

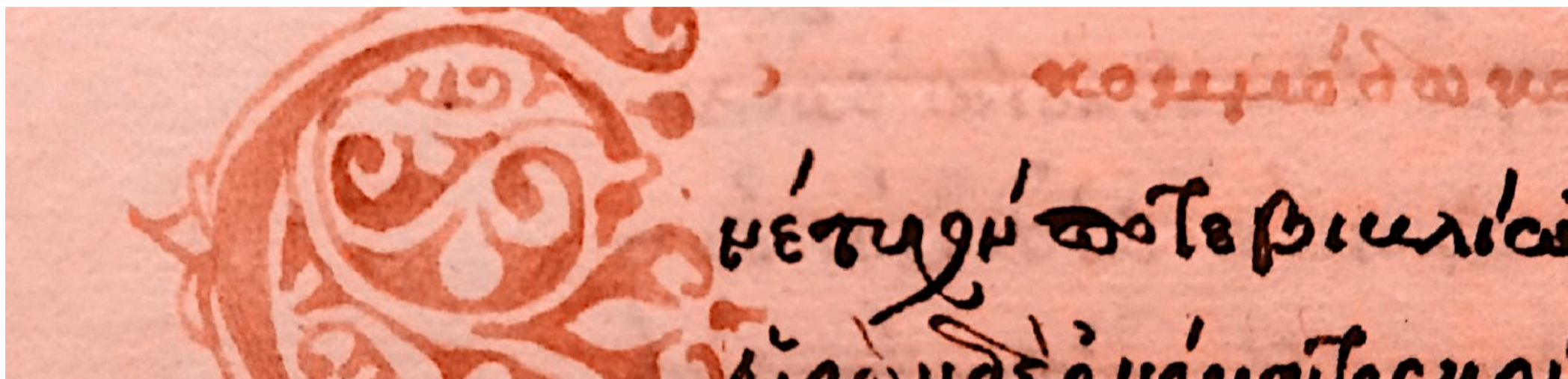


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PURA. Purism In Antiquity: Theories Of Language in Greek Atticist Lexica and their Legacy



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The **Digital Encyclopedia of Atticism** is one of the research outputs of **PURA**, a five-year ERC Consolidator project (grant agreement no. 865817), which began in January 2021 at Ca' Foscari University of Venice. PURA investigates the theories of **linguistic purism** that were developed in ancient Greek culture, and the way in which they were received in later periods. The focus of our analysis is **Atticist lexica**, ancient 'dictionaries' that collect linguistic features to be cultivated or avoided in correct Greek.

DEA contributes to the three main objectives of PURA:

1. to provide a comprehensive mapping of **Atticist purism** by analyzing the linguistic theories of Atticist lexica;
2. to study the intellectual and cultural **legacy** of Atticism in antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the early modern age by charting the history both of the lexica as **books** and of their authors;
3. to make the theories of these specialist and intricate texts more approachable and **accessible** outside the traditional format of critical editions.

To fulfil these objectives, the three sections of DEA, all of which are **open-access**, collect our work on the lexicographic entries in the Atticist lexica and their linguistic history; the major scholars and works of the ancient and Byzantine Atticist debate; and the transmission of the lexica in the medieval and early modern periods. Visit [About DEA](#) for more information.

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PURA. *Purism In Antiquity: Theories Of Language in Greek Atticist Lexica and their Legacy*

Lexicographic entries

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Λάκαινα, Λακωνική

(*Antiatt.* λ 16, *Phryn. Ecl.* 318)

A. Main sources

(1) *Antiatt.* λ 16: Λάκαιναν· τὴν παρθένον φασὶ δεῖν καλεῖν, τὴν δὲ χώραν Λακωνικήν. Ἄλεξις Ἐλένης ἀρπαγῆ.

Λάκαινα: They say that one must call that (i.e. Λάκαινα) a young girl, while [one must call] Λακωνική the land. Alexis in *The abduction of Helen* (fr. 72 = [C.5](#)).

(2) *Phryn. Ecl.* 318: Λάκαιναν μὲν γυναῖκα ἐρεῖς, Λάκαιναν δὲ τὴν χώραν οὐδαμῶς, ἀλλὰ Λακωνικήν, εἰ καὶ Εὐριπίδης παραλόγως φησὶν· ὥς ἢ Λάκαινα τῶν Φρυγῶν μείων πόλις'.

