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# The Aeolic Component of Homeric Diction

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## Introduction

Milman Parry (1932), in line with an earlier formulation by Antoine Meillet (1935 [1913] 183), built a model for explaining the dialectal components of Homeric diction. These components, as he understood them, were Arcado-Cypriote, Aeolic, and Ionic. For Parry, who was working before the decipherment of Linear B, the cover-term for what is now generally known as “Mycenaean” was “Arcado-Cypriote.”<sup>1</sup> I will offer additional arguments in support of Parry’s model, concentrating on the Aeolic component and its relationship to the Ionic component. In the course of my argumentation, I will use the terms *Aeolian* and *Ionian* when I refer respectively to the speakers of *Aeolic* and *Ionic*. These terms, as we will see, will be relevant on the level of *politics* as well as *poetics* and *linguistics*.

When I say *Homeric diction*, I mean *the formulaic system of Homeric poetry* as analyzed by Parry (1932; his collected papers were published in 1971). I emphasize, from the start, the pervasive influence of Meillet on the work of Parry, as highlighted by Charles de Lamberterie (1997). And I need to warn in advance that my understanding of the *Homeric formula* is shaped by the results achieved through the combined research of Parry and his student Albert Lord (1960).

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<sup>1</sup> On residual Mycenaean forms embedded in Homeric diction, I analyze some possible examples in Nagy 1994–1995 (in conjunction with Willi 1994–1995; see also Nagy 2008:63–64). That analysis (cf. also Woodard 1986) is not directly relevant, however, to the arguments I present in my essay here.

Just as Meillet (1921:16) understood language as an integral system where every component has its place, “un système où tout se tient,” so also Parry and Lord understood the formulaic language of oral poetry as an integral system in its own right (Nagy 1996:24). As we will see, some linguists and classicists who study Homeric diction have a narrow and superficial understanding of the Homeric formula, viewing it simply as *a repeated phrase that fits the meter*. By contrast, I follow Parry’s and Lord’s understanding of the formula in the context of oral composition in performance. In such a context, as Lord (1960:47) has said with reference to any orally composed poem, “There is nothing in the poem that {133|134} is not formulaic.” I aim for such a broad understanding of the Homeric formula, viewing all the phraseology of Homeric diction as formulaic (Nagy 1996:23–26).

Next I turn to the term *Aeolic*, by which I mean a dialectal grouping that includes the *Lesbian* and the *Thessalian* and the *Boeotian* dialects of the ancient Greek language as attested in the first millennium BCE. I offer here the following definitions of the three terms I use for these three dialects:

1. 1. The term *Lesbian* refers in general to the eastern sub-group of Aeolic Greek as spoken in the first millennium BCE at the following places:
  - a. (a) the islands of Lesbos and Tenedos;
  - b. (b) the Asiatic mainland facing those islands;
  - c. (b1) the region of Troy, including its coastlines, and of Mount Ida
  - d. (b2) the region extending from the bay of Adramyttion in the north all the way to the bay of Smyrna in the south

2. 2. The term *Thessalian* refers to the western sub-group of Aeolic as spoken around that same time in the following five sub-regions of the region of Thessaly, situated on the Helladic mainland:

- e. (a) Perrhaibia
- f. (b) Pelasgiotis
- g. (c) Magnesia
- h. (d) Thessaliotis
- i. (e) Phthiotis.

3. 3. The term *Boeotian* refers to the dialect spoken around that same time in the region of Boeotia on the Helladic mainland.

In two earlier publications, indicated here in my Bibliography as “Nagy (1970)” and “Nagy (1972),” I studied the phonological, morphological, and morphophonemic affinities of all three of these dialects—Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian. My present argumentation builds on what I presented in these two publications, especially in the second of the two, Nagy (1972), which stems from a volume entitled *Greek: A Survey of Recent Work*, co-authored by my late teacher Fred W. Householder and myself (1972). Parts of the volume were authored by Householder, while the parts authored by me included the Introduction, Parts I and II, and the Conclusions in Part III (pp. 15–72). I refer here to these three parts {134|135} of *Greek: A Survey* as “Nagy (1972),” which has been republished online in 2008, with extensive updating. The online version, which is available gratis at [chs.harvard.edu](http://chs.harvard.edu), is indicated separately here in my Bibliography as “Nagy (2008).” This online 2008 version shows the original page-numbers of the printed 1972 version.

In what follows, wherever I refer to any updated content in the online version, Nagy (2008), I will simply cite the original page-numbering of the printed version, Nagy (1972), since the relevant updated content in the online 2008 version is specially formatted to distinguish it from the older content of the 1972 printed version. In my citations, I add “1972” and “2008” as prefixes for the relevant page-numbering in referring respectively to the older and the updated content. For example, “Nagy (1972:59)” refers to the older content on the virtual page 59, while “Nagy (2008:59)” refers to the updated content on the same virtual page.

### **Building a model for an Aeolic phase of Homeric diction**

I start with the model built by Parry (1932). I have reformulated this model in my own work, and here is a summary of my reformulation (Nagy 1972:59):

In Homeric diction, there are three dialectal components: Mycenaean or “Achaean,” Aeolic, and Ionic.<sup>2</sup> These three components were viewed diachronically by Parry (1932) as three successive layers. Such a view is in line with the earlier formulation of Meillet (1935 [1913] 183) in his general introduction to the history of the Greek language.

When I say here that Parry viewed the dialectal components of Homeric diction diachronically, I am using the term *diachronic* in line with the formulation of Ferdinand de Saussure concerning *synchronic* and *diachronic* analysis in the field of linguistics. According to Saussure, *synchrony* and *diachrony* designate respectively *a current state of a language* and *a phase in its evolution*:

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<sup>2</sup> Supporting the idea of three “phases” is Ruijgh 1985:147–148 and 1995:1–2, 50–90. See also Blanc 2009:149.

Est synchronique tout ce qui se rapporte à l'aspect statique de notre science, diachronique tout ce qui a trait aux évolutions. De même synchronie et diachronie désigneront respectivement un état de langue et une phase d'évolution.

Saussure 1916:117

As we see from the wording that is quoted here, Saussure links *diachrony* with *evolution*. To develop synchronic and diachronic perspectives, then, is to build {135|136} *synchronic and diachronic models* for the description of linguistic structures and for visualizing the evolution of these structures. And such building of models can be applied not only to the structures of language in general but also to the structures of a specialized language like Homeric diction in particular (Nagy 2003:1).

In the online version of the work from which I quoted my reformulation of Parry's model, I added a qualification (Nagy 2008:58):

I now distance myself from speaking of successive dialectal "layers" in epic. In general, I am persuaded by the argumentation of Horrocks (1997:214) in criticizing various current "layer theories." Instead of speaking of earlier and later dialectal "layers" in epic, I will hereafter speak of earlier and later dialectal "phases," since the term phases allows for an overlap and even a coexistence of relatively earlier and later dialectal forms at any given time in the evolution of epic. To the extent that the term layer may not allow for such overlap or coexistence, it seems to me preferable not to use it. In general, my current thinking about the dialectal components of epic is closest to that of Wachter (2000:64n4).

At a later point in my argumentation, I will elaborate on the overall thinking of Wachter (2000 and 2007) about the Aeolic and the Ionic components of Homeric diction.

## Aeolicisms in Homeric diction

Some have argued against the existence of an Aeolic phase in the evolution of the Homeric language (a prominent example is Strunk 1957). In my earlier work (Nagy 1972:62), I noted only in passing the available counterarguments, confining myself to citing the abbreviated but judicious remarks of Ernst Risch (1958:91n1) and Warren Cowgill (1966:86, who offers specific objections to the thesis of Strunk 1957). In the present work I propose to go into more detail. My point of departure is a list of Aeolicisms that we can find embedded in Homeric diction. For the moment, I am saying only *Aeolicisms*, not *Aeolic forms*, since some of these forms may turn out to be not exclusively Aeolic.

I start with six Homeric Aeolicisms posited by Paul Wathelet (1970:366–367):

4. (1) conversion of labiovelars in front of the vowel *e* to bilabials and not to dentals: an example is *πεμπώβολα* ‘having five prongs’ at *Iliad* I 463, showing *πέμπε* ‘five’, to be contrasted with Ionic *πέντε*. I will return to this example at the very end of my presentation.
5. (2) perfect active participles with a thematic formant: an example is *κεκλήγοντες* ‘clamoring’ as at *Iliad* XII 125, attested in the medieval manuscript tradition (including the tenth-century Venetus A), to be contrasted with the {136|137} corresponding Ionic form *κεκληγότες*, which is also attested for the same verse in some medieval manuscripts despite the fact that it scans — — ◡ ◡ (◡), which does not fit the metrical shape that is required here, — — — ◡ (◡).

6. (3) dative plural endings in -εσσι added to the stems of non-es-stem consonantal declensions: an example is Aeolic παίδεσσι ‘for (the) children’ as at *Odyssey* iii 381, to be contrasted with Ionic παισί as at *Iliad* XX 409.
7. (4) infinitive endings in -μεναι: an example is Aeolic ἔμμεναι ‘to be’ as at *Iliad* I 117, to be contrasted with Ionic εἶναι as at *Iliad* I 91.
8. (5) pronouns of the type ἄμμι ‘to us’ and ὕμμι ‘to you’, as at *Iliad* II 137 and VI 77 respectively, to be contrasted with the corresponding pronouns of the Ionic type ἡμῖν and ὑμῖν, as at I 67 and I 18 respectively. I analyze the formulaic complementarity of these types in Nagy 1972:66–67, where I emphasize the fact that the Ionic forms are not completely interchangeable with the corresponding Aeolic forms.
9. (6) θεᾶ́ ‘goddess’ as the feminine counterpart of θεός ‘god’, as at *Iliad* I 1, by contrast with East Ionic (ῆ) θεός.<sup>3</sup>

The examples I have just listed are only a selection taken from a larger number of forms originally listed by Wathelet. My list here concentrates on Homeric forms accepted and defended as distinctly Aeolic by Dag Haug (2002:70–72), who in turn argues that the following additional Homeric forms can likewise be described as Aeolic:

10. (7) the thematic genitive singular in -οιο (Haug pp. 106, 146, 160)<sup>4</sup>
11. (8) the prepositions / preverbs ποτι- or προτι-, not προσ- (Haug pp. 65, 147, following Janko 1979)

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<sup>3</sup> The form θεᾶ́ is now attested on a piece of pottery found at Ischia and dated to the seventh century BCE. See Hackstein 2010:402. This form may be West Ionic, but only if it reflects the dialect of the settlers of Ischia, who were West Ionians. On the distinction between East and West Ionic, as represented primarily by the Ionians of Asia Minor and Euboea respectively, see Wachter 2007.

<sup>4</sup> But see now Blanc 2008:444–445.



12. (9) genitives in  $-\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $-\acute{\alpha}\omega\nu$  (Haug pp. 146–147).

I emphasize here one thing that all nine of these posited Aeolicisms of Homeric diction have in common: not one of these features is shared with the dialect we know as Ionic.<sup>5</sup> {137|138}

### **An Ionic phase of Homeric diction**

It is generally agreed that the evolution of Homeric diction reached its final phase during a period when prototypical forms of what we know as Homeric poetry were being recited by speakers of the Ionic dialect, sometime around the eighth century BCE (Janko 1982:89–93). For the moment, then, let us refer to the final phase of Homeric diction as an *Ionic phase*. But how are we to relate such an Ionic phase to the nine Aeolic features of Homeric diction as posited by Wathelet and Haug? As I just said, not one of those features happens to be shared with the Ionic dialect. So, do we say that such Aeolic features belonged to a *pre-Ionic phase* of what we know as Homeric diction? Or do we say it differently, that they belonged to a *non-Ionic phase*? These two questions are relevant to what we mean when we speak of an *Ionic phase* of Homeric diction. And it is these questions that I need to address now, even before I attempt to address the question of an *Aeolic phase* of Homeric diction.

Although Haug (2002) accepts the idea that the prototype of Homeric diction was a system during an Aeolic phase that he reconstructs (on the basis of the Homeric Aeolicisms I have just listed), he expresses doubts about the integrity of this diction as a system during an Ionic phase that comes only after the Aeolic phase—in terms of his reconstruction. Haug claims (p. 162) that the prototype of Homeric diction as a system was only weakly transmitted during such an Ionic phase. And he also claims (pp. 163–164) that the transmission of this diction was no longer integral in its Ionic phase of existence—and no longer even oral. I disagree with both

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<sup>5</sup> A possible exception is  $\theta\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$ , as I already noted.

these claims, and I will now argue that the prototype of Homeric diction did in fact have an integral Ionic phase.

I must note from the start that I do in fact agree with Haug (2002:146) when he points out that there existed metrical situations in Homeric diction where no Ionic forms were available and where only non-Ionic forms could fit—especially Aeolic forms. But I disagree with him, as we will see, when it comes to my interpretation of those metrical situations.

A case in point is the Homeric metrical sequence — ∪ as occupied by a non-Ionic genitive singular formation in -ᾱo, which is deeply embedded in the formulaic system of Homeric diction. This is the type Πηληϊάδᾱο, as attested for example at *Iliad* XVI 686 before a word beginning with a consonant, and at *Iliad* XI 557 in verse-final position. What matters, Haug (2002:146) says, about a Homeric genitive in -ᾱo is not the fact that such a non-Ionic form existed in Homeric diction: rather, what really matters is that the corresponding Ionic form \*-ηο is not attested in our received text of Homeric poetry and never existed in earlier phases {138|139} of Homeric diction—at least, it never existed from the standpoint of his argumentation.

