

THE ETYMOLOGIES OF ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ AND ΕΡΜΗΝΕΥΣ*

Nouns and personal names ending in –εύς –ῆφος are unique to Greek,¹ and have often been deemed pre-Hellenic in origin simply on account of the lack of Proto-Indo-European (PIE) correspondences. Our failure to find convincing etymologies for βασιλεύς, ἔρμηνεύς, and βραβεύς has itself contributed to this view.² However, we should hesitate, for general reasons, to posit pre-Hellenic origins for these words, since viable explanations both of βασιλεύς and of ἔρμηνεύς (if not of βραβεύς) lie near to hand. Although the explanation of βασιλεύς that will be proposed below still presents difficulties, I believe that it improves on previous attempts.

As Schindler showed in a short but fundamental article, in Mycenaean Greek and in Homer the nouns in –εύς fall into two groups.³ The first group is personal names such as Ἄτρεύς and Πηλεύς, which often appear to be of obscure etymology (and are therefore often deemed pre-Hellenic), but in fact are fully explicable as shortened forms, for reasons that will be given below. The second group is that of common nouns in –εύς, which are nearly all (especially in Homer) denominatives from *o*-stem nouns denoting an occupation or profession: compare χαλκεύς ‘smith’ with χαλκός, κναφεύς ‘fuller’ with κνάφος ‘carding-comb’, ἱερεύς ‘priest’ with ἱερός ‘holy’, and κεραμεύς ‘potter’ with κέραμος ‘pot’, all of which are attested in Linear B and come from familiar Indo-European or Greek roots.⁴

Schindler supplied a convincing explanation from within Greek for nouns in –εύς.⁵ As he observed, the derivatives of *o*-stems are statistically far more common in Homer than are derivatives from other roots. He concluded that these nouns are originally secondary formations made from *o*-stems, comparing the Lithuanian suffix –*ius*, which is functionally as well as morphologically similar: compare *balnius* ‘saddler’ with *balnas* ‘saddle’, *puōdžius* ‘potter’ with *puodas* ‘pot’.⁶ In addition, Hajnal has suggested that the

* I thank my colleague W. Benjamin Fortson IV and an anonymous reader for this journal for very helpful suggestions and improvements.

¹ For a valuable survey of such words in Homer, see E. Risch, *Wortbildung der homerischen Sprache* (Göttingen, 1974), 156–9.

² J. Schindler, ‘On the Greek type ἱππεύς’, in A. Morpurgo Davies and W. Meid (edd.), *Studies in Greek, Italic and Indo-European Linguistics Offered to Leonard Palmer* (Innsbruck, 1976), 349–52, at 349.

³ *Ibid.*, 350–1. See further I. Hajnal, ‘Das Frühgriechische zwischen Balkan und Ägäis: Einheit oder Vielfalt?’, in G. Meiser and O. Hackstein (edd.), *Sprachkontakt und Sprachwandel: Akten der XI. Fachtagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft, 17.–23. September 2000, Halle an der Saale* (Wiesbaden, 2005), 199–203.

⁴ κέραμος is surely from the root of κεράννυμι and refers to the mixing of clay for potting, despite the hesitations of R.S.P. Beekes on semantic grounds (*Etymological Dictionary of Greek* [Leiden and Boston, MA, 2010], 1.674). χαλκός is notoriously obscure (see *ibid.*, 2.1611–12).

⁵ Schindler (n. 2), 350–1, developing an idea of B. Thibau, ‘Βασιλεύς’, *RBPh* 25 (1946), 582–7, at 583.

⁶ Schindler (n. 2), 352.

Phrygian name of which the genitive appears as *Proitavos* in inscriptions M-01b and M-02 is derived from a name in **-eus -ēwos*.⁷

Since there is no **-i-* in the endings of nouns in *-εύς*, Schindler deduces that the original thematic vowel *-e-* was retained throughout the paradigm. He reconstructs the paradigm as nominative **-e-u-s*, genitive **-e-e-u-os*, as in *χαλκ-ε-ύς* **χαλκ-ε-έ-φος*, with contraction of **ῥ-ῥ* to **ῥ*.⁸ The thematic vowel **-e-* is followed by the forms of the suffix **-e-u-* with its accent on the final or penultimate syllable (the ‘proterokinetic’ declension), so that *χαλκε-ύς* **χαλκε-έφος* follows the same pattern as *ἦδ-ύς* **ἦδ-έφος*. Thus, according to Schindler’s theory, the nominative singular *-εύς* is the original form, rather than derived from **-ēus* with the shortening of the long diphthong that is usual in Greek (‘Osthoff’s Law’).⁹ Schindler also suggests that the original accusative must be reconstructed as **χαλκε-έυμ*, which would yield **χαλκῆν*, by the application of Stang’s law, as seen in **Dīe-u-m* > **dīēm* > Ζῆν.¹⁰ He suggests that this is preserved in the Arcadian (and perhaps Cypriot)¹¹ forms such as βασιλῆν and ἱερῆν,¹² but that in the other Greek dialects it has been remade into *-ῆα* by analogy with the other oblique cases; he holds, conversely, that Arcadian and Cypriot have generalized the accusative in *-ῆν* into a declension with a nominative in *-ῆς*.¹³ However, Stang’s law had ceased to operate before the time of Proto-Greek, and it is easier to suppose that the accusative βασιλῆα reflects **g^vasilēma* contracted from **g^vasilē-ῥ-u-m*. Unfortunately the accusative singular of nouns in *-εύς* is still not attested in Mycenaean Greek.¹⁴

