

**Studies in Greek epic diction, metre and language:  
The augment use in *The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (HH 5)**

by Filip De Decker

**Abstract:** This article analyses the use and absence of the augment in *The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (HH 5). This is done in two steps: I start by establishing my corpus and then perform the actual analysis. In order to obtain a corpus of reliable forms, I first check if the transmitted forms are supported by the metre: in doing so, I use metrical bridges, caesurae and (possible or forbidden) elisions and word ends. Then I proceed to the forms that are not guaranteed by the metre or where several variants have been transmitted. I determine their value by an “internal comparison and reconstruction”, i.e. comparing the metrically insecure verb forms to the secure forms of the same paradigm and by comparing the forms of the words preceding the insecure forms to other contexts. Once I have thus obtained a corpus of reliable forms, I start the analysis. This is done in two steps: first, a corpus of forms with a metrically secure presence or absence of the augment is established by using metrical bridges and caesurae; second, after determining that corpus of forms, I proceed to analyse the use and absence of the augment, based on previous scholarship. The article intends to show that the function of the augment is determined by an interaction of different metrical, morphological, syntactic and semantic factors, and confirms the augment as focus marker or emphasising tool for recent and new information. It then applies the findings to the passage in which Aphrodite walks through the mountains and meets Ankhises. At the end, it discusses the *prooimion* and argue that there is no need to catalogue *Aphrodite’s aorists* in that passage as Hymnic or omnitemporal.<sup>1</sup>

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## 1 Determining metrically guaranteed augmented forms

### 1.1 The metre as a factor to determine the metrically secure augmented and unaugmented forms

The basis to determine whether or not a form is secured by the metre is the dactylic hexameter with its bridges and caesurae. The prototypical hexameter has the following structure:<sup>2</sup>

—    ˘˘ // —    ˘˘    // —    ˘˘    // —    ˘˘    // —    ˘˘    // —    ˘  
1a 1b 1c    2a    2b 2c    3a    3b 3c    4a    4b 4c    5a    5b 5c    6a    6b

Caesurae are positions in the verse where the “flow” is interrupted and a short pause is introduced, whereas bridges are positions in the verse where

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<sup>2</sup> The numbering of the feet and half feet is based on Janse (2003) and (2014).

a pause or word end is forbidden or avoided. In determining the word end, I consider enclitics to be part of the preceding words and the prepositions and the proclitic *καί* to be part of the following word.<sup>3</sup> The presence or absence of an augment in a verb form is considered metrically secure if the opposite forms would violate one of the following bridges or caesurae.<sup>4</sup>

- a) Hermann's Bridge: this bridge states that there cannot be a word end between the two short elements of the second half of the fourth foot; it is one of the strictest bridges in epic poetry, with very few exceptions (about 0,3%): I found no violations in HH 5.<sup>5</sup>
- b) the augmented or unaugmented form can be considered secure if the opposite verb form makes a caesura coincided with elision.<sup>6</sup> in the 293 verses of HH 5, there are 5 elisions against the caesura after 1c or 2a (15, 80, 92, 221, 291), 2 elisions with a caesura at 3a or 3b (129, 189) and 3 elisions at the bucolic caesura (103, 144, 176) – this means 10 violations on a possible of 800+ caesurae;

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<sup>3</sup> See Ahrens (1852: 200), Giseke (1864: 127), Tiedke (1873: 39–42), Meyer (1884: 980), Maas (1923: 30–31), Fraenkel (1960), West (1982: 37), Snell (1982: 68), Nünlist (2000: 112), Taida (2007: 9), Oswald (2014: 421); O'Neill (1942) struggled with this problem, as he stated on page 109 that enclitics did not belong to the word, but on page 110 wrote that word and enclitic formed a bigger conglomerate. The linking of the proclitics with the following word makes my figures different from those used in Olson (2012: 37–38). There are no figures of the different bridges in Cássola (1975) nor in Faulkner (2008).

<sup>4</sup> Many of the bridges and caesurae are described by Oswald (2014) as being characteristic of Alexandrian and Imperial epic alone, but a closer look at the Homeric epic data reveals that these apply to early Greek epic as well. I cannot address the issue in detail here.

