

The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



On the Word $\nu\eta\rho\delta\epsilon\varsigma$ in Thucydides VII. 36, 2

G. S. Sale

The Classical Review / Volume 10 / Issue 01 / February 1896, pp 7 - 9
DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00202862, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00202862

How to cite this article:

G. S. Sale (1896). On the Word $\nu\eta\rho\delta\epsilon\varsigma$ in Thucydides VII. 36, 2. The Classical Review, 10, pp 7-9 doi:10.1017/S0009840X00202862

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

state domains in that district (*saltus publici*), just as in the reign of Tiberius (Tac. *Ann.* 4, 27) a quaestor seems to have been stationed in South Italy to look after the great public grazing lands of Apulia and Calabria. Claudius, when he abolished this Gallic quaestorship, must have made some provision for the supervision of the state domains, and it is natural to assume that in Cisalpine Gaul, as at Ostia, the quaestor was replaced by imperial procuratores. That such a change was made may perhaps be inferred from the language of Claudius' edict about the Anauni (Wilmanns, *Inscr. Lat.* 2842). In that edict Claudius refers to the extensive domains (*saltus*) in North Italy 'which,' as he says, 'I learn belong

to me' [*mei juris esse*]*—*and which it is clear from the language of the edict were under the management of imperial procuratores. It may also be worth while to notice that after this period no further traces are found of a quaestor in South Italy, but, on the other hand, the traces of the presence of imperial procuratores become increasingly numerous. In the reign of Marcus Aurelius, the great public grazing lands of Samnium and Apulia were under the supreme control of the procurator a rationibus (Wilm. *Inscr. Lat.* 2841) and from a passage in Statius (*Statius, Silv.* 3, 3, 92) we gather that the same was the case as early as the reign of Nero.

H. F. PELHAM.

ON THE WORD ἀντηρίδες IN THUCYDIDES VII. 36, 2.

καὶ ἀντηρίδας ἀπ' αὐτῶν ὑπέριων πρὸς τοὺς
 τοίχους ὡς ἐπὶ ἐξ πηγῆς ἐντὸς τε καὶ ἔξωθεν.

It would be difficult to mention any sentence in Thucydides the interpretation of which is in a more unsatisfactory condition than the one which I propose to discuss.

It is not necessary to quote what has been written on the subject by commentators or translators from Stephanus downwards. Most of the explanations given are obscure, and some that are not obscure are absurd. And they all proceed on the assumption, which I believe to be wrong, that the ἀντηρίδες were of the nature of props or stays, and were intended to strengthen the ἐπωρίδες. This is the view taken in Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities* and in Baumeister's *Denkmäler*; and a similar view is accepted, though with hesitation, by Grote and Freeman. Grote indeed says: 'The words which Thucydides employs to describe the position of these ἀντηρίδες are to me very obscure; nor do I think that any of the commentators clear them up satisfactorily.' And Freeman says: 'I hope I may be forgiven for not risking myself in the mysteries of ἐπωρίδες and such like.' Thirlwall contents himself with saying that the Syracusans did as the Corinthians had done before the battle of Erineus, that is, they 'strengthened the bows of their galleys by solid timbers'; and afterwards, when describing the action, he says: 'the solidity of the Syracusan

bows overpowered, as had been foreseen, the slighter frame of the enemy's galleys.' He does not say a word about strengthening the ἐπωρίδες with spars, and so far as his language goes I think it is not impossible that he may have held the view which I am going to put forward.

I believe that the commentators have all missed the meaning of the passage, first, through putting a wrong interpretation on the word ἀντηρίδες, secondly, through the more serious mistake of giving a wrong and, as I think, impossible meaning to the preposition πρὸς.

I will first give my own rendering of the sentence, and I will then try to support it by arguments on both these points.

Thucydides describes three peculiarities in the construction of the Syracusan galleys: (1) short, stumpy prows; (2) strong, heavy ἐπωρίδες; (3) extra thick sides, or, as we should say, bows (τοίχους). And he denotes the whole arrangement collectively, in chapter 40, by ἐμβόλων παρασκευή. It is the third of these peculiarities which I believe Thucydides is describing in the sentence with which we are concerned. And this third peculiarity, though by no means the least important of the three, is omitted altogether in the explanations of the passage which have been given hitherto. I render the sentence as follows: 'And they strengthened the bows (τοίχους) both inside and outside with additional thicknesses of timber for a length of nine feet from the

ἔπιωρίδες.' I think it will be conceded that if the sentence will bear this meaning, it is more intelligible than any that has yet been given to it.

