Theoretical Greek texts about etymology
C. Le Feuvre. Etygram

1. Compound words and 'primary nouns'
Plato, *Cratylus* 433d (see also n° 7)
Ed. J. Burnet, *Platonis Opera*, Oxford UP, 1903
Transl. H. Fowler, Loeb CL

Ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶναι τῶν ὀνομάτων τὰ μὲν ἐκ προτέρων συγκείμενα, τὰ δὲ πρῶτα, οὐ καλῶς σοι δοκεῖ λέγεσθαι;	And do you not think it is true that some names are composed of earlier ones and others are primary?

Comment: There are two categories of nouns, the ones which can be decomposed into meaningful units (like φιλό-σοφος) and others which cannot and are called primary (like σοφός). The art of etymology (the word itself is unknown to Plato) consists of decomposing words into primary nouns, not only words which are obvious compounds but also words which seem primary and which are in fact older compounds of primary nouns altered with time.

2. Words are made up from letters
Plato, *Cratylus* 434b
Ed. J. Burnet, *Platonis Opera*, Oxford UP, 1903
Transl. H. Fowler, Loeb CL

Οὐκοῦν ὡσαύτως καὶ ὀνόματα οὐκ ἄν ποτε ὅμοια γένοιτο οὐδενί, εἰ μὴ ὑπάρξει ἐκεῖνα πρῶτον ὁμοιότητά τινα ἔχοντα, ἐξ ὧν συντίθεται τὰ ὀνόματα, ἐκείνοις ὧν ἐστι τὰ ὀνόματα μιμήματα; ἔστι δέ, ἐξ ὧν συνθετέον, στοιχεῖα;	In the same way, names can never be like anything unless those elements of which the names are composed exist in the first place and possess some kind of likeness to the things which the names imitate; and the elements of which they are composed are the letters, are they not?

Comment : This text is explicit about the fact that the primary elements are letters, not sounds. That is, the written form is the one which must be explained. This confusion between the graphic level and the phonological level was easy in Greek where spelling is almost entirely phonetic. As a consequence, etymologists work with letters (add, delete, change) and most of the time do not think in terms of phonetic shape of the word. This conception remained valid throughout Antiquity, even when phonetic evolution altered the correspondence between letter and sound (conspicuously in the case of iotacism). That can lead to etymological explanations based on the spelling of a word, which would be impossible to justify if pronunciation was taken into account: etymology becomes a written game on written words (see βίβλος / βέβαιος, ἀκμή / ἀγή).

3. Are words not reducible to Greek primary elements?

Sextus Empiricus (2-3 c. CE), *Against mathematicians*, 241-246.
J. Mau and H. Mutschmann, *Sexti Empirici opera*, vols. 2 & 3, 2nd ed., Leipzig: Teubner, 2:1914; 3:1961.
transl. R.G. Bury, Loeb CL.

(241) Περὶ ἐτυμολογίας Τὰ δὲ αὐτὰ λεκτέον πρὸς αὐτοὺς καὶ ὅταν δι' ἐτυμολογίας κρίνειν θέλωσι τὸν ἑλληνισμόν. πάλιν γὰρ ἤτοι σύμφωνός ἐστι τῇ συνηθείᾳ ἡ ἐτυμολογία ἢ διάφωνος· καὶ εἰ μὲν σύμφωνος, παρέλκει, εἰ δὲ διάφωνος, οὐ χρηστέον αὐτῇ ὡς προσκοπὴν ἐμποιούσῃ μᾶλλον τοῦ βαρβαρίζειν ἢ σολοικίζειν. καὶ καθόλου μετακτέον τὰς ὁμοίας ἀντιρρήσεις ταῖς ἔμπροσθεν ἡμῖν ἀπο-	241. On etymology We must also use the same arguments against them when they propose to judge hellenism by etymology. Once again, etymology either agrees or disagrees with common usage; and if it agrees it is superfluous, while if it disagrees one should not make use of it, as that would cause more offense than using barbarisms or solecisms. And in general one may transfer and apply counter-arguments similar to those already set forth. 242. But this

