

Like the breath in winter it also often comes from the human mouth, and a mass of bubbles does depict for us chaos. To say that Life is a Breath is almost tautology, but to say that Life is a Bubble is not very far from the thought of Ecclesiastes.

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ADVERSARIA.

I. THE 'BLESSED PRESBYTERS' WHO CONDEMNED NOETUS.

Noetus the Smyrniot, the original inventor of Patripassianism, was examined and ultimately condemned at a council of 'the blessed presbyters'. The object of this note is to try to give an answer to two questions: the first, Where was the council held? the second and more important, Who were the μακάριοι πρεσβύτεροι who composed it?

Our only real authority in the matter is Hippolytus. The account in Epiphanius *Haer.* lvii 1 is, as any one can satisfy himself who compares the two writers,¹ dependent on the account in Hippolytus *contra Noctum* 1 (ap. Lagarde *Hippolyti Romani quae feruntur omnia graece*, 1858, pp. 43, 44). Epiphanius after his manner heightens the effect of the picture by dotting the i's and crossing the t's, as he copies out his source: but there is not the least reason to think that he made use of any other authority. So carelessly and unintelligently does he incorporate into his context the language of his exemplar, that whereas Hippolytus begins by saying that Noetus' place was Smyrna and his date rather recent, οὐ πρὸ πολλοῦ χρόνου γινόμενος, Epiphanius transfers him to Ephesus, and writing nearly a century and a half later says that he taught οὐ πρὸ ἐτῶν πλειόνων, ἀλλ' ὡς πρὸ χρόνου τῶν τούτων ἑκατὸν τριάκοντα, 'not so long ago, that is to say, some hundred and thirty years back!'

No statement therefore made in this connexion by Epiphanius is of any value, unless (a) it is a legitimate deduction from the words of Hippolytus, or (b) we find any special reason to suppose that it rests on some other authority and was not deduced (rightly or wrongly) from Hippolytus.

As to place, Epiphanius knows of no other local connexion than Asia and Ephesus. As to the synod, he calls its members οἱ μακάριοι πρεσβύτεροι τῆς ἐκκλησίας . . . οἱ αὐτοὶ πρεσβύτεροι: but he also

¹ Besides the phrases quoted in the text, compare Hippolytus 43. 12 οἴσει πνεύματος ἀλλοτρίου with Epiphanius ἀλλοτρίῳ πνεύματι φερόμενος: H. 43. 12, 15 εἰς ἐπηρμένον, ἐπαρμα καρδίας with E. ἐπάρμασι μανίας ἐπαρθείς. Comparison of H. 43. 25 τί οὖν κακὸν ποιῶ δοξάζων τὸν χριστὸν . . . καὶ ἡμεῖς ἕνα θεὸν οἶδαμεν ἀληθῶς, οἶδαμεν χριστὸν with E. τί γὰρ κακὸν πεποίηκα; ἕνα θεὸν δοξάζω, ἕνα ἐπίσταμαι may suggest that something has dropped out of our existing text of Hippolytus.

paraphrases twice with ἐπὶ τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου ἀγόμενος, ἐρωτώμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου, so that it is clear that he interpreted the word 'presbyters' literally. From Epiphanius the statement has become current that a synod of presbyters examined and condemned Noetus, and separated him from the Church, ἐξέωσαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας. It does not appear to have occurred to Epiphanius, or to those who have relied on his authority, to ask the question how it came about that presbyters were able to excommunicate on grounds of heresy without any mention of the bishop. Yet *ex hypothesi* the date and place—the province of Asia, at a time somewhere towards the end of the second century—point us to a well-known centre of episcopacy. Polycrates of Ephesus was writing to Victor of Rome (Eus. *H. E.* v 24) very soon after the time when Noetus' case must have been in question, and the pre-suppositions of his letter (even apart from anything else we know of the organization of the Church at that date) would seem to be absolutely inconsistent with the settlement of a doctrinal issue in an important church of that district without reference to any bishop.¹

We shall do well therefore to scrutinize rather carefully the evidence of Epiphanius on this question of the identification of the πρεσβύτεροι, and especially to test it with reference to his source.

