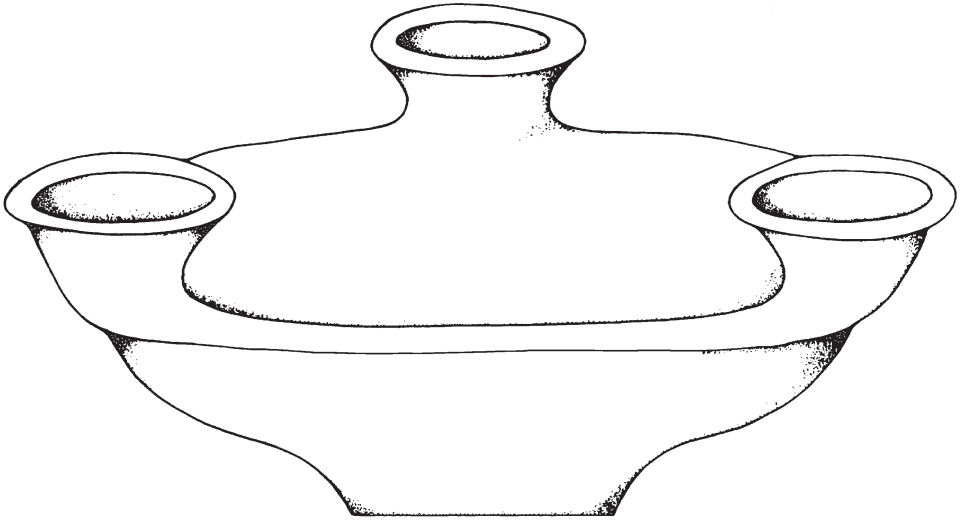


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Beyond Greek “Sacred Laws”*

Abstract: Recent scholarship has recognised that the modern categorisation of certain Greek inscriptions as “sacred laws” is problematic. The article seeks to move beyond the traditional corpus of “sacred laws” to suggest an alternative Collection of Greek Ritual Norms (CGRN), which uses more selective criteria and which will be published on line.

Résumé : La recherche récente a régulièrement remis en cause la catégorie moderne de « lois sacrées » désignant des inscriptions grecques qui forment un ensemble mal défini. Cet article entend dépasser le corpus traditionnel des « lois sacrées » en présentant un projet de recueil alternatif de « Normes rituelles grecques » (CGRN pour l’acronyme anglais), qui s’appuie sur des critères plus sélectifs et sera publié en ligne.

The present article aims to provide an alternative perspective on the corpus of Greek inscriptions known as “sacred laws”. Work on a new online version of this corpus has begun as a project of the Fonds National de Recherche Scientifique at the University of Liège, under the direction of the present authors.¹ This article therefore serves as part of a preliminary introduction to a new collection of documents regularly called by this name and, more importantly, as a necessary redefinition of what might be implied by this designation.

A first section provides an overview along with a critique of recent work on the subject. Despite highlighting the difficulties inherent in the modern rubric “sacred law” and the heterogeneity of the inscriptions gathered under it, contemporary scholarship has for the most part contented itself with both the customary designation and the traditional content of the corpus. Greek terminology, while potentially helpful, is naturally varied and inconsistent, and

* We are very grateful to Robert Parker for his valuable reactions and comments on a draft of this paper. Some epigraphical abbreviations used here can be found in the bibliography at the end of this article. Except where otherwise indicated, numbers refer to inscriptions in a given corpus, rather than pages. Some incidental citations are given in full in their respective footnotes, while frequently referenced works are listed in the bibliography.

¹ Project of the Fonds National de Recherche Scientifique at the University of Liège (Belgium): F.R.S.–FNRS, Project number 2.4561.12 (2012–2015). Another article by the present authors serves as a parallel part of this introduction (Forthcoming). Its focus is instead on the codification of “sacred laws”, that is to say, on the various models that have been proposed for examining which sorts of religious prescriptions were inscribed in the Greek world. Topics discussed include the “stratigraphy” of sacred laws, the polyvalent concept of *hieros nomos*, and the normativity or exceptionalism of the inscriptions.

as a result cannot readily serve to delimit a modern unified corpus of inscriptions. Instead, it might be possible to propose a new corpus that is subdivided into recognisable epigraphical genres, or in other words into a series of distinct corpora, but this might also be vast and impractical.

Moving beyond these recent investigations, the second part of the article suggests a set of general criteria for the creation of a “corpus”, attempting a form of compromise between traditional approaches and modern desiderata, particularly those of scholars of Greek religion who wish to consult normative inscriptions with ease and convenience. Surveying a few of the various inscriptions which have in the past been collected as “sacred laws”, one can outline three broad kinds of subject matter found within them: the sanctuary, the cult personnel and the rituals, particularly those involving sacrifice and purification.

While interesting in their own right, inscriptions exclusively or primarily concerned with the protection or finances of a sanctuary, or similarly with the definition or finances of a priestly office, do not always cohere well with the rest of the inscriptions, which are more properly concerned with ritual practice and performance. Furthermore, it can be argued that the corpus often suffers from an exclusively epigraphical mindset, since it sometimes aims at the establishment of detailed editions over and beyond focusing on the informative aspects of the inscriptions. Though one might gather inscriptions according to epigraphical genre, it is possible instead to excerpt or highlight passages from inscriptions where these are not sufficiently relevant to be included wholesale. Accordingly, while the prescriptive character of some of the inscriptions remains somewhat murky and several fragments might be included, a “hard core” of texts that one might include as a new “collection of Greek ritual norms” can be delineated.

1. Recent Work on Greek “Sacred Laws”

The past decade has witnessed a rekindling of interest in the subject of Greek sacred laws. The end result of the majority of these investigations has been to express caution in the very designation “sacred laws”. This grouping has been qualified as an ill-defined, but ultimately irreplaceable, “working category” consisting of rather diverse inscriptions that pertain to ancient Greek religion.² Such circumspection is notably evidenced by the scare quotes with which “sacred laws” regularly continue to be invoked. Although they offer very useful introductions to the subject and its problems, few (if any) of these investigations have provided new proposals other than resigned acceptance of the designation “sacred law” for this group of texts and of the *status quo ante* of the corpus as a whole. After surveying these recent investigations, we will seek to provide several

² So PARKER (2004), p. 57.

criteria for moving beyond this “working category”, and moreover, beyond the persistent idea of a single or unified “corpus of Greek sacred laws”.

Robert Parker pioneered the detailed investigation of the corpus of inscriptions which had variously been collected throughout more than a century by von Prott, Ziehen, Sokolowski, and others, and which had gone largely unexamined.³ Parker’s first and more detailed contribution served to highlight how the material gathered so far did not form a unified collection, and how it in fact primarily consisted in inscribed laws or decrees “different in no regard except subject matter from other laws and decrees of the community that issued them”.⁴ To these could be added another broad category of texts he called “exegetical laws”, which consisted of inscriptions recording religious traditions outside the scope of decrees properly speaking, but which did not in effect detract from the model of “polis religion”, whereby all significant decisions relating to cultic matters fell to a greater or lesser degree under the authority of the city and its subgroups.⁵ In addition, Parker argued that the modern term “sacred law” did not directly parallel any ancient Greek designation, hence the caution with which it ought to be used.⁶ Yet, though providing an invaluable and concise survey of the “heterogeneous” religious subject matter of the inscriptions, Parker suggested neither any alternative to the current state of the corpus of sacred laws, nor any other term of reference for the documents, observing instead that any expansion of the corpus to include other inscriptions relating to Greek religion would be practically unfeasible.⁷

Nearly contemporaneously, Eran Lupu offered an even more detailed account of the contents of the corpus, which attempted some level of classification of the

³ PARKER (2004) and (2005). See also now R.C.T. PARKER, *On Greek Religion*, Ithaca & London 2011, p. 42-43. Cf. PARKER (2004), p. 57: “The editors did not explain how the ‘sacred’ laws they isolated differed from laws and regulations of other types.” Though valid by modern standards, this criticism is not entirely founded, since there was an attempt at classification from the beginning, as Lupu has shown in his brief history of the corpus (*NGSL*, p. 3-4 and 502). Von Prott collected the *fasti sacri* (i.e. Greek sacrificial calendars) in one volume, and had meant, before his premature passing, to gather inscriptions pertaining to ruler cult in another. Ziehen then followed his predecessor by collecting other inscriptions regulating sacred matters from “Greece and the islands”. Afterwards, Sokolowski’s corpora also had a primarily geographical, rather than typological, arrangement; Ziehen’s approach won over von Prott’s. Lupu’s presentation of the inscriptions reedited in *NGSL* is also geographical (p. 115-387). Rougemont, *CID*, gives a small local corpus from Delphi, hesitating even in his title between calling the inscriptions “lois sacrées” and “règlements religieux” (and cf. p. 1: “une catégorie mal définie”).

