

Reading the Authorial Strategies in the Derveni Papyrus

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If the commentary included in the Derveni papyrus were a literary text, it would be legitimate to read it from a formalistic viewpoint. As this is not the case, scholars have justly focused upon the religious-initiatory and the exegetical-allegorical aspects of this peculiar commentary on the Orphic theogony. On the basis of the distinction between literary and non-literary, the form and content of the Derveni papyrus have been interpreted within a ritual and/or philosophical context — some occasional remarks or even deliberate attempts to theorize about it being the exception that proves the rule.¹

Whichever the generic identity of the Derveni document, it appears to be a far cry from the concept of *literariness*: it can no more be regarded as ‘literature’ than the Homeric scholia or Aristotle’s treatises, at least in the narrow sense of the word. Yet, as the voice resonating throughout the commentary strikes us with its exceptional clarity and vigor, the fact that the profile of the Derveni author has attracted considerable attention by each and every scholar studying the papyrus should not come as a surprise. In my view, all readings of the author’s voice in the Derveni papyrus entail, albeit implicitly, the acknowledgement that what we have here is far more than a set of religious / philosophical technicalities on how to understand the Orphic theogony. Design and intention, arrangement and style point toward a conscious, imaginative speaker (or writer), who is well aware of his ability to manipulate his audience by methodically creating his own authorial persona. It is the question of which devices are employed for this purpose that I will be addressing in the present study.

The approach of the Derveni document as a unified *text* rather than as a heterogeneous collection of two different texts, i.e. a poetic theogony and an exegetical commentary, provides a useful starting point for my discussion. The same principle underlies Madeleine Henry’s rendering of the Derveni commentator as a literary critic, when she notes that “our present and nearly universal habit of characterizing the Derveni document as a poem and commentary thereon may be harmfully inaccurate, for such a perceptual stance diverts us from viewing the entire document as an autonomous object of study”; subsequently, she describes all the objects of the author’s scrutiny, i.e. the Orphic poem, the dreams, the oracles and the rites, and the interpretation itself, as ‘text’.² If the Derveni document is viewed from this unifying perspective, it is natural to suppose that its creator assumes the role of the ‘author’ in that he develops an overall strategy for controlling his ‘text’, in much the same way as any writer of literature does. Therefore, I suggest that the Derveni ‘text’ lends itself to an

¹ See e.g. Calame (1997) and Obbink (1997).

² Henry (1986) 151-152.

analysis based on the same criteria –stylistic, rhetorical, narratological– that underlie the study of literature.³

1. A staged theology?

A peculiar feature of the Derveni commentary, as contrasted to other technical texts, is that it explicitly refers to a setting. To define this setting in terms of (narrative?) space would amount to its analysis by means of various parameters, such as: the existence of an environment, the description of the objects included in it, the implication of a temporal dimension and the demonstration of the ways in which this environment interacts with human experience.⁴

The preserved text begins with a description of Orphic ritual practices, which are probably not enacted in real time to the accompaniment of the commentator’s words (Coll. I-VII).⁵ What strikes us most is the detailed depiction of how these rituals are performed, as the below-mentioned citations clearly demonstrate [*italics are mine*]:

(Col.II.5-8) ... *libations are poured down in drops for Zeus in every temple. Further, one must offer exceptional honors to [the Eumenids] and burn a bird to each [of the daimons]. And he added [hymns] adapted (or: poems well-adapted) to the music.*

(Col.V.2-5) ... *consult an oracle ... they consult an oracle ... for them we enter the oracle in order to ask*, with regard to those seeking a divination, whether it is proper ...

(Col.VI.4-8) This is why the magi *perform the sacrifice*, just as if they are paying a retribution. *And on the offerings they pour water and milk, from which they also make the libations to the dead. Innumerable and many-knobbed are the cakes they sacrifice*, because the souls too are innumerable.

(Col.VI.10-11) On their account anyone who is going to sacrifice to the gods *must first [sacrifice] a bird* ...

(Col.VII.2-3) *For [a sacred rite was being performed]* through the poem.

The text is fraught with difficulties as regards the type and number of rituals described, the subjects of these rituals (Greek and/or Persian magi, initiates) and their connection to

³ In my citation of the Derveni papyrus I follow the Kouremenos-Parássoglou-Tsantsanoglou (2006) edition (henceforth referred to as KPT); I have also adopted their translation of the Greek original.

