The Origin of the Greek Pluperfect

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for Jay Jasanoff on his 65th birthday

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the rather sad word *has-been* as “One that *has been* but is no longer: a person or thing whose career or efficiency belongs to the past, or whose best days are over.” In view of my subject, I may perhaps be allowed to speculate on the meaning of the putative noun *had-been* (as in, *He’s not just a has-been; he’s a had-been!*), surely an even sadder concept, did it but exist. When I first became interested in the Indo-European verb, thanks to Jay Jasanoff’s brilliant teaching, mentoring, and scholarship, the study of pluperfects was not only not a “had-been,” it was almost a blank slate. Largely because of Jasanoff, the situation is now changing: even so, however, with the possible exception of the (marginal) future perfect, there is still no part of the Ancient Greek verbal system that has received less scholarly attention than the pluperfect and perhaps no part that deserves it more. Further investigations are thus a “should-be,” and there is every reason to expect that Jasanoff will continue to be the leading creative force in our understanding of (Proto-)Indo-European verbs for many years to come.*

*I had the good fortune to be a senior at Yale during the year Jasanoff was a visiting professor, and it is a pleasure for me finally to offer him this particular token of affection and esteem. Jasanoff advised my 1991 undergraduate thesis on the origin of the Greek alphathematic pluperfect, and the scenario I proposed there, for which he deserves much of the credit (see in particular Jasanoff 1997a, 125, with n. 20) and none of the blame, differs from what follows in the present paper only in minor details. An expanded version appears also as Chapter IV of my 1993 Oxford M.Phil. thesis, *The Pluperfect in Homer*, supervised by Anna Morpurgo Davies. I hope someday to return, unconstrained by considerations of space, to a fuller treatment of the issues explored here, to a proper reckoning of the Homerien forms, and to an account of the semantic development of the category from archaic to (post-)classical times. My thanks go to those who attended informal presentations of this material at Yale (February 1991), Oxford (May 1993), and Harvard (April 1997) and to the audiences on more formal occasions at the following universities and conferences: the 129th An-
Although the earliest evidence for the Greek pluperfect quite clearly presents a number of interesting problems, there has never been a large-scale study, or even a great many smaller ones, on this verbal category. This neglect is curious in every way. Many linguists specialize in tense, but even those who provide elaborate discussions of the temporal structure of the classical languages as they are described by the ancients themselves (see above all Binnick 1991, 3–26) ignore the evidence of early poetry, in which pluperfects both have a different principal semantic value and play a larger role than is generally acknowledged. As for classical philologists, they routinely comment on the semantic differences in Greek between the two most common past-tense forms, the imperfect and the aorist, while largely playing down the pluperfect (though Duhoux 2000, 432–440 and passim is a useful recent contribution). And finally, Indo-Europeanists have over the past century engaged in all too many aggressive arguments over the form and function of the perfect while tending not to think about pluperfects (they are conspicuously absent from Di Giovino 1990 and 1996), even if very recent years have seen some energetic studies of individual Greek verbs, especially ‘know’, by Martin Peters, Jens Elmegård Rasmussen, Peter Schrijver, Olav Hackstein, and of course Jay Jasanoff. One reason scholars do not generally think very much about the pluperfect is that (it is usually said) the protolingual did not have any such category. However, this may be false, in which case generations of scholars have managed to introduce a pervasively damaging bias into the study of what has been, since the discovery of Hittite and its so-called “bi-conjugation,” easily the most-studied area of the Proto-Indo-European verb, namely the perfect system. I propose, then, to present a novel “Jasanoffian” account of the diachronic morphology of the pluperfect from Proto-Indo-European times to Archaic Greek. But rather than dive straight in, I think it important to spend some paragraphs on the sense of the pluperfect. Like its counterparts in the other modern European languages (e.g., Fr. plus-que-parfait, It. piu che perfetto, and Germ. Plusquamperfekt), the English term goes back to the Latin phrase (tempus praeteritum) plus quam perfectum, literally “past time” more than completed,” which is itself a calque on the Greek grammatical term (γρόνος) ἐπαρουσιασμένος, literally “hyper-completed (time).” What exactly does this mean? It is not easy, as I have discovered, to get people to define pluperfect – speakers of English usually give an illustrative example like “had been” or “had done” rather than saying anything about anteriority – but when pushed, they frequently arrive at the idea that the pluperfect is associated with the distant past. This is certainly what most students in elementary Latin and Greek classes come in believing, and there is even support for the idea from ancient grammarians: Priscian (5th/6th cent. A.D.) uses the phrase iam pridem ‘long ago’ (see OLD s.v. pridem 3) in his definition of the Latin pluperfect (Inst. 8.39 = Gramm. Lat. II, p. 406 Hertz), following such authorities as Apollonius Dyscolus (2nd cent. A.D.), who tells us that the pluperfect in Greek describes things that happened ἐγκαθεσθα (Syntax 205b = Gramm. Gr. II/2, p. 287 Uhlig) ‘long, long ago’. What this adds up to is that educated

4 See Binnick 1991, 544–545 (index s.v. “Pluperfect tense”) and passim. Binnick’s book provides a consistently enlightening treatment of tense, both in theory (indeed, many different semantic theories, ancient and modern) and with reference to actual data.

5 The word is given as oxytone by some sources.

6 One difficulty, which dictionaries and reference works tend not to recognize, is that in many languages the semantic category “pluperfect” and the morphological category of the same name are not wholly overlapping: whatever exactly the formal temporal representation of Eng. had been may be in a sentence like Once he had been to the doctor, he felt much better, the “same” verb has, at least on the surface, a different sense when it is used as a modal (e.g., If he had been to the doctor, ...) or in indirect speech (e.g., She said that he had been to the doctor). And of course it is usual in most cases not to employ the pluperfect for anterior time (e.g., After he went to the doctor, he felt much better).

7 While Priscian’s iam pridem could in context mean just ‘already previously’ (thanks to Bob Kaster for discussing this with me), it seems likely, in view of his dependence on Apollonius, that it has the same sense as ἐγκαθέσθα. Cammerer (1965, 181–182) emends and translates the passage in Apollonius, in which the grammarian explains that ἐγκαθέσθα ‘I had written’ is καὶ ἐγκαθέσθα γεγονότα ‘schein längst Gewordenes’, as opposed to the corresponding aorist and imperfect forms (see also Householder 1981, 161). (LSJ) s.v. ἐγκαθέσθα wrongly gives only the meaning ‘for a long time.’ Berrettini (1989b, 49–50) discusses the term ἐγκαθέσθαι and writes, “It seems to me necessarily to follow that the excess of completeness implied by the use of ἐγκαθέσθα...
folk are likely to have the impression that pluperfects are found only in contexts of extreme anteriority, which must, furthermore, be rather uncommon.

However accurate or inaccurate such an assessment may be for English or Latin (in which the pluperfect looms large and does usually indicate anterior past), it is at best a half-truth when applied to Greek and less than that when applied specifically to Homer. Leaving aside for the moment the question of their meaning, Homeric pluperfects are usually considered by experienced Hellenists to be rare beasts that lumber in from time to time without actually mattering very much. Yet this is not really fair: while it is impossible to take an uncontroversial tally of the number of pluperfects in the Iliad and the Odyssey, by one count of mine there are 558 such forms. That this is not an insignificant number becomes clear when one realizes that it comes to, on average, one pluperfect every 50 verses; put another way, there will be slightly more than one pluperfect on any given opening of the Oxford Classical Text of Homer, whose two great poems total 27,803 verses.

The standard work on the Latin pluperfect remains Blase 1894.

6 Gildersleeve (1902, 242 and 253) makes some lively remarks on the differences between the use of the pluperfect in Greek and in Latin, noting that an overabundance of pluperfects in a Greek text makes one suspect Latin influence; compare Michael 1970, 493-495 on “pluperfect Latinism” in Early Modern English (e.g., to had loved) and note that the pluperfect in British Celtic (e.g., MW 3sg. carasel ‘had loved’) - a real category, not just a “cultural curiosity” (Michael 1970, 493) - is generally assumed to owe its existence to Lat. 3sg. plpf. amāverat ‘had loved’ and the like (see MacCana 1976). Brugmann (1909, 219) is exasperated by the tendency of Germans in “Schulunterricht” to translate Greek pluperfects as though they were Latin “Vorvergangenheitsformen.”

