

Ancient and Medieval Greek Etymology

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Ancient and Medieval Greek Etymology

Theory and Practice II

Edited by

Arnaud Zucker, Claire Le Feuvre and Maria Chriti

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In memory of Elias Tsolakopoulos

Preface

In this volume are collected papers presented at two conferences organized by the ETYGRAM Association: a conference held in Nice, France, in September 2018 and a conference held in Thessaloniki, Greece, in November 2021. The first conference was made possible thanks to generous funding by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. Both were supported by Côte d'Azur University, Sorbonne University and the CNRS. We thank those institutions for their support and the editors of the Trends in Classics series for accepting the proceedings for publication. Our association, ETYGRAM, aims to bring together scholars with an interest in ancient Greek etymology and is engaged in several activities, among which are special pedagogical events for Secondary Education and an open-access online dictionary of ancient etymologies, which is a work in progress. In this dictionary, ancient etymologies either transmitted by technical sources or found in Greek literature in general are gathered and commented on, provided with translation and analysis (ETYGRAM-D, Ancient and Medieval Greek Etymology): <http://appsweb-cepam.unice.fr/etygram>.

Arnaud Zucker, Claire Le Feuvre, Maria Chriti

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List of Abbreviations

<i>BNJ</i>	<i>Jacoby Online. Brill's New Jacoby</i> (I. Worthington ed.)
<i>DÉLG</i>	<i>Dictionnaire Etymologique de la Langue Grecque</i> (P. Chantraine ed.)
<i>EDG</i>	<i>Etymological Dictionary of Greek</i> (R.S.P. Beekes ed.)
<i>Epimerismi</i>	<i>Epimerismi Homerici</i> (A.R. Dyck ed.)
<i>Et.Gen.</i>	<i>Etymologicum Genuinum</i> (F. Lasserre/N. Livadaras ed. vel T. Gaisdorf ed.)
<i>Et.Gud.</i>	<i>Etymologicum Gudianum</i> (E.L. de Stefani ed. vel F.G. Sturz ed.)
<i>EGM</i>	<i>Early Greek Mythography</i> (R.L. Fowler ed.)
<i>EM</i>	<i>Etymologicum Magnum</i> (T. Gaisdorf ed. vel F. Lasserre/N. Livadaras ed.)
<i>Et.Parv.</i>	<i>Etymologicum Parvum</i> (R. Pintaudi ed.)
<i>FGrHist</i>	<i>Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker</i> (F. Jacoby ed.)
<i>FDS</i>	<i>Die Fragmente der Dialektik der Stoiker</i> (K. Hülser ed.)
<i>GEW</i>	<i>Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> (H. Frisk ed.)
<i>LSJ</i>	<i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> (H. Liddell, R. Scott, H.S. Jones ed.)
<i>PGL</i>	<i>A Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> (P.W.H. Lampe ed.)
<i>Scholia in A.R.</i>	<i>Scholia in Apollonium Rhodium</i> (R.F.P. Brunck ed.)
<i>Schol. Gen. Hom. Il.</i>	<i>Scholia in Homeri Iliadem Genavensia</i> (J. Nicole ed.)
<i>Schol. ex. Il.</i>	<i>Scholia Exegetica in Homeri Iliadem</i> (H. Erbse ed.)
<i>SVF</i>	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> (H. von Arnim ed.)

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Arnaud Zucker, Claire Le Feuvre and Maria Chriti

Introduction

This second collection of essays on Greek etymology aims at continuing a collective and individual reflection on the etymological practices of the ancients.¹ This volume mainly represents the results of the second and third conferences (Nice, September 2018 and Thessaloniki, November 2021) of our Association, ETYGRAM (<http://apps.web-cepam.unice.fr/etygram/node/2>). Both conferences depict our interest in deciphering ancient etymological approaches and practices, and each meeting regarded strands of ancient etymologizing that have not yet received sufficient attention by scholarship. We considered it a good idea to merge contributions from those two meetings, so that the essays presented at different meetings that touch on the same topics might together offer a more multilevel analysis.

Several basic tenets of ancient etymological practices were elaborated in the Introduction of the previous volume, but a few essential points need to be mentioned here, too. Echoing the approach of the initial volume, the scope of this specific collection is to highlight the distinctive methods and perspectives of Greek authors regarding etymology. A notable consistency in their understanding of the relationship between words (or nouns), language and meaning is evident, despite some authors adopting unique stances. Etymology in ancient Greece was indeed understood not merely as examining a word's connection to its lexical root, but as the study of a complex relationship that binds each word to a network of linguistic and extralinguistic elements. Byzantine lexicons, as the culmination of a lengthy tradition of linguistic contemplation, affirm the enduring intellectual framework that underpins this conception.

In view of the lack of explicit theoretical treatises on etymology from antiquity — with the exception of scattered segments in the frame of broader linguistic discussions, such as in Varro's *De Lingua Latina* — our insight into ancient etymological reflection largely derives from contextual literary uses and etymological lexicons. Research into contextual uses can often lead the scholars to the discovery of implicit etymologies, cases where a word is not explicitly etymologized but where the semantic bond between a word and its etymon is deduced. Greek writers embedded words within a lattice of intra-linguistic relationships, where each word could be dissected into components that phonetically and semantically resonate or rhyme with other linguistic elements, reflecting what was perceived as a linguistic or 'logical' kinship. This notion, decoupled from what is considered nowadays the

1 *Ancient and Medieval Greek Etymology. Theory and Practice I*, A. Zucker/C. Le Feuvre (eds.), 2021.

diachronic evolution of language and focusing on its synchronic state instead, cannot be fully appreciated through the lens of modern linguistic etymology, since ancient etymology does not do what contemporary etymological inquiry does. In order to grasp this ancient approach to etymological affiliations, one must step aside from the contemporary linguistic framework and embrace the unique practice of *etymologia* that flourished in the pre-modern Greek world, scrutinizing the artifacts of this intellectual tradition. The practice of etymology was not confined to any single literary genre but was universally applied, with a consensus as to its modalities, utilities, and roles which, if not explicitly formulated, was undoubtedly widespread.

The myth of the name-giver

Some ancient authors postulated that the genesis of language, which appears so coherent, may have been the result of a conscious endeavor, attributing the construction of the lexicon to primitive authors — the ‘name-givers’ — who intentionally crafted new words and concepts from existing linguistic resources. This aligns with the Cratylean approach to the emergence of language. In Plato’s dialogue *Cratylus*, this progenitor of language is assigned various titles: ‘law-giver’ (*nomothetēs*: 388e1), ‘name-giver’ (*onomatōn thetēs*: 389d8), ‘name-maker’ (*dēmiourgos onomatōn*: 390e2) and ‘name-coiner’ (*onomatourgos*: 389a1). Whether through legislative or technical prowess, this initial act of creation was seen not as an isolated event, but as a long process, including a linguistic evolution encompassing the growth, enrichment, and sometimes decay of the original lexemes.

The hypothesis of an original creator is not a prerequisite for the ancient conception of the lexicon as a collection of motivated words. The quintessence of the ancient approach to intra-linguistic connections, as exemplified in the practice of *etymologia*, lies primarily in the broadly held and seemingly self-evident assumption of the motivated nature of signs by the authors. The pervasive anticipation of or demand for a motivation of name-attributing suggests that those who coined new terms adhered to a shared and collectively honored tactic, intending to embed in each new name hints of its origin or sources. This inferred lineage of a name would facilitate, or might even be requisite for, its general acceptance into the broader lexicon.

The poetics of *onomata*, illustrated by authors through their *glōssai* and neologisms, does not rely necessarily on a singular legislator, but on shared conventions of word formation. Compositional neologisms, such as those attributed to Aeschylus by Aristophanes in *The Frogs*, might have served as the paradigm for onomastic construction or might have influenced Greek ideas about the malleability of

onomata. This widespread view of sign motivation might have been supported by the fact that the linguistic categories used by the Greeks do not distinguish between proper and common nouns. Since the former are ‘speaking names’, it is tempting to extend the investigation into a presumed common mode of production for all *onomata*. This blurring of categories may encourage the hypothesis that a unified tendency underpins all nouns creation.

Ancient grammarians and authors do not offer prescriptive phonetic rationales for the mutations that engender nouns. While certain phonetic changes like psilosis, vowel elongation, or substitution may be remarked upon, these are not placed within a universal, standardized schema that would render etymological connections foreseeable. The formation of nouns, driven by phonetic-semantic affinities, follows no overarching rule. This theoretical unpredictability in the realm of grammar could be seen as a short fall in etymological discussions. However, it also reflects a consensus that lexical innovation is not a methodical pursuit, but rather a form of onomastic artisanship and improvisation. Therefore, their regularity observed in word formation suggests that grammarians perceive language evolution as a spontaneous collective endeavor, which may appear at odds with the principle — or myth — of the name-giver.

The convergence of Cratylus and Hermogenes

The Platonic dialogue *Cratylus* marks a significant milestone in the history of Greek etymological thought and offers a nuanced exploration of linguistic philosophy through the contrasting theories of Cratylus and Hermogenes. Cratylus espouses the view that names inherently mimic the essence of the things they signify, suggesting a natural correspondence between signifiers and their referents. Hermogenes, on the other hand, proposes that the function and meaning of words are determined by mutual agreement among language users (*synthēkē kai homologia*) — a social contract of linguistics. Thus, the *Cratylus* is often misinterpreted as staging a stark conflict between two fundamentally opposed theories of name genesis. In reality, these theories do not run in parallel or in direct opposition; they address distinct domains: the origin of nouns on the one hand, and their societal acceptance and use on the other.

The two opposing theories in the *Cratylus* are not totally divergent on the question of motivation. While the natural sign theory and the conventional sign theory might appear to be at odds, concerning the intrinsic (Cratylus) or extrinsic (Hermogenes) origins of signifiers respectively, both theories incorporate the concept of motivated naming. Cratylus’ naturalism does not preclude a place for human

agency in the development of language, and Hermogenes' conventionalism does not imply that the genesis of names is devoid of inherent logic or reason: it is not an endorsement of randomness and does not dismiss the idea that naming can be rationalized or have underlying justifications. Hence, conventions do not imply arbitrariness, and their solidity is enhanced by the existence of motives or reasons. The *truth* of names may be objective (according to Cratylus) or subjective (according to Hermogenes), but it is accepted by both sides. The critical point is not 'nature' but 'correctness' (*orthotēs*), aligning with the very subtitle of the dialogue (*On the correctness of names*). A name's alignment with the thing it signifies is not ontologically mandated by that thing but rather semantically suited to it.

There is a prevailing belief in the Greek linguistic tradition concerning the inherent self-sufficiency of the Greek language. Despite the presence of loanwords, evolutionary changes, and dialectal variants, Greek is viewed as a coherent system, the Greek lexicon forming a network in which words determine and contaminate each other. For this system to possess internal logic, it must manifest in the interrelations among its components. Semantics, especially as evidenced in Aristotle's logical works, is deeply intertwined with linguistic considerations, serving as a language's *raison d'être*.

In language, it is to be expected that words share varying degrees of affinity. Just as some words are linked by a shared root (derivatives), those studying linguistic relationships — a central concern of ancient grammar — are entitled to explore the subtler connections between words. The category of lexical derivation (whether deverbative, denominative, etc.) is not a special case of word production; rather, it epitomizes the typical form of inter-lexical linkage. Linguistic proximity often masquerades as dependency, inviting interpretations of derivation. Words in close linguistic quarters tend to 'rub off' on each other, leading to what might be seen by contemporary linguists as familial resemblances. Consequently, Greek etymological explanations do not rigorously differentiate between grammatical derivations and authentic etymological connections — the relationship between words like ὕπερ and ὕειν is treated similarly to that between γονή ('offspring') and γυνή ('woman'). According to the Greek conceptualization, the lexicon evolves progressively, continually enriched, suggesting that nearly all words are interconnected derivatives.

The congruence in practice among ancient Greek grammarians, philosophers, and poets arises not merely because they often overlap in personhood, but because they share a fundamental approach to language, viewing words principally as the result of naming actions. Since naming dynamics are crucial to establishing a word's essence, probing a name's breadth means seeking the original intent behind its creation and application. Poets, in employing a name within their verse, rekindle its meaning and legacy. They utilize it with purpose, informed by the name's traditional

usage or its semantic network. This poetic praxis equates the coinage of a name with its utilization, as both are informed by the name's multifaceted nature and hinge on intrinsic motivation. Here again, we observe that the mythical archetype of the name-giver — the human or divine agent behind the genesis and societal establishment of words, central to the Cratylean model — is not indispensable to a Cratylean-influenced linguistic theory or to the broader Greek etymological viewpoint.

The sensibility towards a semantic system

The absence of a formal etymological theory does not diminish the revealing nature of etymological practices, which illuminate the semantic, semiological, and broader linguistic matrix integral to etymological analysis.

Each word under review is **affiliated with various etymological 'patrons'**, who contribute a portion of their phonetic and semantic lineage, allowing us to discern a connection in sound (paronymy) and meaning (parasemy). Although texts may activate a single etymon for the sake of argument or clarity, the underlying network remains communal, and this selection does not negate the co-validity of other etymons. These, like potential parents, are indeterminate in number and presence. Therefore, each etymon provides a distinct vantage point within the semantic system.

(1) This illumination is 'true' (ἔτυμον), even if it is only a partial truth. Each etymological statement implicitly acknowledges that partial truths, while not exhaustive, do not diminish the value of etymological inquiry. The array of etymologies posited by different authors for the same word reflects a tradition unimpeded by previously established associations. Rather than competing, varied etymologies are seen as collaborative, each reinforcing the principle of an underlying motivation behind words. The ETYGRAM project exemplifies this approach, compiling a burgeoning online dictionary that documents these etymological interpretations in Ancient Greek and Byzantine literature.² Many etymological interpretations are collected in two types of closely related works: *Lexica* and *Etymologica*. These compilations that frequently overlap share similar methodologies and underlying assumptions. The *Etymologica*, in particular, closely resemble lexicons in their content and methods, as they primarily aim to explicate lemmas through etymological analysis. Morphological observations and references to authors, hallmarks of lexicons, are equally prevalent in the *Etymologica*, illustrating the fluid boundaries between these grammatical categories.

² See <http://appsweb-cepam.unice.fr/etygram/dictionary> (last accessed on August 2024).

(2) In a broader linguistic landscape, words resonate **within a network of semantic echoes**, hinting at an underlying order rather than random alignment between signifiers and signifieds. Indeed, attributing linguistic pairings to mere chance is often untenable: all it takes is a single plausible motivation for the hypothesis of a random construction to collapse.

(3) The phonetic variations between a lemma and its etymon, while sometimes ascribed to stylistic choices or dialectal variations, are more fundamentally attributed to **the natural erosion of language** over time. Even within a synchronic examination of etymology, there is an implicit recognition of linguistic evolution — from archaic origins to transformations wrought by history. While it may be challenging to frame the general process of this erosion and pinpoint methodologically *the linguistic ways* by which words frayed or morphed, this observable and seemingly inevitable process legitimizes lexical anatomy and etymological analysis. However, even though Greek grammarians acknowledge that phonetic change is a diachronic process, and that an originally transparent name can become opaque because of phonetic change, they hardly ever use chronology in their own etymologies. For instance, it was not a problem for them to derive a Homeric form from the *koinē* form, which is their starting point, their derivation thus running against chronology. The same *Etymologicum Genuinum*, s.v. *aethleuō*, derives the Homeric form *aethlon* ‘game, prize of the game’ from the *koinē* form *athlon* (alpha 90), and a few lines below, s.v. *aethlon*, correctly derives *athlon* from *aethlon* by contraction (alpha 95). If the chronological criterion had been taken into account, the former derivation would not have been possible. This is because the grammarians, too, see Greek as a synchronic object: they can think in terms of dialectal differences, but they do not think in terms of chronological evolution. The diachronic changes are limited to a prehistoric period, which eventually generated the extant Greek words and a stable state of the language.³

Neither commentary nor exegesis

Etymological insights are a staple not only in poetic compositions, but also in scholarly treatises, permeating the commentary tradition at least up to the works of Eustathius, the Archbishop of Thessaloniki. He contributed a substantial number to this discourse, and it is plausible that the *Etymologica* in general served an educational purpose, enriching the understanding of classical texts by shedding light on

³ See Lallot 2011.

specific terms and their semantic networks. Yet, it is a challenge to demarcate etymological inquiry sharply from other metalinguistic activities, poetic expressions, or interpretive endeavors.

Etymology typically asserts a phonetic and semantic dependency, suggesting a lineage between a word and one or more of its linguistic relatives, often framed as ‘X originates from Y (or Y and Z)’. However, this broad definition does not neatly separate mere wordplay, which could be seen as poetic choices or rhetorical flourish (think associations of homophones, homographs, or paronyms), from *bona fide* etymological linkages. These resonances, which intuitively hint at connections, do not inherently imply a genetic scheme. Puns and wordplays, while flirting with etymological implications, stop short of making a definitive theoretical leap into etymology, even as they exploit this grey area.

Nonetheless, it would be overstating the case to classify all motivational narratives around word usage under etymology. The ‘correctness’ (*orthotēs*) of a word is not inherently etymological: it might emerge from a term’s reflective use in a context that illuminates its meaning. A poet’s selection of an epithet could be unpacked within its textual *milieu* through an implied intention (*hyponoia*), which might elucidate its literal sense or an archaic usage — yet this is more an **etiological** than an etymological elucidation. Such explanations offer a semantic justification without trying to identify creation paths and “words upon words” (Starobinski 1967).⁴ Instead, etymology uncovers a particular kind of ‘cause’ — not teleological but somewhat ‘material’. Its purpose is not to elucidate the meaning of a name, but to unearth its roots, making it more akin to archaeology or genealogy than to search for causality. The motivation of a sign is inherently ‘internal’ and, to an extent, objective, independent of the selection of a signifier or meaning within a particular discourse. This intrinsic focus likely explains why etymology does not hold an *official* role in classical rhetoric or stand as a ‘proof’. Aristotle, notably absent from mentioning it in his treatise on rhetoric, only sparingly introduces etymological comments, such as:

ὅταν δὲ δίχα διαιρεθῇ τὸ ὅλον, τότε φασὶν ἔχειν τὸ αὐτοῦ ὅταν λάβωσι τὸ ἴσον. τὸ δ’ ἴσον μέσον ἐστὶ τῆς μείζονος καὶ ἐλάττονος κατὰ τὴν ἀριθμητικὴν ἀναλογίαν. διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὀνομάζεται δίκαιον, ὅτι δίχα ἐστίν, ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις εἴποι δίχαιον, καὶ ὁ δικαστὴς διχαστής.

(EN 1132a29–32)

And when the whole has been equally divided, then they say they have their own — i.e., when they have got what is equal. It is for this reason also that it is called just (*dikaion*), because it

⁴ See Starobinski 1979 (1967).

is a division into two parts (*dicha*), just as if one were to call it *dichaion*; and the judge (*dikastēs*) is one who bisects (*dichastēs*). (transl. Ross)

For Aristotle, *dikaion* and *dicha* are linguistic kin, with *dikaion* appearing as a double or perhaps a twin of the ghost form *dichaion*. The phrase “as if” (*ōsper an ei*), akin to the Latin *quasi* used by Varro and Isidore, suggests a fictive form — not presented as the word’s original shape, but as its ideal and maybe crypted form, a palimpsest beneath the common term.

Frameworks and uses of etymology

The chapters within this volume dissect various theoretical and practical dimensions of the Greek conception of etymology, exploring its linguistic, philosophical, and literary ramifications.

The initial section is devoted to the etymology as it is found in the *Etymologika*, first of all Orion’s *Etymologicum* (Chriti & Tsolakopoulos, Le Feuvre) and also the Byzantine *Lexica* eventually deriving from Orion (Fiori, Le Feuvre). Chriti & Tsolakopoulos focus on the method and etymological practices that can be traced in the earliest surviving etymological lexicon, whose author is called ‘a grammarian’, by delving into the way that scholarship and grammar are integrated in an etymological work. Le Feuvre deals with the modification of the etymological explanations over time, as they are copied and abridged, to argue that the notoriously problematic plural etymology found in these scholarly works is to a large extent the result of the compilation process and should not be ascribed to the Greek grammarians who first proposed the etymologies. Fiori compares the *Etymologicum Genuinum* and the *Etymologicum Gudianum* from the point of view of *hellenismos*: what is deemed Greek and what is not, what are the criteria and what are the differences between the two *Etymologica*? The author sets out to examine the context of Byzantine teaching and scholarship by exploring the extent to which the Byzantine etymological lexica seem inclusive of ‘barbarian’ forms or negative remarks, as well as considering the possibility of tracing a puristic stance in these massive works.

The second section is more specifically devoted to etiology, which was not always distinct from etymology in the mind of Greek authors and is the most frequent type of ‘etymology’ in Greek literature. Vergados focuses on the ties between the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* and its rewriting by Apollonius of Rhodes, showing how etymological interpretation plays a prominent role in the intertextual references. Vergados elaborates the way that etymological allusions are disputed by the Hellenistic poet in an innovative way vis-à-vis Apollo’s basic features, thereby questioning the poetic

authority of the narrative that was its reference point, and even casting doubt on it. Polychronis deals with the etiologies of toponyms in Hellanicus of Lesbos. The author discusses the function of etymologizing in a historian's text, where the past is arranged with an etiological sequence and presented in an account where reason organizes the facts. Caballero Sánchez treats the didactic role of Eustathius' etymological approaches as it can be deduced from his writings in the *Parekbolai*, which provides commentary on the *Periegesis* of Dionysius of Alexandria. As she showcases, Eustathius does not distance himself from ancient etymological practices in respect to accepting several etymologies for one word, but he expands his critical approach to many of the suggested etymons.

On the other hand, Doyle considers etymologies in the scholia to Apollonius of Rhodes by dealing with the etymology/etiology of proper names, but also of other categories, and shows how etymology was used as a scholarly tool for the understanding of the text. She highlights the way that etymologies rely on mythological affiliations but nevertheless contribute to the inquiry of onomastics, as an aspect of learning grammar and scholarship. Filoni discusses the way that Apollodorus of Athens in his *Περὶ θεῶν* expresses his attempt to reconcile his teacher's (Aristarchus') school with its great adversary, namely Crates' school, as Apollodorus taught in Pergamum, i.e., the city of Crates. By exploring the etymologies provided for the epithets of Apollo, especially ἱήϊος and παϊάν, which combine two explanations for two opposite meanings, etymology is thus rendered a tool for formulating an academic statement. Gianturco studies the use of the etymology of theonyms by the Neoplatonic philosopher Proclus and their integration into a theological discourse. Etymology is explicitly rendered a tool for revealing theological/metaphysical/theurgical truths by the Neoplatonist, who credits it with a foundational role, as that which reveals the genuine nature of the divine. Bouchard reverses the perspective and, studying the speaking names of the gods in Pherecydes of Syros' theogony, shows how such names were designed to be meaningful. She discusses the new paths that can be opened by means of studying the philosopher's etymological manipulations. Between philosophy and mythology, Pherecydes' allegorical narrative is largely based on his etymological usage, in the sense that this differentiates him from earlier linguistic limits.

The third section features papers on the literary and playful uses of etymology in Greek texts. Sluiter provides an examination of an etymological riddle in the founding text on Greek etymology, the *Cratylus*. She approaches the cultural, exegetical and philosophical connotations of the opening riddle in the Platonic dialogue, as it links etymology with genealogy. This specific character of the riddle renders it particularly important, and its contextualization affords us significant insight into its function as a motif. Hudson intertwines Greek and Latin etymology and wordplay,

showing the reciprocal influences between the two traditions. He investigates the extent to which the interrelation between Greek and Latin should be taken into consideration for understanding what Plutarch's ἐτυμολογίαι mean, and suggests that this is a perspective from which Varro's etymological elaborations must be studied. Margelidon focuses on Latin poetry, mainly Ovid, and on the poet's hints at learned Greek etymologies. She touches on cases of Latin etymological plays on words stemming from Greek wordplay by pointing out the creative contact between the two languages. The author treats methods of domesticating Greek etymological material employed by Latin poets by taking into account the role of Alexandrian scholarship in commenting on etymologies and providing the reader with special markers. Peraki-Kyriakidou studies implications of ancient etymologies of Hermes' name and examines qualities of the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes* by examining the lexical and semantic range of the god's name and particular features of it as they appear in various sources. What Peraki-Kyriakidou illustrates is the way that etymologies associated with a god, his assets and his material symbolic objects, can be semantically and notionally interconnected. Semantic affiliations in the bond between explicit and implicit etymologies that concern one and the same figure reveal the richness of data still to be explored in poetry and its scholia from the perspective of ancient etymological practices.

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Part I: **Linguistic Issues**

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The Philosophy of Etymology in the *Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν* of Orion of Thebes

Abstract: This contribution aims at shedding light on the etymological practices which seem to have been followed in the earliest etymological ‘lexicon’ by the grammarian Orion of Thebes (5th c. CE). Orion exploits earlier sources and, given that the Byzantine etymological dictionaries represent his indirect transmission, Orion’s entries need to be contextualized into the ancient tradition of etymological approaches. Given the character of ancient etymologizing, according to which semantic relations were the priority, Orion’s etymological practices have never been evaluated from this specific perspective, or as revealing certain interpretations and considerations of his present philosophical *milieu*, following the nature of his previous respective treatments related to a ‘synchronic’ and not a diachronic reflection on the bond between utterances and the respective meanings. Just like most ancient ‘etymological discourses,’ Orion’s approaches actually have an exegetical, interpretational and argumentative character, by rationalizing and presenting the motive of the ‘name-giver’.

1 Introduction

The subject of this paper is the historical, philological and philosophical contextualization of Orion’s etymological approaches, as these can be deciphered in the *Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν*, the oldest surviving alphabetically arranged series of etymologies, ascribed to him in both the direct and the indirect transmission. At first, Orion’s identity, life and work are discussed, as his origins and activity are presupposed to comprehend the character of his work; a study of the manuscript transmission of *Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν* is of fundamental importance in this kind of treatment. Thereafter, an attempt is made to contextualize Orion’s writings within the philological-grammatical and philosophical tradition up to his era, thus preparing the way for the presentation

This is the first presentation from Elias Tsolakopoulos’ and my work on Orion. It is with great sadness that I am experiencing Elias’ absence after he passed away very recently, but I hope that many other important aspects of Orion’s writings that we dealt with together, will be brought to light during my publishing of our work in the future. Elias and I were grateful to the participants of both conferences for their feedback and positive reaction to our research and we owe special thanks to the anonymous referee and to Prof. Arnaud Zucker for their corrections and constructive remarks in matters of style and content.

of Orion's text in its own right: What are his etymological approaches? What methods does he seem to apply, and what can be concluded from his use of grammar in the etymologies that he presents? Is there a prescriptive line in his practices? These are some of the questions raised in the sections to follow, while the conclusion attempts to theorize Orion's etymological policies in general.

2 Life and work of Orion: What's in a title?

Who was Orion and what do we know of his life and work from the available evidence?¹ A small encyclopedic entry including his place of birth and a list of work titles, in addition to the information from another source stating that he once was a teacher of the Neoplatonist Proclus in Alexandria, provide a context of the places and time of Orion's activity. What we can infer about Orion from the direct transmission is scanty but useful. His text is transmitted in three families of manuscripts; the first is represented by a *codex unicus*, the *Parisinus grec* 2653 (late 16th/early 17th c., based on our codicological and palaeographical study), containing the most extensive collection of entries and bearing the following title at its beginning (f. 1r, 1–3):²

Ὠρίωνος [sic with a rough breathing] Θηβαίου γραμματικοῦ καὶ Καρτείας [sic]. περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν.

*On etymologies by Orion of Thebes, grammarian in Caesarea (?)*³

A similar title occurs also in the colophon (f. 152v, 2–4):⁴

1 For general treatments of his life and work see Sturz 1820, VI–VII, 1–2; Ritschl 1834, 1866, 3–9, 14–17, 22–35 = 585–591, 597–600, 605–619; Kleist 1865, 15–38; Cohn 1913, 688, 697–698, 704; Reitzenstein 1907, 810–811; Tolkiehn 1925, 2464–2465; Wendel 1939; Erbse 1960, 98–101, 287–294; Theodoridis 1976, 16–41, 69–70; Alpers 1990, 28; 2001a, and 2001b, 201 (repeating *verbatim* his [1990]); 2015, 304–306; Degani 1995, 522–523; Tosi 1998; 2000; 2015, 633; Casadio, 1999; Haffner 2001, 11–18; Saffrey 2005; Dickey 2007, 100; Ippolito 2008; Valente 2014a; 2014b; 2019, 256; Matthaios 2015, 287f. = 2020, 363; Webb 2018; Valente 2022, 407–408; Cavallo 2024, 87–89. Kaster 1988, 322–325, offers a more thorough analysis of the sources, where one may find full citations of the relevant texts.

2 Sturz 1820, coll. 1–2. Collated from a digital colour photograph and the digitized b/w film of the manuscript in “Gallica”, the digital library of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. The specific page in: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b525179762/f9.item> (last accessed July, 2024).

3 The translations of the citations from Orion are suggested by us.

4 Sturz 1820, col. 172. Collated from a digital colour photograph and in: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b525179762/f312.item> (last accessed July, 2024).

Τέλος τῶν ἐτυμολιγιῶν [sic] Ὀρίωνος Θηβαίου γραμματικοῦ Καισαρείας:

The end of [On] *etymologies* by Orion of Thebes, grammarian in Caesarea.

In the second family the name of the author is provided only in one of its two witnesses (Darmstadtinus Misc. gr. 2773, f. 89r, l. 1):⁵

† ὠρίων(ος) τοῦ θηβαί(ου):~

By Orion of Thebes.

A third family transmits a smaller interpolated collection of excerpts and gives two titles:

1. *Vaticanus* gr. 1456, 121r, col. 2, ll. 1–7 (written in uncial):⁶

† Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν [sic with a rough breathing] κατὰ στοιχεῖον πρὸς τὸ ἐξ αὐτῶν γινώσκειν πολλάκις τὰς δυνάμεις⁷ τῶν πραγμάτων ἐκ τὸν [sic] κατὰ ὠρίωνα τὸν θηβαῖ(ον). [most probable reading of the last two syllables; the scribe put both a grave accent and circumflex accent above αι].

On etymologies, in alphabetical order, so as to know from them to the utmost extent [or: in most cases] the meanings of things, according to extracts from (the work of) Orion of Thebes.

2a. *Bodleianus* Auct. T.2.11 (*Misc.* 211), f. 323r, ll. 17–18:⁸

Περὶ ἐτυμολογι(ῶν) [sic with a rough breathing] κ(α)τ' (ἀ) στοιχεῖον πρ(ὸς) τὸ ἐξ αὐτ(ῶν) γινώσκειν) πολλάκις (ῆς) [sic] τὰς δυνάμ(ῆς) [sic] τῶν πραγμάτων) ἐκ τ(ῶν) κατ' (ἀ) ὠρί(ω)ν) }ωνα⁹ τ(ὸν) θηβαί(ον) [sic with an acute accent].

5 Edited by Sturz 1818, coll. 611–612 in the title and confirmed by Garzya 1968, 216 (referring erroneously to Sturz's edition of Orion rather than to that of the *Et. Gud.*) and 218, as well as Theodoridis 1976, 15, n. 2, b. The specific page of the digitized b/w film in <http://tudigit.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/show/Hs-2773/0090/image> (last accessed July 2024) is not clear enough to let one confirm the reading of Orion's name.

6 Cf. Theodoridis 1976, 15, n. 2, c and Micciarelli Collesi 1970a & b. One may collate the specific page in: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1456 (last accessed July 2024).

7 On the term δύναμις as 'meaning' see below, section VI.

8 Our collation from a digital photograph.

9 This superfluous reading, in both 2a and 2b, is probably due to the mistaken writing of an inverted breve instead of a horizontal line or tilde, commonly put above the letters as a marker of personal names. The resulting shape justifies the confusion with the abbreviation for ων.

education. Thus, a distinguished career as a qualified ‘γραμματικός’ would find one well prepared for such a vocation. Furthermore, regarding the puzzling — on first acquaintance — entries in the *Suda* lexicon on the two grammarians from Alexandria named *Orion*,¹⁷ these can be justified by the fact that scholars of antiquity acquired a second ethnic name due to the place of their major activity.¹⁸ Therefore, if ‘Alexandrian’ prevailed for Orion in later biographical tradition, but ‘of Thebes’ was preferred in the titles of his works, we may accept both pieces of evidence as correct. Finally, regarding the puzzling reference to the city Caesarea, this is something we cannot easily accept, if we accept it at all, as attributing a second ethnic name to Orion.¹⁹ However, the issue merits a separate study, which would go beyond the scope of this article.

Secondly, the title of Orion’s actual work, *Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν*,²⁰ in terms of the history of the textual transmission may be considered as either the original title given by Orion himself (taken literally, may also mean: “A treatise on Etymology,” and not a dictionary proper), or a conventional one given either in the early phase, when the initial full version still survived,²¹ or even later by the Byzantine compiler of the epitome.²² This specific evidence, particularly if combined with the testimony about his contact with the empress Eudocia,²³ supports for us a hypothesis of high importance for the transmission of the ancient grammatical tradition to Byzantium: Orion,

17 ω 188 and 189 Adler.

18 For the multi-faceted scholarly activity of this specific era in Alexandria cf. Watts 2006 and Fassa 2019. For cases of scholars having two names, one after their homeland and another from the region of their activity, see *Suda* ε 2741 and ο 912 Adler.

19 Most recently interpreted this way by Saffrey 2005, 843 and Ippolito 2008, who express the opinion of the majority of scholars since Larcher (cf. Sturz 1820, coll. 1–2), but all of them disregard the problematic meaning of this phrase in the *paradosis*. A very probable solution, justified by both biographical testimonia and palaeography, is to emend to “καὶ ἱερέως” (cf. in the *Suda* the similar cases of the parathesis of a person’s multiple occupations, one of them being ἱερεύς: φ 358: Φιλίσκος, Κερκυραῖος, ..., τραγικός καὶ ἱερεὺς τοῦ Διονύσου and χ 95: Χάραξ, Περγαμηνός, ἱερεὺς καὶ φιλόσοφος).

20 Cf. Cohn 1913; also Degani 1995; Tosi 2015 on the variety of titles of Greek dictionaries and lexicons.

21 The conventional formula of ‘Περὶ + genitive’ for book titles (if not a later or recent addition in the course of the transmission) might have been given in any case either by an author himself or by a bookseller (a publisher in ancient terms). This would be an easy choice, especially for the latter, for practical reasons: to inform the reader of the work’s subject matter, as well as to provide other scholars with a practical method of citation. Cf. most recently Castelli 2020, esp. chap. III and VII.

22 Given that an epitome is transmitted in *Par. grec* 2653, rather than the original work, we should read the title as “(A selection from the work) by Orion of Thebes on etymologies.” That becomes explicit in the third family of manuscripts, where the typical formula of such epitomes appears.

23 On the questioning approach of Tzetzes’ evidence regarding this specific information see Kaster 1988, 322–323.

together with Orus, who taught in Constantinople in the first half of the 5th c. CE,²⁴ may have been among the personalities who actually transferred the Greek grammatical-lexicographical tradition to the Byzantine capital, a tradition that goes even further back, to the time of the great Hellenistic scholars.

3 Orion in context

In addition to the above evidence as regards Orion's background, the following parameters should be taken into consideration in terms of the ancient etymological tradition that he inherited. From the time of the Presocratics²⁵ to that of Plato's *Cratylus* and the Stoics,²⁶ we witness many cases of etymologizing within several genres (drama, philosophical texts, etc.).²⁷ As is evident from this deposit of etymologies: *a*) authors and scholars of antiquity were not interested in reconstructing the origins of a word in the same way that contemporary linguists do, but focused on explaining the relation between a word and its meaning and *b*) as a consequence, "not linguistically correct" (in the contemporary sense) etymologies were adopted when they could justify a word's relation to its content.²⁸ Furthermore, it needs to be stressed that: *a*) Orion's title *Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν* may be interpreted as the title of either a lexicon or a treatise;²⁹ *b*) in either case, Orion exploits earlier sources and *c*) the Byzantine etymological dictionaries constitute his indirect transmission.³⁰ Consequently, we are dealing with a text that has integrated an earlier tradition and is present in a later tradition, which means that Orion's text connects ancient,

²⁴ See Kaster 1988, 322–324 and 325.

²⁵ See Kotzia/Chriti 2014.

²⁶ Reitzenstein 1907, 808–809; Opelt 1966, 802–804; Pfeiffer 1968, 260; Bernecker 1994, 1546–1547. The Stoics had delved into etymological approaches, and we know that Chrysippus wrote on etymology (*SVF* II p. 9.13–14; Pfeiffer 1968, 241; Dyck 1993, 116–117).

²⁷ See the reference works of Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2007; Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002; Sedley 1998; 2003; and Sluiter 2015. For a general account of ancient Greek etymological practices see Zucker/Le Feuvre 2021 and Chriti 2021, 37–39.

²⁸ See the discussion in Chriti 2021, 38 ff. with further bibliography.

²⁹ See right above.

³⁰ A more comprehensive version of Orion's text has been the source of various Byzantine works, such as the *Homeric Epimerisms* (Dyck 1983, 30; 1995, 767), namely the *Etymologica* (Kleist 1865, 19–20; Theodoridis 1976, 41–60), while Orion's work belongs to the sources of Methodius' *Etymologicum* (5th–9th c. CE; Dyck 1995, 855), which can be recovered through its later users, viz. the *Homeric Epimerisms* (s.v.), the *Etymologicum Genuinum* (Reitzenstein 1897, 47; 1907, 814; Wendel 1932, 1380) and the *Lexicon Haimodein* (Dyck 1995, 852, 855).

Hellenistic and Byzantine lexicographical-etymological traditions, so it can hardly be questioned whether the literary contextualization of Orion's etymologies can shed light on a significant part of the history of etymological approaches.

Orion of Thebes is called a *grammatikos*, a term which in his time was identified with what today would be called a *philologist*, i.e., a scholar who deals with approaching and interpreting ancient texts, but also copes with their linguistic issues.³¹ As a grammarian of the 5th c. CE,³² he was active during a period when the results of a flourishing grammatical-philological tradition were obvious, i.e. a tradition of using grammar for the purposes of explaining language issues. As recent research into the linguistic theories of Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus³³ has revealed, Alexandrian scholars used a high-level frame of systematized grammatical principles, which supplied them with suggestions for solving linguistic issues in literary texts. Ax³⁴ called this specific apparatus “Grammatik im Kopf,” depicting the ability that grammatical classifications gave to a scholar who was faced with philological and interpretative problems. According to the periodization of the linguistic theories of this specific tradition, as Matthaïos wisely suggested on the basis of qualitative criteria,³⁵ Orion is active during the third period (Late Antiquity – early Byzantine era), which concerns the adaptation of an already systematized doctrine.

Orion also leans on a certain tradition in terms of combining grammar and etymology. The use of etymology in grammar was applied by Philoxenus (1st c. BCE)³⁶ and by other grammarians, such as Seleucus of Alexandria (1st c. BCE/1st c. CE). Seleucus wrote several works in which he also discussed etymologies (especially names of body parts and mythological persons): these became sources for the *Etymologica* in the Byzantine age.³⁷ Furthermore, the “Etymologies of the human body”³⁸ by Soranus

31 The combination of Alexandrian and Stoic aspects of this work may be traced in Apollodorus of Athens (2nd c. BCE), a pupil of the Stoic Diogenes of Babylon and later of Aristarchus: he wrote a monograph on etymologies in two books at least (*Etumologouména*, Ath. 14.663a; *Etumologíai*, Ath. 2.63d, 9.483a, Orion 79.8 Sturz: *FGrHist* 244 F 222–225 with Jacoby's commentary; Pfeiffer 1968, 260), a work later used by Soranus (Schwartz 1894, 2871; Theodoridis 1972, 34; 1979, 13). In addition, the grammarian Demetrius Ixion (2nd c. BCE?) wrote several books on this topic (*Etumología*, Ath. 2.50a, fr. 42 Staesche, or *Etumologouména*, Ath. 3.74b, fr. 41 Staesche: Ascheri 2009).

32 Reitzenstein 1907, 810–811; Wendel 1939, 1083–1084; Alpers 2001, 201; Dickey 2007, 100.

33 See Callanan 1987 and Matthaïos 1999; the results of these works are summarized by Pagani 2011, 44–60.

34 2000, 107.

35 2014, 65 ff.

36 Kleist 1865; Pfeiffer 1968, 274; Theodoridis 1976; Lallot 1991b; Santaguida 2014.

37 Reitzenstein 1897, 157–166.

38 *Etumologíai tou sómatos tou anthrópou*, Orion 34.9–10 Sturz; see Orion 131.4 Sturz.

of Ephesus (2nd c. CE) also seem to have been relevant, and now this work is predominantly known through its quotations in Orion's work.³⁹

Last but not least, interaction between Orion and philosophy has not yet received sufficient attention. Orion lived in the city of the only remaining School of philosophy after the decay of other Schools, “the common mother of *logoi*,” according to Procopius of Gaza.⁴⁰ Alexandria was a metropolis, a city with a complex net of contacts, a diverse, cosmopolitan urban *milieu*, with many influences from the East, during an era when several disciplinary fields were defined or re-defined. Neoplatonism was the philosophical mainstream in Alexandria, with the respective famous School, where brilliant philosophers, scientists and teachers were active and influential. Proclus was probably Orion's student, and in the Neoplatonist's commentary on the *Cratylus* there is an extant discussion on name-giving and the practice of etymology, where the influence of grammatical doctrines is more than obvious: Proclus gives interesting advice on how to investigate the *etymon* of words, by referring — among other parameters — to dialectal variation, changes of letters, poetic use, distinction between simple and compound words, factors such as homonymy and analogy, etc.⁴¹

In addition to his relation to Proclus, it is indicative that two thirds of *Cratylus*' etymologies are found in Orion's entries,⁴² something which is very interesting if we take into consideration that Proclus wrote a commentary on the *Cratylus*, while Proclus' student Ammonius of Hermeias, who became the Head of the School of Alexandria, also discusses etymology in his commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*, apart from treating his teacher's positions.⁴³ Therefore, it can't be excluded that there was an interaction between Orion and philosophers, if we take into account the commonly treated *topoi* and philosophical discussions from the School of Proclus in Athens to the School of the city where Orion was active, as is also discussed below regarding a more specific aspect of Orion's approach to etymology.⁴⁴

Linguistic discussions seem to have been very vivid in the Schools of Athens and Alexandria, as is apparent from formulations of Neoplatonic commentators that are drawn on their considerations of topics like psychology, metaphysics, perception, cognition and style in Aristotle's texts. Several linguistic approaches of

³⁹ Kleist 1865, 16–18; Kind 1927, 1117–1118; Wendel 1939, 1086; Theodoridis 1976, 67–68 = Hanson/Green 1994, 1021–1023.

⁴⁰ *Epp.* 57, 104, 119.

⁴¹ See Proclus *On Plato's 'Crat'*. 81–85 Pasquali.

⁴² A few examples: *Crat.* 412 ≈ 29.1–10 Sturtz; *Crat.* 437b–c ≈ 9.31–32 Sturtz; *Crat.* 419b–c ≈ 92.9–12 Sturtz; in some cases Orion adopts the etymology given in the *Cratylus*, but in other cases he doesn't.

⁴³ See Van den Berg 2004; Chriti 2022a.

⁴⁴ See below, section VI.

some of the Neoplatonic commentators have been evaluated and acknowledged by contemporary scholarship.⁴⁵ Porphyry, Dexippus, Ammonius, Simplicius, John Philoponus, Olympiodorus were all engaged in linguistic discussions in their commentaries on Aristotle's treatises from a variety of angles, framed by previous philosophical discussions and exposing commonly treated linguistic *topoi* in the Neoplatonic Schools. The commentators investigated linguistic issues profoundly. Their points of departure were mainly Aristotle's writings, and the fact that their considerations bear relevance to logic and psychology reveals how closely mind, language and reality are interrelated in their reflection. They were mostly interested in the relation between the parameters of what was later called the 'semantic triangle',⁴⁶ though they also delved into the 'by-nature' or 'by-convention' character of aspects of language and, by making use of Presocratic, Epicurean, Platonic, Peripatetic, Stoic, and earlier Neoplatonic grammatical theories, models, arguments and examples, they formulated their positions on:

- the arbitrary connection between utterances and their meanings;⁴⁷
- the communicative character of linguistic utterances, according to which communication is participation in meaning;⁴⁸
- the potential of words to refer to other linguistic signs, apart from referring to things;⁴⁹
- the potential of words to combine with other linguistic units, resulting in either a single or a composite meaning.⁵⁰

The possible relations between the Neoplatonic commentators of Alexandria in particular and the grammarians could constitute a distinct key-study, but the frequency of references made by Alexandrian Neoplatonists to grammarians and their approaches is indicative.⁵¹ Therefore, it should not surprise us that etymologies shared in common between the text of Orion and Neoplatonic commentaries may be found,⁵² something that also has to be examined very carefully; even if only due

45 See, e.g., Ebbesen 1990 and Kotzia 1992 regarding Porphyry's and other commentators' positions on logic, as well as on the relation between things, concepts and language in Aristotle's *Categories*.

46 See Chriti 2018.

47 See Chriti 2011.

48 See Chriti 2014.

49 See Chriti 2019a.

50 On linguistic approaches of Neoplatonic commentators on Aristotle in general see also Chriti 2019b; 2022a; and 2022b.

51 There are 56 references to Grammarians or grammatical doctrines in Ammonius of Hermias' texts, 123 in Simplicius' texts, 104 in John Philoponus' writings, 51 in Olympiodorus' commentaries.

52 E.g., Orion, alpha, p. 16 Sturz and Ammonius, *On Aristotle's On Int.* 16.38.

to common sources, we should not exclude the parameter of the philosophical impact on a grammarian's work in the Alexandria of that era, especially someone with a hieratic background, who most probably received a high-level education.

Orion never refers to 'philosophical sources,' but he cites the *scholia* on various poets, as well as other authors: he used *scholia* on Homer,⁵³ Soranus' work, Herodian's *Peri pathōn*,⁵⁴ *Symposion* and *Orthography*, Heraclides of Pontus' *On etymologies*, some works of Philoxenus, and Herodian's and Pseudo-Herodian's *Epimerisms*; this sequence is at times interrupted by excerpts from other sources.⁵⁵ Let us give some examples of Orion's citations:⁵⁶

52.16–20:⁵⁷ ἔ ν δ ι ν α . τὰ ἔ ν τ ε ρ α . Ὅ μ η ρ ο ς (Ψ 806) φ η σ ί ·
 † ψ α ύ ε ι δ' ἔ ν δ ι ν ῶ ν .
 ὁ δὲ Ἀ ρ ί σ τ α ρ χ ο ς ἑ τ υ μ ο λ ο γ ε ῖ
 ἔ ν ι ἄ τ ι ν ἄ ὄ ν τ α τὰ ἔ ν τ ὸ ς τ ῶ ν ἰ ν ῶ ν , ἥ ἁ π λ ῶ ς τ ῶ ν μ ε λ ῶ ν . κ α ῖ πα ρ ἄ τ ὸ ἔ ν τ ὸ ς ε ἴ ν α ι τ ῶ ν ὀ π λ ῶ ν .
 ο ὅ τ ω ς ε ὔ ρ ο ν ἐ ν Ὑ π ο μ ν ῆ μ α τ ι τ ῆ ς Ἰ λ ι ᾶ δ ο ς .

53.21–24: ἔ θ ε ι ρ α ι , α ἰ ἐ π ι μ ε λ ε ῖ α ς ἀ ξ ι ο ῦ μ ε ν α ι τ ρ ῖ χ ε ς . ἔ θ ε ι ν γ ἄ ρ τ ὸ ἐ ξ ἔ θ ο υ ς τ ι π ο ι ε ῖ ν .
 ὁ δὲ Σ ω ρ α ν ὸ ς φ η σ ῖ ν
 ἔ θ ε ι ρ α ν πα ρ ἄ τ ὸ ἐ ξ ἔ θ ο υ ς ρ ε ῖ ν κ α ῖ ἐ κ π ῖ π τ ε ι ν ἐ π ῖ τ ῶ ν φ α λ α κ ρ ο υ μ ῆ ν ῶ ν .

4 The entries

In its present long version, Orion's lexicon numbers 1794 entries, among which are proper names (of gods, cities), parts of the body, emotions, animals, plants, various objects, etc. The entries are alphabetically arranged based on the first letter, and within each alphabetic section they follow the order they had in the original texts sourced by Orion. Many of them are poetic or, more specifically Homeric, while many of them belong to medical terminology.

The general structure of the entries comprises the meaning and the suggested etymology. This elliptical structure may be attributed either to a convention of the genre or to the epitomizing process:

⁵³ Erbse 1960, 280 ff.

⁵⁴ Nifadopoulos 2001.

⁵⁵ For instance, entries from Helladius' *Chrestomatheia* are sometimes inserted between Philoxenus' entries: Kleist 1865, 15–38; Reitzenstein 1907, 811; Wendel 1939, 1086; Erbse 1960, 98–101, 287–294; Theodoridis 1976, 16–41.

⁵⁶ References to Orion are to columns and lines of the edition by Sturz 1820.

⁵⁷ We have preferred not to provide separate English translations for citations that we discuss extensively, since the discussion/paraphrase gives an interpretation.

52.7–8: ἐξείσα· ἡ πρεσβεία. παρὰ τὸ ἴημι, ὃ ἐστὶ τὸ πέμπω.

Nevertheless, some etymologies are given without any meaning:

21.12: ἀφρός· ἀπὸ τοῦ φρῶ.

51.8: ἐπασσώτερος· παρὰ τὸ ἄσσον.

52.12: ἐνερσι· παρὰ τὴν ἔραν τὴν γῆν.

In general, his entries can be short, as above, or more extended, including a narration or story that is related to the etymon:

21–12: ἄφενος· Ὅμηρος οὐδετέρως (A 171),
ἄφενος καὶ πλοῦτον ἀφύξειν·
ἄφενος οὖν βαρυτόνως ὁ πλοῦτος· ὀξυτόνως δὲ ἀφενός, ὁ ἀνθρωπος ὁ μετέχων τοῦ ἀφένου·
ὡς ἀσφόδελος καὶ ἀσφοδελός. ἀσφόδελος λέγομεν βαρυτόνως τὴν βοτάνην· ἀσφοδελός
δὲ ὁ τόπος ὁ περιέχων τὴν ἀσφόδελον ὀξυτόνως· ὡς Ὅμηρος (λ 539, 573; ω 13) φησί,
κατ' ἀσφοδελὸν λειμῶνα,
τὸν τόπον δηλῶν. ἀφενεός οὖν καὶ ἀφενός, καὶ ἐν πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ἰ ἀφενειός, καὶ συ-
γκοπῇ ἀφνειός, ὡς ἀδελφεός, καὶ ἀδελφειός.

18.21–19.5: Ἀχαιά, ἡ Δημήτηρ. μένηται τοῦ ὀνόματος Ἀριστοφάνης (*Ἀχαρν.* 709). εἴρηται δὲ ἀπὸ
τοῦ ἄχους τοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν Περσεφόνην. τινὲς δὲ ἀπὸ ἱστορίας τοιαύτης.
τοῖς Ταναγραίοις μεταστᾶσιν ἐκ τῆς Τανάγρας, ἐκέλευσε κατ' ὄναρ ἡ Δημήτηρ φανεῖσα
αὐτοῖς ἀκολουθῆσαι τῷ γινομένῳ ἤχῳ, καὶ ὅπου ἂν παύσεως, ἐκεῖ πόλιν κτίσαι. καὶ
διόδευον ἀκούοντες ψόφον κυμβάλων καὶ τυμπάνων. καὶ παυσαμένων περὶ τὴν
Ἀττικὴν, ἔκτισαν πόλιν, καὶ ἰδρύσαντο ἱερὸν Ἀχαιᾶς Δήμητρος.
οὕτως εὔρον ἐν *Υπομνήματι* εἰς Ἀριστοφάνην.

In the second case, Orion does not hesitate to adopt an etiological legend as a reference point defining the semantic bond between the utterance under investigation and the suggested etymon, something that other earlier ancient authors had done as well.⁵⁸ As is obvious, the semantic connection, i.e., the explanation of the conceptual relation between a word and its etymon, is of high priority for Orion.

⁵⁸ As Sluiter points out: 2015, 902 ff.

5 Orion's etymological methods

5.1 Grammar, comparison, analogy: in the name of semantics

Orion uses his grammatical apparatus for interpretative reasons in his etymological approaches. He resorts to grammar to explain the form of the word and/or its relation to other words. In addition, he gives extra information about, e.g., verb tenses, derivatives, dialectal variations, etc. and thus seems to come closer to a linguistic etymological approach in the contemporary sense. However, grammar seems to be utilized as a tool to supply us with more information exclusively about a word's morphology. Thus, grammatical rules and principles are used by Orion to explain the form of the word he discusses, or other possible forms deriving from the same root. This is a fundamental difference in comparing Orion to previous etymological approaches, but it should not be considered as striking, since Orion has possibly assimilated the “Grammatik im Kopf,”⁵⁹ i.e., the established frame of grammatical principles applied to dealing with linguistic issues, as discussed just above.

Grammar is omnipresent in Orion's work, and a series of grammatical terms occurs in almost all of his entries, while sometimes two or three morpho-phonological phenomena are cited together to explain the form of the lemma:

- 49.3: δ ύ σ τ η ν ο ς . παρὰ τὸ στένειν, τροπή τοῦ ε εἰς η .
 7.12–13: ἄ χ ν η , τὸ λεπτότατον τῶν ἀχύρων, ὧν οὐκ ἂν τις ἔχεσθαι δύναται διὰ τὴν σμικρότητα. (i.e.: ἁ στερητικόν + ἔχειν).
 12.21–22: ἄ ν ε μ ο ι , οἶονεῖ ἄμενοί τινες, οἱ μὴ μένοντες, καὶ τροπή τοῦ ν εἰς μ ...
 41.10–12: γ α γ γ α λ ί ζ ε σ θ α ι , παρὰ τὸ γελῶ γελίζω, τροπή τοῦ ε εἰς α , γαλίζω. διπλασιασμῷ, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ γ, γαγγαλίζω, τὸ εἰς γέλωτα ἄγειν.
 42.19–20: γ ν ὡ μ η , νοῶ νοήσω νοήμη, καὶ συναλοιφῇ ἦτοι κράσει νώμη, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ γ, γνώμη.
 66.1–2: Ζ έ φ υ ρ ο ς . ζωεφόρος τις ὢν. τροπή δὲ τοῦ ο εἰς υ κατ' Αἰολέας, ὡς ὄνομα ὄνυμα.
 70.8–12: ἡ λ ί θ ι ο ς , ὁ ἀνόητος, παρὰ τὴν ἄλα. ταύτης γὰρ τὸ ὕδωρ ἄχρηστον. ἔνθεν καὶ ἄλιον τὸ μάταιον, καὶ ἄλως παράγωγον τοῦ ἁλῶ· ἀφ' οὗ ἀλήτης. ἀπὸ τούτου καὶ ἕτερον παράγωγον ἁλεὸς ἐρύη, καὶ αὐτὸ ἁλεὸς Ἰωνικόν.

Several times he uses comparison and analogy to reinforce his grammatical justifications:

- 55.2–5: ἐ ν ί π τ ω . πλεονασμῷ τοῦ τ. καὶ τροπή τοῦ ε εἰς ι, ἐνίπτω. πολλάκις δὲ ἐπείσοδος συμφώνου τρόπον ποιεῖ· τέκω, τίκτω· ἔπω, ἴσπω, ἐνίσπω· βλάβω βλάπτω· ἐπείσῳ τοῦ τ, καὶ τροπή τοῦ β εἰς π.

⁵⁹ See above, p. 19.

55.6–9: ἐ ξ ε τ ἄ ζ ω . παρὰ τὸ ἔτεδὸν τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐτάζω ἐστίν. ὡς ἵππος ἱππάζω· μάταιον ματαιιάζω· ἐτεάζω οὖν, τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀνακρίνω, καὶ ἀποβολῇ τοῦ ε, ἐτάζω καὶ ἐξετάζω.

In the process of composing his work, Orion must have cited *verbatim* or rephrased the etymologies of his sources, probably in the majority of entries.⁶⁰ Some of the most important grammatical terms he uses are the following:⁶¹

- ἀναδιπλασιασμός ‘reduplication’
- ἀναδρομή ‘retraction (of the accent); transformation of (third-decl.) genitives in -ος into (second-decl.) nominatives in -ος’
- ἀποβολή ‘removal (of a word or letter), rejection’
- ἀποκοπή ‘apocope (cutting off of one or more letters, especially at the end of a word); abruptness; elliptical expression’
- δασύνεται ‘to aspirate / to be spelled with a rough breathing’
- διπλασιασμός ‘reduplication; doubling of consonants (as in τόσσοις)’
- ἔκτασις ‘lengthening (of a vowel, syllable), augment, long form (of vowels that can be long or short)’
- ἔνθεσις ‘insertion’
- ἐντίθεσις (false reading for ἔνθεσις [?] instead of: ὑπέρθεσις / ἀντίφρασις)
- ἐπίσδοδος ‘addition of extra letters to a word’
- ἐπένθεσις ‘insertion of a letter or word, epenthesis (the insertion of a sound to make a word easier to pronounce)’
- ἐπίτασις ‘intensity, intensification; presence of the acute accent’; ἐπιτατικὸν (μόριον) ‘intensive, intensifying (particle)’
- καταχρηστικῶς ‘by applying a meaning extension’
- κρᾶσις ‘crasis (combination of two vowels, often from two different words, into one,’ as τοῦνομα for τὸ ὄνομα); occasionally also synaeresis (removal of diaeresis to create a diphthong, as παῖς from πάις)
- κυρίως ‘properly’

⁶⁰ See Le Feuvre in this volume for a discussion regarding grammatical sources. Whether the possibility exists of discerning original etymologies by Orion, so as to determine to what extent he used the traditional grammatical terminology that he received, or to what extent he may have used contemporary terms, even of his own invention, remains to be answered after our research progresses, comparing our findings in each case with the sources or other parallel texts, although such conclusions will hardly be certain, due to the style of the epitomized form of Orion’s transmitted text.

⁶¹ The translations given by Dickey (2007, 219 ff.) are mainly followed here, who warns that the fundamental collection by Bécaries Botas 1985 should be consulted with care. For the terms referring especially to “πάθη λέξεων” cf. Nifadopoulos, 2001. Cf. also Basset et al. (2007), 429–435: “Index des termes”. Much work on ancient grammatical terminology remains to be done. The use and meanings of the terms should be presented both synchronically and diachronically.

- μετάθεσις (στοιχείων) ‘transposition, metathesis (transposition of letters), change (of a letter)’
- ὄνομα ‘noun or adjective, word’
- ῥηματικόν ‘of or for a verb, derived from a verb, verbal’
- παράγωγον ‘derived’
- παρασύνθετον ‘formed from a compound; (as neut. subst.) word derived from a compound’
- παρώνυμον, παρωνύμως ‘derivative, derived from a noun,’ Latin *cognomen*, *agnomen*
- πλεονασμός ‘addition of a letter; redundancy, pleonasm, use of redundant words or letters’
- προσηγορικόν ‘appellative, generic, used in address; nominal, pertaining to a common noun’
- προσηγορικόν ὄνομα ‘common noun, common name,’ Latin *praenomen*, *cognomen*
- πρόσθεσις ‘addition’ (esp. of letters or sounds at the beginning of a word)
- συγκοπή ‘cutting a word short by removing one or more sounds; syncope (loss of a sound or sounds in the middle of a word)’
- συναίρεσις ‘contraction, synaeresis (joining two vowels to form a diphthong)’
- συναλοιφή ‘stopping of hiatus by uniting two syllables through elision, crasis, contraction, or synaeresis’
- σύνθεσις ‘composition, combination, construction (applied to words, sounds, sentences, etc.)’
- τροπή ‘change (of sounds or letters), changing one letter into another’
- ὑπέρθεσις ‘superlative degree; transposition (of words, letters, accents, etc.)’
- ψιλοῦται ‘to write or pronounce with a smooth breathing or non aspirated consonant’

Grammar certainly allows Orion’s treatment to attain a higher level of etymological analysis compared to previous etymologists, but one that is still away from the modern linguistic approach, since his analysis still emphasizes semantic relations, as is obvious from the examples just given. Thus, even when he explains the ‘privative α,’ or some other grammatical data, he does not focus on the linguistic reconstruction of a word, while the similarities between sounds are right in the center of his interpretations: an etymological explanation is sound for the grammarian Orion as long as the proximities in sound serve the ‘reasonable’ semantic bond between a word and its respective meaning: thus, he etymologizes βάτραχος (‘frog’) according to the “harsh loud cry” (βοήν τραχείαν) that characterizes this specific creature, δόρυ according to its material, which is the ‘oak tree’ (δρυς) and δεῖπνον according to the “demanded labour” (δεῖ πονεῖν) for its preparation.

- 34.23–24: β ἄ τ ρ α χ ο ς , παρὰ τὸ βοῆν τραχεῖαν ἔχειν. βοάτραχς, καὶ βάτραχος.
 44.14: δ ὁ ρ υ . δρύον ἂν εἴη· παρὰ τὴν δρῦν, οἶον δρύϊνον.
 44.15: δ ε ἱ π ν ο ν . τὸ παρ' ἡμῖν ἄριστον. δεῖ πονεῖν.

Similarities of sound between the letters of the etymologized word and the etymon, along with the semantic affinity between the linguistic utterance and the suggested root(s), are enough for Orion to justify the respective etymology, as happens with all his entries. His persistence concerning the vocal resemblance of the origin with the word renders onomatopoeia reasonable in his explanations. Therefore he etymologizes, e.g., the Βορέας ('North wind') according to the sound emitted in breathing and γλουτός ('buttock') according to its attributes of 'liquidness/softness' (ὕγρότητα καὶ τρυφερότητα), as it is 'slippery' because of its softness, referring evidently to the use of liquid letter 'λ' in the word. In the latter case, the liquid letter depicts the "liquidness" of the signified object:

- 35.1–2: Β ο ρ έ α ς , ὁ ἄνεμος, παρὰ τὸ ἦχον τὸν γινόμενον κατὰ τὴν πνοὴν τὸ ὄνομα γέγονε.
 39.12–14: γ λ ο υ τ ο ί , οὕτω λέγονται διὰ ὑγρότητα καὶ τρυφερότητα· οἷον γλοιοὶ τινὲς ὄντες, καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι μετὰ λειότητος ἔνυγροι εἰσί.

What Orion does with his grammatical apparatus is provide us first with an *exegetical* etymology⁶² and, secondly, with a grammatical explanation concerning the form of the word.

5.2 One word, two meanings/etymologies

The priority of an exegetical etymology is the reason why we find many cases where Orion accepts alternative etymologies for the same word, not refraining from traditional practices. So, he does not believe that each word should have a unique etymology,⁶³ not necessarily because he cannot choose among the various alternatives, but because each suggested etymology can provide him with a sound reasoning for the relation between the linguistic utterance and the respective content. Note in particular some examples in which one word may have more than one etymological explanation:

- 68.3–2: ἡπαρ.
 ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐπήρθαι τὸ κεκυρτώσθαι.

⁶² A term so successfully used by Sedley 1998.

⁶³ The opposite happens from the perspective of the etymology, since it is only linked to a specific word, as is explained below in section 6.

Υψικράτης (*FGrHist* 190 F 8): ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ ἡ πάροδος τῆς τροφῆς.
 ὁ δὲ Ἡρωδιανὸς ἐν τῷ *Συμποσίῳ* (II, 905,4–6 Lentz),
 παρὰ τὸ ἐπαίρεσθαι,
 φησίν,
 ἐπάρ τι ὄν καὶ ἦπαρ, τροπῇ τοῦ εἰς η. ἢ παρὰ τὸ εἶδω, ἦδαρ, καὶ ἦπαρ. ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ
 τὸ τῆς ἡδονῆς καὶ τὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας.

In this entry a distinct source is cited for each etymology, and Orion does not seem to prefer either of the two; both are acceptable to him because they provide justifiable connections between the entry and its respective etymon. Something similar can be said for the following entry:

1.7–11: ἀρετή·
 αἰρετή τις οὔσα, ἣν αἰροῦνται πάντες·
 οὔτῳ Δίδυμος ἐν *Υπομνήματι* (*Οδυσσ.* (?) fr. 7, p. 185 Schmidt).
 ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλείδης
 κατὰ μετάθεσιν στοιχείων, ἐρατή τις οὔσα, ἡ ἐπέραστος κτήσις·
 ὡς δὲ ἄλλοι,
 ἀρεστή, καὶ ἀποβολῇ τοῦ σίγμα, ἀρετή, ἡ πᾶσι<ν> ἀρέσκουσα.

Again, ἀρετή can be related to ἐρατή, and the different linguistic origin is not a problem for Orion. He cites the possibility of ἐρατή, with the change of letters, which happens to link two verbs that have different derivations but — according to him — close meanings. Therefore, a linguistic/verbal affinity is acceptable, because the concept of the suggested verb matches the concept of ‘ἀρετή.’

Focus on semantic affinities is even more striking in entries where one word has two meanings:

10.9–11: ἀκτῆ, ἐπὶ τοῦ καρποῦ, παρὰ τὸ κτεαχθῆναι, τῷ ἀλήθεσθαι.
 ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ παραθαλασίου τόπου, παρὰ τὸ κατάγνυσθαι εἰς αὐτὴν τὰ κύματα.

In the latter entry, different etymologies are accepted according to the different semantic contents, and language follows meaning again, since it is according to the meaning that each etymon is suggested. There is no consideration of a unique root that may have resulted in semantic change, because that linguistic feature had not yet been considered by scholars of that era, and language is not at the centre of Orion’s explanation: he begins from the meaning and searches for an interpretation of the bond between it and the utterance that represents it.

6 What is etymology after all?

What is etymology according to the author of *Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν*? The manuscript transmission of *Etymologicum Gudianum* attributes the following definition of etymology to Orion, since a scribe added the abbreviation of his name at the beginning of the entry:⁶⁴

Ὅρ(ιω)ν’

ἐτυμολογία· ἐστὶν ἡ τῆς δυνάμεως τοῦ ὀνόματος ὀρθότης ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐρμηνευομένη.

This is the only text in which a specific definition of etymology is attributed to Orion, based on the surviving manuscripts,⁶⁵ and its author will be referred to as ‘Orion’ from now onwards. The definition could be translated as follows, where δύναμις means ‘meaning, content of a word’:⁶⁶

etymology is the correctness of the meaning of a word which is interpreted from the word itself.

The term δύναμις also occurs in the title of the third family of manuscripts,⁶⁷ where it is related to πράγματα, ‘things’ that we learn by means of etymology, while in the definition of ‘Orion’ it is related to words. In the title it is said that “from the etymologies it is possible to know the δυνάμεις of things,” and the only difference from the definition of ‘Orion’ is the attribution of δυνάμεις to things and not to words. Before embarking on the issue of the term δύναμις and its link to words and/or things, it is worth stressing the impressive similarities between the definition of ‘Orion’ and Plato’s *Cratylus* 394b3–5:

Οὕτω δὲ ἴσως καὶ ὁ ἐπιστάμενος περὶ ὀνομάτων τὴν δύναμιν αὐτῶν σκοπεῖ, καὶ οὐκ ἐκπλήττεται εἴ τι πρόσκειται γράμμα, ἢ μετᾴκεται ἢ ἀφίρηται, ἢ καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις παντάπασιν γράμμασιν ἐστὶν ἡ τοῦ ὀνόματος δύναμις.

⁶⁴ *Barb. gr.* 70, f. 71v, l. 4. One may confirm the reading from the digital colour photograph in: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Barb.gr.70 (last accessed July 2024); ed. in: *Et. Gud.* 549.8–9 de Stefani and the critical apparatus on the entry. Baldi (2014, 370) refers to this entry but omits to refer to Orion as the source.

⁶⁵ Baldi (2014, 370) notices the repetition of the ‘definition’ in the so called *Etymologicum* of Anastasius Sinaites; cf. Sciarra 2005, 368–369, esp. 368, fn. 39 on the relation of the transmission of the *Etymologicum* of Sinaites and the *Et. Gud.* She prefers the traditional view, which considers the first as the source for the latter. Baldi (2014, 370) also appears to follow that view.

⁶⁶ See LSJ s.v.; see also right below, the text from the *Cratylus*, to which LSJ actually refers. See also Proclus *On Plato’s ‘Crat.’* 86.10.

⁶⁷ See above, p. 15: “...τὰς δυνάμεις [sic] τῶν πραγμάτων(ων).”

and in like manner the one who expertly knows words investigates their meaning and it is not striking for him if a letter is placed beside or after, or subtracted, or even if the meaning of the word exists in totally different letters.⁶⁸

In *Cratylus* it is explicitly declared that changes of letters do not affect the meaning (δύναμις) folded into words, something expressed in the etymological practices of ancient authors in general but even more evident in Orion's grammatical analysis of the morphology of words, an analysis that never seems to have an effect on meaning in its own right.

Regarding a possible connection between the title attributed to 'Orion' and the text of the *Cratylus*, as has already been suggested,⁶⁹ influences from philosophical texts are highly possible for Orion and, on closer inspection, the definition of etymology transfers almost *verbatim* the core of what is supported in the *Cratylus*: 'Orion' argues that he begins his survey from the word, but what he aims at is interpreting the *correctness* of its bond with the meaning. The inquiry does not concern the word from a linguistic perspective, and his concern is the *correctness* of the meaning's attachment to the word, the same as in the Platonic dialogue, where, in fact, it is said that changes of letters are not important. Consequently, 'Orion' says that etymology is the correctness of the meaning of words, which evokes the *Cratylus*, while in the third family of manuscripts it is said that we learn of things via etymology.

The two approaches are not necessarily contradictory, as can be explained by philosophical treatments of that era: the 'meanings' of words are considered to connect words to things in the Neoplatonic commentaries on Aristotle until the 6th c. CE, and the context in which this discussion was framed concerned the relation between words, concepts and things, as the commentators used what Aristotle formulates in *On Interpretation* about the three parameters of semantics⁷⁰ to explain the *purpose* of the *Categories*, his first logical treatise.⁷¹ In the Neoplatonic commentaries, the meanings of words are mostly designated by the terms νοήματα and ἔννοια, but there is an interesting passage in Ammonius' commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation* where he argues that "names have the power to signify things," meaning that "things are signified by means of names," thus linking explicitly the

⁶⁸ We preferred not to cite any published translation for this text, because we found that they do not render the ancient Greek text accurately, so we suggest a translation of our own.

⁶⁹ See above p. 20.

⁷⁰ For a thorough discussion on this issue see Chriti 2018.

⁷¹ Kotzia in her detailed investigation (1992) gave us the most complete survey on the commentators' positions regarding the subject matter of the *Categories*.

term δύναμις to both names and things.⁷² Moreover, Ammonius declares that concepts (νοήματα) are directly related to things in *a*) his formulaic expression of the subject matter of the *Categories*,⁷³ *b*) his approach to Aristotle's "semantic passage,"⁷⁴ and *c*) his commentary on the *Analytics*.⁷⁵ Ammonius argues that concepts are exclusively, "principally and immediately" designated by words⁷⁶ and applied to things that we want to represent or to have access to.

Therefore, and given that Ammonius was the student of Proclus and drew on material from his teacher's lost commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*, as well as on Proclus' commentary on Plato's *Cratylus*, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the meanings of words as applied both to words and things in the Neoplatonic discussions in Alexandria might be evoked in the sources that attribute the above definition of etymology to Orion and/or describe what happens by means of etymological doctrine. The shift from ascribing δυνάμεις to words (in the definition resembling the text from the *Cratylus*) to attributing δυνάμεις to things (in the 'definition' of the third family of manuscripts) should not give the impression that we are dealing with two incompatible sources. This specific shift could be justified by the philosophical discussions that took place in Orion's city during his era; in those discussions, meanings were considered to be connected to both words and things. Furthermore, in both the definitions of 'Orion' and that of the third family of manuscripts it is formulated that etymology consists in acquiring a certain knowledge: in the former it is the *correctness* of words, in the latter it is the 'meanings' of things; these are not two different targets, as the *correctness* of words can lead to a firm knowledge of the things attached to them, something argued for in the *Cratylus*.⁷⁷

In Orion's writings, the position that etymology consists in investigating the attachment between a word and its meaning is reinforced by an outstanding entry, where we might encounter the earliest actual theoretical formulation of how a scholar should — or, more precisely, should not — etymologize:

72 Amm., *On Int.* 76.4: "...ἐπειδὴ καὶ εἰ σημαντικὴν πραγμάτων τινῶν ἔχουσι δύναμιν..." On the term δύναμις as 'meaning' in the Neoplatonic discussions see also Amm., *On Int.* 93.26, 111.7 & 12–15; Syrianus *On Metaph.* 80.24–25; Asclepius *On Metaph.* 330.26 et al.

73 Amm., *On Cat.* 9.17–18; 9.22; 10.3; 10.8; 10.13; 12.1. Ammonius' formulation concerning the subject-matter of the *Categories* is adopted by most of his students: see, e.g., Simpl., *On Cat.* 12.1 ff; Philop., *On Cat.* 10.6–8; Olymp., *On Cat.* 69.15–17; Elias, *On Cat.* 170.15–18.

74 Amm., *On Int.* 24.8, 24.30 & 89.23.

75 Amm., *On Anal.* 1.9 & 1.18.

76 Amm., *On Int.* 17.25–28.

77 *Crat.* 387c1 & 6–7, also 388c1 and 432a–d.

3.4–7: ἄνθος, παρὰ τὸ ἄνω θεῖν ἐν τῇ αὐξήσει· οὐκ ἀναστρέφουσι δὲ αἱ ἐτυμολογίαι < οὐ γὰρ εἴ τι ἄνω θεῖ καὶ αὐξεται, τοῦτο καὶ ἄνθος λέγεται. ἰδοὺ γὰρ πάντα τὰ φυτὰ ἄνω θέουσι καὶ αὐξουσιν, καὶ ὁμῶς ἄνθη οὐ λέγονται. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἔλαφος παρὰ τὸ ἐλαύνειν τοὺς ὄφεις εἴρηται, ὅπερ ποιεῖ τούτου τὸ κέρασ θυμιώμενον· καὶ οὐκ, εἴ τι τοῦτο ἵποιον, τοῦτο καὶ ἔλαφος λέγεται·> [an omission in *Par. gr.* 2653, which may be recovered from the indirect transmission] ἡ γὰρ δίκταμνος βοτάνη καιομένη ἀπελαύνει τοὺς ὄφεις, καὶ οὐδέποτε ἄν κληθεῖν ἔλαφος.

The phrase “οὐκ ἀναστρέφουσι δὲ αἱ ἐτυμολογίαι” is intriguing, meaning that an etymological link cannot be applied as a principle, on the basis of which similar semantic contents should be related to the same specific sounds. Orion’s declaration that “not everything which grows up (ἄνω) is named as ἄνθος” is important as regards his philosophy of etymology, especially if it is combined with the possibility of having adopted the approach in the *Cratylus* to the ὀρθότης τῶν ὀνομάτων; through the lenses of Orion, the ‘correctness’ of a name’s meaning does not allow us to reproduce a similar etymological link: to be more specific, although every word may not have a unique etymology, from the perspective of the etymology that is connected with this word, the etymon is attached uniquely and exclusively to the word and cannot be reproduced. This means that we are not able to begin from an etymology itself, but must start our investigations each time from the word with which we are dealing, obviously because every such relation (between a word and a thing) must have an explanation that is exegetical, not linguistic, let alone unique. Consequently, the fact that a word can lead us to an etymology does not mean that this specific etymology is established as a principle for producing other words that will have the same relation with the etymology. The example of ἔλαφος and δίκταμος reveal that objects with the same attribute do not have the same name because of this attribute. In this case Orion would probably give us a different etymology for δίκταμος, according to the character of the specific object, an explanation which could, however, justify that this object “repels the snakes,” because the etymology is there to explain the particular bond of the various objects with their words and not to reproduce their relations with them.

It seems that Orion treats ἄνω as a mere combination of letters, reminding us of what is argued in the *Cratylus* about the trivial changes of letters.⁷⁸ He thus asserts a kind of *arbitrariness* regarding etymological relations when he states that it is not necessary for similar concepts to be exclusively expressed by the same vocal sounds and that for him there is no linguistic restriction in the process of etymologizing. It would be enlightening to have more of his comments regarding this specific idea, but we are probably dealing with a general opinion on etymological

78 See above pp. 29–30.

practices for the first time: in previous and older etymological approaches we neither have a generalization nor do we come across a rule as concerns etymology: according to Orion, there is no definite, defining or ‘extra-linguistic’ relation between a word and its etymon which can be prescriptive.

7 Concluding remarks

Let us recapitulate: The earliest extant etymological lexicon attributed to Orion of Thebes, a man of hieratic origin with a very good education who was active as a grammarian in 5th-century Alexandria, may supply modern scholarship with intriguing information in terms of the history and philosophy of ancient etymological approaches. Orion’s identity, his activity and his text in its own right still leave many questions unanswered, but the historical contextualization of *Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν* can afford us an interesting glimpse into a transitional period of ancient etymological practice, which signals the transition from Hellenistic to Byzantine etymology, lexicographical inquiry and philology. The basic features of Orion’s etymological practices can be summarized as follows:

Semantic closeness of the word and its etymon is Orion’s primary concern, and afterwards his considerations are full of grammatical remarks, to which he resorts to explain the form of a word and/or its relation to other related words. Grammar is always present to give a technical morphological explanation of a word and to support the vocal proximity between the word and its etymon, as Orion evidently adopted the developed grammatical system of earlier scholarship. Therefore, sound proximity that can provide us with a satisfying interpretation of the semantic relation between a word and its meaning is the auxiliary factor in Orion’s analysis. This is why he provides us firstly with an exegetical etymology and, secondly, with a grammatical interpretation of the form of a word.

Certainly this is another level of etymological analysis, but one that is still away from a purely linguistic one in the contemporary sense. Thus, linguistics is applied if we compare Orion to earlier etymological approaches, but in order to serve semantics: a semantic exegesis is what matters first of all. Not only are we still dealing with philosophical and exegetical etymologies — there is also the support of a linguistic apparatus, and linguistics serves conceptual affinities: it is a tool of technical expertise.

Emphasis on conceptual affinities is the reason we find many cases where Orion accepts alternative etymologies for the same word; even in words with two meanings, etymologies are given according to meanings. Orion does not believe

that each word should have a unique etymology when each suggested one can provide him with a sound reasoning for the relation between word and meaning.

Etymologies can't be reproduced: each etymon is unique, even when we are dealing with etymologies of the same word, because each one expresses a particular aspect of the object represented. It is not the case that an etymological relation can lead us to other etymologies. Every etymology is a "special story" that emerges because of the particularities of each expressed object and, even when we are faced with common attributes between things, these obviously have a distinct bond with each thing in which they can be traced, a bond that needs to be represented via a distinct etymology.

These specific aspects of the etymological policies found in the *Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν* do not stand in contrast to the definition of etymology ascribed to Orion and insinuated in one of the manuscripts, whether the aim of etymology is considered to be the *correctness* of words or that of things. *Correctness* focuses in both cases on the semantic relation of what is etymologized and that which provides the etymologies, and not on a linguistic origin. Such views may echo the integration of *Cratylus'* linguistic approaches in later philosophical treatments, and it is unlikely that the learned Orion remained unaffected by the mainstream philosophical views of his city and era, i.e., Neoplatonism, as Neoplatonic commentators from the School of Alexandria delve into the interaction between words, meanings and things in so many of their writings and depict an intense discussion on the connection between these three parameters of semantics and logic. In the present paper, an initial attempt was made to touch upon Orion's relation to preceding and later traditions, as well as to philosophical approaches to etymological matters; however, let us hope that more comprehensive surveys on such issues are still to come.

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Claire Le Feuvre

Multiple Etymologies: Plural, Alternative, Complementary Etymologies

Abstract: The paper examines the case of multiple etymologies in Greek grammatical sources. It argues that, while philosophers may have assumed that plural etymology (one word has several different etymons at the same time) was possible, grammarians did not. Grammarians usually assume that one word has only one etymology, for which they argue against competing etymologies. The problem is particularly tricky for polysemous words. In that case, grammarians can either assume that one meaning is the proper one and the other meaning is derived, and in that case there is only one etymology, accounting for the proper meaning, or make a distinction according to context and assume that one and the same word comes from etymon A when it means X, and from etymon B when it means Y. That is, the etymologies by A and B are not true at the same time, but in each context only one etymology is valid. The former approach is the one used by modern linguists for polysemous words, the latter, for homonymous words. Therefore, a close scrutiny reveals that the core question in multiple etymologies is how to deal with polysemy. However, the compilers of the *Etymologica* no longer understood the methods of older grammarians and were content with listing as many etymologies as possible for a given word, disregarding the system underlying the etymologies they report.

Introduction

A remarkable feature of ancient Greek etymology is the existence of multiple etymologies: several etymologies are proposed for one and the same word and seemingly coexist. This practice goes back to Plato, who, etymologizing the theonym Artemis, says “Artemis appears to get her name from her healthy (ἀρτεμέξ) and well-ordered nature, and her love of virginity; or perhaps he who named her meant that she is learned in virtue (ἀρετή), or possibly, too, that she hates sexual intercourse (ἄπορον μισεῖ) of man and woman; or he who gave the goddess her name may have given it for any *or all of these reasons*” (*Cratylus* 406b, transl. Fowler, emphasis mine). That is, the name of the goddess is the focal point at which different explanations converge, each of them partial and referring to one aspect of the divine

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personality. Since a god has several epicleses, referring to various aspects of his or her personality, myth, cult, and since the god can be referred to by the epiclesis only, plural etymology was natural for theonyms, so to speak: several etymologies could be proposed simultaneously to account for the diverse aspects of a divine personality, all etymologies being true but partial.¹ This is the opposite of our modern conception that one word has only one (correct) etymology. But is what is valid for theonyms also valid for common nouns? And was this conception the general one in Antiquity? Too much weight has been given to the *Cratylus*, which overshadows everything. Moreover, the seriousness of the etymologies in the *Cratylus* and the pervasive ironical dimension of the dialogue remain a debated matter. Yet other sources deserve to be examined *per se*.

Plato's conception that one word may have several etymons at the same time is still found in late philosophers. For instance, Syrianus (5th c. CE), in his *Commentary to Aristotle's Metaphysics*, says "and ἀριθμός 'number' received this name because it brings harmony (ἀρμονία) and friendship (φιλία) to all. As a matter of fact, the Ancients say ἄρσαι for 'to fit' (ἀρμόσαι) [...], and call ἀνάρσιον what is ill-fitted (ἀνάρμοστον), and ἀρθμόν the friendship [...]. From all those (ἐξ ὧν πάντων) ἀριθμός 'number' gets its name, measuring everything and fitting them together (ἀρμόζων) and making them friends" (p. 103, l. 29–32). Αριθμός is related to three derivatives of the root meaning 'to adapt, to fit', sharing the initial syllable ἀρ-, and is assumed to receive its name from all of these at the same time. Yet this is not exactly the same case as with Artemis, because ἄρσαι, ἀνάρσιος and ἀρθμός are indeed derivatives of one and the same root, and the fact that those words belong together was clearly known to Syrianus.² His point is that ἀριθμός comes from a verb meaning 'to fit' and includes in itself the meanings of the other derivatives of this verb. This is not exactly a plural etymology, yet he operates with several related etymons.

I will therefore leave aside here Plato and Greek philosophers, and I will concentrate on Greek grammarians and lexicographers, for whom etymology was a

1 See Sluiter 2015, 912: "The different etymologies do not exclude, but rather supplement each other. None of them is supposed to offer the single true historical derivation of the name, but each of them reveals an aspect of the god. They are *simultaneously true*." Lallot 1991a, 138, on Alexandrian etymology: "la continuité avec les pratiques antérieures est frappante: liberté phonétique illimitée, contrôle sémantique peu exigeant, recevabilité de l'étymologie plurielle." On plural etymology in the Stoic school, see Lallot 1991b, 143 — however, from what remains, it seems Chrysippus as a rule gave only one etymology for a given word.

2 The standard etymology in his time derived ἀριθμός from a verb *ἄρω — the pre-form from which ἀραρίσκω and ἥραρον were assumed to be derived. See Herodian ἀριθμός: παρὰ τὸ ἄρω τὸ ἀρμόζω. Ὅμηρος ἄρσαντες κατὰ θυμόν' (*Peri pathōn*, Lentz III/2, p. 232).

serious matter and who are not suspect of playing with deliberately absurd explanations.

That Greek grammarians had a very different conception of etymology from Plato's is clear from at least one well-known fact: whereas Plato assumes that all nouns are compounds created from 'primary nouns' (πρώτα ὀνόματα), grammarians like Philoxenus and Herodian almost always reject compositional etymologies, except for real compounds, and consistently favour derivational etymologies. The derivational etymology of Greek grammarians clearly opposes Plato's compositional etymologies.

In their derivations, Greek grammarians almost always start from a verb and assume that the noun is derived from the verb. This is systematic in Philoxenus, but also applies to Herodian. This, too, goes against Plato, who started from nouns (πρώτα ὀνόματα).

Another conspicuous difference is the clear separation between proper nouns and common nouns. Herodian says proper nouns should not be etymologized: οὐ δεῖ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν κυρίων ἐτυμολογίας λαμβάνειν. οὕτως Ἡρωδιανὸς περὶ παθῶν "because you must not find etymologies for proper names. Thus Herodian, *Peri pathōn*" (*Peri pathōn* 371, Lentz III/2, p. 288, ap. *Et.Gen.*, alpha 499). This is the opposite of Plato's attitude toward etymology, which starts from theonyms. Granted, this perspective was not shared by all grammarians: Philoxenus etymologizes a number of theonyms and heronyms in his treatise *On monosyllabic verbs*.

This is enough to assume that their framework was not the same as his, and to question the following assumption: Greek grammarians, like Plato, assume that plural etymologies are possible. A clue is provided by the many cases where scholars hesitated about the spelling of a Homeric word, using etymology as a criterion. For instance, in the A scholion to *Il.* 15.619: ἡλίβατος: ψιλῶς· ἀπὸ γὰρ τοῦ ἀλιτεῖν ἐσχημάτισται· καὶ ὥφειλεν ὁμοιον εἶναι τῷ ἡλιτόμηνος, συγκοπὴν δὲ ἔπαθεν. [...] οἱ μέντοι δασύνοντες ἐτυμολογοῦσι παρὰ τὸν ἥλιον, τὴν ἡλίῳ βατὴν οὖσαν μόνῳ "ἡλίβατος: "smooth breathing. For it is formed with the word ἀλιτεῖν, and it should be similar to ἡλιτόμηνος but it underwent a syncope. [...] But those who spell it with a rough breathing etymologize it from ἥλιος, assuming it is the one accessible only to the sun." Each camp justified their spelling by one and only one etymology. This does not jibe with the idea that one and the same word can have multiple etymologies.

In the Byzantine *Etymologica*, most explanations follow a pattern: "N [lemma]: from X, or from Y, or from Z," with several proposals coordinated by ἢ, 'or'. The lexicographer lists possible etymologies, without establishing a hierarchy between them. Sometimes there are comments like "but this etymology is erroneous," but most of the time there is nothing but a list. The question is whether that means the lexicographer is listing several possibilities, only one of which is true, which

corresponds to our modern understanding, or rather assumes that they can all be true, which follows the Socratic conception formulated for theonyms. Now, the presentation in the *Etymologica* (starting with Orion's *Etymologicum* in the 5th c. CE), which have greatly influenced our vision of Greek etymology since they are our main sources, is deceptive and obliterates the difference between distinct types of explanations.

I will use the following terminology:

- multiple etymologies: several etymologies are proposed for a single word. This is a purely descriptive tag.
- alternative etymologies: several etymologies are proposed for a single word, only one of which is correct.
- plural etymologies: several etymologies are proposed for a single word, all of which are simultaneously correct (Socratic conception).
- complementary etymologies: several etymologies are proposed for a single word, only one of which is correct in a given context, while a different etymology is correct in a different context. That is, several etymologies are true, but not simultaneously.

1 Alternative etymologies and their reformulation

1.1 'Darkness': σκότος

σκότος, ἀπὸ τοῦ σκιάζειν ὠνομαῖσθαι. οἱ δὲ φασὶν ὅτι σκοπὸς ἐστὶ. ὅτι δεῖ προσκοπεῖσθαι τὸν προερχόμενον ἐν αὐτῷ· οὕτως Ἡρακλείδης. ὁ δὲ Ἡρωδιανὸς παρὰ τὸ σκέθειν ἡμᾶς, ὅτι ἐπέχει πολλὰκις προϊέναι.

Orion, *Etymologicum*, sigma, p. 147

σκότος 'darkness', gets its name from the verb σκιάζω 'to shade'; but/and others say it comes from σκοπός 'watcher', because the one who moves forward in darkness must carefully watch before (προσκοπεῖσθαι) — this is what Heraclides says. But/and Herodian says it comes from the fact that it holds us back (σκέθειν), because often it holds us back from moving forward.

We have here three etymological proposals. The first one (σκιάζειν) remains anonymous. The second one (σκοπός), ascribed to Heraclides,³ is explicitly said to be advocated by other people (οἱ δέ) than the first etymology. The third (σχέθω, σκέθω) is ascribed to Herodian. How are we to interpret this? The difficulty is that we have

³ Heraclides Ponticus the Younger, grammarian of the 1st–2nd c. CE, one of Orion's main sources. See Dyck 1989, 5–6.

three layers: the sources, the compiler Orion, and the abbreviators of Orion, whose original work did not survive. Concerning the sources, it appears that a given scholar only proposed one etymology. That means that he either ignored other etymologies or considered them erroneous. In other words, there is no plural etymology in the first layer, unless Orion chose only to select one etymology per scholar (but see below). Concerning Orion and his abbreviator (at this stage, it is impossible to distinguish them), the interpretation is different according to the value of δέ: if δέ is adversative, ‘but’, it means that Orion considers the different etymologies incompatible and assumes only one of them is correct, but does not say which one. If on the other hand δέ is not adversative, ‘and’, it means that Orion may consider all three etymologies correct. In the first case we have alternative etymologies, in the second case maybe a plural etymology.

Take now the reformulation in Philoponus (6th c. CE):

ὥσπερ τὸ σκότος παρὰ τὸ σκιάζειν εἴρηται ἡ δὲ σκιά ἐπιπρόσθησίς ἐστι φωτός, ἥτις ἐν τῷ ἀέρι ἢ ἀπλῶς ἐν τῷ διαφανεῖ συμβαίνει, ἢ, ὡς Ἡρωδιανὸς φησι, παρὰ τὸ σχέθειν· ἐπέχει γὰρ ἡμῶν τὸ εἰδέναι ἢ τῶν προόδων καὶ τῶν πολλῶν ἐνεργειῶν ἐπιχειρήσις.

Philoponus, *In Aristotelis Categorias commentaria*, vol. 13.1, p. 180

as σκότος ‘darkness’ is so named from σκιάζειν ‘to shade’, and shadow (σκιά) is the result of an obstacle to light which occurs either in the air or simply in the visible world, or, as Herodian says, from σχέθειν ‘to hold back’, because it withholds our knowledge or our undertaking many activities or going forth.

Philoponus gives the same two etymologies as Orion, but he presents them in a different way. They are coordinated by ἢ, not by δέ. Now ἢ cannot be adversative, but it may be exclusive or not: if we take the ἢ as exclusive, it means that we have to choose between the proposed etymologies, only one of which is correct (alternative etymologies). If we take the ἢ as inclusive, it means that both etymologies can be correct (plural etymology).

That is, what can appear as a plural etymology, illustrating the multiplicity of possible etymons for one and the same word, is the reformulation of an alternative etymology which implies the opposite, viz. the fact that the two etymologies (three in the case of Orion) are exclusive of each other.

1.2 ‘Blind’: ἀλαός

ἀλαός· ὁ τυφλός, ὁ ἐστερημένος τοῦ λάειν, ἥτοι βλέπειν. ἸΑρίσταρχος τὸ παρὰ τῷ ποιητῇ “ἀσπαίροντα λάων” (τ 229) οὕτως ἐξηγεῖται· “ἀντὶ τοῦ βλέπων”. Ἡρωδιανὸς δὲ (Lentz III/1, p. 112, 10 = Lentz III/2, p. 898, 39) παρὰ τὸ ἀλῶ, τὸ πλανῶμαι, ἀλαός, ὁ περιπλανώμενος. Σέλευκος

δὲ (p. 43 [θ 195] Mueller) παρὰ τὸ ἀλάσαι, ὃ σημαίνει τὸ ἐλαττω<σαι>, {καὶ} ἵν' ἢ ὁ ἐλαττωθεὶς τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς.

Epimerismi homerici, alpha 319

ἀλαός: 'blind', the one who is deprived of sight (λάειν meaning 'to see'). Aristarchus explains thus the Homeric "ἀσπαίροντα λάων" (*Od.* 19.229): "an equivalent for βλέπων 'looking'." But Herodian says it comes from ἀλάω 'to wander': ἀλαός is the one who wanders. As for Seleucus, he says it comes from ἀλάσαι, which means 'to be inferior', so that it refers to the one who is hampered in the eyes.

We have here three etymologies: the first one parses the word as a privative compound of λάω 'to see' (a ghost-form deduced from the Homeric λάων) and is backed by the authority of Aristarchus, although Aristarchus' comment is not about ἀλαός but about the Homeric λάων. This etymology is in fact advocated by Philoxenus (ἀλαός· ὁ τυφλός, κατὰ στέρησιν τοῦ λάειν ἢ βλέπειν (fr. 428 Theodoridis), transmitted by Orion, *Etymologicum*, alpha, p. 21).

The second one derives ἀλαός from ἀλαόμαι. It is explicitly attributed to Herodian but is older, and is already found in Apollonius the Sophist (1st c. CE):

ἀλαός τυφλός: [...] εἴρηται δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἀλᾶσθαι τὴν πορείαν, οὐχ ὡς ἔνιοι, παρὰ τὸ μὴ λάειν, ὃ ἐστι βλέπειν.

Apollonius, *Lexicon homericum*, Bekker p. 21

ἀλαός means 'blind', and it comes from the fact that one wanders (ἀλᾶσθαι) while walking, not, as some say, from the fact that one does not see (μὴ λάειν).

Apollonius explicitly opposes two etymologies and rejects the one advocated by Philoxenus.⁴

The third etymology found in the *Epimerismi* is explicitly attributed to Seleucus of Alexandria (1st c. CE).

To sum up: in ancient sources transmitting more than one etymology for ἀλαός (Apollonius, the *Epimerismi*, which are not old but contain old material), the formulation makes it clear that scholars who advocate etymology 1 do not advocate etymology 2 and that there is no plural etymology in their minds.

In the Byzantine *Etymologica*, however, this information is lost.

⁴ Unless the οὐχ ὡς ἔνιοι... was not written by Apollonius himself but by the abbreviator, since the *Lexicon homericum* is preserved only as an *epitome*.

Ἀλαός (θ 195)· ὁ τυφλός, ὁ ἐστερημένος τοῦ λάειν, ὃ ἐστι βλέπειν· Ὅμηρος (τ 229)· “ἀσπαίροντα λάων,” ἀντὶ τοῦ βλέποντα. ἢ παρὰ τὸ ἀλῶ, τὸ πλανῶ, ἀλαός, ὁ περιπλανώμενος. ἢ παρὰ τὸ † ἀλάσσαι, ὃ σημαίνει τὸ ἐλαττώσαι, ὁ ἐλαττωθεὶς τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς

Et.Gen., alpha 397

ἀλαός (*Od.* 8.195): the blind one, deprived of sight. Homer “ἀσπαίροντα λάων” (*Od.* 19.229), instead of ‘seeing’. Or from ἀλῶ ‘to wander’, ἀλαός the ‘wanderer’. Or from ἀλάσσαι, which means ‘to lessen’, the one diminished in his eyes.

The notice lists the same three etymologies, but the attribution to scholar X or Y has disappeared and we have once again a succession of hypotheses coordinated by ἢ. If ἢ is understood as exclusive, that means only one of these etymologies is correct and it is still an alternative etymology. If it is understood as inclusive, we have a plural etymology, leaving open the possibility that all etymologies can be correct.

1.3 ‘Excellence’: ἀρετή

Ἀρετή· αἰρετή τις οὐσα, ἣν αἰροῦνται πάντες· οὕτω Δίδυμος ἐν Ὑπομνήματι. ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλείδης κατὰ μετάθεσιν στοιχείων, ἐρατή τις οὐσα, ἡ ἐπέρastos κτήσις· ὡς δὲ ἄλλοι, ἀρεστή, καὶ ἀποβολῇ τοῦ σίγμα, ἀρετή, ἡ πᾶσιν ἀρέσκουσα.

Orion, *Etymologicum*, alpha, p. 1

‘Excellence’, the ‘chosen’ one (αἰρετή) which everybody chooses. This is what Didymus says in his *Commentary*. But/and Heraclides <says it arose> through metathesis of letters, a ‘desirable’ one (ἐρατή), as it were, the desirable acquisition. But/and as others say, it is the ‘pleasing’ one (ἀρεστή), and then, through dropping of the s, ἀρετή, that which pleases everyone.

The version of the *Excerpta* of Orion preserved in the *Paris. gr.* 2630 says the third etymology comes from Theon, a grammarian of the 1st c. CE: ὡς δὲ ἐν ὑπομνήσει εὖρον Θέωνος, ἀρεστή. καὶ ἀποβολῇ τοῦ σ, ἀρετή, ἡ πᾶσιν ἀρέσκουσα (p. 185 Koës). We can therefore put a name in front of the vague ἄλλοι “others.”⁵ There again Orion reports three different etymologies by three different scholars, only one being the correct one in the eyes of the scholar who argued for it, and Orion himself does not take sides with one or the other.⁶

⁵ The *Additamenta* in *Et.Gud.* (p. 190), preserve a longer version of the notice: Ἀρετή· αἰρετ[ικ]ή τις ἐστὶ, ἣν αἰροῦνται πάντες. οὕτως Διδύμος ἐν Ὑπομνήματι. ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλείδης ἐν τῷ Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν φησι κατὰ μετάθεσιν, ἐρατή τις οὐσα, ἡ ἐπέρastos κτήσις. ὡς δὲ ἐν Ὑπομνήματι εὖρον Θέωνος, ἀρεστή καὶ ἀποβολῇ τοῦ σ ἀρετή, ἡ πᾶσιν ἀρέσκουσα.

⁶ The original *Etymologicum* is lost and what we have is an abridged version of Orion (plus various *excerpta*), but from what the abbreviator has retained and what survives in the Byzantine

In the *Et.Gen.*, the information is lost. The three hypotheses are simply presented one after the other, in a different order.

Ἀρετή· παρὰ τὸ ἐρῶ, τὸ ἐπιθυμῶ, ἐρατή, καὶ κατὰ μετάθεσιν τῶν στοιχείων ἀρετή, ἡ ἐπέραστος κτήσις, <ῆ> ἦν αἰροῦνται πάντες· ἢ παρὰ τὸ ἀρῶ ἀρέσω ἀρεστή καὶ ἀρετή, ἡ πᾶσιν ἀρέσκουσα.

Et.Gen., alpha 1142

ἀρετή: from ἐρῶ ‘to desire’, and by metathesis of the letters [*i.e. the vowels*] ἀρετή, the desirable good, or that which everybody chooses. Or from ἀρῶ ‘to please’, ἀρέσω, ἀρεστή and ἀρετή, the one pleasing everybody.

1.4 ‘Sky’: οὐρανός

Ὁ οὐρανός, ὃ παιδίον, περιέχει κύκλῳ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλατταν καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς καὶ τὰ ἐν θαλάττῃ πάντα καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ταύτης ἔτυχε τῆς προσηγορίας, οὗρος ὦν ἄνω πάντων καὶ ὀρίζων τὴν φύσιν· ἔνιοι δὲ φασιν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὠρεῖν ἢ ὠρεῦειν τὰ ὄντα, ὃ ἔστι φυλάττειν, οὐρανὸν κεκλησθαι, ἀφ’ οὗ καὶ ὁ θυρωρός ὠνομάσθη καὶ τὸ πολυωρεῖν· ἄλλοι δὲ αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀρᾶσθαι ἄνω ἔτυμολογοῦσι.

Cornutus, *De natura deorum* 1.1–2 Lang

‘Sky’, my boy, encloses in its circle the earth and the sea and everything that is on earth and in the sea, and this is where it got its name from, being the guardian (οὗρος) of all things, above (ἄνω), and delimitating the natural world. But some say that it is called οὐρανός because it ‘takes care’ (ὠρεῖν) or ‘has care of’ (ὠρεῦειν) things, *i.e.* ‘guards’ them. This is where the word θυρωρός ‘door-keeper’ comes from; and also πολυωρεῖν ‘to care for’. And others yet think its etymology is ‘to look upward’ (ὀρᾶσθαι ἄνω).

This text is not by a grammarian or a lexicographer, but the presentation is identical. There are three different etymologies, which remain anonymous in Cornutus but which we can attribute to known authors: the etymology by ὀρᾶσθαι ἄνω comes from Plato (*Cratylus* 396c); the etymology by οὗρος comes from Heraclides Ponticus the Younger (transmitted by Orion, *Etymologicum*, omicron, pp. 118–119);⁷ the etymology by ὠρεῖν is by an unknown author. They are clearly said to be advocated each by a different scholar (ἔνιοι δέ... ἄλλοι δέ). Cornutus presumably knew who proposed which, but did not bother naming those people because this was not the main point for him. Since Cornutus is talking about the god Ouranos, he may, in the Socratic tradition, consider all those etymologies simultaneously valid for the

Etymologica drawing on Orion, we may be confident that this critical dimension was absent from the original work.

⁷ It may be older than Heraclides, however.

theonym, but that does not imply that his sources did — besides, Plato himself in the *Cratylus* gives no other explanation for οὐρανός as a common noun.

In the redaction of the Byzantine *Etymologica*, once again we only have ἥ:

Οὐρανός· Παρὰ τὸ ὀρῶ, τὸ βλέπω, ὃ πᾶσιν ὀρώμενος, ἥτοι φαινόμενος· ἢ παρὰ τὸ οὐρῶ, τὸ φυλάττω, ὃ πάντα περιέπων, ὥς φησιν Ἡσί<ο>δος, “Ταῖα δέ [τοι] πρῶτον μὲν ἐγένετο ἴσον ἑαυτῇ / Οὐρανὸν ἀστερόενθ’, ἵνα μὴν περὶ πάντα καλύπτει.”

EM, p. 642

Οὐρανός: from ὀρῶ ‘to see’, the one seen, that is, visible, by everyone. Or from οὐρῶ ‘to keep’, the one enveloping everything, as Hesiod says “and Earth first begot the starry Sky, equal to herself, in order that it may cover her from all parts.”

1.5 Later additions

The formulation in the Byzantine *Etymologica* can also be deceptive in a much more radical way:

τὸ δὲ θίς καὶ ρίς ὁ Ἀρίσταρχος διὰ τῆς εἰ διφθόγγου ἀξιοῖ γράφεσθαι καὶ ἀκολουθῶν τῇ ἔτυμολογίᾳ ἔλεγεν, ὅτι τὸ θεῖς παρὰ τὸ θείνεσθαι ἔστι, καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ αἰγιαλῷ θείνονται καὶ τύπτονται τὰ κύματα· ἢ παρὰ τὸ θέειν, καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ αἰγιαλῷ τρέχει τὰ κύματα. τὸ δὲ ῥ<ε>ίς παρὰ τὸ ῥεῖν γέγονε, καὶ γὰρ ἐκ τῆς ῥίνος ῥέουσι καὶ κατέρχονται τὰ περιττώματα τῆς κεφαλῆς. ἀκολουθῶν οὖν ταύτῃ τῇ ἔτυμολογίᾳ εἴρηκεν αὐτὰ διὰ τῆς εἰ διφθόγγου. ἢ δὲ παράδοσις οἶδεν αὐτὰ διὰ τοῦ ι.

Additamenta in Et.Gud., alpha, p. 77

Aristarchus thinks the words θίς ‘heap (of sand)’ and ρίς ‘nose’ should be spelled with a <diphthong> [ei], and he said that, in agreement with etymology, θεῖς comes from θείνεσθαι ‘to be stricken’, because the waves strike and beat on the shore, or from θέειν ‘to run’, because the waves run onto the shore. And ρίς comes from the verb ‘to flow’ (ῥεῖν), because through the nose flow and are evacuated all the superfluous <liquids> of the head. According to this etymology, then, he said that they should be spelled with [ei]. But the tradition only knows the form with [i].

Although the formulation in the *Gudianum* may suggest that Aristarchus proposed two etymologies for θίς (θείνω and θέω), it seems that he in fact proposed only one: Apollonius’ *Lexicon homericum*, Bekker p. 86 (θεῖνα τὸν αἰγιαλόν, ἀπὸ τοῦ θείνεσθαι τοῖς κύμασιν, ὃ ἔστι τύπτεσθαι, with the spelling θεῖνα advocated by Aristarchus), and the D scholion to *Il.* 1.34 (Παρὰ θῖνα. Παρὰ τὸν αἰγιαλὸν τῆς θαλάσσης. ὃς οὕτω κέκληται ἀπὸ τοῦ θείνεσθαι, ὃ ἔστι τύπτεσθαι τῇ προσρήξει τῶν κυμάτων) only mention the etymology by θείνω. The etymology by θέω is mentioned in Orion (*Etymologicum*, theta, p. 73: Θίς, ὃ αἰγιαλός. παρὰ τὸ θέω· ὃ παραθέων τῇ θαλάσση). The ἢ παρὰ τὸ θέειν, καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ αἰγιαλῷ τρέχει τὰ κύματα may be a later insertion

by a compiler, taken from Orion, and intended to establish a symmetry between the two etymologies, θίς from θέω as ρίς from ρέω, as an alternative etymology to the one by θείνω: that it goes back to Aristarchus is questionable.⁸

The same phenomenon can be seen in older sources, too. Orion's text contains later additions. A clear case is that of σόλος.

Σόλος· ὁ δίσκος· παρὰ τὸ σῶ, τὸ ὀρμῶ καὶ κινῶ· ἀπὸ γὰρ τοῦ σῶ τὸ σείω. τοῦ δὲ σῶ ὁ μέλλων σώσω καὶ ῥηματικὸν ὄνομα κατὰ συστολὴν τοῦ ω εἰς ο καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ λ σόλος· παρὰ τὸ ὄλον σεύεσθαι ὡς στρογγύλον· οὕτω Φιλόξενος.

Orion, *Etymologicum*, sigma, p. 147

Σόλος 'quoit'. The disk. From *σῶ, 'to rush and move'; indeed, σείω 'to shake' comes from *σῶ. The future of *σῶ is σώσω and a verbal noun σόλος by shortening /ō/ into /o/ and adding /l/. From being thrown entirely (ὄλον σεύεσθαι) as in στρογγύλον 'round'. That is what Philoxenus says.

Here we have two different etymologies. The first is by Philoxenus and is consistent with his method: it derives the word from an invented monosyllabic verb, starting from the future form and eventually involving a *pathos*. The second is compositional and utterly disagrees with Philoxenus' method. The second etymology is repeated in the *EM*, p. 721: Σόλος· Ὁ δίσκος· ἀπὸ τοῦ σῶ, τὸ σείω, τὸ ὀρμῶ καὶ κινῶ· τούτου δὲ τοῦ σῶ ὁ μέλλων, σώσω· καὶ ῥηματικὸν ὄνομα κατὰ συστολὴν τοῦ ω εἰς ο, σόλος. Ἡ παρὰ τὸ ὄλον σεύεσθαι. The *EM* has the disjunctive ἢ, lacking in Orion, to introduce the alternative etymology "or from ὄλον σεύεσθαι" — this must be the older wording. Now the second etymology is not mentioned in the *Gudianum*, which goes back to a different version of Orion than the *EM* and only has the derivational etymology (*Et.Gud.*, sigma, p. 507: Σόλος, δίσκος, παρὰ τὸ σῶ τὸ ὀρμῶ καὶ κινῶ, which keeps only the etymology and drops the details of the derivation). The compositional etymology comes from the Homeric scholia (*bT Schol. Il.* 23.826c Erbse: σόλον· παρὰ τὸ ὄλον σεύεσθαι). It was probably inserted by a copyist as a complement, after the first etymology, before Philoxenus' name, although it cannot come from Philoxenus — but the copyist was certainly not aware of that. This happened in the copy from which stem both our manuscript of Orion and the version of Orion used by the compiler of the *EM*. Once again, the extant text incorporates later material, yielding an erroneous picture. Philoxenus provided only one etymology for σόλος, a regular derivational etymology. Orion probably mentioned only this etymology under his name, and the alternative compositional etymology was inserted by a copyist in the wrong place.

⁸ Pace Pagani 2015, 812 (after Schenkeveld 1994, 289).

1.6 Two etymologies out of one

Next to conscious additions of etymologies by a compiler, like the preceding ones, the many mistakes of the compilers can also generate ‘new’ etymologies:

Ἀγρός, παρὰ τὸ ἀρῶ τὸ ἀροτριῶ, ἀρός καὶ ἀγρός, ἢ παρὰ τὸ ἄρην, ὃ σημαίνει τὸν σίδηρον, ὃ τῷ σιδήρῳ τεμνόμενος.

Choeroboscus, *Epimerismi in Psalmos*, p. 148

Ἀγρός ‘field’: from ἀρῶ ‘to plough’, *ἀρός and ἀγρός. Or from *Ares*, which means ‘iron’, that which is cut by iron.

It seems we have here two alternative etymologies for ἀγρός, one by ἀρόω and the other by Ἄρης. However, the etymology of ἀγρός by ἀρόω is old and dates back to Herodian at least,⁹ and this same ἀρόω was itself etymologized by *Ares*: Ἀροῦν· παρὰ τὸν Ἄρεα, ὅτι σιδήρῳ τέμνεται ἡ γῆ (*Et.Gud.*, alpha, p. 203); the latter is the origin of Choeroboscus’ formulation σιδήρῳ τεμνόμενος. This means that the original formulation was Ἀγρός, παρὰ τὸ ἀρῶ τὸ ἀροτριῶ, ἀρός καὶ ἀγρός, παρὰ τὸ ἄρην, ὃ σημαίνει τὸν σίδηρον, ὃ τῷ σιδήρῳ τεμνόμενος, where *Ares* was given as the etymon of ἀρόω, itself the etymon of ἀγρός. The etymology of ἀρόω by Ἄρης is an embedded etymology, within the main etymology of ἀγρός by ἀρόω. But the compiler, whether Choeroboscus or a copyist, did not understand and thought it was a different etymology. Therefore he added ἢ, and the result is an alternative etymology appearing where there was only one etymology in the source text.¹⁰

1.7 The ἢ type as a default formulation

From those examples, to which could be added many others, one can already draw a conclusion: plural etymology is to a large extent a matter of wording, characteristic of the Byzantine *Etymologica* because they are compilations and display the features and the drawbacks of compilations — although of course they can also transmit information absent from earlier sources (including the main manuscript of Orion). Byzantine compilers may have considered that a word could have several etymologies, all of them correct, but the scholars who proposed those etymologies

⁹ See the notice on the Etygram online dictionary: <http://appsweb-cepam.unice.fr/etygram/node/733> (last accessed July 2024).

¹⁰ Similarly, the explanation of an etymology in the source text can be misunderstood as a different etymology in the compilation and transformed into an alternative etymology through the insertion of ἢ. On this problem and on embedded etymologies, see Le Feuvre (*forthcoming*).

did not. From what we can see of older grammarians, each of them proposed one etymology and assumed that this etymology was the correct one, excluding competing etymologies. This stands in sharp contrast to the Socratic view formulated in the *Cratylus* about the theonym Artemis (see above).¹¹ But this is expected in so far as grammarians proposed their etymologies in the course of a discussion within a given grammatical theory, which is supposed to be consistent. ‘Grammatical etymology’ is not plural.

Orion himself is a compiler, whose work was later on abridged by copyists. The *Etymologicum* has several notices displaying the type that will become usual, where successive hypotheses are listed and coordinated by ἢ. Most of the time in these notices the etymologies are anonymous:

Αἴρ, παρὰ τὸ ἡρτῆσθαι τοῦ αὔοντος, ὃ ἐστὶ καίοντος αὐτὸν αἰθέρος, ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ αἶν καὶ πνεῖν. ἢ κίνησις γὰρ αὐτοῦ ποιεῖ τὸν ἄνεμον. ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ τινὰ ζῶα αἶρειν καὶ κουφίζειν.

Orion, *Etymologicum*, alpha, p. 19

Αἴρ ‘air’ (comes) from ἡρτῆσθαι ‘to be suspended’ to the ether which parches (αὔοντος) it, that is, burns it. Or from αἶν ‘to blow’, because its movement produces the wind. Or from the fact that certain animals rise through it and are lifted.

The comparison between this type of notice and the preceding ones suggests that ἢ is the default formulation, so to speak: it is what a compiler uses when he does not have enough information, or when he deliberately drops some information found in his source to make an entry shorter. In the case of αἴρ, we have the information missing in the redaction of the *Etymologicum*: the last two etymologies are found in the *Cratylus*, where they are presented with ἢ in an interrogative sentence (ὁ δὲ δὴ αἴρ ἄρα γε, ὧ Ἑρμόγενης, ὅτι αἶρει τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, ‘αἴρ’ κέκληται; ἢ ὅτι αἶε ρεῖ; ἢ ὅτι πνεῦμα ἐξ αὐτοῦ γίγνεται ῥέοντος; οἱ γὰρ ποιηταὶ που τὰ πνεύματα ‘ἀήτας’ καλοῦσιν “but is air called αἴρ because it raises (αἶρει) things from the earth, or because it is always flowing (αἶε ρεῖ), or because wind arises from its flow? The poets call the winds ἀήτας, ‘blasts,’” *Crat.* 410b (transl. Fowler), but Plato is not

¹¹ It is noteworthy that Socrates formulates the rule of plural etymology for theonyms, but that for most common nouns etymologized in the *Cratylus*, he gives only one etymology per word. That is, even Plato does not deal with common nouns as he does with theonyms. And when he mentions two etymologies, he says they are advocated by different people (*Crat.* 418d, etymology of ἡμέρα ‘day’ by ἱμεῖρω ‘to desire’: ὅτι γὰρ ἀσμένους τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἱμεῖρουσιν ἐκ τοῦ σκοτόους τὸ φῶς ἐγίγνετο, ταύτη ὠνόμασαν ‘ἡμέραν’. But right afterwards he mentions a different etymology, 418d: καίτοι τινὲς οἰοῦνται, ὡς δὴ ἡ ἡμέρα ἡμερα ποιεῖ, διὰ ταῦτα ὠνομάσθαι αὐτὴν οὕτως). Similarly, the Stoic Chrysippus, in what survives, gives only one etymology per word (noun or verb).

among Orion's direct sources.¹² Given the heavy loss suffered by the material in the course of centuries between Antiquity and the time of the Byzantine compilers, and on the basis of examples for which we can juxtapose an older source with a Byzantine one, we can assume that in many cases the apparently plural etymologies "N comes from X, or from Y, or from Z" are the result of a lack of information and do not imply that a compiler believes all those etymologies to be simultaneously true, let alone the proponents of those etymologies. They are a mere reformulation of alternative etymologies, and they may still be understood as alternative etymologies (with exclusive ή). Therefore, the frequent formulation in the *Etymologicum* "N: from X or from Y. Herodian" does not mean that Herodian gave both X and Y as possible etymons for N: it is possible that only etymology Y was his.¹³

2 Different etymologies by the same scholar

Does it never happen that a Greek scholar proposes several etymologies for one and the same word? It does. We must distinguish two cases. The first is the case where, before a rare Homeric word, scholars hesitate between two interpretations, which they back by two etymological hypotheses. This is not a plural etymology, where two etymologies are proposed for the same word with the same meaning. Here is an example:

νηγάτεον· ὁ Ἀπίων νεωστὶ κατεσκευασμένον ἢ εὖ νενησμένον. βέλτιον δὲ παρὰ τὸ νεωστὶ γεγενῆσθαι, ὥς σύνθετον.

Apollonius, *Lexicon homericum*, Bekker p. 116

νηγάτεον: for Apion, it means 'recently prepared', or 'well woven'; but it is better to derive it from νεωστὶ γεγενῆσθαι, as a compound.

The meaning of the adjective was debated. Apion provided two possible etymologies, each corresponding to one of the two possible meanings: if νηγάτεος means 'recently prepared/produced', it comes from νεός + γίγνομαι (replaced by a synonym κατασκευάζομαι); if on the other hand it means 'well woven', it comes from νέω 'to spin' + ἄγαν 'very', both implicit in the formulation of Apollonius.¹⁴

¹² The etymology of ἀήρ as a derivative of ἄημι (ἄω) 'to blow' was standard; see the scholia to Dionysius Thrax (*Scholia vaticana*, p. 243) καὶ ἀήρ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄειν, ὃ ἐστὶ πνέειν.

¹³ See Le Feuvre (*forthcoming*).

¹⁴ See the full explanation in *Epimerismi homerici*, nu 3 νηγάτεον (B 43): ὥσπερ παρὰ τὸ τείνω γίνεται τατός, οὕτως καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ γείνω γατός, καὶ τοῦ νέος νειμήγατος "as from τείνω is derived

Apollonius clearly understands them as alternative etymologies: the adjective cannot mean both ‘recently prepared’ and ‘well woven’, therefore only one meaning is correct, and accordingly, only one etymology. Apollonius reports both hypotheses and rejects the second one — βέλτιον does not add a third etymology but refers to Apion’s first explanation, rephrased with the proper etymon. Compare the case of ἡλίβατος above.

2.1 Alternative etymologies

The second case is when two etymologies are provided for a familiar word, the meaning of which is not debated. In most cases, we are dealing with alternative etymologies.

A clear case is found in Apollonius Dyscolus:

Τὸ δὴ ὑπόδρα δύναται μὲν καὶ κατὰ φύσιν εἰς α λήγειν, δύναται δὲ καὶ κατ’ ἔλλειψιν τοῦ ξ ἐξενεχθὲν τάσιν ἀνάλογον ἀναδεδέχθαι. — ἐντελὲς μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ ληγούσῃ, εἰ τῇδε εἴη ἐσχηματισμένον. τὸ δρῶ σημαίνει καὶ τὸ ὀρῶ, ἀφ’ οὗ καὶ τὸ δρωπάζειν, καὶ τὸ δραπέτης ὁ ἐπιβλέπων τοὺς δεσπότας. καὶ σαφὲς ὅτι ἐγένετο ἐπίρρημα εἰς α περατούμενον, ὅμοιον τῷ ἀντῶ ἄντα, ἡρεμῶ ἡρέμα· ἀφ’ οὗ σύνθετον τὸ ὑπόδρα. — δύναται δὲ καὶ παρὰ τὸ ὀρῶ εἶναι τὸ ἀκόλουθον ὄρα, καθότι εἵπομεν καὶ τῷ ἀντῶ ἄντα παρακεῖσθαι, σιγῶ σῖγα. ὃ δὴ πλεονάσαν τῷ δ ἐγένετο ὑπόδρα, καθότι καὶ ἐν τῷ μίγα τὸ μίγδα, ὃ δὴ πάλιν παρέκειτο ῥήματι τῷ μίσγω.

Apollonius Dyscolus, *De adverbiiis*, Schneider – Uhlig, *Gr. Gr.* II/1.1, p. 139

ὑπόδρα can have a final -α by nature, but it can also, produced by dropping of the ξ [*scil.* of the variant ὑποδράξ], have received a regular accentuation — because it is complete in the last syllable if it was formed that way. Δρῶ also means ‘to see’, from which also come δρωπάζειν and δραπέτης, the one watching over his masters. And it is clear that an adverb ending in -α was created, similar to ἀντῶ ἄντα, ἡρεμῶ ἡρέμα, from this the compound ὑπόδρα. But from ὀρῶ there may also be a regular ὄρα, as we said that next to ἀντῶ there is ἄντα, <next to> σιγῶ σῖγα. And the latter ὄρα, with addition of [d], became ὑπόδρα, as in μίγδα from μίγα, which used to exist next to the verb μίσγω.

This text is explicit on the fact that several hypotheses are possible. About derivation, first: ὑπόδρα, next to which is found ὑποδράξ, may be either an adverb in -α, like τάχα ‘quickly, soon’, or an adverb in -αξ, like ὁδάξ, with subsequent loss of the final -ξ. Obviously the two explanations are not both correct: if the first is, the

τατός, so too from γείνω, γατός and from <γατός and> νέος, νεήγατος.” For the other etymology, *Et.Gud.*, nu, p. 407 νηγάτεον, τὸ ἄγαν νενησμένον (ἄγαν as an equivalent of εὖ- is usual in etymological explanations) — with the interesting fact that ἄγαν is assumed to be the second member of the compound instead of the first.

second is not, and *vice versa*. Later on, Apollonius' son Herodian will state that the second explanation is correct (*Epimerismi homerici*, upsilon 5: ὁ δὲ Ἡρωδιανὸς λέγει ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ὑποδράξ γίνεται “but Herodian says it comes from ὑποδράξ”), rejecting the first one. Now, about the etymology, Apollonius mentions two possibilities. The first is Philoxenus' etymology (fr. 25 Theodoridis), deriving ὑπόδρα from a monosyllabic verb δρῶ ‘to see’ (analysis ὑπό-δρα). The second one starts from ὁράω (analysis ὑπ-όδρα). What Apollonius is interested in is the regularity of the formation of the adverb, not the etymology *per se*. And his point is that, whatever the etymology, the formation of ὑπόδρα can be justified. This cannot be taken as an example of plural etymology. Rather, it must be an alternative etymology. The δύνανται δὲ καί clearly introduces an alternative explanation for the derivation (the two derivations are incompatible) and probably does for the etymology, too. Apollonius does not choose between the two etymologies: he simply states that, from the morphological point of view, the adverb is regular in either case.

Similarly for Philoxenus.

Ὑπερφίαλος· παρὰ τὸ φῶ, οὗ παράγωγον φαίνω· ὁ ὑπερφαίνοντα τῶν ἄλλων ἑαυτὸν ἐπιχειρῶν δείξει, ὃ ἐστὶν ὑπερήφανος. ἐὰν δὲ παρὰ τὸ φῶ, τὸ λέγω, ὁ ὑπὲρ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δύναμιν λέγων καὶ ἐπαγγελλόμενος (fr. 191 Theodoridis).

Orion, *Etymologicum*, upsilon, p. 156

Ὑπερφίαλος ‘arrogant’: from *φῶ, from which is derived φαίνω ‘to appear’; [15] one who seeks to show that he is above (ὑπερφαίνοντα) others, that is, haughty (ὑπερήφανος). But if it comes from *φῶ ‘to speak’, one who pretends to be above (ὑπέρ) what he is actually capable of and brags about it.

Philoxenus derives -φίαλος from the monosyllabic verb *φῶ. But there are two verbs *φῶ, one meaning ‘to say’ (φημί) and the other one meaning ‘to appear’ (φαίνομαι).¹⁵ Philoxenus does not say that ὑπερφίαλος comes from both, but that it can be derived either from *φῶ/φημί or from *φῶ/φαίνομαι. It is here again an alternative etymology (ἐὰν δέ).

As far as Philoxenus is concerned, Orion sometimes mentions two different etymologies under his name. Later additions set apart (see above, 1.5), a few cases remain.

μοχλός. παρὰ τὸ ὁμοῦ καὶ τὴν κλεῖν [ἔχειν] ὠνομάσθαι, ὡς ἅμα αὐτῷ τὴν κλεῖν ἔχειν. οὕτω Φιλόξενος ἐν τῇ Περί Ῥωμαίων διαλέκτου (fr. 316 Theodoridis, modified after Koniaris 1980, 471). ἀλλαχοῦ δὲ φησί, παρὰ τὸ μολῶ μοχλός, πλεονασμῷ τοῦ χ (fr. 550 Theodoridis).¹⁶ ὁ δὲ

¹⁵ Lallot 1991a, 147–148.

¹⁶ Sturz prints μολῶ, I correct to μολῶ after Theodoridis.

Ἡρωδιανὸς παρὰ τὸ ὄχω τὸ συνέχω. ἐπεὶ καὶ Ὅμηρος ὀχῆα λέγει τὸν μοχλόν (*Peri pathōn*, Lentz III/2, p. 175).

Orion, *Etymologicum*, mu, p. 103

μοχλός ‘bolt’: named from ὁμοῦ ‘together’ and κλεῖν, as ‘having the key with itself’. This is what Philoxenus says in his *On the language of the Romans*. But he says elsewhere that μοχλός comes from *μολῶ ‘to walk’ [*that is, βλώσκω, ἔμολον*], through addition of the *khi*. As for Herodian, he says it comes from *ὄχω ‘to hold together’, since Homer calls the bolt ὀχεύς.

According to Orion, Philoxenus proposed two different etymologies for the same word with the same meaning. We do not find here the default formulation “N: from X, or from Y. Philoxenus,” which is ambiguous, but the compiler explicitly states that there are two different etymologies by the same scholar. However, Orion makes it clear that they are found in different works by Philoxenus (ἀλλαχοῦ), and that there is an internal contradiction: since the subject is identical (Philoxenus), the δέ is adversative — otherwise Orion would probably use καί.¹⁷ Notice that the second etymology, deriving μοχλός from *μολῶ, is consistent with Philoxenus’ method of deriving nouns from simple verb forms, but the first etymology, parsing the word as a compound and implying several formal manipulations, is not.¹⁸ Is the etymology ὁμοῦ + κλείς really by Philoxenus, or is it misattributed? If it is not by Philoxenus, the contradiction would disappear.¹⁹ Another etymology of μοχλός is transmitted under the name of Philoxenus, not by Orion. I will come back to it later on (see 6).

17 The abridged version of the Darmstadt manuscript has a confused redaction with no author’s name, the etymology by μολῶ attributed to other scholars than the etymology by ὁμοῦ + κλείς and Herodian’s etymology erased, although the argument from the Homeric form backing it is preserved: μοχλός, παρὰ τὸ ὁμοῦ καὶ τὸ κλεῖν· ἄλλοι δέ· παρὰ τὸ μολῶ μολός καὶ μοχλός· ὡς Ὅμηρος, ὀχῆα λέγων τὸν μοχλόν (*Etymologicum (excerpta e cod. Darmstadino 2773)*, mu, p. 61).

18 The other fragments from the treatise *On the language of the Romans* (fr. 311–329 Theodoridis) are consistent with Philoxenus’ method, and the only word parsed as a compound is not a Greek word but a Latin one, *nepōs* (fr. 328 Theodoridis, *ap. Joannes Lydus*).

19 See A. Ippolito at the end of the article “Orion” in *LGA*: “Of particular relevance is the fact that Orion does not have a real comprehension of the different grammatical and etymological theories on which his sources, predating him by many years, are based; this indifference to the ancient problems of etymology leads him to include within the same gloss explanations sometimes based on contradictory criteria, although he does not notice or assume a critical position in this regard.”

See also, for the same Philoxenus:

Ἀσχαλάαν, παρὰ τὸ ἄχω τὸ λυπῶ· οὗ παθητικὸν ἄχομαι· “νῦν δ’ ἄχομαι κακότητι.” παράγωγον ἀχάλλω, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ σ, ἀσχάλλω. οὕτω Φιλόξενος (fr. 451 Theodoridis). ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς φησὶν· παρὰ τὸ σχῶ σχάλλω, καὶ μετὰ τῆς α στερήσεως, ἀσχάλλω (fr. 52 Theodoridis).

Orion, *Etymologicum*, alpha, p. 20–21

ἀσχαλάαν, from ἄχω ‘to cause grief’, the passive of which is ἄχομαι: “νῦν δ’ ἄχομαι κακότητι.” A derivative is *ἀχάλλω, and through addition of [s], ἀσχάλλω. This is what Philoxenus says. But the same Philoxenus says: from σχῶ one derives σχάλλω, and with the privative ἀ-, ἀσχάλλω.

The presentation is similar, and the ὁ δὲ αὐτός is clearly adversative. Theodoridis separates the two etymologies as belonging to different works by Philoxenus.

Thus, for Orion the rule seems to be that one grammarian gives one etymology, and whenever a grammarian departs from the rule, as here Philoxenus, Orion points it out. Orion lists the etymologies without any comment: as a compiler, he does not argue for an etymology against the other, and he does not give us any clue as to how Philoxenus himself presented the etymologies, and whether he favoured one over the other or not. This is because Orion’s work was preserved only in abbreviated versions: the original work probably gave more precise indications, which were lost in the extant summaries.

When the two etymologies are consistent with Philoxenus’ method, we may assume that he considered both of them correct, but maybe not at the same time: he may have advocated first etymology 1, and later on etymology 2 (or *vice versa*) because he had changed his mind. However, this is clearly an easy solution, and the real explanation must be different (see below, 6).²⁰

2.2 Alternative derivations

Those cases should be separated from seemingly similar ones where two formal explanations are attributed to Philoxenus:

τιθήνη. παρὰ τὸν τιθόν, ἀποβολῇ τοῦ ἐνός τ. οὕτω Φιλόξενος ἐν τῷ Περὶ μονοσυλλάβων ῥημάτων. ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ <παρὰ> τὸν θήσω μέλλοντα, δηλοῦντα τὸ τρέφω, ὄνομα θήνη, καὶ διπλασιασμός τιθήνη (fr. 23 Theodoridis).

Orion, *Etymologicum*, tau, p. 152

²⁰ We know Orion compiled his sources in the same order: the first etymology may have been found in the treatise he compiled first, the second etymology in another treatise by Philoxenus which he compiled afterwards, and that does not reflect the chronological evolution of Philoxenus’ theory, but simply the arbitrary order followed by Orion.

τιθήνη ‘wet nurse’ comes from τιτθός ‘nipple’, through dropping of one [t]. This is what Philoxenus says in his *On monosyllabic verbs*. The same scholar also says it comes from the future θήσω meaning ‘to feed’, <hence> the noun *θήνη, and through reduplication τιθήνη.²¹

Here, we have in fact only one etymology, since in both cases τιθήνη is derived from *θῶ ‘to breast-feed’: the difference lies in the fact that there are two different derivational paths, one from the reduplicated τίτθον and the other from the non reduplicated ghost form *θήνη, both derived from *θῶ — the fact that the derivation from τιτθός was found in the *Περὶ μονοσυλλάβων ῥημάτων* implies that the etymon of τιτθός is *θῶ, even if it is implicit in Orion’s formulation. Although Orion quotes them in the same notice and Theodoridis does not separate them either, the second explanation may come from the *Περὶ ἀναδιπλασιασμοῦ*, rather than from the *Περὶ μονοσυλλάβων ῥημάτων*. This would explain why Orion, compiling one treatise after the other, reports the etymology given in the first treatise, with the title, and then, finding another one in another work, adds ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ... presumably also with the title of the other treatise, but the latter was lost in the history of the text.

The same appears in another fragment (fr. 264 Theodoridis):

ὄτλος. παρὰ τὸ τλῶ τὸ κακοπαθῶ καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ο. ἢ παρὰ τὸ α τὸ ἐπιτατικόν. μεταβέβηται εἰς ο, ἄτλος καὶ ὄτλος.

Orion, *Etymologicum*, omicron, p. 119

ὄτλος ‘pain’: from τλῶ ‘to suffer’, through addition of [o]. Or from the intensive ἄ-, which has been changed into [o], *ἄτλος and <then> ὄτλος.

παρὰ τὸ τλῶ, τὸ κακοπαθῶ, ῥηματικὸν ὄνομα τλὸς καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ο <ὄτλος>. ἢ μετὰ τοῦ ἐπιτατικοῦ α ἄτλος καὶ ὄτλος, ὡς ἄχθος ὀχθήσατο. οὕτω Φιλόξενος.

EM, p. 636

from τλῶ ‘to suffer’, <one derives> the verbal noun *τλός and through addition of [o] <ὄτλος>. Or with the intensive ἄ-, *ἄτλος and <then> ὄτλος, as in ἄχθος ‘burden’, ὀχθήσατο ‘he got angry’. This is what Philoxenus says.

We have here, not two etymologies, because in both cases the assumed etymon is the verbal noun *τλός, itself derived from τλάω, but two different ways of deriving ὄτλος from *τλός, one by means of a vocalic prothesis and another one parsing the word as a compound with the intensive ἄ-. The presentation is different, and the two may come from the same treatise. If both are by Philoxenus, he certainly did

²¹ Theodoridis adds that ὁ αὐτός is found in the main manuscript of the *Etymologicum* only (the *Parisinus gr.* 2653), while other sources have the invasive ἦ. The older formulation can only be ὁ αὐτός.

not consider them both correct: the intensive $\acute{\alpha}$ - is not a $\acute{\alpha}\theta\omicron\varsigma$ as the $\pi\lambda\epsilon\omicron\nu\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$, and Philoxenus knew that the two were incompatible. This can only be understood as an alternative explanation with an exclusive η .²²

The case of $\omicron\tau\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ and $\tau\iota\theta\eta\nu\eta$ is different from the case of $\mu\omicron\chi\lambda\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ and $\acute{\alpha}\sigma\chi\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omega$: the latter two involve two different etymologies, the former two involve one etymology but two different alternative derivational paths.

From what Orion says, we cannot infer the existence of plural etymology in Philoxenus: on the contrary, the existence of two etymologies by the same scholar appears to be an anomaly that Orion underlines.²³

2.3 Rejected etymologies

Philoxenus may have mentioned a second etymology, which he rejected, as in the following case:

Γαυλος· παρὰ τὸ γῶ γάζω γαλός καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ υ γαυλός· ἀγγεῖον γάλακτος δεκτικόν. καὶ οὐ πάντως δεῖ παρὰ τὸ γάλα αὐτὸ λαμβάνειν. σημαίνει δὲ καὶ εἶδος πλοίου (fr. 79 Theodoridis).
Orion, *Etymologicum*, gamma, p. 44

γαυλος: from *γῶ ‘to contain’, *γάζω, γαλός and with addition of [u] γαυλός, a kind of vessel for milk. And it must not be derived from γάλα ‘milk’. It also refers to a kind of boat.

A longer version is preserved in the *Et.Gen.* (= *EM*, p. 222):

Γαυλος· [...] παρὰ τὸ γῶ, τὸ χωρῶ, γίνεται γάζω γάλος καὶ γαυλός. καὶ οὐ πάντως δεῖ παρὰ τὸ γάλα λαμβάνειν τοῦτο. λέγεται γὰρ καὶ τριήρης γαῦλος διὰ τὸ πλεῖστα δέχεσθαι, ὡς φησιν Ἡρόδοτος ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ τῶν Ἱστοριῶν (136, 1).

²² Similarly, two possible derivations from the same verb are suggested in fr. 357 (ἄητον, not in Orion).

²³ The problem is made more complex by mistakes introduced in the course of time. For instance, Philoxenus’ fr. 58, for which Theodoridis prints Orion’s text Βάζειν· βοῶ <τὸ> πρωτότυπον· συγκοπῇ βῶ, παράγωγον βάζω, ὡς φῶ φάζω, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ρ φράζω “βάζειν ‘to speak’: the primary form is βοῶ ‘to shout’, with syncope βῶ, derivative βάζω, as φῶ φάζω, and with addition of [r], φράζω” (Orion, *Etymologicum*, p. 37). The correct text was καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ρ <β>ράζω “with addition of [r], βράζω” (cf. Philoxenus’ fr. 71 Βράζει· παρὰ τὸ βῶ, τὸ λέγω, γίνεται βάζω καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ρ βράζω). Because of the mistake introduced by the abbreviator of Orion, while the *Genuinum*, beta 29, preserves the correct wording, the verb φράζω seemingly has two different etymologies for Philoxenus, one by φάζω ‘to say’ (fr. 58) and another one by προίημι ‘to send forth’ (fr. 27). In fact, only the latter etymology was Philoxenus’ (see <http://appsweb-cepam.unice.fr/etygram/node/1376>).

γαυλος: from *γῶ ‘to contain’, comes *γάζω, γαλός and with addition of [u] γαυλός. And it must not be derived from γάλα ‘milk’. For a boat is also called γαῦλος, because of it contains much, as Herodotus says in the third book of his *Histories*.

The first sentence, the etymology of γαυλός ‘vase’ from the monosyllabic verb γῶ ‘to contain’, clearly comes from Philoxenus. So probably does the second sentence “it must not be derived from γάλα:” the derivation from γάλα must be an older etymology rejected by Philoxenus.²⁴ The third sentence, the existence of another γαῦλος with a different accent, may go back to Herodian rather than to Philoxenus. At least, Herodian mentions the difference in his treatise *Περὶ Ὀδυσσειακῆς προσωδίας* (scholion to *Od.* 9.223: γαυλοὶ τε: νῦν μὲν ὀξυτόνως τὸ γαυλοί, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ πλοίου βαρυτόνως “here the word γαυλοὶ ‘vases’ is oxytone, but for the boat it is barytone”). The logical link γάρ between the third sentence and the second — “the derivation from γάλα does not work because it does not make sense for γαῦλος ‘boat’” — may have been added afterwards: it appears in the *Genuinum*, whereas the main manuscript of Orion simply has δέ.