⁴ See *RENT* s.v. “Space in narrative”.

⁵ E.g. Bernabé (2007a) 124: “It can be a *ἱερὸς λόγος* related as *λεγόμενα* to a ritual, but it is impossible to determine which ritual it would be and whether it had something to do with the ones alluded to by the commentator himself”. On a thorough overview of the discussions of these columns, primarily from the viewpoint of Greek religion, see Betegh (2004) 74-91.

Orphic or other mystical cults (e.g. the Eleusinian mysteries). However, my focus is upon the means by which the commentator livens up his theological account. There are at least two different spaces referred to explicitly: the temple (κατὰ πάντα να[όν] and the oracle ([εἰς τὸ μα]ντεῖον). Moreover, the theological background prompts the speculation that the space towering above the others might be a tomb, the place where the *choai* were traditionally performed: it is plausible, then, that the setting of the theological narration captures the atmosphere of the real setting, i.e. the Derveni tomb itself.⁶

The spatialization of the mysteries provides the basis for action to unfold, for ritual to be symbolically enacted. As in any ceremony, the action is not connected with a fixed point in time but instead its repeatedness and duration are stressed. Thus, the numerous verbs describing this recurrent ritual are set in the present (τιμῶσιν, [χ]έονται, χρησ[τ]ηριάζον[ται, πάριμεν, μ[ε]ιλ[ί]σσοισι, π[ο]ιοῦσι[ν], ἐπισπένδουσιν, θύουσιν, προθύουσι) or, in a few cases, in the future ([χ]ρή ... καίειν, ἐπερ[ω]τήσ[οντες] and τὸν μέλλοντ]α θεοῖς θύειν). Corresponding to the activities in which the magi and the initiates are regularly engaged, these verbs alternate between the dramatic present and the didactic / instructional dimension of the future tense –though with a strong emphasis on the first. Dramatization is further reinforced as the commentator provides a detailed record of how these rituals are performed: the libations, the burning of birds, the hymning and playing music, the sacrifice, the offering of water, milk and cakes set the scene for an almost theatrically enacted ceremony.

Three key concepts appear within this theological staging, the Erinyes, the Eumenids and the *daimones* in connection to the soul of the deceased. Several suggestions have been made as to the identification of each category with the other two, and as to their philosophical / religious significance.⁷ However, more important to my reading are the dynamics of their presence within the space implied, the eschatological interface they create between the (real or fictional) setting and the enactment of the ritual. Regardless of whether the ritual context implied here is that of an initiation or a funeral,⁸ the Erinyes, the Eumenids and the *daimones* are shown to inhabit its spatial environment. It is their epiphany (which, apart from its reception in philosophical and religious texts, is notably re-enacted in literature, e.g. in Attic tragedy) that lends a strong feeling of death, an eschatological atmosphere to this staged theology, functioning as an introduction to the Orphic exegesis that is about to follow.

⁶ Cf. Betegh (2004) 76: “*Choai* were most often made to the deceased at the grave. This would certainly fit well with the archaeological context of the roll, and raises the possibility that the text refers to much funerary rituals as were conducted also at the tomb at Derveni.”

⁷ E.g. Henrichs (1984) and Tsantsanoglou (1997).

⁸ Betegh (2004) 88-89.

2. The author's voices

A distinguishing characteristic of the Derveni commentary, separating it from other texts within the same generic category, is its polyphonic quality. By the term *polyphony* narratologists describe either (a) the plurality of voices that can be heard within a text and are not subordinate to a single authorial hierarchy or (b) the fact that the main narrator's utterance is in itself many-voiced.⁹ Although point (a) is also applicable to the Derveni text, as will be shown in the next sections, it is point (b), the variety of the authorial voices, that I will be dealing with presently.

Since the identity of the Derveni author is highly controversial and chiefly reconstructed by his mirror image in the text,¹⁰ we are only able to give an account of the implied author and his narrative persona as reflected within the commentary. Thus, rather than searching for the Derveni author as a historical entity, we should instead focus upon the ways in which he manifests himself in the textual world through the employment of three different voices, the omniscient, the exegetical and the didactic respectively.