<sup>5</sup> Hermann (1805: 692–693; 1817: 213 (*caesura quarti trochaei, FDD rarissima est et studiose vitatur*), Spitzner (1816: 9–12), Van Leeuwen (1890, focusing on the exceptions), Monro (1884: lxxv; 1891: 340), Allen & Sikes (1904: 15–16, mentioning the exceptions), Bassett (1919: 372), O'Neill (1942: 170–171), Bowra (1960a: 21), Korzeniewski (1968: 30–34), Beekes (1972), Snell (1986: 13–16), West (1982: 36–38, 1997: 222–225), Barnes (1986), Van Raalte (1986: 97–98), Sicking (1993: 73–79), Nünlist (2000: 112); De Decker (2016a: 40).

<sup>6</sup> Grashof (1852: 16), Drewitt (1912b: 50); Taida (2007: 3, 2010: 250). The co-occurrence of elision and caesura is not non-existent, but nevertheless rare, see West (1982: 10, 36).

- c) avoidance of a spondaic fifth foot: a spondee in the fifth foot is almost never combined with word end at the fifth foot:<sup>7</sup> there are no spondees in the fifth foot with a word end at 5c and there are only 20 verses with a spondee at the fifth foot out of 293,<sup>8</sup>
- d) avoidance of a short monosyllabic verb form, regardless of whether it appears before the caesura or at the end of the verse or not (this will be discussed in more detail later on),<sup>9</sup>
- e) the presence (or absence) of the augment is also secure, if the opposite creates a word starting in the first foot and ending at 2c, especially when the word ends in a spondee (this is known as Giseke's Law and was later reiterated by Meyer, cf. infra):<sup>10</sup> there are 6 verses out of the 293 in which a word starts in the first foot and ends in the second foot with a spondee,<sup>11</sup>
- f) the presence (or absence) of the augment is also secure, if the opposite creates a word end at 2c with a spondee of which the second element has a syllable long by position: there is only one verse in HH 5 where there is a spondee at 2c with a spondee with position length in the second half foot, and that is HH 5,55 (βουκολέεσκεν βούς);<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Gerhard (1816: 142–147); Hermann (1817: 220); Bekker (1863: 147–148); Maas (1923: 22); Korzeniewski (1968: 30); West (1982: 37); Snell (1986: 13–16); Van Raalte (1986: 37–38); Sicking (1993: 73–74).

<sup>8</sup> The instances are 5, 35, 44, 52, 78, 84, 99, 108, 122, 149, 160, 192, 200, 245, 255, 261, 266, 267, 278, 281.

<sup>9</sup> Wackernagel (1906: 147–148), Brugmann (1916: 13), Jacobsohn (1927: 263), Meillet (1937: 243), Schwyzer (1939: 651), Bonfante (1942: 104–105), Chantraine (1948: 482), Marzullo (1952: 41), Strunk (1967: 275, 1987), Hajnal (1990: 53), Szemerényi (1990: 322, 1996: 297) and recently also Mumm (2004a: §1, without reference to Wackernagel). Wackernagel showed that a similar evolution occurred in Armenian and Middle Indic.

<sup>10</sup> Gerhard (1816: 140, only about the spondee of the second foot), Giseke (1864: 128–134) and Hilberg (1879: 129, 263); see most recently Oswald (2014: 422). Although he considered these laws to be post-Homeric, the small number of exceptions clearly indicates that they apply to Homeric epic as well.

<sup>11</sup> The instances are 45, 55, 162, 270, 275, 289. I do not count the particle δῆ as an enclitic as it can also appear at the beginning of a verse or sentence, so no instance of this is included here.