The term βασιλεύς first appears in the Linear B archives of c. 1350–1200 B.C. as *𐀀𐀁𐀃𐀆*, that is *qa-si-re-u*, which represents Mycenaean Greek */g^vasileus/* as accurately as the conventions of that script permit. Scholars almost universally believe that its etymology is insoluble. Words for kings and rulers are often borrowed from one language to another, as in the case of πρύτανις and τύραννος, if not also φάναξ;¹⁵ hence βασιλεύς

⁷ Hajnal (n. 3), 200.

⁸ This contraction is seen in, for instance, thematic subjunctives such as **b^here-e-* > **b^herē-*, e.g. *ῥέρηται*. As was noted by Schindler (n. 2), 351, there is no evidence for a suffix in the lost ‘e-coloured’ laryngeal **-h₁u-*, yielding a declension **-e-h₁u-s* **-e-h₁u-os*.

⁹ This is the usual view, as in e.g. R.S.P. Beekes, *Comparative Indo-European Linguistics: An Introduction* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1995), 68; M. Egetmeyer, *Le Dialecte grec ancien de Chypre* (Berlin and New York, 2010), 1.415–18. The prevailing explanation (as in H. Rix, *Historische Grammatik des Griechischen* [Darmstadt, 1976], 122–4) is that βασιλεύς has a hysterodynamic inflection, i.e. it originally belonged to the wider class of nouns that carried the accent on the suffix in the nominative singular and on the ending in the genitive singular: cf. *ἄρῆν ἄρνός* ‘lamb’, from **ῥῆν ῥαρνός*, PIE **w²erⁿ *u²rnós* (for the paradigm, compare Sanskrit *urā ukṣnás* ‘bull’). Rix also holds (47) that the long vowel of the Homeric declension *-ῆ(φ)ος* *-ῆ(φ)ι* is formed from the locative which had no suffix: compare Hittite *harnāus* (nominative) and *harnāu* (locative), ‘birth-stool’, which was apparently a noun originally in **-ōus* (A.L. Sihler, *New Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin* [Oxford, 1995], 331). Similarly Beekes (this note), 181. This approach is less elegant and convincing than is Schindler’s.

¹⁰ See W.B. Fortson IV, *Indo-European Language and Culture: An Introduction* (Oxford and Malden, MA, 2004), 63–4.

¹¹ Egetmeyer (n. 9), 1.415–17.

¹² For the Arcadian evidence, see L. Dubois, *Recherches sur le dialecte arcadien* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1986), §66.

¹³ Egetmeyer (n. 9), 1.415–16.

¹⁴ The identification of the obscure Mycenaean words *e-re-de* (PY Fr 1228, Mn 1411) and *ma-se-de* (PY Cc 1285, Mn 1411) as examples of these accusative singulars is improbable, *pace* Egetmeyer (n. 9), 1.417; they seem more likely to be toponyms with the allative suffix *-de*.

¹⁵ See I. Hajnal, *Mykenisches und homerisches Lexicon: Übereinstimmungen, Divergenzen und*

is deemed to be another such term of non-Indo-European origin. Thus Chantraine remarks ‘il est vain de chercher une étymologie à βασιλεύς’, though he continues by noting that the initial labiovelar in Mycenaean *qa-si-re-u* ‘peut faire penser à une origine indo-européenne’.¹⁶ Others ascribe it to the pre-Hellenic substrate population which we know to have been present in Greece before the arrival of the earliest Greeks, as does the author of the latest etymological dictionary of Greek, citing precisely the fact that it contains a labiovelar.¹⁷ However, languages do sometimes use inherited words for ‘ruler’, as in the case of English ‘king’ and ‘leader’; in Homeric Greek, κοίρανος is agreed to have come from the Indo-European root **kor(i)ō-* ‘army’,¹⁸ and Mycenaean *ko-re-te* ‘mayor’ has been linked to this same root.¹⁹

