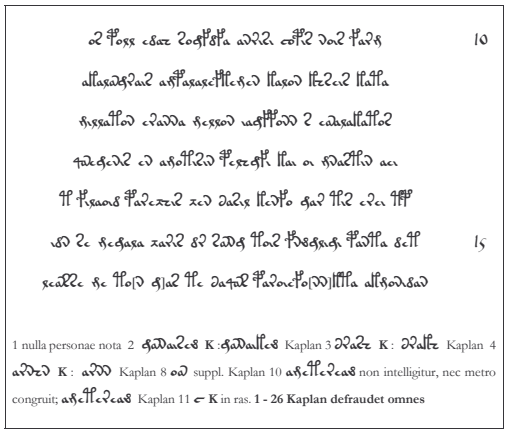

CORLIS

PURGA

ANATOMY OF A FRAUD

CORLIS

PURGA

PRAEFATIO

PAUL DURCAN
COLEGII LODIS
APUD ESTOTIS

EDIDIT CUM PROOEMIO
ET COMMENTARIIS

ROBERT KAPLAN
COLEGII LODIS
APUD ESTOTIS

ESTOTIS
APUD TYPOGRAPHEO ZETOMA

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PREFACE

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the fraud committed by Robert Kaplan in his 1968 publication of the *Purga* or 'Spire' by Corlis of Paramen is that he bothered to commit it at all. At the time of publication there were only three hundred or so scholars working among the fragmentary remains of Euxine civilisation – today there are only one hundred and twenty two - and only a handful with any interest in the work of its post-classical dramatists. Three, perhaps four, people are known to have read his edition in the years immediately following its publication though none of them would have possessed the scholarly knowledge to challenge Kaplan on the authenticity or sanity of his enterprise since he was at the time the world's only living authority on the poet. The simple fact of the matter is that the 'Spire', a literary fragment of some twenty lines of verse, was written by Charles Kinbote, Professor of Euxine History at Lode College, sometime between 1960 and 1962. The manuscript was discovered by Kaplan, the executor of Kinbote's estate, and secretly removed from his papers. Kaplan spent the following six years writing a commentary and finally published the work as a *fragmentum repertum* of seventh century dramatic prosody attributable to Corlis of Paramen (693 - 605 BC).

The discovery of Kaplan's fraud is a brief story. Whether inadvertently or by design he announced it himself while in conversation with a doctoral student by the name of Carl Silens. According to Silens a discussion of the halcic trimeter in Aster had turned unexpectedly to his own future in Euxine academe. Kaplan urged him to give up his studies at the earliest possible date, denouncing

the speciality of Euxine civilisation as a waste of life. Without further prompting Kaplan became impassioned on the subject. Silens made a bold reference to his tutor's own voluminous research and elicited an extraordinary tirade for his pains. In the course of this volley, as if it was a matter of public record, Kaplan declared the *Purga* of Corlis a forgery from top to bottom and challenged Silens as to whether he had read it. Of course, Silens - in common with the rest of the free world – had not and admitted as much. Kaplan dismissed him and the tutorial was at an end. When confronted by Professor Mirnes, Kaplan repeated his admission. He agreed to commit his confession to paper, on the sole condition that he could also express his surprise that the forgery was not common knowledge and that the fact that it had not been detected for twenty years constituted an indictment of Euxine scholarship. To complicate matters, Kaplan refused to resign and under the terms of his tenure could not be removed. He saw out his career in the Euxine School of Lode College under something of a cloud and finally retired five years later. He died in 1985 in the care of his mother.

The reader will by now have arrived at the following question: why reissue the handiwork of a self-confessed fraudster? Before proceeding, the reader should consider dispensing with the priggish assumptions that underlie such a query. Kaplan's fraud deceived only a very few people and I hope to show that the sum of harm resulting from this book is far outweighed by its total benefit. To rephrase then: why reissue a work whose own author has disowned it as inauthentic scholarship?

First and foremost, one has to admit that a certain curiosity attaches to the corpse of a moderately successful hoax. Obscure fragments of antique prosody are the stock-in-trade of obscure antique poets such as Corlis of Paramen but when they turn out to

be composed by gentlemen in suits who read newspapers and smoke cigarettes our interest is inexplicably aroused. The indecipherable heap of slightly amateurish hemameters suddenly seems the product of an arcane, altogether admirable skill rather than another leaden footprint left by plodding antiquity. Indeed, the composition of the 'Spire' must have taken Dr. Kinbote some weeks to compose. The care of its diction and occasional headiness of its prosody bear witness to a long spell at the coalface. There is little doubt that it is a singular work, one whose merit far exceeds the degree of general appreciation it can ever hope to receive. In that sense it is a marvel and one which should be saluted.

Yet it is not to the indecipherable heap of slightly amateurish hemameters that the lay-reader will turn as he leafs through this slight volume, but to its commentary. It is in the commentary that the real triumph of Kaplan's edition lies and it is for its commentary alone, an outrageous, inept but somehow brilliant piece of scholarship and make-believe, that Dr. Kinbote's *Purga* has merited republication.

Perhaps some of the flavour of Kaplan's work can be expressed by paraphrasing Godorcki in *The Big Museum at Baden* : never has a commentary commented so little upon the object of its comments. For truth be told, Kaplan treats Kinbote's felicitous kalligram as little more than a cloakroom in which to hang his motley collection of eccentric coats. This is not to say that his commentary could as easily be annotating a bus ticket as an abstruse piece of late Euxine prosody. Kaplan has clearly attended to the text of the poem and makes some remarkable insights into its method and machinery. Nevertheless, his avenues of inquiry are uniformly odd. For example, he devotes a number of pages to the discussion of a prosodical device by the name of *siamesis* despite the fact that

the figure appears nowhere in the text of the *Purga* itself. This is typical Kaplanitis. Other examples include a lengthy treatment of the *trichroma* in Euxine literature together with Kinbote's notes on the subject; a précis (with excerpts) from *The Strangers from History* by Eugene Kovach; a survey of *allopoeia*; the strange (and utterly apocryphal) story of William Ehrens. The list goes on and leads us to the most pertinent fact of all regarding Kaplan's commentary. Among the facts, of which there are many, he has cast a bagful of false trinkets. In other words, he has made many things up and occasionally he has made everything up. As one reads the notes one begins to realise the truth underlying his remarks to Carl Silens. The commentary is openly meretricious, brazenly so. One cannot read it without knowing one is deceived. The authorship of Kinbote runs through the work like a faultline. In some places it is almost openly admitted. To the trained scholar the commentary is a festival of lies while to the layman it is a stranger carrying the unmistakable but unprovable whiff of imposture.

At which point the reader now patiently awaits a careful tabulation of all the work's falsehoods and flushes. Perhaps he would like a detailed table in small type and on a single page for ease of reference. The job of a preface is to serve up the main course for the pleasure of the reader, not to drag out its carcass to the dining room for inspection. This is a strange dish: so sit down and eat.

P.D.
Lode College,
Estoty.
5th November 1986

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INTRODUCTION

The Severin *Purga* or 'Spire', a fragment of four hundred cheric metra, was discovered in the sands of Oxyrhynchus by Severin Pitris in 1954. Its form is that of a dramatic monody, usually sung by the protagonist or deuteragonist of a Euxine tragedy at the end of the second or the beginning of the final act. Although mutilated, the text presents a virtually self-contained ode to the setting sun which can be only short of its actual length by a few lines if indeed it is incomplete at all. The style and execution of the prosody, along with the diction and technical characteristics of the song, evoke upon first reading the manners and concerns of a seventh century drama. One could almost succumb to the heady thought that here is a new fragment of early Aster or perhaps a Parmenes at the height of his powers. This much alone is to be gained from surveying the text without the aid of historical and literary records. Were it not for the flotsam of ancient commentators, washed downriver by the middle ages, the secrets of the authorship, sourcend date of the *Purga* would be dammed up against our inquiries indefinitely. As it stands, however, we have the casual asides of Merin, Plutarch and Quintilian to thank for advance knowledge of this unexpected but welcome visitor from the shores of the Euxine Rim.

Corlis of Paramen was the author of twenty four plays, none of which survive in complete form. According to Johannis Tsetzes he was awarded first prize at the Limaion on three occasions; for the *Charnades,* the *Milon*, and the *Ahaser*. It was with this last play that Corlis was regarded to have entered the first rank of Euxine tragedians, the 'Golden Rim' of Aster, Parmenes and Alcan. Ac-

cording to myth, Ahaser of Chaldea, the trusted lieutenant of Aisax, stepped over the ailing body of his royal master during one of the many battles at Chalcedon without coming to his aid. Aisax survived but, as punishment, Ahaser was sent home in a lone *triteron*. The army prayed that he may never cross the Agauan alive but Aisax, taking pity on his oldest and most trusted friend, secretly called upon Jope to give him a long life and spare him the indignity of returning to his family disgraced. In the perverse manner typical of ancient gods, the prayers of both were answered. Ahaser was made to wander the wastes of the Agauan eternally without ever sighting land. In the manner of other nautical *topoi* such as mermen and the Hebrew leviathan, 'sightings' of Ahaser and his desolate bark became a traditional part of mariner lore and the inexplicable disappearance of ships and crews in calm weather was being attributed to him even in the time of Aster and Lode. The effect of Corlis' *Ahaser* is outlined by Quintilian in his discussion of ancient heroes:

> The only poet to bring Ahaser to the Euxine stage was Corlis of Paramen. His play won first prize at the Limaion and was so favoured by Trites that he had it performed at the festival every year throughout his rule. The homecoming of Ahaser - a monstrous landfall used by Euxines to curse one another in the phrase ᔪᖅᓚᒃ ᓂᕆᔨᒃ ᐊᓚᒃ - and his death on the shore at Chaldea were invented by Corlis himself. Merin says that the play transformed Ahaser from a figure occasioning horror and disgust among Euxines into a hero in the mould of Aisax, the master he betrayed. A statue was erected to him in the agora at Ardis, and in 670 his name was added to the funerary base at the Temple of Limaion. His famous monody at the end of Corlis' tragedy, an ode to the sunset as he lies dying on the sands of Charis, was sung at the funeral of

> Percones. Such was the effect of Corlis' play that even today we tearfully sing *frustrat crepusculum* without realizing its true source.*

Frustrat crepusculum is a literal translation of 𐌐𐍂𐍉𐌾𐌰 𐌰𐌷𐌿𐌽𐌰, the first words of the *Purga*. Likewise, the poem is an apostrophe to the setting sun. The inference is indisputable: the 'Spire' discovered at Oxyrhynchus is the final monody of Corlis' lost tragedy *Ahaser*. A fragment of Euxine history salvaged from the verso of a fifth century builder's inventory.

ii.

The Text

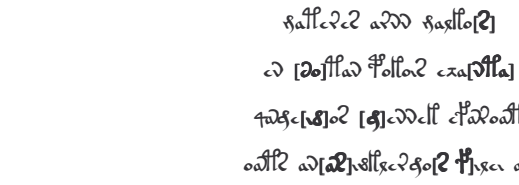
The publication of an *editio princeps* carries with it certain unavoidable responsibilities. Foremost among these is one's fidelity to the text as it is preserved by the manuscript. Although it has proven beyond the means of this edition to reproduce a facsimile of the Severin *Purga* it is still possible to provide a short survey of the quality and state of **K** (Kinbotianus XXXIII 3 saec. b.c.).

Measuring five by twelve inches **K** is a papyrus typical of the quality and manufacture found in and around the north eastern coast of the Euxine Rim where the cultivation of massive reed marshes lasted until well into the fifth century. The verso of the fragment is filled with an inventory of building and other materials in a minuscule shorthand probably dating to the sixth century. The recto contains the *Purga*, probably seventh century. The copyist's hand is an uneven uncial without word or verse breaks. For example, the first lines of the *Purga* appear in **K** as follows:

*Ar, Rhet, XXI, 23.

As one can see, the metrical division of the lines which gives the poem its modern name was not manifest to the ancient reader. The effect of a *purga* or 'spire', if it existed all for Corlis' Euxine audience, was purely auditory.

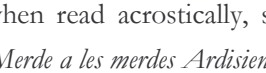
In places, particularly ll.5-10 and ll.19-23, the text is lacunose. Since the damage to both passages is obversely uniform it seems likely that the offence against the text was from the same source and occurred when the papyrus was folded (which latter circumstance would account for the slight erasure of the text on line 15). The pattern of the damage resembles the size and disposition of a three or four small fingers and this effect is even observable in the printed edition of the poem. The most likely explanation is that the manuscript was pierced at some point by the fierce claw of a Euxine infant:



In spite of a relatively clean text **K** is not without its difficulties. It was not part of a *de luxe* edition, in fact its copyist seems to have worked in a blind hurry. His letters tilt in the direction of his progress and he is particularly prone to transposition and *situs reversus*. He has botched a number of lines beyond repair and I am at

pains in the commentary and in the *apparatus criticus* to stress where the text has necessitated significant editorial intervention. There are other cases where difficulty of interpretation clearly rests on our own literary and historical ignorance. In such instances, I have refrained from emendation and hope further excavations at Oxyrhynchus may shed welcome light on the some of the obscure corners of this little text.

The Author

In spite of the fact that almost everything he wrote is now lost, a great deal is known about Corlis of Paramen. He was born in Paramen in 693 while his father was serving under Themiclis at Chaledon. He produced his first play at the Limaion in 670 and won third prize. The peninsular wars of 668-665 interrupted his career but on his return from Demas he produced the *Chardones*, his first triumph. Although he seems to have led a respectable public life, including many terms as *viger* and city treasurer in Ardis, his personal and professional circumstances attracted a wealth of anecdotes. It is alleged by Sotes for instance that he kept a pet stork, whose death he mourned with a funeral ceremony and an ode in halcic trimeters. Quinitilan claims that he did not see or speak to his wife after the first two years of their marriage, although they continued to live happily together and he frequently eulogised matrimony in his plays. Another story, repeated by a number of authors, alleges that the *dramatis personae* of his Chaledon trilogy, when read acrostically, spell out the words  , '*Merde a les merdes Ardisiens!*'. Most scandalously of all, Paratis asserts that Corlis is the bastard son of a *polantis* (a sausage-seller) who cuckolded his absent father, citing as evidence some obscure lines

from Geras' *Moripoi*.

Such tidbits aside, Corlis was a prolific and very successful poet. In old age, he had amassed enough wealth to retire to his own island, a common practice among Ardisian aristocracy. The titles of his twenty four plays are recorded by Tsetzes:

⟨redacted⟩	*The Searchers*	⟨redacted⟩	*The Sea Battle*
⟨redacted⟩	*The Death of Aisax*	⟨redacted⟩	*Meropis*
⟨redacted⟩	*The Sons of Jope*	⟨redacted⟩	*The Judgement*
⟨redacted⟩	*The Androlaid*	⟨redacted⟩	*The Infant Androlas*
⟨redacted⟩	*Daidalis*	⟨redacted⟩	*The Silent Prophets*
⟨redacted⟩	*The Night at Boras*	⟨redacted⟩	*The Root-Cutters*
⟨redacted⟩	*Aisax Unchained*	⟨redacted⟩	*Procris*
⟨redacted⟩	*Coras*	⟨redacted⟩	*The Foot-Washing*
⟨redacted⟩	*The Phaeacians*	⟨redacted⟩	*Memnon Sails In*
⟨redacted⟩	*Phoinidas*	⟨redacted⟩	*Cherones*
⟨redacted⟩	*The Cheran Women*	⟨redacted⟩	*The Drummers*

Of these, it seems likely that ⟨redacted⟩, ⟨redacted⟩, and ⟨redacted⟩ formed the Chaledon trilogy. ⟨redacted⟩, ⟨redacted⟩, and ⟨redacted⟩ also suggest a trilogic structure though its name has not been recorded and Tsetzes seems unaware of its existence. Judging by their titles, ⟨redacted⟩ and ⟨redacted⟩ must have been satyr plays, grotesque mimes with no dialogue usually produced for the Peraion festival.

By common accord, Corlis died in the winter of 605, five days after death of his wife and four years after the murder of his

sons by unknown assassins.

The Play

Apart from its title and the fragment published here nothing survives of the *Ahaser* from Corlis' own hand. We have of course the oblique asides of Merin, Plutarch and Quintilian already cited but there is little or nothing to apprise us of the details of the plot and structure of the play. But given what we know of the Ahaser myth, the conventions of Euxine tragedy and Corlis' own radical treatment of the theme it is still worthwhile to speculate, in the absence of what Corlis *did* write, what he *may* have written.

First of all, the *dramatis personae*. Although one may think we can only be certain of Ahaser, there are at least three other figures who must have impinged upon the stage in one guise or another. The first is the King of Chaledon at the time of Ahaser's landfall, his descendant Xanthes. The encounter between these two across some six generations of patrilineal descent, a *coup de théâtre* by any stretch of the imagination, may have been Corlis' principal motive in staging the play. With the tension between ancient and new established in purely mortal terms between Ahaser and Xanthes, it is difficult to imagine Corlis avoiding the conflict between Jope and Momes as its divine counterpart. According to the myth, Momes was Ahaser's *fizer* or guardian-god in Epaura and persuaded Jope to spare Ahaser's life following his expulsion from the Euxine camp. As a lesser divinity, Momes is one of the 'young', chthonic gods, while Jope is celestial and 'ancient'. The distinction is important as the 'young' gods are seen as part of the 'ancient' gods' creation, virtually their offspring. If we assume that Momes has inspired Ahaser's homecoming and Jope is trenchantly opposed to it as a violation of his authority, the possible structure of Corlis' *Ahaser*

may be represented as follows:

Allies	**Old**	**New**
Divine/Mortal	Jope	Xanthes
Mortal/Divine	Ahaser	Momes

Here we have the traditional 'square' of Euxine tragedy at its most compact: four characters locked into a *chiasmus* of mutually destructive relationships. In Jope and Momes and Ahaser and Xanthes, ancient is ranged against new, yet on these terms each finds an ally in the enemy camp, Ahaser in Momes, Jope in Xanthes. As with Aster's *Mermones* the relationships between the four protagonists are self-enclosed, almost nuclear, yet their allegiances are riven with submerged fault-lines. It is the main business of Corlis' hypothetical *Ahaser* to sunder them completely.

With Ahaser, Xanthes, Jope and Momes as our principals, we are now forced to make a single but possibly lethal assumption: the *Ahaser*, in keeping with the mode of all classical Euxine tragedy, was composed without dialogue. It is still not known at what date dialogue was introduced into Euxine tragedy but it would be unfortunate indeed for our purposes if Corlis' *Ahaser*, as well as rehabilitating a mythological outsider, were also to have secretly reinvented the tragic form. What we have of Euxine tragedy consists almost entirely of long stand-alone speeches. As Tenishev puts it: 'The characters do not so much speak to each other as orate in the other's general direction before exiting the stage to make way for the next phase of action.'* This makes for dull dramaturgy but it does create elbow-room for some splendid prosody and it is in the quality of poetic effects and coruscating rhetoric that the great

**Theatron end Seit* (XXV, pp. 230) 1936.

tragedians such as Corlis achieved the true summit of their art.

As we begin to piece together the *Ahaser* therefore we can be certain of three things only: the title of the play, Ahaser's ode to the sunset, and the opening of the play with a prologue. To understand our certainty on this last count one must remember the absolute centrality of the device to Euxine tragedy. There is perhaps no other dramatic tradition that expended so much of its imagination on elaborating and perfecting the prologue form. It is only in Euxine tragedy, for example, that we find the *polyprologon* or multiple-prologue. This rather aberrant technique consisted of opening a play with an uninterrupted series of prologues delivered by incidental or central personae who assume and yield the stage in oblivious succession. Each speaks as if he was opening the drama and each establishes a separate set of themes with which the play may be approached. The technique seems to have reached perfection in Aster whose Parlemen is consecutively presented as saviour, villain and outcast by the prologuists and whose actions in the course of the tragedy obliquely fulfil the judgements of his accusers and champions alike. This fine balance was not achieved by all, however. Carnis reports that the *Lapides* of Garmen consisted entirely of prologues, nine to be exact, and was even awarded first prize at the Limaion. In this context, there can be no doubt that Corlis opened the *Ahaser* with a prologue or prologues, it is simply a question of how many and by whom. Equipped with our meagre supply of facts we shall take a short adventure into the wilderness of speculation.

The Plot

It is dawn. Ahaser, bearing his sword and shield as if he has just stepped from the battlefield, stands on the shore of his homeland. His triumphant prologue is addressed to the altars of his family's

gods, to the rising sun, and to the city of Chaledon. Overcome with emotion and an ancient weariness, Ahaser ends his speech by sinking into sleep. This is immediately followed by the arrival of the chorus. The strophe of their first ode is concerned with recognition of this fearsome stranger, the antistrophe with the horrified realisation that it is the ancient forefather of their ruler Xanthes. They conclude with an epode announcing the terrible news to the city and disperse. Momes now enters and delivers a second prologue. He outlines his intention to use Ahaser as an instrument of revolt against the rule of Jope. As he speaks, Ahaser wakes and becomes aware of Momes' divine but invisible presence. He offers a prayer of thanks, perhaps sung in halcic dimeters. The ode ends with the arrival of the chorus accompanied by Xanthes who is openly hostile to his ancestor. Xanthes fears Ahaser's presence will bring catastrophic misfortune on the city and orders him to return to the fate of eternal wandering decreed by Jope. In response, Ahaser announces his intention to march in triumph to the city. He draws his sword and exits scattering Xanthes and his guards before him. Momes, now alone on stage, exults in the fruition of his plans to defy Jope. When Ahaser enters the city the authority of his father will lie in ruins. This blasphemous speech is cut short by the arrival, *ex machina*, of Jope himself. Jope does not address his son, he merely passes sentence. Momes will wander the Agauan in Ahaser's place. He will never see land again, while Ahaser will be permitted to die on the soil of his fathers. Momes sings a short lament and the chorus, in the guise of Harpies, carry him from the stage. We have reached the final scene of the play: in a elaborate mirror-image of Momes' departure Ahaser is carried on by Xanthes' guards. He has collapsed before reaching the city and transformed from the burly warrior of the play's opening into a decrepit and helpless old man.

Xanthes describes in detail the events that befell them. Within reach of the city walls, the sky abruptly clouded over and raising his sword in defiance of Jope Ahaser was struck by a fork of black lightning. When the storm lifted as suddenly as it had fallen, Ahaser was found lying in the road, as ancient and weak as if he had aged his three hundred years at sea in a single moment. Lifting himself from the sands, it is Ahaser who now speaks. He gives thanks to Jope for the gift of death. With his final breaths, he sings the ode to sunset: Poxsa asbora. . .

A Note on the Commentary

The chief object of this small volume is the text of the *Purga* of Corlis. The commentary, although it occupies the majority of printed pages, is merely a garrulous aside. In my notes, I have attempted to expand the context of Corlis' poem and also to shed some light on matters with varying degrees of relevance to the *purga* itself. If the reader is looking for a translation of the poem, he should look elsewhere. It is not the purpose of this edition to cater for persons who are not interested enough in Euxine poetry to learn its language. The commentary may still be instructive, but I will have the satisfaction of knowing that the riches of the *Purga* will only reward those who have endeavoured to earn them.

Lode College,
Estoty.
5th November 1968

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SIGLA

K	Kinbotianus XXXIII 3 saec. b.c.
*	littera erasa

Sigla superscripta:

2	manus secunda
σ	manus eius scholia exscripsit
ac	ante correctionem
pc	post correctionem
s	supra lineam
gr	varia lectio cum nota γράφεται vel sim.

