

## CHAPTER I

*Under the watchful eyes of the gods: divine justice in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor\***Angelos Chaniotis*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In late fifth-century Athens, the sophist Kritias, Plato's uncle and leader of the Thirty, presented in his satyr play *Sisyphus* the following scenario of how belief in gods came about: in the earliest times mortals used to live like animals, subject to the power of the mightiest among them. They knew neither the punishment of the wrongdoer nor the rewarding of the virtuous. It was only at a later stage that they developed laws; but again, only open deeds of violence could be punished. In order to deter the secret offenders as well, a clever-dick invented the gods. He introduced divine powers which could see, hear and know everything – including those crimes which remained unnoticed by mortals. Having observed how frightened men were by celestial phenomena, like thunder and lightning, and how gratefully they received the gifts of the sun and the rain, he thought that heaven was the appropriate dwelling-place of these gods.<sup>1</sup>

Not many Greek thinkers were as bold as Kritias to instrumentalize religion directly and openly by associating the creation of faith in gods with the hope of a more effective implementation of justice (cf. Polyb. 6.56.9–12). More numerous were those who – like Diagoras of Melos<sup>2</sup> – lost their belief in divine powers, observing how many wrongdoers remained unpunished; Babrius narrates the witty fable of a peasant who came to despair when he realized that the gods failed to punish even those who had stolen sacred property (*Fab.* 2):

\* I am very much indebted to Hank Versnel (Leiden) for many fruitful and entertaining discussions on some of the subjects discussed in this paper. I would also like to thank Hasan Malay (Izmir) for generously providing information on unpublished texts.

<sup>1</sup> Apud Sextus, *Math.* 9.54 (*TGF*, pp. 771–3, ed. Nauck). Translation and discussion: Guthrie (1971: 243–4).

<sup>2</sup> On Diagoras see *Suda*, s.v.; cf. Jacoby (1959: 5) and Guthrie (1971: 236). Compare the views of Diogenes of Oinoanda (fr. 20 col. III = Smith 1998: 132): 'A clear indication of the complete inability of the gods to prevent wrong-doings is provided by the nations of the Jews and Egyptians, who, while being the most superstitious of all peoples, are the vilest of all peoples' (trans. M.F. Smith).

A farmer while digging trenches in his vineyard lost his mattock and thereafter began a search to find out whether some one of the rustics present with him had stolen it. Each one denied having taken it. Not knowing what to do next, he brought all his servants into the city for the purpose of putting them under oath before the gods . . . When they had entered the gates of the city . . . a public crier began to call out that a thousand drachmas would be paid for information revealing the whereabouts of property that had been stolen from the god's temple. When the farmer heard this, he said: 'How useless for me to have come! How could this god know about other thieves, when he doesn't know who those were who stole his own property? Instead, he is offering money in the hope of finding some man who knows about them.'<sup>3</sup> (trans. B.E. Perry)<sup>3</sup>

There were other critical voices as well. And yet, neither the disbelief nor the resignation of alert observers of human society uprooted the idea that the gods – as superior powers, and not as human constructs – did not neglect crime and wrongdoing. That an evildoer can get away with his crimes during his lifetime was, of course, (and still is) a universal experience; but then the faith that divine punishment awaits him in a life after death reduced the frustration of the just – even if it usually failed to discourage the unjust. Already the earliest testimonia of eschatological beliefs colonize the underworld with sinners whose punishment 'furnished a paradigm on which was modeled the punishment in the afterlife of ordinary impious and unjust people'.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, a sense of justice could be satisfied with the idea that, if a wrongdoer did escape punishment, then at least his relatives or persons associated with him would pay for his deeds (e.g. Solon 13.25–32, ed. West; Plato, *Resp.* 364 b–c). The collective liability of a *genos* is not restricted to the practice of vengeance in Archaic Greece, to the notion of an inherited guilt in Attic tragedy, or to the avenging spirits in popular religion; it can still be found in public documents of the Classical period, i.e. in the Athenian law against tyranny and in a fifth-century verdict against murderers in the sanctuary of Athena Alea.<sup>5</sup> The belief in a collective suffering of divine vengeance for the wrongdoing of an individual had deep roots in Greek religion: the impurity (*miasma*) resulting from the neglect of a religious duty was often regarded as transmissible<sup>6</sup> and was, therefore, potentially

<sup>3</sup> Babrius, *Fab.* 2; for this story cf. Versnel (1991: 78).