In the light of Schindler’s work on nouns in *-εύς*, an old etymology for βασιλεύς deriving it from two very familiar Greek roots at last begins to make more sense. In the 1840s Benfey and Curtius suggested that *g^wasileus* is a compound of **g^wmti-* and **lāwos*, that is, ‘he who makes the host march’;²⁰ they adduced the analogy of German *Herzog* ‘leader of the army’, ‘duke’, which is a compound of *Heer* ‘army’ (from Middle High German *heri* < PIE **koryos*) and *ziehen* ‘pull’, ‘lead’. Another possible meaning of *g^wasileus* would be ‘he who marches with the host’, since the element *-λαος* in names can refer to an oblique case, as, for instance, Πρωτεσί-λαος or Φιλόλαος.²¹ But ever since 1916, when Boisacq mentioned this etymology sceptically, it appears simply to have been forgotten. It probably fell out of favour because the formation of hypocoristic nouns in Greek was not understood until relatively recently.²²

The second half of the compound, *-λεύς*, is a shortened or hypocoristic form that appears to belong to the second class of nouns in *-εύς*, that is masculine personal names. The suffix *-εύς* was no longer productive of names in historical times, but many mythical and Mycenaean names are of this kind. Von Kamptz showed long ago that even apparently opaque forms such as Εὔρυσθεύς and Μενεσθεύς are shortened forms of intelligible Greek names such as Εὔρυσθένης and Μενεσθένης.²³ Thus even as peculiar a form as Ἄ-τρεύς, which von Kamptz still considered pre-Hellenic,²⁴ is in

versuch einer Typologie (Innsbruck, 1998), 60–9, for an Indo-European etymology, which Beekes (n. 4) does not notice.

¹⁶ P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (Paris, 1968–80), 1.167.

¹⁷ Beekes (n. 4), 203, with references to earlier suggestions, none of which convinces either him or me. So too H. Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1954–70), 1.223; Chantraine (n. 16), loc. cit.

¹⁸ Cognates include Anglo-Saxon *here*, the Old Norse epithet of Odin *herjann*, the Old British ethnonym *Coriono-totae*, and Middle Irish *cuire* ‘crowd’; see Beekes (n. 4), 1.732.

¹⁹ M.S. Ruipérez, ‘*Ko-re-te-re* et *po-ro-ko-re-te-re* à Pylos’, in M. Lejeune (ed.), *Études mycéniennes* (Paris, 1956), 105–20, at 107–8, but cf. F. Aura Jorro, *Diccionario micénico* (Madrid, 1985–93), s.v.

²⁰ T. Benfey, *Griechisches Wurzellexikon* (Berlin, 1839–42), 2.29; E. Curtius, ‘Beiträge zur griechischen Etymologie’, *RhM* 4 (1846), 242–59, at 258–9; cf. L. Döderlein, *Homerisches Glossarium* (Erlangen, 1850–8), vol. 2, no. 2007; W. Prellwitz, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der griechischen Sprache* (Göttingen, 1892), 45.

²¹ For a list of such names see F. Dornseiff and B. Hansen, *Rückläufiges Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen* (Berlin, 1957), 217.

²² Such formations were certainly not understood by Thibau (n. 5), 582, which is why he rejected this etymology.

²³ H. von Kamptz, *Homerische Personennamen* (Göttingen, 1982), 23–4, 125 (this work is an unaltered Jena dissertation of 1958); L.R. Palmer, *The Interpretation of Mycenaean Greek Texts* (Oxford, 1963), 79–80; L.R. Palmer, *The Greek Language* (London and Boston, MA, 1980), 34.

²⁴ Von Kamptz (n. 23), 126, 337. For an eloquent protest against this ready resort to pre-Hellenism see Palmer (n. 23 [1980]), 97–8.

fact a shortened version of ἄ-τρέσ-τος or *A-τρέσ-της ‘he who does not run away’, from τρέω;²⁵ compare Ἄγα-μέμων and Μενέ-λαος, members of the very same mythical family, whose names likewise evoke standing one’s ground in battle.²⁶ Likewise Mycenaean /*Alekseus*/ is short for Ἀλέξανδρος or the like,²⁷ while classical Ἄνδρεύς would be an abbreviated form of Ἄνδροκλῆς and Νικεύς of Νικόδημος.²⁸ However, such forms are often so truncated that the original long form of the second half of the compound is unrecognizable.

