence of previous settlements first. Spatial palimpsest presents the same problem of assigning material to specific phases that Bailey identifies with cumulative palimpsest. Temporal palimpsest refers to a situation where artifacts are found together because they have been specifically gathered and deposited together—as in a burial mound, for instance. Although they belong together in one sense, as a collection of items, these objects often span various time periods, creating a kind of palimpsest where objects from discrete contexts are superimposed. Finally, Bailey describes what he calls a palimpsest of meaning. Palimpsest of meaning refers to the succession of meanings acquired by a particular object or group of objects. The succession of meanings spans not only the life of the artifact as a functional object but continues through its discovery and reuse or its reinterpretation as an archaeological find.[150]

In general, Bailey's core definition of palimpsest is compatible with the postcolonial idea of the palimpsest but it is not identical. Bailey understands palimpsest as an erasure and rewriting, just as in postcolonial studies. His idea of the true palimpsest, however, emphasizes the possibility of total erasure. As a postcolonial idea, palimpsest highlights the impossibility of completely clearing all traces of former

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[150] Bailey 2007: 204-208.

writings. This is in the sense in which palimpsest conveys ideas about identity. By contrast, the core of the true palimpsest for Bailey is that each layer of activity is "superimposed on preceding ones in such a way as to remove all or most of the evidence of the preceding activity."[151] Thus while his definition of palimpsest resembles the postcolonial idea, his true palimpsest has a different emphasis.

The postcolonial idea of palimpsest is more like Bailey's second type, the cumulative palimpsest, although there are differences there as well. In the cumulative palimpsest, layers are superimposed on one another without clearing away the traces of what came previously. The model is identical to postcolonial palimpsest, where traces of previous inscriptions remain despite new writings. The difference is that for Bailey the question of clearing or erasing previous layers is value neutral. It is something that happens when human beings reuse a physical space. In postcolonial studies, the act of erasure and rewriting is part of a system of domination. Colonization is an overt attempt to efface native identity and rewrite it in terms that are intelligible and favorable to the colonized culture. The colonizer behaves as if the native were a blank parchment. Here again the fact that vestiges of earlier writings necessarily remain is essential. The colonizer may want to completely erase previous layers but she cannot. These ideas are missing from Bailey's understanding of palimpsest entirely.

To this point, it is clear that Bailey's ideas about palimpsest and the postcolonial conception of the term differ in that the latter calls explicit attention to the dynamics of power that govern the act of imposing a new layer on an existing one. Bailey says little or nothing about the act of imposition. It is simply a historical and archaeological fact that when a space is reused, there is an imposition of some kind. Not only that, but it

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[151] Bailey 2007: 204.

would be difficult or impossible to discern power and agency in Bailey's material, given

lack of appropriate evidence and historical distance.

Although they differ, there is also a complementary aspect between Bailey's ideas

and the postcolonial conception of palimpsest. This is clearer with reference to Bailey's

palimpsest of meaning. As already described, Bailey's palimpsest of meaning refers to

the meanings accrued to an object or group of objects over time. New significance can

be acquired as an object is modified or takes on different uses. Meaning may shift from

one context of use to another. Bailey describes the changes in meaning a given object

goes through as it makes its way from raw material to useful object to trash. From there,

it may be discovered and restored to use—either its original use or a new one. If it is

discovered by an archaeologist, it is perhaps repaired and then interpreted and published.

The object may then be stored and forgotten or it may make its way to a museum and

from there into intellectual discourse, depending on its value to the archaeological

community.[152] Bailey's point is that the significance of an object cannot be reduced to

either its original or its final use. For any given object, there are layers of meaning that

have been superimposed on one another. And for an archaeological find, that process

spans both a past history prior to excavation and a present history since excavation. In

Bailey's words, it is "a palimpsest of meanings with a duration that reaches from the very

distant past to the present day."[153]

This type of palimpsest has a more immediate connection to the postcolonial

because it refers to a historical process. The rest of Bailey's typology functioned as a

description of the nature of archaeological finds and the problems implicit in their

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[152] Bailey 2007: 208.
[153] Bailey 2007: 209.

interpretation. The palimpsest of meanings, on the other hand, refers to a process shaped by changing historical forces in the past and in the present. The postcolonial view of palimpsest also emphasizes that the imposition of new layers is a historical process. It takes the observation a step further by highlighting the significant impact the unequal distribution of power has on such processes. In that respect, the palimpsest of meanings and postcolonial palimpsest are complementary. The idea of a palimpsest of meanings emphasizes the connection between the meaning of a physical object and its history, past and present. The postcolonial conception of palimpsest emphasizes the significance of the dynamics of power to history. Together they speak to the significance of power to the interpretation of physical objects.

In sum, this section outlined two perspectives on palimpsest. Both the postcolonial and archaeological uses of palimpsest are borrowed from manuscript studies. A palimpsest is a manuscript that has been erased and rewritten. In archaeology, it is used by analogy. Instead of a parchment erased and rewritten, a physical space is clear and a new layer of activity imposed on it. In postcolonial studies, palimpsest refers by analogy to a cultural text. New layers of meaning are imposed on previous layers. In archaeology, palimpsest is largely descriptive. In Bailey's work, it accounts for the problems implicit in interpreting archaeological data. In postcolonial studies, it is critical. The imposition of new layers is interpreted as an act of domination. Thus the postcolonial conception of palimpsest dramatizes political realities and therefore calls attention to the dynamics of power at work in the formation of culture and identity.

These perspectives can be combined in the idea of a palimpsest of meanings. Every object that is discovered by an archaeologist is a palimpsest of meanings. Shifting

layers of meaning are added over time as the context and use of a given object changes. The object continues to accrue new layers of meaning in the present, which are superimposed on the meanings accrued to it in the past. The idea that new layers of meaning are imposed upon the past by the present can be related to the dynamics of power that shape the formation of culture. The postcolonial conception of palimpsest highlights the significance of power to this process of imposition. The act of imposing a new meaning on an object or a space is sometimes a practical activity, but it can also be a political act. In either case, it is significant to the life of an object and its interpretation.

Palimpsest and the Landscapes of Eleusis

This section will demonstrate that the archaeological site of Eleusis is a palimpsest of meanings. In particular, the process of excavation accrued new meanings and new significance to specific aspects of the site. These processes were governed by a variety of forces—from the interests of the excavators to economics—and produced Eleusis as an archaeological site, distinct from Eleusis as a sanctuary. Put another way, the ancient sanctuary was produced by processes of effacement and reinscription as it evolved from its earliest configuration in the 15th century BCE to its final form, during the later Roman Empire. This project isolates one moment in that history—the 2nd century CE—for analysis, as one point on a timeline characterized by ever-present change. The changes that preceded and succeeded that moment are accessible archaeologically, and not only as cultural memory, and the archaeological record is itself a kind of palimpsest. It is the afterlife or second history of the sanctuary, the story of how an archaeological site was carved from the edges of the village of Elefsina. The finds that were unearthed during that process comprise the stones from which the sanctuary's history was reconstructed.

In this section, I will describe the history of excavation at Eleusis. The first half will discuss historical factors that governed the physical aspects of excavation, especially toward the beginning of the project. They produced a physical landscape primarily centered on the sanctuary at the southeastern end of the site. The interests of the excavators in prehellenic remains produced a second center to the west, where a prehistoric cemetery was uncovered, yielding some of the most significant grave finds from that period in all of Greece. The next section functions as a map of the intellectual terrain of Eleusis. Excavators presumed that the finds were cohesive, and that their cohesion revealed a definitive picture of the cult in its original form. Roman finds were either dismissed as too late to be relevant, or they were collapsed into the rest of the data. Thus, the site and its intellectual points of reference were produced by a method that obscured the individual significance of the Roman evidence. The latter point is demonstrated by specific attention to the excavation histories of two areas of sustained Roman interest—the Telesterion and the north gate. Eleusis is a clear palimpsest of meanings.

Palimpsest and Physical Landscape

The ancient site of Eleusis is located in the modern village of Elefsina, still a suburb of Athens. The Hieros Odos or Sacred Way was the processional road that connected the two. The area was on the threshold between the ancient city and the countryside, and it was an agricultural center. Today, it is still situated on this threshold, but it is highly industrialized. The archaeological site sits against an outcropping of limestone, overlooking the bay of Eleusis, which is littered with ships. The outcropping was the site of the ancient Eleusinian acropolis, from which the local Eleusinian stone—a grey blue

limestone—was quarried. In 1902, the Titan Cement Company established an operation at the west end of the hill and continued to quarry the local stone. The factory is still in operation today and bounds the site in the west. The sanctuary lies at the eastern end of the site and is the only portion of the excavation that is open to the public. The casual visitor enters a Roman era courtyard and can wander through the remains of the two monumental gates, the cave of the Ploutonion, the Telesterion itself, and the perimeter of the peribolos, where the remains of various shops and cisterns are visible. The museum stands along the southeastern edge of the hill, overlooking the Telesterion, and contains many of the most famous finds from Eleusis, including both a spectacular proto-attic amphora, depicting the blinding of Polyphemus and the Lakrateides relief. Other significant finds, including the Great Relief of Eleusis, are housed in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. [154]

The early history of excavation at Eleusis began some time before Greek independence. In addition to early travelers to the site—Western Europeans in search of a classical past—amateur archaeologists had some access to the area during the early 19th century. The Society of the Dilletanti produced the first survey of finds from Eleusis, especially the Greater and Lesser Propylaia, which they cleared. [155] The rest of the sanctuary area was covered by the homes of Albanian refugees and the Dilletanti had no resources to acquire the land and explore further. Moreover, their interests were quite

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[154] Mylonas (1957) published the protoattic amphora. Clinton (1992: 51) describes the Lakrateides relief in some detail. He discusses the dedicatory inscription (IG II² 4701) as well as the identity of the figures depicted. On the relief, see also Palagia 1997. Discussion of the Great Relief of Eleusis has also focused on identifying the three figures. In particular, there is debate about the identity of the central figure. He was initially identified with Triptolemos by the excavators. And Schwarz (1987: 160-163) includes him in his survey of the iconography of Triptolemos as a result. Metzger (1968: 113-118) argues against the identification. Other options have been proposed. Clinton (1992: 416-420) identifies him with Ploutos and Simon (1998: 373-387) argues that he is Demophoön. On these issues, see Hunt 2001: 3-8.
[155] Society of Dilletanti (London) 1817.

distinct from those of professional archaeologists. James Christie, of the famous auction house, was a member of the Society. Unlike their professional counterparts, the Dilletanti were not averse to carrying off antiquities. One of the karyatids that supported the inner portico of the Lesser Propylaia at Eleusis is now in England, at the Fitzwilliam museum in Cambridge.[156] Christie was not responsible for its transport, but the transfer fits the spirit of the Dilletanti and other early travelers in Eleusis. Their efforts were abetted by the occupying Turkish government, which was little interested in the preservation of Greek cultural treasures. Professional archaeological work marked a significant break, then, and a move toward preservation instead of despoliation. François Lenormant conducted the first professional archaeological work along the Sacred Way and published some of the inscriptions from Eleusis.[157] His work was the first foray into excavating the area more systematically and it was the last to precede the excavation sponsored by a newly independent Greek government in 1882.

Greek independence and the subsequent creation of a modern state coincided with the development of Greek archaeology, because archaeologists both preserved and studied the past and created it, implicitly, by their choices. The foundation of the Archaeological Society of Athens—which oversees the excavations at Eleusis and in Elefsina to the present day—took place in 1837, just five years after Greek independence.[158] The western schools were founded shortly thereafter—the American School of Classical Studies at Athens in 1881, for example—and continued the work already begun toward excavating the past that was the underpinning for the present.[159]

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[156] Clarke 1809.
[157] Lenormant 1862.
[158] Catling 1981-1982: 5.
[159] Koliopoulos and Veremis 2002: 244-245.

Eleusis was a major site in antiquity and so was a major point of interest for Greek archaeologists, whose project was bound up in the development of a new identity for Greece as a nation state. The first task of the government excavation was to clear the Telesterion, and excavators labored from 1882-1932 to clear it to bedrock. The first director of excavation was Demetrios Philios, who was appointed in 1882 and served until 1890. Andreas Skias succeeded him (1894-1907) for a relatively short period compared with Konstantinos Kourouniotes, who directed the excavations from 1917 until his death in 1945. Their underlying task was to help forge a new identity for Greece. The foundational mythology of the modern nation state was encapsulated in the glories of its classical past, which was compelling precisely because Europeans thought so highly of that bygone era. The mythos thus had a legitimating effect.[160] The assertion of a direct lineage between ancient and modern was therefore integral to the formation of the new state. Even the choice of Athens as a capital "symbolized the cultural orientation of the new state towards the classical past."[161]

The immediate context of the excavation accounts for certain particulars of the investigation. The interest in antiquities that drove the initial investigation of Eleusis was a national interest, which found its most ready expression in the reconstruction of the mysteries in their Classical form. The Roman phase superseded the glory of Classical Greece and was, in that respect, less relevant to the task of reviving the country's classical history. As a result, it received attention in due course but as a prelude to investigation of the sanctuary as it existed at the height of classical Greece. There is,

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[160] Koliopoulos and Veremis 2002: 242-243.
[161] Clogg 1992: 50.

then, comparatively little written about Eleusis as a Roman sanctuary, and almost all of what has been written dates from after the initial excavation.

The difficulties Greece faced during WWI and WWII flesh out a picture of the external forces that shaped excavation work at Eleusis. Kourouniotes's early tenure (1917-1930) was characterized by financial difficulty, which coincided with a period of unrest in Greece during WWI. Because modern Greece was founded on the myth of ancient Greece, it followed naturally that the newly formed state also took on the "daunting project of reconstituting the elusive realm of its classical antecedent" and the inevitable result was conflict—with Macedonia and Turkey in particular.[162] The new state also faced internal conflict and the years between 1917 and 1932 were especially turbulent. In 1917, Venizelos—then Prime Minister—staged a coup in order to involve Greece in WWI. In 1920, King Constantine was restored to the throne, only to see the abolition of the monarchy in 1924. At war with Turkey from 1919-1922, the country had very little time to recover when, in 1929, the world felt the effects of the collapse of the stock market in the United States. Greece dealt in luxury imports, which meant it was affected significantly by the world economic crisis.[163] There was some reevaluation of finds at Eleusis during the period, but there was no money for new excavation.

The solution to the excavation's financial troubles came from an American source, although the United States didn't truly become involved in Greek affairs until WWII. Before that, American foreign policy was not interventionist, and Greece was considered "inconsequential" to American interests.[164] American foreign policy changed radically with the American entry into WWII, and Greece was newly construed as the

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[162] Koliopoulos and Veremis 2002: 277.
[163] Clogg 1992: 100-115.
[164] Cassimatis 1988: 166.

boundary between the democratic west and the soviet, communist east. American

interests in Greece were suddenly more pressing, and the United States intervened

heavily in Greek affairs after that point, in order to secure the country for the west.[165]

Even so, America had long supported the formation of a Greek nation state, which

included support for the overall project of grounding a new Greek identity in a classical

past. Under those auspices, the excavators at Eleusis received a 1930 grant from the

Rockefeller Foundation, administered through the American School of Classical Studies

at Athens, and excavation began again in earnest. The final clearing of the Telesterion

was completed shortly thereafter.

