

## A NOTE ON SOME UNUSUAL GREEK WORDS FOR EYES

In *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* N.S. 14 (1968), 68, D. C. C. Young drew attention to a curious variant in the text of Longus 2.2.1, where, in a description of how, at the vintage, women 'eyed' Daphnis, A has τῷ Δάφνιδι τοὺς ἀδελφούς ἐπέβαλον, whereas B has τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς ἐπέβαλλον. Rightly concluding that 'brothers' must be a colloquial expression for 'eyes', he was however unable to cite any other example of this usage, but compared λογάδες, 'picked men', in Paulus Silentiarius (*A.P.* 5. 270), a locution found in a small range of other authors (Sophron, Callimachus, and Nicander, and in a number of lexicographers), as well as παραστάται 'comrades on the flank, bystanders' δίδυμοι 'twins' = testicles, and French *jumelles* = binoculars.

He failed to observe however that, even if there is no other actually attested use of ἀδελφοί in this sense, there is a persistent tradition, in Greek and other languages, of making the equation of eyes and brothers, in a variety of contexts,<sup>1</sup> e.g. Artem. 1.26 εὐόκασι γὰρ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ παισίν, ὅτι καὶ ποθewοί εἰσι καὶ τοῦ σώματος ὁδηγοὶ καὶ ἡγεμόνες. . . . τὸ δὲ δοκεῖν τετυφλῶσθαι ἀμφοτέρους τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς σημαίνει ὀλεθρον ἀδελφοῖς . . . ὅτι καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἀδελφοὶ εἰσιν ἀλλήλων, id. 4.24 γυνὴ ἔδοξε τὰ ὄμματα ἀλγεῖν. ἐνόσησαν αὐτῆς οἱ παῖδες. ἄλλη γυνὴ ἔδοξεν αὐτῆς τοὺς παῖδας νοσεῖν, ἐνόσησαν αὐτῆς τὰ ὄμματα.<sup>2</sup>

Artemidorus makes a similar point about *shoulders* (1.40), and, in a well-known passage of Xen. *Mem* 2.3,<sup>3</sup> Socrates tries to reconcile Chaerecrates with his brother Chaerephon by means of the analogy of the mutual usefulness of those parts of the body which are made in pairs to help each other, as brothers should: καὶ μὴν ἀδελφῶ γε . . . ὀφθαλμῶ καὶ τὰλλα ὅσα ἀδελφὰ ἔφυσεν ἀνθρώποις. In Plutarch, *Mor.* 478 d, eyes, along with other bodily pairs, are said to be διττὰ καὶ ἀδελφὰ καὶ δίδυμα.<sup>4</sup>

It may be that the colloquialism of τοὺς ἀδελφούς ἐπέβαλον in one version of Longus' phrase derives from a well-established theme of *riddles*<sup>5</sup> in which the eyes are alluded to, in various circumlocutions, as 'brothers', or 'twins'. This is prominent in the *aenigmata* of Tatuinus,<sup>6</sup> the eighth-century archbishop —

(xviii, *de oculis*)

discernens totum iuris, natura locavit  
nos pariter geminos una de matre creatos.  
divisi haut magno parvi discrimine collis,  
ut numquam vidi illum nec me viderat ipse;  
sed cernit sine me nihil, illo nec sine cerno.

<sup>1</sup> Apart, that is, from such a periphrasis, in the high-flown style, as Vergil's 'huc geminas nunc flecte acies' (*Aen.* 6.788).

<sup>2</sup> Heliodorus (*Aeth.* 2.16) on the other hand finds it convenient to equate a dream about loss of right eye with death of *father* — εἰκότως ἐπὶ πατέρα καὶ μητέρα τὴν ὁμμάτων συγγίαν . . . οἱ ὄνειροι σοφίζονται.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Suid. s.v. Χαιρεφῶν, schol. Ar. *Nub.* 144.

<sup>4</sup> The analogy is amplified in Hierocles, ap. Stob. iv p. 663, οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ταῦτοῦ μέρη

τυγχάνουσιν ὥσπερ οἱ ἐμοὶ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἐμοῦ.

<sup>5</sup> I am reminded also of the use of γείτονες = testicles. Allusive and riddling language (and, in English at least, rhyming slang such as mince-pies = eyes) is much used of parts of the body. Although the riddle collection of the *Anthology* (surprisingly) does not contain an example of this sort, in 14.25 the twelve children of Niobe are obscurely alluded to as ὀφθαλμοί.

