

THE RAZING OF THE HOUSE IN GREEK SOCIETY*

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Aesop, you seem to me to think of a house as a construction of clay and wood and tiles—as if you believed a snail was the shell and not the living creature.

Anacharsis in Plutarch's *Conversation of the Seven Wise Men*, *Moralia* 155b

Historians in recent years have become increasingly aware of the extent to which many cultures attach symbolic significance to human dwelling places. P. Bourdieu, for example, in the *Mélanges offerts à Claude Lévi-Strauss* (1971) has discussed the symbolic role of the Berber house as a transformation of the exterior world, and Emmanuel Leroy Ladurie has pointed out in *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error* (transl. B. Bray, 1978) how thoroughly the concept of the *domus* permeated the *mentalité* of the residents of Montaillou. Ancient historians are not surprised by these observations, for the importance of the *oikos* in ancient Greece, an importance that goes far beyond the needs for physical shelter and comfort, is well known. As one might expect in such a culture, the destruction of dwelling places was especially awesome and charged with symbolic as well as practical meaning. One form of such destruction, called by the Greeks *kataskaphê*, provides valuable insights into the culture of ancient Greece. This essay investigates some of the practices comprised by this term, examining in special detail a group of passages concerned with the *kataskaphê* of houses, and then looking more selectively at accounts of the *kataskaphê* of walls and whole cities.¹ Although

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¹ In some authors ἀνατρέπω and its cognates are used in a similar sense: Aeschylus *Eumenides* 355, Euripides *Phoenissae* 888 (cf. 884), Plato *Protagoras* 325c, *Republic* 471b (cf. *Politicus* 302a) and Plutarch *Timoleon* 22.2 (T11, below) and *Moralia* 458c. Cf.

much of the evidence concerning these practices comes from legal texts, the writings of the ancient historians, scholia and the like, Greek poetry also illumines and is illumined by an understanding of the practice of *kataskaphê*. In bringing together this evidence the goal is to determine the place and function of the practice in ancient Greek society, without breaking it away from "those rites, practices, symbols, beliefs and institutions which to villagers and city dwellers constitute[d] a whole."²

I

Eleven passages, hitherto only partially gathered together and explicated, describe the *kataskaphai* of houses in archaic and classical Greece. It will be convenient to summarize the passages, identifying each with a number for ease of reference, before going on to examine the similarities and differences among them.

T1. Plutarch in his essay *The Dinner of the Seven Wise Men* (*Moralia* 162Bff.) tells of the murder of Hesiod and his servant Troilus near the temple of Zeus Nemeios in Locris. Dolphins brought the body of Hesiod to the shore and thereby led to the discovery of the murderers. The Locrians who were gathered at a festival "held all else to be of secondary importance in comparison with investigating the murder . . . discovered the murderers, sank them alive in the sea, and razed their house to the ground" (αὐτοὺς τε γὰρ κατεπόντισαν ζῶντας καὶ τὴν οἰκίαν κατέσκαψαν; 162E, transl. F. C. Babbitt).³

Alcaeus 141 L-P, Archilochus 130 West, and Aristophanes *Wasps* 671. Ἀναστρέφω and ἐξαναστρέφω have a similar sense in Sophocles fr. 727 Pearson, Aeschylus *Persae* 813, and Aristophanes *Birds* 1240.

The *kataskaphê* of walls and cities is briefly discussed in the final section of this paper. On the *kataskaphê* of sanctuaries see Lycurgus *Against Leocrates* 1.147, Arrian 7.14.5, Polybius 4.67.3 (cf. 4.62.2, 4.81.1 and 16.1.6, Sozomen *H.E.* Migne PG 67, col. 948.

² N. Z. Davis, "Some Tasks and Themes in the Study of Popular Religion," in *Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion*, ed. Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden 1974) 312.

³ Cf. Pausanias 9.31.6. On the murder of Hesiod, see W. Burkert, *Homo Necans* (New York 1972) 218–26, M. L. West, "The Contest of Homer and Hesiod," *CQ* 17 (1967) 446, and O. Friedel, "Die Sage vom Tode Hesiods," *Jahrbücher für classische Philologie* Suppl. 10 (Leipzig 1878–79) 235–78. The history of the cult of Hesiod at Orchomenos is discussed in Paul Wallace, "The Tomb of Hesiod and the Treasury of Minyas at Orchomenos," forthcoming. See also M. Lefkowitz, *Lives of Greek Poets* (London 1981) 4ff.

Ruth Scodel, "Hesiod Redivivus," *GRBS* 21 (1980) 301–20, suggests that in the fifth century B.C. Hesiod was grouped with wonder workers and shamans and some poets. If this is correct, Plutarch *Numa* 4 has cause for grouping Hesiod's death with that of Archilochus (cf. Galen *Protrepticus* 9.10, Aelian fr. 80 [*Suda* A 4112 s.v. Archilochos], and Plutarch *Moralia* 560E). The death of such an inspired person might be regarded as a form of "aggravated murder" and hence subject to especially severe punishment.

T2. Nicolaus of Damascus (*FGrH* 90 F 60 = *Exc. de insidiis* p. 22.4) says that Cypselus was the successor to Periander in the rule of Corinth, but that after a short time certain Corinthians killed him and liberated the city. The citizenry then “razed the houses of the tyrants and confiscated their property, threw Cypselus, unburied, over the border, and digging up the bones of his ancestors cast them out” (ὁ δὲ δῆμος τὰς τε οἰκίας τῶν τυράννων κατέσκαψεν καὶ τὰς οὐσίας ἐδήμευσεν ἄταφόν τε ἐξώρισε τὸν Κύψελον . . .).⁴

T3. A Locrian law of approximately the last quarter of the sixth century B.C. (Meiggs-Lewis 13) specifies *kataskaphê* as a penalty in certain cases. The text is difficult to interpret, but Meiggs and Lewis translate the relevant portion as “Unless under the pressure of war a majority of 101 men chosen from the best citizens decide to bring in at least 200 fighting men as additional settlers, whoever . . . proposes a division or puts it to vote in the council of elders or in the city or in the select-men, he himself and his family shall be accursed for all time, his property shall be confiscated and his house demolished just as under the law about murder” (αὐτὸς μὲν φερρέτο καὶ γενεὰ ἅματα πάντα, χρήματα δὲ δαμεύσθον καὶ φοικία κατασκαπτέσθον κατὰ τὸν ἀνδροφονικὸν τετθμόν).⁵

T4. Isocrates’ speech *Concerning the Team of Horses* (16.26) alleges that the Pisistratids so hated the Alcmaeonids that they not only razed their houses (τὰς οἰκίας αὐτῶν κατέσκαπτον) but also dug up their graves.⁶

T5. The scholia on Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 273 assert that the Athenian supporters of King Cleomenes of Sparta after their forced withdrawal from Athens in 506 B.C. seized Eleusis. The houses of these Athenians were razed and their property confiscated. They were condemned to death. The Athenians inscribed their decision on a bronze stele on the Acropolis.⁷

⁴ See Jacoby’s commentary ad loc. and D. E. W. Wormell, “Studies in Greek Tyranny I: The Cypselids,” *Hermathena* 66 (1945) 18–24. S. I. Oost argued in *CP* 67 (1972) 10–30 that Cypselus ruled as a restored Bacchiad king, not as a tyrant. There may be a similarity to the prohibition on land reform in T3: for the evidence that the Cypselids redistributed land see E. Will, *Corinthiaka* (Paris 1955) 477–81.

⁵ In addition to the bibliography given by Meiggs and Lewis see K. Latte, “Beiträge zum griechischen Staufrecht II,” *Hermes* 66 (1931), esp. 142–44.

⁶ Although many sources mention the exile of the Alcmaeonids for their actions against the Cylonian conspirators, Isocrates is the only author to allude to the *kataskaphê* of their homes. Plutarch *Solon* 12 reports that after a trial of the *enagéis* the living were exiled and the bodies of the dead were thrown beyond the borders of Attica. On the Cylonian conspiracy and its aftermath see most recently E. Levy, “Notes sur la chronologie athénienne au VI^e siècle,” *Historia* 27 (1978) 513–21.