     Thus, the early excavation at Eleusis was characterized by two issues. First, the

development of Greek archaeology coincided with the development of a Greek nation

state. The excavation of a classical past functioned as part of the construction of a new

Greek identity, a mythologized history that made a direct connection between the height

of Greek civilization during the 5th century BCE and the modern Greek state. Excavators

passed through Roman layers on their way to their classical goal, in that case. Second,

the years surrounding WWI were turbulent for Greece, owing to both internal and

external unrest, which created an economic crisis that effectively halted excavation for

more than twenty years. The work produced in the meantime reevaluated finds, but there

was no new work—a pause in the excavation history that requires some explanation. The

situation illustrates the often intimate connection between excavation, economics, and

political unrest. It is a connection archaeologists know well, and it often changes the

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[165] The involvement was not necessarily unwelcome but at the same time, modern historians have attributed many of Greece's post-war problems to American interference. Cf. Wittner 1982; Kofas 1989.

shape of a site by dictating what kind of work can be done in a particular era—a decision that is not always up to the excavator's interests.

While national interests and economic troubles characterized the early excavation, later excavation was more clearly shaped by the interests of the archaeologists who worked at the site. Kourouniotes died in 1945, passing leadership to his assistants: architect John Travlos and Bronze Age archaeologist George Mylonas. Early work focused on the sanctuary as the center of Eleusis as a Classical site, as was appropriate to the national interest in reconstructing a pre-Ottoman Greek history. Mylonas and Travlos continued the work Kourouniotes had begun, completely clearing the entire sanctuary area by 1954. At that point, they were free to pursue other projects, and turned attention to the Sacred Way and the ancient town, including the ancient road west to Megara, where an extensive prehistoric cemetery was uncovered. A great deal of effort was expended excavating what came to be known the West Cemetery.[166] Classical finds and interests were significant to the political and intellectual context of the early excavation, but later excavation demonstrated that Eleusis was also an extensive prehellenic site, which was a key area of expertise for Mylonas. Work continued on the prehellenic history of the site, even as Mylonas prepared the final report on the sanctuary. The first installment of a final report appeared in 1932 as *Eleusiniaka* I.[167] Kourouniotes's death had interrupted the second report—*Eleusiniaka II*--which was never prepared as planned. In its place, George Mylonas produced a summary of the entire excavation and the findings of the excavators as *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries*.[168] Thus, Mylonas and

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[166] Mylonas 1975.
[167] Kourouniotes 1932; it was preceded by a series of preliminary reports in various archaeological journals (e.g. AD, ArchEphem, and Prakt).
[168] Mylonas 1961.

Travlos worked to complete what Kourouniotes had put in motion, even as Mylonas began further work uncovering prehellenic Eleusis.

The emerging primacy of prehellenic concerns can be illustrated using the example of the Eleusinian acropolis. Excavators discovered the remains of a megaron beneath the Telesterion, now known as Megaron B. It dated from the Mycenean period, more specifically Late Helladic III (LHIII), which spans roughly 1400-1060 BCE.[169] The archaeologists immediately turned their attention to the crest of the Eleusinian acropolis, in the hopes of discovering the LHIII palace they were sure must be in the vicinity. When they discovered only Roman era remains there, they quickly abandoned the project. It was only later, when it was demonstrated that there were prehistoric remains along the north slopes of the acropolis, that they renewed their work on the acropolis itself, eventually uncovering a LHIII building they were certain was their palace.[170] Maintaining focus is, of course, necessary to a cohesive investigation, but the sheer lack of interest in the Roman era is aptly demonstrated by the example. The Roman houses and cisterns on the acropolis were immediately deemed "unimportant," to uses Mylonas's term, and their study abandoned. In some ways this is unremarkable, and yet it is a clear example of the way in which a site is created, not discovered. What exists at Eleusis today, what has been uncovered and left buried, are the product of the presumptions, interests, and values of the excavators who dug and continue to dig there.

With the sanctuary completely cleared and a summative report published, continued work at Eleusis was much more diffuse. Mylonas and Travlos eventually diverted their attention from the Sacred Way to carry out supplementary excavation and

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[169] LHIII spans roughly 1400-1060 BCE.
[170] Mylonas 1936: 414-415.

reassessment of previous work in preparation for a comprehensive volume on the architecture of the sanctuary—a project they never completed although work continues.[171] Prehellenic Eleusis also continues to be a major point of interest: In 1994, Michael Cosmopoulos for the University of Manitoba carried out an excavation of LH remains.[172] In addition to continuing the work begun by Mylonas and Travlos, there has been extensive rescue excavation in the village, beginning during the 1970s. New construction, renovation, utility work and the like have revealed remains from all periods represented by the finds from within the sanctuary. In fact, work in the modern town of Elefsina has allowed for substantial reconstruction of the ancient city, especially in terms of the location of roads and cemeteries. Though many of the finds cannot be fully excavated because of the location of modern buildings, some sense of the ancient topography has nonetheless emerged.[173] By comparison, the current era of investigation is characterized by its relationship to the original excavation of the sanctuary, even as attention in Greek archaeology has shifted to newer, more recently discovered or excavated sites.

The process of excavation that produced the physical site at Eleusis was subject to external influence—both by way of national ideologies and economic difficulties, to say nothing of the interests of the excavators in later years. The result is a site with two centers. The original center, which is still the primary point of reference for the site, was the sanctuary, especially in its classical configuration. Secondarily, under Mylonas the prehellenic face of Eleusis became a major point of interest. The West Cemetery and the

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[171] Ergon 1980: 22-24; Ergon 1981: 45-46; Ergon 1982: 37-38; Ergon 1983: 57-59. Others have continued the work. The most significant work is that of Giraud (1989), who produced a comprehensive survey of the architecture of the Greater Propylaia. See also Kokkou-Vyridi (1999) on the pyres around the Telesterion.
[172] Cosmopoulos 1994.
[173] See AD 41 fig. 3 for a map of the topography (cf. AR 1998-1999: 11-13, esp. fig 12).

megaron beneath the Telesterion, which prompted excavators to seek a LHIII palace on

the slopes of the Eleusinian acropolis, functioned as an auxiliary in later excavation. This

configuration was shaped by nationalism, financial crisis, and the resonance between

excavator expertise and the nature of the finds, which together produced the site available

to the contemporary scholar.

Palimpsest and Intellectual Landscape

The finds of any archaeological dig are, to some extent, accidental but they are also

shaped by external forces, as outlined here. Finds are often an accident of preservation or

of the right circumstances for discovery—the latter often complicated by factors like war,

the expertise of the excavators, prevailing methods, and guiding questions. The

foregoing survey suggests the significance of external factors and alludes to guiding

questions by appealing to the excavator's interests. There is still more to say about the

nature of those questions and the intellectual landscape they produced at Eleusis. The

Roman era was not a primary concern of the excavation because the most pressing

questions and problems related to the earliest phase of the site, the Mycenaean era. The

Roman era marked the beginning of the end for the mysteries, which were halted

sometime after the advent of Christianity, a turn of events regarded with some sadness by

excavators. George Mylonas is characteristically poetic about the end of the mysteries:

> No Emperor was there with the desire to rebuild them; no statesman had the
> ambition to restore "the temenos of the world"; there was no priesthood powerful
> enough and respected enough to impose its will and its desire, no multitude of
> grateful initiates to contribute to the rebirth of the shrine. The Emperor was now
> a Christian who had proclaimed dire measures against the mystic cults; the leaders
> of Athens and its people were no longer worshipers of the Olympian Gods; the
> cities of Greece had stopped sending their titles to Eleusis and the source of
> inspiration provided by the cult had dried up. A new religion controlled the

minds and actions of men. The old pagan rites must go and their shrines must be buried in their own debris. It was so decreed; it so happened.[174]

The Roman era was the beginning of the end of the sanctuary. Clearing its layers, the accretions of Roman interpolation, allowed the excavators to come to the heart of the sanctuary as it was meant to be.

The point resonates with the observation that the early excavators were committed to unearthing a Classical past, not its Roman successor, but there is more. The desire to arrive at an original form of the sanctuary coincided with a push to create a cohesive explanation of the cult. The immediate impetus was the dearth of direct evidence for the secret rituals performed at Eleusis. Interpreters have often looked to summarize the cult and its appeal with an explanation that holds for all times and all places. Mylonas appeals to human psychology:

> Whatever the substance and meaning of the Mysteries was, the fact remains that the cult of Eleusis satisfied the most sincere yearnings and the deepest longings of the human heart. The initiates returned from their pilgrimage to Eleusis full of joy and happiness, with the fear of death diminished and the strengthened hope of a better life.[175]

Mylonas connects the mysteries with the fear of death because he believes the immortality promised by the mysteries is its most basic feature. He cites the opinions of three scholars—Nilsson, Guthrie and Farnell—in support of his point. Guthrie and Farnell argue that the mysteries promised a better lot in the afterlife, perhaps by way of providing an avenue to obtain the friendship of the underworld deities. To that, Nilsson adds the idea of the collective immortality of the human race. The cycle of planting and harvest runs in parallel to the cycle of human death and birth. One dies, another is born and the human race continues forever.

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[174] Mylonas 1961: 186.
[175] Mylonas 1961: 284.

Nilsson's opinion is an appeal to the agrarian roots of the cult, which makes the

point. Mylonas looks with Nilsson to the original form of the cult as a way to ascertain

its basic character. Guthrie and Farnell add a Homeric veneer. And that, taken together,

is how Mylonas understands the mysteries in general, as a summative explanation of

what they mean in every age. He argues his point against those who take a functional

approach to the cult:

> There are a good many scholars who believe that there was no more to the
> Mysteries than the few facts and surmises we have summarized; there are others
> who believe that their substance was so simpe that it escapes us just because of its
> simplicity. There are even a few who maintain that the secret was kept because
> actually there was no secret worth keeping. The testimonies of the ancient world
> would prove untenable the suggestion of the agnostics.[176]

In both cases, the goal is an explanation for the appeal of the mysteries—an explanation

which should hold for all times and all places. The impulse is part of a more general

inclination to seek the original form of a cult as its most authentic expression. The result

is the further obfuscation of the particulars of the cult in the Roman era. Thus, the whole

intellectual underpinning of excavation actively obscures the very question proposed by

this project: What does the Roman phase of the sanctuary at Eleusis reveal about the

dynamics of power between Greece and Rome? Taken together, the presumption of

cohesion and the desire to seek an original form of the cult obfuscate the nature of the

sanctuary as palimpsest. The point can be illustrated by attention to two areas of

significant Roman interest: the Telesterion and the north gate.

The Excavation of the Telesterion

The history of the Telesterion's excavation suggests the sometimes negative effect of the

relative lack of interest in Roman era remains, because the questions driving the

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[176] Mylonas 1961: 282.

investigation had little or nothing to do with the reinscription of the site for political ends or, to be more precise, with any one particular phase of the cult's history. On the contrary, the focus has been on origins and on questions of the overall character of the mysteries, as a once and for all proposition. The Telesterion was the central initiation hall of Demeter's mysteries and for that reason a major center for Demeter's worship in Greece. Further, the immediate area of the Telesterion was the site of some kind of structure—most scholars believe a structure with a ritual use—from as early as the 15th century BCE. Together, those details made the early history of the area the focus of significant attention. Excavators extrapolated from ideas about the origins of Demeter's worship and developed an account of the general character of the mysteries that took little account of individual phases or transformations of the cult.

As already discussed, the Telesterion was the focus of the first government sponsored excavation at Eleusis, which began in 1882 under Philios. The Telesterion was by far the largest and most important building at Eleusis, making it an obvious focal point for archaeological inquiry. In all, excavators labored from 1882-1932 to clear the area of the Telesterion completely, reading its significance in the broader context of the cult, the data for which comprise archaeological, art historical, epigraphical, and literary evidence. In general, interpreters have proceeded under the assumption of cohesion, looking to match material evidence to texts and yet there is no reason for certainty. The sources are drawn from disparate historical and geographical contexts and they may well contradict one another—or even themselves!—and that means the method could yield pleasing and ingenious interpretations that are nonetheless false. Archaeologists are not unaware of that danger, of course. On the contrary, for each phase of the Telesterion's

history, there has been some question about the relationship between the physical remains and the textual record. At the same time, they are limited by the scanty nature of the evidence, which is owing to the secrecy of the rites.

The inclination to create a cohesive picture out of a confusion of information is apparent in the questions that have driven the reconstruction of the Telesterion. The reconstruction of the Periklean Telesterion, for instance, was complicated by a series of (apparent?) contradictions among the sources. There is a clear lack of agreement between Vitruvius (7.16; cf. Strabo 395), who states that Iktinos was the architect of the Telesterion of his era, and Plutarch (*Per.* 13), who names three architects for the same building, none of whom is Iktinos. A building inscription linked to the Iktinian Telesterion suggests that the project was fully conceived and stray foundation work at the site seems to confirm some preliminary work was completed. But the foundation work doesn't match the inscription precisely.[177] The inscription records that the Iktinian Telesterion should have had a stoa along three sides, while the Telesterion dated to the period lacks any stoa and the foundations uncovered are not intended for a stoa along three sides. There was at one time a stoa attached to the Classical Telesterion, but it is Hellenistic, not apparently contemporaneous with the rest of the building, and already associated with yet another architect, Philon.

From this mess of contradictory evidence, Ferdinand Noack concluded that Iktinos's plan was only in an initial phase when the Periklean party fell out of political favor in Athens and the project was aborted.[178] The building that was ultimately completed was overseen in three phases by the architects named by Plutarch. Others

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[177] Davis 1930.
[178] Noack 1927: 179-180.

disagree on the impetus for the abandonment of the project. Iktinos's plan calls for a mere 20 columns, far fewer than the 42 columns that eventually supported an analogous roofing system during the Classical and Roman periods. That information calls its structural feasibility into question, leading some to conclude that architectural implausibility prompted its demise.[179] Disagreement on the details of abandonment notwithstanding, all agree that there are more foundations at Eleusis than can be assigned to known completed building projects and all concur in resolving the difficulty by proposing the partial completion of the Iktinian structure.

