

AGATHON AND KASSANDRA (IG IX.1² 4.1750)*

Abstract: The author discusses an inscription of the late fourth or early third century BC carved on a bronze plaque found in the first excavations at Dodona, on which a Zakynthian, by name Agathon, records a link of proxeny between himself and his family and the Epirote koinon of the Molossians, through Cassandra, the Trojan propheticess. The plaque is decorated by a prominent phallus with testicles, which the author interprets as referring to the continuity, past and future, of the *γενεά* of Agathon. Other explanations of the whole piece have been proposed, and the present essay is intended only to explore the possibility of this interpretation.

THE small but striking object that forms the subject of this study has been known for well over a century, and the enigmatic inscription it carries has been variously understood. The different interpretations take account of the problems raised by it, but an acceptable solution of the whole remains a desideratum: I stress ‘the whole’ because it is in the concatenation of all the individual strands that the main obstacle to understanding the plaque lies. Like the inscription from Vitrinitza concerning the Lokrian Maidens, and, in the literary tradition, the *Alexandra* of Lykophron, Agathon’s plaque belongs to that elusive world in which legend, tradition, personal intention and historical reality, combine to leave us in the dark. This article therefore is essentially exploratory.

First, the object itself. It is a perfectly preserved bronze plaque, 20 cm high, with palmette-finials and a central akroterion, with a small central hole for suspension below the akroterion; two larger holes at the bottom left and right corners kept the plaque flat against a support, probably a wall (see PLATE 1). It was found by C. Carapanos during his excavations at the sanctuary of Zeus at Dodona in 1874/75, and was published in his *Dodone et ses Ruines*.¹ Most Dodonaean documents were inscribed on bronze or lead – the manumissions, most of the proxeny decrees, the dedications – the oracular questions being, as was natural, scratched on soft lead, together with the reply, folded by the officials of the shrine. Our bronze plaque is exceptional in being architectural in form, and not a simple rectangle; and it is also more skilfully inscribed and finished than most documents from Dodona. It is also exceptional among votive offerings in general in having been *sent* to its destination (τόδε σοι δῶρον πέμπω παρ’ ἐμοῦ).²

Secondly, the date. The letter-forms show that the document belongs to approximately the last third of the fourth century BC and are an excellent example of West Greek writing of that

* I am most grateful to the Directorate of the National Museum in Athens for providing me with a photograph of the plaque many years ago, and for giving me permission to publish it. I must here apologize for my inordinate delay in doing so. I am especially indebted to Simon Hornblower and Thomas Corsten for their comments.

¹ C. Carapanos, *Dodone et ses Ruines* (Paris 1878; one vol. of text and one of plates). The plaque, vol. 1, p. 39, no.1, is reproduced in vol. 2, pl. xxii, and discussed by E. Egger in vol. 1, pp. 196–9 (= *BCH* 1 (1877) 254–8, the first publication), now in the Salle Carapanos in the National Museum in Athens (E.M. 803). The main discussions of the plaque are those by Juliette Davreux (*La légende de la prophétesse Cassandre d’après les textes et les monuments* (Bibl. Univ. Liège 94, 1942), without photograph) and by the late S. Dakares in his *Γενεαλογικοί Μῦθοι τῶν Μολοσσῶν* (Βιβλ. τῆς ἐν Ἀθήναις Ἀρχαιολ. Ἐτ. 33, Athens 1964), see pp. 102ff. and pl. 4;

the same author’s *Δωδώνη* (Ioannina 1972, etc.) is an excellent guide to the site, with photographs of bronze objects, but not of our plaque. The text itself is now republished as *IG IX.1² 4.1750* (and pl. xlii; see below, n.9). See also R. Lane Fox, *The Search for Alexander* (London 1980), opp. p. 102 (cf. p. 100). In his discussion of the phallus, A. Greifenhagen gave only a small detail of the text: see below, n.19 and p. 32. The pedimental type of monument is paralleled by the (far more finished and sophisticated) bronze plaques containing proxeny decrees from Kerkyra: P.M. Fraser and T. Rönne, *Boeotian and West Greek Tombstones* (Lund 1957) pl. 29 with p. 180. For a sober study of the whole range of Dodonaean problems, see H.W. Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus* (Oxford 1967) 1–163, who refers to our plaque (at 127 n.30), but does not discuss it.

² For παρ’ ἐμοῦ, see below, p. 38 with n.56.

period.³ The later fourth-century date is certainly appropriate to the historical context, whether or not we associate it with Pyrrhos, for the κοινὸν τῶν Μολοσσῶν, under its tribal king, was then in control of Dodona.⁴

Thirdly, the metre. The dedication, after the characteristic opening invocation, Θεός : τύχα, conventional in this form at Dodona, begins in an anapaestic or dochmiac rhythm, at least as far as line 3, and perhaps as far as line 4, where the metre is unmistakable, and in which individual metrical units are separated by two full points, to mark breaks. Beyond that point metre is hardly identifiable, although there is an approximate repetition of the same rhythm in lines 5 and 8, and it is also possible to see, perhaps to imagine, dimly metrical patterns in the other lines.

The plaque is decorated in the lower central area by a phallus *in natura*. We shall consider later what significance beyond the purely decorative this may have.

The plaque is described as a δῶρον of Agathon, son of Echephylos, who identifies himself and his family as Ζακύνθιοι, and as one of the ‘proxenoi of the Molossians and their Allies’, to Zeus, Lord of Dodona. The opening invocation, Ζεῦ, Δωδώνης μεδέων, is adapted from the lines in the *Iliad* in which Achilles addresses Zeus, in just those terms.⁵ The circumstances of the gift are discussed fully below. We may provisionally assume that it was sent to Dodona on the occasion of a renewal of the proxeny-status which was hereditary in the family. The text is as follows:

Θεός : τύχα
 Ζεῦ Δωδώνης μεδέ-
 ων, τόδε σοι δῶρον πέ-
 μπω παρ' ἔμοῦ: Ἄγαθων
 5 Ἐχεφύλου καὶ γενεὰ
 πρόξενοι Μολοσσῶν
 καὶ συμμάχων ἐν τ-
 ριάκοντα γενεαῖς
 ἐκ Τρωιάς Κασσάν-
 10 δρας φάλλος γενεά
 Ζακύνθιοι.

³ The fourth-century date is accepted on Carapanos (n.1) 39, but *ibid.* 196 (= *BCH* 1 (1877) 255), Egger said only that the letters seemed to indicate a date earlier than the destruction of the temple by the Aitolians. Dakares, *Γενεαλογικοί Μῦθοι* (n.1) 112 n.1, was anxious to assign the Trojan παραδόσεις to the reign of Pyrrhos, whom he associates with the history of the island (see below, p. 31 and nn.51, 53). Davreux (n.1) 85ff. accepts a later date.

⁴ For the complex history of this period of the Molossian koinon (c. 330-272), see the clear account by G.N. Cross, *Epirus* (Cambridge 1932) 20ff.; also P. Franke, *Alt-Epirus und das Königtum der Molosser* (Kallmunnz 1955), esp. ch.2, and *id.* *Die antiken Münzen des Epirus* (2 vols, Wiesbaden 1961) 2.249ff.; N.G.L. Hammond, *Epirus* (Oxford 1967) 525ff., and, for the later period, P. Cabanes, *L'Épire de la mort de Pyrrhos à la conquête romaine (272-167)* (Paris 1976), with epigraphical appendix, containing the Dodonaean texts relevant to the fourth century; A. Giovannini, *Untersuchungen über die Natur und die Anfänge der bundesstaatlichen Sympolitie in Griechenland (Hypomnemata 33, Göttingen 1971) 67-70, 94-9; and, most recently, S. Funke, *Aiakidenmythos und Epeirotisches Königtum* (Stuttgart 2000; diss. Köln, 1995), which suffers (like Davreux, Dakares, Mazzoldi (below)) from the absence of a general*

index: see especially 102ff., 127ff. F. Papazoglou rightly pointed out ('Inscription hellénistique de Lyncestide', *ZAnt* 20 (1970) 118ff.) that our plaque cannot (*pace* Franke and Hammond) determine the date of the establishment of the organization of the Σύμμαχοι τῶν Μολοσσῶν since Agathon is referring to the remote past as well as to the present, and is not employing strict chronological terminology. For a full account of the literary tradition of Ajax's assault on the xoanon of Athena and the rape of Cassandra, see S. Mazzoldi's useful work, *Cassandra, La Vergine e l'Indovina* (Filologia e Critica 88, Pisa and Rome 2001) 31-61. The details of the evolution of the associated themes of the assault of Ajax on the xoanon of Athena and the rape of Cassandra are not relevant here, since by the time of Agathon the notion of the rape was firmly established, whatever ambiguities of representation and interpretation between the theft of the xoanon and the rape may have existed earlier. Cf. also n.13 for the iconographical evidence.

⁵ *Il.* 16.233-5:

Ζεῦ, ἄνα, Δωδωναίε, Πελασγικέ, τηλόθι ναίων,
 Δωδώνης μεδέων δυσχεμεῖρον· ἀμφὶ δὲ Σελλοὶ
 σοὶ ναίουσ' ὑποφῆται ἀνιπτόποδες χαμαιεῦναι.

Cf. Strabo 221.

This I translate, without (except in lines 1 and 4, as indicated on the plaque, retaining *γενεά* in Greek) punctuation: ‘God! Good Fortune! Zeus lord over Dodona I send this gift to you from me: Agathon the son of Echephylos and his “*γενεά*” proxenoi of the Molossians and of (their) allies throughout thirty “*γενεαί*” from Troy the “*γενεά*” of Cassandra Zakynthians.’ Egger translated this: ‘Zeus, souverain de Dodone, Je vous envoie ce cadeau de moi, Agathon, fils du Échéphylos, et ma famille, proxenoi des Molosses et de leurs alliés durant trente générations, depuis Cassandre la Troyenne, nous Zacynthiens de naissance.’ Thus, for him, *γενεά* in line 5 meant ‘family’, and in line 10 ‘by birth’, i.e. τὸ γένος, which is not impossible, but an oblique case would be natural (if that term can be employed in such a linguistic maze), and Egger, aware of the ambiguity, commented ‘les mots καὶ γενεά sont, à ce qu’il semble, pour καὶ ἡ γενεά μου ou ἡ ἐμὴ γενεά, et le mot γενεά n’a pas ici le même sens que dans les lignes 8 et 10, sans que cette diversité puisse laisser le moindre doute sur l’interprétation’ (‘de doute’ in Carapanos (n.1) 2); similarly in *BCH* he prints in line 5 *γενεά* (*sic*) and in line 10 *γενεᾶ* (*sic*). He interpreted the document as indicating that Agathon and his ancestors had been proxenoi of the Molossians for thirty generations, and suggested that the Epirote tribe might have had a list of proxenoi going back to Trojan times, just as there were lists of priests and civic benefactors in various cities stretching back into the remote past. He rightly dismissed Pausanias’ report that during Cassandra’s captivity at Mycenae she had borne twin sons to Agamemnon, who were murdered by Aigisthos,⁶ as irrelevant to the present context, and therefore, since Agathon could not claim to be an ἀπόγονος of the barren prophetess, he regarded the reference to ‘Trojan Cassandra’ – for so he understood ἐκ Τρωϊας Κασσάνδρας – simply as an indication of the date, in terms of the fall of Troy. He made no suggestion about the phallus.

