Homerian ἀάατος: Etymology and Poetics*

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1. Introduction

“vocabulary plane obscurum” Schulze 1892: 512

“the obscure and sinister epithet ἀάατος…” Janko 1992: 195

The etymology of the isolated Homeric word ἀάατος remains unclear. This word occurs in the Homeric epics three times, once in the Iliad (ἀάατον) and twice in the Odyssey (ἀάατο-). In the post-Homeric corpus it is attested only in Apollonius’ Argonautica. The actual passages are:

Il.14.271 ἄγγει νῦν μοι ὁμοσσόν ἵ ἀάατον Στυγός ὕδωρ (West)

ἀάατον: επ’ ααρστον Brandreth: ἀάαστον Dawes: ἀάαστον van Leeuwen

then swear to me by the ἀάατο- waters of the Styx

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1 T. S. Brandreth (1841) prints επ’ ααρστον, restoring a dactyl in the fourth foot under assumption of a metrical lengthening of ὁδόνατος type, but ἐπί is hardly defensible here (ὁμοσσόμενως regularly takes direct object or Inf., much rarer is absolute use, whereas in archaic Greek poetry ὁμοσσόμενως ἐπί + Acc. is only attested Hymn Hom. Merc. 519), and an undivided spondee in the fourth foot is not a metrical problem.
Papyri, quotations and the medieval paradoxis support the reading with three successive α-s, but there is another version of Il.14.271 transmitted by Prisc., Inst. 18.247 (Hertz): ἄγρει μᾶν, νῦν μοι ὀμοσσον Στυγὸς ἄατον ὑδωρ (for ἄγρει μᾶν compare E 765). This learned invention might bear testimony to confusion with ἄατος ‘insatiate’: that such confusion took place is shown by Verg. Aen. 12.816, where Juno swears to Juppiter by Stygii caput implacabile fontis (i.e. by ‘unappeasable water of the Styx’).

Od.21.89 ἄλλ’ ἀκέων δαίνυσθε καθήμενοι, ἢς θύραξε κλαίετον ἐξελθόντε, κατ’ αὐτόθι τόξα λιπόντε, μνηστήρεσσιν ἄεθλον ἄατον (van Thiel)
sit and feast in silence, or else
go forth and weep, and leave the bow here behind
as an ἄατο- contest for the suitors

Ap.Rhod. Argon. 2.77 ἀπελέα δ’ ἀίςα λνήζ ἀο
ππγκαρίελ, ἣθαξην ἄατον, ἣτε χερείων,
στῇ ρ’ ἀμοτον και χερειν ἑναντία χεῖρας ἐμεἴζεν (Fränkel)

2 For instance, codices A, D (two tenth-century mss. which in general do not show a close connection), B, and G (which frequently shares both errors and ancient variants with D, but rarely with A and b): essentially this is the reading given by the older and better mss. of the major families). The reading ἄατον offered by other mss. makes the verse unmetrical (unless one is able to motivate an unlikely scansion ὀμοσσον ρ—ρ— before a diaeresis after the third foot).


Trisyllabic ἄατον (glossed as πολυβαλβές or ἀβλαβές and often confused with ἄατον-ἀπλήρωτον, ἀκόριτον) has left a remarkable trace in Byzantine lexicography (Apion, Apoll. Soph., the Etymologica, Photii Patriarchae Lexicon and Hesychius). It is unlikely that trisyllabic ἄατον stood in the text of Il.14.271 in some of the Homeric mss. available to Byzantine scholars; rather, they took this reading from the manuscripts which had scholia but no Homeric text, most likely, the mss. of Sch. D (where for instance YQ† (van Thiel) read ἄατον).

4 Again, in both verses from the Odyssey ἄαστ- is the preferred reading. According to Allen’s and van Thiel’s apparatus, ἄαστ- is found only in the following four mss.: L₈ (XI c.; van Thiel: F), U₅ (XIII c.; van Thiel: M), P₅² (XIII c.; van Thiel: D), P₆ (XIII c., but our passage is written secunda manu, XV c.; van Thiel: S). Other mss. read ἄαστ- (particularly noteworthy is the correspondence between L₈ (G) and Pal (P), belonging to different families). A comparable picture emerges for χ 5, where ἄαστ- is only found in L₈ (F), U₅ (M) and C.
and he quickly noted the brutal play of his fists
to see where he was ἄαατο- in strength, and where inferior

Argon.1.803 καὶ τὸτ’ ἑπειτ’ ἀνὰ δῆμον ἄαατος ἐξῆπε σε λύσσα (Wendel)
and then an ἄαατο- madness fell upon the people

2. Previous Scholarship

It is generally accepted that the formation must be a compound with ā-privativum, but beyond this, views differ drastically, not least because the meaning admits of various interpretations and is extremely uncertain. A brief summary of analyses proposed thus far might be useful, though no full-scale discussion of each view can be attempted, since despite the scarcity of its attestations this word has elicited an immense body of scholarly commentary.

Traditionally the word has been compared with ἀτη, hence translations such as ‘not to be injured, inviolable’ (LSJ). Derivation from ἀτη (or the verb ἄαω) was in fact put forth already by the commentators of Alexandrian age: the scholia hesitate as to the nature of initial ā-, whether it should be understood as either ἐπιτατικόν (*s-μ-) or στερητικόν (*φ-), but are

5 The verses 801–3 came down to us in two versions: the second one, which is more extensive, is transmitted in scholia L and is referred to as the text of Apollonian προέκδοσις. The uulgata reads ἥ τε σφιν θυμοφθόρον ἐμβάλεν ἀτην.

6 In addition to two pessimistic statements by W. Schulze and R. Janko, chosen as epigraphs to this article, compare further W. Leaf’s “A word of unknown derivation and meaning [...] The problem is beyond our powers of solution” (1902: 86) and K. Meister’s “Die Bedeutung [...] und Form (ά statt ἄν) dieser Adjektiva bedarf noch der Untersuchung” (1921: 181 n.1).

7 Several recent approaches have been discussed (and criticised) by B. Vine, to whose study (1998: 76–79) I will be referring below.

8 Cf. also: “inviolable” (Dawes 1827(1745): 329); “unverletzlich” (Buttmann 1837: 230); “irrevocabilis vel insuperabilis” (Lobeck 1853: 193 n. 5); “unverletzlich” (Schaper 1873: 20); “non violandam” (Clemm 1875: 65); “inviolabilis, irrevocabilis” (Ebeling 1885: 1); “wobei keine Verblendung oder Betörung ist” (LfgrE); “inviolable” (Janko 1992: 195); “imperishable” (Olcott 1993); “invictus” (Pompella 2001). E. D. Francis (1983: 96–97) argued that ἄαατος means “unsusceptible to ἀτη” in the Iliad and “without ἀτη for the suitors” in the Odyssey.

9 The derivation with an ἄ-ἐπιτατικόν is still pursued in a recent work by Shive (2002: 305), who also suggests to read ἄαατος at Soph. Ant. 4, where the mss. have ὅτι ἀτης ἀτηρ’, so printed by Lloyd-Jones–
unanimous as to the root derivation. The problems with this etymology are summed up by W. Leaf (1902 ad II.14.271): “Connexion with ἄαω is usually assumed as obvious; but [...] this explains neither form (ἄα- for ἄαα-), quantity (cf. ἄτατη with ἄ-α), nor meaning.” Indeed, the proponents of the connection with ἄτη are neither able to offer particularly persuasive semantic arguments, nor a plausible phonetic solution for all attestations: ἄτη < *ἀFάτης12 suggests a transpone *h2ηh2/η/ηηηh2, and an old negated compound ‘not subject to ἄτη’ uel sim. could have only resulted in *ναFατός > *νάτος.13

Wilson. This verse was condemned already by Didymus. Various emendations have been proposed (οἶν’ Ἄτης ἄτερ – Maas; οὖν’ Ἄτης γέμων – Hermann; ἄτηριον – Brunck) and the required sense seems in fact to be “either what is not without Ate”, viz. “with Ate”. However, this emendation is rather risky in that it gives no palaepigraphical account of the presumed corruption (for οὖν’ Ἄτης ἄτερ was the only reading known to Didymus) and presupposes an analysis of ἄαατος in its other occurrences in terms of ἄ- ἐπιτητικόν.

10 Sch. T ad II.14.271 τὸ βλαττικόν (Erbse); Sch. D: ἥτοι ἄβλαβες ἢ πολυβλαβες (Z'); ἄβλαβες τοῖς εἰόρκοις, πολυβλαβές δὲ τοῖς ἐπόρκοις (Z: interlinear glosses in A (van Thiel)); Sch. V ad Od.21.91: ἐπιβλαβή ἢ ἄνευ βλάβης (Dindorf); Eust. 985.16: μάλιστα αἴτιον ἄτης ... πολυβλαβές (van der Valk). Three consecutive a-s have even led the grammarians to assume a monstrous ἄ-ὑπερστητικόν (Eust. 985.16; Sch. T ad II.I4.271 a1) or a no less appalling ἄ- ὑπερπεττιτικόν (Sch. b ad II.14.271 a2).

11 The first of these problems did not in fact pass unnoticed by Homeric scholars and was addressed for instance by F. Harder, who traces ἄαατος back to the same root as ἄτη and correctly noticed that this root must have once began with *η- or *ς- (Harder 1876: 54 n.1). Harder does not pursue the idea of a root with an initial *ς- any further, but envisions a connection with a root meaning ‘to blow’ instead (*h2ηh1- in modern terms) glossing ἄτη as ‘ventosa’ and reconstructing a reduplicated formation *h2ηh(h1)-h2ηh1-to-; however, it is hard to see why the Greeks should have preserved both ἄηη ἦ ‘wind’ (common to Arcado-Cypriot and Aeolic: Sappho 2.10; 20.9; Alc. 249.5; Κλετορίου ἄηηη – άνευ in usually reliable χλώσσαι κατά πόλεις) and ἄτη ἦ ‘windy’. The morphology of Harder’s reconstruction is untenable, metrical shortening of the third /a/ (needed for the Odyssey contexts) is hard to parallel and semantic attractions are absent to the point of nullity (Francis 1983: 87–103, without knowledge of Harder’s work, likewise assumes a derivation of ἄτη and ἄααατος from the root *h2ηh1- ‘to blow’, whence first a psychological use ‘Verblendung’ and then ‘harm’ and ‘ruin’: the phonology of Francis’ *h2ηh1-teh2 > ἄFάτης is not clear to me).

12 ἄωτα Alc. 10.7; 70.12; fr. adesp. 25B (Voigt); Pind. Pyth. 2.28; 3.24; denominative verb in Laconian perf. med.-pass. αΓατατα ‘has harmed’ IG V.1.1155 (on which see Nussbaum 1998: 27–28 n. 93).

13 Hsch. ἀάβακτος- ἄβλαβες does not have much to offer for our purposes: although <β> in the text of Hesychius may well stand for *η, the /k/ is obviously due to the stem-final stop seen in ἄαω, so there is a conspicuous morphological difference. Although the translation apparently conforms with ἄτη, this gloss does not prove the existence of an *άααατος derived from ἄτη (pace Francis 1983: 116 and his several predecessors): García-Ramón 2005: 137 (with n. 52) takes a different line, starting with the meaning of
In fact, this form is attested: this is ἄνάτος (scil. ἄν-ἄατος) meaning ‘unharmed, devoid of hurt’ in Aesch. Ag. 1211 and ‘harmless’ in Aesch. Supp. 356. This word is found in Elean (αναατορ ηστω Del3 424) and Arcadian (αναατον ειμεν Del3 668). The proponents of the ἄτη-version often refer to these dialect forms since they are used in the context of swearing an oath. However, we are dealing here with a specific and certainly post-Homeric legal use of the word ἄτη (the Law Code of Gortyn attests to ἄτη with the meaning ‘penalty’15) and so ἄναατος ‘immune from fine’ of the epichoric Richtersprache does not provide a link to poetic ἄαατος. The triple initial α remains unexplained.