<sup>12</sup> One could even read βουκολέεσκε βόας to resolve this, as had already been suggested by D'Orville, see Allen (1897: 257 – this article is a collection of J. D'Orville's notes on the Homeric Hymns as found in an annotated manuscript in

- g) the presence or absence of the augment is secure, if the opposite creates a word end at 2b of a word that starts in the first foot (this is known as Meyer's First Law, although it had been noted before him already; moreover, Meyer's First Law actually contained both Giseke's Law and this one: Meyer argued that a word starting in the first foot should not end at neither 2b nor 2c):<sup>13</sup> there are 25 exceptions on 293 verses;<sup>14</sup>
- h) the presence of the augment is also guaranteed in those verb forms that would otherwise yield a monosyllabic word (short or long) at the end of a verse, colon or sentence: word end is forbidden between 6a and 6b,<sup>15</sup>

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the Bodleian Library in Oxford) and most recently Faulkner (2008: 138) and Richardson (2010: 230), but in my opinion this correction is not needed and it has not been adopted in any edition. See Hoekstra (1969a: 111, 1969b: 45) for an alternative explanation, namely the post-homeric modification of the Homeric βούς βουκολέεσκε(v) into βουκολέεσκεν βούς with a *nu ephelkustikon* building position.

<sup>13</sup> Meyer (1884: 980). Before him, scholars had already stated that word end at 2b was avoided (without restricting it to words starting in the first foot): the first one who said this, was the metrician Nikanor (living in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD), who in his discussion of the form ἠτίμησεν in *Iliad* 1,356, mentioned the avoidance of ἡ τομή κατὰ τὸν ἕβδομον χρόνον, and the first modern scholar to do was Voss. In HH 2,300 the transmitted αἶψα πίθοντο created a word end at 2b, which he changed it into αἶψ' ἐπίθοντο (1826: 89); in HH 2,438, Voss considered the transmitted γηθοσύνας δὲ δέχοντο to be disturbing the rhythm and corrected it into γηθοσύνας δ' ἐδέχοντο. Although he did not explicitly mention a restriction or prohibition against a word end at 2b, these corrections make him if not the founder, then at least one of the earliest predecessors of this Law. After Voss, Hoffmann (1842: 22) noted that the caesura at 2b weakened the verse and catalogued this caesura among the *caesurae minores* in the subcategory (*caesurae*) *versum mollientes* and Grashof (1852: 11) noted that an incision after the trochee in the 2<sup>nd</sup> foot was avoided. In his overview of the different caesurae, Hermann (1817: 212) did not discuss a caesura at 2b, which means that he did not consider word end at this position a possibility. See also Cantilena (1995: 34).

<sup>14</sup> The instances are 4, 11, 18, 32, 56, 78, 86, 107, 111, 143, 146, 147, 149, 153, 179, 182, 191, 194, 200, 209, 216, 239, 243, 265, 287.

<sup>15</sup> I was unable to find out which scholar had first stated this, but Bekker (1863: 148) noted that very few verses had a sixth foot that ended in a monosyllabic word. Before him, Hermann (1817: 216) had already observed that a word end there was dispreferred, but not excluded when special emphasis was needed. Hoffmann (1842: 20–21) catalogued this caesura among the *caesurae minores*, but stated that a caesura in this position was possible, if something spectacular was announced or if the poet spoke about Zeus. Meyer (1884: 983) noted that the combination of a

and more generally, there is a tendency to avoid monosyllabic words at the end of a verse, colon, sentence or before a caesura;<sup>16</sup> there is only one instance of an orthotonic monosyllabic word at 6b in HH 5, namely 202 and there are two examples of a monosyllable before the 3 caesura, namely HH 5,45 and HH 5,55 (cf. supra) and 4 instances of a monosyllabic word before the 2a or 1c caesura, namely HH5, 210, 222, 233 and 252; reversely, monosyllabic verb forms often appear at the beginning of the sentence and/or followed by a clitic (cf. infra);

- i) related to the previous instance, is the fact that what applies to the simplex, also applies to the compounded verb forms: this means that the verb form ἀπέβη (129) has a secure augment;
- j) the caesurae in the third foot: an augmented or unaugmented form is considered secure, if the alternative removes a caesura in the third foot or creates a caesura at the end of the third foot, as bipartite hexameters were avoided (as this had been noted already at least as early as Varro, it is sometimes called “Varro’s Bridge”).<sup>17</sup> There are no unambiguous examples of a bipartite hexameter in HH 5 (36, 136 and 171 are not real examples of a bipartite hexameter, because one could put the caesura at 3a in those instances) and only 1 instance of a verse without caesura in the third foot (HH 5,4). HH 5,199 is a special case:

ἔσχεν ἄχος ἔνεκα βροτοῦ ἀνέρος ἔμπεσον εὐνή (HH 5,199).

