



Kernos

Revue internationale et pluridisciplinaire de religion
grecque antique

25 | 2012
Varia

Ancient Theologies and Modern Times

S.C. Humphreys



Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/kernos/2111>

DOI: 10.4000/kernos.2111

ISSN: 2034-7871

Publisher

Centre international d'étude de la religion grecque antique

Printed version

Date of publication: 26 October 2012

Number of pages: 149-161

ISSN: 0776-3824

Electronic reference

S.C. Humphreys, « Ancient Theologies and Modern Times », *Kernos* [Online], 25 | 2012, Online since 20 November 2014, connection on 17 October 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/kernos/2111> ; DOI : 10.4000/kernos.2111

Ancient Theologies and Modern Times

Abstract: Lobeck's *Aglaophamus* (1829) has been read as beginning modern research on Orphism and the 'ancient theology'. Replacing it in its historical context opens up new perspectives.

Résumé : L'*Aglaophamus* de Lobeck (1829) a été lu comme les prémices de la recherche moderne sur l'orphisme et la « théologique antique ». En le replaçant dans son contexte historique particulier, on ouvre de nouvelles perspectives.

D.P. Walker's *The Ancient Theology* (1972) has not made as much impact as Frances Yates' *Art of Memory* (1966), but is based on the same strategy of identifying an influential complex of ideas and tracking its effects and transformations. For the history of the classical tradition Walker's book is particularly important because it deals with major ingredients in recurrent efforts to reconcile pagan classical thought with Christianity, from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century.

The basis for this reconciliation was the claim that God had originally given his revelation to all mankind; for the most part it had been distorted by priests, either because abstract truths had to be veiled in symbolic imagery to persuade simple minds, or merely to increase their own wealth and/or power. However, the revelation had been secretly preserved and handed down by wise men, the 'ancient theologians'. The list of these sages varied: in addition to Orpheus, Hermes Trismegistus, Moses, Pythagoras, and Plato, it might include Zoroaster, the Chaldaean oracles, the Eleusinian Mysteries, Confucius, and Indian brahmins ('gymnosophists').¹

Walker's story ends in the early eighteenth century, with the influence of Neoplatonism on science (Kepler and Newton), deism, comparative religion, missionary activities (the Jesuits in China), and freemasonry. This note offers a continuation.

In the nineteenth century key elements in the 'ancient theology' complex were repositioned. It no longer seemed appropriate explicitly to Christianise Plato; instead, he was to be read purely as a philosopher (the *Timaeus*, earlier considered his supreme work, became an embarrassment). It was firmly

¹ See WALKER (1953), (1972); MITTER (1977), p. 49.

asserted that Greek religion was a matter of ritual practice without dogma or theology.² Orpheus was not a historical figure, or at least had left no writings.³ On the other hand, the task of accounting for non-classical pagan traditions was being greatly increased and complicated by more intensive contact with China, decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs and of cuneiform, the expansion of British power in India, and a rise in missionary activities around the globe.

Missionaries were still interested in the idea of an original, universal revelation, emphasising either traces of ethical monotheism (Confucius, Islam, Indian *bhakti* cults⁴) or encouragement of polytheism and idolatry by priests.⁵ Others, however, were transforming the idea of original revelation into a historicist concern with chronological priority, and hence into theories of diffusion – from Egypt to India, or from India to the West.⁶

The ancient theology and diffusionism were combined in the climate that provoked Lobeck's *Aglaophamus*. Today, Christian August Lobeck (1781-1860) figures in histories of comparative philology as a traditionalist who failed to recognise the epochal significance of Bopp's demonstration of the common origin of the Indo-European languages, including Sanskrit, and in histories of classical philology as having conclusively shown that all texts attributed to Orpheus were late, and as one of the main critics of Creuzer's *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker* (1810-1812).

A closer look at the historical context may suggest more sympathy for Lobeck's attitude to Sanskrit, and a more nuanced assessment of his place in the history of the study of Greek religion. Sanskrit at first seemed exciting mainly because it offered new evidence on myth, religion, and early poetry.⁷ Bopp himself was a student of Karl Joseph Windischmann, whose interests were in these fields; Bopp published an edition with Latin translation and commentary of parts of the *Mahabharata* in 1819. As the appendix to this paper shows, many of those boldly rushing into this field had no idea that there might be criteria for valid comparison in either philology or religion. If Lobeck (like G.F. Herrmann) had a low opinion of Sanskritists, he had some justification.

Aglaophamus does not attack Creuzer by name (though it has a warm reference to his critic J.H. Voss). We do not know how Lobeck framed his mischievous suggestion that the Eleusinian mysteries taught initiates the higher refinements of

² PARKER (2011), p. 31-2 traces this idea back to the 17th c.

³ Hermes Trismegistus had already been dealt with by Casaubon in 1614: GRAFTON (1983).

⁴ Cf. RAYCHAUDHURI (1988), p. 146-151.