<sup>6</sup> Now available in *Corpus Christianorum, Ser. Lat.* cxxxiii, ed. de Marco (1968).

(xix, *de strabis oculis*)

inter mirandum cunctis est cetera, quod nunc  
narro quidem: nos produxit genitrix uterinos,  
sed quod contemplor, mox illud cernere spernit;  
atque quod ille videt, secum mox cernere nolo.  
est dispar nobis visus, sed inest amor unus.

(xx, *de lusco*)

unus sum genitus lucifer fratris sine fructu (etc.)

Archer Taylor (*English Riddles from Oral Tradition*, p. 386) writes 'Riddlers often mention seeing as an act which is impossible in circumstances which seem to offer no difficulty', and he quotes a number of riddles containing variants on the theme of the eyes as brothers separated by a wall or mountain (i.e. the ridge of the nose<sup>7</sup>), as in lines 2-3 of the first Tatuinus riddle quoted above, e.g. the Polish 'Two brothers look over a little mountain, but can never see each other', Modern Greek 'Two brothers quarreled (cf. Chaerephon and Chaerecrates in Xenophon!), and a hill separated them', virtually identical versions from Albania, Russia, Sierra Leone, and (p. 390) variations from Bermuda and Nova Scotia, 'Two brothers on one side of the road, and yet they cannot see each other', (p. 397) from St. Helena 'Two sisters set in an upstairs window, dey kyan't see each other'.

Such recurrent examples make it virtually certain that, in the otherwise perplexing riddle, cited, without explanation, for its insolubility by Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. Math.* 1. 316), the opening lines 'twin lovers under twin hills perished' refers to someone either losing his eyesight or closing his eyes:<sup>8</sup>

ἡ γάρ σοι δισοοῖσω ὑπ' οὔρεσι δισοδὸς ἐραστής  
ἐφθιτο καὶ νεάτην μοῖρ' ἀνέθηκε φύσω . . .

And the Greek fondness for alluding to the eyes in similar riddling terms is further suggested by the conclusion of the oracle quoted in Pausanias 4.12.4, which is interpreted as referring to the temporary recovery, and subsequent return to his original blindness, of the Messenian seer Ophioneus:

καί τ' ὄχυρόν στεφάνωμα πικρὸς οἰκήτορας ἔξει  
τῶν δύο συντυχίας κρυπτοῦ λόχου ἐξαναδύντων.

This allusion to the seer's two<sup>9</sup> (eyes) 'starting forth from their lurking-place' (ἐκ κρυπτοῦ λόχου) suggests that the composer may have had in mind a (palpably false!) etymology of λογάδες, which is found long after in Et. M. p. 572. 36 εἴρηται δὲ οἶον λογάδες ἐν αἷς αἱ κόραι λοχῶσι, καὶ οἶον λέχος ἐστὶν αὐταῖς.

In one of the late citations of this word, A.P. 5. 270. 6 (Paul Sil.)

<sup>7</sup> The Fool in Shakespeare's *Lear* (1.5.20) uses this traditional riddling theme: 'Thou canst tell why one's nose stand i' the middle on's face? . . . Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose.'

<sup>8</sup> For a brave and learned attempt to disentangle the rest of the riddle in relation to the eyes, see K. Ohlert, *Rätsel und Rätselspiele der alten Griechen*,<sup>2</sup> pp. 206 ff., who cites also another version of the riddle from

Lithuania, 'Zwei Schwestern, die über ein Berglein nicht zusammen kommen'.

<sup>9</sup> For the ellipse, cf. the passages of Herodas quoted at the end of this article. In *Hermathena* 52 (1938), 68 ff. H. W. Parke argued that this oracle was 'interpolated' in the oracular tradition referring to the Messenian wars, but did not discuss the subject matter in great detail.