But I disagree with what is being said here about the Ionic form \*-ηο. Such a form, as I am about to argue, could exist and in fact did exist in earlier phases of Homeric diction. That is, it existed until the formulaic system of this diction reached a point in its evolution when the sequence of vowels ηο was automatically converted to εω in a phonological process commonly known as *quantitative metathesis*.

### **Distinguishing earlier and later Ionic phases in the evolution of Homeric diction**

I argue that an Ionic prototype of the system that we know as Homeric diction went through an earlier phase where an inherited sequence of vowels ηο and ηω, derived from pre-Ionic ᾱο

and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$ , had not yet been converted to  $\epsilon\omega$  by way of quantitative metathesis. Such an earlier Ionic phase cannot be understood, however, if the later Ionic phase is written off as unimportant for understanding the formulaic system of Homeric diction in an era when  $\eta\omicron$  and  $\eta\omega$  had already been converted to  $\epsilon\omega$  in the Ionic dialect.

My task, as I see it, is to show that the system that we know as Homeric diction was still a system even during a relatively late Ionic phase when  $\eta\omicron$  and  $\eta\omega$  had already been converted to  $\epsilon\omega$ . And I will argue against the claim that Homeric diction was unsystematic during such an Ionic phase.

### **Homeric diction as an operative system during the entire extent of its Ionic phase**

Choosing as my point of entry the phonological sequence  $\epsilon\omega$ , I will now focus on selected morphological categories that contain this sequence in Homeric diction. I will argue that the use of these categories was just as systematic, just as formulaic, as the corresponding use of morphological categories containing the sequences  $\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$  in Homeric diction. Then I will argue for the existence of earlier morphological categories that contained the sequences  $\eta\omicron$  and  $\eta\omega$  in an earlier Ionic phase of Homeric diction. And then, finally, putting these two arguments together, I will make the claim that Homeric diction was in fact a system during the entire extent of its Ionic phase.

In arguing that forms containing the phonological sequence  $\epsilon\omega$  were integrated into the formulaic system of Homeric diction, I must disagree with Haug (2002:161–162), who argues that such Ionic forms were never really integrated into Homeric diction. For Haug, this diction could no longer even be a system by the {139|140} time it reached the Ionic phase of its transmission. In terms of his argument, the new morphological and metrical settings that

contained the phonological sequence  $\epsilon\omega$  were no longer compatible with the old morphological and metrical settings that contained the phonological sequences  $\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$ .

In taking such a position, Haug cites as his authority the claims made by Hoekstra (1965:31–41) about Homeric forms showing quantitative metathesis, that is, where original  $\eta o$  and  $\eta\omega$  became  $\epsilon\omega$ . Hoekstra assumes that such Homeric forms showing  $\epsilon\omega$ , which are distinctly Ionic, must be *non-formulaic*, and he gives two reasons for making this assumption:

(1) The occurrences of these Ionic forms showing  $\epsilon\omega$  in Homeric diction are relatively more rare than the occurrences of corresponding non-Ionic forms showing  $\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$ .

(2) The distribution of these Ionic forms showing  $\epsilon\omega$  in the framework of the Homeric hexameter is relatively less regulated than the distribution of corresponding non-Ionic forms showing  $\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$ .

But the distinction that Hoekstra makes here between *non-formulaic* and *formulaic* aspects of Homeric diction is untenable. There is no basis in fact for assuming that any aspect of Homeric diction, including the Ionic aspect, is non-formulaic. I had this assumption of Hoekstra in mind when I warned, from the very start, against a narrow and superficial understanding of the Homeric formula as simply *a repeated phrase that fits the meter*. Nor is there any basis for assuming that differences in (1) relative frequency and (2) patterns of distribution are indications of what is “invented” as opposed to what is “traditional.” These are my two general criticisms of the approach taken by Hoekstra. And I also have a number of specific criticisms, which I organize here along the lines of the three categories into which Hoekstra divides the Homeric examples of quantitative metathesis.

The first of the three categories of quantitative metathesis as organized by Hoekstra (1965) is the type  $\theta\upsilon\rho\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$ , as at *Odyssey* xxi 191. Such forms in  $-\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$ , rarely attested in Homeric diction, are disyllabic, that is, without synizesis. Hoekstra says about them (p. 32): “With the possible exception of  $\nu\epsilon\tilde{\omega}\nu$ , these [forms] do not show the slightest trace of formulaic employment.” I object. There is nothing that is non-formulaic about the combination of a genitive plural like  $\theta\upsilon\rho\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$  with the following verb  $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\alpha\nu$  before the bucolic diaeresis (marked here as “||”):

ἀλλ’ ὅτε δὴ ῥ’ ἐκτὸς  $\theta\upsilon\rho\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$   $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\alpha\nu$  || ἠδὲ καὶ ἀύλῃς

*Odyssey* xxi 191

{140|141} Here, for example, are two examples of parallel combinations of a genitive plural in  $-\omega\nu$  with the following verb  $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\alpha\nu$  before the bucolic diaeresis (marked here again as “||”):

οἱ οἱ ἄμ’ ἡγεμόνες Τρώων  $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\alpha\nu$  || αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα

*Iliad* XIII 491

πυροφόροι, πολλοὶ δὲ φυτῶν  $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\alpha\nu$  || ὄρχατοι ἀμφίς

*Iliad* XIV 123

As for Hoekstra’s remark about the form  $\nu\epsilon\tilde{\omega}\nu$ , with disyllabic  $-\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$ , which he considers to be the “only possible exception” to his rule that forms with disyllabic  $-\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$  “do not show the slightest trace of formulaic employment,” I note the results of a thorough analysis of this form by Jeremy Rau (2009:175n20), who shows convincingly that the disyllabic type  $\nu\epsilon\tilde{\omega}\nu$  is deeply embedded in the formulaic system of Homeric diction. Even where forms in disyllabic  $-\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$  seem less deeply embedded in the formulaic system, as in the case of the genitive plural of *eu-*

stems, the evidence collected by Rau (2008 and 2009) shows that the distribution of such short-vowel forms (with ε instead of η before ο or ω) within the Homeric hexameter is thoroughly consistent with the formulaic rules of Homeric diction.

In Hoekstra's discussion of the type θυρέων, where -έων is disyllabic, that is, without synizesis, he neglects to take into account the related type θυρέων, where -έων is monosyllabic, that is, with synizesis:

ἐν δὲ κληῖδ' ἦκε, θυρέων δ' || ἀνέκοπτεν ὀχῆας

*Odyssey* xxi 47

But the kind of argument I already made in the case of the other type θυρέων, where -έων is disyllabic, can be made in this case as well, where the -έων of θυρέων is monosyllabic. I maintain that the placement of θυρέων here before the word-break marked as “||” is perfectly formulaic, as we can see from the parallel placement and the parallel syntax of other such nouns with monosyllabic genitive plural in -εων:

ῶσαιτο προτὶ ἄστυ, πολέων δ' || ἀπὸ θυμὸν ἔλοιτο.

*Iliad* XVI 655

ἄντα τιτυσκόμενος, πελέκεων δ' || οὐκ ἤμβροτε πάντων

*Odyssey* xxi 421

Next I turn to the second of Hoekstra's three categories of quantitative metathesis, which is the well-known type Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος, as at *Iliad* I 1 and elsewhere. Such forms in -εω, frequently attested, are monosyllabic, that is, with synizesis. They are placed before words that begin with a vowel. Hoekstra says (p. 32): “These forms are simply reducible to older

prototypes (\*Πηληϊάδᾱ' Ἀχιλῆος, etc.).” In terms of this claim, the term “formulaic” can be applied only to the forms that are “prototypes.” Such a so-called “prototype” is the type Πηληϊάδᾱο, which is positioned (1) before a word beginning with a consonant, as {141|142} at *Iliad* XVI 686, or (2) in verse-final position, as at *Iliad* XI 557. By contrast, the same description “prototype” supposedly does not hold for the corresponding Ionic forms of the type Πηληϊάδεω, which is positioned before a word beginning with a vowel, as at *Iliad* I 1. These Ionic forms are merely “reducible” to the older “prototypes”—and so, supposedly, they are no longer formulaic.

My argument against this way of thinking can best be advanced by merging it with my argument against what Hoekstra says about the third and the last of his three categories of quantitative metathesis.

This third category is described by Hoekstra (1965:33) as “the majority of the forms in -εω, -εων.” Unlike the second category, where the type Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος was “reducible” to the type \*Πηληϊάδᾱ' Ἀχιλῆος, the forms that belong to this third category are definitely non-reducible. Examples include the type Τυδείδεω Διομήδεος, as at *Iliad* XVI 74, and the more familiar type Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω in verse-final position, as at *Iliad* II 205. Such forms in -εω, relatively less frequently attested, are again monosyllabic, that is, with synizesis. Forms of the first of these two types are placed before words that begin with a consonant, while forms of the second type are placed at verse-final position. Noting the non-reducibility of these forms and the fact that he can find no “obvious instances of innovation,” Hoekstra concedes that “it is much more difficult to make a clear distinction between traditional and non-traditional expressions” in studying this category of forms and “to establish possible prototypes” for the forms themselves.

In effect, then, Hoekstra concedes that the examples he gives in the third and largest of his three categories of quantitative metathesis happen to show forms that are deeply embedded in the formulaic system of epic diction. And this embeddedness means that the distinction he makes between “formulaic” wording without quantitative metathesis and “non-formulaic” wording with quantitative metathesis is unworkable and simply untenable.

Even after having undermined his own overall formulation, Hoekstra (1965:33–38) proceeds to theorize about various “modifications” of “possible prototypes,” seeking to show that the Homeric forms he places into his third category of quantitative metathesis, like the forms of the previous two categories, are “non-traditional.”

In the end, Hoekstra (1965:38) arrives at this negative conclusion:

It appears, then, that the evidence for the existence of formulae originally built upon quantitative metathesis is extremely slight. This strongly suggests [that,] after the metathesis had begun to develop in East Ionic, oral composition came to an end so soon that hardly any substantial expression created out of the new {142|143} material provided by the evolution of the spoken dialect had time to attain a formulaic fixity.

Having already assumed that Homeric diction must have become non-formulaic during a phase of Ionic transmission that came after the metathesis from  $\eta\sigma$  and  $\eta\omega$  to  $\epsilon\omega$ , Hoekstra then follows up with a further assumption by building on his previous assumption. He assumes that such a supposedly non-formulaic phase would be suitable for a special poet whom he understands to be Homer.

In terms of this understanding, “Homer himself” is a poet who made “personal creations” instead of using formulas. Here is the way Hoekstra (1965:32) describes such forms as the genitives with disyllabic  $-\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$ , that is, without synizesis: “The expressions in which they



appear are obviously personal creations of Homer himself.” Practically in the same breath, Hoekstra (p. 32) was saying earlier—and I have already quoted what he said—that such forms, as “created” by Homer, “do not show the slightest trace of formulaic employment.”

In sum, I simply cannot agree with Hoekstra (1965) and Haug (2002) when they claim that the prototype of Homeric diction as a formulaic system never went through an Ionic phase and that it went through only an earlier Aeolic phase. Nor can I agree with the idea of a “rupture,” as Haug (p. 154) calls it, which supposedly separated speakers of the Ionic dialect from the transmission of a prototype of Homeric diction.

### **A model of formulaic “borrowing” from Aeolic into Ionic**

The idea of a “rupture” in the Ionic transmission of Homeric diction can be contrasted with a more workable idea advocated by Janko (1979:26–29, 1982:89–93), who follows a model formulated by Meister (1921:146–171) and reformulated by Parry (1932:22–47). In terms of this model, an older Aeolic *system* of formulas was borrowed by Ionic-speaking transmitters of what we know as Homeric poetry. The emphasis here is on the word *system*, which points to the integral nature of such a process of “borrowing.”

So I agree with Janko when he contrasts the idea of such *integral borrowing* with the alternative idea of *random adoption* or, as he calls it, *isolated borrowings* of old Aeolic forms into the supposedly new Ionic tradition. I quote the wording of his formulation, noting in advance his use of the expressions “adopted,” “isolated borrowings,” and “integral” (Janko 1979:27):

Meister’s [1921] basic argument for the Aeolic phase of epic diction runs as follows: if the Ionians were simply borrowing metrically useful forms from other {143|144} dialects, we would expect them to transmute them into the form of their own vernacular as far as possible [...]. On the same principle [of isolated

borrowing,] we would expect the genitival endings  $-\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\nu$  to appear as  $-\eta\omicron$  and  $-\acute{\eta}\omega\nu$ , but they do not. Meister showed that long alpha persisted where the word involved was current in Ionic speech with a short alpha [here Janko gives the example of poetic lengthening of the first syllable in Homeric  $\bar{\alpha}\theta\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ , with long initial alpha, to be contrasted with  $\acute{\alpha}\theta\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ , with short initial alpha, as attested in everyday Ionic speech], or where Ionic lacked the form altogether [here Janko gives the example of Aeolic  $\theta\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$  as distinct from the Ionic feminine form ( $\acute{\eta}$ )  $\theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ ]. In this case [that is, in the case of  $-\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\nu$ ] only the second explanation can apply [which is, that Ionic lacked the form altogether], and we conclude that Ionic only adopted these forms after  $-\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\nu$  [which became  $-\eta\omicron$  and  $-\acute{\eta}\omega\nu$ ] had been altered by quantitative metathesis to  $-\epsilon\omega$  and  $-\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$  [...]. Now  $-\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\nu$  are integral to entire formular systems and are therefore extremely frequent, while  $-\epsilon\omega$  and  $-\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$  are very infrequent by comparison. From this it inescapably follows that these morphs are more than isolated borrowings, indeed fundamental to the entire epic diction. Therefore the bulk of the tradition, if not all of it, reached Ionia at a date not much anterior to the composition of the monumental poems we possess. Advocates of a long tradition of epic verse in the Ionic dialect must explain why  $-\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\nu$  did not become Ionic  $-\eta\omicron$  and  $-\eta\omega\nu$ , just as  $-\bar{\alpha}\nu$  became  $-\eta\nu$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\varsigma$  became  $-\eta\varsigma$  throughout the epos as we know it: otherwise, Meister's reasoning must be right.