As to the semantic difficulties of this approach, these need not be signaled in exhaustive detail.16 If ἄαατος were in fact a privative compound derived from ἄτη, it could mean one of two things: either ‘not causing ἄτη’ or ‘not suffering from ἄτη’. Now, while the etymology of ἄτη is less than clear, most authorities agree that ‘mental blindness’ or ‘mind-perverting infatuation’ is the older meaning and the one that ἄτη has in the Iliad, while “harm”, “ruin”, “calamity” and “sin” are all later developments.17 This effectively rules out several interpretations based on the notion of “destruction” that are listed in footnote 8 above (such as Ebeling’s “inviolabilis”).18

the gloss, and traces the form together with αФακτος to the root of ἄγλαμα, ἄγη.

14 *ναςάτος > ἄνατος with a reassertion of privativity (as in νόνυμ(ν)ος > ἄνόνυμονος).

15 ἄτταν col. 11.34–35; 41 (Willetts); this meaning is a predictable development of the original meaning of ἄτη, taking into account that the ἄτη-situation usually involves two people and results in a remorse or payment (Wyatt 1982: 259 n. 3).

16 See the persuasive criticism by Moorhouse 1961.

17 “Verdunkelung des Phrenes” (Stallmach 1950: 37); “temporary clouding or bewildering of the normal consciousness” (Dodds 1951: 2; similarly Barrett 1964: 206); “Schaden, Täuschung” (LfgrE s. u. ἄτη (H. J. Mette), but see G. Müller 1956); “Handlung im Irrtum” (Seiler 1954: 415); “infatuation, folly” (Doyle 1984).

18 That ἄαατος derived from ἄωω or from ἄτη should have meant ‘imperishable’ (< ‘one that cannot be harmed’), being a substitute for ἄφθος (cf. Hes. Theog. 805 Σταυρός ἄφθος τὸ δορά, which render ἄαατος as ‘not damaged/damagable’ or ‘having much damage’ for the Odyssean contexts), it should be kept in mind that ἄτη does not in fact mean
But if “infatuation” is in fact is the older meaning, is it compatible with the contexts in which ἀάα̱τος is used?

It is worthwhile to take a closer look at the line *II*.14.271, where Hypnos calls on Hera to swear an oath: ἄγρει νῦν μοι ὀμοσσὸν ἀάα̱τον Στυγός ὑδῷφ. In antiquity the practice of swearing by water was accompanied by a libation or draught of the water or immersing one’s body into it, that is by some kind of physical contact with the liquid, and it is quite clear why: this water will be hazardous for the health of anyone who commits perjury.¹⁹ Now, Hypnos actually directs Hera to touch water (χειρὶ δὲ τῇ ἐπέρη μὲν ἐλε ... ἀλα μαρμαρένη *II*.14.272–3), and while no health risks can be involved in the case of the immortal goddess, the fate of the god who commits a perjury is known from Hesiod (*Th.* 793): the perjurer will fall into a deep coma for a year and will be deprived of the company and board of the gods for nine years more.²⁰ If ἀάα̱τος is derived from ἀηε―mental blindness‖, how are we to understand the word in this context?

An active reading “causing no infatuation (to an εὔνξθ νο― is certainly excluded: folly is not the punishment in question. But a passive reading “not suffering from mental blindness” is not any more appealing (even though Στυγός ὑδῷφ may in fact refer to the goddess Στύς²¹ in

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¹⁹ For similar reasons, warrior oaths across different Indo-European culture involves touching the weapons (see e.g. Gaspar 2001: 257–59).

²⁰ This is the reason why Styx is “a goddess who makes the immortals shudder” (*Theog.* 775; trans. West). Simon 1953: 33 remarks that “in Wirklichkeit sind die Olympier viel zu mächtig als dass sie die gestürzten unterirdischen Mächte zu scheuen brauchten”; this observation agrees with the standard interpretation, according to which the Styx received the honor of being the great oath of gods in reward for the services performed by it in the Titanomachy. However, one is inclined to agree with J. Rudhardt who concluded, based on the close associations between the Styx and ambrosia, that by invoking the Styx in the oath, the gods invoked the basic principle of their divinity, namely their immortality (Rudhardt 1971: 93–97).

which case it would possess the agency necessary for such an interpretation\textsuperscript{22}). The problem is that “not suffering from ἀτη” or “insusceptible to ἀτη” is not quite the same as “incapable of error” or “not able to be deluded” (which may seem to be a fitting qualification of the Styx in this context). In early Greek literature ἀτη refers to a very special kind of mental impairment: it is usually temporary, it is associated with misguided actions that entail awful consequences and lastly, more often than not ἀτη involves a supernatural interference. None of this is applicable to the Styx as the guardian of the supreme oath of the gods.

Recently the connection between ἀτη and ἄάαηνο was argued again by J. Catsanicos (1991) from a somewhat different angle: in his treatment of ἀτη Catsanicos brought to discussion Hittite ῥαστα- “sin”, ῥασταί- “to miss the mark” and Germanic words meaning “crime” (Old Icelandic vamm, Gothic un-vamm “without fault/blemish”, etc.), all of which he traces back to a root *ʰ₂u-em-.\textsuperscript{23} Notwithstanding the interesting semantic parallels between Hittite and Greek signaled by Catsanicos, his formal analysis of ἄάαηνο is unconvincing, as he sets up a *ʰ₂u-ᵉ-h₂u⁻⁰⁻­with an anomalous reduplication of the root-initial cluster, which he fails to support with parallels (see Vine 1998: 78–79).\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{22} Still, in view of the fact that two lines later an archaic ritual of touching the water is described (II.14.273), it is likely that Σηπγὸο ὕδσξ in our context actually is just the sacred river, in which case it would be hard to see how it could experience clouding of consciousness.

\textsuperscript{23} Catsanicos’ treatment of the Anatolian material is also not impeccable. Firstly, the outcome of Indo-European *-omst- in Hittite is not known (Melchert 1988a: 212), thus ῥαστ- < *ʰ₂uomst- is possible but not assured. Secondly, Catsanicos’ segmentation of the root is suspect: he analyzes the stem ῥαστα- as *(h₂)uom-s-to- derived from the root ῥασ- < *ʰ₂uom-s- ‘to sin’ allegedly with the same s-extension as in *ʰ₂uᵉg-s- ‘to increase’ or *peh₂-s- ‘to protect’. However, as H. C. Melchert (apud Woodard–Westbrook 1990: 645 n. 5) has pointed out, the verbal form ῥαστα (KUB 13.9 ii 4) belongs to a different paradigm and means ‘he has bought himself’. Thus, there is no evidence for an unenlarged verbal base *ʰ₂u⁻⁰⁻­‘to sin’, which means that for Hittite we should operate with a unitary verbal root ῥαστ-. In order to explain its origin from an Indo-European *ʰ₂uom-s-t- and to make Catsanicos’ derivation acceptable, maintaining at the same time the connection with the Germanic material, an extremely sophisticated scenario would have to be elaborated.

\textsuperscript{24} J. Puhvel (1992) approves of Catsanicos’ Greek-Anatolian connection, but at the same time returns to
The conclusion is that an etymology of ἀάαηνο based on a relation with ἄηε still fails to cope with the problem of initial ᾀ-, since whatever the etymology of ἄηε the latter does not go back to a protoform with initial *s or *ς. Moreover, at least in my opinion, no immediately convincing semantic solution is achieved.

Several alternative approaches have been proposed over past century; in particular, the advent of the laryngeal theory made ἀάαηνο a welcome guinea-pig for various combinations. In the interest of space I will forego most of them, referring the reader to an earlier treatment\(^\text{25}\), and will only mention one that has enjoyed certain popularity. A. C. Moorhouse (1961) suggested a derivation from ᾀω “sate; take one’s fill” and translated ἀάαηνο in the Iliadic passage as “unlimited, everflowing”, but as “unsatiable” when it modifies ἄεζινο in the Odyssey.\(^\text{26}\) But the formal derivation proposed by Moorhouse is untenable: he reconstructs the root of ᾀω as *h\(_2\)esh\(_2\)-/ *h\(_2\)seh\(_2\)-, following L. Palmer (1959), who suggested a comparison with Hittite ḫašaš “satiety” and Palaic ḫaš(s)- “drink one’s full”. This reconstruction would lead to a virtual


\(^{26}\) This translation found its way into the DGE: “1. siempre fluyente, ilimitado; 2. insaciable, para el que todo esfuerzo es poco”. Similarly already W. Sonne (1864: 420–21) who rendered ἀάαηνο as ‘freudelos’, assuming a preform ᾀ-, *خوفατο and an (impossible!) etymological relationship between Greek ᾀω and Sanskrit ा्ि. For Wyatt 1982: 271–72 ἀάαηνο is “the true negative prefix of ἀω ‘satiate’".
*ŋ-h₂s(e)h₂-to- which in turn can produce nothing but a Greek ἡθ(ο)τος, unless one is able to justify a Schwebeablauting *h₂esh₂- (*ŋ-h₂esh₂-to-) for Greek, but this preform again will not elicit the desired result (> ἀνάστος). It is therefore unlikely that ἀάαηνος has anything to do with Hittite hašaš “satiety”, hašekk- “to be satiated, satiate oneself” and Palaic hašanti. As to Greek ἄο, it is hard to separate this verb from the root reconstructed in LIV: 520 as *seh₂(i) which never had an initial laryngeal.

Differently from these attempts, in what follows I will propose an explanation of ἀάαηνος from a broader Indo-European context, showing that there is an inherited poetic figure with correspondences in other archaic Indo-European poetic traditions lying behind this word. It goes without saying that any new solution should account for the same formal difficulties which the previous scholarship was confronted with, namely, initial ā- (not ἄν-) and the metrical shape.

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27 Theoretically one might claim (Moorhouse does not, to be sure) that ὲμοσον νάθων with νᾶθων from *ŋ-h₂s(e)h₂-to- showed up in the archetype of our mss. as ὲμοσον ἄθων thanks to a graphic misinterpretation of an ΟΜΟ΢ΟΝΑΑΣΟΝ, and in fact, such a reading is offered by a number of relatively old manuscripts: P¹⁰, C (note the disagreement with B, another representative of Allen’s hyperarchetype b), M⁵ and M⁷ (note dissent with another member of h-group) give αγξεη λπλ κνη νκνζνλ ἄαηνλ ζηπγνο πδσξ, but the evidence of these sources is inferior to that of older mss. and mss. families, and arguments coming from both textual criticism and metrics (see above, footnote 2) do not allow us to place ἄαηνλ in the text of our Homeric editions; a diectasis of ἄαηνλ (āa-) to ἂάηνο (plus Od. ἂάατος) remains an assumption für sich.

28 Greek otherwise only preserves a state II form of this root; in fact, Moorhouse implicitly posits state II for the Greek word.


30 Witness the short initial vowel in Vedic āśīvann- ‘unsatisfiable’ (RV 2.13.4) and the short initial vowel in Greek ἁτατ (Hes.] Sc. 101; uu. ll. ἁτατατ, ἁτατατ; contracted form in ἁται: πληρούται Hsch.) which goes back to *sh₂je/ό- (with analogically restored */h/). The absence of initial laryngeal in *seh₂- is further supported by the short initial vowel in the noun ἁση (h₂- derivative from *seh₂-ti-, *sh₂-tej-) and denominative verb ἁσάω, (On ἁμεματ (ā) see Solmsen 1901: 93–94). However, all these arguments are still insufficient for rejecting a reconstruction *h₂esh₂- out of hand: it might be possible to argue for a root *h₂seh₂(i)- under the assumption of a schwa-dissimilation (Peters 1980: 23 n.18) or a metathesis of the type *h₂yes- ‘to dwell’ > *yešh₂-, *h₂yesu- ‘good’ > *yešh₂s- (as envisaged by M. Peters apud Neri 2005: 208 n.32). And yet in our case both options are highly questionable.