𐑣𐑪𐑓𐑭𐑤𐑩

𐑓𐑹𐑕𐑕𐑩 𐑛𐑪𐑯𐑩

𐑒𐑨𐑛𐑥𐑭𐑮𐑧 𐑓𐑪𐑮𐑾𐑯𐑩

𐑨𐑔𐑭𐑓𐑮𐑪𐑯𐑩 𐑝𐑦𐑤𐑫 𐑚𐑾𐑤𐑒𐑨𐑯

𐑖𐑭𐑓𐑮𐑾𐑛𐑾𐑮 𐑸𐑯𐑛 𐑖𐑨𐑕𐑑𐑪𐑮𐑾

𐑩 [𐑥𐑪]𐑮𐑭𐑤 𐑓𐑪𐑤𐑓𐑮𐑾 𐑮𐑩𐑯[𐑮𐑭]𐑩 5

𐑞𐑨𐑒𐑮[𐑦𐑛]𐑪𐑮 [𐑒]𐑮𐑪𐑯𐑦𐑤 𐑑𐑪𐑥𐑪𐑛𐑭

𐑪𐑭𐑮 𐑪[𐑯𐑣]𐑦𐑚𐑮𐑾𐑒𐑪𐑮 𐑓[𐑦]𐑮𐑩𐑯 𐑪𐑪

𐑟𐑪𐑓𐑪𐑪𐑛𐑮𐑦𐑭 𐑪𐑪 𐑒𐑨𐑮 [𐑮𐑾]𐑤𐑓𐑮𐑾𐑛 𐑪𐑪

𐑮𐑟𐑮𐑾𐑒𐑮𐑦𐑤𐑤𐑓 𐑤𐑭𐑮 𐑮𐑪𐑯𐑕𐑪𐑯𐑨𐑛 𐑨𐑓𐑧𐑟𐑭

𐑛 𐑚𐑪𐑯𐑪𐑮 𐑨𐑒𐑯𐑮𐑒𐑓𐑓𐑭𐑮𐑾𐑛 𐑮𐑧𐑟𐑛 𐑨𐑓𐑧𐑟𐑓 10

𐑤𐑭 𐑒𐑨𐑮 𐑓𐑭𐑴 𐑓𐑭𐑪𐑓𐑭 𐑓𐑾𐑮 𐑩 𐑮 𐑑𐑓𐑪𐑛𐑾𐑮 𐑤𐑓𐑓

𐑓𐑪𐑓𐑭𐑮𐑾𐑟𐑭𐑛 𐑯𐑾𐑮 𐑤𐑭 𐑓𐑦𐑒𐑯𐑮𐑭𐑤𐑓𐑾𐑭𐑛 𐑖𐑨𐑧𐑒𐑪𐑯𐑨𐑦𐑨

𐑚𐑪𐑤𐑮𐑖𐑩 𐑓𐑹𐑕𐑩 𐑯𐑨𐑦𐑒𐑓𐑾𐑩 𐑖𐑪𐑪𐑤𐑪𐑯 𐑮𐑟𐑪𐑛 𐑪𐑧𐑮𐑪

𐑪𐑮 𐑓𐑹𐑕𐑕 𐑮𐑛𐑭𐑮 𐑟𐑪𐑒𐑓𐑾𐑓𐑭 𐑪𐑪𐑮𐑾𐑮 𐑮𐑪𐑛𐑓𐑾𐑮 𐑯𐑪𐑮 𐑓𐑭𐑪𐑖

𐑤𐑭𐑕𐑪𐑨𐑒𐑖𐑪𐑮 𐑩𐑖𐑓𐑭𐑕𐑮𐑮𐑓𐑾𐑮𐑖𐑩 𐑖𐑤𐑕𐑪 𐑤𐑕𐑮𐑪𐑮𐑪 𐑮𐑓𐑭𐑓𐑩 15

𐑖𐑕𐑕𐑭𐑓𐑪𐑯 𐑮𐑪𐑪𐑛𐑩 𐑖𐑒𐑓𐑾𐑓𐑓𐑪𐑛 𐑪 𐑮𐑥𐑕𐑭𐑤𐑓𐑪𐑮

𐑞𐑯𐑒𐑖𐑪𐑮 𐑪 𐑩𐑖𐑪𐑓𐑮𐑪𐑯 𐑓𐑾𐑮𐑛𐑓𐑾𐑤 𐑤𐑭 𐑪 𐑖𐑪𐑮𐑪𐑓𐑮𐑪 𐑩𐑮𐑮

𐑓𐑪 𐑓𐑹𐑭𐑪𐑛 𐑓𐑭𐑮𐑮𐑮𐑮𐑮 𐑮𐑪 𐑪𐑭𐑮𐑪 𐑓𐑪𐑮 𐑮𐑪𐑮 𐑓𐑾𐑓

𐑚𐑪 𐑮𐑛 𐑖𐑒𐑛𐑭𐑕𐑩 𐑮𐑭𐑮𐑪 𐑛𐑾 𐑪𐑭𐑛𐑪 𐑓𐑪𐑯𐑪 𐑓𐑪𐑪𐑖𐑛𐑖𐑒 𐑓𐑭𐑪𐑓𐑤𐑭 𐑛𐑒𐑓

𐑕𐑒𐑾𐑾𐑒 𐑖𐑒 𐑓𐑪𐑤𐑪 𐑓𐑾𐑒 𐑪𐑞𐑖𐑛 𐑓𐑭𐑪𐑯𐑒𐑪𐑤𐑪𐑯[𐑪𐑯]𐑓𐑓𐑤𐑭 𐑤𐑓𐑖𐑪𐑯𐑛𐑪𐑤 20

𐑓𐑭𐑕𐑕𐑨𐑚𐑾𐑮 𐑒𐑾𐑪𐑤[𐑤𐑓𐑭] 𐑖𐑮𐑛𐑒 𐑓𐑾𐑮𐑒𐑮𐑾𐑮 𐑪 𐑒𐑨𐑮 𐑪 [𐑭]𐑪𐑮 𐑪 𐑛𐑪𐑤𐑓𐑮𐑪𐑛𐑒

𐑪𐑾𐑞𐑭 𐑕𐑭𐑯𐑛𐑭 𐑒𐑪𐑛𐑪𐑒𐑭 [𐑓𐑤𐑪𐑖]𐑾𐑮 𐑮𐑭 𐑒[𐑭]𐑪 𐑖𐑒𐑓𐑤 𐑭𐑕𐑕𐑪 𐑓𐑾𐑪 𐑤𐑪𐑛𐑓𐑭 𐑓𐑾𐑪𐑯𐑛𐑭

𐑓𐑤𐑾𐑓𐑭 𐑛𐑒 𐑓𐑭𐑮𐑛𐑤𐑓𐑒 𐑓𐑾𐑪𐑚𐑤𐑮𐑾[𐑤𐑮]𐑒𐑚𐑪𐑮[𐑤𐑮] 𐑮𐑭𐑪𐑤□𐑪 𐑤𐑓𐑒𐑭 𐑓𐑭𐑤𐑪𐑛𐑪𐑓𐑮𐑒𐑛𐑭

𐑒𐑤𐑚𐑪𐑤𐑮 𐑮𐑓𐑾𐑒𐑓𐑭 𐑓𐑤𐑪𐑭𐑮 𐑮𐑓𐑾𐑮 𐑤𐑓𐑾𐑮 𐑓𐑪 𐑮𐑪𐑪𐑤𐑾𐑓𐑾𐑮𐑛𐑪

𐑓𐑤𐑮 𐑤𐑤𐑾𐑓𐑭𐑮 𐑮𐑛 𐑪𐑭𐑪𐑮 𐑖𐑮𐑛 𐑤𐑾𐑪 𐑓𐑾𐑪𐑮𐑭 𐑓𐑾𐑪 𐑮𐑭𐑤𐑭 𐑤𐑭𐑮□𐑮 𐑒𐑨𐑮 𐑭𐑾𐑪 25

𐑛𐑾𐑓𐑭𐑮𐑪𐑮 𐑭𐑤𐑭 𐑛𐑭 𐑯𐑪 𐑒𐑨𐑥𐑩 𐑞𐑪𐑨𐑾𐑾𐑨𐑭 𐑾𐑓𐑭𐑯𐑨𐑮𐑪 𐑩𐑖𐑖𐑩 𐑖𐑦𐑓𐑮𐑾 𐑮𐑨𐑮𐑭𐑪𐑭 𐑪𐑪𐑤𐑪𐑪𐑪𐑾𐑓𐑭 𐑾𐑯

1 nulla personae nota 2 𐑒𐑨𐑛𐑥𐑭𐑮𐑧 **K** :𐑒𐑨𐑛𐑥𐑭𐑮𐑦𐑧 Kaplan 3 𐑝𐑦𐑤𐑫 **K** : 𐑝𐑦𐑤𐑫 Kaplan 4 𐑸𐑯𐑛 **K** : 𐑸𐑯𐑛 Kaplan 8 𐑪𐑭 suppl. Kaplan 10 𐑨𐑯𐑦𐑓𐑾𐑮𐑧𐑨𐑛 non intelligitur, nec metro congruit; 𐑨𐑯𐑦𐑓𐑾𐑮𐑦𐑧𐑨𐑛 Kaplan 11 𐑮 **K** in ras. 12-3 lectio dubia 13 𐑮𐑭𐑛 𐑨𐑖𐑨𐑪 **K** : 𐑮𐑭𐑪𐑛 𐑪𐑦𐑮𐑪 Kaplan sed vid. Ehrens *PA* 208 15 𐑮𐑪 𐑓𐑧𐑕 **K** : 𐑮𐑝𐑸𐑸𐑪 𐑓𐑧𐑕 Kaplan sed supra 𐑮𐑪 scr. 𐑸𐑪, **K** 16 𐑖𐑮𐑪𐑪 **K** : 𐑖𐑮𐑪𐑓𐑪 Kaplan 17 post 16 inseruit Kinbote 18 𐑓𐑪[ ]𐑤𐑪 **K** : 𐑓𐑪[𐑭]𐑤𐑪 Kaplan sed lectio incerta, concinnitum foret 𐑓𐑪[𐑓𐑾]𐑛𐑕 vel 𐑓𐑪[𐑛𐑕]𐑤𐑪 20 𐑖𐑮𐑛𐑒 𐑓𐑾𐑮𐑒𐑮𐑾𐑮 𐑪 non sensu orationis congruit; quamvis obscura sint verba, in Corli mutare non ausus sum 4 𐑓𐑧𐑓𐑤𐑕 **K** : 𐑤𐑓𐑾𐑧𐑓𐑤𐑕 Kaplan

COMMENTARY

1 𐌐𐌏𐌓𐌂𐌀 𐌃𐌏𐌍𐌀: The term *purga* (*𐌐𐌖𐌓𐌂𐌀*) is usually found in ancient sources describing the tall conic monuments erected outside temples dedicated to Limaion along the rim and throughout the hinterland of Pontis and Euxis. The most famous of these was the *purga* at Sephiris raised in the aftermath of the Illyric war, an inconclusive hecatomb which drew in most of the peoples of the Rim. The structure is described by Lucis, the Greek orator and latterly *proxenos* to Chairea, in his *Travels*:

> Leaving Glauceion by its eastern gates, the traveller passes through the mountains known as the Spheroi and emerges from its northernmost pass onto the plain of Sephiris. From the mouth of the pass, although it is some twenty oslots distant, the famous spire (*𐌀𐌊𐌕𐌄, akte*) of Sephiris is already visible. Traders frequently remark that the journey from this point of vantage to the gates of Sephiris itself has the effect of seeming twice the length it actually measures - the featurelessness of the plain and the distant, unchanging aspect of the spire contribute to the impression that one is crossing an infinitely extended threshold. After half a day's passage, although still a whole oslot from the eastern gate (which they call the Nicobid after the mythological founder of Sephiris and which is the town's principal point of entry), the traveller is enveloped almost without warning in the long and imposing shadow cast by the massive spire. It is recorded by Plinus that this phenomenon was not an accident, that the shadow cast on arriving travellers was

> intended to remind them of the terrible shadow cast over Pontis by the Illyric war, but as any traveller will attest it more often acts as welcome relief from the baking heat of the journey, for due to many years of drought the plain at Sephiris has long ceased to be a fertile *mesa* and is little more than a glaucous hostile desert.
>
> The dimensions of the spire are simple but breathtaking. A solid cone composed of forty sections one on top of the other its base is fifty five cales in diameter and as the most elementary calculations will confirm this foundation allows it to stand a quarter of an oslot high. In accordance with articles in the peace treaty promulgated in Sephiris its entire surface has been inscribed from top to bottom with the name of every man that died in the conflict. The exact number is not recorded but, as Caloder remarks in his *Histories*, that is because at the time it was considered a sum too terrible to assay. For my own part, I can only offer the calculations made by those I met at Sephiris. The script, as far as the eye can see, is but a single dactyl in height. Taking into account the basal diameter, the height of the cone, and its gradual tapering to a point one quarter of an oslot from the ground, one arrives by slow, horrid measures at a figure that fully justifies the recalcitrance of our ancestors. The column at Sephiris must list an army of some two hundred thousand spectres.

The Illyric war lasted somewhere between ten and fifteen months, but beyond this nothing is certain. Historical sources are both few and discordant and this is thought to be precisely due to the unforeseeable influence the spire at Sephiris eventually had in altering popular memory of the conflict. As Lucis' account suggests, even some thirty years after its conclusion the Illyric war was regarded with almost prurient awe. Annual embassies to Sephiris from all the nations that had fought side by side and toe to toe served to form a lasting folk-memory of the conflict that spread the

whole circle of the Rim. While from a distance the spire generated wonder in the observer, close at hand it prompted horror. The sheer scale of death evident in the quite minuscule *stoichedon* inscribed spirally to the very tip of the spire seemed to defy Euxine comprehension.

Such was the awe before such apparently infinite numbers and such is the bovine respect we feel for the innumerable dead, that the plainly impossible assertion that a ribbon dyed with the names of the fallen would stretch the entire circumference of the Euxine lake, from Chalde to Razir, Razir to Senna, and Senna back to Chalde, was widely regarded as true and is repeated in almost every source predating the fateful year in which it was finally and catastrophically put to the test. In the Bospor of the tenth year of Samis' teraeaship at Ardis (*c.* 782 BC) the Illyric embassies gathered in Sephiris for the fiftieth year running and elected to construct a new monument, a 'second wonder', which would serve to inspire awe of the Illyric war in the generations to come. It was decided to construct a single sea-step that would, without interruption, run along the shore of the Euxine lake bearing the catalogue of the Illyric dead through the coasts of the twelve nations that opened onto it, all of whom had slain at least one of the men commemorated on the spire. The construction of the step was a matter of months and the completion of the monument only awaited the list of the fallen, which was to be transcribed from the monument by Sephiris' municipal clerks. Without explanation, there were delays. It was soon being reported that Serayas, the chief magistrate at Sephiris, had ordered that no-one be given access to the scaffold constructed around the spire but himself and the appointed clerks. Very soon, there were dark rumours. Almost a year had passed and yet Serayas had provided only twenty thousand names to the

masons supervising the inscription of the step. When the annual embassies arrived in Sephiris, the ambassador from Chalce forced his way past the guards and ascended the scaffold carrying a lens and a length of papyrus roll, announcing that he would complete the survey of the spire himself.

The discovery of the truth of the spire at Sephiris preceded the outbreak of the rim's first conflict since its construction, the Chalcean-Dacian war, by only seven months. Not only did the spire not contain the number of names that had been anticipated, it turned out to be blank from the midway point. From the quarter-way point the dimension of the uncials, beginning at the height of a single dactyl at the base, increased twofold and then threefold, before terminating with the name of Caulus Spirtis in letters exceeding the height of a man's knee. The twenty thousand names supplied by the magistrate were all that the spire contained and subsequent examination revealed that he had even interpolated fabrications of his own, so that the real number of dead on the Sephiris column was estimated to be less still. The inscription of the Euxine step was abandoned only ten oslots from its point of origin in Chalde, one hundred oslots from Razir on the Dacian coast. The Chalcean-Dacian war, which had been brooding for some five years in a dispute over control of corn territories in Parnis now proceeded with unstoppable force, as if some taboo had been shattered, and lasted for over a year, costing both sides heavily. The shifting and complex alliances of the Rim ensured that a succession of minor conflicts followed. Dacia against Caris, Carnassus and Hemis against Boelia, Charon against Rhesid and Caris, Phocis against Serasia. Twenty years later - with the conclusion of the Carcaneid war - the Euxine step was completed under the auspices of the secondtreaty at Sephiris, recording the name of every man who had

fallen in battle since the discovery of the truth of the spire.

1 Purga dora: The metre of the *Purga* is known as 'cheric' and takes the form – ᴗ ᴗ –. The name is often thought to have been derived by fusing the names of the letters *khemil* (ʁ) and *beris* (ϐ), since the one resembles an obverse of the other. It could just as easily be derived from the Morasian variant of *choros* ('hill') however. *Cheros* is found in both Aratis and Corin to refer to the spectacular range of narrow table mountains north of Ardis and the short stressed syllables at the heart of the metron likewise create a brief plateau bracketed by the long ascent and descent of the adjacent unstressed syllables. Whatever the truth of the matter, the metre was a stock element of tragic prosody by the time Corlis composed his *Ahaser* in 680. The cheric 'heap' or 'tower' of progressively longer and more breathless metrical units would have been as striking in the theatre as it is on the page. The effect was one of rising, increasingly desperate emotion leading conventionally to the death of the singer. According to Quintilian, for the final monody in Aster's lost *Mermones*, Geras ends his life and his aria with a burst of eighty cheric metra, twice the length of the final line in our fragment of Corlis. Whether such a quantity could be sung in a single breath without detracting from the solemnity of effect seems questionable and Quintilian's information has been treated with caution. The only other cheric 'tower' to survive in complete or near-complete form is in Parnes' *Masai*, an ode which is often referred to in second-rate manuals of the ancients and particularly in ignorant critiques of Apollinaire as the first kalligram. This neglects the fact Corlis' and Parnes' 'tower' were written for the ear and not the eye.

2 Ϟcɀwϟa : Aisax, the mute king of Lide (Aracin in modern-day Euxis), was famous for devising a crude and unsuccessful

predecessor of tactical attrition and also for the poignant circumstances of his death. In the so-called *nuktegregoria* of the *Boriad* (XVII, 340-524), he resolves the strategic dispute between Laus and Germen with the ingenious suggestion that until a better plan could be put together the army should move its camp three *beloi* (about five feet) nearer Borias every night before lighting the watchfires. While the gradual advance over the featureless Litheian plain would be indiscernible from the Borian walls, four to five weeks of this tactic would gain up to three invisible miles and perhaps create a chain of events where the Litheians' grasp of the situation lagged crucially behind the preternaturally rapid advance of the Euxine cavalry.

The idea was adopted in a resolution by the council and after a month of stealthy shuffling Laus' Royal Bodyguard together with two companies of Thracian mercenaries rushed the citadel in full armour. The rout could not have been more complete. The Euxine army was driven back to the sea and several of its boats (including Aisax's) were fired by Litheian archers. For the first time in six long years of war the Litheian armies now camped outside their own walls and surrounded the Euxine beach-head in a crescent. Blame for this miraculous reversal was placed squarely on the shoulders of its indirect architect. Aisax was called before the council of chiefs and with only a written submission prepared in his defence (read out by Coriolan, his *aide-de-camp*) was sentenced to death, an unprecedented move against a tribal king. This shabby decree was executed immediately. Aisax was escorted to the nearby dunes, a sword was driven through his stomach and, in accordance with a tradition that the notoriety of this instance made defunct, he was buried while still breathing. The miracle that followed is best recounted in the septameters of Aster:

ᚴᚱ ᚨᛦᛟᛟᚱ ᚻᛦᛟᛏ ᚪᚱᛉ ᚢᚪᚱᚨᛏᛏᚱ ᚹᛟᛟᚻᚱ ᚻᛏᚱᚢᚹᚱ.
ᚻᛟᚹ ᚨᚱᚱᛗᚪᚱᚱ ᛏᚱ ᚱᚪᛦᚱ ᚢᛟᚻ ᛈᚻᚱᚪᚳ ᚢᚪᚳᚻᚪᚱ
ᛈᚻᛟᚳᚱ ᚻᛟᚹ ᛏᚢᚻᚾᚪᚱ ᚾᚻᚱ ᛦᚪᚻᚱᚢᚻ
ᛟᚪᚻᛦᚢᚱ ᚪᛦᛦ ᚻᛏᚱ ᚨᚱᚱᚱᚻᚱ-ᚢᚹᚱ ᚨᚹᚪᚻ ᛟᚻ ᚢᚪᚳᚳᚻᛦ.

His blood flowed into the earth and nourished roots there.
For because he could not speak nature spoke for him
And its lament outlived all the breeze-borne bruit of battle.

The tree at the root - so to speak - of the legend is the Tartary jasper or sand-poplar. There are curious markings on the foliage of many of its sub-phyla but they vary widely from tree to tree and from generation to generation. Jebb's definitive paper on the subject 'established' that none of the markings collated from field studies remotely suggested characters representing the phonemes *Ai, s, a,* or *x*, in any surviving variation of the Euxine alphabet. With the permission of the Hermitage Museum and *pace* Jebb, I have consulted the wide range of specimens recently collected from the south and western coasts of the Tartary peninsula by Durfen, just before the accession of the present regime there. According to the curator, he intended to use them in a ground-breaking article on the subject but was eventually discouraged by their failure to provide conclusive evidence. I have not been able to inspect Durfen's notes but it seems likely that he had in mind at least two specimens, both of which present sets of five pictogrammatic figures of varying decipherability. Item VI[2] in the Hermitage Catalogue has two characters in particular (in the wrong order for our purpose), resembling an *x* and an *s*, located at the colyx and the labial node

respectively, while XIV[5] possesses a perfect, quite breathtakingly kalligraphic *Ai*. It seems to me that this alone is enough to confute the findings of Jebb. Indeed, as the prefatory notes accompanying the publication of these leaves in the *Estotisce Botanike Zaitung* remark, 'spontaneous mutation within wide but detectable bands of variation is characteristic not only of the coastal phyla of the *Jaspri Tartar* but of all flora dependent almost solely on the sloe-worm for pollination'. If this 'bandwidth' can comprise figures suggesting *Ai, s* or *x,* even if only in isolated and rare specimens, it seems numerically inevitable that leaves bearing the name of *Aisax*, complete and intact, could well have appeared at intermittent junctures throughout the history of the plant and therefore I would have to propose the distinct possibility that a sand-poplar did, to the consternation of the Euxine armies, sprout from the dung of Aisax's corpse bearing his name on every leaf of its branch.

3 Follo2 ɥɔɹɐʍʞɐ : The line perhaps alludes to Ahaser's legendary *deloreia*; some versions of the myth claim that for many months he was gripped by an unshakeable conviction that someone else was on board the ship with him. Such feelings are part of a recognised system of delusions clinically identified by Talbus Mathauer in his work with meteorological expeditions in Nova Zembla in the late 1800s. Ahaser' particular condition is known as *allopoieia*, lit. 'the creation of others', and can occur in collective, as well as solitary, hysteria of subjects isolated for long periods of time.* The most celebrated instance of group *allopoieia* occurred during the Antarctic exploration led by Ernst Sak. Forced to march without equipment to Ezeris, the four surviving members of the expedition

*Though he groups them together for the purposes of classification, Mathauer is careful to note that while collective *allopoieia* usually occurs to groups with sound mental health in circumstances of protacted danger and physical isolation, *allopoieia* develops in individuals as a protracted episode of psychosis under the pressures of continual but sociable loneliness.

became convinced that there was one more of their number than could actually be counted. This misapprehension came to weigh on them with such force that they decided to turn back, certain that in the extremity of their circumstances they had unwittingly abandoned a member of the party along the route. In the event the decision was fatal, they were met by a week of snowstorms in the Faulkner gorges and their corpses and diaries were not retrieved until the following spring.

Contrary to what one might expect, solitary *allopoieia* is rarer than the collective form. There is no recorded instance, for example, of prisoners in isolation cells experiencing *allopoieia*. The same is true of mental patients held in solitary wards, subjects one would expect, if anything, to yield numerous instances of the condition rather than none at all. On the whole, the manifestation of *allopoieia* in isolated subjects seems to be confined to individuals in what Mathauer terms 'complex solitude'. This is not the solitude of the cell or the secure cubicle but the solitude of the house on a street or in the case of Ahaser, the ship at sea. Here the isolation of the subject is above all *insecure*. This is not to say that the sufferers are misanthropic and fear the invasion of their solitude (most victims of *allopoieia* lead normal social lives but happen to live alone due to unwelcome personal circumstances), rather it is just that, unlike the prisoner who is locked fast within four walls and a bolted door, the irruption of their solitude is unlikely but it is not impossible. A typical example of the delusion is recorded by Mathauer in his case-study of a butcher who presented himself at Mathauer's surgery after reading of his work with meteorologists in the newspapers.

The man, Ernst W., had been born in Roscow but had moved to Vienna at the age of 18 where he was apprenticed to a

master-butcher in the Alterstum quarter. He married in the same year to a girl of Swiss-Italian descent and for twenty years lived and worked in Alterstum before appropriating the means to establish his own business. The death of his wife from consumption, seven years before his first consultation, had led him to move to a small tenement in Gluckweiss and it was while living in these new surroundings that the preliminary symptoms of *allopoieia* first began to manifest themselves:

> During the entire period of his treatment, W. could never recall when he first developed the conviction there was someone else in his tenement-flat. Instead, the emergence of his illness was recollected as a long phase of gradually eroded denial; a long and protracted wearing away of his refusal to believe that there was a second person inhabiting his rooms who took elaborate but imperfect measures to conceal himself. This, as we shall come to see, is the classic structure of the *allopoietic* delusion. The subject, in the face of apparently mounting evidence to the contrary, endeavours heroically to suppress his mania, dismissing it as a flourish of the imagination or an unpleasant by product of loneliness. In W.'s case this battle with the delusion lasted for three agonising years. At the end of this period he had not only succumbed to his illness but had also developed a system of explanatory sub-delusions that spread beyond the clarification of his own private circumstances into a reinterpretation of the nature of the world as a whole.
>
> The first stages of W.'s illness are almost indistinguishable from the thirty five years of everyday existence they brought to an end. In W.'s own view (while still fully under the

influence of his delusion), the experiences that constituted his first symptoms were no different from those of every other man or woman, it was just that he was the first to pursue them to their logical conclusion. The example to which he attached most importance (he reverted to it continually throughout his treatment), was an experience he had of a matchbox mislaid in his kitchen. Every morning and evening, it was his habit to make a pot of coffee and every morning he lit the stove with a box of matches which, in accordance with his habit, were to be found on the lid of the coffee-jar where they had been placed the previous evening. On one occasion, and on one occasion only as far as he could remember, the matches were not to be found in their usual place. As W. reasonably would point out, such is the stuff of everyday life, but such paradoxes were rarely, if ever, pursued. Even *he* had dismissed the matter of the matchbox, until of course such incidents became impossible to ignore.

The conditions that made such events 'impossible to ignore' are the main business of the second and principal act of W.'s *allopoieia*. Their structure will be studied in full later in this work, but at this point it suffices merely to identify them. The first is an inescapable physical sense, enhanced through constant repetition to a quite psychotic quality, of a human presence within close proximity. The second consists of hallucinations, uniformly psychotic in character, of unspecified movement in adjoining rooms. In W.'s case, as in those of others, the latter phenomenon emerged only when the 'sense' of someone else (an habitual feeling for someone married fifteen years) had conspired over a long period of time with the accumulating and carefully noted imperfections

> in the *other's* concealment. In this sense, the psychosis of *allopoieia* is constructed from two elements found in many people's lives, but as we will discover later it is the psychological structure of the subject and the circumstances of his personal life that are decisive in prompting the terrible chemistry of *allopoieia*. It is crucial to note however, that the main exhibits of the illness are something experienced by many people, only without the diseased determination of its true victim.

In the sense described by Mathauer, Ahaser is not a 'true victim' of *allopoieia*. If anything his terrible delusion comes across as a virulent form of cabin-fever rather than the sudden flourishing of a madman. This is as it should be, Ahaser is not intended to be an embarrassing bathchair case. Ahaser, in the heroic mould, mentions the episode with the braggartly insouciance proper to the tale of a difficult battle or a violent tempest. Nevertheless, the florid case-histories offered by Mathauer are too good to be entirely passed over and Kinbote finds some of the most vivid detail for his prospective note on the line in the diaries of 'Martha S.' and 'Georg V.' quoted at length in *Allopoieia: Conditions and Cases* (Vienna 1902). Here are some of his borrowings:

> The creature has remained in the parlour almost the entire day. I dare not even pass the door in case he bursts out to accost me. When I sit here in the kitchen, not making a sound, and keep my ear out I can hear him hushing his footfalls. He is convinced I know nothing about him, that I think he is all in my head...I finally gathered up the courage and went into the parlour. He had heard me coming of course and had hidden somewhere, probably behind

the divan or in the chest beside the mantlepiece. I could only remain there for a few moments, knowing he was there made my skin prickle. I closed the door and locked it again. At least he is trapped there. [Martha S.,p.224]

As I read the newspaper this evening I suddenly became aware of him creeping timidly along the hallway. I had not heard him for several days and only this morning I had assured myself that it really had been all in my imagination. It was almost certainly him. He must have taken all of two hours to proceed from the kitchen to the door of the library. What agony it must have been to creep at such a pace! As I sat there, frozen before my newspaper, afraid to turn the pages lest it should give him the chance to sneak up on me, I suddenly noticed a shadow frozen and silent in the corner of my eye. For a whole hour I sat there waiting for him to pounce. Finally, in the extremity of my anxiety, I passed out. When I awoke, the shadow was still there. I jumped up, as if a shock had passed through me. I heard him retreating away from the other side of the door, back to his hiding place. In a sudden access of courage, I walked up and down the house turning on all the lights. He was nowhere to be found, but there were places I dared not look. [George V., p.298]

I arrived home this evening to find the positions of all the doors in house subtly rearranged. Those that were ajar are now fully open, those that were fully open are now ajar. The back door was unlocked. But maybe that was me. I do forget about it sometimes. [George V., p.231]

I can feel his presence in the house like I used to feel my husband's. Sometimes I think I can smell him. It is an amber smell, like camphor or a chemist's shop. For the last two nights I have stood at the parlour door straining to hear him. There has not been a

> sound, only the smell of camphor. Why doesn't he show himself or just go away? [Martha S.,p.224]

The propriety of publishing these extracts was questioned by a number of Mathauer's contemporaries. Many of them are incoherent *cries de coeur*, no doubt providing valuable data with which to trace the patients' breakdown but perhaps better reserved for their treatment rather than their public exhibition. Whatever the case at that time, the subjects are now long since deceased and I hope that their excerption in the present context will show the excellent use to which Kinbote could have put this raw material.

4 ᒪᐃᑭᓐ ᐊᑎᕐᓭᓕᓂ : The verb *androlazin* is derived from the malign deity Androlas, branded the 'insane god', whose myth recurs throughout Euxine literature as an exemplum of Jope's intractable sense of justice and his penchant for unnecessarily cruel methods of punishment. Androlas, the son of Jope through a Myrmidon princess Kallipe, lived a long and glorious life as King of Calaus on what is today the Black Sea. His *apotheosis* during the Battle of Aucer (about twenty miles outside modern day Sebastopol) is said by Aster to have caused the warring sides to separate by a distance of four oslots and a *tondre massif* to rise from the earth, splitting the terrain of Calaus and Aucer with its present day geological boundary, the Arat ridge. (It is now accepted that Aster's description is based on an established aetiological tradition, traceable not to Calaus, as it happens, but to Aucria.) According to most accounts, Androlas proved to be a 'troublesome god, grievous to Jope' (Acer). In life he had been regarded as a madman (ᖃᓄᖅᓯᒪᓂ, the word implies malevolent eccentricity combined with murderousness): in battle he would not cease fighting until he had personally put to the sword every man in the opposing army with the same initial letters in their

autonym and patronym as his own. Following the conquest of Tyroleia after a long siege he ordered the razing of the town and the next day, standing in its cinders, commanded the construction of an exact replica, down to the last detail, in sandstone instead of brick. When this was completed, he immediately ordered that the inhabitants be put to death in their houses. He refused to eat anything but pomegranates. His mausoleum, not unreasonably, was constructed in the shape of a sword, except that he had stipulated that its point lie seven hundred feet below the earth and only its hilt should be visible above the ground. The burial chamber was to be filled with the trophies of a lifetime's campaigning, in particular his thesaurus of 10,000 swords.