7 Bottin (1969, 124) writes that there are 406 (enumerating them on pp. 125-129), but he leaves out, among other things, all instances of the pluperfect of ‘know’, of which there are 38 (including compounded 3sg. ποιήσασθα [Od. 17.317]) or perhaps 39 (since Zenodotus [3rd cent. B.C.] reads 2sg. ἤκανες in Od. 1.337 rather than the anomalous 2sg. pf. ἔγραψας [compare West 1998, xxxii]). Meekler (1887, 47) counts 334 active forms (compare immediately below in the text); see also the figures in Chantelaine 1988, 437-439. Schlachter (1907/1908) unfortunately groups perfects and pluperfects together.

8 The textual differences among the standard editions of the poems (D. B. Monro and T. W. Allen’s Iliad and Allen’s Odyssey [OCT]), H. van Thiel’s Weidmann Iliad and

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Of these 558 forms, 330 are active (to 41 different verbs) and 228 are medio-passive (to 62 verbs). A rather more interesting, not to say surprising, statistic is this: quite a number of pluperfect forms - 112 in all (57 active, 55 medio-passive), built to 40 different verbs (14 active, 26 medio-passive) - are attested as such in Homer without corresponding simple perfects. I do not, of course, mean to suggest that these perfect forms did not exist, but only wish to point out that for contextual or whatever other reasons, it is perfectly possible to imagine a text, or group of texts, in a given language (Greek, say) in which one set of forms, or one category, is used significantly more than, or even, perhaps, to the exclusion of, another. For example, it is well known that the second-millennium Linear B tablets contain more perfect participles than finite perfect forms, witness the regularity with which the semantically similar a-ra-ru-ja ‘fitted, joined, bound (fem.)’ (active, to ἅρματικα) and de-de-me-no ‘bound (nt./masc.)’ (medio-passive, to δεσμός, δέσμαι) show up. In Homer, too, perfect participles are common (there is ample evidence for ἄρματος, etc.; δεσμέοντας happens not to be attested), but what is truly striking about the distribution is that there are six examples of pluperfect ἄρματος, etc. (5x II. [including ἡκραῖος (12.456)], 1x Od.) and

Odyssey, and M. L. West’s Teubner Iliad are inconsequential for the present purposes; with the possible exception of West’s preference for the unaugmented pluperfect of the difficult verb ὁδούς ‘know’, on which see fn. 64. On a few occasions, I indicate a minor dispute by citing a hapax pluperfect with the augment in parentheses: ἔμαθον (Od. 9.439), ἔμαθε (Od. 12.959), and ἔμαθεν (Od. 12.242). Allen prints the augment in the first form but not in the other two, whereas for van Thiel it is the other way around.

9 An impatient remark like that of Jannaris (1897, 441) is thus not at all self-evident: “For obvious reasons the disappearance of the pluperfect has preceded that of the perfect.” In a talk given at Oxford in 1993, Geoffrey Horrocks emphasized the primacy of (often periphrastic) pluperfects vis-à-vis perfects at a number of later stages of Greek, citing texts from post-classical papyri through dramas of the Cretan Renaissance; see now Horrocks 1997, 231 and passim (I am grateful to Horrocks for further discussion), as well as Ringe 1984, II, 510-511 on the distribution of synthetic and periphrastic perfects and pluperfects in the epigraphic corpus. As Hedin (1987) discusses in detail, the (periphrastic) pluperfect in Modern Greek (whose most frequent use is to indicate the remote past) is strikingly more common than the corresponding perfect (see also Katselos 2004, 183-220). Dahl (1985, 144-149) summarises the cross-linguistic reasons why one might wish to consider the pluperfect both in connection with the perfect and as a separate category.

10 Given the nature of the evidence, it is hardly surprising that there are no certain, or even likely, examples of Mycenaean pluperfects (compare Duhoux 1988, 129 on the interpretation of e-pi-de-da-to [PY Vn 20.1]).
seven of δέδετο, etc. (3x H., 4x Oid.) – while the would-be finite perfects ἀπόπετε and ἀπέδετο are entirely absent. The immediate moral of this story is that pluperfects obviously filled a need in early Greek. The question is, What was it?

Without providing anything like a full answer, it is still possible to come up with a few observations. In view of the use of the pluperfect for anterior time in the later language, it is perhaps surprising – if well known – that the usual way to indicate time further back in the past than some already-stated past action is to employ the aorist, as for example in the following passage: οἱ μὲν κακακομοιοί ἔβραν οὐκόνομεν ἄκατος, / ἢς ἐκάτο τὸ ὁμοίῳ περίκλητος ἀμοιβήσας / Ἴησανσείς ποιήσαν (II. 1.606–608) ‘and they [still, the gods] went [aor.] to rest, each to his own house, where widely renowned, lame Hephaestus had built [aor.] a dwelling for each’.

However, the pluperfect can indicate anteriority in Homer, though this is almost never stated explicitly. Two instances follow, the one active and the other medio-passive: ὅς ὁδὸν ἀρίθμησεν, ὅς ἕπατος ὁμέρας ἔτους (II. 10.520) ‘when [Hippocoon] saw [aor.] the place empty, where the swift horses had stood [plpf.],’ and νῦν δὴ καὶ εἰς ἡμῶν καθήμενος καὶ ἀνέφθε λίθον / λακώνοις καθήμενος πάρος γε μὲν οἷς πελέσθησιν (II. 24.641–642) ‘and now I [scil. Priam] have tasted [aor.] food and let flaming wine down [aor.] my throat; but previously I had tasted [plpf.] nothing’ (note the fine contrast between the aorist and the pluperfect of the same verb, παλάθης ‘partake of, taste’).

Still, the fact remains that most pluperfects in Homer do not indicate anterior time but rather stand in relationship to imperfects the way perfects do to presents: to quote the lovely phrase of Basil L. Gildersleeve, the pluperfect “hunts in couples with the imperfect.” In other words, since the majority of imperfects in Archaic Greek have presential function, it stands to reason that narratives of current events largely consist of presents and presential perfects and those of past actions of imperfects and imperfect-like pluperfects. This is what we have, for example, in the following description of Calypso’s isle: πᾶρ μὲν ἐκ’ ἐγχώρον καὶ κατέκασε, τελώτες [v. l. τελώσε] δ’ ὀδὴν / κεφαλῆν τ’ ἐκείνου ὄψιν ἔξω υἱοῦ (Od. 5.59–61) ‘and a great fire was blazing [impf.] on the hearth, and the smell of split cedar and citronwood was spreading [plpf.].’

As we shall see, the notion of the pluperfect as the “imperfect of the perfect” – so easy to accept as a synchronic tendency in Homer – is what pro-

12 Jasanoff (1978, 82) makes a passing suggestion as to how the “relative prominence of the perfect middle participle and pluperfect middle in Greek” could have come about. Although for Greek pluperfects, note Chantreix 1927, 15–16 on 3sg. δεύτερος(v) ‘(had) struck’, which appears 12 times in Homer (he says 11) to the exclusion of a simple perfect (see on this also McKay 1965, 3, with 18 n. 12, against Wackernagel (1904, 5)). Chantreix calls δεύτερος(v) ‘[le cas le plus embarrassing’ (1927, 15) of a resalutative form with aoristic function in the perfect system, and while I cannot accept his own very tentative suggestion that underlying it is an old aorist [δεύτερος] he can indeed not be accidental that the verb with the most unusual semantics is morphologically a (surely comparatively recent) kappa-formation.

13 The extent of this usage is controversal; see for some examples and discussion, see Rijksboron 1976, 117–119, 1988, 243–244, and 2002, 38 (Herodotus) and McKay 1980, 34–35, with notes on 46–47 (non-literary papyri); also compare Schwyzer / Dobrémanski 1950, 288–289; Humbert (1960, 150–152) and Carrière (1967, 59) are overly resistant (compare also Katselou 2004, 207–218; esp. 208).

14 Euler (1990, with many references) discusses the ways in which anteriority is expressed in early Indo-European languages, notably Indo-Iranian, Greek, Armenian, and Slavic; it seems certain that one of the functions of the aorist in Proto-Indo-European was to express the anterior past. Euler cites II. 606–608 on p. 141.