As far as Herodian is concerned, Orion does not report two different etymologies by him as he does for Philoxenus. However, he may report under the name of Herodian two etymologies, one advocated by Herodian and one rejected by him:

Ἐχθρός. παρὰ τὸ ἔχθος ἔχθηρός, καὶ συγκοπῇ ἔχθρός, ὡς κῦδος κυδρός. οἱ δὲ διὰ τοῦ κ γράφοντες φασὶν εἶναι ἔχθρός· ὁ ἔξω τεθορηκώς [...]. οὕτω φησὶν Ἡρωδιανὸς ἐν τῇ Ὀρθογραφίᾳ. διὰ δὲ τοῦ χ γράφει.

Orion, *Etymologicum*, epsilon, p. 57

Ἐχθρός ‘foe’: from ἔχθος ‘hatred’, *ἔχθηρός and by syncope ἔχθρός, as κῦδος κυδρός. But some who spell it with <κ> say ἔχθρός is he who rushed out [...]. This is what Herodian says in his *De orthographia*. But he spells it with <χ>.

The point is that Herodian derived ἔχθρός from ἔχθος, with an analogical parallel. He also mentioned a competing etymology by ἔκθορέω, the proponents of which argued for a spelling *ἔκθρός, but he rejected this etymology and stuck to the spelling with <χ>. Both etymologies end up under the name of Herodian in Orion, but they do not have the same status, and only one is Herodian’s etymology.

²⁴ This etymology is mentioned in the *Additamenta in Et.Gud.* (gamma, p. 299), where once again we find the default formulation with ἦ: Γαυλός· τὸ γαλακτοδόχον ἀγγεῖον· παρὰ τὸ γάλα γαλός, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ υ γαυλός· ἢ παρὰ τὸ γῶ, τὸ λαμβάνω, τὸ δεκτικὸν τιν[ος] “γαυλός: the vessel receiving milk; from γάλα, *γαλός, and with addition of [u], γαυλός; or from *γῶ ‘to contain’, the one containing something.” It is the only etymology mentioned by Eustathius (*Comm. Od.*, vol. 1, 136). It may be hinted at by Theocritus, *Id.* 5.58 στασῷ δ’ ὀκτὼ μὲν γαυλῶς τῷ Πανὶ γάλακτος “I will give to Pan eight vessels of milk.”

Herodian's argumentation, if ever it was reported by Orion in the original *Etymologicum*, is lost in the version we now have. For Herodian, this is confirmed by Choe-roboscus, who never mentions two different etymologies by Herodian for one and the same word, and who was not relying on Orion.

As a rule, the grammarians from whom Orion took his material only gave one etymology per word, whether their own or an etymology found in their sources and deemed correct — they may mention several, as when Herodian or Philoxenus explicitly rejects etymology Y in favour of etymology X, but they subscribed to only one.²⁵ Heraclides' name, too, is always associated with only one etymology in Orion. I leave aside the case of the physician Soranus of Ephesus, one of Orion's major sources: Soranus was not a grammarian, and the picture is more complex in his case for several reasons.²⁶

3 Complementary etymology

There is, however, a case in which one word is explicitly said to have two different etymologies in the 'grammatical' corpus. These are usually presented in a μέν... δέ structure, or sometimes coordinated through καί. This is the case when a word has

25 For instance, in the A scholion to *Il.* 6.518a Erbse, going back to Herodian (*Peri pathōn*, Lentz III/2, p. 171): γέγονε δὲ τὸ ἡθεῖος ἢ παρὰ τὸ θεῖος κατὰ πλεονασμὸν τοῦ ἡθεῖος — πλεονάζει γὰρ τὸ ἡ ἐν πολλαῖς λέξεσιν<ν>, ὡς μῦει ἡμῦει, “τῷ κε τάχ’ ἡμύσειε πόλις” (B 373), πεδανός “ἡπεδανός” (Θ 104. Θ 311), εὐγενής εὐηγενής, “τεῖχει ὑπο Τρώων εὐηγενέων ἀπολῆσθαι” (Ψ 81), βαιός ἡβαιός (cf. B 380 al.) — ἢ παρὰ τὸ ἔθος ἔθειος, ὡς τέλος τέλειος (cf. A 66, Ω 34), ὄρος ὄρειος, ὄνειδος ὄνειδε<ε>ιος (cf. A 519 al.), καὶ τροπῇ τοῦ εἰς τὸ ἡ καὶ καταβιβασμῷ τοῦ τόνου γίνεται ἡθεῖος. ἀναλογώτερον δὲ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ θεῖος αὐτὸ κανονίζειν ἢ περ ἐκ τοῦ ἔθος. ἐκ γὰρ τοῦ θεῖος καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ τάσις σώζεται καὶ ὀλίγα πάθη δίδονται, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ἔθος καὶ ἀλλότριοις ὁ τόνος καὶ πολλὰ τὰ πάθη δίδονται “ἡθεῖος can come from θεῖος ‘divine’ by addition of the [ē] (the [ē] is added in many words, like μῦει / ἡμῦει [...], πεδανός / ἡπεδανός [...], εὐγενής / εὐηγενής [...], βαιός / ἡβαιός) or from ἔθος ‘custom’, *ἔθειος, as in τέλος ‘end’ / τέλειος ‘final’, ὄρος ‘mountain’ / ὄρειος ‘of the mountain’, ὄνειδος ‘blame’ / ὄνειδειος ‘blaming’, and through change of [e] to [ē] and move of the accent forward, one obtains ἡθεῖος. But it is more regular to derive it from θεῖος ‘divine’ than from ἔθος ‘custom’: because starting from θεῖος, the same accent is preserved and there are few πάθη (changes), whereas from ἔθος the accent is different and there are many πάθη.” The etymology by ἔθος was advocated by Aristophanes of Byzantium (*ap.* Eustathius, *Comm. Il.*, vol. 2, 380), and this is the reason why Herodian mentions it, as he argues for a different one. However, in compilations we only find the default formulation, as in Orion (where the two etymologies remain anonymous): Ἡθεῖε. παρὰ τὸ ἔθος ἔθειος, καὶ τροπῇ τοῦ εἰς ἡ, ἡθεῖος· ἢ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ἡ, θεῖος ἡθεῖος (*Etymologicum*, eta, p. 68).

26 On Soranus, see Le Feuvre (*forthcoming*).

either two different meanings or two different contextual uses, which for Greek scholars was not a great difference: it was a way of dealing with polysemy.²⁷

3.1 Polysemy and homonymy

Modern linguists draw the line between polysemy and homonymy according to two criteria: I. To a given phonetic form (signifier) are associated different meanings (signified). II. Those meanings are related. Words are considered homonymous if only criterion I is met, polysemous if both criteria I and II are met.²⁸ However, all modern linguists acknowledge that the line between polysemy and homonymy is often blurred. Some linguists contest the very notion of polysemy, understood as the coexistence of different signifieds for a given signifier on the abstract level of the ‘word,’ arguing that there is no such thing as an abstract ‘word’ but only contextual occurrences in discourse; others argue that polysemous words are in fact homonymous lexical units.²⁹

This cannot be applied to Greek thought because the tag ὁμώνυμος in Greek applies to something different than our modern conception,³⁰ and because the understanding of the notion of the word itself is different. In modern linguistics, a word is the association of a signifier and a signified. In Greek, the terminology is fluctuating, and the word λέξις can mean ‘word, phrase, speech, diction, style, peculiar word, text of an author.’³¹ It also means ‘signifier’, as opposed to ‘signified’ in the modern sense, in some authors:

²⁷ In the following examples, I select not the oldest source, but the most explicit one, even if it is a late one. The problem of implicit elements in lexicographers is different from what it is in the scholia (on which see Le Feuvre 2021), but is nevertheless always real, and the reader must always try to reconstruct the full reasoning behind the formulation.

²⁸ I consider here only the synchronic criterion of distinction between homonymy and polysemy. Of course, modern linguists also take into account diachronic elements: two words are homonymous if they have different etymologies, polysemous if there is only one etymon. That is, modern etymological knowledge is itself a criterion for drawing the line between homonymy and polysemy. But since this notion of diachrony was completely alien to Greek etymological thought, and since modern etymology is utterly different from Greek etymology, I will not use it and will limit the framework to the synchronic criteria Greek scholars could use themselves — and which some modern linguists, sticking to a strictly synchronic approach of homonymy and polysemy, also consider the only valid ones.

²⁹ See a summary of the various approaches to polysemy in Desclés 2008, 30.

³⁰ On the evolution of ὁμώνυμος in Greek, see Lallot 2007, and, with more details, Hoffmann/Luna 1990.

³¹ Dickey 2007, 245.

Ἀρχύτας μέντοι τοῦ τῶν κατηγοριῶν ἀρχόμενος βιβλίου ἦτοι τῶν καθόλου λόγων περὶ λόγου διδάσκει πρῶτον καὶ τοῦτον ἐν διανοίᾳ καὶ λέξει περιέλαβεν, καὶ τὴν μὲν σημαίνουσαν εἶπεν εἶναι λέξιν, τὴν δὲ σημαινομένην διάνοιαν.

Simplicius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium*, vol. 8, p. 43

Archytas at the beginning of his book *On the categories*, that is, language in general, teaches first of all about λόγος and he divides it into διάνοια and λέξις, saying that λέξις is what signifies and διάνοια what is signified.

Greek lexicographers were not preoccupied with the distinctions made by philosophers, and from their practice it is very clear that what they call λέξις ‘word’ is in fact the signifier, the phonetic shape of the word. That is, they do not think in terms of association of form and meaning, but only take into account the form, the phonetic shape. And then they try to account for the fact that this λέξις refers to one ‘thing’ (πράγμα), which is closer to the referent of modern linguistics than to the signified.

The priority of the phonetic shape means that they distinguish as two different words signifiers that have different accents:

βίος γ’· ζωή· οὐσία· ὑπαρξις· βιός δὲ τὸ τόξον

Apion, Ludwich p. 227

βίος has three meanings: ‘life’, ‘possessions’, ‘existence’. And βιός is the bow.

Here the distinction between βίος and βιός is clear: there is one monosemous word (βιός ‘bow’) and one polysemous word (βίος ‘life’). Compare Herodian’s treatment of γαυλός/γαῦλος above (2.3).

The matter is less clear for two units differentiated not by accent, but by a grammatical criterion, such as gender:

πόσις, ὁ ἀνὴρ, παρὰ τὸ τὴν πόσιν τοῦ ὕδατος· ἐπειδὴ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ αὐτὸ μινγνύμενον τῇ γῇ γεννητικὸν γίνεται· ὁμοίως καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ τῇ γυναικὶ μινγνύμενος, γενέσεως αἴτιος γίνεται. Πόσις, δύο σημαίνει, τὸ τε πόμα καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα· λέγεται δὲ ἀπὸ μεταφορᾶς τοῦ ὕδατος ὁ ἀνὴρ πόσις, καὶ κλίνεται πόσιος.

Et.Gud., pi, p. 477

πόσις (masculine), the ‘husband,’ from πόσις (feminine), the ‘drinking’ of water; because water itself, united with earth, has a generating power, and similarly man, united with woman,

becomes a cause of generation. Πόσις means two different things, the drink and the man; the man is called πόσις from the metaphor of the water, and its genitive is πόσιος.³²

Greek grammarians called substantives μονογενῆ ‘having one gender’, as opposed to adjectives, which agree in gender with their controlling noun. As a consequence, they would understand there to be two distinct words πόσις, a masculine noun and a feminine noun. The explanation in the *Gudianum* consists of two parts coming from two different sources: the first part, coming from Orion and going back to Heraclides,³³ implies that there are two words, one of which is derived from the other (ὁ πόσις derived from ἡ πόσις), but the second part deals with the two as if they were one word (πόσις, δύο σημαίνει) because the signifier is identical.³⁴ This may rely on rare cases like that of ὁ ἅλς ‘salt’ vs ἡ ἅλς ‘sea’, which the Greeks knew were originally the same word. The *Gudianum* adds the indication that the inflection is different, the genitive being τοῦ πόσιος for ‘husband’, vs τῆς πόσεως for ‘drink’ (only the former is mentioned, because it does not follow the regular type πόλις, πόλεως): this morphological difference was a criterion used to distinguish two words by philosophers and grammarians, but the compiler does not bother with those distinctions.

λίς λέων· “ὥστε λίς ἡϋγένειος”, καὶ κατὰ τὴν αἰτιατικὴν “ἐπὶ τε λὶν ἡγαγε δαίμων”. σημαίνει καὶ τὴν λεῖαν πέτρην· “πέτρη γὰρ λίς ἐστι πέριξ” (μ 79).

Apollonius, *Lexicon homericum*, Bekker p. 108

λίς ‘lion’, “ὥστε λίς ἡϋγένειος”, and in the accusative “ἐπὶ τε λὶν ἡγαγε δαίμων”. It also means the smooth rock: “πέτρη γὰρ λίς ἐστι πέριξ.”³⁵

Here the two words λίς ‘lion’, and the Homeric word λίς, which Greek scholars analysed as an adjective meaning ‘smooth’ in the line πέτρη γὰρ λίς ἐστι περιξέστη εἰκυῖα (*Od.* 12.79), are mentioned together under one and the same lemma, as a

³² See also *EM*, p. 684 (Πόσις· Δύο σημαίνει, τὸ τε πόμα καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα. Λέγεται ἀπὸ μεταφορᾶς τοῦ ὕδατος ὁ ἀνὴρ πόσις, παρὰ τὴν τοῦ ὕδατος φύσιν· ἐπειδὴ μιγνύμενον τῇ γῇ γεννητικὸν γίνεται τῶν φυτῶν καὶ σπερμάτων. Οὕτως καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ, μιγνύμενος τῇ γυναικί, αἴτιος γίνεται τῆς τῶν παίδων γενέσεως).

³³ Orion, *Etymologicum*, π1, p. 133: Πόσις· ὁ ἀνὴρ. παρὰ τὴν τοῦ ὕδατος φύσιν. ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ μιγνύμενον τῇ γῇ γεννητικὸν γίνεται. μιγνύμενος δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ τῇ γυναικί γενέσεως αἴτιος γίνεται. The indication about Heraclides comes from the *Et.Gen.* (Dyck 1989, 6).

³⁴ This is also the case in Hesychius, *Lexicon*, π1 3107: πόσις· πόμα. ἀνὴρ. πότος ἢ οἴνου ἢ ὕδατος. Eustathius, on the other hand, distinguishes two words: παρωνόμασται δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς πόσεως ὁ πόσις ὡς δοκεῖ τοῖς παλαιοῖς, διὰ τὴν σπερματικὴν ὑγρότητα (*Comm. Od.*, vol. 1, 9).

³⁵ See also Choeroboscus, *De orthographia (epitome)* p. 235 (λίς· σημαίνει δὲ τὸν λέοντα, ἀρσενικῶς καὶ θηλυκῶς δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς λείας διὰ τοῦ ι γράφεται).

unique word with two different meanings (σημαίνει καί “it also means”). This occurs in spite of the fact that the one term is a noun and the other an adjective. Although they belong to different parts of speech, the fact that they have the same signifier renders them a single λέξις: the σημαίνει καί implies that this is one and the same ‘word’ with different meanings; compare the formulation for βίος/βιός in Apion (above), where ‘bow’ is not given as a fourth ‘meaning’ of βίος but as a different word. The difference in vowel length (λίς ‘lion’ has a short ι, λίσ ‘smooth’ has a long ι) is a criterion by which modern linguists would separate two distinct signifiers, but it was not thus for Greek scholars, who do not mention that fact.³⁶

The fact that only the phonetic shape is considered and that the grammatical criteria are not always taken into account has a consequence: when there is no grammatical criterion allowing a distinction between two identical signifiers, Greek lexicographers always consider them one and the same word. For instance, here is the comment Aristonicus (after Aristarchus) made on *Od.* 4.451 (λέκτο δ’ ἀριθμόν “he counted their number”) and *Od.* 4.453 (ἔπειτα δὲ λέκτο καὶ αὐτός “and then he lied down himself to sleep”):

ὅτι τῇ αὐτῇ λέξει (λέκτο 451 and 453) παραλλήλως οὐκ ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ σημαινομένου κέχρηται.
Schol. Od. δ 451d Pontani

Because he uses the same word twice in a few lines, not with the same meaning.

For modern linguists, those are two homonymous verbs; but Greek scholars never thought there were two different verbs, but only one λέξις with two different meanings. For them, this case was not different from that of ἀμήχανος: ἡ διπλὴ ὅτι δύο σημαίνει ἡ λέξις, ἥτοι μὴ δυναμένη μηχανὴν εὐρεῖν, ἥ πρὸς ἣν οὐκ ἔστι μηχανήσασθαι “*diplè* because this word has two meanings, either the one who cannot find a way out, or the one against whom there is no way out” (*A Schol. Il.* 15.14b Erbse, also from Aristonicus). Consider the following example as well:

οὔλον ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ μαλακοῦ “οὔλων τε ταπήτων”. σημαίνει δὲ τὸ ὄλον ἡ λέξις “ἄρτον οὔλον ἐλών”. ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ ὀλεθρίου “οὔλος ἸΑρης”, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ συνεστραμμένου “οὔλας ἦκε κόμας” καὶ “χλαῖναν πορφυρέην” μεταληφθήσεται εἰς τὴν ὄλην, ὃ ἐστὶν ὀλοπόρφυρον.

Apollonius, *Lexicon homericum*, Bekker p. 124

³⁶ One of the reasons why vowel length is not taken into account is that Greek etymologists work with the written form of the word, and there is only one grapheme <I> for both the short and the long vowel, so that even before the loss of phonological vocalic quantity in spoken Greek this was already an irrelevant feature.

οὔλον means ‘soft’, “οὔλων τε ταπήτων,” “soft carpets.” But the word means ‘whole’, “ἄρτον οὔλον ἐλών” “taking a whole loaf.” And for ‘destructive’, “οὔλος Ἀρης,” “destructive Ares” and for ‘curly’ “οὔλας ἤκε κόμας” “she let his curly hair flow,” and in “χλαῖναν πορφυρέην <οὔλην>” “a mellow purple coat” (*Od.* 19.225) it is taken with the meaning ‘whole’, that is, ‘entirely purple’.

Modern linguistics distinguishes here three homonymous adjectives, οὔλος¹ ‘whole’, Ionic form of ὅλος, οὔλος² ‘funest, destructive’, related to ὀλοός, from the root of ὀλλυμι ‘to destroy’, οὔλος³ ‘curly’, probably from the root of εἰλέω ‘to roll’. They are here given together under the same lemma: for Apollonius they are one and the same word (he uses ἡ λέξις in the singular) having different meanings; for us, it is a single signifier common to three homonymous words.

As a consequence, Greek lexicographers do not make any distinction between homonymy and polysemy, because for them one signifier equals one word.³⁷ When nouns or adjectives or verbs have an identical signifier but refer to different things (πράγματα), they simply say “word N has two/three meanings,” and that includes homonymous words as well as polysemous words: Orus’ treatise *On words with several meanings* (*Περὶ πολυσημάντων λέξεων*), lists words belonging to either category.

That does not mean that the Greeks did not ask the question of whether the meanings were related or not, which is the modern criterion used to distinguish homonyms from polysemous words. In fact, they did seek to explain the relationship between different meanings, but that never led them to the concept of homonymy in the modern sense, that is, two different words having the same signifier. A telling example is that of the adjective ἀργός:

ἀργούς: τρία σημαίνει ἡ λέξις, (1) τὸν τε ἐν τῇ συνηθείᾳ ἀργὸν λεγόμενον καὶ (2) κατὰ ἀντίφρασιν {καὶ} τὸν ταχὺν καὶ (3) τὸν λευκόν.

Epimerismi homerici in Iliadem 1.50d1

ἀργούς: the word has three meanings, (1) the ‘idle’ one as in usual speech and (2) by antiphrasis, the quick one, and (3) the white one.

³⁷ I limit myself here to cases where the spelling is identical. In late sources, it can happen that two different words with different spellings are treated as one and the same λέξις because they were phonetically identical. For instance, *Et.Gud.*, mu, p. 394: Μήτρα, παρὰ τὸ μήτηρ, μητέρος, μητέρα καὶ κατὰ συγκοπὴν μήτρα· σημαίνει δύο· τὴν μήτραν καὶ γράφεται διὰ τοῦ ἥτα· καὶ τὴν ζώνην καὶ γράφεται διὰ τοῦ ι. καὶ Ὁμηρος, μήτρα θ’ ἦν ἐφόρει “Μήτρα ‘womb’, from μήτηρ ‘mother’, <genitive> μητέρος, accusative <μητέρα> and by syncope μήτρα. It has two meanings: ‘womb’, spelled with eta, and ‘belt’, spelled with iota. And Homer <has> μήτρα θ’ ἦν ἐφόρει ‘the belt he was wearing’ (*Il.* 6.137).” Here two different words, μήτρα and μίτρα, are listed under one and the same lemma because they were both pronounced /mitra/ because of iotacism.

For modern linguists, there are two different adjectives, ἀργός (ᾱ) < ἀεργός ‘idle, lazy’, and ἀργός (ᾱ̃) ‘quick, bright’. For Greek lexicographers, there is only one λέξις here, because they do not take into account the difference in vocalic quantity (which in any case was lost as a phonological feature by the time of Byzantine Greek). They seek to justify the different meanings and their relationship by assuming that ‘quick’ is derived from ‘lazy’ by antiphrasis (a rhetorical trope that was applied to etymology in order to explain the relationship between different meanings of the same word, as here), and this is why the ‘proper’ meaning ‘idle, lazy’ is given first. That is, whereas modern linguistics groups together (2) and (3) as a case of polysemy and separates (1) as a homonym, the Greek lexicographer groups (1) and (2) as two related meanings and apparently separates (3), but he still operates with one single ‘word.’

The consequence for etymology is straightforward. In our modern conception, it is licit to assume distinct etymologies for homonyms — and indeed, phonetic evolution, through which two different words acquire an identical phonetic shape, is the main source of homonymy —, but not for polysemous words. For a Greek etymologist, who does not make any difference between homonymy and polysemy, and who equates ‘word’ with ‘phonetic shape’ (signifier), it was licit to assume distinct etymologies for distinct meanings of a single λέξις. When on the basis of semantic criteria Greek lexicographers considered different meanings of a word related, as proper meaning vs derived meaning (proper vs extended, κυρίως vs καταχρηστικῶς, or proper vs ‘by antiphrasis’ as for ἀργός above, etc.), they gave one etymology, as we do today for polysemous words. This etymology is appropriate only for the proper meaning, and the derived meanings are not taken into account — needless to say, the criteria on which one meaning is considered the proper one may be very different from ours, as in the case of ἀργός. When on the other hand they consider that two different meanings are not related, they can give two different etymologies, one for each meaning, as we do for homonymous words. Each etymology is valid for only one meaning, that is, for one contextual use: none of them can account for all the meanings of the word. They are complementary, and each gives a partial explanation of the considered λέξις.

This technique is old and goes back to Aristarchus at least. The verb ὀμιλέω means ‘to come together, to keep company with’. However, in a few lines in the *Iliad* it is used with the meaning ‘to engage combat’. The difference in meaning goes together with a different etymology that justifies it. The testimony of Aristonicus in the A scholia shows that this goes back to Aristarchus. This is best summarized in a scholion to the *Odyssey*:

ὁμιλος ἐπὶ στρατιᾷς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁμοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἴλη, ὁμιλος δὲ ἐπὶ πλήθους ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁμοῦ εἰλεῖσθαι
Schol. Od. a 225e Pontani

ὁμιλος, when said of the army, comes from ὁμοῦ ‘together’ and ἴλη ‘troop’; but ὁμιλος, when said of the multitude, comes from ὁμοῦ ‘together’ and εἰλεῖσθαι ‘to roll’.

There is no choice between the two: the word does not come either from X or from Y (alternative etymologies), but from X in context 1 and from Y in context 2. Etymology becomes a means to justify polysemy — as for modern linguists it is a means to justify homonymy.

Now, as modern linguists acknowledge, the limit between polysemy and homonymy is blurred and difficult to determine. If one does not take into account the diachronic facts (that is, modern etymology), the distinction only relies on the perception that two meanings are or are not related. And this perception varies with individual speakers. Modern lexicographers often disagree, and among modern dictionaries one can find two separate entries (homonymy) in one dictionary where another has only one (polysemy) for the same word(s). Things were no different for Greek scholars: while some were trying to establish the relationship between the different meanings of a word, adopting what we could call a unifying approach, others were focused on the difference between meanings, in what we could call a dissociating approach. And lexicographers adopting the unifying approach did not always agree on which meaning was derived from which. For instance, for ἀργός, while some lexicographers assumed that ‘quick’ is derived from ‘idle, lazy’ (*Epimerismi homerici Il.* 1.50d1 above), others grouped ‘quick’ and ‘shining’ as modern linguists do, assuming the latter to be derived from the former (ἀργός: ὁ ταχύς [...] καταχρηστικῶς δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ λευκοῦ λαμβάνεται, *Et.Gen.*, alpha 1121 = *EM*, p. 135) and providing one etymology for both, and still others separated ‘quick’ and ‘shining’ and provided two different etymologies for these (*Epimerismi homerici Il.* 1.37c, *Et.Gud.*, alpha, p. 188),³⁸ following the dissociating approach.

The unifying approach can include homonyms, since they were most of the time subsumed under the general case of polysemy.³⁹ It can be divided into two subtypes. Either the two meanings are independently derived from one and the same etymon, or one of the meanings is assumed to be secondary.

³⁸ See the detail on the Etygram online dictionary.

³⁹ This can apply even when there is a formal criterion (e.g., accent) allowing differentiation between the homonyms; see the wording of the etymology of γαυλός/γαῦλος in the *Et.Gen.* (2.3): γαυλός ‘milk-vase’ cannot come from γάλα because this etymology cannot be correct for γαῦλος ‘kind of boat’. Only the derivation from *γῶ ‘to contain’ can account for both.

Tab. 1: The two types of relationship between two meanings of one and the same word.

Subtype 1	Subtype 2
<p style="text-align: center;">etymon</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↙ ↘</p> <p style="text-align: center;">meaning A meaning B</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">etymon</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">meaning A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">meaning B</p>

In subtype 1, the two meanings are on the same level. In subtype 2, there is a hierarchy between them.

An instance is provided by the word ἀκτή. Two explanations are transmitted as Philoxenus’.

ἀλφίτου ἀκτὴν· [...] ἢ ὅτι ὥσπερ ὁ εἰς θάλασσαν καθήκων τόπος ἔσχατος ὢν τῆς ἡπείρου ἀκτὴ λέγεται, οὕτω καὶ τὸ ἔσχατον τοῦ ἀλεύρου εἶναι [...]. ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄσσεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ μύλου καθάπερ καὶ τὰ κύματα τῆς θαλάσσης ἐν τῷ αἰγιαλῷ, ὃς ἀκτὴ καλεῖται. οὕτως Φιλόξενος εἰς τὸ Ῥηματικὸν αὐτοῦ.

Philoxenus, fr. 362 (= *Et.Gen.*, alpha 560)

ἀλφίτου ἀκτὴν [...] or because, as the place of the dry land closest to the sea is called ἀκτὴ ‘promontory’, similarly the upmost part of the grain <is called ἀκτὴ> [...]. Or from the fact it is broken by the millstone, very much like the waves of the sea <break> on the seashore, which is called ἀκτὴ. Thus says Philoxenus in his *On deverbial nouns*.

The first explanation assumes that ἀκτὴ² ‘corn, flour’ is a metaphorical use of ἀκτὴ¹ ‘promontory’, therefore there is no need to provide an etymology for ἀκτὴ² (subtype 2). Whether this explanation comes from Philoxenus is not certain. The second assumes that both ἀκτὴ¹ and ἀκτὴ² are derived from ἄγνυμι ‘to break’: the two meanings are accounted for independently out of the same etymon (subtype 1). This etymology is clearly by Philoxenus. Porphyry states that only the first explanation (metaphorical use, subtype 2) is correct:

καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις ἔφη “μυληφάτου ἀλφίτου ἀκτῆς” (β 355). ἔστι δὲ ἡ ἀκτὴ οὐ τὸ κατεαγμένον, ὥς τινες, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐξέχον, ἐκ μεταφορᾶς τῶν κατὰ τοὺς αἰγιαλοὺς ἐξοχῶν, ἃς ἀκτὰς λέγει· ἀκτὴ ἐπὶ προύχουσῃ (ω 82)· τὸ ἄκρον οὖν καὶ ἐξέχον τοῦ ἀλφίτου.

Porphirii quaestionum Homericarum ad Odysseam pertinentium reliquiae = Schol. Od. η 104f Pontani

And elsewhere he says “μυληφάτου ἀλφίτου ἀκτῆς” “of mill-ground barley meal” (*Od.* 2.355). And ἀκτὴ is not the ‘broken’ one, as some say, but the top, by metaphor from the promontories

of the seashore, which he calls ἀκτάς (“ἀκτῇ ἐπὶ προύχουσῃ” *Od.* 24.82 “on a prominent promontory”). Thus, it is the upmost part and the top of the corn.

Of course, we can expect the dissociating approach to be over-represented in etymological lexica: their aim was to collect the different etymologies proposed, and in that perspective, better two etymologies than one. This approach deals with those words as homonyms in the modern sense, although it does not call them homonyms. The different meanings are unrelated independent units, each of which can have their own etymology. And many cases of multiple etymologies come from that approach. As alternative etymologies, complementary etymologies often end up in later compilations with the default formulation “from X or from Y,” where the unequivocal relationship between one context (one meaning) and one etymology is lost. See for instance what ὄμιλος becomes in Orion:

Ὅμιλος. παρὰ τὸ ὁμοῦ εἰλεῖσθαι· ἢ παρὰ τὸ ὁμοῦ τὰς ἴλας ἔχειν.

Orion, *Etymologicum*, omicron, p. 118

Nothing is said about context (ἐπὶ στρατιᾶς vs ἐπὶ πλήθους in the scholia, see above). As a result, the two etymologies appear as equivalent and seem to be valid for the word generally speaking, whereas they are in fact valid for the word only in a specific context.

The analysis of the examples below will show more precisely what the method was, and how the presentation in Byzantine compilations often creates a mess.

3.2 ‘Room’: θάλαμος

The opposition between two different solutions to the problem of polysemy, that is, between the unifying and dissociating approaches, is not always clearcut. Let us start with a word for which the two approaches clearly appear, that of θάλαμος:

θάλαμος κυρίως ἐστὶν οἶκος ἐν ᾧ κατακλείονται αἱ νυμφεύμεναι, ὅτι θάλλουσαι τῇ ἡλικίᾳ συνέρχονται γάμῳ· καταχρηστικῶς δὲ νῦν ὅλας τὰς οἰκίας θαλάμους εἶπεν ὁ Πίνδαρος.

Scholia in Pindarum, O. 5.29h

θάλαμος properly refers to the room into which young spouses are shut, because they arrive to marriage in the flower of age. But by extension, Pindar uses θάλαμος for the whole house.

The word means ‘room’ or ‘bedroom,’ and in particular ‘bridal room,’ and its meaning did not change much over time. The scholiast applies here the unifying approach for what is by our modern criteria a clear case of polysemy: a proper meaning (κυρίως, ‘bridal room’), a derived meaning (καταχρηστικῶς, ‘house’) and only

one etymology corresponding to the proper meaning (θάλλω, ‘to flourish’). This etymology explains the word according to a characteristic, not of the referent (the bedroom) but of the people who enter it (the married couple, necessarily young and beautiful), by metonymy. However weird, this etymology is frequently found in Antiquity.⁴⁰ Notice that the scholiast does not say “θάλαμος means ‘room’ in general, hence the contextual meanings ‘bridal room’ by specialization or ‘house’ by extension.” He starts from a specific meaning, ‘bridal room,’ and derives from it another contextual use. This is consistent in Greek lexicography: the ‘proper’ meaning is always a specific contextual meaning, never an abstract meaning cut from a context. That is, the Greeks may deem proper a meaning that is considered derived by modern lexicography.

Other lexicographers, according to the dissociating approach, do not try to derive one meaning from the other, but deal with the two different meanings as distinct and justify them through two different etymologies:

θάλαμος· σημαίνει δύο· (1) καὶ εἰ μὲν σημαίνει τὸν νέον οἶκον, ἐν ᾧ εἰσέρχεται ἡ τε νύμφη καὶ ὁ νυμφίος, γίνεται παρὰ τὸ θάλλω· δεῖ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ θάλλοντα εἰσέναι σώματα, τουτέστιν ἀκμάζοντα· (2) εἰ δὲ σημαίνει τὴν οἰκίαν, γίνεται παρὰ τὸ θάλπω, τὸ θερμαίνω.⁴¹

Epimerismi homerici, theta 15

θάλαμος: (1) if it refers to the new home into which come the bride and the groom, it comes from θάλλω ‘to flourish’, because bodies have to enter the θάλαμος flourishing, that is, at their best and not when they have faded away. (2) but if it refers to the house, it comes from θάλπω ‘to heat’, as a kind of θάλπαμος ‘heated room’.

Etymology 1, θάλλω, is the same as in the scholion to Pindar. Etymology 2, θάλπω, relies on a characteristic of the referent and corresponds to the use ‘by extension’ described by the scholiast. It is less unexpected for an architectural element than etymology 1, θάλλω. It implies a formal manipulation (πάθος ‘accident’), the dropping of the [p].⁴²

⁴⁰ See for instance *Schol. Od.* α 425d Pontani: θάλαμος ὁ ἐνδοτάτω οἶκος, (1) παρὰ τὸ θάλλειν ἅμα “θάλαμος is the inner-most room; it comes from θάλλειν together (ἅμα = the married couple).”

⁴¹ Same definition in *EM*, p. 441: θάλαμος· (1) εἰ μὲν σημαίνει τὸν νέον οἶκον, ἐν ᾧ εἰσέρχεται ἡ τε νύμφη καὶ ὁ νυμφίος, γίνεται παρὰ τὸ θάλλω· δεῖ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ θάλλοντα εἰσέναι σώματα, τουτέστιν ἀκμάζοντα καὶ μὴ ἀπεσβηκότα· (2) εἰ δὲ σημαίνει τὴν οἰκίαν, γίνεται παρὰ τὸ θάλπω, τὸ θερμαίνω, θάλπαμός τις ὢν.

⁴² This example even became canonical: στρατός· ὄνομα ῥηματικὸν παρὰ τὸ στρέφω, ἐνθεν τὸ ἔστραπται στραπτός καὶ ἐνδεία τοῦ π, ὡς ἐν τῷ θάλπω θάλπαμος καὶ θάλαμος, γίνεται στρατός “στρατός comes from στρέφω, from which one has the passive perfect ἔστραπται, hence στραπτός, and by dropping the [p], as in θάλπω, θάλπαμος and θάλαμος, one obtains στρατός” (*Epimerismi homerici*, sigma 52). This text confirms that, even though for θάλαμος etymology 1 is much more

The etymology by θάλπω may have been already known to Soranus of Ephesus:

ταῦτα τοίνυν ἐμβάλλονται εἰς τὰς λεγομένας θαλάμους τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν· θάλαμος δὲ λέγεται τὸ ἔσω τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ, ἐν ᾧ οἱ χιτῶνες ἐνοῦνται, καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ φῶς ἐνοικεῖ· (2) παρὰ γὰρ τὸ θάλπειν γίνεταί θάλπαμος καὶ θάλαμος· (1) ἐξ οὗ καὶ οἱ νέοι θαλαμεύονται· δεῖ γὰρ θάλλοντα τὰ σώματα ἔχοντας εἰς ταυτὸν συνιέναι.

Meletius, *De natura hominis*, pp. 62–63 Cramer = MPG 64.1164 D

these come into what we call the chambers of the eyes; θάλαμος is the internal part of the eye, where the tunics unite, and where light has its seat;⁴³ (2) it comes from θάλπειν, θάλπαμος and θάλαμος; (1) and from there young people are wedded (lit. led into the *thalamos*, θαλαμεύονται), because they have to unite in the θάλαμος when their bodies are flourishing.

θάλαμος, οἷονεὶ θάλαμὸς τις ὢν, παρὰ τὸ θάλπειν.⁴⁴ διότι δεῖ θάλλοντα τὰ σώματα ἔχοντας εἰς αὐτοὺς εἰσιέναι, καὶ ἀπεσβεβηκότα.

Et.Gud., theta, p. 253

As per Winter, the source is an abridged copy of Orion's *Etymologicum*, which was also the source of the *Gudianum*.⁴⁵ That is, the ultimate source for the etymology by θάλπω for the medical meaning of θάλαμος 'chamber of the eye' may be Soranus (fr. 70 Scheele). Whether the latter was simply applying to the medical meaning an etymology proposed by others for the general meaning 'house,' or was the author of the etymology, remains unknown.

In the formulation of the *Epimerismi homerici*, we have a clear case of complementary etymology (one word, two contextual meanings, two etymologies). How it was presented in Orion remains unclear,⁴⁶ but the presentation in Meletius and in the *Gudianum* is confused, and a fundamental element is missing, namely the two meanings the etymologies are supposed to explain: two different explanations are piled up, and the link between them is logically flawed ("it comes from θάλπω

frequent in our sources than etymology 2, the latter was taught in schools and used as a model to explain other words.

⁴³ In the Greek conception the eye is the source of the light, and projects light rays onto the exterior world.

⁴⁴ The explanation in the *Gudianum* is different: the word is parsed as a compound of θάλπω + αἷμα.

⁴⁵ Winter 1893, 103. Renehan (1984, 160) argues for the opposite, i.e. that Meletius had direct access to Soranus' text and was not drawing from the *Etymologicum*. In the case of the *Περὶ ἐτυμολογιῶν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, Winter is certainly correct and the source of Meletius was Orion, and not directly Soranus, but a more complete Orion than the versions we now have, none of which preserves the etymology of θάλαμος.

⁴⁶ The *EM* has a coherent formulation (see above, fn. 26) taken from the *Epimerismi homerici* and not from Orion.

because the couple must have θάλλοντα σώματα”). Since the incorrect chaining is the same in both, the mistake comes from their common source, the copy of Orion: the copyist who produced the copy of the *Etymologicum* used by Meletius and the *Gudianum* did not understand that these were parts of a system, pairing contextual meaning and etymology.

3.3 ‘Skin’: δέρμα

An instance of mixing the two approaches comes with the word δέρμα.

δέρμα· (1) κυρίως ἐπὶ ἀλόγων· παρὰ τὸ δέρω, τὸ ἐκδέρω· (2) ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν λοιπῶν ζώων, παρὰ τὸ τέρμα εἶναι τοῦ σώματος, ὃ ἐστὶ πλήρωμα· τροπῇ τοῦ τ εἰς δ, δέρμα· ἔξωθεν γὰρ ἐπιβέβληται παντὶ τῷ σώματι.

EM, p. 257, l. 40–44

δέρμα ‘skin’, (1) is properly used for animals, and it comes from δέρω ‘to skin’; (2) but for the other living beings it is so named from the fact that it is the limit (τέρμα) of the body, which is the filling; by changing the [t] into [d], one obtains δέρμα; as a matter of fact, it is applied on the whole body from outside.

The problem here is a consequence of semantic evolution: originally, δέρμα is the skinned hide, from δέρω. This is the only meaning of δέρμα in Homer. The word, however, took on the more general meaning of the ‘skin’ of an animal, dead or alive, and could subsequently be applied to humans, replacing the older χρώς used in Homer. By losing the semantic feature [+SKINNED], the word underwent a semantic widening, which eventually made it the unmarked word for ‘skin,’ whatever the context. This is already the case in Hesiod, *Op.* 514, where δέρμα refers to the skin of a living animal. The result of this semantic evolution is that δέρμα can refer to two different πράγματα: the skinned hide and the skin. Modern linguists consider this a case of polysemy, the signified being related and the difference resulting from a historical evolution, and assume one etymology.

The presence of the word κυρίως for the Homeric meaning suggests that the *EM* condenses into one what are two different explanations: one follows the unifying approach, distinguishing a proper meaning (skinned hide, κυρίως), the older one, and a meaning by extension (skin of a living animal or human being, καταχρηστικῶς) — but only the first part of this explanation would have been kept; the second explanation follows the dissociating approach and provides two different etymologies — the second, by τέρμα, comes from Orion (*Etymologicum*, delta, p. 45), and maybe ultimately from Soranus (fr. 51 Scheele). Once again, there is no attempt

to abstract the smallest common denominator from the two meanings by saying “it means ‘skin’ in general.”

The dissociating approach logically concludes from the difference in nature between the two referents that, since etymology is meant to reveal the true nature of the πρᾶγμα under consideration, there must be two different etymologies. Obviously, the etymology justifying the meaning ‘skinned hide’ cannot account for the use of δέρμα to refer to human skin, so a different etymology is assumed, which in its turn cannot account for the meaning ‘skinned hide’: τέρμα ‘limit’ can apply to the skin as marking the outer limit of the body, not to the skin separated from the body, because in the latter case it is no longer the limit of anything. The etymologies are not simultaneously true, because they refer to two successive states of the skin, which cannot coexist in extra-linguistic reality. Each is correct only in a given context: when the etymology by δέρω is correct, the etymology by τέρμα is not, and *vice versa*. They do not “supplement each other,” in Sluiter’s words,⁴⁷ because the one is not added to the other, but they are complementary, each of them accounting for a different context. They are not alternative etymologies: there is no choice between the two in a given context. That is, between the plural etymology assumed by Socrates for theonyms, where several etymologies can be true at the same time, and the alternative etymologies exemplified in 1., where among several etymological hypotheses only one is correct, complementary etymologies make a third type, where several etymologies can be correct for one and the same word, but not at the same time and not in the same context.

However, what happened to alternative etymologies was also the fate of complementary etymologies: in the work of compilers, they often appear with the same default formulation. Thus, in Meletius, the same two etymologies appear in a series of etymologies coordinated by ἢ (with two others added, by δέμα ‘bound’ and δέμας ‘body’):

Τὸ δὲ δέρμα (2) ὥσπερ τέρμα τοῦ σώματος, ἐξωθεν ἐπιβέβληται παντὶ τῷ σώματι· (3) ἢ οἶον δέμα, τὸ συνισχηκὸς τὸ σῶμα καὶ συνδεσμοῦν· (1) ἢ οἶον δέρμα, παρὰ τὸ ἀποδέρεσθαι ὡς ἐπὶ τῶν ζώων· (4) ἢ οἶον δέμας, διὰ τὸ καὶ τὸ σῶμα οὕτως καλεῖσθαι, ὅτι δεσμός ἐστι τῆς ψυχῆς.

Meletius, *De natura hominis*, p. 132 Cramer = MPG 64.1269 A

This looks like a plural etymology, but it is not: it is the reformulation of a complementary etymology, in which only the etymological explanations are kept, while the indications about the context in which they are valid have been erased, because Meletius (or his source) did not understand the relationship between the different etymologies proposed.

⁴⁷ Sluiter 2015, 912.

About the added etymologies: 2 and 3 may be alternative etymologies for the same context, skin on a living being, which is either the outer limit (2, τέρμα) or what binds the body parts together (3, δέμα),⁴⁸ as opposed to etymology 1, which applies to the hide of an animal. As a matter of fact, the same etymological notice can combine alternative and complementary etymologies (see below, 4).

3.4 ‘Throat’: δειρή

We find a similar case for the name of the throat.

δειρή (Γ 371)· ἐκ τοῦ δέρω δέρη καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ι δειρή· κυρίως <καὶ> ἀπὸ μεταφορᾶς κατὰ τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ μέρος πρῶτον ἄρχονται ἐκδέρεσθαι τὰ ζῶα· ἀπὸ δὲ τούτου μετῆλθεν ἐπὶ τῶν {λοιπῶν} ἀνθρώπων.

Epimerismi homerici, delta 46

δειρή: from δέρω ‘to skin’, δέρη and through adjunction of the [i], δειρή. In the proper meaning and through metaphor: because animals are skinned starting from this part; and from then it was used also for humans.

κυρίως μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν τετραπόδων, διὰ τὸ ἐκεῖθεν ἐκδέρεσθαι· καταχρηστικῶς δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

Meletius, *De natura hominis*, p. 91 Cramer = MPG 64.1208 A

properly said of quadrupeds because they are skinned starting from there, but by extension also said of humans.

This explanation follows the unifying approach, with a proper meaning and a derived one, and only gives one etymology, corresponding to the proper meaning. It is in fact already found in Apollonius, although the wording is not explicitly ‘proper’ vs ‘extended’:

δειρή ὁ τράχηλος· κέκληται δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν τετραπόδων, διὰ τὸ ἀπὸ τούτων τῶν μερῶν ἄρχεσθαι δείρεσθαι.

Apollonius, *Lexicon homericum*, Bekker p. 56

δειρή is the throat. It is thus called from the animals, because they are skinned starting from that part.

In Apollonius’ formulation (or rather in the summary which has come down to us), the ‘extended’ part is missing. Once again, the ‘proper’ meaning is a contextual one:

⁴⁸ See also *Additamenta in Et.Gud.*, delta, p. 347: Δέρμα· τὸ συνεσχηκὸς τὸ σῶμα, οἷον δέμα [τ]ι ὄν.

the lexicographer does not say “δειρή means ‘throat,’ whether human or animal,” but incorporates a contextual feature.⁴⁹ That is, instead of a context-independent [THROAT], he distinguishes two context-dependents, [THROAT] [+ANIMAL] and [THROAT] [–ANIMAL]. The etymology by δέρω ‘to skin’ implies that the ‘proper’ meaning is the first one, [THROAT] [+ANIMAL]. Thereby we can see how etymology can play a role in the selection of the ‘proper’ meaning among several. The same principle is also used in modern linguistics, but of course our notion of etymology is different from the Greek one — and in that case, δειρή has nothing to do with δέρω.

δέρη· Ὅπερ καὶ δειρά καλεῖται· καὶ ἐκ τούτου δειροτομήσαι. Κυρίως δὲ δέρη καὶ δειρά καλεῖται ἐπὶ τῶν τετραπόδων, ὃ τῶν ἀλόγων ζώων τράχηλος, διὰ τὸ ἐντεῦθεν ἐκδέρεσθαι· καταχρηστικῶς δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ ἀνθρώπων. Ἔστι δὲ παράγωγον παρὰ τὸ δέρω, δέρα, καὶ δέρη Ἰωνικῶς, καὶ δειρή· ἢ κατὰ πλεονασμὸν τοῦ δ, εἰρά τις οὔσα, παρὰ τὸ εἶρειν, τὸ λέγειν, ἢ φωνητικὴ· ἢ παρὰ τὸ ῥεῖν τὴν ἐδωδὴν· ἢ παρὰ τὸ τὰ χορηγούμενα δεῖν, ἡγουν δεσμεῖν.

EM, p. 256–257

δέρη: also called δειρά, from which comes δειροτομήσαι ‘to cut the throat’. Properly called δέρη and δειρά when it applies to animals, it refers to the neck of animals, because they are skinned starting from there; and by extension also to humans. It is a derivative from δέρω, δέρα, and δέρη in Ionic, and δειρή; or it is, through addition of the [d], a *ειρά, as it were, from εἶρειν ‘to speak’, the speaking one; or from the fact that food flows through it; or from the fact that it binds together the food supply.

The notice of the *EM* consists of two parts: the first one, shared with Meletius, repeats the unifying explanation and comes from Orion. The second one adds different etymologies, the first of which (δέρω) repeats the one already given in the first part. This means two sources have been stitched together. The etymologies are coordinated by ἢ, but they are not alternative etymologies: the second, ἢ κατὰ πλεονασμὸν τοῦ δ, εἰρά τις οὔσα, παρὰ τὸ εἶρειν, τὸ λέγειν, ἢ φωνητικὴ, is clearly meant only for the human throat, that is, for the derived meaning, whereas the first was meant for the proper meaning. This suggests that someone once proposed a complementary etymology, of the type “δειρή comes from δέρω when it refers to animals, because they are skinned starting from the throat, but it comes from εἶρω when it refers to humans, because the throat is the speaking one.” One can suspect that such a distinction for a word which in itself is not polysemous and always means ‘throat’ is in fact a consequence of the etymology by δέρω: the latter seemed impossible for the human throat, and a different etymology had to be designed. The structure of the complementary etymology is partly lost in the *EM*, presumably

⁴⁹ This integration of contextual, non-essential features reanalysed as essential features of the word is a major cause of semantic evolution, which Croft (2000, 121) labelled hyperanalysis.

because, since the two different contexts were already mentioned in the opposition κυρίως vs καταχρηστικῶς, the compiler considered it sufficient to add the etymologies (first δέρω, then εἴρω) without saying to which context they applied, leaving it to the reader to restore the pairs. Or he may not even have understood the structure of the source notice, since he uses the default formulation ἢ between the two parts of the complementary etymology (the source from which he was copying may have been itself a copy by a scribe who did not understand). Then he adds a third etymology, παρὰ τὸ ρέειν τὴν ἐδωδὴν, which is probably an alternative etymology (again with ἢ) coming from a third source,⁵⁰ and a fourth, by δέω ‘to bind’, presumably also an alternative etymology.

In the case of δειρή, as in the case of δέρμα, the *EM* juxtaposes different explanations reflecting two different approaches, the unifying one (explicit in the case of δειρή, truncated in the case of δέρμα) and the dissociating one (explicit in the case of δέρμα, not in the case of δειρή). This shows that for Byzantine compilers, there was no incompatibility between them, probably because they did not understand what was at stake. Below what appears at first sight to be a piling up of etymologies there used to be a coherent structure, which we have to reconstruct.

3.5 ‘Carpet’: τάπης

The preceding examples allow us to take as a main criterion the fact that a given signifier can apply to two different referents (one λέξις but two πράγματα). However, the principle of complementary etymology has also been extended to cases where there is only one referent, but two different uses of it. An case in point is Eustathius’ treatment of the name of the carpet.

Οἱ δὲ τάπητες πολλαχοῦ φαίνονται ὑποκεῖσθαι κατὰ τι εἶδος στρωμνῆς, ὅποια ἴσως καὶ τὰ καλούμενα ἐπεύχια. διὸ καὶ ἡ πολλὴ ἐτυμολογία ἐκ τοῦ πατεῖσθαι αὐτὰ παράγει. εἰ δέ τις μάθοι ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς τὸ “δέμνια θεῖναι καὶ ῥήγεια ἐμβαλεῖν στορέσαι τ’ ἐφύπερθε τάπητας” ἕτερόν τι νοήσει τοὺς τάπητας, οὓς οἱ παλαιοὶ μεταβολεῖς τῶν λέξεων ἐν πρὸς ἐν φράζοντες ἐφαπλώματα ἐρμηνεύουσι, συγκροτούμενοι ἐκ τοῦ “ἐφύπερθεν.” καὶ ἀργεῖ ἐνταῦθα ἢ ἐκ τοῦ πατεῖν ἐτυμολογία. κρεῖττον δὲ ἢ ἐκ τοῦ θάλλω εἰπεῖν κατὰ τοὺς παλαιούς θάλλης, καὶ μεταθέσει Ἰωνικῇ καὶ ἐκβολῇ τοῦ λ, τάπης, ἢ ἐκ τοῦ ταφών, ὃ ἐκπλαγεῖς τάφης καὶ τάπης ὃ τὸν ὀρώντα ἐκπλήττων.

Eustathius, *Comm. Il.*, vol. 4, 894

⁵⁰ This etymology is probably modelled after the etymology of τράχηλος: παρὰ τὸ δι’ αὐτοῦ ρεῖν, ἦτοι τρέχειν τὴν τροφήν· οἷον τρύχαλος (Meletius, *De natura hominis*, p. 91 Cramer = *MPG* 64.1205 D); it was transferred from ‘neck’ to the quasi-synonym ‘throat’ with the necessary adaptation (ρέω provides the end of the word and a word like ἐδητύς ‘food’ provides the initial syllable).

The carpets are often said to be placed below something, in the manner of a mattress, maybe similar to what we call *epeukhia*. This is why the usual etymology derives their name from πατεῖσθαι ‘to be treaded on’. But if one read in what follows the line “to put mattresses and blankets, and to put carpets over them,” he will understand the carpets as something different, which the ancients, through literal word to word translation, explain as covers (ἐφασπλώματα), figuring it out from the ‘over’ (ἐφ’ ὑπερθεῖν). And here the etymology by πατεῖν ‘to tread on’ does not work. It is better to say the word comes from θάλπω ‘to heat’, with the ancient scholars, *θάλπη, and through Ionic metathesis and dropping of the [l], τάπη, or from ταφών ‘astonished’, the one who is astonished, *τάφης and τάπη, that which astonishes the one who sees it.

Eustathius mentions several times the etymology through πατέω ‘to tread on’, because carpets are on the ground and one walks on them (*Comm. Il.*, vol. 2, 698; vol. 3, 35; vol. 4, 968; *Comm. Od.*, vol. 1, 66). But in *Il.* 24.645 the carpets are put, not on the floor, but over the bed on which Priam will sleep. In that particular context, the carpet cannot be defined as that on which one walks. Therefore, only for this context, he assumes a different etymology by θάλπω, which was in Orion according to the *EM* (p. 746: ἐτυμολογεῖ δὲ αὐτὸ Ὠρίων παρὰ τὸ θάλπω, θάλπη· καὶ μεταθέσει τοῦ θ εἰς τ, καὶ ἀποβολῇ τοῦ λ, τάπη) and probably goes back to Herodian (Lentz III/1, p. 108),⁵¹ because here the carpet is used as a blanket, whose function it is to provide heat. It is a complementary etymology: here the differentiation is not a matter of two different πράγματα, as the same object can be used as a carpet or as a blanket; it is a matter of two different functions materialized by two different positions of the referent with respect to the human body, in two different contexts. Here again the incorporation of a contextual feature (the position of the object) in the meaning of the word leads to a distinct meaning and a different etymology. Eustathius explicitly states that the two etymologies are not valid at the same time (ἀργεῖ ἐνταῦθα ἢ ἐκ τοῦ πατεῖν ἐτυμολογία), because the same object cannot fulfill both functions at the same time. The third etymology provided, by ταφών, can only be understood as an alternative etymology suggested for this particular context: τάπη used as a blanket comes either from θάλπω or from ταφών, and Eustathius leaving the two possibilities open.⁵²

⁵¹ See on the Etygram online dictionary, <http://appsweb-cepam.unice.fr/etygram/node/614>.

⁵² One should not be confused by some formulations apparently assuming explicitly the existence of plural etymology: Eustathius, *Comm. Il.*, vol. 4, 481 (*ad Il.* 21.181) χολάδες δὲ οὐ μόνον παρὰ τὴν ξανθὴν χολήν, ὡς προεδέηλωται, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ τὴν κοιλότητα, ὡς φασιν οἱ παλαιοί, οἷον εἰ κοιλάδες τινές, κοῖλα γὰρ καὶ τὰ ἐντέρα εἰσιν, ἢ καὶ ὡς τῆς τροφῆς, ἣν κόλον λέγεσθαι δηλοῖ Ἀθήναιος, αὐτόθι καταντῶσης, ὡσανεὶ κοιλάδες τινές. “The word χολάδες ‘bowels’ is etymologized not only from χολή ‘yellow gall’, as shown above, but also from the fact they are hollow, as the Ancients say, as though they were *κοιλάδες. Because the intestines are hollow, too, or also because the food, which is called

Here again, in Byzantine *Etymologica* we find the default presentation with ἦ, and all the etymologies proposed are put on the same level, without mention of the different contextual meanings to which they apply:

Τάπητες· Ἐπιβόλαια, ἢ στρώματα. Οὕτως Ἀριστοφάνης. Ἐτυμολογεῖ δὲ αὐτὸ Ὡρίων παρὰ τὸ θάλπῳ, θάλπη· καὶ μεταθέσει τοῦ θ εἰς τ, καὶ ἀποβολῇ τοῦ λ, τάπης. Ἡ δάπης καὶ τάπης. Ἡ παρὰ τὸ θάπτῳ, θάφης καὶ τάπης· ἢ παρὰ τὸ πατῶ, πάτης καὶ τάπης.

EM, p. 746

3.6 Adjectives: δαΐφρων

This technique did not apply only to nouns, but also to other parts of speech (see the example of ἀργός above, 3.1). There is a famous case from Homer: the adjective δαΐφρων:

δαΐφρων· ὁ πολεμικὸν φρόνημα ἔχων· (1) παρὰ τὴν δαΐδοτικὴν καὶ τὸ φρήν· τῆς δὲ δαΐδοτικῆς ἢ εὐθεΐα δαΐς· [...] Ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ “κουριδῆς <τ>· ἀλόχοιο δαΐφρονος” (ο 356) οὐ σημαίνει τὴν πολεμικὴν, ἀλλὰ τὴν σῶφρονα καὶ συνετήν. (2) καὶ γέγονε παρὰ τὸ δαῶ, τὸ μανθάνω, ὁ μέλλων δαήσω καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ δαΐφρων.

Epimerismi homerici, delta 57

κόλος as shown by Athenaeus, ends up there, as though they were *κολάδες.” Eustathius does not mean thereby that the same word goes back to three etyma, but that next to the etymology he already mentioned (χολάδας τὰ έντερα λέγει, έπει εἰς αὐτὰ συρρεῖ ξανθὴ χολή, *Comm. Il.*, vol. 1, 800), there are also two competing ones. Compare the formulation in the Byzantine *Etymologica* έτυμολογεῖται δὲ καὶ παρὰ τὸ X “it is also etymologized from X.” Eustathius always uses this formulation in similar contexts, when he first gives an etymology for a given word as the correct one and later on adds another one. He never uses it when he mentions several etymological hypotheses for a given word discussed for the first time (in that case, he uses the default formulation ἦ). Therefore, the only possible meaning is “this is not the only etymology suggested for that word, there is also another one.” A similar case is found for κήλεος: Eustathius, *Comm. Il.*, vol. 2, 572 (*ad Il.* 8.235) κήλειον δέ, ώς καὶ πρό βραχέων έρρέθη, πῦρ, καὶ Ἰωνικῶς κήλεον, οὐ μόνον παρὰ τὸ κῆαι ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ τὸ κἄλον, ὅ έστι ξύλον. ξύλοις γάρ ώς τὰ πολλὰ διοικονομεῖται ἡ καῦσις, “Κήλειον, as I said shortly above, is the fire, and the Ionic form is κήλεον, it is etymologized not only from κῆαι ‘to burn’ (*Comm. Il.*, vol. 2, 567 Τὸ δὲ κήλεον πῦρ, ὅ έστι καυστικόν, παρὰ τὸ κῆαι κατὰ τὸ δαιδάλεον καὶ τὸ τέλεον παρήκται), but also from κἄλον, that is, ‘wood’. Because burning most of the time is maintained by means of firewood.” These are not plural etymologies. Rather, we are dealing with alternative etymologies: Eustathius mentions first the etymology to which he subscribes, and later on adds “by the way, there is also another one.” His taste for collection makes him record several etymologies, but he does not imply that he believes they are all correct, and the text makes it clear that he favours the one over the other.

δαῖφρων· is the one who has warlike thoughts, from the dative δαί and φρήν ‘spirit’; the nominative of δαί is δαίς [...]; but for the “κουριδής <τ> ἀλόχοιο δαίφρονος” “his legitimate wife” (*Od.* 15.356), it does not mean ‘warlike’, but wise and sensible, and it comes from δαῶ ‘to learn’, the future of which is δαίσω and from there δαῖφρων.

Here the same adjective is used in two different contexts in the Homeric corpus, applied to warriors in the *Iliad*, but also to women in the *Odyssey*. Warrior and woman are two referents of different nature. Instead of retaining one meaning that could fit both contexts, the lexicographer gives two different meanings, each one fit for only one context, and consequently proposes two different etymologies. The divergence between the two meanings results in this case from a synchronic etymology, wrongly relating δαῖφρων to δαί in the context of battle: because the word is always used in the *Iliad* as an epithet of warriors, it was understood as a compound having ‘battle’ (attested in the prepositional phrase ἐν δαί) as its first element,⁵³ and consequently acquired the feature [+MALE] and became marked, and unsuitable for women. As a consequence of this incorporation of a contextual feature, the adjective became polysemous and acquired two different meanings. Instead, the meaning ‘wise’, which is the etymologically correct one by our modern criteria, can account for both contexts because it is not marked, but precisely for that reason it was not retained for all the attested uses. For δαῖφρων there is no trace of any attempt to bridge the gap by means of a proper meaning and a derived one because the two meanings resulting from that process are too far apart. So the dissociating approach applied and led to a complementary etymology.

4 Complementary and alternative etymologies

4.1 ‘Excellence, virtue and valiance’: ἀρετή

I suggested above (3.3) that Meletius’ explanation of δέμμα combines the technique of complementary etymology with alternative etymologies. Meletius was not aware of that, since he puts all the etymologies on a same level with the coordination ἤ.

⁵³ On the etymologies of δαῖφρων, see the Etygram online dictionary. A third explanation understood the word as ‘dividing the mind’: Grintser (2001, 50) assumes that this etymology is implicit in *Od.* 1.48 ἀλλά μοι ἄμφ’ Ὀδυσῆϊ δαῖφρονι δαίεται ἥτορ “my heart is divided about δαῖφρων Odysseus,” and assumes the adjective here means ‘with divided, broken heart’. While the wordplay is clear, it is far from certain that this is an implicit etymology — although it may have been interpreted as an etymology by Greek scholars.

However, there are clear instances of such a combination with a marked hierarchy between both types.

ἀρετή· (1a) παρὰ τὸ ἐρῶ, τὸ ἐπιθυμῶ, ἐρατή, καὶ κατὰ μετὰθεσιν τῶν στοιχείων ἀρετή, ἡ ἐπέραστος κτῆσις, ἣν αἰροῦνται πάντες· (1b) ἢ παρὰ τὸ ἀρῶ ἀρέσω ἀρεστή καὶ ἀρετή, ἡ πᾶσιν ἀρέσκουσα. λέγεται καὶ ἀρετή ἢ κατὰ πόλεμον δύναμις, (2) παρὰ τὸν Ἄρην.

Et.Gen., alpha 1142

ἀρετή ‘virtue’ (1a) comes from ἐρῶ ‘to love’, ‘to desire’, from which ἐρατή ‘desirable’ and through metathesis of the letters ἀρετή, which is the extremely desirable good that everyone prefers. (1b) Or it comes from ἀρῶ ‘to please’, future ἀρέσω, from which *ἀρεστή and then ἀρετή, that which pleases everyone. Is also called ἀρετή power in battle, (2) from Ares.

The semantic evolution here is a specialization. Ἀρετή means ‘value, excellence’ in general, both physically and morally. But in the philosophical vocabulary it became specialized as ‘moral value, virtue’, and this is its usual meaning in *koine* Greek. Therefore, this usual meaning was explained first through an etymology that accounts for the moral connotation: two alternative etymologies are proposed, from ‘to desire’ (1a) or from ‘to please’ (1b): with 1a, ἀρετή is the object, that which is desired, while with 1b ἀρετή is the subject, that which pleases people — the two were originally advocated by different scholars (see 1.3), but the *Genuinum* has the default formulation. But then a different meaning is introduced, as though it were a different word (“is also called ἀρετή...”). This meaning, restricted to poetry, is found in Homer or Pindar, and the word then refers to the physical strength and warlike spirit of a warrior or an athlete, not to a moral quality.⁵⁴

We have in the *Genuinum* a complementary etymology dissociating the philosophical meaning ‘virtue’ and the old meaning ‘valiance’. For the latter, the etymology by Ares, god of war, is valid only in a military context and does not cover the entire semantic range of the word: it cannot account for the meaning ‘virtue’. The two etymologies cannot be true at the same time; they are mutually exclusive in a given context. This complementary etymology incorporates an alternative etymology for only one context (1a or 1b). In this formulation, the structure is clear.

For ἀρετή, we have no trace of an explanation following the unifying approach. If ever a Greek scholar tried to unify the two uses by saying either “there is a proper meaning and a derived one” or “virtue and valiance share a common feature which is the notion of excellence, and the etymology must account for the feature excellence,” this attempt was not preserved in the lexicographical tradition. Trying to

⁵⁴ Greek scholars distinguish two meanings in Homer: see Apion, *Fragmenta de glossis homericis* (Ludwich, *Philologus* 74) ἀρετή β’· ποτὲ μὲν γενικῶς τὴν ἐπαινετὴν ἔξιν. ποτὲ δὲ ὑπομονὴν τοῦ πολέμου.

identify a common feature between the different meanings consists in removing contextual features to consider only the core meaning, common to all uses. Greek scholars, on the other hand, sought to account for all the uses of a word, and included contextual features in their understanding, as we saw. This makes explanations of the unifying type more difficult. And the unifying approach was not as fertile when it comes to producing etymologies, so that the dissociating approach was favoured in etymological lexis, and explanations of the unifying type may have been lost in the course of transmission.

4.2 ‘Body’: δέμας vs σῶμα

Another example combining the two types is found for ‘body’. In Homer, the regular word for the ‘body’ of a living creature is δέμας. In classical Greek, δέμας is a poetic word, and in everyday Greek it has been replaced by σῶμα, which never means ‘body’ in Homer but only ‘corpse, carcass of a dead animal’. That the distinction between living body and dead body is encoded in the lexicon of the Homeric language was well known to ancient scholars.

δέμας· ἰστέον ὅτι σημειοῦνται τὸ δέμας οἱ παλαιοὶ τὸν μὲν ποιητὴν ἐμψυχὸν σώματος θετικόν, ὡς συνδεδεμένον τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ δι’ αὐτῆς συνεστῶτος, τὸ δὲ γε σῶμα ἐπ’ ἀψύχου, τουτέστιν ἐστερημένον τῆς ψυχῆς διὰ τὸ σῆμα [...], τοὺς δὲ μετὰ τὸν ποιητὴν, ἐν οἷς καὶ ὁ Εὐριπίδης ἀδιαφόρως χρᾶσθαι τῇ λέξει ποτέ.

Scholia in Oppianum, Hal. 2.318

you must know that the Ancients signal that the poet uses δέμας for the animate (ἐμψυχον) state of the body, in so far as it is bound (συνδεδεμένον) with the soul and maintained through the soul, and that he uses σῶμα for the inanimate state, that is, the state which has been deprived of the soul because of the grave, but the post-Homeric poets, among whom is Euripides, sometimes use the word with no difference.

Hesiod already uses σῶμα for the living body (*Op.* 540 ἵνα τοι τρίχες ἀτρεμέωσι | | μηδ’ ὀρθαὶ φρίσσωσιν ἀειρόμεναι κατὰ σῶμα “your hairs will not quiver with cold bristle and stand up on end all over your shivering body,” transl. Hine). Hesiod is our first witness of the semantic evolution that saw the widening of the semantics of σῶμα: the feature [+DEAD] is dropped, and the word can now apply both to a dead body and to a living body. The generalization of σῶμα as the unmarked word for ‘body’ made δέμας useless, and hence it was confined to poetry as a stylistically marked variant of σῶμα. The consequence is that, since σῶμα means ‘body’, both dead and living, and since δέμας is in synchrony a stylistic variant of σῶμα, δέμας too can mean both ‘living body’ and ‘dead body’, and the latter use is found in tragedy (*Soph., Ant.* 205: ἀθαπτον δέμας ‘unburied corpse’).

So, lexical replacement here leads to a situation where, instead of two different words with two different meanings (stage 1), there are two words which are synonyms but belong to two different registers, an unmarked word σῶμα and a poetic word δέμας, both with a general meaning ‘body’ (stage 3).

Tab. 2: The diachronic evolution of the words meaning ‘body’.

	stage 1 (Homer)	stage 2 (Hesiod)	stage 3 (class.)
σῶμα	[–LIFE]	[+/-LIFE]	[+/-LIFE]
δέμας	[+LIFE]	[+LIFE]	[+/-LIFE] [+poetic]

Lexicographers, of course, knew the Homeric restriction of σῶμα to ‘corpse’, but the difference between the two referents, corpse and body, led them to follow the dissociating approach. They sought to justify the two uses, not by semantic evolution, because they did not conceive language in terms of diachrony, not in terms of proper vs derived meaning, but by providing each use with its own etymology. And that implied doing the same for δέμας. Instead of an explanation distinguishing an older state of affairs, that of Homeric Greek, and a modern state of affairs, that of classical Greek, they came up with an explanation valid for Greek in general, as a timeless language. The result is a strictly synchronic presentation involving complementary etymologies:

δέμας σημαίνει δύο· τὸ ζῶν καὶ τὸ τεθνηκός. (1) καὶ τὸ μὲν ζῶν ἐτυμολογεῖται ἀπὸ τοῦ δέω τὸ δεσμῶ, τὸ συνδεδεμένον ὃν τῇ ψυχῇ. (2) τὸ δὲ τεθνηκός ἀπὸ τοῦ δαμάζω, τὸ δεδαμασμένον οἶον. ὡσαύτως καὶ σῶμα σημαίνει δύο· τὸ ζῶν καὶ τὸ τεθνηκός. (1') καὶ τὸ μὲν ζῶν ἐτυμολογεῖται (1'a) ἀπὸ τοῦ σώον εἶναι, ἡγουν ὑγιές καὶ ὁλόκληρον· (1'b) ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ σώζω, σώσω, σέσωκα, σέσωσμαι καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ σῶσμαι καὶ ἐκβολῇ τοῦ σ σῶμα τὸ σεσωσμένον καὶ ὑγιές ὑπάρχον· ἢ (1'c) ἀπὸ τοῦ ζῶ ζῶμα καὶ διαλύσει τοῦ ζ εἰς σ καὶ δ—τὸ γὰρ ζ ἐκ τούτων σύγκειται καὶ εἰς αὐτὰ πάλιν διαλύεται—καὶ ἐκβολῇ τοῦ δ σῶμα. (2') τὸ δὲ τεθνηκός παρὰ τὸ σημεῖον καὶ μνημεῖον εἶναι τοῦ ποτε ζώντος.

Scholia in Batrachomyomachiam 81

δέμας means two things: the living body and the dead one. (1) For the living body, etymologically it comes from δέω which means ‘to bind’, because it is bound with the soul. (2) For the dead body, etymologically it comes from δαμάζω, the one that has been tamed, for instance. And similarly, σῶμα means two things: the living body and the dead one. (1') For the living body, etymologically it comes (1'a) from σώον εἶναι ‘being safe’, that is, safe and sound (in good health and unharmed); (1'b) or from σώζω, σώσω, σέσωκα, σέσωσμαι and from the latter σῶσμαι, and with dropping of the [s] σῶμα, that which has been saved and is in good health; (1'c) or from ζῶ ‘to live’, ζῶμα, and through dissociation of ζ into [s] and [d] — because ζ is composed of those two letters and can be dissociated back into them — and through dropping

of [d] one obtains σῶμα. But the dead body (2') comes from the fact that it is a sign (σημεῖον), preserving the memory of the once living body.⁵⁵

The structure is as follows:

δέμας living μέν (1), dead δέ (2)
καί σῶμα living μέν (1'a, ἢ 1'b, ἢ 1'c), dead δέ (2')

Here one can clearly see the difference between the types of etymology: the complementary etymologies are coordinated by μέν... δέ..., and the scholiast incorporates into one of them, for 'living body', three possible etymologies, 1'a, 1'b, 1'c, which are alternative etymologies (introduced by ἢ). The scholiast does not say which of 1'a, 1'b, 1'c should be preferred, but only that all three were proposed, by different scholars,⁵⁶ for meaning 1'. The overall structure is similar to the preceding case: alternative etymologies, coordinated by ἢ, are incorporated into a complementary etymology of which the two parts are not coordinated by ἢ because one cannot choose between 1 and 2, or between 1' and 2', as context imposes only one interpretation.

The same combination of alternative and complementary etymologies is also found with other etymological explanations for the same word:

Δέμας· τὸ σῶμα· (1a) παρὰ τὸ δέω τὸ δεσμεύω, τῇ γὰρ ψυχῇ συνδέεται τὸ σῶμα). (1b) Ἡ παρὰ τὸ δεμῶ δέμας· περιδόμημα γάρ ἐστιν τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ σῶμα καὶ οἰκητήριον· (2) τὸ δὲ νεκρὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ δέεσθαι αἵματος.

Et. Symeonis, delta 121

δέμας 'body': from δέω 'to bind', because the body is bound together by the soul; or from δεμῶ 'to build', because the body is the house (περιδόμημα) and dwelling (οἰκητήριον) of the soul. But the dead body is from δέεσθαι αἵματος 'to be deprived of blood'.

Two etymologies are proposed here for the living body (δέω and δεμῶ, 1a and 1b, alternative) and one for the dead body (δέομαι, 2). The etymologies are different, but the structure, a complementary etymology (living body vs corpse) incorporating alternative etymologies coordinated by ἢ and valid for only one context, is the same as in the preceding case.

⁵⁵ The etymology of σῶμα 'corpse' relies on the famous σῶμα/σῆμα found in Plato's *Gorgias* and attributed to Pythagoras.

⁵⁶ The etymology by σώζω comes from Plato (*Crat.* 400c, presented as a correction to the σῶμα/σῆμα etymology), while the etymology by σώος is attested in Orion (*Etymologicum (excerpta e cod. regio 2610)*, p. 183, σῶμα· διὰ τὸ σῶον αἶμα). They are in fact one and the same etymology from our modern point of view, σώζω being a denominative of σώος (older σάος). See the detail on the Etymonline dictionary.

4.3 δαΐφρων again

We saw above that the *Epimerisms* distinguish between two meanings for δαΐφρων, ‘warlike’ and ‘wise’, and provide a different etymology for each (3.6). We may add that for the meaning ‘wise’, after the etymology by a compound of *δαῶ ‘to learn’, the author adds a formal explanation: in first conjugation verbs, the final -ω is replaced in compounds by either ο or ι. And after that he adds a different etymology, by διά + φρήν:

οὕτως καὶ τὸ δαῶ δαήσω δαΐφρων. ἢ παρὰ τὴν διά πρόθεσιν καὶ τὸ φρήν διάφρων (<τῆς διά> σημαίνουσας ἐπίτασιν) καὶ ὑπερβίβασμῳ δαΐφρων.

Epimerismi homerici, delta 57

So *δαῶ “I learn”, δαήσω, δαΐφρων. Or from the prefix διά and φρήν, *διάφρων, (<the διά> meaning intensity), and by transposition δαΐφρων.

This is an alternative etymology within the complementary etymology: the etymon *διάφρων only accounts for the meaning ‘wise’, not for the meaning ‘warlike’. The general structure is: δαΐφρων 1. ‘warlike’ and its etymology is δαΐ ‘battle’ + φρήν, 2. (δέ) ‘wise’ and its etymology is either (2a) *δαῶ ‘to learn’ + φρήν or (ἢ) (2b) *διάφρων.

5 Complementary etymology and morphological analysis

The dissociating approach separates the different contextual meanings of a word and considers them independently of each other. A consequence of that is that morphological analysis, too, is independent, and the different etymologies proposed may rely on two different morphological segmentations.

5.1 ‘Manual’: ἐγχειρίδιον

An example is provided by the word ἐγχειρίδιον, which refers to something that is held ἐν χειρί ‘in the hand’. As such, it is a descriptive term, ‘hand-something’, which can apply to many different objects and is not the name of one object in particular. In Aeschylus (*Suppl.* 21), it refers to the stripes the suppliants hold in their hands. In Theophrastus (*Hist. Plant.* 4.33), it refers to the handle of a tool. But the word became mainly specialized into two different meanings: a hand-sword, a poignard, or a handbook. The meaning ‘poignard’ is already attested in Herodotus and is

common throughout the classical and Hellenistic periods. The meaning ‘handbook’ is later and does not appear before the Roman period.

The formation is transparent, and most authors correctly analyse it and recognize the prepositional phrase ἐν χειρί. But instead of being satisfied with saying “it means something that we hold in the hand, and that can be either a small sword or a small book or anything else (like a handle),” some scholars distinguished the two main uses by way of a complementary etymology:

ἐγχειρίδιον· παρὰ τὸ χεῖρ χειρός χειρίδιον καὶ ἐγχειρίδιον. σημαίνει δὲ β'· (1) τὸ μικρὸν βιβλίον, καὶ γίνεται ὡς προεῖπομεν· (2) σημαίνει δὲ καὶ τὸ μικρὸν ξίφος, καὶ γίνεται παρὰ τὸ ἐγχος ἔγχεος ἐγχειρίδιον καὶ ἐγχειρίδιον, οἷονεὶ τὸ τοῦ ἐγχους ἴδιον.

Et.Gud., epsilon, p. 397

ἐγχειρίδιον: from χεῖρ, χειρός, one obtains χειρίδιον [*suffixation*] and ἐγχειρίδιον [*prefixation*]; and it has two meanings: (1) the small book, and its etymology is as I said; but it means also (2) the small sword, and in that case it comes from ἐγχος, ἔγχεος, *ἐγχειρίδιον and ἐγχειρίδιον, as the part of the ἔγχος which is specific/particular.

Complementary etymology here is in line with the preceding examples and stems from the fact that the word can have two different referents. A book is by nature different from a poignard, so that ‘poignard’ is provided with an etymology that justifies its nature as a weapon, which the general meaning ‘hand-something’ does not. Granted, a poignard is altogether different from a spear (ἐγχος), and the name of the former can hardly be derived from the name of the latter. But that was not taken into account, obviously, and the phonetic sequence ἐγγχει- was enough to etymologize the word via the name of another weapon, although a very different one. Besides, ἔγχος is sometimes used in tragedy with the general meaning ‘weapon’, which may have helped.

We have here two etymologies corresponding to two different morphological analyses. With etymology 1 (by χεῖρ), ἐγ-χειρί-διον or ἐγ-χειρ-ίδιον, the word includes a prefix, with etymology 2 (by ἐγχος), ἐγγχει-ρ-ίδιον, it does not, and is analysed as a compound ἐγγχει + ἴδιον.⁵⁷ In both cases, the noun is identified as an inflected form in the dative, but the boundaries of the noun are different. The *Gudianum* does not explicitly mention the difference in morphological structure, which is apparent from the proposed derivations. Morphology is subordinate to the identification of an etymon, and is deduced from it.

57 It may also be analysed as ἐγγχει + -ίδιον, the diminutive suffix. The οἷονεὶ τὸ τοῦ ἐγχους ἴδιον imposes the analysis as a compound, at least for the redactor of the *Gudianum*.

The fact that two different morphological structures are assumed is also a criterion by which we would distinguish homonyms. But morphology was most of the time not a criterion for Greek etymologists: it was for grammarians, and Apollonius Dyscolus, Herodian or Philoxenus, who worked with definite morphological theories, would have paid attention to that, but all etymologists were not grammarians. The primary criterion remains meaning, and meaning imposes a separation between ‘book’ and ‘poignard’ because these are two different πράγματα. The word ἐγχειρίδιον, polysemous by modern criteria, is dealt with as we would deal with two homonymous words: different morphological analysis and different etymology, basically because there are two different referents. Apparently Herodian only had one explanation, the correct one (ἐγχειρίδιον· βιβλος μικρά καὶ ξίφος· γέγονεν δὲ παρὰ τὴν ἐν χειρὶ δοτικὴν, *De orthographia*, Lentz III/2, p. 495), and the etymology by ἔγχος was added afterwards in order to account specifically for the meaning ‘poignard’.

Etymology 2a of ἐγχειρίδιον ‘poignard’ was taught in schools as we can see from the following example:

λείριον· τὸ ἄνθος, παρὰ τὸ λείτον, ὃ σημαίνει τὸ ὁμαλόν, λείτιον καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ρ λείριον, ὡς ἔγχος ἔγχει ἐγγεῖδιον καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ρ ἐγγχειρίδιον.

Epimerismi homerici, lambda 11

λείριον the lily, the flower, from λείτος, which means ‘even’, one gets λείτιον and though addition of the [r], λείριον, as ἔγχος, ἔγχει, ἐγγεῖδιον and ἐγγχειρίδιον.

This explanation is provided as a model justifying a similar explanation for a different word.

And as can be expected, in late sources the nature of complementary etymology is lost to the default formulation ἥ:

Ἐγχειρίδιον· Βιβλίον, ἢ ἕτερόν τι, ἢ ξίφος, ἢ ὄργανον τμητικόν. Παρὰ τὴν ἐν χειρὶ δοτικὴν ἐγχειρίδιον. Ἡ παρὰ τὴν ἔγχει δοτικὴν καὶ τὸ ἴδιον, ἐγγχει[ρ]ίδιον, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ ρ, ἐγγχειρίδιον, τὸ ἴδιον τοῦ ἐγχους.

EM, p. 313

ἐγχειρίδιον: book, or something else, or a sword, or a cutting tool. From the dative ἐν χειρὶ ‘in the hand’, ἐγγχειρίδιον. Or from the dative ἔγχει ‘spear’ and the word ἴδιον ‘proper’, ἐγγχει[ρ]ίδιον, and with addition of [r], ἐγγχειρίδιον the proper character of the spear.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ The spelling after καὶ τὸ ἴδιον should be ἐγγεῖδιον, which becomes ἐγγχειρίδιον after the addition of [r]. The copyist did not understand and ‘corrected’ ἐγγεῖδιον, which makes the derivation lame.

5.2 ‘Of the black cloud’: κελαινεφής

The principle of distinguishing two different morphological structures for two different meanings is old.

(s.v. τανύηκες) ὥσπερ ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ “κύδιστε μέγιστε κελαινεφές” σύνθετον ἀποδεδώκαμεν τὸ ὄνομα, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ “κελαινεφές αἷμα” παραγωγόν.

Apollonius, *Lexicon homericum*, Bekker p. 149

as we have shown that in “most honored, highest, shrouded in black clouds” (κύδιστε μέγιστε κελαινεφές, *Il.* 2.412) the word is a compound, but in “black blood” (κελαινεφές αἷμα, *Il.* 4.140) it is a derivative.

This is also a complementary etymology, distinguishing between two contexts and two referents: κελαινεφής as an epithet of Zeus is a compound meaning ‘of the black cloud’, appropriate for the god (context A). But in Homer it also appears as an epithet of αἷμα (context B), and of course ‘blood of the black cloud’ is meaningless. The difficulty, which for modern scholars is due to an improper extension of use from the original context (A) to a new one (B), was solved in two different ways.

The unifying approach led some Greek scholars to assume that κελαινεφής, in context B, is a comparative compound meaning ‘as black as a cloud’ (*D Scholion Il.* 4.140 Κελαινεφές. Μέλαν ὡς νέφος), so that the compound admits of two different structures, possessive ‘of the black cloud’ (head-final) in context A, and comparative ‘black as a cloud’ (head-initial) in context B. The two structures coexist in synchrony, which is not unusual for compounds: compare the case of ἀμήχανος (3.1), with two meanings, active and passive. This case is interesting because the unifying approach here does not materialize as the opposition between a proper use and an extended one, but as two possible interpretations of a compound, which modern linguistics formulates in terms of internal syntax of the compound.⁵⁹ In that case, there is only one etymology. The syntagm ὅπὸν ἀργινεφῇ στάζοντα τομῆς ‘the sap, white as a cloud, dripping from the cut’ (Sophocles, fr. 534.2 *TrGF*) is most probably modelled after the Homeric κελαινεφές αἷμα “flowing from the wound,” which implies that this interpretation is fairly old.

But another way of solving the difficulty, which is that found in Apollonius, is to assume that in context A, the adjective is a compound, but in context B, it is a derivative, not a compound, and simply means ‘black’, the -φης being what in modern terms is a suffix, not endowed with a specific meaning. That is, complementary etymology, as in the case of ἐγχειρίδιον, involves two different morphological

59 See the discussion in Le Feuvre 2021, 70.

structures for the same word because the dissociating approach considers each contextual meaning (triggered by a different referent) independently of the other.⁶⁰ Morphology can then be used as a justification of the semantic difference: the meaning is different because the formation is different. But although Greek scholists consider it one λέξις because the signifier is identical, they deal with κελαινεφής exactly as modern linguists deal with homonyms. So does Herodian, who suggests a third explanation, assuming that, as an epithet of ‘blood’, the word is a compound of φαίνω and means ‘black-looking’ blood:

οὕτως ἐκ τοῦ κελαινῷ τὸ μελαίνω καὶ τὸ νέφος γίνεται κελαινεφής κατὰ συγκοπὴν ὡς τανύω τανύπεπλος. ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ αἵματος ἐκ τοῦ φῶ τὸ φαίνω καὶ τοῦ κελαινόν γίνεται κελαινοφής κελαινεφής ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ θηροφόνα θηρεφόνα· καὶ δῆλον ὅτι οὐ συγκοπή. οὕτως Ἡρωδιανός.

Herodian, *Peri pathōn*, Lentz III/2, pp. 259–260 (ap. *EM*, p. 501)

So from κελαινῷ ‘to become black’ and νέφος ‘cloud’ comes κελαινεφής by syncope, as τανύω τανύπεπλος. But applied to blood, from φῶ meaning ‘to appear’ and κελαινόν ‘black’ comes κελαινοφής, κελαινεφής, as in θηροφόνα θηρεφόνα. And it is clearly not a syncope. This is what Herodian says.

The difference between Apollonius’ explanation and Herodian’s reflects the customary opposition between compositional etymology and derivation. And this time Herodian favours composition, because it was better to have a parallelism between the two meanings of the word, as two compounds with the same first member and a different second member.

6 Back to Philoxenus

Let us now come back to the fragments discussed above (2). For the sake of convenience, I repeat here text and translation.

Three different explanations are reported under the name of Philoxenus for μοχλός. Two are found in Orion, and another in the *EM*.

μοχλός. παρὰ τὸ ὁμοῦ καὶ τὴν κλεῖν [ἔχειν] ὠνομάσθαι, ὡς ἅμα αὐτῷ τὴν κλεῖν ἔχειν. οὕτω Φιλόξενος ἐν τῇ Περὶ Ῥωμαίων διαλέκτου (fr. 316 Theodoridis, modified after Koniariis 1980,

⁶⁰ According to Matthaios (1999, 255–256), the analysis found in Apollonius comes from Aristarchus. See also the discussion of the same example by Matthaios (2008, 48) who concludes with this sentence: “ainsi, dans l’analyse ancienne de la formation des mots, la sémantique joue un rôle si important qu’elle annule presque la morphologie.” I would not say that semantics cancels morphology: rather, semantics imposes an alternative morphological analysis.

471). ἀλλαχοῦ δὲ φησί, παρὰ τὸ μολῶ μοχλός, πλεονασμῷ τοῦ χ (fr. 550 Theodoridis). ὁ δὲ Ἡρωδιανὸς παρὰ τὸ ὄχω τὸ συνέχω. ἐπεὶ καὶ Ὅμηρος ὀχῆα λέγει τὸν μοχλόν (*Peri pathōn*, Lentz III/2, p. 175).

Orion, *Etymologicum*, mu, p. 103

μοχλός ‘bolt’: (1) named from ὁμοῦ ‘together’ and κλεῖν, as ‘having the key with itself’. This is what Philoxenus says in his *On the language of the Romans*. (2) But he says elsewhere that μοχλός comes from *μολῶ ‘to walk’ [that is, βλώσκω, ἔμολον], through addition of the *khi*. (3) As for Herodian, he says it comes from *ὄχω ‘to hold together’, since Homer calls the bolt ὀχεύς.

The *Etymologicum Magnum* provides a more detailed account of Philoxenus’ argument.

μοχλός παρὰ τὸ ὁμοῦ ἔχειν τὴν κλεῖν, ὅς ἄμα αὐτῷ τὴν κλεῖν ἔχει. Ἡ παρὰ τὸ μολῶ, πλεονασμῷ τοῦ χ. Ἡ παρὰ τὸ ἔχω, τὸ συνέχω, ὄχος· ἐπεὶ καὶ Ὅμηρος ὀχῆα λέγει τὸν μοχλόν. Ἡ παρὰ τὸ ὀχλεῖν καὶ ὀχλίζειν παρ’ Ὀμήρῳ καὶ ἄλλοις τῶν παλαιῶν, τὸ μετὰ βίας κινεῖν. Σημαίνει καὶ τὸ ὀχλῶ ῥῆμα· τὸ ΜΑ προσήλθεν, ἐπίτασιν δηλοῦν, μάσχος, καὶ μοχλός. Φιλόξενος δὲ φησιν, ὅτι οὐ κατὰ τὴν νῦν χρῆσιν εἴρηται ὁ μοχλός παρ’ Ὀμήρῳ, ἀλλ’ ἐπιβλής (Ω 453) καὶ ὀχεύς (Φ 537, al.) εἴρηται παρ’ αὐτῷ· μοχλὸν γὰρ λέγουσιν οὐ τὸν συνέχοντα τὰς θύρας, φησίν, ἀλλὰ μοχλὸν λέγουσιν, ἡνίκα ἂν δέη μοχλεῦσαι τι καὶ σαλεῦσαι. οὕτως οἶδε τὴν ἐτυμολογίαν τοῦ ὀνόματος ὁ ποιητής· ὅτι παρὰ τὸ ὀχλῶ, τὸ κινῶ καὶ μοχλεύω (fr. 549 Theodoridis).

EM, p. 592

μοχλός: (1) from ‘to hold the key together’, having the key with itself. (2) Or from μολῶ through addition of [kh], (3) or from ἔχω ‘to contain’, ὄχος, since Homer calls the bolt ὀχεύς. (4) Or from ὀχλέω ‘to move’ in Homer and in other old poets, to move with strength. The verb <μοχλεύω> means also ὀχλέω ‘to stir’: the ma- is an adjunction with an intensive meaning, *μάσχος, and μοχλός. Philoxenus says that μοχλός is used in Homer not according to its present use, but next to it there are ἐπιβλής and ὀχεύς; As a matter of fact, they don’t call μοχλός the bolt locking the doors, according to him, but they use the word when something must be stirred and shaken. Thus the Poet knew the etymology of the noun, that it comes from ὀχλῶ ‘to move’, ‘to move with a lever’.

In the first part of the notice, coming from Orion, the etymologies are simply presented as a list where the items are coordinated by ἢ ‘or’, as in the examples under 1, and not attributed to a named grammarian. The second part of the notice, starting with σημαίνει καὶ τὸ ὀχλῶ ῥῆμα, coming from a different source, develops the etymology by ὀχλέω previously mentioned. This etymology, which Theodoridis attributes to the *Commentarium in Odysseam*,⁶¹ is consistent with Philoxenus’ method.

⁶¹ Orion apparently did not use Philoxenus’ *Commentarium in Odysseam* (Theodoridis 1976, 17), which would explain why he did not refer to the third etymology.

The argument relies on the fact that the meaning of μοχλός in Homer is different from the meaning in classical Attic-Ionic: this is the starting point of many complementary etymologies. And this is what we have here. The etymology by ὀχλέω (4) is explicitly meant for the Homeric use and is not adapted to the meaning in Attic-Ionic or in *koine* Greek. To the latter corresponds the etymology by μολεῖν (2), presumably because the bolt is mobile, although no semantic justification is adduced in our sources. Recognizing this pair as a complementary etymology is a further argument against the attribution to Philoxenus of the etymology παρὰ τὸ ὁμοῦ καὶ τὴν κλεῖν ὠνομαῖσθαι (1), which is not congruent with the scholar's method, as said above: in the case of μοχλός only two meanings are distinguished, not three, therefore we expect two etymologies, one for each meaning. Orion has the wrong pairing when he ascribes to Philoxenus etymologies 1 and 2, whereas in fact Philoxenus had etymologies 2 and 4. Etymology 3, by ἔχω, advocated by Herodian, was not in Philoxenus. Maybe etymology 1 was indeed mentioned and discussed by Philoxenus, but rejected by him, and Orion or his abbreviator only indicated that this etymology was found in the Περὶ Ῥωμαίων διαλέκτου without bothering with the discussion.

The same explanation applies to the two etymologies provided for ἀσχάλλω.

Ἀσχαλάαν, παρὰ τὸ ἄχω τὸ λυπῶ· οὗ παθητικὸν ἄχομαι· ‘νῦν δ’ ἄχομαι κακότητι’. παράγωγον ἀχάλλω, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ σ, ἀσχάλλω. οὕτω Φιλόξενος (fr. 451 Theodoridis). ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς φησὶν· παρὰ τὸ σχῶ σχάλλω, καὶ μετὰ τῆς α στερήσεως, ἀσχάλλω (fr. 52 Theodoridis).

Orion, *Etymologicum*, alpha, pp. 20–21

ἀσχαλάαν ‘to be impatient’, (1) from ἄχω ‘to cause grief, the passive of which is ἄχομαι: ‘νῦν δ’ ἄχομαι κακότητι’. A derivative is *ἀχάλλω, and through addition of [s], ἀσχάλλω. This is what Philoxenus says. But the same Philoxenus says: (2) from σχῶ one derives *σχάλλω, and with the privative ἀ-, ἀσχάλλω.

The problem is the coexistence of two different etymologies for the same word, by the same author, in unnamed works: Theodoridis ascribes fr. 52 to the treatise Περὶ μονοσυλλάβων ῥημάτων and gives fr. 451 under “fragmenta incertae sedis.” The first explanation suggested above (2) was that Philoxenus could have changed his mind between writing an earlier treatise and then writing a later one.

But we are now in a position to suggest a different explanation. As it happens, ἀσχάλλω is a polysemous verb that has two different uses, meaning ‘to get angry’ (usual in Attic-Ionic) and ‘to be afflicted’ (Eur., *Or.* 785). These two meanings refer to different extra-linguistic realities: that is the equivalent of being used for different referents for nouns or adjectives. These realities differ enough to allow Philoxenus to give two different etymologies to justify the two meanings, following the dissociating approach. As a matter of fact, the first etymology provided, deriving it

from ἄχομαι, fits the meaning ‘to be afflicted’, not ‘to get angry’.⁶² On the other hand, the second etymology, from σχεῖν (ἔχω) ‘to hold’, fits the meaning ‘to get angry’ since the derivation explains it as a privative compound of ἔχω, literally meaning ‘not to contain oneself’ (intransitive) or, according to the *Genuinum*, ‘not to bear’ (ὁ ἐπέχειν οὐ δυνάμεθα, transitive).⁶³ The *Et.Gen.* adds an important indication, that this etymology comes from the Stoic philosopher Chrysippus (3rd c. BCE),⁶⁴ which is to say that it is older than Philoxenus. The formulation in Orion is elliptic, and the presentation is not that of a complementary etymology. But it agrees with the pattern of the preceding examples. Accordingly, it is likely that Philoxenus, knowing the etymology by Chrysippus, deriving ἀσχάλλω from ἔχω, which was consistent with his own theory on monosyllabic verbs, added another etymology (which is not necessarily his own but may come from a lost source) accounting for the meaning ‘to be afflicted’, resulting in a complementary etymology. As a consequence, both etymologies may have been found together in the same treatise, and fr. 451 may also belong to the *Περὶ μονοσυλλάβων ῥημάτων*: Philoxenus would have given the two etymologies together, even though only one involves a monosyllabic verb. The two etymologies imply two different morphological structures, ἀ-σχάλλω and ἀσχα-άλλω: as we saw, this possibility was already admitted by Aristarchus (κελαινεφής, 4.2), and the morphological difference in turn becomes a means to explain the semantic difference. But Orion did not understand the point made by Philoxenus.

There is probably a similar case for the verb κλαίω.

κλαίω· παρὰ τὸ κλῶ, οὗ παράγωγον κλαίω· κλᾶται γὰρ ἡ τῶν ἀνθρώπων φωνὴ ἐν τῷ τοῦτο πάσχειν. ἢ καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ ἐστὶν ἡ τὸ κλᾶσθαι παρέχουσα (fr. 114 Theodoridis).

Orion, *Etymologicum*, kappa, p. 86

κλαίω: from κλῶ ‘to break’, the derivative of which is κλαίω; because the voice of men is broken when they suffer that. Or it is the soul that shows breaking.

⁶² It is repeated in the Byzantine *Etymologica: Et.Parv.*, epsilon 30: ἔστιν ἄχος, ἡ λύπη· ἐξ αὐτοῦ γίνεται χάλλω καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ Σ σχάλλω καὶ ἀσχαάλλω. *Et.Gen.*, alpha 1332: παρὰ τὸ ἄχω, ἀφ’ οὗ ἄχομαι [...] γίνεται ἀχάλλω, ὡς περ ἄγω ἀγάλλω, εἶδω εἰδάλλω καὶ ἰνδάλλω, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ σ ἀσχαάλλω [...] ἢ παρὰ τὸ σχῶ σχάλλω καὶ ἀσχαάλλω, ὃ ἐπέχειν οὐ δυνάμεθα. οὕτως Χρύσιππος (fr. novum). *Et.Gud.*, epsilon, p. 536 (idem, without the attribution to Chrysippus). Eustathius, *Comm. Il.*, vol. 3, 267: πρωτότυπον δὲ τοῦ ἰάλλω τὸ ἰῶ, τοιούτεστι πέμπω, καθὰ καὶ τοῦ ἀχάλλω τὸ ἄχω πλεονασμῷ τοῦ σ, ὅθεν καὶ τὸ ἄχος καὶ τὸ ἀχνύσθαι. Similarly *Et. Symeonis* and Ps.-Zonaras.

⁶³ This etymology is assumed to be correct by some modern scholars (Dieu 2015). Doubts in Beekes, *EDG*.

⁶⁴ Chrysippus developed at length the etymologies of different words expressing feelings (fr. 416 Arnim), and that etymology could belong there, although it is not listed by Arnim.

κλαίω· παρὰ τὸ καλῶ κλῶ κλαίω· ἐπικαλοῦνται γὰρ τοὺς ἀποθανόντας οἱ κλαίοντες, οἷον “ὦμωξεν δ’ ἄρ’ ἔπειτα, φίλον δ’ ὀνόμηνεν ἑταῖρον” (K 522) (fr. 114a Theodoridis).

Orion, *Etymologicum*, kappa, p. 84

κλαίω: from καλῶ ‘to call’, κλῶ <and> κλαίω; because those who mourn call upon the dead, as in “he moaned and called his companion” (Il. 10.522).

Theodoridis gives the two fragments together as belonging to the *Περὶ μονοσυλλάβων ῥημάτων*, although he adds in the *apparatus criticus* “nescio an ambo Philoxeni sint,” as the attribution to Philoxenus is not explicit in Orion. Theodoridis’ hesitation comes from the apparent contradiction between the two etymologies, not pointed out by Orion, who mentions them in two different places without relating them to each other.

The same explanations are given together in the *Epimerismi homerici*:

κλαίω (B 263): γίνεται διχῶς· 1) ἐκ τοῦ κλῶ, τὸ κλάνω· κλᾶται γὰρ ἡ φωνὴ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν τῷ κλαίειν· 2) καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ κλιῶ, τοῦ, σημαίνοντος τὸ καλῶ, γίνεται κλαίω· εἰώθασι γὰρ οἱ ἄνθρωποι καλεῖν τοὺς ἀποθανόντας ἐν τῷ κλαίειν καὶ θρηνεῖν.

Epimerismi homerici, kappa 25

κλαίω: it has two origins, 1. From κλῶ ‘to break’, because the voice of men breaks when they cry. 2. And from κλιῶ which means ‘to call’, form which one derives κλαίω, because men are used to calling upon the dead when they cry and mourn.⁶⁵

At first sight, this seems to be a case where the same word has two etymologies at the same time (ἐκ τοῦ... καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ). But it is not. It is a complementary etymology distinguishing two contextual uses of κλαίω, intransitive ‘to cry, to weep’ (etymologized from κλάω ‘to break’ in a descriptive etymology), and transitive ‘to mourn’ (etymologized from *κλῶ ‘to call’, hence καλέω, supposedly derived from it). The distinction between the various verbs *κλῶ is explicit in Byzantine sources:

κλῶ, σημαίνει ἕξ, τὸ καλῶ ἕξ οὗ καὶ κληρος· τὸ ἐπαινῶ ἕξ οὗ καὶ κλύω τὸ ἐπαινῶ· τὸ κλάνω ἕξ οὗ καὶ τὸ κλαίω, παρὰ τὸ κεκλᾶσθαι τὴν φωνὴν ἐν τῷ κλαίειν· τὸ φωνῶ καὶ τὸ ἀκούω, ἕξ οὗ καὶ κατὰ παραγωγὴν κλύω κλῶ· τὸ ἐμποδίζω, ἕξ οὗ καὶ κλᾶν τὸ ἐμποδίζειν· καὶ κλῶ τὸ φονεύω, ἦτοι τὰ ποντίζω· καὶ εἰς τὸ εὐκλόνητον, καὶ ἐπὶ κλημα, καὶ κλαίω καὶ κλημα.

Et.Gud., kappa, p. 329

κλῶ has six meanings. 1. ‘to call’ (καλέω) from which is derived κληρος ‘lot’. 2. ‘to approve’, from which is derived κλύω ‘to celebrate’. 3. ‘to break’ (κλάω) from which is derived κλαίω ‘to cry’, because the voice breaks when one cries. 4. ‘to speak’ and ‘to hear’, from which is derived

⁶⁵ Shorter formulation *ibid.* 45: ἐκ τοῦ καλῶ καθ’ ὑπερβιβασμὸν κλάω· εἰώθασι γὰρ οἱ κλαίοντες ἀνακαλεῖν τοὺς τεθνεώτας· ἢ παρὰ τὸ κλῶ, τὸ [κλάνω]· κλᾶται γὰρ ἡ φωνὴ ἐν τῷ κλαίειν.

κλύω ‘to hear’. 5. ‘to impede’, from which is derived κλῆν ‘to impede’. 6. *κλῶ ‘to kill’, that is, to drown. See also the words εὐκλόνητον, ἐπίκλημα, κλαίω and κλημα.

From the same unattested signifier *κλῶ are derived six attested verbs of different meanings. In our modern conception, we would say that there are here six homonyms, because the meanings are unrelated (see 3.1.), but in the Greek conception this is a verb “with several meanings.” The source of the *Gudianum* is Orus’ treatise *Περὶ πολυσημάντων λέξεων*.

Orus took this notice on *κλῶ from Philoxenus’ *On monosyllabic verbs*. It is therefore likely that we have here again a complementary etymology in Philoxenus, and that both fr. 114 and 114a can be attributed to him: since κλῶ3 means ‘to break’ and κλῶ1 ‘to call’, the derivative κλαίω can be related to either one, depending on the context (although the *Gudianum* derives it only from κλῶ3), but not to both at the same time. In fact, there is a κλαίω1 (derived from κλῶ1) and a κλαίω2 (derived from κλῶ3), which are homonyms in the modern sense. But once again, Orion, or the abbreviators of Orion, did not understand the point.

The *Etymologicum Gudianum* has the same notice as the *Epimerismi*, except that the presentation is different:

κλαίω, κλῶ τὸ κλάνω γίνεται κατὰ παραγωγὴν κλαίω· κλᾶται γὰρ ἡ τῶν ἀνθρώπων φωνή, ἐκ τοῦ κλαίειν, καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦτο πάσχουσα· ἢ παρὰ τὸ κλῶ τὸ καλῶ γίνεται κλαίω· ἐπικαλοῦνται γὰρ τοὺς ἀποθανόντας οἱ κλαίοντες, οἷον· ὦμωξέν τ’ ἄρ’ ἔπειτα, φίλον τ’ ὀνόμηνεν ἐταῖρον.

Et.Gud., kappa, p. 324

The *Gudianum* has the default formulation ἢ (similarly in the *Lexicon* of Ps.-Zonaras, kappa, p. 1221). The same applies to the derivatives of κλαίω, for instance:

κλαυθμός· παρὰ τὸ κλαίω, κλαύσω, κλαυσμός, καὶ κλαυθμός. Ἡ παρὰ τὸ κλῶ, τὸ κλάνω· κλῶνται γὰρ αἱ φωναὶ τῶν θρηνοῦντων.

EM, p. 517

κλαυθμός ‘weeping’: from κλαίω ‘to cry’, κλαύσω, κλαυσμός, καὶ κλαυθμός. Or from κλῶ ‘to break’, because the voice of those who mourn breaks.

In neither case are we dealing with a plural etymology, but with the reformulation of a complementary etymology.

Did Orion consistently miss the pattern of complementary etymology? It is difficult to say in so far as we only have abridged versions: the loss of the contextual indications is consubstantial with the process of abbreviating. There are a few cases in which the *Etymologicum* has contextual indications:

Ἀλύειν, τὸ ἀπορεῖν τὴν ψυχὴν, καὶ ἐν πλάνῃ εἶναι· ἢ παρὰ τὸ ἀλύτως αὐτὴν ἔχειν καὶ συνδεδεμένως, ὅτε δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ χαίρειν· “Ἡ ἀλύεις, ὅτι Ἴρον ἐνίκησας τὸν ἀλύοντα,” παρὰ τὸ ἄγαν λελύσθαι αὐτὴν καὶ διακεχύσθαι· τοῦ α ἐπίτασιν δηλοῦντος.

Orion, *Etymologicum*, alpha, p. 6

Ἀλύειν <means> to be mentally helpless and wandering. Or from the fact the soul is not free and is bound. But when it is used in the meaning ‘to rejoice’ (“are you overjoyed because you beat Iros the fool?” *Od.* 18.333), it comes from the fact that the soul is completely relaxed and overjoyed, the ἀ- being intensive.

Orion reports two explanations, involving the same etymon λύω: one with the privative ἀ- valid in most contexts, and one with the intensive ἀ- valid in only one context, when the verb allegedly means ‘to rejoice’. Therefore, the original *Etymologicum* included such indications about context (sometimes preserved in the Byzantine *Etymologica*) and the principle of complementary etymology may have still been understood by Orion. But the abbreviators of the *Etymologicum* completely missed the point: they were interested in listing etymologies, not in understanding how etymologies worked. They definitely give a poor image of Orion’s work, but we must not forget that the latter, although he was also interested in listing etymologies, had a much more detailed account: he also included in his compilation the explanations of the etymologies, which were often dropped or misunderstood by the abbreviators, as we can see by comparing later versions.⁶⁶ In short, Orion probably did not understand much of the etymologies of the authors he compiled, but certainly he understood more than what appears from the main redaction of the *Etymologicum*.

7 Conclusion

Did Greek thought generally assume that several etymologies could be correct at the same time for a given word? Probably not. Some scholars and philosophers shared this conception, but it seems clear that most grammarians did not. As far as we can see, they held one etymology to be correct, not two. Whenever they mention two different etymologies, these must be understood as alternative etymologies. This is probably true for all monosemous words (like βίος ‘bow’, see above, 3.1). The real problem arises with polysemous words, including words that are not polysemous *per se*, but become so as a result of the incorporation of contextual features, through hyperanalysis, which produces a semantic divergence. For these, two

⁶⁶ Le Feuvre (*forthcoming*).

opposite approaches were applied. The unifying approach, with its distinction between a proper meaning and an extended meaning, is similar to the modern mainstream view of polysemy: there is a one-to-one relationship between the proper meaning of the word and the etymology, and the extended meanings are not taken into account. The dissociating approach, on the other hand, considers each contextual meaning independently of the others and analyses it for itself. Is it very different from the (marginal) theoretical position of some modern linguists, who hold that there are no polysemous words but only homonyms in synchrony, and who would definitely categorize the different meanings of θάλαμος as homonyms, like the different meanings of οὔλος? If we replace the Greek word λέξις with ‘signifier’, which is what Greek etymologists used it for, it is not. Each contextual meaning is an independent unit that happens to have the same phonetic shape as another, and there is a one-to-one relationship between this unit and the etymology.⁶⁷ This led to the technique of complementary etymology, going back at least to Alexandrian philology and of which we can find examples in Philoxenus’ fragments, assigning to different contextual meanings of a given word different etymologies, only one etymology being valid in a given context: ἔγχος ‘spear’ was not considered a valid etymology for ἐγχειρίδιον ‘small book’ but only for ἐγχειρίδιον ‘poignard’, nor was δέρω ‘to skin’ for δέρμα ‘skin’ of a human being, or ἄρετή ‘virtue’. There is no plural etymology here: a given word comes from X, not from Y, when it means A, and comes from Y, not from X, when it means B. This is different from the case of Artemis, for whose name several etymologies can be simultaneously true because, indeed, the goddess possesses all the required features at the same time, always and in every circumstance, independent of context.

The main problem is that even when there used to be a coherent system of explanation, it is often illegible in our sources, beginning with Orion, whose original work was passed down to us through abridged versions in which the explanations going with the etymologies have mostly been cut out. Alternative etymologies and complementary etymologies all surface with the default formulation ἢ, the difference of status when they are combined in a complex explanation is lost, and compilers mix notices reflecting different approaches, producing a formulation of questionable coherence. Moreover, most of the time the etymologies are given in a row, but not explicitly related to one meaning of the word; hence the formulation “N comes from X or from Y or from Z” instead of the complete formulation “N comes from X when it means A, from Y when it means B, from Z when it means C.” As a consequence, the etymology seems to be valid for the word in itself, in *abstracto*,

⁶⁷ This is not the case in modern theories because they are not concerned with etymology in the modern sense and deal with the problem of polysemy in purely synchronic terms.

whereas in fact it was designed to account for the word in a given context with a given meaning, not for all the possible uses of the word. This has been observed for polysemy: “une occurrence n’apparaît comme polysémique que si on la sous-détermine en la coupant de tout contexte,”⁶⁸ that is, in context there is no polysemy, there are distinct units. Multiple etymologies, similarly, appear as plural etymologies only when they are cut off from any context.

The reasons for this are diverse: lack of space, missing information, or simply lack of interest in the theories on which those etymologies were relying, which led compilers to pick up only the final product and not the whole line of reasoning. The aim of Byzantine compilers was to produce a kind of encyclopedic knowledge, listing everything they could find in their sources, not to produce a treatise on etymology. This is why a critical reading of these texts is imperative, because we must first of all seek to understand the reasoning lying behind all this material and to restore the missing elements.⁶⁹ A superficial reading is misleading, and thus we must undertake the considerable task of reconstruction, made out of the scanty material saved from the wreckage, if we want to do justice, not to the compiler — who most of the time did not understand much — but to their sources.

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⁶⁸ Rastier 2014, 24.

⁶⁹ On that problem in the Homeric scholia specifically, see Le Feuvre 2021.

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Simone Fiori

The Concepts of ‘Barbarism’ and ‘Solecism’ in the Byzantine *Etymologica*

Abstract: This paper shows how the concepts of barbarism and solecism (and *hellēnismos*) are defined and dealt with in the four main Byzantine *Eymologica* (*Etymologicum Genuinum*, *Etymologicum Gudianum*, *Etymologicum Symeonis*, *Etymologicum Magnum*). All these lexica show at least some acquaintance with these topics from a theoretical and terminological point of view; still, the concrete application of this conceptual background varies widely from one etymologicum to another. On the one hand, the *Etymologicum Genuinum* (along with the closely related *Etymologicum Symeonis* and *Etymologicum Magnum*) omits most of the (types of) words/expressions that had been proscribed by the purist tradition; on the other hand, the *Etymologicum Gudianum* etymologizes many ‘suspicious’ words (especially Latinisms and Semitisms) and avoids any kind of negative remark about their controversial standing. Interestingly enough, these divergences are not likely to be fortuitous; rather, they seem to reflect different purposes and cultural environments, perhaps also mirroring the complex dynamics between the center and peripheries of the Byzantine Empire.

1 Introduction

When Timarion, the eponymous hero of a 12th-century¹ pseudo-Lucianic dialogue, pleads his case before the court of Hades, the courthouse fills up with odd characters, some of them dressed in flamboyant clothes and Arab-style turbans: they are illustrious pagan sages, expressly summoned to take part in the proceedings. This crowd of *savants*, which includes authoritative figures such as the physicians Hippocrates and Galen, counts among its members also the well-known Atticist grammarian Phrynichus (2nd c.). Significantly, his firm prescriptive approach and strict

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1 Unless otherwise specified, all dates are CE.

scrutiny of non-canonical forms — very conspicuous in his *Ecloga* and (less so) in his *Praeparatio sophistica* — do not fade into the misty underworld atmosphere, since Phrynichus is portrayed as a kind of court clerk who checks the (formal) correctness of the ruling written by the most renowned Alexandrian grammarian, Aristarchus of Samothrace (Ἀρίσταρχος ἐγραμμάτευε, Φρύνιχος ἐπεστάτει).² Regardless of how fanciful and amiably parodical this representation is, it nevertheless constitutes an important piece of evidence of how grammar, purism and linguistic correctness were deeply rooted in Byzantine culture and imagination — at least in their more educated expressions.

Indeed, it seems safe to assume that “the most obvious feature of the grammarian’s teaching (in the Byzantine era) was its extreme conservatism.”³ Even the so-called ‘Macedonian renaissance,’ that is, the bright cultural development that took place under the eponymous Macedonian dynasty (867–1056), did not lead to any significant break in educational practices; instead, the didactical structures and programs that already existed at the end of the 6th century (if not earlier), from the most elementary level to the highest (ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία and beyond), remained fully in force.⁴ In this scenario, Atticizing speech was not reduced to a mere literary device; quite the opposite, since older forms of Greek were far-removed from everyday language and impossible to master without a long and expensive education, classicizing language retained the precise social function of an ‘élite badge.’⁵ Once the necessary *expertise* in purist speech was acquired, any other less-refined level of style could not appear anything but unbecoming. It is therefore no surprise that the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (10th c.), in introducing his *De administrando imperio* (1.10–15), felt it necessary to apologize for adopting a more comprehensible and down-to-earth style, or that Anna Komnene (11th–12th c.) was reluctant to insert the names of the Crusaders’ leaders

2 Timarion § 41. Standard edition, Italian translation and a thorough commentary on the whole dialogue in Romano 1974. The passage in question is now translated and discussed also in Braccini/Silvano 2022, 157–169.

3 Mango 1980, 147. See also Dawkins 1948, 255–258.

4 See e.g., Lemerle 1971, 105; Alpers 1991a, 268–269; Pontani 2020, 373–386. On the foundational role grammar was thought to have in the context of ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία, see also Chriti/Tsolakopoulos (forthcoming): grammar was commonly regarded as the “necessary apparatus that can assist in accessing higher levels of knowledge, such as rhetoric and philosophy.”

5 See e.g., Mango 1980, 234–238; Wilson 1996, 4–8; Pontani 2020, 376 (with further bibliography in fn. 16); Gaul 2022, 263–264. Of course, what the Byzantines perceived as Attic was often quite different from the dialect spoken in classical Athens: it was rather a ‘classicized’ language imitating a large gamut of classical and post-classical literary texts (see e.g., Hinterberger 2021, 23–25; Kaldellis 2021, 162–165).

in the lofty prose of her *Alexiad*, her tongue not being able — she says — to articulate such barbarian sounds (10.10.4: βαρβαρικὰς φωνὰς ἀπαγγέλλειν ἀδυνατούσῃ διὰ τὸ ἄνθρωπον).⁶

These two examples are also useful as they allow us to notice how two different kinds of words could fall under the label of ‘barbarian.’ While Anna Komnene referred to foreign words whose origin was blatantly non-Greek, Constantine VII — though not using explicitly the word βάρβαρος or the like — was clearly concerned about the possibility of stumbling upon vulgarisms that, despite having fully Greek origins, deviated from the norm provided by literary tradition and could therefore be perceived as ‘barbarian.’⁷ In several cases these two aspects could be intertwined: many words of everyday language had indeed a foreign origin, thus justifying the use of such an adjective to designate in general the lower registers of Greek.⁸ It is no surprise, then, that a precise terminological distinction was never consistently applied.⁹ Rather, most of the attention was targeted at the global identification (and consequent avoidance) of barbarisms,¹⁰ with special (but not exclusive) focus on the second typology (that is, incorrect usage of Greek).

The need to distinguish valuable from ‘barbarian’ forms greatly contributed to the success of treatises addressing this specific issue. The problem of linguistic correctness (*hellēnismos*) had already been partly addressed at the end of the classical period and in the Hellenistic age from a philosophical point of view, but with time — and especially after the development of grammar as an autonomous discipline in the Hellenistic age and the onset of Atticism in Roman times — it seems to

⁶ On Constantine’s passage, see Mango 1980, 235; on Anne Komnene’s passage, see Dawkins 1948, 257 and Dagron 1994, 222.

⁷ Already in Atticist lexicography the label ‘barbarian’ is commonly applied to Greek words pertaining to everyday language (*koinē*). Unsurprisingly, most of the occurrences come from Phrynichus’ *Eclogue*: 94 (εἶπεν καὶ ἐπειπεν ἐσχάτως βάρβαρον), 99 (ἐνδον εἰσέρχομαι βάρβαρον), 219 (ἐκθεμα βάρβαρον), 298 (νήστης βάρβαρον), 300 (φάγομαι βάρβαρον), 306 (ψύλλος βάρβαρον), and 347 Fischer (ἐμελλον γράψαι· ἐσχάτως βάρβαρος ἢ σύνταξις αὐτή).

⁸ For a concise account of the features of Greek *koinē* (including loanwords), see Kaczko 2016 (with further bibliography).

⁹ Such a lexical distinction, in contrast, is not unknown to Latin grammatical literature, where *barbarismus*, i.e. the incorrect usage of Latin, is said to be different from *barbarolexis*, i.e. the usage of foreign words (*ex aliena lingua*). In extant Greek literature, however, *barbarolexis* never occurs, so it may well be a Latin coinage: see Mari 2016, 121.

¹⁰ It is probably no coincidence that “in Christian Byzantium the Scripture” — whose language was rich in both Greek vulgarisms and non-Greek loans — “never became a predominant model of style at any level, except, and there rarely, for the lowest forms of hagiography”: see Ševčenko 1981, 298–300 (esp. 299).

have become even more crucial.¹¹ In particular, late antiquity and the Byzantine era saw a thriving production of short treatises about barbarism and solecism (περὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ σολοικισμοῦ),¹² whose main aim was to defend linguistic correctness through an exhaustive study of the two major defects of language (barbarisms and solecisms). The internal categorization of these last two categories may vary among the individual treatises,¹³ but a general distinction between barbarism and solecism remains consistent throughout the different discussions: barbarism is a mistake involving a single word (thus happening on the level of λέξις), while solecism is a mistake occurring in a combination of words (thus affecting the level of λόγος). In other words, barbarism is most typically a morphological, phonological, or prosodic error; solecism instead concerns the syntax of the phrase.

Due to their comparatively small size and relative lack of quotations from classical authors, these treatises cannot be regarded as the most complex and enlightening products of Greek scholarly tradition. However, as shall be immediately proved, it is worth noting that the definitions of barbarism, solecism, and *hellēnismos* that we find in these treatises show significant points of contact with some of the most impressive fruits of ancient erudition, namely the bulky etymological lexica compiled in the Byzantine era from the 9th c. onwards,¹⁴ the most ancient of them, the so-called *Etymologicum Genuinum*, being the common ancestor of the three major later *Etymologica*, namely the *Etymologicum Gudianum* (10th or 11th c.) — whose compilers exploited the *Genuinum* far less than the compilers of the two later lexica —, the *Etymologicum Symeonis* (12th c.) and the *Etymologicum Magnum* (12th c.).¹⁵ Unfortunately, collecting evidence from the Byzantine

11 On the origins and the development of the concepts of *hellēnismos* (and its criteria), *barbarismos* and *soloikismos*, see at least Pagani 2014 and Sandri 2020, 3–27.

12 All of them (except for Matthaëus Camariotes' *Περὶ σολοικισμοῦ*) are now edited and translated into Italian in Sandri 2020. A new treatise on barbarism and solecism has recently been published by Nuovo 2024.

13 Two excellent synoptic tables of the various types of barbarism and solecism according to the individual treatises are available in Sandri 2020, 38–43.

14 This paper does not directly take into account Orion's *Etymologicum*, the oldest extant etymological lexicon, since: a) it dates back to an earlier, late antique phase (5th c.); b) the amount of material included is comparatively modest. Another lexicon excluded from the present study is the one transmitted under the name of Zonaras (13th c., also known as *Lexicon Tittmannianum*), which of course preserves a wealth of material deriving from the *Etymologica* (especially the *Genuinum* and the *Symeonis*) but draws freely on a wide range of earlier scholarly works. For more information on these two works, see at least Dickey 2007, 100 and 102.

15 See Dickey 2007, 91–92; Pontani 2015, 338–339 and 372–373; Dickey 2015, 472; Tosi 2015, 633–634; Rocciola 2016, 6–47; Valente 2019, 255–260; Pontani 2020, 412–414, 417 and 446–447. On the

Etymologica is currently very complicated, since their editions are mostly old, scattered, incomplete or even non-existent;¹⁶ it follows that, at the moment, any far-reaching search on this topic will not be able to provide fully developed conclusions. That notwithstanding, a careful analysis of the already published sections — especially the *Etymologicum Magnum*, which is not only the largest of these *Etymologica* but is also notable for having drawn on all of the other three¹⁷ — and some targeted explorations of the unpublished material can already provide some far-reaching insights and raise new, important questions.

2 Definitions of solecism, barbarism and *hellēnismos* in the *Etymologica*

The first fact that is worth pointing out is that all the major *Etymologica* contain an etymology of the word ‘solecism’ (σολοικισμός).¹⁸ Though some of them provide more than just one etymon, every *etymologicum* suggests both a link to the city of Soli in Cilicia and a paronomastic rapprochement to the periphrasis ὁ τοῦ σώφους λόγου αἰκισμός (“the abuse against the correct language”). These etyma can already be found in the gloss Σόλοικοι transmitted by the *Etymologicum Genuinum* (and

relationship between the *Genuinum* and the *Gudianum*, see also Alpers (2015, 300–303), who hypothesizes that the compilers of the latter knew the former only through excerpts.

16 The most serious shortcomings affect the *Genuinum* and the *Symeonis*, only individual letters of both lexica having been published so far (see Rocciola 2016, 5 and 13–14 for a general survey, which should now include Baldi’s (2019) edition of the letter ζ of the *Etymologicum Symeonis*). The *Etymologicum Magnum* can be consulted in Gaisford’s edition (1848) — which is ‘complete’ but dated —, while the *Etymologicum Gudianum* has been carefully edited by De Stefani 1909–1920, but his work unfortunately covers the section α–ζειαί only: for the rest, one must resort to Sturz’s unsatisfying text (1818), which is based on a single, late, and interpolated manuscript (Guelf. Gud. gr. 29–30: see Cellierini 1988, 12). Hopefully, this disheartening scenario will be soon overcome by the promising project *Etymologica* (Universität Hamburg), supervised by Prof. Dr. Christian Brockmann.

17 On the dependence of the *Magnum* on the *Genuinum*, the *Gudianum*, and (to a smaller extent) the *Symeonis*, see Berger 1972, XVII–XXV and Rocciola 2016, 11–12.

18 The definitions reported in this paragraph have been mainly collected through a *TLG online*-search of all the occurrences of the word βάρβαρος and Σόλοικος (and of their derivatives) in the four major *Etymologica*; once the significant occurrences were identified, it was checked whether they appear in all *Etymologica* or only in some of them, and, in the second case, it was verified whether this absence is real or just due to the fact that they occur in unpublished sections.

later inherited by the ‘proper’ *Etymologicum Symeonis*).¹⁹ Since this gloss is still unpublished, I propose below my own text.²⁰

Σόλοικοι· οἱ βάρβαροι, ἀπὸ Σόλων[ος]²¹ τῶν Κιλικίων. οἱ δὲ σολοικισμόν φασὶ τὸν τοῦ σώου λόγου αἰκισμόν, ἥγουν ὕβριν τοῦ ὁλοκλήρου λόγου.²²

Σόλοικοι: the barbarians, from Soli in Cilicia. Others say that σολοικισμός designates the violation of the correct language (ὁ τοῦ σώου λόγου αἰκισμός), that is, a violence against the intact language.²³

A similar path is also followed by the *Etymologicum Gudianum* (σ 507.26–28 Sturz); this time, however, there is room for some more details.²⁴

Σολοικισμός τοῦ σώου λόγου αἰκισμός εἴρηται· ἢ παρὰ τὴν τοῦ Σόλωνος ἐξιστορίαν καὶ τὴν Κιλικίων ὁμιλίαν.²⁵

19 The *Etymologicum Symeonis* has come down to us in two different versions: a) the ‘proper’ *Etymologicum Symeonis*, transmitted by mss. **E** (Parm. Pal. 2139) and **F** (Vind. phil. gr. 131); b) the *Magna Grammatica* — transmitted by mss. **C** (Laur. S. Marc. 303), **P** (Prag. XXV C 31) and **V** (Leid. Voss. Gr. Q 20) —, which is a *recensio* of the *Symeonis* expanded mainly through glosses coming from the *Etymologicum Magnum*. On the *Magna Grammatica*, see at least Baldi 2013, XXXII and XLII–LIV.

20 As with the following unpublished glosses coming from the *Etymologicum Genuinum*, the text is obtained through collation of its only two extant manuscripts, which nonetheless transmit an epitomized version: **A** (Vat. gr. 1818) and **B** (Laur. S. Marc. 304).

21 Square brackets are used to mark expunction (just as in the corresponding gloss of *EM*, for which see below).

22 σώου] *ita scripsi*: σοού **AB**.

23 Every translation, unless otherwise stated, is mine.

24 Despite this gloss not being unpublished, I propose here my own text, since the one available so far traces back to Sturz’s non-critical edition. The same principle will be applied to any gloss available only in Sturz’s edition (**S**). Instead, my own text is established by following the same criteria adopted by De Stefani. This means that: a) when not marred by *lacunae* and material damages, the only manuscript taken into account is Vat. Barb. gr. 70 (**d**), since it must be regarded as the ‘original’ manuscript of the *Gudianum* (see Valente 2021); b) when **d** is not legible, the text is obtained through collation of one manuscript for each of the four families in which the manuscripts can be divided: for the first family, ms. **b** (Par. gr. 2631) — but, for the poorly legible part of the end of **b**, ms. **c** (Vind. phil. gr. 23) —, for the second family, ms. **z** (Par. suppl. gr. 172), for the third family, ms. **Vat** (Vat. gr. 1708) — but, for the missing part at the end of **Vat**, ms. **o** (Vat. Pal. gr. 244) —, for the fourth family, ms. **w** (Guelf. Gud. gr. 29–30).

25 τοῦ σώου] *ita bVat* : ἢ τοῦ σώου **z** : ὁ τοῦ σώου **w** | Σόλωνος] *ita w* : Σόλον- **z** : Σόλογ- **bVat** | ἐξιστορίαν] ἐξιστορία **b** | Κιλικίων] *ita w^{pc}z* : Κελ- **bVat** : Κυλ- **w^{ac}**.

Σολοικισμός designates the violation of the correct language; or from Solon's quest and the language of the Cilicians.²⁶

Though not explicitly mentioning the city of Soli, the *Gudianum* clearly hints at it through references to the ὁμίλια Κυλίκων and Solon (Σόλων), in honor of whom the city was said to have been named Σόλοι: reportedly, the Athenian statesman founded it during his curiosity-driven travels and settled there some Athenian fellows, who eventually contaminated the purity of Attic with the local language (σολοικίζειν). This (untrustworthy) reconstruction can already be found in Diogenes Laertius (1.51) and is also widely documented in the scholarly tradition;²⁷ in particular, it left its mark even on the theoretical reflection on barbarism and solecism, since one of the treatises *Περὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ σολοικισμοῦ* mentions the speech of the inhabitants of Soli as a possible origin of the word σολοικισμός (*Περὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ σολοικισμοῦ* 7.11–13 Sandri: εἴρηται δὲ σολοικισμός [...] ἀπὸ τῶν εἰς Σόλους μετοικησάντων, οἱ πειρώμενοι τῇ Σόλωνος χρῆσθαι διαλέκτῳ ἡμάρτανον).²⁸

At any rate, even the 'paronomastic' etymon shared by all the *Etymologica* appears in a wealth of scholarly works, and pretty often in the treatises on barbarism and solecism. An early occurrence is already documented in the 2nd-century *Περὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ σολοικισμοῦ* of Polybius of Sardis (2.2.4 Sandri), where solecism is described as σώου λόγου αἰκισμός; moreover, similar words can be found in the treatise *Περὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ σολοικισμοῦ* 6 Sandri, whose first explanation of solecism (§ 3, ll. 9–10) speaks of τοῦ σώου λόγου αἰκία καὶ ὕβρις. However, the most complete convergence is with the treatise *Περὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ σολοικισμοῦ* 12 Sandri and with Choeroboscus' scholia to the *Canones* of Theodosius: the former (§ 7, ll. 9–10) etymologizes the word 'solecism' as σώου λόγου αἰκία ἡγουν ὕβρις, the latter (1.103.8–104.7 = 2.1.15–2.8 Hilgard) provides a detailed discussion on both barbarism and solecism and describes the second as τοῦ σώου λόγου αἰκισμός, ἡγουν ὕβρις τοῦ ὀλοκλήρου λόγου, which are exactly the same words used by the *Etymologicum Genuinum*. It is also noteworthy how Choeroboscus' treatment is later used

²⁶ For the sake of completeness, it should be highlighted that Sturz's edition (σ 507.29–32) also transmits a gloss devoted to the verb σολοικίζειν, which is said to be used not only in grammar but also to describe non-standard behaviors in dressing, eating, and walking. However, this gloss is just a fourth-class interpolation, coming from the so-called 'Cyril lexicon' (text in Cramer 1841, 190.28–32).

²⁷ For a complete list of such *loci*, see Sandri 2020, 18 (fn. 87).

²⁸ "It is called 'solecism' after those who settled in Soli and made mistakes while trying to use the dialect of Solon."

by the compiler(s) of the *Etymologicum Magnum* (721.49–722.11 Gaisford) to expand the shorter gloss of the *Genuinum*.²⁹

Σόλοικοι· οἱ βάρβαροι· ἀπὸ Σόλων[ος] τῶν Κιλικίων. ἰστέον ὅτι διαφέρει τὸ βαρβαρίζειν τοῦ σολοικίζειν· καθὸ τὸ μὲν βαρβαρίζειν τὸ περὶ μίαν λέξιν ἐστὶν ἀμαρτάνειν· κατὰ τόνον μὲν, ὡς ὅταν τὸ ἄνθρωπος ὀξυτόνως εἰπωμεν ἄνθρωπός· κατὰ γραφήν, ὡς ὅταν τὸ Νεῖλος διὰ τοῦ ι γράψω· κατὰ κλίσιν, ὡς ὅταν τὸ Αἴας Αἴου κλίνω· κατὰ χρόνον, ὡς ὅταν τοῦ Αἴας τὸ α συστέλλω· κατὰ πνεῦμα, ὡς ὅταν τὴν ὑπὸ πρόθεσιν ψιλῶ. σολοικίζειν δέ ἐστι, τὸ περὶ τὴν σύνταξιν καὶ τὴν φράσιν ἀμαρτάνειν, τουτέστιν, ἐκάστης λέξεως καθ' ἑαυτὴν κειμένης καλῶς ἐχοῦσης, ἐν δὲ τῇ συντάξει καὶ τῇ φράσει ἀτάκτως καὶ ἀνακολούθως παραλαμβανομένης, ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ “ἐγὼ περιπατῶν ὁ τοῖχος ἔπεσεν.” ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἐνταῦθα ἐκάστη λέξις καθ' ἑαυτὴν οὕσα καλῶς ἔχει, ἐν δὲ τῇ συντάξει ἀτάκτως καὶ ἀνακολούθως παραλαμβάνεται. ὅθεν καὶ σολοικισμὸς λέγεται, οἷον ὁ τοῦ σώου λόγου αἰκισμὸς, ἡγουν ὕβρις τοῦ ὀλοκλήρου λόγου. δεῖ δὲ γινώσκειν, ὅτι σολοικίζειν καὶ βαρβαρίζειν δεῖ λέγειν, καὶ σολοικιζόμενον καὶ βαρβαριζόμενον· σολοικισμὸς δὲ καὶ βαρβαρισμὸς οὐ δεῖ λέγειν. Χοιροβοσκός.

Σόλοικοι: the barbarians, from Soli in Cilicia. It should be known that βαρβαρίζειν differs from σολοικίζειν, inasmuch as βαρβαρίζειν means making a mistake involving one single word — in accentuation, if we make of ἄνθρωπος an oxytone word (i.e. ἄνθρωπός); in orthography, if I write Νεῖλος with ι (i.e. Νίλος); in declension, if I decline Αἴας with genitive Αἴου; in prosody, if I shorten the α of Αἴας; in aspiration, if I put a smooth breathing on preposition ὑπὸ —, while σολοικίζειν is a mistake involving the syntax and the phrase: to put it more clearly, we have a solecism when every word is fine in its own right, but in the context of the syntax and of the phrase it sounds out of place and incoherent, as in the sentence “while walking, the wall fell down.” As you can see, every word here, taken by itself, is fine, but in the context of the syntax and of the phrase it sounds out of place and incoherent. This is also why it is called σολοικισμός, that is, ‘the violation of the correct language’ (ὁ τοῦ σώου λόγου αἰκισμός). It should also be known that one must say σολοικίζειν and βαρβαρίζειν, as well as σολοικιζόμενον and βαρβαριζόμενον, while one must not say σολοικισμός and βαρβαρισμός. So says Choeroboscus.

Choeroboscus’ treatment, whether in its ‘original’ form or in its reworking transmitted by the *Etymologicum Magnum*, shows clear agreements with the grammatical tradition on barbarism and solecism, both in the distinction between *soloikizein* and *barbarizein* and in the structuring/exemplification of both categories: for instance, the trio περὶ τόνον – πνεῦμα – χρόνον is documented in almost every ancient

²⁹ Theoretically, since Choeroboscus’ scholia to Theodosius were also used by the compilers of the *Genuinum* (see Reitzenstein 1897, 45–47), it could be hypothesized that this section belonged to the original formulation of the *Genuinum* and was later suppressed through epitomization (see fn. 20). However, Reitzenstein (1897, 246–248) demonstrated that the excerpts from Choeroboscus’ scholia transmitted by the *Magnum* are not only sometimes absent from the *Genuinum* (e.g., in *EM* 669.57–670.27 Gaisford), but their textual *facies* may also be very different from that of the *Genuinum*’s excerpts from Choeroboscus’ scholia (e.g., in *EM* 814.20–33 Gaisford), thus pointing to an independent usage of this source.

discussion on barbarism, while the solecist-speech example ἐγὼ περιπατῶν ὁ τοῖχος ἔπεσεν can also be found in the treatises 11 and 12 Sandri (respectively, § 4.5–6 and § 5.7–9).³⁰ The *excerptum* from Choeroboscus is also notable because it represents the only extensive treatment of barbarism in the four major *Etymologica*. However, it should be highlighted that the notion of barbarism is implicitly operational in another gloss, this time devoted to the fundamental concept of *hellēnismos*. This entry, already occurring in the *Etymologicum Genuinum*, is then inherited without significant modifications by the *Etymologicum Symeonis* (ε 332 Baldi) and by the *Etymologicum Magnum* (331.36–37 Gaisford); only the *Etymologicum Gudianum* omits it. Here is my text of the gloss of the *Genuinum*.

ἑλληνισμός· ἔστι τὸ καθ' Ἑλλήνας διαλέγεσθαι, τουτέστι τὸ ἀσολοικίστως καὶ ἀβαρβαρίστως διαλέγεσθαι.³¹

ἑλληνισμός means to speak as the Greeks do,³² that is, to speak without solecisms and barbarisms.

In spite of its conciseness, this formulation clearly distinguishes barbarism and solecism, but at the same time it highlights the unifying target of their evidence: *hellēnismos*, depicted as an identity-defining element. A close parallel can be found in the *scholia Londinensia* to Dionysius Thrax' *Ars grammatica* (446.12–15 Hilgard), where *hellēnismos* is defined by the opposition of correct speech to barbarism and that of correct construction of parts to solecism (ἔστι δὲ ἑλληνισμός λέξεις ὑγιῆς καὶ ἀδιάστροφος λόγου μερῶν πλοκὴ κατάλληλος κατὰ τὴν παρ' ἐκάστοις ὑγιῆ καὶ γνησίαν διάλεκτον· λέξεις μὲν οὖν ὑγιῆς κατὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν βαρβαρισμὸν ἀντίθεσιν, λόγος δὲ μερῶν πλοκὴ κατὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν σολοικισμόν).³³

At this point, then, it is already possible to take note of the first data. All four major *Etymologica* show at least some acquaintance with the vocabulary and main themes of the treatises on barbarism and solecism, the latter apparently being an object of greater theoretical interest. However, it seems possible to detect some slight differences in the contents provided by the individual *Etymologica*: while the *Genuinum*, the *Symeonis* and the *Magnum* make at least an indirect reference to the

³⁰ For a fuller discussion, see Sandri 2020, 35.

³¹ τουτέστι] -ν A | ἀβαρβαρίστως] -άρως A.

³² The preposition κατὰ might be also understood as intensive. Therefore, the sentence could be also translated as follows: “ἑλληνισμός means to speak according to the Greeks.”

