

The Song of the Swallow *

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Summary

How is it ascertained that the Song of the Swallow is Rhodian? In spite of the traditional classification, it is necessary to prove that the song kept dialectal traits. Since Rhodian is today more well-known, it has been possible to verify whether some phenomena appearing in the song (e.g. τυρῶν, τυρῶνα or -μες) were really Rhodian or not. Metric structure becomes more successful, if one applies the results of the Rhodian compensatory lengthenings. At the same time, the Rhodian vowel system has been corroborated by this evidence. All these combined features allow us to establish three different dates in the composition of the song and to suggest new readings of the text.

The Song of the Swallow is, without doubt, one of the most beautiful examples of the old popular Greek lyric. In spite of being very well-known, I believe that it has not been studied sufficiently (a condition which also affects the rest of traditional Greek poetry) and that, moreover, the relevant aspects of the work, such as the language and the ritual, have not been accurately examined¹.

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¹ On the characteristics of folksongs see: F. R. Adrados, *Lírica griega arcaica* (Madrid, 1980); idem, *El mundo de la lírica griega antigua* (Madrid, 1981); M. Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition* (Cambridge, 1974); S. Baud-Bovy, *La chanson populaire grecque du Dodécanèse* (Paris, 1936); C. M. Bowra, *Primitive Song* (New York-London, 1962); F. Pordomingo, *La poesía popular griega. Estudio filológico y literario* (Salamanca, 1979); L. Cerrato, «I canti popolari della Grecia antica», *RFIC* 13 (1885), pp. 345-346.; G. Lambin, *La chanson grecque dans l'antiquité* (Paris, 1992).

This version of the Song of the Swallow is known to be from Rhodes. But these kinds of songs are associated with a rite of spring which was widespread throughout Greece, as is proved by the almost identical songs sung today in Greece².

The first written evidence of the Song of the Swallow came from Athenaeus (VIII 360 cd) and is, therefore, from the 2nd or 3rd Century A.D. A thousand years later, Eustathius of Thessalonica (*Od.*, p. 1914, 45 ff.) quoted it partly textually and partly paraphrased. Athenaeus himself tells us that the first written version was that of Theognis of Rhodes (3rd to 2nd Century B.C.), who put it in the second book of his work *Περὶ τῶν ἐν Ρόδῳ θυσιῶν*. He states that the Song of the Swallow was sung in the age of Cleobulus of Lindos (at the end of the 7th Century B.C.).

Between the first version and Athenaeus' there were two others: one at the end of the 1st Century A.D. by the anonymous author of a history of Rhodes entitled *Ροδιακά*, used by Athenaeus, and another one by Pamphilus of Alexandria (*Περὶ ὀνομάτων καὶ γλωσσῶν*, 1st Century B.C.), who took it from Theognis³.

A critical study of this song has been made by Morelli⁴. However, given Morelli's extreme delicacy as well as the many confused critical contributions that have arisen regarding the text, it will be necessary to return to the oldest manuscripts and to remember their readings. From the first edi-

² P. Bádenas, «Canciones neogriegas de la golondrina» in *Athlon F. R. Adrados* ii (Madrid, 1987), pp. 41-50; C. Fauriel, *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne* ii (Paris, 1824-5); Kind, *Neugriechische Poesien* (Leipzig, 1833); idem, *Neugriechische Anthologie* (Leipzig, 1844); E. Legrand, *Recueil de chansons populaires grecques. Collection de monuments pour servir à l'histoire de la langue néo-hellénique*, N. S. 1 (Athènes-Paris, 1874); M. Marcellus, *Chants du peuple en Grèce* ii (Paris, 1851); A. Passow, *Popularia carmina Graeciae recentioris* (Leipzig, 1860); H. Pernot, *Chansons populaires grecques des XVe et XVIe siècles* (Paris, 1931); R. Taibi & G. Caracusi, *Testi neogreci di Calabria* (Palermo, 1959). On the rite, we can consult: J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough³ ii: Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild* (London, 1933); A. van Gennep, *Les rites de passage* (Paris-The Hague, 1969); A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *Structure and Function in Primitive Society* (London, 1952).

³ Throughout the article it will be observed that we have not used the term *χελιδόνισμα*, since it is unattested in Athenaeus, but has been reconstructed on the basis of *κορώνισμα* which, on the other hand, is documented in the aforementioned author (VIII 360b). On the contrary, *χελιδονίζειν* appears in Athenaeus (VIII 360bc) in the sense of «to sing the *χελιδόνισμα*». The term is documented in Hesychius.

⁴ G. Morelli, «Un antico carme popolare rodiese», *SIFC* 35 (1963), pp. 121-160.

tions⁵ in the 16th Century to the last by Page⁶, and even in Morelli's edition, numerous contradictions are present in the criteria employed in the adoption of one manuscript or another.

Traditionally, the text⁷ has been divided into two groups: that from codex **A** of the 10th Century which is followed by **B** (15th Century) and Eustathius. Whenever **C** and **E** are at variance with **A**, Eustathius⁸ is systematically in agreement with **C** and **E**. Manuscript **A** is the best one, as all the editors recognize, but even so, they have all accepted unconditionally the texts of **C** and **E** (always for «linguistic» or «metric» reasons), when these differ from **A**. In my opinion, the false readings stem from the inadequate knowledge of the Rhodian dialect up to now.

