

A SUGGESTION ABOUT THE EXPRESSION τὸν ἀπὸ γραμμᾶς κινεῖ λίθον (THEOCRITUS, *Id.* VI 18)^{*}

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Résumé. – Cet article propose d’élargir le sens donné généralement à l’expression proverbiale figurant au v. 18 de l’*Idylle* VI de Théocrite : « (elle) déplace le caillou de la ligne » (ἀπὸ γραμμᾶς κινεῖ λίθον). L’auteur propose d’y voir également un « signe de désespoir et de frustration » et une connotation aléatoire (*ἀλήρος*) complémentaire, liée à la pratique grecque de divination par le jet de cailloux (cléromancie). On propose une interprétation du proverbe en s’appuyant sur l’invention par Palamède, πρῶτος εύρετής, de ce jeu ou de jeux de plateau similaires (πεττεία et τὸ πεττεύειν) et sur l’hypothèse d’A. Brélich qui met l’accent sur la place de la cléromancie dans la culture. La clé de cette interprétation dans l’*Idylle* VI peut être l’hypothèse que « Daphnis personnifie Ulysse ».

Abstract. – This paper aims at completing the “canonical” explanation of the expression “(she) will move the pebble from the line” (ἀπὸ γραμμᾶς κινεῖ λίθον), used in Theocritus, *Id.* VI 18. The author proposes to interpret it also as a “sign of despair or frustration”. The phrase can offer the complementary connotation of *ἀλήρος*, “of a random nature” (to try one’s luck) linked to the Greek practice of soothsaying. The interpretation of the proverb which is offered here is linked to the invention by Palamedes, πρῶτος εύρετής of this, or similar, board game(s) (πεττεία and τὸ πεττεύειν), and to the hypothesis of A. Brélich which emphasizes the important cultural role played by cleromancy. The key to this interpretation in *Idyll* VI may be the hypothesis that “Daphnis personified Odysseus”.

Mots-clés. – Cléromancie, Palamède, Théocrite, *Idylle* VI, ἀπὸ γραμμᾶς κινεῖ λίθον.

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The bucolical singers (I) Damoetas and Daphnis (Idyll VI) brings together two young people, Damoetas and the neatherd Daphnis, who hasten to compete amicably with songs¹, and exchange presents at the end of their poetical competition². The main theme or literary motif of *Idyll VI* is the Sicilian Cyclop Polyphemus' love for the Nereid Galatea, considered a divinity in Sicily, who refuses his advances, throws apples at him and calls him δυσέρωτα καὶ αἰπόλον ἄνδρα, that is, “a negligible goatherd in love” (VI 7). And Theocritus depicts Polyphemus as madly in love with Galatea, constantly trying to attract her attention, while sitting singing, bewitched, with his gaze fixed on the sea. Meanwhile, Galatea, who appears³ in the ancient catalogues of Nereids⁴, is not accompanied by any narrative about her⁵.

Most of what is known of Theocritus comes from his *Idylls*. His poetic style is filled with the characters and nature which surrounded him. But, if we ask the literal and right meaning (denotation) of the canonical or most accepted interpretation (connotation) of verse 18 of Theocritus' *Idyll VI* is that Daphnis informs Polyphemus that Galatea will do everything in her power to instigate his affection and that she “will move the pebble from the line” (ἀπὸ γραμμᾶς κινεῖ λίθον). As we know, “to move the pebble from the line” was an old proverb, based on a board game (πεττεία) consisting of a board marked with five lines, wherein the movement of a type of counter from the “sacred line” was a “sign of despair” or “close frustration”. Therefore, it should only have to be moved as a last resort, as shown in Alcaeus⁶, or Sophron⁷, among others.

1. Cf. Ch. SEGAL, *Poetry and Myth in Ancient Pastoral. Essays on Theocritus and Virgil*, Princeton 1981, p. 30, points out that the seven strictly bucolic idylls by Theocritus, that is numbers I, III, IV, V, VI VII and XI, should not be read as isolated poems but as “the consciously varied expressions of a unified poetic vision and concern”. Among the cited idylls, number VI and VII have possibly warranted the greatest number of studies, especially due to their relationship with myths and pastoral poetry. About the characters of *Idyll VII* see C. GARRIGA, “Un home de Cidonia”, *Íaca* 1, 1985, p. 185-191.