³³ See Pagani (2015, 799–800), who translates the scholium as follows: “*Hellenismos* is the correct mode of speaking and proper construction of the parts of speech, appropriate according to the true and correct language of each person: thus speech is said to be correct in antithesis to barbarism, while correct construction of the parts of speech stands in antithesis to solecism.”

concepts of barbarism and *hellēnismos*, the *Gudianum* does not. Given the small number of glosses considered so far, this small divergence could be accidental: however, as we shall see, it should be probably regarded as part of a more complex pattern.

3 The particular case of the ‘foreign’ barbarism

3.1 Proscribed words in the *Etymologica*

As already anticipated, the label of ‘barbarism’ mainly applies to mistakes involving individual words, and especially single parts of them (e.g., the accent in the case of the ‘περὶ τόνον’ barbarism, the ending in the case of ‘περὶ κλίσιν’ and ‘περὶ χρόνον’ barbarism, etc.). However, some types of barbarism involve the whole word they affect. This is the case of the ‘περὶ διάλεκτον’ barbarism and of the ‘περὶ λέξιν ξένην’ barbarism: the former happens when an individual word belongs to a dialect different from that of the rest of the text; the latter occurs when a foreign word is used. While the ‘περὶ διάλεκτον’ barbarism is mentioned only by the already cited *scholia Londinensia* to Dionysius Thrax’ *Ars grammatica* (447.23–25 Hilgard), the ‘περὶ λέξιν ξένην’ barbarism is discussed by a broader group of sources, which often provide several examples. One such example is again offered by the *scholia Londinensia* to Dionysius Thrax’ *Ars grammatica* (447.26–27 Hilgard).

βαρβαρισμός ἐστιν ἀμάρτημα προφορᾶς ἐν λέξει γινόμενον· γίνεται δὲ [...] περὶ λέξιν ξένην, ὡς εἴ τις τὸν κλάδον τοῦ φοῖνικος βαῖον ὀνομάζει, δεόν λέγεσθαι ὁμωνύμως τῷ φυτῷ.

Barbarism is an expression-related impropriety and involves only one word [...]. It (also) occurs when a foreign word is used, as when someone calls the palm branch βαῖον while it should be called ‘palm’ (φοῖνιξ) as the tree.³⁴

Indeed, the neuter βαῖον (alternative form of the feminine βαίς) is not documented before the *Septuaginta* and is regarded by modern etymology as an Egyptian loan-word.³⁵ While the *Etymologicum Genuinum* and the *Etymologicum Symeonis* do not mention this word,³⁶ the *Etymologicum Gudianum* (β 257.10 + 257.24 De Stefani),

³⁴ Sch. Lond. D.T. 447.18–27. See also *Barb.* III Nuovo (= Nuovo 2024, 398).

³⁵ See *DÉLG*, *GEW*, and *EDG* s.v. βαίς.

³⁶ This assertion is eased by the fact that letters α–β of all the major *Etymologica* are already fully published. For the unpublished sections, similar statements have been made only after a check of the manuscripts (A and B for the *Genuinum*, E and F for the ‘proper’ *Etymologicum Symeonis*, C for the *Magna Grammatica*, d for each family’s selected manuscript for the *Gudianum*: see also

quite surprisingly, devotes to it a gloss (and an etymology), drawn from Orion's *Etymologicum* (177.1 Koës = 56 Micciarelli Collesi) and later inherited by the *Etymologicum Magnum* (185.3–4). No reference to its 'barbarian' origin is included.

βαῖον· παρὰ τὸ βίᾳ τίλλεσθαι. σημαίνει δὲ τὸ κλάδος τοῦ φοίνικος.

βαῖον: it is so called because it is torn away by force (βίᾳ). It designates the palm branch.³⁷

Two more examples of 'foreign' barbarism are provided by the aforementioned treatise *Περὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ σολοικισμοῦ* of Polybius of Sardis (2.1.22–24 Sandri).

βαρβαρίζουσι δὲ καὶ οἱ ὅλως ἐκφύλοις ταῖς λέξεσιν ἢ καθόλου ὑπηλλαγμέναις χρώμενοι καὶ λέγοντες στίλλον μὲν τὸ γραφεῖον καὶ κράββατον τὸν σκίμποδα.

A barbarism is also committed by those who use fully foreign or completely altered words and call the brush στίλλος and the small bed κράββατος.

The non-Greek origin of both στίλλος and κράββατος seems indisputable: the former is unquestionably a Latin loanword (*stilus*), the latter is mostly thought to be a western loan (cf. Latin *grabā(t)us*), maybe from a Macedonian-Illyrian word for 'oak'.³⁸ While στίλλος does not seem to have awakened the curiosity of Greek etymologists, κράββατος appears to have aroused mixed feelings. The *Etymologicum Genuinum* (α 1279 Lasserre/Livadaras)³⁹ mentions κρά(β)βατος in a gloss devoted to the more illustrious synonym ἀσκάντης and highlights how the former is never used by canonical authors.

ἀσκάντης· κλινίδιον εὐτελές, ὃ καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀττικῶν σκίμπους ὀνομάζεται· Καλλίμαχος (fr. 240 Pfeiffer)· “καὶ τὸν μὲν ἐπ’ ἀσκάνταν κάθισεν.” καὶ Ἀριστοφάνης (*Nub.* 633)· “ἔξει τὸν ἀσκάντην λαβών.” καὶ Πλάτων ὁ φιλόσοφος Πρωταγόρα (310c)· “καὶ ἅμα ἐπιψηλαφήσας τοῦ σκίμποδος, ἐκαθέζετο παρ’ ἐμέ.” ὁ δὲ κράβατος οὐδὲ παρ’ ἐνί. [...] οὕτως Σαλούστιος εἰς τὴν Ἑκάλην Καλλιμάχου.

ἀσκάντης: a small, cheap bed, also called σκίμπους by the Athenian authors. Callimachus says: “and [she] sat him on an ἀσκάντης.” And Aristophanes: “Come forth with your ἀσκάντης.” And

fns. 16–18): in the case of the *Genuinum*, such check has been combined with the consultation of the list of entries of ms. **B** provided by Miller 1868, 11–318.

³⁷ *Et.Gud.* β 257.10 + 257.24 De Stefani.

³⁸ For the etymology of στίλλος, see *LBG* s.v.; for the etymology of κράββατος, see *DÉLG*, *GEW*, *EDG* s.v.

³⁹ Its formulation is later inherited by the *Etymologicum Symeonis* (α 1457 Lasserre/Livadaras) and by the *Etymologicum Magnum* (154.29–37 Gaisford), but the former suppresses the mention of κρά(β)βατος.

Plato the philosopher in his *Protagoras*: “and, while touching the σκίμπους, he sat down next to me.” Not a single author uses the form κράββατος. [...] So says Sallustius in his commentary on Callimachus’ *Hecale*.

This formulation is likely to stem either from the 5th-century lexicographer Methodius⁴⁰ or — (at least up to παρ’ ἐνὶ) — from the λεξικὸν ῥητορικόν,⁴¹ a no-longer-existent lexicon, rich in Atticistic material, which was often used by the compiler(s) of the *Genuinum*. Since a similar entry (ἀσκάντης· κλινίδιον εὐτελὲς καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀττικῶν ὁ σκίμπους. ὁ δὲ κράββατος οὐδὲ παρ’ ἐνὶ) is transmitted by two sources closely connected to the λεξικὸν ῥητορικόν, namely the *Lexicon* of Photius (α 2958 Theodoridis) and ms. **B** of the *Συναγωγή λέξεων χρησίων* (Σ^b α 2238 Cunningham), the second option may be more plausible. At any rate, by the time the *Etymologica* were compiled, the confrontation between the popular κρά(β)βατος and the Attic forms ἀσκάντης and σκίμπους had been an established trademark of Atticist lexicography for several centuries. The use of κράββατος was already stigmatized by Phrynichus (*Eclogue* 41 Fischer), who urged his readers to employ the superior form σκίμπους (σκίμπους λέγε, ἀλλὰ μὴ κράββατος· μαρὸν γάρ), just as Thomas Magister (333.2 Ritschl) would do more than a thousand of years later (σκίμπους ῥητορικόν, κράββατος κοινόν). Even more conspicuous, however, is the doctrinal convergence with the strictly Atticistic lexicon of Moeris (3rd c.), where the everyday character of κράββατος is highlighted with respect to both ἀσκάντης (α 119 Hansen: ἀσκάντης Ἀττικοί· κράββατος Ἑλληγες) and σκίμπους (σ 33 Hansen: σκίμπους Ἀττικοί· κράββατος Ἑλληγες).⁴²

In fact, the Atticistic prescription was not ill-founded. On the one hand, the rare ἀσκάντης occurs in just a handful of ancient authors (Aristophanes, Callimachus, Lucian) and then is virtually confined to scholarly works; on the other, κράβ(β)ατος is absent from classical Attic and becomes frequent from the *Novum Testamentum* onwards.⁴³ However, despite the clear orientation of the scholarly tradition

⁴⁰ Thus Lasserre/Livadaras 1992, 247. Glosses inherited from Methodius are usually recognizable thanks to their stricter alphabetization and frequent position at the beginning of each three-letter alphabetic section (e.g., at the beginning of the section of words beginning in AMA, then at the beginning of the section of the words beginning in AMB, etc.): see at least Reitzenstein 1897, 44–47.

⁴¹ Thus Reitzenstein 1890–1891, 14–15. On the λεξικὸν ῥητορικόν, see at least Rocciola 2016, 18–27.

⁴² On the strictness of Moeris’ lexicon and its standard opposition between Attic and generic Greek words, see at least Swain 1996, 51–53 and Dickey 2007, 98.

⁴³ According to John’s Gospel 5.8, Jesus himself used the word κράβ(β)ατος when he spoke to the paralytic of Capernaum; however, even Christian saints could still find it unacceptable. The 5th-century Church historian Sozomenus (9.1–5) relates that Saint Triphyllius, while celebrating Mass, deliberately replaced this occurrence of κράββατος with the more highbrow word σκίμπους, thus arousing the resentful reaction of the more down-to-earth Saint Spyridon (“οὐ σύ γε,” ἔφη,

(including the other three major *Etymologica*), the compilers of the *Etymologicum Gudianum* took a completely different path: ἀσκάντης was not included, κράβ(β)α-τος instead was and received its own gloss and etymology. Here is my text:

κράβαττος· κρεμνᾶν τὰς βάσεις· καὶ τὸ μὲν κρα τὸ κραδαίνεσθαι ἡγουν σαλεύεσθαι σημαίνει, τὸ δὲ βα τὴν βάσιν.⁴⁴

κράβαττος: to hang up one's feet. κρα means 'to shake' or 'to be shaken,' while βα means 'foot.'

Again, no reference to the 'barbarian' nature of the word is included.⁴⁵ This is quite remarkable, since κράββατος could be (and indeed elsewhere was) regarded as such for no less than two reasons: its 'foreign' origin (confirmed by modern etymology but already well known to the compilers of the ancient treatises on barbarism and solecism) and its frequency in lower-register varieties of Greek (clearly perceived by Atticist lexicographers).

3.2 The suffix -άριον (-ārium)

Two more treatises on barbarism and solecism provide examples of 'foreign' barbarism: both the treatise *Περὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ* 3 Sandri (ll. 5–6) and the treatise *Περὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ σολοικισμοῦ* 10 Sandri (§ 1.8–9) say that a barbarism occurs also “when someone calls the cushion κερβικάριον or the towel μάππα” (εἴ τις τὸ μὲν ὑπαυχένιον ‘κερβικάριον’ λέγοι, τὸ δὲ χειρόμακτρον ‘μάππαν’). Again, there is no doubt that these words are not of Greek origin: both κερβικάριον (*cervicarium*) and μάππα (*mappa*) are Latin loanwords.⁴⁶ It should be highlighted that the exemplification of 'foreign' barbarism through Latinisms comes as no real surprise. To be sure, Byzantines saw themselves as Ῥωμαῖοι ('Romans') and Latin was often acknowledged as the historical language of *Romanitas*: moreover, part of the Greek

“ἀμείνων τοῦ κράββατον εἰρηκότος, ὅτι ταῖς αὐτοῦ λέξεσιν ἐπαισχύνῃ κεχρῆσθαι;”, that is: “surely” he said “you are not better than He who said κράββατος just because you feel ashamed to use the very words which he used!”). On this passage, see also Alpers 1981, 100–101 (who provides a further example of Atticistic manipulation of the Scripture, this time carried out by Sozomenus himself).

⁴⁴ κράβαττος] κράβατ- **S** | κρεμνᾶν] *ita* **S** : κρεμνᾶ **bzw** | τὸ μὲν] τῇ μὲν **b** | τὸ κραδαίνεσθαι] κραδαίνεσθαι **w**.

⁴⁵ For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that the *Etymologicum Gudianum* devotes two glosses (σ 503.54 and 503.60–63 in Sturz's edition) to σκίμπους. However, it is also worth noting that σκίμπους is neither a rare nor an exclusively Attic word, but is also well-documented in later, Christian authors (e.g., Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, etc.).

⁴⁶ On the Latin origin of κερβικάριον and μάππα, see e.g., *PGL* s.vv.

scholarly tradition maintained that Latin was a particular form of (Aeolian) Greek, or at least that it could not be regarded as a fully barbarian language.⁴⁷ However, in practice, its perception and labelling as βάρβαρος διάλεκτος was neither unusual nor marginal.⁴⁸

With regard to the specific cases of κερβικάριον and μάππα, it should be noted that none of the major *Etymologica* devotes a gloss to either. However, the word κερβικάριον seems worthy of more reflection. In fact, it is likely that the compilers of the treatises on barbarism and solecism did not choose this word just because it was generically Latin-sounding, but also because of one of its components: the suffix -άριον. The issue at stake is that Greek originally had its own (diminutive) suffix -άριον (with short [a]), already documented in classical Attic, but, once Latin words started pouring into the *koinē*, a similar but unrelated suffix -άριον, this time with long [a] and born as an adaptation of the Latin suffix *-arium*, became an increasingly frequent formant of everyday items' names. Needless to say, the -άριον loanwords were firmly damned by Atticist lexicography — especially by Pseudo-Herodian's *Philetaerus* (see e.g., the entries 194, 216, 217, 226 Dain) — and possibly contributed to the fall from grace of the authentically Greek diminutive -άριον, whose use was often questioned by the strictest Atticist lexicographers, such as Phrynichus and Thomas Magister.⁴⁹

Against this background, it becomes interesting to evaluate the attitude of the four major *Etymologica* towards the Latin loanwords in -άριον or -άριν (the latter being a later outcome of the former). I have therefore decided to gather in the following table all the glosses devoted to such words in the four major *Etymologica*.⁵⁰

47 On Byzantine 'Roman' identity, see e.g., Dagron 1994, 220 and Kaldellis 2021, 163–164 and 174–175; on the 'Aeolian' theory, see at least Ascheri 2011, 70–71 (with further bibliography); on the controversial positioning of Romans and Latin within the traditional dichotomy Ἕλληνες/βάρβαροι, see at least Dubuisson 1984 and Rochette 1997.

48 On the perception of Latin in medieval Byzantium as a barbaric language and/or in antithesis to Greek, see e.g., Dagron 1994, 220–221 (with fn. 7) and Silvano 2019, 36–40. Dawkins' (1948, 267) assertion that "Latin words also were so closely entwined with the very centre of Byzantine life that, even if they were recognized as non-Greek, they were regarded as free from the stigma of barbarism which attached itself to later comers" seems too optimistic.

49 On both suffixes -άριον, their reputation in Atticist lexicography and the possible role played by the onset of isochrony (that is the loss of distinctive vowel quantity), see Fiori 2022.

50 I have collected the data through a *TLG-online* search; the en dash (–) indicates that a given word is absent in a given etymologicum. On the methodology adopted in this paper to check the presence/absence of each entry in the individual *Etymologica*, see fn. 36.

Tab. 3: Words in -άριον.

Entry	Source	<i>Et.Gen.</i>	<i>Et.Gud.</i>	<i>Et.Sym.</i>	<i>EM</i>
άρμάριον	Scholia in Dion. Areop.?	–	–	–	146.56–147.7 Gaisford
άσσάριον	Cf. <i>Metr.</i> 1.304.8, 1.304.17, 1.305.5 Hultsch	–	α 217.19–20 De Stefani	–	–
δηνάριον	Cf. <i>Epiph. Mens.</i> 773–774 Moutsoulas	–	a) δ 354.12 b) δ 354.13 c) δ 354.14 De Stefani	–	–
καλαμάριν ⁵¹	Orion 178.19 Koës (= 99 Miccia- relli Collesi)	–	κ 293.35 Sturz	–	–
κελλάριον	?	–	κ 313.55 Sturz	–	–
κεντηνάριον	Cf. <i>Metr.</i> 1.267.19–20, 1.307.11– 12	–	κ 314.41–42 Sturz	–	–
κοχλιάριον	a) <i>Philox. Al. fr.</i> 527 Theodoridis b) ? c) Cf. <i>Epiph. Mens.</i> 59 de Lagarde (= 132.31 Sakkelion) d) <i>Et.Gen. s.v.</i> κόχλος e) <i>Et.Gen. s.v.</i> κοχλίδιον	a) <i>s.v.</i>	b) κ 342.9–10 c) κ 342.13–19 Sturz	d) <i>s.v.</i>	a) + e) 534.22–26 Gaisford
πομάριν ⁵²	?	–	π 475.23–24 Sturz	–	–

Once more, the *Etymologicum Gudianum* seems to display a comparatively ‘open-minded’ attitude, resulting in the inclusion of words in -άριον pertaining to a wide range of semantic fields: mostly currencies (άσσάριον, δηνάριον) and/or units of measurement (κεντηνάριον, κοχλιάριον (c)), but also places (κελλάριον, πομάριν) and objects (καλαμάριν, κοχλιάριον (b)). Moreover, the individual entries stem from different sources. Those devoted to currencies and units of measurement come from some sort of ancient metrological treatise similar to the ones published by Hultsch 1864 (= *Mens.*) or to Epiphanius of Salamis’ *Περὶ μέτρων καὶ στάθμων*

⁵¹ Sturz writes καλαμάριον, which is the reading of **w**; however, the reading of **b** and **z** is -iv. The third class does not provide any evidence in this respect, since it transmits neither this nor the other glosses beginning in κ: its originator, ms. **Vat**, descended from a patchy manuscript of the *Gudianum* and had to draw the glosses ἱφι-λέγω from a manuscript of the *Genuinum* (see Sciarra 2005, 380–399).

⁵² Sturz writes πομάριον, which is the reading of **w**; however, the reading of **b**, **z** and **Vat** is -iv.

(= Epiph. *Mens.*); the others have a different origin, which at least in the case of the gloss *καλαμάριν* should be identified with the *Etymologicum* of Orion. Even the etymological approach is diversified: sometimes the word is traced back to a fully Greek etymon — e.g., *καλαμάριν* is said to be thus called ὅτι κάλαμον αἶρει ('because it lifts the reed pen') and *κοχλιάριον* (b) is interpreted as the object that lifts shells or boiling liquids (τὸ κοχλίον⁵³ αἶρον· ἢ ὅτι τὰ κοχλάζοντα αἶρει) —; elsewhere the word is traced back to a Latin word — e.g., *κεντηνάριον* is (rightly) said to stem from the Latin word for 'hundred' (κέντου γὰρ Ῥωμαῖοι τὰ ἑκατόν φασιν) and *πομάριν* is thought to preserve the Latin word for 'fruit' (Ῥωμαῖα ἢ λέξεις· ποῦμα γὰρ λέγουσι τὴν ὀπώραν). Furthermore, in some cases, no actual etymon is suggested: e.g., the entry devoted to *ἄσσάριον* entails mere comparisons between different currencies and/or units of measurement (ἄσσάριον τοῦ ἀργύρου· καλεῖται λεπτά ξ'. ἄσσάριον σταθμός, γράμματα ἕξ. ἄ<σ>σάριον τοῦ χαλκοῦ, φύλλεως τέταρτον),⁵⁴ while the gloss dedicated to *κελλάριον* restrains itself to the annotation *κεκρυμμένον*. There is only a shared feature: all these words are never labelled as 'barbarian.'

The scenario does not change significantly even when we extend the inquiry to the entries devoted to Latin loanwords ending with the very similar masculine suffix -άριος. Again, we have a diversified bunch of occurrences, encompassing both month names (Ἰαννουάριος, Φεβρουάριος) and profession names (the rest), but once more the backbone is represented by the *Etymologicum Gudianum*.

It is worth noting that, among the several entries in -άριον and -άριος spotted through this inquiry, only one is preserved by the *Etymologicum Genuinum*, namely *κοχλιάριον* (a). This gloss, moreover, is quite ancient, since it stems from the inquiries of the 1st-century BCE grammarian Philoxenus of Alexandria, as proved by the *Quellenangabe* at the end of the formulation. Here is my text.⁵⁵

κοχλιάριον· παρὰ τὸ κόχλος κοχλιάριον, πλεονασμῷ δηλονότι τοῦ ι. Φιλόξενος.⁵⁶

Kokhliarion: it comes from κόχλος ('shell'), evidently with the addition of ι. Thus Philoxenus.

⁵³ κοχλίον] χλίον **bz**.

⁵⁴ "Silver ἄσσάριον: this is how sixty λεπτά are called (= a silver ἄσσάριον equals sixty λεπτά). The ἄσσάριον is (also) a unit of measurement, corresponding to six grams. A bronze ἄσσάριον is equivalent to a quarter of a φύλλις."

⁵⁵ A text of this gloss was already provided by Theodoridis (1976, 328), who, however, did not take into account the readings of **Vat** (see fn. 51).

⁵⁶ Φιλόξενος] *ita* Adler *apud* Theodoridis : Φιλ **AVat** : *om.* **B**.

Tab. 4: Words in -άριος.⁵⁷

Entry	Source	<i>Et.Gen.</i>	<i>Et.Gud.</i>	<i>Et.Sym.</i>	<i>EM</i>
Ἰαννουάριος	?	–	ι 269.17–20 Sturz	–	–
καβαλλάριος	?	–	<i>Deest apud</i> Sturz, <i>vd.</i> Reitzenstein 1897, 80	–	–
κοντουβερνάριος	?	–	κ 337.43 Sturz	–	–
μακελλάριος	?	–	μ 378.22–23 Sturz	–	–
νοτάριος	Orion 181.7–8 Koës (= 152 Micciarelli Collesi)	–	ν 411.59–412.2 Sturz	–	607.44–45 Gaisford
σκρινιάριος	?	–	<i>Deest apud</i> Sturz	–	–
σκρινιάριοι	<i>Lyd. Mag.</i> 186.25– 26 Bandy	–	σ 502.29–31 Sturz	<i>Tantum apud Mag- nam Grammaticam, ex EM</i>	718.58– 719.3 Gaisford
Φεβρουάριος	?	–	φ 550.32 Sturz	–	–
φλαμουλάριοι	<i>Lyd. Mag.</i> 554.7 Bandy	–	φ 554.7–8 Sturz	–	–

Unfortunately, no further information is given about which work of Philoxenus is intended. However, it cannot be excluded that Philoxenus discussed this word in his *Περὶ τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων διαλέκτου*, where linguistic similarities between Greek and Latin were discussed and Latin was classified as a form of Aeolic dialect. In fact, interesting reflections could have arisen from κοχλιάριον. First, it should be noticed that it cannot be regarded as a standard -άριον loanword: modern etymologists have ascertained that κοχλιάριον stems from Latin *coc(h)lear*, *-āris*, derivative of *coc(h)lea*, which is in its turn a borrowing from the Greek κόχλος.⁵⁸ Then, given its proximity to actual Greek words, the antiquity of the first occurrences of the word — Philoxenus wrote at the very end of Roman republic/beginning of the

⁵⁷ I have not included in this table the entries *κναιστινάριοι* and *στρουμεντάριος*. Though both occur in *w* and in Sturz's text (respectively 352.24 and 513.47), I have not been able to find them in any other manuscript; therefore, they are likely to be fourth-class interpolations.

⁵⁸ See *DÉLG*, *GEW*, and *EDG* s.v. κόχλος.

imperial era —, the early onset of isochrony, and the existence of authentic diminutives from κόχλος — e.g., κοχλίδιον, glossed by the *Genuinum* straight before κοχλιάριον —, it is possible that at least some ancient grammarians were not sure about the foreign origins of κοχλιάριον. A small clue is perhaps provided by the fact that Herodian, in distinguishing the Greek suffix -άριον from the Latin one on the basis of prosody (3.1.365.11–13 and 3.2.13.22–25 Lentz), exemplifies the latter with σουδάριον and the aforementioned κελλάριον instead of with the more widespread κοχλιάριον.⁵⁹

If our reconstruction is correct, the compilers of the *Etymologicum Genuinum* seem to show a consistent lack of interest in conspicuous loanwords in -άριον/-άριος. Of course, this does not mean that no Latin word is included in the *Genuinum* — for instance, 13 out of 19 fragments of Philoxenus' *Περὶ τῆς τῶν Ρωμαίων διαλέκτου* are preserved (though not exclusively) by the *Genuinum* —, but their frequency appears proportionally less significant than within the much smaller *Gudianum*. With respect to the latter, two other elements should be highlighted:

- a) though most of the entries in -άριον/-άριος come from sources not used by the compiler(s) of the *Genuinum* (e.g., metrological treatises and Lydus' *De magistratibus populi Romani*), at least two of them (and possibly more)⁶⁰ stem from the *Etymologicum* of Orion, which was a primary source for the *Genuinum*, too: moreover, Orion is the source of the *Gudianum*'s gloss to the proscribed word βαῖον (see § 3.1). This notwithstanding, the *Genuinum* omits all these glosses. This difference is likely to depend mostly (but maybe not uniquely) on the fact that the *Genuinum* and the *Gudianum* drew on different versions of Orion's *Etymologicum*: the former is close to the main excerpt published by Sturz 1820, the latter is rich in material attested only in the excerpts published by Koës 1820 and Micciarelli Collesi 1970 (but still shares many entries with the main excerpt).⁶¹

⁵⁹ Moreover, it is worth noting that the word κοχλιάριον was frequently discussed by Atticist lexicographers (Poll. 6.87 Bethe; Phryn. *PS* 88.5–6 van Borries, *Eclogue* 88 Fischer; [Hdn.] *Philet.* 217 Dain), who highlighted its popular nature. However, no mention of its Latin origin is included.

⁶⁰ For instance, the aforementioned interpretation of κοχλιάριον as τὸ κοχλίων αἶρον· ἢ ὅτι τὰ κοχλάζοντα αἶρει in *Et.Gud.* κ 342.9–10 Sturz is very close to the etymology διὰ τὸ τοὺς καλάμους αἶρειν suggested by Orion (and by the *Gudianum*: see Tab. 1) with respect to καλαμάρι(ο)ν. It is therefore tempting to assume that κ 342.9–10 Sturz stems from Orion too.

⁶¹ On the fact that different versions of Orion's *Etymologicum* were independently used by the compilers of the *Genuinum* and by those of the *Gudianum*, see Reitzenstein 1897, 47 and 100 (with fn. 2). On the usage of Orion's *Etymologicum* in the *Gudianum*, see also Alpers 1984, 57; Cellierini 1988, 47–49 (who convincingly argues that the compilers of the *Gudianum* used all the main versions of Orion's *Etymologicum*). A new comprehensive study on the direct tradition and the main indirect witnesses of Orion's *Etymologicum* has been carried out by Dr. Alessandro Musino in his PhD dissertation, whose publication we eagerly await.

- b) though the *Gudianum* was well-known to both the compilers of *Symeonis* and the compilers of the *Magnum*,⁶² few of its entries devoted to proscribed words found their way in the two later *Etymologica*.

4 ‘Barbarian’ words in the *Etymologica*

4.1 ‘Barbarian’ and ‘solecistic’ in the *Etymologica*: cases of negative connotation

Up to now, we have seen how the stigma of barbarism attached to some words (or categories of words) was largely ignored by the *Etymologicum Gudianum* alone, whereas the other major *Etymologica*, though not expressing open condemnation, seem to silently exclude such words from their inquiries. In other cases, however, the *Etymologica* include some explicit remark about the “barbarian” nature of the word they are discussing.⁶³ If so, this kind of observation often aims at highlighting deviations from the norm or from the expected outcome, thus entailing a negative judgement.

Part of such negative remarks target foreign words whose phonological and/or morphological features have not been adapted to the Greek norm (*Fremdwörter*). This trend is represented by two entries: the gloss Γαρίμας, devoted to the name of a Berber population settled in the Sahara Desert, and the gloss φνεί, encompassing a reference to the Egyptian name Φναιίτης. Both are transmitted by the *Etymologicum Genuinum*: the former was later inherited by the *Etymologicum Magnum* (221.41–43 Gaisford) alone, the latter was continued by the *Symeonis* (s.v.) and the *Magnum* (796.45–52 Gaisford).⁶⁴ Here is my text of both *Genuinum*’s glosses.⁶⁵

62 On the relationship between the *Gudianum* and the *Symeonis*, see Reitzenstein 1897, 256; on the relationship between the *Gudianum* and the *Magnum*, see Reitzenstein 1897, 243–248.

63 The relevant occurrences have been individuated starting from the ones already found thanks to the criteria described in fn. 18. However, a further selection has been made: I have taken into account only the occurrences where the words βάρβαρος and Σόλοικος have not a merely descriptive character but entail actual linguistic reflections/prescriptions (that is, when reference is made to phonological and morphological issues or a confrontation is issued with a similar but ‘non-barbarian’ word/construction).

64 For the sake of completeness, it should be highlighted that the ‘proper’ *Symeonis* inherits the text of the *Genuinum*’s gloss, while the *Magna Grammatica* shows the slightly different *facies* transmitted by the *Magnum*.

65 Since A lost glosses Φερσεφόννη–φρόνησις due to material damage, the text of the entry φνεί is based on B alone.

Γαρίμας· ἐκ τοῦ μαρίκας· ἢ ἐκ τοῦ Γαρίμας τὸ μαρίκας· βάρβαρον δὲ τὸ ὄνομα, καὶ ἡ κλίσις, καὶ ὁ τόνος. οὕτως Ἡρωδιανὸς Περὶ παθῶν.⁶⁶

Γαρίμας: it stems from μαρίκας, or μαρίκας comes from Γαρίμας. It is a barbarian name, both its declension and its accent. Thus Herodian in his *Περὶ παθῶν*.

φνεί· μίμημα φωνῆς [[ἀπὸ]] ὀρνέων παρὰ Ἀριστοφάνει (fr. 914 Kassel–Austin). οὐδέποτε γὰρ λέξις Ἑλληνικὴ ἀρχεται ἀπὸ τοῦ φ καὶ ν· τὸ γὰρ Φναίτης σημαίνει ὄνομα βάρβαρον, τοῦτο δὲ πεποιήται. λέγουσι δὲ τινες ὅτι οὐκ ἀρχεται τοῦτο ἀπὸ τοῦ φ καὶ ν, ἀλλὰ τοφνεί, τοῦ το μὴ ὄντος ἄρθρου, ἀλλὰ μέρους τῆς λέξεως· καὶ δῆλον ἐκ τοῦ μὴ εὐρίσκεσθαι αὐτὸ χωρὶς τοῦ το.⁶⁷

φνεί: it is an onomatopoeia reproducing the chirp of the birds occurring in Aristophanes. In fact, no Greek word begins with φ and ν: Φναίτης is a barbarian name, while φνεί is a poetic creation. Some say that not even φνεί begins with φ and ν; rather, the word is τοφνεί, το not being an article but part of the word, as is clear from the fact that there is no occurrence of it without το.

Both entries seem to be indebted to the ancient scholarly tradition, in particular to the grammarian Herodian: the reference *Ἡρωδιανὸς Περὶ παθῶν* at the end of the entry Γαρίμας assures us that it stems directly from him (3.2.271.2–4 Lentz), whereas the entry φνεί possibly traces back to him (3.2.601.16–22 Lentz) through the mediation of Choeroboscus, who is quoted by the *Etymologicum Magnum* as the source of the entry.⁶⁸ It is very likely that both Herodian and the compiler(s) of the *Genuinum* had no real interest in Γαρίμας and Φναίτης *per se*; rather, the inclusion of these words is better explained as an attempt to justify the anomalous features of some words occurring in canonical authors. Thus, on the one hand, the irregular Γαρίμας offered a parallel for the equally barbarian μαρίκας (μαρικᾶς), a derogatory *Fremdwort* used by the playwright Eupolis (5th c. BCE) to attack the demagogue Hyperbolus; on the other, Φναίτης was probably meant to be just a further confirmation of the fact that words beginning with φν- have no real basis in Greek language, since they are either poetic coinages (like the Aristophanean φνεί) or foreign words (like Φναίτης). At any rate, it is clear that these words are objects of inquiry just because of their divergence from the norm, and that the real aim is only to reaffirm that rule.

⁶⁶ τοῦ Γαρίμας] *ita scripsi* : τοῦ μαρίγας A : τοῦ μαρίμας B : τοῦ γαρίκας EM | κλίσις] κλῆσις A | οὕτως] *om.* A | Περὶ παθῶν] *om.* B.

⁶⁷ τοφνεί, τοῦ το μὴ] *ita scripsi cum EM* : τὸ φνεί τοῦτο μὴ B | δῆλον] *ita scripsi cum EM* : δηλοῖ B.

⁶⁸ On the dependence of Choeroboscus' *Orthographia* on various sources, among which even Herodian's *Περὶ ὀρθογραφίας* should be counted, see Alpers 2004, 33–34 (with further bibliography). However, since Lentz is exceedingly generous in attributing scholarly material to Herodian, extreme caution is needed: see Dyck 1993 and Dickey 2014.

Unsurprisingly, much more common are entries where the belittling labels of ‘barbarian’ and ‘solecistic’ are applied to completely Greek words/expressions belonging to lower-register varieties (see the Introduction): just as in the treatises on barbarism or solecism, where ‘foreign’ barbarism is only a special subset of a more general reflection mostly devoted to fully Greek words, so also in the *Etymologica* most of the ‘barbarian’ forms are non-foreign. With regards to solecism, there is just one example, transmitted only by the *Etymologicum Magnum* (774.41–46 Gaisford) and by the *Magna Grammatica* (mss. CPV), but probably inherited from a non-epitomized (or less epitomized) version of the *Etymologicum Genuinum*.⁶⁹ Here is the text of the *Magnum* in Gaisford’s edition.

ὕγις: [...] ζητεῖται τὸ παρὰ Σώφρονι (fr. 33 Kassel–Austin) “ὕγιώτερον κολοκύντας”. πῶς οὐ λέγει ὑγιέστερον; ῥητέον οὖν, ὅτι ἔκοντι ἡμαρτε τὸ ἄκακον τῆς γυναικείας ἐρμηνείας μιμούμενος. ὃν τρόπον κάκεϊ ἐσολοίκισε “τατωμένα τοῦ κιτῶνος” — ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐνέχυρα θεῖσα — “ὁ τόκος νιν ἀλιφθερώκει” (fr. 34 Kassel–Austin). Φιλόξενος.

ὕγις: [...] the expression ‘ὕγιώτερον κολοκύντας’ (“healthier than a gourd”) in Sophron is the subject of inquiries: why does he not say ὑγιέστερον? Well, you should actually say ὑγιέστερον, because Sophron, aiming at imitating the lack of polish of women’s way of speaking, made an intentional mistake. He used an analogous solecistic trope also here, by saying ‘τατωμένα τοῦ κιτῶνος’ (“deprived of [her] chiton”) for ἐνέχυρα θεῖσα (‘having put down a security’) and then ‘ὁ τόκος νιν ἀλιφθερώκει’ (“the interest [on it] had ruined her”). Thus Philoxenus.

Strictly speaking, the first fragment should be classified as a barbarism, since the anomaly involves just one word (or, more precisely, part of a word). The second fragment, in contrast, can be *pleno iure* regarded as an example of solecism: the issue here is not the presence of some comparatively unusual forms (such as the perfect ἀλιφθερώκει),⁷⁰ but the limping syntax produced by the “sloppy hanging participle.”⁷¹ The slight terminological inaccuracy might trace back to Philoxenus himself, who lived in a time when the distinction between barbarism and solecism was possibly not yet fully consolidated,⁷² but it cannot be excluded that later compilers could have oversimplified Philoxenus’ thought. At any rate, it is also worth noting that the intentionality of the mistakes did not prevent Philoxenus and/or the compilers of the *Genuinum* from using the label of ‘solecism,’ which was often

⁶⁹ In this respect, see Reitzenstein 1897, 242, n. 1, and Theodoridis 1976, 256.

⁷⁰ On the intelligibility of the individual words occurring in this passage, see Cassio 2022, 3.

⁷¹ Thus Hordern 2004, 164.

⁷² On the semantic evolution of the concepts of ‘barbarism’ and ‘solecism,’ see Sandri 2020, 19–26.

avoided in case of voluntary poetic deviations and replaced by the notion of σχῆμα.⁷³ Thus, a rather purist attitude seems to emerge from this gloss.

More frequent are the cases of isolated Greek words described as ‘barbarian.’ In one case, the label applies to the Dorism ὀλίος. The compilers of this entry, inherited from Herodian’s only completely extant work *Περὶ μονήρους λέξεως* (3.2.925.23–926.8 Lentz), recall that this form was also attested in literary texts such as Rhinthon’s *Meleager the Slave*; nevertheless, they also highlight how Plato Comicus used it to characterize as ‘barbarian’ the unrefined speech of an uncouth speaker (whom we can deduce to be Hyperbolus).⁷⁴ The entry is handed down by all the *Etymologica* except the *Gudianum*, and here is its text according to the manuscripts of the *Etymologicum Genuinum*.⁷⁵

ὀλίος· κατὰ διάλεκτον· Ταραντῖνοι γὰρ τὸ ὀλίγος ὀλίος λέγουσιν, ἄνευ τοῦ γ. τὰ τοιαῦτα γὰρ κατὰ διάλεκτον ἐν Δούλῳ Μελεάγρῳ (Rhinth. fr. 2 Kassel–Austin)· “ὀλίοισιν ἡμῶν ἐμπέφυκ’ εὐτυχία,” καὶ (Rhinth. fr. 4 Kassel–Austin)· “ὀλίον μισθόν.” Πλάτων μέντοι ὁ κωμικὸς (fr. 183 Kassel–Austin) διαπαίξει τὴν λέξιν ὥς βάρβαρον [...].⁷⁶

ὀλίος: dialectal. Tarentines say ὀλίος for ὀλίγος, that is, without γ. Such forms are indeed dialectal and can be found in *Meleager the Slave*: “in a few (ὀλίοισιν) of us prosperity has grown.” And: “a small (ὀλίον) salary.” However, Plato Comicus mocks this word as barbarian.

Two further instances are documented only in the *Etymologicum Symeonis* (α 858 and 1118 Lasserre–Livadaras): the former is drawn from a λεξικὸν ῥητορικόν,⁷⁷ the latter from a no-longer-extant Atticist syntactical lexicon, which probably descended from the one used by Priscian (6th c.) in his *Ars* (book 18).⁷⁸ Here is the text of both glosses as published by Lasserre and Livadaras.

ἀνταναγνῶναι (Cratin. fr. 289 Kassel/Austin)· καὶ ἀντεξετάσαι βιβλίον· τὸ γὰρ ἀντιβάλλειν βάρβαρον φαίνεται.

ἀνταναγνῶναι: you can also say ἀντεξετάσαι βιβλίον (‘to collate a book’), since ἀντιβάλλειν sounds barbarian.

⁷³ On the notion of σχῆμα and its relation to the concept of solecism, see Sandri 2020, 44–47.

⁷⁴ See Kassel/Austin 1989, 506–507.

⁷⁵ Hence *Et.Sym.* s.v. and *EM* 621.51–57 Gaisford.

⁷⁶ ὀλίος (lemma) | ὀλίος **B** : ὀλίος **A** | Ταραντῖνοι] *ita scripsi cum EM* : Ταραντηνοὶ **AB** | ὀλίγος ὀλίος] ὀλί- ὀλι- **B** : ὀλί- ὀλι- **A** | λέγουσιν] λ^ε **B** : λέγουσι **A** | τοιαῦτα γὰρ] τοιαῦτα **B** | Δούλῳ Μελεάγρῳ] δουλομελεάγρῳ **A** | ὀλίοισιν] ὀλι- **A** | ὀλίον] ὀλι- **A** : ὀλβι- **B**.

⁷⁷ On the λεξικὸν ῥητορικόν used by the compiler(s) of the *Symeonis*, see at least Reitzenstein 1897, 257–258 and Reitzenstein 1907, 816.

⁷⁸ In this respect, see Ferri 2014.

ἀπαγγέλλεται ἤκειν καὶ ἤκων· τὸ σὺν μετοχῇ φασὶν τινες βάρβαρον εἶναι, ἀλλ’ ὁ Δημοσθένης (3.4)· “μémνησθε, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ὅτ’ ἀπηγγέλθη Φίλιππος ἡμῖν ἐν Θράκῃ τρίτον ἔτος τοῦτ’ Ἡραῖον τεῖχος πολιορκῶν.”

ἀπαγγέλλεται ἤκειν καὶ ἤκων: some say that the construction with the participle (i.e. with ἤκων) is barbarian, but Demosthenes says: “You remember, men of Athens, when news came (ἀπηγγέλθη) — it was three years ago — that Philip was in Thrace besieging (πολιορκῶν) the fortress of Heraeum.”

The gloss ἀνταναγνῶναι is deeply rooted in Atticist thought, as proved by the strong similarity to the treatment devoted to this word by Phrynichus, both in the *Praeparatio sophistica* (47.16–17 van Borries: ἀνταναγνῶναι χρήσιμον. οὐκ ἀντιβαλεῖν οὐδ’ ἀνεξετάσαι) and in the *Eclogue* (188 Fischer: ἀντιβάλλειν· καὶ τοῦθ’ ἕτερον σημαίνει καὶ ἑτέρως ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν λέγεται. σημαίνει γὰρ τοιοῦτόν τι ὁποῖον τὸ ἀντιτιθέναι· λέγεται δὲ νῦν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀνταναγνῶναι).⁷⁹ The syntactical entry ἀπαγγέλλεται ἤκειν καὶ ἤκων instead expresses a protest against an application of the label ‘barbarian’: more precisely, its author tries to demonstrate that the construction of ἀπαγγέλλω with the participle is not anomalous by quoting a passage from one of the most respected canonical authors.⁸⁰ At any rate, both entries show good acquaintance with Atticist terminology and argumentative strategies.

Beyond these two entries pertaining to the *Symeonis* alone, a similar acquaintance with purism can be detected in two other instances of ‘barbarian’ words. The first is the anomalous perfect ἀνήγκακα, to which the *Etymologicum Genuinum* (α 868 Lasserre–Livadaras) devotes an entire gloss, later inherited by the *Etymologicum Symeonis* (α 1027 Lasserre–Livadaras)⁸¹ and the *Etymologicum Magnum* (106.23–32 Gaisford). Here follows the text of the *Genuinum* as established by Lasserre and Livadaras.

ἀνήγκακα· ἰστέον, ὅτι τὸ ἀνήγκακα βάρβαρόν ἐστιν· οὐχ εὐρίσκεται γὰρ ἐν χρήσει Ἑλληνικῇ, ὡς λέγει Ἡρωδιανός· ἐν μόνῃ γὰρ τῇ τῶν Ἀλεξανδρέων δημῳδαί συνηθείᾳ <εὐρίσκεται>. λέγουσι δὲ τινες Ἀττικὸν εἶναι, ὅπερ οὐκ ἔστιν· οὐ γὰρ ἔχει ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ καὶ δευτέρᾳ συλλαβῇ τὸ αὐτὸ σύμφωνον. [...]. οὕτως Ζηνόβιος.

⁷⁹ Moreover, similar entries preserved by Photius (*Lexicon* α 2046 Theodoridis) and by the ms. B of the *Συναγωγὴ λέξεων χρησίμων* (Σ^b α 1528 Cunningham).

⁸⁰ This attitude is not surprising, since Priscian’s *Ars* advocates a moderate Atticism, whose stances are similar to those defended by other lexicographers such as Pollux, the Antiatticist and Orus. In this respect, see at least Valente 2014 and Spangenberg Yanes 2019, 220–221.

⁸¹ However, it should be highlighted that the *Symeonis* transmits a shorter version, which completely omits the discussion about the ‘barbarian’ character of ἀνήγκακα.

ἀνήγκακα: it should be known that the form ἀνήγκακα is barbarian. In fact, as Herodian says, it cannot be found in the use of Greek writers: one can find it only in the vulgar Alexandrian usage. Some say it is an Attic form, but this is false since it has not the same consonant in the first and the second syllable.⁸² [...] Thus Zenobius.

As explicitly stated, the entry ἀνήγκακα is greatly indebted to the ancient scholarly tradition: it stems from the grammarian Zenobius (6th c. ?),⁸³ who in his turn is thought to have drawn on Herodian (3.2.388.10–17 Lentz).⁸⁴ In fact, an interest in an ‘Alexandrian’ perfect is not out of place in the context of the erudition of Hellenistic and imperial age: the everyday language of that city was frequently taken into account (and mostly blamed) by several scholars of that time, some of whom (including Herodian) even came from there.⁸⁵ However, this concern is somehow more remarkable in 9th-century Byzantium, when Alexandria was no more part of the Empire and the old forms of the perfect indicative, eroded by the merger with the aorist already begun at the dawn of the Hellenistic age, were largely substituted by periphrases.⁸⁶ Therefore, the choice to preserve such a highbrow discussion on which form of the perfect indicative of ἀναγκάζω is more Attic (that is to say, more correct) confirms once more that the *Genuinum* — or, at least, part of the material selected by its compilers — belongs to and carries on the long-established purist tradition.

The last example of the label ‘barbarian’ is preserved by an entry devoted to the polysemic word σχολή and some of its derivatives and synonyms. Again, the first occurrence among the major *Etymologica* is transmitted by the *Genuinum*, whose text I have reconstructed as follows.

σχολή· οὐχ ὁ τόπος, ἐν ᾧ σχολάζουσι καὶ διατρίβουσι περὶ παιδείαν, οὐδὲ αὐτὴ ἡ ἐν λόγοις εὐμουσία καὶ διατριβή· ἀλλ’ ἦν οἱ πολλοὶ ἀκύρως καλοῦσιν εὐκαιρίαν· τὸ δὲ εὐκαιρεῖν, βάρβαρον (ἀλλ’ ἀντὶ τοῦ σχολὴν ἄγειν λέγουσι), ἡ δὲ εὐκαιρία, βάρβαρον μὲν οὐκ ἔστιν ὄνομα, τάττεται δὲ οὐκ ἐπὶ σχολῆς, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ καιροῦ τινὸς εὐφυΐας καὶ ἀρετῆς. [...].⁸⁷

⁸² What is meant here is that some tried to defend this form by invoking the phenomenon of ‘Attic reduplication,’ which affects perfects such as ἀκήκοα (corresponding to present ἀκούω) and ἐγήγεγκα (corresponding to present ἐγείρω). Our ἀνήγκακα, however, cannot be classified as such since there is no reduplication but rather two different consonants (ν and γ).

⁸³ Very little is known about this Zenobius, who does not even enjoy a *RE* article. For sure he wrote a commentary on Apollonius’ *Πηματικόν*, and thanks to *EM* 639.16–34 Gaisford it can be argued that he was contemporary with or later than John Philoponus (5th/6th c.): see Dyck 1991, 326 (with further bibliography in fn. 53).

⁸⁴ But see fn. 68.

⁸⁵ On the label Ἀλεξανδρεῖς, see Stephan 1889, 4–7; Latte 1915, 384–385.

⁸⁶ On the developments of Greek perfect, see e.g., Horrocks 2010, 176–178 and 300–301; Holton/Manolessou 2010, 551–553 (with further bibliography).

⁸⁷ οὐδὲ αὐτὴ | οὐδὲ ἡ αὐτὴ **A** | ἦν | ἦν **A** | τὸ δὲ | καὶ τὸ **B** | εὐκαιρία] -ίς **AB**.

σχολή: it designates neither the place where one attends classes and is engaged in education, nor the refined taste and engagement in rhetoric itself, but what most improperly call εὐκαιρία ('leisure'). On the other hand, the word εὐκαιρεῖν is barbarian — but they (= the uneducated people) use it instead of σχολήν ἄγειν ('have leisure') —, while εὐκαιρία is not barbarian in itself, but it has nothing to do with σχολή ('leisure'): rather, it is used to indicate an occasion of prosperity and happiness.

Unsurprisingly, the censure against the verb εὐκαιρέω is deeply rooted in Atticist lexicography: the verb is explicitly proscribed both by Phrynichus' *Eclogue* (97 Fischer: εὐκαιρεῖν οὐ λεκτέον, ἀλλ' εὖ σχολῆς ἔχειν) and by Moeris (ε 22 Hansen: εὐκαιρεῖν οὐδεις τῶν παλαιῶν· Ἕλληνες δέ). Moreover, the very entry of the *Genuinum* is thought to stem — through the mediation of the λεξικὸν ῥητορικόν⁸⁸ — from another Atticist lexicographer, namely Orus (fr. B 154 Alpers).⁸⁹ In its turn, the *Genuinum* transmitted this Atticist material to all the later *Etymologica*: in particular, the *Symeonis* (s.v.) and the *Magnum* (740.50–56 Gaisford) display an almost unmodified text, whereas the formulation of the *Gudianum* (σ 519.22–26 Sturz) is somehow different but still similar. Here is my text of the entry of the *Gudianum*.

σχολή· οὐχ ὁ τόπος, ἐν ᾧ σχολάζουσι περὶ παιδείαν, οὐδ' αὐτὴ ἡ ἐν λόγοις εὐμουσία καὶ διατριβή· ἀλλ' ἦν οἱ πολλοὶ καλοῦσιν εὐκαιρίαν· τὸ δὲ εὐκαιρεῖν, βάρβαρον· καὶ γὰρ ἀντὶ τοῦ σχολεῖν (*scil.* οἱ ἰδιώται *vel sim.*) λέγουσιν εὐκαιρεῖν· σχολή ἡ ἀργία.⁹⁰

As far as I can ascertain, this is the only entry in the *Gudianum* where the label 'barbarian': a) applies to a fully Greek word; b) entails a clearly negative judgement. Therefore, one might convincingly argue that purist sensitivity is here much less developed than in the other *Etymologica*. Moreover, it is perhaps no coincidence that the only exception to the general trend is represented by a common word such as σχολή: while seemingly having little general interest in highbrow purist discussions (and especially those concerning unusual forms such as ἀνήγκακα and ὀλίος), the compilers of the *Gudianum* might have found it sensible to include a discussion

⁸⁸ Hence Photius (*Lexicon* σ 919 Theodoridis) and *Suda* (σ 1802 Adler).

⁸⁹ It should also be added that the main version of the *Συναγωγὴ λέξεων χρησίμων* (σ 437 Cunningham) — whence Photius (*Lexicon* σ 917 Theodoridis) and *Suda* (σ 1795 Adler) — and the *Etymologicum Genuinum* itself — whence *Et.Sym.* s.v. — preserve another similar entry (σχολάζειν καὶ σχολήν ἄγειν, οὐκ εὐκαιρεῖν λέγουσιν Ἀττικοί). Again, Alpers (1981, 155) ascribes it to Orus (fr. B 153). On the criteria applied by Alpers to attribute to Orus anonymous Atticist entries preserved by the *Συναγωγὴ* and its expansions, see Alpers 1981, 64–69.

⁹⁰ σχολάζουσι] -ονται **w** | περὶ παιδείαν] *ita* **z** : περὶ παιδείας **o** : περὶ παίδευσιν **bw** : παρὰ παίδευσιν **S** | καλοῦσιν] καλοῦσι **z** | εὐκαιρίαν] -κάριαν **w** | τὸ δ' εὐκαιρεῖν] *om.* **w** | λέγουσιν] *ita* **o** : λέγει **bz** : λέγομεν **S** : λ^e **w** | σχολή] *ita* **S** : -ῆ **bow** | σχολή ἡ ἀργία] *om.* **z**.

of the proper meaning of a word that belonged to the Greek core vocabulary and could be found in any kind of text.

4.2 ‘Barbarian’ and ‘solecistic’ in the *Etymologica*: cases of neutral (to positive) connotation

Though showing just scanty traces of the Atticist label ‘barbarian,’ the *Etymologicum Gudianum* transmits not a few occurrences of the word βάρβαρος; however, these are intended in a different, more neutral way. The label ‘barbarian’ is here mostly applied to actual foreign words, namely Semitisms occurring in the biblical *Book of Psalms*. A survey on the major *Etymologica*, summarized in the following table, shows clearly that this kind of ‘Biblical barbarism’ is not documented in the *Genuinum* and is overall quite rare outside of the *Gudianum*.

Tab. 5: Semitisms described as ‘barbarian’ by the *Etymologica*.

Entry	Source	Typology	<i>Et.Gen.</i>	<i>Et.Gud.</i>	<i>Et.Sym.</i>	<i>EM</i>
ἐκ Βασάν	Choerob. <i>Ps.</i> 154.26–27 Gaisford	Toponym (Bashan)	–	ε 441.1–3 De Stefani	–	–
Ἑρμωνιεύμ	Choerob. <i>Ps.</i> 144.33–145.2 Gaisford	Toponym (Mt. Hermon)	–	ε 528.14–16 De Stefani	–	–
Ἰωνᾶς	*Choerob. <i>Ps.</i> ⁹¹	Anthroponym (Jonah)	–	ι 287.49–54 Sturz	–	–
μάννα	? ⁹²	(Heavenly) food	–	μ 379.17–23 Sturz	–	–

⁹¹ This entry is absent from the standard text of Choeroboscus’ *Psalms-Epimerisms* (namely Gaisford 1842); however, given that that it shows the same erotematic form found in Choeroboscus’ work, it is likely that it stems from a more complete version of this work (for more details on its textual transmission, see below in this paragraph) or at least from a reworking of materials coming from it. Moreover, the entry shows strong similarities to Choerob. *Ps.* 144.26–32 and 160.19–23 Gaisford.

⁹² I ascertained that some manuscripts of Choeroboscus’ *Psalms-Epimerisms* (e.g., Vat. gr. 1861, f. 132^r) include a treatment of the word μάννα — later inherited by the *Gudianum* (μ 379.17–23 Sturz) and the *Magnum* (*574.90–102 Gaisford) —, but this discussion does not show significant similarities to the entry in question.

Entry	Source	Typology	<i>Et.Gen.</i>	<i>Et.Gud.</i>	<i>Et.Sym.</i>	<i>EM</i>
Σελμών	Choerob. Ps. 154.9–12 Gaisford	Toponym (Zalmon)	–	σ 498.31–34 Sturz	<i>Tantum apud Ma- gnam Grammati- cam, ex EM</i>	709.38–41 Gaisford
Σηλῶμ	Choerob. Ps. 162.31 Gaisford	Anthroponym (Shelah)	–	–	<i>Tantum apud Ma- gnam Grammati- cam, ex EM</i>	710.50–52 Gaisford
Σιών/Σηών	Choerob. Ps. 113.10–12 Gaisford	1) Toponym (Sion) 2) Anthro- ponym (Si- hon)	–	σ 501.51–52 Sturz	<i>Tantum apud Ma- gnam Grammati- cam, ex EM</i>	715.8–14 Gaisford

None of these entries overemphasizes the anomaly of the word they are discussing; the focus is not on their divergence from the expected outcome in Greek language, but rather on the possibility of explaining each of these words as part of a more general trend. This approach is clearly detectable in the *Etymologicum Gudianum* s.v. Ἑρμωνιεύμ.

Ἑρμωνιεύμ (Ps. 41.7): τὸ μω μέγα, τὸ νι ι, τὸ εἰμ δίφθογγον. τὰ εἰς εἰμ λήγοντα ὀνόματα βάρβαρα τε καὶ ἔθνικα ὀξύνεται καὶ διὰ τῆς εἰ διφθόγγου γράφεται, οἷον Ἑρμωνιεύμ Ἑλιακείμ Ἰωακείμ Σενναχηρείμ, πλήν τοῦ Βενιαμίν.

Ἑρμωνιεύμ: -μω- is written with ω, -νι- with ι, -εἰμ with the diphthong. The barbarian and gentilitial nouns ending with -εἰμ are oxytone and written with the diphthong εἰ, as in the cases of Ἑρμωνιεύμ, Ἑλιακείμ, Ἰωακείμ, Σενναχηρείμ; Βενιαμίν is an exception.

Let us introduce a comparison with *Genuinum*'s entry Γαρίμας (§ 4.1). In that case, the confrontation between Γαρίμας and μαρίκας did not lead to any further rapprochement or more comprehensive categorization and was probably only aimed at better explaining the classical but anomalous μαρικήs; conversely, here Ἑρμωνιεύμ is regarded as significant *per se* and paves the way for a far-reaching observation encompassing many barbarian names. Even more remarkable, however, is the generalization suggested by the *Gudianum* s.v. Ἰωνᾶς, which goes as far as to cross the boundaries between Greek and barbarian languages. Here is my text of the entry.

Ἰωνᾶς· τὸ ω διὰ τί· διότι πᾶν ὄνομα, Ἑλληνικόν τε καὶ βάρβαρον ἀπὸ τῆς ω συλλαβῆς ἀρχόμενον, τὴν πρώτην συλλαβὴν διὰ τοῦ ι ἔχει, τὴν δὲ μετὰ ταύτης διὰ τοῦ ω. πλὴν τοῦ Ἰορδάνης καὶ Ἰόππης, καὶ Ἰοκάστη, καὶ Ἰόλαος. τοῦ Ἰωνᾶ ὁ κανὼν, τὰ εἰς ας περισπώμενα, ἀποβολῇ τοῦ σ κλίνεται.⁹³

Ἰωνᾶς: why is it written with ω? Because every noun, whether Greek or barbarian, beginning with the syllable ω, has ι in the first syllable and ω in the second one, except for Ἰορδάνης, Ἰόππη, Ἰοκάστη and Ἰόλαος. The paradigm of Ἰωνᾶς, that is, nouns ending in -ας and having a circumflex accent on the final syllable, loses its σ in the declension.

A noteworthy feature of both entries Ἑρμωνιεύμ and Ἰωνᾶς is that neither of them includes a proper etymology, just orthographical remarks. This hallmark is not uncommon at all among the glosses collected in Tab. 3: for instance, the same structure is detectable in the gloss Σιών, both in the shorter version transmitted by the *Etymologicum Gudianum* (Σιών· τὸ ὄνομα τῆς πόλεως διὰ τοῦ ἰῶτα· Σηὼν δὲ⁹⁴ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ βασιλέως διὰ τοῦ ἥτα) and in the longer one handed down by the *Etymologicum Magnum* and the *Magna Grammatica*. Even the gloss Σηλώμ, transmitted only by the *Magnum* and desperately corrupt, shows no traces of etymological interpretation and deals with mere orthographical issues (τὸ ση, η· τῶν ἐθνικῶν καὶ βαρβάρων αἱ προστακτικαὶ παραδόσεις εἰσὶ μᾶλλον, οὐχὶ δὲ παραθέσει ὑποπίπτουσι). However, in other cases, the orthographical observations are mingled with or even superseded by an authentic (if cumbersome) attempt to provide these entries with a Greek etymology. Examples of ‘etymological glosses’ are represented by the entries ἐκ Βασάν and Σελμών, whose text (as transmitted by the *Etymologicum Gudianum*) is quoted in the following lines.⁹⁵

ἐκ Βασάν (Ps. 67.23)· ὄνομα τόπου· ἔστι βῶ, τὸ βαίνω ἡγουν πορεύομαι· ἐκ τούτου βάσω ὁ μέλλων καὶ τὸ Βασάν ὄνομα βάρβαρον, ἐξ οὗ τόπου μετῆλθον.

ἐκ Βασάν: toponym. βῶ is equivalent to βαίνω, which means ‘to go’: hence the future βάσω and the barbarian name Βασάν, whence they came.

Σελμών· ὄνομα βάρβαρον, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔλκω τοῦ σημαίνοντος τὸ ἐλκύω. γίνεται ὁ παρακείμενος εἴλκα, ὁ παθητικὸς εἴλμαι καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ εἴλμος καὶ ἀποβολῇ τοῦ ἰῶτα ἐλμός ἐλμών, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ σ Σελμών· ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐλεύθω ἐλμών καὶ σελμών.⁹⁶

⁹³ διὰ τ[ι] διὰ τ[ι] S | διότι] om. w | ἀρχόμενον]-ην w | ἔχει] ἔχ^{ου} (i.e. ἔχουσι) z | τὴν δὲ] τὰ δὲ w | ταύτης] ταῦτα z | διὰ τοῦ ω] διὰ τοῦ μέγα z | Ἰόππη] Ἰόπτ- z | Ἰοκάστη] Ἰωκύ- b (ft. Ἰοκύ- b⁹⁴) : Ἰοκί- z | περισπώμενα–κλίνεται om. z.

⁹⁴ δὲ] om. bt.

⁹⁵ The text of the entry ἐκ Βασάν is the one published by De Stefani 1920; the text of the entry Σελμών is mine.

⁹⁶ τοῦ σημαίνοντος] ita z : τὸ σ¹ b : ὅτε σ¹ o : om. w | γίνεται] om. w | καὶ πλεονασμῷ–Σελμών] om. w.

Σελμών: barbarian name from ἔλκω, which means ‘to drag.’ Its perfect is εἶλκα, passive εἴλμαι, whence εἴλμος; then, after the removal of ι, it becomes ἐλμός ἐλμών and, after the addition of σ, Σελμών. Or from ἐλεύθω, whence ἐλμών and σελμών.

As evident from Tab. 3, the open-minded approach and the orthographical/etymological concern displayed by these entries are not an absolute innovation in the landscape of ancient Greek scholarship. On the contrary, they have a precise source, that is, the grammatical (and, above all, orthographical) commentary on the *Book of Psalms* — hence the title *Psalm-Epimerisms* — written by the Byzantine grammarian George Choeroboscus (8th/9th c.). However, Choeroboscus’ work does not answer all the questions, and possibly raises some new ones. On the one hand, as already pointed out, all the glosses collected in Tab. 3 are handed down either by the *Etymologicum Gudianum* or, to a lesser extent, by the *Etymologicum Magnum* and the *Magna Grammatica*, but never by the *Etymologicum Genuinum*; on the other, Choeroboscus’ *Psalm-Epimerisms* are recognized as a direct source not only for the *Gudianum* and the *Magnum*, but even for the *Genuinum*!⁹⁷ In other words: the compilers of the *Genuinum*, the *Gudianum*, and the *Magnum* had all at their disposal at least one copy of Choeroboscus’ commentary on the *Book of Psalms*, but they used it in different ways.

Overall, the *Genuinum* seems to have drawn on the *Psalms-Epimerisms* far less than the other two *Etymologica*, and, above all, than the *Gudianum*. To make that clear, it is sufficient to make a comparison between the letter β of each lexicon. While Lasserre and Livadaras trace back to Choeroboscus’ work on the *Book of Psalms* only one entry (βασιλεύς = β 46 Lasserre/Livadaras), De Stefani identifies no less than 19 entries as surely (or very probably) inherited from the *Psalm-Epimerisms*, among which even an evident Semitism (Βεελφεγώρ) pops up.⁹⁸ At this point, just as in the case of the entries in -άριον/-άριος (see § 3.2), one might be tempted to ascribe the conspicuous divergence between the *Genuinum* and the *Gudianum* to a dependence on two different branches of their source’s textual transmission. Of course, this possibility cannot be completely excluded, also because the textual

⁹⁷ On the exploitation of Choeroboscus’ *Psalm-Epimerisms* in the *Etymologica*, see Reitzenstein 1897, 47 (*Genuinum*), 99–100 with fn. 2 (*Gudianum*), 244–246 and 248–249 (*Magnum*). Moreover, it should not be excluded that this work was also used by the compilers of the *Magna Grammatica*: see Baldi 2013, 188.

⁹⁸ The entries of the *Gudianum* I am speaking about are: Βαβύλων (= β 257.16), βάρεων (= β 261.9–10), βάρεσιν (= β 261.21–22), βεβαιῶ (= β 265.9–12), βεβηλώσωσι (= β 265.27–28), Βεελφεγώρ (= β 266.9–12), βιάζω (= β 269.19–20), βιβλίον (= β 269.27–28), βλέφαρα (= β 273.6–7), βοηθός (= β 276.1), βολίς (= β 278.6) βορρᾶς (= β 279.7), βουνός (= β 283.24–25), the two entries devoted to the word βραχίων (= β 285.6–8, 285.9–10), βρύχει (= β 290.22–23), βρύχω (= β 290.24–25), βουούσης (= β 291.6–9), βυθός (= β 291.14 De Stefani).

tradition of the *Psalm-Epimerisms* has not yet been thoroughly investigated; however, the only edition available so far — that is, Gaisford 1842 — is still rich in biblical Semitisms despite being admittedly based on one of the most incomplete manuscripts.⁹⁹ Therefore, it seems more likely that the compilers of the *Genuinum* deliberately chose to make little use of the *Psalm-Epimerism*, whereas the less high-brow compilers of the *Gudianum*, who probably attached greater educational importance to the *Book of Psalms* and knew that their readers could have difficulty writing and understanding the frequent non-Greek words spread within it, took full advantage of the wealth of orthographical and etymological observations collected by Choeroboscus.

5 Conclusions

The passages discussed in this paper have shown that the approach to ‘barbarian’ words and to the scholarly tradition dealing with them varies widely from one etymologicum to another. Of course, some intersections exist, too. In particular, all the *Etymologica* incorporate more or less ‘technical’ reflections on barbarism and solécism (§ 2) and seem to have at least some acquaintance with the terminology developed by the purist tradition, though with different levels of frequency and depth (§ 4.1). However, these (vague) points of contact are overshadowed by a number of hardly reconcilable divergences. Quite remarkably, these differences seem to follow regular patterns, eventually resulting in a consistent opposition between the *Etymologicum Genuinum* and the *Etymologicum Gudianum*: the former omits most of the words, and of the types of words that had been proscribed by the purist tradition (§ 3, 4.2), the latter ignores such restrictive doctrines by etymologizing many ‘suspicious’ words (§ 3, 4.2) and by omitting in its turn a good part of the purist entries collected by the *Genuinum* (§ 4.1).

As already anticipated, the divergences between the *Genuinum* and the *Gudianum* can be partly ascribed to the fact that, in several cases, the two *Etymologica* depended upon different sources or different versions of the same source (§ 3.2). However, it would be wrong to rely with too much confidence on this explanation. First, it is no real answer, since it in turn raises new questions (why did they always use different sources/versions? these differences are fortuitous — unlikely — or do they have to do with different interests and/or availability of books?); second, it

⁹⁹ For a general survey on the textual tradition of Choeroboscus’ *Psalm-Epimerisms*, see Alpers 2004, 35–36 and the integration by Valente 2010, 641 (fn. 10).

does not apply to all cases, e.g., that of Choeroboscus' *Psalm-Epimerisms* (§ 4.2). It would also be unsatisfying to dismiss the question by invoking the mere action of divergent 'personal tastes': both the *Genuinum* and the *Gudianum* are no extemporaneous creations of individual scholars, but rather the product of several compilers working on a well-defined, far-reaching project. In particular, the wealth of learned contents displayed by the *Etymologicum Genuinum* demonstrates that it aimed at being — and indeed managed to be — a proper scholarly encyclopedia, certainly useful for an already well-educated readership; on the other hand, the *Etymologicum Gudianum* was conceived as a schoolbook, as proved by the peculiar arrangement of its archetype, Vat. Barb. gr. 70 (d).¹⁰⁰

Therefore, it seems preferable to avoid oversimplifying explanations and admit that the aforementioned differences could be related to the dissimilar means, sensitivity and aims that produced the individual *Etymologica*: in other words, to their cultural background. In the same way, moreover, goes a lucid remark by the late Prof. Dr. Klaus Alpers, who noticed how the stamp of the *Gudianum* is clearly more 'Byzantine' than that of the *Genuinum*.¹⁰¹ I think that Alpers' intuition is fully correct, and the present paper allows us to further develop it. I would say that the differences among the various *Etymologica* depend on the action of two main forces, both crucial in the shaping of the peculiar physiognomy of Byzantine culture and bound to survive up to the modern era: on the one hand, the centripetal force of the rhetorical and grammatical tradition, aimed at the preservation of the past and of 'Attic' pureness (see the Introduction); on the other hand, more authentically 'Byzantine,' the centrifugal force of everyday language and readings (Holy Scriptures included), rich in 'barbarisms' and 'solecisms,' and in perpetual transformation.¹⁰² Obviously, the centripetal force is active in the *Etymologicum Genuinum* — and, with minor deviations, in the closely related *Symeonis* and *Magnum* —: indeed, several hints guarantee that the *Genuinum* was produced by a learned circle active in Constantinople, the only place where the ancient rhetorical tradition remained

100 On the plurality of scholars involved in the compilation of the *Genuinum*, confirmed by the many marginal notes merged into the main text, and its qualification as "kein Etymologicum, sondern eine Art grammatischer Enzyklopädie," see Reitzenstein 1907, 813–814; on the layout of Vat. Barb. gr. 70, where the text of the *Gudianum*, copied in tandem by a teacher and several pupils, is followed by a compilation of scholia to the gnomic/psychagogic *Carmen aureum*, see at least Sciarra 2005, 359–363 (with further bibliography) and Arnesano/Sciarra 2010, 430–433.

101 Alpers 2001, 204: "Das Gepräge des bisher nur für einen Teil des Textes kritisch edierten <Gudianum> [...] ist weit mehr 'byzantinisch' als das des <Etymologicum genuinum>."

102 For a synthetic account of this 'language division' (or 'diglossia') from its onset (Second Sophistic) to its later manifestations (the opposition, aroused during the struggle for Greek independence, between the purified *Καθαρεύουσα* and the demotic language), see Swain 1996, 27–42.

fully vital through the Byzantine era.¹⁰³ In contrast, the centrifugal impulses the *Etymologicum Gudianum* is subjected to are easily explainable as a consequence of different educative techniques and purposes: in other words, it is likely that it belonged to a less sophisticated cultural *milieu*, whose reference texts did not coincide with those of the rhetorical tradition but rather had a practical and/or religious character.¹⁰⁴

Moreover, the eccentric position of the *Gudianum* could also have to do with a different geographical origin.¹⁰⁵ In fact, regardless of the ‘anomalous’ content of this lexicon, most scholars maintain that its original manuscript — that is, the aforementioned Vat. Barb. gr. 70 — was written in a peripheral zone, namely 10th/11th-century Southern Italy.¹⁰⁶ A provincial background would not be a surprise: Southern Italian book production, at least until the Norman conquest, mainly consisted of religious books; only 7% of the manuscripts produced there between the 10th and the 11th century have a non-Christian subject. Moreover, a great part of the already scanty secular production was not devoted to classical literature; instead, lexicography (e.g., Pollux, Pseudo-Cyril lexicon, Orion’s

103 On the Constantinopolitan origin of the *Genuinum*, see at least Reitzenstein 1907, 813 and Alpers 1991a, b. The theory that the ‘Atticist’ Photius had an active involvement in the compilation of the *Genuinum* has now declined: at any rate, it is sure that Photius made some additions to a manuscript of this lexicon and also used it for his *Amphilochia*.

104 Such a scenario might indeed explain why the compilers of the *Gudianum* definitely used the *Genuinum* but only to a very limited extent. It may have been a deliberate choice, regardless of the hypothetical existence of excerpts from the *Genuinum* (see fn. 15).

105 Reitzenstein (1907, 814) explicitly says that the *Gudianum* must have been copied in a *milieu* different from that of the *Genuinum*: “[das *Etymologicum Gudianum*] stammt aus einem anderen Bildungszentrum und einer anderen Bibliothek.”

106 The attribution of *d* to Southern Italy (and especially to the Terra d’Otranto) traces back to Jacob (1977, 270), who still notices “différences assez sensibles” compared to other manuscripts written in that area. This conviction of a Salentine origin is shared, among others, by Cavallo (e.g., 1978, 205; 1982a, 537; 1982b, 159), Cellierini (1988, 24), Sciarra (2005, 363–372), and Arnesano/Sciarra (2010, 430–433). However, some doubts have been cast by Wilson (1982, 371–372) and Ronconi (2012, 86–87 with fn. 97): the former observes that the evidence produced so far is rather inconclusive, the latter adds that several sources used by the compilers of the *Gudianum* are not documented in the Terra d’Otranto, and, when documented, they either trace back to a different branch of their textual transmission or are attested to at a later stage. Another matter of debate is the dating of *d*: while Reitzenstein (1897, 91–92; 1907, 814), Cavallo (1982b, 159) and Jacob (1985/1986, 309) assign it to the 11th c. on paleographical grounds, Alpers (1984, 62–63) dates it back to the second half of the 10th c. on the basis of philological arguments (namely an interpolation from the *Gudianum* in Anastasius Sinaita’s *Viae dux*, already documented in 10th-century manuscripts).

Etymologicum)¹⁰⁷ was comparatively popular, so that it even managed to leave its mark in the colophons of some South Italian manuscripts, whose pompous diction seems to depend upon glossographical material.¹⁰⁸ Then, even if very little is known about educational practices in Southern Italy,¹⁰⁹ we can conclude that the profile of the *Etymologicum Gudianum* fits perfectly with the expected features of a schoolbook designed for such an audience: few references to the highbrow classical authors (instead abundant in the other *Etymologica*),¹¹⁰ limited influence of the constrictive purist rules, attention for the vocabulary of everyday readings and Latinisms. It is also worth noting that, in the Byzantine era, the word βάρβαρος and its derivatives started to designate even the province-dwellers, depicted by the inhabitants of the capital as uncouth and loutish;¹¹¹ that being so, it is tempting — albeit hardly demonstrable — to suppose that the different usage of the label ‘barbarian’ throughout the *Etymologica* may also reflect the complicated dynamics between the center of the empire and its peripheries.

So, to sum everything up in a convenient phrase: ancient etymology has been rightly described as ‘a serious game.’¹¹² I hope this paper has demonstrated that it was a really serious one: it was definitely serious for the ancients, who probably developed different ‘sets of rules’ — looser in the case of the *Etymologicum Gudianum*, stricter in the case of the other *Etymologica* — according to their *milieu* and their aims. But it should also be taken seriously by modern scholars, if we want to have a better understanding of still obscure topics like education in the Byzantine empire, its different levels and perhaps even its variations between the peripheries and the center.

107 It should be highlighted that the oldest extant manuscript of Orion’s *Etymologicum*, namely Vat. gr. 1456, comes from Southern Italy: moreover, this codex is clearly related to the version(s) used by the compilers of the *Gudianum* (see fn. 61), as proved by the fact that it contains several of the words in -άριον/-άριος absent from the main *recensio*. See also Sciarra 2005, 364 (fn. 27).

108 Southern Italian book production has been a rather popular theme since Irigoin’s (1969) pioneering work: in this regard, see the useful bibliography collected by Ronconi (2018, 330–331, fn. 38). For the percentages on secular manuscript production, see Canart 1982, 121; on the peculiar lexical choices of some Italian colophons, see Follieri 1973.

109 On this topic, see Guillou 1978, and, for similarities/differences to the Orient, Ronconi 2012.

110 This topic, and in particular the different treatment of the comic vocabulary throughout the *Etymologica* — which is one of the main themes of my PhD thesis (discussed in May 2024) —, will be object of further inquiry in other papers.

111 See Cavallo 2003, 81–84.

112 Thus Zucker/Le Feuvre 2021, 9–10.

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Part II: **Etymology and Etiology**

Elsa Bouchard

Etymology and Cosmological Revisionism in Pherecydes of Syros

Abstract: This chapter is divided in two parts. The first part reviews the most important fragments of Pherecydes of Syros' *Theogony* with a special focus on the fragments' relationship to one another, the cosmogonic roles of the main characters, and the various names by which they are called (i.e. Zas, Chronos, Chthoniē, Ophioneus, and Ogēnos). Against the *communis opinio*, it is argued that there is no compelling reason to interpret the main episodes of Pherecydes' narrative allegorically. The second part discusses the possible etymological meanings of the characters' names, suggesting that they are designed to evoke traditional theonyms while marking significant theological differences between Pherecydes' idiosyncratic account and the mainstream notions of Greek religion and mythology. Pherecydes' work provides a rare example of a peculiar form of etymological practice, one that consists in providing a corrective to the tradition by coining 'true' names. His heuristic use of language should be considered an important aspect of his double connection to mythical cosmogony and to the new kind of rationality that is associated with the early Presocratics.

1 Introduction

Pherecydes of Syros is a neglected figure in studies of early Greek philosophy.¹ In Kirk and Raven's influential *The Presocratic Philosophers*, he is treated in the section on "forerunners of philosophical cosmogony," along with Hesiod and Homer. Such a view of him was already entertained by Aristotle, who famously called him a "mixed" figure on account of the fact that he did not write "in a wholly mythical manner."² Indeed, Pherecydes' use of prose and his focus on natural elements are usually associated with Presocratic philosophy, while the subject matter of his work

¹ On Pherecydes see especially Diels 1897 (reprinted in 1969); Gomperz 1929; von Fritz 1938; West 1963, 157–172; Tozzi 1967; West 1971, 1–75; Kirk/Raven 1983, 50–71; Schibli 1990; Breglia 2000; Granger 2007; Gheerbrant 2018; and 2021. I refer to Pherecydes' fragments using Schibli's numerotation, adding the corresponding Diels/Kranz numbers whenever they exist. The recent editions of Laks/Most 2016 and 2016a do not add anything significant to that of Schibli.

² Arist. *Metaph.* 14.1091b8. For a thorough analysis of this passage, see Laks 2009. On Pherecydes' double connection to traditional cosmogony and to natural philosophy, see especially Tozzi 1967.

invites a comparison with mythical accounts of the beginnings of the world such as Hesiod's. But one can also perceive Pherecydes' double connection to mythical cosmogony and to an emerging 'philosophical' rationality in another aspect of his work: an innovative and heuristic use of language, which I consider an early, albeit peculiar, instance of the etymological awareness that is so typical of Greek literature throughout its history. Little scholarly attention has been given to this remarkable feature of his thought.³ This paper will attempt to fill this gap. In the first part I will present the outlines of his work and the major fragments, focusing especially on some contentious points that bear on the subject of the second part: Pherecydes' etymological manipulation of names and its corrective value in the context of 6th-century BCE cosmological discourse.

2 Pherecydes' work

Two main themes were touched upon in Pherecydes' book: a cosmogony, and a (more or less formal) doctrine of the soul, which may have been integrated into the larger context of the cosmogony. The two transmitted titles for the book are *The Seven-Nook Mingling of the Gods* and *The Seven-Nook Birth of the Gods*.⁴ While these titles cannot be safely attributed to Pherecydes, they say something about what ancient readers perceived to be the main 'topics' — or the most important aspects — of the work: the nooks, the gods, the Hesiodic model (suggested by the second title, *Θεογονία*), and the mingling. Although the "mingling" is usually thought to refer to the distribution of natural elements in nooks mentioned in fr. 60 (see below), it is also possible that the word *θεοκρασία* alludes to the syncretic religious character of Pherecydes' work. The apparent amalgamation of various traditional figures behind his main divine characters will be discussed in the second part of this paper.

2.1 Some methodological problems

Before I present the outlines of Pherecydes' work, I feel it is necessary to raise a number of methodological caveats which have usually been ignored or glossed over in recent studies on this topic. These issues have much to do with the fragmentary

³ The reflexive use of language in Presocratic thought is developed in Havelock 1983, who does not consider Pherecydes in his remarkable essay.

⁴ *Suda* s.v. Φερεκύδης: Ἐπτάμυχος ἥτοι Θεοκρασία ἢ Θεογονία. On the rendering of these titles see West 1971, 8.

nature of Pherecydes' work and may be thought to concern anyone working on Presocratic thinkers, but I find that they are particularly crucial in his case.

The Hesiodic model

Pherecydes' work is known largely through testimonia. At best, the direct quotations from his work that are available amount to less than twenty lines. According to a reliable source, one of these quotations happens to be the very beginning of his work; for the rest, our sources do not usually specify where a given line fell in the sequence of his narrative. Research on Pherecydes thus implies a fair amount of speculation, reconstruction, and filling in of the lacunae. Since the main content of his work is cosmogonic, scholars have naturally turned to Hesiod's *Theogony* and other texts with similar preoccupations to patch up the missing pieces. However, the risks attached to such a method have been underestimated, as it is often impossible to tell whether Pherecydes followed, rejected, or modified such previous accounts on particular points.

While I will certainly make use of Hesiod myself in what follows, I will also argue that Pherecydes' work is more plausibly assessed via differentiation from Hesiod (*et alii*), especially as regards the etymological names of his gods. The fact remains that any comparison between Pherecydes and Hesiod is open to the criticism that even though Hesiod may be the representative par excellence of archaic cosmogony *for us moderns*, Pherecydes himself may have had access to a variety of cosmogonical accounts that are unknown to us. While taking into account the limitation of our corpus with regard to the actual cultural production available at a given time is generally a sound theoretical principle, the relevance of Hesiod for Pherecydean studies can hardly be doubted. Hesiod's (and Homer's) broad cultural influence was already well established at the time of Pherecydes, and while their poems never attained a status comparable to that of Holy Scripture, they were soon endowed with a special authority, in the face of which alternative accounts of the gods and of the world always took (at least partly) the form of a challenge.

The principle of economy

The content of the fragments and the testimonies, often bewildering, is also frustratingly lacunose and seems to cry for completion. Scholars have repeatedly succumbed to the temptation to connect the fragments closely to one another and to 'interpret Pherecydes by Pherecydes', but the small size of the extant corpus hardly

warrants the use of this method. Such a principle of ‘economy’ should be used with great care, and only when the connections between the fragments are obvious.

Pherecydes’ so-called allegorism

Despite the strongly ‘mythical’ flavor of his work, the sources of Pherecydes’ main fragments are not mythographers, but rather pagan philosophers and theological (Christian and Jewish) authors. The danger of bias appending to such sources is readily perceptible. The relevant philosophical sources are often late, and their use of anachronistic vocabulary betrays their unreliability as witnesses to Pherecydes’ *ipsissima verba*. Moreover, between the time of Pherecydes and that of Aristotle (the author of one of our earliest comments on the former), there had been a growing tendency with Greek intellectuals to make use of — or at least to recognize the possibility of using — a method for finding supposed hidden meanings in texts, a method for which various terms were used, but which eventually came to be called “allegoresis.” Some ancient readers, perplexed by Pherecydes’ simultaneous use of mythical imagery, ‘scientific’ notions, and prose form, seem to have been particularly tempted to ascribe to him a deliberately ‘obscure’ mode of expression, which went by the name of allegory. In some cases, we can be nearly certain that the testimony provided by a given source is tinged with a superimposed allegorical meaning whose origin is none other than the source-author himself; this is particularly obvious when said source is otherwise known as an enthusiastic allegorizer (e.g., Proclus). But the so-called allegorical character of Pherecydes’ work is also accepted by many modern scholars, who accordingly assume license to use allegoresis to expound the meaning of his meager fragments.⁵

Not only does modern historiography ascribe allegorical tendencies to Pherecydes, but it has also occasionally set him up as the first practitioner of allegorical *interpretation* (or allegoresis).⁶ The record has been set straight in a recent article by Domaradzki, who rightly questions such an interpretation of the relevant fragments.⁷ As we will see presently, the issue of Pherecydes’ connection to allegory/allegoresis bears heavily on the main topic of this paper. Indeed, scholars who associate Pherecydes with the allegorical tradition tend to interpret his use of peculiar theonyms as a mark of his supposed allegorical sympathies. This view is encouraged by the apparent proximity of allegory and etymology — two complementary, but certainly

⁵ See e.g., Jaeger 1947, 66–72.

⁶ See Tate 1927, who was followed by many, *inter alios* Struck 2004, 27.

⁷ Domaradzki 2017, on which see below.

not identical, approaches to the general problem of ‘meaning’. I will come back briefly to this issue in my conclusion.

2.2 The primordial triad

Pherecydes’ work shows the same combination of diachronic and synchronic points of view as in Hesiod; that is to say, the narration of past (‘mythical’) events is intertwined with a descriptive account of the eternal order of the world.⁸ But a crucial difference with Hesiod is that this double viewpoint is internally and philosophically motivated by the fact that Pherecydes’ primordial divinities are eternal, and thus are still here ‘today’: the story of the world is not as radically fragmented into successive generations as in Hesiod. The importance of this temporal framework is revealed by the fact that it was mentioned at the very beginning of Pherecydes’ work:⁹

Ζὰς μὲν καὶ Χρόνος ἦσαν ἀεὶ, καὶ Χθονίη· Χθονίη δὲ ὄνομα ἐγένετο Γῆ ἐπειδὴ αὐτῇ Ζὰς γῆν
γέρας διδοῖ.¹⁰

Zas and Chronos always were, and Chthonië; but for Chthonië, her name became Gē when Zas gives her the earth as gift of honor. (14 Schibli = B1 DK)¹¹

Although the members of the triad composed of Zas, Chronos and Chthonië are expressly said to be eternal, this incipit makes it clear that Pherecydes’ account will not be a description of a static, quiet natural world undisturbed by cosmogonical events. We are already informed that the story to come will involve interactions between the primordial divinities,¹² and that as a result one of them will undergo a change of name. I will address this important aspect at length in a later section.

⁸ Cf. West 1971, 6.

⁹ Diogenes Laertius introduces the sentence by saying that it is the opening of Pherecydes’ book.

¹⁰ The quotation is badly transmitted in the manuscripts of Diogenes. I have reproduced Schibli’s text, which is only slightly divergent from that of Dorandi (2013, 146) and Laks/Most (2016, 172) at the end of the first part of the sentence (where these editions have an additional word: καὶ Χθονίη ἦν).

¹¹ On the strange combination of verbal tenses in this sentence (and in the other main fragments), see Fritz 1949, 198–199. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

¹² In the *Sophist* (242c–d) Plato makes reference to an individual who tells that “the beings are three, and that some of them are sometimes somehow at war with each other, and at other times become friends, get married, have offspring, and provide them nourishment.” Plato’s allusion, which may point to Pherecydes, focuses on the relationships between the primordial beings.

2.3 The wedding

Zas' gift of a γέρας to Chthoniē must have been an important part of the story, since it was judged worthy of mention in the very first sentence of the work. We are thus fortunate that the sole passage that has been independently preserved from Pherecydes' book (on papyrus)¹³ comes from the narration of that very event:

Col. 1

[αὐ-
τῷ ποιεῦσιν τὰ οἰ]κία
πολλά τε καὶ μεγάλα·
ἐπεὶ δὲ ταῦτα ἐξετέ-
λεσαν πάντα καὶ χρή-
ματα καὶ θεράποντας
καὶ θεραπαίνας καὶ
τᾶλλα ὅσα δεῖ πάντα,
ἐπεὶ δὴ πάντα ἐτοι-
μα γίγνεται, τὸν γά-
μον ποιεῦσιν. κάπει-
δὴ τρίτη ἡμέρη γί-
γνεται τῷ γάμῳ, τό-
τε Ζὰς ποιεῖ φᾶρος μέ-
γα τε καὶ καλὸν, καὶ
ἐν αὐτῷ[ι] π ρ ι κ [ἰλλει Γῆν
καὶ Ὠγῆ[νὸν καὶ τὰ Ὠ-
γῆνοῦ δώματα ...

1–2 [αὐ]τῷ Diels || 2 ποιοῦσιν P, cf. 11 || 16–18 ex. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 6.2.9.4

... They build his houses, many and large. When they have accomplished all this, as well as necessities, manservants, maidservants, and whatever else is needed — to sum up, when everything is ready — they perform the wedding. And when comes the third day of the wedding, then Zas makes a large and beautiful robe, and on it he embroiders Earth, Ogēnos, and the abodes of Ogēnos ...

Col. 2

[βουλόμενος
γὰρ σέο τοὺς γάμους]
εἶναι, τούτῳ σε τιμ[έ]ω.
σὺ δέ μοι χαῖρέ τε καὶ σὺ[ν-
ι]σθι. ταῦτά φασιν ἀν[α]-

¹³ *PGrenf.* II 11 (in Grenfell and Hunt [1897]). The papyrus, dated to the 3rd c. CE, was unearthed at Oxyrhynchus and contains nothing beside the two columns from Pherecydes' book.

καλυπτήρια πρῶτον
γενέσθαι, ἐκ τούτου δὲ
ὁ νόμος ἐγένε[το] καὶ
θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρ[ώπ]οι-
σιν. ἡ δέ μιν ἀμείβε-
ται δεξαμ[ένη] εὐ τὸ
φῶ[ρος] ...

1 βουλόμενος Weil, Blass || 3 ζ (600) in marg. || 4–5 σὺ[ν]ι[σθ]ι Blass || 10–12 suppl. Diels

“... that marriages are yours [that this is your wedding?], I honor you with this. Hail to you, and be my consort.” These, they say, were the first unveiling rites (*anakalypteria*), and hence arose the custom for both gods and men. And she answered(?), accepting the robe from him ... (68 Schibli = B2 DK)

Despite my earlier remarks about the dangers of applying the ‘principle of economy’ to the fragments, there are two good reasons to believe that the papyrus text refers to the same moment of the narrative as the last part of fr. 14. First, in the speech that begins column 2, Zas (most likely the speaker) declares that he wishes to “honor” his addressee, using a verb (τιμέω) that is semantically related to the γέρας of fr. 14. Second, one of the adornments that Zas weaves on the robe is earth (Γῆ); this also connects the passage with fr. 14, where earth is precisely the γέρας offered to Chthoniē that brings about her change of name.

It is impossible to tell whether Zas, on the model of Hesiod’s Zeus, contracted other marriages besides this one in Pherecydes’ story. But there is no doubt that the wedding with Chthoniē is paradigmatic, as it is said to be the first — at least, the first ritually celebrated (with ἀνακαλυπτήρια) — wedding. Moreover, it provides an explicit etiology of the marital custom (ἐκ τούτου δὲ ὁ νόμος ἐγένετο), not only for humans but also for gods (καὶ θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισιν). Neither can we know the moment when the wedding occurred in the narrative sequence.¹⁴ No chronology can safely be extracted from Maximus of Tyre’s freestanding enumeration of certain themes present in Pherecydes’ work:¹⁵ “Zas, Chthoniē, the eros between them, the birth of Ophioneus, the battle of the gods, the tree and the peplos” (fr. 73).¹⁶

14 One of the papyrus lines is numbered 600, a relatively late position considering that Pherecydes’ book must have been rather short (Weil 1897, 7; West 1971, 6–7). According to Santamaría 2019, 94, the episode of the wedding is to be placed somewhere “in the middle” of the book.

15 Gomperz (1929, 17–18) is too confident that the sequence of Maximus’ list reflects the actual order of the events.

16 Τὸν Ζῆνα καὶ τὴν Χθονίην καὶ τὸν ἐν τούτοις Ἔρωτα, καὶ τὴν Ὀφιονέως γένεσιν καὶ τὴν θεῶν μάχην καὶ τὸ δένδρον καὶ τὸν πέπλον (73 Schibli = A11 DK). Maximus’ list is puzzling as it puts on a par characters, events, and things.

The idea that the making of the robe symbolizes the creation of the earth is widespread among the commentators of Pherecydes, who is thus considered the earliest Greek evidence for the notion of a divine demiurge.¹⁷ Zas' so-called demiurgic activity is suggested by Proclus' report that "Pherecydes said that Zeus was transformed into Eros when he was about to create" (fr. 72).¹⁸ Since Maximus mentions an eros between Zas and Chthoniē (see above), Proclus' testimony about Zas' "transformation" into Eros could indeed have something to do with his wedding to Chthoniē. But what should we make of Proclus' mention of demiurgical work (δημιουργεῖν)? *Prima facie* this verb may simply refer to the making of the robe on the third day of the wedding. Proclus goes on to explain that the transformation into Eros was "for the reason that, having established the cosmos out of contraries, he brought them into agreement and friendship and implanted sameness in all things as well as unification which is distributed throughout the whole." Commentators agree that Proclus' allegorical gloss cannot be attributed to Pherecydes; West even suspects that the "transformation" into Eros is Proclus' allegorizing comprehension of Zas' sexual fervor.¹⁹ It is similarly possible, then, that Proclus gave an allegorical interpretation of the making of the robe, and in particular that his use of the verb δημιουργεῖν is an interpretative gloss of Pherecydes' bare ποιεῖν.

True enough, the adornments on the robe represent parts of the natural world. But the closest archaic comparans for Zas' activity is the making of Achilles' shield by Hephaestus,²⁰ and while the shield is covered with elaborate designs that replicate both cosmic regions and the world of men, no one seems to have assigned a demiurgic value (in a cosmogonical sense) to Hephaestus' work. Indeed, the world as it is already exists when Hephaestus fashions the shield; it is inhabited by Achaeans and Trojans, men who fight and quarrel just like the characters represented on his work. Why should the robe made by Zas be anything more than an artistic

17 See e.g., Schibli's (1990, 51) over-confident assumption that "The making of the robe by Zas clearly represents his demiurgic function in the creation of the world" (my emphasis). To my knowledge, no author, either before or after Schibli, has ever questioned this assumption.

18 Εἰς Ἐρωτα μεταβεβλήσθαι τὸν Δία μέλλοντα δημιουργεῖν (72 Schibli = B3 DK). On the alternation between forms of Zeus and of Zas in the fragments, see below.

19 West 1971, 17. Indeed, a transformation of Zas into Eros is hard to reconcile with Maximus' mention of an eros *between* Zas and Chthoniē.

20 In a long list of examples of Greek authors 'plagiarizing' other Greeks, Clement (*Strom.* 6.9.3-4) juxtaposes *Il.* 18.483 and 18.607 (ἐν μὲν γαῖαν ἔτευξ', ἐν δ' οὐρανόν, ἐν δὲ θάλασσαν· ἐν δ' ἐτίθει ποταμοῖο μέγα σθένος Ὠκεανοῖο) with Pherecydes' Ζᾶς ποιεῖ φᾶρος μέγα τε καὶ καλόν, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ ποικίλλει Ἰὼν καὶ Ὠγηγόν καὶ τὰ Ὠγηγοῦ δώματα (a parallel for this part of fr. 68), but he does not comment further on the connections between the two passages. Clement's quotation, explicitly ascribed to Pherecydes, is the main evidence for the identification of *PGrenf.* II 11 as a part of Pherecydes' book.

representation of the existing earth? After all, Chthoniē had been there from the beginning. Her transformation into Gē does not entail a change of substance (earth remains earth), but rather one of visibility: Zas' robe is "large and beautiful" (μέγα καὶ καλόν), because "in order for it to cover the body of Chthoniē point for point, it must have been depicted on a 1:1 scale."²¹ Moreover, the beginning of the passage states that prior to the wedding, some unknown characters built "houses, numerous and large," furnished male and female servants, and attended to all the other things needed. This certainly suggests a mundane, well-established world. What happens in this world is repeatedly expressed by the banal ποιεῖν (three occurrences in this fragment alone).

Another element that has encouraged commentators to give an allegorical meaning to Zas' creation of the robe is the fact that other testimonies link this robe to a very special tree. We have already seen that Maximus elliptically mentions "the tree and the peplos." These two objects are more explicitly associated in a testimony from the 2nd c. CE gnostic Isidorus, who alludes to some would-be philosophers' efforts:

... ἵνα μάθωσι τί ἐστὶν ἡ ὑπόπτερος δρυς καὶ τὸ ἐπ' αὐτῇ πεποικιλμένον φᾶρος, πάντα ὅσα Φερεκύδης ἀλληγορήσας ἐθεολόγησεν λαβὼν ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ Χάμ προφητείας τὴν ὑπόθεσιν.

... to understand what is the winged oak, the embroidered robe upon it, everything Pherecydes theologized about in allegory, taking his story-line from the prophecy of Ham.²²

The fact that at some point of the narrative the cosmographically embroidered robe was apparently hung on a tree has encouraged scholars to think specifically of a cosmic tree, a notion present in numerous ancient mythologies. However, the image of a *winged* tree is unparalleled in both Greek and foreign sources.²³ Isidorus' claim that Pherecydes took his inspiration from the prophecy of Ham reflects the typically Christian theme of 'Greek plagiarism' and is not helpful for illuminating the role of the oak in the narrative.²⁴ Some have attempted to interpret the wings of the tree as a metaphor (e.g., for swiftness: Gomperz [1929] 22), but such a metaphorical usage is not in line with Pherecydes' otherwise extremely plain prose. Although he may have expressed his view of the world partly by allegory (as von

²¹ Purves 2010, 105. I find Purves' (2010, 100–108) sophisticated discussion of Pherecydes' fragment particularly illuminating.

²² 76 Schibli = B2 DK (Isidorus Basileides apud Clem. *Strom.* 6.6.53.5).

²³ West 1971, 55–60.

²⁴ Saudelli 2011 suggests a parallel between the covering of the tree with the *pharos* and the covering of the nude (and drunken) Noah by his sons in *Genesis* 9.18–27. The story ends with Noah cursing his son Ham (who may have become a positive character and even the subject of a book in gnostic literature).

Fritz [1938] insists), the first level of meaning *of the words* he uses is distinctly literal. It also seems unlikely that the tree alludes to some ritual practice.²⁵ If it had had such an etiological function in the story, Pherecydes would surely have underlined it, as he does in the case of the ἀνακαλυπτήρια; and his pointing explicitly to this etiology would have rendered useless the efforts of the interpreters who, according to Isidorus, strive “to understand” the things that Pherecydes allegedly said “in allegory.” All in all, I find that the hypotheses about the cosmic nature of Pherecydes’ tree are insufficiently supported by evidence. Be that as it may, one can at least say that a tree evokes the notion of life, and Pherecydes’ choice of an oak, a species particularly associated with Zeus in Greek religion, must be a way to highlight the connections between Zas and Zeus.

2.4 Chronos’ creation

There is in fact a moment of divine creation that we know about in the story, but it seems to have nothing to do with Zas, nor does it take an allegorical form. Using the Peripatetic Eudemos’ doxography of ancient theogonies (fr. 150 Wehrli), Damascius reports that according to Pherecydes,

... τὸν δὲ Χρόνον ποιῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ γόνου ἑαυτοῦ πῦρ καὶ πνεῦμα καὶ ὕδωρ, τὴν τριπλῆν, οἶμαι, φύσιν τοῦ νοητοῦ, ἐξ ὧν ἐν πέντε μυχοῖς διηρημένων πολλὴν ἄλλην γενεάν συστήναι θεῶν, τὴν πεντέμυχον καλουμένην, ταῦτόν δὲ ἴσως εἰπεῖν, πεντέκοσμον.

Chronos made from his own seed fire, breath, and water — the threefold nature of the intelligible, it seems. From these, after they had been divided into five nooks, another numerous generation of gods was formed, called the “five-nook generation”; perhaps this is the same as to say the “five-cosmos generation.”²⁶

If we separate what is likely the authentic Pherecydean material from Damascius’ glosses in the passage,²⁷ we retain the following. Using his own seed, Chronos engenders three elements: fire, breath, and water. These are put inside some kind of cavities, which it seems reasonable to imagine are located inside Chthonië.²⁸ Finally,

²⁵ E.g., the Panathenaia. For this interpretation, see the references in Kirk and Raven 1983, 64.

²⁶ 60 Schibli = A8 DK (Damascius *De princ.* 124b).

²⁷ Gheerbrant (2021) provides a careful analysis of what can be respectively attributed to Pherecydes, Damascius, and Eudemos in this fragment.

²⁸ Cf. Gheerbrant 2021, and West 1971, 14: “It is generally the case in mythology that gods’ semen produces new life ... but only after it has fallen on the earth or been received in some kind of womb.” I agree with West 1971, 13 that no convincing solution has yet been proposed to resolve the

a new generation of gods is born from these elements. Contrary to the primordial triad, these “many” beings are not precisely numbered. Chronos thus gives rise both to natural elements and, indirectly, to other gods.²⁹ In other words, this moment of the cosmogony possesses both a ‘natural-philosophical’ and a ‘mythical’ character. The form of Damascius’ testimony (where the account of Chronos’ creation immediately follows the presentation of the primordial triad) as well as Chthoniē’s ‘availability’ at this point suggest that Chronos’ creation is a relatively early event in the cosmogony — at any rate, one preceding Zas and Chthoniē’s wedding. This event must be what Aristotle had in mind when he stated that Pherecydes is an example of the thinkers who “place the first generator as the best,” that is to say, as a continuing principle that is not superseded by later forces.³⁰ Indeed, Chronos does not suffer defeat at the hands of a superior successor, as we will see in the next section.

2.5 The battle

Apart from the wedding, the episode of the cosmogony for which we have the most extensive description is the battle, which Origen (drawing on Celsus) summarizes in the following form:

φησὶ θεῖόν τινα πόλεμον αἰνίττεσθαι τοὺς παλαιούς, Ἡράκλειτον μὲν λέγοντα ὧδε· Εἰδέναί δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἔοντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ’ ἔριν καὶ χρεών· Φερεκύδην δὲ πολλῶ ἀρχαιότερον γενόμενον Ἡρακλείτου μυθοποιεῖν στρατείαν στρατεία παραταττομένην καὶ τῆς μὲν ἡγεμόνα Κρόνον διδόναι, τῆς ἐτέρας δ’ Ὀφιονέα, προκλήσεις τε καὶ ἀμίλλας αὐτῶν ἱστορεῖν, συνθήκας τε αὐτοῖς γίνεσθαι, ἵν’ ὁπότεροι αὐτῶν εἰς τὸν Ὠγηνὸν ἐμπέσωσι, τούτους μὲν εἶναι νενικημένους, τοὺς δ’ ἐξώσαντας καὶ νικήσαντας τούτους ἔχειν τὸν οὐρανόν. τούτου δὲ τοῦ βουλήματός φησιν ἔχεσθαι καὶ τὰ περὶ τοὺς Τιτᾶνας καὶ Γίγαντας μυστήρια θεομαχεῖν ἀπαγγελλομένους, καὶ τὰ παρ’ Αἰγυπτίοις περὶ Τυφῶνος καὶ Ὀρου καὶ Ὀσίριδος.

Celsus says that the ancients allude enigmatically to a certain divine war. He reports that Heraclitus said: “One must know that war is common and justice is strife, and that all things happen by strife and necessity,” and that Pherecydes, who was much older than Heraclitus,

discrepancy between the five nooks of Damascius’ testimony and the *seven* nooks implied in the title of the work transmitted in the *Suda*.

²⁹ The order of Chronos’ creation is noteworthy: “Cosmogonie précédant une théogonie, comme chez Hésiode” (Simondon 1976, 225). Since the agent of the creation is a near personification of time, the sequence of events is surely significant.

³⁰ Cf. West 1971, 12, fn. 3, who points out that “everyone seems to take it of Zas.” Indeed, many scholars, ranging from Diels (1969 [1897], 29) to Laks (2009, 638) identify Aristotle’s “first generator” and “best thing” (τὸ γεννήσαν πρῶτον ἀριστον) as Zas.

invented the story of an army opposed to another army; of one he made Cronos the leader, of the other, Ophioneus. He reported their challenges and battles, and how they came to the arrangement that whichever of them would fall into Ogēnos would be the vanquished, while those who had thrust them out and vanquished them would possess the sky. And [Celsus] says that the mysteries about the Titans and the Giants, who fought the gods according to tradition, and the Egyptians' stories about Typhon, Horus, and Osiris, also hold this meaning.³¹

One of the opposing armies is led by Ophioneus, whose birth had been recounted somewhere in the book (as we learn from fr. 73). The leader of the other army is here called Κρόνος, with *kappa*. This name that can be explained by one of three possibilities: 1. In Pherecydes' text, the leader of the first army was called Χρόνος, but Origen (or his source Celsus, or the scribe) changed his name (either deliberately or by mistake) to Κρόνος. 2. This Κρόνος is a new character, different from the primordial Χρόνος. 3. The primordial Χρόνος has become Κρόνος sometime in the course of the story (cf. Chthoniē's change of name into Gē). In my view, the best solution is the first one. The second solution is a definite possibility, though it seems intrinsically unlikely. As to the third, it is a popular choice with commentators and should be given serious consideration; I will come back to this specific problem at the beginning of the second part of this paper.

Neither Origen nor any other source tells how the battle ended, but in view of the Hesiodic parallel, it is a widespread assumption that C(h)ronos' army was victorious.³² However, the consequences of this victory have been too quickly deduced on the sole basis of a comparison with Hesiod, where the Olympians' enemies, once defeated, are either banished to the confines of the world (Titans) or obliterated (Typhoeus). The circumstances of the battle as they are transmitted in fr. 78 seem rather incompatible with those of traditional theomachies. Pherecydes' fighting armies are distinctly civilized. They elaborate 'terms' in which the battle is to take place and be adjudicated, and the vanquished apparently do not suffer anything other than having to give up the sky. There is nothing about them being hurled into Tartarus or any other kind of hellish region, apart from Ogēnos — itself a well-established, albeit liminal, part of the cosmos (see below).

³¹ 78 Schibli (text extended) = B4 DK (Orig. *Contra Cels.* VI 42.19–33).

³² From Pherecydes' fragments, only fr. 82 can be interpreted as pointing (but by no means unambiguously) to this outcome.

2.6 Back to the beginning: the conclusion of the work

What happens after the battle remains a mystery, but according to Schibli's influential reconstruction, the roles of Chronos and Chthoniē-Gē are somewhat eclipsed toward the end of Pherecydes' cosmogony: Zas becomes the dominating figure, as shown by his power to ban hybriistic divinities in fragment 83 (quoted below).³³ However, the fact that Zas (or Zeus) appears alone in the role of cosmic judge in the brief fragment 83 can hardly be considered conclusive evidence that he has become the sole ruler.³⁴ And yet, in one of the most recent studies on Pherecydes, Granger argues in favour of Schibli's suggestion of Zas' preeminence, bringing forward two additional arguments to that effect: 1. In the opening sentence of his book, Pherecydes "names Zas first and places his name at the head of the sentence." 2. The name Zas could be considered a derivation from the intensive prefix ζα-, which "may be intended to mark the asymmetry between the gods of Pherecydes' trinity," Zas being "the superior of both Chronos and Chthoniē."³⁵

The first argument may be thought to carry some conviction, although the order of the words in the sentence can be explained alternatively.³⁶ As it happens, Damascius' indirect quotation of this same sentence suggests that he understood it rather differently:

Φερεκύδης δὲ ὁ Σύριος Ζάντα μὲν εἶναι ἀεὶ καὶ Χρόνον καὶ Χθονίαν τὰς τρεῖς πρώτας ἀρχάς, τὴν μίαν φημί πρὸ τῶν δυοῖν, καὶ τὰς δύο μετὰ τὴν μίαν, τὸν δὲ Χρόνον ποιῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ γόνου ἑαυτοῦ πῦρ καὶ πνεῦμα καὶ ὕδωρ ...

³³ Schibli 1990, 100–101. Cf. Granger 2007, 146.

³⁴ Cf. Granger 2007, 146: "At the (apparent) close of Pherecydes' story, Zas' hegemony is evidently confirmed by his control over his enemies, *without any mention of aid from Chronos-Kronos*" (my emphasis). When dealing with Pherecydes, the use of such *e silentio* arguments seems nearly outrageous.

³⁵ Granger 2007, 146. Granger also deems Chthoniē the inferior member of the three: "her inferior position in the opening sentence could prefigure her inferior status in the cosmogony, in which her role is merely one of female passivity" (p. 141). Again, given the radical incompleteness of our testimonies, it is rather rash to conclude that Chthoniē had no active role in the story. Moreover, the fact that she appears last in the opening sentence is natural, since Pherecydes comments on her change of name immediately after; cf. Lilja 1968, 55, with fn. 12.

³⁶ For example, scansion. On the dactylic features of Pherecydes' prose, see Gheerbrant 2018, especially p. 375 on the sequences Ζὰς μὲν καὶ Χρόνος ἦσαν ἀεὶ (— — — — —) and καὶ Χθονίη· Χθονίη δὲ (— — — — —). The opening sentence could not have this dactylic form if it began with either Χρόνος or Χθονίη.

Pherecydes of Syros says that Zas exists eternally, as well as Chronos and Chthoniē, the three first principles — to my mind, the one before the other two, and the two after the one — and that Chronos made from his own seed fire, air, and water ... (fr. 60)

Considering the centrality of time (cf. αἰ) in this fragment, Damascius' enclosed comment (τὴν μίαν φημὶ πρὸ τῶν δυοῖν, καὶ τὰς δύο μετὰ τὴν μίαν) may be considered of some importance. In the direct quotation transmitted by Diogenes Laertius (Ζὰς μὲν καὶ Χρόνος ἦσαν αἰ καὶ Χθονίη), Zas and Chronos are coupled, and Chthoniē comes as a "late" third. Damascius' quotation somewhat isolates Zas on the one hand (Ζάντα μὲν εἶναι αἰ), joining Chronos and Chthoniē on the other (καὶ Χρόνον καὶ Χθονίαν), which apparently supports Granger's view concerning Zas' preeminence within the triad. But Damascius' following remark shows that this is not the case. Indeed, his statement that one of the three principles came *before* (πρὸ) the other two — emphatically repeated by its corollary, that the two came *after* (μετά) the one — must mean that Chronos, Time, was the first. This is corroborated by Damascius' following words, which go on to tell of Chronos' reproductive activity. While it is hard to reconcile Pherecydes' ἦσαν αἰ, which is predicated of all three members, with Damascius' attribution of temporal priority to Chronos,³⁷ this attribution makes it unlikely that Damascius could find anything in Pherecydes suggesting the priority of Zas. So much for the place of Zas in the opening sentence. But Granger's second argument, which relies on the supposed etymology of Zas, is even less convincing: Pherecydes uses many different names for this figure, some of which do not contain the ζα- component. To this subject I now turn.

3 Divine characters and divine names in Pherecydes

I will now focus on the names of Pherecydes' main cosmogonical actors. They comprise one of the most striking features of his work; and it is not to be doubted that Pherecydes wanted them to be so. Another reason to impute significance to these names is the very role of naming as an event of cosmogonical importance in the story, as evinced by the reference to Chthoniē's change of name in fr. 14. Since this change was mentioned in the first sentence of the work, we are justified in thinking that Pherecydes' choice of names is not mere extravagance, but possesses genuine

³⁷ Cf. Schibli 1990, 18 n. 10, who explains that Damascius' misinterpretation "stems from a Neoplatonic unwillingness to accept a plurality of first principles."

significance. I would now like to make a few suggestions on the value of these names in the context of Pherecydes' appropriation and reinterpretation of some traditional figures.

3.1 Traditional vs. non-traditional names

Schibli proposes that, toward the end of Pherecydes' account, the gods revert to their traditional names: not only has Chthoniē become Gē, but Zas is now Zeus and Chronos is now Cronos.³⁸ Long before Schibli, West had objected to this idea, stressing the different status of Chthoniē-Gē on the one hand, Zas and Chronos on the other: "Chthoniē's change into Ge corresponds to the genesis of something that belongs to our present-day world, the familiar Earth. A change of Chronos into Kronos would be the reverse [...]. Zas has nothing to lose or gain by becoming Zeus."³⁹ I would add that the mention of Chthoniē's change of name, following as it does the statement of the eternity of the three divinities, has something of an "official" character, suggesting that she, *as opposed* to the two others, undergoes a significant alteration of identity in the course of the story.

Schibli's hypothesis stems from his wish to accommodate the occurrences of the traditional names, especially Zeus and Cronos, in some of the fragments. But even if one could securely restore the order of events in the narrative, there seems to be no coincidence between the fragments containing the traditional names and what may be thought to be the conclusive sections of the story.⁴⁰ Moreover, whenever the forms Zeus and Cronos appear, the contexts make it risky to ascribe their use to Pherecydes himself. Their appearance seems, rather, to be correlated with some specific sources. For example, in fragment 65, from Probus, we find Ζῆνα καὶ Χθόνα καὶ Κρόνον identified with fire, earth and time (*ignem ac terram et tempus*); and Hermias in fr. 66 reports that "Pherecydes says the principles are Zeus and Chthoniē and Cronos (Ζῆνα καὶ Χθονίην καὶ Κρόνον), Zeus being the aither, Chthoniē the earth, and Cronos time (Ζῆνα μὲν τὸν αἰθέρα, Χθονίην δὲ τὴν γῆν, Κρόνον δὲ τὸν χρόνον)." But both Probus' and Hermias' reports are dependent on the Stoic reception of Pherecydes, and such equations are to be expected in a Stoic context.⁴¹

³⁸ Schibli 1990, 136–139; cf. Baxter 1992, 120; Breglia 2000, 182; Granger 2007, 146.

³⁹ West 1963, 158.

⁴⁰ For example, in fr. 72 (quoted above, note 18), Proclus uses the accusative Δία, whereas the papyrus fragment clearly shows that the protagonist is actually called Zas at this point of the story (the wedding).

⁴¹ Diels 1969, 30.

Similar doubts may be cast on the following text, which comes just four lines after fr. 78 (the text reporting the battle with Ophioneus) in Origen's *Against Celsus* and where an apparently verbatim quotation of Pherecydes contains the form 'Zeus' (for reasons that will be explained later, I include the surrounding context of the fragment; the Pherecydean fragment proper is in bold characters):

Οὕτω δ' ἀκούει καὶ Ὀμήρου, ὡς τὰ παραπλήσια τῷ Ἡρακλείτῳ καὶ Φερεκύδῃ καὶ τοῖς τὰ περὶ Τιτῶνας καὶ Γίγαντας μυστήρια εἰσάγουσιν αἰνισσομένον ἐν τούτοις τοῖς τοῦ Ἡφαίστου πρὸς τὴν Ἥραν λόγους, φάσκοντος: "Ἦδη γάρ με καὶ ἄλλοτ' ἀλεξέμεναι μεμαῶτα / ῥίψε ποδὸς τεταγών ἀπὸ βηλοῦ θεσπεσίῳ", καὶ τοῖς τοῦ Διὸς πρὸς τὴν Ἥραν οὕτως: "Ἥ οὐ μέμνησ' ὅτε τ' ἐκρέμω ὑψόθεν, ἐκ δὲ ποδοῖν / ἄκμονας ἦκα δύω, περὶ χερσὶ δὲ δεσμὸν ἴηλα / χρύσειον ἄρρηκτον; Σὺ δ' ἐν αἰθέρι καὶ νεφέλῃσιν / ἐκρέμω· ἡλάστεον δὲ θεοὶ κατὰ μακρὸν Ὀλυμπον, / λῦσαι δ' οὐκ ἐδύναντο παρασταδόν· ὃν δὲ λάβοιμι, / ῥίπτασκον τεταγών ἀπὸ βηλοῦ, ὅφρ' ἂν ἴκοιτο / γῆν ὀλιγηπελέων". καὶ διηγούμενός γε τὰ ὁμηρικὰ ἔπη φησὶ λόγους εἶναι τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς τὴν ὕλην τοὺς λόγους τοῦ Διὸς πρὸς τὴν Ἥραν, τοὺς δὲ πρὸς τὴν ὕλην λόγους αἰνίττεσθαι ὡς ἄρα ἐξ ἀρχῆς αὐτὴν πλημμελῶς ἔχουσιν διαλαβὼν ἀναλογίαις τισὶ συνέδησε καὶ ἐκόσμησεν ὁ θεός, καὶ ὅτι τοὺς περὶ αὐτὴν δαίμονας, ὅσοι ὕβρισται, τούτους ἀπορριπτεῖ κολάζων αὐτοὺς τῇ δεῦρο ὁδῷ.

ταῦτα δὲ τὰ Ὀμήρου ἔπη οὕτω νοηθέντα τὸν Φερεκύδην φησὶν εἰρηκέναι τὸ **"κείνης δὲ τῆς μοῖρας ἐνερθὲν ἐστὶν ἡ ταρταρὴ μοῖρα· φυλάσσουσι δ' αὐτὴν θυγατέρες Βορέου Ἄρπυιαι τε καὶ Θύελλα· ἐνθα Ζεὺς ἐκβάλλει θεῶν ὅταν τις ἐξυβρίσῃ"**. τῶν τοιούτων δέ φησιν ἔχεσθαι νοημάτων καὶ τὸν περὶ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς πέπλον ἐν τῇ πομπῇ τῶν Παναθηναίων ὑπὸ πάντων θεωρούμενον. Δηλοῦται γάρ, φησὶν, ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἀμῆτωρ τις καὶ ἀχραντος δαίμων ἐπικρατεῖ θρασυνομένων τῶν γιγνένων.

Celsus understands Homer the same way — viz., as if he referred enigmatically to matters like those mentioned by Heraclitus, Pherecydes, and the originators of the mysteries of the Titans and Giants — in those words that Hephaestus addresses to Hera: "On a time before this, when I was striving to save you, he caught me by the foot and hurled me from the heavenly threshold" (*Il.* 1.590–591). And also in those of Zeus to Hera: "Dost thou not remember when thou wast hung from on high, and from thy feet I suspended two anvils, and about thy wrists cast a band of gold that might not be broken? And in the air amid the clouds thou didst hang, and the gods had indignation throughout high Olympus; howbeit they availed not to draw nigh and loose thee. Nay, whomsoever I caught, I would seize and hurl from the threshold until he reached the earth, his strength all spent" (*Il.* 15.18–24). Interpreting the Homeric lines, he says that the words of Zeus to Hera are the words of divinity to matter; and that the words addressed to matter express enigmatically that the divinity took matter which was originally in a state of discord, and bound it and arranged it according to some proportions; and that in order to chastise the hybriistic demons around it, he hurls them down here.

And he [Celsus] says it's because Pherecydes has understood the words of Homer this way that he wrote: **"Below that portion is the Tartarian portion; the Harpies and Thuella, the daughters of Boreas, guard it; among the gods, Zeus sends there any of them who behaves with insolence."** Related to such conceptions, he says, is also the peplos of Athena that

is seen by all at the Panathenaic procession. For he says that from this peplos it is clear that a motherless and pure divinity dominates the arrogant giants.⁴²

Since the name ‘Zeus’ itself is emphatically absent from the list of Pherecydes’ alternative names for Zas provided by Herodian,⁴³ one may legitimately question the integrity of this fragment. Fr. 78 and fr. 83, which both come from Origen, are in fact indirect citations from Celsus’ *On the True Doctrine*, against which Origen’s own treatise is composed. Not only is Origen engaged in anti-pagan polemic, but his testimony is twice removed from the text of Pherecydes. Moreover, Celsus himself may be thought to have given a somewhat distorted account of the latter. His work was an apology of paganism that relied heavily on allegoresis. The two references he makes to Pherecydes (both transmitted by Origen) are characterized by syncretic tendencies, merging together Homeric passages, the Titanomachia, Egyptian mythology, and cultic practices like processions and mysteries. Celsus’ claim that Pherecydes understood lines 15.18–24 of the *Iliad* as “words from god to matter” is anything but warranted.⁴⁴ It was obviously part of Celsus’ agenda that Pherecydes’ account be compatible with Homer’s. Thus it would not be surprising if Celsus, in addition to attributing his own allegorizing interpretation of Homer to Pherecydes, had ‘normalized’ the forms Χρόνος and Ζάς into the Homeric Κρόνος and Ζεύς.⁴⁵

In the rest of this chapter, I will work with the hypothesis that the names Zeus, Cronos, and Okeanos, which make casual appearances in the fragments and testimonia, were not originally part of Pherecydes’ account. Be that as it may, the endorsement of this hypothesis is not a prerequisite to the ideas developed in the following discussion.

⁴² Orig. *Contra Celsum* 6.42.37–66 = 83 Schibli (text extended) = B5 DK (editors usually limit the Pherecydean fragment to the second paragraph of the citation). The Homeric lines are from Murray’s translation of the *Iliad*.

⁴³ 61 Schibli (= B1 DK), about which see below.

⁴⁴ Cf. Domaradzki 2017, 316: “Origen’s thirdhand citation should be regarded as a very suspect source for reconstructing Pherecydes’ allegoresis. After all, the direct quotation from Pherecydes does not appear to contain any obvious ὑπόνοια.”

⁴⁵ It is true that in fr. 78 Ὠγενός is not normalized into Ὠκεανός. This may be due to the fact that Celsus did not find the role of Ogēnos in Pherecydes as easily comparable to Okeanos as the other characters are comparable to their traditional models. See below.

3.2 Χρόνος

Within the primordial triad,⁴⁶ Zas and Chronos are obvious variations on Zeus and Cronos, while Chthoniē, who later becomes Gē, is substituted to the semantically similar Gaia. Of the three, Chronos, a homonym of the word ‘time’ (χρόνος), has the most transparent name. By substituting khi for kappa, Pherecydes endows this character with a name of abstract value, which balances out his heavily anthropomorphized role in the story (creation from the semen,⁴⁷ theomachy). Although the (once contested) possibility that a 6th-century BCE thinker could reach a level of speculation sufficient to posit time at the beginning of his cosmogony is now generally admitted, one should also note the concrete, spatial frame in which Chronos’ first creation occurs: the mysterious *mukhoi* in which the products of his seed are placed are defined spaces situated within a larger, and probably material, container (as opposed to ‘space’ in an abstract sense). The idea of enclosing time (or, at any rate, his progeny) inside a receptacle may seem eccentric, but it can in fact be tracked back to Hesiod, who uses similar spatial devices (granaries, jars, throats, Tartarus...) to create various configurations of time as it is experienced by future-oriented humans, eternal gods, or ‘ancient’, demoted divinities.⁴⁸

The primordial position of Χρόνος in Pherecydes is surely the most significant point of contact between him and some versions of the Orphic cosmogony, and it is certainly no coincidence that Pherecydes was credited with a doctrine of the immortality of the soul that seems to anticipate the theory of metempsychosis traditionally associated with Pythagorean and Orphic beliefs.⁴⁹

If he wanted to place a time-god at the beginning of his cosmogony, Pherecydes had a number of potential names available.⁵⁰ His choice of Chronos was surely motivated by his wish to signal his distance from traditional myth, where Cronos played a significant part in the early phase of the cosmogony. The resemblance

⁴⁶ What follows is a much-extended development of a few ideas briefly outlined in Bouchard 2019, 114–119.

⁴⁷ West (1971, 28–36) adduces numerous Oriental parallels for a time-god as “self-fertilizing progenitor.” Schibli (1990, 29–33) stresses the resemblances with Anaximander’s notion of a ‘seed’ separating from ‘the eternal’ (τὸ αἰδiov) (A10 DK).

⁴⁸ On this Hesiodic theme, see the remarkable study of Purves 2004.

⁴⁹ Cf. Vernant 1969, 69. I fail, however, to see on what basis Vernant attributes to Pherecydes’ Chronos “le rôle d’un principe d’unité transcendant tous les contraires.” The most detailed treatment of the relationships between Pherecydes and Orphic and Pythagorean doctrine is Breglia 2000.

⁵⁰ For example, αἰών. Despite the presence of a large variety of words and expressions for time in its diverse guises (linear, cyclic, etc.) in his two poems, Hesiod himself has no place for χρόνος in the long list of abstractions whose birth he recounts in the *Theogony*.

between these two names only highlights the fundamental differences between the two figures. In standard mythology, Cronos is the dominating figure of the generation of the Titans, and the canonical example of a ferocious male divinity who is ultimately defeated. His name smacks of savagery and primitivism — but also, in certain contexts, of a lost golden age.⁵¹ His most infamous deed is the swallowing of his own progeny in the hope of arresting the normal course of successive generations — some would say, of time itself.⁵² By contrast, Pherecydes' Chronos is eternal, and far from being defeated, he is (in all likelihood) victorious in the battle against Ophioneus, earning ownership of heaven as a result. While Cronos was in power for a short time (after Ouranos and before Zeus), Chronos is there to stay.

3.3 Ὀφιοτεύς

Chronos' opponent in the theomachy is Ophioneus, whose army was probably composed of his own offspring (the Ophionidai mentioned in fr. 80). In some sources he is rather called Ὀφίων, which became the standard form of the name in Orphic and related texts.⁵³

Contrary to Chronos, Zas, and Chthoniē, Ophioneus is not eternal, but comes to life at some unknown point of the narrative (cf. fr. 73: τὴν Ὀφιονέως γένεσιν). Commentators regularly see this latecomer as a threat to the established order and, as such, compare him to Hesiod's Typhoeus. Moreover, his name is transparently linked to *ophis* (snake), which enhances the resemblance with Typhoeus, who is endowed with a hundred snake-heads (*Theog.* 825). However, while Typhoeus attacks Zeus on his own, Ophioneus' opposition to *Chronos* (not *Zas/Zeus*) takes place in the context of a formal engagement between two armies, similar to that between Olympians and Titans in Hesiod (the Titanomachy) and that between Olympians and Giants (the Gigantomachy, to which Hesiod makes only a brief allusion but which was a well-established tradition at the time of Pherecydes). The Titanomachy stages an inter-generational strife, whereby the younger generation of gods succeeds the older as masters of the universe. By contrast, in the Gigantomachy, the

51 On this paradoxical representation of Cronos in myth and ritual, see Versnel 1987.

52 See Purves 2004.

53 The form Ὀφίων appears (*inter alia*) in an intriguing passage of Apollonius' *Argonautica* (1.496–511), where Orpheus sings a cosmogonical song that includes a battle opposing Ophion and Eurytomē to Cronos and Rhea, which ends with the former couple falling into Okeanos. Since the whole song is a mixture of Hesiodic, non-Hesiodic, and Orphic material (after all, it is placed in Orpheus' mouth), I find it difficult to use this passage to support any specific reading of Pherecydes, despite the obvious resemblances to fr. 78.

rebellious army is made up of mortal, though super-human, creatures, who attempt to usurp power rather than retain it. In traditional terms, the theomachy in Pherecydes is thus most readily comparable to the Typhonomachy and the Gigantomachy.⁵⁴

Just like Typhoeus, Giants are earth-born (γηγενεῖς) and provide a likely model for Ophioneus and the Ophionidai, since snakes were considered chthonic creatures. Pherecydes' story may be compared to the later tendency to include Typhoeus among the Giants or, conversely, to represent Giants in ophidian form. More pointedly, his choice of the names Ophioneus and Ophionidai seems like a deliberate attempt to conflate these traditional figures into one single syncretic group representing "the enemies of order." Moreover, the fate of this army — to fall into Ogēnos, which likely becomes their final dwelling-place — is teleologically announced by their names. In traditional imagery, Okeanos was often compared to a snake wound around the earth.⁵⁵ Pherecydes may have wanted to give a literal expression to this image — or alternatively, to provide an etiology to the notion that earth, Gē, is bound by a giant snake inhabiting the earth-limit, Ogēnos (see below on the name Ogēnos).

3.4 Ζάς

The meaning of the name Ζάς is more controversial. Moreover, there is no verbatim citation of Pherecydes' work where the name is declined. In indirect quotations, we find the accusatives Ζῆνα (also found in Homer and Hesiod), Ζάντα,⁵⁶ and the 'regular' (i.e. Attic) Δία. Since Herodian⁵⁷ reports that Pherecydes used different forms for the nominative — not only Ζάς, but also Δίς, Ζήν, Δήν, and Ζής — I see no reason why he would not have done the same with oblique cases.

Even if Pherecydes admitted a multiplicity of names for the primordial Zas, this polyonymy does not seem to compromise his eternity. Just like Chthoniē/Gē, Zas probably lives on through his multiple identities. What these names seem to assert repeatedly is, precisely, life. Since it is mentioned in the first sentence of the work, we may perhaps deem that Ζάς is his 'proper' (or 'main') name. This name looks like a participial form of a verb related to ζῆν (to live),⁵⁸ thus making Zas,

⁵⁴ Schibli 1990, 84–87.

⁵⁵ Onians 1951, 315–316.

⁵⁶ But in the Damascius fragment (fr. 60), Ζάντα is actually an emendation for the transmitted ζῶντα.

⁵⁷ *Grammatici Graeci*, vol. 3.2 p. 911.

⁵⁸ Cf. Kern 1888, 93 n. 64 (quoting a personal communication with Kretschmer): "Ζάς Ζάντα (non Ζάντα!) Ζάντος Ζάντι exemplo participiorum ut βας βάντα βάντος βάντι adducta est." West's (1971, 51)

paradigmatically, ‘The living one.’ The alternative forms Ζήν and Ζής may be considered derivations from the same word. What we know of Zas’ role in the cosmogony is certainly compatible with such a meaning. His close association with a tree, even if not a ‘cosmic’ tree, is at least an indication that he is intimately connected to the realm of life;⁵⁹ the fact that this tree has wings, and is thus a kind of hybrid between a plant and an animal, enhances this connection. Moreover, the mundane details surrounding Zas’ wedding to Chthoniē, as well as Pherecydes’ explicit statement that the wedding established a custom not only for gods but also for men, stress Zas’ close proximity to the life of humans. One can hardly imagine this Zas engaged in a quasi-genocidal war against humans such as that found in Hesiod’s account of the quarrel between Zeus and Prometheus.⁶⁰

Δίς could be Pherecydes’ speculatively reconstructed nominative for the declined forms Διός, Διῖ, and Δία, whose sole apparent function is to replace, and thus get rid of, the form Zeus altogether. As to Δήν, it is not only the Cretan form of Zeus, but is also homonymous with the temporal adverb δῆν, meaning ‘a long time’ — possibly an allusion to the eternity of Ζάς (cf. Χρόνος). Contrary to Zeus in the Hesiodic account, who is engendered after three of four generations, Pherecydes’ Ζάς is conspicuously not engendered; and his names, connotating as they do an eternal present and an eternal life, say just as much.

3.5 Χθονίη

Contrary to Zas and Chronos, Chthoniē’s original name is semantically, but not lexically, related to her most immediate Hesiodic homologue (Gaia). Her change of name in the course of the story, which seems to bring her closer to Gaia, also singles her out as a particularly complex figure. Χθονίη denotes the underground world, while her second name Γῆ more properly designates the terrestrial region. The passage relating this moment is marked by a strong paronomasia: Χθονίη δὲ ὄνομα ἐγένετο Γῆ, ἐπειδὴ αὐτῇ Ζὰς γῆν γέρας διδοῖ. The new name is etilogically related

contention “that a play on the Greek word for ‘live’ was intended is out of court” on the grounds that “for that, Pherecydes might have used the already existing Ζήν, Ζηνός” is unconvincing. Fritz (1938, 2031) contrasts Chronos, who creates inanimate elements, with Zas, “an embodiment of the life principle” (*Verkörperung des Lebensprinzips*).

59 Cf. Schibli 1990, 76: “Trees [...] with their changing foliage and production of fruit in the course of the seasons are symbols of vigour, fecundity, and the regenerative capacity of nature.”

60 The apparent absence of rivalry between gods and humans in Pherecydes may be linked to his eschatological beliefs, which seem to be characterized by a relative optimism (at least in comparison with Hesiod).

not only to earth (γῆ) but also to the transformation itself (ἐγένετο) and to the honorific present (γέρας). In particular, the close paronomasia between γῆν and γέρας suggests that the goddess' new appellation corresponds to her ontological promotion: instead of being confined to the underground, she will now embody the visible part of the earth. For gods, an enhanced visibility is a source of prestige, as evinced by the repeated scenes of epiphany in such religious texts as the *Homeric Hymns*. The "large and beautiful" robe that Zas embroiders with elaborate designs is a concrete and visible symbol of his bride's newly acquired renown.

In Hesiod, no substantial change is applied to Gaia, "eternal and firm seat for all" (πάντων ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ, *Theog.* 117), whose occupation is very much one of uncontrolled procreation. True enough, we do not know much about Chthoniē's role in the *Theocrasia*, apart from her intimate relation with Zas, with whom she is eventually united by the bonds of marriage. The fact that this wedding coincides with her transformation into Gē, the upper, visible part of the earth, brings to mind the figure of Korē-Persephone,⁶¹ who similarly occupies a variable position, either under or over the earth, depending on the will of another divinity (Zeus in the myth related in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Zas in Pherecydes). A significant difference is that Persephone becomes an underworld divinity *after* her union to Hades, while Chthoniē's marriage causes her to move in the opposite direction.

Since Zas' wedding is said to be the origin of the custom (νόμος) for men and gods, scholars often adduce the figure of Hera as a comparans for Gē.⁶² The comparison is encouraged by the popular restitution of the beginning of column 2: <βουλόμενος> γὰρ σέο τοὺς γάμους εἶναι, "since I wish marriages to be yours," viz. "in your jurisdiction." Although this restitution is not certain,⁶³ there is reason to believe that the passage somehow reflects traditional religion, despite the otherwise idiosyncratic character of Pherecydes' account. The authorial comment that resumes the narration after Zas' speech opens with the vague *phasin*: ταῦτά φασιν ἀνακαλυπτήρια πρῶτον γενέσθαι, "people say that this was the first wedding ceremony." Since the indirect construction is abandoned in the rest of the sentence and gives way to a blunt statement (ἐκ τούτου δὲ ὁ νόμος ἐγένετο καὶ θεοῖσι καὶ

61 Cf. West 1971, 11: "Χθόνιος was established by his time as an epithet of gods who are in the earth" and the appending fn. 1: "Χθονίη might suggest Persephone." For further connections between Chthoniē and Persephone/Demeter on the one hand, and Demeter and Gē on the other, see Breglia 2000, 189–190.

62 See Schibli 1990, 62–63; Baxter 1992, 120.

63 Zas may as well simply be "declaring" that Chthoniē's wedding is taking place (<εἰπὼν> [vel. sim.] γὰρ σέο τοὺς γάμους εἶναι ...). Laks and Most (2016) accept the restitution βουλόμενος at the beginning of the line, but their translation restricts the meaning of τοὺς γάμους to Chthoniē's situation ("since I want this marriage to be yours").

ἀνθρώποισιν), this gives the impression that the author accepts the content of the claim introduced by φασι. Pherecydes' use of φασι here may be considered a rhetorical ploy, inasmuch as it suggests that the story of Zas' wedding, while being a creation peculiar to Pherecydes, is based on motifs sufficiently familiar to be related to common lore about the origins of marriage. The explicit *aition* provided for a well-known custom also shows that the episode was inspired not only by mythical models but also by the *Realien* of actual, day-to-day religious practice.⁶⁴

The term ἀνακαλυπτῆρια can refer both to the unveiling (cf. ἀνακαλύπτειν) of the bride at the wedding and to the gifts that are offered to her on that occasion.⁶⁵ Once again, in traditional terms, the word would seem to have a special relevance to Hera, who is shown in the act of pushing back her veil in the presence of Zeus in a number of iconographical representations. Pherecydes' idea to transfer this set of associations to Chthoniē is particularly significant: in the case of Chthoniē, the gift (ἀνακαλυπτῆρια) that is offered to the bride coincides with her enhanced visibility, her *unveiling* (ἀνακαλυπτῆρια), so to speak, to the eyes of gods and mortals.

Despite the possible allusion to Hera in Chthoniē's (also possible) investiture as marriage-goddess, Pherecydes may have made use of other mythological models. While Hera's role as patron of marriages was widespread and certainly ancient in Greece, Hesiod himself does not mention this function of hers. The most developed "marriage-scene" in Hesiod (or something like it) is the gift of Pandora to Epimetheus in the *Works and Days* (and, in a more summary form, in the *Theogony*). Hesiod recounts her creation out of earth and her adornment by various gods before she is sent to Epimetheus. Commentators have noticed that Hesiod's account recalls the Greek practice of marriage, complete with the preparation of the bride and her introduction into her husband's house with a dowry (the jar).

The similarities between Hesiod's Pandora and Pherecydes' Chthoniē-Gē may be summarized in the following table:

⁶⁴ Cf. Breglia 2000, 188. There is another reference to cultic practice in fr. 74 (B12 DK): ἐλεγέ τε ὅτι οἱ θεοὶ τὴν τράπεζαν θυωρὸν καλοῦσιν, "he said that the gods call a table *sacrifice receiver*." To my opinion, this fragment does not suggest the notion of a "language of the gods" (such as that occasionally alluded to in Homer) so much as the idea that gods and men entertain different points of view on things.

⁶⁵ Toutain 1940, 345.

Tab. 6: Similarities between Hesiod's Pandora and Pherecydes' Chthonië-Gē.

