

Myc. *ra-wa-ke-ta* and Dor. *λαγέτης*: Diachronic Semantics and Literary History

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Abstract: This article examines the use of the Mycenaean titular term *ra-wa-ke-ta* ‘leader of the people’ (spelling *lāwāgetās*, continued mainly as Dor. *λαγέτης*) in post-Mycenaean Greek literature, demonstrating the textual and semantic diachrony of this culturally important term through a detailed survey of its usage in the classical period in comparison with the Linear B materials. Following its peculiar absence in Homer and early epics, in Ibycus and Pindar the word *lāwāgetās* exhibits a semantic shift from its administrative and militaristic denotation as shown in the palace documents to being chiefly used as an epithet for mythical and heroic figures. The word is further attested in Sophocles fr.221 Radt where the title is applied to a female character. We will conclude the discussion with a brief look at what traces of *λαγέτης* are preserved in names and lexicography before it finally disappeared in the extant Greek materials.

Keywords: Mycenaean; diachronic semantics; Homer; Pindar.

^{ES} Mic. *ra-wa-ke-ta* y Dor. *λαγέτης*: semántica diacrónica e historia literaria

Resumen: Este artículo examina el uso del término titular micénico *ra-wa-ke-ta* ‘líder del pueblo’ (ortografía *lāwāgetās*, continuado principalmente como Dor. *λαγέτης*) en la literatura griega postmicénica, demostrando la diacronía textual y semántica de este término culturalmente importante a través de un detallado estudio de su uso en el periodo clásico en comparación con los materiales en Lineal B. Tras su peculiar ausencia en Homero y los primeros épicos, en Íbico y Píndaro la palabra *lāwāgetās* exhibe un cambio semántico desde su denotación administrativa y militarista, como se muestra en los documentos palaciegos, para ser utilizada principalmente como un epíteto para figuras míticas y heroicas. La palabra se atestigua además en Sófocles fr.221 Radt, donde el título se aplica a un personaje femenino. Concluiremos la discusión con un breve examen de las huellas que *λαγέτης* ha dejado en la onomástica y la lexicografía antes de que finalmente desapareciera en los materiales griegos existentes.

Palabras clave: griego micénico; semántica diacrónica; Homero; Píndaro.

Summary: 1. Introduction. 2. The *lāwāgetās* in Mycenaean times. 3. On the absence of *λαγέτης* in Homer and early epics. 4. *λαγέτης* as an epithet of mythical/heroic figures in early Greek poetry. 4.1. Ibycus. 4.2. Pindar. 4.3. Sophocles. 5. Traces of *λαγέτης* in names and lexicography. 6. Conclusion.

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1. Introduction

The Mycenaean Greek word *ra-wa-ke-ta* (*lāwāgetās*) is one of the central terms in the Mycenaean palatial archives¹. This word is a titular term usually translated as 'leader of the people'² or 'leader of the war-host/army'³. There are 17 attestations of the word in the extant Mycenaean materials on tablets from Pylos and Knossos⁴, most of which show that the *lāwāgetās* occupies an important political and military position in the palace administration; but the precise function of this figure in Mycenaean society has yet to be determined. The word *lāwāgetās*, just as with the word *wanax* (referring to the supreme figure in the Mycenaean palatial hierarchy), does not have secure linguistic counterparts outside of Greek. The only possible cognate appears in the Old Phrygian inscription M-O1a (late 8th century B.C.), which reads: *ates* : *arkiaevais* : *akenanogavos* : *midai* : *lavagtaei* : *vanaktei* : *edaes*, «Attes the son of Archias, the *akenanogavos*, made (it) for Midas the leader (and) the king.», with the form *lavagtaei* standing in the dative case⁵. The two titles of Midas (*lavagtaei vanaktei*) correspond almost perfectly to the Mycenaean Greek terms *lāwāgetās* and *wanax*, apart from the apparent syncope in *lavagtaei* and its unexpected consonant stem dat. sg. ending *-ei*⁶. Nevertheless, these Phrygian terms are often suspected of being borrowings from early Greek rather than native vocabulary items⁷.

- ¹ For the formation of *ra-wa-ke-ta* and the controversy regarding the second member of the compound (i.e. the question as to whether it belongs with ἡγέομαι 'lead, guide' vs. ἄγω 'lead, carry'), see Szemerényi (1972: 302–317), Chantraine (1956: 85–96), Lindgren (1973: 126–130); more recently Nikoloudis (2006: 225–232) (with references), Jiménez Delgado 2015. See also Wyatt 1994 for a proposal involving ἀγείρω 'gather, assemble'.
- ² Docs.² s.v., Chadwick & Baumbach (1963: 216), *DMic.* s.v. ('conductor del pueblo'), Killen (2024: 293–294, 1024).
- ³ Bernabé & Luján 2020: 334 ('conductor de la hueste'), Hajnal 1998: 60 ('Heerführer', cf. fn. 8 for the reconstructed verb form), see also *DMic.* s.v. fn. 5.
- ⁴ Including the adjectival form *ra-wa-ke-si-jo* (transparently related to *lāwāgetās*); a full list of attestations can be found at *DMic.* 229–231.
- ⁵ Translation taken from Obrador-Cursach (2020: 427). See also Brixhe & Lejeune (1984: 6–9).
- ⁶ On these two points, which may indicate an inscription error for **lavagetai*, see Brixhe & Lejeune (1984: 8); see also Lubotsky (1988: 17–18) for the proposal that the borrowed nom. sg. *lāwāgetās* is misinterpreted as an s-stem, cf. Obrador-Cursach (2020: 427).
- ⁷ Lejeune (1969: 187–192), Panagl & Kowal (1987: 183). In contrast, Hajnal (1998: 64–69) argues against the possibility of borrowing (see Ruppenstein 2015 for archaeological evidence against Graeco-Phrygian contact in the late Bronze Age) and proposes that Gk. *lāwāgetās* and Phryg. *lavagtaei* are shared isoglosses, both descending from a verbal base **lah₂uo-h₂ag-* 'die waffenfähige Bevölkerung leiten' originally with *t*-extension, a construction that he argues is shared with Gk. *wanax* which is to be reconstructed as **u₁h₂ag-(t)* 'profit bringer' (cf. LIV² **uen-* 'überwältigen, gewinnen'), citing Skt. *vanij* 'merchant' as comparative evidence. This is, however, problematic in several ways. First, if the Phrygian form represents the original formation **lah₂uo-h₂ag-t-*, aside from the still problematic ending *-aei*, the different treatment of the unasimilated sequence *-gt-* in *lavagtaei* and the assimilated *-kt-* in *vanaktei* requires further explanation. Second, if the Phrygian form is a scribal mistake for **lavagetai* (and hence formally agrees with Gk. *lāwāgetā-*), then the substitution of the earlier *t*-extension with the new suffix *-etās* has to either have happened at Graeco-Phrygian time (cf. Brixhe 2002: 68) or be an independent innovation, neither of which scenarios seems very plausible given a lack of secure evidence for **(e)taš* in Phrygian (contra Hajnal 1998: 67 fn. 80). Thirdly, the etymology of Sanskrit *vanij* as **uen-h₂g-* is at best speculative, as there are no other compound *nomina agentis* with **-ij* < **-h₂g* as second member unless we consider all forms with the rare primary suffix *-ij* (e.g. *usij-* 'wishing, desiring' < *√vas* 'desire', *bhurij* 'scissors, shears' < *√bhur* 'move rapidly, quiver', cf. AiGr. II.2: 321, Mayrhofer 1979: 111f., see also Scarlata 1999: 17 fn. 21) to be root compounds with *√aj*, which would create further formal and semantic issues. The formation of *vanij* should instead be explained as resulting from the suffixation of *-ij*, or less likely *-j* attached directly to the *set* form of the root (cf. *vānitar* next to *vantār* 'winner, enjoyer'). Further, there is no compelling reason to assume that Myc. (and Old Phrygian) *lāwāgetās*, along with other compound expressions that may have a similar make-up (such as OE. *folctoga* 'chief, general' < 'people-leader'), continues anything inherited, since these kinds of expressions could easily have been generated at any stage.