Anyhow, with the exception of Morelli, no one has questioned the ideas of Ahrens about the song dialect. Ahrens⁹ believed that, at the time it was first written down, it was strongly influenced by the Attic dialect. Also he supposed that two versions had to exist, one in *Doris severior* in the 7th Century B.C. and another in the 5th Century or even in the 4th Century B.C. in *Doris mitior*, which actually was the transmitted one. Morelli thought that there had only been one version, the older one, and that the song was adapted to the common language, although an attempt was made not to lose the metrical rhythm in spite of the linguistic changes.

Athenaeus tells us that this song was sung in the period of Cleobulus of Lindos, that is to say, in the 7th Century B.C. We have no reason to doubt this *a priori*. The dialect of the Song of the Swallow, as it has come down to us, is apparently a mixed dialect¹⁰, very poorly characterized. But a detailed study of the song shows that this mixture of peculiarities fits the characteristics of the dialect of Rhodes¹¹, at the time of Athenaeus' writing.

⁵ The *editio princeps* of the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus was produced in Venice in the year 1514, in the care of Marco Musuro on behalf of Aldo Manuzio and Andrea d'Ascolo.

⁶ D. L. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci*² (Oxford, 1967).

⁷ Codex **A** (*Venet. Marc.* 447, s. x). Codex **B** (*Laurent. plut.* LX 1, s. xv). Codex **C** (*Paris. Suppl. gr.* 841, s. xv). Codex **E** (*Laurent. plut.* I.X 2, s. xv).

⁸ The testimony of Eustathius does not suffice for the textual criticism, since it is not truly a second source.

⁹ H. L. Ahrens, *De Graecae Linguae Dialectis* ii (Hildesheim, 1971), pp. 478-479.

¹⁰ See A. Bartonek, *Classification of the West Greek Dialects at the time about 350 B.C.* (Amsterdam-Praha, 1972); R. Björckegren, *De sonis dialecti Rhodiacaе* (Upsala, 1902); F. Bechtel, *Die griechische Dialekte*² ii (Berlin, 1963).

¹¹ The fundamental argument of this paper is supported by the results of our research (synchronic and diachronic grammar) into the Rhodian dialect (L. Martín

In the apparatus, we'll be able to see that the codex **A** contains more Dorian traits than the others. For example, in line 13 **A B** preserve ἀρίω-μεϛ, dialectal ending, while Eustathius, **C** and **E**, present ἀρίωμεν, Koine ending. It seems that the other texts were subjected to a process of «regularization»: The scholars, and the editors afterwards, took as Attic features what in fact was Rhodian¹².

Furthermore, since Rhodian does not belong to the *Doris severior* nor to the *Doris mitior*, but is a variation on the *Doris media*¹³, we can expect that the Song of the Swallow sung in the 7th Century B.C. by children could have been almost the same as the version collected in any manuscript¹⁴.

So, in the hypothesis that the Song of the Swallow was sung in Rhodian dialect, I'm going to comment on the dialectal features that the song offers, including manuscript variations (especially those found in **A**), together with the different readings and interpretations from editors. In the same way, we'll check whether linguistic changes generate metric changes too and, in this case, whether they fit in with the song sense.

In order to explain these problems, although it supposes a preview of the results, I present my text at this moment with the definitive colometry. I have included in the apparatus Page's and Morelli's readings¹⁵.

Vázquez, *Inscriptiones rodias*, (Madrid, 1988, 3 vols.). It is obvious that these results differ from the old ones —R. Björckegren and F. Bechtel—, because 3.331 Rhodian inscriptions have been employed in the study.

¹² In Morelli's opinion (*op. cit.*, p. 148), **C** and **E** change the **A** Doric features into the Attic features. However, he opts for the readings of **A**; but because of an excessive desire for turning the text into Doric, he interprets in a forced way some readings and reconstructs in the song a supposed dialect of *Doris Severior* in the 7th Century B.C. Thus, all his efforts are centred on explaining «la profonda trasformazione linguistica» which, in his opinion, the text exhibits.

¹³ See L. Martín Vázquez, *op. cit.*, and A. Bartonek, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ Rhodian dialect does not show spectacular changes from the seventh century to the third (L. Martín Vázquez, *op. cit.*, p. 428 *passim*). For this reason, I think, contrary to Edmonds and Morelli's opinion, that it is not necessary to «translate» the Song of the Swallow's text into the Doric dialect, especially when this fact supposes considering it Laconian. Although it is obvious, we must remember that both Doric dialects, Rhodian and Laconian, offer remarkable differences.

¹⁵ Editions and works mentioned in critical apparatus: H. L. Ahrens, *op. cit.*; T. Bergk, *Poetae Lyrici Graeci*² iii (Leipzig, 1882); O. Crusius & E. Hiller, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca*⁵ (Leipzig, 1903), LXX and 324-325; E. Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca*² ii (Leipzig 1942); J. M. Edmonds, *Lyra Graeca* iii (Cambridge-Mass., 1945); *Eustathii Commentarii ad Homerum Odysseum* i (Hildesheim, 1960); G. Hermann, *Elementa doctrinae metricae* (Leipzig, 1816), pp. 461-462; G. Kaibel, *Athenaeus*.