The same argument is deployed by way of explaining the relationship between the two preceding building phases. Both the Peisistratean and the Kimonian Telesteria are, like the Solonion Telesterion, named for inferred benefactors. Both were apparently configured in an eastward direction, with the anaktoron located along the southern wall and tiers of seats along three sides. Some of the details are uncertain and the Kimonian Telesterion has proved especially difficult to reconstruct. For many years, the relationship between the two archaic phases was taken for granted. It was assumed that the Peisitratean Telesterion was burned by the Persians during the invasion of 480 BCE, as attested by Herodotos (*Hist.* 9.65). That narrative did not account for the peculiarity of Herodotos's wording, which suggests specifically that the anaktoron was destroyed (ἐν τὸ Ελευσῖνι ἀνακτορόν), but the opinion persisted until the 1980's. At that time, T. Leslie Shear argued that the Peisistratean building was dismantled to prepare for the new Kimonian Telesterion, which he believes was under construction when the anaktoron was burned.[180] Shear proposed this both because Herodotos's language left questions open

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[179] Mylonas 1961: 113-117.
[180] Shear 1982: 128-140.

and because so many of the architectural members of the Peisistratean Telesterion are preserved. The fissure between Herodotos and the site itself is smoothed by an ingenious interpretation that takes new account of both text and material. Shear argues that the building remained in ruins until the next phase of construction, the Periklean Telesterion, was completed. That creates a gap in the history of the cult, but it accounts for so many of the peculiarities of the evidence that it has proved convincing. What it does, more than anything, is create a cohesive narrative out of a disparate and difficult body of evidence.

If all of the above examples concur methodologically, they also share a common problem. A single mistaken source would destroy any of the fragile explanations outlined above. The fact that many of the textual sources being used were writing about periods before their own magnifies the possibility. Vitruvius's 2nd century CE account of the 5th century BCE can and should only be trusted so far. In some cases, the sources patently cannot be trusted. Herodotos's account of Eleusis has also generated questions that pertain to the earliest Telesterion. The remains of the first Telesterion are scanty, comprising only a corner of the building and a small section of one wall.[181] Though scanty, the remains convincingly demonstrate that the building was cultic, as demonstrated by the pyres that marked its entranceways, in which excavators found a variety of objects that suggested ritual, even sacrifice.[182] The remains were quickly associated with Solon, on the basis of its date, which make Solon not only the likely but the probable candidate for the remaking of the sanctuary.[183] The argument presumes a

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[181] Philios uncovered the corner of the building (Philios 1906; cf Noack 1927: 16-23). Kourouniotes (1931-1932: 1-30) later uncovered another portion of the wall. Cf. Mylonas (1961: 66-67) and Binder (1998: 131-139).

[182] Mylonas 1961: 60. Kokkou-Vyridi (1999) provides a full discussion of all the pyres in the vicinity of the Telesterion.

[183] Mylonas 1961: 63; cf. Boardman 1975: 1-12.

distinction between Athens and Eleusis and a historical event: the incorporation of the latter by the former, probably under Solon given that he secured nearby Salamis. There is some evidence for the claim in ancient sources. Andokides (*De Myst.* 111) links the event to Solon by stating that Solon issued laws pertaining to the mysteries. In support of Andokides, an inscription discovered in the Athenian agora—a reissue of Solon's laws— contains many regulations that pertain to the Eleusinian mysteries[184] Finally, Herodotos (*Hist.* 1.30) has been used as a kind of proof text for the claim that Athens conquered Eleusis and that the terms of surrender included the right of the Eleusinians to retain control of the mysteries.

The conclusion is far from trivial. The reconstruction has funded a number of more general arguments about the Mysteries. Luther Martin argues that the Athenian decision to annex Eleusis was economic—Athens could not feed itself, but Eleusis was an agricultural hub. The meaning of the mysteries, then, is similarly economic or, as Martin puts it, "religio-economic," because the rites reflect the dependence of Athens on the area for agricultural sustenance and likewise function as an "annual display…of autonomy and independence" by the conquered Eleusinians.[185] Martin's understanding of the mysteries is bound up in reading a single moment in the cult's history and, if he is wrong about that moment, his argument fails. It is not necessarily a foolhardy position. Its apparent strength lies in that Herodotos, Andokides, and the epigraphical evidence from the Athenian agora can all be adduced to support it. But, as it happens, the rest of the evidence for ancient Attica does not fit. Recent work suggests instead that relations between Athens and Eleusis "were as close as those between Athens and the rest of

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[184] Oliver 1935: 21-29.
[185] Martin 1987: 72.

Attica, throughout the Geometric period."[186] That evidence is catastrophic for Martin's

reading. It still, however, smoothes any fissure between Herodotos and the rest of the

evidence for ancient Attica. Instead of a battle for Eleusis, his words are construed as a

reference to a battle fought at Eleusis but between the Athenians and the Megarians.[187]

Like Vitrivius, Herodotos is writing about a time long before his own, and here the

preponderance of evidence from that earlier period suggests that his version of events

should not be taken at face value.

Work on reconstructing the history of the building phases of the Telesterion has

relied on a method of weaving a single, cohesive picture from the evidence, while at a

more general level the relationship between the various Telesteria and their predecessors

suggested a potential connection with the origins of Demeter's worship at Eleusis and

possibly in Greece. Scholars have looked to the original cult of Demeter at Eleusis for a

pure expression of the mysteries, uncluttered by generations of cultural baggage. The

entire history of the cult radiates from that pristine, beginning point. The search for the

origin of the cult has taken scholars beneath the floor of the earliest Telesterion, to the

prehistory of the site. There, excavators uncovered two buildings that predate not only

the earliest Telesterion but the entire Hellenic era. The discovery generated questions

about cultic continuity with the prehellenic era. The later of the prehistoric buildings is a

Geometric structure, either apsidal or round in form, which was built over an earlier

building, assigned to LHIII and henceforth known as Megaron B. The presence of LHIII

remains proved especially provocative because it coincided with other evidence. The

Marmor Parian assigns the arrival of Demeter in Eleusis to a comparable era, the 15th

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[186] Osborne 1994: 152.
[187] Clinton 1992: 110-113, esp. 110.

century BCE, under Erechtheus of Athens and Keleos of Eleusis. The details, especially the placement of Demeter's arrival within the reign of Keleos, correspond with the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, which dates from sometime during the 7th cent. BCE.[188] In it, Demeter requires Keleos to build her a temple (ll. 293-298) and the Marmor Parian places Keleos in the right time and place for Megaron B at Eleusis to be that building, assuming that the *Hymn* reflects an older oral tradition or cultural memory.

The presumption that Megaron B was dedicated to Demeter, which is not at all certain, still doesn't answer the question of derivation. The presence of the megaron could be an argument for a Mycenean origin, but there are a host of competing aetiologies. The earliest excavators favored a strong identification between the Demeter cult at Eleusis and Demeter cults elsewhere, making the mysteries a special case but part of the fabric of Demeter's worship throughout Greece. Against Axel Persson and others, George Mylonas disputed arguments for a Cretan origin, because, as he understood the site, the earliest Demeter temple was a megaron, which would suggest a Mycenean origin, not a Minoan one. Nilsson made the same point, though he preserved the possibility of Minoan influence via Mycenae.[189] Still, Mylonas favored Northern Greece—either Thessaly or Thrace—as the originating point for the worship of Demeter in Greece. It is a historical argument, made both from the antiquity of her sanctuaries there—especially Anthele and Pyrasos—and on the basis of textual evidence, namely Pausanias (1.38.2-3) and Apollodoros (3.15.4-5), both of whom suggest links between Eleusis and Thrace.[190]

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[188] See Suter (2002) for an extensive summary of the history of interpretation of the *Hymn*.
[189] Nilsson 1940: 403.
[190] Herodotos (7.200) and Strabo (429) suggest that Anthele was the early home of what would later become the Delphic Amphyctiony. A reference to Pyrasos in Homer (Iliad 2.695) and a connection

One of the chief strengths of the argument for Mycenean origin is architectural resonance. By contrast, the argument for Thracian origin does little to explain the architecture at Eleusis at any phase of the cult's history. An argument in favor of an Egyptian origin of the cult exploited this weakness. It proposed a link between the Telesterion—and not Megaron B—and Egyptian architectural forms.[191] The argument predates the discovery of Megaron B and, as a result, presupposes a later date of origin for the mysteries. It is important, however, insofar as the Telesterion is a genuinely unusual architectural form and does bear some resemblance to hypostyle halls known in Egypt and Persia. A small body of evidence from Eleusis was adduced to support the supposition of Egyptian origin. Both a ram's head from the porch of Philon and the so-called Isis grave—named for the Egyptian scarabs and faience Isis discovered there— were construed as evidence of broader Egyptian influence.[192] Textual evidence provided further justification: Herodotos recounts an ancient tradition that the mysteries were derived from Egyptian sources (*Hist.* 2.123). Herodotos essentially equates Demeter and Isis and Diodorus Siculus (1.29) also suggests an Egyptian origin by making Erechtheus both an Egyptian and the originator of the mysteries.[193] These ragtag data were used to shore up the more basic assumption that the concept of immortality was essentially Egyptian and, simultaneously, that immortality was integral to the mysteries.[194] The argument proved less than compelling and, ultimately, archaeological evidence of a

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between the site and the Pelasgians in Kallimachos (Hymn to Demeter 5.25) suggest the antiquity of the site. Cf. Mylonas 1961: 20-22.

[191] Richardson 1898: 228.

[192] Philios (1883: 60-63) published the ram's head. Young (1939: 234-236) catalogs the content of the grave, which he dates to the 20th dynasty. Skias (1912: 1-39) published some of the early finds from the Necropolis at Eleusis, but it is Mylonas's work that really covers it.

[193] In his typical fashion, this is not the only aetiology of the mysteries proposed by Diodorus Siculus.

[194] Richardson 1898: 223-232, esp. 230-231.

prehellenic history of the cult was its undoing.[195] That data pushed the era of origins

back beyond the reach of most of the so-called Egyptian evidence.

The idea of Egyptian origin never took root among serious scholars.[196] Arguments

for a Cretan origin did. Those who favored Cretan derivation also linked the architecture

of the Telesterion to Cretan forms, this time to the theatral areas of the Minoan palaces.[197]

The palaces at Knossos and Phaistos and the village of Gournia each contain an open air

space, which was bounded by steps and may have housed some public ceremonial,

although the term "theatral area" is a concession to the uncertainty of their use. The

Homeric Hymn to Demeter substantiates the argument: when asked, Demeter reports that

she has come from Crete (ll. 123-124).[198] Demeter could also be linked to the Great

Mother.[199]

All arguments for the derivation of the cult from prehellenic sources posit some

kind of continuity between Megaron B and the later phases of the cult. And yet, from the

beginning, the excavators had reason to question even the cultic nature of Megaron B,

given that no cultic objects discovered there. Aside from its identification with the

Mycenean megaron, there was no archaeological evidence to suggest cultic use, which

led Kourouniotes, who cleared the area, to conclude broadly against continuity.[200] In spite

of his conclusion, the architectural form of Megaron B was enough to suggest cultic use

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[195] Picard (1927:321-330) argued against Foucart's view, citing a lack of physical evidence and reliance on Herodotos, even before the discovery of Megaron B.
[196] Foucart (1914 19-23; 40-46; and esp. 84-89) made the most robust scholarly argument in favor of Egyptian origin. Lefkowitz (1996: 120) notes that the idea of an Egyptian derivation for the mysteries has an afterlife as part of Masonic mythology if not in conventional scholarship.
[197] Anti 1947: 413.
[198] Persson 1922: 285-309. The conclusions of his article are reprised in English in Persson 1942: 148-150. Against Persson and others who support Cretan or Minoan origin, Mylonas (1961: 16-19) argues that the worship of Demeter in Greece cannot plausibly be derived from Crete.
[199] Holland 1928: 59-92; Cf. Foucart: 248-251; Nilsson 1998 [1940]: 400-411.
[200] Kourouniotes 1933-1935: 54-114.

and the implicit continuity suggested by such a long series of buildings on a single site

proved too tempting for most. Later work on the anaktoron unwittingly buttressed the

argument because it demonstrated that the position of the anaktoron was relatively

constant, despite vastly different configurations of successive Telesteria and, moreover,

that it occupied roughly the same space as the two prehistoric structures.[201] Eventually, a

new consensus was forged in favor of a cultic use for Megaron B, but strongly against the

argument for continuity with any of the later phases.[202]

Megaron B is no longer pursued as the key to the cult's origins and arguments for

specific historical derivation are also out of fashion. The centrality of the *Homeric Hymn*

to Demeter, on the other hand, persists. It is construed as the foundational telling of the

mythos of the cult, making it a continued focal point in the search for a pure, original

expression of Eleusinian religion.[203] Mylonas regarded the *Hymn* as "guide to the

intricate life of the Sanctuary" and its details have been and continue to be held up as

evidence.[204]

As the foundational telling of the cult myth, the *Hymn* it is also sometimes taken

as a clue to the substance of the mysteries, which raises certain questions. Ordinary

Greek worship requires an altar if not a canonical temple, and scholars have struggled to

identify any such structure at Eleusis, with some insisting that there must have been a

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[201] Travlos 1951: 1-16.

[202] Cosmopolous 1997: 1-24.

[203] Clinton (1986: 43-49) has argued against the close association between the *Hymn* and site, especially in terms of treating it as an aetiology of the mysteries. Suter (2002) follows Clinton, though most other scholars remain unconvinced. Parker (1991: 1-17), in particular, argued vigorously against Clinton's thesis. Clinton (1992: 30-34) responded by attenuating his argument somewhat, though he persists in the opinion that the relationship between the *Hymn* and the mysteries is much looser than is usually assumed and that the Demophoön episode, in particular, should be associated with the Thesmophoria. Despite Clinton's best efforts, the consensus opinion is that the evidence is insufficient to divorce the *Hymn* from the cult (cf. Shelmerdine 1995: 31).

[204] Mylonas 1961: 14. When Megaron B was discovered, it sparked immediate interest in the palace of Keleos, as discussed above, which is also mentioned in the text (cf. Mylonas 1936: 414-415).

temple of Demeter in addition to the Telesterion. Blavette was the first to note in print that Strabo's distinction between the sanctuary (ἱερόν)—which he took to be a temple— and the site of the mysteries (μυστικὸς σηκός) must imply the existence of a discrete temple of Demeter in addition to the Telesterion.[205] Philios, disputed the relevance of Strabo's distinction to the finds, arguing instead that the Telesterion was the only building dedicated to Demeter and Kore within the peribolos and that Strabo had in mind the entire enclosure when he spoke of the *hieron*.[206] Blavette also put forward a suggestion identifying a potential site for the proposed temple of Demeter under the Panaghitsa on the Eleusinian acropolis—the temple known as L10—but that building was quickly assigned to the Roman period, making the identification implausible. A more feasible suggestion was put forward by Rubensohn, who suggested Temple F—a small temple on the rock cut terrace immediately north of the Telesterion—which he dated to the same era as the Peisistratean Telesterion.[207] Philios never wavered in his opinion that the Telesterion doubled as both initiation hall and temple of Demeter and that there were no other temples to any other Eleusinian deities within the enclosure.[208] He was engaged in print by Svornos, who identified the temple of Demeter with the term anaktoron, and argued that the goddesses shared a temple but that each had her own altar, which he located near the stepped podium between the Ploutonion and the Telesterion.[209] Eventually, Noack revised Rubensohn's hypothesis, suggesting that the earliest temple of Demeter stood on the site of the Panaghitsa and that the Peisistratean Temple F

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[205] Blavette 1884: 256.
[206] Philios 1883: 194 fig. 5.
[207] Rubensohn 1892: 44.
[208] Philios 1904: 11-24; Svornos 1905: 131-160.
[209] Svornos 1901: 169-191. The term anaktoron was known primarily from epigraphic evidence and not satisfactorily interpreted until Travlos (1951: 1-16) identified it with an enclosure inside the Telesterion.

eventually replaced it.[210] Noack's book just preceded the important archaeological work

of the 1930's under Kourouniotes. Kourouniotes and Travlos expended a great deal of

energy in their report proving that there was no earlier temple beneath the existing

Roman era structure known as Temple F. As for the Panaghitsa, Kourouniotes and

Travlos further argued that no monumental structure of any date could have stood there,

in part because they presumed there must have been a wall there of the Mycenaean era,

leaving insufficient room for a monumental structure. They concluded that Philios had

been correct all along: there was no temple to Demeter within the closure at Eleusis

except for the Telesterion.[211] Regarding Temples F and L10, their view—and the current

consensus—is that they were Roman innovations and did not replace older structures.[212]

Roman innovation, we are left to presume, has no bearing on the discussion.