First as to the meaning of ἀντηρίδες. If we had nothing but etymology to guide us, we should naturally take the word to mean 'something attached to the face or front of something else.' And this I believe to be substantially its meaning. Omitting Euripides, *Rhesus* 785, where Musgrave's correction ἀρηριῶν is now generally accepted, and omitting also, for the present, the references in Suidas and the *Etymologicum Magnum*, the word ἀντηρίδες is found in two passages besides the one in Thucydides. These are Xenophon, *Cyngeticus* 10, 7, and Polybius viii. 6, 6. In the former Xenophon is describing the mode of taking the wild boar by means of nets, and he says that when the net has been placed in position it must be held open by means of κλώνες used as ἀντηρίδες. This cannot mean 'props,' for he has already spoken of them, and has said that forked sticks are to be used for that purpose. It can only mean long sticks used as stretchers or spreaders, to hold up the net between and beyond the props.

Polybius, in the passage where he uses the word, is describing the contrivance used by Marcellus which he calls σαμβύκη. He tells us that it consisted of a large ladder or companion, four feet in width, placed in the fore part of two vessels lashed together. This companion was hoisted up by men on the poops, by means of ropes rove through blocks fixed at the mast-heads; while men on the fore part of the vessels shoved the ladder forward ταῖς ἀντηρίσιν. Lipsius (*Polioret.*) translates these words by 'fulcris aut tignis.' It is a pity he did not give a drawing illustrating the operation. I am quite sure that any sailor would find it as difficult to believe that the men on the bows used *fulcra* or *tigna* for pushing the ladder, when they had the ladder itself to take hold of, as to believe that the men on the poop used *tigna* for hauling on the ropes. Besides the article ταῖς makes Lipsius's rendering impossible, and compels us (assuming that there was no part of the ordinary ship's tackling called ἀντηρίδες) to understand the word of some part of the κλίμαξ itself. And if so it can hardly mean anything but the planks or timbers which formed its sides.

Both these uses of the word in Xenophon and Polybius would then correspond very fairly with the meaning suggested by its

etymology. And so also would the meaning 'stout planks, or timbers, attached to the ship's sides' which I have suggested for the passage in Thucydides.

How then did any one ever come to give the word the meaning 'props' or 'stays'? I believe the mistake arose first from the old erroneous derivation for ἐρείδω, given in the *Etymologicum Magnum*; secondly from the use of the word in architecture to denote a buttress. Vitruvius must have borrowed the word from Greek writers, and in the passage where he uses it he explains it quite clearly to mean a buttress. But a buttress is not a 'prop,' which is *capreolus* or *tibicen*. Nor does a buttress act by a longitudinal thrust, except in the case of what we call a flying buttress. It acts by stiffening and thickening the wall from bottom to top, and the pressure is exerted laterally not longitudinally. It is not even essential to a buttress that it should be thicker at the bottom than at the top, although it is true the 'anterides' described by Vitruvius are intended to be so constructed. In fact the ordinary additions which a bricklayer makes, at intervals, to a garden wall would, according to my view, be 'anterides' just as much as the buttresses of a cathedral. If this view is correct, the meanings which the word has in Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, and Vitruvius may all be comprehended in the following definition of ἀντηρίδες: 'Pieces of wood or other material attached to any structure for the purpose of strengthening or stiffening it.'

It is true that Suidas is generally supposed to give an entirely different meaning. He says, if the reading is correct; ἀντήρις δὲ ἀντήριδος (sic) καὶ σημαίνει τὴν θυρίδα. I had thought of suggesting *σανίδα* for *θυρίδα*: but in reality it is not necessary to give the word *θυρίς* universally (or even, as it would appear, generally) the sense 'an opening.' In Herodotus ii. 96 the word *θύρη* means 'a raft'; and again in viii. 51 the word *θύρησι* means boards used as barricades. But the strongest passage is in Athenaeus 521 F., where, quoting a story told by Heraclides of Pontus, he tells us that the floor of a temple was covered closely with plates of copper, κατεχάλλωσαν θυρίσι, in order to stop a miraculous flow of blood. There is therefore no need to suggest any alteration in Suidas, who probably means by *θυρίδα* a board or plate, not a window or opening. And if so, his words confirm my view that the essential meaning of ἀντήρις is 'something attached to the face of something else,' and that it would therefore be a most natural and

obvious word to use for the sheathing or lining of a galley's bows.