The following year W. Christ published an article in which he correctly dated the inscription to the ‘Demosthenische Zeit’, identified the metrical pattern, and interpreted the document very differently.⁷ He regarded Agathon as referring not to the thirtieth generation of Zakynthian proxenoi, *a priori* an impossibility, he maintained, but to himself as a priest of Apollo at Zakynthos, and the thirty *γενεαί* to Agathon’s predecessors as hereditary priests of Apollo, descended from Cassandra. He based this interpretation on (1) the connection of Cassandra with Apollo, touched on briefly by Aeschylus and later by Lykophron: the god had attempted to seduce her with an offer of the gift of prophecy, and she had accepted the gift, but refused her share of the bargain, with the result that Apollo decreed that she should retain the gift of prophecy, but that her prophecies would never be believed,⁸ and (2), the fact that Apollo, who appears regularly on the obverse of Zakynthian coins, was the chief god of Zakynthos.⁹ Agathon was therefore, he argued, hereditary

⁶ Paus. 2.16.6 (of the tombs of Teledamos and Pelops at Mycenae): τούτους γὰρ τεκεῖν διδύμους Κασσάνδραν φασί [i.e. local tradition], νηπίους δὲ ἔτι ὄντας ἐπικατέσφαξε τοῖς γονεῦσιν Αἰγισθος. This was, of course, not accepted by the inhabitants of Amyklai and other sites in which Cassandra was recognized as a cult-figure: see below, n.23.

⁷ ‘Eine metrische Inschrift von Dodona’, *Rh.Mus.* 33 (1878) 610-13. On 611 he commented, regarding a list of hereditary proxenoi as suggested by Egger, ‘Mögen die Alten auch ungläubliches in der Fiction von Ahnen und Stammhaltern geleistet haben, in einer rein politischen Sache waren doch ihrer Phantasie bestimmte Grenzen gesetzt.’

⁸ *Ag.* 1203ff., esp. 1207-8:

Χό. ἦ καὶ τέκνων εἰς ἔργον ἤλθετον νόμωι;

Κά. ξυναινέσασα Λοξίαν ἐμυσσάμην.

Lyc. Alex. 348: ἐγὼ δὲ τλήμων ἡ γάμους ἀρνούμενη...;

352-3: ἡ τὸν Θοραῖον Πτώιον Ὠρίτην θεὸν

λίπτοντ’ ἀλέκτρων ἐκβαλοῦσα δεμνίων, κτλ.

⁹ See B.V. Head, *Historia Numorum* (2nd edn, London 1911) 429-30 (Christ (n.7) 612 is evidently referring to the coins, although he does not expressly say so). See also Plut. *Dion.* 23: τῶι δ’ Ἀπόλλωνι θυσίαν μεγαλοπρεπῆ παρασκευάσας ὁ Δίων ἐπόμπευσε μετὰ τῶν στρατιωτῶν κεκοσμημέναν ταῖς πανοπλίαις πρὸς τὸ ἱερόν: there follows a brief account of the extravagant entertainment provided by Dion for the Zakynthians. For the coin with the legend ΔΙΩΝ alleged to have been struck by Dion at Zakynthos, see the decisive criticism by C.M. Kraay, *Greek Coinage and History* (London 1969) 3-5. The meagre epigraphical harvest from Zakynthos has barely increased in the last century from the ten inscriptions (two on lead bullets) given by Dittenberger (1897) in *IG IX.1*, pp. 135-6 to eighteen (of which only three are not in the earlier edition) in the new edition (2001), *IG IX.1*² 4.1730-47; our plaque is no.1750, with bibliography, but without comment.

priest of Apollo, descended, in family tradition, from the union of Apollo and Cassandra. That interpretation is unacceptable, first because the relationship between the god and Cassandra was a hostile one – she rejected him, there was no union, and therefore a priest of Apollo could not have been regarded as a linear descendant of the pair; and, secondly, because if Agathon had been hereditary ἱερεύς of Apollo, it would have been natural for him to express his tenure of the office, as others did in such a situation, by some phrase such as ἱερατεύσας ἀπό followed by the name of the deity.¹⁰ In fact he says that he is the, or a, current holder of the office of proxenos of the Molossians. Of the phallus Christ said that it ‘probably had a connection with the reason for the dedication’ (p. 611: ‘Die Buchstaben der 3 letzten Zeilen sind in der Mitte durch ein männliches Glied von einander getrennt, welches wohl mit dem Grund der Widmung in Zusammenhang steht’), but did not venture further.

The inscription excited no further interest, except for a brief note by Wilamowitz on the metre,¹¹ until the appearance of Juliette Davreux’ *La légende de la prophétesse Cassandre d’après les textes et les monuments*.¹² She retained the later date for the inscription, the third century BC, as suggested by Egger, and this enabled her to offer a new explanation of the whole. She maintained that in line 9 ἐκ could not be understood as the temporal preposition, meaning ‘since’, but must refer to origin, that is, to descent from Trojan Cassandra. She rightly held that the two murdered twins mentioned by Pausanias were irrelevant, and therefore turned to the other main legend concerning Cassandra, that of her rape by Ajax. That legend, familiar from Attic and other vase-paintings, from the Archaic period onwards, and from a long series of later gems, represents her faced by a threatening Ajax, in various defensive poses, clinging to the ζόανον for protection.¹³ The subsequent atonement of the crime of Ajax, by the virgins of Lokris, was perpetuated by the survival of the ritual of expiation into Hellenistic times. The Lokrians were required by an oracle of Apollo delivered at Delphi to expiate the crime by the annual despatch to Troy, for the space of a thousand years, of two East Lokrian virgins, whom the inhabitants of Troy were expected to stone to death as soon as they landed, but if the virgins avoided their fate they were allowed to serve in the temple of Athena at Ilion. That remarkable and complex story is told in a tantalisingly fragmentary and allusive manner by various writers,

¹⁰ Records of hereditary priesthoods are essentially a feature of the second and third centuries AD, a very different environment from that of our plaque. However, they show the developed form of the practice, and are worth noting in the present context. Egger, *ap. Carapanos* (n.1) 1.198 (= *BCH*, p.257), already pointed to the various Lakonian priesthoods of Imperial date, in *IG* V.1.537, where the honorand, Πόπλ. Μέμμιος Δεξιμαχος Πρατολάου, is described as ἱερεὺς μβ’ ἀπὸ Διοσκούρων; his date is c. mid second century AD (see the complicated family-stemma ranging over two and a half centuries, given at *IG*, loc.cit.); *ibid.* 328, where the honorand may be [-ἱερέα--ἀ]πὸ Ποσειδῶνος; *ibid.* 530, where M. Αὐρ. Παγκρατίδας Ἑλληνικοῦ is honoured by ὁ πανάριστος M. Αὐρ. Ἀριστοκράτης τοῦ Δαμαινέτου, ἱερεὺς κατὰ γένος, μὴ ἀπὸ Ἡρακλέους, μδ’ ἀπὸ Διοσκούρων; *ibid.* 469, etc., T. Κλ. Ἀριστοκράτης ὁ ἱερεὺς καὶ ἀπόγονος Ποσειδῶνος. The vast family-tree of Licinnia Flavilla of Cibra at Oenoanda (see the detailed description of this notable monument in *Anat. Stud.* 46 (1996) 111-44, a reference I owe to Thomas Corsten) of about the time of Caracalla, is slightly different. The list begins with the Spartan κτίστης, Kleandros, who had allegedly been sent to Oenoanda by Amyklas, and then jumps straight to the

first century AD. It is presumably a genuine, partly fabricated, family document. In the fourth century AD Synesius, proud, as always, of his Spartan descent, says (*Ep.* 41.239 Garzya (Budé edn, Paris 2000) = *Epist. Gr.* p. 667 Hercher): ἀναμνησθήτε γὰρ ὑμεῖς τίς ἦν πρῶτη πρὸς ἐμὲ τὸν εἰ μηδὲν ἄλλο, ἐξ ἐκείνων γενόμενον, ὧν ἀπ’ Εὐρυσθέδους τοῦ καταγαγόντος Δωριέας εἰς Σπάρτην μέχρι τοῦμοῦ πατρὸς αἰ διαδοχαὶ ταῖς δημοσίαις ἐνεκολάφθησαν κύρβεσιν. *Cf.* below, n.34.

¹¹ *Griechische Verskunst* (Berlin 1921) 373-4: surprisingly, Wilamowitz (*en passant*) was satisfied, or half-satisfied, with the explanation that Agathon was descended from Teledamos, one of Cassandra’s twin offspring by Agamemnon (see above, n.6), though admitting that Aigisthos had murdered both (νηπιούς ὄντας, Paus.).

¹² Davreux (n.1), esp. 85ff.; the volume was apparently completed by 1933.

¹³ As noted above (n.4), the traditions regarding the circumstances of the rape of Cassandra in literature and art are not relevant here. The archaeological evidence is clearly analysed and illustrated by Davreux, in Part II of her work, and by Mazzoldi (n.4) 40-5, with the list of plates at end (321 n.1, 323-4), arranged as listed in *LIMC* s.v. Cassandra (vol. 7, Addenda).

but especially through the mouth of Cassandra herself, by Lykophron.¹⁴ We know that this act of atonement is historical from various pieces of evidence, particularly from the inscribed plaque of the early third century BC, found in Western Lokris, at Vitriniza (Oianthea), which records the terms on which at Narukeia in Eastern Lokris, the γένος of the Αἰόνττειοι of ἡ πόλις ἁ Ναρυκαίων, the tribe which claimed Aias (Ajax) as its eponym, takes over the despatch of the maidens to Troy, in exchange for various privileges.¹⁵ Such is the story, and Juliette Davreux said that the Agathon of our plaque was a descendant of Cassandra from that act of rape, and that that was why the father was not mentioned alongside Cassandra. She further maintained that when Agathon made his gift to Zeus in the third (*sic*) century BC, the thousand years of expiation had terminated (thirty generations = 1,000 years), and that this was the significance of the figure of thirty generations. She suggested that the phallus supported this interpretation of the plaque in terms of the Lokrian Maidens, as indicating the ineffective role of Ajax.¹⁶ However, I see no material connection between the two situations. Agathon was a Zakynthian proxenos of the Molossians – not of the Lokrians, who are not mentioned in the inscription – and the Molossians had no more to do with either Lokri, or the expiation of the Lokrian Maidens, than, so far as we know, Zakynthos had. Further, there is no suggestion that there was any issue of the rape.¹⁷ Consequently it is difficult to see any specific connection between our plaque and the plight of the Lokrian Maidens.¹⁸

The significance of the phallus itself was examined by A. Greifenhagen in an article in which he discussed the development of representations of that organ, including our plaque.¹⁹ He pointed out that the phallus, represented *in natura*, and not in a state of erection, as with most traditional herms and priapic monuments, was represented on various dedicated objects from the late Archaic period onwards, and claimed that it was a sign of the human life-force: 'es ist das Zeichen der fort und fort zeugenden, sich immer erneuernden Lebenskraft'.²⁰ Greifenhagen did not elaborate this with reference to the plaque, but it seems a fair inference that while the thirty generations might justify the presence of the phallus here as an expression of *Lebenskraft*, it could hardly have any connection on that account with Cassandra. Thus while his claim that the phallus *in natura* represented, or might represent, the continuum of the life-force is true, that does not explain the whole complex of ideas embodied in the inscription.