The underlying premise of this textual world is that it represents the theological and philosophical truth of the Orphic theogony; but, since the revelation of this truth is a question of interpretation, the author, qua interpreter, adopts an overall omniscient voice:

(Col.VII.3-8) And one cannot state the solution of the (enigmatic) words though they are spoken (i.e. not secret). This poem is strange and riddling to people though [Orpheus] himself did not intend to say contentious riddles but rather great things in riddles. In fact he is speaking mystically, and from the very first word all the way to the last.

(Col.IX.10-12) With regard to the phrase 'he took in his hands', he was allegorizing just as in everything else which formerly seemed uncertain but has been most certainly understood.

The author's persona highlights the strange (ξ[ένη τις ἢ] πόησις), enigmatic (ἀνθρώ[ποις] αἰνι[γμ]ατώδης), mystical (ἱερολογεῖται) and allegorical (ἠνιζέτο) nature of the Orphic poem. The abovementioned expressions capture Orpheus' intention –or, to be more accurate, what the author has us believe to be Orpheus' intention– to create a sacred speech, an *hierologia*; his aim was to communicate theological truth to the believers in a non explicit way,¹¹ thus rendering his speech incomprehensible to the many (cf. the repeated use of

⁹ See *RENT* s.v. "Polyphony".

¹⁰ Fundamental is the discussion about the problem of the authorship of the Derveni papyrus by Janko (1997). On the profile of the Derveni author, as sketched out in the text, see Betegh (2004) 349-372.

¹¹ Orpheus' intention to deliver a mystical speech is more effectively expressed, if we take Orpheus to be the subject of the verbs, see KPT (2006) 171-172.

αἰνιζόμενος ἔφη / αἰνίζεται ‘allegorizing / speaking in an enigmatic way’). This deliberate obscurity calls for the superhuman intervention of an interpreter who is able to ‘translate’ the divine discourse of Orpheus and, more importantly, to reveal the (hypothetical) intentionality behind his theogony. Textual markers such as σκέψασθαι δὲ χρή ‘one has to consider...’ followed by ἐδήλωσεν ‘he made clear that...’, κ[α]θ’ ἕπος ἕκαστον ἀνάγκη λέγειν ‘it is necessary to speak about each word in turn’, διὰ τοῦτο λέγει ‘for this reason he says...’, δῆλον ‘it is clear...’, σημαίνει δὲ [τ]όδε ‘and this indicates this...’ and the like suffice to illustrate the point. Occasionally, the author transgresses his role as a go-between between the Orphic text and the community, and grows into a prophet himself not only by assessing Orpheus’ theology (Col.XXII.1-3 ‘so he named everything in the same way as best he could knowing the nature of men, that not all have the same (nature) nor all want the same things’), but also by judging divine providence (Col.XXV.9-10 ‘if the god did not wish the present εἶντα to exist, he would not have made the sun’).

Undoubtedly, the Derveni text resonates chiefly with its author’s exegetical voice.¹² Despite the religious / philosophical subject of the commentary, the most striking feature of the commenting voice is its emphasis upon textual and linguistic analysis. In effect, the Derveni author focuses so intensely upon the exploration of the potentialities and limitations of language that his exegesis of the Orphic religion has plausibly been likened to the type of literary criticism undertaken by Plato and Aristotle.¹³ Taking one step further, we may argue that the Derveni author views Orphic religion through a literary prism in interpreting its textual rendition in terms of poetic language: this is why he highlights the ambiguity of language, the use of metaphor and the paramount importance of the context as vital parameters for the correct understanding of the Orphic text.¹⁴

Moreover, here is an instance of pure textual criticism:

(Col.VIII.6-12) It has escaped notice that these words are transposed; in fact they are as follows: ‘Zeus, when he took the power from his father and the glorious daimon.’ [In this] word order the prevailing meaning is not that Zeus hears his father but that he takes power for him. [In the other] word order the impression would be given that he took the power contrary to the prophecies.

Elsewhere semantic analysis for the terms deployed by Orpheus is provided, as for example in the interpretation of ‘πανομφεύουσιν’:

¹² Edmonds (2008) 33 and n.78 stresses the fact that the Derveni author displays his expert knowledge through the explication of a difficult poetic text, i.e. the Orphic theogony; moreover, he draws a very interesting parallel between the Derveni interpretation of Orpheus and the exegesis of the Simonides poem in Plato *Protagoras* 339a-347a.

¹³ See Henry (1986) 150-151.

¹⁴ These features are brilliantly discussed by Henry (1986) 151-163.