### **The principle of an Aeolic default in Homeric diction**

I agree with what I have just quoted from Janko (1979) when he says that Meister's (1921) reasoning must be right. Here is how I would paraphrase the essentials of Meister's

formulation in the light of Parry's reformulation (1932): *In Homeric diction, if an Ionic form is available to fit into a metrical position that is already occupied by an Aeolic form, then the Aeolic form is replaced by the corresponding Ionic form, but the Aeolic form is preserved wherever no metrically equivalent Ionic form is available. Homeric diction defaults to Aeolic forms when it has no metrically equivalent forms in Ionic.*

From here on, I will refer to this principle simply as the *Aeolic default*.

With this principle in mind, I will now proceed to readjust the model of formulaic "borrowing" from Aeolic into Ionic.

### **A readjustment of the model of formulaic "borrowing"**

While I agree with Janko when he says that the Aeolic forms  $-\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega$  are integral to the formulaic system of Homeric diction, I disagree with him when he {144|145} goes on to say that the corresponding Ionic forms  $-\epsilon\omega$  and  $-\acute{\epsilon}\omega$  are somehow not integral or at least less integral to this system. As I showed earlier in my survey of the existing examples of Homeric forms containing the sequence  $\epsilon\omega$ , either disyllabic or monosyllabic, such forms are just as integral to the formulaic system of Homeric diction as are corresponding forms containing the sequences  $\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$ .

Janko sees a gap in the continuity of epic traditions in Ionic-speaking communities as they existed during the period starting from the end of the so-called "Bronze Age" in the late second millennium BCE and extending all the way into the "archaic age" of the eighth century BCE. By contrast, he sees no such gap in continuity for Aeolic-speaking communities as they existed during that same period of time. And, with these two perspectives in mind, he argues that an Aeolic system of formulaic diction was borrowed by Ionic-speaking poets whose poetry was allegedly lacking in formularity.

Janko's argument is further elaborated, with specific reference to the genitive singular  $-\bar{\alpha}o$ , in a later work of his. I quote again his words, noting in advance his use of the expressions "adopted" (twice), "taken over" (twice), "incidental borrowing," and "isolated form" (Janko 1982:90):

Meister [1921] concluded that genitive singulars in  $-\bar{\alpha}o$  did not become  $-\eta o$  because the Ionians adopted the ending when they were already using forms with quantitative metathesis, i.e.  $-\epsilon\omega$ .

Could the Ionians have taken over genitives in  $-\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\nu$  at this time as part of the incidental borrowing that is postulated? To this we can firmly answer no. [The form]  $-\bar{\alpha}o$  cannot have been borrowed from without as an isolated form, as it is not only very frequent but (more important) glutinously embedded in many formulaic systems, and the same applies with equal force to  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\nu$ . Therefore the Ionians must have taken over the old formulae for  $a$ -stem genitives when they were themselves already using forms with quantitative metathesis; and the formulae for  $a$ -stem genitives are such a crucial and characteristic part of the epic diction *in toto* that it must follow that they adopted the whole of the epic diction at this stage.

Again I agree with Janko when he says that  $-\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\nu$  are integral to the formulaic system of Homeric diction, and that they are not "incidental borrowings." And I also agree with him when he goes on to say that the Ionic-speaking transmitters of Homeric diction "adopted" or "took over" these forms as part of the formulaic system of this diction. But here I must return to my disagreement with Haug (2002), which now extends into a partial disagreement with Janko (1979 and 1982). Janko too, like Haug, is arguing that forms like  $-\eta o$  and  $-\acute{\eta}\omega\nu$  {145|146}

could not have existed in an Ionic phase of Homeric diction. By contrast, I am arguing that such forms could exist and in fact did exist—but only in an earlier Ionic phase of this diction. To that extent, I disagree with Janko as well as with Haug. Even so, as I have said already, I do in fact agree with Janko when he goes on to say that the “borrowing” of forms in  $-\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\upsilon$  into an Ionic phase of Homeric diction was not “incidental.” Rather, this “borrowing” was a systematic adoption of formulas involving the genitives of  $a$ -stem nouns, and these formulas had already been operative in Aeolic Greek.

### A morphophonemic rule of Homeric diction

Such a borrowing from Aeolic morphology into Ionic morphology could be truly systematic only if formulas involving genitives in  $-\eta\omicron$  and  $-\acute{\eta}\omega\upsilon$  had already existed in Ionic Greek, which could then be replaced by the genitives  $-\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\upsilon$  of Aeolic Greek to fill the metrical frames that could no longer be filled by  $-\eta\omicron$  and  $-\acute{\eta}\omega\upsilon$  at the time when quantitative metathesis became a phonological rule in Ionic. I say it this way because the borrowing here simply cannot be a matter of *phonemics* only. It is a matter of *morphophonemics*.

I posit here the existence of a *morphophonemic rule* of Homeric diction, since the *phonological rule* that requires  $\eta\omicron$  and  $\eta\omega$  to become  $\epsilon\omega$  in Ionic by way of quantitative metathesis is insufficient for explaining why we find in this diction no genitives with  $-\eta\omicron$  and  $-\acute{\eta}\omega\upsilon$  but only genitives with  $-\epsilon\omega$  and  $-\acute{\epsilon}\omega\upsilon$ . Although genitives in  $-\eta\omicron$  and  $-\acute{\eta}\omega\upsilon$  are missing altogether in Homeric diction, the fact remains that other forms containing the same phonological sequence  $\eta\omicron$  are not at all missing but very much present. A case in point is the genitive  $\acute{\rho}\acute{\omicron}\lambda\eta\omicron\varsigma$ , an early Ionic form that is not at all missing in Homeric diction and is in fact very well attested (*Iliad* XVI 395; XXI 516; XXII 110 and 417; *Odyssey* i 185; vi 40, 263; xvi 383; xxiii 121, 372; xxiv 212, 308); also attested is the later Ionic form  $\acute{\rho}\acute{\omicron}\lambda\epsilon\omega\varsigma$  (*Iliad* II 811, XXI 547, and so on). Miller 1982:122-123 gives a useful morphological analysis of both forms  $\acute{\rho}\acute{\omicron}\lambda\eta\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\acute{\rho}\acute{\omicron}\lambda\epsilon\omega\varsigma$ . The later

Ionic form *πόλεως* operates in complementary distribution with the earlier Ionic form *πόληος* in Homeric diction.

So the rule that negates genitives in *-ηο* and *-ήων* while it mandates genitives in *-ᾠο* and *-ᾠών* is not just a phonological rule of Homeric diction: it is a morphophonemic rule. In effect, I am arguing that morphophonemic rules exist not only in spoken languages but even in poetic languages, as in Homeric diction.

In terms of my argument, this morphophonemic rule of Homeric diction could not have been generated if the genitive forms in *-ᾠο* and *-ᾠών* had not become the metrically equivalent forms in *-ηο* and *-ηων* during an existing {146|147} Ionic phase of Homeric diction, just as *-ᾠν* had become *-ην* and *-ᾠς* had become *-ης*. These forms in *-ηο* and *-ήων* were at one time an integral part of the formulaic system. Then, at a later time, after *-ηο* and *-ήων* became *-εω* and *-έων* in a later Ionic phase of Homeric diction, the new forms in *-εω* and *-έων* with their new metrical shapes could become in their own right an integral part of the formulaic system, in complementary distribution with the older forms in *-ηο* and *-ήων*. Meanwhile, the old Ionic forms in *-ηο* and *-ήων* were systematically converted into the metrically equivalent Aeolic forms in *-ᾠο* and *-ᾠών* by way of a morphophonemic rule that applied to these forms. Other old Ionic forms like *πόληος*, on the other hand, could not be converted, since the corresponding Aeolic form must have been likewise *πόληος*. So the principle of the Aeolic default could not apply in such cases.

### **Reviewing the basics of quantitative metathesis in Homeric diction**

What I have argued so far about quantitative metathesis in Homeric diction is derived from a briefer argument I presented in my earlier work (Nagy 1972:67), and I review in the next two paragraphs what I said there:

Some forms containing the phonological sequences  $\eta\omicron$  and  $\eta\omega$  ceased to exist in a later Ionic phase of Homeric diction: this later phase got underway only after the formulaic system of this diction reached a point in its evolution where the sequences  $\eta\omicron$  and  $\eta\omega$  started being automatically converted to  $\epsilon\omega$  by way of quantitative metathesis. From that point onward, some formulas containing the sequence  $\epsilon\omega$  were integrated into the system of Homeric diction. And the newer formulas containing the sequence  $\epsilon\omega$  were less restricted in distribution than the corresponding older formulas containing the sequences  $\eta\omicron$  and  $\eta\omega$ .

Meanwhile, some forms containing the Ionic sequences  $\eta\omicron$  and  $\eta\omega$  were replaced by the non-Ionic sequences  $\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$  in an Ionic phase of Homeric diction that came only after the onset of quantitative metathesis. My explanation for such replacements is that the phonological sequences  $\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$  were borrowed from an Aeolic tradition of poetry where these sequences were embedded in morphological settings that were parallel to the morphological settings that contained the Ionic sequences  $\eta\omicron$  and  $\eta\omega$ . For example, an Aeolic genitive plural  $-\bar{\alpha}\omega\nu$  could replace a corresponding Ionian genitive plural  $*-\eta\omega\nu$ .

This model of formulaic borrowing from Aeolic into Ionic (Nagy 1972:67) differs from the model of Janko (1979, 1982) by dispensing with the idea of a gap for Ionic-speaking transmitters of Homeric diction. In terms of Janko's model, as we have seen, these Ionic-speaking transmitters did not have a fully developed formulaic system of their own, and that is why they had to borrow {147|148} from the formulaic repertoire of Aeolic-speaking transmitters. In terms of my model, by contrast, these Ionic-speaking transmitters did in fact

have a fully developed formulaic system of their own, but they nevertheless borrowed systematically from the cognate formulaic repertoire of Aeolic-speaking transmitters.

A newer formulation that comes closest to this old formulation of mine (Nagy 1972:67) can be found in the work of Horrocks (1987 and 1997), who likewise argues for a “borrowing” of the sequences  $\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$  from an Aeolic tradition of poetry into the Ionic tradition of Homeric poetry, where  $\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$  replaced the corresponding sequences  $\eta o$  and  $\eta\omega$  (Horrocks 1997:217). And, like my model, the model developed by Horrocks dispenses with the idea of a gap for Ionic-speaking transmitters of Homeric diction.

### **Applying the concept of “*Sprachbund*”**

Horrocks (1997:214–217) presents a useful analysis of a debate between those who posit an Aeolic “phase” in the evolution of Homeric diction, such as Janko (1982), and those who argue against the need to posit this phase, such as Miller (1982; see especially his pp. 139 and 146). Horrocks mediates between the two sides of the debate by arguing for a pattern of “diffusion” that results in the “borrowing” of features like  $\bar{\alpha}o$  and  $\bar{\alpha}\omega$  from Aeolic traditions of poetry into corresponding Ionic traditions. Instead of the term *diffusion* as Horrocks uses it, however, I find it more relevant here to apply the term *Sprachbund* as defined by Roman Jakobson (1931).

As Jakobson explains (1931, 1949), whatever changes take place in one language that makes contact with another language need to be seen in terms of the overall structures of both languages. And this formulation made by Jakobson applies not only to *language* but also to *dialect*. Moreover, the methods that linguists use for the study of languages in contact can also be used for studying poetic languages in contact—and even for studying the myths that are conveyed by these poetic languages (Nagy 2006 §6).

This concept of *Sprachbund* is relevant to a model I have built for explaining the multidialectal nature of Homeric diction, using synchronic as well as diachronic perspectives



in reconstructing (a) patterns of mutual borrowings between the contiguous dialectal communities of Aeolic-speaking and Ionic-speaking Greeks in the early first millennium BCE and (b) older patterns stemming from the second millennium BCE. Here I summarize this model as I presented it in a book about the history and prehistory of Homeric transmission, *Homer the Preclassic* (Nagy 2009/2010 II §278):

{148|149} *The language of Homeric poetry is a system that integrates and thus preserves the following dialects: dominant Ionic integrated with recessive Aeolic integrated with residual Mycenaean.* I emphasize the *integration* of dominant / recessive / residual dialectal components because, following Parry (1932), I view Homeric language synchronically as a working system, not as an inert layering of dialectal components matching the Ionic / Aeolic / Mycenaean dialects.

In this formulation, the recessiveness of the Aeolic component of Homeric diction corresponds to what I have been describing up to now as the *Aeolic default*.

Besides *Mycenaean* and *Aeolic* and *Ionic* as respectively *residual* and *recessive* and *dominant* dialectal components of Homeric diction, there is also a fourth component, which is clearly the most recent of all the Homeric dialectal components. This fourth component is *Attic*, the dialect of the Athenians, which needs to be viewed here in the context of seasonally recurring performances of Homeric poetry at the festival of the Panathenaia in Athens during the second half of the sixth century BCE and thereafter (Nagy 2009/2010 II §279). In this newest era, the old language of Homeric diction was now being spoken and heard in the new context of performances intended primarily for Attic-speaking audiences (Nagy 2004:124; see also Cassio 2002:117, 126, 131).