	ἦλθ' ἦλθε χελιδῶν	-----	reiz
	καλὰς ὥρας ἄγουσα	-----/	pher
	καὶ καλὸς ἐνιαυτὸς	-----/	reiz
	ἐπὶ γαστέρα λευκὰ	-----	^v reiz
5	κάπὶ νῶτα μέλαινα	-----//	pher
	παλάθαν οὐ προκυκλεῖς	-----	dod ^{''}
	ἐκ πίονος οἴκου;	-----/	reiz
	οἴνου τε δέπαστρον;	-----/	reiz
	τυρῶν τε κάνυστρον;	-----//	reiz
10	καὶ πυρῶνα χελιδῶν	-----	pher
	καὶ λεκιθίταν	-----	ad
	οὐκ ἀπωθεῖται	-----///	2ia sync
	πότερ' ἀπίωμες ἢ λαβόμεθα;	----- ----//	dod ia
	εἰ μὲν τι δώσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐκ ἐάσομεν	--- --- ---/	3ia
15	ἢ τὰν θύραν φέρωμες ἢ θοῦπέρθυρον	--- --- ---/	3ia
	ἢ τὰν γυναῖκα τὰν ἔσω καθημέναν;	--- --- ---/	3ia
	μικρὰ μὲν ἔστι, ραδίως νιν οἴσομεν	--- --- ---/	3ia
	ἂν δὴ φέρῃς τι, μέγα δὴ τι φέροις·	--- -----//	ia dod ^{''}
	ἄνοιγ' ἄνοιγε τὰν θύραν χελιδόνι	--- --- ---/	3ia
20	οὐ γὰρ γέροντες ἐσμεν, ἀλλὰ παιδιά	--- --- ---//	3ia

1. ἦνθ' ἦνθε Hermann, Morelli.

2. ὥρας Hermann, Morelli, ὥρας Page.

3. καὶ καλοὺς codd. Eust., καλοὺς Hermann, Page, καλοῦς τ' Crusius.

5. κάπὶ **A B**, ἐπὶ **C E** Eust., Page, κ' ἐπὶ Ahrens, πὶ Usener, κηπὶ Wilamowitz, Morelli μέλαινα **C E** Eust., μέλανα **A B**, μέλαννα Usener.

Deipnosophistae ii (Stuttgart, 1965) pp. 6-10; G. Morelli, *op. cit.*; G. Murray, C. Bailey, E. A. Barber, T. F. Higham & C. M. Bowra, *The Oxford Book of Greek Verse* (Oxford, 1966); D. L. Page, *Lyrica Graeca Selecta* (Oxford, 1973); idem, *Poetae Melici Graeci*² (Oxford, 1967); G. Pfohl, *Griechische Inschriften, als Zeugnisse des privaten und öffentlichen Lebens* (München Tusculum, 1966); J. U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina* (Oxford, 1970); H. Usener, *Der altgriechische Versbau* (Bonn, 1887), pp. 81-83; U. v. Wilamowitz, *Vitae Homeri et Hesiodi* (Bonn, 1916), pp. 57-58; idem, *Griechische Verskunst* (Berlin, 1921).

6. σὺ προκύκλει Hermann, Page, τὸ Morelli, οὐ προκυκλεῖς codd. Eust.
7. (παλάθαν ~) οἴκου; Ahrens, οἴκω Edmonds, Morelli.
8. οἴνω Edmonds, Morelli.
9. τυρῶ A Morelli, τυρῶν B, τυροῦ C E, Page; κάνυστρον C E, κάννυστρον B.
10. καὶ πυρῶνα A, Wilamowitz, καὶ πυρῶν ἅ B E, καὶ πυρῶν ἅ C Eust., καὶ πύρ-
να Bergk, Page, σπυρῶν δὲ Morelli.
12. ἀποθεῖται B C, ὠθεῖται Edmonds.
13. ἀπίομες A B, ἀπίομεν C E.
14. αἱ ~ ἐασοῦμες Morelli, ἐάσομεν A, ἐάσομες Page.
15. φέρομες A B, φέρομεν C E Eust.; θούπέρθυρον Ahrens, Morelli, τὸ ὑπέρ-
θυρον codd. Eust., Page.
16. κᾶν (sic) ἔσω Eust.
17. μικρὰ γάρ Bergk; μιν codd., νιν Meineke, Morelli; οἴσομεν A B E, οἴσομαι C,
οἰσοῦμες Morelli.
18. ἄν δὴ codd., αἱ δὲ Morelli; (ἄν δὴ) φέρης A B, φέροις C E; μέγα δὴ τι φέ-
ροις codd.
20. ἔσμες Morelli.

*Now came, the swallow came
Bringing good weather
And a good year,
With its white breast,
And its black back.
Do you not share a loaf
From a rich house?,
And a goblet of wine?,
And a basket of cheeses?
Buns and biscuits
By the swallow
Are not rejected.
Shall we go away or cling (to the door)?
If you are going to give something... or else we shall not allow.
Shall we take the door, or the upperdoor?¹⁶,
Or even the woman who is seated inside?
As she is small, she will be easy to take.
If you were to bring something, you would take something big.
Open, open the door to the swallow.
Because we are not old men, but young lads.*

¹⁶ I think it is a typical Mediterranean door with two doorposts: the upperdoor, generally opened by day, and the lower one, usually closed to stop animals coming in (wicket or postern?).

In line 1, the change of <N> for <Λ>, suggested by Hermann, and also adopted by Morelli, is unnecessary and totally inadmissible, because this phenomenon did not occur in Rhodian¹⁷.

In lines 2 and 3 one of the most significant dialectal characteristics in the song appears: The result of the last two compensatory lengthenings. This fact determines *without doubt* that the dialect of the song can only be Rhodian.

