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**THE LAW OF INVIOLEABLE JUSTICE**  
**MECHANISM OF SELF-SUSTAINABLE COSMIC ORDER**

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ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γένεσις ἐστὶ τοῖς οὖσι, καὶ τὴν φθορὰν εἰς ταῦτα γίνεσθαι κατὰ τὸ  
χρεῶν· δίδοναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοισ τῆς ἀδικίας κατὰ τὴν τοῦ  
χρόνου τάξιν.

Anaximander DK 12B1

εἰδέναί δὴ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἔοντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔριν, καὶ γινόμενα  
πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χρεῶν.

Heracleitus DK 22B80

Ἥλιος γὰρ οὐχ ὑπερβήσεται μέτρα· εἰ δὲ μή, Ἐρινύες μιν Δίκης ἐπίκουροι  
ἐξευρήσουσιν.

Heracleitus DK 22B94

## - A -

The World, according to the Ancient Greek experience of it, is in a state of *perfect equilibrium*. This means that the functions and activities of all its parts (at all levels of resolution) correspond exactly to their respective natures, capabilities and powers; which again signifies that any distribution of roles and actions to its parts other than the obtaining one would be unfitting and therefore unstable; it would automatically gravitate towards the actual order. It would also be, consequently, less efficient than the obtaining one.

Both a static (Aristotle) and a dynamic (Stoicism) construal of the overall Cosmic Order and Balance had been proposed. In the latter case, a Law of grand scale Cosmic Change is being inbuilt into the universal system. In order to safeguard the state of *perfect equilibrium* over a *finite* period of time, the Law of Cosmic Change had to be *periodic*; for with non-cyclical change, perfect equilibrium may be ascribed to the World over an infinity of time, which means in reality that there is *no* perfect equilibrium. Thus, in any case, (whether of a static or dynamic nature) for the Ancient World-view the World is in perfect equilibrium over an appropriate length of time.

The World is multi-centered. The centers are things (of whatever level) endowed with essences. This means that the parts of the World follow in existence their internal nature and do not obey blindly an external law. Thus, they enjoy their own individual development, possess their own structure of powers and capabilities, according to which their own action pattern is formed. For such essential beings to constitute a system in Perfect Equilibrium (the World, the Cosmos), the *order* established through their interrelationships of nature, power and activity must be *self-sustainable*. Therefore there must prevail

in such cosmic system a *Law of Self-Correction*, whereby any deviation from the Universal Harmony is always restricted, and *automatically* rectified. The Cosmic Order of the Whole is never violated; any particular disturbance in it affects *parts* of the World, and is *internally eliminated*. The World is a *self-regulated* natural system of parts.

*A state of perfect equilibrium is a just state.* Justice consists in the natural balance of diverse characters, competing potencies and diverging activities. Without Justice there is no Harmonious system, no Whole of Parts, no ἀρμονία: there is either enforced, and thus artificial, homogeneity or utter chaos; either a monotonous sound or a total dissonance.

*The Justice and Harmony of the World is absolute;* Heraclitus (DK 22B102) expressed the fact pointedly: τῶι μὲν θεῶι καλὰ πάντα καὶ ἀγαθὰ καὶ δίκαια, ἄνθρωποι δὲ ἅ μὲν ἄδικα ὑπειλήφασιν ἅ δὲ δίκαια. (From the three attributes characterising the cosmic state and every single part of it (πάντα), δίκαια refers to their objectively moral perfection, ἀγαθὰ to their heightened usefulness and καλὰ to their harmony and beauty). Thus, cosmic justice is necessary if things are seen from the vantage point of divine preeminence, from the point of view of the Cosmic God; *injustice cannot exist*. What appears unjust from the point of view of particular parts of the World (like men) is a *deviation* in effect constitutive of the general *normalcy*. Since being is dynamic, for Heraclitus *reality is vibrational*: it exists as *tension between opposites*, it is, so to speak, pendulum-like. *Order is automatically maintained by mutual cancellations of opposing anomalies, which furthermore are co-implicated into the same causal nexus.* *Cosmic Justice is established as the balancing outcome of warring injustice.* Universal Justice in a natural system presupposes universal war; strife ensures justice through its necessary process of offence and counteroffence, of guilt-debt offered and received alternately, of violation and retribution; B80: εἰδέναι δὲ χρὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἔόντα ξυνόν, καὶ δίκην ἔρην, καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔρην καὶ χρεῶν (cf. B53). Anaximander previously expressed the same idea of Justice

prevailing as a result of balancing opposing injustices, of an *order* based on transgression and retribution, of a Harmony whose working consists in the absolute sway of the Law of Talion; B1: ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γένεσις ἐστὶ τοῖς οὖσι, καὶ τὴν φθορὰν εἰς ταῦτα γίνεσθαι κατὰ τὸ χρεῶν· διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας κατὰ τὴν τοῦ χρόνου τάξιν. All being comes to be out of something else whose destruction produces it. An injustice committed against the former being is redressed at the passing away of the new thing, for this gives way to exactly that out of which it originally sprang.

*Negativity thus subserves the positive Harmony.* Darkness generates and sustains light. Nocturnal, chthonic powers of the Underworld are instrumental to the universal reign of luminous Justice. The horrendous ministers to the august. The system of Archaic human order is identified with the structure of Cosmic harmony; B94 Ἥλιος γὰρ οὐχ ὑπερβήσεται μέτρον· εἰ δὲ μή, Ἐρινύες μιν Δίκης ἐπικούροι ἐξευρήσουσιν. Aeschylus in his *Oresteia* represented the on-going antagonism, at the beginning of the Classical era, between the old, dark *Law of Blood* (expressed by the Erinys) and the new lucid *Law of Spirit* (proclaimed by Apollo); he solemnly and prophetically, urged, too, for a coordination of the two in an Athens that was already committing the Hybris of excessive light-order.

Cosmic justice is self-sustained; cosmic order is self-regulated; cosmic harmony is self-tuned. *The mechanism of such momentous cosmic Principle of self-correction*, as it was experienced in Ancient Greek religiosity and thought out by Archaic philosophers (especially, explicitly by Heracleitus), can best be studied in connexion with the cycle of transgression and retribution, of pollution and counter-pollution, *a cycle repeated successively untill its final cleansing collapse and consequent radical clearing and rejuvenation of the human ground.*

**- B -**

The modern accounts of the great topic of ancient religious purification suffers gravely both from want of a real understanding of the deeply lying core unifying all the apparently infinite multiplicity of beliefs, feelings and practices relating to this all-important matter, and also from lack of detailed investigation into the various forms that this phenomenon of lustration assumes and into the exact meaning of the terms utilized to express that variety. It is thus that one meets with either artificial generalization more or less devoid of any relevance to ancient religiosity, or with an arbitrary lumping together as approximately equivalent of various terms signifying very distinct aspects of the examined phenomenon side by side with other such equally accidental or indiscriminate collections.

In reality, to put the matter in as brief and as general a form as possible, things stand thus. What we would call immorality or impiety is for the ancient Greek spirit viewed as *transgression* of a «natural» law, as going beyond the limits determined and imposed by one's own nature and circumstance, as a kind of arrogation to oneself of powers or functions that one does not really, in the objective order of things, possess. These transgressions of the cosmic order are *ispo facto* crimes of lese-majeste committed against the Gods; for theirs are the operating forces constituting and sustaining the world order. Every transgression is thus, at its root, a *sacrilege*. Now a sacrilegious act proceeds from consists in and propagates, various forms of *pollution*; for pure is that which essentially accords with the will and nature of Gods, and is thus restrained in its movements within the orbit circumscribed by its position in the divine order of reality. What disrupts this order, what is disharmonious to it, is

the *anomaly of defilement*, is a contamination to the purity of the divine operations.

But the World-Order, and its divine source, are not passive, impotent recipients of such *violations*. Without relying on the blind necessity of a physical law which renders mechanically impossible its infringement, the cosmic-divine order has its own in-built, as it were, *corrective* procedures. The transgression is *punished*, sooner or later, the violation *atoned*, not by some arbitrary or ad hoc arrangement decreed by some God or other, but by the natural consequences of the act itself as they are set in motion and unfold on each occasion according to the eternal Laws of the Gods. For a religious anomaly once created constitutes a pole of attraction toward which all kinds of other «disturbances» are bound to converge. A religious stain attracts further defilement and propagates more pollution, and this process of self-aggrandisement continues till the unfortunate bearer of all this scum collapses and sinks down by the very weight of the abominations it has collected. It is a question only of time. The divine World-order is self-corrective, self-adjustable; there is no question of a decision being taken and of a condition being created by *fiat*.

To such horrendous transactions of defilement certain divine beings preside, some daemonic spirits. Their relation to the pollution around which they are to be found, has two complementary aspects, whose sometimes opposing appearance must not delude us as to their basic coherence. Those daemons can be viewed as either the stern, implacable, indispensable executioners, the maybe reluctant avengers of the disrupted divine harmony, the necessary organs of punishment for the transgressors; or, alternatively, they can be seen as quite enjoying their task, as exhilarating in the mire of defilement which they make sure to create out of each infringement of the divine code, as rolling with outmost pleasure in the abominations which are perpetrated under their influence. The contrariety between these two conceptions should not be exaggerated on pains of becoming artificial, false, and anachronistic, or rather

rather «modern», if I may put it thus. To the religious feeling as such any choice between the two is nonexistent. It suffices that the daemons in question preside over pollution and make sure that its natural consequences are being carried out to the full; there is no question of their «liking» it or not, in the superficial sense in which we use the word. To the extent that their very nature makes them exist and act as they do, to that extent they do «like» their acts just as they «like» themselves: this is «objective liking». We must not project onto the gods human types of reaction - and skin-deep ones for that matter; we shall find again and again religious anthropomorphism to be more *symbolic* than *iconic*. On the other hand it is true that even in ancient times there were *views* in which the latter notion dominated, whereas others emphatically moved towards the former account. But this disparity does not affect the ancient religious experience as such; the diverging explanations were attempts at a reflective, philosophical interpretation of the religious fact. And here in this inquiry we are strictly interested in the religious phenomena as such and in their direct meaning, in the immediacy of their content.

Needless to say, equally misleading and anachronistic would be any sharp distinction between two contrasted views as to the nature and function of these daemonic beings: do they cause the accumulation of pollution attending upon any violation of the divine-cosmic order, or do they merely express it? I shall pursue this crucial topic analytically elsewhere, but let it suffice to mention that causality is (for the ancient mind) multiple and multi-dimensional, fourfold according to the Aristotelian schema.

To transgress the divine, cosmic law, to cause pollution, brings in itself after it a train of dire consequences which constitute the punishment and, at the same time, the redress of the initial violation. The whole transaction, the entire chain reaction, is natural and divine simultaneously. Seen from its worldly pole, it consists in the twin series of revenges, and of further transgressions committed in direct answer to such unavoidable revenges; a first transgression



originates such a double series of offensive and defensive atrocities which in its entirety constitutes the justice of the Gods. This justice is terrible; an initial disturbance generates by itself a whirlpool of pollution in which both innocent and guilty will perish - the carnalities do not matter: the slightest transgression is a major sacrilege, extremely dangerous and potentially catastrophic. To create an anomaly is to release powers and energy beyond control, which will run their course in natural necessity, and will utterly eradicate, by the very weight of their accumulated monstrosity, the anomalous point. Once a transgression is committed, there is no way to act as if nothing happened; and there is no question of forgiveness by an act of wilful grace. The punishment, or rather the restitution, is complete when the gangrene has destroyed itself by destroying the patient. In so far as these daemons are concerned, mere remedy or healing is ineffectual and impossible; total destruction is the only acceptable outcome.

And thus starting from the worldly pole we arrived at its divine complement. For these potencies governing the vicious circle of transgression instigated by a first disobedience, these ministers of the offended divine order, are the avenging daemons who wait for such an opportunity to manifest their nature, realise their powers and exhibit their activities before the terror-stricken eyes of helpless humanity. We may call them malevolent deities and sharply dissociate them from the benign heavenly powers who, we are indolent to think, smile beneficially on our worthlessness. But, in truth, they are simply the ministers of the darker aspect of divinity, of the very same divinity whose milder countenance we worship in celebrations of thanksgiving; and far from being malevolent, they provide the necessary means for the natural justice of the Gods.

Such ideas and sentiments do not only reproduce the ancient Greek religious experience of these matters. They also provide the necessary point of reference, and, more than that, the ground, for various philosophical developments. I may mention here, by way of immediate illustration two of the

latter: the Anaximandrian cosmic law of transgression and redress, governing all elemental changes; and the Platonic insistence on the natural and necessary connection between injustice and punishment, between wrong-doing and unhappiness.

We must not confuse these avenging daemonic ministers of chastisement, with enraged heroes or offended gods. In bringing about a certain course of events the former and the latter may concur and combine their activities, yet their nature is distinct and their involvement in such cases different. The gods are the source and foundation of the cosmic order whose violation is therefore sacrilege. The heroes are potent spirits, of a more personal status, subordinate to the divine order, but with great control over natural powers. The avenging daemons are chastising ministers, promulgating corruption in order to naturally and finally cleanse pollution. Thus one, strictly speaking, in errors of commission or omission, propitiates and atones in the face of Gods, appeases and placates heroes, but can only avert, by special rites of magic substitution and surrogation, the daemons of pollution. Of course the situation is further complicated by the fact that in any given instance, more than one of these types of reaction may be due and appropriate.

In connection with the rites of riddance or absorption, it should be noted that the avenging daemons bear various names according to the more specific description of the violation which occasions their active intervention, or in relation to the sphere of pollution over which they preside: ἀλιτήριοι or ἀλιτηριώδεις, ἀλάστορες, παλαμναῖοι, προστρόπαιοι or προστροπαῖοι and the like. There are also divine beings very close to godhead which are akin to such daemons, the Ἐριννῦς. And also there is a full-blown goddess one aspect of whom is of a daemon of pollution: Ἐκάτη.

Here, I shall study in some more detail the nature of ἀλάστορες and ἀλιτήριοι because of their multiple importance, and particularly by reason of their nicely illustrating the above expounded general theory of Pollution, and

further with a view to revealing, so far as it is feasible and permissible, the working of the Law of Blood as a self-sustainable Law of Justice. The Ἀλάστορες are particularly apposite in this connexion as they are intimately correlated to the Furies; in Hesychius, they are also identified in meaning; s.v. ἀλαστεῖν· ἐρινύειν.

- C -

The dominant sense in the meaning field of ἀλαστ- refers to *untouchableness* and *unbearability* as a result of *enormity* (in both senses of the word) *committed*, and thus because of *pollution* (V. Appendix *Ancient Grammaticals on ἀλαστ-*). And so ἀλάστωρ, this potent expression, receives its natural location in the midst of the «abomination» semantic field (V. Appendix). There are two significations for this word, both intimately connected to each other. As Galenus in his *Vocab. Hipp.*, s.v. has it, ἀλάστορες are αὐτοί τε οἱ ἄνθρωποι οἱ τὰ ἄλαστα (rather than ἀλαστά) ἐργασάμενοι, καὶ οἱ τιμωροὶ αὐτῶν δαίμονες. Similarly the *Etym. M.* s.v. ἀλάστωρ: ὁ ἀμαρτωλός, ἢ ὁ φονεύς. Ἡ ὁ ἐφορῶν τοὺς φόνους Ζεὺς (the implication of Zeus here will be explained in a moment). And the *Etym. Gudianum* in the second entry for ἀλάστωρ (p. 32.35 Sturg) has: Ἀλάστωρ· ὁ Ζεὺς ὁ ἐποπτεύων τοὺς ἀλαστά καὶ χαλεπὰ ποιῶντας. Ἡ ὁ ἀσεβής, ἢ ὁ κακοποιός. Οὕτως Ἡρωδιανός. The first entry for ἀλάστωρ in the same lexicon (p. 32.28) seems at first sight to add a third signification: ὁ νεκρός, ὁ φονεύς, καὶ ὁ ἐφορῶν τοὺς φόνους Ζεὺς. Here the variation of meaning is centered round a major pollution: murder; and the murdered, the murderer and the murder-deity are given as the senses of the

word. But in reality we have again the same fundamental bifurcation of the signification: either the *perpetrator* of crime is meant or the *avenger* of crime, whether as the ghost of the dead or as the deity in charge, so to speak, of these pollutions. The spirits of retribution vary from the bloodthirsty soul of the dead man to the revenging angels of chastisement, and the daemons of Vengeance, to the avenging dark aspect of godhead itself. The primeval law of natural justice works through all these levels of agency, and utilizes as well living men and other physical factors; the divine aspect of its operations is stratified according to the various levels of supra-physical existence, but finds its summit and foundation in the very *Dark King* himself. Thus just as we have seen the distinction between the dead man as ἀλάστωρ (evidently in his ghostly, as we should say, capacity) and Zeus as Minder-of-Murders, so we may distinguish between Zeus being called *eponymously* Ἀλάστωρ (as an epitheton dei) and δαίμονες ἀλάστορες (as noticed e.g. in *Etym. M.* s.v. ἀλάστωρ, p. 57.33 and 37. Hesychius also testified as much s.v. ἀλάστωρ· πικρὸς δαίμων. Ζεὺς. For the πικρὸς cf. Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 1502, a passage which will be quoted below). These latter are the immediate instruments of punishment, as Suda has it s.v. ἀλάστωρ· πικρὸς καὶ φονικὸς δαίμων τιμωρῶν καὶ ἀνεπίληστα ἔργα ποιῶν. On the other hand, as to the former, the dark, as well as even chthonic, aspects of Zeus are well documented. If we ask why Zeus, the Olympian King of the Gods and of the New Order, had to be implicated in these transactions of defilement, the answer is not far to reach for him who had paid thorough and minute attention to ancient Greek religion as a whole. There are two main relevant points. *Firstly*, the more general one is that Dark and Light somehow coincide at bottom; they are two aspects of divinity, and of the world-order expressed in divinity, rather than two *opposing* powers. There is not the remotest trace of any Zoroastrianism or Manichaeism in the Greek feelings, attitudes and speculations concerning that primal antithesis - despite misleading or, better, misapprehended appearances. Hellenic Dualism is always

sublated in the complex monism of the ultimate identity (in source and transcendent substance) of the opposites.