⁷ Wilamowitz argued (*Aus Kydathen*, *Philologus* Suppl. 1 [1880] 71ff.) that Craterus was the likely source for this scholion. Herodotus 5.72f. indicates that Cleomenes and his

T6. Herodotus 6.72 says that when King Leotychidas of Sparta was convicted of having accepted bribes on an expedition in the 470s B.C. he fled Sparta and lived in exile at Tegea. His house was razed (καὶ τὰ οἰκία οἱ κατεσκάφη).⁸

T7. Thucydides 5.63 indicates that after the Argive campaign of 418 B.C. the Spartans decided to punish King Agis with the razing of his house and a 10,000 drachma fine. Agis was able to persuade them not to do either of these, but a law was passed requiring ten Spartiates to accompany him on subsequent expeditions.

T8. Diodorus 12.78.5 alleges that the Argives at the same time were enraged at their commanders and attempted to kill them by stoning. After entreaties were made they allowed the leaders to live, but confiscated their property and razed their houses.⁹

T9. Craterus *FGrH* 342 F 17, quoted in the scholia to Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 313, states that in 411/0 the Athenians voted to confiscate the property of Phrynichus, with a tithe for the goddess, and to raze his house. Many other matters against him were inscribed on a bronze stele.¹⁰

T10. Craterus *FGrH* 342 F 5, cited in pseudo-Plutarch, *Lives of the Ten Orators* (*Moralia* 834A), gives the text of a long decree passed in 411/0 B.C. in which the Athenians condemned Antiphon and Arche-

Spartans were allowed to withdraw from Athens under a truce but that the Athenians with Cleomenes were put to death. The *Athēnaiōn Politeia* 20.3 says that Cleomenes and "all those with him" were released under the truce. Isagoras himself, in any event, was not put to death (Herodotus 5.74.1). Thus he may not have joined the faction holding Eleusis and hence avoided the condemnation reported in the decree cited in the scholia to Aristophanes. This would account for the discovery of a son of Isagoras on an Agora sherd, possibly an ostrakon (P 31076, called to my attention by John Camp). Those who joined Cleomenes at Eleusis were perhaps subject to more severe punishments in light of their continued collaboration with the Spartans. Among the modern discussions see especially P. J. Rhodes' commentary on *Ath. Pol.* 20.3, H. T. Wade-Gery, "The Laws of Cleisthenes," *CQ* 27 (1933) 18ff. = *Essays in Greek History* (Oxford 1958) 136–39; D. J. McCargar, *Historia* 25 (1976) 389f.; P. L. Usteri, *Aechtung und Verbannung im gr. Recht* (Diss. Zürich 1903) 53.

⁸ On the historical implications of this passage see Appendix.

⁹ The resemblance between this episode and that reported from the same year in Thucydides (T7) gives rise to the suspicion that Diodorus' story has been colored by details drawn from Thucydides.

¹⁰ No other source mentions the *kataskaphê* of Phrynichus' house, but the account in Lycurgus 1.112–15 mentions other items (removal of the bones etc.) that indicate the intensity of feeling against Phrynichus and are also associated with the punishment of *kataskaphê*. There are useful recent discussions of the death of Phrynichus in Andrewes et al., *Historical Commentary on Thucydides Book VIII* on 8.92, and R. Meiggs and D. M. Lewis, *Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Oxford 1969) 262f.

ptolemus on a charge of treason. The penalties included, in addition to death, confiscation of property, razing of their houses, setting up of *horoi* with the inscription “of Archeptolemus and Antiphon the traitors,” denial of burial within areas controlled by Athens, and *atimia* for the two traitors and their descendants. This decree was also written up on a bronze stele placed next to that condemning Phrynichus (T9).¹¹

T11. Plutarch *Timoleon* 22.1–3 describes the measures taken against the houses of the Syracusan tyrants after the liberation of 343/2 B.C. Timoleon “made proclamation that all Syracusans who wished should come with implements of iron and help in the demolition of the tyrants’ bulwarks. And when they had all come up, considering that day with its proclamation to be a most secure beginning of freedom, they overthrew and demolished not only the citadel, but also the palaces and tombs of the tyrants” (. . . καὶ τὰς οἰκίας καὶ τὰ μνήματα τῶν τυράννων ἀνέτρεψαν καὶ κατέσκαψαν; transl. B. Perrin). Timoleon restored the democracy and used the site for law courts.¹²

These passages are clearly of varied nature and reliability. The earliest alleged instance of the razing of a house comes in a legendary or aetiological context, the punishment of Hesiod’s murderers. Several other passages (e.g. T2, T4, and T8) may be misinformed or distorted. But the others provide ample evidence of the *kataskaphê* of the house as punishment for major offences. The allusion to the Locrian law of murder in T3, moreover, indicates that *kataskaphê* was sometimes used in the punishment of murderers; hence the punishment may have seemed a plausible one to the originators of the story about Hesiod’s death. Similar considerations apply to the accounts in T2, T4, and T8: in each case we may doubt the historicity of the version but can recognize that the punishment was well known.

Although in some cases the action of an individual (T4, T11) or a crowd (T2, T8), without formal legal sanction, may be implied, the punishment is also found in legal contexts as in T3, T9, and T10. Indeed it is part of a repertoire of penalties for crimes such as murder (T3), subversion (T3), treason (T9, T10), and the misconduct of military expeditions (T6, T7, T8). One would not be surprised to find it formally stated as part of the punishment for tyranny (cf. T2, T11).

¹¹ Jacoby’s commentary on this passage is especially valuable, as are the remarks in Andrewes et al. (above, note 10) 197. The anonymous life of the historian Thucydides, sec. 2, says that Onomacles’ house also suffered *kataskaphê*.

¹² *Kataskaphê* and its cognates are also applied to Timoleon’s destruction of the tyrant’s buildings in Plutarch *Timoleon* 24.1 and 39.3 and Diodorus Siculus 16.70.4. Cf. Nepos *Timoleon* 3.3. In Plutarch *Dion* 53 and *Comp. Dion and Brutus* 2.2 Dion is said to have been criticized for not razing the tomb of Dionysius of Syracuse.

Kataskaphê, moreover, is always mentioned in connection with some other punishment, as the following tabulation indicates:

Denial of normal burial	
<i>katapontismos</i> :	T1
no burial within the state:	T2, T10
destruction of tombs or removal	
of bones of ancestors:	T2, T4, T11
Confiscation of property:	T2, T3, T5, T8, T9, T10
tithe mentioned:	T9, T10
Exile:	T6
Curse:	T3 (cf. T10)
Fine:	T7

Since the laws governing *kataskaphê* and the inscriptions noting the individual cases punished in this way were often of bronze (T3, T5, T9, T10), and since bronze was a valuable commodity often melted down and sold or reused, our testimonia are likely to represent only a small portion of the instances of this punishment in antiquity.¹³ Generalizations must therefore be made with great caution. For example, although our testimonia indicate the punishment of razing the house was used in Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Syracuse, and Locris, we do not hear of it in Arcadia, Achaea, Elis, Aetolia, Crete, Cyprus, or the Greek cities of Asia Minor and the adjoining coast line.¹⁴ Whether the geographical distribution of our evidence corresponds to a localization of the practice in ancient Greece cannot be determined with confidence, but *kataskaphê* may have been avoided in some of these areas.¹⁵ The punishment is

¹³ T5, T9, T10. T3 is a bronze plaque. Bronze seems often to have been used in cases where religious matters were involved, Pollux 8.128. Cf. W. S. Ferguson in *Mélanges Glotz* II (Paris 1932) 355 and R. Stroud, *Hesperia* 32 (1963) 38–43, esp. notes 1 and 8. See also Demosthenes 9.41 and Dinarchus 2.24 (Arthmius of Zeleia case). The stele on the Acropolis condemning the Pisistratids may also have been of bronze; see G. Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte* (Gotha 1895) 2.398, note 2. On the melting down of a bronze statue for use as a decree of condemnation see Lycurgus 1.117–19.

¹⁴ On regional variations in Greek law, see M. I. Finley, "The Problem of the Unity of Greek Law," *Use and Abuse of History* (London 1975) 134–52. B. Bravo, "Συλάν," *Annali di Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* Ser. 3, 10 (1980) 971–73, suggests that there was not a great multiplicity of legal practices among the Greeks, but two great domains, at least as far as the treatment of strangers is concerned. In one area, comprising Crete and Aetolia, it was considered legitimate to plunder an outsider unless he was protected by a grant of *asulia*. In the other, the majority of Greek cities, such conduct was not normally approved.

