The naturalistic interpretation of language, especially names common and proper, is as old as the Homeric poems (see e.g. Od. 19. 562—7) and becomes particularly frequent in the lyric poets and Attic tragedy. Being unsystematic and fanciful, it produced many absurdities, but to designate it ‘word-play’ instead of ‘etymology’ is to obscure the vital fact that the early poets believed that names might conceal the character or action or destiny of the bearer (cf. Fraenkel on Aesch. Ag. 682) and that in interpreting them they were exercising a species of insight not granted to the layman. The early philosophers adopted the practice from the poets and applied it to the investigation of ultimate truth; when Heraclitus supported his metaphysical arguments on such etymologies
as ἕν νόῳ λέγοντας ἵσχυρὶς εἰσθαί χρῆ τῷ ἕνῳ πάντων (fr. 114 Diels) he was simply claiming for the philosopher the same kind of insight conceded to the poets. In Pindar especially the practice is so well established that etymologies are regularly introduced by implication, i.e. without an assertion that the subject is 'properly' or 'truly' named; in this category are e.g. Ol. 2. 53—6 Snell (cf. G. Norwood, Pindar, p. 137), Ol. 6. 38, 47, 55 (Norwood p. 252 n. 45), Nem. 2. 8 (cf. Fennell), Pyth. 2. 72—3 (καλός/καλλίας). In Aeschylus, on the other hand, etymologies are more often than not explicit, and for names 'properly' assigned we have ὀρθῶνυμος (Ag. 699—700), ὀρθός (Sept. 829), ἀλήθειας (Suppl. 314), εὐλόγως (fr. 27. 3 Mette), ἐπη-τόμως (Ag. 682, Cho. 948), given by R. Pfeiffer, Sitzgsb. Bayer. Akad., Phil.-hist. Abt. 1938. 2. 9 n. 2, ἐτύμως ¹) and probably δοξίμως (δοξίμως πολυπενθή in Pers. 547 seems to etymologise πολλάων ἀνδρῶν πενθητικόν). In the following notes I am concerned only with ἐτύμως and its reduplicated form ἐτήτυμως (Frisk, Griech. Etym. Wörter., pp. 580—1, s. v. ἐτεός), since the special use of these words has often been mishandled by editors and lexicographers. In LSJ ⁹, for instance, the etymological sense of ἐτυμως is represented as starting with Aristotle and ἐτύμως λόγος in Pind. Pyth. 1. 68, which I shall deal with here, is parcelled up with φήμην ἐτυμων in Eur. El. 818. The etymological sense of ἐτήτυμως seems not to exist; ἐτήτυμως Δίος κόρα in Aesch. Cho. 948—9 is not differentiated from ἐτήτυμως παῖς in Soph. Tr. 1064, and πρέσβυς ἐτητυμή μεμελημένος in Call. Aet. 3. fr. 75. 76 (Pf.) appears to instance ἐτητυμαί = truth, whereas the old man, Xenomedes of Ceos (cf. Pfeiffer on l. 54), was notoriously addicted to etymologies. If this is a true picture of the history of these words, we can but wonder why, as Verrall said, the essentially poetical ἐτυμως was appropriated entirely for etymological terminology in late prose (τὸ ἐτυμων, ἐτυμολογείν, ἐτυμολογία). I list here five early passages illustrating this special use.

¹) Fourteen Aeschylean instances of ἐτυμως and ἐτήτυμως were collected by Verrall, Sept., App. ii, but his conclusions, contested by Headlam, are in some cases too extravagant to be credible. For more recent literature see K. Strunk, 'Frühe Vokalveränderungen in der griechischen Literatur', Glott. xxxviii (1960). 77. n. 3.
In l. 60 Pindar calls upon his muse to join with him in a
hymn of praise for Dinomenes, the regent of the new Syracusan
foundation, Aetna, to which Hiero the founder has paid honour
by having himself proclaimed as an Aetnaean after his victory.
The hymn develops in the form of a parallel drawn between
the Dorians of the Peloponnese, their political creed and mili­
tary prowess in occupying Amyclae, and the Dorians of Aetna,
who Pindar prays may likewise achieve political unity and so
withstand the Carthaginians and Etruscans, already defeated by
Hiero off Cumae (71 ff.). The sense correspondence between
strophe and antistrophe is precise, and 67—70 are paralleled
by 62—5 in the strophe: ‘It is the desire of the descendants of
Pamphylus and, verily, of the Heraclidae too, who dwell
beneath the heights of Taygetus (δῆθας ὑπὸ Ταύγητου ναὸντες),
ever to abide (ἀλει μένειν) as Dorians in the statutes of Aegi­
mius.’ ὑπὸ ὑπὸ τοιαύταν αἴσαν means, therefore, the maintenance of
Dorian political institutions, which is the necessary condition
to unity within the city and security from outside foes; Gilder­
sleeve’s notion that it refers to θεοδική τὴν ἐλευθερία, pre­
dicated of Aetna in 61—2, would leave the Peloponnesian
parallel without any point.