Myc. *ra-wa-ke-ta* (hereafter *lāwāgetās*) is continued in alphabetic Greek as *λαγέτας* (Dor.), best attested in Pindar; but there is a possible attestation in Ibycus and another in a fragment of Sophocles, as well as onomastic usage and lexicographical documentation⁸. Formally, alphabetic Gk. *λαγέτας* is the direct reflex of Myc. *lāwāgetās*, with the regular loss of intervocalic /w/ and subsequent vowel contraction. Semantically, however, there is a noticeable deviation: the original administrative or military denotation of this culturally important term has largely been transformed into usage as an epithet, typically associated with descriptions of gods, heroes, and other mythical figures. The weakening and bleaching in the meaning of *lāwāgetās* has already been noticed by Hajnal (1998: 39) in rather vague terms but the semantic development has not been studied in detail. It is this semantic shift that will be explored in this paper, through analysis of the word's usage from Mycenaean times to late antiquity.

2. The *lāwāgetās* in Mycenaean times

Among the more informative tablets concerning the Mycenaean *lāwāgetās* is PY Er 312.1-3⁹: *wa-na-ka-te-ro, te-me-no | to-so-jo pe-ma* GRA 30 | ***ra-wa-ke-si-jo, te-me-no*** GRA 10, «Official domain belonging to the *wanax*, seed (i.e. area) of such, (land surface of) 30 units of wheat; official domain belonging to the *lāwāgetās*, (land surface of) 10 units of wheat.» Here the adjective form *ra-wa-ke-si-jo* (i.e. *lāwāgesion* 'belonging to the *lāwāgetās*') clearly refers to an official refers to an official in the Mycenaean administration who appears to occupy the second highest position in the kingdom next to the *wanax* since this allotment immediately follows the one for the *wanax* and in a parallel construction. That he is the only person apart from the *wanax* to be offered a *temenos* ('official domain'¹⁰), albeit only one third the size of the land allotted to the king, further confirms the importance of this position¹¹.

The *lāwāgetās* is also known to be one of the participants in religious and cultic activities, as shown in two tablets of the Un series. In PY Un 718.1, 9-11: *sa-ra-pe-da, po-se-da-o-ni, do-so-mo* [...] *to-so-de, ra-wa-ke-ta, do-se, |* OVIS^m 2 *me-re-u-ro, FAR T 6 | VIN S 2 ...* «(at?) *Sa-ra-pe-da*, contribution for Poseidon: ... and the *lāwāgetās* will pay thus much, 2 sheep, 6 units of flour, (and) 2 units of wine», i.e. he is obliged to provide religious gifts for a banquet in honour of Poseidon¹². The *lāwāgetās* here is one of the four entities mentioned, the other three being a person named *e-ke-ra₂-wo*, traditionally identified as the king of Pylos at the time (e.g. Palaima 2002: 221¹³), the *da-mo* (cf. δῆμος; for the meaning of *dāmos* within the Mycenaean context, see Lejeune 1965, Piquero Rodríguez 2019 s.v. δῆμος), and the *wo-ro-ki-jo-ne-jo ka-ma*¹⁴. Without further evidence, it is difficult to ascertain the nature of these religious duties of the *lāwāgetās*; but it suffices to

⁸ Beekes (EDG 832, s.v. *λαός*), following Frisk (GEW II.83, s.v. *λαός*), misleadingly registers "Pi." only, while Chantraine (DELG 619, s.v. *λαός*) and Liddell & Scott (LSJ 1022, s.v. *λαγέτας*) improve on this by citing two of the four Pindaric attestations and the Sophoclean fragment.

⁹ The Pylos texts cited in this paper follow the editions in Melena & Firth (2021).

¹⁰ The association of *temenos* with high status and divine figures can be seen, e.g., in II. XVIII 550 *τέμενος βασιλῆϊον* 'the precinct of a king', II 696 *Δήμητρος τέμενος* 'the precinct of Demeter', Od. XVII 299 *Ὀδυσσεύς τέμενος* 'the precinct of Odysseus', and the frequent collocation of *τέμενος* and *βωμός* 'altar' (II. VIII 48, XXI-II 148, Od. VIII 363).

¹¹ For earlier discussions of the allotment of a *temenos* to the *lāwāgetās*, cf. Hooker 1980: 135, Shear 2004: 48.

¹² The precise purpose of the foodstuffs mentioned in the tablet is still debated, cf. Killen (2015: 856-857) who points out that the much smaller quantity of the food listed here in comparison with other "menu"-like tablets such as Un 2 may suggest their usage in occasions other than a religious banquet. For the cult of Poseidon in Mycenaean society and the role of the *lāwāgetās*, see Doyen (2011: 136-138, 151-183, 271). For the relation between Mycenaean land tenure and obligation in religious provision, see Bendall (2015: 72-77).

¹³ This identification was made also in Docs² (454) and accepted by many authorities on the issue. Such view, however, has been challenged in recent literature, see Petrakis (2008), Piquero Rodríguez (2018: 133-135).

¹⁴ The etymology of *ka-ma* is debated, see DMic. s.v., Piquero Rodríguez 2019 s.v. The precise meaning of the term is still unclear, but it is generally agreed to refer to a type of land-holding (DMic. s.v., Docs.² 121, Heubeck 1966, Piquero Rodríguez 2019 s.v., Killen 2024: 574-576, 966). The sense of *wo-ro-ki-jo-ne-jo* (the possessor of this *ka-ma*) is also unclear; Palaima (2004: 229) calls it a 'social/land organization', which is a vague but likely more or less correct description, see also Nikoloudis 2008.

say for our purposes that his role in the administration has some affinities with ritual and cult. In addition to making offerings, the *lāwāgetās* is also sometimes the recipient of religious gifts, as in PY Un 219.10: **ra-wa-ke-ta**, MA 1 KO 1 «to the *lāwāgetās*, 1 unit of scent¹⁵, 1 unit of hide.» Here, as is clear from the rest of the text, the *ra-wa-ke-ta* appears in a set of formulaic constructions consisting of a noun in the dative followed by the ideograms of the offerings to be given, and therefore the underlying form in this case must be the dative singular *lāwāgetai*. The recipients in the same list include both deities (PY Un 219.5 *a-ti-mi-te* ‘to Artemis’, 7 *po-ti-ni-ja* ‘to Potnia’, 8 *e-ma-a₂* ‘to Hermes’, and possibly 4 *pa-de-we*, which may be a divine name)¹⁶ and persons (e.g. PY Un 219.3 *ka-ru-ke* cf. κήρυκι ‘to the herald’, 4 *a-ke-ti-ri-ja-i* cf. ἀσκήτριαι ‘to the (textile) worker’)¹⁷. In line 7, the form *a-na-ka-te* is unexpected but could be an anthroponym or a misspelling of *wana-ka-te* ‘to the *wanax*’ (Chadwick 1963: 531). In any case, Un 219 provides a clear instance of the *lāwāgetās* (and possibly also the *wanax*) being treated not entirely in a political or administrative sense but as the recipient of ritual offerings, along with some other divine figures. Admittedly, as mentioned, other mortal entities such as the *ka-ru-ke* and the *a-ke-ti-ri-ja-i*, together with several named individuals, are also found in the list, and partly for that reason this text remains enigmatic.

