



Grammatical and Ethical Ambiguities in Alcman 1.34–39

Author(s): Alexander C. Loney

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Classical Philology*, Vol. 106, No. 4 (October 2011), pp. 343–349

Published by: [The University of Chicago Press](http://www.uchicago.edu)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/662041>

Accessed: 02/04/2012 06:37

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



The University of Chicago Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Classical Philology*.

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

GRAMMATICAL AND ETHICAL AMBIGUITIES IN ALCMAN 1.34–39

Ever since Zeus disclaimed responsibility for the suffering of mortals in the opening scene of the *Odyssey*, the moral order of the universe has been a central subject in Greek poetry. Alcman's *Partheneion*, for all the self-reflexive, performative artistry of its last five stanzas, has at its center a set of pivotal, gnomic lines that speak, through a grammatical ambiguity, to an ethical ambiguity in human experience of the κόσμος.

The preserved text of the poem begins partway through a catalogue of the Hippocoontidae whom Tyndareus, his sons, and likely Heracles killed because they usurped and drove out the Tyndaridae and killed Heracles' cousin Oeonus.¹ This mythological exemplum concludes with a gnomic moral lesson: no one should “fly to heaven” (ἐς ὠρανὸν ποτήσθω, 16) nor “try to wed Aphrodite . . . or the daughter of Porcus” ([πη]ρήτω γαμῆν τὰν Ἀφροδίταν . . . παῖδα Πόρκω, 17–19).² A second passage of mythological material occupies the next stanza. Its subject is less clear and much disputed. It might resume the myth of the defeat of the Hippocoontidae or it might introduce another exemplum.³ This stanza culminates with another gnomic utterance (34–35) on the deadly fate of men who do wrong, and the next stanza continues the line of thought with reference to the divine pattern of τίσις, from which the blessed man is exempt (34–39):

]πον· ἄλαστα δὲ
φέργα πάσον κακὰ μηχανέμενοι.
ἔστι τις σιῶν τίσις·
ὁ δ' ὀλβιος, ὅστις εὐφρων
ἄμέραν [δι]απλέκει
ἄκλαυτος;⁴

] Unforgettably
did those who plotted evil suffer.⁵

1. The details of the myth appear in other sources (e.g., Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.5). See Davison 1938, 441–43 and Page 1951, 26–33. Heracles' role is uncertain from the preserved text, but in light of Sosibius' comment (apparently on this poem) that the Hippocoontidae wounded Heracles (Clem. Al. *Protr.* 2.36), it is likely he played a part in Alcman's version. It is also possible that the refusal of the Hippocoontidae to cleanse Heracles of his killing of Iphitus lay behind his anger (Paus. 3.15.3).

2. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

3. Diels (1896, 347) believed this passage concerned the battle of the gods and the giants, and many have followed his suggestion. On the various reconstructions, see Ferrari 2008, 28–29. In my discussion, I assume that the gnomic lines of 1.34–39 reflect especially upon the conflict of the Hippocoontidae and the Tyndaridae. If another myth appeared in this passage, the substance of my analysis would remain valid.

4. I use the text and supplements of Page (1951).

5. My translation of lines 34–35 is only one possible way to construe the sentence, as I discuss in detail below.

There is a retribution of the gods.
 But he is blessed, whoever in wisdom
 weaves his day to the end
 without weeping.

The sentence within lines 34–35, ἄλαστα δὲ φέργα πάσον κακὰ μῆσαμένοι, is rich in Homeric resonances. Alcman has brought together and deployed these Homeric-sounding phrases to striking effect here by creating a web of ambiguous interpretations. The audience could construe the syntax and meaning of the sentence in different ways, and this ambiguity articulates a conception of the close connection between a wrong and its punishment.