Hippolytus speaks of Noetus in more than one of his writings: in the *contra Noetum*, and at two points in the *Philosophumena* or *Ref. Omn. Haer.*, namely at the beginning of book ix and in the middle of book x. But as Epiphanius appears to be drawing here solely on the *contra Noetum*, we will confine ourselves in the first instance to that writing. And we notice at once (besides the minor mistake of the substitution of Ephesus for Smyrna as the home of Noetus and of his preaching) that Epiphanius has gone beyond the letter of his authority in his references to the *presbyterium*: for while Hippolytus repeatedly speaks of οἱ πρεσβύτεροι—ταῦτα ἀκούσαντες οἱ μακάριοι πρεσβύτεροι προσκαλεσάμενοι ἐνώπιον τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐξήταζον . . . πάλιν προσκαλεσάμενοι οἱ μακάριοι πρεσβύτεροι ἤλεγξαν . . . ἀνταποκρίνονται οἱ πρεσβύτεροι . . . ἐλέγξαντες ἐξέωσαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας—he never speaks of τὸ πρεσβυτέριον.

Now if we go on to ask what Hippolytus meant by 'the blessed presbyters', we shall find new light thrown on the problem by the references in the *Philosophumena*. And on the smaller point of the locality of the synod, the evidence of the *Philosophumena* is quite decisive.

The opening chapters of the ninth book are occupied with an exposition of the teaching of Noetus and of its relation to the philosophy of Heraclitus. Not much is told us about his personal history, but the

¹ The hypothesis of a temporary vacancy in the episcopate of the particular community is excluded by the definite mention of two meetings of the πρεσβύτεροι and of an interval, apparently considerable, between them.

little that is said is precise and important. 'There was a certain man called Noetus, by origin a Smyrniot. He was responsible for introducing a heresy constructed out of the doctrines of Heraclitus: and he had for his deacon and disciple a certain Epigonus, who settled at Rome and sowed there the seeds of his godless opinions. Epigonus had a disciple Cleomenes, and Cleomenes it was who developed the Noetian school at Rome with the connivance and ultimately the patronage of pope Zephyrinus and his henchman and successor Callistus.' Hardly anything is added in the references to Noetus in x 26, 27: we are told that a section of the Montanists adopted Noetian views; the information as to the Smyrniot origin of Noetus is repeated, and the succession Noetus—Epigonus—Cleomenes is recapitulated; finally the connexion of Callistus with Noetian and other heretical schools is emphasized.

From these details three things emerge with clearness. (1) The date of Noetus is thrown well back into the second century. His disciple's disciple was contemporary with Zephyrinus and Callistus in the first twenty years of the third century, so that the beginnings of Noetianism in its first home may be placed as early as A. D. 180, and it is not likely that the excommunication of Noetus can be any later than A. D. 190. (2) Any direct connexion of Noetus himself with Rome is excluded. Hippolytus says quite definitely that it was his disciple Epigonus who introduced Noetianism into the capital. There is nothing either in Hippolytus or Epiphanius to suggest that the scene of the transactions in which the 'blessed presbyters' were concerned on one side and Noetus on the other was anywhere else than in Asia Minor: and it is by a quite unaccountable slip that the *Dictionary of Christian Biography* (iv 49) transfers it to Rome. (3) If Epigonus is described as 'deacon of' Noetus, the natural, and indeed I think for the second century inevitable, deduction is that Noetus was a bishop: to Hippolytus' phrase (ix 7. 1) Νοητὸς . . . οὗ διάκονος καὶ μαθητῆς γίνεται Ἐπίγονος I know of no early parallel save Hegesippus' phrase (ap. Eus. *H. E.* iv 22. 3) μέχρις Ἀνικήτου, οὗ διάκονος ἦν Ἐλεύθερος. But if Noetus was a bishop, the idea that he can have been excommunicated by a synod of presbyters becomes tenfold more difficult than before.