The question now arises, what is the subject of διαχρίνειν
( = ‘to mark off’, as a piece of ground, Ol. 10. 46, or ‘to
pronounce, determine an issue’, Ol. 8. 24). Boeckh, followed
by Gildersleeve, Farnell and Norwood, p. 103 2), thought that
it was ἐτύμον λόγον; Gildersleeve renders, ‘Grant that the
judgment of the world may with truth assign such a lot to
citizens and kings.’ Pindar, however, for all his appreciation
of the power of human report, knew very well that it did not
presume to mete out human destiny, and to assert that it did,
after a solemn invocation of Zeus Teleios, would have been

2) Mommsen also agreed, but suggested δῆς τοιαν for τοιαύταν on
the strength of the scholiast’s παράσαχων. But for the acc. and infin. of wish
cf. Pyth. 2. 24.
tantamount to blasphemy. The dispensation of αἰσχρα was the prerogative of Moira or Zeus, and neither needed the λόγον ἀνθρώπων as intermediary. Alternatively, to take διακρίνειν as imperative in force, with Zeus as the subject (so Schroeder) leaves us with αἰσχρα and λόγον as two strange objects in apposition. αἰσχρα, then, is the subject (so Hermann, although he missed Pindar’s point), and we should render, ‘O Zeus the Perfecter, may ever a like portion by the waters of Amenas, for citizens and kings, pronounce men’s account to be a true one.’ What account is meant? The etymological account of Amenas, αἰελ μένειν, supplied in advance in the strophe and reasserted by αἰελ in emphatic position at the beginning of the antistrophe. Unless ναivos τε in 64 is also intended to suggest αἰελ/ναivos = Αἴτνη, which is doubtful, the stream Amenas alone is being etymologised as an omen for the city built on its banks. Pindar’s motive is clear: since Amenas or Amenanos, the feeble, was notoriously irregular in flow (Ov. Met. 15. 280, Strabo 240), he is at pains to repudiate an etymology which would have augured ill for the new foundation, and to maintain that the etymology which proved the opposite was also the popular one. For further etymological activity over the new foundation see Aesch. Αἴτναιν fr. 27 Mette. If this interpretation is right, it would be tempting to take σύμφωνον in the double sense ‘harmonious’ and ‘concordant with the name’ (cf. Plat. Crat. 395e, καὶ τελευτήσαντες ἐν Ἀἰδοὺ ἡ ὕπερ τῆς κεφαλῆς τοῦ λίθου ταλαντεῖα θαυμασθῇ ὡς σύμφωνος τῷ ὅνοματι, sc. Ταντάλῳ).

(2) Aesch. Eum. 532—4: ξύμμετρον δ’ ἔπος λέγω, ἰ δυσσεβίας μὲν ὑβρις ἰ τέξος ὡς ἐτύμως.