‘He will have pain, because I fell into the bed of a mortal man.’

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dactylic word and a monosyllabic word before the caesura in the third foot was avoided. See also Meister (1921: 6), Sjölund (1938: 63), Snell (1986: 16), Barnes (1986: 141) and Sicking (1993: 81), who argued that a monosyllabon at the end of a sentence, colon or verse was avoided.

<sup>16</sup> Sicking (1993: 81); already Hoffmann (1842: 20–21) already pointed out that it was unusual to end the sentence in the foot before the actual pause.

<sup>17</sup> Gerhard (1816: 127–128); Voss (1826: 63 with some examples in epic Greek, such as *Iliad* 15,18; *Odyssey* 10,58 and *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (HH 2),202); Lehrs (1860: 513); von Christ (1874: 182, 199); Monro (1884: lxxiv-lxxv, 1891: 339); Meister (1921: 4); Maas (1923: 22); Stifler (1924: 348); Sjölund (1938: 64); Bowra (1960a: 21); Korzeniewski (1968: 34); Ingalls (1970: 1); Cantilena (1995: 39–40, he also referred to an unpublished MA thesis discussing this topic: M. Marra. 1992/3. *Il problema dell’ esametro bipartito*. MA Thesis Università di Venezia - non uidi); Gentile & Lomiento (2003: 270, referring to Pseudo-Hephaestion (2<sup>nd</sup> century AD?) as the author of the metrical prohibition).

One could interpret ἔνεκα as conjunction and not as a preposition. If it is a conjunction and considered proclitic, then this would be a bipartite hexameter, but if the conjunction is not proclitic, we would have a “normal” caesura at 3a. This verse is the earliest instance in Greek poetry of ἔνεκα being used in this sense (the others only occurring the Hellenistic Age), but this in itself is no need to reject that possibility.<sup>18</sup> If one interprets it as a preposition (which is not so common, as it usually being a postposition) the verse has no caesura at 3a or 3b, and the verse could even be a bipartite hexameter. Some scholars have used this verse as evidence for an Hellenistic Age of the Hymn,<sup>19</sup> while several other scholars have suggested to alter the text to account for this uncommon usage. Suggestions include Hermann’s ἔσχ’ ἄχος οὐνεκ’ ἄρα,<sup>20</sup> Gemoll’s ὄτε τε based on *Iliad* 18,85,<sup>21</sup> Suhle’s ὄτι ῥα (although he was convinced that the Hymn was post-Homeric and even Hellenistic, so he considered his conjecture to be a mere addition to the already large number of suggestions) and Van der Ben’s ἔσχ’ ἄχος οὐ ἔνεκα.<sup>22</sup> Kamerbeek suggested *dubitanter* to leave the text as it is, but to add a comma after ἄχος (thus explaining the unusual long syllable) and explain ἔνεκα then as a preposition with βροτοῦ ἀνέρος.<sup>23</sup> Hoekstra argued that either Kamerbeek’s suggestion was correct or that the verse originated because the poet wanted to imitate and modify the Homeric usage by assuming that using οὐνεκα in the meaning of ἔνεκα was epic.<sup>24</sup> The question is if it is necessary to change the transmitted text: the suggestions by Suhle and Gemoll might have Homeric parallels, but they are too drastic from a palaeographic point of view,<sup>25</sup> and do not answer the question why a copyist would have changed the text if this

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<sup>18</sup> See already Ilgen (1796: 491–492), Faulkner (2008: 258–259) with a discussion of the earlier suggestions, Richardson (2010: 245), Olson (2012: 233).