Nearly every translator has assumed only one interpretation of this sentence, taking it in a linear way. Construed in this fashion, ἄλαστα would modify φέργα, which would be the object of πάσον, while κακὰ would be the object of μῆσαμένοι. The sentence would thus read, “The evil-plotting men suffered unforgettable works.” There is some support for this interpretation in parallel texts.⁶

Despite the immediate appeal of construing the sentence this way (in line with the linear process of the audience’s listening), on closer inspection, the sentence reveals a level of semantic dissonance with this syntax. φέργα is an unusual object for the verb πάσχω. To “suffer” (πάσχω) is a passive activity. It is the experience of being acted upon, of having something happen to the subject. Consider the prominent example from the *Odyssey*’s proem: Odysseus “suffered many woes upon the sea” (πολλὰ δ’ ὃ γ’ ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα, 1.4). πάθεν ἄλγεα denotes Odysseus’ passive experience of actions taken against him by the opponents of his return.⁷ In contrast, ἔργον is an active notion. The normal relationship between it and a subject is active: the subject is the agent that performs the ἔργον.⁸ The etymologically related verb ἔρδω signifies a similar, active notion. It even appears juxtaposed with πάσχω as an explicitly contrastive concept where the two verbs together express the totality of a subject’s experience, the entirety of what he actively does and passively suffers. For instance, when Demodocus sings of the fate of the Achaeans, he tells of “how many things they did and suffered” (ὄσσ’ ἔρξαν τ’ ἑπαθόν τε, Hom. *Od.* 8.490).⁹

This last example from the *Odyssey* shows that it is a rhetorical trope to oppose the ideas of πάσχω and ἔργον (and related words). In another example, in the *Fourth Nemean Ode* Pindar concludes his brief allusion to Telamon’s slaying of Alcioneus with a gnome: “It befits one doing something also to suffer” (ῥέζοντά τι καὶ παθεῖν ἔοικεν, 32). Here again the two different poles of experience of an action—the active and the passive—are juxtaposed by way of the verbs ῥέζω (related to ἔργον) and πάσχω.¹⁰

6. For ἔργον πάσχω, cf. Hom. *Il.* 18.77; Pind. *Isthm.* 2.24. For κακὰ μῆδομαι, cf. Hom. *Il.* 6.157, 7.478, 10.52, 14.253, 21.19, 21.413, *Od.* 3.166, 12.295, 14.243, 24.199; Aesch. *Ag.* 1102; Soph. *Phil.* 1139; Eur. *HF* 1076. But see p. 345 below for more on these examples.

7. Note also that the typical objects of πάσχω all denote the subject’s experience of actions rather than his active performance of them: ἄλγεα, Hom. *Il.* 9.321, *Od.* 1.4; πῆματα, Hom. *Il.* 5.886, *Od.* 1.49, 190, Thgn. 361, Aesch. *Pr.* 472; κήδεα, Hom. *Od.* 17.555. See also the idiom τι/τί παθεῖν, Hom. *Il.* 11.404; *Od.* 5.465, 12.321, 17.596. As I explain below, there are also many examples of κακόν and κακά as objects of πάσχω.

8. Typically, ἔργον is the object of verbs that denote (in the active voice) the agency of the subject in accomplishing some “deed”: (ἐπι)τίθημι, Hom. *Il.* 3.321, *Od.* 8.245; πειράω, Hom. *Od.* 18.369; (ἐκ)τελέω, Hom. *Il.* 7.465, Hes. *Sc.* 38; ῥέζω, Hom. *Il.* 10.51, *Od.* 24.458, Hes. *Th.* 210–11.

9. Cf. also Pind. *Nem.* 4.32.

10. Cf. also the juxtaposition at Eur. *Hec.* 252–53.

As noted above, there are parallel texts where ἔργον is the object of πάσχω; however, in all extant texts through the fifth century B.C.E. I have been able to find only two such instances.¹¹ It is much more common to “plot” (μῆδομαι) ἔργα than to “suffer” (πάσχω) them.¹² On the other hand, κακά as the object of πάσχω (to “suffer evils”) is very common;¹³ κακά as the object of μῆδομαι (to “plot evils”) is relatively common also.¹⁴

The conclusion I draw from these parallels is that the poem’s audience would have felt a certain dissonance between the syntax suggested by the linear succession of the sentence’s words and those words’ typical semantics. This tension suggests that there might be an alternative way of understanding this sentence that is more naturally consistent with its normal semantics.