And in fact, however natural it may* have been for Epiphanius one hundred and fifty years later to misunderstand the language of Hippolytus, there is not the same excuse for us if we do so now, since the *Philosophumena* provide us with an exact parallel which illustrates what to Hippolytus would be implied in the phrase οἱ μακάριοι πρεσβύτεροι. Hippolytus twice refers to St Irenaeus by name (vi 42. 1, 55. 2: Wendland 173. 12, 189. 11), and on both occasions he is called ὁ μακάριος πρεσβύτερος Εἰρηναῖος, though Hippolytus knew as well as we do that

Irenaeus was a bishop. I do not doubt that in the same way the *μακάριοι πρεσβύτεροι* of the Asiatic synod were the bishops of the neighbourhood.

That does not exactly mean that to Hippolytus the titles *πρεσβύτερος* and *ἐπίσκοπος* were interchangeable. But just as St Irenaeus could call the Roman bishops of the last generation, from Xystus to Anicetus, *οἱ πρὸ Σωτήρος πρεσβύτεροι* (ap. Eus. *H. E.* v 24. 14) 'the fathers before Soter', just as *ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἰωάννης* should in my idea be translated 'Father John', just as Hippolytus himself meant by *ὁ μακάριος πρεσβύτερος Εἰρηναῖος* that Irenaeus was one of the luminaries of the last generation 'the blessed father Irenaeus', so too I conceive that Hippolytus would only have used the phrase *οἱ μακάριοι πρεσβύτεροι* of a synod of bishops, if it had been held sufficiently far back in the past for its members to be numbered among the 'blessed dead'. If the *Philosophumena* were published c. A. D. 225, and the condemnation of Noetus took place c. A. D. 185-190, the interval would be fully adequate for this purpose. Again therefore I should render the phrase 'the blessed fathers'.

This interpretation assumes that the use of the word *μακάριος* suggests, so far as it goes, that the *πρεσβύτεροι* in question were dead. But an examination of the evidence for this technical use of *μακάριος* deserves a note to itself.

II. ΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ AS A TECHNICAL TERM.¹

I owe to a book which has never in its own sphere been superseded, Routh's *Reliquiae Sacrae* (ed. 2 vol. i pp. 179, 185: on the phrase in the fragments of Dionysius of Corinth *ὁ μακάριος ὑμῶν ἐπίσκοπος Σωτήρ*), the following citation from the Scholiast on the *Plutus* of Aristophanes

τὸ μάκαρ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀγίων λέγεται μόνον· τὸ μακάριος καὶ μακαριστὸς ἐπὶ ζώντων καὶ ἀποθανόντων· μακαρίτης δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀποθανόντων μόνον.

Of *μάκαρ* I have no instance to give from patristic writers. But as the word was (1) specially associated with the Homeric phrase *μάκαρες θεοί* (and in prose with the phrase 'Island, or Islands, of the blest'), and therefore (2) definitely pagan in association, it is just what we should expect that it should not be found at all in the earliest Christian literature, and that when it does begin to be found it should be specially appropriated to the saints.

Μακαρίτης with a proper name in the sense of 'the departed', 'the late so-and-so', is classical, but particularly frequent in late authors like Plutarch and Lucian (L. S. s. v.). There was no reason why Christians,

¹ The material of the following note comes in part from the slips contributed by various readers for the Lexicon of Patristic Greek.

who had more reason than others to regard the dead as 'blessed', should not adopt this language: and in fact it is of regular occurrence from the beginning of the Constantinian period. Thus it is common in Athanasius: *Ep. Encycl.* 7 ὑπὸ τοῦ μακαρίτου Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἐπισκόπου (and so the council of Sardica ap. Ath. *Apol. contra Arian.* 46 ὑπὸ τοῦ μακαρίτου Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ γενομένου ἐπισκόπου Ἀλεξανδρείας), *Apol. c. Ar.* 51 Κωνσταντίος . . . γράψας ἰδίᾳ πρὸς τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἑαυτοῦ τὸν μακαρίτην Κώνσταντα, *ib.* 59 ὁ μὲν μακαρίτης Ἀλέξανδρος, τὸν μακαρίτην Κωνσταντῖνον, *Ep. ad episcopos Aegypti* 18, 19 *passim*, both of Alexander and of Constantine the Great. And so Epiphanius applies the term to Constantine the Great (*de mens. et pond.* 20, *haer.* 30. 4) and to bishop Eusebius of Vercelli (*haer.* 30. 5).