Ἰνδῶν δ' ὑάκινθος ἔχει χάρις αἴθοπος αἴγλης,  
ἀλλὰ τεῶν λογάδων πολλὸν ἀφαιροτέρην

Salmasius (quoted by Jacobs ad loc.) made the hazardous suggestion that λογάδων be read on the ground that 'adolescentibus insidiantur puellarum oculi'! Sophron, on the other hand, seems to have associated the word with λοξός, of looking 'askance', to judge from the isolated fr. 49 λοξῶν τὰς λογάδας. (The fact that the quotation is from his *Θυννοθήραι* may not be coincidental, as the peculiarity of the tunny's eyes is often mentioned in the Natural History writers, quoting Aesch. fr. 308 N. τὸ σκαῖον ὄμμα παραβαλὼν θύννου δίκην). And Callimachus may also have had this association in mind in fr. 85. 14-15 ὅστις ἀλιτροῦς αὐγάξεν ἰθαραῖς οὐ δύναται λογάσω,<sup>10</sup> which bears the same relationship to his fr. 1. 37-8 ὅσους ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖς . . . μὴ λοξῶ as Horace's 'obliquo oculo limat', (*Ep.* 1.14.37, punning on *limus*) does to his 'quem placido lumine videris' (*C.* 4.3.1). This same etymology duly turns up in Et. M. ἡ ὅτι λοξοῦνται ἐν τῷ βλέπειν κατὰ τὰς ἐπιστροφάς.

Modern etymologists however seem more inclined to the view that λογάδες = eyes derives from the use of λογάδες λίθοι as pebbles (Frisk compares Swedish ögen-sten for the eyeball<sup>11</sup>), and perhaps this interpretation is at the back of the slightly mysterious final entry in Hsch., s.v. λογάδας, οἱ δὲ κανθούς (corner of the eyes) καὶ ψήφους λευκάς. For ψήφοι are used apparently of the eyeballs<sup>12</sup> (although the meaning is not noticed in LSJ) in Artem. 1.26 ὁξὺ ὄρᾶν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀγαθὸν πᾶσιν ἐπίσης. τὸ δὲ ἀμβλυώττειν ἐνδειαν ἀργυρίου δηλοῖ, ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὰ ὄμματα ψήφους ἔχει.

It is of course strange that Hesychius should use λευκός of the eyeball,<sup>13</sup> and one wonders whether the frequent reference to λευκός in relation to λογάδες (e.g. Poll. 2.70 τὸ μετὰ τὴν κόρην λευκὸν ἅπαν σφενδόνη καὶ λογάς) is tending in the direction of the hariolation of Et. M. that, with a convenient metathesis of γ/κ, λογάδες in some way represents λευκάδες! Certainly the identification in Pollux of λογάς and σφενδόνη seems much more appropriate to a description of the iris<sup>14</sup> or *corona* of the eye (which is the rendering preferred by Gow for λογάδες in Nic. *Th.* 292), since σφενδόνη, in addition to being used for such objects as bullets, hailstones (see LSJ), is particularly common of the bezel, or hoop, of a ring in which the precious gem (for which ψήφος is often used) is set.<sup>15</sup> It is particularly unlikely that Paul Sil. wanted to stress the beauty of the whites<sup>16</sup> of

<sup>10</sup> For the side-long glance of retribution threatening the sinner, see especially Ap. Rh. 4.475-6, Call. fr. 374. On λοξός see L. Malten, *Die Sprache des menschlichen Antlitzes im frühen Griechentum* (Berlin, 1961), p. 50.

<sup>11</sup> Also O. N. augasteinn, Dan. öie-steen.

<sup>12</sup> So too πεσσοί — τὰ περὶ τῇ κόρῃ μέλανα Poll. 2.71, cf. Hsch., s.v. It is possible that λωγάλοι (δοσράγαλοι Hsch.) is also comparable, if, like λογάδες λίθοι of Paus. 7. 22. 5, the word derives from λέγω.

<sup>13</sup> I do not see how the reference could be to the λευκὴ ψήφος of the vote of acquittal in the law-courts.

<sup>14</sup> Uniquely (apparently) Theognostus *Can.* (Cramer, *An. Ox.* p. 22.6) identifies it with the *pupil* — λοιάδες (leg. λογ-) αἱ

κόραι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν.

