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Theodora Suk Fong Jim



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The vocabulary of ἀπάρχεσθαι, ἀπαρχή and related terms in Archaic and Classical Greece*

Abstract: While the vocabulary of sacrifice has been the subject of detailed studies,¹ the terms of votive offerings in ancient Greece still lack a semantic survey of their own. I am here interested in a particular type of offering, the so-called ‘first-fruit’ offerings, in Archaic and Classical Greece. It was a common practice in different parts of the Greek world for individuals and cities to bring an offering termed ἀπαρχή to the gods using a portion of the proceeds from a variety of human activities; and this act is described by the verb ἀπάρχεσθαι. And yet the word ἀπάρχεσθαι is not limited to making dedications; it is also used in sacrificial procedures and cult payments. This study aims to give a semantic analysis of these terms, examining their religious applications in different contexts. It appears that the values attached to the notion of ἀπάρχεσθαι are rather different in the cases of sacrifices, of bringing first-offerings and of cult finance. The ways in which the usages of these terms overlap with and diverge from each other constitute one of the most interesting results.

Résumé : Alors que le vocabulaire du sacrifice a fait l’objet d’études détaillées, les termes désignant les offrandes votives en Grèce ancienne souffrent toujours de l’absence d’enquête sémantique spécifique. Il s’agit ici d’étudier un type particulier d’offrandes, à savoir les offrandes de prémices, en Grèce archaïque et classique. Il était habituel en différents lieux du monde grec, tant pour les individus que les cités, d’apporter aux dieux une offrande appelée ἀπαρχή, en prélevant une partie des bénéfices issus de diverses activités humaines. Cette action était désignée par le verbe ἀπάρχεσθαι. Le terme ne se limite pas à l’action dédicatoire. Il est aussi utilisé dans des procédures sacrificielles et des paiements cultuels. Cette étude entend fournir une analyse sémantique de ces termes, en examinant leurs applications religieuses dans différents contextes. Il apparaît que les valeurs attachées à la notion d’ἀπάρχεσθαι doivent être distinguées selon qu’il s’agit du cadre des sacrifices, de l’offrande de prémices et du financement des cultes. Il est particulièrement intéressant de distinguer ainsi les manières dont ces termes se recouvrent ou se différencient les uns des autres dans l’usage qui en est fait.

* I am most grateful to Prof. Robert Parker for helpful comments on an earlier version of this article.

¹ RUDHARDT (1992² [1958]), CASABONA (1966).

Introduction

Offering of *aparchai*, sometimes known as ‘first-fruits’ in English, is a religious practice widely attested in different parts of the Greek world from the Archaic period onwards. Etymologically speaking an *aparche* (*ap-arche*) is a combination of ἀπό and ἄρχω, expressing ‘a preliminary offering from a greater whole’. It was customary for the Greeks, whether on an individual or collective basis, to bring an *aparche* to the gods using a portion of the proceeds from a wide variety of human activities, such as agriculture, fishing, handcraft work, trade, military victory and mining. Since *aparchai* might be offered from a wide variety of sources, the English word ‘first-fruits’ with its agricultural connotation is potentially misleading; and *aparchai* are more appropriately understood as ‘first offerings’ instead. Although the bulk of the evidence pertaining to first offerings concerns dedications, dedicatory practices represent only one of the several contexts in which the language of ‘first offerings’ is used. The act of ἀπαρχεσθαι could also apply to animal sacrifice to denote certain preliminary rites, but with rather different forces. Different again is sacred finance, where cult payments required of certain individuals or groups of individuals are sometimes called *aparchai* or *eparchai*, and the act of making such payments is referred to as *aparchesthai* or *eparchesthai*.

In other words, the vocabularies of ‘first offerings’ and ‘beginning an offering’ are used in different contexts with slightly varying notions and emphases. I am here concerned with the various religious applications of the words *aparche*, *aparchesthai* and etymologically related terms (*eparche*, *eparchesthai*, *katarchesthai*, *apargma*) in inscriptional and literary evidence in Archaic and Classical Greece. Alongside *aparchai*, there are also dedications termed *dekatai* and *akrothinia* whose usages overlap with those of *aparchai*; but these are not etymologically related and will not be discussed here.² Metaphoric applications of the words will not be discussed.³ Since there is no identifiable difference in meaning and usage between the applications of these words in epigraphic and literary sources, the two will be treated together. Nor is there any distinction between their attestations in poetry and prose, except that all Homeric usages concern animal sacrifice only, and that Homer uses *eparchesthai* to express a different ritual from that referred to in the later periods. For this reason Homeric usages and later Greek usages will be treated separately.

² See ROUSE (1902), BEER (1914), VAN STRATEN (1981), p. 92-93, PARKER (2004), p. 275.

³ E.g. Eur., *Andr.*, 149-150 (οὐ τῶν Ἀχιλλέως οὐδὲ Πηλέως ἀπὸ δόμων ἀπαρχάς), Pl., *Prt.*, 343b (ἀπαρχή σοφίας), Diod. Sic., IX, 10, 1 (ἀπαρχαὶ τῆς ἰδίας συνέσεως), Plut., *Cim.*, 10, 7 (καρπῶν ἐτοίμων ἀπαρχάς).

1. Homeric Usages

The term *aparche* does not appear in Homer. Homer uses the verbs *aparchesthai*, *katarchesthai*, *eparchesthai*, and the noun *argmata*. All of them appear in sacrificial rather than dedicatory contexts.

ἀπάρχεσθαι

The word *aparchesthai* is first attested in Homeric sacrifices to refer to the opening sacrificial rite of cutting some of the sacrificial animal's hair as a first offering to be burnt in the fire to a god. It appears twice in Homer in the sacrifices by Nestor and Eumaeus respectively.⁴ When Nestor realizes that it was Athena who accompanied Telemachus, he propitiates the goddess by sacrificing a heifer. Nestor begins the opening rites of hand-washing and sprinkling barley grains on the victim's head.⁵ He prays to Athena, cuts some hair from the victim's head and casts it into the fire, and this act is described by the participle ἀπαρχόμενος (γέρων δ' ἱππηλάτα Νέστωρ χέρνιβά τ' οὐλοχύτας τε κατήρχετο, πολλὰ δ' Ἀθήνη εὔχετ' ἀπαρχόμενος, κεφαλῆς τρίχας ἐν πυρὶ βάλλων).⁶ I will return to the other verb *katarchesthai* in this passage later. Similar rituals, described in more or less the same formula, are found in Eumaeus' sacrifice. A five-year old boar is brought in to honour his guest (Odysseus in disguise); Eumaeus brings it to the hearth, cuts off some of its hair, and casts it into the fire (ἀλλ' ὃ γ' ἀπαρχόμενος κεφαλῆς τρίχας ἐν πυρὶ βάλλεν ἀργιόδοντος ὕος), praying to all the gods for the safe return of his master.⁷ In both passages *aparchesthai* refers to the preliminary ritual of cutting some of the animal's hair, to be cast in the fire, before it is slaughtered. Again in Book XIX of the *Iliad*, when Agamemnon swears to Zeus that he never laid hand on the girl Briseïs, he cuts some of the sacrificial boar's hair as a first offering (κάπρου ἀπὸ τρίχας ἀρξάμενος).⁸ Here we find the verb *archesthai* modified by *apo* used adverbially. There is no mention of the treatment of the hair, and we do not know whether it is cast in the fire or distributed to the participants as has been suggested by some scholars.⁹

⁴ Hom., *Od.* III, 446; XIV, 422.

⁵ Theophr., *Piet.*, fr. 2, 26-28 PÖTSCHER = Porph., *Abst.* II, 6, 1 thus explains why barley grains were sprinkled in preliminary sacrificial rites: τοῦ δὲ Δημητρίου καρποῦ μετὰ τὸν χέδροπα πρώτου φανέντος κριθῶν, ταύταις ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μὲν οὐλοχυτεῖτο κατὰ τὰς πρώτας θυσίας τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος.