δοθείσαις. (242) Ἰδιαίτερον δὲ ἐκεῖνο λεκτέον. Τὸ ἐτυμολογίᾳ κρινόμενον ὄνομα ὅτι ἑλληνικόν ἐστιν, ἤτοι ἔτυμα πάντως ἔχειν ὀφείλει τὰ προηγούμενα αὐτοῦ ὀνόματα ἢ εἴς τινα τῶν φυσικῶς ἀναφωνηθέντων καταλήγειν. Καὶ εἰ μὲν ἀπὸ ἐτύμων πάντως, κατὰ τοῦτο εἰς ἄπειρον τῆς ἐκπτώσεως γινομένης ἄναρχος ἔσται ἡ ἐτυμολογία, καὶ οὐκ εἰσόμεθα εἰ ἑλληνικόν ἐστι τὸ ἔσχατον λεγόμενον ὄνομα, ἀγνοοῦντες ποῖον ἦν τὸ ἀφ' οὗ πρῶτον κατάγεται. (243) Οἷον εἰ ὁ λύχνος εἴρηται ἀπὸ τοῦ λύειν τὸ νύχος, ὀφείλομεν μαθεῖν εἰ καὶ τὸ νύχος ἀπό τινος ἑλληνικοῦ εἴρηται, καὶ τοῦτο πάλιν ἀπ' ἄλλου· καὶ οὕτως εἰς ἄπειρον γινομένης τῆς ἀνόδου καὶ ἀνευρέτου καθεστῶτος τοῦ πρῶτον ἀναφωνηθέντος ὀνόματος, συνακαταληπτεῖται καὶ τὸ εἰ ἑλληνικῶς ὁ λύχνος εἴρηται. (244) Εἰ δὲ ἐπί τινα τῶν ἀνετύμως κειμένων ὀνομάτων καταλήγοι τὸ ἐτυμολογούμενον ὄνομα, ὃν τρόπον ἐκεῖνα τὰ εἰς ἃ κατέληξεν οὐ διότι ἐστὶν ἔτυμα παραδεξόμεθα, ἀλλὰ διότι τέτριπται κατὰ τὴν συνήθειαν, οὕτω καὶ τὸ δι' ἐτυμολογίας κρινόμενον παραδεξόμεθα οὐ διὰ τὴν ἐτυμολογίαν ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ σύνηθες. Οἷον προσκεφάλαιον ἀπὸ τοῦ τῇ κεφαλῇ προστίθεσθαι εἴρηται, ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ καὶ τὸ πρός, ὅ ἐστι πρόθεσις, ἀνετύμως κέκληται. (245) Τοίνυν ὡς ταῦτα χωρὶς ἐτυμολογίας πεπίστευται διότι ἐστὶν ἑλληνικά, τῆς συνηθείας αὐτοῖς χρωμένης, οὕτω καὶ τὸ προσκεφάλαιον δίχα ἐτυμολογίας ἔσται πιστόν. Ἄλλως τε ἐνίοτε τὸ αὐτὸ πρᾶγμα δυσὶν ὀνόμασι καλεῖται, τῷ μὲν ἐτυμολογίαν ἐπιδεχομένῳ τῷ δὲ ἀνετυμολογήτῳ, καὶ οὐ διὰ τοῦτο τὸ μὲν ἔτυμον λέγεται ἑλληνικὸν τὸ δὲ ἀνέτυμον βαρβαρικόν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐκεῖνο ἑλληνικόν, οὕτω καὶ τοῦτο· (246) οἷον τὸ ὑφ' ἡμῶν καλούμενον ὑποπόδιον Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ Κῷοι χελωνίδα καλοῦσιν· ἀλλὰ ἔστι τὸ μὲν ὑποπόδιον ἔτυμον, ἡ δὲ χελωνὶς ἀνέτυμον, καὶ οὐ διὰ τοῦτο οἱ μὲν Ἀθηναῖοι λέγονται βαρβαρίζειν ἡμεῖς δὲ ἑλληνίζειν, ἀλλ' ἀμφότεροι ἑλληνίζειν. (247) Τοίνυν ὡς ἐκεῖνοι διὰ τὴν συνήθειαν καὶ οὐ διὰ τὴν τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐτυμότητα λέγονται ἑλληνίζειν, οὕτω καὶ ἡμεῖς διὰ τὸ ἐν τῇ αὐτῶν συνηθείᾳ τετριμμένον ἔχειν τὸ τοιοῦτον ὄνομα καὶ οὐ διὰ τὴν τῆς ἐτυμολογίας πίστιν ἑλληνιοῦμεν. Ἀλλ' ὅτι μὲν τὸ τεχνικὸν μέρος τῆς γραμματικῆς ἀνυπόστατόν ἐστιν, αὐτάρκως ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων δέδεικται·