<sup>4</sup> Sourvinou-Inwood (1995: 70); cf. Mikalson (1991: 120–1). For Egypt cf. Assmann (1997).

<sup>5</sup> Collective and inherited guilt in popular religion: Lloyd-Jones (1983: 35, 90–1), Parker (1983: 198–205), Mikalson (1983: 51), Burkert (1996: 108–13); Athenian law against tyranny: Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 16.10, Demosth. 23.62; inscription of Alea: Thür and Taeuber (1994: 85, 98). Cf. the idea of a collective guilt of mankind for the crime committed by the Titans against Dionysos in the 'Orphic-Dionysiac' tradition; see recently Graf (1993) and my bibliographical reviews in *EBGR* 1996–2000.

<sup>6</sup> Parker (1983: 218–19); Johnston (1999: 54) on inherited guilt and punishment after death in the late Archaic and early Classical period.

collective. As late as the early third century BC the *polis* of Dodona asked the local oracle, 'if the god had sent the bad weather because of the impurity (*akathartia*) of some man' (*SEG* XIX 427).

That ancient notions of retribution have a religious background is well known. It is particularly clear in the belief that disease represents punishment by the gods.<sup>7</sup> However, there is an aspect of this interdependence of religion and law which has received relatively little attention: the question whether and in which way(s) sacred authorities intervened in judicial matters and legal disputes. It is this specific question that I will discuss in this paper, and not divine justice in general. I have chosen Asia Minor as the geographical region for the following survey, though not because evidence for interventions of sacred authorities in judicial matters is lacking from other regions. This is not the case: the relevant evidence ranges from the participation of sacred officials in the cursing of convicts and potential offenders and the verdicts of priests in cases of persons seeking sanctuary (prosecuted persons, convicts, runaway slaves) in Greece to the role of Egyptian priests in legal conflicts among the native population in Ptolemaic Egypt.<sup>8</sup> Two other reasons make Asia Minor a suitable area for such a study: first, the abundance of documentary sources, among which the 'confession inscriptions' of Lydia and Phrygia, the curse tablets of Knidos, dedications with 'prayers for justice', and funerary imprecations occupy the most prominent position; and second, the existence of traditional sanctuaries, some of which had considerable property and most of which exercised significant social and moral influence on the population of small towns and villages.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. THE EPIGRAPHIC SOURCES: CONFESSION INSCRIPTIONS, PRAYERS FOR JUSTICE AND IMPRECATIONS FOR REVENGE

This paper exploits primarily the evidence provided by the 'confession' or 'propitiatory inscriptions'. These terms designate a group of inscriptions known from parts of Lydia and Phrygia and dating to the first three centuries of our era. So far 142 texts have been published, but many more have been found and await publication. Most texts have been found in the

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., Frisch (1983: 42–3), Varinlioglu (1989: 39 with n. 11), Versnel (1991: 77), Chaniotis (1995, with further bibliography), Burkert (1996: 102–8), Petzl (1998*b*: 23–6). For divine retribution see now Harrison (2000: 202–21).

<sup>8</sup> Cursing of convicts: Gschnitzer (1989); *asylia*: Chaniotis (1996*a*: 78–83); arbitration of Egyptian priests and participation of Egyptian priests in the administration of justice among the native population: Quaegebeur (1993), Anagnostou-Canas (1998).

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., Zingerle (1926: 47–8), Zawadzki (1952–3: 86–9), Debord (1982), Mitchell (1993*a*: 187–95), Petzl (1995), Debord (1997), Schuler (1998: 193–4, 247–55), de Hoz (1999: 103–7).