⁴ PARKER (2004), p. 58.

⁵ PARKER (2004), p. 65. This model is more specifically invoked in PARKER (2005), p. 61-62.

⁶ PARKER (2004), p. 66-67, and (2005), p. 62-63.

⁷ PARKER (2004), p. 67: “A corpus of all the city decrees, records of charitable foundations and so on that bear in some way on sacred matters would be impracticably large, and one should be grateful for what one is given. The point is that the sacred laws of our collections are not just heterogeneous one with another, but also not sharply delimited within a much larger body of material.”

inscriptions included by his predecessors.⁸ Similarly to Parker, Lupu's main aim was to describe and elucidate the subject matter of these "sacred laws", accepting a broad distinction between civic laws and decrees, and other "customs [...] with little to no formal mediation".⁹ Moreover, Lupu did not attempt to strongly justify the inclusion or exclusion of inscriptions from the corpus except by reference to the tradition established by von Prott, Ziehen and Sokolowski, while fully acknowledging the difficulties inherent in any attempt at a systematic definition of the documents contained in the patently miscellaneous corpus.¹⁰ Besides this respect for the diversity of the corpus, Lupu was satisfied with only two vague criteria for what texts to include: the documents must be prescriptive, and they must "pertain to [Greek] religion and particularly to cult practice".¹¹ In this case also, Lupu did not propose any alternative to the designation "sacred law", contenting himself to state that the general term was a convenient and traditional designation for a group of inscriptions belonging to a wide variety of epigraphical genres.¹²

More recently, a spate of other discussions have been published, which have for the most part acknowledged the contributions and the caveats of Parker and Lupu, while also continuing to employ both the traditional corpus and its designation as "sacred law".¹³ Fred Naiden follows Parker in his distinction between two types of "sacred laws", decrees and "exegetical" texts. Wishing to avoid the term "law" in discussing these inscriptions, he tentatively opts to call them "religious regulations", as have other scholars before him, but it must immediately be said that this is merely an equally imprecise designation for the

⁸ LUPU, *NGSL*, p. 3-112, originally published in 2005; cf. the postscript to the second edition, p. 501-504, where he notes that he "share[s] basic agreement" with Parker. For a critique of Lupu's new supplement to the corpus of SOKOLOWSKI, see, for example, the reviews by N. PAPA-ZARKADAS, *JHS* 126 (2006), p. 184-185, and J.-M. CARBON, *BMCR* 2005-04-07.

⁹ LUPU, *NGSL*, p. 5.

¹⁰ LUPU, *NGSL*, p. 4: "These documents, commonly classified as *leges sacrae* (vel sim.) in epigraphical corpora, may indeed form the core of the corpus of Greek sacred laws, and relevance to actual cult practice is usually a good criterion for the inclusion or exclusion of ambiguous cases. But the corpus of Greek sacred laws is, in fact, much more diverse..." But contrast, LUPU, *NGSL* p. xi: "It suffices to note here that an occasional stipulation on the subject of religion or cult practice does not necessarily qualify a document as a sacred law. Some cases are admittedly undecided."

¹¹ LUPU, *NGSL*, p. 5-6; though at n. 14 he implies that the "recurrence" of the ritual events prescribed is also a necessary factor in determining their inclusion.

¹² LUPU, *NGSL*, p. 4: "The term sacred law itself, as it is used inclusively in this corpus, transcends common epigraphical genres, being, to an extent, an artificial modern construct, albeit drawing upon ancient precedents." And further, p. 5: "Even if ideally one would identify individual documents according to their respective genres, a common term is bound to be used. 'Sacred law' may be misleading, and should not be taken at face value in all cases; nevertheless, it has, for better or for worse, prevailed. Coining a new term—should any be coined at all—is pointless."

¹³ This includes also C. TALAMO, "Leghe sacre e polis in Attica," *MGR* 21 (1997), p. 235-255 (*non vidimus*).

same corpus of inscriptions.¹⁴ Naiden offers a valuable perspective on sanctions in “sacred laws”, particularly their role in distinguishing between the civic and “exegetical” material that Parker had outlined, but he does not explore the specific impact of these sanctions on cult practice. Angelos Chaniotis has expanded on Parker’s division of sacred laws between laws or decrees and “exegetical” material, by proposing an intriguing “stratigraphy” of ritual norms in Greek cult, identifying three layers which can be tied to their ancient Greek names: *patria*, *nomoi*, and *psēphismata*. These are respectively, unrecorded or ancestral “customs”, “instructions”, and “dynamic” decrees seeking to augment cultic norms.¹⁵ But, caveats notwithstanding, this analysis still appears to entail more burdensome and conventional references to “cult regulations” or “sacred laws”.¹⁶ In another study, discussing archaic sacred laws from Crete, Michael Gagarin also follows Parker and Lupu, claiming that “[d]espite being a modern creation, the term “sacred laws” has proven useful”.¹⁷

Equally intriguing but differently is an article by Stella Georgoudi, which appeared concurrently with these recent forays into the thorny controversy of Greek “sacred laws”.¹⁸ Presenting her work as only a “sketch” of an approach to the subject, Georgoudi has also observed that, despite the best efforts of Parker and others, one still continues to refer to “sacred laws” without probing the matter much further.¹⁹ However, she shies away from a “définition rigoureuse” of the subject, and settles for the equally capacious and vague designation “règlement religieux”.²⁰ By opening up the corpus of relevant inscriptions, for example to include temple inventories or other inscriptions, she seems to believe that one will be on firmer ground to study Greek religion as a whole.²¹ Georgoudi’s proposal has much to recommend it, since Greek polytheism is of course best studied from a variety of approaches and evidence. However, it risks expanding the notion of “sacred laws” or “rèlements religieux” so widely that it would no longer be useful, a danger against which Parker and others have warned. In fact, the problem may well be that the designation is too wide as it is.

Two other approaches to the corpus of “sacred laws” have come to the forefront in the decades since Sokolowski’s volumes appeared. On the one hand, there is the choice to treat only a well-defined sub-group of the inscriptions,

¹⁴ NAIDEN (2008), esp. p. 125-126.

¹⁵ CHANIOTIS (2009), p. 98.

¹⁶ CHANIOTIS (2009), e.g. p. 91 and 105.

¹⁷ GAGARIN (2011), p. 101-102 and 110.

¹⁸ GEORGOUDI (2010).

¹⁹ GEORGOUDI (2010), p. 41-42: “On ajoute d’habitude que cette dénomination est purement conventionnelle. Mais on se contente de cette généralité sans chercher à aller plus loin.”

²⁰ GEORGOUDI (2010), p. 42-43.