In the case of *g^wasileus*, the second half of the compound is shortened from a word beginning with lambda.²⁹ As such it is open to many possible interpretations, but the most obvious candidate is indeed λα(φ)ός ‘host’, ‘army’. It would be based on an unattested full form **g^wasilāwos*, with which we may compare names such as Ἀγησίλαος. The shortened form of λαφός appears as -λεύς in one very famous name, Νηλεύς/Νειλεύς, ‘he who brings home the host’, a compound of **nese-* ‘return’ (the root of νόμοι and νόστος) and λαφός; the first half of this name recurs in that of Neleus’ son Νέσ-τωρ. The full form appears in Mycenaean as *Ne-e-ra-wo* /*Nehe-lāwos*/.³⁰ Another such name containing this suffix is Ἀχι-λεύς, which sometimes has a hypocoristic doubling of the liquid. As Palmer showed, Achilles’ name means something like ‘grief to the host’; the same semantic elements appear in the hero’s female *altera ego* Πενθεσίλεια and in the name Πένθιλος, both of which end with shortened forms of λαφός.³¹ A different kind of shortening of the same element appears in the Homeric pair Σθενέλαος and Σθένελος and the historical names Ὀνησίλαος and Ὀνήσιλος.³² Finally, Ὀι-λεύς/φι-λεύς may mean ‘strength to the host’, from ἰς ‘strength’, the cognate of Latin *vīs*. βασιλεύς looks very like a personal name of this type, a puzzle to which we will return below.

Benfey derived the first part of *g^wasileús* from the familiar root **g^wem-*, from which are derived Greek βαίνω ‘to step’ or ‘march’, Latin *ueniō*, Sanskrit *gácchati*, and English *come* (Gothic *qiman*).³³ However, since Hermann Müller proved in 1879 that Proto-Indo-European had three laryngeals which have subsequently been lost, we can be more specific about the root of βαίνω. Until late in its prehistory Greek retained a series of three sounds called ‘laryngeals’, that is gutturals of different kinds; these survive directly only in Hittite, where they are often written as *h*, and in its Anatolian relatives and descendants. In certain phonetic environments, laryngeals turned into vowels (mostly *a*, but *i* in Sanskrit).³⁴ Greek is the only Indo-European language where the

²⁵ So already A. Fick and F. Bechtel, *Die griechische Personennamen nach ihrer Bildung erklärt und systematisch geordnet* (Göttingen, 1894²), 425.

²⁶ Palmer (n. 23 [1980]), 35–6.

²⁷ M. Ventris and J. Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* (Cambridge, 1973²), 405.

²⁸ Sihler (n. 9), 328.

²⁹ Hence one must reject A.J. van Windekens’ proposal (*Dictionnaire étymologique complémentaire de la langue grecque* [Louvain, 1986], 38–9) that it means ‘holder of the throne’, from βάσις taken as ‘pedestal’, ‘throne’, with a suffix in *-λ-*.

³⁰ Pylos tablet Fn 79. See A. Heubeck, ‘Beiträge zu einigen griechischen Personennamen auf der Linear B-Tafeln’, *Beiträge zur Namenforschung* 8 (1957), 28–35, at 30; Palmer (n. 23 [1963]), 79–80; H. Mühlestein, ‘Redende Personennamen bei Homer’, *SMEA* 9 (1969), 67–94, at 76; Risch (n. 1), 192 n. 12; Palmer (n. 23 [1980]), 35.

³¹ Palmer (n. 23 [1963]), 79–80; Palmer (n. 23 [1980]), 97–8.

³² See further G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans* (Baltimore, MD, and London, 1979), 70 n. 1.

³³ Benfey (n. 20), loc. cit.

³⁴ See e.g. R. S. P. Beekes, *The Development of the Proto-Indo-European Laryngeals in Greek* (The Hague and Paris, 1969); Rix (n. 9), 36–9.

different laryngeals became different vowels when they fell between two consonants. Thus the so-called *e*-coloured laryngeal $*h_1$ turned into *e*, as in $\theta\epsilon$ -τός ($*d^h h_1$ -τός) from $\tau\acute{\iota}\theta\eta\mu\iota$, the *a*-coloured laryngeal $*h_2$ into *a*, as in $\sigma\alpha$ -τός ($*s t h_2$ -τός) from $\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\mu\iota$, and the *o*-coloured laryngeal $*h_3$ into *o*, as in $\delta\omicron$ -τός ($*d h_3$ -τός) from $\delta\acute{\iota}\delta\omicron\omega\mu\iota$.

