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## *HIEROMĒNIA AND SACRIFICE DURING THE HYAKINTHIA*

### INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

How long did the *Hyakinthia* last, and what was the salient feature of the festival, are questions for which our main evidence derives from Herodotus and Polycrates, probably a historian of late Hellenistic date.<sup>2</sup> Herodotus mentions the *Hyakinthia* in connection with the Athenian embassy seeking military aid from Sparta against the Persians at 479 B.C., which was delayed by the ephors for ten days by reason of the holiday. Yet according to Polycrates, the Spartans celebrated τὴν τῶν Ὑακινθίων θυσίαν for three days, which is usually taken to indicate the existence of a three-day festival.<sup>3</sup> In view of this, Richer has recently argued that in the Classical times the *Hyakinthia* lasted at least ten days, while in later times it lasted only three days, and that the festival ended with “des actes empreints de réjouissance..., qui pouvaient être nocturnes”.<sup>4</sup> My aim in this

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1. I thank the anonymous readers for their suggestions, which have helped me clarify several points. Needless to say, for all views expressed or any remaining errors only the writer is responsible.

2. BLOMQUIST 1994, p. 284. His origin is uncertain. See on Polycrates, *FGrHist* III b (1955) 588.

3. E.g., NILSSON 1906, p. 138; MELLINK 1943, p. 12; MORENO CONDE 2008, p. 21.

4. RICHER 2012, p. 354–356 seems to connect the “actes...nocturnes” (355) with the νόχιον...εὐφροσύναν in Eur. *Hel.* 1470. Cf. Id., 2007, p. 247; 2004a, p. 398–399; (=2004b, p. 80–81, trans. into English).

paper is to show that the contradiction<sup>5</sup> between Herodotus and Polycrates disappears, if we take into account the point that the celebration of a festival, i.e. the actual festival, often occupied only part of a longer holiday called the *ἱερομηνία*. I shall argue (1) that the envoys' arrival coincided not with the celebration of the festival, but with the part of the holiday preceding it, and that they departed as soon as the holiday was over. I shall also argue (2) that the holiday (or *hieromēnia*) of the *Hyakinthia* lasted at least nine days, of which only the last three were dedicated to sacrifice, this certainly being a much shorter period than the *ἐκεχειρία* or *σπονδαί* attested in connection with the early history of the festival. I shall further suggest (3) that during the holiday preceding the festival the Spartans made preparations for the so-called *κοπίς*, a ritual "dinner" consumed by those celebrating at Amyklai in honour of Apollo. Finally I shall argue (4) that the chief feature of the festival was the sacrifice of numerous goats to Apollo on the second day, and that the festival ended with athletic contests which are epigraphically and archaeologically attested since the Archaic times.

## I. HERODOTUS' REFERENCES TO THE *HYAKINTHIA*

### *1. The Holiday and the Celebration of the Festival*

Herodotus refers to the *Hyakinthia* twice, both times in connection with the Athenian embassy sent to Sparta for military aid against the Persians, who had taken Attica for a second time.<sup>6</sup> Let us thus begin with a closer examination of these events.

The Athenians, who had evacuated Athens and retreated to Salamis,<sup>7</sup> sent a delegation to Lacedaemon in order to: 1) reproach the Lacedaemonians for having allowed Mardonius to invade Attica instead of joining them to confront him in Boeotia, 2) remind the Lacedaemonians of the promises the Athenians had received from Persia in the event of their changing sides, and 3) warn them, that if they refused to help the Athenians, the Athenians would find a way to ensure their own safety.<sup>8</sup> However, οἱ γὰρ

5. First noticed by UNGER 1877, p. 31.

6. For Mardonius' strong desire to take Athens for a second time, see Hdt. 9.3.1: ἀλλὰ οἱ δεινός τις ἐνέστακτο ἕμερος τὰς Ἀθήνας δεύτερα ἐλεῖν.

7. Hdt. 9.1-3; Plut. *Arist.* 7.

8. Hdt. 9.6-7.1a.

δὴ Λακεδαιμόνιοι ὄραζόν τε τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον καὶ σφι ἦν Ὑακίνθια, περὶ πλείστου δ' ἦγον τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ πορσύνειν (9.7.1); at the same time the Lacedaemonians were completing the construction of their wall across the Isthmus, which was “already receiving (lit. ‘taking’) its battlements.”<sup>9</sup>

As soon as the envoys arrived, they came before the ephors, ὡς δὲ ἀπίκοντο ἐς τὴν Λακεδαίμονα οἱ ἄγγελοι οἱ ἀπ' Ἀθηναίων... ἐπελθόντες ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐφόρους (9.7.1). The envoys informed them that the Athenians had rejected the Persian king's proposals to give them back their land and to enter into an alliance with them, but also give them any other land they would like to conquer, and concluded their speech (9.7.2) with a plea to send an army to fight alongside the Athenians in the Thriasian plain.<sup>10</sup> The ephors heard their speech and postponed their response supposedly for the next day, but continued to stall for ten days, putting off giving reply from day to day, οἱ ἔφοροι... ἀνεβάλλοντο ἐς τὴν ὑστεραίην ὑποκρίνασθαι, τῇ δὲ ὑστεραίῃ ἐς τὴν ἑτέρεην· τοῦτο καὶ ἐπεὶ δέκα ἡμέρας ἐποίηον, ἐξ ἡμέρης ἐς ἡμέρην ἀναβαλλόμενοι (9.8.1). In the end, the envoys appeared once more before the ephors, with the intention of departing for their own cities on the same day.<sup>11</sup> They reproached the Spartans in the following terms: Stay here then, and hold the festival of the *Hyakinthia*, and have fun, Ὑακίνθιά τε ἄγετε καὶ παίζετε. (9.11.1). In response to them, the ephors assured them under oath that the Spartans were already marching against the invaders.<sup>12</sup> The envoys, who knew nothing about it, asked the ephors what they meant and so learned the whole truth. The previous night, νυκτὸς ἔτι, the ephors had sent out five thousand Spartans, with seven helots assigned to each man, under the command of the regent Pausanias (9.10.1). The delegation was surprised and set out as quickly as possible, while an elite force of five thousand Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* accompanied them (9.11.3).