2. Cf. H. BERNSDORFF, “Polyphem und Daphnis. Zu Theokrits sechstem *Idyll*”, *Philologus* 138, 1994, p. 38-51, E. L. BOWIE, “Frame and Framed in Theocritus Poems 6 and 7” in M.A. HARDER ed., *Theocritus*, Groningen 1996, p. 91-100, or A. MELERO, “Teócrito y la tradición. Notas para la lectura de los Idilios VI y XI” in J. A. LÓPEZ FÉREZ ed., *Desde los poemas homéricos hasta la prosa griega del siglo IV d. C. Veintiséis estudios filológicos*, Madrid 1999, p. 297-311, and E. CALDERÓN, “El léxico musical en Teocrito”, *Habis* 31, 2000, p. 99-112, or M. GARCÍA TEJUEIRO, *Bucólicos griegos*. Introducción, traducciones y notas, Madrid 1988, p. 818-826 about general aspects of interpretation of the present idyll. See also J. A. CLÚA, “The contraposition between *epos* and *epyllion* in Hellenistic Poetry: *status quaestionis*”, *AEF* 27, 2004, p. 23-39 about common mythical episodes addressed at the same time by Apollonius of Rhodes and Theocritus.

3. Cf. Homer, *Il.* XVIII, 45, Hesiod, *Theog.* 250.

4. See R. HUNTER, *Theocritus. A selection*, Cambridge 1999, p. 215.

5. Cf. M. MESSI, “Polifemo e Galatea. Il *komas* “imperfetto” di Teocrito, *Id.* VI e XI”, *Acme* 53, 2000, p. 23-41, J. A. LÓPEZ FÉREZ, “Les Cyclopes et leur pays dans la littérature grecque” in F. JOUAN, B. DEFORGE eds., *Peuples et pays mythiques*, Paris 1988, p. 57-71, and, about Polyphemus and Galatea, see J. A. CLÚA, “Teócrito de Siracusa: *Idilios VI y VII*” in M. SANZ, P. HUALDE eds., *Curso de literatura griega y su influencia*, Madrid 2008.

6. Fr. 351 Voigt.

7. Cf. Sophron, fr. 127 *Kaibel*, *CPG* I 259-60, *RE* XIII 1970-3, and R. G. AUSTIN, “Greek Board Games”, *Antiquity* 14, 1940, p. 267-71.

However, this board game (*πεττεία*) was invented by Palamedes, Odysseus's enemy⁸, and the commentators of this passage obliterate its cleromantic nature, by not mentioning it. So, it is reasonable to suggest that the expression ἀπὸ γραμμᾶς κινεῖ λίθον contains more than just a “sign of despair or frustration” (the official and canonical explanation). In other words, there is a connotation of *κλήρος*, of a random nature, “to try one's luck”, and in this sense, the interpretation of the proverb is more complete and understandable. Consequently, my reading does not aim to replace the meaning given to the expression, but to present and place more emphasis on the argument in favour of a possible and complementary cleromantic⁹ connotation (*κλήρος*) or, perhaps, randomness.

Palamedes, the hero with pre-Homeric roots and *πρώτος εύφετής*¹⁰, who was born in Argos, became, in the eyes of the Greeks, the incarnation of knowledge and inventive ingenuity, honesty and benefits for men. He was clever inventor, contriver, and teacher, so useful at the siege and otherwise a man of so amiable and exalted a character that he seems almost too good to live¹¹. He was an excellent and attractive instrument for the Sophists' declamatory or epideictic discussions. Innumerable discoveries were associated with his personality, which did “...τὸν ἀνθρώπειον βίον πόριμον ἐξ ἀπόδου καὶ κεκοσμένον ἐξ ἀκόσμου”, according to what Palamedes says in his apology that comes from the hands of Gorgias. Our myth suffered some modifications when, with the apogee of the sophistic movement, it became the preferred theme of the rhetoric profession carried out by Gorgias, Alcidamas and other sophists and philosophers. The reasons for this predilection are apparently quite clear: to successfully defend a series of difficult “processes” was a task which attracted many orators. Furthermore, a theme of this kind offered abundant material for the elaboration of subtle declamations. From the sophist Gorgias we conserve two epideictic discourses, the *Encomium of Helen* and the *Defense of Palamedes*, which offer us a very good account of the rhetoric and sophistic traits

8. Sophocles, fr. 479 Radt.

9. Cf. M. PISANI, “Sofistica e gioco sull' Astragalo di Sotades. Socrate, Le Charites et le Nuvole”, *Horti Hesperidum* 3, 2013/1, p. 72, on the cleromantic nature of “un vaso in forma di astragalo a figure rosse, della metà del V sec. a.C., acquisito nella collezione del British Museum di Londra e attribuito al pittore di Sotades da F. Hauser: oltre ad essere impiegato nella divinazione o mantica, l'astragalo è, inanzitutto, utilizzato a fini ludici. Il suo impiego è noto anche in un gioco equiparabile ai moderni dadi, con una differenza determinata dalla conformazione fisica dell'ossicino che prevedeva l'utilizzo di sole quattro facce, anziché sei”.