You will call Λάκαινα a woman, though you will not call Λάκαινα the land, but rather Λακωνική, even though Euripides says against the norm: 'That the Laconian city is smaller than the city of the Trojans' (*Andr.* 194 = [C.2](#)).

B. Other erudite sources

(1) *St.Byz.* λ 19: Λακεδαίμων· [...] ὁ πολίτης Λακεδαιμόνιος. καὶ κτητικὸν Λακεδαιμονικός. λέγεται καὶ κατὰ συγκοπὴν Λάκων [...]. ἔοικε δὲ πρωτότυπον εἶναι καὶ οὐ συγκοπή. τινὲς δὲ τὸ Λάκων ὑποκοριστικὸν φασιν, οὗ τὸ θηλυκὸν Λάκαινα καὶ κτητικὸν Λακωνικός, καὶ Λακωνική τὸ θηλυκόν, ὃ καὶ εἶδος ὑποδήματος.

Λακεδαίμων: [...] The ethnic is Λακεδαιμόνιος and the ktetic Λακεδαιμονικός. There is also the abbreviated form Λάκων [...]. But it (i.e. Λάκων) seems the original form, not an abbreviation. Some say that Λάκων is the hypochoristic, whose feminine is Λάκαινα and the ktetic Λακωνικός. The feminine (i.e. of the ktetic) is Λακωνική, which is also a type of sandal.

(2) Eust. *in Il.* 1.455.11–4 (= Ael.Dion. λ 1 ~ Phot. λ 37; cf. Str. 8.5.8, Hsch. λ 186, schol. [D] Hom. *Il.* 2.581 [A]): Λακεδαίμονα καὶ Σπάρτην διορίζουσί τινες Λακεδαίμονα μὲν πᾶσαν καλοῦντες τὴν Λάκαιναν, Σπάρτην δὲ τὴν μίαν πόλιν. οἱ δ' οὖν Ἀττικοὶ τὴν πόλιν αὐτὴν οὐ μόνον Σπάρτην, ἀλλὰ καὶ Λακεδαίμονα καλοῦσιν. Κρατῖνος δὲ καὶ τὴν χώραν Σπάρτην οἶδεν, οὐ μόνον Λακεδαίμονα.

Some make a distinction between Lacedaemon and Sparta, in that they call Lacedaemon the whole region of Laconia, while Sparta the city alone. But the Attic writers call the city itself not just Sparta, but also Lacedaemon. Cratinus (fr. 493) also knows the land as Sparta, not just as Lacedaemon.

C. *Loci classici*, other relevant texts

(1) Eur. *Andr.* 151–2:

ἀλλ' ἐκ Λακαίνης Σπαρτιάτιδος χθονὸς
Μενέλαος ἡμῖν ταῦτα δωρεῖται πατήρ.

But from the Laconian land of Sparta, my father Menelaus gave these things as a gift to me.

(2) Eur. *Andr.* 194:

ὡς ἡ Λάκαινα τῶν Φρυγῶν μείων πόλις;

[What is the reason why I aim to substitute you as a wife, maybe the fact] that the Laconian city is smaller than the city of the Phrygians (i.e. Troy)?

(3) Hdt. 7.235.1: ὦ Βασιλεῦ [...] δίκαιόν με σοί ἐστι φράζειν τὸ ἄριστον. εἰ τῆς ναυτικῆς στρατιῆς νέας τριηκοσίας ἀποστείλειας ἐπὶ τὴν Λάκαιναν χώραν.

King [...] it is right that I tell you what is best, (which is) if you would send three hundred ships of the fleet against the Laconian land.

(4) X. *HG* 7.1.25: στρατευσάμενοι δὲ καὶ εἰς Ἀσίνην τῆς Λακαίνης ἐνίκησάν τε τὴν τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων φρουράν.

Also making an expedition also against Asine in Laconia, they defeated the Spartan garrison.

(5) Alex. fr. 72 = *Antiatt.* λ 16 re. Λάκαινα, Λακωνική ([A.1](#)).

(6) Eustathius Macrembolites *Hysmine et Hysminias* 1.5: τὰ κύκλωθεν ἐκόσμηι τοῦ φρέατος λίθος Χίος ὁ ἐκ Λακαίνης.

Chian marble from Laconia adorned the well all around.

D. General commentary

Atticist lexicographers debate whether the ethnic Λάκαινα may be used with words like γῆ, χώρα, πόλις, etc. to indicate the territory of Sparta. In fact, one would normally expect the ktetic Λακωνική to be used.