special objection should be stated: — The word which is adjudged to be hellenic by etymology must either have the words which precede it as in all cases its etyma (or true roots), or be traced back to some word naturally pronounced. And if it is derived in all cases from etyma, since in this respect there is a regress ad infinitum, the etymology will be without a beginning, and we will not know whether the ultimate word is good Greek, seeing that we do not know the nature of the word from which it is first derived. 243. Thus, if the word *lukhnos* 'lamp' comes from *luein to nukhos* 'dissolving the darkness', we ought to find out whether νύχος comes from a Greek word, and this in turn from another; and as the regress thus goes on ad infinitum and the word first pronounced is indiscoverable therewith it is rendered impossible to ascertain whether *lukhnos* is a good Greek word. 244. If, on the other hand, the word of which the etymology is sought should be traced back to some words which are without etyma (or roots), just as we shall admit the words from which they are derived not because they are etyma but because they are current in common usage, so also we shall admit the word judged to be Greek by etymology not because of its etymology but because it is commonly used. *proskephalaion* 'pillow', for instance, is so named from being placed at the *kephalē* 'head', but *kephalē*, and the *pros* 'at' which precedes, are words without *etuma* 'roots'. 245. So then, as these words are believed to be good Greek apart from etymology, since they are used in common speech, so too *proskephalaion* will be believed apart from etymology. — Again, the same object is sometimes called by two names, the one admitting of etymology, the other void of etymology, but neither is the etymon said to be good Greek for this reason nor the non-etymon to be barbaric, but as the former is good Greek so also is the latter. 246. For example, that which is called by us *hupopodion* 'foot-stool' (litt. 'under the foot') the Athenians and Coans call *khelōnis*: but *hupopodion* is an etymon, whereas *khelōnis* is a non-etymon, yet the Athenians are not said on this account to be using a barbarism, and we to be speaking good Greek, but rather both are said to be speaking good Greek. 247. Since, then, they are said to be speaking good Greek not because the word they employ is an etymon but because it is in common use, so too we shall be speaking good Greek because the word we employ is current in our own customary speech and not because of our trust in etymology. That the technical section of the Art of Grammar is without foundation has been proved sufficiently by what has now been said.

Comment: Words like προσκεφάλαιον or ὑποπόδιον are reducible without any difficulty to their primary components (πρός + κεφαλή, ὑπό + πούς), which Sextus calls *etyma*. But words like λύχνος

are not: if the standard etymology quoted by Sextus gives an identifiable first element λύειν 'to dissolve', the second element *νύχος is not an existing Greek word. Yet λύχνος is a correct Greek word, even though the etymological analysis cannot find the etymon. So that etymology is not a reliable tool when it comes to judging the correctness of a noun, since words with no Greek *etyma* are nevertheless good Greek. The only reliable criterion to judge whether a word is Greek or not is common use. This text can be compared with Galen's critic of Prodicos on *phlegma* (n° 5).

4. Can we assume unattested word-forms as etymons of attested ones?

4.1. Plato, *Cratylus* 421c-d
Ed. J. Burnet, *Platonis Opera*, Oxford UP, 1903
Transl. H. Fowler, Loeb CL

Φάναι, ὃ ἂν μὴ γιγνώσκωμεν, βαρβαρικόν τι τοῦτ᾽ εἶναι. Εἴη μὲν οὖν ἴσως ἄν τι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ καὶ τοιοῦτον αὐτῶν, εἴη δὲ κἂν ὑπὸ παλαιότητος τὰ πρῶτα τῶν ὀνομάτων ἀνεύρετα εἶναι· διὰ γὰρ τὸ πανταχῇ στρέφεσθαι τὰ ὀνόματα, οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν [ἂν] εἰ ἡ παλαιὰ φωνὴ πρὸς τὴν νυνὶ βαρβαρικῆς μηδὲν διαφέρει.	Saying, if there is a word we do not know about, that it is of foreign origin. Now this may be true of some of them, and also on account of the lapse of time it may be impossible to find out about the earliest words; for since words get twisted in all sorts of ways, it would not be in the least wonderful if the ancient Greek word should be identical with the modern foreign one.