In spite of his death and divinisation, he could not shed the allegiance he felt to his people and his own lust for murderous and violent activity of every sort. He persisted in breaking the 'golden constitution' on which Jope had established his rule of the cosmos and, after casting Cronos and his host from Mount Arat, had inscribed in his own hand on the archway of the gods' conclave: 𐤀𐤋 𐤐𐤏𐤓𐤁𐤍, *Do not intervene.* Although the number of occasions on which Androlas violated the 'golden constitution' differs from source to source, they are unanimous regarding the occasion of his eventual fall. His greatest enemy, Aeolus of Crema, a warlord that had harried his northern borders for the whole of Androlas' reign, was encamped outside the walls of Calaus with an army of tribesmen and mercenaries four times the number of the city's inhabitants. The next day the city would undoubtedly fall and Aeolus would raze it to the ground. Knowing that Jope would let fate takes its course, Androlas slipped from Mount Arat in the dead of night and entered the besiegers' camp. The next morning Aeolus awoke

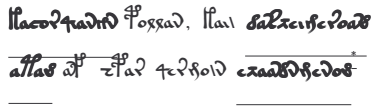
late, it was light and his manservant was still asleep at the foot of the bed. He walked out of his tent to find the camp completely still except for an unnatural swarming of flies. They had gathered in black clusters at the necks of his men, whose twenty thousand throats had been slit from ear to ear.

It is the punishment of Androlas, and its cruel but ingenious method, that gives rise to the verb *androlazin*. Jope, inflamed by the anger of a tyrant that can be soothed only by the indulgence of a father, cast Androlas from heaven but fell short of consigning him to the gulfs of Kaker. Instead, he returned him to earth, but only in such a way that he could not be an affliction 'even to those buried beneath his feet' as he had been in life. Jope decreed that with the arrival of each morning, Androlas would awake in a new body, of which he would have possession for just that one day. Without a fixed identity, he would be incapable of forming ties, friendships, or making enemies. His rage and remonstrations would cause consternation among those he encountered but even were these outbursts to continue for all eternity, they would only last one day in the lives of the persons he inhabited. Condemned to daily transmigration Androlas would become little more than an occasional aberration in the lives of mortals, a moment of madness quickly forgotten by the sufferer and his friends. With delicious irony, he slyly predicted to the conclave of gods that Androlas' punishment would soon be guessed at by mortals or at least invented as an explanation, and that every day for the rest of his infinite life Androlas would have his own name flung in his face as an insult, as slang for a temporary insanity which for him would be eternal.

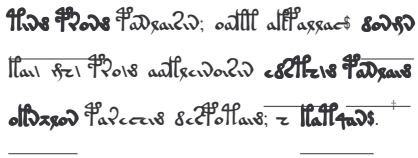
4 Ϸɣɛɛ ɑɔ: The Euxine poet who wished to depict his characters in distress had the privilege of drawing on a stock of cries of woe

that far exceeded in quantity and variety that of any language then or since. As the translator of the *Phokides* or the *Linaia* discovers to his embarrassment, his puny account of Ohs and Alases is soon overdrawn. A full inventory of the cries and howls of high poetry has been compiled by Vergas together with an untidy attempt to systematise their usage according to the circumstance and status of the speaker. The only firm conclusion to be drawn from his survey is that whereas mortals command a repertoire of some fifty eight different cries (from the simple *ai* to the unparalleled elaboration of *eheuoiaxaxax*), divine and semi-divine speakers are limited to three congeners of *au*. The premises of this convention are difficult to decipher. The gods of tragedy are in almost every other respect the verbal superiors of their mortal subjects; their speech is littered with anachronistic metaphors which they alone are permitted; the poet's use of neologism is preserved exclusively for the speech of gods. It is possible of course that the gods are considered to be rich in everything but grief and their literary arsenal for this emotion is correspondingly impoverished. Equally, it little befits the stature of a god to engage in the flamboyant emoting more proper to the demented heroines of the Euxine stage. The terseness and dignity of *au*, *auau,* and *aiau* appears to have been thought far more proper to their station. Unfortunately, to our ears, raised in a world of manly *aarghs* and effeminate *ouches*, the forbidding Euxine cry of *au* and particularly *auau* is not something we would wish to associate with ourselves, not to mention the great Jope lamenting the death of his semi-divine son, Cordis. As Wiestis has noted in his *East of Helicon*, we are not alone in our embarrassment at the tarnished nobility of the exclamation. In Latin *au* is an expression of female consternation, while in Greek it is a dog's bark.

5 ϩαϥϣϭαϩ αϣ ϧαϩ ϩϩ : The *borasis* was common in late Euxine tragedy, particularly in Cima. In contrast to its Greek disciples, which only has the chiasmus, the device is one of a large family of such munitions in Euxine prosody and derives its name from a passing resemblance to the letter *boras*. But whereas the shape of the Greek chiasmus obviously resembles the letter *chi* [χ] by fortuitous coincidence though its real intention is to use the boundaries of the verse-line for recitative symmetry, this cannot be said of *borasis* or even any of the other major prosodic figures in Euxine poetry. Take for instance the *chiasmus* in Aeschylus' *Choephori*:

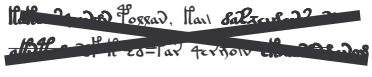


and now compare it with Corlis' *borasis*:

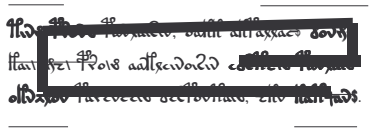


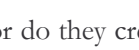
In the former the simplicity of the figure speaks for itself, the linked words stand at opposing ends of the couplet and incidentally form an x-shape when viewed on the page. In the *borasis* meanwhile the

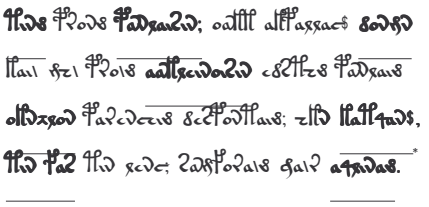
*The *chi* (X) is described as follows:



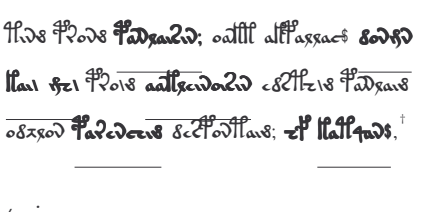
†The *borasis* thus:



elaboration is all too obvious. While the fundamental structure is the same it has been subjected to two touches of gratuitous embrocation. The  and the do not counteract each other nor do they create tension with any of the other words in the figure. Although essential to the sense of the lines, their collocation is not unavoidable; could have been brought forward to the fifth element of the verse and could easily have been brought to the anceps position. This painstaking superfluity is evident in the three other recurring figures of Euxine prosody. *Thasis*, common in comic and proto-dithyrambic verse:

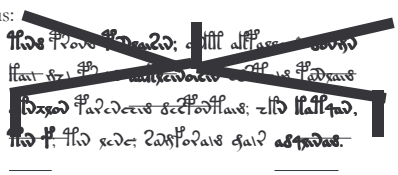


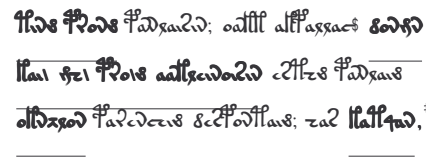
Amasis, common in tragedy:



And finally, *etasis*:

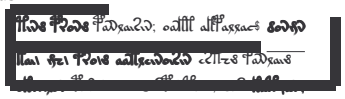
*The *thasis* ( ) thus:



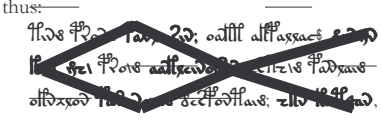


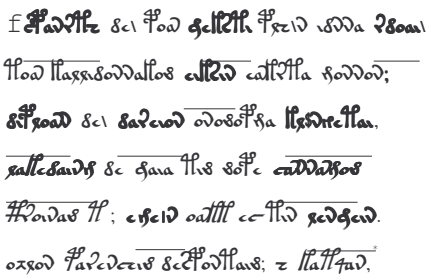
The distribution of these four figures in extant Euxine prosody is the subject of a paper by Rajius, a Dutch philologist who later devoted himself to theosophy. Rajius' statistics show that Aris and Aragon make use of *etasis* and *borasis* in almost equal measure, while Aragon shows a distinct preference for *cadasus* in his later plays, particularly the *Phokides* which contains 12 examples and the *Corena*, which contains 14. It is Aster, however, the latest of the great Euxine tragedians and in formal terms the most decadent and inventive, who brings the use of these prosodic figures onto an entirely new plane of significance. In all his plays, from the apprentice-piece *Eupodeia* to the penultimate masterpiece composed in exile, the *Coragon*, *etasis, borasis, cadasus* now occur in unparalleled numbers and in intricate patterns previously unforeseen by Aris and Aragon and even Euxine prosody as a whole. A characteristic of the early Aster, for instance, is the complex interlinkage of figures evinced in this passage from the *Eriteia*:

‡The *etasis* ( ) thus:



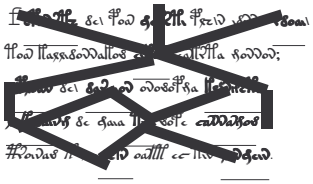
†The *amasis* ( ) thus:



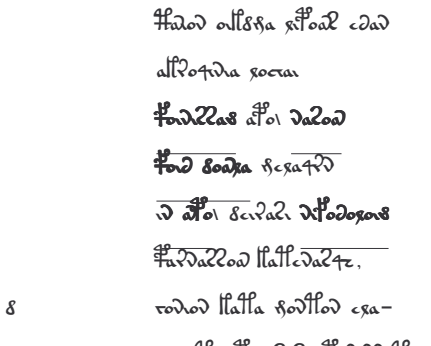


Here the *thasis* and *amasis* do not occur diadochally as one might expect. Instead they are carefully interwoven. The cadasus begins one line before the etasis is completed. What is more the interlocking head and tail of the two figures itself forms a chiasmus and the sibilance in the first line of the *etasis* and the consonance of *calises* in the last of the cadasus join the second head and tail of this dual figure. This so-called *siamesis* (Rajius' pithy but slightly unpleasant coinage) is present in every one of Aster's surviving plays and judging by the copious litter of dramatic fragments unearthed in Oxyrhynchus over the last century his innovation was heavily imitated by contemporaries and successors alike. The level of sophistication that this manipulation of form and content cultivated in Aster's audience permitted him to scatter his work with increasingly spectacular *faits subtiles*, gem-like *opuscula* that have only been unearthed by modern scholars in the last century or so. Aster's

*The linkage is more easily distingushed with the ear than the eye.



favourite device, one which recurs in a variety of forms from the *Eriteia* onwards, is the strophic exclamation. The actor has broken out into a song of lamentation, a threnode consisting of two short verses of complex but identical metrical pattern known as strophe and antistrophe. The *locus classicus* of the device occurs in the *Calides:*



Here the four-line, polymetric strophe contains a delightful *etasis* and is followed by an antistrophe of exactly identical symmetry which contains not an *etasis* but a striking *eplisis.* Thus the listener is

presented with an *etasis* followed by an *eplisis*, in short the nested articulation of the letters *ai* and *e,* which together form *aie*, the traditional cry of lamentation, which is of course the *extra metrum* exclamation that begins and ends the threnode.

The genius of this highly artificial but nevertheless exhilarating flourish requires no amplification. Aster repeated it in almost every subsequent play, inventing new figures to accommodate the conventional cries of *aiai, eheu, acha, oimoi* and in the *tour de force* komma in *Clitorides* ll.200-300 a sequence of antiphonal enfigured cries exchanged by the chorus and Carna, the mourning widow of Aisax.

Inevitably, the charming, even thrilling *leger-de-main* of the innovator soon succumbed to the diligent heavy-handedness of his unwanted disciples. The embrocation of new and old figures into the plodding weave of new tragedies - good, bad or indifferent - became fashionable to the point of plague. Not only was the execution generally crass and inexpert (as the Oxyrhynchus horde amply attests), the whole spirit of Aster's delightful folly was missed. Aster only ever employed enfiguration in scenes of lament, precisely because in a simple and immediately pleasurable way they enhanced the emotional force of the antistrophic and kommatic structure. It was clear to the listener in a matter of moments that a second lament lay earthed, almost unconsciously as if part of its essence, in the form of the singer's mourning. Mander, Choras, Kabdilis, and all the other feeble saplings that sprouted at the foot of Aster's might oak, could only bring themselves to play asinine games, mere *folies* in the worst sense of the word. In the Choras' *Alana* for instance, each act begins with a figure describing a letter, so that taken together the five figures at the beginning of each spell out the heroine's name. Of course, this little sparkle in the cesspool

was not noticed until several centuries later by an anonymous annotator (probably Origen of Adasmus), who claims that he discovered it utterly by chance. The fragmentary and unattributed plays of Euxine literature are littered with such examples, all of them ingenious and empty in equal proportions.

6 ⴰⵔ ⵎⵉⵏⵜ ⵙⴰ: The expression **ⵎⵉⵏⵜ ⵙⴰ** (lit. 'Cantor's dust') is used in connection with disease, love, depression, and most frequently (as in the present case), death. In its simplest interpretation one can say that Ahaser, as the cap to his immemorial suffering, must undergo the slow and insensible death of the old, a terrible indignity for even the most wretched of warriors. However, the more difficult and more truly Euxine meaning is illuminated by some lines from Harpatis and also by the origin of the expression itself. In his *Anatomy*, Harpatis describes the death of a patient after a long illness:

> In the seventh hour the symptoms of fever abated. As if a door had been shut somewhere deep inside him, the sufferer's profuse sweating came to a stop. After almost a month of waxy pallor, there now arose a colour in the man's cheeks and a serenity in his eyes that prompted exclamations of joy from his family. Unbeknownst to them, the man was now only hours away from death. Until the hour of his passing he was to remain silent and to the eyes of even the most cultivated physician a model of robust health. Throughout this time his eyes remained open but instead of seeking those around him they seemed to squint at some distant point as if he was occupied with finding an acquaintance in a large crowd. This preoccupation became a source of great distress to his family who took him in their arms and pressed him towards them in a vain attempt to distract his gaze. In spite of being handled in this way, the patient remained unperturbed, insensible to the shouts in his

> ears and the tears and gestures of his womenfolk. By the time of the coming of night the physician had disabused the family of all hope and had at last taken up position at the dying man's side. At the moon's summit, in the second hour, the patient's breathing was no longer audible and Harpatis now monitored the rate of the man's demise by placing a looking glass at his mouth.[*] The intervals between breaths had become remarkably long. For ten of his own breaths, Harpatis counted only one of his patient's. As the night progressed this ratio increased and decreased in unpredictable measures. In the same hour Harpatis would calculate as little as five and as many as twenty of his own breaths to one of the patient's. It was not until the seventh hour, one whole day after the signs of fever had first abated, that Harpatis realised the patient had died. Preoccupied with counting his own breaths and keeping a close watch on the looking-glass, he noticed to his consternation that the base of his hand had grown cold against the man's face.

The manner of death described by Harpatis in victims of the gazing disease leads him to certain insights into the nature of death taken as a whole. First of all, he points out that the most striking thing about the above case is that one cannot locate any single moment in time at which the patient passed from life into death. In the man's final hours, death emerges as a broken line (known as the *Harpatic line*), a sort of accumulation of intervals gaining unsteadily as the patient's breaths rise and fall in number. The exact moment of death cannot be isolated simply because Harpatis cannot possibly say at what moment the patient at last failed to breathe. Without warning, almost arbitrarily one might say, the interval between breaths persisted and the line representing death assumed an unbroken journey into infinity.

[*] Throughout the *Anatomy*, Harpatis refers to himself in the third person.

This concept of death, as a presence emerging between the final breaths of the still living patient before finally achieving uninterrupted continuity in his expiration, is not found elsewhere in Euxine medical literature. Nevertheless, it is not surprising that some Euxine should have come across it. The Harpatic line is, after all, little more than a temporal counterpart to the spatial concept introduced by the celebrated expedition of a member of the Ardisian elite, Cantor of Elis. Cantor, Euxis' most revered military strategist, came to prominence during the war with the Damians. As commanding officer of the armies in Calor and Pardis Cantor's chief objective was the capture of Banil, the site of the Damian treasury situated deep in the centre of the irregular panel of mountains on the Euxine border. Cantor's unqualified success in conquering Banil, and the extraordinary manner in which he brought the victory about, is recorded in almost every Euxine history of the time. The best, and briefest, summation of Cantor's monumental *exploit de folie* is provided by Zoilus in his *Arcana Euxise Exerciti*, an account which has the additional merit of quoting at length from Cantor's 'memoirs', a work which has not itself survived and whose provenance is regarded suspiciously by most scholars. It should be noted that Zoilus is writing some seven hundred years after the event, when Ardis had already fallen to the expeditionary forces of Caligula:

> In the second Corbyron of the campaign against Damia [January - February 760BC], Cantor withdrew his armies from the foothills of the Circassian mountains and established winter garrisons in Relis and Pontia. The withdrawal was regarded by the Damian generals as a victory and as the season progressed their spies reported that Cantor's forces were steadily deserting their barracks. By the arrival

of spring, Cantor had seen his command reduced from seventy five thousand to fifteen thousand men and the main body of his private staff and bodyguard, including Pherles his second-in-command, had abandoned their posts. With the arrival of the Phormyron and with it the second spring of the war, Cantor martialled his depleted forces and moved off in a single column, fording the Hydlis south of Vesper and pitching camp on the plain beneath Mount Carnon. This unexpected manoeuvre caused delight among the Damian generals. They now assembled a force of one hundred thousand men, swelled by huge numbers of mercenaries, opposite Cantor and prepared to conclude the Euxine campaign by anointing it in a sea of blood. On the morning of the battle, as the Damians were receiving their dispositions for the field, a cavalry unit arrived from Banil with the news that the city had been captured by the Euxines and that the king was dead.

The confusion that followed does not permit a clear or conclusive record. It seems that the Damian generals revised their plans and detached three divisions from their army, dispatching them under Vesparis to relieve Banil. The rest they martialled as before and prepared to assault Cantor. As the first waves of cavalry and infantry went into the field, however, fighting suddenly broke out in the rear. Three divisions of Euxine infantry had drawn up behind the Damian camp and were laying waste to the battalions of their astonished comrades. This sudden onslaught threw the entire Damian host into disarray. Through the absence of reinforcements, the advance assault on Cantor's forces was wiped out and the Euxines now advanced in a single body on the Damian camp. Under attack from within and without, the rout of the Damians was total. With the enemy generals, Vesparis and Qarlin, both dead, Cantor now marched on Banil. Here he destroyed the Damian division laying siege to the city and passed through the gates in triumph.

The simple logic that led to this marvellous, nearly incompre-

hensible, chain of events is provided by Cantor in his *Campaigns*. His account deserves to be reproduced in full:

By the onset of the second winter of our expedition in the Circassian mountains our supplies had run dangerously low, particularly water, and Pherles' initially attractive strategy of diversion, ambush and flight had led us to make great sacrifices for no appreciable gain. With the onset of Corbyron, retreat became inevitable. After crossing into safety over the Hydlis we advanced twenty oslots and camped outside Parlis until arrangements were made for our winter garrisons. Throughout our retreat we had been harried by sand-storms; it as at this time of year that the Lervan crosses Damia and in its descent of the Circassian mountains transforms the Carnon plain into an oven of furious dust. To our relief, our arrival at Parlis marked the first night of calm. The Lervan had passed and we pitched camp with a clear view of the Pleiades. A great number of the men abandoned their bivouacs and slept beneath the open sky. The next morning, some hours before reveille, I awoke early and, covered in a legionnaire's cloak, made a discreet inspection of the camp. To my astonishment, I found that overnight, without a murmur of wind, the entire camp had been cloaked in a veil of dust. The men awoke blackened from head to toe, their faces and clothes uniformly covered by the dark sand which had blown down from the mountains and settled, after hanging invisibly for many days, on the plain below. The following day we divided the army and established our garrisons in Relis and Pontia. After giving the matter some thought, I now confided in Pherles the outline of a strategy that had begun to take root in my imagination. The impossibility of invading Damia by conventional means was uppermost in my mind. Attacking our enemy in small bodies of ten and twenty men according to Pherles' 'thunder and lightning' tactic, in short harrying them like gadflies, had proved utterly ineffective. In order to take possession of Banil, we had to settle on Damia like dust from the mountains. Our invasion had to be imperceptible. The strategy I put to Pherles was just this. We should disperse the army from our winter garrisons in a steady stream. Each of these 'deserters' was to cross the mountains alone. Those from the garrison at Relis were to take shelter in the

forests north of the Ibicus river. Those from Pontia, specifically the mercenary troops from Biris, Elia and elsewhere, were to filter into Banil itself. Since almost all of them hailed from cities that were allied with Damia, their arrival would not create suspicion. Indeed it was vital that they should claim allegiance to the Damian throne and enlist in the city's defence so they should be armed for its capture. By the full moon of the Birycoron, a full twenty days after the first soldier had set out, the mercenary forces were to rise in a single body against the Damian forces in Banil and take possession of the city. At the same time, the forces sheltering in the forests were to gather at the pass out of Carmon and move along the route to the plain beneath mount Carmon. By the morning of the following day, the remnants of the army still in garrison would have forded the Ibdycis and be ready for the decisive assault. We both agreed that it was a desperate stratagem but that there was every reason to believe it could succeed as easily as it could fail.

Cantor's victory was not as unequivocal as the above account suggests. Although he successfully occupied Banil, his losses were huge and there was speculation, even in his own time, that had Caris not broken through from Cappadocia two months later his depleted forces would have relinquished the city under the strain of attack from the rallied Damian armies. Furthermore, there exist strong doubts as to the veracity of the strategy described by Cantor and his historians. Contemporary military theorists have voiced serious reservations regarding the possibility of a general being able to orchestrate the advance of tens of thousand of individuals, particularly large numbers of mercenaries, without the organising quanta of *pheroi* and *maroi* at the very least.

These considerations aside, however, the widespread currency of the expression inspired by Cantor's adventure speaks for its credibility in the view of the Euxines themselves. And whether it is the fancy of an ambitious general or an authentic historical fact, the

unqualified victory of Cantor's dust in the field reflects its flourishing success as a concept in the Euxine mind.

7 ⵔⵄⵔⵗ ⵏⵍⵍ ⵒⵒⵐⵐⵔⵗⵒ : ⵒⵒⵐⵐⵔⵗⵒ (*charideia*) is usually translated as 'providence' or sometimes, by less scrupulous translators, as 'luck'. But both of these renderings fall short of the meaning and significance of the word, quite apart from referring to entirely different concepts in the English language. *Charideia* captures the notion of providence, but minus the prism of a provider. Even the idea of nature is absent. Herylis memorably describes it as 'a shadow inhabiting the threshold between creature and event'. Thus *charideia* is nowhere treated as the manifestation of some divine entity, but at the same it is never spoken of as the mere combination of circumstances. The concept is partially illuminated by its congener *charitiddion*, a word found only in the lexicon of Herylis and the definition of which is given as 'agent of disease'. This is nothing less than a prevision of the virus/bacterium and it perhaps expresses the mode of existence obtaining to these beings more delicately than our lazy labels, which merely tag them according to shape. Governed by the notion of *charideia*, a *charitiddion* is forced to inhabit that liminal zone between creature and event the root of its name has designated for it. The very notion of a 'creature' so small offends the Euxine understanding of the word, yet although such a thing cannot be said to live, it cannot be said to have no life at all. Uneasily, it is to this vacant lot between the alive and the 'inanimate dynamic' that *charitiddion* and *charideia* have been consigned by the Euxines.

7 ⵔⵔⵒ ⵛⵄⵅⵏ : The 'century' of the Euxines was designedly erratic in duration. The **ⵛⵄⵅⵏ** (*chore*), upon the death of the oldest surviving member of the aristocratic elite, was fixed at the length of his life and applied with prospective force until its expiry. In this

way, the Mimnesian *chore* (which lasted 110 years) refers to the era following the death of the consul Memnis; the Calorian *chore,* proclaimed in honour of the general Calor who died while campaigning at 95 years of age, followed; and so on with the Phorian and Lasian *chorai* (105 and 60 years respectively: Lasus was assassinated by Damian ambassadors and the proclamation was honorific, an exceptional break with tradition). The assignation of *chorai* was not regulated until the promulgation of the Limaion temple in Ardis *c.*890 BC, until which time the *demoi* of Euxis proclaimed their own *chorai* in honour of the elders of their ruling houses. The focalisation of power in Ardis, in the symbolic seat of the Limaion, united the disparate nations of the Rim and abolished Euxis' balkanised collage of 'centuries' once and for all. Epigraphical sources preceding the Limaion refer to *chorai* according to the locale of their discovery, literary sources according to the nativity of their audience. The notable exception in this regard is Comer, whose 'catalogue of eras' at the opening of the *Hymn to Daemon* stands as a revealing glimpse of the extent to which the poet's work was disseminated in his own lifetime. It was a well-worn saw in Euxis' court and civil rhetoric, even throughout the period of its greatest prosperity, that the decline in the length of the *chorai* since the golden age of the Memnids was emblematic of the slow demise of the Euxine race as a whole.* In the post-classical era the succession of plagues and wars of occupation conducted by Athens to the east and Persia to the south reduced the average life expectancy of Euxines to about fifty years. The Geraian, Chooraian, and Peralian *chorai* all passed within the space of 84 years. In the reign of the Twenty, the institution of the *chore* was abolished as part of a set of measures intended to fortify the Euxine political system against the pressures of hastening disintegration. The *chore*, after some 2000 years, was replaced with

the *epion*, a magisterial duration of 150 years that could do no more to cheat the Rim's collapse than the political class which oversaw its decline.

8 ᚠᚢᚱ ᚷᚢᚹ ᚠᚢᚱ ᚹᚨᚠᚱᚱ : The contemporary fame of the myth of Coracles is almost entirely due to Jakob Vorsin, whose withering critique, *The Slaves are Happy,* temporarily revitalised interest in Euxine mythology when it was published in 1956. Coracles, the semi-divine son of Jope and the daughter of Aiax, Astrid, sought the daughter of the King of Porus for marriage and was set a series of labours that took him his whole life to complete. In advanced old age, he returned to Porus aboard a vessel bearing a lifetime of booty only to find that his treasures, priceless when he had first set out, were now almost without value and that Astrid had grown old and shrewish. Heartbroken, he sought refuge in the sanctuary of Jope, died and was left unburied outside the city walls.

Vorsin appropriates Coracles as a descriptive model for his theory of the 'consumer servant' as a normative human type in modern developed societies. The 'consumer servant', unlike historically conventional slaves, suffers from the illusion of freedom of vocation and movement, attributes expressed in their extreme form by the archetype of the mythological hero. Like Coracles, he also perceives himself on a path of cumulative self-aggrandisement, a continual, and occasionally spectacular, accretion of conspicuous trophies of both real and symbolic value. Vorsin encapsulates the syndrome of the consumer servant in final paragraph of his 'Prefatory Conclusion':

> These two strains in the consumer servant's psychology persist almost unstanched for the greater part of his life, pacified by his closely-heaped booty and secure in the dream of his complete

> freedom, the consumer servant remains covetously private, isolated from the concerns of society as a whole. In his own words, he is 'his own man'. Empowered by the vital cycle of trophy consumption and professional mobility, the consumer servant is 'master of his own destiny', the assured arbiter of every aspect of his existence. With the advance into old age, however, the two pillars propping up the illusory wisdom of the Coracleian type begin to disintegrate. As his appetite for movement diminishes and his prowess wanes, he begins to understand the severe limits of his greatly cherished freedom. His capacity for conquest has spent itself, the treasure-cycle of his consumption has come to an end and he is now left with the freight of a lifetime's gain. Cruelly, however, it is at the very moment that he expects his trophies to benefit him, when his ability to acquire more has all but vanished, that he must witness their depreciation to what Aster famously termed in the *Eupodeia,* 'Coracle's cargo of dust'. The disvaluating forces of the trophy economy in which he had flourished quickly render his treasures worthless. His life-long 'independence', in other words his profoundly apolitical and asocial position in the world, now guarantees his isolation from power. His voice, if it is raised to protest against an injustice or request the fulfilment of a right, is heard only among the clamour of the many others of his kind. He does not lie unburied on the outskirts of the city, but he becomes acutely aware of his unimportance. In his final days, he realises that he has not been a master, either of his own destiny or of anyone else, but a happy, though unwitting, servant. He dies, surrounded by his defunct treasure of appliances and electronic goods, and if he is lucky, by his family.