And to apply this to the matter at hand: there is not in the World an eternal strife of the powers of good and evil, always equiposed for battle; there is rather the lighter and the darker aspect of divinity, and there are shades, too, in between. All Olympian Gods have their sombre, even gloomy and atrocious aspects; and all spirits and daemonic beings of clearly «chthonic» origin exhibit, when of really divine stature, the corresponding solemn and august, but awe-inspiring, sublimations. In fact «*awful*» is the word best expressing, with the entire subtle variation of shades in its meaning, the divine ambivalence between light and darkness. Divinity for ancient religiosity is not so much good or evil, moral or immoral - it is a-moral as the source and foundation of *natural* morality; it is like a natural law, but a natural law deprived of its senseless mechanicity and infused with spiritual meaning and intelligence. Yet in order to see these things clearly one must, as said, study ancient religion globally, and not fall into the trap of projecting what is co-constitutional complementarity as, for instance, mere temporal succession of a more moral divine order over a more primitive one - such like are the naive schemes that beset the study of ancient religion in modern times.

However, the remedy is ready at hand: take mythology in conjunction with what we can resurrect of the ancient religious practice; do not allow to be imposed upon by a prima-facie interpretation of mythological stories - and of such from a single author for that matter (chiefly Hesiod); think that myth is part of the enigma of symbolism, not the plain answer to it.

But these vastly important issues will be properly attended to in another part of this work. For the time being, let us pass to the second of the two relevant points concerning Zeus' *presidium* over that awesome ritual of blood pollution signified by ἀλάστωρ, and let it be observed that Zeus, presiding, in his primal *kingly* function, over *justice*, presides also over the ways in which

Justice violated is restituted - Justice relating to this or that θεσμός or νόμιμον. Thus, e.g. cf. *Scholia ad Euripides, Hecuba* 345: οἱ ἰκετεύοντες, Ἰκέσιον Δία προέτεινον· οἱ δὲ συνοικοῦντες, Ἐφέστιον· οἱ δὲ φίλοι, Φίλιον· οἱ δὲ ἐν μιᾷ τάξει καὶ συμμορία καταλεγόμενοι, Ἐταιριῶν· οἱ δὲ ξένοι, Ξένιον· οἱ δ' ἐν ὄρκοις συμφωνίας ποιοῦντες, Ὀρκιον· οἱ δὲ ἀδελφοί, Ὀμόγνιον. For Zeus Μελίχιος we shall have occasion to speak later in this essay. Cf. also Herodotus I, 44, where Croesus, lamenting the accidental killing of his son by Adrestus περιημεκτέων δὲ τῇ συμφορῇ δεινῶς ἐκάλεε Δία καθάρσιον (he had purified the very Adrestus from another involuntary murder), μαρτυρόμενος τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ ξείνου πεπονθῶς εἶη, ἐκάλεε δὲ Ἐπίστιον τε καὶ Ἐταιρηΐον (he had kept Adrestus to his house as a honoured guest and friend), τὸν αὐτὸν τοῦτον ὀνομάζων θεόν (sc. Δία), τὸν μὲν Ἐπίστιον καλέων, διότι δὴ οἰκίοισι ὑποδεξάμενος τὸν ξεῖνον φονέα τοῦ παιδὸς ἐλάνθανε βόσκων, τὸν δὲ Ἐταιρηΐον, ὡς φύλακα συμπέμψας αὐτὸν εὐρήκοι πολεμιώτατον. Here the whole situation is now clear and explicit. (Such epitheta are also mentioned in Plutarch, *Anatorius* 758D, without reference to Zeus, but there the point renders such reference irrelevant). Pherecydes also commented (apud *Epimer. Hom.*, Cramer *Anecdota Oxoniensia*. I, 62, 12: καὶ Φερεκύδης (sc. γράφει) «Ζεὺς δὲ Ἰκέσιος καὶ Ἀλάστορος καλεῖται»<sup>1</sup>). – For this God's punishing function in such capacities, v., e.g., Plutarch, *Amatorius* 766C: οὔτε γὰρ ξένων καὶ ἰκετῶν ἀδικίας ὁ Ξένιος (sc. Ζεὺς), οὔτε γονέων ἀράς ὁ Γενέθλιος οὕτω διώκει καὶ μέτεισι ταχέως, ὡς etc. Zeus then, the king θεμιστοῦχος, the upholder of Justice, is also the Punisher. But as justice, for the ancient soul, is a *natural* balance where each has and fares according to *his or its merit*; so it also is that any upsetting of the equilibrium *naturally* corrects itself; the divinity ultimately presiding over this divinely natural (there is no incompatibility, of course, here) restitution of the original balance, is that same Zeus, the source and guarantor of the violated and redressed divine order - the means of the restitution being the cycle of defilement above explained with the daemons operating it.

We have then Zeus ἀλάστωρ as the supreme principle of this field of Enormities, and harsh daemons more directly presiding over and manipulating those awful processes of defilement. Finally, there are also the very perpetrators of the initial violation and the impurity caused thereby. All three classes (categorically distinct but intimately interconnected) are called ἀλάστορες. This fundamental alterability (characteristic of the cognate conceptions as well, as will be more analytically observed elsewhere), is, e.g., interestingly noticed by the Scholiast on *Odyssey* XI 321, where upon the description Μίνωος ὀλοόφρονος, it is remarked: καὶ πῶς Μίνωα εἶδον Διὸς ἀγλαὸν υἷόν (ibid. 568); ἢ τὸν κατὰ τῶν ἀσεβῶν ὀλοόφρονα, ὡς ἀλάστορα τὸν (sc. δαίμονα or ἔφορον) κατὰ τῶν ἀλαστόρων, ὀλοόφρονος οὖν τοῦ ὀλοὰ τοῖς ἀδίκους φρονοῦντος.

The pollution involved in the relevant transactions, need not originate exclusively in murder and blood-guilt. As Erotianus, in *Gloss. Hippocr.* s.v. explains: ἀλάστορες· Βακχεῖος μὲν ἐν πρώτῳ φονεῖς φησὶν, ἐκ τῆς Εὐριπίδου Μελανίππης λέγοντος (Fr. 517 Dindorf): ἴσως ἀλάστορ' (Elmsley pro ἀλάστορας) οὐκ ἐτόλμησε κτανεῖν. Ἐνιοὶ δὲ τοὺς ἀνόσιόν τι καὶ μιᾶρόν ἐργασαμένους, κἂν μὴ ὦσι φονεῖς· οἱ ἄλαστα τινὰ καθ' ὁδοὺς διαπραπτόμενοι. And accordingly, Hesychius has immediately before the quoted lemma on ἀλάστωρ, the following two entries: ἀλάστορες. Παλαμναῖοι. οἱ μιάσματι ἐνεχόμενοι. ἢ οἱ μεγάλα ἀμαρτάνοντες. And: ἀλαστόρων: ἀσεβῶν, τῶν μιάσματι ἐνεχομένων. As practically always, when the epitomator or the corruption of the text do not mislead us, Hesychius can be relied upon to give us exactly what we need.

Scrutiny of significant occurrences of ἀλάστωρ exemplifies the preceding analysis. The word is particularly often met in tragic poetry, as was observed already by Harpocratio, s.v. referring (with the superficial explanation of οὐ μηδέποτε ἄν τις ἐπιλάθοιτο where the similarity of the formulation with the ones to be found in the *Etymologica* in connexion with the ἀνεπίληστον -

interpretation, renders the notion of changing ἐπιλάθοιτο to ἐπιλάβοιτο vain) to Demosthenes, *De Corona*, p. 324.18 (ἄνθρωποι μίαιοι καὶ κόλακες καὶ ἀλάστορες, ἠκρωτηριασμένοι (significant metaphorical use of this repulsive word) τὰς ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος πατρίδας etc.): πολὺ δὲ τοῦνομα ἐν τῇ τραγωδίᾳ.

And so it is. In extant Aeschylus, the word is used in almost all cases to signify the «malevolent» daemon of destruction pursuing inexorably his guilty victims, the culprits who violate the divine order and thereby create pollution. Thus in *Agamemnon* 1497 sqq., Clytaemnestra poignantly explains that she is less the perpetrator of the murder of Agamemnon, than the daemon who at last exacted revenge on the θυέστεια δεῖπνα offered by Atreus:

ἀρχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τοῦργον ἐμόν·  
μηδ' ἐπιλεχθῆς  
Ἀγαμεμνονίαν εἶναί μ' ἄλοχον·  
φανταζόμενος δὲ γυναικὶ νεκροῦ  
τοῦδ' ὁ παλαιὸς δριμύς ἀλάστωρ,  
Ἀτρέως χαλεποῦ θοινατῆρος  
τόνδ' ἀπέτισεν  
τέλεον νεαροῖς ἐπιθύσας.

Clytaemnestra in effect says nothing rhetorical, but the profound truth that she, with *her* desires, *her* decision, *her* act, and *her* «free will» was but the instrument of the implacable, unappeasable, unmerciful daemon who «sprung up» (as it were) from that first enormity and doomed and «sealed» off right then Agamemnon for this bloody retribution. In a similar way, the man who was the first link in the series of events ending with the utter disaster that befell Xerxes' fortunes in Salamis, is described as some malevolent daemon or punishing spirit (the ὕβρις of Xerxes is the proximate offence, as the θεῶν φθόνος in the immediate vicinity of the passage to be quoted makes sharply felt); *Persae* 356-8:

ἤρξεν μὲν, ᾧ δέσποιτα, τοῦ παντὸς κακοῦ  
φανεῖς ἀλάστωρ ἢ κακὸς δαίμων ποθέν.



Ἀνὴρ γὰρ Ἕλληρ ἐξ Ἀθηναίων στρατοῦ  
ἐλθὼν etc.

The man is real, of course, and also his coming is the physical, tangible manifestation of the beginning of the destructive operations of the malevolent spirit chasing down Xerxes: there is nothing incoherent in these two beliefs. They complement each other, just as the cunning of the Greek and the envy of the Gods co-operate, on different levels of existence and causality, in bringing on the inescapable result:

δ' εὐθὺς ὡς ἤκουσεν, οὐ ξυνεῖς δόλον

Ἕλληρ ἀνδρός, οὐδὲ τὸν θεῶν φθόνον etc. (*Ibid.* vv. 364-5).

The divine order is maintained, and the divine plans are carried on, through natural agencies (men included); their instrumentality does not require explicit obedience, or direct command on the part of the Gods - these are rather modern-Christian, naive modes of visualising the workings of Godhead, and its ways in the World. What really happens is that the means, the instrument is manipulated by the Gods and serve their purposes by being what it is - it obeys not by explicitly obeying but by following up its own nature and impulses. Divine causality is not cancelled because of human free will and personal responsibility, any more than it is abrogated by the mechanism of physical processes. Here is a major issue, and a crucial difference between the ancient and the modern conceptions of Godhead; it shall be adequately developed elsewhere in full. But the fundamental point is even explicitly made by the answer of the Chorus to Clytaemnestra's claim above explained. In *Agamemnon*, 1505 sqq. they reply:

ὡς μὲν ἀναίτιος εἶ

τοῦδε τοῦ φόνου, τίς ὁ μαρτυρήσων;

πῶ, πῶ; πατρόθεν δὲ συλλήπτωρ γένοιτ' ἂν ἀλάστωρ etc.

The human agent is guilty; and yet the act *had* to be done, in a very important and pregnant sense: the ἀλάστωρ holds sway over the destinies of

culprit and victim alike. The ἀλάστωρ τῶν Πελοπιδῶν was proverbial, and utilized accordingly by Xenarchus, the comic writer, v. apud Athenaeus II p. 63F (Meineke, *Fr. Com. Gr.* vol. III, p. 614).

In the *Supplices* Ζεὺς Ἰκέσιος plays the cardinal role without appearing on the scene. The King of Argos trying both to avoid aggressive acts and to save the suppliant Danaides, ponders on the necessity of some deeply thought way out of the heavy burden. He says (*Supplices*, 407 sqq.):

δεῖ τοι βαθείας φροντίδος σωτηρίου,  
 .....  
 πως ἄνατα ταῦτα, πρῶτα μὲν πόλει,  
 αὐτοῖσι θ' ἡμῖν ἐκτελεύτησει καλῶς,  
 καὶ μήτε δῆρις ρυσίων ἐφάψεται  
 μήτ' ἐν θεῶν ἔδραισιν ὧδ' ἰδρυμένας  
 ἐκδόντες ὑμᾶς τὸν πανώλεθρον θεὸν  
 βαρὺν ξύνοικον θησόμεσθ' ἀλάστορα,  
 ὃς οὐδ' ἐν Αἴδου τὸν θανόντ' ἐλευθεροῖ.

The πανώλεθρος θεός is Ζεὺς Ἰκέσιος when offended, when his Law of the sacredness of the Suppliant is violated (cf. the very first verse of the tragedy, and cf. e.g. v. 477-8). By disregarding Zeus' sanctions we make Him our cohabitant, an atrocious σύνοικος, a horrible ἀλάστωρ, our Destroyer, - who would not relax His awful, pitiless avenging punishment even after Death. In fact the ἀλάστορες are essentially chthonic beings as we shall see.

From daemons of pollution we moved to the Supreme Ἀλάστωρ: Zeus the Avenger of his violated Law. In the other and opposite direction, there is also one extant passage in Aeschylus concerning the human ἀλάστωρ. Orestes approaches and addresses Minerva thus: (*Eumenides*, 235 sqq.):

Ἄνασσ' Ἀθάνᾳ, Λοξίου κελεύμασιν  
 ἦκω, δέχου δὲ πρρευμενῶς ἀλάστορα etc.

(This passage, on which see also n. 1, will be examined more fully in our examination of the notion of προστρόπαιος).

Sophocles, too, provides examples of both divine and human references for ἀλάστωρ, and also an illustration of how the use of a word can be naturally extended, without becoming exactly metaphorical. - In *Oedipus Colonens*, 787-8

----- ἐκεῖ  
 χώρας ἀλάστωρ οὐμὸς ἐνναίων ἀεὶ.

Oedipus is addressing Creon. The destroying spirit that led Oedipus to his destiny, after the evil doings that he suffered at the hands of his own sons and Creon, is forever to inhabit Thebes (cf. the σύνουκος ἀλάστωρ in the Aeschylean passage above quoted), becoming, as a result of that evil-doing and Oedipus' consequent curse, the destroyer of the land: *the Σφίγξ under some other form is still in Thebes.*

In *Trachiniae*, 1235-6, Hyllas inveighs against his father's injunction to marry Iole:

τίς ταῦτ' ἄν, ὅστις μὴ' ἔξ ἀλαστόρων νοσοῖ,  
 ἔλοιτο; -----

Only one mad and deranged, sick in mind through the action of some destroying, avenging daemons, is likely to have it this way; the scholiast appropriately paraphrases: τίς ἂν ταῦτα πράττειν ἔλοιτο ἐκτὸς ὧν μανίας καὶ θεηλασίας.