Greek distinguishes both morphologically and functionally between ethnics and ktetics (see Dittenberger 1906, Dittenberger 1907, and Fraser 2009). The different functions of ethnic and ktetic are clear: the designation of a person is expressed with ethnic nouns or adjectives, whereas things or abstract entities are designed with ktetic adjectives (see Dittenberger 1907, 1, Gschnitzler 1983, 140 = Gschnitzler 2001, 2, and Fedalto 2009, 603–4; see also Fraser 2009, 39 for a more fine-grained definition). In the case of Λάκαινα and Λακωνική, while Λάκαινα should usually indicate only female human beings, the adjective Λακωνική is expected to be used for objects or abstract concepts. Such a distinction between ethnic and ktetic is fundamental to the Greek language. It provides, for example, a major structural feature in the arrangement of entries in Stephanus of Byzantium's *Ethnika* (for the one regarding Sparta, see [B.1](#)). In the case of the ktetic, the notion of possession implied by the ancient terminology 'ktetic' is narrower than the semantic areas actually covered by such adjectives (see Fraser 2009, 39). Ancient grammarians in reality identified various other categories: οἰκειωτικόν, which indicates the provenance from a place, μετουσιαστικόν, which indicates the material composition, συνεμφαντικόν/συνεκφαντικόν, which indicate an association with something (see Fedalto 2009, 606–7).

However, we cannot always make a sharp division between the uses of ethnics and ktetics, and in a number of cases the distinction may be blurred (see Fraser 2009, 43–7 for examples of ktetic adjectives used as ethnic and vice versa). The situation with Λάκαινα and Λακωνική is a case in point, as the ethnic Λάκαινα may also be used with the function of the ktetic Λακωνική. Most attestations of this use are in tragedy, predominantly Euripides (Spartan land in [C.1](#), paralleled by Eur. *Tr.* 1110–1, Eur. *Hel.* 1473–5, Eur. fr. 1083.9, and Ion *TrGF* 19 F 63.1 [= fr. 76.1 Leurini]; the city of Sparta in [C.2](#), for which see also Eur. *Andr.* 209–10), but a few are also found in Herodotus ([C.3](#)) and Xenophon ([C.4](#), to which we can add X. *HG* 7.1.29). Due to the lack of direct evidence, it is difficult to say what use of Λάκαινα Alexis ([C.5](#)) might have made (see [F.1](#)). One may notice that this use of Λάκαινα for Λακωνική is unattested in Post-classical Greek. The proper ktetic Λακωνικός is very common when indicating the territory of Sparta or the city of Sparta in 5th- and 4th-century prose and comedy, though it never appears in texts using higher registers, such as lyric poetry or tragedy. This suggests that while the ktetic Λακωνικός is a standard way of indicating Spartan land, Λάκαινα is a marginal (and possibly older) usage common in Euripidean tragedy. This explains why Atticist lexicographers regarded using the ethnic Λάκαινα in place of the ktetic to indicate the territory of Sparta as being stylistically too marked to constitute good Attic.

Besides the use of Λάκαινα for Spartan land, however, Λάκαινα is very often used in place of the ktetic to indicate Spartan dogs, that is, with words like κύων and σκύλαξ. This use is first attested in lyric poetry (Pi. fr. 106.1–2 Snell–Maehler: κύων), tragedy (Soph. *Ai.* 8: κύων) and 4th-century prose (X. *Cyn.* 10.1 and 10.4: κύων both times; Pl. *Prm.* 128c.1: σκύλαξ; Arist. *HA* 608a.27: κύων), and it is well-attested in imperial, late antique, and Byzantine prose as well (Plu. *Amatorius* 767a.9, Arr. *Cyn.* 3.6, Aristid. 3.170.8–9 Lenz–Behr [= 46.222.3 Dindorf], Ath. 12.54of [= Alex. *FGrHist* 539 F 2], Philostr. *Jun. Im.* 1.28.5, Eutecnius *Paraphrasis in Nicandri Theriaca* 56.25–8 Gualandri, Them. *Or.* 248.c.2 [Βασανιστή ἢ φιλόσοφος] and 335.b.8 [Περὶ τοῦ μὴ δεῖν τοῖς τόποις ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀνδράσι προσέχειν], Lib. *Or.* 47.28, Aristaenet. 1.18; see also [E.](#)). Clearly, the ethnic Λάκαινα is used much more freely in place of the ktetic for Spartan dogs than is the case for Spartan land: as a designation of dogs, the ktetic Λακωνικός did not easily provide a substitute for Λάκαινα. To quote just one example, in Plato's *Parmenides* (128c.1) we read αἱ Λάκαιναι σκύλακες, a usage that is in contrast with the proper ktetic Λακωνικός regularly used by the philosopher with referents other than dogs (*Cra.* 412b.5: a man; *Prt.* 343b.5: brachylogy; *R.* 544c.3, *R.* 545a.3, *Lg.* 634d.4, 693e.7: the constitution; *Lg.* 680c.7, *Lg.* 721e.4, *Lg.* 806a.1: human life and ways of life). We cannot explain with any certainty why the ethnic Λάκαινα was used so freely to indicate dogs, but a possible explanation may be that dogs, like men, are animated beings. (Possible comparisons are the ethnic Ἐνετίς instead of the ktetic Ἐνετικός to indicate a horse breed, as in Hsch. ε 2958, St.Byz. ε 80, and Phot. ε 902, and likewise the use of the ethnic Πελασγός in place of the ktetic Πελασγικός to indicate a horse or dog, as in Pi. fr. 107a Snell–Maehler). It should also be pointed out that in