⁶ Hom., *Od.* II, 443-465.

⁷ Hom., *Od.* XIV, 414-424.

⁸ Hom., *Il.* XIX, 252-255.

⁹ Cf. Hom., *Il.* III, 273-274, an oath sacrifice where the hair was portioned out to the participants but not burnt; here the practice of cutting the hair of the animal is still attested although the term *aparchesthai* is not used. KIRK (1985-93), vol. 5, p. 265, suggests that the hair in Hom., *Il.* XIX, 252ff might have been treated in the same way as in Hom., *Il.* III, 273-274. On Hom., *Il.* III, 273-274, see commentary in LEAF (1900-02), vol. 1, p. 139, KIRK (1985-93), vol. 1, p. 303-304. But Kirk goes on to say that 'if there is a fire, then burning the ritual hairs is an obvious

In one instance Homer uses the word *archesthai* without *apo* in the same religious sense as *aparchesthai*. It applies to the cutting of bits of raw flesh (instead of hair) from the sacrificial animal as first offerings to the gods. To continue with Eumaeus' sacrifice, after casting the boar's hair into the fire and saying a prayer, Eumaeus slaughters and quarters the animal with the help of the others. Then he takes bits of raw meat from all the limbs and lays them in rich fat (ὁ δ' ὠμοθετεῖτο συβώτης, πάντων ἀρχόμενος μελέων, ἐς πίονα δημόν), sprinkles them with barley-meal and casts them into the fire (καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐν πυρὶ βάλλε, παλύνας ἀλφίτου ἀκτῆ).¹⁰ *Archesthai* here expresses the action of 'offering part of a whole (the limbs)', whereas *omothetein* is used of laying the raw pieces resulting from this *archesthai* on the rich fat.¹¹ It is evident from this passage that, apart from the victim's hair, first offerings can be taken from the flesh as well in Homeric sacrifice. Whether the act applies to the animal's hair or flesh, in both usages the word (*ap*)-*archesthai* carries the same idea of offering 'part of the whole' to the gods.

ἄργματα

It is important to note that the victim's hair and portions of its flesh for the gods were never expressed by the noun *aparche/ai* in Homer. In one passage where the preliminary offerings of the meat are referred to, Homer uses a different but related word *argmata*. This is a cognate noun of *archein* and a synonym of *apargmata* and *aparchai* in later Greek; and lexicographers are more or less consistent in equating *argmata* with *aparchai*.¹² However, the word *argmata* appears only once in Homer in Eumaeus' sacrifice and the reference is uncertain: after bits of raw meat are taken from the limbs and burnt in the fire, the rest of the meat is sliced up, roasted on spits, and divided into seven portions, one portion being set aside for the Nymphs and Hermes with a prayer while the rest is distributed to himself and his guests (τὴν μὲν ἴαν Νύμφησι καὶ Ἑρμῇ, Μαιάδος υἱεῖ, θῆκεν ἐπειξάμενος, τὰς δ'

means of disposing of them, and that might sometime have been regarded as an additional symbolic offering to the gods'.

¹⁰ Hom., *Od.* XIV, 427-429.

¹¹ On the word *omothetein*, see LSJ *s.v.* ὠμοθετέω, LUPU (2003), p. 74. Etymologically it is derived from ὠμός (raw) and τίθημι; but Eust., 134, 35 says that some derived the word from ὤμος (shoulder). In other Homeric sacrifices (e.g. Hom., *Il.* I, 461; II, 424; *Od.* III, 458; XII, 361) it expresses the act of laying the pieces of raw meat that have been cut off from the victim's limbs on thigh bones wrapped in fat, but here the thigh bones are not mentioned. On the absence of thigh bones, an important anomaly which marks Eumaeus' actions as unusual in Homeric and later sacrifices, see MEULI (1975), vol. 2, p. 937, n. 3, who suggested that pigs probably received special treatments different from those of other victims. This view is now supported by osteological evidence studied by EKROTH (2009), esp. p. 137-138, 143-146.

¹² Hes., *s.v.* ἄργματα; *Etyim. Magn.*, *s.v.* ἄργμα: Ἡ ἀπαρχή. Παρὰ τὸ ἄρχω, ἄργμα, ὡς παρὰ τὸ ἥρμαι, ἄρμα. *Etyim. Magn.*, *s.v.* ἀπάργματα: αἱ μεγάλα ἀπαρχαὶ τῶν θυσίων τῶν τελείων. Παρὰ τὸ ἄρχω ἀπάρχω, ἄργμα καὶ ἀπαργμα. LSJ, *s.v.* ἄργμα: ἄργματα = ἀπάργματα.

ἄλλας νεῖμεν ἐκάστῳ).¹³ In distributing the cooked portions to everyone, Eumaeus honours Odysseus with the chine of the boar, and he sacrifices ἄργματα to the everlasting gods and makes libations: καὶ ἄργματα θῶσε θεοῖσ' αἰγιγενέτησι, σπείσας δ' αἴθοπα οἶνον Ὀδυσσοῦν πολυπύρρῳ ἐν χεῖρεσσιν ἔθηκεν.¹⁴ Much controversy centers on the word ἄργματα in line 446: it is uncertain whether they refer to the preliminary portions of flesh from the limbs burnt in the fire (line 428) or the share for the Nymphs and Hermes (lines 435-436) or something else.¹⁵ It seems to me, following the natural sequence of the procedures, that the portion in line 435 is more likely to be meant since the portion in 428 has already been burnt. There is nothing that prevents the portion deposited on the table (θήκεν, line 435) from being burnt in the fire (ἄργματα θῶσε, line 466) subsequently. Whatever the *argmata* might be, the word *argmata* is evidently a synonym of *aparchai* (not used in Homer), referring to the first portions of sacrificial flesh for the gods.

It is noteworthy that more than one set of first offerings are made in different stages of Eumaeus' actions using different parts of the victim and described in slightly different terminologies: the first portion of the victim's hair (*aparchesthai*), first portions of flesh from all its limbs (*archesthai*), and first portions (*argmata*) of cooked meat. All of them, regardless of the different portions involved, share the same meaning of a preliminary portion of the whole.

κατάρχεσθαι

From Homer onwards the compound word κατάρχεσθαι refers to various preliminary rituals at the beginning of an animal sacrifice, meaning to 'begin the sacrificial ceremonies'.¹⁶ The term appears only once in Homer: in the passage cited earlier, Nestor begins the opening rites with the lustral water and barley

¹³ Hom., *Od.* XIV, 435-436. I understand ἔθηκεν (τίθημι) as 'set aside' as most commentators do. But note that PETROPOULOU (1987), p. 141-143, argues at length against the translation of ἔθηκεν as 'set aside', suggesting instead 'serve before' or 'serve up' (παράτιθημι).

¹⁴ Hom., *Od.* XIV, 446-448.

¹⁵ MONRO (1901), vol. 2, p. 40, DAWE (1993), think that they refer to the flesh of the limbs in line 428; but then the acts in 428 and 446 would seem to duplicate each other. Others think that the share in lines 435-436 is meant: e.g. STANFORD (1958-9 [1947-8]), vol. 2, p. 234, JAMESON (1949), p. 126-129, CASABONA (1966), p. 70, 122, and HEUBECK, WEST and HAINSWORTH (1988-92), vol. 2, p. 224-225. GILL (1974), p. 134, assumes that the portion in line 435 is placed at the house table at which Eumaeus and his guests are eating as a form of *trapezomata* but does not comment on the word *argmata*. MEULI (1975), vol. 2, p. 938, n. 3, disagreed with STENGEL (1894)'s view that the seventh portion in lines 435-6 is meant, arguing that the *argmata* are the regular offerings cast in to the fire before a meal begins. KADLETZ (1984) suggests that the *argmata* consist not of solid food but first drops of wine poured by Eumaeus as libation in line 447. PETROPOULOU (1987), esp. p. 138-139, argues that neither the share in line 428 nor 435 is meant, but bits of roasted meat taken from the portions already distributed by Eumaeus to his companions and himself, which serve as first offerings at meals in conformity with preliminary rituals before the consumption of daily meals. Two scholiasts B and Q on Hom., *Od.* XIV, 446 put it vaguely: ἄργματα θῶσε: τὰς ἀπαρχὰς τῶν μερίδων, ἢ τὰ ἀπομερισθέντα τοῖς θεοῖς.