In the light of laryngeal theory, we now know that Greek uses two related roots to mean 'go'. $\beta\acute{\alpha}\iota\nu\omega$ derives from $*g^w(e)m-$, but the other tenses derive from the root $*g^w h_2-$, with the 'a-coloured' laryngeal $*h_2$, which in Greek became α in many phonetic environments. This root is seen in its other tenses $\beta\acute{\eta}\sigma\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$, $\acute{\epsilon}\beta\eta\sigma\alpha$, $\beta\acute{\epsilon}\beta\eta\kappa\alpha$, and $\acute{\epsilon}\beta\eta\nu$ (the exact cognate of Sanskrit $\acute{a}g\acute{a}m$ 'I went'), as well as in $\beta\acute{\iota}\beta\eta\mu\iota$ ($\beta\acute{\iota}\beta\acute{\alpha}\mu\iota$), with its exact Sanskrit cognate $j\acute{ig}\acute{a}ti$, and in words such as $\beta\acute{\eta}\text{-}\mu\alpha$ (compare Avestan $g\acute{a}man-$ 'step').³⁵ It is difficult to determine whether, in the compounded form $g^w asile\acute{u}is$, $\beta\omicron\sigma\iota-$ goes back to (i) the root $*g^w h_2-$, where the laryngeal $*h_2$ has become $\acute{\alpha}$ between two stops (compare $\sigma\alpha\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ from $*s t h_2$ -τός and $\phi\alpha\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ from $*b^h h_2$ -τός), or to (ii) the zero-grade of the root $*g^w m-$, where the syllabic nasal $*m$ has become $\acute{\alpha}$, as in $\beta\alpha\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ from $*g^w m$ -τός (compare Sanskrit $-gat\acute{a}h$, Latin $-ventus$).³⁶ The noun $\beta\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\varsigma$, derived from $*g^w m$ -tis, is formed from the latter root, since it is identical in formation with Sanskrit $g\acute{a}ti\acute{h}$, Latin $(con)uenti\acute{o}$, and Gothic $(ga)qum\acute{p}s$; the nominative, originally $*g^w \acute{e}m$ -tis, has been reshaped by analogy with the oblique cases such as the genitive $*g^w m$ -téis.³⁷

The analogy of the latter two forms suggests that $\beta\omicron\sigma\iota$ -λεός has the same origin, but proof is beyond reach. However, on neither hypothesis did the root $\beta\omicron\sigma\iota-$ contain the thematic vowel *e*, since otherwise it would have to have taken the form $\beta\eta\sigma\iota-$ ($*g^w e h_2-$), as in the Homeric personal name $\text{\textbackslash}\text{A}\nu\alpha\text{-}\beta\eta\sigma\acute{\iota}\text{-}\nu\epsilon\omega\varsigma$ 'he who makes one board the ship'³⁸ and the Homeric (Aeolic) noun $\beta\eta\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\mu\omega\nu$ 'acrobat',³⁹ which originally meant 'he who steps onto a wheel', from $*\beta\eta\tau\iota\text{-}\acute{\alpha}\rho\mu\omega\nu$, a compound of Mycenaean $a\text{-}mo$ /*arhmo*/ 'wheel'.⁴⁰ The assibilation of the dental τ before *i* in compounds of this type, such as $\tau\epsilon\rho\nu\acute{\iota}\text{-}\mu\beta\rho\tau\omicron\varsigma$ and indeed $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\acute{u}\varsigma$ is standard in East Greek; the failure to assibilate in words such as $\beta\omicron\tau\iota\text{-}\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\iota\rho\alpha$, $\acute{\alpha}\rho\tau\iota\text{-}\epsilon\pi\acute{\eta}\varsigma$ and $\beta\eta\tau\iota\text{-}\acute{\alpha}\rho\mu\omega\nu$ is typical of Homeric words which survive from the Aeolic phase of the epic tradition. Thus Ionian epic should have retained the Mycenaean preposition $po\text{-}si$ /*posi*/ (compare Arcadian $\pi\acute{o}\varsigma$), but in fact uses the West Greek form $\pi(\rho)\acute{o}\tau\acute{\iota}$ beside $\pi\acute{\rho}\acute{o}\varsigma$; indeed $\pi\acute{\rho}\acute{o}\varsigma$ can be proved by statistics to have largely replaced $\pi\acute{o}\tau\acute{\iota}$, which must have been in proto-Aeolic also.⁴¹ The same replacement apparently occurred in Lesbian, which borrowed $\pi\acute{\rho}\acute{o}\varsigma$ under Ionic influence: the Homeric formula $\pi\rho\tau\acute{\iota}$ $\text{\textbackslash}\text{I}\lambda\iota\omicron\nu$ $\acute{\iota}\rho\acute{\eta}\nu$, with Lesbian $\acute{\iota}\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$, confirms this.⁴² $\beta\omega\tau\acute{\iota}\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\iota\rho\alpha$ has both $\text{-}\tau\iota\text{-}$ and an Aeolic treatment of metrical lengthening.⁴³

³⁵ See Beekes (n. 4), 1.192.

³⁶ The presence of $*m$ is proved by, for instance, the Latin form, which would otherwise be $\acute{\iota}\nu\acute{a}t\upsilon\varsigma$ < $*g^w h_2$ -τός, cf. $f\acute{a}t\upsilon\varsigma$ from $fateor$ like $\phi\alpha\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ < $*b^h h_2$ -τός from $\phi\eta\mu\acute{\iota}$. If Mycenaean $a\text{-}pi\text{-}qo\text{-}to$ /*amp^hig^wotos*/ 'round' (?), an epithet of tables and hearths on Pylos tablets Ta 709 and Ta 715, is a compound of this verbal adjective, this fact would prove the former presence of the $*m$, but its meaning and derivation are not wholly certain (Aura Jorro [n. 19], 1.85).