On the other hand, evil, wrong-doing, human pests are the ἀλάστορες in Ajax' exclamations when he has understood what he has done; *Ajax*, 372 sqq.:

ὦ δύσμορος, ὃς χειρὶ μὲν μεθῆκα τοὺς ἀλάστορας  
 (Odyssey and the two Atreidae)  
 ἐν δ' ἐλίκεσσι βουσί καὶ κλυτοῖς πεσῶν αἰπολίοις  
 ἐρεμνὸν αἴμ' ἔδευσα.

Finally, the extended usage above indicated is to be found in *Trachiniae* 1092 where the Nemean Lion is called βουκόλων ἀλάστωρ, the scourge of

herdsmen (cf. Hesiod's reference to the same Lion as πῆμ' ἀνθρώποις, *Theogonia* 329). But of course that lion was a semi-divine being, and in any case religiously significant, connected I believe to the Nemean Games. Furthermore one should keep finally in mind that *extended usage does not mean extended, or however altered, sense*. The lion was a dreadful destroyer, a punishment for their sin, as we might say.

There are many occurrences of the word in Euripides, almost all referring to daemonic destroyers. In *Orestes*, 1545 sqq., we have an admirable succinct formulation of the substance of the matter; the Chorus exclaims:

τέλος ἔχει δαίμων βροτοῖς,  
 τέλος πα θέλει  
 μεγάλα δέ τις ἄ δύναμις δι' ἀλαστόρων  
 ἔπαισ' ἔπαισε μέλεθρα τάδε δι' αἰμάτων  
 διὰ τὸ Μυρτίλου πέσημ' ἐκ δίφρου.

ἄ could be omitted with some mss; in any case there is no need for strong punctuation after δύναμις, for the phrase is all right idiomatically - supply οὔσα after τις or read ἄ with a comma before it. On the other hand ἔπεσ' ἔπεσε may be the correct reading, testified as it is by the better mss. and giving a welcome added sharpness to πέσημ' ἐκ δίφρου; we should read then and punctuate thus:

μεγάλα δέ τις ἄ δύναμις· δι' ἀλαστόρων  
 ἔπεσ' ἔπεσε μέλεθρα τάδε δι' αἰμάτων etc.,

understanding μέλαθρα as the subject of ἔπεσε. Or, perhaps better still, we can combine the two readings, thus accounting most naturally for the diversity, reading:

μεγάλα δέ τις δύναμις δι' ἀλαστόρων  
 ἔπαισ' ἔπεσε μέλαθρα τάδε δι' αἰμάτων etc.

This would also account for the juxtaposition of both forms in the Scholia.

ἔπταισ' might also be suggested.

But however this may be, the sense is clear: man's fortune and fate is in the hands of Godhead; indeed great was the power (Hermes') which, *through* the bloodthirsty daemons of Revenge, drowned in blood this House, because of the impious and impure act of its founder towards Myrtilus, Hermes' son. Notice the triple repetition of *διά*; it may appear inartistic at first sight in such a powerful and concise context, but it is purposefully arranged to enhance the crucial point: God acts and gods' will is done through the Daemons of Pollution and Destruction, God acts and his will is done in the human bloodshed and the actions that men commit according to their own mind - all is but part of a huge organism: the World's *natural* justice. *An anomaly is finally resolved*, the stain produced by Myrtilus' ill-suffering at the hands of Pelops is in the end wiped out completely, so to speak. Thus, the last *διά* gives the human affront against the god, while the former two occurrences of the particle represent the «mechanism» through which the offended divine dignity manifests its *essential inviolability*.

For in an important sense, the *divine order* is indeed *inviolable*, like Anaximander's cosmic Law of elemental justice: for whoever seems to violate it, in disobedience, in reality will collapse under its remorsefully overpowering his strength; he precisely proves the law valid by his attempted invalidation of it. For the really divine order consists not in a Law of Prohibition which only can be violated and then redressed; it consists in the maintenance of an adamantly unyielding nexus: *the similar loves, attracts, generates, breeds, goes with the similar*. Inexorably, thus, pollution will follow pollution, baseness will tend on baseness, excellence will search for excellence, mediocrity will propagate mediocrity, and so with anything and everything. This is the great Cosmic Law - and it is inviolable. The perpetrator of crime does not really transgress the divine order; he merely disobeys human, positive injunctions - and the law of such gods as are modelled on such human institutions. What the guilty does is a

confirmation of the ultimate Law of Homeoactivity and Homeopathy: he acts in accordance to his nature and he will move in the circle to which that nature inexorably inscribes him: the circle of defilement; he is confined there by his very nature, not by this or that accidental act of his. Just as the true καλὸς κἀγαθός, when he, by a fortuitous contamination of divergent circles acts unmeritoriously, he is not thereby essentially polluted; for his nature being of a different order, he only externally touches the defilement, and soon returns to his appropriate station.

There is, then, a three-level operation set in movement the moment an impious offence is committed: ultimately and principally, it is a question of the God (safeguarding that aspect of the cosmic order to which the sacrilege relates) restoring intact - or rather exhibiting as intact - the absolute validity of His Divine Law. This action of the offended and enraged divinity is implemented *naturally*, through the transcendent efficacy of cosmic powers and realities. The daemonic Ministers of Destruction (released as they are by and through the very committing of an act which evokes them *by being of their nature*) are directed to plague the sickened portion of the World in the spiritual and physical vicinity of the focus of the *anomaly*. The corrupt sector suffers its due: the daemonic infection simply answers its rotten condition. Through the ensuing accumulation of profanity, the disorder is, as it were, putrefied, eaten out by the very enormity of its pollution, which, in the end, devours itself and thus disappears, invalidated by its unlimited over-indulgence. This is the way that the anomaly is corrected, the offence redressed - or rather eradicated. But, of course, on the third and lowest level people think, will, feel, plan, intend, deliberate and act - yes they even are bound to follow and evolve their own inner nature; in doing which they simply carry out God' s will, as Euripides succinctly teaches us here.

This passage, more than illustrates, it exhibits the *crux* of the matter: the coordination *and subordination* of the various levels of causality in these

operations. For him who can see globally the ancient Greek world, this is a welcome, but expected, insight. What else do the philosophical articulations of reality in ontologically subordinate state tell us? Religious consciousness and philosophical speculations always coincide in their root-experiences for a profoundly integrated and serenely satisfied culture.

The monstrous spirits of destruction, the cruel avengers of transgression will destroy anything in order to harming their miserable victim. Medea acts like them in this respect. Thus Antigone informing the unhappy Oedipus about the mutual killing of his two sons exclaims (*Phoenissae*, 1556 sqq.):

----- σὸς ἀλάστωρ  
 ξίφεσιν βρίθων  
 καὶ πυρὶ καὶ σχετλῖαισι μάχαις  
 ἐπὶ παιῖδας ἔβα τοὺς σοὺς, ᾧ πάτερ.

In fact these daemons of pollution will not take heed of human responsibility as we «morally» understand it. They will infect and plague everything (according to the latter's resistance) with which they come into contact. So Creon sends into exile Oedipus after the preceding dramatic catastrophe, and he clearly explains why (*Phoenissae*, 1589 sqq.):

οὐκουν σ' ἐάσω τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν ἔτι·  
 σαφῶς γὰρ εἶπε Τειρεσίας οὐ μὴ ποτε  
 σοῦ τήνδε γῆν οἰκοῦντος εὖ πράξειν πόλιν.  
 ἀλλ' ἐκκομίζου· καὶ τάδ' οὐχ ὕβρει λέγω,  
 οὐδ' ἐχθρὸς ᾧν σός, διὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀλάστορας  
 τοὺς σοὺς δεδοικῶς μὴ τι γῆ πάθη κακόν.

He is rational and god-fearing but, alas, to no avail.

Similarly Jason rails against Medea after her murdering their children (*Medea*, 1329 sqq.):

----- ἐγὼ δὲ νῦν φρονῶ, τότε οὐ φρονῶν,  
 ὅτ' ἐκ δόμων σε βαρβάρου τ' ἀπὸ χθονός

Ἕλλην' ἐς οἶκον ἠγόμην, κακὸν μέγα,  
πατρός τε καὶ γῆς προδότιν ἢ σ' ἐθρέψατο.  
τὸν σὸν δ' ἀλάστορα εἰς ἔμ' ἔσκηψαν θεοί·  
κτανουῦσα γὰρ δὴ σὸν κάσιν παρέστιον  
τὸ καλλίπρωρον εἰσέβης Ἀργουῶς σκάφος.

Her former crimes attracted the chastising horrible daemon; but his communion with her made that Gods have turned that ἀλάστωρ of hers upon him as well. It is instructive here to note this further point: Jason ascribes to divine direction the Alastor's visitation upon him as well; however he need not have seen the matter in this way: the daemons of pollution do not pay attention to questions of moral responsibility in the modern sense of the word; they do their work and thereby punishment and redress are automatically, so to speak, achieved. Divine origin of the visitation means acknowledgement of *substantial error* on the part of Jason as well; and this is rendered explicit by τότε οὐ φρονῶν in our very passage. Such niceties are easy to discern and follow, once one has adequately understood the essential core of the matter.

Notice further how this passage provides a fine focal point in connection with which fundamental differences between ancient and modern ways of understanding and evaluating human action are clarified. A modern dramatic Jason would simply and directly associate Medea's present and past wrongdoing: since you perpetrated in the past such unnatural enormities in my favour, you are the kind of person that would do similar monstrosities against me on a suitable occasion, as it happened now. But the ancient mind cannot grasp the immediacy of such connections. Medea is no natural monster. And there is no natural evil either, out there in the world or in human soul. What Medea did in Colchis could be, however harsh and extreme, divinely sanctioned (from a powerful section of the divine substance at least) just as Orestes metroctony was. The point is not Medea's evil nature. The point is that her actions then set in motion, after all as it turned out, the working of the self-



correcting mechanism of the divine order (a mechanism symbolized by, and entrusted into the hands of, the corresponding daemonic ἀλάστωρ): Medea was eventually punished by being driven to commit enormities against herself (the killing of her own children) greater than those she inflicted on others earlier. Jason was simply entangled in Medea's punishment because of his connection with her.

Accumulated calamities of a superhuman enormity and beyond reason, perhaps even without apparent cause (so far as the miserable sufferer is concerned), are ascribed naturally to the workings of an ἀλάστωρ. Theseus laments his unhappy lot (*Hippolytus*, 817 sqq.):

ὄμοι ἐγὼ πόνων· ἔπαθον, ὦ πόλις,  
τὰ μάκιστ' ἐμῶν κακῶν. ὦ τύχα,  
ὥς μοι βαρεῖα καὶ δόμοις ἐπεστάθης,  
κηλὶς ἄφραστος ἐξ ἀλαστόρων τινός.

A *stain* is upon him and his household *from an ἀλάστωρ*.

Similarly Hecuba on seeing Polydorus' dead body wails (*Hecuba* 685 sqq.):

αἰαῖ, κατάρχομαι γόων,  
βακχεῖον ἐξ ἀλάστορος  
ἀρτιμαθῆ νόμον.

And the Chorus ascribes the terrible happenings to this ἀλάστωρ, some daemon who sits heavy on her fate (*ibid*, 721-2):

ὦ τλήμον, ὥς σε πολυπονωτάτην βροτῶν  
δαίμων ἔθηκεν, ὅστις ἐστὶ σοι βαρὺς.

Helen's marriage with Paris, resulting in such unimaginable destruction and misery, was not a marriage but a deadly woe coming from an ἀλάστωρ (*Hecuba*, 945 sqq.):

----- ἐπεὶ με γᾶς  
ἐκ πατρώας ἀπώλεσεν,

ἐξώκισέν τ' οἴκων γάμος, οὐ γάμος  
ἀλλ' ἀλαστόρός τις οἰζύς.

And similarly Paris is described as the plague and destroyer of Hecuba, in *Troades*, 941 sqq.=933 sqq. Variorum, (Helen is addressing Menelaus):

ἦλθ' οὐχὶ μικρὰν θεὸν ἔχων αὐτοῦ μέτα  
ὁ τῆσδ' ἀλάστωρ, εἴτ' Ἀλέξανδρον θέλεις  
ὀνόματι προσφωνεῖν νιν εἴτε καὶ Πάριν·

But this concerns the application of the word to pestilences under human form.

When one is going to perform some vile, horrible or repulsive act of destruction - the influence of an ἀλάστωρ impressing upon him the godsend ἄτη is naturally assumed. So Clytaemnestra, upon having of her husband's plan to sacrifice their daughter, immediately thinks of madness and of an ἀλάστωρ's goading (*Iph. in Aul.*, 876 sqq.):

ΚΛ. ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ. Μεμηνῶς ἄρα τυγχάνει πόσις;  
ΠΡ. ἀρτίφρων, πλὴν ἐς σέ καὶ σὴν παῖδα· τοῦτο δ' οὐ φρονεῖ.  
ΚΛ. ἐκ τίνος λόγου; τίς αὐτὸν οὐπάγων ἀλαστόρων;

Even if one is not responsible for an atrocious act, yet if he has been involved in it in whatever way, unintentionally or indeed without his knowledge, he will consider himself as plagued by an ἀλάστωρ. So Achilles, the unwilling cause of Iphigeneia's coming to the Greek camp in Aulis, announces that he intends to prevent the horrible sacrifice (*ibid.*, 944 sqq.):

ἐγὼ κάκιστος ἦν ἄρ' Ἀργείων ἀνήρ,  
ἐγὼ τὸ μηδέν, Μενέλεως δ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν,  
ὡς οὐχὶ Πηλέως, ἀλλ' ἀλάστορος γεγώς,  
εἵπερ φονεύει τοῦμὸν ὄνομα σῶ πόσει

(addressing himself to Clytaemnestra).

That one who causes misery (directly or indirectly, deliberately or unintentionally), especially of an odious or signal in its enormity character, must be the child of daemonic powers bent on destruction is also clearly

highlighted in *Troades*, 761 sqq. = 768 sqq. Variorum. Andromache is referring to Helen:

ὦ Τυνδάρειον ἔρνος, οὐ ποτ εἶ Διός,  
πολλῶν δὲ πατέρων φημί σ' ἐκπεφυκέναι,  
(alluding also to her lewdness),  
Ἀλάστορος μὲν πρῶτον, εἶτα δὲ Φθόνου,  
Φόνου τε Θανάτου θ', ὅσα τε γῆ τρέφει κακά.  
οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἀνχῶ Ζῆνά γ' ἐκφῦσαι σ' ἐγὼ  
πολλοῖσι κῆρα βαρβάροις Ἑλλησί τε.

Helen's pedigree reminds one of the horrible progeny of Νύξ in Hesiod's *Theogony*, 211 sqq. The two last verses in the Euripidean passage, refer to the view that Zeus himself caused (in the sense we explained just before) the Trojan War as a way of relieving the Earth from the weight of Man's impiety and pollution; v. Euripides, *Orestes*, 1638 sqq. with the scholia. There Apollo himself is pronouncing the truth of the matter, which illustrates nicely my analysis of the natural workings of the divine powers: human ὕβρις aggrandises itself, atrocity follows atrocity, the enormity of the crimes and the rapidity of the process increases continuously till the salutary crisis arrives in a paroxysm of Man's sacrilegious pride, and the whole edifice of defilement collapses from within. *This is true divine punishment.*

When the ultimate atrocity is enjoined upon the unhappy Orestes by the Delphic Oracle, he wonders whether it was not really Apollo that advised him but some Ἀλάστωρ. So in *Electra*, 979-80 Variorum:

ΟΡ. ἄρ' αὐτ' ἀλάστωρ εἶπ' ἀπεικασθεὶς θεῶ;  
ΗΛ. ἱερὸν καθίζων τρίποδ'; ἐγὼ μὲν οὐ δοκῶ.

*Electra*, set on the murder of her mother, tries to sooth his apprehensions invoking the inviolable sanctity of the Delphic sacred tripod. No ghostly spectre could dare to sit there on the august throne of the god of light. And Orestes is relieved to hear from Apollo himself that he will stand by his suppliant and will

not betray him now that he had committed what he was advised to; *Orestes*, 1666 sqq.:

ὦ Λοξία μαντεῖε, σῶν θεσπισμάτων.  
 οὐ ψευδόμαντις ἦσθ' ἄρ', ἀλλ' ἐτήτυμος.  
 Καίτοι μ' ἐσῆει δεῖμα, μή τινος κλύων  
 ἀλαστόρων δόξαιμι σὴν κλύειν ὄπα.  
 ἀλλ' εὖ τελεῖται, πείσομαι δὲ σοῖς λόγοις.