Hesiod	Pherecydes
A. Pandora is made of earth.	A'. Chthonië-Gē is earth and is named 'earth'.
B. Pandora receives numerous adornments.	B'. Chthonië receives an embroidered robe.
C. Pandora is brought into the company of men and gods, who suddenly see her (ὥς εἶδον, <i>Theog.</i> 589) with astonishment.	C'. Chthonië's wedding is a ceremony of unveiling (<i>anakalupteria</i>); she moves from her primordial invisibility to the visibility of Earth (Gē).
D. Zeus gives Pandora as a δῶρον to Epimetheus, who receives her (δεξάμενος, <i>Op.</i> 89).	D'. Zas gives γῆ to Chthonië as a γέρας, as well as a robe; she receives (δεξαμένη) them.
E. Pandora is named Pandora because (δοτι) all the gods gave her as a present (see below).	E'. Chthonië became named Gē when (ἐπειδὴ) Zas gave her γῆ as a gift of honor.
F. The marriage of Pandora inaugurates an era in which men must marry, have children, and work to feed their family.	F'. Chthonië's marriage inaugurates the custom of ritual wedding for men and gods. [Zas and Chthonië have offspring and provide them with nourishment (?). ⁶⁶]

Hesiod himself is very fond of etymologizing;⁶⁷ and his comment on the name of Pandora may be one of his most spectacular etiologies for a name. In the *Works and Days*, he tells how Hermes gave her that name "because all (πάντες) the inhabitants of Olympus δῶρον ἐδώρησαν, a plague for toiling men (πῆμ' ἀνδράσιν ἀλφιστῆσιν)" (*Op.* 81–82). The syntax of this phrase admits two meanings. Either all the gods "gave her a present" (referring to the various adornments she receives from Athena, Hermes etc.); or (more likely) all the gods "gave her as a present," viz., to mankind (via Epimetheus).

With this (double) etymology, Hesiod was indulging in mythological and religious revisionism. Specialists of Greek religion agree that the "original" meaning of the name Pandora must be "she who gives all gifts," as is suggested by her alternative name Anēsidora ("Gift-sender") and her early representation as earth-goddess.⁶⁸ This meaning is of course antithetical to Hesiod's anthropological vision, according to which women take everything and give nothing. The obvious meaning of Pandora's name stands in direct contradiction to this view. Thus, a reinterpretation is necessary to support Hesiod's ideological program, and this is precisely what

⁶⁶ On this possible development of the story, see Plato's possible allusion to Pherecydes in the *Sophist* (above, fn. 12).

⁶⁷ See e.g., Risch 1947, 72–79, Arnould 2009.

⁶⁸ An ancient interpretation of the name is found in schol. Ar. Av. 971: Πανδώρα· τῇ γῆ· ἐπειδὴ πάντα τὰ πρὸς τὸ ζῆν δωρεῖται. ἀφ' οὗ καὶ ζεῖδωρος καὶ ἀνησιδώρα.

lines 81–82 of the *Works and Days* achieve. This passage is no mere ‘etiology’; it is heavily programmatic for Hesiod’s general account of the life of mankind.

Pherecydes’ play with names is similarly programmatic. The double name Χθονίη-Γῆ becomes even more significant in view of Hesiod’s own etymological play on Pandora and of the resemblances between Pandora and Chthoniē outlined above. By reinterpreting Pandora-Anēsidora, ‘she who sends all gifts,’ as ‘she who is sent as a (poisoned) gift, a plague for toiling men,’ Hesiod had in effect segregated the traditional earth-goddess from her beneficent, telluric nature.⁶⁹ Pherecydes reverses Hesiod’s process. His own Pandora-like figure is firmly reinstated in her earthly role, not only once, but twice: being both Χθονίη and Γῆ, she evokes both the young Korē, who watches over the subterranean sources of life, and the mature, motherly Gaia, who bears the visible fruits of the crops.

3.6 Ὠγενός

Ὠγενός is obviously a variation on Ὠκεανός. While the name may be explained with reference to non-Greek languages,⁷⁰ Pherecydes’ coinage may also have been motivated by a desire to distinguish his own figure — or even to underline its differences — from the traditional features of Okeanos. Okeanos is a well-known figure of Greek literature from its very beginnings in Homer and Hesiod, where he appeared both as an anthropomorphized figure and as an impersonal, cosmological entity.⁷¹ The epic portrait of Okeanos mixes the image of a river with the generative power of an anthropomorphous deity, and later thinkers were quick to pick up on some of these philosophically interesting features and integrate them into their own systems.⁷² Moreover, ancient sources are practically unanimous in etymologizing Okeanos from ὠκύς (fast), which is in line with the image of a flowing river. In view of the widely received meaning of the name Okeanos in the time of Pherecydes, one may speculate that the latter purposely avoided this name because he disagreed with the cosmological account that the name entailed. While scholars are usually content to see Ogēnos as a stretch of water based on the analogy with

⁶⁹ Cf. Clay 2003, 119.

⁷⁰ See West 1971, 50 and West 1997, 146–147.

⁷¹ The following discussion of Okeanos/Ogēnos draws on some conclusions reached in Bouchard 2020.

⁷² See Kirk and Raven 1983, 10–17 and Rudhardt 1971.

Okeanos,⁷³ the role of Pherecydes' Ogēnos is not identical with that of Okeanos in traditional poetry. Indeed, if that were the case, one could ask why Pherecydes would have bothered to change his name at all.

In the text relating the theomachy (fr. 78), the vanquished army is the one that falls into Ogēnos, which obviously represents a liminal region of the world. Okeanos occupies a comparable position in epic, though he is not involved in any kind of battle. The only other mention of Ogēnos in Pherecydes' fragments appears in the description of the robe that Zas crafted for Chthoniē during their wedding: this robe Zas embroidered with Γῆν καὶ Ὠγηνὸν καὶ τὰ Ὠγηνοῦ δώματα (fr. 68 and 69). Clement of Alexandria (fr. 69) explicitly compares this sentence with the following lines of the *Iliad*: ἐν μὲν γαῖαν ἔτευξ', ἐν δ' οὐρανόν, ἐν δὲ θάλασσαν ... ἐν δ' ἐτίθει ποταμοῖο μέγα σθένος Ὀκεανοῖο.⁷⁴ Of course, the adornments of Achilles' shield are much more sophisticated, and cartographically complete, than those of the robe made by Zas. As it happens, we cannot possibly interpret the designs on the robe as an exhaustive depiction of the universe. Although it is impossible to discern the exact configuration of Pherecydes' cosmos from the fragments, we know at least that 'sky' was one of its main regions, since it was awarded to the victorious side in the theomachy. The design on the robe is only a partial representation of the world; specifically, that part of the world that is allotted to Gē upon her wedding.

The description of the design is repetitive and alliterative: Γῆν καὶ Ὠγηνὸν καὶ τὰ Ὠγηνοῦ δώματα. The phrase seems to suggest that Γῆ is somehow a part of Ὠγηνός, just like the letters γην are part of the name Ὠγηνός; or, conversely, that Ὠγηνός is composed of Γῆ.⁷⁵ Minimally, the play on the names shows that Ὠγηνός is very closely related to Γῆ.⁷⁶ Since the component *ōke* in Okeanos was traditionally interpreted as pointing to speed and movement, the replacement of these letters with γη in Ὠγηνός must evoke the earth's stability (as opposed to movement). As it happens, the idea of stability sits well with the expression "the houses of Ὠγηνός" — admittedly an

73 See e.g., Rudhardt 1971, 33–34. Cf. Schibli 1990, 79: "whichever of the opposing sides falls into the Ocean [sic] would be considered the losers." Schibli does not discuss Ogēnos in his appendix on Pherecydes' theonyms (pp. 135–139).

74 *Il.* 18.483 and *Il.* 18.607. These lines respectively open and close the long description of the shield, so Clement's citation may be understood as referring to the whole description.

75 For Gomperz (1929, 21), Ὠγηνός is a paragon of an 'etymological' name (*das Musterbeispiel eines etymologisierenden Names*) and designates Okeanos as the river that "surrounds the earth like an O" (*die γῆ wie ein O umschließt*).

76 Cf. Baxter 1992, 121 fn. 54, who proposes that Pherecydes used Ὠγηνός instead of Ὀκεανός "to show that the latter is part of the earth's surface" (Baxter's following reference seems to attribute this idea — erroneously — to Kirk and Raven).

enigmatic phrase⁷⁷ — while the Homeric notion of ‘the houses of Okeanos’ sounds somewhat oxymoronic in view of Okeanos’ traditional representation as being in perpetual movement, and not in any fixed place but rather ‘all around’ the earth.⁷⁸

The substitution of Ὠγηνός (consonant with earth and rest) for Ὠκεανός (consonant with water, movement, and speed) may bear further consequences concerning the elemental doctrine of Pherecydes. According to Sextus, Pherecydes said that the principle of everything was earth.⁷⁹ In context, Sextus is talking about principles in the narrow sense of *material* principles (περὶ τῶν ὑλικῶν καλουμένων ἀρχῶν). We may think that Sextus is right inasmuch as earth, under the name of Χθονίη, is one of Pherecydes’ primordial beings, and the only one with an elemental nature — thus it can indeed be called ἀρχή in the narrow sense of ‘first material principle.’⁸⁰ If, as Diogenes Laertius reports (see fn. 79), Pherecydes had contested Thales (and his identification of water as ἀρχή?), then the replacement of Ὠκεανός with Ὠγηνός may have been motivated by his wish to suppress the traditional image of a primordial water.

4 Conclusion

I will sum up briefly, and somewhat selectively, the main conclusions reached in the preceding sections. The significance of Pherecydes’ pantheon of gods is better understood by considering the traditional background against which it was elaborated and by taking seriously his semantical play with theonyms. Chronos, the eternal time-god, is an original figure (though based on Oriental models) whose cosmological role appears all the more coherent through a comparison with his quasi-

77 Cf. West 1971, 19: “The Mansions of Ogenos are something of a mystery.” Although Homeric Okeanos also possesses a house (see next note), which is “appropriate to a divine river” (West 1971, 19), it is hard to see why such a house deserves to be depicted on Zas’ robe, unless it is somehow ‘more’ than just a house.

78 In Homer, Okeanos is endowed with a house: *Il.* 14.202 = 14.303 (δόμοισιν); *Il.* 14.311 (δῶμα). The three Iliadic passages refer to Hera’s (past and future) visits to Okeanos, who is strongly anthropomorphized in these contexts.

79 Φερεκύδης μὲν γὰρ ὁ Σύριος γῆν εἶπε τὴν πάντων εἶναι ἀρχήν, Θαλῆς δὲ ὁ Μιλήσιος ὕδωρ (fr. 77 Schibli = A10 DK). On the opposition between Pherecydes and Thales, cf. fr. 58 Schibli: ἐφιλονεῖται ... θάλητι δὲ Φερεκύδης (Diog. Laert. 2.46).

80 The single testimony (64 Schibli) claiming that Pherecydes (as well as Thales) took water to be the ἀρχή seems impossible to reconcile with the rest of the fragments, especially 60 Schibli, which tells how water was created from Chronos’ seed along with fire and *pneuma* (but, noticeably, *not* earth).

homonym Cronos, the very transient dynast of Hesiod's *Theogony*. Moreover, the way Chronos expresses his masculine power of generation — creating from his seed and entrusting his creation to external receptacles, the *mukhoi* — runs counter to that of Hesiod's Cronos, whose withholding of his children born of Rhea inside his own body resembles a grotesque attempt to usurp and subvert the feminine prerogative of nurturing future offspring in the womb. 'Zas' poses more problems, especially in the light of Herodian's reporting of numerous alternative names, but we have seen that the notion of life coheres well both with the 'main' form 'Zas' and with the actions of this character in the story; and, most importantly, that the relevance of life — specifically human life — for the Zas/Zeus figure is a Pherecydean novelty in respect to Hesiod. Pherecydes' third primordial divinity, Chthoniē, was by far the most complex case, not only because of her explicit change of appellation, but also because she entertains a set of meaningful associations with numerous traditional goddesses (Hera, Gaia, Persephone, Demeter). More specifically, it was also possible to identify some particularly interesting points of contrast with Hesiod's Pandora, whose own name possesses unmistakable connections with the realm of earth, but who had been deprived of these positive associations at the hands of Hesiod. Here more than anywhere else Pherecydes may be seen as offering a corrective to the anthropological lessons of the Boeotian poet.

Pherecydes' fragmentary work allows us a glimpse at a peculiar form of etymological practice. While the word *etumologia* (a Stoic coinage) is usually understood to designate the process by which one may uncover 'truthfulness' (*to etumon*) in 'words' or 'names' (*logoi*), Pherecydes' method consists in enunciating 'true' names, even if this implies creating those needed for a truthful account of the world. I do not believe that Pherecydes' Zas, Chronos, and Chthoniē/Gē are the result of his 'etymologizing' (in the usual sense of the word) of the traditional Zeus, Chronos and Gaia, as is often claimed.⁸¹ This would mean that Pherecydes had a view of the history of language similar to that exposed by Socrates in the *Cratylus*, according to whom originally 'true' names have gone through a process of degeneration, which it is a skillful etymologizer's task to reverse.⁸² It seems much more likely that the similarities between Pherecydes' theonyms and traditional names reflect his wish to draw attention to the actual *differences* between his own account and preexisting

⁸¹ See e.g., Kirk and Raven 1983, 56: "the gods who always existed are probably conceived as *original forms* (by etymology) of conventional figures from the traditional theogony" (my emphasis).

⁸² See e.g., Granger 2007, 146: "The commonplace names of the gods [...] Pherecydes must believe distort the true nature of the gods, and in some cases he may even believe they are corruptions of the true names." There is no evidence whatsoever that Pherecydes entertained such a belief — nor, for that matter, that he was particularly interested in "purging divinity of the disgraceful behavior Hesiod recounts about the gods and in providing the gods with more respectable reputations" (p. 139).

ones.⁸³ Indeed, the close proximity between Pherecydes' and Hesiod's divine figures makes Pherecydes 'differancing' names (to use Derridan terminology) all the more efficient in supporting his revisionist account of the history of the world. This strategy is analogous to his peculiar use of prose, which is marked by the presence of distinctly rhythmical units that seem designed simultaneously to evoke and to mark his differences from the hexametric poets such as Hesiod.⁸⁴ This speculative and heuristic use of language may have been Hesiod's innovation; indeed, it is well suited to his didactic purposes. But the fragments of Pherecydes show that Hesiod's experiment found at least one enthusiastic follower. His appropriation of Hesiod's linguistic technique is both provocative and effective.

In modern historiography, etymology is regularly considered a form of ἐρμηνεία or *interpretatio*, especially in didactic contexts.⁸⁵ In some cases it has been associated with, or even subsumed under, the ancient practice of allegorical interpretation of poets.⁸⁶ The case of Pherecydes shows that 'etymology' is operative well beyond interpretation: indeed, it can be a driving force behind new mythical and philosophical representations. Moreover, his use of etymologically significant names, far from making him an allegorical author, may be considered a feature of his distinctly literal mode of expression: the name Zas means 'life' (or 'living'), and so Zas is life, not an allegory of life; likewise, Chronos is time and Chthonië-Gē is earth under various guises. The fact that these animate figures also embody what we call abstract notions (life, time) or elements (earth) does not make them allegorical symbols. It is, quite simply, a 'symptom' of Pherecydes' mythical view of the world, whereby reality is explained by the presence and action of living, individualized beings who simultaneously instantiate some particular realms of existence. Rather than rationalizing allegories, Pherecydes' gods, with their carefully crafted theonyms, seem to result from an unparalleled experiment with the limits of the linguistic potential of myth itself.

⁸³ Cf. Santamaría 2019, 95; Granger 2007, 146: "Pherecydes may use these strange divine names as a provocation, as a way of sharpening his disagreement with the tradition."

⁸⁴ Gheerbrant 2018.

⁸⁵ See the seminal treatment of Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002.

⁸⁶ On the similarities and (especially) the differences between these, see recently Most 2016.

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Etymology and the Rewriting of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* in Apollonius Rhodius 2.669–719

Abstract: This paper explores how the etymologies presented in the Thynias episode in Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 2.669–719 take issue with the etymological explanations of Apollo's name and of some of his divine appellations in the *Homeric Hymn* dedicated to him. It argues that the deployment of etymology in this episode effectuates a collapse of poetic authorities: while the Homeric poet's etymological etiologies are corrected by Apollonius' Orpheus, whose song is presented in reported (character) speech, Orpheus' song itself is corrected by the *Argonautica*'s narrator who makes his presence abundantly clear and signals the progress in the understanding of linguistic and cultic matters that has taken place since the mythical times of Orpheus and the Argonauts. This conclusion conforms with analyses that view the relationship between Orpheus and the narrator of the *Argonautica* as antagonistic. Finally, Apollonius' engagement with the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* and its etymologies of Apolline matters demonstrates that any authority granted through etymology is only provisional. The etymology may be adapted when a clearer understanding about the past (including through the consultation of more modern/written sources) is available. In this sense, etymology and the quest for authoritative origins embedded in language is a dynamic process that constantly undergoes revision.

1 Introduction

The arrival of the Argonauts at the island Thynias in Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 2.669–719 is a highly etiological account that has drawn considerable critical attention. The links between this passage and the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, as well as Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, have been studied in relation to the *aition* of the ritual *ep hymnion Ieie Paieon*. The passage's exemplarity has also been the object

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of discussion: how does it relate to the overall economy of the poem and what does it achieve by its presence here where it interrupts the flow of the narrative? It has been argued that the narrative of the killing of the serpent at Delphi looks forward to the killing of Ladon later in the *Argonautica*; Apollo's epiphany in Book 2 has its pendant in the Anaphe episode of Book 4, which punctuates the last threat the Argonauts encounter in their adventure, while this first epiphany of Apollo occurs shortly after the Argonauts have successfully crossed the Symplegades.¹ Further, the foundation of the temple to Ὀμόνοια (Concord) could reflect the type of heroism that the *Argonautica* displays: Jason will successfully complete the impossible tasks assigned to him by Aietes, but crucial for his success is the consultation of his heroic companions and of course Medea's help.² The importance of solidarity is reflected in the performance of the paian by the Argonauts, as Tom Phillips has recently pointed out, who has also emphasized how the song performed by Orpheus is 'obsolete' and 'out of date,' as it celebrates a type of heroic achievement brought about through *bie*, when a different kind of heroism is implied in the poem, one based on *metis* and on Medea's *pharmaka*.³

On the other hand, the handling of time is an important issue in this passage as well: as Anke Walter has shown, while the *aition* of Apollo of the Morning appears to be fixed in time, its narrative also functions as a springboard for the activation of another *aition* in the paian performed by Orpheus and the Argonauts: new and old etiologies are juxtaposed, and the Argonauts appear to be performing now what the Corycian Nymphs did in the mythical past: they create a cult-title of Apollo. If Orpheus' song recalls this earlier *aition*, and the Argonauts replicate it by founding a new cult of Apollo and by inventing a new appellation for the god, the voice that interrupts Orpheus's song in lines 708–710 could belong to the narrator or to Orpheus. While this is a matter of debate, it is certain that it is the poet's voice that utters line 713 (ἐνθεν δὴ **τόδε** καλὸν ἐφύμνιον ἔπλετο Φοίβῳ, thence arose this beautiful refrain for Phoebus),⁴ which, through the deictic τόδε, reorients the narrative to the *hic et nunc* of the *Argonautica*'s performance from the undetermined past of line 705 (ποτε) and the overly determined mythical temporality of the

1 See Köhnken 2003; Hunter 2009, 145, fn. 47.

2 On Jason's heroism, see Clauss 1993; Hunter 2008a, 59–85. On the Argonauts' landing at Thynias, see Hunter 2008b, 29–41 (who also explores the links with the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*); Belloni 1999; and the rich and insightful analysis in McPhee 2020, 276–299. On Ὀμόνοια in the *Argonautica*, see Mori 2008 (esp. chapter 3) and Thériault 1996, 28–34. Vian/Delage 1974, 48–49 consider Ὀμόνοια to be one of the themes that underpin the first three books of the *Argonautica*.

3 See Phillips 2020, 83–98.

4 Translation by W.H. Race.

Argonauts' foundation of the cult of Apollo of the Morning. Three temporal levels, thus, collapse.⁵

Against the background of these recent treatments of the episode, I would like to focus my attention in this chapter on the way in which Apollonius employs etymology and ask two questions: (i) first, what does etymology contribute to this episode in the *Argonautica*; and (ii) second, what is the significance of Apollonius challenging the etymologies found in one of the most important intertexts in this episode, the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.⁶

2 Etymologizing Apollo

To be sure, Apollo's name was the object of intense etymological speculation in antiquity. I will mention only a few examples here: In *Agamemnon* 1080–1082, Aeschylus has the lamenting Cassandra call upon Apollo, setting up an etymological link between the god's name in the vocative case (Ἀπολλῶν, 1080) and the verb-form ἀπώλεσας ('you destroyed').⁷ By virtue of this etymological 'play,' the god's name resonates with destruction.⁸ In the *Cratylus* (405c–406a), Plato's Socrates offers several etymologies of Apollo's name: Apollo may be perceived (i) as a god related to release (ἀπόλυσις) and ablutions (ἀπόλουσις) as a god of ritual purification; (ii) as a truthful and simple (ἀπλοῦς) god of prophecy, similar to the god's name in the Thesalian dialect (Ἀπλους); (iii) as a god keen on shooting arrows (ἀειβάλλων, 'ever-shooting'), which reflects some of his actual cult-names, viz. ἐκηβόλος, ἑκατηβελέτης

5 See Walter 2020, 129–134; and Fusillo 1985, 58–59, for the transference of the etiological account onto the mythical plain and Orpheus' meta-literary role as a *mise en abyme* of the function of the *Argonautica*'s poet.

6 On etymology in Apollonius, see the survey in O'Hara 2017, 21–30; and Cusset 2021 on etymological explanation in the Hellenistic poets, esp. pp. 214–218 and 221–222 on Apollonius.

7 Ἀπολλῶν· Ἀπολλῶν· ἀγυῖατ', ἀπόλλων ἐμός. | ἀπώλεσας γὰρ οὐ μόλις τὸ δεύτερον. (Apollo, Apollo! God of the Streets, and my destroyer! For you have destroyed me, with no difficulty, a second time! [transl. Sommerstein]).

8 Needless to say, Apollo's name is not related to ἀπολλύναι in terms of its scientifically correct derivation and is probably pre-Hellenic (or it may be linked to *Apella*, the assemblies of men in Doric societies, thus hinting at Apollo's role as the god of the *Männerbund*). On the various attempts to etymologize Apollo's name, see Frisk and Beekes, s.v. On linguistic and religious/functional grounds, Oettinger 2015 argues that the triad Apollo, Artemis, and Leto came into Greece from West Asia Minor.

(‘far-shooting’);⁹ (iv) finally, as a god of music, his name can point to “the one who harmoniously moves together the axis of the celestial sphere” (ὁμοῦ πόλῃσις).¹⁰ In a polemic turn, Socrates rejects the etymology from Aeschylus’ ἀπολλύναι on the grounds that its proponents do not interpret the god’s name correctly.¹¹ The Stoic philosopher Cleanthes, furthermore, proposed an etymology of Apollo as meaning “rising from different places” (ἀπ’ ἄλλων καὶ ἄλλων τόπων τὰς ἀνατολάς ποιούμενον; *SVF* I 540 = *FDS* 656).¹² Chrysippus, on the other hand, proposed different etymological understandings of Apollo’s name by interpreting the initial ἀ- of the name as privative and rendering as (i) “he who does not belong to the many (οὐχὶ τῶν πολλῶν) trivial substances of fire” and, alternatively, (ii) “he who is one and not many” (οὐχὶ πολλοί; *SVF* II 1095 = *FDS* 656).

If Apollo’s name lends itself particularly to etymological speculation, the hymnic genre exhibits a profound interest in the etiology of cult, and in particular the kind of etiology that seeks confirmation in the etymological explanation of cult titles and divine appellations. The *Homeric Hymns* offer abundant examples of this feature, which I will not rehearse here in detail,¹³ and this is especially true of the *Hymn to Apollo*, with which I will be engaging in this paper.

To anticipate somewhat my conclusions, and following from the temporary collapse of three temporal levels argued for in this passage by Anke Walter, the deployment of etymology in this episode effects another type of collapse, that of poetic authorities: while the Homeric poet’s etymological etiologies are corrected by Apollonius’ Orpheus, whose song is presented in reported (character) speech, Orpheus’ song itself is corrected by the *Argonautica*’s narrator, who makes his presence abundantly clear and signals the progress in the understanding of linguistic and cultic matters that has taken place since the mythical times of Orpheus and the

⁹ These adjectives were connected with ἐκάς in antiquity, but modern linguists analyze them as compounds of ἔκα (adverb in -α, like σάφα, belonging to ἐκῶν); accordingly, the meaning is ‘shoot-ing at will’. See Chantraine and Beekes, s.v. ἐκηβόλος.

¹⁰ I.e. interpreting the initial ἀ- of the god’s name as copulative (= ‘together’) rather than privative (= ‘without’).

¹¹ On the etymologies of Apollo’s name in the *Cratylus*, see Montrasio 1988; Ademollo 2011, 175–176; Sluiter 2015, 909–917; Hunter and Lämmle 2019.

¹² In this he picks up the identification of Apollo with the sun and proceeds to explain the god’s essence by means of a natural allegory. The etymological interpretation of a theonym is for Cleanthes not simply a linguistic and theological matter but is also linked to natural science and physics. See Domaradski 2012.

¹³ E.g., *h.Hom.Aphr.* 198–199; *h.Hom.Pan* 47–48.

Argonauts. This conclusion conforms with analyses that view the relationship between Orpheus and the narrator of the *Argonautica* as antagonistic.¹⁴

3 Apollo and light

I will begin my discussion by looking in detail at the etymologies featured in this episode. The first comes in *Argonautica* 2.669–676 and introduces Apollo's epiphany:

Ἦμος δ' οὐτ' ἄρ πω φάος ἄμβροτον οὐτ' ἔτι λήν
 ὀρφναίη πέλεται, λεπτὸν δ' ἐπιδέδρομε νυκτὶ 670
 φέγγος, ὅτ' ἀμφιλύκην μιν ἀνεγρόμενοι καλέουσιν,
 τῆμος ἐρημαίης νήσου λιμέν' εἰσελάσαντες
 Θυνιάδος καμάτῳ πολυπήμονι βαῖνον ἔραζε.
 τοῖσι δὲ Λητοῦς υἱός, ἀνερχόμενος Λυκίηθεν
 τῇλ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα δῆμον Ὑπερβορέων ἀνθρώπων, 675
 ἐξεφάνη ...

At the time when the divine light has not yet come, nor is it still completely dark, but a faint glimmer comes upon the night, when men awake and call it morning twilight, then they rowed into the harbor of the deserted island of Thynias and, after their exhausting toil, stepped ashore. To them the son of Leto, on his way up from Lycia far off to the countless folk of the Hyperborean people, appeared (transl. W.H. Race).

In this introduction Apollonius is at pains to situate the events in time, in relation to the day. It is not day yet, nor is it night any longer: it is the moment when a faint light spreads over night, what is called ἀμφιλύκη.¹⁵ While in antiquity the word was explained as a synonym of λυκόφως (morning twilight) and was etymologically related to either λύκος, 'wolf'¹⁶ or λύγος, meaning 'shadow' or 'darkness',¹⁷ Apollonius, the narrator, coordinates it etymologically with Λυκίηθεν and thus suggests two possibilities for the interpretation of Apollo's famous cult-title Λύκιος, a term that

¹⁴ See, for instance, Murray 2018, 203.

¹⁵ On Apollonius' glossing ἀμφιλύκη, a reference to *Il.* 7.433 where this Homeric ἀπαξ εἰρημένον occurs, see Fantuzzi 1986, 142. West 2013, 262–264 proposes that (ἀμφι)λύκη was originally a verb form containing the old stative suffix -η (as in ἐδάη, ἐμάνη etc.), hence the phrase meant 'it was gleaming around the edges.'

¹⁶ The link to λύγη (or cognates) or λύκος is posited by Eustathius *Il. ad* 7.433 (II 490 Van der Valk); cf. III 83 (*ad Il.* 10.334) and *Et.Gen.* λ 149; Aelian, *NA* 10.26 (λύκος).

¹⁷ Orion α p. 11.14–15 (Sturz), Hsch. α 4057, *EM*, p. 47.13–14. *Schol. ex. Il.* 7.433b; *Schol. A.R.* 2.671 (p. 179.16–17 Wendel). See also Borghini 1991.

was itself explained as deriving either from Lycia or from λευκαίνεσθαι.¹⁸ At this point in the *Argonautica*, Λύκιος may be linked to light or to Lycia.¹⁹ The connection of Apollo with Lycia is explicitly established already by the poet of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, who begins the Pythian section of the poem with the following words (179–180), but without introducing an explicit etymological link with Λύκιος:

ὦ ἄνα, καὶ Λυκίην καὶ Μηονίην ἐρατεινὴν
καὶ Μίλητον ἔχεις ἔναλον πόλιν ἱμερόεσσαν.

O Lord, Lycia too is yours, and lovely Lydia, and Miletus the beautiful town by the sea (transl.: M.L. West).

Apollonius invests Apollo's connection to Lycia with a secure reference to light, which will be explicitly stated by a character (Orpheus) at *Argonautica* 2.686–688 (see below). But before that statement, the god's epiphany to the Argonauts is marked, as epiphanies generally are, by the intense presence of light, which in the case of Apollo is even more striking given his identification by this point in time with the Sun god.²⁰ *Argonautica* 2.676–677 and 681–683 are particularly revealing:

χρύσειοι δὲ παρειάων ἐκάτερθεν
πλοχομοὶ βοτρυνόντες ἐπερρώοντο κίοντι ...
τοὺς δ' ἔλε θάμβος ἰδόντας ἀμήχανον, οὐδέ τις ἔτλη
ἀντίον αὐγάσασσθαι ἐς ὄμματα καλὰ θεοῖο,
στὰν δὲ κάτω νεύσαντες ἐπὶ χθονός.

¹⁸ Antip. Stoic. fr. 36 Arnim ἀπὸ τοῦ λευκαίνεσθαι πάντα φωτίζοντος ἡλίου (“from *leukainesthai* [becoming white/bright] since the sun throws light on everything”; cf. *FDS* 657), which implies the association of Apollo with the sun, on which see fn. 20. In Cornutus, however, λύκιος is linked to λύκος (“wolf”) and explained in the context of Apollo's activity as god of herds, whereas his *epiklesis* ἀγνιεύς is derived from his association with light (ἀγνιεύς δ' ἐκλήθη δεόντως ἰδρυθεὶς ἐν ταῖς ἀγνιαῖς· καταυγάζει γὰρ ταύτας καὶ πληροὶ φωτὸς ἀνατέλλων, “he has been appropriately called *agíeus*, as he is established on the *aguiiai* [streets]; for he shines upon them and fills them with light when he rises”; p. 57.18–20 Torres). On Apollodorus' interpretation of Apollo's titles λύκειος, λυκηγενής, λυκοκτόνος in the *Περὶ Θεῶν*, which involve also the Homeric term ἀμφιλύκη, see Filoni 2021, 255–268. On the title Λύκιος, see also Hunter 2008b, 35. On the question whether Apollo's appearance here is to be interpreted as a poetic rendering of sunrise, see Hunter 1993, 80; and Feeney 1991, 75–77, for the problems on how to represent divinity raised by this episode that emphasizes the gulf that separates gods from men.

¹⁹ I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer whose comments helped me articulate better what is at stake in this passage.

²⁰ The earliest certain identification of Apollo with the Sun is in E. *Phaeth.* 225 (see Diggle *ad loc.*).

His **golden** locks flowed in clusters over both cheeks as he went ...

Helpless wonder seized them when they saw him, **and no one dared to look directly into the beautiful eyes of the god**. They stood with heads bowed to the ground (transl.: W.H. Race).

Θάμβος or θαῦμα is, alongside radiance, another typical reaction of mortals witnessing a divine epiphany.²¹ This special role of Apollo is understood by Orpheus, who urges the Argonauts to institute the cult of Apollo of the Morning. The build-up of the imagery associated with light culminates in *Argonautica* 2.686–688, in Orpheus' investing Apollo with a new title (Εώιος) that is etymologically derived from the time of the day in which the god appeared (ἠῶος) and provides retrospectively an explanation that links Λύκιος with light (= ἀμφιλύκη, 'twilight' of 2.671), and thus decides between the two possible explanations of Λύκιος implied earlier.²²

εἰ δ' ἄγε δὴ νῆσον μὲν **Ἑωίου** Ἀπόλλωνος
τὴνδ' ἱερὴν κλείωμεν, ἐπεὶ πάντεσσι φαάνθη
ἠῶος μετιών

Come, let us name this the sacred island of Apollo **Heoios**, because he appeared **at dawn** to us all as he passed (transl. W.H. Race).

The island, which during the times of Apollonius was known as Apollonias,²³ is now declared sacred to Heoios Apollo because the god's epiphany occurred in the morning (he appeared ἠῶος to the Argonauts). The etymon behind this *epiklesis* of Apollo was by no means understood in only one way. Herodorus of Heraclea fr. 48 *EGM* (fl. 400 BCE) offers a different account of the epithet.²⁴

²¹ On epiphanies, see Petridou 2016; on epiphanies in Homer in particular, see Turkeltaub 2003.

²² The literature on the role of Orpheus in the *Argonautica* is extensive, and scholars generally remark on his music as a factor that creates or restores order and ὁμόνοια among the heroes, a necessary condition for the success of the expedition. See, for instance, Busch 1993; Clare 2002, 231–240, who observes on Orpheus' song in Book 2 that Apollo's defeat of Delphyne(s) is relevant to the Argonautic expedition and Jason's task in the following book; Köhnken 2006 sees the mythical singer as an *Integrationsfigur*, rather than the narrator's *alter ego*, who acts spontaneously to ensure that the group is reconciled through his authority; Billault 2008; and Klooster 2011, 82–91. Karanika 2010 compares Orpheus' actions in the *Argonautica* to those of the *oikistes* in a colonizing expedition.

²³ See Matteo *ad* 2.672–673 for references; Ziegler 1936. The passage thus offers the *aition* for the name Apollonias as well: Fränkel 1968, 225.

²⁴ See Fowler 2000, II 223, who points that Herodorus may have known the story transmitted by Apollonius; for Hunter 2008b, 32 the scholion from which this fragment derives, is inconclusive. Feeney 1991, 76 remarks that Apollonius avoids rationalizing accounts of myth. On Herodorus in general and his place in the Euhemeristic approach to explaining myth, see Borin 1995.

ἐν δὲ τῇ Θυνίδι νήσω ἱερόν ἐστι Ἀπόλλωνος. Ἡρόδωρος οὖν φησιν Ἐῶν Ἀπόλλωνα προσαγορεύεσθαι καὶ βωμὸν αὐτοῦ εἶναι ἐν τῇ νήσῳ οὐ καθὼ ὀρθρου ἐφάνη αὐτοῖς, ἀλλὰ καθὼ οἱ Ἀργοναῦται ὀρθρου εἰς αὐτὴν κατέπλευσαν.

And on the island Thynis there is a sanctuary of Apollo. Herodorus then says that Apollo is called *heoios* and that there is an altar of his on the island not because he appeared to them in early morning but because the Argonauts landed on it in early morning (my translation).

While Herodorus interprets the god's appellation in a rationalizing manner, which would also imply the absence of his epiphany, Apollonius explains the epithet in a way that is consistent with the kind of narrative events one may expect in an epic poem, such as divine epiphanies, with the *Argonautica*'s interest in foundations of cults in the Black Sea, and with Orpheus' special role as divine interpreter in the poem. Orpheus establishes the god's new cult-title through the etymology that he utters, and his words owe something to the conventions of the hymnic genre or the prayer: promises of greater gifts in the form of sacrifices are made if the god ensures the Argonauts' safe return to Greece, while the last line of Orpheus' words contains technical terms of hymnic language: *κέκλωμαι* ('call upon' a god for aid etc.) and *ἰληθι*, *ἄναξ*, *ἰληθι*, a phrase that ends by pointing again to the god's epiphany (*φασανθείς*).²⁵

While the repeated *ἰληθι* points forward to *ἰλήκοις* in line 708 in the interruption of Orpheus' song that revisits the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, already at this point the poet departs from the *Homeric* subtext for the narrative of the god's epiphany to a group of men at sea, viz. the Cretan sailors travelling for Pylos whose boat Apollo drives off course and directs to the bay of Crisa. After his first epiphany in the form of a dolphin (to which I shall return presently), Apollo appears in radiant form in lines *h.Hom.Ap.* 440–447:

ἐνθ' ἐκ νηὸς ὄρουσεν ἄναξ ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων	440
ἀστέρι εἰδόμενος μέσῳ ἡματι· τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ πολλαὶ	
σπινθαρίδες πωτῶντο, σέλας δ' εἰς οὐρανὸν ἵκεν·	
ἐς δ' ἄδυτον κατέδυνε διὰ τριπόδων ἐριτίμων.	
ἐνθ' ἄρ' ὃ γε φλόγ' ἔδαιε πιφασκόμενος τὰ ἅ κῆλα,	
πᾶσαν δὲ Κρίσῃν κάτεχεν σέλας· αἱ δ' ὀλόλυξαν	445
Κρισαίων ἄλοχοι καλλίζωνοί τε θύγατρες	
Φοίβου ὑπὸ ῥιπῆς· μέγα γὰρ δέος ἔμβαλ' ἐκάστω.	

²⁵ This hymnic language resonates with the hymnic elements in honour of Apollo in the *Argonautica*. See Murray 2018, 202–209; Cuypers 2004, 43–44; and Klooster 2011, 83–84. On p. 88 Klooster argues persuasively against the idea of the *Argonautica* is “one long hymnic proem”; rather, Apollonius incorporates hymnic elements into his poetry, which he associates with Orpheus whose songs often belong to the hymnic genre and who guides the Argonauts in religious matters, especially pertaining to the worship of Apollo.

There the far-shooting lord Apollo darted off the ship, **looking like a star in broad daylight**, with **countless sparks** flying off him, **and the brilliance was heaven-high**. He disappeared into the sanctum through the precious tripods, and there **he lit a flame to manifest his divine force**. The whole of Crisa was filled with the **radiance**, and the Crisaeans' wives and fair-girt daughters yelled aloud under Phoibos' **impulse**, for he had put **terror** into everyone (transl. M.L. West).

Just as in Apollonius, Apollo's luminosity is central to his epiphany in the *Homeric Hymn* and is emphasized through the employment of expressions related to light, fire, and sparks.²⁶ Likewise, his appearance inspires fear to by-standing humans, just as it inspires θάμβος ('amazement') among the Argonauts. But there is a difference: in the *Homeric Hymn* the god's epiphany takes place μέσῳ ἡματι, which, while it need not strictly mean 'mid-day,' certainly contrasts with the morning twilight during which Apollo appears to the Argonauts. And while in Apollonius the god all but ignores the Argonauts, Apollo in the *Homeric Hymn* not only does not neglect the humans but actively engages with them by giving instructions on the foundation of his own cult.²⁷ If Apollo's light in the *Homeric Hymn* is extraordinarily bright and unusual (he appears as a star in broad daylight), the god's epiphany to the Argonauts coincides with the λεπτόν²⁸ ... φέγγος of the ἀμφιλύκη, though accompanied by the radiance one expects in divine epiphanies.

4 Singing of Apollo I: *Delphinios*

A further instance of revision of the etymological etiologies of the *Homeric Hymn* to Apollo is introduced in Orpheus' song, which the narrator reports.²⁹ Following

²⁶ On Apollo and the Cretan sailors, see Strauss Clay 1989, 74–94.

²⁷ See Hunter 2009, esp. 143–149, who compares this scene with *Iliad* 1.43–49 (Apollo's descent to the Greek camp) and *Il.* 13.10–22 (Poseidon's move from the peak of Samos in Thrace to his palace in Aigai) in the context of the sublime.

²⁸ Is λεπτόν here a Callimachean, metapoetic 'tag' pointing to the kind of intertextual engagement that follows? Note that in its only occurrence in Aratus, ἀμφιλύκη (745) appears not very long before the famous λεπτή acrostic of 782 ff. and in fact, as Kronenberg 2018b: §§7–10 has shown, Apollonius closely engages here both with Aratus' λεπτή acrostic and his interpretation of the λευκή acrostic in *Iliad* 24.1–5. For the latter, see Kronenberg 2018a.

²⁹ Faraone 2018, 25 discusses this passage in connection with the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* and argues that Apollonius' version may go back to a local Crisaeian account of the foundation of the altar of Delphinian Apollo in which the god did not give instructions to the Cretan sailors. The Cretans, in this version, decided to worship Apollo on the shore with whatever they had at hand

Orpheus' instructions to the Argonauts to celebrate Apollo of the Morning, the Argonauts hunt on this deserted island (*Argonautica* 2.688–713):³⁰

“τὰ δὲ ῥέξομεν οἷα πάρεσιν,
 βωμὸν ἀναστήσαντες ἐπάκτιον. εἰ δ' ἂν ὀπίσσω
 γαῖαν ἐς Αἰμονίην ἀσκηθέα νόστον ὀπάσση, 690
 δὴ τότε οἱ κεραῶν ἐπὶ μηρία θήσομεν αἰγῶν·
 νῦν δ' αὐτως κνίσῃ λοιβῇσι τε μελίζασθαι
 κέκλομαι· ἀλλ' ἴληθι ἀναξ, ἴληθι φασανθεῖς.”
 Ὡς ἄρ' ἔφη· καὶ τοὶ μὲν ἄφαρ βωμὸν τετύκοντο
 χερμάσιν, οἱ δ' ἀνὰ νῆσον ἐδίνεον, ἐξερέοντες 695
 εἰ κέ τιν' ἢ κεμάδων ἢ ἀγροτέρων ἐσίδοιεν
 αἰγῶν, οἷά τε πολλὰ βαθείῃ βόσκεται ὕλῃ.
 τοῖσι δὲ Λητοίδης ἄγρην πόρεν· ἐκ δὲ νυ πάντων
 εὐαγέως ἱερῷ ἀνὰ διπλόα μηρία βωμῷ
 καῖον, ἐπικλείοντες **Ἑώιον Ἀπόλλωνα**. 700
 ἀμφὶ δὲ δαιομένοις εὐρὺν χορὸν ἐστήσαντο,
 καλὸν **Ἱηπαιήον**· **Ἱηπαιήονα** Φοῖβον
 μελπόμενοι, σὺν δέ σφιν εὖς πάις Οἰάγροιο
 Βιστονίῃ φόρμιγγι λιγείης ἤρχεν ἀοιδῆς·
ὥς ποτε πετραίῃ ὑπὸ δειράδι Παρνηησοῖο 705
Δελφύνην τόξοισι πελώριον **ἐξενάριξεν**,
 κοῦρος ἑὼν ἔτι γυμνός, ἔτι πλοκάμοισι γεγηθώς
 (ἰλήκοις· **αἰεῖ** τοι, ἀναξ, **ἄτμητοι** ἔθειραι,
αἰὲν ἀδήλητοι, τὼς γὰρ θέμις, **οἰόθι** δ' αὐτὴ
 Λητῷ **Κοιογένεια** φίλαις ἐνὶ χερσὶν ἀφάσσει). 710
πολλὰ δὲ Κωρύκiai νύμφαι, Πλειστοῖο θυγατρες,
 θαρσύνεσκον ἔπεσιν, “**ἴη ἴε**” κεκληγυῖαι·
 ἐνθεν δὴ τόδε καλὸν ἐφύμιον ἔπλετο Φοῖβω.

“(And let us set up an altar on the shore) and sacrifice whatever is at hand. And if hereafter he grants us a safe return to the Haemonian land, then indeed we shall place on his altar the thighs of horned goats. But for now, I bid you propitiate him as best we can with the savor of meat and libations. Be gracious, lord, be gracious, you who appeared to us.” Thus he spoke, and some of the men immediately constructed an altar of stones, while others went about the island, seeing if they could spot some fawn or wild goat, animals that often forage in deep woods. Leto's son provided them quarry, and so from each of them they piously burned two

instead. Alternatively, he may be transmitting another version of the events at Thynias, one that conforms with the pattern of the establishment of sea-cults of Apollo.

30 Lines 695 ff. have been compared to the actions of Odysseus' men in the so-called 'Goat island' across from the land of the Cyclopes. See Matteo *ad* 2.696–697 and 297 for parallels and Vian/Delage 1974, 275–276; *idem ad* 2.689–691 for a comparison with the impious 'sacrifice' to Helios that Odysseus' companions stage at Trinacria in *Odyssey* 13, an antithetical model for this scene. See further Hunter 2008b, 30, for this allusion as foreshadowing the deaths of Idmon and Tiphys.

thighs on the holy altar, as they invoked *Apollo Heoïus*. Around the burning offerings they formed a broad choral dance and chanted the beautiful “*Ἰεπαῖεον*, Phoebus *Ἰεπαῖεον*.” And among them the noble son of Oeagrus led off a clear song on his Bistonian lyre, telling **how once upon a time** beneath Parnassus’ rocky ridge the god **killed** monstrous *Delphynes* with his arrows, when he was still a naked boy, still delighting in his long locks — be gracious, lord; your hair always remains unshorn, always unharmed, for such is right; and only Leto herself, Coeus’ daughter, strokes it with her dear hands — and **often** did the Corycian nymphs, the daughters of Pleistus, encourage him with their words, as they shouted” *ἰεῖε*.” From there arose this beautiful refrain for Phoebus (transl. W.H. Race, slightly modified).

A sacrifice follows, and during the feast the Argonauts praise Phoibos Iepaieon with their song-and-dance, while Orpheus performs a song, most likely a paian, that shows unmistakable traits of (rhapsodic) hymnic narrative: ἤρχεν ἀοιδῆς at line 704, though at the end of the verse, reproduces the opening of several of the so-called *Homeric Hymns* (ἄρχοι’ αἰεῖειν),³¹ thus varying the Homeric formula in typical Apollonian manner. The ὥς ποτε in 705 is reminiscent of the transition to the *pars epica* in hymns, which is here devoted to a heroic exploit that took place early in the god’s career and to the etiology of the *epithymnion* used in relation to Apollo even to this day. Both the narrative of an important event in the god’s career and the etiology are hymnal traits. Within this narrative, Apollonius’ Orpheus offers an alternative explanation of the title Delphinios (and by extension of the god’s cult-place, Delphi) that departs from what the poet of the *Homeric Hymn* had offered. There, after Apollo revealed his identity to the Cretan sailors he ordered them to perform the following actions (*h.Hom.Ap.* 486–501):

ἀλλ’ ἄγεθ’ ὥς ἂν ἐγὼ εἴπω πείθεσθε τάχιστα·
 ἰστία μὲν πρῶτον κάθετον λύσαντε βοείας,
 νῆα δ’ ἔπειτα θοὴν ἐπὶ ἡπείρου ἐρύσασθε,
 ἐκ δὲ κτήμαθ’ ἔλεσθε καὶ ἔντεα νηὸς εἰσης,
 καὶ βωμόν ποιήσατ’ ἐπὶ ῥηγμῖνι θαλάσσης· 490
 πῦρ <δ> ἐπικαίοντες ἐπὶ τ’ ἄλφιστα λευκὰ θύοντες
 εὐχεσθαι δῆπειτα παριστάμενοι περὶ βωμόν.
 ὥς μὲν ἐγὼ τὸ πρῶτον ἐν ἡεροειδέϊ πόντῳ
 εἰδόμενος **δελφῖνι** θοῆς ἐπὶ νηὸς ὄρουσα,
 ὥς ἐμοὶ εὐχεσθαι **δελφινίῳ**· αὐτὰρ ὁ βωμὸς 495

31 Cf. *h.Hom.Ap.* 2.1, 9.8, 11.1, 13.1, 16.1, 22.1, 26.1, 28.1; also Hes. *Th.* 1. Bauer 2017 offers an analysis of Orpheus’ song as a paian embedded in the Thynias narrative that is itself constructed as a paian in a poem whose action is propelled by Apollo and which appears to be conceived as a hymn to Apollo. Even though the song is presented as a paian (2.702–703), the way it is introduced resembles the type of opening that Race 1992, 28–29 identifies as belonging to the rhapsodic hymn. This fact calls attention to questions of genre and classification, as one would expect from a Hellenistic scholar-poet. See also Morrison 2007, 130.

αὐτὸς **δελφεῖος**³² καὶ ἐπόψιος ἔσsetαι αἰεὶ.
 δειπνήσαι τ' ἄρ' ἐπειτα θοῇ παρὰ νηϊ μελαίνῃ,
 καὶ σπεῖσαι μακάρεσσι θεοῖς οἱ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσι.
 αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν σίτοιο μελίφρονος ἐξ ἔρον ἦσθε,
 ἔρχεσθαί θ' ἅμ' ἐμοὶ καὶ ἱηταιῖον' αἰεῖδεν
 εἰς ὃ κε χῶρον ἵκησθον ἔν' ἔξετε πίονα νηόν.

500

But come, do as I tell you without delay. First slacken the sheets and lower the sails, and then haul the dark ship up on land, take out your belongings and the ship's tackle, and build an altar on the seashore. Light a fire on it, offer white barley groats on it, and then stand round the altar and pray. Even as I originally leapt onto your ship in the misty sea in the form of a **dolphin**, so you are to pray to me as '**the Dolphin god**,' and the altar itself will be '**Delphian**,' and a permanent landmark. Then have your meal beside your swift dark ship, and make libation to the blessed gods in Olympus. And when you have satisfied your appetite for delicious food, come with me, singing *Ie Paieon*, till you arrive at the place where you will occupy the rich temple (transl. M.L. West).

A few points are worthy of note here. The cult-epithet Delphinios and the name by which the altar which the god orders the Cretan sailors to establish on the shore (δελφεῖος) are derived from δελφίς, the form in which the god first appeared to the men, before he took on his radiant form.³³ This differs markedly from the explanation that Orpheus will give in *Argonautica* 2.705–706:

ὥς ποτε πετραίῃ ὑπὸ δειράδι Παρνησσοῖο
 Δελφύνην τόξοισι πελώριον ἐξενάριξεν

how once upon a time beneath Parnassus' rocky ridge the god killed monstrous Delphynes with his arrows (transl. W.H. Race).

Here it is implied (but not explicitly stated, although this is not an issue in etymological explanations in ancient narrative, which are frequently implicit) that the cult-title Delphinian and any cognate names reflect etiologically the first heroic accomplishment of the young god, his killing of the monster that in Apollonius has

³² On the textual issue here (δελφίνιος transmitted by M, while δέλφειος or δέλφιος is found in the other manuscripts), see Càssola 1975, 514 *ad loc.*

³³ Different explanations existed as well: Plu. *Mor.* 984a–b transmits that Apollo did not transform himself into a dolphin as in the *Hymn* but sent a dolphin to guide the Cretans to Cirrha. See Faraone 2018, 28–29; Richardson 2010, 134–135. In reality the *epiklesis* has no connection to any word for dolphin: Apollo Delphinios is frequently not worshipped at the sea, and he is associated with ephebic rites of initiation and the institution of the *polis*. See Graf 1979 and Gorman 2020, 169–171. See further Philippe 2005, who concludes that local realities added a particular epichoric character to the various cults of Apollo Delphinios.

the name Delphynes.³⁴ While it is called *πελώριον*, it is not specifically said to be a serpent — contrast the *Homeric Hymn*, where at line 300 one finds precisely a *δράκαινα*. There is a further difference here: in the *Homeric Hymn* it is the god himself who establishes the foundation of his own cult, the establishment of an altar on the shore and sacrifices to be offered, and promises to lead the Cretan sailors to the site of his temple in a procession during which they are to sing the *iepaieon*, whereas Orpheus takes on this role in Apollonius. To be sure, Orpheus' proximity to the divine as the son of a Muse, who is sometimes even said to be the son of Apollo (although in the *Argonautica* he is the son of Oiagros) and his reputation as knowledgeable in cultic matters and mysteries explain the authority of his instructions to the Argonauts. But the different etymology offered here for Delphinios challenges the words attributed by the *Homeric* poet to the god himself.³⁵

5 Singing of Apollo II: *Pythios* and *Paieon*

Orpheus' words not only undo this prominent etymology in the Delphic part of the *Homeric Hymn*, but also have an impact on our appreciation of an earlier etymology, that of Pytho and of the cult-epithet *Pythios* at *h.Hom.Ap.* 363–374:

ένταυθοῖ νῦν **πύθευ** ἐπὶ χθονὶ βωτιανείρῃ
οὐδὲ σύ γε ζωοῖσι κακὸν δῆλημα βροτοῖσιν
ἔσσεαι, οἱ γαίης πολυφόρβου καρπὸν ἔδοντες 365
ἐνθάδ' ἀγινήσουσι τεληέσσας ἐκατόμβας,
οὐδέ τί τοι θάνατόν δε δυσηγέγ' οὔτε Τυφωεὺς
ἀρκέσει οὐδὲ Χίμαιρα δυσώνυμος, ἀλλὰ σέ γ' αὐτοῦ
πύσει γαῖα μέλαινα καὶ ἡλέκτωρ Ὑπερίων.
ὥς φάτ' ἐπευχόμενος, τὴν δὲ σκότος ὅσσε κάλυψε. 370
τὴν δ' αὐτοῦ **κατέπυσ'** ἱερὸν μένος Ἑλίοιο·
ἐξ οὗ νῦν **Πυθῶ** *κικλήσκεται*, οἱ δὲ ἄνακτα
Πυθεῖον καλέουσιν ἐπώνυμον, οὔνεκα κεῖθι
αὐτοῦ **πῦσε** *πέλωρ* μένος ὀξέος Ἑλίοιο.

³⁴ Leandros of Miletus fr. 14a (*BNJ*) transmits that the serpent was called Delphynes. That it was female (Delphyne) was said by Callimachus (fr. 88 from *Aetia* Book IV); see Harder 2012, II 716–717 for the confusion regarding the dragon's sex in the sources, and Noboru 2012 on Leandros' fragment. Apollonius does not explicitly specify Delphynes' sex, and since *πελώριον* is epicene in early hexameter, one might assume that the question is left open. Apollonius uses *πελώριον* at 4.1682, however, which renders it highly likely that Delphynes is male; cf. Cusset 2018, 87, fn. 10.

³⁵ On different versions of the Delphic myth, see Panagl 1970; on Ephorus' account, see Walter 2020, 94–99.

Now **rot away** here on the earth that feeds mankind! You will not be an evil bane among the living to the mortals who will eat the fruits of the nurturing soil and bring perfect hecatombs here. Neither Typhoeus nor the accursed Chimaera will save you from grisly death, but **you will be rotted away** here by the dark earth and the blazing sun.” So he exulted, while darkness covered her eyes. And there the sun’s divine force **rotted her down**; hence the place is now called **Pytho**, and the people give the god the title **Pythios**, because it was just there that the keen sun’s force **rotted the monster away** (transl. M.L. West).

Once again the authority for these etymological etiologies rests with none other than the god himself, who is the master of a particular type of speech, viz. oracular pronouncements, which derive their authority from Zeus himself.³⁶ Just like Apollonius, the poet of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* collapses the temporal levels when he uses the etiological tag ἐξ οὗ νῦν in line 372, which highlights the implications of the god’s actions (both the heroic deed and the speech act following it) for the poet’s and his audience’s cultic realities.³⁷

Orpheus’ account in the *Argonautica* thus challenges the *Hymn to Apollo*, which is all the more striking as these etiologies are presented in an etymologically over-determined section of the *Hymn*: forms of the verb πύθεσθαι occur four times and frame the name Πυθώ and the cult-title Πυθεῖος. These are no trivial changes: both etymologies mark important stages in the god’s career. The etymologies involving Pytho/Pytheios punctuate the god’s first heroic exploit that not only rids mankind of a terrible monster but also allows his temple and cult to prosper now that the πέλωρ, the monstrous serpent, has been dispatched. But this does not mean that Apollonius simply rejects the etymology of Πυθώ/Πυθεῖος found in the Homeric hymnist: as Brian McPhee points out, Apollonius shows awareness of the alternative etymologies. He uses πύθεσθαι in connection with another serpent, Ladon, killed by another son of Zeus, Heracles, a task that parallels the heroic feat that Jason must fulfill in the poem (4.1405), and highlights the gulf that separates the two characters in terms of heroics;³⁸ and he connects Πυθώ with πυνθάνεσθαι at 4.530–531, an etymology attested in the scholarly tradition as an alternative to the derivation from πύθεσθαι (‘rot’).³⁹ While Apollonius may suppress or reject in Orpheus’ hymn the link between Πυθώ and πύθεσθαι established by the Homeric hymnist, he continues his

36 Note Διὸς νημερτέα βουλὴν at *h.Hom.Ap.* 132, the ‘unerring will of Zeus’ that Apollo claims for himself as soon as he is born.

37 On the relating the mythical past with the present of the performance, see Noussia-Fantuzzi 2017, 256–257, who examines this passage from the perspective of *choreia*.

38 See above, p. 174, for the connection between Apollo’s killing of Delphyne(s) and Heracles’ killing of Ladon.

39 See McPhee 2020, 285–286. On Πυθώ < πυνθάνεσθαι/πυθέσθαι, cf. *Schol. A.R.* 1.209, *Schol. Ar. Pl.* 39, *Schol. Gen. Hom. Il.* 9.405, *Schol. Pi. P.* 1 inscr. b; *EM*, p. 696.

competitive engagement with the etymological tradition, both poetic and scholarly, in other parts of his poem.

The second set of Apolline etymologies is likewise related to cult (the Delpheian altar) and another cult-name (Delphinian) and marks the first epiphany of the god, his establishment of his own cult and the appointment of the temple's personnel, as well as the first performance of the *ephymnion iepaieon* by his mortal worshippers. Indeed, at *h.Hom.Ap.* 514–519 we learn that:

βάν ῥ' ἴμεν· ἦρχε δ' ἄρά σφιν ἄναξ Διὸς υἱὸς Ἀπόλλων
 φόρμιγγ' ἐν χεῖρεσσιν ἔχων, ἐρατὸν κιθαρίζων, 515
 καλὰ καὶ ὕψι βιβάς· οἱ δὲ ῥήσσαντες ἔποντο
 Κρήτες πρὸς Πυθῶ καὶ ἰηπαῖον· ἄειδον,
 οἳοί τε Κρητῶν παῖνες οἳί τε Μοῦσα
 ἐν στήθεσσιν ἔθηκε θεὰ μελίγηρυν ἀοιδήν.

They set off, and Zeus' son, Lord Apollo, led the way with his lyre in his hands, playing delightfully, stepping fine and high, while the Cretans followed to Pytho, dancing in time, and singing **Ie Paieon** — like the **paean**s of the Cretans, in whose breasts the Muse has placed honey-voiced singing (transl. M.L. West).

Furthermore, the *Hymn* poet seems to imply that the Apolline *epiklesis* already existed: at line 272 the spring Telpousa, who urges Apollo to build his temple in Crisa rather than close to her waters, ostensibly because the god will find the traffic a nuisance, but in reality, in order to lead him into a confrontation with the monstrous serpent, speaks of the “famous races of men who will bring gifts to Iepaieon.” The *Homeric Hymn* does not offer any overt explanation for the sacred *ephymnion*, apart from implicitly positing a link between the ritual cry *iepaieon* and the paean. Etymological explanations can of course be implicit, and the one just mentioned would appear obvious, which does not mean that obvious connections are not sometimes highlighted in narrative. But it is precisely this lack of an explicit explanation that invites the Hellenistic poet's etymological speculation at this point, which constitutes a further act of re-writing the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*. In *Argonautica* 2.705–713 we read:

ὥς ποτε πετραίῃ ὑπὸ δειράδι Παρνησοῖο
 Δελφύνην τόξοισιν πελώριον ἐξενάρειξεν,
 κοῦρος ἔων ἔτι γυμνός, ἔτι πλοκάμοισι γεγηθώς
 (ιλήκοις· αἰεὶ τοι, ἄναξ, ἄτμητοι ἔθειραι,
 αἰὲν ἀδῆλῃτοι, τῶς γὰρ θέμις, οἳόθι δ' αὐτῇ
 Λητῶ Κοιογένεια φίλῃς ἐνὶ χερσὶν ἀφάσσει). 710
 πολλὰ δὲ Κωρύκῃαι νύμφαι, Πλειστοῖο θύγατρος,
 θαρσύνεσκον ἔπεσιν, “ἴη ἴε” κεκληγυῖται·
 ἔνθεν δὴ τότε καλὸν ἐφύμνιον ἔπλετο Φοῖβῳ (translation on p. 183).

In the *Homeric Hymn*, Apollo performs this heroic achievement alone, without any onlookers. The entire affair is dealt with rather briefly, with more lines devoted to the etymological explanation of the title Pytheios and the place-name Pytho than to the killing of the serpent. Apollo, furthermore, kills the serpent by means of just one mighty arrow (cf. 357–358: πρίν γέ οἱ ἰὸν ἐφῆκεν ἄναξ ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων | κρατερὸν), whereas in Apollonius Apollo is encouraged several times (πολλά ... θαρσύνεσκον) by the Corycian nymphs, daughters of Pleistos whose name, as Richard Hunter has pointed out, suggests the derivation of Apollo's name from πολὺς.⁴⁰ The nymphs utter the cry ἦ ἴε,⁴¹ which thus becomes the *aition* for Apollo's *ephymnion*. While this goes a step further compared to the *Hymn* poet, who takes the ritual cry for granted, it still explains only part of the ritual cry, whose full form had appeared in line 702 (καλὸν Ἰηπαιῖον· Ἰηπαιῖονα Φοῖβον | μελπόμενοι). The explanation for the second half of the ritual *ephymnion* may be presented indirectly in line 707 (κοῦρος ἑὼν ἔτι γυμνός) — where γυμνός has sometimes been interpreted as 'beardless'.⁴² Whether or not this is the correct way of understanding it, the presence of κοῦρος may point to the etymology of ἰηπαιῖον from παῖς, and in this case we would have here an etymology through a synonym.⁴³ The result is that Apollonius not only changes the circumstances of Apollo's heroic deed (it is performed in front of witnesses), but he also gives the precise point in time when the god's *ephymnion* was created (when he killed Pytho), which commemorates the god's first heroic deed through each and every repetition.

The etymology that Apollonius supports here is further underscored by sound-play, or *Klangmalerei*, within the comment that interrupts the progression of Orpheus' reported song (*Argonautica* 2.708–710):

ἰλήκοις· αἰεῖ τοι, ἄναξ, ἄτμητοι ἔθειραι,
αἰὲν ἀδήλητοι, τὼς γὰρ θέμις, οἴοθι δ' αὐτῇ
Λητὼ Κοιογένεια φίλαις ἐνὶ χερσὶν ἀφάσσει (translation on p. 183)

⁴⁰ Hunter 1993, 151; see above, p. 176.

⁴¹ ἦ ἴε at A.R. 2.712 is Fränkel's articulation of the MSS reading ἰήτε, whose smooth breathing was sometimes explained through derivation from ἰᾶσθαι ('heal'); cf. *EM*, p. 469.50.

⁴² See Hunter 2008b, 37–38 for a discussion of the difficulties involved in interpreting γυμνός here; Matteo *ad* 2.707 opts for the meaning 'beardless'; Vian/Delage 1974, 210, fn. 1 consider it more plausible that Apollonius is evoking here the nude *kouros* with unshorn hair as represented on statues.

⁴³ On the various meanings and etymologies proposed for ἰή (or ἰή) παιάν, see Athen. 15.701c–f; Fränkel 1968, 228–229.

Αἰεί and αἰέν pick up and contrast the repetition of ἔτι in the previous line⁴⁴ and, furthermore, contain the sounds that will be met with shortly in the title of Apollo (ἦ ἱε), which, depending on how we articulate them, may conceal the term (ὁ) ἰός (arrow; cf. οἰόθι, Κοιογένεια) as well, as hinted at in τόξοισιν above. What is more, αἰεί is one of the elements of the god's etymology in Plato (ἀειβάλλων; see above, p. 175). But the word-and-sound play is complicated by the intricate weaving of voices that has so exercised scholars: some argue that at this point we hear the narrator's voice interrupting the character speech, while others believe that it is impossible to separate the voices at play here.⁴⁵ Whatever the answer to this question, line 713 brings us back to the narrator's own time by means of the deictic τόδε, and the remainder of the Argonauts' poetic performance from v. 714 onwards is presented in reported speech (see also below, p. 191 with fn. 48).

The etymology presented here in somewhat cryptic terms appears in a more complete and explicit form in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*. Even though it is difficult to decide the question of priority (and besides, speculation on the meaning of cult-titles and epithets did not begin with Callimachus and Apollonius), it is a fact

⁴⁴ See Hunter 2008b, 37. Klooster 2011, 88–90 proposes that the song conveys two different perspectives: for Orpheus, Apollo's hair is *still* unshorn, since the singer lives in the mythic era and thus Apollo's unshorn locks belong to the recent past; for the narrator, however, Apollo's unshorn locks are an eternal truth; hence they are αἰεί rather than ἔτι.

⁴⁵ On the play with voices here, see Goldhill 1991, 297–298, Hunter 1993, 150–151, and Kahane 1994, 126–128, who discusses this passage in the context of Apollonius' typical “blurring of seems” when “weav[ing] poetic pasts and presents” (p. 126). Hutchinson 1988, 88–89 sees here the intrusion of the poet's voice, which utters a prayer that parodies Orpheus' prayer by using the same traditional language used by Orpheus a few lines earlier (cf. ἴληθι, ἰλήκοις, ἀναξ ...); the tone shifts again soon, when the Argonauts swear an oath to ὁμόνοια. For Hunter 2008b, 37, too, it is the poet who interrupts the song to ask the god for forgiveness; cf. Busch 1993, 321, fn. 46 (the poet asks humorously the god to forgive Orpheus' mistake, which he corrects). Fränkel 1968, 227–228 posits that it is the poet who acknowledges his error in reporting Orpheus' hymn, which functions as a sign of the spontaneity of a performance that purports to be created in the present rather than being fixed in the past; cf. Vian/Delage 1974, 210, fn. 3. Billault 2008, 202 argues that it is Apollonius' voice that we are hearing throughout the hymn. For Klooster 2011, 89 “the voices of the narrator and Orpheus blend so completely as to become indistinguishable”; so, too, de Jong 2009, 105, who includes this passage in her third category of metalepsis in Greek literature (“blending of narrative voices”). Cuypers 2004, 59 argues that it is impossible to decide whether the narrator corrects his own representation of Orpheus's song or whether the song itself is erroneous. For McPhee 2020, 298–299, finally, it is impossible to disentangle character from narrator voice here, which reflects the entanglement of hymnic performances in this episode.

that both poets revisit the *Homeric Hymn* and that they do this by relying on etymological etiology (Call. *Apol.* 97–104):⁴⁶

ἰὴ ἰὴ παιῶν ἀκούομεν, οὐνεκα τοῦτο
 Δελφός τοι πρῶτιστον ἐφύμνιον εὔρετο λαός,
 ἦμος ἐκηβολίην χρυσῶν ἐπεδείκνυστο τόξων.
 Πυθῶ τοι κατιόντι συνήντετο δαιμόνιος θήρ,
 αἰνὸς ὄφης, τὸν μὲν σὺ κατήναρες ἄλλον ἐπ’ ἄλλῳ
 βάλλων ὠκὺν οἰστόν, ἐπηύτησε δὲ λαός·
 “ἰὴ ἰὴ παιῶν, ἱεὶ βέλος”· εὐθύ σε μήτηρ
 γείνατ’ ἄοσσητῆρα· τὸ δ’ ἐξέτι κεῖθεν αἰείδη.

We hear **hie, hie, paiëon**, *because* the people of Delphi first devised this *refrain*, when you demonstrated the launching of your golden **weapons**. When you were going down to Pytho a demonic beast met you, a dire serpent. You slew him, **shooting** one swift **arrow** after another, and the people cried: “**hie, hie paiëon, shoot your arrow**, a savior from the time when your mother gave birth to you.” And **from that point** you are hymned in this way. (ed. F. Williams, transl. S.A. Stephens)

Callimachus’ account in the *Hymn to Apollo* bears similarities to Apollonius’ treatment of the same event: κατήναρες (101) is reminiscent of ἐξενάριξεν (2.706), which may hint at the etymology of Apollo’s name from ἀπολλύναι (see above, pp. 175–176). Both poets use etymologies and reimagine the circumstances of Apollo’s killing of Pytho: in Callimachus, it is not just the Corycian nymphs but the whole λαός that applaud and sing in accompaniment to Apollo’s heroic feat. Finally, Apollonius implies through ἄλλον ἐπ’ ἄλλῳ that, unlike in the *Hymn to Apollo*, the god did not kill the serpent with just one shot. Callimachus appears here to be more concrete and explicit about the etymological derivation of the *epithymnion*: *Iepaieon* is explicitly linked to βάλλειν, which prompts an association with παῖω, ‘strike,’ in addition to παῖ. Finally, both poets are explicit in drawing the implications of the cries of the Corycian Nymphs or of the people, respectively: they constitute the *aition* for a ritual practice that persists even in the poets’ times. Callimachus highlights the etymology

⁴⁶ See Hunter 2008b, 39–41 for arguments that may suggest that Callimachus may have priority here. On this passage, see also Williams 1978, 82–85, who proposes that Callimachus alludes here (and at *Del.* 91–96) to his *Aetia* fr. 88, a passage that was imitated by Apollonius. Harder 2012, II 717 combines the two proposals, suggesting a sequence *Aetia* 4, *Hymn* 2, Apollonius 2. Callimachus’ priority is also argued for by Köhnken 2008, 78. Obviously, it is difficult to obtain certain answers. Cf. Cusset 2018, 93–95, who examines this passage in relation to Apollonius’ version; he argues that Callimachus places emphasis on Delphi (left unnamed in Apollonius, in whose work Delphi’s position is qualified in relation to other Apollonian cultic or oracular sites) while shifting the focus away from the serpent, which in his *Hymn* is vaguely called a δαιμόνιος θήρ, αἰνὸς ὄφης, whereas in Apollonius it bears the name Δελφύνης and provides the *aition* for the name of Delphi.

at both the beginning and the end of his account (οὐνεκα εὔρετο ... ἐξέτι κεῖθεν), while Apollonius constructs an interesting play with voices, in which the *ephymnion* is first put in the mouth of the Argonauts (2.702), before the narrator's voice redirects us to his own times in 713 with the deictic τόδε: this *ephymnion* here was invented back then. It is possible that Callimachus is also setting up a complex play with voices here: while the *ephymnion* ἰὴ ἰὴ παιῶν, ἱεὶ βέλος is uttered by the Delphians witnessing Apollo's heroic feat, what follows (εὐθύ σε κτλ.) may be the poet's comment in his own voice.⁴⁷ One may wonder whether *Argonautica* 2.711 is to be understood as belonging to Orpheus' reported song, or whether Apollonius' narrator takes over or identifies his voice with that of Orpheus'. This identification is a distinct possibility, since rhapsodic hymns do often exhibit the merging of narrators' voices.⁴⁸

6 The sanctuary of Ὀμόνοια

The final act in this etymologically rich passage is the foundation of the altar of Ὀμόνοια and the Argonauts' solemn oath that they will always assist each other. This passage too is characterized by a dense network of etymological word-and-sound play (*Argonautica* 2.714–719):

αὐτὰρ ἐπειδὴ τόνγε χορείη μέλψαν ἀοιδῇ
 λοιβαῖς εὐαγέεσσιν ἐπώμωσαν ἥ μὲν ἀρήξειν 715
 ἀλλήλοισι εἰσαῖν ὁμοφροσύνησι νόοιο
 ἀπτόμενοι θυέων· καί τ' εἰσέτι νῦν γε τέτυκται
 κεῖν' Ὀμονοίης ἱρὸν εὐφρονος ὃ ῥ' ἐκάμοντο
 αὐτοὶ κυδίστην τότε δαίμονα πορσαίνοντες.

But when they had celebrated him with their choral song, they swore an oath with holy libations as they laid hands upon the sacrifice, that they would forever aid one another in singleness of mind. And still to this day a shrine stands there to kindly Concord, which they themselves built at that time to honor the most glorious goddess (transl. W.H. Race).

The foundation of the sanctuary of Ὀμόνοια follows directly upon the Argonauts' performing the paian together (χορείη μέλψαν ἀοιδῇ) and hints at the role of Apollo

⁴⁷ See Williams *ad* 103.

⁴⁸ See Vergados 2013, 14. Beye 1982, 18–19 explicitly links Apollonius' intervention in direct speech that breaks the illusion of reporting someone else's song to the *Homeric Hymns*.

as the god of harmony in *Crat.* 405c–d, as pointed out by Richard Hunter:⁴⁹ in the *Cratylus*, Plato's Socrates takes the initial 'A-' of the god's name to be the ἄλφα ἄθροιστικόν, equivalent to ὁμοῦ, thus coordinating musical or artistic with political harmony. In a sense, this is what Orpheus achieves in his episode as well: through his musical and poetic harmony he performs a song that forges harmony among the band of heroes through their joined performance and the contents of the oath that they swear. At the same time, Apollonius' narrator picks up αἰέν and ἔτι from the previous, etymologically charged section, marking the eternity of the Argonauts' pact and the existence even to this day of the sanctuary of Ὀμόνοια. The name of Ὀμόνοια, moreover, is etymologized through ὁμοφροσύνεσι ... νόοιο, where ὁμοφροσύνεσι is further underscored through the combination of ἐπώμοσαν and εὐφρονος, while ἐκάμοντο and δαίμονος repeat some of the sounds that make up Ὀμόνοια. Just as with ἡπαιήων, which is pieced together from various parts scattered (or implied) in the narrative, so too Ὀμόνοια brings together in unison a series of syllables and word-parts that turn out to function as constituents of this abstract notion. They thus contribute to the meaning of the words in which they are found, but are also significant by virtue of their function as members of this network of etymological sound-plays.⁵⁰

7 Conclusions

What I hope has emerged from this discussion is that Apollonius does not simply allude to the *Homeric Hymn*, but rather engages in a process of revision of this archaic poem that is etymologically charged, as it provides etiologies for some important cult appellations of the god. What is more, this process of revision is bold, in the sense that the Hellenistic poet challenges the words and etiologies that, according to the archaic poet, had been introduced by the god himself: in place of Apollo, Apollonius (the Apollonian poet!), just as probably Callimachus before him, attributes the etiologies to those witnessing Apollo's heroic deeds — the Corycian nymphs or the λαός encouraging the god in his struggle against Pytho. This move raises the question of poetic authority: if one of the functions of etymology is to anchor important events, cults, names, and titles that occurred or were introduced in the remote past in a language that has its origins in the past but is still in use

⁴⁹ See Hunter 2008b, 33–34, who links this song of Orpheus with his cosmological song of Book 1, which also forges ὁμόνοια among the Argonauts.

⁵⁰ This is the case with the names of the Muses in Hesiod's *Theogony*, as is discussed in Vergados 2020, 23–47.

today and thus has a degree of motivation rather than being entirely arbitrary (in other words, if the contemporary linguistic reality confirms our reconstruction of the past), then who vouches for the validity of these etymologies? If Apollo performed his heroic deed without any witnesses, then how was the knowledge of his titles' origins disseminated? One can claim that the Muse inspires the archaic poet who thus becomes aware of this knowledge, but this solution does not satisfy the Hellenistic poet.

The Argonauts imagine the origins of Apollo's *ephymnion* as arising in a similar way as did their own invention of the title 'Apollo of the Morning': as a coinage that is introduced by a collective. In Orpheus' paian the nymphs, through their repetition of the cry meant to encourage Apollo, lead to the establishment of the *ephymnion*. Likewise, Orpheus reads the signs, as it were, i.e. Apollo's arrival in the morning, and introduces Apollo's new title to the Argonauts. Orpheus is here the authority, to be sure, but the new coinage is adopted by the community, which follows this up immediately with cultic activity. In addition, unlike the Homeric heroes, the Argonauts are unable to comprehend the workings of the divine and to perceive divine aid. The episode preceding Apollo's epiphany at Thynias is a case in point: at 2.611–614 the Argonauts do not realize that their success in crossing the Symplegades was due to Athena's intervention, and characteristically, Tiphys, while acknowledging the help of Athena, offers a mistaken explanation for her intervention (*viz.* that she had in breathed θεῖον μένος into the Argo when it was built.)⁵¹

Since the establishment of the Apolline *ephymnion* according to Orpheus' song in Apollonius parallels Orpheus' establishment of a new Apolline cult-title, one might argue that the introduction of the cult of Apollo of the Morning, with its etymological foundation, retrojects authority onto Orpheus' reconstruction of the god's earlier career. But even so, the mythical singer is not perfect: while Orpheus' etymology adds the connection of Apollo Lycios to dawn, which the main narrator seems to have forgotten about or downplayed — a connection that was important for Aratus to whom Apollonius alludes as we saw earlier⁵² — the narrator feels the need to intervene in lines 708–710 to correct the erroneous implication of Orpheus' words: ἔτι πλοκάμοισι γεγηθώς does not mean that Apollo was still rejoicing in his locks, in the sense that this situation changed over time; rather, we should understand that Apollo rejoices in his locks even now, and eternally. Whether the poet takes over or returns to Orpheus' voice, the final set of etymologies pertaining to Ὀμόνοια are delivered in the poet's own voice, who thus appears to match Orpheus' expertise in explaining old religious foundations. Apollonius the narrator and

51 See Feeney 1991, 74–75 and 85–86.

52 See above, p. 181 fn. 28 and Kronenberg 2018b, § 9.

Orpheus do not stand in a relation of complementarity to each other, as one might initially think, but are rather in competition against each other, with the narrator (predictably perhaps) having the final word.

Finally, Apollonius' engagement with the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* and its etymologies of Apolline matters demonstrates that any authority granted through etymology is only provisional. The etymology may be adapted when a clearer understanding about the past (perhaps through the consultation of more modern/written sources?) is available. In this sense, etymology and the quest for authoritative origins embedded in language is a dynamic process that undergoes revision even to this day, as is shown by Apollonius, the modern poet who supersedes both the poet of the *Homeric Hymn* and Orpheus, the mythical bard.

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Theodosios Polychronis

Etymology as Explanation in Hellanicus of Lesbos' Fragments

Abstract: One of the main reasons why the lost work of Hellanicus of Lesbos is referenced by ancient sources is his fondness for etymological explanations of toponyms. Even though his work only survives in a fragmentary form, the use of etymology, as an explanation tool, alongside the ordering of genealogies does appear as one of the distinguishing features of his work, whose aim is to explain the origins of toponyms, ethnonyms, epithets and customs. This chapter examines significant examples of etymologizing in the extant fragments in order to highlight how these explanations, alongside other motifs such as that of the *prōtos heuretēs* all participate in a common effort, the ultimate goal of which is to render the origin of objects, peoples, toponyms and practices intelligible. Despite the scant nature of the evidence, examining the use of etymology is a way of uncovering what the original project of Hellanicus was.

1 Introduction

Hellanicus, who is usually nothing more than a mere footnote in Ancient Greek literature textbooks, hardly gets the recognition he deserves and probably would receive had his work survived in its entirety.¹ We know precious little about him or his work, and what little has survived (*reliquiae* rather than *fragmenta*, as Brunt² would have it) does not make it any easier to understand what his project consisted in, the impetus behind it or the impact it had on Athenian society. If there is one certainty regarding his work, however, about which so much must, for lack of evidence, remain hypothetical, it is the prominence given to etymology.

Indeed, one could argue that etymology is, alongside genealogical thinking,³ the leading force across his work as part of the larger project of explaining the origins of places, cities, peoples and customs. This is clear not only due to the number of

¹ Jacoby 1912 and Pearson 1939 and 1942 are still very useful. For most recent scholarship on Hellanicus, see Ambaglio 1980; Caérols-Pérez 1991; Fowler 2013; 2016; Möller 2001; Polychronis 2020; Porciani 2001.

² Brunt 1980, 477.

³ On the topic of genealogical organization and list-patterning, see Polychronis 2020.

fragments that are etymological in nature,⁴ but also by the fact that so many commentators, not the least of which was Stephanus of Byzantium in his *Ethnica*, regularly quote Hellanicus as an authority for etymological explanations. The fact that such expressions as *Κτίσεις ἐθνῶν καὶ πόλεων*,⁵ *Ἐθνῶν ὀνομασίαι*⁶ and *Βαρβαρικά νόμιμα*⁷ are used to refer to his lost work is yet another sign that the explanation of toponyms and the unveiling of local customs' origins held a significant place in Hellanicus' work.⁸ Clearly, he was not the only early prose writer to have provided such explanations — they can be found in Hecataeus' fragments, too — but Hellanicus stands out among his fellow *λογογράφοι* as the only one to have used etymology so extensively in his work. Remarkably, Acusilaus and Pherecydes are seldom referenced in Stephanus of Byzantium's *Ethnica*, whereas Hecataeus' many mentions in this work are usually limited to geographical information. Hellanicus, in contrast, is cited by Stephanus primarily as a source of etymological explanations.

Up until now, however, research on early prose historiography has predominantly focused on the problem of its relation to Herodotus. Indeed, the problem of the precedence of these authors in relation to him has detracted attention from the great mass of local historians and the possibility that the writings of Hellanicus and his fellow prose writers had other routes and other causes of momentum than those of Herodotus.⁹ Hellanicus' willingness to study and, most importantly, to bridge the gap that existed between the mythical past and the historical present, should be considered in its own right, in the same way that local histories should be studied in terms of political, social or cultural changes in the Greek world and not simply

4 Most notably fragments 4, 7, 19b, 25, 26a/b, 33, 36, 38, 71, 79a/b, 84, 108, 111, 125, 130, 136.

5 Hellanicus 4 F 67 = Athen., *Deipn.* 12.462c.

6 Hellanicus 4 F 70 = Steph. Byz. s.v. *Χαριμάται*.

7 Hellanicus' 4 F 72 = Porphyry. *Apud Eust. P.E.* 10.3 and 4 F 72 = Phot. s.v. *Ζάμολις*.

8 Expressions used to reference ancient works are often taken at face value as proof for the existence of many separate works, when in fact they usually designate the general scope or content of a work. In the case of Hellanicus, vague expressions such as *ἐθνῶν ὀνομασίαι*, *κτίσεις ἐθνῶν καὶ πόλεων* and *βαρβαρικά νόμιμα* should not be taken as evidence that works under these titles truly existed; they should instead be taken for what they are, expressions explaining what the content of a number of works was. It is therefore not necessary to think, with Jacoby, that Hellanicus developed "genealogical-mythographical," "ethnographical" and "horographical" interests in separate works. It is more likely that Hellanicus did not make such distinctions and that such interests were actually intertwined in his works, however many they might have been. Cf. Ambaglio 1980, Bertelli 2001, Fowler 2001.

9 Thomas 2014, 240 and Thomas 2019. The reference, in reevaluating Jacoby's reading, remains Fowler 1996. See also Luraghi 2001, 1–16; Bertelli 2001, 67–94; Fowler 2001, 95–115.

in terms of the internal development of the genre of historiography, whether in methodological or in literary terms.¹⁰

Focusing solely on Hellanicus through careful analysis of the extant fragments is a way of uncovering and salvaging what patterns may still be discernible in so fragmentary a corpus and after so many centuries of distortion and rewriting due to the process of citing him for purposes that did not align with his own reasons for writing. Etymologizing is one of the patterns that immediately appears as one of the two elements central in his work. There is indeed a clear and deliberate will to ostentatiously and lavishly use etymology on the part of Hellanicus, and his use of it is one of the many distinguishing features of his work, the most recognisable other one being the chronological ordering of the Greek past, both mythical and historical, in an attempt to map the previously confused and unsystematic past as a coherent whole.

My aim with this study will be to examine significant examples of etymologizing in the extant fragments of the Hellanicean corpus and to assess whether one can discern any obvious patterns of etymological practices therein. It will be shown that, despite the scant evidence and nature of the corpus, it is nevertheless possible to perceive specific and meaningful ways through which Hellanicus' etymological practices, in accordance with his interest in the '*prōtos heuretēs*' motif, accurately portray what his project was. It goes without saying, throughout this chapter, the word 'etymology' and its cognates shall be used in a loose way, since the perception of it in Antiquity was fundamentally different from the modern approach and was not scientific in character, in the sense that a modern linguist would conceive it.

2 Characteristics, events and their etymological implications

There are many instances in the extant fragments of Hellanicus' fondness for etymologizing. The sheer number of examples bears witness to this, and the uses of this practice are many and various. It is not only toponyms that are explained away, as in the case of Italy, supposedly derived from the Latin *uitulus* (fragment 111), or that of the Hill of Ate, so named for Ilos' delusion, ἄτη (fragment 25), but also ethnonyms, as in the case of the Sinties, so called because they harmed their neighbours (fragment 71), or that of the Daktyloi Idaioi, so named because they had

¹⁰ Fowler (1996, 2001, 2013 and 2016) has of course ushered in this new way of approaching fragmentary prose writers. Thomas 2019 is, in this respect, groundbreaking.

touched Rhea's fingers (fragment 89), or that of the Amazons, because they each habitually cut off one of their breasts (fragment 107). Hellanicus also seems interested in explaining epithets as well, as fragment 19, focused on Hermes' epithet Φιλότης, attests, or fragment 7, which gives the reason for which Erysichthon was named Aithon; the same type of information can also be found in other fragments, such as 4 F 36, where we learn why the city of Argos was called "Hippoboton", or 4 F 33, where the surname Maloeis of Apollo is explained as deriving from the apple of Manto (μῆλον). Festival names too are explained, as in the case of the name of the Apatouria festival, which is explained as being derived from the word ἀπάτη in fragment 125, and so are personal names (Osiris/Hysiris in fragment 170, Pelias in fragment 123 or Aphetai in fragment 130), which are made to derive from a significant event.

Etymologizing, then, appears in various ways in Hellanicus' work, as a direct result of his elaborate approach to it as an explanation tool, but the same can also be said of the occasions that lead to the introduction of etymologically-oriented information, which are just as numerous and varied. One must then begin by studying what causes Hellanicus to provide etymological explanations and thus try to assess whether a discernible typology of uses can be established.

The most obvious — and, perhaps, the least original — use of etymology Hellanicus displays in explaining origins is having a toponym derive from an eponymous ancestor already associated with the place in local legend or invented by Hellanicus himself.¹¹ He was obviously not the first to have thought of this, and tribes and cities had eponymous ancestors who were often extracted from the name of the tribe or city as a way of explaining their origins and, perhaps, of assigning some prestige to their past. It is fairly certain that, in fact, where such instances occur, Hellanicus was original not so much in mentioning these etymologies, but in the way this information was integrated into the larger canvas of his work. In this case, etymology is the principal means used by Hellanicus to account for the origins of a city or a toponym, by systematically linking it to a legendary founder, relating what led to its foundation and narrating the events themselves.

Etymology is also used in clarifying or explaining the name of a person, the origin of a place/city or the reason why it changed names by linking them to a verb, a noun or an adjective. Such is the case in fragment 4 F 7, deriving from the

¹¹ For examples of this, see fragments 3, 13–16, 24, 30, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40, 42, 43, 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 88, 91, 92, 105, 112, 117b, 122, 136, 137, 151, 162, 163, 176, 187a, 196, 197a. It is safe to assume that the fragments in which city foundations are mentioned without any etymological explanations (possibly due to the lack of interest in it on behalf of the author referencing Hellanicus) did contain some explanation or other in the original.

Deucalionia, where we learn that Erysichthon was called Aithon because of his voracity;¹² the link to the verb αἶθω, 'to burn', seems to derive from some sort of word-play, suggesting the consumption of quantities of food in a short amount of time, just as fire can destroy much in a similarly short time, but there is also the possibility that he was inspired by the expression αἶθοπα λιμόν found in Hesiod's *Works* 363 and the burning sensation brought about by hunger.

Hellanicus explains the origin of the name Agammeia in a similar fashion in fragment 4 F 108, probably belonging to the *Phoronis*, which deals with Laomedon and his refusal to compensate Poseidon and Apollo for building the city walls of Troy. This fragment provides the first continuous account of the story and is probably related to fragments 26a–b and 109, where the story is narrated in detail. In it, we learn that Poseidon had sent a sea monster against the city and Laomedon had, upon advice of the oracle, exposed his daughter Hesione as a sacrifice to the monster in order to save the city. At the same time, he promised to offer the immortal horses Zeus had given him to the person who should kill the monster. Heracles had taken up the task, but, having been given mortal horses instead, he had consequently waged war against Troy. The wording of the fragment does not allow the reader to know who founded the city of Ἀγάμεια, but the link with Hesione suggests that it may have been Heracles, and the explanation provided for the name of the city is the fact that Hesione was, at the time she was exposed, ἄγαμος, that is, unwed. There is no way for us to know how Hellanicus linked the city to Hesione's marital status, but it looks as if, in providing such an explanation, he relied solely on the phonetic similarity between the two words without ever taking into consideration that Ἀγάμεια could not possibly derive from ἄγαμος and without hesitating to find semantic correlations between words simply based on phonetic similarities.¹³ In any case, in the cases of both Erysichthon and Agammeia, Hellanicus used a specific and distinctive characteristic of an important person in the story as a way of explaining the origin of a name, namely the voraciousness of the former and the marital status of the latter.

Specific characteristics as the origin for a name are also found in 4 F 71, where we are presented with the reason for which the Thracian settlers of the island of Lemnos were called Sinties by the locals.¹⁴ This text, one of the rare instances where

12 Hellanicus 4 F 7 = Athen., *Deipn.* 10.416b: Ἐλλάνικος δ' ἐν α' Δευκαλιωνείας Ἐρυσίχθονά φησι τὸν Μυρμιδόνοιο, ὅτι ἦν ἀπληστος βορᾶς, Αἶθωνα κληθῆναι.

13 Further details on fragments 26, 108, 109 appear in Ambaglio 1980, 110, 122–123 and Fowler 2013, 311–313.

14 Hellanicus is equating the mythical Sinties, found in Homer, with the Thracian Sintoi. See Fowler 2013, 517.

we are given Hellanicus' *ipsissima verba*, allows one not only to observe how etymological information was associated to other types of information, but also to see what brought about the etymological explanations in the first place. The text, concerned with the migration of an unnamed people¹⁵ arriving on the island of Lemnos, describes how they come into contact and unite themselves with a group of settlers of Thracian origin who were called Sinties by the locals, because they were artisans who had created weapons (4 F 71a: Τούτους ἐκάλουν οἱ περίοικοι Σίντιας, ὅτι ἦσαν δημιουργοὶ τινες πολεμιστήρια ὄπλα ἐργαζόμενοι). If we are to trust the testimony of 4 F 71c, they had created these in order to harm a neighbouring people (παρὰ τὸ σίνεσθαι τοὺς πλησίον καὶ βλάπτειν), and their name is, according to the scholiast, derived from the verb σίνεσθαι.

This explanation is, from a linguistic point of view, etymologically sound, since the ethnonym is a cognate of such words as σίντης 'predatory' or σίνω 'to harm,' but it is interesting to notice that, in Hellanicus' text — as it is reproduced in 71a, and provided that there have been no significant alterations — the etymological explanation is never explicitly stated, only implied. Hellanicus never gives the etymon, nor does he use such expressions as ἀπὸ τοῦ or παρὰ τό; he does not provide a lexical etymology, but states instead the reason for which this people were so named, in a causal clause introduced by ὅτι. It is as if a name in this instance should be a 'nom parlant', i.e. etymologically transparent and indicative of a specific quality which can be extracted from it without any effort. This should not come as a surprise, since this was actually, as Peraki-Kyriakidou has argued,¹⁶ a very common pattern of etymologizing during Antiquity, and the presence of a clear etymon in the word did not necessarily lead to an explicit etymology, but to mere allusions through a synonym or a reformulation, as is the case in this particular text.

In other instances, however, it is not a specific characteristic but an event that Hellanicus chooses as a way of explaining a new name. This is illustrated in fragment 4 F 130, where two explanations are proposed for the toponym Aphetai, a place situated in the Pagasaeon gulf. According to the fragment, the city was so named because it was the place whence the Argo had made its second departure for Colchis (ὅτι ἐντεῦθεν δευτέραν ἄφεςιν ἢ Ἀργὼ ἐποιήσατο) or because it was the place where the Argonauts had abandoned Heracles (ὅτι ἐκεῖ οἱ Ἀργοναῦται τὸν Ἡρακλέα κατέλιπον). It is impossible to determine with certainty whether Hellanicus proposed two different explanations, why he would have felt the need to do so in this particular instance or whether two different sources might have been

15 For the possible identities of this people, see Ambaglio 1980, 145 and Fowler 2013, 516–517.

16 Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002, 482.

contaminated in Stephanus' text.¹⁷ The only certain fact is that Hellanicus explained the name by having it derive from ἄφεςις/ἀφίημι. He was not the first to have done so and he probably did not invent the etymology; Herodotus is known to have provided a similar explanation and, according to him, the city received its name due to the fact that it was the place from which the Argonauts had taken to sea;¹⁸ the explanation Herodotus proposes is the one that comes first in Hellanicus' fragment. Given that both authors wrote around the same time,¹⁹ and that Thucydides was familiar with Hellanicus' work, it is reasonable to suppose that Herodotus and Hellanicus might have been aware of each other's work and that one might have drawn the etymological explanation from the other, or used a common source, but the available evidence does not allow one to draw definitive conclusions, even though in both cases and in both authors the name of the place is linked to the verb ἀφίημι 'to let go' and the noun ἄφεςις, 'letting go'. As for Heracles being left behind, possible sources might have been the *Wedding of Ceyx*, attributed to Hesiod,²⁰ or Pherecydes.²¹ Whatever knowledge Hellanicus might have had of his predecessors, it is safe to assume that even though he was not the one who invented the etymology, he found a way of investing it with a new significance. It is indeed reasonable to think that, in the fragment, the two different explanations are contaminated by Stephanus of Byzantium and that the first should be attributed to Hellanicus, the other to Herodotus. If this is true, and if Hellanicus explained the name by making the Pagasaeon gulf the 'real' departure from mainland Greece and the true beginning of the journey towards Colchis, then he might have chosen not to link the name

17 Ambaglio (1980, 118) believes the etymology may have originated with Hellanicus.

18 Hdt. 7.193: Ἔστι δὲ χώρος ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τούτῳ τῆς Μαγνησίας, ἐνθα λέγεται τὸν Ἡρακλέα καταλειφθῆναι ὑπὸ Ἰήσονός τε καὶ τῶν συνεταίρων ἐκ τῆς Ἀργοῦς ἐπ' ὕδωρ πεμφθέντα, εὐτε ἐπὶ τὸ κῶας ἐπλεον ἐς Αἴαν τὴν Κολχίδα· ἐνθεῦτεν γὰρ ἔμελλον ὕδρευσάμενοι ἐς τὸ πέλαιος ἀφίησιν· ἐπὶ τούτου δὲ τῷ χώρῳ οὖνομα γέγονε Ἀφείται.

19 Thucydides' criticism of Hellanicus at 1.97.2 and the fact that Hellanicus' *Atthis* contained an account of events between 480 and 431 leave no doubt that this work appeared sometime around the beginning of the Peloponnesian War or later (after 404/403 according to Hornblower 1991, 148 and 195). Thucydides' mention of the burning of Hera's temple in 4.133 is obviously derived from Hellanicus' *Priestesses of Hera at Argos*, which allows us to know that this work referenced events that had occurred during the ninth year of the war. See also fragments 4 F 83, 4 F 171 and 4 F 172 as well as Jacoby 1949, 338 n. 47, Caérols-Pérez 1991, 14, 25 n. 24 and 35 n. 126.

20 See fr. 154 Rz: Ἡσίοδος ἐν τῷ Κήκυος γάμῳ ἐκβάντα φησὶν αὐτὸν ἐφ' ὕδατος ζήτησιν τῆς Μαγνησίας περὶ τὰς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀφέσεως αὐτοῦ Ἀφετὰς καλουμένας ἀπολειφθῆναι. Αντίμαχος δὲ ἐν τῇ Λύδη φησὶν ἐκβιβασθέντα τὸν Ἡρακλέα διὰ τὸ καταβαρεῖσθαι τὴν Ἀργὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἥρωος. See Merkelbach/West 1965.

21 Pherecydes 3 F 111a = Apol. *Bibl.* 1.117: Φερεκύδης δὲ αὐτὸν ἐν Ἀφεταῖς τῆς Θεσσαλίας ἀπολειφθῆναι λέγει, τῆς Ἀργοῦς φθελγυμένης μὴ δύνασθαι φέρειν τὸ τούτου βάρος.

to Heracles but preferred instead an important event, the definitive departure, as a plausible explanation for the origin of the new name.

Two other fragments, 4 F 123 and 4 F 38, also illustrate how names can find their origin in a momentous event. In both cases, a decisive event takes place and the adjective or the verb used to describe this action is the one through which the origin of the name is accounted for. In the first example, the name Pelias is described as a cognate of the verb *πελιόω*, used of parts of the body and meaning ‘to become discoloured by extravasated blood/turn black and blue/livid,’ the reason being that, while he was an infant, he had been hit by a mare in the face, which in turn had caused him to turn livid.²² Here, Hellanicus seems to be using elements of the myth (the presence of a mare) that were probably attested before him and a significant event in order to ascribe to Pelias a distinctive characteristic that could provide an explanation for his name based on the phonetic similarity between *Πελίας* and *πελιόω*.²³ In other words, the name Pelias becomes, as in the case of other etymological explanations, semantically transparent as it comes to be invested with an obvious etymology and, consequently, significance. It should also be noted that this time, contrary to what can be observed in the fragment about the Sinties, the etymological link *Πελίας* — *ἐπελιώθη* is also much more explicit in the wording.

In the second example, possibly linked to fragment 4 F 169a, in which Hellanicus gives the list of the famous trials that took place upon the Areopagus,²⁴ the toponym is explained by a symbolic gesture, namely the fixing of the spear in the ground by Ares during his trial for the murder of Halirrothios, son of Poseidon, whom he had killed because he had raped Alcippe.

Ἄρειος Πάγος· δικαστήριον Ἀθήνησιν... ἐκλήθη δὲ καὶ Ἄρειος Πάγος ἥτοι ὅτι ἐν πάγῳ ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν ὕψει τὸ δικαστήριον, Ἄρειος δὲ, ἐπεὶ τὰ φονικὰ δικάζει· ὁ δὲ Ἄρης ἐπὶ τῶν φόνων. Ἡ ὅτι ἐπῆξε τὸ δόρυ ἐκεῖ ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ποσειδῶνα ὑπὲρ Ἀλιρροθίου δίκη, ὅτε ἀπέκτεινεν αὐτὸν βιασάμενον Ἀλκίππην τὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἀγραύλου τῆς Κέκροπος θυγατέρα, ὡς φησιν Ἑλλάνικος, ἐν α΄ <Ἀτθίδος>.

Areopagus. Lawcourt in Athens. And it was called Areopagus, because it is situated on a hill (*pagos*) and in a high place; ‘Areios,’ because it adjudicates homicides and Ares is in charge of murders. Or because he struck his spear there during his trial against Poseidon for Halirrothios, whom Ares had killed, because he had raped Alcippe, the daughter he had

²² Hellanicus 4 F 123 = *Epim. Hom.* π128: Πελιοῖο παρὰ τοῦ πέλλω· Σοφοκλῆς ἐν Ἀμφιαράῳ σατυρικῷ. Ἑλλάνικος δὲ· “καὶ τὸν <μὲν> Πελίαν ὠνομάζετο, ἐπεὶ ἐπελιώθη αὐτῷ ἡ ὄψις λακτισθέντι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἵππου”.

²³ *Contra* Fowler 2013, 162, who thinks the etymology was not invented by Hellanicus.

²⁴ Regarding the evidence about the Areopagus found in the Atthidographers, see Harding 2008, 33–36.

begotten from Agraulus, daughter of Cecrops, as Hellanicus tells us in the first book <of the *Atthis*>.

In this instance, the name is closely associated with the god and the gesture he made (ὅτι ἐπηξεν τὸ δόρυ ἐκεῖ), thus connecting the second half of the word (πάγος) to the verb πήγνυμι. Hellanicus does not adopt the more usual explanations according to which the place was so named due to the fact that it was the rock that was associated with homicide trials (Ἀρειος ὅτι τὰ φονικά δικάζει· ὁ δὲ Ἄρης ἐπὶ τῶν φόνων). This last explanation was actually one out of the three principal ways in which the meaning of the toponym was clarified: also found in Apollodorus, Charax, the *Etymologicum Magnum*, and the *Suda*, the word Ἀρειος was explained as being more or less the equivalent of φόνιος and therefore meant that the toponym indicated the hill that was associated with homicides.²⁵ The second explanation, found in Aeschylus, was completely different not only from this version, but also from the explanation provided by Hellanicus: according to the tragedian, the hill had received its name after the Amazons had camped on it and sacrificed to Ares during their siege of Athens.²⁶ Hellanicus, then, either adopted an etymological explanation that was older than the one featured in Aeschylus, with which he must have been familiar (the *Eumenides* were staged on 458 BCE), or it is possible that he drew upon the practice of fixing a spear in front of a tomb, signifying the family's belief that the death of their relative had been violent,²⁷ and gave it a new meaning by inventing this explanation, thus tracing its origin to the god Ares himself — which would be consistent with Hellanicus' interest in and use of the πρῶτος εὐρετής motif²⁸ — and which could have provided an αἴτιον for the practice. Interestingly, he does not adopt either one of the other two explanations, through which only a loose association with the god is achieved, but he instead puts Ares centre-stage in the unfolding of an event which, in hindsight, is given critical significance as the first such instance of a practice that would go on to have a rather important significance in Athenian society. It seems as if, in Hellanicus, the etymological explanation is used here as a pretext to retrace the origin of a ritualistic practice and the attidographer, if he is indeed the one who came up with the etymology, can be seen as operating a choice between different versions and selecting the one that fits his goal. In an equally remarkable way, the link between πάγος and πήγνυμι is one of

²⁵ Charax 103 F 8, *EM* 139, *Suda* s.v., Apollod. 244 F 94. Cf. Ambaglio 1980, 151–152.

²⁶ Aesch. *Eum.* 689–690: Ἀρει τ' ἔθουον, ἔνθεν ἔστ' ἐπώνυμος / πέτρα πάγος τ' Ἀρειος.

²⁷ Cf. Fowler 2013, 454–455; sources for the practice are in Dem. 47.69; Harp. ε81, quoting the passage from Dem.; Istros 334 F 14; Pollux 8.45; Phot. 8722.

²⁸ Cf. Kleingunther 1933.

the instances where the explanation is, from a modern perspective, etymologically sound.

The same method of using an important event emerges in yet another fragment, 4 F 19b,²⁹ which gives a list of unions between gods and the seven Pleiads and their progeny:

νων ἐν σπηϊ· τ[ῶν	
δὲ γίγνεται Ἑρμ[ῆς	
φιλητῆς, ὅτι αὐ-	
τῇ φιλησίμ[ως	
συνεκοιμ[ᾶτο·	5
καὶ γίγνεται θε-	
ῶν κῆ[ρυξ] ἀγήρ[αος	
καὶ ἀθάνατος. Κ[ε]-	
λαινοῖ δὲ μίσγε-	
ται Ποσειδέων·	10
τῶν δὲ γίγνεται	
Λύκος, ὃν ὁ πατήρ	
κατοικίζει ἐν μα-	
κάρων νήσοις,	
καὶ ποιεῖ ἀθάνα-	
τον. Τηϋγέτη δὲ	15
Ζε]ῦς μίσγεται· τῶν...	

... in a cave. Their son was Hermes Philetes, because Zeus had lay with her lovingly. And he became the unageing and undying herald of the gods. And Celaino lay with Poseidon and their son was Lycos, whom his father installed in the Islands of the Blessed and made him immortal. And Teygete lay with Zeus. Their...

Of interest in this passage is the epithet granted to Hermes, who was called φιλήτης, due to the fact that his father, Zeus, had laid with the Pleiad Maia φιλησίμως. This is yet another example where the etymological explanation that is given is acceptable by our modern standards, but the exact meaning of the epithet is subject to conjecture, since the adverb φιλησίμως is a *hapax legomenon*. There is also doubt as to how one should pronounce the word: are we to read φιλητῆς and consider it to mean ‘representative of love’/‘love child’/‘lover’ or are we to read φιλήτης and understand that Hermes’ epithet meant ‘thief’? Both interpretations are equally acceptable, since Hermes was known to be the patron of thieves and the father of

²⁹ Attribution to Hellanicus of this papyrus fragment is usually agreed upon, most notably in Jacoby 1923, Ambaglio 1980, Caérols-Pérez 1991, Fowler 2001 and 2013, Thomas 2007; Pearson (1939, 177–178) is more reserved. Most recent arguments in favour of attributing the text to Hellanicus in Thomas 2007, 16–18 and Fowler 2013, 417.

Autolytus (in which case the adverb φιλησίμως would mean 'in secret'), just as it is possible to understand that Hermes was, literally, the lovechild of Zeus and Maia, because they had lay together φιλησίμως, that is 'lovingly'. The context of the fragment unfortunately does not provide any clues that would help choose one or the other reading,³⁰ but it is the second interpretation that is generally adopted by commentators, and this reading is supported by similarities in expression found in the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes* 3–4, which states that Maia had laid with Zeus 'lovingly' (Μαῖα/νύμφη ἐϋπλόκαμος Διὸς ἐν φιλότῃτι μυγεῖσα).³¹

Whatever sense one may attribute to this word — and it seems best to assign the sense 'lovechild/product of love/lover' to φιλητής and 'lovingly/with love' to φιλησίμως — it is clear that, once again, Hellanicus chooses a symbolically meaningful event that marks an intrinsic quality of the person or place that he is in the process of explaining. It should also be noted that, in the case that the papyrus fragment is transmitting Hellanicus' authentic text and not that of some compiler who is referencing him, the etymological explanation is not, once again, made explicit through the use of such expressions as ἀπὸ τοῦ or παρὰ τό but is presented in a causal clause, introduced by ὅτι, just as was the case in the Sinties fragment.

So far, then, it seems as if Hellanicus is providing explanations that are founded on elements taken from the myths he is narrating and that these are not always, in the strict sense, linguistic in nature. Whether it is the intrinsic quality of a person or an event which brings about a new characteristic, what Hellanicus seems to be concerned with is not so much studying the language as revealing the element that was hidden in the myth in order to elucidate elements and details that were previously unclear. In a sense, the repeated interest in the origin of a name seems to stem from his determination to provide an explanation for each one, for which etymological interpretation is used as a kind of scientific evidence.

3 Local tradition and etymologizing

In some instances, however, the theme of a significant event providing the origin of a toponym is used in a considerably different way. In this case, it is the founder who consciously chooses to name a place. I have already pointed out that this is a frequent way of explaining a name, and I shall not dwell on instances where a place

³⁰ Ambaglio 1980, 72 is one of the few to adopt the other meaning (*da loro nasce Ermete ladro, poiché giaceva con lei furtivamente*).

³¹ See Thomas 2007 and Fowler 2013, 417.

or a nation is named after its founder (as in 4 F 14 or in 4 F 74, for instance, where we read that the city Phemiai derived its name from a certain Phemios and that the Macedons were named after Macedon, son of Aiolos respectively). It is more promising to focus on a certain number of fragments, where one can see something different happening, namely, Hellanicus inventing etymologies or retrieving and re-using an element from a legend in order to invest it with a new meaning and thus provide an explanation for a name or give the reason for which a city was founded at that particular moment and place. Fragments falling into this category are 4 F 36a, b and c, in which one learns how Argos came to have the three epithets it does (Ἄργος Πελασγικόν, Ἴασον, ἱππόβοτον), F 79a and b, which deal with the colonization of Sicily, 4 F 84, focused on the foundation of Rome and 4 F 111, which gives the origin of the name Ἰταλία.

What differentiates these fragments from the ones already examined is that, each time, there is a pre-existing element in the tradition, so tightly knit to it that it cannot be taken out; it lacks an explanation, however, or isn't easily explainable and thus needs to be accounted for one way or the other, thus compelling Hellanicus to proceed in a completely different way. The city of Argos and its three epithets, Πελασγικόν, Ἴασον and ἱππόβοτον, is one such case. Whereas the first two could easily be explained through the obvious link to Pelasgos and Iasos, two of the three sons of Phoroneus, the adjective ἱππόβοτον 'grazed by horses' could not be explained by an etymological link to the third son, Agenor, which meant that a different solution needed to be found. It is likely that Hellanicus either invented or used an otherwise unremarkable detail of the legend, the fact that there was no land left for the third son, which Hellanicus creatively imagined as having led to his being granted his father's cavalry regiments instead (36a: τὴν πατρικὴν εἵληφεν ἵππον and 36c: πολλὴν ἵππον ἐκτήσατο).

If we turn to fragments 84 and 111, we are presented with rather original explanations for the toponyms 'Rome' and 'Italy' respectively. In both of these cases, it seems that Hellanicus uses an element of the legend from which he extracted an etiology for the new name and consequently a plausible etymology. Indeed, in both instances, it was, yet again, impossible for him to explain the toponyms by linking them to the founder's name (Heracles in the case of Italy, and Aeneas in the case of Rome).

In this second example, Hellanicus,³² unfamiliar with the version of the twins Romulus and Remus, attributed — according to Dionysius, who is quoting him —

³² It is not necessary to doubt that Dionysius is referring to Hellanicus when he uses the periphrasis ὁ δὲ τὰς ἱερείας τὰς ἐν Ἄργει καὶ τὰ καθ' ἑκάστην συναγαγών. Not only do we not know anyone else, apart from Hellanicus, who wrote a work using the succession of priestesses of Hera at Argos

the foundation of the city to none other than Aeneas, who had come to Italy from the country of the Molossoi with Odysseus. This is, as far as we know, the oldest example of a direct link between the establishment of Rome and the Trojan hero Aeneas in a version that was conceived by Greeks in a Greek context, independent of any Roman influence or any link with Romulus and Remus.³³ At the same time, it is likely that what we have here is the amalgamation of previously separate mythical themes, namely the presence of Odysseus in Italy,³⁴ that of Aeneas in the same place and that of the women who burn their ships in order to put an end to their endless sea voyage into one story. This last theme is quite common in ancient Greek literature and, more particularly, in the context of the *nostoi* of Achaeans or Trojans after the Trojan War. More often than not, what causes them to set fire to the ships is their will to put an end to a long sea journey, or to escape servitude, in the case of the Trojan women. Apart from Hellanicus, the theme of the women burning the fleet is found in Aristotle, Heraclides of Lembos, Plutarch and Polyaeus, among others, and the available evidence suggests that Hellanicus may very well be the first witness to this legend.³⁵

Whether it was he who invented the story or whether he was using an element that already existed in the *nostoi* is impossible to tell, but it is very likely that Rhomē, the woman who gave her name to the city of Rome, was his own invention.³⁶ If so, he fleshed out, from a group of indistinct and unnamed individuals, one particular woman, whom he presented as the instigator of the fire and who, conveniently,

as a dating device, but, also, questioning the attribution to Hellanicus can only come from scholars who find it *a priori* impossible to accept that Hellanicus would have known or said anything about Rome, as Fowler (2013, 564) rightly points out. On the *Priestesses of Hera at Argos*, see Möller 2001.

³³ The bibliography on the foundation of Rome is, unsurprisingly, extremely vast. Interesting perspectives can be found in Ampolo 1992, Ballabriga 1997, Cornell 1975, Galinsky 1969, Horsfall 1979, Perret 1942, Poucet 1985, Solmsen 1986, and Vanotti 1995 and 1997.

³⁴ Possibly a reminiscence of Hesiod *Theog.* 1013. The simultaneous presence of Odysseus and Aeneas is problematic. Dionysius' vague summary is not helpful in determining exactly why he had come to Italy with Aeneas in Hellanicus' version. There is also the problem of whether he was involved in the foundation of Rome, but the phrasing leaves little doubt as to the fact that both heroes were present at the same time in Italy, but that it was Aeneas who founded the new city on his own. On that, see Fowler 2013, 564–566 as well as the testimony of Festus s.v. *Saturnia*, which leaves little doubt as to the nature of the relationship between the two heroes (*Italici, auctore Aenea, uelant capita, quod is cum rem diuinam faceret in litore Laurentis agri Veneri matri ne ab Vlixē cognitus interrumperet sacrificium, caput adoperauit atque ita conspectum hostis euitauit*).

³⁵ On the different versions of the burning of ships, see Martinez-Pinna 1996.

³⁶ Cf. *FrGrHist* III C 840 F 13a, b and c; Arist. *Mir. Ausc.* 109; Lycophr. *Alex.* 1075, Strab. 7.1.12 and 7 F 25; Plut. *De Mul. Virt.* 1 and *Rom.* 1; Polyaeus. *Strateg.* 7.47 and 8.25.2; Schol. Theocr. 4. 24; Heracl. Lemb. 840 F 13b; Steph. Byz. s.v. Σκίωνη; *EM* s.v. Σήτατον; Verg. *Aen.* 5.641; Serv. *Ad Aen.* 10.179. See also Ambaglio 1980, 150–151, Martinez-Pinna 1996, Fowler 2013, 561–568.

ended up giving her name to the new city that was founded in that particular place (ὀνομάσαι δ' αὐτήν ἀπὸ μιᾶς τῶν Ἰλιάδων Ῥώμης. Ταύτην δὲ λέγει ταῖς ἄλλαις Τρωάσι παρακελευσαμένην κοινῇ μετ' αὐτῶν ἐμπρῆσαι τὰ σκάφη βαρυνομένην τῇ πλάνῃ). Resorting to that explanation was made necessary by the fact that Aeneas, though the founder of Rome in this version, could not possibly provide the city with his own name, and thus a convincing reason was needed both for the Trojans ending their journey in that particular spot and for the city being named Rome and not Aeneia.

The burning of the ships was evidently a convenient device to explain the end of the voyage, in order to render the foundation of the new city in that particular place possible. As for the woman, Rhomē, she is the reason this text is so interesting, and the interpretation of Hellanicus so ingenious. Whereas in other instances the πρῶτος εὐρετής and eponym of the new city is almost always a hero, a king or a god and gives his name almost involuntarily, this rather easy and unoriginal solution could not be used in the case of Rome, and Hellanicus needed to find a convincing motive for the city not being named Aeneia, as one would have expected. Rhomē was then invented for that precise reason and Hellanicus most likely provided a reason for which Aeneas chose to name the new city after a woman who had committed a crime. Moreover, in this instance, the founder is presented as consciously choosing a name other than his own, one that has a particular significance, whereas in cases of a people or a city being named after the founder, the name is not given a precise symbolic significance: the role of the eponymous founder is solely to establish a direct lineage between himself and the new city.

How Hellanicus managed to explain Aeneas' choice we cannot know, unfortunately. One tempting explanation is that he presented Aeneas as finding in the very name of the woman a fitting description for the new city that would go on to be founded as a result of Rhomē's ῥώμη, that is, her 'might/strength.' In any case, this fragment is yet another example of the proposed etymological explanation being, from a modern perspective, acceptable, and we have the name of a person, which, interestingly, derives from the transformation of a common noun into a proper noun, becoming a toponym.

It is even harder to guess how exactly Hellanicus came to explain the toponym Italia the way he did in 4 F 111. This fragment comes to us via Dionysius of Halicarnassos once again, who, in his description of the fourth migration in Italy (*A.R.* 1.34–44), is eager to determine when exactly the change of the toponym occurred. Dionysius references the different explanations that could be found in the relevant literature, among which was Antiochus of Syracuse's rather simple and unassuming claim that the name was derived from some ruler of Oenotrian origin called Italos (Ἰταλία δὲ ἀνὰ χρόνον ὀνομάσθη ἐπ' ἀνδρὸς Ἰταλοῦ), which is as straightforward an explanation as one could get and one to which Hellanicus was accustomed and used

frequently. And yet, far from resorting to this type of explanation, the etymology that is given is strikingly original and surprising. According to his version of events, the peninsula had acquired the new name around the time of Heracles, after he had finished his tenth labour and was driving Geryon's cattle back to Argos. One of the calves had managed to escape from the herd, and Heracles had had to chase him across all of Italy and down to Sicily. His search for the calf had led him to inquire of the inhabitants whether anyone had seen it anywhere. When the people of the island, who knew but little Greek and used their own dialect while indicating the animal, used the word *uitulus*, he, in memory of the animal, called all of the country it had wandered over Οὐιτουλία. Consequently, over the course of time, the name changed and became Italia, which, according to Dionysios, was to be expected.

What seems surprising, however, is that Hellanicus should have chosen that elaborate and complicated an etymology, especially when he could have chosen a solution as simple as the one provided by Antiochus. The most likely explanation is that he was using two already existing elements of the legend, namely Heracles' presence in Italy and the escape of the calf, to which he consequently assigned a new meaning. What seems less clear is why he would have chosen these elements, whether he was the one who invented the etymology Οὐιτουλία / Ιταλία based on knowledge of linguistic facts and, if such was the case, how he had come to know it. The easy way to approach this question would be to outright dismiss it and think that Dionysius, who spoke Latin, is here contaminating Hellanicus' version with other, later sources that established a link between Italia and *uitulus*. The answer may lie within a key difference found in Timaeus,³⁷ Varro³⁸ and Servius,³⁹ whose testimony allows one to see that this etymological explanation was far from uncommon and provides an explanation that may help uncover the original Hellenic interpretation.

According to these authors, the link between Italia and calves lied not so much in a supposed linguistic connection between the Latin *uitulus* and the Greek Οὐιτουλία / Ιταλία, but in the Greek word ιταλός instead, unattested elsewhere and

37 Tim. 566 F 42 = Gell. Noct. Att. 11.1: *Timaeus in Historiis, quas oratione graeca de rebus populi romani composuit et M. Varro in Antiquitatibus Rerum Humanarum terram Italiam de graeco uocabulo appellatam scripserunt, quoniam boues graeca uetere lingua ιταλοί uocitati sunt, quorum in Italia magna copia fuerit bucetaque in ea terra gigni pascique solita sint complurrima.*

38 Varr. Res Rust. 2.1.9: *Denique non Italia a uitulis appellata est ut scribit Piso?* and 2.5.3: *Graecia enim antiqua, ut scribit Timaeus, tauros uocabant italos, a quorum multitudine et pulchritudine et fetu uitulorum Italiam dixerunt. Alii scripserunt quod ex Sicilia Hercules persecutus sit eo nobilem taurum qui diceretur Italus.*

39 Serv. apud Aen., 1.533: *alii Italiam a bubus quibus est Italia fertilis, quia Graeci boues ιταλούς, nos uitulos dicimus.*

supposed to mean ‘calf’. This renders the explanation provided by Dionysius suspicious, since it seems rather strange that Hellanicus would have explained *Italia* by connecting it to a Latin word and not a Greek one, when Latin sources, many centuries later, would have the name derive from a Greek word. This discrepancy may be explained by the fact that Dionysius is quoting Hellanicus from memory here and that his own knowledge of Latin tricks him into inventing an explanation that was never there in Hellanicus, which seems to be supported by the remark he adds: ὥσπερ καὶ νῦν λέγεται. In fact, it may very well be that Hellanicus, familiar with the Oscan word *vītū*, a cognate of *uitulus*, which he might have gotten from Greek residents of the region, could have invented the word ἰταλός, phonetically closer to Ἰταλία than *uitulus* or *vītū*, in order to provide an etymology that was both phonetically transparent and convincing to Greek ears. In any case, whatever version was transmitted by Hellanicus (*vītū* / οὐίτουλος > Οὐίτουλία / Ἰταλία or ἰταλός > Ἰταλία), the reason for which he did not opt for the simpler and much less complex explanation given by Antiochus is probably the fact that bulls were already closely associated with the southern part of Italy.⁴⁰ Since the region was known for its oxen, then, which therefore could not be taken out of the equation, Hellanicus must have chosen Heracles because the cattle of Geryon provided him with the opportunity to introduce oxen into his explanation and thus the means to invest the legend with a new etiological meaning, while preserving and integrating local tradition, which he was compelled to present.

If this interpretation is right, then the fragment also bears witness to just how deeply engaged Hellanicus — like Hecataeus — was with foreigners and foreign tradition, something already evident from such expressions as *Persica*, *Scythica*, *Aegyptiaca*, used to describe portions of his work. However, compared to the intense scrutiny that Herodotus’ relationship with foreigners has been put through, Hellanicus’ own relationship with the non-Greek element has, up until now, been given very little attention. Upon closer reading, it seems that the explanation proposed in the case of *Italia* may very well constitute an *interpretatio graeca* of a piece of foreign information. Indeed, Timaeus’ testimony, which, in all probability, reflects the native view, relates the name not to Heracles, but to the abundance of fine cattle in the region. Hellanicus, then, must have been aware of the fact that cattle were a source of pride for the Italian populations, but chose to appropriate this foreign information and incorporate it into his own very personal, and very Greek, interpretation.⁴¹

⁴⁰ They would later go on to take on a strong political meaning during the Social War, as numismatic evidence depicting a bull killing a wolf suggests. On this, see Mahé-Simon 2003.

⁴¹ See also Fowler 2018, 105.

We might never know why Hellanicus chose this particular explanation as an origin for the name of Italy or why he linked Aeneas to the foundation of Rome: what this selection of fragments shows is that there is no systematic and definitive way of pinning down the use of etymology in Hellanicus' fragments. This might very well be a direct consequence of the fragmentary nature of the corpus, and it may be difficult to establish a conclusive typology of the explanations Hellanicus provided, but the fact remains that even in its incomplete state, as it stands, the work confirms that etymology not only held a significant place in it but also that it was often used in a highly original way.

Given that there is only so much one can infer from individual fragments, comparison with Hecataeus and Pherecydes, placing Hellanicus in the larger context of prose writing in general and genealogical/chronological patterning in particular, is the next logical step and provides a new and valuable perspective. Indeed, by the time Hellanicus had set himself to work, mythographical prose works were already a century old, standards had been set thanks to the work of Hecataeus and Pherecydes, the work of Herodotus was probably already in circulation and he had at his disposal a selection of ways to approach his subject matter.⁴² Similarities, then, across the works of Acusilaus, Hecataeus, Pherecydes and Hellanicus are immediately obvious, and yet it is clear that every author is engaged in the development of mythographical prose writing from a different perspective. Even though it is difficult to assert with certainty just how personal each approach might have been, recent scholarship has rightly insisted on the importance of delving into what distinguishes each author from another,⁴³ instead of considering them as authors whose writings were all similar, and it seems best to consider each writer as adding their own voice and personal approach to a polyphonic discussion which aimed at better defining the scope and tools of a developing genre.

Just as there is no evidence in Pherecydes' work of interest in chronology in the form of converting generations to years or reconciling contradictions across the genealogical grid, as is the case in Hellanicus' fragments, so the interest in etymology in the former's work seems less important, and the same can be said about Hecataeus.⁴⁴ Extant fragments do show Pherecydes' concern with eponyms, and we also find therein etymological explanations, but etymology, though a related interest, does not appear as often, and the contrast with Hellanicus is quite telling. Whereas Pherecydes is mostly concerned with producing what could be called an

⁴² Fowler 2016, 36.

⁴³ Fowler 2016.

⁴⁴ Etymological explanations can be found in fragments 15, 22, 59, 84 of Hecataeus and fragments 10, 102, 175 of Pherecydes.

encyclopaedic work,⁴⁵ or a work of reference, in as orthodox and thorough a manner as possible, there are hardly any signs of interest in identifying and removing contradictions between independent genealogical branches and across generations. Such concerns are not present in Hecataeus, Acusilaus or Pherecydes, and there are in fact some examples of surprising disregard for such matters in their work,⁴⁶ with the result that Hellanicus' work, when compared with theirs, stands out precisely because it focuses on establishing accurate and detailed genealogical *stemmata*, and also on chronologically situating the right event at the right moment with the utmost degree of precision, thus mapping the past into a coherent whole.⁴⁷

This in turn brings us to question the contrast between Hellanicus' systematic and obvious use of etymologizing, on the one hand, and the lack of interest in it as a tool, on the other, in Acusilaus, Hecataeus and Pherecydes. Given that Hellanicus spent a considerable amount of time in Athens, Sophists and their reflections on language could have significantly influenced him. But whether it was Sophistic influence or some other factor that inspired Hellanicus' keen interest in etymological explanations and their use as an etiological tool, their prominence in his works was likely the direct result of him reacting to his predecessors' works and the arguments they presented. In other words, Hellanicus' determination to remove all contradictions in the genealogies so as to arrive at chronologically accurate *stemmata*, as well as his very obvious interest in revealing the origin of names, may have originated as a response to the lack of precision or insufficient explanations in other prose writers' works.

Etymology, then, alongside chronological calculations, constitutes the principal tool Hellanicus resorts to in order to produce as reasonable and thorough an account of the past as possible. Whether it be genealogical patterning, etymological explanations or his interest in origin tales, one can conclude that Hellanicus is keenly aware of his predecessors' work, but also at pains to take their efforts one step further and adopt different perspectives, as evidenced by the ever present *πρῶτος εὐρετής* motif. Indeed, throughout the extant fragments, it appears that one of the main goals of Hellanicus was to trace and explain origins in as methodical a way as possible. Etymologizing and explaining how and why a certain name was adopted for a place, then, is part of the larger project of explaining not only toponyms, but also objects, institutions, customs and even proverbs.

A significant number of fragments provides ample evidence of this. Explicit references to the creation of objects can be found in fragment 104a and b, in which

⁴⁵ Fowler 2016.

⁴⁶ Fowler 2013, 663.

⁴⁷ Pearson 1939 *passim* and Fowler 2016.

Hercules is presented as the creator (Ὁ δὲ Ἑλλάνικός φησιν ἑαυτῷ κατασκευάσαι) of the rattle used to scare the Stymphalian birds out of hiding, whereas in other sources it is the goddess Athena who gives it to him. In fragments 71b and c, we learn that the Sinties created weapons, and in fragment 189 it is told that Saneunos, king of the Scythians, had also created them. The same pattern of tracing origins can be observed in the case of places, as in the case of fragments mentioning the creation of altars (such as the one dedicated to the twelve gods, in 4 F 6a and b or the one dedicated to Hercules in 4 F 109) and temples (4 F 40: Φορβαντεῖον). Origins for customs also hold an important place in Hellanicus' work, and we learn in 4 F 178a, b that queen Atossa was the first to wear a tiara (τιάραν πρῶτην φορέσαι), the first to wear trousers (πρῶτον δὲ καὶ ἀναξυρίδας), the first to adopt eunuchs as ministers (τὴν τῶν εὐνούχων ὑπουργίαν εὐρεῖν) and the first to respond in writing through letters (178a: διὰ βίβλων τὰς ἀποκρίσεις ποιεῖσθαι, 178b: καὶ ἐπιστολὰς συντάσσειν).

Last but not least, the available evidence indicates that Hellanicus was interested in providing the origin of proverbs. According to a scholiast (4 F 103), he is said to have provided Herodorus with the explanation for the expression “Πρὸς δύο οὐδ’ ὁ Ἡρακλῆς”, which is supposed to have originated from Heracles being unable to fight the Lernaean Hydra while fending off the attacks of the crab that Hera had sent against him. The fact that he had needed Iolaos' help in order to vanquish his opponents was thought to have brought about the expression “Against two foes, not even Heracles.” The same interest may be present in fragment 4 F 93, where we are given the explanation for the expression Πιτάνη εἰμί “I am Pitane,” but it is difficult to decide whether the explanation contained in Photios' text is his own interpretation or whether he is reproducing one that was already in Hellanicus' text. As it stands, the fragment does not allow one to decide with certainty, and the only thing the reader can be sure of is that Hellanicus mentioned the fact that the city of Pitane had been captured by the Pelasgians and then freed by the Erythreans. Whatever the case, it is very likely that Hellanicus was not the creator of these expressions, but what matters is his obvious and systematic interest in mentioning them and uncovering their origin, which remains evident despite the fragmentary nature of his works.

4 Conclusion

In conclusion, etymologizing holds, throughout the work, a highly significant place in Hellanicus' project and his ever-expanding quest of ordering the past in a

chronologically and logically sound way.⁴⁸ Etymological explanations, alongside the *prōtos heuretēs* motif, the organization and transformation of the previously nebulous past in a meticulously and conscientiously charted timeframe by the ordering of the mythical genealogies,⁴⁹ the use of the list of the priestesses of Hera, and that of the Athenian archons as a historical dating device, all participate in one common effort, the ultimate goal of which is the explanation of origins. Hellanicus' industry and scholarly virtuosity remain perfectly visible in his prodigious output of works and the attention given to every last detail. Ultimately, it is not so much interest in language itself or in etymology that one can discern in Hellanicus; rather, etymology is the tool to which he continuously resorts so as to provide what must have seemed to him to be reasonable explanations. In other words, it is etiological concerns, motivated by the presence in the myths of toponyms, epithets or expressions that needed to be accounted for in as reasonable a way as possible, which provided Hellanicus with an incentive for resorting to etymological explanations in an attempt to interpret the past in a sensible and even rational⁵⁰ way, and there is no evidence in the corpus that etymological and etiological concerns were ever separate. The term 'scientism',⁵¹ then, used to describe Hellanicus' approach to knowledge about the past, seem to be appropriate and exemplifies what his ultimate goal must have been: to give a plausible explanation for all of the events of the past while rendering every last detail understandable. Interest in writing about the past was, indeed, not new and had already been developed by Hecataeus and Pherecydes, who had their own ways of making sense of the past: Hellanicus' contribution consisted in going beyond one's own interpretation and devising tools that could provide an objective approach. Etymologizing was one such tool.

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48 On 'rationalistic' readings of early prose-writers, see Ambaglio 2007.

49 Attention to detail is analysed in Fowler 2013, 447–453 and Fowler 2016, 36–40.

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Apollodorus in Pergamum, or the Reconciliation of Opposites

Abstract: Where was Apollodorus of Athens' treatise *On the Gods* composed? It is not clear what the Athenian grammarian did after the expulsion of philologists from Alexandria (146 BCE): according to Ps.Scymnus (vv. 10–49) Apollodorus dedicated his *Chronicles* to Attalus II of Pergamum. Was the dedication accepted? Accordingly, did Apollodorus stay in Pergamum, composing here his theological treatise? If so, the fact would be significant: a disciple of Aristarchus taught where Aristarchus' adversary Crates of Mallus had had the chair. The *On the Gods* shows a hybrid methodology, which includes a rigorous reading of Homer according to Aristarchus' categories and readiness to consider the etymologies of divine names by the Stoics, not to say the latter approach in theology. This methodology strongly suggests that Apollodorus aimed at a compromise between Crates' and Aristarchus schools, an operation which might have had sense only in Pergamum. This conclusion seems confirmed by Apollodorus' interpretation of Apollo's epithet ἱήιος and παιάν, in which the etymologies of the former epithet by Aristarchus and Crates are combined. An analysis of the Apolline chapter within Macrobius' 'solar theology' (*Sat.* 1.17) helps to determine the actual interpretation of the two Apolline epithets by the grammarian, against the interpretation which is explicitly assigned to him in *Sat.* 1.17.19.

1 Introduction

Where did Apollodorus of Athens compose his treatise *On the Gods* (*Περὶ θεῶν*)? We are certain neither about this point — we may be dealing with a late work of the grammarian — nor about where precisely Apollodorus lived after the exile of Greek grammarians from Alexandria (145 BCE): he dedicated his *Chronicles* to Attalus II, but the reaction of the king is unknown. According to the reconstruction proposed here, the methodology of the work suggests that the grammarian was pursuing a — perhaps impossible — compromise between Aristarchus' and Crates' approaches, the most distinguished and, at the same time, methodologically different interpreters of Homer in Hellenistic times.

This conclusion seems to be confirmed by Apollodorus' interpretations of two Apolline epithets, ἱήιος and παιάν, interpretations we can read in Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.17.16–20): both epithets received a positive and a negative interpretation, obtained

through four different etymologies. The positive and the negative etymologies of *λήϊος* derive respectively from Crates of Mallus and Aristarchus: but the Athenian grammarian joined them into a new and unique interpretation. This was due to the principle of divine ambiguity, according to which Apollo is able to both kill and heal (indeed, the principle is valid for interpreting the natures of all the divinities).

This bold contamination between Crateteian and Aristarchean methodologies and interpretations could be realized because it was inspired by a precise context: the stay of Apollodorus in Pergamum. For the dedication of the *Chronicles* to Attalus II was accepted and Apollodorus began to teach in the Attalid capital.

2 Apollodorus' life

First of all, it is necessary to record the main facts of Apollodorus' biography.¹ He was born about 180 BCE in Athens, where he frequented the Stoic philosopher Diogenes of Babylon.² Then he lived for some years in Alexandria, where he was a disciple and then a collaborator of the great Aristarchus of Samothrace.³ In 145 BCE the scholars of the Alexandrian Museum were expelled by the terrible Ptolemy VIII; Aristarchus died in Cyprus the following year. Ps.-Scymnus informs us that Apollodorus asked Attalus II of Pergamum for protection in exchange for his *Chronicles* (Χρονικά), which he offered in three books.⁴ We do not have any evidence of Attalus' reaction: Ps.-Scymnus is not explicit on this point. Surely, the grammarian spent his last years in Athens, where he frequented the Stoic Panaetius (who had returned from Rome in 129 to lead the local Stoic school and died in 109); Apollodorus gave

1 Cf. Jacoby 1926, 716–718; Pfeiffer 1973, 385–388; Montana 2020, 232; Fleischer 2020, 7–24. Fundamental source is the description given by Ps.-Scymnus vv. 16–49 (244 *FGrHist* T 2); the entry Suda s.v. Ἀπολλόδορος (244 *FGrHist* T 1), which probably came down to us in a shortened form, is less reliable, since it considers Panaetius to be the teacher of the grammarian; this is not possible, because chronological considerations suggest that Apollodorus frequented him in Athens when both were old men (see below).

2 Ps.-Scymnus v. 20: γεγονώς ἀκουστής Διογένηος τοῦ Στωϊκοῦ “who had become a listener of Diogenes the Stoic” (tr. D. Roller, as the following).

3 Ps.-Scymnus v. 21: συνεσχολακῶς δὲ πολὺν Ἀριστάρχῳ χρόνον “and who also had taught for a long time with Aristarchos.”

4 Ps.-Scymnus vv. 16–23: τοῖς ἐν Περγάμῳ | βασιλεῦσιν... τῶν Ἀττικῶν τις γνησίῳ τε φιλόλογον | ... συνετάξατ' ἀπὸ τῆς Τρωϊκῆς ἀλώσεως | χρονογραφίαν “for the benefit of the kings of Pergamum... a certain genuine Attic scholar... composed a chronography that went from the Trojan capture...”

lectures to the philosopher Philo of Larissa in the years 120–118.⁵ Here the grammarian added to his *Chronicles* a fourth book, which describes events up to 120 or, according to Fleischer, even 110 BCE.⁶ Apollodorus must have died some time later, having lived for about 80 years.

The most important works of the Athenian grammarian, without a doubt, are the *Commentary on Homer's Catalogue of Ships* (Κατάλογος νεῶν / Περὶ νεῶν καταλόγου, henceforth KN), the *Chronicles* (Χρονικά, henceforth XP) and the treatise *On the Gods* (Περὶ θεῶν, henceforth ΠΘ). According to Jacoby, these fundamental works were composed in the following chronological sequence, which is still accepted: KN > XP > ΠΘ.⁷ KN, which described the geopolitical situation in Greece at the time of *Troika* until the end of the heroic times, is a totally Aristarchean work, in the sense that it was conducted following Aristarchus' methodology in interpreting the guide author, Homer.⁸ About XP, which seem like a continuation of KN until present times, we are better informed, thanks to Ps.-Scymnus, who refers some crucial information: XP were offered to Attalus II, king of Pergamum, when the Alexandrian grammarians had to flee from Egypt and Apollodorus was looking for protection and support. Ps.-Scymnus attests that XP included events from the fall of Troy until his times, i.e. a range of 1040 years,⁹ since Apollodorus followed Eratosthenes in dating the fall of Troy to 1184, the work probably went up to 145 and was offered to Attalus either the same year or one or two years later.¹⁰ ΠΘ was considered by Jacoby to be the work of an old scholar.¹¹ On the whole, I agree on a late dating; yet the width of the work and its wide erudition suggest that the author was still an active scholar when he composed it.¹² Probably the work is later than KN, since Aristarchus' methodology seems partially reformed,¹³ furthermore, the

5 This information derives from a recent re-reading of the *Index Academicorum* by Fleischer 2020, 16–21.

6 Fleischer 2020, 40–51.

7 Jacoby 1926, 716.

8 Jacoby 1926, 775–779.

9 Ps.-Scymnus vv. 22–25: συνετάξατ' ἀπὸ τῆς Τρωϊκῆς ἀλώσεως | χρονογραφίαν στοιχοῦσαν ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν βίου· | ἔτη δὲ τετταράκοντα πρὸς τοῖς χιλίοις | ὠρισμένως ἐξέθετο... “(a certain genuine Attic scholar) composed a chronography that went from the Trojan capture down to the present time. He laid out in a definite manner 40 in addition to a thousand years...”

10 Jacoby 1926, 719. Slightly different opinion in Fleischer 2020, 11.

11 This is to understand from the succession presented in Jacoby 1926, 716, where ΠΘ should correspond to Apollodorus' final stage of life, when he was in Athens. See also below.

12 I also like to think to a sort of ‘mystic’ conversion of Apollodorus, who dedicated his last years of activity to theology — but still working with the weapons of philology.

13 Namely, the application of Aristarchus' distinction between what is said by the narrator/poet and what is said by a character to the interpretation of divine epithets: cf. Filoni 2022.

theological nature of the work suggests a substantial departure from KN and XP, which for their part are close to one another because of their historical contents and purposes. Therefore, $\Pi\Theta$ should be later not only than KN, but also than XP.