¹⁶ LSJ, s.v. κατάρχω. II.2

grains for sprinkling (on the victim's head); he prays to Athena, while cutting the hair from the victim's head as a first offering and casting it into the fire.¹⁷ Homer seems to distinguish between *katarchesthai* and *aparchesthai*, using the former with respect to the rites of hand-washing and sprinkling of barley and the latter for cutting the victim's hair.¹⁸ As will become apparent in the next section, in post-Homeric usages it is not always clear what procedures are comprised in *katarchesthai*. However, as far as the present (and only) Homeric passage is concerned, the term is restricted to the use of lustral water (χέρονιψ) and barley grains (οὐλοχύται or οὐλαί) but not the cutting of the lock.

2. Post-Homeric Usages

ἀπαρχεσθαι

After Homer, *aparchesthai* continued to denote the sacrificial rite of taking some of the animal's hair or flesh as first portions for the gods.¹⁹ But it is worth noting that the act of *aparchesthai* can also apply to the animal's entrails.²⁰ This is how Herodotus describes the Scythian sacrificial rites: since there was no wood in Scythia with which to make a fire, the Scythians strangled and skinned the animal; then they made a fire by using its bones and they boiled the flesh in the animal's paunch. When the meat was cooked, the sacrificer took portions of the flesh and entrails of the animal and threw them in front (ὁ θύσας τῶν κρεῶν καὶ τῶν σπλάγχων ἀπαρχάμενος ῥίπτει ἐς τὸ ἔμπροσθε). Here the scene is Scythian but the terminology is Greek; and the act of *aparchesthai* applies to both the flesh and the *splanchna*.²¹ A fourth-century sacrificial calendar in Cos also has a possible but uncertain reference to first offerings of entrails.²² One of its regulations concerns the sacrificial portions for Asia:

- [- - - - -] θύοντι δὲ δύο θυῶνας ποιήσαντες[ς]
 10 [ῥίσας τῶν τε κρεῶν] καὶ τῶν σπλάγχων, καὶ τὰς θυ-
 [ώνας τίθεντι ἐπὶ β]ωμοῦ· ὁπεῖ δὲ ταῖς Ἀσίαις ἐπιτίθεν[τι]
 [- - - - -] ῥεζάμενοι καὶ τῶν σπλάγχων[ν]
 [- - - - -] καὶ τοῦ λίθου τοῦ ἐν ταῖς ἐλα[ίαις]
 [ἀψάμενοι ὀμνόντι· - -]

¹⁷ Hom., *Od.* III, 444-446.

¹⁸ Confirmed by the interpretation of STANFORD (1958-9 [1947-8]), vol. 1, p. 264-265.

¹⁹ E.g. *LSAM* 50, 23-25 (ἀπὸ τῶν ἀριστερῶν ἀπαρχάμενοι), Hdt., IV, 188 (τοῦ ὧτος ἀπαρχώνται τοῦ κτήνεος), Eur., *El.*, 810-812 (the term *aparchesthai* is not used but the rite is attested).

²⁰ On the usual treatment of the *splanchna* in Greek sacrifice, see e.g. VAN STRATEN (1995), p. 131-133.

²¹ Hdt., IV, 61, 2.

²² *LSCG* 151D, 11-13, RO 62D, 11-13, *IG* XII 4, 275, 11-13. Some of the supplements in HERZOG (1928), RO 62 and *IG* XII 4 are different; here I follow the supplements given in *IG* XII 4, but I have omitted those in lines 12-13 because of textual uncertainties.

Unfortunately the fragmentary nature of the text makes it difficult to ascertain the construction of lines 11-13 which concern us here. Line 12 is supplemented by Herzog and the recently published *IG* XII 4 as *ἐπα]ρξάμενοι καὶ τῶν σπλάγγων[ν]*. This is untenable as the words *eparchai* and *eparchesthai* never apply to sacrificial practices in Classical usages on the evidence presently available (see below). More recently Pirenne-Delforge has suggested *κατα]ρξάμενοι* instead of *ἐπα]ρξάμενοι*; yet the difficulty is that *kataresthai* always refers to the pre-killing stage in animal sacrifices and therefore cannot apply to entrails.²³ If it is correct to take *τῶν σπλάγγων[ν]* as being governed by the preceding verb ending in *-ρξάμενοι*, the most likely supplement would be *ἀπα]ρξάμενοι*. The Herodotean passage and possibly the Coan calendar demonstrate that, despite the difference in the part (hair, flesh, *splanchna*) of the victim from which the first offerings were taken, the act of *aparchesthai* continued to refer to offering ‘part of a whole’ in sacrificial rites as in Homeric usage.

The offering of hair by humans on various occasions is also referred to by the term *aparchesthai*.²⁴ In rituals of mourning it was customary to cut a lock(s) of hair and place it upon the corpse or the grave; this act is referred to by the word *aparchesthai*. Electra, for example, sheds tears and cuts some hair (*δάκρυά τ’ ἔδωκα καὶ κόμης ἀπηρξάμην*) at Agamemnon’s tomb in mourning for him.²⁵ The custom is already attested in the *Iliad*, but Homer does not use the term.²⁶ Funeral hair-cutting aside, the word also applies to hair-offering in rites of maturation: on attaining manhood or womanhood boys and girls would cut a lock(s) of their hair and dedicate it to some deity or a river.²⁷ The offering of hair by humans in both contexts intersects with the practice of cutting a sacrificial animal’s hair before killing the animal, as if cutting the hair of humans is an act of *aparchesthai* of the self. However, in contrast to animal sacrifice where the cutting of hair anticipates the slaughter and the offering of the whole animal, in hair-offering by humans the person is not sacrificed. The hair offered

²³ HERZOG (1928), p. 12-14, adopted in *LSCG* 151D, 12, RO 62D, 12, and *IG* XII 4, 275, 12. HERZOG quoted 1) STENGEL (1910) in support of this, to the neglect that STENGEL’s article primarily concerned the phrase *ἐπαρξασθαι δεπάσσειν* in Homer (see n. 78 below); and 2) *Syll.*³ 323, 9 (= *IG* XII 9, 192; *LSS* 46) which has a reference to *ἐπαρξεσθαι δὲ καὶ τοὺς χορούς*, but the context is not sacrificial. PIRENNE-DELFORGE (1996), p. 210-211 and n. 103: ‘j’ai préféré restituer *κατα]ρξάμενοι* et non *ἐπα]ρξάμενοι*. Car le premier évoque l’idée de préparation, ce qui permet également de voir apparaître le dépôt des entrailles sur la pierre. Le second évoquerait déjà une aspersion préliminaire quand rien n’indiquerait comment les entrailles sont arrivées là.’

²⁴ On human hair-offering see BURKERT (1985 [1977]), p. 70, 374, n. 29, LEFTAO (2003).

²⁵ Eur., *El.*, 91. Instances where the term does not appear are e.g. Eur., *IA*, 1437; Eur., *Supp.*, 97; Aesch., *Cho.*, 168.

²⁶ E.g. Hom., *Il.* XIII, 135-152.

