

THE MEANING AND USE OF *ΜΙΚΡΟΣ* AND *ΟΛΙΓΟΣ* IN THE GREEK POETICAL VOCABULARY

1. ARISTOTLE, in chapter 22 of the *Poetics* (1458*18–1459*16), has some remarks on poetic diction. He lays it down that, while poetry should be clear in meaning, it should avoid meanness of expression. *σεμνή δὲ καὶ ἐξαιλάττουσα τὸ ἰδιωτικὸν ἢ τοῖς ξενικοῖς κεχρημένη*—it becomes dignified and elevated above the commonplace when it employs unusual words; *ξενικὸν δὲ λέγω γλῶτταν καὶ μεταφορὰν καὶ ἐπέκτασιν καὶ πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τὸ κύριον*—and examples of unusual words are rare words, metaphors, lengthened forms, and everything that differs from normal speech. He then gives specimens of poetry, to show how the poetic effect can be spoilt by the substitution of *τὰ κύρια* for *τὰ ξενικά*, and of these the two that follow are taken from the *Odyssey*. The first is *Od.* 9. 515,

*νῦν δέ μ' ἐὼν ὀλίγος τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καὶ ἀεικής*¹

which Aristotle says would be spoilt by being turned into

νῦν δέ μ' ἐὼν μικρὸς τε καὶ ἀσθενικὸς καὶ ἀειδής.

The second is *Od.* 20. 259,

δίφρον ἀεικέλιον καταθεῖς ὀλίγην τε τράπεζαν:

this could be spoilt by becoming

δίφρον μοχθηρὸν καταθεῖς μικρὰν τε τράπεζαν.

My chief concern is with the substitution of *μικρός* for *ὀλίγος*, which is made in both the passages. But first let us see the nature of the other changes. (a) *οὐτιδανός* 'worthless' is quoted in L. and S. as appearing in Homer, in Aeschylus (with the sense 'reckless'), and in the poet of the second/third centuries A.D., Oppianus Anazarbensis, author of *Haliutica*: its substitute *ἀσθενικός* 'weakly' is a prose word, first appearing² in Arist. *H.A.* 587*20, where it qualifies *παιδίον*. (b) *ἀεικής* 'unseemly' is in Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Herodotus, Simonides, and the same Oppianus: the substitute *ἀειδής* is in Aristotle and Theophrastus with the meaning 'formless', and in Hippocrates as 'unsightly'. (c) *ἀεικέλιος* 'unseemly' is in Homer and Bacchylides, and (in the contracted form *αἰκέλιος*) in Theognis and Euripides (lyr.): the substitute *μοχθηρός* in the sense 'in bad condition' which is its nearest correspondence to *ἀεικέλιος*, is in Antipho, Aristophanes, Cratinus, Plato, Demosthenes, Dinarchus, Aristotle, Andocides, and Sextus Empiricus. It is now easy to see why in these three cases Aristotle condemns the use of the substitutes. They are all relatively late words, and further they are either confined to prose or else used much more freely in prose than in verse; and the result is that Aristotle regards them as unsuitable for use in Epic poetry. But what of the final pair, *ὀλίγος* and *μικρός*? We cannot say that *μικρός* is a late word, since it is found three times in Homer; nor can we say that it is less at home in verse than is *ὀλίγος*, when we find that Sophocles makes liberal use of *μικρός* (36 times) and, as I shall try to show, never uses *ὀλίγος* at all. We must therefore look elsewhere for an explanation, which it will be my chief object to provide.

2. We may begin with a general survey of the uses of *μικρός* and *ὀλίγος*. How very similar they are in meaning may be seen from a parallel conspectus of the uses of the two words (from which the adverbial uses are omitted).

¹ The final word of the line is *ἀκις* in our accepted text of Homer.

² Here again, and in the succeeding examples, I am following L. and S. for my quotations.

	<i>μικρός</i>	<i>ὀλίγος</i>
1. 'small', in size	yes	yes
2. 'small', in quantity	yes	yes
3. 'small', in value or importance; hence 'petty', 'trivial', 'slight'	yes	yes
4. 'short', of time	yes	yes
5. 'few', of number	no	yes

Meaning (1), 'small' in size, is very likely the original sense of both words. At any rate this seems to have been the IE. meaning of *μικρός*, as it is possible to say on the strength of the comparison with OHG. *smāhi*, ON. *smár* 'small'.¹ The etymology of *ὀλίγος* appears too uncertain to be of any help in this respect. The meaning 'small in size' is found for both words from Homer onwards, but in the case of *ὀλίγος* becomes less common in later Greek.² Meaning (3) is especially common for *μικρός*. For *ὀλίγος* it is much rarer, and less frequently recognized, and I quote what I regard as some examples of it: (a) *Od.* 6. 208 and 14. 58 *δόσις ὀλίγη τε φίλη τε*:³ (b) *Il.* 1. 167 *γέρας ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε*: (c) *Od.* 3. 368 *χρεῖος οὐ νέον οὐδ' ὀλίγον*: (d) Callin. 1. 17 *τὸν δ' ὀλίγος στενάχει καὶ μέγας, ἦν τι πάθῃ*: (e) *Ar. Pl.* 752 *βίον ἔχοντες ὀλίγον*: (f) *id. Av.* 625 *πυροὺς ὀλίγους προβαλοῦσιν*.⁴

It will be seen that there is a very large degree of correspondence in the uses of the words, at any rate on a superficial view. The only meaning which is not held in common is (5) 'few in number', which is possessed by *ὀλίγος* alone: and that can be safely taken as having first arisen in post-Homeric times, since it does not appear in any of the twenty-five passages in which Homer uses the word non-adverbially.

However, the superficial view is misleading, since there is, in fact, a profound difference in the associations of the two words, which is especially observable in the usage of the Greek poets. Briefly, the difference is that *μικρός* generally has affective or emotional connotations, and that *ὀλίγος* nearly always has not. Latin does not possess two words showing habitually the same distinction;⁵ but it is readily understood by speakers of English, since we have a similar pair in *little* (affective) and *small* (non-affective, neutral). The origin of the affective sense of both *μικρός* and *little* is the same as that of the familiar affective use of diminutive nouns; indeed, this use of the adjectives may be taken as the prototype of the development of the diminutive nouns. An object of small size—for example, a young child or other animal—naturally may excite the emotion of affection or pity, because of its apparent helplessness and dependence; of sympathetic and amused regard, as when Catullus records the comment of the bystander on the undersized orator Calvus, *di magni, salaputium disertum*; or else of scorn and derision for its ineffectiveness and insignificance.⁶ Because of this psychological fact, adjectives denoting 'small', and diminutive nouns and adjectives which include the same notion, are liable to add to the meaning 'small'

¹ The coexistence of the two forms *μικρός* and *σμικρός* in Greek is a difficult problem. Sentence-phonetics seem to be responsible. See Meillet-Vendryes, *Traité de grammaire comparée des langues classiques*, p. 51; Schwyzler, *Griech. Gramm.*, p. 311.

² Thus the Scholiast on Apoll. Rhod. 1. 955 *εὐναίης ὀλίγον λίθον ἐκλύσαντες* finds it necessary to explain *ὀλίγον*. *μικρόν ἔφη, ὡς καὶ Ὀμηρος, ὀλίγην τράπεζαν (Od. 20. 259) καὶ Θεόκριτος, ὀλίγον κοῦρον (Id. 1. 147 ὀλίγος τις κῶρος)*. Possibly in his day there was already established the division of meaning found in Modern Greek (both spoken and written), where *μικρός* =

'small in size, short', and *ὀλίγος* = 'small in quantity, few'.

³ L. and S. takes this as in 'a sense between that of Size and Quantity', but I dissent from that view.