Whatever configuration of temples the sanctuary had, it had them in its original form and

it retained that configuration throughout its life. The discussion reiterates, in concrete

terms, the presumption of an original version of the cult that can be used to understand

evidence from every successive age.   Here we return to the brittle explanations

engendered by a strong presumption of coherence among the data. The quest for origins

creates the same problem. The assumption of coherence presumes cogency among data

from a single era. But the search for an original form operates as though the cult

presented a single face, across every age and, moreover, that the original, pristine face is

the template by which all others can and should be reconstructed.

The study of the Roman phase of the cult and sanctuary suffered the most. The

finds have often been dismissed as too late to be relevant to the most pressing question—

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[210] Noack 1927: 85-88.
[211] Kourouniotes and Travlos 1933: 54-114.
[212] Mylonas 1961: 177.

the question of origins. The textual sources have been collapsed into the morass of Eleusinian data, without attention to the perspective of the authors. Strabo's distinction between the *hieron* and *mustikos sekos*, for example, is construed as a reference to the entire sanctuary and the Telesterion respectively in order to avoid any implication that there was a temple to Demeter other than the Telesterion itself *in any period*. The presumption is that Strabo, though writing during the Roman era—long after the apparent period of origins for the cult—is discussing the selfsame configuration of space as every other author writing about the sanctuary. From the very evidence uncovered by the excavators themselves, he patently was not. Roman benefactors contributed a number of buildings at Eleusis—not least among them temples F and L10, which are unattributed but stand within the peribolos of the sanctuary. They suggest, if nothing else, that the divisions of sacred space were not imagined in the same way during every period.

To draw the discussion back to palimpsest, there is a tension between the sanctuary as an evolving space—a reality that is clearly conveyed by the evidence—and a method that approaches contradiction as a tension to be resolved. The basic questions and units of discourse were produced by attention to inconsistencies and contradictions in the evidence and by the attempt to form a cohesive picture of the puzzle. Approached this way, the sanctuary demands a single explanation, which is fundamentally at odds with the idea of sanctuary as palimpsest. In this case, the questions and concerns as well as the methodology that accompanied excavation obscures rather than clarifies the way in which the cult itself evolved over time, inscribed and reinscribed by many hands, each with their own goals in mind.

The Excavation of the North Gate

To this point, I have tried to make clear how the excavation of the sanctuary was guided by certain questions and methodological presumptions, using the Telesterion's excavation to illustrate. The finds themselves prompted certain questions and yet, it is also clearly the case that some of what was pursued at Eleusis might have been abandoned in favor of expending energy in another direction. Or, as the foregoing example demonstrates, some finds—like the Roman remains on the acropolis of Eleusis—simply didn't prompt any pressing questions and were therefore not pursued.

The north gate comprises a number of discrete buildings, chief among them the Greater and Lesser Propylaia, each a monumental gateway into the sanctuary (A and B in Fig. 6). They are the most significant buildings in the area of the north gate and thus the subject of the most sustained attention. They were complemented by certain further improvements. The area in front of the Greater Propylaia was paved during the Roman period and flanked by a fountain house, a stoa, and an altar and temple dedicated to Artemis Propylaia and Poseidon. The area of the north gate was improved extensively over time. Several of the structures were pure Roman innovation, and others only entail two building phases, which simplified excavation a great deal. Overall, discussion has centered on cataloging the evidence and attributing each project definitely to a donor, especially as touches the Greater and Lesser Propylaia.[213] The approach is characteristic of the history of investigation, in that it focuses on the personal patronage of individuals, making the individual motives of those patrons the primary point of interest.

Interpreting the Greater and Lesser Propylaia began with the Society of the

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[213] Clinton (1989b: 1499-1539) surveys Roman patronage at Eleusis chronologically by name and includes information as to whether a given patrons was an initiate, the donor of a statue, or responsible for a building project.

Dilletanti, who first cleared them. The task was fairly uncomplicated, both because of the relatively small size of each structure and because each replaced a single structure and was never subject to major renovation. Further, the Dilletanti were able to access the remains because both areas were free from modern houses or other structures, which is precisely the reason they didn't access the Telesterion, which was buried beneath houses and even a church. In fact, they didn't even know the Telesterion was there. As many early travelers had done, they assumed that the Lesser Propylaia was a temple of Demeter.[214] James Christie developed the ingenious and surely incorrect argument that the mysteries were a shadow play conducted in the Lesser Propylaia. His underlying assumption was that the Lesser Propylaia was, in fact, the site of the mysteries and not a gate building. The rest of his argument was extrapolated equally from art historical evidence, the unusual grooves in the floor of the Lesser Propylaia, and a comparison with Chinese shadow theater.[215] The mistake—taking the Lesser Propylaia for a temple—is understandable given the decorative features of the building and the fact that it is the first building beyond an obvious monumental gate. If they had descended beneath the Roman level, on the other hand, they would have discovered an earlier pylon beneath each gate, which might have redressed the faulty assumption that the Lesser Propylaia were a temple of Demeter.

After Greek independence, a new era of excavation began, but it was focused on the Telesterion, and there was little in the way of investigation of either the Lesser or the Greater Propylaia. After the Telesterion was cleared by the Dilletanti, no further detailed examination of the Lesser Propyalaia was undertaken until Hörmann's study in the

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[214] Wheler 1682; Chandler 1776.
[215] Christie 1825.

1920s—which is incidentally the period of time during which new excavation stopped

and former excavations were reexamined for lack of funds.[216] Hörmann's discussion of

the Lesser Propylaia focuses on the mechanics of reconstructing the building. Much of

the superstructure survives and Hörmann's detailed study of the Lesser Propyalaia

remains the most comprehensive description to date. Dinsmoor proposed two

modifications: the position of the ionic column capitals along the lateral wall and the

position of the karyatids with respect to the Corinthian columns (Fig. 8). [217] Beyond

Dinsmoor's modifications, however, very little further interpretation of the Lesser

Propylaia has surfaced. The exception is art historical study of the structure's decorative

elements. The Lesser Propylaia were an unusual structure, just on the cusp between

Greek and Roman art, and it has been used to illustrate the process of Romanization.[218]

The investigation of the Greater Propylaia followed a similar path. It was also cleared

and documented by the Society of the Dilletanti, who noted its similarity to the Propylaia

of Mnesikles on the Athenian acropolis. Lenormant noted the same resonance, which

was later the subject of discussion by Dinsmoor.[219] Philios later reviewed the work

completed by the Dilletanti but didn't modify their conclusions.[220] Nothing substantial

was written about the architecture of the building itself until the late 1980s, although

there was some discussion in the meantime of a late Roman fortification of the

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[216] Hörmann 1932. During the same period, the courtyard surrounding the Greater Propylaia and its
contents were reinvestigated. Orlandos surveyed the courtyard and its monumental arches—he was first to
associate with the Arch of Hadrian in Athens, therefore dating them to sometimes after 129 CE—and the
fountain house, in addition to the small temple dedicated to Artemis Propylaia and Poseidon. On the
arches: Orlandos 1932: 222; on the fountain house: Orlandos 1916: 101; his full reconstruction of the
temple of Artemis Propylaia and Poseidon appeared in Orlandos 1932: 209-223.
[217] Hörmann 1927: 81-84; Dinsmoor 1950: 286. Dinsmoor's view is favored by Mylonas (1961: 162-165)
[218] See, for example, Palagia (1997: 81-95) who argues that it represents a poor Roman approximation of
the Greek aesthetic, a kind of dead letter that lacks the lively and playful spirit of Greek art. The Greater
Propylaia have been subject to the same critique (Richardson 1900: 470).
[219] Lenormant 1862: 46-48. Dinsmoor 1910.
[220] Philios 1889: 51-52.

building.[221]

Both structures have been the subject of significant discussion regarding dating and patronage. Dating the Lesser Propylaia was a relatively simple process, given the intact inscription (CIL² 775), but assigning a patron has proved more difficult. Reconstruction efforts have been complemented by attempts to date and assign both gates. The attribution of the Lesser Propylaia to Appius Claudius Pulcher and his nephews is clear enough from the inscription. The project is likewise mentioned by Cicero (*Epist. Ad Atticum*, 6.1.26; 6.6.2). Cicero erected his own propylon in Athens and seems to have been in competition with Appius as both projects moved toward completion. Combined with dates for the consulship of Appius, the information further clarifies the date, though it cannot be assigned exactly.[222] As to the Greater Propylaia, Lenormant dated the structure to era of the Antonines, an observation that has persisted, but nothing more specific has emerged, owing to the fragmentation of the inscription.[223] The text mentions Marcus Aurelius but his name doesn't appear until the second line, implying that he may not have been solely responsible for erecting the structure.[224]

In the absence of a complete inscription, the pedimental portrait takes on greater significance. If identified, it could reveal the patron more exactly. The earliest interpreters favored Antoninus Pius for the assignment of the bust (Fig. 2).[225] Later, Deubner argued that the bust should be interpreted as Marcus Aurelius on the basis of the

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[221] Kourouniotes 1934-1935: 2; Travlos 1954: 70; cf. Mylonas 1961: 161. The conversation is related to the end of the mysteries and the destruction of the sanctuary, which is attested in literary sources (Zosimos 1.29; and Zonaras 12.23). Giraud's (1989) study is the most minute and detailed architectural study to date. The text is in modern Greek but includes an English summary (69-75).

[222] Clinton 1989b: 56-68.

[223] Lenormant 1862: 46-48.

[224] Dinsmoor (1910: 153-155) was the first to note and interpret the placement of Marcus Aurelius's name in the second line of the inscription.

[225] Cf. Philios 1906 (guide): 59; Orlandos 1932: 223; Kouruoniotes 1932: 31, 34.

shoulder strap, which he links to a bust of Marcus Aurelius at Marathon.[226] His opinion

is the current consensus, but not for the same reasons. Fittschen reached the same

conclusion on the basis of quite distinct evidence. Though the face is in poor condition

and the features difficult to make out, the hair is distinguishable. The coiffure is highly

stylized, suggesting to Fittschen that it belongs to the late portrait type of Marcus

Aurelius.[227] The association between Marcus Aurelius and the renovation of the

Telesterion (Scholion to Aristides, *Panathenaic* 183.3) makes the case even more

compelling. And yet, the presence of a second portrait on the inner pediment strongly

suggests the influence of at least one other emperor.[228] Giraud concurs in the

identification of the bust with Marcus Aurelius but he also argues from the leaves

surrounding the image that it is funerary and therefore probably posthumous. He

concludes that the building was partially erected under Marcus Aurelius but ultimately

completed and dedicated by his successor, Commodus.[229] Definitive identification of the

pedimental sculpture might clarify matters, as would possession of the entire inscription.

   In the absence of more complete evidence, the attribution is necessarily

provisional. The situation further is complicated considerably by evidence of Hadrian's

influence. His interest in Eleusis is well-established by other evidence, including the

triumphal arches flanking the Greater Propylaia (Fig. 3). The dedication of the arches by

the Panhellenes buttresses the case, given that they were the leaders of the Panhellenion,

which was a league of cities founded under the emperor Hadrian. Those details suggest

Hadrian's potential influence. As a result, Clinton concludes that the Greater Propylaia

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[226] Deubner 1937: 73-81.
[227] Fittschen 1989: 76.
[228] Giraud 1989: 75.
[229] Giraud 1989: 74-75; Cf. Clinton 1989a: 65-66.

were originally a Hadrianic project, which is why they were eventually accompanied by the arches, but that they were completed by Marcus Aurelius, who therefore appears in the inscription and the pedimental sculpture.[230] The sense of ambiguity is heightened by the many inscribed statue bases in the vicinity of the arches, which bear dedications from the Antonine emperors and their families—including deified Antonines—suggesting robust Antonine influence.[231] The height of the statuary, however, also suggests the significance of Hadrian. He was apparently honored by a statue on top of one of the arches by a dedication to Hadrian Panhellenius, surrounded by statues of the Antonines.[232]

In sum, the question of patronage has dominated discussion of both the Lesser and Greater Propylaia as the most significant. Work on the north gate implicitly acknowledged the sense in which Roman building around the north gate was innovative, overwriting a space that was formerly Greek, and yet very little is made of that point because Roman innovations were not of immediate interest in the overall intellectual landscape of Eleusis. As a result, the area has been the subject of less intense scrutiny than other parts of the sanctuary, among them the Telesterion, even if the very emphasis on attribution invokes the dynamics of Roman power at Eleusis.

Palimpsest as Process and Power at Eleusis

Palimpsest draws an analogy between manuscript studies and the analysis of archaeological or cultural texts. In postcolonial studies, the analogy is between parchment and cultural texts. In archaeology, the concept refers to the archaeological site

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[230] Clinton 1989b: 1527.
[231] Clinton 1989a: 56-58.
[232] Clinton 1989b: 1533.

itself as a kind of overwritten text. In postcolonial studies, the colonizer overwrites an existing text, leaving traces of pre-colonial inscriptions. The resulting text is necessarily a text in transition, which emphasizes the diachronic aspect of cultural interaction. At any given point, both colonizer and colonized are embedded in process of interaction that entails evolution over time. The same could be said of archaeological palimpsests. Questions of change over time and the problem of assigning material to individual episodes in the history of a site are central to the archaeological idea of palimpsest. The postcolonial trope of palimpsest balances attention to the reciprocity of the relationship with and awareness of the asymmetry of power between the dominant and subordinate partner in the interaction. In archaeology, palimpsest is a neutral description of the character of archaeological finds.