This is what can be said about the chronological sequence of the three great works; another huge problem is the place where they were composed. We cannot doubt that KN was conceived and written in Alexandria: Aristarchus' methodology is applied in the interpretation of Homer for historical purposes. Surely it was the masterpiece of Apollodorus' Alexandrian period. As for XP, it is not clear where it was written: probably the composition of its three complex and long books required time and required the support of a considerable bibliography; being a sort of continuation of KN (see above), XP may have been conceived in Alexandria and its composition may have already begun there. Indeed, it must be said that we don't know where the grammarian lived during the exile: Athens, his homeland, is a possible place; it could have offered the bibliographical support necessary for composing XP.¹⁴ Remarkably, the work is written in iambic trimeter, a feature revealing a divulgative approach that is curious among, and indeed foreign to, the Alexandrian grammarians, who lived and debated inside the Museum, provoking the ironies of Herodicus of Babylon. We cannot exclude that XP may have been mostly written during the exile, which would have forced the learned Apollodorus to be more divulgative in order to be read by a wider audience. The dedication of XP to Attalus II, attested by Ps.-Scymnus (see above), also must be understood in itself. As formulated by Ps.-Scymnus, the dedication obviously suggests that the work was conceived from the very beginning in honor of the king. This is possible, but may also signal the use of a commonplace required by the actual circumstances; the situation in which the work was composed might have been more complex and difficult than was officially declared. Finally, the length of XP and the nature of the huge problems with which it dealt — e.g., the difficult task of dating the archaic poets — must have required some time for composition, and much should be taken into account in this regard; the dedication to Attalus may have been added later. Possibly, Apollodorus dedicated his XP to Attalus only when he understood he had some chance of being accepted by the latter. Consequently, XP were probably completed at the

¹⁴ It must be remembered that the grammarian chose the list of the Athenian archontes as a chronological reference-point for XP — something which appeared a little odd to later readers of the work, accustomed to the Olympian chronological system. This choice might reflect the patriotism of the grammarian, but could also hint at the locally available sources, if he was working in Athens.

time of the dedication (145? 144? See above), or at least were at an advanced state of composition.¹⁵

Not even in the case of ΠΘ do we know where the work was composed. We must remember that Apollodorus' theological treatise, with its length of 24 books, surpassed KN (12 books) and XP (3 books) by far. It is well accepted that the grammarian spent his last years in Athens (see above), and Jacoby seems to hold that the work was composed there.¹⁶ In my opinion, some speculation is possible when we consider further the dedication of XP to Attalus and the eventual arrival of Apollodorus in Pergamum. That the dedication was accepted, and that the grammarian arrived at the Attalid court, is not explicitly stated by the sources, but is generally considered likely.¹⁷ The XP constituted a great intellectual achievement and Attalus will have had every reason to appreciate them; Apollodorus was by then a prestigious scholar — KN had probably already been published — and Attalus might have been interested in taking advantage of what had happened in Alexandria by welcoming a renowned scholar of that centre. On the other hand, the rejection of such a scholar would have been awkward. Therefore, it is not sure, but it is likely, that Apollodorus entered the court of the Attalids.

This, if it really happened, would not be of secondary importance within the history of philology:¹⁸ a member of the Alexandrian Museum arrived in Pergamum, where Crates of Mallus, the great opponent of Aristarchus, taught. The two scholars represented two alternative methodologies in interpreting Homer: roughly simplifying, the critical and historical approach (Aristarchus) against the allegorical one (Crates). According to the former, the Poet had to be understood within and according to the archaic context in which he lived, whereas according to the latter, the Poet was — quite unhistorically, as it were — a wise and well-informed authority

¹⁵ We may presume that the exile complicated the life and activity of the scholar greatly.

¹⁶ See fn. 11.

¹⁷ See Jacoby 1902, 8; Jacoby 1926, 716 ("Aufenthalt in Pergamon von 144/3 bis 138 oder 133"); Pfeiffer 1973, 387; Montana 2020, 232: "it appears that at the time of Ptolemies' dynastic crisis he fled to Pergamum"; Fleischer 2020, 12: "it seems likely that Apollodorus dwelt in Pergamon for some time after leaving Aristarchus"). Fleischer also argues that Apollodorus, like the Academic philosophers, was supported by the Attalids when he lived in Athens: cf. Fleischer 2020, 56.

¹⁸ This is enhanced by Montana 2020, 232. The scholar rightly exhorts us to overcome any Manichean division between the Pergamenian school — if ever it had a methodological unity — and the Aristarchean: the case of Apollodorus might indicate, on the other hand, that relations and exchanges existed. Obviously, this does not mean that differences between the two schools were absent: contamination requires difference. Montana also exhorts us to move beyond the 'duopoly' of Alexandria and Pergamum, since other cultural centres existed in the ancient Mediterranean, like Rome and Rhodes. Cf. Montana 2020, 227–229.

in every cultural and scientific field.¹⁹ Therefore, the arrival of a disciple of Aristarchus in Pergamum would have been a significant event, which may be understood in a deep sense: did this represent the defeat of the school of Pergamum by the Aristarchean, which then ‘conquered’ Pergamum?²⁰ Or was Aristarchus’ disciple conquered by Crates’ methodology? How did Apollodorus behave in Pergamum?

The fragments of $\Pi\Theta$ give us some clues. The work clearly reveals an allegorical approach in the sense that Glenn Most used that word, i.e. to signify recovering the meaning, veiled and at the same time mediated, by the names and epithets of the gods, the attributes of the gods, the cultic practices, the myths about the gods.²¹ In the extant fragments of $\Pi\Theta$ we find examples of all these features — where the myth, it must be said, plays a secondary role.²² Despite some doubts held by Jacoby (who, in any case, does not deny similarities),²³ from this point of view $\Pi\Theta$ may be considered a ‘Stoic’ work. It is not by chance that fr. 95 of Jacoby’s collection, which will be considered later (cf. § 4), mentions many Stoic scholars, though mingled with the authorities added by the Neoplatonic mediators.²⁴ At the same time, Aristarchus’ methodology is strongly present in $\Pi\Theta$: the distinction between Homer, the guide author, and the post-homeric poets (the so-called νεώτεροι), who played a secondary role, is present, whereas the Stoics considered the authority of Homer and that of later poets, like Hesiod and Euripides, as equal. Another Aristarchean category employed in $\Pi\Theta$ is the distinction between what is said by the narrator and what is said by a character.²⁵ The words of K. Reinhard describe the nature of $\Pi\Theta$ very well: according to the scholar, Apollodorus adapted “Stoic theology to the rules of Aristarchean method.”²⁶

To sum up, from the surviving fragments and the visible practice of the whole treatise, we already perceive that Apollodorus aimed to find a compromise between Aristarchus’ and Crates’ methodologies in interpreting Homer. But where could this happen? In my opinion, only in a context where it would be well-accepted and practically required to find a compromising program, namely if the Athenian

19 Schironi 2018, 583–584, 744–748; Montana 2020, 225–226.

20 See Jacoby 1926, 717 (ad T 2): “der wissenschaftliche Gegensatz Krates-Aristarchos brauchte den selbstständigen Gelehrten nicht zu hindern, seinen Blick auf Pergamon zu richten, wo der Wunsch bestanden haben mag, *die Erbschaft Alexandreias anzutreten*” (italics mine).

21 See Most 1989, 2023–2026.

22 See Jacoby 1926, 757 (perhaps excessive when stating “tatsächlich nimmt Apollodors interpretation... nie von einem Mythos den Ausgang”); Filoni 2018, 409.

23 Jacoby 1926, 757; see also Pfeiffer 1973, 397.

24 See Filoni 2022.

25 See Filoni 2018, 413–414; 2021, 242; 2022.

26 See Reinhardt 1910, 86: “Stoicorum theologiam ad Aristarcheae disciplinae regulas exigeret.”

grammarian, after teaching in Alexandria beside Aristarchus, taught in Pergamum: ΠΘ was composed when Apollodorus worked in the Attalid capital. In my opinion, this is even declared in a precise case, namely the etymology of Apollo's epithets ἱήϊος and παιάν, where Apollodorus combined the contrasting interpretations of Aristarchus and Crates (cf. § 5.2–3), an attempt that is surely consistent with the hybrid methodology of the work.

3 The 'solar theology'

The etymologies of these epithets came to us through to so-called 'solar theology', namely the speech by Vettius Praetextatus on the first day of Macrobius' *Saturnalia*; in this speech it is 'demonstrated' that all the gods are aspects of the same, solar divinity.²⁷

Sections	Macr. Sat. 1.17
'Proem'	1.17.2–6
Apollo	1.17.7–70
Dionysus	1.18.1–24
Mars	1.19.1–6
Mercurius	1.19.7–18
Aesculapius	1.20.1–5
Hercules	1.20.6–12
Isis, Serapis	1.20.13–18
Attis, Great Mother	1.21.1–10
Osiris	1.21.11–12, 14–15
Horus	1.21.13
Zodiac	1.21.16–27
Nemesis	1.22.1
Pan	1.22.2–7
Saturnus	1.22.8
Zeus	1.23.1–22

Most of the gods are male, with some exceptions (e.g., Isis, the Great Mother, Nemesis — others are also mentioned occasionally). All of the male gods are considered solar; among the goddesses, Nemesis is considered the power of the sun (*solis*

²⁷ See Filoni 2021, 229–244 (with previous bibliography and a detailed analysis).

potestas), whereas Isis and the Great Mother represent the earth. Foreign divinities are also included, like Isis and Serapis, Osiris, Horus, Attis and the Great Mother. Not surprisingly, the first in the list, to whom the longest essay is attributed, is Apollo; on the other hand, divinities are interpreted as solar which we would hardly interpret as such, like Ares, Hermes, Asclepios, Pan and so on. The solar essence of these gods is ‘demonstrated’ recurring to the etymology of their names and epithets, their iconography, and/or the rites dedicated to them, providing a wide range of learned knowledge, mentions of literary authors and philosophers (essentially Stoic and Platonic) included. In the proem — or, better, in what remains of it — Plotinus is mentioned. Allegorical interpretation of myth plays a minor role.²⁸ The author of the ‘solar theology’ considers the sun an image of the superior intellect, of which the pagan divinities represent singular aspects.²⁹

According to the reconstruction followed here, Macrobius composed the ‘solar theology’ by way of epitomizing a work of the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry (*On Divine Names?*),³⁰ possibly the Latin edition of the same work by a Roman follower of Porphyry, Cornelius Labeo.³¹ In turn, Porphyry drew abundant material from Apollodorus’ ΠΘ, mostly in the chapter dedicated to Apollo,³² but not only.³³ Jacoby recorded Apollodorus’ parts of the Apolline chapter as the — fundamental — *FGrHist* 244 F 95 of his edition. This complex history created a stratification in Macrobius’ text, so that we may distinguish Latin additions — the latest ingredient of the text — the Neoplatonic part, which indeed constitutes the main body, and the erudition possibly deriving from ΠΘ.

Criteria for identifying the possible Apollodorean material include the following: Homer as the first and most reliable source on pagan religion; the emergence of Aristarchean terminology and hermeneutical categories in interpreting Homer; learned quotations from literature; the use of antiquarian/local literature; mention of Athens and Athenian cults.³⁴ Further, it is possible to compare the ‘solar theology’ with — obviously — fragments of the grammarian (a thing which, indeed, is a rare

²⁸ Filoni 2021, 234–235.

²⁹ Filoni 2021, 273 and fn. 115.

³⁰ Filoni 2021, 235–241. Here is also considered the relation of the ‘solar theology’ — or better of Porphyry’s work source of the latter — with Porphyry’s *About Images*: the latter work seems to have been composed earlier than the source of the ‘solar theology’.

³¹ Filoni 2021, 231–233.

³² Filoni 2021, 236–237, 242–243. Apollodorus — or erudition derived from him — rarely appears in other parts of ‘solar theology’: the grammarian is mentioned at 1.20.4; the Stoic Cleanthes — who belongs to the ‘bibliography’ of ΠΘ — at 1.18.14.

³³ Such a stratification is easy to see in the section dedicated to Apollo πατρώος: Filoni 2021, 243–244.

³⁴ Filoni 2021, 242.

eventuality), and mostly with other witnesses of Apollodorus' ΠΘ, like the allegorical manual of L. Annaeus Cornutus, Heraclitus' *Homeric Allegories*, the *Homeric lexicon* of Apollonius the Sophist, the scholia on Homer and Strabo.³⁵

4 The chapter on Apollo (*Sat.* 1.17.7–70)

Macrobius' chapter on Apollo is the longest and the most complex within those present in the 'solar theology'. In order to analyse it, I divide it into two parts: the former deals mostly with the very name of the god — though some epithets are considered, too (*Sat.* 1.17.7–29) — the latter one only with Apollo's epithets (*Sat.* 1.17.30–70).³⁶ I will begin with the second part (§ 4.1); this way the former, which is a complex one, will be easier to understand (§ 4.2).

4.1 The latter part (*Sat.* 1.17.30–70)

For present purposes, it will be sufficient to examine the text, which is quite long, in a schematic form. We have in the first column Macrobius' passages, in the second the epithets, in the third the authorities who interpreted the epithets. In the last two columns parallelisms with fragments or witnesses of ΠΘ (cf. § 4.3) are indicated. As far as it concerns the authorities, I simply indicate them as 'anonymous' when they are not explicitly mentioned (often), or I indicate the historical peoples when the interpretations are referred to the latter (cf. 1.17.37; 42); if the poet is not the author of the interpretation, but is mentioned only as a witness by the actual author, the name of the poet is indicated in brackets (cf. 1.17.46; 59). In some cases, we have only one interpretation for an epithet (cf. 1.17.32; 35; 47 [x3]; 48 [x3]; 49 [x2]; 64) or for a group of epithets (cf. 1.17.34; 60). Sometimes we have several interpretations — in this case they are numbered — for one epithet (cf. 1.17.31; 33; 42; 46; 50–9+61–3; 65) or for a group of epithets (1.17.36–41; 43–5). The solar interpretations are in bold character.

³⁵ Filoni 2014; 2021.

³⁶ Different division in Syska 1993, 113–209, inspired by the different *solis virtutes*, which Vettius Praetextatus is going to explain (1.17.4); cf. Syska 1993, 113. The scholar applies a frame derived from the solar virtues to Apollo and the relative Macrobian section (1.17.7–70). Actually, Praetextatus' words seem to refer not only to Apollo, but to the whole 'solar theology' and all of the gods dealt with here (1.17.4: *ita diversae virtutes solis nomina dis dederunt*).

Tab. 7: Structure of the latter part of the chapter on Apollo (*Sat.* 1.17.7–70).

Macrobius <i>Sat.</i> 1.17	epithets	<i>auctores</i> , interpretations	Apollodorus' fragments	Apollodorus' witnesses
30: <i>nunc ex aliis quoque huius dei nominibus eundem esse Apollinem et so- lem probemus</i>				
31	λοξίας	1) Oenopides 2) Cleanthes 3) anonymous		
32	δήλιος	anonymous	fr. 99 (Corn. 32 [55.68–70 T.])	
33	φοῖβος	1) Cornificius 2) anonymous	fr. 98 (Heraclitus 7.5–7); fr. 99 (Corn. 32 [55.13–14])	Ap. Soph. 164.10–13 B.
34	φάνης, φανεός	anonymous		
35	άειγενέτης	anonymous		
36–41	λυκηγενής, λύκιος ³⁷	1) Antipater of Tarsus 2) Cleanthes 3) prisci Graecorum	fr. 98]. (Heraclitus 7.10–11)	
42	πατρῷος	1) Athenians 2) Orpheus		
43–45	νόμιος, ἐπιμήλιος, ποιμνιος ἀρνοκό- μης, ναπαῖος ³⁸	1) ex officio pastorali 2) anonymous		
46	ἐλελεύς	1) anonymous (+Eurip.) 2) anonymous (+Emped.) 3) Plato		
47 (sun rays)	χρυσόκομας	anonymous	fr. 99 (Corn. 32 [55.19–20])	
47 (sun rays)	ἀκερσικόμας	anonymous	fr. 99 (Corn. 32 [55.19–21])	Ap. Soph. 19.26–28 B.

³⁷ On these epithets, see Filoni 2021, 255–268.³⁸ On these epithets, see Filoni 2021, 244–254.

Macrobius <i>Sat.</i> 1.17	epithets	<i>auctores</i> , interpretations	Apollodorus' fragments	Apollodorus' witnesses
47 (sun rays)	ἀργυρότοξος	anonymous		
48	σμινθεύς	anonymous		
48	καρνεῖος	anonymous		
48	κιλλαῖος	anonymous		
49	θυμβραῖος	anonymous		
49	φιλήσιος	anonymous		
50–59 + 61–63	πύθιος	1) anonymous 2) anonymous 3) Antipater of Tarsus 4) anonymous (+Eurip.) 5) Cornificius		
60 (sun rays as arrows)	(ἐκάεργος) ἐκηβόλος, ἐκατηβόλος, ἑκατος	anonymous	fr. 97 (<i>Sch. Hom. Ge</i> , Φ 472 on ἐκάεργος); fr. 98 (Heracl. 7.8–9); fr. 99 (Corn. 32 [54.9–13])	Ap. Soph. 65.8 (ἐκάεργος), 65.14 (ἐκατηβόλος)
64	διδυμαῖος	anonymous		
65	δέλφιος	1) anonymous 2) Numenius		
66–70	[iconography of Assyrian Apollo]	anonymous		

In this second part of Macrobius' chapter on Apollo, the epithets are mostly dealt with rapidly;³⁹ they are sometimes grouped around certain motifs, such as sun-rays (1.17.47: χρυσοκόμας, ἀκερσικόμας, ἀργυρότοξος) or sun-rays as arrows (1.17.60: ἐκάεργος, ἐκηβόλος, ἐκατηβόλος). The solar interpretations are by far the most frequent: the non-solar ones are few and usually mentioned only to be ruled out (cf. 1.17.42: πατρώος; 50: πύθιος). There is no doubt that the solar interpretation is dear not only to the Neoplatonic mediator, but also to Apollodorus, as confirmed by the parallel witnesses (cf. 1.17.32; 33; 36–41; 47 [x2]; 60).⁴⁰

³⁹ Notable exceptions are the essays on the epithets πύθιος, for which are attested many allegorical explanations, and λύκιος/λυκηγενής.

⁴⁰ In the case of Apollo πατρώος (cf. 1.17.42), Apollodorus prefers an antiquarian interpretation: Filoni 2021, 243–244.

4.2 The former part (Sat. 1.17.7–29)

The former section of the two, which is very complex, in my opinion should be structured thus:

1.17.7–15: Interpretations of the name of Apollo:

(7) *Apollinis nomen multiplici interpretatione ad solem refertur; cuius rei ordinem pergam.*

A) *Plato solem Ἀπόλλωνα cognominatum scribit ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀποπάλλειν τὰς ἀκτῖνας, id est a iactu radiorum;*

B) *Chrysippus* ὡς οὐχὶ τῶν πολλῶν καὶ φαύλων οὐσιῶν τοῦ πυρὸς ὄντα, *primam enim nominis litteram retinere significationem negandi,*

C) ἢ ὅτι μόνος ἐστὶ καὶ οὐχὶ πολλοί, *nam et Latinitas eum, quia tantam claritudinem solus obtinuit, solem vocavit.*

D) (8) *Speusippus, quod ex ignibus multis constet vis eius, ὡς ἀπὸ πολλῶν οὐσιῶν πυρὸς αὐτοῦ συνεστῶτος.*

E) *Cleanthes* ὡς ἀπ' ἄλλων καὶ ἄλλων τόπων τὰς ἀνατολὰς ποιουμένου, *quod ab aliis atque aliis locorum declinationibus faciat ortus.*

F) (9) *Cornificius arbitratur Apollinem nominatum ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀναπολεῖν, id est quia intra circuitum mundi, quem Graeci πόλον appellant, impetu latus ad ortus refertur.*

G) *alii cognominatum Apollinem putant ὡς ἀπολλύντα τὰ ζῶα; exanimat enim et perimit animantes cum pestem intemperie caloris immittit, (10) ut Euripides in Phaethonte: “ὦ χρυσοφεγγὲς ἥλι’, ὡς μ’ ἀπώλεσας, ὅθεν σ’ Ἀπόλλων ἐμφανῶς κλήζει βροτός.” Item Archilochus: “ἄναξ Ἀπολλον, καὶ σὺ τοὺς μὲν αἰτίους σήμαινε καὶ σφᾶς ὄλλυ’, ὥσπερ ὄλλύεις.” (11) Denique inustos morbo Ἀπολλωνοβλήτους καὶ ἡλιοβλήτους appellant, et quia similes sunt solis effectibus effectus lunae in iuvando nocendoque, ideo feminas certis adflicta morbis σεληνοβλήτους et Ἀρτεμιδοβλήτους vocant.*

(12) *Hinc est quod arcu et sagittis Apollinis simulacra decorantur, ut per sagittas intellegatur vis emissa radiorum; <unde Homerus:> αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ’ αὐτοῖσι βέλος ἐχευεὺκὲς ἐφείεις | βάλλ’ (Il. 1.51–52).*

H) (13) *idem auctor est et publicae sospitatis, quam creditur sol animantibus praestare temperie. Sed quia perpetuam praestat salubritatem, et pestilens ab ipso casus rarior est, ideo Apollinis simulacra manu dextera Gratias gestant, arcum cum sagittis sinistra, quod ad noxam sit pigrior, et salutem manus promptior largiatur. (14) Hinc est quod eidem adtribuitur medendi potestas, quia temperatus solis calor morborum omnium fuga est. Nam ὡς ἀπελαύνοντα τὰ νόσους Ἀπόλλωνα, tamquam Ἀπέλλωνα, cognominatum putant. (15) Quae sententia Latinae quoque nominis enuntiationi congruens fecit, ne huius dei nomen verteremus, ut Apollinem appellentem mala intellegas, quem Athenienses ἀλεξίκακον appellant. Sed et Lindii colunt Apollinem λοῖμιον, hoc cognomine finita pestilentia nuncupatum. Eadem opinio sospitalis et medici dei in nostris quoque sacris fovetur. Namque virgines Vestales ita indignant: “Apollo medice, Apollo Paeon.”*

(7) Apollo's name is related to the sun by many different paths of understanding, which I shall pursue in order.

A) Plato writes that the sun was named Apollo “as though from *apopallein tas actinas*,” that is, from casting his rays;

B) Chrysippus “because he is not one of fire’s many [*pollōn*] lowly substances” — for the first letter of his name keeps its negative force –

C) “or because the sun is one and not many [*polloī*]” – for Latin, too, called him ‘sun’ because he alone [*solus*] is so bright;

D) (8) Speusippus “because he is constituted from many [*pollōn*] of fire’s substances”;

E) Cleanthes “because he rises now from one point, now from another [*ap’ allōn*], at different elevations.”

F) (9) Cornificius judges that Apollo’s name comes from ‘turning up again’ (*anapolein*), that is, because he is carried forcefully around the vault of heaven, which the Greeks call the *polos*, and returns to the point of his rising.

G) Others think that Apollo got his name from destroying [*apollunta*] living things, as he does when he lets loose a plague with his immoderate heat, (10) as Euripides writes in his *Phaethōn*: “O sun of golden light, as you have destroyed me, whence mortal man frankly calls you ‘Apollo’.” Similarly Archilochus: “You too, lord Apollo, mark out those who are guilty and destroy [*olly*] them as is your wont.” (11) Finally, they call those withered by disease ‘Apollo-struck’ and ‘sun-struck’; and because the actions of the moon are like those of the sun when it comes to helping and harming, they call women afflicted with certain diseases ‘moon-struck’ and ‘Artemis-struck’.

(12) That is why the images of Apollo are adorned with a bow and arrows: the arrows represent the force of his rays when they are shot forth, <whence Homer> “but then let loose your piercing shaft against them and strike.”

H (13) Apollo is also the source of the general well-being he is thought to provide living creatures by tempering the climate. But because he continually provides health and only rarely gives rise to sickness, images of Apollo hold the Graces in their right hand, a bow and arrows in the left, because he is slower to do harm, while his readier hand is lavish with well-being.

(14) Hence the power of healing is attributed to him too: the sun’s moderate warmth puts all diseases to flight, and that is why they think Apollo was named from ‘driving away [*ape-launonta*] sicknesses’, as though he were ‘Apello’. (15) That idea squared with the pronunciation of his name in Latin too, so there was no need to translate the god’s name: as a consequence, you may take Apollo to be the one who drives woes away [*apellentem*], whom the Athenians call ‘of the plague’, so called because he ended a pestilence. The same conception of saving and healing god is fostered in our rites too, for the Vestal virgins invoke him with the formulas “Apollo Healer, Apollo Paean.”

transl. Koster

1.17.16–20. Interpretation of the epithets ἰήϊος and παῖάν (about which cf. § 5)

1.17.21. The epithet οὔλιος (and οὐλία):

Eundem deum praestantem salubribus causis οὔλιον appellant, id est sanitatis auctorem, ut ait Homerus “οὐλέ τε καὶ <μάλα> χαῖρε” (Od. 24.402). Maeander scribit Milesios Ἀπόλλωνι Οὐλίῳ pro salute sua immolare. Pherecydes refert Thesea, cum in Creta ad Minotaurum duceretur, novisse pro salute atque reditu suo Ἀπόλλωνι οὐλίῳ καὶ Ἀρτέμειδι οὐλίῳ.

They call the same god who presides over the sources of health Oulios, or “author of well-being”, as Homer says: “Health to you, and much joy.” Maeandrius writes that the people of

Miletus sacrifice to Apollo Oulios to their health. Pherecydes reports that when Theseus was brought to Crete to face the Minotaur, he made a vow to Apollo Oulios and Artemis Oulia for his safe return.

transl. Koster

1.17.22. Comparison with Poseidon and Hermes:

nec mirum si gemini effectus variis nominibus celebrantur, cum alios quoque deos ex contrario in eadem re duplici censerī et potestate accipiamus et nomine, ut Neptunum, quem alias ἐνοσίχθονα id est terram moventem, alias ἀσφαλίωνα, id est stabilientem vocant. Item Mercurius hominum mentes vel oculos et excitat et sopit, ut ait poeta (Il. 24.343).

Nor is it surprising if the god's two actions are celebrated under different names, since we learn that the other gods who have opposite effects in the same sphere are judged to have a twofold power and a double name, as in the case of Neptune, whom people call now Eno-sichthōn, or 'earth-shaker', now Asphaliōn, or 'he who steadies'. Similarly, Mercury both arouses and lulls to sleep men's minds or eyes, as the poet says "he took up his wand with which he beguiles men's sight.

transl. Koster

This former part deals with the very name of the god (1.17.7–15), a first set of epithets (ἥϊος, παϊάν: 1.17.16–20; οὔλιος, οὐλία: 1.17.21), and makes a comparison with the case of other divinities (1.17.22). The name of Apollo receives eight etymologies, which are immediately presented as 'solar' (1.17.7: *Apollinis nomen multiplici interpretatione ad solem refertur*); this means that this former part of Macrobius' Apolline chapter is strongly consistent with the following. The solarly of the god is demonstrated through etymologies, which refer the name either to the sun itself (Plato refers the name to the sun-rays [A]; Chrysippus says it derives from the 'solitude' of the sun in its fundamental role [C]; according to Cleanthes, from the different positions the sun arises from [E]; according to Cornificius, from its revolving around the earth [F])⁴¹ or to the fiery matter of the sun (Chrysippus — who, as it seems, offered many interpretations — says it derives from the noble and simple elements the fire consists of [B]; according to Speusippus, it derives from the fire which consists of many elements [D]). The last two interpretations, G and H, are solar too, but only indirectly: the name of Apollo means 'he, who kills what lives' (1.17.9: ἀπολλύντα τὰ ζῷα [G]) or, conversely, 'he who casts the diseases away' (1.17.14: ἀπελαύνοντα τὰς νόσους [H]) because, according to a physical theory, the sun is able respectively to provoke pestilence by corrupting the air through an excess of heat (1.17.9: *exanimat enim et perimit animantes cum pestem intemperie caloris immittit* [G]) or, on the contrary, to bring health to all the creatures through a

⁴¹ Properly, Cornificius belongs to the Latin additions; see Filoni 2021, 231, fn. 15, and 232 fn. 18.

temperate heat (1.17.13: *idem auctor est et publicae sospitatis, quam creditur sol animantibus praestare temperie* [H]); the epithets ἀλεξικακος and λοίμιος are involved in supporting the latter perspective: the god receives these epithets because he casts pestilence away (1.17.15: ... *Athenienses ἀλεξικακον appellant. Sed et Lindii colunt Apollinem λοίμιον, hoc cognomine finita pestilentia nuncupatum*).⁴²

The proper explanation of many of Apollo's epithets begins with ἥϊος and παϊάν — which will be the core of the present essay, and will be dealt with later (cf. § 5) — and οὔλιος/οὔλια. The latter two epithets involve the sister of the god: Pherecydes attests that Theseus sacrificed both to Apollo οὔλιος and to Artemis οὔλια (1.17.21: *Pherecydes refert Thesea ... novisse pro salute atque reditu suo Ἀπόλλωνι οὔλιω καὶ Ἀρτέμιδι οὔλιᾳ*). It must be said that, in this respect, Artemis is also present in the interpretation G of Apollo's name: as humans killed by Apollo are called 'stricken by Apollo/the sun', so the women killed by Artemis are called 'stricken by the moon/Artemis' (1.17.11: *inustos morbo Ἀπολλωνοβλήτους καὶ ἡλιοβλήτους appellant et quia similes sunt solis effectibus effectus lunae ... ideo feminas certis adflictas morbis σεληνοβλήτους et Ἀρτεμιδοβλήτους vocant*). Apollo, through the epithet οὔλιος, is perceived as a beneficent divinity (1.17.21: *Eundem deum praestantem salubribus causis οὔλιον appellant, id est sanitatis auctorem*): therefore Milesians and Theseus sacrifice to him. The etymology is supported by a Homeric passage, which attests a — indeed rare — root referring to good health (*Od.* 24.402: οὔλετε καὶ <μάλα> χαῖρε); accordingly, the epithet is interpreted as 'he, who heals.'

The comparison of Apollo to Poseidon and Hermes casts some light upon all this erudition, which may seem quite puzzling. Hermes is able to both open and close human minds and eyes, as attested another time by Homer — probably *Il.* 24.343–344 ~ *Od.* 24.3–4 ([ράβδος] τῇ τ' ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει | ὣν ἐθέλει τοὺς δ' αὖτε καὶ ὑπνῶντας ἐγείρει), Poseidon to move the earth, as well as to maintain its stability, as attested respectively by the epithets ἐνοσίχθων ('earth-shaker') and ἀσφαλίων ('stabilizer'). We need not be surprised, Macrobius advises, if twin powers are described by different epithets (1.17.22: *nec mirum si gemini effectus variis nominibus celebrantur*); not only Apollo, but also the other divinities, are perceived by humans via two powers and therefore two epithets (*cum alios quoque deos ... duplici censerī et potestate accipiamus et nomine*); this is because the contraries exist inside the same thing (*ex contrario in eadem re*). In other terms, the god who rules a determined phenomenon in the world — Hermes sleep, Poseidon earthquakes — is able to produce the phenomenon itself, as well as to retain it; the existence of two apparently contrasting epithets mirrors the existence of a double, ambiguous power of a god, that of provoking an effect or not.

42 On these epithets, cf. § 4.3.

The argumentation clearly indicates that this principle, which we can call the principle of divine ambiguity, is to be applied to Apollo: the cases of Hermes and Poseidon are useful for understanding that of Apollo. For, the principle emerges in interpretation G of the name of the god: the latter is a negative etymology of Apollo's name ('he who kills what lives': see above), but the interpreter, when recalling the similarity with Artemis, observes that both divinities have similar powers in both benefiting and harming humans (1.17.11: *quia similes sunt solis effectibus effectus lunae in iuvando nocendoque*). The iconography of the god, represented with bow and arrows, is interpreted from both points of view: the weapons clearly reflect the negative side of Apollo (1.17.12: *Hinc est quod arcu et sagittis Apollinis simulacra decorantur, ut per sagittas intellegatur vis emissa radiorum* — interpretation G), but the placement of the weapons in the left hand, as well as that of the Graces in the right, arguably suggests slowness in punishing and readiness in producing health (1.17.13: *Sed quia perpetuam praestat salubritatem, et pestilens ab ipso casus rarior est, ideo Apollinis simulacra manu dextera Gratias gestant, arcum cum sagittis sinistra, quod ad noxam sit pigrior, et salutem manus promptior largiatur* — interpretation H).⁴³ In interpretation H, which is a positive one (see above), to support the latter, the epithets ἀλεξίκακος and λoίμιος are connected to positive etymologies; yet λoίμιος derives from the very name of the pestilence (λοιμός). The same ambiguity is reflected by the epithets οὔλιος and οὐλία: though interpreted positively (see above), they sound very similar to ὄλλυμι. Most of all, interpretations G and H, which characterize Apollo in two opposite ways, but at the same time rely on the same principle, seem to constitute the two sides of the same typical coin: they assign to him — as well as to Artemis — the dual power to excite or retain the element ruled by him — i.e. solar (or lunar) influence, in particular the power to heat — so as to produce life or death for living beings.

In conclusion, the principle of divine ambiguity crosses through a good part of interpretations G and H concerning the name of Apollo and seems to unify them; the epithets ἀλεξίκακος and λoίμιος, as well as οὔλιος and οὐλία, are also involved; the cases of Hermes and Poseidon are mentioned in order to make this principle intelligible. There is no doubt that this double interpretation — *scil.* G and H considered together — is the most important one among those mentioned here; this is also confirmed by its final position, and the width and the erudition which characterizes it. The previous interpretations, all of which are solar, seem only to introduce it: their being solar surely enhances this specific hermetical direction, but the final, two-sided interpretation seems to be the most acceptable.

⁴³ The iconography described by Macrobius is convincingly identified by Chiai as that of Delian Apollo: cf. Chiai 2016, 244–248.

4.3 Comparison with Apollodorus' fragments and witnesses

We have now to compare Macrobius' essay with the fragments of ΠΘ or possible readers of that text. The *Scholia genevensia* quote a passage of the work *verbatim*, which deals with the questions we have found in Macrobius:

Ἀπολλόδωρος ἐν <Ι>Γ Περὶ θεῶν “ἐφόσον γὰρ τῷ Ποσειδῶνι προσήκειν ἡγεῖτο [scil. Ὅμηρος] τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκοδομίαν, ὃν ἡμεῖς ἀσφάλιον καὶ θεμελιοῦχον, αὐτὸς δὲ [scil. Ὅμηρος] ἐνοσίχθονα καὶ γαυίοχον καλεῖν εἴωθεν, ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον καὶ <τὰ> κατὰ τὰς νομάς τῷ νομίῳ Ἀπόλλωνι.”

Schol. Hom. Ge. II. 21.447 Erbse (= 244 FGrHist 96)

Apollodorus in Book 13 of his *On the Gods*: “For in so far as he (Homer) believed that matters concerning the building of walls belong to Poseidon, whom we call Asphalios (‘Securer’) and Themeliouchos (‘Holding-the-Foundation’), but (he [scil. Homer]) was accustomed to call Enosichthōn (‘Earth-shaker’) and Gaiēochos (‘Earth-Upholding’), so similarly (he believed that) the matters concerning the grazing of herds belong to Apollo Nomios (‘Of Shepherds’). (adapted from Williams)

On the one hand, Homer held that Poseidon was the god of construction/building (τῷ Ποσειδῶνι προσήκειν ἡγεῖτο [scil. Ὅμηρος] τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκοδομίαν); this is confirmed by the actual epithets with which we venerate the god, i.e. ‘stabilizer’ and ‘lord of foundations’ (ὃν ἡμεῖς ἀσφάλιον καὶ θεμελιοῦχον [scil. καλεῖν εἰώθαμεν]). On the other hand, Homer designated Poseidon with the epithets ‘earth-shaker’ and ‘lord of the earth’ (αὐτὸς δὲ [scil. Ὅμηρος] ἐνοσίχθονα καὶ γαυίοχον καλεῖν εἴωθεν), hinting at the power of the god to shake the earth and destroy what was built.⁴⁴ Indeed, the case of Poseidon is mentioned within a wide, comparative clause: “As far as (Homer) held that the art of building fitted with Poseidon... so far (Homer held that) the art of shepherds fitted with Apollo νόμιος” (ἐφόσον γὰρ τῷ Ποσειδῶνι προσήκειν ἡγεῖτο [scil. Ὅμηρος] τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκοδομίαν... ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον καὶ <τὰ> κατὰ τὰς νομάς τῷ νομίῳ Ἀπόλλωνι).⁴⁵ It is not necessary to spend words on the importance of Homer, from Apollodorus' point of view, as a witness on Greek religion. We also perceive that, as in Macrobius, the case of Poseidon is useful in understanding an epithet of Apollo — in this case, νόμιος; for, in the cases of the two divinities, the principle of divine ambiguity is clearly visible. This means that the

⁴⁴ The epithet γαυίοχος may be understood thanks to the other epithet present in the same *colon*, namely ἐνοσίχθων.

⁴⁵ About which see Filoni 2021, 248–249. The principle of divine ambiguity emerges in the case of νόμιος very clearly. If Poseidon is the god used as example, Apollo's epithets which are clarified are not the same: in fr. 96 it is νόμιος, in the case of Macrobius it is the very name of the god and the epithets οὔλιος, οὔλια, ἰήϊος and παϊάν. The grammarian might have recurred to this tool frequently: cf. Filoni 2018, 472; 2021, 243, fn. 49.

principle, which is the core of the most important explanation in Macrobius' essay (*scil.* GH), derives from ΠΘ.

Now we have to consult the witnesses of Apollodorus' ΠΘ, i.e. authors who consulted and excerpted the work of the grammarian, though not mentioning it in that precise passage — or not at all (cf. § 4.1):

Heracl. *Hom. All.* 7.3; 8.1–4 (244 *FGrHist* 98):

(7.3) καὶ καθ' Ὅμηρον αὐτός ἐστιν Ἀπόλλων καὶ ἥλιος (cf. 8.1; 8.5) ... (8.1) αἱ λοιμικαὶ δὲ νόσοι τὴν μεγίστην ἔχουσι τῆς φθορᾶς πρόφασιν τὸν ἥλιον. (2) ὅταν μὲν γὰρ ἡ θέρειος μαλακὴ καὶ πραεῖα... διαθάλληται, σωτήριον ἀνθρώποις ἐπιμειδῖα φέγγος· (3) αὐχμηρὰ δὲ καὶ διάπυρος ἐκκαεῖσα νοσηροῦς ἀπὸ γῆς ἀτμοὺς ἐφέλκεται... (4) τῶν δ' ὀξειῶν συμφορῶν αἴτιον Ὅμηρος ὑπεστήσατο τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα, διαρρήδην τοῖς ἀφνιδίοις θανάτοις ἐπιγράφων τὸν θεόν — φησὶ γάρ· “ἐλθὼν ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων Ἀρτέμιδι ξύν | οἷσ' ἀγανοῖς βελέεσσι ἐποιοχόμενος κατέπεφνεν”

(*Od.* 15.410–411)

in Homer too Apollo is identified with the sun... | (8.1) The sun gives plagues their best opportunity to be destructive. (8.2) For when a soft and mild summer is gently warmed... his saving light smiles upon humanity; (8.3) on the other hand, the scorching of a parched and fiery summer draws pestilential vapors from the earth... (8.4) Homer made Apollo the cause of acute epidemics, explicitly connecting the god's name with sudden death, for he says “then came Apollo of the silver bow with Artemis, and with his gentle arrows fell upon and killed them.” (transl. Russel/Konstan)

Heraclitus argues that, according to Homer, Apollo and the sun are the same (καθ' Ὅμηρον αὐτός ἐστιν Ἀπόλλων καὶ ἥλιος); then it is said that the sun produces positive effects when it warms (ὅταν μὲν γὰρ ἡ θέρειος μαλακὴ καὶ πραεῖα... διαθάλληται, σωτήριον ἀνθρώποις ἐπιμειδῖα φέγγος), as well as producing pestilential vapors when it blazes (αὐχμηρὰ δὲ καὶ διάπυρος ἐκκαεῖσα νοσηροῦς ἀπὸ γῆς ἀτμοὺς ἐφέλκεται). Accordingly, the sun may be the cause of good health (σωτήριον ἀνθρώποις ἐπιμειδῖα φέγγος) or of pestilence (αἱ λοιμικαὶ δὲ νόσοι τὴν μεγίστην ἔχουσι τῆς φθορᾶς πρόφασιν τὸν ἥλιον). The god is also able to cause sudden death (διαρρήδην τοῖς ἀφνιδίοις θανάτοις ἐπιγράφων τὸν θεόν), as attested by Homer (*Od.* 15.410–411).⁴⁶ Clearly, we see here the same ideas we found in Macrobius, namely the solar perception of the god, the principle of divine ambiguity, the involvement of Artemis, who emerges as a parallel — perhaps less important — figure beside her brother, and the role of Homer, who witnesses two points. All these features fit very well with Apollodorus, who is explicitly quoted shortly earlier in

⁴⁶ Since Homer is often mentioned as an authority in Apollodorus, other passages of the Poet might also have been mentioned to attest the point: see fn. 70.

Heraclitus (*Hom. All.* 7.1 = 244 *FGrHist* T 10). Not by chance, Heraclitus' chapters 7 and 8 are accepted by Jacoby as Apollodorus' fr. 98.

οὔλιον δ' Ἀπόλλωνα καλοῦσι τινα καὶ Μιλήσιοι καὶ Δῆλιοι, οἷον ὑγιαστικὸν καὶ παιωνικόν· τὸ γὰρ οὔλειν ὑγιαίνειν, ἀφ' οὗ καὶ τὸ οὐλή, καὶ “οὔλέ τε καὶ <μάλα> χαῖρε” (*Od.* 24.402)· ἱατικὸς γὰρ Ἀπόλλων. | καὶ ἡ Ἄρτεμις ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρτεμεῖς ποιεῖν. καὶ ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ἡ σελήνη συνοικεῖνται τούτοις (*scil.* Apollo and Artemis) ὅτι τῆς περὶ τοὺς ἀέρας εὐκρασίας αἵτιοι· καὶ τὰ λοιμικὰ δὲ πάθη καὶ τοὺς αὐτομάτους θανάτους τούτοις ἀνάπτουσι τοῖς θεοῖς.

Strabo 14.1.6 (244 *FGrHist* 99f | 99b)

Both Milesians and Delians invoke an Apollo *Oulios*, that is, a god of ‘health and healing’, for the verb *oulein* means ‘to be healthy’; whence the noun *oule* and the salutation ‘both health and great joy to thee’; for Apollo is the god of healing. And Artemis has her name from the fact that she makes people *artemeas*. And both Helios and Selene are closely associated with these, since they are the causes of the temperatures of the air. And both pestilential diseases and sudden deaths are imputed to these gods. (transl. Jones)

Strabo does not explicitly mention the grammarian of Athens, or his theological work, but clearly reports the most important points we have read in Macrobius: the assimilation of Apollo and Artemis to the sun and the moon (ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ἡ σελήνη συνοικεῖνται τούτοις); the fact that they are able to produce both temperate heat (τῆς περὶ τοὺς ἀέρας εὐκρασίας αἵτιοι) and pestilence (τὰ λοιμικὰ δὲ πάθη ... τούτοις ἀνάπτουσι τοῖς θεοῖς); and both gods may cause sudden death (τοὺς αὐτομάτους θανάτους τούτοις ἀνάπτουσι τοῖς θεοῖς). Strabo also speaks of the positive, curative side of Apollo (ἱατικὸς γὰρ Ἀπόλλων) and mentions the same epithet we have seen in Macrobius, i.e. οὔλιος, even referencing the same etymology (τὸ γὰρ οὔλειν ὑγιαίνειν), the same literary authority (“οὔλέ τε καὶ <μάλα> χαῖρε” [*Od.* 24.402]) and the same cult place (οὔλιον δ' Ἀπόλλωνα καλοῦσι τινα... Μιλήσιοι). There are so many similarities with what we have found in Macrobius that it can only be that Strabo — who read Apollodorus directly — is summarizing the same passage of ΠΘ that has come down to us, in a reworked version, through Macrobius. Accordingly, we may assign to Apollodorus the points present in the same passage, though absent in the other witnesses: that also the Delians venerate Apollo as οὔλιος (οὔλιον δ' Ἀπόλλωνα καλοῦσι τινα καὶ Μιλήσιοι καὶ Δῆλιοι); that the term οὐλή derives from the same root of οὔλιος (τὸ γὰρ οὔλειν ὑγιαίνειν, ἀφ' οὗ καὶ τὸ οὐλή, καὶ “*Od.* 24.402”);⁴⁷ the etymology of the name of Artemis, as ‘she who makes healthy’

47 Linguistics attest a more complex situation: many roots are involved, which indeed produced several similar terms; the latter were erroneously related to each other by the ancient grammarians. We have: 1) οὔλος/ὄλος (‘entire’), from which our οὔλε derived (apparently a vocative taken as imperative form); 2) οὔλος (‘lock’) related to οὔλαμος, ἱουλος; 3) οὔλος/οὔλιος (‘fatal, destructive’),

(καὶ ἡ Ἄρτεμις ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρτεμεῖς ποιεῖν), which perfectly corresponds to the positive interpretation of οὐλίος and οὐλία as ‘he/she who heals’ (cf. § 4.2).⁴⁸

Ἀπόλλων ὁ ἥλιός ἐστιν, Ἄρτεμις δὲ ἡ σελήνη... | δοκοῦσι γὰρ καὶ φθεῖρην ἔσθ’ ὅτε τὸν ἀέρα καὶ τῶν λοιμικῶν καταστάσεων αἰτιοὶ γενέσθαι· διὸ καὶ τοὺς ὀξεῖς αὐτοῖς θανάτους ἀνέτιθεσαν οἱ πάλοι, καὶ ὁ ποιητὴς ὡς ἐμφανές τι ἐν τῷ λοιμῷ παρεισάγει τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖα λέγοντα ὅτι ζητητέος μάντις “ὅς κ’ εἴποι ὅτι τόσσον ἐχώσατο φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων” (Il. 1.64). τοῦτου δ’ ἐνεκεν οἶονται κατ’ εὐφημισμὸν τὴν μὲν Ἄρτεμιν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρτεμεῖς ποιεῖν, ὃ ἐστὶν ὑγιεῖς, ὠνομάσθαι, τὸν δ’ Ἀπόλλωνα ὡς ἀπολύονθ’ ἡμᾶς τῶν νόσων ἢ ἀπελαύνοντα ἀφ’ ἡμῶν αὐτὰς ἢ ἀπολούοντα ταύτης τετευχέναι τῆς προσηγορίας καθ’ ἣν ἐννοίαν καὶ παιῶν ἐκλήθη καὶ ἱατρὸς ἔδοξεν εἶναι. τινὲς δὲ αὐτόθεν Ἀπόλλωνα αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀπολλύναι — φασὶν εἰρησθαι — | παιᾶνα δ’ αὐτὸν ἐκάλεσαν εἶπουν κατ’ ἀντίφρασιν καὶ ἐξυλαστικῶς, ἵνα μὴ νόσους αὐτοῖς ἐπιτέμῃ μηδὲ φθεῖρῃ τὸν ἀναπνεόμενον ὑπ’ αὐτῶν ἀέρα, εἴτε καὶ ὡς τῷ ὄντι τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὑγιείας τῷ σώματι αἰτίου γινομένου διὰ τῆς τοῦ περιέχοντος εὐκρασίας.

Cornutus (Επιδρομή 32, 54.8–9 | 54.16–55.5 | 58.3–7 Torres)

Apollo is the sun, and Artemis the moon ... | For sometimes they seem to corrupt the air and to be responsible for pestilential states – which is why the ancients attributed sudden deaths to them. And the Poet represents Achilles as saying during the plague, as if it was something obvious, that a soothsayer should be sought, “who might say why Phoebus Apollo raged so much.” Because of this, they think that we are dealing with euphemisms: Artemis being named from making things stable (*atremeis*), that is, healthy, and Apollo being so addressed as delivering (*apoluōn*) us from diseases, or driving them away (*apelaunōn*) from us, or destroying (*apolluōn*) them. (This notion led to his being named *Paieōn* (‘healer’) and considered a physician.) For the same reason, some say that it (the sun) was called Apollo from to destroy (*apol-lunai*) ... | They called him *Paian* (‘healer’) – whether, indeed, by antithesis, to appease him, so that he should not send diseases to them or corrupt the air they breathed, or whether it was because he is in fact himself the cause of bodily health by making the immediate environment well tempered. (transl. Boys-Stones)

Cornutus’ chapter on Apollo is a long and a complex one, and now it is not possible to consider all the passages where Apollodorus’ influence — which must have been great — emerges;⁴⁹ therefore, only the passages that are some way in relation to the question dealt with here will be examined. The Stoic philosopher accepts the

related to ὀλοός, ὄλλυμι; 4) οὐλή (always referred in Homer to Odysseus’ scar). Cf. *Lfgre* s.vv. οὐλή, οὐλος I, II, III; Chantraine *DÉLG* s.vv. οὐλή, οὐλος 1, 2, 3.

⁴⁸ Such similarities with Macrobius were already indicated by Münzel 1883, 22. Unfortunately, the scholar held that the note derived not from ΠΘ, but from ΚΝ, and later interpolated into Strabo’s text. Jacoby recorded Strabo’s excerpt as fr. 99f and 99b. The inversion in respect to Strabo’s presentation derives from the fact that Jacoby, in publishing the witnesses of Apollodorus’ doctrine on Apollo, follows Macrobius’ sequence (*scil.* Macr. 1.17.12–14 ~ Strabo’s latter part [divine ambiguity]; Macrobius’ 1.17.15 ~ Strabo’s former part [οὐλίος]).

⁴⁹ See the experiment with Cornutus’ chapter on Poseidon: cf. Filoni 2018, 419–564.

identification of Apollo and Artemis with the sun and the moon (Ἀπόλλων ὁ ἥλιός ἐστιν, Ἄρτεμις δὲ ἡ σελήνη). The god, through a temperate climate, is able to produce good health (ὡς τῷ ὄντι τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὑγείας τῷ σώματι αἰτίου γινομένου διὰ τῆς τοῦ περιέχοντος εὐκρασίας), and he and his sister can also corrupt the air and therefore cause pestilence (δοκοῦσι γὰρ καὶ φθείρειν ἔσθ' ὅτε τὸν ἀέρα καὶ τῶν λοιμικῶν καταστάσεων αἴτιοι γενέσθαι); Homer considers the latter fact well-known when he introduces Achilles, during the famous pestilence in the *Iliad*, looking for a seer and asking why Apollo is angry with the Achaeans (ὁ ποιητής ὡς ἐμφανές τι ἐν τῷ λοιμῷ παρεισάγει τὸν Ἀχιλλέα λέγοντα ὅτι ζητητέος μάντις “*Il.* 1.64”). Apollo and Artemis also cause sudden death (διδό καὶ τοὺς ὀξεῖς αὐτοῖς θανάτους ἀνετίθεσαν οἱ πάλα). The name Artemis derives from ‘making healthy’ (τὴν μὲν Ἄρτεμιν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρτεμῆς ποιεῖν, ὃ ἐστὶν ὑγιεῖς, ὠνομάσθαι). Apollo is etymologized in many ways: the god was given his name because either “he frees us from diseases or drives them away from us or purifies (/washes)⁵⁰ us from them” (τὸν δ' Ἀπόλλωνα ὡς ἀπολύονθ' ἡμᾶς τῶν νόσων ἢ ἀπελαύνοντα ἀφ' ἡμῶν αὐτὰς ἢ ἀπολούοντα). It is not difficult to recognize here the Apollodorean elements that we have seen in other witnesses: the parallelism between the twin gods; the divine ambiguity; the importance of Homer as a witness; the emergence of the same etymologies, e.g., Artemis as ‘she who makes healthy’, or the second etymology of Apollo’s name in Cornutus (ἀπελαύνοντα ἀφ' ἡμῶν αὐτὰς), which we have already found in Macrobius (1.17.14: *Nam* ὡς ἀπελαύνοντα τὰς νόσους Ἀπόλλωνα, *tamquam* Ἀπέλλωνα, *cognominatum putant* [interpretation H: cf. § 4.2]).

Further, in Cornutus we find the idea — absent in other witnesses to Apollodorus — that the positive interpretations of the names of the two gods apply only in a euphemistic sense: it is euphemistically said that Artemis is ‘she who makes healthy’ (οἰόνται κατ' εὐφημισμὸν τὴν μὲν Ἄρτεμιν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρτεμῆς ποιεῖν); possibly also the positive etymologies of Apollo’s name are to be understood in this sense, because they are connected, through μὲν... δὲ, to Artemis’ name (τὴν μὲν Ἄρτεμιν ἀπὸ τοῦ κτλ.... τὸν δ' Ἀπόλλωνα ὡς ἀπολύονθ' ἡμᾶς κτλ.). The euphemistic interpretation immediately follows the description of the negative side of the two gods and is explicitly presented as a consequence of the latter (τοῦτου δ' ἔνεκεν οἰόνται κατ' εὐφημισμὸν τὴν μὲν Ἄρτεμιν κτλ.). Cornutus seems to give more weight to the negative side of the god, whereas the positive one does not exist *per se*, but only in the

⁵⁰ In this case, Cornutus’ textual tradition is divided between ἀπολλύντα and a senseless ἀπόλλαντα/ἀπόλλοντα/ἀπείλλαντα (cf. Torres’ apparatus); Lang preferred the former reading, in order to athetize it; Torres accepts Villosion’s correction ἀπολούοντα, inspired by Plat. *Crat.* 406a; Boys-Stones accepts ἀπολλύντα. In any case, the third as well as the first etymology of the series do not have parallels in other witnesses to Apollodorus; accordingly, we are not sure that they derive from ΠΘ.

wishes of humans. In my opinion, we are dealing with a personal interpretation by the Stoic philosopher, since the euphemistic perception of the positive side of the god strongly disagrees with the principle of divine ambiguity, which requires two parallel and equally important sides; further, divine ambiguity has been deduced from Macrobius (interpretation GH: see § 4.2) and confirmed by the nominal fragment and the other witnesses of ΠΘ (see above). Further still, Cornutus himself reveals that he knows Apollodorus' principle, since he applies it later in the same chapter: the epithet παιῶν, which has no explicit etymology — but which, from what follows, seems a positive one — was given the god *per oppositionem* (κατ' ἀντίφρασιν), in order to appease him (καὶ ἐξίλαστικῶς), so that he might not corrupt the air (ἵνα ... μὴδὲ φθείρῃ τὸν ἀναπνεόμενον ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἀέρα) and cause disease (ἵνα μὴ νόσους αὐτοῖς ἐπιπέμπῃ). Here we are still dealing with the euphemistic nature of the name and the epithets of the god. Actually, a second explanation (παιᾶνα δ' αὐτὸν ἐκάλεσαν εἴτουν... εἴτε...) admits that the god may really cause good health through a temperate climate (ὥς τῷ ὄντι τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὑγείας τῷ σώματι αἰτίου γινομένου διὰ τῆς τοῦ περιέχοντος εὐκρασίας): in other words, a positive role of the god undeniably exists in addition to the negative one. This means that Cornutus, in reading ΠΘ, found the principle of divine ambiguity and, where possible or where desired, reformulated the positive side into euphemistic terms; but this interpretation is totally his own.

Now, a short summary of the fragment and the witnesses that we have read, and a reflection on how they can help us to recover Apollodorus' presence in Macrobius. The explicit fragment of Apollodorus, by comparing its treatment of Poseidon with that of Apollo νόμιος, attests both Apollodorus' custom of comparing the god he is dealing with to other divinities, and the principle of divine ambiguity itself. We can read both points in Macrobius.⁵¹ The importance of Homer as a witness on Greek religion is immediately evident: not by chance, the Poet is mentioned also by Macrobius. Heraclitus is more explicit about the identification of Apollo and the sun, and about the power of the god to give health or illness to the humans respectively through a temperate climate or excessive heat. Heraclitus also assigns to Apollo the capacity to cause sudden death, an idea we have already seen in Macrobius. Strabo, though an occasional reader of ΠΘ, is a fundamental witness to Apollodorus' interpretation of the god, since he confirms many points present in Macrobius: the solar nature of the god; his power over the climate and therefore over human health; the role of Artemis; that both gods cause sudden death; the epithets οὐλιος and οὐλία;⁵² the importance of Homer (to say nothing of the fact that Strabo

⁵¹ Even if the passage is not the same: see fn. 45.

⁵² This was already remarked by Münzel 1883, 30.

preserves interesting details, which are absent in other witnesses). Cornutus' evidence is to be considered with caution: the euphemistic nature of the positive side of Apollo and Artemis, which contrasts with the principle of divine ambiguity, seems to be totally Cornutean. Anyway, Cornutus confirms all the most important points: the parallelism between Apollo and Artemis; their identification with the sun and the moon and their role in influencing positively or negatively the climate and human health; Homer as witness; certain etymologies that we have already found in Macrobius (that of the name of Artemis, and the second etymology of the name of Apollo).

Accordingly, we may presume that Apollodorus' essay on Apollo — at least as far as it has been reconstructed so far — presented the following points, all of which are present in Macrobius: 1) the god was considered the same as the sun; 2) the comparison with Artemis, identified with the moon, was continuous; 3) both gods had the power to influence the climate and, accordingly, human health, positively or negatively (principle of divine ambiguity);⁵³ 4) their names and epithets (ἄλεξίκακος, λοίμιος, οὔλιος and οὐλία) were etymologized according to both of these opposite powers; 5) Apollo and Artemis were considered causes of sudden death; 6) the case of other gods, like Poseidon and Hermes, was mentioned to help the reader understand the complex personality of Apollo; 7) Homer was a fundamental source on Greek religion. Obviously, each of the witnesses presented these common points according to his own style or necessities: consider the pompous style of Heraclitus, the antiquarian interests of Strabo, the autonomous reinterpretation by Cornutus. At the same time, we cannot deny the underlying presence of the same, erudite source.⁵⁴ Let us present the Apollodorean evidence schematically:

⁵³ According to this frame, which involves on the one hand Apollo and Artemis, on the other a positive and a negative side, Apollodorus might also have conceived a negative etymology of the name of Artemis: this way, a perfect symmetry with her brother would have been created. The positive etymology which we have read in Strabo and Cornutus is already mentioned by Plato in *Crat.* 406b, where indeed the 'health' understood in her name is referred not to humans made healthy by the goddess, as in Apollodorus' witnesses, but to Artemis herself (Ἀρτεμιν δὲ <διὰ> τὸ ἄρτεμὲς φαίνεται καὶ τὸ κόσμιον, διὰ τὴν τῆς παρθενίας ἐπιθυμίαν): cf. Ramelli 2003, 400. The adjective ἄρτεμής is mostly of poetic use (cf. LSJ s.v.) and is mentioned by Homer himself: *Il.* 5.515; 7.308; *Od.* 13.43; in *Sch. Hom. B, Od.* 13.43 Dindorf it is glossed as σώοις, ἀρτίοις, ἀνελλιπέσιν, ὑγιῶς ἔχουσιν.

⁵⁴ We find similar ideas, moreover in the same sequence, in Ps.-Plut. *De Hom.* 202. *An.Par.* (3.211 Cramer) associates the etymology of Artemis with the positive one of οὔλιος (*Od.* 24.402 included): cf. Münzel 1883, 23; Ramelli 2003, 401.

Tab. 8: Apollodorus on Apollo, according to the examined witnesses.

	Macr. Sat. 1.17	Sch. Hom. Ge, Il. 21.447	Heracl. Hom. All.	Strab. 14.1.6	Cornutus
1) Apollo as the sun	X	–	X	X	X
2) Artemis as female counterpart of Apollo	X	–	–	X	X
3) sun causes both pest and health (divine ambiguity)	X	(X)	X	X	X
4) etymology of Apollo's and Artemis' name and epithets	X	–	–	X	X
5) Apollo and Artemis as cause of sudden deaths	X	–	X	X	X
6) comparison with other divinities	X	X	–	–	–
7) Homer as witness	X	X	X	X	X

5 The epithets ἰήϊος and παιάν

5.1 The interpretation of the epithets by Apollodorus

Finally, we arrive at the epithets that are the core of the present essay, namely ἰήϊος and παιάν. If we except Cornutus, who gives a very common interpretation of παιάν — ‘healer’ (cf. § 4.3) — the Macrobian section dealing with these epithets does not find echoes in Apollodorus’ other witnesses. Then, in Macrobius the name of the Athenian grammarian is related to an interpretation which — in my view — is mediated by Apollodorus, but not supported by the latter. In order to understand the role of the Athenian grammarian in this section correctly, it was necessary to reconstruct Apollodorus’ interpretation firstly from the other Macrobius’ sections and parallel fragments and witnesses of ΠΘ, and only thereafter to consider *Sat.* 1.17.16–20. Let us read Macrobius’ text, which, for our purposes, is presented in a schematic form:

(16) *cum ergo sint huiusce sideris, id est solis, duo maximi effectus, alter quo calore temperato iuvat mortalium vitam, alter quo iactu radiorum nonnumquam pestiferum virus immittit, duo eademque cognomina singulos effectus propriis enuntiationibus signant, appellantes deum ἰήϊον atque παιάνα. Quae cognomina utrique effectui apta sint, ut sit*

1) ἰήϊος ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰᾶσθαι, *id est a sanando*

2) *et παιάν ἀπὸ τοῦ παύειν τὰς ἀνίας*

3) *et rursus* ἰήϊος ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰέναι, *ab immittendo*, [βέλος ἔχευενκὲς ἐφιεῖς (Il. 1.51)]

4) *et* παιάν ἀπὸ τοῦ παῖεν, *a feriendo*

(17) *Obtinuit tamen ut*

1) *cum sanitatem dari sibi precantur*, ἰὴ παιάν *per* ἡ litteram enuntient, *id est* “medere paeān”

2) *cum autem per ε litteram dicunt cum adspiratione prioris litterae, significant hoc dici in aliquem versa precatione*, βάλε παιάν, *id est* “immitte feriendo”.

a) *qua voce ferunt Latonam usam, cum Apollinem hortaretur impetum Pythonis incessere sagittis; [cuius rei naturalem rationem suum locum reddam]*

b) (18) *hanc vocem, id est ἰε παιάν, confirmasse fertur oraculum Delphicum Atheniensibus petentibus opem dei adversus Amazonas Theseo regnante; namque inituros bellum iussit his ipsis verbis semet ipsum auxiliatorem.*

(19) *Apollodorus in libro quarto decimo* Περὶ θεῶν ἰήϊον *solem scribit: ita appellari Apollinem ἀπὸ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν κόσμον ἰεσθαι καὶ ἰέναι, quod sol per orbem impetu fertur.* (20) *Sed Timotheus ita: “σύ τε ὦ τὸν αἰὲ πόλον οὐράνιον | λαμπραῖς ἀκτῖσ’ ἄλῃε βάλλων | πέμψον ἑκαβόλον ἐχθροῖσι βέλος | σὰς ἀπὸ νεύρας, ὦ ἰε παιάν”* (fr. 800 PMG).

Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.7.16–20

(16) Since, then, there are two chief actions of this star, that is, the sun – one whereby he supports mortals’ lives with well-regulated warmth, the other whereby he sometimes lets loose a pestilential miasma with the stroke of his rays – men mark each of these actions with the same two names, each with its own distinctive form, calling the god *Iēios* and *Paian*. Both of these two names are appropriate to the sun’s two actions:

1) *Iēios* is from *iāsthai*, that is ‘healing’,

2) and *Paian* is from ‘ending [*pauein*] woes’;

3) and conversely, *Iēios* is from *hienai*, or ‘letting fly’,

4) and *Paian* is from *paiein*, or ‘striking’.

(17) Still, the custom has prevailed

1) of saying *iē Paian* – that is, “heal, Paeān” – with eta, when praying for health,

2) whereas when people say *hie Paian*, with an epsilon and a rough breathing on the first letter, they show that they intend a prayer to harm another, *bale Paian*, or “let fly and strike.”

a) They say that that is the expression Latona used when she was urging to meet Python’s attack with his arrows (I will give a rational explanation of this episode in its proper place).

b) (18) It is said that the Delphic oracle ratified this expression – *hiē Paian* – when the Athenians were seeking the god’s aid against the Amazons during Theseus’ reign: as they were about to start the war, the god bade them to call upon him with those very words and urge him on as their ally.

(19) In book 14 of his *On the Gods*, Apollodorus writes that *Iēios* is the sun and Apollo is so called from “moving speedily” [*hiesthai kai ienai*] through the universe. (20) But Timotheus writes as follows: “And you, o sun, who ever strikes the vault of heaven with brilliant rays, send ‘gainst the foe the shaft that hits its mark from your bowstring, o *hie Paian*.”

transl. Koster

The principle of divine ambiguity is described once more (*cum ergo sint huiusce sideris, id est solis, duo maximi effectus* etc.), since it is useful to understand ἰήϊος and παιάν: both epithets express both powers (*duo eademque cognomina singulos effectus propriis enuntiationibus signant*), as declared by two opposite etymologies

for each epithet: ἰήϊος derives from both ‘healing’ (ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰᾶσθαι, *id est a sanando*) and from ‘throwing’ (ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰέναι, *ab immittendo* — *Il.* 1.51 is quoted); παῖάν derives from both ‘ending pains’ (ἀπὸ τοῦ παύειν τὰς ἀνίας) and ‘hurting’ (ἀπὸ τοῦ παίειν, *a feriendo*). The double perception of Apollo opens the way to the double interpretation of the same epithet through two apt etymologies; this task is redoubled by the ancient interpreter further by applying it to two epithets. This way a sort of square building is created, where four etymologies explain two epithets, which in turn belong to one and the same god.

The principle of divine ambiguity is also applied to the ritual cry IE ΠΙΑΙΑΝ, where both epithets are present — παῖάν is explicitly mentioned, while ἰήϊος emerges through the verb; coherently, the same roots are used to interpret the ritual cry. The interpretation also affects the actual spelling of the cry: on the one hand, it is written ἰῆ παῖάν with an ēta and smooth breathing, because it means “heal, you who make end pains” (ἰῆ παῖάν *per η litteram enuntient, id est “medere paeon”*); this version of the ritual cry is uttered when humans pray for health (*cum sanitatem dari sibi precantur*); clearly, we are dealing with the positive side of the god. On the other hand, when the same cry is written ἱε παῖάν with an epsilon and rough breathing (*cum autem per ε litteram dicunt cum adspiratione prioris litterae*), it means “throw (your arrow), you who hurt” (βάλε παῖάν, *id est “immitte feriendo”*) and is uttered when humans pray to the god against someone (*significant hoc dici in aliquem versa precatione*) — it is not necessary to say that we are dealing with the negative side of the god, to be turned against an enemy. In other terms, the cry IE ΠΙΑΙΑΝ is interpreted — and etymologized — according to both sides of the god. As in the case of ἰήϊος, the different etymologies require different readings: smooth or rough breathing and, as far as concerns IE, which is a verb, a long or short vowel.⁵⁵

After the interpretations, we find in Macrobius the mythological *exempla* of the ritual cry: the cry was uttered by Leto when she exhorted her son to hit Python with his arrows (*qua voce ferunt Latonam usam, cum Apollinem hortaretur impetum Pythonis incessere sagittis*) and by Theseus and Athenians, after the advice of the oracle, when they asked for help against the Amazons (*inituros bellum iussit his ipsis verbis semet ipsum auxiliatorem invocari hortarique*). Clearly, this is the negative side of the ritual cry; mythological events attesting the positive side of it are not

⁵⁵ Theoretically speaking, two different meanings applied to two different names would produce — if all the possible combinations occur — four different interpretations, as we have seen in the case of the two epithets. Instead, in the case of the ritual cry, we have only two interpretations. This derives from the fact that the two roots are present in the same sentence: accordingly, they must be consistent with each other — i.e. they must be both either positive or negative; interpretations like “heal, you who hurt” or “throw (your arrow), you who heal” would have sounded very odd. This circumstance reduces the possible combinations from four to two.

recorded — and are not otherwise attested. This is not surprising, since the positive version likely never existed: probably it was conceived by the *esprit de géométrie* of the ancient interpreter, who followed the symmetrical frame of divine ambiguity; according to this frame, the negative interpretation of the cry had to be paired with a positive one.

At this point, the very name of Apollodorus is mentioned (*Apollodorus in libro quarto decimo Περὶ θεῶν*) to attest a solar interpretation of ἡΐος (*Apollodorus... ἡΐον solem scribit*): the epithet derives from the very idea of ‘moving’ since Apollo, as the sun, moves impetuously through the universe (*ita appellari Apollinem ἀπὸ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν κόσμον ἔσθαι καὶ ἰέναι, quod sol per orbem impetu fertur*). After Apollodorus’ interpretation follows another, that of the lyrical poet Timotheus (*sed Timotheus ita* [fr. 800 PMG]): the solar god, who always hits the sky with its bright rays (σύ τε ὦ τὸν αἰὲ πόλον οὐράνιον | λαμπραῖς ἀκτῖς ἄλῃε βάλλων), is exhorted to throw his far-shooting arrow against the enemies (πέμψον ἐκαβόλον ἐχθροῖσι βέλος | σᾶς ἀπὸ νεύρας); the last verse ends with the ritual cry invoking the paean-god (ὦ ἔε παιάν). Clearly, we are here dealing with other solar interpretations; in the case of Timotheus, the negative side of the god is enhanced. Macrobius is also clear in opposing the interpretation of the grammarian and that of the poet (*Apollodorus... sed Timotheus ita*).

Actually, Macrobius’ exposition is not convincing. At first sight, the moving of the sun through the universe may be considered positive, and may well be opposed to the negative interpretation of Timotheus. Indeed, in Timotheus we find mention of the ritual cry ἔε παιάν, which is absent in the grammarian; therefore, the two authorities are not really symmetrical. Secondly, the ritual cry, attested in Timotheus according to the negative interpretation, should not follow Apollodorus, but the mythological *exempla* of the cry, which are all negative (see above) and are therefore consistent with the mention of Timotheus. This means that the lyrical poet should not have been mentioned where he is, namely after Apollodorus and opposed to him, but immediately after the mythological *exempla* of the cry. Possibly we are dealing with a reworking of Apollodorus’ erudition by Macrobius — or by one of the sources of the latter — not without a little misunderstanding.

On the other hand, a direct attribution to the Athenian grammarian of the etymology of ἡΐος from ‘moving’, i.e. thinking that this interpretation was personally supported by him, is not acceptable. Firstly, the etymology is pedestrian in itself. Then, we have seen the importance of the principle of divine ambiguity in Macrobius’ essay: it is consubstantial with Apollo’s — and Artemis’ — general portrait and the solar nature of the god. The comparison with the explicit fragments and witnesses of ΠΘ (cf. § 4.3) has shown that we are not dealing with a later reworking by the Neoplatonic author, the direct source of Macrobius (cf. § 3), but with an

actual doctrine of Apollodorus. Accordingly, it would be much more natural to assign to the grammarian the double interpretation of ἰήϊος and παιάν, which is based on the principle of divine ambiguity, and not this isolated interpretation of ἰήϊος. Finally, the interpretation explicitly assigned to Apollodorus is too physical: it may be compared to the first interpretations of Apollo's name, which introduce the solar approach — which is the correct one — but are not precisely those favoured by the grammarian (cf. § 4.2); one of the scholars or philosophers who interpreted the name of the god in solar sense may have done the same with ἰήϊος, and Apollodorus may only have quoted the etymology. Since the doctrine of ΠΘ was continuously reworked — think only how many hands intervened between Apollodorus' treatise and Macrobius' 'solar theology' (cf. § 2) — the name of the grammarian may have been joined to this interpretation, though being only its mediator and not its author.⁵⁶

5.2 Apollodorus' predecessors on the interpretation of ἰήϊος and παιάν

It must be said that some pieces of the double interpretation of ἰήϊος and παιάν are otherwise known, since the epithet ἰήϊος — which appears in the form ἥϊος in Homer⁵⁷ — was explained by Aristarchus and Crates exactly as we find it in Macrobius.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ The etymology from 'moving' seems to have enjoyed some importance, since it is mentioned elsewhere (*Sch. Hom. bT, Il.* 15.365b: ἥϊε: ... παρὰ τὸ ἰέναι ἥλιος γάρ ἐστιν. Eust. *ad loc.* adds: Ὑπερίων γάρ); possibly, this importance derived from being quoted in ΠΘ.

⁵⁷ *Il.* 15.365 (ὥς ῥα σύ, ἥϊε Φοῖβε); 20.152 (ἀμφὶ σε, ἥϊε Φοῖβε); cf. *Hom. Hym.* 3.120 (ἐνθα σέ, ἥϊε Φοῖβε); actually, the epithet generally appears in the form ἰήϊος, as in Macrobius. Probably correct is the ancient etymology which derives the epithet from the ritual cry ἰή, which we find in some paeon-songs (cf. *Sch. Soph. OT* 154: ἐπὶ τῶν παιάνων λέγεται τὸ "ἰήϊος", ἐπεὶ τοιούτῳ μέλει ἦδον τοὺς παιᾶνας. ἐπεὶ δὲ πρὸς τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα ἦδοντο παιᾶνες, ἐλέγετο καὶ ὁ Ἀπόλλων ἰήϊος, ὥς ὑπὸ τοιούτου μέλους ὑμνούμενος, ὥσπερ εὖϊος ὁ Διόνυσος κτλ.; Eust. *ad Il.* 20.152 [4.385.2–4 Van der Valk]: δοκεῖ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰή παρῆκται, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐπίρρημα ἐνθεαστικὸν ἐπιφωνούμενον τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι ἐν τῷ "ἰήϊε παιάν" καὶ τοῖς ὁμοίοις). For its part, the Homeric ἥϊος is not a different epithet, but a different form of the same one, where the initial iota was consonantized, being in hiatus (i.e. σύ/σέ, ἰήϊε Φοῖβε — where the recurrence suggests that we are dealing with an old, formulaic syntagm), and then neglected in writing. On the consonantization, cf. West 1982, 14. The consonantized iota, usually preserved in writing (see Αἰγυπτίη, Ἰστίαιαν), is sometimes neglected (cf. πότνα θεά, *Od.* 5.215; 13.391; 20.61). On the etymology of the epithet, cf. *Lfgre* s.v. ἥϊος (M. Schmidt); Chantraine *DÉLG* s.v. ἥϊε (where the epithet is derived from invocation cry ἦ: if what stated above about ἰήϊος is correct, this is not necessary); Käppel 1992, 69; Schironi 2004, 362, fn. 4.

⁵⁸ This was already observed: cf. Schironi 2018, 367. On the following scholium cf. Schironi 2018, 365–367 (with previous bibliography).

ἦτε· Ἀρίσταρχος δασύνει, ἀπὸ τῆς ἔσεως τῶν βελῶν· οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Κράτητα ψιλῶς, ἀπὸ τῆς ἰάσεως (fr. 23 Broggiato)· καὶ οὕτως ἐπέισθησαν οἱ γραμματικοὶ πρὸς διάφορον ἐτυμολογίαν διαφόρως ἀναγινώσκειν. ἀγνοοῦσι δὲ ὅτι ὁ χαρακτήρ μάχεται· αἶε γὰρ τὸ η̄ πρὸ φωνήεντος ψιλοῦται, “ἦώς” (Hom. *passim*), “ἦῖα” (Il. 13.103; Od. 2.289, 410; 4.363; 12.329). ταύτη καὶ τὸ “ἦτε ξείνων θέμις ἐστὶ” (Od. 9.268) δασύνεται, τὸ δὲ “ἦϋτε” (Hom. *passim*) ψιλοῦται· καὶ τὸ ἔως (scil. ἑωσφόρος, Il. 23.226) δασύνεται, τὸ δὲ “ἦώς” ψιλοῦται· καὶ τὸ “ἦλιος” (Hom. *passim*) δασύνεται, τὸ δὲ “ἦέλιος” (Hom. *passim*) ἐψιλώθη. ὥστε εἴτε ἐκ τοῦ ἰήϊος δασυνομένου ἐστὶν εἴτε ἐκ τοῦ ψιλουμένου, μόνως ψιλωτέον.

Sch. Hom. A, Il. 15.365a [Herodian]]

Aristarchus pronounces with a rough breathing (*hēie*), from ‘shooting’ (*hesis*) of the arrows. Those around Crates (read it) with a smooth breathing, from ‘healing’ (*hiasis*). And so the grammarians were persuaded to read it in a different way according to the different etymology. | But they ignore that the character (of the word) prevents it: for heta before vowel always has the smooth breathing: (consider) *ēōs* (‘dawn’), *ēia* (‘provisions’); in this sense also *hēte* (‘like’) is written with rough breathing, whereas *ēyte* (‘like’) with the smooth one. And *heōs* (‘dawn’) is written with rough breathing, on the other hand *ēōs* with smooth; correspondingly, *hēlios* (‘sun’) and *ēelios*. Therefore, whether (it derives) from *hiēios* with rough breathing, or from *iēios* with smooth breathing, (it) can only be written with smooth breathing.

(adapted from Schironi)

Aristarchus used a rough breathing mark, since he derived ἦϊος from the action of ‘throwing’ arrows (ἀπὸ τῆς ἔσεως τῶν βελῶν); Crates employed smooth breathing, deriving the epithet from ‘healing’ (ἀπὸ τῆς ἰάσεως). Later grammarians followed Aristarchus or Crates according to the etymology they preferred (οὕτως ἐπέισθησαν οἱ γραμματικοὶ πρὸς διάφορον ἐτυμολογίαν διαφόρως ἀναγινώσκειν), i.e. they put the smooth breathing mark if they derived the epithet from ‘healing’, the rough if from ‘throwing (arrows)’.⁵⁹ Herodian objects to the latter group because, even if the epithet derived from ‘throwing (arrows)’, in any case the word would not have had an aspiration, since the phonological situation — heta before vowel — requires this feature (αἶε γὰρ τὸ η̄ πρὸ φωνήεντος ψιλοῦται), as attested by many — real or assumed — Homeric examples: ἦώς vs. ἔως (present in Homer in the compound ἑωσφόρος); ἦῖα; and what we would call apophonic couples, such as ἦτε and ἦϋτε,⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Aristarchus’ and Crates’ etymologies are often mentioned together — with the very name of the *auctores* or not: e.g., Ap. Soph. s.v. ἦρος (*sic*, 90, 16 Bekker); Sch. Hom. bT, Il. 15.365b (where Aristonicus’ and Herodian’s doctrines are contaminated); Hom. D, Il. 15.365 (from Aristonicus, since Aristarchus’ interpretation is preferred); Sch. Hom. h, Il. 20.152; Sch. Hom. bT, Il. 20.152; Et.Gen. (AB) s.v. ἦϊος (from Herodian); Et.M. 469.50 Gaisford. For other witnesses, see Syska 1993, 131, fn. 41. For previous bibliography, see Schironi 2018, 366, fn. 113.

⁶⁰ Curious interpretation by Herodian (cf. also Et.Gud. 251.48 ff. De Stefani; Et.M. 440.2 ff. Gaisford): ἦτε may be simply considered a relative pronoun, as is clear in Od. 9.268 (δωτίην, ἦ τε ξείνων θέμις ἐστὶ); see also the parallel case in Il. 11.779 (ξείνια ... ἦ τε ξείνων θέμις ἐστὶν).

ἥλιος and ἡέλιος. Therefore, according to Herodian, (ι)ήϊος, whether it derives from an aspirated root or not, can only be psilotic (εἴτε ἐκ τοῦ ιήϊος δασυνομένου ἐστὶν εἴτε ἐκ τοῦ ψιλουμένου, μόνως ψιλωτέον).⁶¹

Herodian essentially addresses the anonymous scholars who followed either Aristarchus or Crates; yet, by criticizing the Aristarchean school directly, Herodian indirectly seems to criticize Aristarchus himself. Be that as it may, the polemic between Crates and Aristarchus seems to be not limited to this rare Homeric epithet, but to involve a greater question related to Homeric religion, namely the identity of Paieon, a divine figure who appears only twice in the fifth book of the *Iliad* as physician of the gods.⁶² Paieon, according to a widespread interpretation in antiquity, was considered the same as Apollo, since παῖάν, a Doric form of παῖων but current in the whole of Greece, was usually held as the epithet of Apollo as healer. On the contrary, Aristarchus, who always aimed to interpret Homer according to the epoch in which the Poet lived and to reject interpretations that projected onto him features belonging to later epochs, distinguished Paieon from Apollo: for the grammarian held that the identification between the two gods was a later event in Greek religion; according to him, Homer attested an earlier situation, when they were still distinguished.⁶³

As far as it concerns Crates, we do not know his opinion about Homeric Paieon, but if he derived (ι)ήϊος from ‘healing’, the Pergamenian grammarian either accepted two healer gods within the Homeric pantheon or, more likely, followed the common opinion and considered Apollo and Paieon to be the same god.⁶⁴ This suggests that Aristarchus, in interpreting (ι)ήϊος, probably avoided deriving the epithet from ‘healing’ precisely because he distinguished Paieon from Apollo: this means that the interpretation of Παῖων/παῖάν might have played a role in that of (ι)ήϊος.⁶⁵ This happened because the two epithets are historically associated with each other: ιήϊος is often mentioned within paean-songs⁶⁶ and probably derives from the ritual cry ιή, which is also present in these songs.⁶⁷ This explains very well why the ancient

⁶¹ Cf. Schironi 2018, 366, fn. 112; Sluiter 2015, 920.

⁶² *Il.* 5.401; 900.

⁶³ On the ancient debate and Aristarchus’s view on this point, see Schironi 2018, 690–693; Filoni 2023, 159–160. On the genre of the paean, fundamental Rutherford 2001, 3–136; Käppel 1992.

⁶⁴ For bibliography on Crates’ opinion, cf. fn. 58.

⁶⁵ Cf. Schironi 2018, 366; 690, fn. 186; Schironi 2004, 363.

⁶⁶ Rutherford 2001, 70, fn. 70; Käppel 1992, 66–67. Rutherford underlines the fact that the vocative ιήϊε may be confused with the ritual cry ιή ιέ. As far as the etymology is concerned, Rutherford accepts it here (*loc. cit.*: “invoked by cries” — cf. fn. 57) but elsewhere seems to follow the ancient view that derived the epithet from ιε/ῖε (Rutherford 2001, 25–27).

⁶⁷ On the etymology of ιήϊος, see fn. 57.

interpreters somehow had to explain ἰήϊος and παῖάν together. Aristarchus' choice in interpreting Παῖών as a god different from Apollo required for (ἰ)ήϊος, which is an epithet used only for Apollo, an etymology that rendered the epithet distant from Paieon. An etymology from 'throwing' (ἵεναι) must have seemed to him very likely, since it referred the epithet to a well-known aspect of the god, that of archery, which was also well attested by Homer, through many famous epithets (ἀργυρότοξος, ἐκηβόλος and so on)⁶⁸ and the concrete action of the god (e.g., the pestilence in first book of the *Iliad*).⁶⁹ Thus did Aristarchus suggest that Apollo was able to produce and stop the pestilence but was not yet specialized as a healer god, as he was in later times.

If the reconstruction is correct, Crates followed current religious ideas of his own times — he considered Apollo and Paieon the same god — and interpreted (ἰ)ήϊος, which frequently appears in the paeon-songs (see above), accordingly ('healer'). On the contrary, the opinion of Aristarchus, who distinguished Apollo and Paieon — and therefore avoided etymologizing (ἰ)ήϊος from 'healing', preferring a derivation from 'throwing' — is to be considered a bold one and far from mainstream thought; for it must be said that Aristarchus' interpretation is not without oddities in interpreting the Homeric evidence itself.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Cf. *Il.* 1.37, 651; 2.766; 5.449, 760; 7.58; 10.515; 21.229; 24.758; *Od.* 7.64; 15.410; 17.251 (ἀργυρότοξος); *Il.* 4.101, 119; 15.55; *Od.* 17.494; 21.267 (κλυτότοξος); *Il.* 1.147, 474, 479; 5.439; 9.564; 15.243, 253; 16.94, 706 (v.l.); 17.585; 21.461, 472, 478, 600; 22.15, 220 (ἐκάεργος); *Il.* 1.14, 21, 96, 110, 373, 438; 16.513; 22.302; 23.872 (ἐκηβόλος); *Il.* 1.370; 5.444; 15.231; 16.711; 17.333; *Od.* 8.339; 20.278 (ἐκατηβόλος); *Il.* 1.75 (ἐκατηβελέτης); *Il.* 1.385; 7.83; 20.71, 295 (the Kurzform ἑκατος). On this aspect of Apollo, cf. *LfgRE* s.v. Απόλλων; Graf 2009, 9–32.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Il.* 1.45–52. The god appears with this weapon also in the 'theomachy' (*Il.* 21.474). Through his bow the god kills heroes (*Il.* 21.278 [Achilles]; 24.605 [Niobids]) and common people (*Il.* 24.758–759; *Od.* 3.280; 7.64; 15.410–411). Apollo grants skill in using the bow (*Il.* 2.827 [Pandaros]; 15.440–441 [Teucros]) and concedes success, or not, in the shooting of an arrow, depending on whether he is invoked or not (fundamental *Il.* 23.863–873; cf. *Il.* 4.119; 8.311; *Od.* 21.338, 364–365; 22.7). The god kills Eurytus, who challenges him in archery (*Od.* 8.224–228). According to Schironi, Aristarchus' etymology derives from the myth of the killing of Python (cf. Schironi 2018, 366; 2004, 362); this is unlikely, since the myth is not a Homeric one. In my opinion, the Homeric evidence is enough to support the etymology.

⁷⁰ The first, macroscopic objection is the pestilence in the first book of the *Iliad*, where Apollo causes and then stops the illness; that the god had a special relation with the disease is explicitly stated by Achilles (*Il.* 1.64). Then Apollo heals the Lycian Glaucos (*Il.* 16.527–529) and restores the wounded Hector (*Il.* 15.262) — though the last two events may have been ascribed to powers belonging to any god. The grammarian Zenodotus of Mallos, perhaps a disciple of Crates (cf. Broggiato 2014, 109–110), considered the healing of Glaucus proof that Apollo was to be identified with Paieon (cf. T 1 and fr. 2 Broggiato: cf. Broggiato 2014, 126–131; cf. also Schironi 2018, 367, fn. 120). On *Il.* 1.473, where a paeon-song is mentioned in an Apolline context, cf. fn. 72.

5.3 Apollodorus' syncretism

Now we can return to Macrobius and Apollodorus' interpretation of ἰήϊος and παϊάν with a different awareness. Firstly, that ἰήϊος and παϊάν were interpreted together did not happen casually, but derives from the intimate connection between the two epithets (cf. § 5.2), something that surely was taken into account by Apollodorus. Secondly, the positive and negative etymologies of ἰήϊος already existed: they belonged respectively to Crates and Aristarchus, who understood the epithet in a different sense. But we have also seen that the principle of divine ambiguity played a fundamental role for Apollodorus in understanding the Homeric gods (see § 4.2); possibly, this principle convinced the grammarian that there was no real opposition between the interpretation of ἰήϊος by Aristarchus and that given by Crates: thanks to this principle, both etymologies were possible for a god able both to strike and to heal. Surely the grammarian of Athens had in mind the pestilence in the first book of the *Iliad*, where the god caused the disease through his arrows first and then, once appeased, stopped it.⁷¹

If the double interpretation also involves the epithet παϊάν, this can only mean that Apollodorus broached the question on the Homeric Paieon and gave his own explanation of the latter. Firstly, since Macrobius is clear in presenting παϊάν, together with ἰήϊος, as an epithet of Apollo, the Athenian grammarian must have considered Paieon and Apollo the same god. This means that Apollodorus, though being a devoted disciple of Aristarchus, this time followed Crates — and common opinion, too. The grammarian of Athens may have had his reasons for doing so: though sharing Aristarchus' methodology of saving Homer from anachronistic retrojections from later times and of interpreting the Homeric poems as a coherent unity, Apollodorus may have held that in this specific case Crates explained the Homeric evidence better: the god causes and stops the pestilence — and that Apollo has a direct relation to illness is considered obvious by Achilles (*Il.* 1.64); a paean was sung in Chrysa, i.e. in a clearly Apolline context;⁷² and the god healed Glaucos and Hector.⁷³

The etymologies of παϊάν could only follow this predetermined frame: the positive etymology from 'stopping troubles' (ἀπὸ τοῦ παύειν τὰς ἀνίας) is not surprising;

⁷¹ Indeed, the Athenian grammarian held that the pest was mediated by animals: cf. Filoni 2021, 244–254.

⁷² *Il.* 1.473. In my opinion, the presence of this verse, attesting the existence of the paean in Homer in an Apolline place, should have been disturbing for Aristarchus, who held that Paieon was a different god; accordingly, the athetesis attested for the following verse (cf. *Sch. Hom. A, Il.* 1.474) is to be referred to 473. On this case, cf. Filoni 2023. For an interpretation of the case according to the attested evidence, cf. Schironi 2018, 691–693.

⁷³ Cf. fn. 70.

the same cannot be said about the negative one from ‘striking’ (ἀπὸ τοῦ παῖν), which contrasts with the function of the Paeon-god as a healer. Both etymologies are not definitely attested before ΠΘ; we don’t know whether they antedated Apollodorus or were conceived by the grammarian himself.⁷⁴ Indeed, this is not important: in both cases, these etymologies were useful in completing the exegetical frame conceived by Apollodorus. Together the intimate connection between ἱήϊος and παιάν, and the principle of divine ambiguity form the walls of a square building, which required four etymologies: two positive and two negative ones for the two epithets; in other words, two etymologies — one positive and one negative — for each epithet. The etymologies of ἱήϊος already existed — and, possibly, suggested the whole exegetical frame. In turn, the positive and negative interpretations of παιάν, whatever their origin, seem to offer a white and a black counterpart to ἱήϊος.

Finally, as observed by Francesca Schironi, an attempt to reconcile Aristarchus and Crates is surely in action.⁷⁵ Practically, Apollodorus paid tribute to both grammarians: he not only accepted the interpretations of ἱήϊος by both; Apollodorus, on the one hand, followed Crates in the debate about Paieon in Homer, considering Paieon the same god as Apollo, and on the other followed the Athenian grammarian, though not a precise interpretation of Aristarchus, but rather the spirit of the latter, in the sense that Crates’ choice allowed him to explain the Homeric evidence better: the pest of the first book of the *Iliad* ended with a sacrifice and a paeon-song in the Apolline sanctuary in Chrysa (see above). The higher principle of divine

74 The etymology from ‘stopping troubles’ is mediated by Didymus (1 c. BCE) in *Et. Gud.* s.v. παιᾶνες (446.50–51 Sturz παρὰ τὸ παύσω παύω καὶ κατὰ τροπὴν τοῦ υ εἰς ι. οὕτω Δίδυμος) and mentioned in *Et. M.* s.v. παιάν (657.2 ff. Gaisford). The latter entry is very interesting because here it is possible to find many features belonging to ΠΘ, like the identification between Apollo and the sun, the parallelism Apollo-Artemis, their role as god of the pest (ὡς αἰτίοις τῶν λοιμικῶν παθῶν); accordingly, the name of the paeon is understood as the song which makes pest end (ὁ καταπαύων ὕμνος τὸν λοιμόν). A pun which may have anticipated Apollodorus is to be found in Eur. *Alc.* 220–225 (ὦναξ Παιάν ... φόνιον δ’ ἀπόπαυσον Ἄιδαν). As for the etymology of παιάν from ‘striking’, the play in Aristoph. *Pax* 453–454 ([Tr.] ἱή, παιών, ἱή. [Ch.] ἄφελε τὸ παῖν, ἀλλ’ ἱή μόνον λέγε) may be a superficial one, referring to war pains (cf. Sommerstein 1990, 154) — but it does not exclude that it was seriously taken into consideration by an allegorical interpreter. *Sch. Aristoph. Plut.* 636b Holwerda is an intriguing text, which cannot be dealt with here. In this learned scholium, the etymologies from παύω (‘to make end’) and παῖω (‘to strike’) are both present, but the latter verb is interpreted in the sense of the former, i.e. as ‘to cure’ (παῖω, τὸ θεραπεύω... παῖω παύσω ἐπὶ τῆς θεραπείας) — possibly we are dealing with Apollodorus’ interpretation according to a reformulated version. On the etymologies of παιάν, cf. Rutherford 2001, 14, fn. 17; Käppel 1992, 32–33; Blumenthal 1942, 2344.13–2346.21.

75 Schironi 2018, 368: “Macrobius does not mention Aristarchus or Crates; however, he reports their etymologies as far as the epithet ΙΗΙΟΣ is concerned, framing them within an allegorical reading of Apollo as the sun.”

ambiguity, to Apollodorus' eyes, "demonstrated" that both scholars reached a part of the truth — which, obviously, had to be joined to each other and possibly completed. The rigorous structure of the coupled interpretations of ἱήϊος and παῖάν included Aristarchus' and Crates' etymologies within a greater plan, of which Apollodorus was obviously the author.

6 Concluding remarks

Research into the time(s) and the place(s) where Apollodorus composed his three main works have led us in Pergamum: the *Commentary on Homer's Catalogue of Ships*, his first work, is a totally Alexandrian work, conceived and written according to Aristarchus' hermeneutical categories to interpret his main source, Homer, as best as possible. The *Chronicles*, possibly, were composed during the exile from Alexandria (in Athens?), influenced by the difficulties of that period — the learned grammarian, despite the complexity of the matter, aimed at a wider audience and a divulgative exposition — dedicated to Attalus II only at the last. Possibly, the dedication was graciously accepted — the alternative would have been awkward, since Apollodorus was one of the most renowned scholars of those times; therefore, Aristarchus' disciple arrived at Pergamum, with all the consequences such an event might have had. The *On the Gods*, surely the latest of the three works, according to Jacoby was written when Apollodorus was an old man, during the retirement of the grammarian in his homeland; instead, there are good reasons to argue that the treatise was conceived and composed before, when Apollodorus was in Pergamum.

Here, in fact, Aristarchus' disciple had to find a common language by which to enter into dialogue with his local colleagues, who were influenced by Crates of Malus, if they were not directly disciples of the latter. Apollodorus' attempt to find a compromise with Crates' school may explain a main feature of the theological treatise, namely the coexistence of a rigorous reading of Homer — *scil.* not without Aristarchus' categories — and a readiness to consider, or even accept, the etymologies of divine names and epithets of the Stoics — and even a more general approach to theology. This bold mixture was made possible by the fact that the grammarian already had the seeds of both parts within himself: on the one hand, his long collaboration with Aristarchus in Alexandria; on the other, Apollodorus was a disciple of a Stoic, Diogenes of Babylon, when he was a young man and, still in Alexandria, where Aristarchus indicated the way of the text — a way sometimes followed pedantically by other disciples — the Athenian always paid attention to context, i.e. to the historical dimension. This was a feature which, indeed, he could also find in Aristarchus. He also attended to a humanism in a wider sense. Accordingly, in order

to stay in Pergamum, Apollodorus did not have to change his mind, but expressed parts of his personality that were always present. He had only to find a new methodology that could bear the best of the Aristarchean and the Cratetean approaches, and a new language with which to expose it.

The difficult case with which we have dealt, i.e. Apollodorus' interpretation of the Apolline epithets ἰήιος and παιάν, confirms and fits very well with the methodology of the treatise to which it belongs. The two epithets are both Homeric — though not attested in the same passages — and this fact made them worthy of particular consideration to Apollodorus' eyes. Secondly, ἰήιος and παιάν had a mutual relationship, because the former probably derived from the ritual cry (*scil.* ἰή) present in Apolline paeon-songs. That in Homer Apollon and the god Paieon, homonymous to the song, were the same divinity was the object of a fiery debate in Hellenistic times: Aristarchus stated that they were different gods; Crates — and common opinion, for which the paeon-song belonged to Apollo — considered them the same god. On the other hand, Aristarchus and Crates also had different opinions about ἰήιος; the former referred it to the action of throwing arrows, the latter to healing. Clearly, since Homer attested ἰήιος for Apollo (*scil.* in the form ἦιος), a derivation of the epithet from ἰᾶσθαι would have presupposed the identification of Apollo and Paieon. Not surprisingly, Crates accepted this etymology; Aristarchus, in order to avoid this identification, preferred an etymology which enhanced another aspect of Apollo, his archery, which indeed is well present in the Poet.

On these divergent views the grammarian of Athens gave his personal interpretation, which combined them into each other in an ingenious way — while also being respectful of the divinity whose personality he aimed to describe. *Pace* Aristarchus, Apollodorus followed the Hellenic tradition, according to which Apollo was the paeon-god and the paeon was an Apolline song; according to the grammarian, Homer did not distinguish himself on this point.⁷⁶ This conclusion was perfectly in agreement with the fact that Homer linked (ἰ)ήιος, attested in many paeon-songs, to Apollo. Not only that: the Athenian grammarian also combined the etymologies of ἰήιος given by his illustrious predecessors. For the two contrasting etymologies could be simultaneously possible thanks to the principle of divine ambiguity: the god, inasmuch as he holds a power or a weapon, can either use it or abstain from using it. In order to make this principle understandable, Apollodorus compared the

⁷⁶ This conclusion is valid for Homer, too: the attempt of Aristarchus, despite his authority — which makes his interpretation appear in ancient witnesses often — has to be considered erroneous. The great scholar was misled by these two contemporary facts, namely his principle about Homer as a consistent author and the fact that Paieon appears in scenes that are archaic in nature and factually detached from the rest of the narration of the *Iliad*: cf. Filoni 2023, 159–160.

power of Apollo with those of Poseidon and Hermes through Homeric epithets and situations, something that reveals that the grammarian deduced this principle too from the Homeric evidence; in the case of Apollo, the pestilence of the first book of the *Iliad*, where the god makes use of his bow but finally heals his victims, might have been a clear example. Thanks to this principle — quite surprisingly, it must be said — Aristarchus' and Crates' etymologies were pinned to each other. The strict relationship between ἰήσιος and παῖάν caused the latter to receive a double etymology too: not only a positive one, for which there was a well-established tradition, but also a negative etymology, which must have been a novelty. The four etymologies form a solid, square building that was well preserved by Macrobius. Such an interpretation of the epithets, supported by the principle of divine ambiguity, was a concrete way to reconcile the personalities — at least, *ex post* — of Aristarchus and Crates.

It is interesting that this bold operation of making Aristarchus and Crates agree was accomplished only through the interpretation of these two epithets; moreover, ἰήσιος and παῖάν are dealt with by the grammarian only in Books 13 or 14 of the *On the Gods*, dedicated to Apollo, i.e. at the beginning of the second half of the treatise, and not before. In my opinion, those etymologies were not alone in their function of joining the efforts of the Alexandrian and Pergamenian schools. We must always remember that Apollodorus' treatise came down to us in a very fragmentary form, and the doctrine of the grammarian was often reworked; therefore, this curious combining might have occurred many times.

This operation agrees perfectly with the whole methodology of the work, where the allegorical approach and a rigorous reading of Homer work together. Both elements, general methodology and concrete interpretation of ἰήσιος and παῖάν, strongly suggest that the place of composition for the theological treatise was Pergamum — which would be a non-secondary event in the history of the Hellenistic scholarship; through these etymologies, Apollodorus sent a message of academic politics, aiming at a compromise — if possible — between the adversarial schools.

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Lisa Doyle

Etymologies in the Margins: Etymological Practices in the Scholia on Apollonius' *Argonautica*

Abstract: This chapter examines how etymology and exegetical practice intertwine in the scholia on Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, a rich and varied corpus that derives from commentaries dating to the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. I explore the role of synonymy in the corpus, including a notable comment on the synonymous relationship between *θύελλαι* and *ἄρπυιαι* which was informed by Homeric poetry and scholarship, and I highlight the significance of the term *κυρίως* to indicate 'proper' word usage in etymological comments. My analysis of theonyms focuses on the divine names 'Rhea' and 'Kronos'. The etymology proposed for the goddess shares correspondences with other traditions and displays innovative features. In my exploration of toponyms, which confirm the function of etymology within etiological discourse, I discuss the motivations behind the etymological notes on Prokonnesus, the Mossynoecians and Abarnis and elucidate what they reveal about ancient critical engagement with Apollonius' text.

1 Introduction

The scholia on the *Argonautica* by Apollonius of Rhodes contain a rich collection of etymological notes. This corpus derives from a variorum commentary ('Dreimännerkommentar'), which is based on scholarship ranging from shortly after Apollonius' own time to the 2nd/3rd c. CE,¹ and it is often overlooked by modern scholars, valued only for the many references to lost works that it contains. Although there are some unusual features of the *Argonautica*-scholia, such as the focus on mythological material and the lack of 'literary-critical' notes after Book 1, there is a sustained interest in etymologies, and etymological discourse that reflects that etymology is a

1 In a subscription on the final page of the primary manuscript (L: Laurentianus gr. 32.9), we are told that the scholia are derived from the commentaries of Theon, Lucillus of Tarrha and Sophocleus. Two other commentators, Chares and Eirenaeus, are referenced in the corpus. See Smith 1996, 397 and Wilson 1960, 200 on this manuscript. More information about the textual tradition of the *Argonautica* can be found in Schade/Eleuteri 2008, Fränkel 1961, v–xxi, Fränkel 1964, Vian 1974, xl–lxxii and Wendel 1932. The examples discussed in this paper are from the L manuscript, unless otherwise indicated.

standard ‘tool’ of the scholar, or grammarian.² My aim in this paper, then, is to explore how etymology functions as a scholarly tool in the scholia on the *Argonautica*. As this corpus is comprised of a diverse body of material, the etymological practices in it are wide-ranging. Although there is a limited amount of material that can be discussed in this paper, the examples below will illustrate how critics are prompted to etymologize, and to relate other authors’ etymologies, in a variety of contexts. Furthermore, the fact that the *Argonautica* is a travel narrative, composed by an Alexandrian scholar-poet, means that it is packed with *aitia* that include etymological wordplays, which subsequently prompt etymological interest in the scholia.³

2 Synonymy

Synonymy is an integral part of the discourse on language in this corpus. The following scholion, which relies on semantic analogy between synonyms, is one such example of this.⁴ In the passage below, the commentator glosses the word θύελλαι. At this point in the narrative, the Argonauts have defeated the Earthborn men on Mt Dindymum and have set sail, only to be driven back to the Doliones on account of ‘stormwinds’: ἀλλὰ θύελλαι | ἀντίαι ἀρπάγδην ὀπίσω φέρον “but contrary storm winds seized the ship and carried it back” (*Arg.* 1.1016–1017).⁵ The critic explains that θύελλαι are καταγίδες, violent storm winds, and that Homer uses the words θύελλαι and ἄρπυιαι as synonyms, with the Harpies as (personifications of) violent storm winds (καταγιδῶδεις πνοάς).

2 For an overall discussion of etymology as a tool in poetry and prose in historical and literary contexts, see Sluiter 2015, 899–904.

3 Examples of etymological wordplay include: *Arg.* 2.295–297 (the Strophades, discussed by O’Hara 1990); *Arg.* 2.703–713 (Orpheus’ ‘Hymn to Apollo’, discussed by Hunter 1993, 150–1); *Arg.* 4.133 (the Araxes river); *Arg.* 4.984, 4.989 (Drepane, discussed by Hunter 2015, 218–220).

4 In his discussion of synonymy in the scholia to Book 1, Lachenaud (2018), 117 notes that etymological explanations are often required to justify a synonym or the use of a word by the scholiast. See also Le Feuvre 2021, 55; Peraki-Kyriakidou (2002, 482–489) on synonymy in ancient etymological discourses.

5 All translated excerpts from the *Argonautica* are by Race 2008.

ἀλλὰ θύελλαι· αἱ χειμεριναὶ καταγιγίδες καὶ πνοαί. ὁθεν Ὅμηρος ἐν συνωνυμία τίθησι θυέλλας τε καὶ ἄρπυιᾶς ἀντὶ τοῦ καταγιγιδώδεις πνοάς, ἀπὸ τοῦ οἶον ἄρπάζειν παραγώγως. “ὥς δ’ ὅτε Πανδαρέου κόυρας ἀνέλοντο θυέλλαι”, εἶτα: “τόφρα δὲ τὰς κόυρας ἄρπυιαι ἀνηρεΐψαντο”, ὡς τῶν αὐτῶν οὐσῶν. τὸ μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄρπάζειν, τὸ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ θύειν, ὃ ἐστὶ μετὰ βίας αἶεν. ἄρπάγδην δὲ εἶπεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄρπάζειν, ὡς φοράδην ἀπὸ τοῦ φέρειν καὶ αἰγδην ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰσσεῖν.
Σ Arg. 1.1015–1017b

ἀλλὰ θύελλαι: hurricanes and storm squalls. For this reason Homer uses *thuellai* and *harpuiai* synonymously for hurricane blasts, deriving the meaning from *harpazein*: [he says] ‘as when the θυέλλαι carried away the daughters of Pandareos’ (*Od.* 20.66), and then: ‘meanwhile the ἄρπυιαι carried away these maidens’ (*Od.* 20.77), as though they are the same. The one (ἄρπυιαι) comes from *harpazein* and the other (θύελλαι) comes from *thuein*, which means ‘blow with force’. He [Apollonius] says *harpagdēn*, which comes from *harpazein*, just as *phoradēn* comes from *pherein* and *aigdēn* from *aissein*.

The critic writes that ἄρπυιαι derives from ἄρπάζειν, and this derivation is repeated at the end of the scholion with the adverbial form ἄρπάγδην.⁶ The derivation of ἄρπυιαι from ἄρπάζειν, ‘to seize’ is found in the D-scholia (Σ D *Il.* 16.150).⁷ The adjective καταγιγιδώδεις is also used by Eustathius in relation to the Harpies: Ἀρπυιαι δὲ ἀλληγορικῶς μὲν, ἄνεμοι καταγιγιδώδεις καὶ ἀρπακτικοί “*Harpuiiai* [is used] allegorically for tempestuous and rapacious winds” (*Od.* 1.54.40).⁸

The usage of συνωνυμία above is the only occurrence of this noun in the *Argonautica*-scholia. There is one occurrence of the adjective συνώνυμος (Σ Arg. 1.305) and three occurrences of the adverbial form συνωνύμως (Σ Arg. 1.416, 1.1165c, 1.1280–1a). The discourse of synonymy in this corpus reflects a keen interest in, and attention to, technical and grammatical details. This is mirrored in other scholarly texts and scholia as a result of the interconnection between grammatical learning and the commentary tradition.⁹ Moreover, syncope and apocope belong to the

6 According to O’Hara 2017, 28, it is implicitly suggested that ‘Harpies’ derives from ἄρπάζω, as this verb appears near their name at Arg. 2.187–189 (Ἀρπυιαι στόματος ... ἥρπαζον, “The Harpies snatched ... from his mouth”), which is when they are first introduced in the poem. See also line 2.223: Ἀρπυιαι στόματος μοι ἀφαρπάζουσιν (“The Harpies snatch away from my mouth”).

7 Le Feuvre (2021, 65), notes that the scholiasts “seek in the text itself ... helpful elements and clues to establish the meaning of an obscure word.”

8 Wendel (1932, 61–64) discusses the likelihood that Eustathius had access to a version of the Apollonius-scholia. There are other notable overlaps with the Apollonius-scholia and Eustathius’ commentaries. Some indicative examples are e.g., the term ἀστεῖως (‘wittily’), which is not common in other corpora, though it is an important term in the *Argonautica*-scholia and appears 163 times in the *Iliad* commentary; and the unusual form ζητήτεον (occurring once at Σ Arg. 1.763–764) occurs in Eust *Il.* and *Od.* 110 times.

9 See, e.g., Criatore (2001, 209–210) on the role of etymology in the teaching of the grammarians; and Schironi (2018, 340–348) on etymology and the exegetical practice of Aristarchus.

grammatical knowledge that reinforces synonymy and etymological explanations. Σ *Arg.* 1.219–220 discusses the relationship between ἐρεμνᾶς and ἐρεβεννᾶς as an example of syncope.¹⁰ Similarly, at Σ *Arg.* 1.305 the critic states that the word ἔται is synonymous with ἑταῖροι and is the product of apocope. It bears similarities to the scholion at 1.1015–1017b, for which two quotes from Homer are provided as evidence:

Ἔστι δὲ συνώνυμος ἡ λέξις, κατὰ ἀποκοπὴν δὲ ἐξενήνκεται. πρῶτος δὲ Ὅμηρος κέχρηται λέγων “κασίγνητοὶ τε ἔται τε”. Διὸ καὶ κατὰ τὸ πλεῖστον ἐκ πλήρους ἐκφέρεται: “οὐ γὰρ μοι πάρα νῆες ἐπήρετμοι καὶ ἑταῖροι.”

Σ *Arg.* 1.305

The word is synonymous, and it is produced through apocope. Homer was the first to use it, saying “brothers and companions (*etai*)” (*Il.* 16.456). Thus, for the most part, it is used in a full form: “for I have not any oared ships by me nor any companions (*hetairoi*)” (*Od.* 5.141).¹¹

This scholion is representative of the short grammatical and etymological notes which comprise much of the content in this corpus. The note at lines 1.1015–1017, however, contains a lengthy etymological excursus, perhaps because it was informed by Homeric poetry and scholarship. The critic inserts two quotes from *Odyssey* 20 as evidence of the synonymy between θύελλαι and ἄρπυια, since both terms are used to describe the kidnapping of the children of Pandareus by the Harpies. The scholion finishes with a final etymological formula: ἄρπυια derives from ἀρπάζειν, θύελλα from θύειν, ἀρπάγδην (which appears at *Arg.* 1.1017) from ἀρπάζειν, as φοράδην is from φέρειν, and αἰγδην is from αἰσσειν. In formulating these semantic associations, the critic justifies his own synonym, καταγίδες, with this final etymological explanation.¹² In Homeric scholarship, the final etymology, αἰγδην from αἰσσειν, was also proposed by Aristarchus.¹³ The connection between the αἰγ in καταγίδες and the verb αἰσσειν is found in Σ *A Il.* 11.297a, as Hector enters the conflict like a ‘blustering tempest’: ταῦτας δὲ ἡμεῖς καταγίδας καλοῦμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κάτω αἰσσειν

¹⁰ ἐρεμνᾶς δὲ ἦτοι κατὰ συγκοπὴν τὰς ἐρεβεννᾶς, τουτέστι ... σκοτεινὰς κυρίως, ἐξ οὗ μελαίνας “*Eremnas* (‘dark’) is in fact *erebennas* (‘dark’, ‘gloomy’) with syncope, that is to say properly *skoteinas* (‘dark’), hence *melainas* (‘black’)” (Σ *Arg.* 1.219–220).

¹¹ Transl. Lattimore 1965. Wendel (1935, 34) follows Hölzlin (1641) in deleting οὐκ from this note, believing that the scribe made a mistake. If the οὐκ were to be left in, the sense would be that ἔται is not a different word with the same meaning (synonymy), but the same word, ἑταῖροι, in a shortened form (apocope). Cf. *Etymologicum Magnum* s.v. Ἐτης, Kallierges p. 386: Ἐτης· ὁ ἑταῖρος, ἔθης τις ὢν, παρὰ τὸ ἔθος, ὁ συνήθης “Ἐτης: a companion (*hetairos*), someone who is *ethēs*, after *ethos* (‘habit’), an acquaintance (*sunēthēs*).” Note that in Gaisford’s edition τις contains an accent grave (τίς), which I have omitted.

¹² As pointed out by Lachenaud 2018, 117.

¹³ Noted by Schironi 2018, 344 and 694.

“We name these *kataigides* (‘hurricanes’) from *katō aissein* (‘to rush downwards’),” and again at *Il.* 17.594a: καταιγίδες, αἱ πνοαὶ αἱ κάτω αἰσσοῦσαι “*kataigides*, the blasts which dart downwards.”¹⁴ The only other occurrence of ὄθεν “Ὀμηρος” in this corpus is a notable one, which comments on a simile at 3.1019–1021. Here too, the critic frames his argument with two quotes from the Homeric poems (*Il.* 23.598–599 and *Od.* 12.175), and there is clear precedent and context for his argument as the topic (the correct usage of the verb αἰίνω) is discussed in the scholia to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.¹⁵

3 Κυρίως: ‘proper’ word usage

The prevalence of etymologies in the *Argonautica*-scholia is perhaps most apparent in the frequent use of terms relating to language and etymological derivations. The term κυρίως is significant to this corpus, appearing 38 times. Defining this term is not straightforward. Aristotle uses it in a narrow sense,¹⁶ and in some scholia corpora it is used in opposition to ἰδίως (which denotes poetic, figurative meanings or ‘non-standard’ words).¹⁷ In this corpus, κυρίως has different applications. It can be used in reference to mythological content (e.g., to validate the name of the island *Arktōn*, Σ *Arg.* 1.936–949a), but it is mainly used in an etymological context: to correct catachreses in Apollonius’ poem (Σ *Arg.* 1.745–746a) as well as mistakes made by others (Σ *Arg.* 4.71). It is best understood as indicating ‘proper’ or ‘standard’ use of language, such as in the scholion below. Ultimately, as Schironi notes (in relation to the A-scholia), the ‘standard meaning’, which is defined as κυρίως, is the meaning deduced from the etymology provided by the scholar. So, if the etymology relates the

14 See Eustathius *Il.* 1.296.30: ἐπαιγίζειν δὲ τὸ ἐφορμᾶν δηλοῖ καὶ ἄνωθεν ἐπιπνέειν ὄθεν καὶ αἰγίδες καὶ καταιγίδες, τὸ δ’ αὐτὸ καὶ καταιγίζειν λέγεται “*epaigizein* means ‘to rush upon’ and ‘to blow upon from above’: hence also *aigides* (‘rushing storms’) and *kataigides* (‘hurricanes’). One also finds *kataigizein* used in this sense.” Kolovou 2018 discusses etymologies in Eustathius. At Σ *Od.* 4.515d12, θύελλα is glossed with ἡ καταιγίς / πνεῦμα βίαιον “a squall/ violent wind.” See Σ *Il.* 1.202 for the aegis (αἰῖς, αἰγός) as a synonym for a rushing storm or hurricane and Σ *A Il.* 4.167b for the same association. Cf. Schironi 2018, 694.

15 Σ *bT Il.* 598a, Σ *H. Od.* 12.175, Σ *T Il.* 15.103a1, Σ *A Il.* 10.277a.

16 See, e.g., Lachenaud (2018, 177) who discusses the different senses of κύριος as an Aristotelian adjective (appropriateness & standard language vs *glossai*); Aristotle *Top.* 123a36: οὐ κυρίως ἀλλὰ μεταφορᾷ; Crivelli 2017, 482–484 for κυρίως as ‘strictly.’

17 Schironi 2018, 229. There is an interesting scholion at Σ *Arg.* 2.1193, where the ‘proper’ meaning of ἐπιπροθεῖν “to order dogs (on the hunt)” is actually described as ἀπὸ μεταφορᾶς in the *EM* (s.v. Ἐπίπροθος, Kallierges p. 363).

proper meaning of a word, the following scholion is noteworthy, since κυρίως is used twice to introduce different etymological explanations. Moreover, Σ Arg. 1.743 is the only note in the entire corpus in which κυρίως appears more than once. It is quite a strange comment for this reason, and the two occurrences of κυρίως seem to be at odds with each other. There is a contrast between Apollonius' use of ὀχμάζω and what the critic(s) deem to be the proper usage of this verb. The scholion comments on the image of Aphrodite in arms from Jason's cloak, as she is carrying the shield of Ares.¹⁸ It is credited as L^m(P), meaning that the note in the recension manuscript (P) differs from the one found in the margins of L. I have included both notes below, and have numbered the first scholion in three parts, to indicate that the note is disjointed.

ὀχμάζουσα· κατέχουσα, βαστάζουσα, καίτοι μὴ οὔσα πολεμική, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐραστῇ χαριζομένη. κυρίως δὲ ἐστὶν ὀχμάσαι τὸ ἵππον ὑπὸ χαλινὸν ἀγαγεῖν ἢ ὑπὸ ὄχημα. κυρίως δὲ λέγεται τὸ ἐν μάχῃ κρατῆσαι, ἀπὸ τῆς αἰχμῆς.

Σ Arg. 1.743 L^m(P)

ὀχμάζουσα: (1) gripping, holding fast; but without being warlike, rather as if pleasing a lover. (2) In the proper sense, it is getting a horse on the bit or bringing it under the yoke. (3) In the proper sense, it means to prevail in combat, from *aichmē*.

Ἄρεος ὀχμάζουσα, φέρουσα, οὐχ ὡς πολεμική, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐραστῇ χαριζομένη τῷ Ἄρει. Σημαίνει δὲ τὸ ὀχμάζειν ἐνταῦθα τὸ φέρειν. Κυρίως δὲ τὸ ἀγεῖν τὸν ἵππον ὑπὸ χαλινόν, ἢ ὑπὸ ὄχημα. Σημαίνει δὲ καὶ τὸ προσηλοῦν ἐπὶ ὄχθου τινός. Τὸ δὲ αἰχμάζειν σημαίνει τὸ τῇ αἰχμῇ χρῆσθαι ἐπὶ τοῦ πολέμου.

Σ Arg. 1.743 P

Ἄρεος ὀχμάζουσα: carrying, not warlike but rather as if pleasing a lover, namely Ares. Here, *ochmazein* signifies 'to carry'. In the proper sense, it is getting a horse on the bit, or bringing it under the yoke. And it also signifies pushing up a hill. *Aichmazein* signifies using a spear in war.

The first scholion begins with synonyms for the verb ὀχμάζω, and a descriptive etymology follows. The critic explains that Aphrodite is holding the shield 'without being warlike'.¹⁹ This non-military sense is followed by two etymologies that tie ὀχμάζω to an equestrian and martial context: to bring under the yoke and to conquer in battle, with ὀχμάζω being related to ὄχημα and αἰχμή. This first use of κυρίως ('to

¹⁸ On the ekphrasis of Jason's cloak, see Bulloch 2006 and Hunter 1993, 52–59.

¹⁹ Tsitsibakou-Vasalos (2007, 101–103) discusses contextualizing etymologies in relation to authors such as Pindar, who 'tailors' etymologies to fit new contexts. Petit (2021, 112) notes that etymological wordplays can 'support or confirm elements of a description' in poetic contexts.

lead a horse on the bit or a chariot yoke”) seems to be a reaction to the (correct) definition of ὀχμάζουσα at the beginning of the note. Indeed, this first definition seems to be defending Apollonius against a potential claim of inappropriate usage from a previous commentator, since Aphrodite is not warlike here. Furthermore, the second suggested usage of ὀχμάζω (‘to conquer or subdue in battle’) may have been inserted by another commentator. This is supported by the logic in the scholion, which seems to change based on the two separate uses of κυρίως. If κυρίως is meant to validate the standard meaning of ὀχμάζω, then the two definitions are unlikely to have come from the same critic.

The L-scholion presents alternative etymologies, though the P-scholion, which contains just one occurrence of κυρίως, somewhat resolves this. The P-scholion does not reiterate the association of ὀχμάζω with αἰχμή, and clarifies that the verb simply means φέρω in this context. The usages of ὀχμάζω in the L-scholion may be a reference to Lycophron *Alex.* 441–443:

...αἰχμάσουσι λοισθίαν βοήν
 πύργων ὑπο πτέρναισι Παμφύλου κόρης
 αἰπὺς δ' ἀλιβρώς ὄχμος ἐν μεταίχμιω...

... [They] shall fight with their last battle-shout
 at the foot of the towers of the daughter of Pamphylos
 That tall citadel, eaten away by the sea...

transl. Hornblower

Lycophron engages in wordplay by using words that are connected in etymological discourse: αἰχμάζω, ὄχμος and μεταίχμιον. As Hornblower points out, μεταίχμιον derives from αἰχμή (which is one of the roots connected with ὀχμάζω above), but it no longer has a ‘military’ sense in this context.²⁰ The suggestions given in the L-scholion may also have been informed by other usages of, and scholarship on, the verb ὀχμάζω. In earlier literature it seems to connote aggression (e.g., Eur. *Or.* 265 and Eur. *El.* 817),²¹ and the *Etymologicum Magnum* preserves this sense also:

²⁰ Hornblower 2015, 217. Αἰχμάσουσι is glossed with πολεμήσουσι (‘they will fight’, ‘they will do battle’) at Σ Lycoph. 441.

²¹ See also the scholion to *Orestes* 265, which picks up on these aggressive connotations: ὀχμάζεις· συνέχεις, ἐπαίρεις· ἴδιον δὲ τῶν μαινονένων τὸ τοὺς κηδομένους ἀποσείεσθαι δοκεῖν βλάπτεσθαι μᾶλλον “ὀχμάζεις: you embrace, you lift up. It is particular to those who are so mad that they shake off those who are caring for them and think rather that they are being harmed,” transl. Mastro-narde (modified) (Σ Eur. *Or.* 265). Cf. Eustathius *Od.* 1.206.13 τὸν ὀχμόν. οὗ ῥῆμα ὀχμάζειν παρ’ Εὐριπίδῃ “Meaning fortress (*ochmon*). Of which the verb *ochmazein* is derived, which occurs in Euripides.” Cf. Lachenaud 2018, 124: “Le scholiaste propose donc de mettre ce détail de l’*ekphrasis* du

Ὅχμάζω· σημαίνει τὸ κατέχω. Ἐκ τοῦ ἔχω, τὸ κατέχω ... ὀχμάσας σημαίνει δὲ τὸ κρατήσας καὶ κόψας

Ὅχμάζω: It means 'I hold up'. From 'I hold', 'I confine'... *ochmasas* means 'having seized with force' and 'having struck'.²²

However, the Oppian-scholia provide a number of synonyms for ὀχμάζω, including κρατέω, but this also simply means 'to hold up':

Ὅχμάζουσιν· ἀναβαστάζουσι, κινουῖσι, βαστώσι, κρατοῦσιν, ἀνέχουσι, βαστάζονται
Σ Opp. Hal. 3.374

Okmazousin: 'They carry,' 'they lift up,' 'they raise,' 'they support,' 'they hold up'.

In *Prometheus Bound* (618) ὀχμάζω means 'bind fast', and an etymology for the unusual form ὀχμή (ὄχανον) is suggested in the scholion to this line:

Ὅχμασε· ἐποίησεν ἀναβασταχθῆναι. ὀχμὴ λέγεται τὸ μέσον ἐχόμενον, ἢ παρὰ τὸ ἔχειν ἔχημα, καὶ ἔχημα κατὰ συγκοπήν

Σ Aesch. PV 618

Okmase: He held up. *Ochmē* is the word for the middle part which is being held (cf. ὄχανον, 'handle' in the middle of a shield), or after *echein* ('to hold'), *echema*, and it becomes *echma* ('that which holds') due to syncope".

It seems, then, that there are different voices in the L-scholion and that the comments have accumulated and been integrated, reflecting the variorum commentary from which the *Argonautica*-scholia derive. Indeed, this is not the only occasion in this corpus at which a scholion contains a statement, or statements, that undermine the previous part of the note.²³ The scholion at 1.743 illustrates etymologizing in action and the ways in which critics may apply their etymology training. It seems that κυρίως is used to criticize word usage (though it can also be used in positive evaluations, e.g., Σ *Arg.* 4.1193). This is also evident from further examples such as Σ *Arg.* 4.1418, where the critic clarifies the proper meaning of λωφῆσαι ('to relieve weight from the neck', from λόφος, which is defined by the critic as 'neck') in response to

manteau en rapport avec ὄχημα et avec αἰχμή, alors que le verbe signifie « tenir d'une main ferme » chez Euripide (*Cycl.* 484, *Or.* 265)."

²² S.v. Ὅχμάζω, Kallierges p. 645.

²³ This is a common occurrence, with another notable example at Σ *Arg.* 3.1019–1021a. Wendel 1932, 25, 36–38 provides examples from the P manuscript in which a scholion incorporates different comments from L. He also discusses how the 'three-man commentary' ('Dreimännerkommentar') may be combined in the same scholion, 112.

Apollonius using it in the sense of παύομαι ‘cease’. In an earlier note (Σ Arg 2.485b) the critic comments on λωφήια, which is used by Apollonius to refer to sacrifices ‘of atonement’. Here also, the critic clarifies that the proper sense (κυρίως) of λωφήσαι is ‘to relieve burdens from the neck’ (τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ τραχήλου ἄχθος ἀποθέσθαι). Based on how it is used in these examples, κυρίως represents an attempt to monitor Apollonius’ poem for (im)proper language use. This corresponds to the utilization of other terms in this corpus such as κακῶς and οὐχ ὑγιῶς to comment on linguistic errors, namely the misuse of pronouns.²⁴

4 Theonyms: Rhea & Kronos

One of the most common and popular strands of etymological discourse in antiquity, especially in the Stoic tradition, is etymologizing divine names.²⁵ This interest is also reflected in the Apollonius-scholia. For instance, the commentator at Σ Arg. 1.297b glosses the optative form of ἄροιο (from αἶρω) and explains that Ares’ name might derive from the fact that “in war one gains (*lambanein*) and loses (*aphelesthai*)”, using ἀφελέσθαι from ἀφαιρέω.²⁶ Furthermore, the etymological origins of Athena’s epithet and Apollo’s cult name are provided at Σ Arg. 1.1280 (ὅθεν καὶ ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ γλαυκῶπις “hence Athena is also called *glaukōpis*”) and Σ Arg. 2.301–302b (ὅθεν καὶ Φοῖβος ὁ Ἀπόλλων “hence Apollo is also called Phoebus”).²⁷ The scholion I will be focusing on in this section, however, includes both standard and unusual etymologies.

²⁴ For οὐχ ὑγιῶς see, e.g., Σ Arg. 1.242–243, 3.751–753b and for κακῶς see, e.g., Σ Arg. 2.541–549d, 3.335, 3.600. There is a notable example at Σ Arg. 4.1613b where Callimachus’ use of ἀλκαῖα to mean ‘fly’ is described as κακῶς, and the critic includes two etymologies to validate the correct usage of the word.

²⁵ Domaradzki 2012, 13. See also Van den Berg (2021, 235) on the physical nature of Stoic etymology. See Hunter and Laemmle (2019) and Nagy (2004, 250–258) on the etymology of Apollo’s name. The etymologizing of divine names is also found in *Cratylus*, with the derivation of Rhea from ρεῖν at *Crat.* 402b–c.

²⁶ ἄροιο· λάβοις. ὅθεν καὶ τὸν Ἄρη τινὲς ἐτυμολογοῦσιν, ἀπὸ τοῦ λαμβάνειν καὶ ἀφελέσθαι ἐν πολέμῳ “ἄροιο: you will gain (*labois*). From this some also derive the name Ares, because in war one gains (*lambanein*) and loses (*aphelesthai*)” (Σ Arg. 1.297b).

²⁷ Athena *glaukopis*: τὸ δὲ γλαυκὸν καὶ χαροπὸν συνωνύμως λέγεται· ἀμφοτέρω γὰρ ἐπὶ τοῦ λαμπρεῖν ... ὅθεν καὶ ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ γλαυκῶπις καὶ γλήνη ἢ κορή τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ, παρὰ τὸ γλαύσσειν, ὃ ἐστὶ λάμπειν “*glaukos* (‘gleaming’) and *charopos* (‘bright’) are used synonymously. For both apply to that which is radiant (*lampros*) ... hence also Athena *glaukōpis* and *glēnē* for the pupil of the eye, related to *glassein*, which means ‘to shine’ (*lampein*)” (Σ Arg. 1.1280); Phoebus Apollo: φοιβήσαντες diacritics: οὖν λαμπράναντες, καθάραντες· φοῖβον γὰρ τὸ καθαρὸν, ὅθεν καὶ Φοῖβος ὁ Ἀπόλλων,

The critic at Σ Arg. 1.1098–1102a comments on the Argonauts' dedication to Rhea on Mt Dindymum, in their effort to appease her and stop the contrary winds that have been keeping them at Cyzicus after their accidental slaying of its eponymous king, a context we already encountered in Section 1.

ἐκ γὰρ τῆς ἀνεμ<οι>· ἐκ ταύτης τῆς Ῥέας καὶ γῆ καὶ θάλασσα καὶ οὐρανὸς συνέχεται. οἱ γὰρ φυσικοὶ αὐτὴν γῆν φυσιολογοῦσι καὶ τὴν πάντων ἁρμογὴν καὶ σύνδεσμον, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς ἐτυμολογοῦσι παρὰ τὸ ρεῖν αἰεὶ καὶ ποιεῖν τεῖρεα. καὶ φυσικῶς ταύτης ἄνδρα τὸν Κρόνον φασίν, οἰονεῖ τὸν χρόνον μεταβολῇ τῶν ἀντιστοιχίων· σύνεστι δὲ τῇ τῶν στοιχείων τάξει ἐξ ἀνάγκης ὁ χρόνος, καὶ εἴτα λοιπὸν ἀλληγορικῶς τούτους τῶν θαλασσίων καὶ οὐρανίων καὶ χθονίων θεῶν πατέρας εἶναι φασί· μετὰ γὰρ τὴν τῶν στοιχείων θέσιν καὶ σύνδεσμον συνέβη καὶ θεοὺς καὶ θεῶν δυνάμεις καὶ διαφορὰς μαθεῖν τοὺς ἄνδρας καὶ τιμῆσαι.

Σ Arg. 1.1098–1102a

ἐκ γὰρ τῆς ἀνεμ[οι]: by her, Rhea, the earth, sea and sky are held together. For the natural philosophers explain her nature by saying that she is the earth and the arrangement of all things and the bond which unites them, and they etymologize her name from the fact that she is always-flowing (ρεῖν) and makes 'monsters' (τεῖρεα). And in a physical explanation, they say her husband is Kronos, that is, time (χρόνος) with the change of a letter. Time is associated by necessity with the order of the elements. Then there are also those who say allegorically that they are the parents of the gods of the sea, sky and underworld. For after the elements were arranged and bound together, it happened that men learned to distinguish the gods and the powers of the gods and honour them.

We are told that the φυσικοὶ etymologize Rhea's name from τὸ ρεῖν αἰεὶ and ποιεῖν τεῖρεα. The association of Rhea with terms relating to 'flow' is common.²⁸ For example, Chrysippus says that Rhea stands for the earth, since the waters flow from it, identifying Rhea with ῥύσις ('flow').²⁹ The identification of Kronos with 'time' further demonstrates that this comment is invoking Stoic etymological discourse, in which divine figures are taken to represent the physical nature of the universe.³⁰ However, there is no clear theoretical context for ποιεῖν τεῖρεα, and this etymology does not appear to be documented elsewhere. The strange spelling of τέρας to suit the proposed etymology is a feature shared with other examples in this paper.³¹

διὰ τὸ καθαρὸν, "So *phoibēsantes* means 'having made bright', 'having purified': for *phoibos* is 'what is pure'; hence also Apollo is called Phoibos, because of his purity" (Σ Arg 2.301–302b).

²⁸ The critic may also be invoking the image of Rhea as we see her in Callimachus' *Hymn to Zeus*. See Hopkinson 1984, 176–177.

²⁹ Chrysippus (SVF II, fr. 1084), from *Etymologicum Magnum* (s.v. Ῥέα, Kallierges p. 701). Cf. Heraclitus 41, 7.

³⁰ Found in Chrysippus (SVF II, fr. 1087). Cf. Cornutus (6, 20; 7, 5). Similarly to the scholion above, Heraclitus associates Kronos with the elements (41, 6). Discussed by Domaradzki 2012, 140–141.

³¹ Τεῖρεα is a form that is often used in Greek poetry to refer to star-signs (e.g., Arg. 3.1362).

There are two ways of reading τέρας here. The first ('monster') corresponds with Lachenaud's translation and with the traditions in which Rhea, and the Earth, produced monstrous beings.³² In fact, the second sense of τέρας ('miracle,' 'marvel') may be more relevant here, and we find the motivation behind this strange etymology in the poem itself. After the Argonauts have performed the ritual to Rhea, later in that same episode, the results of the sacrifices become apparent and the narrator tells us that Rhea produced another 'miracle' as water gushed forth from Mt Dindymum for the first time: ἡ δὲ καὶ ἄλλο θῆκε τέρας (1.1145). It seems that the critic used this line of the poem as the grounds for the etymology at Σ *Arg.* 1.1098–1102. Further, the critic's description of Rhea as 'always flowing' (τὸ ῥεῖν ἀεὶ) instead of the just 'flowing' may refer to ἀλκτος ('unceasing') in line 1148. Therefore, this etymology and the motivation behind it give us greater insight into ancient critical engagement with Apollonius' text.

In a scholion to line 1148 the critic mentions οἱ φυσικοί again, noting that they identify Rhea with the earth (καὶ τοῖς φυσικοῖς γὰρ δοκεῖ ἡ αὐτὴ εἶναι τῇ γῇ "For also by the natural philosophers she is considered to be the same as the earth," Σ *Arg.* 1.1141–1148b). It is important to ask, then, to whom οἱ φυσικοί refers. In addition to the two instances noted already, there are two other references to οἱ φυσικοί in this corpus. At Σ *Arg.* 1.865–868a, which comments on Heracles rebuking the Argonauts on Lemnos, the critic writes that Heracles is understood as a symbol of wit and strength by the natural philosophers (παρὰ δὲ τοῖς φυσικοῖς ὁ Ἡρακλῆς σύνεσις καὶ ἀλκὴ λαμβάνεται "Among the natural philosophers Heracles is taken to be a paradigm of intelligence and prowess"). In the lengthy comment on the flooding of the Nile in Book 4, Democritus is identified as a φυσικός (Δημόκριτος δὲ ὁ φυσικός, Σ *Arg.* 4.269–271a). The association of 'natural philosophers' with the Pre-Socratics is also evident in Aristotle's *Poetics*, which calls Empedocles a φυσιολόγος.³³ So the reference to the Pre-Socratics at Σ *Arg.* 1.1098–1102a ensures that this scholion is being linked to the philosophical discourse in this corpus.³⁴ It is interesting that the etymology ποιεῖν τεῖρα seems to be innovative but is attributed to the 'natural philosophers,' perhaps in order to validate it.

³² Lachenaud 2010, 160: "créer des monstres."

³³ Arist. *Poet.* 1447b.16–20: οὐδὲν δὲ κοινόν ἐστιν Ὀμήρῳ καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλεῖ πλὴν τὸ μέτρον, διὸ τὸν μὲν ποιητὴν δίκαιον καλεῖν τὸν δὲ φυσιολόγον μᾶλλον ἢ ποιητὴν "There is nothing in common between Homer and Empedocles except for their meter. For this reason it is right to call one a poet and the other a natural scientist rather than a poet."

³⁴ This can include references to specific figures and broader philosophical discourses, e.g., Σ *Arg.* 1.643–648e contains a discussion of the Pythagoreans and metempsychosis; Σ *Arg.* 1.496–498b references Empedocles, Thales and Anaxagoras on the elements.

5 Toponyms and anthroponyms

One of the overarching areas of interest in the *Argonautica*-scholia is geography, as the commentators frequently seek to expound geographical and ethnographic content and relate various sources of knowledge on the ‘inhabited world’ or *oikoumenē*. Naturally, there are many opportunities afforded by Apollonius’ poem to comment on different places and peoples, and this preoccupation extends to etymology and onomastics. The three examples below are representative of this broad interest and reveal different features about the function of etymologies in Apollonian scholarship.

5.1 Copying etymologies: Dionysius of Chalcis and Prokonnesus

In Book 2, as the Boreads pursue the Harpies, they are compared to hunting dogs on the trail of ‘horned goats’ (αἰγας κεραούς) or ‘deer’ (πρόκας). In the following scholion, the critic launches into an etymological digression on the origin of the place name Prokonnesus, which illustrates the role of etymology in thinking about origins and derivations and its function within etiologal discourse,³⁵ which is a hallmark of Alexandrian poetry.³⁶

ἡ δὲ πρόκας ἰχθυεῦντες· ζῷόν τι ὅμοιον ἐλάφῳ, ὃ λεγόμενος νεβρός. Διονύσιος δὲ φησιν ὁ Ἀθηναῖος ἐν ταῖς Κτίσεσι τὰς ἐλάφους οὕτω λέγεσθαι, πρόκας· ὅθεν καὶ Προκόννησος, ἐπεὶ ἐν ταύτῃ πληθύνουσιν ἐλάφοι. οἱ δὲ Προχόννησον λέγουσιν εἰρῆσθαι ἀπὸ τῆς προχόου, ἣν ἔχουσα τοῖς Μιλησίοις ἀπήντησεν ἡ Παρθένος, ὅτε τὴν ἀποικίαν ἐστέλλοντο. οἱ δὲ Προχώννησον ἐτυμολογοῦσιν, καθὼ πρότερον οὕσα νῆσος ὕστερον προσεχώσθη. ὑπὸ τινων δὲ [ἡ] Προκόννησος καὶ Ἐλαφώνησος ἐκλήθη. Φιλητᾶς δὲ φησι πρόκας λέγεσθαι ἐλάφους τὰς πρῶτως τικτομένας, οἷον πρωτοτόκου

Σ Arg. 2.279

ἡ δὲ πρόκας ἰχθυεῦντες: an animal close to a deer, the so-called *nebras*. But Dionysius of Athens, in his *Foundations* (F 12 Mueller IV 395), says that deer are called thus (*prokes*). Hence also the name *Prokonnesus*, since there are many deer there. But others say that it is called

³⁵ Sluiter (2015, 902–904) demonstrates that causality and motivation are prominent characteristics of etymological discourse.