15 Euler (1990, 142–143) admits this grudgingly, stating that “als Paradebeispiel wurde immer wieder δευτερος [see fn. 12] angeführt” (142). The example of δεύτερος that he goes on to cite (Od. 22.286) is not, however, well chosen; II. 4.108 is much better. (See, however, Chantreix 1955, 199–200.) Compare also Rasmussen 2000, 449–450 – interesting and witty (but read δευτερος for his “δευτερος” 1450)
vides, in my view, the key to this interesting and understudied category’s diachronic analysis. Consider the standard third-person singular endings of the active and medio-passive pluperfect and perfect in both Homeric and Attic Greek, as illustrated by the verbs ἐβηκαί ‘go’ and ἔβηκα ‘stretch’, respectively:

Hom. plpf. (ἐ)βηκαί - pf. βῆκα
Hom. plpf. (ἐ)τέτακα - pf. τέτακα

The active pluperfect ending -κα corresponds in the perfect indicative to -κε -how exactly is the principal subject of this paper - while, far more transparently, the medio-passive pluperfect ending -τα corresponds to perfect -τα. The only difference of any note between the epic and Attic forms is that the augment is not an integral part of the early pluperfect and is in fact more often than not left off, at least according to the great Alexandrian grammarian and textual critic Aristarchus (2nd cent. B.C.). Now, while the medio-passives are of considerable interest, their morphology is thoroughly unsurprising: the juxtaposition of a primary ending -τα and a secondary ending -κα is both wholly familiar from elsewhere in the verbal system and certainly not of extreme antiquity, for as is well known, the so-called perfect “tense” in Proto-Indo-European was not originally a tense at all, but rather a stative formation, and it is clear that medio-passives could not have arisen en masse - though Jasanoff (2003) now argues persuasively that some significant forms did arise quite early - before the perfect had developed semantically in such a way as to make it seem like an active, transitive (though not yet resumptive) form in need of a medival correspondent (compare Chanaire 1927, 47-70). In the Indo-European-based analysis that follows, I therefore con-
Fourth, while the dual and plural forms in the usual Homeric paradigm are simple athematic forms, the singulars are what is now normally known as "alphathematic,"23 and the internal preteritizing formant -e- that is the sole mark of distinction between the unaugmented pluperfect and the perfect, at least in the critical first- and third-person singulars (παρειθετ(ε)α and παρειθετ(ε)ε), looks extremely odd when considered against the background of virtually all other verbal formations in Greek. And fifth, there are also a number of Homeric pluperfects that are neither athematic nor alphathematic, and sorting these out has proved an especially woolly problem. For one thing, there is the inflection of the most common pluperfect of all, namely 3sg. ἦν 'knew', to ὠδα (PIE *gīd- 'see'); whereas 'knew' behaves largely like the usual alphathematic/athematic-type (see below, with fn. 59), the desinence—only in Homer—of the single best-attested form, the basic third-person singular, is -η rather than -ει, an anomaly found in no other verb and one that clearly requires an explanation.25 Additionally, there are a number of thematic pluperfects, most notably 1sg. ἦγεον, 3sg. ἦγεον(v), 3pl. ἦγεον(v) "ordered, commanded; bade"; these verbs—which are attested only in these three persons, frequently express speech or noise, and have a limited but very interesting distribution in the sources (basically "Achaeans"; Aeolic plus (Arcado-)Cypriote)26—make up a particularly difficult class in view of the fact that in the third-person singular, the perfect and (unaugmented) pluperfect forms are identical, both ending in a simple -ε.27

“Achaeans” nature of pf/plpf. ἰνων/ἰνων specifically, see Ruigh 1957, 128–130 (with particular reference to C. M. Bowra). In fact, thematic paradigms tend to be “nailed,” but the more-than-occasional alphathematic forms, e.g., 3sg. ἦγεον (ll. 2.280+), are evidently secondary (compare ἦγεον; see fn. 25). In theory, it is possible that ἦγεον, etc. are imperfects to the secondary present ἰνων (cf., e.g., 3sg. pres. ἰνων [ll. 6.439+1] and 1sg. fut. ἀνων [lfs. 16.404]; compare Nussbaum 1987, 249, with n. 53), a form, be it noted, that seems in turn to owe its very existence to a backformation from the thematic pluperfect (Chaniotai 1991, 185) and Ringe 1984, (L) 128] suggest more loosely that it is a backformation from the perfect; an oft-cited parallel for this process in Sanskrit is Ved.-3sg. pres. act. sibhibh ‘is afraid’, which is formed from RV 3sg. plpf. act. sibhibh ‘was afraid’ (see below, with fn. 39) and replaces RV 3sg. pres. act. bhavat ‘becomes afraid, is afraid’ (see above all Wackernagel 1907, 305–309 and Cardinal 1992). It is important to stress, though, that even if some early instances of ἰνων are in fact imperfects (I do not know how one would be able to tell), the thematic pluperfect is definitely a real category: unlike ἦν, which is purely Homeric, there is incontrovertible evidence for thematic pluperfects elsewhere, and in non-literary language (see above all Ringe 1984, [L] 127–128 and [L] 508–509). Most remarkable of all is the appearance of two such forms in Cypriote, 3pl. ἀ-μο-κο-κε (i.e., ἰνων) in the famous early 5th-c. B.C. Idalion Bronze (Masson 1983, 236–237 and 239 [s. ICl 217 A.2]) and 1sg. or 3pl. ἀ-μο-κο-κε (i.e., ἰμοκοκες) [vs. Att. 3pl. ἰμοκοκαζαειν in Xen. Hell. 5.1.35] ‘they swore/ had sworn’ in a late-4th-c. B.C. text from Paphos (Masson 1983, 105 [ον IG II 8]; for the dating, see Masson 1980, 77). As Ringe (1984, [L] 128) notes, it is very likely that ἀ-μο-κο-κε is a pluperfect since we have no evidence of such remodelling [i.e., ἰνων] in Cypriote; and in any case, ἀ-μο-κο-κε cannot be anything but a pluperfect.” (The East Ionic form 3pl. ἱνων in an inscription in elogivoc form ca. 350 B.C. [Inschr. Pren. 196.5] is a Homericism; see Ringe 1984, [L] 93.) For further details see below, in fn. 27.

23 Note, too, “super-thematic” 3pl. ἱνων (ll. 7.394, with synizesis) — “découment récent” (Chaniotai 1958, 439) whose background is treated most fully in Nussbaum 1987, 248–250, and the varia lectora ἐλεοῦντος (Od. 12.395, with synizesis; instead of 3sg. ἐλεοῦντος or — in my view older; see below in the text — ἐλεοῦντος ‘mooded, lowed’), as well as ἐλεοῦντος, a form of λειοῦντος (ll. 22.141 and Od. 12.85) ‘scream’ that Nussbaum (1987) argues (elegantly, in my opinion, despite the objections of Hackstein 2002, 154–156) lies behind the morphologically and semantically problematic hapax 3pl. ἐλεοῦντος (Od. 8.379). (Chaniotai 1958, 347–348) notes also ἱεροῦν [Od. 9.47 (3pl.) and 12.370 (1sg.)] and ἱεροῦν [Od. 17.161 (1sg.), with t.l. ἱεροῦν], which he takes to be secondary imperfets based on the old thematic pluperfect 3sg. ἱεροῦν(v) ‘called out, shouted’ [less common than ἵναν(v), etc. but of the same sort and with a similar meaning (and likewise occasionally secondarily alphathematic: ἵναν(v)]; see also Nussbaum 1987, 238 n. 23 and 248–250, as well as Ringe 1989, 146–147 n. 13.) This type cannot be motivated.

24 The term, now widespread, goes back to Rix (1976, 207: “alpha-thematic(s),”), who, however, does not use it in the first place of pluperfects.

25 There is no evidence for 3sg. ἦν outside Homer. Hackstein (2002, 254) accidentally cites ἦν in Soph. OT 433 as both a first- and a third-person singular form; in fact it is the former and — like ἔλαξις (see above in the text) — simply shows contraction from ἦν (see fn. 59). I find it very unlikely (pace, e.g., Chaniotai 1961, 202) that the second eta of 3sg ἦπινθυ in Classical Greek (supposedly closest in Soph. Ant. 447, where, however, it is just C. G. Cober’s universally accepted conjecture for ἦν τε of the codices) is old (what appears to be the same form is a Homeric hapax in Od. 19.93; see fn. 59); it is easy enough to think of analogical models for its creation. The occasional instances of 3sg. ἦσε (Homer, ll. 10.240+) in Homer, only ll. 18.404 and Od. 23.29 are metrically guaranteed [unless one were to print ἦσε’]; Od. 23.29 shows that Chaniotai [1958, 438] is wrong to state that ἦσε(v) always forms the first foot) are certainly remodeled on the basis of the usual alphathematic ending.