(Col.X.6-10) Therefore, ‘teaching’ was not considered different from ‘saying’ and ‘saying’ from ‘uttering’, but ‘uttering’, ‘saying’ and ‘teaching’ mean the same. Thus nothing prevents “all-voicing” and ‘teaching all things’ from being the same thing.

In Col. XXII the author identifies various deities, namely Ge, Gaia, Demeter, Meter, Rhea and Hera, with each other by suggesting the etymological affinity between their names; even if the idea forms part of the Orphic religion,¹⁵ the emphasis on tautology should be credited to the commentator himself. The etymologizing of other divine names, such as Aphrodite from ἀφροδισιάζω, Peitho from εἴκω-πείθω and Harmonia from ἀρμόζω in Col.XXI, displays the curious mixture of philological and philosophical discourse used by the Derveni author.¹⁶

As said, the Derveni text is polyphonic in more ways than one: its author, via his exegetical voice, engages repeatedly in an (intertextual?) dialogue with previous interpreters.¹⁷ To reconstruct their identity is an almost impossible task, as their figures remain nameless and shadowy; their voice is subsumed into the author’s discourse; their presence is only vaguely sensed, as for example in the following passage:

(Col.XII.3-6) Those who think that Olympus and heaven are the same are mistaken, because they do not realize that heaven cannot be long rather than wide...

Scholars have made reasonable assumptions about the origin of the beliefs criticized here, linking them primarily with views expressed in the Homeric epics as interpreted by pre-Hellenistic commentators.¹⁸ However, in contrast with explicit references to other thinkers, such as Heraclitus in Col.IV.5 (κατὰ [ταύτ]᾿ Ἡράκλειτος μα[ρτυρόμενος] τὰ κοινά ‘in the same manner Heraclitus invoking common truths...’), the Derveni author opts to roughly outline the profile of ‘those who misunderstand’ the theological truths. In addition, the opinions of the ordinary people are objected to:

(Col.XIX.4-5) So when they say that ‘Moira spun’, they are saying that...

Or:

(Col.IX.2-4) But those who do not understand the words spoken think that Zeus takes the power and the daimon from his own father.

¹⁵ Betegh (2004) 189-190.

¹⁶ For a thorough discussion of the commentator’s technique of applying the numerous divine names used by Orpheus to very few divinities, see Betegh (2004) 185-205.

¹⁷ On the agonistic aspect of such criticism, see Edmonds (2008) 33 n.79.

¹⁸ Kouremenos in KPT (2006) 189-191, see esp. the concluding remark on p. 191: “It is unclear whether in rejecting the identification of Olympus with the sky the Derveni author objects to the absence of a clear distinction between Olympus and the sky in Homer, to a pre-Zenodotean interpretation of the Homeric Olympus as the sky, or to the use of the noun ‘Olympus’ as a name for the outermost heavens in the natural philosophy of his day.”

There is an undertone of contempt for the anonymous misinterpreters throughout the Derveni text; this undertone marks the transition from the exegetical to the didactic voice. By assuming the role of the initiator and the instructor at the same time, the Derveni author constructs a textual world modeled on the conventions of didactic literature, the most crucial of which is the opposition of an addresser and an addressee.¹⁹ It is to this opposition that I will now turn my attention.

3. Devising the addressees

Were the textual world of the Derveni papyrus to be inhabited only by the implied author, our reading experience would have been definitely less exciting, less dramatic and less personalized than it is now. It is exciting because otherwise the text would have been monophonic; it is dramatic because the author animates his protagonists; it is personalized since the addressees function as (anti)models for the reader himself.

Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the Derveni author differentiates his commentary from traditional initiatory texts: no direct apostrophes to the addressees are included nor do the initiates produce their own utterances. Claude Calame, in comparing initiatory texts known from the gold leaves and the Derveni papyrus, remarks that “from the enunciatory point of view, these texts either constitute direct addresses to the initiand, praising the initiatory process he is in the process of performing, or are placed in the mouth of the initiand himself, who thereby expresses his hope for salvation. With the performative value they receive by being spoken in the second or first person, these texts diverge greatly from the Derveni commentary, which is characterized by the distance of the interpretations stated in the third person.”²⁰

Teaching in the Derveni papyrus is normally voiced in this distanced rhetoric; however, the author’s didactic does not take place in a vacuum.²¹ The paradox of the Derveni text, then, is the lack of a direct dramatization of the intended initiatory act, whereas, on the other hand, the experience of an actual ritual is hinted at by reference to a staging, an instructor and a community of worshippers. The Derveni author is not alone in his textual world. Having already stressed the theatricality of the ritual space and the different personae adopted by him, I will now focus upon the vivid account of his addressees.