The ὄραζω at 9.7.1 is an absolute verb which means “to observe a holiday”<sup>13</sup>, not “to celebrate a festival,” as Richer translates it.<sup>14</sup> The relevant clause should in fact be rendered as follows: “The truth was, the Spartans were on holiday this period, for it was the time of the *Hyakinthia*, and “they considered it of utmost importance to prepare the

9. The translation is by FLOWER, MARINCOLA 2002, p. 110.

10. Which stretches along the Eleusinian Gulf. See *ibid.*, p. 113.

11. Hdt. 9.11.1.

12. Hdt. 9.11.2; Plut. *Arist.* 8.

13. POWELL 1938, p. 268, s.v. ὄραζω.

14. RICHER 2012, p. 354; 2004a, p. 398; 2004b, p. 80.

things of the god.”<sup>15</sup> As a matter of fact, the genitive θεοῦ at 9.7.1 is the earliest literary evidence that Apollo had become the presiding deity of the Amyclaeon shrine, in whose honour the *Hyakinthia*, a festival named after Hyakinthos, was now celebrated.<sup>16</sup> When the envoys set out, they were probably aware that the Spartans were on holiday, as they also knew that the wall at Isthmus was nearing its completion.<sup>17</sup> For the γὰρ δὴ<sup>18</sup> at 9.7.1 actually introduces these two facts which are both necessary to the understanding of the context as they constitute the reasons for the dispatch of the Athenian delegation to Sparta.

On the earlier occasion of the battle of Marathon (490 B.C.), it took the herald (κῆρυξ) and day-runner (ἡμεροδρόμος) Pheidippides two days to cover the distance between Athens and Sparta,<sup>19</sup> which is today 259 kl. The distance between Salamis and Sparta is certainly shorter. The Athenian envoys<sup>20</sup> were, no doubt, ferried across,<sup>21</sup> probably to Megara where they apparently took with them the Megarian and Plataean envoys mentioned at 9.7.1.<sup>22</sup> With regard to the remainder of the route, the delegation probably used a carriage. It must have taken them more than a day to reach Sparta.

When the envoys came before the ephors for the first time, the Spartans were *already* on holiday, although they had not yet started the celebration of the festival of the *Hyakinthia*. For on the day Apollo was honoured, a πανήγυρις was held at Amyklai,<sup>23</sup> and the whole Spartan *polis* turned out to celebrate in the countryside where the god’s shrine was located. On the day of their departure, however, the envoys reproached the Spartans with the sarcastic words, Ὑακίνθιά τε ἄγετε καὶ παίζετε (9.11.1). The verb ἄγω means “hold a festival,” while the meaning of παίζω is “make merry.”<sup>24</sup> It is evident that the envoys had witnessed, in the meantime, the

15. The translation is by FLOWER, MARINCOLA 2002, p. 110.

16. Despite his *apotheōsis*, Hyakinthos did not qualify as a θεός, cf. MELLINK 1943, p. 13.

17. On the latter point, see Hdt. 9.7.2β. On the earliest epigraphical evidence on the cult of Apollo, PETROPOULOU 2011-2012, p. 154.

18. On the use of these two particles, see POWELL 1938, p. 65 ad 5b, s.v. γὰρ δὴ (a).

19. Hdt. 6.105.1; 106.1.

20. On the problems involved with the names Cimon, Xanthippus, and Myronides attested as envoys in a ‘decree of Aristides’ (Plut. *Arist.* 10.10), see FLOWER, MARINCOLA 2002, p. 109.

21. Cf. the verb διεπύρθησε at Hdt. 9.4.1. On its use here, see MACAN 1908, p. 599.

22. MACAN 1908, p. 603 offers a different interpretation.

23. Polycrates cited at Athen. 4.139e (via Didymous).

24. POWELL 1938, p. 3, s.v. ἄγω 4.VI; *ibid.* p. 286, s.v. παίζω 2.

actual celebration and the merrymaking at Amyklai, which are features attributed by Polycrates<sup>25</sup> to the second, joyful day of the *Hyakinthia*, on which Apollo was honoured with a *panêguris*.

That delegations of other cities came to Sparta during the *Hyakinthia* in order to take or renew oaths concerning treaties or alliances, is known from Thucydides.<sup>26</sup> In connection with the Peace of Nicias, Thucydides mentions that the inscribed *stelae* were to be set up at the shrine of Apollo at Amyklai.<sup>27</sup> This practice may account for the presence at Sparta during the *Hyakinthia* of the Athenian envoys whose mission was to persuade the Spartans send an army to fight alongside the Athenians on the Thriasian plain. Verses 844-46 in Aesch. *Agam*.<sup>28</sup> imply that in extraordinary circumstances the proclamation of athletic games was the occasion for a national assembly (*πανήγυρις*)<sup>29</sup> at which deliberation on serious issues took place.

Richer argues that in the Classical times the *Hyakinthia* lasted at least ten days.<sup>30</sup> A period of ten days is implied by various clues given in Herodotus' text, of which the most explicit is the ἐπὶ δέκα ἡμέρας delay in the ephors' response to the envoys.<sup>31</sup> However, attention should be also drawn to a point which suggests that the actual celebration at Amyklai had ended on the day "before what was to be the final audience of the Athenian delegation"<sup>32</sup>, τῇ προτεραίῃ τῆς ὑστάτης καταστάσιος μελλούσης ἔσεθαι (9.9.1). We are told regarding the previous day (τῇ προτεραίῃ) that, while it was still night, νυκτὸς ἔτι, the ephors sent out five thousand Spartan men (i.e. *hoplitas*) having given the command of the army to Pausanias, son of Cleombrotus: ἐκπέμπουσι πεντακισχιλίους Σπαρτητέων... Πανσανίῃ τῷ Κλεομβρότου ἐπιτρέψαντες ἐξάγειν (9.10.1). Such a large expeditionary force, which did not include *Perioikoi*, indicates that the levy, although

25. Athen. 4.139e-f.

26. Thuc. 5.23.4; 41.3.

27. Thuc. 5.23.5.

28. Τὰ δ' ἄλλα πρὸς πόλιν τε καὶ θεοῦς/κοινοῦς ἀγῶνας θέντες ἐν πανηγύρει/βουλευσόμεσθα.

29. LIDDELL, SCOTT, JONES *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. πανήγυρις.

30. RICHER 2012, p. 355; 2007, p. 247; 2004a, p. 398; 2004b, p. 80 (ten days [or more]), cf. p. 85. The same number of days was suggested by FARNELL 1907, p. 266. For ASHERI 2006, p. 184, the number ten gives only an approximate idea of the Herodotean notion of time.