Katakekaumene (north-east Lydia) – mainly in Maionia and in the territories of Saittai and Philadelpheia; other important find spots in Lydia are Sardis and the region between Apollonos Hieron and Tripolis; in Phrygia, confession inscriptions have been found in Akmonia and in the sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos; a few texts are known from Tiberiopolis in Mysia.<sup>10</sup> The publication of Georg Petzl's valuable corpus (1994, henceforth: *BIWK*), with reliable texts, accurate translations and commentaries, has made a large number of texts widely accessible and permitted a better and more differentiated picture. These texts, written on stone stelae and set up in sanctuaries, contain the confessions of religious offences, crimes and misdemeanours. As far as we can see, the confessions were not made voluntarily, but were forced by divine intervention, i.e. by the prosecution of the guilty person by a divinity through illness, accident, death or destruction of the property.<sup>11</sup> The offences recorded are primarily of a religious nature: disregard of purity regulations (e.g. consumption of forbidden food, entering the sanctuary with unclean clothes or unwashed, sexual intercourse), insult of the gods by ignoring their commands, offences against sacred property and perjury. However, numerous texts mention offences commonly prosecuted by property and criminal law, such as theft, the neglect to repay a debt, cheating, insult, slander, injury, adultery and sorcery.<sup>12</sup>

As we can infer from the longer texts, when a person committed, intentionally or not, a crime or violated a rule and thought that the god was inflicting punishment, he went to a local sanctuary and asked for help. By means of oracles, divine messengers (*angeloi*) or dreams, the god revealed the cause of his anger and the way in which atonement could be

<sup>10</sup> The bibliography is vast; I list here some more general studies (not editions of individual texts): Steinleitner (1913), Zingerle (1926), Pettazzoni (1936: 54–115) and (1954: 7–59), Varinlioğlu (1983), Frisch (1983), Petzl (1988), (1991), (1994), (1995: 41–8) and (1997), Versnel (1991: 75–81), (1994), (1999) and (2002), Mitchell (1993a: 191–4), Chaniotis (1995) and (1997a), Riel (1995) and (1997), Klauck (1996), Schuler (1998: 253–5), Sima (1999), Rostad (2002). M. Riel's dissertation *La conscience du péché dans les cultes anatoliens à l'époque romaine. La confession des fautes rituelles et éthiques dans les cultes méoniens et phrygiens* (Belgrade 1995; in Serbian, with French summary) was unfortunately not accessible to me; it contains 135 texts: see Riel (1997) and Petzl (1997: 78–9). For the areas where confession inscriptions have been found see Petzl (1994: vii) (with a map) and Riel (1997: 36). For the chronological distribution of the material see Petzl (1994: vii and 145) (AD 57–264). A precise date is known for fifty-six texts; most of them (thirty-seven texts) are dated to the period of the Antonines; only three texts can be safely dated to the first century. For texts not included in Petzl's corpus (*BIWK*) see Riel (1997) and Petzl (1997) and (1998a).

<sup>11</sup> Varinlioğlu (1989: 39), Riel (1995: 71).

<sup>12</sup> Surveys of the offences attested in the confession inscriptions: Mitchell (1993a: 192–4), Petzl (1994: xii–xiii), Chaniotis (1997a: 354–5), Klauck (1996: 72–5). I regard perjury as a religious offence, since it was not prosecuted by secular law: see Hirzel (1902: 37–41), Plescia (1970: 88–91). The texts not included in Petzl's corpus concern misdemeanours with regard to sacred property (Petzl 1997) and the refusal of a woman to follow a god's request and serve as a priestess (Riel 1997).

achieved.<sup>13</sup> However, only a few texts present the facts in their actual chronological sequence; shortening and (much worse) unclear language usually obscure the events. The following text is a good example of the usual course of events (*BIWK* 57):

Because Trophime, daughter of Artemidoros, also known as Kikinnas, had been asked by the god to fulfil a service and refused to come quickly, the god punished her and made her insane. Now, she asked Meter Tarsene and Apollo Tarsios and Mes Artemidorou Axiottenos, who rules over Koresa. And the god ordered me to register myself for sacred service.

At first sight the procedure seems to concern only the sinner and the divinity, without the interference of any authority, whether secular or sacred. Things are not, however, as simple as that. To begin with, an interference of priests can be recognized in the recording of the confession: in many texts (including the one just quoted) we notice a change of the subject of the verb – from the third to the first person; this may be due to the fact that a priest recorded the confession, possibly made by an illiterate person. In addition to this, it was the priests who transmitted and explained the commands of the gods, usually given in the form of oracles.