In the apparatus we can observe that Hermann considers the <A> of ὥρας as short, while Page sees it as long: ὥρας¹⁸. On the other hand, Hermann (*op. cit.*) considers the first <A> of καλᾶς as long and the ending -ας as short. But in the following line, for «metric reasons», he is not ashamed to measure the <A> of καλοῦς as short (also he removes καί). Neither does he observe that the thematic accusative plural ending (ἐνιαυτός) should also be short, like the corresponding feminine one of the previous line. However, Morelli (and West, *op. cit.*, p. 147) always measures καλ- with a short vowel, and on the other hand, considers the feminine accusative plural as short and the masculine as long. Actually, according to the dialect rules, both accusative plural desinences must be short and the <A> of καλός long¹⁹, that is to say: καλᾶς ὥρας ἄγουσα/ καὶ καλὸς ἐνιαυτός. As far as I know, in no other dialect does this convergence of results occur in the last two compensatory lengthenings: The third one is accomplished, the second took place only medially. This peculiarity could set the dialect of the song in the 7th Century B.C.

Rhodian kept its characteristics to a very late date, but at the same time it acquired features from Koine, at least in spelling. For instance, the ending -ους of the masculine accusative plural is documented from the end of the 4th Century B.C. substituting the dialectal desinence -ος, attested in inscriptions. It was impossible to appreciate accurately from inscriptions what the true metre of these plural accusatives was, that is to say, whether

¹⁷ The change of <N> for <Λ> is not documented in any of the 3.331 inscriptions (see note 11) from 8th Century B.C. to the 5th Century A.D., so there is no reason to make this change in the song, especially when manuscripts have <Λ>. This is another attempt to translate the song into Laconian (see note 14). Some doric dialects present this change (φίντατος, βέντιστος, ἐνθών, Cyr. ἐνθη, τενται; Meg. ἐνπιδες in M. Lejeune, *Phonétique historique du mycénien et du grec ancien* (Paris, 1972, pp. 152 ff.), but especially it is attested in Laconian.

¹⁸ M. L. West, *Greek Metre* (Oxford, 1982), p. 147: ὥρας with short α.

¹⁹ On Rhodian compensatory lengthenings, see L. Martín Vázquez, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-101 and pp. 349-354.

their spelling changed under the influence of the Koine or their vowels were changing from short to long. This vowel shift seems very strange to me, since even at that time, there are attested «errors» that reflect the loss of quantity. In any case, although this may have been so, in a popular song this change would have broken the ancient rhythm, in spite of the very strong tendency to keep the rhythm that is present in these folksongs. We are going to see further on that the Song of the Swallow did keep it also. It is natural that the manuscripts have <ΟΥΣ>, since this was the spelling of Koine.

Moreover, if the text of manuscript **A** is accepted and we bear in mind Rhodian phonetic features in the two last compensatory lengthenings, line 2 is a pherecratean (-~---~) and line 3 is a reizianum (-~---~; considering ἐνιαυτός with synizesis in ιαυ²⁰).

L.5. The crasis κάπι in **A** and **B** is well documented in Rhodian; however, the occurrence of μέλανα in **A** is surprising. Perhaps, it will be necessary to accept the reading of Eustathius μέλανα.

L.6. Although all the manuscripts present οὐ προκυκλεῖς, Morelli, accepting Hermann's edition, believes that this is a *corruptio* due to an *emendatio* from the Byzantine period before the 10th Century, and offers other Doric peculiarity: τὸ προκύκλει. First of all —states Morelli— the verbal form was corrupted and passed to the indicative; then the pronoun would have been understood to be redundant and σύ would have become understood as οὐ. Instead of this very complex process, I prefer the text of **A**. In order to preserve the manuscript reading, one merely needs to understand the phrase as interrogative and add a question mark²¹. So if we

²⁰ Morelli (*op. cit.*, p. 151) considers line 2 as reiz (~---x), seeing καλας (two short α), and line 3 as pher (~---x). But, we can also observe that he describes the accusative thematic ending as long (καλούς, with short α), while the feminine (καλας, two short α) as short. In Page's and Bergk's text, line 3 is a reiz; for that purpose they remove καί. On the other hand, West (p. 147) agrees with Morelli's scansion, but he makes an ionic analysis in the first part of this song. He also thinks that the four emendations made in Bergk's and Page's text in order to find ten reiz. are excessive. On synizesis in l.3 (ἐνιαυτός), we can see D. Korzeniewski, *Griechische Metrik*² (Darmstadt, 1989), pp. 25-26 and M. L. West, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-14.

²¹ Interrogative sentences are typical of folksongs. I think that this very stimulating Morelli's interpretation has been forced in order to find another reiz (~---). Contrarily, we'll see (studying lines 13 and 18) that it is not essential for the meaning of the song to consider this colon as a reiz, but it is much better to maintain codex **A** reading.

follow **A** text, we'll find ~~~~~ (with *correptio* in προκυκλεῖς), that is to say, a reversed dodrans (dod[~])²².

L.9. Codex **B**, which always tends to coincide with **A**, offers τυρῶν, while τυρῶ appears in **A**. All editors, without doubt, have adopted τυροῦ from **C** and **E**. In spite of what Morelli believes, τυρῶ does not hide a vestige of the older dialect either, since Rhodian has never had this desinence²³.