26 See Schwizer 1939, 777 and Chaniotai 1958, 438–439 for helpful accounts; on the
Let us now turn seriously to the desinences of the active pluperfect, and in particular to the singulars, the only part of the Greek verbal system without even the beginnings of a convincing historical explanation. Before presenting my own solution, I must argue at some length against the one scenario that has gained any acceptance, that of the late Nils Berg, who in 1977 published what is by far the most detailed and carefully argued discussion of the problem. Although Berg gives a fine account of the failings of the many previous analyses of the Greek pluperfect and then dismisses them with good reason (see Berg 1977, 218–222 and passim, with 259 n. 24), he, like many before him (and some since: e.g., Sihler [1995, 578]), acquiesces in the belief that the apparent peculiarity of the forms makes it necessary to explain the category as an inner-Greek development. This is in principle possible, of course, but Berg’s scenario, which I summarize here in tabular form (compare Berg 1977, 233–240, esp. 238–240), fails on a number of levels and is ultimately untenable:

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<th>1sg.</th>
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<tr>
<td>(a) PIE</td>
<td>*-h2e &gt; *-th2e &gt; *-e</td>
<td>[Undifferentiated perfect-cum-pluperfect]</td>
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<td>(β)</td>
<td>*-a &gt; *-pτa</td>
<td>*-e</td>
<td>[Regular phonological change]</td>
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<tr>
<td>(γ)</td>
<td>*-a</td>
<td>*-as &gt; *-e</td>
<td>[Replacement by analogy to the aorist]</td>
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<td>(δ)</td>
<td>*-a &gt; *-as &gt; *-e-Ø</td>
<td>[***Reanalysis after 3sg. *-s-&gt; *-s-Ø in the sigmatik aorist]</td>
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</table>

purely by meter if the 4th-cent. B.C. Phocian hapax plp. ἐφαρμανον (Delph. III(5) 20,39) ‘were in charge’ (for the normally thematic forms of the verb, see below in the text) is probative (see Ringe 1984, [1], 204–205 and [II], 508–509 anc also 1989, 146 n. 13). Beckwith (2004) has recently discussed all these forms (though he misses ἐμνεων), invoking ἔμνεων as a significant form in the rise and spread of the Greek perfect; I consider most of his speculations misguided – in particular, his belief that “[…]best comparative evidence [What is it? – JTK] suggests that the early Greek perfect was thematic” (59) – but I certainly do agree on the importance of recognizing a semantic difference between thematic and alaphathematic forms (see below in the text).

Berg’s speculations are noted in Meier-Brügger 1992, 55 and Szemerényi 1996, 299 n. 24; mentioned with both praise and reservations in Beckwith 2004; cited approvingly but without comment in Tichy 1983, 70 n. 14 and 373 n. 146, Cardona 1992, 12–13 n. 19, and Kortlandt 1994, 1 n. 1; and lauded in Ringe 1989 (where Berg is reported to have “brilliantly elucidated” the pluperfect [114 n. 6]) and also Kimball 1991, 150–151. It has not been widely noticed that a similar view is found in Perelmuter 1977, 68–78 (but see M. Peters, IC 24b [1978] #376, as well as Szemerényi 1996, 299 n. 24 and Rasmussen 2000, 447).

The Origin of the Greek Pluperfect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hom.</th>
<th>*-e-α</th>
<th>*-e-α</th>
<th>*-e-Ø</th>
<th>[Initial extension of the preteritizing formant -e-; 3sg. *-e-∅ &gt; plf./thematic plpf. -e-]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Ω)</td>
<td>*-e-α</td>
<td>*-e-α</td>
<td>*-e</td>
<td>[Final extension of the formant -e-, whence 3sg. alaphathematic plpf. -e-]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(η)</td>
<td>*-e-α</td>
<td>*-e-α</td>
<td>*-e-ξ</td>
<td>[Quasi-regular contraction to 3sg. -e-ξ].</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Berg starts off (a) with the common – though happily no longer universal – assumption that Proto-Indo-European had no special category “pluperfect” and that the familiar set of endings 1sg. *-h2e, 2sg. *-th2e, and 3sg. *-e are undifferentiated perfect-cum-pluperfects. These develop regularly into, respectively, *-a, *-pτa, and *-e (β), and the second-person form is changed to *-as (γ) by analogy to the aorist. So far so good, but it is in the next step (δ) that Berg unveils his original trick: once the third-person singular desinence *-e-α has been lost by regular phonological change in the sigmatik aorist, with the result that the analysis of this form is *-s-Ø, the ending *-e- of the perfect/pluperfect is reanalyzed as having a zero-ending as well. The result (e), which is a stage of Greek that we may call Homeric, is that the *-e- of the third-person singular – formerly the ending but now some sort of pre-desinential element – is mechanically added in front of the endings of the other two singular forms (in line with the tendency sometimes known as “Watkins’s Law”). According to Berg, the third-person singular form *-e-∅ (δ) is what develops into both the perfect and the thematic pluperfect. And finally – for in Berg’s view a distinct pluperfect is so late that it is, in his words, “in statu nascendi” at the time Homer was composing (1977, 205 and 231) – the now-anomalous third-person form is fitted out with its own ending, another *-e, and the result (Ω) is the alaphathematic singulars 1sg. *-e-α, 2sg. *-e-α, and 3sg. *-e, whence also (η) contracted 3sg. *-e-ξ.

The essentials of Berg’s picture of the origin of the Greek pluperfect have never been subject to detailed, point-by-point criticism in the 30 years since its publication. This is very odd, for – despite his strong appeal to some admittedly striking and not easily explicable metrical facts about the placement in the hexameter of pluperfects in -e-1 there are any number of reasons why Berg can hardly be correct. First of all, the idea that the loss of the final…

28 In other words, (e), (Ω), and (η) are all Homeric: note the subtitle of Berg’s paper, “Ein Beispiel von systemimmanenter Instabilität und ständigem morphologischen Wandel.” See fn. 30.
29 Defenders of Berg will object that the metrical aspect of his argument deserves more
than a footnote. The issues are complex enough, however, for a separate paper (for one thing, the question is intimately connected with the origin of hexametric verse and the date at which it came to have its canonical form, a subject on which I have no strong opinion but on which Berg wrote a number of influential papers, beginning with Berg 1978; see also, e.g., Berg / Haug 2000, as well as Haug / Welo 2001, with references), and I believe that the objections to Berg’s general scenario raised in the coming two paragraphs in the text are at any rate too severe to be overcome. In brief, the prototypical third-person singular alaphematic pluperfect (e.g., ἔρρηκεν) has the metrical shape (ʼ)ο<, and as is well known, the majority of such pluperfects (e.g., all 37 instances of ἔβαλεν [including 3x ἐπιβαλεν] compare Melker 1887, 116 and Berg 1977, 226–231, with 259 n. 29) are hexameter-final (ʼο< < ξ<; all those that do appear before the bucolic caesura (see most conveniently Shipp 1977, 170), which in turn implies that they should actually be scanned (ʼο< < ξ<; compare O’Neill 1942, 145 and passim and see also Nussbaum 1987, 248 n. 47), i.e., pronounced and written with uncontracted -εν as is obviously not possible in the sixth foot. Given these facts, Berg suggests that the verse-final precollection of the alaphematic pluperfect is no less than the critical indication that even still during the period of Homeric composition this category was simply an undifferentiated perfectum-pluperfect of the shape (ʼ)ο< (e.g., ἐρρηκεν) and was in the process of acquiring its new ending. This sounds good – indeed (though Berg does not note this fact) there is a correlation between the placement of the pluperfect of a given verb at verse-end and the placement of its corresponding amphibrac perfect in the same position – but among other problems, it cannot account for why, aside from ἔβαλεν (on which Berg 1977, 227–232, with notes on 259] naturally concentrates), the Homeric third-person singular thematic and mixed pluperfects and their corresponding perfects seem to be distributed rather differently (compare Melker 1887, 63–64; for a quick summary, see Hackstein 2002, 261–262); particularly striking are the facts about plpf. ἐγέρατον (straddling the second and third feet; II. 14.469; before the boculic caesura: II. 24.703 and Od. 8.305); plpf. ἐγέρᾳ (always verse-final; II. 22.34 and 23.425 and Od. 21.368); and pl. ἔγερα (always straddling the fourth and fifth feet: Od. 5.400 = 9.473 + 5.1218 = 6.294). Neither Berg nor I can explain explicitly how -ε (a sequence that contracts in Homeric much more frequently than -et-; see Bechtel 1908 and Shipp 1972, 148–189 for all the details) could have gotten into the hexameter’s final foot in the first place (Berg 1977, 230) merely cites a general, and not especially apt, remark of Chaniotae (1927, 59) on this point, but I stress that the ending need not be a very recent creation: Chaniotae (1958, 40) provides a list of verbs in -ε that show contraction, “souvent dans des formes, tout particulièrement à la fin du vers” (including πέλαξε δὲ ἐν πυρί ἀργυρῷ [II. 1, 1x Od.] “and fierce anger took hold of him/her” [compare Shipp 1972, 156, with n. 1]; ἐφίλησα, though a kappa-pluperfect and therefore probably not terribly old as such (see on this Berg 1977, 259 n. 29), shows up verse-finally in one of the most linguistically (or, just possibly, metrically) archaic passages in Homer (II. 16.856–857 = 22.362–363, where the famous form ἐπιβάλετος μακαδός (acc.) is probably to be scanned (ʼο<); and finally, the word ἔτει is very frequently verse-final and – if indeed it goes back to an old locative like PIE *h₁-et₁-ye₁-t₁, as many have thought, rather than directly to a u-stem dative *h₁-ey₁-et₁ – reflects the contraction of two vowels across an *s, as I shall suggest does also our pluperfect ending.