But though most commonly used in this sort of connexion, it must not be supposed that μακαρίτης is limited either to persons like emperors or bishops, or to the recently dead. Athanasius speaks among his own predecessors not only of Peter (*Vita Antonii* 47) as ὁ μακαρίτης ἐπίσκοπος Πέτρος, but of Dionysius (*de sent. Dion.* 1, 4) as τὸν μακαρίτην Διονύσιον τὸν ἐπίσκοπον, and even (as it was clear who was meant) as ὁ μακαρίτης (*de sent. Dion.* 5). Cosmas Indicopleustes (ii 104 A) applies it to his friend Menas ὁ μετ' ἐμοῦ μακαρίτης Μηνᾶς. But it does probably represent a new extension of the term when we find it applied in the *Paschal Chronicle* to Biblical characters like St Peter and St Paul and even as far back as David (p. 249 c): earlier writers, and perhaps non-Alexandrine writers, would, I imagine, have used μακάριος instead.

How far back in Christian times the usage of μακαρίτης extends, I should not like to say: the only ante-Nicene example which I have so far come across is in the Encyclical of the Synod of Antioch, c. A. D. 268, ap. Eus. *H. E.* vii 30. 3, Διονύσιον τὸν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας καὶ Φιρμιλιανὸν τὸν ἀπὸ τῆς Καππαδοκίας τοὺς μακαρίτας.

The word may, I dare say, be traced earlier still: I think however that the epithet most usually employed in the earliest Christian times was not μακαρίτης but μακάριος. Μακάριος had no sort of pagan associations: on the contrary it was a specially Christian and favourite word. But since it could be and was used as well of the living as of the dead, the problem before us is to see whether and when a distinct use of it in relation to the departed began to grow up.

Two specific developments may be noticed in passing, where the application is fixed by the context respectively to the dead and to the living. Μακάριος is the adjective most commonly used with μνήμη in Christian inscriptions: μακαρίας μνήμης is the Greek equivalent of the Latin 'bonae memoriae'.¹ Conversely the abstract noun ἡ μακα-

¹ References for Sicily in Gondi *Trattato di epigrafia cristiana latina e greca del mondo romano occidentale* (Rome 1920) p. 172.

ριότης as a title for bishops 'Your Blessedness' or 'Your Beatitude' implies of course the use of μακάριος for the living. But though this became in time a regular title, I am not sure whether it could be found before the fifth century¹: St Basil, in addressing bishops, used ἡ σὴ (or σοῦ) ἀγάπη, εὐλάβεια, θεοσέβεια, σεμνότης, τιμιότης, σύνεσις, and the like, but I have not noticed μακαριότης. And if it was not used in the fourth century, I think the reason probably was that μακάριος was by that time reserved ordinarily, even if not exclusively, for the dead. Certainly this seems to be the consistent usage of St Basil. In the case of Silvanus of Tarsus we cannot, so far as I know, prove that he was dead when he is first mentioned with the epithet μακάριος (ep. 67 p. 160 E: cf. epp. 223 p. 339 E, and 244 p. 378 D), though there is nothing to shew that he was alive. In all other cases the evidence is clear. Ep. 95 (p. 189 A, C) 'the blessed deacon Theophrastus', μαθόντα τὴν κοίμησιν τοῦ μακαρίου διακόνου: more often of bishops, of Dionysius of Milan ep. 197 (p. 288 B), of St Athanasius epp. 214 (p. 321 C) 258 (p. 394 B), of pope Liberius ep. 263 (p. 406 C), and of Hermogenes, the predecessor of Dianius in the episcopate of Cappadocian Caesarea, epp. 81² (p. 174 B) 263 (p. 406 A). An obscurer reference in a letter written by Basil on behalf of his brother Gregory of Nyssa, ep. 225 (p. 345 B) ῥάδιον γὰρ ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν γραμμάτων τοῦ μακαρίου ἐπισκόπου φανεράν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ποιῆσαι, must I think mean simply 'from the papers of the late bishop'.