To Morelli's peculiar question of how a form such as τυρῶ could have entered the Athenaeus' tradition, I find two equally valid and appropriate replies. The first and most simple is to accept reading **B** as a genitive plural; if τυρῶ was written in **A**, instead of τυρῶν, the reason probably was that it came down from Athenaeus in this way. At that time the loss of -v ending does occur fairly often²⁴. The second answer could be explained easily by other very usual characteristic of the late Greek: the mistake for open and closed vowels²⁵. Confusions between the genitive singular and the genitive plural are frequent in inscriptions of the 3rd Century A.D. and later, when Athenaeus was writing his work.

It is equally appropriate for the sense and the metre of the song to accept τυροῦ or τυρῶν (τυρῶ was never a Rhodian form). I am inclined to accept τυρῶν as *lectio melior*, since it is easy to see how τυροῦ is originated from τυρῶν (τυρῶν > τυρῶ(v) > τυρῶ > τυροῦ).

²² West (*op. cit.*), B. Snell, *Griechische Metrik*¹ (Göttingen, 1982), p. 37. Wilamowitz (U. v. Wilamowitz, *Griechische Verskunst* (Berlin, 1921, 210-44) calls ~~~~~ acephalous choriambic dimeter (^chodim). Some writers follow Maas (P. Maas, *Griechische Metrik*, (Leipzig, 1929²) in calling it «wilamowitzianus» acephalous (^wil). Dale (A. M. Dale, *The lyric metres of Greek drama* (Cambridge, 1968²) calls the two forms dodrans A (~~~~) and B (oo~~). Others know them as *edite* and *maecenas* (after Hor.C.1.1 *Maecenas atavi / edite regibus*). Also we can call this colon «chor. heptasyll. blunt» (W. S. Barret, *Euripides Hippolytos* (Oxford, 1964), p.370). As regards to *correptio*, we can find this same treatment in *Il.* 1, 113: οἴκοι ἔχειν· καὶ γάρ ῥα Κλυταιμνήστρης προβέβουλα, for example, and in West (*op. cit.*), but he makes an ionic analysis of the first part of the song. Morelli sees *correptio* in τὸ προ..... See also P. Chantraine, *Grammaire homérique*⁶ i (Paris, 1988), pp. 108-9, Korzeniewski (*op. cit.*).

²³ See L. Martín Vázquez, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-198 and p. 392.

²⁴ Another similar example could be the hesitation between -ην and -η that the Thucydidean codices offer in -εσ- stems (A. López Eire, «Del ático a la koiné», *Emerita* 49 (1981), pp. 349 ff). In our song we can see another similar mistake: κελούς ἐνιαυτούς. It is Attic spelling disagreeing with Rhodian phonetics or metrics.

²⁵ See L. Martín Vázquez, *op. cit.*, pp. 326 ff.

In l. 10 the reading of **A**: **καὶ πυρῶνα**, is generally not accepted; the objections are not based on the metre (*pher* ---~~~~), but on the meaning. I agree with Morelli that the editors' readings are forced: they think that the final <A> is an article or that <Ω> can be omitted or added with the same facility as an <I>²⁶.

Morelli's text could be acceptable palaeographically and have an appropriate meaning, but with it he is trying to find another characteristic of the *Doris Severior*, in this case **σπυρῶν** (attested in Syracuse) instead of **πυρῶν**. According to Morelli, the scribe could have found the series of letters **ΚΠΥΡΩΝΑΧΕΛΙΔΩΝ** and understood **κ(αὶ) πυρῶν ἃ χελιδῶν**, instead of **σπυρῶν δ(ὲ) χελιδῶν**.

To accept **ἃ χελιδῶν** with the definite article presents, in my opinion, serious difficulties. All through the text we can observe that the definite article (**ὁ, ἡ, τό**) has been used as if it were a Homeric demonstrative. Only «woman» and «door» have a true definite article, that is to say, the target for the threats, which is different in every house. On the other hand, the rest of the nouns in the song are without an article: they are either prototypes (the sweets requested) or have a general or symbolic use.

Morelli's attractive interpretation (*another Doric feature!*) including **δὲ** breaks down the syntactic structure of the first part of the song. One can see an evident symmetry in the use of **καὶ** and **τε** in the text where there is no room for **δέ**: **καὶ** joins the two direct objects of **ἄγουσα** (l. 2 y 3), the two adverb phrases **ἐπὶ... κάπι...** (l. 4 y 5) and the objects of **ἀποθεῖται**: **πυρῶνα** and **λεκιθίταν** (l. 10 y 11). On the other hand, **τε** joins (l. 8 y 9) the two objects of **προκυκλεῖς** with a very characteristic rhythm and a metre: **οἴνου τε δέπαστρον/ τυρῶν τε κάνυστρον**; contrarily, the other object of **προκυκλεῖς**, **παλάθαν**, typical of the spring, is situated emphatically at the *colon* beginning. So then we think that it is very problematic to remove the **A** reading in order to see a *reiz* in every *cola*, since this fact breaks down all the rhythm and the peculiar parallelism to a folksong marked by the alternative sequence of **καὶ** and **τε**. This fact has been helped by the insistence on seeing «Doric» features where there are «Rhodian» features. In fact **πυρῶνα** presents Rhodian characteristics, but they are different from Morelli's idea.

I think that **πυρῶνα** is the specialized name for the bread that «the swallows» beg around houses. Probably it is, like **πυρήν**, a derived form from

²⁶ Page: **καὶ πῦρνα χελιδῶν**. This colon is forced by all editors, including Morelli, in order to find another *reiz* ---~~~~.