31. RICHER 2012, p. 355; 2004a, p. 398; cf. 2004b, p. 80.

32. Translation by WATERFIELD 1998, p. 544.

not consisting of the total citizen-force available, was virtually πανδημεί.<sup>33</sup> It apparently consisted of “two thirds of the Spartan citizens of military age”<sup>34</sup> the greatest number of Spartans mobilized for a single campaign in the whole of history of Sparta.<sup>35</sup>

With reference to Xen. *Hell.* 4.5.11,<sup>36</sup> Parker noted that “the whole Spartan army was not required for the *Hyakinthia*.”<sup>37</sup> However, without the presence of the greatest number of citizens of military age and of at least one of the two kings,<sup>38</sup> no *panêguris* could be held to celebrate the *Hyakinthia* festival. Thus it is more reasonable to assume that the five thousand Spartan *hoplitai* were levied to march out against the Persians *immediately after the end* of the celebration at Amyklai.<sup>39</sup> In fact, the *Hyakinthia* had finished on the ninth day from the envoys’ arrival at Sparta, i.e. before sunset on which the tenth day began, since Greek calendar dates began in the evening on the setting of the sun.<sup>40</sup> Thus, since the 10<sup>th</sup> day from the envoys’ arrival began at sunset, there was enough time overnight to levy 5,000 thousand Spartan *hoplitas* and send them out while it was still night, νυκτὸς ἔτι, i.e. several hours before the last reception of the Athenian envoys. My assumption that the citizen-force was levied immediately after the festival was over, also accounts for the discrepancy in the departure of an elect army force of 5,000 thousand *hoplitai Perioikoi* who marched out later, following the Athenian envoys, σὺν δέ σφι (i.e. the Athenian envoys) τῶν περιοίκων Λακεδαιμονίων λογάδες πεντακισχίλιοι [ὀπλίται] τῷτὸ τοῦτο ἐποίηον (9.11.3). For the *Perioikoi*,<sup>41</sup> of whom representatives and members of the elite seem to

33. MACAN 1908, p. 607 *ad* 10.4. The force that the Spartans planned to send to Thermopylai (Hdt. 7.206.1) would have been πανδημεί, had not the Persians annihilated Leonidas and his 300 men.

34. FLOWER, MARINCOLA 2002, p. 117.

35. ASHERI 2006, p. 185.

36. Οἱ Ἀμυκλαῖοι αἰεὶ ποτε ἀπέρχονται εἰς τὰ Ὑακίνθια ἐπὶ τὸν παιᾶνα, ἐάν τε στρατοπεδευόμενοι τυγχάνωσιν ἐάν τε ἄλλως πως ἀποδημούντες. Cf. Paus. 3.10.1.

37. PARKER 1983, p. 154, n. 54 (with earlier bibliography).

38. Since the spring of 479 Leotychides had had the command of the Greek fleet assembled at Aigina (Hdt. 8.131.1).

39. As the Spartans planned to do at Hdt. 7.206.1. Cf. RICHER 2004a, p. 399; 2004b, p. 80. That the celebration on the 9<sup>th</sup> day was held only as long as it was daylight, is also implied by Plut. *Arist.* 8.

40. SAMUEL 1972, p. 13. Cf. PARKE 1977, p. 111.

41. The *Perioikoi* are not mentioned at Athen. 4.139f, although the citizens of Sparta and their household slaves are. However, the presence of their representatives may be safely

have been present on the second day of the *Hyakinthia*, could not have levied this elect force,<sup>42</sup> unless they first returned to their own towns which lay some distance from Sparta and Amyklai.<sup>43</sup>

It has been argued<sup>44</sup> that the three main Spartan festivals, i.e. the *Hyakinthia*, the *Gymnopaideiai* and the *Karneia* were organized to take place in the first half of the month, in the period of the waxing moon, and that the date of the end of the *Hyakinthia* probably coincided with the full moon,<sup>45</sup> which is also assumed with regard to the *Karneia*.<sup>46</sup> Regarding the

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assumed from the fact that the *Perioikoi* were fellow-members of the Lacedaemonian *polis* on behalf of which they had to take or renew oaths concerning alliances or treaties, together with the representatives of the Spartans. See, e.g., the treaty of 421 (Thuc. 5.18.9). The presence of wealthy *Perioikoi* may be also implied by Polycrates' word τοὺς γνωρίμους, "those whom the Spartans were acquainted with," to whom they offered dinner from the sacrifices. Members of the *Perioikoi* elite were connected with the two royal houses of Sparta, since the kings owned chosen plots of land within the territory of many *perioikic* towns, while all the Lacedaemonians paid a royal tribute to them. HODKINSON 2000, p. 352 (the information on the royal tribute is regarded, however, as inconclusive by CARTLEDGE [1979] 2002, p.155).

42. RICHER'S (2012, p. 355; 2004a, p. 399; 2004b, p. 80) assumption that the 5,000 select *Perioikoi* had attended the festival is not substantiated by the evidence. See previous note.

43. On the location of the *Perioikic* towns and the obligation of the *Perioikoi* to follow the Spartans at war, see CARTLEDGE [1979] 2002, p. 153f and 159–66.

44. SERGENT 1991, p. 140–141. On the *Karneia* and the *Gymnopaideiai*, cf. RICHER 1998, p. 174, n. 123; 2005, p. 257–258; 2009, p. 219–220; 2012, p. 417 and 448–454. They both seem to have not been aware of PRITCHETT 1971, p. 116–126 (with earlier bibliography, especially p. 121, n. 28) nor of POPP 1957, p. 75–122.

45. RICHER 2004a, p. 414; 2004b, p. 86; 2007, p. 247; 2012, p. 375–376 (I have had no access to D. KNOEPFLER'S book, *La patrie de Narcisse. Un héros mythique enraciné dans le sol et dans l'histoire d'une cité grecque* [Paris, 2010] and its chapters on "Narkissos and Hyakinthos"). Yet RICHER'S argument that the full moon is that following the spring equinox, which is based on Ovid's (*Met.* 10.164–66) myth of Hyakinthos' new birth in the form of a flower in the spring, is not substantiated by the evidence. The myth of Hyakinthos' death in connection with his rebirth as a flower seems to be a later articulation of the myth, a version which is not apparently put in concrete form before Palaiphatos (4<sup>th</sup> c. B.C.); MORENO CONDE 2008, p. 10. Besides, the flower plays no known role in the *Hyakinthia*, nor is there any link between god or flower-hero and vegetation in general. FORBES IRVING 1990, p. 281. The festival began with grief felt for Hyakinthos' death, who originally seems to have been a god or vegetation-hero who died every summer to be reborn in the spring.

46. Hdt. 6.106.3 (although the name of the festival is not mentioned) and Eur. *Alc.* 448–451 (the destiny of Alcestis will be sung of "at Sparta in the month *Karneios*, when the moon lasts all the night," i.e. when the moon is full, during the musical *agôn* of the *Karneia*). The Olympic Games were likewise a moon festival held at the second full moon after the summer solstice. MILLER 1975, p. 216, 222–223 (the chart) and 229–231.

*Hyakinthia* our sole evidence is a practice attributed by Pseudo-Lucian to Lycurgus, namely that the Spartans did not go out to fight before the moon was full, which was due to their belief that the potency of the moon varied depending on when it waxed and when it waned.<sup>47</sup> As has been pointed out by Pritchett, the ban applied only to marching out.<sup>48</sup> This reinforces my assumption suggested above that the 5,000 citizens were levied to march out only immediately after the celebration of the *Hyakinthia* was over:<sup>49</sup> i.e. after the full moon on the ninth day from the arrival of the Athenian delegation, which ended before sunset on which the tenth day began.