However, Euripides appears to adopt the highest level of alastorship: the Aeschylean Zeus ἀλάστωρ would seem inadmissible to him. Therefore he contrasts godhead with the terrible ministerium justitiae. But this, if seriously meant, undercuts the very foundation of a self-sustainable divine order, besides being a cardinal example of a rationalistic oversensitivity and, in effect, wobbliness. But, fortunately, there is sound meaning in Euripides point here, which would free him from the allegations of his ancient detractors and modern admirers. Orestes hesitates; is what he experiences an Apollonian spectre that hides a horrendous Ἀλάστωρ urging him to augment the series of atrocities heavily weighting upon the House of the Pelopids; or is it pure Apollo himself, the god of final achievement and luminous harmony, that will affect the final liberating act in that series of monstrous deeds, putting an end to the accumulation of abominations that an initial transgression originated and has kept going on up to now?

When Medea goes indoors to murder her children, the Chorus invokes Mother Earth and the God of Light, the Sun, to help and prevent the atrocious deed; especially addressing themselves to the Daylight, call upon it to throw out of the house, at this crucial juncture, Medea, who, under the influence of ἀλάστορες, has been transformed into a murderous Fury (*Medea*, 1258 sqq.):

ἀλλά νιν, ὦ φάος διογενές, κάτειργε  
 κατάπαυσον, ἔξελ' οἴκων φονίαν  
 τάλαινάν τ' Ἑρρινὺν ὑπ' ἀλαστόρων.

My interpretation of this difficult passage keeps the transmitted text and the sense elicited is nicely apposite; yet  $\upsilon\pi'$  ἀλαστόρων is not perfectly natural here taken in the required meaning. Perhaps  $\acute{\alpha}\pi'$  ἀλαστόρων (with Elmsley) is some improvement, but it does not meet the difficulty all the way. Musgrave, whose notes on Euripides are almost always illuminating even where we should certainly not adopt his emendations, proposed:

τάλαιναν τ' ἔριννύσ' ὑπ' ἀλάστορον,

taking ἀλάστορον as accusative of ἀλάστορος (this form was noticed above) and construing τάλαιναν τ' ἀλάστορον ὑπὸ ἔριννύσι, which Porson, as he said, did not understand. «Μοχ ἔριννύσ' ὑπ' ἀλάστορον legit Musgravius, quod neque ipse interpretatur, neque ego intelligo». And yet Porson was, and partly is hailed as a great philologist (of verbal criticism, no doubt!) when Musgrave, the best Euripidean scholar, was hardly noticed or known. But from people who can admire such pretensions critical fools as Cobet or Badham, nothing is surprising. However Musgrave's emendation, ingenious though it is, will not really help us here. For the basic problem remains - which is, how the formula «ἔξελε Χ ὑπὸ Ψ» can, without bias, mean throw out Medea who has become and acts like X on the influence of Ψ; in fact, in one particular Musgrave aggravates the problem by changing the (relatively more appropriate in expressing influence) ὑπό + genitive to ὑπό + dative. In any case the formula is harshly, perhaps unbearably, elliptic. Unless, which I prefer, we should read quite simply τῶν ἀλαστόρων instead of ὑπ' ἀλαστόρων or, if we keep ὑπό, connect it to ἔξελε with a most daring ὑπερβατόν, which is, after all, the scholiast's reading, it would seem; he comments: τὸ ἐξῆς: ὑπέξελε τῶν οἴκων τὴν φονίαν Ἐριννὺν τῶν ἀλαστόρων. (Schwartz, in his very defective edition of the Euripidean scholia, missing and destroying the entire point inserts <ὑπὸ> τῶν ἀλαστόρων!). - That Medea is meant by Ἐριννύς is, I think, certain because of τάλαινα. The Scholiast, it is true, takes it as referring to the Daemon goading Medea to her atrocious deed: τάλαιναν δὲ ἔριννὺν αὐτὴν φησὶ τὴν Μηδείας

δαίμονα, οὐ τὴν Μήδειαν. ὑπείληπται γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων κακῶν αἰτία εἶναι Ἐριννύς. This, though in itself better, leaves us with the problem of τάλαινα. For his explanation of τάλαινα is very weak: τάλαιναν δὲ τὴν τάλαινας ποιοῦσαν. Alternatively, we may with Seidler (approved by Elmsley) reverse the order to τάλαιναν φονίαν τ', and take τάλαιναν as referring to Medea, while φονίαν τ' Ἐριννύν would then quite properly signify the overhanging murderous Fury who has taken possession of Medea's mind. All right - but unnecessary, and even, perhaps, less poignant in the context and moment. So I stay with text and interpretation as above indicated.

The action of an ἀλάστωρ is well indicated by the Chorus with reference to Oreste's madness and deranged mind (*Orestes*, 335 sqq.):

ἰὼ Ζεῦ,  
 τίς ἔλεος, τίς δ' ἀγὼν  
 φόνιος ἔρχεται  
 θοάζων σὲ τὸν μέλεον, ᾧ δάκρυα  
 δάκρυσι συμβάλλει  
 πορεύων τις εἰς δόμον ἀλαστόρων  
 ματέρος αἷμα σᾶς σ' ἀναβακχεύει;

Finally, there is a most telling passage in the midst of the awful monologue of Medea, when she broods, still hesitating, over her intention to harm and wound as deeply as she can Jason irrespective of consequences and her own attendant suffering (as I noticed above, her behaviour illustrates very aptly the character of the daemonic beings which we study). *Medea*, 1056 sqq.:

Ἄ, ᾗ.  
 Μὴ δῆτα, θυμέ, μὴ σύ γ' ἐργάση τάδε·  
 ἔασον αὐτούς, ᾧ τάλαν, φεῖσαι τέκνων·  
 ἐκεῖ μεθ' ἡμῶν ζῶντες εὐφρανοῦσι σε.

As the scholiast well observes: πάλιν ἐνταῦθα λύεται πρὸς οἶκτον. But then, suddenly, the chthonic powers prevail:

Μὰ τοὺς παρ' Ἄϊδη νεοτέρους ἀλάστορας,  
 οὗτοι ποτ' ἔσται τοῦθ' ὅπως ἐχθοροῖς ἐγὼ  
 παῖδας παρήσω τοὺς ἐμοὺς καθυβρίσαι.

Again the scholiast remarks, just to the point: ἐπειδὴ δὲ συνεχῶς ὄρᾳ ἑαυτὴν νικωμένην τῷ πρὸς τοὺς παῖδας οἴκτῳ, ὄρκῳ φρικωδεστάτῳ κατακλείει ἑαυτὴν πρὸς τὸ μηδὲν ἕτερον ἢ τὸν φόνον τῶν παιδῶν ἐξ ἄπαντος δοῦσαι. The φρικωδέστατος ὄρκος is the invocation of the chthonic ἀλάστορες; she takes an oath by them and lets them imbue her with their own blind, deadly spirit breathing revengeful destruction even in the most impious way. It is very important that we find here explicitly mentioned the chthonic character of the ἀλάστορες such as they have been disclosed to us; they belong and draw their power from the awesome kingdom of the Dead. The full significance of this character will emerge in a much later stage of our inquiry. But even here we may notice the fundamental connexion between chthonicity and things awful, fearful, terrible, horrible. Thus, the scholiast to *Phoenissae*, 810-1 (= 823-4 Variorum):

----- ἄν (sc. Σφίγγα) ὁ κατὰ χθονὸς Ἄϊδας  
 Καδμείοις ἐπιπέμπει·

has: ἦν Ἐριννύς τις, ἢ Αἰδωνεύς ἢ ἀλάστῳ (notice the significant addition; cf. also Bekker, *Anecdota* p. 382.27, where Nicochanis, the comic poet, spoke of the Sphinx as ἀλάστῳ (θηλυκῶς), Meineke *Fr. Com. Gr.* vol. II, p. 847 = Fr. 23 PCG vol. VII p. 48) ἐφῆκε τῇ πόλει. Πάντα γὰρ τὰ δεινὰ χθόνια ἔλεγον οἱ ἀρχαῖοι. (The ἀρχαῖοι instead of παλαιοί may indicate Byzantine origin - but the remark is in any case absolutely true). And the scholiast to Aristophanes *Ares*, 1745 observes: καὶ τὰς χθονίας κλήσατε: Εὐφρόνιος, τὰς φοβεράς. Πάντα γὰρ τὰ δεινὰ τῆς γῆς γενεαλογοῦσιν. Here we meet the same point in mythological - genealogical dress.

As I said the vast majority of the occurrences of ἀλάστῳ in the extant Euripidean corpus refer to daemonic beings. But the human side of the

manifestation of the character signified by this word is also represented in *Troade,s* 941 (referring to Paris) and *Hercules Furiens*, 1234, where however the point concerns the passing over by contact of a contagious, religious miasma. Such use of the word with reference to humans is commoner with prose writers, especially when an emphatic point has to be made. Cf. Demosthenes, *De Corona* p. 324.18 (Reiske) (already quoted); Philip can be called ἀλάστωρ, *id. De Falsa Legatione* p. 438 penult.; or Dionysius the tyrant son of Dionysius, can be described as ἀπάσης Σικελίας ἀλάστωρ, Clearchus apud Athenaeus XII, 541C.

To conclude this survey, one last point must be noted, which applies equally well to all these daemonic beings that we are analysing, ἀλιτήριοι, ἀλάστορες, παλαμναῖοι, ἐριννύες etc. **One should not fall into the usual errors of conceiving of them in the framework of modern, Christian religious thought as either *angels of punishment or devils, sons of evil*. They are neither ministers of justice and executioners in our sense of these expressions, nor organs of Satan. They merely represent the dark, chthonic aspect of divine Law and Order; they are *part* of the natural justice prevailing in the ancient Cosmos, as its in-built corrective «mechanism», so to speak; only it is a living mechanism, an organism. I remarked already that Greece does not really know of any dualism of competing moral forces, of any eternal battle going on between Light and Darkness, Good and Evil. There is only good really - and failure. In any case it is tautological to say that the divine, cosmic order is «good» in the ancient «non-moral» sense of the word. The same power who blinds us with its splendour and unspeakable beauty does not become evil when it delivers a terrible blow on the unworthy. Divinity has indeed an awful, dreadful, terrible, yes even monstrous aspect; but it is *not* evil for that. In one sense, it remains pure and unsullied in the midst of the wildest orgies of revenge, in the fullness of the abominations perpetrated according to the necessary workings of cosmic Law, in the complete abandonment to animalistic instincts. In another sense, these very ecstasies of corruption are**



but the other aspect of divine grandeur and majesty. There is an unbroken chain which bonds together the lowest and the highest in a well-graduated hierarchy of subordination according to the nature of each and every thing; there is one law, one vital force to which all obey without even so much as the possibility of «choice». Cosmos is one living organism, its vital energy is the inviolable divine law, and its soul is divinity in all its manifestations. (Here one sees the essential congruence of ancient life-experience and ancient thought; what I describe as fundamental attitudes of ancient mentality and its in-bred world-view is the basis of a variety of easily recognizable philosophical theories all-sharing the same insight *au fond*). It is the same divine order which necessarily presents its terrible aspect to the, so to speak, *natural errors*, to the defective and the abortive in the World; the same divine order again sustains the law in its subordinate existence and blazes over what is excellent its inexhaustible treasures of Goodness, Beauty and Truth.

The same point emphatically crosses again and again the path of any inquiry into ancient Greek religiosity of feeling and reflexion. One should take special care not to impute to these daemons of pollution a Christian-devilish countenance. They are not «evil» in the satanic sense of the word - indeed they are themselves *divine* beings, and their principles are veritable *Gods*. This is the reason why in the above conducted analyses I normally avoided using such expressions as «evil», «maleficent» etc.; I sparsely utilised them when it was necessary to put especial weight and emphasis on the horrible and hideous appearance or character of a situation, a thing, an act, a suffering. But one should always bear in mind that such employment is intended for the modern man, who is likely to conceive of the intensely fearful and dreadful as «evil», and who, consequently, is most powerfully aroused to the feeling of horror in connexion with the workings of maleficent, satanic powers. However, it must be made clear that for the ancient Mind it is not *religious* terms that acquire their full sense and weight

by being infused with *moral* implications; on the contrary moral conceptions and expressions cannot be really severed from their religious core and foundation. *For the ancient World and culture, it is not so much a question of a moral and «spiritual» Religion, as of a religious morality and spirituality.*

It is also in such a way that we must understand some exegetical remarks on ἀλάστωρ, probably of *Byzantine* origin. For example, the scholion to Euripides, *Phoenissae*, 1556 (σὸς ἀλάστωρ ξίφεσιν βρίθων etc.) has after the ancient observation: ἀλάστωρ· ἔφορος δαίμων τῶν τὰ ἄλαστα πεποιηκότων καὶ τιμωρός, the following additions: Ἄλλως. ὁ παρακολουθῶν σοι κακοποιὸς δαίμων; and: ἄλλως. ἀλάστορες λέγονται τινος ἢ οἱ κακοποιοῦντες αὐτὸν ἢ οἱ δ' ἐκδίκησιν αὐτοῦ ἑτέρους κακοποιοῦντες. And in another ms.: ἡ σὴ δυστυχία, ὁ κακοδαίμων ὁ ἀκολουθῶν σοι ἀεί. Similarly the scholion to *Phoenissae*, 1587 (διὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀλάστορας τοὺς σοὺς etc.) runs thus: τοὺς ἀλάστορας τοὺς σοὺς, ἤγουν τοὺς παρακολουθοῦντάς σοι κακοποιούς δαίμονας. Naturally, in a Greek context even κακοποιός means *harmful* rather than *evil-doer*; just as the primal and basic signification of ἀγαθόν is benefit, *advantage*, profit, useful, gain etc. And this gives another dimension to the same point: as a rule of thumb, avoid importing «moral» connotations in ancient things as much as you can; one cannot err by being overcautious in this matter. (For the «a-morality», the natural perfection-basis, and the cognitive core of Classical Ethics v. in reference to Platonic Philosophy, my Essay «Roads to Excellence: Is Optimal Self-realization Metaphysically Neutral?» in J. D. Gericke and P. J. Maritz (eds.), *Plato's Philosophy of Education and its Relevance to Contemporary Society and Education in the Ancient World*, vol 2, 1998, pp. 329-373).).

Ἀλιτήριοι or ἀλιτηριώδεις (sc. δαίμονες) comes from ἀλιταίνω, ἀλιτραίνω, ἀλίτω or ἀλείτω, with the cluster of cognates. Just as λίσσομαι, λίτομαι, λιτή etc. express the proper attitude towards Divinity (that of reverential obeisance and prostration) the former forms signify basically the rebelling thought or act, man's insurrection (perceived consciously as such or not, it does not matter greatly) against Godhead, in other words, sacrilegious behaviour. The notion of conceiving or perpetrating wickedness is, in a sense, secondary in this context; wrong doing in all its forms is, as has been explained, fundamentally an act of (deliberate or not) insolence against, and of violation of, the cosmic and divine order, - an act therefore sacrilegious.

A survey of the main occurrences of the root ἀλιτ- in our sources will support this basic insight. When Homer in *Iliad* I, 735 has: ἐκ γὰρ δή μ' ἀπάτησε καὶ ἤλιτεν, the ἤλιτεν does not so much refer to the speaking Achilles as to the *religiously* coloured wrongdoing committed by Agamemnon in deceiving Achilles. Eustathius has sensed this (757.1 sqq.): τὸ δὲ «καὶ ἤλιτεν» ἄριστα πρόσκειται εἰς τὸ «ἐκ γὰρ δή μ' ἀπάτησεν»: ὡς γὰρ οὐ πᾶς δόλος, οὕτως οὐδὲ ἀπάτη πᾶσα ψεκτή, ἀλλ' ἢ μόνη ἢ τῶν ἀλιτρῶν. Καλῶς γὰρ ἔσχε τὸ «ἀγαθῆς ἀπάτης οὐκ ἀποστατεῖ θεός». The αἰὲν ἀλιτρός in *Iliad*, Θ, 361 expresses, in words of rage, Zeus' eternal transgression of the proper order as perceived by an incensed Athena. Again Eustathius (717.20 sqq.) has caught in the main the conveyed sentiment: ἀλιτρός δὲ ὁ τοῦ δέοντος ἀλιτῶν, ἦτοι ἁμαρτῶν (where see also his following interesting grammatical remarks on the derivation of ἀλιτρός) –.

In *Iliad* T, 265, the force of our view becomes manifest. Agamemnon takes a solemn oath that he did not touch Briseis; and he invokes upon himself the divine punishment if he commits perjury:

εἰ δέ τι τῶνδ' ἐπίορκον, ἐμοὶ θεοὶ ἄλγεα δοῖεν

πολλὰ μάλ', ὅσσα διδοῦσιν τίς σφ' ἀλίτηται ὁμόσσας.