⁴ There should be added here, with extension of meaning, the remarkable use in *Hp. Virg.* 1 *ἀθυμότερη καὶ ὀλιγωτέρη φύσις*, where *ὀλίγος* = 'weak, deficient in strength'.

⁵ Latin *parvulus* is too rarely used to be justly entered into comparison.

⁶ It is convenient to summarize the feelings of sympathy, etc., under *good affect*; and of antipathy, etc., under *bad affect*.

another, affective meaning, referring to one of the emotions described. We are familiar with the fact that in the diminutive nouns the affective sense often becomes more important than the sense 'small', and may oust the idea of 'smallness' completely: that is, the diminutive form may be used purely to express emotion (especially affection), and not at all to express the idea of size. In the adjectives meaning 'small' such displacement does not occur: the nearest approximation to it is the case where the adjective 'small', being used = 'of small value', adds a bad affective sense which becomes predominant, as in Eur. *Suppl.* 953 *σικκρόν τὸ χρήμα τοῦ βίου*.

So much for the general principle of the semantic change. At this stage it is useful to draw attention again to English *little* (on which see the *OED.*, and Fowler, *Modern English Usage*, s.v. 'small'). In *little* we see that (a) the affect is by no means present in all uses, and indeed that only a relatively small part of the semantic area covered by the word is concerned with it; and that (b) the affect was not present from the start of the history of the word. With regard to (b), the *OED.* (heading A.I.3) does not admit the presence of affect before the sixteenth century, although non-affective meanings go back to the ninth century. It is perhaps possible to be too confident in assertion on this point, and one might hesitate to exclude affect entirely from some earlier uses, e.g. the quotations (under heading A.I.2 in the *OED.*) King Alfred *lytel cild*; Tindale, *Matth.* 18. 6, *whosoever offendeth one of these lytell wons*. Nevertheless, the affective meaning in *little* was clearly one that arose during the course of the word's historical development. In considering the cases of *μικρός* and *ολίγος*, we shall have to bear in mind these two features in *little*: it will be seen to be a mistake to expect to find in either word a universal presence or absence of affective meaning. Further, with the evidence before us of the difficulty of deciding the presence of affect in English, we shall not be surprised to find similar doubt in many Greek passages. I shall indicate what is my own judgement on the Greek passages to be quoted, without expecting to command general agreement in every instance. I would not claim that, in every case which I call 'affective', it is necessary in translating from the Greek to emphasize the presence of affect. But what is worth noticing is that in them the context is such that affect is possible: whereas in the non-affective (e.g. such an adverbial use as Eur. *I.T.* 669 *ἔφθης με μικρόν*) it is impossible. What I am investigating is the kind of context in which the Greek poets felt themselves free to use *μικρός* and *ολίγος* respectively.

3. It is time now to turn to consider the usage in the Greek poets. Quotations will be given more freely in covering the vital ground of the earlier authors.

A. HOMER

(a) *μικρός*. Three occurrences only.

- (i) *Il.* 5. 801 *Τυδεὺς τοι μικρὸς μὲν ἔην δέμας, ἀλλὰ μαχητής*. Athena comes to Diomedes, exhausted and wounded, and wants to urge him on to further fighting. She does this by speaking of his father Tydeus, saying what a fine fighter *he* was. She says, 'Truly Tydeus begat a son very little like himself. Tydeus was no giant in size, but he *was* a fighter.'

μικρός is affectionate, and its use takes the sting out of the description: *ολίγος* in this place would have stated objectively the fact of the small stature of Tydeus, and would not have prepared the way for the praise in *μαχητής*.

- (ii) *Il.* 17. 757 *κίρκον, ὃ τε σικκρήσι φόνον φέρει ὀρνίθεσσιν*. Aeneas and Hector are driving the Achaean warriors before them. The Achaeans are compared to a flock of starlings or daws, flying with confused cries when they see the approach of a hawk, 'the bearer of death to little birds'.

Sympathetic use of *σμικρός*. The translation of Lang, Leaf, and Myers 'bearer of death to small birds' misses the point. For the sentiment of sympathy with nature, which is not common in Greek poetry at any time and especially not in the early literature, compare the account in Hesiod, *Op.* 524-6 of the plight of the cuttle-fish who, in the winter, exposed to the cold, 'gnaws his foot in his fireless house and wretched home, and the sun shows him no pastures to make for'.

- (iii) *Od.* 3. 295-6 *ἔνθα Νότος μέγα κῦμα ποτὶ σκαῖον ῥίον ὠθεῖ,
ἐς Φαιστόν, μικρὸς δὲ λίθος μέγα κῦμ' ἀποέργει.*

Nestor is describing the homeward sailing of Menelaus from Troy, and how some of his ships were wrecked off Crete. He says that the great south-westerly gales rage round that coast, and where the wreck occurred there was only a little reef out at sea to break their force. Rieu, in his recent Penguin translation, renders: '(there is) nothing but this puny reef to keep their violence in check'.

This passage is remarkable because *μικρός* qualifies an inanimate object. The question arises whether we are justified in seeing here a note of 'sympathy' with a process of inanimate nature. It is ultimately one for literary criticism to decide: so far as the linguistic evidence goes, it seems to me to be wholly in favour of the 'sympathetic' view.¹

Besides the use of the positive *μικρός*, there are in Homer two passages with the comparative *μείων*: *Il.* 2. 528-9, and 3. 193. In neither passage is there any affective sense. This is usual, and I do not propose to consider hereafter the comparative (or superlative) forms of *μικρός* or *ὀλίγος*.

(b) *ὀλίγος*.

Much more frequent, with 40 uses (including 15 adverbial). It is the regular word for 'small', which is applied to persons as well as to a shield, fish, table, etc. As a rule it is quite clear that it is non-affective.

But the two passages where it is used of persons are less plain. They are *Il.* 2. 529-30 *ὀλίγος μὲν ἦν . . . ἐγγεῖη δ' ἐκέκαστο Πανέλληνας καὶ Ἀχαιοὺς* (of Ajax, son of Oileus); and *Od.* 9. 515 *ὀλίγος τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καὶ ἄκις* (which is one of the two passages quoted by Aristotle in *Poetics*, ch. 22—section 1 above). In *Il.* 2. 529 there is at first sight a resemblance to *Il.* 5. 801 *μικρὸς μὲν ἦν δέμας, ἀλλὰ μαχητής*. But it must be borne in mind that *Il.* 2. 529 occurs in a catalogue of forces, where affect would not be at home as it is in the speech of Athena in the latter passage; *ὀλίγος*, then, merely states the fact of the size of the hero (a theme which arises naturally in comparing him with his namesake, Telamonian Ajax), with no implied comment upon it. *Od.* 9. 515 is less simple; it is spoken by the Cyclops about Odysseus; he says that he expected danger from someone tall and comely—*φῶτα μέγαν καὶ καλόν*—but instead it has been one *ὀλίγος τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καὶ ἄκις* who has blinded him. In this passage a contemptuous sense would be at home in the epithet 'small', because of the meaning of the rest of the line. Perhaps *ὀλίγος* was used because *μικρός* could not in Homer have *bad* affect, which it had certainly not yet acquired. There must also be noticed the other Aristo-

¹ W. R. Hardie, *Lectures on Classical Subjects* (1903), 'The Feeling for Nature', p. 12, claims that Homer 'rarely attributes any kind of feeling to inanimate Nature; one feels it to be very exceptional when the sea is spoken of as "foreboding" or feeling the approach of stormy winds'—*Il.* 14. 17 *ὁσσόμενον κτλ.* But this surely underestimates the importance of the personification

of both natural phenomena and inanimate objects which we find in Homer. For examples see W. B. Stanford, *Greek Metaphor*, on 'Animating Metaphor', especially p. 12 and pp. 138-9. Metaphorical personification is plain in *λάας ἀναδής* (*Od.* 11. 598), as Aristotle noticed; and I think that it is this which also makes possible the use of *μικρός* as the attribute of *λίθος* in *Od.* 3. 296.

telian line, *Od.* 20. 259 δῖφρον ἀεικέλιον καταθεῖς ὀλίγην τε τράπεζαν: this is a second passage which may have bad affect. But there are no others in Homer, and we may perhaps on that ground prefer to take the two as non-affective. I shall return to this in my final section.