¹⁴ *Alex.* 1141-72.

¹⁵ *IG IX.12* 3.706 (= E. Schwyzer, *Dialectorum graecarum exempla epigraphica potiora* (Leipzig 1923, repr. Hildesheim 1960) 366), for which see A. Wilhelm's classic article, 'Die lokrische Mädcheninschrift', *JÖAI* 14 (1911) 163-256 (= *Abhandlungen und Beiträge zur griechischen Inschriftenkunde* (Leipzig 1984) 1.373-466). I need not go further into this remarkable, perhaps unique, fusion of history and legend, but may refer to Momigliano's excellent discussion, 'The Locrian maidens and the date of Lycophron's *Alexander*', *CQ* 39 (1945) 49-53 (= *Secondo contributo alla storia degli studi classici* (Rome 1960) 446-53); see also the criticisms by Jacoby, in his commentary on Timaeus F146. On the Lokrian Maidens, see also H.W. Parke (n.1) 111-12; D.D. Hughes, *Human Sacrifice in Ancient Greece* (London 1991) 166-84 (summarized in *SEG* 42.481*), and Mazzoldi (n.4) 52-60, who discusses the various hypotheses regarding the still baffling historical background and the ritual nature of the entire episode. For the identification of Vitriniza with Oianthea, see L. Lérat, *Les Locriens de l'Ouest* (Paris 1952) 1.110-14 and 2.205-20.

¹⁶ Davreux (n.1) 87: 'Une troisième hypothèse reste à envisager: l'ancêtre d'Agathon serait le fils issu d'Ajax et

de Cassandre. Cela expliquerait pourquoi Agathon ne donne que le nom de l'aieule ...' with n.2: 'La figure phallique qui orne l'inscription suggère aussi cette interprétation.' However, I do not believe that this is the correct explanation of the phallus: see below, p. 39.

¹⁷ The existence of the γένος τῶν Αἰαντείων at Narukeia can hardly be cited in support of such an issue, since that represents a wider genealogical relationship than could be expressed by a single line of descent (even if it existed); cf. Wilhelm (n.15) 172 (= *Abhandlungen* 1.382): see, however, Lérat (n.15) 2.10 n.11.

¹⁸ So also Dakares, *Γενεαλογικοί Μῦθοι* (n.1) 105-6.

¹⁹ '«Hermae Pentelici cum capitibus aeneis», *AA* (1964) 628-38 (to which John Boardman originally drew my attention); cf. already the very detailed analysis by H. Herter, *RE* s.v. Phallos, esp. col. 1736, where he lists our plaque without comment under the 'apotropaic'; the vast range of interfusing and ambiguous concepts inherent in representations of the organ over the centuries notwithstanding, this seems to me to misunderstand the essence of our piece, which symbolizes continuity.

²⁰ Col. 636.

S. Dakares' monograph on the genealogical legends of the Molossians, embodying a lifelong familiarity with Epirote history and with Dodona, appeared at about the same time as Greifenhagen's article.²¹ Dakares maintained that the plaque belonged to the period of the extension of Molossian rule in Epirus, under the Aeacids, and more particularly to the reign of Pyrrhos (292-272 BC), and he interpreted the inscription in the following way: the meeting of Aeneas and his Trojan followers, who had come from Ambrakia to Dodona with Helenos, the twin brother of Cassandra and husband of Andromache, was linked in Ambrakian tradition (perhaps stemming from the pen of Pyrrhos' court-historian, Proxenos²²) with the role of Cassandra, the prophetess, as the first priestess of the sanctuary, as attested, he maintained, by the Zakynthian plaque itself. He stressed that in the *Iliad* there is no reference to the prophetic powers of Cassandra, who appears simply as the beautiful daughter of Priam (*Il.* 13.365-6, εἶδος ἀρίστην, Κασσάνδραν) and that otherwise her fortunes are linked with those of Agamemnon, in the Peloponnese, a tradition clearly not relevant here.²³

Dakares regarded Cassandra's role as the first priestess at Dodona as a strictly Molossian tradition; the earlier occupants of Dodona, the Thesprotians, did not make use of the Trojan legends: their cult revolved round the prophetic doves (πελειάδες), known to Herodotus from information provided at the sanctuary by the priestesses called the 'Doves', who appear with the oak-tree whence issued the oracle, as a trio on bronze coinage of c. 300 BC. According to Dakares, these were replaced by the pair Cassandra and Helenos, he too a prophetic seer.²⁴ It was in recognition of the bestowal of the award of proxeny on Agathon by the Molossian symmarchy that he traced his ancestry back to the prophetess who was also the first priestess; and he was able to reckon his descent from Cassandra by means of the accepted reckoning by generations.²⁵ He linked this reconstruction with the archaeological data for the Trojan War, which he believed to be reflected with some accuracy in the thirty generations recorded by Agathon in the later fourth century. It is possible to feel some doubt about this element in his reconstruction, but the chronological link with the Trojan War is expressly stated and can hardly be doubted, though subject to various other considerations.

Since the publication of Dakares' work the plaque has not received much attention, and in re-examining it I am mainly concerned not with the legendary Cassandra but with the human

²¹ See n.1 above. For the role of Cassandra and the interpretation of the plaque, see 102ff. and the further references below.

²² *FGrHist* 703. The meeting of Aeneas and Helenos is transmitted by Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.51.1: ἐκ δὲ Ἀμβρακίας Ἀγχίσης μὲν τὰς ναῦς ἔχων παρὰ γῆν κομιζόμενος εἰς Βουθρωτὸν λιμένα τῆς Ἠπείρου κατάγεται. Αἰνεΐας δὲ καὶ οἱ ἀκμαιότατοι σὺν αὐτῶι τοῦ στρατοῦ διανύσαντες ἡμερῶν δυεῖν ὁδὸν εἰς Δωδώνην ἀφικνοῦνται χρῆσόμενοι τῶι θεῶι καὶ καταλαμβάνουσιν αὐτόθι Τρῶας τοὺς σὺν Ἑλένωι. The text continues as quoted below in n.57.

²³ For the varied evidence relating to the cult of Cassandra and Agamemnon in localities in the Peloponnese (especially Amyklai), see Dakares, *Γενεαλογικοί Μῦθοι* (n.1) 106-8, particularly 107 n.2; *LIMC* 7.1 956-7.

²⁴ *Hdt.* 2.55.1: ταῦτα μὲν νυν τῶν ἐν Θήβησι ἱρέων ἤκουον, τάδε δὲ Δωδωναίων φασὶ αἰ προμάντιες· δύο πελειάδας μελαίνας ἐκ Θηβέων τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἀναπατάμενας τὴν μὲν αὐτέων ἐς Λιβύην, τὴν δὲ παρὰ σφέας ἀπικέσθαι, κτλ. The bronze coins are Franke

(*Münzen*, n.4) pl.15, V 41 and 64. The complex literary evidence regarding the oak and the doves of Dodona from Herodotus onwards is investigated by Parke (n.1) 55ff. Unpublished oracular responses shed further light on this tradition.

²⁵ Proclus' summary of the *Cypria* (Bernabé, *PEG* 38-43 = Davies, *EGF* 30-4) contains the brief statement regarding the preliminaries of the Trojan War: ἐπειτα δὲ Ἀφροδίτης ὑποθεμένης ναυπηγείται, καὶ Ἑλένος περὶ τῶν μελλόντων αὐτῶι προθεσπίζει. καὶ ἡ Ἀφροδίτη Αἰνεΐαν συμπλεῖν αὐτῶι κελεύει. καὶ Κασσάνδρα περὶ τῶν μελλόντων προδηλοῖ, the earliest reference to her gift of prophecy. For the relevant lines of the *Andromache*, see especially ll. 293-300. Dakares, *Γενεαλογικοί Μῦθοι* (n.1) 68ff. (*cf.* further 111) argues at length, as others have done (see Funke (n.4) 68ff.), that the *Andromache*, with its numerous innovations of myth, was produced on behalf of, and at the court of, the Molossian Royal House. This is probably correct, but the question does not directly concern Agathon, whose link with Cassandra does not depend on the drama in any way. For the calculation by generations, see Dakares (n.1) 109-14.

Agathon. I am very much less certain about some parts of my presentation than others, and, in any case, as with all γρίφοι, riddles, oracles and Sibylline utterances, doubts must remain.

(1) First, further analysis of the various meanings of the word γενεά, is necessary; on them, I believe, Agathon plays, and this forms one of the main threads in the interpretation of the inscription. It is a noun of shifting significances and emphases, but it mostly retains the basic notion of linear descent, both ancestral and prospective, by contrast to γένος, which implies more precisely membership of a static unit, be it civic or religious, by membership, by kinship or by community of function; and the two terms occur side by side in the formula γένος καὶ γενεά, which occurs frequently in West Greek inscriptions, and especially in the inscriptions of Dodona during the Molossian period, in which it is regularly used to mean both ‘children’ and ‘descendants (= ἔκγονοι) in general’. The precise meaning in particular instances may be disputed, but in general there can be no doubt that it carries this ambiguity, replacing both ἀπόγονος and ἔκγονος of Attic and koine.²⁶ There is also no doubt that from a very early date γενεά bore the meaning of ‘nationality’ or ‘race’, with reference to ethnicity or racial kinship, but without reference to linear descent. This usage is found in Homer and in the early poets, as e.g. Περσῶν γενεά, Τυρρηνῶν γενεά, and in later verse whenever it was convenient (as on metrical, speaking, tombstones, etc.), where the word is equivalent to the prose ἔθνος or (τὸ) γένος.²⁷ Finally there is the meaning of ‘descent’ in a strictly chronological sense, a ‘generation’, usually a span of thirty or thirty-three years, as used by Herodotus and subsequent historians and chronographers.²⁸ Agathon, who uses the word three times in ten very short lines, is evidently playing on its various meanings, the elasticity of which is emphasized by Plutarch when, in his *De Defectu Oraculorum*, one speaker discusses the possibility of the word meaning ‘a year’ (ἐνιαυτός) in a passage of Hesiod.²⁹ We cannot tell whether Agathon calculated the generations *grosso modo*, or, as far as he was able to, by specific life-spans (and, in that case, whether the total was calculated to include his own (hypothetical) life-span and that of his γενεά), and whether the starting-point of his calculation with relation to Cassandra was the beginning or the end of the Trojan War.