10. Cf. A. KLEINGÜNTHER, *Πρώτος εύφετής. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte einer Fragestellung*, Berlin 1933, p. 24-25. In spite of the fact that this author (*ibid.*, page 78) is of the opinion that it is in the *Cypria* where we must search for information about certain traits of Palamedes' character – like his inventions –, which were later highlighted by the tragedy writers, we believe that it is in the lyrics where he first appeared characterised as an inventor and cultural hero. With regard to this we prefer the argument presented by M. SZARMACH, “Le mythe de Palamède avant la tragédie grecque”, *Eos* 61, 1974, p. 35-47 (esp. p. 43).

11. Cf. E. D. PHILLIPS, “A suggestion about Palamedes”, *AJPh* 78, 1957, p. 267-278 (esp. p. 267).

of this philosopher and which, in the specific case of Palamedes, are a catechism of Greek dialectic and rhetoric¹². Palamedes appeared in this discourse defending himself from some false accusations of betrayal of which Ulysses accuses him in front of the Achaean army¹³.

One believes that his name¹⁴ had its origins in the ability or dexterity of his hand (*παλάμη*, palm of the hand: hence, generally, *hand*; metaph. *cunning, art, device*¹⁵). Other authors try to tie our hero with the Greek word *πάλος*¹⁶, that is, with the luck that comes to each of us, which points out Palamedes' own fatal destiny.

12. According to Reiske (*Or. Gr. VIII, praef.*: “meretur hoc opusculum (...) ut in archetypes eloquentiae graecae forensic habeatur”, quoted by F. BLASS, *Die Attische Beredsamkeit*, I, Leipzig 1892, p. 81).

13. The arguments adduced by Palamedes in his defense could have perfectly served to accuse a culprit: “I could not betray my homeland, neither would I have desired to even if it had been possible”. Having reached this point we must ask ourselves, on the one hand, if the general concept of “hero epic-inventor” with all its connotations obeys the mythic characterization of Gorgias’ Palamedes, and if its function as a *παίγνιον* also responds to the election of this myth by Gorgias, or if for him and his Athenian philosophic circles of the second half of the fifth century it had other connotations. With regard to the characterization of our hero we must say that only the elements of the myth which make reference to the trial are alluded to in the *Defense of Palamedes* by Gorgias, and that the rest of the details or mythic adventures have been omitted. In fact, we can only deduct from the discourse that Ulysses has accused Palamedes of being a traitor and that, according to Palamedes, the hero from Ithaca did not offer any proof. Furthermore, there is no reference made to the letter which Ulysses placed in Palamedes’ tent to betray him, and as a consequence Palamedes has to make suppositions about Ulysses’ conduct. In contrast, what is more difficult to ascertain is the second question. Gorgias’ intentions with this discourse were not only a distraction and *παίγνιον*. His objective was also to “persuade”, to recognise the persuasive strength of emotion as born from rhetoric which in a certain sense was similar to poetry. The orator had to be a poet, “a leader of souls, a *psyche-gogós*”. Nonetheless, we doubt that Gorgias was more interested in the success of the approached theme and the techniques of discourse, than the theme dealt with or the philosophic truth, contrary to what has been said. However, other than the previously mentioned reasons, Gorgias, in our understanding, chose the theme of Palamedes because he had a good knowledge of its numerous connotations with the sophistic movement and the “idea of progress” it possessed among Tragic writers, and especially in Euripides. Palamedes was the archetype of the dishonoured philosopher due to the persecution of intellectuals at the beginning of the Peloponnesus War. And another reason why Gorgias chose our myth must be searched for in the later imitation of the defense of Gorgias by Xenophon and Plato. Therefore, until the article by J. A. COULTER (“The Relation of the *Apology of Socrates* to Gorgias’ *Defense of Palamedes* and Plato’s Critique of Gorgianic Rhetoric”, *HSPh* 68, 1964, p. 269-303 esp. 274) saw the light of day, the *communis opinio* was that the mythic figure of Palamedes had a high consideration inside the Socratic circles. Nonetheless, Coulter, without disdaining the influences of Palamedes’ myth in Xenophon, pointed out that Socrates appears in Plato’s *Apology* as the antipode of Palamedes. To reach this thesis he has based his statements on a passage of Plato’s *Apology*, 41 a-c, where Socrates says that he desires to come across Ajax and Palamedes in the “other world”, because he is a “wise colleague”. Nonetheless, Socrates also says that “to converse with heroes like Palamedes will be a marvellous pastime”.