²¹ GEORGOUDI (2010), esp. p. 47 and 54. For example, the inscriptions included in the extremely useful but also very focused regional corpus of GRAF (1985), p. 427-470, are of a comparable diversity.

perhaps first made by Rougemont in his collection of “règlements religieux” from Delphi.²² Another parallel undertaking was that of Frisone, who collected and commented a small corpus consisting of about a half-dozen funerary laws and regulations, most of which had also been included by Sokolowski.²³ These approaches have yielded valuable sub-corpora of the documents, and suggest how one might continue to approach the larger subject of “sacred laws” from an epigraphical standpoint.²⁴ For example, it would notably be possible to propose a series of volumes gathering the sacred laws of various cities or regions, which would complement that of Rougemont. An alternative avenue of research would be to propose typological sub-corpora of the different epigraphic genres of “sacred laws” insofar as these can be defined. This might entail volumes gathering civic decrees on cult, sacrificial calendars, sales of priesthoods, boundary stones, private foundations, and other categories such as funerary laws.²⁵ However valid, these approaches would probably necessitate a very gradual approach to collecting and reediting “sacred laws”, and they could of course make no pretension of offering a ready alternative to the corpus “sacred laws” as a whole.

On the other hand, a new form of detailed monograph on individual “sacred laws” has recently become prominent. In most cases, this involves a new edition and ample commentary of a lengthy or particularly noteworthy ‘sacred law’. The first of this genre to appear was the fundamental *editio princeps* of the “sacred law” (actually a dossier of different sacrificial prescriptions inscribed on a lead tablet) from Selinous resulting from the collaborative work of Jameson, Jordan and Kotansky.²⁶ More recently, Herda has advanced a similar monograph, albeit one reediting an inscription, the “so-called Molpoi-statutes” (*der sog. Molpoi-Satzung*) from Miletos, with a very lengthy commentary.²⁷ In many other cases, it would probably not have been possible to write some 600 pages on a “sacred law”, but the 45-line long inscription does present a number of interesting challenges. Yet, since the text is actually presented as the decree of a cult-association, the uncertainty displayed in the title of Herda’s monograph betrays the problems inherent in designating it or treating as a “sacred law”. Another “sacred law” which has now warranted two separate monographs is the text from Andania,

²² *CID*. Cf. again the more encompassing approach of GRAF (1985).

²³ FRISONE (2000); a second projected volume was planned but has not appeared.

²⁴ Another proposal comparable to the small corpus of Frisone is A. Petrovic & I. Petrovic’s forthcoming collection of verse cult regulations, introduced in their 2006 article.

²⁵ While the relatively formulaic phraseology of the documents could be more or less consistently delineated, and thus allow the constitution of various sub-corpora, several unclear headings or references would of course cause problems with the consistency of such a typological classification. For instance, it would not always be easy to discern whether a text is a *diagraphie* or not, or what sort of priestly contract: e.g. *LSAM* 44 (Miletos, ca. 400 BC).

²⁶ JAMESON, JORDAN & KOTANSKY (1993), cf. now *NGSL* 27 (ca. 500-450 BC).

²⁷ HERDA (2006), and cf. *LSAM* 50 (cut in the 2nd c. BC, but dating probably to the 5th c.). For a pointed review, cf. A. CHANIOTIS, *Kernos* 23 (2010), p. 373-379.

probably the lengthiest and best preserved inscription which thematically defines all of the aspects of a festival.²⁸ The first volume, by Deshours, did not really offer a new edition but helpfully presented the inscription within its wider historical context, while the most recent one from Gawlinski represents a fundamental reedition with commentary, in the spirit of the editors of the Selinous tablet.²⁹ Though the text from Andania is called a ‘sacred law’ in her title, Gawlinski is well aware of the problematic character of the designation and she commendably uses the inscription’s internal self-reference, the Greek word *diagramma*, in her descriptive commentary on the text. Yet she nonetheless concedes that “sacred law” remains in use due to the “overwhelming body of evidence” for such inscriptions.³⁰ A similar volume is perhaps that of Robertson, which juxtaposes the oblique reedition of two famous inscriptions, the tablet from Selinous and the stele concerning purifications from Cyrene, with detailed and speculative commentary.³¹ This author also seems satisfied to accept the *status quo* and does not venture into a detailed discussion of the concept of “sacred law”.³² While nearly all of these detailed and specific monographs are extremely useful, they do not represent a sustainable approach to the corpus of “sacred laws” for several reasons, the most mundane one being that few of the inscriptions are sufficiently detailed to support monographic studies. Furthermore, as in the case of regional or typological sub-corpora, such monographs could not provide a viable alternative to the corpus of “sacred laws” as a whole.

*

It has now been well recognised that there is a perpetual danger of a complacent tautological definition of “sacred laws” as meaning “those texts conventionally designated or collected as ‘sacred laws’”.³³ The scare quotes do not help at all, especially if one has to cite the abundant and growing bibliography surveyed above. Indeed, one may well wonder to what extent the term “sacred law” has in

²⁸ Cf. its earlier inclusion in the corpus as *LSCG* 65 (91 BC).

²⁹ DESHOURS (2006); GAWLINSKI (2012).

³⁰ GAWLINSKI (2012), p. 3, adding: “It is a problematic term—no longer to be used without qualification or scare quotes—but it has become part of the way we deal with an often overwhelming body of evidence. I have chosen to refer to the inscription as the “sacred law of Andania” [...] because of its familiarity in the scholarly record.”

³¹ ROBERTSON (2010); on the inscription from Cyrene, cf. still *LSS* 115 (ca. 350-300 BC). See also the review article on both ROBERTSON and GAWLINSKI (2012) in this volume of *Kernos* 25 (2012), p. 318-327.

³² ROBERTSON (2010), p. 3-4; his comment that the texts “are seldom laws in the sense of enactments by an official body but rather customs of self-evident authority” is not true of the current disposition of the corpus which is roughly composed of as many civic decrees as other texts, cf. PARKER (2004) and above.

³³ Contrary to Lupu, PARKER (2004), p. 57-58, already lamented the “force of inertia [through which] we often continue to behave as if the texts assembled in Sokolowski are sacred laws, and sacred laws are the texts assembled in Sokolowski”.

fact proven useful, as these scholars have argued, beyond perhaps offering a vague “convenience” or a familiar reference point. Similarly, one might easily fall into the trap of speaking of terms like “religious regulation”, which are not significantly more transparent than “sacred law”.³⁴ The root of the problem, as has become clear, is that these inscriptions were, for the most part, not usually more “sacred” than others, except – but not always – in their subject matter. Moreover, they were not always strictly speaking “laws”, or even “regulations”, either in the ancient or the modern sense.

Not a few of the scholars mentioned above, and particularly Chaniotis, Georgoudi and Gawlinski, may offer an alternative way of approaching “sacred laws”, namely through the internal designations of the sources themselves. But one can readily agree with Parker and others that modern and ancient terms are not easily reconciled, as was briefly discussed above.³⁵ In other words, it would be unrealistic to provide only a corpus of those texts which could be called *patria* or *hieroi nomoi*, since this would only involve an extremely narrow body of material. Moreover, the internal designations for the documents known as “sacred laws” are quite varied, ranging from decrees to *horoi*. Likewise, as was intimated above, it would be impractical to include such a wide body of material as all cult inventories and accounts, or even the incredibly numerous Greek decrees which deal with sacred matters. Recent scholarship also appears headed in various directions, such as epigraphical sub-corpora and individual monographs, which are useful but may not be conducive to the creation of a single corpus. Though attractive and perhaps incrementally feasible, a thoroughly reedited and commented printed corpus would be a project on a vast scale which still might not resolve the problematic issue of “what is a sacred law”.