²⁶ For Molossian examples, see *Iapoll.* 308 (Cabanes (n.4) 540 no.4 = *SGDI* 1334) 8ff.: ἔδω(μ)καν ἰσοπολειτείαν Μολοσσῶν τὸ κοινὸν Σιμίαι Ἀπολλωνιάται κα/τοικοῦντι ἐν Θε/πτίωι, αὐτῶι κα/[ῖ] γενεαὶ καὶ γέν/[ει ἐκ] γενεᾶς; *ibid.* (Cabanes) no.5, 5ff.: [-- ἔδ]οξε τ[ᾶ]ι ἐκκλησίαι τῶν / [Μολοσσῶν] Κτήσων εὐεργέτας ἐ/[στ]ι, διδὸ (?)] πολιτείαν Κτήσ/[ωνι δόμειν καὶ] γενεαῖ; *ibid.* 63 (*SEG* 26.705) (manumission): a family of manumitters, Φλευχῶ ἐλευθέρων ἀφίεν[τι] καὶ αὐ/τῶν καὶ γένος ἐκ γενεᾶς, κτλ.; *SEG* 43.332, an oracular enquiry asking περὶ γενεᾶς, i.e. ‘the prospect of offspring’. Cf. the three brief statements of proxeny-award at Lousoi, of the mid fifth century BC: *IG* V.2 387 (= M. Guarducci, *Epigrafiá greca* (Rome 1967-78) 1.122 no.3): I: πρόξενοι Λυσιατῶν· Μάδρος Βλάσας Ἀλκαίνετος, αὐτοὶ καὶ γενεά; II: προξένῳ Λυσιατῶν· Πανῆς Ἀνδρόβιος αὐτὸ καὶ γενεά; III: Πρόξενος Λουσιατῶν· Βρυχονίδας καὶ γενεά. For γενεά of preceding generations in direct descent, see e.g. *Syll.*³ 1015 (= Sokolowski, *LSAM* 73 (3rd c. BC)), 4-7: ὁ πριάμε[νο]ς [τῆ]ν ἱερητείαν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος τῆς Περγαίας πα/[ρέξ]εται ἰέρειαν ἀσπὴν ἐξ ἀσπῶν ἀμφοτέρων ἐπὶ [τρ]εῖς γενεὰς γεγενημένην κ[αὶ] πρὸς πατρός καὶ πρὸς μητρός.

²⁷ It was in this sense that Egger understood γενεά / Ζακύνθιοι in our inscription: see above, p.28. J. and L. Robert, *BE* (1965) no. 228, stated that the only sense that γενεά has ‘dans tout le grec’ is ‘descendance’; that would

only be true if ‘descendance’ is extended to include ‘race’ (= γένος), as in the examples quoted above, which is a forced extension of the term.

²⁸ See *LSJ* 9 s.v. γενεά, and the familiar passage in *Hdt.* 2.142.1: Ἐς μὲν τόσονδε τοῦ λόγου Αἰγύπτιοί τε καὶ οἱ ἱερέες ἔλεγον, ἀποδεικνύντες ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου βασιλέως ἐς τοῦ Ἡφαίστου τὸν ἱέρα τούτων τὸν τελευταῖον βασιλεύσαντα μίαν τε καὶ τεσσαράκοντα καὶ τριηκοσίας ἀνθρώπων γενεὰς γενομένας καὶ ἐν ταύτησι ἀρχιερέας καὶ βασιλέας ἑκατέρους τοσούτους γενομένους. καίτοι τριηκόσια ἀνδρῶν γενεαὶ δυνάεσσι μυρία ἕτεα· γενεαὶ γὰρ τρεῖς ἀνδρῶν ἑκατὸν ἕτεά ἐστι. ‘Ten generations’ is used as a vague reference to the future in *Od.* 14.325: καὶ νῦ κεν ἐς δεκάτην γενεὴν ἕτερον γ’ ἔτι βόσκοι.

²⁹ *Plut. Mor.* 415C-F = *Hes. fr.* 304 MW: ἐννέα τοι ζῶει γενεὰς λακέρυζα κορώνη / ἀνδρῶν ἡβόντων· ἔλαφος δέ τε τετρακόρωνος· / τρεῖς δ’ ἐλάφους ὁ κόραξ γηράσκειται· αὐτὰρ ὁ φοῖνιξ / ἐννέα τοὺς κόρακας· δέκα δ’ ἡμεῖς τοὺς φοίνικας / νύμφαι εὐπλόκαμοι, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο. *A propos* of this passage (*ibid.* E), the speaker quotes the definition of γενεά as a period of thirty years given by Heraclitus (22 A19 DK): ἀλλ’ οἱ μὲν ἡβόντων ἀναγιγνώσκοντες ἔτη τριάκοντα ποιῶσι τὴν καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον ἐν ὧ χρόνῳ γεννῶντα παρέχει τὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγεννημένον ὁ γεννήσας.

(2) In line 8, ἐν τριάκοντα γενεαῖς can only mean ‘for the duration of’, ἐν taking the place either of διὰ followed by the genitive or of ἐπί followed by the accusative case. However we interpret the inscription as a whole, no other meaning is possible for the preposition here. There are parallels for the usage of ἐν, unusual though it is, e.g. ἐν ἔτεσιν χ, ‘during the number of years between ...’³⁰

(3) In line 9 Τρωίας (genitive) does not refer to Cassandra. Τρωία is the West Greek form of Τροία, ‘Troy’, while the regular feminine of the ethnic Τρώ(ι)ος / Τρωεύς is Τρωιάς or Τρωάς, allegedly used as the personal name of one of the children of Neoptolemos and Andromache.³¹ This interpretation is supported by the word-order, for if the supposed ethnic referred to Cassandra it would most naturally follow the personal name, ἐκ Κασσάνδρας Τρωίας. In other words, we must make a break after ἐκ Τρωίας, which means ‘from’ or ‘after Troy’, whether from the destruction of the city or from the beginning of the War, or just as a general point of chronological reference. That being so, it follows:

(4) that we place another comma after γενεά in line 10. We thus have three parallel clauses: (a) Ἀγάθων – γενεά, (b) πρόξενοι – Τρωίας, (c) Κασσάνδρας γενεά, with finally (d) Ζακύνθιοι. It would be grammatically possible to place a further break after γενεαῖς (line 8), and to regard ἐκ Τρωίας as an independent indication of origin, a very common usage, as already in Homer, ἐκ Σιδῶνος εὐχομαι εἶναι, and in the formal descriptions of origin, such as Αἰτωλὸς ἐκ Ναυπάκτου, or, with the regional ethnic alone, Ἀνδρόμαχος ἐξ Ἠπείρου. This interpretation, however, seems rather abrupt (though perhaps not too abrupt for Agathon), and I prefer to regard ἐκ as an indication of time, ‘from the time Troy fell’, or, more generally, ‘since the days of Troy’.³²

So we may translate lines 4ff. of the inscription, this time with punctuation, thus: ‘Agathon, the son of Echephylos, and his offspring, proxenoi of the Molossians and their allies throughout thirty generations from Troy, the race of Cassandra, Zakynthians.’

The next difficulty concerns Agathon and the hereditary proxeny. It is possible that Agathon’s family should have preserved a tradition of a continuous link with the Molossians (as a tribe, not a symmarchy) and their sanctuary at Dodona across the centuries, even though the point at which that link was fictitious may not have been very far in the past. From the Archaic period onwards records of family descent, real or suppositious, were preserved for many generations, and such descent might be recorded on stone, either as the years were individually relevant or as a single resumptive series. The most familiar example is perhaps the mid fifth-century tombstone of Heropythos of Chios, on which fifteen generations of ancestors are recorded, reaching back to about 850 BC, when, according to Ion of Chios, a King Hector was reigning on the island.³³ Again, an inscription of Cyrene, of later date, records a list of ancestors going back

³⁰ Thuc. 1.118.2: ἐν ἔτεσι πενήκοντα μάλιστα μεταξύ τῆς τε ἀναχωρήσεως καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦδε τοῦ πολέμου; Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.37: ἐν τρισὶ μῆσι, cf. *LSJ* s.v. ἐν, IV.2.

³¹ See schol. Eur. *Androm.* 24: κάγῳ δόμοις]· ἰδίως ἕνα φησι παῖδα γενέσθαι τῷ Νεοπτολέμῳ, ἄλλων τρεῖς λεγόντων Πύρρον Μολοσσὸν Αἰακίδην καὶ Τρωάδα; Plut. *Pyrr.* 1.5-7 establishes Τρωιάς as a recurrent name in the Molossian Royal House: Θαρρυποῦ δ’ Ἀλκέτας υἱὸς ἦν, Ἀλκέτα δ’ Ἀρύβας, Ἀρύβα δὲ καὶ Τρωιάδος Αἰακίδης. (6) οὗτος ἔγημε τὴν Μένωνος τοῦ Θεσσαλοῦ θυγατέρα Φθίαν... (7) ἐκ δὲ τῆς Φθίας τῷ Αἰακίδῃ γίνονται θυγατέρες Δηϊδάμεια καὶ Τρωιάς, υἱὸς δὲ Πύρρος; cf. Dakares, *Γενεαλογικὸί Μῦθοι* (n.1) 22. Also *LGNP* IIIA s.v. Τρωιάς (1)-(4), all of 4th-3rd c. BC, from Aitolia and Epiros, including the two ((3) and

(4)) of the Molossian Royal House. Τρωάς occurs also as a personal name at a late date (3rd c. AD) at Paros, *IG* XII.5 176.V, a dedication of ephebic hair by Τρωάς Κουαρτίωνος μετὰ τοῦ πατρὸς [sc. αὐτοῦ = πάππου] Ἀσκληπιάδου τοῦ Πυθείδου ὑπὲρ τοῦ υἱοῦ μου, Δαμαρίωνος τοῦ καὶ Ἡλιοδώρου, κτλ. (i.e. five generations recorded).

³² For many examples of the use of ἐκ = ἀπό with ethnics, see *Syll.*³ Index, p. 312, s.v.