To argue for an alternative understanding of the sentence, I will first note that ἔργα and κακά frequently come together as a single phrase, “evil deeds.”¹⁵ Two examples of this from Homer are especially relevant.¹⁶ The first is used of Achilles as he enters the river Xanthus (*Il.* 21.19) and before he lights Patroclus’ pyre (23.176): κακά δὲ φρεσὶ μῆδετο ἔργα (“He was plotting evil deeds in his mind”). The second example is used of Clytemnestra in reference to her conspiracy with Aegisthus (*Od.* 24.199)—an act, it should be noted, that, like the crimes of the Hippocoontidae, precipitates τίσις; ὥς Τυνδαρέου κόρη κακά μῆσατο ἔργα (“As the daughter of Tyndareus plotted evil deeds”).

In these phrases, κακά and ἔργα together form the object of the verb μῆδομαι, even though they are separated by their verb. These phrases thus demonstrate two things that apply to the syntax of Alcman’s sentence. First, φέργα and κακά may serve as a single constituent even though they are separated by the verb that takes them as its object. Thus, in Alcman’s sentence φέργα and κακά may together serve as the object of the intervening verb, πάσον (though in reversed order). Furthermore, because the most common pairing among the four words in line 35 is κακά with πάσον,¹⁷ the appeal of construing these two together is strong. Second, these Homeric phrases show that the well-attested natural pair of φέργα . . . κακά may serve together as an object of the verb μῆδομαι. Likewise, in Alcman’s sentence they may naturally act as the object of μῆσαμένοι. These Homeric examples thus indicate that each of these ways of construing φέργα . . . κακά is possible. In fact, they are mutually compatible: the pair may simultaneously serve as the object for both the verb and the participle.

In sum, I am suggesting that the phrase ἄλαστα . . . φέργα . . . κακά serves, through a kind of zeugma, as the object of both πάσον and μῆσαμένοι: “Plotting unforgettable evil deeds, they suffered them.”¹⁸ On this reading, the reference of ἄλαστα . . . φέργα . . .

11. Hom. *Il.* 18.77; Pind. *Isthm.* 2.24.

12. I have found twenty-one instances of ἔργον acting as the object of μῆδομαι: Hom. *Il.* 2.38, 10.289, 21.19, 22.395, 23.24, 176; *Od.* 3.261, 11.429, 474, 24.199, 426, 444; *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 351; *Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 46; Hes. *Th.* 166, 172, *Sc.* 34, frag. 195.24 MW, 204.96 MW; Pind. *Nem.* 10.64; Soph. frag. 10c R.

13. Examples are too numerous to catalogue. Phrases such as κακά περ πάσχοντες (*Od.* 10.189, et al.) and κακά πολλὰ παθόν (*Od.* 3.116, et al.) are formulaic in Homer.

14. See n. 6 above.

15. Hom. *Il.* 9.595, 15.97; *Od.* 2.67, 8.329, 9.477, 14.284, 16.380, 17.158, 226, 18.362, 20.16, 23.64, 24.326; Thgn. 1150; Neophr. frag. 3.3.

16. Commentators (Campbell 1982, 201; Calame 1983, 322; Hutchinson 2001, 84) have noted the second of these parallels in passing, but have not drawn out the implications of taking Alcman’s sentence in line with it as I do here.