²⁷ E.g. Callim., *Hymn* 4, 296-299, Plut., *Thes.*, 5, 1, Paus., I, 43, 4. There is no Classical usage of the word *aparchesthai* in adolescent hair-offering to my knowledge, but the practice is attested in Classical sources without using the term, e.g. Hdt., IV, 34, Eur., *Hipp.*, 1425ff, Theophr., *Char.*, 21, 3.

may be considered as a token offering, symbolizing or replacing the offering of the whole person.²⁸

It is worth mentioning that Theophrastus' usage of the word *aparchesthai* in the *De Pietate*, later quoted in Book two of Porphyry's *De Abstinencia*, differs from ordinary Greek usages.²⁹ In several instances Theophrastus uses *aparchesthai* to express the whole act of sacrifice (whether plants or animals) in general without reference to any specific preliminary sacrificial procedures, so that there is a blurring of meaning between *aparchesthai* and *thuein*.³⁰ For example, he says that offerings should be made to the gods by reason of honour, gratitude and for want of good things, so that καὶ τῶν ζώων, εἰ ἀπαρχτέον αὐτὰ θεοῖς, τούτων τινὸς ἕνεκα θυτέον. Here ἀπαρχεσθαι τῶν ζώων is essentially the same as θύειν τὰ ζῶα, meaning 'if animals should be offered to the gods, they should be sacrificed for one of these reasons'.³¹ When he condemns human sacrifice, he speaks of σφῶν αὐτῶν ἀπήρξαντο τοῖς θεοῖς, meaning not 'making first offerings of themselves' but 'making sacrifice from among themselves'.³² This identification of *aparchesthai* with *thuein* is perhaps deliberate, since Porphyry deplores animal sacrifice as unholy and elevates agricultural first-fruits and bloodless offerings above animal sacrifice.

ἀπαρχή

The earliest literary attestation of the noun *aparche* is in Herodotus, who uses *aparche/ai* three times in dedicatory contexts.³³ As mentioned at the beginning, although the word *aparchai* has often been translated by modern commentators as 'first-fruits' in English,³⁴ etymologically it has no reference to agriculture and is more appropriately understood as 'first-offerings' instead. *Aparchai* might be dedicated of agricultural produce,³⁵ of hunting and (sale of) animals,³⁶ of hair,³⁷ of

²⁸ The ritual has been variously interpreted and there is no authoritative explanation: e.g. PEARSON (1909), p. 190 on Eur., *Phoen.*, 1524-1525: 'an act of symbolism, by which the survivor devoted himself to the service of the dead. The act is then a substitute for a more primitive self-immolation'; LEAF (1900-02), vol. 2, p. 481 on Hom., *Il.* XXIII, 135: 'a part cut straight from the living body represents the whole man, who thus offers himself as an escort to the shades'; JAMESON (1949), p. 59: 'by cutting off a living part of himself and presenting it to a god or a dead relative, a man in effect dedicates himself'; WEST (1987), p. 187 on Eur., *Or.*, 96: a form of self-mutilation.

²⁹ Also noted by JAMESON (1949), p. 75.

³⁰ E.g. Theophr., *Piet.*, fr. 12, 42-49; 13, 15-22; 19, 3-7 PÖTSCHER = Porph., *Abst.* II, 24, 1; 27, 1; 32, 1. These passages are taken by scholars, e.g. PÖTSCHER (1964), FORTENBAUGH (1992), as quoted by Porphyry from Theophrastus and can reasonably safely be regarded as Theophrastus' use of the word *aparchesthai*, though it is unclear whether Porphyry was quoting from Theophrastus *verbatim*.

³¹ Theophr., *Piet.*, fr. 12, 43-48 PÖTSCHER = Porph., *Abst.* II, 24, 1.

³² Theophr., *Piet.*, fr. 13, 15-22 PÖTSCHER = Porph., *Abst.* II, 27, 1.

³³ Hdt., I, 92; IV, 71; IV, 88.

³⁴ E.g. LSJ, s.v. ἀπαρχή, 2: 'firstlings for sacrifice or offering, first-fruits'.

³⁵ E.g. Eur., *Meleager*, fr. 516.

booty,³⁸ of earnings from work,³⁹ of wealth,⁴⁰ and of proceeds from any other enterprise. The offerings might be ‘raw’ or ‘converted’: according to Snodgrass’ definition, a ‘raw’ dedication is an existing object normally intended for other usages, such as a weapon and a jumping weight; by contrast, a ‘converted’ dedication involves the conversion of a part of one’s wealth into an object (such as a statue or statuette) produced for the specific purpose of dedication.⁴¹ Its cognate verb *aparchesthai*, apart from sacrificial usages discussed above, is also used in dedicatory practices to refer to the act of making a first offering to the gods using a part of a greater whole. It is sometimes accompanied by a qualifying genitive expressing the source from which the dedication is made.⁴²

Although *aparche* is most commonly used for dedications, in isolated instances the word also applies to sacrifice. In Euripides’ lost play *Meleager*, whose subject is the fate of Oeneus’ first wife Althaea and their son Meleager resulting from Oeneus’ failure to offer *aparchai* of his harvest to Artemis, his action to the gods (save Artemis) is referred to as θύειν ἀπαρχάς (Οἶνεύς ποτ’ ἐν γῆς πολύμετρον λαβὼν στάχυν θύων ἀπαρχάς), which shows that the offering of *aparchai* is closely related to sacrifice.⁴³ In Soph. *Trach.*, Heracles offers a literal hecatomb to the gods, a grand sacrifice of a hundred victims consisting of a mixed herd of perhaps oxen, goats and sheep, of which twelve bulls are killed first as ἀπαρχή λείας (ταυροκτονεῖ μὲν δώδεκ’ ἐντελεῖς ἔχων λείας ἀπαρχήν βοῦς: ἀτὰρ τὰ πάνθ’ ὁμοῦ ἑκατὸν προσῆγε συμμιγῇ βοσκήματα).⁴⁴ Here the *aparche* takes the form of twelve bulls in a blood sacrifice. The word *aparche* may be understood in two senses here: the twelve bulls are the choicest and the first ones to be sacrificed to the gods among the one hundred animals; they also represent a portion of the revenue derived from Heracles’ military enterprise. In both

³⁶ E.g. IG I³ 828 (ἀπαρχή ἄγρας); Arr., *Cyn.*, 33 (ἀπαρχαὶ τῶν ἀλισκομένων); *Anth. Pal.* VI, 196 (ἀπαρχή ἄγρας); cf. SEG 47, 346 (δεκάταν αἰγῶν).

³⁷ E.g. Eur., *Or.*, 96 (ἀπαρχαὶ κόμης); Eur., *Phoen.*, 1524-1525 (ἀπο χαίτας ἀπαρχαί).

³⁸ E.g. Soph., *Trach.*, 183 (μάχης ἀπαρχαί), 761 (λείας ἀπαρχή).

³⁹ E.g. IG I³ 628 (ἐργον ἀπαρχή), 695 (ἐργον ἀπαρχή); IG XI 4, 1248 (ἀπαρχή ἀπὸ τῆς ἐργασίας). There is a reference to ἐργον ἀπαρχήν in DAA 155 (= IG I³ 673), but RAUBITSCHKE (1949)’s supplement is uncertain and does not appear in IG I³ 673.

⁴⁰ E.g. IG I³ 647 (ἀπαρχή κτεάτων); IG II² 3846 (χορήμ[ατα] ἀπαρχή), 4904 (χορημ[άτων] ἀπαρχή).

⁴¹ SNODGRASS (1989-90), p. 291.

⁴² E.g. IG I³ 730 (κτεάνων μοῖραν ἀπαρχσάμενος), IG II² 4320 ([τέχνης] οἰκίας ἔρνος ἀπαρχάμ[ενος]), 4334 (μοῖραν ἀπαρχσάμενη κτεάνων); Hdt., III, 24, 4 (πάντων ἀπαρχόμενοι).