The tradition and inertia of the past century ought not to preclude a more thorough revision of what can be desired in a corpus of “sacred laws”. It is in fact high time to move beyond this designation, and several reconsiderations present themselves when starting from a *tabula rasa* as it were. The most important of these are: why a corpus and what is its intended audience? One of the criticisms offered of Sokolowski was that his editions were insufficiently based on careful revision of the stones and standard editing practice, but his intended audience appears to have been historians of Greek religion rather than epigraphists *per se*.³⁶ Lupu’s corpus has corrected Sokolowski’s bias by presenting detailed and cautious epigraphical editions, balanced with discussion aimed

³⁴ Similarly, many epigraphical corpora, e.g. most recently *IG XII 4* (Cos), continue to speak vaguely of “*tituli sacri*”, perhaps wishing to avoid the even more problematic Latin term *lex sacra*.

³⁵ And see further our more detailed discussion of *hieros nomos* in CARBON & PIRENNE-DELFORGE (forthcoming).

³⁶ A point well noted, for example, by GAWLINSKI (2012), p. 3: “*leges sacrae* was a category created in the nineteenth century as part of an effort to organize and make accessible the inscribed documents deemed most useful to scholars of the history of religion.”

at the study of Greek religion. But some of the inscriptions included by Lupu only tangentially referred to cultic matters, which caused a substantial portion of his commentary to veer away from such subjects.³⁷ One could argue that this represents an overcorrection of Sokolowski, at least from the point of view of convenience and ease of consultation.

Furthermore, recent research has enabled the development of standards for the online edition of inscriptions, the most important of which is TEI XML (Text Encoding Initiative, Extensible Markup Language).³⁸ This form of encoding and markup greatly facilitates the lemmatisation and online publication of inscriptions. Though primarily applied to the development of definitive epigraphical corpora, it seems that in theory this form of publication would be particularly well suited to the inscriptions known as “sacred laws”, which include a disparate and increasing number of documents. Online publication would solve at least some of the problems that are involved in serial or monographic publication of the texts. For instance, one could seamlessly publish successive versions of a given text, reflecting later revisions as well as increasing commentary, and continue to add to a growing and easily cross-referenced collection of documents.

Given all of these reevaluations, an alternative to the existing corpus of Greek “sacred laws” can now be proposed. Consideration of the intended audience for past corpora suggests that instead of a unified epigraphic corpus, which “sacred laws” could never truly constitute in any case, one should instead try to build a collection of inscriptions which benefit scholars of Greek religion. However, this is still too wide a body of material to be presented in a single project. The subject matter of the documents included in the past falls under various broad rubrics, notably the definition and protection of Greek sanctuaries, but two of the most prominent and studied ones are the rituals of sacrifice and purification.³⁹ Accordingly, it has seemed to the present authors that the preferable solution for moving beyond Greek “sacred laws” is to collect those inscriptions which, whether in full or in part, contain sacrificial and purificatory ritual norms. The use of “norm” as a comprehensive term helps to dispel the

³⁷ A good example of this is the gymnasiarchal law from Beroia, included as *NGSL* 14 (further discussed below).

³⁸ For the most recent TEI guidelines, see: <http://www.tei-c.org/Guidelines/P5/>. Cf. particularly the application of this standard by the Epidoc collaborative, and for examples of projects using Epidoc XML, see the Inscriptions of Aphrodisias (*LApb*): <http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/iaph2007/index.html>; and the forthcoming *MAMA* XI corpus: <http://mama.csad.ox.ac.uk/monuments/index.html>. For recent appraisals and further discussion see also: C. ROUECHÉ, “Digitizing inscribed texts,” in M. DEEGAN, K. SUTHERLAND (eds.), *Text Editing, Print and the Digital World*, Bodmin, 2009, p. 159-168; and G. BODARD, “EpiDoc: Epigraphic documents in XML for Publication and Interchange,” in F. FERAUDI-GRUÉNAIS (ed.), *Latin on Stone: Epigraphic Research and Electronic Archives*, *Roman Studies: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, Lanham MD, 2010, p. 1-17.

³⁹ Cp. LUPU, *NGSL*, Part 1, who surveys 4 broad topics: “Sanctuaries and Sacred Space”, “Cult Officials”, “Cult Performance”, and “Festival and Ceremonies”.

notion of strict “law”, decree or regulation, categories to which not all the relevant documents belong, while at the same time acknowledging the degree to which Greek inscriptions record both ancestral and innovative ritual practices.⁴⁰ This new terminology also properly includes several other inscriptions which can be viewed as containing or related to ritual norms, such as oaths, oracular consultations, *theoria*, games and contests, prayers and hymns, etc. Such documents, insofar as they are relevant, could be gradually included into the collection in the future or form the subject of separate but complementary projects.⁴¹

The proposed publication will therefore be entitled a Collection of Greek Ritual Norms, and abbreviated CGRN.⁴² It will attempt to strike a compromise between a strictly epigraphical approach and that of Sokolowski for example, by presenting some new editions and revisions of the texts, but mostly standard editions where these are available. It will include a basic but serviceable *apparatus criticus*, noting only those variant readings and restorations which could have some bearing on the interpretation of a given inscription.⁴³ The text will be translated in English and in French for the convenience of the reader, or commented in both languages in the case of fragments. The main aim will be the publication of an online lemmatisation and commentary of the inscriptions which will enable efficient cross-referencing and comparison between the texts, and in turn facilitate the creation of a lexical database of Greek ritual vocabulary.⁴⁴ In what follows, a series of general criteria for the definition of this collection will be suggested. Although the criteria suggested will inevitably not satisfy everyone, it will at least be clear that to speak of “sacred laws” will simply no longer suffice. In addition, it is to be hoped that the new collection outlined here will largely replace the volumes edited by Sokolowski as a scholarly resource.

⁴⁰ Cf. already the proposed appellation “la norme” in BRULÉ (2009), p. 7-11. See further CARBON & PIRENNE-DELFORGE (forthcoming).

⁴¹ A project aimed at creating an online database of Greek oracles is being developed by Pierre BONNECHERE and a team at the Université de Montréal.

⁴² The collection will make no pretension of gathering material beyond the epigraphic sources, such as literary passages. Many of these are already collected in an accessible format by A. TRESP, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Kultschriftsteller* (RGVV 15), Giessen, 1914, and by F. JACOBY, *Athens: the Local Chronicles of Ancient Athens*, Oxford, 1949, respectively, though more could be gathered from occasional references in authors such as Herodotus and Pausanias. In any case, such references may perhaps be best treated as part of the commentary on certain inscriptions rather than collected separately.

⁴³ The Epidoc XML format to a large extent subsumes the *apparatus criticus*, though one with the essential readings (not all the minor *variae lectiones*) would still be included.

⁴⁴ The database could perhaps eventually form the basis for a printed tool, such as a “Lexicon of Greek Ritual Vocabulary”.

2. Towards a New Collection: Some Definitions and Criteria

Rather than offering a “maximalist” and vague corpus as in the past, one can therefore opt instead for a manageable collection containing what might be viewed as an essential group of texts.⁴⁵ Such a selection necessitates a more precise identification of what one might mean by “ritual norm”, and a set of criteria concomitant with this definition can be established. Some of the criteria, in fact, can be argued to have a precedent in the corpus collected previously, whether implicitly in the case of Sokolowski or explicitly in that Lupu, though the aim is to apply them with greater consistency to the present project. None of them are foolproof of course, and they mostly serve as guidelines for constituting an interesting body of inscriptions relevant to contemporary scholarship.⁴⁶

The category of “ritual” helps one avoid the nebulous topic of the “sacrality” of the inscriptions, since for example it would be difficult to argue that some decrees headed *theoi* or *agathe tyche* are less “sacred” than others, even if these do not concern ritual practice. But it is still a capacious and imprecise modern rubric for a variety of actions. By adding the specification that the collection preliminarily aims to gather only inscriptions relating to sacrifice and purification, however, the subject matter of “ritual norms” immediately becomes more precise.