31 For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that another path speakers might have gone down, but did not, is to build up a new “Latin-looking” perfect according to the following analogy: 3sg. impf. δέχομαι - δέχομαι - δέχομαι; 2sg. plpf. *δέκατορ-: 3sg. pf. X, where X = *δεκατορ- (whence, then, 2sg. *δεκατορ-; compare the overtly rigid remarks of Cowgill 1979, 28–30 and passim) on, among other things, the non-use of the hic et nunc-particle with perfect stems (see also Cordona 1992, 8–10, with 13 n. 20, and now Jasnow 2003, 11–13).

32 Unlike an infix, which properly speaking imposes itself within a root, my term “internal suffix” is a diachronic designation that refers to an element added between already existing morphological components: given two suffixes X and Y, one may thus distinguish between the derivational processes *AX = AX-Y (Y is a simple suffix) and *AX = A-Y-X (Y is an internal suffix).

33 Lejeune (1972, 224) notes a very few cases of hiatus that “résultent directement, en grec même, de la juxtaposition de deux éléments morphologiques,” Jasnow (1991a, 116–121 and passim) neatly disposes of one old line on the provenance of the so-
general principles, then, the hiatus between the vowel *e* and the endings 1sg. *-α*, 2sg. *-ας*, and 3sg. *-ε* in the pluperfect is most likely to have come about through the comparatively late regular intervocalic loss of a *υ*, a *ι*, or an *ε*.

In addition to all this, though, there are some even more serious objections. For example, in Berg’s scenario, it would seem that whether a verb in Homer has a thematic or an alaphematic pluperfect is a matter of chance. This is surely infelicitous (compare Beckwith 2004, 78), for (as noted above) the majority of thematic pluperfects are verbs of speech or noise (verba dicendi vel sonandi), and such verbs are clearly semantically unusual in the perfect system as a whole in not being originally stative (pace Brugmann [1904, 493], who translates 3sg. pf. μηύξα as ‘moos, lows’ as ‘er ist ins Brüllen gekommen und ist nun im Brüllen drin’). Furthermore, Berg cannot explain the usual ending of ἔνη, the pluperfect par excellence, and rejects what seems to me and nearly everyone else quite obviously the lectio difficilior in favor of the lame view that the eta is a quirk of Aristarchus. This is all highly undesirable, for the correct explanation of the origin of the active pluperfect should obviously be able to account for the really quite coherent distribution of the various kinds of singular desinences: alaphematic in most forms, the majority of which are old statives; alaphematic also in the stative verb ‘know’, which has, however, one striking oddity; and thematic in a very few forms, among them some prominent non-stative verbs of speech. In view of all this, we are forced to reject Berg’s proposal, and I suggest also that we go back to the very beginning and ask ourselves, as for example Rasmussen (2000) now does, whether Berg and many others might not in fact be wrong to take as their initial assumption that Proto-Indo-European could not have had some sort of formation that one might refer to as “the pluperfect.”

34 called “Aeolic” aorist optative, which looks as though, to quote Forbes (1958, 173), “εια- [where] simply prefixed before the indicative endings” of the unaugmented sigmatic aorist. This leaves Hom. 2sg. ἔμπ ορόγια ράισα! and λέγει ‘Lie down!’ which Roth (1990, 60–76) believes come from ἀγόροι and ὑλεῖο; whatever their history may be, “ils semblent être des créations artificielles et en partie métriques” (Chantrenne 1958, 417).

35 See also Wackernagel 1926, 185 for the refreshingly undogmatic remark, “Ob es vorgriechisch, schon in der Grundsprache, ein Präteritum des Perfekstammes gab, wissen wir nicht.” Note by contrast no less an authority than Hoffmann (1970, 27): “[D]ie urindogermanische Existenz eines Pluviumperfekts [ist] ganz zweifelhaft.” Tichy (2000, 80) seems to suggest that Proto-Indo-European had a category “Pluviumperfekt,” which, she stresses, was “nicht = Tempus der Vorvergangenheit” (compare also, e.g., Rix 1976/1992, 257 and Szemerényi 1996, 298, with notes on 299).

Now, although the perfect (or, with Jasanoff, “protomiddle”) denoted a timeless state in Proto-Indo-European, or at least in “Early” Proto-Indo-European, it is clearly usually presentential and “tense-like” earlier in the earliest texts in all the early Indo-European languages, including of course Archaic Greek. As such, the perfect might reasonably have been supplied at quite an early stage with a past-tense counterpart. Suppose, then, that Proto-Indo-European or some early Indo-European language or group of languages did in fact create a secondary perfect. How would this have been accomplished, given that there are no special secondary perfect endings, that is to say, that the endings of the perfect are different from the familiar *-m/*-st/*-t-forms of the present and aorist (“tensed”) systems, which underlie both primary and secondary endings? There can, I think, be only one answer, namely that the secondary endings *-m, *-s, and *-t would simply be imported into the perfect system and added directly to the perfect stem, thereby yielding pluperfects (or perfect infinitives) that are formally “imperfects of the perfect.”

It should be noted that such a solution, which can be found in two papers by Jasanoff from the 1990’s (1994, 153–154 and passim and 1997a) and in his remarkable recent monograph (2003, 34–43 and passim), is what evidently gives rise to the athematic dual and plural active pluperfects in Greek, witness, for example, the structure [augment + reduplicand + to/h0-grade ablauting root + secondary endings] of 1pl. (ἔ-)πει-πο-με; καταλιόμενοι the same procedure is responsible also for Greek medio-passive pluperfects like (ἔ-)πα-το-το.

Consider now the pluperfect in Indo-Iranian, one of only a few branches of Indo-European that have a reasonably robust category of non-periphrastic formations and the branch whose verbal system is, at least superficially, the closest to Greek. The early Vedic pluperfects – in the singular, N.B., as

36 I make no distinction in this paragraph between pluperfects and perfect infinitives, for the sake of simplicity referring to both as “pluperfects.”