⁴³ Eur., *Meleager*, fr. 516. The fact that Oeneus’ first offerings most probably consisted of animal sacrifices financed by the proceeds of his harvest is supported by Hom., *Il.* IX, 533-536, in which we are told that all other gods save Artemis enjoyed a hecatomb: καὶ γὰρ τοῖσι κακὸν χρυσόθορονος Ἄρτεμις ὥρσε χωσαμένη ὃ οἱ οὐ τι θαλύσια γουνῶ ἀλωῆς Οἶνεύς ῥέξῃ: ἄλλοι δὲ θεοὶ δαίνυνθ’ ἑκατόμβας, οἷη δ’ οὐκ ἔρρεξε Διὸς κούρη μέγαλοιο. Note, however, that Homer uses the word *thalusia* rather than *aparchai*.

⁴⁴ Soph., *Trach.*, 760-762.

instances the word *aparche* refers to the sacrifice offered using a part of a greater source of revenue, but not the part of the victims offered to the gods. There is no Classical example of *aparche* expressing the first portion of sacrificial victims set aside for the gods. The only available example in which the word *aparche* possibly refers to a portion of sacrificial flesh is a newly published *lex sacra* from the city of Patara in Lycia in the Hellenistic period, which requires worshippers who sacrifice to make an *aparche* from each animal to the priest: τοὺς θύοντας | Διὶ Λαβραύνδωι | ἢ τῶν ἐντεμενίων θεῶν τινι | διδόναι τῷ ἱερεὶ ἀπαρχήν | ἄφ' ἐκάστου ἱερέ<ι>ου πλάτα ἴσον.⁴⁵ However, it is uncertain what the obscure phrase πλάτα ἴσον means;⁴⁶ the inscription is post Classical and its usage of the word *aparche* is untypical. In any case, the custom here is different from the customary practice of taking a preliminary portion of hair or flesh to the gods denoted by the act of *aparchesthai*, as this Hellenistic *lex sacra* concerns priestly perquisites rather than the traditional portion for the gods (see n. 58 below). The use of the word *aparche* in relation to contributions to participation in a ritual (here a sacrifice) is a different application in another phenomenon to which I will return at the end. Meanwhile it should be reiterated that there is no Classical example of the word *aparchai* being used to describe the first portions of sacrificial victims offered to the gods.

Sometimes where there is no specification of the origin of an *aparche* (or its synonyms) by a qualifying genitive, the idea of a portion is less obvious and the word may resemble an 'offering' or *anathema*.⁴⁷ A fourth-century *aparche* dedicated by one Bacchios for being 'crowned by his association (*thiasotai*)' seems to be simply a dedication: Β]άχχιος τῇ Ἀθην[ᾱ] | τεῖ Ὀργάνηι ἀπαρχήν | ἀνέθηκεν στεφάνω | θεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν θιασωτῶν.⁴⁸ There are many other examples where the word *aparche* is used without a genitive.⁴⁹ However, in the lack of contextual information (unlike in Bacchios' case), it is difficult to know whether the *aparche* is a first offering or simply an offering without a partial sense; and we cannot rule out the possibility that a genitive is implied and not made explicit.

ἀπάργματα

While Homer uses *argmata*, in the Classical period we find *apargmata* instead of *argmata*. The word *apargmata* is used mostly in the plural⁵⁰ in the same sense as, though much less frequently than, *aparchai*. We have seen that Homer uses the

⁴⁵ ENGELMANN ap. SCHULER (2007), p. 134-135.

⁴⁶ The suggestion in ENGELMANN ap. SCHULER (2007), p. 135, 'die glatte Fläche am Unterleib der Tiere' is far from certain.

⁴⁷ This is neglected by LSJ, s.v. ἀπαρχή.

⁴⁸ IG II² 1939 = 4339; PARKER (2004), p. 275.

⁴⁹ E.g. IG I³ 526, 531, 547, 559, 566, 680, 696, 702, 731, 740, 834, 848, 872.

⁵⁰ The singular *apargma* is used in e.g. I. *Histriae* 101 (see n. 61 below).

word *argmata* in sacrifice only, but in Classical usages *apargmata* can refer to both sacrificial and dedicatory practices. An example of the former may be found in the fifth-century *lex sacra* from Selinus. The inscription stipulates that, for the pure Tritopatores as to the gods, a table and a couch are laid on which are placed olive wreaths, honey mixture in new cups, cakes, and meat. First portions are taken from these (cakes and meat) and placed on the altar where they are burnt together with the cups (πλάσματα καὶ κροῖ ἀπαρξάμενοι κατακαάντο καὶ καταλινάντο τὰς ποτερίδας ἐνθέντες, lines 15-16). For Zeus Meilichios, worshippers are to set out a table, take out the public *hiara*, and burn the thigh, the *apargmata* from the table, and the bones of a ram (προθύμεν καὶ ρολέαν καὶ τὰπὸ τὰς τραπέζας: ἀπάργματα καὶ τὸστέα κα[τα]κῆσαι, line 19).⁵¹ We have here a *theoxenia* where food and drink are set on a table before images of the gods. The rituals of *aparchesthai* in lines 15-16 and taking *apargmata* in line 19 are very likely to be related. Both seem to involve taking samplings of the food on the table⁵² and burning them as first offerings to the gods before the rest is consumed.⁵³

The only appearance of the word in Classical literature is in Aristophanes' *Pax*. After Trygaeus has rescued the goddess Peace and a sacrifice is being prepared, the *chresmologos* Hierocles comes uninvited to claim a share: Ἄγε νῦν ἀπάρχου κᾶτα δὸς τὰπάργματα.⁵⁴ The scholiast on Aristophanes (*Pax*, 1056) reports that ἀπάργματα were the *aparchai* which the priests were accustomed to take: τὰς ἀπαρχάς, ἃς εἰώθασιν οἱ ἱερεῖς λαμβάνειν.⁵⁵ Perhaps influenced by this view, Sommerstein and Olson explain that *apargmata* were offered to the gods and passed on to the priests.⁵⁶ What the *apargmata* would have consisted of in this case is a matter of conjecture: they could have been a portion of the sacrificial flesh by analogy with the *argmata* in Eumaeus' sacrifice seen earlier, or they might have been a portion of the *splanchna* and the tongue which Hierocles shows interest in.⁵⁷ However, as far as the Classical period is concerned,⁵⁸ there is no evidence

⁵¹ IG45MG I² no. 53bis; SEG 43, 630; NGSL 27A. A full commentary is provided by JAMESON, JORDAN and KOTANSKI (1993), DIMARTINO (2003), DUBOIS (2003).

⁵² On *trapezomata*, see GILL (1974).

⁵³ Here I follow LUPU's interpretation of the rituals entailed: see his commentary on NGSL 27A. JAMESON, JORDAN and KOTANSKI (1993) do not comment on what actions are involved in *aparchesthai* (lines 15-16) and taking *apargmata* (line 19).

⁵⁴ Ar., *Pax*, 1056.

⁵⁵ ΣΥΓΓΡ., *Pax*, 1056. cf. Hsch. s.v. θευμορία · ἀπαρχή. θυσία. ἢ ὁ λαμβάνουσιν οἱ ἱερεῖς κρέας, ἐπειδὴν θύηται. θεοῦ μοῖρα.

⁵⁶ SOMMERSTEIN (1985), p. 183, OLSON (1998), p. 270. See also VAN STRATEN (1995), p. 122: '[Hierokles] shows a particular interest in those parts of the victim that, at a sacrifice where a priest officiated, would normally fall to the priest'; but Van Straten does not say whether the *apargmata* in line 1056 are supposed to be priestly portions or not.