¹⁵ In the Mantinean judgment against persons found guilty of murder in the temple of Athena Alea confiscation of their houses, but not *kataskaphê*, is specified: C. D. Buck, *Greek Dialects* (Chicago 1955) no. 17, p. 198f. In this case one would expect the razing of the house; the absence of this penalty perhaps suggests that Arcadian law avoided this punishment. See also Xenophon *H.G.* 5.2.5. There must have been some evidence about

attested in both the archaic and classical periods but not in Homer or the Hellenistic period. Its absence from the Homeric poems may be due to the growth of these poems in regions where the practice was not common.¹⁶ Many alternative explanations are possible; for example it has been suggested that the practice was limited to the period of the flourishing of the polis, in which the citizen participated in the city by virtue of membership in an *oikos*. But the presence of the practice in other cultures and the problems of the preservation of evidence compel caution, especially for the early period of Greek society, in which the *oikos* was likely to be of great importance, even though the full polis organization had not yet appeared. In the Hellenistic period, the *kata-skaphê* of individual houses is rarely attested, but one does hear of continued examples of the *kataskaphê* of walls, shrines, and even of whole cities. In some cases the language used may be devoid of the rich connotations of the archaic and classical age, but the allusions to these forms of *kataskaphê* require some discussion in a later section of this paper.

The sources do not make clear precisely what happened in a *kata-skaphê*. Since the word is etymologically related to *skaptô*, dig, and since physical demolition is implied in T11, we should probably imagine the actual removal of some or all of the foundation of the house,¹⁷ perhaps in some cases after its burning.¹⁸ Once the rubble was levelled or removed the site would be available for new uses, such as the construction of law courts mentioned in T11.¹⁹ To judge from Euripides *Hecuba*

the house of the tyrant Polycrates if the story in Suetonius *Gaius* 21.4 is true that Caligula planned to restore or rebuild (*restituere*) the house. The house of the tyrant Cleon of Sicyon was known to Pausanias (2.8.1). Cf. note 23 below.

¹⁶ The Homeric poems also de-emphasize or are unaware of the infectiousness of offences that in other ancient sources are said to result in pollution, of the existence of *kômoi*, and of most forms of Greek ecstatic religion. See E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951) 35–37.

¹⁷ Note the references to the *makella*, the pick, of Zeus in Aeschylus *Agamemnon* 525f., Aristophanes *Birds* 1240, and Sophocles fr. 727 Pearson in contexts relating to the destruction of houses or families; and cf. Athenaeus 13.585D. On the *dikella* see Euripides *Phoenissae* 1155 and *Herakles Mainomenos* 944.

¹⁸ Note the association of burning with *kataskaphê* in passages such as Sophocles *Oedipus Col.* 1318, Euripides *Helen* 196f., *Rhesus* 391 (cf. 603), and Pausanias 8.27.16. See also note 29 below.

¹⁹ The reuse of the site for another building is not paralleled in other testimonia concerning Greece. The purpose of the *horoi* in T10 is perhaps to warn people away from a potentially dangerous spot and thereby to make the site a permanent marker of the community's action against treasonous activities.

Building F in the southwest corner of the Athenian Agora has sometimes been thought to have been the residence of the Pisistratid tyrants. Some rooms were destroyed in the late sixth century (or possible later) to make way for the old bouleuterion. Later the Tholos replaced the building complex. It is not clear, however, that a *kataskaphê* was

22, the hearth of the house might be a special—and awesome—part of the destruction.²⁰ As Gustav Glotz said:²¹

To overthrow this house, to demolish this altar (within it), is a punishment which strikes at the same time at the living generation and at all the line of dead ancestors and of descendants yet to be born.

Glotz's comment helps explain the attitude of those Greeks who utilized this punishment and its link to other penalties such as the denial of burial (T2) and the throwing out of the bones of ancestors (T4). It was clearly a very severe action.²² While minor crimes and offences do not seem to have called forth demands for *kataskaphê*, murders (T1, T3), tyranny (T2, T11), and betraying one's country for profit (T6), which Pausanias calls the most impious of all crimes, *τολμημάτων δὲ τὸ ἀνοσιώτατον* (7.10.1), are often associated with this penalty.²³ If, as seems likely, the punishment connotes the extirpation of the individual and his immediate kin from the society, then it would be especially appropriate in cases such as treason, in which divine anger might be anticipated. Lycurgus in his speech *Against Leocrates* (1.129) gives a clear indication of one Greek attitude to cases of treason: "Even divine assistance is not vouchsafed to traitors. And it is right that it should not be; for impiety towards the gods is the first crime by which they show their wickedness, since they deprive them of their traditional cults" (transl. J. O. Burt).

involved. See J. S. Boersma, *Athenian Building Policy from 561/0 to 405/4* (Groningen 1970) 16f. and notes 190–202.

In Rome the reutilization of such sites is better attested. Cicero's house was destroyed and a shrine of Libertas erected on the spot (see Cicero *de Domo*, esp. 100–116, and Nisbet's edition, esp. Appendix V, 206–210). Marcus Manlius' house was made into a shrine of Moneta (Plutarch *Camillus* 36, Valerius Maximus 6.3.1, cf. Plutarch *Publicola* 10). A possible parallel from Magna Graecia is Pausanias 6.13.1: the house of Astylus of Croton converted into a prison; but again, *kataskaphê* is not certain in this case.

²⁰ For the association of the hearth with the pollution of a house or family, see also Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 967, *Eumenides* 169, Euripides *Herakles Mainomenos* 923ff., and Wilamowitz ad loc. Cf. Plutarch *Phocion* 37. For a Roman parallel, see Plutarch *Cicero* 47. Cf. also J.-P. Vernant, *Mythe et pensée chez les grecs* (Paris 1969²) 97–143.

²¹ G. Glotz, *La Solidarité de la famille dans le droit criminel en Grèce* (Paris 1904) 477.

²² Note, however, the lists of punishments in Plato *Gorgias* 473bf. and *Republic* 361E, Aeschylus *Eumenides* 186–90, and Plutarch *Moralia* 1057Df.

²³ The *kataskaphê* of the house is not, however, mentioned in several cases where one might expect it: against Cylon or his supporters, against the Pisistratids and Hipparchus son of Charmus (Lycurgus 1.117), Themistocles (Aelian *V.H.* 10.17; Plutarch *Themistocles* 25), Arthmius of Zeleia (*FGrH* 342 F 16 with Jacoby's commentary), Callias (Demosthenes 19.273), Diagoras the atheist (see F. Jacoby, *Diagoras ho atheos* [Abhandlungen der deutschen Akademie . . . zu Berlin, Klasse für Sprachen, Literatur und Kunst, 1959 nr. 3] 4), in Cannonus' decree (Xenophon *H.G.* 1.7.20), against Cinadon (Xenophon *H.G.* 3.3.11), and in the case of Critias (Xenophon *H.G.* 2.4.8). Note also the sparing of Pindar's house from the general *kataskaphê* of Thebes: Arrian 1.9.10. Cf. above, note 15.

Thus we will not be surprised to find complementarity between the practice of *kataskaphê* and certain Greek curses. For example in the Amphictyonic oath cited by Aeschines after his description of the *kataskaphê* in the First Sacred War:²⁴

If anyone should violate this . . . whether city or private man, or tribe, let them be under the curse . . . of Apollo and Artemis and Leto and Athena Pronaea. . . . That their land bear no fruit; that their wives bear children not like those who begat them, but monsters; that their flocks yield not their natural increase; that defeat await them in camp and court and marketplace and that they perish utterly themselves, their houses and their whole line. . . .

Indeed, in the earliest securely attested example of *kataskaphê* of a house (T3), the allusion to *kataskaphê* is almost immediately followed by an oath which calls down blessings if the provisions of the law are observed and *exôleia* if they are not:

ἔμεν δὲ τοῖ ταῦτα παρβαίνοντι ἐξξόλειαν αὐτοὶ καὶ γενεᾷ
καὶ πα-
μάτεσιν, τοῖ δ' εὖσεβέοντι ἡλίαος ἔσσοτο.

on the person who transgresses it may there be destruction, on him and his family and his possessions, but may (the god) be kindly to him who observes it. (text and translation from Meiggs and Lewis)

The *exôleia* of the house is frequent in curse formulae, such as in the oath sworn by Callias, the notorious Athenian millionaire, when he swore at the Apatouria that Hipponicus was his legitimate son.²⁵ In this oath he called down utter destruction upon both himself and his house if what he swore was not true. Official oaths in Athens also contained this provision, e.g. the oath at the Palladion and the Heliastic oath, that before the Areopagus and the curses at meetings of the Ecclesia and the Boule.²⁶ Similar formulae are well known from Athens and other

²⁴ Aeschines 3.110ff. transl. C. D. Adams. Cf. the terms of the so-called Plataean oath, *GHI* 2 no. 204, lines 39ff. and the Itanos stele *SGDI* 5058, lines 40ff. The argument is not affected by the contention of N. Robertson, "The Myth of the First Sacred War," *CQ* 28 (1978) 38–73, that Aeschines' story is a fabrication.