I have said that the meaning given to the passage in Thucydides by the commentators involves, in my opinion, a misuse of the preposition *πρός*. If Thucydides had intended to express 'extending from the *ἐπωτίδες* to the ship's sides' he must, I think, have written *εἰς τοὺς τοίχους*, not *πρὸς τοὺς τοίχους*. The preposition *πρός*, when used in a physical sense with the accusative, means either 'motion to' or 'attachment to' a thing. The former meaning is out of the question; but the latter is exactly what is required. It will be noticed that the words *πρὸς τοὺς τοίχους* follow *ὑπέτειναν*. It seems to me hardly possible to read these words together without giving them the meaning 'they attached to the ship's sides.' It is scarcely necessary to illustrate this, not uncommon, use of *πρός*. I will merely quote three instances: Sophocles, *Ajax* 108, *δεθείς πρὸς κίον' ἐρκείου στέγης*, Plato, *Phaedo* 83 D, *προσηλοῖ πρὸς τὸ σῶμα*, and *Timaeus* 82 D, *κολλᾷ πρὸς τὴν τῶν ὀστέων φύσιν*. Also Thucydides himself in iv. 110, 3 has *οὔσης τῆς πόλεως πρὸς λόφον*, and in vi. 101, 3 *τὸ πρὸς τὸν κρημνόν*.

I will only add, in confirmation of what I have said, (1) that it is inconceivable to me that the Syracusans should have omitted to strengthen their bows, or that Thucydides should have omitted to mention the fact; (2) that there was no necessity to add 'props' or 'stays' to the *ἐπωτίδες*, for Thucydides tells us that they were made *παχίαι*, and 'props' carried to, or through,

the ship's sides would have given them no additional strength; (3) that Thucydides himself, in section 3 of the chapter, implies that the bows were made thicker than usual, for he says that the bows of the Athenian galleys were *λεπτά, κοῖλα* and *ἀσθενή*, in comparison with those of the Syracusan galleys which were *στέριφα* and *παχέα*. These epithets are admirably chosen, if the view I take of the passage is correct; but they certainly are not very well chosen if they only describe the difference between *ἐπωτίδες* with props and *ἐπωτίδες* without props. (4) Finally in chapter 40, where he describes the action, he tells us that, owing to the special build of the Syracusan galleys, they stove in the Athenian triremes and carried away a great part of the oarsmen's galleries (*παρεξείρεσις*).¹ This effect would be produced, not by the beaks, or prows, which were shortened for the very purpose of bringing the strong bows into play, nor even, completely, by the *ἐπωτίδες*, but by the broad part of the strengthened bows, grinding against and tearing away the thinner bows and sides of the Athenian triremes.

G. S. SALE.

Otago University, Dunedin, New Zealand.

¹ I am aware that the meaning which I here give to *παρεξείρεσις* is different from that usually given. This is a matter which requires more than a short note for its discussion. I may mention, however, that I have the authority of E. Assmann, in Baumeister's *Denkmäler*, for the meaning I have given; and I have other stronger reasons which I may perhaps take another opportunity of explaining.

RHYMES AND ASSONANCES IN THE *AENEID*.

In the *Aeneid* I have noticed about sixteen accurately rhyming couplets, not reckoning about half-a-dozen others in which the same word or words are repeated for an ending. There are other examples too where the rhyme is almost perfect; with yet others where verses which accurately rhyme alternate with others which do not. Further, there are series of two, three, or more verses whose endings, though not in strict rhyme, are more or less assonantal.

Now rhyme is a thing so comparatively rare in Latin verses, that the question naturally suggests itself: Are these examples mere oversights, which would have

been removed on revision, or were they inserted of set purpose and for special effect? That the latter is the true reply will become evident upon examination of the cases. In the first place the verses of each couplet are arranged to correspond in time, rhythm and general effect. Secondly, the sounds chosen for rhyme are practically but two—the 3rd pers. of an imperfect tense, and the sound *-entem* or *-entum*. The ending *-ator* occurs once; and there is besides one case where the reading is doubtful. Thirdly, all these verses have trisyllabic terminations, and, in accordance with Virgil's usual practice in such case, have mostly the strong caesura in