Another function that scholars often attribute to the office of *lāwāgetās* is that of military command (Wyatt 1994, Palaima 1992)¹⁸. The evidence from the tablets themselves, however, is scanty and does not strongly substantiate this claim. The only militaristic task the *lāwāgetās* seems to be in charge of is the recruitment of rowers, as may be shown in PY An 724.1, 7: *ro-o-wa*, *e-re-ta*, *a-pe-o-te*, | ... | *ra-wa-ke-ta*, *a-pe-e-ke* []e VIR 1 «At Roowa, rowers being absent, ... the *lāwāgetās* sent (?) [...] 1 man.» This tablet has a number of problems and a translation is difficult. It appears to be dealing with a shortage of rowers (*e-re-ta* [cf. ἐρέται] who are *a-pe-o-te* ~ ἀπέοντες ‘absent’), and a few named officials, along with the *lāwāgetās*, are involved in one way or another. Precisely what their actions are is uncertain, as the repeated verbal form *a-pe-e-ke*, which (together with the subject *e-re-ta* ‘rowers’ and the repeated infinitive *e-re-e* ‘to row’) is central to the understanding of the text, is susceptible of more than one interpretation¹⁹. It is plausible that the office of *lāwāgetās* incorporates *some* military function, but whether this figure is the supreme commander of the army is difficult to prove on the basis of the materials in hand.

Outside of the Mycenaean evidence, also worth noting here is the etymological background of the word λαός, which could add more support to the term’s martial nuance. The word λαός has been associated with Hittite *lāh₂*- ‘campaign, military expedition’ and Old Irish *lāech* ‘warrior’ since Sturtevant (1931: 120) and remains the prevalent theory²⁰. This etymology points to a PIE root *leh₂*-, with the Hittite and Irish forms reconstructed as **leh₂-(o)*-²¹ and **leh₂-u-iko-*, respectively (Watkins 1963: 241). Against an Indo-European etymology, Beekes (EDG s.v.) asserts that λαός is

¹⁵ Cf. Melena 2014: 142.

¹⁶ As pointed out to me by Jeremy Rau, the divine names in the PY Un 219 may also be a shorthand for the temples dedicated to the listed deities, i.e. ‘to (the temple of) Artemis’, etc.

¹⁷ On the variant spellings between *a-ke-ti-ri-ja* and *a-ze-ti-ri-ya* and their implication on the blocking effect of *s* on palatalization, see Méndez Dosuna (1993).

¹⁸ Palaima (1992: 130) specifically states that «the *wanax* had primarily religious functions, while military matters were in the hands of the *lāwāgetās*», although he provides little evidence from the tablets. Additionally, following the approach of Palmer 1955, Palaima tries to match the (possible) socio-political terms in PY Un 718 to the three classes in the Dumézilian trifunctionality theories, i.e. *e-ke-ra₂-wo* (religion), *ra-wa-ke-ta* (military), *da-mo* (production). This analysis, however, is highly speculative; for a critique of Dumézilian trifunctionalism, see e.g. Fortson (2010: 31–32). For an overall critique of the attribution of militaristic functions to the office of the *lāwāgetās*, see in particular Piquero Rodríguez (2017) who doubts the military significance of Myc. **ra-wo vis-à-vis da-mo*.

¹⁹ Myc. *a-pe-e-ke* has variously been interpreted as ἀφῆκε (ἀφίημι ‘send away’) or ἀπείχε (ἀπέχω ‘keep away, retain’), see DMic. s.v., Piquero Rodríguez 2019 s.v. ἀφίημι.

²⁰ Puhvel’s attempt (2001: 6) to connect Gk. λαός with Hom. δαί ‘in battle’, appealing to *l-/d-* alternations seen elsewhere (e.g. λάφνη vs. δάφνη ‘laurel’, λαβύρινθος vs. Myc. *da-pu₂-ri-to-jo* ‘labyrinth’), cannot be correct: in addition to the short /ä/ in δαί (which does not match the length in λαός), the hiatus in δαί is an *h*-hiatus from earlier **-s-* (not a *u*-hiatus), cf. Myc. *da-i-qo-ta* (PN). For the proposal of a possible Minoan phoneme /ð/ that may be spelled alternatively as <d> or <l> in Linear B, see Davis (2014: 204–214).

²¹ Whether Hitt. *lāh₂*- was originally thematic or a root noun is debated, see Kloekhorst (2008: 510).

rather of pre-Greek origin and, following Furnée (1972: 238), considers its derivative λήϊτον (Hdt. VII 197.2, Plut., *Rom.* 26.2; Ionic form for λάϊτον) 'town hall' to have a pre-Greek suffix -ιτο-. However, the suffix -ιτο-, although rare in Greek, can still be observed in several forms attached to inherited vocabulary, e.g. ἀμαξ-ιτός 'suitable for wagons' (from ἀμαξα 'wagon') and (Homeric) ἀταρπ-/ἀτραπ-ιτός 'path' (from ἀτραπός 'path'). The -ιτο- in these forms has traditionally been explained as a *to*-adjective/participle of the verb ἰέναι, hence 'traversed by...'²². But whatever the origin of -ιτο- the doublet λαός and *λαίϊτος does not require a pre-Greek etymology.

Together with the frequent use of λαός (< *leh₂-u-) in its military sense ('army, host, armed band') in Homer (cf. Heubeck 1969: 539), it is not unreasonable to posit that the root *leh₂- and possibly some of its nominal derivatives had already acquired various military denotations at the PIE stage, and that the military function of the Mycenaean compound term *lāwāgetās* reflects this inherited usage in its first member *lāu-. Still, the evidence for projecting λαός (and Hitt. *lāhh*- and OIr. *lāech*) back to PIE is otherwise limited and problematic. One of the problems has to do with the meaning (and the identity) of the PIE root *leh₂-, which is generally reconstructed as 'pour, flow' (LIV² s.v. 2.*leh₂-) to account for the Anatolian data, e.g. Hitt. *lāhu*- 'id.'. Whether the supposed root underlying λαός, Hitt. *lāhh*- and OIr. *lāech* is the same root here and, if so, how the semantics shifted from 'to pour, flow' to 'army, soldier, host' *vel sim.* is still unclear²³. A possible comparandum here is Umbrian *hondu* 'strike down (?)', which occurs twice in the Iguvine Tables (Vlb 60, VIIa 49), both times in the context of a curse against the enemies banished from the city. The form has been considered an exact match with Latin *fundito* 'he shall pour', going back to *g^hu-n-d-e-toḏ (Meiser 1986: 168), a nasal-infixed form of the root *g^heu- with a *d*-extension (see LIV s.v. *g^heuḏ 'gießen'). If the formal connection stands²⁴, this would present an example of the type of semantic change similar to the one proposed for λαός, i.e. a root meaning 'pour, flow' used also in the military sense of 'rout, strike down'. The other thing to note here is that the Irish word *lāech* as an independent piece of evidence is also debatable, as its etymon can alternatively be explained as a borrowing from Lat. *laicus* < Gk. λαϊκός 'of the people' (cf. Pedersen 1909: 203), ultimately from λαός itself. There is, then, some tantalizing support to give the military aspect of *lāwāgetās* an IE background, but the evidence is limited and should not be pressed too far.