37 Aside from Greek and Indo-Iranian (though the actually attested forms are almost all Indic; see immediately below in the text), the only two branches with morphological pluperfects are British Celtic (see fn. 7) and Italic (attested only in Latin[2], but their absence elsewhere can only be accidental – the “Freiburg School” interprets Osc. 3pl. impf. futans in the Cippus Abellanus [Cm 1 A10 Rx] ‘were’ as an old pluperfect: the locus classicus is Rix 1983, 101–102 n. 15, and see also Meiser 2003, 42–43, as well as B. Schirmer and M. Kümmel in Rix et al. 2001, 98, with 100 n. 24, and Untermann 2000, 251, with references back to W. Petersen). Both formations are of
well as in the dual and plural – are generally said to be inner-Indic (or inner-Indo-Iranian) formations (see, e.g., Kulikov 1991 and Cardona 1992), but nothing speaks against taking at least some of them to be reflexes of old imperfects of the perfect, that is, the perfect stem plus secondary endings: note, for example, the Rigvedic forms 1sg. caikaram (IV.42.6) ‘made’ (root *k'r-), 38 2sg. (djjagam (I.130.9 and III.9.2) ‘had’ come’ (root *gam-; < *g-m-s), and 3sg. abudhah (X.138.5) ‘was afraid’ (root *h-h-).39 The same holds true also for the lone perfect plural singular in an early Iranian language, GAv. 3sg. urturaast (Y.51.12), which probably means something like ‘rejected, repelled’ (see Kümmler 2000, 667–668 for references and discussion) and which certainly goes back to *raud-t, the dental-final strong perfect stem of a root *rud- (cf., YAv. 1sg. pr. *urturalah) plus the athematic desinence *-t.40 Furthermore, beyond arguing for the antiquity of these Indo-Iranian forms, Jasanoff has plausibly identified two relic perfects of exactly the same type in the widely separated Anatolian and Germanic branches: Hitt. 3sg. pret. wewakht(a) (KUB 43.23 Vo. 12); probably a hapax) ‘demanded’ (PIE *ye-he- ‘wish’) and Go. ògs, a second-person singular form of the preterit-present verb ògant* ‘fear’ (PIE *h2eh2g*h2) whose precise morphology has been the subject of much hand-wringing.41 The existence of so simple a method of

considerable diachronic interest (for the Italic perfect system, see Jasanoff 1987 and also 1991b), but neither would seem to be relevant to the issue at hand.

38 The expected outcome of PIE *kekevór must of course be *cekāram, by Brugmann’s Law, but there is no real difficulty in seeing in caikaram a remodeling on the corresponding perfect, caikāra.

39 Thiem 1929, 35–51 and passim remains the starting point for any discussion of the perfect in Vedic, where the category is already moribund. Many of Thiem’s analyses of individual forms are open to question, however, and the new authority is Kümmler 2000 (to whose bibliography add Kulikov 1991 and Cardona 1992, the latter with observations [see pp. 7–8, with notes on 12] on seeming differences in origin between the perfects of *gam- and *h-h-). For the form and function of Indo-Iranian pluperfects, see Kümmler 2000, 47–49 and esp. 82–88, with remarks on the three Rigvedic verbs just cited in the text on pp. 137, 158–159, and 336. See also Rasmussen 2000, 449 and passim and now Jasanoff 2003, 35–36 and passim.

40 Kellens (1984, 411) calls urturaast ‘le seul plus-que-partant indiscutable de l’Avesta.’ However, Jasanoff (1997a and 2003, 39–40 and passim) argues strongly in favor of analyzing GAv. khūtāraast (Y.32.11) as a third-person plural perfect with a meaning something like ‘appeared’ (for an overview, see Kümmler 2000, 32–35, 48, and 634–636, where the root is registered as ‘*weh ‘beachent; erscheinen, glänzen’). Hoffmann / Forasman (2004, 237) are generally skeptical.

41 For detailed argumentation, see Jasanoff 1994, 153–154 and 156–157, 1997a, 125 and passim, and now 2003, 34–38 and 251 (index s.v. wewakk-, etc.). Jasanoff’s idea

word-formation in one major Indo-European branch (and very probably more), coupled with the existence of an unsolved puzzle in the morphology of the same category in another branch, suggests that we investigate whether the Greek pluperfect, too, might not go back – everywhere, and not just outside the singular – to something of this kind. If this strategy is correct, it would unify the usual pluperfect paradigm in Archaic Greek as through and through athematic from a historical point of view: in addition, it would bolster the suggestion that the Vedic and Old Avastan forms go back to something well older than Common Indo-Iranian.

The described template of this putative Proto-Indo-European formation in the perfect system is just what underlies such forms as Gk. (παραπλητζειν, as noted above: [(augment +) reduplicand + uO-grade ablauting root + secondary endings]. If such “pluperfects” – that is, perfects with secondary endings – had made their way into Greek unmediated by anything other than regular phonological change, they would have developed into some quite peculiar forms: for example, 2/3sg. (παραπλητμαι ( < *-p-l-m-s, *-p-l-t) and (from the root *lēik-, ‘leave’, as in Gk. λέις) 2sg. (παραπλημίου, 3sg. (παραπλησία ( < *-p-s, *-p-t). But this is not, of course, what happens. Consider the following partial paradigm of the uncontroversial Proto-Indo-European perfect and the “Jasanoff pluperfect” of the root *bheid- ‘trust’, as in Gk. ποικίλα and (παραπλησία:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>Pluperfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg.</td>
<td>*bhi-bheid-</td>
<td>a*he-bheid-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg.</td>
<td>*bhi-bheid-</td>
<td>a*he-bheid-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg.</td>
<td>*bhi-bheid-</td>
<td>a*he-bheid-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

is a brillant Go. ògat ‘μή φοβοδα ‘Fear not!’ reflects an old perfect intransitive (a category whose existence Hajnal 1990, 73 n. 68) expresses itself in a prohibitive clause (rather than, e.g., a short-syllable subjunctive, an old idea promoted in recent years by Bammesberger [1986] and Eucer [1993, 22–23 n. 29]) as *mē *he-bheid-s, with restoration of the root *-h- after the rest of the paradigm. (Kortlandt [1994, 1], too, writes that ògat “evidently represents a perfect stem with a secondary ending,” while, however, also stating categorically, “There was no pluperfect in Proto-Indo-European.”) The idea that wewakht(a) goes back directly to PIE *ye-yel-t has risen to considerable doubt but is in my view very likely correct: the fact remains that the expected preterite of the bi-verb wewakki would have been *wewakki: further more, Jasanoff (1994, 156–157 n. 14, 1997a, 125 n. 21, and 2003, 38) notes the unexpected – and very likely telling – root accentuation of a Rigvedic form that seems to be nearly exactly cognate with Hitt. wewakk-, namely 2sg. pres. wewak-st (VI.45.6) ‘wish’.

By the Proto-Indo-European “dental + dental-rule” (which explains such things as the final cluster in GAv. ur∂raost), such a paradigm would uncontroversially go into Greek with the root obscured in the second- and third-person singular pluperfects, at this point respectively *(e)pépois (< *(e)pépois) and *(e)pépoist (compare now Jasanoff 2003, 36 n. 20):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>Pluperfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg. xénojba</td>
<td>*(e)pépoirn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg. *(e)pépoirn</td>
<td>*(e)pépois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg. xénojba: 'believes, trusts in'</td>
<td>*(e)pépois 'believed, trusted in'.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such a situation (which Berg [1977, 225, with references] explicitly calls a “Hypothese[, die] offenbar gar keinen Erklärungsvers ... besitzt”) would be untenable and cry out for paradigmatic leveling: the final consonant, *(d) or (in Greek terms) *(θ), is now missing from these two pluperfect forms while still being found in, for example, the first-person singular perfect and pluperfect and the third-person singular perfect. The only way to restore it is through thematicization: *(e)pépois and *(e)pépoist become respectively *(e)pépois and *(e)pépoist. And now, once some of the pluperfects, notably those to dental-final roots, are thematic, all other pluperfects are likewise thematicized (except one; see below): so, to take again the labiovelar-final root *(e)léik*, 3sg. *(e)léeloik* becomes *(e)léeloik* (and so on and so forth). It should be stressed that it is not problematic that the scenario I am sketching relies crucially on dental-final roots as a fulcrum of morphological change: quite a number of perfects and pluperfects in epic are built to such roots and there are also a number of uncontroversial examples in early Greek of the morpho-phonological extension of dentals and of forms that reflect the dental + dental-rule.

Let us turn now to a brief consideration of the thematic pluperfect. What is interesting is that almost all the attested forms fall into at least one of two mutually inclusive classes. As already noted, the majority of thematic pluperfects are non-stative verbs of speech or noise, all of which – plus most of the remaining thematic forms – have at least two, and usually all three, of the following characteristics: (1) they are built to laryngeal-final or inherently long-vowel roots; (2) they have a propensity for root-final or suffix-initial kappas and other velars; and (3) they exhibit, or at least potentially exhibit, abnormal ablaut.