With Verrall, Eum. pp. 94—6 and Sept. App. ii. 142—3, I am in general agreement, but his explanation of ξύμμετρον ἔπος, ‘a maxim (verse) of the same measure’, alluding both to metre and to the political moderates, is too far-fetched; so is Thomson’s reference to the Pythagorean doctrine of the mean. It means simply ‘a word to square with the thought’, ξύμμετρος being used here as the converse of σύμφωνος τῷ ὅνοματι. The etymology is effected by allusion, ὑβρις, = κόρος (cf. LSJ s. v. κόρος), ἐστιν ὡς ἐτύμως δυσσεβίας τέξος, = κόρος, κόρη, because Aeschylus could count on his audience’s familiarity with the κόρος / κόρος motif of traditional γνώμαι, Theogn. 153, Solon 5. 9 Diehl, Pind. Ol. 13. 12, Bacis ap. Hdt. 8. 77 (Verrall).
(3) Ion of Chios fr. 4. 3—4 Diels:

εἴπερ Πυθαγόρης ἑτώμως σοφός, ἀνθρώπων γνώμας εἶδε καὶ ἔξεμαθεν.

In l. 3 I adopt the conjecture proposed by F. H. Sandbach, Proc. Camb. Phil. Soc. clxxxv. n.s. 5. p. 36, instead of the reading ἑτώμως ὅ σοφός given by Diog. Laert. 1. 119, and follow him in construing ἀνθρώπων, separately from περὶ πάντων, with γνώμας. Why has Ion seen fit here to illustrate Pythagoras’ σοφία on the after life by appeal to his knowledge of other men’s γνώμαι? Perhaps, as Sandbach suggests, he is hinting that Pythagoras drew the views on immortality which he fathered on Orpheus from the Egyptians. But ἑτώμως indicates that the process of thought has been actuated by something more elementary, viz. the etymology of Pythagoras’ name. ἑτώμως σοφός directly attention to ἐπιθυμία τοῦ ἀγώνα, and the clause ὅ ... ἔξε-μαθεν provides the proof that Pythagoras was ‘wise in accordance with his name’.

(4) Pind. Ol. 10. 49 — 55: καὶ πάγον Ἐν Κρόνου προσεφθέγ-ξατο· πρόσθε γάρ ἡ νοῦνμος, ἂς Ὑλόμαυος ἀρχε, βρέχετο πολλὰ νυφάδι. ταῦτα δ’ ἐν πρωτογόνῳ τελετᾷ! παρέσταν μὲν ἄρα Μοίραι σχεδὸν! ὅ τ’ ἐξελεγχων μόνος ἀλλ’ θειαν ἐπιτιμον Χρόνος.

The context is the institution of the Olympian Games by Heracles. The traditional name of the Hill of Kronos, being apparently regarded as a slight to Zeus, the vanquisher of Kronos, is reinterpreted here with all the resources available to Pindar. πάγον has already been etymologised correctly with πάξας in l. 45, and now, with appeals to myth, ‘chronology’ and the sanction of the Μοίραι, Κρόνου is outrageously connected with Χρόνος, for ‘Time alone can put the genuine truth (sc. of a name) to the proof’. For ἐπιτιμον cf. Bury on Nem. 7. 63 and for ἀλλ’ θειαν in this sense cf. Nem. 7. 25, Istb. 2. 10. Norwood’s interpretation, p. 252 n. 43, ‘Truth which does indeed repel oblivion (ἀ - λάθ - εια)’, looks for the etymology in the wrong place.

(5) Aesch. Ag. 160 — 75: Ζεύς, ὅστις πότ’ ἐστιν, εἰ τόδ’ αὖ· ἐν τῷ φύλον κεκλημένην, ἐμνυτό νιν προσενέπω· σοφή ἐγὼ σοφικάκας | πάστ’ ἐπισταθμώμενος ἐν θήλην Διός, εἰ τὸ μάταιν ἀπὸ φρονεῖδος ἅχθος | χρὴ δικεῖν ἐπιτιμίας. — ὅστις πάροιδεν ἢν μέγας | παμμάχῳ θράσει βρόων, |
M’s original reading προσηνάσαι, which I have verified from the facsimile, yields, with the accentuation corrected, προσηνά­σαι ἀπ. λεγ., ‘to put in the scale before’. σηχὸς is basically an enclosure, and the simple σηχάζειν means ‘to pen’, as animals or men (Il. 8. 131, Xen. Hell. 3. 2. 4) or even πυροῦς καὶ ἀσ­τάχυς (Orph. fr. 268). Neither word is found in the sense ‘scale’, but the scale as an enclosure for wares is a natural image (cf. σταθμὸς), and σηκοῦν, σήκωμα (the thing scaled, i. e. weight, load) and ἀντίσηκος, ἀντισηκοῦν (e. g. Aesch. Pers. 437) prove that this sense existed. Words for ‘to scale’ are not in common demand, while a word for ‘to counter-scale’ is; hence the lack of evidence for σηχὸς, σηχάζειν and of classical evidence for σηκοῦν, and the abundance of classical evidence for ἀντισηκοῦν etc. With this reading we establish a uniform metaphor from weighing in the strophe, προσηνάσαι, ἐπισταθ­μῷμενος and τὸ μᾶταν ἀχθος, to match the wrestling metaphor of the antistrophe.