⁵ There was a strong input from Protestant anti-Catholic discourse (see now WALSHAM [2011]), also taken up by anticlerical milieux in France (see JUDET DE LA COMBE [1998], p. 287 on Benjamin Constant).

⁶ See e.g. the maps of diffusion of myths in GÖRRES (1810).

⁷ See JAMME (1991); SHAFFER (1975); SASSI (1984), GRAF (1993) on Heyne.

Indian cookery (see appendix); Creuzer did derive Orphic mysteries from India.⁸ Creuzer, in any case, was not the only target, even if he was conspicuous among German classicists of the period. Creuzer was, indeed, an adherent of the ‘ancient theology’, but he was not alone.⁹ Each of the three sections of *Aglaophamus* deals with a mystery cult – Eleusinian, Orphic, Samothracian – and in each case the issue was whether secret mystical wisdom, concerned especially with the afterlife, was revealed to initiates. The connection of such mystical teaching to Greek philosophy and to belief in the immortality of the soul passed through the eponymous figure of *Aglaophamus* – ‘proclaimer of the sublime’ – who supposedly transmitted Orpheus’ theological teachings to Pythagoras.

Lobeck was not the first to question the antiquity of the texts attributed to Orpheus, or even the first to propose the correct explanation of the ‘mystical’ term *konxompax*.¹⁰ But he made a more systematic attempt than earlier editors to collect, arrange, and date Orphic fragments concerned with ‘theogony’; it was this argument that (for some readers) removed the last grounds for belief in ‘genuine’ Orphic poetry.

Aglaophamus – probably more often cited than read in its entirety (it is not an easy read) – was constructed in later research as marking a rupture, a decisive turn away from earlier, less philologically scientific discussions.¹¹ This construction then justified not only reduction of the history of research (when it figured at all) to the post-Lobeck era, but also a selective treatment that often ignores issues outside this reductive framework. Its questions were framed by historicism and by nineteenth century classical philology’s conception of its disciplinary skills and tasks: how were stages in the development of the Mysteries and versions of the Orphic texts to be dated? Could ancestors of the later texts be reconstructed? They were also framed, less explicitly, by equally modern presuppositions about what was essentially ‘Greek’ or must be non-Greek,¹² by unexamined complexes of ideas about ‘religion’, and by often timid curiosity about the possible influence of Greek religious beliefs and rituals on early Christianity.

⁸ Satire on such topics was not a European prerogative; Indians too ridiculed diffusionist theories and the assumption that Indians needed European influences to make them civilised. In one of the satires of Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay (1838-1894) a white parrot who has come to India to find food and ‘civilise’ Indians by urging them to imitate it explains that it began life as a pig near the Black Sea (theories of the origin of Indo-European?) and was transformed through being eaten by fierce two-legged animals called humans who mistook it for an eel (CHATTERJEE [1986], p. 60; cf. RAYCHAUDHURI [1988], p. 162). On Wilford see BAYLY (2000).

⁹ See ASSMANN (1997) on eighteenth-century Neoplatonism; HUMPHREYS (2001) on Creuzer and his critics.

¹⁰ See appendix; MÜLLER (1830) attributes it to Boeckh. HERRMANN (1805) had already cast doubt on the Orphic texts.

¹¹ See e.g. ROHDE (1890), p. 222, and (1893), Appendix IX, on the Eleusinian Mysteries and the Orphic theogony.

¹² In the case of Orpheus, ‘Thracian’ or more exotically ‘shamanic’ – an idea that still has its attraction. See HUMPHREYS (2001) on Preller.

These two latter preoccupations are well illustrated by two publications of the 1890s, Erwin Rohde's *Psyche* (1890, 1893) and Ernst Maass's *Orpheus* (1895). Rohde claims to be analysing Greek ideas about the afterlife objectively, without allowing Christian conceptions to distort his account, but does not explain why he chose the 'cult of souls' as the focus of his work on Greek religion. Maass explicitly cites Lobeck (along with Dörpfeld's excavations in Athens) as the inspiration for his work; but what impressed him in Lobeck was the emphasis on historical change and development in religion. This is a valid reading; Lobeck is nicely ironical about scholars who assume that religion never changes. But the scope of Maass's historical narrative is very different, beginning with Orpheus as an early Greek god and tracing later stages of Orphic practices, beliefs, and texts, to end with questions about their influence on early Christianity.