The verba dicendi vel sonandi (see fn. 26 and 27 for significant details) are as follows (the first three are “normal human,” the next two “animal”): (a) Hom. 1sg.3pl. át'ýa第二天, 3sg. át'ýa(v) and Cypr. 3pl. a-no-ko-ne ‘ordered, commanded; bade’, Hom. 3sg. *(e)ŷe-gọve(v) ‘called out, shouted’, and Cypr. 1sg. or 3pl. o-no-mo-ko-ne ‘swore’; and (b) Hom. 3pl. *(e)με-γο(v) (Od. 9.439) ‘baaed, bleated’ and probably Hom. 3sg. *(e)με-γο(v) (Od. 12.395, v.l.) ‘moored, lowered’. Notice that the remaining forms have

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42 Although the matter is of little consequence here, it should be noted that this standard rule (see Mayrhofer 1986, 110–112) may in fact need modification: see now Hill 2003 (discussion of ur∂raost on p. 64, with reference to X. Tremblay).

43 According to the list in Risch 1974, 347–348 of active pluperfects in Homer (ordered by final consonant of the root or extension), roughly half the stems whose perfects end in a dental consonant – including ‘know’ – have attested alaphathemic pluperfects. That said, only a quarter of the stems that have attested alaphathemic (or mixed) pluperfects end in a dental consonant: see Chantaine 1958, 437–438, corrected by Shippl 1972, 170 n. 2.

44 Brent Vine points out to me the somewhat similar extension in 1sg. pf. mid. xénojba (Od. 11.505 and standard in the classical language) ‘found out, learned’ (based on 3sg. xénojba) PIE *(h)reid-‘ notice (vel sim.)’ and also the curious Homeric form 3pl. pf. mid. éρρατ-‘ be scattered’, which is part of the paradigm of poivo ‘sprin-


46 The Proto-Indo-European root of the third verb is clear, *(h)en-, and the root of the first is certainly *(h)eke-‘ say’, though it is disputed whether this is ultimately the same as the root for ‘drive’ (see, from very different angles, Sæpe 2000, 194–236, esp. 194–204, and M. Kûmmel in Rix et al. 2001, 255–256, with particular reference to M. Postoe; see also Jasanoff 2003, 224–225 n. 3). As for the second verb, while its root is often taken to be *(h)en- ‘know’ (see, e.g., Sæpe 2000, 237–259 and Tremblay 2002, 115–117), Hackstein (2002, 187–193) suggests linking it to Toch. A *ken- ‘call, invite’ via a new root *(h)en- (1) with the meaning ‘sich laut vernehmbar machen’ and Vine (2007), though accepting Hackstein’s Teutarcan comparandum, rejects *(h)en- (and also *(h)en-) in favor of *(h)en- ‘cry out’, which he proposes may also lie behind Lat. _generare_ ‘grow’ (← *generare). Schwyzer (1939, 777 n. 6) and Morpurgo Davies (1968, 800) imagine that 3pl. ka-ta-wo-ro-ko-ne (i.e., κατάφωρον) ‘besieged’ (PIE *(h)yg-RE: *vel sim.) ‘lock (in)’ might be a third pluperfect in Cyprian, but this form in the Iadlon Bronze (see fn. 26) is more likely to be an aorist (see Masson 1983, 238 [plus 414]), certainly on semantic and perhaps also on morphological grounds (Ringe [1984] does not mention it in his catalogue of epigraphic (plu)perfects).

47 Presumably the “roots” of these last two verbs are onomatopoetic and not of a canonical structure: *(m)ē/mē and *(m)i. It seems likely to me that at least some other noisy alaphathemic pluperfects, to roots with both a long vowel and a final velar

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much the same shape: 3pl. ἐπετρύκων (vs. Hom. ἐπετρύξκεσθαι; unattested, but cf. 3sg. πετρύκει) in a formula about the prodigious hecat that 'were' on or 'grew' from the Hundred-Handers' shoulders (Hes. Th. 152 = 673; also = Op. 149), an early (probably Aeolic) kappa-pluperfect to the non-ablating laryngeal-final root *buh2; 'be, become' (on which see above all Jasanoff 1997b); 3sg. ἔπστάσκα (known from three [1] 3rd- and 2nd-cent. B.C. E. Aeolic inscriptions; vs. Hom. ἐφηστήκει and Att. ἔφηστήκει 'stood on/over (vel sim.)', "another kappa-pluperfect to a laryngeal-final root, *steh2; (see Ringe 1984, [1] 140–141, [1] 144, and [III], 508 for references and thorough discussion; see also Ringe 1989, 146 n. 12)"; and probably the etymologically, morphologically, and semantically obscure Homeric forms ἐπενίγοθε: (2x.II.) and ἐπενίθολεν (II. 11.266; perhaps [see Richardson 1974, 253–254, with references] < *ἐπενιθολεν with haplology). 50 This is not the place for a proper discussion of the many issues that these forms raise, both for the history of Greek and for Indo-European historical linguistics more generally. 51 But the fact that among these anomalously thematic pluperfects are ones that mean things like 'bleat (like a sheep)' and are therefore not the sorts of verbs that one expects to find in the perfect system should surely be taken seriously, and I propose that at least one of the factors (I imagine there are others) in the development of this small class of forms fits in with my overall scenario: so far I have explained how we get to the point at which the third-person singular perfect ends in *-et; 52 and I suggest that just those verbs that are atypical and not natively developed by regular phonological change from *-et to *-e, thereby engendering by analogy to the imperfect a thematic paradigm with first-person singular and third-person plural forms in -ov (compare Berg 1977, 232). 53

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What about all the other verbs? To answer this question, it is necessary to backtrack very slightly. I claimed two paragraphs ago that all pluperfects become thematicized, under the influence of the paradigmatically conditioned restoration of the final consonant in dental-final roots. This is not in fact quite correct: one single verb does not, in my view, undergo thematicization, namely the most prominent one, 'know', whose especially common (compare fn. 59) third-person singular pluperfect remains *(e)γοινις (≠ *(e)γοινις-t) rather than becoming *(e)γοινιτη. The exceptional retention of archaic morpho-archaic verbs, like 'know' and 'be', is of course very common cross-linguistically.52 Berg's trick in his solution to the problem of the pluperfect is to claim a zero-ending in the third-person form, and it is time for me to unveil my trick, which I believe is linguistically far easier to motivate: only the semantically atypical verbs keep the ending -(ε)τ long enough to become -(ε)σ (and, hence, thematic pluperfects); all the typical — that is, stative — forms are altered by analogy to the unique ending of the most common — and stative — pluperfect, namely *(e)γοινις. The result of this is that 3sg. *(e)peipo'tet (and *(e)leloin'et, etc.)53 becomes *(e)peipo'test (and *(e)lelokont'est, etc.).56

We thus have a singular pluperfect paradigm 1sg. *(e)peipo'tnm, 2sg. *(e)peipo'tes, 3sg. *(e)peipo'test, and the next step is to generalize the sequence -(ε)τ- from the second- and third-person forms to the first: so, *(e)peipo'tem, *(e)peipo'tes, *(e)peipo'test. Next, *(e)peipo'test loses its final -(ε)τ and develops regularly into *(e)peipo'tes; this takes place at the same time-level, of course, as the loss of the -(ε)τ in the creation of the thematic pluperfects, as already described. Since the first-person singular form looks quasi-aristotelian *(e)peipo'tes [vel sim., after the development of final -(ε)τ] cf. 1sg. aor. --σα, as also does the third-person plural (something like *(e)peipo'tpes), the second- and third-person singular forms, too, are fitted out with aoristic endings: the awkwardly ambiguous form *(e)peipo'ttes is changed to *(e)peipo'tesas in the second person and *(e)peipo'tese in the third. And this provides the punch line, for with the loss of intervocalic -(ε), this gives us exactly what we find in Homer. Indeed, *(e)peipo'tes is attested as such, as επεποθετα (≠ επεποθοθετε), in Iliad 16.171: πέντε δ’ ἄρ’ ἡμέρας ποίησα, τοῖς ἔπεποθέθα ‘and [Achilles] had appointed five leaders, whom he trusted'.

There is, to be sure, one last precaution, namely what the solution is to the last remaining pluperfect, the anomalous *(e)γοινιτη, which must somehow become the wholly different *(e)γοινις.59 Berg's view of *(e)γοινις (see 1977. 240–256), both < PIE *(e)γοίνιτη; compare fn. 57) and other second-person singular preterit-present and preterite forms to dental-final roots; but see now Hill 2003, 83-92 and passim; see also Jasanoff 1987, 178–179 on Lat. 2sg. pf. -ist and the like, modified now in Jasanoff 2003, 119–121.