Taken together, these two perspectives on palimpsest offer a compelling approach to the politics of space. The site is not a puzzle to be solved, as suggested by the investigation of the Telesterion. Instead, it is like a manuscript waiting to be read in terms of a process of erasure and resinscription in competing and contradictory hands. Palimpsest also offers something more: a sense in which erasure and reinscription are part of the dynamics of domination and resistance. Within that framework, palimpsest suggests two principles. First, any "text," real or metaphorical, is a process, produced historically and in a constant state of revision. And second, the revision of a "text" must be read in terms of the dynamics of power in which it is embedded—even where revision is subtle. Read in those terms, each phase of the sanctuary's history is a chapter in a story of the evolution of the religious identity of the people who worshipped at Eleusis. And that evolution terminated with Rome, a phase that entailed a final revision of the

sanctuary as palimpsest, and one that deserves to be considered individually and in light of the asymmetry of power between Greece and Rome.

These ideas will govern my analysis of the sanctuary in the next chapter. The chapter is focused on the Telesterion and the north gate as major points of Roman interest. The goal is to interpret the Roman configuration of each as one point in a timeline, reading their significance in terms of what preceded and followed that moment in the history of the space. Reading the space across time produces an understanding of the sanctuary that can be best interpreted by appealing to the asymmetry of power implicit in palimpsest.

Chapter Four—Ambivalence and Hybridity in the Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis

Introduction

In the last chapter, I argued that the archaeological site of Eleusis was a palimpsest of meanings. New meanings were accrued to the space through a process of excavation that was influenced by a number of factors. The excavation was shaped by the interests of the excavators as well as economic and political factors. The process was embedded in a history. This chapter will demonstrate that the sanctuary itself was also a palimpsest of meanings. Like the archaeological site, new layers were added to the space and thus new meanings were accrued. And like the process of excavation, the processes of modification and renovation that changed the sanctuary over time took place according to the specific interests and motivations of historical individuals, who were influenced by historical realities. A palimpsest of meanings can be shaped by politically interested forces, as in the postcolonial use of the term palimpsest. This chapter will also demonstrate that the changes made to the sanctuary at Eleusis reflect the imbalance of power between Greece and Rome. Roman renovation of the sanctuary expresses the same ambivalence and hybridity that were visible in Roman texts.

The first half of the chapter will establish that the sanctuary was a palimpsest of meanings by providing a detailed history of two areas, the Telesterion and the north gate. These were two areas of significant Roman interest during the 2nd century CE. The major centers of Roman building present a contradictory impression of Roman building at the site. The second half of the chapter will address this contradiction. The contradiction between Roman building at the north gate and the Roman renovation of the Telesterion expresses the same ambivalence apparent in Roman texts. And the eclectic nature of

Roman building at the north gate reveals an emerging cultural hybridity at Eleusis.

The Sanctuary as Palimpsest

The history of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore is emblematic of the relationship between Greece and Rome. During the Archaic period, the first sanctuary was erected on a site of importance in the prehellenic world—a Mycenaean village of some significant size, which included a megaron nestled against the hillside. As a Greek site, it was one of the demes of Athens and the home of the Eleusinian mysteries, which were celebrated in Demeter's honor each autumn. As the site of the mysteries, Eleusis was a major pilgrimage site. The sanctuary of Demeter was the terminus of a procession that began in Athens and the festival itself drew initiates from across the Mediterranean. Thus, though closely tied to the agricultural cycle, it was also a key part of Athenian civic life. Eleusis was one of the most important religious sites in all of Greece and its mysteries only equaled by the Samothracian mysteries in fame. The Romans eventually took a keen interest in Eleusis because of the fame of the mysteries. Consuls traveling to and from posts in the east were often initiated there, but it wasn't until Hadrian became emperor that Eleusis truly became a major Roman site.[233] Its transformation from Greek to Roman sanctuary took place over a number of years, and the changes were often subtle. There is no question, on the other hand, that there was a change, from the Greek sanctuary of old to a Roman site, filled with Roman monuments and points of reference. As with the rest of Greece, something that had long existed was incorporated into the new Roman order. The result was necessarily a transformation, which is the sense in which

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[233] For a survey of all known Roman initiates, see Clinton 1989b: 1499-1539.

the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis is emblematic, though not perfectly representative, of what took place all over Greece under the aegis of Rome.

There is a marked difference in character between Roman building at Eleusis during the Republican era and building projects undertaken during the Imperial era. Interest in Eleusis during the Republican period was sporadic and limited to officials making their way to and from posts in the east, but it is nonetheless apparent.[234] Imperial interest was concentrated during the second century CE, but it dates from the time of Augustus. Augustus was initiated but he was not responsible for any major building projects. Increased population and the popularity of the cult during the second century generated the need for housing and services, like the large bath complex near the north entrance to the sanctuary, and Roman patronage of Eleusis increased significantly as a result. Among the buildings donated at Eleusis, however, the area of the north gate— especially the Greater Propylaia and its courtyard—and the Telesterion are the most significant. The renovation of the Telesterion was necessary—the building had been damaged by war—but it was also an opportunity for a Roman patron to reimagine the center of cult activity. The structures erected at the north gate are the best preserved examples of Roman monumental architecture at the site, and they suggest an overt Roman influence, which makes the area a useful counterpoint to the renovation of the Telesterion.

This section will approach each area as a palimpsest by describing the history of successive building phases as reconstructed by archaeologists. In both areas, the configuration of space changed with each successive building phase, culminating with a Roman capstone. Each area tells a distinct story, on the other hand. The Telesterion has

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[234] Clinton 1989b: 1503-1504.

a long and complex history, but the final phase of the building relies heavily on Greek precedent. The Greater Propylaia, on the other hand, was a Roman innovation. Where the north gate had been primarily functional and defensible, the Greater Propylaia was impressive for its monumentality, not its defensibility.

The Roman Telesterion

Reconstructing the Telesterion's history was a chief aim of archaeological inquiry at Eleusis, and it proved a difficult task. The presence of architectural members and foundation work belonging to abandoned building projects exacerbated the difficulties while textual sources posed even more significant challenges. Ancient references to the sanctuary's configuration and history conflict with one another and, at times, conflict with the material remains. A simple assumption—that the evidence adds up to a single, cohesive narrative—guided the inquiry, and yet as the (often contradictory) data accrued, it became more and more difficult to discern that narrative. To make matters worse, the final excavation of the area of the Telesterion revealed two prehistoric buildings, which raised significant questions about the history of the site and the cult. The finds prompted a search for the original form of the cult, an impulse that should be interpreted alongside the assumption of cohesion across the data. As a result, the discussion has neglected individual phases of the cult and sanctuary except where they serve the purpose of the larger narrative.

Put another way, the history of the Telesterion was difficult to reconstruct and remains difficult to interpret because it is a palimpsest (Fig. 7). Scholarly consensus upholds the following reconstruction of the Telesterion's history. The first Telesterion is usually associated with Solon and dates from the early archaic period. Its remains are so

scanty that there is no possibility for reliable reconstruction or dating and there is very little that can be said about the structure itself.[235] The next Telesterion is much better preserved and was erected about a century later, during the middle of the 6th century BCE. The structure is conventionally attributed to Peisistratos and was roughly square, measuring 25.30 m by 27.10 m. The roof was supported by a series of twenty-two columns and the design included tiers of seats along each wall, interrupted by the anaktoron in the southwestern corner.[236] It was apparently pulled down to make way for a larger Telesterion during the 5th century BCE, which accounts for the preservation of many of its architectural members. The planned replacement was destroyed during construction, presumably by the Persians c. 480 BCE.[237] Certain aspects of the design were retained by the architects of later Telesteria: the tiers of seats on all four walls, the expanse of regular columns supporting the ceiling, and the existence of the anaktoron, as an enclosure. The size and shape of the building and the position of the anaktoron changed, on the other hand. The Telesterion associated with Kimon was significantly longer than its predecessor, measuring nearly 50 m, while still only about 27 m wide. The anaktoron shifted from its location in the southwestern corner to a centered position on the western wall.[238] After its destruction by the Persians, the site stood in disrepair for a generation until a new Telesterion was undertaken by Perikles. Under his program of renewal, plans were conceived and foundations laid for a completely reimagined Telesterion, designed by the architect Iktinos—best known as the architect of the Parthenon on the Athenian acropolis and the Hephestaion in the Athenian agora. But the

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[235] Sourvinou-Inwood 2003: 25-49.
[236] Mylonas 1961: 78-83.
[237] Shear 1982: 128-140.
[238] Mylonas 1961: 112.

project was quickly abandoned—perhaps when the Periklean party fell out of favor—and a more modest design was erected in its place, completed sometime late in the 5th century BCE. The completed structure was significantly larger than its predecessors and almost square, measuring 51.20 m. by 51.55 m. The Roman Telesterion was nearly an exact copy of its predecessor. Renovated under Marcus Aurelius, the final Telesterion was expanded it by 2.15 m. to the west, bringing the east west dimension to 53.7 m. The building was nearly square in both its Periklean and Roman configurations, and in both it was supported by 42 interior columns in six rows of seven columns each. The enclosed anaktoron now stood at the center, rather than along the wall, and measured 14.20 m. by 5.60 m. Both designs included eight tiers of steps along the walls, ranging in size from .60 m. to .72m., making them suitable for use as seating. At the height of the cult, the Telesterion was a large enclosure—capable of accommodating some 3,000 initiates.[239]

In sum, although the Telesterion went through a series of successive building phases, its defining characteristics were a square or rectangular form, a roofing system supported by regularly arranged interior columns, tiers of seats along each wall, and an enclosed anaktoron. Thus, there were some changes in configuration between the archaic phases of the cult and the classical period, but they took place in the context of a more general conservatism. The orientation of the building changed between the archaic Telesteria and their successors. The size of the building changed, which required additional columns to support the roof. The anaktoron shifted from its position along the wall to the center of the structure, as part of the increasingly size of the building. Finally,

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[239] Mylonas 1961: 117-120.. On the basically conservative design of the Telesterion, even through its successive phases, see Winter 2006: 135. For an architectural description of the Periklean building, see Dinsmoor 1950: 194-196. I refer in this section to the Periklean design and the Roman renovation that approximated it and not to any other phase of the building.

the addition of the stoa along the front of the structure in the 4th century BCE represented perhaps the most obvious design innovation. And yet, for those changes, the overall history of the Telesterion is characterized by the repetition of elements. Every revision entailed an enclosed rather than colonnaded space, with a roof supported by a system of interior columns. The tiers of seats along the walls remained unchanged. The position of the anaktoron shifted, but the presence of an anaktoron was a constant. Thus, across successive versions of the building, these elements were repeated, whatever other design changes were made.

The North Gate of the Sanctuary

In some ways, the building projects undertaken in the vicinity of the north gate differed significantly from the renovation of the Telesterion (Fig. 6). Where Roman benefactors rebuilt the Telesterion because it was destroyed by war, they completed building projects in the vicinity of the north gate for other purposes, transforming the area from a functional gateway into a monumental space, fraught with reminders of Roman domination and innovation. As a result, the reconstruction of the history of the north gate was far simpler than the history of the Telesterion. Many of the structures in the vicinity of the north gate were unprecedented, meaning there are no successive building phases that must be surveyed. The overall effect was innovative, where the effect on Telesterion was conservative.

The sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis was primarily approached through the north gate, where initiates were admitted through a propylon. Originally the propylon was a fortified structure but during the Roman period, a pair of monumental gateways replaced the older structures, giving the sanctuary a grander though less immediately

defensible façade. These gate buildings are known to scholars as the Lesser Propylaia

and the Greater Propylaia respectively. Initiates passed through the Greater Propylaia

first and then the Lesser Propylaia on the way into the sanctuary. The Greater Propylaia

was later complemented by a large paved courtyard, which was built over an open area

that was already apparently used as a kind of staging area for the mysteries and included

a number of structures, for instance the shrine of Dolichos.[240]

The erection of the Lesser Propylaia was the first major step toward those

innovations. It was the earliest Roman building at Eleusis and the only building that can

be reliably dated to the Republican period. Though once taken for a temple, full

reconstruction revealed that the building was actually a gate. The building included

niches, perhaps for statues and lateral doorways, giving it three openings. On approach,

the large doors were flanked by walls that created a courtyard of sorts. The movement of

the doors was facilitated by grooves in the pavement. Another set of grooves provided

drainage. The central doorway was sheltered by a small portico and on their interior side

a similar portico was supported by a pair of colossal karyatids (Fig. 8). The central

doorway measured 2.95 m. and was flanked on the approach by a pair of Corinthian

columns with unusual and highly decorative capitals, depicting lions and griffons in

relief. The inner façade was sheltered by a distyle porch supported by a pair of colossal

Karyatids. The kiste have some important decorative elements: wheat and poppies, but

also a lidded kernos. Each maiden wears a chiton with a Gorgon. The building's

inscription is likewise decorative, ornamented by kiste, sheaves of wheat, bukrania and

poppies. It identifies Appius Claudis Pulcher as the donor and gives the date 54 BCE,

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[240] The shrine is partially covered by modern houses and not fully excavated. Travlos 1949: 143. Cf Mylonas 1961: 170.

which is plausibly the date of donation, not the date the structure was completed. The inscription also names Appius's nephews, who apparently completed and dedicated the building after their uncle's death.[241]

The Lesser Propylaia was built on the site of an earlier pylon, dating from the Peisistratean period and fortified by a guard tower (H18). The structure known as the Greater Propylaia was likewise built over an earlier pylon, which was possibly concurrent with the attempted renovation of the Telesterion associated with Kimon and therefore dated to the second quarter of the fifth century BCE. In both cases, the original structure was a fortified entrance, which makes the shift to a monumental gateway notable. The former entrance was constructed to be defensible. The new gate buildings were primarily ornamental and could not be easily defended.

The construction of the Greater Propylaia thus transformed a fortified entrance to the city into a monumental gateway (Fig. 4). The structure resembled a colonnaded temple. Initiates passed through a façade comprising six Doric columns each 1.558 m. in diameter and 8.8075 m. in height, through the building, and through an identical façade on the other side. The building was a copy of the central section of the Propylaia of Mnesicles on the Athenian Acropolis. Just as in the Athenian propylaia, the exterior columns are Doric while the interior columns are Ionic. Inside the building two rows of three Ionic columns supported the roof. In fact, the building comprises two porticoes. The outer portico is 15.24 m. and terminates in a curtain wall, punctuated by five

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[241] In addition to some question about the date, the building has a number of odd and difficult to interpret features. Curved grooves in the floor of the building apparently facilitated the movement of the doors but the use of a second pair of straight ruts is more opaque. The ruts are approximately 1.40 m. apart and 2.90 m. long and were originally construed as evidence of carriages or other wheeled vehicles but a more reasoned view suggests that they channeled rain water, so as to prevent it from building up beyond the doors (Mylonas 1961: 156-160).

doorways. Beyond the wall, the inner portico extends another 7.36 m. By contrast with the highly decorative Lesser Propylaia, the architrave of the Greater Propylaia was relatively plain. Above the entablature, there was an enormous pedimental sculpture, an *imago clipeata* of an emperor, variously identified as Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, or Marcus Aurelius, though current consensus favors Marcus Aurelius (Fig. 2).[242] A second shield, missing its portrait, has been assigned to the interior pediment, though no identification can be made, as the shield and not the portrait survives. The building inscription is very fragmentary but it does identify Marcus Aurelius with the structure. Based on the fragmented evidence, the building is usually dated to sometime during the later 2nd century CE.[243]

The courtyard in front of the Greater Propylaia was not a Roman innovation per se. There was an existing space where initiates could gather in front of the entrance to the sanctuary. The Roman innovation was paving the space. The courtyard was likely paved at or around the same time the Greater Propylaia was constructed. It is irregularly shaped, approximately 65 m. across and, from the center of the Greater Propylaia to its northeastern limit, 40 m. wide.