Maass does not mention the gold tablets found in graves in southern Italy and Sicily and edited by Domenico Comparetti from 1879 on, but they appear in later editions of Rohde's *Psyche* and in Albrecht Dieterich's study of the Orphic hymns (1891) and in his *Nekyia* (1893). As Graf's account of the history of research on the tablets (2007) shows, their publication strengthened the belief that 'orphism' promised its initiates a blessed afterlife, and hence it could be seen as an individualistic religion of salvation – and as such, perhaps, comparable with Christianity.¹³

The turn of the century was a favourable period for work on Christianity's historical background. The topic could still be controversial,¹⁴ but it was respectable enough to think that St Paul had introduced Greek elements into Christian thought; and there were philologists superbly equipped with disciplinary skills who had also been brought up on the New Testament. The expertise used by Lobeck in dating Orphic texts was developed in brilliant studies of both language and genre – *Formgeschichte* – by Richard Reitzenstein and Eduard Norden.¹⁵ From the viewpoint of the history of the study of Greek religion, interest in the Hellenistic background was a valuable counterweight in a period otherwise heavily influenced by evolutionist anthropology.

There were still attempts to insist that 'Orphism' was not a religion, that there were no orphic sects, and that 'Orpheus' was just a label attached (for reasons that were left unclear) to a variety of texts. The position was somewhat changed, however, by reports and eventual publication of the 'Derveni papyrus', found in the remains of a funeral pyre dated before 300 B.C.E. near Thessaloniki. It proved to be a commentary on a theogonic poem with 'Orphic' characteristics.¹⁶

¹³ DIETERICH (1891), (1893); GRAF (2007).

¹⁴ See GRAF (2007). Some of the claims made for 'orphism' – for example by MACCHIORO (1920), (1930) – were indeed wild.

¹⁵ REITZENSTEIN (1910), NORDEN (1912).

¹⁶ WEST (1983), LAKS and MOST (1997), BETEGH (2004), BERNABÉ (2005), KOUREMENOS a.o. (2006).

This shifted attention back to philological attempts to reconstruct classical or preclassical Orphic theogonies, with other interests centering mainly on the identity or social role of the commentator. Research is still haunted by the idea that ‘real’ Orphism must be preclassical and probably non-Greek, either ‘oriental’ or ‘shamanic’; hence classical and postclassical developments in Greece can be characterized as ‘hocus pocus’¹⁷ – a confession that scholars do not know what questions to ask. This absence of serious critical questions is both fostered and disguised by the production of collective volumes in which various specialists pursue their own interests.¹⁸

The history of the classical tradition is too often seen as a specialized interest that is not essential to the study of the ancient world, and is particularly important for the middle ages and the Renaissance.¹⁹ A critical historical perspective on the places of ancient societies in the global imaginaire must however deal with ruptures as well as continuities. The modern attempt to break with the classical tradition produced massive reconfigurations. The relevant points for this paper are that there were major changes in the concept of ‘religion’ (driving most classical scholars into an untheorized phenomenology that simply allows them not to examine their ideas), and that Greek and Roman ‘religion’ were constructed as ‘dogma without theology’ (all theology being reclassified as ‘philosophy’), religious practice (before Christianity) being treated as ‘traditional’ – perhaps with exotic origins – or as ‘failure of nerve’, ‘syncretism’, and/or ‘oriental influence’.

There are some signs now that the categories that shape research on the ancient world are being critically reexamined. Garth Fowden pointed out already in 1986, discussing the ‘Hermetica’, that we need to move on from Casaubon’s questions about the historicity of Hermes Trismegistus and the date of the texts to think about the ‘author functions’ of Hermes (how was he imagined as an author? what did it mean to attribute texts to him?),²⁰ and the same is true of Orpheus. Jean Rudhardt has asked new questions about the theology of the Orphic hymns.²¹ We have evidence that at least in Attica in the second century C.E. ‘mystery plays’ were performed and watched both by initiates at Eleusis and by a city-based Dionysian group, the Iobacchoi.²²

¹⁷ WEST (1997); cf. WEST (1983), p. 29, ‘Dabbling in religion’. In the *Neue Pauly’s Rezeptionsgeschichte* section orphism appears under “Okkultismus”, STUCKRAD (2001).

¹⁸ MASARACCHIO (1993), LAKS and MOST (1997), BERNABÉ and CASADESUS (2008), EDMONDS (2011).

¹⁹ Even the recently founded *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* has relatively few papers on the history of scholarship.

²⁰ FOWDEN (1986), p. 29, citing FOUCAULT (1980). Cf. GAGNÉ (2007) on the Orphic *Physika*.

²¹ RUDHARDT (1991); cf. RIEDWEG (1993); SOURVINOU-INWOOD (2005), p. 173–79. See also GRAF (2009).