While the life of Coracles ended in tragedy, the life of the consumer servant ends in bathos. The disappointing epiphany of unimportance reverses the course of his life and, incompletely soothed by

his now stagnant reservoir of possessions, he comes to the end of his cycle of heroic consumption and unwitting servitude to the trophy economy. Vorsin's second and more important work, *Obey and Complain*, subtitled *Happy and Unhappy Servitude in Developed Societies*, frees itself from the demands of the Coracles model and develops a more detailed and complete picture of the role and nature of the consumer servant. For the most part, *The Slaves are Happy* is now regarded only of interest as an apprentice-piece to the later work, though regrettably this has not prevented Euxine scholars from publishing utterly dilatory articles pettifogging over Vorsin's supposed misrepresentation of the Coracles myth.*

9 ωδε δαεήλη ΙΠΠ : The Euxine legend regarding Daemon, mythical king of Chaera, was popular among dramatists and historians alike, though its treatment tended to vary widely according to the treater. The starting point of the myth, which all authors seem to agree on, is related with some vivid details by Strobe in his *Anecdota* and an anonymous author in the *Storigiphi*. Daemon, at the age of two hundred, ceded his royal powers to his eldest son and retreated to the wilderness, as was then the custom, in order to await death. For fifty days and nights he went without food or water until at last 'he felt the flow across his limbs of the 'cold tide' that Aisax had described in a final, faint whisper to him on the plains of Litheia' (Zoilus). He lay down beneath a vast cedar tree, inserted an obol beneath his tongue and was visited by a dream from Aplon. Aplon told him that he, not Circis, was his true father. That as a mortal of divine parentage he would now

*As is their deserts, I feel duty-bound to subject the two worst offenders to the traditional Euxine shaming-ceremony of public exhibition: Judith Lloyd, *Coracles is Unhappy*: the author of *The Blade is Hot, So Why Do I Feel So Cold?: Death and Speech in Ancient Euxis* subjects us to a rare philological volley, mis-etymologising Coracles' name and misinterpreting Vorsin's concept of Disvaluation; Morgen Linstrad, *The Wrong Man: Coracles and Vorsin*: obviously the best chapter in a very bad doctoral thesis.

ascend to Mount Halcyon and live in the City of the Immortals. Daemon was astonished but when he had composed his thoughts his face darkened and he replied : ' "Leave me Aplon. Allow me to die and descend to Actaeon so that I may kiss my father's face again and one day that of my own son Chairon. The immortal in me is long dead and the mortal can only think of rejoining those he loves.'" (Strobe). In an access of the trite fury only gods can know, Aplon breathed fire at his son and vanished. Daemon felt the tide of death pour off him like a river. He stood up and realised he had been restored to robust health and although he fasted for yet another fifty days his body, vigorous with immortality, refused to die.

With this basic premise established the ancient genres of drama, epic poetry and 'history' part company. In Zoilus, Strobe and their ilk, Daemon, despairing of death, returns to Chaera and is received with joy by his son. He renounces his claim to the throne and recedes into the shadows of the palace, wary of the wrath of Aplon the 'Memorious'. The reign of the Nereids now embarks on a period of turbulence. Famine, plague and internecine bloodletting pay their respects to every corner of the kingdom and Daemon's son is brought to the brink of usurpation. Finally, Chaera is invaded and after a short siege the city walls are breached. With his son dead, Daemon abandons the palace precincts and flees alone to the temple of Aplon where he obstructs the pillaging troops from entering and is cut down by a mercenary captain. The blood filling his cupped hands, he fixes his eye on his assailant. He is about to declare his immortality when he recognises the captain's face. It is that of his divine father, Aplon. In an instant, death falls over Daemon like a tidal wave. Aplon, with the wild-eyed despair of a professional soldier, announces that the king's father has been sent

to Tartarus and leads the destruction of his own temple.

Predictably, comedy handles the story of Daemon somewhat differently. Instead of returning to Chaera, Daemon remains in the desert and persists in a series of futile and increasingly comic suicide attempts. After a touching but clearly paratragic speech he thrusts himself from a cliff-edge only to fall comfortably into a thick bed of sage-brush. A deadly potion of hemlock and *laide* succeeds only in making him outrageously deluded so that he engages in heated debate with tumble-weed over the price of maize and mistakes the cedar tree for one of his concubines. In hilarious desperation, Daemon assays every conceivable method of doing away with himself but to no avail. At this point a passing goatherd (in the mould of the wily slave, a stock comic type in Euxine theatre) is inveigled into Daemon's assistance. Despite some pop-eyed incredulity and a whole host of asides to the audience regarding Daemon's sanity, the slave eventually agrees a price for his trouble and, with the entire Nereid kingdom for the taking, sets about his task. Though understandably circumspect at first, it is not long before the slave is embarked on a industrious blitz of stabbing, strangling and clubbing. With all the opportunity of a well-made play, it is at the height of the final and most exasperated of the slave's attacks that Daemon's son arrives in search of his father's corpse for burial and instead finds him being clubbed furiously 'like a dusty couch'. The denouement writes itself. The slave is almost summarily executed by Daemon's son and is saved only by the utterly unruffled Daemon jumping up to rescue him. Father and son are joyfully reunited. Daemon returns to Chaera in splendour and is reinstated on his throne. His reluctant immortality will lead to a happy and eternal reign welcomed by all.

10 𐬐𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬌𐬎𐬌𐬎 𐬌𐬌 : The reference is to a famous story told of the distinguished editor of Aster's *Logeion*, William Ehrens. I first met William Ehrens at the memorial service of a mutual acquaintance, Carl Perecq, the well-known Euxine scholar and editor of Carybdis' history of the Chalcedonian wars the *Cataclumena*. I was working on a new edition and commentary of the *Cataclumena* at the time and knew Dr. Ehrens only by reputation. When the service was over, a group of us went for dinner to a nearby hotel and it was there that Dr. Ehrens introduced himself. I was flattered that he had heard of my work; I had published little and I assumed Dr. Perecq's hostile indifference to my research on Carybdis would be honoured by his colleagues. When I mentioned the treatment I had received from his friend, Dr. Ehrens revealed his reason for approaching me. What he told me that afternoon I have recorded elsewhere but since his passing last year many things have been said in praise of Dr. Ehrens and it would be unjust to exclude his exemplary conduct in a matter that reaches to the very heart of our profession as Euxine scholars.

The story Dr. Ehrens told that afternoon dates back to the years spent working on his commentary of Aster's tragedy *The Logeion*. By his own account, while composing a note on the entrance of Cleomene in line 254 he had occasion to enlist an elegant *hapax legomenon* recalled from Carybdis' *Cataclumena*. The word, *cantharis*, describes the moment of anticipation between the knowledge that an act is about to occur and its actual execution. Carybdis had used it to refer to the psychological state of soldiers seconds before entering battle and Ehrens could not resist transferring it from one ancient theatre to another. In the final stages of preparing his edition the time came for Ehrens to provide a page reference for the *lexis*. He scanned through his copy of Carybdis

without result. It had been a couple of years since he had read the work, so his initial failure to track the passage down did not surprise him. What did surprise him, however, was the word's absence from his Chamber & Scott lexicon. At this point most scholars would have admitted defeat, but instead of making a minor alteration to the note Ehrens decided instead to re-read Cardybdis from cover to cover.

In a meticulous reading of the books dealing with the battles of the Chalcedonian war Ehrens finally tracked down the passage that had troubled him but *canthari*s, to his astonishment, had vanished. Even worse it had vanished into the botched fault line of a subtle but quite singular *anacolouthon* and had done so without a mutter of explanation from the apparatus criticus. Concerned that his own copy was somehow defective he consulted the four editions of Carybdis available in the college library. The passage he recalled was there alright but again there was no trace of Carybdis' nonce-word and again the editors, dating as far back as the Renaissance humanist Lens Adolphus, were silent. As he sat in his study agonising over the final draft of his note it became painfully clear to Ehrens that he had been mistaken. The *anacolouthon* was the fruit of the poor judgement of critics inferior to himself and could easily be repaired. He had wasted an entire week on this squib, his commentary was four months overdue and he had no desire to give ammunition to his rivals in Tenishev and Lode by dropping in an imaginary word from a bad sentence in a minor historian. Putting the lapse down to old age and a lifetime of over-reading, he winced and struck out the offending sentence from his manuscript.

Ehrens' *Logeion* was published in 1971 and it established him in the first rank of Euxine tragic scholarship. Two years later, a chair was created for him in Lode and he gratefully returned to his *alma*

mater in the hope of completing an edition of Aster's fragments. It was here, during his last years of research in the Bogen library, that he crossed the path of Carybdis' *Cataclumena* for the third and final time in his life. One afternoon he was browsing the shelves for an edition of Mander's comedies when his eye inadvertently fell on the spine of a volume he had not opened since his graduate days. The lurid purple background and the gold-embossed lettering laid a chill hand on Ehrens' heart. The edition was an octavo facsimile of the most complete manuscript in the *paradosis* of the *Cataclumena* published with facing translation and preface by the editor Carl Perecq. The flyleaf indicated it had been donated by Perecq. Retreating to his study Ehrens opened the book with an incipient sense of horror and there on page 234 in the rapid but legible uncial hand of Treviranus was the word that he feared:

ϧⲁⲣⲣⲓⲙ ϧⲓⲛⲉⲓⲣ ⲉⲗⲓⲣⲁ ⲧⲱⲟⲩ ⲗⲉⲃⲉⲣⲉ ⲥⲁⲟⲩⲉ ⲉⲙⲓⲛⲉⲁⲁ. .

A terrible realisation overtook him. That afternoon he telephoned Karl Kraus, the editor of the Clarendon Carybdis, and asked for what he termed an 'eccentric but harmless' favour. The two men were strangers but Ehrens' reputation was enough to elicit respect for his request. The following day Kraus returned his call and informed Ehrens that the word was nowhere to be found in his fiche of the Vatican manuscript nor in his copy of the Perecq edition. But since the word obviously possessed a slight Estotian tang Kraus politely suggested looking in Carlis or Baler, two post-classical historians who were quite fond of regional idiom... At this point he was courteously cut off by Ehrens who had become quite distracted.

His travel arrangements had been made hastily so Ehrens' flight to Rome was uncomfortable and he had no choice but to put up at the airport hotel. After a night of fitful sleep he made do without breakfast and travelled directly to 12 Via Fermata, the address of Perecq's erstwhile publishers Scorruti. Here Signora Ghieri, whom he had spoken to on the phone the previous day, was waiting for him on the street. Already breathless with anticipation, Ehrens now had to endure the elaborate hospitality Italian publishers usually reserve for cherished clients. After a long breakfast in a local restaurant and introductions to the majority of the staff, Ehrens finally had the opportunity to state his business. Signora Ghieri fell silent. This was not the offer of a juicy monograph she had been expecting.

Passed onto the publisher's archivist with operatic gestures from his downcast hostess, Ehrens spent that afternoon and evening burrowing among files and records dating as far back as the *risorgimento*. It soon became clear that Perecq's *Cataclumena* had had just the sort of messy birth he anticipated. The first and second runs had been pulped at his own request and the funding of the third had required a subvention from the Vatican library and a contribution from Perecq's own pocket. There were receipts from the Museo di Chiado for the facsimile production of the manuscript. The earliest of these was for a complete set of negatives for the entire quarto but again Perecq seems to have expressed his dissatisfaction and, judging by the invoices for use of rooms and equipment, had intervened to produce a complete set of photographs under his own supervision. The final piece of evidence was uncovered by Ehrens' assistant. Attached to a preparatory draft of his 'Acknowledgements' Perecq had supplied a list of colleges and universities he wished to receive a complementary copy. Lode

College, his own *alma mater*, was not among them. Ehrens thanked his young assistant and looked at his watch. There was still time to catch the nine o'clock flight.

It was past midnight when Ehrens got back to his study in Lode, fresh from a taxi from the airport. Without taking his coat off he hurried to his desk and opened Perecq's *Cataclumena*. At the back there were eight blank pages which had remained uncut, though he now noticed that one of them had been partially slashed with the neatest and most discrete of incisions. With his paper knife, he opened the wound and found the words he had been looking for, a paragraph scrawled at an awkward angle in Perecq's own hand.

> For my *alma mater* the most precious copy of the entire edition of this humble work and also a confession of what will seem a crime to some but which I hope others may understand as an act of preservation. During the recension of the manuscript published here I discovered the only surviving occurrence of an unusual and quite pleasing Euxine noun. Naturally, I was delighted and as the edition was going to print I celebrated by preparing an article on this new word for Hermes. But as I worked through the drafts of this piece I realised something strange, even paradoxical was happening. My article quoted the word some twenty five times and struggled continually to find new ways of terming it an *hapax legomenon*. I looked through my notes as well as the discarded drafts on my desk and in the wastepaper bin and realised that I had transcribed the word no less than three hundred and twenty times. For two thousand years there had been only one instance of this word and now within a couple of days, by my hand alone, there were already several hundred. I then had a vertiginous prevision of what was to come. After the publication of my article, my edition of Carybdis and the next revision of Chamber and Scott this word,

once unique, would have multiplied beyond numeration. I became possessed of a feeling I could not escape. I had taken something away from this word or dispelled something from it. I have thought long and hard about what this could be and I have come to the conclusion that I had begun to rid it of something perhaps no other word still possesses. I had started to disengage it from the most acutely real moment in its existence. It had ceased to be yet another instance of the word but had become the word itslf. On this last page, in this last book the word had become a fully fledged entity so that if it was effaced by me or by any other agent it would be gone forever, like a shattered rock. In short, I realised that the letters on the page were lived in and that what I was banishing was the word itself.

I realise that these latter remarks may not sound very sane, and what follows will seem the actions of a madman. But it is my resolute belief that illness has neither the duration or clarity of my firm conviction on this matter. I destroyed my notes and all the drafts of my article. In the face of strenuous protests from both publisher and printer, I had the edition, which was already awaiting transport in the warehouse, pulped except for the last copy, which I preserved. With even greater difficulty I had to insist on the destruction of the fiche made by the Museo di Chiado and convince the Vatican to release the manuscript for a second set of photographs. Exhausted with the creation of increasingly intricate pretexts I now had to steel myself for the most difficult act of all. On the 30th of June, alone in the Museum's laboratory, I defaced the second clausula of Chapter XX in the Vatican manuscript with a razor and split one of Carybdis' characteristically windy periods in half with a subtle but unavoidable anacolouthon. My mission was complete. The word had moved house but it was still alive and it lives in the copy you are holding in your hands. I have had it privately re-bound in order to insert this notice of preservation and

to pass this explanation of my deed onto you, whoever you may be.

It is to Ehrens' credit that he did not for a moment consider becoming an accomplice in this strange piece of vandalism committed by Perecq. The record of his disapproval is still to be found in the unique edition of the *Cataclumena* he opened that day. Across the blank pages concealing Perecq's testimony the word *canthari*s has been written in his hand again and again, effacing in a few minutes the so-called 'preservation' work to which Perecq devoted more than a year of his life.

In 1978, two years after Perecq's death and with Ehrens' assistance, I published a new edition of the *Cataclumena* with the full Euxine text and Perecq's coveted *hapax legomenon* restored to its proper place. Even to this day I sometimes find myself writing the word on a random scrap of paper, as though Perecq may return at any time and resume his work of destruction. As all students of the vanished civilisation of the Euxine Rim know only too well, lasting oblivion is never far away.

12 ᚠᚱᚹᛋᚠᚱᛋ ᚴᚨᚱᛏᛖᚹᛋ : Corlis' counter-intuitive arrangement of the seasons in this simile is deliberate and the lines form a more or less direct reference to the disputed ll.240-252 of Domides' *Sparga*. They are also intended to recall the intense debate in which this passage took a small part earlier this century and the eventual admission of what has come to be known as mischrony by most textual critics. Charles Korda was the first to collate the trope's key passages from surviving Euxine prose and prosody in a short addendum to his Aratus commentary. Here he registered and summarised a number of elegant but seemingly irretrievably corrupt lines, including some from Aratus, Comer, and Drianthes, all of

which had succumbed to the editor's knife but each of which seemed to share with the others a likeness of conception striking in poets of different generations and geography. Korda impishly suggested that this could only mean one of two things: an assiduous medieval interpolator bent on grafting a figure of his own invention into as many ancient classics as passed through his hands, or an established metaphorical convention that had so far eluded the critical apparatus of posterity and had been almost excised out of existence by hasty editors.

The authenticity of Korda's exempla is instantly apparent. In the first, and by far the most famous, Aratus describes the four epochs of Jope's rule in Arat by reference to the four seasons. The spring of his coronation in the temple of the gods is followed quickly by a winter of civil war between the gods allied to Jope (the Aratian gods) and those allied to his father; with the expulsion of Cronos and his host to the gulf of Cacer, there comes the sombre autumn of penitence when the gods in Arat observe 90 days of mourning, as if Cronos is dead; and it is only upon the completion of mourning that the eternal summer of Jope's reign begins in earnest. To the inattentive reader, the anachronic arrangement of the seasons is not glaringly evident. The pairing of the two 'major' seasons flows naturally, and lubricated by the cliché the eye rolls over the bizarre coupling of autumn and summer almost without blinking. The seasons, in this example, behave like versatile pieces of a jigsaw: their misarrangement is only noticeable on close inspection of the picture.

But mischrony becomes a truly odd device when it is applied to demarcations of time that are organically linked with one another. This is observable in the lemmata provided by Comer and Drianthes. In the second book of the Boriad, Aisax reflects on the

course of the siege of Borias thus far while in conference with Memnon, the overall leader of the armies:

> We arrived on these shores as fully grown oaks (ᚫᚹᚲᚠᚹᚫ) but in ten years have withered to saplings. Those who were saplings have become acorns. Those who were acorns have vanished from the earth. But if we ancients can be green again, we can muster a whole army of ᚠᚱᚲᚠᚹᚫ (ancient oaks).

This bizarre passage did not make it into a published edition of Comer until twenty years ago and the perplexed reader can readily sympathise with the passage's recensers. The first lines are an example of mischrony at its most digestible. The counter-arpeggio that reverts the kings from ancient maturity to tender youth proposes, as Korda subtly puts it, 'retro-tropic growth as the extreme form of entropy'. As at the highest point of a musical scale the player must stop altogether or descend back along the notes to his starting point, so the armies of Aisax and Memnon, in the absence of meeting their deaths at the most glorious moment of their lives, have found themselves falling backwards to the earth along the parabolic arc on which they set out. But I cannot help feeling it is Aisax's apparently nonsensical peroration in l.205 that has damned it in the eyes of most editors: *if we ancients can be green again, we can muster a whole army of ᚠᚱᚲᚠᚹᚫ (ancient oaks)*. Here the inverted, contrary connexity of the first lines is lost and replaced by the pairing of disparate notes in a period meaningful, though still paradoxical, in isolation but severed from the sense of the verses preceding it.

It is to both of these passages that Korda brings his definitive analysis of mischrony:

> It is best to think of mischrony as a way of allowing discrete periods of time to behave as if they were notes in a scale. Where the sequence spring, summer, autumn, winter is a simple ascent though the octave; summer, winter, spring, autumn is a melody. In the speech of Aisax, the delicate arpeggios of ll.202-204 prelude the sudden, forceful chord of l.205 where the two most unexpected notes of the passage clash across the false sentiment of their speaker. To our own impoverished eyes mischronic passages seem jumbled and meaningless. Perhaps we owe this to a disparity in poetic sensibility that only the passage of several thousand years can account for, or perhaps we should consider it a genuine oddity, an aberration in Tenishev's *humanitas mundi*. It is to my mind most definitely a species of aberration, but a species that only poetry can achieve and one which poetry alone should be permitted.

13 ⵙⵙⵍⵏⵙⵙ ⵒⵓⵙⵙ ⵜⵙⵙ ⵙⵙⵙ : The phrase is shared almost *in toto* from a short poem attributed to Myracles in the *Anthologia Pergamana*, collated sometime in the second century by an unknown scholar. The full text runs:

ⵙ ⵍⵓⵙⵙ ⵙⵒⵏⵙⵍⵍⵒⵓⵙ, ⵙⵒ ⵙⵍⵙⵙⵙ ⵙⵜ ⵙⵜⵒⵒ
ⵙⵜⵙⵙⵒⵍⵙ ⵒⵙⵙⵙ ⵜⵙⵙⵜⵙⵜⵙ ⵙⵍⵜⵒⵙⵙⵙ.
ⵙⵒⵙⵙⵙⵙ ⵙⵍⵍⵒⵙⵙⵙⵒⵜ, ⵙⵙⵙⵒⵓⵙⵜ, ⵒⵜⵍⵒⵙⵙ ⵙⵙⵜⵙ,
ⵙⵜⵙⵙⵙ ⵒⵜⵙⵒⵍⵒⵜⵙⵙ ⵙⵒⵍⵜ ⵒⵙⵍⵒ ⵍⵙⵙⵙ
ⵜⵜⵙ, ⵙⵙⵜⵍⵒⵜⵙⵒⵙ ⵜⵙⵙ: ⵒⵙⵍⵒ ⵍⵙⵙⵙ: ⵜⵓⵒⵙⵙⵙ ⵜⵙⵜⵙ
ⵜⵒ ⵙⵜⵜⵙ: ⵙⵙⵙ ⵙⵜⵍ ⵙⵙⵙⵙⵙ ⵙⵜⵙⵙⵙⵙ,
ⵙⵒⵒⵙ ⵙⵍⵓⵙⵙ ⵒⵍⵍⵒⵙⵙⵙ ⵒⵍⵙ ⵙⵜⵙ ⵙⵍⵓ ⵙⵙⵓⵙ ⵙⵓⵙⵙⵙ
ⵙⵜⵙⵙ, ⵙⵙ ⵙⵍⵓⵙⵒⵙ ⵙⵙⵙⵙⵙⵙⵙⵙ ⵒⵓⵙⵙ.

THE LOYAL SON

The legend that attaches to this poem is recorded by a number of authors, notably Pollux and Boethius, both of whom accord it the honour of opening their *idiota florilegia*.* Pollux gives a rather novel-ettish account of the discovery of Myracles and his 'Lament', frequently avoided by scholars because of its probable roots in his own imagination :

> Myracles was born in the time of the Danaeds, some ten years before the outbreak of the Gerontine war in which his father was to fight and die. He was born with what was then known as the 'Grip of Aster' and is today referred to as the 'Devil's Dream' (*eidolon diaboli*). It is said that on the day of his birth he could be heard screaming in his mother's womb but that when he emerged after a long and terrible labour he fell silent and immobile and remained so until the day of his death. Now it often happens that such children, even today, are rejected by their families and with the help of a domestic servant, exposed on a mountain side to die as infants. This was not the fate of Myracles. His father was not a powerful or a rich man, and he could ill afford an idle mouth at his table, but he rejected the appeals of his wife and demanded that the child be raised his son and heir.
>
> The years passed and Myracles grew slowly, so slowly in fact that by his tenth year he was still no more than an unkempt bundle wrapped in a chiton. But the chiton was brocaded with gold and every evening Myracles' father placed him at the head of the table and every day sat him on his lap as he wrote the townspeople's letters and correspondence in the Forum of Aster, the town's small market square. In the spring of Myracles' tenth year, war came and his father was forced to defend a king of whom he knew little and

* Such personal anthologies, traditionally consisting of elegant veriscules from diverse sources together with virtuous exhortations penned by the anthologist and bequeathed to one's children as a sort of heirloom, were very popular in the early centuries of the present millenium.

cared less. When he left he placed Myracles in the *aula* outside the home and told him to wait at the exact spot so that his son would be the first person he saw upon his return. The years passed and the father did not return. The king he had cared so little for had repayed the courtesy and used his entire company in a diversionary manoeuvre. During the winter months of the following year, his mother attempted to carry him into the house but he had given her a look of such black defiance (his eyes were his only means of communication) that she dared not complete the task. It was assumed that Myracles did not understand the fate of his father.

Fifteen years later, still a mere bag of bones, Myracles died where his father had left him. But by this time his name had penetrated to every corner of Euxis. According to Simon of Pergamon, his funeral was attended by some twenty thousand people and the oration was given by none other than Democales of Carga. The discovery of the great poet was partly due to chance but could never have happened without the tenacity of the *Pergamana*'s anthologist, Deaneirus of Pergamon.

In Myracles' twenty second year the anthologist had taken to passing through the village on his way from his home in Eupolon to Epirus, where he regularly consulted the library of the shrine to Daemon. Like any passing traveller, he had not failed to notice the palsied, deformed man-child propped against the wall of an old, neglected-looking house near the square. The sight of Myracles frequently pricked the interest and often the sympathy of strangers, and the small tokens of charity he received were a source of income to his mother. One evening the anthologist was returning to Eupolon before the light faded. As usual he cast a covert glance at the sick child, whom he avoided approaching and did not wish to be seen staring at. On this occasion, something caught his eye and without intending to do so, he stopped in his tracks. The child, instead of being totally immobile, appeared to be in the grip of a seizure, his eyes had rolled into the back of his head and his legs

were shaking uncontrollably. Resisting the urge tohurry on in silence, he approached the child and called into the house. Together with Myracles' mother, he succeeded in soothing the child who, when he had recovered his wits, fell immediately into a deep slumber. With the child asleep, the anthologist bowed his head and took his leave. As he turned to go, his attention was caught by something near the child's feet. He assumed it was a soother or plaything used to quieten and comfort him and he bent to pick it up. As he groped in the declining light of dusk, however, he discovered that there was nothing there but a sort of geometrically shaped hollow. The declining light of dusk had merely played one of its habitual tricks. He laughed and in a lighter mood said good night to the child and its mother.

The following day, on his way to Epirus, the anthologist stopped to call at the house of Myracles and inquire after his health. According to the mother, the child had made a full recovery. On his way out, the anthologist stopped to greet Myracles and as he took his leave his eyes were drawn to the child's feet which seemed to be scratching in the dust. There in the bleached mud lay a perfectly formed *aleph* and beside it what seemed to be an incomplete *mu*.

Pollux's account of Myracles goes on in the same vein for several more stephanus pages and soon becomes a sentimental tour de force on the order of a miniaturised *Notre Dame de Paris*. The poem that emerges from Myracles through the daily struggle of letters etched onto the sand is a funerary epigram for his father. The town, astounded at the determination and genius of its native son, eventually erected a monument in the square with the poem inscribed on each of its four sides. According to Pollux (and it is only Pollux who records this fact so it should perhaps be regarded as suspicious),

Deaneirus pressed Myracles to dictate the rest of his poems but was refused. Astonished, Deaneirus beseeched Myracles and attempted to compel him by saying that the world should not be denied the work of such a great poet. But Myracles remained recalcitrant and over a period of seven days etched the stirring reply, 'I am not a poet, I am a son'.*

12 ᚠᚱᚹᚢᚠᚱᚹᚲ ᚾᚨᚱᚾᚢᚢᚾ :

Speaking of old men, one should add that sometimes these posthumous auspices and interventions were in the nature of parody. Cynthia had been on friendly terms with an eccentric librarian called Porlock who in the last years of his dusty life had been engaged in examining old books for miraculous misprints such as the substitution of *l* for the first *h* in the word 'hither'. Contrary to Cynthis, he cared nothing for the thrill of the obscure predictions; all he sought was the freak itself, the chance that mimics choice, the flaw that looks like a flower; and Cynthia, a much more perverse amateur of misshapen or illicitly connected words, puns, logogriphs, and so on, had helped the poor crank to pursue a quest that in the light of the example she cited struck me as statistically insane.

from *The Sisters Veen,* Vivian Darkbloom

The amused irony of Darkbloom's narrator comes back to haunt him. The fatidic misprint of Cynthia's murderer in the newspaper announcement of her marriage at 'Grove Abbel' leads to his obsessive pursuit and eventual murder of her absolved but - in the mind of the narrator at least - only possible assassin, an innocent shipping clerk by the name of Abel Grove. The tale ends with Falter gnashing the straps of his restraining jacket in a convalescent home and receiving consolatory visits from the intolerable Porlock.