<sup>19</sup> Suhle (1878: 17), Freed & Bentman (1950: 158).

<sup>20</sup> Hermann (1806: 101–102).

<sup>21</sup> Gemoll (1886: 271).

<sup>22</sup> Suhle (1878: 9) *in versu 199. viros doctos offendit vox ἔνεκα, cuius tollendae causa varias coniecturas protulerunt, quarum multitudo facile augeri potest (velut hac: ὄτι ῥα)*, Van der Ben (1981: 82).

<sup>23</sup> Kamerbeek (1967: 388), approved by Lenz (1975: 127). Interpreting it as a preposition was already done by Ilgen (1796: 491–492).

<sup>24</sup> Hoekstra (1969b: 47).

<sup>25</sup> Allen & Sikes (1904: 214).

reading was so much closer to Homeric epic. Kamerbeek's suggestion changes the text and removes the (obvious) link between εὐνή and βροτοῦ ἀνέροϋ: the scandal for Aphrodite is that she slept with a mortal man.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the fact that the Alexandrinians used ἔνεκα as a preposition could also mean that they knew of this uncommon use in early Greek epic and wanted to show that they knew it.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, it is better to leave the text as it is.<sup>28</sup> Assuming, with Heitsch, that the poet made a mistake,<sup>29</sup> does not add anything to the discussion and does not explain why later poets (including some learned Alexandrinians) would have used the word in this meaning as well.

## 1.2 Formal criteria in deciding the certainty of the augment

The presence or absence of the augment is considered secure, if the alternative form yields

- i) the elision of a dative singular ending in -ι,<sup>30</sup>
- ii) the elision of a dative plural ending in -σι of the consonant stems (but not in -εσσι, which can be elided, although it is not that common),<sup>31</sup>
- iii) the elision of an -υ, which is *never* elided.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>26</sup> As was pointed out by Van Eck (1978: 72–73), Strauss Clay (1989: 184–185), Faulkner (2008: 258–259) and Richardson (2010: 245).

<sup>27</sup> Baumeister (1860: 265–266), Càssola (1975: 554), Van Eck (1978: 72–73).

<sup>28</sup> Baumeister (1860: 265–266), Thiele (1872: 22), Càssola (1975: 268, 554), Van Eck (1978: 72–73), Faulkner (2008: 258–259), Richardson (2010: 245), Olson (2012: 233).

<sup>29</sup> Heitsch (1965: 30–31).

<sup>30</sup> Grashof (1852: 11); La Roche (1869: 76, 80, but see 125–129); Bekker (1872: 22–23); Monro (1891: 349–350), Maas (1923: 27); Chantraine (1948: 86), Wachter (2000: 74); there are only 19 exceptions in the entire Homeric corpus, the list of which can be found in La Roche (1869: 125–129).

<sup>31</sup> La Roche (1869: 76, 80); Bekker (1872: 22–23); Monro (1891: 349–350); Maas (1923: 27); Chantraine (1948: 86); Wachter (2000: 74). For the possible elision of -εσσι, see La Roche (1869: 125–129)

<sup>32</sup> Spitzner (1832: 167); Kühner & Blass (1890: 230–240); Monro (1891: 349–350); Maas (1923: 27); Chantraine (1948: 85–86); Koster (1966: 45); Korzeniewski (1968: 24); Wachter (2000: 74–75). The elision of -υ was not discussed in La Roche (1869), which means that he had not found any instances in which it occurred.



iv) a short monosyllabic verb form (cf. supra).

In all the other instances (which include all the compound forms), the augment cannot be counted as secure. When analysing them and determining their value, we will have to use other criteria. This will be done in the next subchapter.

### 3 The “Barrett-Taida” method

In epic Greek,<sup>33</sup> the augment can often be added or removed without violating the metre and in several instances both the augmented and the unaugmented variant are transmitted, but only one form can be printed and different editors took different approaches.<sup>34</sup> To discuss the forms that are metrically insecure (i.e. not guaranteed by the rules in §2), I will use a method that is based on the method of Barrett and Taida. When analysing

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<sup>33</sup> Although the augment is not mandatory in lyric and tragic poetry either, I leave those genres out for the current investigation.