The σφέ here is plural as Eustathius notices (1183.48). Whoever offends them in his oath, whoever in mind or act rebels against them by perjuring himself will be punished. The force of ἀλίτηται here can be adequately brought out only in our interpretation. - In *Iliad*, Ψ 595 we meet the pregnant expression δαίμοσιν εἶναι ἀλιτρός. Antilochus, reflecting on the extremities to which the young men's transgressions may lead (νέου ἀνδρός ὑπερβασίαι - a very significant, often occurring word, nicely fitting to the above account of the basic model of ancient Greek wrongdoing), yields to Menelaus, not wishing to displease him and be offensive, insolent in the face of divinity. - In *Iliad*, Ω 157 (repeated in 186) Achilles is described by Zeus thus:

οὔτε γὰρ ἔστ' ἄφρων, οὔτ' ἄσκοπος, οὔτ' ἀλιτήμων,

ἀλλὰ μάλ' ἐνδυκέως ἰκέτεω πεφιδήσεται ἀνδρός.

He will respect the suppliant, being neither foolish or senseless, nor bereft of good council, nor ἀλιτήμων, godless or heedless of the divine order. Eustathius did once more capture the implications; he explains (1343.32 sqq.): ἐνταῦθα δέ, κατὰ τοὺς παλαιούς (this is, that is, an old insight according to the view, already prevalent in Classical times, that in Homer you have the beginning and end of all wisdom) διέλαβε ὁ ποιητὴς διὰ ταχέων, ὅθεν ἔρχονται εἰς τὸ ἀδικεῖν ἄνθρωποι· ἢ γὰρ δι' ἀσυνεσίαν, ὃ δηλοῦται διὰ τοῦ «ἄφρων» ἢ ἀκόντως, ὃ δηλοῖ Ὅμηρος διὰ τοῦ «ἄσκοπος», ὃ σημαίνει τὸν μὴ τοῦ συμφέροντος προνοούμενον κατὰ τὸν εὐσκοπον Ἑρμῆν· ἢ ἐκουσίως, ὃ διὰ τοῦ ἀλιτήμων ἐδήλωσεν, ἀλιτήμων γὰρ ὁ ἐκουσίως ἀμαρτάνων τοῦ δεόντος. One can be consciously mischievous according to the ancient sentiment, only because of a basic godlessness. The alternative interpretation of ἀλιτήμων given by Eustathius τινὲς δὲ τὸ «ἀλιτήμων» ἀντὶ τοῦ «ἀλιτάνευτος» with reference to the responsiveness to a *suppliant* affirmed of Achilles in the following line) is patently less appropriate in meaning and less

probable grammatically, even though, of course, both words have a common root in λιτ-, as observed at the beginning of this section.- Finally in *Iliad*, Ω 570 the notion of the transgression of the divine law for ἀλίτω is strikingly evident even on the first level. Achilles asks Priamus not to enrage him,

μή σε, γέρων, οὐδ' αὐτὸν ἐνὶ κλισίῃσιν ἐάσω  
καὶ ἱκέτην περ ἐόντα, Διὸς δ' ἀλίτωμαι ἐφετμάς.

Improper behaviour towards a suppliant constitutes transgression of Zeus' law (Ζεὺς Ἰκέσιος as Eustathius notices 1365.512).

Passages from the *Odyssey* confirm our interpretation. δ, 377-8: ἀλλὰ νυ μέλλω / ἀθανάτους ἀλιτέσθαι, οἱ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν ( *scholium*: ἀλλὰ ἔοικα ἡμαρτηκέναι εἰς τοὺς θεοὺς). - δ, 806-7: ἐπεὶ ῥ' ἔτι νόστιμός ἐστι / σὸς παῖς· οὐ μὲν γάρ τι θεοῖς ἀλιτήμενός ἐστι. ( *scholium*: οὐχ ἡμαρτηκῶς εἰς τοὺς θεοὺς, ἀλλὰ τουναντίον προσφιλῆς. Eustathius 1518.38: τουτέστιν οὐκ ἐφάμαρτός ἐστιν εἰς τὸ θεῖον. Notice the scholiast's derivation of the word from an initial present form ἀλείτω, cf. the ἀλείτης, the sinner, of *Iliad*, Γ, 28 and *Odyssey*, υ, 121) - ε, 108: ἀτὰρ ἐν νόστῳ Ἀθηναίην ἀλίτοντο, / ἦ σφιν ἐπῶρσ' ἄνεμόν τε κακὸν καὶ κύματα μακρά. - In ε, 182-5: ἦ δὴ ἀλιτρός τ' ἐσσι καὶ οὐκ ἀποφώλια εἰδώς, / οἷον δὴ τὸν μῦθον ἐπεφράσθης ἀγορευῆσαι, Odysseus is ἀλιτρός because he explicitly distrusts Kalypso and obliges her to take a formal oath; he is offensive against her divine dignity. (Eustathius here, 1529.40 sqq., gives the derivation of ἀλιτρός from ἀλείτω in the same way as the above noted scholium to δ, 807).

Hesiod concurs. V. *Scutum* 79-80: ἦ τι μέγ' ἀθανάτους μάκαρας, τοὶ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσιν, / ἦλιτεν Ἀμφιτρούων etc. In v. 91 we have ἀλιτήμενον, godless, as in Homer. In *Opera et Dies* 238 sqq.. we find the best exposition of the idea above analysed concerning the destruction brought upon guilty and innocent by a first transgression; in this context ἀλιτραίνη is conjoined with ἀτάσθαλα (explained as ἀνόσια significantly by a gloss) μηχανάαται:

οἷς δ' ὕβρις τε μέμηλε κακὴ καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα,

τοῖς δὲ δίκην Κρονίδης τεκμαίρεται εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς.  
πολλάκι καὶ ξύμπασα πόλις κακοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἀπηύρα  
ὅστις ἀλιτραίνη καὶ ἀτάσθαλα μηχανάαται.  
τοῖσιν δ' οὐρανόθεν μέγ' ἐπήγαγε πῆμα Κρονίων,  
λιμὸν ὁμοῦ καὶ λοιμόν, ἀποφθινύθουσι δὲ λαοί,  
οὐδὲ γυναιῖκες τίκτουσιν, μινύθουσι δὲ οἴκοι  
Ζηνὸς φραδμοσύνησιν Ὀλυμπίου· ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε  
ἦ τῶν γε στρατὸν εὐρὺν ἀπώλεσεν, ἦ γε τεῖχος  
ἦ νέας ἐν πόντῳ Κρονίδης ἀποτείνυται αὐτῶν.

- In v. 330 ὅς τέ τευ ἀφραδίας ἀλιταίνητ' ὄρφανὰ τέκνα, we must not suppose that since the object is not grammatically the gods any more, the sense has lost its religious character. ἀλιταίνητ' ὄρφανὰ τέκνα means behaves godlessly towards orphans in violation of the divine laws. Notice that the verb is middle here; the sense strictly is: he who for himself transgresses god's and nature's decrees in his behaviour towards orphans.

Alcman (Fr. 87 Bergk<sup>4</sup>) speaks of Tantalus (Schol. Pindar, *Olymp.* I 97; or Sisyphus, as Eustathius *Comm. on Odyssey* p. 1701, 23 would have it) as ἀλιτρός - exactly the type of the great offender against the Gods, an offender furthermore filling them with incense and extraordinary wrath so as to inflict upon him exemplary punishment.

Theognis stays within the same signification; ἦλιτες ἀθανάτους, v. 1170. He also uses ἀλιτρός in v. 377 in connection with one committing ὕβρις. In *Pseudophocylides*, 208 it is ἀλίτη σέο, not ἀλίτη σέ.

Pindar's ἀλιτρά in *Olympionicae*, II, 59, especially found as it is in the midst of the famous orphic passage, must be understood in the same fully religious way. Notice that the judgement over such transgressions is entrusted to some principle of «hostile or hateful necessity». Even though the description ἐχθρᾶ is qualified implicitly in λόγον φράσαις, the punishment ἐχθρᾶ ἀνάγκη conveys forcefully the natural, unswerving, implacable necessity of retribution

following an initial disturbance of the divine order, in the sense in which I have explained the operation above. The ἀλιτρός of *Nemeonicae*, VIII, 39 leaves us in the same field. Nor is the case with *Olymp.* X 6 really different: the ἐνιπὰ ἀλιτόξενος is a reprehension, a blame for wrongdoing committed towards a ξένος, but this is eminently of a religiously character. As was explained in similar cases above: the sense strictly speaking is that someone behaves in contravention of the divine laws of φιλοξενία. In all such cases *the gods are at least as much offended as the recipient of the improper behaviour is wronged*. They have an eye for such violations of *their* law.

And Aeschulus teaches us the same lesson. In *Prometheus*, 534, μήδ' ἀλίτοιμι λόγοις, sc. τοὺς θεοὺς from 532. - *Eumenides*, 269 is also very instructive in connection also with the point last mentioned. The Erinnys warn and threaten:

ὄψει δὲ κεί τις ἄλλος (beside Orestes) ἤλιτεν βροτῶν  
 ἢ θεὸν ἢ ξένον τιν' ἀσεβῶν ἢ τοκέας φίλους,  
 ἔχονθ' ἕκαστον (sc. the god, the ξένον or the parent) τῆς δίκης ἐπάξια.

Fearful retribution is a promised certainty for any transgression of *the divine order concerning what is due to either god or ξένον or parent*. The ἀσεβῶν makes the point exceedingly clear. Maltreating a ξένος or a parent is an act of impiety, of ungodliness just as improperly behaving towards godhead as such. The ἤλιτεν refers to any offence against the divine order, any ἀσέβεια of whatever particular description. Similarly in v. 316: ὅστις δ' ἀλιτῶν ὥσπερ δ' ἀνὴρ etc.; Orestes has violated all sacredness by murdering his very mother.

Aristophanes also makes my point very clear. In *Equites* 445, Paflagon scorns Agoracritos: ἐκ τῶν ἀλιτηρίων σὲ φημι γεγονέναι τῶν τῆς θεοῦ. As the scholia explain, this refers to the celebrated Κυλώνειον ἄγος. We observe that the ἀλιτήριοι were τῆς θεοῦ (sc. Athena; for the story see the Scholia; Herodotus V 71; Thucydides I, 126; Pausanias VII, 25, 3; Plutarchus, *Solon*, XII). They were suppliants to the goddess; killing them was an offence against the

deity, a violation of the divine decrees concerning supplication as well as a pollution. They thus became ἀλιτήριοι τῆς θεοῦ. As the scholiast *ad loc* notices here ἀλιτήριοι is tantamount to ἐναγεῖς, i.e. ἐνεχόμενοι ἄγει, μιάσματι. Thus Pausanias, *loc. cit.*, relating the story, concludes: καὶ αὐτοί τε οἱ ἀποκτείναντες ἐνομίσθησαν καὶ οἱ ἐξ ἐκείνων ἐναγεῖς τῆς θεοῦ. (Notice that pollution spreads like an infection by a dangerous virus even to the descendants of the guilty person). Thucydides, *loc. cit.*, combines the expressions to the same effect for our point: καὶ ἀπὸ τούτου ἐναγεῖς καὶ ἀλιτήριοι τῆς θεοῦ ἐκεῖνοί τε ἐκαλοῦντο καὶ τὸ γένος τὸ ἀπ' ἐκείνων. The scholiast to the present Aristophanian passage summarizes the point, explaining: ἀλιτηρίων· τῶν ἀμαρτησάντων εἰς Ἀθηνᾶν. In *Acharnenses*, 907, we find the word ἀλιτρία as the abstract substantive of ἀλίτειν or ἀλείτειν. The same word occurs in Sophocles, Fr. 42 Di, apud Hesychius s.v. ἀλιτροσύνη· ἀμαρτία. καὶ ἀλιτρία Σοφοκλῆς Αἰχμαλώτισιν λέγει (i.e. Sophocles expresses the abstract notion, expressed also by the form ἀλιτροσύνη, by ἀλιτρία). The scholiast to the aristophanian passage explains ἀλιτρίας πλέων as ἀμαρτίας καὶ ἀδικίας πεπληρωμένον.

Sophocles provides another relevant passage. *Oedipus Coloneus*, 371-2:

νῦν ἐκ θεῶν του καὶ ἀλιτηροῦ [sic most mss, Suda s.v.

ἀλιτηροῦ and Eustathius p. 694.17] φρενός

εἰσηλθε τοῖν τρισαθλίον ἔρις κακή, etc.

Regarding the textual problem, I think we should bow to the overwhelming testimony of our sources, and retain the ἀλιτηροῦ, assuming an expressively significant lengthening of the second syllable. ἡ ἀλιτηρὸς φρήν is a sinful mind set upon violating divine appointments and dispensations. It is to be observed here how unashamedly Sophocles puts in immediate juxtaposition the two originations of the ensuing turbulence: it comes from some god *and* from a sinful mind. Innumerable such conjunctions can be adduced in order to utterly discredit the modern notion that, at bottom, the two causes are



somehow incompatible or contradictory. On the contrary: *divinities prey on polluted φρένες*; but, also, on the other hand, *pollution may come to the man from even an inadvertently offended deity*. The basic fact is that transgression breeds transgression and pollution feeds on pollution. The initial disturbance may have been an unconscious violation; or indeed perhaps not even that, since the matter can well be a case of hereditarily or otherwise by contagion to an infected «innocent» (as we might wish to say) individual. – (The scholiast to the Sophoclean passage explains ἀλιτηροῦ by μιχροῦ (repeated in Suda s.v.), very significantly).

The comic poets apply the word ἀλιτήριος to satyriized persons in a way that, without breaking away from the religious substantial core, lends itself to the satirical sense of «wicked fellow» which the word possesses even now in Greek. Thus Eupolis in Δῆμοι Fr. VII (Meineke vol. II p. 460) = Fr. 103 PCG apud Aristides vol. II p. 174 Dindorf has:

ρήτωρ γὰρ ἔστιν νῦν τις, ὧν γ' ἔστιν λέγειν;

ὁ Βουζύγης ἄριστος ἀλιτήριος (Porson, pro ἀλιτήριος)

The reading ὧν is testified as a variant by the scholiast *ad loc.* (p. 473 Dindorf). The sense is: Is there now an orator of those who are allowed to speak (i.e. which they are not guilty of some impiety prohibiting them from speaking in the Assembly); best is Buryges, the ἀλιτήριος - the point being that as ἀλιτήριος and offensive to the gods he certainly should not be one of those permitted to speak. (The orator meant being all but certainly Demostratos by name - as was already supposed by Frommelius, cf. Fr. XXXIV (Meineke vol. II p. 474) apud Scholia to Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 398 - it is not impossible that his family might have had some involvement with the Κυλώνειον ἄγος, as Meineke, following Raspius, *loc. cit.*, suggests. This would give an extra dimension of point to the ἀλιτήριος, but it is not necessary. I wonder, should we also connect to this unfortunate orator Fr. XX of Eupolis' comedy? ἀλιτήριος and προστρόπαιος fit admirably together). - The same combination of the two

aspects of ἀλιτήριος mentioned above is to be found in another of Eupolis' fragments, this one from his Κόλακες. Fr. X (Meineke vol. II p. 490) = Fr. 157 PCG apud Diogenes Laertius IX, 50 (cf. Eustathius p. 1547.53):

ἔνδον (Porson pro ἔνδοθι) μὲν ἔστι Πρωταγόρας ὁ Τήϊος  
 ὃς ἀλαζονεύεται μὲν ἀλιτήριος (Porson, pro ἀλιτήριος)  
 περὶ τῶν μετεώρων, τὰ δὲ χαμᾶθεν ἐσθίει.

The religious element is conspicuous. We know about Protagoras' impiety in general, and here he is accused of propounding *insolent* thoughts about the heavenly phenomena - Anaxagoras' plight comes immediately to mind (in having maintained that the Sun is a fiery stone), and the decree prohibiting *μετεωρολογεῖν*, i.e. *impiously* treating supraterrrestrial entities and events.