³³ The Chiot inscription, Schwyzer (n.15) *DGE* 690 = *SGDI* 5656 (with the order of names incorrectly given at one point), was discussed by H.T. Wade-Gery, *The Poet of the Iliad* (Cambridge 1952) 8ff., and by O. Masson, ‘Notes d’onomastique Chypriote’, *Κυπριακαὶ Σπουδαί* 28 (1964) 5ff. For the passage of Ion (*FGrHist* 392 F1) which names ‘King Hector’, see Wade-Gery 88-9, who

to a period not much, if at all, later than the foundation of the city,³⁴ while a list of priesthoods at Halikarnassos, probably ultimately of late Hellenistic date, but inscribed over a longer period, actually lists the priests in the family (κατὰ γένος) with their years of tenure, over a period of at least five hundred years.³⁵ Since our inscription is of the mid fourth century we have here a claim, or a pretension, to a tradition going back to the verge of the Dark Ages, inevitably largely fictitious in the terms expressed, since there was no symmarchy of the Molossians before the later fourth century. However, the link with the Molossians, to which the proxeny purports to bear witness, may have existed before they formed a symmarchy, though Agathon's gift refers to the current state of affairs. The institution of proxenos, both in the sense of an inter-state guarantor and in the later, familiar sense of a state-representative, was probably widely spread in western Greece earlier than elsewhere and was certainly hereditary by the mid fifth century. The frequency with which the honour was bestowed by the Molossian League at Dodona (see above, p. 33), among others (allegedly) on Pindar, suggests that it too had adopted it at a relatively early date, and regarded it as a significant status.³⁶ In the earliest inscription from western Greece, the funerary monument of Menekrates of Oianthea, who was buried at Kerkyra in the seventh century BC, Menekrates is described as πρόξενος of the Kerkyraians, and the description of him as Οϊανθέος γενεάν may refer to an otherwise unknown *ktistes* of Oianthea.³⁷ It is, then, perfectly possible that the office of proxenos of the Molossians was regarded as hereditary over many generations by the family of Agathon, and that a link with Kassandra, prophetess or priestess at Dodona, the Molossian administrative and religious centre, derived from that tradition. To discover the nature of the link we must look, not at Kassandra, but at other members of her family.

also gives a list of other local pedigrees which extend continuously from heroic to Classical times. I have always regretted that Wade-Gery did not find a place for Agathon in his remarkable book. On fiction versus reality in family genealogies, see R. Thomas, *Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens* (Cambridge 1989) ch.3.

³⁴ The inscription (*SGDI* 4859), probably of the Roman period, is quoted in P.M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford 1972) 2.1096 n.504, as testimony to the conservatism of Cyrenaean society; it was republished by O. Masson, *BCH* 98 (1974) 263ff. (= *OGS* 1 (1990) 211ff.). The Cyrenaean epigram of 2nd c. AD, *SEG* 9.189, in which the Founder, Battos-Aristoteles, is described as having dedicated a temple to Apollo, which is now rebuilt (ἐκ πολέμοιο χαμαιριφῆ) by another Aristoteles, exemplifies the continuation of the royal name at a very late date in a family which presumably claimed descent from the Founder; cf. the remark of Synesius, above, n.10.

³⁵ For this remarkable inscription, which lists the years of tenure of the priesthood of each incumbent from Poseidon, *Syll.*³ 1020 (with a very full analysis of the whole list by Hiller), see also Wilhelm (n.15) 64ff. (= *Abhandlungen* 296ff.) for the method of entry of the names. It was already mentioned in the present context by Egger (n.1) 198 (= *BCH* 257). Potentially a similar proxeny might be assumed for the priestess Aristarche, one of the original Phocaeen colonists to Massalia, Strabo 179 (§4): 'Αριστάρχη δὲ τῶν ἐντίμων σφόδρα γυναικῶν παραστήνηα κατ' ὄναρ τὴν θεὸν [*sc.* the Ephesian Artemis] καὶ κελεύσασαι συναπαίρειν τοῖς Φωκαεῦσιν ἀφίδρυμα τῶν ἱερῶν λαβούσῃ·

γενομένου δὲ τούτου καὶ τῆς ἀποικίας λαβούσης τέλος, τό τε ἱερὸν ιδρύσασθαι καὶ τὴν 'Αριστάρχην τιμῆσαι διαφερόντως ἱερείαν ἀποδείξαντας, ἐν τε ταῖς ἀποίκους πόλεσι πανταχοῦ τιμᾶν ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις ταύτην τὴν θεὸν καὶ τοῦ ξοάνου τὴν διάθεσιν τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ τᾶλλα νόμιμα φυλάττειν τὰ αὐτά, ἅπερ ἐν τῇ μητροπόλει νενόμισται.

³⁶ See above n.26 for the epigraphical evidence from Arkadia and Dodona. For Pindar's self-proclaimed proxeny, see *Nem.* 7.64, ἐὼν δ' ἔγγυς Ἀχαῖος οὐ μέμφομαι μ' ἀνήρ / Ἰονίας ὑπὲρ ἄλλος οἰκῶν· προξενία πέποιθ', of which the scholiast (on 95b, 3.129 Drachmann) says τὸ δὲ προξενία ἀμφίβολον ποτερόν φησιν ὁ Πίνδαρος μὴ μεμψῆναι ἂν ὑπὸ τῶν Αἰακιδῶν· πρόξενον γὰρ ὄντα μὴ ἂν ποτε κατὰ Νεοπτόλεμον εἰπεῖν· καὶ ὅτι πρόξενος αὐτοῖς ἐπ' οὐδενὶ μεμψῆσμαι. As Hornblower points out to me, the significance of the claim has been much debated: see C. Carey, *A Commentary on Five Odes of Pindar* (New York 1981) 163, *ad loc.*; H. Lloyd-Jones, *Greek Epic, Lyric and Tragedy* (Oxford 1990) 149 (= *JHS* 93 (1973) 135).

³⁷ *ML* 4 = *CEG* 143 (cf. *SEG* 44.441): ἡυιοῦ Γλασίου Μενεκράτεος τόδε σᾶμα · / Οϊανθέος γενεάν· τόδε δ' αὐτοῖ δᾶμος ἐποίηι · / ἔς γὰρ πρόξενος δᾶμου φίλος, κτλ. Οϊανθέος γενεάν may, of course, simply = γένος. For the use of πρόξενος as 'guarantor', see e.g. *IG* IX.1² 3.717 (= Schwyzer (n.15) *DGE* 363 A.8-9): τὸν πρόξενον · αἱ ψευδέα προξενέοι· διπλειῶι θυῖστῶ (E. Lokris); *ML* 10, the gods and a city as guarantors of the treaty between the Sybarites and the Serdaioi, line 5: πρόξενοι ὁ Ζεῦς κ' Ὀπόλον κ' ὄλλοι θ/εοὶ καὶ πόλις Ποσειδα/νία.

The Zakynthian link with Troy is not limited to the individual family relationship of Agathon. Alongside the historical tradition of the foundation of the city from Achaia, given by Thucydides,³⁸ two different legends associated the origins of the island with Troy, one directly, one indirectly. The indirect tradition, preserved by Dionysius of Halicarnassus,³⁹ is that the island had been 'founded' by Zakynthos, a son of Dardanos. There were two genealogies for Dardanos, the one indicated by Dionysius, according to which he was the son of Zeus, and therefore lived five or six generations before the Trojan War; and a shorter one implicit in the fact that in the *Iliad* Priam is called Δαρδανίδης, a patronymic form which, in the Homeric world, usually indicates the relationship of son or grandson. The link with Troy, in either case, is indirect, because the split in Dardanos' descendants took Zakynthos off on a collateral line before Tros came on the scene.⁴⁰

The second, and direct, link is provided by the tradition that on their Hesperian journey Aeneas and his companions stopped at Zakynthos. This is recorded by Dionysius in the same passage. He says that the Trojans lingered on the island for some time, founded a temple of Aphrodite there and established ἀγῶνες in her honour, which survived until the time of Dionysius' source – Timaeus, Varro, or another: ζόονα of the hero and his mother were erected on or near the course of the ἀγών, which was itself called Αἰνείου καὶ Ἀφροδίτης δρόμος.⁴¹ Virgil tells us the same story of the western journey of Aeneas in *Aeneid* 3, except that he moved the stop, with the ἀγῶνες, from Zakynthos to Nikopolis, close to Actium, where the Ἄκτια, a long-standing Akarnanian festival of Apollo, were now celebrated to commemorate Augustus' victory over Cleopatra and Mark Antony.⁴² This part of the narrative of Dionysius reproduces, if only indirectly, material collected by Varro,⁴³ who, as he tells us in the Preface to the second Book of the *Res Rusticae*, had spent some time in Epirote waters in 67 BC, during the Pirate War, in which he was Legate.⁴⁴ The passage clearly reflects the survival of cults of Aphrodite and

³⁸ Thuc. 2.66: οἱ δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ οἱ ζύμμαχοι τοῦ αὐτοῦ θέρουσ [430 BC] ἐστράτευσαν ναυσὶν ἑκατὸν εἰς Ζάκυνθον τὴν νῆσον, ἣ κεῖται ἀντιπέρας Ἡλίδος· εἰσὶ δὲ Ἀχαιῶν τῶν ἐκ Πελοποννήσου ἄποικοι καὶ Ἀθηναίους ξυνεμάχουν. In the list of Suitors of Penelope in *Od.* 16.250ff., only the Zakynthians are called Ἀχαιοί· ἐκ δὲ Ζακύνθου ἕασιν εἰκόσι κούροι Ἀχαιῶν.

³⁹ *Ant. Rom.* 1.50.3: δεξαμένων δ' αὐτοῖς [Aeneas and his party] καὶ τῶν Ζακυνθίων πρὸς φιλίαν διὰ τὸ συγγενές (Δαρδάνωι γὰρ τῷ Διὸς καὶ Ἡλέκτρας τῆς Ἀτλαντίδος δύο γενέσθαι ἐκ Βατείας παιδῶν, Ζάκυνθον τε καὶ Ἐριχθόνιον, ὧν ὁ μὲν Αἰνείου πρόγονος ἦν, Ζάκυνθος δὲ τῆς νήσου κτίστης); cf. Paus. 8.24.3: ἔστι δὲ καὶ Ζακυνθίων τῇ ἀκροπόλει Ψωφίς ὄνομα, ὅτι ναυσὶν ἐς τὴν νῆσον ἐπεραιώθη πρῶτος καὶ ἐγένετο οἰκιστὴς ἀνὴρ Ψωφίδιος, Ζάκυνθος ὁ Δαρδάνου.

⁴⁰ For the genealogy, see Frazer on Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.12.1-2 (Loeb 2.35-6).