The courtyard itself was not aligned exactly with the front of the Greater Propylaia. Instead, the paving stones are angled to align with two other structures: the fountain house and the temple of Artemis Propylaia and Poseidon, which are positioned opposite one another. The fountain house faces northwest and measures 11.30 m. and comprises a tank, eight circular troughs, and a drain. The temple faces the fountain house, oriented to the southeast. It was a small, Doric structure, 16.03 m. long and 10.10

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[242] Fittschen 1989.
[243] Clinton 1989b.

m. wide and comprises two porticoes. Four steps lead to the stylobate and the façade consists of four, monolithic columns, each 4.53 m. in height. The structure was a pure innovation, of uncertain significance.[244] Thus, although paving the courtyard was not so much innovation as a massive improvement, many of the structures that occupied it were unprecedented. They represent genuine innovation in the context of an already well-defined space.

Finally, the courtyard was bounded to the southwest and the southeast by a pair of triumphal arches. On the southwest, the arch is attached to the fountain house that stood at the edge of the courtyard. The arches marked the road in each direction leading away from the courtyard. The arches are copies of the arch of Hadrian in Athens and they were nearly identical to Hadrian's arch in design (Fig. 3). The arch of Hadrian in Athens is light and delicate compared to many Roman arches. It also bore an intriguing inscription. On the western face of the arch of Hadrian in Athens reads "this is Athens, the former city of Theseus"; the eastern face expresses another sentiment: "this is the city of Hadrian, not of Theseus" (IG II² 5185).[245] The arch is related spatially to both the tenemos of the temple of Olympian Zeus on one hand and an ancient road leading up to the acropolis on the other.[246] In fact, viewed from the east, the arch frames the acropolis in the distance. Though archaeologists once searched for and never found a new Roman quarter of the city in the vicinity, the statements inscribed on the arch are not genuinely contradictory, as some have argued.[247] Like the arch of Hadrian, the arches at Eleusis were ornate. They comprised a single arch spanning an opening of 4.85m and they were

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[244] The best survey of the structure is still Hörmann 1932.
[245] See Adams 1989: 11 on the translation of the inscription as "former" not "ancient."
[246] Adams 1989: 14.
[247] Cf. Boatwright 2000: 147.

adorned with Corinthian columns and pilasters. They differed from their predecessor in

iconography. Their decoration included a pair of crossed torches, a symbol of the

goddesses. They also differed in their inscription, which reads "To the goddesses and the

emperor (αὐτοκράτορι) by the Panhellenes" (IG II² 2958).[248]

Ambivalence and Hybridity at Eleusis

The foregoing analysis isolated the Telesterion and the north gate as two areas of

significant Roman interest in the sanctuary. I interpreted each in terms of the shifting

spatial history of the site and the broader context of the ancient Mediterranean. In other

words, I read them as a palimpsest, that is as spaces produces by historical processes. As

described in the previous chapter, palimpsest also suggests the significance of power.

The spaces in question are part of the fabric of Roman imperial discourse. Thus this

section will interpret them as expressions of ambivalence and hybridity. Roman building

practices at the north gate and the Roman renovation of the Telesterion present a

contradictory impression of Roman presence at Eleusis. The juxtaposition of disparate

elements in and around the north gate suggests the hybridization of culture. I will discuss

each in turn.

The Telesterion, the North Gate, and Roman Ambivalence

Ambivalence is characteristic of colonial discourses, which often convey contradictory

ideas simultaneously. The reasons for this are described in Chapter One. In the first

place, discourses that normalize colonialism often run counter the stated goals and ideas

of the colonizing culture. This produces a discursive split. The colonizer speaks for and

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[248] The design of the arches connects them to Hadrian and he was likely the recipient but the statement is
sufficiently vague to apply to later emperors, probably by design (Clinton 1989b: 1519-1520).

against his own position by, for instance, arguing for the good of democracy and arguing against the native's right to self-rule. There is some self-deception involved but the system relies primarily on representation of the native as unwilling or unable to self-govern, for instance. Ambivalence also refers to the experience of both colonizer and colonized. Both sides experience a kind of terror associated with the threat of being incorporated by the other. For the colonizer, this manifests itself in the trope of the cannibal, a vicious native who threatens quite literally to devour the colonizer. The potential loss of identity is a source of anxiety for both. And yet, both are drawn to one another in some respect. The other is not only terrifying but intoxicating. It is frightening and yet appealingly exotic.

Theorizing colonial discourse this way is useful because it accounts for the coexistence of apparently incompatible elements without allowing too much awareness on the part of the colonizer. Thus, Roman building at Eleusis can be described as ambivalent even absent a coherent building program. Rather than expressing a cohesive ideology, the Telesterion and the north gate each convey something independent about the relationship between Roman and Greek. They express Roman ambivalence in that they convey mutually exclusive approaches to that relationship.

The Telesterion reinscribes a Greek precedent, and there was likely a compelling reason for Rome not to alter the design of the structure. The Telesterion was an unusual building in the context of Greek architecture. It was not a canonical Greek temple. The Parthenon on the Athenian Akropolis is perhaps the most iconic of all Greek temples and its colonnaded design sets it apart from the Telesterion's complete enclosure. The Parthenon's exterior colonnade of eight columns across the façade and seventeen along

each side is complemented by an interior colonnade of 23 columns inside the naos and a cella defined by four columns.[249]

It was also not a bouleterion, although it has been identified with the form. As an example, the well-preserved bouleterion (or ekklesiasterion) at Priene provided enclosed meeting space with tiers of seats on three walls, which is not unlike the seating inside the Telesterion. And yet, with seating for just 600-700 individuals, the building was roughly half the size of the Telesterion (20.25 m. by 21.06 m.) and the roof adequately supported by hyperpathral columns, freed the center of the space for a podium.[250] The Telesterion does have similar seating—albeit on all four walls and not only three—but the columns fill the space, which is organized around the anaktoron and not a podium or other performance area.[251]

The Telesterion has also been compared with theatrical spaces by virtue of the banks of seats along each wall, even though it lacks a performance area. The so-called theatral areas on Crete, such as the ones found at the palaces of Knossos and Phaistos and the village of Gournia, have been adduced as potential prototypes (Fig. 1).[252] There are significant differences, however, beginning with the open-air design of the spaces on Crete. The theatral area at Knossos, for example, is oblong where the Telesterion is square and it is also characterized by just two banks of stairs, rather than the tiers of seats surrounding the center. The stairs or stands at Knossos flanked a performance space that

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[249] Lawrence and Tomlinson 1996: 111-115. For a detailed, technical description of the Parthenon, see Dinsmoor 1950: 159-179. For information about the Parthenon in the context of the Athenian Acropolis, see Hurwit 1999 and 2004.

[250] Lawrence and Tomlinson 1996: 202. For a plan of the structure, see Sear 2006: 350.

[251] For a full description, see Rumscheid 1998: 51-59. For an overview history of the structure and its excavation with illustrations, see Ferla 2006: 74-81.

[252] Cf. Anti 1947: 413.

gave way to a road running to the west and toward the rest of the city.[253] The overall

effect suggests procession rather than theater and ultimately has very little in common

with the Telesterion in either form or apparent function.

In terms of function, the Telesterion might be placed among the initiation halls of

other sanctuaries but none are large enough to approximate the Telesterion or its

architectural difficulties. At Samothrace, there are two initiation halls. They are known

to scholars as the Anaktoron and the Hieron and they were used for the lower and higher

grades of initiation respectively.[254] Both were enclosed spaces, like the Telesterion but

neither was more than roughly half the size of the Telesterion. The first grade of

initiation at Samothrace was celebrated on a rolling basis, so there was no parallel to the

yearly influx of initiates at Eleusis but more to the point, at Eleusis, candidates for both

grades of initiation were accommodated by a single building while at Samothrace, they

were divided between two structures. There was simply no need at Samothrace for a

building that could accommodate such a large number of people at once. And, because

the structures are comparatively small, the roofing system did not require the forest of

columns that characterized the interior space of the Telesterion.[255]

The forest of interior columns places the Telesterion with the Thersilion at

Megalopolis and the Odeion of Perikles at Athens, although the Telesterion is still unique

among them. Each was a large, enclosed spaces that used a large number of interior

[253] Dinsmoor 1950: 12. Scholars once routinely connected the Creatan "theatral areas" and the Telesterion but the association is no longer popular. The shift is due largely to changes in approaches to Minoan Crete. For an overview of the history of Greek archaeology on Crete, see the essays in Huxley 2000. For a full description of the Minoan palaces, see Dinsmoor 1950: 9-24.
[254] Lehmann and Lehmann 1969: 15-17. This hierarchical arrangement of initiates is similar though not identical to the system of initiation at Eleusis. See Evans 2002.
[255] See Lehmann and Lehmann 1969: 3-50 for a full discussion of the function of the Hieron at Samothrace. For a description of the Hieron and an overview of its history, and excavation, see Lehmann and Lehmann 1969: 51-131. For a brief overview of the Anaktoron, see Lehmann 1998: 56-61. On the cult of the Great Gods at Samothrace, see Cole 1984.

columns to create a stable roofing structure.[256] All three relied on a large number of

interior columns to support the roof, and yet there are important differences. Inside the

Thersilion, columns radiate from a center point—actually a small performance area—

which is also the lowest point in the room. The columns thus hide one another,

optimizing the number of people who had an unobstructed view of the central focal point

of the room.[257] No such accommodation is made inside either the Telesterion or the

Odeion of Perikles. Inside the Odeion of Perikles, columns were arranged in nine rows

of nine, which created a clearly defined center that served as a focal point for the room.[258]

The Telesterion's columns were inequitable—six rows of seven columns—but with the

central column omitted to create space for the anaktoron. There is a difference between

the Telesterion and the Odeion, on the other hand, in that the Odeion eventually became

obsolete. It was superseded by the Odeion of Agrippa in the late 1st cent. BCE, which

was constructed with a semi-circular cavea and hyperpathral columns, a design that

allowed for completely unobstructed sight lines from every angle.[259] The Odeion of

Perikles was essentially replaced by a building of superior architectural design and by the

time of Pausanias—that is, by the second century CE—it was known only as an odd

structure meant to imitate the tent of Xerxes (Paus. 1.20.4). Because of its importance to

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[256] Winter draws a comparison between the Telesterion and the Thersilion at Megalopolis, suggesting that the architects of each building faced the same problem: the need to create a stable roofing system capable of enclosing a large space. According to Winter (2006: 137), the answer should have been triangular trusses, had the technology been available. Miller 1997: 231 draws the same comparison and makes a similar point.

[257] For a brief but thorough description of the Thersilion's features, see Sear 2006: 400. Dinsmoor 1950: 242-243; 249-250; 303; 366 for a reconstruction of the building and a brief excavation of the site. For a more general overview of the function and chronology of the Thersilion, see Tsiolis 1995: 47-68. For a complete overview of the Odeion of Perikles, see Papathanassopoulos 1995.

[258] On Plutarch's comment (*Per.* 13.11) regarding the building see Miller 1997: 221-222. The length of his comment alone suggests that the structure was unusual.

[259] Thompson 1950: 139-141. Thompson also gives a detailed account of the structure, its history and excavation (31-141). For a survey of the Athenian Agora and its excavation in general, see Thompson 1972.

the mysteries, the design of the Telesterion persisted and it was never replaced by another structure.

There is an apparent reason the Roman's chose to follow Greek precedent in the case of the Telesterion. The fact that such a peculiar and apparently unwieldy design persisted suggests that the design may have been integral to the celebration of the mysteries, although without direct knowledge of the celebration it is difficult to prove that claim. Even so, the peculiarity of the Telesterion contextualizes the Roman decision not to alter the arrangement of interior space. To do so would have radically altered the mysteries and the Romans clearly had no such intention. There is an element of necessity, then, but only because the Romans responsible for the renovation wanted to preserve the mysteries. Roman patronage was thus suited to local interests and local needs. The renovation reveals an impulse to promote Greek interests and as such, it can be characterized as one side of a discursive split.

By contrast, Roman building around the north gates is innovative. The earlier configuration had been characterized by a fortified gate and wall. It was the entrance to both the city of Eleusis and the sanctuary. Its primary functioned was defensive. The later Greater Propylaia was colonnaded and it was therefore a monument and not a defensible tower. Like the Lesser Propylaia, its function was more aesthetic than anything. In fact, late in the life of the sanctuary the front colonnade of the Greater Propylaia was enclosed in order to restore its function as a fortification. Clearly, later inhabitants of Eleusis thought it necessary to reclaim the defensibility that was lost when the Greater Propylaia was constructed.[260]

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[260] Mylonas 1961: 165.

The design of the outer courtyard also included some genuine innovations. The paving of the courtyard was contemporary with the construction of the Greater Propylaia. Thus what had been simply an open space became a courtyard. The stoas that defined the edges of the precinct were also innovative, as was the fountain house that stood directly opposite the temple of Artemis Propylaia. The temple itself was perhaps the most significant innovation. There was no prior temple in the area, nor any temple of Artemis or Poseidon in the vicinity of the sanctuary. The reason for a temple of Artemis and Poseidon is not clear, but the structure is clearly a Roman interpolation that had no clear precedent.

In addition to these innovations, both the Greater Propylaia and the arches that framed the courtyard conveyed Roman values and thus Roman power inasmuch as both included imperial portraiture. There was a bust of the emperor on both the inner and outer pediments of the Greater Propylaia. The arches were copies of the arch of Hadrian in Athens, which immediately calls to mind the emperor. Unlike their Athenian counterpart, the arches were dedicated to the emperor by the Panhellenes rather than erected by the emperor himself but a statue of Hadrian Panhellenius stood on top of the structure. The arches were also surrounded by statues, inferred by the remaining statue bases, dedicated to the Antonines and their families as deified rulers of the Roman Empire. These elements were unprecedented in the life of the sanctuary for obvious reasons.[261]

In sum, Roman benefactors made significant changes to the courtyard in ways that defied precedent. Under Rome, the courtyard developed into a cohesive space. They changed the gate itself from a fortified entrance into a piece of monumental architecture.

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[261] Mylonas 1961: 166-167.