There is an interesting group of four passages (already quoted in section 2 above), in which ὀλίγος probably = 'of small value': *Od.* 6. 208 = 14. 58; 3. 368; *Il.* 1. 167. In the first two the phrase is δόσις ὀλίγη τε φίλη τε: the gift is at the same time of small value and highly regarded. Here in my view there is a complete absence of affect. With the meaning 'of small value' we may have either bad affect ('contemptibly poor, mean') or no affect: good affect is not appropriate. In these passages the circumstances are such that a gift, etc., though absolutely of small worth, is relatively of great worth because of the need of the recipient. There is the same contrast in *Il.* 1. 167 γέρας ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε. Here Achilles is contrasting his own poor share of any spoils with what Agamemnon gets: he says that Agamemnon has a much larger share, while as for himself ἐγὼ δ' ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε | ἔρχομ' ἔχων ἐπὶ νῆας. This must be ironical: as in the case of the beggars, Achilles says that he must be pleased (φίλον) with such little as he is given.

Fifteen of the Homeric examples are adverbial. Affect is quite absent.

Summary of the evidence in Homer. μικρός without exception is affective, with good sense. ὀλίγος is almost always neutral, and may always be so: but there is a possibility that in two passages there is bad affect.

B. HOMERIC HYMNS

(a) μικρός. The one example is *H. Aphr.* 5. 114-15.

Τρωάς γὰρ μεγάρῳ με τροφὸς τρέφεν. ἦ δὲ διαπρὸ
σμηκρὴν παῖδ' ἀτίταλλε, φίλης παρὰ μητρὸς ἐλούσα.

This is in the same context as the very frequent *little child*, etc., in English. Here Aphrodite, deceiving Anchises, is telling him a story about the circumstances of her upbringing. It is possible, but not essential, to see a sympathetic use.

(b) ὀλίγος.

(i) *H. Herm.* 4. 245 παῖδ' ὀλίγον δολίης εἰλυμένον ἐντροπήῃσι.

(ii) *Ibid.* 456 νῦν δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν ὀλίγος περ ἐὼν κλυτὰ μέδεα οἶδας.

In these two examples ὀλίγος is applied to the infant Hermes. It is not, I think, fanciful to see a diminution of affect here as compared with *H. Aphr.* 5. 115.

(iii) *Ibid.* 240 ἐν δ' ὀλίγῳ συνέλασσε κάρη χειράς τε πόδας τε. ὀλίγον used substantively. Neutral.

(iv) *Ibid.* 259-60 ὑπὸ γαίῃ | ἐρρήσεις ὀλίγοισι μετ' ἀνδράσιν ἡγεμονεύων. Apollo threatens Hermes with banishment to the underworld. The meaning of ὀλίγος is curious: it is usually taken = 'of small size' (so Allen and Halliday), and would therefore be neutral, or possibly with bad affect. But I am doubtful about this interpretation: it does not seem to add much point to the threat, to tell Hermes that he will be leader of the children down there. I prefer to take ὀλίγος = 'worthless, insignificant', which thus describes the condition of men in the underworld who are, as Homer tells us, less happy than even slaves on earth. For the meaning of ὀλίγος cf. Callin. 1. 17, with my note, below. Probably affective.

Summary. The usage of the *Hymns* in general bears out the distinction found in Homer.

C. HESIOD

(a) *μικρός*. All examples occur in the same passage, *Op.* 359–63.

ὅς δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἔληται ἀναιδείῃφι πιθήσας,
καί τε σμικρὸν ἔόν, τό γ' ἐπάχνωσεν φίλον ἦτορ.
ὅς δ' ἐπ' ἔόντι φέρει, ὃ δ' ἀλέξεται αἴθοπα λιμόν·
εἰ γάρ κεν καὶ σμικρὸν ἐπὶ σμικρῷ καταθεῖο
καὶ θαμὰ τοῦτ' ἔρδοις, τάχα κεν μέγα καὶ τὸ γένοιτο.

The most natural way is to take the thrice used *σμικρός* as neutral. This will be the earliest definite use in that sense. We might doubtfully see a slight bad affect, *σμικρός* = 'a poor little amount', such as might be despised: that use would be equally notable.

(b) *ὀλίγος*.

(i) *Op.* 30–1 ὥρῃ γάρ τ' ὀλίγη πέλεται νεικέων τ' ἀγορέων τε
ᾗτινι μὴ βίος ἔνδον ἐπηετανὸς κατὰκειται.

ὀλίγος could have bad affect: 'he has little regard for quarrels and courts' could = 'he despises them'; but I regard it as most likely that it is neutral. The question cannot be separated from that of the compound adjective *ὀλίγωρος* (on which see section 5 below).

(ii) *Ibid.* 480 ἤμενος ἀμήσεις ὀλίγον περὶ χειρὸς ἔργων. *ὀλίγος* is probably neutral.

(iii) *Ibid.* 643 νῆ' ὀλίγην αἰνεῖν, μεγάλη δ' ἐνὶ φορτία θέσθαι. Also neutral.

Summary. In the only passage with *μικρός* a new development is seen, its use for the first time either as neutral or with bad affect. *ὀλίγος* has no extension beyond the Homeric use.

D. ELEGIAC AND LYRIC POETS

(a) *μικρός*.

(i) Tyrtaeus 10. 6 (Bergk) πλαζόμενον . . . παισὶ τε σὺν μικροῖς κουριδίῃ τ' ἀλόχῳ.
Good affect.

(ii) Phocylides 5 (Bergk)

καὶ τότε Φωκυλίδεω· πόλις ἐν σκοπέλῳ κατὰ κόσμον
οἰκεῦσα σμικρὴ κρέσσων Νίνου ἀφραινούσης.

Neutral.

(iii) Theognis 14 σοὶ μὲν τοῦτο, θεά, σμικρὸν, ἐμοὶ δὲ μέγα. The author is referring to his poem, in his invocation to Artemis. Affect is likely, in both *σμικρὸν* and *μέγα*: and in *σμικρὸν* it is bad affect.

(iv) *Id.* 253–4 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ὀλίγης παρὰ σεῦ οὐ τυγχάνω αἰδοῦς,
ἀλλ' ὥσπερ μικρὸν παῖδα λόγοις μ' ἀπατῆς.

Note the opposition between neutral *ὀλίγης* and affective *μικρὸν*. I would regard it as unthinkable to have the adjectives reversed here, *μικρός* with *αἰδοῦς* and *ὀλίγος* with *παῖδα*. As in the preceding example, *μικρὸν* has slight bad affect.

(v) *Id.* 323 μήποτ' ἐπὶ σμικρῇ προφάσει φίλον ἄνδρ' ἀπολέσσαι. Again bad affect. Similarly in the two following examples from Theognis.

(vi) *Id.* 580 σμικρῆς ὄρνιθος κοῦφον ἔχουσα νόον.

(vii) *Id.* 607 ἀρχῇ ἐπὶ ψεύδους μικρὴ χάρις.