Comment: Given that words were altered and did not keep their original shape, an ancient word (as hypothesized by Socrates, that is, as a combination of 'primary nouns') may look non Greek to Greek speakers. Therefore it may be difficult to draw the line between Greek and non Greek. However, the 'primary nouns' are assumed to be Greek, what is non Greek is their combination. A nice instance is the etymon suggested for σελήνη, in fact for the variant σελαναία: ὅτι δὲ σέλας νέον καὶ ἔνον ἔχει ἀεί, 'Σελαενονεοάεια' μὲν δικαιότατ᾽ ἂν τῶν ὀνομάτων καλοῖτο, συγκεκροτημένον δὲ 'Σελαναία' κέκληται (*Cratylus* 409b-c): the 'primary elements', σέλας, νέον, ἔνον, ἀεί, are all Greek, but their combination 'Σελαενονεοάεια' is not, yet it is the etymon of the Greek word σελαναία.

4.2. Herodian (2nd c. CE), Περὶ ῥημάτων, Lentz III/2, p. 795-796
Ed. A. Lentz, *Herodiani technici reliquiae. Grammatici graeci* III/1, III/2. Leipzig: Teubner, 1867-1970.
Transl. C. Le Feuvre (Etygram)

τοῦ δὲ νέφω εἰ καὶ μή ἐστι χρῆσις, ἀλλὰ δοκεῖ ὅμως πρωτότυπον αὐτὸ εἶναι τοῦ νείφω, ὡς ὑποδηλοῖ καὶ τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ νέφος καὶ ἡ νεφέλη.	Even though the word *nephō* is not used, it seems nevertheless to be the prototype of the verb *neiphō* « to snow », as shown by its derivatives *nephos* « cloud » and *nephelē* « cloud ».

Comment: This text is not by Herodian but summarizes a discussion by him and answers a problem he did not solve. The author of the text asserts here that assuming the existence of a unattested form on the basis of its derivatives is licit: there is no *νέφω, yet the existence of νέφος and νεφέλη, with initial [neph], implies that there once was such a verb (in the conception according to which the verb is the primary form and the nouns are derived from it), and that it must be the older spelling/pronunciation of which the attested νείφω is a modification. Herodian in fact derived νείφω from *νέφω, but derived the latter from νέφος (see νείφω / νέφος). This text is an answer to the point dealt with in text n° 3 (Sextus Empiricus): a word-form which is never used (that is, a ghost-word) may nevertheless be Greek, and can therefore be assumed as the etymon of another one. This goes a step further than Plato, as here not only the combination of primary elements, but the primary elements themselves can be non existing forms in classical Greek. Assuming that a form is lost but survives in its derivatives is as close as the Greeks could get to a historical analysis of their language. This was in particular the doctrine of Philoxenus (1st c. BCE), who systematically

assumed monosyllabic verbs, most of the time unattested, as the basis of a derivational family, which is not far from the modern notion of verbal root.

5. A correct etymology is useless if it does not agree with common use

5.1. Galen (2 c. CE), *De Differentiis Febrium* 2.6 (7.347–348 K)
Ed. C.G. Kühn, *Claudii Galeni opera omnia*, vol. 7, Leipzig: Knobloch, 1824 (repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1965).
transl. N. Rousseau (forthcoming), "Ὅτι ἀλαζών ἐστι μάρτυς ἡ ἐτυμολογία. Galen on Etymology, Theory and Practice", in: A. Zucker & C. Le Feuvre, *Greek ancient and medieval etymology: Theory and practice I*, Berlin, de Gruyter 2020.