The courtyard contained other buildings that were pure Roman innovation. And in addition to all of this, the space also included statues of members of the imperial family including the emperor. The changes stayed within certain parameters. The north gate was still primarily an entrance way. At the same time, the north gate demonstrates Roman willingness to innovate rather than simply renovate.

Roman activity at Eleusis was thus inherently contradictory. The renovation of the Telesterion demonstrates Roman patronage of the sanctuary, where patronage indicates something done on behalf of another. Damage to the Telesterion would have interrupted the celebration of the mysteries. In order to continue, the Telesterion would have to be renovated. The Roman renovation of the Telesterion responded to a direct need and it met that need by rebuilding the Telesterion more or less exactly as it had been. Thus rather than calling attention to Roman influence, the work of rebuilding the Telesterion supported the continuation of the cult in a simple and direct way. On the other hand, Roman building at the north gate renovated the existing entranceway on Roman terms. The purpose of those building projects was improvement of the space— the Roman reconstruction of the courtyard added many useful features—but it accomplished the goal of improvement by interpolating innovative elements, some of which called explicit attention to the emperor and the imperial family. The overall effect communicated a Roman takeover of the cult, in stark contrast to the kind of unassuming support conveyed by the renovation of the Telesterion.

The contradiction should not be resolved. Reading the incongruity between these approaches as an expression of ambivalence, Rome was neither simply supportive of the mysteries nor did Roman benefactors take over the cult wholesale. Rather, Rome's

influence worked in two ways—toward supporting Greek interests and toward subsuming

Greek interests under its own. As ambivalence, it's possible to read both impulses as

genuine. They are a sign that Roman attraction to Greece coexisted with a fear of the loss

of identity by incorporation into Greek culture.

Eleusis, Third Space, and Hybridity

In Chapter Two, I described hybridity as the mean between two extremes. Analysis of

cultural interaction sometimes operates as if individual cultures were discrete rather than

interdependent. This is not the case. Cultures continually interpenetrate one another in a

process of mutual transformation. On the other hand, cultures also do not dissolve into

one another. The melting pot theory of cultural interaction is not borne out by the

experience of diversity. There are always indissoluble chunks. Hybridity describes

cultural interaction in terms of a mutually transformative interaction that produces a

culture that is an amalgamation of elements. Hybridity refers to the coexistence of

mutually exclusive elements fused in relationship to one another.

Hybridity emerges, then, from the space created by the interaction between

cultures and Chapter Two argued that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries were just such

a space of interaction. Bhabha calls this Third Space. It is a discursive space in which

cultures come into contact. The chapter demonstrated that there was a discourse about

the mysteries that was shared by Greek and Roman writers. The conclusion was that, as a

Third Space between Greece and Rome, Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries should

show signs of hybridization, but the textual sources are too scant to identify it. Because

the mysteries were secret, it's possible to discern points of commonality between what

Greek and Roman authors have to say about the mysteries, but they don't say enough to flesh out a picture of hybridity.

There is, however, a hint of hybridity in Pausanias's description of the physical space at Eleusis. Pausanias describes the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis at the end of his description of the Hieros Odos. As in his discussion of the city Eleusinion, he truncates his comments, citing a dream that forbade him to give more details (1.38.7; cf. 1.14.3). Before he stops his comments, however, he mentions a handful of physical features that suggest the coexistence of disparate cultural references. Both the Kallichoron and Triptolemos were ordinary parts of the Greek mythology of the cult, as the stories related to both are part of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (cf. 99-117; 473-479). In the same context, Pausanias describes another building, the temple of Artemis Propylaia and Poseidon, neither of whom have any apparent connection to the Eleusinian mysteries.[262] The juxtaposition of conventional and unconventional mythological references hints at possible hybridization. Without a fuller understanding of why Artemis and Poseidon seemed appropriate, it is impossible to say more with any certainty.

Where Pausanias provides only a hint, the archaeological remains clearly demonstrate cultural hybridity, especially when the history of each individual element is taken into account. The temple of Triptolemos Pausanias mentions has not been identified with any archaeological remains, but the Kallichoron and the temple of Artemis Propylaia and Poseidon have both been uncovered. Pausanias does not describe the Greater Propylaia or the arches that framed the courtyard, but they are likewise an

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[262] There is a possible connection between Hekate, who appears in the Hymn to Demeter, and Artemis. Hekate hears the Kore's cries for help. The goddesses were not equivalent, however, and it therefore isn't clear why the temple would be dedicated to Artemis and not to Hekate herself. Nothing in the Hymn to Demeter accounts for the presence of Poseidon. (25; 57-58; 67-68). See Orlandos (1932: 209-223) for information on the temple and its date.

important part of the archaeology of the courtyard. In this context, hybridity entails the coexistence in a given space of architectural elements drawn from culturally distinct sources. The Kallichoron is a concrete connection to a pre-Roman Greek past, while the temple of Artemis is pure Roman innovation. The arches and the Greater Propylaia are more complex symbolically given that both make visual references to examples of Athenian architecture while at the same time referring to Rome. Although the arches refer to Athens and the Panhellenes, they are rich in symbolic reference to Rome, suggesting that the arches themselves are hybridized. Along the same lines, the Greater Propylaia expresses hybridity in that they combine references to Greece and Rome in a single structure. I will consider each in turn.

The well identified as the Kallichoron was located at the southwestern corner of the Roman courtyard, although it significantly predates the Roman era. The opening of the well is marked by two concentric rings of stone, with the outer ring held together by clamps. The technique employed in constructing the well dates it to the second half of the sixth century BCE. The stones were precisely worked, as was the fourth century BCE wall that surrounded it. Both its antiquity and its beauty suggest that this was a significant well, which is a key reason it has been identified as the Kallichoron, which has in turn been identified with the well where Demeter sat, as described in the *Hymn to Demeter*.[263] Thus in addition to its connection to a Greek mythological tradition, the Kallichoron was also a pre-Roman Greek structure.

The Kallichoron was a remnant of the sanctuary's pre-Roman past that did not dissolve into the Roman context but rather remained distinct (Fig. 5). Although it predated Rome, the Kallichoron was still a significant landmark during the Roman era. It

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[263] Mylonas 1961: 97-99. Cf. Philios 1892 and Noack 1927: 73-75.

was still in use, which is one indication. The spatial relationship between the Greater Propylaia and the enclosure around the well is also telling. Both the paving of the courtyard and the Greater Propylaia were positioned to avoid infringing on the precinct of the well. There is also evidence of a wooden stairway from the southwest corner of the Greater Propylaia to the well.[264] Roman building in the courtyard worked around it, preserving its position and identity exactly as it had been, while at the same time incorporating it into the new spatial configuration.

The Kallichoron was a reminder of the Greek heritage of the cult that remained visible and intact. It coexisted with structures that were innovative, like the temple of Artemis Propylaia and Poseidon. The temple of Artemis Propylaia was built by a Roman benefactor, but the design is not incongruous with a Greek sanctuary. However, as mentioned above, the relationship between Artemis and Poseidon and the cult is inscrutable. It is not at all clear what mythological connection either had to Eleusis. What is certain, on the other hand, is that there was no temple of any kind in the outer courtyard prior to the Roman era. There is a sharp contrast between the preservation of the Kallichoron and the interpolation of the temple of Artemis Propylaia and Poseidon.

The arches that framed the roads leading away from the courtyard and into the city were not only innovative, but they were a conscious reminder of Roman influence and power. The arches were copies of the arch of Hadrian in Athens. Hadrian's arch in Athens stands near the temple of Olympian Zeus, to the east of the Acropolis. The date of the arch is unclear although the other structures associated with Hadrian, including the temple of Olympian Zeus that is adjacent to the arch date from the middle of the 2nd century CE. It is also unclear whether Hadrian erected the arch himself, whether it was

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[264] Mylonas 1961: 98.

completed by a successor, or whether it was constructed in his honor by someone else.[265]

The arches at Eleusis were dedicated by the Panhellenes to "the goddesses and the

emperor" (IG II² 2958).[266] The design references the emperor Hadrian. The inscription

does not name him but it does invoke the office of the emperor. It also mentions the

Panhellenion, which was founded by Hadrian, inasmuch as the Panhellenes were

responsible for the arch. Statues of the deified Antonines stood around the base of the

arch and at the top there was a statue of Hadrian Panhellenius—the emperor as god of all

the Greeks. The arches were thick with references to Roman imperialism in the person of

the emperor Hadrian, his deeds, and his family.[267]

The insertion of Hadrian and the Antonines into the physical landscape of Eleusis

paralleled a new Roman understanding of the significance of the cult. The association

between Herakles and Hadrian at Eleusis illustrates. According to mythographers,

Herakles was initiated at Eleusis immediately prior to his twelfth labor, the harrowing of

hell.[268] Apollodorus recounts that Herakles presented himself as the adopted son of an

Athenian Pylius. This was necessary because at that time only Athenians were permitted

to be initiated into the mysteries (Bibl. 2.25.12; cf. Diod. Sic. 4.25.1). Herakles was

therefore a prototype for non-Athenian Greek initiates and the myth of his initiation

implicitly argued for the cult's panhellenism. Hadrian associated himself with Herakles

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[265] Frothingham (1904: 8) dated the arch to either 125/126 or 129/130 to correspond with Hadrian's visits to Athens but he also admits it isn't clear when the structure was completed or by whom. Graindor (1934: 229) holds that the Athenians erected the arch themselves, arguing in part from *Vit. Hadr.* 20.4, which says that Hadrian eschewed inscriptions (cf. Day 1973: 187). Sear (2006: 237-238) dates the structure to 138 to correspond roughly with the completion of the temple of Olympian Zeus in 131/132 and Hadrian's library (117-138). On the arch, see also Adams 1989.

[266] The design of the arches connects them to Hadrian and he was likely the recipient but the statement is sufficiently vague to apply to later emperors, probably by design (Clinton 1989b: 1519-1520).

[267] On the arches, see Orlandos 1932: 222 and Mylonas 1961: 166-167.

[268] On Herakles's initiation, see Colomo 2004. The placement of the initiation immediately prior to the harrowing of hell suggests a parallel to Persephone's sojourn in the underworld (Cf. Endsjø 2000).

in an inscription that was erected at Eleusis as part of his own panhellenic ideology (IG[3] 900).[269] The initiation of Herakles demonstrated that being Greek superseded being Athenian. Hadrian's panhellenism stretched the argument such that being Greek was a matter of cultural affinity and language rather than ethnicity.[270] It was therefore something to which even an individual born outside of Greece could aspire. Greek identity was central to the significance of the Eleusinian mysteries. Roman patronage of the cult encouraged an understanding of Greek identity as cultural affiliation rather than ethnicity. The association between Hadrian and Herakles communicated a new Roman understanding of the cult's meaning. The interpolation of reminders of the emperor reinforced this new understanding.

The coexistence of these disparate elements illustrates the cultural hybridity of Roman Greece. The Kallichoron was a reminder of the Greek identity of the cult. The temple of Artemis Propylaia was an example of Roman innovation, although without reference to any specifically Roman symbols. The arches and the statues that surrounded them were a clear reminder of Rome's presence and power, in clear contrast to the objects that surrounded them.

The Greater Propylaia draws together all of these elements and combines them in a single building. The structure was almost an exact copy of the Propylaia of Mnesicles on the Athenian Acroplis. There were differences, however. The Eleusinian version lacks the lateral wings of the Athenian version and because the site at Eleusis is flat, the uneven foundation work required by the landscape in Athens is also missing. But the

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[269] Kuhlmann 2002: 128-132.

[270] On the centrality of Eleusis to Hadrian's panhellenism, see Antonetti 1992.Eleusis was central to Hadrian's panhellenism. Romeo (2002) addresses the question of Greek identity as ethnicity and cultural affinity during the time of Hadrian.

overall effect is undeniable. The Greater Propylaia was a clear visual reference to the

Athenian Acropolis and therefore to the Greek identity of the cult. Although a copy of a

Greek monument, the structure was also a Roman innovation. It replaced a defensible

portal with a monumental one. Moreover, the construction of the Greater Propylaia

imported an Athenian monument to Eleusis, where no such visual reference to Athens

had existed. The design also incorporated a stark reminder of Roman rule in the portrait

bust and inscription on the architrave. Whether the sculpture was Hadrian, Marcus

Aurelius, or Commodus is unclear but it was a Roman emperor. Likewise, the inscription

is fragmentary but the remains contain a reference to Marcus Aurelius. Thus the Greater

Propylaia were an expression of hybridity—a structure whose design referenced an

example of classical Greek architecture that was also innovative in its context and

incorporated a direct visual reference to imperial Rome.

The sum is that the major structures in the courtyard around the north gate at

Eleusis collectively express the hybridization of Roman Greece. Greek and Roman

elements coexisted in the same space in the courtyard. The juxtaposition of the

innovative temple of Artemis and the pre-Roman Kallichoron is an example. They even

coexisted in the design of a single building in the Greater Propylaia. The effect is not a

Roman veneer or the wholesale Roman adoption of Greek culture. They do not dissolve

into one another. The Kallichoron, for example, is still recognizably Greek in both its

history and its mythological context. Likewise overt visual references to Roman imperial

ideologies are also part of the landscape, although juxtaposed to more subtle innovations.

What is Greek and what is Roman can still be discerned. The overall effect is still

cohesive, on the other hand. The courtyard functioned as the entrance to a single

sanctuary and the space was organized so that all of the structures in it functioned as a group. And while it is possible to identify the Kallichoron with Greek culture, on the one hand, and the triumphal arches with Rome, on the other, still other elements fall somewhere between, as for example a temple dedicated to a pair of Greek deities, Artemis and Poseidon, constructed by a Roman benefactor.

A Postcolonial Reading of the Sanctuary

This chapter began with a metaphorical description of Roman building at Eleusis as the final writing on a text that had been written and overwritten many times. The chapter outlined the whole history of the space as the key to interpreting the significance of each successive phase. It thus demonstrated that the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore Eleusis was itself a palimpsest of meanings.

I chose the Telesterion and the north gate as the two areas of the sanctuary that were the subject of the most sustained Roman attention. The resulting reading of the space produced a contradictory impression of Roman activity at Eleusis. On the one hand, the Telesterion suggested Roman desire to preserve the Greek configuration of space. On the other, Roman building at the north gate was innovative and contained many reminders of Roman presence. The chapter argued that the contradiction is an expression of Roman ambivalence.

Turning then to the north gate specifically, the area was characterized by the coexistence of elements from various phases of the cult. Some were pre-Roman. Others belonged to not only the Roman era but to a Roman understanding of the cult and its significance. The overall effect was a somewhat jumbled mixture that I interpreted as an expression of hybridity. While the textual sources suggested that Eleusis and the

Eleusinian mysteries were a Third Space of interaction, the material data provided a better indication of what a hybridized Roman Greek culture actually looked like. The balance of power still clearly favored Rome, and yet reminders of the Greek history of the cult remained.