The scholars who have studied the confession inscriptions agree that the part played by the priests went beyond these services, although there is some disagreement both in the interpretation of individual texts and in the nature of the activities of the sacred authorities. In the light of the references to offences commonly prosecuted by criminal law as well as in the light of the use of a legal vocabulary in many confession inscriptions, Joseph Zingerle was the first to suggest in 1926, when the known material was rather limited, that trials concerning secular offences took place in the sanctuaries of Phrygia and Lydia; he went so far as to suspect that the priests did not hesitate to assist the gods in carrying out capital punishment.<sup>14</sup> Zingerle's views could not be confirmed by the material available at that time and did not find many followers.<sup>15</sup> O. Eger (1939) rightly pointed out that there is no evidence for trials; he admitted, on the other hand, that accusations must have been submitted to the priests by the wronged party, and that subsequently the priests cursed the guilty party, interpreted the

<sup>13</sup> For the means of communication between man and god see van Straten (1976: 9–12), Varinlioglu (1989: 39) and (1991: 93), Versnel (1991: 75), Petzl (1994: xv–xvi, 5, 79, 106), Chaniotis (1997a: 354 n. 5), Klauck (1996: 71), de Hoz (1999: 114–24). The importance of reconciliation is stressed by Rostad (2002).

<sup>14</sup> Zingerle (1926: esp. 45–6).

<sup>15</sup> See, e.g., the criticism of Debord (1982: 166), Versnel (1991: 80–1), Petzl (1994: 65, 77, 87–8 and 1995: 43), Riel (1995: 69–73), Chaniotis (1997a).

signs of the divine will and consulted those who wished to atone for their misdemeanours. Ender Varinlioğlu (1989), the editor of several of the new texts, suggested that the legal vocabulary attested in these inscriptions is occasionally used metaphorically. Marijane Riel (1995), who has compiled a corpus of these texts (n. 10), came to a similar conclusion: the temples did not act on their own account, she argued, but only when they were asked to intervene by the victims of an offence. The procedure consisted in swearing in the parties and cursing the offenders in order to attract the interest of the gods in the offence. Trials, in the more narrow sense (with judges and verdicts), did not take place.<sup>16</sup> That the priests occasionally served as judges and inflicted penalties has been, nonetheless, maintained by Georg Petzl (1988 and 1994) in the light of a lengthier text: the confession of a certain Theodoros. Indeed, this text (*BIWK* 5, see below, pp. 27–8) resembles the minutes of a trial presided by a priestly council. But in addition to the problems of its interpretation, this text concerns a sacred slave, i.e. a person under the authority of the priests, and thus it is not suitable for general conclusions. My own study of the legal terms and the judiciary elements contained in the confession inscriptions (1997*a*) was conducted after the publication of Petzl's valuable corpus and was based on a larger source material than that available to some of the earlier scholars. Differences in the interpretation of individual texts and in several details notwithstanding, my study confirmed the conclusions of Varinlioğlu and Riel that trials did not take place in the sanctuaries of Lydia and Phrygia. But I could also find some evidence for negotiations between the priests and the delinquents which allow us to determine the part played by the priests more accurately. This evidence is one of the subjects of the present study; but in order to place the confession inscriptions in a broader religious and social context, I also consider here the evidence provided by further groups of inscriptions.

A group of texts very closely related to the confession inscriptions was found in the sanctuary of Demeter at Knidos; they date to the late second or early first centuries BC.<sup>17</sup> The fact that these texts were written on lead tablets, and that their authors address their curses against persons who had wronged them, brings these inscriptions very close to the ordinary curse

<sup>16</sup> Riel (1995: 69, 'the village temple assumed some of the characteristics of a law-court, but without earthly judges and lawyers', and 71). Riel also points out that the 'punishment' is often out of all proportion to the crime or the sin.