⁵⁷ Hom., *Od.* XIV, 446; OLSON (1998), p. 270, thinks that the *apargmata* involve 'the god's share of the *splanchna* and the tongue, which were dedicated to the divinity and then passed on to his or her servant'.

that ἀπαρχαί or ἀπάργματα for the gods would be passed on to the priests or diviners who officiated at the sacrifice. Where priests were allowed the portions intended for the gods, priestly perquisites were variously called ἱερωῶσυνα, τροπεζώματα and γέρα,⁵⁹ but never ἀπάργματα or ἀπαρχαί. When Hierocles claims a share by saying ἄγε νυν ἀπάρχου κᾶτα δὸς τὰπάργματα, the comic effect is to dramatize his greed: the *chresmologoi* were a particular subject for ridicule in Aristophanes. Later in the same scene Hierocles is shown as trying to beg and then snatch unsuccessfully a portion of the wine, the *splanchna* and the tongue.⁶⁰ The passage therefore cannot be taken as evidence for a regular practice of giving *apargmata/aparchai* to sacred officials. It is just another instance where Aristophanes makes a mockery of the greed of seers as *apargmata* were reserved for the gods alone: both *aparchesthai* and *apargmata* in Aristophanes (*Pax*, 1056) refer to the god's share which should *not* go to religious officials.

There are a few attested instances of the word *apargma* in dedicatory inscriptions. A fragmentary roof tile discovered in Histria in Scythia Minor, dedicated to Aphrodite in the sixth century, is inscribed with the word *apargma*.⁶¹ This is probably the earliest epigraphical attestation of the word; and it shows that the word is by no means confined to sacrificial uses. Two Attic vessels found in Ialysos on Rhodes are inscribed with the word; and Martellin notes that the word *apargma*, rarely used elsewhere, seems to denote some local variant of the more common *aparche*.⁶² However, the word *argmata* is also attested elsewhere. For example, a fragmentary fifth-century dedicatory inscription on the Athenian acropolis has been supplemented with the word [ἄρ]γματα or [ἀπάρ]γματα.⁶³

κατάρχεσθαι

We saw earlier in Nestor's sacrifice that *katarchesthai* involves hand-washing and sprinkling barley grains on the animal; the word is used with χέρονιψ and

⁵⁸ The only available piece of evidence which possibly speaks of first portions of sacrificial victims given to the priests is the Hellenistic *lex sacra* in ENGELMANN ap. SCHULER (2007), p. 134-135; the difficulties in using this text have already been mentioned above.

⁵⁹ E.g. *IG* II² 1356, 1359, 1363; *LSAM* 24A; *IG* V 1, 1390; *IG* XII 7, 237; *SEG* 35, 113. On priestly prerogatives, see GILL (1974), p. 127-133, LE GUEN-POLLET (1991), VAN STRATEN (1995), p. 154-155.

⁶⁰ *Ar.*, *Pax*, 1099-1121. See also *Ar.*, *Av.*, 975-976.

⁶¹ *I. Histriae* 101, amended by MORETTI, *RFIC* 111 (1983), p. 55-57 (= *SEG* 33, 582), *SEG* 50, 685, BÎRZESCU (2005), p. 418, no. G8, *Kernos* 22 (2009), p. 217 no. 13. Moretti's interpretation of *apargma* as equivalent to *ἐργων ἀπαρχή*, an offering consisting of a part of the artisan's earnings ('offerta fatta con parte del guadagno che un artigiano ricava col suo lavoro') is problematic; in his footnote he quotes LAZZARINI (1976), p. 88 (on the phrase *ἐργων ἀπαρχή*), but LAZZARINI does not give such an explanation of *apargma*.

⁶² *SEG* 38, 783d (Ἀθαναίας ἀπαργμα Πείσιος ἀνέθεκε), f (Βωλάκριτος : Ἀθαναίαι : ἀπαργμα); MARTELLIN (1988), p. 114. Also quoted in HERDA (2006), p. 244, n. 1739.

⁶³ *IG* I³ 703 = *DAA* no. 284. Note that *IG* I³ 703 has [ἄρ]γματα, whereas *DAA* no. 284 has [ἀπάρ]γματα.

οὐλοχύται in the accusative. However, in later Greek the word is more often followed by a genitive object,⁶⁴ meaning ‘to begin a sacrifice’ or more precisely ‘to begin sacrificing (a particular victim)’. In post-Homeric usages it is not always clear what ritual procedures are comprised in *katarchesthai*, especially when the word is used absolutely without a qualifying object. For example, Herodotus notes that the Scythian custom of sacrifice involves no rite of *katarchesthai*: the sacrificer throws the animal down by pulling the end of a rope, invokes the god, strangles the animal by twisting a rope around its neck; then he skins it and sets about cooking it. There is ‘no fire nor preliminary rites of sacrifice nor libation’ (οὔτε πῦρ ἀνακαύσας οὔτε καταρξάμενος οὔτ’ ἐπισπείσας).⁶⁵ It is the absence of ritual beginning (*katarchesthai*) that Herodotus is remarking on when he compares Scythian and Greek sacrifices; but it is unclear what preliminary rites Herodotus has in mind.⁶⁶ The same ambiguity is found in other absolute usages of the word, where we can only tell that it means ‘to begin a sacrifice’ vaguely without knowing what precisely is involved.⁶⁷

While the above Homeric usage of *katarchesthai* excludes the cutting of some hair, in Classical Greek literature there is one instance which applies the word explicitly to hair-offering. When Thanatos is about to take Alcestis to Hades, he thus explains his actions: στείχω δ’ ἐπ’ αὐτὴν ὡς κατάρξωμαι ξίφει: ἱερὸς γὰρ οὗτος τῶν κατὰ χθονὸς θεῶν ὅτου τὸδ’ ἔγχος κρατὸς ἀγνίσῃ τρίχα.⁶⁸ Here *katarchesthai*, followed by the instrumental dative ξίφει, obviously refers to the opening rite of cutting some hair using the sword.⁶⁹ In another Euripidean passage, however, a different preliminary rite is referred to. The word used for Iphigenia’s priestly duty in Euripides’ *IT* is *katarchesthai*: she was to perform the opening sacrificial rites of the ship-wrecked victims but she left the slaughter to others.⁷⁰ By inference from her sacrificial role described elsewhere in the play, it is evident

⁶⁴ E.g. Hdt., II, 45 (αὐτοῦ κατάρχεσθαι), Ar., *Ar.*, 959 (μὴ κατάρξῃ τοῦ τραγού), Eur., *Phoen.*, 573 (κατάρχεσθαι θυμάτων), Dem., 21, 114 (κατάρχεσθαι τῶν ἱερῶν).

⁶⁵ Hdt., IV, 60.

⁶⁶ MACAN (1895-1908), p. 41, put it vaguely: ‘no beginning with consecration’; HOW and WELLS (1928), vol. 1, p. 326: burning of hair; ASHERI, LLOYD and CORCELLA (2007), p. 626: ‘the sprinkling of lustral water and scattering of barley-grains to consecrate the victim’.

⁶⁷ Absolute usages: e.g. Hdt., IV, 103 (καταρξάμενοι ῥοπάλῳ παίουσι τὴν νεφαλὴν); ASHERI, LLOYD and CORCELLA (2007) do not comment on this word; Eur., *Heracl.*, 529 (στεμματοῦτε καὶ ἑκατάρχεσθ’ εἰ δοκεῖ); And., 1, 126 (ἐκέλευον κατάρξασθαι τὸν Καλλίαν); Ath., fr. 1, 40-43 K.-A.: καταρχόμεθ’ ἡμεῖς οἱ μάγειροι, θύομεν, σπονδὰς ποιούμεν, τῷ μάλιστα τοὺς θεοὺς ἡμῖν ὑπακούειν διὰ τὸ ταῦθ’ εὐρηγέμεναι τὰ μάλιστα συντείνοντα πρὸς τὸ ζῆν καλῶς; MALAY and RICL (2009), p. 40, no. 1, 42-43 (κατάρξετ[αι] ἐπὶ τοῦ βωμοῦ).