31 According to the lamentation of M. P. Cuypers (2003: 224 n. 2), nobody considered the possibility that the variation in metrical shape between II. ἀάατος and Od. ἀάατος (quantity marks given by Cuypers loc. cit. are wrong) may reflect different origins. This is not really true. At least one scholar to my knowledge
3. Metrical Analysis

The twofold prosodic value of ἀάαηνο (o – o x vs. o – – x) offers a convenient place to start. Scholars have been much too ready to explain both long vowels in ἀάαηνο away as metrically conditioned.\(^{32}\) But the assumption of a metrical lengthening of two adjacent vowels lacks conviction, since a metrical lengthening of the ἀθάνατος-type would have been a far more natural way to accommodate an original *ἀάατος to the hexameter (> *ἀάατος). Moreover, the cases in question are of a different nature: metrical lengthening of the third /a/ in Il. 14.271 (ἀγρει νον μοι ὁμοσσον ἀατοον Στυγος ὅδωρ), where the cretic shape (o) – o – would be lengthened to (o) – – –, is conceivable and easy to motivate and support with parallels.\(^{33}\) On the other hand, the assumption of metrical lengthening of the second /a/ in ἀάαηνο is far from being evident, first because the /a/ is long in all our attestations and secondly because the scansion – o – (ἀθάνατος) would have been the expected treatment of a sequence o o o x, while there does not seem to be an analogical model for ἀάαηνο to align itself with words that show the “μεμιάτες” type of metrical lengthening.\(^{34}\) Therefore my contention is that o – oo is the original shape of the word ἀάατο-.

has been sufficiently disturbed by this difference and has in fact attempted to establish different etymologies. A. Goebel (1877: 46–49) traces ἀάατος (Od. 21.91, 22.5) back to a compound of α-intensium and ἀαο ‘inflint’ with a resulting meaning ‘ganz bethört’ and a lengthening in the second member of a compound, whereas ἀατοο Il. 14.271 is glossed ‘unnebelt, finster = ἕρβος’ and is derived from *aFᾱ-, further details being unclear to me. Of course, this suggestion does not explain the initial ἀ- as the presumed form of α-intensivum before vowel; it also fails to explain the vowel quantity of the second α or the semantics. For our purposes the suggestion is significant mainly in showing the bewilderment which the difference between the Iliadic context and the Odyssean usage engender. Still, the fact that the meaning of the word in two passages from the Odyssey (both attesting ἀεθλο- ἀάατο-) is not immediately clear, even combined with a different metrical structure, is certainly not an argument for a different origin of ἀάατος and ἀάατος (as Chadwick 1996: 31 also points out).


33 ἡγάαζζε (á) Od. 4.122, ἐγρεἴῃ (for ἐγρέῃ) 9.10, ἀτιμήςν (ἀ) 13.142, ἀεργίς (ἀ) 24.251, πνείοντες Il. 2.136+, Ὀμλείς Od. 15.244. Examples are many if not ubiquitous, see Schulze 1892: 275–308 and Danielsson 1897: 51–72.

34 Even though in both Od. 21.91 and 22.5 our word occupies the position between the feminine penthemimeral caesura and the bucolic diaeresis, where metrical lengthening is quite common, and the
4. Oath by Water (Il. 14.271)

The key passage to start the investigation of the etymology and the original meaning of ἀάαην- is most likely going to be Il. 14.271, not only because of the old-looking Aeolic ἄγξεη used in the beginning of the verse, but also because of its content. This passage is a part of Hera’s beguiling of Zeus: she is trying to strike a deal with Hypnos, planning to prevent a sleeping Zeus from interfering with the success of the Achaeans, and in Il. 14.271 Hypnos calls on Hera to swear that she will fulfill her promise. It is the particular oath requested by Hypnos which makes one think that the verse should contain archaic elements: Hera swears by the waters of the Styx, the most solemn Greek oath (μέγιστος ὁρκος δεινότατος τε). 35

Moreover, the practice of swearing by the water is likely to be inherited: we find it in Vedic India 37 and in the Old Norse Poetic Edda. 38 The Vedic oath involves direct contact with second /a/ of ἀάαην fills the thesis of the fourth foot, which makes it similar to the examples like Il. 2.818 λαοί θωρήσοντο μεμαότες ἐγχίησι or Il. 3.210 στάντων μὲν Μενέλαος ὑπέρεχεν εὐρέας ὀμοὺς (this type of metrical lengthening was acknowledged by such influential scholars as F. Solmsen (1901: 3–70) and O. A. Danielsson, but the scepticism expressed by W. Schulze, G. M. Bolling (1907) and K. Witte (1915: 485) is still worth noting).


36 Gods swear by the waters of the Styx at: Hes. Theog. 384; 773; Hymn Hom. Merc. 518; Hymn Hom. Cer. 259; Lycoph. Alex. 706–9. This practice is reflected in vase-painting (e.g. on a red-figure pelike from Bologna, 490 BCE, LIMC IV Hera 215). We also have an instance of mortals swearing by the waters of the Styx: Herodotus (6.74) tells us that Cleomenes persuaded the Arcadians to go with him against Sparta and he made them swear by the water of the Styx. The archaic practice of swearing with water survived into classical Greece, and Olcott 1993: 80–81 neatly sums up the most interesting evidence including pouring of water before giving witness, attested by Demosthenes (45.8; 54.36; 57.21); see also Graf 2005 and Simon 2004 with further literature.

37 A frequent Vedic oath formula is (yād) āpo aghnīyā [...] ucimā / šāpamahe “(when) we have sworn by the waters, the kine” AV 7.83.2, VS 6.22, TS 1.3.11, MS 1.2.18, TB 2.6.6, etc. (on aghnīyā ‘cows’ as an epithet of waters see Narten 1971: 131–34; a more precise translation, following Narten, would have been “(when) we have sworn by saying ‘āpo aghnīyā...’ ”). Water is a dwelling place of Varuṇa, Vedic god of the Underworld and the night sky, who is in charge of oath and perjury. See Lüders 1951: 28–37; Thieme 1952: 53–55; Oberlies 2002: 76–79.

38 Helgakviða Hundingsbana II 31 Neckel: Pic scyli allir eīðar bīta / þeir er Helga hafðir unna, / at ino liósa Leiptrar vatni / oc at úrsvǫlom Unnar steini “Now may every oath bite you that you have sworn
water, which we also find in our Homeric passage (χειρὶ ... ἔλε ... ἀλα μαρμαρέην II. 14.272–73). Further, it is noteworthy that across different archaic Indo-European cultures the penalty for perjury is dropsy, i.e. water retention in the body. The evidence for this is found in the Hittite soldiers’ oath, in Vedic literature and probably in Greek. This comparative evidence proves that an oath by (subterranean) waters, which will be hazardous for a perjurer, is likely to be an inherited motif. It will therefore not be unreasonable to speculate that the oath formula in II.14.271 has preserved an archaism.

5. The New Solution

It is time to present the new solution. The basic argument of this paper is that ἄαινο belongs with the family of the Indo-European word for “sun” (Ionic ἓλιος, Attic ἥλιος, Latin to Helgi, by the bright water of Leipt, and the ice-cold stone of Uth” (compared to the oath by the Styx by Gering 1892: 178). But see Scharfe 1972 who is sceptical about this evidence.

39 Consider the following passages: ἀπα ἰνά κασίνα σἀμγρβην ἀσάνν ἀστυ ἀσάτα ἰνδρα υάκτα “like water seized with the hand, let him, who is about to speak what is not, be annihilated, o Indra” (RV 7.104.8; trans. Thieme 1952: 54 = 1960: 310) or ἀπα ἐργήγα γαδι νά σαμ ἀμιση “or when you have sworn an oath, having entered the water” (AVP 5.36.4a; trans. after Hoffmann 1969: 202).


41 RV 6.74.4; 8.88.7; AV 2.10.1; 4.16.6.7; 14.15.7, etc. Cf. the expression ἕρων γρβήνα- ‘seized by Varuṇa’ (TS 2.1.1.1; KS 12.4; SB 4.4.5.11; TB 1.6.4.1).

42 Philostr. VA 1.6 (unless the Cappadocian cult reflects Anatolian influence).

43 M. Schwartz put forth an interesting explanation for Modern Persian saugand xurdan ‘swear an oath’, literally ‘to drink sulphur water’, reflecting an ancient way of swearing an oath, whereby a perjury lead to death (Schwartz 1989). In the Greek and Roman world the water of the Styx was likewise believed to be instantly fatal (Plin. HN 2.231; 31.26; Strabo 8.8.4; Sen. Q. Nat. 3.25.1).

44 It is immaterial whether the entire Διὸς ἄπατη (II.14.153–351) should be considered an interpolation (e.g. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1920: 232) or not (e.g. Erbse 1970). In any event, the reasons to consider this episode an interloper emerge first of all from the plot, not from the language: the text is not linguistically younger than other parts of the Iliad. We cannot exclude that the line containing an oath formula is a sample of genuine archaic epic poetry that was included into what may have been a literary composition.
sōl, Vedic svār, Avestan huuarǝ, gen.sg. xāṅg, Gothic sunnō, English sun, etc.). I propose to regard ᾠᾶατο- as a compound the second member of which is derived from the oblique stem of the word for “sun”: ᾠᾶατο- < *hseh2m̥to-, meaning something like “deprived of the properties of the sun, having no sun in it”, viz. “not lit by the sun”. From the semantic viewpoint, this meaning is quite appealing for ᾠᾶατον Στυγός ὑδῷ (II.14.271) which can now be understood as “the sunless water of the Styx” or, rather, “the sunless Styx”, lack of the sun being the expected quality of the Underworld.45

What about the remaining attestations? It is likely that in two passages from the Odyssey (21.91 and 22.5, both attesting ἀεθλο- ᾠᾶατο-) the word ᾠᾶατος, no longer transparent to the singers, was extracted from its formulaic context and used in the description of the bow-stringing contest simply by virtue of being a sinister epithet related to the Underworld.46 It is further not unreasonable to speculate that the verse Od. 22.5 presents the first step in creation of a homerisches Wort: Odysseus is addressing the suitors saying that “this ᾠᾶατο- contest is at an end” (οὗτος μὲν ἂεθλος ᾠᾶατος ἐκτετέλεσται) and from the perspective of the narrative the contest may indeed be qualified as fatal or deadly for the suitors. The juncture ἂεθλον ᾠᾶατον in φ 91 (in Alcinous’ speech) was in turn modeled on χ 5.

Now to the passages from Apollonius’ Argonautica. The uulgata reading at 1.803 is ἢ τέ σφιν θυμοφθόρον ἔμβαλεν ᾳτην, while the προέκδοσις (preserved in the scholia L) reads: καὶ τότ’ ἔπειτ’ ἀνὰ δῆμων ᾠᾶατος ἐμπέσε λύσσα “and then an ᾠᾶατος madness fell upon the people”.

45 The semantic justification is presented in more detail below. It is quite suprising to find a gloss ‘black’ provided for ᾠᾶατος in Photii Patriarchae Lexicon: a 17 ᾠᾶατος: ἐπιβλαβής, ἐνιοῦ ἀπλήρωτον, οἱ δὲ μέλανα (Theodoridis).

46 One may speculate that the bards understood ᾠᾶατος as equivalent to Ἅηδνπ/ᾇδνπ in adjectival sense; for this use compare the description of the snare in the scene of Agamemnon’s murder: δικτυὸν τὶ γ’ Ἅηδα (Aesch. Ag. 1115) or the iron swords, spilling the royal blood: ἔξεσιν σιδαρέωσιν Ἅιδα (Eur. Ὀρ. 1399).
The meaning of the verse in two different redactions is expected to be nearly identical.\textsuperscript{47} In the \textit{uulgata} version Hypsipyle acknowledges the role of Aphrodite as an instiller of soul-destroying ἄτη, and therefore in the προέκδοσις version the madness (λύσσα), inflicted by gods, should be qualified in a similar way.\textsuperscript{48} This in fact can only imply that Apollonius understood ἄαστος as “full of destruction/infatuation”, deriving the word from ἄτη and ἄ-ἐπιτατικόν (as suggested by Sch. \textit{a}\textsuperscript{2} ad II.14.271: τὸ λίαν βλαπτικότατον).\textsuperscript{49} The second attestation in Apollonius where the epithet is used in a description of a fight between Amycus and Polydeuces (2.77: ἢ κάρτος ἄαστος, ἢ τε χερείων “where he was ἄαστος in strength, and where inferior”) can in any event be due to a misinterpretation of the context in the Odyssey: ἄεθλος ἄαστος “a contest that cannot be won”, hence “invincible”.\textsuperscript{50}

6. Formal analysis

Now we can proceed to the details of phonology and derivational morphology. The Indo-European word for “sun” can be reconstructed as a proterokinetic paradigm: *séh₂u₁, gen. sg. *s(h₂)u₂₁ns, n.\textsuperscript{51} The -l-stem is much better attested, compare Vedic svār, Avestan huuarə and

\textsuperscript{47} As in the case of other discrepancies between the \textit{uulgata} and the προέκδοσις we do not know which of the versions is older (Fränkel 1968: 10); according to the 
\textit{uitae} of Apollonius, he himself made corrections to his own work during his life-time, so both versions are probably authentic (the \textit{uulgata} version seems to imitate Hes. fr. 172.2 (Merkelbach-West), where, too, the subject is Aphrodite: κακὴν δὲ σφ’ ἐμβάλε Φήμην).