14. Cf. G. ZOGRAPHOU-LYRA, Ο μύθος του Παλαμήδης στην αρχαία Ελληνική, Iannina 1987, p. 247-248 (*παλάμη* + *μήδεα* (verbs as *μέδω*, *μέδομαι*, *μήδομαι*, *μῆτις*, *μέτρον*) = the name of Palamedes), and Suidas (II 41, IV 494 Adler), in which *παλάμη* means *τέχνη*, or Gorg. Pal. 25 (Palamedes = *τεξνήεντα*). See also L. P. ROMERO-MARISCAL, “El prólogo del *Palamedes* de Eurípides”, *Lexis* 25, 2007, p. 229-240 (esp. p. 237).

15. According to the LSJ Greek-English Lexicon, s.u. *παλάμη*: “palm of the hand: hence, generally, *hand*; metaph. *cunning, art, device*” or P. CHANTRAYNE, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque, Histoire des mots*, [édition 2009], Paris 2008 s.u. *παλάμη*.

16. Cf. J. PLATTHY, *The Mythical Poets of Greece*, Washington 1985, p. 193 and J. A. CLÚA, “El mite de Palamedes a la Grècia antiga; aspectes canviants d’un interrogant cultural i històric”, *Faventia* 7, 1985, 70, n. 3, and

The meaning of *πάλος* (*destination*), derived from the “agitation of the hull” where the stone is removed, would relate to Palamedes with divination¹⁷ and, on the possible origins of the shamanistic character in the myth¹⁸, and with his invention of games that involve the random of the given that is shaken, as would be the *χύβοι* and a modality of *πεσσοί*. According to J. Platthy¹⁹, “he (Palamedes) is the fate-deviser for whom Fate, the goddess Tyche, in her old temple at Argos, sanctifies the dice he invented”²⁰.

So, the possible association of the name of Palamedes with the verb *πάλλω* would highlight the military aspect of the hero, a companion in arms of Achilles in Troy²¹, whose famous spear only he can wield. On the other hand, and because of the ties of Palamedes to the sea through his family (Nauplius, Oeax, Nausimedon, his mother [Clymene]), some have also tried to derivate the name from *ἄλς*, *ἄλός*, with the letter Π normally ante-posed.

It is true that this interpretation was very appropriate for our inventor, because, on the one hand the Pre-Socratic philosophers awarded enormous importance to the human hand due to man’s work during creation and, on the other, with the advent of the “sophist” movement in the classic period, Palamedes enjoyed a series of connotations which curiously tied him to this symbol.

I will quote a few verses of Theocritus’ *Idyll VI*, in which the expression object of this analysis is mentioned²²:

15 ἀ δὲ καὶ αὐτόθε τοι διαθρύπτεται· ώς ἀπ’ ἀκάνθας
 ταὶ καπυρδὰι χαῖται, τὸ καλὸν θέρος ἀνίκα φρύγει,
 καὶ φεύγει φιλέοντα καὶ οὐ φιλέοντα διώκει,
καὶ τὸν ἀπὸ γραμμᾶς κινεῖ λίθον· ἡ γὰρ ἔφωτι
 πολλάκις, ὁ Πολύφαμε, τὰ μὴ καλὰ καλὰ πέφανται.

For which I offer the following translation:

“From over there she (Galatea) entices you: like the sultry foliage
 Of the hedgerow, when the sweet summer burns it,
 She flees from who loves her and chases who does not
 “and she moves the pebble from the (sacred) line”. Because, indeed, in
 Love, Polyphemus, often that what is beautiful, sees beautiful”.

vid. H. LEWY, “Palamedes” in W.H. ROSCHER, *Ausführliches Lexicon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, III.1 *Nabaiothes - Pasicharea*, Hildesheim 1965 (orig. edit. Leipzig 1897-1902), 1271. This etymology is very uncertain and based on the first part of the compound noun in relation to the verb *πάλλω*.

17. Cf. J. PLATTHY, *op. cit.*, p. 196-197.

18. Cf. G. ZOGRAPHOU-LYRA, *op. cit.*, p. 216-46.

19. Cf. J. PLATTHY, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

20. Cf. Paus. 2.20.3. The etymological relationship between *παλάμη* and *πάλλος* is also quoted in the *Etymologicum Magnum*.