Clearly St Basil uses μακάριος or μακαριώτατος where St Athanasius, as we have seen, would have used μακαρίτης. As between the positive and superlative, the latter seems to be preferred in the case of specially eminent or saintly persons—Athanasius, Dionysius, Liberius, and (on one of two occasions) Hermogenes.³

How far back can St Basil's usage be traced? Does it give us

¹ We have, among the material collected for the Patristic Lexicon, references from John Moschus, from the Emperor Justinian, from Eutychius of Constantinople (sixth century), and, as the rendering of *beatitudo*, from the Greek version of the Council of Carthage of 419. And when the *Definitio fidei* of the Council of Chalcedon speaks of the letter τοῦ μακαριωτάτου καὶ ἀριωτάτου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Λέοντος τὴν γραφεῖσαν πρὸς τὸν ἐν ἁγίοις ἀρχιεπίσκοπον Φλαυιανόν, we see the growth in the fifth century of the process of using these adulatory terms of living prelates.

² A certain presbyter of Caesarea is described as τὸν ἔκγονον τοῦ μακαρίου Ἐρμογένους τοῦ τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἄρρηκτον (v. l. ἄρρητον) πίστιν γράψαντος ἐν τῇ μεγάλῃ συνόδῳ. Does this mean merely that Hermogenes subscribed the Creed at the great Council—but that should be ἐπογράφαντος, and besides Leontius was according to the Nicene lists still bishop at the time of the Council—or how are we to explain the allusion? Was Hermogenes acting as secretary to the Council?

³ Gregory Nazianzen uses the superlative in reference to his own parents, ἐξ ἐντολῶν τῶν μακαριωτάτων γονέων μου.

reasonable warrant to think that when Hippolytus spoke of οἱ μακάριοι πρεσβύτεροι he meant 'the departed fathers'?

There is a passage in Eusebius *contra Marcellum* i 4. 17, where he criticizes the comments of Marcellus of Ancyra on a letter of Asterius, from which some light is thrown upon the question: for it suggests a transitional time in the use of the word when it was sometimes, but not regularly, used as an honorific address to the living. Asterius addressed his letter πρὸς τὸν μακάριον Παυλῖνον, and if this had been a quite ordinary method of addressing bishops Marcellus could hardly have satirized it as he did, μακάριον αὐτὸν διὰ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ὅτι τὴν αὐτὴν εἶχεν Ἀστερίῳ δόξαν: 'he called him "blessed", and I suppose he did so because he was on his own side'. Eusebius' argument seems to imply familiarity with the use of the word for the living, but still more with its use for the dead (Paulinus had died in the interval): τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπον, τὸν ὡς ἀληθῶς τρισμακάριον, Παυλῖνον . . . μακαρίως μὲν βεβιωκότα μακαρίως δὲ ἀναπεπαυμένον, πάλαι τε κεκοιμημένον καὶ μηδὲν αὐτῷ διανοχλοῦντα. When Eusebius a little later on (i 4. 50) refers to Marcellus' attacks on Paulinus in the words διαβάλλει τὸν μακάριον, I think that he again means to remind his readers that Paulinus was dead.

Dionysius of Alexandria, writing to pope Xystus of Rome, therefore in A. D. 256-257, uses the word of his own immediate predecessor (ap. Eus. *H. E.* vii 9. 2) πρὸ τῆς ἐμῆς χειροτονίας, οἶμαι δὲ καὶ τῆς τοῦ μακαρίου Ἡρακλᾶ καταστάσεως.

