

ΛΑΘΕ ΒΙΩΣΑΣ
and the Interpretation of Euripides Heracles 532

In the monumental Wilamowitz edition of Euripides „Heracles“ (1959³)¹ we find the following note to verse 532 (ἦραις ἐσώθης εἰς ἀκμὴν ἐλθὼν φίλοις): „Statt ἐλθὼν ist eigentlich das Part. praes. erfordert; der Aorist steht durch Angleichung der tempora. Musterbeispiel λάθε βιώσας *lebe im verborgenen*“. The reason for this objection to the part. aoristi is that, in relation to the predicate ἐσώθης as a circumstantial modifier of time, it contradicts the situation. ἐλθὼν, therefore, is supposed to be used here instead of the more convenient present participle only by a purely-formal „attraction“ of tense. But this interpretation is not exact in its comprehension of the principal meaning of the artistic theme of the passage. Taking this into account, ἐλθὼν expresses not the temporal relation, but the aspect of action, i.e. a characteristic indicative of the *momentary* duration. In mathematical terms it may be represented as t/∞ , where t is the measure of *any* definite duration (hence the name ἀόριστος was derived), with a *resultative* connotation.

Thus, in the joyful exclamation of Megara and Amphitryon, ἦραις ἐσώθης, both coincide as to the presential connotation „you are arrived now, safe and sound“, which receives, as a kind of epexegetis, the attributive-predicative adjunct ἐλθὼν.

Neither of two other cases (Eurip. Suppl.302; Aesch. Sept.754), cited by Wilamowitz as examples of attraction of tense, is conclusive. In both cases, the participles play the role of a semantic centre within the whole expression, while the verb in aorist with the meaning of momentary action demands the use of partic. aoristi according to the grammatical rule and not to the phenomenon of attraction.

As to the phrase λάθε βιώσας, where Wilamowitz also admits that aor. βιώσας is caused by attraction of the form λάθε, just the opposite seems to be the case. It is the aor. λάθε that is caused by the part. aor. βιώσας, as is clear from the meaning of the famous saying. This meaning is not „live unnoticed“ (German *lebe im verborgenen*, Russian *zhivi nyezamyetno*), but „live through one's life unnoticed“, in Russian „*prozhivi nyezamyetno*“. By supposing this, we leave the ground of

¹ U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. Euripides Herakles II (Berlin 1959) 202.

everyday morals and enter the sphere of philosophic ethics. Compare the *placitum* of Antisthenes (*Diog.L.VI,11*: τὴν δὲ ἀδοξίαν ἀγαθόν), which seems to indicate that the idea had cynical origins.

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For readers interested in knowing more about J.M. BOROVSКИJ (1896-1994), a classicist whose role was indispensable for the tradition of classical studies in St.Petersburg, we suggest a Latin obituary by A.B. Chernjak in *Vox Latina* 30 (1994) 117: 418-421 and also the following forthcoming publications. A list of J.M. Borovskij's publications with an obituary note is expected in *VDI* (by A.K. Gavrilov and T.M. Andronenko). A biography of J.M. Borovskij and a description of his philological creed and skill prepared by N.M. Botvinnik and A.I. Zajcev respectively will appear in the first issue of a new series in the humanities to be published in St.Petersburg, *The Classical World and Us*.