\textsuperscript{49} F. Vian in his \textit{notes complémentaires} to the text notes that Apollonius interpreted ἄαστος (2.232) as βλαβερός which would be an additional reason to create ἄαστος by means of intensifying ἄ- (Vian 1974: 267). The fact that Apollonius construed ἄαστος with fem. λύσσα does not have any particular implications for the morphological analysis of the adjective: only oxytone -to- stems are exempt from the two-gender pattern in compounds (διαβατός, -η, -ον, etc.).

\textsuperscript{50} Similarly J. Chadwick (1996: 31) and \textit{LSJ}, Supplement.

Albanian *diell* from *súyel- < *sh₂yl-*, but heteroclitic stem alternation is vouchsafed by Avestan *huuarr₃*, gen. sg. *x₃ng*. Greek *hā Gelijo- (Hsch. ábélλον· ἠλλιν Κρῆτες, Arcadian and Aeolic ἄελλος, Ionic ἥλλος, Attic ἥλλος) pairs together with other -iō- derivatives from the same stem: Vedic *sár₃ya- “sun; sun god” < *suh₂l-iyo-, Lithuanian *sáulė < *séh₂ulięh₂-, Old English *sygel “the sun; the name of the rune “S” < *sųyilja- < *suh₂él-iyo-. Proto-Indo-European *séh₂ul₁, *s(h₂)yéns also had an internal holokinetic animate derivative *séh₂u₂l (Latin sōl) that originally probably had a personifying meaning “the sun, sun god”. The reconstruction of the heteroclitic stem alternation -l/-n- in the word for “sun” is of course crucial for the proposed derivation *aǎαto- < *nse₂h₂ynτo-.

Phonologically there seems to be little difficulty with the derivation *aǎαto- < *nse₂h₂ynτo-. In the East Ionic dialect the reflex of Proto-Greek *ahǎμato- should have developed to *aēατo- (viz. ἁήατo- / ἁείατo- in Homer) and then from *aēατo- to *aeατo- with a metathesis of quantity. However, there is no problem with an assumption that the form *aǎατo- is an Aeolic element in the Homeric diction, whether a residue from an earlier stage of the epic diction (as the proponents of an “Aeolic phase” would argue) or a borrowing from a neighbouring Aeolic tradition, when the metrical structure of the epithet in Ionic was distorted by the sound changes and the word could no longer be used in the old formulae (as per the

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52 Unless from *g₇h₁y- ‘tawny, yellow’, Lithuanian želvas (Orel 2000: 81).

53 Germanic also preserves the n-stem in Gothic sunnō, n./f. and Old Norse sunna, f. (‘sun’ in the language of gods, as opposed to sól in the language of men: Alvíssmál 16).

54 For such derivation compare *séh₁men- (Latin sémen) → *seh₁mon- (Latin Sēmōnēs, Paelignian semunu Pg 9 Rix), see Schindler 1975: 63.

55 Possibly also *s(h₂)yōn: Welsh huan ‘sun’ may go back to *suymono- interpretable as a thematized version of *sųymón, a Lindeman variant of animate holokinetic *s(h₂)yōn.
“diffusionist” point of view).\textsuperscript{56} The absence of \textit{spiritus asper} (which should have resulted from anticipation of medial intervocalic \(^{-h-} < *^{-s-}\)) over \textit{alpha privativum} is likewise unproblematic under the assumption that \(āa\)r\(ā\)to- comes from a psilitic Aeolic dialect.\textsuperscript{57} Lastly, lacking vowel contraction over /\(h/ (from \(^{-s-}\)) is not unparalleled in the Homeric language.\textsuperscript{58}

The derivational morphology of the proposed reconstruction is quite interesting. The suffix \(^{-to-}\) in the reconstructed protoform \(*\eta\)-\textit{seh}_\(2\)\(ų\)\(nto-\) recalls the suffix found in the so-called \textit{barbātus}-type (Latin \textit{barbātus}, Old Church Slavonic \textit{bradaṭ}, Lithuanian \textit{barzdōtas}, all “bearded”).\textsuperscript{59} The proposed \(*(\eta)-\text{seh}_\(2\)\(ų\)\(nto-\) may therefore be parallel to the formation found in Vedic \textit{pārvata}-

— “rock”/ “rocky”, Younger Avestan \textit{pauuruaṭa}- “mountain range”\textsuperscript{60} < \*\textit{peru}-\(nto-\) based on

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\textsuperscript{56} Alternatively one could assume that a vowel assimilation blocked the development \(*\textit{aēato-} > *\textit{aēato-} > \*\textit{aēato-}, thus \(*\textit{aēato-} > *\textit{aēato-} > âa\(ā\)to-.

\textsuperscript{57} The absence of rough breathing is unproblematic under the assumption of vowel assimilation (see the previous footnote) either, compare â\(ō\)\(n\)\(no\) “sleepless”.

\textsuperscript{58} Lack of vowel contraction over /\(h/ from /\(s/ is paralleled by \(\textit{ekρα\(ι\)αιν\(e\)} ‘accomplished’ < \*\textit{krēhanj\(ē\)j\(ē\)/ō- < \*\textit{krē\(h\)\(s\)n\(j\)ēj\(ē\)/ō-, \(\textit{tēp\(\acute{a}\)} ‘marvels’ < \*\textit{k\(er\)a\(h\)a, ή\(ο\)\(ρ\)\(ο\)\(ς\) (\textit{Od.} 12.89, of Seylla’s legs, compared to Latin \textit{s\(û \)r\(a\) by Bechtel 1914: 80) and contraction in \(\textit{ā\(t\)o\(s\) ‘insatiate’ is resolvable (\(\textit{Ἀ\(ρ\)\(η\)\(ς} / \textit{ἀ\(ν\)\(ή\)\(ρ \(ά\(τ\)\(ο\)\(ς πολ\(έ\)\(μ\)\(ο\)\(ι\)\(o\)\(s\) \#) < \*\textit{ahato-} < *\textit{\(n\)-sh\(2\)-e\)to- (Bechtel 1908: 141).

\textsuperscript{59} In the succinct formulation of Jörundur Hilmarsson: “One function of the I.-E. suffix \(*\textit{-to-}\) was to form denominal adjectives with the sense “being furnished with” or “having the properties of’” (1987: 57). Formations of this kind may be further exemplified by Latin \textit{tog\(ā\)t\(ū\)s, ān\(s\)t\(ū\)s, honest\(ū\)s, scelest\(ū\)s, po\textit{le\(n\)t\(a\), Umbrian \textit{hostatu, Lithuanian rag\(ū\)t\(as \‘horned’, Greek \textit{θόματ\(ό\)ς ‘wonderful’ or \textit{ἀ\(κ\)ο\(σ\)τ\(η \‘barley’.}

\textsuperscript{60} Note, that \textit{pārvata-} can mean ‘mountain’ or ‘rock’ both used with and without \textit{gir\(i\) or \textit{ādri-} (substantival use e.g. RV 1.32.2 \textit{āhann āhīn pārvatē \(s\)\(i\)\(s\)\(rī\)\(y\)\(ā\)\(n\)ām); four presumed instances of adjectival usage of \textit{pārvata-} in the Ṛgveda can all be interpreted as an asyndeton with a karmadhāraya-like meaning or else as a hendiadysion, since repetition and doubling are a widespread poetic device in Vedic (this strategy is adopted both by K. F. Geldner (1951–57: 296) and L. Renou (1967: 151) in their translation of RV 10.94.1c \textit{ā\(d\)r\(a\)\(y\)\(ā\)h pā\(r\)\(v\)at\(ā\)h). Elizarenkova 1999b: 174–76 makes a similar point, discussing RV 1.37.7 (pā\(r\)vato \textit{gir\(i\)h}, 8.64.5 and 5.56.4 (pā\(r\)vata\(m\) \textit{gir\(i\)m}: she concludes that pā\(r\)vata- has no adjectival meaning in the Ṛgveda. Adjectival use could perhaps be gleaned from AV 6.12.3b pā\(r\)vātā \textit{gir\(i\)h\(ā\)h mā\(d\)hu, but here again a repetition of two substantives cannot be excluded (M. Bloomfield translates “the mountains and peaks are honey”). Younger Avestan \textit{pauuruata}- (\(ā\)?) (Yt. 19.3; Y. 10.12) is only substantival: Yt. 19.3 \textit{du\(u\) \(h\)a\(m\)\(a\)n\(k\)u\(n\)a pauuruat\(a\) is best translated with H. Humbach, P. R. Ichaporia and A. Hintze as “two mountain ranges hooked together.” Summing up, the best way to interpret the Indo-Iranian evidence seems to be in terms of a unitary substantival \*\textit{pē\(r\)u\(n\)-t\(ō\) ‘mountain’, which in turn may represent a substantivization of adjectival \*\textit{peru}-t\(ō- \‘rocky’ (this is essentially the conclusion of
heteroclitic *pēr̩, pēr̩- “rock”.  

While the *barbātus-type is not productive in Greek, it is attested by a number of good and archaic looking examples and seems to be the most promising strategy in the case of ἀάαηα < ἡ-σε-θ-μτό-, though other analyses are possible, too.

There is additional evidence in support of the analysis of ἡ-σε-θ-μτό- as a compound the second member of which is derivationally related to a possessive *barbātus-type derivative made from the PIE word for “sun”. This is Tocharian B swā̄nco, Tocharian A swā̄ncem ‘(sun)beam, ray (of light)” and Proto-Germanic *sunþa- ‘south’. On the strength of these words the

Jörundur Hilmarsson 1987: 59, who, however, still operates with “pāvata- (adj.)”. Vedic bhāmītā- ‘enraged’ (TS 1.6.12.5c) from bhāma- confirms the hypothesis that the *barbātus-type was originally end-accented.

**61** See Hoffmann 1975: 336. The word is cognate with Hittite "pēr̩ ‘rock’, Dat.-Loc. Sg. peruni, Greek πέης < *pertreh₂ (Meier-Brügger 1979); the question whether there is an etymological relationship with Vedic pārvan-, pār̩- ‘joint, knot’ and Greek πειραρ, πείρας ‘end, limit, rope’ is best left open.

**62** Cf. E. Tichy on κολλητός ‘furnished with a peg, closely joined’: “(e)s handelt sich dabei um eine vorhomerische Bildung nach einem im Griechischen sonst nicht mehr sicher nachweisbaren doch ererbten Typus” (1982: 301); however, her scepticism is slightly exaggerated.

**63** It is possible to make a case for a back-formation *hā̄Ｆατο- ‘sun’ based on the -nt- inflection in Proto-Greek singular oblique and plural case forms: *sē̄h₂θl, *sē̄h₂θένς >> *sē̄h₂θl, *s(e)h₂θunos >> *sē̄h₂θl, *sē̄h₂θμτος, as in all nouns in -(F)αρ; on the basis of the plural (collective) *sē̄h₂θμτός > *hā̄Ｆατο, misunderstood for a plural form of a thematic neuter noun, a *sē̄h₂θμτόν > *hā̄Ｆατον ‘sun’ is created (the case would be comparable to ἀληντον from ἀληντα, contracted form of ἀλεάτα Del³ 725, a plural of *ἀλεάφ = Armenian aliwr ‘flour’). The problem with this analysis is that on the one hand the old athematic word for ‘sun’ has left no traces in Greek and on the other hand Homeric ἀάαηα looks too old for such a backformation (ἀληντον first shows up in Hippoc., πρόβατον in Xen., σπλάγχνον in Eur., ἀλαντόν in lyric poetry, etc.; on these and similar cases see Egli 1954: 25–57). Lastly, a collective plural for a word meaning ‘sun’ is difficult to imagine (‘rays of sun’, whence the need to create a singular ‘sunlight’).