ὃς γὰρ ἂν ὑγρὸς ἅμα καὶ ψυχρὸς ᾖ χυμός, ὑπὸ τὴν τοῦ φλέγματος ἀνάγεται προσηγορίαν, εἴ τις Ἱπποκρατείως τε καὶ συνήθως ἅπασιν, οὐ μόνον τοῖς παλαιοῖς ἰατροῖς, ἀλλὰ ἤδη καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις Ἕλλησιν ὀνομάζειν ἐθέλει. Πρόδικος γὰρ ἐν τῷ Περὶ φύσεως ἀνθρώπου παρανομεῖ καὶ περὶ τοῦτο τοὔνομα, πρὸς τῆς θαυμαστῆς ἐτυμολογίας ἀναπειθόμενος.	The humor which is both wet and cold comes under the name of *phlegma*, if one wishes to name in accordance with Hippocrates and with the usage that is common to all, not only to ancient physicians but also to the other Greeks. Prodicus indeed, in his treatise *On the Nature of Man*, contravenes the law also regarding this word, as he is convinced by the amazing etymology.

5.2. Galen, *De Naturalibus Facultatibus* 2.9 (2.130 K), ed. G. Helmreich, Leipzig, Teubner, 1893.
transl. N. Rousseau (forthcoming), "Ὅτι ἀλαζών ἐστι μάρτυς ἡ ἐτυμολογία. Galen on Etymology, Theory and Practice", in: A. Zucker & C. Le Feuvre, *Greek ancient and medieval etymology: Theory and practice I*, Berlin, de Gruyter 2020.

Πρόδικος δ᾽ ἐν τῷ Περὶ φύσεως ἀνθρώπου γράμματι τὸ συγκεκαυμένον καὶ οἷον ὑπερωπτημένον ἐν τοῖς χυμοῖς ὀνομάζων φλέγμα παρὰ τὸ πεφλέχθαι τῇ λέξει μὲν ἑτέρως χρῆται, φυλάττει μέντοι τὸ πρᾶγμα κατὰ ταὐτὸ τοῖς ἄλλοις. τὴν δ᾽ ἐν τοῖς ὀνόμασι τἀνδρὸς τούτου καινοτομίαν ἱκανῶς ἐνδείκνυται καὶ Πλάτων. Ἀλλὰ τοῦτό γε τὸ πρὸς ἁπάντων ἀνθρώπων ὀνομαζόμενον φλέγμα τὸ λευκὸν τὴν χρόαν, ὃ βλένναν ὀνομάζει Πρόδικος, ὁ ψυχρὸς καὶ ὑγρὸς χυμός ἐστιν οὗτος.	Prodicus, in his work *On the Nature of Man*, names φλέγμα the product of burning and, so to speak, overcooking of humours, after *pephlektai* 'to be inflamed.' In so doing, he uses the word in another way, but maintains the thing consistent with others. The innovation of this man regarding names is sufficiently shown by Plato, too. So what is named *phlegma* by everybody, and is white-coloured, that Prodicus names *blenna*, is a cold and wet humour,

Comment : Prodicos (5th c. BCE) correctly analysed *phlegma* as a derivative of *phlegō* 'to burn', implying that it must refer to a burning humor. Yet *phlegma* is used in Greek medical literature to refer to the cold and humid hunor. Galen uses this example to say that even a correct etymological analysis (in that case Prodicos') is useless if common use has turned the meaning of the word otherwise: in that case, in Greek common use *phlegma* refers to the opposite of what it meant etymologically, so that the etymological explanation does not bring anything but confusion.

6. Asymmetrical character of the etymological relationship

Orion (5 c. CE), *ap*. Etym. Genuinum, alpha 882
F. Lasserre and N. Livadaras, *Etymologicum magnum genuinum. Symeonis etymologicum una cum magna grammatica. Etymologicum magnum auctum*, vol. 1, Rome: Ateneo, 1976
Transl. C. Le Feuvre (Etygram)

Ἄνθος· παρὰ τὸ ἄνω θεῖν καὶ τρέχειν ἐν τῷ αὔξεσθαι. οὐκ ἀναστρέφουσι δὲ αἱ ἐτυμο-λογίαι· <οὐ γὰρ εἴ τι ἄνω θεῖ καὶ αὔξεται, τοῦτο	*Anthos* 'flower' comes from 'to run' (*theîn*) and rush (*trekhein*) 'upward' (*anō*) in its growth. The etymologies don't work both ways: <as a matter of fact, it is not the case that, if something runs and