(viii) Anacr. 17. 1 ἡρίστησα μὲν ἱτρίου λεπτοῦ μικρὸν ἀποκλάς. Notable as a neutral example of *μικρός*.

(ix) Archil. 58 (Bergk)

οὐ φιλέω μέγαν στρατηγόν . . .
ἀλλά μοι σμικρός τις εἶη καὶ περὶ κνήμας ἰδεῖν
ρόικός, ἀσφαλῆως βεβηκώς ποσσὶ, καρδίας πλέος.

Good affect. Compare *Il.* 5. 801, of which this passage may be a reminiscence.

- (x) Sappho 34 (Bergk) σμίκρα μοι πάϊς ἔμμεν ἐφαίνεο κᾶχαρις. σμίκρα is used, as often, with πάϊς, but not with the common meaning of 'little child' as opposed to an adult. The reference here is more definitely to stature, pointing to a physical defect. 'You seemed to me to be a slight and graceless child', i.e. 'slight' compared with others of that age. The affect is therefore bad.

(xi) Simon. 124 A (Bergk)

ἄνθρωπ', οὐ Κροίσου λεύσσεις τάφον' ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς
χερνήτεω μικρὸς τύμβος ἔμοιγ' ἱκανός.

Neutral; or possibly slight bad affect, 'the poor man's little stone is big enough for me'.

- (xii) Pind. *P.* 3. 107 σμικρὸς ἐν σμικροῖς, μέγας ἐν μεγάλοις ἔσσομαι. 'I shall be humble when my means are humble, great when they are great.' σμικρός has the same meaning as ὀλίγος in Callin. 1. 17 (see below). No affect.

- (xiii) Pind. *O.* 12. 12 ἐν μικρῷ . . . χρόνῳ. Again no effect.

(b) ὀλίγος.

- (i) Callin. 1. 17 τὸν δ' ὀλίγος στενάχει καὶ μέγας, ἣν τι πάθη. The poet describes the general mourning that attends the death of the brave warrior. So much is clear: but it is less certain what is the nature of the contrast between ὀλίγος and μέγας. Hudson-Williams (*Early Greek Elegy*) takes the meaning as 'young and old': for the use of ὀλίγος he compares *Il.* 5. 800 ἡ ὀλίγον οἱ παῖδα εἰκότα γείνατο Τυδεύς, and *Od.* 10. 94 οὔτε μέγ' οὔτ' ὀλίγον. But neither passage is of any help; the first, since in it ὀλίγον is not adjectival with παῖδα but adverbial with εἰκότα; and the second, since it is applied to the description of a wave. One might quote *H. Herm.* 4. 245 παῖδ' ὀλίγον: but it is one thing to use ὀλίγος = 'small', and so 'young', to qualify a noun which itself means 'child', and quite another to use it independently. There seems to be no parallel to a use of ὀλίγος by itself = 'a young person'. I would further doubt whether μέγας by itself could = 'a grown-up person, an adult'. Cf. *Od.* 9. 513-16, where the Cyclops is speaking of Odysseus:

ἀλλ' αἰεὶ τινα φῶτα μέγαν καὶ καλὸν ἐδέγγμην
ἐνθάδ' ἐλεύσεσθαι, μεγάλην ἐπιειμένον ἀλκήν·
νῦν δέ μ' ἐὼν ὀλίγος τε καὶ οὔτιδανός καὶ ἄκιυς
ὀφθαλμοῦ ἀλάωσεν.

Here μέγας and ὀλίγος are contrasted, with the meanings 'big' and 'small' man: both refer to stature, but not to difference of stature caused by age. Since it is pointless to see this sense in Callinus, it seems likely that we should accept the view of L. and S., that ὀλίγος and μέγας = 'of low and high degree', 'the humble and the mighty'. This meaning of ὀλίγος would then be similar to what I have suggested for *H. Herm.* 4. 259 ὀλίγοισι μετ' ἀνδράσιν (of the dead). μέγας can easily be paralleled, as in Pind. *P.* 3. 107 μέγας ἐν μεγάλοις (opposed to σμικρός); Soph. *Aj.* 158-61 καίτοι σμικροὶ μεγάλων χωρὶς | σφαλερὸν πύργου ῥῦμα πέλονται | μετὰ γὰρ μεγάλων βαιὸς ἄριστ' ἂν | καὶ μέγας ὀρθοῖθ' ὑπὸ μικροτέρων. ὀλίγος therefore neutral: there is no note of contempt.

- (ii) Simon. 39 (Bergk) ἀνθρώπων ὀλίγον μὲν κάρτος, ἄπρακτοι δὲ μεληδόνες. Possibly affective.

- (iii) Pind. *P.* 10. 20 τῶν δ' ἐν Ἑλλάδι τερπνῶν λαχόντες οὐκ ὀλίγαν δόσιν. We might have suspected affect, taking οὐκ ὀλίγαν as = 'a proud and foremost' share of the pleasant things in Hellas. Such is often the import of οὐ σμικρός in litotes. But Pindar is here purposely making his prayer for the family of Hippocleas in a subdued key. He immediately follows by praying that the gods will not be envious, μὴ φθονεραῖς ἐκ θεῶν μετατροπῆαις ἐπικύρσαιεν. We must therefore take οὐκ ὀλίγαν as carefully neutral, = 'not a small' share. The use of οὐ σμικράν in this passage would, if I am not mistaken, have given the affective note which Pindar was anxious to avoid.

Other examples in Pindar are neutral (*P.* 8. 92; *N.* 7. 38; *Paeon* 4. 52; fr. 61. 1 (Bergk)), and do not call for any comment.

Summary. For σμικρός bad affect is here the most frequent use (6 or 7 out of 13 examples); good affect occurs twice; there are 4 or 5 neutral cases. The prominence of bad affect is especially notable, since earlier poetry has only one doubtful example (in Hesiod). ὀλίγος (neutral 6 or 7 times, bad affect possibly once) is more rarely used: it has no new development to show, and its use has remained consistent since Homeric times, with the emphasis very strongly on neutral meaning.

E. TRAGIC POETS

(1) *Aeschylus*

(a) σμικρός. 7 examples.

- (i) *Ag.* 1301 ἦκει τόδ' ἡμᾶρ, σμικρὰ κερδαίνω φυγῇ. Strongly affective (contempt).

- (ii) *Ch.* 204 εἰ δὲ χρή τυχεῖν σωτηρίας,
σμικροῦ γένοιτ' ἂν σπέρματος μέγας πυθμῆν.

Slightly contemptuous.

- (iii) *Ch.* 262 κόμιζ', ἀπὸ σμικροῦ δ' ἂν ἄρειας μέγαν
δόμον δοκοῦντα κάρτα νῦν πεπτωκέσαι.

A repetition of example (ii).

The other four examples have οὐ with σμικρός.

- (iv) *P.V.* 977 κλύω σ' ἐγὼ μεμνηνός' οὐ σμικρὰν νόσον.

- (v) *Sep't.* 465 σεσημάτισται [νελ' ἐσχημ-] δ' ἀσπίς οὐ σμικρὸν τρόπον.

- (vi) *Ag.* 1437 οὗτος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἀσπίς οὐ σμικρὰ θράσους.

- (vii) *Sup'p.* 958 δεδωμάτωμαι δ' οὐδ' ἐγὼ σμικρᾷ χειρί.

I would regard affect as being evident in all these four: and it is interesting to look at their contexts to verify this, and to see the contrast with such a use as οὐκ ὀλίγος in Pind. *P.* 10. 20 (discussed above).

In (iv) the speaker is Hermes, who is engaged in bitter altercation with Prometheus. Thomson translates 'your mind is most sorely diseased'. The connotation is of hate or contempt.