17. See n. 13 above.

18. This figure of speech, a yoking together of two verbs to a single direct object, which I here call “a kind of zeugma,” does not fall under the strictest definitions of zeugma; it is closer to the figure known as

κακά is ambiguous: it is both the crimes of the Hippocoontidae and their punishment at the hands of Heracles and the Tyndaridae.¹⁹

The effect of this ambiguity is to draw a close, nearly synonymous connection between evil done and evil suffered. The two are one and the same, two sides of a single action.²⁰ In normal experience, humans cannot experience this synonymy personally. It is split between the agent and the patient of the act. For instance, according to one version of the tradition that lies behind Alcmān's poem, Hippocoon and his sons did evil by killing Oeonus.²¹ The Hippocoontidae thus experienced the agent's aspect of the act of killing, whereas Oeonus faced the patient side of the act—and died. The act of killing is thus separated into two perspectives: the active and the passive, killer and killed. Nevertheless it remains a single action. If an actor who once was on the active side of the action later experiences the passive side, it must necessarily be a different action and cannot be identical to the action he first performed, because the circumstances of the event have changed. When the Hippocoontidae face the revenge of Heracles and experience the passive side of the act of killing, it occurs at a different time and place and at another's hand. Their death is symmetrical, talionic insofar as it expresses an exchange of like for like, of homicide for homicide. But the events are distinct. They happen in different contexts to different actors.

In Alcmān's summary of the myth matters are different. The distance between action and symmetrical reaction, as well as between agent and patient, disappears. Through the poetic effect of syntactical ambiguity, the Hippocoontidae plot and suffer the same

a *diazeugma*. (Ancient rhetoricians most commonly used the Latin terms *disiunctum* or *disiunctio*; the less common Greek term διεzeugμένον is attested by Aquila Romanus *De figuris* §43.) The anonymous manual *Rhetorica ad Herennium* offers a few examples under the heading *disiunctum* (4.37), in which parallel clauses end with different verbs with related meanings. This need not include an elision of a grammatical constituent of the sentence, and this is the case in the manual's first example. But the manual's second example, a Latin translation of the Greek proverb, "Beauty either time uses up or disease wastes" (κάλλος μὲν γὰρ ἡ χρόνος ἀνὴλωσεν ἢ νόσος ἐμάρανεν, found in Isoc. 1. 6), illustrates how a single word (in this case, κάλλος) can function as the direct object for two different verbs. (The Latin translation has it somewhat differently, with "beauty" as the single grammatical subject of two verbs: *formae dignitas aut morbo deflorescit aut vetustate extinguitur*.) In a similar fashion, the phrase ἄλαστα . . . φέργα . . . κακά in the *Parthenion* can act as the direct object for two different verbs, πάσων and μῆσαμνοι. On the figure of *diazeugma* in ancient rhetorical treatises, see Anderson 2000, 35–36. The question of how to categorize different figures as either *syllipsis*, *zeugma*, *diazeugma*, *epizeugma*, *prozeugma*, *hypozeugma*, or *mesozeugma* is vexed. Despite modern prescriptive arguments for narrowly defining these figures (e.g., Lussky 1955), in actual practice rhetoricians apply these terms more flexibly.

19. One possible objection to my reading is that the adjective ἄλαστος typically pairs with notions of "suffering" or "grief" (e.g., πάσχω) and not with notions of "plotting" (e.g., μῆδομαι). (For usages of ἄλαστος with notions of "suffering" or "grief," cf. Hom. *Il.* 24.105, *Od.* 1.342, 4.108, 14.174, 24.423; *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 207; Hes. *Th.* 467; Aesch. *Pers.* 990; Eur. *El.* 1187; Soph. *OC* 538.) On this account, ἄλαστα ought only to modify the object of πάσων and not the object of μῆσαμνοι. However, this tendency does not indicate a fundamental incompatibility with taking ἄλαστα with the object μῆδομαι. (Cf., for instance, the letter that Diogenes Laertius says Anaximenes wrote to Pythagoras, in which the sons of Aeaces "do unforgettable evils" [ἄλαστα κακά ἐρδουσι, 2.5].) Instead, as is also the case with the apparent pair φέργα πάσων, this tendency points to the semantic and syntactic tensions inherent in the line that find their resolution in an intentionally ambiguous reading. The semantics of ἄλαστος itself contains something of this passive/active ambiguity: Nicole Loraux (1998, 94) observes that the ἄλαστον . . . πένθος of Eupheithes at the close of the *Odyssey* is simultaneously the "mourning that cannot be forgotten" and the "mourning that does not want to forget." See also *ibid.*, 96–101, and Slatkin 1991, 95–96.