³⁶ On the Alexandrian poetic practice of etiology, see Cusset 2021, 213 and O’Hara 2017, 24, on the etymologies of proper names in Alexandrian poetry, which are usually explained with a ‘mythical *aition*’. Harder (2022, 1) claims that etiologies both shape the past and are concerned with the future. Sluiter 2015, 900 notes that ancient etymology can be understood as an ‘anchoring practice’ which creates “points of reference and orientation in past and present.” Both authors emphasize the significance of causality in these discourses. See Paskiewicz 1988 for a discussion of the *aitia* in Book 2 of the *Argonautica*.

Prochonnesus on account of the jar (*prochoos*) which Parthenos carried when she met the Milesians, at the time when they founded their city. Others again etymologize it as *Prochōnnesus*, considering it was previously an island which later silted up (*prosechōsthē*). *Prokonnesus* is also called *Elaphonesus* by some. Philetas (F 48 Spanoudakis) says that deer who first give birth are called *prokes*, because they are *prōtotokoi* ('primiparous').

The etymology for Prokonnesus is formed by a compound uniting two nouns, πρόξ ('deer', using the genitive form προκός) and νῆσος ('island'). A similar etymology for 'Peloponnese' (Πέλοπος + νῆσος) is noted in the *EM*.³⁷ It is explained that a surplus *ν* is added, in the same manner as Prokonnesus (ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ Προκόννησος). The reference finishes with a reference to Herodian's work on modifications, *Peri Pathōn*. In the note above, the spelling of Prokonnesus is adapted for each different etymological explanation (Προκόννησος, Προχόννησος, Προχώννησος) in order to facilitate the proposed etymology. This practice is prominent in other authors such as Orion.³⁸ This entire scholion is replicated in an entry in the *Etymologicum Magnum*, with some additional information.³⁹ The fact that the *EM* entry contains a more comprehensive account on Prokonnesus suggests that it derives from a fuller critical corpus on Apollonius than what the L-scholia preserve. It also preserves an alternative tradition in which Prokonnesus is spelled with an iota (Προικόννησος) and derives from the compound προικός ('gift') and νῆσος. Moreover, Diodorus Siculus preserves another version of the story of Parthenos, whose 'jar' lends its name to Prokonnesus (*Prochonnesus*) in the scholion above. Diodorus' account at 5.62.3 is

³⁷ S.v. Πελοπόννησος, Kallierges p. 659.

³⁸ See, e.g., Orion of Thebes, *Etymologicum*, upsilon p.156: Ὑγρόν. ὑδρόν τι ὄν. ὁ δὲ Ἡρωδιανὸς παρὰ τὸν ὕσω μέλλοντα φησὶν ὑρὸς, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ γ, ὑγρὸς καὶ ὑγρόν "Hugron ('moist'), a 'watery' thing (hudron). But Herodian says that from the future *husō* ('I will rain') one derives *huros*, and through adjunction of [g], *hugros* and *hugron*"; *Etymologicum*, delta p. 45: Δέρματα. κατὰ μετὰθεσιν τοῦ τ εἰς δ, ὡς περὶ τέρμα τοῦ σώματος "Dermata 'skins'. Through a change of the [t] into [d], as if it were the boundary (*terma*) of the body." Both examples transl. by Le Feuvre and available on the Etymgram website (<http://appsweb-cepam.unice.fr/etygram>). Le Feuvre (2021, 58) notes that, in ancient Greek etymology, 'it was not a problem to add a letter or to drop one'.

³⁹ S.v. Προικόννησος (Kallierges p. 689), with the following additions: Ἐκ τοῦ προῖξ προικός καὶ τοῦ νῆσος, ἢ πάσαις ταῖς νήσοις προῖκα τῶν μαρμάρων μεταδοῦσα ... Ὑπὸ τινων δὲ ἡ Προκόννησος Ἀδελφόννησος κέκληται ... Φιλήτας δέφησι πρόκας λέγεσθαι τὰς πρώτων τικτομένας ἐλάφους, οἷον πρωτοτόκους, ὡς παρὰ Ἀπολλωνίῳ "*Proikonnesos*: From *proix*, *proikos* 'gift', and *nesos* 'island', she who shares with all islands the gift (*proika*) of marble blocks...By some *Prokonnesus* is called *Adelphonnesos* ...Philetas says *prokes* is the word for deer who first give birth, because they are *prōtotokoi* 'primiparous', as in Apollonius." See Wendel (1932, 68) on the relationship between the *Argonautica*-scholia and the *Etymologica*, particularly the *Et.Gen*.

concerned with her cult at Chersonnesus.⁴⁰ He includes a rationalizing explanation of the deification of Parthenos and her sister Hermithea: the jar (here a κέραμος) containing their father Staphylos' wine was destroyed while they were guarding it, so out of fear of their father's punishment they threw themselves into the sea, but were saved by Apollo and then deified.

Scholars have identified the Dionysius 'of Athens' in this note as Dionysius of Chalcis, the author of *ktiseis* or foundation texts.⁴¹ He is cited in a similar context in the scholia to Book 1, in a discussion of the origins of the Macrians (Διονύσιος δὲ ὁ Χαλκιδεὺς εἰρήσθαι φησιν αὐτοὺς Μάκρωνας, ἐπειδὴ Εὐβοέων εἰσὶν [Μάκρωνες] ἄποικοι "Dionysius of Chalcis says that they were called Macrones, because they are Euboean settlers," Σ *Arg.* 1.1024a). His work *Foundations* is also referenced in Book 4, likewise with the ethnic signifier 'of Chalcis' (καὶ Ἀριστίας ὁ Χίος ἐν ταῖς Κτίσεσι καὶ Διονύσιος ὁ Χαλκιδεὺς ἐν α' Κτίσεων καὶ ἔθνος φασὶν Ἀρκαδίας Σεληνίτας εἶναι "Both Aristias of Chios in his *Foundations* and Dionysius of Chalcis in Book 1 of the *Foundations* say that there were also Arcadian people called Selinites," Σ *Arg.* 4.263–4b). The lengthy note in which he is cited at 2.279 is not directly relevant to Apollonius' poem, which suggests that the critic has copied the entire etymological entry from Dionysius.⁴² The single 'blanket' reference to Dionysius means that this scholion can be considered the longest of his fragments,⁴³ and the fact that it is related in such detail, despite being irrelevant, speaks to the idea that it was copied down.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ On the cults of Parthenos in Miletus and Chersonnesus, and her association with Artemis, see Braund 2018, 40. Muntz discusses Diodorus' methods of rationalization and Euhemerism, 108–111.

⁴¹ See Müller *FHG* 4.393–6. He notes a similar example concerning Euphron in Helladius' *Chrestomatheia* (preserved in Photius' *Bibliotheca*, cod. 279, p. 532b). According to Engels (2015), the ethnic 'Athenian' might refer to Dionysius' Attic citizenship.

⁴² This is contrary to what we might usually expect from a scholiast. Le Feuvre (2021, 56) comments on the fact that the restricted space available in the margins of the manuscript often results in the scholiast using implicit explanations.

⁴³ Based on the fragments collected by Müller 1851. Blanket references are discussed by Cameron (2004, 93, 104, 113, 115).

⁴⁴ Sluiter (2015, 918) states that etymology can support cultural memory, and the words within these etymologies function as "repositories of cultural information."

5.2 The Mossynoecians & Abarnis

In the next example, the critic builds on an etymology provided in the poem itself, elaborating on one of the suggested origins of the name Mossynoecian (Σ *Arg.* 2.377–380).⁴⁵ The Mossynoecians are mentioned in the context of Phineus’ instructions to the Argonauts for the rest of their voyage. He explains that the heroes will pass the Mossynoecians before they reach the island devoted to Ares, which is guarded by vicious birds. I include the extract from the poem and the corresponding scholion below.

τοῖς δ’ ἐπὶ Μοσσύνοικοι ὁμόριοι ὑλήεσαν
 ἐξείης ἥπειρον ὑπωρείας τε νέμονται,
 δουρατέοις † πύργοισιν ἐν † ἐν οἰκία τεκτίναντες
 κάλινα καὶ πύργους εὐπηγέας, οὓς καλέουσιν
 μόσσυνας, καὶ δ’ αὐτοὶ ἐπώνυμοι ἔνθεν ἔασιν.
Arg. 2.379–381b

Next in order and sharing a border with them, the Mossynoecians inhabit the wooded plain and lower mountain slopes, having built their wooden homes within towers made of timber, along with sturdy towers they call *mossynes*, and from these the people themselves take their name.

The scholion reiterates the etymology found in the poem:

Μοσσύνοικοι δὲ ἔθνος καὶ αὐτὸ <Σκυθικόν>, ἀπὸ τῆς διαγωγῆς τὴν προσηγορίαν ἐσχηκός. μόσσυνοι γὰρ οἱ ξύλινοι οἶκοι λέγονται, οἷς [καὶ αὐτοὶ] ἐχρῶντο· ὅπερ καὶ αὐτὸς αἰνιττόμενος ὑλήεσαν γῆν αὐτοὺς οἰκεῖν ἔφη. ἀπὸ γοῦν τοῦ μόσσυνος, ὃ λέγεται ὁ ξύλινος οἶκος, ἐκλήθησαν Μοσσύνοικοι.

Σ *Arg.* 2.377–380

The Mossynoecians too are a Scythian people, who have taken their name from their dwellings. For *mossynes* is the word for wooden houses, which they used. And [Apollonius] himself also alludes to this when he says that they live in a wooded area. The Mossynoecians are at any rate called after *mossyn*, which is the word for a wooden house.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ The other etymology occurs at 2.1005–1017. Discussed by Cusset 2021, 216–218. On the etymologies of the *Argonautica*, O’Hara (2017, 24) notes that the derivations of proper names in this poem attribute features of the modern world to the “deeds of the heroic age.”

⁴⁶ Cf. Stephanus *Ethnica* μ 119: Μελάγχλαινος κέκληνται ἀφ’ ὧν φοροῦσιν ὡς Ἱππημολγοὶ παρὰ τὸ τοὺς ἵππους ἀμέλγειν καὶ Μοσσύνοικοι παρὰ τὰς οἰκήσεις “*Melanchlainoi* ... they are named after the garments they wear, just as the Hippemolgoi are named after the fact that they milk horses, and the Mossynoecians after their dwellings”; Hesychius μ 1702: μόσσυν· πύργος “*mossyn*: ‘tower’”, μ 1704: μόσσυνες· ἐπάλξεις. πύργοι “*mossynes*: ‘battlements’, ‘towers’.” Cf. Photius μ 544;

The repetition in this scholion may have been caused by a textual issue. Verses 381a–b were omitted by Brunck (1780),⁴⁷ and, according to Wendel, the description of the Mossynoecians in this scholion points to the fact that the critic's text did not contain the verses 381a–b.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, this scholion attests to the interest in etymologizing the name Mossynoecian, which is an Iranian word.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the Mossynoecians and their 'wooden towers' are mentioned in Xenophon *Anabasis* 5.4.26, which may have been Apollonius' source.

ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς αὐτῶν ὁ ἐν τῷ μόσσυνι τῷ ἐπ' ἄκρου ὠχοδομημένῳ...οὐκ ἤθελεν ἐξελθεῖν, οὐδὲ ὁ ἐν τῷ πρότερον αἰρεθέντι χωρίῳ, ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ σὺν τοῖς μοσσύνοις κατεκαύθησαν.

Their king in his wooden tower built upon the citadel...refused to come forth, as did also the commander of the stronghold which had been captured earlier, so they were burned up where they were, along with their towers.⁵⁰

The scholia on the *Anabasis* reiterate what is found in Apollonius' text and in the *Argonautica*-scholion (Σ Xen. *An.* 5.4.2).⁵¹

Μοσσύνοικοι ἐκαλοῦντο παρὰ τὸ ξυλίνους οἴκους ἔχειν. Μόσσυνος γὰρ ὁ ξύλινος οἶκος ἐπιχωρία φωνή (sic). Περί τῶν Μοσσυνοίκων φησὶν ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ ποιήματι.

The Mossynoecians are called after their wooden homes. For a *mossyn* is a wooden house in the native language. Apollonius mentions the Mossynoecians in the second book of his poem.

Although much of this scholion repeats what is found in the poem, the use of αἰνιττόμενος is noteworthy. Typically, in the *Argonautica*-scholia this verb refers to hints and allusions as opposed to allegorizing,⁵² which can be expressed by ἀλληγορέω as we

Etymologicum Magnum (s.v. Μόσυν): σημαίνει δὲ τὴν ξυλίνην οἰκίαν "It refers to a wooden house"; *Etymologicum Gudianum* (s.v. Κίνδυνος): μόσυν μόσσυνος, σημαίνει δὲ τὸν ξυλινὸν πύργον "*mosyn*, *mosynos*: it refers to a wooden tower."

⁴⁷ On this, see Race 2008, 145 fn. 27.

⁴⁸ Wendel 1932, 58; 1935, 159.

⁴⁹ Frisk 1970. See also Cusset 2021, 217. Schironi 2009, 2 discusses the development of 'ethnographic glossography' as a result of the Greek interest in foreign languages and cultures. On this topic, see Fiori in this volume.

⁵⁰ Transl. Brownson 1998.

⁵¹ See Dickey 2007, 55, on the Xenophon-scholia.

⁵² At Σ *Arg.* 1.146–149 the commentator uses αἰνίττεσθαι to describe Alcman's 'suggestion' that Leda is the daughter of Glaucus, and again at Σ *Arg.* 2.206–208 the critic understands the word μόλις as the narrator's allusion (αἰνίττεται) to Phineus' ill health. Nünlist (2009, 230–233) discusses ancient critics' use of αἰνίττεσθαι in the context of hints and hidden meanings.

saw in Section 3.⁵³ However, it does feature in allegorical readings elsewhere. One notable example is Porphyry's *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, in which ὕλη in the sense of 'matter' is a key term. This text is an extended allegorical interpretation that features αἰνίττεσθαι, a significant term for Neoplatonic allegory, in conjunction with ὕλη.⁵⁴ So perhaps it is not coincidental that αἰνίττεσθαι features in the discussion at Σ *Arg.* 2.377–380, in which ὕλη is a central word.

The note at Σ *Arg.* 2.377–380 can also be read with Σ 1.168–170, which comments on the word καλιά (referring here to Aleus' granary) and clarifies that it is a house built from wood, since κᾶλα are the equivalent of τὰ ξύλα ('pieces of wood'). The scholion finishes with the statement that "they used to build wooden houses since they did not yet know how to build in stone" (ξυλίναις γὰρ ἐχρῶντο τὸ παλαιὸν οἰκίας λιθίνων μηδέπω ἐπινοηθέντων). The reasoning here corresponds to Σ *Arg.* 2.377–380, as it implies that the Mossynoecians too are a primitive people who build in wood because they are incapable of building more permanent and secure stone structures. This fits with their strange customs.

Similarly to the name Mossynoecian, Abarnis, our last example, is not Greek. It is a town in Asia Minor. By providing the etymology below, the critic has again fixated on a non-Greek name and etymologized it as a Greek word, demonstrating one of the ways that etymology can serve 'the cause of Hellenism' not only in poetry, but in scholarship as well.⁵⁵ However, unlike the Mossynoecians, there is no etymology for Abarnis in the poem. In fact, it only receives brief mention, as the narrator tells us that the Argonauts passed the town on their way to the Doliones (Περκώτην δ' ἐπὶ τῇ καὶ Ἀβαρνίδος ἡμαθόεσσαν | ἡίονα ... παρήμειβον "After which they passed Percote and the sandy shore of Abarnis", *Arg.* 1.932–933).

Ἀβαρνίδος· ἡ Ἀβαρνίς πόλις τῆς Λαμψάκου. ὠνομάσθη δὲ ἀπὸ αἰτίας τοιαύτης. Διονύσου ἐρασθεῖσα Ἀφροδίτῃ ἐμίγη αὐτῷ καὶ ἀναχωρήσαντος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν Ἰνδικὴν ἐμίγη τῷ Ἀδώνιδι. ὥς δὲ ἦλθεν ὁ Διόνυσος, στέφανον ποιήσασα ὑπὴντησεν αὐτῷ. καὶ στέψασα αὐτὸν ἀκολουθεῖν μὲν ἤδεῖτο διὰ τὸ ἤδη γεγαμῆσθαι, εἰς δὲ Λάμψακον ἀναχωρήσασα τὸ ἐξ αὐτῆς κυοφορούμενον ἡβούλετο τεκεῖν. Ἦρα δὲ ζηλοτυποῦσα μεμαγευμένη τῇ χειρὶ ἐφύπητο τῆς

53 Another notable example of ἀλληγορέω in this corpus can be found at Σ *Arg.* 4.57–58, which references the Stoic allegorical tradition and the Myth of Endymion.

54 Αὐτοφυῆς δὲ ὁ κόσμος καὶ [αὐτοσυμφυῆς] προσπεφυκῶς τῇ ὕλῃ, ἦν λίθον καὶ πέτραν διὰ τὸ ἀργὸν καὶ ἀντίτυπον πρὸς τὸ εἶδος εἶναι ἡνίττοντο "The universe is self-generated and cognate with matter, which is symbolically represented by stone and rock, because it is unworked and the antitype ('receiver') of form" (*De antr. nymph.* 5.9). Akçay (2019, 45–50) discusses this passage and elucidates the importance of 'symbol' and 'image' as concepts of Neoplatonic allegory.

55 Pagani (2015, 798–849) discusses the concept of language correctness and *hellenismos*; Nünlist (2009, 13) mentions 'Greek chauvinism' as a form of critical bias that can be found in the scholia. Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2007, 30, 106.

γαστρός αὐτῆς καὶ ἐποίησε τεκεῖν ἄμορφον, ὃν Πρίαπον προσαγορευθῆναι ἐκ τοῦ <...> ἀπαρνήσασθαι τὴν Ἀφροδίτην καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Ἀπαρνίδα κληθῆναι. ὕστερον δὲ κατὰ μετάθεσιν τοῦ στοιχείου ἐκλήθη Ἀβαρνίς.⁵⁶

Σ Arg. 1.932–933a

Abarnidos: Abarnis is a town in the region of Lampsacus. It was named for the following reason. Aphrodite, in love with Dionysus, had intercourse with him, and when he had left for India she had intercourse with Adonis. When Dionysus returned, she made a crown and went to meet him. She crowned him but was ashamed to follow him because she was already married, and once back in Lampsacus, she wanted to give birth to the baby she was pregnant with from him. But Hera, out of jealousy, using magical arts, touched her stomach and caused her to give birth to a deformed child, who <they say> was called by the name Priapus because <...> Aphrodite had rejected him (*aparnēsasthai*), hence the name Aparnis. Later, through changing a letter it came to be called Abarnis.

The commentator relates the origin of the city's name: Hera intervened in Aphrodite's pregnancy and made her child deformed, Aphrodite rejected him and therefore the name of the town derives from the verb ἀπαρνήσασθαι, which recalls one of the proposed etymologies for Prokonnesus in Section 3.1 (προσχώννυμι). This etymology also features a change of letters (from π to β), so Aparnis became Abarnis. The only other source to 'venture' that Abarnis was spelled with a π is Herodian (and repeated in Stephanus' *Ethnica*, see below), who attributes this spelling to Artemidorus the geographer: ὡς παρὰ Ἀρτεμιδώρῳ τῷ γεωγράφῳ (no etymology is provided).⁵⁷

This note seems to combine different mythological traditions on Aphrodite's relationships. Although it mentions her relationships with Adonis and Dionysus, it is not exactly clear what has caused Hera's jealousy. Probably she suspects that Aphrodite is carrying a child of Zeus,⁵⁸ or perhaps she knows that the father is Dionysus, who is a child of Zeus and Semele. The *Suda* (s.v. Πρίαπος, p. 2277 Adler) preserves a condensed version of the myth related in the Apollonius-scholion. It mentions the same details regarding Hera laying her hands on Aphrodite's belly (Ἡρα ζηλοτυπήσασα μαγγανείᾳ τινὶ ἤψατο τῆς κοιλίας τῆς Ἀφροδίτης "But Hera, out of jealousy, using some kind of magic, grasped Aphrodite's belly"),⁵⁹ but does

⁵⁶ Wendel (1935, 80) notes in his critical apparatus that the version of this note in the P manuscript includes διὰ τὸ ἀπρεπὲς τοῦ αἰδοίου, taken from Σ Arg. 1.932–933b (L), thus filling the gap and supplying what had been previously edited out by a prudish critic.

⁵⁷ Herodian, *Peri Orthographias*, Lentz III/2, p. 465.

⁵⁸ For Zeus' attempted rape of Aphrodite, see e.g., Nonnus *Dionysiaca* 5.611; 14.193; 32.65.

⁵⁹ The entry in *EM* (s.v. Ἀβαρνίδα, Kallierges p. 2) closely matches the *Argonautica*-scholion, with only minor differences, suggesting that they both derive from the same source. The following words are included in the *EM* where there is a lacuna in the *Argonautica*-scholion: ὃν Πρίαπον ὀνομασθῆναι φασίν, ἄσχημον, καὶ βαθυαἰδοῖον· καὶ τοῦτον ἀπαρνήσασθαι τὴν Ἀφροδίτην "the one who

not mention Aphrodite's relationships with Dionysus or Adonis. Instead, it is noted that Priapus was the son of Zeus and Aphrodite (Πρίαπος ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς καὶ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης συνελήφθη "Priapus was conceived by Zeus and Aphrodite").⁶⁰ In his *Ethnica* (α 4), Stephanus quotes line 1.932 of the *Argonautica* before relating a condensed version of the etymology of Abarnis, which does not mention Aphrodite's relationships or Hera's jealousy. Significantly, he attributes the etymology of Abarnis to 'Sophocles', who is most likely the Apollonian commentator Sophocle(u)s: "Sophocle(u)s tells this in his commentary" (τοῦτο δὲ Σοφοκλῆς ὑπονηματίζων ἱστορεῖ).⁶¹

The etymology from Σ *Arg.* 1.932–933a is repeated in L in a second note, scholion (b): ἡ δὲ Ἀβάρνις τοῦ Ἑλλησπόντου, ἣ τὸ παλαιὸν Ἀπαρνίς ἐκαλεῖτο, ὡς εἴρηται, ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀφροδίτην ἐνταῦθα τεκοῦσαν τὸν Πρίαπον ἀπαρνῆσασθαι τὸν παῖδα διὰ τὸ ἀπρεπὲς τοῦ αἰδοίου "Abarnis is on the Hellespont, the city which was formerly called Aparnis, as has been said, because Aphrodite after giving birth to Priapus there rejected (*aparnēsasthai*) her child on account of his unseemly genitals." This note is connected with the moralizing discourse in this corpus through the use of πρέπον, which can denote something that is fitting in a stylistic sense, but in this context, and elsewhere in the *Argonautica*-scholia, it appears to be used in a moralizing fashion. Other notable examples include the comments on Hylas' abduction (Ἀπρεπὲς δὲ νεανίαν ὑδρίαν βαστάζειν· Ὅμηρος δὲ πρεπόντως παρθένον "But it is inappropriate for a young man to carry a *hydria*. Homer used it appropriately of a girl", Σ *Arg.* 1.1207b) and Orpheus' song (ὅτι πρέπον ἐστὶ τῆς μάχης παύσασθαι "Since it is appropriate to stop the fight", Σ *Arg.* 1.496–498), and it is used in multiple glosses to explain terms that convey appropriateness in different contexts.⁶² Furthermore, the inclusion of ὡς εἴρηται to refer back to the previous note corresponds with the use of προεἴρηται ("as previously said") elsewhere in the corpus (Σ *Arg.* 3.240, 2.672–673). This kind of repetition is quite typical of the *Argonautica*-scholia. However, part 'b' is not a direct copy from 'a'. Instead, the commentator is repeating the myth of Abarnis from part 'a' with a condensed, more formulaic version of the etymological etiology, which is marked by ἀπὸ τοῦ and διὰ τό.

they say was named Priapus, ugly, and with giant genitalia: and [they say] that this Priapus was rejected (*aparnēsasthai*) by Aphrodite."

⁶⁰ See Pausanias 9.31.1 on the fact that Priapus is revered by the people of Lampsacus and is the son of Dionysus and Aphrodite. Cf. Tzetzes *ad Lycophron* 831, in which Aphrodite and Adonis are the parents of Priapus.

⁶¹ On Sophocle(u)s see Pagani 2013.

⁶² τὼς γὰρ θέμις· οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ("thus it is fitting", Σ *Arg.* 2.705–711e); κατὰ μοῖραν· κατὰ τὸ πρέπον ("according to what is proper", Σ *Arg.* 2.1159); ἐναίσμιος δὲ ἡ καθήκουσα καὶ πρέπουσα ("being *enaisimos* means the one which is proper and fitting", Σ *Arg.* 4.859–861f).

6 Concluding remarks

Whether the critic just integrates traditional etymologies from various sources, often by building on the scholarship of the poet himself, or formulates his own etymologies, the above scholia are indicative of etymologizing in practice. The prevalence of the term *κρίσις*, especially in the context we encountered it (to correct improper word usage: Σ *Arg.* 1.743, 4.1418), exemplifies the role of etymology in grammatical learning and, consequently, Greek scholarship. The use of this term corresponds with a broader interest in language and grammar in this corpus, and the concern with synonymy and semantic analogies is a fitting example of this. The particular preoccupation of Apollonian scholars with mythological and geographical material often results in scholia that include numerous citations and mythological variants, which is what this corpus is known for. But this interest also allows for onomastic exploration and the inclusion of etymological etiologies. By attempting to understand the logic behind these scholia, then, we can understand how etymologies were formulated, which in turn can shed light on how ancient critics were reading the *Argonautica* and on the process of commentary and the role of etymology within that. Notwithstanding that this paper is not a systematic account of etymological practices in the *Argonautica*-scholia, we have encountered a number of examples that show how etymology and exegetical practice intertwine in this corpus.

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Etymology as a Teaching Tool for Learning Geography: Eustathius of Thessalonica's *Parekbolai* on Dionysius Periegetes

Abstract: Eustathius of Thessalonica wrote several commentaries (*parekbolai*) on ancient authors, Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Pindar (now lost), perhaps Oppian, Aristophanes (some fragments survive) and Dionysius of Alexandria's *Periegesis*. Unlike the Homeric *Parekbolai*, those on the *Periegesis* has been the subject of little study, not only as a scientific work by classical philologists, but also as a literary work by Byzantinists. In this regard, this chapter delves into the didactic methodology and etymological approach of Eustathius in his *Parekbolai* on the *Periegesis*, analyzing the role of etymology in the teaching of geography and focusing on the places, geographical features, and peoples of the *oikoumenē* described in the *Periegesis*. The chapter also examines the ways in which Eustathius uses, rewrites, and adapts his sources to elucidate the etymology of the terms he discusses, and the ways in which he extends etymologies with his own remarks.

For my mother

1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the didactic methodology and etymological approach of Eustathius of Thessalonica, one of the most eminent Byzantine scholar-teachers, in his *Parekbolai* on the *Periegesis* of Dionysius of Alexandria, as well as the role of etymology as a tool for teaching geography. Eustathius' *Parekbolai* on the *Periegesis* have thus far received less notice in this respect than his *Parekbolai* on the Homeric poems; indeed, the only research carried out on the use of etymology by Eustathius in these *Parekbolai* has been that of Paola

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Cassella, who wrote a succinct paper regarding the etymological issues in Eustathius,¹ a study that constitutes an interesting and useful starting point for a deeper exploration of this topic. Previously, Phaedon I. Koukoules had examined Eustathius' role as etymologist by focusing on the vernacular Greek words analyzed in the *Parekbolai*, providing a brief glossary of vernacular terms in which he questioned some of Eustathius' etymologies and discussed them from a contemporary linguistic point of view.² More recently, Georgia E. Kolovou has devoted a study to the etymological remarks in Eustathius' commentary on the *Iliad* Book 6,³ which informs us, in general terms, of the nature and role of etymology in his *Parekbolai* on the *Iliad*. In this light, I will examine the ways in which a Byzantine scholar-teacher like Eustathius made use of etymology for his exegetical purposes, without overlooking the general role and context of his commentary, which is closely linked to his *Parekbolai* on Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

2 Dionysius' *Periegesis*

The *Periegesis* (or *Description of the Known World*) of Dionysius of Alexandria⁴ is a didactic poem in 1,187 hexameters.⁵ The work (2nd c. CE) is a description of the known world at the time, ranging from Western Europe and North Africa (Europe, Libya) to the East (Asia) and containing geographical and ethnographical descriptions, together with many literary and mythological references. The *Periegesis* can thus be placed within the Greek periegetical tradition, whereas its language and meter, proper to ancient didactic poetry, echo the Homeric tradition in the use of hexameter and Homeric language.

1 Cassella 2013, 139–143.

2 Koukoules 1953, 86–131.

3 Kolovou 2017, 111–127.

4 The main studies of Dionysius' *Periegesis* were carried out by C. Jacob: see especially Jacob 1981, 21–97; 1984, 215–239; 1985, 83–107; 1990; 1991.

5 The most recent edition, based on the oldest preserved manuscript (Par. suppl. gr. 388), is by Lightfoot 2014. Previously, Tsavari 1990b published an edition which was largely criticized. Critical contributions which aimed to improve Tsavari's edition are by Counillon 1991, 365–371, West 1992, 568–569, and Reeve 1994, 209–220.

Dionysius' *Periegesis* was a well-known text that was widely read and copied in antiquity and in Byzantium.⁶ By virtue of its content, which was able to satisfy the curiosity of the Byzantines regarding the *oikoumenē*, and its brevity in comparison with Strabo or Ptolemy, the poem would become one of the most copied and read geographical works in Byzantium, and, along with Strabo, a major reference work on geography.⁷

The archaic vocabulary of the *Periegesis*, its mannered and concise style and its wealth of toponyms and mythological references required an exegesis to make it more accessible to the reader. Indeed, *scholia vetera*, the chronology of which is uncertain,⁸ are preserved along with the poem in many of the manuscripts. These *scholia* are helpful as they contain references to unknown authors and clarify and expand upon Dionysius' poem, especially with regard to geography and mythology.⁹ This material was enriched by a paraphrase in prose written in *koiné*,¹⁰ perhaps dating from the Byzantine period.¹¹ Later, in the 12th century, this anonymous exegetical material would be consulted by the μαῖστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων ("senior teacher of rhetoricians") and renowned court orator during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180),¹² Eustathius of Thessalonica, when he composed

6 Further proof of this popularity are the Latin versions of the work by Avienus (4th c. CE) and Priscian (6th c. CE), edited by Van de Woestijne (ed.) 1961 and 1953 respectively. Moreover, the poem is preserved in approximately 150 manuscripts: see Tsavari 1990a and again Counillon 1991, 365–371 on its complex transmission.

7 On the context of the transmission of the *Periegesis* in Byzantium, see Pérez Martín-Cruz Andreotti 2020, 231–260, esp. 240–241, and Pérez Martín 2022, 195–213, esp. 195–196.

8 Müller (ed.) 1861, 2.427–457, and Ludwig (ed.) 1885, 2.575–587.

9 The manuscript Par. suppl. gr. 36 (16th c.) contains *scholia* on the *Periegesis* attributed to a certain Demetrios Lampsakenos (Müller 2 [ed.] 1861, xxxi). These *scholia* are in fact forgeries by the mid-sixteenth scribe Konstantinos Palaiokeppa: Diller 1936, 124–129, esp. 127–129.

10 Another paraphrase in prose and *koiné* is attributed to the 13th-century scholar Nikephoros Blemmydes; this is a forgery by the 16th-century book merchant Antonios Episkopopoulos, as demonstrated by Diller (1936, 124–127). On the edition, see Müller (ed.) 1861, 2.458–468.

11 See Tsavari 1900a, 58–61, who suggested with some reservations that the paraphrase might have been composed between the 10th and 11th centuries. By contrast, after Tsavari's study, Counillon (1991, 370), simply declared that "seule une étude précise de la tradition manuscrite des scholies et de la paraphrase pourrait permettre de déterminer précisément comment s'est construite la paraphrase, si elle a été composée de façon indépendante puis intégrée, ou s'est élaborée au fil des éditions successives entre le x^e et le xii^e siècle." On the edition, see Müller (ed.) 1861, 2.409–425, and Ludwig (ed.) 1885, 2.556–574.

12 He composed an epitaph for Manuel I Komnenos: see Bourboulakis (ed.) 2017.

his own commentary, the so-called *Parekbolai*,¹³ on Dionysius' *Periegesis*,¹⁴ a contribution which in recent years has been receiving wider attention.¹⁵

3 Eustathius' *Parekbolai* on Dionysius' *Periegesis*

Analogous to the *Parekbolai* on the Homeric poems,¹⁶ the *Parekbolai* on the *Periegesis* are a selection and compilation of extracts from ancient sources as well as Eustathius' own works, supplemented with critical and personal remarks on many topics not always related to Dionysius' poem.¹⁷ They serve to clarify and delve deeper into the

¹³ I am aware that in modern Byzantine scholarship the title *Parekbolai* for Eustathius' works is not easy to translate, since his *Parekbolai* are founded on his selection and quoting of ancient works, which he then enriched with innumerable critical remarks. In this respect, Kolovou (2017, 112–113), suggests that a transliteration of the word may be better than a translation. Nevertheless, I will be using both “commentary” and *parekbolai* for stylistic variation. On this issue, see also Cullhed 2016, 3 (fn. 15).

¹⁴ The most recent edition of the *Parekbolai* to the *Periegesis* dates from the 19th c., Müller (ed.) 1861, 2.201–407, which was published after that of Bernhardt (ed.) 1828, 67–316. Müller did not collate all the manuscripts. The first approach to the study of the textual tradition of the *Parekbolai* on Dionysius is by Diller 1975, 181–207, who examined and partially collated some manuscripts of Eustathius' commentary on Dionysius, given that the *Parekbolai* are relevant to the history of Strabo's *Geography*.

¹⁵ See, for instance, Pérez Martín 2022, 195–213, on Eustathius' teaching of the *Periegesis* in school, and Angelov 2023, 15–43, on Eustathius' epistemic methods in the composition of the *Parekbolai* on the *Periegesis*. Moreover, the Spanish Project “El mundo según Homero: de Dionisio Periegeta a Eustacio de Tesalónica,” funded by the Fundación Logos del BBVA, has mapped the world according to Dionysius' poem and Eustathius' commentary: <https://elvuelodehermes.github.io/> (last accessed on August 2024). In the framework of this project, I. Pérez Martín, in collaboration with C. García Bueno and myself, has undertaken a critical edition and study of the manuscript transmission of the work, a long-standing *desideratum* as the most recent edition dates back to the 19th c. (see above fn. 14).

¹⁶ Eustathius' *Parekbolai* on Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were edited by Van der Valk (ed.), 1971–1987, and Stallbaum (ed.) 1825–1826, respectively. More recently, Cullhed 2016 has edited and translated into English the commentary on rhapsodies A and B of *Odyssey*. For a general view of his activity, see several of the essays included in the volume edited by Pontani, Katsaros and Sarris 2017. For his commentary on the Homeric poems, see the recent monograph by Van den Berg 2022, devoted to the composition of the *Iliad*, and Cullhed 2016, especially 1–33, on the *Odyssey*.

¹⁷ Eustathius also devoted *Parekbolai* to Pindar (only the proem survives), Aristophanes (a few fragments are preserved), and perhaps to Oppian (lost), as well as composed an exegesis on the *Iambic Pentecostal Canon*. On his commentary on Pindar, see Kambylis (ed.) 1991, and Negri 2000 with an Italian translation; for Aristophanes see Koster-Holwerda 1 (ed.) 1954, 136–156; 1955, 196–206, and Holwerda (ed.) 1960, 323–326; on Oppian's see Dyck 1982, 153–154, and for his exegesis on the

meaning of the verses in the *Periegesis*, but Eustathius focuses especially on the origins, etiology and meanings of the toponyms, geographical features and ethnonyms that appear throughout the poem.

The general goal of Eustathius' *Parekbolai* in the educational sphere¹⁸ was to provide students with a polymathic training and a deep knowledge of the Greek language for rhetorical purposes. They were intended to become 'professional writers' and orators in order to "exalter les divers membres de la famille impériale et leurs exploits, en diverses circonstances."¹⁹ Learning the origins of words played a key role in this training. Eustathius' own awareness of this is confirmed by one of his pupils, Michael Choniates, who claimed that Eustathius was keen on introducing him to several linguistic issues, such as the origin of nouns.²⁰ In keeping with this general goal, the *Parekbolai* are replete with remarks in which Eustathius explains to his student and the addressee of the work,²¹ John Doukas Kamateros,²² the origins of certain names and the numerous compositional mechanisms found in the poem. However, as he also declares in the prefatory letter of the work, which constitutes a genuine 'declaration of intent,' he addresses his *Parekbolai* to a wider audience as well,²³ ranging from beginners²⁴ and curious²⁵ readers to zealous admirers of Dionysius.²⁶ All of these readers will benefit from Eustathius' commentary, as it

Iambic Pentecostal Canon, see Cesaretti-Ronchey (ed.) 2014, Cesaretti 2017, 167–179, and Agapitos 2022, 41–60, esp. 53–54. On the traditional chronology of his exegetical production, see Pontani 2000, 14 (fn. 11). However, it is difficult to establish the chronology of his *Parekbolai* on Homer and Dionysius, since he worked continuously on them over the years, revising and expanding the texts: see Cullhed (ed.) 2016, 5–6.

18 On education and scholarship in the Komnenian period, see Magdalino 1993, especially 335–356 on Eustathius' work, Kaldellis 2009, 1–43, Nesseris 2014, especially vol. 1, 91–104 and vol. 2, 162–187 on Eustathius, and more recently Agapitos 2022, 41–60.

19 Loukaki 2015, 249–250.

20 Koukoules 1953, 86, and Kolovou 2017, 115.

21 The prefatory letter of the work (especially Eust. *On D.P.*, epist. 69–70), and the headings preserved in the manuscripts (two versions are transmitted), inform us that the *Parekbolai* on the *Periegesis* were commissioned by John Doukas Kamateros. For a transcription of the headings, see Diller 1975, 182.

22 An aristocrat and the son of Andronikos Kamateros, a senior official under the Emperor Manuel I Komnenos. On the interest in geography and the acquaintance with this discipline shown by the Kamateros family, see Pérez Martín 2022, 203–204.

23 Eustathius employs several words to allude to the audience of his *Parekbolai* on Dionysius: see Pérez Martín 2022, 201 (fn. 32). On the audience of Eustathius' *Parekbolai* on the Homeric poems, see Pizzone 2016, 225–244.

24 Eust. *On D.P.*, epist. 133. (I will always quote Müller's edition on the *TLG*).

25 Eust. *On D.P.*, epist. 163.

26 Eust. *On D.P.*, epist. 80–82.

provides the knowledge needed for a full understanding of the poem. In fact, given the requirements of verse and the brevity of the *Periegesis*, the reader's knowledge of the origin of the peoples and toponyms mentioned in the poem is limited. Therefore, he does not hesitate to amplify these aspects to satisfy his audience's curiosity²⁷ by employing etymology as an essential tool. Nor does he neglect the work's geographical and cultural dimensions, supplementing these with the numerous geographical, historical, ethnographical, and even mythological remarks which are intertwined in each *parekbolē*. This methodology is connected to the utility of the *Periegesis* and his *Parekbolai*: as Eustathius himself declares, studying geography is not only useful for living, but also an essential tool for soldiers, emperors, etc.,²⁸ and thus for the administrative practices of court dignitaries.²⁹

4 Eustathius' etymological remarks on Dionysius' *Periegesis*

According to Paola Cassella,³⁰ Eustathius presents three types of explanations to clarify the origin of the terms discussed in his *Parekbolai* on the *Periegesis*: the first explores the origin of a term by virtue of a myth or different traditions of a myth; the second combines etymology and grammar; the third is strictly grammatical. However, remarks regarding mythology are constantly present in all three types, and there is no doubt that our scholar very often intertwines both grammar (that is, lexicology, etymology, semantics, and orthography) and mythology to elucidate the origins of terms. On this basis, I will focus especially on the second type of method employed by Eustathius to show how he makes use of etymology for didactic purposes. Furthermore, I will examine how he uses, rewrites, adapts or

²⁷ Eust. *On D.P.*, epist. 152–156.

²⁸ Eust. *On D.P.*, epist. 477–482.

²⁹ According to Angelov 2013, “one may call [this kind of geographical thought] academic geography”, although Eustathius seems to be aware that his contribution will also be useful for the administrative training of court members (“political geography” again in the words of Angelov). Available on-line: <https://chs.harvard.edu/chapter/2-asia-and-europe-commonly-called-east-and-west-constantinople-and-geographical-imagination-in-byzantium-dimiter-angelov/> (last accessed 30 September 2022).

³⁰ Cassella 2013, 139–141.

expands etymologies from his sources, as well as his way of presenting and explaining his etymological remarks.³¹

The word “etymology” and its derivatives appear at least 20 times in his commentary, from which we can infer that this linguistic tool plays a key role in his exegesis. Etymology, however, does not seem to be merely a linguistic tool for explaining the poem, but also a way to satisfy the curiosity of Eustathius’ audience as a hermeneutic tool.³²

Τὸν δὲ ἐσπέριον ἄνεμον καὶ ζέφυρον καλεῖσθαι φησιν, ἐρεθίζων οἶον ἡμᾶς εἰς ἐτυμολογίας ἀνεύρεσιν.

Eust. *On D.P.* 400. 4–6

The west wind is also called “zephyr”, he says, arousing our curiosity so to speak in order to search its etymology.³³

In his *Parekbolai* on Homer, especially on the *Iliad*, Eustathius deals with etymologies through expressions as εἰς τὴν πρώτην ἐτυμολογίαν, or παλαιὰν τόλμαν ἐτυμολογίας, or ἡ κοινὴ ἐτυμολογία, etc.³⁴ We do not find these expressions in his commentary on the *Periegesis*, where etymology seems to be approached in a less systematic manner. However, this does not mean that this linguistic tool is less relevant here. In fact, in the prefatory letter, Eustathius himself declares that the explanation of the origins of the toponyms and peoples mentioned by Dionysius is a way of learning geography. Given that Dionysius just meant to offer a general view of the *oikoumenē* and its peoples, Eustathius’, as an *exegete*, engages himself in explaining them.³⁵ Therefore etymology constitutes the core of every *parekbolē* and a starting point for further remarks that enrich Dionysius’ geographical account.

To clarify the etymology of terms, Eustathius consulted a wide range of sources, which are sometimes difficult to identify. These include lexicographical works, *scholia vetera*, the Byzantine paraphrase and geographical/historical works that provide the etymology of a given place or people, as well as literary sources that further clarify the origins and meanings of a term. As we might imagine, he does not mention these sources in a consistent manner, and when he does so, especially with regard to the literary sources, he often employs a sort of ‘nickname’, such as ὁ Γεωγράφος (Strabo), ὁ Πουητής (Homer), ὁ Περικηγετής (Dionysius), ὁ Κωμικός (Aristophanes) and so on.

³¹ For this, I have consulted the volume by Koukoules 1953, and the glossary by Fenoglio 2012 on the grammatical terms employed by Eustathius in his *Parekbolai* on the *Odyssey*.

³² Eust. *On D.P.*, epist. 80–82.

³³ All extracts are my translation.

³⁴ Kolovou 2017, 117.

³⁵ Eust. *On D.P.*, epist. 146–156.

Among the lexicographical sources he mentions explicitly we find Pausanias,³⁶ Aelius Dionysius,³⁷ Herodian³⁸ and Stephen of Byzantium.³⁹ Most of these sources are also used for his *Parekbolai* on Homer.⁴⁰ They and others not directly mentioned allow Eustathius to postulate the various etymological origins of a given term according to one or more sources, to discuss them, and then to give his own opinion or even his doubts as to its origin. In general, it would be reasonable to state that the scholar adopts what amounts to a critical point of view. We find good examples of this methodology in the frequent use of the verb δοκέω ('to seem') and the adverb ἵσως ('perhaps'). Such words allow Eustathius to declare his doubts regarding the etymology of a word and even on the linguistic mechanism behind an etymological connection.

Αἴτιον δέ φασι τοῦ πάθους τούτου πνεῦμα ὑπόγειον, ποτὲ μὲν ἐπιόν, ποτὲ δὲ ἀπὶόν καὶ ὑπονοστοῦν, ὅτε τὸ ὕδωρ ἀνωθοούμενον, εἴτα συγκαταδύνον ποιεῖ τὴν ἄμπωτιν, ἥτις, ὡς ἐρρέθη, ἐκ τῆς ἀναπόσεως κέκληται, ὥσπερ αὖ πάλιν ἐκ τοῦ ἐναντίου ἢ πλημμύρα ὠνόμασται, ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ πλῶ πλῆσω τὸ ἀναπληρῶ, ἐξ οὗ καὶ ἡ πλήμη παρὰ τῷ Γεωγράφῳ,⁴¹ ἀφ' ἧς ἡ πλημμύρα παρήχθαι δοκεῖ κατὰ παρωνυμίαν τινά.

On πλημμύρα (Eust. *On D.P.* 198.32–38)

They say that the cause of this phenomenon is a current of subterranean air, which sometimes emerges, and other times recedes and fades away, pushed upwards and then downwards, causing a reflux (ἄμπωτιν), whose name, as said before, comes from 'absorption' (ἀναπόσεως). At the same time, 'high tide' (πλημμύρα) is named thus for the opposite action, from *plō plēsō* ('overflow'), from which also comes *plēmē* ('flood-tide') in the Geographer, and from which seems to come *plēmmyra* ('high tide') through a kind of paronymy.

This is a personal etymological observation by Eustathius. By presenting a 'descriptive etymology,' he tries here to elucidate the origin of πλημμύρα ('high tide'), clearly derived from πλήμη ('flood-tide'), which shares the same root with πίμπλημι ('to fill'), and ἀναπληρῶ ('to fill up'). His doubts concern the linguistic mechanism used to explain the link between the words, that is, by a sort of paronymy (κατὰ

³⁶ Πανσανίας δέ, οὗ τὸ Ἀττικὸν λεξικόν (Eust. *On D.P.* 525.39–40).

³⁷ Αἴλιος δὲ Διονύσιος ἐν τοῖς περὶ Ἀττικῶν λέξεων (Eust. *On D.P.* 912.67–68).

³⁸ Ἡρωδιανός (Eust. *On D.P.* 215.2; 566.23; 1140.2); Ἡρωδιανός ἐν τῇ καθόλου προσῳδίᾳ (Eust. *On D.P.* 457.23, 504.15, 533.3); Ἡρωδιανός ἐν τῷ Περὶ παθῶν (Eust. *On D.P.* 859.7).

³⁹ Ὅ τὰ Ἐθνικά γράψας (Eust. *On D.P.* 11.26; 66.9; 305.5; 310.14; 530.46; 694.2; 927.24; 954.5); ὁ παρὰ τῷ γράψαντι τὰ Ἐθνικά (Eust. *On D.P.* 38.14); κατὰ τὸν τὰ Ἐθνικά γράψαντα (Eust. *On D.P.* 78.7; 815.31); ὁ γράψας τὰ Ἐθνικά (Eust. *On D.P.* 260.16; 787.12); κατὰ τὸν γράψαντα τὰ Ἐθνικά (Eust. *On D.P.* 513.31); ἐν τοῖς Ἐθνικοῖς (Eust. *On D.P.* 524.4; 859.9); οἱ τὰ Ἐθνικά γράψαντες (Eust. *On D.P.* 625.10); Ὁ δὲ τῶν Ἐθνικῶν ἀναγραφεὺς (Eust. *On D.P.* 954.25).

⁴⁰ Kolovou 2017, 116.

⁴¹ Str. 3.35.20 (Lasserre ed.).

παρωνυμῖαν τινά).⁴² On other occasions, he instead questions the etymology provided by the source consulted.

Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ Νάξος, λεγομένη οὕτως ἀπὸ Νάξου Καρῶν ἡγεμόνος· ἢ παρὰ τὸ νάξαι, ὃ ἐστὶ θῦσαι, διὰ θυσίας ἰσως ἐξαιρέτους τινὰς ἐκεῖ γινομένης.⁴³

On the island of Naxos (Eust. *On D.P.* 525.82–84)

But also Naxos, named thus for Naxos, the leader of the Carians, or for *naxai*, which means ‘to sacrifice’, **perhaps for certain exceptional sacrifices that are practiced there.**

The adverb ἰσως (‘perhaps’) here informs us that Eustathius is not convinced of the etymological origin of the toponym Naxos as provided by his source, the *Ethnika* of Stephen of Byzantium. In other instances, however, he fully agrees with his sources and even shows a predilection for some (especially Homer and Strabo) over others.

Ἐκεῖ δέ πού φασιν⁴⁴ εἶναι καὶ τὸ Ἀλήιον πεδῖον, οὗ καὶ Ὅμηρος μέμνηται,⁴⁵ ἐν ᾧ μετὰ τὴν κατάπτωσιν, ὡς ἔρρεθῃ, ἐπλανᾶτο Βελλεροφόντης [...] ὅθεν καὶ μονώτην εἴλετο βίον, ἀνθρώπων ἀπάνευθε περὶ τὸ πεδῖον ἀλώμενος, ἡγουν πλανώμενος, ὅπερ ἐκ τῆς τοιαύτης αὐτοῦ ἄλης, ὃ ἐστὶ πλάνης, ἐτυμολογηθέν, ὡς καὶ Ὅμηρῳ φαίνεται δοκεῖν,⁴⁶ ἐκκλήθη Ἀλήιον· ἢ ἀπὸ τινος πόλεως καλουμένης Ἀλης, ὡς τινες λέγουσιν, ἢ παρὰ τὸ στερεῖσθαι ληίων.

On the plain of Aleion (Eust. *On D.P.* 867.53–62)

It is said that somewhere in that region one finds the plain of Aleion, **which Homer also mentions**, and in which, after his fall, as said before, Bellerophon wandered [...] And so he chose a solitary life, apart from human beings, wandering (*alōmenos*), that is to say, errant (*planōmenos*) upon the plain (*Aleion*), whose etymology is *alē*, *planē* (‘wandering’), **as Homer seems also to have believed; or for a certain city called Alē, according to some, or because it lacked arable soil (lēia).**

We see here that the implicit homerical etymology presented by Eustathius is the main and most authoritative source for explaining the etymology of the plain of Aleion (in Cilicia), apart from other sources that are not mentioned directly.⁴⁷ In fact, Eustathius supposes that Homer had accepted this etymology due to the link between the origin of the name and the myth. In the second etymology, the word is

⁴² On the meanings of this term in ancient Greek scholarship, see Dickey 2007, 253. On its use in Eustathius’ *Parekbolai* on *Odyssey*, see Fenoglio 2012, 233.

⁴³ Steph. Byz. 3.362.7–9. (Billerbeck ed.). Billerbeck edited βῦσαι, whereas Meineke edited θῦσαι.

⁴⁴ Str. 14.5.21 (Jones ed.).

⁴⁵ *Il.* 6.201 (Allen ed.).

⁴⁶ *Il.* 6.201–202 (Allen ed.).

⁴⁷ Probably *Etymologicum magnum* 62.20–37 (Gaisford ed.), which also mentions the homerical etymology.

related with a certain city called Ἄλη. Although Eustathius attributes this etymology to certain authors, it is not found in any preserved source. He presents an additional etymology of the word based on a phonetic similarity between the toponym Ἀλήιον and the adjective λήϊον with alpha privative; that is, through a paronomasia. In this case, Eustathius probably consulted the *Etymologicum Magnum*, where the homeric Ἀλήϊος⁴⁸ provides a similar definition.⁴⁹ We find here still further remarks that expand the etymology by means of a synonymous expression (ἦγουν πλανώμενος, ὃ ἐστὶ πλάνης), which serves to shed light on Dionysius' poem.

On other occasions, Eustathius elucidates the etymologies of a toponym by presenting only one source to which he attributes complete reliability.

Αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ Ῥήγιον οὕτω καλεῖται ἢ παρὰ τὴν ῥῆξιν, ὡς ἀπορραγείσης τῆς Σικελίας ἐκ τῆς ἐκεῖσε ἠπείρου ὑπὸ σεισμοῦ,⁵⁰ ὡς καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς ῥηθῆσεται [...] ἢ Ῥήγιον εἴρηται ὡς ἂν εἴποι τις βασιλείον, ῥῆγες γὰρ καὶ ῥέγες οἱ βασιλεῖς, τῶν Σαυνιτῶν οὕτω καλεσάντων αὐτὸ δι' ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς πόλεως.⁵¹

On Reggio Calabria (Eust. *On D.P.* 340.15–25)

This name of Regio is explained thus, **either from 'fracture' (rēxis)**, as Sicily was broken off from the mainland by an earthquake, as will be explained later [...] **or because Regio is used in the sense of 'royal'**, as kings are *rēges* and *reges*, and the city is called thus by the Samnites for its fame.

Here the only source is Strabo's *Geography*. Eustathius expands on his source by pointing out the Greek and Latin words that explain the etymology suggested by his source (ἢ παρὰ τὴν ῥῆξιν, ῥῆγες and ῥέγες). This extract shows that Eustathius was probably acquainted with Latin. This is also evidenced from his allusion to a certain Latin lexicon.⁵² In fact, he does not hesitate to provide the etymologies of Latin toponyms and their meanings. An instance is to be found in the origin and history of the name of the river Orontes (in Western Asia).⁵³ As "the Geographer" claims, it was once called Typhon due to the myth,⁵⁴ but "others say that the Caesar Tiberius changed its name Draco to Orontes, which in Latin means 'oriental'."⁵⁵ Here we find

48 *Il.* 9.125, 267 (Allen ed.).

49 *Etymologicum Magnum* 62,20–24 (Gaisford ed.).

50 Str. 6.135.16–20 (Lasserre ed.).

51 Str. 6.136.15–20 (Lasserre ed.).

52 Eust. *On D.P.*, 384.30–31.

53 Eust. *On D.P.*, 919.8–20.

54 Str. 16.2.7. (Jones ed.).

55 Ἄλλοι δὲ φασιν ὅτι ὁ Καῖσαρ Τιβέριος ἐκ Δράκοντος αὐτὸν Ὀρόντην μετωνόμασεν, ὃ σημαίνει Ῥωμαῖστί τὸν ἀνατολικόν. Eustathius seems to paraphrase the *Chronographia* of John Malalas (Io.

an implicit etymology of the word Orontes, connected with the Latin verb *orior* ('to rise'). Similarly, when he addresses the etymology of the Campanian city of Καπύη (Capua), he offers two etymological explanations: on one hand the Latin origin of the word provided by Strabo, and on the other the mythological one.

[...] ἐν μεσογείῳ ἐστὶν ἡ Καπύη, κεφαλὴ τῷ ὄντι, ὥς φησιν ὁ Γεωγράφος,⁵⁶ κατὰ τὴν ἐτυμότητα τοῦ ὀνόματος γλῶττι Λατίνων, καίτοι τινὲς⁵⁷ ἀπὸ Κάπυος τοῦ Τρωὸς αὐτὴν καλεῖσθαι ἠθέλησαν.
On Capua (Eust. *On D.P.*, 357.12–16)

[...] Capua is in the inland, which means 'head' according to the etymology of the name in the language of the Latins, as the Geographer says, although some called it thus for the Trojan Capys.

Eustathius' critical treatment of etymologies is also evident with regard to the Greek or foreign origin of a word. In fact, throughout his exegesis, he makes a distinction between Greek and non-Greek words, which allows him to delimit his etymological inquiries. One of the most relevant reflections in this sense concerns the river Nile, called Siris by the Ethiopians; in Eustathius' opinion, it is not necessary to search for a Greek etymology for either the African or the Italian Siris (located in Sicily).

Τὸ δὲ Σῆρις οἱ μὲν βάρβαρόν φασιν εἶναι ὄνομα, ἥτοι Αἰθιοπικὸν κατὰ τὸν Διονύσιον· διὸ οὐδὲ χρῆναι λέγουσι ζητεῖν Ἑλληνικὴν ἐτυμολογίαν αὐτοῦ, οὐδὲ τῆς Ἰταλικῆς Σίριδος·
On Siris (Eust. *On D.P.*, 222.11–14)

Of Siris some say that it is a foreign name, that is, "Ethiopic" according to Dionysius, and so it is not necessary to search for a Greek origin, either for it or for the Italian Siris.

Eustathius here follows Dionysius' verse⁵⁸ and sources such as Herodian⁵⁹ and Stephen of Byzantium⁶⁰ in reference to the non-Greek name of the Nile. His concerns about clarifying the terms of the *Periegesis* also become apparent in his providing its Greek toponym or meanings. We find several examples of this: the Pillars of Hercules (in the Strait of Gibraltar), for which Eustathius gives both the original and Greek names;⁶¹ the river Istros (the Danube), once called Matoas, which, as his

Mal. 10.10.53–55 [Beck/Kambylis/Keydell eds.]), but this etymology must have been transmitted by a lost older source.

⁵⁶ Str. 5.115.15–16 (Lasserre ed.).

⁵⁷ Dion.Hal. 1.73.3.7 (Jacoby ed.).

⁵⁸ *D.P.* 223–224 (Lightfoot ed.).

⁵⁹ Herod., *De prosod. cath.*, 3.1.99.5–7 (Lentz ed.).

⁶⁰ Steph. Byz. 4.228.4–5 (Billerbeck ed.).

⁶¹ Eust. *On D.P.* 64.5–6. The source is *Schol. vet. in D.P.* 64.11–15 (Müller ed.).

sources clarify, means ‘slime’ in Greek;⁶² the Persian city of Pasargadae, which, as he points out, in Greek means ‘Persian encampment,’⁶³ and the river Silis (Tanais in Greek, the current river Don), whose etymology, based on a paronomasia, is drawn from the Byzantine paraphrase of the poem.

Ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι ὁ ποταμὸς οὗτος διὰ τὸ τεταμένως ρεῖν⁶⁴ Τάναϊς Ἑλληνιστὶ καλούμενος, Σίλις, ὡς φασὶ τινες,⁶⁵ παρὰ τοῖς παροικοῦσι βαρβάροις ὠνόμασται. Ὅτι δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι ποταμοὶ ἐν βαρβάροις ῥέοντες ὁμῶς ἐξελληνίζονται τῇ κλήσει δῆλον...

On the river Tanais (Eust. *On D.P.* 14.21–23)

And you should know that **this river, which in Greek is called Tanais because it flows intensely (*tetamenōs*), is called Silis**, according to some for the barbarians that live along its banks; and it is evident that other rivers, although they flow through barbarian lands, have hellenized their names...

These kinds of interventions may be interpreted as linguistic bridges built to close the gaps created by geographical distance. This is not only a matter of physical distance as perceived by the Byzantine reader, but also an inherent feature of the *Periegesis*: the further the poem moves away from the Mediterranean, especially from the area of Alexandria, the fewer ethnonyms, toponyms and geographical features are mentioned, with less (and more fictitious) information provided. Eustathius thus endeavors to add supplementary data not contained in the poem as long as his sources allow him to do so. He is also concerned with building bridges between the time of the poem and his own age, and for this he often includes contemporary remarks to make the *Periegesis* more immediate for his audience. Such interventions are typically introduced by words such as ἡμεῖς, the verb φημί and adverbs such as τότε, πρότερον, νῦν and ὕστερον. In effect, these words allow Eustathius to ‘update’ the information in the *Periegesis* by providing the current (and sometimes the vernacular) names of places, peoples and geographical features used by the Byzantines, or to link the origin of any idiomatic expressions or proverbs with a commented-upon term.⁶⁶ This is well justified if we consider the utility of the *Periegesis* for the administrative training of future Byzantine dignitaries.⁶⁷ Relevant

⁶² Eust. *On D.P.* 289.34–35. Eustathius’ source is Herod., *De prosod. cath.* 3.1.52.28–29 (Lentz ed.).

⁶³ The source is Herod., *De prosod. cath.*, 3.1.66.27–3.1.67.1 (Lentz ed.).

⁶⁴ Paraphrase of *D.P.* 14.2–3 (Ludwich ed.).

⁶⁵ *Schol. vet. in D.P.* 14.4–5 (Müller ed.).

⁶⁶ For an approach to Eustathius’ explanations of proverbs and their sources, see Tosi 2017, 229–241.

⁶⁷ See above p. 284 and fn. 29.

instances of the first procedure are to be found in his remarks on Venice,⁶⁸ on the Colchian people called the Macrones,⁶⁹ on the Cilician Solos,⁷⁰ etc. Regarding the second practice (the explanation of an idiomatic expression or proverb and its origin), we find an interesting example when Eustathius mentions the river Nile, which floods in the ‘heat of the dog-days’ (κυνοκαύματα), an expression used in vernacular Greek, as Eustathius points out (τὰ παρ’ ἡμῖν κατὰ τὴν καθωμιλημένην γλῶτταν λεγόμενα κυνοκαύματα).⁷¹ In other instances, a reference to a vernacular word is used to expand an etymology, as when Eustathius speaks of the etymology of Gadira (Cádiz), drawn from Stephen of Byzantium.

Τὰ Γάδεια δὲ νῆσος πλησίον τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ περιμήκης κατὰ τοὺς παλαιούς, ὡς οἷα ταινία,⁷² τουτέστι καθάπερ ὑφάσματος τμήμα στενὸν καὶ μεμηκυμένον, ὅπερ ἡμεῖς φασκίαν φαμέν. Λέγεται δὲ καὶ ἡ Γάδεια θηλυκῶς.⁷³ Καλεῖται δὲ οὕτως οἰονεῖ γῆς δειρά, ὃ ἐστι τράχηλος...

On Gadira (Eust. *On D.P.* 64.14–19)

Gadira is a long island near the Ocean which, according to the ancients, has the form of a strip, that is to say, is like a long, narrow piece of cloth, what we call a ribbon. Gadira is also a singular feminine noun. It is called thus as it were *gēs deira*, that is to say, ‘neck of land’...

Here the scholar expands upon the etymology of Gadira (καλεῖται δὲ οὕτως οἰονεῖ γῆς δειρά) with a synonymous expression of his own (ὃ ἐστι τράχηλος), a grammatical remark (ἡ Γάδεια θηλυκῶς) extracted from the *Ethnika*, and a definition of the word ταινία in relation to the shape of Gadira. In fact, ταινία refers to a sort of narrow band (τουτέστι καθάπερ ὑφάσματος τμήμα στενὸν καὶ μεμηκυμένον), or rather, what the Byzantines commonly called φασκία, a Latin loanword widely used in the Greek of Eustathius’ time.⁷⁴

His etymological examination also regards word change and word composition. Eustathius seeks to clarify the composition processes and the linguistic mechanisms behind a word, as these allow him to explain and justify its origin and meaning. Indeed, grammatical remarks are recurrent in the *Parekbolai*. These are highly relevant linguistic tools for elucidating the etymology of the terms used. Eustathius’

68 Eust. *On D.P.* 378.24–33. The main source, preserved and transmitted indirectly by Eustathius, is Arrian fr. 46 [Ross/Wirth eds.].

69 Eust. *On D.P.* 765.1–4. The source is partially Steph. Byz. 3.256.5–7 (Billerbeck ed.).

70 Eust. *On D.P.* 875.24–25. The source is Steph. Byz. 4.208.12–18 (Billerbeck ed.).

71 Eust. *On D.P.* 222.16–19. The source is partially the *scholia vetera* 223.1–3 (Müller ed.).

72 Steph. Byz., 1.394.9–10 (Billerbeck ed.).

73 Steph. Byz., 1.394.11 (Billerbeck ed.).

74 Eustathius himself informs us that the word φασκία is more common in his time than ταινία: Eust. on *Il.* 13.714 = 1.717,27–30 (Van der Valk ed.). On this, see also the *Etymologicum Magnum* 749.44 on ταινία (Gaisford ed.).

remark on the origin of the noun παλάτιον ('palace'), in reference to the Pelasgians and the Palatine hill, clearly shows these concerns.

[...] τῷ Πανὶ νεῶν ἰδρύσας καὶ λόφον ὀχυρωσάμενος, ὃν Παλλάντιον ὠνόμασεν ἀπὸ τοῦ υἱοῦ Πάλλαντος [...]· ὅθεν καὶ νῦν οἱ Λατῖνοι τοὺς βασιλεῖς πρέποντας τόπους οὕτω καλοῦσι παλάτια, καθ' ἀφαίρεσιν ἀμεταβόλων τοῦ τε λ καὶ τοῦ ν.⁷⁵

On *Palátion* (Eust. *On D.P.* 347.21–26)

[...] <Evander> erected a temple in honor of Pan, fortified a hillock that he named Pallantium for his son Pallante [...] from which the Latins now also refer to royal dwellings as *palatia*, by apheresis of the liquid l and n.

The etymology of this word, for which Eustathius has consulted the *scholia vetera* on the *Periegesis*, can be traced back directly to the myth of Pallas (the son of Evander). Eustathius expands here on his source by specifying the phonetic mechanism behind the current term παλάτια: it is not just a corruption or alteration (παραφθορά), but specifically an apheresis.

Another example of Eustathius' concern with linguistic issues, in this case with word composition, is to be found in verse 933 of the *Periegesis*, which alludes to the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, called Μέσσην ποταμῶν.

Τὸ δὲ μέσον τούτων διάστημα Μέσσην, φησί, καλοῦσι ποταμῶν, ὃ ἐστι Μεσοποταμίαν· ὡς καὶ τὴν ἀκρόπολιν διαλελυμένως ἢ ποίησις ἄκρην πόλιν φησί, καὶ τὴν Λευκόπετραν Λευκὴν πέτραν, καὶ τὴν Νεάπολιν Νέαν πόλιν.

On Mesopotamia (Eust. *On D.P.* 976.12–16)

The area between them, he says, is called “the middle of the rivers”, that is to say, Mesopotamia, in the same way that the poetic tongue can separate *acropolis* into *akrē polis* ('high city'), Leukopetra into *Leukē petra* ('white stone'), and Neapolis into *Nea polis* ('new city').

This remark on Mesopotamia gives Eustathius the opportunity to analyze the διάλυσις (διαλελυμένως here), that is, the resolution of a compound into its original components.⁷⁶ This term is also found in the *scholia vetera* on Homer's *Iliad* (one of the main sources of Eustathius' *Parekbolai* on that work)⁷⁷ and, with a similar clarification, in his commentary on the *Iliad*.⁷⁸ Indeed, in both commentaries, Eustathius examines the διάλυσις with the same method, that is, by expanding on his

⁷⁵ *Schol. vet.* in *D.P.* 348.1–19 (Müller ed.).

⁷⁶ On this term in Ancient Greek scholarship, see Dickey 2007, 231–232. On its use in Eustathius' *Parekbolai* on the *Odyssey*, see Fenoglio 2012, 233.

⁷⁷ *Schol. vet.* in *Il.* 6.88b.1, (Erbse ed.).

⁷⁸ Eust. *on Il.* 2.250.12–15 (Van der Valk ed.).

remark with further examples for a more immediate understanding of this morphological phenomenon.

Eustathius' attention to the components of a word becomes also evident in the morphological analysis that enables him to explore etymology and meanings. We find several instances of this procedure, such as his remark on the expression νήχυτος κόλπος (v.126), which is composed by the prefix νη, a prefix that denotes here an augmentative rather than privative meaning.⁷⁹

Ὅτι ὡς περ τὸ α ποτὲ μὲν στερεῖ, ποτὲ δὲ ἐπιτείνει, οὕτω τὸ νη. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ νηλεὲς ἐλέου δηλοῖ στέρησιν, τὸ δὲ νήχυτος κόλπος δαψίλειαν χύματος.

On νήχυτος κόλπος (Eust. *On D.P.* 126.1–4)

Just as the prefix α- sometimes means privation and other times intensity, so also with the prefix νη-. While on the one hand *nēleēs* ('pitiless'), from 'pity', indicates privation, on the other, *nēkhytos kolpos* ('deep gulf') means 'of abundant volume.'

Similarly, the ethnonym Ἀραψ enables him to present his own interpretation of an orthographic issue connected with the origin of the word.

[...] εἰ καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις τόποις πολλὰ τῶν ἀντιγράφων πολὺν τὸν ροῖζον ἐκ τῆς τοῦ ἀμεταβόλου ἐξηχοῦσι διπλώσεως [...] Βούλονται γὰρ πολλοὶ ἀναδιπλοῦν τὸ ρ, ὡς ἀπὸ τῆς α στερήσεως καὶ τοῦ ράπτω ράψω, κάντεῦθεν τὴν τῶν Ἀράβων κλησιν οἶον συρράπτουσιν, ὡς μὴ ραπτομένων ἱμάτια, περιτυλισσομένων δὲ ὑφάσματα· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο κατ' ἀνάγκην φασὶν ἐν τῷ Ἀραψ κεῖσθαι τὸν τοῦ ρ διπλασιασμόν, ὡς καὶ ἐν τῷ ἄρρηκτος καὶ ἄρρητος καὶ ἀρραγῆς καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὁμοίοις.

On the Arabians (Eust. *On D.P.* 927.10–20)

[...] although in other passages many copies reflect a more vibrant sound for the duplication of the liquid consonant [...] In effect, many double the rho, as when the alpha privative is added to *raptō*, *rapsō*. Thus, they write the name of the Arabians as in *syrraptousin* ('sew together'), as they do not sew their clothes but instead wrap themselves in cloth. For this reason, they say that *Araps* should be written with a doubling of the rho, as in *arrēktos* ('unshakable'), *arrētos* ('ineffable'), *arragēs* ('unbreakable') and other similar cases.

Eustathius informs us here of a common orthographical mistake that is found in most of the manuscripts, where the ethnonym occurs with the gemination of the rho (Ἀραψ instead of Ἀραψ). According to him, this arises from the morphological interpretation that explains the etymology and meaning of the ethnonym. Some interpret the word as being composed of an alpha privative and the verb ράπτω ('to sew'). Arabs, then, are "those who do not sew their clothes" (ὡς μὴ ραπτομένων

⁷⁹ See, for example, his remarks on νήδυμος ὕπνος (*Il.* 2.2), to which he seems to refer by heart as the νήχυτος κόλπος in vv. 125–126 of the *Periegesis* by means of πόντος νήχυτος (Eust. *on Il.* 1.252.16–19, Van der Valk ed.).

ιμάτια). Such an interpretation might justify the necessary gemination of the rho, by analogy to words like ἄρρηκτος, ἄρρητος, ἀρραγής, etc.

5 Conclusions

Let us summarize the etymological labor of Eustathius on Dionysius' *Periegesis*: he follows the ancient tradition of accepting several etymologies for one word and expanding them with synonymous sentences and words. In fact, his etymological inquiry is founded on ancient tradition. In this light, he employs a wide range of ancient sources in combination with a critical approach, which allows him to rely on sources that he seems to consider more reputable (as with Πήγιον) and express his doubts about the etymological origin, linguistic mechanisms and composition processes that explain and justify the etymology of a given word (as in the example given of Νάξος and πλεμμύρα).

His critical approach is also evident from the fact that he uses the distinction between Greek and non-Greek origins of words with the aim of delimiting his etymological inquiries, as in the instance of the river Nile. Moreover, as we have seen, he does not hesitate to consider both Greek and Latin stems for an etymology (as with Πήγιον), and to provide the etymology and meaning of Latin words (as with Καπύη and the river Ὀρόντης).

Like other scholars before him and within the framework of his rhetorical teaching, his etymological approach also provides grammatical explanations, as well as the examination of the mechanisms that explain the origin and meaning of a given term (as with νήχυτος κόλπος, and παλάτιον and Ἄραψ).

Sometimes Eustathius contributes his own personal etymologies (as with πλεμμύρα), although most are taken from the ancient sources consulted. His contribution also consists in the expansion of the etymologies by opening some windows into his own contemporaneity in order to 'update' the *Periegesis* for the Byzantine reader. In fact, Eustathius often presents the current Byzantine name of places and peoples and employs vernacular words when explains a given etymology (as for example, with the shape of Γάδειρα resembling a φάσκια).

Finally, the ethnographic and geographic character of the *Periegesis* is certainly a particular and fruitful context for developing an etymological and grammatical inquiry, which Eustathius uses and adapts for teaching purposes in his *parekbolai* on the poem. In fact, in explaining its language and commenting on the origin and history of the toponymies, ethnonyms and geographical features of the *Periegesis*, Eustathius displays a valuable and practical knowledge not only to the curious Byzantine audience and scholars, but also to the future dignitaries of the court.

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Celebrating the Hidden Essence of the Gods: The Etymology of Theonyms as a Source of Divine Revelation in Proclus' *Commentary on the Cratylus*

Abstract: The article focuses on Proclus' 'philosophy of language' as presented by the philosopher in the *Commentary on the Cratylus*, with specific attention to the importance of the etymology of 'divine names', since they are considered as 'representations' or, better, 'statues' of the gods. According to this perspective, etymological analysis is a fundamental tool, as it can provide comprehension of the powers and activities of the gods and, consequently, the entire structure of the Whole, with important implications for theurgy. In the light of these reflections, the paper discusses some examples of Proclus' approach to the etymology of divine names, particularly by focusing on the theonym 'Athena' and its etymological analysis, with the aim of showing that the etymological analysis of theonyms, if correctly conducted, is an important tool both for acquiring theological knowledge, and for practising theurgy properly, as is especially clear from the philosopher's Prayer to Athena.

1 Introduction

As the demiurgic intellect establishes resemblances about matter of the first forms contained in himself, [...] after the same manner I think the science that is with us (ἡμῖν ἐπιστήμη), representing intellectual production, fabricates resemblances of other things, and also of the Gods themselves [...]; and thus fashioning names, ultimately exhibits images of divine natures. For it generates every name as if it were a statue of the Gods (ἄγαλμα τῶν θεῶν). And as the theurgic art through certain symbols calls forth the exuberant and unenvying goodness of the Gods into the illumination of artificial statues, thus also the intellectual science of divine concerns (ἡ νοερά τῶν θεῶν ἐπιστήμη), by the compositions and divisions of sounds, unfolds (ἐκφαίνει) the occult essence of the God (τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην οὐσίαν τῶν θεῶν). Very properly therefore, does Socrates in the *Philebus* say, that on account of his reverence of Gods, he is agitated with the greatest fear respecting their names (*Phil.* 12c3).

Theol. Plat. I, 29, 124.13–125.7¹

¹ Transl. Taylor 1995, 125. Translations of *Platonic Theology* are borrowed from this edition. I also suggest the careful and recent Italian translation of *Platonic Theology* by Abbate (2019).

This quotation from the *Platonic Theology* is extremely significant, since in it we can discern the fundamental aspects that Proclus attributes to θεῖα ὀνόματα, ‘divine names’/‘theonyms’. The first is I) the *scientific* aspect, according to which reference is made to the ἡμῖν ἐπιστήμη (‘our science’); by imitating the activity of the demiurgic intellect, this science forms divine names — conceived of as εἰκόνες of the divine entities themselves — and unveils the characteristics of the gods through such divine names; names thus become a source of metaphysical knowledge. Closely related to this is II) the *theological-metaphysical* aspect, ἡ νοερά τῶν θεῶν ἐπιστήμη, ‘the intellectual science of the divine entities’. Finally, we have III) a *theurgical* perspective, which can be found in the intertwining between those theurgical activities that allow humans to draw down the gods’ benevolence (which, through certain kinds of symbols, illuminates handcrafted statues) and the possibility of celebrating the hidden essence of the gods through their names — defined in this passage as ἀγάλματα τῶν θεῶν, ‘statues of the gods’, thus something to be venerated as well.

These statements are of high importance, not only because they are found in one of Proclus’ capital works, the *Platonic Theology* — a sort of metaphysical-theological *summa* of Neoplatonic tenets, attesting the importance of the topic of divine names for the Diadochus — but above all because they reveal the core of Proclus’ “philosophy of language” (the subject of Proclus’ *Commentary on the Cratylus*) and the importance of etymology in this specific context. Indeed, if divine names are representations or, better, *statues* of the gods, then according to this perspective, etymological analysis must be considered a fundamental tool: through it — along with a correct analysis and understanding of the meaning of divine names — it is possible to comprehend the powers and activities of the gods and, consequently, the entire structure of the Whole, with important implications for theurgy.

Since any conception of etymology necessarily depends on one’s conception of human language and one’s view of the claim that names reflect the essence of the things they represent, it is indispensable for the present discussion to focus first of all on the conception of names that emerges from Proclus’ *Commentary on the Cratylus*. Proclus believes in the ‘by-nature’ character of names, according to which names are representations of the nature — or essence — of the things to which they refer. I will then embark on an inquiry concerning the instrument of etymological analysis, and especially the case of theonyms, in order to illustrate how, in this context, etymology becomes a source of metaphysical and, above all, theological revelations.

In the light of the ensuing reflections, I will discuss some examples of Proclus’ approach to the etymology of divine names and the ways in which they convey metaphysical-theological knowledge, particularly by focusing on the theonym ‘Athena’ and its etymological analysis. I will endeavour to show that, according to Proclus, the etymological analysis of theonyms, if correctly conducted, is an important tool, not

only for acquiring theological knowledge, but also for practising theurgy properly, as is especially clear from the philosopher's *Prayer to Athena*. The investigation will show that the etymological analysis of divine names is crucial for Proclus, insofar as it perfectly encapsulates his entire system, in which metaphysical-rational, theological, and theurgical dimensions are interconnected and co-implicate each other.

2 The φύσει-conception of names: an outline of Proclus' philosophy of language

Proclus opens his *Commentary on the Cratylus*² with an exposition of the main σκοπός ('purpose') that he attributes to the Platonic dialogue:

The purpose of the *Cratylus* is to describe the generative activity of souls among the lowest entities and the ability to produce likenesses which souls, since they received it as part of their essential lot, demonstrate through the *correctness of names*.

In Crat. 1, 1.1–5³

Proclus is here considering two specific activities/faculties of the human soul: *generative* (or *productive*) and *assimilative*. The former is a sort of imitation of demiurgic action by the human soul:⁴ in this sense, through the production and formation of names, souls are capable of leading the particular and material dimension back to the original intelligible causes and paradigms, just as the Demiurge moulds matter according to intelligible paradigms.⁵ More specifically, souls' productive activity

2 Proclus' text is the only ancient work on the *Cratylus* to have survived, although it is mutilated (the work abruptly ends with the discussion of the theonym *Athena*). It has come down to us in the form of excerpts (as suggested by the *Inscriptio* of the text, "Ἐκ τῶν τοῦ φιλοσόφου Πρόκλου σχολίων εἰς τὸν Κρατύλον Πλάτωνος ἐκλογαὶ χρήσιμοι"), which was probably written by an *excerptor* or derives from annotations taken by an anonymous student during Proclus' lessons on the *Cratylus* (on this issue, see Van den Berg 2001, 101). The *Commentary* consists of 185 chapters specifically focusing on *Cratylus* 383a–407c.

3 Transl. Duvick 2007, 11. Translations of the *Commentary on the Cratylus* are borrowed from this edition. I also recommend the Italian translation of this *Commentary* by Abbate (2017), which was fruitful for my paper.

4 In this regard, see *Theol. Plat.* VI, in which Proclus succinctly presents the ἀφομοιωτική ιδιότης, the 'assimilative property', as that which distinguishes the divine hypercosmic ordering, which takes place between the purely intellectual dimension and the sensible one. For more details concerning the relationship between the assimilating property of the hypercosmic ordering and the assimilating faculty of souls, see Abbate 2017, 53–55.

5 On the way that souls can generate names after their "fall" from the One, see Chriti 2019.

consists in ensuring — through the formation of names — that the names themselves reflect the actual reality of their referents. Closely connected to this is the other power/faculty that Proclus essentially attributes to human souls in the passage just quoted, namely the assimilative faculty, which enables human beings to assimilate a name to its original referent through the act of *correct* naming. In other words, by imitating the demiurgic action and drawing upon the assimilating power inherent in itself, the human soul is able to produce a true “image” and linguistic “representation” of the essence of the thing to which a certain name refers, so as to properly unveil its nature.⁶ It is in this sense that names are conceived of as ἀγάλματα, ‘statues’ of things,⁷ and represent the nature of entities through certain sounds: this is Proclus’ so-called ὄνομα-ἄγαλμα⁸ conception, according to which names, in order to be considered as such, must be depictions, i.e., *representations* of the entities that they represent (this issue, which is central to the present discussion, will be analysed extensively below). Names, ὀνόματα, are conceived of as *naturally* connected to their referents; Proclus’ conception is thus a φύσει-conception of human language.

The explanation of what it means for names to be ‘by nature’ is offered by Proclus in chapter 17 of the *Commentary on the Cratylus*, where he identifies four different ways of understanding “what is by nature”.⁹ (1) the substance (οὐσία) of animals and plants (both in their entirety and in their parts); (2) their activities and faculties, “like the lightness of fire and its heat”¹⁰ (*In Crat.* 17, 7.21); (3) the shadows and reflections in mirrors; (4) the artificial images (τεχνηταὶ εἰκόνες) that are similar to their models (ἀρχετύποις ἑαυτῶν).¹¹ Proclus argues that Socrates understands the “φύσει” character of names according to the fourth sense: on the one hand, names are products of scientific reflection, particularly by the “imagining soul,”¹² i.e., the soul that makes mental representations of things in the mind — therefore, they are not the result of natural stimuli¹³ — while on the other hand, names were

⁶ For more details, see Romano 1987, especially p. 115, and Abbate 2017, 55.

⁷ See *In Crat.* 51, 18.30–19.18.

⁸ On this issue in Platonism and Neoplatonism, see Bonfiglioli 2008.

⁹ For this specific discussion, as well as for a comparison of Proclus’ linguistic theory with that of his student Ammonius, see Chriti 2022.

¹⁰ Transl. Duvick 2007, 15.

¹¹ On the four ways of understanding what is ‘by nature’, see *Theol. Plat.* XVII, 7.19–8.12. See also Chriti 2022.

¹² *Theol. Plat.* XVII, 8.10: ψυχὴ φανταζομένη.

¹³ This can be seen in the passage from *Platonic Theology* quoted at the beginning of this paper (I, 29, 124.13–125.7), where it is stated that ‘our science’ (ἡμῖν ἐπιστήμη) *produces* names.

originally attributed to things in a proper way, and represent the true essence of things in themselves.¹⁴

The consequence of such statements and of the resulting φύσει-conception of names is that the name, according to Proclus' words,¹⁵ is an instrument (ὄργανον) that is instructive (διδασκαλικόν) and revelatory (ἐκφαντικόν) of the essence of things; the 'instructive' character derives from the one that uses the instrument, while the 'revelatory' one derives from the model being followed. Even though Proclus borrows a definition from Plato's *Cratylus* (388b13–c1), he introduces a significant modification: whereas Plato had defined the noun as an instrument that is διδασκαλικόν ('suitable for teaching') and διακριτικόν ('suitable for distinguishing') for the essence of things, Proclus retains the first adjective but replaces the second with ἐκφαντικόν, 'revelatory'. This shift can be explained in the light of the brief reconstruction of Proclus' theory of language advanced so far:¹⁶ since names are "images" or "depictions"/"representations" of the essence of their referents, according to the fourth meaning of 'by-nature' the relationship that exists between names and things is the same as that between an image and its model.

It follows that names are instruments that can *reveal in themselves* the true and authentic nature of the things to which they refer,¹⁷ since the "model" of this relationship is significantly constituted by the dimension of the divine. Indeed, in the

14 On this issue, see Abbate 2001, 33 and F. Romano 1987, 121–122.

15 In *Crat.* 48, 16.12–15. See Duvick 2007, 25.

16 This shift is explained, above all, by Proclus' Neo-Platonic perspective; more specifically, it reflects the interweaving of late Neo-Platonism with elements of magical-sacral forms of knowledge — despite the fact that such elements are actually criticized by Socrates in the *Cratylus*, insofar as he considers the mythical-sacral conception of names to be unfounded. This shift is due to the considerable influence exerted by the systematic interpretation of the *Chaldaean Oracles* in particular, as introduced by Iamblichus, as well as by the great importance acquired by Homer's and Hesiod's poetry. It is within this perspective that theurgy and theology are inextricably linked in Proclean thought, becoming the privileged key to the Platonic dialogues. On this issue, see Opsomer 2003 and Van den Berg 2016. On the differences between the Platonic perspective of the *Cratylus* and its Neo-Platonizing interpretation by Proclus, see the fundamental contribution by Abbate 2001, esp. 152–156. A very interesting and clarifying outline of the differences between Plato's and Proclus' theses on names is also provided by Romano 1987, 119.

17 Particularly interesting in this regard is the reading by Moutsopoulos (1985, 74–77), according to whom, also for Plato, the meaning of linguistic signs of names is less arbitrary than the ways in which it appears: the attribution of an appropriate name answers the postulate that makes an image the "essential" and revealing reproduction of the realities to which the human soul refers. The word is thus representative of the essence, and designates it on a minor mode. In this sense, quoting Moutsopoulos: "Un certain « réalisme » s'infiltré ici : ce ne sont pas les images elles-mêmes qui revêtent une forme linguistique, et ce n'est pas le consensus intersubjectif qui la leur confère ; ce sont les modèles qui la leur imposent" (p. 77).

Proclean perspective, the divine dimension is inevitably present and inherent at every level, since it is the element that permeates the Real and simultaneously serves as the presupposition and the foundation, the model and the point of arrival, for both the Real in all of its complexity and individual human souls.¹⁸ This means that according to Proclus, names — and language in general — have an *eidetic* and, above all, a *divine* foundation.¹⁹ While the eidetic foundation should be clear from what has been said so far — especially in relation to the paradigms and intelligible models to which the soul looks in order to shape names — a brief reflection is useful here in order to complete the picture that has emerged with regard to the Proclean philosophy of language and its conception of names. This reflection concerns precisely the *divine* aspect of language. In chapter 123 of the *Commentary on the Cratylus*, Proclus distinguishes three different types of names: I) names fashioned and established by the gods, II) names established by daemons, and III) names fashioned by human beings — and which can be assigned according to science (in which case they are correct) or not according to science (in which case they are fallible). The names set by the gods are the most perfect, based on the Proclean conception according to which in the gods' case thinking and naming are the same thing, meaning that names are pure acts of thought that also coincide with *being* in the divine dimension.²⁰ The unitary origin that Proclus attributes to names is grounded on this conception and is attributed in particular to the first *Onomaturge* — the *Nomothetes* of Plato's *Cratylus*, whom Proclus presents as equivalent with the universal Demiurge.²¹

All these conceptions have fundamental implications: even though humans are not as closely connected to eidetic reality as the gods, they can nevertheless rely on a crucial tool, namely etymological-philosophical analysis, through which they can grasp the true essence of things. If, from a Proclean perspective, names reveal the essence of their referents, thus leading us to know things starting from the names, this is all the more true of theonyms, in accordance with the principle that “names assigned to eternal entities partake more of the natural.”²² It follows that divine names, if etymologized correctly, are capable of *revealing*, in a sense, the very structure of the Real, which finds its foundation precisely in the divine dimension.

¹⁸ For an in-depth study on Neoplatonism and the Proclean structuring of the real, see Abbate 2010 and 2012.

¹⁹ See Trouillard 1975, 239.

²⁰ On this issue, see Chriti 2019, esp. 102.

²¹ As Proclus states in *In Crat.* 51, 20.17–18. For the Proclean identification between *Nomothetēs* and Demiurge and on the original unity of the names, as referring to a single demiurge/nomothetēs, see Abbate 2001, 50–54; Romano 1987, 126–132.

²² *In Crat.* 10, 4.13–14.

3 The etymology of theonyms as a source of revelation: between theology and theurgy

Of great interest is the fact that, at a very advanced point in his discourse, Proclus attributes a second, fundamental σκοπός to the *Cratylus*. In doing so, he seems to contradict the singularity that characterizes the theme of each Platonic dialogue:²³

In the *Cratylus* the great Plato aims to celebrate not the foremost, middle and last orders of the gods, but only the properties (ιδιότητας) revealed in their names.

In Crat. 166, 91.24–27²⁴

If we unite the two ‘purposes’ that Proclus attributes to the *Cratylus*, what emerges is not only the close connection between them²⁵ — which actually constitute a single great σκοπός — but also the considerable importance that the tool of etymology acquires in this context, especially in relation to divine names. This clearly emerges in the passage just quoted, where Proclus is ‘warning’ the reader not to think that through theonyms and their etymological analysis one can acquire perfect and absolute knowledge of the original essence of the gods, since this is still a level of transcendence and perfection, the absolute and complete comprehension of which remains unattainable by human souls’ logico-rational faculty.²⁶

²³ See Motta (2020, esp. 51). Referring in particular to the didactic and metaphysical rule established by the anonymous author of the *Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, according to which a single theme must be established for each Platonic dialogue (*Prol.*, 21.23–32), the author states that “the assumption that a dialogue has two *skopoi* is absurd for a Neoplatonist: it means going against a literary rule, one of the essential rules of any Neoplatonist school, namely the need to acknowledge the importance of the first metaphysical principle.”

²⁴ Transl. Duvick 2007, 90.

²⁵ On this, see Abbate 2001 (esp. pp. 29–30) and Motta 2020, 53. Of particular interest is also the interpretation by Romano (1987, 119–120), according to whom the fact that the two purposes assigned by Proclus to the *Cratylus* are not jointly presented at the beginning of the commentary, but rather set out at such considerable distance from one another, indicates that the commentator handles the use of his hermeneutic method in two stages and with a certain gradualness. In the author’s view, this would be explained by the fact that Proclus was well aware of the non-explicit nature of the dialogue’s theological significance: for that reason, at first the Diadochus sought to translate the more obvious physical-epistemological σκοπός onto the psychological-cosmological level (souls produce names through the act of bringing the process of universal generation to completion), and then applied this psychological-cosmological reading of the σκοπός to the ultimate dimension of the divine world, from which the souls themselves derive their “assimilative power.”

²⁶ Indeed, in *In Crat.* 96, 47.15 Proclus states that the essences of the gods, insofar as they are ineffable and unknowable, are reserved for the ἄνθος τοῦ νοῦ alone, i.e. the “flower of the intellect,”

Asserting, however, that the *Cratylus*' purpose is precisely to celebrate the *properties* of the gods that are "revealed by their names" carries an important sub-text, which concerns the instrument of etymology and the consequences of its application to divine names. To better understand the meaning of this statement, it is particularly important to note that elsewhere Proclus states that Socrates ascends in an *analytic* manner from the divine names (images of the gods) to their powers (δυνάμεις) and activities (ἐνέργειαι):²⁷ the 'analytical manner' is clearly the mode of etymological analysis, which is thus a tool by which human beings can go back to the very essence of things, to their most authentic origin. It is important to point out that Proclus' approach to etymological analysis is philosophical:²⁸ following Socrates' statements about the various combinations of vocal sounds,²⁹ Proclus argues that nouns are composed of a formal aspect (the εἶδος of the name, i.e. its 'form') and a material one (the ὕλη of the name). The ὕλη is precisely the material component of a name, i.e., its graphic and phonic signs, while its εἶδος corresponds to the conceptual image expressed by a single name, which reflects the essence of the object named. Unlike the ὕλη, which is more subject to becoming and to what is by convention (since it is part of the sensible universe), the εἶδος of the name participates more in what is by nature and is thus connected to the intelligible dimension: for these reasons, it is not subject to becoming. According to Proclus' words,³⁰ while

an expression taken from the *Chaldaean Oracles* (see fr. 1 des Places) that indicates in the Proclean perspective the most authentic and true part of our essence, the *divine* component of our soul, above logical-discursive thought. In this sense, any human discourse about the gods and their original essences must ultimately end in silence. On the topic of apophaticism and silence in relation to ways of "saying" the divine, see Casas 2017, 281–305; Van der Meeren 2017, 243–247.

²⁷ In *Crat.* 96, 47.12–19. See Duvick 2007, 53.

²⁸ On this issue and on the discussion of the philosophical consistency of etymologies in Plato's *Cratylus*, see Sedley 1998. On the approach to philosophical etymologies, see Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002 and Vasalos-Tsitsibakou 2007. For a detailed discussion on ancient etymological practices, which represent the cultural context of this kind of perspective, see Zucker/Le Feuvre 2021, esp. 1–17. On the instrument of etymology in Proclus as 'philosophical', see Abbate 2001, 23; 43–45 and Romano 1987, 123–124.

²⁹ In the *Cratylus* (431e9–432e2) Socrates states that words can consist of various syllabic combinations. As Sedley points out (1998, 148), Socrates acknowledges that the same meaning can be signified by means of different sounds (just as the same tool can be made of different metals) and that all languages use the same sounds, but in various ways.

³⁰ See In *Crat.* 10, 4.16–18; 80, 37.22–25. In the latter passage, Proclus specifically states: "Concerning the names *Astyanax* and *Hector*, the philosopher who looks to the form and the object of signification describes them as nearly the same, but the grammarians, who are drawn down to the matter and the syllables, would say that they are very dissimilar" (transl. Duvick 2007, 46). The Diadochus is referring specifically to *Crat.* 393a1–b2 and 394a1–c1, where Socrates presents the etymologies of the two names Ἀστυάναξ and Ἑκτωρ: according to the correct etymology, Ἀστυάναξ is composed

the grammarians subordinate the eidetic aspect of the name to the material one, on the contrary, the approach of philosophers regarding names and their etymologies is to subordinate a name's ὕλη to its εἶδος. Proclus thus continues the Platonic tradition by assigning a *truthful* foundation to what is nowadays called a “philosophical etymology” and its ability to reflect the original essence of nouns, a foundation that also derives from the fact that, by focusing on the εἶδος of the name itself, the philosophical approach to etymology conceives of them as identical, since each has a unique and well-defined semantic value reflecting the nature of the thing named; on the contrary, a grammatical approach concerns different nouns that can be applied to the same referent as different from each other. In other words, based on philosophical etymology, “essi [viz. names] sono simili ai loro referenti, riproducendone, a livello d'immagine, l'essenza.”³¹

The philosophical approach to etymology in the case of theonyms has significant consequences in Proclean philosophy: etymological analysis is a fundamental tool for theological speculation, since it makes manifest and explicit the specific prerogatives of each god, which are concealed and implicit in the divine names themselves. Through the etymological analysis of divine names, human beings are capable of grasping the specific characteristics of a single divinity and of signifying them linguistically; the fact that the gods may have several names,³² each with its own etymology,

of ἄστυ and ἀναξ, thus indicating ‘the lord of the city’; Ἐκτωρ is instead traced back by Socrates to the verb ἔχω, and thus indicates the one who κέκτηται (possesses) and ἔχει (holds), thus meaning ‘the possessor’. According to Socrates these names mean the same thing and thus possess the same form, since they both indicate the ‘lord’ of the city, even though they differ phonetically. Indeed, in *Crat.* 393d2 ff. Socrates states that it does not matter whether one adds or removes a letter from a name, or whether in certain syllables the name means the same thing: what matters is rather that the essence of the thing clearly expressed prevails in the name. On the art of naming in Plato's *Cratylus*, see Sedley 2003 and Romani Mistretta 2021.

³¹ Abbate 2001, 47.

³² As stated by Dörrie (in the *Discussion* with Trouillard 1975, 253–254), the Greeks admitted long before Proclus that each god had several names, that the gods were πολυώνυμοι. In this sense, the same deity could be venerated under several names. According to Dörrie, Proclus undoubtedly takes this fact into account (on the theme of the plurality of gods' names in Greek poetical and philosophical tradition, see also Criscuolo 2005, 65 fn. 41). On this issue, see also Chriti 2019, esp. 103, where the author states that according to Proclus' approach, “words originate from the need to call upon the gods, who connect humans with the Divine, while differentiation and variation are a merely human necessity, automatically arising from the existence of various peoples: different nations address the gods (and each other) by various names.” In this sense, if in *De Mysteriis* Iamblicus stated that preference should be given to the barbarian names of the gods — in particular Egyptian ones — which are more ancient and closer to the gods, as they have not undergone alterations or changes over time due to the immutable nature of barbarian languages (unlike the language of the Greeks, who instead love change: *Myst.* VII, 4, 256, 10–5, 260), in his *Commentary on*

does not mean that the etymology of their names possesses no value and correctness:³³ through the etymological analysis of each theonym it is possible to unveil the characteristics and powers that each god possesses in his immutable unity.³⁴

There is a further element that needs to be analysed: Proclus states not only that Socrates rises to the powers and activities of the gods through an analytical study of their names, but also — and most importantly — that these are ἀγάλματα τῶν θεῶν, *simulacra* of the gods, or rather, ‘statues,’ representations, depictions. This means that knowing the gods’ powers and activities through etymological analysis corresponds to a true form of theological revelation, not only about the gods and their characteristics but also — and above all — about the very structure of the Whole. Indeed, it must be remembered that the Proclean system is constituted as a theologization of reality, according to which the entire metaphysical structure finds its *raison d’être* and original foundation precisely in the divine dimension, which is present and inherent at every level of the hierarchy that proceeds to the One.³⁵ It is

the *Cratylus*, Proclus to the contrary affirms the full legitimacy and efficacy of the Greek names of the gods (see *In Crat.* 71, 32.5–12). In this regard, Trouillard rightly notes that Proclus, unlike the *Chaldaean Oracles* and *De Mysterioriis*, does not oppose the use of the Greek equivalents of the barbarian names of the gods precisely because in his view the virtue of the name lies in its relation to the essence it reveals (Trouillard 1975, 247). This is confirmed by Criscuolo 2005, 68. For more information on Iamblichus and the universalism of barbarian names, see Lecerf 2017, 181–208.

33 See Trouillard 1975, 249.

34 Particularly indicative in this regard is the theonym *Apollo*: in the *Cratylus* Socrates had already identified four different etymologies of this name, which he considered to be equally true and valid; each corresponded to one of the four faculties or powers (δυνάμεις) traditionally attributed to the god (medicine, divination, ballistics, and music). It is important to emphasize that, according to Socrates, these etymologies are not independent of each other or conflicting, but rather complementary, in that they all highlight the characteristics and faculties specific to this god and contained, precisely, in the name *Apollo* (see *Crat.* 405b–c). Proclus takes up the Socratic etymologies, interpreting them, however, in the light of the etymology of Ἀπόλλων as ἀ-πολλόν, ‘non-multiple’/‘negation of the multiple’, a widely accepted etymology in Neo-Platonic circles on the basis of which Ἀπόλλων is taken to mean ‘cause of union’ (τῆς ἐνώσεως αἴτιος) and ‘he who reduces multiplicity to unity’ (ὁ πλῆθος ἀνάγων εἰς τὸ ἓν). It is in this sense that the name *Apollo* celebrates the First Principle itself: the One and the concept of ‘unity’ as the negation of multiplicity linked to it. It should be specified that Proclus does not regard this etymology as an alternative to the four Socratic etymologies, but rather as perfectly consistent with them: according to the Proclean perspective, the four properties of Apollo, however different from each other, all serve the purpose of achieving harmony, proportion, and order. For further discussion on the theonym *Apollo* in the *Commentary on the Cratylus*, see *In Crat.* 174, 96.12–176, 103.5; Abbate 2001, 108–114. For the etymology of *Apollo* as ἀ-πολλόν in authors before Proclus, see e.g., Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 381f2–3 and Plotinus, *Enn.* V 5, 6, 27–28.

35 This is most evident in *Platonic Theology*. It should be specified that this is a fundamental Neoplatonic tenet: the metaphysical — and/or theological — structuring that Neoplatonism ascribes to the real consists of a true hierarchy, which pervades both the intelligible world (perfect and

precisely in this sense that, in the Proclean perspective, the names of the gods represent a privileged path by which humans can know divine reality and the hierarchical structure of the Whole itself, since deities' names enclose and guard their activities and powers, and consequently the position occupied by each divinity within the divine hierarchy of the Real and the specific role he or she plays in it. Therefore, the entire Proclean discussion on language is ultimately aimed at offering a theological reflection, in which it finds its culmination and foundation: the theory of theonyms-ἀγάλματα becomes a theory of the name as a divine symbol,³⁶ and it is precisely in this sense that the correct use of the instrument of philosophical etymology serves as a true means to attain theological knowledge of the world.

This emerges more clearly if we consider that, according to Proclus, there are different degrees of θεῖα ὀνόματα: at the highest level, one finds the truest and most authentic divine names, which can be revealed to humans directly by the gods;³⁷ at an intermediate level, one finds the divine names that come from the daemonic genus;³⁸ finally, to an even lower level belong the theonyms that humans use to call and venerate the gods, and which are produced by human beings of a certain kind, namely “godlike” human beings, either through divine inspiration³⁹ or according to science. It should be specified, however, that irrespective of their (human or divine) origin, all divine names have a divine foundation, which in each case finds its original dimension in revelation, inspiration, or divine assimilation/imitation. In this sense, since theonyms are ἀγάλματα of the gods, the telestic art (the art of creating and animating the statues of gods) and the onomastic one (i.e., the art of attributing

unchanging) and the sensible world (mutable and imperfect). At the apex of this hierarchy is the One (ἓν), that is, the First Principle, First Cause and Ultimate End of all things that are, and from whom all that is proceeds and is derived. The One, identified with the Absolute Good, is beyond Being itself, as well as above all relation, determination, and difference.

³⁶ See Romano 1987, 118.

³⁷ See *Theol. Plat.* I 29, 123.20–124.11.

³⁸ Proclus, however, says nothing too explicit about such names. With regard to this topic, I will refer to Timotin 2017, 137–152, which is extremely interesting and useful for issues related to the ‘voices of daemons’ in the Middle and Neo-Platonic tradition and forms of communication between daemons and humans.

³⁹ See *In Crat.* 71, 32.1–2, where Proclus distinguishes three species of theonyms: I) ineffable divine names, which secretly reside with the gods; II) divine names expressed through symbols (σύμβολα) or signs (συνθήματα), which are, in essence, the symbols that theurgy makes use of; III) finally, the divine names by which the gods are named and celebrated by human beings. Talking about the divine names, by which the gods are named and celebrated by human beings, Proclus explicitly states that names of the last type are revealed *directly* by the gods themselves (καθ’ αὐτῶν τῶν θεῶν ἐκφανέτα).

correct names to things) can be equated,⁴⁰ by virtue of the evocative and celebratory function of statues, insofar as divine names are able to associate phonic material (the names as such) with the eidetic representation of the gods' characteristics,⁴¹ and thus to celebrate them. It is important to note that an ἄγαλμα is meant to 'magnify' and celebrate the gods,⁴² and as such it partakes of what is the object of veneration.⁴³ The same definition also applies to theonyms, as is especially evident from the fact that at several points in the *Commentary on the Cratylus* Proclus states that divine names are venerable "as sacred objects of the gods" (σεβάσμια ὡς ἱερὰ θεῶν), since they represent both the powers and activities of the gods. These are the names, of course, which in the *Philebus* Socrates reveres and respects 'beyond the greatest fear' (*Phlb.* 12c3)" (*In Crat.* 30, 11.2–6).⁴⁴

One extremely significant consequence of this is that:

just as it is not reverent to transgress against the statues of the gods, so it is not holy to do wrong regarding names [...] and we must revere them (sc., the names) because of their kinship (συγγένειαν) to gods.

In Crat. 51, 19.20–24⁴⁵

Since they are true representations of the gods themselves, the names of the gods must also be *venerated* and *revered*. Indeed, just as it is impious to offend the gods and their statues, it is equally impious to sin in relation to their names, precisely because the theonyms are *statues* of the gods, and hence naturally akin to the gods themselves.

A further, fundamental conclusion emerges from the previous reflections: the great importance of the correctness of etymological analysis from a Proclean point

⁴⁰ See *In Crat.* 51, 18.30–19.18.

⁴¹ On the connection between telestics and onomastics with reference to the evocative function of statues, see De Piano 2020, esp. 9. Particularly interesting is her statement that the name has a material consistency equal to a marble statue; in this sense, the invisibility of a representation of the invisible, such as the name as an invisible representation of the idea of the named thing, has the same evocative capacity as the statues of the gods in telestic practices.

⁴² As reported by Lanérès (2021, 52), it is in accordance with the most probable etymology that ἄγαλμα, derived from ἀγάλλω, 'to glorify'/ἀγάλλομαι 'to glory, to be proud,' is built on ἀγα-(λ)- which is a variant of μέγα, 'great.' This notion would then be early implemented by the notion of light conveyed by the adjective ἀγα-ός 'bright.' An ἄγαλμα is thus conceived of as an object or a being that carries an active principle that magnifies, places above, fills with pride, i.e. what can also be called "the joy of the gods."

⁴³ With regard to this topic, see Bonfiglioli 2008, 134–138; Gernet 1968, 122; Ildefonse 2021, 125–138; Patera 2021, 57–76.

⁴⁴ Transl. Duvick 2007, 18.

⁴⁵ Transl. Duvick 2007, 28.

of view lies, first of all, in the fact that — as has just been stated — theonyms are to such an extent representations of the gods that to make errors about divine names is to sin against the gods themselves and to commit impiety. This is evidently a strong affirmation of the close correspondence between theonyms and the properties of the gods, based on the tool of etymology and the importance of its correctness. Indeed, in chapter 172 of his *Commentary on the Cratylus* Proclus states:

The lover of piety toward the gods should eagerly cleave to the correctness of the divine names lest he, like those who sin against Persephone and Apollo⁴⁶ through ignorance of the etymology of their names, be reproached by Socrates.

In Crat. 172, 95.24–28⁴⁷

Therefore, the seriousness of the etymological method consists in being accompanied by religious sentiment: those who are pious towards the gods scrupulously adhere to the correctness of their names, in order not to err, due to ignorance, in analysing the names themselves.⁴⁸ One can appreciate even more clearly just how deep-rooted religious sensibility is in Proclean thought. This sensibility blends perfectly with his metaphysical-theological perspective and emerges also — or maybe *precisely* — from a work devoted to human language such as the *Commentary on the Cratylus*. It is for this reason that “aux âmes qui comprennent la signification de la fonction onomastique, le nom apparaît comme une effigie (ἄγαλμα) et une illumination du dieu.”⁴⁹ It is within this perspective that throughout the *Commentary on the Cratylus* Proclus makes use of the revealed truths from the *Chaldean Oracles*⁵⁰ and divinely inspired poetry — i.e., archaic-mythological poetry, particularly the Orphic and Homeric hymns⁵¹ — to further justify the etymologies of the theonyms and the theological interpretation that he derives from them. Indeed, divinely inspired poetry is interpreted by Proclus as that form of expression in which language, using

⁴⁶ See *In Crat.* 173–174.

⁴⁷ Transl. Duvick 2007, 94.

⁴⁸ See Romano 1987, 124.

⁴⁹ Trouillard 1975, 247.

⁵⁰ On gods' and humans' language in the *Chaldean Oracles*, see Seng 2005, 53–78. With regard to the *Chaldean Oracles*, Kroll 1894 and the translation of his work by Saffrey (2016) are particularly relevant.

⁵¹ On the important role assumed in Proclus by divinely inspired poetry, see Abbate 2001, 67–73. On Homer's reference to gods' names, see Abbate 2001, 73–86, Chiron 2017, 29–51 and Lazzeroni 1957, 1–25.

the dense network of symbols and signs disseminated by the gods, succeeds in communicating the essential characteristics of intelligible and divine reality.⁵²

All this evidently falls not only within Proclus' metaphysical-theological perspective, but also — and above all — within the sphere of *theurgy*, another fundamental aspect of his thought. Composed of θεός, 'god,' and ἔργον, 'work'/'act' (also in the sense of 'ritual action'), θεουργία consists in that particular art — practised by Proclus himself⁵³ — that allows one to *operate* on divine reality by evoking it, so as to achieve different forms of contact with it. In Proclus' perspective, theurgy is therefore a form of knowledge that is both philosophical and mystical, marked by a fundamental religious and evocative value/function, which possesses a strongly philosophical connotation.⁵⁴ It is evident, then, that for Proclus the discussion on the etymologies of theonyms has not only cognitive or revelatory value in the theological sense, but also an exquisitely *theurgical* connotation, as "the use of these names is in itself a theurgical technique for attracting the gods by means of symbols."⁵⁵ As theonyms are considered 'statues of the gods' worthy of devotion and veneration, through their etymologies it is possible not only to celebrate the gods and their properties/activities in the most correct way based on the meanings of their names, but also to get in touch with the divine dimension through the act of correctly *calling* a deity, and more specifically of *praying to it* in the most proper way. The possibility of this ὁρθότης derives precisely from the correct understanding of the prerogatives of the various gods, which can once again be inferred from the correctness of their names and their etymological analysis.

In order to sum up the argument developed so far and to convey its deeper meaning, I will end this section recalling the enlightening words by Trouillard, according to which the power of naming cannot be separated from *demiurgy*. In this sense, as Trouillard states, the onomastic power is circular: starting from the gods, it

52 On the issue of poetry as an originary language, able to communicate through articulated symbolism truths otherwise ineffable, see Abbate 2001, 163.

53 See Marinus, *Vita Procli*, 18; 19; 20; 26; 28; 29, in which we find a general account of Proclus' great familiarity with theurgical practices and rites (particularly of the Chaldean tradition), his devotion to prayer and the writing of hymns and prayers, and even (esp. in *Vita Procli* 28 and 29) of some miracles that Proclus is said to have performed, both through prayer (the episode of the healing of Asclepienia) and through talismans and amulets (in one case, freeing Attica from a disastrous drought by bringing rain and, in another, stopping an earthquake).

54 In this regard, considerable influence is known to have been exercised on Proclean thought by the philosophy of Iamblichus, who had 'legitimized' the possibility of holding theurgy, theology, and philosophy together, considering them complementary. For further discussion, see for instance Taormina 1999, esp. 133–158.

55 Van den Berg 2001, 106.

returns to them and brings back souls to them, through the movement of conversion that it provokes in souls. Language is not therefore an extrinsic and indifferent garment of thought: it is not inefficient, but it carries out what it means and symbolizes.⁵⁶

4 The theonym ‘Athena’: from etymology to prayer

In the previous sections we examined the Proclean φύσει-conception of names and the importance acquired in this perspective by the tool of etymology, especially in relation to theonyms, i.e., the proper names of the gods through which human beings celebrate them. I thus intend to devote the concluding sections of this paper to an example of Proclus’ way of proceeding with the etymological analysis of divine names, so as to bring out the close relationship between the metaphysical, theological, and theurgical planes in Proclus’ thought as clearly as possible.

Among the various relevant theonyms that could be treated, that of the goddess Athena is of particular interest. Although the analysis of the name presents some difficulties — given that the excerpts from the *Commentary on the Cratylus* break off at the very beginning of the analysis of the theonym, which is thus incomplete⁵⁷ — my choice to focus on this name is firstly a sort of tribute to Proclus, since the goddess Athena consistently played an important role in his life: he always displayed great devotion towards this goddess, so much so that he considered himself a ‘dwelling’ of the goddess.⁵⁸ The second reason for the choice of this theonym consists in the fact that it may be said to represent one of the clearest examples of the intersection between metaphysics, theology, and theurgy in relation to the etymological analysis of divine names, as I shall attempt to show.

Proclus begins his reflection on the theonym *Athena* with these words:

⁵⁶ Trouillard 1975, 250–251.

⁵⁷ See *above*, fn. 1.

⁵⁸ Consider, in particular, the episode narrated by Marinus in his *Vita Procli*, 30, according to which, after Proclus witnessed the removal of Athena’s statue from the Parthenon by the Christians, the goddess herself is said to have appeared to him in a dream, telling him that from that moment on she would dwell with him: “How dear he himself was to the philosopher-goddess is sufficiently established by his choice of the philosophical life, which was such as my account reveals; but the goddess herself also indicated it plainly when her statue, which at that time was situated in the Parthenon, was displaced by those who move even the immovable. For it seemed to the philosopher in a dream that he was approached by a woman of fair aspect, who announced that he must prepare his house as quickly as possible. ‘For the mistress of Athens’, she said, ‘desires to live with you’” (transl. Edwards 2000, 104–105).

The theologians praise two powers in particular of our lady Athena — the guardian (φρουρητική), which keeps the order of the things as a whole untainted and unconquerable by matter, and the perfective (τέλειουργός), which fills all creatures with intellectual light and turns them back to their own cause. This is why in the *Timaeus* Plato analogously praises Athena as both a 'lover of war' (φιλοπόλεμος) and a 'lover of wisdom' (φιλόσοφος; *Tim.* 24c7–d1). Her orders are described as three: the first is fontal and intellectual (ἡ πηγαία καὶ νοερά), and by this she established herself in her Father and exists there without procession. The second is principal (ἡ ἀρχική), and by this she exists with Core, limits all her procession and turns her back to herself. The third is independent (ἡ ἀπόλυτος), and by this she perfects, guards, and covers all the cosmos with her own powers [...]. Here, then, Socrates celebrates the guardian power with the name of Pallas (Παλλάς), and the perfective with that of Athena (Ἀθηνᾶ).

In Crat. 185, 111.26–112.16⁵⁹

Proclus' way of proceeding is significant: first of all, he sets out the two powers of the goddess Athena that are celebrated by theologians; secondly, even before moving on to the reference to Socrates and the names through which he celebrates the goddess, the Diadochus provides an initial 'overview' of Athena's positions and roles within the hierarchy of the Whole, based on the complex metaphysical-theological system that emerges, in particular, from the *Platonic Theology*;⁶⁰ Proclus then identifies the first two powers mentioned with the two names *Pallas* and *Athena*, respectively. The next step, as will be seen shortly, consists in explicating once again the different positions and roles assumed by the goddess Athena in the divine hierarchy of the Whole, with more specific references to her powers and

⁵⁹ Transl. Duvick 2007, 107–108.

⁶⁰ According to the complex Proclean metaphysical-theological system, some gods belong to different levels of the divine hierarchy, or rather have different forms of determination, whereby they can also be counted among the deities belonging to different divine orders. In his *Platonic Theology*, Proclus identifies three levels of the goddess Athena: intellective (*Theol. Plat.* V, 35), hypercosmic-choric (VI, 11), and hypercosmic-encosmic (VI, 16–17). Without going into too much detail, it may be observed that, according to the complex metaphysical structuring of the Proclean Real, the intellective level is the last totally transcendent divine level, on which depends the order on which the entire universe is structured; at the head of the first triad of the intellective gods we find Zeus, whom Proclus identifies with the Demiurge. The hypercosmic level, on the other hand, lies in the middle between the level of the intellective gods and that of the encosmic gods (the gods who are part of the cosmos). We could say that the function of the hypercosmic level is to create a kind of bridge between the transcendence of intellective reality and the subsequent levels of reality. The hypercosmic-encosmic level, instead, acts as an intermediary between the hypercosmic level and the properly cosmic level, keeping the hypercosmic gods separate and distinct from the encosmic gods and acting as a bridge between these divine dimensions. The hypercosmic-encosmic gods, however, are not directly in contact with the sensitive dimension, but are rather separated from it. On Athena's different positions and roles in the divine hierarchy, her powers, and her activities — not least in connection with Orphic and Homeric poetry — see also *In Tim.* I, 140.24–171.25 (ed. Diehl 1903 and Festugière 2012).

activities. This explication is based precisely on the names with which Socrates celebrates the goddess.

A fundamental conclusion can thus be drawn: on the one hand, the etymological analysis of the theonyms finds its justification, foundation, and crowning in the very structuring of the Real, since Proclus sets out from a description of Athena's positions and roles in the divine hierarchy of the Real and then, on the basis of this, proceeds with the identification of a specific power with a specific name. Conversely, it can also be argued that the etymological analysis of theonyms constitutes the crowning and a further legitimation of the structure of the Whole according to the Proclean metaphysical-theological system,⁶¹ given that right after the reference to the names with which Socrates celebrates the goddess' two powers, the Diadochus completes and enriches his initial definition of the three levels to which Athena belongs with the set of powers and activities emerging from the etymological analysis of her names.

In light of these considerations, one can understand the centrality acquired by the Proclean assertion that the goddess' guardian power is inferred from the name *Pallas* and her perfective power from the name *Athena*. It is important to emphasize that, although he does not specify it, here too Proclus is faithfully adhering to the etymologies that Socrates proposes in the *Cratylus*, and which thus constitute his primary point of reference with regard to the treatment of the goddess' names: it is evident that the etymologies presented in the *Cratylus* by Socrates cannot but be considered the most *correct* by an author such as Proclus. In the *Cratylus* Socrates etymologically traces the epithet Παλλάς back to the Greek verb πάλλειν/

61 This is also particularly clear from the etymology of the theonym *Zeus*. In this case, too, Proclus reappraises the etymology that Socrates proposes in the *Cratylus*, and in agreement with it traces the etymology of Ζεύς back to the double accusative Δία and Ζῆνα (*Crat.* 396b1; *In Crat.* 101, 52.1–103, 53.8). According to the Proclean interpretation, Δία indicates τὴν δι' οὗ αἰτίαν, 'because of which,' and thus expresses the *efficient cause*; on the other hand, Ζῆνα indicates the ζωογονία, i.e. the 'generation of living beings' (probably still on the basis of the Socratic etymology, which leads Ζῆνα back to the infinitive ζῆν of the verb ζάω, 'to live'). In this sense, as Proclus also states in *Tim.* I, 315.7–8 (ed. Diehl 1903) and in *Theol. Plat.* V, 80.5–6, Ζεύς means "the one because of whom all living beings are given life." Thus, through what Abbate defines as a "meta-etymological" criterion (2001, 101), Proclus arrives at the assertion that the etymology of Ζεύς appropriately formulated κατ' αἰτιατικὴν πᾶσι, i.e. on the basis of the "causative case", which is none other than the *accusative case*, precisely in the sense that Zeus is the *cause* of everything. In the etymological analysis of the theonym Zeus, Proclus finds further proof of the causative and demiurgic nature of the god; conversely, the etymology itself finds legitimation — in terms of its intrinsic validity and ultimate foundation — in the metaphysical-theological structuring of the Real, in which Zeus represents the Demiurge. On the place occupied by Zeus in the complex divine hierarchy of the Proclean Real, see *Theol. Plat.* V; VI, 1–24.

πάλλεσθαι, ‘to shake’/‘to be shaken,’ which according to the philosopher comes from an allusion to dancing in arms or surrounded by arms — ἡ ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις ὄρχησις. According to this etymology, *Athena* is thus ‘she who dances and who makes to dance.’⁶²

More specifically, concerning the name *Athena*, Socrates states that it derives from ἄ — which stands for the feminine article ἡ — plus θεονόα, which would in turn derive from θεοῦ νόησις, ‘god’s thought’ (also with mythological reference to Athena’s birth from Zeus’ head). On the basis of this etymology, Athena would thus be the one ‘who thinks about divine things’ (τὰ θεῖα νοῦσα), from which it follows that she is Ἀθεονόη, and thus ‘Athena.’⁶³ The dimension of thought — in the sense of intellect — is so inherent in the essence and activity of this goddess that Socrates gives her a further name, calling her Ἡθονόη, a term resulting from the union of ἦθος and νοῦς, precisely in the sense that Athena is ἡ ἐν τῷ ἦθει νόησις, i.e., ‘she who has the nature/character of intellect.’

It is on the basis of these etymologies that Proclus attributes the following powers and activities to the goddess in his *Commentary on the Cratylus* (given the relevance of the passage, it is worth quoting it in its entirety):

She thus reveals rhythmic dance by the motion (τὴν ἐνρυθμον χορείαν διὰ τῆς κινήσεως ὑποφαίνει) which she also shares first of all with the Curetic order, but secondly with the other gods as well. For by this power, says Orpheus, Athena is leader of the Curetes (fr. 185). And for this reason she is equipped with empyrean arms (τοῖς ἐμπυρίοις ὅπλοις κεκόσμηται), just like the Curetes, by means of which she repels all disorder (ἀναστέλλει πᾶσαν ἀταξίαν), keeps the demiurgic order unmovable (φυλάττει τὴν δημιουργικὴν τάξιν ἀκίνητον), and reveals the dance through rhythmic motion (τὴν ὄρχησιν διὰ τῆς ἐν ρυθμὸν κινήσεως ἐκφαίνει). Yet she also preserves the reason-principle that proceeds from Intellect (τὸν λόγον τὸν ἀπὸ νοῦ προϊόντα φρουρεῖ) and governs matter through her (κρατοῦντα τῆς ὕλης δι’ αὐτήν). [...] It is therefore this same Goddess that subjects Necessity to the creative activity of the Intellect (ἡ ὑποτάττουσα τὴν ἀνάγκην τῇ ποιήσει τοῦ νοῦ), raises the universe to participation in God (ἐπαίρουσα τὸ πᾶν εἰς τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ μετουσίαν), awakens and situates it in the “harbour” of the Father (ἀνεγείρουσα καὶ ἐνιδρύουσα τῷ ὄρμῳ τοῦ πατρός), and guards it eternally (φρουροῦσα διαιωνίως). And if the universe is ever said to be “indissoluble” (ἄλυτον λέγεται τὸ πᾶν), she is bestower of its permanence (αὕτη τῆς αὐτοῦ διαμονῆς χορηγός); and if it is said to dance for all time (χορεύειν εἰς ἅπαντα τὸν χρόνον), she is leader of the chorus (αὕτη τῆς χορηγίας προστάτις) by a single reason-principle (καθ’ ἑναλόγον) and a single order (μίαν τάξιν). She therefore watches over all the creation of her Father (πᾶσαν τὴν δημιουργίαν ἐφορᾷ τοῦ πατρός), holds it together (συνέχει) and turns it back to him (ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς αὐτόν), and conquers all material indefiniteness (καταγωνίζεται πᾶσαν τὴν ἐνυλον ἀοριστίαν). This is why she is called both *Nike* [‘Victory’] and *Hygieia* [‘Health’], the former because she makes

⁶² See *Crat.* 406d12–407a2.

⁶³ On Socrates’ etymology of Ἀθηνᾶ, see *Ibid.* 407a5–c2.

Intellect and Form govern Necessity and matter, respectively (τὸν νοῦν κρατεῖν ποιούσα τῆς ἀνάγκης καὶ τὸ εἶδος τῆς ὕλης); the latter because she keeps <the cosmos> forever whole (ὅλον δ' αἰεὶ διαφυλάττουσα τὸν κόσμον), perfect (τέλειον), ageless (ἀγήρων) and incorruptible (ἄνοσον).⁶⁴ It therefore is a property of this Goddess to elevate (τὸ ἀνάγειν), divide (μερίζειν) and, through intellectual dancing, join to the more divine realm (διὰ τῆς νοερᾶς χορείας συνάπτειν τοῖς θειοτέροις), to establish and preserve in (ἐνιδρύειν καὶ φρουρεῖν ἐν)...

In Crat. 185, 112.16–113.14⁶⁵

On the basis of the etymologies provided by Socrates, it is evident how Proclus not only deduces the powers and activities of the goddess Athena, but also concretely shows how etymology, if used correctly as in this case, can serve as a source for the knowledge of both metaphysical and theological revelations: the etymology of Παλάς as ‘she who dances and causes to dance’ is referred by the Diadochus to the dance through which the goddess Athena provides sustenance to the cosmos and maintains the uninterrupted dance of the entire universe.⁶⁶ Particularly significant is the reference to the Curetes, who, according to Greek mythology, are those priests or daemonic deities who were entrusted with the task of protecting baby-Zeus, and whose noisy dances and clanging of weapons against shields prevented Kronos from hearing the wailing from Zeus’ cradle. This reference once again illustrates the close connection between philosophy and the mythical-religious dimension in Proclus; most importantly, it also shows that, within Proclus’ complex theological system, Athena, as κόρη (i.e., *pure* in the sense of virginal as well as of uncontaminated intellect) is placed — at her level as intellective goddess — at the head of the very triad of the Curetes, whose task is to make Zeus the Demiurge remain pure, uncontaminated, and transcendent with respect to everything that he enables to subsist.⁶⁷ Indeed, in the passage just quoted we read that Athena’s further activity is that of guarding the demiurgic order, keeping it immovable.

The reference to empyrean weapons, i.e. weapons of the ‘empyrean realm,’ should also be understood in this sense, again on the basis of the etymologies of Athena: the term ἐμπυρίος specifically refers to Athena’s intellectual nature (which emerged from the etymology of Ἀθηνᾶ), since the empyrean dimension — also on the basis of the tradition derived from the *Chaldaean Oracles*⁶⁸ — is identified with the intellective sphere. It is therefore also in this sense that Proclus affirms that

⁶⁴ These are characteristics attributed by Plato to Zeus (e.g., *Tim.* 33a2). See Abbate 2017, 670, fn. 1081.

⁶⁵ Transl. Duvick 2007, 107–108. This is precisely where the *Commentary on the Cratylus* ends in the form that has been preserved.

⁶⁶ See Abbate 2017, 670, fn. 1079. With respect to the uninterrupted dance of the cosmos, see *In Tim.* III, 50.29 ff. (ed. Diehl 1903).

⁶⁷ See *Theol. Plat.* V, 35.

⁶⁸ See, e.g., fr. 203 des Places.

Athena presides over the order of the Whole and rejects, as we have seen, any form of disorder, ensuring that the Intellect — i.e., the rational order given to the Whole by the Demiurge — prevails over Necessity⁶⁹ and material causes. In the passage quoted we see once again that the dance of Athena-Pallas is closely connected to the assertion that Athena is the guarantor of the continuous permanence of the Whole: this in particular refers to the second level of divinity on which Proclus places the goddess, namely that of the divine hypercosmic-choric triad, defined as the life-generating triad.⁷⁰ It is important to note that in this triad Athena specifically represents the life-generating divine *intellect*, filled with intellectual knowledge and the original source of the totality of Virtue, and that as such she also has the function of directing the entities that depend on her towards perfection; Athena is thus the principal and elevating Virtue. It is in this sense that, on the basis of the etymology of Athena as ‘she who thinks divine things’ and who has the nature of intellect, we can understand the Proclean assertion that one of Athena’s activities is to turn the cosmos towards the Father (i.e., towards Zeus the Demiurge), and this precisely because Athena, as a hypercosmic-choric deity, guarantees the return of all things towards their cause (perfective power), thereby opposing the indeterminacy of matter (guardian power). From this passage one can also deduce Athena’s peculiar providential care for the Whole, insofar as she presides over the permanence of the order established by the Father/Zeus/Demiurge with her ceaseless life-giving dance and empyrean weapons, protecting and vivifying the Whole through her nature as intellect. The text once again highlights how the powers and activities of the goddess — briefly examined here — are revealed precisely by her theonyms and the etymological analyses proposed by Socrates.

There is, however, a further interesting aspect of Proclus here: driven by his deep religious attitude, he wrote numerous prayers and hymns to the gods. Particularly notable among those that have come down to us is a prayer to the goddess Athena, contained in Proclus’ *Commentary on the Timaeus*. Herein lies the main reason why, among the various possible examples provided by theonyms, I have chosen to analyse precisely that of Athena: by reading the prayer that the Diadochus devoted to the goddess, one can see that what he venerates in the goddess through prayer are precisely those powers that were also revealed by the etymological analysis of her names, and that the functions he asks her to perform are precisely those activities that we have just analysed and have been able to deduce, once again, from Socratic etymologies. The prayer reads as follows:

⁶⁹ See *Tim.* 47e5–48a2.

⁷⁰ See *Theol. Plat.* VI, 11; see above p. 311, fn. 58.

In her graciousness she (Athena) provides for us a share in her immaculate wisdom and the fulfilment of our intellective power, providing us with Olympian benefits that elevate the soul, while casting out the Gigantic, generation-producing imaginings, stirring up in us pure and undistorted concepts concerning all the gods, and radiating upon us the divine light from herself. For she is *Light-Bringer* (Φωσφόρος), since she extends the intelligible light in all directions; *Saviour* (Σώτεια), since she establishes all particular intelligence in the universal intellects of the Father; *Worker* (Εργάνη), since she is the director of creative works — at least the Theologian (Orpheus) says that the Father produced her « so that she might become for him the fulfiller of great deeds ». She is *Beauty-Worker* (Καλλίεργος), since she conserves all the works of the Father in intellective beauty; *Virgin* (Παρθένος), because she holds before her an immaculate and unmingled purity; *War-Lover* (Φιλοπόλεμος), because she manages the opposing columns in the All and presides over war in its totality; *Aegis-Holder* (Αιγίοχος), because she sets the whole of destiny in motion and guides its productions.

In Tim. I, 168.22–169.9 [Diehl]⁷¹

In the opening part of the prayer, Proclus asks the goddess to allow him to partake of *immaculate wisdom* and to be filled with *intellective power*. The latter seems to correspond to the *perfective* power that the Diadochus attributes to the goddess, and which can be inferred in particular from the name Ἀθηνᾶ as well as from the epithet Ἥθονόη and their etymological meanings, which reveal her identity as divine thought and her uncontaminated intellectual nature respectively. Continuing with the analysis, the reference to “procuring the goods that come from Olympus” can be explained in the light of the statements made earlier regarding Athena’s providential care for the Whole, as well as her being identified by Proclus with the principal and elevating Virtue. This would be confirmed by the fact that, according to the prayer, those goods that come from Olympus *elevate souls*, a claim that finds its counterpart in the statement we find towards the end of the *Commentary on the Cratylus*, namely that “it therefore is a property of this Goddess to elevate.”⁷² It is important to consider, moreover, that one of the activities connected to the perfective power of the goddess Athena is precisely the turning of all beings towards their cause (Zeus-Demiurge).⁷³

In another section of the prayer, Proclus asks the goddess to “cast out the Gigantic, generation-producing imaginings, stirring up in us pure and undistorted concepts concerning all the gods, and radiating upon us the divine light from

⁷¹ Transl. Tarrant 2007, 267–268. For a French translation of the prayer, see Saffrey’s important collection of Proclus’ hymns and prayers (1994), and Festugière 2012, I, 223–224; for an Italian translation of Proclus’ hymns, see Giordano 2022.

⁷² See *In Crat.* 185, 113.12 (see above, pp. 314–315).

⁷³ See also *In Resp.* I, 18.28–29: “[Athena] is the guide leading souls in their ascent and chorus-leader of intellect (νοῦχ ὁρηγὸς) and true intelligence” (transl. Baltzly/Finamore/Miles 2018, 67). I also recommend the Italian translation of Proclus’ *Commentary on the Republic* by Abbate (2004).

herself:” we can see how even the mythological reference to the Giants — like the one to the Curetes mentioned above — should be interpreted in a theological-philosophical sense. As children of Gaia, the ‘Giants’ are ‘terrestrial,’⁷⁴ and therefore synonymous with *materiality*, as is also evident from the fact that Proclus speaks of the ‘appearance’ of the dimension of the Giants, directly connected to the dimension of becoming. The fact that Athena has the power to banish materiality⁷⁵ and to awaken pure notions about the gods in us⁷⁶ through her intellectual light is paralleled by the goddess’ perfective power and her guardian power. In the *Commentary on the Cratylus*, this power emerged from the Socratic etymologies of Athena’s names, particularly in connection to the fact that, being equipped with empyrean weapons, she repels all forms of disorder.⁷⁷ Indeed, in the *Commentary on the Cratylus* Proclus states that the goddess “preserves the reason-principle that proceeds from Intellect and governs matter through her,” and that she “conquers all material indefiniteness.”⁷⁸ Proclus’ statement that Athena is also called *Nike*, ‘Victory,’⁷⁹ insofar as she causes Intellect to dominate over Necessity and Form over matter, finds further

74 On this, see Van Den Berg 2001, 285.

75 Particularly important in this regard is the fact that in the *Commentary on the Parmenides* (*In Parm.* I, 692.25–28) Proclus states that the real war of the Giants takes place within our souls, but that since reason and intellect reign in souls, it is the goods from Olympus and those that come from Athena that dominate. This could refer to the *philosophical purification* Proclus speaks of in his *Commentary on the Alcibiades* (*In Alc.* II, 174.8–16), in which he states that life subjected to the passions corresponds to a corruption and degradation of our soul, and that purification consists in the rejection of the passions linked with matter, which are a cause of oblivion for us. In this sense, Proclus states that the first form of purification consists in expelling the bodily images to which the soul is first bound when it descends into the world of generation and mortal nature (*In Alc.* I, 108.16–19). One can thus understand the importance and role played by traditional mythology in Proclean thought: as Vachon (2016, 172) states, myth is nothing other than “symbolisme en parole (*logos*).”

76 This is a reference to the figure of Athena as the ‘philosopher goddess’ and lover of philosophy (*Vita Procli* of Marinus, 10.7–12 and 30.1), which Proclus also refers to in the passage quoted *above*, p. 312, drawing upon Plato’s description (in *Tim.* 24c7–d1) of Athena as both a lover of war and a lover of knowledge. In other commentaries Proclus also attributes to the goddess Athena the power to awaken in our souls the intellectual light, the source of knowledge; one example is *In Resp.* I, 18.22–26, in which the Diadochus states that Athena “joins the intellective light to souls: ‘there burned from her helmet and her shield an unwearying fire’ [*Iliad* V.4], [...] she removes the mist [*Iliad* V, 127 sgg.] which, when it is present, prevents a soul from seeing what is divine and what is human” (transl. Balzly/Finamore/Miles 2018, 67). This identification of Athena as the philosopher goddess would appear to be a recurrent feature of Neo-Platonism, as has been excellently demonstrated by Hoffmann 2020, esp. 209–267.

77 *In Crat.* 185, 112.20.

78 *Ibid.* 112.23–113.8.

79 *Ibid.* 113.8.

explanation precisely in the light of this prayer and the reference to the Gigantomachia.

The adjectives Proclus attributes to the goddess in the prayer, and through which he venerates her, are also significant: Athena is celebrated as *Light-Bringer* (Φωσφόρος), “since she extends the intelligible light in all directions,” and as *Saviour* (Σώτεια), “since she establishes all particular intelligence in the universal intellections of the Father,”⁸⁰ activities/powers discernible, once again, in the perfecting and unifying power and intellectual nature of the goddess, which also emerge in the passage examined in the *Commentary on the Cratylus*. Again, Athena is worshipped as *Worker* (Εργάνη), “since she is the director of creative works,” as *Beauty-Worker* (Καλλίεργος), “since she conserves all the works of the Father in intellective beauty,” and as *War-Lover* (Φιλοπόλεμος, a characteristic, moreover, evoked by Proclus himself in the *Commentary on the Cratylus* with explicit reference to the *Timaeus*), characteristics that can be traced back to the guardian power of the goddess that was revealed and celebrated through the name Παλλάς. Finally, the definition of Athena as a *Virgin* (Παρθένος) who holds an immaculate and unmingled purity finds a counterpart in the assertion made in the *Commentary on the Cratylus* that such a goddess is κόρη, i.e., *pure* (a reference not only to her virginity but also to her being the uncontaminated intellect). Proclus’ definition of her as *Aegis-*

80 Proclus interprets the mythological episode (of Orphic origin) of the dismemberment of Dionysus by the Titans, stating that through her providence Athena saved the god’s heart and delivered it — still palpitating — to Zeus, who then gave birth to an immortal Dionysus. Although such a reference to the dismemberment of Dionysus is also present in the *Commentary on the Cratylus* (*In Crat.* 133, 77.25–78.3), in the *Commentary on the Alcibiades* Proclus states: “to the rational soul [...] are still attached the emotions and the irrational powers as it were plotting against the life of reason and like the Titans attempting to read it, but the intellect, like Athene, is set above, keeping it from sinking in the scale and tending to implication in matter. For it is the function of Athena to preserve life undivided, for which reason Pallas Athene is called *Saviour*; but of the Titans is to divide it and to entice it to the process of coming-to-be” (*In Alc.* I, 43.21–44.4; trad. O’Neill 1971, 27). We can note the reference to Athena as Σώτεια, equally present in the prayer we have analyzed; but this passage also offers insight as to why Proclus in *In Crat.* 185, 113.9 assigns the goddess the epithet *Hygieia*, ‘Health’ (an epithet usually attributed to Zeus): for “she keeps <the cosmos> forever whole, perfect, ageless and incorruptible.” Van den Berg (2001, 289–290) significantly states: “The emotions and irrational powers (the Titans) that come with living in a body distract the attention of the soul from the metaphysical realm, characterized by unity, towards the realm of matter, characterized by plurality, thus scattering the particular soul (the body of Dionysus). However, our intellect (the heart) remains intact. The right use of intellect may, with the help of Athena, enable the *epistrophe* of our soul towards the world of unity away from the world of matter. We need the help of Athena in this. She places our personal, partial intellect in the total intellections of Zeus, the Demiurge (in mythical language: she brings the heart of the scattered body to Zeus). These are the intellections of the transcendent Forms, which Zeus alone, being the divine Intellect, can contemplate.”