## A distinction between obligatory and optional Aeolicisms in Homeric diction

Earlier, I noted that my thinking about the dialectal components of epic is closest to that of Wachter (2000:64n4). Here I elaborate on his overall thinking, as reformulated in his more recent work (Wachter 2007). He distinguishes between (1) Aeolicisms that are embedded within an earlier Aeolic phase of Homeric diction, which has in the meantime evolved into an Ionic phase, and (2) “unnecessary” Aeolicisms, which he attributes to the borrowing of Aeolic forms by “Homer” himself, described here as an individual speaker of Ionic who was conversant with the poetic language of the Aeolians. With reference to the first of these two categories of Aeolicisms, Wachter (2007:319) accepts “the usual assumption of a diachronical Aeolic phase preceding the composition of the poems of Homer the Ionian”; with reference to the second category, by contrast, he attributes the “unnecessary” Aeolicisms to the “origin of the Homeric language at a linguistic boundary of two synchronical dialects.” In the paragraphs that follow, I propose a different formulation, one that requires a restatement of the distinction made by Wachter. In terms of my restatement, I distinguish between (1) *obligatory* and (2) *optional* Aeolicisms. {149|150}

As examples of “unnecessary” Aeolicisms in Homeric diction, Wachter (2007:318) lists the following Aeolic forms, juxtaposing them with corresponding Ionic forms that are also attested in Homeric diction: the conjunction αἰ instead of εἰ, the particle μᾶν instead of μήν, the pronouns ἄμμι(v) / ὕμμι(v) instead of ἡμῖν / ὑμῖν, and infinitives of the type ἔμμεν instead of εἶναι. As an example of embedded Aeolicisms, on the other hand, Wachter (2007:319) highlights the Aeolic feminine epithet ἐρεβεννή, with a distinctively Aeolic -εννη as opposed to Ionic -εινή. The distribution of such an Aeolic morpheme within the Homeric hexameter, as Wachter points out, is much more restricted and therefore much more deeply embedded than

the distribution of the corresponding Ionic morpheme. I make a similar point about the Aeolic type ἐρεβεννή in my own work (Nagy 1972:69–70, following Meillet 1935 [1913] 172).

Such a point can also be made, however, about the distribution of an “unnecessary” Aeolic form like ἔμμεν in the Homeric hexameter, as opposed to the Ionic form εἶναι. This Aeolic form is likewise more restricted in distribution than its Ionic counterpart. Wachter (2007:319) notes that ἔμμεν is restricted to a position immediately following the bucolic diaeresis of hexameter, whereas we find no such restriction in the case of εἶναι.

Here is where I disagree with the distinction that Wachter makes between “synchronic” Aeolicisms that are “unnecessary” and “diachronic” Aeolicisms that are embedded. I maintain that both kinds of Aeolicism are embedded in the formulaic system of Homeric diction, and that the difference between these two kinds is simply the fact that the “unnecessary” Aeolicisms are less deeply embedded and thus liable to be replaced by metrically equivalent Ionic forms. When we take a second look at the Aeolic type ἔμμεν, for example, we note the fact that εἶναι too can occur immediately after the bucolic diaeresis (as at *Iliad* V 173, VI 350, etc.), just like ἔμμεν (as at *Iliad* XVIII 364). So the Ionic form εἶναι can oust the Aeolic form ἔμμεν even from its restricted environment.

Still, there may be at times specific reasons for the retention of “unnecessary” Aeolic forms in preference to their Ionic counterparts. Let us take for example the Aeolic forms ἄμμι(ν) / ὕμμι(ν), which Wachter includes in his list of “unnecessary” Aeolicisms on the grounds that they can be interchangeable with the corresponding Ionic forms ἡμίην / ὕμίην. In this case, one reason for at least occasionally retaining the Aeolic forms is that they make it possible to avoid *overlength*, that is, a situation where the closing syllable of a word contains a long vowel followed by a consonant and where the next word begins with a consonant. As Parry (1971 [1928a] 41) points out, the formulaic system of Homeric diction tends to avoid overlength in

the process of building formulas. Here is an example involving {150|151} ἄμμι(ν) / ὕμμι(ν): a verse-initial sequence like τῶν κ' ὕμμιν χάρισαίτο at *Iliad* X 380 shows an avoidance of overlength by way of choosing Aeolic ὕμμιν and not Ionic ὑμῖν before the next word beginning with a consonant, by contrast with the non-avoidance of overlength in the comparable verse-initial sequence οὐδ' ὑμῖν ποταμός περ at *Iliad* XXI 130. Aside from this kind of example, I must emphasize in general what I already noted about the Ionic forms ἡμῖν / ὑμῖν (Nagy 1972:66–67), that they are in any case not completely interchangeable with the corresponding Aeolic forms ἄμμι(ν) / ὕμμι(ν).

In sum, I would prefer to say that some Aeolic forms are *optional* within the formulaic system of Homeric diction, as in the case of ἔμμεν and ἄμμι(ν) / ὕμμι(ν), while other Aeolic forms are *obligatory*, as in the case of *a*-stem genitive plurals in -ἄων where the ending occupies verse-final position (as surveyed by Wachter 2007:319). In that case, there is no corresponding Ionic form (shaped — —) that fits the meter, and the only kind of Ionic *a*-stem genitive plural in verse-final position is -έων, with synizesis, as in the case of ἐφετμέων at *Iliad* I 495 (Wachter p. 326).

I should add that Wachter (2007:319n8) notes the same fact that I noted earlier, that Ionic εἶναι can occur immediately after the bucolic diaeresis just like Aeolic ἔμμεν, but he interprets this fact differently. For him, the interchangeability of forms like Aeolic ἔμμεν and Ionic εἶναι within the same metrical context is caused by “synchronic” contact, whereas the non-interchangeability of forms like Aeolic -ἄων with any corresponding Ionic form in the same metrical context is caused by the “diachronic” priority of pre-existing Aeolic forms.

Wachter’s use of the term “diachronic” brings me back to a point I made at the beginning, where I emphasized the fact that Saussure equates *diachrony* and *evolution*. In terms of such an equation, I now argue, we do not need to set up a dichotomy between (1) a “synchronic”

contact of Aeolic with Ionic and (2) a “diachronic” embeddedness of Aeolic forms inherited by speakers of Ionic. I say this because *any Sprachbund between Aeolic and Ionic poetry as systems can be expected to develop diachronically just as it can be expected to operate synchronically*. I offer this formulation as a friendly amendment to the formulation of Wachter. In terms of such an amended formulation, the Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund* can be viewed diachronically as well as synchronically, and there is no need to posit the historical existence of an individual agent of Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund* on a synchronic level, let us call him “Homer,” who needs to be made distinct from a collective heritage of Aeolicisms on a diachronic level.

To follow up on this point, I will now examine two distinct historical contexts where we can view diachronically as well as synchronically the {151|152} phenomenon of Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund*. The first context is considerably earlier, as we will see, than the second.

### **An early historical context for Aeolic–Ionic Sprachbund**

The existence of a poetic *Sprachbund* that links Aeolic-speaking and Ionic-speaking transmitters of what eventually became Homeric poetry can be reconstructed from the surviving historical evidence we have about Aeolians and Ionians who inhabited the coast of Asia Minor and its outlying islands during the late eighth and early seventh centuries BCE.

I will start with the Ionians and then continue with the Aeolians.

The work of Douglas Frame (2009 ch. 11) has demonstrated that the oral tradition of Homeric poetry took shape in the historical context of an Ionian festival celebrated season after season during the late eighth and early seventh centuries BCE at a grand meeting place situated on the southern coastline of Asia Minor. This seasonally recurring festival, called the Panionia, and the place where it was celebrated, called the Panionion, were the creations of a federation of twelve Ionian city states known collectively as the *Ionian Dodecapolis*. The twelve

city states belonging to this federation are listed by Herodotus (1.142.3) as Miletus, Myous, Priene, Ephesus, Colophon, Lebedos, Teos, Klazomenai, Phocaea, Samos, Chios, and Erythrai.

Frame (2009) has shown that the politics of the Ionian Dodecapolis shaped the poetics of what become the Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Even the poetic organization of these two epics was shaped by the political numerology of the Dodecapolis as a federation of twelve city states. Here is a summary (Nagy 2009/2010 I §38, following the overall argumentation of Frame 2009 ch. 11):

The Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were each divided into six units of performance, adding up to twelve units representing each one of the twelve city states of the Ionian Dodecapolis. Each one of these twelve units was performed by one of twelve teams of competing *rhapsōidoi* ‘rhapsodes’, who were professional performers of epic. And each one of these twelve units of rhapsodic performance corresponds to four *rhapsōidiai* ‘rhapsodies’ or ‘books’ of the Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as we know them (‘books’ 1–4, 5–8, 9–12, 13–16, 17–20, 21–24).

The *Ionian Dodecapolis*, this federation of twelve Ionian city states situated on the mainland of Asia Minor (Miletus, Myous, Priene, Ephesus, Colophon, Lebedos, Teos, Klazomenai, Phocaea, Erythrai) and on two offshore islands (Samos and Chios), was in direct political and cultural competition with the *Aeolian Dodecapolis*, a rival federation of twelve Aeolian city states, all situated {152|153} on the mainland of Asia Minor. The twelve city states of this Aeolian federation are listed by Herodotus (1.149.1) as Cyme, Lērisai, Neon Teikhos, Tēmnos, Killa, Notion, Aigiroessa, Pitanē, Aigaiai, Myrina, Gryneia, and Smyrna. Herodotus (1.151.1) says that the Aeolian cities on the mainland of Asia Minor in the region of Mount Ida were grouped separately from the Aeolian Dodecapolis, and he does not list these cities by name. As for the

island of Lesbos, offshore from Asia Minor, Herodotus (1.151.2) says that it was politically organized as a federation of five Aeolian cities. This old federation is described by Strabo (13.2.1 C616) as a single unified state that claimed to be the metropolis or ‘mother city’ of the Aeolian cities on the Asiatic mainland.

A focal point of the political and cultural competition between the Ionian Dodecapolis and the Aeolian Dodecapolis was the ownership of Homeric poetry, and such ownership was expressed by way of appropriating Homer himself. As I have argued extensively in *Homer the Preclassic* (Nagy 2009/2010 ch. 6), both federations claimed Homer as their prototypical poet and culture hero, and these claims were expressed primarily in the form of myths about the prehistoric life and times of Homer in Asia Minor. According to the Ionian version of the myth, Homer was an Ionian and a spokesman for all Ionians; according to the rival Aeolian version, by contrast, Homer was an Aeolian.

There are traces of these two conflicting versions attested in a genre of ancient biographical reportage known as the *Vitae Homeri* or *Lives of Homer narratives*. I highlight here *Vita 1* (in the edition of Allen 1912), better known as the “pseudo-Herodotean” *Life of Homer* (dated to the fifth or fourth century BCE), and *Vita 2* (in the same edition), an accretive text that stems from the *Museion* of Alcidamas (who flourished in the fourth century BCE). In terms of the Aeolian version as represented by *Vita 1* (p. 194 lines 27–31 ed. Allen), Homer was born an Aeolian in the Aeolian city of Smyrna. In terms of the non-Aeolian version as represented by *Vita 2* (p. 226 lines 7–12 ed. Allen), on the other hand, Homer was born an Ionian in the Ionian city of Smyrna, during the era of the Ionian migration (Nagy 2009/2010 II §§24–27). I will have more to say later about this so-called *Ionian migration*.

But how could the city of Smyrna switch from Aeolian to Ionian status as we switch from our reading of *Vita 1* of Homer to our reading of *Vita 2*? I ask this question in view of the

historical fact, reported by Herodotus, that Smyrna had been a member of the Aeolian Dodecapolis. For a clear answer, we may now consider another historical fact reported by Herodotus: of the twelve Aeolian cities of the Aeolian Dodecapolis on the mainland of Asia Minor, one city was ‘detached’ (*paraluein*) from the Aeolian federation by the Ionians; as we know from {153|154} Herodotus, that city was Smyrna (1.149.1 μία γάρ σφεων παρελύθη Σμύρνη ὑπὸ Ἴώνων). In other words, Aeolian Smyrna was captured by Ionians and converted by them into an Ionian city.

The capture of Aeolian Smyrna by the Ionians, which happened probably as early as 800 BCE or before, and definitely before 688 BCE (Frame 2009:526n21), was a major historical event that destabilized the Aeolian Dodecapolis culturally as well as politically, since it deprived the Aeolians of their native son and culture hero, Homer. In terms of Ionian mythmaking, the status of Homer himself could now switch from Aeolian to Ionian. And even his language could now switch from the Aeolic to the Ionic dialect.

The historical fact of this major conflict between Ionic-speaking and Aeolic-speaking communities of Asia Minor is relevant to the *Sprachbund* of Homeric diction that links these two competing communities with each other. The relevance is evident if we focus on the point of contention we have just considered, which is, *the ownership of Homeric poetry*. Just as the Ionians became culturally dominant over the Aeolians by way of appropriating Homer as their native son, so also the Ionic dialect of Homeric diction became linguistically dominant over the Aeolic dialect.