²² Eleusis: SOURVINOU-INWOOD (2003), p. 29; Iobacchoi, *IG II²* 1368 (cf. HUMPHREYS [2004], p. 266–267). MAASS (1895) thought the Iobacchoi were Orphic, identifying the dramatic

While elements of the Eleusinian ‘sacred drama’ may go back to the archaic or classical period, we are not entitled to assume that there were no changes over the course of the centuries, still less that there were no changes in the ways the audience experienced what they saw.²³

In a way, perhaps, research interest has now returned full circle to the period and milieu in which the ‘Ancient Theology’ was elaborated, i.e. late antique Neoplatonism. But we now see it as a period of many theologies, with varying cosmological, dramatic, gnostic, and philosophical tendencies.²⁴ Perhaps even, as we come to know more about the movements of goods, people, and ideas around the Mediterranean and further into Asia during late Antiquity and on into the ‘middle ages’, cross-fertilization between the ‘ancient world’ and India may not seem a laughable suggestion. But it would no longer be seen as a movement from primitive and exotic sources into a more civilized world. Everywhere, thinkers were trying to make sense of the universe and of history with a mixture of local and exogenous materials.²⁵

S.C. HUMPHREYS

Rhamnous
Cotswold Road
OXFORD OX2 9JG
E-mail: schumphreys@wordprocessing.co.uk

character Proteurhythmos as Orpheus (HARRISON [1903], p. 475-477, 655-659, suggested Eros Protogonos). It seems likely that the Iobacchoi were influenced by the Orphic creator-figure Protogonos (see WEST [1983]; SOURVINOU-INWOOD [2005], p. 174-75), but shifted it to emphasize Dionysus’ links with dance and theatre. See also CALAME (1991), p. 200-201, on the history of the terms *drân* and *drômenon*.

²³ SOURVINOU-INWOOD (2003) thinks that the Eleusinian ritual was fixed in the 6th century; it is rather tempting to assume that in Aristophanes’ *Frogs* the context between Aeschylus and Euripides takes the place of the secret ‘sacred drama’. SOURVINOU-INWOOD (2005) shows more interest in tracing changes.

²⁴ See CHADWICK (1980) on Gnosticism.

²⁵ LUHRMANN (1989) provides a model analysis of how this ‘making sense’ process works.

Appendix 1

Calcutta meets Königsberg

Christian LOBECK, *Aglaophamus* (1829), p. 773-783.²⁶

One further topic remains to be explained; the meaning of the names Orpheus gave to the gatekeepers of the winds. If I were to think that the first, Amalcides, came from *malacia* (softness), or taking another reading (Hamaclides) conjecture that this name and the rest denoted some of the first-born, first speaking beings, I greatly fear that it would seem to most men *passé* and unworthy of our century. Style, and the taste of the reader, have changed. Other arts, though – no doubt due to lack of cultivation – still cling modestly to their ancient roots; but mythology has always been very like Libya, which according to the Greek proverb each year brings forth some new monstrosity, and our own age has made a degree of progress that the old sages could hardly suspect or even imagine.

For since the most learned president of the Calcutta Academy, Jones, has announced that the sacred tales of India are marvellously in accord with Greek mythology in Lilius Gyraldus' collection [1548], this quasi heaven-sent message has so converted and revolutionalized scholarship that everyone at all in the know has given up reading Greek and Latin texts and seeks help in interpreting the ancients only from the pundits and their mouthpieces. Once this track had been opened up, so many and such incredible things have been brought to light in just a few years that if we only wait a little there will be nothing unknown in this whole field of scholarship. So we may hope that it will soon become clear what these Orphic terms mean. They do seem Sanskrit to me. For, in the first place, it is clearly to be understood that Orpheus' phrase in Hymn VIII, addressed to the moon,

Ἐλθέ μάκαιρ', εὐφρων, εὐάστρος, φέγγει τῷ σῶ
λαμπομένῃ, σῶζουσα τεοὺς ἰκέτας ἐς Λοκούρη.

is Sanskrit. The leading philologists have been completely deluded in their treatment of this passage – Julius Scaliger, who decided it was corrupt, Ruhnken, who emended it (ἰκέτας σέο, κούρη), and finally Hermann who even dared print this conjecture in his text. What need of further words? Orpheus wrote just what the old editions reproduce:

²⁶ Several of Lobbeck's notes are omitted.

... φέγγει τῷ σῶ
λαμπομένη σῶζουσα τεοὺς ἐκέτας ἐς Λοκούρη.

And if anyone asserts that this line does not conform to the laws of metre – well, those laws were written by philologists and not mythographers. The meaning is excellent: ‘Shining with thine own light, shelter in Locure those who humbly call on thee’, as Wilford translates in his ‘Essay on the Sacred Isles in the West’, *Asiatic Researches* XI, 43. Locure, in case you didn’t know, is the Sanskrit name for the lunar paradise, originally denoting amber, from which derive many place-names both ancient and modern: Liguria, Laceria, Loire, Leicester.