Holder (Αιγίοχος), as well as representing a further reference to the mythology about Athena, can be linked, once again, with her providential care and guardian power (the prayer indeed states that Athena is the Aegis-Holder because “she sets the whole of destiny in motion and guides its productions”).⁸¹

With the comparison just made, I certainly do not wish to assert that the *Commentary on the Cratylus* in itself constitutes the conceptual basis for the *Prayer to Athena* or the privileged avenue for its analysis: it is evident that this prayer finds its foundation in the complex Proclean theology, which finds its most complete exposition in the *Platonic Theology*, the *Elements of Theology*, and the *Commentary on the Timaeus*. What I think is interesting to emphasize, however, is the extent to which the etymologies of the proper names of the gods set out in the *Commentary on the Cratylus*, far from being a marginal aspect of Proclean philosophy, fully fit within this context: as has been argued at various points, not only do the etymologies of theonyms find their foundation and a guarantee of their correctness in the structure of the Real, but the latter, conversely, finds further legitimization and explanation precisely in the revelations which the instrument of philosophical etymology can disclose. In this sense, since in the Proclean perspective theonyms are ἀγάλματα τῶν θεῶν and thus *naturally* akin to the gods, it has been affirmed on several occasions that the instrument of etymological analysis proves to be a fundamental cognitive tool with regard to the divine dimension: it is for this reason, in my opinion, that a precise link can be established between etymology and prayer, as clearly illustrated by the analysis of the theonym ‘Athena’ just conducted.

To give an account of this last assertion, it is fundamental to turn to a particularly significant passage in the *Commentary on the Timaeus*. Commenting on the invocation of the gods by which Timaeus opens his speech about the universe, Proclus reviews the opinions of Porphyry and Iamblichus (who plays a fundamental role in this context). He then embarks on a veritable analysis of prayer, in order to understand its essence, its perfection, and how it is granted to souls.⁸² Since this is not the specific theme of the present work, and since I cannot dwell too much on the matter (which is particularly complex),⁸³ it can be stated in brief that Proclus locates the *essence* of prayer in its power to bind and unite souls with the gods or, better still, to unite the secondary things to primary ones, on the basis of the principle

⁸¹ See also *In Resp.* I, 19.1–2: “[Athena] possesses greater authority in the celestial levels, and that from above she completes all the sublunary order” (transl. Baltzly/Finamore/Miles 2018, 67).

⁸² See *In Tim.* I, 207.21–23 ff. (ed. Diehl 1903; tome II ed. Festugière 2012).

⁸³ See Brisson 2016, 108–133; Dillon 2016, 7–25; Goeken 2020, 345–353; Hoffmann 2020, 209–267; Layne 2016, 133–163; Redondo 2016, 164–191; Timotin 2017, 207–245; Van den Berg 2020, 193–207; *Id.* 2001.

that “all things pray except the First”;⁸⁴ the *perfection* of prayer instead consists in the fact that it starts from the most common goods and ends with union with the divine, accustoming the soul little by little to the divine Light. Finally, its *operation* is defined by Proclus as efficacious, in that it makes possible the soul’s ascent and union with the divine.⁸⁵ The perfection of prayer, in particular, provides for Proclus five stages, which follow the following scansion:

First there is the knowledge (γνώσις) of all the divine ranks to which the person who prays draws near. For he [the person praying] would not approach them in the appropriate manner if he did not know the characteristics of each of them.

[...] Second after this comes the process of familiarization (οικείωσις), which takes place through becoming like the divine in respect of complete purity, chastity, education and ordered disposition. Through this we direct what is ours towards the gods, extracting their goodwill and submitting our souls to them.

Third comes touching (συναφή), through which we make contact with the divine substance with the topmost part of our soul and incline towards it.

Next there is the ‘approaching’ (ἐμπέλασις) [...] allowing us greater communion with the gods and a more transparent participation in their light.

Finally, there is unification (ἐνῶσις), which establishes the unity of the soul in the unity of the gods, causing there to be a single activity of us and them, in accordance with which we no longer belong to ourselves but to the gods, remaining in the divine light and encircled in its embrace. This is the supreme limit of true prayer, enabling it to link together the reversion with the [initial] rest, to re-establish in the unity of the gods all that proceeded from it, and to enclose the light in us with the light of the gods.

*In Tim. II, 211.10–212.1*⁸⁶

Particularly relevant to the present discussion and to the connection between etymology and prayer is, evidently, the first stage, that of γνώσις: it consists, in particular, in knowledge of all the divine orders and classes of the gods, by virtue of which one comes to know the distinctive characteristics of each god and, according to Dillon, one also grasps the correct way to approach “to whichever god one is interested in.”⁸⁷ Even more significantly, in the passage just quoted Proclus states that it is *impossible* to approach the gods properly if one does not know their *properties*: a type of knowledge that can only be theological — i.e., based on the science of theology. As Brisson correctly noted, this knowledge is “the subject of the *Elements of Theology*

⁸⁴ According to a statement that Proclus, in his *Commentary on Timaeus* (I, 213.3 Diehl; tome II ed. Festugière 2012), attributes to Theodore of Asine.

⁸⁵ *In Tim. I, 213.6–8* (ed. Diehl 1903; tome II, ed. Festugière 2012).

⁸⁶ Transl. Runia/Share 2008, II, 47–48; tome I, ed. Diehl 1903.

⁸⁷ Dillon 2016, 18.

and of the *Platonic Theology*”;⁸⁸ yet, I believe that the reflections conducted thus far justify the inclusion of the *Commentary on the Cratylus* alongside these two texts, particularly on account of the fact that it discusses the etymology of theonyms as a source of metaphysical-theological knowledge with regard to the gods’ properties, powers, and activities, as well as the position and role that each god acquires in the divine hierarchy of the Whole. As has been reiterated several times, knowledge of the gods’ names and ὀρθότης in their analysis is also necessary in order not to commit *impiety* towards the gods themselves, while at the same time reflecting a deep sense of religious piety. In addition, as Timotin has shown,⁸⁹ the first stage of prayer corresponds to what Proclus calls the *material causes* of prayer, which he defines as the ‘signs’⁹⁰ that the Demiurge has imprinted in the essence of souls and by which the latter are able to awaken within themselves the memory of the gods, who brought everything into being (including the souls themselves). Particularly interesting is the fact that, according to Lewy’s interpretation,⁹¹ these συνθήματα (sometimes referred to by Proclus as σύμβολα ἄρρητα τῶν θεῶν, ‘ineffable symbols of the gods’) that the gods have ‘sowed’ into the souls of humans could refer to the revelation of the secret names of the gods. Although it is evident that not all divine συνθήματα can be traced back to the ἄρρητα ὀνόματα, in these pages from the *Commentary on the Timaeus* the Diadochus affirms that the gods have disseminated

88 Brisson 2016, 121.

89 See Timotin 2017, 230–232.

90 With regard to this topic, Layne states (2016, 152–153): “For Proclus the material causes of prayer or our return are the demiurgic traces of itself in all things, i.e. the divine symbols or *sunthēmata*. Neatly described as a kind of divine signature that evidences our divine lineage and heritage, Proclus suggests that these symbols established not only in things but also within our own souls ultimately remind us and even beckon us to return to our origin. [...] According to Proclus, due to the god’s benevolence, i.e. causal agency, these divine signatures (identified with marks that establish the soul’s ability to revert to the intellect and to remain in the One) are sown into the human soul as the *material* causes of prayer, ultimately allowing souls to recognize that they are already bound to the god, embraced, as Iamblichus also insisted, by divine *sympatheia* and *philia*. In recognizing these material causes of prayer we uncover the bond that establishes our ability to revert it and return to the divine.” However, she argues, these material causes do not establish *the effect* of praying, but only reveal *the manner in which* prayer is to be performed; in this sense, they would be ‘ancillary causes. As regards σύνθημα and σύμβολον in Proclus and the differences between their specific meanings, Cardullo 1985 remains a fundamental work; see also Bonfiglioli 2008, 140–154.

91 See Lewy 2011, 191–192: “The realization of the soul’s wish to return to the place from which she was sent down by the Paternal Intellect is only possible, when she has remembered the magical ‘watchword’ forgotten by her at the moment of entering the body. This *synthema* which being uttered disposes the Supreme Intellect in favour of the soul’s wish is identical with the one of the *symbols* (i.e. the *voces mysticae*) which this Intellect [...] ‘has sown throughout the word’ and which are assimilated to the ‘ineffable beauty’ of the Ideas.”

divine συνθήματα and σύμβολα not only in souls, but throughout the entire cosmos and in all beings that are part of it, including inanimate ones. This finds a significant echo in the *Commentary on the Cratylus*,⁹² but also in the *Commentary on the Alcibiades*, in which Proclus states that “the gods have filled the whole world both with themselves and their own names.”⁹³

It is thus clear, in my opinion, just how relevant the study of divine names is in this context: the correct etymological analysis of theonyms allows one not just to *call* deities correctly, but also and above all to *know* each god in relation to his/her rank and powers. If we consider that this constitutes the first fundamental step towards union with the divine, which begins with prayer, it is evident that the instrument of philosophical etymology, as a cognitive and revelatory tool with regard to the gods’ characteristics, can rightly be included in the first stage of prayer and contribute to that elevation of souls which is necessary in order to ultimately attain ἔνωσις after passing through the other stages. To quote a particularly significant passage from Iamblichus’ *De mysteriis*, a work central to the Proclean discussion of prayer in the *Commentary on the Timaeus*:

But as for those names of which we have acquired a scientific analysis, through these we have knowledge of divine being, and power, and order, all in a name! And, moreover, we preserve in their entirety the mystical and arcane images of the gods in our soul (τὴν μυστικὴν καὶ ἀπόρρητον εἰκόνα τῶν θεῶν); and we raise our soul up through these towards the gods and, as far as is possible, when it has been elevated, we experience union with the gods.

Myst. VII 4, 255.14–256.3⁹⁴

5 Conclusions

To sum up the investigation conducted so far, it is worth returning to one of the fundamental σκοποί that, in his *Commentary on the Cratylus*, Proclus attributes to Plato’s work: the specifically theological goal of celebrating the gods through the properties inferable from their names. This proved a particularly relevant aspect for us, since it made it possible to show that one of the peculiar functions that the Diadochus attributes to the tool of etymology consists precisely in its serving as a means to reveal theological truths when it is *correctly* used for the analysis of θεῖα

⁹² See *In Crat.* 71, 30.29–31.5.

⁹³ *In Alc.* I, 150.10–11 (transl. O’Neill 1971, 99). In this regard, see Criscuolo 2005, 64–65.

⁹⁴ Transl. Clarke/Dillon/Hershbell 2003, 297. On the relationship between Iamblichus and Proclus regarding divine names as a hidden and sacred image of the gods and their importance for theurgy, see Pépin 1982, 109–116.

ὀνόματα, i.e., ‘divine names’ or ‘theonyms.’ In this sense, the tool of etymology can be seen to be inextricably linked not only with the metaphysical-theological dimension, but also with that particular form of theological knowledge known as theurgy.

These assertions found justification precisely on the basis of the peculiar linguistic conception that emerged from a brief examination of the Proclean ‘philosophy of language’ (section 1 of this paper), presented in the *Commentary on the Cratylus*: according to this φύσει-conception, the activity of human naming springs from that particular power of the human soul which, by imitating and assimilating itself to the action of the Demiurge, is able to produce a linguistic image and representation of the essence of the thing to which a given name refers, going so far as to reveal its true and authentic nature. It is precisely in this sense that Proclus refers to names by the significant term ἀγάλματα, meaning that they are ‘statues’, i.e. representations, of what is named by them.

On the basis of what has been said, two fundamental points emerge. The first, of a theological nature, lies in the fact that the etymological analysis of divine names cannot but reveal the properties and prerogatives of each god, since these are contained in and expressed by the original meaning of their names. It can therefore be argued that, if used correctly, etymology can serve as a genuine instrument of revelation with regard not only to the essence of things, but also — and above all — to the divine dimension. The second point, closely linked to the first, is strictly theurgical: if names in general are ἀγάλματα, one can understand the great significance of the statement that theonyms are ἀγάλματα τῶν θεῶν, *statues of the gods*, which — as such — are aimed at *celebrating* the gods in relation to their characteristics. Indeed, theonyms are so connected with the nature of their referents that — as the Diadochus repeatedly states — just as it is *impious* to sin *against* the statues of the gods, it is equally impious to *offend* the gods themselves through error and ignorance in the etymological analysis of their names (and the meaning of these names).

Etymology thus seems to play a fundamental role: through it, it is possible not only to acquire knowledge and theological revelation about the structure of the Whole and to celebrate the gods in the most correct way, but also, in a sense, to enter into contact with the divine dimension through the act of *calling* the gods correctly, which finds one of its greatest examples in prayer. This state of affairs has emerged in a particularly clear way through the analysis of the theonym *Athena* in the *Commentary on the Cratylus*, as well as from the proposed connection with the *Prayer to Athena* of the *Commentary on the Timaeus* (section 4 of this paper): this theonym has proven to be a clear example of how, in the Proclean perspective, naming the deities correctly and making a correct etymological analysis of their names also and above all allows one to be able to pray *correctly*, by focusing on the gods’ specific properties. In this regard, a reflection has been proposed on the close

connection that seems to emerge between the etymological analysis of theonyms and prayer, particularly through the proposal to ‘include’ the tool of etymology, as a source of knowledge of the gods’ properties, in the first stage of prayer — that of γνῶσις — which is indispensable, in the Proclean perspective, for anyone wishing to approach the gods. Thus, the correct study of the etymologies of divine names proves to be not only a source of knowledge, but also an initial stage in the ascent towards the gods: the latter have strewn the cosmos and human souls with divine συνθήματα and σύμβολα, so that men may return to the divine dimension, and among such symbols and signs exist precisely their names.

One can see, then, in what sense the etymology of theonyms enables the celebration of the hidden essence of the gods in all of its possible forms: metaphysical, theological, and theurgical; the discussion concerning the tool of etymology fits perfectly within the Proclean philosophical system.

Given this picture, Socrates’ words, repeatedly quoted by Proclus himself, sound like a warning: “the dread that always comes over me, Protarchus, when it comes to naming gods, is not of a human order, but surpasses the greatest fear”⁹⁵ (*Phlb.* 12c3).

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95 Transl. Gosling 1975, 2.

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Part III: **Literary and Playful Use of Etymology**

Eleni Peraki-Kyriakidou

The Role of Etymology in the Formation of a Symbol: The *Fourth Homeric Hymn to Hermes*

Abstract: This paper starts with two remarks: first, that the word σύμβολον, etymologized from the verb συμβάλλω, has the meaning of ‘bringing together,’ ‘uniting’ (LSJ); second, that the material symbols of the gods are often etymologically related to their names, giving meaning and substance to their qualities and properties. In the *Fourth Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, the etymologizing (which is particularly dense in this text) has as a focal point Hermes’ name (especially its first compound), associated not only with εἶρω (‘say,’ ‘speak,’ LSJ B) as Hermes is the messenger of the gods, but also with εἶρω (‘fasten together in rows,’ ‘bring and string together,’ ‘connect,’ LSJ A) in ἁρμονία (harmony). After the theft of Apollo’s cattle by Hermes, the conflict between the two brothers ends in φιλότης (‘friendship’) with the exchange of gifts, the staff and the lyre, the staff becoming Mercury’s well-known symbol, and the lyre Apollo’s. Both — also related to the meaning of ‘unification’ — form the ground upon which this φιλότης is forged and Hermes is gradually developed into a power that unites all in harmony. Near the end of the *Hymn*, Hermes himself is meaningfully characterized as a σύμβολον “of the immortals and all else together” (526–527).

1 Introduction

The meaning of the word σύμβολον according to the LSJ¹ is a “tally, i.e. **each of the two halves**² or **corresponding pieces** of an ἀσπράγαλος or other object, which two ξένοι, or any of two contracting parties, broke between them, each party keeping one piece, in order to have proof of the identity of the presenter of the other;” it is also “any token serving as proof of identity” (s.v. 2). According to this, therefore, a

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¹ In this paper I often use LSJ 1996, which remains the standard reference for all classicists. I hereafter refer to the *Fourth Homeric Hymn to Hermes* as 4HHH.

² Cf. Thomas 2020, on 30–38: “A σύμβολον is one half of a pair of tallies”; see also Struck 2004, 78.

symbol is one of a whole of two parts which has properties in common with the other part. A **σύμβολον** may also be something that corresponds to something else. This definition entails that in both cases one part may represent the other.³ The word is etymologized from the verb **συνβάλλω** ('bring together', 'unite', LSJ 1).

In the *Symposium*, when Plato is discussing the androgynon ('man-woman'/hermaphrodite), he refers to the myth that Zeus cut it into two, the result being that each part longs to be reunited with its other half/part, in order to become whole once more. So each half/part of a human may represent the other and so is a **σύμβολον** of that other half/part:

ἕκαστος οὖν ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπου **σύμβολον**, ἅτε **τετμημένος** ὥσπερ αἱ ψῆτται, ἐξ ἐνὸς δύο-
ζητεῖ δὴ αἰεὶ τὸ αὐτοῦ ἕκαστος **σύμβολον**.

Plat., *Symp.* 191d

Then each of us is a symbol of a human, since we have been cleaved just like flatfish, two generated from one. So each person forever searches for the symbol of himself.

transl. Struck 2004, 79

The important point in this passage of Plato is the implied notion of the whole, in that each part is so closely associated with the other that it desires⁴ to be united once more with its other 'piece' so as to recreate the whole.⁵ Thus, the idea of wholeness is dominant here. However, in Plato's phrasing the stress falls on **τμήσις** [LSJ s.v.: 'cutting'] (**τετμημένος**, Plato),⁶ which gives us the reverse etymology of the word **σύμβολον**, so creating a powerful image, by which the **σύμβολον** is conceived as 'part' of the One.

In Plato's passage, **σύμβολον** is defined in terms of materiality. In Plato (and Aristotle/Empedocles, n. 5), therefore, each part/**σύμβολον** may become spatially independent. This observation leads to the expansion of the semantic field of the word to include a **σύμβολον**/part that may have a different origin and be spatially independent, a different entity altogether. Indeed, in ancient Greece the word was used in many different contexts and at different periods. It was used in both the

³ Cf. Thomas 2020, on 30.

⁴ Struck 2004, 79 talks about the "economy of desire."

⁵ On the same issue, Aristotle (*GA* 1.18, 722b10–12) refers to Empedocles' view: ἐν τῷ ἄρρενι καὶ τῷ θήλει οἶον **σύμβολον ἐνεῖναι**, ὅλον δ' ἅπ' οὐδετέρου ἀπιέναι, ἀλλὰ **διέσπασται** μελέων φύσις... ('[the seed] is a sort of token in the male and female; it does not come complete from either, 'but the nature of the limbs has been torn apart,'" transl. Inwood).

⁶ In Empedocles, too (see previous note), **διάσπασις** has a similar meaning [LSJ s.v.: 'tearing asunder; 'forcible separation']. On this fragment, see De Ley 1978, 153–162.

material⁷ and the non-material world, in religion, in law, in art, philosophy, politics, and, more importantly, in language and linguistics, in the description of space or time, or in expressing an abstract notion and so on.

There are, therefore, a number of occurrences where a **σύμβολον** is not a part of a whole (an ‘index’, according to modern terminology), but one of two totally different entities, which have no common provenance but do share some common properties. Thus, a **σύμβολον** is not necessarily an **ὁμοίωμα** (an ‘icon’ according to modern terminology). The birth of a symbol does not entail the existence of another half/part,⁸ as the etymological meaning of the word implies. Instead, it can occur when two different entities converge upon a notional common ground that functions as a link between the signifier and the signified. Seen thus, a symbol may operate somewhat like a vehicle in a simile, where tenor and vehicle may present two different things, situations, or concepts, one usually deriving from what is [more] ‘familiar’ to the hearer.

A **σύμβολον**/symbol, as we have said, may be either material or non-material, such as, for instance, a word, a name, a phrase, or even a shape.⁹ In fact, one should avoid the term ‘half,’ as this term creates the mistaken impression that there are two equal parts, which are therefore of the same quantity, quality and importance.

The word **σύμβολον** which comes from the verb **συνβάλλω** [‘bring together,’ ‘unite,’ LSJ s.v. 1] presents what is brought together, ‘meets,’¹⁰ ‘encounters,’ ‘agrees,’ or ‘converges’ (sometimes to the degree of inter-penetration), **συνβάλλεται** with

7 Struck (2004, 78) referring to Walter Müri 1976, ‘Symbolon,’ in: *Griechische Studien*. Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft, vol. 14, Basel: “The symbol begins life as a concrete thing by which the action contained in the verb is performed.” In post-Classical Greek a god’s ‘symbol’ was on occasion called **φόρημα**, which shows the very close relation between the material symbol and deity: e.g., Paus. 9.30.3; *P. Herc.* 1428 cols. 8,14–10,8 = *SVF* iii, Diogenes 33, at Obbink 1996, 19. Peraki-Kyriakidou 2004, 347.

8 Indeed, each, ‘part’ may have features and elements not shared by the other ‘part’ either in the abstract world or in the material. In modern terminology “It must be noted generally that *symbols*, *indexes* and *icons* are manifestations of the same type of link in three different degrees. *Icons* have the greatest number of properties in common with their denotata, being seemingly a one to one representation, symbols have almost none, while indexes are in between” (E. Kyriakidis 2005, 35).

9 Cf. Arist. *De interpretatione* 16a Bekker. See Chriti 2021, 39 with fn. 16; also Arist. *De Sophisticis Elenchis* 423 Bekker: τοῖς ὀνόμασιν ἀντὶ τῶν πραγμάτων χρώμεθα **συμβόλοις** (“we use names as symbols in the place of things,” E.S. Forster, Loeb 1955) where the symbol is immaterial representing what is material. Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* 1417b also uses the word for the construction of a narrative: **σύμβολα** γίγνεται ταῦτα ἃ ἴσασιν ἐκείνων ὧν οὐκ ἴσασιν. πλείστα δὲ τοιαῦτα λαβεῖν ἐξ Ὁμήρου ἔστιν (“symbols are created from what they know for what they do not know; Homer offers many examples of this”).

10 Struck 2004, 78, 178.

something else — whether similar/same or dissimilar/different. Therefore, no matter how many usages and meanings the word **σύμβολον** may have in different periods in ancient Greece, its primary meaning is still present in all such cases and is related to its etymological origin from **συν-βάλλω** > **συμβάλλω**. One should always recall this meaning whenever is required to understand the function of the word in a particular context.

When the **σύμβολον** is a material object, such as what nowadays we often call ‘symbol,’¹¹ for instance, of a god, it can represent both the god and the abstract notion or meaning that led to the creation of this (divine) mythical character.¹² For Shelmardine (1984, 203): “A **σύμβολον** is ... a token or symbol by which a god can be recognized, one which gives power over the deity and is therefore used when calling on him.” This is true even if the ancients for various reasons did not call the object in question a **σύμβολον**. When an object, therefore, is strongly associated with a deity and can represent him/her upon a shared conceptual basis, I would not hesitate to call it ‘symbol’, while also bearing in mind its ancient usage(s).¹³

The material symbol during its continuous process of formation may unbrokenly represent in space and time ‘its other part.’ It is easily recognisable as an omen or token and links humans together from different places and over different periods. However, when the symbol is detached, like the male and the female from the *androgynon*, and so becomes free to move in space and time, its significance may be reconfigured more deeply, to correspond better to each stage of its development of its other ‘part’ and to an ever-changing context. That is to say, it acquires the ability to shift itself on occasion to different elements in the web of meanings adhering to its other ‘part,’ thereby rearranging all its own notional properties. The

11 Cf. above, fn. 7.

12 Cf. Hunter 2018, 83: “the representation of anthropomorphic divinities is thus a signifying marker, a **σύμβολον** by which we portray that which is invisible and of which no likeness can be produced by means of what is visible and representable.”

13 For Struck 2004, 2: “Indeed, the concerns that are generally seen to be embedded in the modern symbol — to produce a form of representation that has an intimate, ontological connection with its referent and is no mere mechanical replication of the world, that is transformative and opens up a realm beyond rational experience, that exists simultaneously as a concrete thing and as an abstract and perhaps transcendent truth, and that conveys a unique density of meaning — are all quite alien to the concerns of these ancient readers.” Struck’s point is confirmed by texts and art to a great extent. I wonder, however, if there could also be another way of approaching this issue. The word **σύμβολον**, throughout antiquity has the meaning of a ‘binding’ and ‘convergence’ with its other ‘part’ or with something else, entailing a shared representational quality upon a common ground between the ‘symbol’ and the referent. Thus, the word **σύμβολον** corresponds to a great extent to what Struck says about the modern symbol, which produces “a form of representation that has an intimate, ontological connection with its referent.”

formation, that is, of a symbol to a great extent, depends on, and takes place in interaction with its other ‘part’ and its context. As Hannah Segal puts it when she frames the terms of the discussion:

Symbol formation... starts very early, probably as early as object relations, but changes its character and functions with the changes in the character of the ego and object relations. Not only the actual content of the symbol, but the very way in which symbols are formed and used seem to me to reflect very precisely the ego’s state of development and its way of dealing with its objects.¹⁴

Needless to say, on occasion a symbol may enjoy such a wide recognition in space and time that its web of meanings can expand to other areas of meanings as well: “All symbols which have been exposed for a long period to many people, and in different contexts, acquire more and more meanings, and become all the more **polyvalent**”¹⁵ (emphasis mine).

2 Naming a god or goddess: The name, the attributes, the symbols

In antiquity the name of a deity may etymologically denote his/her qualities or properties. It is the name, we could argue, which may explain the essence of a deity, functioning as a symbol of a sort and revealing in a way the exigencies behind his/her invention. Generally speaking, one should always bear two things in mind: firstly, that “the relationship [etymology] established between the words is not always *genetically* correct, even if always *culturally* relevant, since it is essentially based on intuition — reflective intuition,”¹⁶ and secondly, that, in the particular field we are discussing, the etymology of a deity’s name is not always apprehended in the same way in different contexts and at different periods. Each individual approaches the issue of a name in his/her own way, and indeed often *imposes*¹⁷ meanings on it in his/her own way of thought and perception. Consequently, multiple

¹⁴ Segal 1988, 160–177.

¹⁵ E. Kyriakidis 2005, 20.

¹⁶ Zucker and Le Feuvre 2021, 3; also Chriti 2021, 37.

¹⁷ Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002, 492. On the use of this verb see Varro’s programmatic phrase *LL* 5.1: “*Quemadmodum vocabula essent imposita rebus...*” with Maltby 2006/2021, 4.

etymologies are extremely common,¹⁸ frequently complementing one another in the formation and understanding of a name.¹⁹

A well-known case is that of Athena: Philodemus,²⁰ referring to Diogenes of Babylon (240–152 BCE) and other Stoics, introduces into his treatment of Athena’s name the notions of vision and mind (*on Piety. P. Herc.* 1428 col. 27–9 ap. Obbink 1996, p. 358):

Αθηνᾶν μὲν οἶον Ἀθρηναῖν εἰρήσθαι.

...that [the name] Athena is as though one were to say *Athrena* [Ἀθρηναῖ].

transl. Obbink 1996, p. 358

Cornutus (*Comp.* 20) repeats this etymology as one possible explanation of the name:

τὸ δὲ ὄνομα τῆς Αθηνᾶς δυσετυμολόγητον διὰ ἀρχαιότητά ἐστι, τῶν μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄθρεῖν πάντα οἶον Ἀθρηναῖν αὐτὴν εἰπόντων εἶναι ...

It is hard to give an etymology for the name of ‘Athena’ because of its antiquity. Some say that it comes from her **contemplating**²¹ [sc. ἄθρεῖν] everything — as if they said she was ‘Athrene’...

transl. Boys-Stones

Many centuries later in *EM* 24.43 the combination of νοῦς and ἄθρεῖν is explicitly found:

Αθηνᾶ: Οἶονεῖ ἄθρηναῖ τις οὔσα, παρὰ τὸ²² τὸν νοῦν ἄθρεῖν.

Αθηνᾶ: ‘as though she is some ἄθρηναῖ related to ‘the mind observes’.

Interestingly, Athena’s formulaic epithet γλαυκῶπις [from γλαύσσω = ‘shine’, also: ‘see’ + ὄπωπα (/ ὄψις < ὀράω)] finds to some degree an etymological parallel in the goddess’s name. It is a compound word with each part glossing the other, thus explaining and enhancing the notion of vision, the goddess’s main quality. Also, her

¹⁸ See e.g., Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002, 487; Zucker 2016, 122–123.

¹⁹ “Ancient Greek Poetry consciously fabricates multiple and exciting ‘truths’, manipulating the potential of sounds and lexemes of proper names among others and making a compositional and narratological factor,” Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2007, 18; see also, among others: Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002, 487; Zucker 2016, 122–123; Zucker and Le Feuvre 2021, 10f.

²⁰ Peraki-Kyriakidou 2016, 81.

²¹ Hays for ἄθρεῖν uses the verb ‘perceive.’ Cf. Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2007, 53f.

²² I consider παρὰ τό different from ἀπὸ τοῦ: Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002, 480: παρὰ τό “points to the ‘parallel’ and the ‘like’ and not necessarily to the ‘preceding’ form and meaning.”

symbol, the *owl*, the **γλαῦξ**, the *ἱερὸν ὄρνειον* ('sacred bird')²³ of Athena, repeats the same notion.

Thus, the name of the goddess, her formulaic epithet and her symbol have parallel etymologies, showing their sharing of common notional ground.

According to what we have said above, however (pp. 334–335), how would ancient people perceive the procedure involved when a symbol detached from the god trespasses on the territory of another deity? Does the etymological relation between the proper name of the deity and his/her symbol remain the same as in its previous attachment, or has the web of meanings been reshuffled with the emphases now shifted, or even changed? In such a case, this development may bring two different domains harmoniously into one. These are the issues we shall discuss below, having as a reference text the *Fourth Homeric Hymn to Hermes* (4HHH).

3 The Fourth Homeric Hymn to Hermes

The subject of this text²⁴ is how Hermes, the son of Zeus and Maia, born in a cave, steals Apollo's cattle, the conflict between the two brothers and how it ends in **φιλότης** ('friendship'), with Hermes' integration into the Olympian group of gods. It is only then, as a member of this divine group, that he obtains his full powers in the heavens, on the earth, and in the underworld, for which he becomes the sole messenger, thereby conversing and communicating with all: *πᾶσι δ' ὃ γε θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ὁμιλεῖ* ("With all, both mortals and immortals, he converses," 576).²⁵

In the 4HHH there are material symbols that have a significant role to play in the narrative, functioning as mute 'characters' but interacting with the gods themselves.²⁶ I refer mainly to the lyre and the staff. Their role is secured, as we shall see below, through their etymological relation to the name of the god(s) (in a similar fashion to that occurring in the case of **γλαῦξ** and the goddess Athena).

The word **σύμβολον** is used twice in the text, at lines 30 and 527: The first is related to a material entity (the first of the two material symbols we have mentioned), which is none other than the tortoise, out of which Hermes will create the

²³ Scholia in Arist. *Equ.* 1094a.2.

²⁴ We have been fortunate to have two excellent editions of the *Fourth Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, by A. Vergados 2013 and O. Thomas 2020. I follow the most recent edition of the text, that of Thomas 2020, unless stated otherwise.

²⁵ See below, pp. 367, 369.

²⁶ As Vergados (2013, 151) notes: "the construction of the narrative proves to be highly sophisticated."

lyre.²⁷ The second time the word **σύμβολον** appears, it is attributed to Hermes himself near the end of the *Hymn*, when Apollo promises to make him “an accomplished symbol/part of the immortals and all else together” (ἐκ δὲ τέλειον / σύμβολον ἀθανάτων ποιήσομαι ἢ δ’ ἅμα πάντων,²⁸ 526–527). Both are conceived materially, the tortoise as well as the anthropomorphic Hermes. In both instances, **σύμβολον** falls to a great degree within the area of meaning the word has in Plato in his presentation of the *androgynon*. In the first case Hermes, upon ‘finding’ the tortoise, immediately regards it a **σύμβολον** ... **ὀνήσιμον** (“a useful symbol,” 30) and expresses his desire to make a singer out of it, as he himself is, in order to share his musical experiences with it. In the second case, the word is directly related to Hermes, who early in the *4HHH* has expressed his desire to join the Olympians (166–175, esp. 170: βέλτερον ἡματα πάντα μετ’ ἀθανάτοισ’ ὀαρίζειν, “it is better to converse for ever with the immortals”),²⁹ thinking that, as a son of Maia and Zeus, he has a legitimate claim to be ‘part’ of them. At the end of the *Hymn*, he achieves his goal by becoming a **σύμβολον** — ‘part’ of the Olympian group of gods, and therefore representative of them. His integration into the pantheon is endorsed by the **χάρις** of Zeus (575) and Apollo’s **φιλότης** (524, 574–575). The poet, therefore, seems consistent in what he considers a **σύμβολον**: it is an entity that shares certain properties with some other entity and so becomes associated with it or even unites with it and is able to represent it. Thus, in such cases, the word **σύμβολον** retains its primary meaning, which it still bears today when we speak of the material ‘symbols’ of a deity. It is this common ground and these common properties that lend the signifier and signified the dynamics of representation.

In approaching this issue, we shall often have recourse to later texts, scholia and lexica, their authors and compilers that for the most part seem to have had a deep understanding of the meaning of the *Hymn*, even though they seldom refer to it by name. Scholarship has shown the influence this work had upon later periods, such that it became a reference text in its own right.³⁰ In our research, therefore, we should not bypass the long history of its reception for reasons of expediency,

27 The word **σύμβολον** in this case is translated either as ‘sign’ or as ‘omen’: Thomas 2020: ‘sign’; Vergados 2013, *ad loc.*

28 See below, pp. 363, 365, 366.

29 For Vergados 2011b, 22: “at the beginning of the poem and up until the events at the Alpheius, Hermes does not seem to be fully conscious of his divine status or what it exactly entails. Although a god, he is hungry for meat. It is only when he realizes that he cannot consume any of the meat he has roasted that his divine identity is established beyond any doubt.”

30 The *4HHH* has been highly influential in later periods as Vergados (2013, 76–124) and Thomas (2020, 63–72) have shown. Also Brown 1947/1969: “The *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* is the canonical document for all subsequent descriptions and discussions of Hermes the Thief”; Torres 2016.

thereby taking into consideration only the modern views and the current bibliography under the false pretence that the scholarship of earlier periods reflects only its own respective time. Indeed, in those texts there are issues, discussions and interpretations similar to the ones we are concerned with here. Bearing this in mind, it is of particular importance that a number of names show a great stability in retaining the same explanation and interpretation from Classical antiquity to the Byzantine era.

The *Hymn*, according to O. Thomas 2020, 23, was probably composed around 450 BCE, “with a considerable margin of uncertainty on either side,” while earlier Vergados (2013, 147) inclined to date it towards the “second half of 6th c. B.C.”

4 Hermes and his name

In antiquity, the most important of Hermes’ functions is that of messenger. In many cases he is also the (ψυχο)πομπός, the guide of souls to the underworld.³¹ In the *4HHH* he is the πρώτος εὑρετής, inventor,³² of the lyre,³³ of the technique of making fire (111), and the inventor of the syrinx (511–512). Mainly, however, he is³⁴ a messenger, a κῆρυξ and ἄγγελος, being the god of *logos*³⁵ and discourse.³⁶ As Socrates states in the *Cratylus* (in relation to Hermes’ son, Pan): ΣΩ. ... ὁ λόγος τὸ πᾶν³⁷

31 He is (ψυχο)πομπός or πομπαῖος; e.g., Hom. *Il.* 24.153, 182, 439, 461; Aesch. *Eum.* 91; Soph. *Aj.* 832; Eur. *Alc.* 361, *Med.* 759; Diod. Sic. 1.96; Plut. 2.758B; Richardson 1993, on *Il.* 24.437–439.

32 E.g., πολλῶν εὑρετῆν γενόμενον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, Diod. Sic. 3.60.

33 Vergados 2011a, 101.

34 Among a number of other qualities of his: Hermes is the saviour and supporter of humans (ἔρμα: ‘prop’, ‘support’, LSJ) Ἑρμῆς· ὅτι μέγιστόν ἐστιν πρὸς τὸν βίον ἔρμα· περιποιεῖ γὰρ πλοῦτον (“Hermes: because he is really great support to life as he brings wealth,” *Additamenta in Et.Gud.*, epsilon 527.20); and ἔρρυμα (‘fence’, ‘guard’, LSJ); below, pp. 345 (and fn. 54), 352 (and fn. 78); cf. also Cornutus *Comp.* 16; *EM* 376.29.

35 According to Cornutus τυγχάνει δὲ ὁ Ἑρμῆς ὁ λόγος ὢν, *Comp.* 16 (see below, p. 343). For M. Bettini 2000 (transl. 2001), 6: “... it is interesting to note that for Cornutus Hermes literally was ‘the word’ (*logos*), and all his other attributes derive from this fundamental characteristic. We have already seen Hermes *diaktoros* functioning as a kind of linguistic vector. His ‘penetrating’ and ‘per-spicious’ nature is also emphasized, as well as his ‘swiftness in vocal articulation’ — the same features that characterize effective linguistic communication.”

36 It is a discourse, however, whose aim is not always the truth, as Clay (1989/2006², 110–111) notices, “but rather that use of language whose goal extends outside itself and which is a means to an end: persuasion, seductive rhetoric, lies, oaths, perjuries, and even magical incantations.”

37 An obvious etymology of *Pan*; see among others Laird 2003, 158 with further references; Sedley 2003, 95–96; Peraki-Kyriakidou 2006, 85; Hunter and Laemmle 2019, 381–382; Thomas 2020, 23;

σημαίνει³⁸ καὶ κυκλοῖ καὶ πολεῖ ἀεί... (SOC. "... logos signifies everything and circulates and is always on the move..." *Crat.* 408c).³⁹ At the end of the 4HHH, Hermes is appointed as the sole messenger to the underworld (κύδιμον Ἑρμῆν /οῖον δ' εἰς Αἴδην τετελεσμένον ἄγγελον εἶναι, "honoured Hermes to be the only fully fledged messenger in the underworld," 571–572). On this point there has been discussion as to who has appointed Hermes as a τετελεσμένον ἄγγελον (572).⁴⁰ The prevailing view, with which I agree, is that it is Zeus, since at line 10, which falls after the pregnancy of Maia and before the birth of Hermes, the poet says:

ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ μεγάλοιο Διὸς νόος ἐξετελεῖτο

but when great Zeus' plan started being implemented.

This shows that what follows in the narrative is Zeus' intent, since Maia's pregnancy is the first step in Zeus' plan: Zeus wants to have a son by Maia — possibly with her features — in order to make him the messenger of his word to the underworld. Indeed, the 4HHH closes with the appointment of Hermes as a τετελεσμένον ἄγγελον (572). While in the initial lines of the 4HHH the verb ἐξετελεῖτο (10)⁴¹ appears in the imperfect,⁴² showing that it is then that Zeus' plans started being implemented, the participle of the verb, τετελεσμένον (572), appears near the end of the 4HHH in the perfect, signaling that it is 'now' a fait accompli.⁴³ The tense of the participle is revealing, for it marks the completion of the implementation of Zeus' plans. The friendship between Apollo and Hermes seals the integration of the god of logos into Olympus, Zeus the father bestowing his grace (574–575).

Mistretta 2021, 29. Thomas (2011, 151–172) brings forth the relation of 19HH (to Pan) to 4HHH (see pp. 161–162 on 45–57).

³⁸ The verb is the basis of the word **σημάντωρ** (e.g., 4HHH 367), usually related to Zeus, which takes us to the concept of 'leader,' 'king,' 'commander' (Vergados); 'director' (Thomas). I think, however, that there is more to it than this: Zeus is 'leader' *because* he **signifies** everything and makes all things known. He is in a way the personification of ὁ λόγος, which [τὸ πᾶν] σημαίνει. Hermes, therefore, and his son, represent this quality of Zeus.

³⁹ Pettersson 2016, 52.

⁴⁰ See below, pp. 363, 367.

⁴¹ Allan (2018, 16f.) in her chapter "Making Connections, Building Relationships" says: "In lines 10–11 we are told that the bringing to birth of Hermes was the fulfilment of his father's purpose; in other words, Zeus' plan for his cosmos was accomplished and embodied in this child ... Zeus is not the god who actually brings things to their ordained conclusion... For his purposes to be fulfilled he requires a son who can move rapidly among all the realms in his cosmos and their inhabitants, enacting the executive power granted him by his father."

⁴² Cf. *Il.* 1.5; Vergados 2013 and Thomas 2020, *ad loc.*; Clay 1989/2006², 104 n. 34.

⁴³ Cf. Thomas 2020, *ad loc.* "The inclusion of a form of τελέω contributes to this closural move."

οὕτω Μαιάδος υἱὸν ἄναξ ἐφίλησεν Ἀπόλλων
παντοίῃ φιλότῃ, χάριν δ' ἐπέθηκε Κρονίων.

Thus king Apollo showed his affection towards the son of Maia in every way, and the son of Cronus also gave his grace.

The first word of the *4HHH* is Ἑρμῆν. To repeat Calame here,⁴⁴ “One will remember that ... ‘to name’ (ὀνομάζειν) a god is not simply to give him a name, but also to identify him; **it is to confer qualities upon him**, which in a polytheistic system are placed in relation to the functions practised in a specific field of action” (emphasis mine).

The dominant etymology of Hermes’ name in the various sources is the verb εἶρω. Before, however, going further, we must investigate this verb and its meaning(s) as presented in the LSJ: There are three different items with the same form (all with *spiritus lenis*), each one bearing a different meaning:

- εἶρω (A) – ‘fasten together in rows,’ ‘string’
- εἶρω (B) – ‘say,’ ‘speak,’ ‘tell’
- εἶρω (C) – ‘ask’

In my view, these three different items are bound to each other by a close relationship, since when we ‘speak’ (LSJ B), or ‘ask’ (LSJ C),⁴⁵ we do not just utter words in any order, but we *articulate* our thoughts with words and phrases so that there is a meaningful ‘string’ of meaning to be understood and received by our interlocutor. This procedure presupposes the existence of the significant area of εἶρω (LSJ A), upon which the other two operate, irrespective of whether the *spiritus* of the verb is *lenis* or *asper*.⁴⁶ Thus, the three different εἶρω seem to function in a complementary fashion, covering a broad spectrum of meanings.

We now turn to what Socrates has to say in the Platonic *Cratylus* (407) about Hermes’ name:

ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ μὴν τοῦτό γε ἔοικε περὶ λόγον τι εἶναι ὃ “Ἑρμῆς,” καὶ τὸ ἐρμηνεῖα εἶναι καὶ τὸ ἄγγελον καὶ τὸ κλοπικόν τε καὶ τὸ ἀπατηλὸν ἐν λόγοις καὶ τὸ ἀγοραστικόν, περὶ λόγου δύναμιν ἐστὶν πᾶσα αὕτη ἡ πραγματεία· ὅπερ οὖν καὶ ἐν τοῖς πρόσθεν ἐλέγομεν, τὸ ‘εἶρειν’ λόγου χρεία ἐστί, τὸ δέ, οἷον καὶ Ὅμηρος πολλαχοῦ λέγει, ‘ἐμήσατό’ φησιν, τοῦτο δὲ μηχανήσασθαι ἐστὶν. ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων οὖν τούτων τὸν τὸ λέγειν τε καὶ τὸν λόγον μῃσάμενον—τὸ δὲ λέγειν δὴ ἐστὶν εἶρειν—τοῦτον τὸν θεὸν ὥσπερ ἐπιτάττει ἡμῖν ὁ νομοθέτης “Ὡ ἄνθρωποι, ὅς τὸ

⁴⁴ Calame 2011, 337.

⁴⁵ We also know that the verb εἶρω gives the second form of the future tense ἐρῶ to the verb λέγω.

⁴⁶ In LSJ εἶρω (A) appears with *spiritus lenis*, while in many texts the verb and its cognates appear with *spiritus asper*.

εἶρειν ἐμήσατο, δικαίως ἂν καλοῖτο ὑπὸ ὑμῶν Εἰρέμης· νῦν δὲ ἡμεῖς, ὡς οἴομεθα, καλλωπίζοντες τὸ ὄνομα “**Ερμῆν**” καλοῦμεν.

Plato *Crat.* 407e–408b

Well, the name ‘Hermes’ (Ερμῆς) seems to have something to do with language (ἔοικε περὶ λόγον τι εἶναι). And to be an interpreter (τὸ ἐρμηνέα εἶναι), a messenger (τὸ ἄγγελον), to be thievish (καὶ τὸ κλοπικόν), deceptive in speech (καὶ τὸ ἀπατηλὸν ἐν λόγοις), and to be a wheeler-dealer (καὶ τὸ ἀγοραστικόν) — all this activity involves the power of language (περὶ λόγου δύναμιν ἐστίν). Now, as we mentioned before, to talk (εἶρειν) means to use language (λόγου χρεια ἐστί); and the other part of the name says — as Homer often does — **contrived** (ἐμήσατο), which means to **devise** (μηχανᾶσθαι). And it was out of these two words that the lawgiver [or name-maker] established the name of the god who devised speech and language, since to talk (εἶρειν) means the same as to speak (λέγειν). It’s just as if he told us: ‘Humans, it would be right for you to call the god who has contrived speech (τὸ εἶρειν ἐμήσατο) Eiremes (εἰρέμης).’ But we, beautifying the name, as we suppose, call him Hermes.

transl. Pettersson 2016, p. 41

One sees here what is generally valid throughout the *Cratylus*: The etymologies presented are often not accompanied by a typical etymological marker, such as **ἀπὸ τοῦ** or **παρὰ τό** (indeed, Plato nowhere in his work uses the term **ἐτυμολογία/ἐτυμολογικός**, and so on). Instead, they appear contextualized in the stream of the philosophical diction, so remaining aloof from the narrow grammatical intent of other sources.

Here Socrates states from the beginning that the name **Hermes** is related to **λόγος**. Then he goes on to explain what it entails: first of all, Hermes is **ἐρμηνεύς** (‘interpreter’); second he is **ἄγγελος** (‘messenger’), as though **ἐρμηνεία** were the basis for what follows. It goes without saying that the word **ἐρμηνεύς** is obviously conceived as etymologically related to the name **Ερμῆς**.

The name of the god is apparently a compound word consisting of **both** (ἐξ **ἀμφοτέρων**): **εἶρω** (‘say’, LSJ B) providing the first component, and **μήδομαι** (‘be minded’, ‘intend’, ‘contrive’, ‘invent’, LSJ I.1, 2) the second (see also below, pp. 347–351, 355). This is confirmed in the same passage a few lines later: **τὸ εἶρειν ἐμήσατο**.

This etymological⁴⁷ approach is repeated explicitly some centuries later, which means that the god’s domain and his basic qualities remained stable long after Classical times. The text of Diodorus Siculus, whose historiography embraces a wide range of people and places even beyond the Greek world, is illustrative of this stability. Diodorus highlights Hermes’ relation to speech and **λόγος** (5.75), although he makes clearer than Plato does the issue of the god’s **hermeneutical** and **organizing** ability as a messenger:

47 Cf. Del Bello 2007, 56–57.

κήρυκα τῶν θεῶν, ἔτι δ' ἄγγελον ἄριστον διὰ τὸ σαφῶς αὐτὸν ἕκαστα τῶν εἰς ἐντολὴν δοθέντων ἑρμηνεύειν· ἀφ' οὗ καὶ τετευχέναι τῆς προσηγορίας αὐτὸν ταύτης, οὐχ εὐρετὴν τῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ λέξεων γενόμενον, ὡς τινὲς φασιν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τῆς ἀπαγγελίας ἄρτιον καὶ σαφεὲς ἐκτεπονηκὸτα περιττότερον τῶν ἄλλων.

Diod. Sic. *Bibl. Hist.* 5.75

[Tradition also says that] he is the herald of the gods and their most trusted messenger, because of his ability to express clearly each command that has been given him; and this is the reason why he has received the name he bears, not because he was the discoverer of words and of speech, as some men say, but because he has perfected, to a higher degree than all others, the art of the precise and clear statement of a message.”

transl. Oldfather

Cf. also Diodorus 1.16: καὶ τοὺς Ἑλλήνας διδάξαι τοῦτον τὰ περὶ τὴν ἑρμηνείαν, ὑπὲρ ὧν Ἑρμῆν αὐτὸν ὠνομάσθαι. (cf. 3.59)

Soon after Diodorus, Cornutus has similar views and offers yet another aspect of Hermes' qualities, that of being a protector, a 'bulwark':

τυγχάνει δὲ ὁ Ἑρμῆς ὁ λόγος ὧν, ὃν ἀπέστειλαν πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ οἱ θεοί, μόνον τὸν ἀνθρώπων⁴⁸ 65 τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς ζώων λογικὸν ποιήσαντες, ὃ παρὰ τᾶλλα ἐξοχώτατον εἶχον αὐτοί. ὠνόμασται δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑρεῖν μῆσασθαι, ὅπερ ἐστὶ λέγειν, ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔρυμα ἡμῶν εἶναι καὶ οἶον ὄχυρωμα.

Cornutus *Comp.* 16

And 'Hermes' happens to be reason, the preeminent possession of the gods, which they sent to us from heaven, making man alone of the terrestrial animals rational. He is named from contriving to speak, that is, to talk, or from being our bulwark and stronghold, so to speak.

transl. Boys-Stones

Both writers build on Plato's views, although they are bolder in that they display their etymological intentions in a formal manner.⁴⁹ They both stress Hermes' relation to *logos* either explicitly or implicitly⁵⁰ (Diodorus using such words as κήρυξ and ἄγγελος, and Cornutus λογικόν). Diodorus, however, stresses the matter of ἑρμηνεία, while Cornutus only alludes to it in his etymology that derives the god's name from ἑρεῖν μῆσασθαι, thereby repeating the Platonic thought τὸν τὸ λέγειν τε καὶ τὸν λόγον μῆσάμενον — τὸ δὲ λέγειν δὴ ἐστὶν εἶρειν and τὸ εἶρειν ἐμήσατο.

⁴⁸ Boys-Stones 2016; cf. Lang 1881: ἀνθρώπων.

⁴⁹ Diodorus 5.74: ἄγγελον ... διὰ τὸ ... ἑρμηνεύειν / ἀφ' οὗ καὶ τετευχέναι τῆς προσηγορίας αὐτὸν ταύτης.

⁵⁰ See Hunter and Laemmle 2019, 397 on the 'implicit etymology' and its omni-presence in the texts. They also stress the permeability between the mode of the implicit and the explicit etymologies: "Cratylus, ... is itself one of the prime witnesses of this."

It is Diodorus who very clearly and emphatically relates Hermes to ἄρτιον λόγον, whereas this issue is not to the fore either in Plato or in Cornutus. For Diodorus, Hermes was not the εὐρετής of words and names, but much more importantly, the god who articulated and organized speech (*logos*) and so rendered recital and narrative ἄρτιον ('complete', 'precise' and 'clear', LSJ s.v.) (τὸ τῆς ἀπαγγελίας ἄρτιον).

In the light of these remarks, Plato's τὸ κλοπικόν τε καὶ τὸ ἀπατηλὸν ἐν λόγοις καὶ τὸ ἀγοραστικόν makes better sense, since these features involve human activities at the centre of social life, in which the abilities of a speaker and the organization (even the manipulation) of speech are of the utmost importance.⁵¹ In particular, Hermes was traditionally the patron of the ἀγορά (ἀγοραστικόν), in all its aspects, since the bringing together of people required that the mediator (εἴρειν, LSJ A) possess the persuasive qualities of *logos* and interpretation (ἐρμηνεία; cf. εἴρειν, LSJ A).

Hermes, therefore, teaches the ἄρτιον λόγον: well structured and meaningful speech. This presupposes ability in διαρθροῦν τὰς λέξεις ("articulating speeches"), to use one more phrase of Diodorus (1.8.3):

τῆς φωνῆς δ' ἀσήμε καὶ συγκεχυμένης οὐσης ἐκ τοῦ κατ' ὀλίγον διαρθροῦν τὰς λέξεις, καὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους τιθέντας σύμβολα περὶ ἐκάστου τῶν ὑποκειμένων γνῶριμον σφίσιν αὐτοῖς ποιῆσαι τὴν περὶ πάντων ἐρμηνείαν.

Diod. Sic. 1.8

And though the sounds which they made were at first unintelligible and indistinct, yet gradually they came to give articulation to their speech, and by agreeing with one another upon symbols for each thing which presented itself to them, made known among themselves the significance which was to be attached to each term.

transl. Oldfather

Without the articulation of speech (διαρθροῦν)⁵² and ἄρτιον λόγον ('clear,' 'precise' speech) one cannot acquire the ability to steal (!), to deceive in speech (!), or to buy (!), according to Plato.

In the light of this and of ancient thought on the matter, it seems that the first two lemmata of LSJ (εἴρω A: 'fasten together in rows,' 'string' and 'join'; εἴρω B: 'say,' 'speak,' 'tell') coexist in the first component of Hermes' name. The meaning given by A is the foundation on which *logos* operates, that is the placing of words

⁵¹ Cf. Pettersson's view 2016, 48–49.

⁵² Cf. Plato *Prot.* 322a: ὁ ἀνθρώπος ...πρῶτον μὲν ... ἐπεχειρεῖ βωμοὺς τε ἰδρύεσθαι καὶ ἀγάλματα θεῶν· ἔπειτα φωνὴν καὶ ὀνόματα ταχὺ διηρθρώσατο τῇ τέχνῃ ... ("man ... firstly... put his hands to making altars and statues in honour of the gods and soon after he skillfully invented articulate speech and words").

and phrases in a logical order, **εἰρμός**.⁵³ **εἴρω** (A) for that matter, is the basis upon which we organize our speech. This is made clear mainly in Plato and Diodorus Siculus, who introduce the notion of **ἐρμηνεία** and **ἐρμηνεύειν** into the discussion. *Logos*, in order to be **ἄρτιος** ('complete,' 'perfect,' 'exact' and 'precise' LSJ s.v. II 2), must be **διηρθρωμένος** ('articulated'). This chain of notions rests conceptionally on both **εἴρω** A and B.

All these are succinctly developed in later literature and lexica, which explicitly offer earlier thoughts and meanings. In the *EM*, the lexicographer, heir to a long history of thoughts and etymological explanations, accepts the traditional connections regarding the name of Hermes. In fact, he makes explicit the meaning of **εἴρω** (LSJ A), which Plato in the *Cratylus* had previously only implied through the word **ἐρμηνεύς**.

Παρά τὸ εἴρω, τὸ ἀρμόζω, ἀφ' οὗ Ἑρμῆς
EM 376.45

Thus, in *EM*, Hermes is etymologically related to **εἴρω**, which is associated with **ἀρμόζω**, a relation also presented at *EM* 339.50:

Εἴρω οὖν παρὰ τὸ ἄρω, τὸ ἀρμόζω, τροπῇ τοῦ Α εἰς Ε, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ Ι.

EM gives further room to the same etymology of Hermes at 376.28, together with some further etymologies of the name:

Ἑρμῆς: Ἀπὸ τοῦ εἴρω, τὸ λέγω [i.e. **εἴρω** LSJ B] ἢ τὸ ἀρμόζω [i.e. **εἴρω** LSJ A]: ὁθεν **ἔρματα**, διὰ τὸ **ἔρυμα** ἡμῶν εἶναι, καὶ **ὄχυρωμα** τοῦ βίου· μέγιστον γὰρ τῷ βίῳ λόγος εὐρέθη. Ἡ παρὰ τὸ **ἐρῶ**, τὸ λέγω, Ἑρμῆς, ὁ τοῦ λόγου ἔφορος· ἢ ὅτι μέγιστον ἐστὶν **ἔρμα** τῶν περὶ τὸν βίον.⁵⁴ ὁθεν καὶ τὰ ἀπὸ τύχης ἀγαθὰ καὶ κέρδη, **Ἑρμαία**.

EM 376.28–33

Hermes: from the verb **εἴρω**, which means either to 'speak' (**εἴρω**) or 'join' / 'bind fast' (**ἀρμόζω**); because of this we have the word 'props' (**ἔρματα**), since he is really a great support (**ἔρυμα**) for us and a 'fortress' (**ὄχυρωμα**) of life; for reason/*logos* (**λόγος**) proved to be of the utmost importance in life. Or it is related to the verb 'speak' (**ἐρῶ**); Hermes is the guardian of *logos*; or because he is a very important support for life; hence fortune's benefits and profits, the **Ἑρμαία**.

53 **εἰρμός**: παρὰ τὸ εἴρω, τὸ συμπλέκω ('embrace', LSJ), *EM* 303.45 and τὸ εἴρειν, τὸ δεσμεῖν ('fetter'), *EM* 379.42. See also: Τοῦτο δὲ τὸ εἴρω, ὅτε μὲν ψιλοῦται, σημαίνει τὸ λέγειν· ὅτε δὲ δασύνεται, σημαίνει τὸ συνάπτω, *EM* 304.29.

54 Cf. Orion 54: **Ἑρμῆς**. ὅτι μέγιστον ἐστὶ **ἔρμα** τῶν περὶ τὸν βίον.

Obviously, in *EM* the verb εἶρω (LSJ B) is considered to be different from εἶρω (LSJ A), which is a synonym⁵⁵ of the verb ἀρμόζω (‘fit together,’ ‘join,’ ‘put together,’ ‘bind fast,’ ‘compose,’ ‘suit’ LSJ). The meanings of these two different verbs, therefore, converge in the etymology of *Hermes*, the god of *logos*. As Hunter and Laemmle (2019, 398) remark: “The richly various forms of etymologizing bleed into each other.”

Indeed, in the *4HHH* the issue of ‘joining’ and ‘binding’ is profoundly important, imprinted, as it were, in *Hermes*’ etymological DNA. In the narrative, this concept moves around various peripheral scenes before ending up embedded in φιλότης, the ‘friendship’ between *Hermes* and *Apollo*, after their quarrel over the theft of *Apollo*’s cattle, and then finally in *Hermes*’ ‘joining’ the Olympic pantheon: when *Hermes* is preparing to carry out his plan to steal *Apollo*’s cattle, the poet entwines his description with images and clusters of synonyms or cognates of the words in question.⁵⁶

σάνδαλα δ’ αὐτίκα ῥιψὶν ἐπὶ ψαμάθοισ’ ἀλίησιν
ἀφραστ’ ἢ δ’ ἀνόητα διέπλεκε, θαυματὰ ἔργα,
συμμίσγων μυρίκας καὶ μυρσινοειδέας ὄζους.
τῶν τότε συνδήσας νεοθηλέος <ἄγκαλον ὕλης>
ἀβλαβέως ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο σάνδαλα κοῦφα
αὐτοῖσιν πετάλοισι, τὰ κύδιμος Ἀργεῖφόντης
ἔσπασε,...

79–85

(Vergados: ἄγκαλον ὕλης; Thomas: ἀγκάλα ὥρης)

But by the sands of the seaside he straightaway wove sandals from osier shoots — wonderful work ineffable and extraordinary — mixing together tamarisk and myrtle-like twigs. Then, binding an armful of their young wood, which the glorious slayer of *Argus* had plucked out leaves and all, he safely tied the light sandals under his feet.

Later in the text, *Maia* warns her son that *Apollo* may try to punish him, binding him out of the house,

νῦν σε μάλ’ οἶω
ἢ τάχ’ ἀμήχανα δεσμὰ περὶ πλευρῆσιν ἔχοντα
Λητοῖδου ὑπὸ χερσὶ διῆκ προθύροιο περήσειν

156–158

⁵⁵ Etymologizing through a synonym was widely practiced in antiquity: Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002, esp. “The Role of the Synonyms in Ancient Etymologizing,” 482–489.

⁵⁶ This is the widely recognized archaic Greek, and particularly Homeric, technique of “clustering together words from the same root”: Louden 1995, 27; also Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2007, on the “cluster of cognates” (see index *Notionum* and of Proper Names); Sluiter 2015.

But now, I really believe that either you will pass through the threshold bound helpless by Apollo's hands, ...

Also, when Apollo threatens to send Hermes to the underworld, from which nobody will be able to release him, he uses the verb **ἀναλύσεται**, in a reversal of the etymology of the Hermes' name:

ρίψω γάρ σε λαβὼν ἐς Τάρταρον ἡερόεντα,
εἰς ζόφον αἰνόμορον καὶ ἀμήχανον, οὐδέ σε μήτηρ
ἐς φάος οὐδὲ πατήρ **ἀναλύσεται**,

256–258

For I will take you and throw you into murky Tartatus, into a doomed, helpless darkness; and neither your mother nor your father will be able to release you back into light.

At a later stage, when Apollo tries to tie up Hermes with bonds of vitex (καὶ χερσὶ περίστρεφε καρτερὰ δεσμά / ἄγνου, 409–410), they begin miraculously to sprout in the ground and then cover the whole field containing the cows. Apollo fails to 'bind' his brother.

The words of joining and binding have yet to bring into focus the major matter of **φιλότης** between the two brothers (574–575).

The notion, therefore, of fastening, joining and binding is widespread in the narrative and gives meaning from different perspectives to the name of Hermes as the name orbits its two basic concepts, that of **εἶρω** (LSJ A), related to the verb **ἀρμόζω** ('fit together,' 'join,' 'put together,' 'bind fast,' 'compose,' 'suit' LSJ), and that of **εἶρω** ('talk' LSJ B). These two are the cornerstones of the god's name as far as the first component of Hermes' name is concerned.

It is time now to look into the second component of the name. Plato, as we have seen, in his *Cratylus* relates the second part of the name to the verb **μήδομαι** ('be minded,' 'intend,' 'contrive,' 'invent' LSJ I.1,2), related to **μητιάω** / **μητίομαι** (**μητις**, 'wisdom,' 'skill,' 'craft' / 'counsel,' 'plan,' 'undertaking' LSJ s.v.) and their cognates, especially adjectives, in a repetition of the phenomenon of the association between a (formulaic) epithet and the name⁵⁷ of a deity. All the instances below relate to Hermes:⁵⁸

καὶ τότε γείνατο παῖδα πολύτροπον, αἰμυλομήτην ,	13
ὥς ἅμ' ἔπος τε καὶ ἔργον ἐμήδετο κύδιμος Ἑρμῆς.	46
τίπτε σὺ, ποικιλομήτα , πόθεν τόδε νυκτὸς ἐν ὥρῃ	155

57 O'Hara 2017², 64 and fn. 320; Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002, 488.

58 Cf. Vergados 2013, on 348.

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πολύμητις ⁵⁹ ἔων πολυμήχανον ἦϋρεν	319
ἀλλ' ἄλλην τινὰ μητίν ἔχων διέτριβε κέλευθα	348
Ζεὺς δὲ μέγ' ἐξεγέλασεν ἰδὼν κακομηδέα παῖδα	389
πῶς ἐδύνω, δολομήτα , δὴ βόε δειροτομήσαι	405
νῦν δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν ὀλίγος περ ἔων κλυτὰ μήδεα οἶδας	456
δείδια, Μαίαδος υἱέ, διάκτορε ποικιλομήτα	514

Plato also associates **μήδομαι** with **μηχανῶμαι** ('make by art,' 'construct,' and 'contrive,' 'devise' by art or cunning' LSJ s.v. 1, 2),⁶⁰ an association also latent in **ἀμήχανος** (346) or in the adj. **μηχανιώτα** (βουφόνε **μηχανιώτα**..., "killer of oxen, contriver," 436). Interestingly, at line 319 the *4HHH* (in the list above) attributes **πολύμητις** and **πολυμήχανον** in the same line to both brothers: **πολύμητις** is used of Hermes and **πολυμήχανον** of Apollo; furthermore, both words share the same first component, **πολύς**.⁶¹

Plato, however, does not bring into the discussion — at least overtly — the notion of **μαίομαι** (= 'seek after,' 'seek for'; 'pursue'; 'desire' LSJ, s.v.), an etymology clearly considered in later texts. Nevertheless, this concept was already there, in the myth, in a different guise, personified in the name of Hermes' mother, **Maia**.⁶² Her name suggests inquisitiveness and a love of searching, qualities of her own son, Hermes.⁶³

Cornutus (*Comp.* 16) combines this meaning of **μαίομαι** with the word **μαῖα** with Boys-Stones (2018, n. 79) noting that "The thought has its root in Socrates's famous comparison of himself to a midwife, *maia* (Plato, *Theaet.* 149a)":

ἐκ δὲ Μαίας ἔφασαν γεγεννησθαι Διὶ τὸν Ἑρμῆν ὑποδηλοῦντες πάλιν διὰ τούτου θεωρίας καὶ ζητήσεως γέννημα εἶναι τὸν λόγον· καὶ γὰρ αἱ μαιούμεναι τὰς γυναῖκας ἐντεῦθεν εἰρηνταὶ μαῖαι τῷ ὥσαν ἐξ ἐρεῦνης προάγειν εἰς φῶς τὰ βρέφη.

⁵⁹ Zeus is also **μητίετα**: ἦϋς τε κρατερός τε· φιλεῖ δὲ σε **μητίετα** Ζεὺς (469); also of Zeus: θέσφατα ... ὅσα **μήδετα** εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς (540).

⁶⁰ Cf. the above passage of Plato: 'ἐμήσατό' φησιν, τοῦτο δὲ **μηχανήσασθαι** ἐστίν (above, pp. 342f.).

⁶¹ Vergados 2013, *ad loc.*; Thomas 2020, *ad loc.*; see also Vergados 2016, 171.

⁶² Cf. e.g., Hom. *Od.* 14.435; Hes. *Theog.* 938 and of course, in *4HHH passim*, etc. **Maia** is associated with **μαίομαι** / **μαιεύομαι** (see LSJ s.vv. **μαίας**, **-άδος** / **μαιεύομαι**). As becomes apparent in the sources, all these belong to the same area of meanings.

⁶³ Similarly in *EM* 133.4, 574.308 and **Μαίας**: Ὁ Ἑρμῆς, παρὰ τὸ **μαίεσθαι τὸν λόγον** (312). Properties and qualities of a parent are passed on to the son or daughter, cf. e.g., Soph. fr. 880 N: Peradotto 1990, 128 ff.; Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2007.

They said that Hermes was born to Zeus from ‘Maia,’ again suggesting through this that reason is the offspring of contemplation and inquiry; those who help women deliver are thus called midwives because, as in the case of inquiry, they bring something to light — the fetus.

The same etymologies of the second compound of Hermes’ name remained diachronically standard for centuries:

Καὶ τὴν τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ (ὃ ἐστὶ τὴν τοῦ λόγου) μητέρα, **Μαῖαν** λέγει, παρὰ τὴν ζήτησιν καὶ εὔρεσιν τῶν μαθημάτων· καὶ **μαίω**, τὸ ζητῶ· ὅθεν καὶ **μαῖα** καὶ **μουσα**.⁶⁴

EM 589.44

And the mother of Hermes (that is of *λόγος*), is called *Μαῖα*, which is associated to ‘seeking’/ ‘search for’ / ‘inquiry’ (*ζήτησιν*) and ‘finding’ / ‘discovery’ (*εὔρεσιν*) of things to learn; and the verb **μαίω** means ‘inquire’ (*ζητῶ*); hence midwife (*μαῖα*) and muse (*μουσα*).

For Eustathius, too, the meaning of Maia’s name reveals Hermes’ qualities:

Μαίας δὲ υἱὸς ὁ Ἑρμῆς ... καὶ ἀλληγορικῶς δὲ διὰ τὸ τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ λόγου ζητητικὸν καὶ ἐρευνητικόν.
Eust. *In Od.* 2.80.32–35⁶⁵

The creation of two different mythological characters, **Μαῖα** and **Ἑρμῆς**, whose common features are the notions of ‘seeking,’ ‘inquisitiveness’ and ‘the love of searching,’ clearly shows that **Μαῖα** represents a part of Hermes’ qualities, being a sort of symbol for him. This notion, like the concept of ‘joining’ and ‘binding’ examined above, is present at crucial points of the narrative, either explicitly or implicitly and shows that Hermes’ character possesses the element of inquisitiveness and the desire to learn and discover. Indeed, the concept occurs — almost programmatically — at the beginning of the *Hymn*, in the form of the verb **ζητέω**, a synonym for **μαίωμαί**. Hermes, after crossing the threshold⁶⁶ of the cave where he was born, starts looking for Apollo’s cattle (22–23): ἀλλ’ ὃ γ’ ἀναΐξας **ζήτει**⁶⁷ βόας Απόλλωνος / οὐδὸν ὑπερβαίνων ὑψηρεφούς ἄντροιο (“but he sprang up and, striding over the threshold of the high-roofed cave, started seeking Apollo’s cows.”). The same verb is used again by Zeus when he gives orders to both his sons, Apollo and Hermes:

⁶⁴ This is also the etymology of Muse’s name: Plat. *Crat.* 406 τὰς δὲ ‘Μούσας’ τε καὶ ὅλως τὴν **μουσικήν** ἀπὸ τοῦ **μῶσθαι**, ὡς εἰοικεν, καὶ **τῆς ζητήσεώς τε καὶ φιλοσοφίας** τὸ ὄνομα τοῦτο ἐπωνόμασεν (“The Muses and music in general are, as it would seem, given this name from *mōsthai* and from searching and philosophy,” transl. Hunter/Laemmle 2019, 388).

⁶⁵ Bettini 2000 (transl. 2001), 10.

⁶⁶ Cf. among others Casali 2019.

⁶⁷ **Ζητέω** is a synonym of **μέμμαι**, an etymology of major importance for the name of Hermes, as is obvious from all the passages above concerning Maia’s etymology.

ἀμφοτέρους δ' ἐκέλευσεν ὁμόφρονα θυμὸν ἔχοντας / **ζητεῦειν** (“[Zeus] ordered both, having one mind, to search [sc. for the cattle]”, 391–392), a phrase which is a response to line 315,⁶⁸ where the brothers were of different mind:

Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ τὰ ἕκαστα διαρρήδην **ἐρέεινον**
Ἑρμῆς τ' οἰοπόλος καὶ Λητοῦς ἀγλαὸς υἱὸς
ἀμφὶς θυμὸν ἔχοντες...

313–315

And when both Hermes the shepherd and the glorious son of Leto were ‘exploring’⁶⁹ everything in detail, having a different view...

ζητεύω and **ἐρεεῖνω** (313 [= **εἴρω** – ‘ask for,’ ‘ask about’ LSJ C]),⁷⁰ are now applied to both gods, as we saw happening with the notion of **μήδομαι** and **μήτις** at line 319 (αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ **πολύμητις** ἔων **πολυμήχανον** [sc. Ἀπόλλωνα] εὔρεν) (see the previous pages).

In the second component of Hermes’ name, therefore, both **μήδομαι** and **μαίομαι** coexist and function (again) supplementarily. Having noted the combined role of **μήδομαι** and **μαίομαι** in the second part of the name and the corresponding combined function of **εἴρω** (‘say’ LSJ B) and **εἴρω** (‘fasten together in rows’ LSJ A) in the first, inevitably we go one step further: Hermes’ name seems to contain one more meaning (as we have just realized), that given by the third LSJ entry for **εἴρω** (‘ask’ LSJ C) for the first component of the name. This meaning, ‘ask’, is a synonym of **μαίομαι** and **ζητῶ** (‘seek for,’ ‘inquire for,’ ‘search after,’ ‘search out,’ ‘desire,’ ‘question’ LSJ), involved in the second component of the name. Seen like this, the second component of the name (**μαίομαι**) glosses and enhances the first (**εἴρω**, LSJ C); **μαίομαι** emphasizes the notion of inquisitiveness implicit in the first component **εἴρω** and so plays a dominant role in the construction of Hermes’ character. We thus have a parallel phenomenon involved in **γλαυκῶπις** as an attribute of Athena, in which the second component is a synonym for the first (above, pp. 336–337).

To recapitulate: the etymologies regarding the second component of the name from **μήδομαι** and **μαίομαι** seems to refer more to the *modus operandi* of Hermes and the way he pursues things. They therefore complement the etymologies of the first component, which are the conceptual foundations upon which the identity of Hermes is built. We will consider these etymologies in our discussion of Hermes’ symbols as presented in the text of the *Fourth Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, where the

⁶⁸ Thomas 2020, on 391.

⁶⁹ Thomas 2020, *ad loc.*: ‘explore.’

⁷⁰ Cf. 547: **ἐξερεεῖνω**.

god who, although the son of Zeus and Maia, and brother of Apollo, nevertheless has to undergo a long process which forms the plot of the *Hymn*,⁷¹ before his divinity is fully acknowledged on Olympus and his full powers are finally conferred upon him.⁷²

Few other gods have as many features and qualities accumulated as Hermes has. Above all, Hermes is the messenger of the gods, representing the conveyance of speech. The meaning of his name, however, does not necessarily imply the verbatim repetition of a message (a characteristic more often related to Iris).⁷³ Instead, it suggests the ability to join and combine and an inquisitiveness, the drive towards enquiry and research (ἔρευνα), the contriving, inventing and interpreting, that is, ἑρμηνεία. “Hermes is the name given to the power that makes connections and builds relationships,” according to Allan⁷⁴ or, as Bettini puts it (2000, transl. 2001) 11: “[Hermes] is at the center of the most delicate part of the linguistic operation: interpretation.” Hermes is the god who represents the inherent complexities of the mind. Thus the meaning of profit and of κερδῶς Ἑρμῆς enter the discussion.

5 Hermes’ symbols

We have already seen above that a name of a deity may be etymologically related to a material object recognized as his/her symbol,⁷⁵ either directly or through synonymy⁷⁶ of the etymologies of the words involved. As I will try to show below, in the *4HHH* the phenomenon of the etymological relation between a deity’s name and his/her symbol is repeated. In the case of Hermes, this occurs with the **chelys** or **lyre** and the **ράβδος** of the god, which play an important role in the narrative.

⁷¹ Christ also has to pass a number of trials before his ascension (in an entirely different context).

⁷² However, he will never be allowed to enter the realm of divination, that is, the domain of Apollo (533–540); Richardson 2010, on 531–532.

⁷³ Hermes’ role of transferring the divine message is similar to that played by Iris. In the *Cratylus* [408b], Iris is also etymologized from the verb εἶπεν: καὶ ἡ γὰρ Ἴρις ἀπὸ τοῦ εἶπεν ἔοικεν κεκλημένη, ὅτι ἄγγελος ἦν (“Also Iris seems to have got her name from εἶπεν, since she is a messenger”); Peraki-Kyriakidou 2017. However, Iris’ name lacks the concept of μῆδομαι. The difference between the two is therefore substantial.

⁷⁴ Allan 2018, 18.

⁷⁵ Peraki-Kyriakidou 2004, 344.

⁷⁶ See above, p. 346 with fn. 55.

5.1 The chelys – lyre: Between Hermes and Apollo

Hermes played the lyre as a child (ἡῶος γεγονώς μέσῳ ἤματι **ἐγκιθάριζεν**, “although born at dawn he could play the lyre at midday,” 17) before finding a tortoise⁷⁷ and constructing an instrument out of its shell, the **χέλυσ** (24–25):

ἐνθα χέλυν εὐρών⁷⁸ ἐκτίησας μυρίον ὄλβον·
Ἑρμῆς.⁷⁹ τοι πρῶτιστα χέλυν τεκτήνατ⁸⁰ ἀοιδόν⁸¹

on finding there a tortoise he gained great happiness; the first thing Hermes did was to make the tortoise a singer.

As the story develops, the new instrument also⁸² appears as a **κίθαρις** (499, 509, 515)⁸³ and **φόρμιγξ** (64, 506), and as a **λύρα**, although this last name appears only once in the whole *Hymn*, at 423.

⁷⁷ The tortoise, as an animal, obviously existed before Hermes’ ‘invention,’ just as the **γλαῦξ** also most certainly existed before the invention of Athena.

⁷⁸ See Struck 2004, 94–96 on “The Semantics of Coincidence”; Thomas (2020, on 24) relates this “fortuitous find” to the **ἑρμαῖα** as they are called in Greek. On this cf. Cornutus 16: ἵδρυται δὲ ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς καὶ ἐνόδιος λέγεται ὅποταν τις εὐρὴν τι προάγων ἐν ὁδῷ, συνήθως ἐπιφθέγγεται τὸ κοινὸν εἶναι τὸν Ἑρμῆν, ὃς δὴ συνίσταται ἐστὶ τῆς εὐρέσεως ἐνόδιος ὢν, ἐμφαίνοντες ὅτι κοινὸν ἀξιοῦσιν εἶναι καὶ τὸ εὐρημένον, ἐντεῦθεν καὶ τῶν εὐρημάτων **ἑρμαίων** λεγομένων... (“He is set up on roads [en hodois] and is called ‘Wayside’ [enodios]... it is customary for someone who finds something as he goes along a road to say ‘Hermes in common!’ (Hermes of the Wayside being in fact witness to the find). This shows that people reckon the thing found to be common property — and so found objects are called hermaia....” (transl. Boys-Stones, 2018).

⁷⁹ Interestingly Hermes here lacks, as Greene notes, any specific attribute: Greene 2005, 345 n. 11.

⁸⁰ Mistretta 2017, 6f., 12f.

⁸¹ Mistretta 2017, 10: “The poet makes clear that Hermes’ lyre does not simply generate voiceless music, but ‘song’ (*Homeric Hymns*, IV, 484: φθεγγομένη), wherein words and sounds are never separate from each other. In this connection, Hermes’ first song is crucial both to Hermes’ self-fashioning and to the definition of his identity as a god, since what he sings is nothing less than a *mise en abyme* of the hymn as a whole (54–62);” Vergados 2013, *ad loc.*; see below, p. 361 (φθεγγομένη). Tzifopoulos 2000, n. 36; Calame 2011, 348.

⁸² The word **χέλυσ** at 33 is still a tortoise, at 153 and 242 the newly made instrument; also **χελώνη** at 42 when Hermes takes its life.

⁸³ No matter what the instrument is called in the text, the verb is (ἐγ)κίθαρίζω (17, 423, 425, 433, 455, 475, 476, 519); see Vergados 2013, on 423; Thomas 2020, *ad loc.* Also at *3HHap.* the instrument is called **φόρμιγξ** (184) and a few lines later **κίθαρις** (188), while the verb is again (ἐγ)κίθαρίζω (201) and once **φορμίζω** (182). See Brown 1947/1969, 95: “the cithara was a stringed instrument similar to the tortoise-shell lyre, but made of wood.”

In the *Hymn*, when Hermes finds (or ‘meets’) the tortoise (εὐρών, 24),⁸⁴ he names it σύμβολον⁸⁵ ... ὀνήσιμον (“a useful symbol,” 30). Given the meaning of the word σύμβολον (as above), it can be perceived that the god in the making of the instrument imposes on it features and qualities ontologically related to him: firstly, his singing quality: (θεὸς δ’ ὑπὸ καλὸν ᾄδειν / ἐξ αὐτοσχεδῆς πειρώμενος, “The god sang to it beautifully, making an impromptu⁸⁶ experiment,” 54–55); the tortoise also becomes a ‘singer’ (ᾄδόν, 25);⁸⁷ secondly, the sweetness of the sound made by both, the instrument when Hermes plays it, and the voice of the god himself. Both instrument and voice are similarly characterized as ‘lovely’ and sweet: χέλυν ἐρατήν (153) and Hermes’ playing, ἐρατὸν κιθαρίζων (423; similarly 455) while Hermes’ voice (or the lyre’s sound?) is ἐρατή ... ἰωή (421). The same point is made in the phrase ἐρατή δέ οἱ ἔσπετο φωνή (426).⁸⁸ The fact that there is a debate over whether the voice is that of Hermes or the lyre shows that both voice and lyre have a similar effect.⁸⁹

In the myth as presented in the *4HHH* desire plays a major role, since it leads Hermes to kill the tortoise in order to appropriate it and associate it with himself in regard to a particular quality, that of being a musician, whereby Hermes is singer and player and the instrument produces a sound (25). Desire also seizes Apollo on hearing the sweet sound of Hermes’ song and of his performance on the instrument [καί μιν γλυκὺς ἵμερος ἦρει (“and a sweet desire seized him,” 422) and τὸν δ’ ἔρος ἐν στήθεσιν ἀμήχανος αἴνυτο θυμόν (“and an extraordinary desire took hold of him deep in his heart,” 434; cf. 475)].

The chelys, therefore, becomes an instrument as a result of desire on the part of Hermes to create a singer. Then the instrument becomes the object of Apollo’s desire, who later in the *4HHH* obtains the chelys, which thereafter symbolizes him. Indeed, the chelys passes into the domain of Apollo as a gift from Hermes who, upon

⁸⁴ Struck 2004, 93–94.

⁸⁵ For Vergados 2013, 15: “In *h.Herm.* 30 σύμβολον does not simply designate a ‘token of identification’ but borders on the realm of divination,” with reference to Struck. Also Thomas 2020, on 30; see also above pp. 337–338.

⁸⁶ Vergados 2011b, 2 fn. 4: “The very use of αὐτοσχεδῆ in the sense ‘improvisation’ is a departure from Homer proper, where the word refers to combat at close quarters,” with references; see also Vergados 2013, *ad loc.*; Thomas 2020, on 54–55.

⁸⁷ Line 25 was considered in the past as an interpolation: Vergados 2013, *ad loc.*

⁸⁸ Calame 2011, 349.

⁸⁹ For these phrases, see Vergados 2013 and Thomas 2020, *ad loc.*

noticing his brother's ἔμπος ('longing,' 'yearning after'; 'desire' LSJ s.v.),⁹⁰ hopes that it will soothe his anger at the theft of his cattle.

Music, and especially singing (both by the chelys and by Hermes) obviously falls into the broad semantic area of *logos*, and this is made clear by Hermes himself when he praises his lyre for its 'speaking' qualities: καλὰ καὶ εὖ κατὰ κόσμον ἐπισταμένην ἀγορεύειν ("who knows very well to make good speeches in good order," 479); this reminds us of the phrase said by the poet of Hermes, πάντ' ἐνέπων κατὰ κόσμον ("narrating everything in order," 433; cf. below, fn. 123). Both Hermes and the lyre can 'speak' in an orderly, articulated way.

But is the relation between the god and the lyre also apparent at an etymological and linguistic level, as it is, for instance, in the case of Athena and the owl?

EM makes things clear following the tradition since Hesiod, etc.:

Χέλυσ: Σημαίνει τὴν κιθάραν· διότι ἀπὸ δέρματος χελώνης κατεσκευάστο τῷ Ἑρμῇ· δέδωκε δὲ αὐτὴν τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι. Ἡ **παρὰ τὸ χέω, τὸ λέγω**.

EM 808.18

Chelys, the tortoise, means the kithara; for it was made by Hermes out of its shell; and he gave it to Apollo. Or it is related to **χέω**, 'say'.⁹¹

Notably the word **χεῖλος** ('lip') shares the same etymology with **χέλυσ**:

χεῖλος: Παρὰ τὸ χέειν λόγους

EM 811.11

Ever since the time of Hesiod⁹² or Pindar,⁹³ and later Theocritus,⁹⁴ the verb **χέω** or **χεῖω** (LSJ, s.vv.) — together with its cognate **χυτός** — was related to speech and in particular the poetic discourse and song.

⁹⁰ Vergados 2013, on 435–462. "Apollo... obliquely asks for the lyre." Clay 1989/2006², 140: "Wonderstruck and racked with desire to possess Hermes' enchanting instrument, Apollo immediately declares his willingness to strike a bargain and to resolve their differences peacefully."

⁹¹ Gaisford (ed. *Etymologicum Magnum*) in the testimonia: *haud scio an verius, παρὰ το χέειν τὸν λόγον*. Cf. LSJ s.v. **χέω** III.1 of the voice.

⁹² Hesiod *Theog.* 83–84: τῷ μὲν ἐπὶ γλώσση γλυκερὴν χεῖουσιν ἑέρσην, / τοῦ δ' ἔπε' ἐκ στόματος ῥεῖ μείλιχα ("they pour sweet dew upon his tongue, and his words flow soothingly from his mouth", transl. G. Most, Loeb 2018) [for the Muses]. Cf. also Hes. *Theog.* 97: γλυκερὴ οἱ ἀπὸ στόματος ῥέει αὐδή.

⁹³ Pindar *O.* 7.7 and *N.* 3.77: νέκταρ **χυτόν**.

⁹⁴ Theocr. *Thal.* 7.82: γλυκὺ Μοῖσα κατὰ στόματος **χέε** νέκταρ ("the Muse had poured sweet nectar on his lips", transl. Gow). This imagery also takes us back to *Il.* 1.249, where words sweeter than honey flowed from the tongue of old Nestor.

From this perspective, there is a certain synonymy between **εἶρω** (= ‘say’ LSJ B) and the etymology of the instrument from the verb **χέω** (also = ‘say’, according to *EM* 808.18 above, p. 354). This synonymy seems to point to an etymological nexus that might explain instructively the connection between **Hermes** and his symbol, the **χέλυσ**,⁹⁵ his other ‘part’ in music and song.⁹⁶ However, this nexus is not particularly strong, since it is restricted to the notion of **εἶρω** (‘say’, LSJ B) and there is no etymological allusion to the other conceptual foundation of Hermes’ name, that of **εἶρω** (LSJ A).⁹⁷ Furthermore, there is no linguistic link with the second component of Hermes’ name involving the notion of **μήδεσθαι**, **μηχανᾶσθαι**, and/or **μαίεσθαι**.⁹⁸

The name of the instrument **χέλυσ** appears for the last time at line 242, well before the reconciliation scene (397–578) and earlier than the middle of the *Hymn*. The word **φόρμιγξ** is used twice (64, 506), to refer to the same instrument, while it also appears as **κίθαρις** in the last part of the *4HHH* three times (499, 509, 515). The word **λύρα**⁹⁹ appears only once (423)¹⁰⁰ — but in what context?

The connection, therefore, between Hermes and the **χέλυσ** weakens even further, in that the other two names for the same instrument, **κίθαρις** and **φόρμιγξ**,¹⁰¹ have no obvious relationship to the name of the god.¹⁰²

All these factors, together with the disappearance of the word **χέλυσ** from the rest of the *Hymn*, lead to a gradual loosening of the exclusive relation between Hermes and his instrument-σύμβολον, as it will continue to offer musical experiences, albeit now under different names before the instrument finally changes hands. Only when Hermes — in seeking reconciliation with Apollo — sings and plays it for

⁹⁵ For Thomas 2020, on 24, when Hermes picks the tortoise, he is choosing an “inferior animal” to create his instrument, which will be “then paradoxically and hyperbolically esteemed.” For Hermes, however, the tortoise’s shell is the right shape for a sound-box, which justifies the god’s choice. Secondly, the semantic relationship between the verb **χέω**, with its poetic and cultural dynamism, and the name of Hermes himself makes him feel that there is an ‘intimate relationship’ involved, one could say, that will help him in the creation of his music and song.

⁹⁶ Cf. Mistretta 2017, 6: “In fact, the god’s creation of the instrument and his musical achievements may be regarded as ‘figures of consonance’ in Albright’s taxonomy since the hybrid components of Hermes’ artwork stand in a relationship of mutual reinforcement and generate a single, unified image of the god as inventor.”

⁹⁷ See above, p. 341.

⁹⁸ Cf. Vergados 2011a, 86.

⁹⁹ The word **λύρα** does not appear in Homer: Shelmerdine 1984, 203.

¹⁰⁰ Jarczyk 2017, 192.

¹⁰¹ E.g., **Φόρμιγξ**: Ἡ κιθάρα. Παρὰ τὸ προηγεῖσθαι τῆς οἴμης (*EM* 798.41); **Κίθαρις**: Κιθάρα παρὰ τὸ κινεῖσθαι ῥαδίως· ἢ παρὰ τὸ κινεῖν εἰς ἔρωτα τοὺς ἀκούοντας· ἢ παρὰ τὸ κινεῖν τοὺς θαιρούς (*EM* 513.23).

¹⁰² On the “terminological chaos,” see Jarczyk 2017, 197.

the last time in order to soothe Apollo's anger over the theft of his cattle, is the **χέλυσ** called **λύρα** (423).

γέλασσε δὲ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
 γηθήσας, ἔρατῇ δὲ διὰ φρένας ἤλυθ' ἰωή
 θεσπεσίης ἐνοπῆς, καὶ μιν γλυκὺς ἥμερος ἦρει
 θυμὸν ἀκούάζοντα. λύρῃ δ' ἔρατὸν κιθαρίζων
 στῇ ῥ' ὃ γε θαρσύνσας ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ Μαιάδος υἱὸς
 Φοίβου Ἀπόλλωνος, τάχα δὲ λιγέως κιθαρίζων
 γηρύετ' ἀμβολάδην, ἔρατῇ δέ οἱ ἔσπετο φωνή,
 κραίνων ἀθανάτους τε θεοὺς καὶ Γαῖαν ἐρεμνὴν
 ὡς τὰ πρῶτα γένοντο καὶ ὡς λάχε μοῖραν ἔκαστος.

420–428

Phoebus Apollo laughed with joy; lovely was the sound of the marvellous divine voice deep in his heart, and a sweet desire permeated his spirit as he listened. And he, the son of Maia, playing lovely music on the lyre, stood with courage on the left of Phoebus Apollo. And then, while he was playing clearly, he began with a prelude, and sweet was the voice which accompanied him while singing the song on the immortal gods and the dark Earth, how they came into being and how each one received his share.

Apollo's response is enthusiastic, and Hermes gives as a gift to his brother the instrument he himself has made. When, however, Apollo takes the instrument in his hands, then it is called **κίθαρις** (499).

Let us now examine the way the word **λύρα** was understood in antiquity: In the ancient sources, the word is related both to the verb **λύω** and to **λύτρον** ('the price of release'):

Λύρα. παρὰ τὸ λύω ... **λύτρα** ἐδόθη τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι παρὰ τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐκλεψε βοῶν ὁ αὐτὸς Ἑρμῆς.

Orion, *Etymologicum*, 96.7

Λύτρον: Παρὰ τὸ λύω λύσω· **ᾄθεν καὶ λύρα**, **λύτρα** τίς οὖσα· ἐδόθη γὰρ τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι παρὰ τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐκλεψε βοῶν τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος ὁ Ἑρμῆς.

EM 572.1

Both Orion's *Etymologicum* and *Etymologicum Magnum* are much later sources. However, in both cases the works refer specifically to the plot of the *4HHH*,¹⁰³ which means that the lexicographers in etymologizing the word have taken into consideration the context and content of the *4HHH*.

¹⁰³ The same could be said of Cornutus' text: Torres 2016. See also above, p. 343.

Indeed, in relation to the musical instrument constructed by Hermes, the notion of ‘solving’ and ‘releasing’ (λύω) is present in the 4HHH in various ways: firstly, it brings forth the meaning of the word λύτρον (as in both Orion and EM), a notion strongly implied in the narrative when Hermes offers his instrument to Apollo; secondly, it shows the ability of the lyre to release humans from their worries (ἐργασίην φεύγουσα δυήπαθον, “avoiding arduous labour,” 486); and thirdly, it foreshadows the λύσις of the bond between Hermes and his symbol, which is soon to pass into the hands of Apollo.

Interestingly, the lyre and Apollo seem to share the same etymology¹⁰⁴ (from [ἀπο]λύω),¹⁰⁵ in a variety of contexts (being the reversal of Hermes’ etymology from εἶρω, ‘fasten together in rows’, LSJ A). Plato’s *Cratylus* is one source of major importance for the etymology of the name of Apollo (where there are a number of further etymologies, which will not be discussed here):

- ΣΩ.** Εὐάρμοστον μὲν οὖν, ἅτε μουσικοῦ ὄντος τοῦ θεοῦ. πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ἡ κάθαρσις καὶ οἱ καθαρμοὶ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἰατρικὴν καὶ κατὰ τὴν μαντικὴν καὶ αἱ τοῖς ἰατρικοῖς φαρμάκοις καὶ αἱ τοῖς μαντικοῖς περιθειώσεις τε καὶ τὰ λουτρά τὰ ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις καὶ αἱ περιρράνσεις, πάντα ἐν τι ταῦτα δύναιτ’ ἄν, καθαρὸν παρέχειν τὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ κατὰ τὸ σῶμα καὶ κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν· ἢ οὐ;
- ΕΡΜ.** Πάνυ μὲν οὖν.
- ΣΩ.** Οὐκοῦν ὁ καθαίρων θεὸς καὶ ὁ ἀπολούων τε καὶ ἀπολύων τῶν τοιούτων κακῶν οὗτος ἂν εἴη;
- ΕΡΜ.** Πάνυ μὲν οὖν.
- ΣΩ.** Κατὰ μὲν τοίνυν τὰς ἀπολύσεις τε καὶ ἀπολούσεις, ὡς ἰατρὸς ὢν τῶν τοιούτων, ‘Ἀπολούων’ ἂν ὀρθῶς καλοῖτο· κατὰ δὲ τὴν μαντικὴν καὶ τὸ ἀληθές τε καὶ τὸ ἀπλοῦν — ταυτὸν γάρ ἐστιν —, ὥσπερ οὖν οἱ Θετταλοὶ καλοῦσιν αὐτόν, ὀρθότατ’ ἂν καλοῖτο· ‘Ἀπλοῦν’ γάρ φασι πάντες Θετταλοὶ τοῦτον τὸν θεόν. διὰ δὲ τὸ αἰεὶ βολῶν ἐγκρατὴς εἶναι τοξικῇ ‘Ἀειβάλλων’ ἐστίν. κατὰ δὲ τὴν μουσικὴν δεῖ ὑπολαβεῖν ὅτι τὸ ἄλφα σημαίνει πολλαχού· τὸ ὁμοῦ, καὶ ἐνταῦθα τὴν ὁμοῦ πόλησιν καὶ περὶ τὸν οὐρανόν, οὓς δὴ ‘πόλους’ καλοῦσιν, καὶ τὴν περὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ ὁδῇ ἁρμονίαν, ἣ δὴ συμφωνία καλεῖται, ὅτι ταῦτα πάντα, ὡς φασιν οἱ κομποὶ περὶ μουσικὴν καὶ ἀστρονομίαν, ἁρμονία τινὶ πολεῖ ἅμα πάντα· ἐπιστατεῖ δὲ οὗτος ὁ θεὸς τῇ ἁρμονίᾳ ὁμοπολῶν αὐτὰ πάντα καὶ κατὰ θεοὺς καὶ κατ’ ἀνθρώπους· ὥσπερ οὖν τὸν ὁμοκέλευθον καὶ ὁμόκοιτιν ‘ἀκόλουθον’ καὶ ‘ἄκοιτιν’ ἐκαλέσαμεν, μεταβαλόντες ἀντὶ τοῦ ὁμο- ἄλφα, οὕτω καὶ ‘Ἀπόλλωνα’ ἐκαλέσαμεν ὃς ἦν ‘Ὀμοπολῶν’, ἕτερον λάβδα ἐμβαλόντες, ὅτι ὁμῶνυμον ἐγένετο τῷ χαλεπῷ ὀνόματι. ὅπερ καὶ νῦν ὑποπτεύοντές τινες διὰ τὸ μὴ ὀρθῶς σκοπεῖσθαι τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ὀνόματος φοβοῦνται αὐτὸ ὡς σημαῖνον φθοράν τινα· τὸ δὲ, ὥσπερ ἄρτι ἐλέγετο, πασῶν

¹⁰⁴ For the etymology of the name ‘Apollo’, see among others: Sluiter 2015; Hunter and Laemmle 2019; cf. also Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002, 487.

¹⁰⁵ E.g., *Et.Gen.* alpha 1051; *EM* 129.18; cf. *Et.Gud.* 174.3.

ἐφαπτόμενον κείται τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ δυνάμεων, ἀπλοῦ, αἰ βάλλοντος, ἀπολούοντος, ὁμοπολούντος.

Plato, *Crat.* 405b–406a

Socrates: His name and nature are in harmony; you see he is a musical god. For in the first place, purification and purgations used in medicine and in soothsaying, and fumigations with medicinal and magic drugs, and the baths and sprinklings connected with that sort of things all have the single function of making a man pure in body and soul, do they not?

Hermogenes: Certainly.

Socrates But this is the god who purifies and washes away (ἀπολούων) and delivers (ἀπολύων) from such evils, is he not?

Hermogenes: Certainly.

Socrates: With reference, then, to his acts of delivering and his washings, [405c] as being the physician of such diseases, he might properly be called Apoluon (ἀπολούων, the washer), and with reference to soothsaying and truth and simplicity — for the two are identical — he might most properly be called by the name the Thessalians use; for all Thessalians call the god Aplun. And because he is always by his archery controller of darts (βολῶν) he is ever darting (αἰ βάλλον). And with reference to music we have to understand that alpha often signifies ‘together,’ and here it denotes moving together in the heavens about the poles, as we call them, and harmony in song, [405d] which is called concord; for, as the ingenious musicians and astronomers tell us, all these things move together by a kind of harmony. And this god directs the harmony, making them all move together, among both gods and men; and so, just as we call the ὁμοκείμενον (him who accompanies), and ὁμόκοιτιν (bedfellow), by changing the ὁμο to alpha, ἀκόλουθον and ἄκοιτιν, so also we called him Apollo who was Homopolo, [405e] and the second lambda was inserted, because without it the name sounded of disaster (ἀπολῶ, ἀπόλωλα, etc.). Even as it is, some have a suspicion of this, because they do not properly regard the force of the name, and therefore they fear it, thinking that it denotes some kind of ruin. But in fact, as was said, [406a] the name touches upon all the qualities of the god, as simple, ever-darting, purifying, and accompanying.

transl. Fowler, Loeb 1963

Centuries later, Cornutus holds a similar view (*Comp.* 32):

τὸν δ' Ἀπόλλωνα ὡς ἀπολύονθ' ἡμᾶς τῶν νόσων ἢ ἀπελαύνοντα ἀφ' ἡμῶν αὐτὰς ἢ ἀπολλύντα ταύτης [66,1] τετευχέναι τῆς προσηγορίας...

‘Apollo’ being so addressed as delivering us from diseases, or driving them away from us, or destroying them.

transl. Boys-Stones

and *EM* 130.18:

Ἀπόλλων: Παρὰ τὸ ἀπολύειν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τῶν κακῶν· ὁ ἀπελαύνων καὶ ἀπολύων ἀφ' ἡμῶν τὰς νόσους· ἱατρὸς γὰρ καὶ μάντις...

Apollo: related to releasing people from misfortunes; he who takes away and relieves people from the diseases, as he is a doctor and a seer...

This etymology from [ἀπο]λύω of both Apollo and the lyre is an extreme example of the linguistic nexus between a deity and his/her symbol — Apollo's new symbol in this case — since the etymology of the name, rather than being simply synonymous with the etymology of the symbol, is actually one and the same. Because of this linguistic relationship between Apollo and the λύρα, Hermes' association with this instrument seems to fade.

Transference of the symbol from the one god to the other has taken place on the grounds of reconciliation. Yet, reconciliation presupposes the notion of 'harmony,' 'agreement' and 'bringing together,' rather than 'solving' or 'releasing a bond.' If this element cannot be traced in, or attributed to the λύρα, then we are left with the impression that Hermes loses¹⁰⁶ forever the instrument he himself had constructed and the whole scene comes to a closure.

In Greek antiquity the λύρα is often linked to harmony because of its harmonious sound and the effect of harmony upon the listener: In Plato's *Phaedo* (mainly 85), in the discussion on the relationship between body and soul and between harmony and the lyre, the debate is as to whether there can be harmony without the lyre. Later, Cornutus, who employs a vocabulary similar to that of *Phaedo* (which also reminds us of the *Cratylus* on Apollo [above]), highlights this relationship, in that he, too, presents Hermes as the inventor of the lyre, the name of which he treats as a metonymy of τῆς συμφωνίας καὶ ὁμολογίας.¹⁰⁷

τῆς δὲ λύρας εὐρετής [sc. Hermes] ἐστὶν οἶον τῆς συμφωνίας καὶ ὁμολογίας καθ' ἣν οἱ ζῶντες εὐδαιμονοῦσιν, ἡρμοσμένην ἔχειν τὴν διάθεσιν ἐπιβάλλοντος.

Cornutus, *Comp.* 16

He is the inventor of the lyre, as of the harmony and consistency¹⁰⁸ by which those alive are happy, when it falls to them to have a well-adjusted disposition.

transl. Boys-Stones

[R.S. Hays, ὁμολογία is 'agreement']

106 For Brown 1947/1969, 91: "Hermes does not lose the lyre, Apollo does not lose the cattle; they agree to share both lyre and cattle. **Each initiates the other into his own art**" (my emphasis).

107 Torres 2016 traces in this Stoic views.

108 See Boys-Stones 2018, 71–72, fn. 57.

Thus, the name of the instrument involves two shades of meaning, ‘solving’ and ‘bringing harmony.’

Notably, here there are parallel etymologies: the **λύρα** denotes ‘solving’ (from **λύειν**), but it is also associated with the opposite meaning, the **εἶρειν**, **ἀρμόζειν** and **ἀρμονία**, while Apollo’s name also denotes ‘solving’ (from **λύειν**), but is also connected, as in the *Cratylus* (above), to **ἀρμονία** and **συμφωνία**, concepts related to music, the main area of Apollo, which brings harmony.¹⁰⁹

All three, therefore, Hermes, the **λύρα**¹¹⁰ and Apollo are associated with the concept of **ἀρμόζειν** and **ἀρμονία**. The lyre contains within itself this notion, in that it brings harmony through its music and sound. However, in the *4HHH* it also represents the **ἀρμονία** between the two brothers realized upon the transference of the instrument from one god to the other. Apollo and Hermes come close to each other¹¹¹ thanks to the harmonious sound of the lyre in **φιλότης** (507),¹¹² a bond of eternal friendship confirmed externally by the supreme power of Zeus (506–510).¹¹³ This notion is directly related to the Empedoclean **φιλότης**,¹¹⁴ a term often used in literature, which suggests the idea of the penetration of one into the area of the other rather than the concept of simple ‘bonding.’ As Clay (1989/2006², 99) has said: “Hermes’ typical mode of action is characterized by penetration and passage between boundaries and limits.”¹¹⁵

The instrument acquires mobility, a feature of Hermes himself, who as a messenger moves in space. Once attached to Apollo, it becomes his well-known symbol; but before this it had to change names and ownership. Thereafter, the word **λύρα** is not used again in the rest of the *Hymn*. Appearing only once in the text during the

¹⁰⁹ I repeat here from pp. 357–358: ΣΩ. **Εὐάρμοστον** μὲν οὖν, ἅτε μουσικοῦ ὄντος τοῦ θεοῦ ... **πάντα ἐν τι ταῦτα δύναιτ’ ἄν**, καθαρὸν παρέχειν τὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ κατὰ τὸ σῶμα καὶ κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν. Sedley 2003, 96–97.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Mistretta 2017, 20.

¹¹¹ See Pettersson 2016, 52; Hunter and Laemmle 2019, 381–382.

¹¹² Fletcher (2008, 27–28) talks about “ritualized friendship.”

¹¹³ Brown (1947/1969, 96–97) is skeptical about what a number of scholars accept: “[The] idea that the two cults [i.e. Apollo’s and Hermes’] were in conflict has not been taken seriously by modern historians of Greek religion, many of whom seem to treat Greek religion as if it were a coherent system of dogma. They seek to establish a harmonious division of labor between Hermes and Apollo within the musical sphere” (emphasis mine).

¹¹⁴ Garani 2007, 48–50.

¹¹⁵ Also Clay 1989/2006², 99: “(Hermes’) characteristic activity is passing and piercing,” and “According to Kahn [(1978) *Hermès passe ou les ambiguïtés de la communication*, Paris], the nature of the movement that constitutes Hermes’ typical mode of action is characterized by penetration and passage between boundaries and limits and hence also by mediation between a host of oppositions.” See also Thomas 2020, Introd. pp. 54–58; also Vergados 2013, on 336.

reconciliation scene, it represents the coming together of the two gods and the **ἁρμονία** between them. By the same token, the disappearance of the word after line 423 allows neither god to claim any exclusive relation to the instrument.

Thus the chelys — lyre, despite undergoing a process of (re)formation, still remains within the compass of the same etymological web of meanings of Hermes' name, moving between the two basic conceptual bases of **εἶρω** (LSJ A, B) and sharing also with its new master, Apollo, the concept of **λύειν**. It is during this process of movement and change that the chelys — lyre with its speaking abilities (479) is empowered to teach Apollo,¹¹⁶ as Hermes asserts, **ὅς τις ἂν αὐτὴν / τέχνη καὶ σοφίη δεδαημένος ἐξερεεῖν**,¹¹⁷ / **φθεγγόμενη παντοῖα νόῳ χαρίεντα διδάσκει** ("whoever artfully and skillfully enquires the lyre with knowledge, him she teaches through her voice all kinds of things that delight the mind," 482–484).

Reconciliation (397–578), however, was not a one-step process, and there are still further stages to be gone through. Some lines down, Apollo reciprocates with the gift of the lavishly described **ῥάβδος** (528–530), the famous symbol of Hermes. This emblematic object-symbol of Hermes is given by Apollo, just as the signature object-symbol of Apollo, the lyre, is offered by Hermes.

5.2 The staff in a chain of symbols

The staff, **ἡ ῥάβδος**, in Greek antiquity was very often associated with Hermes. However, its function and meaning was not the same in every instance. In the main it was related either to the god's ability to "enchant people" (as in *Il.* 24.343, *Od.* 5.47, 24.2, LSJ s.v.) or it functioned as his emblematic symbol as a messenger.¹¹⁸ In this capacity, Hermes's staff was either referred to as a **ῥάβδος** or as a **κηρύκειον**.¹¹⁹ The **κηρύκειον**¹²⁰ could be held by messengers and ambassadors for peace, often in **ἐπικηρυκεία** (πρεσβεία ειρήνης).

116 Mistretta 2017, 17.

117 The verb is obviously a compound form of **εἶρω** (LSJ C).

118 This also becomes apparent in iconography, where the symbol is usually depicted next to the god.

119 The word **κηρύκειον** does not appear either in Homer or in the *Homeric Hymns*. Its first occurrence is at Herodotus 9.100 (Vergados).

120 If we consider the conceptual relationship, which is often etymological, between a deity's name and the name of his/her symbol, we note that, just as in the case of Athena, Hermes' name (<**εἶρω**, 'say' LSJ B) is meaningfully associated with the word **κηρύκειον**, his symbol, since **κηρύσσω** ('be a herald', 'officiate as herald', 'announce', LSJ), a *verbum dicendi*, is almost a synonym for the "generic" verb **εἶρω** ('say', LSJ B). Diodorus Siculus, when talking about **ἐπικηρυκεία** and **κηρύκειον**, uses the telling term **σύσσημον** [LSJ s.v. **συσσημαίνω**] for 'something signified along

Broadly speaking, the **ράβδος** was not of one kind. Among its many usages and functions, the **ράβδος** could be an instrument of magic, or the **ράβδος** of the herdsman or the rhapsode (as we shall see further down, e.g., Call. fr. 26.5, Pf. = 30.5 Mas-similla), and so on. Consequently, its etymology varies depending on the content and the context in which it appears.¹²¹

Early in the 4HHH Hermes is described as **ἄγγελος ἀθανάτων** (“a messenger of the immortals,” 3) who had the appearance of a **κήρυξ**¹²² (φύην κήρυκος ἔχοντα, “looking like a herald,” 331) and who as a child had a **ράβδος** (νήπιος, εἶχε δὲ ράβδον, 210). However, although he is called **ἄγγελος ἀθανάτων** at the beginning of the *Hymn*, he does not carry any message to anyone. In fact, during the theft of Apollo’s cattle, he actually tries to silence the herdsman of Onchestos (92–93), while on other occasions he skillfully contrives arguments and speeches as a trickster.

Hermes was able to play the kithara the very day he was born (17) and sing as an **αἰιδός** (54, 425–433), thus performing the role of a rhapsode, whose symbol was often the **ράβδος** (210). In lines 57–61 the god attributes to his birth and genealogy a rather majestic, quasi-‘epic’ character. Later, after the disclosure of the theft of Apollo’s herd (401–404), Hermes plays his instrument again and sings his own ‘theogony’ (427–433),¹²³ thereby provoking the admiration of Apollo (434–456) and obtaining his brother’s promise to make him a **κυδρὸν ἐν ἀθανάτοισι καὶ δλβιον ἡγεμόνα** (“a glorious and blessed leader among the immortals,” 461). Music and the gift of Hermes’ lyre to Apollo (496) brings the brothers together before Zeus, who confirms their reconciliation (**χάρη δ’ ἄρα μητίετα Ζεύς, / ἄμφω δ’ ἐς φιλότητα συνήγαγε**, “and wise Zeus rejoiced, and brought them both to friendship,” 506–507). When Apollo himself swears to remain Hermes’s friend forever (**ἐπ’ ἀρθμῷ**¹²⁴ καὶ φιλότητι,

with another’: Diod. Sic. 5.77. Does Thomas allude to an etymological relation between *Κῆρες* and *κηρύκειον*? (2020, on 530).

121 Cf. *Il.* 12.296–297 where, as Vergados (2013, on 210) notes, there is a *figura etymologica* on the verb **ράπτω**. The word **ράβδος** has a variety of etymologies: **ράβδος**: παρὰ τὸ **ράσσω**· ἢ παρὰ τὸ **ραπίζω**· ἢ παρὰ τὸ **ράπτω**, τὸ **ραπίζω**, **ράπδος** καὶ **ράβδος**. Ἐτυμολογεῖται δὲ παρὰ τὸ **ῥᾶον βαίνειν** ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ (*EM* 701.41); Ford 1988, 300–301.

122 Casali 2019, fn. 2.

123 In these lines Hermes narrates (427–433) “everything in order” (**πάντ’ ἐνέπων κατὰ κόσμον**, 433), imbuing his song with the order of the universe. This phrase, which corresponds to line 479 (of the lyre), is an indication of his maturation as an Olympian god. See Clay 2011, 245; also above, p. 354.

124 **Ἀριθμός**: Παρὰ τὸ **ἄρω** τὸ **ἀρμόζω**, **ἀρμός**, καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ Θ καὶ τοῦ Ι, **ἀριθμός**: ἐξ ἀρμογῆς γὰρ μονάδων ἐστίν (*EM* 143.47), and **Ἀρθμός**: Ἡ φίλια, καὶ ἡ ἀρμονία τῆς ψυχῆς. Ἄρω, ἡρμαι, ἀρμός, ὡς κείρω κορμός· καὶ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ Θ **ἀρθμός**, Ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐρῶ τὸ λέγω· οἱ γὰρ ἐν φιλίᾳ ὄντες διαλέγονται ἀλλήλοις (*EM* 141.26). Del Bello (2007, 82) relating the Pythagorean **ἀριθμός** to the Varronian text (*LL* 5.2.12) considers it “the philosophical analog of that ‘unity in diversity.’”

“on harmony and friendship,” 524) and promises to make him a *τέλειον* / *σύμβολον ἀθανάτων* ... *ἡδ’ ἅμα πάντων* (“an accomplished symbol/part of the immortals and all else together,” 526–527), he offers his brother his *ράβδος*, which is made of gold and a gift of major importance (529–532), in confirmation of their *φιλότης* and his promises. A few lines later Hermes is called *χρυσόρραπις* (539).¹²⁵ Only after this is Hermes recognized as a *τετελεσμένος ἄγγελος* (“a fully fledged messenger [of the gods],” 572) to the underworld.

Although we know that the god’s staff is not associated only with the speech of the *κῆρυξ* and the song of a *ράψωδός* or an *αἰιδός* (54, 429, 442), I think that in our etymological quest we should take seriously into account mainly the ancient etymologies that relate *ράβδος* to *ράψωδός*, since the staff in the story is given to Hermes, the *αἰιδός*, by Apollo as a gift in recognition of his enthusiasm for the songs and music of his brother. Indeed, in the *Hymn* Hermes sings songs whose content is traditionally related to a *ράψωδός* (as is his ‘theogony’ 427–433).

The word *ράψωδός* is etymologically related to the adj. *ραπτός* and consequently to the verb *ράπτω*,¹²⁶ a verb which together with its cognates may also refer metaphorically to speech and song. The much-discussed Pindaric phrase (*N.* 2.1–2.) referring to the rhapsodes singing the Homeric poetry is characteristic:

... Ὀμηρίδαι / *ραπτῶν ἐπέων* ... αἰοῖοι

See also the Callimachean phrase, which shows the closeness of meaning (in fact almost a synonymy) between *ὑφαίνω*¹²⁷ and *ράπτω* whose cognate is *ράβδος*:

125 *χρυσόρραπις* (4HHH 539), the attribute used of Hermes, is related both to the god’s *ράβδος* but simultaneously to the concept of *ράπτω*, which on occasion is near to the meaning of *μηχανᾶσθαι*; Apoll. Soph. 168: *χρυσόρραπις* ὁ Ἑρμῆς, ἀπὸ τῆς *ράβδου*, οἷον *καλομήχανος*; λέγεται γὰρ *ράπτειν μεταφορικῶς τὸ ἐπὶ συντιθέναι τῶν βουλευομένων* (“Hermes is *χρυσόρραπις*, with a wand of gold, from *ράβδος*, the wand, like *καλομήχανος*, ‘resourceful’; for *ράπτειν* is used metaphorically of putting thoughts together constructively”). Apollonius the Sophist seems to be aware of the context of the *Hymn* and of the way this attribute is used when Apollo addresses Hermes when he reveals to him *Ζηνός πυκινόφρονα βουλήν* (“the plan of astute-minded Zeus,” 538). See also Heracl. *Hom. All.* 73.3: *Ἑρμείας χρυσόρραπις* ἀντεβόλησεν [*Od.* 10.277] αὐτῷ: Τὸ μὲν γε χρυσοῦν ἀντὶ τοῦ καλοῦ παρείληπται, τὸ δὲ *ράπτειν μεταφορικῶς ἀντὶ τοῦ συντιθέναι τε καὶ διανοεῖσθαι*.

126 ‘Sew together’, ‘stitch’, II. ‘devise’, ‘contrive’, ‘plot’, 2. ‘string’, ‘link together’, ‘unite’ (LSJ s.v.). The verb is explained in *EM* (702.26) with the phrase *‘ράπτω: ... καὶ τὸ τὰ διεστώτα συνάπτω’*. See above, previous fn.

127 Nagy 2011, 301.

τὸν ἐπὶ ῥάβδῳ μῦθον ὑφαινόμενον

Call. fr. 26.5, Pf. = 30.5 Massimilla¹²⁸

The scholia vetera to Pindar's *Nemea* point to these relationships, especially that between **ῥάβδος** and **ῥαψωδία**.¹²⁹

παρὰ τὴν ῥάβδον ἢ ῥαψωδία εἴρηται, οἷον εἰ ῥαβδωδία τις οὔσα, φασὶ καὶ τοῦτο οἱ παλαιοὶ ἀκολουθοῦντες τῷ Καλλιμάχῳ εἰπόντι· τὸν ἐπὶ ῥάβδῳ μῦθον ὑφαινόμενον

Scholia in Pind. *N.* 2.1d, Drachmann

ῥαψωδία is so called from the word **ῥάβδον**, as if there were some **ῥαβδωδία**, song sung by one holding a **ῥάβδος**; and this is what previous generations say, following Callimachus who said: τὸν ἐπὶ ῥάβδῳ μῦθον ὑφαινόμενον.

This chain of the etymologically related words **ῥάβδος**, **ῥαψωδία** (and **ῥαψωδός**), **ῥάπτω** and **ῥαπτός** is further enriched in the scholia with the addition of the word **ῥαφή** and its synonym **εἰρμός**, which is directly related to the name of Hermes (above, pp. 344–345, with fn. 53):

οἱ δὲ φασὶ τῆς Ὀμήρου ποιήσεως μὴ ὕφ' ἓν συνηγμένης, σποράδην δὲ ἄλλως καὶ κατὰ μέρη διηρημένης, ὅποτε **ῥαψωδοῖεν αὐτήν**, **εἰρμῶ τινι καὶ ῥαφῇ** παραπλήσιον ποιεῖν, εἰς ἓν αὐτὴν ἄγοντας.

Scholia in Pind. *N.* 2.1d, Drachmann

Others say that since the poetry of Homer is not one unified whole, but instead consists of different pieces and is divided into parts, whenever they recited it they pulled it into a whole to resemble a single work with a kind of joining and stitching.

Hermes had two **ῥάβδοι** in his life: He acquired the first in his early childhood (**νήπιος**, 210) and the second from Apollo, who gave it to him as a gift. However, we should distinguish between these two: The first **ῥάβδος** — like chelys — represents Hermes only for the period before the reconciliation scene between Apollo and himself (397–578), that is, before Hermes is accepted as a fully fledged god and part

¹²⁸ Massimilla 1996, *ad loc.*: “e il racconto (*acc.*) intessuto sulla verga” (5); cf. S. Kyriakidis 1998, 97 and fn. 63, 64.

¹²⁹ The encoded qualification in Hermes' attribute **ἐρμηνεύς** repeatedly noted in the sources [and related to **εἴρειν**, LSJ A] combined with the **ῥάβδος**, the token of a **ῥαψωδός**, is alluded to in Plato's presentation of his theory of **ῥαψωδός** at *Ion* 530d: οὐ γὰρ ἂν γένοιτό ποτε ἀγαθὸς **ῥαψωδός**, εἰ μὴ *συνεῖη* τὰ λεγόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ. **τὸν γὰρ ῥαψωδὸν ἐρμηνεῖα** δεῖ τοῦ ποιητοῦ τῆς διανοίας γίνεσθαι τοῖς ἀκούουσι (“indeed, a man can never become a good rhapsode if he does not understand what the poet says; for the rhapsode should be an interpreter to the audience of the poet's thought”) (cf. 535a).

of the immortal Olympians.¹³⁰ This forming of Hermes as a god takes place externally, when Apollo, the god of **ἀρμονία** and **ἀρμόζειν** (*Crat.* 405c–e, above, pp. 357–358), accepts his brother among the Olympians and promises to make him a **τέλειον** / **σύμβολον ἀθανάτων ... ἡδ' ἅμα πάντων** (“an accomplished symbol/part of the immortals and all else together,” 527). In confirmation of this, Apollo accompanies his words with the gift of the περικαλλέα **ράβδον** (529).¹³¹ Let us look at the text:

ἐκ δὲ τέλειον
σύμβολον ἀθανάτων ποιήσομαι ἡδ' ἅμα πάντων,
πιστὸν ἐμῷ θυμῷ καὶ τίμιον. αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
ὄλβου καὶ πλούτου δώσω περικαλλέα ράβδον
χρυσεῖην τριπέτηλον, ἀκήριον ἢ σε φυλάξει,
πάντας ἐπικραίνουσα θεμοὺς ἐπέων τε καὶ ἔργων
τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ὅσα φημι δαήμεναι ἐκ Διὸς ὁμφῆς.
(526–532)

I will make you an accomplished symbol/part of the immortals and all else together, trustworthy and honoured in my heart. Moreover, I will give you a splendid staff of happiness and wealth: golden, three-leafed, which will keep you unharmed, as it brings to pass all exhortations, whether in words or deeds, of great men which I claim to have learned from the word of Zeus.

This **ράβδος** of Apollo (529–530) is a beautiful object, made of gold. It is clearly more weighty than the **ράβδος** of Hermes' childhood since it is also a **φυλακτήριον**, an amulet, so to speak, that protects Hermes and keeps him safe from harm. In this passage the verb **φυλάξει** (530) points to an etymological ramification of Hermes' name that now emerges. The symbol acquires the power to protect the god, thus reversing the roles between the god and his symbol since generally it was Hermes who was considered the **ἔρυμα** of mankind, not his symbol.¹³² More importantly, this **ράβδος** is closely associated with *logos*, in that it becomes the mediator between gods

¹³⁰ Clay 1989/2006², 151.

¹³¹ As Thomas (2020, on 531–532) notes: “Apollo in these four [sc. 529–532] lines has offered Hermes an object which encapsulates a range of his connections to staffs with different functions, in line with the general tendency of the final part of *Herm.* to fit in as many of Hermes' roles as possible.” This staff is to accompany Hermes as he exercises his newly acquired power over the skies, earth and underworld. See immediately below. See West 1966, on *Theog.* 30: **σκήπτρον**, a sort of **ράβδος**, is given by the Muses to Hesiod together with the inspiration to sing of things that will happen or had happened.

¹³² See Cornutus, *Comp.* 16 and *EM* 376.28–33 (see above pp. 343 and 345). However, at the beginning of the *4HHH* when Hermes ‘meets’ the tortoise, he thinks that if he keeps it alive, it will be an **ἔχμα** (37) for him (a synonym of **ἔρυμα** — ‘guard,’ ‘bulwark’) from various harms; if the tortoise were to die, however, “then you could make the sweetest song” (τότε κεν μάλα καλὸν αἰεῖδεις, 38). See Thomas (2020, on 37–38) for the different ways of explaining the word **ἔχμα**.

and men that brings to pass all men's requests (ἐπικραίνουσα, 531–532), like Hermes, who has previously acted as mediator between gods and what is on the 'dark Earth' (κραίνων ἀθανάτους τε θεούς καὶ Γαῖαν ἐρεμνήν, 427–428). This mediating quality of the **ράβδος** corresponds to the meaning of **ράπτειν** and **εἴρειν** (LSJ A), concepts that point explicitly or implicitly both towards Hermes' name and towards the basic feature of Apollo, the **ἁρμονία** and **ἁρμόζειν**, which is also related to Hermes (above, pp. 357, 360). This basic meaning of **ράβδος** is contextualized on a large scale within the reconciliation narrative, as 1) it represents the song as the *logos* of a rhapsode; 2) it represents separately the two gods — Apollo, the god of **ἁρμονία**, and Hermes, related to **εἴρειν** (LSJ A) and **ἁρμόζειν**; 3) it represents the reconciliation between the two gods ἐπ' ἁρθμῷ καὶ φιλότῃ (‘‘on harmony and friendship,’’ 524); 4) it also represents in more general terms mediation¹³³ between gods and men; and 5) it represents Hermes' integration into the Olympian gods as a **τέλειον/σύμβολον ἀθανάτων ... ἡδ' ἅμα πάντων** (527).

The **ράβδος**, therefore, is no mere symbol that, formed in accord with its other 'part', is dependent on Hermes.¹³⁴ Instead, now having the upper hand as it moves from one god to the other, it acquires the power that will protect Hermes as he becomes a **τέλειον/σύμβολον ἀθανάτων ... ἡδ' ἅμα πάντων** (‘‘an accomplished symbol/part of the immortals and all else together,’’ 527). As a matter of fact, if the etymology of Hermes' name relies heavily on the sum¹³⁵ of the notions of *logos* as 'say,' 'speak,' etc. (**εἴρω**, LSJ B) and 'binding' (**εἴρω**, LSJ A), then we should consider whether there is a species of synonymy between the name **Hermes**, **ράβδος**, an object related to **ράφή** and **εἰρμός**, and the word **σύμβολον**¹³⁶ itself (from **συμβάλλω** 'bring together'), with all that this may entail. Thus Hermes, the god who possesses the **ράβδος**, becomes a **σύμβολον** as regards both the name of the god and of the **ράβδος**.

The reconciliation with Apollo has now been completed in **ἁρθμός** and **φιλότης** (523–526),¹³⁷ and Hermes is finally and fully acknowledged¹³⁸ as **εἰς Αἴδη**

¹³³ That is, the **ράβδος** functions as an extension of Apollo himself, who is in a position to know Zeus' ὁμή; 471, 532; also 538.

¹³⁴ Versnel 2011, 326.

¹³⁵ Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2007, 55, where she talks about ‘‘the **holistic approach** to the treatment of derivation and sound similarities’’ (emphasis mine).

¹³⁶ Calame 2011, 350: ‘‘The *caduceus* is, therefore, a ‘symbol’ (σύμβολον, 527) which corresponds to the ‘symbol’ of the lyre at the beginning of the poem.’’

¹³⁷ On the combination **ἁρθμ-** / **φιλ-** see Thomas 2020, 524 and fn. 124 above.

¹³⁸ Now, at the end of the *Hymn*, Zeus' plan has been fulfilled; up till now Hermes has been ‘‘neither fully Olympian nor simply terrestrial, a perfect go-between’’ (Clay 1989/2006², 104 and 149).

τετελεσμένος¹³⁹ ἄγγελος (572), with Zeus bestowing his grace (575). The god's power (ἀνάσσειν, 571) now extends to the skies (576), as he becomes a part of the immortal gods; to all living beings on earth (567–571), where Apollo has already given him the power of herding (498); and down to the underworld (572–573). This means that Hermes can become the medium of the θεῖος λόγος from the sky down to the extremes of life, space and time. He can therefore converse with both mortals and immortals (576).¹⁴⁰ Hermes representing the *logos* of Zeus permeates the whole universe and communicates with all. The three parts of the cosmos,¹⁴¹ the sky, the earth, and the underworld, converge in an εἰρμός under the name of Hermes, the symbol of *logos*.

ταῦτ' ἔχε Μαιάδος υἱέ, καὶ ἀγραύλους ἔλικας βοῦς
ἵππους τ' ἀμφιπόλεψε, καὶ ἡμιόνους ταλαεργούς...

<

>

καὶ χαροποῖσι λέουσι καὶ ἀργιόδοις σύεσσι
καὶ κυσὶ καὶ μήλοισιν, ὅσα τρέφει εὐρεῖα χθών,
πᾶσι δ' ἐπὶ προβάτοισιν ἀνάσσειν κύδιμον Ἑρμῆν,
οἶον δ' εἰς Αἶδην τετελεσμένον ἄγγελον εἶναι,
ὅς τ' ἄδοτός περ ἑὼν δώσει γέρας οὐκ ἐλάχιστον.
οὕτω Μαιάδος υἱὸν ἀναξ ἐφίλησεν Ἀπόλλων
παντοίῃ φιλότῃ, χάριν δ' ἐπέθηκε Κρονίων.
πᾶσι δ' ὅ γε θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ὀμιλεῖ.

567–576

Take these, son of Maia, and look after of the spiral-horned cows in the fields, and horses and labour-enduring mules. And [*<Zeus>* orders] that glorious Hermes rules the flashing-eyed lions and white-tusked boars and dogs and sheep that the wide earth nurtures and all cattle, and to be the only fully fledged¹⁴² messenger [of the gods] to Hades who although he receives no gifts [i.e. cannot be appeased by gifts],¹⁴³ yet will give Hermes not a small gift of honour.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁹ At this point Thomas (2020, p. 465 fn. 646) seems to understand the verb in terms of one of its meanings, 'to initiate'. See Richardson 2010, on 572; Vergados 2013, on 572: "formally appointed [LSJ, s.v. τελέω III 2] hence 'with full powers'"; 'the sole initiated messenger to Hades': Thomas' translation; see also his comment *ad loc.*; see above p. 340 and fn. 43.

¹⁴⁰ For Thomas 2020, on 576, Hermes will meet all mortals "in his psychopompic role."

¹⁴¹ Could this tripartite division of the world be represented by the adj. *τριπέτηλος* [ράβδος] (530)?

¹⁴² As I have said above (p. 340), in the translation I consider the use of the perfect tense in the participle significant; *τελέω* LSJ I 5; see also Struck 2004, 204: "*telein*, meaning 'to complete, or consecrate'." Thomas 2020, *ad loc.*

¹⁴³ Cf. however, Vergados 2013, *ad loc.*; see also Thomas 2020, *ad loc.*

¹⁴⁴ There is a great difference between the words above and what is said at 291–292: τοῦτο γὰρ οὖν καὶ ἔπειτα μετ' ἀθανάτοισ γέρας ἔξεις / ἀρχὸς φιλητέων (: Thomas; φιλητέων: Vergados) κεκληῖσθαι ἡματα πάντα ("for in future you will have this honour among the immortals: you will be called the chief of thieves.")

Thus lord Apollo showed his affection towards the son of Maia in all the ways, and the son of Cronus gave also his grace. With all, both mortals and immortals, Hermes converses.

So, to reach Olympus, Hermes has passed through various stages before his integration into the pantheon.¹⁴⁵ In this process the two main objects-symbols in the *Hymn*, the **χέλυσ** – **λύρα** and the **ῥάβδος**, the staff, have played a decisive role, finding their full significant formation during — and because of — their exchange¹⁴⁶ between Hermes and Apollo: the lyre is given to Apollo by Hermes; the staff is given to Hermes by Apollo. We have seen above that there is a close linguistic nexus between the name of each object and the name of the corresponding divine owner. This nexus does not seem to alter after the exchange of the lyre and the staff, when, that is, the lyre is attached to Apollo and the staff to Hermes. The reason for this is that there is some common ground between the two different webs of meanings related to the names of Hermes and Apollo, especially the notion of ‘joining,’ ‘bringing together’ and **ἀρμόζειν/ἁρμονία**. Thus, the mobility of the two objects-symbols contributes to the creation of a close relationship between the divine owners and the objects, while at the same time there is even a convergence between the symbols themselves as they move from one god to the other. Therefore, two different domains interweave with one another in harmony, enhancing the significance of the reconciliation scene. It is this etymological stability that has ‘allowed’ the symbols to be mobile and to develop in a flux.

Renewed as they are, although not altered,¹⁴⁷ both symbols, the lyre and the staff, become empowered not to function only as mere representatives of the gods but, in a reversal of roles, to impose upon the latter that which was thought to be only in their power: the **λύρα** will teach Apollo, and the **ῥάβδος** will be a mediator between gods and humans, also protecting Hermes by becoming his **ἔρυμα** [*EM* 376.28; cf. Cornutus *Comp.* 16]. *Logos* in this *Hymn*, and especially the **ἄρτιος** λόγος, is represented

145 Fletcher 2008, 20: “The hymn represents Hermes’ development from a cunning child thief who plays tricks with oaths to an adult god of commerce and diplomacy, endeavors whose efficacy depends on the integrity of the oath. By the end of his second day, Hermes is a mature god who has engaged in an oath ritual that identifies his adult masculinity and membership amongst the Olympians. Nonetheless, the hymn ends with a reminder that this is a knavish god who ‘hoodwinks the peoples of the world’ (578), a clue perhaps that we should think very carefully about all of Hermes’ oaths.”

146 Shelmerdine 1984, 203, fn. 8.

147 E. Kyriakidis 2005, 21: “symbols ... are easily susceptible to change; ... signs and especially symbols may alter their value, and continuity in their use does not necessarily imply constancy (R. Needham 1985, ‘Remarks on Wittgenstein and Ritual’, in Needham (ed.) 1985, *Exemplars*, Berkeley, CA, 149–177).” To this we can add: “unless the etymological nexus between the symbol and its referent does not change.”

not only by Hermes, but also by the two objects-symbols which are ‘active’ in speech and song.

6 Concluding remarks

In the light of all this, we can argue that in this *Hymn* the two main objects-symbols, the lyre and the staff, represent and summarize in parallel what the narrative aims to show: Hermes, the god of speech, proves to be not only “the lord of all communication” (Bettini 2000, transl. 2001, 14) but also the god who, as he moves from the one realm of the universe to the other — sky, earth, and the underworld — communicates with all, *πᾶσι δ’ ὃ γε θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ὁμιλεῖ* (“With all, both mortals and immortals, he converses,” 576).¹⁴⁸ Both symbols in their full formation represent the development of Hermes into a unifying power, based on the foundations that conceptually form his name, the ‘binding’ and *logos* (*εἶρειν*, LSJ A, B). This verifies Rachel Barney’s words (2001, 75): “Language encompasses everything and keeps it in motion; the etymological section expounds the whole cosmos, and presents it as being in flux,” thoughts which go back to Plato’s *Cratylus* (408).¹⁴⁹ ὁ λόγος τὸ πᾶν σημαίνει καὶ κυκλοῖ καὶ *πολεῖ αἰεὶ* (“*logos* signifies everything and circulates and is always on the move...”), a phrase uttered in relation to Pan, but is equally valid for Apollo (ὁ θεὸς τῇ ἁρμονίᾳ ὁμοπολῶν αὐτὰ πάντα καὶ κατὰ θεοὺς καὶ κατ’ ἀνθρώπους) and of course, for Hermes, the god of *λόγος*.

¹⁴⁸ This phrase comes from the final part of the narrative of the *Hymn*. Earlier in the text (160–161) Maia warns Hermes that, because of his behaviour, Zeus the father may consider him *μεγάλην μέρμυραν / θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισι καὶ ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι* (“a great source of sorrow for mortal people and immortal gods”). Mortals are the humans, the immortals are the gods. In this closing line the *θνητοῖς* also include all the animals on earth, while immortals can encompass both the gods of the pantheon but also all the creatures that are traditionally regarded as immortal. At the end of the *Hymn*, Hermes converses with all in the universe. Clay (1989/2006², 96) elaborates on similar thoughts to show the general orientation of the *Hymn*: “[It] manifests the hymns’ characteristic concern with the acquisition and (re)distribution of *timai* among the Olympians that leads to a permanent and irreversible reorganization of the divine cosmos.” See de Jong’s approach (2018, 70): “The narrator concludes the narrative with a final reference to Hermes’ status as god of thieves (576–578).”

¹⁴⁹ Hunter and Laemmle 2019, 381.

Appendix

Concerning lines 567–572 and the putative lacuna between 568 and 569, Thomas, having considered previous scholarship on the matter, concludes that there is a lacuna between these two lines. His main argument is that, although until 568 Apollo has been addressing Hermes directly,¹⁵⁰ the syntax then turns abruptly to the third person and the names of the animals of the catalogue at lines 569–570 appear in the dative as objects of *ἀνάσσειν* (571) with the accusative *κύδιμον Ἑρμῆν* (571), being now the subject of *ἀνάσσειν* and *[ἄγγελον] εἶναι*. This syntactical turn between the two passages (–568) and (569–) has been thought to mark the end of Apollo's speech and the beginning of the poet's voice, who continues his narrative with what Hermes has been awarded, because scholars expected that there should be a *verbum dicendi* at this point, a "loquitur-formula" (Vergados / Thomas). It may, however, be possible to read this passage in another way: There is no doubt that the whole *4HHH* has a "theatrical"¹⁵¹ element which makes the characterization of Hermes, Apollo and Zeus vivid and adds content to the narrative. In my view, it is quite possible that Apollo, while speaking to Hermes, might turn abruptly to the third person in order to convey Zeus' words about important matters that concern Hermes, thus verifying what Apollo has said earlier, that he is the only one who knows Zeus' thoughts. *Oratio recta* turns to *oratio obliqua* and Apollo shows himself a *μάντις* who reveals Zeus' plans:

τὰ γὰρ οἶδε Διὸς νόος, αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ γε
πιστωθεὶς κατένευσα καὶ ὤμοσα καρτερόν ὄρκον
μὴ τίνα νόσφιν ἐμεῖο θεῶν αἰεγενετῶν
ἄλλον γ' εἴσεσθαι Ζητὸς πυκινόφρονα βουλήν.
καὶ σύ, κασίγνητε χρυσόρραπι, μὴ με κέλευε
θέσφατα πιφαύσκειν ὅσα μῆδεται εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς.

535–540

"this is what Zeus' mind knows; and I have assented as a pledge and given a strong oath that apart from me no one else among the immortals will know Zeus' wise counsel. And you, my brother with your golden staff, do not urge me reveal the divine decrees which the far-seeing Zeus intends."

If my thoughts are correct, Apollo, in conveying Zeus' words to Hermes, violates his oath (536) and so acts in a fashion very similar to that of his brother, when earlier

150 Richardson 2010, on 567–573.

151 For Vergados 2011a, 96, in this *Hymn* gods "are humanized to the extreme."

in the 4HHH Hermes falsely swears to Zeus (ὥς οὐκ αἰτιός εἰμι· μέγαν δ' ἐπιδέξομαι ὄρκον, 383), claiming that he has not stolen the cattle of Apollo, causing Zeus' smile (389).¹⁵² This behaviour on the part of each brother discloses another common trait of their character.

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¹⁵² Similarly, as Vergados (2013, on 568) notes, "Apollo had promised honours to Hermes already at 460–462 and he attempted to usurp Zeus's role as the punisher at 254–259."

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Ineke Sluiter

The Opening Riddle of Plato's *Cratylus*

Abstract: This paper discusses the roles of the opening riddle in Plato's *Cratylus*. The riddle is that Cratylus and Socrates are 'truly' called 'Cratylus' and 'Socrates,' but that 'Hermogenes' is not Hermogenes' name. The riddle functions as an effective rhetorical opening move (*captatio benevolentiae*) and supports important characteristics of the dialogue genre, notably its tendency to 'make things personal'. It marks important junctures (opening, ending, transition to major new part) in the literary construction of the dialogue. It represents an example of Cratylus' Heraclitean literary style and its clash with Socratic dialectic. And, crucially, it invokes genealogy as a culturally relevant anchor for an investigation of the problematic practice of etymology. Genealogy can fulfill this role since it is the most 'natural' of anchoring discourses, a discursive form capable of forging a link between a (new or difficult) point of discussion and something familiar (a 'beginning' in the past, tracked through the succession of generations). Exploiting a 'genealogical principle,' well established in Greek cultural history, to think about etymology is a perfect illustration of the situatedness and cultural specificity and embeddedness of the Socratic dialogue.