πυρός. The formation of food-names does not present a uniform line, excepting the fact that the majority are hapax and belong to popular language²⁷. Now, if we think that it is a begging-song and children beg for many different kinds of bread, fig bread or fruit bread, one should be tempted to consider πυρῶνα the typical bun or biscuit, made of wheat and egg, that is to say, of πυρός and ὄον. It would be correct in the neuter plural, as in other kinds of small food²⁸, or could even be the accusative singular of a nasal-stem, formed from the quoted compound. With this interpretation, πυρῶνα becomes a misunderstood hapax; this noun is very suitable for a spring begging-song, where typical products and first fruits are begged.

To sum up, the following colometry can be suggested with regard to the first part of the Song of the Swallow: reiz pher/ reiz/ ^vreiz pher//dod^r reiz/ reiz/ reiz//pher ad 2ia sync²⁹///.

Until Morelli, no one had tried to determine the full metre of this Song, perhaps since this involved many problems³⁰. Metrically, the song is divided into two clearly differentiated parts (two stanzas: l.1-12 and l.13-20). The first having been analyzed, we can see that the second part is made up of sung (lyric) iambic trimeters. Frequently, long series of iambs appear in ancient lyrics associated with choriambic *cola*.

Generally the editors join lines 12 and 13 probably because of metric troubles. But without any doubt both the meaning and the structure, and even the syntax, make line 12 belong to the first part of the song and line

²⁷ Nevertheless there are parallels: θιαγών (an Aetolian sacrificial cake, Nic. Fr.136, Hsch. quoted by Athen.114c) and κυκεών.

²⁸ See also μελιχοίρινα in L. Martín Vázquez, *op. cit.*, n.24. There are not many examples of compounds made up of two coordinated elements. But some of them belong to food-names and popular language (ἀρτό-κρεας, ἀρτό-μελι, see Athenaeus iii and E. Fleury, *Morphologie Historique de la Langue Grecque* (Paris), p. 62 ff.). Perhaps its popular condition has made possible the form πυρῶνα or πυρῶνα for *πυρῶνα.

²⁹ Line 12 (cr sp) is considered a dochmius (---*) by Morelli.

³⁰ M. L. West (*op. cit.*, p.147) only considers the first part. See also D. Korzeniewski (*op. cit.*) and B.Snell, (*op. cit.*). F. R. Adrados («La canción rodia de la golondrina y la cerámica de Terà», *Emerita* 42 (1974), pp. 47-68) does not present the structure of the song, but he defines it as composed of two parts: the first, of reiziana and pherecratean, and the second of iambic trimeters, but he says that line 12, which he joins to 13, is an incomplete trochaic tetrameter which may be attributed to either side. About the second part of the song, West (p. 147) only says that they are «iambic trimeters except perhaps for an anapestic dimeter in 17».

13 to the second. With regard to syntax we have already seen the role played by *καί* and *τε* in the first part. But furthermore, if we pay attention, this stanza is made up of three sentences with the verb in the singular, in all cases the swallow is the protagonist (l. 1 ἦλθε, l. 6 προκυκλεῖς; of course the grammatical subject of this verb is the master of the house, but the swallow is the one who asks the question; and l. 12 ἀπωθεῖται). On the contrary, in the second part there are many verbs and that which prevails is the first person plural.

L. 12 and 13 are two transition *cola*, in 12 the swallow finishes speaking and in 13 it is the young who begin, and it stands to reason that the metre shows this change too. So it is not necessary to join line 12 together line 13, as has been done ever since Hermann. Although both are iambic, l. 12 belongs to the Aeolic *cola* because of the number of syllables and, above all, because of the syncopation; moreover, iambs are very frequent in the final clauses of the Aeolic *cola*.

Thus the second stanza (composed by sung iambs) begins in line 13. The fact that the final clause of the Aeolic *cola* and the first line of the second part of the song have a scansion which is, let us say, ambiguous (as happens in l. 18) could raise some doubts. But according to the meaning, the structure of the song supports these metrical «irregularities» (see below)³¹.

Metrically we can describe l. 13 (~~~~~ ~~~) as: dodrans, ia³². But the most remarkable peculiarity of this transition colon is the fact that while its iambic end links the next *3ia*, however its first choriambic half links the previous *cola*. Moreover, line 12 has a slow rhythm (long syllables are accumulated); on the other hand a rapid rhythm is emphasized in line 13 by the succession of short syllables. This feeling is also produced by a chiasmus: l. 12 ---, -- // l. 13 ~~~ ~-

³¹ On the transition verses see J. S. Lasso de la Vega, «La oda primera de Safo», *CFC* 6 (1974), pp. 9-93; *CFC* 7 (1974), pp. 9-80 and «Los coros de *Edipo rey*: notas de métrica», *CFC* 2 (1971), pp. 9-95. For the iambic tripodiac see J. D. Denniston, «Lyric iambs in Greek Drama» in *Greek Poetry and Life. Essays presented to Gilbert Murray* (Oxford, 1936), pp. 121-144; see also B. Snell & H. Mähler (eds.), *Pindari Carmina cum fragmentis*⁴ ii (Leipzig, 1975), p. 169. In Sophocles and Euripides there are numerous cases of syncopated *2ia* and *3ia*, which serve as transition verses. In *Hippolytus*, for example, the change from choriambic *cola* to iambic trimeters is realized using exactly the same series as in this song. Cf. Hipp. 1146, ~~~~; see A. Guzmán Guerra, *Estudio comparativo de las series métricas de transición en los versos líricos de Eurípides* (Madrid, 1981).

³² About this colon, see note 22. We can also consider it as: chor. hendecasyll. blunt (~~~~~x~) with the cho in A (Barret).