In (v) the Watcher describes the proud battle-array of Eteocles, one of the hostile protagonists at the gates of Thebes. Notice the arrogance attributed to him four lines later, (βοᾷ) ὡς οὐδ' ἂν Ἄρης σφ' ἐκβάλοι πυργωμάτων.

In both (vi) and (vii) there is the note of pride and self-assurance: (vi)—Clytaemnestra declares her reliance on her paramour Aegisthus; (vii)—Pelagus, offering asylum to the chorus of suppliant women, points to the strength and wealth of his city and palace. Cf. ll. 955-6 εὐερκῇ πόλιν | πύργων βαθεία μηχανῇ κεκλημένην. I do not know in any other writer such a consistently emphatic use of οὐ σμικρός.

(b) ὀλίγος.

- (i) *Sep't.* 762-3 μεταξύ δ' ἀλλὰ δι' ὀλίγου τείνει πύργος ἐν εὐρεῖ. The sense is not very

clear: Tucker, reading *πύργου*, translates 'small is the verge that stretches between to save us; it is but a wall's width'. But so far as *δλίγος* is concerned the meaning is definite: it is non-affective referring to distance.

(ii) *Pers.* 330 πολλῶν παρόντων δ' ὀλίγ' ἀπαγγέλλω κακά. Also neutral.

(2) *Sophocles*

(a) *μικρός*. Used frequently, 36 examples. It will be unnecessary to quote them all: some typical examples follow.

(i) O.T. 1076-7 τοῦμόν δ' ἐγώ,
 κεί σμικρόν ἐστι, σπέρμ' ἰδεῖν βουλήσομαι.

(ii) *El.* 450–I, σμικρὰ μὲν τάδ', ἀλλ' ὅμως | ἄχω.

(iii) Ibid. 1142 *σμικρὸς προσήκεις ὄγκος ἐν σμικρῷ κύτει*. Spoken by Electra of the supposedly dead Orestes (cf. *σμικρὰ λείψανα* of *El.* 1113): emotion lies in the double use of *σμικρός*.

(iv) *O.C.* 72 ὥς ἂν προσαρκῶν σμικρὰ κερδάνη μέγα.

(v) *Tr.* 361 ἔγκλημα μικρὸν αἰτίαν θ' ἐτοιμάσας.

(vi) fr. inc. 768 (Pearson) *συμκροῖσιν αὐλίσκοις*. The use of *συμκρός* with a diminutive noun, which is not common, is worth noting: it appears that *αὐλίσκος* is used here contemptuously (so Jebb).

The examples given are all affective: and to them I would add *O.T.* 1083; *O.C.* 5, 148, 443, 587, 620, 635, 958, 1163; *Ai.* 1078, 1120, 1268; *El.* 1113; *Tr.* 871; *Ph.* 275, 498; fr. 41. Of these, *O.C.* 587, 635, 1163, *Ai.* 1120, and *Tr.* 871 contain οὐ σμικρός. All show the (affectively) developed meaning of 'slight', 'trivial' for σμικρός: but the affective note is not so strong as in the Aeschylean examples of οὐ σμικρός.

On the other hand, there are a number of neutral examples. Such are:

(vii) *Αἱ. 1253-4 μέγας δὲ πλευρὰ βοῦς ὑπὸ σμικρᾶς ὁμῶς
μάστιγος ὀρθὸς εἰς ὁδὸν πορεύεται.*

(viii) *O.C. III 6 ταῖς τηλικαῖσδε μικρὸς ἐξαρκεῖ λόγος.*

(ix) *Ant.* 666-7 ὃν πόλις στήσεις, τοῦδε χρή κλύειν
καὶ σμικρὰ καὶ δίκαια καὶ τάναντία.

(x) El. 415-6 πολλά τοι σμικροὶ λόγοι
ἔσφηλαν ἤδη καὶ κατώρθωσαν βροτούς.

There are nine other examples: *Ai.* 158, 1148; *Ant.* 477; *El.* 414, 1483; *O.C.* 569, 1152; *O.T.* 961; fr. 106.

(b) *ἀλίγος*. It can be quoted in only three dubious passages, each of which deserves some discussion.

(i) fr. 646 *ἐν γὰρ βραχεὶ καθεῖλε κωλίγω χρόνον* | . . . *ἄλβον*. The tautology of *βραχεὶ* and *ἄλβον* is obviously objectionable. Pearson's comment is, 'if written by Sophocles, (it) belongs to one of his least happy moments'. Some emendation is certainly preferable: Pearson's *καλόγω* is attractive.

(ii) fr. 904. I ὀλίγοισιν ἵπποις τοῖσιν ἐκλελεγμένοις
ἧδιον ἂν χωροῖμεν ἢ παντὶ σθένει.

ἐν τοῖσιν codd.: ὀλίγ. Cobet: σὺν τοῖσιν Schneidewin. The reading ἐν of the codd. does not make sense. Schneidewin's σὺν is simple and quite effective, while Cobet's ὀλίγοισιν may be regarded as excelling it if regard is paid purely to the meaning, with its antithesis of ὀλίγοισιν and παντί. It was this consideration of meaning which turned the scale in favour of ὀλίγοισιν for Pearson.

But apparently neither Pearson nor, so far as I know, anyone else has noticed the extreme rarity (to make no stronger claim) of *ὀλίγος* in Sophocles. This fact should, I think, turn the scale back in favour of *σὺν τοῖσιν*.

- (iii) *Ant.* 625 *πράσσει δ' ὀλίγιστον χρόνον ἐκτὸς αἵτας. ὀλίγιστον* Bergk: *ὀλιγοστόν* L (ante correct.) A al.: *ὀλιγωστόν* L (post correct.) F. Bergk's emendation *ὀλίγιστον*, the superlative of *ὀλίγος*, is generally accepted. L. and S., however, prefer *ὀλιγοστόν*, to which they give the meaning 'smallest space (of time)'. Since *ὀλιγοστόν* is closer to the codd., the crucial question is, can it bear with *χρόνον* in this passage a sense which fits the context?

The suffix *-οστός* belongs to the ordinal adjective series *εἰκοστός*, etc. (see Schwyzler, *Griech. Gramm.* i. 596), and was borrowed therefrom to form *ὀλιγοστός* and *πολλοστός*. Just as *εἰκοστός* = 'twentieth', i.e. last in a series of twenty, so strictly we expect *ὀλιγοστός* = 'last one in a small series', and *πολλοστός* = 'last one in a numerous series'. So we find Isoc. 5. 65 *πολλοστός ὢν Συρακοσίων καὶ τῷ γένει καὶ τῇ δόξῃ*: if we take a large number of Syracusans, this man will be at the end of them in the order of merit. This meaning may be extended, so that *ὀλιγοστός* = 'one in a small series, one of few' (without its being specified that it is the last one), and *πολλοστός* = 'one in a large series, one of many'. In Berossus ap. Josephus *Ant. Iud.* 10. 11. 1 *αὐτὸς ὀρμήσας ὀλιγοστός*, the adjective means simply that there were only a few with him, and there is no suggestion of ranking. Similarly in Xen. *Mem.* 4. 6. 7 *οὐδὲ πολλοστόν μέρος, πολλ.* = 'one of many, very small'. Lastly, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish closely between the two meanings. In Plato, *Phileb.* 44 E *τὰ σκληρότατα* 'the hardest objects' are opposed to *τὰ πολλοστά σκληρότητι*, and again *αἱ ἀκρόταται καὶ σφοδρόταται ἡδοναὶ* to *αἱ πολλοσταί*: *πολλοστός* could attain to its meaning 'ordinary, moderate' either from the meaning 'belonging to the general mass' of hard objects and of pleasures, or else from 'last of many'. I should hesitate to decide.