## 2. *The ιερομηνία and the έκεχειρία or σπονδαί in connection with the Hyakinthia*

Once we know the date on which the festival ended, we can now return to where we started: i.e. the arrival of the Athenian delegation at Sparta in the period during which the Spartans were involved in observing the holiday of the *Hyakinthia*. With regard to the Herodotean text, Paul Stengel<sup>50</sup> and Ludwig Ziehen<sup>51</sup> stated in their *RE* entries respectively that the festival of the *Hyakinthia* lasted at least three days (Stengel) or just three days (Ziehen), while the *hieroménia* lasted at least nine days (Stengel) or most certainly longer than the (ten) days implied by Hdt. 9.7.f. (Ziehen). The term *ιερομηνία*,<sup>52</sup> of which the original sense must be ‘sacred month’,<sup>53</sup> is never used by Herodotus and in general there are actually very few literary

47. Luc. [*De astrologia*] 25: μηδὲ ἐς πόλεμον προχωρεῖν πρὶν τὴν σεληναίην πλήρεια γενέσθαι· οὐ γὰρ ἴσθη ἐνόμιζεν (sc. Λυκοῦργος) εἶναι τὴν δυναστείην ἀξανομένης τῆς σεληναίης καὶ ἀφανιζομένης, πάντα δὲ ὑπ’ αὐτῇ διοκέεσθαι. Cf. Hdt 6.106.3, μὴ οὐ πλήρεις ἔοντος τοῦ κύκλου and PRITCHETT’S 1971 p. 118 translation “unless the moon be full that day”. Cf. also Paus. 1.28.4: εἶναι γὰρ δὴ νόμον αὐτοῖς μὴ πρότερον μαχουμένους ἐξιέναι πρὶν ἢ πλήρη τὸν κύκλον τῆς σελήνης γενέσθαι.

48. PRITCHETT 1971, p. 120. Yet there is no evidence for a ban in the form of a *nomos*. A final decision, on the parallel of the *diabatéria*, was made by the *manteis*, see *ibid.*, p. 126.

49. Cf. RICHER 2012, p. 355; 2004a, p. 399; 2004b, p. 80 (“the delay could be explained by the necessary participation in the festival of the five thousand Spartiates”).

50. *RE* 9 (1914) col. 1.

51. *RE* 3A (1929) col. 1518.

52. I have had no access to G. F. UNGER’S article on the *ιερομηνία* (*Philologus* 33, 1875, p. 227–248).

53. PARKER 1983, p. 154.

references to it.<sup>54</sup> As Parker<sup>55</sup> has pointed out, it is a special term denoting the sacred time associated with a festival, and is regularly used in the context of restrictions placed upon profane activity, such as a suspension of hostilities/war or of other important aspects of the life of the community.<sup>56</sup>

A pair of related terms used in connection with Panhellenic festivals are the words ἐκεχειρία<sup>57</sup> and σπονδαί, which designate the sacred truce<sup>58</sup> and have a narrower sense restricted to the sphere of warfare.<sup>59</sup> The ἐκεχειρία covered the period immediately before, during and after a sacred festival,<sup>60</sup> during which, in certain circumstances, aggression against a state, or by it, might be prevented,<sup>61</sup> the same being true for the σπονδαί.<sup>62</sup> It is the sacred truces between the host state and the participating states that permitted the celebration of the four Panhellenic athletic festivals even in time of war.<sup>63</sup>

The tradition attributing the invention of the ἐκεχειρία to the joint ingenuity (συνδιαθεῖναι) of the king of Elis Iphitos, who was the founder of the Olympic Games, and Lycurgus, is not devoid of truth.<sup>64</sup> With regard to the joint effort, it is enough here to note that the celebration of the *Olympia* and the *Hyakinthia* had been fixed to a period recognized so to speak, by the first or second full moon after the summer solstice.<sup>65</sup> In fact,

54. LIDDEL, SCOTT, JONES *Greek English Lexicon*, s.v. ἱερομηνία; ROUGEMONT 1973, p. 82–86.

55. PARKER 1983, p. 154.

56. PARKER 1983, p. 154–158 and, earlier, ROUGEMONT 1973, p. 83–86.

57. The first historical reference to *hieromēnia* is in Thucydides, 3.56.2.; 5.54.2. BRODERSEN 1991, p. 12 and nn. 49, 50.

58. See *testimonia* in ROUGEMONT 1973, p. 86 (II)-89. On the notion of the ἐκεχειρία, which literally means “a holding of hands”, hence a cessation of hostilities, see POPP 1957, p. 130–132.

59. ROUGEMONT’S 1973, p. 101ff, distinction between the sacred truces and the ἐκεχειρία.

60. DILLON 1997b, p. 2.

61. PARKER 1983, p. 155.

62. See above, n. 59.

63. PARKER, 1983, p. 155.

64. Arist. fr. 533 (Rose), ap. Plut. *Lyc.* 1 : οἱ μὲν γὰρ Ἰφίτω συνακμάσαι καὶ συνδιαθεῖναι τὴν Ὀλυμπιακὴν ἐκεχειρίαν λέγουσιν αὐτὸν, ὃν ἔστι καὶ <Ἀριστοτέλης> ὁ φιλόσοφος τεκμήριον προσφέρων τὸν Ὀλυμπιασὶ δίσκον ἐν ᾧ τοῦνομα τοῦ Λυκούργου διασώζεται καταγεγραμμένον. Cf. Paus. 5.20.1; 26.2.

65. The beginning of the training period of the *Olympia* is placed at the first full moon after the summer solstice. The Olympic games occurred at the second full moon. See MILLER 1975, p. 216 and 219–231. The *Hyakinthia* ended with athletic contests (see text below, p. 182–183) which should be probably placed at the first full moon after the summer solstice (late June), given that Athens had been taken by the Persians for a second time

the earliest “sacred truces” known, are those concluded by the Eleians and by the Spartans, both of which go back to about the mid 7<sup>th</sup> c. B.C. Because of the Eleian εἰρήνη,<sup>66</sup> the Eleians were unarmed when Pheidon of Argos captured Olympia<sup>67</sup> and held the games together with the people of Pisa. The Spartan σπονδαί are attested by Pausanias in his account of the events related to the Second Messenian War.<sup>68</sup> According to Pausanias,<sup>69</sup> on the approach of the festival of Hyakinthos, the Lacedaemonians made a forty-day truce, σπονδάς, when besieging the Messenians at Eira.<sup>70</sup> The truce permitted the Spartans to return home in order to hold the festival and then return to Eira to resume the siege. However, there is no evidence that the Spartans proclaimed an ἐκεχειρία whenever they celebrated the *Hyakinthia* or the *Karneia*, as the Greeks invariably did at Panhellenic festivals. According to Busolt, towards the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> c. the *ekecheiria* was restricted to the four Panhellenic festivals, to the Asklepieia at Epidaurus and to the Eleusinian mysteries.<sup>71</sup> In contrast to the sacred truces, however, the ἱερομηνία for the *Karneia* and presumably for the *Hyakinthia*, which did not extend beyond the end of the festival,<sup>72</sup> would have lasted in Classical times much less than a month.<sup>73</sup>