20. Cf. the later, fifth-century argument of Socrates that an action has a single, objective character, regardless of the differences of how an agent and a patient experience it. If it is just for an agent to punish someone, it is just for that person to suffer the punishment, because the quality of justness inheres in the action itself (Pl. *Grg.* 476). The argument is similar to that at *Resp.* 438. A. E. Taylor ([1926] 2001, 114) has called this synonymy of agent/patient experience "the interconnection between the modalities of correlates."

21. Diod. Sic. 4.33.5; Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.7.3; Paus. 3.15.4–6.

“evil deeds” (ῥέργα . . . κακά). Achronologically, they are the objects of their own destructive action and so, in effect, commit suicide. This sentence forms a linguistic icon of the social logic of the doubleness and ambiguity of human actions. It is a finely crafted example of a proverb widely known in early Greek thought that connects the experiences of suffering and doing into a single, double-sided whole, which has its most succinct expression in Aeschylus’ “the doer must suffer” (δράσαντι παθεῖν, *Cho.* 314).²² In Alcman’s poem this proverbial justice of reciprocity rules the universe as divine law: “A retribution of the gods exists” (ἔστι τις σῶν τίσις, 36). Calvert Watkins has reconstructed a proto-Greek form of this gnome as a palindrome: **esti kʷis tʰeôn kʷitis* or, with a phonetic resegmentation, **es tikʷis tʰeôn kʷitis*, which he calls “an icon of the reciprocal nature of ‘the vengeance.’”²³ As with the preceding lines 34–35, poetic effects (here phonetic) reflect and support semantics. Vengeance is a single, double-sided action.

In contrast to this picture of τίσις as a simultaneity of crime and punishment, the normal logic of τίσις is that, in the fullness of time,²⁴ the evildoings of an actor will come to redound upon his own head in the form of symmetrical justice. Though this law of vengeance “exists” in the universe apart from human agency, it is realized diachronically, through the ordered, sequential narratives of human actions. Thus, as Alcman recounts in the successive lines of a catalogue of the dead Hippocoontidae who fall one after the other in battle, τίσις works itself out through the narrative sequence of the retribution of Heracles and the Tyndaridae. This law of τίσις reverses the subject’s experience of violence so that he becomes its object, only the exchange of agent/patient position is delayed in accordance with the regular order of the cosmos.

Likewise, Alcman gives time an important role in the administration of “positive” justice for those who do well. In contrast to the ill fate of the Hippocoontidae, Alcman presents a beatitude: that man is “happy” (ὄλβιος) who “weaves his day to the end without weeping” (ἀμέραν [δι]απλέκει ἄκλαντος, 37–39).²⁵ Just as those who do evil get their deserts in the end, those who do well (the εὐφρονες) achieve the state of blessedness. But it is only after completing the fabric of one’s life, “weaving” it “to the end,” that “happiness” can be found. Time’s progression brings about the harmonious, proper order of “the proportion between welfare and well-doing” (to quote Kant).²⁶

This sequential picture of justice stands in contrast to the view encoded in the gnomic lines of 34–36, where Alcman has dechronologized the narrative of justice. In those lines, Alcman strips away what Roland Barthes has called the “chronological illusion” of the narrative in order to put on display the essential unitary logic of τίσις.²⁷ Alcman

22. Cf. also Pind. *Nem.* 4.32; Soph. frag. 223b R. The *Oresteia* thematizes this proverb: Ag. 533, 1527, 1564; *Cho.* 923, 930. Aristotle cites this proverb (Hes. frag. 286 MW), calling it “suffering in return” (τὸ ἀντιπεπονθός) and attributes this principle of justice to the Pythagoreans (Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 5.5). (He also notes that some attribute it to Rhadamanthys.)