57 It appears that the third-person plural aorist ending -(ε)τ is generalized extremely early on, at least in some dialects, as the secondary ending for this person, including in the pluperfect (note in the first place probably τον 'know' [see fn. 59] for τον [≠ *(ε)τ] on account of 2pl. pf. [unattested pfpl.?] to, etc., whose -(ε)τ reflects the dental + dental-rule). On -(ε)τ in general and in pluperfects, see especially Ringe 1989, 124–125, with notes on 144–147, and passim.

58 It is unclear why some verbs, especially those with a -(ε)τ-initial root, have a lengthened augment: see, e.g., Chuntraine 1958, 479–481 (plus 517), as well as Szemerényi 1996, 297, with notes on 299.

59 For a tally of the pluperfects of οἶος (38 or 39 in Homer; see fn. 8), see Hackstein 2002, 254 and passim; see also Ringe 1989, 123–127, with notes on 143–148. For the third-person singular form ηούς/παρηούς is attested 21 times in Homer (v.l. ηούς), and note in addition ηεῖ(ε)ν (6x) and the hapax ηεῖ/παρηούς (Od. 9.206, with ἐν/παρηούς, ηεῖδε, ηεῖες). The form ηεῖ(ε)ν (and also ηεῖα) can hardly reflect anything other than a late analogy to the normal ending (see fn. 25); it is of course what wins out in post-Homeric forms of Greek. The other forms of 'know' in Homer are: 1sg. ηεῖα (4x); 2sg. ηεῖα (Od. 19.93) and (t)εῖα (H. 22.280, with v.l. ηεῖες; cf. also Zeno's reading ηεῖα in Od. 1.337); and 3pl. ηεῖα (4x).
to which I have already alluded, is nothing short of bizarre: “Unter allen Umstän
den sollte man nicht vergessen, dass die lectio difficilior èdè pri
mair und eigentlich nur etwas über die alexandrinische Rezension des Homertextes
aussagt. Wir müssen folglich konkludieren: führt das Vertrauen auf die Art-
starchische Lesart zu linguistisch und metrisch unhaltbaren Ergebnissen, so
ist sie unbedenklich zu verwerfen. Die Linguistik hat darüber das letzte Wort
tz sprechen” (1977, 244). If indeed linguistics is to have the last word, then
it will hardly do to discard what Berg himself admits is the lectio difficil-
ior.60 Now, the verb ‘know’ has been for most scholars the key to the prob-
lem, but I confess that I cannot see how to reconcile my picture with either
two thought-provoking (and themselves mutually irreconcilable) scenarios
for ἠτη found in the recent scholarly literature, that of Martin Peters, who
suggests an Armenian comparandum, and that of Peter Schrijver, who pro-
poses a Celtic one.61 An attractive idea that will fit – for it explains how ἠ τη
 can be unique in Homer while not putting the origins of -η back to the
remote past – is something that Jasanoff tells me he first mooted at a confer-
ence in 1983 and has since noted all too briefly in print on a few occasions
(see 1991a, 117 n. 34, 1997a, 125 n. 20, and now 2003, 36 n. 20). At some
point, *έ(η)νοιστ (which, had it survived, would have yielded *έ(η)νοιστοι)
seemed so out of place in comparison with the other pluperfects that even it
had to be changed, and Jasanoff suggests that it was fixed according to the
following proportion: 3sg. aor. pass. opt. φανείν (to φανερό ‘show, cause
to appear’) : 3sg. aor. pass. indic. (έ)φανέν62 ‘appeared’ :: 3sg. pf. opt. (έ)φα

60 Hackstein (2002, 254–277) makes some interesting forms in the course of
discussing Homeric and later Greek pluperfects, especially forms of the verb ‘know’,
but his defense of Berg on this point (see esp. pp. 260–265) entirely fails to convince.
Schumacher (2004, 697–699) puts the objections cogently.

61 Peters (1997) argues that the ending -η is to be compared to the -η- (< *η-η-: vel sim.)
in Armenian aorists like 3sg. gitač ‘knew’; Schrijver (2000) claims that ἠτη goes
back to PIE *peid-ě ‘in e-grade form [see fn. 54] that ‘wahrscheinlich schon grund-
sprachlich als Plusquamperfekt ... fungierte’ [270]) and that this same preform also
underlies British Celtic imperfects like MW 3sg. gwed-y-yr ‘knew’ (compare Ras-
mussen 2000). See also Barton 1990/1991, 43 and passim. Schrijver’s idea in particu-
lar holds a certain appeal (see Schumacher 2004, 696, as well as Beckwith 2004, 78
n. 13), but in view of the apparent incompatibility of both scholars’ arguments
with my own, I see no point in assessing either of them in a footnote. I urge readers to take
the time to consider in their own minds the relative merits and weaknesses of all positions.
The late C. J. Ruijgh’s Inner-Greek study about ἠτη and other forms of the verb
‘know’ (final publication: Ruijgh 2004, 54–56) has been widely criticized.

62 The last few years alone have seen more than a few “solutions” to the origin of the

that is X = ἠτη (or ἠτη or perhaps even ἠτη) ‘knew’, a
form attested once in Homer as such (see fn. 59) and the presumed precursor,
with contraction, of the usual ἠτη.64 The relationship between a pluperfect
and an optative is even semantically motivated since it is well known that
past time and non-indicative moods are to some extent interchangeable; for
example, a modal verb can be employed as an imperfect, as in Eng. would,
and possibility can be expressed with a past tense, as in the Russian modal
particle by, which derives from the old aorist of the verb ‘be’ – not to men-
tion the use of what is formally a pluperfect in past contrary-to-fact condi-
tions in such languages as English and Persian (compare Gonda 1956, 191),
instances of modal pluperfects in Old Welsh poetry (see MacCana 1976, 198–199),
and the fact that the Latin pluperfect indicative develops in
Spanish into an imperfect subjunctive (Meiser [1992, 200, with 214 n. 39,
citing W. D. Elcock] explains why this is interesting).65 What makes Jasa-
noff’s explanation of ἠτη so appealing is that it fits nicely with the account
proposed here of all the other kinds of pluperfects: the exceptional retention
of an archaic, thematic, form in just the most common stative verb explains
both it how it is formally different from all the rest and, most important of all,
why and how the thematic and alphathematic pluperfects develop – and de-
velop differently from each other.

If, as I have tried to show, Nils Berg’s theory of the origin of the pluper-
fect is unacceptable, then this category would seem to be the largest remain-

63 (where the category is rightly referred to as in the first place “intransitive” rather than
passive).

64 This is itself an inner-Greek replacement of expected ἠτη (vel sim.), with zero-
grade of the root (as in RV vīyādi, GA vīyāji [I 48.9], and Go. wīt); see the refer-
ences at the end of fn. 34.

65 Jasanoff does not comment on the initial digamma presupposed by such things as the
Homeric verse-opener ὅτι ἠτη ... (II. 1.70 and 6.351) ‘who knew ...’. But any way
one looks at this, it is not a great problem. On the one hand, that vowel-initial ἠτη
should be changed to ἠτη by analogy to ποίη, etc. would hardly be surprising in
view of the fact that the internal morphology of the forms of ‘knew’ could not
possibly have been recognized even by early speakers. Alternatively, perhaps West
(1998 and 2000) is right to follow Wackernagel (1878, 266) and print unaugmented
mouseenter text of the ἠτη: he discusses his decision in the “Praefatio” (West 1998, xxxiii), but I note the objection of Janko
(2000, 2, where “ἠτη” in line 11 is a printer’s error for ἠτη).
ing problem in the Greek verbal system. However, my scenario, which I stress owes a very great deal to hours in front of a blackboard with Jay Jasanoff, cuts through the knot with just one stroke, accounting for all the essential difficulties by explaining (1) the origin of the alphamathematic pluperfect as at heart the same as the inherited(?) athematic pluperfect, with which it shares a single paradigm; (2) the (or at least a) reason for the formally and semantically anomalous thematic pluperfect; and (3) the reason why ἐγόν is basically an alphamathematic/athematic form, but with a striking unique feature. While this scenario is far from simple, each step is well motivated. Exceptional forms require exceptional solutions, and I hope that this solution is worthy of my exceptional teacher, colleague, and friend.

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