1 Introduction

Plato's *Cratylus* famously opens with a riddle (383a ff.). Apparently, there has been an ongoing disagreement between Hermogenes and Cratylus over the natural correctness of names versus their purely conventional nature. Hermogenes reports to Socrates that Cratylus has agreed that his own name is truly Cratylus, and that Socrates is truly called Socrates. But to Hermogenes' dismay, he had then gone on to deny that this holds for everyone — adding specifically, as partial proof for this statement (γε), that 'Hermogenes' is not Hermogenes' name, not even if everyone

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calls him that.¹ It is this riddle, followed by Cratylus' annoyingly knowing silence when asked to explain himself, that makes Hermogenes turn to Socrates and draw him into the conversation.

What is the role of this riddle within the *Cratylus*? I will argue that it has multiple functions on the rhetorical, literary and philosophical levels of the dialogue. I will touch on all of these but will pay special attention to the cultural-historical context of the riddle, in particular the relevance of genealogy. The riddle recurs at several points in the dialogue and creates a link between the central issue of etymology and, precisely, genealogy. As argued elsewhere,² 'etymology' is one of the so-called 'anchoring discourses' available in ancient Greek culture and is in that sense comparable to 'mythology,' 'etiology,' and 'genealogy.' They are 'anchoring discourses' in that all four are discursive forms, suitable to connect whatever is under investigation to something familiar (often in the past), and thus capable of offering a form of cognitive stability. Mythology offers foundational stories underpinning social and cultural identities. Etiology offers a narrative explanation of the status quo. Genealogy appeals to the most natural link between the old and the new available in common human experience: the succession of generations. It allows an explanation of the current situation by creating an unbroken link to a significant point of departure.³ Etymology anchors an understanding of the world as it presents itself in language by explaining *why* things are called what they are.⁴ In a way, etymology is the most abstract of these four discursive practices. It presupposes a linguistic stability and epistemological independence (of language *vis-à-vis* reality) that will in the end prove untenable in the *Cratylus*. In Greek culture in general, etymology is an attractive and ubiquitous argumentative strategy that takes as its point of departure something that is always in the common ground (and hence part of the shared and mutual knowledge of all participants in the communicative situation): language itself. The riddle of Hermogenes' name is a first introduction of one easy way to understand etymology: the principle of genealogy. In a well-regulated

1 Οὐκοῦν καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις πᾶσιν, ὅπερ καλοῦμεν ὄνομα ἕκαστον, τοῦτό ἐστιν ἐκάστῳ ὄνομα; ὁ δέ, Οὐκοῦν σοί γε, ἦ δ' ὅς, ὄνομα Ἑρμογένης, οὐδὲ ἂν πάντες καλῶσιν ἀνθρώποι.

2 With an apology for self-reference in this note and the next ones, cf. Sluiter 2015 on etymology as "a tool for thinking," and Sluiter 2021, 248, on the four types of anchoring discourse. On the concept of anchoring, see Sluiter 2017. See further www.anchoringinnovation.nl (last accessed in August 2024).

3 Genealogy is a way of presenting each new generation as an instance of "anchored innovation," cf. Sluiter 2016 (also for the relation between parents and children being a model for that between teachers and students). Cf. Fowler 1998–1999; on the relationship between etymology and genealogy, see Rothstein 1990; Sluiter 2021.

4 Sluiter 2015.

universe, offspring should be connected to and resemble parents, in essence and in name. This is the *phusei* relationship *par excellence*. In its use of genealogy (in this case to anchor an understanding of etymology as revealing the natural connection between words and things), the *Cratylus* inserts itself into a long-standing Greek tradition, as I will show.

Analysis of this cultural embeddedness of the riddle (section 5) will be preceded by an overview of its other functions: it is here used in the service of the rhetoric of beginnings, as an effective opening strategy, and it supports characteristics of the dialogue genre (section 2). As a literary motif, it works as a structuring device (section 3). And it supports the philosophical progression of the dialogue (here touched upon only very briefly) and illustrates differences in philosophical style (section 4). In the final section, I will return to the first half of the riddle: the reason why the names of Socrates and Cratylus himself *are* supposed to be ‘correct’ and not simply conventions.

2 Rhetorical strategy, generic marker

Although the riddle does not constitute the opening words of the dialogue (on which see below, section 4), it does create a very effective rhetorical beginning. It is attention-grabbing, engages the reader, and is the perfect ‘shoe-in’ to the dialogue, which makes it a classical rhetorical *captatio*. As readers we are stimulated by an intriguing problem for which we do not have an immediate solution. We are entertained and ready to be illuminated.

This opening move also fits the *genre* of the dialogue. Instead of taking the form of a philosophical exposition, the opening is dramatic, and we are thrust into the middle of an on-going conversation (notice the use of οὖν in the very first line, spoken by Hermogenes: βούλει οὖν καὶ Σωκράτει τῷδε ἀνακοινωσώμεθα τὸν λόγον; “Then let’s share our conversation with Socrates here as well, shall we?”). The conversation is enacted. In fact, it is enacted philosophy.

This, of course, is true for many of the dialogues. But the riddle plays into another relevant characteristic of the genre: the fact that the topic of discussion, in this case the nature of language, is made intensely personal for Hermogenes. The issue is not just an abstract philosophical conundrum, but affects him personally. His own, individual name is at stake all of a sudden. This ‘making it personal’ is a feature of the Socratic dialogue that can be readily paralleled in other dialogues. A familiar example is the fact that the immortality of the soul is discussed on the very day on which Socrates will die (*Phaedo*) — technically, it should not make any difference to Socrates’ post-mortem fate whether or not the interlocutors can clinch

the matter, and yet, a great sadness overcomes them when it seems that fatal objections to the idea of immortality have been raised. It is as if Socrates' personal immortality is at stake.⁵ Similarly, in the typical 'what is x' dialogues, many interlocutors begin, when asked for a definition of a virtue, from their personal experience. Piety, says Euthyphro, is what I am doing right here: prosecuting someone who has committed a wrong, whether it is your father or mother or anyone else. Similarly, general Laches claims that it is not hard to define courage: if someone is prepared to stay at their assigned post in battle, fight off the enemy, and not flee, that person is courageous.⁶ In the *Cratylus*, the opening riddle makes Hermogenes realize that he has a personal stake in the topic of conversation. The riddle, then, has a clear rhetorical function and also amplifies the effect of the dialogue genre.

3 Literary motif and structuring device

We now turn to literary function. The riddle recurs at different points in the dialogue, either explicitly or implicitly, and thereby serves as a structuring device. In this very long dialogue, the motif marks important junctures, while different solutions are hinted at. Without claiming to be exhaustive, here are some illustrations of this principle.⁷

As soon as Socrates enters the dialogue, on his very first turn to speak, he responds to the riddle by addressing Hermogenes with his full patronymic: ὦ παῖ Ἱππονίκου Ἑρμογένες "Hermogenes, son of Hipponicus" (Pl. *Crat.* 284a). While the name 'Hermo-genes' suggests 'offspring of Hermes,' Socrates specifies, in what is obviously a successful address of Hermogenes, that he is the son of Hipponicus. In that very same speech turn, Socrates also offers as a first, superficial solution to the riddle the idea that Cratylus must have been joking. Hermogenes famously has no money, something clearly unbecoming a son of Hermes. Hermogenes then is no

⁵ Pl. *Phd.* 88c ff.; in the interlude on *misologia*, starting in 89c–d, Socrates himself makes it clear that his personal circumstances should be no reason not to follow the arguments through to the end (cf. 91a–c).

⁶ Pl. *Euthphr.* 5d–e; *La.* 190e.

⁷ See Mackenzie 1986, 125, who regards the riddle as one of three paradoxes ('Hermogenes' is not Hermogenes' name, 383b; falsehood (contradiction) is impossible, 385a–436e; coming to know is impossible, 437a–440e) that structure the dialogue. At 1986, 126 f. she further discusses its structural function.

Hermo-genes.⁸ This type of joke has a literary precedent, for instance, in the *Prometheus Vincit*, where Kratos points out that Prometheus is wrongly named since he is clearly in need of a *Prometheus*, a ‘forethinker,’ himself to get out of the fix in which he finds himself.⁹

In the next section of the *Cratylus*, Hermogenes states his own position: names are conventions. When Socrates and Hermogenes investigate this thesis, they come to the conclusion that there are right and wrong ways to do things, including naming. The right way is connected to “naturalness” — which means that Cratylus has a point. However, Hermogenes is not prepared to give up his position so quickly and asks for further demonstration (391a). This is the transition to the next stage of the conversation, and at this juncture the riddle makes another appearance. What would be the best way to investigate then? Well, says Socrates, we could pay a lot of money and ask the sophists. That’s what your brother Callias did! But — and here he again refers to Hermogenes’ well-known poverty — this road is not open to Hermogenes, since he does not have control of his paternal inheritance (τὰ πατρῶα), i.e. he has no access to funds.¹⁰

This interlude forms the introduction to the long etymological section, which is a separate structural unit. But is this really a reference to the *riddle* or just to Hermogenes’ poverty? I think the riddle is being cued again here. Hermogenes is not in control of what belongs to his father whether this refers to his actual inheritance or to the connotation of his name. Whether his father is Hipponicus or Hermes, contrary to what either option might make us expect, he has no money. As a tentative and speculative suggestion, let me point to a potential echo of the first line of Aeschylus’ *Choephoroe*: Ἑρμῆ χθόνιε, πατρῷ ἐποπτεύων κράτη “Hermes of the earth, overseeing the fatherly reign.” This line has come down to us through Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (1127 ff.), and we know from this Aristophanic passage that the interpretation of this line was disputed: is the father in question Zeus, father of Hermes? Or Agamemnon, father of Orestes? This second instance in which Socrates alludes to Hermogenes’ poverty (and hence to an explanation of why his name may

8 Pl. *Crat.* 384c2 ff. (first solution): οἷεται γὰρ ἴσως σε χρημάτων ἐφιέμενον κτήσεως ἀποτυγχάνειν ἐκάστοτε “for maybe he thinks that you long to acquire money, but fail every time.” On the family situation of Hermogenes, see Nails 2002, 68–74.

9 Aesch. *Pr.* 85 ff. (Kratos to Prometheus): Ψευδωνύμως σε δαίμονες Προμηθεά / καλοῦσιν· αὐτὸν γὰρ σε δεῖ προμηθεώς / ὅτωι τρόπῳ τῆσδ’ ἐκκυλισθήσῃ τέχνης “the gods are naming you wrongly in calling you Prometheus. For you need a Prometheus, forethinker, yourself, to see how you can extricate yourself from this artful contraption.”

10 Pl. *Crat.* 391b9 ff, esp. ἐπειδὴ δὲ οὐκ ἐγκρατὴς εἶ τῶν πατρῶων, λιπαρεῖν χρὴ τὸν ἀδελφόν “but since you are not in control of your inheritance, you should beg your brother.”

not be appropriate) has a structuring function in that it rounds off the part of the dialogue preceding the etymological section.

The etymological section itself begins with an investigation of Homeric views on naming and introduces a discovery relating to the names of fathers and sons, for which the reader has been primed by the Hermo-genes issue. The names of Astyanax and Scamandrius are both used for the son of Hector, but Homer himself (says Socrates) claims that Astyanax is the *better* name. And Socrates quotes something Iliadic to support his claim (392e):¹¹ φησὶν γάρ· οἷος γάρ σφιν ἔρυτο πόλιν καὶ τείχεα μακρά. διὰ ταῦτα δὴ, ὡς ἔοικεν, ὀρθῶς ἔχει καλεῖν τὸν τοῦ σωτῆρος υἱὸν Ἀστυάνακτα τούτου ὃ ἔσωζεν ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ, ὡς φησιν Ὅμηρος “for he says: ‘for he alone protected their city and the long walls for them.’ So evidently, that is why it appears to be correct to call the son of the savior (an) Astyanax [Lord of the City] of that which his father had been saving, as Homer says.”

Socrates’ discovery is emphatically marked by διὰ ταῦτα δὴ: “so, evidently (δὴ), that is why it is correct,” and the discovery itself comes down to a *genealogical principle*: an explicit connection between etymology and genealogy. The name of the son is explained by the nature of the father. When Hermogenes confirms that he thinks Socrates is right, Socrates unexpectedly questions his understanding (since, he says, he doesn’t even understand what he is saying himself), and he uses Hermogenes’ name again. The address seems prompted by the fact that Hermogenes is the living example of the doubtfulness of the genealogical principle. And Hermogenes is quick to backtrack: in fact, he doesn’t really understand either.¹² This passage will occupy us at greater length in section 5, but let us first finish the overview of the riddle as a literary structuring device.

When in the passage about the etymologies of the names of the gods Socrates is about to discontinue that topic (407d), Hermogenes has one last request, with explicit reference to Cratylus’ riddle: could Socrates elucidate the name of Hermes? It turns out that this yields another way in which Hermogenes is far removed from Hermes: Hermes is “about logos,” whereas Hermogenes has to admit that he is not very good with logos, although Hermes, of course, is.¹³

A mirroring use of Hermogenes’ name occurs in Socrates’ argument with Cratylus. In 429b12, the question is raised whether the use of the name Hermogenes would mean that Hermogenes is not named correctly, or whether in fact no naming

¹¹ See Ademollo 2011, 152 ff., for the creative way in which Socrates handles and combines (and slightly distorts) the *Iliad* references (*Il.* 6.401–403; 22.505–507).

¹² 392e6 f: τί δὴ ποτε; οὐ γάρ πω οὐδ’ αὐτὸς ἔγωγε μανθάνω· ὧ Ἑρμόγενης, σὺ δὲ μανθάνεις; “how is that? for I don’t even understand it yet myself. Hermogenes! – but you understand it?”

¹³ On this passage, see Petterson 2022.

had taken place at all. The latter is the case according to Cratylus. A further point is how this relates to issues of “truth” and “falsehood.” But in 429e, Socrates creates a problem for Cratylus’ strict views on such matters, by imagining that someone would come up to him and address him with a number of apt qualifications, but would then insert the name ‘Hermogenes’: χαῖρε, ὦ ξένε Ἀθηναίε, υἱὲ Σμικριῶνος, Ἑρμογόενες “greetings, Athenian stranger, son of Smicrion, Hermogenes!” Hermogenes may not have been Hermogenes’ name, but it certainly isn’t Cratylus’. And yet, an appellation seems to have just taken place.¹⁴

Finally, there is the end of the dialogue, where Socrates takes leave of Cratylus and tells him that Hermogenes will accompany him (440e5): πορεύου εἰς ἀγρόν. προπέμψει δέ σε καὶ Ἑρμογένης ὁδε “continue on your way into the country. And Hermogenes here will accompany you.” The expression προπέμψει ... σε signals that for once Hermogenes is living up to his name as a descendant of Hermes, in his role of *pompaïos*, the *πομπός par excellence*.¹⁵ It is worth pointing out that this last reference to the opening riddle is apt in another way: Hermes accompanying someone is a recurring feature of the *endings* of literary works. At the end of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* Hermes performs this very task, for the living Priam on his way to Achilles and back, and for the dead suitors on their way to the underworld.¹⁶ At this point, it would look as if Cratylus is right and wrong at the same time: wrong in his riddle, right in the natural connection between name and thing: for his companion Hermogenes takes the role of a true son of Hermes at this point.

To sum up the use of the riddle as a literary motif and structuring device: references to Hermogenes’ name and the riddle of its inappropriateness occur at the very beginning of the dialogue and at several structurally relevant points in the rest of it. There is a *prima facie* solution relating to Hermogenes’ lack of money, which provides a hook for jokes about the expensive sophists at the transition point between the first dialectical passage and the etymological section. There may be a passing allusion to it when Socrates discovers a genealogical principle in name-giving, and Hermogenes himself reverts to it in asking for an explanation of the name of Hermes, at which point he embraces the inappropriateness of his own name. And it helps in getting Cratylus to clarify his point about false or ineffective names. Finally, there is an allusion at the very end of the dialogue, which illustrates the lack of reliability of any argument based solely on names: In spite of his own diffidence,

¹⁴ Cf. Mackenzie 1986, 126.

¹⁵ Rightly noted by Barney 2001, 160, cf. Ademollo 2011, 488.

¹⁶ Hom. *Il.* 24.430 (Priam to Hermes) πέμψον δέ με; 24.437 (Hermes) σοὶ δ’ ἂν ἐγὼ πομπός; 439 πομπόν; Hom. *Od.* 24.1–5: Hermes leading out (ἄγε) the souls of the dead suitors to the underworld, in his role of πομπάιος (without use of the *πεμπ/πομπ*-lexeme).

Hermogenes turns out to be a worthy descendant of Hermes in at least this one respect, and for Cratylus, too, the argument from Hermogenes' name is turned on its head.

4 Philosophical style

For reasons of space and competence, I will leave to the side the riddle's philosophical role in the discussion of truthfulness and falsehood of utterances and parts of utterances,¹⁷ but I do want to discuss very briefly its connection to the issue of philosophical style, before turning to the cultural-historical context of the genealogical model.

Myles Burnyeat has taught us to pay careful attention to the opening words of Platonic dialogues, since they will often contain a prefiguration of important themes of the dialogue.¹⁸ The *Cratylus* is no exception. It opens with Hermogenes' question to Cratylus (383a): βούλει οὖν καὶ Σωκράτει τῷδε ἀνακοινωσώμεθα τὸν λόγον; "Then let's share our conversation with Socrates here as well, shall we?" And, as Burnyeat points out, following Baxter 1992, this sentence is both an attempt to reestablish a broken down communication and it picks out Socrates effectively by means of a personal name — the personal name works with Socrates; it does not, according to Cratylus, work with Hermogenes.

However, there is more to be said about this sentence. The most pregnant term is no doubt ἀνακοινωσώμεθα "let us share (our logos, our argument)." Hermogenes is a good Socratic at heart, although on his view dialectic would in practice become impossible for lack of a validated shared language, if anything anyone wishes to call something could be its name by convention. However, the principle of jointly investigating is a good Socratic one.¹⁹ Cratylus is not a good communicator. But Hermogenes' report shows that Cratylus did not just produce the riddle spontaneously, to annoy Hermogenes. In fact, it is Hermogenes himself who is attempting to start a philosophical argument and investigation into Cratylus' thesis on natural ὁρθότης by asking Cratylus questions, Socrates-style. At the beginning of the dialogue, he is reporting this earlier part of the conversation to Socrates, 383a ff.:

¹⁷ Cf. Pl. *Crat.* 429b10 ff. (discussed above, section 3), and 430e9 ff.

¹⁸ Burnyeat 1997.

¹⁹ Note how ἀνακοινωσώμεθα is echoed in Socrates' words (384c2) συζητεῖν μέντοι ἐτοιμός εἰμι καὶ σοὶ καὶ Κρατύλῳ κοινῇ "however, I'm willing to investigate *together* with you and Cratylus *jointly*." See Adomenas 2006 on the importance of this terminology of sharing to signal the dialectical style of doing philosophy.

ἐρωτῶ οὖν αὐτὸν ἐγὼ εἰ αὐτῷ Κρατύλος τῇ ἀληθείᾳ ὄνομα· ὁ δὲ ὁμολογεῖ. Τί δὲ Σωκράτει; ἔφην. Σωκράτης, ἦ δ' ὅς. Οὐκοῦν καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις πᾶσιν, ὅπερ καλοῦμεν ὄνομα ἑκαστον, τοῦτό ἐστιν ἐκάστῳ ὄνομα; ὁ δέ, Οὐκ οὐν σοί γε, ἦ δ' ὅς, ὄνομα Ἑρμογένης, οὐδὲ ἂν πάντες καλῶσιν ἄνθρωποι. καὶ ἐμοῦ ἐρωτῶντος καὶ προθυμουμένου εἰδέναι ὅτι ποτε λέγει, οὔτε ἀποσαφεῖ οὐδὲν εἰρωνεύεται τε πρὸς με, προσποιούμενός τι αὐτὸς ἐν ἑαυτῷ διανοεῖσθαι ὡς εἰδῶς περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὃ εἰ βούλοιτο σαφῶς εἰπεῖν, ποιήσειεν ἂν καὶ ἐμὲ ὁμολογεῖν καὶ λέγειν ἅπερ αὐτὸς λέγει. εἰ οὖν πῃ ἔχεις συμβαλεῖν τὴν Κρατύλου μαντείαν, ἡδέως ἂν ἀκούσαιμι.

So I ask him whether his name is truly Cratylus, and he agrees that it is. “And what is Socrates’ name?”, I said. “Socrates”, said he. “Doesn’t this then apply to everyone else too, that whatever name we call each person, that is each person’s name?” And he said: “Well, no, at least your name is not Hermogenes, not even if everyone calls you that.” And although I keep asking and wanting to know what in the world he means, he refuses to explain anything and he is being ironical with me, pretending (as if really knowing about this) that he is having some private thought, which would, if he chose to speak it out clearly, make me agree entirely with him. So if you could somehow interpret Cratylus’ oracular speech, I would love to hear it.

Hermogenes is initiating a miniature Socratic dialogue here: is your name truly Cratylus? –Sure. And what is Socrates’ name? –Socrates. Well then, doesn’t that go for other people as well? In section 2, we discussed how the Socratic dialogue tends to make the topic of conversation personal. Here we see that it is in fact Hermogenes who begins to make things personal for Cratylus. But just as he attempts to generalize from the two instances ‘Cratylus’ and ‘Socrates,’ Cratylus makes the issue more personal than Hermogenes finds comfortable. Whatever is the case for Socrates and himself, Hermogenes’ name is not Hermogenes.

This is the *only* speech initiative we have from Cratylus. He delivers his *μαντεία*, his oracular riddle, and cannot be made to explain himself. This is a performance of anti-dialectic, and it is no less than a triumph for Socrates when he manages to draw Cratylus into the discussion later on. But Cratylus’ philosophical style is not his own invention: it marks him as the Heraclitean he is across the whole dialogue. Heraclitus was not just known for his flux theory, but also for his oracular and riddling style, a style parodied in the *Theaetetus*. There Theodorus says: it is impossible to have a discussion with Heracliteans. They are worse than madmen. No quiet conversations with questions and answers with them! They just pull out puzzling little phrases, like arrows from a quiver, and shoot them. And they will not explain themselves: riddles, but no examination.²⁰ This is in stark contrast to the Socratic emphasis on the joint nature of the whole philosophical enterprise.

20 Pl. *Tht.* 179e ff. (Theodorus speaking) αὐτοῖς ... οὐδὲν μᾶλλον οἶόν τε διαλεχθῆναι ἢ τοῖς οἰστρωσιν ... τὸ δ' ἐπιμεῖναι ἐπὶ λόγῳ καὶ ἐρωτήματι καὶ ἡσυχίῳ ἐν μέρει ἀποκρίνασθαι καὶ ἐρέσθαι ἥττον αὐτοῖς ἐνὶ ἡ τὸ μηδὲν ... ἀλλ' ἂν τινά τι ἔρη, ὥσπερ ἐκ φαρέτρας ῥηματίσκια αἰνιγματώδη ἀνασπῶντες ἀποτοξεύουσι “(with those Heracliteans) it is no more possible to discuss ideas than

The riddle then is also a way to introduce and contrast two styles of doing philosophy right from the beginning of the dialogue.

5 The role of genealogy: anchoring etymology

When Plato produced his *Cratylus*, there had never been a treatise on etymology as powerful and prolonged as this dialogue, with its various attempts at providing theoretical background to what was a ubiquitous cultural practice. Etymologizing and thinking about the reason why things are called what they are called, the relationship between names and the entities they indicate, had been a staple of the poetic and intellectual tradition from its inception.²¹ Ancient etymology, not to be confused with its modern counterpart, is a discursive form that can be used to underpin a certain idea, interpretation, or argument in a show of the logical coherence of the world. As explained and announced in section 1, in that sense it is an “anchoring” discourse: it refers to shared information (language itself). Anchoring means connecting whatever is under investigation or needs explanation to something familiar, capable of offering a form of cognitive stability for the relevant social groups. In particular, whenever something is presented as “new,” or is perceived as such, “anchoring” will make it more acceptable or at least understandable.

The most “natural” of the anchoring discourses is genealogy, since the succession of generations is a common human experience with a strong intuitive appeal (this is a discernible strength of monarchies, for example, in comparison with other polities; it is no coincidence that Roman emperors adopted their prospective successors). Etymology is more abstract and theoretical, since it anchors an understanding of the world in its representation in language. In the first part of the *Cratylus*, then, the more familiar anchoring discourse (genealogy) is used to anchor the one that is problematized (etymology) until the genealogical model has exhausted its use and is discarded for the rest of the dialogue. The riddle of Hermogenes’ name introduces this genealogical principle: the parent-child relationship is the prototypical example of a φύσει relationship.

In section 3 we discussed the discovery of the genealogical principle, right after Socrates’ allusion to the opening riddle in 391b–c. Since Hermogenes lacks the money to study with the sophists, Socrates turns to Homer and the other poets and

with madmen ... as for keeping to an argument or a question and quietly answering and asking in turn, their power of doing that is less than nothing ... But if you ask any of them a question, he pulls out puzzling little phrases, like arrows from a quiver, and shoots them off.”

²¹ Sluiter 2015 with references.

discusses the explanation of the name Astyanax from 392b: Astyanax has his name because he is the son of a ruler of the city. The genealogical principle of naming, for which we had been primed by ‘Hermo-genes’, who may or may not have been a true son of Hermes, is further explained in 393a–e.²² There is a normative quality to the principle: fathers and offspring *should* have the same name. This normative nature is brought out clearly by the use of δίκαιον in 393b6:

Δίκαιόν γέ τοι ἐστίν, ὡς ἐμοὶ φαίνεται, τὸν λέοντος ἔκγονον λέοντα καλεῖν καὶ τὸν ἵππου ἔκγονον ἵππον. οὐ τι λέγω ἐάν ὥσπερ τέρας γένηται ἐξ ἵππου ἄλλο τι ἢ ἵππος ἀλλ’ οὐ ἂν ἢ τοῦ γένους ἔκγονον τὴν φύσιν, τοῦτο λέγω. ἐάν βοὸς ἔκγονον φύσει ἵππος παρὰ φύσιν τέκη μόσχον, οὐ πῶλον κλητέον, ἀλλὰ μόσχον.

It is surely right at least, as it appears to me, to call the offspring of a lion ‘lion,’ and the offspring of a horse ‘horse.’ I am not speaking of the case where from a horse something other than a horse is born, like a monster, but I’m referring to the natural offspring of the species to which it belongs. If a horse, contrary to nature, should bring forth a calf, the natural offspring of a cow, it should not be called a colt, but a calf.

There is a three-step argument in 393bc, which is recapitulated in 394a: 1. kings are born from kings, unless there is a τέρας (and note that ‘king’ is not a natural kind, unlike horses or cows); 2. they should thus be called ‘king’; 3. the concept ‘king’ may be expressed through different forms of linguistic material. The argument is rounded off in 394d2–3: τοῖς μὲν δὴ κατὰ φύσιν γιγνομένοις τὰ αὐτὰ ἀποδοτέον ὀνόματα “anything born κατὰ φύσιν, in accordance with this natural relationship, should be given the same names.” Unfortunately, Greek mythology, another anchoring discourse, is rife with examples of ‘monsters,’ in whose case this naming principle breaks down irreparably. So, immediately after this conclusion about how naming *should* work, Socrates transitions to τοῖς παρὰ φύσιν, οἳ ἂν ἐν τέρατος εἶδει γένωνται “the ones contrary to nature, who are born in the form of a monster,” each higher generation another abomination: Orestes, Agamemnon, Atreus, Pelops, Tantalos, Zeus. These names are too unstable and are in fact given for all kinds of non-essential reasons. Once this is established, the interlocutors try to find renewed stability in the names of ever-lasting entities (gods, heavenly bodies, etc.).

Let us return to the text quoted above to reflect a bit further on the use of the term δίκαιον and on the strong emphasis on natural and unnatural relationships. Generation παρὰ φύσιν will lead to τέρατα ‘monsters,’ *monstra*, prodigies. In a disastrous family like that of the Atreids, the δίκαιον model is quickly seen to break

²² Ademollo 2011 calls the genealogical principle “the Principle of Synonymous Generation,” comm. *ad loc.*

down: all behaviors are *παρὰ φύσιν* there, and every next generation takes the form of a *τέρας*.

The combination of naturalness, offspring, and *δίκαιον*, with its strong ethical overtones, is highly suggestive: it makes the genealogical model an even more obvious place for Socrates to start, and a mismatch between name and behavior or essence even more jarring. It is important to note how culturally embedded this nexus is when Socrates applies it to the issue of names. Right from Hesiod we find the principle that in a *just* city, women will bear children *that resemble their fathers* (τίκτουσιν δὲ γυναῖκες ἐοικότα τέκνα γονεῦσιν).²³ In his commentary *ad loc.*, Martin West correctly points out that this means the children are legitimate and the wives have been faithful, both hallmarks of a just and well-organized society. Several oaths claiming to date back to the time of Solon stipulate that if the people taking the oath do not abide by it, the women will *not* bear children resembling their fathers, but *τέρατα* instead. If they do abide by it, to have the women bear children that *do* resemble their fathers is something to be prayed for as a reward:

καὶ εἰ μὲν ἐμπεδορκοῖν τὰ ἐν τῷ ὅρκῳ γεγραμμένα, ἢ πόλις ἡμῇ ἄνοσος εἴη· εἰ δὲ μὴ, νοσοίη.
... καὶ γυναῖκες τίκτοιεν ἐοικότα γονεῦσιν· εἰ δὲ μὴ, τέρατα.

and if I keep to what is written in the oath, may my city be without illness. But if not, may it be ill ... and may the women bear children that resemble their fathers; but if not, monsters.²⁴

In the *Cratylus* passage, then, a very familiar cultural pattern is evoked: ‘what is right’ (*δίκαιον*) goes hand in hand with natural children (*κατὰ φύσιν*, resembling their parents), and this is offset against what is unnatural (*παρὰ φύσιν*): *τέρατα*. Generations should represent a natural continuum with recognizable, stable traits from one generation to the next. Leslie Kurke (1991) has explained a number of ambiguous references in Pindar from this culturally embedded genealogical principle: in a couple of passages, it is not clear whether a certain achievement is to be attributed to the victor or his father. Kurke thinks this serves to emphasize that individual identity is culturally less important than family identity. Another example

²³ Hes. *Op.* 235 “the women bear children that resemble their fathers.” This is part of the passage about the superiority of Dike over Hybris (from 213).

²⁴ Tod, *Greek Hist. Inscr.* II, no 204.39 ff. (oath of the Athenians before Plataea). Cf. Aeschin. *Ctes.* 110f. καὶ ἐπεύχεται αὐτοῖς μῆτε γῆν καρποὺς φέρειν, μῆτε γυναῖκας τέκνα τίκτειν γονεῦσιν ἐοικότα, ἀλλὰ τέρατα, μῆτε βόσκηματα κατὰ φύσιν γονὰς ποιεῖσθαι “and he put a curse on them, that neither would the earth bear fruit, nor would the women bear children resembling their fathers, but monsters, nor would the cattle have offspring according to nature.”

of the self-evident value attached to the resemblance of children to their parents comes from the 3rd-c. BCE female poet Nossis:²⁵

Αὐτομέλιννα τέτυκται ἴδ', ὡς ἀγανὸν τὸ πρόσωπον. / ἃ μὲ ποτοπτάζειν μελιχίως δοκέει / ὡς
ἐτύμως θυγάτηρ τῇ μητέρι πάντα ποτῶκει. / ἣ καλόν, ὅκκα πέλη τέκνα γονεῦσιν ἴσα.

Melinna herself is depicted here. Look how friendly her face. / she seems to look at me gently. / how truly the daughter resembles her mother in everything. / Really, it is beautiful when children are like their parents.

In this text, it is the resemblance with the mother that invites praise, but the praise is couched in the familiar generic form τέκνα γονεῦσιν ἴσα. It is a gnomic statement (“it is a beautiful thing when...”), part of the cultural common ground.

Let us return to 393b6 ff., quoted above p. 385, one final time. It is important to note that φύσις is used in two different ways: the natural offspring of a horse is a colt. If not, this is παρὰ φύσιν. But such offspring still has an individual φύσις, a natural disposition, of its own. For instance, it might be a calf. And in that case it should be called after its *own* φύσις, which obviously invalidates the genealogical principle.²⁶ Names of human beings in particular are unreliable, they often serve commemorative purposes, as when a grandson is called after his grandfather, or they are aspirational, serving to express the high hopes of the parents.²⁷ None of this invalidates the fact, though, that the genealogical principle was the perfect cultural anchor for a discussion of etymology: the situation in which offspring resemble their parents, in essence and name, would have been not only familiar, but also normatively appropriate.²⁸

²⁵ Cf. also Arist. *GA* 721b, e.g. 21 γίνονται γὰρ εὐκότες. I'd like to thank Glyn Muijtens for bringing this passage to my attention.

²⁶ So, e.g., Orestes is named after his own φύσις (394e10 τὸ θηριῶδες τῆς φύσεως), and we even find a phrase such as εὐοικεν δέ γε καὶ τῷ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ κατὰ φύσιν τὸ ὄνομα εἶναι, where κατὰ φύσιν does not indicate genealogical naturalness, but the individual nature of Agamemnon (“according to his nature”), 395a2f.

²⁷ Pl. *Crat.* 397b.

²⁸ When the discussion shifts to abstract entities, it will turn out that δικαιοσύνη / τὸ δίκαιον itself cannot be grasped etymologically without a dialectical investigation: even if one understands why it is called what is called, one still has no idea of its essence (412c6–413d2, Sluiter 1997, 184f.; Ademollo 2011, 215 ff., esp. 218f).

6 Why are Cratylus and Socrates named correctly?

There is one last aspect of the riddle that merits discussion. For the riddle, in fact, has two parts. Even if ‘Hermogenes’ is not Hermogenes’ name, why are Cratylus and Socrates named correctly, according to Cratylus? It has been noted, of course, that both names have the stem κρατ-, indicating strength, power or control.²⁹ It is also interesting that the two names are *related* in this way. Cratylus may have liked that anyway, since he also seems to be affecting some Socratic behavior (note εἰρωνεύεται, 384a1).³⁰ Κράτος, control, apparently is an important aspect of the answer. Remember that one explanation of why Hermogenes was not Hermogenes’ name had to do with the fact that he was not ἐγκρατής τῶν πατρῶων, 391c2.³¹ Having control over your name means having control over who you are. The essence expressed in the name should be in full effect.

When Hermogenes finally adopts a function of Hermes (the πομπός, section 3) at the end of the dialogue, he may have been regaining some control of his name. On the other hand, Cratylus may not be Cratylus’ correct name by the end of the dialogue, since he has just lost control of the argument. In fact, the only one whose control is still entirely intact (σῶς), who is still ἐγκρατής, is, of course, Socrates.³²

7 Conclusion

In this essay, we studied the multifarious uses and effects of the opening riddle of Plato’s *Cratylus*. It functions as an effective rhetorical opening move (the *captatio*

²⁹ Sedley 2003, 22.

³⁰ For the issue of discipleship, with Socrates pretending to be Cratylus’ student, and Cratylus never detecting the problem in his own philosophical style and lack of “sharing”, see Adomenas 2006 (and section 4 above).

³¹ Note also the term κράτη in Ἑρμῇ χθόνιε, πατρῶ’ ἐποπτεύων **κράτη** in A. Cho. 1, discussed above section 3 (cf. Aristoph. *Ran.* 1127 ff.). The term ἐγκρατής occurs at two other points in the *Cratylus*. In one of four etymologies of the name of Apollo, his function as the god of archery is adduced. He is *Aei-ballōn*, always hitting the mark, which is explained as διὰ ... τὸ ἀεὶ βολῶν ἐγκρατής εἶναι “because he is always in full control of his shots” (405c5). Even more important is 393d, where it is stated that the offspring of a king is called ‘king’: οὐδ’ εἰ πρόσκειται τι γράμμα ἢ ἀφήρηται, οὐδὲν οὐδὲ τοῦτο, **ἕως ἂν ἐγκρατής ᾖ** ἢ οὐσία τοῦ πράγματος δηλουμένη ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι “nor does it make a difference if a letter is added or taken away, as long as the nature of the thing, which is being made clear in the name, is in full effect.”

³² On the name of Plato himself, not his real name ‘Aristocles,’ but a nickname, see Sedley 2003, 21f., who takes the name-change as historical, vs. Notopoulos 1939, who does not.

benevolentiae) and supports important characteristics of the dialogue genre, notably its tendency to “make things personal.” It worked at important junctures (opening, ending, transition to important new part) as a marker of the literary construction. It represented an example of Cratylus’ literary style and its clash with Socratic dialectic. And it invokes genealogy as a culturally relevant anchor for an investigation of the problematic practice of etymology. Thus it is a perfect illustration of the situatedness and cultural specificity and embeddedness of the Socratic dialogue.

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Jared Hudson

***Ridentem dicere uerum*: Etymology and Humor in Varro and Plutarch**

Abstract: This paper examines the role played by humor in ancient Greek and Latin etymologizing, in theory and practice. An introductory section presents ancient accounts of laughable etymology in Varro (as articulated by a disapproving Quintilian) and Plutarch (as put in the mouth of the transgressive Lamprias); this is followed by a brief sketch of past scholarly reluctance to take playful etymologizing in, e.g., Plutarch, seriously, in part related to still recent shifts toward approaching ancient etymologies emically, and with sensitivity to performative or generic contexts. Two brief case studies then investigate the operation and function of humor in the etymologies of Plutarch and Varro. Surveying the former's far-flung derivations, I argue that Plutarch performs etymologies with an acute awareness of their potential to spin off from playful 'unconcealment' into acerbic parody, and that this line is closely connected to his special role as inter-cultural (and, to some extent, -linguistic) interpreter, one who exhibits a distinctly more circumspect approach to Latin etymologies. Finally, after highlighting a recurring ludic tendency across Varro's work, I examine striking instances of derivational excess in which the Roman scholar appears, performatively, to test the boundary between etymological object and process, with seemingly humorous effect.

*...that goddess fair and free (fairly fair, frailly free), divinest Etymology.*¹

1 Laughable etymology

In summing up an eloquent but prescriptive account of the nature and function of *etymologia* in Book 1 of his *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintilian offers a scathing estimation of that ancient Roman scholar who has become — mostly due to the accidents of survival — especially identified with the ancient practice of (Latin) word derivation,

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1 Austin 1970, 260.

Marcus Terentius Varro. After a brief sketch of the potential uses of *etymologia*, followed promptly by a longer outline of its abuses, the rhetorician singles out three exemplary (i.e., notorious) names: Gavius, who derived *caelibes* ('bachelors') from *caelites* ('gods'), since both are free of the heaviest burden; Modestus, at least Gavius' equal in inventiveness, who linked *caelibes* to Saturn's castration of *Caelus*; and Aelius, Varro's own teacher and an influential scholar with Stoic leanings, who accounted for *pituuta* ('phlegm') with *quia petat uitam* ('because it attacks life').² This triptych of word-tracing decadents turns out to be a lead-in for Quintilian's special criticism of Varro:

sed cui non post Varronem sit uenia? qui 'agrum' quia in eo agatur aliquid, et 'gragulos' quia gregatim uolent dictos uoluit persuadere Ciceroni (ad eum enim scribit), cum alterum ex Graeco sit manifestum duci, alterum ex uocibus auium. sed hoc³ tanti fuit uertere, ut 'merula', quia sola uolat, quasi mera uolans nominaretur.

But who shouldn't be pardoned after Varro? He aimed to persuade Cicero (his dedicatee) that a 'field' (*ager*) is so-called because something 'is done' in it (*agitur*), and that jackdaws are (*graguli*) because they 'fly in flocks' (*gregatim uolent*), even though one is obviously derived from Greek [ἀγρός], the other from the birds' call. But Varro thought performing such a transformation (*uertere*) was so worthwhile that he claims *merula* ('blackbird') was named as *mera uolans*, because it 'flies alone'!⁴

2 After making a little show of declining to identify the well-known author of an etymology of *stella* (< *stilla luminis*, 'drop of light'), since that would be harsh (*cuius etymologiae auctorem clarum sane in litteris nominari in ea parte qua a me reprehenditur inhumanum est*), Quintilian goes on to name (and shame) our trio — who ought to have left their *nomen*-derivations anonymous! *Inst.* 1.6.36: *qui uero talia libris complexi sunt, nomina sua ipsi inscripserunt, ingenioseque uisus est Gavius 'caelibes' dicere ueluti 'caelites', quod onere grauissimo uacent, idque Graeco argumento iuuit: ἡϊθέους enim eadem de causa dici adfirmat. nec ei cedit Modestus inuentione: nam, quia Caelo Saturnus genitalia absciderit, hoc nomine appellatos qui uxore careant ait; Aelius 'pituutam' quia petat uitam. Note Gavius' analogical appeal to Greek ἡϊθεοί ('unmarried young men') < αἰεῖ θεοί, or ἡ θεοί, or simply θεοί, a form of meaning-based derivation that is for Quintilian apparently beyond the pale. Gavius may be Gavius Bassus, author of a *De origine uerborum et uocabulorum* (Gell. 2.4, 3.19), and Modestus' wonderfully titled *Quaestiones confusae* turns up in Gell. 3.9. Cf. Colson 1924, 84–89.*

3 Text of Winterbottom 1970a, with *hoc* referring back to the derivation of *gragulus*. The (rhetorical) point here is that Varro's far-fetched claim that *gragulus* < *gregatim* (*uolans*) was made specifically to support his (likewise far-fetched) derivation of *merula* < *mera uolans*. Cf. Winterbottom 1970b, 66. Russell 2001 prefers *huic* to *hoc*, and apparently takes the sentence as a more general observation about Varro's penchant for wild derivations, which *merula* (merely) exemplifies.

4 *Inst.* 1.6.37–38. Quintilian leaves out that Varro notes the Greek derivation, too, and he obscures Varro's derivation from *agere* ('drive', specifically): *ager dictus in quam terram quid agebant, et unde quid agebant fructus causa; ali<i> quod id Graeci dicunt ἀγρόν</i>*, Ling. 5.34. Ling. 5.76: *merula, quod mera, id est 'sola', uolitat. contra ab eo graguli, quod gregatim [sc. uolitant].* On

Quintilian's own skills of persuasion are in evidence here: hyperbolic rhetorical question underlined by the alliterative jingle, *Varronem sit uenia* (or is *that* a deliberately far-fetched *figura etymologica*, in jest?); the misleading "character witness" of the ultimate Orator: "for he *tried to persuade Cicero*" (*uoluit persuadere Ciceroni*); tried, that is — and, implicitly, failed. Ciceronians, Quintilian prompts his would-be-Ciceronian readers, should know better than to take such absurdities too seriously: ask Cicero.⁵ A reading of the surviving correspondence between Cicero and Varro (alongside Cicero's letters to Atticus about the elder scholar) reveals just how anxious to win over Varro Cicero in fact was.⁶ Quintilian's examples moreover are carefully plucked for their *un*-persuasiveness: *ager* from *agitur* is about as vague and arbitrary as can be (what else happens *anywhere* but 'action,' 'activity'?). And the two birds rhetorically underline the apparent silliness of Varro's task, especially since, Quintilian asserts, the derivations of these bird-words are already perfectly transparent, requiring no elaborate *etymologia* to begin with. The moralizing subtext detectable in this passage — that, among other things, Quintilian can easily critique Varro's overindulgence in etymology — attests an ethics of derivation already at play here in this early moment in the reception of Varronian word-tracing.⁷

A roughly contemporary analogue of this kind of mocking criticism turns up late in Plutarch's *Quaestiones convivales*, when the scholar and his banqueting interlocutors discuss, rather self-reflexively, the origins of the Greek words for dinner, δειπνον, and breakfast (or lunch), ἄριστον.⁸ The spread of derivations on offer here is relatively modest by Plutarch's standards — compared, that is, to his frequent tendency towards etymological accumulation (more on this below). Just two possible etymologies are given for ἄριστον (from αὔρα, 'morning breeze,' and ῥᾶστον, 'easiest'); and only two for δειπνον, though these are playfully, almost proudly,

gragulus as onomatopoetic in origin, cf. Festus 97L (*a sono oris*), Isid. *Etym.* 12.7.45 (*a garrulitate*; following Quint. [*cum sit manifestum ~ cum...sit manifestum*] in rejecting *gregatim*), and Collart (1954), 193. Festus 124L records the derivation from *merus*, though without connecting *merula* to *uolare* (*merum antiqui dicebant solum; unde et auis merula nomen accepit, quod soliuaga est et solitaria pascitur*).

5 Behind the passage may also be Cicero *ND* 3.62, Cotta's attack on Stoic etymology and allegory (as recounted by Balbus at 2.66–69): *exsectum a filio Caelum...haec et alia generis eiusdem ita defenditis, ut i qui ista finxerunt non modo non insani sed etiam fuisse sapientes uideantur. in enodandis autem nominibus quod miserandum sit laboratis*. Cf. Dyck 2003.

6 On their relationship, see Kumaniecki 1962, Baier 1997, 15–30 ("gespannte Freundschaft"), and Rösch-Binde (1998). On the dedications — books 2–4 originally dedicated to P. Septimius (5.1), 5–7 and the entire work dedicated to Cicero — and chronology, see Barwick 1957 and Rösch-Binde 2001.

7 Cf. *Inst.* 1.6.32: *inde prauis ingeniis ad foedissima usque ludibria labuntur*.

8 *Quaest. conv.* 726c–727a. Date of *Inst.*: likely finished by 95 CE; cf. Kennedy 1969, 26–28; *Quaest. conviv.*: after 99–before 116, cf. Jones 1966, 56 and Jones 1971, 72–73.

contradictory. It is either, Plutarch reports, from διαναπαύει, because dinner gives us rest from labors (τῶν πόνων), or from διαπεπονημένον, because dinner is an elaborate, or elaborated, process.⁹ No decision between these mutually exclusive options is offered, as is usually the case in Plutarch's parades of etymologies, for here the author's brother Lamprias chimes in:

ὕβριστής δ' ὢν καὶ φιλόγελως φύσει ὁ ἀδελφὸς ἡμῶν Λαμπρίας ἔφη μυρίῳ τὰ Ῥωμαϊκὰ δεῖξιν οἰκειότερα τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ὀνόματα, τοσαύτης ἀδείας τῷ φλυαρεῖν δεδομένης.

My brother Lamprias, a troublemaker and one who always enjoys a joke, said that he would demonstrate, since such license had been granted for spouting nonsense, that Latin words are far more 'appropriate' than Greek ones.¹⁰

Lamprias then proceeds to derive a rather dizzying array of Latin words from Greek: *cena* ('dinner') from κοινωνία ('fellowship'), *mensa* ('table') from ἐν μέσῳ ('in the middle'), *panis* ('bread') from πείνα ('hunger' — ὡς ἀνιέντα τὴν πείναν, a tasty *kat' antiphrasin*), *prandium* ('breakfast,' 'lunch') from πρὸ ἔνδιον ('before noon', comparing ἐνδιάζειν, 'pass the midday, take a siesta'), or πρωϊνήν ('early'), or πρὶν ἐνδεεῖς ('before being in need'), and, last and most elaborate, *labra* ('lips') from the fact that we 'take food with them' (ἀπὸ τοῦ λαμβάνειν τὴν βορὰν δι' αὐτῶν). Aside from a great number of Latin words that require no intricate derivation, since they are roughly the same as in Greek — στρώματα (*stromata*), οἶνος (*uinum*), μέλι (*mel*), ἔλαιον (*oleum*), γεύσασθαι (*gustare*), προπιεῖν (*propinare*), ἔδειν (*edere*), ὀδόντες (*dentes*), and many more (ἕτερα πάμπολλα) — who could deny, says Lamprias (τίς οὐκ ἂν εἴποι), that '*comissatum*' [sc. *comissatio*] is based on κῶμος ('revelry'), or *miscere* on Homeric ἔμισγε ('[she] mixed'), or *corona* ('wreath') is derived from 'head' since Homer in one passage compares a helmet (κράνος) to a wreath?¹¹ After

9 *Quaest. conv.* 726c: καὶ πιθανὸν ἐδόκει διὰ τὴν ἐωθινήν αὖραν ἄριστον ὀνομάσθαι καθάπερ τὸ αὐρίον· τὸ δὲ δεῖπνον, ὅτι τῶν πόνων διαναπαύει· πράξαντες γάρ τι δειπνοῦσιν ἢ μεταξὺ πράττοντες...εἰ μὴ νῆ Δία τὸ ἄριστον αὐτόθεν ἀπραγμόνως προσφερόμενοι καὶ ῥαδίως ἀπὸ τῶν τυχόντων, τὸ δὲ δεῖπνον ἤδη παρεσκευασμένον, ἐκεῖνο μὲν ῥᾶστον, τοῦτο δ' ὥσπερ διαπεπονημένον ἐκάλεσαν. Teodorsson (1996, 223), following Hubert, notes that νῆ Δία is only used in direct speech, suggesting that Plutarch has forgotten that the last quoted interlocutor, Theon, is no longer speaking. αὐτόθεν likewise colors the entire alternative (εἰ μὴ...ἐκάλεσαν) as a spontaneous improvisation. On these and other ancient etymologies of ἄριστον and δεῖπνον, see the *Etygram* online dictionary entries at, respectively, <http://appsweb-cepam.unice.fr/etygram/taxonomy/term/198> and <http://appsweb-cepam.unice.fr/etygram/taxonomy/term/161>.

10 *Quaest. conv.* 726d–e.

11 *Quaest. conv.* 726e–727a. Plutarch has Lamprias showcase his derivational tour de force with artful variation, cycling through several means of articulating etymological connection (φασί...διά...καλεῖσθαι...γάρ..., ἐκλήθη...ἀπό...γάρ, ἡ...σημαίνοντες...ἡ, καὶ μὴν, ἴν' ἀφώ...ἕτερα

serving up this etymological smorgasbord, Lamprias concludes his interjection, and the πρόβλημα itself, with the following words:

ἢ καὶ τούτων οὖν ἀκουστέον ἀγελαστὶ λεγομένων ἢ μὴδ' ἐκείνοις εὐκόπως οὕτως διὰ τῶν ὀνομάτων ὥσπερ τριγχιῶν τὰ μὲν ἐκκόπτουσι μέρη τὰ δὲ καθαιροῦσιν παραδύσεις διδῶμεν.

Therefore, we should either listen without laughter to these claims too, or else not so readily allow the explanations offered earlier to undermine words as if through fortification-walls, breaking through some parts of them and knocking down others.¹²

The whole passage is ludic, tinged with irony, and deliberately paradoxical, in part because of Lamprias' striking use of the language of propriety (οἰκειότερα) to introduce his catalogue, and then due to the elaborate image of siege he uses to characterize it: words are made up of internal boundaries ('retaining walls,' τριγχία) which keep components — letters, syllables, meanings — in place; a particularly perverse etymology is like a fortification-breach, letting morphological or semantic entities go where they shouldn't. Aside from offering a telling glimpse of a particular conception of how language 'parts' are supposed to work (and of etymology as illicit boundary-crossing), Lamprias' intervention is revealing in that it relies on specific social and cultural norms for its shock value. His point depends on the (apparently given) absurdity of subjecting Latin words to the same kind of whimsical derivations — from Greek — which symposiasts, and latter-day learned banqueters, conventionally apply to *their* words. This etymology stuff, Plutarch has his brother gibe, should never be taken *too* seriously — imagine playing such games with Latin! The irony, of course, is that Lamprias' tongue-in-cheek assertion, that Latin words are more 'proper' or 'correct' (and, by implication, more etymologically transparent), is made by employing *Greek* derivation, and by pretending for a

πάμπολλα τοῖς αὐτοῖς ὀνόμασι καταφανῶς χρώμενα, τίς οὐκ ἂν εἴποι ἐπὶ...Ἑλληνικῶς...λέγεσθαι, καθ' Ὅμηρον..., ἀπό..., ἀπό...ὡς Ὅμηρος...εἵκασέ που..., ἀπό...), and pointedly alternating his explanatory mode (four variously obvious derivations of two Latin words from Greek; a list of six words etc. that are "the same" in Latin and Greek; another familiar derivation of Latin from Greek; two Homeric derivations of two common Latin words — both to do with banqueting! — and interlacing, once again, more, and less, familiar etymologies of Latin words from Greek). Part of the effect is that his cleverness appears arbitrary. As it turns out, many of Lamprias' etymologies turn up elsewhere (cf. Maltby 1991 s.vv.), and a few are already in Varro: *quod graece γεύεται, latine gustat* (Ling. 6.84); *edo a Graeco ἔδω* (Ling. 6.84); *comiter hilare et lubenter, cuius origo graeca κῶμος, inde comisatio latine dicta* (Ling. 7.89). Unsurprisingly, the derivations of *panis* and *labrum*, and the Homeric etymologies (*miscere* < ἔμισγε *Od.* 10.356, *corona* < κράνος *Il.* 7.12), are otherwise unattested. 12 *Quaest. conv.* 727a. I follow here the transmitted εὐκόπως (with Teodorsson 1996, 227), rather than Wyttenbach's emendation to εὐκόλως, and take Lamprias as making a faux-etymological play on ἐκκόπτουσι; cf. Hubert's easy change to εὐκόπους (with παραδύσεις).

moment that the practice of Greek etymology might actually be more ‘at home’ (οἰκειότερα) in a foreign language.¹³ Significantly, Lamprias’ appeal to the linguistic division between Greek and Latin (and, implicitly, the cultural one between Greek and Roman) helps him articulate, and affirm, a hard and fast line between two ideals of intellectual pursuit: one for fun, and another for keeps.¹⁴ It is this distinction between seriousness and playfulness in the practice of ancient Greek and Roman etymologizing that I wish to problematize in the following discussion. After an introductory sketch of modern receptions of the ‘bad joke’ that is ancient etymology, I shall investigate some of the ways in which playfulness or humor might be significant to the meaning of Plutarch’s, and then Varro’s, process of etymologizing.¹⁵ Lamprias’ critique of ‘laughable’ etymologies will be important to this discussion for two reasons: first, because I take his challenging intervention as evidence that the distinction upon which he insists was by no means taken for granted among those engaging in etymologizing; second, and more importantly, because his comments thematize what it means to posit, or recount, etymologies as a prominent Greek intellectual (indeed a *pepaideumenos* par excellence) living under the Roman empire. While pinning down the tone, and effect, of such performative derivations will always be a challenge, Plutarch’s special position as an ‘etymologist’ of *both* Greek and Latin can help sharpen our understanding of how such experimental operations might have been received.

2 Serio-comic etymologizing

We tend not to think of truth-inquiries as humorous, and in the case of etymology, at least ancient etymology, the laughs aroused have tended to be scoffs: they elicit the occasional chuckle only because they seem silly, ridiculous, or simply arbitrary. Compare Quintilian (and Plutarch’s Lamprias) above. Until relatively recently, scholarly accounts of ancient etymology were almost exclusively that: accounts, reckonings, in which two itemized lists of derivations were drawn up — those of modern historical linguistics in one column, the ridiculous attempts of antiquity in the other — and the results carefully tallied, with ancient etymologies ending up

¹³ Cf. Teodorsson 1996, 223–224 and Pelling 2011, 210.

¹⁴ As noted by Teodorsson 1996, 227, Lamprias appears to “call for a new, serious and precise method of etymology,” but it is significant that Plutarch does not show himself approving (or disapproving of) his brother’s critique.

¹⁵ Spengel 1885, 245, on the derivation of *lucus a non lucendo* (“was uns wie ein schlechter Witz erscheint”), noted by De Melo 2019, 37.

very much in the red.¹⁶ Fortunately, that has (mostly) changed, and scholars have for some time been considering ancient etymological accounts as valuable in their own right, both as vital segments of broader views about the nature and operation of language and as potentially revealing clues of a more generally cultural nature.¹⁷ Sincere attempts have been made to see where exactly these origin-positors were coming from. It may be true that Plato, Varro, and Plutarch excelled in reliably producing the wrong answer (according to modern etymology), but, this revised view has it, there must have been some method in their apparent madness.¹⁸ In other words, what used to be wrong but funny rather suddenly became not necessarily wrong — but then again no longer funny either (it was no longer polite to laugh). Constructing a coherent system out of, say, Varro's, or even Plutarch's, etymologies now meant taking them seriously indeed, and much of their potential playfulness or even humor was stripped away in the process. An early, very particular contribution to this development, Frederick Ahl's *Metaformations*, used scraps of ancient linguistics, etymology in particular, as a backdrop against which to explore wordplay in poetry, primarily Ovid.¹⁹ A virtue of this polemical work was its willingness to treat Greek and Roman thinking about language as fundamentally different from modern, scientific approaches — and this had the thrilling effect of enriching and complicating many familiar literary texts — but it also resulted in strengthening the already firm division between ancient etymology and its more assuredly literary reflex: wordplay. For, on a strictly formal level, ancient etymology often works in a way similar to wordplay, except that it is framed in a rather different context: often it is played more directly for, or against, authority (cultural or linguistic) rather than just for laughs. While this greater sensitivity to context is commendable, it seems that modern categories have allowed us to make distinctions firmer and tighter than they actually were. After all, modern linguistic explication is serious business — certainly no laughing matter. Marked differences in interpretative approaches to ancient etymologizing mirror such a split: whereas readings of etymological wordplay in (primarily) poetic texts have tended, rightly, to emphasize

16 E.g., the footnotes to Kent's Loeb of Varro *Ling.* (1938); observed by Hinds 2006, 2 and 19–20. De Melo 2019, 45 notes that Varro "is right in about 40% of all cases" — i.e., not bad compared to 'other ancient etymologists,' but this figure is tempered by the observation that many of Varro's 'correct' derivations are either erroneously argued or obvious: "ultimately, then, we may not be able to learn anything about specific words from Varro."

17 Cf. Taylor 1975; Amsler 1989, 15–56; the survey of Rawson 1985, 117–131 which is brief but sympathetic; Ahl 1985, 17–60; Maltby 1991; O'Hara 1996, 42–50; Bloomer 1997, 38–72.

18 E.g., the valuable accounts of Plato's *Cratylus* by Baxter 1992 and Sedley 2003, and of Varro by Taylor 1975 and Pfaffel 1981.

19 Ahl 1985.

context in seeking to understand the potential force and tone of a particular derivation, the more ‘technical’ derivations such as those appearing in the texts discussed here are frequently extracted from their contexts and treated as itemizable content. This should come as no surprise, since ‘poetic’ etymology has primarily been used as a special means of accessing a particular (privileged) text’s meaning, while, e.g., Varro’s etymologies are often seen as consultable items whose textual form is incidental to their value (as Latin lore, trivia, or objects of mockery). As reading strategies, that is, these methods move in opposite directions, one employing ancient etymology to explicate a text, the other employing a text to explicate ancient etymology. Ovid was playing with etymology in verse; the *De lingua latina* compiles weird specimens of etymological pedantry. In the case of the former, etymology is of interest because it pops up in Ovid; Varro has been interesting to literary scholars primarily because his text contains — *preserves* — etymologies.

None of this should come as much of a surprise, of course, but as a way of coming closer to an understanding of not just the mentalities of ancient etymologizing, but also their performativity and textualization, I suggest that we attempt to collapse this boundary of serious vs. playful derivation, if at all possible. That is, what if we were to acknowledge the potential humor, but recognize that it does not comfortably map onto modern divisions of ‘dead seriousness’ and ‘play let loose.’ For examining the variety, contradiction, expansiveness, and sheer strangeness of, for instance, Plutarch’s etymologies tells us that the line between seriousness and play can only seem artificial, in the context of his vast and variegated material. So, an axiom for what follows: Plutarch’s etymology represents a form of humorous play which, while certainly ludic, nevertheless has a powerful truth-value for its participants, if only in that it allows multiple, surprising, and often fleeting glimpses into the structure of the world as mediated through the slipperiness of language. This kind of playful investigation, already familiar to us from Plato’s *Cratylus*, is especially at home in the dialogic context of the *symposium* (hence the preponderance of etymologies in works such as the *Table Talk*).²⁰ Plutarch’s ‘latecomer’ status injects mimetic, intertextual dimensions into this model: his etymological truth-play depends on an eagerness to romp through vast quantities of literary, historical, and antiquarian learning. Thus far, things would seem fairly uncontroversial. But matters become much more complex when Plutarch presents derivations of Latin words, either from Greek words or from other Latin words. Clearly the stakes are

20 At *Quaest. conv.* 746b, Plutarch has himself quoting Plato’s authority for the notion that the gods’ names can be traced (‘like tracks’) to find their essences (ἐγὼ...ἔφην ὅτι ‘καὶ Πλάτων αὐτὸς ὥσπερ ἵχνεσι τοῖς ὀνόμασι τῶν θεῶν ἀνευρίσκειν οἶεται τὰς δυνάμεις’), a reference to *Cratylus* 393b (~ τινος ὥσπερ ἵχνους) and the etymologies at 396a–c. See Teodorsson 1996, and Göldi 1922, 10–15.

higher when Plutarch confronts Latin etymology, and I shall return to this issue at the end of the next section. After that, I conclude with a brief discussion of the possible role of humorous effects in the etymological discussions of the Roman scholar and antiquarian Varro, who is, for us, Plutarch's most significant predecessor as a wide-ranging and prolific interpreter of Roman language and culture.

3 Deriving Greek under Rome

I shall first look at several ways in which Plutarch's numerous etymologies might have been — might have sounded or read — humorous. First of all, there is his technique of verbal expansion, treating words as if they were acronyms concealing the elements of other words within their structure, or as if simplex words were instead compounds (already familiar, or notorious, from the *Cratylus*). So, in the *de Primo Frigido*, he derives κνέφας ('darkness') from κενός ('empty') and φῶς ('light'), that is, 'light-less-ness'. Or νέφος ('cloud') is analysed into the negative prefix νη- and φῶς: 'no light'.²¹ 'Victory' (νίκη) comes from 'not yielding,' τὸ μὴ εἶκον.²² The Muses, Μοῦσαι, are so-called because they 'are together,' ὁμοῦ...οὔσαι, forever in concord and sisterly affection.²³ The Sirens (Σειρήνες) 'speak divine matters' (τὰ θεῖα εἰρουσι).²⁴ Deer are said to be called ἔλαφοι not because they are 'nimble' (ἐλαφρός), but because of their "power of attracting snakes" (τῆς ἔλξεως τοῦ ὄφεως)!²⁵ Nourishment, τροφή, is named from "preserving nature" (τὸ τηροῦν τὴν φύσιν).²⁶ The rose is called ρόδος because, almost lyrically, it "releases a flow of scent" (ῥεῦμα πολὺ τῆς ὁδωδῆς).²⁷ In one instance, the expansive etymology of γέροντες, 'old men', from ῥέοντες εἰς γῆν, "flowing into earth," is rejected in favor of an alternative, but similarly charming, derivation, which is not (as far as I can tell) an example of this kind of expansion.

21 *De prim. frig.* 948e–f: καὶ γὰρ 'κνέφας' τὸν ἀφώτιστον ἀέρα καλοῦσι, κενὸν ὡς ἔοικε φάους ὄντα· καὶ 'νέφος' ὁ συμπεσὼν καὶ πυκνωθεὶς ἀῆρ ἀποφάσει φωτὸς κέκληται.

22 *Quaest. conv.* 723b (palm wreath), with Teodorsson 1996, 199.

23 *De frat. amor.* 480e: ὁ δ' Ἡσίοδος οὐκ εὖ παραινεῖ 'μουνονγενῇ παῖδα' τῶν πατρῶων ἐπὶ κληρον εἶναι (*Op.* 376), καὶ ταῦτα τῶν Μουσῶν γεγρονῶς μαθητῆς, ἅς ὁμοῦ δι' εὐνοίαν ἀεὶ καὶ φιλαδελφίαν οὔσας οὕτως ὠνόμαζον, μούσας.

24 *Quaest. conv.* 9.745f.

25 *De soll. an.* 976d: ...ἐλάφοις δ' ὄφεις ἀγόμενοι ῥαδίως ὑπ' αὐτῶν (ἢ καὶ τοῦνομα πεποιήται παρὼν μόνον οὐ τῆς ἐλαφρότητος ἀλλὰ τῆς ἔλξεως τοῦ ὄφεως).

26 *Quaest. conv.* 688a: οὕτω γὰρ οἶμαι καὶ τροφὴν ὠνομάσθαι τὸ τηροῦν τὴν φύσιν.

27 *Quaest. conv.* 648a: τὸ δὲ ρόδον ὠνόμασται δῆπουθεν, ὅτι ῥεῦμα πολὺ τῆς ὁδωδῆς ἀφίησι.

Instead, γέροντες is to be from γεώδεις καὶ γεηροί, because they are “earth-like and earthy.”²⁸

By a process that is almost the reverse of such unpacking, words that would seem, in linguistic terms at least, entirely distinct are revealed to be one and the same, or perhaps different reflexes of the same thing. The result still delivers a punchline. So, the god Κρόνος is said to be the same as χρόνος (‘time’), Ἥρα is αἴρ (‘air’),²⁹ and ἦθος (‘character’) derives from ἔθος (‘habit’).³⁰ Εἰρήνη (‘peace’) comes from εἶπειν ‘talking’. Ὕν(ν)ις ‘ploughshare’ comes from ὕς ‘swine’, because these animals taught men how to dig a furrow.³¹ And perhaps most preposterously of all, we are told twice by Plutarch that πάντα (‘all’) comes from πέντε (‘five’).³² How can ‘five’ turn into ‘all’? The answer turns out to be that five represents the sum of the first even and the first odd numbers (two and three), but the fact remains that a kind of provocative play is at work.

In all of these cases, it seems that we are meant to be amused, or at the very least pleasantly surprised, though in slightly different ways in each context. However, we should not for this reason simply write these derivations off as trifling wordplay. Some truth is being grasped at every turn, and the humor arises from its unexpected revelation, whether through the disclosure of some previously concealed facet of semantics, or, more perversely, as in the case of πάντα and πέντε, from the dramatic reinterpretation of something that was right under our noses all along. That is, not hidden away, but so obvious as to be all but invisible.

So far, the examples listed reveal their potential humor, even stripped of context as they are here. But in many instances, the manner in which the derivations are revealed can in itself be funny, or at least ludic, as well. Often Plutarch appears to delight in paradox and will present two opposite derivations of a single word. I don’t mean simply different derivations, as in his multiple etymologies of Hades from ἡδύς (‘sweet’)³³ and ἀειδής (‘invisible’).³⁴ Such derivations would seem to

28 *Quaest. conv.* 650c–d: οἱ δὲ γέροντες ὅτι μὲν εἰσιν ἐνδεεῖς ἰκμάδος οἰκείας, τοῦνομά μοι δοκεῖ φράζειν πρῶτον· οὐ γὰρ ὡς ῥέοντες εἰς γῆν, ἀλλ’ ὡς γεώδεις καὶ γεηροί τινες ἤδη γινόμενοι τὴν ἕξιν οὕτω προσαγορεύονται.

29 *De Is. et Os.* 363d.

30 *De virt. mor.* 443c; *De sera num.* 551e.

31 *Quaest. conv.* 760a: τὴν δ’ ὕν ἀπὸ χρηστῆς αἰτίας τιμᾶσθαι λέγουσι· πρώτη γὰρ σχίσασα τῷ προύχοντι τοῦ ῥύγχους, ὡς φασι, τὴν γῆν ἵχνος ἀρόσεως ἔθηκεν καὶ τὸ τῆς ὕνεως ὑψηλήσας ἔργον· ὅθεν καὶ τοῦνομα γενέσθαι τῷ ἐργαλείῳ λέγουσιν ἀπὸ τῆς ὕος.

32 *De Is. et Os.* 374a; *De def. or.* 429d: οἶμαι δὲ καὶ τὰ πάντα τῶν πέντε παρώνυμα γεγονέναι κατὰ λόγον, ἅτε δὴ τῆς πεντάδος ἐκ τῶν πρώτων ἀριθμῶν συνεστῶσης.

33 *De Is. et Os.* 362d.

34 *De prim. frig.* 948f.

represent a notion of etymology as a process of accumulation, an aggregate of stabs at disclosing immanent meaning — whatever humor or amusement results would depend on the thrill offered by such glimpses. By contrast, there are etymologies in Plutarch that locate the essence of a particular word in two (apparently) mutually exclusive senses. We saw this already with δειπνον. In the case of the god Ares, his name is said at one point to come from ἀναιρεῖν, ‘to destroy,’ and from ἀρήγειν ‘to help,’ at another.³⁵ Indeed, in addition to the etymologies themselves, the very multiplicity of Plutarch’s derivations can itself be a source of amusement. These lists are often delightful because of their playful exuberance, but subtle irony or parody, even deflected onto the practice of etymologizing itself, is never very far off. It is significant, in such textual moments of etymological accumulation that Plutarch seldom commits himself to any one of the interpretations he unveils. His account in his *Theseus* of the epithet of the Dioscuri, Ἄνακες, is striking for this apparently unresolved plurality:

καὶ τιμὰς ἰσοθέους ἔσχον, Ἄνακες προσαγορευθέντες ἢ διὰ τὰς γενομένας ἀνοχάς, ἢ διὰ τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν καὶ κηδεμονίαν τοῦ μηδένα κακῶς παθεῖν στρατιᾶς τοσαύτης ἔνδον οὐσης· ἀνακῶς γὰρ ἔχειν τοὺς ἐπιμελομένους ἢ φυλάττοντας ὁτιοῦν· καὶ τοὺς βασιλεῖς ἴσως ἀνακτας διὰ τοῦτο καλοῦσιν. εἰσὶ δ’ οἱ λέγοντες διὰ τὴν τῶν ἀστέρων ἐπιφάνειαν Ἄνακας ὀνομάζεσθαι· τὸ γὰρ ἄνω τοὺς Ἀττικοὺς ἀνέκας ὀνομάζειν, καὶ ἀνέκαθεν τὸ ἄνωθεν.

They also obtained honors like those given to gods, and were addressed as Anakes, either on account of their ‘stopping’ (τὰς γενομένας ἀνοχάς) hostilities, or because of their attention and care that no one should be injured, even though there was such a large army within the city; for the phrase ἀνακῶς...ἔχειν is used of such as ‘care for,’ or ‘guard’ anything, and perhaps it is for this reason that kings are called ‘lords’ (ἀνακτας). There are also those who say that the Dioscuri were called Anakes because of the appearance of their twin stars in the sky, since the Athenians use ἀνεκὰς and ἀνέκαθεν for ἄνω and ἄνωθεν, signifying ‘above’ or ‘on high.’³⁶

Three possible, but to our mind incompatible, explanations are offered, but no conclusion is reached. We are simply tantalized by the options, each offering a potentially revealing glimpse of some underlying nature of the divinities — and then Plutarch’s narrative of Theseus resumes. That this process was quite self-conscious can be shown by a similarly chaotic unraveling that takes place in the life of Numa. This time Plutarch provides an almost virtuosic enumeration of etymologies of a Latin word, *ancile*, the bronze shield said to have fallen from the sky and reproduced for the king with eerie exactitude by the legendary craftsman, Mamurius Veturius. So skilled was this Mamurius, that not even Numa could identify the original.

³⁵ Ἀναιρεῖν: *Amat.* 757b; ἀρήγειν: fragment 157 (*De Daed.*).

³⁶ *Thes.* 33.2–3 (translation adapted from the Loeb of Perrin).

Αὐτὰς δὲ τὰς πέλτας ἀγκύλια καλοῦσι διὰ τὸ σχῆμα· κύκλος γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲ ἀποδίδωσιν, ὡς πέλτη, τὴν περιφέρειαν, ἀλλ' ἐκτομὴν ἔχει γραμμῆς ἐλικοειδοῦς, ἥς αἱ κεραταὶ καμπὰς ἔχουσαι καὶ συνεπιστρέφουσαι τῇ πυκνότητι πρὸς ἀλλήλας ἀγκύλον τὸ σχῆμα ποιοῦσιν· ἢ διὰ τὸν ἀγκῶνα περὶ ὃν περιφέρονται. ταῦτα γὰρ ὁ Τόβας εἶρηκε γλιχόμενος ἐξελληνίσαι τοῦνομα. δύναιτο δ' ἂν τῆς ἀνέκαθεν φορᾶς πρῶτον ἐπώνυμον γεγενῆσθαι, καὶ τῆς ἀκέσεως τῶν νοσοῦντων, καὶ τῆς τῶν αὐχμῶν λύσεως, ἔτι δὲ τῆς τῶν δεινῶν ἀνασχέσεως, καθ' ὃ καὶ τοὺς Διοσκούρους Ἄνακας Ἀθηναῖοι προσηγόρευσαν, εἴ γε δεῖ πρὸς τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν διάλεκτον ἐξάγειν τοῦνομα.

The shields themselves are called *ancilia* (ἀγκύλια) from their shape; for this is not round, nor yet completely oval, like a regular shield, but has a curving indentation, the arms of which are bent back and united with each other at top and bottom; this makes the shape 'curved' (ἀγκύλον). Or else they are named from the 'elbow' (ἀγκῶνα) on which they are carried. This is what Juba says, yearning to derive the name from the Greek. But the name may come from the Greek (ἀνέκαθεν) inasmuch as the original shield fell 'from on high'; or from 'healing' those who were sick from the plague (τῆς ἀκέσεως τῶν νοσοῦντων); or from 'putting an end to the drought' (τῆς τῶν αὐχμῶν λύσεως); or, further, because it brought a 'cessation' of calamities (τῆς τῶν δεινῶν ἀνασχέσεως), just as Castor and Pollux were called Anakes by the Athenians; if, that is, we must derive the name from the Greek.³⁷

We have not only picked up yet another derivation of our earlier example, Anakes, along the way, but the passage ends with the suggestion that this list is far from exhaustive. For Plutarch has not even begun to treat etymologies that derive *ancile* from Latin. Once again, no decision is reached; Plutarch pauses for his set-piece elaboration and then simply presses on. But perhaps this is part of the point: in the context of this discursive, playful, and plural version of etymology, the goal is (strangely to us) not necessarily to identify a single, true original. Rather, it is a way of teasing out, and in the process certainly enhancing, the significance and the significant aspects of some verbal specimen, in this case *ancile*. An elaborated showcasing of a glittering array of potential verbal originals for a glittering array of sacred objects whose significance depends primarily on their being indistinguishable versions of one (potentially) original thing.³⁸

What then of the tricky question of Plutarch's handling of Latin derivations? I have already suggested that the Greek etymologies are a way of enacting a self-consciously constructed version of prior Greek dialogue, a more learned and antiquarian, backward-looking take on the playful pursuit of the truth (as practiced by Platonic symposiasts). But it is in the context of tracing Latin word origins that things become more complicated: presenting oneself repeatedly, albeit in passing, as a,

³⁷ *Num.* 13.5–6 (slightly adapted from Perrin).

³⁸ Cf. Buszard 2011, 152–153, who instead argues that Plutarch is mocking such derivations, and sarcastically rejecting Juba's — and any — attempts to devise a Greek etymology for *ancile*. But Plutarch's aesthetic of accumulation when tackling etymology is hardly unique here.

perhaps *the* authority on the origins of Greek words is one thing; deriving the origins of the Latin language is undoubtedly more fraught. Scholars have noted, with a variety of emphases, Plutarch's seeming reluctance to advocate for Greek origins of Latin words, as if this would be to assert that the entire Latin language was wholly derivative, simply a late offshoot of Greek — the so-called 'Aeolic theory' — and thus too brazen, chauvinistic, or even dangerous.³⁹ For instance, Plutarch frequently enumerates Greek etymologies of Latin words in the *Roman Questions*, but, from what we can reconstruct of his sources, apparently chooses not to press for Greek derivations of Latin terms in his *Lives* of Romulus and Numa, biographies in which the question of cultural origins is obviously front and center.⁴⁰ But when he does etymologize Latin words from Greek, as we have seen, more overt humor fairly reliably ensues, as if to provide a kind of defense or way out. That such playful, dialogic, Greek etymologies of Latin words are put into the mouth of Lamprias, and then even further ironized, is certainly a way of playing it safe: a tactic of self-distancing. The Latin-Latin examples, by contrast, tend not to be so humorous or enumerative. The month Maius ('May') comes from the *maiores*;⁴¹ *dictator* comes from *dicere*, or *edicere*;⁴² the *opima* of *spolia opima* comes from either *ops* or *opus*.⁴³ The *pomerium* comes from *post* and *murus*.⁴⁴ This tendency may be related to Plutarch's declared lack of expertise in the Latin language itself (however modest, or misleading).⁴⁵ Sometimes his purpose for including Latin-Latin derivations is merely explanatory, a way of helping out his Greek readers. But the fact remains that Plutarch seems not to access, or invoke, a Roman, Latin version of the serio-comic discourse of Greek etymologizing I sketched out above. For even if he does on occasion appear to contradict Varro (for example, in preferring a derivation of *pontifex* from *posse* and *facere*, rather than anything to do with bridge building), such contradictions are hardly signaled, and certainly not characterized by dialogic banter, a phenomenon which could suggest a willingness to (be seen to) defer to the Roman *auctoritas* of a Varro or a Verrius.⁴⁶ Juba is more often cited by name as a

³⁹ See, e.g., Stevens 2006.

⁴⁰ As argued by Buszard 2011.

⁴¹ *Quaest. Rom.* 285b; *Num.* 19.

⁴² *Marc.* 24.

⁴³ *Marc.* 8; *Rom.* 16.

⁴⁴ *Rom.* 11.

⁴⁵ Cf. Sickinger 1883; Göldi 1922, 20–26; Rose 1924, 11–19; Jones 1971, 81–87; Russell 1972; De Rosalia 1991; Strobach 1997, 32–46.

⁴⁶ Varro *Ling.* 5.83 (and Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.73.1, 3.45.2; Servius Dan. *ad Aen.* 2.166) for the derivation of *pontifex* from *pons* and *facere*. Stadter (2014, 177) argues that Plutarch's derivation (at *Num.* 9.2) "asserts the pre-eminence of the gods, the notion that lies at the heart of Plutarch's

source for Plutarch's Greek etymologies of Latin in the *Roman Questions*.⁴⁷ Whatever Plutarch's actual expertise in Latin was, even his declarations of inexperience must be part of the ever delicate negotiation of learned Greek-identity under Roman power (and, to some extent, culture) that his writing exemplifies. Jokes do not translate easily across cultures — still less do discourses of etymological play, especially when, as Plutarch reminds the addressee of his treatise of advice on public life, one must defer (ultimately) to Roman authority since you “see the boots above your head.”⁴⁸

4 Varro σπουδογέλοιος?

I have so far been suggesting that the cultural, and inter-cultural, dynamic — here between Greek and Roman — must be taken into consideration for an understanding of the meaning of Plutarch's *etymologiae*. A version of such a dynamic must also underlie Varro's *De lingua latina*, a text which, after all, represents a large-scale attempt to translate a characteristically Greek intellectual discourse for Roman readers, a basic issue of interpretation that deserves further study.⁴⁹ If we were to look beyond Plutarch's apparent reluctance to engage freely in a Greek intellectual discourse when faced with Latin material, we might even say that his relative lack of humorous treatment of Latin-Latin derivations (in Greek) reflects a feature of his actual Latin sources. Varro's *De lingua latina*, it must be admitted, is not widely known for its runs of witty banter. The scorn exhibited by Quintilian in my opening passage may be a (rhetorician's) reflex of a mocking tone occasionally adopted by Varro and other Latin grammarians attacking their rival etymologers, but the fact

interpretation of Numa's life” and thus, next to his account of the Vestal buried alive at 10.8–13, is introduced to present a counterpoint to Domitian's recent punishment of a Vestal. On Plutarch's use of Varro, see Valgiglio 1976.

⁴⁷ On Juba, see Roller 2003, and on Juba's language-focused fragments Funaioli *GRF* pp. 451–456.

⁴⁸ *Prae. ger. reip.* 813e–f (ὁρῶντα τοὺς καλτίους [< *calceus*] ἐπάνω τῆς κεφαλῆς), on the dynamic of the prominent Greek who “rules, though ruled” needing to play it safe, once more, like Lamprias' boundary-crossing Latin-Greek etymologies, articulated in terms of a characteristically Greek cultural practice (the actor's impassioned performance ultimately constrained by the authority of poetic form — but instead of heckling, the transgressor must beware the *axe*!). For further context, cf. Jones 1971, 110–121 and, on this passage, Swain 1996, 66.

⁴⁹ A number of Varro's predecessors had of course already treated Latin etymology (e.g., Aelius Stilo, Nigidius Figulus, and Aurelius Opilius), but he appears to have done so on an unprecedented scale. On some of the cultural aspects of Varro's project, cf. Bloomer 1997, 38–72, and for background, Rawson 1985, 117–131.

remains that this form of banter is more about refutation than the playful disclosure of some concealed essence (or intertextual reference).

But there is a playful strand running through many of Varro's works and it is worth considering how that might be present in *De lingua latina*. As is frequently noted, earlier in his career Varro wrote 150 books of serio-comic Menippean satires.⁵⁰ The parodic potential of Varro's *De re rustica* had not been explored until relatively recently.⁵¹ A case has been made for a particular type of personifying humor bubbling up in much of Varro's work, most obvious in *De re rustica*, but also surfacing in *De lingua latina*. It may have been a distinctive enough tic for Cicero to invoke it in his letter to the scholar (*fam.* 9.8), in which he reminds Varro of his (supposed) promise to dedicate a work to him using a playful image of Cicero's own four books of *Academica*, dedicated to Varro, doing the work of personified 'reminders' (*misi autem ad te quattuor admonitores non nimis uerecundos*).⁵² Such personifying humor as we do encounter in *De lingua latina* appears in the prefatory sections, rather than in the context of the actual derivations.⁵³ In this concluding section, rather than tracing out the potentially playful aspects of the Greek-Roman interface noted above, or the strand of agonistic banter apparent in Latin etymologizing, I shall briefly examine some potential aspects of Varro's 'etymological play' that deserve further investigation.

The *De lingua latina* certainly exhibits many of the striking (and potentially comic) features already noted in Plutarch's derivations. Part of the charm of Varro's derivation of *quaerere* from *quae rēs* could be in suggesting that a 'bad joke' might

50 Cf. Cic. *Acad. post.* 1.8 (45 BCE), "Varro's" description of his Menippeans (likely c. 80–60 BCE), which he "sprinkled with a certain jocularly" (*quadam hilaritate conspersimus*). Several fragments include what is typically classified as "etymological wordplay," e.g., 64 Astbury (*Bimarcus: sociis es hostis, hostibus socius, bellum ita geris ut bella omnia domum auferas*; Schröter 1963, 81 compares *bellum quod res bella non sit* GRF p. 283, fr. 265, cited by Augustine as an example of *e contrario*), and several in 333–341 (*Nescis quid uesper serus uehat* = Gell. 13.11).

51 Kronenberg 2009, 73–129; parodic potential is downplayed by Skydsgaard 1968, 36, though note his passing comment at 35, as well as the brief account of Laughton 1978.

52 Laughton 1978, 105–106, comparing the personifying joke at *fam.* 9.1.2 (*scito enim me...redisse cum ueteribus amicis, id est cum libris nostris, in gratiam*), also to Varro. Cf. *Att.* 13.25, describing the letter to Varro, and Della Corte 1970, 169–192. As noted by the reader, Varro's original dedication of books 2–4 to his quaestor P. Septimius (rather than Cicero) might have been a joke at the impatient Cicero's expense! See Flobert 2019, 90 on *Ling.* 7.109.

53 E.g., as noted by Laughton 1978, 106, *Ling.* 5.5 (derivations are to be tracked down in a shadowy wood) and *Ling.* 6.1 (Varro tacitly begs pardon for 'obeying' [*geremus morem*] the words' kinship rather than the listener's unfair objections).

in fact be veracious, or at least revealing.⁵⁴ What if, Varro's metaphorical etymology suggests, *rorarii* ('skirmishers') were truly named from *ros* because it 'drizzles' (*rorat*) before it rains, the analogical drops before the downpour?⁵⁵ The oversimplifying story behind his etymology of *nexus* from *nec suum* (surely, rather than *neque suum*) could be meant to press the audience's sense of disbelief and then press them to deny its truth.⁵⁶ And the occasions on which Varro suggests two etymologies, not as alternatives, but apparently as coexisting derivations, appear to involve a technique of playful revelation. *Pālus* is named after 'a bit' (*paululum*) of water with regard to depth and water 'widely' (*palam*) spread.⁵⁷ *Sarculum* comes from both 'sowing' (*serere*) and 'weeding' (*sarīre*).⁵⁸ *Volo* is from 'wishing' and 'flying' — absurd, unless we try to imagine a circumstance in which the movement of will is somehow concretized.⁵⁹ An extreme case occurs when Varro offers a nutshell account of the semantic development of *latrones* ('mercenaries' > 'brigands'), and then promptly provides a different etymology for each — that is, each *meaning* of *latro*, he seems to be teasing his reader with potential alternatives.⁶⁰

But, as already stated at the outset, understanding the tone of Varro's etymology means reading how they are textualized. I offer, lastly, some choice samples of

54 6.79: *ipsum qu<a>erere ab eo quod quae res ut reciperetur datur opera* ("Quaerere 'to seek' itself is from the fact that an effort is made that 'some thing' [*quae res*] be recovered").

55 7.58: *rorarii dicti ab rore qui bellum committebant, ideo quod ante rorat quam pluit* ("Rorarii ['skirmishers'] who started the battle were named from 'dew' [*ros*] because it 'drizzles' [*rorat*] before it rains"). Verrius (Paul. Fest. 13, 323) apparently thought it worth accepting (or recording).

56 7.105: *nam id <a>es quod obligatur per libram neque suum fit, inde nexum dictum* ("For that copper which is under obligation according to the scale and does 'not' [*neque*] become 'his own' [*suum*] is therefore called *nexum* 'bound obligation'").

57 5.26: *palus paululum aquae in altitudinem et palam latius diffusae* ("Palus ['swamp'] is a 'little bit' [*paululum*] of water with respect to depth and widely dispersed 'openly' [*palam*]").

58 5.134: *sarculum ab serendo ac sariendo* ("Sarculum ['hoe'] is from 'sowing' [*serendo*] and 'weeding' [*sariendo*]").

59 6.47: *uolo a uoluntate dictum et a uolatu, quod animus ita est, ut puncto temporis peruolet quo uult* ("Volo ['I want'] is named from 'wish' [*uoluntate*] and 'flight' [*uolatu*], because the mind is such that it in an instant of time it 'flies through' [*peruolet*] to wherever it wishes [*uult*]").

60 At 7.52: *latrones dicti ab latere, qui circum latera erant regi atque ad latera habebant ferrum, quos postea a stipatione stipatores appellarunt, et qui conducebantur; ea enim merces Graece dicitur λάτρον. Ab eo ueteres poetae nonnunquam milites latrones. <at nunc uiarum obsessores dicuntur latrones,> quod item ut milites <sunt> cum ferro, aut quod latent ad insidias faciendas* ("Latrones ['mercenaries'] were called from 'side' [*latus*], who were at the side of the king and had a sword at their side (these they subsequently called stipatores ['bodyguards'] from stipatio ['closeness']: for this pay is called λάτρον in Greek). But now highway robbers are called *latrones*, because just like soldiers they have a sword, or because they 'lurk' (latent) to make an ambush"). That is, the etymology of *latro* 'mercenary' is from *latus* (and λάτρον?) and that of *latro* 'robber' is from *latēre*.

the texture of Varro's etymologies in Book 5, and briefly to sketch out some of the interpretative issues I believe are raised by Varro's very manner of writing. The most interesting of these is at 5.25:

is [sc. humor] si quamvis deorsum in terra, unde sumi pote, puteus; nisi potius quod <A>eolis dicebant ut πύταμον sic πύτεον a potu, non ut nunc φρέ<ap>. a puteis oppidum ut Puteoli, quod incircum eum locum aquae frigidae et caldae multae, nisi a putore potius, quod putidus odoribus s<a>epe ex sulphure et alumine. extra oppida a puteis puticuli, quod ibi in puteis obruebantur homines, nisi potius, ut Aelius scribit, puticuli, quod putescebant ibi cadavera proiecta, qui locus publicus ultra Esquilias. itaque eum Afranius putilucos in Togata appellat, quod inde suspiciunt per puteos lumen.

If this moisture is in the ground no matter how far down, in a place from which it can (*pote*) be taken, it is a well (*puteus*); unless rather (*potius*) because the Aeolians used to say, like πύταμος for πόταμος ('river'), so πύτεος ('well') for πότεος ('drinkable'), from drinking (*potus*), and not φρέαρ ('well') as they do now. From wells (*putei*) comes the town-name of, for example, Puteoli, because around this place there are many hot and cold spring-waters; unless rather (*potius*) from stench (*putor*), because the place is often stinking (*putidus*) with smells of sulphur and alum. Outside the towns there are little pits (*puticuli*), named from pits (*putei*), because there people used to be buried in pits (*putei*); unless rather (*potius*), as Aelius writes, the little pits (*puticuli*) are so called because the corpses which had been thrown out used to rot (*putescebant*) there, in the public burial-place beyond the Esquiline. Thus Afranius in a *fabula togata* calls this place 'pit-lights' (*putiluci*), because they look up through the pits (*putei*) to the light (*lumen*).⁶¹

Following his characteristic procedure in Book 5 of charting "places and those things which are seen in them" via semantic associations (which are generally transparent), Varro is here in the process of plumbing further his line of connection between *humus* ('soil') and *humor* ('moisture'). That a *puteus* ('well') would seem to have a special significance as a place under the soil which possesses moisture accounts for Varro's movement from the earlier cluster of *terra* and *humus*, to, here, *puteus* (and then on to *lacus* and related bodies of water). But that apparent straightforwardness is belied by the almost dizzying elaboration of the process of derivation (of *puteus*) itself: first, from *pote* (since water *can* be taken from it); then, from Aeolic Greek (*puteos*, with a brief dialectal aside), and then, from *putor* ('stench'), a derivation which gets the most attention and even ends with a kind of flourish, through a citation of a punning description of graves by Afranius. As usual,

⁶¹ *Ling.* 5.25; text and translation from Kent 1938. Hinds 2006, 12, already saw the passage as (potentially) revealing along lines similar to those sketched here, observing Varro's repetition of *potius* (after *puteus* < *pote*). By contrast, De Melo (2019, 670) notes: "*Puteus* 'well' has no convincing modern etymology... Varro's derivation from (*sūmī*) *pote* 'it can (be drawn)' is obviously nonsense."

none of the derivations is singled out as the most likely — Varro does not stake a claim to any of the three. But more striking is the unsettling collocation of a derivation word (*pote*; *puteus* is a place from which water ‘can’ be drawn) and term of derivation (*potius*, or *rather puteus* is an Aeolic word). That is, the former is an intrinsic part of the derivation; the latter is a meta-term for the *process* of derivation. It should be noted that *potius*, like its positive form *pote*, is a fairly common derivational marker in Varro, just as, for example, *eo...quod* or *quod*. But there is a variety of expressions that Varro can use to articulate his process of derivation, and it is difficult to believe that he would have been unaware of the resulting heuristic static. Perhaps this is an example of a deliberate stylistic method meant to nudge the reader, however coyly, to scrutinize more deeply the operation of linguistic reference. Etymology is everywhere, such a passage conveys: where there’s a well there’s a way. Or, if we are not comfortable postulating that Varro is intentionally melding the object and, as it were, the tools of his etymological practice, he has at least written his derivation of *puteus* by way of a cluster of paranomasiac side-effects, whether for fun or by accident. At the very least, the existence of such a textual dynamic further induces the reader to tread cautiously, concertedly disentangling message and medium.

Later (5.61–63), a different but kindred issue is problematized by Varro in his account of the etymology of Venus. Once again, for texture, the passage deserves quoting in full:

igitur causa nascendi duplex: ignis et aqua. ideo ea nuptiis in limine adhibentur, quod coniungit<ur> hic, et mas ignis, quod ibi semen, aqua femina, quod fetus ab eius humore, et horum unionis uis Venus. hinc comicus: ‘huic uictrix Venus, uidesne haec?’ non quod uincere uelit Venus, sed uincire. ipsa Victoria ab eo quod superati uinciuntur. utrique testis poesis, quod et Victoria et Venus dicitur caeligena: Tellus enim quod prima uincta Caelo, Victoria ex eo. ideo haec cum corona et palma, quod corona uinclum capitis et ipsa a uinctura dicitur uieri, <id> est uinciri; a quo est in Sota Enni: ‘ibant malaci uiere Veneriam corolla.’ palmam, quod ex utraque parte natura uincta habet paria folia. poetae de Caelo quod semen igneum cecidisse dicunt in mare ac natam ‘e spumis’ Venerem, coniunctione ignis et humoris, quam habent uim significant esse Ve<ne>ris. a qua ui natis dicta uita et illud a Lucilio: ‘uis est uita, uides, uis nos facere omnia cogit.’

Therefore [i.e., since summer and winter demonstrate that neither excessive heat nor moisture is generative] the conditions of procreation are two: fire and water. Thus these are used at the threshold in weddings, because there is union here, and fire is male, because the seed is in the one, and the water is female, because the offspring is born from the moisture of the latter, and the force (*uis*) of their binding (*uinctio*) is Venus. Hence the comic poet says, “Venus is his victress, do you see it?” not because Venus wishes to conquer (*uincere*), but to bind (*uincire*). Victory herself is named from the fact that the overpowered are bound (*uinciuntur*). Poetry bears testimony to both, because both Victory and Venus are called heaven-born; for Tellus, because she was the first one bound to the Sky, is from that called Victory. Therefore

she is connected with the garland (*corona*) and the palm (*palma*), because the garland is a binder (*uinclum*) of the head and is itself, from *uinctura* ('binding'), said to be plaited (*uieri*), that is, to be bound (*uinciri*); whence there is the line in Ennius' *Sota*: "The soft pair were going, to plait the Love-god's garland." Palm (*palma*) is so named because, being naturally bound on both sides, it has equal (*paria*) leaves. The poets, in that they say that the fiery seed fell from the Sky into the sea and Venus was born "from the foam," through the conjunction of fire and moisture, are indicating that the force (*uis*) which they have is that of Venus. Those born of this vis have what is called life (*uita*), and that was meant by Lucilius: "Life is force, you see; it is force that makes us to do everything."⁶²

Varro's insistence on the connection of *Venus* to *uincire* ('binding') is rather surprising, especially given that he offers the well-attested alternative (*uincere*, to conquer) elsewhere in his work.⁶³ That underlying multiplicity in ancient etymology has already been pointed out — the to-us-unsettling possibility that more than one derivation can be 'true,' even at a given moment, for ancient audiences of *etymologiae*.⁶⁴ But even if readers might have been aware of the other familiar connection with *uincere*, what I want to point out here is the striking phrasing Varro uses to introduce the notion of *uincire* to begin with. He identifies *Venus* as the *uis uinctionis*, the *force* of binding, a sound effect which causes us, as in the case of the paranomasiac *potiuses* above, to do a quick double-take and re-estimate where the content of the derivation begins and Varro's account of that content precisely ends. Is *uis* meant to be connected with the name of Venus? Indeed what *isn't* a part of any one of Varro's etymologies? When he later explains Juno's name as *quod una iuuat cum Ioue* "because she *helps together with Jupiter*," and Varro has already just connected Jupiter's name with *iuuare*, 'help,' it is hard to decide whether *cum Ioue* belongs to the 'actual' derivation Juno's name as well.⁶⁵ This potential difficulty, of deciding exactly what counts as an etymology and what is merely part of an environment in which the connection between sound and sense are given special attention, is a recurring feature of the *De lingua latina*, and a problematic to which Varro was keenly sensitive.⁶⁶ Indeed, exploring that boundary often appears to be a purpose, if not merely an effect, of Varro's text, humorous or otherwise.

⁶² *Ling.* 5.61–3; text and translation from Kent (1938), slightly adapted. Parts of the passage are touched on by Hinds 2006, 10–11.

⁶³ 5.67: *ea dicta, quod una iuuat cum Ioue, Iuno* ("She is called Juno because she 'helps' [*iuuat*] 'together [*una*] with Jupiter"); also in Cic. *N.D.* 2.26; 5.65 (quoting Ennius): *...haec<e> propter Iupiter sunt ista quae dico tibi, | qu<ando> mortalīs atque urbes beluasque omnis iuuat* ("...Because of this, those things which I say to you are Jupiter, since he 'helps' [*iuuat*] all mortals and cities and beasts").

⁶⁴ See the paper by Claire Le Feuvre in this volume dedicated to the issue of multiple etymologies.

⁶⁵ *Ling.* 5.67.

⁶⁶ As the reader points out, he may have discussed the issue directly in the lost theoretical books (2–4) on etymology.

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Cécile Margelidon

Etymological Wordplay: Greek Philology as an Important Mediation between Greek and Latin Poetry of Erudition

Abstract: Greek etymological theories and practices were very popular in Rome. The aim of this article is to show the different ways in which Latin poets, Ovid in particular, took on Greek etymological thinking in wordplays and conundrums. Without forgetting Latin's own etymological tradition, we seek to understand how Latin poets appropriated Greek plays on the meaning of proper nouns or on specifically poetic terms according to Hellenistic principles. The knowledge Latin poets could have of grammatical theories and of specific *quaestiones* is reused in their verses to create a special complicity with the reader. Etymology is involved at two points in the poetic process: first, to understand Greek proper nouns or γλῶσσαι, then, to create complicity with the reader thanks to etymological riddles. We also look at the kinds of clues poets use to make their games perceptible, the so called 'Alexandrian footnotes' or 'etymological markers': hiding them enough to derive pleasure from solving the riddle, and uncovering them enough to establish connivance with the reader.

1 Introduction

The Greek literary tradition has been part of Latin poetry since its beginning with the *Odissia* of Livius Andronicus.¹ More precisely, it was conceived both as a continuation of it in its themes, meters and devices, and as its transposition into a different way of thinking.² The study of Latin poetry in its connection to Greek etymology is therefore justified, insofar Latin poets translate and innovate from a Greek canvas. However, these relationships to Greek poetic texts, especially Homeric, are not only direct but also mediated by the various Greek philological studies of the Hellenistic period. Whether it was a question of lexicon or mythology, or even

¹ See Knoche 1958; Mariotti 1986; Viredaz 2020.

² For instance, Propertius, 3.1.1–5. Bonamente/Cristofoli/Santini 2016, 7: "La sua dichiarazione di esse il *Callimaco romano* dell'Umbria si fonda infatti sulla sua profonda elaborazione dei temi della mitologia, patrimonio secolare della civiltà greca tornato in auge presso le raffinate corti ellenistiche, con le quali ormai Roma si confrontava con il piglio del conquistatore-conquistato."

of moral convenience, Latin poets took advantage of the philological resources available to them to introduce into their poems numerous cryptic references intended for an erudite reader capable of spotting these suggestions.³ Etymology plays a large part in these clever puzzles in several ways. As with the Alexandrian poets, it plays an important role both in ‘etiological inquiry’⁴ and as a tool of poetic suggestion. Because it is a ‘tool for thinking,’⁵ poetic etymology is first a discursive practice, inasmuch as it fits into a discourse or forms an onomastic gloss, even if paronymic aspects are not to be forgotten. It is a play on a formulation, on a discourse, rather than on a word alone. It is in this sense that cryptic statements constitute one of its principles, since the poet involves his reader, assuming common knowledge, a common taste for erudition and, generally, mythography in its multiple declensions, i.e. the presence of myth in the names of places, people, flowers, objects, festivals, etc. The interest for grammatical remarks is visible from the earliest texts of Latin poetry, where they constitute, according to Jean Collart, “a guarantee of success”.⁶ Livius Andronicus laid the foundations for literary translation in his *Odissia*; Accius or Lucilius argued about the graphic representation of long vowels; vocabulary issues are also found in Ennius, Naevius and Afranius; and Catullus wrote a very witty *carmen* on Latin pronunciation of the aspiration (*carm.* 84). The etymological remarks and suggestions are particularly numerous in Latin poetry,⁷ and they are mostly based on Greek philology.⁸ We want to sketch the main lines of Latin etymological wordplay in its connection to Greek philology: how has the study of words been integrated by Latin poets into their effort to adapt Greek poetry and to manifest

3 See Schlunk 1974; Schmit-Neuerburg 1999; Jolivet 2004; 2009; and 2013.

4 Cusset 2021, 213.

5 Sluiter 2015, 899: “In antiquity, etymology is what we may call a *Denkform* and a ‘discursive practice’, a particular mode of thinking and speaking.” I suppose she is making reference to the title of an article written by Curtius 1954.

6 Collart 1954, 16: “un gage de succès.”

7 For a general overview on Latin, and Ovidian, and in particular, etymological wordplays, see André 1975, Ahl 1985, Desbordes 1991 and O’Hara 2017. Really helpful is the *Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies* collected by Maltby 1991. However, the risk is to see an etymological game everywhere where two words of the same family are used not far from each other (see Maltby 1993 and Cairns 1996 for a methodological overview and Michalopoulos 2001 for an attempt to realize a lexicon-with-commentary of etymological wordplays in the *Metamorphoses*). However, highlighting riddles and literary allusions in Latin poetry thanks to Greek comparison allows a more precise definition of the figure to emerge. For a commentary on Varro’s discussion of etymological games in Ennius, see Margelidon 2021.

8 Schlunk 1974, 2–3: “The Alexandrian scholars were highly esteemed in antiquity and known to Roman *litterati*, perhaps even from the time of Livius Andronicus, and there is certainly more than ample evidence that they and their works were well known to contemporaries of Vergil.”

the extension of their erudition? What are the strategies developed by the Latin poets to show their knowledge of Greek poetry and philology?

2 Philological knowledge and erudite wordplay

Philology functions as a bridge between Greek and Latin literature as a way to understand, translate and comment on ambiguous terms, hapaxes or proper names. The actual knowledge that the Latin poets may have had of Greek philology is difficult to establish, although some biographical elements are certain. According to Suetonius, Crates of Mallos was the first grammarian in Rome. Cicero, who cites Aristarchus several times, refers to his name as a synonym for any astute literary critic.⁹ Varro, the most important Republican grammarian, was the student of Aelius Stilo, who was himself taught by Dionysius of Thrace,¹⁰ and was a friend of Tyrannio.¹¹ He was also influenced by Philoxenus, who came to Rome to give lectures or to establish himself around the first century BCE.¹² The Alexandrian grammarian wrote monographs that focus on a particular language, like Laconian, Ionian, Syracusan, and Latin, and he seems to be the first to formulate the hypothesis of the Aeolian origin of Latin.¹³ This was indeed a very fashionable theory in Rome at the end of the Republican period. Differently from Aristarchus, whose main aim was to “trace the difference between Homeric and post Homeric usage,”¹⁴ the distinctive feature of Philoxenus’ thinking was to relate the Greek lexicon to a defined

9 Cic., *ad Att.* 1.14.3: *Totum hunc locum, quem ego varie meis orationibus, quarum tu Aristarchus es, soleo pingere, de flamma, de ferro (nosti illas ληκόθους), valde graviter pertexuit?* “[Crassus] worked up with great effect all that purple patch which I so often use here and there to adorn my speeches, to which you play Aristarchus — the passage about fire and sword — you know the paints I have on my palette” (transl. Shackleton Bailey).

10 Suet., *Gramm.* 3.

11 See Collart 1954 and De Melo 2019.

12 As did Aristodemus of Nysa, who taught Pompey, the elder Tyrannio who studied with Dionysus Thrax and was taken prisoner by Lucullus in 67 BCE during the Mithridatic wars and so was driven to Rome, Cornelius Alexander Polyhistor, the tutor of Lentulus, and finally Parthenius, whose *Erotika Pathemata* were dedicated to the condemned poet Gallus.

13 Dubuisson 1984. The bibliography given by Christos Theodoridis in his edition of Philoxenus (1971) mentions two types of secondary references: either studies on the transmission of texts or studies on his conception of Latin as a Greek dialect. But his influence on Latin poetry has not been studied, to our knowledge, as such.

14 Schironi 2003, 71.

set of monosyllabic verbs, qualified as *πρωτότυπα ῥήματα* (660).¹⁵ From these verbs, a small number of principles are applied, of which the most frequently implemented by Philoxenus are: addition, reduplication, derivation, future form, use of a privative *ἀ* or of an intensive *ἀ*, and, often, analogy. Also, Apion lived in Rome at the turn of the millennium, and wrote a Homeric lexicon entitled *Γλῶσσαι Ὀμηρικαί*, where he explained the origin of difficult words.¹⁶

It is difficult to determine to what extent Latin poets could have known Greek grammatical theories and allude to the latter in their lines. When Ovid invents the nymph *Lara*, the mother of the Lares,¹⁷ he explains that her name was previously *Lala*, with a reduplication. This phenomenon is absent of the Varronian description of language,¹⁸ and scarce elsewhere.¹⁹ On the contrary, it is well attested by Greek grammarians — we know, for instance, that Philoxenus wrote a *Περὶ ἀναδιπλασιασμοῦ*, *On Reduplication*, where the verb *λαλεῖν*, ‘to prattle,’ is explained as the reduplicated form of the monosyllable *λῶ*, which means *τὸ θέλω*, ‘to want’ (fr. 296).²⁰ *Lara* is precisely the only nymph who does not *want* to obey Jupiter’s request not to reveal his love affair with Juturna (2.597–598). Ovid’s entire passage is fanciful,

15 Pfeiffer 1968, 274: “The monosyllables as the ἀρχαί, the prototypes, had a particular value, he believed, for the recognition of the ἔτυμα and were also the criteria for the correct use of the Greek language (ἐλληνισμός).” See also Lallot 1991 and 1993.

16 Neitzel, 1977, 190: “Eine Sammlung von (etymologischen) Erklärungen homerischer Wörter. Von diesem Werk können wir uns vor allem durch die Vermittlung des Apollonios Sophistes, der zahlreiche Interpretationen Apions in sein Homerlexicon aufnahm, ein recht gutes Bild machen.” See also Dickey 2006, 26.

17 F. 2.599–601: *Fortē fuit nais, Lara nomine; prima sed illi/ Dicta bis antiquum syllaba nomen erat, Ex uitio positum*. “It chanced there was a Naiad nymph, Lara by name; but her old name was the first syllable repeated twice, and that was given her to mark her failing” (transl. Frazer). Biville 2000, 104: “[Ovide crée] en même temps que le nom, la légende de la nymphe Lara, mère des Lares, punie par les dieux pour avoir été trop bavarde.” She adds: “Dans la perspective étimologique qui est la sienne, Ovide n’hésite pas à créer des signifiants factices à partir de lexèmes grecs existants, pour disposer d’étymons qui lui permettent de trouver une motivation aux noms de divinités romaines, souvent opaques comme beaucoup de noms propres.”

18 Collart 1978, 12: “Pour justifier ses étymologies, [Varron] fait appel à des phénomènes de *demptio*, *additio*, *commutatio* ou *traiectio litterarum*.”

19 Prisc. 2.459.30; 468.7; 468.10, cited by Schad 2007, *ad loc.* But a substantive as *murmur* is explained as an onomatopoeia by Varro without mention of any reduplication. See André 1978.

20 The monosyllable verb *λῶ*, *τὸ θέλω*, that one finds in *λαλαίσαι* (140), in *ἀπολαύω*, or in *λάρυγξ* (137), is not to be confound with *λῶ*, *τὸ θεωρῶ*, which is seen in *ἄλαός*, ‘blind’ (fr. 138, 428). *Ex uitio positum* signals us the nymph’s main defect, *garrulitas*, chattering (*λαλεῖν*).

and it would not be surprising if he mixed various sources to justify the Greek origin of the Latin *Lares compitales*.²¹

Two main types of words are the object of etymological inquiry in commentaries and in poetry:

1. Greek proper names can be translated and glossed in the Latin poem, especially names of gods, of places and of mortals.²²
2. Greek terms of controversial meaning which therefore had several explanations can also be translated in Rome in many ways.

A few examples show how precise and multifaceted the philological erudition of Latin poets in regard to Greek, following the two guidelines put forth above. Proper names were, in Greek and in Latin, literature-motivated, they were not given randomly, especially in mythography, where they had a great importance in the construction of narratives. That is why there are numerous explicit names explanations in Latin poetry, Augustan poetry in particular.²³ But allusive etymological wordplays are also recurrent. For instance, when Ovid presents a particularly rare nymph as one of the most famous (*inter Auernales haud ignotissima nymphas*),²⁴ he insists on her name, taken from the Greek ὄφρνη, ‘darkness, gloom.’ The meaning of the name is also suggested by mentioning the *siluae ... atrae*, “black shadows” (5.541), under which the nymph bore Ascalaphus. The way Orpheus gives birth in the dark could also refer to the ancient Greek etymology of ὄφρνη, from ἐρέφω, ‘to cover,’ that is, σκέπω τὸ φῶς, “to protect from light.”²⁵ The etymological wordplay is reinforced by the mention of Proserpine as *regina Erebi* (5.543), since Ἐρεβος is also etymologically associated with ἐρέφω.²⁶

21 The *amores* of Jupiter for Juturna are denounced to Juno by Lala, who can never keep quiet, *linguam tenere* (602): the insistence on this phrase constitutes an *omen*, an announcement of her punishing: her tongue will be cut off, and so she cannot speak anymore, hence her name, *Muta*. However, the connection operated between Lara and Lala, and the reason of the change, is no more explained, but the conclusion of Ovid’s narration is interesting: Lala is the mother of the *Lares compitales*, i.e., the gods who watch over the crossroads (615–616). It all seems as if Ovid started with a Greek name and added a religious foundation to it at the very end to give it a form of legitimacy in the *Fasti*.

22 O’Hara 2017, 66–73.

23 See O’Hara 2017, 73–75.

24 *M.* 5.412.

25 Philoxenus, fr. 231 Theodoridis.

26 Philoxenus, fr. 484 Theodoridis.

The expression *inter Auernales haud ignotissima nymphas* functions here as an etymological marker,²⁷ drawing the reader's attention to a nymph about whom we know precisely nothing and whose name rightly indicates that we know nothing about her. In other words, it is Orphne's name itself that indicates that she is an obscure nymph. Her name is therefore appropriate in two ways: on the one hand, the nymph is unknown, and on the other, she lives in the dark, which justifies her presentation by Ovid.

More allusively, the etymological wordplay can be a commentary on the Greek proper noun with a Latin adjective, "a single-adjective gloss,"²⁸ or an equivalent periphrasis. The wordplay is thus based on the Latin translation of the word. A typical example is the phrase *sub densis ramorum... umbris* in Catullus,²⁹ which is an etymological commentary of *Daulia*, from δαυλός, an unusual adjective for δασύς, 'thick, leafy'.³⁰

Latin poets can also refer to an ambiguous word or to a hapax: the Latin translation supposes the choosing of the most convenient meaning of the word.³¹ For instance, Lemnos is qualified in Homer as ἀμιχθαλόεσσα (*Il.* 24.753), an adjective that could signify either 'that one cannot approach' or 'which is obscured by smoke'.³²

27 Maltby 1993, Cairns 1996. "Etymological marker" is a more specific expression than "Alexandrian footnote" (Ross 1975, 78), which refers in general to "device designed to draw attention precisely to the allusive content of an utterance — to the fact that the material belongs to an earlier tradition, or even a plurality of competing traditions" (Townshend 2015, 77). See also Rosati 2002 and Jolivet 2008. Hinds speaks of the "Ovidian 'buzzword'," a meaningful expression (1993, 25).

28 For a typology of these adjectives in Greek and in Latin, cf. McCartney 1927 and O'Hara 2017, 64.

29 *Carm.* 65. 12–14: *Semper maesta tua carmina morte canam [tegam] / Qualia sub densis ramorum concinit umbris / Daulias absumpti fata gemens Itylei*. "I shall always sing strains of mourning from the death, as under the thick shadows of the boughs sings the Daulian bird bewailing the fate of Itylus lost" (transl. Postgate).

30 *Schol. D in Iliadem*, 2. 520: Δαυλὶς· καὶ αὕτη πόλις Φωκίδος, ἀπὸ Δαυλιέως ὀνομασθεῖσα τοῦ Τυράννου καὶ Κρηστώνης, ἥ διὰ τὸ σύμφυτον· δαυλὸν γὰρ τὸ δασὺ ἔλεγον οἱ ἀρχαῖοι. "Daulis: it is a city of Phocis, so called from king Daulieus, and from Chrestonè, or because of its vegetation: for the ancients said δαυλὸν for δασύ, 'dense, bushy'" (my transl.).

31 For a description of the process, especially in Livius Andronicus, see Sheets 1981, and in Accius, see Dangel 1990.

32 *Schol. Vet., Erbse, ad loc.*: ἀμιχθαλόεσσαν· κατὰ Κυπρίου εὐδαίμονα. οἱ δὲ πετρώδη καὶ τὰ κύκλω ἀπόκρημνον· [...]. οἱ δὲ ἀμικτον διὰ τὸ ἐκ θαλάσσης δυσπρόσιτον καὶ τὴν τραχύτητα. "ἀμιχθαλόεσσαν: according to the Cyprian, 'flourishing'. For others, 'gravelly' and 'steep all around'. For others, because it is 'not accessible by sea' and because of its roughness" (my own transl.). The meaning εὐδαίμων one can find in the *Heroides* (6.117) in the qualification of Lemnos as *terra ingentiosa colenti*, "land kindly-natured to the husbandman."

When the tragic playwright Accius, who was aware of philological problems,³³ wrote *Lemnia litora rara* in a similar context,³⁴ we can suppose that he was consciously choosing the first explanation. Catullus too, when he writes that Protesilas' house is *incepta frustra*,³⁵ is probably echoing to one of the possible meanings of the Homeric ἡμιτελής.³⁶

A difficult word or *hapax* can thus be the starting point of a poetic variation. In the Ovidian *Heroides*, when Paris Alexander writes to Helen to persuade her to run away with him, he defends himself against the accusation of fawning, in these terms:

*A! quotiens aliquem narraui potus amorem,
Ad uultus referens singula uerba tuos,
Indiciumque mei ficto sub nomine feci!
Ille ego, si nescis, uerus amator eram.
Quin etiam, ut possem uerbis petulantius uti,
Non semel ebrietas est simulata mihi.*

H. 16.243–248

How often, after drinking, have I told of some affair hoping you would see me in that tale that you might learn something of my love? Believe me, if you have not known before, I was that lover. Indeed, I will be still more honest and I will tell you more truth; that I was drunk was only pretence.

transl. Showerman

Paris' art consists in making his talent for concealment not a flaw but a quality, in turning the prejudices that Helen may have against him on their head. Here he defends his talent for concealment and speech, just as he will try to show that his nickname of Alexander is a memory of military exploits, even if it was only to defend his flocks (16.359–360). These few lines on cunning and hiding demonstrate the character's art and his mastery of rhetorical codes. Paris is using a seduction technique presented by Ovid in his *Ars*: feigning drunkenness allows greater freedom of speech (1.597–600). The adverb *petulantius*, which qualifies the effrontery, the impudence of Paris, is nowhere else attested in Latin poetry, Kenney remarks.³⁷

33 Dangel (1990, 41) notes the influence of Alexandrian philology on Accius: "L'école d'Alexandrie n'aurait pas dédaigné les étymologies auxquelles Accius, excellent lexicologue, recourt si naturellement qu'il peut en faire la matière d'un raisonnement ou d'une pensée."

34 Varro, *LL*, 7. 10 = fg. II *Phil*. Dangel (= *Tusc* 2.23).

35 *Carm.*, 68, 73–75.

36 See Lyne 1998.

37 Kenney 1996, 112.

Paris is also probably alluding to his own Homeric representation, and especially to the accusation (αἰσχροῖς ἐπέεσσιν) of Hector against him:

Δύσπαρι, εἶδος ἄριστε, γυναιμανές, ἡπεροπευτά

Il. 3.39 = 13.769

Evil Paris, most fair to look on, you who are mad after women, you deceiver.

transl. Murray

The first hemistich has also been translated elsewhere by Ovid in the *Heroides*,³⁸ but the entire verse is probably in filigree here. *Petulans*, which originally denotes the propensity to attack,³⁹ here qualifies excessive freedom of speech, and the desire to dissimulate truth, perhaps with an echo to the Greek analysis of ἡπεροπευτής as someone who “wrongly employs speech and seeks to deceive” (ὁ τῷ λόγῳ κακῶς χρώμενος καὶ ἀπατῶν).⁴⁰ Ovid shifts the usual meaning of the word *petulantius*: it is no longer an attack, but a feint, which is also underlined by the wordplay between *facere* and *ingere*, and the typical contrast between *ficto* and *uerus*.⁴¹ *Indicium* is here an etymological marker, drawing the reader’s attention to the possibility of an additional meaning. The wordplays show here the extension of Paris’ rhetorical art and his propensity to turn the meaning of words in his favour.

These inconspicuous linguistic allusions manifest a very close reading of Greek poetry and philology and show the common knowledge of an important corpus of *quaestiones*. Etymology functions as an “exegetical tool”⁴² Latin poets can play with to mark their erudite connivence with their readers.

³⁸ *Her.* 13.43: *Dyspari Priamide, damno formose tuorum*. “Ill-omened Paris, Priam’s son, fair at cost of thine own kin” (transl. Showerman).

³⁹ Festus 206 Lindsay: *Petulantes et petulci etiam appellantur, qui proteruo impetus, et crebro petunt laedendi alterius gratia*. “One calls *petulantes* and even *petulci* the one who launch impudent and frequent assaults to hurt others.”

⁴⁰ Fr. 660 Theodoridis.

⁴¹ Michalopoulos 2006, 218: “Ovid takes the opportunity for another etymological play: *facere* and *ingere* are associated by Varro (*LL* 6.78). [...] He will use the combination *fictum nomen* again in the *Ibis* (93). Here *ficto* with *uerus* (next line) forms a contrasting pair, one of Ovid’s favorite practices.” And then (218): “Paris reveals the truth to Helen, although he should not have doubted her ability to understand the real import of his stories.”

⁴² Broggiato 2003.

3 The Hellenistic paradigm of ποιηταὶ ἅμα καὶ κριτικοί

Latin poets understood themselves as part of the Greek literary tradition. They translated Greek poetry, but were simultaneously showing their originality and ability to cross versions and introduce new poetical models. This effort of transposition is clear in many phrases or motives they used, but is also manifest in the way in which they refer to Greek terms and their etymologies. Latin poets read Greek poetry closely and alluded to philological and mythographical difficulties in their own verses. This practice is directly inherited from the Hellenistic poets, who often worked as librarians in Alexandria,⁴³ where they were sometimes called ποιηταὶ ἅμα καὶ κριτικοί.⁴⁴ The practice of commentary finds many ways of revealing itself in poetry, in the form of explanations or of more or less cryptic allusions.

The popularity of *quaestiones* (ζητήματα) in Rome takes a different form in poetry.⁴⁵ While there are many numerical questions and narrative problems, literary riddles lead to discussions about the appropriateness of a name or to suggesting one name behind another. Furthermore, in Latin poetry, long arguments or speeches can be based on etymology or etymological arguments, i.e. the origin of a word or its relationships to others. This perspective is at the heart of current studies on scholia, inasmuch as it makes it possible to account for borrowings from Greek poetry through the critical reading of philologists. Various types of remarks are frequently found and reflect a real scholiastic knowledge and cultural impregnation in Latin poetry. Therefore it is all the paratexts and commentaries that surround the Greek poems that allow us to better understand the knowledge the Latin poets had of them. This focus was first proposed for Vergil on the basis of the Greek scholia, which made it possible to understand how the *Aeneid* quoted the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* by adapting them on the basis of precise philological remarks: certain discrepancies can be explained by adjustments made to the Greek source. Etymological markers and philological footnotes help the reader find these references.

Some of Ovid's lines show on a first reading possible allusions to literary debates and appear in episodes "that explore ways of reading and the interpretation

⁴³ See Thomas 1986, Blänsdorf 1994 and Rengakos 2001.

⁴⁴ Strab. 14.19 about Philetas.

⁴⁵ The sophistication of these *quaestiones* is repeatedly mocked by Seneca (*De Breu. Vit.* 13; *Epist.* 88.6). See Jolivet 2014. Seneca's ironic sentence *Philologia facta est quae philosophia fuit* (*Ep.* 108.23) was reversed by Nietzsche in the conclusion of a conference on Homer and classical philology: *Philosophia facta est quae philologia fuit*, to underline the way philosophy need the support of philology (2022, 45–46).

of stories.”⁴⁶ A significant example comes in the *Metamorphoses* with the witty debate between Polyphemus and Telemus, the *uates* who predicted to the Cyclops that he would be blinded.⁴⁷ The scene is replayed in a comic way, where Polyphemus, who is in love with Galatea, does not believe the prediction:

*Telemus interea Siculam delatus ad Aetnen,
Telemus Eurymides, quem nulla fefellerat ales,
Terribilem Polyphemon adit; “lumen que quod unum
Fronte geris media, rapiet tibi, dixit, Ulixes”.
Risit et : “O uatum stolidissime, falleris;” inquit
“Altera iam rapuit.” Sic frustra uera monentem
Spernit.*

M. 13.770–776

Meanwhile Telemus had come to Sicilian Aetna, Telemus, the son of Eurymus, whom no bird had deceived; and he said to grim Polyphemus: “That one eye, which you have in the middle of your forehead, Ulysses will ravish from you.” He mocked and answered: “O most stupid seer, you are wrong; another girl has already ravished it.” Thus did he scoff at the man who vainly sought to warn him.

transl. Miller mod.

The most evident wordplay is the *antanaclasis* on the verb *rapere*, which is used twice but with two different meanings.⁴⁸ In Telemus’ prophecy, *rapere* means ‘to ravish’ in a literal sense. But Polyphemus answers as if the verb meant ‘to ravish’ in an erotic sense, well-attested elsewhere in Ovid.⁴⁹ This antanaclasis enters into the ways in which Polyphemus tries to demonstrate his rhetorical skill, his ability to handle beautiful language.⁵⁰ The Cyclops, described in the preceding verses as a shaggy barbarian (13.764–769), nevertheless strives to manifest his rhetorical skills and uses the stereotypical elements of love speech, just as he will later play on the origin of Galatea’s name (13.789) or praise, albeit awkwardly, the beauty of his unique eye, comparable to the sun in the sky (13.851–853).

⁴⁶ Rosati 2002, 292.

⁴⁷ Bömer 1982, 415: “Ovid fügt diese Episode bereits hier ein und benutzt die Gelegenheit, einerseits um den Cyclophen durch Vers 774 stärker als Tölpel zu charakterisieren (XII 245 f.), andererseits nicht nur um der Szene durch das witzige Wortspiel mit der Junktur *lumen rapere* (XIII 772f.) eine besondere Pointe zu geben, sondern auch, um auf diese Weise die plötzliche Wendung zu der Galatea-Geschichte zu motivieren.”

⁴⁸ Hill 2000, 165: “Taking someone’s ‘eye’ can be either literal of injury or metaphorical of attraction.”

⁴⁹ *Am.* 2.19.19. This is possibly a quotation from Theocr. 11.52–53.

⁵⁰ Frécaut 1970, 30: “Il est piquant de constater que le géant énamouré sait manier le beau langage.”

The repetition with a double meaning of *rapere* contributes to the tragic irony of the passage, on which the narrator himself comments: *frustra uera monentem / spernit*, where the position of *spernit* underlines Polyphemus' *hybris*.⁵¹ The *uates* had nevertheless insisted heavily on the concrete meaning of *lumen*, 'eye', so that his prophecy was very clear.⁵² Despite his apparent rhetorical mastery, Polyphemus does not understand the real meaning of the announcement. The soothsayer's insistence on the Cyclops' single eye could be a reminiscence of Hesiod⁵³ or of the antic *quaestio* about the eyes of the Cyclops: we know that, in some versions of the myth, Polyphemus had lost his first eye before Odysseus arrived.⁵⁴

51 Newman 1967, 108: "At 774 we find *uatum stolidissime*, but it is the speaker rather than the *uates* who is the fool."

52 Telemus has also excluded the meaning 'to kill' for *lumen rapere*, for which one can find for instance in two verses attributed to Ennius (*Tragedies by authors unknown*, 58–59): *Viue, Vlixes, dum licet; / Oculis postremum lumen radiatum rape*. "Live, Ulysses, while you may. With your eyes catch these rays of light – your last!" (transl. Warmington). Cicero (*De Or.* 3.162), who is explaining the property of similes from a rhetorical point of view, comments on the choice of *rapere*, here appropriate to the context. The lines of Ennius are probably taken from his *Aiæx*.

53 *Theog.* 144–145: Κύκλωπες δ' ὄνομα ἦσαν ἐπώνυμον, οὐνεκ' ἄρ' ὁ σφέων/κυκλωτερὴς ὀφθαλμὸς ἔεις ἐνέκειτο μετώπῳ. "They were called Cyclops (Circle-eyed) by name, since a single circle-shaped eye was set in their foreheads" (transl. Most). Accius *Did.* I (= Gellius, *NA*, 3, 11, 4): *Accius autem in primo didascalico leuibus admodum argumentis utitur, per quae ostendi putat Hesiodum natu priorem: quod Homerus, inquit, cum in principio carminis Achillem esse filium Pelei diceret, quis esset Peleus, non addidit; quam rem procul, inquit, dubio dixisset, nisi ab Hesiodo iam dictum uideret. De Cyclope itidem, inquit, uel maxime quod unoculus fuit, rem tam insignem non praeterisset, nisi aequae prioris Hesiodi carminibus inuulgatum esset*. "Accius, in the first book of *Records of the Stage*, uses very flimsy arguments by which it is proved (so he thinks) that Hesiod was born first. For, says he, when Homer at the beginning of his poem had occasion to tell how Achilles was son of Peleus, he did not go on to say who Peleus was. This information, says Accius, he would without any doubt have given us, if he had not seen that it had been given already by Hesiod. And again, he says, in describing the Cyclops, Homer would not have failed to make particular mention of so important a detail as the fact that the monster was one-eyed, if his predecessor Hesiod had not already made it common knowledge, through his poems, just as much as the former example" (transl. Warmington). Philoxenus, fr. 405 Theodoridis: ὁ δ' Ὀμηρος φαίνεται φύσιν αὐτῶν λέγων· εἰ γὰρ ἦν τι τοιοῦτον, ὥσπερ τὰς ἄλλας ιδιότητας τῶν ὀφθέντων ἔγραψεν ἐπ' αὐτοῦ Κύκλωπος τὸ μέγεθος, τὴν ὠμότητα, οὕτω καὶ τὸ περὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ ἔγραψε. "Homer seems to tell their nature. Indeed, if it were so, just as he wrote about their other characteristics, like their size, their cruelty, so he would have written about their eye."

54 Scholia Graeca in *Odysseam* 9.383 (Pontani): Πορφυρίου· ὁ Κύκλωψ κατὰ μὲν Ὀμηρον οὐκ ἦν μονόφθαλμος φύσει, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τινα συντυχίαν τὸν ἕτερον τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀποβεβλήκει. β' γὰρ ὀφρύας εἶχε· φησὶ γὰρ "πάντα δέ οἱ βλέφαρ' ἀμφὶ καὶ ὀφρύας εὖσεν αὐτῇ" "From Porphyry: according to Homer, the Cyclops has not one eye by nature, but has lost the first by chance. For he has two eyebrows: he says indeed that (9.389): 'eyelid and eyebrows were nothing but steam'." See also Scholia in *Od.* 1.79.g and 9.106 (= Philoxenus fr. 405 Theodoridis).

The verb *rapere* presents another problem, this time with the episode of Polyphemus in the *Odyssey* and in the *Aeneid*. Vergil uses the verb *terebrare* (3.636),⁵⁵ and then the verb *effodere*, ‘to gouge out’ (3.663). In their commentary on *Aeneid* 3, Heyworth and Morwood consider this contradiction to be poetic licence.⁵⁶ With *terebrare*, Vergil follows the description of the *Odyssey* 9.375–398, where Ulysses compares his gesture to that of an auger (τρύπανος).⁵⁷ On the contrary, Ovid insists on *lumen rapere*, here and in 14.189 (*luminis orbus*) and 14.200 (*inanem luminis orbem*), perhaps with an echo between *orbus* and *orbis*. In each case, Ovid plays on the two meanings of *lumen*, ‘eye’ and ‘sight’, and one may wonder whether there is not a deliberate ambiguity here, but without any certitude. Ovid could be here discreetly inserting himself into a mythographic debate thanks to the choice of dialogue between Polyphemus and Telemus, which enables him to highlight the choice of a version, a choice determined by philological discussion.

Well-attested is the coexistence of several ancient explanations of one word in the same passage. Latin poets can interweave the various possibilities. Two examples have already been precisely studied: the Curetes⁵⁸ and the Hyades.⁵⁹ Another one is the example of *Symplegades*, the name of Greek islands: according to Apollonius and Callimachus, Πλαγκταί came from πλάζεσθαι, ‘to wander’, but according to Aristarchus, from πλήσσεσθαι, ‘to hit, to knock’.⁶⁰ In the letter from Medea to Jason in the *Heroides*, as in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid associates the name *Symplegades* (*Planctae* is not mentioned in Latin poetry) with the verb *elido*, ‘to hurt’, thus following the interpretation of Aristarchus.⁶¹ But, according to Hellenistic style,

55 *Aen.* 3.635–636: *Et telo lumen terebramus acuto / ingens, quod torua solum sub fronte latebat* “and with pointed weapon pierce the one huge eye, that lay deep-set beneath the savage brow” (transl. Fairclough).

56 Heyworth-Morwood 2017, *ad loc.*: “Though ‘digging out’ is not quite what has happened, Vergil has been influenced by the idiomatic phrase *oculos effodere* used by a range of writers with reference to real or imagined punishments and in hyperbolic threats.” Horsfall (2006, *ad loc.*) only highlights the violence of the phrase. Servius remarks (3.663): *Supra non effossum huius oculum, sed terebratum legimus* “We read above that the eye was not torn out, but pierced.”

57 More elusive is the lament of Polyphemus in the *Odyssey* 9.509–512 and in Euripides, *Cycl.* 636.

58 *Lucr.* 2.629–639; *Verg. G.* 4.149–152; *Ov. F.* 4.207–214, from κοῦρος, κουρίζω (Hes. *Fr.* 123 Merkelbach; *Call. Jov.* 52–54; *Arat. Phaen.* 32–35), but from κουρά in Eur. *Agath.* fr. 3 Snell. See Shechter 1975, 370. Latin poets also mix references to Curetes and Corybantes respectively.

59 *Ov. F.* 5.163–166; 179–182, from ὕειν and Hyas, *Cic. Arat.* 28 Soubiran, *Verg. Aen.* 1.744.

60 Rengakos 2001, 198: “Apollonius and Callimachus derive Πλαγκταί (in the sense “Wandering Rocks,” *Arg.* 4, 786, 860, 924, 932, 939) from πλάζεσθαι (πλαγκτή from erring Delos, *Call. Del.* 273), not from πλήσσεσθαι (as Aristarchus erroneously does).”

61 *M.* 15.338–339: *Vndarum sparsas Symplegadas elisarum, / quae nunc inmotae perstant ventis quae resistunt*. “The Symplegades, which at that time clashed together with high-flung spray; but now

both texts allude also to the second etymology. In the *Metamorphoses*, the poet remembers that the islands stand *nunc inmotae*, “now immovable,” which is the opposite to πλάζεσθαι, ‘to wander’, which Ovid also suggests in the *Heroides* with the verbal adjective *compressos*.⁶²

A specific type of etymological wordplay can be identified, where the main term is removed and replaced by a riddle about its name. The poet plays with his reader’s knowledge and his ability to recognize the cryptic allusion. This kind of etymological riddles is called by Servius *nomen suppressum*,⁶³ but its extension is still difficult to establish, since it is based precisely on the unsaid.

In this kind of riddle, where an element has to be discovered by a reader from textual clues, etymology provides the key to resolution and thus explains an underlying meaning or variant of a myth. Jolivet has demonstrated the allusion to the name of Iphigeneia in the epistle of Oenone to Paris.⁶⁴ According to Woodman, in the lines previously cited, where Catullus speaks of Daulia, the phrase *semper...canam* could be a reference to the Greek name of the nightingale, ἀηδών.⁶⁵ The name of the Symplegades, which we have also already commented on, is also the core of an etymological riddle in the *Metamorphoses*:

*Quid quod nescio qui mediis concurrere in undis
Dicuntur montes*

M. 7.62–63

But what of certain mountains, which, they say, come clashing together in mid-sea.

transl. Miller

The verb *concurrere*, ‘to clash together’, is the turning-point of the etymological wordplay and alludes to συμπλήττομαι as the etymon of *Symplegades*, or to πλῆσσεσθαι as the etymon of *Planctae*, as Aristarchus did. Two elements make this clear:

they stand immovable and resist the winds.” H. 12.121–122: *Compressos utinam Symplegades elisissent*, / *Nostra que adhaerere ossibus ossa tuis*, “Now I wish the Symplegades had found us and crushed our bones together.”

⁶² H. 12.123. See Dan 2013.

⁶³ G. 2.126–135 about medica.

⁶⁴ H. 5.131. See Jolivet 2009.

⁶⁵ Woodman 2013, 143. There are actually different textual lessons: *canam* or *tegam*. The former is edited by Francis Warre Cornish (LCT) in accordance to the poetic context of the lyric complaint, the latter in the corresponding French edition (ed. Viarre-Lafaye) makes reference to the often evoked obscurity of Alexandrian poets, who imply etymological allusions and mythographical references.

nescio qui, which is an “Ovidian ‘buzz-word,’” according to Hinds,⁶⁶ and the alliteration of [k], which makes the clashes of the islands audible.

The same kind of etymological riddle is provided by Briseis in her missive to Achilles in Ovid’s *Heroides*. When Briseis addresses Achilles, she recalls her status as a slave and mistress, who has no ability to influence her lover, and states:

*Me quaedam, memini, dominam captiua uocabat:
“Seruitio, dixi, nominis addis onus.”*

H. 3.101–102

One of the captives, I remember, once called me ‘mistress.’ I replied, “That name adds to the shame of slavery.”

transl. Showerman mod.

Ovid is here translating an Euripidean dialogue, where Briseis prefers to be called a slave (σύνδουλος) rather than a mistress (δέσποινα) by her θεράπεινα.⁶⁷ The burden metaphor (*onus*) is absent in Euripides, but, though topical about slavery,⁶⁸ could contain an etymological riddle about Briseis’ name itself. According to an explanation present in the *Etymologicum Magnum*, *Briseis* is taken from βρίθω, “to be heavy, burdensome”, because Briseis overwhelms all women with her beauty (παρὰ τὸ βρίθω, παρὰ τὸ βαρεῖν τῷ κάλλει πάσας τὰς γυναῖκας).⁶⁹ This etymology seems here to be evoked in filigree by Briseis, who thus delicately plays on the origin of her name through the use of *onus*, on which she insists.

Following the Hellenistic poets, Latin poets play with the origin of words as an allusive device. Manipulating words and literary traditions, they include in their verses many references, more or less obvious, to specific stories or terms. Etymology functions both as an intertextual reference and as an allusion to an erased term.

⁶⁶ Hinds 1993, 25.

⁶⁷ Eur. *Andr.*, 56–65.

⁶⁸ Barchiesi 1992, *ad loc.*

⁶⁹ *EM*, s.v.: Βρισηΐς· παρὰ τὸ βρίθω, παρὰ τὸ βαρεῖν τῷ κάλλει πάσας τὰς γυναῖκας, ἢ παρὰ τὸ βαρεῖν τοὺς Ἕλληνας· ἐβάρησε γὰρ καὶ ἐβλαψε τοὺς Ἕλληνας, διὰ τὸ λαβεῖν αὐτὴν τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα. “Βρισηΐς: from βρίθω, ‘to overwhelm’ all women with her beauty, or ‘to overwhelm’ the Greeks: indeed she overwhelmed and embarrassed the Greeks, because Agamemnon had taken her prisoner” (my transl.).

4 Concluding remarks

If philology is known as the art of reading, philological wordplay is really the playful side of it. Latin poets show their great Greek erudition and refinement by the multiplication of allusions, and thus manifest their ability to enter a long poetic tradition. The knowledge Latin poets could have of grammatical theories and of specific *quaestiones* is reused in their verses to create a special complicity with the reader, who shares their familiarity with the variants and commentaries of the schools of philology. Etymology is involved at two points in the poetic process: first, to understand Greek poetry, proper nouns or γλῶσσαι, then, to create complicity with the reader thanks to etymological riddles.

However, the Latin etymological wordplay is not only a Greek etymological wordplay written in Latin. It also has a special manner of considering variants and of playing with different possible translations. Latin poets have created in their poems many interfaces where the two languages come into contact. The riddles they disseminate are always perceptible thanks to “Alexandrian footnotes,” or to “etymological markers,” which help the reader find the solution. Etymological descriptions of poetic words and of proper nouns by the scholiasts lead to the Latin translation. The etymological wordplay thus consists in choosing one variant rather than another on the basis of etymological argument, and so entering into a dialogue with the grammatical tradition. This is only one aspect of Latin etymological wordplay, as the proper Latin traditions are also present. The various examples studied here should not make us forget the large number of Latin toponyms or theonyms that are also commented upon in the poems of the Augustan period in particular. But even in these cases, the typically Hellenistic variations are numerous and reflect the appropriation by Latin poets of Greek etymological tools.

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