⁶⁸ Eur., *Alc.*, 74-76.

⁶⁹ STENGEL (1908) denied that there is any question of a sacrifice here at all; DALE (1954), p. 58, considers the passage untypical in that the terminology of ordinary sacrificial ceremony is applied to the ceremony of death, with Thanatos as the officiating priest; LSJ, *s.v.* κατάρχω, II.b, cite this as an example where the word means ‘sacrifice’ or ‘slay’ (rather than ‘to begin a sacrifice’). PARKER (2007), p. 67, translates line 74: ‘to begin the rites with the sword’.

⁷⁰ The word occurs three times: Eur., *IT*, 40, 56, 1154.

that *katarchesthai* involves the sprinkling of lustral water and possibly barley grains on the victim's head.⁷¹ This coincides with the Homeric use of the word seen earlier.

These different usages have led to scholarly disputes of what the act of *katarchesthai* entails precisely.⁷² It seems reasonable to conclude that the word *katarchesthai* involves no fixed action, and that the preliminary ritual procedure(s) can vary in different sacrificial contexts. Yet the most important distinction between *katarchesthai* and *aparchesthai* is that *aparchesthai* ('taking a portion from a greater whole') can apply to any stage of the sacrifice and any portion (whether hair or flesh, raw or cooked) of the sacrificial victims, whereas *katarchesthai* applies only to the pre-killing stage of the sacrifice and therefore never refers to the sacrificial flesh. Nevertheless, sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between *katarchesthai* and *aparchesthai*. When Aristophanes' Dicaeopolis tells his daughter to put down the basket so that they may begin the sacrifice (ἵν' ἀπαρξώμεθα), the word used is *aparchesthai* where we might expect *katarchesthai*.⁷³ Euripides, by contrast, uses *katarchesthai* in connection with the cutting of Alcestis' hair where we would expect *aparchesthai*.⁷⁴ Therefore, when used absolutely in sacrificial contexts, sometimes the words *katarchesthai* and *aparchesthai* seem to intersect or coincide.⁷⁵ But when followed by a genitive object, the former usually means to perform an initial act – whatever it may be in the pre-killing stage – to the

⁷¹ Sprinkling of water: Eur., *IT*, 53-54, 622; PLATNAUER (1938), p. 64, CROPP (2000), p. 175. Euripides makes no explicit mention of the procedure of scattering barley grains (οὐλογύται or οὐλάει) on the victims' head; but it is possible that this also formed part of Iphigenia's duty as the two acts were customarily performed together in Greek sacrifice: see e.g. Hom., *Od.* III, 444-446, Ar., *Pax*, 948-962, Ar., *Av.*, 850, Eur., *IA*, 1568-1569, VAN STRATEN (1995), p. 31-40. Note also the noun κατάργματα in Eur., *IT*, 244: χέρνιβας δὲ καὶ κατάργματα οὐκ ἂν φθάνοις ἂν εὐτρεπῇ ποιουμένη. The κατάργματα seem to refer to barley grain here; but since this word is otherwise unattested in the Classical period (later in Plut., *Thes.*, 22, 5), it is not entirely clear what it signifies precisely. See also LSJ *s.v.* κατάργματα: 'first offerings'. Etymologically related to κατάρχεσθαι and κατάργματα is the noun καταρχή, attested in religious use only in *IG* II² 1359 (= *LSCG* 29), and its meaning remains obscure. LSJ, *s.v.* καταρχή. III, explain this as 'the part of the victim first offered'; but the fact that the word is derived from *katarchesthai* (a pre-killing rite) makes it unlikely that the flesh of the victim is involved, unless the hair is meant, which is unlikely in this context.

⁷² Hair-cutting: Hsch. *s.v.* κατάρχεσθαι τοῦ ἱερείου τῶν τριχῶν ἀποσπάσαι; Phot. *s.v.* κατάρχεσθαι τῶν τριχῶν ἀπαρξασθαι τοῦ ἱερείου; LSJ, *s.v.* κατάρχω, II.2.a; PARKER (2005), p. 97 n. 25. Lustration and scattering of grains only: STENGEL (1908). Hair-cutting, lustration, and scattering of grains: DENNISTON (1939), p. 148, JAMESON (1949), p. 56, DUNBAR (1995), p. 541-542, on Ar., *Av.*, 959, PARKER (2011), p. 134-135, 161.

⁷³ Ar., *Ach.*, 244.

⁷⁴ Eur., *Alc.*, 74-76.

⁷⁵ Absolute use: *katarchesthai*: e.g. Hdt., IV, 60, 103, Andoc., 1, 126; *aparchesthai*: Ar., *Ach.*, 244.

sacrificial victim,⁷⁶ while the latter means to offer a preliminary portion of a greater whole.⁷⁷

ἐπάρχεσθαι and ἐπαρχή

Homer uses the word *eparchesthai* in rituals of drinking;⁷⁸ after Homer, the word *eparchesthai* and its cognate verb *eparche* were used in another context with very different connotations. In the Classical and Hellenistic periods, the words *eparche* and *eparchesthai*, along with *aparche* and *aparchesthai*, were used in cult finance to signify ‘a religious payment’ (often in cash, occasionally in kind) and ‘to make a religious payment’ to the gods. In *leges sacrae* the words may be used in connection with cult fees, taxes, and contributions required of individuals or groups of individuals to increase sacred revenue. Two types of *a/eparchai* may be identified: first, cult fees payable for the use of cult utilities and services such as for sacrificing and healing;⁷⁹ and second, obligatory contributions imposed on certain classes of individuals such as shipowners, office-holders and land-holders.⁸⁰ For example, a regulation in c. 432 BC, which concerns a cult at Piraeus,⁸¹ requires shipowners who dock along Phaleron to pay a drachma each per ship as an *a/eparche*.⁸² Two fourth-century inscriptions concerning the cult of Amphiarus in

⁷⁶ *Katarchesthai* with a genitive object: e.g. Hdt., II, 45 (αὐτοῦ πρὸς τῷ βωμῷ κατάρχοντο), Eur., *Phoen.*, 573 (κατάρχει θυμάτων), Ar., *An.*, 959 (Μὴ κατάρχει τοῦ τράγου), Dem., 21, 114 (κατάρχεσθαι τῶν ἱερῶν).

⁷⁷ *Aparchesthai* with a genitive object: e.g. Hdt., IV, 61; IV, 188; Eur., *El.*, 91.

⁷⁸ Homer uses the word *eparchesthai* in connection with preliminary rituals of drinking, meaning ‘to pour the first drops (into the cups) before a libation’. It is used seven times in Homer and always appears in the formula ἐπάρχεσθαι δεπάεσσιν, an expression not found in later Greek literature. See Hom., *Il.* I, 471, IX, 176, *Od.* III, 340, VII, 183, XVIII, 418, XXI, 263, 272. See also LSJ, s.v. ἐπάρχεσθαι II.1. The partial sense is present in the Homeric *eparchesthai*: it signifies also the offering of a first portion of a greater whole (of wine).

⁷⁹ Sacrifice: e.g. *LSCG* 88 (c. 230?), PARKER and OBBINK (2000), no. 1, 10-12 (c. 125?) (= *SEG* 50, 766), PARKER and OBBINK (2001), no. 4A (1st century) (= *SEG* 51, 1066), *LSS* 72 (1st century), ENGELMANN ap. SCHULER (2007), p. 134-135 (Hellenistic). Healing: PETRAKOS (1997), nos. 276 (= *LSS* 35), 277 (= RO 27).

⁸⁰ E.g. *SEG* 16, 182 (early 4th century, women getting married), Xen., *An.* V, 3, 13 (4th century, tenants of sacred land), *LSCG* 134 = *IG* XII 3, 436 (4th century, possibly tenants of sacred land), *IG* II² 1215 (early 3rd century, office-holders), PARKER and OBBINK (2000), no. 1 (c. 125?, freedmen, fishermen, shipowners) (= *SEG* 50, 766), PARKER and OBBINK (2001), no. 6, 85-88 (early 2nd century, contractors) (= *SEG* 51, 1062).