classical and Post-classical Greek the expected ktetic Λακωνικός is also used relatively commonly for dogs. Yet, while this use of Λακωνικός is unmarked, the use of Λάκαινα for dogs is limited to learned writers; all occurrences of Λάκαινα for dogs in imperial prose appear in the work of writers influenced by the rhetorical tradition, some of whom show strongly Atticising tendencies (Libanius, Aristaenetus). We may therefore suggest that the use of Λάκαινα in place of the ktetic to indicate Spartan dogs became a fossilised, high-register choice in Greek prose (see also schol. Pl. *Prm.* schol. 7 Cufalo Λάκαιναι σκύλακες· ἄς ἢ συνήθεια Λακωνικάς φησιν). This may explain why Atticist lexicography approved the use of Λάκαινα for Spartan dogs (this use is recorded without any accompanying caveat by Pollux, 5.37 and 5.38).

The ethnic Λάκαινα is used in place of the ktetic with a few other referents, too. To begin with, Λάκαινα may qualify a λίθος ‘stone’, that is, a type of marble (Luc. *Hipp.* 5, Poll. 7.100, Them. *Or.* 223.a.3 [Περὶ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως φιληκοῖας], and Gr.Nyss. *Hom.in Eccl. MPG* 5.320.19–321.2). Λακωνικός may also be alternatively employed, but this use is not more widespread than Λάκαινα (see Plu. *Quaestiones convivales* 618a.8–9, Lib. *Ep.* 471). Finally, Λάκαινα is employed in isolated cases to qualify a variety of other things: ῥῆσις (‘precept’, Tyr. fr. 24.1–2 West = Peek, *GVI* 749.7–8 = [IG 9,1².298](#).7–8; this occurrence is probably *metri causa* since the ktetic Λακωνικός would have been incompatible with the dactylic metre), ἀγέλη (‘flock’, Pi. fr. 112.1 Snell–Maehler, though notice that here the adjective in fact refers, by hypallage, to Spartan παρθέναι), cups (Ar. fr. 225.3, see also [E.3](#)), κυνή (‘cap’, B. *Dith.* 4.50 Snell–Maehler), παιδεία (‘education’, Phld. *Mus.* fr. 32.29), τριήρης (‘trireme’, Demetr. *Eloc.* 198), πορφύρα (‘purple dye’, Ael. *NA* 15.10), θάλασσα (‘sea’, Ael. *NA* 17.6), ματτύη (a type of dish, Ath. 14.664e), and λύρα (‘lyre’, *Su.* ε 750).