<sup>34</sup> For the irregular transmission of augments, see Grashof (1852 *passim*), Cauer (1890: xxxiv), Monro & Allen (1908: vi–vii), Mazon (1942: 133–134), West (1998: xxvi–xxvii), Bakker (2005: 120), Taida (2007: 3–4; 2010: 250). Monro & Allen often added or removed the augment, sometimes without mentioning it in the apparatus; Cauer often (but not always) preferred the unaugmented form in verbs starting with a vowel followed by two consonants and (sometimes) when both the augmented form preceded by an elision and the unaugmented form without elision were transmitted; Murray & Wyatt (in the Loeb) often choose one or another variant as well (as shall become clear in the different examples).

Some editors argued that the augment was already established at the time of the poems and therefore had to be inserted in the text whenever possible (as was stated by Fick 1883: 34): this was put into practice by Payne Knight (1820 – examples include *Iliad* 1,55 where he changed the transmitted φρεσὶ θῆκε into φρέσ' ἔθηκε or 1,333 where he changed the transmitted φρεσὶ φώνησέν τε into φρέσ' ἐφώνησέν τε in violation of Hermann’s Bridge; he did not say why he did this), Fick (1883, 1887), Van Leeuwen (1890: 268) and Van Leeuwen & Mendes da Costa (1886: 68–69, 1895: ix and 1898: 85–86 – they thought that the augment had always been present, that it was apocopated when the metre required it and that the absence was not a specificity of the epic diction, contrary to what Aristarkhos had thought). Janko (1992: 11) stated that the poet used a *Kunstsprache* that was very close to his native dialect and since that dialect already had the augment, all augmented forms that were transmitted in the manuscripts had to be accepted.

cases in which both the augmented and the unaugmented verb forms were attested in Euripides, Barrett decided to look at the other instances of that specific verb in tragedy and comedy and divided the attestations in three categories: metrically secure augmented forms, uncertain forms and metrically guaranteed unaugmented forms. Whichever of the guaranteed forms was more common, had to be adopted in the doubtful instances.<sup>35</sup> Taida applied this method to the Homeric Hymns to Hermes and Demeter, and compared the verb form under investigation to the attestations of that tense in the entire epic corpus.<sup>36</sup> Whereas Barrett adopted the variant with most metrically secure attestations, Taida also took metrical and semantic observations into consideration, such as the position of the form in the verse compared to the metrically secure forms in that very same position, the application of metrical laws and type of passage in which the form occurred (augmented verb forms in gnomes and *similia* were catalogued as securely augmented and iteratives in *-sk-* were securely unaugmented).<sup>37</sup> My method will follow Taida's closely, but I will also apply it to the compound verb forms and will not only focus on the number of attested forms and use the following criteria in descending order of importance:

- a) the (un)augmented form has preference if the opposite causes the shortening of a long vowel or long diphthong: long vowels and long diphthongs undergo much less shortening than short diphthongs,<sup>38</sup>
- b) the (un)augmented form has preference if the opposite causes a word end at 2b or 2c: word end at 2b and 2c is not impossible, but nevertheless not common, as it occurs only in 10% of the verses at 2b (29 out of 293) and 11% of verses at 2c (31 out of 293);
- c) if the augmented and the unaugmented variant both violate Giseke's and Meyer's Laws (word end at 2c and 2b of word starting in the first foot), the variant that violates 2b has preference, because word end at 2b of word starting in the first foot is more common than word end at 2c (and, as was stated above, a spondee at 2c is very rare in any case, so

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<sup>35</sup> Barrett (1964: 361–362).

<sup>36</sup> He admitted that the language of Homer, Hesiod and the Hymns was not the same, but stated that it was similar enough to be considered in its entirety.

<sup>37</sup> Taida (2004, 2007, 2010).

<sup>38</sup> Von Hartel (1874a, especially page 48, 1874b: 1–13), Sjölund (1938: 43, 58–70).