⁴¹ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.50.3 (in continuation of the passage quoted in n.39 above; for convenience I quote to the end of the chapter): ταύτης τε τῆς συγγενείας ἀναμνήσει καὶ φιλοφροσύνῃ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων διατρίβοντες αὐτόθι καὶ ἅμα ἀπλοῖαι κατειργόμενοι θύουσιν Ἀφροδίτῃ πρὸς τῷ κατασκευασθέντι ἱερῷ θυσίαν, ἣν εἰς τὸδε χρόνον συντελοῦσι κοινῇ Ζακύνθιοι, καὶ ἀγῶνα ποιοῦσι ἐφήβοις τῶν τε ἄλλων ἀγωνισμάτων καὶ δρόμου· τὸ δὲ νικητήριον ὁ πρῶτος ἐλθὼν εἰς τὸν νεὼν λαμβάνει· λέγεται δὲ Αἰνείου καὶ Ἀφροδίτης ὁ δρόμος, καὶ ζόονα τούτων ἔστηκεν ἀμφοτέρων.

⁴² *Aen.* 3.270:

Iam medio adparet fluctu nemorosa Zacynthos
277: Ergo insperata tandem tellure periti
lustramurque Iovi votisque incendimus aras,
Actiaque Iliacis celebramus litora ludis.

For the Aktia established by Augustus at Nikopolis, see K. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte* (Munich 1960) 303 and n.2. For the earlier history of the shrine and cult, see the inscription of Anaktoron, *IG IX.1²* 2.583: O. Dany, *Akarnanien im Hellenismus* (Munich 1999) Index, s.v.

⁴³ E. Schwartz, *RE* 4.961 (= *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber* (Leipzig 1957) 359), minimizes Varro's direct influence on Dionysius, but accepts his general use of the material collected by Varro. J. Perret, *La légende de Rome* (Paris 1942), discredits Varro to suit his thesis, but Momigliano in his review, *JRS* 35 (1945) 99-104 (= *Terzo contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico* (Rome 1966) 677-87) showed that to be wholly untenable.

⁴⁴ *Rust.* 2, praef. 6, Varro says he will describe *res pecuaria* (ranching) *ex sermonibus nostris conlatis cum iis qui pecuarias habuerunt in Epiro magnas, tum cum piratico bello inter Delum et Siciliam Graeciae classibus praeessem*; Serv. ad *Aen.* 3.349: *parvam Troiam simulataque magnis Pergama*]: Varro Epiri se fuisse dicit et omnia loca eisdem dici nominibus quae poeta commemorat se vidisse; unde apparet haec non esse fabulata. idem etiam Varro Troiam Epiri ab Aenea sive a comitibus eius †byopator† nuncupatam docet.

Aeneas many centuries later than the Archaic age, but an early association of the island with Aeneas is not thereby discredited. It was, no doubt, only a locally recognized one, formulated in the record of Trojan forebears in the transmitted genealogy of some Zakynthian families from an early date, just as some Romans had (witness Varro's *De familiis Troianis*).⁴⁵ Our fourth-century plaque thus confirms the Varronian tradition surviving in Dionysius, and establishes its antiquity.

Agathon and his family, then, probably traced their ancestry back to a Trojan hero related to the barren Cassandra, who had come westwards with Aeneas. I suggest that the hero may have been the Agathon mentioned only once in the *Iliad*, and not at all in the western legends.⁴⁶ He is Cassandra's brother, at the least on his father's side, and it is he who provides Agathon of Zakynthos with his onomastic *raison d'être*, and, if that is correct, it establishes his own presence along with Aeneas and the other Trojans in the West. Cassandra's link with the island (and with Agathon) is thus indirectly (and, in the present context, characteristically) established. If it was this Trojan Agathon, the son of Priam, who created the link with Cassandra, this may well have been only a Zakynthian, even a family, confection (we do not know what texts and variant legends the 'city' editions of the *Iliad*, entitled generically αἱ κατὰ πόλεις (*sc.* ἐκδόσεις), may have contained). In the *Odyssey* Zakynthos, like the other islands off the west coast, provided a quota of suitors for Penelope (in the case of Zakynthos, twenty), and this may also have played a part in family traditions, in the way that other families were collectively distinguished in other cities and places (as at Lokris).⁴⁷

Alternatively, we may search for a physical γενεά for Cassandra by attaching the plaque to the more familiar legends concerning Cassandra's acknowledged twin, the seer Helenos. He certainly journeyed to western Greece, and plays a larger part in the stories of the Trojan wanderings and the *Nostoi* than he does in the *Iliad*, in which, like his sister and Agathon, he has almost no role. His activities in the West are centred on the Molossian region, and especially on Dodona, where according to later tradition he founded a city.⁴⁸ When his fellow-traveller from Troy, Neoptolemos, who had won Andromache as wife after the fall of Troy, died at the hand of Orestes, Helenos married her,⁴⁹ and it was at that point that Aeneas found him at Dodona.⁵⁰ Thus the Molossian Royal House boasted two distinct ancestries in historic times – the Greek descent from Neoptolemos, of which Pyrrhos was so proud, and the Trojan descent from Helenos, after

⁴⁵ For the fragments of the *De familiis Troianis*, see Peter, *HR²* 9ff.; H. Dahmann, *RE Suppl.* 6.1241-2 s.v. Terentius Varro.

⁴⁶ *Il.* 24.248: ὁ δ' (Πρίαμος) υἷάσιν οὖσιν ὁμόκλα, / νεικίων Ἐλενόν τε Πάριν τ' Ἀγάθωνά τε δῖον, κτλ. That only Agathon is δῖος is perhaps no more than a rhapsodic convenience.

⁴⁷ The lists of islands which provided suitors for the hand of Penelope are always the same, in the same phraseology (*Od.* 1.246; 2.51b; 16.123, 250; 19.131), but only 16.247-53 give the full total, squires included.

⁴⁸ For the story of his wanderings as recorded in the tradition of ps.-Apollodorus, see *Epit.* (Vat.) 5.23, of the distribution of the Troades: λαμβάνει δὲ Ἀγαμέμνων μὲν κατ' ἐξάριτον Κασάνδραν, Νεοπτόλεμος δὲ Ἀνδρομάχην, Ὀδυσσεὺς δὲ Ἐκάβην. ὡς δὲ ἔνιοι λέγουσιν, Ἐλενος αὐτὴν λαμβάνει, καὶ διακομισθεὶς εἰς Χερρόνησον σὺν αὐτῇ κύνα γενομένην θάπτει, ἔνθα νῦν λέγεται Κυνὸς Σῆμα; 6.12-13: Νεοπτόλεμος δὲ μείνας ἐν Τενέδωι δύο ἡμέρας ὑποθήκας τῆς Θέτιδος εἰς Μολοσσοὺς πεζῆι ἀπίηι μετὰ Ἐλένου,

καὶ παρὰ τὴν ὁδὸν ἀποθανόντα Φοῖνικα θάπτει, καὶ νικήσας μάχηι Μολοσσοὺς βασιλεύει, καὶ ἐξ Ἀνδρομάχης γενναὶ Μολοσσόν. Ἐλενος δὲ κτίσας ἐν τῇ Μολοσσίαι πόλιν κατοικεῖ, καὶ δίδωσιν αὐτῷ Νεοπτόλεμος εἰς γυναῖκα τὴν μητέρα Δηιδάμειαν. That the city was called Δωδώνη, that is, was meant to be regarded as the same site as the sanctuary, is not stated in this passage, but the quotation in Strabo 328 (*cf.* Philoch. *FGHist* 328 F225; schol. Soph. *Trach.* 1171, quoting from Hesiod's Ἡοῖαι (*fr.* 240.5: ἔνθα δὲ Δωδώνη τις ἐπ' ἔσχατιῇ πεπόλισται)), suggests that that may have been the tradition in the Archaic period.

⁴⁹ See Virg. *Aen.* 3.294-7:

Hic [at Buthrotus] incredibilis rerum fama occupat auris, Priamiden Helenum Graias regnare per urbes coniugio Aeacidae Pyrrhi sceptrisque potitum et patrio Andromachen iterum cessisse marito.

⁵⁰ For Aeneas' meeting with Helenos at Dodona, see Dion. Hal. 1.51.1, quoted above (n.22). In the *Aeneid* (374ff.) Helenos foretells to Aeneas the adventures of the Trojans in the West.

whom Pyrrhos named his youngest son.⁵¹ Helenos, then, from whom Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great, claimed descent,⁵² may have been the Trojan ancestor of the Molossians, for whom Agathon of Zakynthos, homonymous descendant of Agathon, the son of Priam, was proxenos. The building called the 'Ελένειον mentioned in the decree of the Akarnanian League of 216 BC, regarding the cult of Apollo Aktios at Anaktorion, may have been an oracular martyrion of the Seer-King.⁵³

No closer link between Cassandra herself and Zakynthos, and the family of Agathon, expressed as Κασσάνδρας γενεά, can be determined. Agathon's pride in his Trojan origin, and his genealogical link with Cassandra's twin, Helenos, or (genealogically and onomastically) with Agathon, may be confirmed by the name of Agathon's father, 'Εχέφυλος, 'The Stock Preserver', which, though not in itself remarkable (being one of some sixty or more names with the root 'Εχε-),⁵⁴ seems in this context to have an almost symbolic significance; the ingenious Agathon perhaps wished to express the survival of his stock by referring to his father's name; it is even possible that his father's name was something else than 'Εχέφυλος; it might appropriately have been either 'Ελενος or 'Αγάθων.

⁵¹ Cf. Dakares, *Γενεαλογικοί Μῦθοι* (n.1) 125; Cabanes (n.4) 39ff. analyses at length the intricacies of the genealogy of the Aeacid royal house after 272. The role of Helenos is minimal. The fullest statement of the twin birth of Cassandra and Helenos, linked to the strange events at the sanctuary of the Thymbraean Apollo, is in Antikleides, *FGrHist* 140 F17 (schol. AD Gen.II, Hom. *Il.* 7.44): μυθεύεται τῶν ἐξ 'Εκάβης γεγονότων παίδων τὸν 'Ελενον καὶ τὴν Κασάνδραν διδύμους γεγενῆσθαι· τῶν δὲ γενεθλίων αὐτοῖς συντελουμένων ἐν τῷ τοῦ Θυμβραίου 'Απόλλωνος ἱερῷ λέγεται τὸν 'Ελενον καὶ τὴν Κασάνδραν ἐν τῷ ναῶι παίζοντας κατακοιμηθῆναι, ὑπὸ δὲ μέθης ἐκείνων ἐκλαθομένων περὶ τῶν παίδων οἴκαδε χωρισθῆναι· τῇ δὲ ὑστεραία ἐλθόντας εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν θεάσασθαι τοὺς παῖδας ταῖς ὑπὸ τῶν ὄψεων γλώτταις τοὺς πόρους τῶν αἰσθητηρίων καθαιρομένους, ὡς οὖν διὰ τὸ παράδοξον αἱ γυναῖκες ἀνέκραγον, συνέβη ἀπαλλαγῆναι τοὺς ὄφεις καὶ καταδῶναι ἐν ταῖς παρακειμέναις δάφναις, τοὺς δὲ παῖδας ἀμφοτέρους τῆς μαντικῆς οὕτω μεταλαβεῖν. It is not clear that the tradition in ps.-Apollod. 3.6-7 (151) accepts that they were twins: in it, Hekabe's daughters and sons are listed separately, and although Cassandra is said to have had the gift of prophecy bestowed on her by Apollo, Helenos is simply listed without further description (as are all the sons except Troilos, said to be the son of Apollo).