*This last anecdote is generally disregarded as a fiction of Pollux's own making and used to infer or support the theory that Pollux was trying to recover his relationship with his son.

Misprinted premonitions of the great and the ghastly (Heliot Lither, the barber-surgeon eventually held to account for the murder of an entire family tree of Viennese itinerants is typical of the *grand guignol* of Darkbloom's novelette) were the subject of an amusing paper by Kinbote's great rival Alexander Durcen in the *festschrift* dedicated to Tenishev's great scholar of maritime Euxis, Cheever Wootham. To Kinbote's ill-concealed chagrin the piece was republished in several newspapers. Dusty minutiae such as the haplography of *chordama* in the tenth century manuscript of Aster's *Booitii* [Laurentianus Mediceus (M) 32.9] and the anadiplosis of the *min* in the mistranscribed *merle* in a twelfth century copy of Tzetze's *Stoicus* [Hauniensis (H) 12.3] took on the air of titillating factlets in a decade whose living models of soldierly fortitude and gossip-column glamour were the Peruvian *generallisimo* Luis Chordma and his brassy consort, Eva Meler. Durcen's *jeu d'esprit* was the subject of some mischievous cajoling for a time and, in fairness to the man, he was the first to laugh it off. Regrettably, Kinbote discredited himself on several occasions by mistaking the tone of the banter for an opportunity to satirise Durcan in a manner that clearly contradicted the feelings of those in his presence. For years afterward, he persisted in referring to Durcan as Falter, even when the personal circumstances of his adversary made the joke wholly inappropriate. The paraplography in this line is clearly intended as his definitive *mal mot* on the matter. Draft after draft, ꝺolſ٩ꝺ (*dokren*) is consistently misprinted as ꝺoᵽlſꝺ (*dorken*).

14 ꝏlſꝺ ꝛꝛoꝛ ꝏꝺ٩o: Whether such a tribe ever existed is a matter of serious but not unequivocal doubt. The *Nepheles* are mentioned only once in Euxine literature; in the *Chardones* of Aster, where they feature in a short catalogue of the peoples of the north eastern rim.

If they were fit to be spoken of in the same breath as the Silasians and the Mardones it is surprising, to say the least, that no other trace of them survives. There is no hint of them in any of the histories of the Illyric wars nor in any of the documentary or epigraphic material unearthed in the Rim. As Tenishev remarks, 'The *Nepheles*, it would appear, had the unusual distinction of being utterly ignored by their neighbours while at the same time taking great pains not to leave the slightest vestige of their culture and civilisation, or even of their very presence.'

Such a people are ripe for excision by the scholiast's pen. Durcan scotches Aster's line, an otherwise mellifluous halcic dimeter, down to an anapaestic monometer by removing *Nepheles* altogether and inserting a conjunctive. Tenishev meanwhile abolishes the line completely, together with several verses preceding and following.

While this destructive work illustrates the actual integrity of the offending verses, it also does violence to the manuscript tradition of the *Chardones*. The fact of the matter is that the lines appear in every single extant copy of the play, for which there are at least four separate sources, one of them dating back to within a hundred years of its composition. The provenance of *Nepheles*, far from suggesting that it is some wild or half-baked interpolation, on the contrary confirms it as among the most certain Asterian verses in the entire work. In the sense that the word was almost certainly written by Aster, the text of the line has been retained by more recent editors *ex principio*, though their already stuffed apparatus criticus is invariably swollen with a suggested emendation of their own. Such a perplexing case will never admit of any definite resolution and perhaps the only reasonable conclusion is to be found in Tenishev, who adds with an unmistakable note of sincerity

to his ironic remarks quoted above: 'Perhaps history, already clogged with the boasting and wailing of so many trivial peoples, should be grateful for at least one among the throng who troubles it with nothing but a name.'

15 𐬀𐬎 𐬐𐬀𐬭𐬭 𐬉𐬀𐬌𐬌 𐬎𐬀𐬐𐬀 : The minute pointillism of the metaphor reflects an observation or more precisely, a way of seeing, that receives unparalleled prominence in the Euxine poets. The phenomenon at the root of the matter is disputed but as is the norm in such wearying scholastic debates the truth probably embraces both poles of opinion. Scholl, Ailesbury *et al* hold that it derives from what is clinically known as *spargens volitentes*. These are the clusters of transparent and minute exclamation marks that glide across the vision when the opened eye is in a state of rest. They most usually resemble the electroscopic images of bacteria (though some subjects colourfully describe them as river-borne twigs) and, because they are a retinal phenomenon, cannot be viewed directly, veering away from the iris like timid animals. Carnac and Fruhlein meanwhile (the latter was an unruly pupil of Scholl's) maintain that the figure is in fact a cousin of Anaximander's *particulae*, a crude pre-atomism popularised by Lucretius. The Greek envisaged a universe whose visible constituent parts were themselves composed of infinitely diminishing but dimensionally identical constituents way beyond the threshold of invisibility. In this way a bone was made up of many millions of minute bones which in their turn were the composite of yet more millions of similarly shaped yet infinitesimally little 'bonelets' (*osteidia)*, and so on, all presumably being munched at each gradation by corresponding packs of dogs and doglets. Their most interesting and compelling text in support of the Anaximander connection is from Aster's *Logeion*. Phoebe is

imagining escape from her woes. First, she conventionally contemplates being transformed into an eagle. Her next imagining is one of those unique tropes that ancient drama, the unwitting whelper of so many hackneyed *topoi*, frequently rewards its latter-day reader:

ⲁ ⲏⲟⲗⲁ ⲁⲣⲏⲣⲍⲏⲗⲓⲏⲟⲁ, ⲉⲏ ⲍⲏⲗⲁⲭⲁⲁ ⲇⲉ ⲏⲉⲏⲏ
ⲍⲉⲟⲣⲏⲗⲁ ⲏⲁⲭⲭⲁ ⲧⲏⲏⲧⲁⲭⲉⲟⲁ ⲍⲏⲉⲏⲁⲟⲁ.
ⲏⲣⲁⲏⲏⲁ ⲇⲟⲗⲏⲣⲁⲁⲣⲏⲉⲣ, ⲟⲇⲟⲏⲟⲣⲉ, ⲏⲉⲏⲣⲁⲟ ⲟⲏⲏⲁ,
ⲭⲉⲟⲣⲁ ⲏⲉⲣⲣⲏⲉⲭⲭⲉⲁ ⲟⲍⲏⲉⲁ ⲏⲁⲏⲓ ⲏⲁⲟⲁ
ⲉⲉⲁ, ⲁⲣⲉⲏⲉⲏⲣⲍⲁⲁ ⲉⲏⲏ: ⲏⲁⲏⲣ ⲏⲏⲟⲇⲟⲁ: ⲉⲁⲏⲣⲟⲟⲁⲁ ⲧⲭⲧⲟⲁ
ⲉⲣ ⲭⲉⲧⲟⲁ: ⲇⲁⲁ ⲟⲁⲓ ⲁⲏⲟⲣⲁⲁ ⲏⲉⲟⲁⲏⲏⲁ,

Phoebe, reduced to the minutest constituent Phoebe, to the state of a 'sub-atomic *puelluncula*' (Carnac), imagines herself in a state of diminution so ultimate that she is placed at the radiant keyhole of a sort of parallel universe. The Phoebe that amasses and eventually materialises on the other side of this cosmic aperture is the exact reverse of her Euxine counterpart, happy, free and beautiful. The conceit is overripe, underwrought and was probably incomprehensible to Aster's audience, but, like Dante's vision of the hypersphere, nevertheless prefigures concepts that are commonplace in contemporary cosmic physics.

Where does this leave Carnac-Fruhlein *vs* Scholl-Ailesbury? Kinbote's own opinion, which I think definitive, is recorded in the fly-leaf summation he pencilled in his copy of *Die Euxinen Wissenschaft des Kleinlichheit*: 'Neither camplet in this Lilliputian debate seems to have grasped what should be obvious to any self-respecting seven year old. The many millions of *minutiae* observable in daily life, from gleaming dust-motes to *spargens volitentes*, are

man's first intimation of the world's two key mysteries: overwhelming multiplicity and infinite individuation. He may be unique, but he is hugely outnumbered and very far from being elemental. The Euxine preoccupation (if it can be reasonably called such) with the world's numerous minuteness is neither consciously philosophical nor frivolously literary. Rather it is the closest that this cool race of hard-nosed realists ever came to genuine mysticism.'*

16 ᐁᒪᔭᓇᐃᔭᑭᓇᑦ ᓀᖅᑭᔭᔭᓪᓕᒧᓂᐅᑦ : The word's only other known occurrence in the Euxine *corpus* is in Carybdis' *Spargtota*, a sixth century philosophical tract in the form of a dialogue. The provenance of the noun is uncertain. Carle, the definitive editor of the *Spargtota*, gets into a great muddle entertaining the various possibilities of nonce coinage, idiomatic or exotic borrowing, even eponymy - the word vaguely resembles the patronym of the celebrated Estotian exile Lucas - before surrendering to the complete absence of conclusive evidence and moving on to the diacritical marks in the Ludwig papyri. Whatever its origin, the notion of *exogy* is almost certainly Carybdis' own. In his journal Kinbote describes his impressions on first encountering the text as a postgraduate:

> I have just returned from the library after a gruelling but heady encounter with the *Spargtota*. The manuscript is Europe's oldest, dating just seventy years from the death of Carybdis and situated at the node of the best branch in the tradition's diastema. The copyist's hand was excellent although his *cader* was a little eccentric and for the first time in my life I found I could read uncial script without any difficulty whatsoever. Once the initial intoxication wore off, however, I found myself getting weary. On the whole, the *Spargtota* is justifiably obscure. Calin and Paura strike me as the sort of unpalatable boffins you would walk under a tram to avoid.

*The literal and unlovely translation is my own.

Carybdis is full of too much undigested Aster and has crammed in a surfeit of obscure score-settling with forgotten rivals. Sixth century Ardis must have been a very dull place for intelligent men-about-town to sit out in their courtyards with this sort of wadding for company. As tea-time approached and the library emptied out I was on the point of deferring the pleasure of the remaining three octavos until the morning. I decided to read one more chapter and return the manuscript to Bartle, who was already beginning to frown at me.* I then read the most astounding words in the Euxine language ever written. When I lifted my head I found Bartle sound asleep and the college bells striking three o'clock! In a trance I left the manuscript beside Bartle's unconscious head and spent the next two hours walking through the town in a state of what I can only call raw awakening. I think I am coming to my senses a little now but occasionally the chapter runs through my brain like an involuntary current and makes me dizzy again. I am sober enough to realise that the prose clunks and scrapes but the vast plains that it has opened up to me are undeniable. For any other reader what follows will be bathos but I must put Carybdis' words on paper. Maybe that will rob them of their absurd intoxication.

'Calin, this talk of deserts unvisited by the human eye is commonplace. Do they exist because we cannot see them? Who cares? What of those places in the world, those very real deserts, that all of us may see and see every day but which none of us look at. These places - and I call them places because their locale is so distinct - exist in our houses, on our street, in our town yet it as is if they are not

*The University Library at Wien maintains the quaint practice, even to this day, of remaining open and attended until the last reader has returned his books and left the building. While many distinguished scholars have been known to keep the library's oil-fires burning late into the night - the late Ariel Durfman, a physicist from Argentina, is thought to hold the University Record, a sixteen hour session stretching to eight o'clock the following morning - it is practically unheard of for the librarians to allow the enthusiasm of undergraduates keep them from their dinners.

there. They are the little enclaves of wilderness which we step across without so much as getting our soles wet. But Calin, let me tell you, I have got my soles wet and it is my intention to get myself drenched in the lakes of desert that surround me every day of my life yet which I see everyone else disregard as if they were invisible.'

'Paura, my old friend, we have known each other for many years yet for the first time in our friendship I don't understand a word you're saying.'

'Let me explain how it happened, Calin. Maybe that way you'll know what it is I'm talking about. Three days ago I was reading Aristotle's Organum. The words were making no impression and my mind soon drifted towards my business affairs. I was roused from thought by the dinner gong. Not feeling the least bit hungry I was in no hurry to get to the dining room and took my time replacing the book to its proper place on the shelves. For some reason when I slipped the book in its rightful place my attention fell on the space between its spine and the edge of the shelf. At that moment a chill wave passed through me such as I had never experienced before nor whose sheer electric severity I am ever likely to experience again. I realised that this empty space of shelf, until this point, had never truly existed for me. It had dutifully fulfilled its purpose without hesitation but it had remained empty, not just of books, but of the meaning I had given to the part which held the books. Why did this realisation strike me with such force? Because I realised that up until this point this empty space of shelf had remained meaningless, that it had possessed such a ark mass of nullity that it was not even observable as empty, that it had not even been observable at all. Dazed, I shambled out of my study and ate dinner with my family like a stranger. That evening I went out into the streets and attempted to take my constitutional. Everywhere, the throbbing gaps in the observed world pulsed at me like dark hearts. The corners of houses, the gutters, all so long unnoticed gushed over me in torrents. From that day forward, Calin, I determined that I would spent the rest of my life soaked to the skin in the world that everyone else has put aside like dross. I firmly believe that this universe of spargtota has waited for someone like me for several centuries, and that all its meaning, all its existence, so long stanched at the source, has drowned me in a potent reality that you and the common run of men who paddle in the

shallow waters of everyday things have yet to understand.'

It is hopeless. I am still drunk.

In a later but undated hand of red ink:

My 'intoxication', as I put it, has faded as has the sheen I thought I detected in this overwrought and underwritten chapter. Nevertheless the idea of *spargtota*, a world sprinkled with puddle-like gaps in human observation, is as singular to my mind today as it was that night. I have searched the commentators and scholars of Carybdis for further discussion of it but have been rewarded with nothing but the usual etymological wrangles at best and blithe omission at worst. Even Dorfheim evinced only distraction when I mentioned the passage to him. How strange. How typically disappointing.

To this day, Kinbote remains the only descutant of the matter.

16 𐌀𐌚𐌓𐌀𐌓 𐌋𐌀𐌋𐌀: At first sight the detail seems exiguous. The most striking feature of the verse is the rather choice adjective, 𐌗𐌀𐌐𐌓𐌀𐌓 (*haprhis*), denoting a shade of blue associated exclusively in epic and tragic prosody with the colour of the sky above the immortals' home Mount Memnon; a firmament conceived as a superstrate of our own, which conceals it. As usual however Kinbote is obscurely pleasuring himself. The odd import of the line is revealed by some extracts collected in a celebrated monograph, *Nepheles: Strangers from History*, first published privately by Eugene Kovach in Tubingen at the turn of the century:

After many weeks of starvation the sufferer (who at times may have resorted to grass or even mud to relieve his hunger) will suddenly react with violent disgust at the prospect of food. For example, in

the twentieth spring of the Phorian *chore*, I was taken to the house of Phormides where a stranger to whom he had given refuge was taken gravely ill and, according to the slave sent to fetch me, near death. Conducted into the courtyard, I found the man stretched out on a cot in the shade of an ibiscus tree. A preliminary examination confirmed the gravity of his condition. His complexion was pale and damp to the touch and his face had withered to the bone, suggesting that he had not eaten for several weeks. So as to examine his chest and back I attempted to remove his *himation*, which was of an unfamiliar cloth and dyed in *lapis lazuli*. At this the stranger sat bolt upright and refused any further treatment. His language was not familiar to anyone present but his emphatic gestures and the black expression in his eyes were easily understood. Since he refused food, I directed that he be force-fed; otherwise he would certainly die. Obstinately the man refused to submit. When Phormides' slaves attempted to restrain him, he broke loose from their grip and fled the house.

Ars Medica, Harpatis (tr. Henry Browne (Harvard 1924))

'Make way for Monsieur le Duc d'Enghien!' called a voice, and all at once the crowd began to shove and jostle. Oaths rent the air, someone cried out that his hat had fallen off, and I found myself suddenly propelled toward the middle of the square.

'The Duc d'Enghien, that's the son of Monsieur le Prince,' said the Gardin, who was still at my side. 'They say that he and Monsieur intend to meet in the church today, after an estrangement lasting three years.'

Just then a passage opened up, and through the silent throng strode a tall, gaunt man in top boots and a coat woven of a dazzling blue material, the like of which I have never seen before and have

not found since.

'That's Monsieur le Duc's groom, a savage beast. He campaigned with Monsieur in Tartary and saved his life in the siege of Carnis. I warn you, Turlupin, avoid his eyes. The man will have you slaughtered as soon as take off his hat.'

The man cast his piercing, malevolent eyes across the crowd and for a brief, terrible moment rested his black, cavernous gaze on my face. The terror this savage inspired around him was awesome to witness. Suddenly there was a flourish of movement in the crowd. It was le Duc d'Enghien himself, accompanied by his bodyguard...

Memoirs of a Parisian Tailor, Leonid Turlupin (Paris 1794)

Our entrainment from Monowitz-Buna to Rzeszow took ten days. At last, in the hours before dawn, we were woken by the noise of the Russian conscripts as they walked up and down the carriages beating the sides with their rifle-butts. When the doors were shunted open we poured blinking from our trucks onto the sidings and saw before us the massive transit camp that we learned to call Starya Zet. In a single column we picked our way across the railyards towards a dirt track at the camp's perimeter and were marched to the holding block, a group of nissen huts beside the main barracks.

There were now eighty of us packed into a room with a concrete floor. The soldiers that had escorted us had disappeared. Outside, there were noises of stamping boots and shouts in Russian. We waited, not without the fear that what had happened to us in Monowitz-Buna was happening to us all over again. Near me an old man, pale and silent, fainted and slumped on the ground. At last a door was flung open and a conscript waved his carbine towards the yard and innocently declaimed, in the only language we all

understood, the vile cry of our vanquished persecutors: *Heraus! Heraus!*

It was now mid-morning. Hurried forward by the soldiers we ran across the yard into a large warehouse. Here we found a mountain of rags heaped against the far wall but reaching all the way to the centre of the hangar. By means of gestures and fragmented German we were given to understand that we were to take our clothes ration from the heap. In details of ten and fifteen we were marched to the heap and allowed to scramble for whatever we could. It was clear that these clothes, some of which still had yellow stars and curious red squares pinned to their arms and breasts, had been collected from nearby depots or even Monowitz-Buna itself. As my detail approached the heap, a corner of bright cloth attracted my attention. I immediately made to grab it but as I came within reach I suddenly found myself intercepted by the old man I had seen fainting in the holding block. His eyes, glittering with numb darkness, fixed on mine and his hand, which was damp and cold, grabbed my extended forearm. In an hysterical fury egan screaming at me in something resembling Yiddish or Greek, but which I could not understand. He pushed me away and pulled the bright cloth from the heap. It was a voluminous bright green coat, almost like a cloak, much faded and almost threadbare. Wrapped in this splendid glory, he strode back to the soldiers, who laughed at his transformed radiance and began greeting him with mocking, obsequious bows. I now realised from the old man's gait and appearance that he could not be more than thirty-five or forty. His grey hairs and ancient face, his tenacious desperation and frail limbs had all been acquired in the *laager*.

The Grey Zone, Levin Einaudi (Milan 1954).

As Kovach cautiously remarks, in written testimony spanning more

than two thousand years, Harpatis of Elia, a Euxine physician of the sixth century; Leonid Turlupin, a Parisian bespoke tailor who lived through the French Revolution; and Levin Einaudi, a survivor of the death-camps in Monowitz-Buna, all record encounters with a man of almost identical dress, build and demeanour. There is, in addition to the distinguishing feature of his cloak, the haunting thread of the man's eyes, black, desperate, and, in their turn, haunted. But Kovach does not permit us to entertain the speculation that somehow one man, a stray immortal, has prowled undetected through history except for a few unwitting glimpses. The purpose of his survey is broader and perhaps more ambivalent than the material he has gathered might have been expected to indulge him.

For those who are not familiar with the work, or more likely are only acquainted with its distorted reflection in newsprint, Kovach's remarkable study collects a total of eleven *retraits* such as the one excerpted above. The mysterious *nepheles* or *personae* he documents in this way can appear in as many as twenty different sources, or, in the case of the man in the blue cloak, as few as two or three.* The explicitness of description provided by the sources varies greatly, sometimes to the point of controversy. One *persona*, known as 'The Man of the Book' after his most striking characteristic, a red codex volume he carries that is never identified by any of the witnesses, appears unambiguously in seven different works. There is however a substrate of five references that are either too brief or too vague to be considered as certain occurrences of the *persona*. In the *Confessions* for example, St. Augustine describes a cleric from Pergamon holding an unidentified volume bound in red Morocco. But since the *persona* is elsewhere recorded as bearing a birthmark on his left cheek and Augustine, whether out of delicacy or because it

was not there, does not mention the disfiguration, the occurrence must remain tendentious. Likewise, a source may often conceal a genuine occurrence of the *persona* by inadvertent errors in description. This sort of problem is demonstrated by Levin Einaudi's anomalous assertion that the refugee in Starya Zet reclaimed a green cloak rather than a blue one. In fact, medical records retrieved by Kovach from the Sorori di Angeli Hospital in Milan confirm that Einaudi was colour-blind and unable to distinguish green and blue.

Throughout the main body of *Strangers from History* Kovach maintains this cautious and initially puzzling vocabulary of *persona* and *occurrence* without explanation. In the final chapters, however, the intention behind these terms becomes plain. In fact, it is soon evident that they lie at the core of his understanding of the phenomenon the candid scholarship of the early chapters has brought so carefully to light. For Kovach it is not of any use to refer to these figures as 'persons' nor to their appearance in a diverse range of testimony as 'sightings'. To speak of the 'same person' appearing in the journal of Leonid Turlupin and the medical writings of Harpatis of Elis is certainly tempting and is almost reasonable, but it ultimately gives the impression of hungry superstition gobbling down slim evidence. The documents gathered in *Strangers from History* do not demand that we resurrect the frail notion of 'immortal wanderers' straying in and out of recorded history, the only thing they can require us to do is to grant the 'Man of the Blue Cloak' a single attribute, a *persona*. As ever, it is better to let Kovach speak for himself:

> On the publication of this book, the 'Man of the Harsh Voice' will not be suddenly dragged unmasked before the world to the consternation of the general public. There is after all no such man. His

> existence, if he can be said to have one, is confined entirely to what is recorded of him; his *occurrence* in a small selection of disparate testimonies where he is distinguished by his virtual anonymity and his acute stylisation. Indeed it is these two traits that mark him out not only in the individual works in which he appears but in the broader conspectus of real events among which he is depicted as existing. The singularity of such an individual; his heavily and purposely masked identity, his recurrence in the quotidian literature of different periods of history, his uneasy transposition upon the dreary backdrop of reality, these are not the attributes of an actual person. Rather, such an individual is clearly a visitor in the pages of history. Such an individual is not a person but a *persona*. To put it in precise terms a *persona*, as exemplified by the *retraits* collected in this survey, possesses the unity of identity without submitting to the condition of reality. He is a *character* [in the dramatourgical sense of the term] that, if we are to use the distinction proposed by Bukhtin, may be said to have emerged from the arena of imagination onto the streets of fact. In short, 'The Man with the Harsh Voice' exists in the same mode as Aisax or Leonard Babbit but he does so in the medium of historical testimony rather than fictional confection. This attitude, and its epistemological premises, require some explanation.

There are difficulties with Kovach's response to his own discovery of the *nepheles*. These have been presented in detail by Tenishev and Wengerhoff, though it is Bukhtin who has emerged as his strongest critic, particularly with regard to his own theory of the *persona* which Kovach openly bends to his purpose. Regardless of the violence he may have done to the theories of the Englas school, however, Kovach's interpretation of the strangers from history remains the only cogent survey of the *nepheles* so far undertaken. The possibility that they represent some form of liminal selfhood, poised between

imagination and history, is alarming and perhaps redolent of educated mischief, but it is the most acceptable limit to which the phenomenon has so far been taken.

17 𐬀𐬞𐬵𐬀𐬎𐬀 𐬞𐬀𐬞𐬞𐬀 : The apparently innocuous words are lifted from a passage in the *Dociales*, a dialogue by the author known as psuedo-Parmenes. The discussion has turned to figures of speech in the halcidic poets and Loranis (later a conspirator in the Cambian oligarchy) is reciting at length from a palinode he attributes to Hectemorus. His impromptu performance is interrupted by an exclamation from Philotas. Excusing his 'eye-tears', Philotas begs him to continue, explaining that he had misheard the measure 'winter-oars' as the 'tress of Phaeacia'.

Remarkably, this enigmatic plea is accepted without demur and Loranis resumes his recitation. Pseudo-Parmenes remarks, 'Philotas' recollection of the words sent a small shiver through all of us. And when Loranis had finished the song, Euphoris observed that perhaps it was Hectemorus' intention to evoke the words Philotas had heard, since such a thing had been certainly done by less subtle and less able poets lacking the talent to produce emotion in the listener with their own unhappy confections alone.'

The 'tress of Phaeacia' was not alone in exerting this talismanic power over Euxine sensibilities. A scene similar to the one between Loranis and Philotas is enacted in Coras' dialogue *The Sympositai* but in this case it is the words 'voyaging son of Ergas' that occasion the tears of the listener. Also, it is possible that Eurphoris, when he speaks of 'less subtle and less able poets', had in mind the minor tragedian Parnes of Charin, who gets an unfavourable mention in Colophis' comedy the *Sardones* (*The Sausage-Sellers*). According to the one of the sausage-sellers whenever Parnes has floun-

dered his way through another botched speech and realised with horror that no-one in their right mind could possibly find the maudlin warbling of his character in the least affecting, he scratches the last line and replaces it with a verse such as:

This without exception, says Colophis, allowed Parnes to 'flood the theatre with tears once he had abominated it with doggerel'.

Each of these phrases draws its bemusing emotional force from a single source. The 'terrible myth' of Ergas and the Phaeacian woman was easily the most popular and oft-repeated theme in Euxine tragedy and halcic poetry, at least until the arrival of the Athenians in the fifth century and the suppression of Euxine drama in favour of its Attic counterpart. In its outlines the story is a straightforward tale of betrayed love distinguished by some odd upendings of Euxine narrative cliché and the quite remarkable fact that one of its main protagonists, the Phaeacian woman, is never named. For the most part it reads as a dull ancestor to the Hippolytus-Phaedra myth beloved of the Greeks and it is periodically announced by 'promising' scholars, as if the observation were some extraordinary discovery, that the tale of Ergas and the Phaeacian woman is quite unremarkable both in structure and detail. In the words of Wilamowitz *ex cathedra*, 'it is as if the elements that made Mander a genius comparable to Aster for the Euxines but an overwrought and sometimes incompetent dramaturge for the modern reader were somehow rearranged and transposed into the realm of *topos* and narrative. Here, as elsewhere, we are reminded just how profoundly *ausländisch* the Euxines are to us.' Such commentary,

drowning in its own historical idleness, discouraged any attempt to understand the disproportionate force of the Ergas myth for many years and it was not until the work of a literary scholar, Johan Bermas, that any headway was made.

Bermas was the first to point out that the now indecipherable emotional appeal of the Ergas myth was not unusual, indeed it was barely worth noting. As a rule, tears are never shed at modern-day performances of Euxine tragedy. Tenishev once famously remarked that the only emotion Aster had ever evoked in him was a mild vexation at the riddling syntax of his choral epodes. Rather, what was of genuine importance was the one aspect of the Ergas myth and its treatment that was without any known historical precedent or sequel. Throughout some two hundred years of continuous treatment by poets, tragedians, and mythographers the tale had not been altered in even the most trifling of its details. For example, from Coris to Aster, even up to Parnes, the cloak worn by Ergas is referred to as *phoinix,* blood-red; the horses raced by his brother in the fatal chariot race at Pylis are *ek Koglou lliamis*, bred in Coglis; the sword with which the woman of Phaeacia unwittingly slaughters her lover is *hup ton panglis,* of hammered silver. All of this in spite of the long disuse of the conventional trichroma in post-classical prosody, the permanent eclipse of Coglis's famous horses after the city's destruction in 780 and the jarring, surely expendable eccentricity of a 'silver sword' deep in the bronze age. Bermas quickly establishes that these strange but stubbornly persistent details, along with the main structure of the myth, can be traced back to fragments as far back as the 800s. Whether it was with the lost *Ergaid* of Charnes or the *Phaeacians* of Paramis at some point in this century a permafrost settled on the story of Ergas and the Phaeacian woman and for the three hundred years that followed the myth, even in the minutiae of

its dress-code and furniture, remained immutable.