Furthermore, in the Eleusinian mysteries, which we know were founded by Orpheus’ fellow-student Eumolpus, the sacred officials spoke Sanskrit. Everyone who has used Meursius knows that at the end of this ritual, when the congregation was dismissed, the words Κόγξ ’Ομπαξ were proclaimed as they left. What they meant, no one before the present age had an inkling. Some – impiously altering the genuine reading – thought it should be emended to κόγξ, βόμβαξ. But now this same Wilford, the darling of the symbolists, in his note, ‘Remarks on the names of the Cabirian deities’ (*Asiatic Researches* V, 297) has taught us that these words are perfectly sound and Samscredanic: ‘At the conclusion of the mysteries of Eleusis the congregation was dismissed in these words: Κόγξ, ’Ομ, Πάξ. These mysterious words have been considered hitherto as inexplicable; but they are pure Sanskrit and used to this day by Brahmens at the conclusion of religious rites. They are written in the language of the Gods, as the Hindus call the language of their sacred books, *Candscha*, *Om*, *Pacsha*. *Canscha* signifies the object of our most ardent wishes. Om is the famous monosyllaba used both at the beginning and conclusion of a prayer or any religious rite, like *Amen*. *Pacsha* exactly answers to the obsolete Latin word *vix*; it signifies change, course, stead, place, turn of work, duty, fortune, etc.’ (p. 300).²⁷ This interpretation has been embraced by Fr. Muenther (‘Erklärung einer griechischen Inschrift’, p. 18), Fr. Creuzer (*Symbolica* IV, 573), the famous Uvarov (*Essai sur les mystères d’Eleusis*, 26 f.), Schelling (*Ueber die Gottheiten von Samothrake*, 91), and others too. But this shows how valuable even a slight knowledge, or no knowledge at all, of Sanskrit literature is for classical scholarship. For what Greek scholar could ever have suspected this? Hesychius’ text is: Κόγξ ’Ομπαξ: ἐπιφώνημα τετελεσμένοις. Καὶ τῆς δικαστικῆς ψήφου ἥχος, ὡς ὁ τῆς κλεψύδρας. παρὰ δ’ Ἀττικοῖς βλόψ. Now

²⁷ By the same trick Drummond (who recently proved that the twelve patriarchs, and the twelve emperors of Suetonius, were neither patriarchs nor emperors but the signs of the Zodiac) has thrown light on a passage in Euripides’ *Bacchae*. In line 581 we read the deeply obscure words σέβομεν ὦ, which Hermann and Elmsley leave unremarked, presumably because they did not understand them; but this great master in *Classical Journal* 18, 1814, 363 shows that they really mean ‘Let us worship O’, O or On or Hou or Houa being the name of a Supreme Being invoked by Arabs and other oriental peoples. Doubtless many thousand such words are to be found in Greek and Latin writers, which idiot critics have classed as copyists’ errors.

consult any of those who call themselves philologists; he will get juice out of a pumice-stone before he will get from this passage that Κόγξ Ὅμ Πάξ was said to initiates. First he will say that κόγξ ὅμπαξ are not parts of a single phrase, but one is an interpretation of the other, as in the similar glosses Εἶα δὴ ἄγε δὴ, Ἐχε δὴ ἄγε δὴ, and that κόγξ ὅμπαξ could no more be pronounced in the same breath than Εἴπερ γὰρ ἐὰν γάρ and other phrases linked in the same manner by glossographers. Then he will claim that neither hide nor hair of the Eleusinian mysteries appears here, and that he could not even tell whether the term τῶν τετελεσμένων would refer to the mysteries of Demeter and Proserpine, or Hecate, or the Cabiri, or Mithras, or even the sacraments of Christianity. Bolder still, he will assert that no initiates are to be read into this passage, but that τετελεσμένοις is the neuter dative of τετελεσμένα, which means the same as ἐξειργασμένα: a job done, concluded, finished. So ἐπὶ τετελεσμένοις means the same as ἐπ' ἐξειργασμένοις: when a job is done. Finally he will go right on to explain Hesychius as saying, Κόγξ ὅμπαξ is an artificial term used when something is over, to mean 'enough of that, finished'; and he will note that Latin *pax* or *pax perit ilico* means the same, and that Hesychius gives the same meaning to the Greek term Πάξ, τέλος ἔχει – which is the same as if he had written πάξ ἐπιρῶνῃμα τετελεσμένοις. Thus, perhaps, will someone speak – one of those philologists. But before we let Wilford's splendid discovery be torn from our hands, let us take a final careful look at the words, to see if there is any way of saving them from the quibblers.

First, then, Κόγξ, which Hesychius says means the sound of a waterclock or a juror's voting-pebble, the term being obviously created in imitation of the splash of a drop falling from on high into water or the sharp sound of a pebble being dropped into an urn. All languages have such words, although they seldom agree with each other (examples...), or with the terms we use ourselves. So we can easily be persuaded that Hesychius is right about κόγξ, even if we would use another sound. And indeed βλόψ, which seems to be related to *scloppo*, sounds highly naturalistic. Πάξ, then (derived from πήσσω, *pacio*, like *tax* from *tagó* and *evax* from ἐβάζω) means the noise of other colliding bodies, and perhaps especially of clapping hands or a hand rapping the table – actions which even our fellow-countrymen, not much given to gesticulation, use to mean 'approved!', 'enough!', or 'stop!'. So κόγξ may mean various things but never – as Wilford claims – 'the object of our most ardent wishes'.