In three other passages, from the middle and new comic poetry, we do not possess enough context to demonstrate the existence of the religious core in the meaning of ἀλιτήριος. And it is not impossible that, in the beginning of the post-classical period some individuals, especially in comedy, might use the word in the satirical implication primarily. Yet even here we can discern the traces of the word's serious use. Thus, the passages are: (1) From Eubulus' Πορνοβοσκός Fr. I (Meineke vol. III p. 247) = Fr. 87 PCG apud Athenaeus III, 108d. Even here, the ἀλιτήριος is described by his slave as: ἄνθρωπος ἀνυπέρβλητος εἰς πονηρίαν, borrowing the words of Antiphanes, Athenaeus III, 108e. Thus the φιλάργυρος δὲ κάλιτήριος refer to two distinct traits of the distasteful person. (2) Damoxenus' *Σύντροφοι* Frg. unicum (Meineke vol. IV p. 531) = Fr. 2 PCG apud Athenaeus III, 102A: The cook says (vv. 7-8):

ἢ φύσις πάσης τέχνης  
 ἀρχέγονον ἔστ'. ἀρχέγονον, ᾧλιτήριε;

The mock-tragic tone makes the employment of the religiously laden word peculiarly apposite. Even in (3), Menander's *Fabulae Incentae* Fr. XXXVIII (Meineke vol. IV p. 246) apud Plutarch *De Laude Ipsiis*, 547E, the conjunction of

ἀλαζών and ἀλιτήριος (οἶος δ' ἀλαζών ἐστὶν ἀλιτήριος) contributes to the propriety of the employment of our word though the medium of insolent propensity to transgression.

The post-classical poets exhibit the word in the same dimension of meaning as the old epic and tragic poetry. Apollonius in particular could have been relied upon to preserve the basic religious core especially alive. Thus, excepting a not particularly interesting use of ἀλείτης in A, 1338 (this form seems to be the least laden with explicit religious burden from among its cognates, as its occurrences, above noted, in Homer as well tend to justify), we have a number of very important passages, as follows.

(1) B, 215. Phineus, the old miserable, god-stricken soothsayer implores and imprecates the Argonauts to help him in his terrible predicament:

Ἰκεσίου πρὸς Ζηνός, ὅτις ρίγιστος ἀλιτροῖς  
 ἀνδράσι, Φοίβου τ' ἄμφι, καὶ αὐτῆς εἵνεκεν Ἥρης  
 λίσσομαι-----

By ceremoniously invoking the Gods, he puts himself under their protection; any one harming him negatively or positively is primarily raising his hand in sacrilegious offence against the deities involved, especially against Zeus the overseer of Supplications, who is most *terrible to transgressors* of his law and shield of protection.

(2) Phineus used to disclose to men in detail the will of gods; but they were offended by this his impious indiscretion, and severely punished him (B.311-316): for to know in detail things past, present and future is the prerogative of Gods and whoever renders (by means of mantic powers *granted* to him by the gods) such wisdom accessible to mere humanity disrupts the world-order and infringes upon eternal divine rights. When, thus, further down in his relation, Phineus comes close to again committing the same error (B, 388-90), he shrinks back at the last moment from this novel *transgression*:

Ἀλλὰ τίη με πάλιν χρεῖώ ἀλιτέσθαι,

Μαντοσύνη τὰ ἕκαστα διηγεκὲς ἐξενέποντα;

(3) The king of Mossynoeci, sitting on his highest throne delivers justice to his subjects:

----- ἦν γὰρ πού τι θεμιστεύων ἀλίτηται,  
λιμῶ μιν κεῖν' ἦμαρ ἐνικλείσαντες ἔχουσιν.

This is punishment if he fails to deliver equal justice, if he therefore *transgresses* the divinely apposited law of natural justice according to which he *θεμιστεύει*, he applies and proclaims right and wrong, *Themis'* ordinances. The role of the king in his judicial capacity (θεμιστοῦχοι βασιλῆες) is, we know from Homer, deeply religious. And injustice committed in this way is high sacrilege. - In the same perspective we should understand the ἀλιτήμων δίκη of Δ, 1057.

(4) In Γ, 981 ἀλιτέσθαι does not mean simply say falsehoods or deceive or beguile or simulate. For Jason and Medeia are in the sacred temple of Hecate (v. Γ 915), whom Jason in a moment will formally invoke (Γ, 985). Thus the force of ἀλιτέσθαι is taken from the circumstance that they are in sacred place, χώρῳ ἐν ἠγαθέῳ, ἵνα τ' οὐ θέμις ἔστ' ἀλιτέσθαι: ubi *nefas* est offendere deam, by, as this is the immediate danger in the circumstances, deceiving me (Jason speaks) in my hour of need.

(5) In Δ, 388 the sense of *violation* for ἀλίτω is explicit and manifest, in relation here to an oath: Μάλα γὰρ μέγαν ἦλιτες ὄρκον / νηλεές. –

(6) In the midst of the locus classicus concerning the ritual of purification for murder, to which we shall advert again in detail below, we find (Δ, 698):

----- αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω  
Κίρκη φύξιον οἶτον, ἀλιτροσύνας τε φόνιοι.

Αλιτροσύναι φόνιοι are the μιάσματα, the defilement caused by the murder, the violation committed of the divine law, which consists in pollution, and fills with it the perpetrators of the *impious* deed. Very similar is the ἀλιτημοσύνη of the Orphic *Argonautica*, 1318: πατρὶ θ' ἑῶ τίσεσθαι δίκην ἀλιτημοσυνάων, of the ungodly deeds of transgression.

Apollonius' opponent, Callimachus, much more formal though he is in his archaism, does confirm our interpretation regarding the matter at hand. Thus an epiphany of Apollo is imminent at the beginning of his hymn to this God; and the proclamation is speedily echoed: (v. 2) - ἐκάς, ἐκάς, ὅς τις ἀλιτρός, he who has violated divine laws and is therefore impure and βέβηλος. Similarly in Frg. CXXXII, Bentley (apud *Etym. M.*, s.v. λογχάδες, which are there explained as the white of the eye, probably λογάδες), speaking perhaps of a god, as Bentley would have, Callimachus writes:

----- ὅστις ἀλιτροῦς

Αὐγάζειν ἰθαραῖς οὐ δύναται λογάσιν.

A pure eye cannot see the impure sceleratos. In *Hymnus in Dianam*, 255, Callimachus speaks of the impious endeavours of Λύγδαμις ὑβριστής: ἄ δειλὸς βασιλέων ὅσον ἤλιτεν. He offended against the goddess, and thereby he ultimately failed; for he etc. (οὐ γὰρ ἔμελλεν etc.).

**This is an appropriate place to notice that just as the senses «unjust» or «evil-doing» or «sinful» etc. do not subvert the fundamental religious meaning of the root considered in this disquisition; so the notion of «failure», «failing of one' s purpose», «going wrong», «fault» etc. are to be seen in the context of that same basic core. Violation of the divine law (and such is the cosmic, natural order) is sinful, unjust action; and, being bound to result in the end in an absolute failure, is a moral, material and practical (because a religious and metaphysical) *fault*.**

This is the correct way to see passages like the one just mentioned. V. 642 of the Orphic *Argonautica*, where an ordinary notion of «loosing one's way» seems to be the more natural, is exceptional, and is to be considered, I think, since it is singular, as a case of lapsus mentis on the part of the author, or rather of μεγαληγορία, using here an epic-tragic word to signify a common incident. Unless of course, one would daringly connect Hylas' loosing his way with the following encounter with the Nymphs - a contact prohibited and disastrous. In

that case ἤλιτεν would gain its religious standing and sense of contravening the world-order, once more. –

Finally, in the same hymn, v. 122 sqq., Artemis is portrayed as sending one of her arrows to a city of injustice:

----- τὸ τέτρατον (sc. arrow) οὐκέτ' ἐπὶ δροῦν,  
ἀλλὰ μιν εἰς ἀδίκων ἔβαλες πόλιν, οἷτε περὶ σφέας  
οἷτε περὶ ξείνους ἀλιτήμονα πολλ' ἐτέλεσκον.

The following description of the dire consequences which ensue provides a very good example of what I mean by initial transgressions originating a whirlwind of foul abomination which is apt to destroy just and unjust alike. -

The immediate interest, so to speak, that the God concerned has in punishing the ἀλιτρός (as the one who offended him in his divine majesty) is well brought out by Theocritus, X 17 (a proverbial expression as the scholia *ad. loc.* inform us - but it strangely is not to be found in the extant collection of the Paroemigraphi). Milon wishes to express emphatically that what happened to Battos was what he was asking for; and he puts it thus:

Εὔρε θεὸς τὸν ἀλιτρόν· ἔχεις πάλαι ὦν ἐπεθύμεις.

Tryphiodorus, *Excidium Ilii*, 268-9

οἷά με λωβήσαντο θεῶν ὅπιν οὐκ ἀλέγοντες,  
οὐδὲν ἀλιτραίνοντα, -----

They did not heed the impending vengeance of the gods in maltreating me, without any transgression on my part.

Nonnus, XII, 71-3 describes the horrible deed of Harpalyce:

----- ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὴ  
Ἄρπαλύκη μετὰ λέκτρον ἀλιτροβίων ὑμεναίων  
υἷέα δαιτρεύσασα θυγατρογάμῳ γενετῆρι,  
etc.

His father was θυγατρογάμος, i.e. committed incest with her; in a dish she offered to him the son she bore to him. Such marriage can very appositely

be described as ἀλιτροβίος - an ungodly life of abomination, of violation of the divine order.

The ἀλείτ-, ἀλίτ- root appears also as ἀλοίτ-, just as from ἀλείφω comes ἀλοιφή, and from λείπω, λοιπός to give two examples, noticed by Eustathius<sup>2</sup>.

The extant occurrences of the form are two passages in Lycophron, 136 and 936, the latter of special significance. The former illustrates finally our view of the matter. Paris is the ἀλοιτός who dared transgress divine ordinances, smashing the common table of hospitality and throwing down Themis, vv. 136-7:

ἔτλης θεῶν ἀλοιτὸς ἐκβῆναι δίκην

λάξας τράπεζαν κἀνακυπώσας Θέμιν etc.

But he will not get away with it, his punishment being detailed in the sequel. His transgressions are recounted in 131-5 and are all deeply religious. It is primarily with reference to them, not merely on account of the rape of Helen as such, that he is ἀλοιτὸς and will be avenged.

ὄς τοὺς Λύκου τε καὶ Χιμαιρέως τάφους

χρησιμοῖσι κυδαίνοντας οὐκ αἰδούμενος,

οὐδ' Ἀνθέως ἔρωτας, οὐδὲ τὸν ξένοις

σύνδορπον Αἰγαίωνος ἀγνίτην πάγον etc.

Paris' violations concern: (1) his unashamedly not respecting those who properly honoured two heroes worshipped in Ilion - the people referred to being the Spartans and Menelaus, their leader, in particular, who specifically went to Troja in order to perform the proper ceremonies and offer honours to the heroes in question, on which occasion he was entertained as a guest by Paris; (2) his disregarding the fact that Menelaus purified him from the accidental killing of Antheus, his beloved; and (3) his offending against the laws of hospitality which prohibit wrong-doing towards one with whom you shared salt in the same table. For the details of the stories alluded to by Lycophron in those four lines, v. the scholia, *ad loc.* (p. 63.15 sqq., ed. Scheer). My point is

evident. Ἀλαίτος is the ἀμαρτωλός, as both the P and p glosses, as well as the scholia, and *Etym. M.* s.v., have; but the fault involved is a *fault in the face of gods* first of all.

The second Lycophronian passage concerns Epeius' father and his perjury, his ὄρκον ψευδώμοτον (v. 932). The oath he took on a goddess and a god. The former is described as Ἀλοῖτις, Κυδωνία, Θρασώ, the latter as θεὸς Κρηστώνης, Κανδάων ἢ Μάμερτος ὀπλίτης Λύκος. The glosses and the scholia tell us that the male god is Ares, and as this is supported by what they tell us and what we independently know, we can acquire in this although we must probably understand rather a pelargic, primeval divinity of destruction and blood (cf. Herodotus I, 57; Thucydides IV, 190 - for the Pelasgic nature of the population there). But they also tell us (*without* any explanation) that the goddess is Athena; and here we must take exception. Cydonia, the famous and ancient city in Crete, gives the topographical name to the goddess in question, Κυδωνία. But the Cydonia and the Cydonians were associated with Artemis: the temple of Δίκτυνα (or Δίκτυννα) there is mentioned by Herodotus (III, 59, 2) in a way which suggests its eminence (Herodotus seems to maintain that Cydonia was built by Samians at the time of Polycrates (cf. III, 44). But he either must mean a significant enlargement of an already existing town, or, at most the συνοικισμός of the Cydonian population in a great - one of the three main, tests Strabone - city). Callimachus in his *Hymnus in Dianam* relates the story of Britomartis (the nymph best loved by Artemis) and connects it with the *Cydonian* worship of Dictynna (which, as he says, is one epitheton of Artemis as well) specifically, v. 190 sqq., esp. 197-205 (cf. v. 81, Artemis' Κυδώνιον τόξον). When Strabo, X, 479 chastises Callimachus in relation to this very passage, he exposes the latter's geographical ignorance in making the mountain Δίκτη to be in the vicinity of the Cydonians (whereas it truly is in the other end of the island), but he leaves intact, and indeed supports, the mythological connection and the religious point. For he maintains that the mountain near Cydonia is



called Tifyros, on which there is a sacred space called not Δικταῖον, but Δικτύνναιον. - Further Artemis is connected to Cydonia in the account reported by Pausanias VIII, 53, 3-4. But, not to pursue further the matter, I may conclude with bringing to notice the fact that Cydonian coins exist with Artemis in her characteristic dress portrayed carrying a long torch and with a dog by her side (like the one, bearing the emblem Κυδωνιατᾶν, reproduced in Smith' s Dictionary of Ancient Geography, vol. I, p. 723b). The torch and the dog are significant: the Artemis worshipped was of the mystic, dark, Hecatean type, and very appropriately so for our Lycophronian passage: for the deity invoked is described as Θρασώ, the Insolent and Andacious One, and as Ἀλοῖτις, the feminine of ἀλοΐτης, the *transgressing daemon of the transgressions*, the *Atrocious One*, presiding over atrocities, punishing them by causing more of them to be perpetrated. Here we meet the exact parallel to Zeus Ἀλάστωρ : Ἄρτεμις Ἀλοῖτις.

**We moved thus from men committing violation to daemonic beings causing, and presiding over, them. And in the final, third level, to the God whose ineluctable decrees have been temporarily insulted, and who (by providing the ultimate guarantee for the eternal validity of the divine, cosmic order which those decrees sustain) causes the daemonic ministers of absolute justice to pursue the affrontery till its final extermination through extreme contamination.** In the same spirit Empedocles can speak of θάνατος ἀλοΐτης, v. Plutarch, *Adversus Colotem* 1113B: *Violating, Atrocious Death*. He associated the phrase, as Plutarch presents the matter, with δυσδαίμων πότμος, fate ill-starred by the daemons, «ill-eyed» by them, if I may conjure this expression. Empedocles' point is, of course, that what appears as Dissolver, as Destroyer of the cosmic law and of the fabric of the World, is in reality but an intrinsic part of it. But this context only confirms the validity of our analysis of the meaning of the word.

Nor is the meaning-field in question differently characterised when we come to prose writers. The Antiphonian examples present a particularly good

aspect of the subject, given also the emphatic existence of religious considerations in Antipho's orations in connection with murder-charges. Here the ἀλιτήριοι are δαίμονες who play the role of Erinnyes: they will inflict perdition on those guilty of pollution. In 4, γ, 7 the accuser calls upon the judges, in the name of the killed, to clear the entire city from the pollution, by killing the killer ...ἀντὶ τοῦ παθόντος ἐπισκήπτομεν ὑμῖν, τῷ τούτου (sc. the guilty one) φόνῳ τὸ μῆνιμα τῶν ἀλιτηρίων ἀκεσαμένους, πᾶσαν τὴν πόλιν καθαρὰν τοῦ μιάσματος καταστήσαι. It is not exact to translate τὸ μῆνιμα τῶν ἀλιτηρίων ἀκεσαμένους by «placating the wrath of the ἀλιτήριοι»; we rather have to cure, or make amends for, or even «satisfy» the blood-guilt which is the object of the wrath of the ἀλιτήριοι (i.e. ἐφ' ᾧ μνήουσιν) or, at one further step, their objectified, impending, maddening revengeful wrath. We also meet here the abundantly attested notion that a violation of the divine order pollutes the whole region and is not restricted to the person who directly committed it: pollution is like a virus; cf., also in the Antiphontian corpus, 4, α, 5. - In 4, δ, Antiphon is presenting the line of defence for the same case: a younger man, being provoked and attacked by an older one, stroke him in self-defence; the other died from his wounds, the responsibility falling, it is alleged, on the doctor. The friends of the young man, in defending him, call upon the judges not to kill the innocent in their desire to bring the man responsible for the killing to justice and to punish him (4, δ, 10): ...ἡμεῖς ὀσιώτερον ὑμῖν ἐπισκήπτομεν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ, μὴ τὸν φονέα ζητοῦντας κολάζειν τὸν καθαρὸν ἀποκτείνειν. ὃ τε γὰρ ἀποκτείνας (sic the transmitted text, though it is usually incorrectly suspected; the real ἀποκτείνας according to the defence is the doctor, v. §3, whereas the real φονεύς is the dead man himself) τούτου (i.e. the defendant) ἀποθανόντος οὐδὲν ἦσσαν τοῖς αἰτίοις (sc. τοῦ φόνου τούτου i.e. ὑμῖν) προστρόπαιος ἔσται, οὗτός τε (sc. the defendant) ἀνοσίως διαφθαρεῖς διπλάσιον καθίστησι τὸ μίασμα (or perhaps better, μῆνιμα as in the previous example and in 4, β, 8, too; but the change is not really necessary in view of

what we have said on the issue of pollution) τῶν ἀλιτηρίων τοῖς ἀποκτείνασι αὐτόν. The sense of the first clause is that if you punish the defendant, the real killer (i.e. the doctor) will continue to exist among yourselves and be an «attractor» of mischief and calamity as moving pollution. The notion of προστρόπαιος will be discussed below.