The other adjectives used for the Spartans also partake in this tendency to interchange ethnics and ktetics. The ethnic Λακεδαιμόνιος, which is standard in the masculine and occasionally used in the feminine (Hdt. 1.4.3: Λακεδαιμονίης εἵνεκεν γυναικός ‘Because of a Spartan woman’, Eur. *Tr.* 250–1: τᾶ Λακεδαιμονία νύμφα | δούλαν; ‘As a slave for the Spartan wife’, Paus.Gr. υ 5 = *AP* 14.73.2 = schol. Theoc. 14.48/49a: Λακεδαιμόναι δὲ γυναῖκες ‘Spartan women’), may sometimes be used in poetic texts as a ktetic, both for male and female referents (see Call. *Lav.Pall.* 24–5: οἶα παρ’ Εὐρώτᾳ τοὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι | ἀστέρες ‘Like the Spartan stars beside the Eurotas’, [Scyl.] 48: Κυκλάδες δὲ αἶδε εἰσὶ κατὰ τὴν Λακεδαιμονίαν χώραν οἰκούμεναι ‘These are the Cyclades which inhabit the territory of Sparta’). Similarly, the male ethnic Λάκων is sometimes used as a ktetic, too (Soph. fr. 176.2: λόγος ‘speech’; Pratin. *TrGF* 4 F 4 = fr. 2 *PMG*: τέττιξ ‘cicada’), as is the adjective Λακωνίς, used as a ktetic in early poetry (*h.Hom.* 3.410: γαῖα ‘earth’; echoed in Q.S. 10.120) but later also as an ethnic (Max.Tyr. 3.6: θεραπαινίδες ‘female servants’). The ktetic Λακεδαιμονικός, given as the proper form by Stephanus of Byzantium (see [B.1](#)), is in turn very rare. Besides the occurrences in Stephanus, Λακεδαιμονικός only occurs in scholiastic literature and once in the 8th-century *Life of Saint Pancratius of Taormina*.

The doctrine that does not allow the use of Λάκαινα as a ktetic must date back to sources earlier than the *Antiatticist* ([A.1](#)), in that the gloss of this lexicon is likely to have originally quoted Alexis ([C.5](#)) as evidence for breaching the norm (see [F.1](#)). As regards the gloss in Phrynichus’ *Eclogue* ([A.2](#)), its aim is to reassert the norm criticised by the *Antiatticist*. Latte (1915) and Valente (2015) do not consider Phrynichus’ gloss a response to the gloss in *Antiatticist*, while Fischer (1974, 39–41) does, which I also find plausible: note that *Ecl.* 316 and *Ecl.* 317, too, are Phrynichus’ reply to *Antiatt.* κ 54 and κ 88 respectively (see Latte 1915, 378), and that *Ecl.* 318 ([A.2](#)) would conform to the alphabetical ordering that is a typical sign the second book of Phrynichus’ *Eclogue* depended on material in the *Antiatticist*.

Slater (1986, 8), while discussing Ar.Byz. fr. 3 (from Περὶ τῶν ὑποπτευομένων μὴ εἰρήσθαι τῶν παλαιῶν) and the ancient debate regarding the forms Ἀθηναία, ἀστή, and Ἀττική, considers the glosses on Λάκαινα in the *Antiatticist* ([A.1](#)) and Phrynichus ([A.2](#)) evidence that a debate similar to that of Ἀθηναία, ἀστή, and Ἀττική may have concerned Λάκαινα and Λακωνική as well. Valente (2015, 31 n. 193) dubitatively considers the possibility that the gloss of the

Antiatticist regarding Λάκαινα and Λακωνική may also derive from Aristophanes of Byzantium's treatise. Although all this material is clearly related to problems with ethnic terminology, the issues at stake in each case are quite different from one another. In the case of Ἀθηναία, ἀστή, and Ἀττική, the problem is whether Athenian women were properly indicated with the ethnic, the ktetic, or a word signifying their coming from the city. In the case of Λάκαινα and Λακωνική, the point is whether the ethnic may be used in place of the ktetic to indicate the territory of Sparta. Thus, although these examples all belong in a discussion of ethnic terminology, it does not inevitably follow that Aristophanes of Byzantium must have discussed the forms Ἀθηναία, ἀστή, and Ἀττική in the same context that a discussion of Λάκαινα and Λακωνική would have taken place.