21. Cf. L. P. ROMERO-MARISCAL, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

22. Cf. A.S.F. Gow, *Theocritus*, Cambridge 1965.

In the long commentary by A. S. F. Gow²³ a lot of information is provided by the ancient authors who analysed the παροιμία about τὸν ἀπὸ γραμμᾶς κινεῖν λίθον, *e.d. the last chance to try*. Among these, we could mention the quotations from Eustace²⁴ and Pollienus²⁵. Besides, Alcaeus and Sophron, Menander²⁶ and Plutarch²⁷ used this proverb and Plato²⁸ also alluded to it. Its full form is τὸν ἀφ' ιερᾶς (κινεῖν) and, as stated, its most canonical explanation is ἐπὶ τῶν τὰ ἔσχατα κινδυνεύοντων or τῶν τὴν ἔσχάτην βοήθειαν κινούντων. In fact, ιερὰ γραμμή was laconically cited as γραμμή. For this reason, I. Rumpel, in his *Lexicon Theocriteum*²⁹, tells us about the term γραμμά:

“linea sacra VI 18: *h.e. extrema, omnia experitur. Erant enim in ludo tesserario quinque lineae ab utraque parte, quibus totidem imponebantur calculi; media autem linearum ιερά dicebatur, unde nisi re postulante calculus non movebatur.*”

In order to contextualise – verse 18 and the meaning of the expression object of my suggestion – it should be noted that there is a first song that provides something paradoxical, such as the fact that it is Galatea who is unsuccessfully courting Polyphemus. By contrast, in the second song, it is the Cyclops who explains his tactic: feigned indifference. Moreover, Galatea offers Damoetas’ cattle apples, an affectionate gift. However, beforehand, she had given the vain Cyclops orders and requests.

Lastly, and before commencing the analysis of the aforementioned expression, notice that in this idyll it is easier to discover or better understand that the rivalry between the two young protagonists is a literary convention³⁰, similar to the theme of their songs. In contrast with

23. Cf. A.S.F. Gow, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

24. Cf. Eust. 633.59, who explains this “*paroimia*” as follows: ὅποιας ἔπαιζον οἱ κυβεύοντες, ὃν μία τις μέση γραμμὴ ώνομάζετο ιερά, ἐπειδὴ ὁ ἡττώμενος ἐπ' ἔσχάτην αὐτὴν ἵετο. οὕτων καὶ παροιμία κινεῖν τὸν ἀφ' ιερᾶς, ἐπὶ τῶν ἐν ἀπογνώσει δεομνῶν βοήθειας ἔσχάτης. χρῆσις δὲ ταύτης καὶ παρὰ Σώφρονι ἐν τῷ Κινήσῳ δ' ἥδη καὶ τὸν ἀφ' ιερᾶς. ἔνθα λείπει τὸ πεσσὸν ἢ λίθον. Ἀλκαίος οὖν ἐκ πλήρους ἔφη τὸ Κινήσας τὸν πήρας πυκινὸν λίθον, κωμικευσάμενος ἐκείνος καὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ ιερᾶς ὡς ἐν παρόδῳ γράψας τὸ πήρας...

25. Cf. Pollienus IX 98: τὸ δὲ πεπτεύειν... ἐπεὶ δὲ ψῆφοι μὲν εἰσιν οἱ πεπτοί, πέντε δ' ἐκάτερος τῶν παιζόντων εἶχεν ἐπὶ πέντε γραμμῶν, εἰκὼν ταῦτα Σοφοκλεῖ. Καὶ πεσσὰ πεντέγραμμα καὶ κύβων βολαί. τῶν δὲ πέντε τῶν ἐκατέρωθεν γραμμῶν μέση τις ἦν ιερὰ καλουμένη γραμμή...

26. Cf. fr. 269.

27. Mor. 783 B, 975 A, 1116 E.

28. Legg. 730 A.

29. Cf. I. RUMPEL, *Lexicon Theocriteum*, Hildesheim 1961, p. 166.

30. As regards editions, notice that A.S.F. Gow, (1952) and *Id.* (1950) have been followed at all times. As for studies about hexameters and their poetics, see M. BRIOSO, “Aportaciones al estudio del hexámetro de Teócrito”, *Habis* 7, 1976, p. 21-56 and *Ibid.*, *Habis* 8, 1977, p. 57-75 and C. MIRALLES, *El helenismo*, Barcelona 1981. Lastly, about the typology of Theocritus’ idyll and its relationship with the myth, see, among others, J. G. MONTES CALA, “El Epitalamio de Helena y la tipología del idilio teocriteo” in J. A. LÓPEZ FÉREZ ed., *Desde los poemas homéricos hasta la prosa griega del siglo IV d. C.* Veintiséis estudios filológicos, Madrid 1999, p. 313-327 and Ch. SEGAL, “Landscape into Myth. Theocritus’ Bucolic Poetry”, *Ramus* 4, 1975, p. 115-39. For their extensive introductions and notes, as well as the abundant literature they contain, see the volumes that J. ALSINA, *Teòcrit, Idillis*, 2 vols.,

other previous idylls³¹, the tone is narrative and not very dramatic, and there is no sign of an agnostic and competitive nature, possible origin of the bucolic³² to which K.J. Gutzwiller³³ has dedicated many lines.