Taking all the textual and comparative evidence into consideration, it is reasonable to assume that the Mycenaean *lāwāgetās* was an official with a range of duties and privileges. More specifically, the figure of the *ra-wa-ke-ta* in Mycenaean times had connections with societal elites, with gods and rituals, and possibly also with military leadership.

3. On the absence of λαγέτης in Homer and early epics

The term *lāwāgetās* is continued in a few dialects and poetic traditions in Greek of the first millennium, as treated in detail below. Notably, however, it is not attested anywhere in the Homeric corpus, or elsewhere in early Greek hexameter verse. A simple and effective explanation would be metrical incompatibility, as the cretic scansion of λαγέτης – in most of its case forms, at least – cannot fit into the hexameter²⁵. Consequently, one could hypothesize that phrases of similar meaning and form (i.e. using phraseology with λαός) might have been

²² EDG s.v. ἄμαξα, DELG s.v. ἄμα, Chantraine 1933: 303, Gschnitzer 1977: 203.

²³ E.g., García Ramón (2000: 66 fn. 9) identifies the root underlying Gk. λαός and Hitt. *lāhh*- with *leh₂- 'pour' and derives the militaristic sense via «...das Heer sich über das Schlachtfeld ergießt, d.h. "sich ausbreitet"». Following a similar approach, Nikoloudis (2006: 231) suggests a semantic shift from 'pouring/influx of outsiders' to 'men, folk' for Myc. *ra-wo and 'pouring in/out over the plain' to 'military campaign' for Hitt. *lāhh*-. Avoiding the semantic difficulties, Katz (2004: 205–6) alludes to the possibility of a separate PIE root *leh₂-(u) meaning 'plunder'.

²⁴ Notice also, however, the alternative explanation for *hondu* as *g^hom-dh₃-toḏ 'give to the ground (?)', cf. Untermann 2000, s.v. *hondu*.

²⁵ The two cases that can fit into the hexameter are the voc.sg. λαγέτα and nom.pl. λαγέται. Hajnal (1998: 38–39) argues that (1) the voc. form is unlikely to be used alone without its corresponding nom.sg. form and (2) the λαγέτας cannot occur in the plural. (1) seems valid to me (in so far as no other such titular term is only attested in the vocative), but for (2) there are plural forms of the other Mycenaean kingship term, i.e.

created in its stead, among which the most frequently used one is ποιμὴν λαῶν ‘shepherd of the people’, occurring 58 times in the epics²⁶ and serving as an epithet of a variety of characters including Agamemnon, Atreus, Jason, Ajax, Nestor as well as certain minor characters. The phrase appears both in political/administrative contexts, e.g. *Il.* II 84–86 ὡς ἄρα φωνήσας βουλῆς ἐξ ἧρχε νέεσθαι, | οἳ δ’ ἐπανεστήσαν πειθοντό τε ποιμένι λαῶν | σκηπτοῦχοι βασιλῆες· ἐπεσσεύοντο δὲ λαοί, «So he (Nestor) spoke and led the way departing from the council, and the rest rose to their feet, the sceptred kings, obeying the shepherd of the people and the army thronged behind them.», and as epithets attached to leading soldiers in battle scenes, e.g. *Il.* V 144. ἔνθ’ ἔλεν Ἀστυνοόν και Ὑπείρονα ποιμένα λαῶν, «Next he (Diomedes) killed Astynoös and Hypeiron, shepherd of the people.» Needless to say, ποιμὴν λαῶν and similar collocations involving λαῶν do not *have to* be metrical substitutions for *lāwāgetās*, and their occurrence in hexameter poetry mainly provides contextual information about how phrases similar in meaning and form to *lāwāgetās* are used in Homer.

There have also been previous attempts to use Homeric phraseology to argue for the second member of the compound *lāwāgetās* (between ἄγω, ἡγέομαι, and ἀγείρω, see fn. 2) by looking at which verb is more frequently used to govern λαός (cf. Wyatt 1994: 163–170, Jiménez Delgado 2015: 125)²⁷. This approach is methodologically unsound, since there is no necessary correlation between the existence of a compound and the more or less frequent collocation of its two members when used as independent words, especially when there is a gap in genre and chronology involved²⁸. In other words, the fact that λαός is used more often with one or another verb can be entirely due to the context and the subject matter of the various epic passages in question and neither confirms nor negates particular possibilities regarding the formation of the compound *lāwāgetās*. Whether these phraseological collocations constitute a substitute for the missing compound is difficult to tell, as such phrases as ‘lead the people’ or ‘gather the people’ are fairly standard in the epics and their occurrences are all occasional and do not appear to function like a «paraphrased» version of a title limited to specific figures²⁹.

Aside from questions related to metre and phraseology, a different approach to explaining the absence of λαγέτης in Homer (and other early epic), as proposed by Trümpy (1986: 28–29, 59–63), suggests that the Homeric *Kunstsprache* and the poetic language of Greek lyric belong to different traditions. In other words, the lexical item λαγέτης/της was not an element in the vocabulary of the bard(s) to begin with. The literature in which λαγέτης/της is attested, namely choral lyric, could therefore be considered to have inherited the word directly from Mycenaean (or other second millennium dialects) and hence from a different poetic tradition than Homer (cf. Bartonek 2003: 468)³⁰. This account is certainly plausible and offers a reasonable explanation for the origin of λαγέτης/της and some 20 other non-epic lexical items in lyric poetry shared with Mycenaean Greek.

There are, however, several aspects to this hypothesis that may require further consideration. First, it is unclear when Trümpy speaks of a «choral lyric tradition independent from Homer» (*loc. cit.*) whether she means specifically a difference in chronology, i.e. the choral lyric poetry started at an earlier stage when words such as λαγέτης/της were still current, recognizable

wanax, attested in Homer (see fn. 44), and the word βασιλεύς is also frequently used in the plural; for other Mycenaean words discontinued in Homer for metrical reasons, see Hajnal (1998: 38–40).

²⁶ Other epithets involving λαῶν include κοσμήτωρ ‘commander’ + λαῶν (κοσμήτορε λαῶν *Il.* I 16 plus 2x *Il.*, 1x *Od.*), κοίρανος ‘king’ (κοίρανε λαῶν *Il.* VII 234 + 3x *Il.*), ὄρχαμος λαῶν ‘leader of the people’ (ὄρχαμε λαῶν *Il.* XIV 102 plus 3x *Il.*, 7x *Od.*).