Other curses invoking *exôleia* on the house of the offender include: Andocides 1.126; Aeschines 2.87; Antiphon 5.11; Demosthenes 23.67; [Demosthenes] 59.10; *IG* XI, 4.1296A + B 6f. (Delos).

²⁵ Andocides 1.126; cf. Meidias' oath in Demosthenes 21.119, also Demosthenes 57.22 and 53.

²⁶ The oath at the Palladion is mentioned in Aeschines 2.87 and [Demosthenes] 59.10. The Heliastic oath is reported in the document in Demosthenes 24.151. See W. Hoffman, *De iurandi apud Athenienses formulis* (Darmstadt 1886) on this and other Attic oaths. The oath before the Areopagus court is attested in Demosthenes 23.67; cf. Antiphon 5.11 and Demosthenes 47.71. Demosthenes 19.70–71 alludes to a curse pronounced at every meet-

cities.²⁷ Both the razing of the house and these curse formulae envision the permanent removal from society of the transgressor and his descendants. They sometimes also share the notion of sanctifying or tithing the land or property to a god.²⁸

To summarize: so far we have collected the evidence concerning the razing of the house in Greek law and custom and noted the regions and periods for which this practice is attested. Some of its significance has been explicated by comparison to passages from the orators, curse formulae, etc. A fuller understanding, however, requires an investigation of a wider range of material, including analogues and allusions to the practice in Greek dramatic poetry. These texts, it will appear, point to a relationship between *kataskaphê* and Greek ideas of pollution. These topics will be investigated in the next section of this paper.

II

The destruction of the house in the metaphorical sense of the ending of a kinship line is, of course, a major theme in Greek tragic drama. It needs little explication here. But even if we restrict ourselves to the narrower question of the extent to which the practice of *kataskaphê* is reflected in Greek tragedy we find considerable material. To be sure, the dramatists did not attempt to represent on stage the physical removal of foundation blocks—the use of torches to suggest the imminent destruction of a building was far more suited to the stage, as at the end of Euripides' *Orestes* when Orestes and Pylades appear with torches and threaten to burn down the Atreid house.²⁹ But the metaphor of *kata-*

ing of the Ecclesia and Boule; the curse is parodied in Aristophanes *Thesmophoriazusae* 331f.

²⁷ Curses invoking *exôleia* on the individual and his *genos* or kin (but without specific mention of the *oikos*) are not uncommon; e.g., on Teos, Meiggs and Lewis 30, *passim* (c. 470 B.C.), and *SIG*³ 578.45 and 64 (second century B.C.); Mylasa, *SIG*³ 167.15 (c. 360 B.C.); Dreros *IC* 1 ix, 1 (p. 85), lines 81–84 (third or second century B.C.); Itanos *SGDI* 5058 (third century B.C.); Arcadia *BCH* 102 (1978) 335; Aetolia and Boeotia *SIG*³ 366.10–15 (c. 292 B.C.); Smyrna and Magnesia *OGIS* 229.69 and 78 (third century B.C.). Among Athenian oaths note the Erythrae decree *IG* i³ 14 = Meiggs and Lewis 40.16f., Lysias 12.10 (cf. Aristophanes *Frogs* 587f.), and the Thoriko calendar *SEG* 26.136.61 (fourth century B.C.).

²⁸ T2, T3, T5, and T8 refer only to the confiscation of property, but confiscation with tithe was probably the normal Attic practice as the fuller citations in T9 and T10 illustrate. The tithing should be compared with the tithing of cities such as that alluded to in the curse in the Plataean Oath (*GHI* 2.204.32ff.); the similarity to the Amphictyonic curse has often been noted. On tithing as ritual destruction see H. W. Parke, "Consecration to Apollo," *Hermathena* 82 (1948) 82–114.

²⁹ Compare the burning of Socrates' house at the end of Aristophanes' *Clouds*, described as including a *kataskaphê* of the roof in lines 1487–89. See also Lucian *Ikar*. 21.1 and Dover on *Clouds* 1485–92. The scene, as van Leeuwen noted on *Clouds* 1487ff., bears a remarkable resemblance to some of the stories concerning the burning of the house of

skaphê is sometimes quite central to the linguistic and imagistic patterns of the drama. In the *Herakles Mainomenos*, for example, when Heracles hears of the brutality and usurpation of Lycus, he exits determined to destroy the house of the tyrant:

ἐγὼ δέ, νῦν γὰρ τῆς ἐμῆς ἔργον χερός,
πρώτον μὲν εἶμι καὶ κατασκάψω δόμους
καινῶν τυράννων, κράτα δ' ἀνόσιον τεμῶν
ρίψω κυνῶν ἑλκημα . . . (565–68)

And I—a task for my one hand alone—
shall go and raze this upstart tyrant's house,
cut off that blaspheming head and give it
to the dogs to paw . . . (transl. Arrowsmith)

In this passage *kataskaphê* is present in a familiar configuration: as a response to the crime of tyranny. But the contrasts are significant as well. Heracles acts on his own, not as part of a civic resolve, formal or informal, to remove Lycus and his power from the land. Heracles, moreover, allows his zeal to carry him to the contemplation of savagery, not just the denial of burial, so often associated with *kataskaphê*, but to the beheading of his enemy and the throwing of the head to the dogs.³⁰ In his excess we anticipate his future madness and slaughter of his own children. His plan for a *kataskaphê* of the tyrant's house soon turns into the destruction of his own house as Lyssa prepares to drive him mad, echoing his own words:

εἶμι γ' οὔτε πόντος οὔτω κύμασι στένων λάβρος
οὔτε γῆς σεισμός κερανοῦ τ' οἶστρος ὠδίνας πνέων
οἷ' ἐγὼ στάδια δραμοῦμαι στέρνον εἰς Ἡρακλέους·
καὶ καταρρήξω μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἐπεμβαλῶ,
τέκν' ἀποκτείνασα πρώτον· ὁ δὲ κανὼν οὐκ εἴσεται
παῖδας οὓς ἔτικτεν ἐναρών, πρὶν ἂν ἐμὰς λύσσας ἀφῇ. (861–66)

. . . go I will: to the heart of Heracles I run,
more fast, more wild than the ocean's groaning breakers go,
than earthquake, or the thunder's agonizing crack!
I shall batter through the roof and leap upon the house!
He shall kill his sons and, killing, shall not know
what he begot, until my madness leave him.

(transl. Arrowsmith)

Milo of Croton: Diogenes Laertius 8.39, K. von Fritz, *Pythagorean Politics in Southern Italy* (New York 1940) 86ff., and W. Burkert, *Weisheit und Wissenschaft* (Nürnberg 1962) = *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism* (Cambridge, Mass. 1972) 115f. Aristophanes may be adapting a Greek practice of razing or burning tyrants' houses to the dramatic opportunities presented by the ending of the *Clouds*.

³⁰ Compare Aeschylus *Seven Against Thebes* 1014. Euripides' lines imply that Heracles is about to violate the burial code so central to Greek life. The punishment of *kataskaphê* is often associated with another form of contravention of this code, the state's denial of burial to some criminals: T2, T4, T10.

After the murder of his children, as his understanding returns, Heracles returns to concrete, almost technical building imagery:

τὸν λοίσθιον δὲ τόνδ' ἔτλην τάλας πόνον
παιδοκτονήσας δῶμα θριγκῶσαι κακοῖς. (1279–80)

Heracles' last labor has turned out to be the destruction of his children, a coping stone added to his house.

Heracles' phrasing echoes Aeschylus' *Oresteia* (ἄτας τάσδε θριγκῶσων φίλοις, *Agamemnon* 1283), the drama in which the destruction of the house figures most prominently and most significantly:³¹

τί γὰρ λύτρον πεσόντος αἵματος πέδου;
ὣ πάνους ἐστία,
ὣ κατασκαφαὶ δόμων·
ἀνήλιοι βροτοστυγείς
δνόφοι καλύπτουσι δόμους
δεσποτῶν θανάτοιςι.