On the basis of Herodotus’ description, it is impossible to determine the precise length of the ἱερομηνία assumed for the *Hyakinthia*. For the Athenian envoys arrived at Sparta while the Spartans were already

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(Hdt. 9.3.2) probably in June 479 (Thuc. 5.40-41 also suggests that the *Hyakinthia* were held in early summer, not at the height of it as is assumed by Ziehen, see above, n. 51). On the date of Athens’ second capture by Xerxes, LAZENBY 1993, p. 213.

66. *Gottesfrieden* is the word used by BUSOLT 1926, p. 1263 for the ἐκεχειρία, it recalls the medieval term “the peace and truce of God”. The meaning “Olympic Peace” is presupposed at Thuc. 5.49f. BRODERSEN 1991, p. 12 and n. 50.

67. BRODERSEN 1991, p. 12–13 citing Ephoros *FGrHist* 70 F 115 (=Strab. 8.358); cf. Paus. 6.22.2.

68. Its end is placed towards the mid 7<sup>th</sup> c. or a little later. See LÉVY 2003, p. 21.

69. Paus. 4.19.4: Λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ ἐπήει γὰρ Ὑακίνθια πρὸς τοὺς ἐν τῇ Εἴρᾳ τεσσαράκοντα ἐποιήσαντο ἡμερῶν σπονδάς· καὶ αὐτοὶ μὲν ἀναχωρήσαντες οἴκαδε ἐώρταζον.

70. On Mt. Eira, not far from Andania in North-East Messenia, was made the last stand of the Messenians. CARTLEDGE [1979] 2002, p. 110.

71. BUSOLT 1926, p. 1263.

72. On the *Karneia*, see Hdt. 6.106.3: ἦν γὰρ ἰσταμένου τοῦ μηνὸς εἰνάτη, εἰνάτη δὲ οὐκ ἐξελεύσεσθαι ἔφασαν μὴ οὐ πλήρους ἐόντος τοῦ κύκλου, the latter phrase translated by PRITCHETT 1971, p. 118 “unless the moon be full that day”.

73. On the uncertainty of the length of the *hieromēnia* in the historical times, see PARKER 1983, p. 154.

observing the holiday, and the festival ended on the ninth day from the envoys' arrival, as I have argued.<sup>74</sup> Stengel is undoubtedly right in assuming that the *hieromēnia* lasted at least nine days. Parker notes that festivals lasting any number of days up to ten are frequently reported.<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, there is no reason to suppose, as Richer does, that in the Classical period the celebration of the festival was longer than the three days mentioned by Polycrates in his account concerning τὴν τῶν Ὑακινθίων θυσίαν.<sup>76</sup>

### 3. The Preparations for the Festival

In view of what has been argued so far, one may wonder what the matters of utmost importance were that the Spartans had to prepare every year for Apollo,<sup>77</sup> i.e. what they prepared during the holiday preceding the celebration of the festival. As a matter of fact, Mellink<sup>78</sup> was the first to assume that preparations for the festival may have been included in the ten-day delay period during which the Athenian envoys were present. She notes that the Spartans concluded a forty-day truce during the siege of Eira and remarks that they would have had other reasons too “for choosing this otherwise excessive number of days.”

Mellink's assumption is reinforced, I think, by the information we have concerning the feast held on the day Apollo was honoured.<sup>79</sup> The feast that followed the sacrifice to Apollo is a distinctive Spartan form of ritual “dinner.”<sup>80</sup> It is regularly denoted by the Laconian term κοπίς/κοπίζω,<sup>81</sup> instead of which Polycrates uses the verb δειπνίζουσιν in his phrase that “they offer dinner to all their acquaintances and their own slaves.”<sup>82</sup> The

74. See text, above, p. 169–170, 172, 174.

75. PARKER 2011, p. 173.

76. See Athen. 4.139d. According to RICHER (2012, p. 356; 2004a, p. 399; 2004b, p. 81) demographic reasons caused perhaps a shortening of the *Hyakinthia* between the 4th and 5th c. B.C.

77. See text, above, p. 169–170.

78. MELLINK 1943, p. 25.

79. Namely, the “middle” (second) day, see Athen. 4.139e-f.

80. BRUIT 1990, p. 163–164. The *kopis* was a δειπνον, see Athen. 4.140b. PETERSSON 1992, p. 16–17 has pointed out the sacred character of *kopis*.

81. Athen. 4. 138e-139b (*passim*) and 140a-b.

82. Athen. 4.139.f: καὶ δειπνίζουσιν οἱ πολῖται πάντα τοὺς γνωρίμους καὶ τοὺς δούλους τοὺς ἰδίους. On the personal relationship between Spartiate households and their servants, see HODKINSON 2000, p. 336–337.

κοτίδες resembled the Spartan φιδίτια, at which portions of meat and bread were distributed equally to all.<sup>83</sup> Yet the *kopis* held every year at the *Hyakinthia* was enriched with a variety of tasty dishes offered in abundance, such as broth (ζωμός),<sup>84</sup> i.e. soup in which presumably the sacrificial goat meat had been boiled.<sup>85</sup> Of particular significance is the fact that this *kopis*, which is described as a “dinner” by Polycrates, was held not at home but at the shrine of Apollo. According to Polemon of Ilium,<sup>86</sup> whenever the Spartans held a *kopis*, they first set up tents in the shrine of the god, and they constructed beds of brushwood inside, over which they spread carpets, ἐπὶν δὲ κοπιῶσι, πρῶτον μὲν δὴ σκηνάς ποιοῦνται παρὰ τὸν θεόν, ἐν δὲ ταύταις στιβάδας ἐξ ὕλης, ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων δάπιδας ὑποστρωννύουσιν.<sup>87</sup> In other words, the citizens offered all their acquaintances and their own slaves a ritual “dinner” served in private tents (σκηναί) furnished with couches, rather than in their own homes, the tents evidently replacing these as the place where hospitality was offered.<sup>88</sup> This, I think, is accounted for by the fact that the houses of most citizens were too far away to take and consume the sacrificial goat meat at home, as they did on other occasions. Polemon’s<sup>89</sup> information regarding the setting up of tents probably goes back to the time of Xenophon. If my assumption is correct, this would mean that at least down to the 4<sup>th</sup> c. B.C. an unknown number of tents were erected and an

83. BRUIT 1990, p. 163.

84. See *ibid.*; cf. PETROPOULOU 2011-2012, p. 155.

85. On the sacrifice of numerous (probably she-) goats for the *kopis*, see text below, p. 181–182. On boiling in connection with animal sacrifice, see DURAND [1979] 1989, p. 103–104. It is still the method of cooking of meat in modern Greece at the so-called “Kourbania,” i.e. the sanctified animal sacrifices of village communities in honour of Saints. GEORGIOUDI [1979] 1989, p. 190–191. On the boiling of meat prior to its distribution and consumption within the sanctuary, see recently EKROTH 2008, p. 99. It was a convenient way of preparing meat for a large number of worshippers. The archaeological (cauldrons) and osteological evidence indicates that most meat eaten in Greek sanctuaries was in fact boiled. EKROTH 2012, p. 109.