²⁷ There are 11 instances of λαός governed by ἀγείρω, three by ἄγω, and one by ἡγέομαι.

²⁸ As a simple example here, Lat. *pontifex* ‘high priest’ does not entail more prominent or more frequent collocation of *pōns* ‘bridge’ and *facere* ‘to make’.

²⁹ The fine-grained comparison by De Lorenzi (1968) of Achilles (and to some extent Odysseus) to the Mycenaean *lāwāgetās* is based on largely speculative observations on the power structure of the Greek army as depicted in Homer and the supposed military function of the *lāwāgetās* in Mycenaean times. Too little is known about either for a direct comparison to be viable.

³⁰ For a full list of lexical correspondences between Mycenaean Greek and lyric poetry to the exclusion of Homer, see Trümpy (1986: 60).

lexical items and hence part of the lexical repertoire of the lyric poets, but by the time of the earliest epic poetry these words had gone out of use or become moribund and therefore they were never incorporated into epic diction. This would assume for the emergence of the epics a perilously late date considering that *λαγέτης*, attested as late as Sophocles, likely did not become completely obsolete until long after the fall of the palace³¹. One must also posit a scenario where there was limited cultural exchange in early first millennium Greece that prevented the epic bards from acquiring a then “inactive” word from the lyric poets.

If, on the other hand, Mycenaean-lyric isoglosses, as they were, such as *lāwāgetās*-*λαγέτης*, are meant to reflect a “lyric tradition” that is independent from the epics from a linguistic or dialectal perspective (cf. «...vom Epos unabhängigen sprachlichen Quelle», Trümpy 1986: 61), the question then arises why the lyric tradition (primarily Doric and Aeolic) shows lexical affinities with Mycenaean Greek which linguistically shares more dialectal isoglosses (e.g. *-sī* < **-ti*) and is commonly grouped together with the eastern dialects, including Ionic, in which the epics are primarily composed. One could argue that dialects in contact are susceptible to lexical borrowing regardless of genetic closeness, but that still does not explain the absence of *λαγέτης* (vs. the frequency of, e.g., *wanax*) in Homer.

Thirdly, if the term “poetic traditions” is used as a general term broadly to denote poetic diction and stylistics, the argument then becomes nebulous without much linguistic substance, since we know that epic and lyric use different metres, which naturally allow for words of different metrical shapes³², and often deal with different subject matter resulting in different registers. Therefore, the fact that the two poetic genres have, for instance, a slightly inconsistent lexical stock could be considered a mere epiphenomenon that ultimately boils down to more tangible factors such as metre and register.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to engage in a full discussion of non-Homeric poetics in the lyric tradition³³. In the specific case of *lāwāgetās*, its association with high status fits perfectly with epic themes and register. Being an important power term, it is likely to have been a pan-Hellenic word and hence there is no reason to assume it was unknown to Homer due to dialectal or geographic separation. Therefore, the metrical incompatibility in my opinion is sufficient to explain the gap in the attestation of this word³⁴.

4. *λαγέτης* as an epithet of mythical/heroic figures in early Greek poetry

4.1. Ibycus

The earliest instance of the Mycenaean term reappearing in the historical period comes from Ibycus S166 (= Campbell 1991 no. 282A). The reading of the papyri (P.Oxy. 2735), in particular regarding the line relevant here, poses many problems³⁵. Textual issues notwithstanding, there could be an instance of *λαγέτης* towards the end of line 15 at the beginning of the first apostrophe:

15]Τυνδαριδ.[]ci λαγε[
16]δι κάλπιγος ὄκ' ἐν κε[
17]θ' ἱπποδάμωι καὶ π[

³¹ Unless we should consider the Sophoclean *λαγέτης* “borrowed” from lyric and not part of the unmarked core vocabulary of the tragedian.

³² The variety of lyric metres would by default accommodate more metrical shapes than dactylic hexameter, so the idea that certain words, such as *λαγέτης*, are found in lyric but not epic poetry is entirely expected.

³³ That lyric poetry has at least some elements from a tradition other than Homer can be seen from the Aeolic metres alone, which operate on drastically different metrical principles from the hexameter and have direct correspondences in other IE branches.

³⁴ Ultimately this may not contradict what Trümpy says, in the sense that the word *λαγέτης* is preserved in the lyric tradition but excluded from the epics precisely because of its unwieldy metrical shape.

³⁵ For general background about the fragments and the debate regarding its authorship (sometimes ascribed to Stesichorus), see Wilkinson (2013: 88–93).

18]εϛ ἀντιθέοι
 19]νοπάονεϛ· οἷϛιν εϛ.[
 20]εῖ μεγάλα χρύσαιγιϛ.[
 21].αδέα.

(text follows the edition in Wilkinson 2013: 94)

The last four letters λαγε- in v. 15 likely stand for (some form of) λαγέτης, as generally assumed, since words beginning with λαγε- are otherwise extremely rare³⁶ and the theoretically possible alternative reading *λαγϛ- (as the last letter has only a vertical stroke remaining) is phonologically implausible³⁷. Of particular relevance to the reading of λαγε- here is the macron above the alpha. The macrons in this papyrus consistently mark long vowels and all of the recognizable examples in this poem besides λαγε- are linguistically correct, including v. 19 οπάονεϛ (όπάων ‘comrade’), v. 20 χρύσαιγιϛ (‘with golden aegis’, cf. Bacchylides fr.15 [Campbell]), v. 28 ἰάονεϛ (ἰάονεϛ ‘Ionians’)³⁸. The long alpha, therefore, should confirm that λαγε- is indeed a form of λαγέτης.

The case form of λαγέτης and its meaning in this context is unknown due to the fragmentary state of the text. But the general sense of the stanza suggests that the word is used here in a mythological narrative. The theonym Tyndaridai (i.e. Castor and Pollux), probably as dat.pl. Τυνδαριδ[αι]ϛ in v. 15, appears immediately before the presumed form of λαγέτης. A frequent epithet of Castor ἵπποδάμωι ‘tamer of horse’ follows in v. 17, and the adjective ἀντιθέοι³⁹ ‘godlike’ in v. 18, either qualifying the Tyndaridai or some other entities in the stanza (όπάονεϛ ‘comrades’?). The μεγάλη χρύσαιγιϛ (v. 20) ‘the mighty one with golden aegis’ most likely refers to Athena. If λαγε- was originally λαγέ[ταιϛ] agreeing with Τυνδαριδ[αι]ϛ as its epithet, which should be a plausible reading given their adjacency and the general context here⁴⁰, it is then clear that the semantics of λαγέτης in Ibycus have already diverged from the word’s Mycenaean backgrounds and instead of/in addition to denoting a position in government or a rank for mortal beings it is adopted in describing gods or other mythical figures.

4.2. Pindar

Most of the post-Mycenaean uses of λαγέτης are found in Pindar, where it is attested four times (O. I 89, P. III 85, IV 107, and X 31), all appearing in the mythological section of the ode with the exception of P. III 85.