Although the origin of κύβοι and πεσσοί³⁴, and *astragalismós*³⁵ is not known with certainty, there is proof of their existence since Homer. Thus, the epic poet explains how Patroclus killed Amphidamas, father of Clitonymus, over a game of dice³⁶. The Egyptians had disseminated these games since the second millennium B.C., but in Greece, Palamedes, the first inventor (πρώτος εὑρέτης) of many things, such as measures or the letters of the alphabet, as reflected in the expression coined by A. Kleingünther³⁷, was their inventor *par excellence*.

With the development of the sense of personality and individualism incarnated in the lyrical poets – let us remember the ponderings made by Archilochus (fr. 77 D), Alcman (fr. 92 D) and Solon (fr. 5 D) about their respective works – we find the need to attribute the various *heuremata* to different characters, specifically with regard to the musical field. Therefore, it is not strange that Palamedes appears with the epithet εὑρέτης in the mouth of a lyric poet like Stesichorus³⁸ or Pindar, yet in another field, that of the alphabet, which is tightly related to music, like for instance when it is said that the poet Simonides of Ceos added two vowels to the five which Apollo's sacred lyre possessed.

Barcelona 1961 devoted to Theocritus in his translation. Also, see the Spanish translations by M. BRIOSO, *Bucólicos griegos*, Madrid 1986, and the Italian translation of B. PALUMBO, *Teocrito. Idilli e Epigrammi*, testi greco a fronte, Milan 1993.

31. Theocritus is the most conspicuous diffuser and founder of pastoral poetry, apart from almost being one of the canonical poets of the Hellenistic period alongside Apollonius of Rhodes, Callimachus or even Euphorion, Lycophron, Rhanus, among others. See D.M. HALPERIN, *Before Pastoral: Theocritus and the Ancient Tradition of Bucolic Poetry*, New Haven-Londres 1983, p. 225, M. BRIOSO, "Teócrito y la bucólica", *Anuario de Estudios Filológicos* 7, 1984, p. 25-34, and J. A. CLÚA, *Estudios sobre la poesía de Euforión de Calcis*, Cáceres 2005 and *Id.*, "Euphorion, la malédition mythique et la comicité intentionnelle" in C. CUSSET, E. PRIOUX, H. RICHER eds., *Euphorion et les mythes: textes et images*, p. 267-289, Naples 2013, or J. B. BURTON, *Theocritus's mimes: mobility, gender and patronage*, Berkeley 1995.

32. About this theme, see M. BRIOSO, *Bucólicos griegos*, Madrid 1986, p. 100.

33. Cf. K.J. GUTZWILLER, *Theocritus' Pastoral Analogies: The Formation of a Genre*, Madison 1991, p. 3-19.

34. On the invention of κύβοι and πεσσοί, cf. Soph., *Palamedes* fr. 479 Radt (= 438 Nauck²), Soph., *Nauplios* fr. 429 Radt (= 396 Nauck²), Schol. in Eur., *Or.* 432, Gorg., *Pal.* 30, Alcid., *Od.* 27, Philostr., *Her.* 33 (177 min. Kayser), Paus. II 20. 3 and *Suid. s. u. Παλαμήδης* (P 44, IV 494 Adler).

35. The *astragalismós* is attested, with the function of "cleromancy" in some sanctuaries of Artemis, one of the most widely venerated of the Ancient Greek deities.

36. See Apollodorus, *Library*, 3.13.8. For the study of chance and other games, see J. CALVO, *Juegos de niños en la Grecia antigua*, Barcelona 1978 (unpublished doctoral thesis).

37. *Philologus Suppl. B*, 26, I, Berlin 1933.

38. Stesich. fr. 36/213 Page.

Furthermore, there is a factor which, according to A. Kleingünther³⁹, gave rise to the crime of attributing inventions “the economic revolution of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C.” and the numerous inventions which saw the light during this period: “the systems of measures and weights, the minting of coins, the trireme, etc”. All of these inventions belonged to a local tradition, and in order to increase the popularity of the home city, the citizens highlighted for what they were famous. In the midst of this patriotism the multiple divergences in the attribution of the true *heuremata* were born⁴⁰.

According to the scholiast on Dionysius Thrax 160 Hilgard⁴¹, Palamedes was introduced as an inventor by Stesichorus (Στησίχοδος δὲ ἐν δεύτερῳ Ὀρεστείᾳ τὸν Παλαμήδην φησὶν εὑρηκέναι (*scil. τὰ στοιχεῖα*), and it has been supposed that the myth of Palamedes was tied with one of the two works by our lyric⁴².

