

**Reflecting identities through morphology in diachrony:
Ancient Greek ethnonymic verbs in *-ízō* and nouns in *-ismós***

This paper focuses on two classes of Ancient Greek derivatives formed on ethnonymic lexical bases, which were highly productive since Archaic Greek to Hellenistic and Byzantine times. These classes include verbs ending in *-ízō* and correlated nouns in *-ismós*, e.g. *lakōnízō* and *lakōnismós* both signifying ‘imitate/imitation of Lacedaemonian manners’ and ‘act/acting in the Lacedaemonian interest’. When denoting imitation of manners, the derivatives also implied connotations and stereotypes associated with behaviours of the ethnic and social group indicated by the lexical basis that might be perceived as foreign or unfamiliar to those who created and used the derivatives in *-ízō* and *-ismós*. These behaviours were mainly associated with language, e.g. *attikízō* / *attikismós* ‘speak Attic / act of speaking Attic, use of Attic dialect’, as well as aspects such as dressing, hairstyling, eating, drinking, dancing, etc. It is understood that connotations and stereotypes were socially and culturally determined and could change over the centuries and across social groups. Some of them became widespread and evolved into proverbial expressions, e.g. *krētízō* ‘imitate Cretan manners, i.e. lie’ (see example (1)). Conversely, others had diverse connotations depending on the epochs and social groups. For instance, the verb *skuthízō*, which literally means ‘behave like a Scythian’, denoted the fashion of shaving the head according to Euripides (example (2a)) and the attitude of drinking immoderately according to Athenaeus (example (2b)).

(1) μὲν οὖν Ἀχαιὸς ἐποίει τὰ δυνατὰ· τοῦτο δ’ ἠγνόει, τὸ δὴ λεγόμενον, **πρὸς Κρήτα κρητίζων**. (Plb. 8.19.5)
Achaeus indeed was doing his best, but he did not consider that, as the saying is, he was trying to play the Cretan with a Cretan.

(2a) Ἡλ. καὶ **κρᾶτα πλόκαμόν τ’ ἐσκυθισμένον** ξυρῶι. (E. El. 241)

And the hair of my head is cropped close with a sharp blade.

(2b) Ἱερώνυμος δ’ ὁ Ῥόδιος ἐν τῷ περὶ Μέθης **καὶ τὸ μεθύσαι σκυθίσαι** φησί. (Ath. 11.101.10)

Hieronymus of Rhodes in his work on drunkenness refers to getting drunk as playing the Scythian.

This study aims to investigate the classes of verbs in *-ízō* and nouns in *-ismós*, with a particular focus on their meanings and usage in texts. In addition to literary works, I will consider ancient lexica and grammatical treatises, which serve as unique sources of information for several lemmas. My research is corpus-based and encompasses Ancient Greek texts from Archaic Greek to early Byzantine Greek (seventh century CE). I intend to provide both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the derivatives under scrutiny. Specifically, my interest lies in exploring how the connotations and stereotypes associated with these derivatives originated and spread, the types of texts in which they occur (e.g. history, theatre, oratory, etc.), and how their social meanings evolved over the centuries.

The topic addressed in this study sheds new light on the theme of language and identity from the perspective of internal linguistics. As a specific type of proper names, ethnonyms convey ethnic and social boundaries without assigning specific meanings to them. The examined derivational processes illustrate how ethnic and social boundaries can acquire linguistic significance, transforming into identity markers.