As said, there is no trace of a direct address to a hearer (or reader) in the Derveni text; its author opts for a third-person form of address, as “when the point is to emphasize unequal

¹⁹ On the didactic function, see Calame (1997) 77-80.

²⁰ Calame (1997) 79, cf. *ib.* n.23.

²¹ Even more so, if he had been a practitioner, probably a *mantis*, as Tsantsanoglou (1997) 98 thinks: “but it is noticeable that this is not the didactic tendency of a theological thinker, but the desire of a religious practitioner to disseminate his professional secrets to the faithful.”

status between speaker and addressee, for instance, to show respect or scorn.”²² The latter is the case here, since the author constantly opposes his addressees to his own ability to comprehend and reveal the religious truth to people. The author’s strategy is to introduce only the ill-informed and the profane into his textual world, thus excluding those who understand –a trace of the latter is to be found in the following passage:

(Col.XXIII.1-3) This verse is composed so as to be misleading; it is unclear to the many, but quite clear to those who have correct understanding, that “Oceanus” is the air and that air is Zeus.

To gain in effectiveness, the author represents his instruction as a process of enlightenment; we may record the different stages of this process by observing the various portrayals of the addressees. At first, they seem to disbelieve on the basis of their ignorance:

(Col.V.6-10) Why do they disbelieve in the horrors of Hades? Without knowing (the meaning of) dreams or any of the other things, by what kind of evidence would they believe? For overcome both by error and pleasure as well, they neither learn nor believe.

Disbelievers are those who cannot decipher the signs sent by the gods in the form of dreams –signs clearly hinting at the horrors of Hades. Crucial to their misinterpretation is the fact that they have given themselves over to pleasure.²³ Are they to be identified with the many who have no hope of understanding?

(Col.VII.9-11) ...having ordered them to “put doors to their ears”, he says that he is not legislating for the many [but addressing himself to those] who are pure in hearing...

The implied audience has been selected according to the main criterion applying to Orphic mysticism, namely the exclusion of the unholy.²⁴ A few, uninitiated but with a prospect of understanding, are eventually accepted as recipients of the Orphic teaching and its interpretation.²⁵ Now, their lack of knowledge (οἱ δὲ οὐ γινώσκον[τες]) is due to the misinterpretation of the Orphic theogony (δοκοῦσι / οἱ δὲ δοκοῦντες), which in turn may be attributed to the ambiguity of the poetic language deployed;²⁶ the point is best illustrated in the following example:

²² RENT s.v. “Address”.

²³ On the association of disbelief and pleasure within an eschatological context in Plato, see Kouremenos in KPT (2006) 164-166.

²⁴ On this topos of Orphic and related literature, see the testimonia collected by Bernabé (2007b) ad loc.

²⁵ Bernabé (2007a) 100-102, on the contrary, argues that the listeners are already initiated and therefore the poem is not *sensu stricto* an initiation poem.

²⁶ We may even find a counter-example implied in Col.XIII.7-9: “*Seeing that people consider all birth to depend on the genitals and that without the genitals there can be no birth, he used this*

(Col.XXVI.8-12) But those who do not understand the word think that it means ‘of his own’ (i.e. ἑᾶς) mother. But if he wanted to show the god “desiring to mingle in love with his own mother”, he could have said, altering (a few) letters, ‘ἑοῖο mother’.

Shifting from eschatology to mysticism and from philosophical exegesis to literary interpretation, the Derveni author manipulates his implied audience into accepting his view of Orphism; given that this view is subjective and refracted through the authorial strategies deployed, I will finally review the Derveni commentary as a complex, multilayered text, mainly by examining its relation to the Orphic original.