<sup>17</sup> The most recent publication (with earlier bibliography) is the one by Blümel (1992) = *I.Knidos* nos. 147–59; the most comprehensive recent studies are those presented by Versnel (1994), (1999: 152–3) and (2002: 50–4).

tablets (*defixiones*) of the ancient world. There are, however, significant differences: the culprits are dedicated to the goddess and conditionally cursed; they are to suffer for as long as it takes to make them come to the sanctuary and confess their crime.<sup>18</sup> In the Knidian texts the standard term for the divine pressure exercised on a culprit is πεπρημένος, 'burnt' (only in one case κολαζόμενος, 'punished'). I give a few lines of one of these texts in translation (*I.Knidos* 150 A 1–4): 'I dedicate to Demeter and Kore the man who has made imputations against me, (claiming) that I make a poison (or a potion) against my own man; may he come up to (the sanctuary of) Demeter, with his entire family, burning (or burnt) and confessing . . .' The term *pepremenos* was interpreted by C.T. Newton as 'sold', but it is more probable (also in view of the role of fire as punishment in ancient magic) that it means 'burning with fever' or 'burning in shame'; but the term may also allude to ordeal by fire or hot water, known to have been performed to prove purity or legitimate possession, and to analogous types of oaths of innocence.<sup>19</sup> The interpretation of the term is not without importance, because if an ordeal by fire took place, then the active part played by the sanctuary would be much more significant than just serving as the place where the tablets were deposited. Unfortunately, the material known so far does not allow a decision. Still, the Knidian texts are in many ways very helpful for a better understanding of the involvement of sanctuaries in judicial matters and of the religious mentality which made this involvement possible. The expectation of a confession brings them very close to the confession inscriptions; more similarities can be seen in the nature of the crimes expected to be pursued by the goddesses (theft, slander, embezzlement, bodily injury) and in the expectation of a punishment. As H. Versnel (1994) has pointed out, the main difference is that the Knidian texts ask the gods to do what the confession inscriptions report as already done. The same scholar has also drawn attention to the publicity of these texts and their preoccupation with shame and honour (Versnel 1999 and 2002).

The Knidian texts, with their explicit reference to wrongdoings and their appeal to the intervention of the deities for the satisfaction of the

<sup>18</sup> The same idea is expressed in a Christian curse from Alexandria Troas; *I. Alexandria Troas* 188. 7–8: ποιήσον αὐτοὺς πρὸ σοῦ βήματος μολῖν, ἑαυτοὺς ἐσθιοντάς καὶ τέκνα καὶ γυναῖκας; M. Riel, *ad loc.*, has pointed to the similarity of this text to the confession inscriptions and to the Knidian curses.

<sup>19</sup> Burning with fever: Blümel (1992: 85); a long curse tablet referring to 'burning' and 'burning with fever' to death (ἐνπυροῦσθαι, καίεσθαι, φλογίζεσθαι, φλογίζεσθαι πυρετοῖς ἀγρίοις) has been published recently: Kantzia (1997) = *SEG* XLVII 1291. Burning in shame: Versnel (1999: 154). Ordeal by fire: Versnel (1994: 150–4).

wronged party, belong to a distinct group of curses; H. Versnel, who has dedicated a series of penetrating studies to them (1991, 1999 and 2002), has very aptly used the designation ‘prayers for justice’.<sup>20</sup> Similar texts, in Greek and Latin, calling the attention of a divinity to an act of injustice, are known from many parts of the Roman empire. Although some of these texts at first sight are very similar to *defixiones*, they share one common feature: they do not force a divinity to harm another person by simply applying magical formulas (like the *defixiones*), but they present arguments to motivate a divinity to act.<sup>21</sup> They inform about the act of injustice (theft, slander, etc.) and they request satisfaction, revenge or both. The use of argumentation is particularly clear in a recently published curse tablet from Oropos (third/second century), whose nature was not recognized by its editor.<sup>22</sup> Someone cursed a series of persons, willing them to be delivered to Plouton and Mounogenes (Persephone), and wishing them death and misery. Unlike ordinary *defixiones*, the curser justified himself: ‘I demand that my request be heard, because I have been wronged’ (ll. 15–16: [ἀδικο]ύμενος ἀξ[ιῶ πάντα] ἐπήκοα γενέσ[θαι]); ‘having been wronged, and not having wronged first, I demand that what I have written down and deposited with you be accomplished’ (ll. 25–9: ἀξιῶ οὖν ἀδικούμενος καὶ οὐκ ἀδικῶν πρότερος ἐπιτελ[ῆ] γενέσθαι <1> ἃ καταγράφω καὶ ἃ παρατίθεται ὑμῖν; cf. l. 10: ἀξιῶ; l. 45: ἀδικούμενος ὑπ’ αὐτῶν). The curser obviously believed that the more or less mechanical application of a curse formulary against the person who had wronged him would not suffice; his appeal to the gods of the Netherworld would be more effective if he presented legal (‘I have been wronged’) and moral justifications (‘not having wronged first’).<sup>23</sup> In the cases which concern lost or stolen objects, the victim sometimes asks only for vengeance, as, e.g., in the following *defixio* written on a lead sheet (Hamble estuary, Hampshire, fourth century AD):