But the dominant Ionic dialect of Homeric diction never completely eliminated the Aeolic dialect. We have already noted a phenomenon that I have been describing up to now as the *Aeolic default*. And we can now see the relevance of this term to the wording I used earlier when



I applied the concept of *Sprachbund* to build a model for explaining the multidialectal nature of Homeric diction. I repeat here the relevant part of my wording (Nagy 2009/2010 II §278):

*The language of Homeric poetry is a system that integrates and thus preserves the following dialects: dominant Ionic integrated with recessive Aeolic integrated with residual Mycenaean.*

I focus here on the integration of the Ionic and the Aeolic dialects as respectively *dominant* and *recessive* dialectal components within the working system that is Homeric diction. In terms of this working system, we can say that *the dominant poetic language, which is Ionic, tolerates Aeolic forms only by default*. This principle, I repeat, is what I have described as the *Aeolic default*.

### **Another early historical context for Aeolic–Ionic *Sprachbund***

So far, we have considered the ancient Greek epic tradition as it survived in those areas of Asia Minor where Ionic became the dominant dialect. But what about the poetic traditions of Asia Minor in areas where Aeolic rather than Ionic was the {154|155} dominant dialect? A prime example is a fragmentary body of poetry attributed to Sappho and Alcaeus, the two foremost poetic figures of the island of Lesbos. Reportage from the ancient world dates both of them around 600 BCE. The traditional poetic language of Sappho and Alcaeus stems from an Aeolic dialect commonly known as *Lesbian*. This term, as we have already seen, is used by linguists in referring generally to the dialect of all the Aeolians of Asia Minor. As we will now see, there is historical evidence for the existence of contacts between this poetic language of the Aeolians and the poetic language of Homeric diction, which as we have seen became the prized possession of the Ionians. In other words, there is evidence for an Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund* linking the poetic language of Sappho and Alcaeus with the poetic language of Homeric diction.

In the course of studying extensively this Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund*, I have developed a working definition of the poetic language of Sappho and Alcaeus, combining diachronic and synchronic perspectives (Nagy 2009/2010 II §281):

*The poetic language of Sappho and Alcaeus is a system that integrates and thus preserves the following dialects: dominant Aeolic integrated with recessive Ionic integrated with residual Mycenaean.*

As in the case of the language of Homeric poetry, I follow Parry (1932) here in viewing the language of the poetry of Sappho and Alcaeus synchronically as a working system, not as an inert layering of dialectal components matching the Aeolic / Ionic / Mycenaean dialects (Nagy 1990a 14§9 [= p. 418]).

### **Lyric and epic in contact**

Unlike the other case of Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund* we have already considered, however, where the poetic language of both the Aeolians and the Ionians was *epic*, we are now considering a case where the poetic language of the Aeolians was not *epic* but *lyric*. That is to say, the poetic language of Sappho and Alcaeus was the language of *lyric poetry*.

Here is what I mean when I say *lyric poetry*. During the sixth and fifth centuries BCE and even later on, the songs of Sappho and Alcaeus were traditionally performed by *kitharōidoi* or ‘citharodes’, professional singers who sang these songs to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument called the *kitharā*, conventionally translated as ‘lyre’ (Nagy 2009/2010 II §§324–325). The modern term ‘lyric’ is actually derived from ancient references to this kind of performance. We must keep in mind, though, that there was also an earlier kind of lyric performance in the case of Sappho, since most of her songs were *choral lyric poetry*, that is, they were originally composed to be sung and danced by a *khoros* or {155|156} ‘song-and-dance

ensemble' of young women (Nagy 2009/2010 II §§301-320). That said, my point remains that even the choral lyric poetry of Sappho, like the non-choral lyric poetry of Alcaeus, was transmitted during the sixth and fifth centuries BCE in a citharodic format, not in a choral format (Nagy 2007c).

The point that I just made here is opposed to another way of looking at the transmission of lyric poetry ascribed to Sappho and Alcaeus. I have in mind the following formulation by West (2002:219):

[I]t is a curious fact of literary history that the sudden outburst of this lyric around 600 [BCE], nine books of Sappho and ten of Alcaeus, was immediately followed by silence. Sappho and Alcaeus are a flash in the pan: they have no successors. Perhaps the reason may be that they themselves became instant local classics, and Lesbian folk were content to go on singing their songs instead of constantly composing new ones. If that is what happened, it is a further illustration of the power of the written text (for Sappho and Alcaeus must have written, or such quantities of their verse could not have been preserved) to stabilize tradition and halt its further growth.

By contrast with the point of view expressed in this quoted formulation, I view the transmission of the lyric poetry of Sappho and Alcaeus as a matter of *performance*, not *text*, arguing for a broad diffusion of this poetry as traditionally performed by *kitharōidoi* or 'citharodes' during the sixth and fifth centuries BCE and beyond (Nagy 2007c). In terms of my argument, the songs of Sappho and Alcaeus did not remain "local classics." Rather, they became Panhellenic classics. And the transmission of these classics of lyric poetry as traditionally performed by *kitharōidoi* or 'citharodes' singing in a poetic language that was predominantly Aeolic is comparable to the transmission of epic poetry as traditionally

performed by *rhapsōidoi* or ‘rhapsodes’ reciting in a poetic language that was predominantly Ionic (again, Nagy 2007c).

An important example of such classics of lyric poetry is Song 44 of Sappho, known as “The Wedding of Hector and Andromache,” which was composed in a meter that is stichic, that is, in a verse-by-verse format that is not stanzaic (Nagy 1974:120). Such a format shows overtly that this song was composed for citharodic performance even in its original Lesbian context (Power 2010:258–263).

### **A cognate relationship linking lyric and epic**

For my argumentation, Song 44 of Sappho is important as an example of lyric poetry not only because it has an overtly citharodic format but also because its meter and its phraseology are cognate with the meter and phraseology of epic {156|157} poetry as attested in Homeric diction (Nagy 2009/2010 II §295, referring to earlier work in Nagy 1990a, Appendix §37 [= p. 464], summarizing the essentials of what I present in still earlier work, Nagy 1974:118–139). In general, and I must insist on this point, the two different genres of Aeolian lyric and Ionian epic are cognate with each other, just as the Aeolian and the Ionian genres of epic are cognate in terms of my argumentation. I say this on the basis of the results I achieved by comparing Aeolian lyric traditions with the predominantly Ionian epic tradition inherited by Homeric poetry (besides the references I have cited earlier, including Nagy 1974, I cite here also Nagy 1990a §§6–9 [= pp. 416–418] and Appendix §§2–19, 27, 33–37 [= pp. 439–451, 455–456, 459–464]; see also Katz 2010:364–365).

And I must stress that Aeolian lyric and Ionian epic, as my work shows, are cognate not only on the level of *meter* and *phraseology*. They are cognate also on the level of *theme*, by which I mean the contents of myths as mediated by oral traditional poetry. A prime example is the description of the bride Andromache and the bridegroom Hector as [ἴ]κελοι θεοί[ς] and

θεοεικέλο[ις], both meaning ‘looking like the gods’, at lines 21 and 34 of Song 44 of Sappho, to be compared with the appellation of Achilles, the “eternal bridegroom” of Homeric poetry, as θεοείκελ(ε) at *Iliad* I 131 and XIX 155 (Nagy 2007b:28–38). In this case, even the metrical and the phraseological contexts of these words can be shown to be cognate (Nagy 1974:138–139).

There is a simple reason for my going out of my way to emphasize that the lyric traditions of the Aeolians and the epic tradition of the Ionians are related to each other as cognate structures. It is because this special relationship affects the general relationship of *Sprachbund* that also happens to link these two traditions with each other. The fact is, the general phenomenon of *Sprachbund*, where we see mutual influence taking place between two languages in contact, is not restricted to languages that happen to be cognate with each other: as the work of Jakobson (1931, 1949) has shown, *Sprachbund* can link also languages that are not at all cognate with each other. It stands to reason, then, that we can expect the structural opportunities for mutual influence to increase exponentially when languages in contact are in fact cognate with each other.

Such is the case with the poetic language of Sappho and Alcaeus, which is cognate with the poetic language of epics attributed to Homer. I have been arguing that these two cognate poetic languages stem respectively from Aeolic and Ionic poetic traditions evolving independently of each other. In the course of history, however, these independent traditions became interdependent as a result of {157|158} cultural contact (Nagy 2009/2010 II §301). This *interdependence* is what I have been describing here as *Sprachbund*.

### **Examples of linking the cognate structures of lyric and epic within the framework of an Aeolic–Ionic *Sprachbund***

In earlier work (Nagy 1974:137–139), I concentrated on arguing that the Aeolic tradition as represented by the poetry of Sappho and Alcaeus shows signs of influence from a

predominantly Ionic tradition as represented by Homeric poetry. In later work (Nagy 2009/2010 II §§301–320) I concentrated on arguing that the converse holds true as well, in other words, that the Ionic tradition as represented by Homeric poetry shows signs of influence from a predominantly Aeolic tradition that we find still attested in the poetry of Sappho and Alcaeus. I now proceed to examine some examples of such patterns of mutual influence within the framework of an Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund*.

I focus on a detail we find in the Aeolic tradition of lyric attributed to Alcaeus. It has to do with the hero Ajax in Song 387 of Alcaeus, who is described as the second-best of the Achaeans in comparison to Achilles, who is best (ἄριστον), just as this same Ajax is described as second-best to Achilles in the *Iliad*, who is best in the epic as well, as we see from the explicit wording there (for example, at II 768–769, XVII 279–280). In such a case, according to West (2002:209–210), the idea of Achilles as best of the Achaeans is an epic theme that is somehow borrowed by a lyric master like Alcaeus and converted into a lyric theme. Instead of this model of a *one-way borrowing* from epic into lyric, I advocate the model of a *two-way poetic Sprachbund* linking the epic traditions represented by Homer with the lyric traditions represented by Sappho and Alcaeus.

In terms of this alternative model, the idea of Achilles as the best of heroes in his generation is independently embedded in the lyric traditions of the Aeolians just as it is independently embedded in the epic traditions of the Ionians as attested in the dominantly Ionic phase of epic poetry, that is, in Homeric diction.

A case in point is the description of Achilles as the best of the *hēmitheoi* or ‘demigods’ in Song 42 of Alcaeus (line 13); in the same context (line 14), he is described as *olbios* ‘blessed’ by virtue of being the child of the goddess Thetis. The lyric usage of both these words here, as I will now argue, is independent of the epic usage of these same two words in Homeric diction.

I start with the description of Achilles as the best of the *hēmitheoi* or ‘demigods’ in Song 42 (line 13) of Alcaeus. This word *hēmitheos* ‘demigod’ is attested only once in Homeric diction, at *Iliad* XII 23. In the context of this single Iliadic attestation, as I argue elsewhere (Nagy 2006 §§66–75), the heroes who fought in {158|159} the Trojan war are being viewed retrospectively not as the heroes of the *Iliad* in particular but as a breed of superhumans who are celebrated in a variety of poetic forms in general: these poetic forms, which include Hesiodic poetry and the so-called *Homeric Hymns*, transcend the specific genre of epic, elaborating on general heroic themes that are elided by the strictly epic form of the *Iliad*. Examples of such themes, derived from cosmogonic and anthropogonic poetry (Nagy 2006 §66), are signaled by the attestations of the word *hēmitheoi* in Hesiodic poetry (F 204.100 and *Works and Days* 160); relevant too are the attestations of this word in the poetry of the *Homeric Hymns* (31.19 and 32.19).

Next I turn to the description of Achilles as *olbios* or ‘blessed’ in Song 42 (line 14) of Alcaeus. In the Hesiodic *Works and Days* (172) this same word *olbioi* describes *cult heroes* who are immortalized after death and who enjoy a state of bliss in a paradisiacal setting that transcends the temporal and the spatial constraints of mortality (Nagy 1990b:126). It is from the comparative perspective of analyzing such non-Homeric contexts that we can understand the significance of the same word *olbios* in some of its Homeric contexts. A case in point is the salutation ὄλβιε Πηλέος υἱέ, θεοῖσ’ ἐπιείκελ’ Ἀχιλλεῦ ‘O you *olbios* son of Peleus, godlike Achilles’ in the Homeric *Odyssey* (xxiv 36), where the speaker is the *psukhē* ‘spirit’ of Agamemnon (xxiv 35), who is speaking to the *psukhē* of Achilles (xxiv 24). At this point in the epic narrative, as I have argued elsewhere (Nagy 2011b), Achilles is already dead, already housed in his tomb, already a *cult hero* who has by now transcended, retrospectively, his former status as an *epic hero*.

Relevant here is the use of *olbioi* 'blessed' in the words of a cryptic prophecy told in the *Odyssey* (xi 137) by the seer Teiresias about a future hero cult of Odysseus: in this context, the meaning 'blessed' applies both to the dead, that is, to the cult hero, and to the living who benefit from contact with the cult hero by way of worshipping him according to the norms of hero cult (Nagy 2006 §103 and 1990b:127n21).

### **The historical context for the Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund* of lyric and epic**

The evidence for the historical context of this Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund* of lyric and epic comes from a variety of relevant sources, especially Herodotus (5.94–95), Strabo (13.1.38–39 C599–600), and Diogenes Laertius (1.74). I have analyzed this evidence at length in *Homer the Preclassic* (Nagy 2009/2010 ch. 6), and what follows is only an epitome:

The poetic language of Sappho and Alcaeus evolved in the political setting of a federation of five Aeolian cities situated on the island of Lesbos. The federation {159|160} was controlled by one of these cities, Mytilene, which was engaged in an ongoing conflict with the nominally Ionian city of Athens during the late seventh and early sixth centuries BCE. Both sides were fighting for possession of Sigeion, an Aeolian city situated on the mainland of Asia Minor. This Aeolian city was considered essential for the possession of the entire region of ancient Troy. To possess this region was vitally important not only because of its strategic location at the Hellespont but also because of its prestige as a space made sacred by the heroes who fought in the Trojan War. The deeds of these heroes were memorialized by living poetic traditions that represented the conflicting claims of Ionians and Aeolians as headed respectively by Athens and Mytilene.