We will start with Pythian 3 (vv. 84–86), which shows a more conservative use of λαγέτης: τὴν δὲ μοῖρ’ εὐδαιμονίας ἔπεται. | λαγέταν γάρ τοι τύραννον δέρκεται | εἴ τιν’ ἀνθρώπων, ὁ μέγας πότμος, «Good fortune accompanies you. For great destiny favours the λαγέτας, the tyrant, if it favours any mortal man.»⁴¹ The λαγέταν in these lines, largely glossed over by the commentators, exhibits a meaning that hearkens back to its Mycenaean past, in its function as a political designation or a term referring to kingship. Here λαγέταν primarily refers to the Syracusan despot Hieron (the subject of this epinician song), who in other instances is hailed as βασιλῆα ‘king’ by Pindar (O. VII 23) and by Bacchylides as ἀστυθεμῖν ‘city-ruler’ (Ep. IV 3) and στραταγέ ‘commander’ (Ep. V 2).

The fact that λαγέταν is juxtaposed with the word τύραννον (either as an apposition or an adjective modifying λαγέταν) is noteworthy in two ways. First, the collocation suggests that

³⁶ Other than λαγέτης, one finds the adjective λάγειος ‘of the hare’ (LSJ s.v. λάγειος and λαγῶος), used once in Hippocrates (Aff. 43.13) with κρέα, and the Hesychian gloss λαγερός· σμίλαξ ‘holm-oak, bindweed’. Neither is semantically appropriate to the contexts of this particular stanza and λάγειος (cf. λαγῶος ‘hare’) has a short α in the first syllable (see fn. 38 and further below on the use of macrons in this text).

³⁷ For further discussion of the reading of λαγε, cf. Wilkinson 2013: 107. The letters legible here are α (with a macron above it) and γ. The first and the fourth letters are only partially visible, but editors generally agreed on the reading of λ and ε.

³⁸ I am grateful to David Blank (UCLA) for help evaluating the macrons in this papyrus.

³⁹ ἀντιθέοι shows Doric accentuation here (cf. Att. ἀντίθεοι).

⁴⁰ Notice, however, Campbell’s reservation on connecting λαγε- with Τυνδαριδ[αι]ϛ in his translation «(to) the sons of Tyndareus... leader(s) of the people».

⁴¹ All translations are my own, except as indicated.

λαγέτας may have been perceived by Pindar as having characteristics similar to those of a τύραννος in so far as they both refer to the ruling figure of a society. This shows a continuation of its Mycenaean usage, but some semantic bleaching or broadening can already be observed, as the Mycenaean *lāwāgetās*, as shown above in section 2, is patently *not* the supreme leader, as is usually denoted by τύραννος and as is certainly the case here with Hieron. In connection with this, the term λαγέτας here has been argued to reflect an attempt to “whitewash” or deflect the potential negative tone of τύραννος (Luraghi 2011: 34–35, Figueira 2015: 37 fn. 52). The ameliorating effect of the title, however subtle, must be a post-Mycenaean development and probably is related to its association with mythical heroic leaders (see below). Structurally, the word appears towards the end of *Pythian* 3, concluding the gnomic section of the ode (where the poet admonishes Hieron on the potential adversities in life for ambitious rulers like him) and is immediately followed by the mythological narrative of Peleus and Cadmus, as examples of ancient figures in the category λαγέτας τύραννος. Thus, the title *lāgētās*, perhaps as an antiquated but still recognizable kingship term for Pindar’s audience, served as a bridge that links the current subject of the ode, namely Hieron the tyrant, with his counterparts in the distant mythological past.

In *Olympian* 1 (vv. 86–89), *lāgētās* is mentioned in the myth concerning Pelops and his marriage with Hippodameia: τὸν μὲν ἀγάλλων θεὸς | ἔδωκεν δῖφρον τε χρύσειον πτεροῖσιν ἑ ἄκάμαντας ἵππους. | ἔλεν δ’ Οἰνομάου βίαν παρθένον τε σύνευνον. | τέκε τε⁴² λαγέτας ἐξ ἀρεταῖσι μεμαότας υἱοῦς, «Honouring him the god granted a golden chariot and winged untiring horses. He (*i.e.* Pelops) then overcame the force of Oenomaus and took his daughter as wife. He begot six sons, *λαγέτας*, eager for virtues.» The interpretation of λαγέτας here is potentially ambiguous, as either nom.sg. (referring to the subject of τέκε, apparently Pelops himself, but see further below on this point) or acc.pl. (*λαγέτας* being the six sons) is possible. The nominative reading avoids the problem of having a plural form of λαγέτας, which is elsewhere not seen⁴³, and also keeps the subject of the previous clause unchanged. The reference to Pelops, who in the other two mentions in Pindar is called ἥρως ‘hero’ (*O.* IX 9) and ἐσθλός ‘noble’ (*N.* II 21), shows the expected semantic change of λαγέτας from a specific Mycenaean political title to an honorific epithet for an illustrious mythical figure with little substance in meaning but a distinct heroic undertone⁴⁴.

Commentators and translators in general, however, favour the acc.pl. reading for stylistic and contextual reasons⁴⁵. In particular, as suggested by Verdenius (1987: 40), stating that the sons and by extension all the descendants of Pelops, among whom Hieron the victor celebrated in the ode counts himself, are λαγέτας, a name perhaps with a strong exalting effect, would serve a more effective encomiastic purpose here. Syntactically, the active aorist form τέκε (~ τίκτω ‘bring forth, give birth to’) is mostly used with reference to the mother (*LSJ* s.v. τίκτω), in this case Hippodameia, and there is no reason why the poet would refer to such a marginal character by the title *lāgētās*. If the acc.pl. reading stands (which is further supported by the scholia⁴⁶), this instance of λαγέτας would be another example of its weakened semantics, *i.e.* a generic encomiastic title for a group of unnamed mythical figures who hold no official political

⁴² For an overview of the textual problems concerning the sequence preceding λαγέτας (e.g. τέκε τε, τέκε δέ or ἔτεκε), see Gerber (1982: 137–138).

⁴³ Cf. Hajnal 1998: 39: «... der Nominativ des Plurals inhaltlich nicht passt (der Titel λαγέτας wird jeweils nur einem einzelnen Individuum verliehen) ...». The other Mycenaean kingship term *wanax*, however, did occur in the plural even in Homer, e.g. *Od.* XII 1290, XIII 223, XIV 60, etc.

⁴⁴ The comparison of Hieron’s ongoing colonial enterprise in Etna to Pelops’s founding of Olympia is clear and has been extensively discussed in the literature, see e.g. Athanassaki (2003: 121f.), Foster (2013: 307), and Kousoulini (2021: 36 fn. 48) for more references. Whether the use of the rare title λαγέτας contributes to this connection is difficult to tell, but it is plausible that the poet employed the term λαγέτας again later in *Pythian* 3 (also referring to Hieron; see above), where Hieron is then called Αἰτναῖον ξένον (v. 69) ‘Aetnaean host’ after the foundation of Etna, precisely as an echo of the λαγέτας in this passage in reference to Pelops to further strengthen the implied link between the two figures through the shared title.

⁴⁵ See Gerber (1982: 137f.), Lefkowitz (1976: 92), Verdenius (1987: 40).