⁵² See Theopomp. *FGrHist* 115 F355: ἡ δὲ 'Ολυμπιάς ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ εἰς Πύρρον τὸν 'Αχιλλέως καὶ 'Ελενον τὸν Πριάμου τὸ γένος τὸ ἀνεκαθεν ἀνέφερεν, ὡς φησι Θεόπομπος καὶ Πύρανδρος. Curiously, no direct offspring of Helenos is named, but it is perhaps implicit in the claim to descent from him. But γένος is too vague a term to attach a precise relationship to it; cf. above, n.17.

⁵³ *IG IX.12* 583 (= Sokolowski, *LSS* 45) line 38: τὸ δὲ 'Ελένειον κα[ῖ] / [τὰ συ(προς)κύρ] οντα [supplevi] ἐν τῷ ἄλσει κατεσκευασμένα τὰς πό(λ)ιους τῶν 'Ανα/[κτοριέων εἶμ]εν. In his publication of this inscription in *Hermes* 85 (1957) 85-122, Habicht said of

the 'Ελένειον that it was 'kaum ein Heiligtum der Helena' (101), and that it was more probably, like the Leonideion at Olympia, 'ein Haus für Ehrengäste oder für die Beamten des Bundes'. Dakares, *Γενεαλογικοί Μῦθοι* (n.1) 125, compared it with the Πύρρειον of Polyb. 21.27.2, recounting the siege of Ambrakia in 189 BC, τρία μὲν ἔργα κατὰ τὸ Πύρρειον, and regarded it as reflecting Pyrrhos' interest in Helenos. That naturally does not exclude my interpretation, and it should be said that there is no agreement as to what the Πύρρειον was (?fort; ?location): see Walbank, *ad loc.* There was also an ἡρώιον Αἰνείου in Ambrakia (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.50.4: ἐν δὲ 'Αμβρακία ἱερὸν τε τῆς αὐτῆς θεοῦ [*sc.* 'Αφροδίτης] καὶ ἡρώιον Αἰνείου πλησίον τοῦ μικροῦ θεάτρου, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ξόανον μικρὸν ἀρχαῖκόν Αἰνείου λεγόμενον, καὶ αὐτὸ θυσίαις ἐγέραιρον αἱ καλούμεναι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἀμφίπολοι). If my general reconstruction of the legend of Helenos in the West is correct, it seems plausible to regard it as a subsidiary shrine of Helenos, perhaps as a seer, within the precinct of Apollo, the god of prophecy. Merkelbach, *ZPE* 1 (1967) 78, regarded the lacuna as probably to be filled by the name of another shrine: 'Den Namen des zweiten Heiligtums können wir nicht mit Sicherheit bestimmen: man könnte z.B. denken an τὸ δὲ 'Ελένειον κα[ῖ] τὸ Καστόρειον'. For my more formulaic supplement, see the instances of these phrases in connection with shrines in *JEA* 38 (1952) 68-9, with *Eranos* 49 (1951) 102 (also Wilhelm, *Griechische Inschriften rechtlichen Inhalts* (Athens 1951) 61 (= *Akademieschriften zur griechischen Inschriftenkunde* (Leipzig 1974) 3.455), whence Sokolowski, *ad loc.*). A nominal parallel to the 'Ελένειον is provided by the 'Οδύσσειον on Ithaca, *IMagn.* 36 (= *Syll.*³ 558, now re-read and republished as *IG IX.12* 4.1729), lines 2 (a meeting-place) and 16 (the games called 'Οδύσσεια).

⁵⁴ It is most common in central and western Greece: see *LGPN* IIIA-B. All the many personal names compounded in 'Εχε- naturally have the same significance of 'holding', be it physical, historical/social or psychological.

At this point it may be thought that we have reached as far as we can go in terms of interpretation, and perhaps of fancy. We are, however, in a nebulous world of secondary, and localized myth, well described in a recent book on Euripides' *Andromache*: 'We are dealing with a pool of interrelated but nevertheless fluid tales whose malleability makes possible their role in creative literature.'⁵⁵ Other items remain to be considered, fundamental to the understanding of the plaque.

First of all, what sort of object is it? What does the inscription really tell us? (1) It is not, strictly speaking, a dedication, or an ex-voto: it contains no reference, either by the use of the familiar verb or noun, i.e. Ἀγάθων Ἐχεφύλου Ζακύνθιος ἀνέθηκε or ἀνάθημα Ἀγάθωνος τοῦ Ἐχεφύλου Ζακυνθίου, to a dedication, nor is an appositional noun such as εὐχήν employed. It is a δῶρον, a gift, a word frequently used of Dodonaean offerings, and Zeus, to whom the gift is made, is invoked, without any conventional suggestion of dedication, in a roughly poetical style.⁵⁶ (2) The plaque was sent from Zakynthos to Dodona, and must have been conceived as inscribed from the outset, for inscription and representation form a unit. That is noteworthy. The natural, but not essential, prerequisite of a private dedication or gift to a deity was the presence of the individual, who had either carried out the task himself (as in graffiti on vases) or else had the dedication or gift (whatever it might be) carved or inscribed on his behalf on the spot by local artisans. But Agathon's plaque, 'this gift', sent to Zeus by an individual, is primarily only an intimation of a link with Dodona through a mythical antecedent. How it arrived there (πέμπω παρ' ἐμοῦ) we are not told. At Dodona it joined the many other bronze 'gifts' which had accumulated there from legendary times, traditionally from those of Aeneas and his companions onwards. According to Dionysius, Aeneas and 'the strongest (?fittest) of his companions', οἱ ἀκμαιότατοι (an unexpected epithet), dedicated inscribed bronze objects when they reached the sanctuary, 'some of which, inscribed in very archaic lettering [!], with the names of the dedicants, survive until the present'.⁵⁷ (3) We must next ask what especial importance

⁵⁵ See W. Allan, *The Andromache and Euripidean Tragedy* (Oxford 2000) 37.

⁵⁶ See e.g. Carapanos (n.1) 1.41ff. nos.4 (tripod): Διὶ δῶρον ἀνέθηκε πόλις / Λεχαιῶν; 9 (plaque): ... αἴσιος Διὶ Νάωι δῶρον; 13 (vase): Βημισίος Φύλλεος Διὶ Νάωι δῶρον; all of the Classical period (see *ibid.* vol. 2, pls. xxiii-xxiv); *SEG* 14.475 (4th c. BC): Αἴσχρων Διὶ Ναίωι δῶρον ἔστράτου ἀνέθηκεν (where the verb is by exception used). I refer to my article ('A bronze from Dodona', *JHS* 74 (1954) 56-8) for the historical background of this dedication, and for an analysis of the formula ἔστράτου, which also occurs in *FD* III.1 106, a proxeny decree for ... Λαίτωι Ἀκαρνᾶνι ἔστράτου of the mid 3rd c. BC, i.e. of the period when Stratos was an Akarnanian τέλος. (It is noteworthy that both the Dodonaean bronze and the Delphic inscription have the assimilated single sigma for the κ/σ sound, ἔστράτου.) δῶρον is rarely found elsewhere in the place of e.g. εὐχήν or a verb, but note *IG* II² 4602 (late 4th c. BC), which combines the word with the verb ἀνέθηκε: Νικαγόρα / Φιλιστίδου / γυνὴ Παιανιέως / Διὶ δῶρον / κατὰ μαντείαν / ἀνέθηκε. The word was obviously metrically useful, as in the present case and in *IG* IX.2 417 (B. Helly, *Gonnoi* (Amsterdam 1973) 2.184) (4th c. BC): Κυθηρία ὀνέθεικε / Τάρταμιδι τὰ ἐν Σ/κιᾶ / δῶρόν τε [κ]ά[π]ω[ν] / καὶ τροφεία τῶν τέκνων (iambic trimeter from line 3). (The comment in *BE* (1959) no.3 (*à propos* of *OGIS* 253) that the supplement [δῶρο]ν is impossible because 'ce n'est pas le formulaire de cette époque' is not quite appropriate; the

objection to it there (a prose dedication) is that it is rare in itself and more appropriate in a metrical one. In any case, J.G. Bunge, 'Die Feiern Antiochos' IV. Epiphanes in Daphne im Herbst 166 v. Chr.', *Chiron* 6 (1976) 53-71, showed that the inscription must be understood differently, supplying [βωμό]ν.) The recent study by M. Steinhart and E. Wirbelauer of the use of the gift-formula (παρά, with or without δῶρον), 'Par Peisistratou. Epigraphische Zeugnisse zur Geschichte des Schenkens', *Chiron* 30 (2000) 255-89, is primarily concerned with gifts between individuals (with a list of them as recorded on strigils and vases at pp. 277ff.), and sacral dedications described by the word δῶρον (including the material from Dodona as given above) are not included except for the dedication to Apollo on the Attic vase of c. 525 BC, *IG* V.1 1521 (no.3 in the list): --ειτονίδας ἀνέθηκε τῷ Ἀπόλωνι παρ Δωριέος δῶρον, which again combines the dedicatory verb with the notion of giving. The dedicatory epigram by Leonidas in which he records the dedication of a rustic shrine of the Nymphs and Pan, Gow-Page, *HE* 1966-71 (*cf. comm. ad loc.*) provides a very typical example of the word in a similar context: ἴλαοι τὰ ψαιστὰ τό τε σκύφος ἔμπλεον οἴνης / δέξασθ', Αἰακίδεω δῶρα Νεοπτολέμου.