L.14 is a *3ia* (---, ---, ---) with synizesis in *ἔάσομεν*³³. The confusion between *-μες* and *-μεν*, which also appears in l.13, 15, 17 and 20 would not have been surprising in the age of Athenaeus. The forms *ἔάσομεν* and *ἔάσομες* could have been used alternately. As Morelli says (p. 149), the changing from Rhodian to Koine could have begun before the Athenaeus' manuscript tradition, perhaps in the 5th Century B.C. Now then Morelli could be right suggesting that the Doric futures, *ἔασοῦμες* and *οἰσοῦμες*, were replaced by the Attic *ἔάσομεν* and *οἴσομεν*, in order to avoid two scazon *3ia*. But we must remember two significant facts: first, «Doric» future is not only a Doric feature, and second, *ἔάσομεν* and *οἴσομεν* are two well-known Homeric forms³⁴. So we prefer to preserve the codex **A** reading.

L.15. The reading *θουῦπέρθυρον* instead of *τὸ ὑπέρθυρον* is not strange to the dialect and is also more suited to the metre. In any case, if we accept *τὸ ὑπέρθυρον*, with separate writing, metrically it can be considered as a single syllable; synizesis is very common in popular songs.

L.17. The Rhodian form is *vuv*. However the Ionic form could have been introduced into the text at any date; furthermore, the error of <M> for <N>, especially prefaced by an <I>, is very frequent in uncial writing.

Line 18 can be defined metrically as: *ia*, reversed *dodrans*³⁵. The first part until penthemimer³⁶, *ἄν δὴ φέρης τι*, follows the rhythm of the previous *3ia*. On the other hand, the second half, *μέγα δὴ τι φέροις*, is found in responson with l.6 (a reversed *dodrans*), being in this way a perfect close to the second part of the song.

Lines 19 and 20 are two *3ia* concluding the song. L.19 resumes the first stanza; the verb is repeated in first place (*ἄνοιγ' ἄνοιγε*) and *χελιδών* is

³³ See, for example, *Il* 5, 256 and others; usually *ἔάω* is found monosyllabic. See D. Korzeniewski, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26 and M. L. West, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-14.

³⁴ *Ἐάσομεν* is found in Homer as subjunctive with short vowel (*Il* 19, 65, and others; these kind of subjunctives, and Homeric traits too, are very common throughout Rhodian inscriptions). This feature is an ancient athematic stem with short vowel, that later became to be understood as a future (but let us remember that the Classic future of *ἔάω* is generally *ἔασόμεθα*). As to future of *φέφω*, *οἴσω* is not a true sigmatic future, but a sigmatic stem (see *οἰστός*, Chantraine, pp. 245-6). It is often employed by Homer as aorist, like later in koine.

³⁵ See notes 22 and 32. This colon can also be defined: *ia* ^wil; or chor. hendecasyll. blunt (x-~---) with the cho in D (Barret, *op. cit.*).

³⁶ West (*op. cit.*) calls this segment penthemimer (pe).

located at the end of the *colon*: «the swallow is coming, so the door must be opened». However, l.20 follows the second stanza (verbs are in the first person plural) and the identity of the swallow is made clear: «those threatening and begging are lads».

Resuming, the colometry of this stanza is: *dod ia // 3ia / 3ia / 3ia / 3ia / ia dodB // 3ia / 3ia ///*.

A literary analysis reveals how metre, structure and meaning are perfectly integrated and how the central theme is developed in each one of the sections in a different way. Actually the metrical «irregularities» fall in transition *cola* and in those alluding to the master of the house. They are the following:

L.6: a reversed *dodrans* breaks up the perfect sequence of *reix* and *pher*. Just in this *colon* appears the first question to the master of the house. There are three sentences in the first stanza: in the first and in the third the swallow is mentioned, but in the second (l.6) it is the swallow that begs openly.

L.12: It is here where the first stanza is closed by a *2ia sync.* modifying lightly the rhythm of the previous *cola* and announcing the next period; thus it is the other transitional *cola* between the two stanzas.

L.13: in those *cola* the lads begin speaking and the threats are clearly shown up. The mixed metre (*cho* and *ia*) helps one appreciate the transition from the previous style to the next. Now the action will begin becoming more flowing and verbs more numerous.

L.18: it consists of two transitional *cola* where the master of the house is upbraided; its irregular metre changes together with the sense (a *commutatio*: *φέρω* is employed with two meanings). This line is joined up with l.6 because of metre, sense and syntax.

All through the song there are four references to the master of the house. These mentions are shown gradually depending on the intensity of the begging:

l.6 *παλάθαν οὐ προκυκλεῖς* (*dod*). The begging is here rhetorical and polite. That is to say, formal.

l.14 *εἰ μὲν τι δώσεις*: (*pe*) Now it becomes a ritual threat, more direct than the previous, but more typical³⁷.

³⁷ *Pe* is the colarion *~~*, see the previous note. This formula appears in the Song of the *Samian Eiresione* (E. Diehl, *op. cit.*, n. 1). See also *Il.* 1.135, Hdt. 8.62., TII. 3.3, Hes. *Op.* 357. The song has been studied by L. Martín Vázquez, «La canción de la Eiresione samia», *Minerva* 4, (1990), pp. 39-52.

l. 18 ἂν δὴ φέρῃς τι (pe), μέγα δὴ τι φέροις (dod^π). The third time the threat becomes a plea, perhaps a desire for prosperity, but it could, if necessary, be heard as a curse.

l. 19 ἄνοιγ' ἄνοιγε (pe) And finally, at the climax we find a double imperative.