Having lost the support of κόγξ we must take refuge, as if in an ark, in Ὅμ, which since it resembles no Greek word may easily be Sanskrit. But I very much doubt if it will provide shelter for long. What will we say, I ask, if someone says this monstrous ὅμ is an abbreviation of the adverb ὁμοίως? – which Hesychius often uses when putting together words of the same meaning (examples...). And let no one wonder how ὅμ could come from ὁμοίως. For scribes generally reduce words like this, which appear on every page, to a few initial letters... And this is not the only substitute we could propose for our

brahminical whatnot; there is also οἶον, even shorter, which Hesychius uses when explaining words, as in Ἐλέπουν, οἶον ἐλέπιζον. But having admitted this we can hardly object to taking Hesychius' gloss – νόγξ ὁμοίως or οἶον πάξ – as follows: both are words 'invented' as rhetoricians say, to imitate the sounds of smashing, hitting, clapping, and hence transferred to something smashed, broken off, decided and settled. I see no hope left. For the only remaining word, πάξ, we must willy-nilly concede is the ἐπιφθεγματικόν written with the same letters in Latin. Moreover, this type of word is restricted to the narrow range of vulgar and familiar speech, like *enax*, *tax*, *pax*, *κνάξ*, *πούπαξ*, *πάπαξ*, *βομβάξ*, *παπαιάξ*, *ιατταταιάξ*. What a calamity! For it this is the case, what could be less appropriate to the status of a hierophant than this absurd word *pax*? It would have been received by hearers with as much laughter as if today some preacher in the pulpit, instead of the 'Amen' with which a sermon usually ends, were to say 'Basta!'. 'Different affairs are conducted in different ways', the same ending is not appropriate for all (examples...); a minister of the church, sending away the congregation, says *ite, missa est*. No one would say *pax* except in a place and on an occasion where today one could say 'Basta'.

What are we to do? Shall we then conclude that Hesychius was not talking about mystery rites, either Eleusinian or any others? that the words he explains, *konx* and *pax*, are not Sanskrit? that Wilford's explanation is completely invented, futile, and false? Surely not; we will stick faithfully to our *Mumpsimus*, and not allow the authority of any philologist's arguments to prevent us from believing that the Eleusinian hierophants in their ritual pronouncements were speaking Sanskrit. And we will defend our cause with the same weapons if anyone suggests that another formula, in the Eleusinian hymn, ὅτε τοκῶτε – which indeed has not yet been explained by Wilford, but which in Muentzer's view derives from very ancient and foreign sources, can be transformed into the imperatives ὕε and κῶε. However, when Wilford claims that the hierophant's phrase of dismissal had never previously been explained, I can no longer agree with him. For 'many strong men lived before Agamemnon', and even in philology every age has produced its own Mercurial spirits, who have tried to scuttle faster up the road to fame by impressing their readers with marvels. One of the members of this golden race, about a century ago, was the Frenchman Legrand, who writes (*Diss.philos. et crit.* 173), 'various semibarbarous names of gods are found in the Greek mysteries, for example Titan, and Λελιούρη at the end of the hymn to the moon (the Aldine and Étienne editions should be emended to ἐξ Λοκούρη). Titan is Satan, as Jean Dorat says in his manuscript notes on Hesiod. The most ancient Orpheus included Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldaic and even magical terms in his poems.²⁸ Similarly Jean Leclerc, a famous theologian and (until he met a real one in Bentley) philologist, asserts

²⁸ This is splendidly confirmed by Hesychius: Titan – Antichrist, the two names being arithmetically equivalent and both equal to the number of the Beast of the Apocalypse.

that our *konx ompax* is Punic and means, ‘Be watchful and abstain from all sin’ (*Bibl. univers.* VI 86). And indeed, if anyone considers the number and the ingenuity of the older etymologists, he can scarcely doubt that one or another will have proposed a Chinese or Cimbrian or for all I know Mexican origin; yet they are all now buried, unwept and unknown, in age-long night, for want of a poet ready to splash their praises around in the dailies.²⁹

Appendix 2

FRIEDLÄNDER (1861), p. 11-12.

Throughout *Aglaophamus* Lobeck maintains a tone of calm superiority, even allowing himself to jest. The bombastic exuberance and pomposity of the ‘symbolists’ invited parody; Lobeck linked one of his skits to Königsberg. Older residents will remember an eccentric named Andreas Duncker who adorned his house on the Tragheim with an art collection, and built an observatory on his roof. He also printed at his own expense 200 emendations to Virgil’s *Georgics* (1806), attributed to a manuscript allegedly owned by a monastery on the Tragheim (*monachium Traghemense*). The book must by now be extremely rare, if indeed it still exists at all. Lobeck claimed to have found in the same monastic collection an unpublished fragment of Goropius Becanus, the Dutch scholar who in the 16th century demonstrated that the names of the Greek gods were Dutch. This text (said Lobeck) explained that Greek religion was nothing but a culinary system wrapped in symbolism and allegory. Missionaries from India, finding the Greeks living on raw food like wild animals, had to start by changing their crude eating habits into a civilised diet, and thus began their work of conversion with cookery lessons. To implant this education more fixedly in savage minds they proclaimed that well-made meals of the approved type, and their preparers, were to be considered holy and addressed by prayers; they set up kitchens and hearths everywhere – this was the real meaning of temples and altars; the gods were named after cuisines, foods, or herbs; worship took the form of meals and feasting; finally, the Mysteries were founded to support and spread knowledge of the higher gastronomy.