We will never know the reasons for this unique petrifaction of the Ergas myth. Indeed Bermas does not detain himself by considering the possibilities, as it is the consequences of such complete atrophy that interest him rather than its explanation. The tears of Philotas are not tears in the normal sense of the word, as Philotas himself seems to admit. His 𐬎𐬀𐬵𐬀𐬎𐬀𐬀𐬌𐬀𐬵𐬀𐬀𐬌, his 'weeping of the eyes' (a nonce-word not repeated elsewhere in Euxine literature) reveals something quintessential about the Ergas myth as well as the special mode of emotion it came to evoke. It is pertinent that he does not use the coinage, common at the time, of 𐬎𐬀𐬵𐬌𐬀𐬀𐬌, 'theatre-tears'. Philotas does not bracket his response with the becalmed lachrymosity of the theatre but is attempting to indicate an emotion more attenuated and even more dislocated from the passions than the weeping occasioned by Aster or Chardalis. As Bermas puts it: 'There is a concealed path from the aspicated Ergas myth to the obscure tears of Philotas, a path buried not in the debris of a cluttered and incomprehensible ancient psyche but cloaked in the shade of our own historical failure.'

In the *Tress of Phaeacia* Bermas sets out his stall. His line of inquiry picks up the cursory judgement tossed out by Wilamowitz some fifty years earlier: In what sense can we apply such notions as *topos* or cliché to an apparently inconsequential detail as the 'tress of Phaeacia'? Was Wilamowitz just being loose and lazy when he used these terms or were they in fact the result of an unconfided aporia? Wilamowitz wishes to dismiss the tress of Phaeacia as a curious modality of the Euxines, similar perhaps to the puzzling way in which the heroes of Amazonian legends evoke the sympathy of listeners almost by virtue of the fact that they have committed incestuous rape. But such an approach is clearly ill-fitted to the

discussion of finicking details of a narrative's furniture. It is not the Euxine response to the themes of the Ergas myth that we find puzzling, but that among Euxines Philotas' *ophthalodakruai* are shed in equal measure over the betrayal of Ergas as over the evocation of his haspis-wood sandals drenched in blood, over the excessive punishment and ostracism of the Phaeacian woman as the evocation of her bronzed tresses, over the fate of the Ergalid fleet as of the trifling detail of their winter-oars. In the Ergas myth (or the *Ergaid* as its continuous literary treatment is denoted) we have a structure where at a deep level both the over-arching themes and the minute details rest in a state of aesthetic equivalence. 'Where the myths of the Greeks and Romans and indeed all those others of the Euxines suffer a continual, sometimes vigorous rearrangement and renovation of their contents, occasionally even the reshaping of their whole interior, the Ergas myth stands alone and ineffable, with the realignment of a single footstep as unconscionable as the destruction of the edifice itself.' The normal separation of architecture and furniture that allows for the fluidity of myth in every other case breaks down in the Ergas myth, for here the two have become indissolubly and inexplicably fused. As Bermas tellingly and lucidly makes plain, Wilamowitz' terminological confusion pierces to the heart of the matter. The 'tress of Phaeacia' resounds as deeply within the unique construction of the *Ergaid* as the destruction of Pharalis simply because the *unicum* of the *Ergaid* has elevated detail to the level of topos. The redemption through death of the Phaeacian woman, the betrayed Ergas' refusal, under pain of his own death, to reveal his betrayers to the people of Pharalis, the destruction of Pharalis because of its own indefatigable search for the truth of its foundation, all of these form the essence of the myth and give it its recognisable emotion. For the Euxines, however, this topologi-

cal level of the *Ergaid* was fused with a massive and immutable complex of nuances exerting a quite specific gravity on the emotions, the phrase that provokes Philotas' *ophthalodakruai*, the 'mossy birch of Algan' tossed desperately into the botched tragedy by Parnis. At pains to find a name for this aberrant phenomenon, Bermas suggests that they should be considered as *loci* of emotion punctuating the topos of the narrative, or more 'preciously', 'minute jewels with the power to dazzle even when removed from their setting'.

18 ϧϫϫⲁⲙⲓⲗⲁ ⲉⲓⲙⲁⲓⲁ : The Temple of Limaion in Macris (destroyed by the Romans in 74 BC as a symbol of the struggle for Larminian independence) was widely celebrated in the ancient world for the set of 'fingerprints' to be found near the base of its north-easternmost column. Though they were of human dimension, tradition ascribed them to the temple's eponymous god, who had erected the column himself and thus laid the foundation stone of the city. Annual processions celebrated the god's mythical journey from his birthplace deep in a grotto overlooking the Carthusan bay to his final residence in Macris, where he brought about the synoecism of the tribes dispersed around the natural harbour and inlet opposite the island of Limis. Hecatombs of livestock along the sacred route commemorated the seven labours of Limaion's journey, culminating in his slaughter of the volcano deity, Pharis. His hands still white-hot from this battle, Limaion had erected a hewn crag on the temnos indicated by his father, searing the permanent imprint of his fingers onto the stone.

The 'fingerprints of Limaion' exerted a remarkable fascination on the Euxine imagination. From very early times, the artefact was treated as a mythical wonder and regularly cited as a proof of

the existence of the gods. Pilgrimages to Macris were commonplace: Charonas was brought there by his father while still a child; Meropes, Aster and Harpatis all visited Macris as adults specifically to visit the temple and see the famous column. Following the capture of Macris by the Ardisian fleet in 680 the generals made a point of conducting propitiatory sacrifices in the temple and took special measures to ensure that the temnos was not overrun by soldiers 'eager to examine the column spoken of with wonder in their homeland' (Charnas). The first note of scepticism with regard to their divine origin was sounded by Lucis:

> The fingerprints are situated on the side of the column facing the temple itself. There are ten and they are arranged side by side, so as to suggest that Limaion embraced the rock with the full extent of his arms when he placed it in the ground. Standing in the raised base within the colonnade one must look upwards to examine the fingerprints, and again this seems intended to suggest something about Limaion: he must have stood at least two or three times the size of a normal man. But when other aspects of the column's arrangement are examined these conspicuous details begin to seem specious. For example, it is impossible to imagine a disposition of the hands, especially in the act of lifting, that would entail the pads of Limaion's thumbs pressing flatly upon the column. In fact it is clear that the imprint by Limaion's thumbs must have been made separately, after its original emplacement. Furthermore, the daintiness of the fingers that made these marks on the stone, especially in relation to Limaion's supposed size and height, is remarkable. Although I was not allowed by my guide to touch the column, it was clear that Limaion's fingerprints were barely larger than my own. It seemed to me remarkable that such hands could lift a sword, not to mention an entire crag. Limaion may have had the

> stature of a god but he was afflicted with the puny fingers of a mortal.

Lucis' observations aroused controversy and on the publication of his *Travels* he was forbidden from returning to Macris by an edict of the city's assembly. He responded by publishing the so-called *Epistle to the Macrians*, a letter which, in the manner of these things, never reached them but passed in a sort of touring exhibition through every other city along the Rim. The text of the letter was nothing short of an unconditional apology, Lucis retracted his objections to the column's divine origin and called upon the Macrians to forgive his indiscretion. Instead of his signature, however, Lucis ended the letter by attaching a fingerprint. This, he explained, was intended as a tribute to the Macrians and had been 'made' [*epoiethen*] by himself, as an authenticating mark of the letter's authorship. The crushing ambiguity of the *epoiethen* was unmistakable. Either Lucis' fingerprint was really his own or, as was increasingly suspected, it was the product of minute, painstakingly executed artistry, perhaps the work of Lucis himself or, alternatively, a hired craftsman. Lucis, presumably delighted at the success of his stratagem, would not be drawn on the matter except to say that the sincerity of his apology should not be compromised by the confusion. As it passed from city to city, the letter to the Macrians was examined at length by everyone whose opinion might carry weight in the matter. Artists, sculptors, philosophers, orators all took their turn and went away as divided among themselves as they were among each other. The presumed irony of Lucis' letter argued for the fingerprint as a forgery, yet the faultless verisimilitude of the print and the failure of any subsequent artist to reproduce it suggested that, as Lucis himself maintained, his contrition was sincere. The problem, as Geras pointed out in his

Impresiis, resembled a pair of facing mirrors. One possessed a flaw in its glass and until Lucis should interpose himself between the two it would not be possible to say to which the flaw belonged. Needless to say, Lucis remained silent until his death.

19 ᴎoᴝ ƨ ɔɒɘɿɒlfɒlƨ :

> *Maintaining Orador's appearance of devastation without suggesting neglect has proved almost impossible. Either it is to be razed or it is to be rebuilt; it is not reasonable of your majesty to expect his architects to maintain it in a state that is neither.*
>
> *Collectanea Oradora* (III, xv).

The destruction of Orador, along with all of its inhabitants, took place shortly before the town was approached by forces under the command of Arafas, the promising lieutenant dispatched by King Androlas to quash the city's revolt. Before marching out to battle, the men of the city had collected their wives and children in the roofed assembly together with their most precious possessions and gained the women's assent to their plan; wood was piled up all around and thirty trusted guards appointed, who, on the news of defeat, were to kill everybody and set fire to the as much of the town as possible, giving precedence to the sacred places. According to Haratis, when scouts returned with the news that the entire population of the town had died in this *auto-da-fé* Arafas' men refused to enter its gates and resisted his orders to decamp eastwards from the Arxis river. There were attempts to desert and, though Arafas expressed sympathy with the emotions of the deserters, he nevertheless insisted on their execution. Having demonstrated his resolve in at least this matter of discipline, Arafas was free to order a withdrawal. He left a detail of four hundred men to

stand watch over the ruins of Orador and led the remainder in a forced march to Calaus.

King Androlas, whose own fate is discussed elsewhere, received his lieutenant warmly. Arafas' failure to enter the town of Orador was not mentioned, instead he was told to billet his men in the palace of the equerry and arrange for supplies to be transported to those he had left behind. Furthermore, Androlas announced that he would enter the town himself at a later date, in an official procession. Arafas was grateful for his life, but his inward sigh of relief stopped short when the king immediately outlined to him his next commission. After several days' rest he was to commandeer his choice of architects and lead a small relief force to Orador. There he was to await the king's arrival, and in co-operation with the architects, ensure that Orador was preserved in the same state of ruin as he had himself first found it. Androlas' campaigns in Cappadocia were about to commence and he expected it would be at least a year before he could return to inspect the town. With that, Arafas was dismissed and the forbidding king and his young lieutenant parted for the last time.

In all, the ruins of Orador were preserved for some fifty years, long after the death of Androlas in 680 and his banished lieutenant, Arafas, in 668. Androlas never visited the town nor did his successor, Melchis. The reasons for this oversight on the part of the Calaid monarchy are debated, but can be easily reduced to two opposing suppositions. The first, openly proclaimed at court and held wherever the matter was discussed publicly, reasoned that Androlas had simply used Orador as a one-man penal colony. Arafas had been sentenced for the rest of his life to occupy the town he had balked from entering. This view was confirmed when, upon the death of Arafas, Androlas banished his renegade general

Parlis to Orador, presumably in recompense for returning with almost all his men to Calaus when he had failed to capture the Cappadocian stronghold, Cumner. The second view, maintained discreetly among close friends and never mentioned among strangers or acquaintances, was that Androlas was himself susceptible to teligious horror that had seized Arafas' men in the approach to Orador and that had prompted many of them to hazard execution rather than enter the town. It was widely known to be a superstition among the Carthids that Mirais, leading their ancestors in their first migration towards the rim, attempted to occupy the deserted city of Toris. A large number of the exiles refused to enter, heeding warnings from the Calains that the town had been occupied by the gods who jealously guarded it as their home. Mirais, and those who had followed him, entered Toris but did not return and when the Carthids remaining outside the city walls had listened to their screams for three days they decamped and went to settle in Calaus. Androlas was thought to be descended from these exiles and could not fail to forget the lesson taught by the myth of that long vanished city.

Although the banishment of Arafas and the peculiar manner of his punishment is treated by a number of sources (for many historians, most notably Haratis and Parces, it confirms a pattern in Androlas' extraordinary rule; his sadistic, though inventive, treatment of his enemies and the arbitrary and unstable way in which he exerted his power), only one ancient author was attracted by the particulars of Arafas' task in Orador and the quite paradoxical nature of his undertaking. Pornis of Cales, appointed as architect to the Abyssid court in the reign of Perineon, toured the rim in an effort to compile a comprehensive treatise on Euxine temples. While in Calaus, some one hundred years after the death of

Androlas and fifty after the fall of the Arotids and the accession of the Euxine satrap Maarus, Pornis was given access to the palace libraries and appears to have discovered a wealth of correspondence relating to the preservation of Orador. Fascinated by the struggle evident in these documents, Pornis eventually published a short survey of the problem of Orador's preservation, a work circulated privately among his contemporaries and surviving today in a single copy excavated from the desert village of Oxyrhyncha.

The magnitude of the task facing Arafas and his architects was apparent by the spring of their first year in the town. The freezing winter experienced in the north of the rim gives way to a long thaw and a season of uninterrupted rain settles on that part of the Euxine lake until the end of the Hyperboreion, the first of the summer festivals. Orador, a blackened ruin the majority of whose structures now consisted of loosely congregated walls and roofless stoas, was quick to suffer under these conditions. The town's private buildings were mostly constructed using bricks of puddled clay (a mix of gravel and baked mud) and stripped of their natural shelter the stunted shelves of their smoke-discoloured walls rapidly began to disintegrate. After only four weeks of the Coralon, that part of the town worst affected by the fire resembled a marsh. 'We have inspected the area surrounding the assembly and the temple precinct of Limaion. The domestic and commercial buildings there have mostly liquefied. Their former size and dimension can only be quantified by the depth of the mud they have left behind them. Parts of this section of the town are not so much untraversable as unnavigable.' The facetious tone of Androlas' early reports prompted the arrival of unequivocal orders from Calaus. 'All damage must be repaired and every structure in the town must be preserved in the state in which it was left by the inhabitants. This

applies most of all to the humblest dwellings since these are the most vulnerable to decay. As your architects will confirm, this does not entail the difficult task of their reconstruction, it is merely required that the buildings be poured out again.'* Apart from this icy riposte and the affirmation that he would not be receiving any materials with which to repair the rain-washed town, Arafas' insolence also resulted in 200 of his detail at Orador being seconded back to Calaus. He was later informed that inspectors would arrive on a quarterly basis to ensure the progress of his work.

His impudence crushed within the first year of humiliating exile, Pornis relates that Arafas' correspondence settles into regular, workmanlike reports on the obstacles facing the preservation of Orador and the manner in which they were being overcome. There are no complaints in the reports or plaintive requests for supplies or men. The bitter remonstrations of his earlier letters has vanished, but as Pornis brilliantly points out (the insight is remarkable for a Euxine), Arafas must have realised that the preposterous irony of preserving a ruined city could speak for itself. The following quotations, taken from Pornis, give a flavour of the laconic tone and ludicrous content of Arafas' official correspondence.

> Throughout the town many buildings, particularly those constructed of marble or masonry, are covered in a thick but not impermeable layer of black soot. This is particularly evident in the temples and the assembly halls, as well as the stoas overlooking the agora. At the advent of the Hyperboreion, once the task of 'repouring' the buildings puddled by that season's rains was well in

*In the original Euxine [illegible] translates as "repoured", implying that the mud merely needs to be poured back into the shape of a house, its former receptacle; the term is usually used to describe the process of repouring the wine into it original vessel after it has been mixed in the *corytheion*.

hand, it was noticed that this layer of soot had been heavily rilled and in some cases almost entirely washed away by the downpours. For the most part, this was easily attended to. The charred surface of the walls was rubbed carefully and the white streaks left by the rain covered over. In cases where damage has been greater, however, we have had to take more extreme measures. A large supply of charcoal has been gathered and stored in our camp outside the town. This will be applied to any damage to the ruins when the need arises and should ensure that even these subtle traces of the fire's destruction are not effaced by the passage of time.

Collectanea Oradora (IV, x).

The many works now in progress here have created unforeseen difficulties. Foremost among these is the many traces left by the labourers in the course of their daily duties. Yesterday, a complete survey of the site revealed that no less than six thousand footprints are visible in and around the central precincts of the city. In order to redress this damage to the thoroughfares, I have detailed a troop of fifteen men to efface these tracks at the end of each day. This is to be achieved by means of specially devised mats brocaded with nails and pole-tree leaves. This supply is not expected to last the winter, so we will require a surplus of some eighty nails to the usual allocation.

Collectanea Oradora (XV, ii)

I would like to make special mention of Calon, who has devised an ingenious method of overcoming a problem regarded by us all as almost insurmountable, namely the conservation of the various type of ash left by the fire that destroyed Orador. The steady succession of snow, rain and sun year after year has compacted much of this material to the consistency of a layer of powdery stone. In addition, due to its exposure to the elements, this layer of ash (which covers most of the town) is now utterly black, though

> on our first arrival it was heavily flaked with grey char and paler embers of varying shapes and sizes. Although it has not been observed by your inspectors, the obsolescence of the town's ash has proceeded rapidly and until recently without any hope of reversal. A process has finally been discovered, however, that in addition to the primitive measures already undertaken will redress the work of the seasons. The ashes are presently being excavated to the depth of two *poia* and removed in large litters to our camp. Here, before they are dried by the sun, Calon treats them with a dye drawn from the bark of a local genus of eucalyptus and mixed with polycanther. This done, the solid embers are removed and the ashes are threshed and dried. Restored to their original, uncontaminated condition the ashes are returned to their site and the larger embers are replaced carefully in their former arrangement.
>
> *Collectanea Oradora* (X, viii)

Judging from the credulity of his response it seems that Arafas' correspondent, the chancellor of Androlas' court, did not realise the impossible ingenuity of dying carbon and perhaps Arafas himself did not realise it (even Pornis does not seem to have noticed it). It is a splendid fiction in any case, a joke that can perhaps only be made out from the shoulders of our more scientific age, but a clear indication nonetheless that Arafas had begun to savour the irony of his bitterly futile labour.

The destruction of Orador was not completed until the death of Parlis, its second and last inmate, in 662. Correspondence between the city and royal Calaus does not survive after 684 and Parlis died from what seems to have been an ancestor of typhus in 680. When the land was cleared Melchis ordered its abandonment and by Pornis' time the location of the vanished city was no longer known. In the end, nothing ensured the disappearance of Orador

more surely than the preservation of its ruin.

19 ꞵꞷꞩꞵꞷꞩ ꞷ ꞩꞵꞽꞽꞷꞩ : Several pages of typescript notes among Kinbote's papers indicate he may have intended a note of his own on this line. The notes consist of two extracts; the first is from a footnote published in the seventh imprint of *Winter in the Forega: An Expedition to Bantestan* by Dr.Adolphus Casares, published in 1956.

> There is a troubling detail in the above account, one that has passed unremarked by the reading public in previous editions of these memoirs and was only drawn to my attention as lately as the spring of last year. Dr. J.M. Barne, a distinguished Salesian entomologist at the Lode Museum and a man whom I have known for some years, took the unusual measure of visiting me at my cottage in Mener so as to express 'in circumstances of the utmost confidence' the disquiet he had experienced on re-reading my account of the expedition's rescue from the lush and inhospitable *forega*. He was referring to the piece of ingenuity on Calveston's part that had enabled us to attract a spotter-plane on its desolate route to Gabriel. As the reader will recall, Calveston, who was short-sighted, contrived to light an improvised signal fire using his spectacles as a sort of tinder. Several days later a rescue party arrived and we last five survivors were saved from certain death.
>
> 'But you see, Professor Agrevis,' Dr.Barne told me, 'the thing is quite impossible. The optics are all wrong. Completely back to front, in fact. Calveston is short-sighted; the spectacles prescribed for his condition could not possibly have been used as burning glasses. Whichever way he held them, they would have been quite unable to make the rays of the sun converge.'
>
> The revelation astounded me; I had witnessed the kindling of the signal-fire with my own eyes, there was no doubt that Calveston's glasses had lit that papery bundle of taper and straw. I remonstrated with Dr. Barne but he was ruefully insistent. He had

confirmed his first instinct with an optometrist at the Lode Museum. He had even conducted some experiments with his own wire-rimmed and very thickly set beer-bottle spectacles. We parted, with a terseness I later apologised for; but this state of affairs had left me perplexed and, what was worse, it had suddenly lent me the whiff of a jumped-up *scholes gloriosus*.

The weeks that followed were furious and fruitless. Calveston and the rest of the expedition were as confounded by Dr Barne's discovery as I was but the science of the matter could not be denied. We presented his spectacles to several professional acquaintances and, as Barne had asserted, they all agreed there was no conceivable way in which they could kindle a fire, whatever the intensity of light to which they were exposed. Calveston and I, together with the other members of the expedition, made repeated attempts to recreate the fire that had leapt so readily from the kindling back in the *forega,* but all to no avail. The matter proved insoluble, and though we were all agreed on what we had seen with our own eyes in Bantestan*,* we have despaired of ever squaring it with the facts of optical science. Speaking for the expedition, I can only say that *it is an event for which there is no explanation*. On a personal note, however, I often find myself returning to some words spoken by Calveston, who wittily remarked in conversation with me some time ago, 'Well, Casares, I always thought our rescue rather resembled the climactic scene of a cheap novel; but who would have thought it should turn out to have the added demerit of being so badly researched!'

The second is from the *Tenishev Euxine Dictionary,* the same edition in which his own and Silens' note on Hediales appeared.

Carpo of Samis, tragedian and conspirator, composed twenty

tragedies and assassinated four political opponents in Ardis before rushing to exile in Calaus around 560 BC. His successes at the Limaion were few (his highest honour was to come second in the festival of 550) and, with one notorious exception, not even the titles of his plays survive. His death at the court of Androlas in 578 was greeted with public celebration. Since the execution of his co-conspirator Lomis eight years previously he had been the last surviving member of the *Twelve*, the junta of military and aristocratic elements that had seized power in 559 and collapsed the following year. Hatred for him was so great, according to Haratis, that his name - once as common in Ardis as *Berne* or *Federic* in modern-day Esototia - had died out entirely by the time of his death.

20 [illegible] : The phrase is found elsewhere only in Alimus (XXXV) whose complete surviving works can be presented in just over a page:

It is our principal failing to suppose that the trajectory of nature and the course of destiny and fortune tend towards the fostering of the great.

(*Collectanea Palamuda,* XXXI)

The earth speeds to dust yet everywhere we suppose that we can see mountains rising towards the sky.

(*Collectanea Palamuda,* XXXII)

The only lessons we should learn are those taught by the desert and the sea.

(*Collectanea Palamuda,* XXXIIII)

The world's greatest bounty is its powder.

(*Collectanea Palamuda,* XXXIV)

What is nature? An infinite industry of dust. (𐎠𐎲𐎼 𐎢𐎰 𐎪 𐎪𐎰𐎠𐎲𐎼 𐎮𐎼)
(*Collectanea Palamuda,* XXXV)

'The Gods ordained the conquest of Almyra, a nation of infinite numbers, so that the fame of Ardis and Cantor should endure forever.' No. 'The Gods ordained the conquest of Almyra, a nation of infinite numbers, so that man should learn even the infinite is not enough. Only dust will suffice.'
(*Collectanea Palamuda,* XXXVI)

The wheel of the universe is like a mill-stone unto itself.
(*Collectanea Palamuda,* XXXVII)

Who is man's heir? The dust of his cities.
(*Collectanea Palamuda,* XXXVIII)

The world will end without man as a witness but perhaps the last man will have some foretaste of his world's conclusion. He will expire, choked by the invisible particle-storm, his last glance will see the last city blasted down by the gales of pulverised mountains and vanished temples. It will be as if the earth is melting before his eyes. This will be his final horror: to learn that he is not nature's son.
(*Collectanea Palamuda,* XXXIX)

21 𐎠𐎲𐎼𐎰𐎢𐎰𐎪 : Actually the name given by Aratis to an anonymous, probably imaginary city. *Chailon* literally translates as *invisible.* By the time he came to compose his *Travels* the memory of its details had escaped him and his notes refused to yield any distinct location, face, building or event which he could recall with any clarity. All

that was left to him was the memory of a narrow street, perhaps near the city's market.

> There is a smell like hibiscus or tamarisk but the street is filled with livestock. I have the impression that the inhabitants of this memory, though I cannot see any of them individually, are standing with their backs to me, as if the whole street has turned to look towards something in the distance. What this might be I can neither remember nor make out in the faded shadows of this strange recollection. Recently, in moments of idleness, I have found myself scanning the effaced details of the scene for some clue of the city, perhaps some adjoining street I can follow or someone whose manner of dress will tell me where I am, but to no avail. Everything finer than the form of a man or an animal has been scrubbed away, only ghosts - less, the outline of ghosts remains.

Aratis concludes that the memory is a counterfeit, the uneasy residue of a city he had failed to visit and had imagined in spite of himself. He is disturbed one night, however, when he wakes suddenly with the quite lucid recollection of a bright green head-dress worn by one of the traders.

> There in my memory, standing out from the fog enshrouding the rest of the scene, was the head-dress of some forgotten man, rendered in such exquisite detail I felt as if I could actually see it. The material was a perfect green silk, rendered by the light and the elaborate folds of its arrangement into a thousand shades, from brilliant white to an almost marine black. I had never seen this beautiful garment before in my life, nor have I seen its type since. The silk too, the more I examined its weft and its elaborate texture, seemed strange to me. The sight and the feel of it left me cold. Quite simply, I had never seen such a beautiful object, yet there it

lingered with all the character of a vivid memory.

By his own account Aratis puzzled over the appearance of this extraordinary detail in his life for only a short time. Preparations for a journey to Bazariz had been made and the journey could not be put off. The days before departure required devout attention to an army of busy details. Finally, after the last welter of inventories and leave-takings, Aratis stood watch on the stern as his ship departed from the Piraeun.

> The mountains behind Ardis had begun to recede. The city itself had vanished and clouds had gathered in flat skiffs along the horizon. There was nothing now, as Aster says in his *Driades*, but the 'loud silence of the sea'. I was filled with a sensation of immense blankness when suddenly, unrolled before my eyes by some unseen hand, I beheld my memory of *Chailon* and there, as if he was floating face upwards in murky water, stood the figure and face of a man looking straight back at me. The apparition of this stranger in a memory I had long since disowned held me in its thrall until dusk. It was possible for me to examine every detail of his appearance as though I was consulting a map spread out on the deck. His green-black eyes, which curved away to the side of his head like drops of water, were framed by a cowl of dark silk and were sunk deep into a complexion of blackened leather. A robe covered him from head to toe. His dark features were either southern or eastern but, in spite of my many years of travel, I could not tell which. I knew for certain that I had never seen him before.

Over the years that followed Aratis was visited again and again by new details of his memory of *Chailon*, as if the memory itself lay wrecked on the seabed and was slowly releasing its cargo to the

surface. With each new revelation, his understanding of the memory changed. When he had thought its inhabitants were standing with their backs to him, the appearance of the robed stranger overthrew this impression. Later revelations showed him that what he had mistaken for livestock was in fact a kind of chariot or wagon. Towards the end of his life he came to believe that the scene was not in a street at all but in some kind of enclosed area like a large temple or an arena. To add to this confusion, he also became aware of a much greater variety of sensations than he had previously suspected of the memory. Not only could he now recall the tang of tamarisk and hibiscus in the air, there was also the potent smell of ox-dung and the aroma of something roasting. The scene was filled with confused sounds (perhaps a language he did not understand) of which he could only make out individual syllables screeched at an unnatrally high pitch: *ka, mir, fil.*

> Over the last twenty years I have watched this fragmentary memory of a city, remembered and attested to by no-one, seethe violently to life, as if it were water bubbling up from the dry earth. There is no question that the city exists. Perhaps it is a place that has died or one that has yet to come into existence, in which case it is a memory that is not my own or some sort of vision. As I sit here, beneath the shade of a pole tree, gathering the notes I have cribbed from cities which I have tasted, and smelt and seen but which now seem unutterably distant and vague, it is only the image of Chailon that remains, a city that does not exist and one which I can never have visited.

