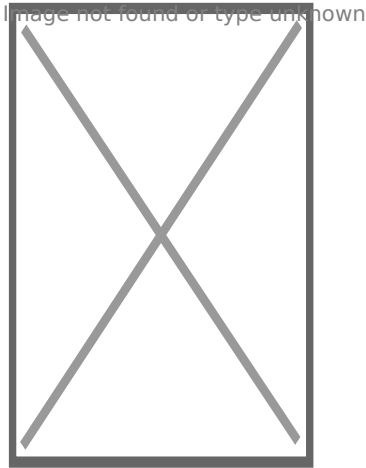


Further Thoughts On Science And Epicurean Philosophy

Post by "Don" of January 11, 2024 at 4:43 PM

As far as ritual or religious practices, Epicurus leaves money in his will for "the funeral offerings to my father, mother, and brothers." The word translated "funeral offerings" in τὰ ἐναγίσματα (ta enagismata) < enagisma. See:



[Chapter IV. The ritual pattern](#)

1. The sacrificial rituals of Greek hero-cults This study has had two aims, first of all, to establish the sacrificial rituals of Greek hero-cults in the...

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Quote

1.4. Destruction sacrifices

12Destruction sacrifices at which no dining took place, covered by the terms holokautos in the inscriptions and enagizein, enagisma and enagismos in the literary texts, are rare and cannot be considered as the regular kind of ritual in hero-cults. All the terms seem to cover the same kind of ritual, the destruction of the offerings, but they have different bearings on the character of the recipient. Holokautos was more neutral, being used for both heroes and gods, while enagizein, enagisma and enagismos are particular to hero-cults and the cult of the dead. Apart from referring to a destruction sacrifice, enagizein, enagisma and enagismos also mark the recipient as being dead and therefore impure in some sense, and distinguish him, or a side of him, from the gods, who are immortal and pure. In most cases, the destruction sacrifices to heroes were performed as separate rituals and not in connection with a thysia.

13The enagizein sacrifices seem to have been aimed at highlighting the dead and impure character of the hero. The destruction of the offerings formed part of the cult of the dead, but it is doubtful to what extent they were performed with animal victims, since the sacrifice of animals had practically disappeared from the cult of the ordinary dead already in the Archaic period, partly as a result of the funerary legislation.

14Partial and total destructions of the victims are also found in the cult of the gods and can sometimes be viewed as a result of the character of the recipient, but perhaps more clearly as a reaction to or as a reminiscence of a particularly pressing and difficult situation. Similarly, in hero-cults the destruction sacrifices are not only a reflection of the recipient's character, but may also be a response to the problems and stress of a particular situation or may be performed in order to avoid difficulties in the future. Seen from this angle, these rituals were used in the same manner as in the cult of the gods.

15The evidence for the terms enagizein, enagisma and enagismos, considered to be standard terms for the sacrifices to heroes, is slight for sacrifices to heroes in the Archaic and Classical periods (no use at all is made of the terms in inscriptions before the late 2nd century BC, for example). More remarkable is the frequent use of the terms in the 1st to the 3rd centuries AD, particularly in the 2nd century AD and especially by Pausanias and Plutarch. The popularity of the terms during this period, evident also from the hapax enagisterion (attested in an inscription dating from c. AD 170), can be linked to the antiquarian tendencies of the Second Sophistic. Enagizein sacrifices seem to have been regarded as an old and venerable ritual, and the terms enagizein, enagisma, enagismos and enagisterion are predominantly used for heroes considered as being ancient, a tendency which may have originated in a desire to separate the old, traditional heroes of the epic and glorious past history from the more recently heroized, ordinary mortals of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. This link between heroes and enagizein may, in its turn, have been the reason for the almost mechanical use of enagizein in the scholia to explain and elucidate sacrifices to heroes in the Classical sources, whether or not these rituals contained any actions of the kind usually covered by enagizein. It is also interesting to note that, in the 2nd century AD and later, enagizein began to be used for sacrifices to gods, though often to divinities connected with the sphere of death and the underworld, and for sacrifices differing from regular thysiai. In this late period, the term seems gradually to have taken on the meaning "to burn completely", no matter who was the recipient.