Conclusion—A Postcolonial Reading of Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries

This dissertation began with the observation that conversations about the relationship between religion and politics often resort to oversimplification. The relationship between religion and politics is even more complex than usual in colonial and imperial contexts. Postcolonial studies addresses this difficulty in a general sense. The purpose of postcolonial theory is to delineate carefully the complicated dynamics of power that govern colonial interaction. It is a central tenet of the dissertation that postcolonial theory can also address the dynamics of power that affect religion in colonial and imperial contexts.

While some theorists offer limited resources for the project, others provide a rich starting point for discussion. Gayatri Spivak, for example, approaches religion as ideology. It is a secondary concern in her work because it is a symptom of the social and economic conflict that is her focus. On the other hand, theorists like Edward Said and Homi Bhabha work to interpret the cultural dynamics of colonialism and their ideas can therefore be used to interpret religion as a cultural phenomenon. Rather than a symptom of a more basic conflict, religion can be understood as one system of meaning among many in a set of overlapping discourses and practices that comprise a cultural context. It follows that the working definition of religion for the project should be drawn from anthropology. The introduction drew on the work of Clifford Geertz, who defines religion as a cultural system. Geertz also defines ideology as a cultural system in a way that resonated with Bhabha's work. Religion and ideology are distinct but the dissertation demonstrates that they can operate together.

The purpose of the work is to contribute to conversations about the many ways religion and politics interact with one another across historical and cultural contexts. This is accomplished by careful analysis of a single context as one among many possibilities. The dissertation describes and analyzes Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries as a case study in the politics of religion in Roman Greece. The mysteries were a quintessentially Greek cult with a long history. The mysteries were intimately connected with Athenian civic life and they reached a high point in popularity during the 5th cent. BCE. Because of the interest of Roman benefactors, the cult had a renaissance during the 2nd cent. CE. In particular, the patronage of the philhellenic emperors encouraged interest in the mysteries among both Greeks and Romans. The dissertation is primarily concerned with this second period of popularity. Roman investment in the sanctuary at Eleusis and in the Eleusinian mysteries was in many ways emblematic of the relationship between Greece and Rome. Although Roman benefactors refurbished the sanctuary and encouraged interest in the cult, their patronage also altered the character of the cult. The result was an Eleusis that was at once both Greek and Roman.

In postcolonial terms, the relationship between Greece and Rome that is apparent at Eleusis was ambivalent and the resulting culture was hybridized. The argument, then, is first that that the postcolonial concepts of ambivalence and hybridity are apparent at Eleusis. The second part of the argument is that the ambivalence of Roman imperialism is expressed both textually and architecturally. The hybridity of the emerging culture of Roman Greece can be inferred from textual sources but because the mysteries were a secret, hybridity is better reflected by the architecture of the site. The cultural dynamics of Roman imperialism permeate both the textual and material evidence. Thus I argue that

the discourses of Roman imperialism were encoded and expressed in interrelated and overlapping ways at all levels of Roman Greek culture.

The significance of the argument is related to the question of how religion and ideology are related to one another as cultural systems. The same ideas that are expressed in textual sources are found in architecture. There is also a parallel between Roman imperialism as an ideology and religion in Roman Greece as a distinct cultural system. The same ideas that belong to Roman imperialism are part of the religious landscape. I interpret this parallel as an illustration of religion's potential to incorporate and interpret political realities and to infuse them with a sense of ultimate significance. The presence of Roman ambivalence and hybridity at Eleusis is an expression of Roman dominance. It also demonstrates that religion can accommodate ideology and incorporate it into an understanding of what is really true about the world. At Eleusis, the Roman political system became part of a religious culture that made the things of everyday life meaningful. This gave it a wider reach than it would have enjoyed as ideology.

The Chapters

The argument proceeded by first establishing a connection between Roman and Greek texts and the postcolonial concepts of ambivalence and hybridity. Chapter One outlined the idea of ambivalence, especially as it relates to representation. According to Homi Bhabha, ambivalence is both a characteristic of colonial discourse and a description of the experience of the colonizer. The native culture constitutes a threat to the integrity of the colonizer's identity. At the same time, the colonizer is frequently attracted to the native. The experience is therefore ambivalent. This ambivalence is expressed in colonial discourses. The colonizer frequently neutralizes the threat posed by the native by

controlling the terms of discourse through representation. Representation masters the native by fixing an interpretation of it that interprets the native and native culture in terms that favor the colonizer.

The work of David Spurr characterizes colonial representation by outlining a set of overlapping tropes, among them insubstantialization, debasement, classification, appropriation, and affirmation.[271] The trope of insubstantialization narrates the psychic drama of the colonizer who is almost overcome by the native culture but still manages to maintain his identity. The trope represents the native as both attractive and threatening, with an emphasis on the potential for native culture to erode and destroy the colonizer's identity. Debasement and classification fix the terms of discourse in ways that favor the colonizer. The trope of debasement identifies the native with filth and defilement. This again emphasizes the threat posed by the native. The native is associated with negative characteristics as a means of asserting the distance between colonizer and colonized. Classification refers to the practice of rank ordering native peoples according to their degree of concurrence with the colonizing culture. In this trope, the colonizer's own culture is construed as more developed and advance. The native may be praised but only insofar as she approximates characteristics that are valued by the colonizer. Appropriation and affirmation represent the colonial enterprise itself. Appropriation emphasizes native desire to be colonized and native gratitude for colonization itself. It is thus not the colonizer who desires to dominate but rather the native who demands domination. Affirmation is closely related. The trope of affirmation represents colonization as not only a right but a moral duty. It is incumbent upon the more advanced society to impose itself on the primitive native and thus lead the native into a

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[271] Spurr 2004 [1993]

better state. Taken together, these tropes produce a contradictory impression of the

native. Thus the discourse of representation is ambivalent.

Chapter One used this discussion of ambivalence to analyze and interpret Cicero's

first letter to his brother Quintus. The letter is Cicero's advice to his brother on how to

govern in the provinces. The chapter establishes that Cicero's representation of the

Greeks is ambivalent. I used Spurr's categories to analyze his treatment of the Greeks.

As in Spurr's trope of insubstantialization, Cicero perceives the Greeks as a threat to

Roman character and identity. He debases them by associating them with characteristics

like deception and flattery. He classifies the conquered peoples of the Roman Empire.

The Greeks are the best and most civilized of all barbarians and yet even they are more

primitive than the Romans, which is why they require Roman rule. Cicero alludes to the

gratitude of the Greeks, which resonates with appropriation. Finally, he affirms Roman

imperialism by insisting that Rome has a duty to impose the kind of civilization imagined

by Plato on Greek contemporaries who are not able to embody it themselves. This

contradictory impression of the Greek people demonstrates Cicero's basic ambivalence

regarding Greece. Inasmuch as his philhellenism is typical among Roman authors,

Roman philhellenism can be called ambivalent by inference.

Chapter Two argued for a resonance between the postcolonial concept of

hybridity and Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries as a Third Space. First, I outlined

hybridity by drawing again on the work of Homi Bhabha. In Bhabha's work, the concept

of hybridity mediates between two models of cultural interaction. Cultural interaction is

sometimes interpreted as a process by which cultures interact with one another as discrete

entities with only minimal mutual transformation. At the other extreme, cultural

interaction is sometimes interpreted as a process by which two cultures combine to produce a new, third culture. Bhabha mediates between these options. He proposes first that cultures are necessarily transformed by their interaction with one another. He further proposes that cultures do not simply dissolve into one another. Instead, they are hybridized. They are fused in a relationship that reflects the dynamics of power between them. Bhabha argues that there is a space between them, which he calls a Third Space. It is from this Third Space that new cultural forms emerge. These new cultural forms are neither of one culture or the other. They are not a new, third thing. Instead, they represent an emerging culture in relationship. All parties navigate this space of interaction differently, drawing on disparate elements in fresh configurations to craft hybridized identities. Mimicry is one of the ways this takes place.

Chapter Two used the discussion of hybridity and Third Space to argue that Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries functioned as a Third Space between Greece and Rome. I first established a framework for describing discourse as space and for delineating Greek and Roman. Then, I demonstrated that Latin authors who identified primarily with Rome and Greek authors whose political loyalties were culturally Greek both participated in a common discourse about Eleusis and the Eleusinian mysteries. This constitutes interaction in the most general sense of the word. They repeat an overlapping set of tropes in a way that suggests mutual intelligibility. Cicero and Pausanias served as exemplars. Both preserved the secrecy of the mysteries. Both men also associated the cult with the natural world, especially by connecting it with agriculture. And both connected the cult and its celebration with Athens. The degree of concurrence between them demonstrates the cohesive nature of their shared discourse.

The differences between them further demonstrate that each navigated the Third Space of Eleusis differently. Cicero's account of the mysteries telegraphs his position as a Latin interpreter of Greek traditions for a Latin audience. Pausanias, on the other hand, emphasizes the secrecy of the mysteries in a way that calls attention to his position as a Greek writing during a time of occupation about Greek traditions for a Greek speaking audience.

The mysteries were held in secret, which means the textual sources are somewhat limited. There is a body of relevant material data, on the other hand. Chapter Three bridges the distance between postcolonial studies and the analysis of space. The concept of palimpsest establishes the connection. Palimpsest is used in postcolonial studies to refer to a cultural text that is written and overwritten. No matter how faint, traces of former writings remain. The point is that cultures and identities cannot be divided into pre- and post-colonial. Instead, cultures and identities are constantly in the process of being written and rewritten. Analysis of postcolonial cultures, then, must give attention to this process and to vestiges of former cultural realities and identities. The concept of palimpsest is also used in archaeology to refer to the archaeological site itself. Palimpsest is therefore conceptually a point of contact between postcolonial studies and the interpretation of material remains.

Chapter Three argued that the physical and intellectual landscapes of Eleusis are palimpsests of meaning. The term palimpsest of meaning was borrowed from Geoff Bailey, who presents a typology of archaeological palimpsests. The palimpsest of meaning accrues new layers of significance over time. The chapter surveys the excavation history of Eleusis. This history illustrates that the site itself acquired new

meanings over time according to the shifting interests of excavators and in keeping with historical and economic forces. Although the archaeological site at Eleusis was often approached as a puzzle waiting to be solved, it is not. Rather, it is a palimpsest of meanings, as described by Bailey.

Chapter Four combined the archaeological idea of palimpsest with its postcolonial counterpart. It proceeded by addressing the history of two areas of the sanctuary at Eleusis, each of which was renovated significantly by Roman benefactors. They were the Telesterion and the north gate. The chapter described each area as a palimpsest of meanings after the archaeological understanding of palimpsest. As spatial configuration and patterns of use changed, each area acquired new associations and meanings. The postcolonial conception of palimpsest calls attention to traces of what came before as a critique of power. The chapter thus also set the history of each area against the backdrop of an asymmetrical balance of power that favored Rome.

The chapter demonstrated that the same postcolonial concepts that were described in Chapters One and Two were apparent in the sanctuary itself. The imperial discourses that appeared in textual sources were also embedded in the monumental architecture of Eleusis. The chapter discussed ambivalence and hybridity in turn. The history of the Telesterion established that the design of the Telesterion was basically conservative. The final Roman renovation stayed within parameters created by Greek precedent. To the contrary, the north gate presented many examples of Roman innovation. The final configuration of space resembles what had come before but only slightly. This contradiction was interpreted as a sign of Roman ambivalence. The chapter connected hybridity with the area of the north gate. It was a space that contained many Roman

innovations but on a closer examination, the space displayed an eclectic mix of elements. Together they display the hybridization of culture. The temple of Artemis in the courtyard was a Roman innovation. It coexisted with the pre-Roman Kallichoron well, a visual reference to the early history of the cult. Roman and Greek elements also coexisted in the design of the Greater Propylaia, which was a copy of an Athenian monument with an interpolated portrait of the emperor displayed prominently. These are the stubborn chunks that will not dissolve but rather coexist in relationship.

Toward a Postcolonial Theory of Religion

The dissertation demonstrates that the postcolonial concepts can be used to analyze ancient data. The first two chapters analyze textual data related to Roman Greece in terms of ambivalence and hybridity, drawing on Homi Bhabha's theorization of those terms. Chapter Three makes a bridge between the analysis of textual and material sources. Chapter Four analyzes the architecture of Eleusis using the postcolonial concepts of ambivalence and hybridity. The conclusion is that the same discourse that is apparent in Roman texts is repeated in architecture. Roman imperialism, like colonial discourses, permeates not only the textual world but the architectural world of Eleusis as well. Roman imperialism thus extends beyond rhetorical strategies into the organization of space.

The significance of the argument is apparent when the discussion is brought back to Geertz. There is also a kind of synergy between the culture of imperialism and religion as a cultural system in Roman Greece. Roman imperialism functions as a cultural system the way Geertz describes ideology as a cultural system. Ideology makes sense of the politics of a given time and place. Religion has a wider purview in that it

makes sense of the world as human beings imagine it really is. In the context of Roman Greece, religion and ideology together express the idea that the political order has ultimate significance.

Finally, the dissertation establishes a potential direction for future postcolonial studies in religion. Brian Pennington and others conclude that postcolonial studies is too focused on class conflict to adequately account for religion. The observation is correct about a certain kind of postcolonial studies. Spivak's work, for example, is too narrowly focused on social concerns to be of use to any project that doesn't presume religion is subordinate to sociology. This is not the sum of postcolonial studies, however. An anthropological approach to religion can be combined with postcolonial ideas. This project drew on the work of Homi Bhabha because he describes colonialism as a system of meaning-making. Approached from an anthropological perspective, it is possible to analyze the relationship between religion and the political in a colonial or imperial context in a careful and serious way without subordinating religion to other concerns.

Figures

Figure 1

Eleusis, Sanctuary of Demeter, Telesterion
Photo by the author (June, 2005)

Figure 2

Eleusis, Bust of Marcus Aurelius from the Greater Propylaia
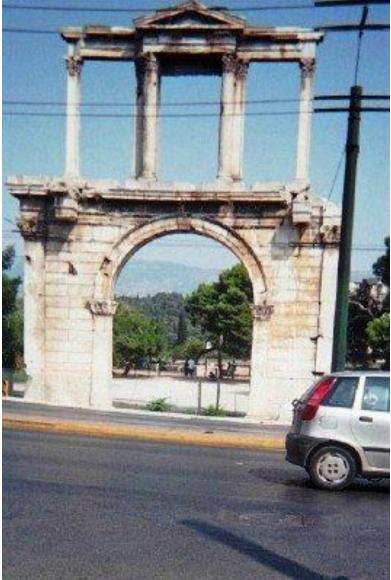Photo by the author (June, 2005)

Figure 3

Athens, Arch of Hadrian
Photo by the author (July, 2006)

Figure 4

Eleusis, Sanctuary of Demeter, Greater Propylaia
Photo by the author (June, 2005)

Figure 5

Eleusis, Sanctuary of Demeter, Kallichoron Well
Photo by the author (July, 2006)

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