καὶ ἄνθος λέγεται. Ἰδοὺ γὰρ πάντα τὰ φυτὰ ἄνω θέουσι καὶ αὔξουσιν, καὶ ὅμως ἄνθη οὐ λέγονται. Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἔλαφος παρὰ τὸ ἐλαύνειν τοὺς ὄφεις εἴρηται, ὅπερ ποιεῖ τούτου τὸ κέρας θυμιώμενον· καὶ οὐκ, εἴ τι τοῦτο †ποιοῦν, τοῦτο καὶ ἔλαφος λέγεται·> ἡ γὰρ δίκταμος βοτάνη καιομένη τοῦτο ποιεῖ, καὶ οὐδέποτε ἂν κληθείη ἔλαφος. Οὕτως Ὡρίων ὁ Θηβαῖος.	grows upward, that thing is also called *anthos* 'flower'. And notice that every plant runs and grows upward, and nevertheless they are not called *anthē* 'flowers'. Similarly, the word *elaphos* "deer" is so named from the fact that it repels (*elaunein*) snakes (*opheis*), which is what its horn does, when it is burned. And it is not the case that, if some other thing does that, it is also called *elaphos*,> for the dictamnus, when it is burned, has this power, and it would never be called *elaphos*. This is what Orion of Thebes says.

Comment: This text is a witness of a theoretical discussion by Orion (5th c. CE), who states that the relationship between lemma and etymon is oriented and works only in one direction: the lemma is aptly described by the etymon which reveals its features, but the same etymon cannot be assumed for other words referring to objects with the same features as the lemma. This is probably an answer to critics of the naturalistic theory: in the framework of the latter, if a noun reflects the features and properties of the object, then any object having the same properties and features should bear the same name, which obviously is not the case. This objection is addressed by stressing the fact that the etymological relationship is asymmetrical: the etymon reflects one or several features of the lemma but not all of them, so that the semantic range of the etymon is included in the semantic range of the lemma but does not cover it all and accounts for only a part of it (this is why several etymons can be proposed for a given word). As a consequence, if two objects named A and B have feature X in common, A can be named after X but B after another feature Y, although it shares with A feature X.

7. Nature of etymology and types of etymologies

Etym. Genuinum (the same text is found in *Etym. Symeonis*, epsilon 886 ; the first part, on the nature of etymology, without the different types, is also found in Ps.-Zonaras, *Lexicon*, epsilon p. 891).
Ed. D. Baldi, 2014 "Sub voce ἐτυμολογία," *Revue d'histoire des textes, Nouvelle série*, IX, 359-374.
Transl. C. Le Feuvre

Ἐτυμολογία· ἐστὶ λέξεων ἀνάπτυξις, †συμφώνων† τῶν σημαινομένων ἁρμόζουσα τῇ φωνῇ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ὑποκειμένου πράγματος πιθανότητα· γίνε-ται ἐκ τοῦ εἰμί, τὸ ὑπάρχω, ἐτὸς ὁ ὑπάρχων, καὶ ὥσπερ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔλος ἔλυμος, οὕτως καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐτός ἔτυμος· οἱονεὶ ὁ ὑπάρχων καὶ ἀληθής· τὸ γὰρ ἀληθὲς καὶ ὑπάρχει. ἐκ τοῦ οὖν ἔτυμος καὶ τοῦ λόγος γίνεται ἐτυμολογία οἱονεὶ ἀληθο-λογία τίς οὖσα. Δεῖ δὲ γινώσκειν ὅτι αἱ ἐτυμολογίαι ἐοίκασιν ἰατρικοῖς καλουμένοις ἀνατομαῖς. Ὥσπερ γὰρ ἡ ἀνατομὴ διαίρεσίν τινα τῶν μορίων ποιεῖται, οὕτως ἡ ἐτυμολογία διὰ τῆς ἀναπτύξεως τρόπον τινὰ διαίρεσιν τῶν λέξεων ἀπεργάζεται. Λαμβάνεται δὲ ἡ ἐτυμολογία κατὰ τρόπους ἐννέα. [1] Κατὰ ἱστορίαν· ὥσπερ τὸ ἰφικρατίς ἐστὶν δὲ εἶδος ὑποδήματος, λέγεται δὲ οὕτως ἀπὸ Ἰφικράτους τοῦ εὑρόντος αὐτό.	Etymology is the unfolding of words which fits the sounds of the words meant by the human voice to the likelihood of the underlying real thing. The word comes from εἰμί, which means "I exist", *ἐτός "the existing", and as from ἔλος "marsh" one derives ἔλυμος "millet", similarly from *ἐτός one derives ἔτυμος "real, true", so to speak the one which exists and is true. As a matter of fact, what is true also exists. From this ἔτυμος combined with λόγος comes ἐτυμολόγος, which is so to speak a kind of true speech. One should acknowledge that *etumologiai* are similar to physicians' so-called dissections. As a matter of fact, as a dissection produces a separation of the individual parts (of the body), similarly, through this unfolding, the etymology works out a kind of separation of words (into their constitutive elements). Etymology encompasses nine types. 1. Historical: for instance, *iphicratis* is the name of a kind of shoe, and gets its name from Iphicrates who invented it. 2. *Glossa*-based: for instance, ὀξυδερκεῖν "to be