⁴⁶ The scholion (Drachmann 1997: 47f.) reads ἃ τέκε λαγέτας ἐξ and comments ἥτις Ἰπποδάμεια. It also takes λαγέτας as the acc.pl. with the comments ἡγεμόνας, τῶν λαῶν ἡγουμένους.

status (contrast Hieron above). Its connection with the etymological sense of the word, namely 'leader of the people' or 'leader of the war-host', is only subtly reflected through the fact that, as Suárez de la Torre (1977: 274–275) observes, some of the six sons of Pelops mentioned here⁴⁷, including Atreus, Thyestes, Troezen, Alcathous, etc., are mythical kings or founders of their respective city.

Pythian 4 (vv. 105–108) sees the word again employed with a specific mythical figure, and in this case with Aeolus: ἰκόμαν | οἴκαδ', ἀρχαίαν κομίζων πατρός ἐμοῦ βασιλευομένην | οὐ κατ' αἴσαν, τάν ποτε Ζεὺς ὥπασεν λαγέτα | Αἰόλω καὶ παισί, τιμάν, «I have returned home, to take care of my father's kingdom, now ruled unfittingly, the honour Zeus once gave to Aeolus, the λαγέτας, and his sons.» The passage is part of the speech given by Jason when he saw Pelias in the middle of the section that recounts the myth of the Argonauts. Qualifying Aeolus and in close proximity to Ζεὺς, the title λαγέτας here carries a strong mythological and heroic connotation. This is also another case in which the founding figure of a nation or people is given the title of λαγέτας, which according to Suárez de la Torre (1973: 275–277) is the characteristic usage of the word in Pindar. That being said, I agree with Braswell (1988: 198) that the actual meaning of λαγέτας should not be overread and that it may just be an honorific title that is largely interchangeable with other such terms, as we have seen in the case of Hieron and Pelops⁴⁸. The phrasal structure here, namely λαγέτα being an attribute of the founding figure himself (Αἰόλω) but not the descendants (παισί), could be a parallel with *O.* 189 if one opts for the nom. sg. reading there. Further, the occurrence of λαγέτας in *Pythian* 4, commonly considered the most "Homeric" ode of Pindar in terms of its subject matter, metre, and choice of vocabulary, might suggest that the word is not after all foreign to epic tradition or that it has a distinctly non-Homeric character⁴⁹.

The last passage to look at is *Pythian* 10 (vv. 29–32): ναυσι δ' οὔτε πεζὸς ἰὼν κεν εὔροις | ἐς Ὑπερβορέων ἀγῶνα θαυματὰν ὁδόν. | παρ' οἷς ποτε Περσεὺς ἐδαΐσατο λαγέτας | δώματ' ἐσελθών, «Neither by boats nor on foot could you find the road to the amazing meeting place of the Hyperboreans. Perseus the λαγέτας once entered their houses and dined with them.» Perseus here is addressed as the λαγέτας amid an elsewhere unrecorded visit of his to the lands of the Hyperboreans. Again, the term refers to a heroic leader and is deeply embedded in the myth section of the ode. As one of the earliest (and perhaps the earliest) of the odes composed by the poet (498 B.C.), the youthfulness and occasional rigidity of Pindar's art in *Pythian* 10 have been noticed and discussed since early commentators (see, e.g., Burton 1962: 1f.). The use of λαγέτας here, however, is consistent with its occurrence in Pindar's late works and may reflect that the word is part of the lexical stock-in-trade in the tradition in which the poet is working.

In conclusion, the Pindaric materials suggest that λαγέτας is chiefly used as an honorific epithet to denote mythical and legendary figures, as in *P.* IV 107, X 31 and *O.* 189, and its mood is heroic and elevating. The shared characteristics of the three figures – Aeolus, Pelops (or his sons), and Perseus – in these contexts may very well be that they are all city or nation founders of some sort, as Suárez de la Torre argues, and this could be the proper use of the word as Pindar understood it. But whether or to what extent this is a direct continuation of the semantic realm of the Mycenaean *ra-wa-ke-ta* is unclear. On the one hand, its use with ancient leaders or rulers reflects that the word still carried at least some remnants of its original meaning 'leader of the people'. On the other hand, the number of examples is too few for any semantic judgement to be conclusive. In a similar way one might see the use of λαγέτας with the contemporary ruler Hieron in *O.* 185 as a semantic archaism. But more likely it is an innovated use: the term by the time of Pindar is only proper for legendary figures and applying it to Hieron is an occasional encomiastic device to elevate and transplant the Sicilian king to the rank of those illustrious ancient leaders.

⁴⁷ The scholia differ as to which sons of Pelops are referenced. The names mentioned include Atreus, Thyestes, Pittheus, Alcathous, Pleisthenes, Chrusippos, Hippalcmos, and Dias.

⁴⁸ In the case of Aeolus, this is the only passage in Pindar where the character is mentioned directly.

⁴⁹ For a thorough examination of the non-Doric/Homeric features of *Pythian* 4, see Forssman (1966: 86–180).

4.3. Sophocles

Following Pindar, the last occurrence of λαγέτας in literary sources is from Sophocles fr.221.10–13 (Radt 1999, pág. 223; P.Oxy. 1175):

¹⁰ ο]ύχ ὁρῶ· βέβηκε[.].[
¹¹ δ]ωμάτων ἄγχι πρ[.
¹²]τος γύναι λαγέτ[α] [
¹³ φρ]οῦδός ἐσθ' ὁ ξένος

«I do not see. (S)he went...near the houses in front of...the women, leader of the people. The stranger is gone...».

Not much can be said about its context aside from the determination that the fragment is part of the play *Eurypylus* and that the scene described here probably occurs before the duel between Eurypylus and Neoptolemus⁵⁰. Metrically Pearson (2010: 163) sees iambic and trochaic rhythms in this fragment. Relevant to this paper is the word λαγέτ[α] in v. 12. Standard editions including Pearson (2010: 164) and Carden (2011: 46) take this as the vocative form of λαγέτας, in which case the word must agree with the vocative γύναι that precedes. It is commonly suspected that the woman mentioned here is Astyoche, mother of Eurypylus and a major character of the play. This usage of λαγέτας as an epithet associated with heroic figures is consistent with what was observed before in lyric traditions. What is noteworthy is that the title is applied to a female character, which might suggest a development in the semantics of the word that moves further away from its old meaning and leaves λαγέτας as a bleached and generic honorific term suitable for any person with a distinct status or noble descent, male or female, mythical or historical⁵¹.

5. Traces of λαγέτᾱς in names and lexicography

To judge from the materials available to us at any rate, the word subsequently disappeared from Greek literature, although its form must have remained recognizable to Greek speakers for some period of time, as it survived in onomastic and numismatic materials.

The name Λαγέτας is attested in six inscriptions dated from the early/mid 4th to the late 3rd centuries and in all instances appears to refer to public figures of some prominence. Four of the six attestations are amphora stamps from Thasos (Bon & Bon 1957: 282f. no. 1082–1085) with the name ΛΑΓΕΤΑΣ on the top followed by the ethnic ΘΑΣΙΩΝ and another personal name⁵². The people whose name appears in the legends of the stamps are usually thought to be either the eponymous official of the city or the person in charge of the production of the amphora («fabricant») ⁵³. The other two instances of Λαγέτας are found in proxeny decrees, one from Dodona (Cabanes 1976: 539; mid 4th century) in which Λαγέτας from Pherae of Thessaly is granted *proxenia* by the Molossians, the other from Thermos (*IG IX 1²* 1: 25; 245–236 B.C.) where Λαγέτας from Herakleia, ostensibly as the then *hipparchos* 'Cavalry Commander' (ἐπὶ ... ἵππαρχέοντος Λαγέτα Ἡρακλεώτα) of the Aetolian league, is mentioned as one of the eponymous

⁵⁰ For a summary of the plot, see Pearson (2010: 146–149).