³⁷ Rix (n. 9), 146.

³⁸ Hom. *Od.* 8.113.

³⁹ Hom. *Od.* 8.250, 383.

⁴⁰ Risch (n. 1), 52.

⁴¹ R. Janko, 'The use of $\pi\acute{\rho}\acute{o}\varsigma$, $\pi\rho\tau\acute{\iota}$ and $\pi\acute{o}\tau\acute{\iota}$ in Homer', *Glotta* 57 (1979) 24–9.

⁴² See R.S.P. Beekes, 'ΠΙΠΟΤΙ ΙΛΙΟΝ ΙΡΗΝ', *Mnemosyne* 26 (1973) 387–90.

⁴³ So F.W. Householder and G. Nagy, *Greek: A Survey of Recent Work* (The Hague, 1972), 66: cf.

As Curtius noted,⁴⁴ compounds such as τερψί-μβροτος often have transitive verbs in the first half, for example, Sophocles' ζευξίλεως 'he who yokes the host'⁴⁵ or Στησίχορος 'he who establishes the chorus'. In the case of this root we may compare Ἄνα-βησι-νεως 'he who makes one board ship'. Such formations are often related to sigmatic transitive aorists.⁴⁶ By this analogy, we might perhaps have expected to find βησι- with the *e*-grade rather than the zero-grade of the root. However, we saw that βητάρμων has *βητι- in an intransitive sense, and that nouns in -εὺς always have the accent on the suffix; hence the lack of the thematic vowel in the root of the first half of βασι-λεύς is not surprising. The Mycenaean name *Ne-e-ra-wo* /*Nehe-lāwos*/ has the *e*-grade,⁴⁷ but the vocalism in the *Kurzformen* Νηλεύς and Νειλεύς is presumably based on that of the full form.

The meaning of βασιλεύς may shed light on its history. In Linear B *qa-si-re-u* denotes neither the supreme ruler, which is *wa-na-ka* /*wanaks*/, nor his second-in-command, the *ra-wa-ke-ta* /*lāwāgetās*/ 'leader of the host'. The latter word survived into the first millennium as λῶγέτως in Pindar.⁴⁸ Remarkably, it was borrowed into Phrygian along with *wanaks*, since it appears in the early inscription over the façade of the 'Tomb of Midas' at Midas Şehri near Afyon.⁴⁹ Indeed, when the stone-cutter incised *lawagtaei* : *wanaktei* (ΛΑΦΑΓΤΑΕΙ : ΦΑΨΑΚΤΕΙ), one suspects that he was supposed to put the Greek dative singular λῶφαγέτῳ, and simply miscopied what should have read **lawagetai* : *wanaktei* by anticipating the ending of *wanaktei*.

Mycenaean *qa-si-re-u* clearly denoted some sort of minor chief, mayor, or headman, since the term describes not only an 'overseer' of bronze-smiths but also various local officials.⁵⁰ In Pylos tablet Jo 438 the *a-ke-ro qa-si-re-u*, perhaps 'overseer of messengers',⁵¹ is assessed to contribute gold along with various people of the rank of *ko-re-te* 'mayor', *po-ro-ko-re-te* 'deputy mayor', *mo-ro-qa*, and [*du*]-*ma*, and with individuals who can be identified as holding the prestigious posts of *e-qe-ta* and *da-mo-ko-ro*. A man who is known from Pylos tablet Jn 431 to have been a *g^wasileus* is, according to tablet An 261, in charge of a *ke-ro-si-ja* /*geronsial*, 'council of elders'.⁵² The important Knossos tablet As 1516 records at Phaistos and Setoia two groups called *g^wasilēwiai* of 23 and 17 men each, alongside a larger group at Knossos, consisting of 31 men, which is called *lāwāge<si>ā*. Each group may well have been another 'council of elders'. As Ventris and Chadwick noted, 'the use of these terms suggests that the *basilēwes* of subordinate districts were in some sense analogous to the

ὠλεσίκαρπος for οὐ-. On the Aeolic phase of the epic tradition see further R. Janko, *The Iliad: A Commentary. Volume IV: Books 13–16* (Cambridge, 1992), 15–19.

⁴⁴ Curtius (n. 20), 259.

⁴⁵ Fr. 133,6 Radt (anapaests) = Hsch. *Lex.* ζ 27 Latte.

⁴⁶ Risch (n. 1), 192.

⁴⁷ I thank the anonymous reviewer for raising this.