What can wash off the blood once spilled upon the ground?
O hearth soaked in sorrow,
o wreckage of a fallen house.
Sunless and where men fear to walk,
the mists huddle upon this house
where the high lords have perished.

The literary significance of the theme of the destruction of the house in the *Oresteia* is beyond the scope of this essay, although we may hope that a better understanding of the practice of *kataskaphê* will be helpful in the interpretation of several Greek tragedies. Some of the attitudes reflected in the *Oresteia*, however, demand attention, since they may help set *kataskaphê* into a wider context of ancient Greek values and mentalities. Perhaps most important is the relationship between this practice and Greek ideas of pollution. Louis Moulinier in *Le Pur et l'impur dans la pensée des Grecs* (Paris 1952) and others have used the *Oresteia* and other texts to produce a coherent picture of Greek attitudes to guilt and pollution. Although more recent works such as Robert Parker's *Miasma* (Oxford 1983) disagree in important respects with the emphasis in earlier scholarship on guilt and psychic revulsion at the sight of blood, the main outlines of classical Greek attitudes toward

³¹ Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 48–53, transl. R. Lattimore. For the notion that the stain is especially associated with the hearth see *Choephoroi* 965–68, and cf. note 20 above. *Choephoroi* 48–53 strongly resemble the allusion to *kataskaphê* in Timotheus' *Persae* (fr. 15.178ff. Page):

ὣ κατασκαφαὶ δόμων
σεΐριαί τε νᾶες Ἑλλανίδες, αἵ
κατὰ μέν ἡλικ' ὠλέσαθ' ἧ-
βαν νεῶν πολὺν ἄνδρον.

pollution are clear. In this culture the consequences of murder and other heinous crimes may be represented as a pollution that extends beyond the individual to the entire polis and beyond the immediate generation to those yet unborn. Such crimes may cause an infection or *miasma* that afflicts individuals at many removes from the criminal.³² The consequences may also be personified as an *alastôr* or *daimôn*, an avenging spirit, as can be seen both in the *Oresteia*³³ and in passages such as the following from Antiphon:³⁴

“Ὁ τε γὰρ ἀποθανών, στερόμενος ὧν ὁ θεὸς ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ, εἰκότως θεοῦ τιμωρίαν ὑπολείπει τὴν τῶν ἀλιτηρίων δυσμένειαν, ἣν οἱ παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον κρίνοντες ἢ μαρτυροῦντες, συνασεβούμενοι τῷ ταῦτα δρῶντι, οὐ προσήκον μῖασμα εἰς τοὺς ἰδίους οἴκους εἰσάγονται.

For the victim, robbed of the gifts bestowed by God upon him, naturally leaves behind him the angry spirits of vengeance, God's instruments of punishment, spirits which they who prosecute and testify without giving heed to justice bring into their own homes, defiling them with the defilement of another, because they share in the sin of him who did the deed.

Pollution, while invisible, is not abstract. It inheres in physical objects that come into contact with the guilty person, including the soil upon which he treads and the place in which he is buried.³⁵ Since a murder victim, as we have seen in Antiphon, may leave behind *alitêrioi*, avenging spirits, it is not surprising to find the house being purified when some act of religious pollution such as a murder has been committed.³⁶ The same complex of attitudes explains why being in the same

³² On the infectiousness of pollution see especially E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951) 23–37. There are also useful discussions in A. W. H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility* (Oxford 1960) Chapter 5, G. Bond's commentary on Euripides *Herakles Mainomenos* 1155f., L. Moulinier, *Le Pur et l'impur* (Paris 1952), esp. Chapter 1, and R. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford 1983), esp. 121.

³³ Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 566; cf. *Agamemnon* 1468, 1481, 1500f., 1508. See also Fraenkel on *Agamemnon* 1501 and F. Pfister s.v. Daimonismos, *RE Suppl.* 7 (1940) 107. The *daimôn* is both the curse and the Eumenides themselves; cf. *Eumenides* 354. Similar ideas are also expressed in Aeschylus *Seven Against Thebes* 812f., Sophocles *Oedipus Col.* 369f., and Euripides *Phoenissae* 1555f.

³⁴ Antiphon 4.1.3, transl. K. Maidment. The destruction of the house is personified in Herodotus 6.86γ2, the parable of Glaucus, who tried to win Delphi's sanction for refusing to return some silver that had been deposited with him. The priestess told him that Horos has a slow-moving son who nevertheless destroys the posterity and house, ὁλέσθη γενεὴν καὶ οἶκον ἅπαντα, of the man who violates an oath. Cf. Hesiod *Works and Days* 284.

³⁵ Cf. Moulinier (above, note 32) 215–19. See also C. W. Macleod, *JHS* 102 (1982) 132.

³⁶ On the purification of the house after a murder see Euripides *Herakles Mainomenos* 923f. and Wilamowitz ad loc. Moulinier (above, note 32) 92f., E. Rohde, *Psyche*, transl. W. B. Hillis (London 1925) 295 and note 75, and R. Parker (above, note 32) 114, note 39 provide useful discussions. For a further hint about the ritual see Plato *Laws* 9.877E.

ship or participating in the same ritual as a polluted person involves a risk of infection or disaster.³⁷ Understandably then, Athenian homicide trials that came before the court of the Areopagus were held out of doors to avoid having the judges under the same roof as the guilty person.³⁸

Crimes other than murder had similar implications, as becomes clear from passages that reflect attitudes toward treason. The orator Lycurgus, for example, reports in his speech against Leocrates:³⁹

When Hipparchus . . . did not stand his trial for treason before the people but let the case go by default, they sentenced him to death. Then as they did not secure his person to answer for the crime, they took down his statue from the Acropolis and, melting it down, made a pillar of it on which they decreed that the names of the *alitêrioi* and traitors should be inscribed.

The traitors, in other words, are in this view themselves the avenging spirits, the *alitêrioi*, and hence need to be removed both physically and symbolically from the city. A similar attitude emerges in Demosthenes' *On the Crown* (18.296), in which traitors are represented as *alastores*, unforgetting scourges; their presence brings divine anger on the entire community. Severing every link between the traitor and the community is thus an act of good sense and caution.

For many Greeks in antiquity acts that subverted the existing social and political order were accordingly not purely political or secular matters. They could also be represented as offences against the gods or as a kind of sickness in the body politic. The comparison between treason and sickness is not uncommon in Greek literature. Plato *Republic* 8.544c, for example, calls tyranny "the fourth and ultimate sickness of a city." But we commonly interpret such remarks as purely metaphorical. When Solon, for example, refers to the lack of restraint of the leaders of the people and describes its result as an "inescapable sore for the whole city," *πάσῃ πόλει ἔρχεται ἑλκος ἄφυκτον* (4.17), we note the vividness of language and the significance of the theme of sickness in Solon's work.⁴⁰ But the language may be more than metaphor, a sugges-

³⁷ Cf. Antiphon 5.82–84, Lysias 12.99.

³⁸ D. M. MacDowell, *Athenian Homicide Law* (Manchester 1963) 39.

³⁹ Lycurgus 1.117, transl. J. O. Burt, modified. The manuscripts identify this Hipparchus as the son of Timarchus; editors often emend to "son of Charmus," without justification in my opinion.

⁴⁰ See also Solon fr. 32 (= Plutarch *Solon* 14.8) and Euripides *Pleisthenes* fr. 626 Nauck:

δήμῳ δὲ μήτε πᾶν ἀναρτήσης κράτος
μήτ' αὖ κακώσης, πλοῦτον ἐντιμον τιθείς,
μηδ' ἄνδρα δήμῳ πιστὸν ἐκβάλης ποτέ
μηδ' αἶξε καιροῦ μείζον', οὐ γὰρ ἀσφαλές,
μή σοι τύραννος λαμπρὸς ἐξ ἀστοῦ φανῇ.

tion that certain abuses in politics are so offensive that they are likely to provoke divine vengeance in the form of sickness of humans and animals and the failure of crops. The *Oedipus Tyrannos* works with the convergence of these themes and Oedipus' apparent status as a usurper in the city of Thebes.⁴¹

The bracketing of extreme cases of political misconduct with the robbing of temples, where the god's anger is especially likely to be provoked, also suggests the expectation that physical effects such as sickness would result from these acts. The juxtaposition is already present in Solon fr. 4 (esp. 12ff.) and can again be seen in the Attic law on temple robbers and traitors cited in Xenophon *H.G.* 1.7.22. The denial of burial specified in this law hints at the implicit infectiousness of such crimes. The comparison of the good politician to a physician is also more than a useful rhetorical *topos* which points out the analogy between two arts, medicine and statesmanship.⁴² It implies that the corruption of sound government is almost physically infectious and hence calls for strong treatment—the extirpation of the sources of the sickness and all that is physically linked to them—including even ancestors' bones and in some cases the houses of the guilty.