86. *FHG* 3.86 (=Athen. 4.138f).

87. A parallel for the expression παρὰ τὸν θεόν is at *IG* IV<sup>2</sup> 109, III, 145-6, τοῦ ὄχετοῦ τοῦ πρὸ τῆς πασιτάδος/[τ]ῆς παρ’ Ἀπόλλωνα.

88. Cf. BURKERT’S 1985, p. 107 remark concerning the *skênê* in general, “the house is replaced by an improvised hut.” Camping in the sacred area was forbidden, worshippers pitched their *skênai* in the vicinity of the sacred site. DILLON 1997a, p. 123.

89. In his work, *Tò παρὰ Ξενοφῶντι κάναθρον* (= *On the Carriage Fitted with Wickerwork in Xenophon*). Athen. 4.138e. On the content of the work, see *RE* 21 (1952) cols. 1314–1315 (by K. Deichgräber).

even greater number of couches set up every year, in order to accommodate those feasting at the *kopis*.

The construction of tents and couches, which required some technical or practical skills including the carving or gathering of wooden beams<sup>90</sup> and brushwood, gathered presumably from the wooded slopes of the Amyklaion hill,<sup>91</sup> would have taken several days.<sup>92</sup> *Skēnai* furnished with στιβάδες were occasionally erected in sanctuaries, mainly for sleeping but also for eating,<sup>93</sup> especially when athletic contests were involved.<sup>94</sup> The *skēnai* accommodated those who both spent the night and took their meals there. The nightlong revelry at Eur. *Hel.* 1468-70,<sup>95</sup> presupposes an overnight stay at the Amyklaion, which lay a few kilometers south-east of Sparta town.<sup>96</sup> The revelry can only be placed after the end of the second day,<sup>97</sup> i.e. on the third day which began at sunset, during which the whole Spartan population was still present at Amyklai. Given that in 480 B.C. the total number of Spartan *hoplitai* seems to have been 8,000,<sup>98</sup> hundreds of tents and thousands of couches would have to be constructed in 479 B.C. for the accommodation of nearly all Spartan citizens and their families.

These σκηναί bear little resemblance to the σκιάδες used at the *Karneia*.<sup>99</sup> Only nine *skiades* were made every year for the celebration, in each of which nine chosen men ate together and everything was carried out as a response to an order from a herald.<sup>100</sup> The σκιάδες<sup>101</sup> or “shades”, as their name implies, were structures offering protection against the sun (and

90. Eur. *Ion*, 1133-6: σεμνῶς ἀτοίχους περιβολὰς σκηνωμάτων/ὄρθοστάταις ἰδρύεθ', ἡλίου βολὰς/καλῶς φυλάξας, οὔτε πρὸς μέσας φλογὸς/ἀκτίνας οὔτ' αὖ πρὸς τελευτώσας βίον. On the construction of the *skēnê*, see *RE* 3A (1927) col. 471–472 (by A. Frickenhaus).

91. A late inscription (*IG* V<sup>1</sup> 455, 2) refers to a δάσκιον ἄλλ[ος] on it. Olive trees were cultivated on the top and slopes of the hill in Tsountas' time. See TSOUNTAS 1892, p. 1.

92. The ritual meals of the first day, called δεῖπνα at Athen. 4.139d, were of a short duration and probably held in the halls where the *syssitia* were consumed. PETROPOULOU 2015 (in press).

93. *Ag. Thesm.* 624; 658. On the *stibas*, see *RE* 3A (1929) col. 2482 (by F. Poland); VERPOORTEN 1962.

94. *Ag. Pax* 880 (for the *Isthmia*); Xen. *Hell.* 7.4.32 (for the *Olympia*).

95. Χοροῖς/ἢ κόμοις Ὑακίνθου/νύχιον ἐς εὐφροσύναν.

96. CARTLEDGE 2001, p. 17.

97. PETROPOULOU 2011-2012, p. 154 (between the second and third day).

98. *Hdt.* 7.234.2 and FIGUEIRA 1986, p. 168–169.

99. Demetrios of Skepsis in Athen. 4.141e-f.

100. See *ibid.*

101. On the *skiades*, see SCHÄFER 1939, p. 38–39 (σκιάς derives from σκιά, cf. the Latin *umbraculum* from *umbra*).

rain) in spots selected.<sup>102</sup> There is no evidence that the *skiades* made for *Karneia* were used for sleeping. Besides, the nine men who ate together represented the three *phratriai* and formed a “representative body of men meeting for a communal sacrificial banquet... bound to one another in a quasi-military camp life.”<sup>103</sup>

What form of these *skiades* took is not known. The *skênai*, however, erected at sanctuaries for (sleeping and/or) ritual meals,<sup>104</sup> were usually square,<sup>105</sup> the couches being constructed along their (three) walls. For the Mysteries of Andania various sizes of tents were set up. The relevant regulation of the sacred law of Andania is assumed to refer to the maximum permitted perimeter of the tent, of which the measurement is defined as 30 feet and would occupy an area of approximately 9 m (each side 2.25 m = just over 5 m<sup>2</sup>).<sup>106</sup> Tents of various sizes were probably similarly erected at the *Hyakinthia*, to judge from the disparities in the ability of citizen households to maintain household servants, i.e. *mothônes* and *nothoi*.<sup>107</sup> For, although the average Spartan household consisted of 4-5 members, as was the case elsewhere in Greece, due to local peculiarities Spartan households were probably even more diverse in size and composition than those in other poleis.<sup>108</sup>

Naturally, the σκηναί and στιβάδες were used only on the second and third day of the three-day *Hyakinthia*.<sup>109</sup> Being temporary structures, they were evidently dismantled afterwards. However, several days prior to the celebration of the festival, the Spartans would have been occupied with setting up or constructing of tents and couches to be used on the last two days of the *Hyakinthia*.