⁸¹ SCHLAIFER (1940), p. 234, suggested Zeus Soter. LEWIS (1960) suggested Apollo Delios; followed by GARLAND (1992), p. 110-111. LEWIS’ view is questioned by MATTINGLY (1990), p. 112-113 (= *SEG* 40, 10), who proposes τὸς δὲ λῖ[θος] instead of τὸς Δελ[ιος] in line 19; the reference to stones suits the context of temple-building here. MATTINGLY supposes Zeus Soter to be the god concerned here. However, both τὸς Δελ[ιος] and τὸς δὲ λῖ[θος] are rejected by MATTHAIIOU (2000-03) (= *SEG* 51, 31) on the basis of autopsy, who reports that the letter following the lambda is not an iota, but another lambda, so that line 19 should read τὸς δ’ ΕΛΛ[.....].

⁸² *IG* I³ 130; both words *aparche* (line 7) and *eparche* (line 18) are used in this inscription.

Oropus prescribe a fee called *eparche* for those who come to be cured by the god.⁸³ At the beginning of the third century, office-holders in an unidentified deme in Attica were required to pay an *eparche* εἰς τὴν οἰκοδομίαν τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ τῶν ἀναθημάτων.⁸⁴ It is in this context that the word *aparche* is used in the above-mentioned Hellenistic *lex sacra* from Patara in Lycia: apparently it refers to a portion of sacrificial flesh payable by those who sacrifice to the priest as a fee, but not to the customary preliminary portions set aside for the gods.⁸⁵ It should also be noted that as far as cult fees and taxes are concerned, both forms *aparche/aparchesthai* and *eparche/eparchesthai* are used; and in some instances both forms appear concurrently in the same text.⁸⁶ But it is only in the context of cult finance, and never in sacrificial or dedicatory practices, that the forms *eparchai* and *eparchesthai* are used. The confusion between the two similar-sounding *aparchai/aparchesthai* and *eparchai/eparchesthai* may be facilitated by the presence of the word *eparchesthai* in Homer, where it is used in connection with a very different ritual, namely rituals of drinking, which is not relevant to us here.⁸⁷

I mentioned at the very beginning that the words *aparche* and *aparchesthai* carry two connotations: a portion from a greater whole, and a preliminary offering expressing the priority of the gods. We have seen that the two notions are present in both sacrificial and dedicatory applications of the words, that is, except in some cases where *aparche* is used without a qualifying genitive, in which case the idea of a portion is less obvious and the word *aparche* may have a general sense of ‘offering’ or *anathema*. It is only in the last usage, in the sphere of sacred finance, that both notions of the ‘preliminary’ and the ‘portion’ are absent altogether in the words *a/eparche* and *a/eparchesthai*. And yet the word *a/eparche* still retains its religious character in cult finance. These *a/eparchai* and acts of *a/eparchesthai* are markedly different from the traditional *aparchai* and *aparchesthai* in two respects: most of them are obligatory payments rather than occasional voluntary gifts to the gods;⁸⁸ they are simply ‘offerings’ or ‘cult payments’ rather than ‘first part offerings’, with a much weakened connotation of a ‘first portion’. Therefore there seems to be a diminished awareness of the partial connotation of the word over time, as reflected in the replacement of the prefix *apo* with *epi*.

⁸³ PETRAKOS (1997), nos. 276 (= *LSS* 35), 277 (= *RO* 27). In no. 276 the word is supplemented by PETROPOULOU (1981), p. 40-42.

⁸⁴ *IG* II² 1215.

⁸⁵ ENGELMANN ap. SCHULER (2007), p. 134-135.

⁸⁶ E.g. *IG* I³ 130, 7 (*aparche*), 18 (*eparche*); *IG* II² 1672, 182 (*eparche*), 263 (*eparche*), 288 (*eparche*), 297 (*aparche*).

⁸⁷ See n. 78.

⁸⁸ Not all religious payments of *aparche/eparchai* are compulsory: e.g. the *eparchai* in *CID* II 1, 3, 4 are voluntary contributions for the re-building of the temple of Apollo in Delphi.

Conclusion

The semantic survey of the use of *aparchai*, *aparchesthai* and related terms shows that the vocabulary of ‘first portion’ could be used in relation to sacrifice, dedications, hair-offerings from humans, and sacred finance. Particularly interesting and noteworthy is the fact that the word *aparchesthai* can apply to both sacrificial and dedicatory practices to denote two seemingly different acts: the act of offering sacrificial portions and of bringing first offerings as dedications to the gods. I hope it has become apparent by now that the two are not as entirely unrelated as they may appear to be at first sight: both acts set aside a portion as a symbolic offering, both express the precedence accorded to the gods over men. And yet it is with rather different forces that the word *aparchesthai* is used in these two contexts: in animal sacrifice the act of *aparchesthai*, whether applied to the hair or the flesh, anticipates the offering of the whole animal to the gods. The preliminary portions of hair and flesh may be seen as symbolizing, but are by no means identical to, the gods’ portion, since the gods were subsequently presented with the whole sacrificial animal rather than just locks of hair and bits of meat. By contrast, in dedicatory practices *aparchesthai* and *aparchai* refer to the portions assigned to the gods and the rest is retained for human utilization. Generally, the *aparche* acknowledges the superiority of the recipient over the dedicant; but the offering of a part has no effect on the whole in this case.⁸⁹ The claim that the part offered renders the rest of the food or objects ‘holy’, ‘safe’ or ‘permissible’ for human consumption by lifting the ‘taboo’ is a misconception indiscriminately applied to Greek religion from other cultures by some anthropologists.⁹⁰ However, unlike the hair-offering from a sacrificial animal, the offering of a lock of hair by humans in funeral rites or rites of maturation had no effect on the rest of the individual despite the intersection between the two practices. The hair offered may be considered as a token of the whole person, who is not sacrificed.

Therefore, the vocabularies of ‘first offerings’ relate, intersect with, and diverge from each other in different contexts. One way of expressing the complex relation between these terms is to see *aparchesthai* as poised midway between *katarchesthai* and *aparche*: the verb *katarchesthai* features only in sacrificial procedures but never dedications, whereas the noun *aparchai* is used predominantly in dedications and very rarely with reference to animal sacrifice. On the other hand, *aparchesthai* can apply to both sacrificial and dedicatory practices; so too can the noun *apargmata* though the latter is used much less frequently. Nevertheless, despite these general trends, sometimes there is a degree of imprecision in the usage of these terms. As its various usages overlap and the

⁸⁹ JAMESON (1949), *passim*, emphasized that a *thusia* offered the whole sacrificial animal to the god, in contrast to *aparchai* in meals which were ‘part offerings’ in nature.

⁹⁰ On the notion of ‘taboo’ on food, see e.g. FRAZER (1911-15), vol. 3, p. 5, 102; vol. 4, p. 101-2; vol. 8, p. 56-58; HARRISON (1903), p. 83.

distinction between them is elusive, the notion of *aparchesthai* is sufficiently fluid to allow the Greeks to use the word with varying emphases in different contexts. Thus Theophrastus uses *aparchesthai* interchangeably with *thuein*, deliberately blurring the distinction between the two in his attempt to elevate bloodless offerings above animal sacrifice. It is the fluidity of the notion of *aparchesthai* which allowed Theophrastus to conflate *aparchesthai* with *thuein* for his purpose. The way in which imprecision or malleability gave the concept religious potency is one of the most interesting observations.

Theodora Suk Fong JIM

St. Antony's College,
OXFORD, OX2 6JF
E-mail: suk.jim@classics.ox.ac.uk

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