Of course the title as applied to Biblical characters and writers means ordinarily no more than just what we mean by 'St': ὁ μακάριος Παῦλος is 'St Paul', and the usage extended to the Old Testament as well as to the New. Yet I am not quite sure that when Clement of Rome recalls the attention of the Corinthians to the epistle τοῦ μακαρίου Παύλου τοῦ ἀποστόλου (§ 47), or when Polycarp wrote similarly to the Philippians (§ 3) of the wisdom τοῦ μακαρίου καὶ ἐνδόξου Παύλου, the blessedness of 'the departed' was wholly absent from their thought: cf. Apoc. xiv 13 μακάριοι οἱ νεκροὶ οἱ ἐν Κυρίῳ ἀποθνήσκοντες ἀπ' ἄρτι. Certainly the references to Polycarp himself in the *Martyrium Polycarpi* do seem to me to connect the use of μακάριος rather definitely with his death and martyrdom: the epithet is nowhere used in the body of the narrative, but four times over in close connexion with the verb μαρτυρέω: § 1 τὰ κατὰ τοὺς μαρτυρήσαντας καὶ τὸν μακάριον Πολύκαρπον, § 19 τὰ κατὰ τὸν μακάριον Πολύκαρπον ὃς . . . μαρτυρήσας, § 21 μαρτυρεῖ ὁ μακάριος Πολύκαρπος, § 22 ἐμαρτύρησεν ὁ μακάριος Πολύκαρπος. Again in the Letter of the churches of Lyons and Vienne μακάριος is the adjective consistently used whether of the martyrs as a body or of individual martyrs like Pothinus and Blandina (ap. Eus. *H. E.* v 1. 4, 19, 27, 29, 47, 55). In both of these documents the technical

sense of 'the blessed dead' appears to come definitely into view¹; and with these passages would go the reference of Irenaeus in the letter to Florinus, ap. Eus. *H. E.* v 20. 6 τὸν τόπον ἐν ᾧ καθέζομενος διελέγετο ὁ μακάριος Πολύκαρπος. I should similarly interpret the language of Serapion of Antioch (Eus. *H. E.* v 19. 2, 3, Routh *Rel. Sacr.*² i 451, 452, 457) Κλαυδίου Ἀπολιναρίου τοῦ μακαριωτάτου γενομένου ἐν Ἱεραπόλει ἐπίσκοπου, Σωτᾶς ὁ μακάριος ὁ ἐν Ἀγχιάλῳ.

Against these references to the dead two are quoted to the living from the documents of the same period: Dionysius of Corinth, writing to the church of Rome when Soter was bishop, speaks of ὁ μακάριος ὑμῶν ἐπίσκοπος Σωτήρ (ap. Eus. *H. E.* iv 23. 10), and Alexander of Jerusalem, writing to the church of Antioch, says that he is sending the letter by the hands of Clement διὰ Κλήμεντος τοῦ μακαρίου πρεσβυτέρου. But in these cases the recipients knew well enough if the 'blessed' bishop or presbyter in question was living, just as the vocative μακάριε is occasionally found, for the more usual ἀγαπητέ, e.g. in the anti-Montanist ap. Eus. *H. E.* v 16. 15²: and no more is contended in this note than that in appropriate contexts the epithet had at least from the early third century begun to acquire a technical meaning in reference to the 'blessed dead'. For a time no doubt the two uses may have gone on side by side: and in Latin the epithet *beatus* and the still more frequent *beatissimus* followed I think a separate line of development, and did not become attached to 'the departed' as μακάριος did.

But I have no sort of doubt that Hippolytus, whether in the μακάριοι πρεσβύτεροι of the *c. Noetum* or in the μακάριος πρεσβύτερος Εἰρηναῖος of the *Philosophumena*, was already using μακάριος in the later technical sense. In his phraseology the μακάριος and the πρεσβύτερος helped one another out, so that there would have been no danger for contemporaries, as there was for Epiphanius, of misunderstanding his meaning.³

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¹ So in the *Apostolic Constitutions* James and Stephen, the martyrs of the Book of Acts, are specially singled out in connexion with the epithet μακάριος, v 8. 1, vi 30. 10, viii 46. 16 (ed. Funk 263. 17, 385. 6, 562. 10).

² I take this reference from Bonwetsch *Geschichte des Montanismus* p. 32 n. 1, who is concerned to minimize any implication of the reference of μακάριος to the departed.

³ There are of course other ways of employing the epithet μακάριος than in the personal reference to which I have here been limiting my enquiry. For instance there is the use of the word in relation to the Godhead, the 'Blessed Trinity'. I have made no special investigation, but I do not suppose that μακάριος is as frequent in this connexion as some other epithets. Eusebius of Caesarea has τὴν ἁγίαν καὶ μακαρίαν Τριάδα *Praef. Ev.* xi 20, and τὴν ἁγίαν καὶ μακαρίαν καὶ μυστικὴν Τριάδα *c. Marcell.* i 1 (3. 24).