102. Athen. 4.141f: τόπους μὲν γὰρ εἶναι ἑννέα τῷ ἀριθμῷ, σκιάδες δὲ οὗτοι καλοῦνται σκηναῖς ἔχοντες παραπλήσιόν τι. Cf. the ἄσημον τόπον at which was held the *gymnopaedia* mentioned at Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 208b.

103. BURKERT [1977] 1985, p. 234.

104. See the δημοθονία at Eur. *Ion*, 1140. See also Frickenhaus, above, n. 90; DILLON 1997b, p. 160.

105. Eur. *Ion*, 1137-8. See also the Regulation of the Andanian Mysteries in SOKOLOWSKI 1969, nr. 65, line 35, and the next note. Cf. SCHAEFER 1939, p. 38.

106. GAWLINSKI 2012, p. 72-73 (text) and 143-144 (commentary).

107. On this latter issue, see HODKINSON 2000, p. 337.

108. See *ibid.*, p. 372.

109. Athen. 4.139e-f.

## II. THE 'HYAKINTHIA SACRIFICE' IN POLYCRATES' ACCOUNT

*The chief feature of the festival and the celebration of the third day*

There remains the question of, first, why Polycrates uses the word *θυσία*, instead of *έορτή*, when he is evidently using the phrase *τὴν τῶν Ὑακινθίων θυσίαν* to refer to the three-day celebration of the festival and, second, of how exactly this celebration, of which only the first two days are described in Athenaeus, came to an end on the third day.

In Polycrates' description of the *Hyakinthia*<sup>110</sup> the word *thusia* is used twice: in the opening phrase of his account and in the sentence with which he concludes the description of the festival's second day. In the former case, Polycrates speaks of the three-day "duration" of the celebration of the festival, *τὴν μὲν τῶν Ὑακινθίων θυσίαν οἱ Λάκωνες ἐπὶ τρεῖς ἡμέρας συντελοῦσι*.<sup>111</sup> In the latter case, he refers to the "sacrifice" of numerous victims and the dinner offered by the citizens to all their acquaintances and their own slaves, which no one missed, as the city turned out to attend the spectacle: *ιερεῖά τε παμπληθῆ θύουσι τὴν ἡμέραν ταύτην καὶ δειπνίζουσιν οἱ πολῖται πάντας τοὺς γνωρίμους καὶ τοὺς δούλους τοὺς ἰδίους· οὐδεὶς δ' ἀπολείπει τὴν θυσίαν, ἀλλὰ κενουῖσθαι συμβαίνει τὴν πόλιν πρὸς τὴν θέαν*.<sup>112</sup>

The word *thusia* ordinarily refers to the act/ceremony or mode of sacrifice.<sup>113</sup> Occasionally, however, *thusia* can be used to designate "a whole of which it constitutes the essential part," and hence it can be used as an alternative to the word *heortê*, namely a festival at which a *thusia* was offered.<sup>114</sup> This is evidently the manner in which the word *θυσία* is used in the opening sentence of Polycrates' description concerning the duration of the festival, Πολυκράτης, φησί (i.e. Didymus), *ἐν τοῖς Λακωνικοῖς ἱστορεῖ τὴν μὲν τῶν Ὑακινθίων θυσίαν...*<sup>115</sup> while in reference to the sacrifice of numerous victims offered to Apollo and the dinner held on the second day,

110. Athen. 4.139d-f (Polycrates, *FGrHist* 588 F1 quoted via Didymus).

111. Athen. 4.139d.

112. Athen. 4.139f.

113. CASABONA 1966, p. 127–139, and mainly, p. 138. See also LIDDELL, SCOTT, JONES *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. *θυσία* I.2.

114. CASABONA 1966, p. 133. LIDDELL, SCOTT, JONES, s.v. *θυσία* 3.

115. See above, n. 111.

it is stressed that no one missed the “sacrifice,” οὐδεὶς δ’ ἀπολείπει τὴν θυσίαν,<sup>116</sup> which was actually the essential part of the festival.

Spartan sacrifices were proverbially small and cheap.<sup>117</sup> The extant information on public sacrifices is meagre. Occasionally there is reference to a bull or even to a much less expensive animal, such as a cock.<sup>118</sup> As far as I know, it is only with regard to the *Hyakinthia* that we know both of the kind and great number of victims and of the feast, the *kopis*, which is distinguished from other *kopides* for its variety and abundance. According to the account of Polemon of Ilium quoted by Athenaeus (also via Didymus,<sup>119</sup> which refers to the second day of the *Hyakinthia*,<sup>120</sup> the Spartans sacrificed only goats at the *kopides*, and no other victim, θούουσι δ’ ἐν ταῖς κοπίσιν αἶγας, ἄλλο δ’ οὐδὲν ἱερείον. It is worth noting that there is only one parallel to the considerable number of goats sacrificed, and goats alone, in honour of Apollo, namely the 500 goats offered annually to Artemis Agrotera after the victory at the battle of Marathon.<sup>121</sup> In view of this, there can be hardly any doubt that the great number of goats sacrificed was the chief feature of the Spartan festival which was therefore called ἡ τῶν Ὑακινθίων θυσία.

Had the second day been identical to the final day of the *Hyakinthia* celebrated in the time of Herodotus, Richer would have been right in arguing that the festival ended with “des actes empreints de réjouissance..., qui pouvaient être nocturnes”. However, it has been recently argued elsewhere, that the “νύχτιον...εὐφροσύναν” (Eur. *Hel.* 1470) to which Richer refers<sup>122</sup> “cannot but be placed between the second and the third day” of the celebration mentioned by Polycrates.<sup>123</sup> On the other hand, we know that the *Hyakinthia* ended with a day which focused on athletic games. The description of this “third” day is missing altogether from Athenaeus’ text. The responsibility for its absence should be attributed to Athenaeus,

116. See above, n. 112.

117. Plut. *Lyc.* 19.8: καὶ τὸ περὶ τῶν θυσιῶν πρὸς τὸν πυθόμενον διὰ τί μικρὰς οὕτω καὶ εὐτελεῖς ἔταξεν..., “with regard to the sacrifices, when asked why (i.e. Lycurgus) ordained that they be so small...”. BREMMER 2007, p. 134, suspects the influence of Spartan ideology.

118. Plut. *Apophth. lac.* 208e (βουθυτῶν); 238f (βοῦν, ἀλεκτρούνα). When the *Karneia* were approaching, individuals would sacrifice a ram, see Theoc. *Id.* 5.81-2. How many rams were sacrificed at the *Karneia*, is not known.

119. *FHG* 3.86 (=Athen. 4.138f.) and BÖLTE 1929, p. 133.