Another thinkable alternative to *-(e)sēh₂θn-to- with a possessive suffix *-to- would be *sē̄h₂θμτ-το- ‘in the sun, exposed to sun’, viz. ‘sunny’, derived from a t-stem *sh₂θέν-t, originally an “individualized” locative; compare the classic couple Vedic hemantā- vs. Hittite gimmant- ‘winter’: *ḡēm ‘in winter’ → *ḡem-t- ‘what is in winter’ (the geminate -mm- in Hittite gimmant- remains somewhat troubling) → *ḡem-t-o- ‘wintry’. However, it is exceedingly hard to explain why the full grade in the suffix of the locative was zeroed-out in the case of *sē̄h₂θμτ-o- (which does not happen in e.g. Vedic sasvār̩ta, based on Loc. sasvār ‘in secret’), and more importantly, there is no evidence for a *t- stem among the derivatives of the word for ‘sun’.

**64** The Tocharian words are certainly based on an *-nt- stem (with a palatalization of the dental caused by further material added to this stem, possibly by a reflex of *-e- present in the paradigm on individualizing *-e/on- suffix with which all inherited *-t- stems were enlarged in Tocharian).
reconstruction of a PIE adjectival stem *sh₂un-tō- ( > *suh₂n-tō-) ‘having sun’ (independently substantivized in Tocharian and Germanic) becomes virtually certain. This stem is derived from the oblique stem of the base word *sēh₂yₜₜ, *sh₂yēn- ‘the sun’⁶６: the “zeroing-out” (viz. introduction of zero-grade in all unaccented ablaut positions) found in *sh₂un-tō- is not unknown in suffixal derivational processes (compare *uvej₂d-es- → *uie₂d-s-yō- > Gk. ἵσος).⁶⁷

I follow Jörundur Hilmarsson 1987 in assuming that the derivational basis *sh₂un-tō- ( > *suh₂n-to- with laryngeal metathesis) gives *súṃnt’ae- directly (with *-uh₂- > -ūa-; see the following footnote). Alternatively one could start with a proto-form *suh₂ento- > *sāuṃnt’ae-, where the allomorph *suh₂en- will represent a locative form with an analogical root form *suh₂- transferred from the athematic paradigm (see above on Vedic svār). Either way we are dealing with a possessive *-to- derivative of the word for ‘sun’.

Germanic *sunþa- < *sūnþa- (Osthoff’s Law) < *suh₂n-to-, with a secondary substantivizing accent shift. Laryngeal metathesis that would take *sh₂un-to- to *suh₂n-to- would presumably be a Common Indo-European development. It is possible to assume a vowel contraction in Proto-Germanic (*sūnþa- > *sūnt’u- > sūnto-), but in fact it is unlikely that the preform *suh₂n-to- was ever realized as trisyllabic *suh₂nto- as the fate of the sequence *VHN- is generally controversial: thus, Jörundur Hilmarsson (1987: 62, 65) has argued for an unconditional resyllabification of this sequence in individual Indo-European languages; under this theory both Common Tocharian *sū̃nt’ae- and Proto-Germanic *sūnþa- can go back to a sequence *suHnto-, compare *h₂uh₂gēh₂nto- > *h₂uh₂gēh₂nto- > Tocharian A want, B yente, Gothic winds ‘wind’ or *peh₂gēnt-s > *peh₂gēnt-s > Tocharian B po, AB pont ‘all’ (the latter not mentioned by Hilmarsson). As far as Germanic is concerned, see Neri 2003: 265 n. 870, who, following S. Schaffner and J. A. Hardarson, plausibly makes the accent responsible for the different treatments: *h₂juh₂ḵó- with unaccented *ŋ > Proto-Germanic *junga- > Gothic juggs, *h₂juh₂šti- with suffixal accent transferred from the strong stem > *juṃṇuŋhi- > *juṃṇuŋhi₁ > Old English geogōd.

In theory, there is one more way to get the form *sh₂un-tō-: *sh₂un- is the expected oblique stem of the holokinetic stem *(c)sh₂yōn (see above, n. 55).

There is one morphological difficulty that needs to be discussed in this connection. In composition barbātus-type formations are usually replaced either by internal derivatives of the athematic base noun or by i-stem adjective abstracts (barbātus – imberbis, parallel to the type arma – inermis). In view of these archaic patterns one could expect that in a negated counterpart of reconstructed *sh₂un-tō- ‘having sun’ the suffix *-to- will be absent. However, both Greek and Vedic have cases where a negated barbātus-type adjective is formed with *-to-, witness Vedic amānuyata- ‘not having resentment’ AV 12.3.31, anapta- ‘not provided with water’ RV 9.16.3 (see Wackernagel-Debrunner 1954: 588), Greek ἄγεραστος ‘not having a gift of honor’ A 119, ἀνάλτως ‘not salted’ ρ 228, σ 115, 365, ἀπρόφητος ‘not girt with towers’ λ 264, ἀπροφητός ‘not exposed to fire’ Ψ 270 and possibly also θέμιστος (I 63 +) and θέμιστος (Aesch. Ag. 718 +), though for these words other strategies are possible (see Sommer 1948: 82–83). Latin, which preserved both the barbātus-type and compounds of the imberbis-type as productive classes, attests to the occasional creation of negated barbātus-type denominal adjectives, witness indōtāta virgo (Ter. Phorm. 120; Plaut. Aul. 480, who both also have dōtāta [e.g. uxor]; both adjectives are denominal, since verbal dōto makes its first appearance later), inauritus ‘deaf’ (Gel. 6.6.1; cf. auritus) or illitterātus (Plin. Ep. 7.27.12; Cic. De orat. 2.25). A particularly interesting case is ἄπειρος ‘boundless’ (Pi. O. 6.54, where most editors print Heyne’s conjecture ἄπειροτος).
Problems, however, remain: the formal difference between *sh₂un-tó-, reconstructed on the basis of Germanic and Tocharian, and *seh₂un-tō- posited above as a preform for Proto-Greek *(-)hā̄jato is conspicuous, and it is not clear at first sight how one can get here from there. Unfortunately, the example of *peru̯tō- “rocky” discussed above is not really instructive because the ablaut properties of its derivational basis (*peru- “rock”) are disputed: since oblique stem is usually employed in this kind of external derivation, all one needs to argue in case the base word was acrostatic is that the addition of suffixal *-to- to the acrostatic oblique stem *peru̯- resulted in expectable *peru̯tō-.\(^68\) We have no evidence for vṛddhi in barbātus-type adjectives\(^69\), so a derivation *sh₂un- → *s-e-h₂un-to- does not seem compelling either. Still, I believe there is a way around this difficulty even if one starts with a proterokinetic *sēh₂un, *sh₂uněns, which is a commendable approach, since this reconstruction is best supported by our actual evidence.\(^70\)

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\(^68\) The Hittite inflection of \(\text{NA4}\) pēru ‘rock’, Dat.-Loc. Sg. \(\text{NA4}\) peruni may suggest that we are dealing with an acrostatically inflected noun (compare the inflection of mēḫur, mēḫunaš), and this is the contention of H. Eichner (1973: 75), who explains the lack of final -r in pēru by dissimilatory loss in *peru̯ (Melchert 1988b: 224 joins him; S. Neri (\textit{per litteras}) suggests that Hittite pēru goes back to *per-ru metathesized from *per-yr). Alternatively, Rieken 1999: 338 suggests an interesting scenario, whereby she maintains the etymological relationship with Vedic pārvan-, pārus- and Greek πεῖρα, which can only continue a proterokinetic inflection, and starts with a proterokinetic *peru̯, *peru̯ans, giving a Hittite *peru̯, *peru̯as; this paradigm underwent a double analogical reshaping: Gen. Sg. *peru̯as yields a Nom. pēru like that of \(u\)-stems, and Nom. *peru̯, structurally similar to mēḫur, gives rise to a creation of *pērunaš. Summing up, we cannot say whether *peru̯tō- is a barbātus-type derivative of a proterokinetic or acrostatic stem.

\(^69\) This fact corresponds to what we know about the behavior of the possessive *-o- suffix, which is not accompanied by insertion of an extra-vowel in the root (genitival *-o₂- suffix, on the contrary, is), witness Indo-European *uētēs- ‘year’ → Vedic vatsā- ‘calf’, Vedic tāmas- ‘darkness’ → tamasā- ‘dark-coloured’, Greek ἐρωμα ‘protection’ → ἐρωμὸς ‘fortified’, Indo-European *kōru-/*kēru- ‘horn’ → Latin cērus ‘deer’ (Schindler 1984; Balles 2006: 286 n.473).

\(^70\) One radical solution would be to reconstruct an acrostatic *sōh₂un, *sēh₂unš: obviously, a barbātus-type possessive derivative from an oblique stem of this noun would give *sēh₂un-to- for free. Such reconstruction would allow assessing Latin sōl as an o-grade formation under the assumption that this word later changed its gender in Latin, as it was used with a reference to a solar deity, compare the case
I can see two possible strategies to solve the problem. One strategy will be to deny any connection with the stem *suh₂n-tó- continued in Tocharian and Germanic and to assume that Proto-Greek *(-)hāu-tó- is an inner-Greek creation. One would need to assume a levelling of root ablaut in the word for “sun” on its way to Greek combined with the usual Greek treatment of heteroclitics: at some point in proto-Greek there would have existed a paradigm *hāu₂, oblique stem *hāu(t)-, from which a *hāu-to- “having sun” may have been formed. A serious drawback of this explanation is the fact that athematic *sēh₂u, *sh₂uēns has left no traces in Greek.

A second, more plausible way to motivate the stem *seh₂u- is the following. We have seen that the reflexes of *sh₂un-tó- (> *suh₂n-tó-) were substantivized both in Germanic (by an accent shift: *suh₂n-tó- → *suh₂n-to- > *sunha- ) and in Tocharian (by addition of a nasal suffix: *suh₂n-tó- → *suh₂n-te/on- > *səu̯nca-). It is entirely plausible to assume that the reconstructed *n-seh₂u̯nto- (> *áaarto- ) is not a determinative compound based on a barbarus-type adjective (“un-sunny”), but rather a possessive compound “not having sun(light)” , the second member of

of Venus, f. from a neuter s-stem *yen(h₂)e/os- or amor, m., historically a holokinetic s-stem *h₂-emh₁-ōs- (witness the derivatives ἁμοιος- κακος (Hsch.) and Homeric ὁμοιος ‘pernicious’ (κακὸν Sch. min. ad Il. 5.315), the latter with a metrical lengthening). However, an acrostatic *sōh₂u, *sēh₂u would not fit the traditional typology of accent-ablaut paradigms: it would be hard to find evidence for the o/e acrostatic inflection in nouns with a complex *-CR/-n- suffix. For a discussion of putative examples see Nikolaev 2010: 56–58 (listing *gʰod-μῆ > Hittite kammaris ‘excrement’, *s(h₂)nuq > Hittite ıshunaıwar ‘upper arm’, *soğʰ-μῦ > Greek ὄφρος beside ἐγρος ‘strong’, *smokʰ- > Hittite zamamıokur, and some others): none of them stand scrutiny for different reasons.

71 Greek does not usually preserve root-ablaut in mobile paradigms very well; a notable exception is δέλεαρ vs. Hsch. βλῆρ ‘fishing hook’ (δέλεαρ [...] παρά λακαῖο).  
72 Incidentally, δέλητον ‘bait’ Sophron fr. spur. 113 Kassel–Austin (quoted in Soph. fr. spur. 1124 Radt via Etym.Magn. p. 254.53 Gaisford: δέλητον· οἱ δὲ τὸ ἄγα όν ὄ τὸ δέλεαρ ἔγκειται) may conceal a reflex of *gʰelh₁u̯nto-, which structurally is identical with *(ŋ)-seh₂u̯nto-, being a barbarus-type derivative from a proterokinetically inflected noun; however, the form may simply be a productive diminutive in -ατον from a -(F)a(τ)- stem, cf. ϕτατον from ϕδωρ, φρεάτια / φρεντια from φρέαρ, γονάτον from γόνο or the countless nouns in -μάτον.  
73 Another version of an inner-Greek explanation of the troubling full-grade in *ŋ-seh₂u̯nto- is available: the long vowel in *hāu̯a-to- can be explained as an import from Proto-Greek *h₃F₃λος (< *seh₂uel-ıjo-).
which is a substantive “sunlight”. In other words, the problematic stem *seh₂uṇto- was possibly a noun, derived from the adjective *sh₂un-tó- “having sun”.