[2] Κατὰ γλῶσσαν· ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ ὀξυδερκεῖν, τὸ γὰρ ὁρᾶν δέρκεσθαι λέγονται αἱ διάλεκτοι.	sharp-eyed", because the dialects say δέρκομαι for "to see".
[3] Κατὰ τρόπον ἤγουν κατὰ μεταφοράν· ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ ναυτιᾶν, λέγεται δὲ οὕτως κυρίως τὸ ἐμεῖν ἐν ταῖς ναυσίν, κατεχρήσατο δὲ αὐτῷ ἀπὸ μεταφορᾶς τῶν νηῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐμούντων ἐν τῇ γῇ.	3. Metaphoric or trope-based: for instance, ναυτιᾶν "to suffer from nausea", which refers properly to vomiting when on a ship. By displacement (*metaphora*), it came to be used, from the ships, also for those who vomit while on dry land.
[4] Κατὰ πεποιημένον· ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ βάτραχος, πεποιημένη γάρ ἐστιν αὕτη ἡ φωνή, λέγεται δὲ βάτραχος παρὰ τὸ βοὴν τραχεῖαν ἔχειν.	4. Onomatopeic: for instance, the word βάτραχος "frog", which is a made up word, because the frog is named after the fact that it has a rough (τραχεῖαν) cry (βοή).
[5] Κατὰ ἀντιστοιχίαν· ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ κάλως, κάλως γὰρ λέγεται τὸ σχοινίον παρὰ τὸ χαλᾶν χάλως καὶ κάλως.	5. By phonetic similarity: for instance the word κάλως "rope", which is the name of a reed rope; it comes from χαλᾶν "to loosen", hence *χάλως and κάλως.
[6] Κατὰ διάλυσιν συνθέσεως· ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ λύχνος λύνυχος γὰρ λέγεται παρὰ τὸ λύειν τὸ νύχος, ὅ ἐστι τὸ σκότος.	6. Through decomposition of a compound: for instance λύχνος, which is properly *λύνυχος, from "to solve" (λύειν) the night (νύχος), that is, darkness.
[7] Κατὰ πρόσθεσιν· ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ χλαῖνα· χλαῖνα γὰρ λέγεται παρὰ τὸ χλιαίνειν, τὸ θερμαίνειν οἱονεὶ χλίαινά τις οὖσα.	7. Through adjunction of a letter: for instance, χλαῖνα "cloak" ; it gets its name from χλιαίνειν "to warm up", a *χλίαινα, as it were.
8] Κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν· ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ κέντρον, ἀπὸ γὰρ τοῦ κέντριον γέγονεν· ἔστι δὲ ἡ λέξις ἀπὸ τοῦ κεντᾶν.	8. Through deletion of a letter: for instance, κέντρον "centre", for it comes from κέντριον, and this word comes from κεντᾶν "to spur".
[9] Κατὰ σχηματισμόν· ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ κειμήλια σχηματίζεται γὰρ ἡ λέξις ἀπὸ τοῦ κεῖσθαι καὶ τὰ μήλια ἤγουν τὰ χρήματα.	9. Through poetic configuration: for instance, κειμήλια "treasures", the word is configured from κεῖσθαι τὰ μήλια, that is, χρήματα "riches lie".