<sup>15</sup> So γλήνη, commonly used of the eyeball, is also a 'socket of a joint' LSJ.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Alciph. *Ep.* fr. 5.4 for praise of κόραι μελάνταται in the setting of τὸ κύκλῳ λευκόν. To show the whites of the eyes was thought a sign of exceptional lasciviousness — see τὰ λευκά ἀναβάλλειν in Alex. fr. 222.9, Athen. 529<sup>a</sup>, Poll. 2.60, and cf. Ar. *Pr.* 876<sup>a</sup>33, LXX *Sir.* 26.9 πορνεία γυναικὸς ἐν μετεωρισμῷ ὀφθαλμῶν γνωσθήσεται. For suspicion of 'wall-eyed' ('Having one or both eyes of an excessively light colour, so that the iris is hardly distinguished from the white') see W. Deonna, *Le Symbolisme de l'oeil*, pp. 202 ff. See also Pearson on Soph. fr. 1037.

his beloved's eyes, but rather the glow from the eyeballs, which he appositely compares to the Indian precious gem, the blue hyacinthus, which LSJ equate with aquamarine.<sup>17</sup> Similarly Nicander, loc. cit., is describing the prominent eyes of the snake *haemorrhois*,<sup>18</sup> which he compares to those of *πάρνοπες*. The scholiast adds to these *ἀπτελεβοι* and one recalls *ἀπτελεβόθαλμος* used 'of prominent staring eyes,' LSJ, in Eub. fr. 107.10.

The only other possible derivation of the use of *λογάδες* used of the eyes seems to be from the tradition of the eyes as the dearest, most precious and 'select' of one's possession<sup>19</sup> — cf. Plin. *N.H.* 11. 52 'oculi pars corporis pretiosissima', the use of *oculissimus* = *carissimus* ('the apple of my eye'), etc. — a persistent theme of literary tradition, of which only a small sample need be given:

LXX *De.* 32.10 διεφύλαξεν αὐτὸν ὡς κόρην ὀφθαλμοῦ.

Mosc. 4.9 τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ τίεσκον ἴσον φαέεσσιν ἑμοῖσιν.

Cat. 3.5. quem plus illa oculis suis amabat.

Shak. *Othello* 3.4.66 Make it a darling like your precious eye.

This at times appears a literary sophistication, but one might note the more colloquial overtones of Hdas. 6.23 *μὰ τούτους τοὺς γλυκέας* [sc. *ὀφθαλμούς*], an ellipse which recurs in 5. 59–60 *τούτοις τοῖς δύο*, Theoc. 6.22 *οὐ τὸν ἐμὸν τὸν ἕνα γλυκύν*, Call. *Ep.* 32 *ἔβλεπες ἀμφοτέροις*. In his note on the Theocritus passage, Gow observes that a gesture might, in all but the last, explain the ellipse, and it is therefore also worth considering whether both the omission of the word, and the use of the riddling substitute *ἀδελφός*, in Longus, may not belong to the strange area of 'interdictions de vocabulaire' to which A. Meillet directed attention, including the *eye* in the words he found occasionally subject to this phenomenon.<sup>20</sup> It is interesting to find that, in addition to the three oaths cited above, other examples of the omission of *ὀφθαλμός* (Call. loc. cit., Ar. *Vesp.* 497 *ἡ λαχανόπωλις παραβλέψασα θάτέρω*, id. *Ec.* 498 *παραβλέπουσα θάτέρω*), or its substitution by another word (*ἀδελφός* in Longus, the four examples of *λογάδες* referred to, Hdas. 4.71 *ἐπιλοξοί τῇ ἐτέρῃ κούρῃ*), are all in contexts where the provocative, suspicious, or dangerous — usually side-long — casting of eyes is alluded to. The same appears to be true also of almost all the examples of omission of *oculi*<sup>21</sup> that I have noticed in Latin, e.g.

Plaut. *Ba.* 1130 viden limulis, opsecro, ut intuentur?

— *M.G.* 1217 aspicio limis, ne ille nos se sentiat videre.

Ter. *Eun.* 601–2 ego limis spectro/sic per flabellum clanculum.

Ov. *Met.* 6.34 adspicit hanc torvis.

Hor. *Sat.* 2.5.53 ut limis rapias.

Mart. *Cap.* 1.84 sed eius miros lacertos rictusque Cleonaeos limis Iuno cernebat.

<sup>17</sup> I notice a coincidental parallel in the OED citation from Rowland's edition (1658) of Mouffet's *Insectorum Theatrum* 968, 'In the uttermost part of the wings, as if it were four Adamants glistening in a beazil of hyacinth.'

<sup>18</sup> Gow ad. loc. states that 'snakes have no whites in their eyes.'

<sup>19</sup> The best collection of passages is to

be found in Headlam's note on Hdas. 6. 23.

<sup>20</sup> *Linguistique historique et linguistique générale*<sup>2</sup> (Paris, 1926), pp. 281–91.