An understanding of the ideas of religious pollution within Greek culture thus helps clarify the background to the practice of *kataskaphê*. And the fading of some of these ideas in the late classical and Hellenistic periods seems also to coincide with the decline of this practice in later Greek culture. Indeed pollution is such a convenient concept that it is easy to misrepresent it as an *explanation* of the practice and to neglect thereby the grounding of both ideas such as pollution and practices such as *kataskaphê* in the structure of Greek society.

Pollution beliefs and their reverberations in Greek law do not exist in a vacuum. They arise from the tensions in social life, are tested by the society on countless occasions, and shaped, modified, or abandoned over time. Thus in the archaic and early classical periods, while the *oikos* was a fundamental unit within a society of growing complexity—*πάσα γὰρ σύγκειται πόλις ἐξ οἰκῶν* (Aristotle *Politics* 1.1253b1)—, any major action would be known to and shared by all members of the household. Just as an individual's accomplishments or achievements reflected prestige on the entire household, an act of impiety, a crime, or a plot could

κόλουε δ' ἄνδρα παρὰ δίκην τιμώμενον
πόλει γὰρ εὐτυχούντες οἱ κακοὶ νόσος.

⁴¹ For comparisons of tyranny to a sickness, see W. R. Connor, "Tyrannis Polis," *Ancient and Modern, Essays in Honor of Gerald F. Else*, ed. J. H. D'Arms and J. W. Eadie (Ann Arbor 1977) 103f. and note 14.

⁴² Nicias in Thucydides 6.14.1 and Plato *Laches* 195b. Cf. also Alcmaeon of Croton 24 B 4 DK.

not be undertaken without involving one's kin. Responsibility was never individual. The close proximity imposed by the physical circumstances of the Greek house, the virtual absence of privacy, the close bonds within each household, meant that all members of the *oikos* would know the acts and plans of each individual. Strong family loyalties ensured complicity or at least protection after the fact. In such a world the *oikos* was the center of a value and metaphorical system. Yet at the same time the polis asserted communal interests and values. In the conflict of these two systems the belief in pollution was a convenient shorthand, summarizing a complex set of relationships and defining limits and acceptable modes of conduct. Hence the razing of the house of someone who had violated the most important norms of the society and who was thought polluted could be a powerful symbolic act, affirming the ability of the community to impose its own values and goals and legitimized by the pollution beliefs of the community. The physical removal of the house demonstrated the ultimate authority of the polis, and prevented the return of the offending family and hence the danger of vengeance or renewed strife.

The gradual change in the role of the *oikos* in Greek society evident in the late fifth and fourth centuries and the weakening of the bonds that joined the individual to the *oikos* eventually made the pollution metaphor a less valuable expression of the relationships among individuals, families, and society. As it becomes easier to imagine individual decision and responsibility, the infectiousness of guilt seems a less compelling idea. Other historical circumstances bring about the often discussed changes in the relationship between *oikos* and polis characteristic of the Hellenistic age. The weakening of bonds within the family parallels the weakening of pollution beliefs and the gradual disappearance of the practice of the *kataskaphê* of individual houses.

These processes take place slowly and quietly, but the changes can be compared to yet a further development: a shift in attitudes toward including the children in the punishments of those found guilty of serious offences. The notion that the crimes of the fathers should be visited upon their children had long baffled "the sense of justice of the Greeks. They cannot justify the necessity that children should 'pay back' the sins of the fathers."⁴³ However the gods might act, some Greeks used a different standard for human conduct. Pausanias, the regent of Sparta, according to Herodotus, gave early expression to the more humane attitude. After the battle of Plataea the Thebans agreed to hand over to the victorious Greeks the chief Theban medizers. When one of them, Attaginus, escaped, the Thebans turned over his children

⁴³ G. Vlastos, "Solonian Justice," *CP* 41 (1946) 76, citing Solon 13.31f., Theognis 731-52, Euripides *Hippolytus* 1378-83, and Herodotus 7.137.

but Pausanias refused to hold them guilty "since children (he said) could have no part in such an offence" (Herodotus 9.99, transl. Rawlinson).

Athenian punishments for treason and conspiracy seem for a long time to have included the children or the *genos* in the penalties.⁴⁴ By the late fifth century, however, there are signs of departures from this practice. Both Demophantus' decree of 410/9 and the so-called Charter of the Second Athenian Confederacy, while severe in their penalties, tacitly exclude the descendants of the guilty parties.⁴⁵ Cannonus' "exceedingly severe" law against those who wrong the people of Athens and the legislation against temple robbers and traitors, both mentioned in Xenophon *H.G.* 1.7.20–22, also contain no hint of the punishment of the children of the guilty party.⁴⁶ Eucrates' law against subversion (336 B.C.), however, reverts to the older practice, perhaps under the pressure of the Chaeronea crisis; his law is likely to have been repealed before 331/0 B.C.⁴⁷

Plato's writings reflect something of the contemporary dilemma: the horror at treason and impiety and the reluctance to extend the punishments to the descendants of the guilty party. In the *Laws* he writes:

Next to cases which concern religion come those which concern the dissolution of the polity. Whosoever enslaves the laws by making them subject to men, and makes the state subject to a faction, and acts illegally in doing all this by violence and stirring up civil strife—such a man must be deemed the worst of all enemies to the whole state. . . . They shall have the same judges as the temple-robbers had, and the whole trial shall be conducted just as it was in their case, and the death penalty shall be imposed by a majority of votes. As a summary rule, the disgrace or punishment inflicted on a father shall not descend upon his

⁴⁴ Athenian laws that extend the penalty to descendants of the guilty party include: Draco in Demosthenes 23.62; a law of the sixth century in *Ath. Pol.* 16.10; the Erythrae decree of 453/2 B.C., *IG I³* 14 = Meiggs and Lewis 40.34ff.; and the Brea decree *IG I³* 46 = Meiggs and Lewis 49.23. See also the useful discussion of hereditary *atimia* in M. Hansen, *Apagoge, Endeixis and Ephegesis*, Odense Univ. Classical Studies 8 (1976) 72–74.

⁴⁵ Demophantus' decree is reported in Andocides 1.96; the "Charter" is *IG II²* 43+, new text in J. L. Cargill, *The Second Athenian League* (Berkeley 1981) 16–27; see esp. lines 54–62.

⁴⁶ Since neither of these laws includes the *kataskaphê* of the house among the penalties, it is unlikely that either is the law under which Antiphon and Archeptolemus were condemned. See T10.

⁴⁷ Eucrates' decree was first published by B. D. Meritt in *Hesperia* 21 (1952) 355–59. For an important discussion of the inscription and its relation to Athenian legislation against tyranny, see M. Ostwald *TAPA* 86 (1955) 103–28. Note that this law was probably repealed before 331/0 (Ostwald 128). Cf. the long dispute about the descendants of the tyrants of Eresus, *GHI* 2.191. Note also that Demosthenes avoids including the *oikia* or the *genos* in his curse of *exôleia* at the end of the *De corona*, 18.324.

children, except in a case where not only the father, but his father and grandfather before him, have all been condemned on a capital charge: in such a case, the children . . . shall be deported. . . . (9.865B-D, transl. R. G. Bury)

A similar reluctance is evident in a law of the mid-fourth century found at Olympia: "But one shall not exile the children (of the exile) . . . nor confiscate the property."⁴⁸

This reluctance is not necessarily a sign of growing humaneness and gentleness among the Greeks, for atrocities in social revolutions and the brutality of war, undiminished in the fourth and subsequent centuries, remind us of the persistent severity of Greek life. Nor are the changes to be explained by the history of some abstract ideas, e.g. a growing scepticism about which traits were transmitted by heredity. It is more likely to reflect an important social and political reality: the family had been tamed, if not completely, at least enough to make possible on some occasions a disassociation of the kin from the guilt of the perpetrator. In such a setting the inclusion of the children in the punishment and by analogy the practice of *kataskaphê* would seem unnecessary, at least in most cases. And thereby the razing of the house could become an archaic practice, yet still recollected and powerfully evocative of a different age and circumstances.