23. Watkins 1995, 103–4.

24. The notion of the delay of τίσις is evident *inter alia* in Hermes’ warning to Aegisthus not to kill Agamemnon (*Od.* 1.38–41), the Delphic oracle of the revenge of the Heracleidae upon the fifth generation after Gyges (Hdt. 1.13, 1.91), and Solon’s metaphor of justice as a slowly building fire (frag. 13.14–15 W) and a sometimes multigenerational process (25–32).

25. The weaving metaphor is common, though this particular use of ἡμέρα as its object and metaphorically signifying a span of time is unusual. See Page 1951, 84. In the terms of I. A. Richards (1936, 96), ἡμέρα is the vehicle and “the time-span of life” the tenor. Cf. also Hom. *Od.* 3.208.

26. Kant 1956, 40.

27. Barthes 1975, 251.

has combined in this poem both perspectives on the time of justice in order to capture, at once, both the bounded, temporal experience of justice and its underlying, singular logic.

Gloria Ferrari has recently argued that the *Partheneion* was one of the rituals at Sparta that “had the function of linking the orderly workings of the cosmos to the well-ordered city.”²⁸ The most essential element of this cosmic order is the regular, diachronic progression of the heavenly bodies, whose cyclic motions (embodied, Ferrari suggests, in the dancing of the poem’s chorus) reflect the cycles of community order. As the heavens turn, the seasons progress, and the times of planting and harvest return.²⁹ The vision of cosmic order expressed in this poem is a cycle of return back to the point of origin. In social order this means the subject of an act of violence comes full circle back to that act again—only on his return as the object of the act. But this return is gradual, leaving wrongdoers very often blind to the truth of their crimes: that they are as much victims as their intended targets. Alcman’s poetic move in 1.34–35 serves as a warning, for it discloses the true unity of crime and punishment normally separated and hidden by the slow progress of time. This is why he underscores that their “evil deeds” (φέργα . . . κακά) are “unforgotten” (ἄλαστα): their crimes are unaffected by the passage of time and become their punishment.

In these few lines Alcman has captured in both syntax and semantics the fundamental nature of human ethical experience: ambiguous intersubjectivity. Simone de Beauvoir articulated this truth best when she called this state of being “the fundamental ambiguity of the human condition”: a person is always simultaneously both “a sovereign and unique subject” and “an object for others.”³⁰ This is the ethical vision that Alcman has captured and presented to the Spartan πόλις, which it in turn performs in its celebration of the Karneia. All human actions are both done and suffered; every person is both an agent and a patient. The justice of τίσις is finally ambiguous.

ALEXANDER C. LONEY
Duke University

28. Ferrari 2008, 107; see also 106–18. Her interpretation is controversial, particularly on the point of the identification of the chorus with astral bodies; see Podlecki 2009; Eckerman 2009. Nonetheless, my reading of 34–39 is consistent with her interpretation, especially as it supports her view that the poem connects the regular progression of time and the seasons with political order.

29. Ferrari (2008, 106–8, 128–35) connects the *Partheneion* with the celebration of the Karneia and the onset of winter. In this connection, Anaximander’s portrayal of the transaction of τίσις and δίκη in the cosmic, diachronic drama of creation (γένεσις) and destruction (φθορά) makes the same connection between the cycles of celestial order and the cycles of political life (frag. 1). See Jaeger 1945, 158–61.

30. De Beauvoir 1948, 7, 118. She writes (7), “[Man] asserts himself as a pure internality against which no external power can take hold, and he also experiences himself as a thing crushed by the dark weight of other things.”

LITERATURE CITED

- Anderson, R. D. 2000. *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms Connected to Methods of Argumentation, Figures and Tropes from Anaximenes to Quintilian*. Leuven.
- Barthes, R. 1975. *An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative*. Trans. L. Duisit. *New Literary History* 6: 237–72.
- Beauvoir, S. de. 1948. *The Ethics of Ambiguity*. Trans. B. Frechtman. Secaucus, N.J.