In 4, β, 8 the defendant argues: ἀδίκως μὲν γὰρ ἀπολυθείς, διὰ τὸ μὴ ὀρθῶς ὑμᾶς διδαχθῆναι ἀποφυγών, τοῦ μὴ διδάξαντος (sc. the man charged with the prosecution) καὶ οὐχ ὑμέτερον τὸν προστρόπαιον τοῦ ἀποθανόντος καταστήσω· μὴ ὀρθῶς δὲ καταληφθεὶς ὑφ' ἡμῶν, ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ τούτῳ τὸ μῆνιμα τῶν ἀλιτηρίων προστρέψομαι. The argument could exist and be used only in the context of a very religiously-minded court, and it goes to a considerable extent towards indicating (confirmed by other characteristics, as well) that the presumed court in question was the Areopagus. The defendant places his judges in a compelling dilemma whose force is exclusively religious: if you pronounce me innocent and you are wrong in that, the responsibility clearly falls upon the accuser who did not manage to exhibit to you the truth and to persuade you to adopt the just cause; in that case the pollution from the murder that I bear (assuming that I am guilty) shall naturally be directed to him, as the one who failed to secure the punishment of the guilty. If, on the other hand, I am not guilty and you condemn me, my innocent blood will fall upon your heads since you would in that case have committed judicial murder. The daemons of defilement will therefore pursue you. It is a most singular argument, and most illuminating as to the religious basis of archaic and early classical justice.

In 4, α, 3 the ἀλιτήριοι are explicitly said to be entrusted by the killed man with the revenge of his murder; whoever tries to obstruct their course, takes into his home pollution that need not have been his: ὅ τε γὰρ ἀποθανών, στερόμενος ὧν ὁ θεὸς ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ, εἰκότως θεοῦ τιμωρίαν ὑπολείπει τὴν τῶν ἀλιτηρίων δυσμένειαν, ἣν οἱ παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον κρίνοντες ἢ

μαρτυροῦντες, συνασεβοῦντες τῷ ταῦτα δρῶντι, οὐ προσῆκον μίασμα εἰς τοὺς ἰδίους οἴκους εἰσάγονται. (The working of the ἀλιτήριοι δαίμονες constitute divine punishment for the wrong-doing. We again meet the triple order of co-implication: human level -daemonic ministry- god sustaining cosmic order). Similarly, those entrusted with the punishment (or rather revenge) of such crimes, if they persecute the innocent because of a private rancour, τῷ μὲν ἀποθανόντι οὐ τιμωροῦντες δεινούς ἀλιτηρίους ἔξομεν τοὺς τῶν ἀποθανόντων προστροπαίους etc. (4, α, 4) which brings also into significant connection the ἀλιτήριοι and the προστροπαῖοι δαίμονες. The meaning is: the daemons making sure that evil will be fell upon the polluted (the perpetrator of a crime) will become our ἀλιτήριοι, i.e. daemons chastising violators of the divine order - for we ourselves will have thereby a share in the violation by not helping the *natural* and necessary course of events: *the drowning of blood in blood*.

In Andocides, we encounter the other dimension of the meaning of ἀλιτήριος. It is there applied to a man, of evil repute, who proved the destruction of his protector. In *De Mysteriis* §§130-1: εἰ γὰρ μέμνησθε, ὅτε... Ἴππόνικος δὲ ἦν πλουσιώτατος τῶν Ἑλλήνων, τότε μέντοι πάντες ἴστε τι παρὰ τοῖς παιδαρίοις τοῖς μικροτάτοις καὶ τοῖς γυναίκοις κληδὼν ἐν ἀπάσῃ τῇ πόλει κατεῖεν, ὅτι Ἴππόνικος ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἀλιτήριον τρέφει, ὃς αὐτοῦ τὴν τράπεζαν ἀνατρέπει... οἰόμενος γὰρ Ἴππόνικος υἱὸν τρέφειν ἀλιτήριον αὐτῷ ἔτρεφεν, ὃς ἀνατέτροφεν ἐκείνου τὸν πλοῦτον, τὴν σωφροσύνην, τὸν ἄλλον βίον ἅπαντα. Οὕτως οὖν χρῆ περι τοῦτου γινώσκειν, ὡς ὄντος Ἴππονίκου ἀλιτηρίου. - In §51 of the same oration we find the formula which we documented even from Homer: Androcides is thinking of the plight that he will cause to be afflicted upon his relatives if he does not speak up the truth; they all, together with him, are accused of sacrilegious actions. He, having been brought by Charmides to the realization of what is going to happen to them, thinks: Ὡ πάντων ἐγὼ δεινοτάτη συμφορᾷ περιπεσὼν, πότερα περιῖδω τοὺς ἑμαυτοῦ συγγενεῖς ἀπολομένους ἀδίκως, καὶ αὐτούς τε ἀποθανόντας καὶ

τὰ χρήματα αὐτῶν δημευθέντα, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ἀναγραφέντας ἐν στήλαις ὡς ὄντας ἀλιτηρίους τῶν θεῶν etc. They will be publicly and for ever stigmatised as ἀλιτήριοι τῶν θεῶν, as Violators, transgressors against Gods and their law and order.

What Androcides envisaged would happen to his relatives if he remained silent, seems to have happened to himself in so far at least as the stigma of sacrilege is concerned. In the oration *Contra Andocidem* ascribed to Lysias, Androcides is inveighed against in this devastating way (p. 252 Reiske): οὗτος γὰρ ἐνδύς στολήν, μιμούμενος <...> (I think something is missing here, like e.g. τὸν ἱεροφάντην) τὰ ἱερὰ ἐπεδείκνυε τοῖς ἀμυήτοις καὶ εἶπε τῇ φωνῇ τὰ ἀπόρητα τῶν δὲ θεῶν, οὓς ἡμεῖς θεοὺς νομίζομεν καὶ θεραπεύοντες καὶ ἀγνεύοντες θύομεν καὶ προσευχόμεθα, τούτους περιέκοψε. καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις ἰέρεια καὶ ἱερεῖς σπάντες κατηράσαντο πρὸς ἐσπέραν καὶ φοινικίδας ἀνέδεσαν (very important description of a sacerdotal ἀρά, of an excommunication) κατὰ τὸ νόμιμον τὸ παλαιὸν καὶ ἀρχαῖον. Ὁμολόγησε δὲ οὗτος ποιῆσαι (the two sacrilegious acts). Ἔτι δὲ παρελθὼν τὸν νόμον ὃν ὑμεῖς ἔθεσθε, εἴργεσθαι τῶν ἱερῶν αὐτὸν ὡς ἀλιτήριον ὄντα etc. And after describing his violation of the prohibition accompanying an ἀλιτήριος, the orator concludes (p. 255 Reiske): νῦν οὖν χρή νομίζειν τιμωρουμένους καὶ ἀπαλλαττομένους Ἀνδοκίδου τὴν πόλιν καθαίρειν, ἀρὰν ἀπάγεσθαι καὶ ἀποδιοπομπεῖσθαι καὶ φαρμακὸν ἀποπέμπειν καὶ ἀλιτηρίου ἀπαλλάττεσθαι, ὡς ἐν τούτων οὗτός ἐστι. Here the ἀλιτήριος is not so much the cause of mischief as the *natural vehicle of calamity* which has to be disposed off drastically at all costs. His sacrilegious profanation of the mysteries and affront to the holy Herms made him a proper κάθαρμα, the impure attractor of all defilement. Cf. also Lysias, *Contra Agoratum*, p. 499 Reiske, where nobody would have anything to do with Agoratus, avoiding him as ἀλιτήριον - as pollution-bearer: οὔτε γὰρ συσσιτήσας τούτῳ οὐδεὶς φανήσεται, οὔτε σύσκηνος γενόμενος, οὔτε ταξίαρχος εἰς τὴν φυλὴν κατατάξας, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ

ἀλιτηρίῳ οὐδείς ἀνθρώπων αὐτῷ διελέγετο. Thucydides gives us a locus classicus in reference to those involved in the (in)famous Κυλώνειον ἄγος (A, 126). Speaking of the killers, he says: καὶ ἀπὸ τούτου ἐναγεῖς καὶ ἀλιτήριοι τῆς θεοῦ ἐκεῖνοί τε ἐκαλοῦντο καὶ τὸ γένος τὸ ἀπ' ἐκείνων (cf. a playful application of the appellation in Aristophanes, *Equites*, 445.6). The conjunction of the word with the genitive τῆς θεοῦ (cf. Matthiae *Grammar* p. 652) makes the meaning clear: *the offenders against the goddess*. And thus it is explained by the scholiast to the Aristophanian passage; ἐκ τῶν ἀλιτηρίων: τῶν μετεχόντων τοῦ Κυλωνείου ἄγους, ὅπερ εἰς τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν δοκεῖ γενέσθαι ἀσέβημα, ἐπειδήπερ etc. And further: τῶν ἀμαρτησάντων εἰς Ἀθηνᾶν.

Plato provides a very characteristic and significant illustration of the meaning of the word in a pregnant passage. He is treating of the legislation concerning sacrilege; and he delineates the προοίμιον of the relevant law in the form of an exhortation to the potential transgressor, to the man who is spurred by an evil desire to offend godhead in the most radical way, i.e. by an explicit act of lèse-majesté. The law will warn: ὦ θαυμάσιε, οὐκ ἀνθρώπινόν σε κακὸν οὐδὲ θεῖον κινεῖ τὸ νῦν ἐπὶ τὴν ἱεροσυλίαν προτρέπον ἰέναι, οἴστρος δὲ σέ τις, ἐμφυόμενος ἐκ παλαιῶν καὶ ἀκαθάρτων τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἀδικημάτων, περιφερόμενος ἀλιτηριώδης, ὃν εὐλαβεῖσθαι χρεῶν παντὶ σθένει. The working of such an abominable urging cannot be due to the operations of any human or even divine maleficence - it must rather spring from a wandering around, a hovering about, overhanging, a madness that causes one to act as a damned gadfly urging Transgression, itself the wretched testimony of old and unpurified violations of the divine law. Plato goes on to explain what piety in this case would enjoin: ὅταν σοι προσπίπτῃ τι τῶν τοιούτων δογμάτων, ἴθι ἐπὶ τὰς ἀποδιοπομπήσεις, ἴθι ἐπὶ θεῶν ἀποτροπαίων ἱερὰ ἰκέτης, ἴθι ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν λεγομένων ἀνδρῶν ὑμῖν ἀγαθῶν συνουσίας, etc. When one feels in himself such an evil surge, let him perform ceremonies of *riddance* and casting away, let him supplicate at the sacred places of the *Averting* deities etc. We see

live before our eyes the vivid connexions drawn and insisted upon: **transgression generates and constitutes pollution which, once created stays on as a source of infection; its victims (guilty or innocent of the initial transgression is irrelevant - if we understand guilt in the modern legal and moral way of direct personal responsibility) are driven to further acts of impiety - and the only powerful remedy in any particular case is to have recourse to rites of Riddance and to invocations of Averters. And this, even if successful, is of restricted efficacy; for the law of the accumulation of defilement (with a view to the total reinstatement of the cosmic order through the wiping out of the impurity contracted as a result of the initial transgression) will keep its implacability working while simply avoiding to touch the particular place and person sanctified and protected by the awesome averting rites.**

Two Demosthenic passages further confirm and illustrate the validity of our conception. In *De Corona* p. 280.24 H (Reiske) Demosthenes speaks of Philip: ὧν (sc. men responsible for the evils of Greece) εἷς οὗτός ἐστιν, ὃν εἰ μηδὲν εὐλαβηθέντα τάληθές εἰπεῖν δέοι, οὐκ ἂν ὀκνήσαιμι ἔγωγε κοινὸν ἀλιτήριον τῶν μετὰ ταῦτ' ἀπολωλότων ἀπάντων εἰπεῖν, ἀνθρώπων, τόπων, πόλεων· ὁ γὰρ τὸ σπέρμα παρασχών, οὗτος τῶν φύντων αἴτιος. Philip is the one, single root of all evils that befell Greece - a veritable *pestilence*. (Significantly, Demosthenes inquires immediately afterwards: ὅν πως ποτὲ οὐκ εὐθύς ἰδόντες ἀπεστράφητε, θαυμάζω πλὴν etc. This is the turning oneself and one's eyes away from the vehicle of pollution - something I have documented elsewhere). - In *De Falsa Legat.* p. 402.27: τῶν θεοῖς ἐχθρῶν τε καὶ ἀλιτηρίων Ὀλυνθίων αἰχμάλωτον οὖσαν (a certain Olynthian woman who was not very forward to the advances of the symposiasts). Befittingly, the ἀλιτηρίων is coupled to the ἐχθρῶν θεοῖς. - (A third occurrence of the word, *ibid.* p. 411.26, is contextually neutral: τοῖς ἀλιτηρίοις τούτοις, these pests. And similarly with two passages in Aeschines *Contra Ctesiph.* p. 72.19 and 76.6:

Demosthenes now is the Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος). - In Deinarchus' *Contra Demosth.* §77, Demosthenes is again ὁ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος, and here a significant detail is added: τὸν τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριον ἀποκτείναντας ἐξόριστον ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ποιῆσαι etc. The turn bears, I think, a double meaning: to exterminate and remove from the city the pestilence of Greece meaning both to annihilate him and to actually throw his body outside the boundaries of the country, as was the custom with those polluted. Cf. e.g. the stories about the Κυλώνειον ἄγος. And also the φαρμακός ritual.

## E

Let us recapitulate. The same message is conveyed to us wherever we look in our sources - and it is a good exemplification of the type of inquiry which should and can be undertaken in each disputed case, in proof of the essential coherence and unity of the evidence before us provided that we know how to sift it so as to make it disclose its true colour and substance. Certain aspects of the entire meaning-complex are more prominent in some passages, other in others, but they all work together, if properly fitted, and complement each other; what is left outside from among the scholia and the rest of the grammatical labours of the ancient philologists is minimal, and stems from their own personal incapacity to equal their task, not from any essential defect in the traditions that they are handling.

**In our present problem then, the meaning-field is this: wrong human action = violation of the cosmic order = transgression of the divine Law = an**



act of *lèse-majesté* = pollution against the Gods. There are three intertwined levels of operation and causality in this cosmic drama of default and restitution. First and proximately there are the pollution bearers i.e. the men implicated (whether by commission, omission or passion) in the whirlpool of abomination generated by the initial violation. Then there are the pollution-inflicters, i.e. the daemons presiding over the vicious circle of impurity instigated by a first human fault and propagated by the daemons concerned till it collapses under the weight of its own enormity. Finally, in the supreme realm of reality, there is godhead, the gods sustaining the particular cosmic order in question, the divinity whose one aspect radiates the light of the harmony upheld by the cosmic order, while the other mysterically reveals the darkest horrors of the cosmic disorder let loose by the act of disobedience, of infringement, the act which occasions the terrible dis-closure. In effect, the dark side of divinity keeps the cosmic harmony in existence. Mythologically speaking, radiant Phanes comes from the womb of awesome Night.