In the case of sacrifice, the offering and consecration of animals and/or of vegetal substances is at the core of what is concerned. Thus, inscriptions which relate to Greek *thysia* in all of its declensions, together with a host of other Greek terms such as *bagizein*, fall under this optic. However, this is probably still a subject too large for a single collection. Indeed, several inscriptions only mention that a *thysia* was or has to be offered, without any specific details. This is for example the case with prescriptive oracles which simply specify that one is to “sacrifice and receive good omens” to a series of gods, but also with several other texts which simply specify *thyein* or the like and which have seldom been thought of as “sacred laws”.⁴⁷ Other inscriptions, in a similar fashion, simply describe that a sacrifice is to be performed “according to custom” or that one should sacrifice “whenever is necessary”.⁴⁸ Comparable requirements are sometimes enjoined

⁴⁵ This has the added advantage of reducing the total number of traditional “sacred laws” from ca. 500 to a more manageable body of ca. 300 inscriptions. (Counting all of the texts in *LGS*, *LSAM*, *LSCG*, *LSS*, *CID* and *NGSL*, there are 448 “sacred laws” to be exact. To these, one might add, *exempli gratia*, the inscriptions listed as possible inclusions in *LUPU*, *NGSL* App. B, thus yielding approximately a further 80 texts, for a total of 528, which both keeps growing and could be increased in other directions.)

⁴⁶ For the sake of consistency, inscriptions previously included in the various volumes of corpus will most often be cited as examples, with only a few later additions.

⁴⁷ Cf. e.g. *LSCG* 180 (cult of Archilochos on Paros, ca. 275-225 BC), on which see now D. CLAY, *Archilochos Heros: The Cult of Poets in the Greek Polis*, Cambridge MA, 2004.

⁴⁸ Cp. e.g. *LSS* 103 (Camiros, 3rd c. BC): Ζηνὶ δ[ε] | Ὑητίω | ὄκκα δέητ. Other more obvious excerpts from the Rhodian sacrificial calendar, e.g. *LSS* 89, 96-97, 99-102, 104 etc, which were published on small *stelai* throughout the island, would of course be included.

upon individuals or civic officials, such as “to sacrifice the sacrificial animals for the city”.⁴⁹ The attribution of a generic *geras* or portion from a sacrifice or the right of participation (*metousia*) in this sacrifice, which is often conferred in the honorific decrees of various Greek cities, are of doubtful interest to the present collection.⁵⁰ In addition, texts concerned wholly with the financial sale of priestly offices or the monetary remuneration of such officials do not form a part of the “hard core” of the subject.⁵¹

Though of course somewhat informative and clearly relating to “ritual norms” of sacrifice, such inscriptions are probably insufficiently detailed to figure among the core texts which interest scholars of Greek religion. Instead, one might view the minimum level of informativeness as the indication of a certain number of rituals details: not just the deity to which the sacrifice is to be made, but a specific indication of the animal or vegetal offering involved, as well as, yet not always, the date on which the sacrifice takes place; or conversely, a restriction against performing a given type of sacrifice or offering a certain kind of animal. Accordingly, the details itemised in sacrificial calendars are perhaps best representative of this basic requirement, since they regularly follow the order date – deity – sacrificial animal.⁵² In the case of a sacrificial division or distribution, the indication of a specific portion from the animals, such as the hide, a leg or the entrails, is correspondingly desirable.⁵³ If at least one such criterion is met then, the nexus of other ritual details described in a given text could be included and it could feature as a core document in the collection.

In the case of purity and the ritual of purification, a comparable criterion can be applied. Though in some cases one finds rather nonspecific boundary stones restricting access to sanctuaries, some as basic as the indication *abatōn*, these yield comparatively little ritual information compared to more detailed texts.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Such is the case of the scribe Spensithios (*SEG* 27, 631, Lyttos, ca. 500 BC) whose sacred duties are described as follows, lines B4-6: *καὶ ὀτιμί κα θιῶν ἱερῶν μὴ ἰδιαιλο* | [ca.1-2] *θῦεν τε τὰ δαμόσια θύματα τὸ <ν> ποιναστὰ* | *ν καὶ τὰ τεμένια ἔκην*. LUPU, *NGSL*, p. 49 n. 241, also preferred not to include this text as a “sacred law”.

⁵⁰ Also not germane are decrees establishing lists of priests or participants in the cult, which have regularly been included in the corpus: e.g. *LSCG* 138 (Rhodes, ca. 150-50 BC) and *LSAM* 58 (Olymos, ca. 100 BC).

⁵¹ Cf. *LSAM* 25 (Erythrai, 2nd c. BC), an inventory of priesthood sales with prices obtained. Financial remuneration: cp. *LSAM* 7 (Kyzikos, Hellenistic).

⁵² Cp. even such a small text as this other one from Camiros (*LSS* 98, ca. 200 BC), which apparently contains just two of these basic elements: *Μαινύρου* | *θῦεται* | *κριὸς ἐνόρχας*.

⁵³ One might therefore consider excluding from immediate consideration a text such as the very fragmentary *LSS* 125 (cp. *IG* II 2, 1242, Athens 3rd c. BC), restored by Sokolowski in lines 8-10 as: [τὸς δὲ ἴ] | *ερχοπιούς νέμειν* [τὰ κρέα τοῖς ὀργεῶσι] | *ν τῆς Ἡγεμόνος ΣΧΥ* [?] — — — τῆι ἱερείαι ἀφ] | *ελόντας τὰ γέρα* [τὰ νομιζόμενα — — — —]; or line 9: {ἄχρ[ι μνᾶς] ?}.

⁵⁴ Such boundary stones have sometimes been included in the corpus: e.g. *LSCG* 121 (Chios, date uncertain: *ἱρόν οὐκ ἔ* | *σοδος*); and *LSS* 128 (Kallipolis, 5th c. BC: *ἐς τὸ ἱερόν* | *μὴ παρήμεν +* sanctions).

Similarly, there are several boundary stones relating to *asylia* and decrees concerning the protection of suppliants which have been incorporated into the corpus, but by no means consistently.⁵⁵ The whole topic of the delimitation of the Greek sanctuary is a vast one, and includes the notions of preserving its sacrality as well as of protecting the physical integrity of its boundaries and belongings. The latter is reflected in several inscriptions included by Sokolowski and Lupu which are tangentially, if at all, concerned with sacrifice and purification.⁵⁶ These texts can often be differentiated from boundaries and decrees which are explicitly concerned with rituals of purification, though some cases are less clear-cut and the concepts of “protection” and “purity” are of course not always easily distinguished.⁵⁷ In other words, it would again seem that, for the inscription to be included as a fundamental text, a desirable requirement is a minimum degree of specific ritual information. For example, some indication that purity, rather than mere cleanliness, is the object of the given interdictions stipulated by a decree, or that a purification ritual is clearly the sanction imposed for illicit behaviour.⁵⁸ Boundary stones which are wholly preoccupied with the requirement

⁵⁵ Texts probably to be excluded are: *LSCG* 149 (Cyprus, 3rd c. BC, fragment decree on the protection of *horoi*?); *LSCG* 158 (Cos, ca. 250 BC, perhaps concerned with the *asylia* of the temple of Asklepios, but cf. now *IG XII* 4, 288 which shows how small and difficult the fragment really is); *LSAM* 75 (Tralleis, 1st c. AD copy of an inscription from 350 BC?); *LSAM* 85 (Ephesos, fragment, 2nd c. BC); *LSS* 34 (Corinth, ca. 475 BC); and *NGSL* 17 (Lindos, 3rd c. BC, fragment of a decree on suppliants, only sanctions preserved). Cf. instead K.J. RIGSBY, *Asylia: Territorial Inviolability in the Hellenistic World*, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1996.