Turning now to the usage of these adjectives with nouns expressing time, we have two important examples of *πολλοστός*. Cratinus *Iun.* 9 *πολλοστῷ δ' ἔτει* | *ἐκ τῶν πολεμίων οἴκαδ' ἦκων*: here *πολλ. ἔτει* = 'in the last of many years', i.e. 'after many years'. Ar. *Pax* 558-9 *τάς τε συκάς, ἃς ἐγὼ 'φύτευον ὦν νεώτερος, | ἀσπάσασθαι θυμὸς ἡμῖν ἐστι πολλοστῷ χρόνῳ*: here the sense is either 'I should like to visit and greet my figs, on this, the last of many occasions (when I have wanted to do so)'; or, perhaps preferably, 'at this, the last of many seasons (when they were ripe)'. From this last example Jebb, dealing with *Ant.* 625, argues that *ὀλιγοστόν χρόνον* would mean, not 'for a fraction of time', but 'for one in a small number of *χρόνοι*'. I think that we should follow him here, and so reject the meaning 'for the smallest space of time' given by L. and S. Nevertheless it seems to me that *ὀλιγοστόν χρόνον* can fit perfectly well into the passage of *Antigone*: it means 'he avoids calamity during a season that comes but rarely', i.e. the number of the seasons which are not attended by calamity is small. Here *ὀλιγοστός*, as in the passage of Berossus quoted above, has the sense 'one of few', and not 'last of few'. There is, then, no need to change *ὀλιγοστόν* into *ὀλίγιστον*.

Thus it seems probable that there are no genuine examples of *ὀλίγος* in Sophocles.

(3) Euripides.

(a) *μικρός*. 45 times affective, as in the first three cases.

(i) *Heracl.* 1114 *Ἑλλάς αὐτῇ μικρὸν οἰκητήριον*.

(ii) *I.A.* 1241 *μικρὸς μὲν σὺ γ' ἐπίκουρος φίλοις*.

(iii) *Supp.* 953 σμικρὸν τὸ χρῆμα τοῦ βίου.

But there as many as 26 neutral uses. Such are:

(iv) *Med.* 389 μείνασα σμικρὸν χρόνον.

(v) *I.T.* 669 ἔφθης με μικρόν.

(b) *ὀλίγος*. Nearly always (i.e. 14 out of 15 examples) neutral.

(i) *I.A.* 957 ὀλίγ' ἀληθῆ, πολλὰ δὲ ψευδῆ λέγει.

(ii) *Supp.* 1126 ἐν ὀλίγῳ τὰμὰ πάντα συνθεῖς.

But the following single example is affective:

(iii) *Supp.* 1130 φέρεις σποδοῦ πλήθος ὀλίγον ἀντὶ σωμαμάτων. Cf. with this *Soph. El.* 1142 (example (iii) above of μικρός in Sophocles), and *ibid.* 1113.

Summary. μικρός is freely used in all tragedians; affect is usual, and is in my view always bad (extending the development in that direction noted for lyric and elegiac); but whereas Aeschylus does not use it at all without affect (thus carrying on the older tradition of Epic), in Sophocles and Euripides the neutral use rises to as much as one third of all occurrences. ὀλίγος is less common, and is entirely absent from Sophocles:¹ it has only one affective use, which is in Euripides.

F. ARISTOPHANES

(a) μικρός.

Forty-five examples, of which 27 are affective. Such are:

(i) *Ran.* 709 Κλειγένης ὁ μικρός.

(ii) *Ach.* 523 ταῦτα μὲν δὴ σμικρὰ κάπιχώρια.

(iii) *Ibid.* 909 μικκός γὰ μακρός οὗτος.

Also a number in which μικρός is joined to diminutive nouns, thus intensifying the sense of contempt, etc., as in:

(iv) *Vesp.* 803 δικαστηρίδιον μικρὸν πάνν.

(v) *Pl.* 147 διὰ μικρὸν ἀργυρίδιον.

But the number of neutral uses is high, as many as 18. So:

(vi) *Lys.* 98 ἐπερήσομαί τι μικρόν.

(vii) *Pl.* 126 σμικρὸν χρόνον.

Included here are 5 adverbial uses. So:

(viii) *Av.* 1499 σμικρὸν τι μετὰ μεσημβρίαν.

(ix) *Pax* 490 μικρὸν γε κινούμεν.

(x) *Vesp.* 1290 ὑπὸ τι μικρὸν ἐπιθήκισα.

Of the adverbial uses, 1 relates to time, 1 to space, and 3 relate to manner.

(b) ὀλίγος.

Also 45 examples, all but 1 neutral.

(i) *Eq.* 667 ὀλίγον χρόνον (indistinguishable in meaning from σμικρὸν χρόνον in *Pl.* 126).

Twenty-seven examples are adverbial, divided into 4 of time, 4 of space, 2 of degree, 17 of manner.² There is a special use of the genitive ὀλίγου = 'nearly' (already found in

¹ The absence of ὀλίγος from Sophocles no doubt helps to explain his high proportion of neutral uses of μικρός. It also explains (and its validity is in turn supported by) his more frequent use of two synonyms of ὀλίγος—παῦρος (5 times in Sophocles, against 2 in Aeschylus and 3

in Euripides) and βαιός (14 times in Sophocles, against 3 in Aeschylus and 1 in Euripides): both are poetical words, the latter post-Homeric.

² So at *Nub.* 495 for time, *Ach.* 242 space, *Eccl.* 71 degree, *Vesp.* 1411 manner.

Homer), which has no counterpart in *μικρός*:¹ but, with that exception, the adverbial uses of the two words are very similar.

There is one affective use, in

(ii) *Eq.* 387 *μηδὲν ὀλίγον ποίει*, 'do nothing that is little or mean'.

Summary. In Aristophanes we reach the climax of the development in the main stream of Greek poetry. For *μικρός* the proportion of neutral uses is higher than in any preceding poet represented by an appreciable quantity of verse, and equals two fifths of all examples; where there is affect, it is almost always bad. For *ὀλίγος*, which is found just as many times, there is only a single affective use.

4. To recapitulate, the lesson of the usage in the Greek poets is as follows. *μικρός* and *ὀλίγος* both had in Homer the sense 'small in size', but *μικρός* was affective (with good sense), and *ὀλίγος* was not, with the exception of two doubtful passages. There was thus, at that stage of the language, a distinction resembling that between *little* and *small* in English. *μικρός* had no other sense, but *ὀλίγος* already had several: 'small in amount and extent', 'of small value', 'short' of time, and 'little' in an adverbial sense. Adverbial uses are neutral: the relatively frequent adverbial use of *ὀλίγος* (15 times out of a total of 40), with the absence of adverbial *μικρός*, stresses the lack of affect in *ὀλίγος*.