A primary focus of the conflict was a tumulus identified with the tomb of Achilles. This tumulus, named the *Akhilleion*, had been controlled by the Aeolian city of Sigeion. The *Akhilleion* was situated at the southern end of the heights known as the Sigeion Ridge, some ten kilometers in length, which extends along the Aegean coast of the Hellespont region from the promontory at the Bay of Beşik in the south all the way to the promontory of Sigeion (Kum Kale) in the north, which is where the city of Sigeion itself was located.

In the course of the ongoing conflict between the Ionians led by Athens and the Aeolians led by Mytilene, the Aeolian side eventually lost the Aeolian city of Sigeion to the Athenians, who converted it into an Ionian city. Although the Aeolians lost Sigeion at the northern end of the Sigeion Ridge, they managed to retain the tumulus of Achilles at the southern end, the *Akhilleion*, with the result that the Athenians were forced to designate another tumulus as the allegedly real tomb of Achilles. This rival tumulus was situated at the northern end of the Sigeion Ridge, quite near the city of Sigeion, some ten kilometers north of the *Akhilleion*. So now there were two rival tumuli of Achilles matching two rival poetic traditions about this hero.

### **Conclusions about Aeolic–Ionic *Sprachbund* in Asia Minor**

Earlier in my argumentation, I had highlighted a historical era when the Aeolians of Asia Minor were being pressured from the south by the Ionians and eventually lost to them the old Aeolian city of Smyrna, the site where Homer, premier poet of the Aeolians, was believed to have been born. As we saw, this loss of Smyrna by the Aeolians, an event that happened probably as early as 800 BCE or before, and definitely before 688 BCE (Frame 2009:526n21), had

a permanent impact on the form and the content of Homeric poetry as we know it. Because of this loss, Homer became irrevocably Ionian. And, just now, I have also highlighted another historical era, dated to the late seventh and early sixth centuries BCE. This time, the Aeolians of Asia Minor were being pressured from the north by the Ionians as led by the Athenians and, this time, they eventually lost Sigeion, the old Aeolian {160|161} city that once controlled the site named *Akhilleion*, where the premier hero of the Aeolians was believed to be buried in a tumulus. In this case, the loss of the Aeolians was not complete, because they lost only the city of Sigeion but retained the *Akhilleion*, which they considered to be the site of the real tomb of Achilles. And they held on to their poetic traditions about Achilles as their premier hero.

So by now we have considered two cases of Aeolic-Ionic *Sprachbund*, corresponding to two cases of Aeolian-Ionian conflict in Asia Minor. While the historical sources emphasize the conflicts themselves, I emphasize the linguistic contacts achieved in the course of the conflicts, and I summarize here in two parts the effects of these contacts:

13. (1) mutual influence between Aeolian and Ionian epic, where the Ionic dialectal component of attested Ionian epic is dominant and the Aeolic dialectal component is recessive
14. (2) mutual influence between Aeolian lyric and Ionian epic, where the Aeolic dialectal component of attested Aeolian lyric is dominant and the Ionic dialectal component is recessive.

I have argued in both cases that the contact between poetic languages is a contact between cognate structures. And, as I said, we can expect to find enhanced structural opportunities for mutual influence if in fact these languages are cognate. That is what we have seen most clearly in the evidence of Homeric diction, and I cite here once again as my primary example the morphophonemic rule that systematically substitutes the Aeolic morphological type  $-\bar{\alpha}o$  for

the cognate Ionic morphological type  $-\eta\omicron$ . This type  $-\eta\omicron$ , fitting one kind of metrical context, is demonstrably older than the type  $-\epsilon\omega$ , fitting another kind of metrical context. And the Aeolic type  $-\bar{\alpha}\omicron$  is in turn just as old as the type  $-\eta\omicron$  that it replaces, since it belongs to an independent Aeolian epic tradition that existed during a phase when the poetic traditions of the Ionians still coexisted with the corresponding poetic traditions of the Aeolians.

Such traditions, as I have argued, can be reconstructed all the way back to the second millennium BCE on the basis of the Aeolic diction that is still attested in the Aeolian lyric tradition of Sappho and Alcaeus (Nagy 1974; also 1990a Appendix [= pp. 439-464] and 2009/2010 II §294).

My reconstruction (Nagy 1974), with special reference to Song 44 of Sappho, has been cited by Horrocks in the course of his own analysis of Aeolic components in Homeric diction. With reference to the same song of Sappho, Horrocks (1997:200) notes that this type of lyric composition “has been plausibly {161|162} interpreted as providing evidence for a long poetic tradition similar to, but partly independent of, its [Homeric] Ionian counterpart” (Horrocks also cites in this context the relevant work of West 1973).

I propose to modify this formulation of Horrocks: I would say instead that the Aeolian lyric tradition of Sappho and Alcaeus was cognate with the Ionian epic tradition of Homeric poetry, not just similar to it. With this modification in place, we can see more clearly the workings of the poetic *Sprachbund* linking Aeolian lyric with Ionian epic.

### **From Aeolic Asia Minor to Aeolic Europe and back**

Up to now, whenever I mentioned Aeolians as speakers of Aeolic, my field of vision was restricted to the Aeolians of Asia Minor. I have not yet spoken about the Aeolians of Europe, that is, the Aeolians who inhabited Thessaly and Boeotia, separated by the Aegean Sea from the Aeolians who inhabited Asia Minor and the outlying islands of Lesbos and Tenedos. My

next task, then, is to investigate whether we can find in Homeric diction any traces of the dialects spoken by the European Aeolians.

As we will see, there are in fact such traces, which will provide evidence for arguing that Homeric poetry integrates the Aeolic dialects of Europe with the Aeolic dialects of Asia Minor. And, as we will also see, Homeric poetry integrates even the myths of the European Aeolians, especially of the Thessalians, with the myths of the Asiatic Aeolians.

### **A debate about the concept of an Aeolic proto-dialect**

Before I can proceed to examine the evidence for a European Aeolic in Homeric diction, I must confront a basic question: how are we to define *Aeolic*? To arrive at an answer, I start by considering the argumentation of Holt Parker (2008), who aims to narrow the concept of *Aeolic*. He argues that the Lesbian and the Thessalian and the Boeotian dialects do not belong to a single overall dialectal grouping that can be called *Aeolic*. In terms of his argument, only the Lesbian dialect can be called *Aeolic*. Parker is using here the specific term *Lesbian* as a general way of referring to the Greek dialects spoken on the islands of Lesbos and Tenedos as also on the mainland of northern Asia Minor.

Parker's work (2008) was published in coordination with another work, by Brian Rose (2008), who aims to disprove the existence of what historians conventionally describe as the *Aeolian migration*. Since the argumentation of Parker depends in part on the argumentation of Rose, I need to address first the work of Rose. {162|163}

### **The Aeolian migration**

In terms of the argument presented by Rose (2008), linguists as well as historians are wrong to posit a *migration*, happening sometime toward the end of the second millennium BCE, of Aeolic-speaking Greeks traveling west to east across the Aegean Sea from the European

mainland, especially from Thessaly, to the islands of Lesbos and Tenedos off the coast of the Asiatic mainland and, traveling even farther, to the mainland of northern Asia Minor. He thinks that they are wrong because the Greek-speaking populations of Lesbos and Tenedos and of northern Asia Minor, who all called themselves Aeolians, were already there, in their Asiatic homeland, well before any migrations from Europe could have taken place. That is the essence of Rose's argument, based mainly on archaeological evidence. And he rejects as "fiction" the existing myths about the migrations of European Aeolians from Thessaly and from other places on the Helladic mainland across the Aegean to Lesbos and Tenedos and to the mainland of northern Asia Minor in the era following the Trojan War, toward the end of the second millennium BCE.

My own work on these myths about an *Aeolian migration*, which I study in combination with myths about an *Ionian migration* (Nagy 2009/2010 chapters 6–8), points to a different interpretation. Taking an anthropological point of view, I see these myths not as "fiction" in the modern sense of the word but rather as political narratives about social realities—including the linguistic facts of dialectal affinities. And such social realities can then be analyzed as historical facts in and of themselves. One of these realities is the historical fact that the myths about contacts between the Aeolian populations of Lesbos and Asia Minor on one side of the Aegean Sea and the Aeolian populations of Thessaly on the other side were actually shared by the Asiatic Aeolians and the European Aeolians even in periods of open hostility with each other around the middle of the first millennium BCE.

As we are about to see, such sharing is evident in the myths about the *Aeolian migration*. Even if there was no real migration of Aeolians from west to east, starting in prehistoric times toward the end of the second millennium BCE, both sides in the historical times of the first millennium BCE accepted as true the myths that told about the Aeolian migration, and such a

contractual acceptance of myth can be studied as a historical fact about the ongoing process of maintaining cultural affinities. For more on the methods I apply in studying such myths shared by rival communities, I refer here to a study of mine on myths linking the elites of Thessaly and Aegina in the sixth century BCE (Nagy 2011a). {163|164}

That the myths about an Aeolian migration were mutually accepted by both the European and the Asiatic Aeolians in the first millennium BCE is evident from the content of these myths, which tell how the Aeolians of Europe undertook an *apoikia* or ‘colonization’ of the *Aiolis* ‘Aeolic territory’ of Asia Minor. This word *apoikia* ‘colonization’ is the actual word used in ancient sources with reference to myths about what we call the ‘migration’ of the Aeolians—and of the Ionians. Here, then, is a brief narrative of the Aeolian *apoikia* ‘colonization’, which is an epitome I have made on the basis of a lengthy narrative by Strabo:

[9.2.3 C401:] The *apoikia* ‘colonization’ of *Asia* ‘Asia Minor’ by the ‘sons of Orestes’ was launched from Aulis in Boeotia, and the narrative here refers to the *Aiolikos stolos* ‘Aeolian fleet’ that conveyed the colonists. [9.2.5 C402:] The Boeotians participated in the *Aiolikē apoikia* ‘Aeolian colonization’ led by Penthilos son of Orestes. [13.1.2–3 C581–582:] There are different versions about the full extent of the *Aiolis* ‘Aeolic territory’ along the coastline of Asia Minor; according to the most far-reaching version, the *Aiolis* once extended all the way from Kyzikos in the north to Smyrna in the south. [13.1.3 C 582:] The *Aiolikē apoikia* ‘Aeolic colonization’, which started sixty years after the Trojan war and four generations before the start of the *Iōnikē apoikia* ‘Ionian colonization’, was a process that lasted for a longer time than the Ionian counterpart; Penthilos the son of Orestes reached only as far as Thrace with his Aeolic fleet; later, during the succeeding generations, the Aeolians crossed over into Asia Minor; the

island of Lesbos was colonized by the Aeolians only during the fourth generation.

According to an alternative version reported by Pausanias (3.2.1), Lesbos was colonized already by Penthiolos. There is a similar alternative version in the Homeric *Vita* 1, which I will summarize at a later point.

The basic cultural affinities between European and Asiatic Aeolians in the first millennium BCE were most strongly affirmed by way of their shared myths about a common ancestor *Aiolos*, a Thessalian hero who was revered as the prototypical Aeolian par excellence: as we read in a fragment of Hesiod (F 9 ed. Merkelbach / West), *Aiolos* was the son of *Hellēn* the ancestor of all Hellenes, and he was the brother of *Dōros* the ancestor of the Dorians and of *Xouthos* the ancestor of the Ionians (the essentials of this genealogy are conscientiously noted by Rose 2008:402).

### **A criterion for determining whether the dialects of Lesbos, Thessaly, and Boeotia are related**

But the question remains: did the dialects of all these Aeolians stem from a prototypical dialect, and can this dialect be called Aeolic? In terms of the argument {164|165} presented by Parker (2008), there was no such thing as a common Aeolic proto-dialect. He argues that the Lesbian and the Thessalian and the Boeotian dialects do not belong to a single overall dialectal grouping. To make his argument, Parker (2008:440-441) uses this primary criterion: “In trying to determine ancestral relationships among dialects or languages, ... [t]he first principle is that only shared innovations show any relationship.” In support of this principle, he cites Wyatt (1970:46–461) and also in general Adrados (1952).

I agree with this criterion. Here is how I formulated the same criterion in my earlier work: “we will regularly use the criterion of shared innovation to establish the affinity of dialects”

(Nagy 1972:59). And, to back up this formulation, I cited the work of Adrados (1952). In the online version of my earlier work, I restated the same criterion this way: “I rely especially on the criterion of *shared innovation* for the purpose of establishing the affinities of the attested ancient Greek dialects. Such a criterion is I think of prime interest for those who are interested in developing more effective methodologies for analyzing these dialects” (Nagy 2008:59). Then I proceeded to apply this criterion in making my argument that the dialects of Lesbos, Thessaly, and Boeotia were in fact related.

Although I agree with Parker’s formulation of this primary criterion for reconstructing dialectal affinities, I disagree with the overall inference he makes about the common innovations that he finds in Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian. In each case of such common innovation, Parker points to the attestation of the same innovation in other dialects that are not related to Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian. On the basis of such attestations, he argues that each given innovation could have been independently shared by Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian, just as it was independently shared by other dialects that are unrelated to these three—and unrelated to each other.