⁵⁶ Cf. e.g. *LSCG* 3 (485/4 BC, cp. *IG I* 3 4), the so-called “Hekatompedon decree”, probably one of the earliest sanctuary-protection regulations from Athens, which only tangentially mentions some necessary behaviour during sacrifice, line B4: *ἡστᾶν ῥδοῖσι* : *τὰ ἱερόα* etc. A large number of “sacred laws” are mostly concerned with protecting votives or cultic apparatus in the sanctuary: e.g. *LSAM* 74 (Loryma), *LSCG* 43, *LSCG* 70 (Oropos), *LSCG* 144 (Lebena), *LSS* 27 (Argos), *LSS* 107 (Rhodes), *LSS* 117 (Kyrene), *LSS* 127 (Athens), etc. Another category to be excluded for the present time is comprised of inscriptions relating to the construction or relocation of a temple, e.g. *LSCG* 72 (Tanagra, 3rd c. BC). In all of these cases, relevant rituals may be mentioned incidentally and rather marginally, e.g. the sacrifice of an *aresterion* at *LSCG* 42 (Athens 221/0 BC, lines 45-47). Such instances are good candidates for a simple reference or an excerpt from a larger text (see further below).

⁵⁷ How is one, for example, to interpret the interdictions found at Panamara, *LSAM* 68 (Hellenistic), against bringing weapons, pasturing and taking away anything: does this relate to the mundane protection of the sanctuary or to its general purity, or both? It is best not to prejudge these ambiguous cases, but see the following note for additional criteria.

⁵⁸ For the first point, cf. e.g. *LSAM* 55 (Knidos, ca. 350-300 BC), line 4-8: *ὅπω[ε] | ἀγνεύηται τὸ [ἱερόν] | ν τοῦ Διονύσου το[ῦ] ἡ Βάκχου, μὴ ἐξῆ | μ[ε]ν καταλύει[ν]*. For the second, contrast e.g. *LSS* 32 (Arcadia, 5th c. BC), an interdiction to carry ornate clothing, followed apparently by the sanctions of a fine and impiety, with *LSS* 33 (Patrai, 3rd c. BC) which contains similar interdictions “against carrying”, but where the sanction is more detailed, namely to purify the sanctuary of Demeter (lines 9-11: *τὸ ἱ[ερόν] καθαράσθω | ὡς παρσεβέουσα*). The text from Patrai is surely of greater relevance for ritual practice than the more vague *LSS* 32, though the latter would of course be a candidate for inclusion as “reference material” in the collection. Cp. also *NGSL* 4 (Marathon, 61/60 BC), which given its fragmentary state of preservation might not warrant immediate inclusion as a ritual norm concerning purity.

that worshippers enter a sanctuary with a pure mind, while fascinating in their own right and often formally similar, do not provide the same level of detail as lists of abstentions and ablutions required for entry in certain sanctuaries.⁵⁹

Ritual practice and performance thus forms the main subject matter of the inscriptions to be included, in which sacrificial and purificatory norms often intersect.⁶⁰ The argument proposed here is not to exclude entirely “vague” documents, since, as was stated above, they could easily be added to successive iterations of the online publication. Rather, the guideline established here simply excludes such texts from the “hard core” of ritual norms in the collection, and confines other texts to marginal references, at least for the time being.⁶¹ The same can be said of extremely fragmentary documents, whose interpretation is often hypothetical and which do not warrant being the focus of attention of the first phase of the project.⁶² But the advantage of this reconsideration of the entire corpus will be the addition of relevant and noteworthy inscriptions which have been omitted in the past, most notably several well-known inscriptions from Olympia and some accounts from Delos.⁶³

The idea that the text must contain a certain basic amount of detail describing the rituals involved naturally raises a related issue, namely the proportion that that information occupies within a given inscription. In most cases, the whole document, even if a decree with a lengthy introduction or preamble which does not touch on rituals per se, can of course be included as a ritual

⁵⁹ Contrast e.g. *LSCG* 130 (Astypalaia, ca. 300-250 BC): [ἐ]ς τὸ ἱερόν μὴ ἐσέρπεν ὅσ|τις μὴ ἀγρός ἐστι, ἢ τελεῖ| ἢ αὐτῶι ἐν νῶι ἐσσεῖται, or *LSS* 82 (Mytilene, late Hellenistic?): ἀγρόν πρὸς τέμενος στεῖχεῖν | ὅσα φρονέοντα; with *LSS* 54 (Delos, ca. 100 BC): ἀγαθῆ τύχη· ἀρνεύοντας | εἰσέναι ἀπὸ ὄψαριου τρι|ταίους· ἀπὸ δείου λουσάμε|νον ἀπὸ γυναικὸς τριταίου<ς>· | ἀπὸ τετοκείας ἐβδόματους· | ἀπὸ διαφθορᾶς τετταρα|κοσταίους· ἀπὸ γυναικεί|ων ἑναταίους. On this subject, cf. A. CHANIOTIS, “Reinheit des Körper—Reinheit der Seele in den griechischen Kultusgesetzen,” in J. ASSMANN, T. SUNDERMEYER (eds.), *Schuld, Gewissen und Person: Studien zur Geschichte des inneren Menschen*, Gütersloh, 1997 (*Studien zum Verstehen fremder Religionen*, 9), p. 142-179.

⁶⁰ Most famously, at *LSS* 115 (Cyrene) and *NGSL* 27 (Selinous).

⁶¹ Another example of such “vagueness” would be the famous convention between the Akarneis and Anaktoreis concerning the Aktias: *LSS* 45 (found at Olympia, 216 BC); here, the adoption of the traditional *hieroi nomoi* (lines 69-70) is significant but the details of the restored ritual are hardly forthcoming in the inscription (save perhaps for a fragmentary reordering of the procession: lines 41-43).

⁶² For example, several of the inscriptions included by Lupu would not be at the centerstage of the new collection: e.g. *NGSL* 6 (Tiryns, late 7th-early 6th c. BC), 10 (Oropos, Roman imperial period), and 15 (Chersonesos, ca. 150-100 BC), among others.

⁶³ SOKOLOWSKI’s corpora were implicitly quite selective about what to include or not, but one might think of adding such texts as *InO* 7 (already *LGS* II 61, ca. 525-500 BC), lines 1-2: κα θεαρός εἶ· αἱ δὲ βενέοι ἐν πλαροῖ, βοῖ κα θῶάδ(δ)οι καὶ κοθάροσι τελείαι, καὶ τὸν θεαρόν ἐν τ|α<ὺ>ταῖ; see now MINON, *IED* 4. Some inscriptions like *IED* 3 (*LGS* II 60) might be too fragmentary to warrant full inclusion, while others reveal interesting prescriptive ritual details e.g. *IED* 18 (ca. 475-450 BC) and *SEG* 42, 373 (ca. 550 BC, unpublished contract of a *theokolos* mentioning sacrificial duties). Delos: see esp. the self-standing accounts *ID* 445 (178 BC: λόγος τῶν ἐς τὰ Πιοσίδεια) and 464 (from ca. 170 BC), and also below for further discussion of this material.

norm. But in other inscriptions, sacrificial or purificatory prescriptions may be lost among a wealth of detail which pertains to several other subjects. In the gymnasiarchal law from Beroia included as a “sacred law” by Lupu, sacrifice forms only a small part of the subjects treated, which include the oath of the gymnasiarch and his subordinates, the supervision and education of boys, access to the gymnasium and good behaviour.⁶⁴ Only some 43 out of the 173 extant lines of the inscription concern a festival celebrated in the gymnasium called the Hermaia, and even these only casually discuss sacrifices to Hermes. It is therefore worth asking if such a small passage from a lengthy inscription validates its entire inclusion in a collection of Greek ritual norms.