In later poetry *μικρός* developed, from its primary affective sense 'little', the further affective sense 'of little value', which became the more important of the two. Secondly, *μικρός* admitted neutral use, doing so for the first time in Hesiod;² and such use gradually spread, until in the more colloquial language of Aristophanes it accounted for two fifths of all uses. The earliest adverbial use is in Sophocles.³ *μικρός* eventually embraced all the meanings of *ὀλίγος*, with the exception of 'few in number'. But in all the authors and for all the periods under review, the affective use remained the more frequent.⁴

ὀλίγος in post-Homeric times remained remarkably faithful to the neutral role assigned to it in Epic. It will be remembered that in four Homeric passages *ὀλίγος* had the sense 'of small value' in a neutral context. A development of this sense can also be traced, in my view, in *H. Herm.* 4. 259 and *Callin.* 1. 17, and in the former of these there is affect in the sense 'unimportant'; but the usage, which we may regard as an errant sport, did not extend any further, and *μικρός* was the usual word for persons of small account. There is possibly an affective use in Simonides;⁵ and single examples also occur in Euripides⁶ and Aristophanes.⁷ Apart from these very slight exceptions, the word was used neutrally. It agrees with this aspect that *ὀλίγος* took on, after Homer, the essentially neutral meaning 'few in number' (though this sense was generally avoided by the tragic poets). We shall probably be right in attaching considerable importance to this change: it must have encouraged the freer use of *μικρός* in order to avoid the confusion between the meanings 'small' and 'few' arising in the plural use of *ὀλίγος*.⁸

I have not made an extended study of prose writers, to trace there, too, the history of the two words. But a survey of Herodotus suggests that the change to neutral use of *μικρός* was more complete in prose. For *σ μικρός* I find in that author no affective uses outside the combination in litotes with *οὐ*: and though the usual meaning of *οὐ*

¹ *μικροῦ* with the same sense occurs in prose in Xenophon and later writers.

² *Op.* 360.

³ *El.* 414 ἐπὶ μικρόν.

⁴ For affective use in a later period, it is worth while to consult the note of Headlam on Herodas 6. 59.

⁵ 39.

⁶ *Supp.* 1130.

⁷ *Eq.* 387.

⁸ So notice the neutral use of *σ μικρός* and *σ μικρότης* in Anaxagoras, as in fr. 1, to describe the principle of 'smallness'. *σ μικρότης* is coupled and contrasted with *πλήθος* 'quantity'. Clearly *ὀλίγος*, and *ὀλιγότης* (which Plato used with both the meanings 'smallness' and 'fewness'), would have been too ambiguous in such a context.

σικμρός (it is found four times) is the affective one 'important, serious',¹ it is found once² in the neutral sense 'large', coupled with δύναμις 'force of men'. ολίγος is regularly neutral, and it is interesting to contrast with ού σικμρός the use of the litotetic ούκ ολίγος. In the plural it means 'many': in the singular 'large' (with δύναμις, στρατιή, χωρίον) or 'long' (with χρόνος), thus for the most part keeping itself distinct from ού σικμρός. There are, however, two passages³ where ούκ ολίγος qualifies έπαινος and προθυμία, and where ού σικμρός would rather have been expected. But with the exception of the litotetic combinations, there is in prose very little difference indeed between μικρός and ολίγος, so far as I have observed.⁴ As we should expect, the language of poetry was more conservative than that of prose: and for that reason it was the richer in resources.

5. Corroboration of these conclusions can be obtained from a study of the numerous compounds formed with μικρός and ολίγος as their first elements, of which there are listed in L. and S. 78 with μικρός and 103 with ολίγος.⁵

The majority of the μικρός compounds show μικρός with neutral meaning. But there are 19 examples where μικρός is affective, always with bad sense. They are (1) -αδικητής 'doing petty wrongs'—first use, Arist.; (2) -αίτιος 'complaining of trifles'—Demetr. Lac.; (3) -γνωμοσύνη 'narrowmindedness'—Poll.; (4) -δοσία 'giving small presents, stinginess'—Polyb.; (5) -θαύματος 'admiring trifles'—Schol. Ar.; (6) -θυμία 'faint-heartedness'—Placit., and -θυμος 'mean-spirited'—Dion. Hal.; (7) -κενόσπουδος 'busy with foolish trifles'—Philod.; (8) -κλέπτης 'petty thief'—Schol. Ar.; (9) -κομψος 'finicking, affected'—Dion. Hal.; (10) -λόγος, -ία 'mean, captious(-ness)'—Plato; (11) -λυπος 'vexed at trifles'—Plut.; (12) -ποιέω 'lower tone of (writing)'—Longin.; (13) -πρεπής 'mean, petty'—Arist.; (14) -τεχνία 'pettiness in art'—Schol. Dion. Thrax; (15) -τράπεζος 'keeping a mean table'—Antiph.; (16) -φιλότιμος 'seeking petty distinctions'—Theophr.; (17) -φροσύνη, -φρων 'littleness of mind'—Plut.; (18) -χαρής 'easily pleased'—Antip. Tars.; τὰ μ. 'paltry pleasantries'—Longin.; (19) -ψυχία 'littleness of soul, meanness of spirit'—Isocr.; -ψυχος 'mean-spirited'—Isocr.; but -ψυχέω 'faint'—Arist. To these add (20) μικρύνω 'belittle'—Demetr. Rhetor; (21) μικρότης 'smallness'—Anaxag.; 'feebleness (of voice)'—Arist.; 'pettiness (of rank)'—Isocr.; 'triviality (of language)'—Longin.

The compounds formed with ολίγος use the adjective almost entirely in neutral sense. In the following list I quote (a) the very few affective examples (real or supposed); and (b) some of the neutral examples, either because they are compounds which might readily have had affective sense if ολίγος had allowed it, or because their second elements also appear in μικρός compounds, and they thus provide an illuminating contrast. These last I have marked with an asterisk, and it is instructive in each case to refer back to the μικρός list just given. (1) -αρκέω 'be contented with little'—Aesop; (2) ολιγηπελέων 'having little power'—Homer; (3) *-γνώμων = ολίγωρος 'heed-

¹ So 3. 4. 2 έόντα αυτόν λόγον ού σικμροῦ.

² 5. 113.

³ 1. 96. 3; 9. 67.

⁴ Mr. W. R. Smyth has kindly drawn my attention to several passages in Thucydides with examples of the use of ούκ ολίγος in litotes, which have sometimes been taken affectively. (1) 2. 8. 1 ολίγον τε έπενόουν ούδέν άμφοτέροι: Poppe-Stahl notes 'ολίγον i.e. μικρόν', and Jowett follows this interpretation with his version 'on neither side were there any mean thoughts'; also Foster Smith (Loeb) with 'nothing paltry'. I would take ολίγον neutrally, and translate 'the designs of both sides were on an immense scale': the meaning of ολίγον ούδέν έπινω is 'to think "big"'. (2) 7. 87. 6 ούδέν ολίγον ές ούδέν κακοπαθήσαντες (of the fate of the Athenian captives at Syracuse): it seems to me that ολίγος puts the fact of 'prodigious suffering' (Jowett) objectively—compare Thucydides' parallel description of the event in this same passage as an unprecedented disaster for Athens and an equal triumph for Syracuse. (3) 8. 15. 2 ολίγον έπράσσετο ούδέν ές την βοήθειαν την έπί την Χίον: as in (1), nothing was done 'on a small scale'. Thus I think that, in these and other passages, Thucydides has a neutral use of ούκ ολίγος.

⁵ This is counting as one closely related forms such as μικροθυμία and μικρόθυμος.

less' (on which see below)—Hesych.; (4) -δεής 'wanting little'—Posidon.; (5) -δίαυτος 'living on little'—Cephisodor. ap. Caryst.; (6) -δρανώων 'able to do little'—Homer; -ής 'id.'—Ar.; (7) *-θυμέω 'be of little courage'—Eustath.; (8) *-ποιέω 'make few'—LXX; (9) -πραγμοσύνη 'a retired life'—Chrysipp. Stoic.; -μων 'averse to business'—id.; (10) *-φρων 'of small understanding'—Philo; (11) *-ψυχέω 'be faint'—Isocr.; 'become discouraged'—*P. Petr.* (iii B.C.); 'be worried'—*UPZ* (ii B.C.); -ψυχία 'swooning'—Hippocr.; 'faint-heartedness'—LXX; -ψυχος 'faint-hearted'—id.; (12) δόλιγυρος 'heedless'—Hdt. To these add (13) *δολιγώω 'diminish'—LXX (cf. μικρύνω); (14) *δολιγότης 'fewness'—Plato; 'smallness'—id.; 'shortness (of time)'—id.; 'feebleness (of voice)'—Poll.