The Song is composed as a small dramatic work with an exposition, crisis and conclusion. Each one has as central axis the word *χελιδών*. This word is repeated three times in the song, always at the end of the line: in the first line (*ἦλθ' ἦλθε χελιδών*), in the tenth (*καὶ πυρῶνα χελιδών*) and in the nineteenth line (*ἄνοιγ' ἄνοιγε τὴν θύραν χελιδόνι*). *Χελιδών* acquires different meanings throughout the poem. It changes through the song, from the first line to the last. It seems to tell a brief story or better to be playing a dramatic game which reveals its meaning at the very last moment.

In the exposition (lines 1-5) the swallow's arrival is announced. It is described together with the good things that its arrival will bring. *Χελιδών* here symbolizes the spring. In the crisis (lines 6-18) the swallow asks for «the produce of spring». This request is made in three forms differentiated gradually: A rhetorical request for a gift (l. 6-9); an ironical hidden request (10-12) and burlesque threats (13-18). *Χελιδών* here no longer represents the spring, rather the children «beg» taking the swallow's place.

Finally in the conclusion (lines 19-20) the intention of the song is clearly explained. The addressee is requested to shelter the swallow. And at last, the swallow reveals itself. *Χελιδών* here is identified with the young people.

The carefully study of the song has compelled me to maintain the chronological and dialectal differences: I have not harmonized the desinences *-μες* and *-μεν*. I have changed neither the conjunction *εἰ* for *αἰ*, nor the spelling of the long closed vowels used in the dialect in ancient times. I have only corrected the spelling of the masculine accusative plurals (l.3), because this seems to make reading easier and avoids errors, and the genitive *τυρῶ* for *τυρῶν*, for the same reason. I have also maintained the «Attic accentuation» to avoid more confusions.

In lines 15 and 16, I have interpreted *η* as a particle introducing a direct question, therefore they appear with a circumflex accent *-ῆ-* (*η* bis in l. 15 is *ῆ*). The sense of the *cola* is thus much more in agreement with the rest

of the song. It is now possible to interpret it, since there are parallels in other dialects³⁸.

To date the spelling back to the period in which the song was first sung would not produce anything conclusive. Rather more it would be disguised in relation with one of the more meaningful features of all popular songs, an immutability of structure and rhythm throughout the ages. I believe that to maintain these variations in the song is the most suitable, since the popular nature of the song is respected and the passing of time is reflected in the apparent «chronological incongruencies».

All these characteristics and features of the dialect allow us to distinguish three levels of composition, which could coincide with three different written versions of the Song of the Swallow:

1. There is no objection to the date of the 7th Century B.C. which tradition dictates, as is proved by lines 2 and 3: *καλὰς ὄρας ἄγουσα καὶ καλὸς ἐνιαυτός*.
2. The change of *αι* for *ει* and the confusion of *-μες* and *-μεν* are attested between the 2nd Century B.C. and the 1st Century A.D. This is also the first written version's date: Theognis of Rhodes, the anonymous author of the *Ῥοδιακά* and Pamphilus of Alexandria.
3. The reading *τυρῶ* for the genitive plural is characteristic of the 3rd-4th Centuries A.D., which corresponds to Athenaeus' age.

To sum up, the Song of the Swallow has all the traditional constituents of a folksong, such as repetition, ambiguity³⁹, dramatization and above all

³⁸ See J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*² (Oxford, 1966) & P. Chantraine, *Grammaire Homérique* II (Paris, 1963).

³⁹ J. Alsina, «Principios de estilística griega: el nivel sonoro» in *Athlon* F. R. Adrados (Madrid, 1987), pp. 69-81, M. García Teijeiro, «Retórica, oratoria y magia» in *Estudios de drama y retórica en Grecia y Roma* (León, 1987) and «Recursos fonéticos y recursos gráficos en los textos mágicos griegos», *RSEL* 19 (1989), pp. 233-249. S. Mariner, «Expresividad de los sonidos del lenguaje ¿También en su producción?», *RSEL* 16 (1986), pp. 83-90. On the double meaning in the vocabulary of this song, we have been able to consult the Dissertation for the PhD of M. Benavente, *Ambigüedades cómico-obscenas en la literatura griega* (unpublished), for which I express my grateful thanks to the author.

a practical function. All of these constituents adopt as much a lyrical tone as a joking or «iambic» one.

The appearance of children in the song, young people and old folk, together with the swallow, is widespread throughout all the folksongs, since it was required by the ritual. A Dorian tradition is perhaps hidden here as occurs in a folksong from Sparta⁴⁰ and in a vessel of the 6th Century B.C. found in Vulci, Etruria⁴¹. These fragments together with the Song of the Swallow, although only residual signs, show the spreading of this kind of lyrics in Greece. This is the reason why I think that the method employed here, made from a conglomerate of linguistic, metric and critical elements, is the only way to achieve any suitable analysis in the ancient Greek folksong.

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⁴⁰ D. L. Page, *PMG*, n. 870.

⁴¹ G. Pfohl, *op. cit.*, n. 154. There is an old man, a child and a young man observing the arrival of a swallow and holding the following conversation:

–Young man: Ἴδὸ χελιδόν.

–Old man: Νὲ τὸν Ἡερακλέα.

–Child: Ἡαντεῖ.

–Old man: Ἦαρ ἔδε.