- Calame, C., ed. 1983. *Alcman*. Rome.
- Campbell, D. A. 1982. *Greek Lyric Poetry: A Selection of Early Greek Lyric, Elegiac, and Iambic Poetry*. Rev. ed. London.
- Davison, J. A. 1938. Alcman's *Partheneion*. *Hermes* 73: 440–58.
- Diels, H. 1896. Alkmans *Partheneion*. *Hermes* 31: 339–74.
- Eckerman, C. 2009. Review of Ferrari 2008. *CJ Online* 2009.07.05. <http://classicaljournal.org/CJ%20Eckerman%20on%20Ferrari.pdf> (retrieved April 7, 2010).
- Ferrari, G. 2008. *Alcman and the Cosmos of Sparta*. Chicago.
- Hutchinson, G. O. 2001. *Greek Lyric Poetry: A Commentary on Selected Larger Pieces*. Oxford.
- Jaeger, W. 1945. *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture?*. Vol. 1. Trans. G. Highet. Oxford.
- Kant, I. 1956. *Critique of Practical Reason*. Trans. L. W. Beck. New York.
- Loraux, N. 1998. *Mothers in Mourning*. Trans. C. Pache. Ithaca, N.Y.
- Lusky, E. A. 1953. Misapplications of the Term Zeugma. *CJ* 48: 285–90.
- Page, D. L., ed. 1951. *Alcman: The "Partheneion."* Oxford.
- Podlecki, A. J. 2009. Review of Ferrari 2008. *BMC* 2009.10.59. <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2009/2009-10-59.html> (accessed April 7, 2010).
- Richards, I. A. 1936. *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Oxford.
- Slatkin, L. M. 1991. *The Power of Thetis: Allusion and Interpretation in the "Iliad."* Berkeley and Los Angeles.
- Taylor, A. E. [1926] 2001. *Plato: The Man and His Work*⁴. Reprint. Mineola, N.Y.
- Watkins, C. 1995. *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*. New York.

DON'T BLAME SOCRATES (XEN. *MEM.* 1.2.40–46)

Socrates was formally accused of, among other things, corrupting young men.¹ That his associations with both Critias and Alcibiades at least partly underlay this particular charge is clear from Xenophon's extensive discussion of it in *Memorabilia* 1.2.² This same chapter of the *Memorabilia* contains two anecdotes about Socrates and Critias documenting the former's ultimately futile attempts to check the latter's immoral and tyrannical tendencies (Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.29–38). The result of these attempts, according to Xenophon, was a falling out between the two men well before Critias came to power as one of the notorious Thirty Tyrants, and a continued enmity on his part toward Socrates thereafter. About Alcibiades, however, Xenophon has only a single anecdote to relate in *Memorabilia* 1.2 (= *Mem.* 1.2.40–46), and Socrates does not directly figure into it. The story concerns a reported conversation between Alcibiades and Pericles, Alcibiades'

1. Diog. Laert. 2.5.40 preserves what is presumably the actual text of the indictment, which Favorinus (c. 85–155 C.E.) claims to have located in the archives of Athens; cf. the strikingly similar wording of Pl. *Ap.* 24b–c, Xen. *Ap.* 10, and Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.1. On "corrupting young men" as a separate, actionable offense in legal terms, see the discussion in de Stryker and Slings 1994, 89–91.

2. Cf. Aeschin. *In Tim.* 173, which claims as the reason for Socrates' conviction and execution the fact that "he was shown to have been the teacher of Critias" (Κριτίαν ἐφάνη πεπαιδευκός). This connection between Socrates' relationships with Critias and Alcibiades and the charge of corrupting young men does not require that these relationships, of which most members of an Athenian jury were presumably well aware, have been explicitly invoked at the trial itself. I therefore take no position here on whether "the accuser" (ὁ κατηγορὸς) first mentioned by Xenophon in *Mem.* 1.2.9 is to be identified with Polycrates, who published an *Accusation of Socrates* sometime after 393 B.C.E., or with someone, perhaps Anytus, who participated in Socrates' actual prosecution.