Lord Neptune, I give you the man who has stolen the solidus and six argentioli of Muconius. So I give the names of those who took them away, whether male or female, whether boy or girl. So I give you, Niskus [a hitherto unknown deity], and to Neptune the life, health, blood of him who has been privy to that taking-away.

<sup>20</sup> Versnel (1991: 68–75, 81–93), (1999: 127) and (2002: 48–50). More material has become known in the last years: Corell (1994), Hassall and Tomlin (1994), (1995) and (1996), Tomlin (1997), *EBGR* (1997) no. 296.

<sup>21</sup> Versnel (1991: 68–9) and (2002: 48–56).

<sup>22</sup> Petrakos (1997: 477–9, no. 746); cf. my commentary in *EBGR* (1997) no. 296.

<sup>23</sup> It should be mentioned in passing that a similar development can be observed in the same period with regard to the notion of pollution, as the purification often requires more than the mechanical performance of a ritual: it presupposes an internalized process of atonement. See Chaniotis (1997*b*).

The mind which stole this and which has been privy to it, may you take it away. The thief who stole this, may you consume his blood and take it away, Lord Neptune. (trans. R.S.O. Tomlin)<sup>24</sup>

If I have referred here to texts from Oropos and Britain, it is because of their similarity in content, mentality and (to some extent) vocabulary with analogous texts from Asia Minor.<sup>25</sup> Studies dedicated to a phenomenon in a particular region sometimes tend to overestimate its singularity; these texts remind us that, despite some particular features of the inscriptions of Asia Minor, the ideas concerning divine justice circulated widely in the ancient Mediterranean (and beyond).

A third group of texts, very closely associated with the previous categories in terms of legal, sociological and religious background, but yet very distinct in terms of motivation, are vows addressed to the gods requesting support in various affairs of everyday life, including financial and legal matters. A dedication to Mes Axiottenos at Axiotta, for example, reports the concerns of a woman about whether she would receive some property from her mother; she did get what she wanted and then made the promised dedication.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, Fl. Attalos at Telmessos made a vow to Zeus Olympios, requesting his support in order to obtain the ownership of some pieces of land.<sup>27</sup> Such vows do not allude to disputes and consequently they do not request punishment. Naturally, an unfulfilled vow could easily create the feeling of injustice and dishonour and turn a frustrated person to more drastic means of winning the favour of a god: to curses and prayers for revenge (cf. §3 below).

The belief that crimes did not remain unnoticed and unpunished by the gods is also attested in inscriptions, usually epitaphs, which either mention a crime that had been committed and ask the gods to avenge it or request the punishment of anyone who may have wronged the deceased person.<sup>28</sup> I present only one example of such a prayer for revenge, published recently. In the area of Dorylaion, Helios and Tateis erected a stele, decorated with a representation of hands raised in prayer, on the grave of their slave; an imprecation is addressed to Helios, asking him to avenge the death of their

<sup>24</sup> Tomlin (1997: 455–7).

<sup>25</sup> For the wide diffusion of these ideas and similarities in the vocabulary see Versnel (1991), (1999: 155).

<sup>26</sup> *SEG* xli 1012.4–10: εὐξαμένη | Μηνὶ Ἀξισοττηνῶ, | ἔαν παρὰ τῆς μητρὸς | λήψομαι τὰ μέρη | λαβοῦσα ἀνέθηκα τὴν | στήλῃην περὶ ὧν εὐξάμην. The word μέρος probably means a share in an inheritance; cf. *BGU* iii 895, 35; *BIWK* 18, 28, 71.