In a word, and to come back to an idea expressed at the very beginning of this part of the inquiry, the form *ἀλιτ-* is the opposite of *λιτ-*; just as the latter connotes the proper attitude towards the gods, so the former signalises an act of fundamental unruliness. And just as, specifically, the latter relates to imploring and appeasement of the Gods, so the former refers to causing them to be wrathful and revengeful. This connection, in opposition, of the two forms was perceived and noticed, albeit unclearly, by the ancient philologists, to judge even from the meagre remnants. Thus in the *Etym. Magnum* s.v. *ἀλάστωρ* we read of Apollodorus' derivation of the word from *ἀλιτεῖν*, which though faulty (unless the sentence is transposed from the lemma on *ἀλιτρος*, say, or something similar), is significant for our purpose: *κατὰ δὲ Ἀπολλόδωρον ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀλιτεῖν, ὃ ἐστὶν ἀλιτανεύτως ἀδικεῖν* (i.e. committing injustice beyond the pale and efficacy of any suppliant prayers and entreaty as to its atonement). Or as the *Etymologus* continues: *μήποτε δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ διὰ μέγεθος τῶν*

πεπραγμένων αὐτῷ λιτῆς μὴ καταξιούμενος, ἀλάστωρ, that is, (or rather ἀλιτηρός, as I said) being one, who because of the enormity of his crimes has rendered himself unworthy of a λιτή. Similarly s.v. ἀλήτης... ἀλίτης δὲ διὰ τοῦ ἰ γραφόμενον εὖρον ἐγὼ σημαῖνον τὸν ἀμαρτωλόν, ἀπὸ τοῦ μὴ ἔχειν λιτήν, ὃ ἔστιν δέησιν. Finally we meet the idea also in the *Etym. Gudianum* s.v. ἀλίτω: τὸ ἀμαρτάνω: ...ἀπὸ γὰρ τοῦ «λιτή» γίνεται «ἀλιτῶ», τὸ λιτῆς καὶ ἰκεσίας στερεῖσθαι. Finally we meet the idea also in the *Etym. Gudianum* s.v. ἀλείτης ...γίνεται δὲ παρὰ τὸ ἀλιτῶ, τὸ ἀμαρτάνω. ἐξ οὗ ἀλείτης (or ἀλίτης) ὁ ἀμαρτωλός, παρὰ τὸ τὰς λιτὰς μὴ τηρεῖν.

In fact in the lexicographers we find the entire field of meaning for our word and its relatives - just as it should be expected. Reading through the various relevant lemmata of Suda and the *Etymologus*, for instance, we see clearly expressed the main focuses: ἀμαρτία, ἀμαρτάνω etc. passim (to sin, err morally and religiously, do wrong) - μίασμα and those implicated in such an one; e.g. v. *Etym. M.* s.v. ἀλιταίνω ...καὶ ἀλιτραίνω, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀλιτρον, τὸ μιαρὸν καὶ πονηρόν (cf. Sch. Sophocles, *Oedipus Col.* 372: ἀλιτηροῦ: μιαρᾶς, sc. φρενός); s.v. ἀλιτήριος: ...ἐντεῦθεν ἐκαλοῦντο οἱ μιάσματι συνεχόμενοι; Suda s.v. ἀλιτήριος: ἀνόσιος, ὁ ἐνεχόμενος μιάσματι καὶ ἐξημαρτηκῶς εἰς θεούς; s.v. ἀλιτηροῦ... μιαρᾶς. The μίασμα in question is particularly murder. As Hesychius has s.v. ἀλιτήριος... θανάτου αἴτιος καὶ ἔνοχος.

As to the daemons of violation, their topmost grade must have been Δημήτηρ Ἀλιτηρία and Ζεὺς Ἀλιτήριος, the epitheton being testified by *Etym. M.* s.v. ἀλιτήριος and *Gudianum* s.v. ἀλητηρία (to be corrected to ἀλιτηρία - the entry there is corrupt and must be corrected from the straightforward account in the *Etym. Magnum*). The explanation of the epitheton following in these lexica can be dispensed with, and seems the result of some unsubstantially clever Alexandrian scholar: it enjoins the notion that these gods presided over the ἀλοῦντες and the ἀλούμενα (*threshing*) protecting them during a state of famine from the ἀλιτήριοι who wanted to steal the flour! Plutarch mentions it

neutrally (λέγεται) in his *De Curiositate* 523A, but correctly condemns it in *Aetia Graeca* 297A. (Notice however that though the derivation is unlikely, the pattern is the same: the protecting Gods bear the same epitheton with the perpetrators of the injustice against which the Gods guard and which they punish). Plutarch's explanation of ἀλιτήριος in *loc.cit.* is unlikely as well as less to the point and weaker than our own: ἀλιτήριος δ' ὄν ἀλεύασθαι καὶ φυλάξασθαι διὰ μοχθηρίαν καλῶς εἶχε.

In fine let it be added that the study of compounds like νηλιτής (cf. *Odyssey* π, 317 and τ, 498 with the Scholia and Eustathius; also Hesychius, Suda and *Etym. M.* s.v. νηλιτέες or νηλιτεῖς), παραλιτέω (Apollonius *Argonautica* ii, 246 with the scholion and iii, 890), or μέγαλοτος (Theocritus ii, 72) do confirm the validity of our analysis.

## NOTES

1. I do not know why Jacobi, *Fr. Gr. H*, vol. I, p. 103, Fr. 175, writes Ἀλάστωρ. The point of the whole passage is the existence of the nominative ἀλάστορος: παρὰ δὲ τὸ ἀλαστῶ ρῆμα, ἀλάστωρ ὁ Ζεὺς, ἐπὶ τῶν χαλεπὸν τι πρᾶσσόντων (sc. ἔφορος or τιμωρός or something of the sort, is to be supplied). Παρηκτική (παρηῆκται Dindorf) δὲ ἡ εὐθειᾶ παρὰ τὴν ἀλάστορος γενικήν. Αἰσχύλος Ἰξίονι (Fr. 90 Di = 92a Radt) «πρηνεμένης ἀλάστορος» (that the reference is instead to *Eumenides*, 236 where we now read δέχου δὲ πρηνεμένως ἀλάστορα, but where it initially was πρηνεμένως ἀλάστορον is

Nauck' s dream). In fact Aeschylus employed the form at least a second time, since in *Anecdota Bekkeri* p. 382, 30 we read: ἀλάστορον ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀλάστορα, ἀπὸ τῆς εὐθείας ὁ ἀλάστορος. Αἰσχύλος: «μέγαν ἀλάστορον» (Cf. also Photius, *Lexicon*, a 900 Theodoridis; I, 74, 17 Bachman). The form is also found according to all known significant mss, and also Eustathius, *Scholia in Homerum*, p. 757.38 (though Musgrate would have it written ἀλάστορσιν and others would propose various unwanted «corrections»), in Sophocles, *Antigone*, 974, ἀλαστόροισιν ὀμμάτων κύκλοις (referring to the sons of Phineus blinded by his cruel wife) where the scholiast interprets ἀλαστόροισι: τοῖς ἄλαστα πεπονθόσιν, ἢ τοῖς δυστυχέσιν κύκλοις τῶν ὀμμάτων. Correctly, but of course δυστυχέσιν does not give by itself the full power of the word. Nor is there an alternative meaning that Welcker and Donaldson propose: «crying for vengeance». We have seen how (and we should always strive) to combine such «differences» and «contrasts». The eyes suffered (especially in the circumstances) an heinous, unbearable atrocity which arouses wrath and indignation at its enormity and cries for vengeance. This nexus is *the* meaning, not any part of it in isolation. - As to the grammatical form, to have the nominative shaped according to the genitive (as above observed by the author in Kramer's *Anecdota Graeca Oxon.*) was relatively rather common; we read in *Etym. M.* s.v. Τρίβακος. ἡ τριβή, παρώνυμον. ἔστι γὰρ τρίβαξ, τρίβακος· καὶ μετατίθεται ἢ γενικῇ εἰς εὐθεΐαν, καὶ γίνεται ὁ τρίβακος, ὡσπερ ὁ φύλαξ, τοῦ φύλακος, καὶ ὁ φύλακος· ἐν πολλοῖς γὰρ μετατίθεται ἢ γενικῇ εἰς εὐθεΐαν, ὡς καὶ παρὰ τῷ Σοφοκλεῖ, κυνὸς Λακαίνης ὡς τις εὐρινος βάσις, ἀντὶ τοῦ εὐόσφρητος πορεία. καὶ ἰέραξ, ἰέρακος, καὶ ὁ ἰέρακος. The Sophoclean passage is from *Ajax*, 8, and the *Etymologus* takes εὐρινος with βάσις as nominative in place of εὐριν; the scholiast *ad loc.* however takes εὐρινος with κυνὸς interpreting: ἐπάγεται δὲ ἢ βάδισις τοῦ Αἴαντος δίκην κυνὸς εὐοσφρήτου, etc. But, as is observed by, among others, Lobeck *ad loc.*, the former interpretation preserves better the tragic idiom; and Libanius spoke

of: εὐρίνω βάσει τὸ λανθάνον ἀνιχνεύοντες, clearly having in mind the present passage. Pherecydes (perhaps the Athenian logographer rather than the theologian from Syros) also used the peculiar form: ὁ Ζεὺς δὲ Ἰκέσιος καὶ Ἀλάστορος καλεῖται (Cramer, *Anecd.Oxon.* loc.cit. = Fr. 114a Müller I, 99 = fr. 175 Jacoby Fr.Gr.H.; Jacobi considers the ascription to the Athenian Pherecydes doubtful or spurious on no evidence. But maybe Pherecydes of Syros is involved: he had a penchant for the employment of significantly strange names; although the utilization of ἀλάστορος in place of ἀλάστωρ has rather more to do with dialectal idiosyncracies and stylistic effect than with meaningful symbolism.) - Cf. also, for the same grammatical phaenomenon, Eustathius, ad *Ilias* IX, 378, where in the midst of his discussion of the difficult phrase τίω δέ μιν ἐν καρὸς (or ἔγκαρος) αἴση, he observes: Ἄλλοι δὲ γράφουσιν μὲν καὶ αὐτοὶ προπαροξυτόνως ἔγκαρος, καὶ κλίνουσιν ἔγκαρ, ἔγκαρος, τὴν δὲ λέξιν ἐπὶ ἐγκεφάλου νοοῦσιν, ὃν φασιν ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων μὴ ἐσθιέναι (but this view is refuted by Eustathius further down), ἵνα λέγη τι ἀποτροπιάζομαι τὸν βασιλέα ὡς τινες τὸν ἔγκαρα, ὃν ὁ Λυκόφρων ἔγκαρον λέγει, ὡς εἴ τις εἴποι καὶ τὸν μάρτυρα μάρτυρον καὶ τὸν ἀλάστορα ἀλάστορον, οὗ χρῆσις παρὰ Σοφοκλεῖ ἐν τῷ: ἀλαστόροισιν ὁμμάτων κύκλοις (our very passage). – φυλάκους and φύλακας occurs in the mss on *Ilias* XXIV 566; μάρτυροι occurs *Ibid.* III, 280 and II, 302 where Zenodotus reads μάρτυρες. The famous alternation διάκτωρ and διάκτορος may also be adduced. The point is that some words of the third declension were also considered as of the second (and this seems to be in fact the more ancient form) with the nominative of the latter being identical to the genitive of the former form. (In Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, 1341 Wecklein proposed to read τὸν μέγ' ἀλάστορον in place of τὸν μέγ' ὀλέθριον of Erfurdt for the mss. τὸν ὀλέθριον μέγα(v)).

2. Eustathius 717.28 οὕτω ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀλείτω ἐνεστῶτος ἀλοιτὸς παρὰ Λυκόφρονι (the passages will be quoted in a moment), τοῦ ρηματικοῦ ε

μεταπεσόντος εἰς ο, καθὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ λείπω λοιπὸς καὶ τοῖς ὁμοίοις. Choeroboscus in his *Orthography* confirms really this line of derivation, although if not properly interpreted he might appear to reverse it. Thus in *Etym. M.* s.v. ἀλείτης we read: καὶ λέγει ὁ Χοιροβοσκὸς εἰς τὴν ὀρθογραφίαν αὐτοῦ τι ἀνεφάνη τὸ ο ἐν τῷ ἀλοίτης (ὅπερ σημαίνει καὶ αὐτὸ τὸν ἁμαρτωλόν), καὶ διὰ τοῦτο διὰ τῆς εἰ διφθόγγου γράφεται (sc. τὸ ἀλείτης. That is, it is not ἀλίτης). Τὰ γὰρ ἔχοντα τὸ ο ἀναφαινόμενον, ἔχουσιν τὸ ε ἐγκείμενον: οἶον σπείρω, σπορά, ἀλείφω, ἀλοιφή. Οὕτως οὖν καὶ ἀλείτης, ἀλοίτης. (What follows – τοῦτο δὲ παρὰ τὸ ἀλῶ, τὸ πλανῶ ἢ ὀλοθρεύω [cf. the modern Greek ἐξ-ολοθρεύω] belongs I think to the following entry ἀλήτης). Choroboscus is here arguing for an initial, untestified root ἀλείτ- (where the ε ἐγκεῖται, is ingrained, inherent), from the existence of the form ἀλοίτ- (in which form the ο is ἀναφαινόμενον, is appearing subsequently in the development, not existing in the root from the beginning, so to speak). The same account is to be found in the *Etym. Gudianum* as well, s.v. ἀλείτης: τὸ εἰ δίφθογος διὰ τί; τὰ διὰ τοῦ -ιτης παρώνυμα διὰ τοῦ ι γράφεται, πλὴν τοῦ ἀλείτης καὶ τὰ ὅμοια (better τῶν ὁμοίων). Τοῦτο δὲ (sc. happens), ἐπειδὴ (pro ἐπειδὴν) ἀντιπαράκειται αὐτὸ τὸ ο, ἀλοίτης (σημαίνει δὲ καὶ αὐτὸ τὸν ἁμαρτωλόν). And then the Choeroboscian rule: καθόλου δέ, τὰ ἔχοντα τὸ ο ἀντιπαράκειμενον, ἔχουσιν τὸ ε ἐγκείμενον ἐν τοῖς ρήμασιν. An alternative explanation is then offered, taking the οἰ as an *Aeolism*: ἢ τι κατὰ διάλεκτον αἰολικὴν (sc. λέγεται). Οἱ γὰρ Αἰολεῖς τὴν εἰ δίφθογγον εἰς οἰ τρέπουσι τὸ γὰρ ὄνειρον, ὄνοιρον λέγουσι, καὶ τὸ ἐπέιγω, ἐποίγω. –

Coming back to Eustathius 1885.66: ὁ δ' ἀλείτης ἐκ τοῦ ἀλείτω, τοῦ ἁμαρτάνω, γίνεται· ἐκεῖθεν δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀλοιτὸς ὁ παρὰ τῷ Λυκόφρονι, ὁμοίως ὢν τῷ ἀλείτη. Indeed Eustathius believes that the formation of ἀλοιτὸς is better supported by analogies than that of ἀλείτης: 1529, 50, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ἀλείτω ἐνεστῶτος, ἀλείτης, ὁ ἁμαρτωλός· οὗ ἀναλογώτερον παρὰ Λυκόφρονι, ὁ ἀλοιτὸς. The *Etym. M.* gives an alternative derivation. The relevant passage

runs thus: ἀλοιτός, ὁ ἀμαρτωλός. Παρὰ τὸ ἀλιτῶ, ἀλιτός· καὶ ἐπενθέσει τοῦ ο, ἀλοιτός. (This line of production is less plausible than Eustathius one from ἀλείτω, but it comes to the same effect). Ἡ ὁ ἀνδροφόνος, παρὰ τὸ ἀλοιᾶν, τὸ τύπτειν· ἔνθεν καὶ πατραλοίας ὁ τὸν πατέρα τύπτων. This connection is implausible; the ἀλοιᾶν comes from ἀλοῶν and has the ο inherent. We are considering a root ἀλιτ- which develops an ο, not a root ἀλο-. On the other hand, as to meaning, an ἀλοιτός may well be ἀνδροφόνος.

We saw that Eustathius mentions the form as being found in Lycophron, but there must have been other authors as well employing it, to judge from the forms ἀλοιταί and ἀλοιτήεσσον explained in Hesychius. In fact Hermann proposed to read κάξ ἀλοιτηροῦ in the troublesome Sophoclean passage above discussed, *Oed. Col.*, 372; but this is unnecessary (as the simple solution is very obvious), and also unjustified. However we need not speculate since the use of the form by Empedocles is testified by Plutarch, *Adv. Colotem.* 1113B (Frg. 10 Diels). And to this occurrence probably refers the unfortunately mutilated entry in Suda s.v. ἀλοίτης (though this is usually associated erroneously with Callimachus - on what possibly grounds?). Besides that use, the unidentified fragment apud *Et.M.* s.v. ἀμορμεύω may contain the form in question: Σὺν γ' ἡμῖν ὁ πελαργὸς ἀμορμεύεσκεν ἀλοίτης. For lack of context we cannot be sure, but I think ἀλήτης is the correct reading. Unless there was a special sense in which the πελαργός was considered as transgressor.