III

Once the significance of allusions to the *kataskaphê* of houses is recognized, a further group of passages naturally comes to mind. These concern the destruction of walls, sanctuaries, and whole cities and derive largely from writers active after the *kataskaphê* of houses has ceased to be attested. These passages pose numerous questions and difficulties, above all whether these acts were also to some degree colored by the attitudes discussed in earlier parts of this paper. A full inquiry is impossible in a short essay such as this but three preliminary observations may be of use.

First, the presence of the word *kataskaphê* or of its cognates does not of itself indicate the nature or circumstances of the destruction. Since the word has the strong emotional force already discussed, it would be especially inviting to authors with a polemical purpose. The

⁴⁸ C. D. Buck, *Greek Dialects* (Chicago 1955) no. 65, p. 262f. = Schwyzler 424, Solmsen-Fraenkel 53. Athenian practice in classical times no doubt varied from occasion to occasion. The *horkos nomimos* in fourth-century Attica, however, probably included mention of the children or the *genos*. See Demosthenes 54.40 with Blass's emendation and cf. Antiphon 5.11, Demosthenes 55.35 and 57.54, and [Demosthenes] 59.3. The *horkos nomimos* reported in P. Halensis 1, col. 10.218 specifically prohibits including the *genos* in the oath. The commentary ad loc. by F. Bechtel et al. (*Dikaionmata* [Berlin 1913]) notes the parallel to Roman practice. See also R. Hirzel, *Der Eid* (Leipzig 1902) 9.

circumstances of the destruction are not easily disentangled from the writer's rhetorical strategy. For example, to describe the destruction of a city as a *kataskaphê* might in some circumstances emphasize the severity of the destruction; in other circumstances it might hint that there was a religious pretext or justification for the act.

There is, however, one interesting preliminary test that may be applied. Authors vary a great deal in the frequency with which they use this terminology. The relative frequency of *kataskaphê* and its cognates when compared to other words for destruction, such as *kathaireô*, may help identify authors who attach special significance to the word. In Thucydides, for example, *kataskaphê* and its cognates occur approximately a tenth as often as *kathaireô* and its cognates. When Thucydides refers to the destruction of Orneae as a *kataskaphê* (6.7.1), there is some likelihood that he envisioned a very distinctive treatment of this city.

Xenophon and Plutarch, other authors who use this terminology very sparingly, provide an example that illustrates a second point: the careful study of other types of *kataskaphê* may shed further light on, or raise important new questions about, the *kataskaphê* of houses. One of the most famous acts of *kataskaphê*, the razing of Athens' walls after the city's defeat in the Peloponnesian War, is perhaps best known from Xenophon's description:

The exiles returned. They razed the walls (*κατέσκαπτον*) to the accompaniment of flute girls, with great enthusiasm, considering that day to be the beginning of freedom for Greece. (*H.G.* 2.2.23):

Plutarch's report of the event differs in some points from Xenophon's, especially in its emphasis on festival elements:

Lysander sent for many flute girls from the city, and assembled all those who were already in the camp, and then tore down the walls (*κατέσκαπτε*) and burned up the triremes, to the sound of the flute, while the allies crowned themselves with garlands and made merry together, counting that day as the beginning of their freedom. (*Lysander* 15, transl. B. Perrin)

Although these descriptions are often quoted, the remarkable nature of the event is usually overlooked. According to Xenophon the returning exiles, not impressed gangs of Athenian democrats or slaves, undertook the hard labor of pulling down the walls. The mood, moreover, is festive, with *aulos* players, presumably *hetairai*, providing music and the allies, according to Plutarch, garlanded and rejoicing. The event becomes an informal Freedom Festival, celebrating the liberation of Greece from Athenian rule, much as the razing of the tyrants' buildings in Syracuse (T11) celebrates the end of tyranny. Our sources indicate

that in each case the act was thought to mark the *archê eleutherias*, the beginning of liberty. We should be cautious then about assuming that *kataskaphê* was regularly a cut and dried legal procedure, carried out without emotion or ceremony by a government official or board. From time to time it might include Dionysiac elements, flutes, *hetairai*, and revelry and shared joy at the extirpation of the offender. In these cases the practice would serve not only to remove a perceived threat to the well-being of the community but also to renew and reinforce the civic ties that had been threatened by murder, tyranny, treason, or other acts.

Third, the circumstances surrounding an act of destruction may be helpful in determining whether it shares some of the features of the *kataskaphai* of houses discussed in earlier sections of this paper. The destruction of the cities of Phocis by Philip of Macedon, for example, is often called a *kataskaphê* by our sources.⁴⁹ Since their rhetorical purposes are obvious, the use of the term may simply be due to a desire for heightened color and emotion. Yet we know that Philip's punishment of Phocis was the result of a Sacred War to punish what were regarded as serious religious offences. Ritual elements and echoes of the attitudes discussed earlier in this paper might then plausibly be expected in the punishment of Phocis. Indeed there is some reason to think that the Macedonians were often swift to seize on religious infractions as a justification for harsh treatment and their punishment of resisting cities may often have included elements of a ritual *kataskaphê*.⁵⁰

One of the most notorious of these acts, Alexander's burning of the palace complex at Persepolis, may also retain some of the elements of the *kataskaphê* even though the term is not, to the best of my knowledge, applied to the event.⁵¹ The interpretation of the destruction of Persepolis has long been controversial: some have viewed it as a drunken revel that got out of hand with results quite unintended by Alexander. Others have joined Wilcken in seeing it as "a symbolical act" deliberately undertaken to mark the completion of the great crusade against Achaemenid rule.⁵² Even our brief preliminary investigation suggests a third

⁴⁹ Aeschines 2.162, the letter quoted in Demosthenes 18.39 and the decree in 18.182, Demosthenes 19.65, and Pausanias 10.3.2 are the principal instances.

⁵⁰ Among the instances in which *kataskaphê* and its cognates are applied to Macedonian punishments of cities are the following: Philip's punishment of Olynthus in 348 B.C., Plutarch *Moralia* 40E and 458C; Philip's destruction of Porthmos, Demosthenes 18.71; Alexander's destruction of Thebes, Arrian 1.9.9, Plutarch *Alexander* 11, *Camillus* 19.10, *Moralia* 847C; other cities destroyed by Alexander, Arrian 1.4.5, 1.23.6, 4.23.5, 5.24.8. This list is merely a sample.

⁵¹ Clitarchus *FGrH* 137 F 11 (Athenaeus 13.576D-E), Plutarch *Alexander* 37 and 38, Diodorus Siculus 17.71 and 72, Quintus Curtius 5.6.

⁵² U. Wilcken, *Alexander the Great*, transl. E. N. Borza (New York 1967) 157.

possibility: that the destruction of Persepolis was both of these: a celebration of the end of a tyranny, through a *kômos* resulting in the destruction of the offending buildings. Was it then, like some *kataskaphai*, an informal Freedom Festival, that used elements from this long-standing practice of the Greeks to convey an exultant message of liberation?

These and other instances of *kataskaphê* demand more thorough investigation. This paper will have fulfilled its purpose if it provides a useful basis for future inquiry into a practice whose origin goes back to the archaic age and to some of the most deeply rooted attitudes and values of the Greeks.

Appendix

If the argument of the main body of this paper is correct, and the *kataskaphê* of Leotychidas' house marks the intention of the society to remove both the person guilty of an especially serious crime and his descendants, passage T6 (Herodotus 6.72) has important historical and chronological implications. The *kataskaphê* of the house of King Leotychidas of Sparta for betraying the expedition to Thessaly in the 470s should, if our view is correct, indicate that the Spartans intended to include his descendants in the punishment.⁵³ Such an action, while extreme and unusual, is consistent, I believe, with the patterns of thought and action within early Greek society explicated in the earlier portion of this paper. But it entails the surprising historical conclusion that Leotychidas' grandson, Archidamus II, is unlikely immediately to have succeeded him and hence that for a time Sparta was without a king or known regent in the Eurypontid house.