Fraenkel’s note on 681 ff., the Helen etymology, acknowledges the special sense of ἑτητῳμὸς there, but although he notes Aeschylus’ preoccupation with the god and his name in 160—2 and, oddly, cross-references ἑτητῳμὸς 166 with ἑτητῳμὸς 682, he finds no etymology here. The chorus’ difficulty, stated with Ζεῦς, δοσὶς πότ’ ἐστιν, is to find for the god his proper name, i.e. the name which conforms with his nature, and since even to invoke the god as Ζεῦς prejudges the issue, the name Ζεῦς is said to be provisionally accepted (εἰ . . . . προσεννέτω). The subject is then divided into two parts; the strophe deals with Δλ, the antistrophe with Ζήνα. The two solutions are presented in emphatic position at the beginning of the corresponding lines 165 and 174, where the change from trochees to ‘mantic’ dactyls emphasises that the solution comes only by prophetic insight.

In the strophe the φροντίς, which here, as in Ag. 912, is the faculty which cares, is conceived as a balance, with the god
set in one scale and a succession of possible names being tried
in the other. Διός 165 is not the god but the name, which pro-
perly understood enables the chorus to discard the others as
being a ‘futile weight’ in the scale, μάταιν ἄχθος sc. σηκοῦ, a
phrase probably suggested to Aeschylus by ἐτώσιον ἄχθος ἀροῦ-
ρής, Η. 18. 104 (cf. γῆς ἄλλως ἄχθη, Plat. Theae. 176 d). “As
I bring all names to the balance, I cannot put in the scale first
any save Δία, if it be granted me to throw, δίκειν, in the
proper meaning of the word, from my pondering heart those
that would be but a futile weight in the scale.” What Fraenkel’s
rendering of βαλεῖν ἐτητύμως, ‘to cast in real truth’, means I
am unsure, but if it means ‘to cast thoroughly’ or ‘successfully’
(and he maintains it is the opposite of βαλεῖν μάτην), it pre-
sumes an unparalleled sense for ἐτητύμως. If, alternatively, it
means ‘to cast in the proper sense of the word’, it is otiose
unless it refers implicitly to δίκειν. Like Verrall, I believe that
the etymology should here be explicit and δίκειν restored to the
text from the Hesychius lemma. Zeus was the throwing god,
and since Cho. 949 gives us Δίκα = ἐτητύμως Δίος κόρα, Aeschy-
lus’ etymological grouping seems to be Άλα, δίκειν, δίκη.

In the antistrophe the chorus eliminates Uranos and
Kronos, both dead and gone, from the list of possible con-
tenders, and then realise, with a flash of insight, that Zeus
is the living god, Ζηνα ζήν. This etymology seems, as Zeller
suggested, to be involved in Heraclitus fr. 32 Diels, and
perhaps from him via Cratylus derives Plat. Crat. 396a—b
(with a philosophical development): συμβαίνει οὖν ὁρθῶς ὅνομα-
ζεσθαι οὕτως ὁ θεὸς εἶναι, δι’ ὅν ζήν ἀεὶ πάσι τοῖς ξύσιν ὑπάρ-
χει· διελθυται δὲ δίκα, ὅπερ λέγω, ἐν ὑπὸ τὸ ὄνομα, τῷ “Δι”
kai τῷ “Ζην”; cf. Eur. Or. 1635, Ζηνός γὰρ ὁδοὺν ζῆν νῦν (sc.
Έλενην) ἀφήσων χρεῶν. For τεύξεται in an etymologising con-
text cf. τυχόντες καλῶς Cho. 951, and ἐν τούχα Ag. 685.