Since the proposed project is not to be constrained by the strictest standards of epigraphic reedition and is instead to a degree unshackled by its online format, an alternative can be proposed. This would involve in some cases simply offering a small excerpt or reference from a given inscription while describing its context; as above, such texts would not belong to the core of the collection. In others, where the extract from a text is necessarily more significant, this would entail setting the passage in relief within a republication of the whole inscription. (One would not wish to quantify this approach, however, and the judgement concerning whether to cite only a given passage will necessarily be a subjective, editorial choice.) For example, the text of the gymnasiarchal law from Beroia might appear as a background in which the lines on the Hermaia would be significantly highlighted. With an indication of the context of the whole inscription, only the latter passage would be translated and commented fully. In some cases, this may appear much more appropriate than others, for example when only certain sides of a stele discuss rituals norms of sacrifice and purification. For example, it might be argued that side B of the decree on the “Lesser” Panathenaia which discusses the festival could be to some extent dissociated from side A concerning the *misthosis* of the Nea, or that the 2 of the 4 sides of the stele of the Labyadai, those dealing with funerary purification and banquets respectively, could be treated more or less independently.⁶⁵ In all of these cases, the relevant ritual norms would be briefly set in their proper context, which would be facilitated by the format of the virtual edition, but they would remain the focus of the commentary and not be mired in discussions of other subjects of little interest to the intended audience. In arguing for such a selective criterion, it may be observed that a precedent for it had already been set by Ziehen and Sokolowski, who sometimes only included parts of inscriptions, though seldom with the proper contextual caveats. It is only the recent corpus of Lupu which prefers to view the inscriptions as a

⁶⁴ *NGSL* 14 (ca. 200-170 BC); Hermaia: lines 45-87.

⁶⁵ Lesser Panathenaia: *LSCG* 33 (note that ZIEHEN, *LGS* II 29 had also only included side B); Labyadai: *CID* 9 (Delphi, cp. *LSCG* 77 with sides C and D only).

whole, not to be excerpted.⁶⁶ In the case of previously well-edited documents, Lupu's approach becomes even more difficult to justify, and the idea of selected passages correspondingly more attractive. Moreover, the number of excerpts which could be included is perhaps more significant now that one is no longer bound by the idea of "sacred law", and this would doubtless render the collection more useful for historians of Greek religion.

*

The notion of "norm" is the other premise which will influence the choice of inscriptions included in the planned collection. This concept, as indicated above, enables one to get rid of the idea that the relevant documents are laws or decrees, since some of them are dedications, accounts, or the like.⁶⁷ Instead, the inscriptions to be included must, in a wide sense, have a normative character. Ideally, this implies that the text is strongly prescriptive with imperative, future or infinitive verbs.⁶⁸ However, some inscriptions still demonstrably have a normative aspect while being more descriptive than prescriptive: this is notably the case of sacrificial calendars, where one usually finds the present indicative passive.⁶⁹ The description of traditional practice is of course a form of normativity. It therefore seems fundamentally important to also include texts which are records of practice such as inventories of priestly perquisites, and even selections from the accounts of Delos.⁷⁰ To be clearly distinguished from these categories of documents are inscriptions recording the fulfillment of vows or sacrifices, which like many dedications certainly do *reflect* ritual norms, but do not necessarily *embody* or *codify* them.⁷¹

⁶⁶ LUPU, *NGSL*, p. 7, outlining this contradictory position: "it is incumbent upon documents which are to be included in the corpus that matters pertaining to religion and cult practice be less a means to an end and more an end in their own right, occupying an indisputable first place. As a result, some of the documents included in the corpus (as traditionally constituted) are, in fact, excerpts from longer inscriptions. This was avoided in the present collection, out of the belief that an inscription is better presented and studied as a whole".

⁶⁷ Cf. e.g. *NGSL* 24 (Lissos, Hellenistic?): Θυμίλος Ἰσσατο τόνδ' Ἀσκληπιὸν ἐνθάδε πρῶτος· | Θαρσύτας δ' υἱὸς τόνδ' ἀνέθηκε θεῶι. | θύην τὸν βωλόμενον. | κρεῶν οὐκ ἀποφορά. | τὸ δέσμα τῷ θεῶι.

⁶⁸ Cp. LUPU, *NGSL*, p. 5-6, noting similar difficulties.

⁶⁹ Most famously in the headings of the calendar of Athens, e.g. fr. 3: τάδε τὸ ἕτερον ἔτος θύεται Α[— —] (originally *LSS* 10, etc., 410-399 BC, cf. now S.D. LAMBERT, "The Sacrificial Calendar of Athens," *ABSA* 97 [2002], p. 353-399).

⁷⁰ Priestly perquisites: e.g. *SEG* 54, 214 (Aixone, ca. 400-375 BC). Delos: synoptic selections from the monthly accounts ([τάδε ἀνῆλωτ]αι κατὰ μ[ῆ]να, cf. *IG* XI 2, 269, line 14, ca. 300-250 BC) could be included as significant excerpts in the collection, with due reference to their context, e.g. *IG* XI 2, 203 (269 BC), lines 32-57, *IG* XI 2, 287 (250 BC), lines 41-85, among many other possible inscriptions.

⁷¹ Such texts have almost never been included in the corpus of "sacred laws", for example the Boukopia inscriptions, *Lindos* II 581-614, which record performed sacrifices but only imply a norm.

This distinction is also impactful for the often problematic identification of the recurrent character of rituals. It seems clear that to be normative in a meaningful sense the rituals described or prescribed by the inscriptions must have a durative character. However, this is often difficult to demonstrate absolutely. While sacrificial calendars and other accounts may be reasonably surmised to lay down traditional or new and future practice, other sacrifices are sometimes prescribed which appear to have been one-off affairs. This is particularly the case with thanksgiving sacrifices or with oath rituals which seal agreements.⁷² Though a categorical judgement is sometimes impossible, it seems best to exclude many of these documents from the present collection, except where the rituals performed are demonstrably recurrent.⁷³

A related issue is presented by other inscriptions which are normally excluded from the corpus of “sacred laws”, namely those concerning the cult of living or dead individuals, and notably Hellenistic rulers. There does not seem to be any reasonable justification for excluding these texts from a collection of ritual norms, since the intention behind their foundation was surely that they would be new but durative customs of religious practice.⁷⁴ It is worth pointing out that at least one inscription directly concerning ruler cult had so far been included in the “corpus”, among several other heroic cult foundations, all of which are, as might be expected, set “within a framework of divine worship”.⁷⁵ Though these could form an obvious epigraphic sub-corpus, decrees founding cults of Hellenistic rulers, as well as cults of individuals honoured with civic burial and recurring sacrifices for example, would significantly but not

⁷² LUPU, *NGSL* p. 7-8, citing *SIG* 3, 398 (Cos, ca. 278 BC), where the unrepeatable context is relatively clear, as well as *I. Cos ED* 5 (now *IG XII* 4, 291, Cos, ca. 180 BC), where it is not. Note that even *SIG* 3, 398 is set within the context of a recurring *theoria*, whose sacrifices would clearly fall under the rubric “ritual norm”. Oath rituals: cf. e.g. *IG XII* 4, 152 (Cos, ca. 208-200 BC), lines 9-10: τὰ δὲ ὀρκωμόσια ἔστω ταῦρος κἀπρος κριός, τέλεια | πάντα; but there is no indication, as in several other instances, that this sacrifice would be repeated on later occasions. Contrast also *LSAM* 15 (Elaea, 129 BC) prescribing rituals surrounding the installation of written *pinakes* containing the treaty with the Romans, whose inclusion LUPU attempts to justify.

⁷³ Even in the case of sufficiently detailed prescriptive oracles, one may reasonably suppose that these more often prescribed one-off or *in situ* sacrifices rather than recurrent ones, cf. e.g. *SEG* 15, 391 (Dodona, ca. 390 BC) side B.a: θεός | Διὶ Πατρῴϊωι ΠΙΕΠΙ[...Ι]ΙΟ | Τύχαι λοιβάν, | Ἡρακλεῖ, Ἐρεχθεῖ, | Ἀθήναι Πατρῴια(ι). But cult foundations sanctioned by oracles, as with *LSCG* 180 cited above n. 47, represent a different scenario.