A case in point is the dative plural ending *-εσσι* instead of *-σι* (as in *παῖδεσσι* instead of *παῖσι*) in third-declension nominal formations, which is an innovation shared by Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian. Parker (2008:447) disputes the probative value of this innovation on the grounds that the same innovation can be found also in unrelated dialects located in such places as Pamphylia, Delphi, Locris, Elis, and Cyrene, as also in some daughter cities of Corinth (but not in Corinth). He concludes in this case: “the creation of *-εσσι* datives is an easy analogical change that occurs in various dialects, and as such is valueless as a basis for grouping.” As we will see later, however, with reference to the work of Cassio (2006) and Blanc



(2007, 2008, 2009), the existing evidence about a subset of -εσσι datives is useful for countering the argument that we see being made here. {165|166}

Parker (2008:447) also confronts another innovation shared by Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian: in this case, we see a substitution of the innovative thematic form \*-o-nt- for the inherited athematic form \*-wos-/\*-us-of the perfect participle. This innovation, as Parker notes, is found “in full paradigm” only in these three dialects. Accordingly, Parker (p. 448) concedes that “this is the strongest evidence for a shared innovation.” Even so, he then goes on to cast doubt on this evidence by adding: “but the fact that other dialects succumb to the temptation of thematic forms for the perfect weakens the case somewhat.” At this point he summarizes the sporadic evidence for the existence of thematic forms of the perfect in other dialects:

15. (1) The dialects of Crete, East Argolis, Phokis, Kos, and Nisyros show thematic forms for the perfect infinitive.
16. (2) The dialect of Delphi shows thematic forms for the perfect infinitive and, only in the feminine, for the perfect participle.
17. (3) The dialect of Cyrene shows an “isolated” case of a thematic form for the perfect participle.

The evidence here does not add up. As we have just seen from Parker’s inventory of this evidence, and as we can see also from an extensive earlier survey by Wathelet (1970:326–327), such thematic forms of infinitives and participles do not match in any systematic way the thematic forms of the perfect participle as we find them attested in Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian. Granted, many dialects show the innovation of changing an athematic conjugation or declension into a thematic counterpart, and there are even instances where perfect indicatives develop thematic present-tense endings, as for example in the dialect of Syracuse

(Parker 2008:447; see already Chantraine 1961:185). Even so, the fact remains that only the dialects of Lesbos, Thessaly, and Boeotia show a thematic form “in full paradigm” for the perfect active participle.

The evidence of such a “full paradigm,” I argue, strengthens the case for saying that the thematic form of the perfect participle in Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian shows that these three dialects, unlike other dialects, are derived from a common source. My argument here shifts the emphasis of the argument made by Parker (2008:448) when he says that “the fact that other dialects succumb to the temptation of thematic forms for the perfect weakens the case somewhat” for the common ancestry of Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian. The fundamental difference between these three dialects and other dialects is that only these three regularized the thematic form of the perfect participle while the other dialects did not. {166|167} (I find it useful here to apply the criterion of distinguishing between *constants* and *tendencies*; in Nagy 1974:30–33, 36, I apply this criterion as developed by Jakobson 1952.)

### **Evidence for distinctly Aeolic forms in Homeric diction**

In this light, I can now make full use of the fact that the thematic form of the perfect participle, as attested in Lesbian, Thessalian, and Boeotian, is attested also in Homeric diction (there is a list of examples in Wathelet 1970:324). I argue that this fact can be used as evidence for the existence of distinctly Aeolic forms in Homeric diction.

At the beginning of my presentation, I already noted as a prime example the Aeolic form κεκλήγοντες ‘clamoring’ as at *Iliad* XII 125, attested in the medieval manuscript tradition (including the tenth-century Venetus A), to be contrasted with the corresponding Ionic form κεκληγότες, which is also attested for the same verse in some medieval manuscripts despite the fact that it scans — — ∪ ∪ (∪), which does not fit the metrical shape that is required here, — — ∪ (∪). Also attested for the same verse in other medieval manuscripts is the form

κεκληγῶτες, which does fit the required metrical shape. Such a form can be described as an “inner-epic analogical innovation” (I borrow this term from Rau 2009:190, who applies it to Homeric short-vowel formations of the type Πηλέος).

The formation in -ῶτες, from a diachronic point of view, is not Ionic any more than it is Aeolic. It is simply a creation of the poetic language of the Ionians, who would have used -ότες in their everyday language. And, whereas the type -οντες is a direct reflex of an Aeolic formation, the variant type -ῶτες is an indirect reflex, showing correctly the original Aeolic metrical frame but not the original Aeolic morphology.

I must add that the distribution of the type κεκλήγοντες in Homeric diction fits perfectly the principle of the Aeolic default as I have already defined it. Aeolic forms of the type κεκλήγοντες survive within metrical frames where the corresponding Ionic forms do not fit, but Homeric diction defaults to Ionic forms where they do fit the given metrical frame. A case in point is the nominative singular κεκληγῶς as at *Iliad* V 591 and elsewhere. Here the Ionic form has ousted the corresponding Aeolic form κεκλήγων, which is not needed by Homeric diction in the metrical context of — — —. Accordingly, I consider it unjustifiable for modern editors of the Homeric text to restore the type κεκλήγων. A case in point is *Iliad* II 222, where the edition of Allen (1931) gives κεκλήγων while the medieval manuscript tradition shows only κεκληγῶς. {167|168}

By contrast, the medieval manuscript attestations of the type κεκλήγοντες are well grounded. We even have evidence for attestations of κεκλήγοντες as verified by the editorial work of Aristarchus, head of the Library of Alexandria in the mid-second century BCE. There are reports in the scholia of the medieval manuscripts of the Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that this form was attested by Aristarchus and was featured in one of two Aristarchean editions of Homer that were used by the later Alexandrian scholar Didymus, who flourished in the first

century BCE/CE (for background on these two editions, see Nagy 2008/2009 Prolegomena §§66-97). As we read in the scholia “A” and “T” for *Iliad* XVI 430, with reference to the form κεκλήγοντες as attested in the medieval manuscripts for this verse, Didymus saw this form κεκλήγοντες in one of the two Aristarchean editions and the form κεκληγῶτες in the other edition: ἐν τῇ ἐτέρᾳ τῶν Ἀριστάρχου κεκληγῶτες ‘in the second of the [two] editions of Aristarchus, the reading is κεκληγῶτες’. In the scholia for *Odyssey* xiv 30, where only κεκληγότες and κεκληγῶτες are attested in the medieval manuscript tradition, we find a report that matches the report of Didymus: κεκληγῶτες καὶ κεκλήγοντες διχῶς αἰ Ἀριστάρχου ‘the two different readings in the [two] editions of Aristarchus are κεκληγῶτες and κεκλήγοντες’.

We read further in the scholia “T” for *Iliad* XVI 430: οὕτω καὶ αἰ πλείους· οὐ γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον τὸ Αἰολικόν, μέτρου μὴ ἐπείγοντος ‘the reading is this way [κεκληγῶτες] in the majority [of the preferred texts], since the Aeolic form is not necessary if the meter does not require it’. This statement is valid from a synchronic point of view, since both variants κεκληγῶτες and κεκλήγοντες are equally functional alternatives that are both integrated into the formulaic system of Homeric diction. From a diachronic point of view, however, the variant κεκληγῶτες is clearly secondary, a product of “inner-epic analogical innovation” (to borrow again a term used by Rau 2009:190) that happened during an Ionic phase of Homeric diction, while the variant κεκλήγοντες is primary, stemming from an Aeolic phase of this diction. (Also relevant is the Homeric type μεμαῶτες. On this type I await the forthcoming work of Alexander Nikolaev [2012], who argues that the -ῶτ- in such participles is likewise a result of “inner-epic analogical innovation.”)

The decisive evidence of the Aeolic type κεκλήγοντες as attested in the Homeric textual tradition is highlighted in my earlier work (Nagy 1972:62). Referring to perfect participles with

thematic formant in -ovτ- as embedded in Homeric diction, I argued that the “pervasiveness” of such embeddedness proves the existence of an Aeolic phase in the evolution of Homeric poetry. And here is {168|169} the way I restated the argument in the online version of the same work (Nagy 2008:62):

I maintain that there is incontrovertible evidence for an Aeolic phase in the form of distinctly Aeolic features embedded in the formulaic system of Homeric diction. I also maintain that these features complement the distinctly Ionic features that are likewise embedded in this formulaic system. In order to prove the existence of such embedded Aeolic and Ionic features, it is essential to locate not their linguistic archaisms but rather their linguistic innovations. Examples of such innovations include the Aeolic perfect participle in -ovτ- and the Attic-Ionic particle ἄν.

Another example of distinctly Aeolic innovations embedded in Homeric diction is a set of forms in dative plural -εσσι, of the type βελέεσσι at *Iliad* XXIV 759 and ἐπέεσσι at *Iliad* I 519 and elsewhere. Such Homeric forms, as Alain Blanc has observed (2008:444 and 2009:148, with reference to Witte 1914:54), point to the existence of an Aeolic component in Homeric diction. As Blanc has also observed (2009:148–149), the actual formation of this type of dative plural within the formulaic system of Homeric poetry must have taken place during an Ionic phase in the evolution of Homeric diction. A similar though slightly different observation has been made by Albio Cesare Cassio (2006), who points to epigraphical evidence in arguing that Homeric forms like βελέεσσι and ἐπέεσσι must be Aeolic: he cites as an Asiatic attestation the form ἐπιφανέεσσι in an inscription from Aeolic Cyme (second century BCE) and, as a European

attestation, the form  $\tauειχ\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\sigma\iota$  in an inscription from Skotoussa in Thessaly (also second century BCE).<sup>6</sup>

By contrast with my argumentation here concerning the Aeolic perfect participle in  $-\omicron\nu\tau-$  and dative plural in  $-\epsilon\sigma\sigma\iota$ , Parker's own argument (2008) does not take into consideration the evidence of such innovating forms as embedded in Homeric diction. And yet, this evidence from Homeric poetry is most compelling, especially when we consider the relatively early dating we have for the time when this poetry took shape, around the late eighth and early seventh centuries BCE in the Ionian Dodecapolis (Frame 2009 ch. 11, followed by Nagy 2009/2010 {169|170} I §§38, 167, 188, 231; II §249). To be contrasted are the later datings of the attested epigraphical evidence we have from Lesbos, Thessaly, and Boeotia.

And why should the evidence of Homeric poetry be discounted? Such a question is addressed only indirectly at the end of Parker's article (2008:460n138), where he says that his research has led him to doubt the need for positing the presence of "Aeolisms" in Homeric poetry. But he says this only because he has already concluded that there is no such thing as an Aeolic proto-dialect that could possibly be derived from the attested dialects of Lesbos, Thessaly, and Boeotia.

Since Parker (2008) does not consider the formulation of Parry (1932) concerning the presence of an Aeolic component in Homeric diction, his argument is not directly relevant to that formulation—except insofar as the concept of a proto-Aeolic dialect is concerned. Even if Parker were right in arguing that the Lesbian and the Thessalian and the Boeotian dialects do not stem from a proto-Aeolic dialect as a common source, there could still have existed in the

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<sup>6</sup> As for the integration of these Aeolic forms into Homeric diction, Cassio argues that it could have happened only in a Lesbian context where the type  $*-\omicron\iota\sigma\iota \text{ } \acute{\epsilon}\pi\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\sigma\iota$  could become  $*-\omicron\iota\sigma' \acute{\epsilon}\pi\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\sigma\iota$ , after the loss of  $\acute{\epsilon}$ -; in a Thessalian context, such a formulaic transformation would have been impossible, since the  $\acute{\epsilon}$ - was still preserved in this dialect even as late as the fourth century BCE. For a different interpretation of this epigraphical evidence, see Blanc 2009:148. See also in general García-Ramón 1990:148–149.

evolution of Homeric diction a dialectal phase that corresponds to what is called *Aeolic*. As we have already seen, such a Homeric dialectal phase could in any case be called *Lesbian* in the general sense of referring to the dialect of the Greek-speaking populations on the islands of Lesbos and Tenedos and on the facing mainland of Asia Minor, since they all called themselves *Aioleîs* ‘Aeolians’ in the historical period of the first millennium BCE.

So, at the very least, we can say that the Homeric attestations of Aeolic perfect participles in -οντ- and of Aeolic dative plurals of the type βελέεσσι and ἐπέεσσι provide evidence for a Lesbian component in Homeric diction. But the fact is, there are also Homeric attestations of other Aeolic forms that are no longer attested in the Aeolic dialect of Asia Minor but are still well attested in the Aeolic dialects of Europe. For a salient example, I quote from my earlier work with reference to the forms ποτί / προτί, which are deeply embedded in Homeric diction (Nagy 1972:69):

[The preservation of ποτί / προτί] is directly ascribable to the failure of [\**poti* | \**proti* >] \*ποσί / \*προσί to survive in spoken Ionic; ποτί is still attested in [...] the Thessalian and Boeotian dialects. In Mycenaean, the corresponding form shows assibilation: *po-si*. As for προτί, the extent to which it is embedded in the oldest layers of epic is illustrated by the fact that out of its 60 Homeric occurrences, 57 are located before words that originally started with *ɸ-* [Meister 1921:256]. Also relevant are Arcadian πός and Ionic πρόσ; these forms were probably prehistoric *sandhi*-variants of ποτί and προτί. {170|171}

In this case, we know that the corresponding form in everyday Lesbian speech was πρόσ, exactly like the Ionic form, instead of ποτί or προτί (Janko 1979:28–29). And we also know that such a Lesbian form resulted from a lively *Sprachbund* that linked the Aeolic and the Ionic

dialects of Asia Minor with each other. So the Homeric forms ποτί and προτί must have stemmed from European Aeolic forms.

On the basis of such evidence, then, we can see that it is not enough to posit a Lesbian dialectal component in Homeric diction, and that is why I have argued for an overall Aeolic dialectal component that integrates Thessalian forms.