It will be noticed that in both sets of formations the great majority of forms are first used in the fourth century B.C. or later. This will help to account for the relatively small number of affective examples in μικρός compounds—19 out of 78: and another reason lies in the fact that the words are not poetical, but belong essentially to prose, where the distinction of affect was much less marked. Seen in this light, the total of 19 is an impressive one.

As for the δόλιγος compounds, affect appears only in the later uses of δολιγοψυχέω (but not in the first use), and in the very late δολιγοθυμέω of Eustathius. But there is another, δόλιγυρος, which might be affective (though I do not think it is), and since it is an early and fairly common word, it requires closer examination.

δόλιγυρος, a compound of δόλιγος and ὥρα 'concern', occurs first in Herodotus. L. and S. gives 'little-caring, lightly-esteeming, contemptuous': Powell, *Lex. Herod.* 'insolent'. It must be admitted that if the basic meaning of the word is 'having a poor, low opinion of', which is what is suggested by 'insolent, contemptuous', we should have here an affective use of δόλιγος. But L. and S. is right in giving first place to 'little-caring'. The original pattern can be seen in Hes. *Op.* 30-2 ὥρη γάρ τ' δόλιγη πέλεται νεικέων τ' ἀγορέων τε, | ὥτινι μὴ βίος ἔνδον ἐπηγετανός κατάκειται | ὥραιος, the man who has not a year's supply of corn laid up in store has little concern, little to do, with quarrels and law-courts. The earliest occurrence of δόλιγυρος, in Hdt. 3. 89 χαλεπός τε ἦν καὶ δόλιγυρος (of Cambyses), is taken by Powell, *Lex. Herod.*, to show the meaning 'insolent'; and Herodotus unfortunately has no other example, from which we might arrive at a clearer notion of what he meant by the word. If δόλιγυρος here really does mean 'insolent', we should have to regard the meaning as a secondary one: but that too would be surprising in such an early use. But I think it is far more likely that it meant 'neglectful (of his people's welfare)': with which compare Rawlinson's version 'reckless'. Such is the sense that we find in Dem. 24. 208: (if the prison were open and the prisoners escaping) οὐδεὶς οὔτε γέρων οὔτ' δόλιγυρος οὕτως ὅστις οὐχὶ βοηθήσειεν ἂν καθ' ὅσον δύναται, 'no one would be so incapacitated by age or so indifferent. . .'. And finally Isoc. 12. 106 τὴν εἰρήνην, ἣς οὐδεὶς ἂν ἐπιδείξειεν . . . δολιγωρότεραν τῶν Ἑλλήνων, 'a peace more regardless of Greek rights'.

The position of δολιγωρία and δολιγωρέω is similar. There is an interesting passage in Hdt. 1. 106: the Scythians, we are told, ruled Asia for twenty-eight years, καὶ τὰ πάντα σφι ὑπὸ τε ὕβριος καὶ δολιγωρίας ἀνάστατα ἦν. There is a clear distinction here between ὕβρις, the arrogant ill-treatment, and δολιγωρία, the passive attitude of indifference and neglect. Less easy is the repetition of the same phrase in 6. 137, of the Pelasgians who misused the Athenian women when fetching water: ὅκως δὲ ἔλθοιεν αὐταί, τοὺς Πελασγούς ὑπὸ ὕβριός τε καὶ δολιγωρίας βιάσθαι σφεας. Here δολιγωρία, I would suggest, indicates an attitude of indifference to the consequences of the acts of violence; the Pelasgians, while indulging in ὕβρις, paid no regard to the trouble to which it might, and did, lead. And finally Thuc. 4. 5. 1 οἱ δὲ ἑορτὴν τινα ἔτυχον ἄγοντες καὶ ἅμα πυνθανόμενοι ἐν δολιγωρίᾳ ἐποιῶντο, 'the Lacedaemonians, who were just then celebrating a festival, made light of the news' (Jowett).

It is thus seen that *ὀλίγως* does not imply affect.

6. I now return to consider again the passage in Aristotle's *Poetics* from which this inquiry began. The question which we have to answer is, Why did Aristotle think that the substitution of *μικρός* for *ὀλίγος* would spoil the two Homeric lines which he quoted?

It seems to me that the answer must be that the affective sense of *μικρός* would have been wrong in those lines. *ὀλίγος* was neutral in Homer; and a neutral 'small' was the proper meaning, with the true epic quality of elevation, in *Od.* 9. 515 νῦν δέ μ' ἐὼν ὀλίγος τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καὶ ἀεικής, and 20. 259 δίφρον ἀεικέλιον καταθεὶς ὀλίγην τε τράπεζαν. Admittedly it would have been easy to use in place of *ὀλίγος* an affective *μικρός*, to give the senses 'slight' and 'poor little' table; and such phrasing would have been more natural, *κυριώτερον*, for the Greeks of Aristotle's day, or for the language of comedy. But the dignified style appropriate for epic required vocabulary without the associations of *μικρός*—and especially Aristotle will have had in mind those associations which it acquired in post-Homeric times. Thus Aristotle's disapproval of *μικρός* was not exactly on a par with that of *ἀσθενικός*, *ἀειδής*, and *μοχθηρός*, which he discussed as substitutes in the same lines. The three latter are entirely or chiefly prose words, and also late: *μικρός* is both poetic and early, but with the wrong associations.

What, then, of the absence of *ὀλίγος* from Sophocles, and the frequent appearance of *μικρός*? If this is not accidental—and I do not think that it can be—I would suggest that Sophocles deliberately took a stage further than other poets the disinclination to use *ὀλίγος*, which can be seen in post-Epic poetry generally with the notable exception of Aristophanes. It seems that *ὀλίγος* incurred disfavour because it properly lacked affect, that is, it was colourless: that was no handicap to it in the dignified language of epic, but it was felt to be so in other styles of composition.¹

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¹ A note may be added here on morphology, especially that of the by-form *μικκός*.

The form *μικκός* occurs in Ionic, Doric, and Boeotian. The parent form is taken by Boisacq (s.v. *μικρός*) and Brugmann, *Griech. Gramm.*, p. 66, as **μικ-ρος*: cf. *Μίκυθος*, *Μικύλλος*, *Μικύλος*. But it is at least as likely that *-κκ-* is an example of the popular gemination of consonants (a possibility which Boisacq admits in a footnote). This is seen above all in affectionate names and children's words—see Schwyzler, *Griech. Gramm.*, p. 315—such as *ἄττα*, *ἄππα*, *ἄπφα*, *πάππα*, *τέττα*: *μάμμη*: *νάννα*, *νέννος*: *τίτθη*. Also, what is especially worth noting, in *τυτθός* 'little'. It can hardly be coincidence that two words for 'little', *μικκός* and *τυτθός*, show consonant gemination. *τυτθός* is more frequent than *μικρός* in Homer, where it

is mainly applied to persons; less common in later Greek, and especially rare in prose. It is certainly affective.

From *μικκός* there was formed **μικκιος* (*-χος*), the base of *μικκιχιδδόμενος* (*μικ-*) which is found in Doric inscriptions denoting a boy in the third year of training, or ten years old. **μικκιος* is of interest in showing a diminutive termination added on to what had itself originally been, as an affectionate by-form, the equivalent of a diminutive, but had lost that meaning.

By contrast with this comparative wealth of formations from the stem of *μικ-*, it is important to note that from *ὀλίγος* there was made no diminutive and no affectionate form. Clearly the meaning of the word did not encourage it.