This inference is radical but must not be rejected out of hand. It receives corroboration from a study of the chronology of the Eurypontid kingship, and helps account for an otherwise puzzling discrepancy in the accession dates for this house. Leotychidas' expedition to Thessaly must be in the first half of the 470s B.C., probably c. 477–76 B.C., and his expulsion and *kataskaphê* are most likely to have followed soon thereafter.⁵⁴ While the accession of Archidamus II is given as 476 in Diodo-

⁵³ The historicity of the *kataskaphê* might be doubted on the basis of the apparent antiquity of the doors of Agesilaus' house as described in Plutarch *Agis* 19. But Plutarch's source, Xenophon *Agesilaus* 8.7, implies only that the doors *looked* so old that one might conjecture that they went back to the time of the founder of the Eurypontid dynasty, Aristodemus. In any event only the doors, not the house itself, appeared so ancient. I am indebted to Miltos Hatzopoulos for assistance on this point.

⁵⁴ Herodotus 6.72 is supplemented by Pausanias 3.7.8, who notes that Archidamus succeeded Leotychidas, "after the departure of Leotychidas for Tegea." Pausanias may have assumed that the succession was immediate, but does not make this explicit. Plutarch *De malignitate Herodoti*, *Moralia* 859D does not help with the chronological problem. Among

DIODORUS' EURYPONTID ACCESSION DATES

Diodorus' Date	Actual	Event	Reference in D.S.	Length of reign in D.S.	Actual length of reign	Reference in D.S.
498/7	491	accession Leotychidas	(11.48.2)	22	c. 15 or 22	11.48.2
476/5	?	end Leotychidas	11.48.2			
476/5	?	accession Archidamus II	11.48.2 & (12.35.4)			
434/3	c. 427	end Archidamus II	(11.48.2) & 12.35.4	42	c. 42 or 49	11.48.2
434/3	c. 427	accession Agis II	12.35.4	27	c. 28	12.35.4
407/6	c. 399	end Agis II	(12.35.4)			
407/6	c. 399	accession Agesilaus II	(12.35.4)			
369/8	c. 360	end Agesilaus II	(16.63.2)	(38)	c. 39	(12.35.4 & 16.63.2)
369/8	c. 360	accession Archidamus III	(16.63.2)		c. 22	16.63.2
361/0	c. 360	accession Archidamus III	(16.88.4)			
346/5	338	end Archidamus III	16.63.2			
346/5	338	accession Agis III	16.63.2	23	c. 22	16.63.2
338/7	338	end Archidamus III	16.88.3			
338/7	338	accession Agis III	16.88.3			
331/0	331	end Agis III	(16.63.2)	15	7	16.63.2
330/29	331	end Agis III	17.63.2	9		17.63.4 & 16.88.4
329/8	331	end Agis III	(16.88.4)			

*Parenteses indicate the event or date is implied by Diodorus.
 Exclusive count is used throughout.*

rus Siculus 11.48.2 (cf. 12.35.4) and most modern handbooks, Plutarch *Cimon* 16 says that the Helot revolt broke out in the fourth year of Archidamus' reign. The chronology of this revolt is notoriously difficult, but a date circa 472 is unacceptably early. Many indications point toward 465–64 for its outbreak.⁵⁵ Hence there is reason to suspect that Plutarch knew a version of Spartan chronology in which Archidamus' reign began c. 469 B.C. This makes sense on the hypothesis that following the *kataskaphê* of Leotychidas' house, there was a gap in the Eurypontid succession for approximately seven years until the house was restored under Archidamus.

This hypothesis can also help account for the peculiar dates given for the Eurypontid monarchs in Diodorus Siculus (see table, p. 100). Recurring discrepancies of seven or eight years in this list have been explained in many ways.⁵⁶ Certainty is impossible in the absence of a clear picture of the systems of Spartan record keeping and the methods used by Diodorus and his sources. If a list of eponymous ephors with the beginning and end of the reign of various kings clearly noted had been accessible, it would have been easy to construct a coherent chronology and there would be little reason for muddles such as we find in Diodorus. But the records may have been far less satisfactory. The list of ephors, for example, might have lacked any indication of when the various kings ruled. In such a case a chronologist would have been forced to turn to other sources for information about the reign of the kings and would then have had to reconcile this information with a list of eponymous ephors or Olympiads vel sim.⁵⁷ In such a situation the

the many modern discussions see especially G. Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte* III 1 (Gotha 1897) 83–86; E. M. Walker, *CAH* 5 (Cambridge 1927) 466; Mary White, *JHS* 84 (1964) 145, note 21, and D. Lotze, *Klio* 52 (1970), esp. 265ff. See now A. S. Schieber, "Leotychidas in Thessaly," *L'Antiquité Classique* 51 (1982) 5–14.

⁵⁵ On the chronology of the Messenian revolt see Thucydides 1.101, Diodorus 11.63f. and 84.7f., Pausanias 4.24.5, and the scholia on Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 1144. Especially useful discussions are to be found in A. W. Gomme, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides* I (Oxford 1945) 401–8, and P. Deane, *Thucydides' Dates* (Don Mills, Ontario 1972) 16f., with useful bibliography in the notes.

⁵⁶ The principal positions in the problem of the Eurypontid dates in Diodorus were already set forth by the three great German historians of Greece: Eduard Meyer, *Forschungen zur alten Geschichte* 2 (Halle 1899) 502–9, G. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte* II 2 (Strassburg 1916²) 190–92, and G. Busolt (above, note 54), III 1.83f. See also H. T. Wade-Gery, *JHS* 52 (1942) 224, note 86; H. W. Parke, *CQ* 39 (1945) 111; G. W. Forrest, *History of Sparta* (London 1968) 101; and A. Andrewes apud M. White, *JHS* 84 (1964) 145, note 21. In the English speaking world, Busolt's contention that Diodorus confused the date of Leotychidas' exile with the date of his death has had many adherents, especially after the lucid restatement and defence of this case by J. Johnston, "Chronological Note on the Expedition of Leotychidas," *Hermathena* 46 (1931) 106–11.

⁵⁷ Charon, Hippias, Hellanicus, Aristotle, Eratosthenes, and Apollodorus are all known to have dealt with Spartan chronology. See W. den Boer, *Laconian Studies* (Amsterdam

possibilities for confusion were numerous. The chronologist might, for example, have obtained from the royal families a list of successive monarchs with the number of years of their reigns, but without absolute dates. This would compel the chronologist to find a known date for the beginning or end of a reign and to calculate the other regnal dates from this point.

Such a method could be quite accurate, provided the lengths of the various reigns were accurately reported. If, however, a royal house were confronted with an embarrassment—for example the expulsion of one monarch and a delay before the accession of his successor—the chronology might easily be distorted. If the Eurypontids, for example, regarded the expulsion of Leotychidas as illegal or as too disgraceful to admit, their king list might imply that he was king until the accession of Archidamus. They would then report twenty-two years as the length of his reign (491–69) and forty-two years for the reign of Archidamus (i.e. 469–27). If a chronologist received such a list and made the reasonable (and in my opinion correct) assumption that after 476 B.C. Leotychidas ceased to rule and the further (but mistaken) assumption that Archidamus immediately succeeded him, the resulting chronology would be almost exactly that of Diodorus, down to Agis III when the calculation of another fixed point would result in the pattern evident in the table above.

We cannot prove that this was the process used by Diodorus' source, but it does account for the chronological problems. The hypothesis of a gap in the Eurypontid accession from c. 476 to c. 469 also leads to interesting historical conclusions. On the chronology advanced by Mary White in *JHS* 84 (1964) 140ff. the gap falls during the tumultuous final years of Pausanias' regency. Certainly the fall of Leotychidas, c. 476, comes in Pausanias' lifetime and was likely to be exploited if not engineered by him. Our hypothesis also invites a new interpretation of Aristotle's comments on the connection between ambition (*philotimia*) and *stasis*:

A man who has a great position, and the capacity for a still greater, will promote sedition in order to make himself the one ruler. Pausanias, the generalissimo during the Persian War, is an example at Sparta: Hanno at Carthage is another. (*Politics* 5.1307^A, transl. E. Barker)

Does Aristotle mean *ἓνα μοναρχῆν* to be taken quite literally: Pausanias aspired to be the single ruler of Sparta by the elimination of the Eurypontid house?

1954) 3–147, and F. Jacoby, *Atthis* (Oxford 1949) 59 and his comments on *FGrH* 244 F 61 and 62.