<sup>21</sup> In the second and third of these quotations, *oculis* is supplied as a gloss in some manuscripts. I observe in passing that the English use of 'a squint' as a noun presumably derives from a similar suppression of 'eyes'.

Tertull. *De pall.* 4 si praestat oculos abducere ab eiusmodi propudiis . . .  
aspice tamen vel sublimis . . .

The examples cited above of γλυκὺς used of the eyes (to which add Theoc. 11. 53 τὸν ἔν' ὀφθαλμόν, τῷ μοι γλυκερώτερον οὐδέν, *Ap. Rh.* 4.1039 γλυκεροῖ-σιν ὄμμασιν) seem, incidentally, to me to support the view that the traditional rendering of *Hom. Od.* 16.23 Τηλέμαχε, γλυκερόν φάος 'Sweet light of mine eyes' is correct, although LSJ and others see φάος here as belonging to the 'metaphor of deliverance, etc.' category – it is in fact the diametrically opposite in sense to the address ἔρρε, κακὴ γλήνη of *Il.* 8. 164,<sup>22</sup> where the interpretation 'plaything' (Leaf, LSJ) is quite misleading, as the expression clearly belongs to the vocabulary of the 'evil eye'.<sup>23</sup>

To revert finally to the sentence of Longus: having no expertise in the textual transmission of *Daphnis and Chloe*, I cannot make any useful judgement on Douglas Young's view that the ἀδελφούς-ὀφθαλμούς variant of 2.2.1 reveals the author's own second thoughts. In *PCPS* 15 (1968), 75 ff., M. D. Reeve rejected this, but on the passage in question, apart from commenting 'Longus is above slang', he did not attempt to account for the alternative reading of A, from which I assume he regards ἀδελφούς as simply a bizarre corruption. As a simple misreading of ὀφθαλμούς this seems highly improbable, and in view of the material collected above, although this usage of ἀδελφοί is apparently unique in surviving literature, to call it 'slang' is perhaps over-pejorative, and it may simply reflect the curiously recurrent Greek fear of βασκανία, which is prominent in much Hellenistic and later literature, and come into the category of 'kennings',<sup>24</sup> which often reflect the allusive language of the riddles quoted above. In this case, if the 'author's variant' theory is to be rejected, B's ὀφθαλμούς may be a simple case of a gloss on A's ἀδελφούς.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Il.* 1. 105 κάκ' ὀσσόμενος, *Od.* 2. 152 ὀσσοντο δ' ὄλεθρον, where Leaf's insistence that this must mean 'bode in the mind's eye' seems to me to ignore the Greek concept (see *Plut. Quaest. Conv.* 5. 7) of evil emanations from the eye itself. (The addition of θυμῷ etc., in other such passages makes all the difference). Note also σμερδαλέον δέδορκεν of the snake in *Il.* 22. 95, glossed by schol. Τ βλέπων χαλεπὸν, and the similar gloss ἐπιβλαβὲς καὶ χαλεπὸν ὀρώσα of the evil-eyed *mantis religiosa* in schol. Theoc. 10.17.

<sup>23</sup> Professor I. M. Campbell has reminded me that the word may have much the same origins and implications as the old English curse 'Damn your eyes!' I am puzzled that, in quoting the phrase, Meletius, *de nat. hom.* (Cramer, *An. Ox.* iii, p. 69. 2), says

Homer means τὰ λευκὰ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν – the same definition ascribed elsewhere to λογάδες. According to this same obscure author (p. 68. 28) ἡ δὲ κόρη τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν καὶ γλήνη λέγεται καὶ ἴλη. This latter word I have not found recorded in any dictionary in this meaning: the astonishing coincidence with λογάδες 'picked men' is disturbing, but perhaps Meletius is right in his etymology ἀπὸ τῆς εἰλήσεως καὶ τῆς ἐπὶ τὰ κάτω φορᾶς, and one thinks also of ἰλλός (etc.) in connection with eyes.

<sup>24</sup> See I. Waern. ΓΗΣ ΟΣΤΕΑ: *The Kenning in pre-Christian Greek Poetry* (Diss. Uppsala, 1951), F. Bornmann in *Studi Germanici* N.S. 8 (1970), 99 ff.

<sup>25</sup> I am grateful to my colleague Dr. R. C. McCail for his comments on an earlier draft of this article.