21 ﬂᓚᘐ ᓀᓇ ᖻᖾ ᓭᘐ ᖻᖻ : The reference is to the *Epistle of Cleitho*, the ancient model for Von Hoffmanstahl's famous *Lord Chandos*

Letter. Cleitho *Amauris* ('the Stupid') was classical Ardis' fiercest critic and spent most of his life decrying the lethal chicanery and shameless hypocrisy of his native city. Paracles referred to him as the 'hunch-backed mosquito' and since he could not exclude him from the assembly barred him from the precinct of the Limaion during public festivals. This gives us some clue to the possible content of the lost *Between the Festivals*, a phrase made proverbial for assembly business by the title of Cleitho's diatribe. None of his works, bar the epistle that gave rise to his sobriquet, survive except for their titles. He is mentioned in a list of philosophers that influenced Epicurus by Quintilian, though the reference is deleted by recent editors who read it as a corruption of *cletus amoris* from the previous line. There is no other trace of his memory in the literature of Greece and Rome apart from the preservation of his letter to Philotas by Boethius and it was not until Hoffmanstahl's discovery of the epistle in Camotius' *Opuscula Euxina* that his paradoxical case recovered the fame it had enjoyed three thousand years previously on the Euxine rim. The letter opens strikingly (according to Harpatis the words were often recited at symposia and Marnis cites them in his *Atlas of Style*):

> It was kind of you, my dear, honoured friend, to overlook my two years of silence, and to write to me as you did, though I hardly know if I am still the person to whom your precious letter is addressed.

After some further courtesies to his old acquaintance and ally he resumes:

> Am I, at thirty-five, the same person who composed the *Gods of*

> *Ardis* beneath the canopy of my garden court in Sanis? Am I the same man who faced down Paracles and his armed thugs at the debate over Larnis' proposed amendment to our city's constitution? Was it I who could brand my fellow Ardisians a 'citizenry of cattle' and taunt them for their imbecility and prostration before Paracles' tyranny?
>
> Was that I, who today, as I sit in the shade of my study hunched over in the furious and exhausting exertion of composing this epistle letter by letter, cannot understand a single one of my speeches, can comprehend only with difficulty the simplest verse of Aster, can barely grasp the meaning of my youngest daughter's simplest entreaty?
>
> What is man, to presume to understand!

Cleitho now ventures to explain himself further but is hindered by a number of false starts and an impatience to express himself apophthegmatically. Finally, he hits upon the solution of tracing his crisis to its first days:

> But nothing of what I have said so far is satisfactory. Perhaps, Verulas, you should consider such foaming confusion evidence enough of the irreversible dilapidation of my mind. No, that would not be enough. I demand that you understand exactly what has become of your old friend Cleitho, the one who used to inhabit the body addressing you now.
>
> Two years ago, shortly after we had returned from Samis together, I sat down to write the work I had consulted you on during those long nights at sea. I had already decided on its title, *Reflections on Flight,* and felt confident that the thoughts I had arranged on the subject would flow freely and without interruption. I was mistaken, after just several days I was forced to return to my sources, in particular to Calister and Parmen. My inquiry, as was the

case with almost everything I have ever written, had turned out to be suffused with a small galaxy of syllogisms that seemed rare and perfect until the moment came to express them in words, whereupon they had crystallised almost instantly into strange, unrecognisable nonsense. I made first for Parmen's *Logic* and still in the thrall of anxiety over the fate of my essay came upon the sentence where he describes the operation of negatives in Comer's 'lament of Aisax'. I had read this sentence many times but now I faced it as if it was written in the tongue of Prazemen. As I read and reread the sentence in a bid to understand what Parmen was saying I felt the words become more and more like a gallery of mirrors turning stubbornly to face one another. Each word directed one to the next, which itself referred to another, and so on until the circle was complete and meaning impossible. At last, as the sentence closed inexorably in upon itself I found that I could not, as I had presumably done so often before, pluck the meaning of the sentence from between the glances of the mirrors. The meaning of Parmen's words had become as ineffable to me as the flight of a reflection from glass to glass. I looked up from the text and felt the sentence harden in my mind, like a splinter around which everything festers, pulses and seethes. My head now felt so heavy it was as if it was weighted at the centre with a massive knot of marble into which my mind was attempting to compress itself. I felt a pressure exert itself from somewhere at the centre of my being, quietly, without hope, for almost before it had begun this force suddenly died out. Now it was as if the knot of marble suddenly expanded to eclipse everything, as if it transformed itself into an eyeless statue with which to inhabit me. I felt a hard surface press behind my eyes.

Since that day I have not read a single sentence, not a single word of Parmen or any other author. Even your letter, my dear Verulas, was read to me by my eldest daughter in the slow, painstaking fashion that my terrible condition demands and for

> which she alone of my family has the infinite patience. The sensation behind my eyes, along with all the others I have described, remains to this day. Since that moment of hideous revelation I have remained in a state of complete mental petrifaction, unable to understand the simplest phrase or sentence without exerting all the weight of my mind upon it. I have become like a child, a dull, slow-witted child immured in the body of a man. Everything must be repeated to me several times over before I can pluck any sense from between the facing mirrors of its meanings. I can grasp commands almost instantly, it is true, but not *instantly*. 'Sit down', I am told, 'Get out of bed.', 'Give me the plate'. What is a man, Verulas, when he is treated like a dog by the family of which he was once the master? What is a man who is forced to ponder his wife's observation on the weather as if it was a whirlpool of blank glass, yielding no meaning to him, no sense he can grasp to his heart?

The letter concludes as follows:

> My dear Verulas, write me no more letters. Your friend Cleitho has changed so utterly that he is in truth no more. I wish it had been given to me, in the last words of this last letter I shall write to you, to concentrate all the love and gratefulness, all the unmeasured admiration for the greatest benefactor of my mind, and the foremost Euxine of my time that I hold in my heart, and will keep there until it breaks in death.

Cleitho the Stupid died some twenty years later, around 580BC. According to Harpatis (writing some sixty years after the event), he had by then lost the ability to speak and move.

22 ϫⲉⲗⲗⲉ ϩⲉ ⲫⲟⲟⲩ ϧⲁⲣ : The name has a singular history. Its only known bearer is Kirkis of Byzon, the poet who set fire to the

Temple of Limaion in order to win the lasting fame the measliness of his poetry had thus far denied him. His enthusiastic proclamation of guilt, in a dechastic ode recited among the temple's cinders, so confounded the population of Maris that he was merely exiled from the city when they might have been forgiven an imaginative execution. According to Strobius, Kirkis wished only that his name should endure and insightfully points out: 'whether it was to be carried through the ages by honour or ignominy was of no account to him. His only concern was that it should be blown through time like pollen, a mere sound of syllables, without history or attribute.' And so it has proved. In the ancient sources Kirkis is regarded almost without malice, the man a mere bearer of the determined, death-denying tag. Apocryphal, undoubtedly invented stories proliferate in the literature about the origin of the name. In Para we are told that his father discovered it etched by the waves on a pebble washed up on the shore near his home. Others, Herin and Alcatis included, report that the name was the new-born's first utterance. Merpis claims that the name is an onomatopoeic rendering of the call of a species of salamander that became mysteriously extinct in Byzon in the poet's youth. These colourful, if not convincing, explanations are all that is preserved by the ancient sources. But however unenlightening such inventiveness may be it is at least an index of the exoticism of the name even in the poet's own time and the established belief that it had emerged complete from nature and slipped into the poet from Byzon as if he were a nearby pair of shoes.

In a second, more curious strand of survival Kirkis, Precutio's *nomen et fors naturae,* discreetly became something of a trope for the perils of *noblesse oblige*. Regarded as a name in possession of a man rather than a man in possession of a name, a *Kirkis* was any

person who allowed the interests of his family name and honour to outweigh those of his well-being or security.

22 ⱱⱡ ⱚⱛⱬⱬⱡⱛⱬⱚⱚ ⱚⱬⱡⱡⱡⱛ : Memnos' *Symposion* concludes with a series of speeches on the nature of memory. The penultimate speech is given by Carybis, who we are told is a playwright, though no other record survives of him. The passage is an obvious source for lines 22 to 23. Kinbote even adapts the scene at the beach on the island of Remis.

> Do you remember Maisios? He died some years ago on a merchant vessel sailing for Pontis, I think it was during the archonship of Melides. He was quite a successful trader in figs and cloth, he was also a lieutenant in the expedition at Melchis and I remember he served as *lementis* for a while. You will recall him, Cardes, he proposed a levy on the trade in wool to raise funds for the defence of the city, even though his own business would be among the worst affected. Salis, you may remember him as the man who reacted harshly to your *Lagones* and spoke out against it in the assembly. He was a man of quite strict opinions.
>
> Anyway Maisios was an acquaintance of mine for several years, one I owed to my time as a juror in the libel case brought by that imbecile Mariandes. Maisios was my *heremos* (seating-companion) and although we discovered quite different attitudes in each other towards many of the affairs of the time we were united in our loathing of Mariandes. As a matter of courtesy we exchanged visits after the trial had closed and enjoyed many conversations together. We were, I believe, brought closer to one another by a genuine fascination for each others opinions, for although we knew our temperaments to be almost exactly alike we could not have been more contrary in our understanding of the world. Maisios was cold and harsh in his judgement on matters of state and individual

conscience. He deplored chicanery and extravagant politesse. He also had little aesthetic feeling, as was perhaps instanced by his reception of your *Lagones*, Cardes. After the passage of so much time many of the details of his opinions and conversation are now lost to me, with one exception. And this is what I want to relate to you.

Maisios lost his wife in the second plague. He was left to raise his two sons alone and was deeply affected by her death. Their families were old commercial allies and they had known each other since childhood. Maisios told me that he had never known any other woman. His longest separation from her had been during the campaign in Melchis, a full year that he had found almost intolerable. During that time, wherever he looked Maisios could find nothing to reflect her presence in the world. He experienced bouts of vertiginous terror at the thought that she may have died in his absence. This anguish continued for a long time until one evening he sat with his comrades on a beach in the island of Remis. They had eaten and the captain was relating some adventures that had befallen him in Pontis. The account provoked laughter in Maisios' comrades and Maisios, an habitually grave man, smiled for what may have been the first time in months. As he expressed it to me, he instantly realised that the smile was not his own. His own smile was wry, often cynical. The smile the captain's tall tale had provoked in him was the artless, sunny expression he knew only from his wife. He passed his hands over his face as if it was a warm mask. In the months that followed, his anguish deserted him and whenever he smiled it was with that same smile he had discovered on the beach at Remis. When he returned to Ardis the following summer he found his wife in the glowing health he expected. His sons had grown and his estate was not in total disrepair. Everything soon returned to the way it had been before his departure. Even his old, reluctant smile, which he had not felt for almost a year, returned on the first day of his homecoming.

When he told me this story I noticed that he finished it with the wry, slightly pained expression he had been describing. My indiscretion permitted me to ask what I am sure none of you here would have had the bad grace to even contemplate. I asked if his wife's smile had returned to him after her death, as a final and lasting memory. He answered that it had not. 'Perhaps,' he remarked, 'it is as Polybus says to Aisax in Aster's *Litheia*: *Only the living truly laugh and the dead truly weep*. On the night of my wife's death I wept the tears I had seen her shed on the birth of our sons and on the day of my departure and return from Melchis. Now it is only when I remember her that I weep and it is only when I weep that I remember her.'

These were the ways in which Maisios honoured his wife.

22 Ⲡⲁⲥⲥⲁⲃⲉ : The word belongs to a Euxine dialect from the north-eastern area of the Rim. It is puzzlingly alien from any Euxine root, however, and is thought to be either an import from some unknown exotic source or an eponym of some forgotten mythical figure. The tradition the word describes is mysterious and has not been satisfactorily explained by modern Euxinists. This is due in no small part to the sources, which are as unhelpful as they are scant. The following fragment (attributed to Harpatis by Bayley despite its uncharacteristically cramped style) was discovered beneath the Aster palimpsest (IV,i):

I first heard mention of the *heideton* while travelling to Carlis. In the dialect of that region the word simply means 'empty place' and no town in that part of the rim is without one. The source of the institution is not known and is therefore thought to be ancient though it is universally agreed by the people of the region that it sprang from Carlis where the finest and most sacred *heideton* is to be found. This lies at the centre of the town's marketplace. It is about

> half an oslot long and a quarter broad. It is quite literally an 'empty place', for although the agora is bustling with people the area of the *heideton* remains untouched and absolutely empty. As evening draws on and the marketplace thins out its outline becomes less distinct but no less inviolate. At this point it becomes clear to the traveller that the *heideton* itself is not delineated by any form of marking on the ground.[.....]
>
> In many towns the traveller will not find the *heideton* unless it is pointed out to him. In Larin, for example, it is the north-east corner of the Temple of Limaion. In Persis it is the hearth in a house belonging to Diomedes. In Penuat, it is the bottom of a saltwater well.

The only other reference to the word is in the *Moralia* of Parmenes:

> While staying with Lames I was conducted by him to the town's *heideton*. This was in the assembly, beneath a statue of Daemon. Lames made great emphasis of the fact that the ground of the *heideton* had not been touched by men since the town's foundation and as we spoke it soon transpired that he had in fact taken advantage of the occasion to refute an argument I had defended the previous evening. I had claimed that the virtuous man cannot possibly uphold a life proper to his vocation among the addled vice of the city. 'Yet Parmenes,' he exclaimed as we stood by the *heideton*, 'see how even the desert can mix unharmed with its mortal enemy: man. And as I am sure you will have to agree, *not even virtue is as delicate as the desert*.'

22 ᚱᚨᚾ ᚠᚹᚨᚱ : The metron, a combination of Iolic and Halic rhythms, was devised by Aragis in 650BC. From 580 on, however, it remained indissolubly associated with the so-called 'Paphis taboo' and was known as the *papheion*. The defeat and capture of the Ardisian armies at Paphis and their wholesale slaughter at the hands

of the Litheians in the nearby quarries at Larnum initiated almost thirty years of internecine conflict between the two cities and stands out in Euxine literature as the definitive human catastrophe of the Rim, analogous perhaps to our own perceptions of the destruction of the Estotian army at Parala in the last war. The defeat was commemorated with a *stele* raised half-way between Larnum and Paphis inscribed with a dedication composed by Aster. The text, preserved by Zoilus and countless others, runs:

> *To the East the men of Ardis fought like gods;*
> *To the West they were slaughtered without their swords.*
> *May your children remember Larnum.*

The lines, though undistinguished, proved immortal. Aratis, in his *Travels,* claims to have had them quoted to him by a beggar in Trebispont in Galicia; as recently as the seventh century schoolmasters in Verona and Carpathis drummed them into their charges as the sum total of their education in ancient Euxine. For the Ardisians themselves the lines were virtually talismanic. Our main source in this regard is Coralis, who complains of the vogue for heading official and private letters with the verses and even of wearing pendants inscribed with the lines as a charm against the evil eye.

The hysteria surrounding the epigram was obviously immense and the poem was increasingly regarded as a *unicum* obtaining to a sacredness shared only by the dead of Larnum themselves. While copies of the poem proliferated on almost every available medium however, the metron in which it was composed, once popular in tragic and sympotic verse, began to disappear almost entirely. From c.570-560 on there is not a single line of Euxine prosody surviving that uses the measure. It is found in the early plays of Arathis and Coragin but not in their *Phorades* or *Ergan,*

composed towards the end Milesian *chore* some thirty years after Larnum. Aratis, Philo, and Carnis among others do not seem to have used the metre at all. Were it not for an anecdote provided by Caris it might have been assumed that this was explicable as mere chance or as a vicissitude of literary fashion. As it happens the essayist recounts an incident at the performance of a *Eurike* during the consulship of Malis only ten years after the battle of Paphis. Lamenting the death of her son, Eurike broke into a threnode of halcic dimeters capped at each strophe with a *papheion*. The audience reacted harshly and drove the actor from the stage. 'The next day Parlis begged for his play to receive a second audience since he had taken care to remove the offending rhythm and fully regretted his indiscretion'(*Against Ceresipes* IV,2).

In 520 Ruminis reports that he searched in vain for the *stele* erected at Larnum. He even claims that the monument had been broken up and removed for quarrying. This contradictory and quite incredible state of affairs is explained by Tenishev in his *Geschaf Aldkimmer*: 'Rather than placate the dead of Larnum with a well-tended monument, the Euxines, whether they were aware of it or not, honoured them with a death at the heart of their culture. Rather than live on in the verses composed by Aster, the dead of Larnum died again and again, with every verse that was not composed in the *papheion*. In this sense it may be said that all of Euxine prosody after Larnum stands as a monument to the dead of that terrible event - the dead of Larnum have become an absence not only in history but in prosody as well.'

22 ↄ ꝺaᒣhaᗪᥱ : Ahaser' endeavour to break the monotony of endless days at sea has been borrowed by Kinbote from a story told of the orator Philocles, who spent the last twenty years of his life in

idle retirement on the island of Pharis. According to the *Anecdota* Philocles eagerly retreated from his hectic professional career in Ardis to the quiet of his ancestral home but soon became demoralised by the moribund round of waking at dawn, attempting to remain occupied through the baking day and finally crawling to bed, miserable and sleepless, at the first sign of sunset. In an effort to counter the effects of this regime he devised a daily schedule to relieve the solid tedium. So as not to disturb his family, he arranged to move to a remote part of the island where a small house had been fitted out for spells of solitude. Here, with the aid of a *hydrautes* crafted by one of his servants, he immediately embarked on a regimen of retiring to bed one hour earlier each night while still maintaining his habitual repose of six hours sleep. According to his own calculations this meant that after the passage of each calendar month his own waking hours would rotate back through the solar day to their original starting point. To be precise, with the elapse of every twenty four sunsets he would complete a tour through every possible permutation of dark and light, from days of continuous sun to days of uninterrupted dusk and back again.

Rumours of Philocles' singular regimen were not long in spreading throughout the rim and the gossip soon prompted several of his former clients and acquaintances to visit Pharis to ensure his well-being. By the time of their arrival, Philocles had been living by the hours of the *hydrautes* for seven months. Since he now saw so little of the sunlight he was distinctly paler. He had however put on weight, and it could even be said that he was showing surprisingly few signs of age. He was not reluctant to speak of his experiment, he even indulged his discussion of it with a note of quiet rapture. The singular arrangement of his day was the source of some unanticipated pleasures. For example, for a couple of days in a row

he would find himself spending the afternoon watching the sun set behind the mountains overlooking Ardis, while several days later he could while away the evening watching dawn emerge from the further shore of the rim beyond Chalcis.

Frequently, however, his waking day would only afford him several hours of light in which to busy himself with his reading and correspondence and as winter set in he had begun to spend more and more days without seeing the sun. These days of darkness had at first proven a challenge, they were after all as monotonous and oppressive as the tyranny of sunlight he had sought to escape. But by simply adjusting the *hydrautes* for the months of Boreia and Clomeris to take account of the unusually long nights and by changing the rhythms of his sleep by several hours each night instead of just one, he had found he could easily recover the unevenly bisected day of light and dark he had come to favour during the previous spring and summer.

In contrast to Ahaser, Philocles maintained this disorienting regimen until his death in 650BC. According to the *Anecdota* he was mauled by a wolf while exploring the woods near his cottage. Though Cicero claims his death was induced by his unnatural lifestyle. More recently, Joren Kohler observed in an article published in *Theatron end Seit* that since wolves are known to be nocturnal animals forests were generally avoided at night by ancient Euxines (Zoilus,*V,ix.3* &c.). Philocles may finally have mistaken his own morning for that observed by the rest of nature.

23 : *Paramis, Canglion, Rebis.* All these names denote species of trees to be found in and around the northern panel of the Euxine rim, particularly Cerissis and the environs of Ardis. The mockery in these lines is not at first apparent; perhaps because it is

we who are the object of Kinbote's scorn as much as the notorious taxonomical fraudulence of Euxine prosody in the 7th and 6th centuries. The bugbear in the great scholar's sights is as commonplace among the urban civilisations of today as it was then, but if anything, the charlatanry of the likes of Herois and Parnes was more harmful since it sealed a stage in the decline of the Euxine civilisation, whereas our own charlatans are merely pulled along on the coat-tails of a long and proud tradition, a tradition of which, in extenuation of their crimes, they are perhaps only vaguely aware.

If it is not already obvious, the fraud in question is easily illustrated. Take for example the following passage from our own Siegfried Mann:

> On our way to Wensehlas we took a detour through the forest on Count Leman's estate. There we discovered a wondrous, gloaming grove of jasper-planes and ceradas. Leala insisted that we stop and the coachman, an amiable *paisan* who always seemed to anticipate his mistress' *folies*, promptly drew in the horses. Arm in arm, we promenaded among the proud, sun-dappled boli of this little Arcadia. Here and there, among the rosefeather lichen and finely spun parleyweed nestling luxuriantly on the sturdy boluswood, bloomed exquisite damsel orchids and perfumed *filitis*. As if at the prompting of this heady, olfactory symphony I dropped to my knees…

And so on. The quality of the writing is not at issue here, but a certain, rather tawdry device disposed within it most certainly is. In a city of several million people there will be, on the very outside, about four of them who can honestly visualise the 'gloaming grove of jasper-planes and ceradas' in which the above passage is set. For the other millions there will just be a gathering of trees, provenance

not determinable. Likewise with the 'rosefeather lichen' and 'parleyweed' growing 'luxuriantly' at the base of the 'sturdy boluswood', only the vaguest of images (a tree lightly dressed in herbs (?) and weeds) is roused from the imagination under the onslaught of such botanical expertise. The operation at the heart of this extremely conventional device is essentially a contract for the free movement of mellifluous pabulum between writer and reader. The author fills out his work with the taxonomically correct names of various flora and fauna in the knowledge that the reader will understand the scene described involves flowers, trees, grass and animals of various shapes and sizes, which is all that is sufficient for his modest needs. Of course, should the reader become more curious than is strictly necessary, he can look up 'boluswood' in any good dictionary and be told that it is a conifer of such-and-such a species, in short: that it is a tree.

This mutual confidence-trick between reader and writer, merely an ossified protocol in our own literature, can be seen in its first bloom only in the epigrammatic poetry emanating from Ardis in the sixth and seventh centuries. Here we have a small civilised city of some eighty thousand people on the cusp of slumping into a permanent and laudable ignorance of the many and stifling details of the flora and fauna in its surrounding countryside. Where in the eighth century Aridisian epigrams are hung with a small clique of emblematic flowers and other flora, by the arrival of Chorabdis and company the genre suddenly teems like a Victorian hothouse. Of the four hundred hapax legomena in the poets of this era two hundred and eighty are the names of flowers, plants or trees. A notorious culprit is Herois. The following lines are from his *Dreiadi*:

ᚾᚨᛃᚲᚳ ᛒᛗᚣᚾᚩᛟᛞᛉᚾᚨᛞ ᛟᛞᛒᚳᛞ ᚳᛞ ᚻᚲᛇᛗ
ᛒᛞᛗᚨᛃᚲᚳ ᚾᚲ ᚱᚾᛞᛗ:
ᚷᚲᛇᛗ ᚱᚲ ᚱᛗᚻᛞ ᛈᛗ ᛟᛞᚱᛇ ᛋᚲᛇᚷᚱ
ᚾᚩᛞ ᛟᛞᛗᛟᚾᚨ ᛟᛞᚳᛟᛞᛞᚾᚨᚨ ᚻᛞ ᛟᚻᛇᚲᛏᛞᛟᛞᛒ
ᚱᛞᛗᛒ ᛇᛞᛗᚨᚱᛞᛞ ᛟᛞ ᛞᛗᚲᛇᛋᛏᚲᛞᚾᚨᚨ ᛟᚾᛇᛞᛞ
ᚱᚲ; ᛟᛞᛞᛒ ᚱᚲ ᚾᚩᛞ ᛗᛇᛞᛞ ᛟᛇᛞᛞᛞ
ᚲᛇᚻᚨᛗᚱ ᛗᛇᛟᚲᛇᛟᛇᛞ ᚱᚾᚩᛒ
ᛇᚲᚾᚨᚨ ᛟᚾᛇᛇᛟᛗᚩᛒ ᛟᚲᚾᚩᛒ.

The lines are more like stuffed festoons than pentameters. The *ekpleion plimnis* (*plimnis:* a species of chesternut), the *koribdin dibir* (*koribdin*: a rare wild flower resembling the *acanthus*), the *parlimis raclilis* (*racilis*: a type of berry) have been dragged from the botanical tracts of the time for the mean purposes of alliteration and consonance. The steady jingle of *arcana* distracts us from observing that, like many other poets of his time, Herois has constructed an *ekphrasis* that is physically impossible.

23 ᛞᛇᚲᛏᛒ ᛇᛒᛟᛞᛒ : A direct graft, one of five in the following twenty lines, from Mander's *Boustrophi*. This catalogue of unutterably trite truisms was compiled sometime in the Dark ages from the jetsam of post-classical drama by persons unknown, probably a conspiracy of smug village pedagogues. Only half of the *boutstrophi* (lit. 'one-liners') are of genuine Mandrian provenance, the rest are from *belles-lettrists* justly buried in the anonymous ash-heap of time. Wedged among the dung, a lot of it pure Mander, are a few unquestionable gems, however. In this regard Kinbote's taste is unfailing.

24 𐬀𐬉𐬎𐬭 𐬐𐬀𐬌𐬌𐬀 : There are some fifty words for 'night' in Estotian. The moonless, bottle-blue darkness of summer midnight, the ochreous black approaching dawn, the ebony solidity of an unstarred sky during *Hyperboreion* (December to February) are the most evocative. In total, the Estotian octave of nightfall comprises some twenty notes of diminishing luminescence. In Aster's *Legeia*, the watchman's soliloquy describes the four principle stages: crepuscule, the melting-of-shadows, the stars becoming brighter than the sky, and finally impenetrable darkness. Intervening shades are picked up in Oreon's *Ledger of Natural Things* and Choerus' slapdash omnium gatherum *The History of Day and Night* but the *locus classicus* on the subject is to be found in Annal, *The Thousand and One,* xxvi, 2. Kinbote is here referring to the sort of darkness reminiscent of graphite that is only to be found in very dimly illuminated caves, *nux* traditionally deriving from *Nuka* the sacred grotto dedicated to Jope in Chalcedon.

24 𐬀𐬉𐬎𐬭 𐬐𐬀𐬌𐬌𐬀 : There is a playful but ominous anachronism in the words of the mariner. The rock he is speaking of is the Euxine ancestor of the modern-day *paura*. By the time of Chailer the formerly abundant open-cast mines in Daura had been exhausted and *lite* was considered semi-precious. In the epic cycles of the Bronze Age the heroes live in palaces made entirely of it and in the celebrated *liteboleia* episode of Aster's *Boriad* the opposing Euxine and Litheian armies stoned each other with loose boulders of the rock littering the plain outside the city. With the flawed logic typical of self-styled Silver eras the ancient abundance of *lite* was seen as an emblem of irreversible decline since the superhuman glory of the Bronze age rather than the result of centuries of over-mining a pleasant but fragile and rapidly soluble rock. This much is obvious

to the reader of an age where vast supplies of *paura* are available from an archipelago of mines across Estoty and only desperate or terminally ignorant communities such as the Barbers in the northern panel of Tartary construct their dwellings with a mineral given to disintegrating after a period of only thirty to forty years. The truth is that the mariner's 'precious cargo' would not be so for another two centuries and even then only for a period corresponding to the pre-eminence of the Euxine league.