Now one way of producing an adjective abstract in Proto-Indo-European was to substantivize a vṛddhi-derivative of the adjectival stem (itself derived through insertion of a new accented full-grade in the root) by making it a neuter: e.g. *h₂ṛtó- “ordered, established” → *h₂érto- “truth; cosmic order”\(^{74}\) (Gāthic aša- n.).\(^{75}\) This model predicts *séh₂uṇto- “sunlight, sunniness” from *sh₂un-tó- “having sun”.\(^{76}\)

A cogent morphological motivation can thus be provided for *ṃseh₂uṇto- “not having sunlight”.

7. The Gloomy Underworld

It is time for us to consider the meaning of ἀάαηνος, in relation to its proposed derivation from *ṃ-séh₂uṇto- “not having sunlight” and the first attestation to be examined is Iliadic ἀάαηνον Στυγὸς ὀδῷρ. The reasons to begin with this line, preferring it to the other two passages from the Odyssey, should be clear from the preceding discussion: the solemn oath formula has a better chance of having preserved a particularly archaic usage.

Unfortunately, the waters of the Styx acquire various epithets (being πολυόνυμον ὀδῷρ, Hes. Theog. 785)\(^{77}\), therefore no typology can be envisaged which might help in interpreting the

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\(^{74}\) The translation ‘cosmic order’ follows P. O. Skjærvø.

\(^{75}\) Other examples include *gṛṇh₁tó- ‘born’ (Vedic jātī-) → *gṛṅh₁tō-m ‘the born one, child’ (Old High German kind), *H₁ṛnō- ‘guilty’ (Vedic rṇā- ‘guilty; guilt’) → *H₁érno-m (Younger Avestan arṇaṭ.caēša- ‘punishing injustice’). See Klingenschmitt 1980: 144; Rau 2007: 165–66.

\(^{76}\) Note that Germanic *sunha- presupposes *suh₂nto- with initial stress and its meaning speaks in favor of a substantivization of original *sh₂un-tó- ‘having sun’ by an accent-shift (without insertion of a new full-grade); this lends some support to the chain of events described in the main text above.

\(^{77}\) At Hymn Hom. Cer. 260 Στυγὸς ὀδῷρ is called ἀμείλακτον; Il. 15.37, Od. 5.185, Hymn Hom. Ap. 85 it is κατεἰβόμενον.
original meaning. It is thus only the historical-comparative method and a bit of common sense that one has to go by, but in this particular case the reasoning can be quite straightforward: for the Greeks the Underworld is a dark, gloomy place, called ζόφος ἱερός (Od. 13.241), κελανος Ἄιδος ([Aesch.] PV 433) and ἀλάμπετον οὐδας (GVI 662, 2nd cent. BCE). The water of the Styx gushes through a particularly dreadful, rugged place, described as a painful gloom, at which even gods shudder (χάσμα μέγα: Hes. Theog. 736–39), flowing through the black night (ῥέεη διὰ νύκτα μέλαινα: Hes. Theog. 788). Hesiod’s picture matches the splendid description of the rivers of the Netherworld found in Pindar (fr. 130 Snell–Maehler):

ἐνθεν τόν ἄπειρον ἐρεώγονται σκότον
βληχροι δνοφερας νυκτος ποταμοι
from where sluggish rivers of black night
belch forth their limitless gloom

Note further the close correspondences between Calypso in the Homeric epics and Styx, as described by Hesiod, which become especially important seeing as Calypso (who is a sister of Styx according to the version transmitted by Hes. Theog. 359–61) is notoriously associated with darkness, sunset and death.

78 Darkness is of course the most natural characteristic of the Underworld and I believe that the motif of the dark Underworld is inherited, as the parallels from other Indo-European traditions (to be discussed below) strongly suggest. Without these parallels one may be inclined to think that the gloomy Greek Underworld may be due to ancient Near Eastern tradition, compare the Babylonian Epic of Istar’s descent to the Underworld, which is described as “dwelling of darkness” and “the house, whose inhabitants are removed from light, where they see not the light but in darkness are dwelling” or Book of Job 10, 21–22 featuring a “land of darkness and shadow of death” (for other parallels see West 1997: 158–60).

79 Note the use of ὦγύγης applied to Calypso’s island (Ὀγυγίη νήσος Od. 1.85 +) and to the waters of the Styx (δῦορ ὦγύγων Hes. Theog. 806) — on the sinister figure of Boeotian Οὐγνος which seems to be old, see Ballabriga 1986: 94 — or the fact that both goddesses live apart from the other gods and their dwelling places, more precisely, caves, can only be reached by crossing a sea. These and other correspondences have been discussed by Frame 1978: 166–69.

80 The connotations are suggested by the very name Καλψός, compare τέλος θανάτου κάλψεν (Il. 16.502, 855, 22.361 (note similar semantics of “concealing” in the expression τόν πανκεσθή [...] νεκρῶν πλάκα said of Αἴδης in Soph. OC 1563); one of the scholarly traditions of interpreting this goddess of controversial nature is the one most closely associated with H. Güntert, who argued at length that Calypso is a goddess of the dead (Güntert 1919; see also Anderson 1958); I believe this argument is correct.
Pindar’s passage quoted above is not the only evidence that the idea of sunless Hades lived on in the fifth-century Greece. In this connection the (Doricizing) epithet ἀνάλιος, a transparent compound of ἀ/ἠλιος and a privative ἄ, attested in lyric parts of tragedy (Aesch. Cho. 51; Eur. Andr. 534; Ion 500) is particularly interesting. This word is used in the description of Hades in the magnificent but difficult passage Aesch. Sept. 859:

δὲς αἰὲν δὴ’ Ἀχέρωντ’ ἁμείβεται
{τὰν} ἀνοστόν μελάγγροκον
ναυστολόν θεωρίδα
τὰν ἀστιβή Παιώνι, τὰν ἄνάλιον
πάνδοκον εἰς ἀφανῆ τε χέρσον

τὰν ἄνάλιον West: τῷ Δαλίῳ Hutchinson.81

which always causes the black-clothed ship of no return to pass over Acheron to the unseen land untridden by Apollo, the sunless land that receives all men

Similar imagery is found in Eur. Alc. 436–37 (Diggle):

χαίρουσά μοι εἰν Λίδα δόμοισιν
τὸν ἄνάλιον οἶκον οἰκετεύοις
farewell, and may you have joy even as you dwell in the sunless house of Hades!

I believe that there is a semantic continuity between ἀάατος and ἀνάλιος and we are dealing here with a renewal of a poetic epithet.

81 It is unclear whether the reference is made to the Charon’s bark (τὰν ἄνάλιον θεωρίδα) or the land (χέρσον).

Despite τὰν ἀστιβῇ Παιώνι in the beginning of the same verse, it is unlikely that ἄνάλιον should mean ‘not attended by Apollo’: the earliest certain literary identification of Helios and Apollo is Eur. Phoen. 225 (although [Eratosth.] Cat. 24 (140 Rob.) reports that in Aeschylus’ lost Bassarai Orpheus calls Helios “Apollo”: fr. 23 Radt = West 1990: 32–35); on Aesch. Suppl. 212–14 see Page apud Diggle 1970: 147.
8. Homeric ἄατος and the Indo-European Poetics

We have thus arrived at an oath by the sunless water of the Styx, and it behooves us to investigate the possible Indo-European background of this phrase. In fact, the reconstructed ἄντο- seems to have had a certain place in Indo-European poetics. The following pages will be devoted to the Indo-Iranian evidence: Vedic asúrte, Younger Avestan ax'arəta- and Younger Avestan x'anuuant-, Gāthic x'ānnuant-. These forms are interesting not merely from the viewpoint of morphological reconstruction: they also shed light on the poetic status of the expression “not having sun”.

8.1. Vedic asúrta-

Rigvedic hapax asúrta- is attested in RV 10.82.4 asúrte sůrte rājasi niṣattē (locative absolute).82 The similarity between (a)súrta- and svār, gen.sg. sūrah “sun” is striking and has been observed ever since Th. Benfey (1860: 733–34). H. Oldenberg (1912: 285) commented on this passage “unbesonnt passt dort vortrefflich” and K. F. Geldner translated it as “nachdem der nichtbeschienene, der sonnenbeschienene Raum hingesetzt ward” (“after the the unillumined space and the illumined space was established”).83 Scholars have been largely unanimous as to

82 This expression is transmitted in a number of later Vedic texts: asūrta … niṣattāḥ MS 2.10.3; asūrta … na sattāḥ KS 18.1; asūrta … vimāne TS 4.6.2.2c; asūrte … niṣattē VS 17.28. H. Oldenberg suggested emending the Rigvedic verse to asūrte sūrte rājasi niṣattāḥ after the transmission of the Black Yajurveda, which gives a better meaning, with षयाः ‘singers’ in the preceding verse acting as the subject (Oldenberg 1888: 313). As Oldenberg further pointed out, the locative asūrte is not beyond any doubt, since asūrta is the predominating Yajus-reading: if the form is restored as a nom. pl. asūrtāḥ (hardly asūrta as an adv. in -tā or a loc. pl. of an -i-stem), “unillumined षित्’s in the illumined space” would not be absurd. However, later in his translation Oldenberg opted for asūrte … niṣattāḥ: “in der unbesonnen Luft niedergelassen hatte” (Oldenberg 1912: 284–85).

83 J. Varenne (1982: 213): “lorsque fut installé l’espace ensoleillé (ainsi que l’espace) sans soleil”; A. Keith translated asūrta sūrta rajaso vimāne (TS 4.6.2.2c) as “they who fashioned those beings illumined and unillumined in the expanse of space”. N. Brown (1965: 31) offered a somewhat different translation of the Rigvedic verse: “when the illumined atmosphere (rajas) was still immersed in the unillumined” (but his understanding of asūrta- does not differ from Geldner’s).
the connection of (a)súrta- and svār, which is accepted in nearly all major works of reference. As to the contents of the verse, Oldenberg was inclined to interpret rājasi as referring to night- and dayspace and some Indologists followed suit. However, this cosmogonic picture may also reflect a division of the world into its terraneous and infernal constituents. This interpretation is made plausible by the only other occurrence of asúrta- in Vedic literature:

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\text{asúrtaṁ rájo ápy agus té yantv adhamám támah “[= my enemies] have gone into unlighted space, let them go to lowest darkness” (AV 10.3.9; trans. Whitney). Vedic asúrte súrte together form a merism, making reference to the entire universe.}
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The morphological analysis of (a)súrta- ( < *súh₂lto-) presents interesting problems. Benfey identified the form as a part. perf. pass. of a verbal root *sṛel- meaning “to burn, to shine”, but this is unlikely, since the existence of this root is not assured and in any event it is completely absent from Indo-Iranian. Jörundur Hilmarsson in his elegant treatment of Tocharian B swāñco and related forms (1987: 57–59) has argued that Vedic súrta- is best understood as a barbātus-type derivative “having sun to it”. This solution is almost certainly correct, except for one seemingly minor detail: Jörundur Hilmarsson assumed that súrta- is the

84 Except the St.-Petersburg dictionary: “entlegen, fern”. M. Bloomfield, too, expressed a divergent opinion, having translated asúrta- as ‘untrodden, remote’ comparing this word to the root *sṛeṇ- ‘to flow’ (Bloomfield 1896: 162 with a reference to Pāṇini 8.2.61 and Kāśikā-commentary on Pāṇini); this analysis has little to recommend it, as we have no evidence for a laryngeal in this root and an inner-Vedic analogical pattern does not suggest itself immediately (as far as I can see, the only possible parallel is atúrte RV 10.149.1 (of space) from *terh₂- and one wonders if this juncture could have triggered a reshaping of a putative *asúrta- to asúrta).