⁴⁸ *Ol.* 1.89; *Pyth.* 3.85, 4.27, 10.31.

⁴⁹ M-01a in C. Brixhe and M. Lejeune, *Corpus des inscriptions paléo-phrygiennes* (Paris, 1984). The tomb is sixth century B.C. or earlier.

⁵⁰ Ventris and Chadwick (n. 27), 409, 510, citing PY Jo 438. For recent views, see the essays by P. Carlier, M. Iacovou, and T.G. Palaima in S. Deger-Jalkotzy and I. Lemos (edd.), *Ancient Greece: From the Mycenaean Palaces to the Age of Homer* (Edinburgh, 2006); C.J. Ruijgh, 'Mycenaean and Homeric language', in Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (edd.), *A Companion to Linear B* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2008–11), 2.253–98, at 263.

⁵¹ /*angelōn g^wasileus*/, unless *a-ke-ro* is a man's name.

⁵² The expected Dorian form of this word, γερωντία, is attested at Xen. *Lac.* 10.1 and Nic. *Dam. fr.* 103(3) Jacoby.

lāwāgetās at Knossos',⁵³ and, as Shelmerdine observed, 'the association and relative numbers could indicate that the *g^wasileus* stands not far below the *lāwāgetās* in the administrative hierarchy'.⁵⁴

Benfey's etymology of βασιλεύς accords with the view that the *g^wasileus* originally held an office of high rank, the authority of which was greatly reduced when administration was concentrated in the palaces. There is a consensus that the power of the βασιλεύς rebounded after the fall of the palatial centres around 1200 B.C., when, with society 'decapitated', authority devolved back to the level of the village; this will explain how the word came to mean 'king' in Homeric and especially post-Homeric Greek.⁵⁵ If 'these officials really derived their power from local communities', this 'would account for both their survival and their increased status after the palatial system collapsed'.⁵⁶

As the class of nouns in -εύς seems hardly paralleled outside Greek, it was probably created within Proto-Greek. Indeed, since there is no evidence at all for a West Greek (or Proto-Greek) form †βατυλεύς,⁵⁷ the word *g^wasileus* should have arisen only after East and West Greek had been differentiated, when East Greek began to assibilate τ in most phonetic environments; to judge by the evidence of Mycenaean, which is indubitably a dialect of East Greek ancestral to Arcado-Cypriot, this differentiation must have occurred by the middle of the second millennium B.C. The rise of the office of *g^wasileus* well suits the development of nucleated small states with local rulers and minor tholos-tombs such as we see at this time in southern Greece, which is exactly where East Greek evolved.⁵⁸

The remaining puzzle about *g^wasileus* is that there is no parallel for a shortened or hypocoristic form of λαρός that is not within a proper name. No words ending in -λεύς are anything other than normally formed agent-nouns in -εύς. Hypocoristic shortening other than in names is very rare. One possible exception is νήπιος, which seems to be an abbreviated form of νηπύτιος; it has been suggested that this is owed to baby-talk, as befits the meaning of the word, *in-fans*.⁵⁹ Could *g^wasileus* have been created by children as a hypocoristic form of a title **g^wasilāwos*, perhaps in some juvenile pursuit such as the game of βασιλίνδα⁶⁰ or its Roman equivalent *rex eris si recte facies*? Or was **g^wasilāwos* shortened to *g^wasileus* in order to mock this relatively low-ranking office-holder, who was perhaps merely a file-leader like a λοχαγός, just as a 'sergeant' was originally a 'servant'?⁶¹ Or was *g^wasileus* originally a personal name which became a noun for 'ruler', like 'Caesar'?⁶² If it was once a name, it is remarkable

⁵³ M. Ventris and J. Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* (Cambridge, 1956), 171.

⁵⁴ C.W. Shelmerdine, 'Mycenaean society', in Duhoux and Morpurgo Davies (n. 50), 1.115–58, at 135.

⁵⁵ See N. Yamagata, 'ἄνωξ and βασιλεύς in Homer', *CQ* 47 (1997), 1–14. Epic phrases such as Ζεὺς δὲ θεῶν βασιλεύς are demonstrably innovative compared with phrases containing ἄνωξ (A. Hoekstra, *Epic Verse before Homer* [Amsterdam, 1979], 97–9).

⁵⁶ Shelmerdine (n. 54), 135.

⁵⁷ Thus Sihler's reconstructed paradigm based on **g^watilews* ([n. 9], 330) is probably incorrect in this respect.

⁵⁸ There is no sound evidence that West Greek (i.e. North-west Greek and Doric) was spoken anywhere south of the Gulf of Corinth before the fall of the Mycenaean palaces or indeed before the Iron Age began in 1100 B.C. or later, but this is not the place to argue this point.