Nonetheless, it is evident that Palamedes does not appear in this first apogee of lyrics as he does from Pindar onwards, where our hero, and not Ulysses, carries the epithets of σοφός κυριώτερος. Furthermore, as W. B. Stanford has well pointed out, “Odysseus was not neglected after the decline of the epic style⁴³”. Lyrics like Alcman, Archilochus, Solon and Theognis still considered the positive traits of Odysseus in their works. All in all, though, when we speak about Palamedes in the lyrics, we must never separate him from the development of the myth of Odysseus⁴⁴. The case of Pindar throws light on the evolution about which we are speaking. Effectively, from Ael. Aristides’ *testimonium* (II 339 Dind.) which says καίτοι τίς οὐκ ἀν φῆσειν οὐτωσὶ πολλὴν είναι τὴν ἀλογίαν, ὅντα μὲν αὐτὸν (= Παλαμήδεα) κυριώτερον τοῦ Ὀδυσσέως εἰς σοφίας λόγον, ὡς ἔφη Πίνδαρος, εἰθ' ἡττηθῆναι ύπὸ τοῦ χείρονος (fr. 260), hatred emerges and not just Ulysses’ vengeance towards Palamedes. Pindar hated Odysseus and admired the figure of Ajax. Homer’s favourite hero became the one Pindar most

39. Cf. A. KLEINGÜNTHER, *op. cit.*, p. 24-25.

40. However, maybe the main reason which justifies the lyrics’ new conception of our “hero” should be found in relation with the disdain for Ulysses due to his intentional and gross character, and that he was an enemy of Law and laws, and as a consequence, in the enhancement of the mythological people who did not play a decisive role in Homer or in the cyclic poems, like in the case of Palamedes.

41. Cf. the extensive scholia to the Dionysius Thrax’ *Techne*, which were edited by A. HILGARD, *Scholia in Dionysii Thracis Artem Grammaticam, recensuit et apparatus criticum indicesque adiecit Alfredus Hilgard*, Lipsiae 1901.

42. See also F. JOUAN, *Euripide et les légendes des Chants Cypriens*, Paris 1966, p. 360, who dares state that Palamedes was mentioned in the *Nostoi*, the *Aegymios* and the *Oresteia* by Stesichorus, and that nonetheless “rien ne permet de dire si ce motif figurait dans l’une ou l’autres de ces œuvres”.

43. W. B. STANFORD, *The Ulysses Theme*, Oxford 1954, “Growing Hostility” p. 90-100.

44. The reasons for this seem, other than those already mentioned, to lie in the fact that Pindar belonged to the Aeolic race, and therefore he admired the austere Doric style and also with the fact that in the court of Hiero of Syracuse he came up against the malicious rival poets that had a lot in common with Ulysses.

loathed. Furthermore, the indirect testimonies of Stesichorus and Pindar about Palamedes serve as an illustrative example of the modification of certain legends by aristocratic poets of Delphic-Apollonian mentality, like Pindar and Stesichorus⁴⁵.

Therefore, if the symbolism of the aforementioned games is recognised, it becomes obvious that they are an authentic mythical element. In fact, besides their festive meaning and connotations with childhood, knucklebones and perhaps dice contain, as said, another symbol: the idea of randomness and uncertainty and a tie with cleromancy. So, A. Brélich⁴⁶ indicates that this invention by Palamedes possibly has a deep cultural root in cleromancy. Good proof of this hypothesis lies in the fact that according to Pausanias (II, 20, 3), the temple of Tyche in Argos conserved a die that Palamedes dedicated to the goddess.

However, it is possible to pinpoint the inspiration for these remarks, by indicating that when the Greeks contemplated Polygnotus' representation of the paintings in the Cnidian Lesche at Delphi⁴⁷, which depicted Hades and a series of heroes, including Palamedes who was certainly noticeable, they thought about premature death, symbolised by gambling. These games were a kind of omen of the fate that befitted them.

As in the case of other inventions by Palamedes⁴⁸, it is necessary to ask if dice and chance games were attributions that constituted the original *corpus* of this hero, or if they were added in later times. The key lies in the discovery of a die from the middle of the seventh century B.C.: it is of unusual size, and embossed with a mythical portrait of Palamedes⁴⁹. This die, the oldest known until now, was perhaps consecrated to a sanctuary or buried near a dead person.

S. Karouzou's⁵⁰ hypothesis is that during this period the myth was initially established and had a great influence on figurative arts, and that the figure of Palamedes was gradually included in a long list of inventions. To grasp the popularity of this invention attributed to Palamedes, it is sufficient to read Eustace, *Od. I 107*, where he speaks of a *Palamedeion abakion*⁵¹.