E. Byzantine and Modern Greek commentary

In Byzantine Greek, the ktetic use of the ethnic Λάκαινα is still well-attested, though the evidence is even more polarised than in classical sources as far as the referents are concerned. The one case where Λάκαινα indicates the territory of Sparta is the passage of Eustathius Macrembolites ([C.6](#)), though this is caused by a mere misunderstanding of the source text from which Eustathius took his inspiration. A tragic influence should also be considered (see [E.3](#)). In most of the remaining cases, the ktetic use of the ethnic Λάκαινα is limited to dogs (Michael Psellus *Orationes minores* 18.6 Littlewood, *Epistulae* 54.11, 142.61, and 391.30, Eustathius Macrembolites *Hysmine et Hysminias* 9.11, Michael III *Oratio aditialis* 404 Browning, Michael Choniates *Orationes* 3 vol. 1.73.16 Lampros, Nicetas Choniates *Historia* 277.16 van Dieten, Nicolaus Mesarites *Disput.* 17.1–2 Heisenberg), but in one case Λάκαινα is used for marble (Paul.Sil. *Descriptio Sanctae Sophiae* 628). In all these cases, it is very evident that the use of the ethnic Λάκαινα in place of the ktetic was limited to learned authors who wrote in a higher register.

F. Commentary on individual texts and occurrences

(1) *Antiatt.* λ 16 ([A.1](#))

According to Arnott (1996, 204), the *Antiatticist* quoted Alexis ([C.5](#)) as evidence either for the use of the ethnic Λάκαινα as a ktetic to indicate the territory of Sparta or to document the use of the ktetic Λακωνικός in place of the ethnic Λάκαινα. Arnott considers these two possibilities equally plausible options. The former may look initially more attractive due to the many available parallels quoted above. The question must, however, remain unsettled.

(2) Phryn. *Ecl.* 318 ([A.2](#))

Phrynichus' concessive statement regarding Euripides' use of Λάκαινα would *prima facie* suggest that Euripides' language was considered a reliable source of information concerning proper Attic usage. However, since this is the only case where Phrynichus quotes Euripides, and as Phrynichus is generally distrustful towards tragic language (cf. his criticism of Sophocles' lexis in *Ecl.* 157 and 351), Euripides is more likely to be quoted simply because he is an exemplary case in his free use of Λάκαινα to indicate the territory of Sparta. Phrynichus probably quotes one of the occurrences in *Andromache* because this is the one play to contribute a higher number of examples of Λάκαινα indicating the territory of Sparta, which features prominently in the play ([C.1](#), [C.2](#), and Eur. *Andr.* 209–10).

(3) Eustathius Macrembolites *Hysmine et Hysminias* 1.5 ([C.6](#))

As he does so often in his novel, Eustathius alludes to a passage of Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe et Clitophon*) (2.2.2 οἶνον οὐκ εἶναι ποτε παρ' ἀνθρώποις [...] οὐ τὸν μέλανα τὸν ἀνθοσμῖαν [...] οὐ Χίον ἐκ Λακαίνης 'There was no wine among men [...] neither the black one which smells of flowers [...] nor the Chian one from Spartan cups'. However, while Eustathius' ἐκ Λακαίνης indicates that the marble is from Laconia, in Achilles Tatius Χίον ἐκ Λακαίνης clearly means 'Chian wine from a Spartan cup'. In fact, Achilles Tatius is referring to Χίον ἐκ Λακαίνων 'Chian wine from Spartan

cups' of a famous line of Aristophanes' *Banqueters* (fr. 225.1–3 ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἔμαθε ταῦτ' ἐμοῦ πέμποντος, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον | πίνειν, ἔπειτ' ἄδειν κακῶς, Συρακοσίαν τράπεζαν | Συβαριτίδας τ' εὐωχίας καὶ Χίον ἐκ Λακωνῶν 'For he did not learn these things because of my sending him [i.e. to school], but rather drinking, then singing badly, Syracusan cuisine and Sybaritic feasting and Chian wine from Spartan bowls'; see further Cassio 1977, 67). Apparently, Eustathius did not understand the meaning of Achilles Tatius' ἐκ Λακαίνης, and even though a sentence such as Eustathius' 'Chian (marble) from Laconia' does not quite make sense, he treats Λάκαινα as indicating the provenance of the stone (see Jeffreys 2012, 180 n. 15). This misunderstanding may also have been favoured by the fact that Eustathius is evidently familiar with tragedy, which he quotes amply in his novel. Thus, the fact that he regarded Λάκαινα as meaning 'Laconia' may also be a tragic reminiscence, or at least it may imply his being familiar with the tragic, and especially Euripidean, use of Λάκαινα to indicate the territory of Sparta or the city itself.

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a philological and linguistic commentary on the ethnic adjective Λάκαινα and the ktetic Λακωνική, discussed in the Atticist lexica Antiatt. λ 16 and Phryn. Ecl. 318.

KEYWORDS

Aristophanes of Byzantium

Dogs

Ethnics

Ktetics

Tragedy

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