⁷⁴ Contrast Lupu (*NGSL*, p. 7), who rather feebly attempts to justify their exclusion: “all the cases included in the corpus [...] set the cult within a recognized framework of divine worship. Documents concerned with the straightforward cult of the living or of the dead, including all documents concerned with *bona fide* ruler cult, are left out of the corpus”; see further his p. 84. Recall that it had always been the intention of von Prott to gather these inscriptions in a separate volume, see above n. 3.

⁷⁵ *LSCG* 106 (Ios, 3rd c. BC), festival sacrifice for a king (Antigonos Gonatas or Dason?); cp. *LSAM* 72 (Halikarnassos, ca. 300 BC: Agathos Daimon of Poseidonios and Gorgis) and *LSCG* 135 (Thera, ca. 210-195 BC: heroes Phoinix and Epikteta).

prohibitively increase the number of ritual norms in the proposed collection.⁷⁶ Several texts only provide basic information concerning the foundation of a sanctuary or altar on which to perform a periodic sacrifice, while others yield a wealth of ritual detail which could be compared with other norms relating to deities of the Greek pantheon.⁷⁷ It is to be hoped that the inclusion of this material will be viewed as a valuable innovation of the present collection with respect to the earlier corpora of “sacred laws”.⁷⁸

Envoi: The Margins of Greek Ritual Norms

Of course, even in this plan of a new collection, meant to advance beyond the existing corpora of “sacred laws”, several uncertainties remain. The most salient of these is the problem of the cultural and temporal limit that one might wish to impose on the material.⁷⁹ It is clear that since the purported aim is to gather a collection of Greek ritual norms, that the texts must be Greek, both in language and in cultural terms. But the boundaries of Greek religion and ritual are not easy to define. Though inscriptions from the Herodian temple in Jerusalem which were written in Greek have sensibly been omitted from the corpus of “sacred laws” in the past, it still contains such inscriptions as a Pergamene calendar detailing Roman festival celebrations, or a decree of a perhaps syncretistic Jewish association called the Sabbatistai from Cilicia.⁸⁰ Should one include festival decrees from Ptolemaic Egypt, such as the famous decree of Canopus inaugurating a cult for the princess Berenike, which have never been seen as “sacred laws”?⁸¹ And how is one to treat inscriptions which take on a distinctly Roman character while maintaining traditional aspects, such as the *patrios nomos* of

⁷⁶ According to the current project inventory, the number of additional texts to be included in the “hard core” of the corpus would be ca. 20-25.

⁷⁷ For a very basic norm, probably insufficiently detailed for the purposes of the collection, cf. e.g. *IC* III iv 4 (Itanos, ca. 246 BC), lines 8-13: ἱερὸν τέμενος | ἰδρύσασθαι τὸν παρὰ δῖον τὸν πρὸς τῷ πύλαι | βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου καὶ βασιλίσσης Βερενίκας | τᾶς τῷ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίῳ ἀδελφᾶς καὶ γυναικός· | θύσει δὲ ἅ πόλις κατ’ ἐνιαυτὸν τοῖς γενεθλίοις βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίῳ καὶ βασιλίσσῃ Βερενίκῃ | καὶ δρόμον συντελέσονται; to this, one could compare the recently published inscription honouring Seleukos I and Antiochos I from Aigai (ca. 281/0 BC): H. MALAY, M. RICL, “Two Hellenistic Decrees from Aigai in Aiolis”, *EA* 42 (2009), p. 39-47 no. 1.

⁷⁸ It will also constitute a contribution to the ongoing and stimulating debates about the character of ruler cult: cf. e.g. C.P. JONES, *New Heroes in Antiquity: From Achilles to Antinoos*, Cambridge MA 2010; L.-M. GÜNTHER, S. PLISCHKE (eds.), *Studien zum hellenistischen Herrscherkult: Verdichtung und Erweiterung von Traditionsgeflechten*, Berlin, 2011 (*Oikumene Studien zur antiken Weltgeschichte*, 9); H.S. VERSNEL, *Coping with the Gods*, Leiden, 2012 (RGRW, 183), p. 439-492.

⁷⁹ This has caused uncertainties in the past and notable discrepancies between the various iterations of the corpus: LUPU, *NGSL*, p. 6 with n. 18, and p. 8-9.

⁸⁰ Herodian inscriptions: *NGSL* p. 6, 19-20; Pergamene calendar: *LGS* I 27 (129-138 AD); Sabbatistai: *LSAM* 80 (Elaioussa, Augustan).

⁸¹ *OGIS* 56; cf. S. PFEIFFER, *Das Dekret von Kanopos (238 v. Chr.)*, Munich, 2004.

Ephesos concerning its *prytaneion*?⁸² The fascinating dossier of the cult foundation and religious inscriptions of Antiochos I of Kommagene presents an interesting mix of Greek and Zoroastrian beliefs, never yet included as evidence for ritual norms.⁸³ Cases of hybrid cults and rituals are necessarily inextricable, and including some of these texts is perhaps no different from doing the same with a boundary stone concerning purification and relating to Egyptian cults imported into a Greek city.⁸⁴

To a certain extent, any distinction whether geographical, cultural or temporal, is bound to constitute an arbitrary cut-off point. The unenviable alternative, however, would be to include all Greek-language material almost regardless of its discernible reference. While regretting that one has to prejudge the borderlines of Greek ritual norms, one perhaps has to establish limits, as subjective or idiosyncratic as these might be. Since several inscriptions from the second or third centuries AD seem to take on a markedly different aspect from the rest of the extant material, the first half of the second century AD will be fixed as an approximative *terminus ante quem* for the first phase of the project. Similarly, the geographic or cultural boundaries set by the past corpora will be more or less consistently maintained, including eastern Anatolia, Cyprus, Crete and Cyrenaica to the South, Sicily in the West, and the North more flexibly.

Here, as elsewhere in the investigation of this set of inscriptions, no satisfactory resolution may be possible. In the end, the decision about whether or not to include a given text may ultimately depend on a personal choice by the editors, but one may be consoled by the fact that online publication permits the successive addition of further documents. Through the examples cited above, the present discussion has given at least a partial overview of how the proposed Collection of Greek Ritual Norms (CGRN) will be constituted, and what will be excluded, at least for the present time.⁸⁵

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⁸² *LJS* 121 (end of 2nd or 3rd c. AD).

⁸³ Cf. e.g. *OGIS* 383 (ca. 70-31 BC).

⁸⁴ Or indeed a text like *LJS* 119 (1st c. BC), itself from Ptolemais.

⁸⁵ As this article represents part of the introduction to that ongoing project, we would finally like to take this opportunity to ask for general feedback as well as specific reactions to the proposal outlined here. In addition, we wish to kindly solicit contributions to the project from our readers, particularly in the form of published or forthcoming work on new or well-known Greek ritual norms.

Epigraphical Abbreviations

- CID* G. ROUGEMONT, *Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes, Tome I: Lois sacrées et règlements religieux*, Paris, 1977.
- IED* S. MINON, *Les inscriptions éléennes dialectales (V^e-II^e siècle avant J.-C.)*, 2 vols., Geneva, 2007 (*Hautes études du monde gréco-romain*, 38).
- LGS* H. VON PROTTE and L. ZIEHEN, *Leges graecorum sacrae e titulis collectae*, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1896 & 1906.
- LSAM* F. SOKOLOWSKI, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure*, Paris, 1955.
- LSCG* id., *Lois sacrées des cités grecques*, Paris, 1969.
- LSS* id., *Lois sacrées des cités grecques, Supplément*, Paris, 1962.
- NGSL* E. LUPU, *Greek Sacred Law: A Collection of New Documents*, 2nd ed., Leiden/Boston, 2009.

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