A. Kleingünther opposes this view when he states that chance (and other) games are examples of inventions added *a posteriori*. In order to resolve this thorny issue, it is advisable to follow the very plausible opinion of E. D. Phillips⁵² that dice and draughts (as well as the alphabet and other inventions attributed to Palamedes) had already been represented in the

45. In this point we follow the theories outlined by J. DEFRADAS, *Les thèmes de la propagande delphique*, Paris 1954.

46. Cf. A. BRELICH, *Gli eroi greci*, Roma 1978, p. 168-169.

47. Cf. R.K. KEBRIC, *The paintings in the Cnidian Lesche at Delphi and their historical context*, Leiden 1983.

48. Cf. J. A. CLÚA, *op. cit.*, p. 72. See as well, M. DETIENNE, *L'écriture d'Orphée*, Paris 1989, p. 126-127.

49. See S. KAROUZOU, "Der Erfinder des Würfels. Das älteste griechische mythische Porträt", *MDAI* 98, Berlin 1973, p. 55-65. For other dice found during the seventh century B.C., see R.M.G. DAWKINS, *Artemis Orthia. The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta*, London 1929, p. 179-181, and p. 201-205.

50. Cf. S. KAROUZOU, *ibid.*

51. Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, v. 195 and ff. mentions Palamedes playing – dice with Protesilaus. Moreover, according to Philostratus, Palamedes had invented the "tesserae" in Aulis. Lastly, it should be noted that in Troy the stone upon which Palamedes would play with dice was exhibited (Eustace, 11.2.308; Hom., *Od. 1.107*).

52. E. D. PHILLIPS, "A suggestion about Palamedes", *AJPh* 78, 1957, p. 267-278 (esp. p. 270 and ff.).

Minoan-Mycenaean tradition. However, the ancient origin of these inventions agrees perfectly with the sombre nature of dice and chance games befitting a “titan-hero” like Palamedes who, according to M. Delcourt⁵³, was fully anchored in the heroic period.

However, it would be unfair not to mention that divination by pebbles or dice was discovered by Athena. In fact, in Athens, Athena *Skiras* was the goddess who presided over the scenes where warriors used dice or knucklebones⁵⁴. Furthermore, near Eleusis there was a place dedicated to Athena *Skiras* for religious or mantic reasons, whereas mythology placed luck under the control of Hermes, the god of randomness, chance and fate.

As a first conclusion, it could be said that gambling belonged to the cultured and sacred sphere and that it had a strong tie with the idea of chance and uncertainty and cleromancy. In the Greek context, both Athena (the goddess of wisdom, inspiration, civilization, strategic warfare, the arts, crafts and skill), and Palamedes were inventors of games connected to a cultural and cultural field, while luck, randomness and chance were the realm of Hermes in common mythology.

Therefore, as noted and according to a fragment by Sophocles (Soph. fr. 479 Radt), πεττεία was supposedly invented by Palamedes, Odysseus’ enemy. However, such an image would be especially denoted by Theocritus if, as it seems, in *Idyll VI* Daphnis personified Odysseus. Here, in my opinion, is the key to the interpretation. R. Hunter⁵⁵ pointed out this hypothesis, which I believe corresponds to Daphnis’ witty or deceitful character, and is in line with how Odysseus appears throughout the *Odyssey*. Thus, by talking about board games (πεττεία) and Odysseus, it follows that those who read the passage in Theocritus, a connoisseur of Palamedes’ invention, would also think about the cleromantic and random nature of what Galatea wanted to achieve with Polyphemus. The exact words of R. Hunter⁵⁶ on the real possibility of a connection between Daphnis and Odysseus and, in turn, Odysseus and Palamedes and this board game (πεττεία) are: “Does Daphnis take the role of Odysseus? This would certainly fit his shifting mode of speech and his anonymity (Odysseus was after all “No Man”), and gives particular point to Polyphemus’ dismissal of the prophecies of Telemos”. Consequently, if Gow’s commentary states that the circumstances in which this board piece “was moved cannot be further determined”, the twofold interpretation of the expression being analysed becomes apparent: a mixture between randomness or cleromancy (connotation of χλήρος, of a random nature, in order to try one’s luck) on the one hand, and, on the other, a “sign of despair or frustration”.

53. M. DELCOURT, “The Last Giants”, *HR* 4, 1965, p. 209-242.

54. For the relationship between Athena and divination dice, see Zenobius, *Proverbs*, v. 75.

55. Cf. R. HUNTER, *Theocritus. A selection*, Cambridge1999, p. 246- 247.

56. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 246.