4. The quoter and the quotee

To address the question of the nature and the generic quality of the Derveni text is not an easy task. Should we classify it as secondary literature or as an autonomous essay on Orphism? Does its importance stem from its religious function as an initiation text or is it merely a philological source for the reconstruction of the lost Orphic poem?²⁷ The fact that it has been variously labeled as commentary, *hypomnema*, theogony, *hieros logos*, allegorical exegesis, *syngamma* etc. reflects the difficulty to identify the Derveni text with a well-defined, pre-Hellenistic, subliterate generic category.²⁸ The following remark by Henry provides a useful starting point for reconsidering the issue: “The Derveni author interprets the Orphic poem on behalf of an untrained audience. By rereading and rewriting the text for that audience, the commentator implies that all criticism is a species of rewriting as well as of rereading. It is self-justifying because in thus guiding the audience to what he believes are important questions, the Derveni author creates his own ‘model readers’.”²⁹

The key to understanding this device may be found in the author’s notion of the quotation. In effect, the Derveni author (the quoter) is rereading and rewriting a theogonic poem attributed to Orpheus (the quotee) by embedding brief excerpts from it (the quotational inset) into his own initiatory / exegetical discourse (the discoursal frame).³⁰ The way in which these four parameters interact with each other has a series of consequences. First, the author, acting as an intermediary reader, controls both the Orphic pretext and his audience; thus, his reliability is put to the test, as the reader has to rely on the author for the selection,

(word) and likened the sun to a genital organ.” See e.g. Kouremenos (KPT [2006] 196) who remarks that the Derveni author in explaining the word αἰδοῖον appeals to common beliefs in order to justify the explanation that Orpheus employs in his poem.

²⁷ The various possibilities of classifying subject matter and genre of the Derveni text are listed by Betegh (2004) 349-350.

²⁸ For an overview of this debate, see Funghi (1997).

²⁹ Henry (1986) 163-164.

³⁰ On the terminology, see *RENT* s.v. “Quotation theory”.

arrangement and accurate citation of the pretext.³¹ Second, by juxtaposing his own voice with the Orphic, the Derveni author renders his text polyphonic but, more importantly, transgeneric, in that he combines the Orphic (hymnic or epic) theogonic poem, with philosophical, theological and exegetical discourse. Moreover, not only does the quoter enhance his prestige by invoking the authority of Orpheus but also the quotee, via his cited theogony, may challenge the validity of the author's explanation.³²

All this amounts to a new 'genre' which encompasses the Orphic original as adapted to the intra- and extratextual standards applied by the author –the authorial strategies, rhetoric and style belonging to the first, the ritual, religious and philosophical requirements of the author's cultural environment to the latter.³³ Our irresolution to define, to name this genre stems from its multi-dimensional character. Dirk Obbink, in arguing that the Derveni author combines cosmology with initiation, concludes that this mixed genre is “an alternative to the view of the Derveni papyrus as a composition of a single dimension: a philological commentary, philosophical treatise, or literary *paignion*... Certainly some of the exegetical techniques invoked by the commentator derive from a shared early stage of critical activity dating to the late fifth century. But the mobilization of those techniques in the linking of myth and idea at the expense of clarity in reasoning has ritual and social motivation.”³⁴

To conclude. The Derveni author imposes his highly personalized, subjective view upon the Orphic material; he constructs his readers and communicates his own perspective of Orphism to them; this results to a text where citation, commentary, instruction and apologetic converge. In my opinion, there are some interesting parallels with late antiquity and Byzantine texts, all of which can be regarded as 'commentaries' on great works of the past –in the broadest sense of the term. These may include such diverse genres as philological criticism (especially Eustathius' and Tzetzes' personalized commentaries on Greek poetry), Christian apologetic and Neoplatonic treatises, and works such as Basil's *Hexaameron* or Philon's *Quaestiones*. We would benefit considerably by reading the Derveni text in the light of these works –but this is a matter of another survey.

³¹ For a reconstruction of the Orphic theogony on the basis of a) the literally quoted fragments and b) “the content of the text the commentator read but did not quote”, see Bernabé (2007a), cf. Betegh (2004) 92-131.

³² There is a dissonance between the Orphic theogony and the author's cosmogonic views, see e.g. Betegh (2004) 275 who notes that “there is hardly anything connecting the two. This is why it is customarily held that the author –as indeed all who engage in the business of allegoresis– loses sight of and violates the apparent meaning of the text.”

³³ On the philosophical affiliations of the Derveni author, see Janko (1997) 61-66. Cf. the suggestion also put forward by Janko (2002-2003) that the Derveni author was probably regarded by his contemporaries as an 'atheist' for the fact that he applied allegory and etymology to the interpretation of the holy texts of Orphism.

³⁴ Obbink (1997) 54.

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