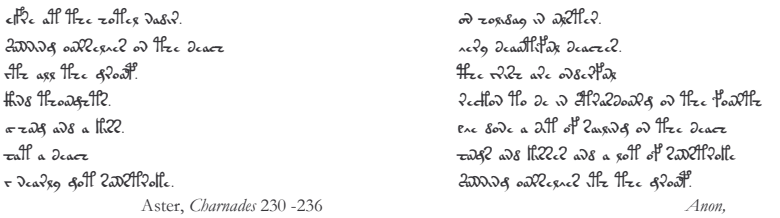
24 𐬀𐬉𐬎𐬀 𐬐𐬀𐬎𐬌𐬀 : One of the fascinating oddities of the Euxines is their blindness to the colours blue and green. This 'discovery' was not made until quite recently, by Jacob Oder in his 1891 thesis *Die blauen und gruehnen Augen der Euxinevolks*. In his reading for a new edition of Aster Oder revisited the marginal alluvia of some two thousand corrections and revisions introduced by scribes and previous editors. Among these were many that he had not previously suspected and a cluster of four in particular that caught his attention. Each of these had been solved seamlessly in the pages of *Jope* by various obscure contributors. In II, xvii p.332 for instance Rajius Schmitt pointed out that the length of sea-wrack with which Aisax is suspended from the lintel of Paseia's peninsular temple in the *Strophades* cannot be legitimately compared to 'thick golden cord' since sea-wrack is resolutely brown.. Presumably munching a butter crumpet the smug philistine neatly emended the line to read 'thick jibrope'. Oder's curiosity was kindled and he soon discovered a plethora of emendations, ancient and modern, throughout the *paradosis* of Euxine literature which had obliterated one of the few things bored undergraduates nowadays actually find interesting about Euxine culture, namely their inability to distinguish green from sallow brown and blue from dusky yellow. The impact of

Oder's discovery is too wide-ranging to summarise here, but its significance for tragic scholars was ironically quite minor. In all only fifty 'corrupt' lines have had to be restored to their proper condition. The eyes of Aster's sacrificial virgins (*Mel.* l.756) are indeed the colour of cornflower, the mossy barks of the Litheian fleet *do* spangle like a shower of tossed coins, and the hair of Kinbote's Ahaser does resemble an abundant, unripe vine.

When all is said and done, though, it is still astonishing to think that a culture which could distinguish up to fifty chromatic shades in the generic blackness of night thought itself invisible to the naked eye while striding shaven-headed down a grassy hill.

24 ᖻᕼᑎᖻᕼᓂᑎ : The poet Cimmer, a native of Ardis, founded a school of rhetoric on the isle of Scyrris and was the author of the *Hymn to Limaion* and a treatise in halcic tetrameters on the origin of the Euxine alphabet. His teachings and his wide fame as a poet of genius inspired many generations of followers and the *sideion* at Scyrris acted as a university for the Ardisian elite until it was destroyed in the Illyric wars by forces under the command of Luman of Senna. Although none of Cimmer's work survives, the legacy left by the annual festival devoted to his memory at Scyrris makes it possible to re-imagine his work at least in part. This is thanks to an innovative practice known as ᖻᕼᑎᖻᕼᓂᑎ (*redizeion)*which Cimmer himself instituted and was probably one of his main pedagogical methods. The technique is difficult to describe comprehensively and is still the object of scholarly controversy. Tenishev translates the word with a harsh neologism, *tradaction*, a multiple mongrel suggesting simultaneous processes of attentive re-editing, transformation of metre and register but retention of the archetype's diction and *lexis*. The best analysis is arrived at by

example. A *redizeion* of the second choral ode in Aster's *Charnades* survives on two verso pages of the Libelin manuscript of Dio Cassius' *Epitome of the Illyric Wars*. I have printed the extracts from Aster's text and the anonymous *redizetes* side by side to facilitate comparison:



Aster, *Charnades* 230 -236 *Anon,*

Both periods are polymetric: Aster's alternates halcic metra with propaedeic while his unknown 𐬀𐬬𐬎𐬀𐬛𐬀𐬌𐬀𐬌 (*rizedetes*) mingles chaldic verses with rather strained pericheric measures. The oddity of the *rizedeion*'s prosody is its signal calling card. The flawed measures in ll. 5 and 7, particularly the muddled sequence of anceps positions in 𐬭𐬀𐬌𐬎 𐬛𐬀𐬎𐬎 𐬀 𐬄𐬀𐬀 𐬊𐬌 𐬐𐬁𐬙𐬀𐬌𐬀𐬌, are deliberate flaws prescribed by the Scyrris school to distinguish the *rizedeion* from true verse. While linked by obscure subterraneous layers it is evident even at first glance that the poems are mixed from the same soil. A successful 𐬀𐬎𐬛𐬬𐬎𐬀𐬙 should share the greater part of its diction with the archetype, and turns of phrase it does not fully transpant it should at least echo to the ear or to the eye. Thus we find 𐬐𐬁𐬙𐬀𐬌, 𐬎𐬀𐬎𐬎, 𐬛𐬎𐬀𐬀𐬊, 𐬬𐬀𐬀𐬍𐬎𐬀 all repeated in the *rizedeion* and even collocated in matching positions of the line; while 𐬀𐬀𐬬𐬀𐬀𐬊 and 𐬀𐬙𐬁𐬐 suggests Aster's 𐬬𐬙𐬀𐬙 𐬐𐬬𐬁𐬎𐬎. Other traces are less eye-catching. The tone of the poem is recognisably *bomic*, a cheerful genre drawn from popular songs recounting the ordeals of Jope's gardener, Bomos, when he first set out to please the divinity by foresting the earth. This contrasts with the solemn

mood of Aster's hymn to the moon but its setting, the garden of the Temple of Jope, Bomos' traditional presidium, in this case provides the *rizedetes* with the transformational cue he requires. His choice of metre is a more subtle puzzle. Chaldic and pericheric metres traditionally derive their names from the words for spear and hill respectively, while the halcic is taken from *halcos* ('branch') and propaedic from *paedis* meaning 'hook'. These four words mingle in a number of common composite forms: a *prohalcos* can mean a 'leaf' or 'twig'; a *chaldepais* is a sort of shovel in the Sephirin dialect; a *cherihalcos* is a coinage of Aratis' to denote the solitary trees found on the knolls around Maios and reputedly planted by Androlas' army to commemorate generals who died in battle. The combinations almost exclusively form words appropriate to a secret celebration of the god charged with cultivating and protecting the gardens of Euxine temples.

In the case of Cimmer, this elaborate literary exercise has left us with a wealth of poems by numerous *rizedetes* using his works as their archetypes. The festival at Scyrris, devoted entirely to composing *rizedeia* of his great *Hymns to Limaion*, annually produced some fifty poems in his honour. These were hugely successful (copies of the *Cimmerias* of 675 have been unearthed as far afield as Alexandria) and the *rizedeia* of Malin and Chilis were regarded as masterpieces in their own right. But the success of the festival had the adverse effect of crowding Cimmer's own poetry out of general circulation. The *Hymns to Limaion* have been lost, only fragments of his abecedarium survive. Even Philo, writing in 180 AD, was unable to find anything by Cimmer and remarked in *Lapses of the Ancients* that 'the song of the poet is always outlived by the applause of its admirers'.

25 𐬀𐬎𐬀𐬌: The island of Alcos, located in the south-eastern and the northern seas of the Euxine Rim, was a *diphnesia* or double-island. Put simply, it was regarded as a single island though composed of two disparate land masses. Tenishev erroneously compares the use of the term to the collective nomenclature of island groups such as the Phokides or the Cyrenaides. But Alcos, like Pyris and Aramene, is a singular noun, and there is no attempt to differentiate between the sibling islands in any of the literary or epigraphical remains. In this sense, the 'island of Alcos' (𐬛𐬀𐬍𐬀 𐬀𐬎𐬀𐬌) refers to two islands and to one, the 𐬞𐬍𐬀𐬛𐬀𐬍𐬀 (*diphnesia*), the combination that makes a single island of both.

This difficult word, whose sense and premise is unique to Euxine, is opened up in the unusual work *Parables of Distant Planets* by Joseph Daubmann (Estoty 1952). In the Parable of the Islands, Daubmann describes a planet that is almost entirely open sea apart from two small land masses in its northern and southern hemispheres. The civilisations that have emerged on these modest patches of rock are primitive though enterprising and spurred by myths describing a formidable enemy across the sea each has scoured the oceans for traces of the other. In early times both attributed the failure to discover their natural foe to the size and fury of the seas. For many hundreds of years vast tracts of ocean were regarded as unnavigable and many expeditions lit out into the green wastes of the north and east without ever returning. With the rapid technological advances of the later periods of these two civilisations however, the planet was opened up to exploration. Both circumnavigated the globe, conquered the poles and charted the surface of the planet within the same fifty years. An industrial age of maritime harvesting was begun, massive ga and oil fields

were discovered in the shallows of the south pole, and each island mined itself all but hollow. The urgency of discovering and conquering another land mass was never greater but the only advance these twinned civilisations had made in their quest for each other was in the evolution of an ever more robust and implacable belief in one another's existence. Massive oceanic surveys, conducted over twenty and thirty year spells, were repeated for centuries with undimmed enthusiasm and absolutely no success. Miraculously, although a second island was nowhere to be found, this was never considered to betoken its non-existence, merely its persistent evasion from the eyes of explorers. Gradually, each race began to scale down its expeditionary fleets. An acceptance emerged that the each island would never be found by the other and that it should be permitted to live in peace apart from its questing neighbour.

The first discoverers of the Planet of the Islands found two civilisations in an almost exactly parallel state of development. The language, customs and technology of both peoples suggested a long commercial and cultural partnership. They shared the same system of government, the structure of some institutions was identical and the prosopology of the two peoples suggested regional rather than racial differences. When it became clear that each island believed in the existence of a counterpart it had failed to discover, the explorers realised the perilous nature of their scientific position. To bring about an encounter between the two islands, if such a thing were actually possible, even to confirm the existence of the other was out of the question. The implications of such a meeting seemed to disappear into a terrifying corridor of facing mirrors. The riddling existence of these two islands, their failure to find one another, permitted the explorers only one baffling conclusion: in some way these two islands e the same island, a strange relation of the Euxine

double-island or *diphnesia*. Was it possible for a people to meet itself? Was it desirable? The explorers wisely concluded it was not.

The above summary of Daubmann's parable should not lead one to believe that the metaphysical concept it outlines is actually present in the word as it was understood by the Euxines. The emergence of *diphnesia*, a taxonomical aberration celebrated even in Corlis' time, is attributable solely to the notorious Androlas, who founded the *diphnesia* of Alcos in the seventh year of his rule as a means of oppressing the inhabitants of Pyre. The islands, separated by a distance of some sixty nautical miles, were administered as a single entity and the institutions of the island were set up so that each adult citizen made at least five journeys a week over invariably rough seas. This regime lasted some sixteen years until 750 BC, when the Pyreans sided with Marnis in the Maccedian revolt. There is no trace of the Pyreans after this ill-fated campaign. Presumably they were destroyed.

20–27 ϟ.ᔑᓭϟ. . ᘐᘓϟᒣ. . ᔦᒣϟᓭᓭᔑ : The sentence, tentered over seven verses, is almost Euxine prosody's longest. Only Aster and Parnes offer rivals and even these secure victory by the narrowest of margins. In the *Chardones* Dilais apostrophises her dead father with a proem of some twenty halcic anapaests in a single, syntax-strangling *periodos*, only three phonemes and four metrical units greater than Corlis. The punctuation of the passage in Parnes is disputed, but if we accept Tenishev's reading Deaniras' so-called 'Song of Sorrows' contains a period of fourteen trimeters, pipping Corlis again by a mere four phonemes.

Statistical pettifogging aside, the verses play host to a 'paradoxist's delight' (in Dorken's unpronounceable coinage). The attentive reader will have noticed the rather prominent collocation

of the verses' three 'key' terms: ᚱᚲᚨᚺᚨᚱᛇ . . ᛇᛞᚷᚹᛊ . . ᛒᚠᚱᚷᚢᚾᚷᚢ . Each expresses the idea of the clausulum directly succeeding it; in rhetorical terms they act as the period's milestones (a rule of thumb first described in Maras' *Oratoricon*, where his description of them as *pharaliai* literally, but clumsily translates, as 'border marks'). With this observation to the forefront of his mind, the reader may be interested to read the following passage:

> As it is with people, so it is with words. In the course of life one may hope to make life-long friends but can only be assured of many short-lived acquaintances who, after a series of fortuitous encounters, will disappear from view until chance intervenes once more. I happened upon my first such acquaintance only four summers ago, in the *Perodes* of Milis. Here I came across an unusual locution: ᚱᚲᚨᚺᚨᚱᛇ *[meriamis],* a word one could easily deduce from the verse it resided in as denoting the shade of green appropriate to the leaves of a pole tree in shadow. In the weeks that followed, as if it had fallen in a sudden shower on every book I handled, I came across the word no less than seven times. It was as if Aster, Parmenes, Chalis, Laran, Renes had only just learned that ᚱᚲᚨᚺᚨᚱᛇ was a new acquaintance of mine and only now felt it appropriate to invite him along whenever we were in each other's company. As abruptly as it had started, however, this unexpected downpour of a single arcane word now came to a halt. In the years since that strange month of *hyperboreion* I have read it perhaps two or three times; were ᚱᚲᚨᚺᚨᚱᛇ a person I would think of him as nothing other than a ᚠᚺᚨᚾᛟᚠᛁᛚᛟᛇ [*phainofilos,* lit. *festival-friend].*[*] Indeed, as with the ᚠᚺᚨᚾᛟᚠᛁᛚᛟᚱ of day-to-day life, I have made many other such transient acquaintances in my travels among the monuments of our letters. ᛇᛞᚷᚹᛊ I found in the *Chardones*, then met again in Philis, the *Onoma*

> of Beramicis, and Parlis; all in the space of a single week. My acquaintance with 𐬀𐬉𐬌𐬎𐬀𐬌𐬀𐬎𐬀 was even shorter, after reading the word in a poem by Corlis, I travelled to Pontis the next day and read it on a funerary inscription at the town's southern gate. That evening, a merchant used it in my presence to describe the vineyards in Sephiris.

It is curious, one is almost tempted to say it is miraculous, that the three *pharaliai* (𐬞𐬁𐬉𐬀𐬉𐬁. . 𐬐𐬀𐬛𐬵. . 𐬀𐬉𐬌𐬎𐬀𐬌𐬀𐬎𐬀) to be found in the *Purga* are the same rare words delighted in by Moras in the above passage from his *Docalia*. One might assume that Corlis were having some fun with his audience, perhaps at the expense of Moras, were it not for the fact that the latter is writing some two hundred years after the poet's death. The only possibility this leaves is that Moras intends some kind of ludic reference to the *Purga*, an intention perhaps admitted by his remark: 'My acquaintance with 𐬀𐬉𐬌𐬎𐬀𐬌𐬀𐬎𐬀 was even shorter, after reading the word in a poem by Corlis..'. But the significance of alluding to the last ode of the *Ahaser* caked in such a heavy disguise, simply taking three words from the poem and claiming to have discovered them everywhere except the one place in which they are gathered together, escapes comprehension. What Moras possibly could be attempting to express with such a ruse is perhaps beyond us. It is remarkable, nonetheless, that for centuries before the *Purga*'s emergence from the sands of Oxyrhynchus, it was being announced in tangled ciphers by this resolutely obscure herald.

[*] A word used to describe acquaintances made at and *en route* to festivals in ditricts other than one's own. 𐬵𐬀𐬌𐬎𐬵𐬀𐬌𐬀 would not only share time, but accomodation and living expenses while abroad together. Although the warmth of feeling between 𐬵𐬀𐬌𐬎𐬵𐬀𐬌𐬀 appears to have been genuine, it was considered indecorous to attempt to sustain the friendship beyond the period of the festival itself. [P.D.]

26 𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃 : Surviving descriptions of this creature are slightly contradictory. The testimony provided by Aratis suggests that the 𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃 resembled a species of prea while the taxonomy in Maris' *Organikon* classifies the animal as a type of hare. There is enough textual corruption in both sources to suggest that neither are wholly reliable and modern discussions of the 𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃 tend to draw predominantly on the many incidental references to its behaviour and habitat found in literary sources. The earliest reference to the 'game' played by the 𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃 is found in Auer. The casualness of the simile suggests that the sight of the 𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃 'darting to and fro between high rocks, busy in eager competition' was commonplace for Auer's audience. This is not in keeping with the tenor of strange news evident in the much later descriptions of Zoilus and Amaher. The latter reports spending a whole month in Elis in search of a 𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃 game. He also provides our most specific surviving account of the 'rules' by which the 𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃 play:

> The 𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃 generally choose a level clearing of about four choroi in length and one in breadth. The teams are drawn by a method that is still unknown since no-one has yet come upon a game that was not already in progress. Kalis claims to have witnessed a game with fifteen competitors aside but this seems impractical and the most that has been generally attested to is closer to seven or eight. In Chalcede the number appears to be fixed, no game has been witnessed there with anything more than nine. The 'master' of each side (generally the weakest 𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃 since he is the most idle competitor) takes up his position at one side of the halfway point of the playing field and with the beginning of each new game guides the players to their facing positions on the temnos. These

> positions vary wildly and appear to be random. Once it has commenced the rate of play is so rapid that at first it is impossible to follow. Opposing players exchange positions and after a number of such 'moves' some are considered 'lost' and leave the field of play while their victors remain. It is soon clear, despite the bewildering pace at which the game proceeds, those players are 'lost' that are surrounded by no-one but members of their own side once they have moved from their original positions. After a very short time the number of competitors on the field is quickly reduced to a single ᚛ᚑᚔᚔᚑ᚜ who is adjudged the winner on behalf of his side.

Zoilus, who claims to have witnessed more than forty ᚛ᚑᚔᚔᚑ᚜ games, is the only source to suggest that they evince a seasonal pattern linked to the creature's mating habits. But according to Amaher the game is played without spectators and female ᚛ᚑᚔᚔᚑ᚜ are not mobile enough to participate. The idea of playing seasons is also mentioned by Kalis (whom other sources mention solely for the purposes of disagreeing with him) but with the rather bizarre implication that the games constitute annual festivals. It was popularly believed that Androlas attempted to farm the ᚛ᚑᚔᚔᚑ᚜ with a view to instituting popular tournaments but when the enterprise failed and domesticated ᚛ᚑᚔᚔᚑ᚜ seemed to know nothing of the game played by their wild counterparts he ordered the annihilation of the species within the bounds of his kingdom. By 650 BC, perhaps in part due to the efforts of Androlas, the creature seems to have become all but extinct and the wonder attaching to its game has given way to incredulity and ridicule. Among the characters in Merimnis' comedy *The Sausage Sellers*, for example, we find an ancient carpet-bagger by the name of Zoilus retailing an eye-witness

account of a chariot race between ducks and rats at Cambon.

APPENDIX

THE *TRICHROMA*

I think Corlis has done something in the *Purga* as a whole that may only attract the notice of readers versed in the niceties of prosodical debate among Western Euxinists in the 1850s or acquainted with certain remarkable theories of the still respected scholar, Dr Ernst Tenishev, published as *Dey Chromatic Gesicht oder 'Kolorutura' dies post-Classickes Hellenen* (Ardis, 1856) and serialised in *Antiken Euxine Studen den Ardis*. Quite simply, it appears that Corlis has composed the whole of this poem, lasting for some twenty six lines and describing the visual and tactile sensations of the observer of a cloudless sunset, without a single reference to any other colour than

black or white. I realise that this inconspicuous fact may seem incidental, but the subtlety to be found elsewhere in Corlis' poetry will I hope permit me to make some observations on the passage with regard to Tenishev's theories and Kinbote's own, vocal, opinion of them.

In the present day Dr Tenishev's claims are no longer well-known and, like many brilliant but ultimately problematic 'discoveries', his papers in the *Antiken Studen* aroused a great deal of excited flapping from his colleagues before succumbing to unjustified discredit and then slightly disgraceful oblivion. What Tenishev proposed, in essence, was that on the either side of a dateband beginning in 750BC and ending sometime circa 740 BC two distinct patterns are evident in all surviving Euxine poetry. These two patterns are not only clear and without exception, they are also utterly inexplicable, and at least to present day understanding, groundless and without meaning. The simple distinction is this: before 750 BC all extant Euxine verse contains only the colours black, white and red, whereas all after 740 BC mention every colour available to the Euxine language but previously admissible only to prose. Until 1865, the letter of Tenishev's discovery was true in every point. Aratus, Domides, Comer, Drianthes, all the 'Hymns of Cargon' and even the Orphic texts and monumental and religious inscriptions, indeed every scrap of poetry that survived from before 750 only referred to three colours by name: red, black and white. Everything afterwards meanwhile, Aster, Origen, &c. admit colours, of whatever shade, casually and without qualm. The veracity of Tenishev's observation, supported by the usual Euxine heft of statistics and tables and subsequently by even the most minute reading of pre- and post- '*chromatik'* prosody, provoked consternation on the pages of the *Antiken Studen* and its less philological rival,

Theatron end Seit. The enigma of this arbitrary but apparently compulsory convention demanded a rational explanation, but none was forthcoming. The well-known 'colour-blindness' of the ancient Euxines [Kohler (*ACSA* 73 (1854) 146-158)] dilutely resonates with the problem but does not explain its details or even its general principles; adducing an aesthetic parallel in the chromatic restriction of Greek black- and red-figure pottery some two centuries later [Boehnik(*TS* 23 (1854) 23-32) is as cogent as adducing the black-and-white cinema of the early twentieth century; and the notion that the entire phenomenon is due to a massive, almost providential coincidence without conscious origin in Euxine culture [Gormel (*ACA* 74 (1854) 89-103)] is nothing but an abdication from fact. The problem persisted, with a new, utterly uncompelling theory surfacing in an English or Euxine journal every quarter, until 1865 when the major papyrus discoveries in Pergamum, including new fragments of Comer, were published by the Lode Museum.

In retrospect it is clear that the Pergamum papyri of Comer and Aratus destroyed only one, apparently central but essentially minor aspect of Tenishev's claims: the chronological band of 750-740 dividing pre and post-*koloratura* poetry based on the corpus as it was extant at the time of writing. But with the discovery that the transition between the two might not have been brief and decisive at all, but shabby and protracted, with pre-*kolorotura* still in evidence some fifty years after Tenishev's dateband, the glittering opportunity to lose all sense of perspective was grasped with both hands by scholars. A debate began to rage, but not over the meaning of *kolorotura*. Rather the apple of discord was now Tenishev's chronology.

What happens next is as inevitable as night after day and can be summed up in a single sentence. One scholar attempts to refute

Tenishev's dateband and is answered by another who, as just reward for his incoherent clodhopping, is, in his turn, rebutted soundly by a third (moderate in letter but fiercely, righteously correct in tone); and indirectly, little by little, Tenishev's discovery is diminished, and finally demolished, by simply refuting the arguments of inept proxies on an aspect of his paper that was not really pertinent in the first place. Meanwhile Tenishev himself loses interest in the matter entirely and, since he is already knee-deep in a revised edition of the *Phaenomena*, the resplendent paradox disclosed by his papers remains ravelled in its heart, dense and emitting no light.

Even today, then, the question remains: why did Euxine poetry permit no other colours than red, black and white to its greatest and perhaps most immortal poets? Or perhaps more correctly: why did the greatest poets of Euxine prosody succumb to this morbid, irrational law for so long? Dr. Kinbote had his own, very firm opinions on the matter, which he frequently shared with his pupils in both seminars and lectures. As part of his notes towards an edition of Aster, he took the opportunity to commit some of them to paper. (A short article on the subject, which he subsequently destroyed, was rejected for publication by the *LSC* citing the topic's 'lack of currency in recent scholarship' (a spurious notion) and Kinbote's 'schematic treatment' of it (a more justifiable claim). He refused the readers' corrections and as a *quid pro quo* cancelled his subscription to the journal and insulted it's editor, Dr.Geoffrey Rolls-King, at a summer school on metre the following summer.):

> The neglected riddle of *kolorotura* (*chroniochromatismus*, Behr's unhappy nonce-word has thankfully been disregarded), was discovered and named by the redoubtable Tenishev in a series of papers

mid-way through the last century. The debate that it raised was inconclusive and since 1870, not one scholar has ventured to explain the phenomenon or even understand what it could mean in the context of Euxine poetry as a whole. The following are my own disparate observations:

(i) The universal adherence to *kolorotura* up until the *Phaenomena* of Aratus by every poet regardless of genre suggests that this is not an ordinary convention of the type intended to maintain propriety of *ethos*. I am thinking of the unwavering use of the first and second person plural for the direct speech of single person speakers in all *epirrhematic* poetry, and the contrasting laxity in *homolochic* poetry. In short, there was nothing 'vulgar' about the explicit mention of colour, since it is avoided even in the most lurid poetry of the same period.

(ii) *Kolorotura* does not proscribe the metaphorical or figurative reference to colour. The description of objects by simile or analogy is frequently turned to a vivid evocation of their exact hue. Aisax has a face 'like a king's robe' (ie purple). After his journey across the desert in the hinterland of Carnes Memnon's torso resembles 'an ancient oak' (ie. blackened and cancerous from exposure to the sun). What is more, 'coloured' words are admitted without exception, though only if their roots do not derive from the colour's literal name. For example, a man can 'flush' but he cannot 'redden'[*sic*].

(iii) There are no surviving works of any poet who engaged in both *kolorotura* and non-*kolorotura* poetry. One was either a *kolora-turimis* or one was not.*

(iv) The colours black, white and red do not seem to have had any referential (or even reverential) significance in combination, at

least judging from extant sources. There is for instance, no occurrence of any object or building which is composed of only these three colours. They were not the colours of a people or tribe (national/ethnic colours post-date *kolorotura* in Euxis by some one hundred and fifty years). Indeed, the most significant thing about the *trichroma* is that they appear to be significant nowhere else other than *kolorotura* prosody.

(v) *Kolorotura*, once it died out completely in the 740s BC (probably with the death of Aratus), did not recur as a literary genre or even a sentimental vogue. It was forgotten or its passing was not noticed at all.

(vi) The use of 'black', 'white', and 'red' is not limited to particular objects nor is the number of any of the words' occurrences in a given poem. In general, the application of the three colours to objects does not stretch the imagination. The only exceptions to this rule are some of the minor poets.

(vii) It seems probable that many metaphorical uses of the *trichroma* evident in historical and other prosaic genres originate from *kolorotura* prosody.

(viii) *Kolorotura* poets do not attempt to 'pallette' the *trichroma*. They do not, for instance, attempt to arrive at orange by describing a mixture of red and white.

(ix) There is no poem, however short, which does not contain at least one instance of each of the colours of the *trichroma*.

The picture of *kolorotura* that emerges from these observations is of a fixed and generic method of composition common to all forms of poetry, subscribing to a strict but simple rule, favouring

the evocation of colour in imaginative, innovative ways but proscribing or at least discouraging, undue or disagreeable circumventions of its law.

Kolorotura is unique not just in its superficial idiosyncrasy but in one other, overridingly important way. It is the only instance in any surviving poetry of any culture through which all genres of prosody of all metres subscribe to the same compositional principle. Through the *trichroma* the entire corpus of Euxine poetry until the death of Aratus is unified by the single thread of *kolorotura* alone. *Kolorotura* is the only inflexible convention that all genres share, and it is the only case in the history of prosody where all the poetic genres of one culture share a single convention. In a certain sense therefore, the *trichroma* is indeed a significant combination. It is a literary standard around which all Euxine poetry rallies, a flag of invisible colours raised in proclamation by a nation of poems. The *trichroma* are emblazoned on a Euxine poem like a silver standard, a seal of identity. Even to this day, therefore, whatever language a Euxine poem is read in, it bears Euxis embedded deep within it in the form of the *trichroma,* a discreet stamp of its origin, as if to say 'Made in Euxis'.

Kinbote's exposition is more of a trope than a theory (it clearly does not answer the question he has set himself in his first paragraph) but he was immensely fond of it and it provided a rare glimpse of the secretive imagination already working on the magisterial edition of the *Phokides*. It is obvious that the absence of red in the *Purga* is significant. In his only known *kolorotura* passage (ie a passage where colours are required but conspicuously avoided), it is as if Corlis the exile withholds from himself the authenticating seal of a complete trichroma, as if to say 'Not Made in Euxis'.

APPENDIX: THE *TRICHROMA*