⁵⁹ Chantraine (n. 16), 751; the different view of Beekes ([n. 4], 1017) is wholly unconvincing.

⁶⁰ Hsch. *Lex.* β 284 Latte.

⁶¹ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v., 2736.

⁶² Βασιλεύς was occasionally a name in the historical period, but this is clearly a secondary development.

that its meaning is no less appropriate to leadership than is that of *lāwāgetās*. But the Spartan king-lists contain many names suited to royalty, from Agis, Agesilaus, and Archelaus to Pleistarchus, Pleistoanax, and Prytanis. In the absence of historical and literary records from the Aegean Bronze Age, the full story eludes us.

In the light of his success in showing that nouns in *-εύς* are a Greek innovation on an Indo-European basis, Schindler warned against resorting too readily to non-Greek explanations for them:

any non-Greek explanation must necessarily rely on completely uncontrolled assumptions about prehistory, which are of course not disprovable in the strict sense ... the lack of cognates and the existence of unanalysable words are not conclusive arguments in the absence of additional positive evidence. The lack of direct correspondence could also be explained as due to the retention exclusively in Greek of a PIE type, or to an innovation based on PIE material, and the incorporation of foreign appellatives and names into already existent stem classes is a linguistic commonplace.⁶³

It does not weaken the overall strength of Schindler's hypothesis that the noun ἐρμηνεύς 'interpreter', originally ἐρμῶνεύς as in Doric,⁶⁴ is a clear case of the latter phenomenon. No recognized etymology for it existed⁶⁵ until Yakubovitch proposed that ἐρμῶνεύς is cognate with Carian *armon* 'dragoman',⁶⁶ since *armon* corresponds to Egyptian *wh̄m* 'dragoman' in a Carian-Egyptian bilingual from Memphis (text E.Me. 8 Adiego). This is a bronze Apis-bull bearing the Carian inscription *paraeym: armon ki | para'eym: sb polo*, together with the Egyptian inscription *H3py dj 'nh Prjm p3-wh̄m*, which means 'may Apis give life to Prjm (= *Paraeym*) the dragoman'.⁶⁷ Yakubovitch adds that the initial vocalism of the Greek word has been influenced by the name of Hermes, god of communication.⁶⁸

I would myself add to this convincing derivation the suggestion that the common origin of Greek ἐρμῶνεύς and Carian *armon* may be the familiar and ubiquitous Akkadian term *targumānu* 'dragoman', 'interpreter', from which Hebrew *targum* and our own word 'dragoman' are derived. The Akkadian word, which is attested from Old Akkadian and Ur III onwards,⁶⁹ has suffered unpredictable phonetic changes during its lengthy transmission, which must have taken place via first Syria and then Anatolia. It has lost its initial dental, perhaps by a mis-division of words. For this phenomenon one may compare the Hittite rendering of the Ahhiyawan name *Ta-wa-ga-la-wa*, which was rightly identified by Forrer as the Achaeans (Mycenaeans) name */Etewoklewēs/*, Eteocles, with an *added* initial dental.⁷⁰ Akkadian *targumānu* has also lost the medial syllable *-gu-*, probably via a form such as **targmān* or **argmān*, because of a dynamic stress accent such as Carian is known to have had.⁷¹ In Carian *armon*, the original *ā* has been lowered to *o*, a phonetic change familiar both in

⁶³ Schindler (n. 2), 349.

⁶⁴ Pind. *Ol.* 2.85. The root is unattested in Mycenaean.

⁶⁵ So Beekes (n. 4), 462, with references to earlier works.

⁶⁶ I. Yakubovitch, 'Review of I.J. Adiego, *The Carian Language*', *JNES* 71 (2012), 131–3, at 133.

⁶⁷ I.J. Adiego, *The Carian Language* (Leiden and Boston, MA, 2007), 40–1.

⁶⁸ Yakubovitch (n. 66), 133.

⁶⁹ R.D. Biggs et al. (edd.), *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of Chicago* (Chicago, IL, 2006), s.v. *targumanni*.

⁷⁰ E. Forrer, 'Vorhomerische Griechen in den Keilschrifttexten von Boghazköy', *Mitteilungen der deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft* 63 (1924), 1–22; see further e.g. T.R. Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites* (Oxford, 2005²), 359.

⁷¹ See Adiego (n. 67), 238–41.

Carian and in many other languages.⁷² In Carian, *targumānu* has lost its final *-u*, whereas in Greek ἐρμῶνεύς has been adapted to suit the class of nouns in *-εύς*. But of course the inclusion of this particular foreign formation within this existing type of noun by no means undermines Schindler's conclusion that this class of nouns as a whole is of Hellenic origin.

University of Michigan

RICHARD JANKO
rjanko@umich.edu

⁷² For the Carian evidence, see Adiego (n. 67), 258.