120. BÖLTE 1929, p. 134.

121. PETROPOULOU 2011-2012, p. 155–156.

122. RICHER 2012, p. 355, n. 74.

123. PETROPOULOU 2011-2012, p. 154.

on whom Jacoby<sup>124</sup> lays the blame, rather than to Didymus from whose book *Συμποσιακά* Athenaeus extracted the text of Polycrates.<sup>125</sup>

It has sometimes been argued that the athletic games of the *Hyakinthia* are late,<sup>126</sup> on the grounds that the main evidence comes from the Antonine period.<sup>127</sup> Yet the earliest cultic event of the *Hyakinthia* that we know of, is the ἀγών attested in connection with the conspiracy of the *Partheniai* and the foundation of Taras as a Spartan colony, which is dated to the last decade of the VIII<sup>th</sup> c. B.C.<sup>128</sup> In fact, the throwing of the discus, which caused the death of Hyakinthus, was an event included in the pentathlon, and is epigraphically and archaeologically attested as early as the Archaic period.<sup>129</sup>

It has been also very recently argued that the βούθυτον ἀμέραν with which Apollo charged the Spartans to honour Hyakinthos in Euripides *Helen*,<sup>130</sup> probably echoes the bull sacrifices with which Apollo and Hyakinthos would have been honoured on the third day of the *Hyakinthia*.<sup>131</sup> Athletic games held in honour of divinities and/or heroes were usually preceded by one or more sacrifices offered to the divine master of the shrine and/or the hero worshipped there.<sup>132</sup> Bull sacrifices at the Amyklaion are confirmed by archaeological finds excavated in the area of the altar<sup>133</sup> or elsewhere in the shrine.<sup>134</sup> In view of these, the bull sacrifices of the βούθυτον ἀμέραν with which Apollo charged the Spartans to honour Hyakinthos, were very

124. *FGrHist* IIIb (1955) 588 F 1.

125. BÖLTE 1929, p. 133–134.

126. For example, BRULÉ 1992, p. 37.

127. MORENO CONDE 2008, p. 34.

128. The traditional date, 706 B.C., is in agreement with the earliest Greek pottery excavated on the site. PETROPOULOU 2011–2012, p. 153–154.

129. HODKINSON 1999, p. 155.

130. *Eur. Hel.* 1473–5: τῶ <δε> Λακαί-/να γᾶ βούθυτον ἀμέραν/ ὁ Διὸς {δ} εἶπε σέβειν γόνος. The text is edited by KANNICHT 1969, I, p. 177.

131. PETROPOULOU 2011–2012, p. 155–156; EAD., 2015 (in press).

132. On the *Olympic Games*, see MILLER 2003, p. 12 (sacrifices to gods located within the altis) and p. 18 (a hecatomb to Zeus); EKROTH 2012, p. 104–106 and 109–111 (sacrifices and *theo Xenia* for Pelops). On annual, private heroic cults established in Hellenistic times, which ended with games, see EKROTH 2007, p. 113.

133. Bull teeth, found among the semi-circular foundations of what was later recognized to be the altar of Apollo, are noted by TSOUNTAS 1892, p. 11.

134. On a III<sup>rd</sup> c. B.C. dedicatory stele, on which is carved a bull being dragged for sacrifice towards the statue of Apollo, which was excavated by TSOUNTAS 1892, p. 8–9, see MORENO CONDE 2008, p. 78–79 (with earlier bibliography) and, recently, PETROPOULOU 2011–2012, p. 155.

probably offered to both Apollo and Hyakinthos, before the ἀγών of the *Hyakinthia* began, as has been argued elsewhere recently.<sup>135</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

We have shown that the contradiction between Herodotus and Polycrates with regard to the duration of the *Hyakinthia* is probably not due to any change in the length of the festival occurring sometime between the classical period and later times, as Richer has argued. A careful analysis of Herodotus' text (*supra* I.1) implies that, when the envoys came before the ephors for the first time, the Spartans were on holiday, although not yet celebrating the actual festival at Amyklai. However, on the day of their departure from Sparta, the envoys addressed the ephors as if they had witnessed the actual celebration with a *panêguris* in honour of Apollo and the merrymaking at Amyklai, which are features attributed by Polycrates to the second day of the festival. On the other hand, Polycrates (II) speaks of a three-day celebration of the actual festival. The latter celebration is denoted by the word θυσία, an alternative to ἑορτή, because the chief feature of the celebration was the sacrifice to Apollo of a great number of goats on whose meat they feasted. In addition, we have argued that the *Hyakinthia* ended not with “des actes empreints de réjouissance..., qui pouvaient être nocturnes”, which are actually attested in Eur. *Hel.* 1470 and recently placed between the second and third day of the festival, but with a day on which athletic contests were held.

We have specifically argued with regard to Herodotus' text that (I.1) the *Hyakinthia* probably lasted at least nine days, not ten, as earlier scholars and Richer have argued in connection with the ten-day delay of the envoys. For on the tenth day, 5, 000 men commanded by Pausanias were sent out to fight against the Persians, and it is more reasonable to assume that such a large army, the greatest ever mobilized as far as we know, was actually levied after the festival had finished, i.e. after the sunset which marked the start of the tenth day. That the departure of this army took place immediately after the end of the *Hyakinthia*, of which the date is assumed by Richer to coincide with the full moon, is confirmed by the Spartan practice of not going out to fight before the moon was full. We have further shown (I.2) that although the term *hieromênia* (the sacred time associated with a

135. PETROPOULOU 2015 (in press).

festival) is not used by Herodotus in general, the related words *ekecheiria* or *spondai*, which define the sacred truce of the Panhellenic festivals, are attested in relation either to the mythical beginnings of the *Olympia* and presumably the *Hyakinthia* or to actual celebrations of them in about mid VII<sup>th</sup> c. B.C. However, it has been pointed out that the assumed *hieromênia* of the *Hyakinthia* would have lasted in the Classical times much less than a month. We have also argued (I.3) that the preparations made by the Spartans every year for Apollo during the holiday preceding the actual celebration of the festival, involved the erection of a greater number of tents and the construction of an even greater number of couches within the tents, on which they feasted during the ritual dinner termed *kopis*. The construction of these, which would be of use on both the second and third day of the *Hyakinthia* celebrated at Amyklai, would have taken several days. Moreover (II) it has been pointed out that the *Hyakinthia* is the only Spartan festival for which we know of both the kind and number of victims slaughtered as well as of the ritual “dinner” called *kopis*, at which the sacrificial meat was consumed, together with other dishes, in private tents erected at the shrine. Finally we have pointed out that the *agôn* of the *Hyakinthia* seems to go back to the late VIII<sup>th</sup> c. B. C, while the throwing of the discus is attested epigraphically and archaeologically in the VI<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The athletic games, which were held on the third day of the festival’s celebration, were very likely preceded by bull sacrifices offered to Apollo and Hyakinthos, as we have argued.

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