²⁹ [Lobeck says *ephemeridae*, a dig at the ephemeral life of ‘journals’.]

Bibliography

- Jan ASSMANN, *Moses the Egyptian*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard Univ. Press, 1997.
- Christopher A. BAYLY, "Orientalists, informants and critics in Benares 1790-1860", in J. MALIK (ed.), *Perspectives of Mutual Encounters in South Asia 1760-1860*, Leiden, Brill, 2000, p. 97-127.
- Alberto BERNABÉ, Frances CASADESÚS (eds.), *Orfeo y la tradición orfíca: un reencuentro I-II*, Madrid, Akal, 2008.
- (ed.), *Poetae epici graeci testimonia et fragmenta II. 2-3*, Munich/Leipzig, Teubner; Berlin, de Gruyter, 2005, 2007.
- Gabor BETEGH, *The Derveni Papyrus*, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 2004.
- Franz BOPP, *Nalus carmen sanskritum e Mahābhārato; edidit, latine vertit et adnotationibus illustravit F. Bopp*, London, Treuttel & Würtz, 1819.
- Claude CALAME, "Mythe' et 'rite' en Grèce: des catégories indigènes?", *Kernos* 4 (1991), p. 179-204.
- William M. CALDER, Renate SCHLESIER (eds.), *Zwischen Rationalismus und Romantik: Karl Otfried Müller und die antike Kultur*, Hildesheim, Weidmann, 1998.
- Isaac CASAUBON, *De rebus sacris et ecclesiasticis exercitationes XVI*, London, 1614.
- Henry CHADWICK, "The domestication of gnosis", in Bentley LAYTON (ed.), *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism I*, Leiden, Brill, 1980, p. 3-16.
- Partha CHATTERJEE, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World*, London, Zed Books/Delhi, Oxford Univ. Press, 1986.
- Michael B. COSMOPOULOS (ed.), *Greek Mysteries: the archaeology and ritual of ancient Greek secret cults*, London, Routledge, 2003.
- Georg Friedrich CREUZER, *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen*, Leipzig/Darmstadt, Heyer & Leske, 1810-1812 (2nd ed. 1819-1821).
- Albrecht DIETERICH, *De hymnis orphicis capitula tria*, Marburg, Elwert, 1891.
- , *Nekuia: Beiträge zur Erklärung der neuentdeckten Petrusapokalypse*, Leipzig, Teubner, 1893.
- Radcliffe G. EDMONDS (ed.), *The Orphic Gold Tablets and Greek Religion: further along the path*, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 2011.
- Michael FOUCAULT, "What is an author?", in Josué V. HARARI (ed.), *Textual Strategies: perspectives in post-structuralist criticism*, Ithaca, Cornell Univ. Press, 1980, p. 141-60.
- Garth FOWDEN, *The Egyptian Hermes: a historical approach to the Late Antique mind*, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1986.
- Ludwig FRIEDLÄNDER (ed.), *Mittheilungen aus Lobecks Briefwechsel*, Leipzig, Teubner, 1861.
- Renaud GAGNÉ, "Winds and ancestors: the *Physika* of Orpheus", *HSCP* 103 (2007), p. 1-23.
- Joseph GÖRRES, *Mythengeschichte der asiatischen Welt*, Heidelberg, Mohr & Zimmer, 1810.
- Fritz GRAF, "Die Entstehung des Mythosbegriffs bei Christian Gottlob Heyne", in GRAF (ed.), *Mythos in mythenloser Gesellschaft*, Stuttgart/Leipzig, Teubner, 1993, p. 284-294.
- , "A history of scholarship on the tablets", in Fritz GRAF, Sarah Iles JOHNSTON (eds.), *Ritual Texts for the Afterlife: Orpheus and the Bacchic gold tablets*, London, Routledge, 2007, p. 50-65.
- , "Serious singing: the Orphic hymns as religious texts", *Kernos* 22 (2009), p. 169-182.
- Anthony GRAFTON, "Protestant versus prophet: Isaac Casaubon on Hermes Trismegistus", *JWCI* 46 (1983), p. 78-93.
- Jane HARRISON, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1903.
- Gottfried F. HERRMANN (ed.), *Orphica cum notis A. Chr. Eschenbachii I.M. Gesneri Th. Tyrnwhitti*, Leipzig, Fritsch, 1805.
- Sarah C. HUMPHREYS, "Historicizing fertility", in Glenn W. MOST (ed.), *Historicization – Historisierung*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001, p. 169-200 [reprinted with additions in *eadem* 2004].