<sup>27</sup> *SEG* vi 748: Διὶ Ὀλυμπίῳ Φλάβ[ι]ος Ἀτταλος ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐνκτη[σ]εος τῶν [χ]ωρίων.

<sup>28</sup> For such 'funerary pleas for justice' in Asia Minor see Versnel (1999: 131–2); for examples outside Asia Minor see Björck (1938), Versnel (1991: 70–1) and (1999: 129–31). For the attribution of unexpected death to magic or poisoning see also Graf (1996: 47).

slave (early third century AD): ‘they have dedicated this stele for their slave who died a premature death, imploring the testimony of Helios and all the gods, so that they avenge us’.<sup>29</sup>

The expectation of divine punishment is attested in many more inscriptions of Asia Minor than the groups I have singled out here. I should mention in particular the funerary imprecations which threaten desecrators of graves with divine punishment, and the epigraphic evidence for the cult of deities whose name indicates a particular interest in justice. More than 400 funerary imprecations have been found in epitaphs in Asia Minor and in the adjacent islands of Lesbos, Samos, Kos and Rhodes, as well as in epitaphs of ‘Anatolians’ in Thrace, Macedonia, Athens and Rome – now assembled in a valuable corpus by J. Strubbe (1997).<sup>30</sup> The particular interest of these texts for our subject lies in the fact that their vocabulary often assimilates the divine punishment with a trial (see below p. 29). In addition to this, these texts provide evidence for a strong continuity in religious beliefs, since the earliest text – a bilingual inscription from Kyanaei in Lykia – can be dated as early as the early fourth century BC (Strubbe 1997: no. 376). In the funerary imprecations, but also in other texts as well, we often encounter divinities whose names or epithets imply a very close association with justice. Besides the goddess of punishment Nemesis, whose cult goes back to the Classical period (in Rhamnous and Smyrna) but becomes very popular in the Imperial period, and Dikaiosyne, the personification of Justice, one should mention the all-seeing Sun (Helios Pantepoptes), the Eye of Justice (Dikes Ophthalmos) and Hosios kai Dikaioi (or Hosion kai Dikaion, i.e. the personification of Purity and Justice).<sup>31</sup> The latter divine couple is known from more than a hundred monuments (usually dedications, but also a confession inscription and an imprecation). Its cult is almost exclusively limited to Asia Minor (with only four attestations from places

<sup>29</sup> *SEG* XLIV 1050.3–11: δούλω | άώρω τήν|δε άνέθηκ|αν, μαρτυ|ρούμενο<1> τὸν Ἡλιον [κέ] | πάντας | θεοὺς ἰν’ ἐγ[δική]|σουσιν ἡμ[άς]; cf. Riel (1994: 170–1, no. 26); Strubbe (1997: 16), with further examples of epitaphs with representations of raised hands, which may be epitaphs of persons who had met a violent death. A similar Christian prayer for revenge with representation of raised hands (Bahçekonak, Phazemonitis, AD 237/8) has been published recently by Marek (2000: 137–46): ‘Almighty lord, you have made me, but an evil man has killed me; avenge me fast!’ For another example of raised hands and the explicit reference that the deceased had met a violent death (ὕπὸ βίαις) see *I. Beroia* 388.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Strubbe (1991). For several texts published after Strubbe’s corpus see Brixhe (1997) and Brixhe and Drew-Bear (1997).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. in general Versnel (1991: 70–1 with nn. 44–7), Mitchell (1993a: 191). Nemesis: Hornum (1993); cf. Volkmann (1928) and (1934), Chaniotis (1990: 132 n. 28). Dikaiosyne: *TAM* III 731. Helios Pantepoptes: *SEG* XXXVII 1036; cf. *SEG* XVIII 561. Dikes Ophthalmos: *SEG* XXXVIII 1310; cf. Riel (1991a: 14 no. 25). Ate: *TAM* III.1 268. Hosios kai Dikaioi: Riel (1991a), (1992a), (1992b), Petzl (1992), (1998b).