85 E.g. Elizarenkova 1999a: 481.

86 From Iranian cosmogony one may compare one of Zarašuṭra’s questions to Ahura Mazda: kō huuapâ raocăscă dāt tomăscă “what artisan created both, the light and the darkness?” (Y. 44.5).

87 The appearance of the stem allomorph *sūh₂l-/n- is due to laryngeal metathesis in *sh₂ul-/n-.

88 Benfey (1839: 456–60) compared Old High German suēlan.
primary formation, while asûrta- is an Augenblicksbildung. But this is far from being certain and so we should address the following question: is asûrta- a poetic creation of a Vedic īṣi or does it present an Indo-European inheritance?

There is one possible indication that asûrta- is not old, namely, its accent. Assuming that the meaning is “un-besonnt”, one is inclined to treat asûrta- as a determinative compound; however, Vedic determinative compounds with an adjective ending in -ta- as a second member are usually stressed on the first member (sûṣruta- “very famous”, nî-hîta- “placed down”) and the same is true for compounds with a- (ā-kṛta- “undone”). Therefore one may assume that the accent may have been original in sûrta- and was transferred from simplex to the compound. For this reason, it may appear desirable to take asûrta- for a secondary formation, built to match sûrta-.

Nevertheless, I am inclined to think that asûrta- is actually old.\(^{89}\) First, the simplex sûrta- “sunny” does not make an impression of a primary stem with an adjectival meaning. Its accent can hardly be original: the assumption that barbātus-type derivatives had an unaccented *-to- does not bear scrutiny, as we have seen in the course of earlier discussion of Vedic pârvata-.\(^{90}\) Note also that if a nom. asûrtāḥ is adopted in the text of RV 10.82.4, following the transmission of the Black Yajurveda (see n. 82), the chances of its being an artificial form built to match loc. sûrta decrease. Finally, the antiquity of asûrta- is probably confirmed by its independent usage in AV 10.3.9, cited above.

The assumption that sûrta- is secondary and was extracted from asûrta- (much as Dūti- was extracted from the name of the mother of all gods, Áditī- “the unbound”) is confirmed by an

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\(^{89}\) M. Peters (apud Jörundur Hilmarsson 1987: 59) has already suggested that sûrta- is an Augenblicksbildung to asûrte.

\(^{90}\) One could argue, however, that adjectival sûrta- is the result of contamination of virtual *suh₂ltó- ‘having sun’ and *suh₂ltó- ‘the one having sun’ ~ Proto-Germanic *sunþa- < *suh₂gto-.
argument from poetics: in our verse asúrta- precedes súrta-, while usually in such juxtapositions, the negated adjective follows the positive one, e.g. kṣīyántam... ákṣiyantam RV 4.17.13, bhaktám ábhaktam RV 1.127.5, yámann áyáman RV 1.181.7, etc.⁹¹ The antiquity of the order “positive-negative” is confirmed by the formulaic epithet “seen and unseen (worms)”, which is likely to be a part of Indo-European ritual language: AV 2.31.2 dṛṣṭām adṛṣṭām atṛham “I have bruised the seen (and) unseen (worm)”, Cato Agr. 141 morbos uisos inuisosque “diseases seen and unseen” and Umbrian TI VIa 28 uirseto auirsto uas “seen (or) unseen ritual flaw”. If “sunny and sunless” in our Rigvedic passage were built on this model, one could expect that the negated counterpart of the formula would be morphologically aligned to the form of the simplex (*súrta-asvān- > súrta- asúrta-); but the fact that in our verse the negated form precedes the positive simplex makes it unlikely that asúrta- is an Augenblicksbildung to súrta-, while the reverse gains in plausibility.

Now we can turn to the problem of the accent. Vedic asúrta- with a barytone -(t)a- stem as its second member follows a pattern that is not unheard of; note the following paroxytone compounds that are usually classified as determinative in traditional grammars: aksára- “imperishable”, ajára- “ever young”, adábha- “not injuring”. For our purposes particularly interesting are the privative compounds with the suffix -ta-: amṛṭa- “immortal”, atúrta- “not outrun”, ayúta- “unbounded”, adṛṣṭa- “unseen”, acíṭta- “unnoticed”.⁹² It has been argued that compounds of this type were originally possessive (bahuvihi) and contained nouns as their second members: *mṛtó- “dead” → *mṛto-“death” → *n-mṛto- “not having death” ( > amṛṭa-);

⁹¹ The word-order is reversed only if a conjunction is used, as Renou 1939: 2 points out. In later Vedic juxtapositions of this type were often replaced by singular or dual dvandvas, cf. AV kṛtākṛtām (vs. RV kṛtād ákṛtāt).

⁹² Some of these compounds underwent further contrastive accent shifts that were employed in order to differentiate between compounds of different meaning (e.g. atúrta- ‘not outrun, der undurchschrittene’ RV 10.149.1 vs. ātūrta- ‘unvanquished, der nicht überholte’ RV 8.99.7).
subsequently these compounds were reinterpreted as determinative (“death-less” → “immortal”). This reinterpretation did not affect the place of accent. The paroxytonesis of the type observed in Vedic amṛta- (which became anomalous in Classical Sanskrit both for determinative and for possessive compounds) is very likely to be archaic and inherited.

A similar analysis is possible for asūrta-. We have seen above that Greek ἀάαηνο– can be plausibly analyzed as a bahuvrīhi-compound “not having sun(light)” with a substantive stem *sēh₂un nto- as its second member; Germanic *sunₚa- goes back to a substantive stem *sūh₂nto-. One is therefore tempted to analyze asūrta- as a possessive compound of the same kind that we find in Greek with the same *sūh₂nto-m “sunlight” that we find in Germanic used as its second member (*sūh₂nto-m ← *suh₂nto-tó “having sun” (adj.), compare *mṛto-m ← *mṛtō- above). Since Indo-Aryan lost the heteroclitic stem alternation in the word for “sun” at an early stage, the stem of the second member of this compound was aligned with the forms ṣuvār, sūrah, hence the compound second member (*/)sūrta-.95

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93 See Wackernagel 1905: 20; 215.

94 In Classical Sanskrit bahuvrīhīs with a(n)- as the first member regularly stress the last syllable of the second member (Pāṇini 6.1.206–210).

95 This is, however, not the only possibility. Although *-to- is normally not used in composition, there are a few isolated examples of bahuvrīhi compounds that exhibit precisely this suffix, e.g. Avestan hukorəpta- ‘having a good body’ or Vedic ānapta- ‘having no water’. Therefore it cannot be excluded that the suffix *-to- in áāaαoc and asūrta- was introduced in composition and has nothing to do with the morphological structure of the second member. In our case the use of *-to- as a compounding suffix (instead of *-o-, *-i- or zero) could in theory be prompted by the existence of simplex *suh₂nto- ‘having sun’, reflected in Germanic and Tocharian. If so, one could speculate that Proto-Indo-European had a compound *n-sh₂un-tó- (or *n-suh₂tō-) with an expected zero-grade of the unaccented oblique stem of *sēh₂l, gen. sg. *s(h₂)gēns; both in Greek and Old Indo-Aryan the second member of this compound was aligned with the word for ‘sun’, current in these languages: *ahōnto- >> *ahāqato- after *hāueljo- and *asūnta- >> *asūrta- after *sugar, gen. *sūras. If this approach is adopted, the conclusion reached above would have to be modified. However, this theory involves several difficulties (for instance, some special pleading will be required in order to circumvent the problem created by the rule of laryngeal loss in *sh₂y-, see footnote 51 above) and it does not explain the place of accent in asūrta-.
We have seen above that there are no reasons to consider Vedic asúrta- a poetic Augenblicksbildung: the word is likely to be an element of inherited poetic tradition. asúrtam rájah ‘sunless space’ is thus the Vedic term for the Underworld, synonymous with other Vedic terms such as ádhamanm / ádharam tánah ‘lowest darkness’ (RV 10.152.4, AV 1.21.2), andhám tánah ‘blind darkness’ (RV 10.89.15) or, significantly, asúryám tánah ‘sunless darkness’ (RV 5.32.6). The latter juncture is used in a passage describing where the serpent Vṛtra had grown; elsewhere the location of the serpent (or, rather, its beneficial Doppelgänger, Ahi Budhnya) is called rajas- e.g. RV 7.34.16.96

Vedic asúrtam rájah / asúryám rájah thus exactly matches the description of the Underworld river Styx as úáaíov, which is all the more significant because Vedic rajas- is the etymological counterpart of the Greek name for Underworld, Ἑπεβος.97

Together with its Iranian parallels, to be discussed momentarily, Vedic asúrta- will constitute the body of our evidence for an Indo-European motif “water, not lit by the sun”.

8.2. Younger Avestan axarbata-.

The first piece of Iranian evidence that may shed some light on the Indo-European poetic figure under discussion is Younger Avestan axarbata-, the standing epithet of x’arənəh- “glory”. More precisely, axarbətəm x’arənə is a particular kind of x’arənəh-: it is in complementary

96 For a juxtaposition of rájah and tánah cf. AV 8.2.1, a charm to revive a dying man: rájas támo mópa gā “do not go down in rájas (dark space?) and darkness” (Whitney translates rájas here as ‘welkin’). On darkness in connection with the yonder world in Vedic texts see the series of articles by H. Bodewitz (1999, 2000, 2002).

97 Even though the expression asúrta- rajas- is attested outside the Family Books (in manḍala X) and the theology of the hymn belongs to a later stratum of Vedic religion, it is not improbable that the phraseology is actually old: one may even speculate that the epithet asúrta- originally qualified the cosmic waters (in the following stanza of the hymn the waters set down the primeval germ) and was later remastered for the purposes of the Viśvakarman theology.
distribution with kauuaēm x'arənō and is only used in kardes 7–9 of Zamyād Yašt, where x'arənḥah- becomes a matter of conflict between Spənta Mainiu and Aŋra Mainiu.98 The meaning of the word remains obscure; recent editors render ax'arətəm x'arənō as “unappropriated glory”, emphasizing that x'arənō in these passages cannot be seized by Aŋra Mainiu, Ātarš, Aži Dahāka or Turanian Fraṛrasian (and yet, Apam Napāt, the Scion of the Waters, is able to get hold of it: Yt. 19.51).99

This word was compared with Vedic asūrta- by K. F. Geldner (1884: 4 n. 3), who, however, did not then recognize that asūrta- belongs with the word for “sun” and translated ax'arəta- as “unerreichbar”.100 Geldner’s suggestion fell into oblivion and later, in his translation of the Rgveda, he abandoned it; nevertheless, in my opinion, it can and should be revived (as has in fact been done before).101 Avestan ax'arəta- can be traced back to Proto-Indo-Iranian *āṣuṛta- “un-sunny”.102 Morphologically this form resembles Avestan patarəta- “winged” derived from the strong stem of heteroclitic *potɾ/-ṇ- “wing” (Hittite pattar). Similarly, the adjectival stem *-suṛta- in the second member of the determinative compound *āṣuṛta- is built on the strong stem of the word for “sun”.

98 Outside Yt. 19 this juncture is only attested in formulaic litanies (Y. 1.14; 2.14; S. 1.25).

99 Humbach–Ichaporia 1998: 16. Etymologically they relate ax'arəta- to the Iranian root *ḥuṛ- ‘to take’, the evidence for which comes exclusively from Middle and Modern Iranian languages: Bactrian ɣoap- ‘to take’, Khotanese (nā)hvar- ‘to long for, to grasp at’ and possibly Modern Persian xurdan ‘to take’. However, this Middle Iranian root is very likely to be identical with Avestan x'ar- which means ‘to eat’.