⁵¹ The sequence]ἀγετανγ[in Simonides 519, fr.52, 6 is included by Trümper (1986: 27) and Hajnal (1998: 39 fn. 40) as another possible instance of λαγέτᾱς. The missing first part of the word, however, allows for multiple possible readings other than λαγέταν and the papyrus (P.Oxy. 2430, fr.52) is otherwise too fragmented to establish any contexts. For the reading of the letter preceding ᾱ as γ and the word as κυ]γαγέταν or ξε]γαγέταν, see Poltera (2008: 391).

⁵² Thasian jar stamps bearing two names (i.e. “old-style” stamps) are generally agreed to be dated before the late 4th century, see Grace (1946: 35), Tzoché (2016: 15–19). For further discussion and references on the issue of chronology, see Lawall (2005: 37–49). A newly excavated stamp from Histria bearing the name of the official Λαγέτας and the fabricant Αἰσχυρίων, mentioned in Tzoché (2016: 67 fn. 13), follows the same pattern.

⁵³ See Tzoché (2016: 8–11).

officials granting *proxenia* to several individuals⁵⁴. The tendency of the name Λαγέτας to refer to a high-status member of society is further supported by its occurrence in coinage from Philadelphia (*RPC* II 1332–6) in the Flavian period (81–96 A.D.) bearing the dating formula ΕΠΙ ΛΑΓΕΤΑ, likely referring to the magistrate of the city⁵⁵.

A perhaps more well-known figure named Λαγέτας is the great-grandfather of Strabo. In book 10 (4.10) the geographer recounts:

ΤΕΚΝΟΠΟΙΕΪΤΑΙ Δ' Ἐκ Μακέτιδος γυναικός, Στερόπης τοῦνομα, δύο μὲν υἱεῖς, Λαγέταν καὶ Στρατάρχαν, ὧν τὸν Στρατάρχαν ἐσχατογήρων καὶ ἡμεῖς ἤδη εἶδομεν.

«he (Dorylaos) begot, by a Macetan woman named Sterope, two sons, Lagetas and Stratarchas, of whom I saw Lagetas when he was extremely old.»

It is conceivable that Dorylaos, Strabo's great-great-grandfather on his mother's side and a military 'tactician' (ἄνῃρ τακτικός) under the Pontic king Mithridates Euergetes, may have named his sons Λαγέτας and Στρατάρχας after the martial tradition of the family, if one assumes that both names, in particular Λαγέτας, which is elsewhere an inactive lexical item, were still somewhat associated with military leadership in his time⁵⁶.

Hesychius also has an entry for λαγέτης, which is glossed as ἡγεμῶν ὄχλον συναγαγών «a leader who brings the people together». This is along the same lines as the interpretation given in the Pindaric scholia on *O.* I 89 (ἡγεμόνας, τῶν λαῶν ἡγουμένους; see fn. 47) and *P.* III 85 (λαγέτας ... πάντας ἄγει λαούς. ὑποτάσσονται γὰρ αὐτῷ πάντες). Both scholia gloss the word in its etymological sense and this may represent the general understanding of this word among the Alexandrian commentators.

6. Conclusion

To summarize, the rare attestations of λαγέτας in the historical period make it a difficult task to provide a clear picture of its semantic development. In terms of the general direction of the change, however, it is plausible that *lāwāgetās* lost its political and administrative sense fairly soon after the fall of the palace. This process is easily understood: after the social structure and the “palatial” system that the *lāwāgetās* as a government official relied on and was rooted in ceased to exist, it is only natural for the word to have lost its meaning in that capacity. In the historical period, λαγέτας/ης has a sprinkling of attestations in lyric and tragic poets. It is mainly used as an epithet for mythical figures such as heroes and legendary kings, and this certainly is relatable to its earlier connotations with the ruling class and cultic rituals in Mycenaean times. Aside from its role in mythological narrative, it also displays a development towards a more generic sense that can be used in the same way as other contemporaneous power terms such as τύραννος and not necessarily limited to mythological contexts.

This paper offers, then, a close analysis of the philological data surrounding the word *lāwāgetās* in an attempt to demonstrate the semantic development (and, in some respects, continuity) of a Mycenaean term inherited into later literature, thereby providing what may be a useful case study

⁵⁴ The odd genitive form Ληγέτου, attested once in *SG*³ 585.230 (Delphi, ca. 180 B.C.), as the name of the father of a Dionysios who is listed as a *proxenos* of Delphi, could be a hyper-Ionicized variant.

⁵⁵ A fragment of Λαγέτας may be preserved as ΛΑΓΕ on a coin from Sinope (ca. 330–300 B.C.), see Babelon & Reinach (1925: 196** no. 26, Pl. sup. O [fig. 9]).

⁵⁶ Van Effenterre (1968) suspects that the source of the two names Λαγέτας and Στρατάρχας (given by Dorylaos to his sons after he had settled down in Knossos) may be a living military or political institution in late 2nd century Crete that still had the λαγέτας as a government official who was in charge of the λαός (manpower potentially for military use) next to the στράταρχος who led the actual army. This view to me is forced. Granted, as Van Effenterre (*op. cit.* 589) suggests, it is unlikely that Dorylaos, a mercenary officer, searched the odes of Pindar for the names of his sons (although not entirely unimaginable). But, as shown above, Λαγέτας as a name is robustly attested in inscriptions and in coins from Asia minor including the Pontic region (see fn. 53). So, the fact that Dorylaos named one of his children Λαγέτας should reflect, if anything, that the name was a recognizable andronym in his time and it had a somewhat strong presence in the area around Amisos where Dorylaos was originally from.

for further investigations into the semantic shift of other culturally important Mycenaean lexical items.

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Abbreviations

- AiGr* = WACKERNAGEL, Jakob (1905), *Altindische Grammatik*, vol. 2(2), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- DELG* = CHANTRAINE, Pierre (1999), *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque: Histoire des mots*, Paris, Klincksieck.
- DMic* = AURA JORRO, Francisco (1993), *Diccionario Micénico*, vol. 2, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto de Filología.
- Docs.*² = VENTRIS, Michael & CHADWICK, John (1973), *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, University Press.
- EDG* = BEEKES, Robert S. P. (2010), *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, Leiden, Brill.
- GEW* = FRISK, Hjalmar (2017), *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 3rd ed., Heidelberg, Winter.
- IG* = KLAFFENBACH, Guentherus (1932), *Inscriptiones Graecae IX, 1, fasc.1*, 2nd ed., Berlin.
- LIV* = RIX, Helmut (2001), *Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben. Die Wurzeln und ihre Primärstämmebildungen*, 2nd ed., Wiesbaden, Reichert.
- LSJ* = LIDDELL, Henry G., SCOTT, Robert, JONES, Henry S. et al. (1996), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed., Oxford, Clarendon.

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