### **A Thessalian connection in the evolution of Homeric poetry**

The integration of Thessalian forms in Homeric diction is parallel to the integration of Thessalian myths in the overall framework of Homeric poetry. As an example, I highlight here the figure of Achilles, native son of Thessaly in the Homeric *Iliad*. As I argue in *Homer the Preclassic* (Nagy 2009/2010 ch. 7) Achilles was a premier epic hero of the European Aeolians of Thessaly just as he was a premier cult hero of the Asiatic Aeolians of the Troad during the era when this epic real estate was still being controlled by the city of Mytilene as leader of a confederation of five Aeolian cities of Lesbos. I give here an epitome of my argumentation (Nagy 2009/2010 II §§47–49):

As we learn from the stylized account of Philostratus in the *Heroikos* (52.3–54.1), the tomb of Achilles in the Troad was the site of seasonally recurring sacrifices offered to the hero by Aeolians. But these Aeolians were Europeans. That is, they were Thessalians, who performed the ritual by stealth because they were considered to be enemies of the Asiatic Aeolians. Relevant is the fact that the Thessalians were not only enemies of the Asiatic Aeolians but also allies of Athens during the era of the Athenian tyrants, the Peisistratidai. Herodotus (5.63.3) highlights the ongoing alliance between the dynasts of Thessaly and the Peisistratidai of Athens.



The Thessalians claimed to be the prototypes of the Aeolians on the island of Lesbos and, by extension, of the Aeolians on the Asiatic mainland. As we have seen, Thessaly was understood to be the point of origin for the *Aeolian migration*, that is, for the colonization of the Aeolian cities on the island of Lesbos and, by extension, of the Aeolian cities on the Asiatic mainland. Just as the Athenians figured themselves as the prototypes of the Ionians of Asia Minor and of its outlying islands in the context of myths about an *Ionian migration*, so also the Thessalians figured themselves as the prototypes of the Aeolians of Asia Minor and of its outlying islands, especially of Lesbos, in the context of myths about an *Aeolian migration*. {171|172}

What I have just formulated can be reconciled with two references in the *Iliad* to the capture of all Lesbos by a single hero, Achilles of Thessaly (IX 128–131, 270–273). I argue that the story of this capture was a charter myth that accounted for the early appropriation of Lesbos by the Thessalians and for a much later attempt at reappropriation in the specific context of their alliance with the Athenians. In terms of such a charter myth, the tomb of Achilles could be located not only at the site of the *Akhilleion*, as owned and operated by the Mytilenaeans of Lesbos, but also at the site of the city of Sigeion, as owned and operated by the Athenians. Homeric poetry was cited as testimony to validate either of these two rival sites.

In sum, the sharing of the myths about Achilles by Asiatic and European Aeolians meant that each of the two sides accepted the Aeolian identity of the other side, despite their mutual hostility.

## The mythology of Homer the Aeolian

At the end of the narrative of the Homeric *Vita* 1, the so-called “pseudo-Herodotean” *Life of Homer*, we find a relative chronology that is based on a myth claiming that Homer was an Aeolian (Nagy 2009/2010 II §28):

One hundred thirty years after the Capture of Troy, Aeolian cities were founded on the island of Lesbos (*Vita* 1.540–543), which had previously existed without any city (1.543, *apolis*).

Twenty years after this settlement, Aeolian Cyme was founded (1.543–544).

Eighteen years after this founding, Aeolian Smyrna was founded by Cyme and, at this moment, Homer was born in Smyrna (1.545–547); thus Homer was born 168 years after the Capture of Troy (1.552–553).

Six hundred twenty-two years after the birth of Homer, Xerxes crossed the Hellespont from Asia Minor to Europe (1.547–550).

There are a number of different myths that center of the dating of Homer’s birth, and each one of these myths promotes different political interests (Nagy 2009/2010 II §29). For now, however, I concentrate on the myth I just paraphrased because it is evidently Aeolian in origin. That is why it highlights the idea that the city of Smyrna was still Aeolian when Homer was born there. That is, Smyrna had not yet turned Ionian. In terms of this myth, the birthplace of Homer was an Aeolian city, and Homer was an Aeolian by birth. In the Athenocentric narrative of the Homeric *Vita* 2, by contrast, Homer was born in Smyrna at a time after the *Ionian migration*, after this city had already become Ionian (Nagy 2009/2010 II §§24–27). To put it another way, we see here the Homer of a diminished Aeolian Dodecapolis who is becoming

redefined as the Homer of an {172|173} augmented Ionian Dodecapolis (Nagy 2009/2010 II §30). This version of the myth, which is pro-Ionian and anti-Aeolian, boasts that Homer was an Ionian by birth but concedes that the city was formerly Aeolian. So the myth is saying that *Homer originates from a city that was once Aeolian but is now Ionian, just as Homeric poetry originates from a poetic tradition that was once Aeolic but is now Ionic*. I see here an Ionian aetiology for the principle that I have been calling the *Aeolic default*. In terms of this principle, as we have seen, Homeric diction defaults to its Aeolic component wherever an Ionic component is lacking.

### One last look at the Aeolic default

In the “pseudo-Herodotean” *Life of Homer*, the narrator seeks to back up his claim that Homer was born an Aeolian by arguing that Homer’s usage reveals his true identity as a native speaker of Aeolic (*Vita* 1.517–537; commentary in Nagy 2009/2010 I §100). And the narrator highlights as his one example an Aeolic word that he has found in Homeric usage: it is πεμπώβολα ‘having five prongs’ at *Iliad* I 463. The part of this compound adjective that means ‘five’ is Aeolic πέμπε, to be contrasted with Ionic πέντε. In Aeolic, \*k<sup>w</sup> becomes π before ε, whereas it becomes τ before ε in Ionic.<sup>7</sup> {173|174}

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<sup>7</sup> The argument could be made that πεμπώβολα is not Aeolic but Ionic, on the grounds that the labiovelar \*k<sup>w</sup> of \*penk<sup>w</sup>e, which becomes τ before ε in Ionic, would be expected to become π before ω or ο or α in that dialect. In terms of this argument, the form πεντώβολος ‘worth five obols [όβολοί]’ would not count as a counterexample, on the grounds that (1) the earliest attestation is no earlier than the fifth century, in Aristophanes, and (2) this compound formation would have been created at a time when morphological analogy by way of non-compound πέντε, which was of course no longer \*penk<sup>w</sup>e, would have overridden the old phonological rule that requires \*k<sup>w</sup> to become π before ω or ο or α in Ionic. But I do not accept this argument. I counterargue that, already in the earliest Ionic phases of Homeric diction, morphological analogy by way of non-compound πέντε prevented \*k<sup>w</sup> from becoming π before ω or ο or α. For example, there are a number of Homeric compound-formants in πεντα-, such as πενταέτηρον at *Iliad* II 403, where the expected phonological result of \*πεμπα- is prevented by morphological analogy with non-compound πέντε. Even the vocalism α of πεντα- is of course due to morphological analogy, by way of the paradigm-leveling that takes place in the process of counting from one to ten, where the α of τρια- and τετρα- and έπτα- and δεκα- levels out the ε of πεντε- and converts it to πεντα-. As for the ω of πεμπώβολα, which results from an old lengthening by way of a morphophonemic rule that Wackernagel

This same Aeolic word πεμπώβολα ‘having five prongs’, I note, was the first example of Homeric Aeolicisms that I highlighted at the beginning of my presentation. And the point that the narrator makes here has given me the opportunity to take one last look at the principle of the *Aeolic default*. I quote here the passage in its entirety:

Ὅτι δὲ ἦν Αἰολεὺς Ὅμηρος καὶ οὐτε Ἴων οὐτε Δωριεύς, τοῖς τε εἰρημένοις  
 δεδήλωταί μοι καὶ δὴ καὶ τοῖσδε τεκμαίρεσθαι παρέχει. ἄνδρα ποιητὴν  
 τηλικούτον εἰκός ἐστι τῶν νομίμων τῶν παρὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ποιοῦντα ἐς τὴν  
 ποίησιν ἦτοι τὰ κάλλιστα ἐξευρόντα ποιέειν ἢ τὰ ἐωυτοῦ, πάτρια ἐόντα. ἤδη  
 τοίνυν τὸ ἐνθένδε αὐτοὶ τῶν ἐπέων ἀκούοντες κρινεῖτε. ἱεροποιῆν γὰρ ἢ τὴν  
 κρατίστην ἐξευρῶν ἐποίησεν ἢ τὴν ἐωυτοῦ πατρίδι προσήκουσαν. λέγει γὰρ ᾧδε·  
 αὐέρυσαν μὲν πρῶτα καὶ ἔσφαξαν καὶ ἔδειραν,  
 μηρούς τ’ ἐξέταμον κατὰ τε κνίσση ἐκάλυψαν,  
 δίπτυχα ποιήσαντες, ἐπ’ αὐτῶν δ’ ὠμοθέτησαν.

[*Iliad* I 459–461]

ἐν τούτοις ὑπὲρ ὀσφύος οὐδὲν εἴρηται ἢ ἐς τὰ ἱερὰ χρέονται· μονώτατον γὰρ τῶν  
 Ἑλλήνων τὸ Αἰολικὸν ἔθνος οὐ καίει ὀσφύν. δηλοῖ δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖσδε τοῖς ἔπεσιν  
 ὅτι Αἰολεὺς ὦν δικαίως τοῖς νόμοις τοῖς τούτων ἐχρήτο·

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(1889) described as *Dehnungsgesetz* (on which I have more to say in Nagy 2008:34; cf. Blanc 2008:79n98), I have found Attic-Ionic compounds that clearly show πεντ- and not πεμπ- before the morphologically lengthened ω. A case in point is this passage in Xenophon *Cynegeticus* 2.5: τὸ δὲ μέγεθος τὰ μὲν ἐνόδια διώρυγα, τριώρυγα, τετρώρυγα, πεντῶρυγα, τὰ δὲ δίκτυα δεκῶρυγα, εἰκοσῶρυγα, τριακοντῶρυγα ‘As for the length [of the various hunting nets], the snares [that block the pathways of the hunted animals] are two or three or four or five arm-spans long [διώρυγα, τριώρυγα, τετρώρυγα, πεντῶρυγα], while the nets proper are ten and twenty and thirty arm-spans long [δεκῶρυγα, εἰκοσῶρυγα, τριακοντῶρυγα]’. Accordingly, I stand by my statement that πεμπώβολα is Aeolic and not Ionic.

καῖε δ' ἐπὶ σχίζης ὁ γέρων, ἐπὶ δ' αἶθοπα οἶνον  
 λειῖβε· νέοι δὲ παρ' αὐτὸν ἔχον πεμπώβολα χερσίν.

[*Iliad* I 462–463]

Αἰολέες γὰρ μόνοι τὰ σπλάγχνα ἐπὶ πέντε ὀβελῶν ὀπτῶσιν, οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι Ἕλληνες  
 ἐπὶ τριῶν. καὶ γὰρ ὀνομάζουσιν οἱ Αἰολεῖς τὰ πέντε πέμπε.

“pseudo-Herodotean” *Life of Homer* (Vita 1.517–537)

That Homer was an Aeolian and not an Ionian nor a Dorian is demonstrated by what has been said so far, and it can be proved even more decisively by way of the following: it is likely that a songmaker [*poiētēs*] who is of such ancient pedigree, and who draws upon ancestral customs prevalent among humans, would be making [*poiēîn*] things take place inside his songmaking [*poiēsis*] that were either the most beautiful things he could ever make [*poiēîn*] with his poetic invention or his very own things as he inherited them from his ancestors. Now you will be able to judge for yourselves by listening to his verses. So, in creating [*poiēîn*] a sacrificial scene [*hieropoiia*], what he did was either create the best such scene that he could make with his poetic invention or make it fit the way it {174|175} was done in his own native land. For this is the way Homer speaks [*Iliad* I 459–461]:

They [= the sacrificers] pulled the heads [of the sacrificial animals] back and  
 they slit their throats and flayed them.

Then they cut out the thigh-bones and covered them with fat,  
 with one fold on the top and the other fold on the bottom, and they put pieces  
 of raw meat on top.

In these verses, there is nothing said about the use of the tenderloin for the sacrifice. And that is because the Aeolians are the only ethnic group among the Greeks who do not burn the tenderloin for sacrifice. And, once again in the following verses, he [= Homer] shows that he is an Aeolian who correctly follows the customs of his people (*Iliad* I 462–463):

And the old man burned them [= the thigh bones] over splinters of wood, and  
 bright wine did he  
 pour over them, while the young men were getting ready for him the five-  
 pronged forks that they were holding in their hands.

You see, the Aeolians are the only ones among the Greeks who roast the innards with forks that have five prongs [πεμπώβολα], while the other Greeks use forks that have three prongs. And of course the word that the Aeolians use for ‘five’ [pente] is *pempe*.

“pseudo-Herodotean” *Life of Homer* (Vita 1.517–537)

In highlighting the form πεμπώβολα ‘having five prongs’, the narrator of the “pseudo-Herodotean” *Life of Homer* is making the point that Homer defaults to Aeolic usage when he speaks about customs that are most familiar to him, as in the case of the Aeolian custom of using five-prong forks rather than three-prong forks for roasting sacrificial meat at an animal sacrifice. This cultural detail about an Aeolian custom is a fitting symbol of the linguistic process that I have been describing as the Aeolic default, where Homeric diction defaults to an Aeolic form in the absence of a corresponding Ionic form. It is this linguistic process that generates the Aeolic component of Homeric diction.

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