100 Similarly Johansson 1905: 236: “unfassbar”.


102 For the place of accent compare Vedic án-aptə- ‘not-watery, waterless’: if the accent were on the penultimate syllable in Avestan, one would expect a form ṭax'āša-. Because of this accent ax'arəta- is unlikely to be an exact match to Vedic asūrta-.
The meaning of Younger Avestan ax'arəta- can be effectively reconciled with this etymology. This epithet is only applied to x'arən̄ah-, concealed in the waters of the sea Vourukašom (Yt. 19.51–59); the essential property of ax'arətəm x'arən̄ō is thus the fact that it is under water:

\[
\begin{align*}
aētaq & x'arən̄ō hāŋgrofšāne \\
yāt & ax'arətəm \\
bunəm & zraiāŋhō gufrahe \\
bune & jafranəm vairīanəm
\end{align*}
\]

I will seize this x'arən̄ah- the ax'arəta- one- at the bottom of deep sea, at the bottom of the deep rivers (Yt. 19.51)

Assuming that the Avestan poet misunderstood a poetic figure inherited from the Indo-Iranian Dichtersprache (ax'arəta- buna- zraiāŋhō?103), we may surmise that Avestan ax'arəta- refers to the same inherited poetic concept of “unillumined waters” that we have seen above in the case of sunless waters of the Styx.

8.3. Younger Avestan x'anuuant-, Gāthic x'ũnuuant-

One more parallel from Avestan that brings us even closer to Homeric ἀάαηνο can be found in x'anuuant-, Gāthic x'ũnuuant- “sunny”. This word, transparently derived from the oblique stem of the word for ‘sun’ by means of the possessive suffix *-uuant- is attested as an

103 In the passage quoted in the main text (Yt. 19.51) acc. bunəm ‘bottom’ that follows the first attestation of ax'arəta- is transmitted in all mss. Editors restore a loc. *'bune, corresponding to bune in the next line, which is a completely plausible solution, and yet it is not unreasonable to speculate that the syntactic incongruence is real and as such could reveal the original juncture ax’arətəm bunəm ‘sunless bottom’ (cf. Pind. fr. 207 Ταρτάρου πυθμένα […] ἀφανοῖς), misused by the author of the Yašt. This must necessarily remain conjectural.
epithet of one’s own (Zaraϑuštra’s) immortal life: \(x^\nu\)ahe gai\(\i\)he \(x^\nu\)anuuat\(\i\) \(a\)mo\(\o\)şahe.\(^{104}\) This association with immortality immediately reminds of the Styx.\(^{105}\)

Equally interesting is another attestation in Yasna 16, where \(x^\nu\)anuuant\(-\) is an attribute of \(\text{varzz}-\) (\(x^\nu\)anuuatt\(\i\)š \(a\)sha\) \(\text{varzz}\) Y. 16.7; Vr. 19.2; Yt. 3.1). Avestan \(\text{varzz}-\) refers to location\(^{106}\) and Bartholomae 1904: 1378 glosses the word as “abode, habitation” (Kellens 2010: 17: “domaines insoleillés”). However, its Vedic correspondence, \(\text{ūrj}-\), means “strength, vigor” and “nourishment, refreshing drink that brings vigor”.\(^{107}\) The original semantics of Indo-Iranian *\(\text{ūrHj}\)- is an old conundrum.

P. O. Skjaervø (pers. comm.) has suggested that the word \(\text{varzz}-\) in Y. 16.7 may refer to heavenly waters, where Ahura Mazda places the Orderly ones, since the waters are the source of the vigor. Skjaervø draws attention to the Rgvedic hymn to waters where all gods receive invigoration (\(\text{ūrj}-\)) while resting in the heavenly waters (RV 7.49.4ab):

\[
y\acute{a}su \ r\acute{a}ja \ v\acute{a}ru\tilde{n}u \ y\acute{a}su \ s\acute{o}mo \\
v\acute{i}\acute{v}ve \ d\acute{e}v\acute{a} \ y\acute{a}s\acute{u}\acute{r}j\acute{a}m \ m\acute{a}dant\acute{i}
\]

from whom Varuṇa the king, and Soma, and all the gods drink vigor

The hymn expressly identifies Varuṇa, the Vedic god of oath, as the sovereign of these waters: Varuṇa is praised in this hymn as the discriminator of truth and falsehood. This usage of Avestan \(x^\nu\)anuuant\(-\) brings together immortality, the waters of the Netherworld and oath.

\(^{104}\) Y 9.1; Yt. 8.11; 10.55; 10.74 (said of Tištriia and Miθra). Interestingly, the line looks out of place in all its occurrences: in Y. 9.1 it does not fit the context and in the Yašts it is metrically and grammatically incompatible with the surrounding lines. It is not unlikely that we are dealing with an import from a different (possibly Old Avestan) text and therefore the original referent of this line cannot be ascertained.

\(^{105}\) The Styx is closely associated both with death and immortality: witness the well-known story of Thetis’ attempts to endow her offspring Achilles with immortality by immersing him into the Styx’ waters (Serv. ad Verg., Aen. 6.57; according to another version (Sch. D ad Il. 16.36), Thetis was putting him into the hearth and anointing his body with ambrosia).

\(^{106}\) In fact, locative \(\text{varzz}\) is the only form attested in the Gäthas, Y. 45.9; note also the compound \(\text{varzzHj}\).haomanaghHom P. 34.

\(^{107}\) On the formal and semantic details of the equation see Humbach 1957: 47–50; Kellens 1974: 361–64.
In Vedic there is a nearly identical adjective svàrvant ‘sunny’, without a doubt a substitution of original *súvanvant.  

Vedic svàrvant is a standing epithet of “waters”. Significant, too, is the fact that in RV 1.119.8c svàrvant- applies to útíḥ, the help rendered by the Aśvins to Bhujyu, son of Tugra, when he was drowning in the ocean. This mythological narrative finds a close parallel in Yt. 5.61–63 (the story of Pāuruua) and thus in all likelihood goes back to common Indo-Iranian era.

Now, as has been compellingly argued by T. Gotō (2006: 263–66), the myth of Bhujyu / Pāuruua is likely to contain an allegory of the sun, going into the ocean in the West and rescued by the Morning and the Evening star. Gotō did not discuss svàrvant-, but it appears that there is an interesting phraseological connection between the myth of Bhujyu and the Vedic notion of the Netherworld as a “sunless space”.

In RV 1.182.6 we read that the ships of Aśvins saved “the son of Tugra who had been cast into waters, thrown forth into the anchorless darkness” (ávaviddham taugryám apsv àntár anārambhāṇé támasi práviddham), and in RV 1.116.5 the Aśvins are praised for “being like heroes in the anchorless sea that had nothing to stand upon, nothing to grasp” (anārambhāṇé tād avīrayethām anāsthānē agrabhāṇē samudré). Based on the combined evidence of these verses we can conclude that in the myth the sun (allegorized as Bhujyu) was setting in the waters which were conceived as dark and anchorless (as opposed to svārvar āpah). The word anārambhāṇā- (lit. “that which has nothing to hold on to”) is only used in the Rigveda one more time outside these two passages: importantly, it is again used as an epithet of tāmas “darkness” in a passage that has been thought to contain evidence for a Rigvedic concept of hell: indrāsomā duśkṛto

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108 See above on asúrtá- arguably remade from expectable *asúnta- under the influence of s₃vār, gen. súraḥ.

109 svārvar āpah RV 1.10.8c; 5.2.11d; 8.40.10e; 8.40.11e; TB 2.4.7.5d.

vavré antár anārambhaṇé tāmasi pra vidhyatam “Indra and Soma, throw forth the evil-doers into the enclosure, into the anchorless darkness” (RV 7.104.3). The use of anārambhaṇé tāmasi both in the narration of the Bhuju myth and in the description of Vedic Netherworld of some kind is unlikely to be coincidental, given the limited distribution of tāmas- in the Rigveda. The next logical step would be to reconstruct, following Gotō, an Indo-Iranian myth in which the Aśvins (or their Δωσκουροτ-like prototypes) rescue the sun from the gloomy waters of the world of the dead. If this interpretation of the textual evidence is correct, the study of the epithet anārambhahā- has led us to the missing piece of the puzzle: the association of the lack of sun not just with the Netherworld (asūrta- rájas-), but specifically with the waters where the sun sets down.

Younger Avestan x’anuuant- and Vedic svārvant allow us to tie up loose ends and return to Greek ááστον Στυνός úðωρ where this inquiry started: Indo-Iranian *suauvant- is a derivative of the Indo-European word for “sun”, it is an epithet of water, it is related to oath and has strong associations with immortality. We have thus made full circle.

Finally, it is worthwhile to ponder why the sun (and lack thereof) should be related to the waters of the Netherworld and to the themes of death and immortality. In order to answer this

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111 Perhaps comparable is the fate of the deceitful, described in the Gāthās as darogōm aiiū tmanjho “long duration (life) of darkness” (Y. 31.20, cf. Vedic dirghāṁ tāmas RV 1.32.10+); according to the Hādōxt Nask 2.33 (Piras), “the fourth step that the soul of the wicked man made laid him in the Endless Darkness” (tūrīm gāma frabarāt yē narś druutō uruau anayraēsūa tomōhūa paiūt nidaāā).  
112 As S. Jamison has observed (1991: 267 n. 227), the word tāmas- otherwise always appears in passages pertaining to the villain Svarbhānu; the expression anārambhané tāmasi thus has a special poetic status.  
113 The myth may well be datable to Proto-Indo-European. See Jackson 2006: 96-9 who compellingly identified several parallels between verses dealing with the Nāsatya-Aśvins helping shipwrecked Bhujuy to return home (RV 1.116.5 āhāthur bhujyīm āstam ‘you carried B. home’) and those describing the Phaean ships bringing Odysseus home and helping him to achieve his homecoming (āsta-, vōstōc and Nāsatya- of course all come from the same root *nes-).
question, a general association between sun and sunlight on the one hand and life on the other should be recalled. In Vedic “to see the sun or celestial light (svār-)” is synonymous with “to live”, and “to leave the light of sun” means “to die” (RV 1.23.21 jyók ca sūryam drśé “so that I may long see the sun”). The same meaning can be inferred from Gāthic xəŋg darəsōi xəsrōi xiiāt ārmaitiš “[may Humility] be in sight of the sun” (Y. 43.16). In Greek literary culture we meet the same opposition of light = life vs. darkness = death (best exemplified by formulaic ὀρᾶ φῶς ἠειίνην 115). In Hittite, again, watching the sun is equated with remaining alive: KBo 4.8 rev. 18–19 TI-anza kuit nu nepišaš DUTU-un IGI.ΗΙ.Α-it uškizzi “because she is alive, she beholds the sun of heaven with her eyes” (ed. and trans. Hoffner 1983: 188). We are clearly dealing here with an inherited Indo-European poetic figure and it is through the lens of this figure that the poetic expression reconstructed in this article should be understood: ‘water that has no sun’ means ‘the water of the dead’.

9. Conclusion

It is time to take stock. In this article I argued that the obscure Homeric epithet āάαηνο is related to the Indo-European word for ‘sun’ *sēh₂ul₂, *s(h₂)uēns and goes back to a proto-form *ahāyatō- < *ṇ-seh₂uṃto- ‘having no sunlight’; the juncture āάατον Στυγός ὄδωρ in the archaic oath formula (II.14.271) can now be understood as “the sunless water of the Styx”. From a morphological viewpoint the reconstruction *ṇ-seh₂uṃto- finds support in Germanic *sunþa- and

114 See Roesler 1997: 265 n. 553.

115 E.g. II. 18.61 ὀφρα δὲ μοι ζῶει καὶ ὀρᾶ φῶς ἠειίνην; same in the eschatology of the Orphic Gold Leaves: ἀλλ’ ὀπόταμ ψυχῇ προλίπηφ φῶς ἀειίνο (fr. 487.1 Bernabé).

116 For these semantic fields in Vedic and Greek see the studies by Roesler 1997 and Bremer 1976, respectively. On svār drś- “die Sonne schauen” see also Oberlies 1998: 455–58. On the level of Indo-European poetic diction this expression has been studied by Dunkel 1993: 106–8.
Tocharian A *swāñcem* ‘ray of light’ both of which continue a stem *sh₂un-to- ‘having sun’. The second member of the bahuvrīhi-compound *ṣeḥ₂un-to- is a substantive meaning ‘sun(light)’ that was derived from adj. *sh₂un-to-.

On the level of poetic diction ἄααηνο finds close correspondences in the Vedic expression for the Netherworld *asůrtam rájas- ‘sunless space’ and in Younger Avestan *ax‘arəta- ‘not having sun’. In the course of the mythological inquiry undertaken in this article we have seen that in a number of Indo-European traditions there is a close association between the sun, waters, and immortality. All of this is contained in Homeric ἄααηνο.

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