⁵⁷ *Ant. Rom.* 1.51.1 (in continuation of the passage quoted in n.22): ἀνελόμενοι δὲ χρησμοὺς περὶ τῆς ἀποικίας καὶ τὸν θεὸν ἀναθήμασι δωρησάμενοι Τρωικοῖς ἄλλοις τε καὶ κρατήρσι χαλκοῖς, ὧν τινες ἔτι περὶεῖσιν ἐπιγραφαῖς πάνυ ἀρχαίαις δηλοῦντες τοὺς

Agathon attached to what is, after all, the most conspicuous feature of the plaque, the male genitalia. This has mostly been left unexplained (as by Egger and Christ) or taken as apotropaic (by Herter) or explained as an oblique way of referring to the rape of Cassandra by Ajax, but these latter alternatives, as we have seen, face substantial difficulties. On the other hand, Greifenhagen's explanation that the organ represents the continuing life-force of the Trojan stock of Agathon, is no doubt correct up to a certain point. However, if it is to be regarded as the total explanation, then the life-force must be that embodied in the thirty generations of descent from Cassandra. But the barren figure of Cassandra cannot seriously be understood as representing that force. Can we then alter the point of reference of the life-force, and yet preserve its essential significance? The answer seems straightforward. If the life-force is that embodied in the thirty generations supposedly descended from Cassandra, the only individual to whom it can specifically refer is Agathon: it is as the symbol of his own role that the phallus is represented, for it guarantees the future of the γενεά. It is then looking no less to the future than the past.⁵⁸

That may seem a sufficient answer to our γρῖφος. There is, however, a more recondite possibility, which would add a more allusive point to the riddling gift, but yet retain the concept of the life-force. Helenos and Cassandra, the children of Priam, were, we have seen, twins, δίδυμοι. Agathon the Zakynthian could effectively indicate pictorially that he was linked to both of them by representation of the genitalia, and especially the very prominent testicles, which indeed might seem to take pride of place, in Agathon's concept, to the organ itself. The explanation of this requires an excursion into the realm of anatomical vocabulary.

Galen tells us that Herophilos, the great Alexandrian anatomist, called both the testicles and the ovaries δίδυμοι, and so, not surprisingly, did others.⁵⁹ I have pointed out elsewhere that Herophilos liked to take the terminology of his anatomical vocabulary from items of everyday life, according to their resemblance to the part of the body that he wished to illustrate. Here, then, perhaps, is an instance slightly earlier than that of Herophilos. Agathon drives home his kinship with the Trojans and the Molossians by the physical representation of the 'twins' which lie at the root of human continuity, whether they represent Cassandra and Helenos or Cassandra and Agathon.

I used the word γρῖφος earlier to describe Agathon's plaque, and I have tried to interpret it, in part, as such. Enigmatical party games, riddles involving alphabetical and verbal puzzles

ἀναθέντας, ἐπὶ τὸ ναυτικὸν ἀφικνοῦνται τετάρων μάλαστα ἡμερῶν διελθόντες ὁδόν. For bronze objects excavated at the sanctuary, see the drawings in Carapanos (n.1) vol. 2 *passim*, and the selection in Dakares, *Δωδώνη* (n.1) *passim*. There is a useful (but now inevitably incomplete) chronological list of dedicated objects in Parke (n.1) 274ff., who also has *ibid.* a bibliography of the bronzes. The perplexing tradition regarding the Boiotian 'sacrilege' at the sanctuary, and their subsequent annual tribute of a Boiotian tripod, the τριποδοφορία from Boiotia to Dodona, recorded by Ephorus (*FGrHist* 70 F119; cf. Parke 71ff.) and in a slightly variant version, linked to the Boeotian τριποδηφορικὸν μέλος, by Procl. *Chrest.* ap. Phot. *Bibl.* 239, p. 321 (quoted by Jacoby, comm. *ad loc.*), was probably attached to an early dedication.

⁵⁸ Compare Burke's remark in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*: 'people will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors'.

⁵⁹ See Heroph. *ap. Gal. Us.Part.* p. 323 Helmreich = Heroph. T 61 and 109 von Staden: καλεῖ γὰρ Ἡρόφιλος

οὕτω (τὸν δίδυμον) τὸν ὄρχιν (here, the ovaries), cf. Fraser (n.34) 1.354-5. Inevitably, the term became one of several synonyms for the testicles (for others, see Plat. *Com., fr.* 188 KA, with Herter (n.19), *RE* col.1693), and is used later, as slang, by Argentarius, Gow-Page, *GP* 1332, a pun in a particular context on the Constellation of the Δίδυμοι and the ὄρχεις: ἦ γὰρ ὁ ταύτης / οὐρανὸς ἐντὸς ἔχει καὶ Κύνα καὶ Διδύμους; also by Philodemus, *ibid.* 3319, referring to an unnamed 'acquaintance (ὁ δεινὰ)' who gave an ugly girl 5T for an uncomfortable ride, while he (Philodemus) had achieved a better result for 5Δρ. He says that either he (ὁ δεινὰ) must be mad, or τοὺς κείνου πελέκει δεῖ διδύμους ἀφελεῖν. In the Septuagint, *Deut.* 25.11, the word is used in a context that shows it was also normal usage in Alexandria: εἰ δὲ μάχωνται ἄνθρωποι ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό, ἄνθρωπος μετὰ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ, καὶ προσέλθῃ ἡ γυνὴ ἐνὸς αὐτῶν ἐξελέσθαι τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς ἐκ χειρὸς τοῦ τύπτοντος αὐτόν, καὶ ἐκτεῖνασα τὴν χεῖρα ἐπιλάβηται τῶν διδύμων αὐτοῦ, ἀποκόψει τὴν χεῖρα αὐτῆς· οὐ φέισεται ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς σου ἐπ' αὐτῆι.

(ἐπικυλίκιοι ἐξηγήσεις) were very popular at the time, in symposiastic and similar contexts.⁶⁰ They were perhaps a sophisticated and not wholly serious response to the traditional and ambiguous utterances of the great oracular centres such as Dodona and Delphi, and also an expression of that casual familiarity towards the Olympians, notably Zeus, which was characteristic of the age.⁶¹ Agathon, hereditary proxenos of the Molossians, and child of a wealthy and civilized city such as Zakynthos preeminently was⁶² – ‘Zante, Zante, / fior di Levante’ in the Venetian catchphrase – sent his ambiguous γρίφος, as a δῶρον to Zeus at his most venerable oracular sanctuary, the centre of Molossian authority. Klearchos, the approximate contemporary of Agathon, and, if not the inventor, at least a populariser, of γρίφοι, would perhaps have looked approvingly at the αἴνιγμα.⁶³ The metrical distich prefixed to schol. Marc. 476 of Lykophron aptly applies to our plaque.⁶⁴ Whether the testicles are intended to be those of Agathon, or symbolize his relationship to the Trojan twins, or both, we are not likely ever to know.

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⁶⁰ See Diog.Laert. 4.42 for the phrase. Mazzoldi (n.4) 258-60 regards Lykophron's *Alexandra* as in essence a γρίφος, or αἴνιγμα, with some justification. It is one of the main elements contributing to the style of the poem. The earlier Lykophron (as I regard him, i.e. *not* the poet) certainly had some taste for post-prandial literary games, as the fragments of the *Menedemos* show (TGrF 1.276, conveniently quoted by A.W. Mair in the original (1921) Loeb *Callimachos and Lycophron*, 478-9; fr. 3 well exemplifies the style: τράγημα γὰρ / ὁ σαφρονιστῆς πᾶσιν ἐν μέσῳ λόγος.

⁶¹ This light-hearted attitude towards the Olympians (notably Zeus) comes out clearly in the Hellenistic epigrammatists: see e.g. Call. *Epigr.* 6 Gow-Page (Zeus in love with Ganymede), 24 (a pinax dedicated to Asklepios by a patient to prove that he has paid Asklepios' bill for treatment), 55 (Zeῦ φίλε); Asclep. 11 (Zeus as a fellow-victim of love); *idem* 14 (the *exclusus amator* seeks the sympathy of Zeus: ἄχρι τίνος, Zeῦ; / Zeῦ φίλε, σιγήσω καὶ τὸς ἔραν ἔμαθες). The attitude was, of course, not new.

⁶² Agatharchid. *FGrHist* 86 F14 (Athen. 528a): Ζακυνθίους φησὶν [*sc.* ὁ Ἀγαθαρχίδης] ἀπείρους εἶναι πολέμου διὰ τὸ ἐν εὐπορίαι καὶ πλούται τρυφῶντας ἐθίζεσθαι. Abundant woodland and a rich fruit-bearing soil fostered this wealth: Strabo 458: (ἡ Ζάκυνθος) ὑλώδης μὲν, εὐκαρπὸς δέ; Virgil's *nemorosa Zacynthos* (*Aen.* 3.270). Its wine, however, was not recommended: Ath. 33b: χαριέστατος δ' οἶνος ὁ

Κερκυραῖος. ὁ δὲ Ζακύνθιος καὶ ὁ Λευκάδιος διὰ τὸ γύψον λαβεῖν καὶ κεφαλὴν ἀδικουσιν.

⁶³ For Klearchos' γρίφοι, see *frr.* 84-95 Wehrli. They mostly come as quite lengthy extracts in Athenaeus, and it is amusing that one of the passages quoted from Klearchos (*fr.* 92) refers to (another) unconventional Zakynthian: Κλέαρχος δ' ἐν τῷ Περὶ Γρίφων τὰ Ἀρχιλόχου, φησὶν, Σιμωνίδης ὁ Ζακύνθιος ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις ἐπὶ δίφρου καθήμενος ἔρρανώιδει. A rhapsode would normally recite standing, as we know from many illustrations, but it is difficult to determine the meaning of ἐπὶ δίφρου, which embraces many shades of meaning from a simple stool to a chariot. Archilochus is mentioned as a subject for a rhapsode by Socrates in Plato's *Ion* 531: Πότερον περὶ Ὀμήρου μόνον δεινὸς εἶ ἢ καὶ περὶ Ἡσιόδου καὶ Ἀρχιλόχου; Ion: Οὐδαμῶς, ἀλλὰ περὶ Ὀμήρου μόνον· ἱκανὸν γὰρ μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι. A rhapsode with the rare name of Τερψικλῆς made a dedication at Dodona, Carapanos (n.1) 1.40 no.3, pl. xxiii, no.2 (= Cabanes, *Nikephoros* 1 (1988) 53 and pl. 8): Τερψικλῆς τῷ Δι Ναιῶι ῥαψωιδὸς ἀνέθηκε. Another dedication by a rhapsode, probably from Dodona: L. Robert, *Collection Froehner* (Paris 1936) 39 (= Cabanes, *loc.cit.*): Κλέαρχος Διομέδοντος ῥαψωιδὸς μ' ἀνέθ(η)κε. Both are of the fifth century.

⁶⁴ E. Scheer, *Lycophronis Alexandra* (2nd edn, Berlin 1908) 1.vi: Ἐνταῦθα κείται δυσφάτων αἰνιγμάτων / κείμενον τοῖς θέλουσιν ἀντλεῖν εὐτόνωος.



Bronze plaque with dedication from Dodona (*IG IX.1² 4.1750*)
(photograph: Directorate of the National Museum, Athens)