- Sarah C. HUMPHREYS, *The Strangeness of Gods*, Oxford, Univ. Press, 2004.
- , Rudolf WAGNER (eds.), *Modernity's Classics*, Heidelberg, Springer, in press.
- Christophe JAMME, *Einführung in die Philosophie des Mythos II: Neuzeit und Gegenwart*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1991 (French tr. Paris, Vrin, 1995).
- Pierre JUDET DE LA COMBE, "Le 'savant antiquaire de Gottingue'. Karl Otfried Müller en France", in CALDER – SCHLESIER (1998), p. 283-311.
- Theokritos KOUREMENOS, George M. PARASSOGLU, K. TSANTSANOGLU (eds.), *The Derveni Papyrus*, Florence, Olschki, 2006.
- Andre LAKS, Glenn W. MOST (eds.), *The Derveni Papyrus*, Oxford, Univ. Press, 1997.
- Christian August LOBECK, *Aglaophamus sive de theologiae mysticae Graecorum causis libri tres*, Königsberg, Bornträger, 1829.
- Tanya LUHRMANN, *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: ritual magic in contemporary England*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard Univ. Press, 1989.
- Ernst MAASS, *Orpheus: Untersuchungen zur griechischen römischen altchristlichen Jenseitsdichtung und Religion*, Munich, Beck, 1895 (reprinted 1974).
- Vittorio MACCHIORO, *Zagreus: studi intorno al orfismo*, Bari, Laterza, 1920.
- , *From Orphism to Paul: a history of Orphism*, New York, Holt, 1930.
- Agostino MASARACCHIO (ed.), *Orfeo e l'orfismo*, Rome, G.E.I., 1993.
- Partha MITTER, *Much Maligned Monsters: a history of European reactions to Indian art*, Chicago, Univ. Press, 1977 (repr. with new preface 1992).
- Karl Otfried MÜLLER, review of LOBECK 1829, *GGA* 1830, reprinted in id., *Kleine deutsche Schriften* II, Breslau, 1848/Hildesheim, Olms, 1979.
- Eduard NORDEN, *Agnostos theos: Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede*, Stuttgart, Teubner, 1912 (repr. Darmstadt, WBG, 1956).
- Tapan RAYCHAUDHURI, *Europe Reconsidered: perceptions of the West in nineteenth-century Bengal*, Delhi, Oxford Univ. Press, 1988 [2nd, revised ed. 2002].
- Richard REITZENSTEIN, *Die hellenistische Mysterienreligionen nach ihren Grundgedanken und Wirkungen*, Leipzig, Teubner, 1910 (3rd ed. 1927).
- Christophe RIEDWEG, *Jüdisch-hellenistische Imitation eines orphischen Hieros Logos: Beobachtungen zu OF 245 und 247 (sog. Testament des Orpheus)*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1993.
- Erwin ROHDE, *Psyche* I-II, Freiburg, Mohr, 1890-1893.
- Jean RUDHARDT, "Quelques réflexions sur les hymnes orphiques", in Philippe BORGEAUD (ed.), *Orphisme et Orphée: en l'honneur de Jean Rudhardt*, Geneva, Droz, 1991, p. 263-288.
- Maria Micaela SASSI, "Ermeneutica del mito in K.O. Müller", *ASNP* 3 14.3 (1984), p. 911-935.
- Elinor S. SHAFFER, *'Kubla Khan' and 'The Fall of Jerusalem': the mythological school in Biblical criticism and secular literature*, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1975.
- Christiane SOURVINOU-INWOOD, "Festival and mysteries: aspects of the Eleusinian cult", in COSMOPOULOS (2003), p. 25-49.
- , *Hylas, the Nymphs, Dionysos and others: myth, ritual, ethnicity*, *Acta-Ath. in* 8° 19 (2005).
- Kocku von STUCKRAD, s.v. "Okkultismus", *Neue Pauly* XV.1 (2001), col. 1146-1466.
- D. Perkin WALKER, "Orpheus the theologian and Renaissance Platonism", *JWCI* 16 (1953), p. 100-120.
- , *The Ancient Theology*, London, Duckworth, 1972.
- Alexandra WALSHAM, *The Reformation of the Landscape: religion, identity, and memory in early modern Britain and Ireland*, Oxford, Univ. Press, 2011.
- Martin L. WEST, *The Orphic Poems*, Oxford, Univ. Press, 1983.
- , "Hocus-Pocus in East and West", in LAKS – MOST (1997), p. 81-90.
- Frances YATES, *The Art of Memory*, London, Routledge, 1966.