Comment: This definition of etymology is in line with the conception exposed in the *Cratylus*, that a word is made of different parts which, bound together, underwent various alterations so that the meaning of each of them is lost. The task of etymology is to uncover those different parts in order to give to the word its lost semantic value and its original meaning. The comparison with anatomy and dissection is strikingly expressive – although in the types of etymology listed afterwards some have nothing to do with isolating in a word its supposedly basic components.

This is illustrated by the etymology of ἔτυμος itself, which is derived from ἐ-, supposedly the root of "to be", whence a ghost-form ἐτός "being" (descriptively a verbal adjective like δοτός), from which the derivation of ἔτυμος is justified by means of an analogical proportion (ἕλος : ἔλυμος :: ἐτός : x = ἔτυμος).

The nine types listed are different. Some are defined through a formal process (5-9), others, through a semantic relationship (2-3), the first one through a contingent relationship. For the ones defined through a formal process, there is in fact an underlying semantic relationship between the lemma and the alleged etymon, which is not explicit, and the focus is on the formal manipulation required to get from the etymon to the lemma.

1: this is an aetiological explanation, which has nothing to do with "unfolding" the word.

2: this type draws its name from the fact that it explains a *glossa*, that is, a rare or obsolete word for Byzantine scholars. Here δέρκομαι "to see", a Homeric word, which is the second element of the verb ὀξυδερκέω (in modern words, a denominative of the compound ὀξυδερκής "sharp-sighted"), is a *glossa*, a word which has to be explained, and the etymological explanation consists in explaining the *glossa* by means of a translation into standard Greek, here ὁρᾶν.

3: this type is concerned with semantics alone and does not try to reduce the word to separate components: the aim is not to explain the formation of ναυτιάω but to explain why the word, obviously having something to do with ships, is also used in contexts where no ship is involved.

4: the onomatopeic type is larger than what we would call an onomatopoeia (an imitative word like *bow-wow* or *cuckoo*), but refers to any compound word.

5: this is the first of the series involving a formal modification, in that case the alteration of a consonant. The full explanation would be: a "rope" (κάλως) is used to bring down the mast or the sail, therefore it can come from χαλάω "to loosen, to let go", through alteration of the initial consonant. Phonetic similarity implies that one phoneme at least is different in the lemma and the etymon.

6: this is the typical "Cratylean" etymology, explaing a word as a compound of two words, the relation between both being lost ("composition loss") because of phonetic alteration which makes the identification of the individual parts difficult. In the case of λύχνος, from *λύνυχος, from λύειν "to solve, to destroy" νύχος "night", the etymology implies a syncope of [u], then a metathesis of [nkh] to [khn], and finally a *glossa*, νύχος presented as a rare form of νύξ, although in reality *νύχος is a ghost-word (drawn for the sake of etymology from the adjective νύχιος).

7: this type implies that one adds at least a letter to the etymon, but the instance given does not agree with that, as deriving χλαῖνα *χλίαινα would rather be an instance of syncope or aphaeresis as in 8. There may have been a confusion between two sources.

8: in order to understand this explanation, we must take κέντρον in the meaning "centre", which was the regular meaning in Byzantine Greek, the older meaning "spur" being obsolete and taken over by the derivative κέντριον. The assumed derivational chain is thus κεντέω "to spur" → κέντριον "spur" → κέντρον "centre" through aphaeresis. The fact that κέντρον did mean "spur" in classical Greek is not taken into account: for Greek scholars etymology is ahistorical, they operate with their own state of language and never attempt to start from an earlier state of language.

9: this type refers to poetic creations not belonging to the usual vocabulary, and implying a poetic "figure" (σχῆμα): here κειμήλια as a poetic compound of κεῖμαι + *μήλια, although the latter is a ghost-word (like *νύχος in λύχνος).